



AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION



# Stress in America

Mind/Body Health: For a Healthy Mind and Body, Talk to a Psychologist



**November 9, 2010**  
**Vanderbilt YMCA**



## **Panelists**

- **Norman B. Anderson, PhD**  
**Chief Executive Officer & Executive Vice President, APA**
- **Katherine C. Nordal, PhD**  
**Executive Director for Professional Practice, APA**
- **Kathryn E. Henderson, PhD**  
**Rudd Center for Food Policy & Obesity at Yale University**
- **Wheaton Griffin, PhD**  
**New York YMCA Camp**

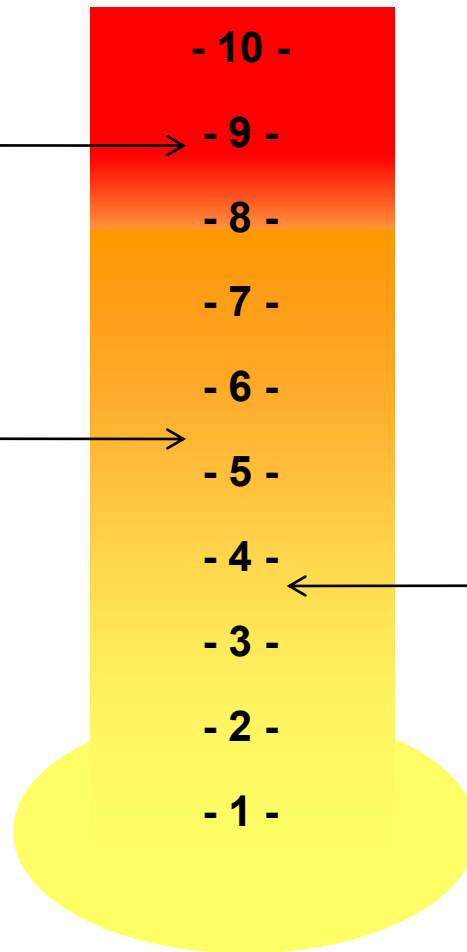


# A Public Health Warning

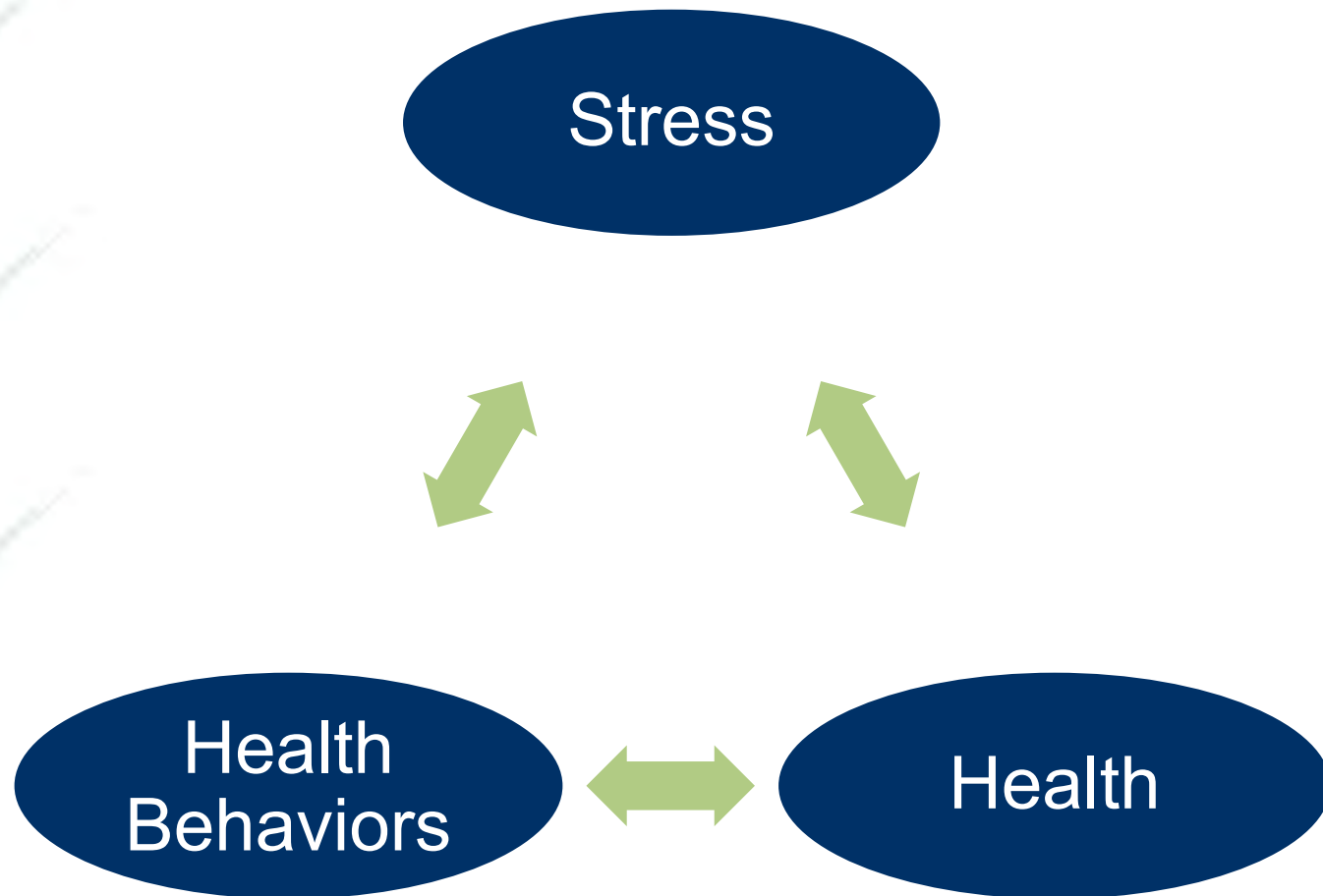
**Average stress level for 24 percent of adults (8, 9 or 10)**

