

The rate of HIV was more than ten times higher for respondents whose current sole source of income was from underground economy work (15.0%), five times higher among those who have participated in sex work at any point in their lifetime (7.9%), and almost twice as high for those who have experienced homelessness (2.7%).

III. HIV Health Care

Medical providers and HIV health care advocates often describe effective treatment and management of HIV in terms of the HIV care continuum or the HIV treatment cascade. The HIV care continuum describes stages of HIV medical care, including “diagnosis of HIV infection, linkage to care, retention in care, receipt of antiretroviral therapy, and achievement of viral suppression.”⁸⁵ Respondents were asked whether they had received HIV-related health care in the year prior to the survey, and were also asked about other aspects of the HIV care continuum.

Most of the respondents who were living with HIV had received HIV-specific health care within the past year, not including care received during an emergency room visit or during a hospital stay. Eighty-nine percent (89%) of respondents living with HIV had seen a doctor or health care provider for HIV care in the past 12 months, and 87% received HIV care in the past 6 months.

Respondents who had not seen a doctor for HIV care *in the past 6 months* offered a range of reasons, including not being ready to find health care for HIV, not being able to afford HIV care, not knowing where to go for HIV care, and relying on a higher power or God to help with their HIV.⁸⁶ Similarly, those who had not seen a doctor for HIV care *in the past 12 months* offered a variety of reasons, including not having health insurance, not

being able to afford HIV care, not knowing where to go for HIV care, not feeling sick enough to look for health care, relying on a higher power or God to help with their HIV, only recently finding out about their HIV status, and other unspecified reasons.⁸⁷

Of respondents who were living with HIV, 82% reported that they had their blood tested to determine their viral load and CD4 counts in the past 6 months. Five percent (5%) had most recently received such testing between 6 and 12 months ago, 6% were last tested more than a year ago, and 7% had never had a blood test for their viral load and CD4 counts.

Eighty-seven percent (87%) of respondents living with HIV have been prescribed anti-retroviral therapy (ART), which are medications that can reduce the amount of HIV in the body.⁸⁸ This is compared to 94% of those living with HIV in the general population.⁸⁹ Eighty-one percent (81%) of people living with HIV reported that they were currently taking their ART medications. Of those who had been prescribed ART, almost two-thirds (64%) reported taking it regularly and as prescribed all of the time, one-third (33%) took it most of the time, 2% rarely took it, and 1% never took it regularly and as prescribed. Approximately half (45%) of respondents who were not taking their ART medication all of the time—including those who took it most of the time, rarely, or never—reported that the main reason for not taking it as they were supposed to was that they forgot to take it. The remaining respondents (n=23, unweighted) reported several reasons why that they did not take their medication as prescribed, including not being able to afford the medication, not having health insurance, concerns about conflicts with other medications, concerns about weight gain, not wanting to take ART, and other reasons not listed in the question.

Conclusion

Findings throughout the chapter indicated that respondents were impacted by substantial health-related disparities, including access to quality care and health outcomes. Respondents reported substantial barriers to receiving the care that they need, such as financial constraints, lack of health insurance or insurance that does not adequately address their health needs, and lack of access to health care providers who can administer health care respectfully and with a sufficient knowledge of transgender patients' needs. Furthermore, although some respondents were able to access health care related to gender transition, such as counseling, hormone therapy, or a variety of surgical procedures, a large number have not received such health care despite wanting to do so, often due to

income and economic instability and lack of access to adequate health insurance.

Results also suggest that insufficient access to quality care and coverage contributed to poor health outcomes among respondents. Respondents were substantially more likely to be living with HIV than the general population, with much higher rates among transgender women of color. Respondents were also more likely to report poor mental health outcomes, including higher rates of substance use, serious psychological distress, and suicide attempts. Findings demonstrated an association between poor health outcomes and a number of risk factors, such as economic instability, housing instability, lower educational attainment, and lack of family support.

ENDNOTES | CHAPTER 7: HEALTH

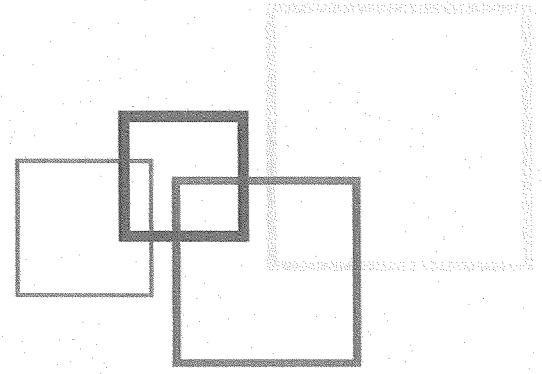
- 1 Bockting, W. O., Miner, M. H., Swinburne Romine, R. E., Hamilton, A., & Coleman, E. (2013). Stigma, mental health, and resilience in an online sample of the US transgender population. *American Journal of Public Health, 103*(5), 943–951; Grant, J. M., Mottet, L. A., Tanis, J., Harrison, J., Herman, J. L., & Keisling, M. (2011). *Injustice at Every Turn: A Report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey*. (pp. 72–87). DC: National Center for Transgender Equality & National Gay and Lesbian Task Force; Institute of Medicine. (2011). *The Health of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender People: Building a Foundation for Better Understanding*. DC: National Academy of Sciences.
- 2 Kosenko, K., Rintamaki, L., Raney, S., Maness, K. (2013). Transgender patient perceptions of stigma in health care contexts. *Medical Care, 51*(9), 819–822; Poteat, T., German, D., & Kerrigan, D. (2013). Managing uncertainty: A grounded theory of stigma in transgender health encounters. *Social Science & Medicine, 84*(1), 22–29; Grant, et al. (2011). pp. 72–87; Lambda Legal. (2010). *When Health Care Isn't Caring: Lambda Legal's Survey of Discrimination Against LGBT People and People with HIV*. New York, NY: Lambda Legal.
- 3 U.S. Census Bureau. (2015). 2015 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates. Available at: https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_15_1YR_S2701&prodType=table.
- 4 U.S. Census Bureau. (2015). 2015 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates: Private Health Insurance Coverage By Type. Available at: https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_15_1YR_S2703&prodType=table; U.S. Census Bureau. (2015). 2015 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates: Public Health Insurance Coverage by Type. Available at: https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_15_1YR_S2704&prodType=table.
- 5 The estimate for the percentage of people who receive coverage through the Indian Health Service was calculated based on a 2015 statement that approximately 2.2 million American Indian and Alaska Native people were served by the Indian Health Service. <https://www.ihs.gov/newsroom/factsheets/quicklook/>.
- 6 Q. 11.9 specified that “[h]ealth insurance marketplaces are part of the new health care law, sometimes called ‘Obamacare’ or the ‘Affordable Care Act,’ where people can get insurance online, such as through healthcare.gov, over the phone, or in person.”
- 7 “Insurer” here refers to insurers providing coverage under both private insurance plans (such as those purchased through an employer) and public plans (such as through Medicaid or Medicare).

- 8 The "other insurance" category includes TRICARE or other military coverage, VA, Indian Health Service, and other types of insurance not listed. See Table 7.1.
- 9 Respondents were asked if they had "experienced unwanted sexual contact (such as fondling, sexual assault, or rape) in a health care setting (such as a hospital, office, clinic)" in Q.12.7.
- 10 "People with disabilities" here refers to respondents who identified as a person with a disability in Q. 2.20.
- 11 Respondents on active duty in military service were asked separately about where they received transition-related health care. These results are reported in the *Military Service* chapter.
- 12 Although 1.5% of respondents in the sample reported having taken puberty-blocking medication, the percentage reported here reflects a reduction in the reported value based on respondents' reported ages at the time of taking this medication. While puberty-blocking medications are usually used to delay physical changes associated with puberty in youth ages 9–16 prior to beginning hormone replacement therapy, a large majority (73%) of respondents who reported having taken puberty blockers in Q.12.9 reported doing so after age 18 in Q.12.11. This indicates that the question may have been misinterpreted by some respondents who confused puberty blockers with the hormone therapy given to adults and older adolescents. Therefore, the percentage reported here (0.3% or "less than 1%") represents only the 27% of respondents who reported taking puberty-blocking medication before the age of 18.
- 13 "Transition-related surgery" here includes all procedures listed in Table 7.4 and 7.5, with the exception of electrolysis and non-surgical voice therapy.
- 14 Respondents who are "living in poverty" represent those who are living at or near the poverty line. See the *Income and Employment Status* chapter for more information about the poverty line calculation.
- 15 The "other insurance" category in Figure 7.11 includes TRICARE or other military coverage, VA, Indian Health Service, and other types of insurance not listed. See Table 7.1.
- 16 Since the available surgical procedures related to transition generally vary based on individuals' sex assigned at birth (the gender they were thought to be when they were born), respondents received different questions about surgical procedures based on their response to Q. 2.1, which asked about the sex listed on respondents' original birth certificate. Respondents who said that they had female on their original birth certificate received Q. 12.15, and respondents who said they had male on their original birth certificate received Q. 12.18. Although the vast majority of respondents received only questions about medical procedures available to them, 2.7% of respondents indicated that they were intersex, and a portion of them may not have received questions about all the surgical procedures that best fit their health care needs.
- 17 Respondents were asked about having "top/chest surgery reduction or reconstruction" in Q. 12.15.
- 18 Respondents were asked about having a "hysterectomy/'hysto' (removal of the uterus, ovaries, fallopian tubes, and/or cervix)" in Q. 12.15.
- 19 Respondents were asked about having a "clitoral release/metoidioplasty/centurion procedure" in Q. 12.15. These are genital procedures that separate the clitoris from the labia.
- 20 Respondents were asked about having a "phalloplasty (creation of a penis)" in Q. 12.15. This is a genital procedure involving the construction of a larger phallus.
- 21 The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force currently recommends Pap smears every three years for adults who have a cervix and are between the ages 21 and 65. U.S. Preventive Services Task Force. (2012). *Cervical Cancer: Screening*. Available at: <http://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/Page/Document/UpdateSummaryFinal/cervical-cancer-screening>.
- 22 Centers for Disease Prevention and Control. (2016). *2015 National Health Interview Survey: Sample Adult File*. Available at: ftp://ftp.cdc.gov/pub/Health_Statistics/NCHS/Dataset_Documentation/NHIS/2015/samadult_freq.pdf
- 23 Respondents were asked about having a "vaginoplasty/labialplasty/SRS/GRS/GCS" in Q. 12.18. A vaginoplasty is a surgical creation of a vagina. A labialplasty is a surgical modification or construction of the labia.
- 24 Respondents were asked about having an "orchidectomy/'orchy'/removal of the testes" in Q. 12.18.
- 25 Respondents were asked about having "facial feminization surgery (such as nose, brow, chin, cheek)" in Q.12.18.
- 26 Respondents were asked about having "breast augmentation/top surgery" in Q. 12.18. This refers to an augmentation mammoplasty, which reshapes or increases the size of the breast.
- 27 Respondents were asked about having a "tracheal shave (Adam's apple or thyroid cartilage reduction)" in Q. 12.18.
- 28 Although silicone injections are sometimes used to modify one's appearance, they are often risky and can lead to disfigurement, injury, and even death. Such injections are illegal in the United States. However, due to barriers to affordable care, some transgender people turn to silicone injections as a less expensive or more easily accessible substitute for safer treatments.
- 29 See e.g., Pascoe, E. A. & Richman, L. S. (2009). Perceived discrimination and health: A meta-analytic review. *Psychological Bulletin*, 135(4), 531–554.
- 30 See e.g., Bariola, E. Lyons, A., Leonard, W., Pitts, M., Badcock, P., Couch, M. (2015). Demographic and psychosocial factors associated with psychological distress and resilience among transgender individuals. *American Journal of Public Health*, 105(10), 2108–2116; Nuttbrock, L., Brockting, W., Rosenblum, A., Hwahng, S., Mason, M., Macri, M., & Becker, J. (2014). Gender abuse and major depression among transgender women: A prospective study of vulnerability and resilience.

- American Journal of Public Health*, 104(11), 2191, 2198; Bockting, W. O., Miner, M. H., Swinburne Romine, R. E., Hamilton, A., & Coleman, E. (2013). Stigma, mental health, and resilience in an online sample of the US transgender population. *American Journal of Public Health*, 103(5), 943–951; Institute of Medicine. (2011). *The Health of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender People: Building a Foundation for Better Understanding*. DC: National Academy of Sciences.
- 31 The general health rating among adults in the U.S. population was calculated by the research team using data from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2015). *BRFSS Prevalence & Trends Data*. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/brfss/brfssprevalence>.
- 32 The Kessler Psychological Distress Scale, or K6, assesses psychological distress based on how often in the past 30 days respondents felt: so sad that nothing could cheer them up, nervous, restless or fidgety, hopeless, that everything was an effort, or worthless. See Q. 12.2. See the National Health Interview Survey for additional information about the K6 mental health screening instrument and measure of serious psychological distress in adults (available at: http://www.healthindicators.gov/Indicators/Serious-psychological-distress-adults-percent_50055/Profile).
- 33 The K6 scale rates how often feelings are experienced on the following scale: (0) none of the time, (1) a little of the time, (2) some of the time, (3) most of the time, and (4) all of the time. See Q. 12.2. A total score of 13 or above across all six measures indicates serious psychological distress.
- 34 Centers for Disease Prevention and Control. (2016). *2015 National Health Interview Survey: Sample Adult File*. Available at: ftp://ftp.cdc.gov/pub/Health_Statistics/NCHS/Dataset_Documentation/NHIS/2015/samadult_freq.pdf.
- 35 See note 33 for an explanation of how “serious psychological distress” is calculated based on the K6 scale.
- 36 Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. (2016). *Results from the 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables*. Table 8.86B. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Available at: <http://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/NSDUH-DetTabs-2015/NSDUH-DetTabs-2015/NSDUH-DetTabs-2015.pdf>.
- 37 Serious psychological distress is related to age and educational attainment in the U.S. general population. (see note 33; <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6340a13.htm>). Those who are younger and have lower educational attainment have a higher prevalence of serious psychological distress. When the “supplemental weight” is applied to the USTS sample’s prevalence of serious psychological distress to adjust the sample to reflect the age and educational attainment of the U.S. adult population, the prevalence is reduced to 30%, six times the national prevalence for U.S. adults. Based on studies using population-based samples of transgender adults, it is estimated that the transgender population is younger and has lower educational attainment than the U.S. adult population. Flores, A. R., Brown, T. N. T., & Herman, J. L. (2016). *Race and Ethnicity of Adults who Identify as Transgender in the United States*. Los Angeles, CA: Williams Institute; Conron, K. J., Scott, G., Stowell, G. S., & Landers, S. J. (2012). Transgender health in Massachusetts: Results from a household probability sample of adults. *American Journal of Public Health*, 102(1), 118–122. Therefore, the finding of 39% for prevalence of serious psychological distress is reported here using the standard weight only.
- 38 *Results from the 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables*. Table 8.86B. See note 36.
- 39 Results for respondents who were sexually assaulted here reflect those who reported that they had “experienced unwanted sexual contact (such as oral, genital, or anal contact or penetration, forced fondling, rape)” in the past year (see Q. 18.3).
- 40 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2015). *Ending Conversion Therapy: Supporting and Affirming LGBTQ Youth*. Available at: <http://store.samhsa.gov/shin/content/SMA15-4928/SMA15-4928.pdf>.
- 41 Additionally, eleven percent (11%) of respondents in the sample said they were sent to a therapist, counselor, or religious advisor by immediate family members to stop them from being transgender. See the “Sent to a Professional for Being Transgender” section of the *Family Life and Faith Communities* chapter for a discussion about respondents who were sent to a professional by their family.
- 42 Although 0.4% of the overall sample reported that gender transition was not for them, these respondents did identify as transgender, meeting all criteria for inclusion in the survey (see Q. 110–118).
- 43 Haas, A. P., Rodgers, P. L., & Herman, J. L. (2014). *Suicide Attempts Among Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Adults*. New York, NY & Los Angeles, CA: American Foundation for Suicide Prevention & Williams Institute; Moody, C. & Smith, N. G. (2013). Suicide protective factors among trans adults. *Archives of Sexual Behavior* 42(5), 739–752; Grant, J. M., Mottet, L. A., Tanis, J., Harrison, J., Herman, J. L., & Keisling, M. (2011). *Injustice at Every Turn: A Report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey*. (p. 82). DC: National Center for Transgender Equality & National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.
- 44 Lipari, R., Piscopo, K., Kroutil, L. A., & Miller, G. K. (2015). *Suicidal Thoughts and Behaviors Among Adults: Results from the 2014 National Survey on Drug Use and Health*. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.
- 45 Kessler, R. C., Berglund, P., Chiu, W. T., Demler, O., Heeringa, S., Hiripi, E., . . . Zheng, H. (2004). The US National Comorbidity Survey Replication (NCS-R): design and field procedures. *International Journal of Methods in Psychiatric Research*, 13(2), 69–92.

- 46 *Results from the 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables*. Table 8.68B. See note 36.
- 47 *Results from the 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables*. Table 8.69B. See note 36.
- 48 *Results from the 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables*. Table 8.70B. See note 36.
- 49 *Results from the 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables*. Table 8.70B. See note 36.
- 50 *Results from the 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables*. Table 8.86B. See note 36.
- 51 Whether or not a person receives medical attention following a suicide attempt is often used as a measure of the severity of the attempt. However, because many transgender people report avoiding medical professionals because of fear of mistreatment (see, for example, the previous section on “Experiences with Health Care Providers”), it may be difficult to use this measure to gauge the severity of the attempt among USTS respondents.
- 52 *Results from the 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables*. Table 8.77B. See note 36.
- 53 *Results from the 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables*. Table 8.77B. See note 36.
- 54 Kessler, R. C., Borges, G., & Walters, E. E. (1999). Prevalence of and risk factors for lifetime suicide attempts in the National Comorbidity Survey. *Archives of General Psychiatry*, 56(7), 617–626. See also Nock, M. K., Hwang, I., Sampson, N. A., & Kessler, R. C. (2010). Mental disorders, comorbidity and suicidal behavior: Results from the National Comorbidity Survey Replication. *Molecular Psychiatry*, 15(8), 868–876; Nock, M. K., Borges, G., Bromet, E. J., Cha, C. B., Kessler, R. C., & Lee, S. (2008). Suicide and suicidal behavior. *Epidemiologic Reviews*, 30(1), 133–154 (finding a lifetime prevalence of suicide ideation of 5.6–14.3%, a lifetime prevalence for suicide plans of 3.9%, a lifetime prevalence for suicide attempts of 1.9–8.7%).
- 55 Respondents who reported that they were out to all, most, or some of the immediate family they grew up with were asked to assess how supportive their family was using a five-point scale from “very supportive” to “very unsupportive”. The categories were collapsed to create a new variable reflecting a supportive, neutral, or unsupportive family.
- 56 Results for respondents who were sexually assaulted here reflect those who reported that they had “experienced unwanted sexual contact (such as oral, genital, or anal contact or penetration, forced fondling, rape)” in their lifetime (see Q.18.1).
- 57 The age of the most recent suicide attempt reported here includes responses from both respondents who reported a single attempt and those who reported multiple attempts. For respondents who reported a single suicide attempt, the age of the most recent suicide attempt is also the age of their first suicide attempt as reported in the previous section.
- 58 See e.g., Cleveland, M. J., Feinberg, M. E., Bontempo, D. E., & Greenberg, M. T. (2008). The role of risk and protective factors in substance use across adolescence. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 43(2), 157–164; Kilpatrick, D. G., Ruggiero, K. J., Acierno, R., Saunders, B. E., Resnick, H. S., & Best, C. L. (2003). Violence and risk of PTSD, major depression, substance abuse/dependence, and comorbidity: Results from the National Survey of Adolescents. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 71(4), 692–700.
- 59 Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. (2015). *2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health Questionnaire*. Available at: <http://www.samhsa.gov/data/population-data-nsduh/reports?tab=39>.
- 60 Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. (2015). *Results from the 2014 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables*. Table 2.6B. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Available at: <http://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/NSDUH-DetTabs-2015/NSDUH-DetTabs-2015/NSDUH-DetTabs-2015.pdf>.
- 61 *Results from the 2014 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables*. Table 2.6B. See note 60.
- 62 This report follows the 2014 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) definition for binge drinking, which is defined as “drinking five or more drinks on the same occasion on at least 1 day in the past 30 days.” As this definition differs from the 2015 NSDUH definition, general population comparisons for binge and heavy drinking in this report will be drawn from the 2014 NSDUH data. Hedden, S. L., Kennet, J., Lipari, R., Medley, G., Tice, P., Copello, E. A. P., & Kroutil, L. A. (2015). *Behavioral Health Trends in the United States: Results from the 2014 National Survey on Drug Use and Health*. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Available at: <http://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/NSDUH-FRR1-2014/NSDUH-FRR1-2014.pdf>.
- 63 *Results from the 2014 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables*. Table 2.46B. See note 60.
- 64 *Results from the 2014 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables*. Table 2.46B. See note 60.
- 65 *Results from the 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables*. Table 2.28B. See note 36.
- 66 *Results from the 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables*. Table 2.16B. See note 36.
- 67 *Results from the 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables*. Table 6.7B. See note 36.
- 68 Respondents were instructed to include products such as “weed, joints, hashish, hash, or hash oil” when reporting on marijuana use. See Q. 15.1.
- 69 *Results from the 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables*. Table 1.35B. See note 36.
- 70 *Results from the 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables*. Table 1.35B. See note 36.

- 71 For the purposes of this report, "illicit drugs" include those such as cocaine, crack, heroin, LSD, methamphetamine, and inhalants, but does not include marijuana or nonmedical use of prescription drugs. See Q. 15.1. This differs from illicit drugs as reported in the NSDUH, which includes "the misuse of prescription psychotherapeutics or the use of marijuana, cocaine (including crack), heroin, hallucinogens, inhalants, or methamphetamine." *Results from the 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables*. Table 1.30B. See note 36. Due to the difference between the two definitions, a comparison to the U.S. general population for the overall use of illicit drugs (not including marijuana or nonmedical use of prescription drugs) is not possible.
- 72 *Results from the 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables*. Table 1.22B. See note 36.
- 73 *Results from the 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables*. Table 1.30B. See note 36.
- 74 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2016). *HIV and Transgender Communities*. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/pdf/policies/cdc-hiv-transgender-brief.pdf>; Baral, S. D., Poteat, T., Strömdahl, S., Wirtz, A. L., Guadamuz, T. E., & Beyrer, C. (2013). Worldwide burden of HIV in transgender women: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *The Lancet Infectious Diseases*, 13(3), 214–222; Grant, J. M., Mottet, L. A., Tanis, J., Harrison, J., Herman, J. L., & Keisling, M. (2011). *Injustice at Every Turn: A Report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey*. (p. 80). DC: National Center for Transgender Equality & National Gay and Lesbian Task Force; Reisner, S. L., Poteat, T., Keatley, J., Cabral, M., Mothopeng, T., Dunham, E., Holland, C. E., Max, R., Baral, S. D. (2016). Global health burden and needs of transgender populations: a review. *The Lancet Infectious Diseases*, 388(10042), 412–436.
- 75 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2016). *HIV and Transgender Communities*. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/pdf/policies/cdc-hiv-transgender-brief.pdf>.
- 76 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2015). *National Health Interview Survey: Survey Description*. Available at: ftp://ftp.cdc.gov/pub/Health_Statistics/NCHS/Dataset_Documentation/NHIS/2014/srvydesc.pdf.
- 77 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2014). *2015 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Questionnaire*. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/brfss/questionnaires/pdf-ques/2015-brfss-questionnaire-12-29-14.pdf>.
- 78 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2015). *BRFSS Prevalence & Trends Data*. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/brfss/brfssprevalence>.
- 79 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2016). *Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System: 2015 Codebook Report*. Available at: http://www.cdc.gov/brfss/annual_data/2015/pdf/codebook15_llcp.pdf.
- 80 Centers for Disease Prevention and Control. (2016). *2015 National Health Interview Survey: Sample Adult File*. Available at: https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhis/nhis_2015_data_release.htm.
- 81 Percentages related to HIV status are presented with one decimal place throughout the section for more accurate comparison with general population figures.
- 82 The rate of respondents living with HIV includes those who were HIV-positive or reactive. Among respondents who had been tested, the rate of those who tested positive for HIV was 2.6%.
- 83 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2015). *HIV Surveillance Report, 2014*; vol. 26. Table 18a. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/library/reports/surveillance/>. The HIV Surveillance Report provides data for those who were living with diagnosed HIV infection in the U.S. population in 2013. The U.S. population data includes those who are 15 years of age and older and does not include rate for those who are under 18, so it was not possible to exactly match the USTS sample with the U.S. population data. However, when estimating the impact of including 15–17 year olds in the U.S. population rate of those living with HIV, research team calculations estimated a difference of approximately 0.002% in the rate, which would not impact the rate of those living with HIV in the U.S. population as reported here.
- 84 Ninety-seven percent (97%) of those who were tested for HIV were HIV negative.
- 85 AIDS.Gov. (2015). *HIV Care Continuum*. Available at: <https://www.aids.gov/federal-resources/policies/care-continuum>.
- 86 Due to a low sample size, response figures could not be reported for those who had not seen a doctor for HIV care in the past 6 months.
- 87 Due to a low sample size, response figures could not be reported for those who had not seen a doctor for HIV care in the past 12 months.
- 88 See AIDS.Gov. (2015). *Overview of HIV Treatments*. Available at: <https://www.aids.gov/hiv-aids-basics/just-diagnosed-with-hiv-aids/treatment-options/overview-of-hiv-treatments>.
- 89 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2016). *Behavioral and Clinical Characteristics of Persons Receiving Medical Care for HIV Infection—Medical Monitoring Project, United States, 2013 Cycle (June 2013–May 2014)*. HIV Surveillance Special Report 16. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/pdf/statistics/systems/mmp/cdc-hiv-hssr-mmp-2013.pdf>.



