Students with basic needs insecurities are less likely to succeed academically than their peers not facing unmet needs. The inability to identify students with unmet basic needs prevents institutions from connecting students to resources at key times.

Figure 4. Percentages of student respondents experiencing BNI overall and by college type in Texas (N=12,959)
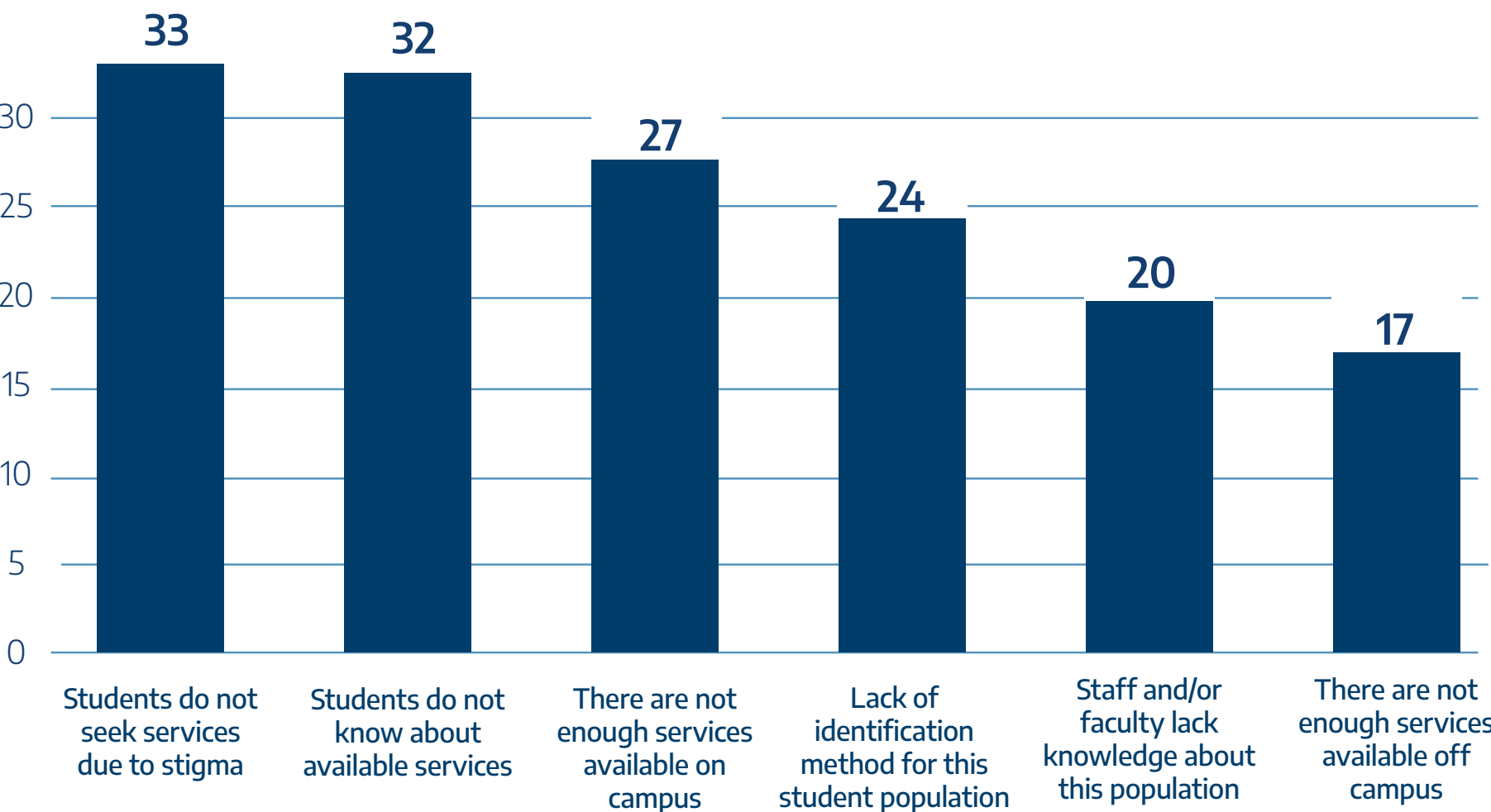