**Average stress level reported by all adults**

Definition of **healthy stress level**



## Connection Between Stress, Behavior & Health



## **Americans Know:**

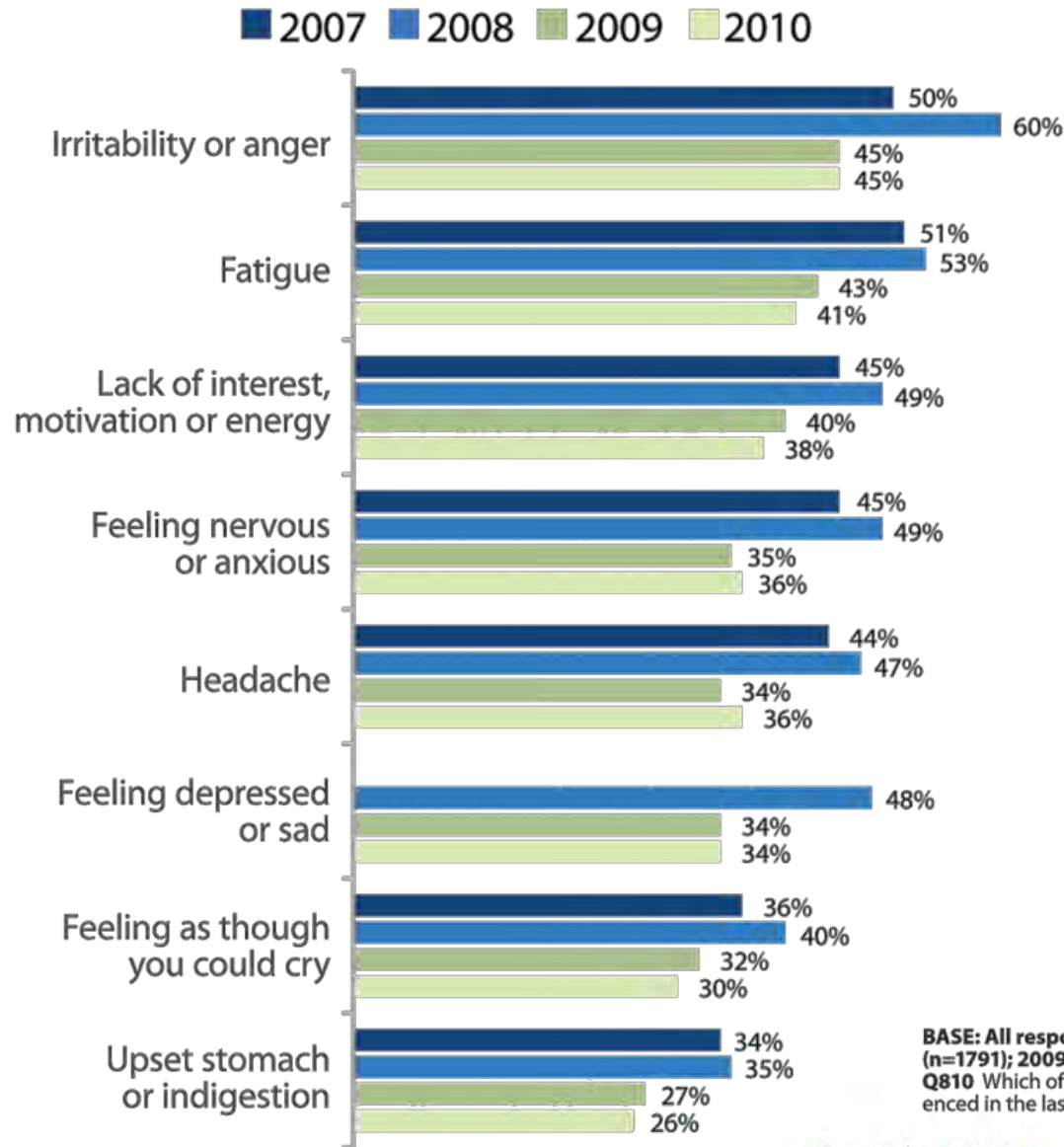
- **Their stress is too high.**
- **It's not healthy.**
- **What they should be doing ...**
- **... but are not successful doing it.**

## **Health Care System**

**Health care system not  
adequately addressing stress,  
behavior and health connection.**



# Americans Report Symptoms of Stress



**BASE: All respondents 2007 (n=1848); 2008 (n=1791); 2009 (n=1568); 2010 (n=1134)**  
**Q810** Which of the following, if any, have you experienced in the last month as a result of stress?

## **More Stress, More Health Troubles**

- **Self-ratings of “fair/poor health” related to more stress (compared to those rating their health as “excellent/very good”).**
- **29 percent of obese adults reported high stress in past month compared to 20 percent of normal weight adults.**



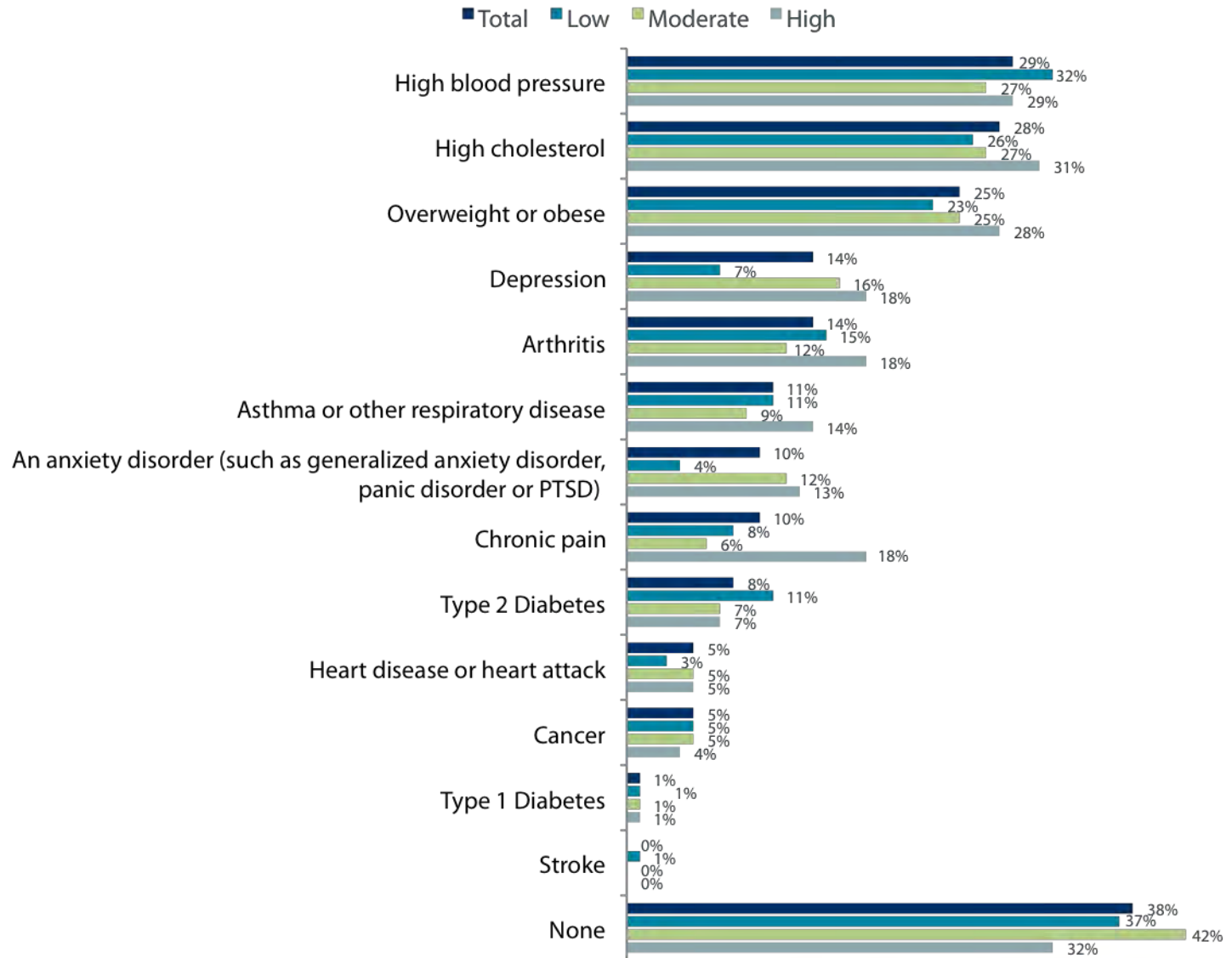
## **More Stress, More Health Troubles**

**Adults with high stress levels are more likely to have received a diagnosis from a health care provider.**





# More Stress, More Health Troubles



**BASE: All respondents (n=1,134); Low (n=268); Moderate (n=567); High (n=292)**

**Q2105** Have you ever been told by a health care provider that you have any of the following conditions? Please select all that apply.

## **More Stress, More Health Troubles**

**Those with high stress levels are more likely to have been told they have the following:**

- **Depression (18% vs. 7%)**
- **Anxiety Disorder (13% vs. 4%)**
- **Chronic Pain (18% vs. 8%)**

