

# Exhibit 13



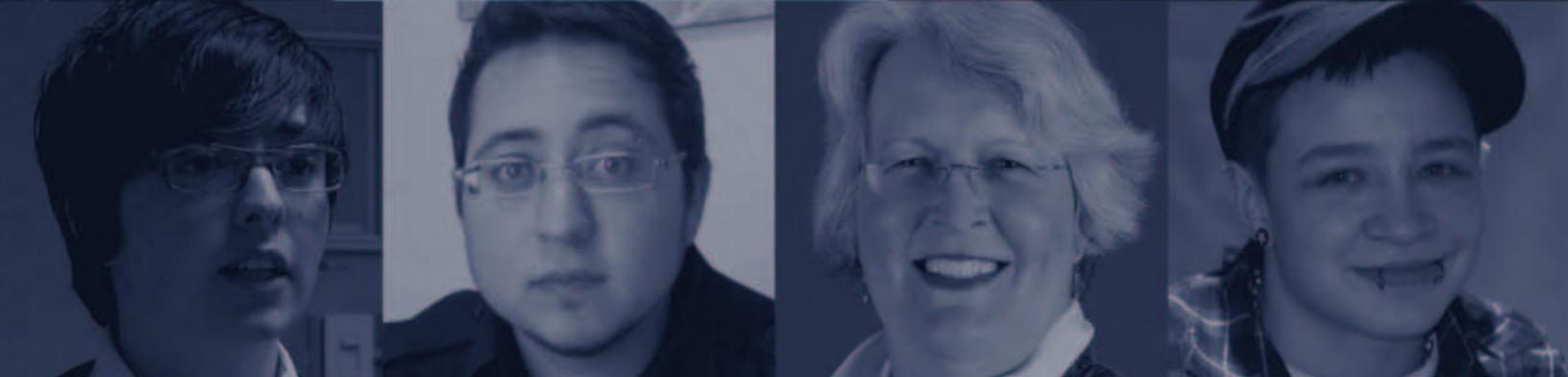
# Injustice at Every Turn

A Report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey

*Lead authors in alphabetical order:*

Jaime M. Grant, Ph.D.  
Lisa A. Mottet, J.D.  
Justin Tanis, D.Min.

with Jack Harrison  
Jody L. Herman, Ph.D.  
and Mara Keisling





# INJUSTICE AT EVERY TURN: A REPORT OF THE NATIONAL TRANSGENDER DISCRIMINATION SURVEY

*Lead authors in alphabetical order:*

Jaime M. Grant, Ph.D.

Lisa A. Mottet, J.D.

Justin Tanis, D.Min.

with Jack Harrison, Jody L. Herman, Ph.D., and Mara Keisling

## About the National Center for Transgender Equality

The National Center for Transgender Equality is a national social justice organization devoted to ending discrimination and violence against transgender people through education and advocacy on national issues of importance to transgender people. By empowering transgender people and our allies to educate and influence policymakers and others, NCTE facilitates a strong and clear voice for transgender equality in our nation's capital and around the country.

## About the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force

The mission of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force is to build the grassroots power of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community. We do this by training activists, equipping state and local organizations with the skills needed to organize broad-based campaigns to defeat anti-LGBT referenda and advance pro-LGBT legislation, and building the organizational capacity of our movement. Our Policy Institute, the movement's premier think tank, provides research and policy analysis to support the struggle for complete equality and to counter right-wing lies. As part of a broader social justice movement, we work to create a nation that respects the diversity of human expression and identity and creates opportunity for all.

© 2011 The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force and the National Center for Transgender Equality. We encourage, and grant permission to, reproduction and distribution this publication in whole or in part, provided that it is done so with attribution. Further written permission is not required.

### RECOMMENDED CITATION

Grant, Jaime M., Lisa A. Mottet, Justin Tanis, Jack Harrison, Jody L. Herman, and Mara Keisling. *Injustice at Every Turn: A Report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey*. Washington: National Center for Transgender Equality and National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, 2011.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements.....	1
Executive Summary .....	2
Introduction.....	10
Methodology.....	12
Demographic Composition of Sample .....	16
The Findings	
A Portrait of Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming People.....	20
Education .....	32
Employment.....	50
Health.....	72
Family Life .....	88
Housing.....	106
Public Accommodations .....	124
Identification Documents .....	138
Police and Incarceration .....	158
Cross-Dressers .....	174
Policy Priorities.....	178
Conclusion .....	179
Appendices	
Appendix A —Glossary.....	180
Appendix B — Survey Instrument—Issues and Analysis.....	182
Appendix C — Survey Instrument (paper version).....	204
About the Authors .....	221



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study was undertaken with the dogged commitment of the National Center for Transgender Equality and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force to bring the full extent of discrimination against transgender and gender non-conforming people to light. Executive directors Mara Keisling and Rea Carey committed considerable staff and general operating resources to this project over the past three years to create the original survey instrument, collect the data, analyze thousands of responses and, finally, present our findings here.

Key Task Force and NCTE staff, as well as our data analyst, are credited on the masthead of this report but many former staff, pivotal volunteers and visiting fellows put their unflinching effort and best thinking to this enormous task.

We are deeply grateful to Dr. Susan (Sue) Rankin of Pennsylvania State University, a nationally recognized LGBT researcher, for hosting our study through Penn State's Consortium on Higher Education. This allowed the survey to go through the Institutional Review Board process, to ensure the confidentiality and humane treatment of our survey participants. We are most grateful to M. Somjen Frazer who first as a volunteer and then later as a staff analyst made a crucial contribution in the questionnaire development, data cleaning and variable development phase of the research. Former Task Force Policy Institute staff member Nicholas Ray also did a wonderful job convening and guiding the many staff and volunteers who participated in developing the questionnaire.

A number of Vaid Fellows at the Task Force made crucial contributions to this work in the data cleaning, field work and early analytical stages of this report including Morgan Goode, Amanda Morgan, Robert Valadéz, Stephen Wiseman, Tey Meadow and Chloe Mirzayi. Morgan's work interfacing with staff at homeless shelters, health clinics and other direct service programs serving transgender and gender non-conforming people greatly increased participation in the study by transgender people often shut out of research projects.

Transgender community leaders made a major contribution to our thinking in developing the survey and field work, including Marsha Botzer, Moonhawk River Stone, M.S., LMHC and Scout, Ph.D. All of these leaders made important suggestions in the development of the questionnaire and our data collection process. We are grateful to Marsha, as the Task Force board chair, and Hawk, a member of the Task Force board, for championing this work institutionally.

Our organizations are especially grateful to the Network for LGBT Health Equity, formerly the Network for LGBT Tobacco Control, for providing \$3,000 in funding for health and outreach workers to reach underserved racial and ethnic populations in this endeavor.

Both organizations would also like to thank their foundation funders for their support in making this work possible: Arcus Foundation, Gill Foundation, Open Society Institute, as well as an Anonymous donor. In addition, the Task Force would like to thank additional foundation funders who supported this work, including the David Bohnett Foundation, Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund, Ford Foundation, Kicking Assets Fund of the Tides Foundation, and the Wells Fargo Foundation.

We are thankful to the following for translating the questionnaire into Spanish: Terra Networks, NCTE founding board member Diego Sanchez, and Task Force communications manager Pedro Julio Serrano.

We are thankful to the National Black Justice Coalition for assistance in reaching transgender and gender non-conforming people of color.

We are thankful to Beth Teper, Executive Director of COLAGE, for providing guidance on what subjects to cover relating to family life.

Thanks go to Donna Cartwright for editing the entire report, as well as Brad Jacklin, Vanessa Macoy, Richael Faithful and Laurie Young for editing portions. We are thankful to Heron Greenesmith for pouring through the respondent's open-ended answers to select quotes for inclusion throughout the report. We are thankful to Caitlin Fortin for research on comparable data. We are also thankful to Harper Jean Tobin for assistance with facts and policy recommendations in portions of the report.

Finally, we thank Steven K. Aurand, who has volunteered at the Task Force for over 20 years, using his expertise in statistics to greatly increase our capacity to work with a very complex data set.

This study has obviously been a labor of love by a community of dedicated advocates, and we are honored to be able to offer the collective fruits of our labor to the community.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study brings to light what is both patently obvious and far too often dismissed from the human rights agenda. Transgender and gender non-conforming people face injustice at every turn: in childhood homes, in school systems that promise to shelter and educate, in harsh and exclusionary workplaces, at the grocery store, the hotel front desk, in doctors' offices and emergency rooms, before judges and at the hands of landlords, police officers, health care workers and other service providers.

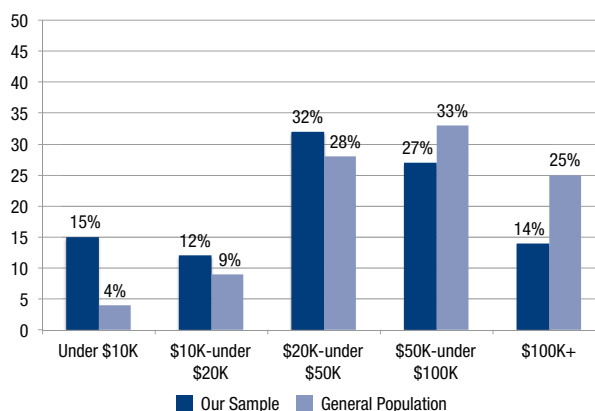
The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force and the National Center for Transgender Equality are grateful to each of the 6,450 transgender and gender non-conforming study participants who took the time and energy to answer questions about the depth and breadth of injustice in their lives. A diverse set of people, from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands, completed online or paper surveys. This tremendous gift has created the first 360-degree picture of discrimination against transgender and gender non-conforming people in the U.S. and provides critical data points for policymakers, community activists and legal advocates to confront the appalling realities documented here and press the case for equity and justice.

## KEY FINDINGS

Hundreds of dramatic findings on the impact of anti-transgender bias are presented in this report. In many cases, a series of bias-related events lead to insurmountable challenges and devastating outcomes for study participants. Several meta-findings are worth noting from the outset:

- Discrimination was pervasive throughout the entire sample, yet **the combination of anti-transgender bias and persistent, structural racism was especially devastating**. People of color in general fare worse than white participants across the board, with African American transgender respondents faring worse than all others in many areas examined.
- Respondents **lived in extreme poverty**. Our sample was nearly four times more likely to have a household income of less than \$10,000/year compared to the general population.<sup>1</sup>
- A staggering **41% of respondents reported attempting suicide** compared to 1.6% of the general population,<sup>2</sup> with rates rising for those who lost a job due to bias (55%), were harassed/bullied in school (51%), had low household income, or were the victim of physical assault (61%) or sexual assault (64%).

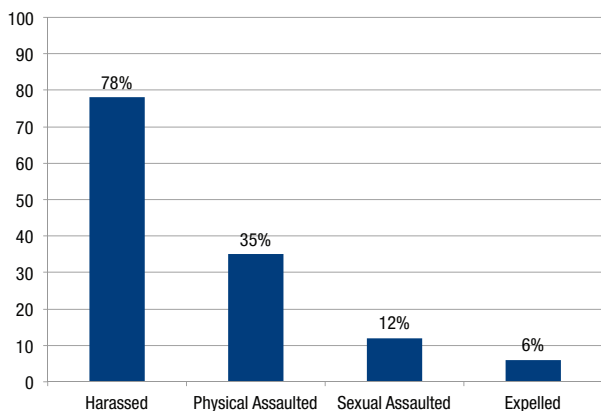
Household Incomes of Respondents<sup>3</sup>



**HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION IN EDUCATION**

- Those who expressed a transgender identity or gender non-conformity while in grades K-12 reported **alarming rates of harassment (78%), physical assault (35%) and sexual violence (12%)**; harassment was so severe that it led **almost one-sixth (15%) to leave a school** in K-12 settings or in higher education.
- Respondents who have been **harassed and abused by teachers** in K-12 settings showed dramatically worse health and other outcomes than those who did not experience such abuse. Peer harassment and abuse also had highly damaging effects.

Harassment, Assault and Discrimination in K-12 Settings



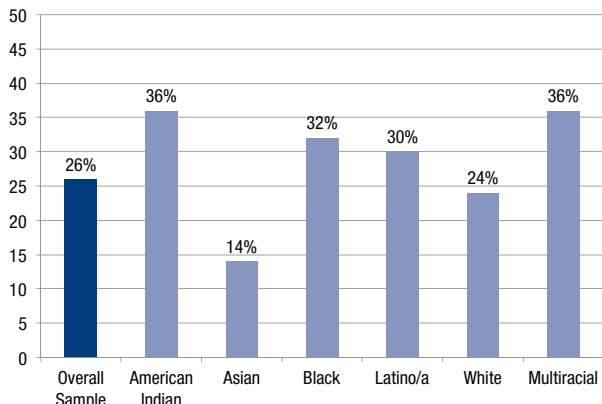
Respondents Income by Mistreatment in School<sup>4</sup>

	General Population	No school mistreatment	Mistreated in school
Under \$10K	4%	12%	21%
\$10K - under \$20K	9%	11%	15%
\$20K - under \$50K	28%	31%	33%
\$50k - under \$100k	33%	30%	21%
\$100k+	25%	16%	9%

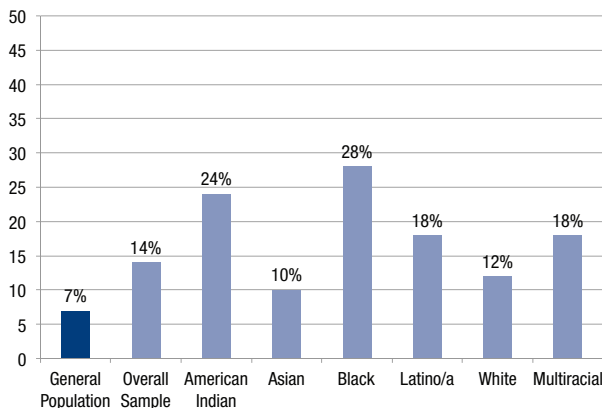
**EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION AND ECONOMIC INSECURITY**

- **Double the rate of unemployment:** Survey respondents experienced unemployment at twice the rate of the general population at the time of the survey,<sup>5</sup> with rates for people of color up to four times the national unemployment rate.
- Widespread mistreatment at work: **Ninety percent (90%) of those surveyed reported experiencing harassment, mistreatment or discrimination** on the job or took actions like hiding who they are to avoid it.
- Forty-seven percent (47%) said they had experienced an adverse job outcome, such as **being fired, not hired or denied a promotion** because of being transgender or gender non-conforming.
- **Over one-quarter (26%) reported that they had lost a job** due to being transgender or gender non-conforming and 50% were harassed.
- Large majorities attempted to avoid discrimination by **hiding their gender or gender transition (71%)** or delaying their gender transition (57%).
- The **vast majority (78%)** of those who transitioned from one gender to the other reported that they **felt more comfortable at work and their job performance improved**, despite high levels of mistreatment.
- Overall, **16% said they had been compelled to work in the underground economy** for income (such as doing sex work or selling drugs).
- **Respondents who were currently unemployed experienced debilitating negative outcomes**, including nearly double the rate of working in the underground economy (such as doing sex work or selling drugs), twice the homelessness, 85% more incarceration, and more negative health outcomes, such as more than double the HIV infection rate and nearly double the rate of current drinking or drug misuse to cope with mistreatment, compared to those who were employed.
- **Respondents who had lost a job due to bias also experienced ruinous consequences such as four times the rate of homelessness**, 70% more current drinking or misuse of drugs to cope with mistreatment, 85% more incarceration, more than double the rate working in the underground economy, and more than double the HIV infection rate, compared to those who did not lose a job due to bias.

Loss of Job by Race



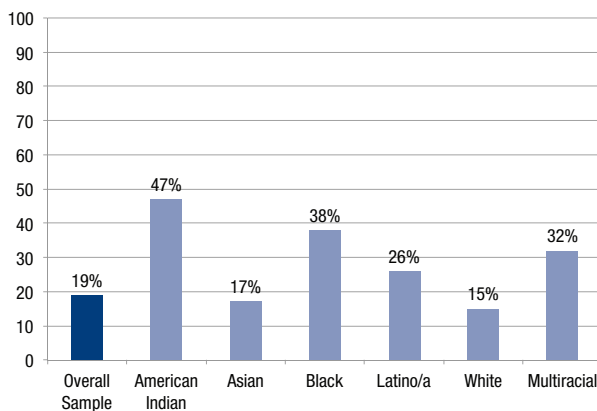
Unemployment Rates including by Race



**HOUSING DISCRIMINATION AND HOMELESSNESS**

- Respondents reported various forms of direct housing discrimination — **19% reported having been refused a home or apartment** and 11% reported being evicted because of their gender identity/expression.
- **One-fifth (19%) reported experiencing homelessness** at some point in their lives because they were transgender or gender non-conforming; **the majority of those trying to access a homeless shelter were harassed by shelter staff or residents (55%), 29% were turned away altogether,** and 22% were sexually assaulted by residents or staff.
- **Almost 2% of respondents were currently homeless,** which is almost twice the rate of the general population (1%).<sup>6</sup>
- Respondents reported **less than half the national rate of home ownership:** 32% reported owning their home compared to 67% of the general population.<sup>7</sup>
- **Respondents who have experienced homelessness were highly vulnerable** to mistreatment in public settings, police abuse and negative health outcomes.

“I was denied a home/apartment” by Race



**DISCRIMINATION IN PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS**

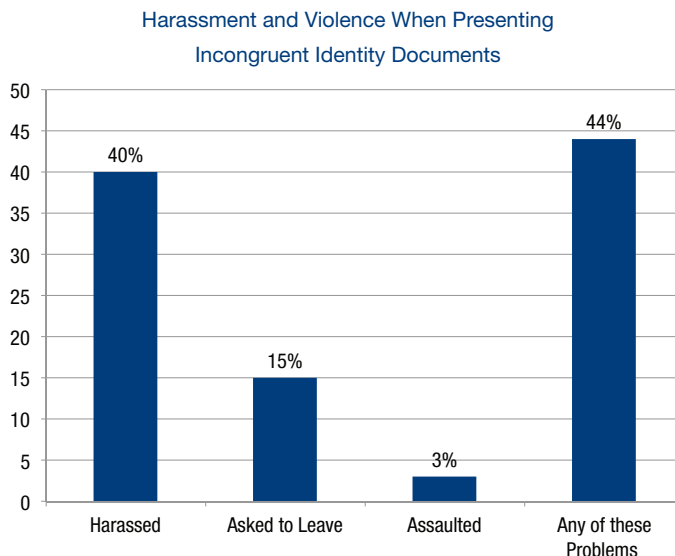
- Fifty-three percent (53%) of respondents reported being verbally harassed or disrespected in a place of public accommodation, including hotels, restaurants, buses, airports and government agencies.
- Respondents experienced widespread abuse in the public sector, and were often abused at the hands of “helping” professionals and government officials. One fifth (22%) were denied equal treatment by a government agency or official; 29% reported police harassment or disrespect; and 12% had been denied equal treatment or harassed by judges or court officials.

Experiences of Discrimination and Violence in Public Accommodations

Location	Denied Equal Treatment	Harassed or Disrespected	Physically Assaulted
Retail Store	32%	37%	3%
Police Officer	20%	29%	6%
Doctor’s Office or Hospital	24%	25%	2%
Hotel or Restaurant	19%	25%	2%
Government Agency/Official	22%	22%	1%
Bus, Train, or Taxi	9%	22%	4%
Emergency Room	13%	16%	1%
Airplane or Airport Staff/TSA	11%	17%	1%
Judge or Court Official	12%	12%	1%
Mental Health Clinic	11%	12%	1%
Legal Services Clinic	8%	6%	1%
Ambulance or EMT	5%	7%	1%
Domestic Violence Shelter/Program	6%	4%	1%
Rape Crisis Center	5%	4%	1%
Drug Treatment Program	3%	4%	1%

**BARRIERS TO RECEIVING UPDATED ID DOCUMENTS**

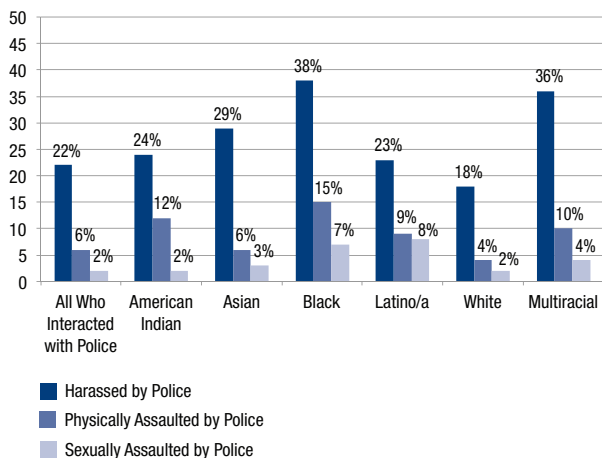
- Of those who have transitioned gender, only one-fifth (21%) have been able to update all of their IDs and records with their new gender. One-third (33%) of those who had transitioned had updated none of their IDs/records.
- Only 59% reported updating the gender on their driver’s license/state ID, meaning 41% live without ID that matches their gender identity.
- Forty percent (40%) of those who presented ID (when it was required in the ordinary course of life) that did not match their gender identity/expression reported being harassed, 3% reported being attacked or assaulted, and 15% reported being asked to leave.



**ABUSE BY POLICE AND IN PRISON**

- **One-fifth (22%) of respondents** who have interacted with police **reported harassment by police**, with much higher rates reported by people of color.
- Almost half of the respondents (46%) reported **being uncomfortable seeking police assistance**.
- **Physical and sexual assault in jail/prison is a serious problem:** 16% of respondents who had been to jail or prison reported being physically assaulted and 15% reported being sexually assaulted.

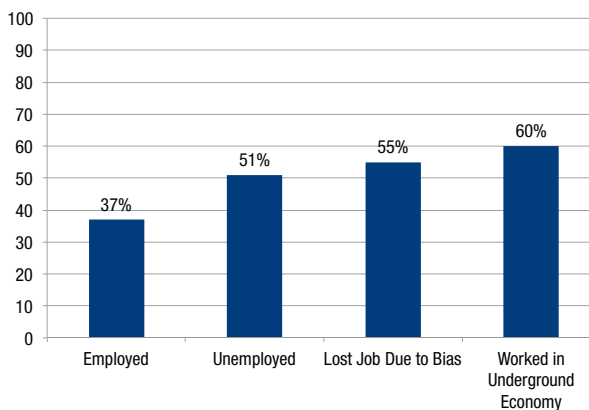
Police Harassment and Assault, Due to Bias, by Race



**DISCRIMINATION IN HEALTH CARE AND POOR HEALTH OUTCOMES**

- **Health outcomes for all categories of respondents show the appalling effects of social and economic marginalization**, including much higher rates of HIV infection, smoking, drug and alcohol use and suicide attempts than the general population.
- **Refusal of care: 19% of our sample reported being refused medical care** due to their transgender or gender non-conforming status, with even higher numbers among people of color in the survey.
- **Uninformed doctors: 50% of the sample reported having to teach their medical providers** about transgender care.
- **High HIV rates:** Respondents reported **over four times the national average of HIV infection, with rates higher among transgender people of color.**<sup>8</sup>
- **Postponed care:** Survey participants reported that when they were sick or injured, **many postponed medical care due to discrimination (28%)** or inability to afford it (48%).

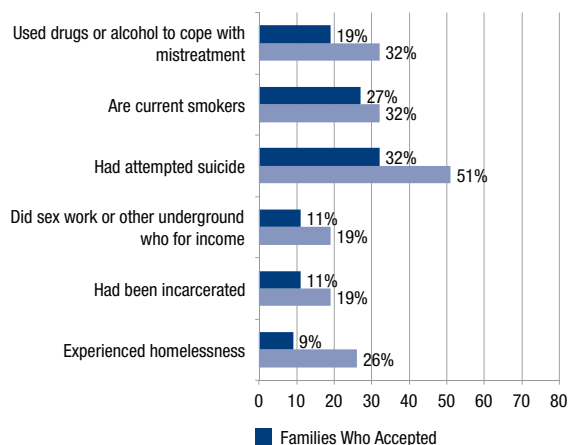
Suicide Attempt by Employment



**FAMILY ACCEPTANCE OF GREAT IMPORTANCE**

- **Forty-three percent (43%) maintained most of their family bonds**, while 57% experienced significant family rejection.
- In the face of extensive institutional discrimination, **family acceptance had a protective affect against many threats to well-being** including health risks such as HIV infection and suicide. Families were more likely to remain together and provide support for transgender and gender non-conforming family members than stereotypes suggest.

Impact of Family Acceptance

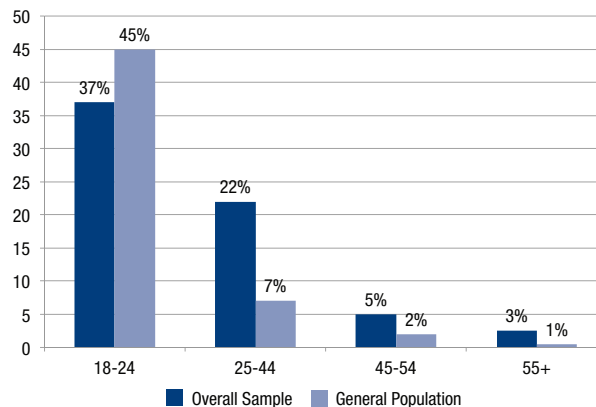


**RESILIENCE**

Despite all of the harassment, mistreatment, discrimination and violence faced by respondents, study participants also demonstrated determination, resourcefulness and perseverance:

- Although the survey identified major structural barriers to obtaining health care, 76% of transgender respondents have been able to receive hormone therapy, indicating a determination to endure the abuse or search out sensitive medical providers.
- Despite high levels of harassment, bullying and violence in school, many respondents were able to obtain an education by returning to school. Although fewer 18 to 24-year-olds were currently in school compared to the general population, respondents returned to school in large numbers at later ages, with 22% of those aged 25-44 currently in school (compared to 7% of the general population).<sup>10</sup>
- Over three-fourths (78%) reported feeling more comfortable at work and their performance improving after transitioning, despite reporting nearly the same rates of harassment at work as the overall sample.
- Of the 26% who reported losing a job due to bias, 58% reported being currently employed and of the 19% who reported facing housing discrimination in the form of a denial of a home/apartment, 94% reported being currently housed.

Status as a Student by Age<sup>9</sup>



## CUMULATIVE DISCRIMINATION

Sixty-three percent (63%) of our participants had experienced a serious act of discrimination — events that would have a major impact on a person's quality of life and ability to sustain themselves financially or emotionally. These events included the following:

- Lost job due to bias
- Eviction due to bias
- School bullying/harassment so severe the respondent had to drop out
- Teacher bullying
- Physical assault due to bias
- Sexual assault due to bias
- Homelessness because of gender identity/expression
- Lost relationship with partner or children due to gender identity/expression
- Denial of medical service due to bias
- Incarceration due to gender identity/expression

Almost a quarter (23%) of our respondents experienced a catastrophic level of discrimination — having been impacted by at least three of the above major life-disrupting events due to bias. These compounding acts of discrimination — due to the prejudice of others or lack of protective laws — exponentially increase the difficulty of bouncing back and establishing a stable economic and home life.

## CONCLUSION

It is part of social and legal convention in the United States to discriminate against, ridicule, and abuse transgender and gender non-conforming people within foundational institutions such as the family, schools, the workplace and health care settings, every day. Instead of recognizing that the moral failure lies in society's unwillingness to embrace different gender identities and expressions, society blames transgender and gender non-conforming people for bringing the discrimination and violence on themselves.

Nearly every system and institution in the United States, both large and small, from local to national, is implicated by this data. Medical providers and health systems, government agencies, families, businesses and employers, schools and colleges, police departments, jail and prison systems—each of these systems and institutions is failing daily in its obligation to serve transgender and gender non-conforming people, instead subjecting them to mistreatment ranging from commonplace disrespect to outright violence, abuse and the denial of human dignity. The consequences of these widespread injustices are human and real, ranging from unemployment and homelessness to illness and death.

This report is a call to action for all of us, especially for those who pass laws and set policies and practices, whose action or continued inaction will make a significant difference between the current climate of discrimination and violence and a world of freedom and equality. And everyone else, from those who drive buses or teach our children to those who sit on the judicial bench or write prescriptions, must also take up the call for human rights for transgender and gender non-conforming people, and confront this pattern of abuse and injustice.

We must accept nothing less than a complete elimination of this pervasive inhumanity; we must work continuously and strenuously together for justice.

Endnotes

---

- 1 U.S. Census Bureau, "Current Population Survey," Annual Social and Economic Supplement (Washington, DC: GPO, 2008).
- 2 "U.S.A. Suicide: 2002 Official Final Data," prepared for the American Association of Suicidology by John L. McIntosh, Ph.D. Official data source: Kochanek, K.D., Murphy, S.L., Anderson, R.N., & Scott, C. (2004). Deaths: Final data for 2002. National Vital Statistics Reports, 53 (5). Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics DHHS Publication No. (PHS) 2005-1120. Population figures source: table I, p.108. of the National Center for Health Statistics (Kochanek et al., 2004), see [http://www.sprc.org/library/event\\_kit/2002datapg1.pdf](http://www.sprc.org/library/event_kit/2002datapg1.pdf).
- 3 General population data is from U.S. Census Bureau, "Current Population Survey," Annual Social and Economic Supplement (Washington, DC: GPO, 2008).
- 4 See note 3. "Mistreatment" includes harassment and bullying, physical or sexual assault, discrimination, or expulsion from school at any level based on gender identity/expression.
- 5 Seven percent (7%) was the rounded weighted average unemployment rate for the general population during the six months the survey was in the field, based on which month questionnaires were completed. See seasonally unadjusted monthly unemployment rates for September 2008 through February 2009. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, "The Employment Situation: September 2008," (2008): [http://www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/empsit\\_10032008.htm](http://www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/empsit_10032008.htm).
- 6 1.7% were currently homeless in our sample compared to 1% in the general population. National Coalition for the Homeless, "How Many People Experience Homelessness?" (July 2009): [http://www.nationalhomeless.org/factsheets/How\\_Many.html](http://www.nationalhomeless.org/factsheets/How_Many.html).
- 7 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, "U.S. Housing Market Conditions, 2nd Quarter, 2009" (Washington, DC: GPO, 2009): [http://www.huduser.org/portal/periodicals/ushmc/summer09/nat\\_data.pdf](http://www.huduser.org/portal/periodicals/ushmc/summer09/nat_data.pdf).
- 8 The overall sample reported an HIV infection rate of 2.6% compared to .6% in the general population. United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and World Health Organization (WHO), "2007 AIDS Epidemic Update" (2007): [http://data.unaids.org/pub/EPISlides/2007/2007\\_epiupdate\\_en.pdf](http://data.unaids.org/pub/EPISlides/2007/2007_epiupdate_en.pdf). People of color in the sample reported substantially higher rates: 24.9% of African-Americans, 10.9% of Latino/as, 7.0% of American Indians, and 3.7% of Asian-Americans in the study reported being HIV positive.
- 9 U.S. Census Bureau, "Current Population Survey: Enrollment Status of the Population 3 Years Old and Over, by Sex, Age, Race, Hispanic Origin, Foreign Born, and Foreign-Born" (Washington, DC: GPO, October 2008): Table 1. <http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/school/cps2008.html>. The last category, over 55, was not rounded to its small size.
- 10 See note 9.



