

2021 SURVEY REPORT

**BLUE SHIELD OF CALIFORNIA
NEXTGEN CLIMATE SURVEY**



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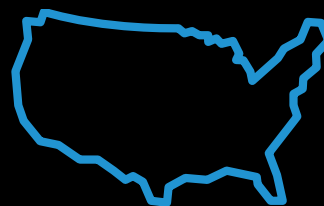
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METHODOLOGY



Time frame

This survey
was fielded online
by Quest Mindshare
between March 5-12, 2021



Sample size

It reached a total of
n=1,200 US respondents between the
ages of 14 and 24 and is weighted to
be nationally representative



Oversample

The results among California
youth are from an oversample of
n=300 youth in California among
the same age range of 14 to 24

AUDIENCE PROFILE



Age

14-17: **48%**
18-24: **52%**

Gender

Male: **40%**
Female: **53%**
Nonbinary: **4%**
Prefer to self-describe: **1%**

Region

Northeast: **17%**
Midwest: **21%**
South: **38%**
West: **24%**

Ethnicity

Black/African-American: **16%**
White: **60%**
Hispanic/Latinx: **16%**
Asian/Asian-American: **12%**
Native American: **2%**
Pacific Islander: **1%**
Other: **2%**

Location

Urban/Large city: **23%**
Suburban: **46%**
Small town: **18%**
Rural: **9%**

Politics

Liberal: **35%**
Moderate: **23%**
Conservative: **19%**
Other: **2%**
None: **6%**
Don't know: **13%**

Living with parents

Yes: **75%**
No: **25%**

Current education level

Middle/High-school: **43%**
High-school graduate, no college: **19%**
High-school graduate, in college: **23%**
College graduate: **11%**
Post-college graduate: **2%**

KEY FINDINGS

The environment and climate change

More than **eight out of 10** (83%) Gen Z youth are concerned about the health of the planet.

“The environment and climate change” has the second highest percentage (47%) of youth concerned about it of any issue, behind only “racism and social justice” (62%).

This is especially true in California, where **56%** of youth select it as one of the issues they are most concerned with.





Biden administration

Young people are more optimistic than not about the health of the planet since the Biden administration took office:

48% say they feel better about it compared to just **19%** who say they feel worse. The gap is starker in California — **54%** better / **15%** worse.

And **60%** of American youth / **63%** of California youth believe the Biden administration will take steps to meaningfully address and combat climate change.

Generational perceptions

The gap between perceptions of their own generation vs. their parents' generation on climate change is wide.

Fully **62%** of American youth / **66%** of California youth say their generation takes climate change at least somewhat seriously.

Yet only **34%** of American youth / **33%** of California youth think their parents' generation takes climate change seriously.



Environment and personal health

Youth understand the connection between environment and personal health.

Fully **86%** of American youth / **82%** of California youth agree, usually strongly, that the quality of the environment where they live, work, and play affects their health and well-being.

A majority of respondents say that their environment has an effect on their physical health (69%) and their mental health (75%).

The top three environmental issues that young people are very concerned with are air quality (60%), water pollution (59%) and plastic pollution (56%) — but even natural disasters, wildfires, flooding and rising sea levels bring out at least some concerns for more than half of respondents.

Race and socioeconomic

For the most part, youth also understand the way socioeconomic factors and race/ethnicity factors interact with the environment and health.

64% of American youth agree that race/ethnic background affects health and well-being, including **33%** who feel this way strongly.

American youth also recognize how wealth can be a contributing factor to environmental protections with **54%** disagreeing that environmental protections are the same regardless of how rich or poor you are.





Impact on activities

About **one in three** (32%) have, at some point in the last five years, had an environmental event or natural disaster (not including COVID) interfere with their ability to exercise outside.

This is even more true for California youth, where **39%** say this.

One in four (26%) said that an environmental event or natural disaster has impacted their ability to concentrate in school.

Mental and physical symptoms

Mental symptoms such as stress, anxiety and depression top the list of symptoms experienced as a result of a natural disaster.

When it comes to physical symptoms, **31%** have had headaches, **25%** have had coughing or wheezing, **23%** have had sore throat.

Only **27%** say they have not had a single symptom nationwide (**24%** in California).

Sustainable brands

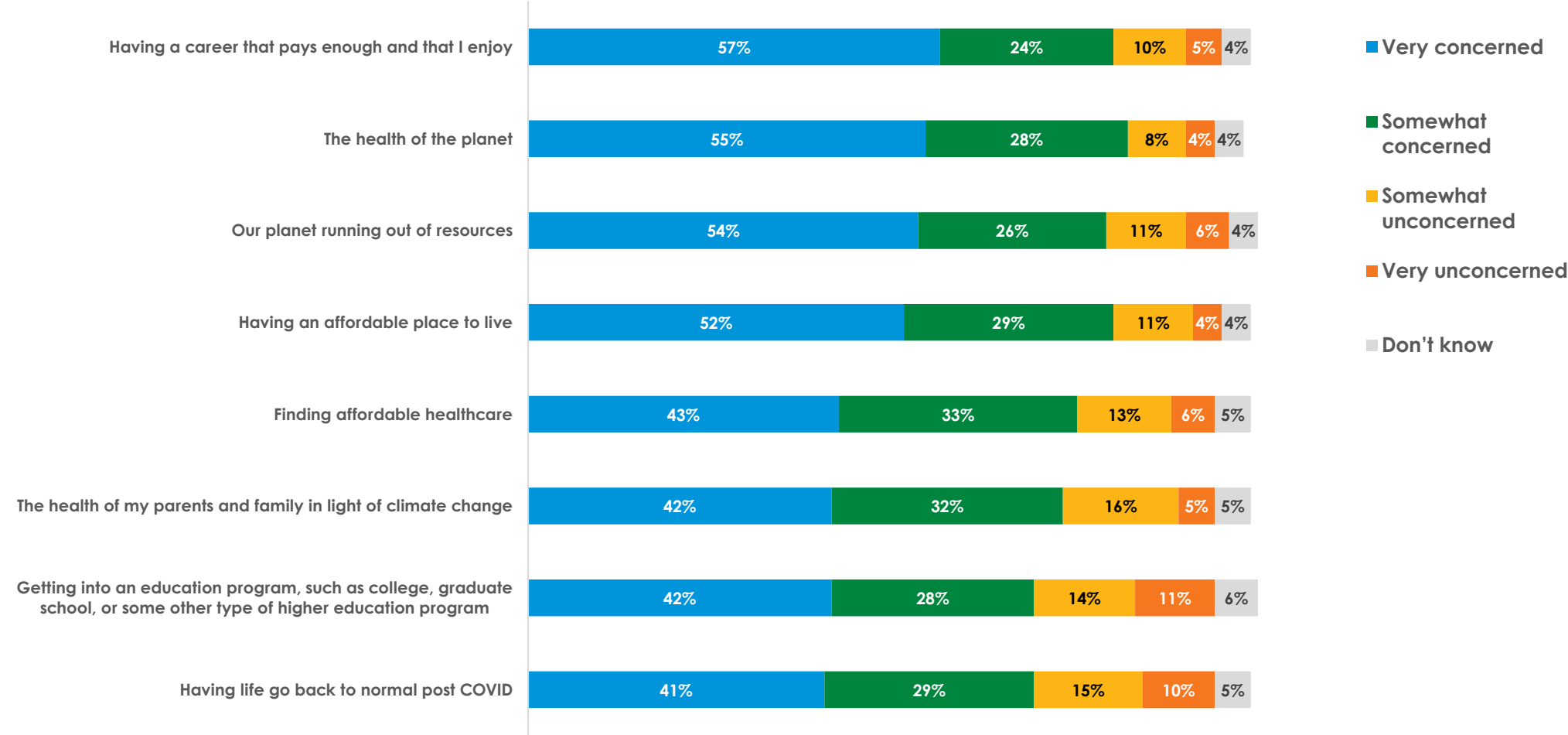
79% of American youth / **76%** of California youth say it is at least somewhat important to support brands and companies that are environmentally friendly or try to make their products sustainable.

KEY FIGURES



More than **eight out of 10 (83%)** Gen Z youth are concerned about the future health of the planet. **More than half (54%)** said they are ‘**very concerned**’ about the planet running out of resources.

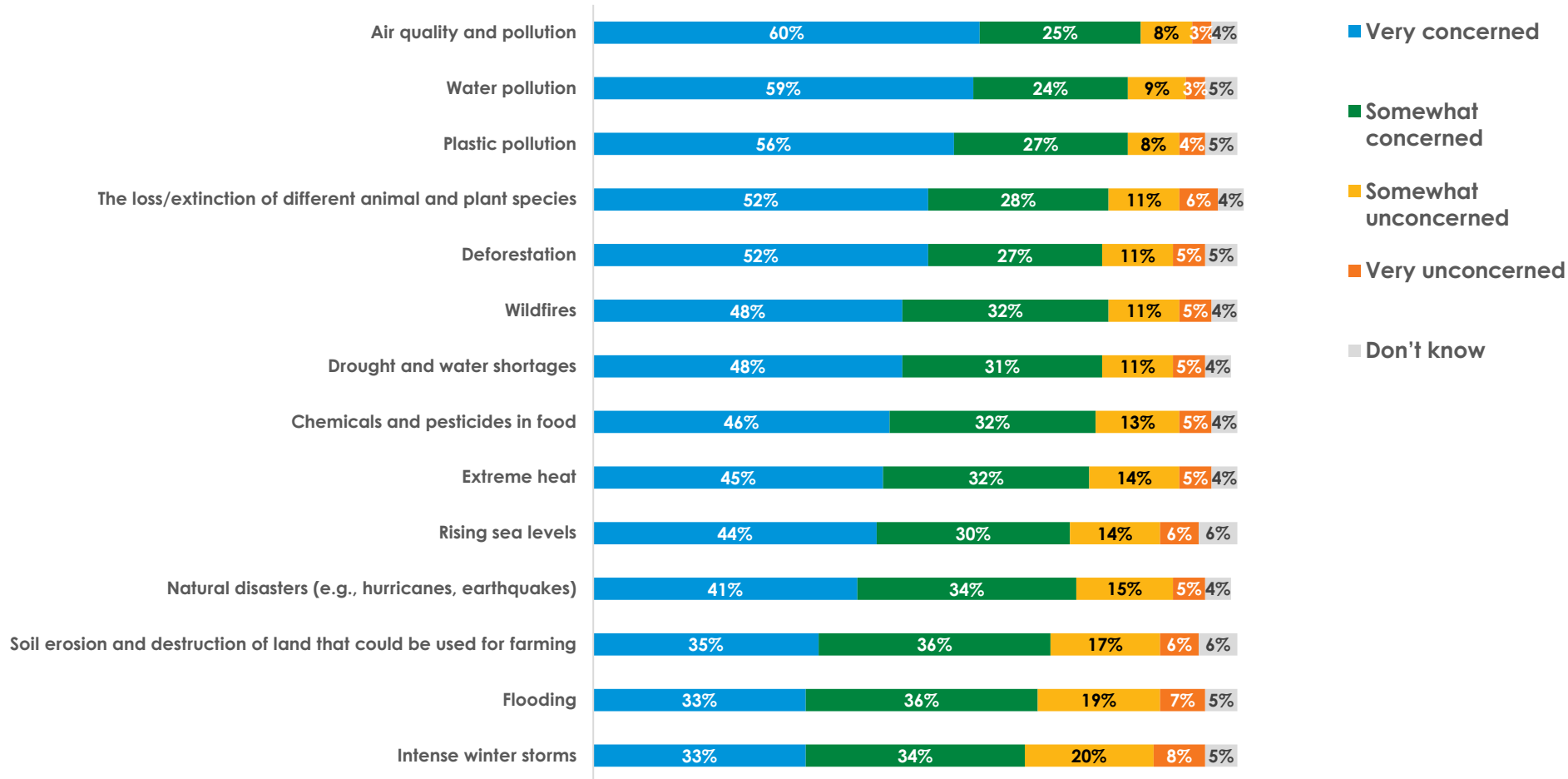
How concerned are you about the future when you think of the following?





The top three environmental issues that young people are very concerned with are **air quality (60%)**, **water pollution (59%)** and **plastic pollution (56%)**.

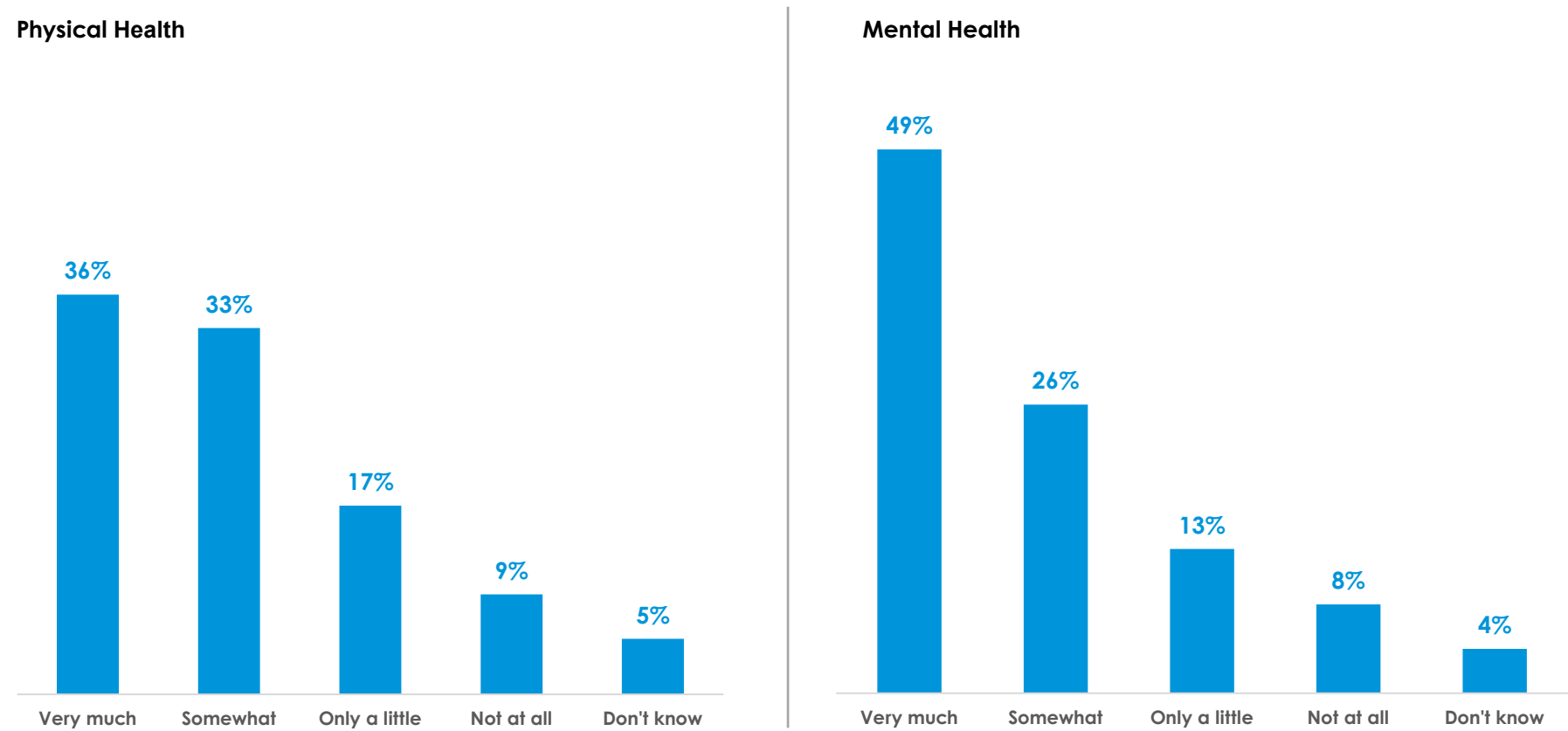
How concerned are you about each of the following environmental issues when it comes to the future of the planet?





A majority of respondents say that the environment affects their **physical health (69%)** and their **mental health (75%)**.

How much does the environment you live, work and play in affect your physical health/mental health?