## **More Stress, More Health Troubles**

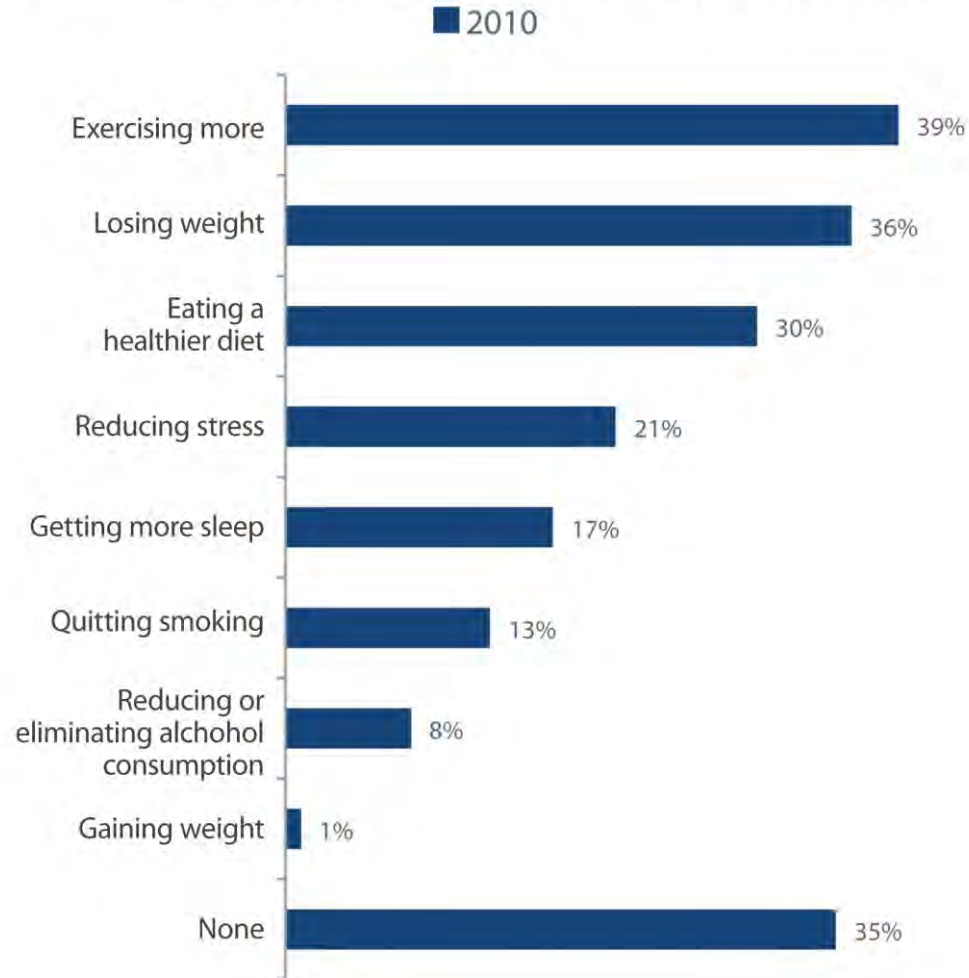
**Those with moderate stress levels are more likely to have been told they have the following:**

- **Depression (16% vs. 7%)**
- **Anxiety Disorder (12% vs. 4%)**



# Healthy Behaviors

## Recommendations from Health Care Providers



BASE: All respondents 2009 (n=1568); 2010 (n=1134)

\* Multiple responses are possible

Q2110 Which of the following, if any, has a health care provider recommended to you in the past 5 years? Please select all that apply.



# Americans are Falling Short

## Aspects of Well-Being: Importance vs. Achievement



**BASE: All respondents (n=1134)**

\* Multiple responses are possible

**Q7005** How important are each of the following to you?

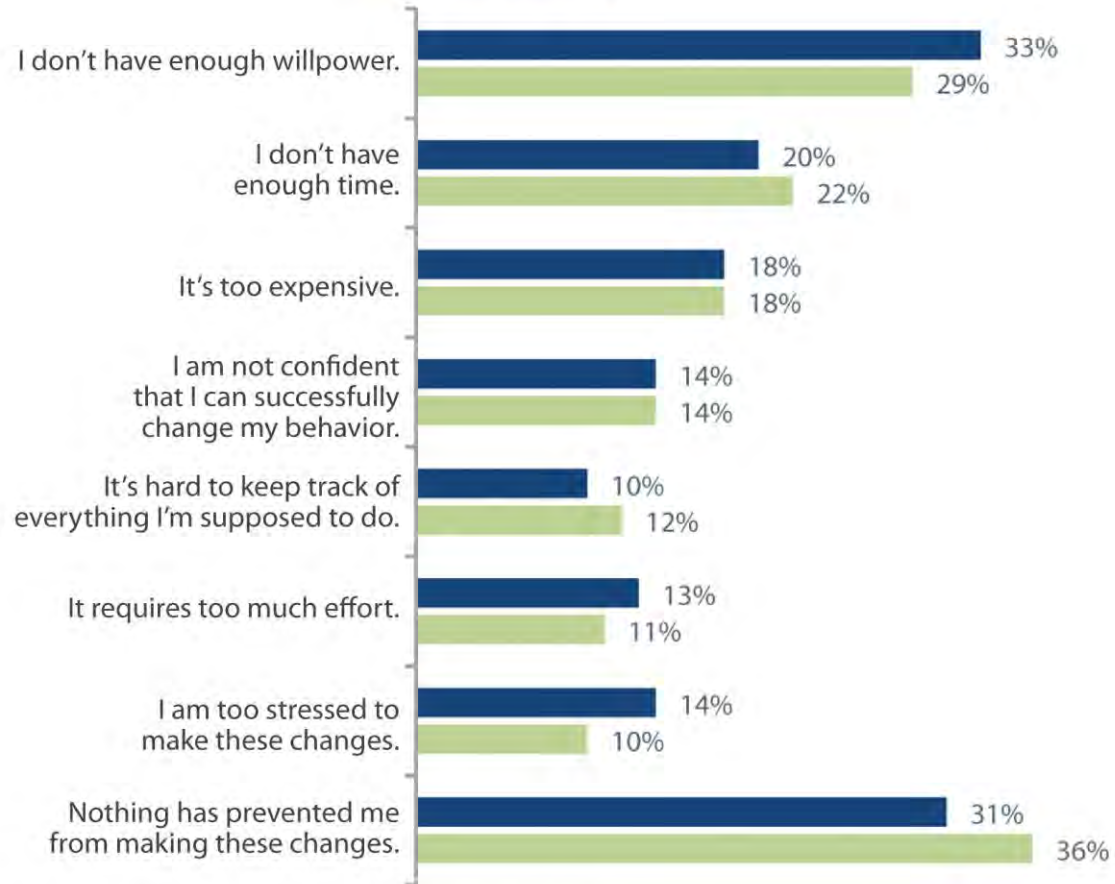
**Q7010** How well are you doing at achieving each of these?