# INJUSTICE AT EVERY TURN: A REPORT OF THE NATIONAL TRANSGENDER DISCRIMINATION SURVEY

## Introduction

Every day, transgender and gender non-conforming people bear the brunt of social and economic marginalization due to discrimination based on their gender identity or expression. Advocates confront this reality regularly working with transgender people who have lost housing, been fired from jobs, experienced mistreatment and violence, or been unable to access the health care they need. Too often, policymakers, service providers, the media and society at large have dismissed or discounted the needs of transgender and gender non-conforming people, and a lack of hard data on the scope of anti-transgender discrimination has hampered the work to make substantive policy changes to address these needs.

In 2008, The National Center for Transgender Equality and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force formed a ground-breaking research partnership to address this problem, launching the first comprehensive national transgender discrimination study. The data collected brings into clear focus the pervasiveness and overwhelming collective weight of discrimination that transgender and gender non-conforming people endure.

This report provides information on discrimination in every major area of life — including housing, employment, health and health care, education, public accommodation, family life, criminal justice and government identity documents. In virtually every setting, the data underscores the urgent need for policymakers and community leaders to change their business-as-usual approach and confront the devastating consequences of anti-transgender bias.

Sixty-three percent (63%) of our participants experienced a serious act of discrimination—events that would have a major impact on a person’s quality of life and ability to sustain themselves financially or emotionally. Participants reported that they had faced:

- Loss of job due to bias
- Eviction due to bias
- School bullying/harassment so bad the respondent had to drop out
- Teacher bullying
- Physical assault due to bias
- Sexual assault due to bias
- Homelessness because of gender identity/expression
- Loss of relationship with partner or children due to gender identity/expression
- Denial of medical service due to bias
- Incarceration due to gender identity/expression

Each of these can be devastating and have long-term consequences, as we will see in this report.

Almost a quarter (23%) of our respondents experienced a catastrophic level of discrimination, having been impacted by at least three of the above major life-disrupting events due to bias. Imagine losing your home, your job and your children, or being bullied by a teacher, incarcerated because of your gender identity and sexually assaulted. These compounding acts of discrimination—due to the prejudice of others or unjust laws—exponentially increase the difficulty of bouncing back and re-establishing a stable economic and home life.

While these statistics are often devastating, it is our hope that they motivate people to take action, rather than simply despair. The gravity of these findings compels each of us to confront anti-transgender bias in our communities and rebuild a foundation of health, social and economic security for transgender and gender non-conforming people in our communities. We do believe that the situation is improving and look forward to future studies that will enable us to look at discrimination over time.

All of us — whether we are human resources professionals, nurses or doctors, police officers or judges, insurance company managers, landlords or restaurant managers, clerks or EMTs, teachers or principals, friends or community advocates — must take responsibility for the pervasive civil rights violations and callous disregard for basic humanity recorded and analyzed here. It is through the choices that each of us make, and the institutional policies we reject or uphold that either recreate or confront the outrageous discrimination study participants endure.

We present our findings, having just scratched the surface of this extensive data source. We encourage advocates and researchers to consider our findings with an eye toward much-needed future research. We expect these data to answer many questions about the lives of transgender people and the needs of this community and to provoke additional inquiry in years to come. To this end, we plan to provide the data set to additional researchers to perform deeper or different analysis.

## Roadmap for this Report

Immediately after this chapter is Methodology, then we provide chapters based on major areas of life:

- Education
- Employment
- Health
- Family Life
- Housing and Homelessness
- Public Accommodations
- Identity Documents
- Police and Incarceration

Following these, we have shorter sections on two subjects: the particular experiences of cross-dressers and the policy priorities as defined by our respondents. We end with a Conclusion chapter.

There are three Appendices: Appendix A is a glossary of terms used in this report, Appendix B contains recommendations for future researchers who seek to do similar studies or ask similar questions of respondents, and Appendix C is the original survey instrument (paper version). We plan to provide the dataset to additional researchers to perform deeper or different analysis.

*“I was kicked out of my house and out of college when I was 18. I became a street hooker, thief, drug abuser, and drug dealer. When I reflect back, it’s a miracle that I survived. I had so many close calls. I could have been murdered, committed suicide, contracted AIDS, or fatally overdosed.”*

# METHODOLOGY

The National Transgender Discrimination Survey is the most extensive survey of transgender discrimination ever undertaken. Over eight months, a team of community-based advocates, transgender leaders, researchers, lawyers and LGBT policy experts came together to create an original survey instrument. In the end, over 7,500 people responded to the 70-question survey. Over four months, our research team fielded its 70-question online survey through direct contacts with more than 800 transgender-led or transgender-serving community-based organizations in the U.S. We also contacted possible participants through 150 active online community listserves. The vast majority of respondents took the survey online, through a URL established at Pennsylvania State University.

Additionally, we distributed 2,000 paper surveys to organizations serving hard-to-reach populations — including rural, homeless, and low-income transgender and gender non-conforming people, conducting phone follow-up for three months. With only \$3,000 in funding for outreach provided by the Network for LGBT Health Equity, formerly the Network for LGBT Tobacco Control, we decided to pay stipends to workers in homeless shelters, legal aid clinics, mobile health clinics and other service settings to host “survey parties” to encourage respondents whose economic vulnerability, housing insecurity, or literacy level might pose particular barriers to participation. This effort resulted in the inclusion of approximately 500 paper surveys in the final sample.

Both the paper and online surveys were available in both English and Spanish. For additional information about the questionnaire itself, please see the Survey Instrument chapter.

The final study sample includes 6,456 valid respondents from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Our geographic distribution generally mirrors that of the general U.S. population. For more information, see the tables at the end of this chapter or the Portrait chapter.

## Our Respondents

At the outset, we had to determine if the population we sought for the survey was transgender people only, or transgender and gender non-conforming people. We ultimately chose to include both.

Both of our organizations define “transgender” broadly to include those who transition from one gender to another (transsexuals), *and* those who may not, including genderqueer people, cross-dressers, the androgynous, and those whose gender non-conformity is a part of their identity. Because the term “transgender” is understood in various ways that may or may not include these groups of people, we chose to use broader gender non-conforming language to ensure broad participation in the survey.

Furthermore, gender non-conforming people, especially those who are also lesbian, gay or bisexual, found themselves at the heart of the debate over the inclusion of transgender people and “gender identity” in the Employment Non-Discrimination Act in 2007. Information about their experiences of discrimination could better shape debates like these and shed light on the relationship between gender identity/expression and discrimination.

Consequently, we decided to invite the broader range of people to respond to the survey, and then, during cleaning, eliminate those who were neither transgender nor gender non-conforming; this process is described further in the “Cleaning the Data” section.

In the Portrait chapter, and in our discussion of Questions 3 and 4 in Appendix B, we describe more about the results of the choice to survey both transgender and gender non-conforming people (75% of our sample fell into the transgender category), as well as how we developed the categories of “transgender” and “gender non-conforming.” Throughout this report, we attempted to give both transgender and gender non-conforming results separately so that those who are interested in one of the groups could use more specific data.

## Developing the Survey Instrument

Over eight months, a team of highly trained social science and health researchers, grassroots and national transgender rights advocates, expert lawyers, statisticians, and LGBT movement leaders worked together to craft this questionnaire. The mix of trained researchers, movement advocates and end-users at the forefront of policy change was powerful.

We based survey questions — their inclusion, their framing, relevant terms, and literacy level — on the experiences of transgender and gender non-conforming people in the room, and others in our lives, our families and our communities. By mining the stories of discrimination we had already encountered as advocates, researchers, family members and grassroots organizers, we helped design an instrument that was relevant and user-friendly, and ultimately yielded the largest sample of transgender experience ever gathered.

There were a few places where wording of questions could have been improved, which we realized during the data analysis phase of this project. Please see Appendix B, Survey Instrument—Issues and Analysis, for guidance for future researchers who seek to inquire about similar topics.

## Length

The survey contained 70 questions, although often a single “question” was in reality a combination of many questions (for example, Question 4 asks for responses to 15 different terms). Reports from the field varied widely about the time it took to complete the survey. Some reported taking the survey in 20 minutes on a personal computer; while others who accessed the survey through health or homeless services settings and took it with the assistance of outreach workers often took an hour or longer. Before the survey data collection was started, some experts expressed concern that respondents who had a high school diploma or less would be unable to complete such a lengthy questionnaire, but our final sample included 806 respondents at that educational level.

The team believes that the period in which we fielded the survey — about a year after the 2007 removal of gender identity from proposed federal legislation that would have prohibited discrimination based on sexual orientation in the workplace — was a factor in the depth and breadth of our sample. This was a historic moment when gender non-conforming and transgender people felt a particular urgency to tell their stories, and to have their experiences accounted for in the national conversation on workplace discrimination and employment.

Many questions we wanted to ask were deleted in the end so that we could keep the survey at 70 questions. We understood length to be a risk.<sup>1</sup> We were hopeful that our two national organizations maintained a level of credibility in the community that would generate a strong response and that our affiliation with an academic institution, Pennsylvania State University, would also boost completion rates.

## Distribution of Online and Paper Surveys

Before starting survey field work, we developed a list of about 800 active, transgender-specific or trans-related organizations and about 150 listserves in the United States. We attempted to reach every one by phone or e-mail, asking the organizations to e-mail their constituents or members directly with the URL for the questionnaire upon release and to run articles and free ads about the survey in their newsletters.

During our first two weeks of field work, study team members called hundreds of colleagues in LGBT organizations to ask for their help in spreading the word about the survey, and encouraging appropriate contacts to take the survey. We made a sustained effort to focus on LGBT people of color, rural and homeless/health service organizations so that our study would not neglect the respondents most often left out of critical research on our communities.

During our six-month data gathering effort, we dedicated a half-time staff person to do direct outreach to rural-focused organizations and listserves and those serving transgender people who access community resources via housing, health and legal programs. In some cases, volunteers, some of whom were given a modest stipend, acted as survey assistants at clinics or small “survey parties” through local programs, delivering and collecting paper surveys. We did not use incentives for respondents to complete the survey, although food was served at some group gatherings.

Our final sample consisted of approximately 6,000 online surveys and 500 paper surveys. More research or analysis would need to be done on the sample to determine whether we may have avoided the typical online bias by collecting paper questionnaires in addition to online data collection.<sup>2</sup>

While we did our best to make the sample as representative as possible of transgender and gender non-conforming people in the U.S., it is not appropriate to generalize the findings in this study to all transgender and gender non-conforming people because it not a random sample. A truly random sample of transgender

and gender non-conforming people is not currently possible, as government actors that have the resources for random sampling have failed to include questions on transgender identity in their population-based research.

## Language and Translation

We attempted to make the language of the survey questionnaire accessible to as many participants as possible by maintaining an appropriately accessible literacy level without compromising the meaning of our questions. For example, we often omitted medical terminology that is not commonly understood while putting technical terms in parentheses for those who were familiar with them.

Often, we also had to choose between words that were clearer versus those that matched the sensitivities of the various communities the survey was intended to speak to. For example, we avoided using the terms “illegal,” “criminal,” and “prostitution” in Question 29 because of implicit value judgments in those terms. Instead we opted for “street economy” and “sex work,” which may have reassured some respondents but puzzled others. We found striking the right balance on language use to be a challenge.

Trained volunteers, including a company providing pro bono services, translated the survey into Spanish; we did not have funding to translate into additional languages.<sup>3</sup> Gendered terms posed a major challenge since they are often linguistically and culturally specific and don’t always translate easily or precisely.

## Hosting and Institutional Review

The questionnaire was hosted online by Pennsylvania State University through our partnership with Professor Susan (Sue) Rankin. The technological aspects of administering the online survey were handled by Pennsylvania State University IT professionals and her graduate students, who did an excellent job programming and safeguarding our data. Paper surveys were hand-entered into the system after the online survey closed.

It was important to us that our data go through a university-based Institutional Review Board (IRB) process, which ensures confidentiality and humane treatment of survey participants, so that our data could be published in and cited in peer-reviewed journals. Although this did add extra steps and time to our process, we believe it was well worth it.<sup>4</sup>

Going through institutional review also required that we start the questionnaire with an instruction sheet that told participants their rights and recourses as participants, as well as a variety of other information. The language in the instruction sheet met Pennsylvania State’s standards for IRB instructions and was at a

higher literacy level than the remainder of the survey. Accordingly, we worried that this would prove to be an intimidating first hurdle for some respondents. That instruction sheet is available in full in Appendix C: Survey Instrument.

## Cleaning the Data

The next step was to clean the data, which is the process of eliminating those questionnaires that did not belong in the sample, as well as recoding written responses into categories when appropriate.

First, we eliminated respondents whose answers indicated that they were not taking the survey in earnest or were answering questions illogically, such as by strongly agreeing with each term in Question 4.

Second, we eliminated from our data set those respondents who indicated through their answers to Questions 1-4 that they were not actually transgender or gender non-conforming. There were a small group of people who were eliminated according to the following rubric: If they were born as one gender (Question 2), and still identified as that gender today (Question 3), we looked to see if they identified with the terms in Question 4. If they did not identify with these terms and reported that people did not know they were gender non-conforming (Question 5) and they did not tell people (Question 6), we removed them from the sample.

Third, throughout the survey there were open-ended questions, often “other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_,” to which respondents were given the opportunity to write their own answer.<sup>5</sup> Part of our cleaning process involved examining these written responses. In some instances we were able to place more specific responses into the listed answer choices.

Fourth, we dealt with incompletes, duplicates, and those that did not consent. There were 31 duplicates that we removed from the sample. We removed records if the respondent stopped before answering Question 5, and we removed those who did not consent.

Taken together, our cleaning process reduced our sample size from an initial set of 7,521 respondents to 6,456 respondents.

## Data Analysis and Presentation of Findings

After being cleaned, these data were analyzed to tabulate the sample's responses to each question presented in the survey instrument. Answers to individual survey questions were then broken down by various demographic characteristics to explore differences that may exist in the experiences of survey respondents based on such factors as race, income, gender and educational attainment. Further analysis was completed to see how some subgroups differed based on their answers to non-demographic questions, such as questions about drug use, suicide attempts and HIV status.

Not all respondents answered each question presented in the survey, either because they skipped the question or because the question did not apply to them. Tabulations of data were completed for those who completed the question being analyzed, with the further limitation that generally only those respondents for whom the question was applicable were included in the tabulation. For instance, when analyzing respondents' experiences while in jail or prison, the analysis was limited to those who answered the questions and also reported they had been sent to jail or prison.

Our findings are generally presented in the form of percentages, with frequencies presented where relevant. Throughout this report, we have rounded these percentages to whole numbers. We did not round HIV rates, which are provided in two decimals for more exact comparisons with existing research on the general population, and did not round in a few other places where greater precision was necessary due to small size.

When the respondents were segmented, occasionally the sample size became either too small to report on or too small for reliable analysis. When the  $n$  is under 15, we do not report the data and when the  $n$  is over 15 but under 30, we report the data enclosed in parentheses and make a note of it.

General population data are provided in the report as a way to roughly gauge how our sample differs from the U.S. population in terms of demographics and a variety of outcomes our survey sought to measure.

We did not employ the use of statistical testing to establish the statistical significance of the differences we found between various respondent subsets or between our sample and the general population. Though our sample was not randomly selected, future researchers may wish to conduct tests with this sample as a way to crudely measure the statistical significance of differences and relationships among subsets in the sample.

Throughout this report, we occasionally use terms such as "correlate," "significant," and "compare" that trained researchers might interpret to mean that we ran statistical tests; we did not, as explained above, and are using these terms in the way that a lay person uses such terminology.

Throughout the report, we include quotes from respondents who wrote about their experiences of acceptance and discrimination in response to an open-ended question. We have edited these responses for grammar, spelling, brevity, and clarity, as well as to preserve their confidentiality.

## Demographic Composition of the Sample

(Some readers may be more interested in these data as it is presented in the next chapter:  
A Portrait of Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming People.)

Question	Response	#	%
<b>Q1. Identify as Transgender</b>	Yes	6436	100
	No	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>6436</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Q2. Sex Assigned at Birth</b>	Male	3870	60
	Female	2566	40
	<b>Total</b>	<b>6436</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Q3. Primary Gender Identity Today</b>	Male/Man	1687	26
	Female/Woman	2608	41
	Part time as one gender, part time as another	1275	20
	A gender not listed here, please specify	864	13
	<b>Total</b>	<b>6434</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Q4. Identify with the Word Transgender</b>	Not at all	618	10
	Somewhat	1601	26
	Strongly	4039	65
	<b>Total</b>	<b>6258</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Q10. Region</b> (see Portrait chapter for the composition of the regions)	New England	540	9
	Mid-Atlantic	1314	21
	South	1120	18
	Mid-West	1292	21
	West (Not California)	1035	17
	California	906	15
	<b>Total</b>	<b>6207</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Q47. Disability</b>	Yes	1972	31
	No	4401	69
	<b>Total</b>	<b>6373</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Q49. HIV Status</b>	HIV negative	5667	89
	HIV positive	168	3
	Don't know	536	8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>6371</b>	<b>100</b>

Question	Response	#	%	
<b>Q11. Race</b> (Multiple Answers Permitted)	White	5372	83	
	Latino/a	402	6	
	Black	389	6	
	American Indian	368	6	
	Asian	213	3	
	Arab or Middle Eastern	45	1	
	<b>Total</b>			Multiple responses were permitted so % add to >100%
<b>Q11. Race recorded</b>	American Indian only	75	1	
	Asian only	137	2	
	Black only	290	5	
	Hispanic only	294	5	
	White only	4872	76	
	Multiracial and other	736	11	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>6404</b>	<b>100</b>	
<b>Q12. Education</b>	Less than high school	53	1	
	Some high school	213	3	
	High school graduate	540	8	
	Some college <1 year	506	8	
	Technical school	310	5	
	>1 years of college, no degree	1263	20	
	Associate degree	506	8	
	Bachelor's degree	1745	27	
	Master's degree	859	13	
	Professional degree (e.g. MD, JD)	191	3	
	Doctorate degree	231	4	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>6417</b>	<b>100</b>	
	<b>Q38. Did You Ever Attend School as a Trans or GNC Person</b>	Yes	3114	49
No		3262	51	
<b>Total</b>		<b>6376</b>	<b>100</b>	
<b>Q25. Work Status</b>	Full-time	2970	46	
	Part-time	1012	16	
	Multiple Jobs	490	8	
	Self-employed/Owner	541	8	
	Self-employed/ Contractor	282	4	
	Unemployed/Looking	700	11	
	Unemployed/Not looking	210	3	
	Disability	502	8	
	Student	1292	20	
	Retired	450	7	
	Homemaker	111	2	
	Other, specify	434	7	
	<b>Total</b>			Multiple responses were permitted so % add to >100%



Question	Response	#	%
<b>Q13. Household Income</b>	Less than \$10,000	944	15
	\$10,000 to \$19,999	754	12
	\$20,000 to \$29,999	731	12
	\$30,000 to \$39,999	712	11
	\$40,000 to \$49,999	539	9
	\$50,000 to \$59,999	485	8
	\$60,000 to \$69,999	394	6
	\$70,000 to \$79,999	353	6
	\$80,000 to \$89,999	252	4
	\$90,000 to \$99,999	234	4
	\$100K to \$149,999	539	9
	\$150Kto \$ 199,999	163	3
	\$200K to \$250,000	74	1
	More than \$250,000	84	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>6258</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Q16. Relationship Status</b>	Single	2286	36
	Partnered	1706	27
	Civil union	72	1
	Married	1394	22
	Separated	185	3
	Divorced	690	11
	Widowed	94	1
		<b>Total</b>	<b>6427</b>
<b>Q63. Citizenship</b>	U.S. citizen	6106	96
	Documented non-citizen	156	2
	Undocumented non-citizen	117	2
		<b>Total</b>	<b>6379</b>
<b>Q64. Voter Registration</b>	Registered	5695	89
	Not Registered	689	11
		<b>Total</b>	<b>6384</b>
<b>Q65. Armed Service</b>	Yes	1261	20
	No	4983	78
	Denied Enlistment	133	2
		<b>Total</b>	<b>6377</b>
<b>Q66. Sexual Orientation</b>	Gay/Lesbian/Same-gender	1326	21
	Bisexual	1473	23
	Queer	1270	20
	Heterosexual	1341	21
	Asexual	260	4
	Other, specify	698	11
		<b>Total</b>	<b>6368</b>

Endnotes

---

- 1 In general, we suggest that future researchers not replicate the length of this survey, unless they have the resources to process the results and are sure that respondents will complete the questionnaire.
- 2 According to Don Dillman, “The lack of Internet service for 29% of the population and high-speed service for 53% of the population is complicated by differences between those who have and do not have these services. Non-Whites, people 65+ years old, people with lower incomes, and those with less education have lower internet access rates than their counterparts, and, therefore, are more likely to be left out of Internet surveys.” Don Dillman, Jolene Smyth, and Leah Melani Christian, *Internet, Mail, and Mixed-Mode Surveys: The Tailored Design Method* (New York: Wiley, 2008). Therefore, online samples often have higher educational attainment and higher household income. Our sample had considerably lower household income, which would lead one to speculate that we have avoided this bias. However, our educational attainment is much higher than the general population, which could lead to the opposite conclusion. Even more interestingly, one would expect the sample to demonstrate higher levels than the general population of being in school between 18-24, if it were privileged, yet, as discussed in the Education chapter later, our sample is in school less than the general population in that age range. For more information about online bias, see David Solomon, “Conducting web-based surveys,” *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation*, 7 no.19, (2001): <http://PAREonline.net/getvn.asp?v=7&n=19>. See also Lee Rainie et al., “The Ever-Shifting Internet Population: A new look at Internet access and the digital divide,” *Pew Internet & American Life Project* (2003): <http://www.pewinternet.org/Reports/2003/The-EverShifting-Internet-Population-A-new-look-at-Internet-access-and-the-digital-divide/02-Who-is-not-online/03-Several-demographic-factors-are-strong-predictors-of-Internet-use.aspx>.
- 3 We would recommend that future studies budget funding for translation. We also recommend working with members of the transgender community who speak the language you are translating to to be sure that the terms used are current and appropriate.
- 4 We urge other researchers to follow the IRB process to continue building peer-reviewed research and articles that document the overwhelming problems of discrimination against transgender and gender non-conforming people. However, the additional time and expense involved may make institutional review impractical for some community-based surveys that are not intended for publication in peer-reviewed academic or research journals.
- 5 In every case where writing in answers was an option, coding and tabulating the data was extremely time-consuming. For organizations conducting a survey such as this with fewer resources to process results, it may be advantageous to avoid or limit this type of question.

# A PORTRAIT OF TRANSGENDER AND GENDER NON-CONFORMING PEOPLE

Our sample provides a new and complex look at transgender and gender non-conforming people and the ways they define themselves. In this chapter, we will explore information about who responded to our survey and present some of the more detailed findings about gender identity and expression. It is our hope that these additional data about our respondents will provide a fuller picture of their lives.

Transgender and gender non-conforming people form a diverse group and, while they shared many common experiences that are outlined in this report, our participants also came from many demographic and sociographic groups. We will begin by exploring some broader demographic characteristics and then focus more specifically on the concepts of gender, gender identity and sexual orientation.

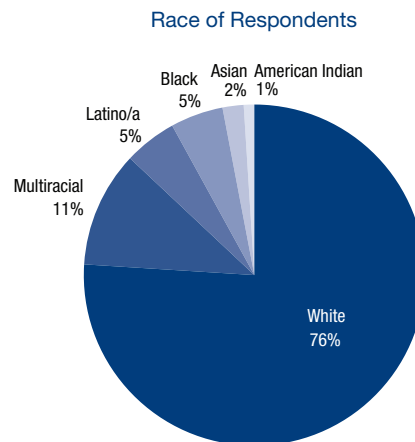
## Race

Respondents were given the following options:

- White
- Black or African American
- American Indian or Alaska Native (enrolled or principal tribe) \_\_\_\_\_
- Hispanic or Latino/a
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Arab or Middle Eastern
- Multiracial or mixed race

Throughout the report, when we report data on race, those who checked more than one racial identity are included within the multiracial category. This includes all respondents who identified as Arab/Middle Eastern because *all* Arab/Middle Eastern respondents in this study also selected a second racial identity option. Accordingly, reports about race, other than about the multiracial category, provide information on those who chose that racial/ethnic identity alone.

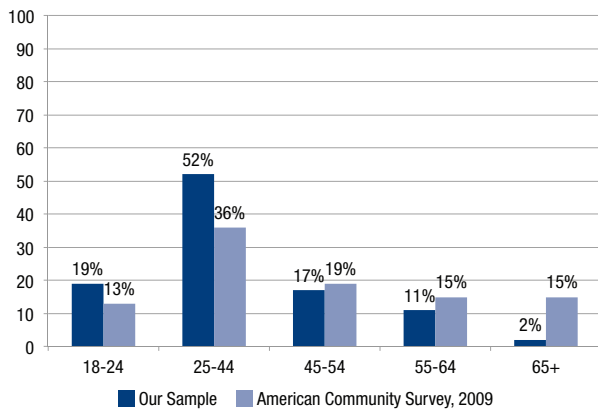
Our sample size of American Indian/Alaska Native respondents was the smallest of the final categories. While this group was small, we did include American Indian/Alaska Native separately in all data analyses that involved race.



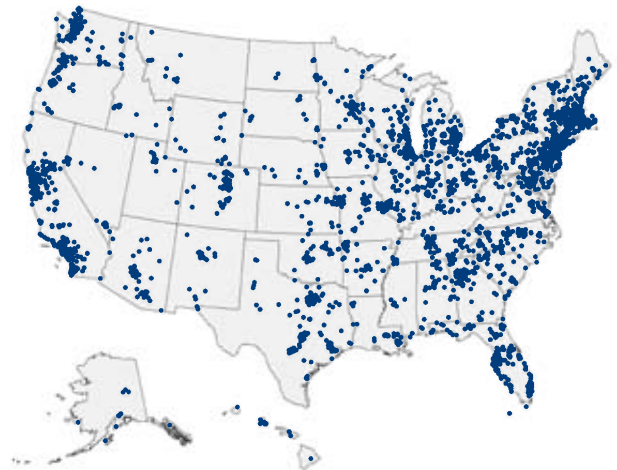
## Age

The sample included participants from 18 to 89 years of age. Our sample has a larger percentage of young people than the U.S. population as a whole. Further research is needed to know whether the difference in age between our respondents and the population as a whole is a result of our research methods or reflects differing understandings and social acceptance of gender identity/expression among different generations. We suspect that a combination of the two factors may have been involved. When more studies are undertaken of transgender and gender non-conforming experience, we will be better able to answer this question.

Age of Respondents<sup>1</sup>

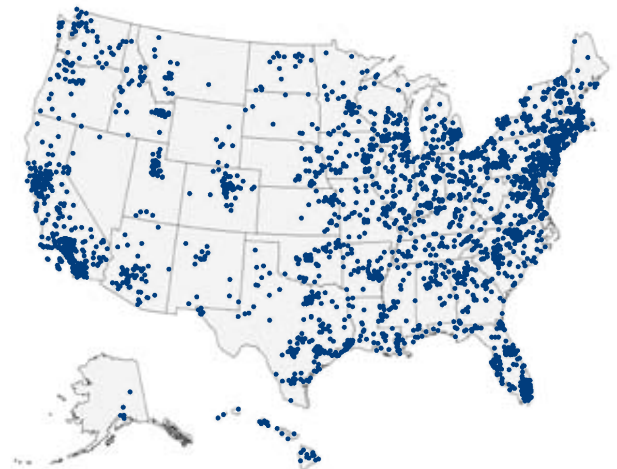


The National Transgender Discrimination Survey Sample



1 dot = 1 respondent

Population Density in the United States

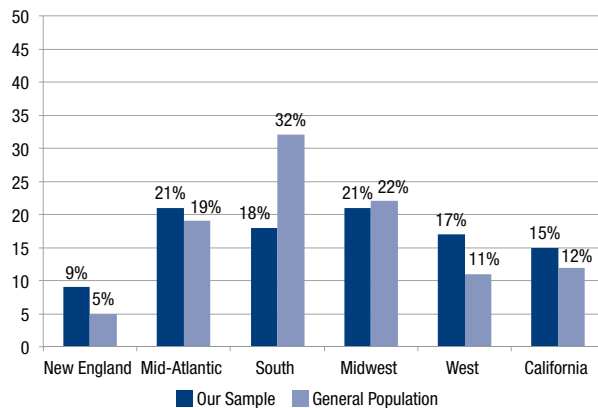


1 dot = 100,000 people

## Location

The sample included respondents from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Our geographic distribution approximately mirrors that of the general U.S. population. The regional breakdown we used is: New England (ME, NH, VT, MA, RI, CT), Mid-Atlantic (NY, NJ, DE, PA, MD, DC, VA, WV), South (NC, SC, GA, FL, AL, MS, LA, TX, OK, AR, TN, KY) Midwest (OH, MI, IN, IL, WI, MN, IA, MO, KS, NE, SD, ND), West (NM, AZ, CO, WY, UT, NV, MT, ID, WA, OR, AK, HI), California (CA).