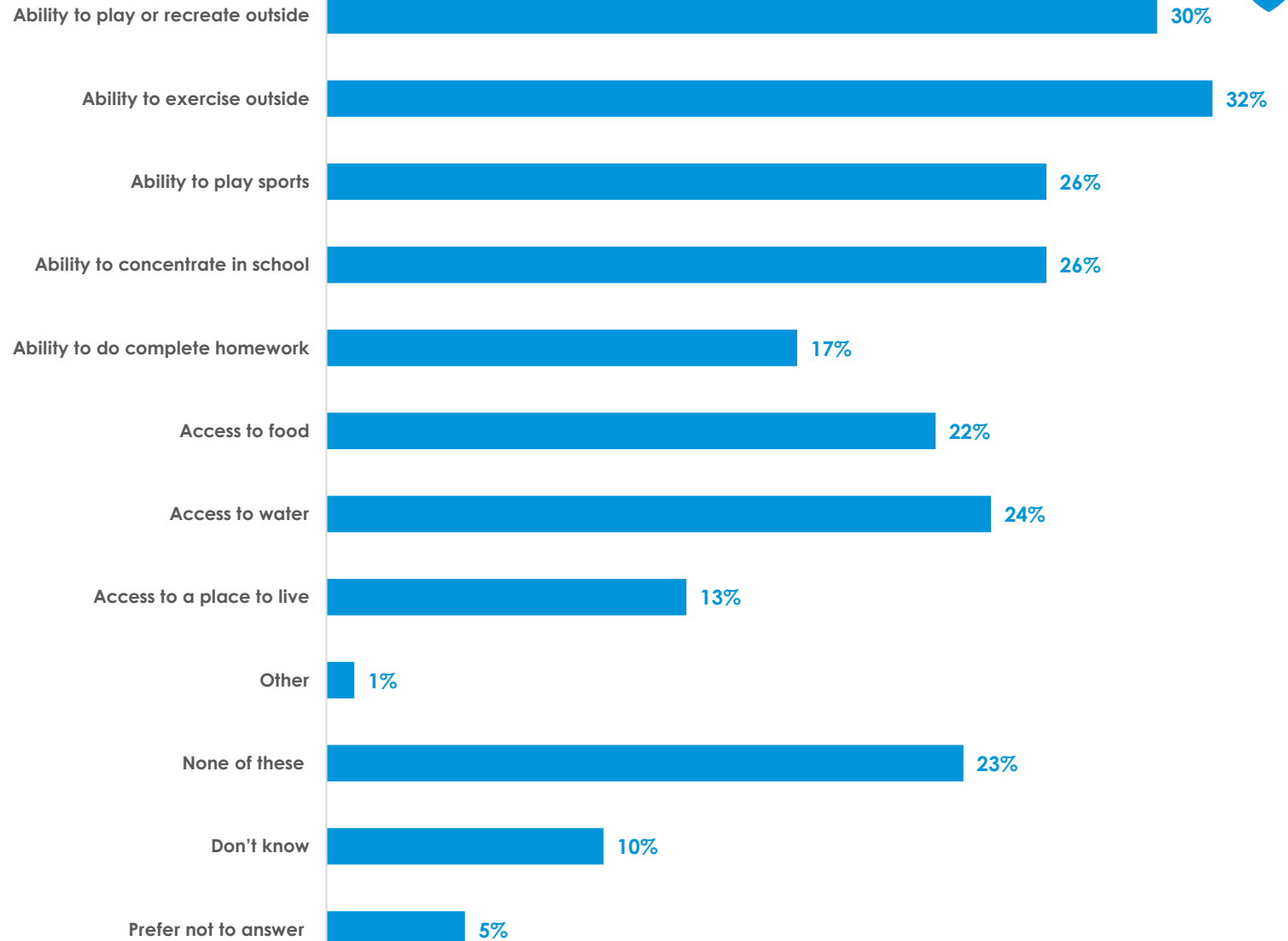


One in four (26%) said that an environmental event or natural disaster – like a flood, fire or hurricane - has impacted their **ability to concentrate** in school.

At any time in the last five years, has an environmental event or natural disaster impacted any of the following?

Note: For the sake of this question, please do **not** consider COVID-19 a natural disaster or environmental event.

Please select those for which this applies.

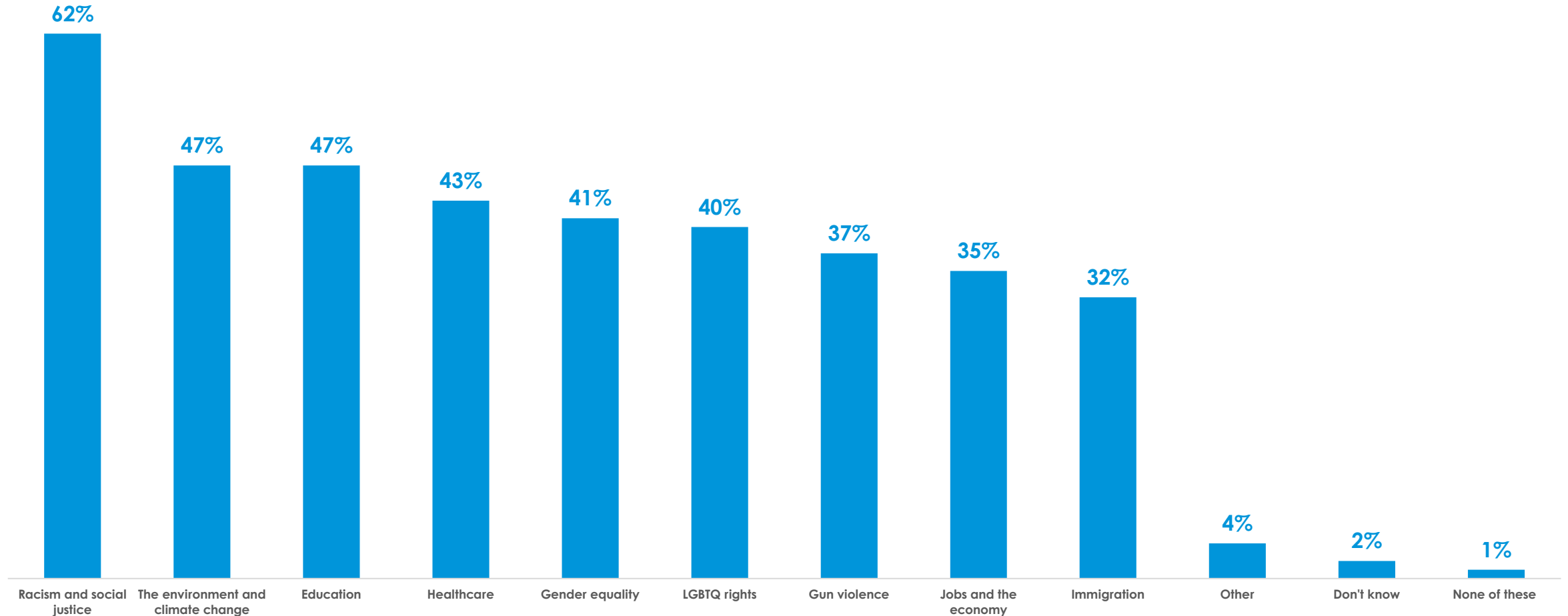


PERCEPTIONS OF THE FUTURE

Racism and social justice is the top issue that youth are concerned with today.



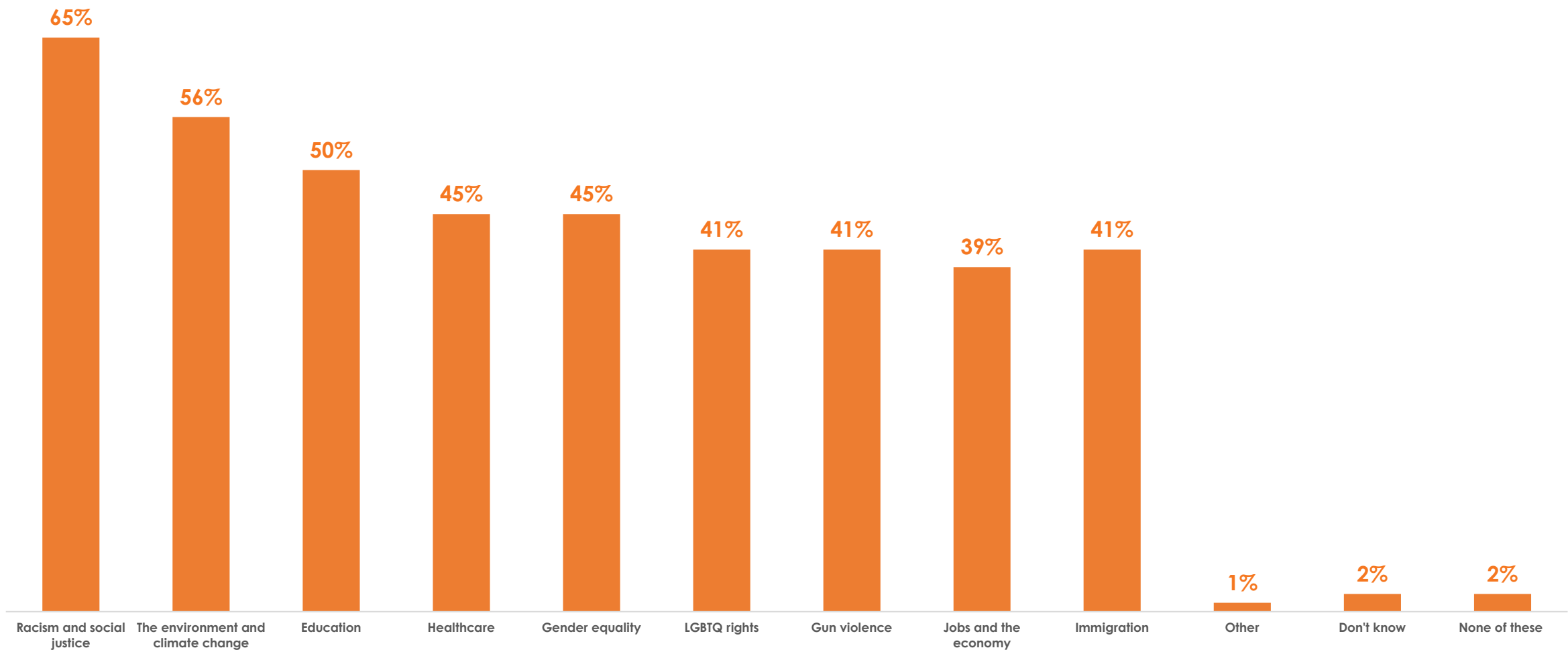
Which of the following issues do you find yourself most concerned with today?





Youth in California (56%) are more inclined to say that they are concerned with the environment and climate change, than those nationwide (47%).

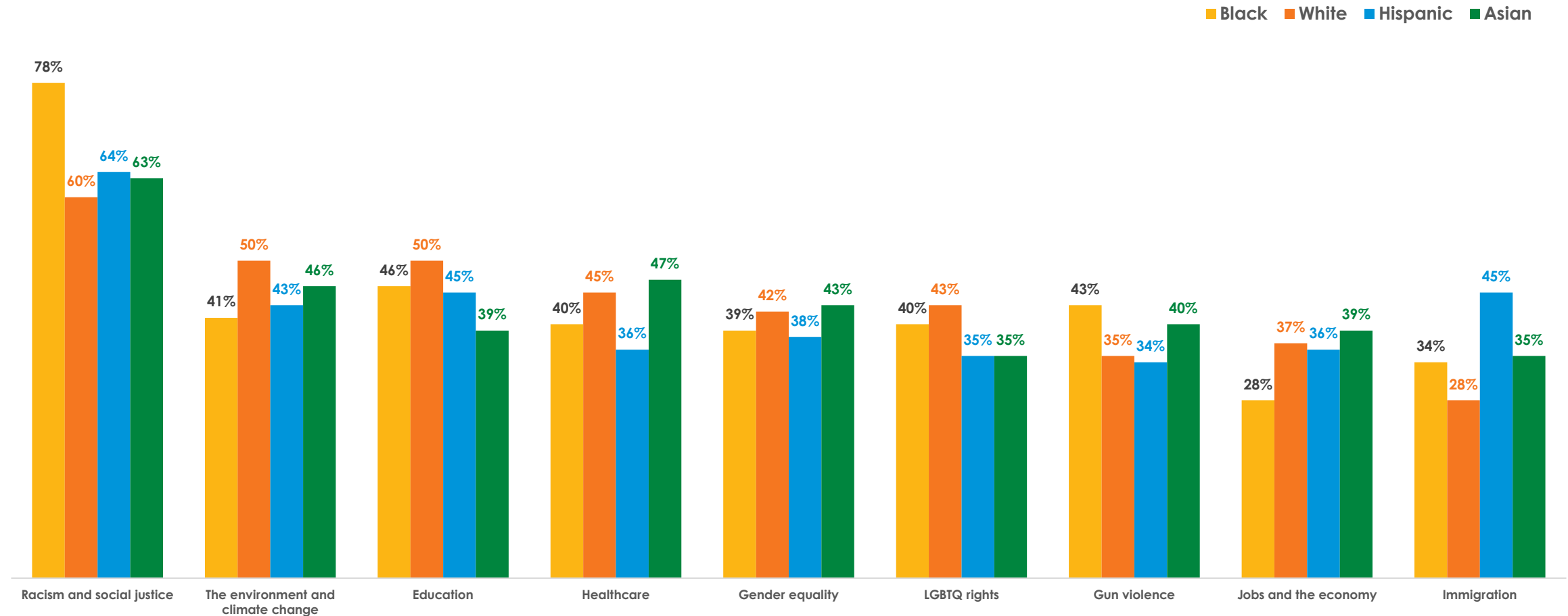
Which of the following issues do you find yourself most concerned with today?



Black youth are especially likely to be concerned with racism and social justice.



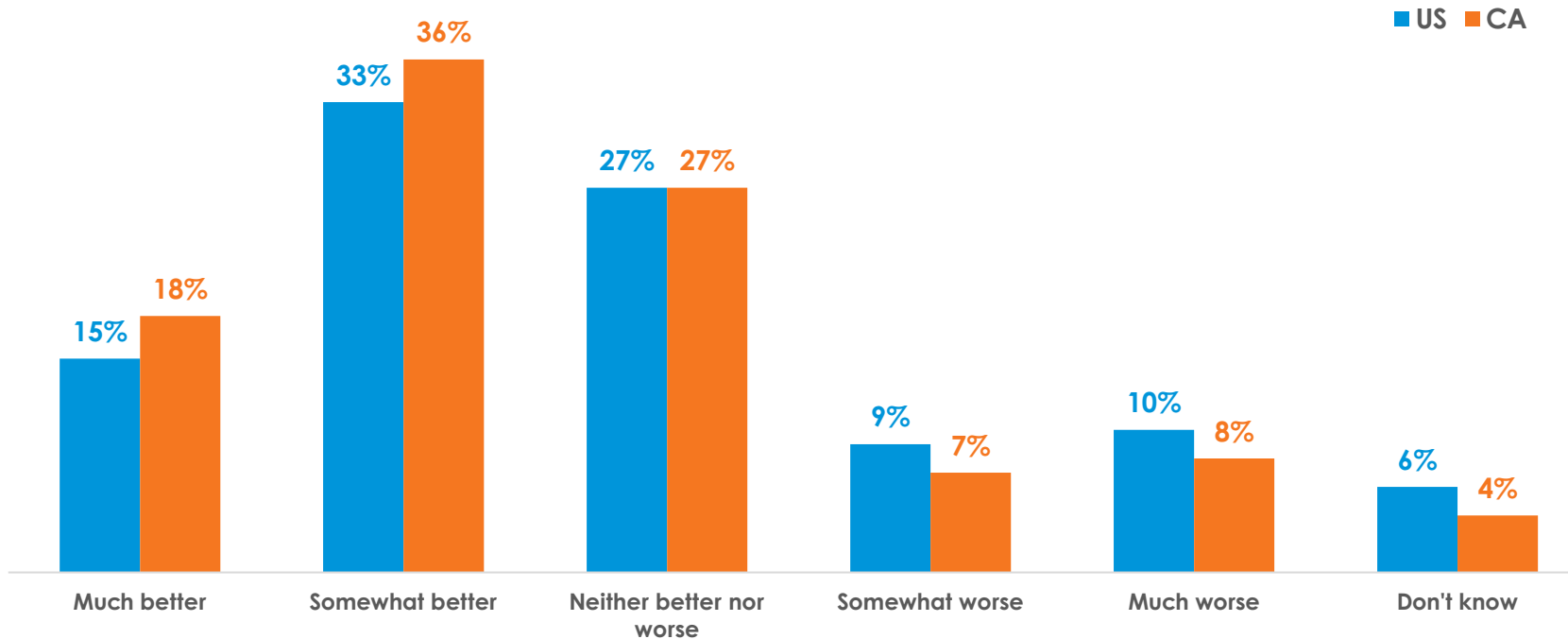
Which of the following issues do you find yourself most concerned with today?



54% of California youth feel at least somewhat better about the future health of the planet in the Biden administration. This is true for 48% of youth nationwide.



Do you feel better or worse about the future health of the planet in light of having a new presidential administration in the U.S. (the Biden administration)?



While liberals feel better about this considering the new administration (76%),

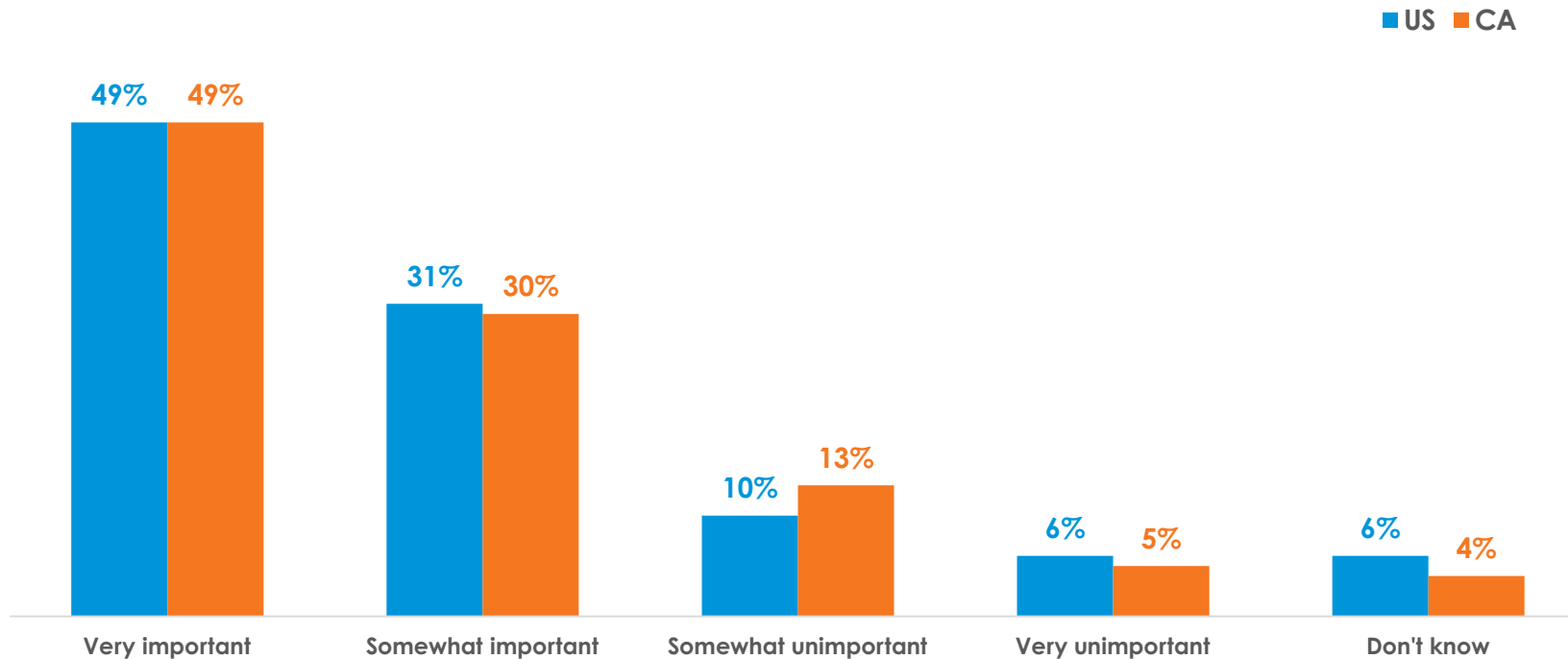
this is only true for 39% of moderates

and 22% of conservatives.