# Willpower Stands in the Way of Good Health

## Barriers to Change

■ 2009 ■ 2010



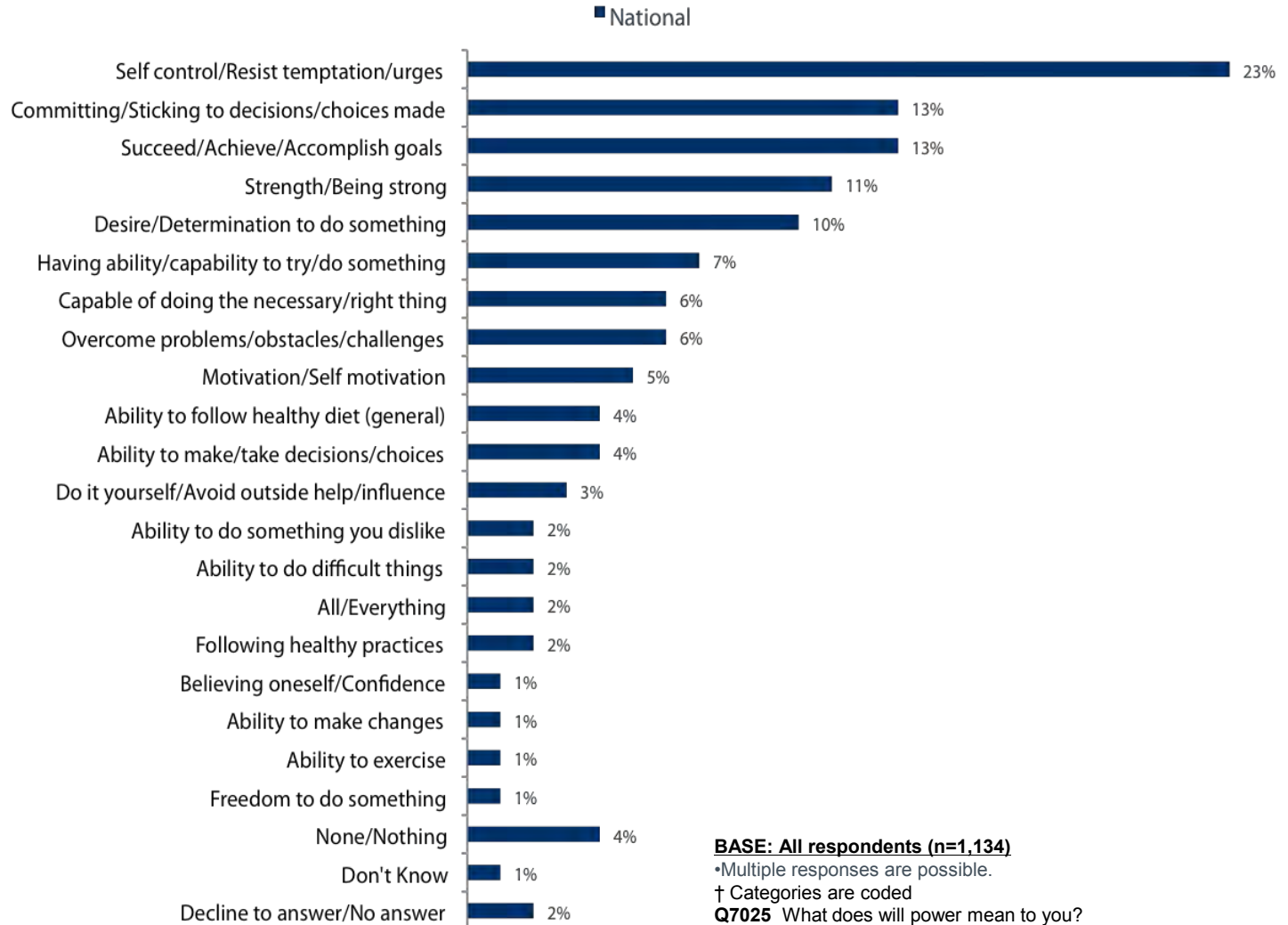
**BASE: HCP Recommended Changes 2009 (n=1068); 2010 (n=735)**

\* Multiple responses are possible

**Q2255** Which of the following, if any, have prevented you from making the lifestyle changes your health care provider has recommended? Please select all that apply.



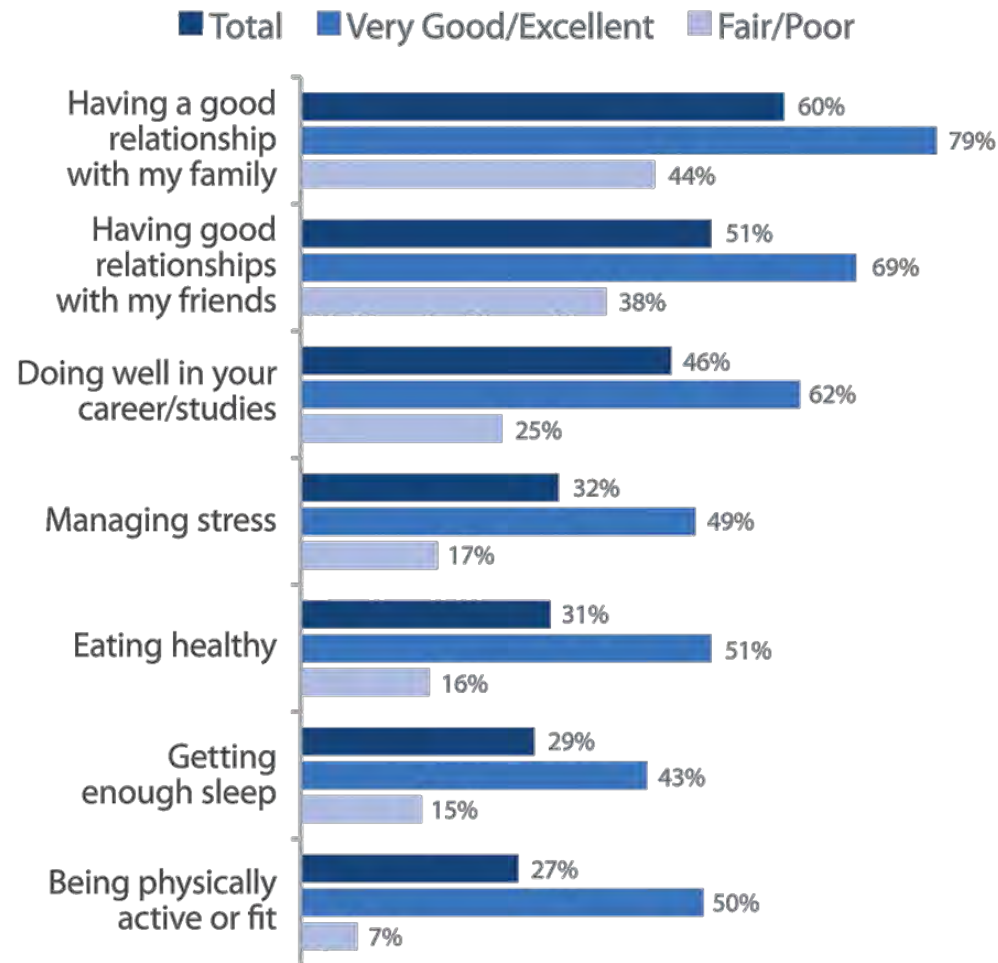
# What Willpower Means to Americans





# Feel Healthy, Act Healthy

## Achievement, by Health Rating



BASE: All respondents (n=1134); Very good Excellent (n=383); Fair/Poor (n=280)  
Q7005 How important are each of the following to you?



## **The News is Worse for Women**

- **28 percent of women report having a great deal of stress compared to 20 percent of men.**
- **49 percent of women said their stress has increased over the past 5 years compared to 39 percent of men.**
- **31 percent of women eat to manage stress compared to 21 percent of men.**
- **49 percent of women report having eaten too much or unhealthy foods because of stress in the past month compared to 30 percent of men.**



## The News is Worse for Women

- **Women are more likely to report physical and emotional symptoms of stress in the past month than men:**
  - Headache (41% vs. 30%)
  - Feel like crying (44% vs. 15%)
  - Upset stomach or indigestion (32% vs. 21%)