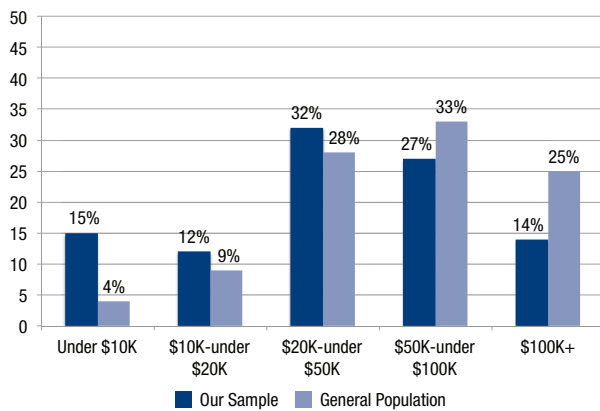
Respondents by Region<sup>2</sup>



## Household Income

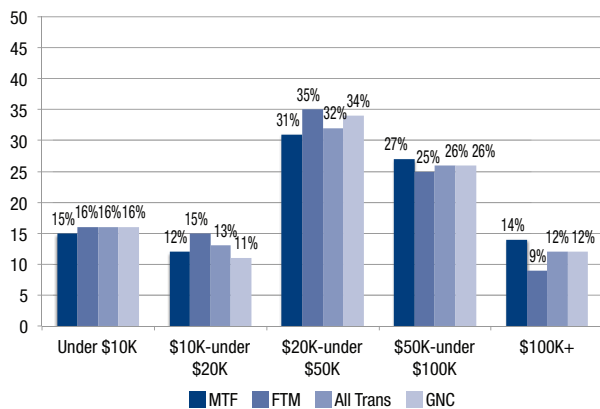
Our respondents reported much lower household incomes than the population as a whole, with many living in dire poverty. Fifteen percent (15%) of our respondents reported making under \$10,000/year, nearly four times the rate of this household income category for the general population.<sup>3</sup> Twelve percent (12%) said they made between \$10,000 and \$20,000/year. Fourteen percent (14%) said they made \$100,000/year or more, compared to 25% making 100,000/year or more for the general population.

Household Incomes of Respondents<sup>4</sup>



Given that household income does vary between men and women in the United States,<sup>5</sup> it is notable that the current gender of our participants did not impact their income much.

Household Income by Gender Identity/Expression

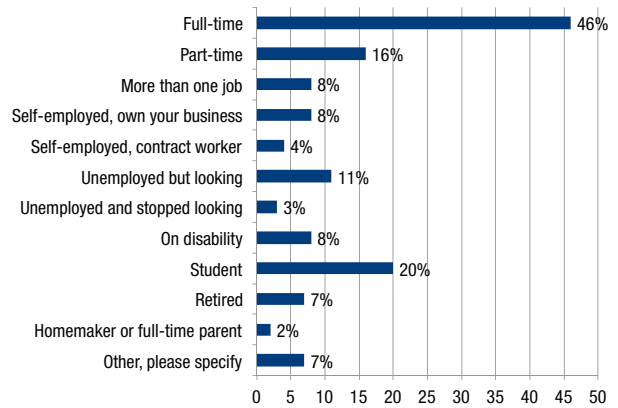


Additional analysis related to household income is contained in the Education and Employment chapters.

## Employment Status

When asked about employment (with the option of selecting as many responses as were applicable), respondents noted the following:

Employment Status of Respondents



Based on these responses, we determined that of all our respondents, 70% were currently employed, 11% were currently unemployed,<sup>6</sup> and 19% were out of the workforce (generally as students, retirees, or homemakers).

When calculating the unemployment rate, the U.S. Department of Labor excludes those who are out of the workforce; applying the same standard to our sample provides a generally comparable unemployment rate of 14%. The weighted unemployment rate for the general population during the time the questionnaires were collected was 7%.<sup>7</sup>

## SEX WORK AND WORK IN THE UNDERGROUND ECONOMY

It has been well documented that economic circumstances have caused many transgender people to enter the underground economy for survival, as sex workers or by selling drugs. Yet, despite the stereotypes that a majority do so, the vast majority (84%) of participants have never done so. Sixteen percent (16%) of respondents said they had engaged in sex work, drug sales, or other underground activities for income.

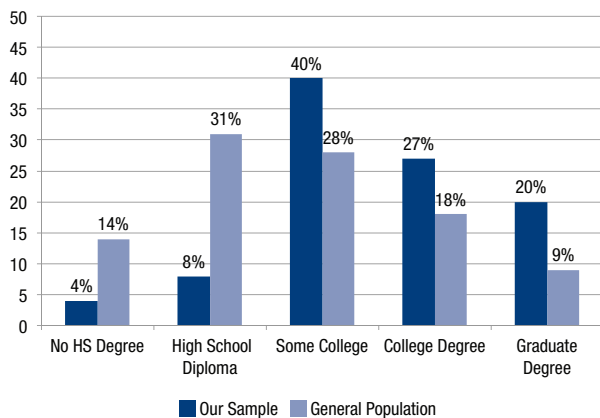
Sex workers made up the largest portion of those who had worked in the underground economy with 11% of all respondents reporting having done sex work for income. Eight percent (8%) engaged in drug sales.

In comparison, the Prostitutes' Education Network estimates that 1% of women in the U.S. have engaged in sex work.<sup>8</sup>

## Educational Attainment

In terms of educational attainment: 4% reported having no high school diploma, 8% have a high school diploma, 40% have attended college without receiving a four-year degree, 27% have attained a college degree, and 20% have gone to graduate school or received a professional degree. In contrast to the other measures of economic security, health, and other indicators we examined in the study, where our respondents often fare much worse than the general population, our sample has a *higher* level of educational attainment than the general population. Study findings of higher levels of poverty, incarceration, homelessness, and poor health outcomes among respondents speak to the power of anti-transgender bias to “trump” educational attainment. The Education chapter provides additional breakdown and analysis of these figures.

Educational Attainment of the Sample and the General Population<sup>9</sup>



## Disability

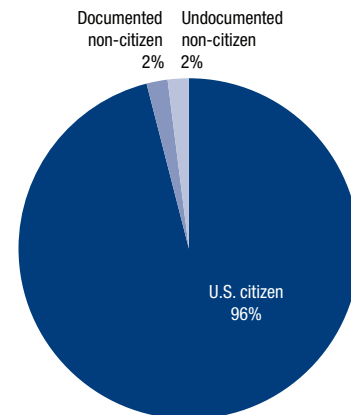
Thirty percent (30%) of respondents reported having a physical disability or mental health condition that substantially affects a major life activity. By contrast, the overall U.S. population reports a disability at a rate of 20%.<sup>10</sup> However, the way we asked the question about disability may differ from the definition used by the Centers for Disease Control.

## Citizenship

Ninety-six percent (96%) of our sample respondents were U.S. citizens. Two percent (2%) were undocumented non-citizens. Two percent (2%) were documented non-citizens.

In the U.S., generally 7.1% of the population are non-citizens and among those, generally 45% are undocumented.<sup>11</sup>

Citizenship Status of Respondents

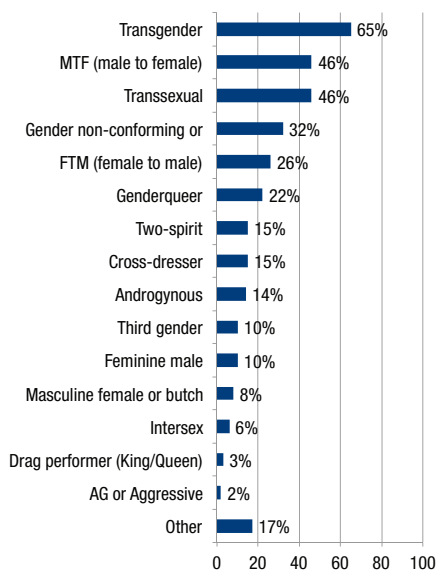


## Gender Identity/Expression

### IDENTITY

As with any community, language around identity in transgender communities is constantly changing. Class, race, culture, region, education and age all shape the language respondents use to describe their gender identity and expression, as well as individual preferences. We offered participants a variety of choices that we understood to be commonly used, and they chose “Strongly,” “Somewhat,” and “Not at all” for each.

Percentages of respondents who selected that they “strongly” identified with term



Note: respondents could select all terms that applied so percentages do not add to 100%. Definitions of these terms are provided in Appendix A.

Over 500 respondents wrote in a range of additional gender identities including: “*transdyke*,” “*mahuwahine*,”<sup>12</sup> “*FTX*,”<sup>13</sup> “*boi*,” “*questioning*,” “*stud*,” “*both-neither*,” “*princess*” and “*bender*,” among others. This remarkable descriptive variety speaks to the dynamic, evolving diversity of gender expression within transgender and gender non-conforming communities.

### ANALYTIC GENDER IDENTITY/EXPRESSION CATEGORIES

Gender identity and expression are complex and layered characteristics, with almost as many variations as there are individuals. However, for the purposes of this study, the researchers created aggregate categories presented here so that we might have useful “containers” in which to organize and analyze respondents’ experiences of anti-transgender bias and its impacts.

Based on the terms that people identified with, as well as their sex assigned at birth and current gender identity, we created several gender identity/expression categories that, though limited, provide a framework from which to analyze strengths, resiliencies and exposure to prejudice and abuse.

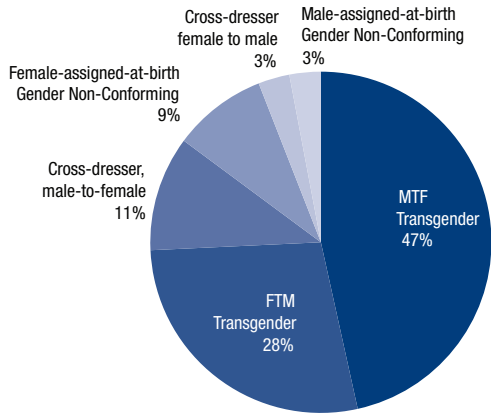
We identified two groups of transgender respondents: those who are male-to-female (MTF) and those who are female-to-male (FTM), also referred to as transgender women and transgender men respectively. These respondents generally identified strongly with the terms *transgender*, *transsexual*, *MTF*, or *FTM*. Fully 75% of all respondents fell into one of the transgender categories, with 47% of the sample identifying as MTF and 28% as FTM. For more information on how we formed these categories, consult Appendix B: Survey Instrument — Issues and Analysis.

We also created a “gender non-conforming” category. Fourteen percent (14%) of the sample identified as gender non-conforming, which generally included those who strongly identified as *genderqueer*, *two-spirit*, and *third gender*, among others. Three percent (3%) of the sample self-reported identifying as gender non-conforming along a male-to-female spectrum of gender identity/expression and 9% of the sample described themselves as gender non-conforming along a female-to-male spectrum of gender identity/expression. Of the gender non-conforming people in the sample, therefore, 78% identify on the female-to-male spectrum, with 22% on the male-to-female spectrum.

Additionally, we created two cross-dresser categories, generally including those that identified strongly with the term *cross-dresser*. Eleven percent (11%) of our sample identified as male-to-female cross-dressers, while another 3% identified as female-to-male cross-dressers. The existence of those who are best described as female-to-male cross-dressers is notable. The experiences of cross-dressers, when remarkably different than that of the rest of the sample, are noted throughout this report. However, we also provided a separate chapter that provides results about male-born cross-dressers because of their unique experience.

Although both of our organizations firmly define “transgender” to include gender non-conforming people and cross-dressers, to better understand and report on the experiences of different types of transgender people, we needed these analytic categories. Therefore, in this report, when we refer to transgender respondents, we do not include cross-dressers and gender non-conforming respondents.

Analytic Gender Identity/Expression Categories



**ASSIGNMENT AT BIRTH AND CURRENT IDENTITY**

Sixty percent (60%) of respondents were assigned male at birth, while 40% were assigned female. We gave respondents a choice of indicating whether their current gender identity was male, female or if they lived a part-time or gender non-conforming identity. Twenty-nine percent (29%) of respondents said their current gender identity was male. Forty-two percent (42%) said they were currently female. Twenty-nine percent (29%) said they identified as something other than male or female, or that they identified/lived part time as one gender and part-time as another.

Out of those who are transgender, 63% were assigned male at birth and 37% were assigned female. Out of those who are gender non-conforming, 22% were assigned male and 78% were assigned female.

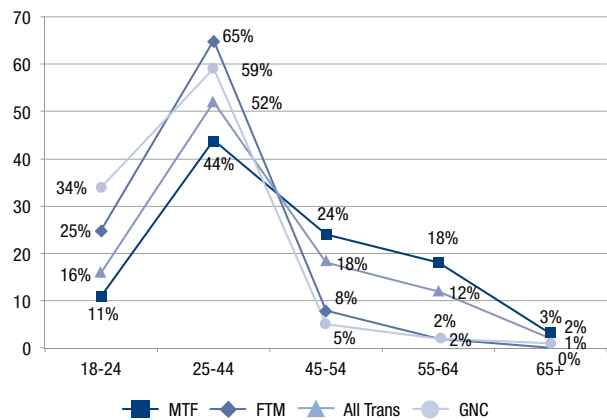
Sex Assigned at Birth of Respondents

What sex were you assigned at birth, on your original birth certificate?	What is your Current Gender?			
	Overall Sample	Male	Female	Part-time/ Other
Male	60%	20%	87%	61%
Female	40%	80%	13%	39%

**GENDER IDENTITY/EXPRESSION AND CURRENT AGE**

The most dramatic demographic differences in gender identity/expression were among age groups. Our older respondents are much more likely to have been assigned male at birth and to be living as women, while younger respondents are more likely to have been assigned female at birth and living as male. In addition, gender non-conforming respondents were also in the younger age categories.

Respondents' Gender Identity/Expression and Current Age





## Transition

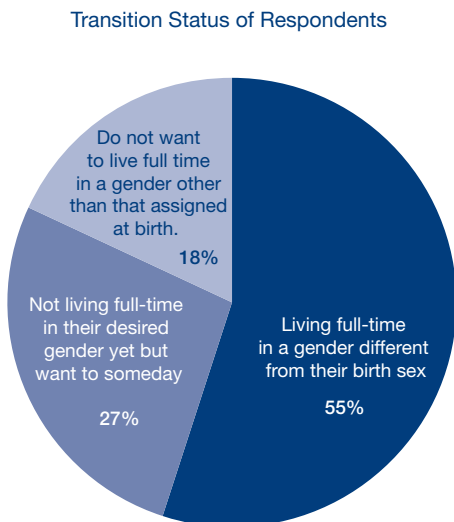
Transition is a process that some — but certainly not all — transgender and gender non-conforming people undertake to live in a gender different from the one they were assigned at birth. For some, the journey traveled from birth sex to current gender may involve primarily a social change but no medical component; for others, medical procedures are an essential step toward embodying their gender.

For many gender non-conforming people, transition as a framework has no meaning in expressing their gender — there may be no transition process at all, but rather a recognition of a gender identity that defies convention or conventional categories. For yet other gender non-conforming people, transition is a meaningful concept that applies to their journey from birth sex to their current identity, which may not be male or female. Respondents in our sample were asked questions that helped us identify whether they had embarked on a transition process or if they desired to do so in the future. This was important to us and, hopefully, to future researchers in considering the role of transition in (among other things) transgender health, economic security, experience of bias and family life.

### FULL-TIME STATUS AND TRANSITION

Fifty-five percent (55%) of our sample reported that they lived full-time in a gender different from their birth sex. We considered a respondent to have transitioned if that person reported living full time in a different gender than that assigned at birth.

Twenty-seven percent (27%) said they were not living full-time in their desired gender yet but wanted to someday. Eighteen percent (18%) said they did not want to live full time in a gender other than that assigned at birth.



## MEDICAL TRANSITION

Two terms that we used to define the medical aspects of transition are “medical transition” and “surgical transition.” Medical transition includes respondents who have had any type of surgery *or* hormonal treatment. Surgical transition identifies only those respondents who have had some type of transition-related surgical procedure.

Sixty-one percent (61%) of our respondents reported having medically transitioned,<sup>14</sup> while 33% said that they had surgically transitioned. The percentage of respondents who we label “medically transitioned” is higher than the percent of those who we consider “transitioned” because a sizable percent of those who have had hormone therapy are not yet living full-time. Detailed information about specific treatments and procedures is contained in the Health chapter.

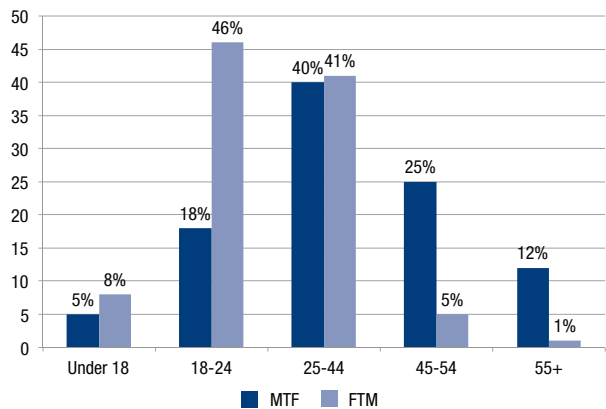
It is important to keep in mind that almost all transition-related care is paid for out of pocket, without any insurance reimbursement. Thus, appropriate medical treatment is highly dependent on an individual’s ability to pay for it. The *desire* to medically transition and the *ability to afford* to do so are entirely different and should not be conflated or confused.

### AGE OF TRANSITION

For those who had transitioned, we calculated the age that they transitioned (when they began to live full time in a gender different than their sex at birth). Most transitioned between the ages of 18 and 44.

Generally, transgender men in our sample transitioned at earlier ages than transgender women.

Age of Transition by Gender Identity



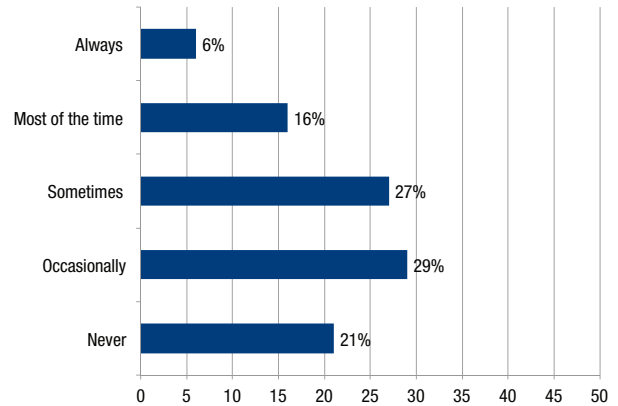
## Gender Identity and the Public Sphere

### VISUAL NON-CONFORMITY

At the outset of our study, the research team hypothesized (based on anecdotal experience) that those respondents whom others visually identify as not conforming to society’s expectations of gender might be at higher risk for discrimination and violence. Thus, we determined whether respondents believed their gender presentation matched their gender identity by asking whether: “People can tell I’m transgender even if I don’t tell them.” The term we developed for the study participants who are perceived<sup>15</sup> by strangers or in casual circumstances to be transgender or gender non-conforming is *visual non-conformers*. This is a similar to the concept of “passing,” a more colloquial term used by some to describe the same perception.

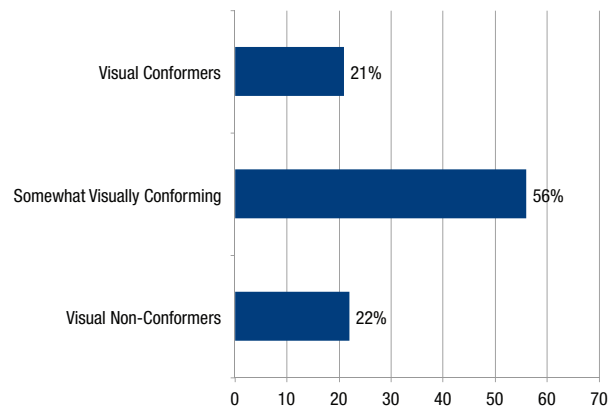
Throughout the report, we will note the significance of visual non-conformity as a risk factor in eliciting anti-transgender bias and its attendant social and economic burdens.

People can tell I’m transgender/GNC even if I don’t tell them:

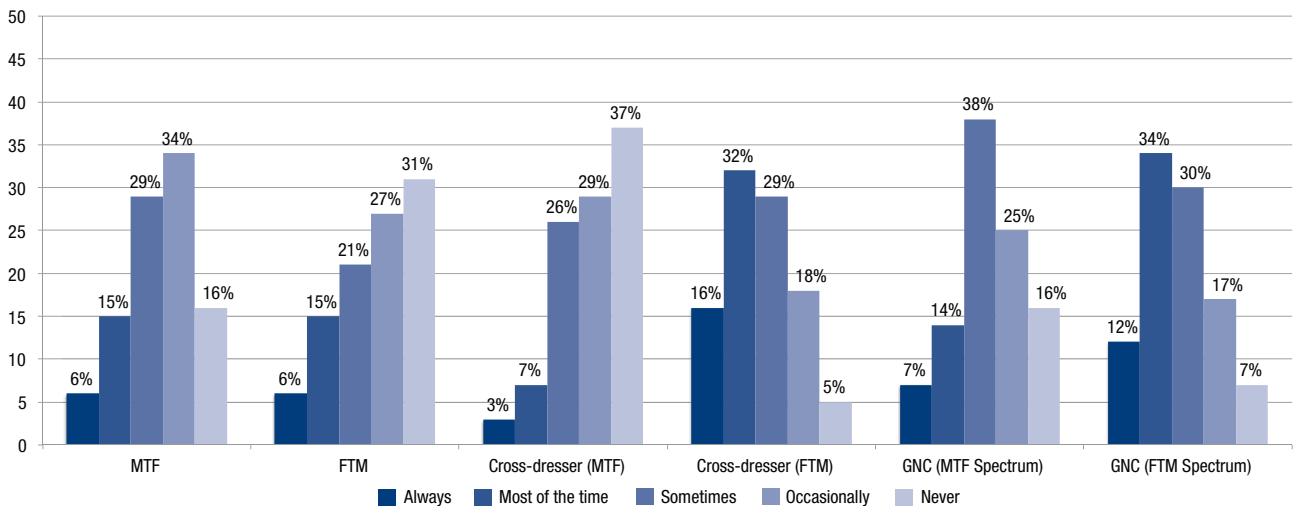


We also collapsed these categories further for our analysis.<sup>16</sup>

Visual Conformity Analytic Categories



People can tell I’m transgender even if I don’t tell them:

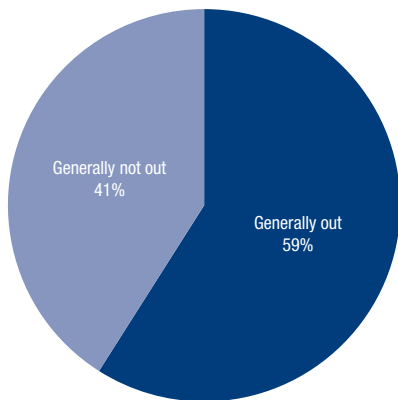


## Outness

Along with visual conformity, the research team wondered about “outness” in the lives of the respondents. Our question was: does being open that one is transgender or expressing gender non-conformity have any positive or protective effect (i.e. in the workplace, at the doctor’s office, or in social situations) or does it simply increase risk for discrimination? In LGBT communities, the process of coming out is widely seen as a path to self-empowerment and public understanding. A number of studies among lesbian, gay and bisexual people have shown positive effects of being out on social and economic outcomes.<sup>17</sup> However, the specific impact of outness on transgender people has not been examined.

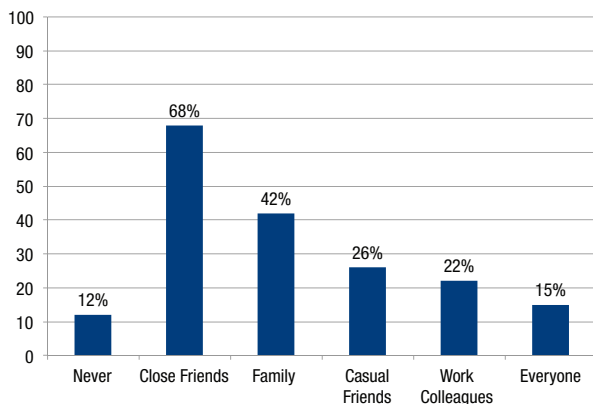
Multiple questions on levels of outness helped us establish two basic categories, “generally out” and “generally not out,” in order to ascertain whether outness has a positive or negative effect in the lives of transgender and gender non-conforming respondents.

Outness of Respondents with Collapsed Categories



Outness in specific contexts, such as the workplace, with family members, and in seeking medical care is reported on in the relevant chapters.

I tell people that I’m transgender/gender non-conforming (Mark all that apply)



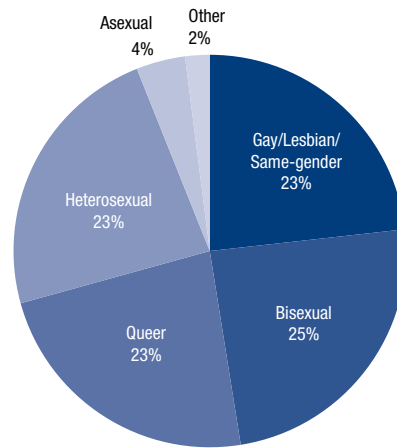
## Sexuality and Relationships

### SEXUAL ORIENTATION

The sexual orientation of the sample demonstrates a diverse spectrum of sexual orientations among transgender and gender non-conforming people. Among respondents, 23% reported a lesbian or gay sexual orientation (or attraction to the same gender); 24% identified as bisexual; 23% reported a queer orientation; 23% reported a heterosexual or opposite-gender sexual orientation, 4% describe themselves as asexual and 2% wrote in other answers.

The wide distribution of responses speaks to the complexity of sexual orientation for those whose gender identity/expression may have changed over the course of their lives.

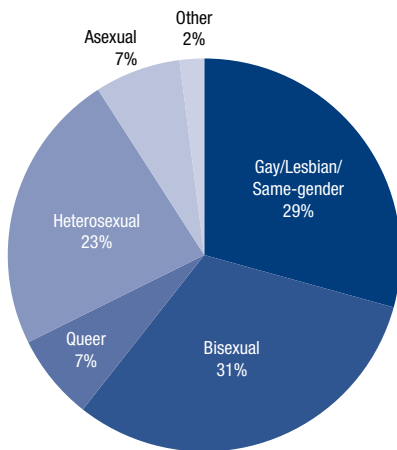
Sexual Orientation of Respondents



Those who assume all transgender people are straight after transition are as incorrect as those who assume them all to be gay, lesbian or bisexual.

The common assumption that gender identity and sexual orientation form the basis for two distinct communities obscures the reality, documented here, that the majority of transgender people — at least in our sample — are lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer-identified. While debate in the LGBT community often draws clear lines of demarcation between the LGB and the T, our findings suggest that there is considerable overlap.<sup>18</sup>

Sexual Orientation of MTF Respondents

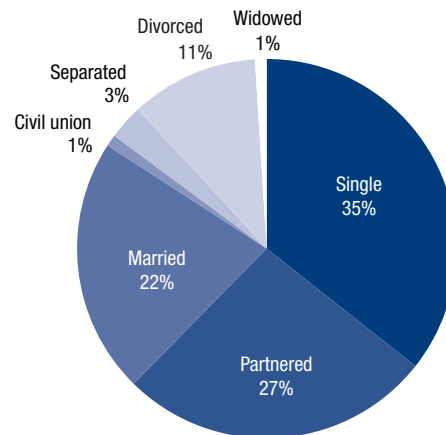


## Relationship Status

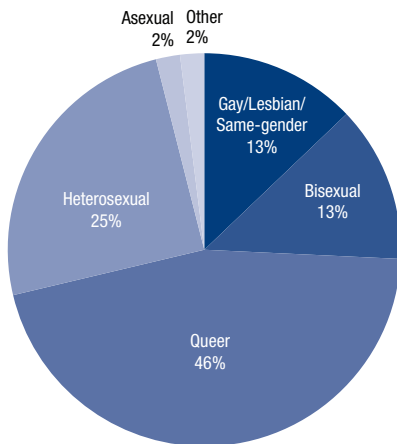
Our sample was split evenly among those who reported being currently in a relationship and those who reported being single, separated, divorced or widowed.

Thirty-six percent (36%) of survey respondents said they were single. Twenty-seven percent (27%) said they were partnered. Twenty-three percent (23%) indicated they were in a civil union or were married. Three percent (3%) said they were separated. Eleven percent (11%) said they were divorced. One percent (1%) said they were widowed. In the general population, 51% are married.<sup>18</sup> Note that many respondents may not have the ability to legally marry depending on the gender of their partner.

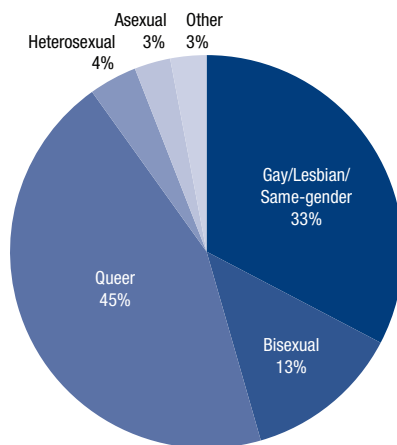
Relationship Status of Respondents



Sexual Orientation of FTM Respondents



Sexual Orientation of GNC Respondents



## Civic Participation

### VOTER REGISTRATION

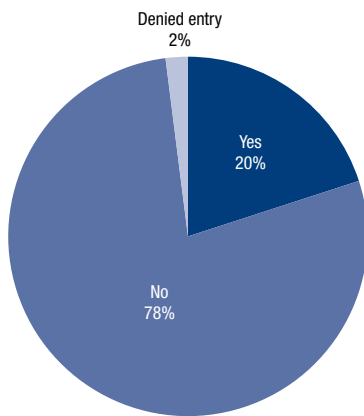
Our sample had high rates of voter registration. Eight-nine percent (89%) of respondents said they were registered to vote while 11% said they were not. The U.S. Census reports that in the 2008 election cycle, the closest Presidential election year to our survey, 71% of the voting-eligible population was registered to vote.<sup>19</sup>

**89%**  
were registered  
to vote.

### MILITARY SERVICE

Our sample was very highly engaged in military service to the nation. Twenty percent (20%) of respondents said they are or had been a member of the armed forces. Seventy-eight percent (78%) said they had not, while 2% said they were denied entry. According to the American Community Survey for the same year as this survey, 10% of the adult United States population had served in the military.<sup>20</sup>

Military Service of Respondents



### Endnotes

- 1 U.S. Census Bureau, "American Community Survey (ACS): 1-year Public Use Microdata Sample: 2009 (2010): [http://factfinder.census.gov/home/en/acs\\_pums\\_2009\\_1yr.html](http://factfinder.census.gov/home/en/acs_pums_2009_1yr.html). The ACS has more age categories than our survey instrument; for the purposes of analysis, the ACS categories have been combined here to match our survey categories to enable comparisons and limited to the adult U.S. population (age 18 and over).
- 2 U.S. Census Bureau, "Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for the United States, Regions, States, and Puerto Rico: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2009" (Washington, DC: GPO, 2009): <http://www.census.gov/popest/states/tables/NST-EST2009-01.csv>.
- 3 U.S. Census Bureau, "Current Population Survey," Annual Social and Economic Supplement (Washington, DC: GPO, 2008).
- 4 General population data is from U.S. Census Bureau, "Current Population Survey," Annual Social and Economic Supplement (Washington, DC: GPO, 2008).
- 5 The Institute for Women's Policy Research, "Fact Sheet: The Gender Wage Gap: 2009" (2009): <http://www.iwpr.org/pdf/C350.pdf>.
- 6 Note that in the report we use two definitions of "unemployed." Here, we have approximated the definition the U.S. Department of Labor uses, in which "unemployed and stopped looking" are considered to be outside of the workforce, and thus not part of the equation when calculating the unemployment rate. However, when measuring discrimination and harassment against people who are "unemployed," those who chose "unemployed and stopped looking" are included.
- 7 7% is the rounded weighted average unemployment rate for the general population during the six months the survey was in the field, based on which month questionnaires were completed. See seasonally unadjusted monthly unemployment rates for September 2008 through February 2009. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, "The Employment Situation: september 2008," (2008): [http://www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/empst\\_10032008.htm](http://www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/empst_10032008.htm).
- 8 Prostitutes' Education Network, "Prostitution in The United States - The Statistics," (2007): <http://prostitution.procon.org/view.source.php?sourceID=000240>.
- 9 U.S. Census Bureau, "Current Population Survey," Annual Social and Economic Supplement (Washington, DC: GPO, 2009).
- 10 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control, "Press Release: Number of U.S. Adults Reporting Disabilities is Increasing," (Washington, DC: GPO, 2009): <http://www.cdc.gov/media/pressrel/2009/r090430.htm>.
- 11 7.1% of the U.S. population are foreign-born, non-U.S. citizens according to the U.S. Census Bureau, "Nativity Status and Citizenship in the United States: 2009," *American Community Survey Briefs*, ACSBR/09-16, (Washington, DC: GPO, 2010): [www.census.gov/prod/2010pubs/p20-562.pdf](http://www.census.gov/prod/2010pubs/p20-562.pdf). For the proportion of documented or undocumented non-citizens (the Pew Hispanic Center uses the term "unauthorized") see Table 3 of the following report: Jeffery Passel and D'Vera Cohn, "U.S. Unauthorized Immigration Flows Are Down Sharply Since Mid-Decade," (2010): <http://pewhispanic.org/files/reports/126.pdf>.