CHAPTER 8

Experiences at School

Many schools provide supportive environments that promote learning and growth, while some schools can be unwelcoming and unsupportive for transgender students, whether in Kindergarten through 12th grade (K–12), or in technical or higher education institutions (such as a college or university). Other studies have shown that many students feel unsafe and have been verbally harassed or physically attacked because of their transgender identity.^{1,2}

Survey respondents were asked whether they were out or perceived as transgender in K–12 and in higher education institutions. Those who said that they were out as transgender or that others thought they were transgender were asked additional questions about negative experiences based on their transgender status, including verbal harassment, physical and sexual assault, leaving school because of mistreatment, and expulsion. Throughout the chapter, notable differences in respondents' experiences based on demographic and other characteristics are reported.

KEY FINDINGS

- ▶ Twelve percent (12%) of respondents were out as transgender at some point from Kindergarten through the 12th grade.

- ▶ More than three-quarters (77%) of respondents who were out or perceived as transgender in K–12 had one or more negative experiences, such as being verbally harassed, prohibited from dressing according to their gender identity, or physically or sexually assaulted.

- ▶ Fifty-four percent (54%) of people who were out or perceived as transgender in K–12 were verbally harassed, and 24% were physically attacked.

- ▶ Seventeen percent (17%) of people who were out or perceived as transgender left a K–12 school because the mistreatment was so bad, and 6% were expelled.

- ▶ Twenty-four percent (24%) of people who were out or perceived as transgender in college or vocational school were verbally, physically, or sexually harassed.

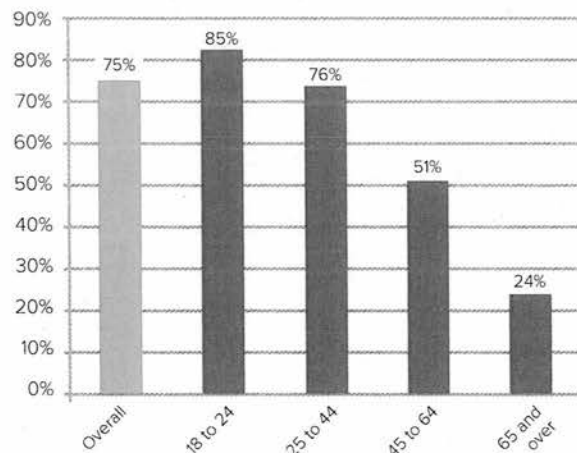
I. Outness in K–12

Twelve percent (12%) of respondents reported that they were out as transgender at some point between Kindergarten and the 12th grade (K–12). Of those who were not out as transgender, 28% said that they believed classmates, teachers, or school staff thought they were transgender.

All respondents, including those who were out or perceived as transgender in K–12, were also asked whether classmates, teachers, or school staff thought or knew that they were lesbian, gay, bisexual, or queer (LGBQ) in K–12. Three-quarters (75%) believed that classmates, teachers, or school staff thought or knew they were LGBQ. Younger respondents were much more likely to report that classmates, teachers, or staff in K–12 thought or knew they were LGBQ than older respondents,

such as 18- to 24-year-olds (85%) in contrast to 45- to 64-year-olds (51%) (Figure 8.1).

Figure 8.1: Perceived as LGBQ in K–12
CURRENT AGE (%)

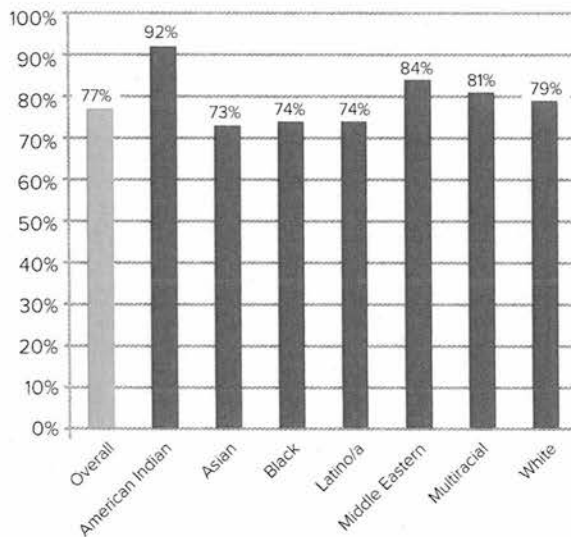


More than three-quarters (77%) of those who were out or perceived as transgender had one or more negative experiences at school because they were transgender, such as being verbally harassed or physically attacked.

II. Treatment in K–12

Respondents who were out as transgender in K–12 or who said that others thought that they were transgender received additional questions about negative experiences in K–12, such as being verbally harassed, physically attacked, or expelled. Overall, 77% of those who were out or perceived as transgender had one or more of these negative experiences, while only 23% did not have any of these experiences (Table 8.1). American Indian (92%), Middle Eastern (84%), and multiracial (81%) respondents (Figure 8.2) and people with disabilities³ (82%) were more likely to have one or more negative experiences.

Figure 8.2: Had one or more negative experiences in K–12 (of those who were out or perceived as transgender)
RACE/ETHNICITY (%)



Poor treatment in school was associated with a variety of negative experiences. Respondents who were out or perceived as transgender in K–12 and had one or more negative experiences outlined in this chapter were:

- More likely to have attempted suicide (52%) than those who were out or perceived as transgender and did not have any of these negative experiences (37%).
- More likely to have experienced homelessness (40%) than those who were out or perceived as transgender and did not have any of the negative experiences (22%).
- More likely to currently be experiencing serious psychological distress (47%) than those who were out or perceived as transgender and did not have any of the negative experiences (37%).
- More likely to have ever worked in the underground economy, such as in sex work or drug sales (28%), compared with those who were out or perceived as transgender and did not have any of the negative experiences (18%).

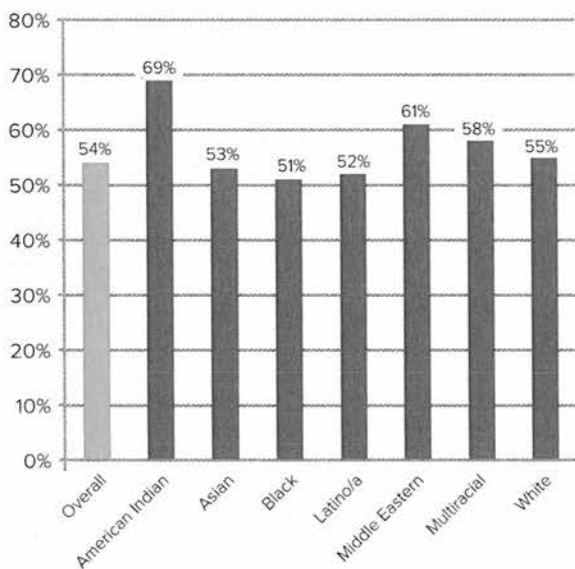
Table 8.1: Experiences of people who were out as transgender in K–12 or believed classmates, teachers, or school staff thought they were transgender

Experiences	% of those who were out or perceived as transgender
Verbally harassed because people thought they were transgender	54%
Not allowed to dress in a way that fit their gender identity or expression	52%
Disciplined for fighting back against bullies	36%
Physically attacked because people thought they were transgender	24%
Believe they were disciplined more harshly because teachers or staff thought they were transgender	20%
Left a school because the mistreatment was so bad	17%
Sexually assaulted because people thought they were transgender	13%
Expelled from school	6%
One or more experiences listed	77%

a. Verbal Harassment

More than half (54%) of people who were out or perceived as transgender in K–12 were verbally harassed because they were transgender. Verbal harassment differed among people of color, with American Indian (69%) and Middle Eastern (61%) respondents being more likely to have this experience, and Latino/a (52%) and Black (51%) respondents being less likely (Figure 8.3).

Figure 8.3: Verbally harassed in K–12 because people thought they were transgender RACE/ETHNICITY (%)



b. Physical Attack

Nearly one-quarter (24%) were physically attacked because of being transgender. Transgender women (38%) were more likely to have been physically attacked than transgender men (20%) and non-binary people (16%) (Figure 8.4). American Indian respondents (49%) were more than twice as likely to have been physically attacked, and Middle Eastern (36%), multiracial (31%), and Black (28%) respondents were also more likely to have had this experience, in contrast to Latino/a (24%), white (23%), and Asian (17%) respondents (Figure 8.5).

Nearly one-quarter (24%) of those who were out or perceived as transgender in school were physically attacked because of being transgender.

Figure 8.4: Physically attacked in K–12 because people thought they were transgender GENDER IDENTITY (%)

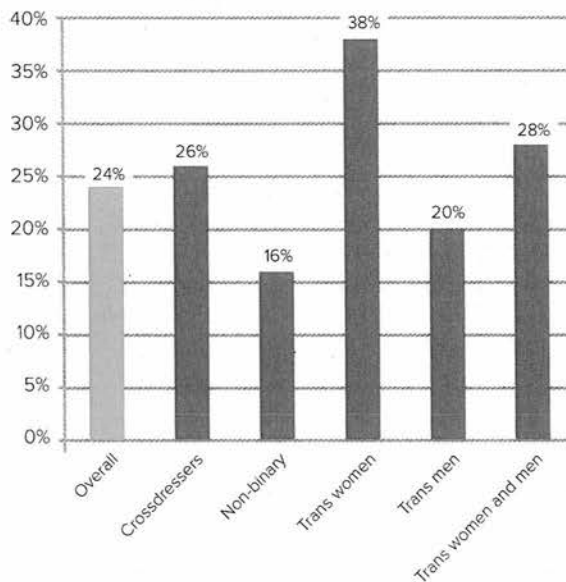
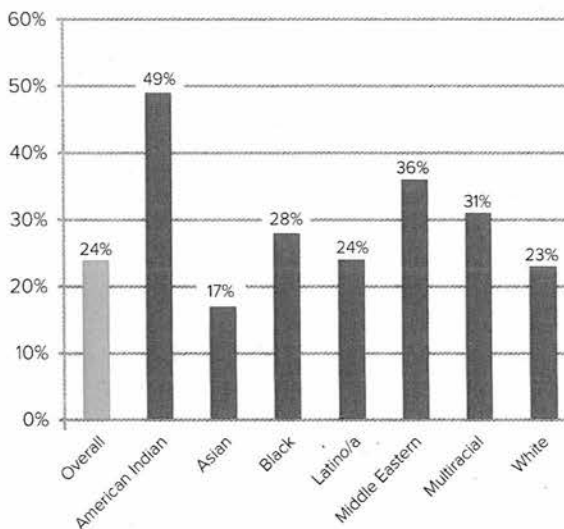


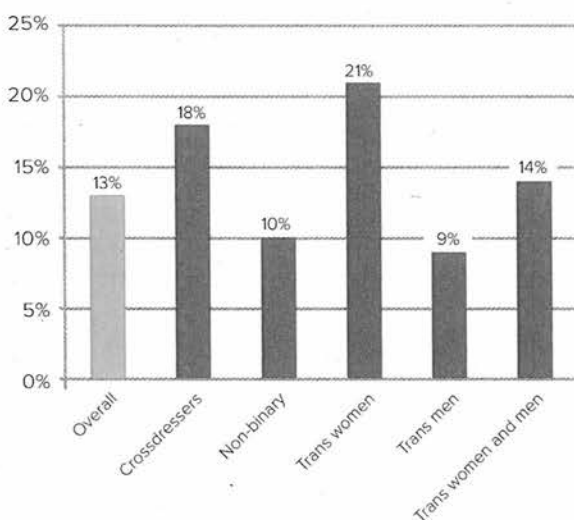
Figure 8.5: Physically attacked in K–12 because people thought they were transgender RACE/ETHNICITY (%)



c. Sexual Assault

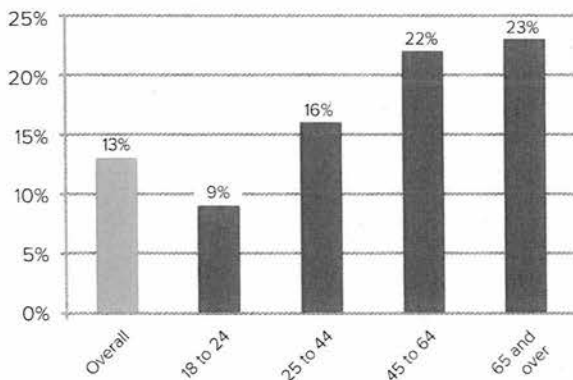
Thirteen percent (13%) of people who were out or perceived as transgender in K–12 were sexually assaulted in school because they were transgender.⁴ Transgender women (21%) and crossdressers (18%) were more likely to have been sexually assaulted than transgender men (9%) and non-binary people (10%) (Figure 8.6).

Figure 8.6: Sexually assaulted in K–12 because people thought they were transgender
GENDER IDENTITY (%)



Whether a respondent was sexually assaulted in K–12 varied by age, with older respondents such as 45- to 64-year-olds being more likely to have been sexually assaulted (22%) than younger respondents such as 25- to 44-year-olds (16%) (Figure 8.7).

Figure 8.7: Sexually assaulted in K–12 because people thought they were transgender
CURRENT AGE (%)



In Our Own Voices

“I was constantly bullied and physically assaulted by my classmates. Teachers would often see it happen and make no move to intervene. The harassment continued, and I eventually had to change high schools three times, each time just as bad as the last, until I finally gave up on public schools.”

“I’d get hit by soda cans, spit balls, and paper airplanes of hate mail. Teachers weren’t there or didn’t care. I had to avoid social interactions like buses and school bathrooms because I didn’t feel safe.”

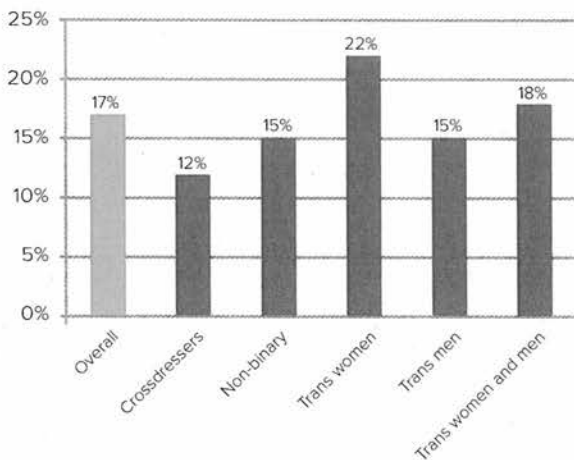
“Every single day at college, I was harassed for being a visibly trans woman. People slowed their cars down to stare at me, they shouted slurs at me from their dorm windows, insulted me in class, and a lot more I’d rather not think about. It got so bad that I tried to kill myself twice over the course of three months. Getting out of that school has been the best thing to have happened to me.”

“In high school, the staff told me I could not use the men’s bathroom because I’d make other students uncomfortable, even though I was out to everyone and none of the students were bothered by my gender.”

d. Left School Due to Harassment

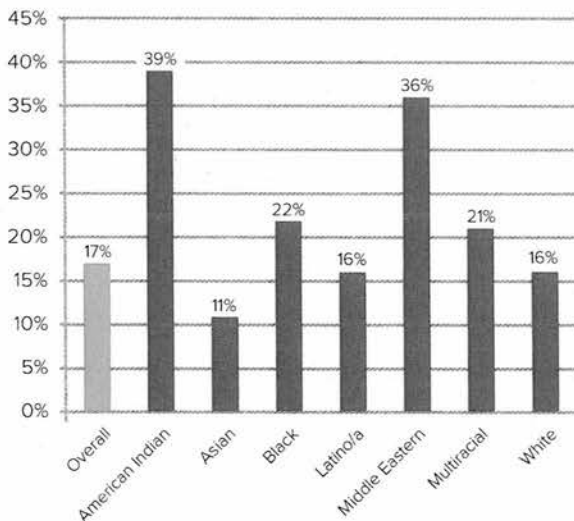
Seventeen percent (17%) of those who were out or perceived as transgender left a school because the mistreatment was so bad. Transgender women (22%) were more likely to have left a school because of mistreatment, in contrast to transgender men (15%) and non-binary people (15%) (Figure 8.8).

Figure 8.8: Left school due to mistreatment in K-12 GENDER IDENTITY (%)



American Indian (39%) and Middle Eastern (36%) respondents were more than twice as likely to have left a school because the mistreatment was so bad, and Black (22%) and multiracial (21%) respondents were also more likely to have left a school for this reason (Figure 8.9).

Figure 8.9: Left school due to mistreatment in K-12 RACE/ETHNICITY (%)

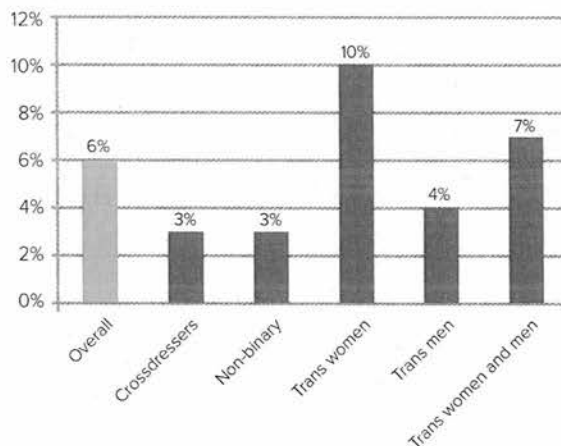


Seventeen percent (17%) of people who were out or perceived as transgender in K-12 left a school because the mistreatment was so bad.

e. Expelled from School

Six percent (6%) of people who were out or perceived as transgender were expelled from school. Transgender women were nearly twice as likely to have been expelled, with one in ten (10%) reporting that experience (Figure 8.10). Further, respondents who were currently working in the underground economy (18%) were three times as likely to have been expelled from school.

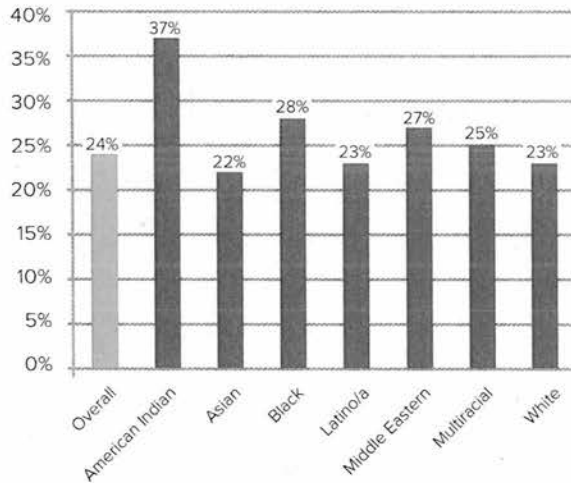
Figure 8.10: Expelled from school in K-12 GENDER IDENTITY (%)



III. Outness and Treatment in College or Vocational School

Of respondents who had attended college or vocational school, 46% said their classmates, professors, or staff at college or vocational school thought or knew they were transgender. Nearly one-quarter (24%) of respondents who indicated that classmates, professors, or staff at college or vocational school thought or knew they were transgender were verbally, physically, or sexually harassed. American Indian (37%), Black (28%), and Middle Eastern (27%) respondents were more likely to have had these experiences, while white (23%), Latino/a (23%), and Asian (22%) respondents were less likely (Figure 8.11).

Figure 8.11: Verbally, physically, or sexually harassed in college or vocational school RACE/ETHNICITY (%)



Of respondents who were out or perceived as transgender and who experienced some form of harassment, 16% left college or vocational school because the harassment was so bad. This represents 2% of all respondents who attended a higher education institution. Of those who experienced some form of harassment, transgender women (21%) were more likely to

have left college or vocational school for this reason than transgender men (16%) and non-binary people (12%) (Figure 8.12). Respondents currently working in the underground economy were almost twice as likely (31%) to have left college because of harassment than other respondents. American Indian (23%), Latino/a (23%), Black (21%), and multiracial (20%) respondents were more likely to report leaving school for that reason (Figure 8.13).

Figure 8.12: Left college or vocational school because harassment was so bad (of those who were harassed) GENDER IDENTITY (%)

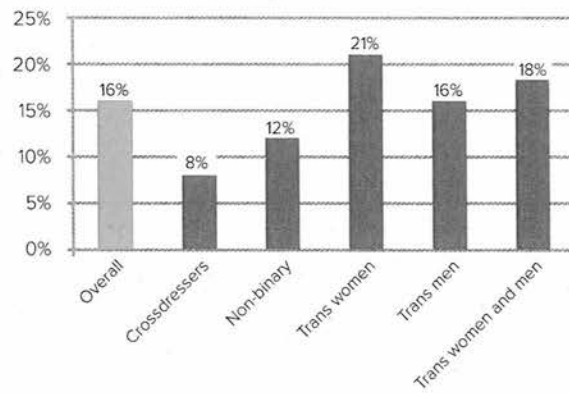
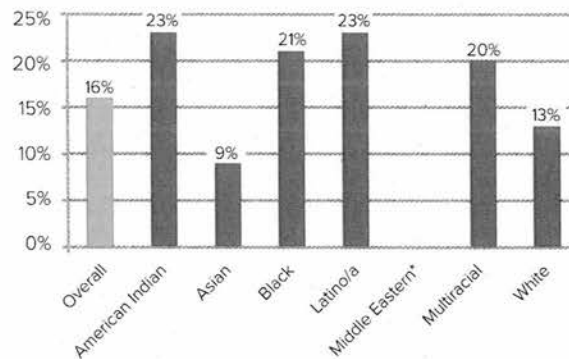


Figure 8.13: Left college or vocational school because harassment was so bad (of those who were harassed) RACE/ETHNICITY (%)



*Sample size too low to report

In addition to the 2% who left because the harassment was so bad, 1% of respondents who attended college or vocational school were expelled or forced out, and 5% left because of other reasons related to being transgender.

IV. Current Outness and Support of Classmates

In addition to questions about being out to classmates at any time while they were in school, respondents were asked whether they currently had classmates, and whether those classmates knew that they were transgender. Of respondents who currently had classmates, only 15% said that all of their classmates knew that they were transgender, 10% said that most of them knew, 28% said that some of them knew, and nearly half (47%) said that none of their classmates knew that they were transgender.

Respondents who currently had classmates and reported that all, most, or some of their classmates knew that they were transgender were asked how supportive their classmates generally were of them as a transgender person. Responses were given on a five-point scale from “very supportive” to “very unsupportive.” The categories were collapsed to create a new variable reflecting supportive, neutral, or unsupportive classmates.⁵ More than half (56%) reported that their classmates were supportive, 39% had classmates that were neither supportive nor unsupportive, and only 5% reported that their classmates were unsupportive (Table 8.2).

Table 8.2: Classmates’ level of support of them as a transgender person

Level of support	% of those who reported that all, most, or some of their classmates knew they were transgender
Very supportive	21%
Supportive	35%
Neither supportive nor unsupportive	39%
Unsupportive	4%
Very unsupportive	1%

More than half (56%) of those who had at least some classmates who knew they were transgender reported that their classmates were supportive.

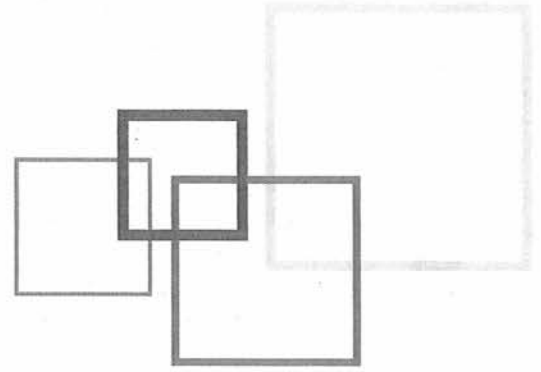
Conclusion

Results indicated that the majority of those who were out or perceived as transgender in K–12 had one or more negative experiences, and that such experiences were correlated with a variety of poor outcomes, such as higher rates of attempted suicide, homelessness, and serious psychological distress. Although negative experiences were reported at all age groups, results found that older individuals were less likely to have been out as transgender in K–12 than younger respondents, but when out, they were more likely to have experienced negative treatment in schools. This indicates that school environments have improved for transgender people over the years, though high rates of mistreatment were reported even among younger respondents.