Legend:
- Homelessness
- Housing Insecure
- Food Insecure
- Any BNI

Overall: Homelessness 16%, Housing Insecure 55%, Food Insecure 43%, Any BNI 65%
Two-Year Colleges: Homelessness 15%, Housing Insecure 55%, Food Insecure 42%, Any BNI 64%
Four-Year HBCUs: Homelessness 20%, Housing Insecure 61%, Food Insecure 50%, Any BNI 72%
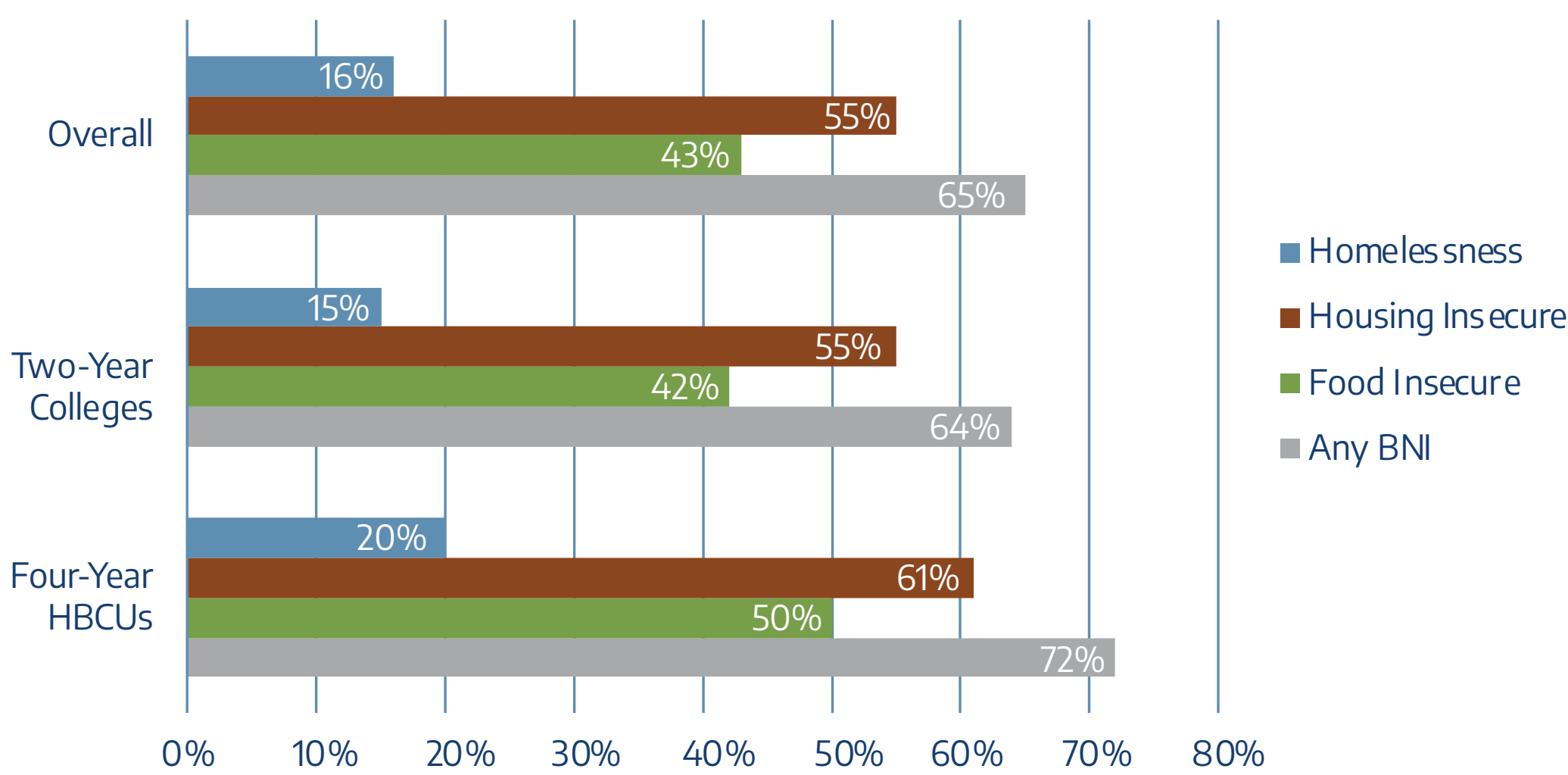
Note. "Any BNI" includes students who experienced food insecurity in the past 30 days or housing insecurity/homelessness within the last year (The Hope Center, 2021).

Challenges and Opportunities to Providing and Accessing BNI Supports

Colleges are aware that there are challenges associated with student access to BNI supports in the colleges. Figure 11 shows the six most frequent barriers to accessing supports identified by respondents.

Figure 11. Count of respondents' most commonly identified barriers for students accessing on-campus services for BNI (N=46)

- Students do not seek services due to stigma: 33
- Students do not know about available services: 32
- There are not enough services available on campus: 27
- Lack of identification method for this student population: 24
- Staff and/or faculty lack knowledge about this population: 20
- There are not enough services available off campus: 17

We use the term "basic needs" to denote adequate and equitable access to:

- nutritious and sufficient food;
- safe, secure, and adequate housing (to sleep, study, cook, and shower);
- healthcare to promote sustained mental and physical well-being;
- affordable transportation;
- affordable technology;
- resources for personal hygiene care; and
- family care and related needs.

Changes Proposed:

- **Create working group with various stakeholders**
  - Key stakeholders are likely to include: Information technology, institutional research, financial aid, student support service providers, school district partners, etc.
  - A first deliverable of the stakeholder group should be to create an institutional definition of 'Basic Needs,'
- **Develop process and survey instrument to collect self-identifiable information from students**
  - Includes student journey mapping to identify times and opportunities to continuously collect information. These may include New Student Orientation, Academic Advising, Application for Admission to the institution, registration periods, activities providing free food, etc.
- **Develop system to record, track, and utilize information that is collected**
  - Possibilities include the institution's Student Information System (SIS), data queries, Customer Relationship Management system, learning management system, etc.

- **Develop communication plan/activities for relevant stakeholders to communicate available resources**
  - Host opportunities and activities to reduce the stigma of utilizing services and self-identification of needs.
  - Utilize language that emphasizes resources are available for all students.
  - Identify opportunities to create communication that emphasize a positive association with utilizing support services.
- **Create evaluation plan**
  - This may include the Hope Center survey, Trellis Financial Wellness survey, service utilization metrics, or student use survey. The evaluation is to identify the effectiveness of implemented changes.

Expected Outcomes

As a result of the efforts to identify students with basic needs insecurities we expect:

- Increased student use of college resources.
- Improved retention and completion rates of students with basic needs insecurities.
- Decrease in drop and withdrawal rates.
- Increased access to student funding opportunities such as grants and Foundation dollars.
- Developing a culture of awareness and support for basic needs insecurities across campus, and a culture of belonging for all students.

Implementation Timeline

- **SEPT**: Identify Implementation team
- **OCT**: Define data collection process and build survey instrument
- **DEC**: Develop system to record, track, and utilize survey data
- **MARCH**: Develop communication plans for various stakeholder
- **MAY**: Create and implement evaluation process