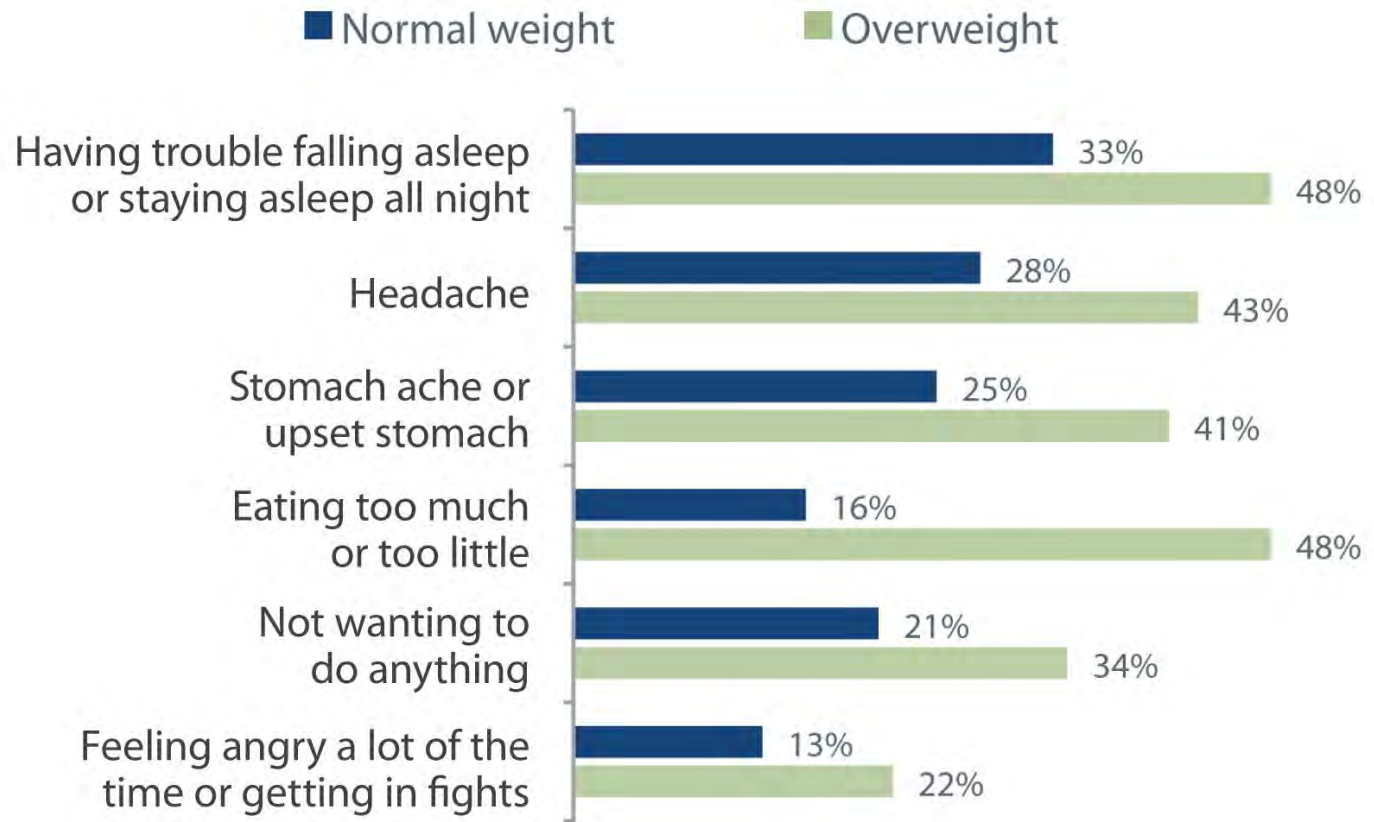
# Stress and Children

Dr. Katherine Nordal





# Physical Health Toll of Stress on Children



**BASE: Youth (n=1136); Underweight (n=169); Normal weight (n=640); Overweight (n=327)**

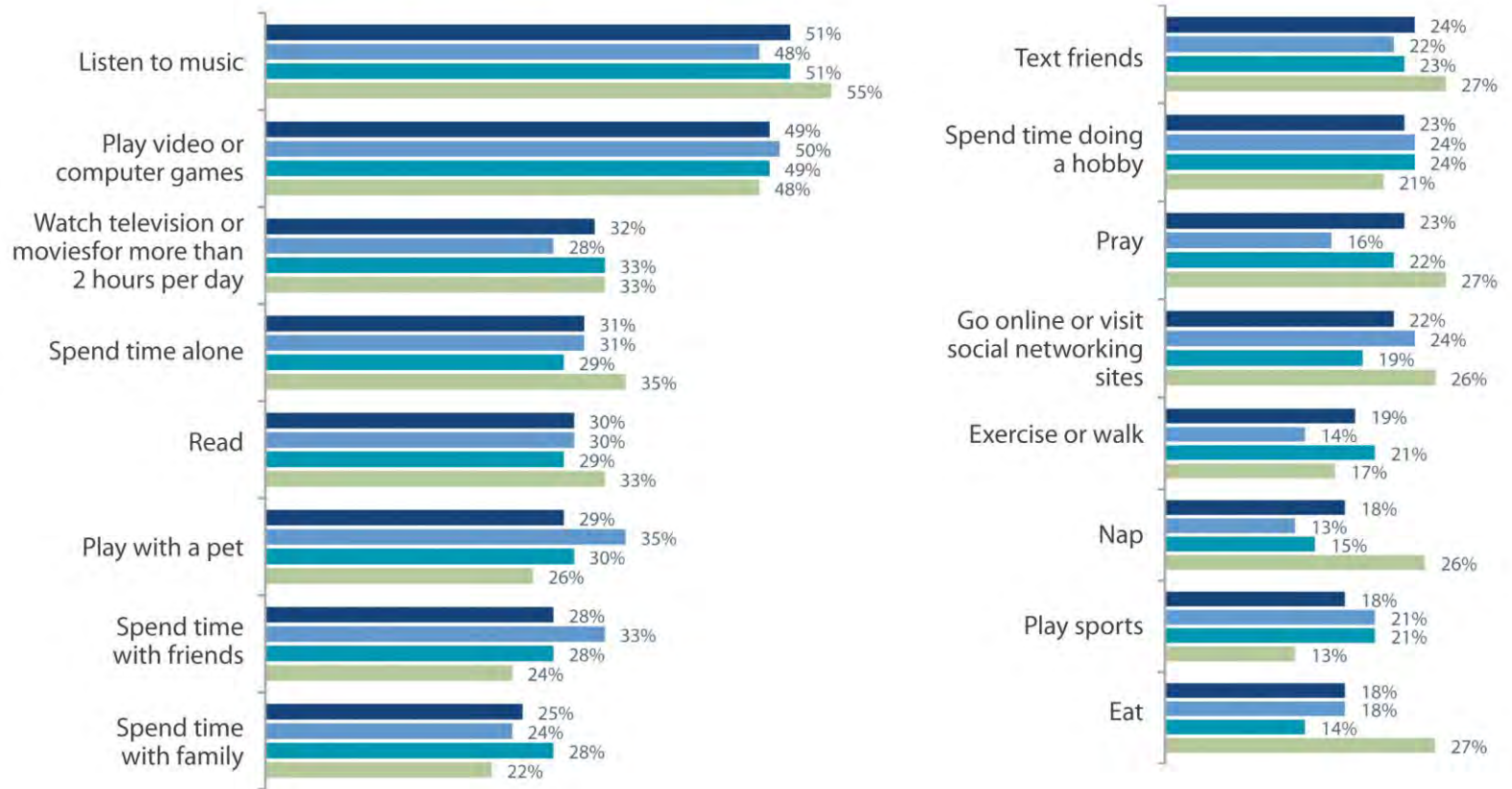
**Q730** Which of the following, if any, have you experienced in the last month? Please select all that apply.



# How Kids Cope

## What Kids Do to Feel Better When They Are Worried or Stressed

■ Total ■ Underweight ■ Normal weight ■ Overweight



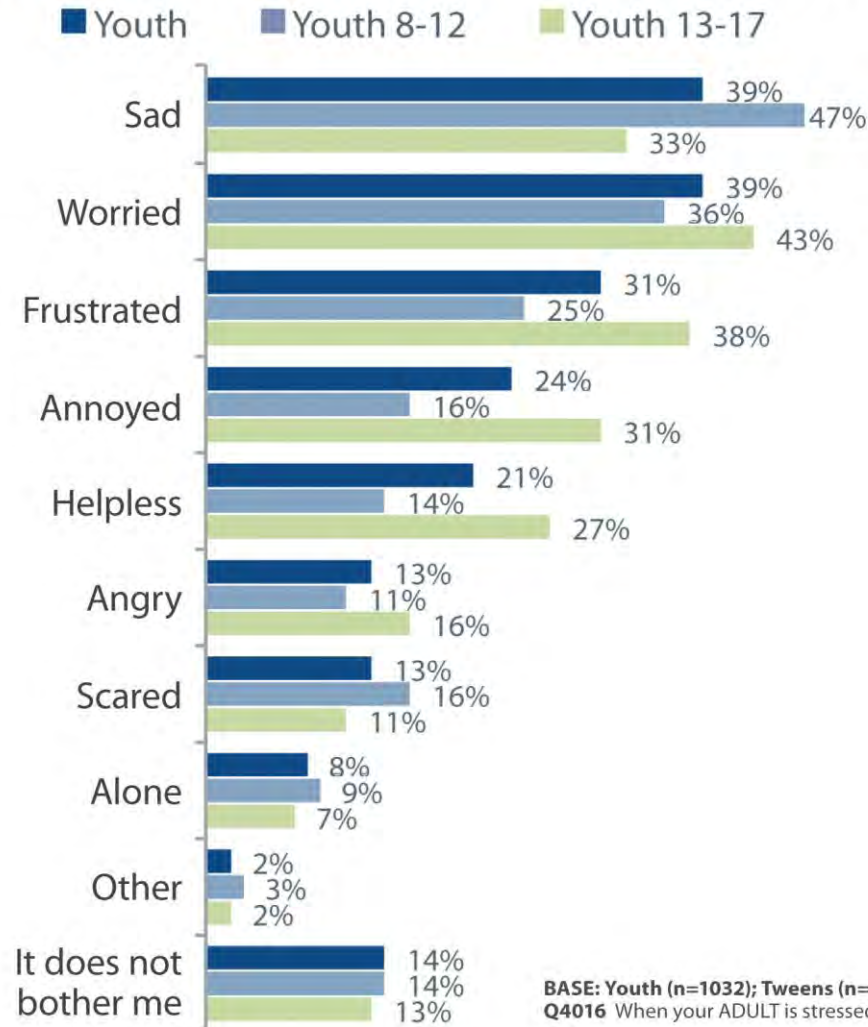
BASE: Youth (n=1136); Underweight (n=169); Normal (n=640); Overweight (n=327)