Additionally, results indicated that those who attended college or another higher education institution were out or perceived as transgender at high rates. However, they also suggest that transgender students in such institutions are subject to harmful experiences that lead to negative outcomes, such as having to leave school to avoid being harassed because of being transgender.

ENDNOTES | CHAPTER 8: EXPERIENCES AT SCHOOL

- 1 Kosciw, J. G., Greytak, E. A., Palmer, N. A., & Boesen, M. J. (2014). *The 2013 National School Climate Survey: The Experiences of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Youth in Our Nation's Schools*. New York, NY: Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network; Kosciw, J. G., Palmer, N. A., Kull, R. M., & Greytak, E. A. (2013). The effect of negative school climate on academic outcomes for LGBT youth and the role of in-school supports. *Journal of School Violence, 12*(1), 45–63.
- 2 Rankin, S. & Beemyn, G. (2012). Beyond a binary: The lives of gender-nonconforming youth. *About Campus, 17*(4), 2–10; Rankin, S., Weber, G., Blumenfeld, W., & Frazer, S. (2010). *2010 State of Higher Education for LGBT People*. Charlotte, NC: Campus Pride.
- 3 "People with disabilities" here refers to respondents who identified as a person with a disability in Q. 2.20.
- 4 This data is derived from responses to Q. 26.4, where respondents were asked if they had "experienced unwanted sexual contact because people thought [they were] trans."
- 5 "Very supportive" and "supportive" categories were collapsed into a single "supportive" category. "Very unsupportive" and "unsupportive" categories were collapsed into a single "unsupportive" category. See Q. 4.12.



CHAPTER 9

Income and Employment Status

High rates of poverty, unemployment, and economic vulnerability among transgender people have been documented in prior research.¹ These disparities can lead to numerous negative outcomes in housing, health, and many other aspects of life. The survey explored respondents' employment status and income sources with questions that were patterned on the Current Population Survey (CPS), a survey used by the Bureau of Labor Statistics to assess economic indicators and the state of the labor force in the United States.^{2,3} The questions were used to compare the income and employment experiences of the USTS sample with those in the U.S. population.⁴ Notable differences in respondents' experiences based on demographic and other characteristics are reported throughout the chapter.

KEY FINDINGS

- ▶ The unemployment rate among respondents was 15%, three times higher than the U.S. unemployment rate at the time of the survey (5%).

- ▶ Nearly one-third (29%) of respondents were living in poverty, more than twice the rate in the U.S. adult population (14%).

- ▶ One in eight (12%) respondents reported an annual household income between \$1 and \$9,999, three times higher than the U.S. adult population in this income bracket (4%).

I. Employment Status

Respondents were asked a series of questions about their current employment status. More than one-third (35%) currently had a full-time job, 15% had at least one part-time job, 15% were self-employed, and 11% were students (Table 9.1). Nine percent (9%) of those who were employed were working more than one full-time or part-time job, which represents 4% of the whole sample.

Two percent (2%) of respondents were currently employed doing sex work, selling drugs, or doing other work in the underground economy for income. Of these, 60% indicated that they were currently looking for work that is not criminalized.⁵

Of those who were working either full time or part time for an employer, 13% were members of a labor union or an employee association similar to a union (representing 6% of the full sample), while another 2% of those who were working for an employer were not union members but were covered by a union or employee association contract. This compares to 12% of wage and salary workers in the U.S. population who were members of a union or were not union members but were covered by a union or employee association contract.⁶

Table 9.1: Current employment status

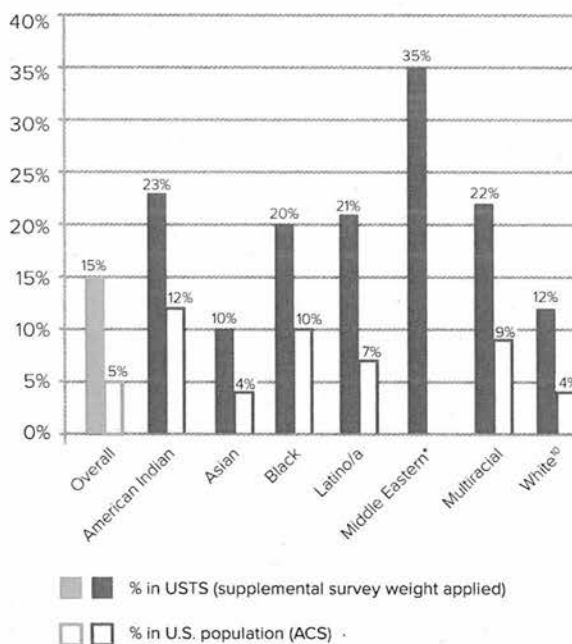
Employment status	% of respondents (supplemental weight)
Work full time for an employer	35%
Work part time for an employer	15%
Self-employed in own business, profession or trade, or operate a farm (not including underground economy)	15%
Retired	14%
Not employed due to disability	13%
Student	11%
Unemployed but looking for work	11%
Unemployed and have stopped looking for work	5%
Homemaker or full-time parent	3%
Work for pay from sex work, selling drugs, or other work currently criminalized	2%
Not listed above	4%

The national unemployment rate, as reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, is calculated out of only those who are currently “in the labor force.” This includes people who are employed and those who are unemployed but looking for work. It does not include those who are unemployed but not looking for work, since they are considered to be out of the labor force. For the purposes of comparison, the unemployment rate for USTS respondents reported here was calculated in the same manner. The unemployment rate for

The unemployment rate for USTS respondents was 15%, three times the unemployment rate in the U.S. population.

USTS respondents was 15%, three times the U.S. unemployment rate at the time of the survey (5%).⁷ Nearly one-half (49%) of undocumented residents were unemployed. The unemployment rate was also higher among people with disabilities⁸ (24%) and people of color, with Middle Eastern (35%), American Indian (23%), multiracial (22%), Latino/a (21%), and Black (20%) respondents being more likely to be unemployed. Unemployment rates among Asian, multiracial, Latino/a, and Black USTS respondents were between two and three times higher than Asian, Latino/a, multiracial, and Black people in the U.S. population (Figure 9.1).⁹

Figure 9.1: Unemployment rate RACE/ETHNICITY (%)



*U.S. population data for Middle Eastern people alone is not available. See note 10.

II. Sources of Income and Assistance

Respondents were asked about their income sources, and they reported a wide range of sources. In order to compare the USTS sample to the U.S. population in the CPS, the USTS data presented in Table 9.2 is limited to respondents ages 25 and older only. Compared to findings from the CPS, respondents' sources of income differed from the U.S. population in several categories. For instance, 57% of USTS respondents aged 25 and older had income from their own and/or their spouse's employment, compared to 67% of adults aged 25 and older in the U.S. population (Table 9.2).

Table 9.2: Current sources of income (ages 25 and older only)

Income source	% in USTS (supplemental weight)	% in U.S. adult population (CPS)
Pay from respondent's and/or partner's full-time or part-time job	57%	67%
Self-employment income from own business, profession or trade, or farm (not including underground economy)	18%	7%
Social Security retirement, railroad retirement income, or Social Security disability benefits (SSDI)	25%	25%
Private pension, government employee pension, or other retirement income	13%	13%
Income from dividends, estates or trusts, royalties, rental income, savings, or bonds	12%	61%
Supplemental Security Income (SSI)	7%	3%
Regular contributions from people not living in household	4%	1%
Veterans disability benefits and other veterans benefits	4%	2%
Pay from sex work, selling drugs, or other work currently criminalized	3%	--
Cash assistance from welfare (such as TANF) or other public cash assistance program (not including SNAP or WIC)	2%	1%
Unemployment benefits	2%	2%
Child support or alimony	1%	2%
Workers' compensation or other disability	1%	1%
Income not listed above	9%	--

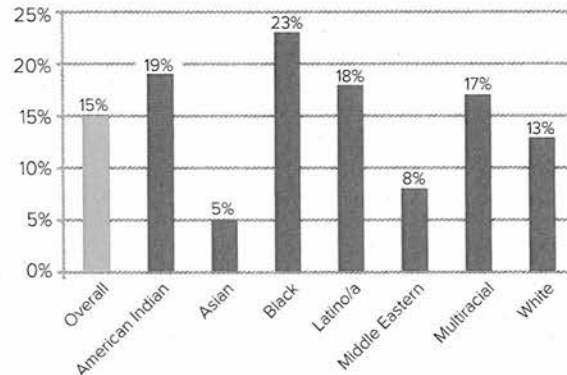
Responses were examined to determine whether respondents had one source of income or multiple sources. Nearly one-half (45%) of all respondents reported having multiple sources of income. Thirty-seven percent (37%) reported that their sole source of income was from their own employment or their partner's employment. Nearly one in ten (9%) reported that their sole source of income was Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or disability, 1% received their only income from unemployment benefits or cash assistance programs, and 1% reported that their sole source of income was from underground economy work, including sex work, drug sales, or other work that is currently criminalized (Table 9.3).

Table 9.3: Current sources of income by single and multiple sources

Income source	% of respondents (supplemental weight)
Employment only (from their own employment, partner/spouse's employment, or self-employment)	37%
SSI/disability only	9%
Pension/retirement only	3%
Other sources only	3%
Pay from sex work, selling drugs, or other work that is currently criminalized only	1%
Unemployment benefits/cash assistance only	1%
Multiple sources	45%

Fifteen percent (15%) of respondents reported receiving assistance through food stamps (SNAP)¹¹ and/or WIC.¹² Forty-one percent (41%) of respondents living with HIV received SNAP and/or WIC assistance. People with disabilities (29%), and Black (23%), American Indian (19%), and Latino/a (18%) respondents were also more likely to receive SNAP and/or WIC assistance (Figure 9.2).

Figure 9.2: Currently receive SNAP or WIC assistance RACE/ETHNICITY (%)



III. Individual and Household Income and Poverty

Respondents also received questions about their individual¹³ and household¹⁴ incomes from the year 2014, which was the last full year prior to the survey for which they could provide annual income figures. They reported lower incomes overall than the U.S. population as a whole, as well as higher poverty rates. Most of the analysis and reporting in this chapter focuses on household income.

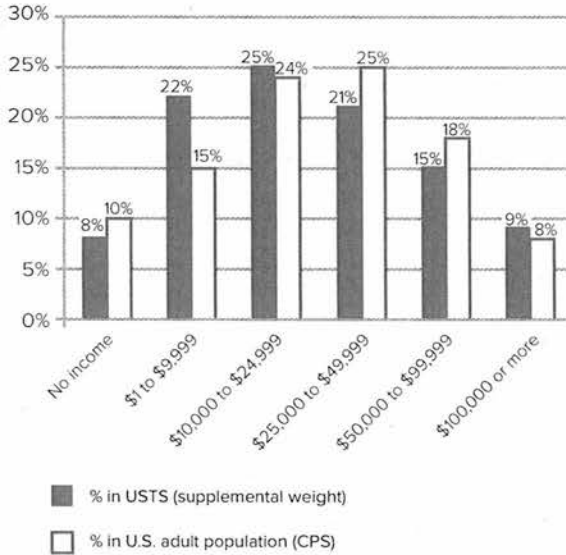
a. Individual Income

When asked about their *individual* income, 8% of respondents reported that they had no individual income, compared to 10% in the U.S. adult population.^{15,16} Nearly one-quarter (22%) of respondents reported that they had an income between \$1 and \$9,999 per year, compared to 15% in the U.S. adult population (Figure 9.3).¹⁷

One in eight (12%) respondents reported that they had a household income between \$1 and \$9,999 per year, three times the rate in the U.S. population (4%).

Nearly one-third (29%) of respondents were living in poverty, more than twice the rate in the U.S. population (14%).

Figure 9.3: Individual income in 2014



b. Household Income

Turning to household income, 4% of respondents reported that they had no household income, which was four times higher than the rate of those with no income in the U.S. adult population (1%)¹⁸ Additionally, one in eight (12%) respondents reported earning an annual household income between \$1 and \$9,999, which was three times as many when compared to the U.S. adult population (4%) (Figure 9.4).¹⁹ Respondents were nearly twice as likely to have a household income of only \$10,000 to \$24,999 (22%) as those in the U.S. adult population (12%). Furthermore, respondents were less likely to have household incomes of \$50,000 to \$100,000 (23%) than those in the U.S. adult population (31%).

In Our Own Voices

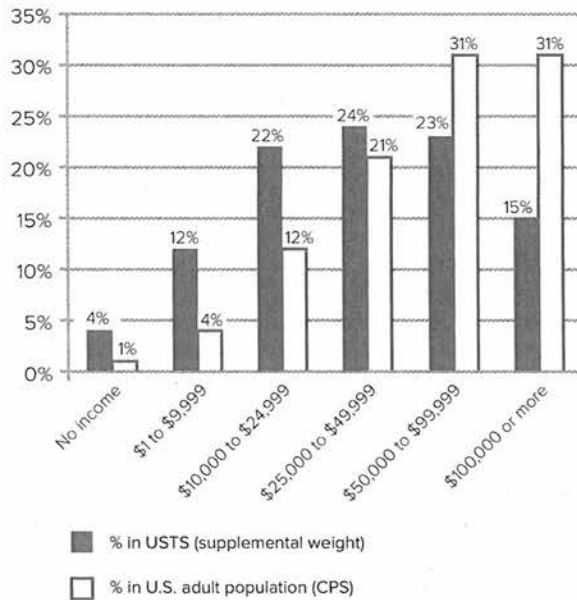
“The day I came out as transgender at work, I was let go. Since transitioning, employment has been difficult, with a 95% reduction in earnings.”

“I quit after seven months of unbearable working conditions. I have been struggling to keep afloat financially. I’m afraid of going to apply for unemployment or SNAP benefits because I know that I will be discriminated against. I’m on the brink of being homeless and my own family hasn’t even reached out to help me.”

“I have had to live my life with no safety net or resources, and it’s hard. I’m constantly battling homelessness, I rarely get hired because I’m mixed and visibly queer, and I end up having to rely on government assistance and friends with available couches.”

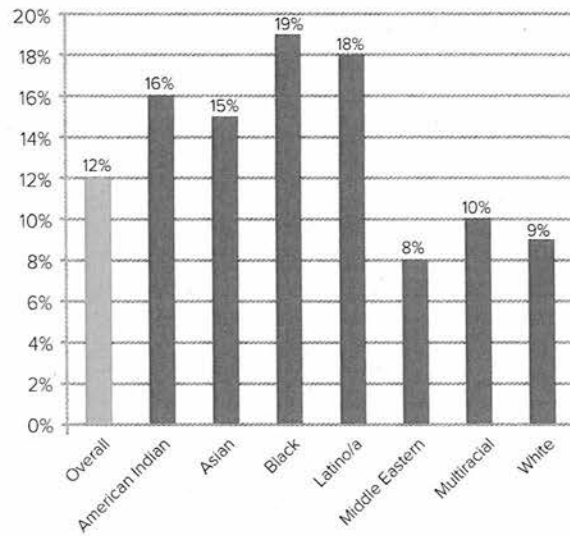
“In the nearly seven years since I transitioned, I have been unemployed, surviving off the charity of friends and family, and government assistance when I could get it. I have over 20 years of experience in my field, yet I cannot even land a part-time retail position.”

Figure 9.4: Household income in 2014



More than half (53%) of respondents whose sole source of income was from the underground economy had a household income between \$1 and \$9,999 per year, more than four times the rate in the overall sample. Nearly one-third (31%) of those who were currently working in the underground economy and also had additional sources of income reported this low household income, nearly three times the rate of the overall sample. People with disabilities (21%) were nearly twice as likely as the overall sample, and those living with HIV (19%) and people of color, including Black (19%), Latino/a (18%), and American Indian (16%) respondents, were also more likely to have a household income between \$1 and \$9,999 (Figure 9.5).

Figure 9.5: Household income from \$1 to \$9,999 RACE/ETHNICITY (%)

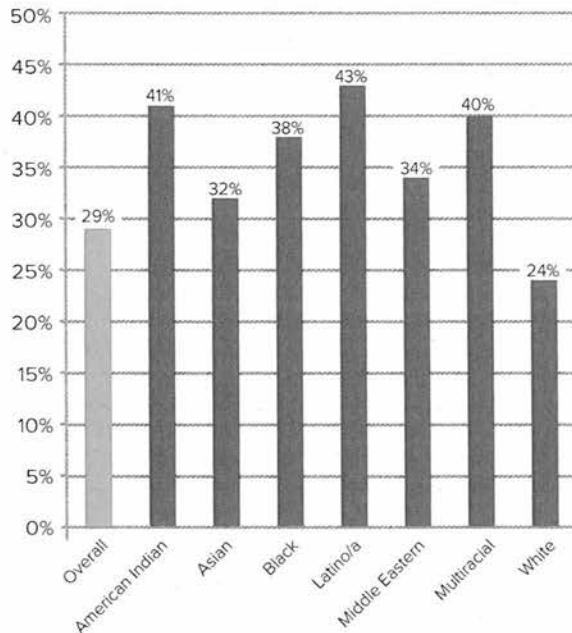


c. Poverty

Nearly one-third (29%) of respondents were living in poverty,²⁰ more than twice the rate of people living in poverty in the U.S. adult population at the time of the survey (14%).²¹

More than two-thirds (69%) of undocumented residents and nearly two-thirds (62%) of those currently working in the underground economy were living in poverty. Respondents living with HIV (51%) and people with disabilities (45%) were also more likely to be living in poverty. Among people of color, Latino/a (43%), American Indian (41%), multiracial (40%), and Black (38%) respondents were most likely to be living in poverty (Figure 9.6).

Figure 9.6: Living in poverty RACE/ETHNICITY (%)



Conclusion

The results indicate that respondents faced higher levels of unemployment and poverty compared to the U.S. adult population. They were three times more likely than the U.S. adult population to be unemployed, more than twice as likely to be living in poverty, and more than three times as likely to have an annual household income below \$10,000. People of color, undocumented residents, people with disabilities, and respondents living with HIV were more likely to report being unemployed, living in poverty, and having low incomes, which indicate that these respondents have experienced substantial economic instability.

ENDNOTES | CHAPTER 9: INCOME AND EMPLOYMENT STATUS

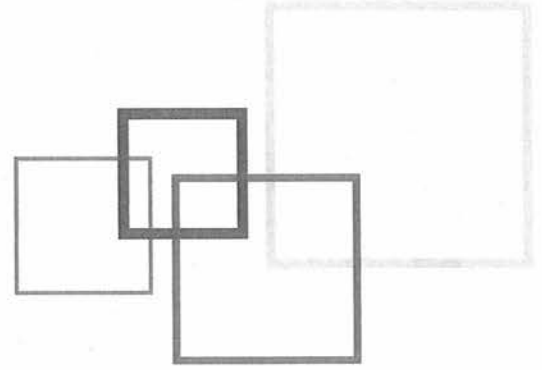
- Grant, J. M., Mottet, L. A., Tanis, J., Harrison, J., Herman, J. L., & Keisling, M. (2011). *Injustice at Every Turn: A Report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey*. (p. 22). DC: National Center for Transgender Equality & National Gay and Lesbian Task Force; Center for American Progress & Movement Advancement Project. (2015). *Paying an Unfair Price: The Financial Penalty for Being Transgender in America*. Available at: <http://www.lgbtmap.org/file/paying-an-unfair-price-transgender.pdf>.
- U.S. Census Bureau & Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2015). *Current Population Survey (CPS)*.
- This chapter provides an overview of respondents' income and employment status. Experiences in specific fields of work are discussed further in the *Sex Work and Other Underground Economy Work* and *Military Service* chapters. Experiences in employment settings, such as being fired or harassed in the workplace, are discussed in more detail in the *Employment and the Workplace* chapter.
- Throughout this chapter, findings regarding respondents' income and employment have been weighted with a supplemental survey weight to reflect the age and educational attainment of the U.S. population in addition to the standard survey weight. The USTS sample differs substantially from the U.S. population in regard to age and educational attainment. Therefore, this additional weight is applied to all percentages reported in this chapter in

- order to provide a more accurate comparison to the U.S. general population. See the *Methodology* and *Portrait of USTS Respondents* chapters for more information about the supplemental survey weight.
- Experiences of respondents with sex work and other underground economy work are discussed further in the *Sex Work and Other Underground Economy Work* chapter.
- Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2016). *Union Affiliation of Employed Wage and Salary Workers by Selected Characteristics, 2014–2015 Annual Averages*. Available at: http://www.bls.gov/news.release/union2.t01.htm#union_a01.f1. The percentage of people in the U.S. who are members of a union or covered by a union or employee association contract includes those in the U.S. population who are 16 years of age and older, in contrast to the USTS sample, which includes respondents who are 18 and older. Therefore, the comparison to the USTS sample should be interpreted with caution.
- Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2015). *The Employment Situation—August 2015*. Available at: http://www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/empsit_09042015.pdf; Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2015). *The Employment Situation—September 2015*. Available at: http://www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/empsit_10022015.pdf. The national unemployment rate for August and September 2015, as published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, includes those

in the U.S. population who are 16 years of age and older. The USTS sample includes respondents who are 18 and older. Therefore, the comparison between the national unemployment rate and the USTS unemployment rate sample should be interpreted with caution.

- 8 "People with disabilities" here refers to respondents who identified as a person with a disability in Q. 2.20.
- 9 The unemployment rate by race and ethnicity among adults in the U.S. population was calculated by the research team using CPS data available via the CPS Table Creator (<http://www.census.gov/cps/data/cpstablecreator.html>). CPS Table Creator data utilizes data from the March 2015 Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement, in which the overall U.S. unemployment rate was 5.5%. This March 2015 national unemployment rate was higher than the national rate at the time of the survey (5.1% in August and September 2015), as outlined in this report (see the unemployment rate time series table available through the Bureau of Labor Statistics, available at <http://data.bls.gov/timeseries/LNS14000000>). Given the higher national unemployment rate in March 2015, the comparison of the national unemployment rate by race and ethnicity to the unemployment rate for USTS respondents by race and ethnicity as reported here likely reflects smaller differences in the unemployment rate than would have existed at the time of the survey. Therefore, these comparisons should be interpreted accordingly.
- 10 CPS data combines people of Middle Eastern descent and white people in a single "white/Caucasian" category, therefore Middle Eastern respondents in the U.S. population are included in the CPS percentage for this category.
- 11 See Q. 710. Respondents received the following definition for SNAP: "The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is sometimes called the Food Stamp program. It helps people who have low or no income to buy food, usually with an EBT card." SNAP benefits are not considered income.
- 12 See Q. 710. Respondents received the following definition for WIC: "'WIC' stands for 'Women, Infants, and Children.' It's the short name for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children. WIC is a federal program to help women who are pregnant or breastfeeding and children less than five years old get health care and healthy food." WIC benefits are not considered income.
- 13 See Q. 712. Respondents received the following note describing individual income: "'Individual income' includes money from jobs, employment, net income from business, income from farms or rentals, income from self-employment, pensions, dividends, interest, social security payments, and other money income that you personally received in 2014. Do not include assistance from food stamps (SNAP) or WIC as income."

- 14 See Q. 714. Respondents received the following note describing household income: "'Household income' includes you and all members of your household who have lived with you during the past 12 months and includes money from jobs, employment, net income from business, income from farms or rentals, income from self-employment, pensions, dividends, interest, social security payments, and any other money income received by you and members of your household who are 15 years of age or older in 2014. Do not include assistance from food stamps (SNAP) or WIC as income."
- 15 *Current Population Survey (CPS)*. See note 2.
- 16 Those who report having "no income" in the USTS and CPS are a group with characteristics that are distinct from low-income earners, such as those who earn an income between \$1 and \$9,999. For example, they are more likely to be out of the labor force. Therefore, when differences in experiences by income level are highlighted in this report, the experiences of those who report no household income are generally presented separately from those of low-income earners.
- 17 *Current Population Survey (CPS)*. See note 2.
- 18 *Current Population Survey (CPS)*. See note 2.
- 19 *Current Population Survey (CPS)*. See note 2.
- 20 The research team calculated the USTS poverty measure using the official poverty measure, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, which can be found at: <https://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/about/overview/measure.html>. The income ranges in the USTS allowed for designation of respondents as in or near poverty if their total family income fell below 124% of the official poverty measure for purposes of comparison to the U.S. adult population. Respondents who are "living in poverty" represent those who are living at or near the poverty line.
- 21 Proctor, B. D., Semega, J. L., & Kollar, M. A. (2016). *Income and Poverty in the United States: 2015*. (p. 12). DC: U.S. Census Bureau. Available at: <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2016/demo/p60-256.pdf>.