- 12 A relatively new Hawaiian term for transgender women of Hawaiian and Polynesian ancestry. *Mahu* denotes someone who is homosexual, intersex, or has a cross-gendered identity, while *wahine* means both woman and feminine.
- 13 FTX generally refers to females assigned at birth who no longer identify as female, but also not male.
- 14 The percentage of respondents whom we categorize as “medically transitioned” is higher than the percent of those who we consider “transitioned” because a sizable proportion of those who have had hormone therapy are not living full-time yet.
- 15 This perception is often based on a person’s physical features, the sound of their voice, mannerisms and other stereotypes of how men/women are supposed to appear and present.
- 16 “Always” and “most of the time” were categorized as visual conforming, “sometimes” and “occasionally” became somewhat visually conforming, and “never” became visual non-conforming.
- 17 Some researchers have found that coming out to family members and others may have some positive influence on identity formation and social and intimate relationships for lesbians and gay men. R. Savin-Williams, “Coming Out to Parents and Self-Esteem Among Gay and Lesbian Youths,” *Journal of Homosexuality* 18, no.1-2 (1989); Ilan Meyer, “Prejudice, Social Stress, and Mental Health in Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Populations: Conceptual Issues and Research Evidence,” *Psychol Bull* 129, no.5 (2003); M. Eliason, “Identity Formation for Lesbian, Bisexual, and Gay Persons,” *Journal of Homosexuality* 30, no.3 (1996).
- 18 U.S. Census Bureau, “Family Status and Household Relationship of People 15 Years and Over, by Marital Status, Age, and Sex: 2009,” Current Population Survey, 2009 Annual Social and Economic Supplement, Table A2, (Washington, DC: GPO, 2009): <http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/hh-fam/cps2009.html>.
- 19 U.S. Census Bureau, “Voting and Registration in the Election of 2008” (2010): <http://www.census.gov/prod/2010pubs/p20-562.pdf>.
- 20 Kelly Ann Holder, U.S. Census Bureau, Housing and Household Economics Statistics Division, “Comparison of ACS And ASEC Data on Veteran Status and Period of Military Service: 2007” (Washington, DC: GPO, 2007): [http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/laborfor/veterans/comparison\\_report.pdf](http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/laborfor/veterans/comparison_report.pdf).

# EDUCATION

Education is a fundamental human right. It can expand our horizons, help us learn about ourselves and our world and build foundational skills for our working lives. In the United States, there is a strong connection between one's level of educational attainment and income. In addition, individuals who have higher education levels are less likely to be dependent on public safety-net programs, to be incarcerated, or to experience extreme poverty. They are also more likely to have positive health outcomes, such as lower rates of smoking, and high rates of civic participation.<sup>1</sup>

Unfortunately, not all students have the opportunity to pursue education in a safe environment. Our data shows that transgender and gender non-conforming people are currently unable to access equal educational opportunities because of harassment, discrimination and even violence. Our data also shows the way this discrimination impacts educational attainment, which in turn affects other outcomes such as income, incarceration, health and suicidality, over respondents' life spans.

*“People are suffering in my school, there are so many trans kids that just can't come out because they are afraid.”*

*“I find these constant whispers, this constant staring, it terrifies me in the same way all the high school bullies did. When they followed me and screamed at me and threw my things around the room.”*

## KEY FINDINGS IN EDUCATION

What emerges clearly from the following data is that in education, as in other areas of life, survey participants faced high levels of harassment and violence. For participants in the study, this mistreatment is highly correlated with lower levels of educational attainment, lower income and a variety of other negative outcomes from homelessness to suicide.

- Those who expressed a transgender identity or gender non-conformity while in grades K-12 reported **alarming rates of harassment (78%), physical assault (35%) and sexual violence (12%)**.
- The **harassment was so severe that it led nearly one-sixth (15%) to leave school** in grades K-12 or in higher education settings.
- Six percent (6%) of respondents were expelled in grades K-12 for their gender identity/expression.
- Teachers and staff members, whose job in part includes ensuring student safety, were too often the perpetrators of harassment and violence in K-12. **Thirty-one percent (31%) of the sample reported harassment by teachers or staff**, 5% reported physical assault by teachers or staff and 3% reported sexual assault by teachers or staff.
- Negative experiences at school varied by gender and race. **Students of color experienced higher rates of harassment and violence across the board**. In terms of gender, MTF students reported higher rates of violence, while FTM and gender non-conforming students reported higher rates of harassment and bullying.
- Nineteen percent (19%) of respondents expressing a transgender identity or gender non-conformity in higher education reported being denied access to gender-appropriate housing. **Five percent (5%) were denied campus housing altogether**. Eleven percent (11%) lost or could not get financial aid or scholarships because of gender identity/expression.
- Despite mistreatment in school, respondents reported **considerably higher rates of educational attainment** than the general population, with 47% receiving a college or graduate degree, compared with only 27% of the general population. These high levels of achievement appear to be largely due to respondents returning to school later in life.
- **Educational attainment did not provide respondents the protection against poverty** that is common in the United States. At each level of educational attainment, our respondents had considerably lower incomes than the general population. Our sample was 4-5 times more likely to have a household income of less than \$10,000/year at each educational category, including college graduates.
- **Experiences of mistreatment in school correlated with lower income levels**. Those who reported mistreatment in school were 50% less likely to earn \$50,000/year than the general population.
- **Those respondents who said they were physically assaulted at school** due to gender identity/expression were **twice as likely to have done sex work** and other work in the underground economy and were **50% more likely to be incarcerated**.
- **For those who had to leave school** due to harassment, **nearly half (48%) reported having experienced homelessness**.
- **Those who were mistreated in school had higher rates of drug and alcohol abuse and smoking** to cope with the mistreatment. For those who were physically assaulted or had to leave school due to harassment, rates of misuse of alcohol and drugs doubled.
- **Respondents who reported having to leave school due to harassment** were HIV-positive at a rate of 5.14%, **more than eight times the HIV rate of the general population, 0.6%.<sup>2</sup>**
- **More than half (51%) of respondents who were harassed, physically or sexually assaulted, or expelled because of their gender identity/expression reported having attempted suicide**. Of those who were physically assaulted by teachers/staff or students, 64% reported having attempted suicide. And **three-quarters (76%) of those who were assaulted by teachers or staff reported having attempted suicide**.

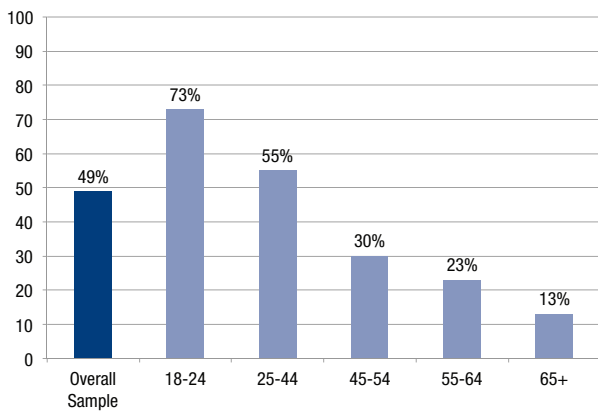


## Expressing a Transgender Identity or Gender Non-Conformity at School

We asked respondents a series of questions to explore their experience of the educational system when they “attended school as a transgender/gender non-conforming person.” Participants who answered these questions may have done so because they openly identified as transgender or gender non-conforming at school or in some other way expressed gender non-conformity. We did not ask whether they expressed a transgender *identity* or gender non-conforming *presentation* at school; so when we report results based on gender identity/expression, those who identify as transgender today may have expressed gender non-conformity at school but not a transgender identity.

Forty-nine percent (49%) of study participants reported engaging in educational pursuits as a transgender/gender non-conforming person at any level, with 29% reporting such attendance in K-12 educational settings, and 40% reporting a transgender or gender non-conforming presentation or identity in college, technical school or graduate school.

Expression of Transgender Identity and Gender Non-Conformity at School by Age

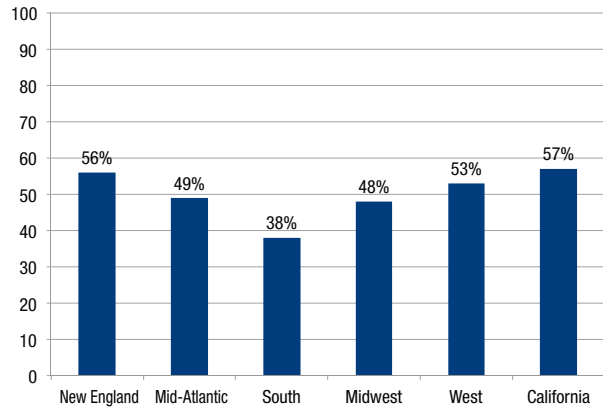


Among study participants, people of color were more likely to report expressing a transgender identity or gender non-conformity at school (Black 52%, Latino/a 57%, Asian 59%, American Indian 56%, Multiracial 63%), than whites (46%).

Transgender and gender non-conforming people from New England (56%), California (57%), and other West Coast respondents (excluding CA) (53%), answered affirmatively more often than those from other regions of the country.

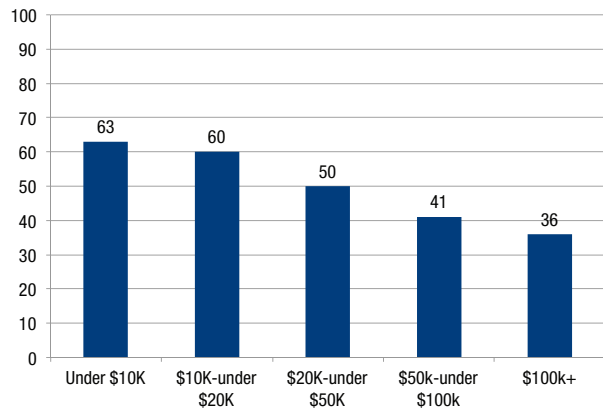
*“I am afraid in school and I am slowly coming out. I came out to one of my teachers and I have never felt so good in my life.”*

Expression of Transgender Identity and Gender Non-Conformity at School by Region



Notably, lower current household income was strongly associated with expressing a transgender identity or gender non-conformity in school. Those who most frequently expressed a transgender identity or gender non-conformity at school were those in the lowest income categories.

Expression of Transgender Identity and Gender Non-Conformity at School by Current Household Income



Respondents who identify as transgender today reported expressing transgender identities or gender non-conformity at school at a frequency of 50% while those who are gender non-conforming today reported 68%. Female-to-male respondents who identify as transgender today expressed transgender identities or gender non-conformity at school at particularly high rates (72%), compared to only 37% of male-to-female transgender respondents.

*“Not being out at school has sheltered me from many of the challenges other transgender/gender non-conforming people face.”*

## Experiences of Harassment and Discrimination at School

Fully 61% of respondents who expressed a transgender identity or gender non-conformity at school reported considerable abuse because of their identity/expression. From elementary through graduate school, the survey showed high levels of harassment and bullying, physical assault, sexual assault, and expulsion from school.

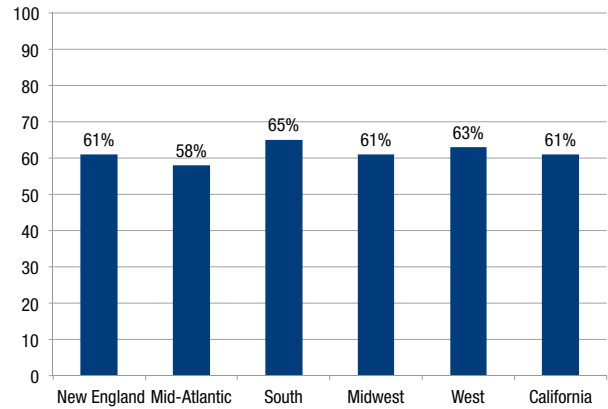
61% reported harassment, assault or expulsion because they were transgender or gender non-conforming at school.

The following data reports on the experiences of those respondents who expressed a transgender identity or gender non-conformity in school. Throughout, we report on negative experiences that respondents attributed to bias based on their transgender identity or gender non-conformity.

Fifty-nine percent (59%) of respondents said they were harassed or bullied in school at any level. Twenty-three percent (23%) said they were physically assaulted in school at any level. Eight percent (8%) were sexually assaulted at school at any level. Five percent (5%) were expelled at any level.

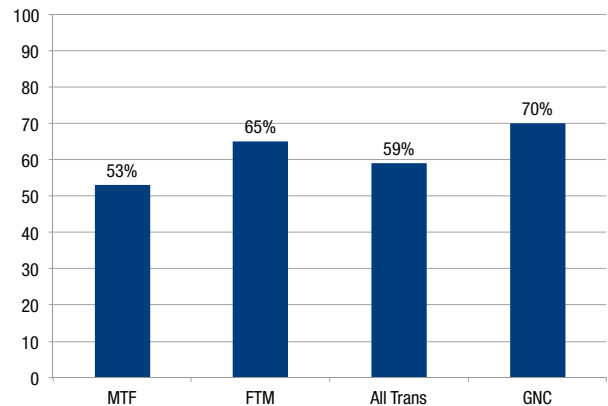
Race and geography compounded these effects. Multiracial respondents reported these abuses at 71%. Those living in the South reported 65%.

Any Mistreatment at School by Region  
(includes harassment, assault, and expulsion)



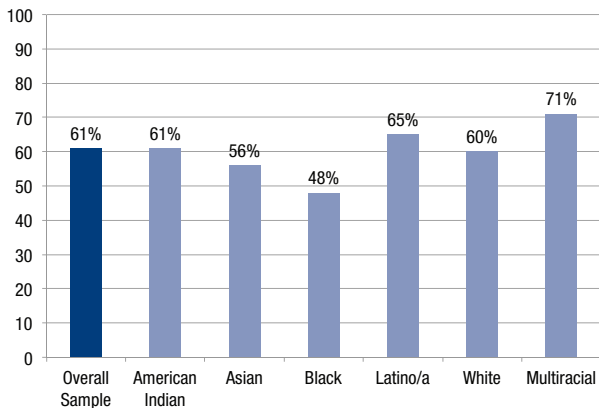
Respondents who identify as female-to-male transgender people today reported a higher rate of these abuses (65%) than male-to-female respondents (53%) and those who identify as gender non-conforming experienced abuse at a higher frequency (70%) than transgender-identified respondents (59%).

Any Mistreatment at School by Gender Identity/Expression  
(includes harassment, assault, and expulsion)



Respondents in all educational settings also reported denial of access to essential gender-appropriate facilities, such as bathrooms (26%) and housing (19%).

Any Mistreatment at School by Race  
(includes harassment, assault, and expulsion)



*“I am not allowed to use the facilities I would like and have been denied requests for unisex bathrooms.”*

## K-12 Settings

Kindergarten through twelfth grade is a formative period, both educationally and socially. Alarming, our study showed both physical and emotional damage done to students in these grades. In this section, we first examine experiences of harassment and assault in general. Later we look more closely at harassment and assault committed by *other students* versus that committed by *teachers*. Within each of these sets, we will further subdivide our findings by 1) harassment and bullying, 2) physical assault, and 3) sexual assault. Throughout we will report on these experiences through the lenses of race, gender identity, and region.

### MISTREATMENT IN K-12 SCHOOLS

Seventy-eight percent (78%) of the 1,876 respondents who expressed a transgender identity or gender non-conformity in grades K-12 reported harassment by students, teachers or staff. Many of the students experienced violence in the form of physical assault by either a peer or teacher/staff member (35%) or sexual assault (12%). Six percent (6%) reported expulsion due to their gender identity/expression.

#### Harassment

There were regional variations; students in the South noted higher levels of harassment and violence. Gender identity/expression was also clearly a factor; those who are transgender men today reported a considerably higher frequency of harassment and bullying than those who are transgender women today. Gender non-conforming students citing harassment at higher rates than their transgender counterparts.

*“Shortly after I came out in high school, I began receiving threats in my locker. The usual sort of idiocy: ‘Damn dyke, no one wants you here’ or ‘Fucking fag.’”*

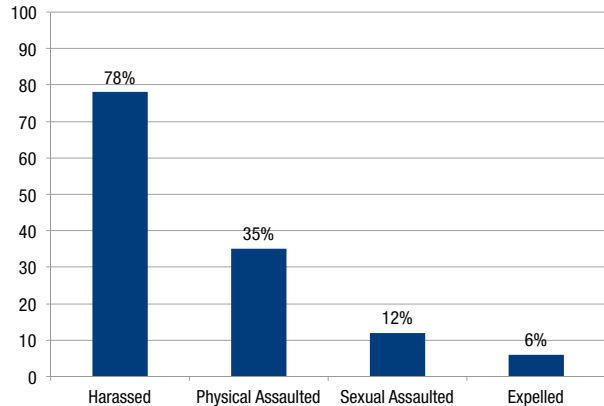
#### Physical Assault

Multiracial students (45%) reported a higher incidence of physical assault than students of other races, and those in the South (40%) and West (40%) reported higher incidences than those in other regions. Male-to-female transgender participants experienced higher rates of assault (43%) than female-to-male respondents (34%).

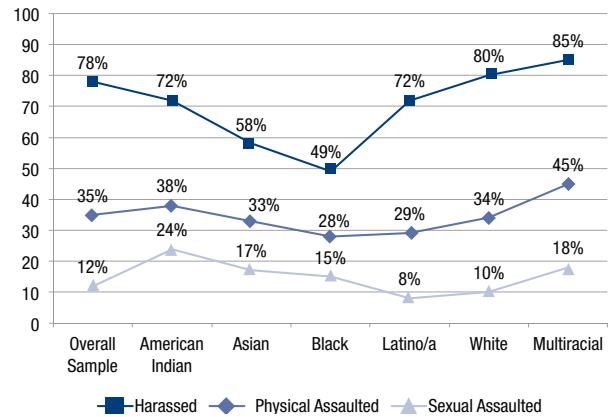
#### Sexual Assault

American Indian (24%), multiracial (18%), Asian (17%) and Black (15%) respondents experienced sexual assault at higher rates than students of other races. MTF respondents experienced sexual assault more often (15%) than their FTM peers (10%).

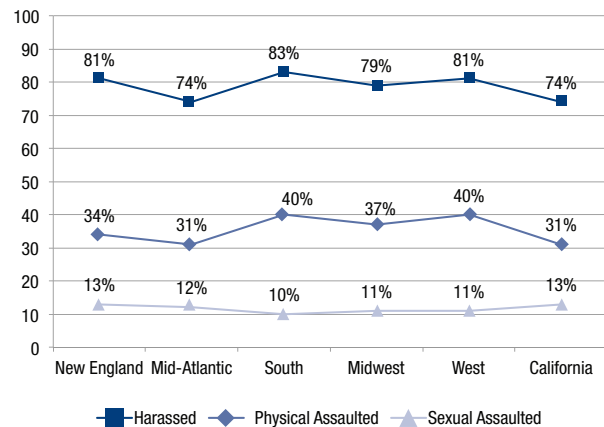
Harassment, Assault and Discrimination in K-12 Settings



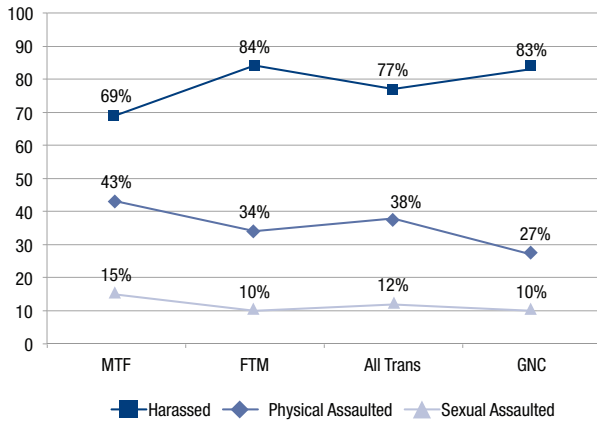
Harassment and Assault in K-12 Settings by Race



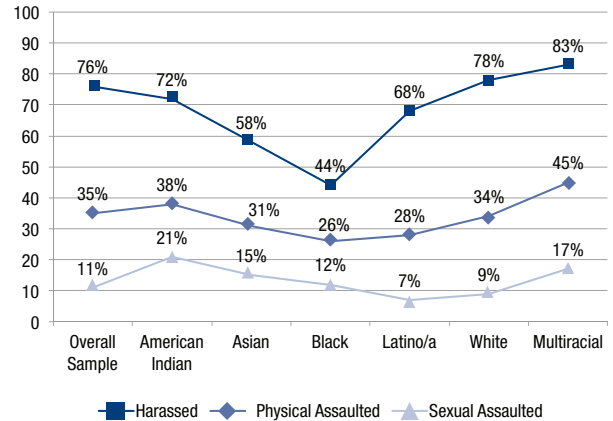
Harassment and Assault in K-12 Settings by Region



Harassment and Assault in K-12 Settings by Gender Identity/Expression



Harassment and Assault by Students in K-12 Settings by Race

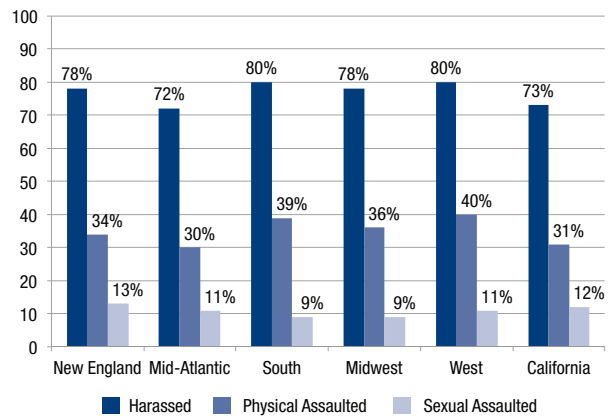


**HARASSMENT AND ASSAULT BY OTHER STUDENTS IN K-12**

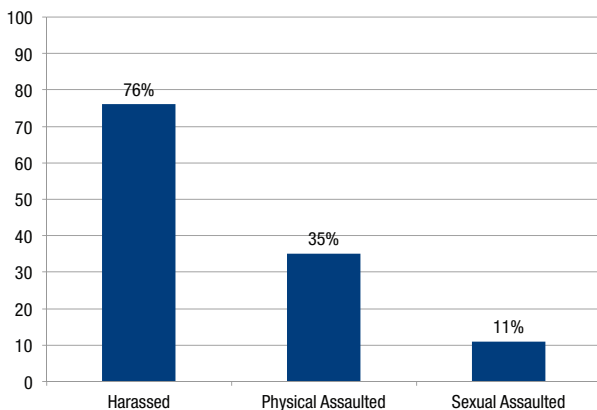
Examining harassment perpetrated by other students in the K-12 setting, respondents reported high levels of harassment and bullying (76%) and physical assault (35%).

Multiracial students reported the highest levels of harassment and bullying (83%) and physical assault (45%); American Indian students showed particularly high levels of sexual assault (21%). Respondents who are female-to-male transgender today reported higher rates of harassment and bullying (82%) while MTFs reported higher rates of physical (42%) and sexual assault (14%).<sup>3</sup>

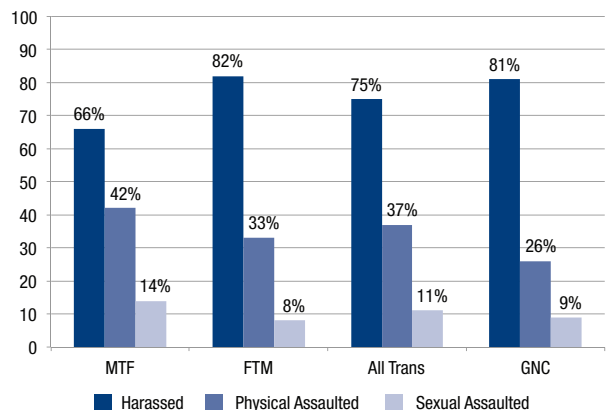
Harassment and Assault by Students in K-12 Settings by Region



Harassment and Assault in K-12 Settings by Students



Harassment and Assault by Students in K-12 Settings by Gender Identity/Expression



**HARASSMENT AND ASSAULT BY TEACHERS AND STAFF IN K-12**

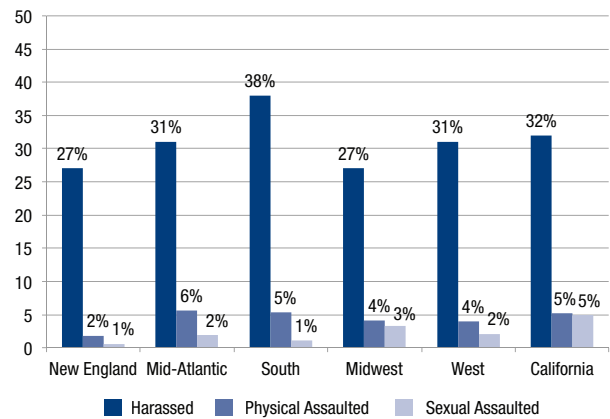
Mistreatment by teachers and staff in K-12 was also severe and had an even greater negative impact than mistreatment by peers. Respondents experienced considerable abuse, including harassment and bullying (31%), physical assault (5%) and sexual assault (3%) at the hands of teachers and staff. Students and their parents have every right to expect that teachers and staff will keep children safe, and not endanger the students through violence or harassment. This trust was violated for far too many.

Latino/a and multiracial respondents reported the highest levels of harassment and bullying by their teachers, at 35% and 42% respectively. Multiracial and American Indian students experienced the highest levels of physical assault by teachers and staff at 6%. African American students experienced much higher rates of sexual assault by teachers (7%) relative to their peers of any race.

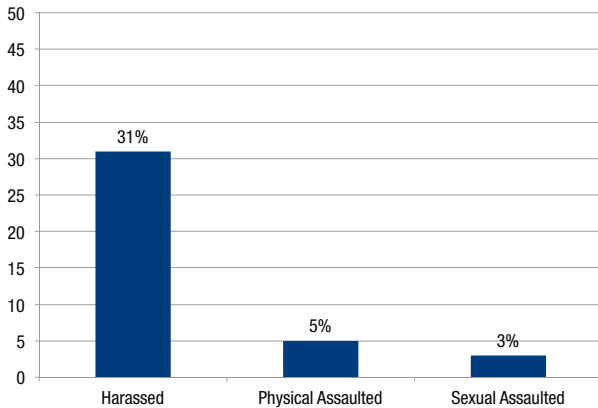
Respondents who today identify as female-to-male transgender people experienced teacher harassment and bullying by teachers and staff at higher rates (35%) than male-to-female transgender study participants (30%), but MTFs were at nearly double the risk for physical (7%) and sexual (3%) assault than their FTM peers (4% physical, 2% sexual).

*“My sister has faced more outright discrimination for her support of me than I have. I transitioned in her last year in high school, the students verbally harassed her regularly to the point that she considered dropping out and just getting her GED. Teachers would also verbally harass her, saying things like “You will go to hell for your support of that abomination” and generally treating her unequally compared to other students.”*

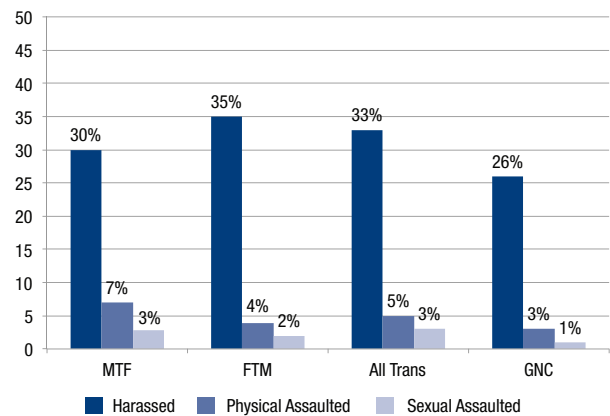
Harassment and Assault by Teachers/Staff in K-12 Settings by Region<sup>4</sup>



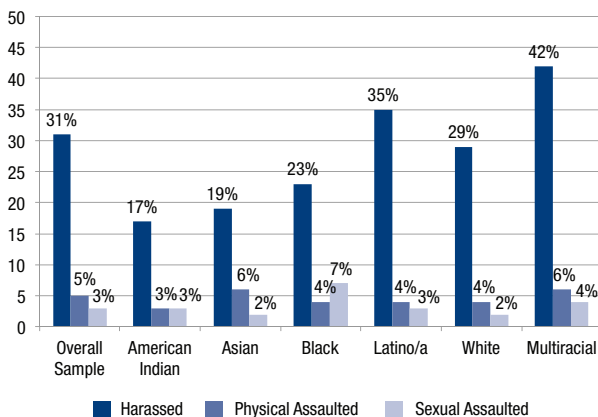
K-12 Overall Abuse by Teachers/Staff



Harassment and Assault by Teachers/Staff in K-12 Settings by Gender Identity/Expression



Harassment and Assault by Teachers/Staff in K-12 Settings by Race



## College, Graduate School, Professional School and Technical School

In examining higher education specifically, those attending college, graduate school, professional school or technical school reported high rates of abuse by students, teachers and staff, including harassment and bullying (35%) as well as physical (5%) and sexual assault (3%). Two percent (2%) reported expulsion due to their gender identity/expression. At this level, the variation in frequency of harassment and assault did not vary considerably among racial groups, between regions, or by gender identity/expression.