Q4012 Which of the following things do you do to make yourself feel better when you are really worried or stressed out about something? Please select all that apply.



# Stress is Hurting American Families

## How Children Feel When Their Parent is Stressed

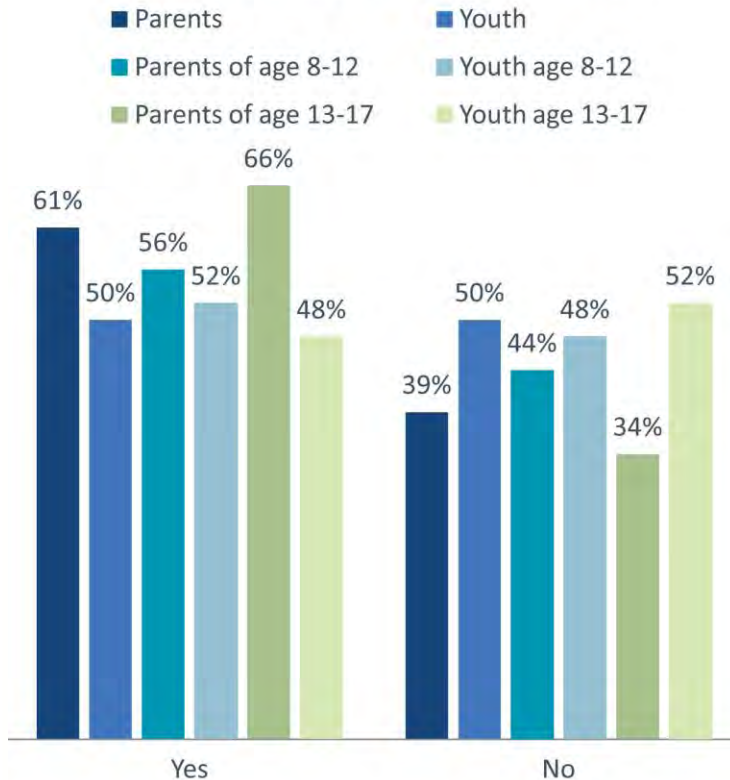


BASE: Youth (n=1032); Tweens (n=460); Teens (n=572)  
Q4016 When your ADULT is stressed or worried how do you feel?

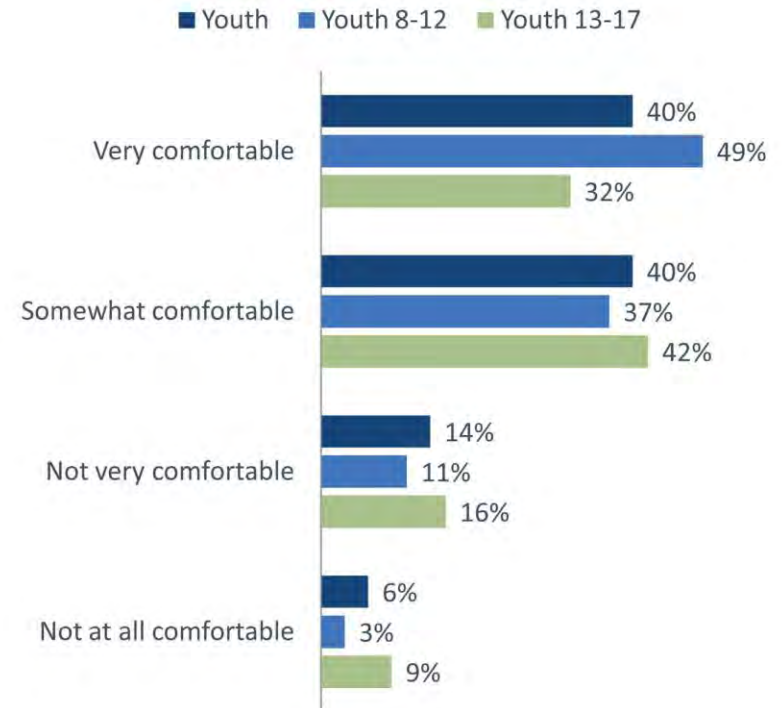


# Talking About Stress

Talked with Parents About Stress



Comfort Level of Talking With Parents About Stress



**BASE: Parents (n=1037)**

**Q5080** Have you asked your child about their stress or worry level in the past month?

**BASE: Youth (n=1136)**

**Q5085** Thinking about the past month, have you talked to your parents about things that you are worried or stressed out about?