CHAPTER 10

Employment and the Workplace

Access to employment is critical to people's ability to support themselves and their families. Prior research has shown that transgender people face pervasive mistreatment, harassment, and discrimination in the workplace and during the hiring process.¹ In addition to being fired, forced out of their jobs, or not hired for jobs because of their gender identity or expression, transgender people are also often subject to additional forms of mistreatment at work, such as being verbally harassed, being forced to present as the wrong gender in order to keep their jobs, or being physically attacked at work.²

Respondents were asked about being out in the workplace and the level of support they received from coworkers. They were also asked how they were treated in the workplace as a transgender person, including whether they had been fired, denied a promotion, or not hired because of being transgender, whether they had been harassed or faced other forms of mistreatment, and whether they had to take actions to avoid mistreatment, such as quitting their job or delaying their transition. Throughout the chapter, notable differences in respondents' experiences based on demographic and other characteristics are reported.

KEY FINDINGS

- ▶ Sixteen percent (16%) of respondents who have ever been employed reported losing at least one job because of their gender identity or expression.
- ▶ Thirty percent (30%) of respondents who had a job in the past year reported being fired, denied a promotion, or experiencing some other form of mistreatment in the workplace related to their gender identity or expression, such as being harassed or attacked.
- ▶ In the past year, 27% of those who held or applied for a job reported being fired, denied a promotion, or not hired for a job they applied for because of their gender identity or expression.
- ▶ Fifteen percent (15%) of respondents who had a job in the past year were verbally harassed, physically attacked, and/or sexually assaulted at work because of their gender identity or expression.
- ▶ Nearly one-quarter (23%) of those who had a job in the past year reported other forms of mistreatment based on their gender identity or expression during that year, such as being told by their employer to present as the wrong gender in order to keep their job or having employers or coworkers share private information about their transgender status with others without permission.
- ▶ More than three-quarters (77%) of respondents who had a job in the past year took steps to avoid mistreatment in the workplace, such as hiding or delaying their gender transition or quitting their job.

I. Outness and Support in the Workplace

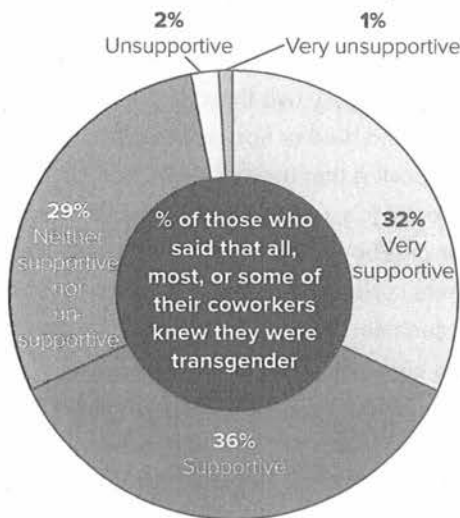
Respondents were asked whether their current bosses or supervisors and their current coworkers knew they were transgender. Of respondents who currently had bosses or supervisors, 35% said that all of their current bosses or supervisors knew they were transgender, 6% reported that most knew, and 10% indicated that some knew that they were transgender. Nearly half (49%) reported that none of their bosses or supervisors knew that they

were transgender. Of respondents who currently had coworkers, less than one-quarter (23%) reported that all of their coworkers knew they were transgender, 11% reported that most of their coworkers knew, and 24% said that some of their coworkers knew they were transgender. Forty-two percent (42%) indicated that none of their coworkers knew that they were transgender.

Respondents who currently had coworkers and reported that all, most, or some of their coworkers knew that they were transgender were asked how supportive their coworkers generally were of them as a transgender person.³ Responses were provided on a five-point scale from “very

supportive” to “very unsupportive.” More than two-thirds (68%) of these respondents reported that their coworkers were supportive, 29% had coworkers who were neither supportive nor unsupportive, and only 3% had unsupportive coworkers (Figure 10.1).

Figure 10.1: Level of support



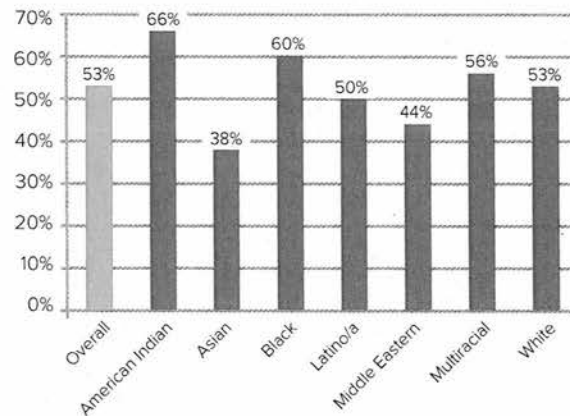
II. Loss of Employment During Lifetime

Eighty-one percent (81%) of respondents had worked at a job or business at some point in their lifetime.⁴ Those respondents were asked whether they had ever experienced a loss of employment, including losing a job, being laid off, being fired, or being forced to resign, and the reasons they believed this happened.

Overall, more than half (53%) of respondents who had ever held a job experienced a loss of employment for any reason. Respondents who were living with HIV (78%) and those who have done sex work (73%) were more likely to have lost a job at some point in their lifetime. American

Indian (66%) and Black (60%) respondents (Figure 10.2), transgender women (66%), and people with disabilities⁵ (59%) were also more likely to have ever lost a job.

Figure 10.2: Ever lost job for any reason RACE/ETHNICITY (%)



Respondents who had lost a job at some point in their lifetime were asked what they believed the reasons were for that treatment, and they selected one or more reasons from a list, such as age, race or ethnicity, and gender identity or expression (Table 10.1).

Table 10.1: Reported reasons for losing a job

Reason for losing job	% of those who have ever lost job	% of those who have been employed
Age	7%	4%
Disability	13%	7%
Income level or education	5%	2%
Gender identity or expression	30%	16%
Race or ethnicity	5%	3%
Religion or spirituality	2%	1%
Sexual orientation	13%	7%
None of the above	61%	32%

One in six (16%) respondents who have been employed reported that they had lost a job because of their gender identity or expression.⁶ This represents 13% of the overall sample.

American Indian (21%), multiracial (18%), and Black (17%) respondents were more likely than the overall sample to have lost a job because of their gender identity or expression (Figure 10.3). More than one-quarter of respondents who have done sex work (27%) and respondents living with HIV (26%) have lost a job because of being transgender. Transgender women (18%) were more likely than transgender men (14%) and non-binary people (7%) to have lost a job because of their gender identity or expression (Figure 10.4).

Figure 10.3: Ever lost job because of being transgender RACE/ETHNICITY (%)

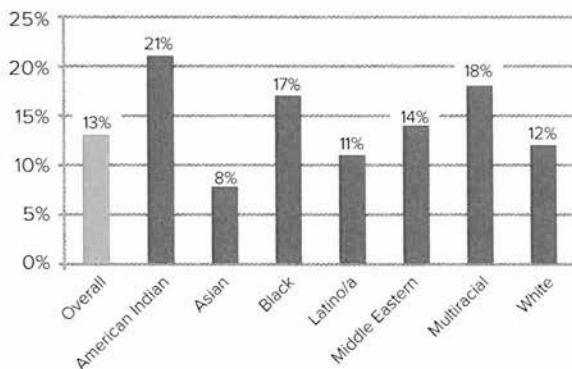
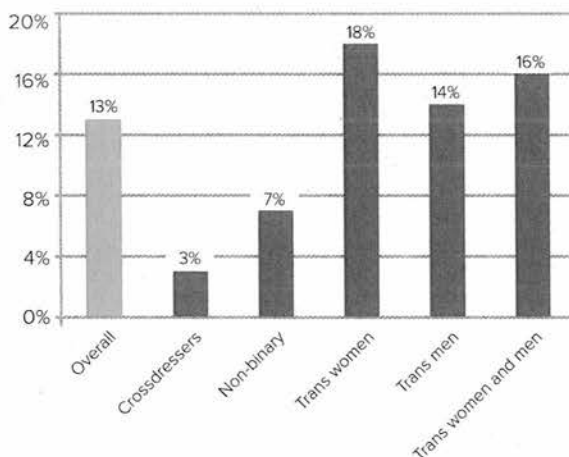


Figure 10.4: Ever lost job because of being transgender GENDER IDENTITY (%)



III. Firing, Hiring, and Promotions in the Past Year

Seventy percent (70%) of respondents had held and/or applied for a job in the past year. Those respondents were asked if they had negative experiences related to firing, hiring, and promotions in the past year.

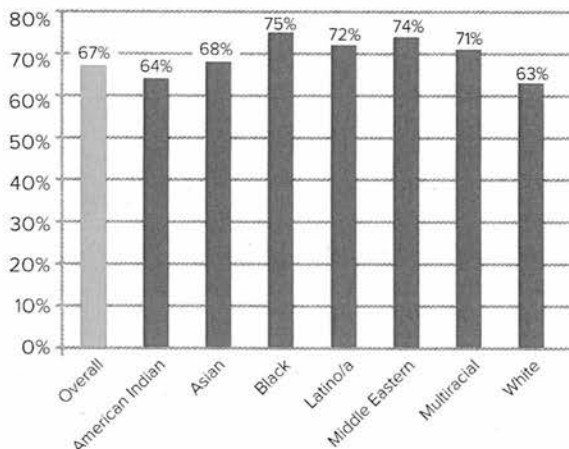
Overall, approximately two-thirds (67%) of respondents who held or applied for a job in the past year reported that they were fired or forced to resign from a job, not hired for a job that they applied for, and/or denied a promotion (Table 10.2). Respondents currently working in the underground economy, such as sex work, drug sales, or other work that is currently criminalized (78%), and people with disabilities (75%) were more likely to have had one or more of these experiences in the past year. Black (75%) and Middle Eastern (74%) respondents were also more likely to have had one or more of these experiences in the past year, in contrast to white (63%) and American Indian (64%) respondents (Figure 10.5).

Table 10.2: Fired, not hired, or denied a promotion for any reason in the past year

Occurrence in the past year	% of those who held or applied for job
Not hired for a job they applied for	61%
Denied a promotion	13%
Fired or forced to resign	12%
One or more experiences listed	67%

More than one-quarter (27%) of those who held or applied for a job in the past year reported not being hired, being denied a promotion, or being fired during that year because of their gender identity or expression.

Figure 10.5: Fired, not hired, or denied a promotion for any reason in the past year
RACE/ETHNICITY (%)



Respondents who reported these experiences were asked what they believed the reasons were for that treatment. Forty-one percent (41%) of respondents who were fired or forced to resign from a job, not hired for a job that they applied for, or were denied a promotion believed that it was due to their gender identity or expression (Table 10.3). This means that 27% of all of those who held or applied for a job in the past year (or 19% of the overall sample) reported not being hired for a job they applied for, being denied a promotion, or being fired from a job in the past year because of their gender identity or expression.

Table 10.3: Reported reasons for not being hired, being denied a promotion, or being fired in the past year

Reported reasons for negative experience in the past year	Reasons for not being hired (% of those not hired)	Reasons for being denied promotion (% of those denied promotion)	Reasons for being fired (% of those fired)
Age	21%	16%	6%
Disability	7%	9%	15%
Income level or education	21%	13%	6%
Gender identity or expression	39%	49%	43%
Race or ethnicity	11%	14%	10%
Religion or spirituality	1%	3%	2%
Sexual orientation	10%	16%	14%
None of the above	41%	33%	40%

In Our Own Voices

“Coworkers would gossip about me as news about my trans status spread through the workplace. I was treated significantly differently once people heard about me being trans. Coworkers felt they had the right to disrespect me because the owners set the tone. I became a spectacle in my own workplace.”

“The day before I started work, HR sent a mass email to everyone in the office ‘warning’ them about my trans status. I used the women’s bathroom since starting, but a month in to the job, I was called to my manager’s office and told that I could not use the women’s bathroom. I did not feel safe in the men’s bathroom, so I told the HR manager that due to city law, I could not be denied access to the bathroom matching my gender identity. I was fired the next day for no given reason.”

“I changed jobs from a high-paying one where I was not comfortable being out as a trans person to a much lower-paying one where I felt that my identity would be respected. Having a job where my gender identity is respected consistently, where I don’t have to constantly fight for myself or hide myself, has improved my quality of life more than any other aspect of my transition.”

IV. Responses to Firing Due to Transgender Status

Respondents who reported that they had been fired in the past year because of their gender identity or expression were asked how they responded. While more than two-thirds (69%) of these respondents did not take any formal action in response, 14% filed an official complaint (Table 10.4). Respondents who filed a complaint were asked where they filed it. More than half (53%) reported that they filed a complaint with their employer's human resources or personnel department. One-third (33%) of respondents who filed complaints did so with the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the agency that enforces federal employment nondiscrimination laws (Table 10.5).

Table 10.4: Response to being fired in the past year because of their gender identity or expression

Response to being fired	% of those fired because of their gender identity or expression
They did nothing	69%
They contacted a lawyer (see Table 10.6)	15%
They made an official complaint (see Table 10.5)	14%
They contacted a transgender, LGBT, or other group	10%
They contacted their union representative	2%
Not listed above	7%

Table 10.5: Location where respondent made an official complaint

Place complaint was filed	% of those who filed an official complaint
Employer's human resources or personnel department	53%
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)	33%
Employer's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) office	18%
Local or state human rights commission	17%
Supervisor or manager	9%
Not listed above	26%

Fifteen percent (15%) of those who were fired in the past year because of their gender identity or expression responded by contacting a lawyer. These respondents were asked what happened after they contacted the lawyer. Nearly one-third (29%) reported that they were not able to hire the lawyer. Other respondents reported that the lawyer filed a lawsuit (21%), helped them file an official complaint (14%), called or wrote a letter to their employer (10%), or advised them not to take any action (10%) (Table 10.6).

Table 10.6: Assistance provided to those who contacted a lawyer

Outcome of contacting lawyer	% of those who contacted a lawyer
They were not able to hire the lawyer	29%
Lawyer filed a lawsuit	21%
Lawyer helped them to file an official complaint	14%
Lawyer called or wrote a letter to employer	10%
Lawyer advised them to take no action (write-in response)	10%
Lawyer did nothing or did not follow up (write-in response)	7%
Not listed above	9%

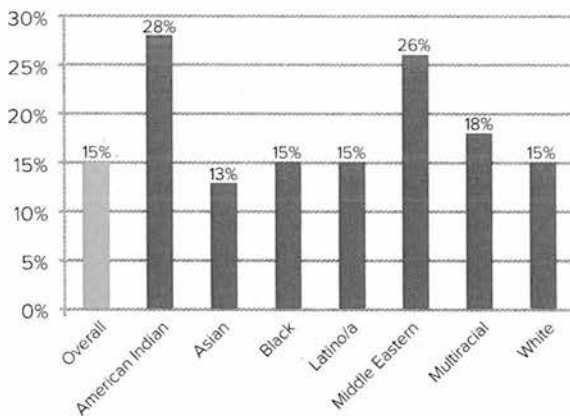
V. Other Forms of Mistreatment in the Past Year

Respondents who held a job in the past year were asked a series of questions about other forms of mistreatment in the workplace that happened because they were transgender.

a. Verbal Harassment, Physical Attack, and Sexual Assault

In the past year, 15% of respondents who had held a job during that year were verbally harassed, physically attacked, and/or sexually assaulted at work because of their transgender status.⁷ Respondents currently working in the underground economy (34%), American Indian respondents (28%), and Middle Eastern respondents (26%) were more likely to report one or more of those experiences in the past year (Figure 10.6).

Figure 10.6: Verbally harassed, physically attacked, or sexually assaulted at work in the past year
RACE/ETHNICITY (%)



Fourteen percent (14%) of those who held a job in the past year were verbally harassed at work because they were transgender. Respondents who said that others can always or usually tell that they are transgender (23%) were more likely

to be verbally harassed at work in the past year, compared with those who said that others can sometimes (19%) and rarely or never (10%) tell they are transgender.

One percent (1%) of respondents were physically attacked at work in the past year because they were transgender, with higher numbers among respondents who were currently working in the underground economy (4%).

One percent (1%) reported that they were sexually assaulted at work in the past year because they were transgender. Asian (4%) and American Indian (2%) respondents and transgender women (2%) were more likely report this experience.

b. Other Mistreatment in the Past Year

Respondents were asked if their employer, boss, or coworkers took other negative actions in the past year because of their transgender status, such as telling them to present as the wrong gender in order to keep their jobs, removing them from direct contact with clients, or sharing private information.

Nearly one-quarter (23%) of respondents who held a job in the past year reported that they experienced one or more of those actions in the past year because of their transgender status. One in six (16%) said that, because they were transgender, a boss or coworker shared personal information about them that should not have been shared. Six percent (6%) said that their boss gave them a negative review because they were transgender, 4% were told to present in the wrong gender in order to keep their job, and 4% said that they were not allowed to use the restroom consistent with their gender identity (Table 10.7).

Table 10.7: Mistreatment at work due to being transgender in the past year

Mistreatment at work due to being transgender in the past year	% of those who had a job
Employer/boss or coworkers shared information about them they should not have	16%
Employer/boss gave them a negative job review	6%
Employer/boss forced them to resign	4%
Employer/boss did not allow them to use the restroom they should be using based on their gender identity	4%
Employer/boss told them to present in the wrong gender to keep their job	4%
Employer/boss removed them from direct contact with clients, customers, or patients	3%
Employer/boss could not work out an acceptable restroom situation with them	3%
Employer/boss forced them to transfer to a different position or department at their job	2%
One or more experiences listed	23%

c. Efforts to Avoid Discrimination

Respondents who held a job in the past year were also asked a series of questions about actions they took in order to avoid discrimination at work in the past year, including hiding their gender identity, delaying their transition, and quitting their job. More than three-quarters (77%) took one or more actions to avoid discrimination (Table 10.8).

More than three-quarters (77%) of respondents who had a job in the past year hid their gender identity at work, quit their job, or took other actions to avoid discrimination.

Table 10.8: Actions taken to avoid anti-transgender discrimination at work in the past year

Actions taken to avoid anti-transgender discrimination at work in the past year	% of those who had a job
They had to hide their gender identity	53%
They did not ask employer to use pronouns they prefer (such as he, she, or they)	47%
They delayed their gender transition	26%
They stayed in a job they would have preferred to leave	26%
They hid the fact that they had already transitioned gender	25%
They kept a job for which they were overqualified	24%
They quit their job	15%
They did not seek promotion or raise	13%
They requested transfer to a different position or department	6%
One or more experiences listed	77%

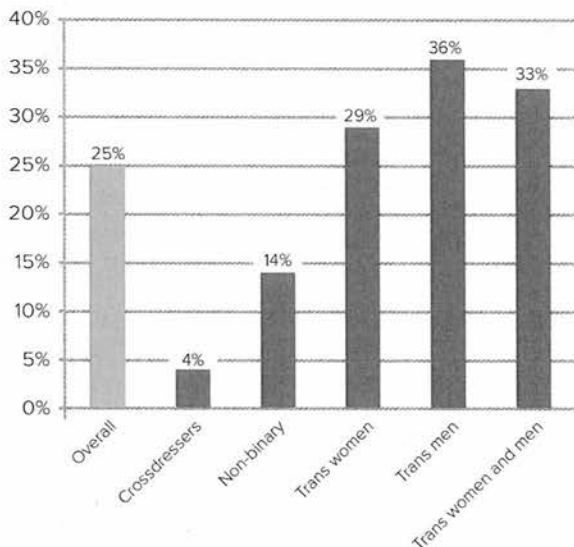
Respondents who were living in poverty⁸ (82%), non-binary respondents (81%), and people with disabilities (81%) were more likely to take one or more of these steps to avoid discrimination.

More than half (53%) reported having to hide their gender identity at work.⁹ Nearly half (47%) said they did not ask their employer to refer to them with correct pronouns (such as he, she, or they) out of fear of discrimination. Non-binary respondents (66%) were nearly twice as likely to avoid asking to be referred to by their correct pronouns compared to transgender men and women (34%).

More than one-quarter (26%) said that they stayed at a job that they would have preferred to leave for fear of encountering discrimination elsewhere. American Indian (40%), Black (31%), and Latino/a (28%) respondents and respondents with disabilities (30%) were more likely to stay at a job that they would have preferred to leave in order to avoid discrimination.

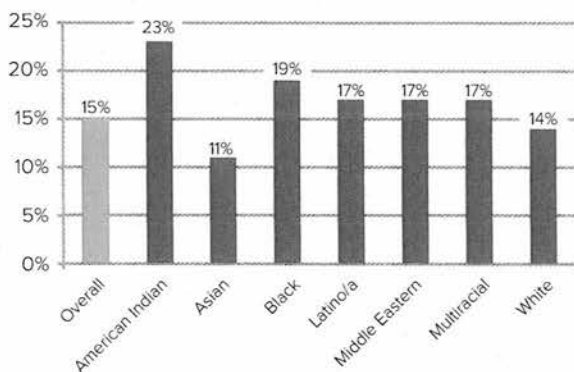
One-quarter (25%) of respondents reported that they hid the fact that they had already transitioned. In the past year, more than one-third (36%) of transgender men hid their past gender transition in the workplace in order to avoid discrimination (Figure 10.7).

Figure 10.7: Hid past transition to avoid discrimination in the past year
GENDER IDENTITY (%)



Fifteen percent (15%) of respondents who held a job in the past year reported that they quit their job in order to avoid workplace discrimination. Those currently working in the underground economy (28%), American Indian respondents (23%), Black respondents (19%), and people with disabilities (21%) were more likely to quit their job to avoid discrimination (Figure 10.8).

Figure 10.8: Quit job to avoid discrimination in the past year
RACE/ETHNICITY (%)



VI. Overall Negative Experiences in the Workplace

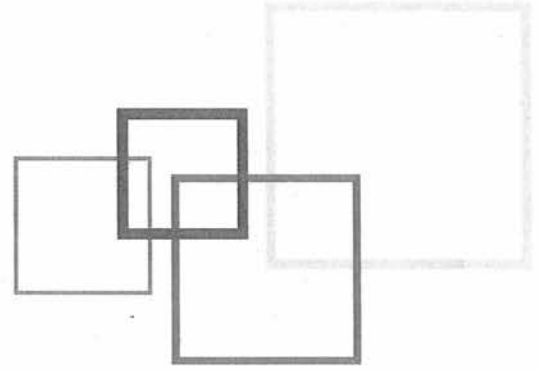
Overall, 30% of all respondents who held a job in the past year experienced some form of workplace discrimination during that year, including being fired or being denied a promotion because of their gender identity or expression, being harassed or assaulted at work, or experiencing one or more of the other forms of mistreatment discussed in section V of this chapter.¹² This represents 16% of all respondents. Further, 80% of respondents who held a job in the past year reported either experiencing some form of discrimination and/or taking steps to avoid discrimination at work, representing 41% of all respondents.

Conclusion

Respondents reported high levels of workplace discrimination based on their gender identity or expression, including losing employment opportunities, being harassed, being assaulted, and facing other forms of mistreatment because of being transgender. Many reported losing their job due to anti-transgender bias, with the experience being more likely to occur among people of color, people with underground economy experience, and people with disabilities. Many respondents who applied for or held a job in the past year reported that they were fired, denied a promotion, or not hired for a job they applied for because of their gender identity or expression. Respondents also faced substantial levels of harassment and mistreatment on the job because of their gender identity or expression, including verbal harassment, physical and sexual assault, and breaches of confidentiality. A large number of respondents felt they had to take actions to avoid discrimination, such as quitting a job or hiding their transition, despite the potential impact on their wellbeing or financial stability.

ENDNOTES | CHAPTER 10: EMPLOYMENT AND THE WORKPLACE

- 1 Grant, J. M., Mottet, L. A., Tanis, J., Harrison, J., Herman, J. L., & Keisling, M. (2011). *Injustice at Every Turn: A Report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey*. (pp. 50–71). DC: National Center for Transgender Equality & National Gay and Lesbian Task Force; Sears, B. & Mallory, C. (2011). *Documented Evidence of Employment Discrimination & Its Effect on LGBT People*. Los Angeles, CA: Williams Institute. Available at: <http://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Sears-Mallory-Discrimination-July-2011.pdf>; Rainey, T. & Imse, E. E. (2015). *Qualified and Transgender: A Report on Results of Resume Testing for Employment Discrimination Based on Gender Identity*. DC: DC Office of Human Rights. Available at: http://ohr.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ohr/publication/attachments/QualifiedAndTransgender_FullReport_1.pdf.
- 2 Grant, et al.; Sears, et al.
- 3 Respondents were not asked about the level of support from their current boss or supervisor.
- 4 Q. 21.1 and other questions in this chapter asked only about jobs doing legal work and excluded underground economy work, such as sex work, drug sales, and other work that is currently illegal.
- 5 "People with disabilities" here refers to respondents who identified as a person with a disability in Q. 2.20.
- 6 The survey included both "transgender status/gender identity" and "gender expression/appearance" as answer choices so that respondents could select what they felt best represented their experience. Because there was a substantial overlap of respondents who selected both reasons, and because these terms are commonly used interchangeably or with very similar meanings, responses of those who selected one or both of these reasons are collapsed for reporting as "gender identity or expression."
- 7 Respondents were asked whether they had "experienced unwanted sexual contact (such as fondling, sexual assault, or rape)" at work because they were transgender in Q. 22.3.
- 8 Respondents who are "living in poverty" represent those who are living at or near the poverty line. See the *Income and Employment* chapter for more information about the poverty line calculation.
- 9 Respondents were asked if they "had to be in the closet about [their] gender identity in the past year" in order to avoid discrimination.
- 10 This figure does not include the experience of not being hired for a job in the past year, since this figure represents adverse actions in the workplace experienced by those who had a job only. It also does not include experiences of those who applied for a job but did not work a job in the past year.