People of color in government leadership positions is important to 80% of youth, with 49% saying this is very important. This is also true for 59% of those identifying as conservative.

How important is it to have more people of color in leadership positions in the government?

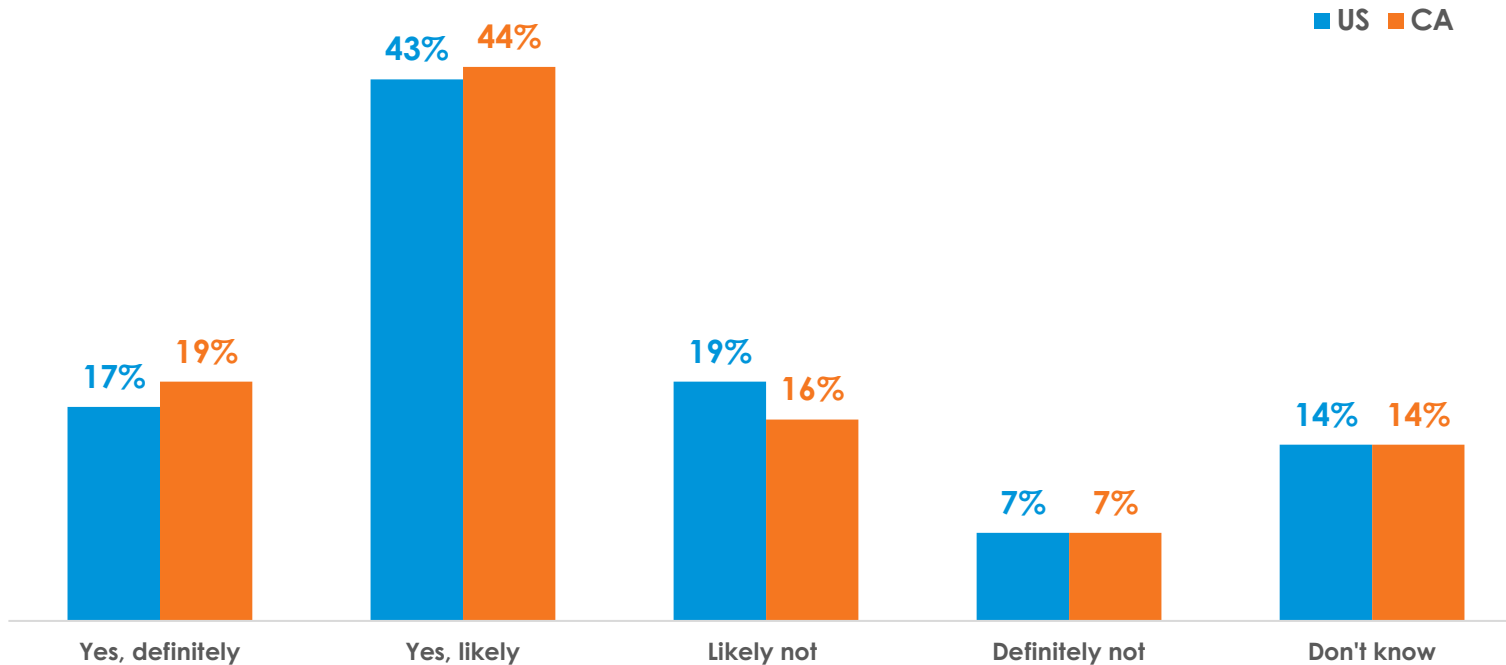


While liberals feel this is important (91%), this is also important for 79% of moderates and 59% of conservatives.

The majority find it likely that the Biden administration will take meaningful steps to address climate change.



Do you think the Biden administration will take steps to meaningfully address and combat climate change?

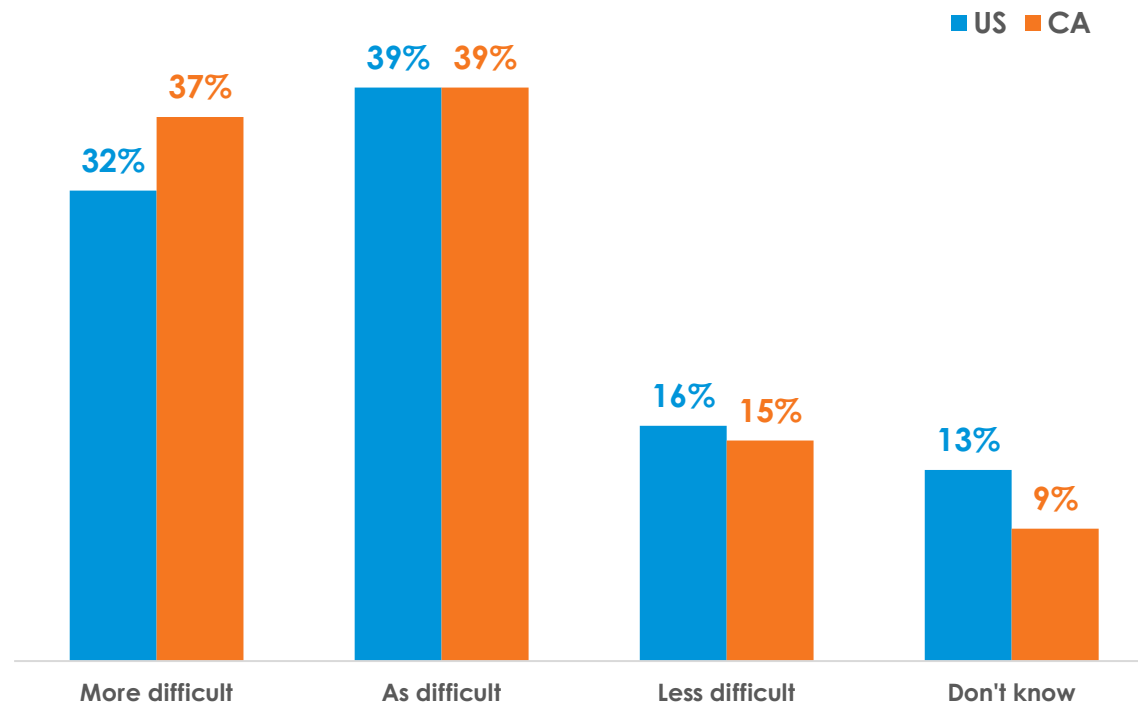


81% of liberals feel this way compared with **60%** of moderates and **39%** of conservatives.



71% of youth nationwide find it more or as difficult to address climate change during COVID. Often, this was because the pandemic was seen as a more pressing issue.

Is addressing climate change more difficult, less difficult, or as difficult during the time of COVID when compared to other times?



In a sentence or two, in what ways is addressing climate change more difficult during the time of COVID?

"COVID is the primary global issue at the moment. It's harder because COVID-19 is currently killing people at high rates, but climate change is killing us slowly."

"With nothing to do, and needing to stay at home people tend to more things around the house [that] impact the environment negatively. Which is understandable as we can't be outside more, but it's harder to address it."

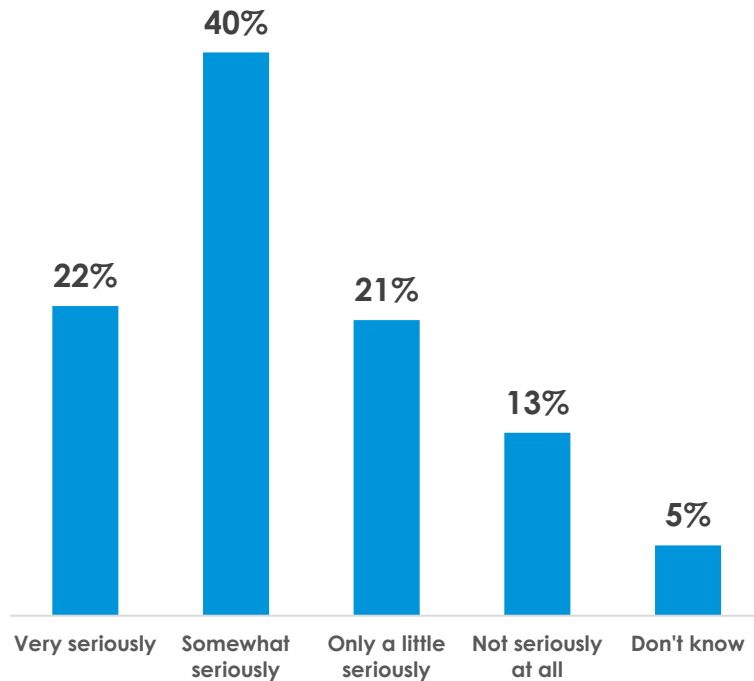
"There is so much to worry about at a time like this, it's hard to save concern for this planet's future. It's also difficult to use more sustainable products at this time when people are stressed and barely getting by."



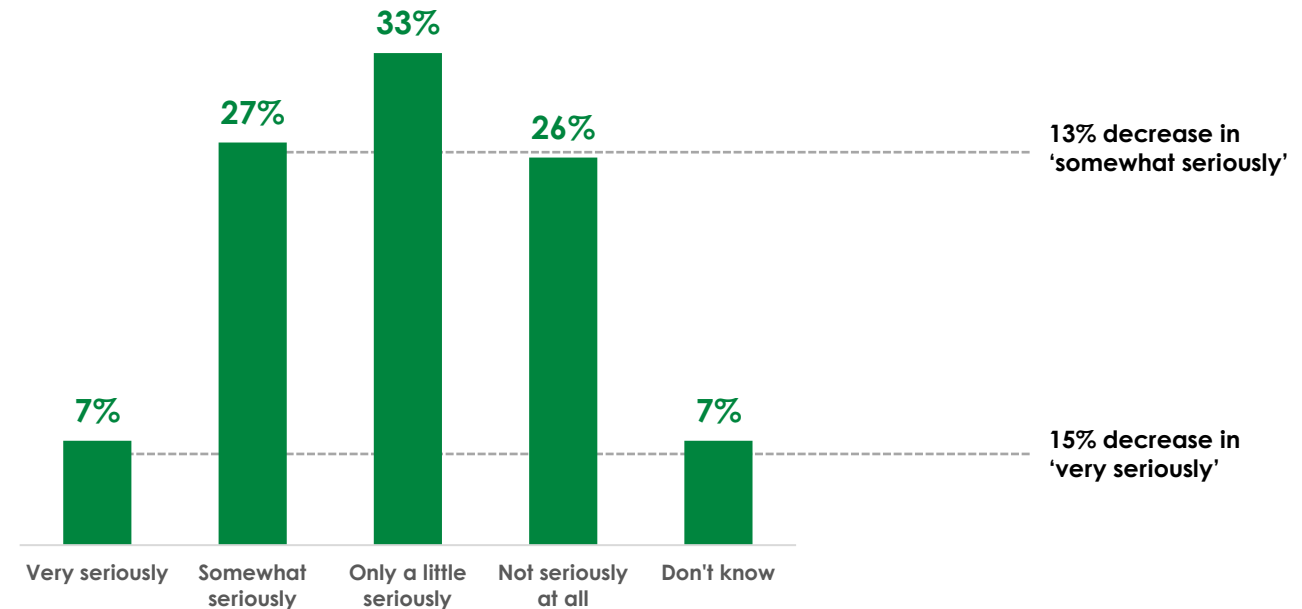
62% of youth nationwide feel that their generation takes **climate change** at least somewhat seriously. However, only **34%** say that their **parents' generation** takes climate change at least somewhat seriously.

Generally speaking, how seriously do you think your generation / your parents' generation takes climate change?

Your generation



Your parent's generation

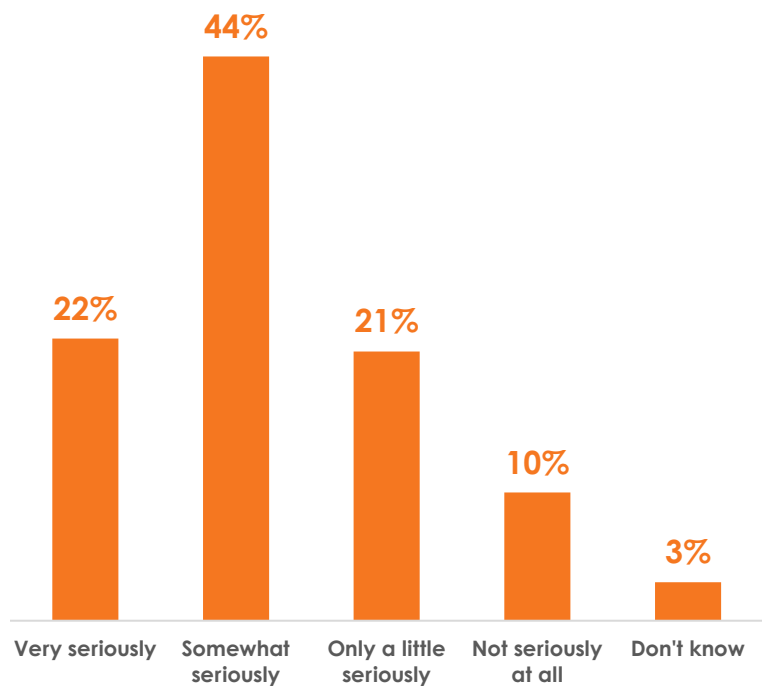




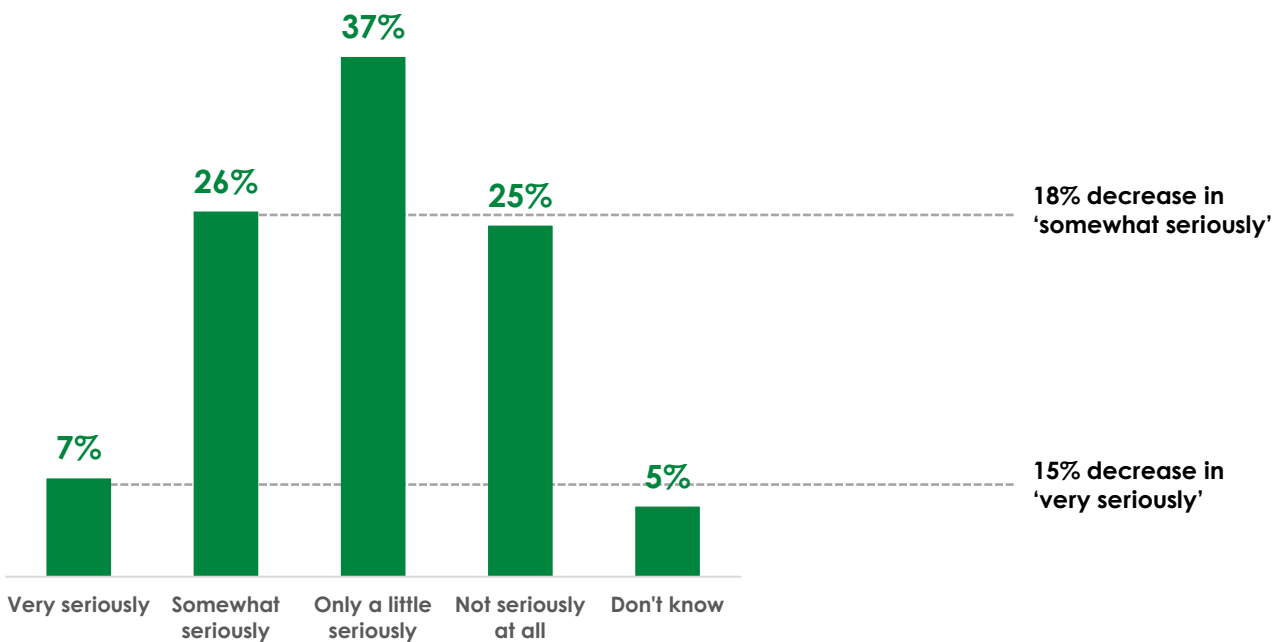
In California, 66% of youth think their generation takes climate change seriously, compared to only 33% that think the same of their parent's generations.

Generally speaking, how seriously do you think your generation / your parents' generation takes climate change?