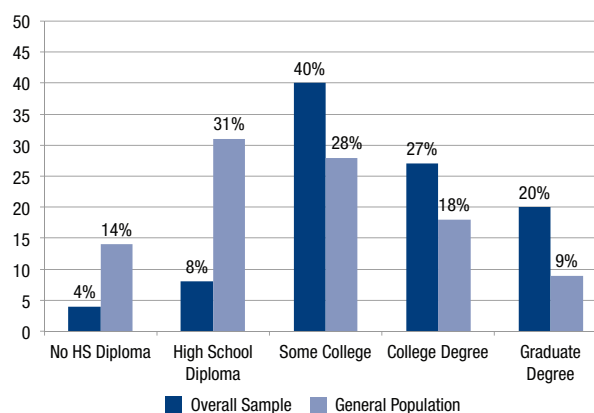
Those students identifying as transgender or expressing gender non-conformity while attending college, graduate school or technical school also reported other barriers to full participation including denial of campus housing (5%) denial of gender-appropriate housing (20%), and denial of appropriate bathroom facilities.

## Educational Attainment

Despite the mistreatment that respondents have faced, they reported high levels of educational attainment. Almost half of our sample had a college degree (27%) or a graduate degree (20%); this compares to a combined total of 27% of the general population with these degrees.<sup>5</sup> This above average educational attainment appears to be related to many older students returning to school after facing job loss or other difficulties; we explore this further in the section, “School Attendance by Age.”

*“I have chosen to attend college online to avoid harassment.”*

Educational Attainment of Our Sample and the General Population

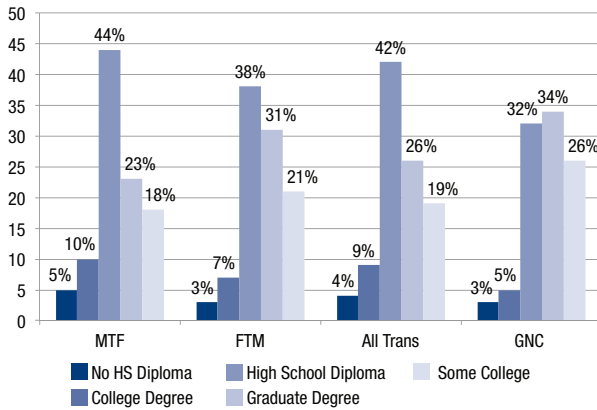


*“I am in a Ph.D. program and have been censured by the faculty for coming out as a trans woman. I have been denied classes and otherwise harassed by some teachers. One male psychologist verbally attacked me in class and used transphobic and misogynist language.”*

*“I am not able to pass as male to the students who live in the same residence hall that I do because I have a female roommate, which automatically shows to them that I [was born] female as well.”*

Female-to-male respondents reported higher levels of educational attainment than their male-to-female peers. Fifty-two percent (52%) of transgender men had college or graduate degrees compared to 41% of transgender women. Gender non-conforming people reported college and graduate degree attainment at 60%. In the general population, men and women have the same rate of holding a college or graduate degree.<sup>7</sup>

Educational Attainment by Gender Identity/Expression



Black and Latino/a respondents were the least likely to obtain a high school diploma.

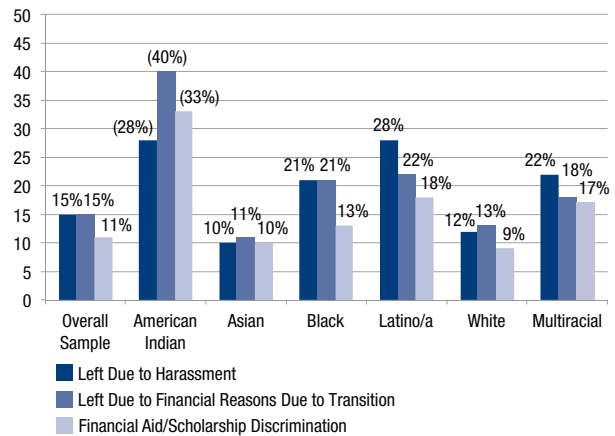
**FORCED TO LEAVE SCHOOL**

In addition to the previously discussed problem of expulsion due to bias, we found many study participants experienced other barriers to attendance so severe that they were also forced to leave school (in grades K-12 or in higher education). Fifteen percent (15%) reported having to leave school “because the harassment was so bad.” Fifteen percent (15%) reported leaving school due to financial reasons related to transition. Eleven percent (11%) said they lost or could not get financial aid or scholarships because they were transgender or gender non-conforming.

Harassment was so severe that it led nearly one-sixth (15%) to leave school.

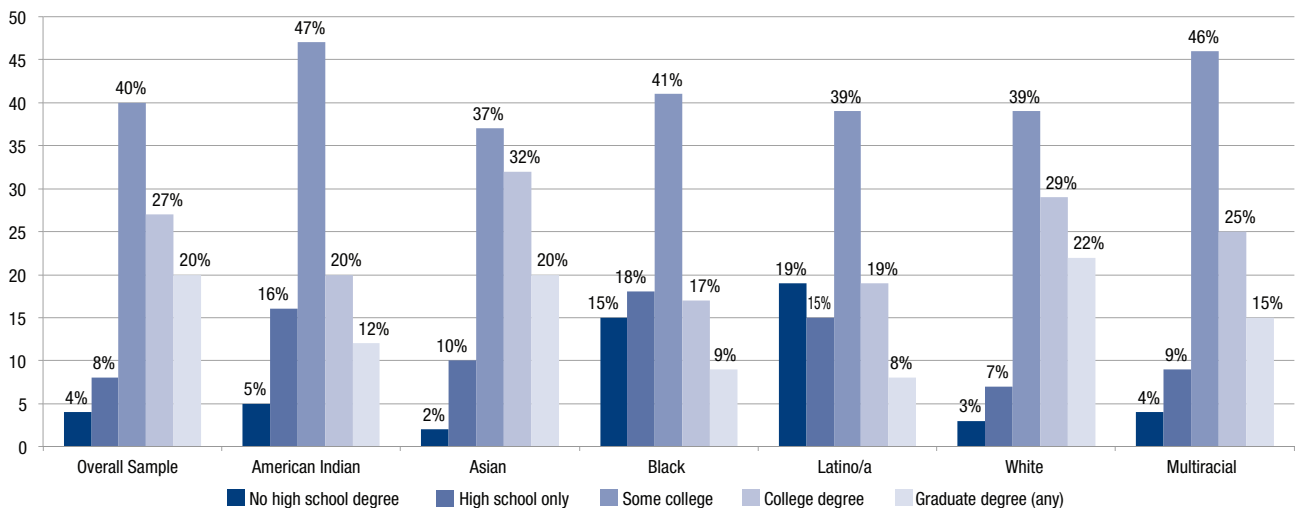
American Indian, Black, Latino/a and multiracial respondents reported these difficulties at higher rates than students of other races, and transgender women respondents experienced these barriers at higher rates than transgender men.

Impediments to Staying in School by Race



( ) Sample size too low for reliable data

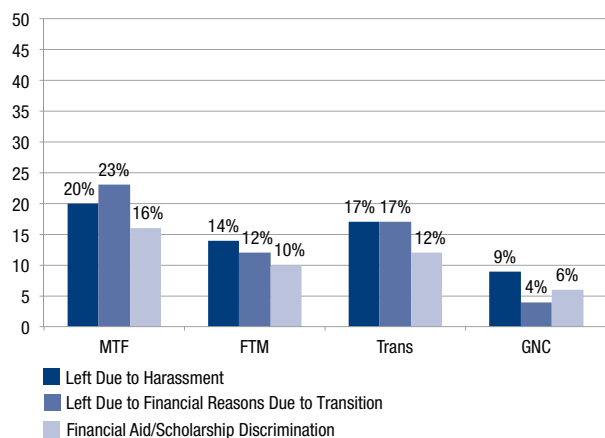
Educational Attainment by Race



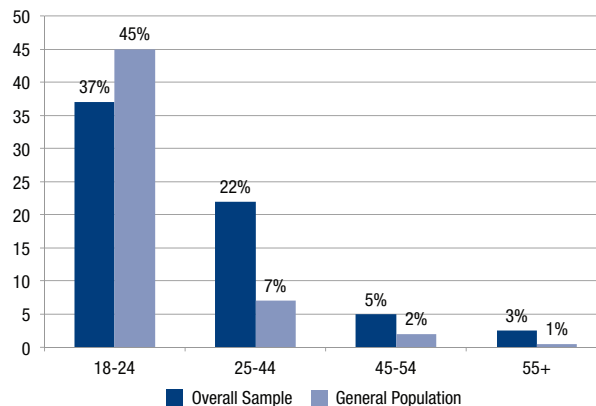
*“Prior to being out at school, I received about \$18,000 in financial aid, several awards, and scholarships. The year that I decided to be “out” on my applications, I received one scholarship out of 18 that I applied for despite having a 4.0 and an excellent application package.”*

*“I was kicked out of school by my principal because he hated who I was; I was also harassed by students and even called a slut by a one of my Special Ed teachers because she didn’t like the way I dressed. I was sent to a correctional facility for boys because I used to act out when I was very young, not having the guidance I wish I had. There at the correctional facility, I was harassed, attacked, spit on, verbally abused by other youth and staff, and sexually abused.”*

Impediments to Staying in School by Gender Identity/Expression



Status as a Student by Age<sup>10</sup>



**SCHOOL ATTENDANCE BY AGE**

The age breakdown of those who reported that they were currently in school was very different than the general population.<sup>8</sup> For 18-24 year olds in the general population, 45% were currently in school. However, in our sample, only 37% were in school. For older age categories, our respondents were in school at rates two to three times *higher* than the general population. For 25-44 year olds, 7% of the general population was in school, whereas 22% of our sample were in school. For 45-54 year olds, the general population figure was 2% compared to 5% of our respondents.<sup>9</sup>

This pattern indicates that many transgender and gender non-conforming people are experiencing interruptions in their education compared to the general population. It also shows a pattern for some of returning to school later in life to finish or acquire diplomas or degrees, perhaps as an attempt to increase employment opportunities in the face of discrimination.

Because of these findings related to the percentage of people in school at different ages, we do not believe online bias<sup>11</sup> is the *only* reason our sample has such high educational attainment figures. Had these attainment figures been due solely to online bias, we would have expected a higher rate of students in the 18-24 age category exceeding that (or at least matching that) of the general population. Thus, we believe that transgender people reported higher rates of formal education than the general population largely due to returning to school at later ages (ages 25 and above).

*“I am an older re-entry student at a university in California. I was surprised and pleased to find that among my younger friends (who are typically college-aged), gender and sexuality seems almost to be a non-issue. This gives me great hope for the future.”*

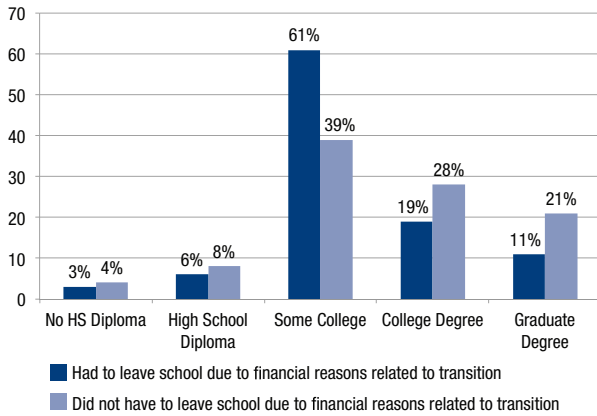
*“Regarding employment status, I lost my job of 10 years as a result of transition. I was unemployed for several months, then underemployed in a temp job. Eventually, I returned to school to get an Associate’s degree in nursing which I paid for with home equity loans, and became a registered nurse.”*



**FINANCIAL BARRIERS TO EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT**

As previously mentioned, 15% of the sample reported leaving school for financial reasons related to transition. Respondents who left school for financial reasons experienced lower levels of educational attainment overall. This is most notable in the percentage of respondents who reported their highest education level was some college. Sixty-one percent (61%) of those who had to leave school due to financial reasons related to transition started college but did not finish it. This contrasts with the rest of our sample (who did not leave school for financial reasons) for which 39% started but did not finish college. This is also reflected in the percentages of people who achieved college and graduate degrees. A combined 30% of people who left school for financial reasons ultimately received a college (19%) or graduate degree (11%) as opposed to a combined total of 49% of those who did not have to leave school for financial reasons.

**Educational Attainment of Those Who Left School for Financial Reasons**

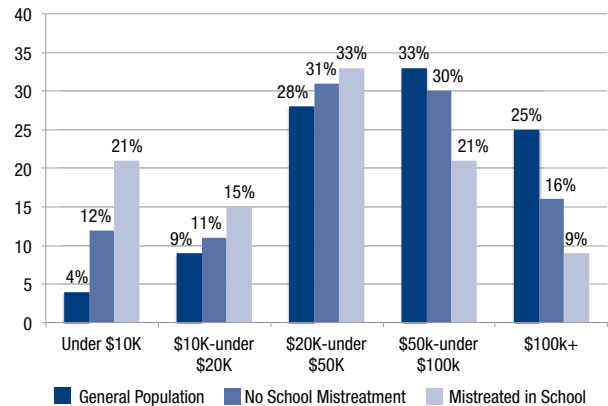


**MISTREATMENT, EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, AND INCOME**

In our sample, mistreatment in school, educational attainment and present household income of our respondents were connected. We found that negative experiences in school were tied to income disparities later in life. Sixty-seven percent (67%) of those making under \$10,000 per year at the time of the survey had been harassed, physically assaulted, sexually assaulted or expelled from school. Comparatively, a smaller number (55%) of those with high incomes, making \$100,000 per year or more, experienced this mistreatment.

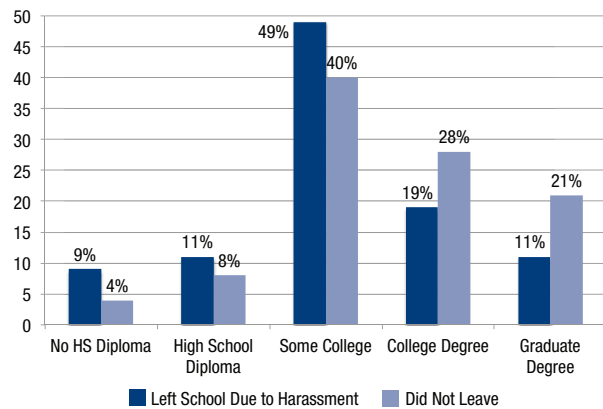
We also compared current income for those who reported no problems in school (either because they did not experience bias or because they did not express a transgender identity or gender non-conformity at school) with those who did experience mistreatment at school. Forty-six percent (46%) of those who reported no mistreatment at school reported making over \$50,000/year at the time of the survey, whereas 30% of those who experienced mistreatment in school were in the same income range. Fifty-eight percent (58%) of the general population makes \$50,000/year or more, meaning our respondents who were mistreated in school are about half as likely to be in that range than the general population.<sup>12</sup>

**Household Income Levels of Respondents Mistreated in School<sup>13</sup>**



We also found that mistreatment in school correlated with lower levels of educational attainment. Those who had to leave school due to harassment were less likely to graduate from high school, college or graduate school. Forty-nine percent (49%) of those who did not have to leave school due to harassment went on to receive a college or graduate degree, whereas 30% of those who did have to leave school achieved the same (either returning to school later or switching to a new school in order to graduate). Those who had to leave school due to harassment were twice as likely (9%) to not graduate from high school as opposed to those who did not (4%).

**Educational Attainment of Those Who Left School Due to Harassment**



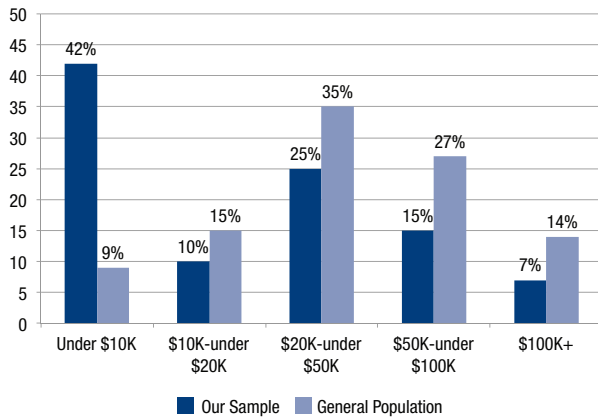
**EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT AND INCOME COMPARED TO THE GENERAL POPULATION**

Below we compare the income of our respondents to that of the general U.S. population<sup>14</sup> at four levels of educational attainment: no high school diploma, only high school diploma, some college and college degree or higher.

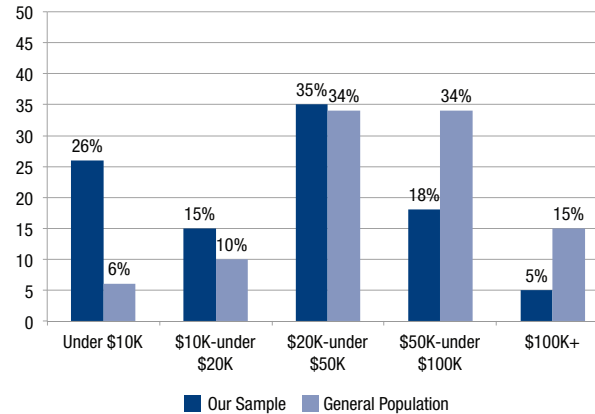
Shockingly, our sample is 4-5 times more likely than the general population to have a household income of less than \$10,000/year at each level.<sup>15</sup> For example, 8% of those who achieved a bachelor’s degree or higher in our sample still made less than \$10,000/year as compared to only 2% of the general population, and 42% of our respondents who did not have a high school diploma made less than \$10,000/year as compared with 9% of the general population without a high school diploma.

Our respondents were 2-3 times less likely than the general population to be making \$100,000/year or more at the same levels of educational attainment. For example, 5% of our respondents who had a high school diploma make \$100,000/year or more as compared to 15% of the general population, and 20% of our respondents who had a college degree make \$100,000 or more as compared to 46% of the general population.

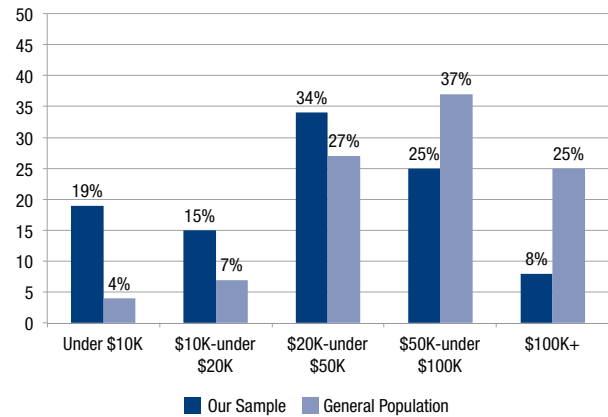
Income of Those Without a High School Diploma Compared to the General Population<sup>16</sup>



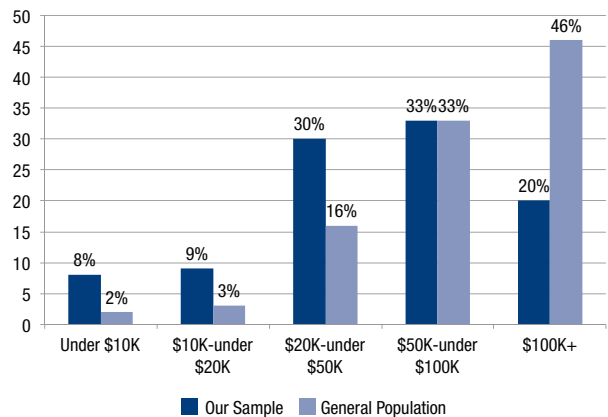
Income of Those With Only a High School Diploma Compared to the General Population



Income of Those With Some College Compared to the General Population



Income of Those With a College Degree Compared to the General Population



## Making the Connections: Experiences in School, Economic Security, and Health

In this section, we examine the connections between negative experiences in school and employment access, incarceration, homelessness and health outcomes.

### MISTREATMENT IN SCHOOL AND ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT

We found that being mistreated in school aligned with various negative outcomes later in life.

We found that those who were mistreated in school were more likely than others to report doing sex work or other work in the underground economy such as drug sales. For example, 32% of those who were physically assaulted at school also reported doing sex work or other work in the underground economy as compared to 14% of those who were not assaulted. Thirty-nine percent (39%) of those who had to leave school “because the harassment was so bad” reported doing sex work or other work in the underground economy.

Having to leave school because harassment was intolerable was also associated with unemployment. Nineteen percent (19%) of those who had to leave school because of harassment reported being unemployed as compared with 11% of those who did not.

We also found that being physically attacked in school was linked to later actions in the workplace that were presumably taken to avoid further discrimination. Those who were physically attacked in school were considerably more likely to stay in a job they would prefer to leave (64%) compared to those who were not (42%). Similarly, 47% of those who were physically assaulted in school “did not seek a promotion or raise” in order to avoid discrimination as opposed to 27% of those who were not. Thus, it appears that appropriate treatment in school impacts later job success.

Those physically assaulted at school were more than twice as likely to report doing sex work or other work in the underground economy.

### MISTREATMENT IN SCHOOL AND INCARCERATION

We found an association between being assaulted at school and being incarcerated. Fifteen percent (15%) of our sample reported having been incarcerated at some point in their lives, but 22% of those who were physically assaulted in school were incarcerated at some point in their lives. Further, 24% of those who were sexually assaulted in school were incarcerated at some point in their lives.

### MISTREATMENT IN SCHOOL AND HOMELESSNESS

There was an alarming relationship between mistreatment in school and whether respondents reported having ever experienced homelessness. For those who were verbally harassed, physically or sexually assaulted, or expelled because they were transgender or gender non-conforming, 25% reported having experienced homelessness as compared to 14% of those who did not experience this mistreatment at school. For the subset who were physically assaulted at school, 38% reported having experienced homelessness, and for those who had to leave school due to harassment, nearly half (48%) were currently or formerly homeless.

Nearly half of those who left school due to harassment, experienced homelessness.

### MISTREATMENT IN SCHOOL AND HEALTH

We examined four health indicators — smoking, drug and alcohol abuse, HIV rates, and suicide attempts — as they related to mistreatment in school. In all cases, those who experienced mistreatment in school had worse outcomes.

#### Smoking

Thirty-seven percent (37%) of those who were physically assaulted at school reported being current daily or occasional smokers compared to 29% of those who were not. Forty-five percent (45%) of those who had to leave school due to harassment reported being current daily or occasional smokers.

#### Drugs and Alcohol

Thirty-five percent (35%) of those who were verbally harassed, physically or sexually assaulted, or expelled because they were transgender or gender non-conforming, reported using drugs or alcohol to cope with mistreatment they faced for being transgender or gender non-conforming. This compared to 21% of those who did not face these forms of mistreatment in school. This number rose to 44% for those who were physically assaulted and 48% of those who had to leave school due to harassment.

## HIV

Respondents who reported having to leave school due to harassment were HIV-positive at a rate of 5.14%, compared to 1.87% of respondents who did not. This rate, 5.14%, is more than eight times the HIV rate of the general population, 0.6%.<sup>17</sup>

## Suicide

Fifty-one percent (51%) of those who were verbally harassed, physically or sexually assaulted, or expelled because they were transgender or gender non-conforming reported having attempted suicide.

Three-quarters of those who were assaulted by teachers or staff reported having attempted suicide.

Of those who were physically assaulted, 64% attempted suicide, and of those who were sexually assaulted 68% attempted suicide. Of those who had to leave school because of harassment, 68% reported having attempted suicide.

Notably, suicide attempt rates rose dramatically when teachers were the reported perpetrators: 59% for those harassed or bullied by teachers in K-12 or higher education, 76% among those who were physically assaulted by teachers and 69% among those who were sexually assaulted by teachers.

## CONCLUSIONS FOR EDUCATION

Harassment and discrimination against transgender and gender non-conforming students is severe and pervasive in school. In grades K-12, over three-quarters of students reported experiencing harassment or assault. Almost one-third were harassed by their teachers. In higher education, students are too often denied gender-appropriate housing or housing altogether and experienced bias in financial aid and scholarship opportunities.

Given these devastating circumstances, the number of those who stayed in school, or returned despite mistreatment, demonstrates a remarkable resiliency and commitment to obtaining an education. The level of educational attainment in this sample is notable given the extreme levels of discrimination and abuse in educational settings reported.

The fact that so many are going back to school later in life likely speaks both to persistence as well as the desperate economic state people find themselves in because of severe employment discrimination. Respondents appear to be experiencing a revolving door of between the classroom and the job market driven by educational and workplace abuses.

Clearly, despite these high levels of educational attainment, our respondents are not fully benefitting from their efforts as reflected by current household income. Whereas most who obtain high school diplomas, college degrees, or professional degrees see a corresponding increase in income, our sample too often does not.

People of color were especially vulnerable to lower educational attainment and lower income, which may be in part due to the fact that people of color were more likely to report having expressed their gender identity or gender non-conformity at school and because of the compounding effects of racism.

In terms of gender, MTF students reported higher rates of violence, while FTM and gender non-conforming students reported higher rates of harassment and bullying. We speculate that the difference here is that MTF students were under-reporting verbal harassment that occurred when they were also experiencing violence.

We found that mistreatment in school had a lasting effect on our respondents' lives and correlated with a number of negative outcomes including higher rates of sex work, incarceration, homelessness, smoking, drug and alcohol abuse, HIV and attempted suicide.

All of the experiences documented here as well as the related negative outcomes later in life speak to an urgent need for reform of the nation's education system and an end to the abuse of transgender and gender non-conforming students. Like all other students, transgender and gender non-conforming people have a right to equal opportunity in school, free from harassment and violence.

People of color were especially vulnerable to lower educational attainment and lower income.

*“Overall, my experience at school was night and day different when they didn’t know I am trans.”*

*“In school I was harassed and bullied for being different. I was forced to wear dresses to school until 8th grade when the dress code was changed.”*

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EDUCATION

- Provide a safe learning environment for transgender and gender non-conforming students
  - Enact and enforce anti-harassment policies that cover gender identity/expression as well as race and other personal characteristics within educational settings at all levels and provide training so that faculty, staff and students are aware of and comply with the policies.
  - Actively and promptly investigate all complaints of harassment or violence perpetrated by students, faculty or staff and ensure that appropriate disciplinary actions are taken. have a zero-tolerance policy for violence and harassment initiated by faculty and staff members.
  - Pass and ensure compliance with all local, state and federal laws relating to harassment, discrimination and assault.
- Create a supportive environment for transgender and gender non-conforming students
  - Develop curricular and extra-curricular programming to create a school environment that affirms transgender and gender non-conforming people and students, including but not limited to inclusive Gay-Straight Alliances.
  - Ensure that transgender and gender non-conforming students of color are fully included and supported in these efforts.
- Help transgender and gender non-conforming students remain in school
  - Develop policies to ensure that transgender and gender non-conforming students are not expelled because of their gender identity or expression or because of something triggered by their gender identity or expression (such as a physical alteration when the student was simply acting in self-defense).
  - Intervene with transgender and gender non-conforming students who are at high risk of dropping out, especially students of color who face additional risk factors.
- Ensure that higher education is accessible to transgender and gender non-conforming students
  - Ensure that financial aid and scholarship opportunities are open to and non-discriminatory toward transgender and gender non-conforming applicants.
  - Enact policies to ensure transgender and gender non-conforming students have access to gender-appropriate housing and facilities.
  - Develop trans-inclusive support systems for older students returning to school.
- Bridge the gap between education and employment
  - Ensure that campus resources such as career counseling and job placement services are accessible to transgender students and are able to provide culturally competent resources that help students become employed in their fields.
  - Provide meaningful internship opportunities for those students to make career contacts and to show the contribution that they can make to the workplace.
- Ensure GED programs, vocational training programs, and other workforce development programs are accessible to transgender and gender non-conforming people.