CHAPTER 11

Sex Work and Other Underground Economy Work

Many people participate in sex work, drug sales, and other activities that are currently criminalized (“underground economy”) to earn an income, or in exchange for food, a place to sleep, or other goods or services. The commercial sex trade exists in a variety of forms, including street-based sex work, pornography, and escort services.¹ Participation in the sex trade is often higher among those who have faced family rejection, poverty, or unequal opportunities in employment, housing, and education.² Previous studies have documented higher levels of participation in sex work among transgender people, and in particular people of color and those facing homelessness or poverty.³ They have also found high rates of negative mental and physical health outcomes, police abuse, and experiences of violence among transgender people who have done sex work.⁴

Respondents were asked a series of questions about their participation in sex work and other underground economy work, and their interactions with law enforcement officers when they were doing sex work or when police thought that they were doing sex work. Notable differences in respondents’ experiences based on demographic and other characteristics are reported throughout the chapter.

KEY FINDINGS

- ▶ One in five (20%) respondents have participated in the underground economy for income at some point in their lives, including in sex work, drug sales, and other currently criminalized work, and 9% did so in the past year.

- ▶ One in eight (12%) respondents have participated in sex work for income. Six percent (6%) have engaged in sexual activity for food, and 8% have done so for a place to sleep. Overall, nearly one in five (19%) respondents reported doing some type of sex work, such as for money, food, or a place to sleep.

- ▶ Three percent (3%) of all respondents have interacted with the police either while they were doing sex work or while police thought that they were doing sex work.
 - Of those who interacted with the police while doing or thought to be doing sex work, 86% reported some form of police harassment, abuse, or mistreatment, including being verbally harassed, physically attacked, or sexually assaulted by police.
 - Of those who interacted with the police while doing or thought to be doing sex work, 32% said that at least one of those interactions led to an arrest. Nearly half (44%) of respondents who were arrested said that police used condoms in their possession as evidence of sex work.

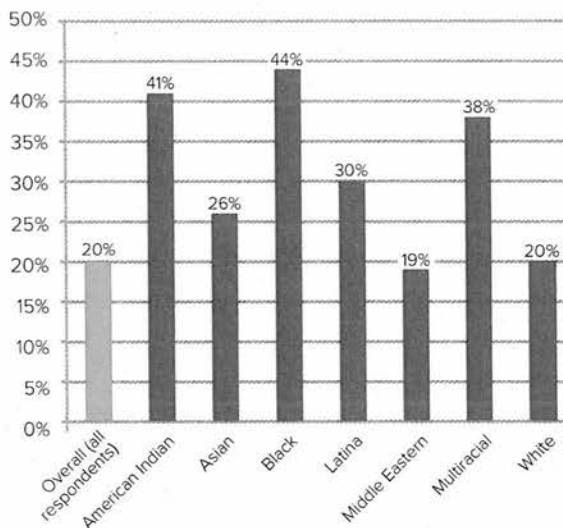
- ▶ One in eight (12%) respondents have earned income by selling drugs (11%) or by doing other work that is currently criminalized (2%), other than sex work.

I. Overall Underground Economy Participation

Respondents were asked about their participation in sex work, drug sales, and other forms of work in areas that are currently criminalized, referred to throughout this report as underground economy work.

Overall, one in five (20%) respondents had participated in the underground economy for income at some point in their lives. Undocumented residents (38%) and respondents who have lost a job because of their gender identity or expression (37%) were more likely to have participated in the underground economy. Transgender women of color were also more likely to participate in the underground economy for income, including Black (44%), American Indian (41%), multiracial (38%), and Latina (30%) respondents (Figure 11.1).

Figure 11.1: Underground economy experience among transgender women
RACE/ETHNICITY (%)



One in five (20%) respondents have participated in the underground economy at some point in their lives and 9% participated in the past year.

Nearly one in ten (9%) respondents have participated in the underground economy for income in the past year (Table 11.1). Undocumented residents (29%) were more than three times as likely to have worked in the underground economy in the past year. Further, respondents who have been homeless in the past year (23%) were nearly three times as likely to have worked in the underground economy during that year.

Table 11.1: Income-based underground economy experiences

Type of work	% of respondents (past year)	% of respondents (in lifetime)
Income-based sex work	5%	12%
Drug sales	4%	11%
Other criminalized work	1%	2%
Any underground economy work	9%	20%

II. Sex Work

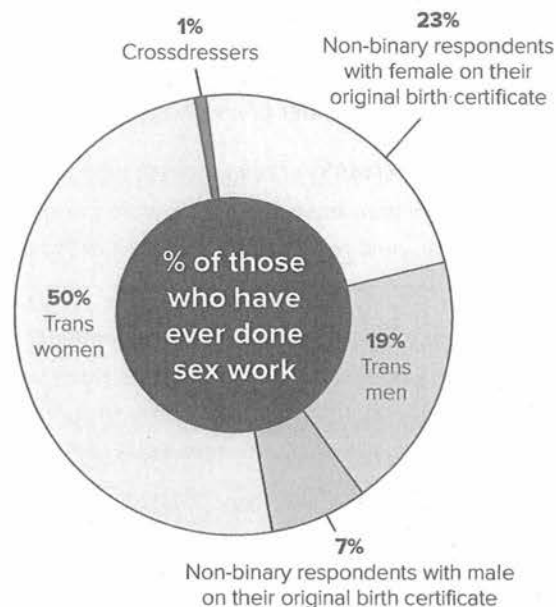
a. Income-Based Sex Work

One in eight (12%) respondents have done sex work for income at some point in their lifetime, meaning that they have exchanged sex or sexual activity for money or worked in the sex industry, such as in erotic dancing, webcam work, or pornography.

Of respondents who have done sex work for money in their lifetime, transgender women represent one-half (50%), non-binary people with female on their original birth certificates represent nearly one-quarter (23%), and transgender men represent 19% (Figure 11.2). While this chapter primarily highlights the experiences of transgender women of color due to their disproportionately high representation among those who have done sex work, it is also

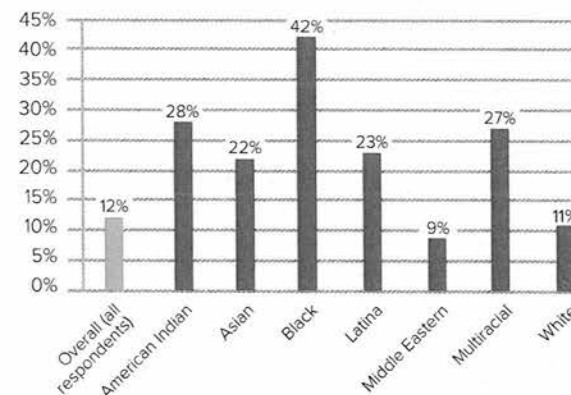
important to recognize that non-binary people with female on their original birth certificates and transgender men account for a large proportion of those in the sample who have done sex work.

Figure 11.2: Income-based sex work in lifetime GENDER IDENTITY (%)



Transgender women of color, including Black (42%), American Indian (28%), multiracial (27%), Latina (23%), and Asian (22%) women (Figure 11.3), were more likely to have participated in sex work than the overall sample. Undocumented residents (36%), those who have lost a job because of their gender identity or expression (25%), and those who have ever experienced homelessness (23%) were also more likely to have participated in sex work.

Figure 11.3: Income-based sex work among transgender women RACE/ETHNICITY (%)



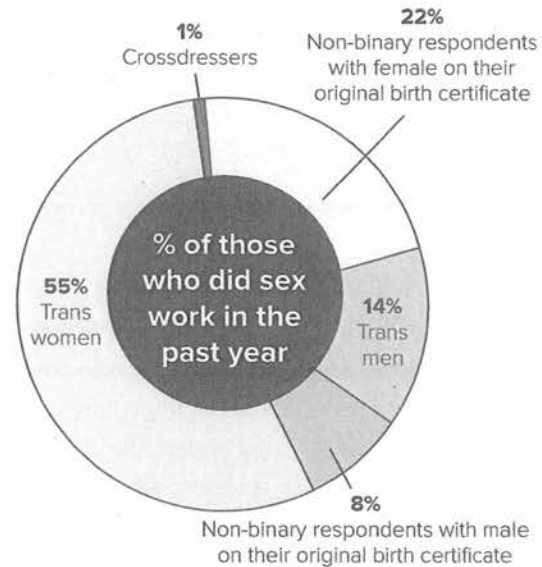
One in eight (12%) respondents have done sex work for income, and 5% of respondents did so in the past year.

Respondents who have done income-based sex work during their lifetime were more likely to have experienced a number of challenges:

- Nearly half (45%) of respondents who have done income-based sex work were currently living in poverty, in contrast to 26% of those who have not done sex work.
- Nearly three-quarters (72%) of respondents who have done income-based sex work have been sexually assaulted in their lifetime, in contrast to those who have not done sex work (44%).
- More than three-quarters (77%) of respondents who have done income-based sex work have experienced some form of intimate partner violence, compared with 51% of those who have not done sex work.
- Respondents with sex work experience were nearly sixteen times as likely to be living with HIV (7.9%) as those who have never done sex work (0.5%), and nearly six times more likely than those in the overall sample (1.4%).

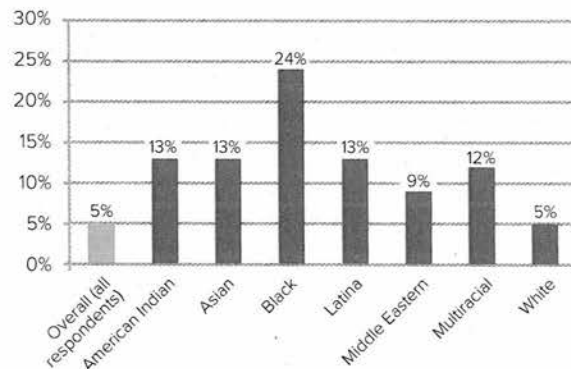
Five percent (5%) of all respondents did sex work for income in the past year. More than half (55%) of those who did income-based sex work in the past year were transgender women, 22% were non-binary people with female on their original birth certificate, and 14% were transgender men (Figure 11.4).

Figure 11.4: Income-based sex work in past year
GENDER IDENTITY (%)



Respondents who experienced homelessness in the past year (17%) were more than three times as likely to have participated in sex work during that year compared to the overall sample. Respondents who were living with HIV (32%) and undocumented residents (29%) were substantially more likely to have participated in sex work in the past year. Additionally, transgender women of color reported higher rates of sex work participation in the past year, particularly Black transgender women (24%), who were almost five times as likely to have done sex work for income in the past year (Figure 11.5).

Figure 11.5: Income-based sex work in past year among transgender women
RACE/ETHNICITY (%)

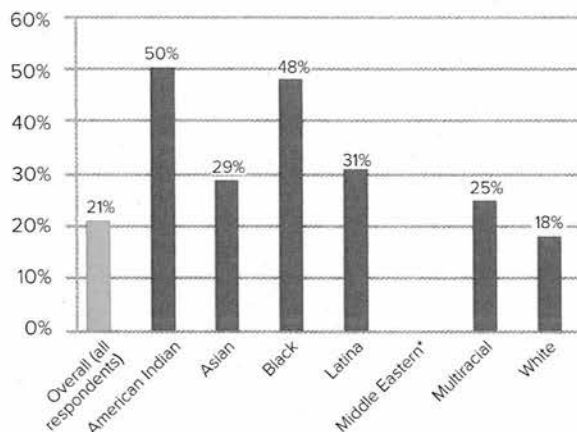


Respondents who have done sex work for income reported working in a wide range of settings, including sex work advertised online (36%), webcam work (35%), and street-based sex work (21%) (Table 11.2). Among those who have done some type of sex work, transgender women (30%) were more likely than others with sex work experience to have done street-based sex work, with women of color, including American Indian (50%), Black (48%), and Latina (31%) women, being substantially more likely to participate in street-based sex work (Figure 11.6).

Table 11.2: Type of income-based sex work

Type of sex work	% of those who have ever done sex work
Informal sex work through word of mouth, occasional hook ups with dates in my networks, or things like that	38%
Sex work advertised online	36%
Webcam work	35%
Pornography (picture or video)	28%
Fetish work	24%
Street-based sex work	21%
Phone sex	14%
Escort, call girl, or rent boy with an agency	12%
Erotic dancer or stripper	11%
Sex work advertised in magazines or newspapers	7%
Not listed above	9%

Figure 11.6: Participation in street-based sex work among transgender women who have done sex work RACE/ETHNICITY (%)



* Sample size too low to report

In Our Own Voices

“At 17, I ran away with no way of supporting myself. I turned to Internet prostitution, which allowed me to do things for myself that I couldn’t [before], like buy girl clothes, pay out of pocket for my doctor to prescribe HRT, and put a roof over my head.”

“Sometimes I slept in my truck when friends couldn’t put me up at their house, and sometimes I would meet people at a bar and have sex with them to really just sleep over and shower.”

“I couldn’t find work. I watched one guy throw away my application literally 30 seconds after turning it in. I resorted to escorting. It’s the only way to keep food in my belly and a roof over my head.”

“I became a sex worker to support myself and pay for my transition. I did not want to do sex work, but I have had worse jobs that paid less.”

“An officer attempted to arrest me on prostitution charges because I was at a street corner. It was roughly noon, I was holding a bag of food in my hand, and I was clearly waiting for the street light to change so I could cross the street.”

Nearly one in five (19%) respondents participated in sex work, such as for money, food, a place to sleep, or other goods of services.

b. Sex Work for Goods or Services

All survey respondents, including those who did not report doing sex work for income, were asked whether they had sex or engaged in sexual activity for food, for a place to sleep, for drugs, or in exchange for something else (Table 11.3).

Table 11.3: Engaged in sexual activity in exchange for goods or services

Type of activity	% of respondents (past year)	% of respondents (in lifetime)
Engaged in sexual activity for food	2%	6%
Engaged in sexual activity for a place to sleep (in someone's bed, at their home, or in their hotel room)	2%	8%
Engaged in sexual activity for drugs	1%	5%
Engaged in sexual activity in exchange for something not listed above	3%	7%

Six percent (6%) of respondents have ever engaged in sexual activity for food. Respondents living with HIV (32%) were more than five times as likely to have engaged in sexual activity for food. Undocumented residents (17%) and American Indian (15%), Black (12%), and multiracial (10%) respondents were also more likely to have engaged in sexual activity for food.

One in twelve (8%) respondents engaged in sexual activity for a place to sleep. Respondents who were living with HIV (28%), who have ever experienced homelessness (20%), or who were undocumented residents (17%) were more likely to have engaged in sexual activity for a place to sleep.

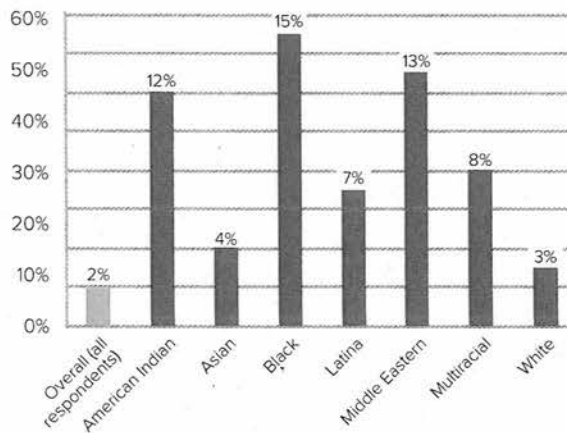
Overall, 19% participated in sex work, such as for money, food, a place to sleep, or other goods or services.

c. Police Interactions

All survey respondents were asked if they had ever interacted with police either while doing sex work, or when police thought they were doing sex work. One percent (1%) of respondents said that they interacted with police while participating in sex work, and an additional 2% said they did so when police thought they were doing sex work. Overall, 3% of respondents have interacted with police while doing sex work or when police thought they were doing sex work.

Transgender women of color, including Black (15%), Middle Eastern (13%), American Indian (12%), multiracial (8%), and Latina (7%) women, were more likely than the overall sample to interact with police who *thought* they were doing sex work (Figure 11.7).

Figure 11.7: Interacted with police who thought they were doing sex work among transgender women RACE/ETHNICITY (%)



Respondents who interacted with the police while doing sex work or when police thought they were doing sex work were asked about specific experiences they had with police. Eighty-six percent (86%) reported at least one negative experience during the interaction (Table 11.4).

Table 11.4: Interactions with police while doing or when police thought they were doing sex work

Type of interaction	% of those who interacted with police who thought they were doing sex work, or while doing sex work
Officers kept using the wrong gender pronouns (such as he, she, or they) or the wrong title (such as Mr. or Ms.)	69%
Officers verbally harassed them	65%
Officers asked questions about their gender transition (such as hormones and surgical status)	41%
Officers sexually assaulted them	27%
Officers physically attacked them	18%
Officers forced them to have sex or engage in sexual activity to avoid arrest	14%
Arrested for drugs in their possession when police stopped them for doing sex work	11%
One or more experiences listed	86%

More than two-thirds (69%) said that officers repeatedly referred to them as the wrong gender. This experience was more likely among transgender women (74%). Nearly two-thirds (65%) were verbally harassed by police.

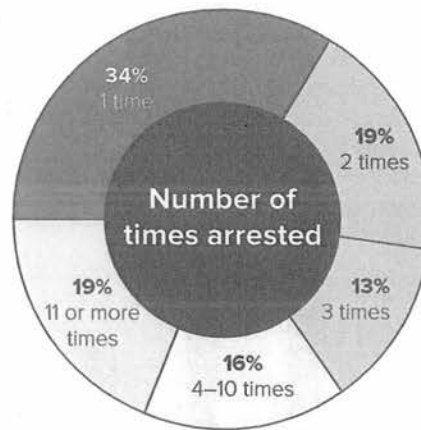
More than one-quarter (27%) of respondents who had interacted with police in this context were sexually assaulted by an officer, including being fondled, raped, or experiencing another form of sexual assault.⁶ Respondents who have ever experienced homelessness (34%) were more likely to be sexually assaulted by an officer. Fourteen percent (14%) also reported that they were forced to have sex or engage in sexual activity to avoid arrest.

d. Arrest

Respondents who interacted with police while engaging in sex work or when police thought they were engaging in sex work were also asked if they were arrested during any of those interactions. Almost one-third (32%) reported being arrested during at least one interaction. Black respondents (50%) and transgender women (40%) were more likely to report that their interaction with the police led to an arrest.

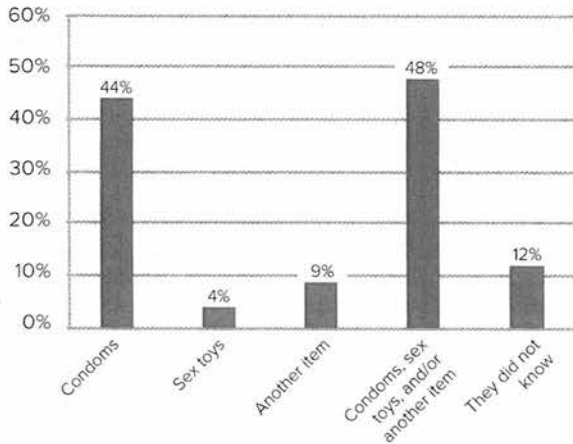
Respondents who reported being arrested were asked how many times they were arrested while they were doing sex work or when police thought they were doing sex work. Approximately one-third (34%) were arrested once, 32% were arrested two or three times, and 35% were arrested four or more times (Figure 11.8).

Figure 11.8: Number of times arrested while doing or when police thought they were doing sex work



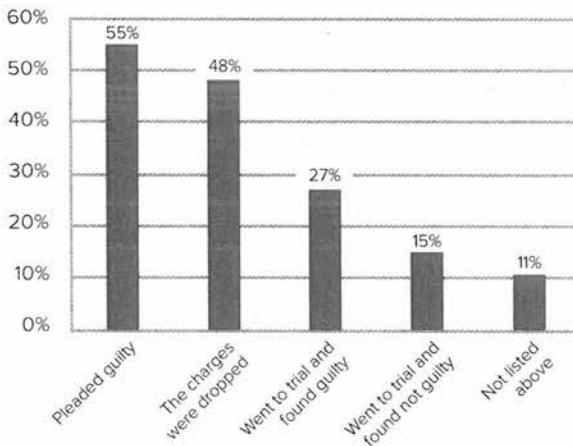
Respondents who were arrested while doing or while police thought they were doing sex work were also asked whether police considered items in their possession, such as condoms, as “evidence of prostitution.” Forty-four percent (44%) said that the police considered condoms in their possession to be evidence of prostitution (Figure 11.9).

Figure 11.9: Items in possession considered as evidence when arrested (% of those arrested while doing or suspected of doing sex work)



Respondents were asked about the outcomes of their arrests. More than half (55%) of the respondents who were arrested pleaded guilty in connection to one or more of their arrests, while nearly half (48%) reported that the charges were dropped on at least one occasion (Figure 11.10).

Figure 11.10: Outcome of arrest (% of those arrested while doing or suspected of doing sex work)



III. Drug Sales and Other Underground Economy Work

One in eight (12%) respondents have done other work in the underground economy other than sex work at some point in their lifetime. This included those who had participated in drug sales (11%) and/or other work that is currently criminalized (2%).⁷ Respondents who were living with HIV (27%), who have lost a job because of their gender identity or expression (22%), or have ever experienced homelessness (21%) were more likely to have been paid for underground economy work apart from sex work during their lifetime.

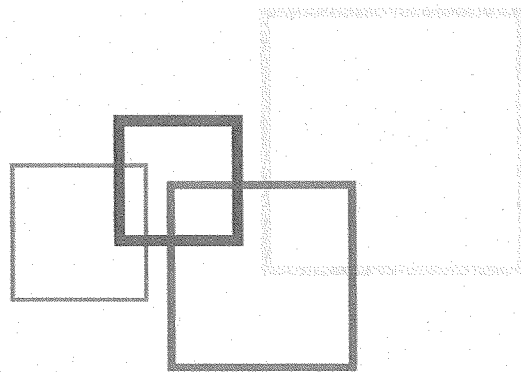
In the past year, 4% of all respondents have participated in drug sales, and 1% have participated in other underground economy work (other than drug sales or sex work) (see Table 11.1).

Conclusion

Respondents reported substantial levels of involvement in sex work and other underground economy work, particularly people of color, those living with HIV, undocumented residents, and those who have experienced homelessness. Many respondents, especially transgender women of color, also reported that police often assumed they were doing sex work, even when they were not. The vast majority of those who interacted with the police while doing sex work or while suspected of doing sex work reported being mistreated by police, including being verbally harassed, physically attacked, or sexually assaulted by law enforcement officers.

ENDNOTES | CHAPTER 11: SEX WORK AND OTHER UNDERGROUND ECONOMY WORK

- 1 See Ditmore, M. & Thukral, J. (2011). *Behind Closed Doors: An Analysis of Indoor Sex Work in New York City*. New York, NY: Sex Workers Project at the Urban Justice Center. Available at: <http://sexworkersproject.org/downloads/BehindClosedDoors.pdf>; Ditmore, M. & Thukral, J. (2003). *Revolving Door: An Analysis of Street-Based Prostitution in New York*. NY, New York: Sex Workers Project at the Urban Justice Center. Available at: <http://sexworkersproject.org/downloads/RevolvingDoor.pdf>.
- 2 Amnesty International. (2016). *Amnesty International Policy on State Obligations to Respect, Protect and Fulfill the Human Rights of Sex Workers*. Available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/pol30/4062/2016/en>.
- 3 Fitzgerald, E., Elspeth, S., & Hicky, D. *Meaningful Work: Transgender Experiences in the Sex Trade*. DC & NY, New York: Best Practices Policy, National Center for Transgender Equality, & Red Umbrella Project. Available at: http://www.transequality.org/sites/default/files/Meaningful%20Work-Full%20Report_FINAL_3.pdf; Amnesty International. (2016). *Amnesty International Policy on State Obligations to Respect, Protect and Fulfill the Human Rights of Sex Workers*. Available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/pol30/4062/2016/en>.
- 4 Fitzgerald, et al. See note 3.
- 5 Respondents were asked whether they had “ever engaged in sex or sexual activity for money (sex work) or worked in the sex industry (such as erotic dancing, webcam work, or porn films)” in Q. 6.1 and whether they had done such work in the past year in Q. 6.2. This report uses the term “sex work” to refer to all work in the sex industry or involving the exchange of sexual activity for income, food, a place to sleep, or other goods or services. While many of forms of sex work are currently criminalized in the United States, some of them are not.
- 6 Respondents were asked whether they had “experienced unwanted sexual contact from an officer (such as fondling, sexual assault, or rape)” in Q. 6.6.
- 7 Respondents were asked in Q. 6.11 if they had “ever been paid for selling drugs or other work that is currently considered illegal.”