Your generation



Your parent's generation



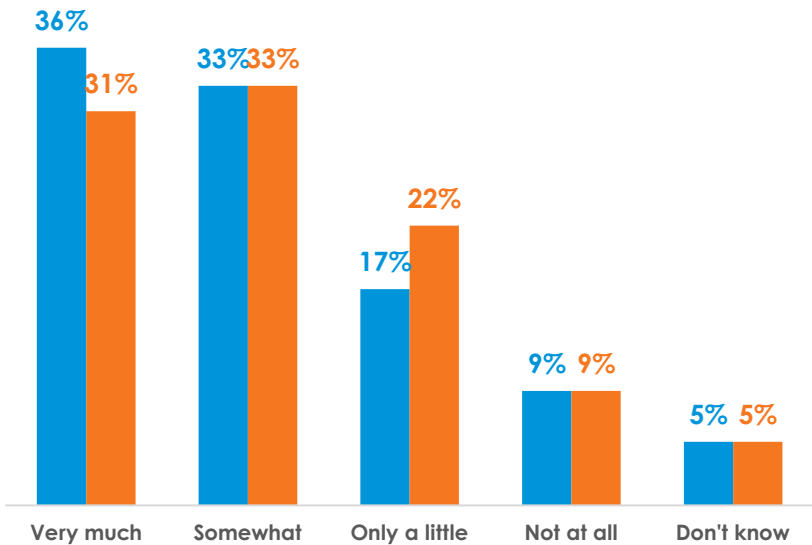
HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS



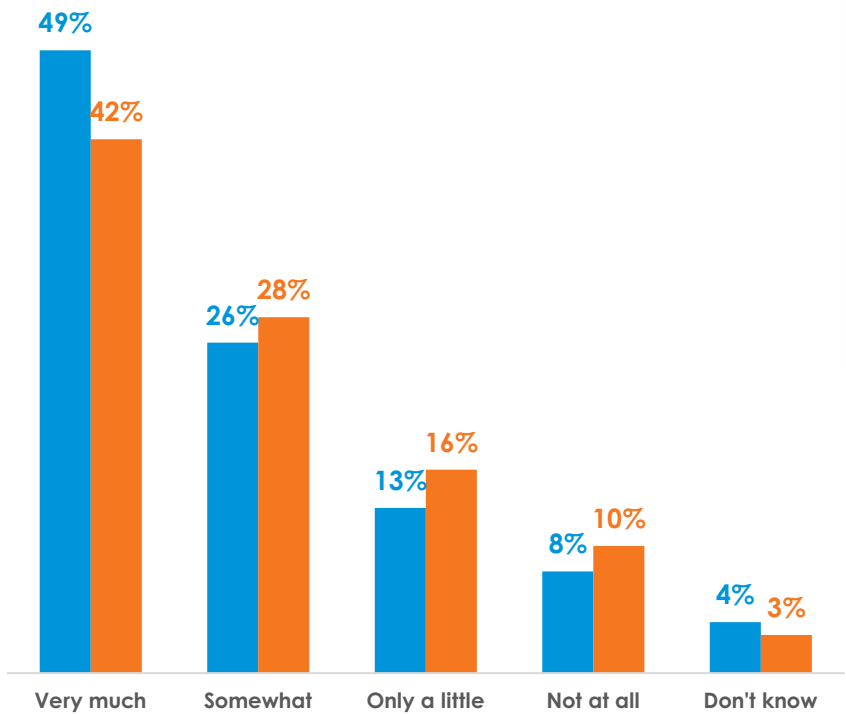
69% of youth nationwide say that their environment affects their physical health to some extent. Even more (75%) say their environment affects their mental health. This is particularly true among women.

How much does the environment you live, work and play in affect your physical health/mental health?

Physical health



Mental health



■ US ■ CA

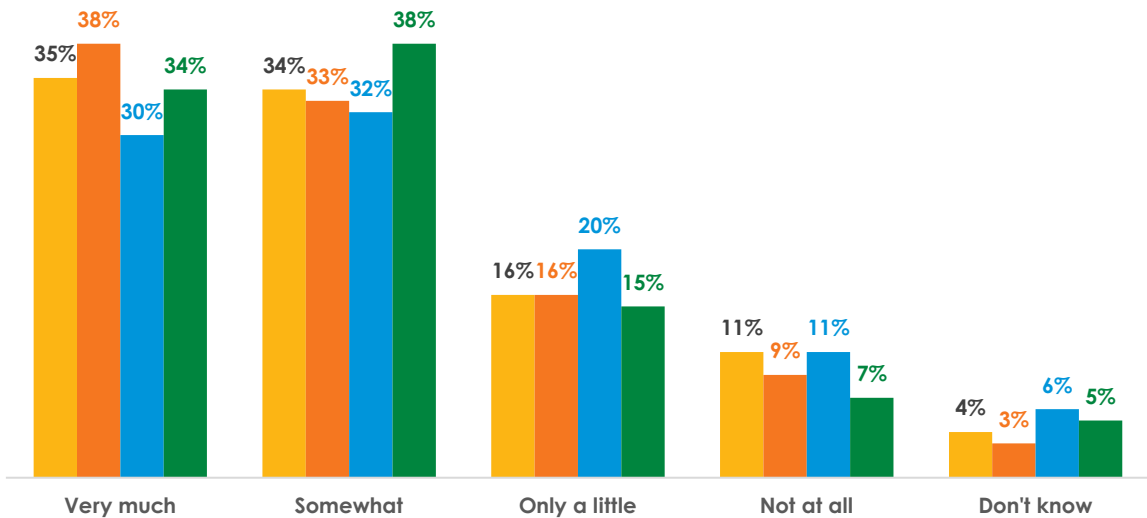
Nationwide,
56% of women say their environment impacts their mental health **'very much'**
compared with just **38%** of men.



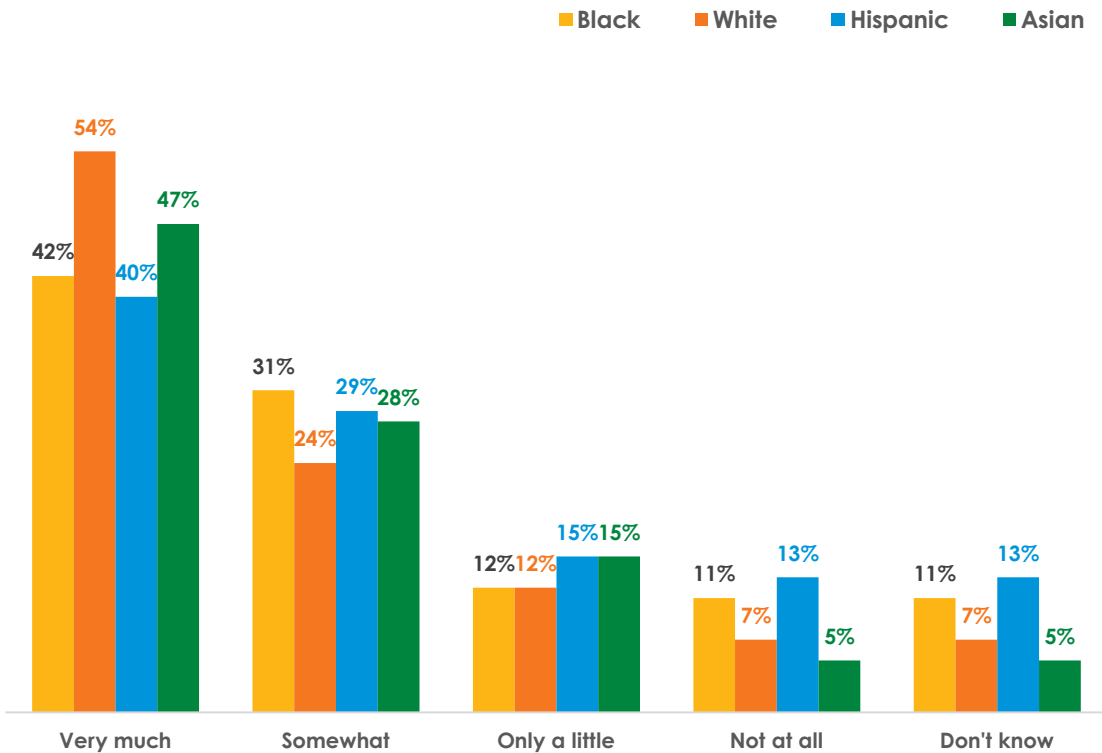
At least **6 out of 10 youth** of all races say their **physical health** is affected by their environment. At least **7 out 10 youth** of all races say their **mental health** is affected by their environment.

How much does the environment you live, work and play in affect your physical health/mental health?

Physical health



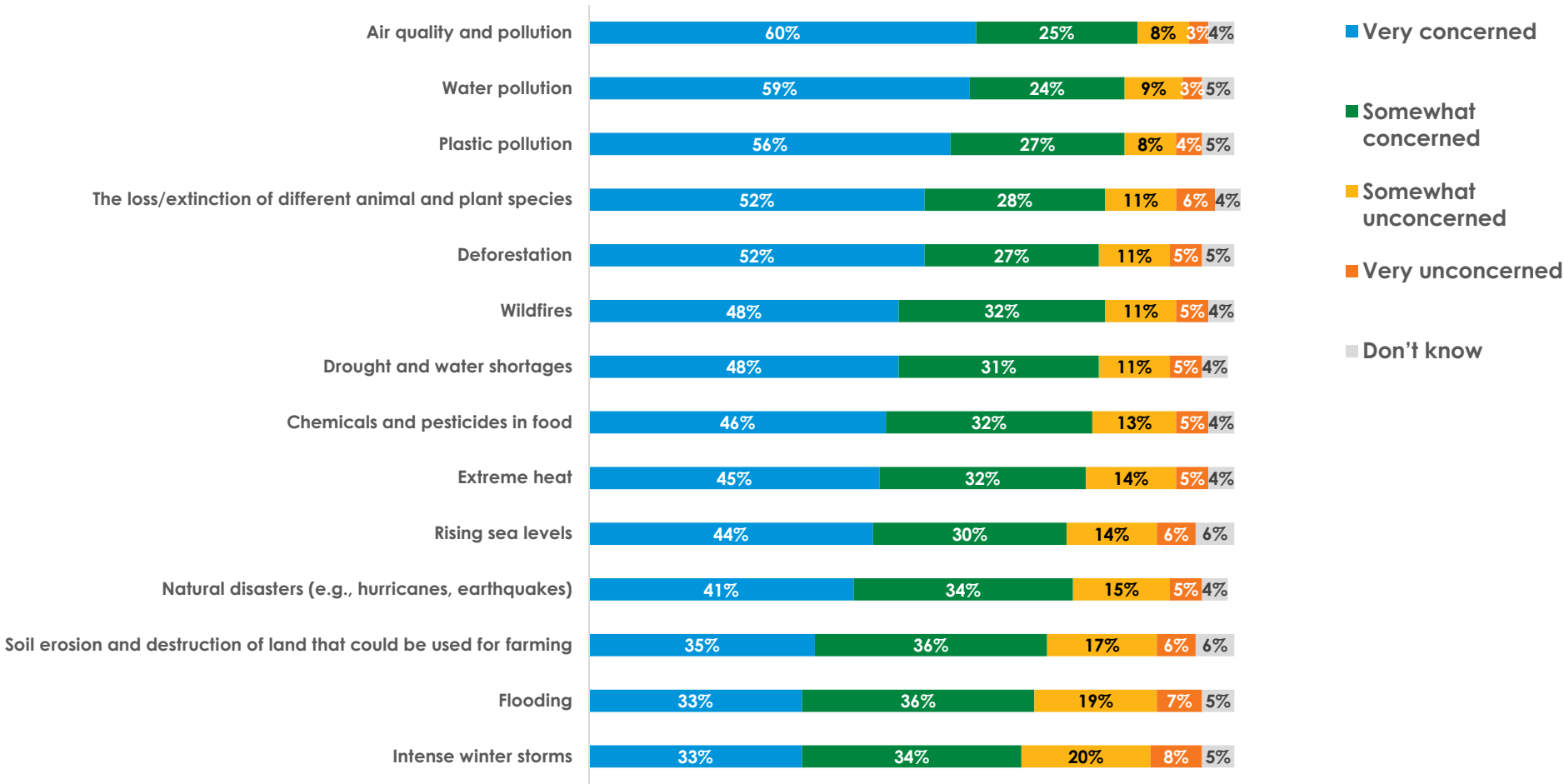
Mental health





Nationwide: At least **two-thirds of youth** are concerned about each issue asked about. **Pollution** is a **top environmental issue** youth say they are concerned about, with **over half** indicating they are very concerned.

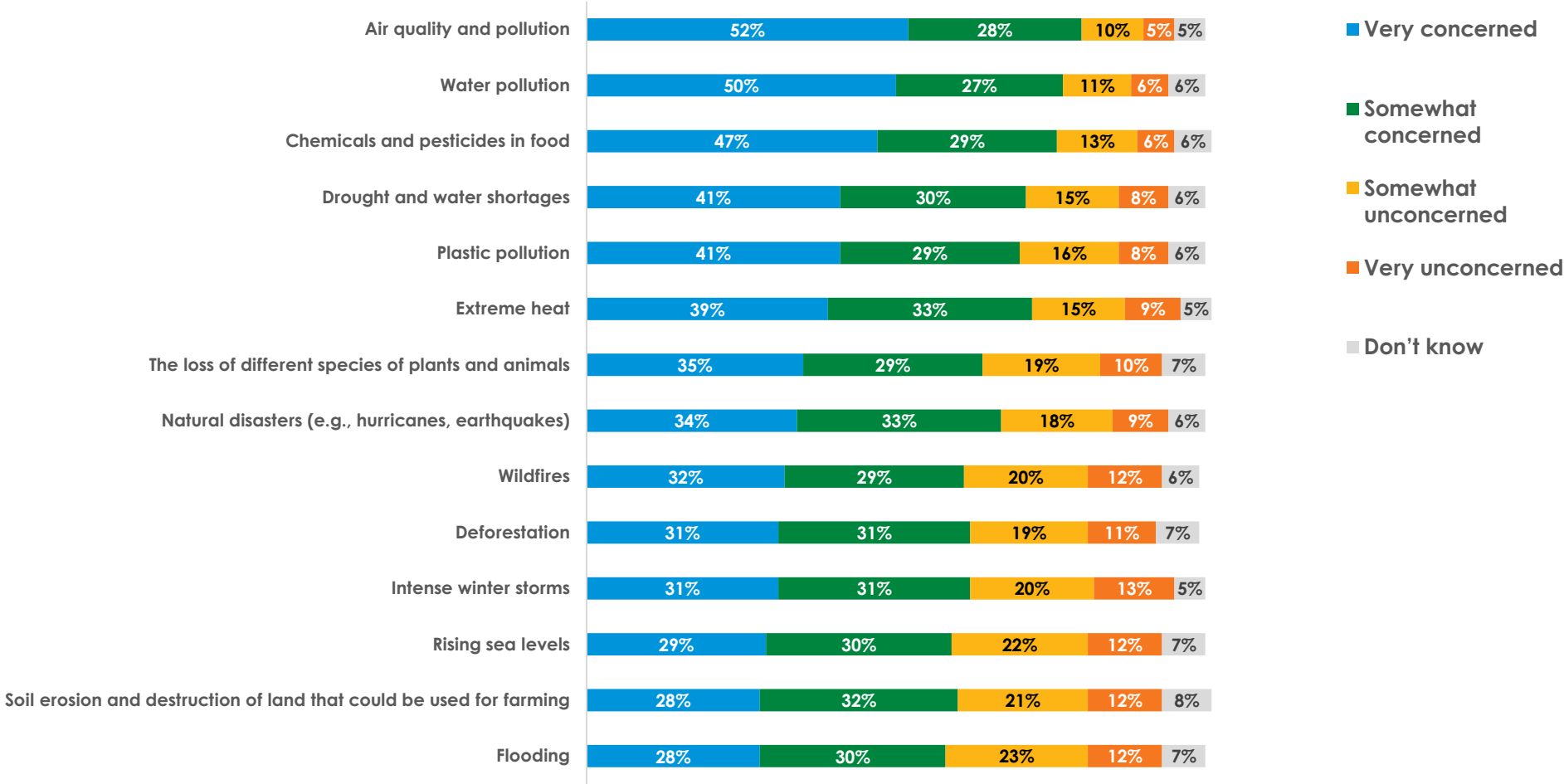
How concerned are you about each of the following environmental issues when it comes to the future of the planet?





Nationwide: When it comes to personal health, **air pollution** and **water** remain a **top concern**. **Chemicals** and **pesticides** in food also have about **half of youth very concerned**.

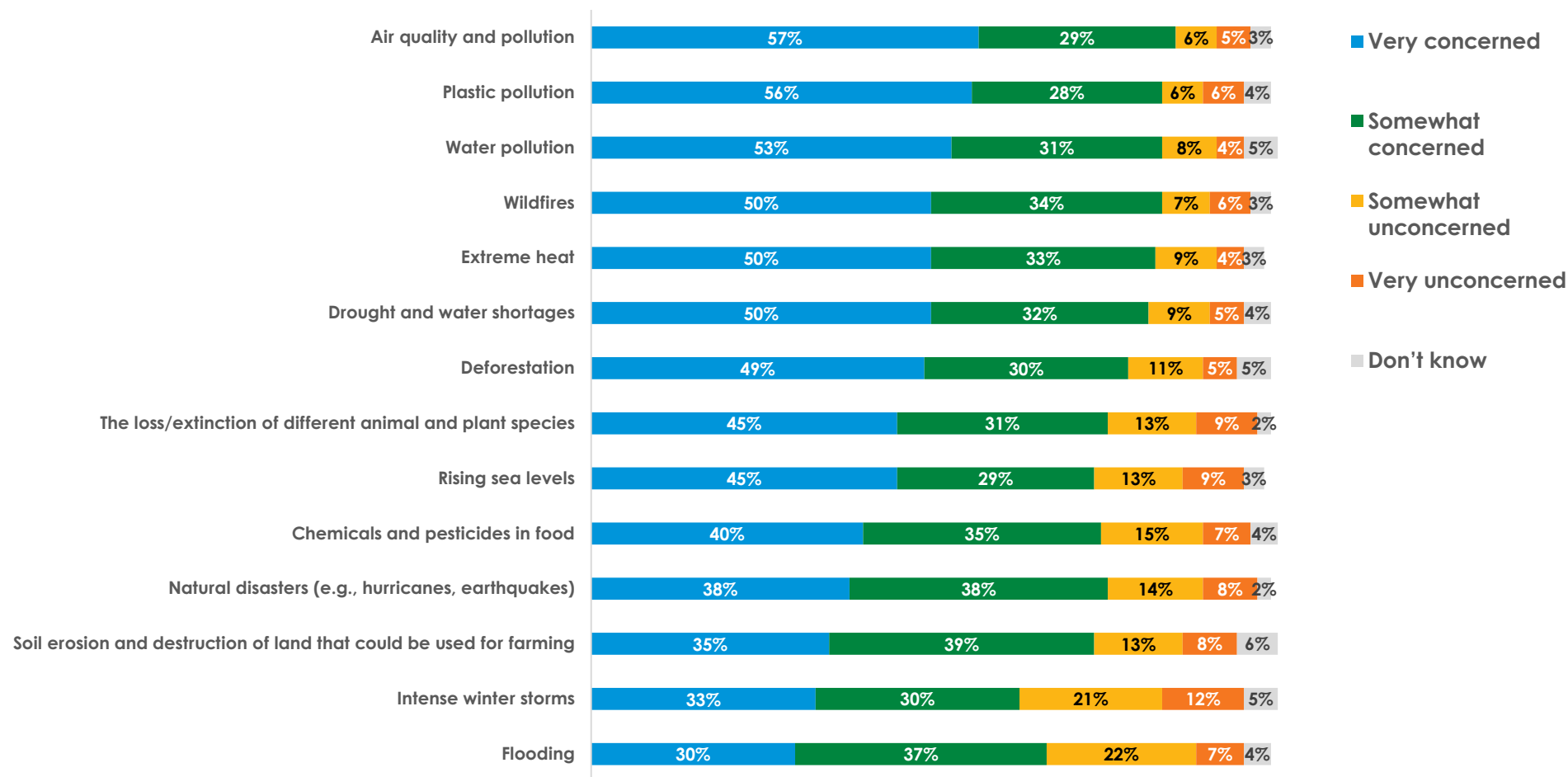
How concerned are you about each of the following environmental issues when it comes to your own personal health?



