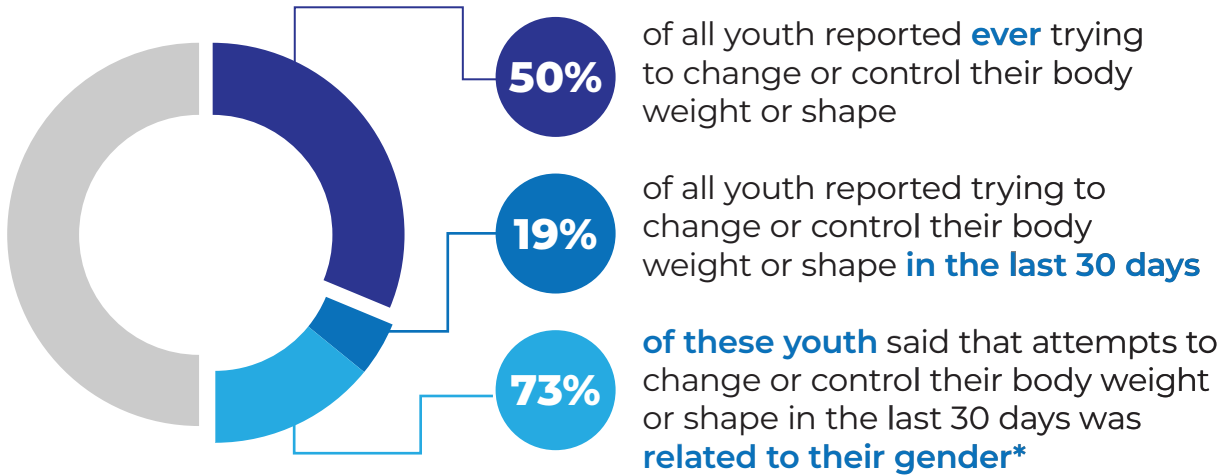


# Behaviours to Change or Control Body Weight & Shape

## Experiences of Trans and Non-Binary Youth Under Age 16 in Clinical Care

### At the time of their first medical appointment at the clinic (before receiving any hormonal suppression or gender-affirming hormones):



### \*What does this mean?

Research has found that trans youth who try to change or control their body weight or shape may do so with the goal of aligning their body with their gender.

**Transmasculine** youth engaged in body weight or shape change & control behaviours in the last 30 days **significantly more** than transfeminine youth

Transmasculine youth were significantly more likely to use **dieting & exercise** than transfeminine youth

Of youth who tried to change or control their body weight or shape **98% were transmasculine** and **2% were transfeminine**



Among those who tried to change or control their body weight or shape in the past 30 days, the following were found to be significant predictors of severity (i.e., more behaviours and/or higher frequency of behaviours):

- HIGHER** psychological distress
- MORE** experiences of day-to-day discrimination over the past year
- LOWER** gender positivity<sup>1</sup> related to their body
- LOWER** school and family connectedness

### Youth who tried to change or control their body weight or shape in the last 30 days did so by\*:

*\*These behaviours can be harmful to health*

- 96%** dieting, fasting, eating less food
- 83%** exercising
- 28%** bingeing
- 25%** vomiting
- 16%** swallowing a pill or something else (for example, protein powder)

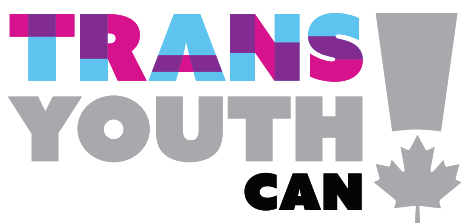
*(Total will not sum to 100% as youth may engage in more than one behaviour)*

On average youth were reporting **at least 2** of these behaviours in the past 30 days.

Youth who tried to change or control their body weight or shape in the last 30 days also engaged in **self-harm significantly more** than youth who didn't.

*Youth using disordered eating behaviours as a coping strategy to deal with gender (and general) distress are at substantial risk for health complications and clinical eating disorders.*

*More attention, research, and careful screening is needed regarding weight or shape change or control behaviours and disordered eating.*



### Who are the participants in this study?

There are 174 youth and 160 parents/caregivers participating in the Trans Youth CAN! study. Youth aged 15 or younger and who had reached puberty were recruited at their first appointment after referral for blockers or hormones at one of 10 medical clinics across Canada (Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Winnipeg, London, Toronto, Hamilton, Ottawa, Montreal, Halifax). Youth could also invite one parent or caregiver to participate. This data was collected between September 2017 and June 2019.

1- What is gender positivity? Check out the full measure on our website here: [https://transyouthcan.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Gender-Positivity-Scale-vSHARE\\_EN-2021.pdf](https://transyouthcan.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Gender-Positivity-Scale-vSHARE_EN-2021.pdf)