## Endnotes

- 
- 1 Sandy Baum and Jennifer Ma, "Education Pays 2007: The Benefits of Higher Education for Individuals and Society," Trends in Higher Education Series, (2007): [http://www.collegeboard.com/prod\\_downloads/about/news\\_info/trends/ed\\_pays\\_2007.pdf](http://www.collegeboard.com/prod_downloads/about/news_info/trends/ed_pays_2007.pdf).
  - 2 HIV rates have not been rounded for better comparison to national rates.
  - 3 In a similar survey reaching LGBT students in 2007, the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network found that 86.2% of respondents reported being verbally harassed in the last year — 44.1% said they were physically harassed, and 22.1% reported physical assault. The transgender-specific break out from that sample reported much higher rates, including verbal harassment because of sexual orientation at 89%, verbal harassment because of gender expression at 87%, physical harassment because of sexual orientation at 55%, physical harassment due to gender expression at 53%, physical assault due to sexual orientation at 28%, and physical assault due to gender expression at 26%. Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network, "2007 National School Climate Survey" (2008): [http://www.glsen.org/binary-data/GLSEN\\_ATTACHMENTS/file/000/001/1290-1.pdf](http://www.glsen.org/binary-data/GLSEN_ATTACHMENTS/file/000/001/1290-1.pdf); Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network, "Harsh Realities" (2009): [http://www.glsen.org/binary-data/GLSEN\\_ATTACHMENTS/file/000/001/1290-1.pdf](http://www.glsen.org/binary-data/GLSEN_ATTACHMENTS/file/000/001/1290-1.pdf).
  - 4 Physical and sexual assault figures have not been rounded due to their small size.
  - 5 U.S. Census Bureau, "Educational Attainment in the United States: 2009 - Detailed Tables, Current Population Survey" (Washington, DC: GPO, 2009): <http://www.census.gov/hhes/socdemo/education/data/cps/2009/tables.html>.
  - 6 U.S. Census Bureau, "Current Population Survey," Annual Social and Economic Supplement (2009).
  - 7 U.S. Census Bureau, "Current Population Survey: Enrollment Status of the Population 3 Years Old and Over, by Sex, Age, Race, Hispanic Origin, Foreign Born, and Foreign-Born" (Washington, DC: GPO, October 2008): Table 1. <http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/school/cps2008.html>.
  - 8 Ibid.
  - 9 Ibid.
  - 10 Some numbers have not been rounded due to their size.
  - 11 According to Don Dillman, "The lack of Internet service for 29% of the population and high-speed service for 53% of the population is complicated by differences between those who have and do not have these services. Non-Whites, people 65+ years old, people with lower incomes, and those with less education have lower internet access rates than their counterparts, and, therefore, are more likely to be left out of Internet surveys." Don Dillman, Jolene Smyth, and Leah Melani Christian, *Internet, Mail, and Mixed-Mode Surveys: The Tailored Design Method* (New York: Wiley, 2008). Therefore, online samples often have higher educational attainment and higher household income. Our sample had considerably lower household income, which would lead one to speculate that we have avoided this bias. However, our educational attainment is much higher than the general population, which could lead to the opposite conclusion. Even more interestingly, one would expect the sample to demonstrate higher levels than the general population of being in school between 18-24, if it were privileged, yet, as discussed in the Education chapter later, our sample is in school *less* than the general population in that age range. For more information about online bias, see David Solomon, "Conducting web-based surveys," *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation*, 7 no.19, (2001):<http://PAREonline.net/getvn.asp?v=7&n=19> . See also Lee Rainie et al., "The Ever-Shifting Internet Population: A new look at Internet access and the digital divide," *Pew Internet & American Life Project* (2003): <http://www.pewinternet.org/Reports/2003/The-EverShifting-Internet-Population-A-new-look-at-Internet-access-and-the-digital-divide/02-Who-is-not-online/03-Several-demographic-factors-are-strong-predictors-of-Internet-use.aspx>.
  - 12 U.S. Census Bureau, "Current Population Survey," Annual Social and Economic Supplement (Washington, DC: GPO, 2009).
  - 13 Ibid.
  - 14 Ibid.
  - 15 Given that overall, our respondents have only nearly four times the rate of having a household income lower than \$10,000 per year reported elsewhere, a reader might be confused that these data (that states for each educational attainment level, respondents have 4-5 times the rate of being in the lowest income category) is incorrect. It is correct. The reason our overall rate of those with \$10,000 per year or less is only nearly four times larger than the general population is that our sample has a large number of who are in the lowest income category and yet have the highest educational attainment (24% of those making \$10,000 or lower in our sample had a bachelor's degree or higher). The highest educational category has the lowest percentage of people in our sample receiving \$10,000 annually or less, so the large presence of highly educated people in the sample's lowest income category drags the overall percentage down closer to the general population percentage in that income category.
  - 16 U.S. Census Bureau, "Current Population Survey," Annual Social and Economic Supplement (Washington, DC: GPO, 2009).
  - 17 HIV rates have not been rounded for better comparison to national rates.





# EMPLOYMENT

Employment is fundamental to people's ability to support themselves and their families. Paid work is not only essential to livelihood; it also contributes greatly to a sense of dignity and accomplishment over a lifetime. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights asserts the rights of individuals to work at the job of their choice, receiving equal pay for equal work, without discrimination. Yet far too often, transgender people are denied these basic human rights.

There are also serious social consequences associated with unemployment and under-employment. The loss of a job and unemployment are linked to depression and other mental health challenges.<sup>1</sup> Given the high rates of unemployment seen in our sample and the high rates of suicide attempts noted in the Health chapter of this document, employment issues are of particular concern to transgender and gender non-conforming people.

Field work for this study was done from September 2008 through February 2009, with a large majority completing questionnaires during September. Accordingly, the employment statistics here largely precede the widespread layoffs and double digit unemployment that the nation as a whole experienced as the economy moved into a major recession. The data that follow show that due to discrimination, study participants were experiencing very high rates of unemployment and extremely poor employment conditions. Given that respondents were faring worse than the nation as a whole before the recession led to large-scale layoffs, the data suggests that in the current crisis, transgender and gender non-conforming people are likely facing even higher unemployment than their gender-conforming peers.

The data show not only the rampant discrimination against transgender and gender non-conforming people, but also show that large numbers have turned to the underground economy for income, such as sex work or drug sales, in order to survive. Throughout this chapter, we refer to this as "underground employment."

## KEY FINDINGS IN EMPLOYMENT

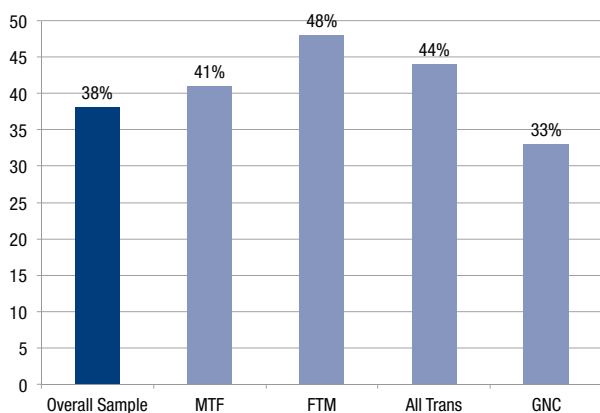
- **Double the rate of unemployment:** Survey respondents experienced unemployment at twice the rate of the general population, with rates for people of color up to four times the national unemployment rate.
- **Near universal harassment on the job:** Ninety percent (90%) of those surveyed reported experiencing harassment or mistreatment on the job or took actions to avoid it.
- **Considerable loss of jobs and careers:** Forty-seven percent (47%) said they had experienced an adverse job outcome, such as being fired, not hired or denied a promotion because of being transgender/gender non-conforming; 26% of respondents said that they had lost a job due to being transgender or gender non-conforming.
- **Race multiplies the effect of discrimination:** For Black, Latino/a, American Indian and multiracial respondents, discrimination in the workplace was even more pervasive, sometimes resulting in up to twice or three times the rates of various negative outcomes.
- **Living in dire poverty:** Fifteen percent (15%) of our respondents reported a household income under \$10,000/year, nearly four times the rate of this category for the general population. **Those who lost a job due to bias lived at this level of poverty at six times the rate of the general population.** More information about income can be found in the Portrait and Education chapters.
- **Rampant under-employment:** Forty-four percent (44%) reported experiencing under-employment.
- **Large majorities attempted to avoid discrimination** by hiding their gender or gender transition (71%) or delaying their gender transition (57%).
- **The vast majority (78%) of those who transitioned from one gender to the other reported** that they felt more comfortable at work and **their job performance improved.**
- **Eighty-six percent (86%)** of those who have not lost a job due to bias reported that they **were able to access restrooms at work** appropriate for their gender identity, meaning that 14% of those who kept their jobs were denied access.
- **People who had lost a job due to bias or were currently unemployed reported much higher involvement in underground employment such as sex work or drug sales,** had much higher levels of incarceration and homelessness, and negative health outcomes.
- Sixteen percent (16%) said they had been compelled to engage in underground employment for income. **Eleven percent (11%) turned to sex work.**
- **Many respondents demonstrated resilience:** Of the 26% who reported losing a job due to bias, 58% reported being currently employed.

## Outness at Work

We asked about outness at work in two different ways, only examining those who were currently employed. First, we asked respondents whether they tell work colleagues they are transgender or gender non-conforming. Second, we asked whether or not people at work knew that the respondent was transgender or gender non-conforming

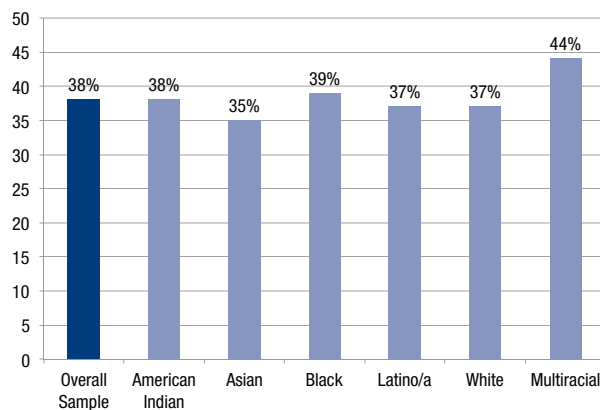
In the first measure, 38% reported that they tell work colleagues that they are transgender or gender non-conforming.<sup>2</sup>

Outness at Work by Gender Identity/Expression

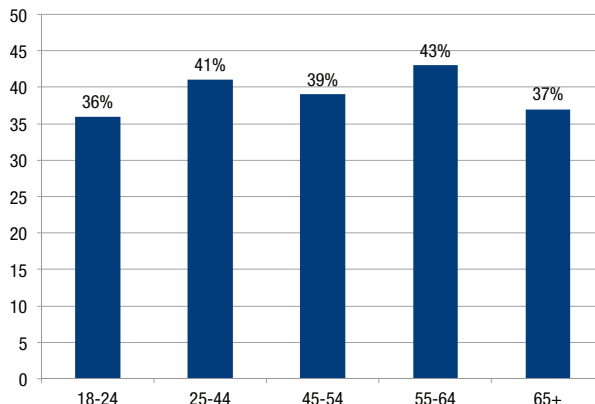


Outness did not vary much by race or age.

Outness at Work by Race



Outness at Work by Age



In the second measure, whether or not people at work knew that the respondent was transgender or gender non-conforming, we found that over one third (35%) reported that “most” or “all” coworkers knew they were transgender or gender non-conforming. Another third (37%) said “some” or “a few” coworkers knew, and 28% said no one knew.

Among those who had transitioned, we see slightly elevated rates of coworkers being aware of their transgender or gender non-conforming status. Half (50%) reported “most” or “all” coworkers knew, 34% said “some” or “a few” knew, and 16% said no one knew.

*“The only positive benefit of being on Disability is that I do not have to worry about employment discrimination.”*

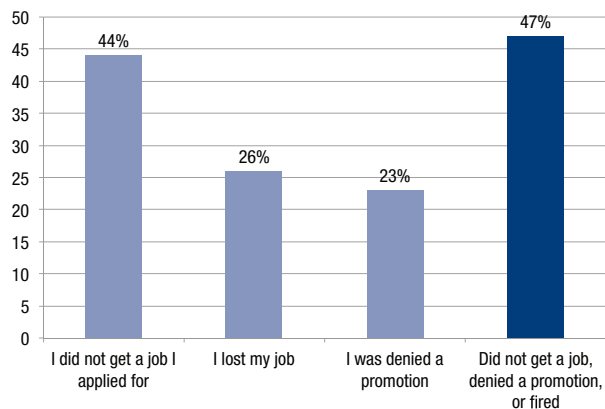
*“For years, I lived ‘in the closet’ in order to support myself in my career.”*

## Employment Discrimination

Forty-seven percent (47%) of survey respondents said they had experienced an adverse job action—they did not get a job, were denied a promotion or were fired—because they are transgender or gender non-conforming.

*“I went from making 40K, to nothing; I can barely get a part time job at a fast food restaurant.”*

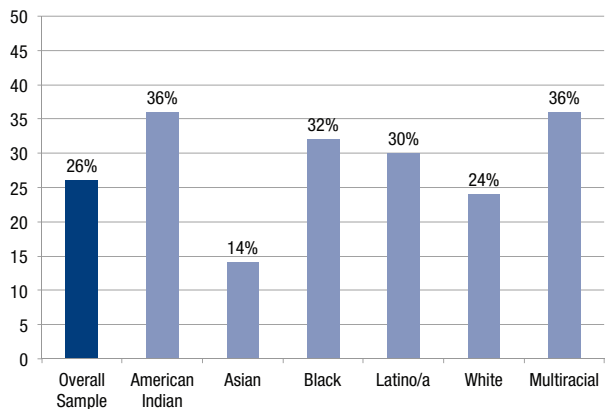
Adverse Job Actions



### JOB LOSS DUE TO DISCRIMINATION

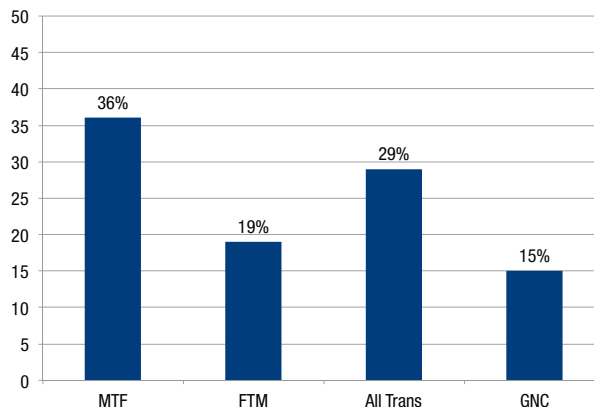
An alarming number of the people surveyed, 26%, reported losing their jobs directly due to their gender identity/ expression. Particularly hard hit were those who were Black (32%), multiracial (36%), and American Indian (36%).

Loss of Job by Race



Male-to-female transgender respondents reported job loss due to bias at a frequency of 36% while female-to-male transgender respondents reported 19%. Twenty-nine percent (29%) of transgender respondents experienced job loss due to bias while gender non-conforming participants reported 15%.

Loss of Job by Gender



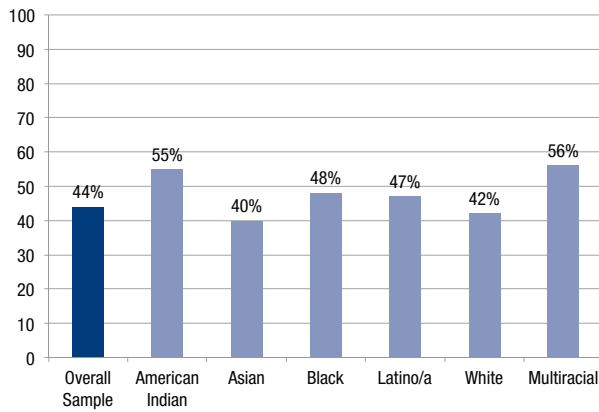
Respondents who reported having lost a job due to bias reported being currently unemployed (26%), many times the general population rate at the time of the survey (7%), which suggests that they have been unable to find new employment after a discriminatory termination. Twenty-eight percent (28%) of those who have lost a job due to bias have also reported work in the underground economy. Those who were living in the South were more likely to have lost a job due to bias (30%) than those living in other regions of the country. Undocumented non-citizens (39%) reported lost jobs due to bias more often than U.S. citizens (26%). Those with no high school diploma (37%) and those with only a high school diploma (33%) also experienced particularly high rates of job loss due to bias.

*“I was highly regarded at my new workplace until one of my old co-workers came in for an interview there and saw me. During his interview he told them all about me. He didn’t get the job, but I soon lost mine.”*

**DISCRIMINATION IN HIRING**

Forty-four percent (44%) of survey respondents reported they did not get a job they applied for because of being transgender or gender non-conforming. Eighty-one percent (81%) of those who had lost their job due to bias also reported discrimination in hiring as did 71% of those currently unemployed. Also particularly hard hit were multiracial respondents (56%), American Indians (55%) and those making under \$10,000/year (60%).

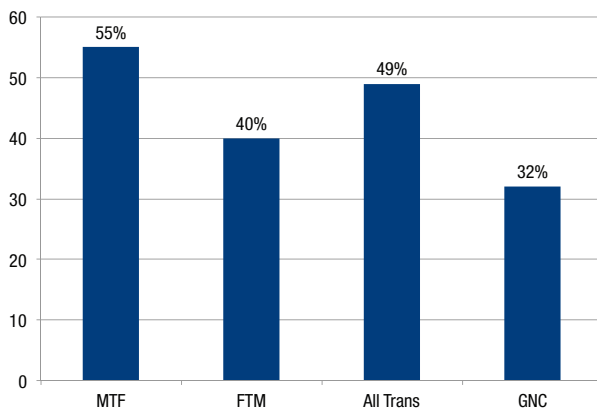
Discrimination in Hiring by Race



Sixty-one percent (61%) of those who reported doing sex work, drug sales or other underground work also say that they had experienced discrimination in hiring in the traditional workforce.

Male-to-female respondents experienced discrimination in hiring at 55%, compared to 40% of female-to-male respondents. Gender non-conforming respondents experienced this form of discrimination at 32%.

Discrimination in Hiring by Gender

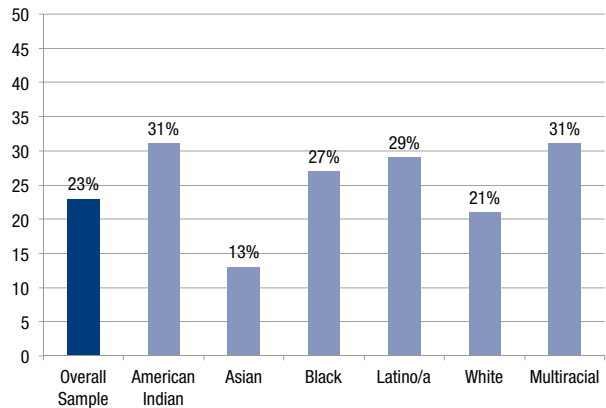


*“It was absolutely impossible to find any work at all during transition. I was unemployed for four years. I went from comfortably upper middle class to the brink of destitution; I have spent all my retirement savings.”*

**DENIED PROMOTION**

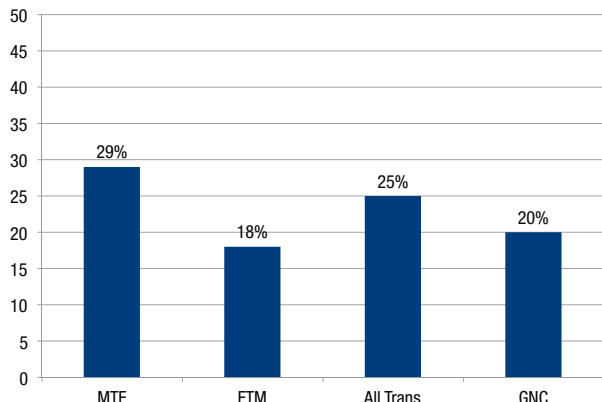
Twenty-three percent (23%) of respondents reported that they were denied a promotion because of being transgender or gender non-conforming. Thirty-three percent (33%) of those with no high school diploma reported denial of a promotion due to bias along with 31% of those who made under \$10,000/year. Also hard hit were Latino/a (29%), multiracial (31%) and American Indian (31%) respondents.

Denied Promotion by Race



Twenty-nine percent (29%) of male-to-female respondents reported denial of promotion due to bias, while female-to-male respondents reported an 18% rate. Twenty percent (20%) of gender non-conforming respondents reported denial of promotions due to bias.

Denied Promotion by Gender Identity/Expression



## Under-employment

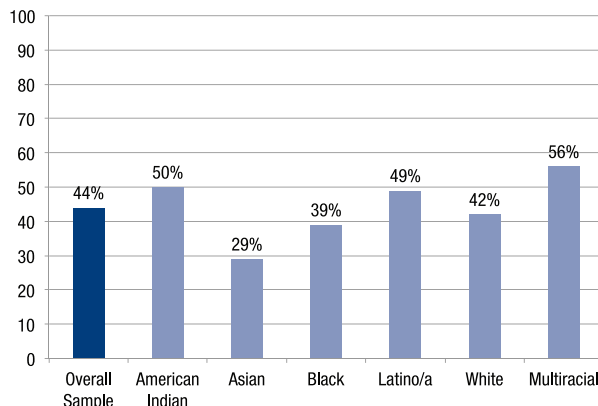
We asked respondents whether they were currently or previously under-employed due to their gender identity/expression; that is “working in the field I should not be in or a position for which I am over-qualified.”

Forty-four percent (44%) of our respondents reported that they considered themselves under-employed. Seventy-seven percent (77%) of those who lost a job due to bias also reported experiencing under-employment at some point as well. Sixty-four percent (64%) of those currently unemployed also reported under-employment. Those who made less than \$10,000/year reported current or previous under-employment at a rate of 56%. Also highly impacted were multiracial respondents (56%).

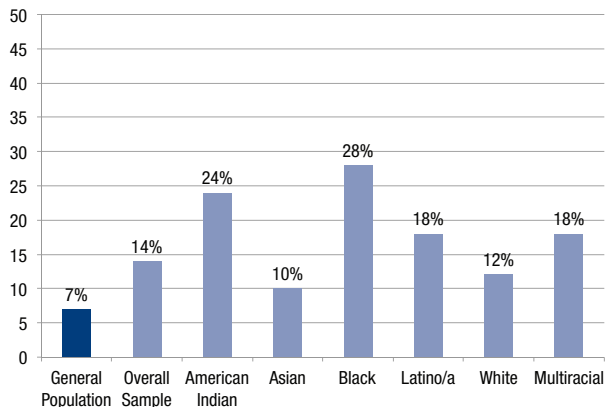
## UNEMPLOYMENT

Transgender and gender non-conforming people are unemployed at alarming rates. Overall, the unemployment rate for respondents was 14%; double the weighted national average at the time of the survey.<sup>3</sup> Nineteen percent (19%) of respondents were out of the workforce and “not looking.” Black, American Indian, Latino/a and multiracial respondents experienced unemployment at considerably higher rates than their white counterparts. Black respondents were unemployed at 28%, four times the rate among the general population; American Indian/Alaska Native respondents were unemployed at over three times the general population rate at 24%, Latino/a and multiracial respondents were unemployed over twice the general population rate at 18%

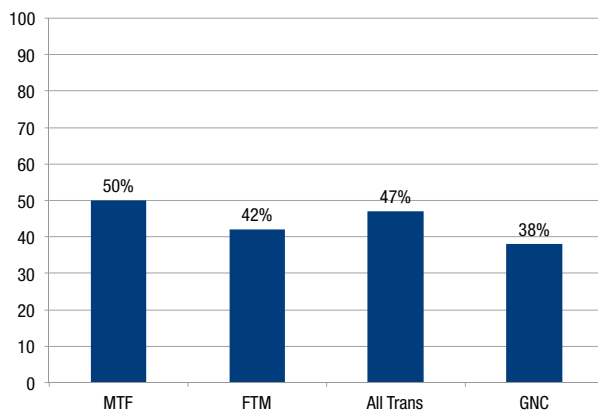
Underemployment Including by Race



Unemployment Rates including by Race



Underemployment by Gender Identity/Expression Chart



*“I was a very respected lawyer before all of this, but lost my practice and clients, and have not been able to attract any new clients or get referrals or even get a job in my field for the past 8 years. Very frustrating because I don’t feel any less intelligent or less qualified, but others, both the public and lawyers, perceive me that way.”*

## Workplace Abuse — A Near-Universal Experience

Harassment and mistreatment at work is a near universal experience for transgender and gender non-conforming people and its manifestations and consequences are many. Not only do many face mistreatment and discrimination directly from coworkers and supervisors; others feel distressed and intimidated when they see others discriminated against, and decide they must hide who they are or give up certain career aspirations in order to stay protected.

Ninety percent (90%) of respondents said they had directly experienced harassment or mistreatment at work or felt forced to take protective actions that negatively impacted their careers or their well-being, such as hiding who they were, in order to avoid workplace repercussions.

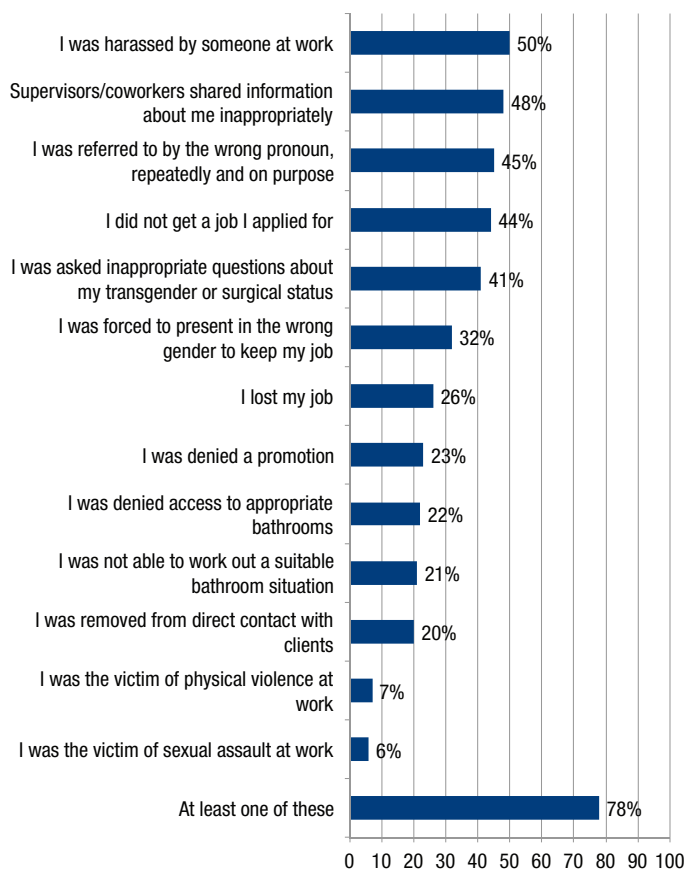
Mistreatment ranged from verbal harassment and breaches of confidentiality to physical and sexual assault, while bias-avoidant behaviors included hiding one's gender, delaying transition, or staying in a job one would have preferred to leave. Given the broad spectrum of workplace abuse experienced by our study participants, their persistent engagement in the workforce speaks to a determination and resilience that goes largely unheralded in statistics and discourse about transgender and gender non-conforming people in the workplace.

*“The obstacles currently facing trans people in regards to employment are the most insidious. Without an income, one has absolutely NO voice, politically, economically or socially. Elimination of employment discrimination, above all else, is the keystone to fundamental transgender equality in America.”*

## DIRECT MISTREATMENT AND DISCRIMINATION

Respondents reported on a wide range of workplace abuses, including direct discrimination and mistreatment by coworkers and supervisors. Seventy-eight (78%) of respondents said they experienced some type of direct mistreatment or discrimination.

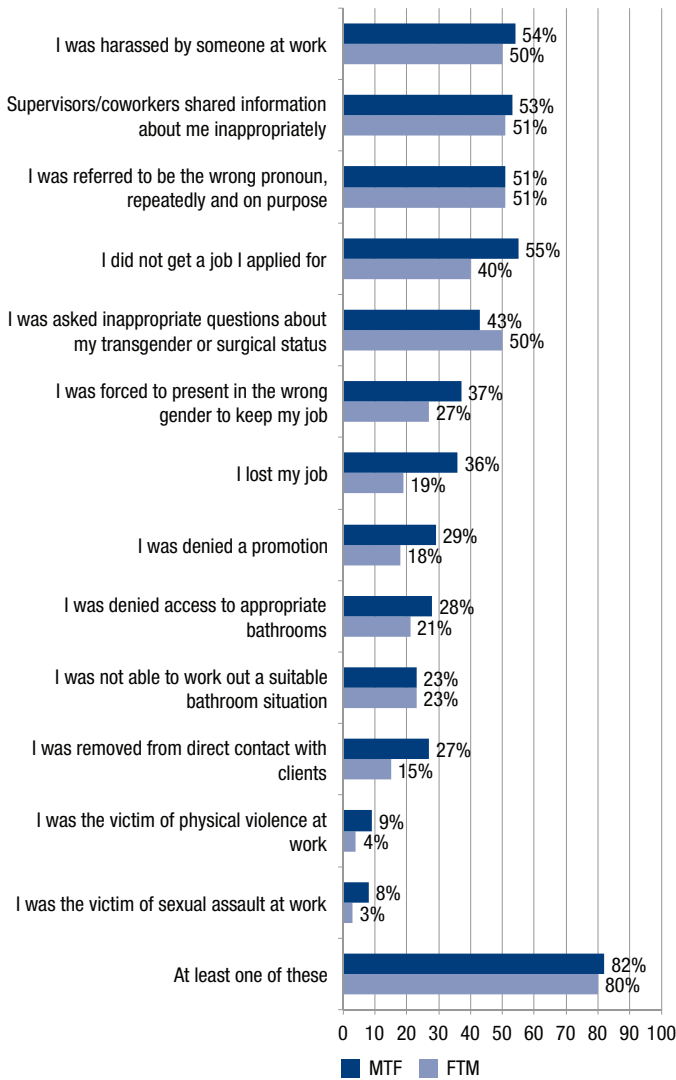
Direct Mistreatment and Discrimination in the Workplace



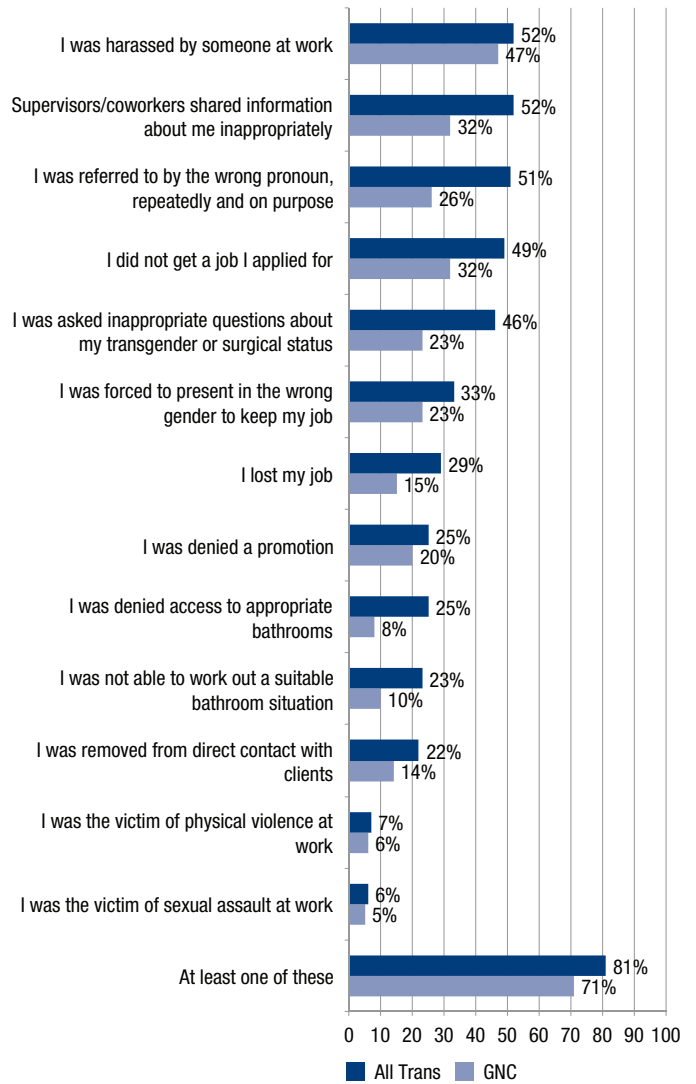
In answering each negative work experience question, transgender respondents reported higher levels of abuse than their gender non-conforming counterparts, often with a gap of 10 percentage points or more. Male-to-female respondents experienced harassment and mistreatment slightly more often than female-to-male respondents, though MTF experience of job loss, denial of promotion and discrimination in hiring was much higher than for FTM respondents.