The top concerns among California youth are also pollution-related.



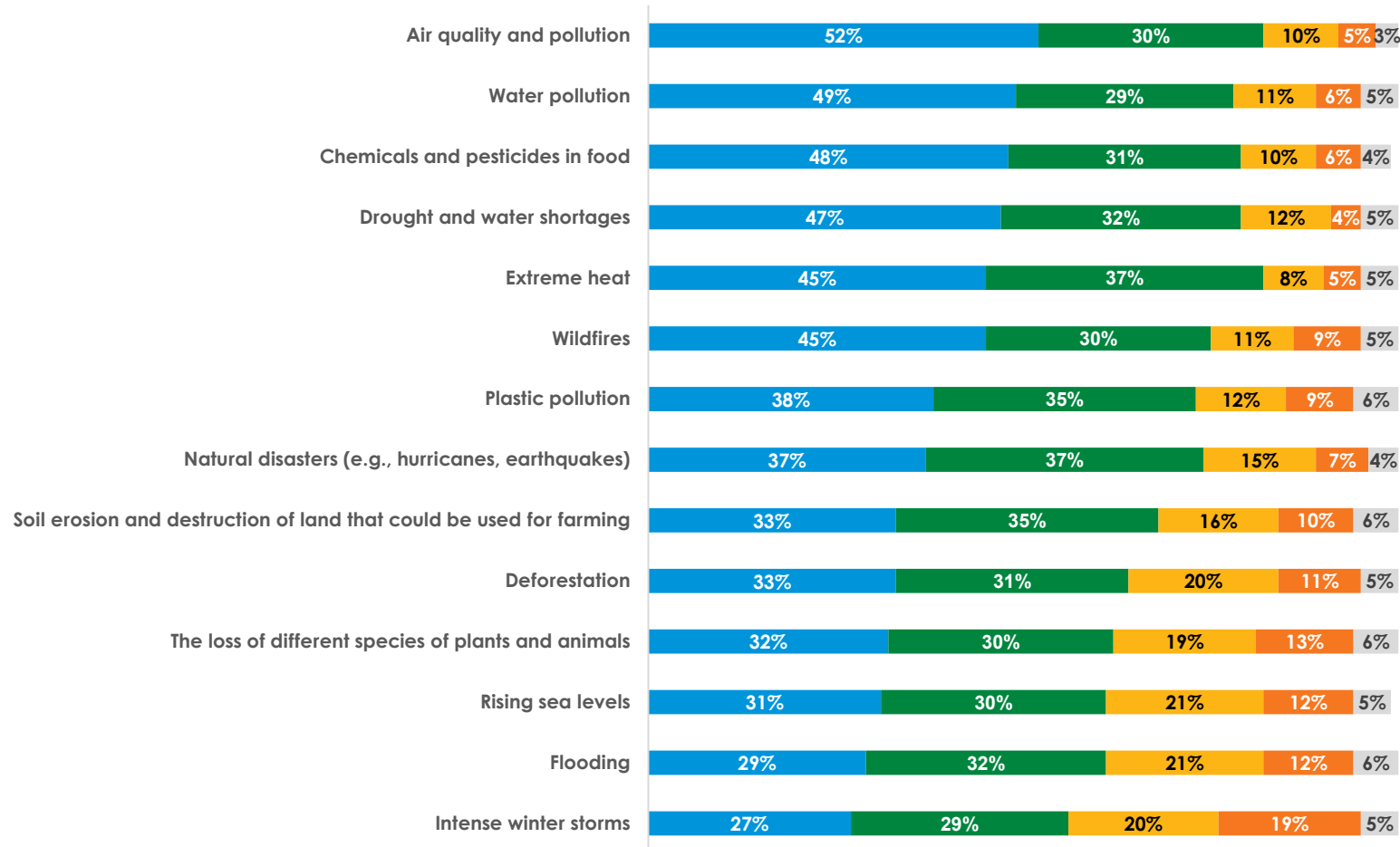
How concerned are you about each of the following environmental issues when it comes to the future of the planet?



While **top concerns** among California youth are also surrounding **pollution**, there is stronger concern around **personal health** and **wildfires**.



And similarly, how concerned are you about each of the following environmental issues when it comes to your own personal health?



California youth are **14%** more likely than youth nationwide to say that they are **very/somewhat concerned** about wildfires impacting their personal health.

They are **10%** more likely to say this about extreme heat,

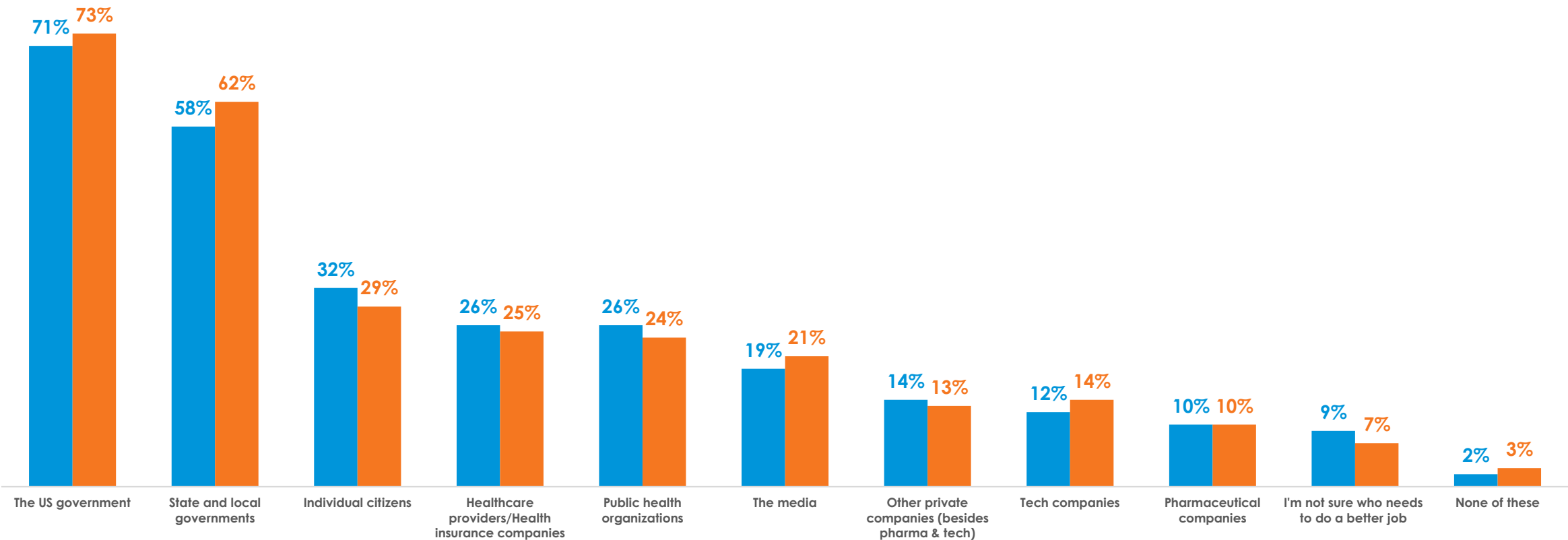
and **8%** more likely to say this about drought and water shortages.

SOCIAL JUSTICE CONCERNS



Youth feel that it is **the job of the government**, federal as well as state and local, to protect citizens from the **negative** health effects of **climate change**. Youth in **California feel similarly**.

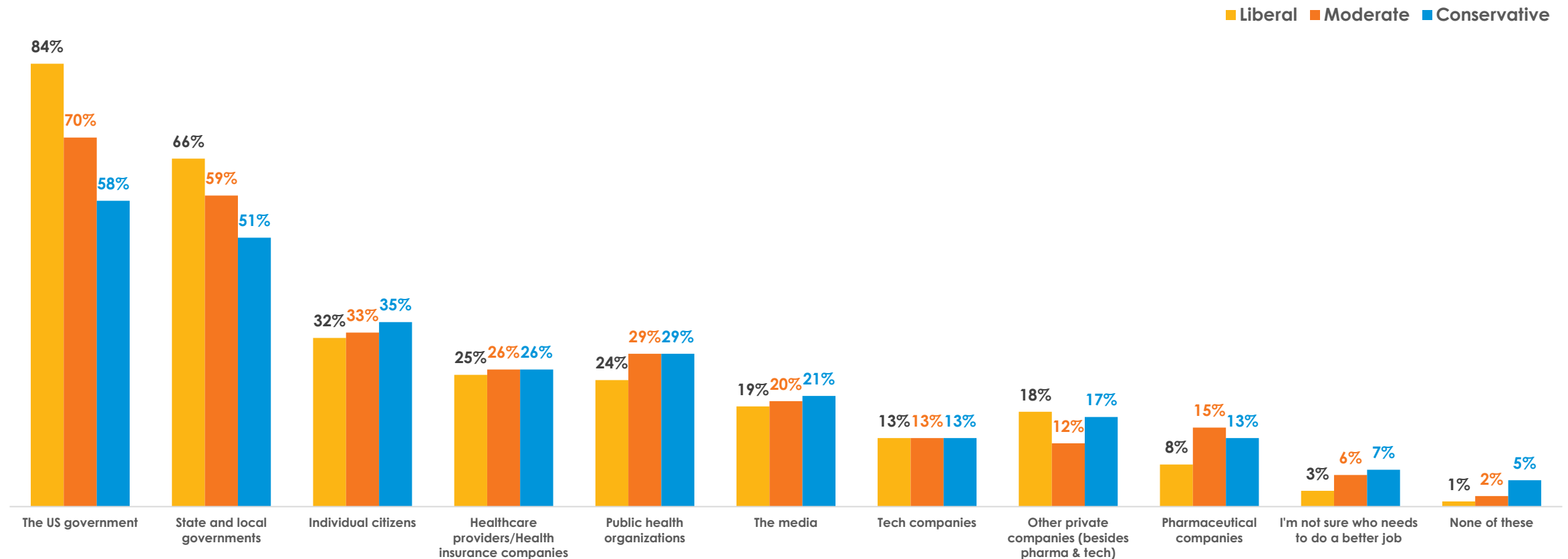
Who, if anyone, needs to do a better job when it comes to protecting citizens from negative health effects that may stem from climate change? Select your top three.



The role of government varies by political ideology, other options remained fairly consistent across ideologies.



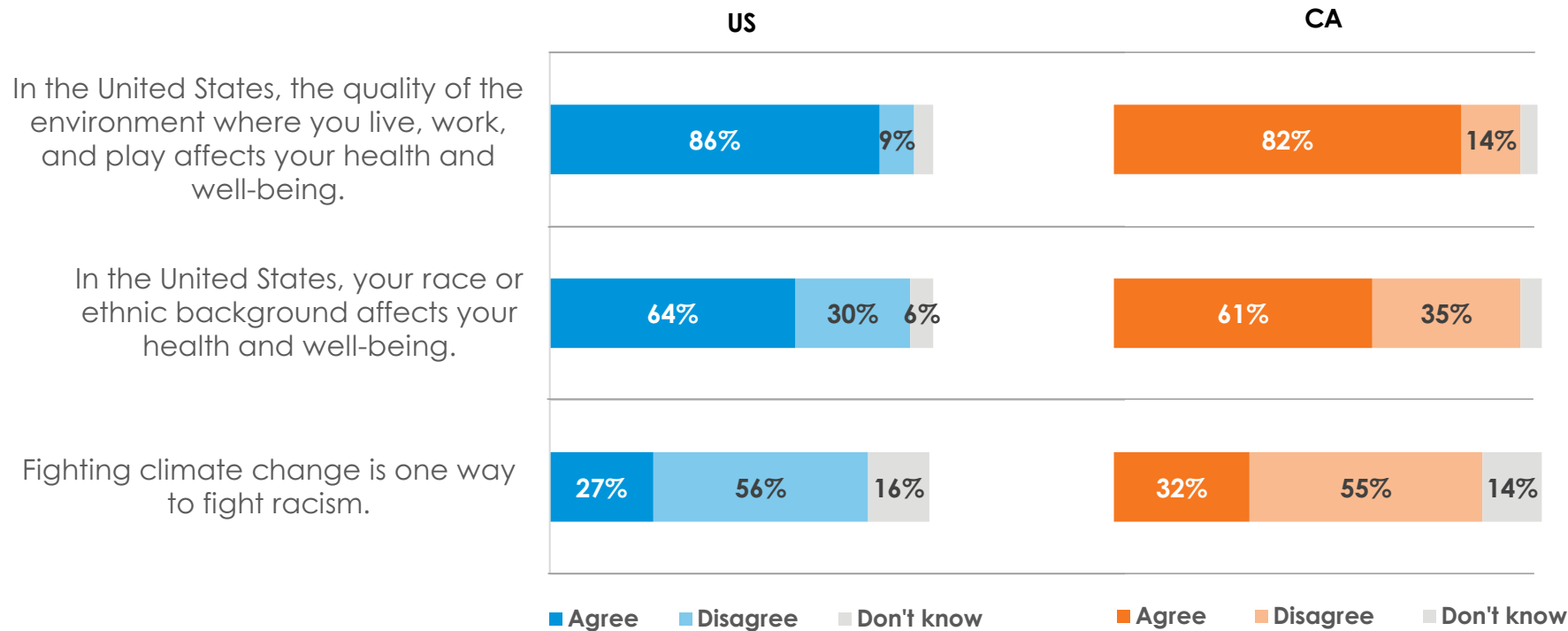
Who, if anyone, needs to do a better job when it comes to protecting citizens from negative health effects that may stem from climate change? Select your top three.





The **majority** agrees that in the US, **the quality of your environment**, as well as your **race or ethnic background**, impact your health and well-being. About **one in five** agree that fighting climate change is one way to **fight racism**.

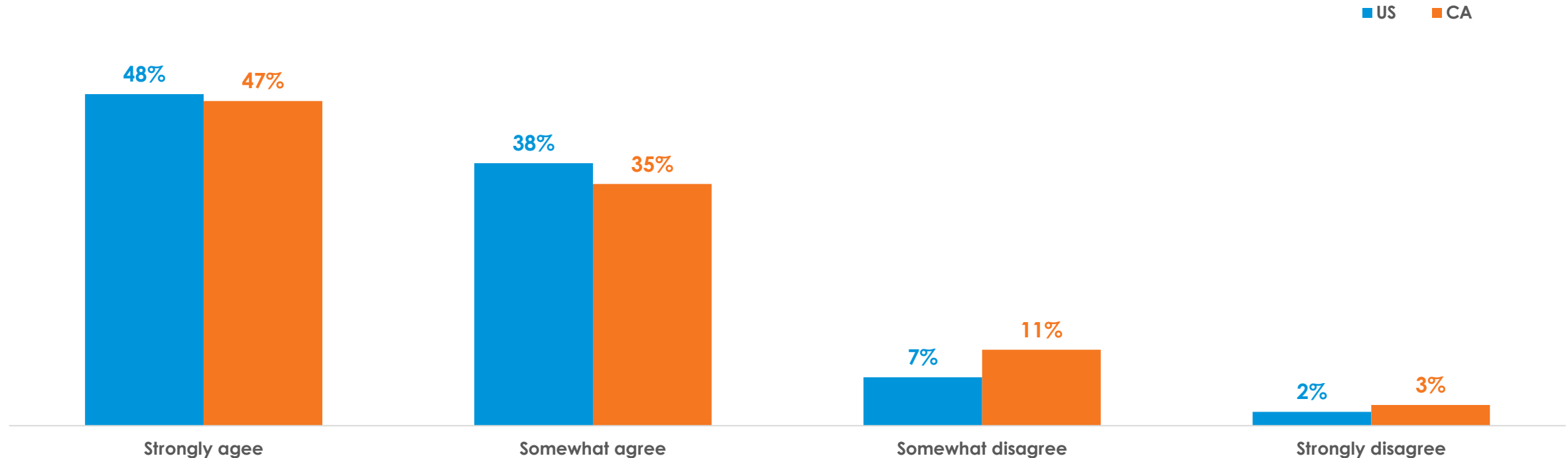
Please say whether you agree or disagree with this statement:



About **half (48%) of youth** strongly agree that the **quality of your environment** affects your health and well-being.