**BASE: Youth (n=1136)**

**Q720** How comfortable do you feel talking to your parent(s)/guardian about things that you worry about?



# **Stress, Weight and Children**

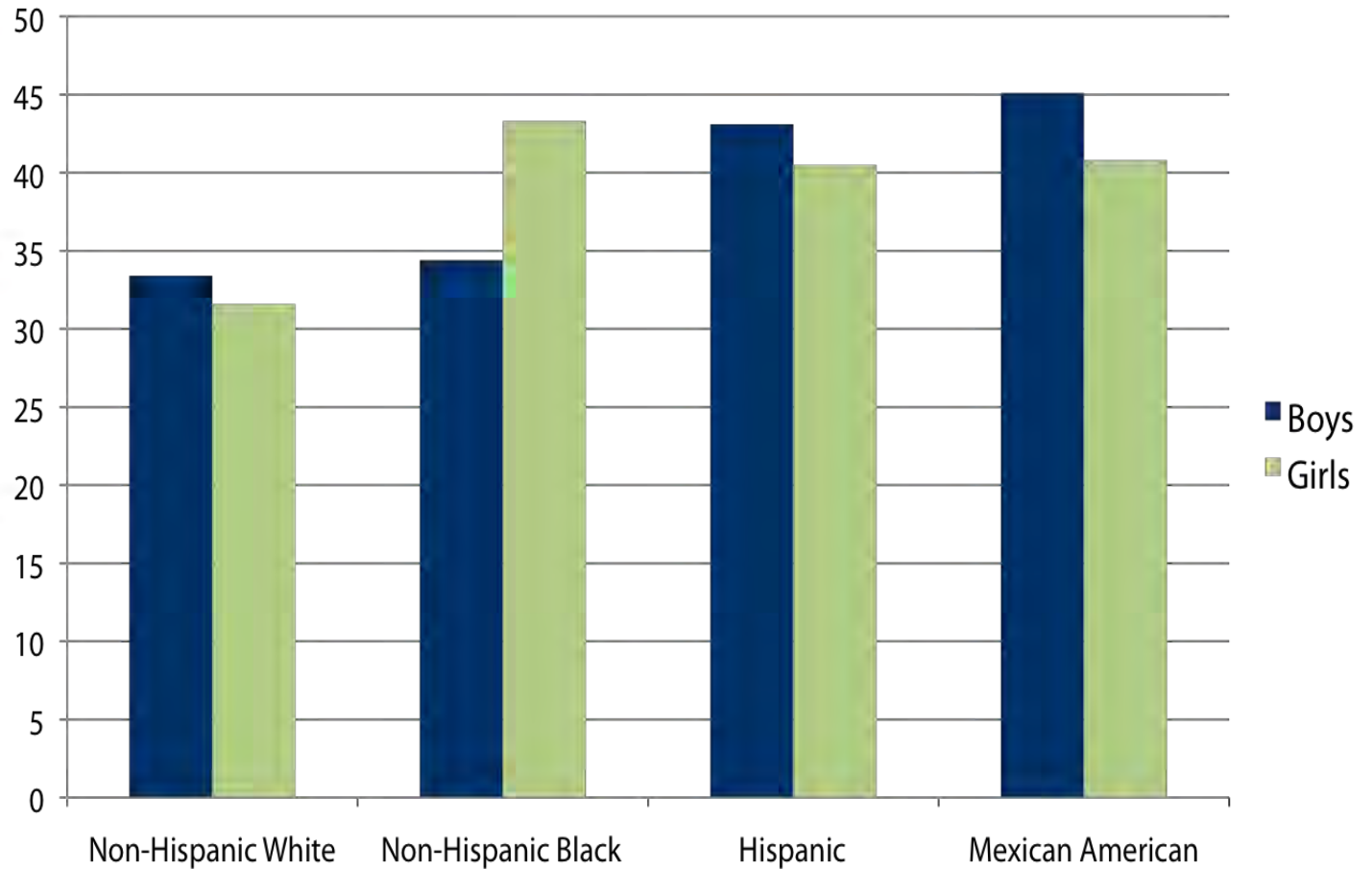
**Dr. Kathryn Henderson**



# Prevalence & Consequences of Overweight

- **Children: 34 percent**
- **Adults: 66 percent**
- **Increases over several decades**
- **Consequences:**
  - **Medical**
  - **Psychological**
  - **Social**

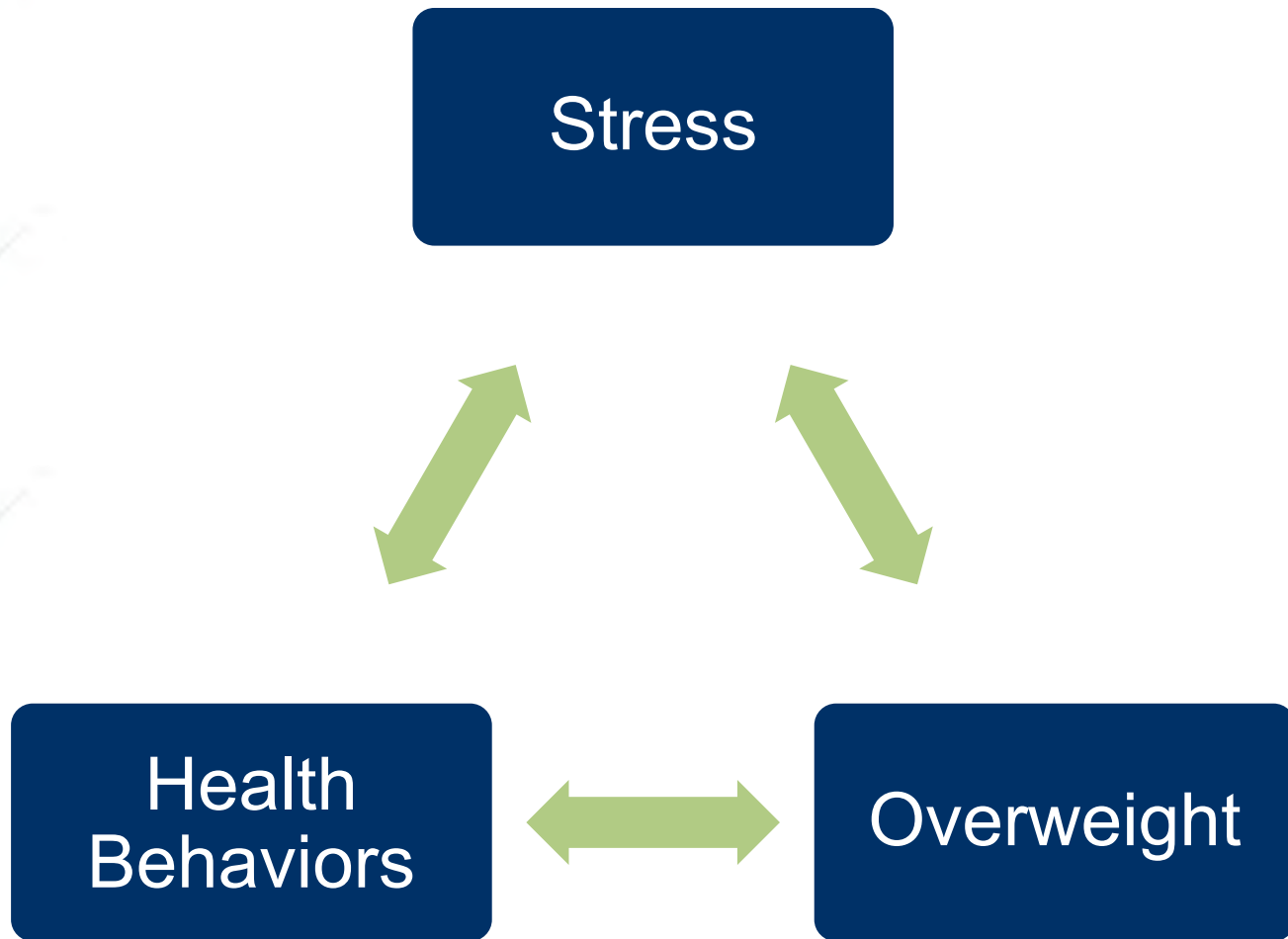
# Prevalence of Overweight in Children



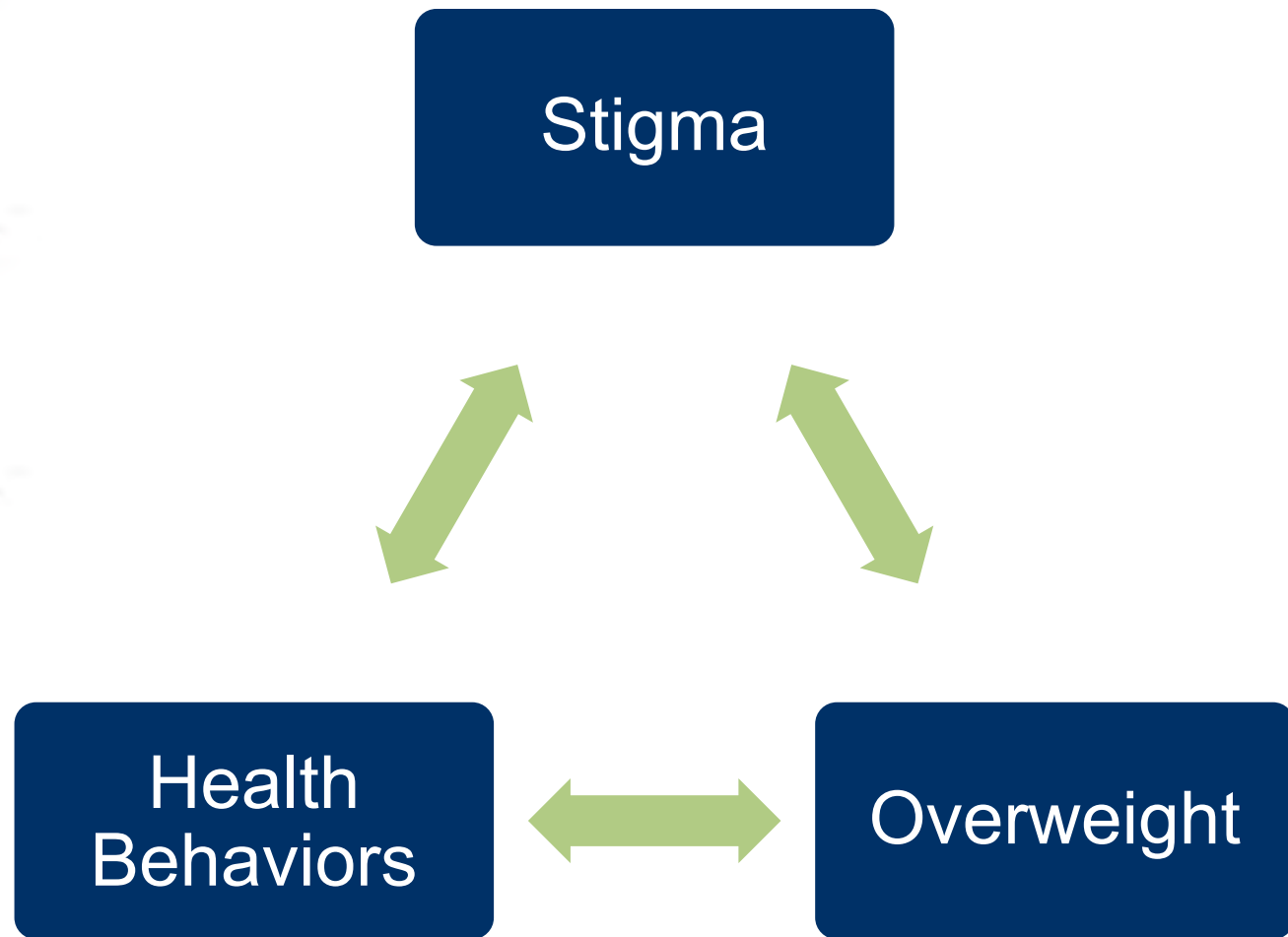
U.S. Overweight Prevalence in 6-19 year-olds by Race/Ethnicity  
Source: Ogden, Carroll, Curtin et al., *JAMA*, 2010.