CHAPTER 12

Military Service

Prior research suggests that transgender people serve in the military at a higher rate than the U.S. general population.¹ USTS respondents with military experience were asked a series of questions about their service, their treatment as transgender service members, and their separation from the military. They were also asked about health care that they received through military providers and the Veterans Health Administration.

At the time that survey data was collected in 2015, the military still barred transgender people from serving openly in the military, and service members could be discharged simply for being transgender.² The Department of Defense announced that it was lifting the ban on June 30, 2016, with full implementation of specific policies related to transgender service members expected to be completed in 2017.³ Despite the long-standing ban, thousands of transgender people have served and continue to serve in the military, many of them openly and with the support of their colleagues and commanders.

This chapter examines the experiences of current and former service members, including their interactions with leadership and health care providers as transgender people. It also explores veterans' unique experiences of separating from the military and accessing health care. Notable differences in respondents' experiences based on demographic and other characteristics are reported throughout the chapter.

KEY FINDINGS

- ▶ Nearly one in five (18%) respondents have served in the military, including veterans and those currently on active duty.

- ▶ Of current service members whose leadership or commanding officers knew or thought they were transgender, nearly one-quarter (23%) said that actions were taken to discharge them.

- ▶ Sixty percent (60%) of service members who separated from the military within the past ten years said that they might or would return to the military if the ban on transgender service members were lifted.

- ▶ Nearly one in five (19%) respondents who separated from the military more than ten years ago said they were discharged partly or completely because of their transgender status, and 19% left the military to avoid being mistreated or harassed as a transgender person.

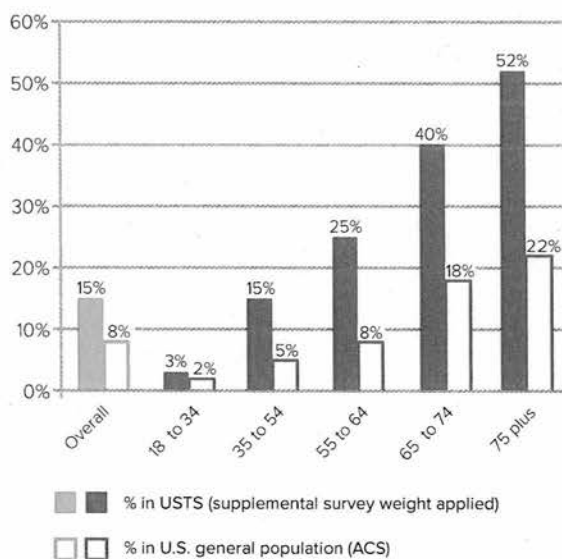
I. Current and Past Military Service

Nearly one in five (18%) respondents in the sample have served in the military, including respondents who were currently serving in the military on active duty (0.5%), and those who were currently on active duty for training in the Reserves or National Guard (2%).⁴ Fifteen percent (15%) of respondents were veterans, compared with 8% in the U.S. population.⁵

Respondents in every age group were more likely to be veterans than their counterparts in the U.S. population. More than half (52%) of respondents over the age of 75 and 40% of respondents between the ages of 65 and 74 were veterans, compared with 22% and 18% of those age groups in the U.S. population, respectively.⁶ One-quarter (25%) of respondents between the ages of 55 and 64 were veterans, more than three times higher than that age group in the U.S. population (8%).⁷

Fifteen percent (15%) of respondents between the ages of 35 and 54 were veterans, which was three times higher than the same age group in the U.S. population (5%)⁸ (Figure 12.1).

Figure 12.1: Veteran status AGE (%)



Among those with past or current military service, crossdressers (33%), transgender women (23%), and non-binary people with male on their original birth certificate (22%) were more likely to have served, compared with transgender men (8%) and non-binary people with female on their original birth certificate (2%) (Figure 12.2). White (21%), American Indian (20%), and Middle Eastern (20%) respondents were more likely to have served in the military, while Asian (7%) and Latino/a (7%) respondents were less likely (Figure 12.3). Multiracial respondents were ten times as likely as the overall sample to currently be on active duty, with 5% on active duty at the time they took the survey.

Figure 12.2: Past or current military service GENDER IDENTITY (%)

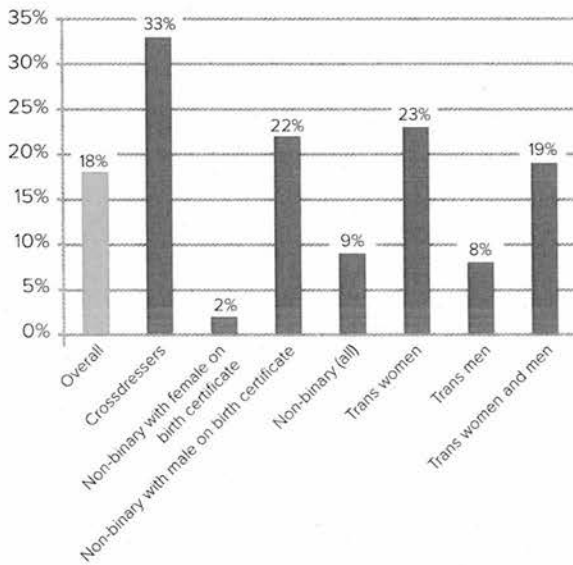
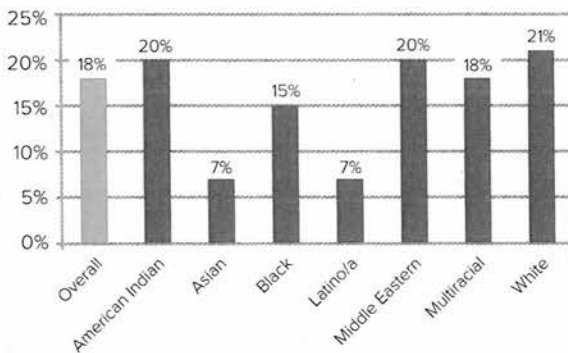


Figure 12.3: Past or current military service RACE/ETHNICITY (%)



Fifteen percent (15%) of respondents were veterans, compared with 8% in the U.S. population.

Of those who reported military service, 2% were still serving. Nearly one-third (31%) of those who were no longer serving separated from military service within the past ten years, and 69% separated from military service more than ten years ago.

II. Branch of Service

Current and former service members were asked to identify their current or most recent branch of service. Twenty-eight percent (28%) of these respondents currently or most recently served in the Army, 22% in the Navy, 18% in the Air Force, 7% in the Marine Corps, and 1% served in the Coast Guard. Nearly one-quarter (24%) served in the Reserves or the National Guard (Table 12.1).

Table 12.1: Current or most recent branch of service

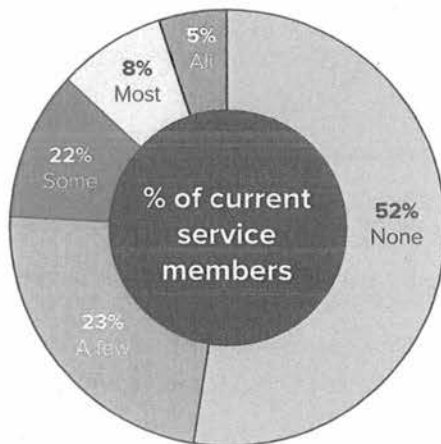
Branch of service	% of current or former service members
Air Force	18%
Air Force Reserve	2%
Air National Guard	2%
Army	28%
Army Reserve	8%
Army National Guard	8%
Coast Guard	1%
Coast Guard Reserve	<1%
Marine Corps	7%
Marine Corps Reserve	1%
Navy	22%
Navy Reserve	3%

III. Outness or Being Perceived as Transgender

Current service members⁹ were asked how many people in the military (with the exception of other transgender people) thought or knew that they were transgender.¹⁰

More than half (52%) of current service members said that, as far as they knew, no one else thought or knew that they were transgender. Approximately one-third (34%) of current service members indicated that a few or some people in the military thought or knew that they were transgender, and 13% indicated that most or all people in the military thought or knew that they were transgender (Figure 12.4).¹¹

Figure 12.4: Number of people in the military who thought or knew that respondent was transgender



More than half (52%) of current service members said that, as far as they knew, no one else thought or knew that they were transgender.

IV. Leadership Response to Transgender Status

Among current service members who said that a few, some, most, or all others in the military thought or knew they were transgender, 48% indicated that their leadership or commanding officer thought or knew that they were transgender.

These respondents were asked about the ways in which their leadership or commanding officer responded to them being transgender, and they selected one or more response. Many reported that their leadership or commanding officer responded to their transgender status in a variety of positive ways, including supporting their name change (47%) and supporting their transition-related medical treatment (36%). Thirty percent (30%) reported that their leadership or commanding officer ignored their transgender status or looked the other way. Approximately one-quarter (23%) reported that their leadership or commanding officer had taken actions to discharge them (Table 12.2).

One-third (33%) of these respondents wrote in responses describing additional actions their leadership or commanding officers took because they thought or knew the respondent was transgender. Their write-in responses included several positive actions, such as supporting their social transition or their use of pronouns and uniforms that were consistent with their gender identity. These respondents also offered several additional negative actions, such as forcing respondents to present in a way that was inconsistent with their gender identity, forbidding them from discussing their transgender status with anyone else, passing them over for awards and duties, and subjecting them to administrative discipline.

Table 12.2: Response of leadership and/or commanding officer to being transgender

Leadership or commanding officers' response	% of current service members whose commanding officer thought/knew they were transgender
Supported name change	47%
Supported medical treatment	36%
Ignored or looked the other way	30%
Took actions to discharge them	23%
Not listed above	33%

V. Separation from Military Service

Veterans were divided into two groups for the purposes of analysis: those who separated within the past ten years and those who separated more than ten years prior to taking the survey. The two groups were given distinct questions based on a consideration of the types of experiences a service member may have encountered during their service and the changing nature of the military.¹²

a. Type of Discharge

Respondents who separated from military service more than ten years ago¹³ were asked about the reasons for their separation from service, including the type of discharge they received. More than three-quarters (79%) of these respondents reported being honorably discharged, and the remaining 21% reported a variety of other types of discharges (Table 12.3).

Table 12.3: Type of discharge

Discharge	% of veterans who separated more than 10 years ago
Honorable	79%
General	7%
Medical	6%
Other-than-honorable	3%
Entry level separation	2%
Bad conduct	1%
Retired	1%
Dishonorable	<1%
Not listed above	2%

In Our Own Voices

“I began to accept myself as a woman. I was happier than I ever had been before. But the army didn’t share my enthusiasm. A year after returning from deployment, I was kept in under penal conditions. I was demoted from a sergeant to a private, the lowest rank in the army.”

“I am repeatedly harassed in my workplace, and am continually required to conceal my transgender status. When I sought assistance from the Equal Opportunity Office, I was told that they were unable to help because transgender individuals are not protected against harassment in the military.”

b. Discharged Because of Transgender Status

While 81% of respondents who had separated from service more than ten years prior reported that they did not believe their discharge was related to being transgender, 19% believed their discharge was either partially related (14%) or completely related (5%) to being transgender.

Respondents who indicated that their discharge was related to being transgender were less likely to have been honorably discharged. Eighty-six percent (86%) of those who said their discharge was not related to their transgender status were honorably discharged, while only 45% of those who

said their discharge was partially related to being transgender and 51% of those who indicated that it was completely related were honorably discharged.

Respondents with female on their original birth certificate (24%) were more likely to say that their discharge was partially or completely related to being transgender than those with male on their original birth certificate (17%). Latino/a (28%) and Black (24%) respondents were also more likely to report that their transgender status was a factor in their discharge, compared with white (16%) respondents.

Even though these discharges took place more than ten years ago, the experience of being discharged partly or completely because of one's transgender status was associated with a variety of negative outcomes affecting respondents at the time they took the survey. Respondents who were currently living in poverty (29%) or currently working in the underground economy (34%) were more likely to say that their discharge was completely or partially connected to their transgender status, as were respondents who were currently experiencing serious psychological distress (28%).

c. Separated to Transition or Avoid Harassment

Nearly one in ten (9%) respondents who separated from military service more than ten years ago left the service in order to transition, and an additional 19% said they left the service to avoid being mistreated or harassed as a transgender person.

Differences emerged by race, where Latino/a (28%) and Black respondents (26%) were more likely to have left to avoid mistreatment or harassment.

Approximately one-third (32%) of those who were currently living in poverty and more than one-third of those who have done sex work (38%) also left the military to avoid mistreatment or harassment.

VI. Name Change on Discharge Papers

Respondents who separated from military service more than ten years earlier were also asked if they had changed their name on their military discharge papers, known as the DD 214. Two percent (2%) applied for and received an updated DD 214 with a new name, or they received a DD 215 (an alternative form used to correct errors in a DD 214) with their new name. Six percent (6%) applied for a name change on their military discharge papers, but their request was denied. The remaining 92% had not tried to change their name on their military discharge papers.

VII. Health Care Treatment from Military Providers

Current service members and veterans who separated from military service within the ten years prior to taking the survey were asked whether they had received health care related to gender transition from a military provider, not including the Veterans Health Administration. Twelve percent (12%) had received mental health treatment related to gender transition from a military provider, and 4% had received medical treatment related to gender transition other than mental health treatment, such as hormone therapy or surgical care, from a military provider.

Even though this survey was conducted prior to the Department of Defense's announcement of plans to allow transgender people to serve openly, more than one-quarter (28%) of all current service members reported taking hormones for their gender identity or gender transition at the time they participated in the survey. Among these

current service members, 28% reported getting their hormones from an on-post medical doctor and/or pharmacy. Nearly three-quarters (74%) received their hormones through an off-post medical doctor, and 57% received them through an off-post pharmacy (Table 12.4).

Table 12.4: Source of hormones

Source of hormones	% of current service members who take hormones
Off-post medical doctor	74%
Off-post pharmacy	57%
On-post pharmacy	15%
Friends, online, or other non-licensed sources	15%
On-post medical doctor	13%

Current services members were asked whether a military medical provider, including any mental health provider, had reported to their commanding officer that they were transgender or recommended them for discharge. Of current service members whose providers knew they were transgender,¹⁴ 86% reported no action being taken by military medical or mental health providers. However, 8% said that their provider reported their transgender status to their commander, and 12% said that their provider recommended them for discharge.

VIII. Veterans Health Care

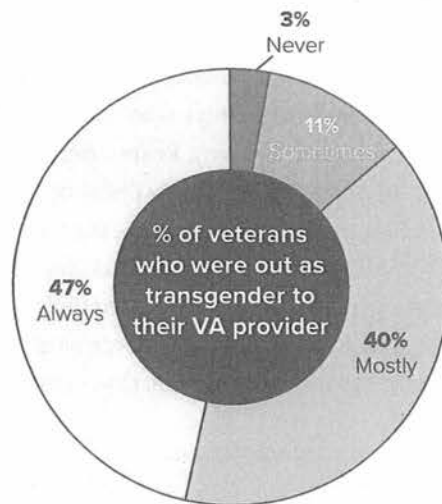
Veterans who separated from the military more than ten years ago were asked about their experiences receiving health care through the Veterans Health Administration (VA).¹⁵

Forty percent (40%) of former service members have received health care through the VA, 75% of whom were currently receiving care through the VA. Of those who received health care through the

VA at any point, more than half (56%) received care related to gender transition.

Nearly three-quarters (72%) indicated that they were out to their VA providers as transgender. Of those who were out to their VA providers as transgender, almost half (47%) reported that they were always treated respectfully as a transgender person, and 40% said that they received mostly respectful care. Eleven percent (11%) reported that they were sometimes treated respectfully, and 3% said that they were never treated respectfully (Figure 12.5).

Figure 12.5: Frequency of respectful treatment at the VA



IX. Impact of Repealing Ban on Transgender Service

At the time the survey was taken, the military had not yet announced it would let transgender people serve openly. Current military service members were asked what they would do if the military allowed transgender people to serve openly. Nearly one-quarter (24%) said that they would start to transition while still serving, and 18% said that they would finish the transition that they

had already started while continuing to serve. Additionally, 21% reported that they had already transitioned (Table 12.5).

Table 12.5: What respondent would do if open service in the military was allowed for transgender people

What they would do if allowed to serve openly	% of current service members
They would start to transition while still serving	24%
They have already transitioned	21%
They would finish the transition they already started and continue to serve	18%
They would leave the military to transition and not return	6%
They do not want to transition	6%
They would leave the military to transition and then return to service	3%
They would not finish the transition they already started and continue to serve	1%
Not listed above	21%

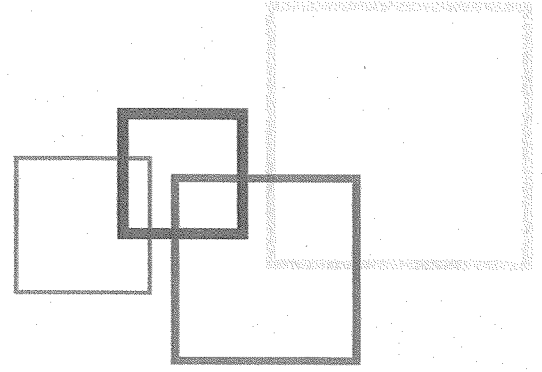
Veterans who separated from the military within the past ten years were asked whether they would return to military service if transgender people were allowed to serve. Nearly one-third (30%) of these respondents indicated that they would return, 30% said that they might return, and the remaining 39% reported that they would not return to military service. Transgender men (42%) were more likely than transgender women (25%) and non-binary people (18%) to say that they would return to service.

Conclusion

Despite a ban on transgender service members at the time the survey was administered, nearly one in five respondents reported having served in the military, and respondents were nearly twice as likely to be veterans as the general U.S. population. The findings indicated that a majority of current service members were interested in serving openly as transgender people, including those who would transition during their military service. Responses also indicated diverse experiences of acceptance and rejection of transgender people in military and veteran settings by military officials, direct superiors, and health care providers. The results suggest that lifting the ban on transgender service members and implementing new policies could lead to a substantial number of current and former service members continuing or resuming their military service.

ENDNOTES | CHAPTER 12: MILITARY SERVICE

- 1 Gates, G. J. & Herman, J. L. (2014). *Transgender Military Service in the United States*. Los Angeles, CA: Williams Institute. Available at: <http://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Transgender-Military-Service-May-2014.pdf>; Blosnich, J. R., Brown, G. R., Shipherd, J. C., Kauth, M., Piegari, R. I., & Bossarte, R. M. (2013). Prevalence of gender identity disorder and suicide risk among transgender veterans utilizing Veterans Health Administration care. *American Journal of Public Health, 103*(10), e27–e32; Shipherd, J. C., Mizock, L., Maguen, S., & Green, K. E. (2012). Male-to-female transgender veterans and VA health care utilization. *International Journal of Sexual Health, 24*(1), 78–87.
- 2 Although the ban is described in this chapter as being one that prevented “transgender people from serving openly in the military,” in actuality, the ban categorically barred transgender people from serving, regardless of whether or not they were open about being transgender. However, it is clear that tens of thousands of transgender people chose to serve in the military despite the ban, and many had to hide their identity to do so. Therefore, the ban is being described here as relating to open service as a transgender person.
- 3 See e.g., Rosenberg, M. (2016, June 30). Transgender people will be allowed to serve openly in military. *The New York Times*. Available at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/01/us/transgender-military.html>.
- 4 In this section of this chapter, the percentages of respondents who have served or are currently serving in the U.S. Armed Forces have been weighted to reflect the age and educational attainment of the U.S. population in addition to the standard survey weight. The USTS sample differs substantially from the U.S. population in regard to age and educational attainment, and therefore, this additional weight is applied in order to provide a more accurate comparison to the percentage of U.S. adults who have served in the armed forces, as reported in the American Community Survey. See the *Methodology* and *Portrait of USTS Respondents* chapters for more information about the application of the supplemental survey weight.
- 5 U.S. Census Bureau. (2015). *American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates: Veteran status*. Available at: https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_15_1YR_S2101&prodType=table.
- 6 U.S. Census Bureau. See note 5.
- 7 U.S. Census Bureau. See note 5.
- 8 U.S. Census Bureau. See note 5.
- 9 “Current service members” includes individuals who were (1) currently serving on active duty, (2) only on active duty for training in the Reserves or National Guard, or (3) no longer on active duty but had been in the past and were still serving in the military. See Q. 2.17.
- 10 Q. 8.9 asked, “How many people in the military (who aren’t trans) believe you are trans?” In the context of the questions in this section, this question was intended to assess how many people were out as transgender in the military by determining if other non-transgender people thought or knew that they were transgender.
- 11 This question (Q. 8.9) did not distinguish between service members who were not out or perceived as transgender because they were not living according to their gender identity, and those who were already living full time according to their gender identity but did not disclose the fact that they had previously transitioned. However, 47% of service members who said that no one in the military thought or knew they were transgender also reported that they were living full-time in Q. 1.12, suggesting that a substantial number of respondents who were not out to others in the military were living according to their gender identity without disclosing their past transition.
- 12 During the development of the survey questionnaire, the research team consulted with individuals and groups with subject-matter expertise in LGBT military service in general, and transgender military service in particular. After consultation, the research team chose to divide those who had separated from service into two groups to evaluate the experiences that each group might have had based on their time of service and separation. It was determined that those who had separated from service within the past ten years were serving in a time of changing societal and military culture and policies—including the repeal of “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell,” permitting lesbian, gay, and bisexual (but not transgender) service members to serve openly—and may have had different experiences as a result. This group may have also had different experiences with transitioning, receiving medical care for transition- and non-transition-related health care, and eligibility to return to service. The two groups were directed to specific questions accordingly.
- 13 Those who separated within the past ten years should have received questions 8.12–8.21 (which covered the reasons for separation and the nature of their discharge, VA health care, and military discharge papers) to evaluate the differences in experiences between them and those who separated more than ten years prior to participating in the survey. However, due to a programming error, respondents who separated within the past ten years did not receive these questions. Therefore, results of questions that addressed veterans’ issues only reflected the experiences of those who separated more than ten years prior and likely underestimated certain experiences reported in this section.
- 14 Thirty-seven percent (37%) of current service members said that the question did not apply to them, as none of their military health providers knew that they were transgender, while 63% indicated that at least one military health provider knew they were transgender.
- 15 Veterans who separated from the military within the past ten years did not receive this question due to a programming error. See note 13.



CHAPTER 13

Housing, Homelessness, and Shelter Access

Housing is one of the most vital needs all people share. However, many transgender people have faced discrimination when seeking housing, and are vulnerable to actions such as eviction because of their transgender status. Such discrimination, in addition to family rejection and other risk factors, can lead to housing instability and higher rates of homelessness.¹ For transgender people who experience homelessness, shelters present additional problems and often are unsafe environments. Previous studies have found that shelters frequently turn transgender people away because of their gender identity, or require them to stay in facilities that are inappropriate for their gender, often putting them at further risk of violence and harassment.²

This chapter explores respondents' current living arrangements and their experiences with homelessness, as well as with specific forms of housing discrimination and instability occurring in the past year because of their transgender status. It also examines respondents' experiences with homelessness in the past year, including access to shelters and the treatment they received in those shelters as transgender people. Notable differences in respondents' experiences based on demographic and other characteristics are reported throughout the chapter.

KEY FINDINGS

- ▶ Only 16% of respondents owned their homes, in contrast to 63% in the U.S. population.
.....
- ▶ Nearly one-third (30%) of respondents have experienced homelessness at some point in their lives. One in eight (12%) experienced homelessness in the past year because of being transgender.
.....
- ▶ Nearly one-quarter (23%) of respondents experienced some form of housing discrimination in the past year, such as being evicted from their home or denied a home or apartment because of being transgender.
.....
- ▶ More than one-quarter (26%) of respondents who were homeless in the past year avoided staying in homeless shelters because they feared they would be mistreated as a transgender person. Additionally, six percent (6%) were denied access to a shelter, including 4% who were denied access due to being transgender.
.....
- ▶ Seventy percent (70%) of those who stayed in a shelter in the past year reported some form of mistreatment because of being transgender.
 - More than half (52%) of those who stayed at a shelter in the past year were verbally harassed, physically attacked, and/or sexually assaulted because of being transgender.
 - Nearly one in ten (9%) respondents were thrown out once the shelter staff found out that they were transgender, and 44% decided to leave the shelter because of poor treatment or unsafe conditions.
 - One-quarter (25%) decided to dress or present as the wrong gender in order to feel safe in a shelter, and 14% said that the shelter staff forced them to dress or present as the wrong gender in order to stay at the shelter.