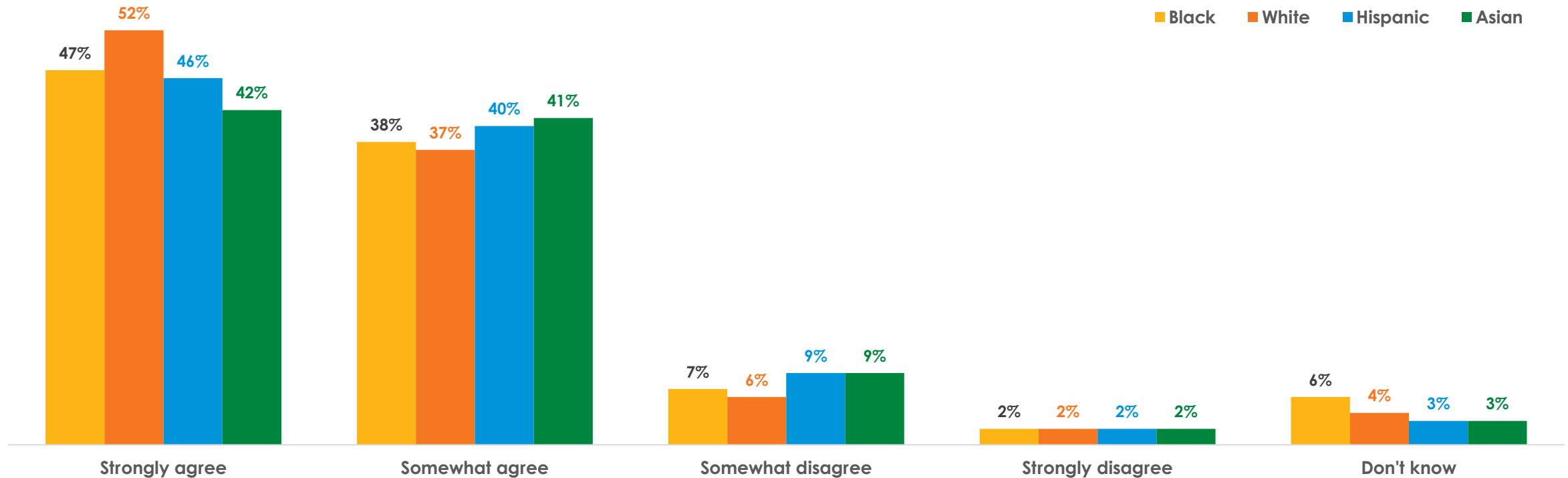
Please say whether you agree or disagree with this statement: In the United States, the quality of the environment where you live, work, and play affects your health and well-being.





At least 8 out of 10 youth of all races agree either strongly or somewhat that your environment affects health and well-being.

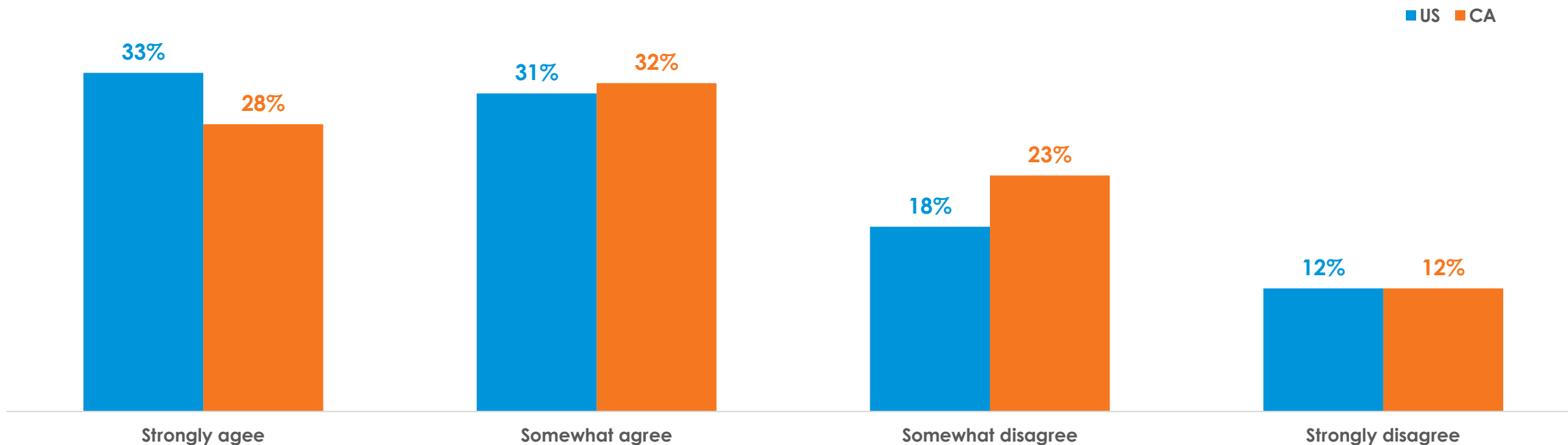
Please say whether you agree or disagree with this statement: In the United States, the quality of the environment where you live, work and play affects your health and well-being.



About **one-third of youth** strongly agree that in the US, **race and ethnic background** affect health and well-being.



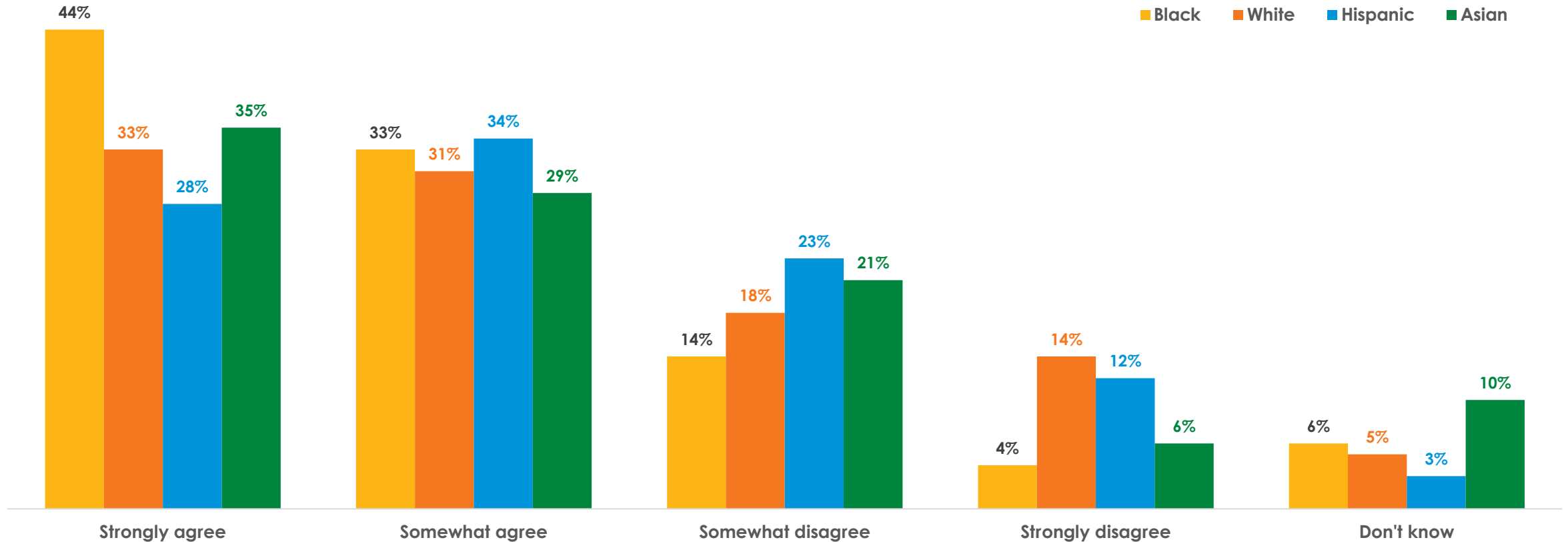
Please say whether you agree or disagree with this statement: In the United States, your race or ethnic background affects your health and well-being.



Black youth are more likely to strongly agree with this sentiment than others.



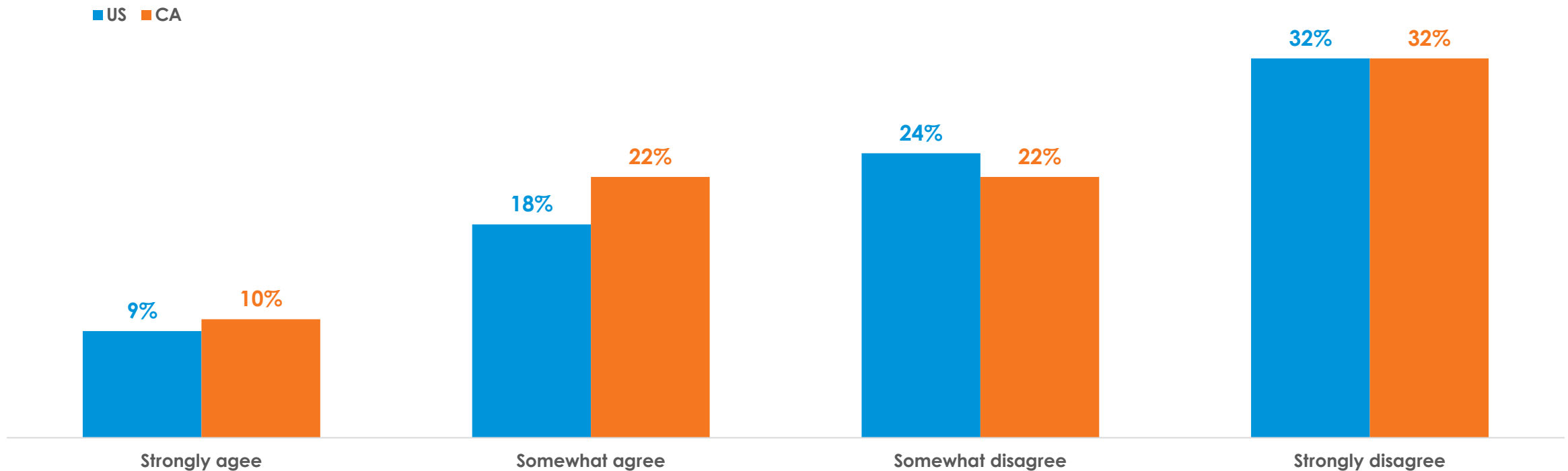
Please say whether you agree or disagree with this statement: In the United States, your race or ethnic background affects your health and well-being.



27% of youth nationwide agree to some extent that fighting climate change is one way to fight racism. This is slightly higher (32%) among California youth.



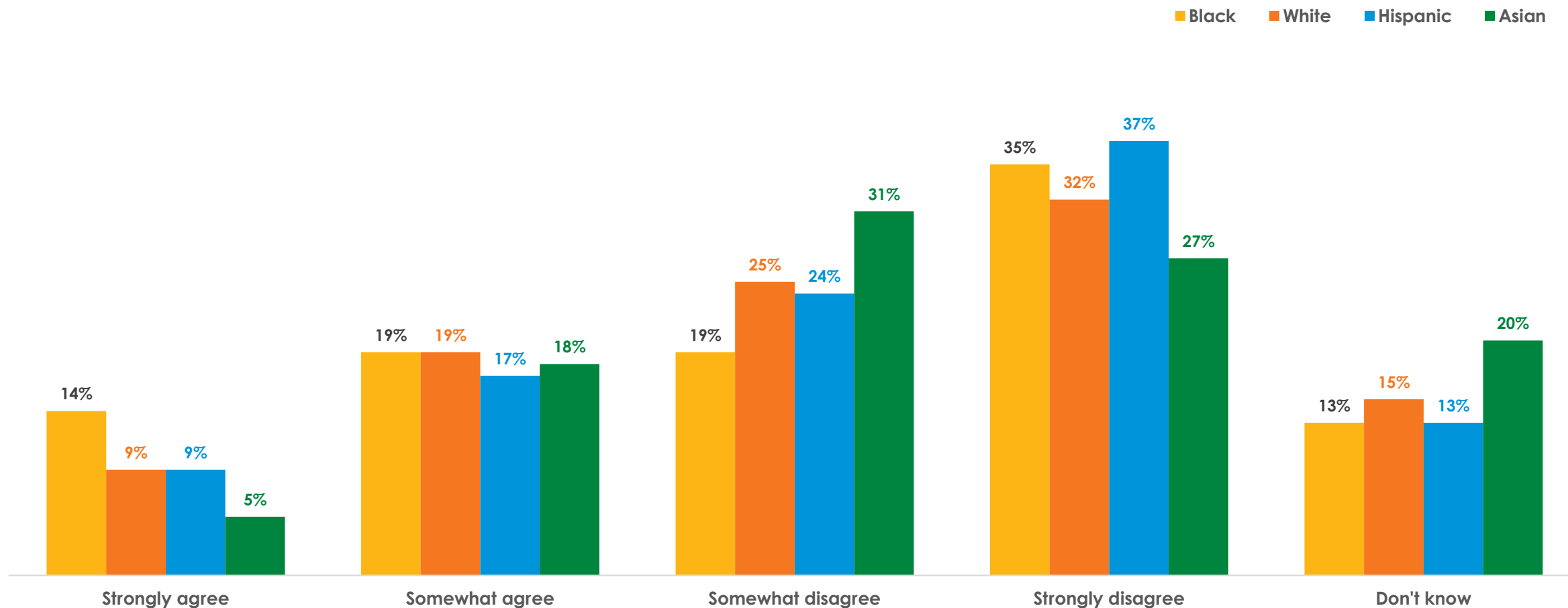
Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with this statement: Fighting climate change is one way to fight racism.



Again, **Black youth** are more likely than others to **strongly agree** with this sentiment, however only **14%** indicated so.



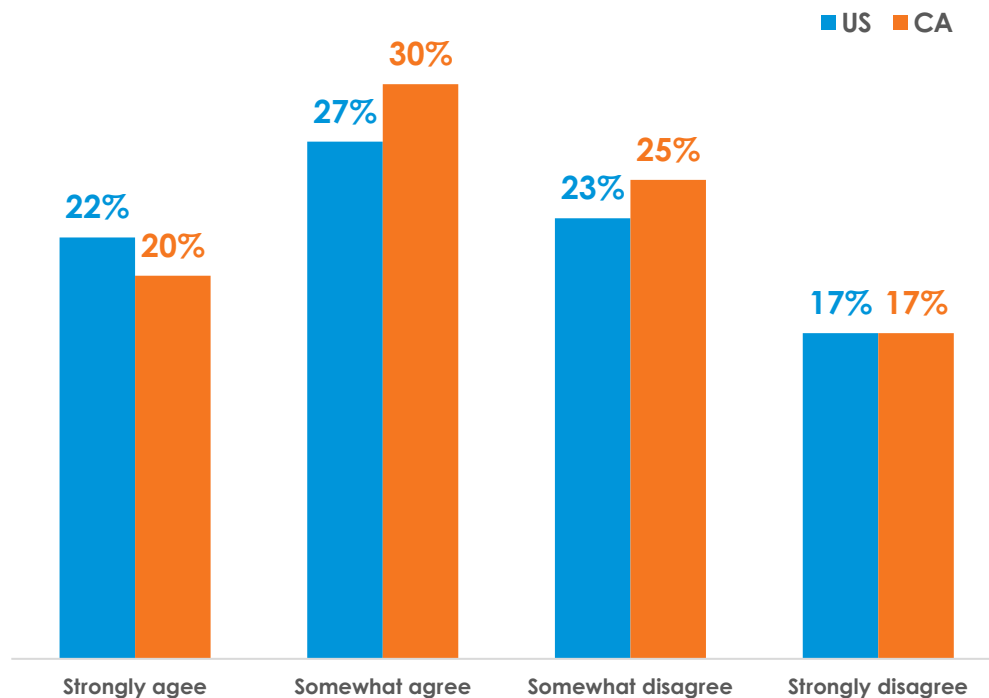
Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with this statement: Fighting climate change is one way to fight racism.



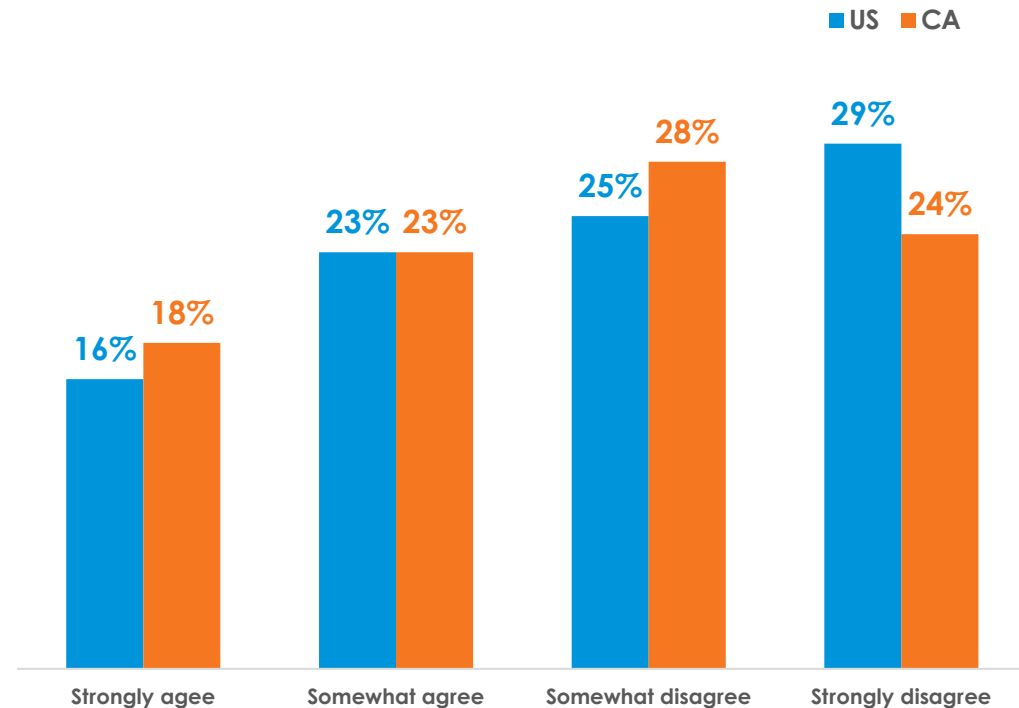
49% of youth agree that **environmental protections** are the same nationwide regardless of race; a smaller amount, **39% of youth** agree regardless of wealth.



Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with this statement: In the United States, environmental protection efforts are basically the same nationwide, regardless of the **race or ethnicity** of the people who live near the area needing protection.