People of color in the sample generally reported higher levels of abuse than the sample as a whole. Other respondents reporting higher vulnerability to mistreatment at work were those who had lost jobs due to discrimination; the unemployed; respondents who had done sex work, drug sales, or other underground work for income; and those earning under \$10,000 annually.

Direct Mistreatment at Work for MTF and FTM Respondents



Direct Mistreatment at Work for Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Respondents



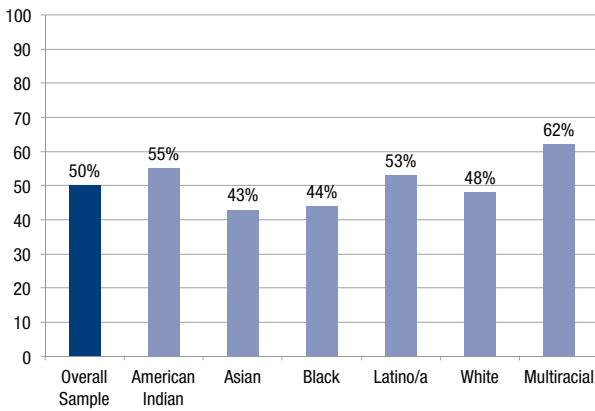
*“I was fired from my job after 18 years of loyal employment after a fellow employee saw me dressed while attending counseling and reported me to the boss. I was forced on to public assistance to survive.”*



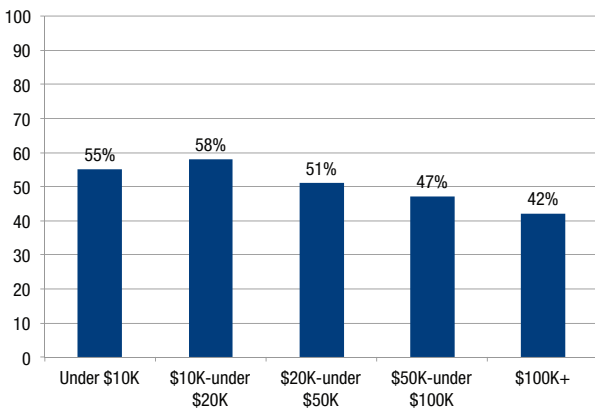
**HARASSMENT**

Fifty percent (50%) of respondents reported experiencing harassment in the workplace. This was the most common negative experience at work. Risk of harassment was higher for those earning lower incomes. High numbers of those who were currently unemployed also reported that they had been harassed when they were working. Similarly, a large number of those who reported having lost jobs due to bias also reported having been harassed at work. Last, those that had done underground work such as sex work, drug sales, or other underground activities for income also frequently reported that they had been harassed at work.

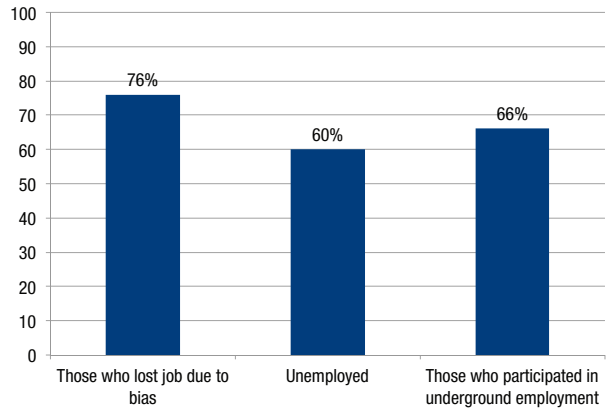
Harassment by Race



Harassment by Income



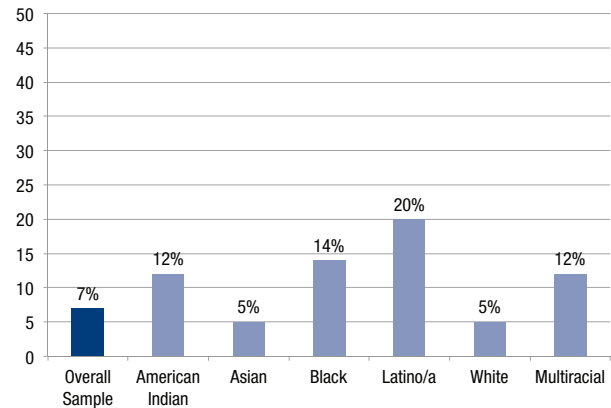
Harassment by Other Factors



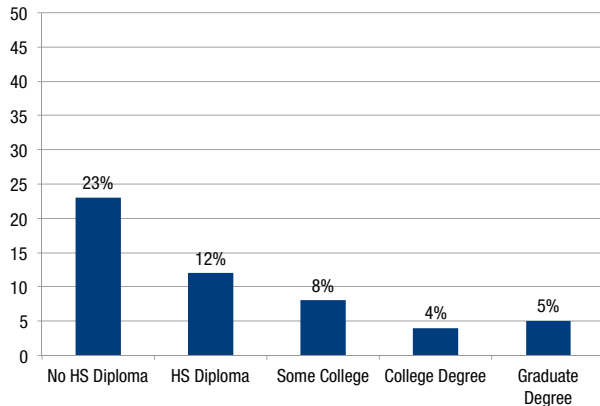
**PHYSICAL ASSAULT AT WORK**

Seven percent (7%) of our sample reported being physically assaulted at work because of being transgender or gender non-conforming. Undocumented noncitizens in our sample reported the highest rates of physical assault at 25%, over three times the rate of the overall sample.

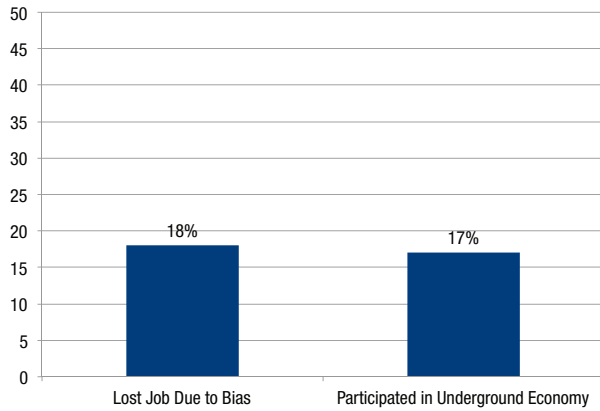
Physical Assault at Work by Race



Physical Assault at Work by Educational Attainment



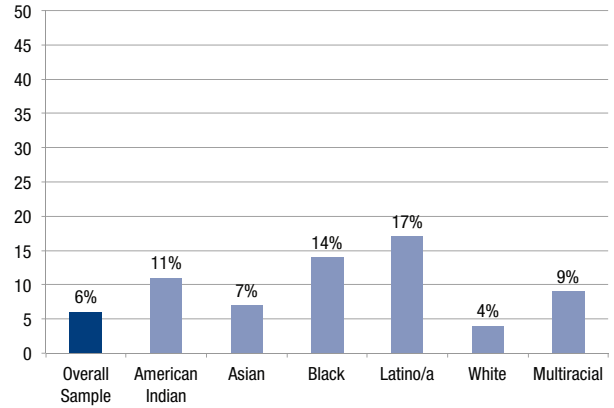
Physical Assault at Work, by Others at High Risk



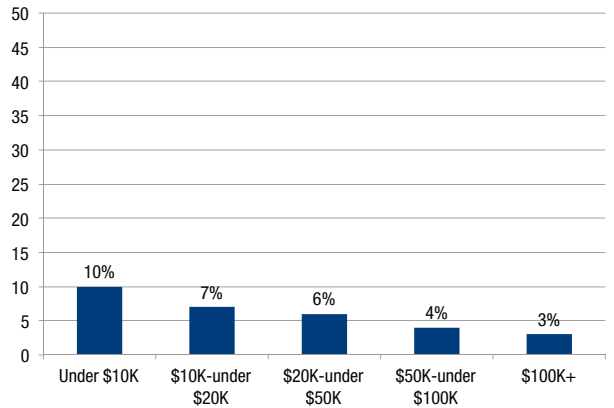
**SEXUAL ASSAULT AT WORK**

Six percent (6%) of respondents reported being sexually assaulted by someone at work because of being transgender or gender non-conforming. Undocumented noncitizens reported the particularly high rates of sexual assault at 19%, over three times the rate of the overall sample.

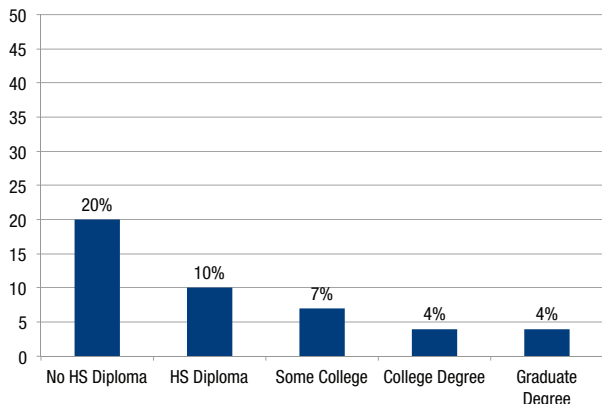
Sexual Assault at Work by Race



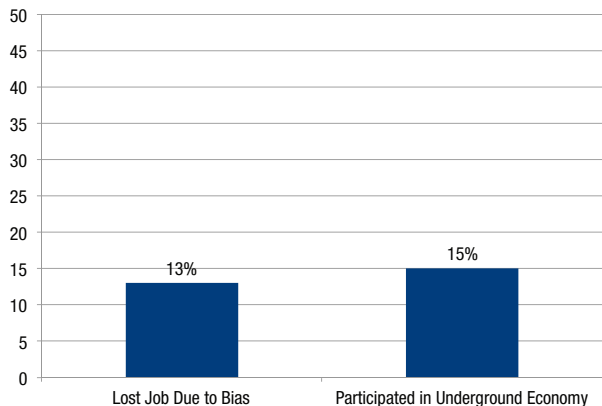
Sexual Assault at Work by Household Income



Sexual Assault at Work by Educational Attainment



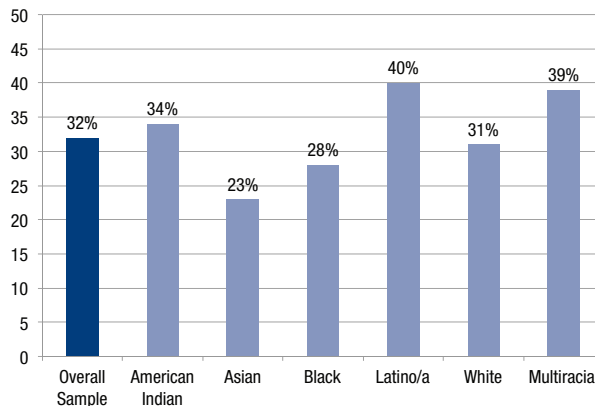
Sexual Assault at Work, Others at High Risk



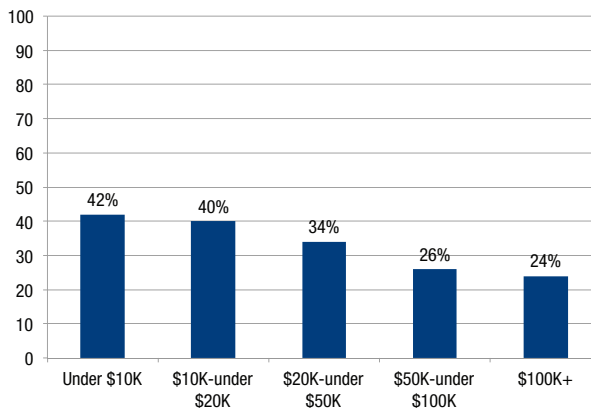
**FORCED TO PRESENT IN THE WRONG GENDER**

Thirty-two percent (32%) of respondents reported being forced to present in the wrong gender to keep their jobs. Our question did not specify whether they were required to do so by their employer, or they felt forced to because of fear of discrimination. Undocumented noncitizens reported this experience at a particularly high rate (45%).

Forced to Present in the Wrong Gender by Race



Forced to Present in the Wrong Gender by Household Income

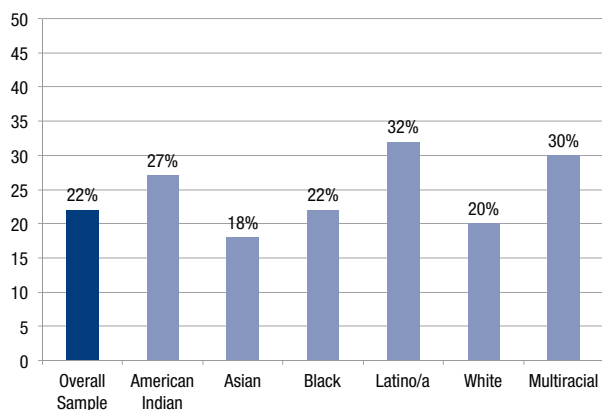


*“When one of my colleagues found out I was born female, I was forced to use the bathroom in another part of the building where I worked, because he said that I made the ‘real’ men uncomfortable with my presence. Now, I look like a bio-male, and the only reason they knew about my status is because a supervisor found out, and spread my business to the other supervisors and friends. I had to walk 5 minutes to another building, which impeded my break times.”*

**RESTROOMS AT WORK**

Eighty-six percent (86%) of those who have not lost a job due to bias reported that they were able to access restrooms at work appropriate for their gender identity, meaning that 14% of those who kept their jobs were denied access. Looking at the full sample, regardless of whether they were able to keep or they had lost a job, 78% were given access to restrooms appropriate for their gender identity and 22% were denied access.

Denied Access to Gender-Appropriate Restrooms by Race

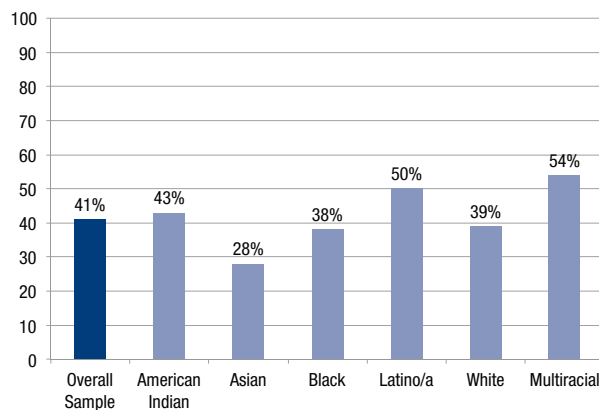


**INAPPROPRIATE QUESTIONS**

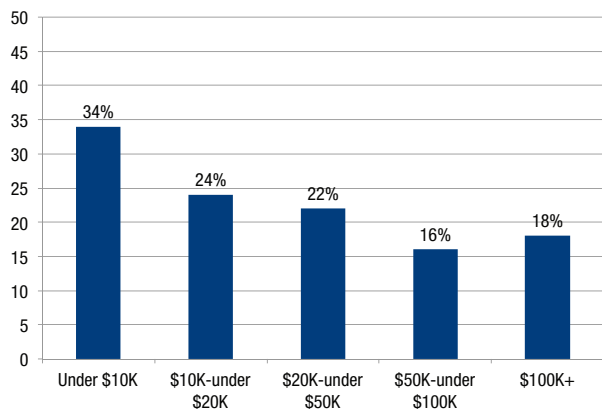
Forty-one percent (41%) of respondents reported having been asked inappropriate questions about their transgender or surgical status.

Forty-five (45%) of our sample reported having been referred to by the wrong pronouns “repeatedly and on purpose” at work.

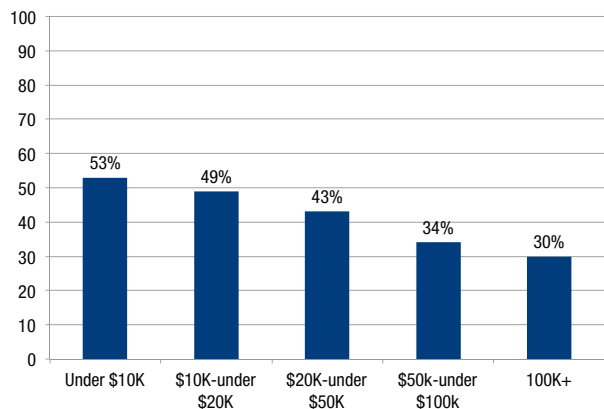
Was Asked Inappropriate Questions by Race



Denied Access to Gender-Appropriate Restrooms by Household Income



Was Asked Inappropriate Questions by Household Income

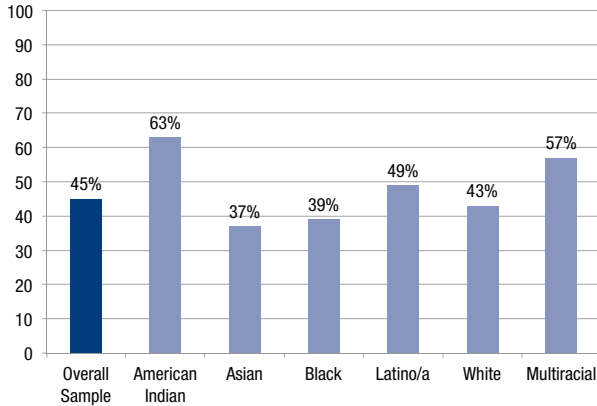


*“At the job I came out at, most were ok and accepting; but the HR manager blocked any attempts for me to arrange a bathroom, even after I pointed to a local law allowing me to use the correct bathroom.”*

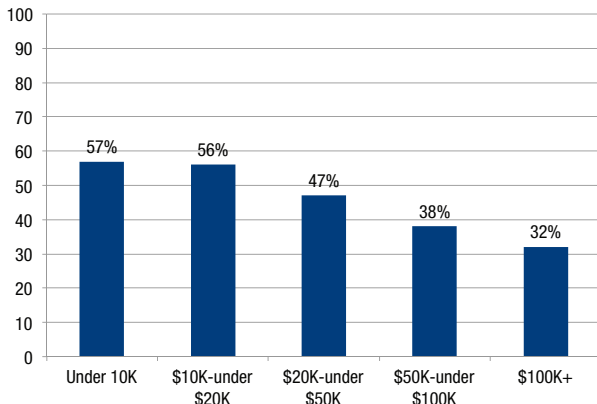
**DELIBERATE MISUSE OF PRONOUNS**

Forty-five (45%) of our sample reported having been referred to by the wrong pronouns “repeatedly and on purpose” at work.

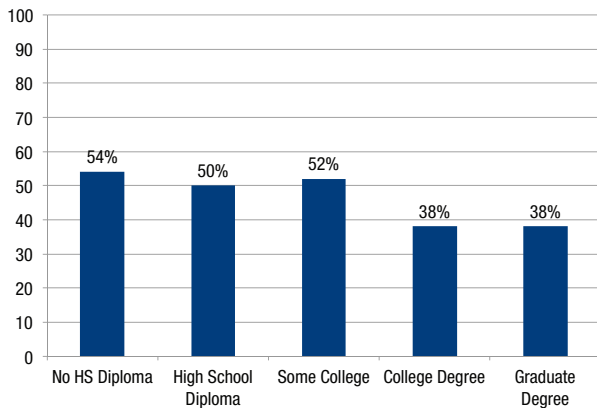
Deliberate Misuse of Pronouns by Race



Deliberate Misuse of Pronouns by Household Income



Deliberate Misuse of Pronouns by Educational Attainment

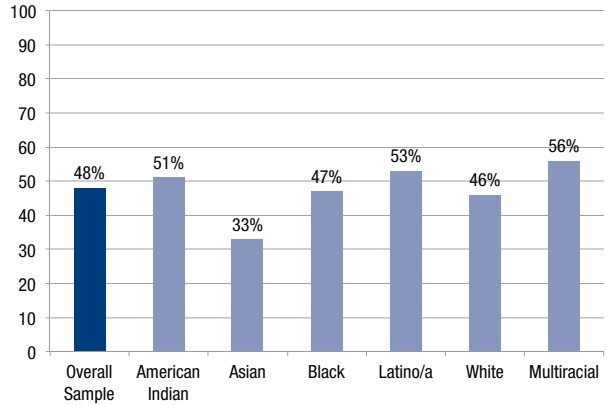


**BREACHES OF CONFIDENTIALITY**

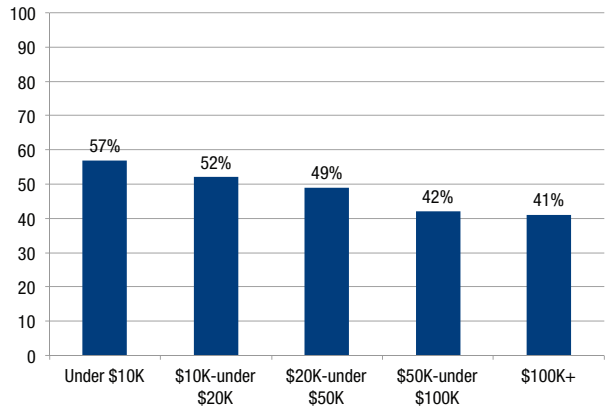
Forty-eight percent (48%) reported that supervisors or coworkers shared information about the respondent that they should not have had.

*“My former employer outs me anytime a prospective employer calls.”*

Breaches of Confidentiality by Race



Breaches of Confidentiality by Household Income

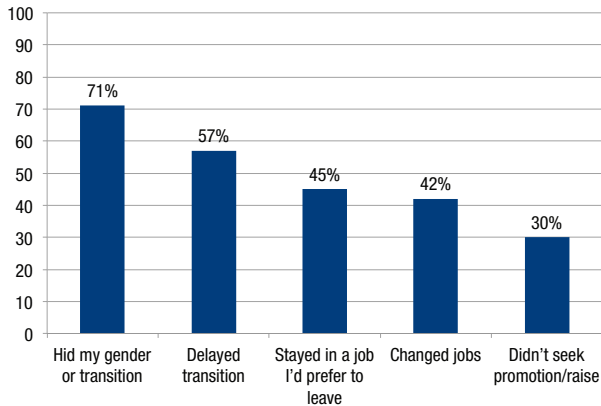


## Attempts to Avoid Discrimination

In order to avoid discriminatory actions and workplace abuse, many study respondents reported having “delayed my gender transition” (57%) or “hid my gender or gender transition” (71%). Given the importance of transition for many people, it is striking that well over half of our respondents delayed this life-affirming, and often life-saving step. Even more alarming is that nearly three-quarters of respondents reported they felt they had to hide who they are on a daily basis for job security.

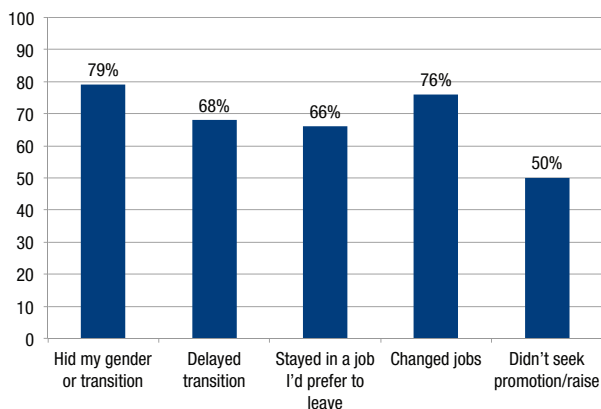
Many respondents stayed in jobs they would have preferred to leave (45%) or didn’t seek promotions or raises (30%) in order to avoid discrimination. Others (42%) said they had changed jobs to escape discrimination.

Discrimination-Avoidant Behaviors, Overall Sample

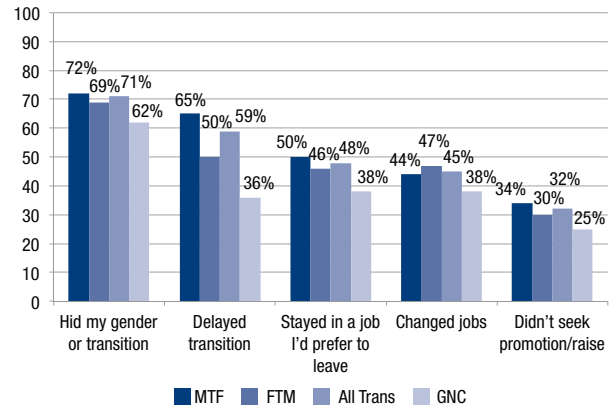


The discrimination avoidant behaviors described in this section all have implications for career achievement and secure livelihood. Those who have lost a job due to discrimination display the highest levels of discrimination avoidant behavior.

Discrimination-Avoidant Behavior Among Those Who Have Lost a Job Due to Bias



Discrimination-Avoidant Behaviors by Gender Identity/Expression



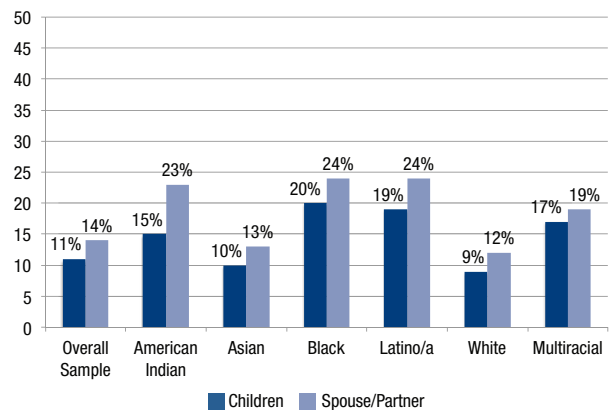
## Employment Bias by Association

We asked respondents whether their spouses/partners or children experienced job discrimination due to the respondent being transgender or gender non-conforming.<sup>4</sup> Fourteen percent (14%) of respondents reported that due to their gender identity, their spouse or partner experienced job discrimination. Respondents who reported having lost a job due to bias reported discrimination against their partners at twice that rate (28%).

Respondents also reported that their children were subject to job discrimination due to associational bias at 11%. For those who lost jobs due to bias, discrimination against their children was reported at 25%.

Undocumented non-citizens reported high levels of associational discrimination for both spouses/partners (20%) and children (20%).

Employment Bias by Association by Race

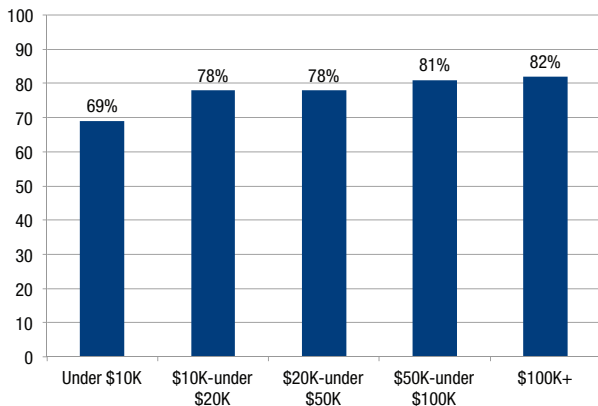


## Improved Job Situation For Those Who Transition

Of respondents who are living full-time in accordance with their gender identity, 78% said they felt more comfortable and their performance improved at work. Respondents in the higher income categories more often reported an increase in feeling comfortable and performing better after transitioning. Transgender men (78%) and transgender women (79%) who have transitioned reported nearly identical rates of improved job situation.

These respondents who felt their performance improved experienced similar rates of harassment and other forms of mistreatment in the workplace as other transgender and gender non-conforming people. For example, of those who transitioned who said their job performance improved, 51% also reported being harassed at work, compared 50% of the overall sample.

Improved Job Performance by Income



*“When I started my transition, the place that I was working was very supportive. My boss had a family member who is transgender. I was treated with respect by everyone. I had worked there for many years and everyone assumed that I was gay until then and they knew my partner. I guess they just figured I would still be me. Except for growing facial hair and going bald, I am the same, only better and more free.”*

## Sex Work, Drug Sales, and Other Underground Work for Income

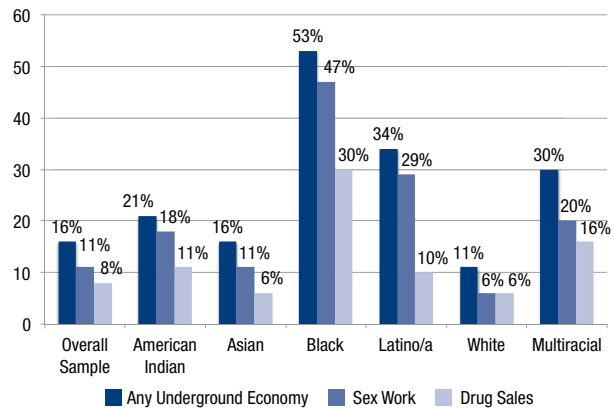
Given that transgender and gender non-conforming people are often denied access to, forced out of or grossly mistreated in traditional employment markets, it follows that underground work can be an essential survival strategy.

Sixteen percent (16%) of our sample has had some experience in sex work, drug sales, and other underground work. Those at high risk for underground work were those who had lost jobs due to bias (28%), compared to those who had not lost a job (13%), and the unemployed (29%), compared to 14% of those who were employed.

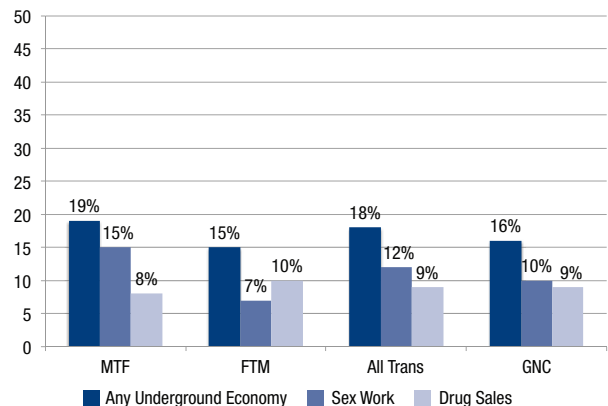
Black (53%) and Latino/a (34%) respondents had extremely high rates of underground work, likely related in part to barriers and abuse within educational systems and dramatically higher rates of employment discrimination.

Male-to-female (19%) respondents had slightly higher rates of underground work than female-to-male (15%) respondents, and transgender (18%) and gender non-conforming (16%) respondents were involved at almost equal frequency.