I. Current Living Arrangements

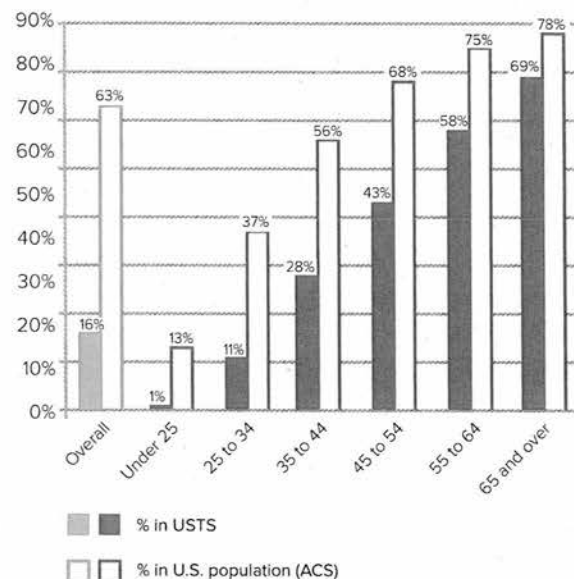
Respondents were asked what their current living arrangements were at the time they participated in the survey. Nearly half (44%) of respondents were living in a house, apartment, or condo they rented, either alone or with others, which was the most commonly reported living arrangement. Seventeen percent (17%) had not yet left home and were living with their parents or the family they grew up with (Table 13.1).

Table 13.1: Current living arrangements

Current living arrangements	% of respondents
Living in house, apartment, or condo they rent (alone or with others)	44%
Living with parents or family they grew up with because they have not yet left home	17%
Living in house, apartment, or condo they own (alone or with others)	16%
Living temporarily with friends or family because they cannot afford their own housing	9%
Living in campus or university housing	7%
Living with a partner, spouse, or other person who pays for the housing	5%
Living on the street, in a car, in an abandoned building, in a park, or a place that is NOT a house, apartment, shelter, or other housing	<1%
Living in a shelter (including homeless, domestic violence, or other type of emergency shelter) or in a hotel or motel with an emergency shelter voucher	<1%
Living in transitional housing or a halfway house	<1%
Living in a hotel or motel that they pay for	<1%
Living in military barracks	<1%
Living in a nursing home or other adult care facility	<1%
Living in a foster group home or other foster care	<1%
Living in a hospital	<1%
Not listed above	2%

In contrast to the 63% homeownership rate in the U.S. at the time of the survey,³ USTS respondents were nearly four times less likely to own a home, with only 16% reporting that they were living in a house, apartment, or condo that they owned. A large difference in the rate of homeownership was consistent across age groups (Figure 13.1).⁴

Figure 13.1: Homeownership rate
CURRENT AGE (%)

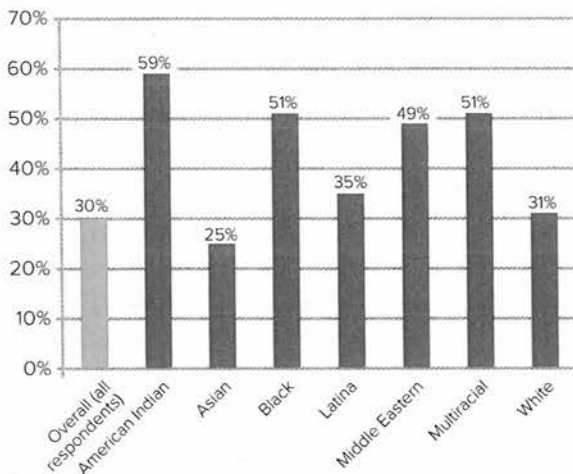


Respondents also reported substantial housing instability. Nearly one in ten (9%) respondents were living temporarily with friends or family because they could not afford their own housing. Approximately half of one percent (0.53%) of respondents were homeless at the time they participated in the survey, including those who were living in a shelter (other than a domestic violence shelter), or on the street. This was three times the rate of current homelessness among adults in the U.S. population (0.18%), as reported by the Department of Housing and Urban Development.⁵

II. Homelessness During One's Lifetime

Nearly one-third (30%) of respondents have experienced homelessness during their lifetime, including those who have stayed in a shelter, lived on the street, lived out of a car, or stayed temporarily with family or friends because they could not afford housing. The homelessness rate was substantially higher among respondents whose immediate family had kicked them out of the house, with nearly three-quarters (74%) of these respondents experiencing homelessness. The homelessness rate was also nearly twice as high among respondents who have done sex work (59%) and those living with HIV (59%), as well as respondents who have lost their job because of their gender identity or expression (55%). Transgender women of color, including American Indian (59%), Black (51%), multiracial (51%), and Middle Eastern (49%) women, also experienced especially high rates of homelessness (Figure 13.2).

Figure 13.2: Lifetime homelessness rate among transgender women
RACE/ETHNICITY (%)



III. Housing Discrimination and Homelessness in the Past Year

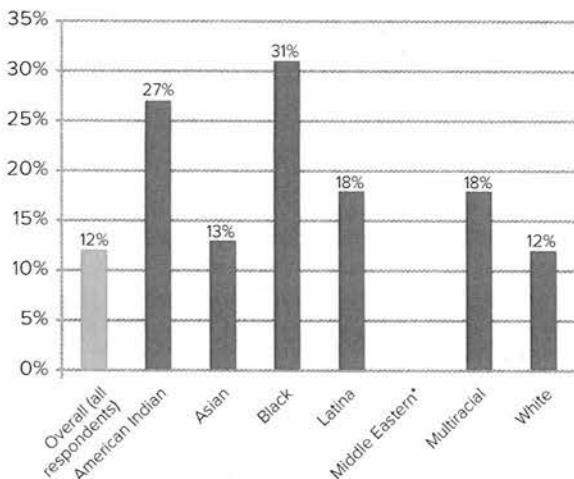
Respondents were asked about specific experiences with housing discrimination and instability in the past year, such as being evicted or being homeless, because they were transgender (Table 13.2).⁶

Table 13.2: Housing situations that occurred in the past year because of being transgender

Housing situation	% of people to whom situation applied
They had to move back in with family members or friends	20%
They slept in different places for short periods of time (such as on a friend's couch)	15%
They had to move into a less expensive home or apartment	13%
They experienced homelessness	12%
They were denied a home or apartment	6%
They were evicted from a home or apartment	5%
One or more experiences listed	30%

One in eight (12%) respondents reported experiencing homelessness in the past year as a result of anti-transgender bias. Those currently working in the underground economy (such as sex work, drug sales, and other work that is currently criminalized) (37%), undocumented residents (32%), and those living with HIV (27%) were more likely to report experiencing homelessness in the past year because they were transgender. Transgender women of color, including Black (31%), American Indian (27%), multiracial (18%), and Latina (18%) women, were substantially more likely to report being homeless in the past year because of being transgender (Figure 13.3).

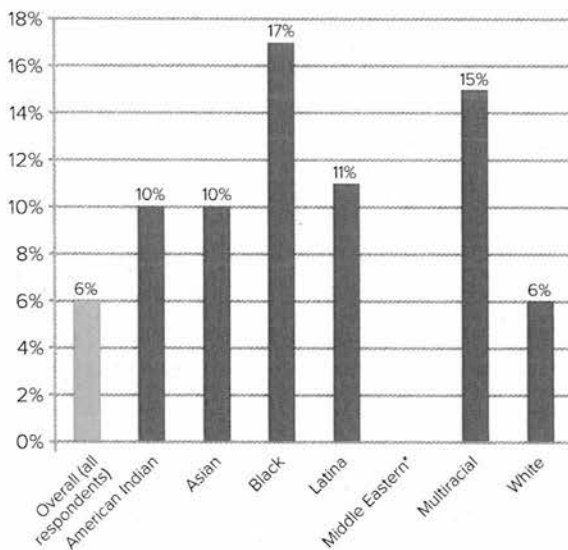
Figure 13.3: Homelessness in the past year because of being transgender among transgender women RACE/ETHNICITY (%)



*Sample size too low to report

Six percent (6%) of respondents were denied a home or apartment in the past year because they were transgender, with transgender women of color, including Black (17%), multiracial (15%), and Latina (11%) women, being more likely to have this experience (Figure 13.4).

Figure 13.4: Denial of home/apartment in the past year due to being transgender among transgender women RACE/ETHNICITY (%)



*Sample size too low to report

In Our Own Voices

“I was ejected from my apartment while I was out of town after my landlord discovered I was trans. The apartment was empty when I returned home.”

“I lost my job after I came out as transgender. I became homeless for about year. I never stayed in a shelter because I feared harassment.”

“When I was 18, I ran away from my abusive parents who had been violent toward me because of my sexuality and gender expression. I became homeless for several years, traveling all over the country, stealing food and sleeping in abandoned buildings.”

“When I go to shelters, I am admonished and told that I should return to ‘being a woman’ in order to use the shelter system.”

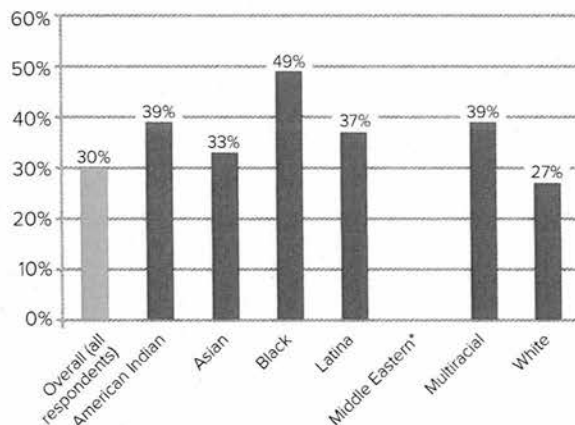
“I’ve tried shelters. The men’s ones aren’t safe for trans men: if those men find out who you are, you’re opening yourself up to physical and sexual violence. And when I turned to the women’s shelters, I was too masculine to make the women comfortable.”

Five percent (5%) of respondents were evicted from their home in the past year because of anti-transgender bias.

Five percent (5%) of respondents were evicted from their home or apartment in the past year because of anti-transgender bias. Differences emerged by demographic characteristics, where undocumented residents (18%), people with disabilities⁷ (8%), and people of color, including American Indian (9%) and Black (9%) respondents, were more likely to report this experience.

Overall, nearly one-third (30%) of respondents to whom these housing situations applied—23% of all respondents—experienced one or more forms of housing discrimination or instability in the past year because they were transgender. Respondents who were currently working in the underground economy (59%) and those who had been kicked out of the house by their family at some point in their lives because they were transgender (59%) were nearly twice as likely to report one or more of these experiences. Undocumented residents (50%) and transgender women of color were also more likely have had one or more of these experiences, including Black (49%), multiracial (39%), American Indian (39%), and Latina (37%) women (Figure 13.5).

Figure 13.5: Any housing discrimination and/or instability in past year due to being transgender among transgender women
RACE/ETHNICITY (%)



*Sample size too low to report

IV. Shelters

a. Access to Shelters

Respondents who experienced homelessness in the past year because of their transgender status were asked whether they had gone to a homeless shelter during that year (Table 13.3).

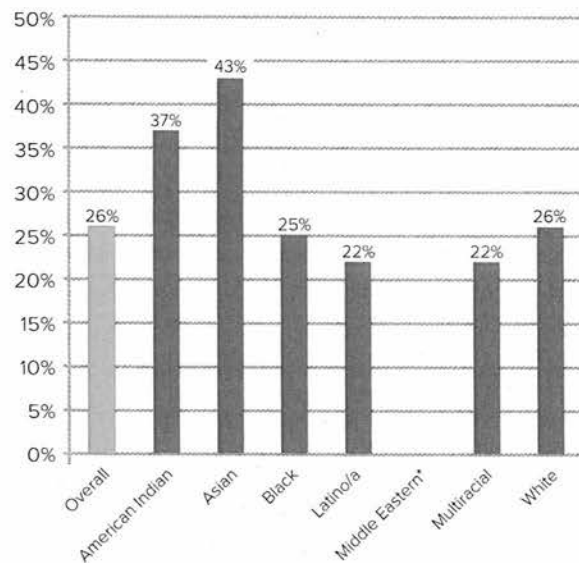
Table 13.3: Experiences with homeless shelters in the past year

Experiences with homeless shelters	% of people who were homeless
They sought shelter and stayed at one or more shelters	10%
They sought shelter and were denied access to one or more shelters	6%
They did not seek shelter, because they feared mistreatment as a transgender person	26%
They did not seek shelter for other reasons	59%

One in ten (10%) respondents sought shelter and stayed at one or more shelters in the past year. Higher percentages were noted among respondents living with HIV (22%) and American Indian (23%) and Black (15%) respondents.

More than one-quarter (26%) did not seek shelter because they feared being mistreated as a transgender person in the past year. Asian (43%) and American Indian (37%) respondents were more likely to report avoiding a shelter for this reason, in contrast to other people of color, such as Black (25%) and Latino/a (22%) respondents (Figure 13.6). Respondents currently working in the underground economy (36%), and respondents whose families had kicked them out of the house for being transgender (35%) were more likely to avoid seeking shelter for fear of being mistreated.

Figure 13.6: Did not seek shelter for fear of mistreatment as a transgender person in the past year RACE/ETHNICITY (%)



*Sample size too low to report

Six percent (6%) of respondents were denied access to a shelter in the past year. Transgender women of color were more likely to be denied access to a shelter, with multiracial women (30%) being five times as likely, and Black women (13%) being more than twice as likely. Those who were currently working in the underground economy (13%) were also more likely to be denied access to a shelter.

Respondents who were denied access to one or more shelters in the past year were asked what they believed the reasons were for that treatment, and they selected one or more reasons from a list, such as age, race or ethnicity, and gender identity. Nearly three-quarters (74%) believed that they were denied access to a shelter because of their gender identity or expression.⁸ This represents 4% of those who were homeless in the past year (Table 13.4).

Seven out of ten (70%) respondents who stayed at a shelter in the past year faced some form of mistreatment, such as being forced out, harassed, or attacked because of being transgender.

Table 13.4: Reported reasons for being denied access to one or more shelters

Reason for denial	% of those denied access to shelter
Age	7%
Disability	8%
Income level or education	5%
Gender identity or expression	74%
Race or ethnicity	4%
Religion or spirituality	4%
Sexual orientation	17%
None of the above	19%

b. Treatment in Shelters

Respondents who stayed at one or more shelters in the past year received questions about how they were treated at the shelter(s) as a transgender person. Seventy percent (70%) encountered at least one negative experience based on their transgender status in the past year, such as being forced out, harassed, or attacked because they were transgender.

Nearly one in ten (9%) respondents who stayed at a shelter in the past year were thrown out after the shelter staff found out that they were transgender. Forty-four percent (44%) decided to leave the shelter because of poor treatment or unsafe conditions, even though they had no other place to go. One-quarter (25%) of respondents decided to dress or present as the wrong gender in order to feel safe in a shelter, and 14% said that the shelter staff forced them to dress or present as the wrong gender in order to stay at the shelter (Table 13.5).

Table 13.5: Experiences while staying in homeless shelters in the past year

Experiences while staying in homeless shelters	% of people who stayed in a shelter
They left because of poor treatment or unsafe conditions, even though they had nowhere else to go	44%
They decided to dress or present as the wrong gender to feel safe in shelter	25%
The shelter required them to dress or present as the wrong gender	14%
They were thrown out after shelter staff learned they were transgender	9%
One or more experiences listed	58%

Respondents who stayed at a homeless shelter in the past year were also asked whether they were verbally harassed, physically attacked, or sexually assaulted⁹ at the shelter because they were transgender. Nearly half (49%) reported that they were verbally harassed because they were transgender. Nearly one-fifth (19%) were physically attacked, and 17% were sexually assaulted at the shelter because they were transgender (Table 13.6).

Table 13.6: Verbal harassment, physical attack, and sexual assault in homeless shelters in the past year because they were transgender

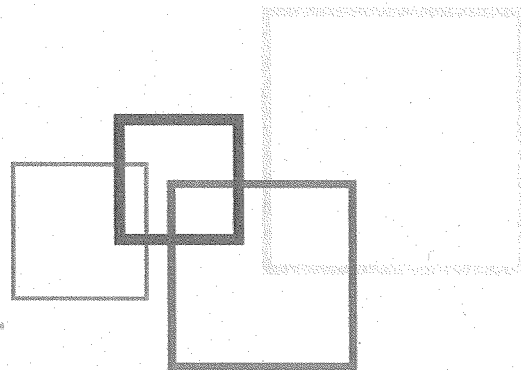
Experiences while staying in homeless shelters	% of people who stayed in a shelter
Verbally harassed	49%
Physically attacked	19%
Sexually assaulted	17%
One or more experiences listed	52%

Conclusion

Respondents reported high rates of homelessness both in their lifetime and the past year. The results also indicated that a substantial number of respondents experienced housing discrimination and housing instability in the past year based on their transgender status, with higher rates among transgender women of color, people living with HIV, people who have been kicked out of their homes by their families, and respondents currently working in the underground economy. Many of those who experienced homelessness in the past year reported that they avoided using a shelter because they feared being mistreated as a transgender person, and those who did use a shelter in the past year faced high rates of mistreatment based on their transgender status, such as being kicked out of the shelter, being verbally harassed, physically attacked, or sexually assaulted.

ENDNOTES | CHAPTER 13: HOUSING, HOMELESSNESS, AND SHELTER ACCESS

- 1 See e.g., Davidson, C. (2014). Gender minority and homelessness. In *Focus: A Quarterly Research Review of the National Health Care for the Homeless Council*, 3(1). Available at: http://www.nhchc.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/in-focus_transgender_sep2014_final.pdf; Durso, L. E. & Gates, G. J. (2012). *Serving Our Youth: Findings from a National Survey of Service Providers Working with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Youth who are Homeless or at Risk of Becoming Homeless*. Los Angeles, CA: Williams Institute. Available at: <http://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Durso-Gates-LGBT-Homeless-Youth-Survey-July-2012.pdf>; Grant, J. M., Mottet, L. A., Tanis, J., Harrison, J., Herman, J. L., & Keisling, M. (2011). *Injustice at Every Turn: A Report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey*. (p. 112). DC: National Center for Transgender Equality & National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.
- 2 Grant, et al.; Rooney, C., Durso, L. E., & Gruberg, S. (2016). *Discrimination Against Transgender Women Seeking Access to Homeless Shelters*. DC: Center for American Progress. Available at: <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/lgbt/report/2016/01/07/128323/discrimination-against-transgender-women-seeking-access-to-homeless-shelters/>.
- 3 U.S. Census Bureau. (2015). *American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates: Homeownership Rate by Age of Householder*. The ACS homeownership rate include ages 15 and older, in contrast to the USTS rate, which includes respondents who are 18 and older. Because the ACS includes people under 18 years of age, an exact comparison to the USTS sample could not be made. Therefore, this comparison should be interpreted with caution.
- 4 U.S. Census Bureau. (2015). *American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates: Homeownership Rate by Age of Householder*. The ACS homeownership rate for the "under 25" age group includes those who are 15–24 years of age, in contrast to the USTS rate, which includes respondents who are 18–24 years of age. See note 3.
- 5 The homelessness point-in-time estimate is based on January 2015 data. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2015). *2015 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress*. Available at: <https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/2015-AHAR-Part-1.pdf>. Calculation is based on the 436,921 people over the age of 18 who were homeless on a given night in 2015 and the January 2015 estimated adult population (247,492,492).
- 6 Respondents were given the choice of answering "yes," "no," or "does not apply to me" for each housing scenario listed in Q. 23.2. They were instructed to select "does not apply to me" if the housing situation could not have happened to them in the past year. For example, those who did not rent a home in the past year could not have been evicted, and were instructed to select "does not apply to me" for that question. The results reported in this section do not include those who answered "does not apply to me" for each of the housing situations.
- 7 "People with disabilities" here refers to respondents who identified as a person with a disability in Q. 2.20.
- 8 The survey included both "transgender status/gender identity" and "gender expression/appearance" as answer choices so that respondents could select what they felt best represented their experience. Because there was a substantial overlap of respondents who selected both reasons, and because these terms are commonly used interchangeably or with very similar meanings, responses of those who selected one or both of these reasons are collapsed for reporting as "gender identity or expression."
- 9 Respondents were asked if they had experienced "unwanted sexual contact (such as fondling, sexual assault, or rape)" in Q. 24.4.



CHAPTER 14

Police, Prisons, and Immigration Detention

Transgender people, particularly transgender people of color, face elevated levels of negative interactions with law enforcement officers and the criminal justice system. This includes higher rates of police mistreatment,¹ incarceration,² and physical and sexual assault in jails and prisons.³ Furthermore, when navigating the United States immigration system, many transgender people, including those who are seeking asylum based on their gender identity, face the prospect of being placed into unsafe immigration detention centers. While in immigration detention, transgender people are often placed in facilities that do not match their gender identity or face extended periods of solitary confinement, leaving them vulnerable to physical and sexual abuse, denial of medical treatment, and other dangerous conditions.⁴

This chapter explores respondents' experiences with police and other law enforcement officers, in jail, prison, or juvenile detention centers, and in immigration detention, including experiences of physical and sexual assault during interactions with law enforcement and while incarcerated. Many of the questions in this section were modeled on the Bureau of Justice Statistics' National Inmate Survey. Results in this chapter are presented in three sections: (A) Interactions with Law Enforcement Officers, (B) Incarceration in Jail, Prison, or Juvenile Detention, and (C) Experiences in Immigration Detention. Notable differences in respondents' experiences based on demographic and other characteristics are reported throughout the chapter.

A. INTERACTIONS WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

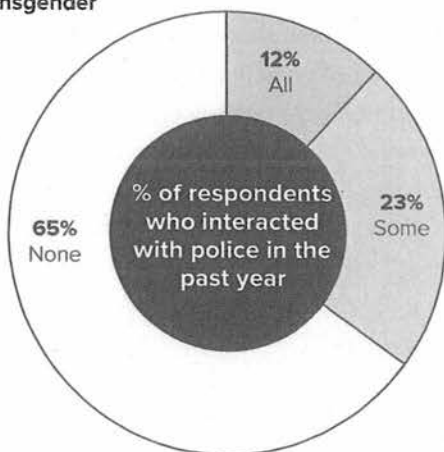
KEY FINDINGS

- ▶ Of respondents who interacted with police or law enforcement officers who thought or knew they were transgender in the past year, 57% said they were never or only sometimes treated respectfully. Further, 58% reported some form of mistreatment, such as being repeatedly referred to as the wrong gender, verbally harassed, or physical or sexually assaulted.
- ▶ More than half (57%) of respondents said they were either somewhat or very uncomfortable asking the police for help.
- ▶ Two percent (2%) of respondents were arrested in the past year, and of those arrested, 22% believed they were arrested because they were transgender.

I. Law Enforcement Interactions in the Past Year

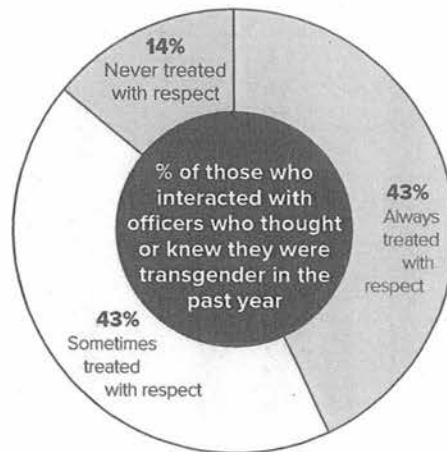
Forty percent (40%) of respondents said that they interacted with the police or other law enforcement officers in the past year. Of those, 65% said that they believed none of the officers thought or knew they were transgender, and 35% said that some or all of the officers thought or knew they were transgender (Figure 14.1).

Figure 14.1: Interaction with officers who thought or knew respondents were transgender



Respondents who said that some or all of the law enforcement officers thought or knew they were transgender were then asked whether they were treated with respect during the interactions. More than half of these respondents (57%) said that they were never or only sometimes treated with respect, and 43% reported that they were always treated with respect (Figure 14.2).

Figure 14.2: Frequency of respectful treatment by police or other law enforcement officers in the past year



Respondents who were currently working in the underground economy (80%) were more likely to

report never or only sometimes being treated with respect, as were those who were currently living in poverty⁵ (69%). Non-binary respondents (71%) and transgender men (62%) were more likely to report having never or only sometimes been treated with respect than transgender women (51%) (Figure 14.3). People of color were also more likely to report never or only sometimes being treated with respect, particularly American Indian (72%) and Black (70%) respondents (Figure 14.4).