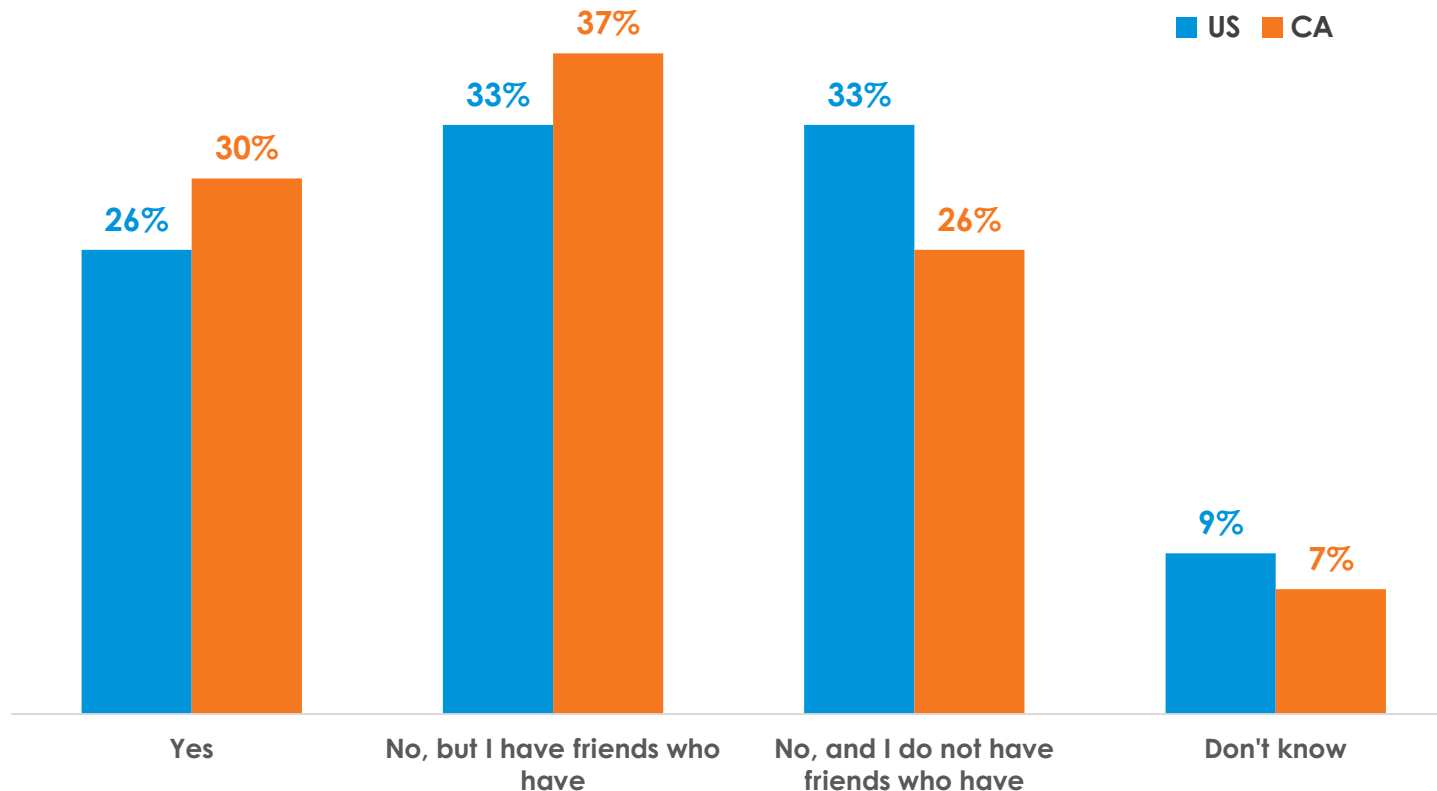
Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with this statement: In the United States, environmental protection efforts are basically the same nationwide, regardless of how **rich or poor** the people who live near the area needing protection are.



Nationwide, 26% of youth have participated in a cause or event dedicated to helping the environment.



Have you ever participated in a cause or event dedicated to combating climate change or helping the environment?



In a sentence or two, what was that cause?

"I started a small group where we'd go and collect trash and recycle all of the trash that was able to be recycled"

"I volunteer to help pick up trash and keep my neighborhood clean."

"Raising awareness for plastic pollution. Also helping scientists come up with an alternative for plastic water bottles"

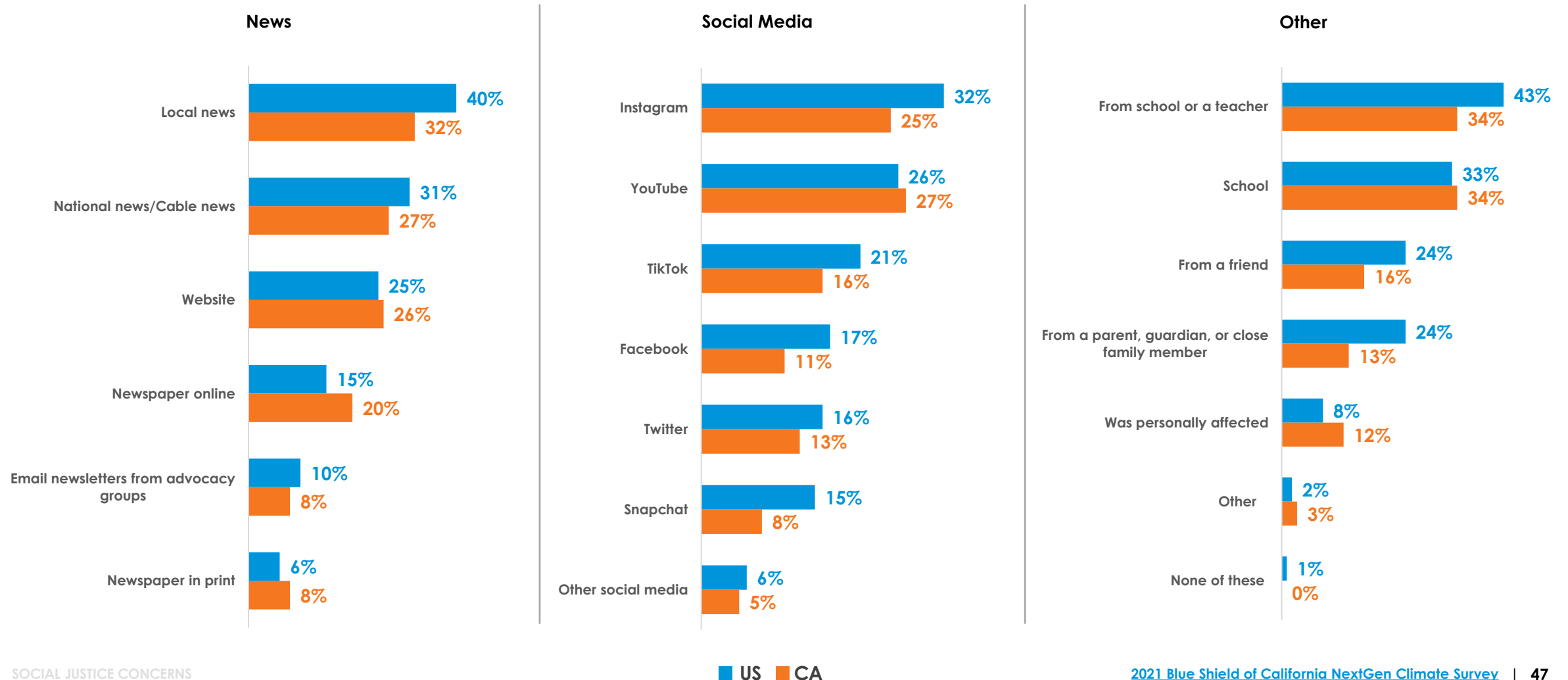
"Through my school, I planted multiple trees and other plants."

"I supported eco-friendly businesses and donated to eco-friendly causes."

These events are likely to be heard about from **school, local news and Instagram.**



Where did you learn about the environmental issue or cause? Select all that apply.



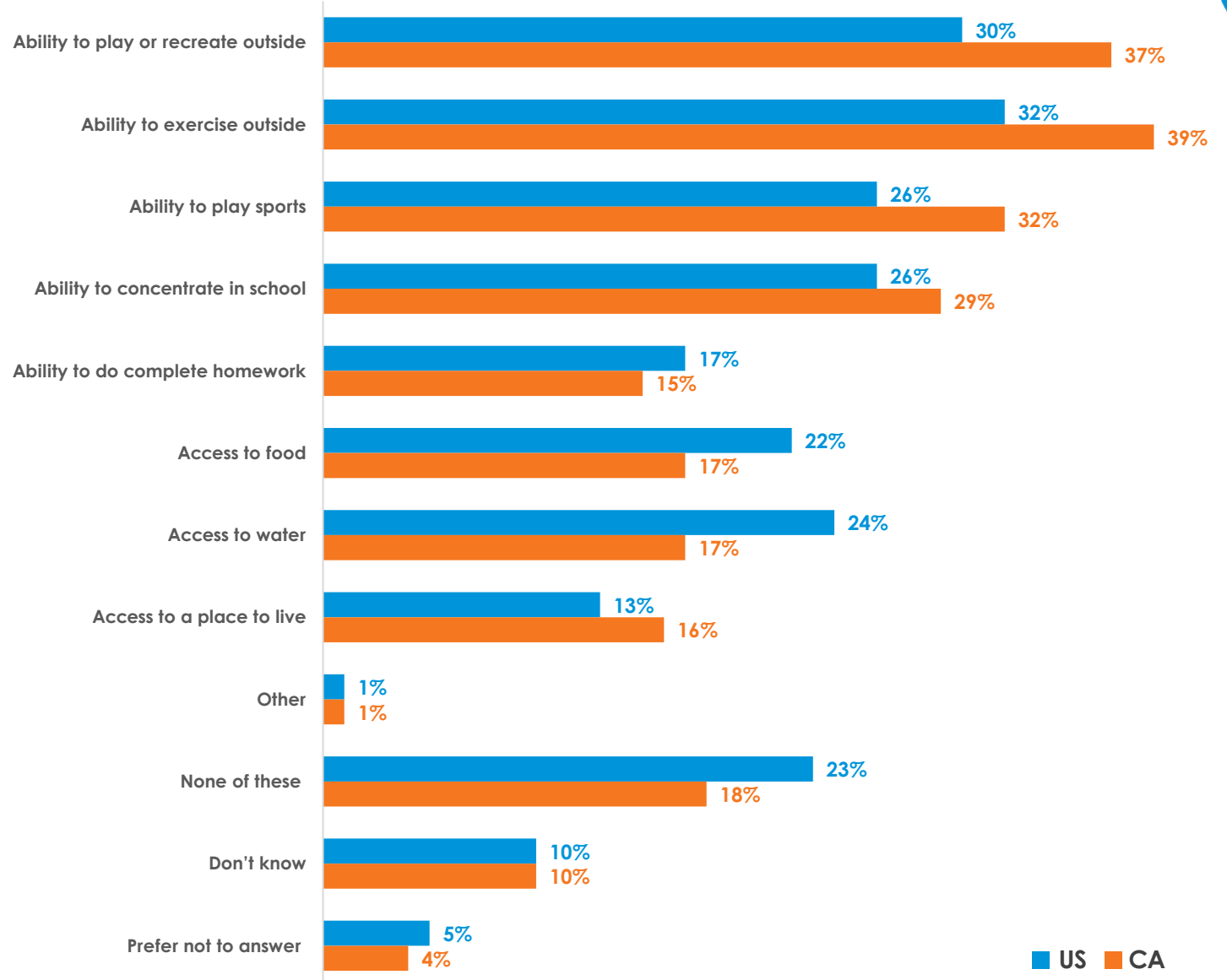
IMPACT ON LIFE

California youth are **more likely** to have been impacted by an **environmental event** or **natural disaster** that impacted their ability to **play and exercise outside**.

At any time in the last five years, has an environmental event or natural disaster impacted any of the following?

Note: For the sake of this question, please do **not** consider COVID-19 a natural disaster or environmental event.

Please select those for which this applies.

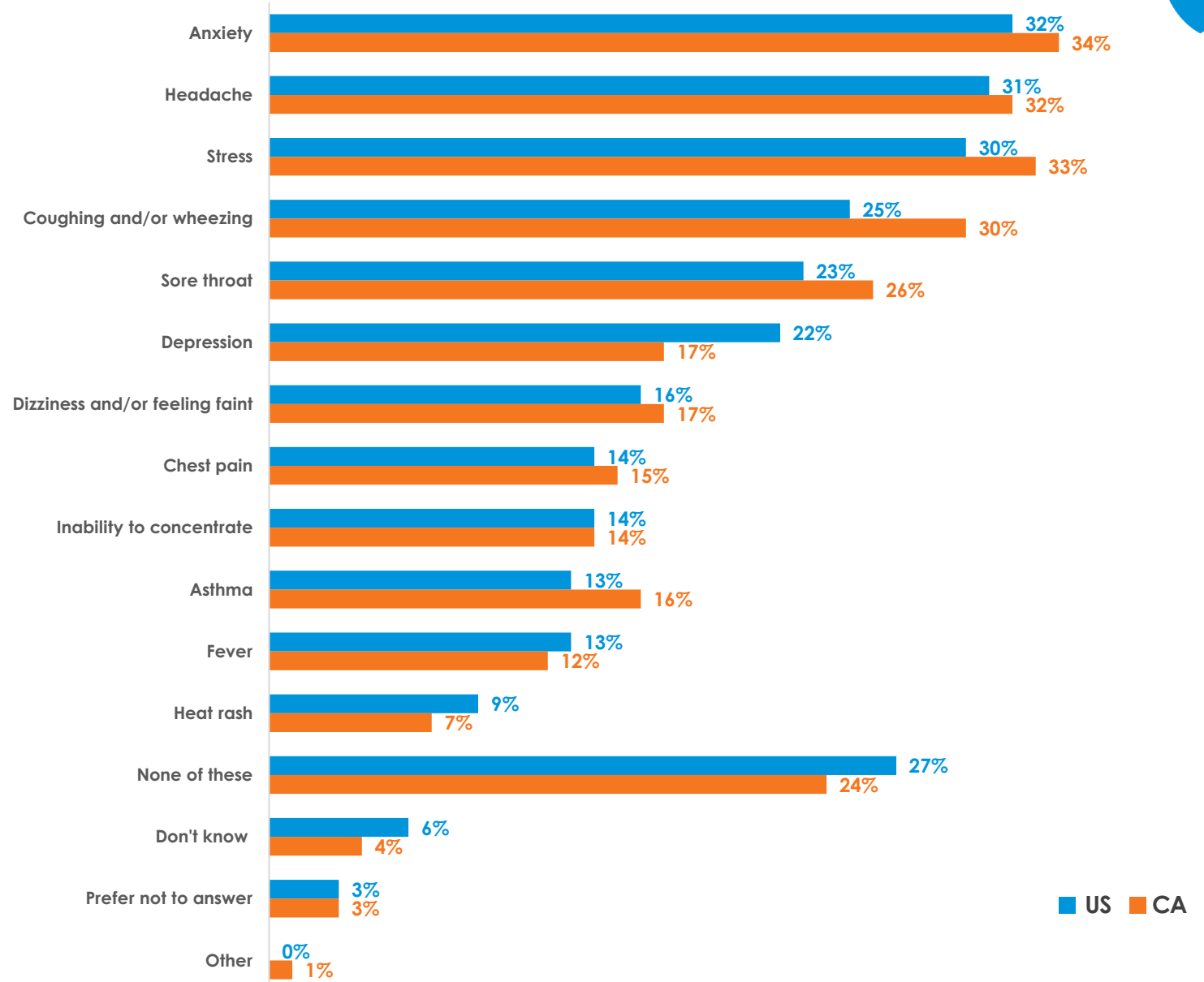


Anxiety was the most common mental health symptom stemming from a **natural disaster** or an **environmental event**, with **one in three** California youth indicating they've experienced this.

Headaches, coughing or wheezing and sore throats are common physical symptoms stemming from natural disasters or environmental events.

Have you ever experienced any of the following, related to a natural disaster or an environmental event, such as from a wildfire, flooding, extremely hot or cold days, hurricane etc.?

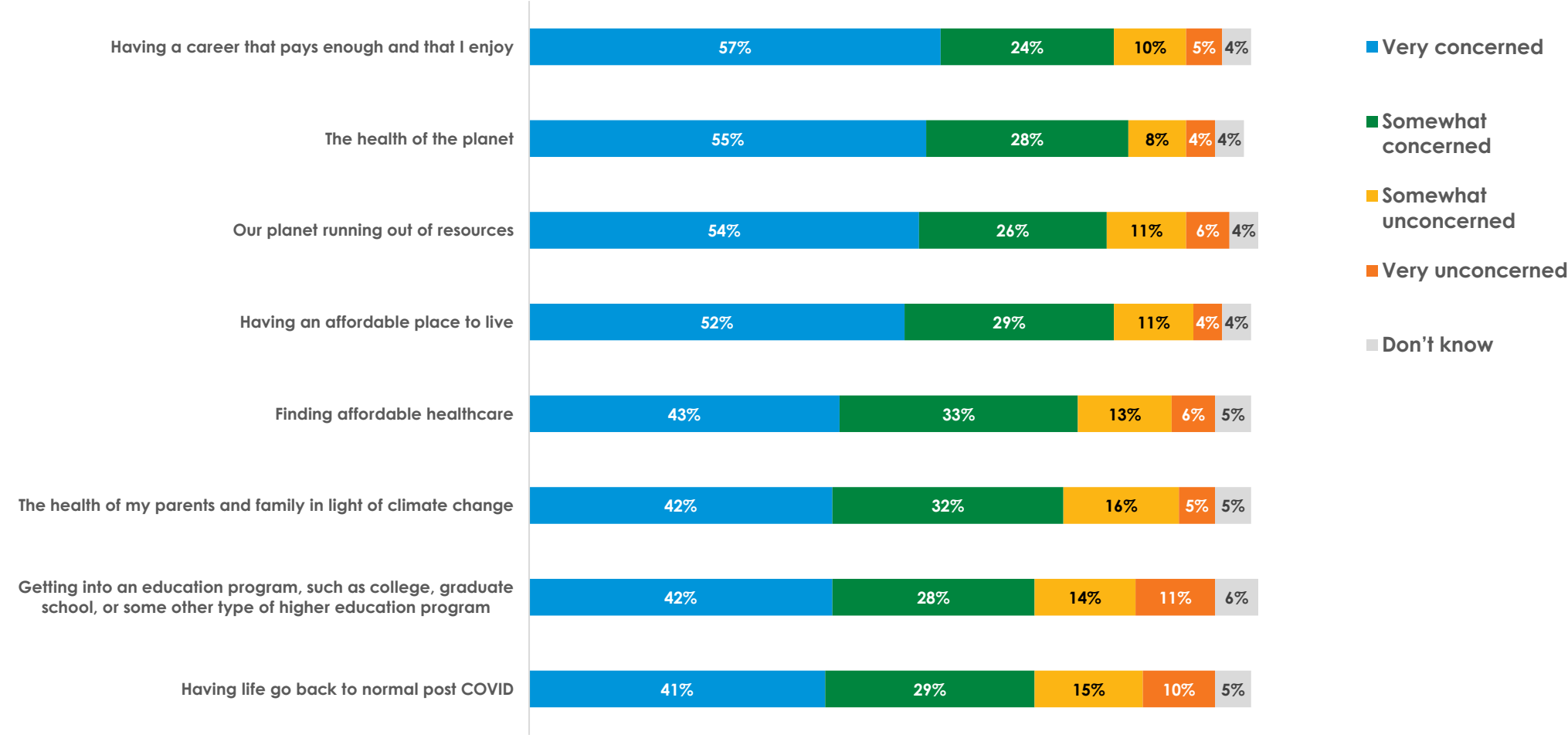
Please select all that apply.