# Stress/Weight Connection



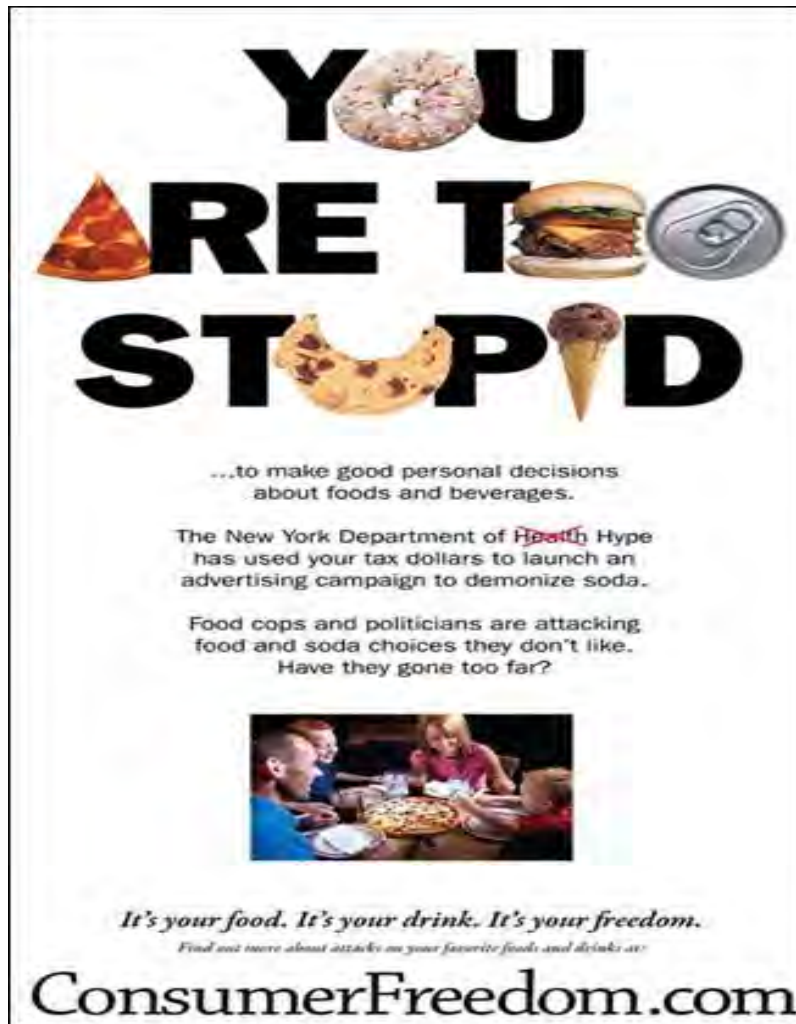
# The Role of Weight Stigma





# Where there's a will...?

Poor health behaviors attributed to lack of willpower




**YOU ARE TOO STUPID**

...to make good personal decisions about foods and beverages.

The New York Department of ~~Health~~ Hype has used your tax dollars to launch an advertising campaign to demonize soda.

Food cops and politicians are attacking food and soda choices they don't like. Have they gone too far?



*It's your food. It's your drink. It's your freedom.*  
*Find out more about attacks on your favorite foods and drinks at:*

**ConsumerFreedom.com**

# Environmental Cues

- Built environment
- Advertising
- Access, availability, cost
- Portion size
- Unhealthy defaults





# The Role of Parents and Family

- **Overweight parents more likely to have overweight children.**
- **Parent behaviors are critical to improving health.**
  - **Need for sensitivity to self-esteem/weight stigma**
  - **Focus on health behaviors rather than weight**
  - **Change for the whole family**
  - **Change the environment**



# Healthy Family Home

Dr. Wheaton Griffin





# Healthy Family Home

- **Eat Healthy**
- **Play Every Day**
- **Get Together**
- **Go Outside**
- **Sleep Well**



# **Eat Healthy**

## **Key Healthy Habits**

- **Choose your drinks with care.**
- **Aim for at least five fruits and vegetables a day.**
- **Check the label.**
- **Watch your portions.**

## **Suggested Goals**

- 1. This week, we will each drink a glass of water with dinner.**
- 2. This week, we will each commit to eating a piece of fruit with our lunch.**
- 3. This day, we will try two new vegetables with dinner.**
- 4. This week, we will commit to eating dinner together at least three times.**
- 5. This week we will switch from using whole to 2% milk on our cereal.**



# Play Every Day

## Key Healthy Habits

- Play for an hour each day.
- Turn it up a notch by engaging in vigorous activity for 20 minutes three days per week.

## Suggested Goals:

1. This week, we will take a 30-minute family bike ride.
2. This week, we will take family walks together around the block.
3. This week, we will attend family swim at the Y.
4. This week, we will walk the dog instead of letting her out into the yard.
5. This week, I will play ball with the kids for 15 minutes when I get home.



# Get Together

## Key Healthy Habits

- Make family time a priority.
- Make togetherness the main ingredient for mealtime.
- Spend one-on-one time with kids.

## Suggested Goals

1. This week, we will try out family board game night.
2. This week, I will invite my child out on a special date night.
3. This week, I will try to learn three new things about my kids.
4. This week, we will commit to eating dinner together at least three times.
5. This week, we will take a 30-minute family bike ride.



# Go Outside

## Key Healthy Habits

- Protect the right to play.
- Introduce children to nature.

## Suggested Goals

1. This week, I will take my children to a park to let them play.
2. This week, we will have a family discussion about priorities.
3. This week, we will plant something together.
4. This week, we will do a family nature scavenger hunt.
5. This week, we will take family walks together around the block.

# Sleep Well

## Key Healthy Habits

- Make rest a priority.
- The more the better.

## Suggested Goals

1. This week, I will read one bedtime story to my child each night.
2. This week, we will turn off the TV one hour before bedtime.
3. Three times this week, the adults will be in bed before (a specific time).
4. Three times this week, the kids will be in bed before (a specific time).
5. Each day this week, I will not have any caffeine after (a specific time).



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Join the live Facebook chat with Dr. Lynn Bufka at  
[www.facebook.com/americanpsychologicalassociation](http://www.facebook.com/americanpsychologicalassociation)

Wednesday, November 10, 2 - 3 p.m. EST

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