Figure 14.3: Never or only sometimes treated with respect by law enforcement officers in the past year
GENDER IDENTITY (%)

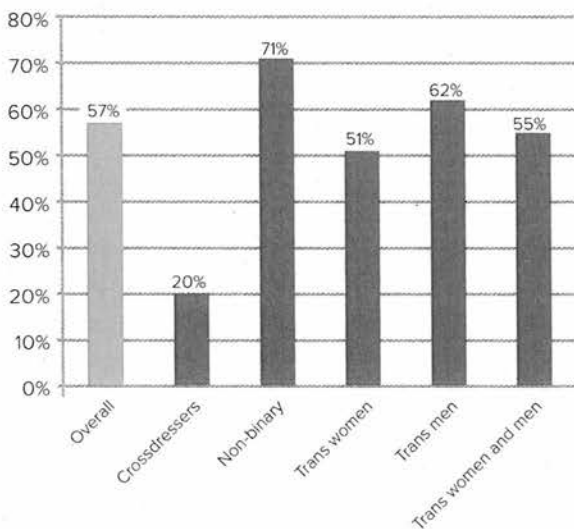
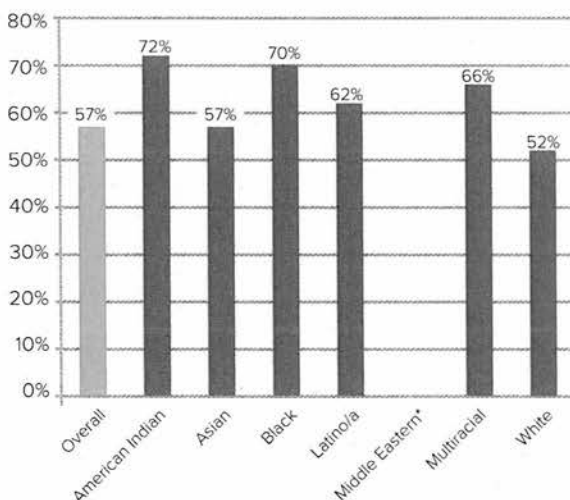


Figure 14.4: Never or only sometimes treated with respect by law enforcement officers in the past year
RACE/ETHNICITY (%)



*Sample size too low to report

Respondents who said that some or all of the officers they interacted with thought or knew they were transgender were also asked whether they experienced specific forms of mistreatment in their interactions with law enforcement officers in the past year, such as being repeatedly referred to as the wrong gender, verbally harassed, or physically attacked. More than half (58%) of these respondents reported having experienced one or more forms of mistreatment (Table 14.1).

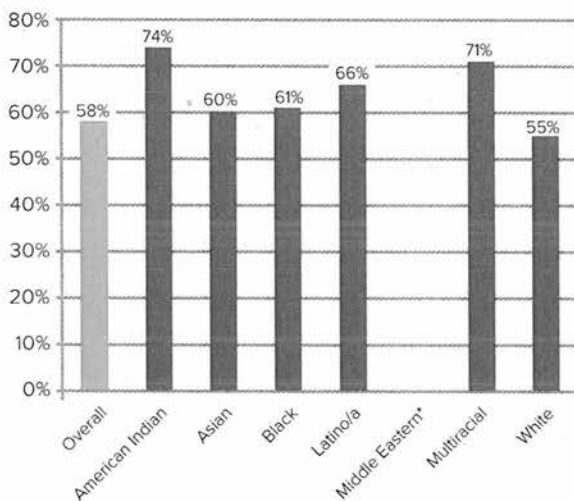
Table 14.1: Mistreatment by police or other law enforcement officers in the past year

Experiences of mistreatment in the past year	% of those who interacted with officers who thought or knew they were transgender in the past year
Officers kept using the wrong gender pronouns (such as he/him or she/her) or wrong title (such as Mr. or Ms.)	49%
Verbally harassed by officers	20%
Officers asked questions about gender transition (such as about hormones or surgical status)	19%
Officers assumed they were sex workers	11%
Physically attacked by officers	4%
Sexually assaulted by officers	3%
Forced by officers to engage in sexual activity to avoid arrest	1%
One or more experiences listed	58%

People of color, including American Indian (74%), multiracial (71%), Latino/a (66%), and Black (61%) respondents, were more likely to have experienced one or more forms of mistreatment (Figure 14.5). Respondents who were homeless in the past year (78%), those who were currently unemployed (75%), and people with disabilities⁶ (68%) were also more likely to report one or more of these experiences.

More than half (58%) of respondents who interacted with a law enforcement officer who thought or knew that they were transgender were verbally harassed, physically or sexually assaulted, or mistreated in another way in the past year.

Figure 14.5: Experienced one or more forms of mistreatment by law enforcement officers in the past year
RACE/ETHNICITY (%)



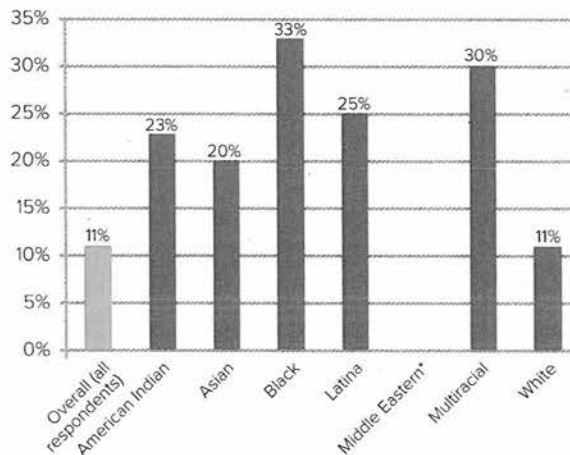
*Sample size too low to report

Verbal harassment was frequently reported by respondents who interacted with police or other law enforcement officers who thought or knew they were transgender. In the past year, one in five (20%) of these respondents reported verbal harassment by an officer. Those who had been homeless in the past year were twice as likely to

be verbally harassed by an officer (40%), and those who were currently working in the underground economy were more than twice as likely to be verbally harassed (51%).

In the past year, more than one in ten (11%) respondents who interacted with law enforcement officers who thought or knew they were transgender reported that an officer assumed that they were sex workers. Transgender women of color were more likely to report that an officer assumed they were sex workers, including Black (33%), multiracial (30%), Latina (25%), American Indian (23%), and Asian (20%) women (Figure 14.6).

Figure 14.6: Law enforcement officer assumed they were a sex worker in the past year among transgender women
RACE/ETHNICITY (%)

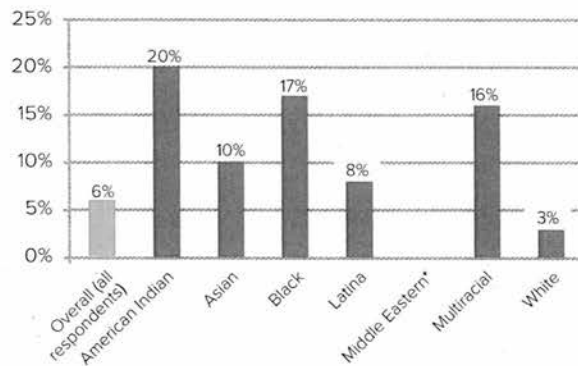


*Sample size too low to report

Respondents who interacted with law enforcement officers who thought or knew they were transgender in the past year also reported being physically or sexually assaulted. Six percent (6%) of these respondents were physically attacked, sexually assaulted,⁷ and/or forced to engage in sexual activity to avoid arrest by an officer. Respondents who were currently working in the underground economy (27%) and those who were homeless in the past year (17%) were more

likely to report one or more of these experiences. Transgender women of color, including American Indian (20%), Black (17%), and multiracial (16%) women, were also more likely to report one or more of these experiences (Figure 14.7).

Figure 14.7: Physically attacked, sexually assaulted, and/or forced to engage in sexual activity to avoid arrest in the past year among transgender women RACE/ETHNICITY (%)



*Sample size too low to report

II. Comfort Interacting with Law Enforcement Officers

All respondents were asked how comfortable they would feel asking for help from the police if they needed it. Twenty-nine percent (29%) reported that they would either be very comfortable or somewhat comfortable asking for help from the police, and 15% said they were neutral. A majority (57%) of the sample said that they were somewhat uncomfortable or very uncomfortable asking for help from the police (Figure 14.8).

In Our Own Voices

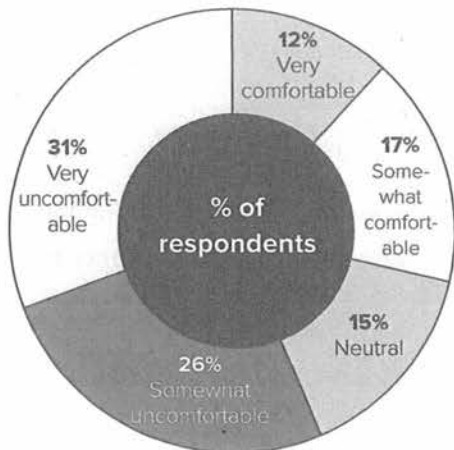
“When I began to live in my correct gender, I was stopped by police and forced to strip in public in front of them as well as being verbally harassed, threatened with arrest, and accused of being a sex worker.”

“While I was in solitary, a cop asked me about my gender. I told him I was male, and he told me I sounded female. Next thing I knew, I was being taken to the jail doctor to spread my legs and have him confirm my gender. It was humiliating.”

“I was in [jail] for 12 days housed with male detainees. Upon being booked, I was escorted to the shower area where I was forced to strip down and shower with male inmates who made sexual advances towards me while mocking me for being different. I feared for my life and the guards were of no help because they mocked me for being transgender.”

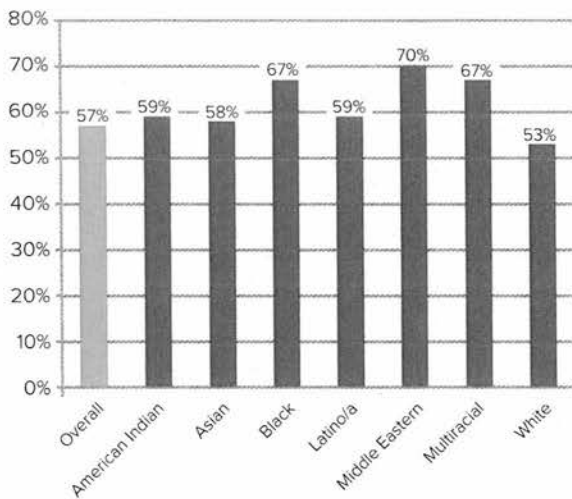
“When I was booked, the officers asked very intrusive questions about my genitalia in a very nonprofessional manner and laughed about it. They ended up booking me into an all-female solitary confinement cell, kept calling me ‘miss,’ and gave me female colors even though I pass full time as male.”

Figure 14.8: Comfort asking the police for help



Middle Eastern (70%), Black (67%), and multiracial (67%) respondents were more likely to say that they were either somewhat or very uncomfortable asking for help from the police (Figure 14.9). Respondents with disabilities (70%) and those who were living in poverty (67%) were also more likely to be somewhat or very uncomfortable asking for help from the police.

Figure 14.9: Somewhat or very uncomfortable asking the police for help RACE/ETHNICITY (%)



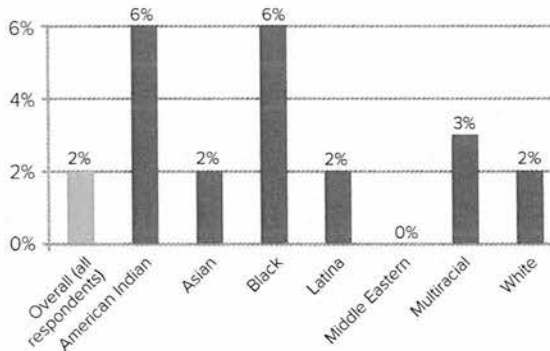
A majority (57%) of respondents said they would be somewhat or very uncomfortable asking for help from the police if they needed it.

III. Arrest

Two percent (2%) of all respondents reported having been arrested in the past year. Almost one-quarter (22%) of those who were arrested believed that they were arrested because they were transgender.

Respondents who were homeless in the past year (6%) were more likely to be arrested during that year. Transgender women of color, including Black (6%), American Indian (6%), and multiracial (3%) women, were also more likely to be arrested in the past year (Figure 14.10).

Figure 14.10: Arrested in the past year for any reason among transgender women RACE/ETHNICITY (%)



B. INCARCERATION IN JAIL, PRISON, OR JUVENILE DETENTION

KEY FINDINGS

- ▶ Two percent (2%) of respondents were held in jail, prison, or juvenile detention in the past year.

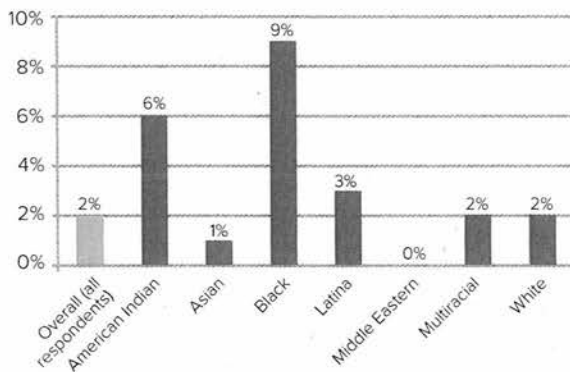
- ▶ Nearly one-third (30%) of respondents who were incarcerated were physically and/or sexually assaulted by facility staff and/or another inmate in the past year.

- ▶ During the past year, more than one-third (37%) of respondents who were taking hormones before their incarceration were prevented from taking their hormones while incarcerated.

I. Overall Incarceration Rates

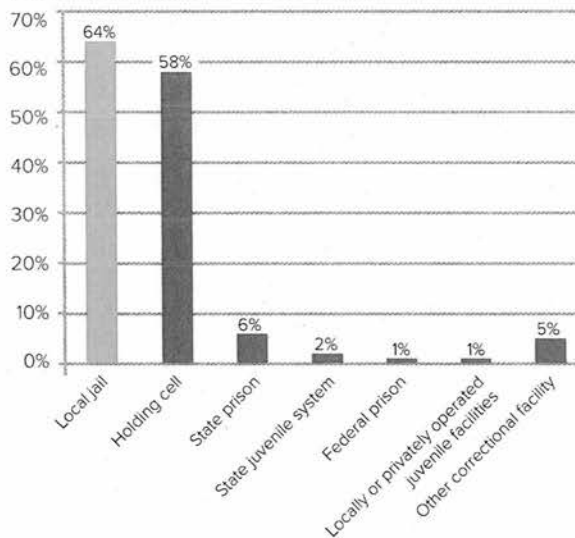
Two percent (2%) of respondents were incarcerated (held in jail, prison, or juvenile detention) in the past year. Twelve percent (12%) of undocumented respondents were incarcerated in the past year. Transgender women of color, including Black (9%) and American Indian (6%) women, were more likely to have been incarcerated in the past year (Figure 14.11), as were respondents who had been homeless in the past year (7%).

Figure 14.11: Incarcerated in the past year among transgender women
RACE/ETHNICITY (%)



Respondents who were incarcerated in the past year were asked what type of jail, prison, or juvenile detention facility they were in, and they made one or more selections. Most of these respondents were incarcerated in a local jail (64%) and/or held in a holding cell (58%) (Figure 14.12).

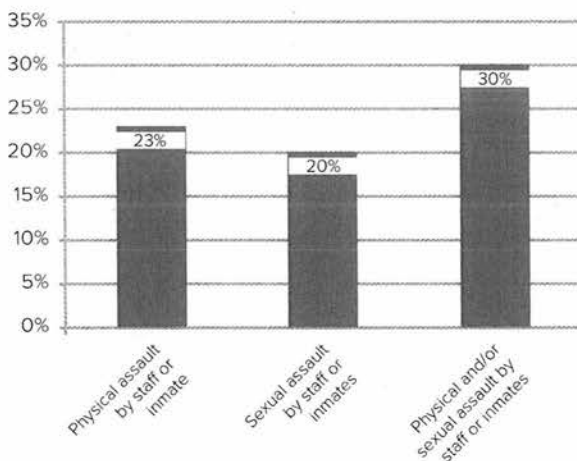
Figure 14.12: Types of incarceration facilities



II. Physical and Sexual Assault During Incarceration

Respondents who were incarcerated in jail, prison, or juvenile detention in the past year were asked whether they had been physically or sexually assaulted⁸ by facility staff or other inmates during that time period. One in five (20%) respondents reported being sexually assaulted by facility staff or other inmates. This rate was five to six times higher than the rates of sexual assault by facility staff or other inmates reported by the U.S. incarcerated population in prisons (4%) and in jails (3.2%).⁹ Nearly one-quarter (23%) were physically assaulted.¹⁰ Overall, 30% were physically and/or sexually assaulted in the past year while incarcerated (Figure 14.13). Physical and sexual assault by staff or other inmates is explored separately in the following sections.

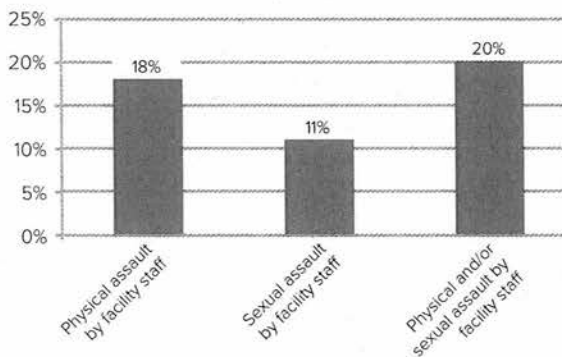
Figure 14.13: Physical and sexual assault by staff or inmates in the past year during incarceration



a. Physical and Sexual Assault by Facility Staff

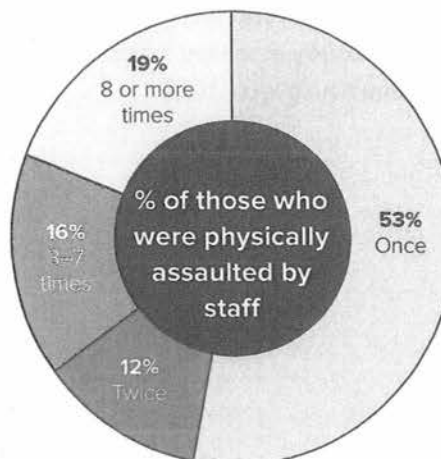
One in five (20%) respondents who were incarcerated in jail, prison, or juvenile detention in the past year were physically and/or sexually assaulted by facility staff during that time (Figure 14.14).

Figure 14.14: Physical and sexual assault by facility staff during the past year



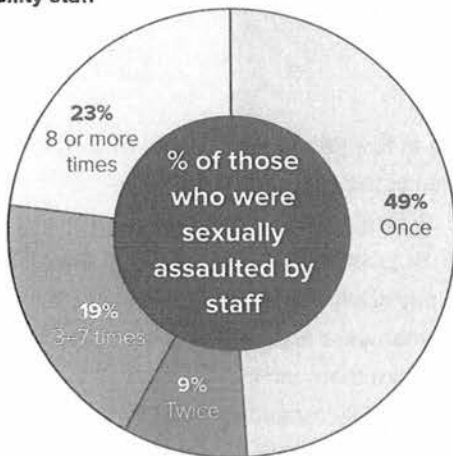
Almost one in five (18%) respondents who were incarcerated in the past year were physically assaulted by facility staff during their time in jail, prison, or juvenile detention. Respondents who were physically assaulted by facility staff in the past year were asked how many times it happened. More than half (53%) reported that they had been physically assaulted once, 12% reported that it happened twice, 16% said that it happened between three and seven times, and nearly one in five (19%) reported that it happened eight or more times (Figure 14.15).

Figure 14.15: Number of physical assaults by facility staff



Eleven percent (11%) were sexually assaulted by facility staff in the past year during their time in jail, prison, or juvenile detention. The rate among USTS respondents was five to six times higher than the rates of sexual assault by facility staff reported by the U.S. incarcerated population in prisons (2.4%) and in jails (1.8%).¹¹ Respondents who were sexually assaulted by facility staff in the past year were asked how many times it happened. Nearly half (49%) said that it happened once, 9% reported that it happened twice, 19% said it happened between three and seven times, and almost one-quarter (23%) said that it happened eight or more times (Figure 14.16).

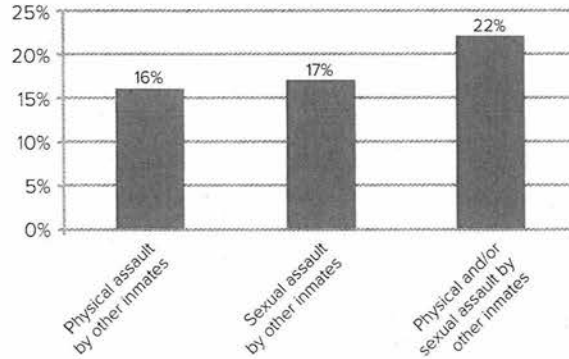
Figure 14.16: Number of sexual assaults by facility staff



b. Physical and Sexual Assault by Other Inmates

Twenty-two percent (22%) of respondents who were incarcerated in jail, prison, or juvenile detention in the past year reported that they were physically and/or sexually assaulted by other inmates during that time (Figure 14.17).

Figure 14.17: Physical and sexual assault by other inmates during the past year



One in six (16%) respondents who were incarcerated in the past year were physically assaulted by another inmate during their time in jail, prison, or juvenile detention. Respondents who were physically assaulted by another inmate in the past year were asked how many times it happened. Fewer than half (43%) of those respondents were physically assaulted once, 13% were physically assaulted twice, 34% said that it happened between three and seven times, and one in ten (10%) said that it happened eight or more times (Figure 14.18).

Respondents who were incarcerated were five to six times more likely than the general incarcerated population to be sexually assaulted by facility staff, and nine to ten times more likely to be sexually assaulted by another inmate.

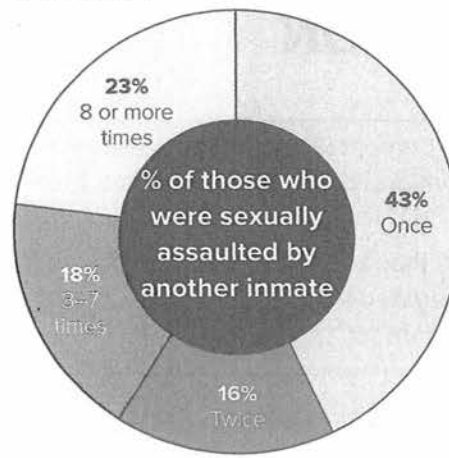
Figure 14.18: Number of physical assaults by another inmate



Seventeen percent (17%) of respondents who were incarcerated in the past year reported that they were sexually assaulted by another inmate during their time in jail, prison, or juvenile detention. The rate among USTS respondents was nine to ten times higher than the rates of sexual assault by other inmates reported by the U.S. incarcerated population in prisons (2%) and in jails (1.6%).¹²

Respondents who were sexually assaulted by another inmate in the past year were asked how many times it happened. Forty-three percent (43%) of those respondents were sexually assaulted once, and 16% were sexually assaulted twice. Nearly one in five (18%) said it happened between three and seven times, and nearly one-quarter (23%) said that it happened eight or more times (Figure 14.19).

Figure 14.19: Number of sexual assaults by another inmate



III. Hormone Therapy During Incarceration

Over half (58%) of respondents who were incarcerated in the past year had been taking hormones before their time in jail, prison, or juvenile detention. Of those, 82% had a prescription for those hormones. More than one-third (37%) of respondents who had been taking hormones before their incarceration were prohibited from taking their hormones in the past year while in jail, prison, or juvenile detention.

In the past year, more than one-third (37%) of respondents who had been taking hormones before being incarcerated were prohibited from taking those hormones while in jail, prison, or juvenile detention.

C. EXPERIENCES IN IMMIGRATION DETENTION

KEY FINDINGS

- ▶ Four percent (4%) of respondents who were not U.S. citizens by birth had been held in immigration detention at some point in their lives.

- ▶ More than half (52%) of respondents who were held in immigration detention were segregated from other people in detention, including 42% who were held in solitary confinement.

- ▶ Forty-five percent (45%) of respondents who were in immigration detention experienced some form of mistreatment, such as being physically or sexually assaulted or being denied access to hormones.

I. Placement in Immigration Detention

Respondents who were not U.S. citizens by birth were asked if they had ever been held in immigration detention, such as being held in an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention center or a local jail just for immigration court proceedings.¹³ Four percent (4%) (n=30, unweighted)¹⁴ had been held in immigration detention. More than two-thirds (69%) of those who were held in immigration detention said that staff, guards, or others thought or knew that they were transgender or lesbian, gay, or bisexual (LGB).

II. Isolation and Solitary Confinement

Respondents who were detained were asked whether they had been segregated from others who were also in detention. Of the thirty respondents who answered this question, more than half (52%) reported being isolated in one or more ways. Seventeen percent (17%) were held in a separate area for transgender and/or LGB people, such as a pod, unit, tank, or other housing area. Forty-two percent (42%) were held in solitary confinement.

Those who were held in solitary confinement were asked how long they were held in confinement. Of the nine respondents who had been in solitary confinement, forty percent (40%) were held for 14 days or less (up to two weeks). More than one-quarter (28%) were held for 1–3 months, while 14% were held in solitary confinement for over six months (Figure 14.20).