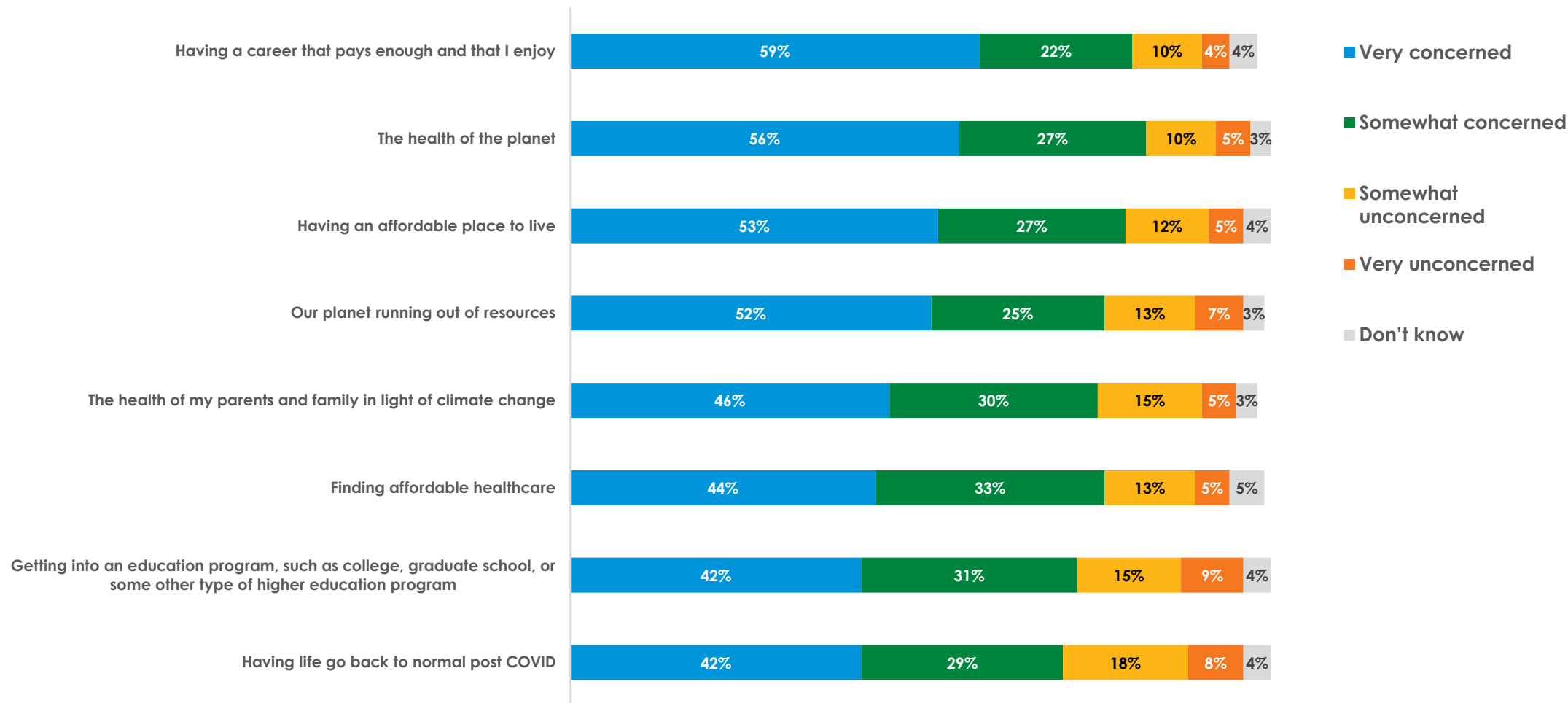
Nationwide: Youth are as concerned with the **future health of the planet (83%)** as they are with having a career that pays enough **(81%)**.

How concerned are you about the future when you think of the following?



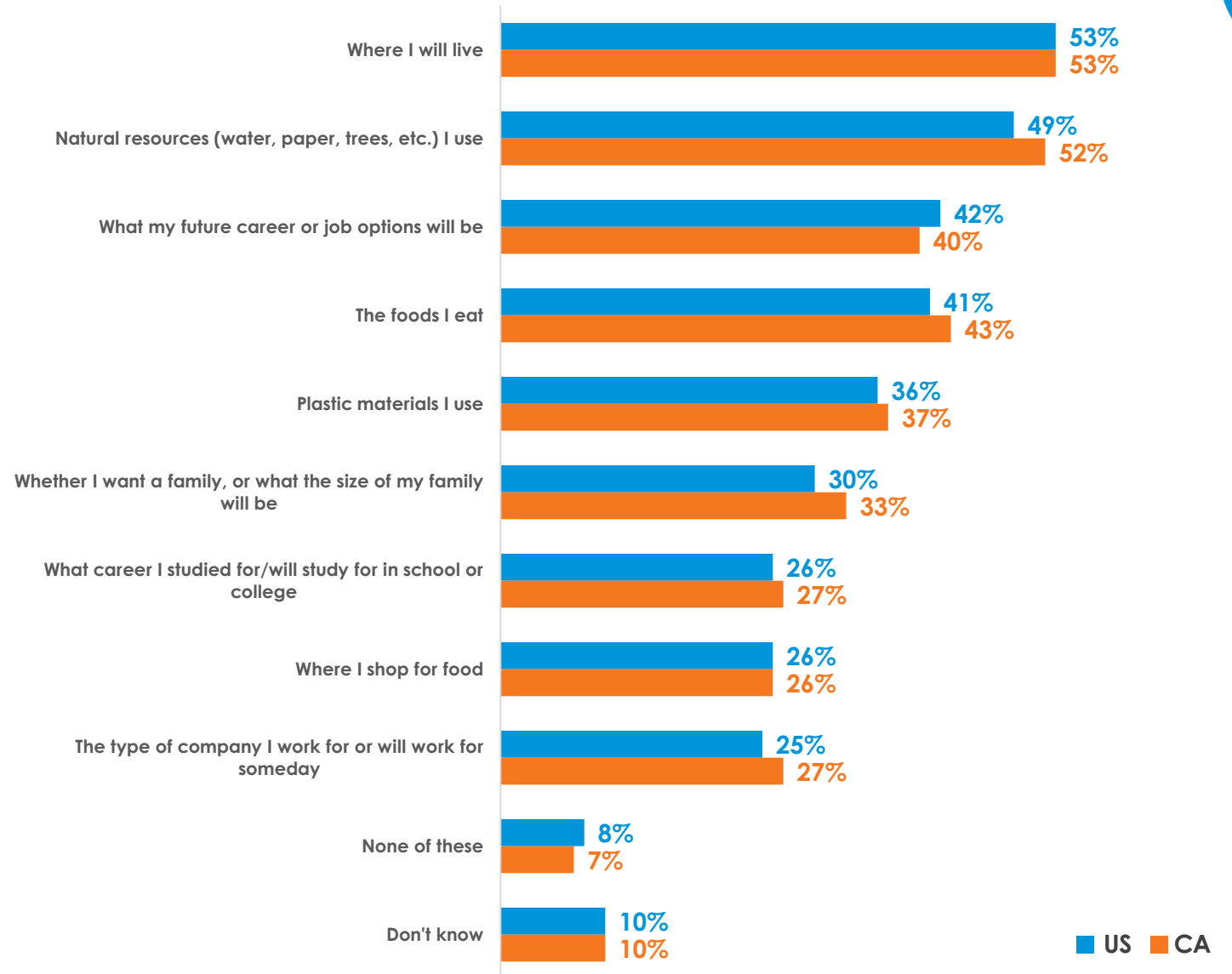
This is also true of **California youth.**

How concerned are you about the future when you think of the following?



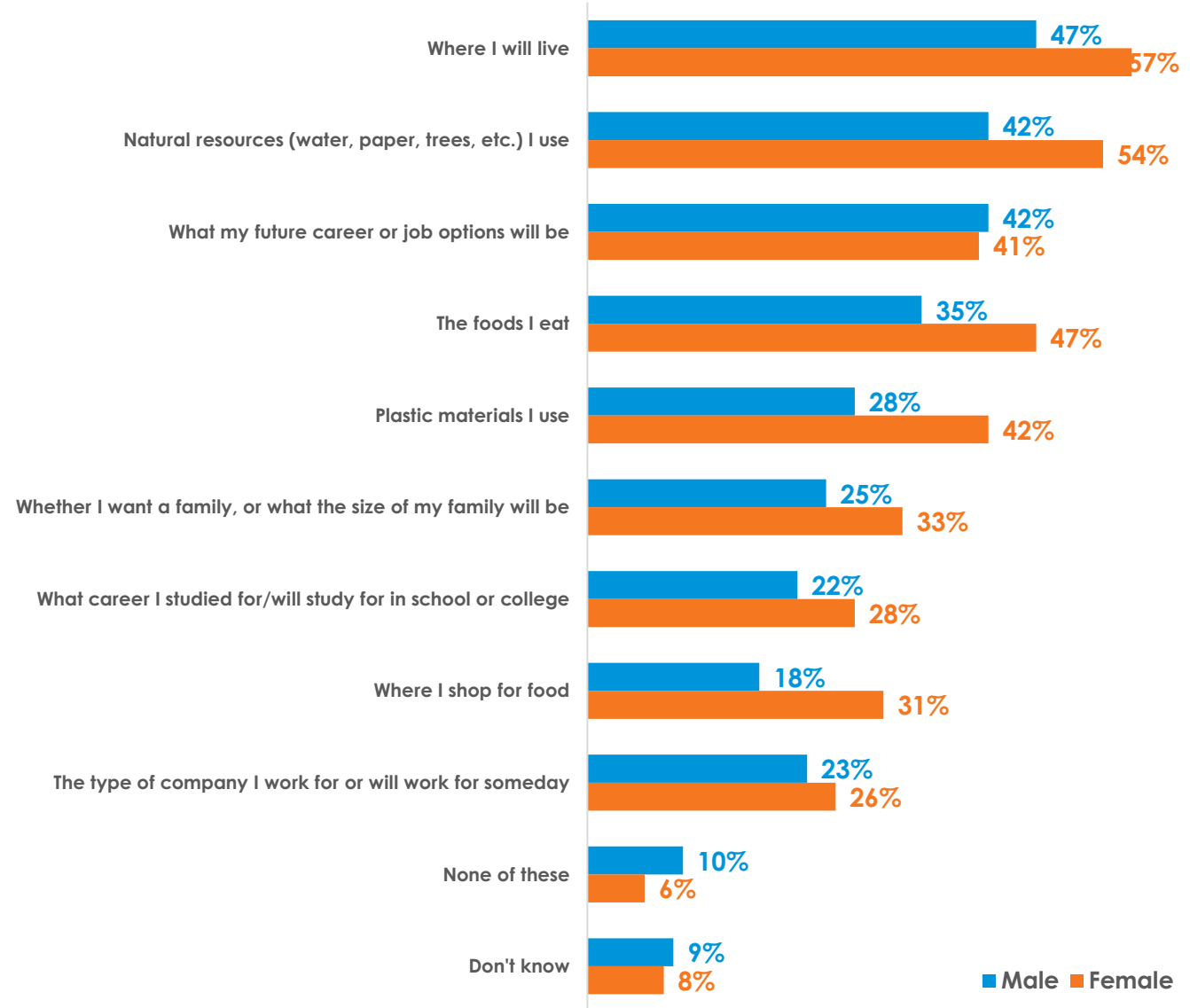
Half of youth perceive that the current state of the climate and environment will impact the future of where they live and the natural resources they use.

For which of the following, if any, does the current state of the climate and environment affect your decisions about the future? Select all that apply.



More of women's future decisions are impacted by the climate and environment than men's, particularly when it comes to where they will live, the food they will eat, plastic material usage and where they will food shop.

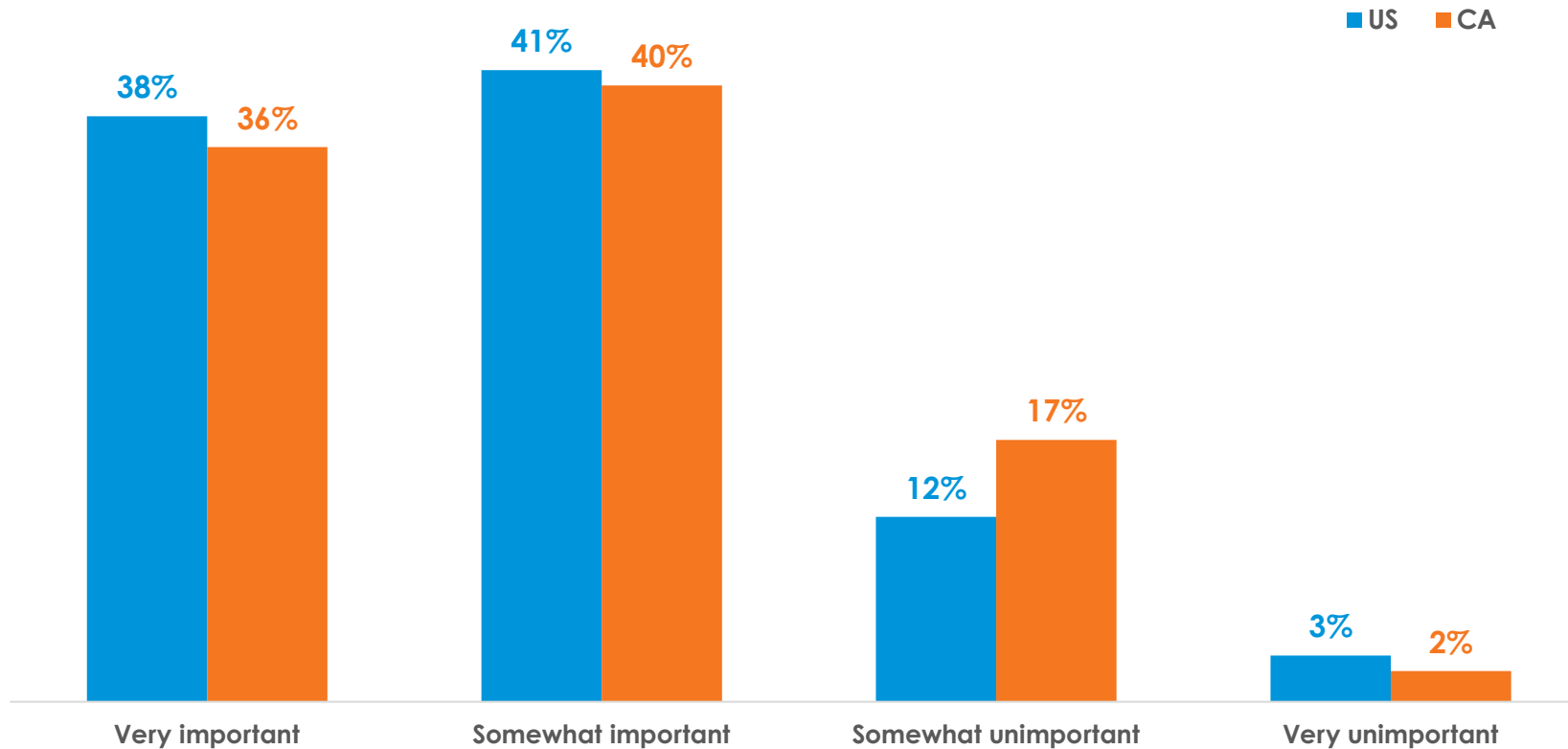
For which of the following, if any, does the current state of the climate and environment affect your decisions about the future? Select all that apply.



79% of youth nationwide think it is important to support brands and companies that are environmentally friendly or sustainable.



How important is it to you to support brands and companies that are environmentally friendly or to try to make sure their products are sustainable?



Women tend to find this more important with **85%** saying it is **somewhat or very important**

compared with **72%** of men.



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About Blue Shield of California

Blue Shield of California strives to create a healthcare system worthy of its family and friends that is sustainably affordable. Blue Shield of California is a tax paying, nonprofit, independent member of the Blue Shield Association with over 4.5 million members, over 7,500 employees and more than \$21 billion in annual revenue. Founded in 1939 in San Francisco and now headquartered in Oakland, Blue Shield of California and its affiliates provide health, dental, vision, Medicaid and Medicare healthcare service plans in California. The company has contributed more than \$150 million to Blue Shield of California Foundation in the last four years to have an impact on California communities.

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2021 SURVEY REPORT

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