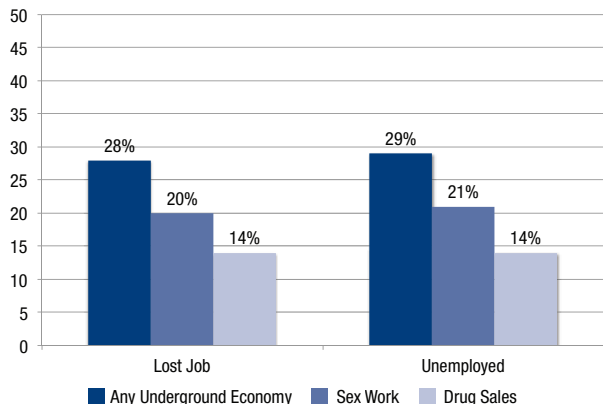
Participation in the Underground Economy by Race



Participation in the Underground Economy by Gender Identity/Expression



Participation in the Underground Economy by Employment



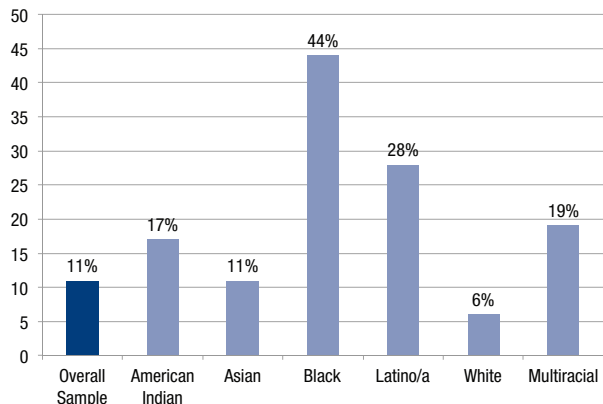
**SEX WORK**

Eleven percent (11%) of respondents did sex work for income. Here we take a closer look at the demographics of sex workers in our sample and then examine their rates of incarceration, homelessness, and health outcomes.

MTF respondents were more likely to report sex work (15%) than FTM respondents (7%); these data unearths the reality that some transgender men have also done sex work at some point in their lives. Transgender respondents, overall, reported sex work at 12%, only slightly higher than gender non-conforming respondents (10%).

Respondents of color were more likely to have reported having done sex work; African-American respondents reporting the highest rate at 44%. Latino/a respondents had the next highest rate at 28%. These data aligns with extremely high rates of unemployment and workplace abuse experienced by respondents of color in the study.

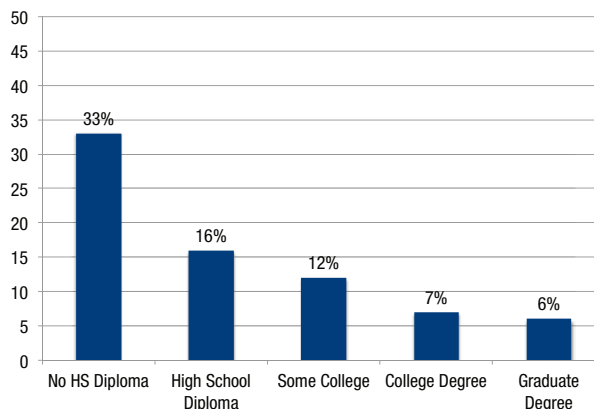
Sex Work by Race



Those with higher educational attainment were less likely to report sex work. Those with no high school diploma reported a 33% rate of sex work, compared to those with college degrees at 7%. However, sex work among those with high levels of

attainment remained elevated, including 6% of those with graduate degrees.

Sex Work by Educational Attainment



**Homelessness**

Respondents reporting sex work were far more likely to also report experiencing homelessness due to bias than the full sample; anecdotal evidence indicates that many who face homelessness do sex work to pay rent or to stay in a hotel. Forty-eight percent (48%) of those who had done sex work also reported experiencing homelessness due to bias. This compares to 19% of the sample overall and 7.4% for the general population overall.<sup>5</sup>

**Incarceration**

Participants who did sex work were almost four times as likely to have been incarcerated for any reason (48%) than the overall sample (16%).

**HIV**

Those who had did sex work were over 25 times more likely to be HIV-positive (15.32%) than the general population (0.6%).<sup>6</sup>

**Smoking**

The rate of smoking among those who had done sex work was much higher (49%) than the overall sample (30%).

**Drinking and Drugs**

Respondents who had done sex work were twice as likely to misuse drugs or alcohol to cope with the mistreatment (18%) as the overall sample (8%).

**Suicide Attempts**

The rate of attempted suicide among those who had done sex work was mucg higher (60%) than the overall sample (41%) and more than 37 times higher than the general population (1.6%).



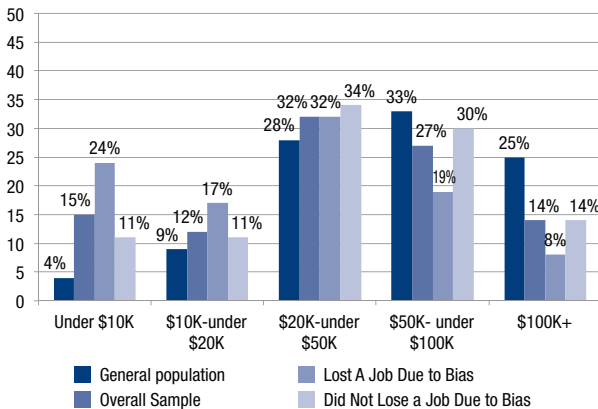
## Making the Connections: Employment Discrimination, Economic Security, and Health

In this section, we examine the connections between employment discrimination and present income, incarceration, homelessness and health outcomes.

### RESPONDENTS WHO HAVE LOST JOBS DUE TO DISCRIMINATION

We looked at present household income of the more than one quarter (26%) of our sample who said they had lost jobs because they were transgender or gender non-conforming and found the apparent effects to be severe. Respondents who had lost a job due to bias were six times as likely to be living on a household income under \$10,000/year (24%) as the general U.S. population (4%).<sup>7</sup> They were nearly twice as likely to be living on between \$10,000 and \$20,000/year (17%) as the general population (9%).

Income of the General Population, Our Sample, and Those Who Lost a Job Due to Bias



*“I was fired for being transgender. I was on the brink of homelessness and starvation until a friend (who is also transgender) invited me to stay with her in a different state, over 15 hours away.”*

### Homelessness

Respondents who had lost a job due to bias were four times more likely to have experienced homelessness due to bias (40%) than those who did not lose a job due to bias (10%).

### Incarceration

Respondents who had lost a job due to bias were 85% more likely to have been incarcerated for any reason (24%) than those who did not lose a job (13%).

### HIV

Respondents who had lost a job due to bias reported an HIV rate (4.59%) over seven times higher than the general population (.6%),<sup>8</sup> and more than double the rate of those who did not lose a job (2.06%).

### Smoking

Respondents who had lost a job due to bias were more likely to be smokers (38%) than the overall sample (30%).

### Drinking & Drugs

Respondents who had lost a job due to bias were 70% more likely to misuse drugs or alcohol to cope with the mistreatment they face (12%) than those who had not lost a job (7%).

### Suicide Attempts

Respondents who had lost a job due to bias were much more likely to have attempted suicide (55%) than those respondents who had not lost a job due to bias (38%), and both figures are striking in contrast to the general population figure of 1.6%.

## UNEMPLOYED RESPONDENTS

Here we take a closer look at those respondents who reported being currently unemployed and describe the higher incidence of negative outcomes they experienced. These respondents may be unemployed because they lost a job due to bias, because they experienced discrimination in hiring, or for other reasons.

### Homelessness

Respondents who were unemployed were more than twice as likely to have experienced homelessness due to bias (38%) than those who were employed (14%).

### Incarceration

Respondents who were unemployed were 85% more likely to have been incarcerated for any reason (24%) than those who were employed (13%).

### HIV

Respondents who were unemployed reported an HIV rate (4.67%) over seven times higher than the general population (.6%),<sup>9</sup> and more than double the rate of those who were employed (1.81%).

### Smoking

Respondents who were unemployed were more likely to be smokers (38%) than the overall sample (30%), and almost twice as likely to be smokers than those who were working (20%).

### Drinking & Drugs

Respondents who were unemployed were almost two times as likely to misuse drugs or alcohol to cope with the mistreatment they face (13%) than those who were working (7%).

### Suicide Attempts

Respondents who were unemployed were much more likely to have attempted suicide (51%) than those respondents who were working (37%), and both figures are striking in contrast to the general population figure of 1.6%.

*“I was fired from a good job because I tried to transition on the job. I then lived on menial employment for over 3 years before finally landing another good one that was full-time job and had benefits. At one point, I had an offer of employment withdrawn after the would-be employer found out I was transgender.”*

## CONCLUSIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT

Transgender and gender non-conforming people face staggering rates of harassment mistreatment, and discrimination at work. In this chapter we have shown that many of those who faced this discrimination also experienced multiple, devastating outcomes across many areas of life.

The most obvious sign of this discrimination was the extremely high unemployment figure: double the rate of the general population at the time of study. Underemployment and low household income were also widely reported.

Encouragingly, most of those who have transitioned reported feeling more comfortable at work and that their job performance had improved. However, many of our respondents are unable to reap that benefit because they delayed their gender transition in order to avoid discrimination. The data appears to indicate that transition is not only pivotal to the individual's well-being, but also that employers would be wise to support and facilitate gender transition of their employees to increase productivity.

Many report changing jobs to avoid discrimination or the risk of discrimination. Again, employers should be aware how environments hostile to transgender workers negatively affect their bottom line, as they lose experienced employees and face the added expense of hiring and training replacements.

High rates of workplace abuse and unemployment among respondents, and resulting poverty, indicate that anti-transgender discrimination has left many in a position where sex work and drug sales are necessary for survival. Respondents of color were particularly vulnerable to being pushed into underground work, with a combination of discrimination based on gender, race and citizenship forcing them farthest to the margins.

The data show that there is a high price to pay for those who must do sex work and other underground work, including homelessness, incarceration and catastrophic health outcomes.

This survey is a call to action; employment discrimination has devastating effects on transgender and gender non-conforming people and must be confronted and eradicated. Not only must individual employers be held accountable, but society as a whole must be held accountable for widespread violations of a basic human right.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT

Respondents in this study faced overwhelming bias and mistreatment in the workplace due to gender identity and expression. In the absence of workplace protections, employers and coworkers are free to engage in a broad range of abuses from arbitrary firings to demeaning and even violent treatment. The solution to this problem requires the attention of the legislative and executive branches of government, corporations and other employers, labor organizations and non-profit organizations.

- Federal, state, and local laws should be enacted to prohibit discrimination on the basis of gender identity or expression.
  - Federal employment non-discrimination legislation should be enacted with transgender/gender non-conforming protections intact.
  - States and local governments should prioritize enactment of non-discrimination laws.
- Government agencies should implement laws through regulations, compliance guidelines, training, and publicized decisions by enforcement agencies.
  - Only a handful of the states/localities that currently have legal protections have written regulations or guidelines showing employers how to properly treat transgender and gender non-conforming employees. Without these specifics, employers are not sure what the law requires of them and employees cannot engage in effective self-advocacy when being mistreated or discriminated against.

- Enforcement agency staff should undergo training to better understand the specific issues that transgender and gender non-conforming employees experience in the workplace and should learn how to respectfully deal with transgender and gender non-conforming complainants.
- Decisions, investigations, and settlements related to discrimination on the basis of gender identity/expression should be publicized as much as possible to increase awareness of what constitutes illegal discriminatory actions.
- Enforcement agencies should develop and offer trainings for employers on how to comply with the law. If this is not done, non-profit organizations should develop and provide these trainings.
- Enforcement agencies and non-profit groups should develop “Know Your Rights” materials and trainings for transgender and gender non-conforming people.
- Corporations should enact and enforce their own gender identity/expression non-discrimination policies.
  - All employees should be trained on how to comply with the policy. Hiring officers must be instructed to ensure they are not consciously or unconsciously discriminating in hiring and should also be educated about how to recognize when an applicant has a poor work record due to discrimination.
  - Written policies should be developed concerning gender transition in the workplace so that all employees understand proper, respectful protocol. This policy should address confidentiality, access to gender-segregated facilities, dress standards (if relevant), medical leave policies, pronouns and forms of address, harassment, change of employee records and badges, and any other topic necessary for a smooth gender transition in the workplace.
  - Companies should actively recruit transgender and gender non-conforming applicants.
- Government agencies at all levels should develop transgender-specific workforce development programs, or modify existing programs, to train and match transgender and gender non-conforming people to the best jobs available.
  - Staff running these programs should be properly trained to address and work with transgender and gender non-conforming participants respectfully.
  - Special attention in such programs should be paid to devising ways to expunge criminal records of persons who have been incarcerated for survival behaviors, and/or find employers who are willing to hire applicants with criminal records.
  - These programs should train cooperating employers on how to avoid discrimination in hiring transgender and gender non-conforming employees and require that staff of cooperating employers have received training on how to respectfully treat these coworkers.
  - Government agencies should work with transgender organizations to develop such programs, ideally providing grants to these organizations for their assistance.
- Labor organizations should ensure that contracts include gender identity/expression nondiscrimination clauses, train union officers and rank-and-file on the importance of nondiscrimination in the workplace, and how to process grievances related to discriminatory treatment.
- Governments should focus their resources on providing meaningful pathways out of poverty, such as by increasing employment opportunities for transgender and gender non-conforming people, rather than expending significant resources on arresting, prosecuting, and incarcerating those doing sex work.

Endnotes

---

- 1 U.S. National Library of Health and the National Institutes of Health, Medline Plus, "Out of Work May Mean Out of Sorts: Mental health takes a beating with economic downturn, [http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/news/fullstory\\_102374.html](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/news/fullstory_102374.html)
- 2 This includes people who said they tell "everyone."
- 3 Seven percent (7%) was the rounded weighted average unemployment rate for the general population during the six months the survey was in the field, based on which month questionnaires were completed. See seasonally unadjusted monthly unemployment rates for September 2008 through February 2009. For information on how we calculated the unemployment rate for respondents, see the Portrait chapter. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, "The Employment Situation: September 2008," (2008): [http://www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/empst\\_10032008.htm](http://www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/empst_10032008.htm)
- 4 See Appendix B: Survey Instrument – Issues and Analysis for more discussion of this question.
- 5 Bruce G. Link, PhD, et al., "Lifetime and Five-Year Prevalence of Homelessness in the United States," *American Journal of Public Health* 84, (December 1994): <http://ajph.aphapublications.org/cgi/reprint/84/12/1907>.
- 6 HIV rates are reported without rounding in order to make a more precise comparison with general population data.
- 7 4.15% of the population had a household income below \$10,000 per year. U. S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau and U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Current Population Survey: Annual Social and Economic Supplement" (2008).
- 8 HIV rates reported without rounding in order to make a more precise comparison with general population data.
- 9 HIV rates reported without rounding in order to make a more precise comparison with general population data.



# HEALTH

Access to health care is a fundamental human right that is regularly denied to transgender and gender non-conforming people.

Transgender and gender non-conforming people frequently experience discrimination when accessing health care, from disrespect and harassment to violence and outright denial of service. Participants in our study reported barriers to care whether seeking preventive medicine, routine and emergency care, or transgender-related services. These realities, combined with widespread provider ignorance about the health needs of transgender and gender non-conforming people, deter them from seeking and receiving quality health care.

Our data consistently show that racial bias presents a sizable additional risk of discrimination for transgender and gender non-conforming people of color in virtually every major area of the study, making their health care access and outcomes dramatically worse.

## KEY FINDINGS IN HEALTH

- Survey participants reported that when they were sick or injured, they **postponed medical care** due to discrimination (28%) or inability to afford it (48%).
- Respondents faced **serious hurdles to accessing health care**, including:
  - **Refusal of care:** 19% of our sample reported being refused care due to their transgender or gender non-conforming status, with even higher numbers among people of color in the survey.
  - **Harassment and violence in medical settings:** 28% of respondents were subjected to harassment in medical settings and 2% were victims of violence in doctor's office.
  - **Lack of provider knowledge:** 50% of the sample reported having to teach their medical providers about transgender care.
- The **majority of survey participants have accessed some form of transition-related medical care** despite the barriers; the majority reported wanting to have some type of surgery but have not had any surgeries yet.
- **If medical providers were aware of the patient's transgender status, the likelihood of that person experiencing discrimination increased.**
- Respondents reported **over four times the national average of HIV infection**, 2.64% in our sample compared to .6% in the general population, with rates for transgender women at 4.28%, and with those who are unemployed (4.67%) or who have done sex work (15.32%) even higher.<sup>1</sup>
- Over a quarter of the respondents **misused drugs or alcohol specifically to cope with the mistreatment** they faced due to their gender identity or expression.
- A staggering **41% of respondents reported attempting suicide** compared to 1.6% of the general population, with unemployment, bullying in school, low household income and sexual and physical associated with even higher rates.

## Access to Healthcare

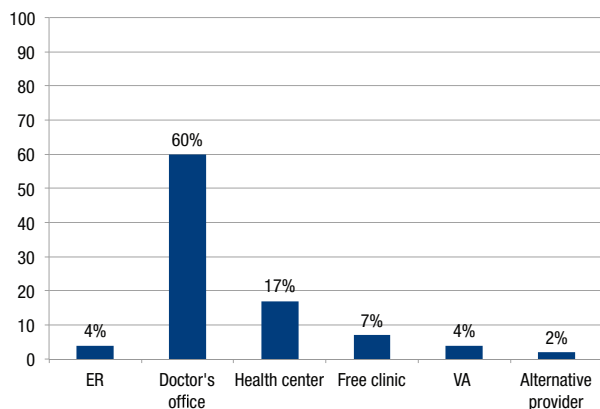
### HEALTH CARE SETTINGS

A majority of study participants sought care (“when you are sick or need advice about your health”) through a doctor’s office (60%); however a sizable minority used health centers and clinics (28%). Four percent (4%) of respondents primarily used emergency rooms for care. Several studies have shown that individuals who use emergency rooms for primary care experience more adverse health outcomes than those who regularly see a primary physician.<sup>2</sup> Factors that correlated with increased use of emergency rooms (ERs) among our respondents were:

- Race—17% of African-Americans used ERs for primary care, as did 8% of Latino/a respondents;
- Household income—8% of respondents earning under \$10,000 per year used ERs for primary care;
- Employment status—10% of unemployed respondents and 7% of those who said they had lost their jobs due to bias used ERs for primary care;
- Education—13% of those with less than a high school diploma used ERs for primary care.

Visual conformers and those who had identity documents that matched their presentation had high rates of using doctor’s offices for their care.

Primary Source of Medical Care for Respondents



*“After an accident on ice, I was left untreated in the ER for two hours when they found my breasts under my bra while I was dressed outwardly as male.”*

*“I have been refused emergency room treatment even when delivered to the hospital by ambulance with numerous broken bones and wounds.”*

## Health Care Experiences

### DISCRIMINATION BY MEDICAL PROVIDERS

Denial of health care and multiple barriers to care are commonplace in the lives of transgender and gender non-conforming people. Respondents in our study seeking health care were denied equal treatment in doctor’s offices and hospitals (24%), emergency rooms (13%), mental health clinics (11%), by EMTs (5%) and in drug treatment programs (3%).<sup>3</sup> Female-to-male respondents reported higher rates of unequal treatment than male-to-female respondents. Latino/a respondents reported the highest rate of unequal treatment of any racial category (32% by a doctor or hospital and 19% in both emergency rooms and mental health clinics).

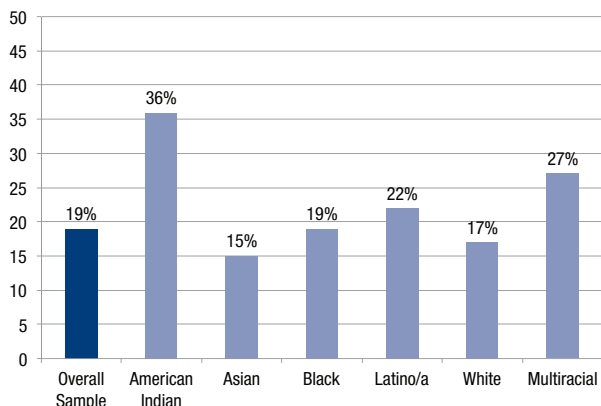
19% of our sample reported being refused care altogether, due to their gender identity or expression, with even higher numbers among people of color in the survey.

We also asked whether respondents had been **denied service altogether** by doctors and other providers.<sup>4</sup> Nineteen percent (19%) had been refused treatment by a doctor or other provider because of their transgender or gender non-conforming status.

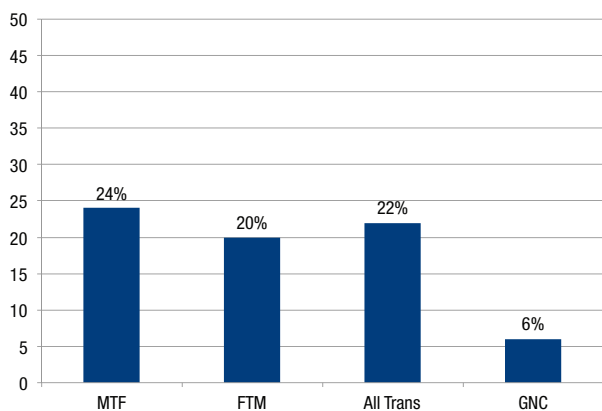
Twenty-four percent (24%) of transgender women reported having been refused treatment altogether and 20% of transgender men did. Respondents who reported they had lost jobs due to bias (36%); American Indians (36%); those who worked in the underground economy (30%); those on public insurance (28%); and those who transitioned (25%) experienced high occurrence of refusal to treat.



Refusal to Provide Medical Care by Race



Refusal to Provide Care by Gender Identity/Expression



*“I have had general practitioners refuse to accept me as a patient on the basis of having a history of gender identity disorder.”*

**VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT WHEN SEEKING MEDICAL TREATMENT**

Doctors’ offices, hospitals, and other sources of care were often unsafe spaces for study participants. Over one-quarter of respondents (28%) reported verbal harassment in a doctor’s office, emergency room or other medical setting and 2% of the respondents reported being physically attacked in a doctor’s office.

*2% of respondents reported being physically attacked in a doctor’s office.*

*28% reported being verbally harassed in a medical setting.*

Those particularly vulnerable to physical attack in doctors’ offices and hospitals include those who have lost their jobs (6%); African-Americans (6%); those who done sex work, drug sales or other work in the underground economy (6%); those who transitioned before they were 18 (5%); and those who are undocumented non-citizens (4%).

In emergency rooms, 1% reported attack. Those more vulnerable to attack include those who are undocumented (6%); those who have worked in the underground economy (5%); those who lost their jobs (4%); and Asian respondents (4%). Obviously, harassment and physical attacks have a deterrent effect on patients seeking additional care and impact the wider community as information about such abuses circulates.

*“My experiences in dealing with hospital personnel after my rape was not pleasant and lacked a lot of sensitivity to trans issues.”*

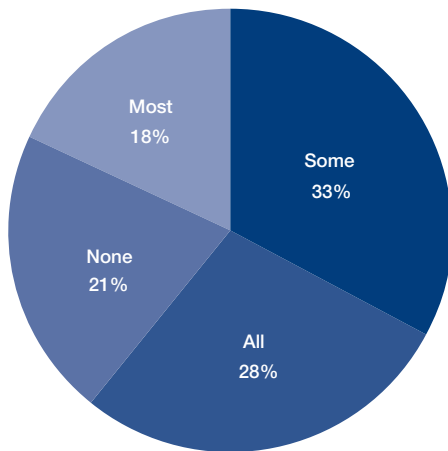
*“When I tried to kill myself and was taken to a suicide center, I was made fun of by staff and treated roughly.”*

*“I was forced to have a pelvic exam by a doctor when I went in for a sore throat. The doctor invited others to look at me while he examined me and talked to them about my genitals.”*

## OUTNESS AND DISCRIMINATION

Twenty-eight percent (28%) of respondents said they were out to all their medical providers. Eighteen percent (18%) said they were out to most, 33% said some or a few, and 21% were out to none.

When Seeking Medical Care, How Many People Know or Believe You Are Transgender or Gender Non-Conforming?



Doctors can provide more effective care when they have all medically relevant information about their patients. Unfortunately, our data shows that doctors' knowledge of a patient's transgender status increases the likelihood of discrimination and abuse. Medical professionals' awareness of their patient's transgender status **increased experiences of discrimination** among study participants up to eight percentage points depending on the setting:

- **Denied service altogether:** 23% of those who were out or mostly out to medical providers compared to 15% of those who were not out or partly out
- **Harassment in ambulance or by EMT:** 8% of those who were out or mostly out to medical providers compared with 5% of those who were not out or partly out
- **Physically attacked or assaulted in a hospital:** 2% of those who were out or mostly out to medical providers compared with 1% of those who were not out or partly out

*“I have been harassed and physically assaulted on the street. One time, I didn’t go the hospital until I went home, changed [out of feminine] clothes, and then went to the emergency room in male mode. I had a broken collar bone as a result of that attack.”*

*“I rarely tell doctors of my gender identity. It just seems so hard to explain what “genderqueer” means in a short doctor’s appointment. I also am reluctant to take the risk of discrimination; I need to be healthy more than I need to be out to my doctors. I hate making this compromise. But I’m not quite that brave yet.”*

*“Denial of health care by doctors is the most pressing problem for me. Finding doctors that will treat, will prescribe, and will even look at you like a human being rather than a thing has been problematic. Have been denied care by doctors and major hospitals so much that I now use only urgent care physician assistants, and I never reveal my gender history.”*

## MEDICAL PROVIDERS' LACK OF KNOWLEDGE

When respondents saw medical providers, including doctors, they often encountered ignorance about basic aspects of transgender health and found themselves required to “teach my provider” to obtain appropriate care. Fully 50% of study respondents reported having to teach providers about some aspect of their health needs; those who reported “teaching” most often include transgender men (62%), those who have transitioned (61%) and those on public insurance (56%).

50% of the sample reported having to teach their medical providers about transgender care.

*“I have several health issues and have been refused care by one doctor who ‘suggested’ that I go someplace else because she could not treat me since she ‘did not know anything about transgender people.’ “*

## POSTPONEMENT OF NECESSARY AND PREVENTIVE MEDICAL CARE

We asked respondents whether they postponed or did not try to get two types of health care: preventive care “like checkups” and necessary care “when sick or injured.” We found that many postponed care because they *could not afford it* and many postponed care because of *discrimination and disrespect from providers*.

One fourth of study participants reported delaying needed care because of disrespect and discrimination from medical providers.

A large number of study participants postponed necessary medical care due to inability to afford it, whether seeking care when sick or injured (48%), or pursuing preventive care (50%). Transgender men reported postponing any care due to inability to afford it at higher rates (55%) than transgender women (49%).

Insurance was a real factor in delayed care: those who have private insurance were much less likely to postpone care because of inability to afford it when sick or injured (37%) than those with public (46%) or no insurance who postponed care (86%).

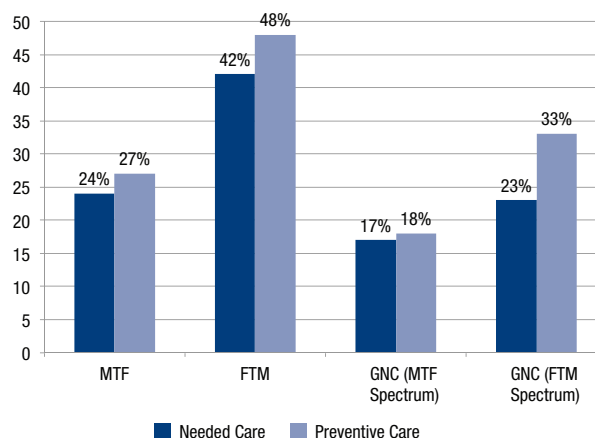
In terms of preventive care, those without insurance reported delaying care due to inability to afford it much more frequently (88%) than those with private insurance (39%) or public insurance (44%). Failing to obtain preventive care is known to lead to poor long-term health outcomes.

Due to discrimination and disrespect, 28% postponed or avoided medical treatment when they were sick or injured and 33% delayed or did not try to get preventive health care. Female-to-

male transgender respondents reported postponing care due to discrimination and disrespect at a much higher frequency (42%, sick/injured; 48% preventive) than male-to-female transgender respondents (24%, sick/injured; 27% preventive). Those with the highest rates of postponing care when sick/injured included those who have lost a job due to bias (45%) and those who have done sex work, sold drugs, or done other work in the underground economy for income (45%). Twenty-nine percent (29%) of respondents who were “out” or “mostly out” to medical providers reported they had delayed care when ill and 33% postponed or avoided preventive care because of discrimination by providers.

*“The transition and health care has been expensive, all at a time where my main source of income (my law practice) deteriorated. I have exhausted my savings and the equity from selling my home just to pay medical and living expenses.”*

Postponement Due to Discrimination by Providers



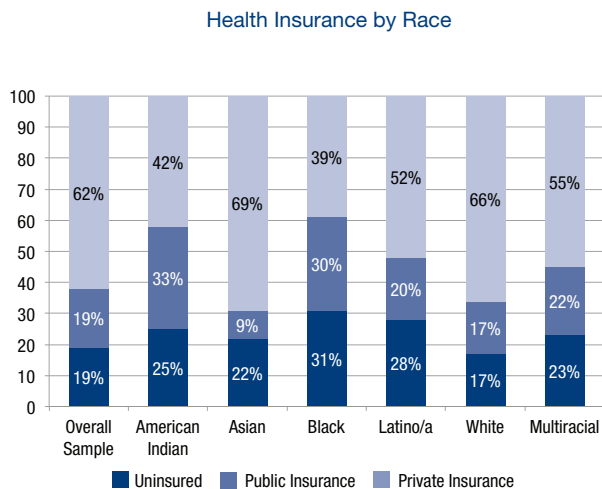
## ACCESS TO INSURANCE

Study participants were less likely than the general population to have health insurance, more likely to be covered by public programs such as Medicare or Medicaid, and less likely to be insured by an employer.

Nineteen percent (19%) of the sample lacked any health insurance compared to 17% of the general population.<sup>5</sup> Fifty-one percent (51%) had employer-based coverage compared to 58% of the general population.<sup>6</sup>

African-American respondents had the worst health insurance coverage of any racial category: 39% reported private coverage and 30% public. Thirty-one percent (31%) of Black respondents reported being uninsured; by contrast 66% of white respondents reported private insurance, 17% public insurance and 17%

uninsured. In the general population, 68% have private insurance and 28% have public insurance.<sup>7</sup>

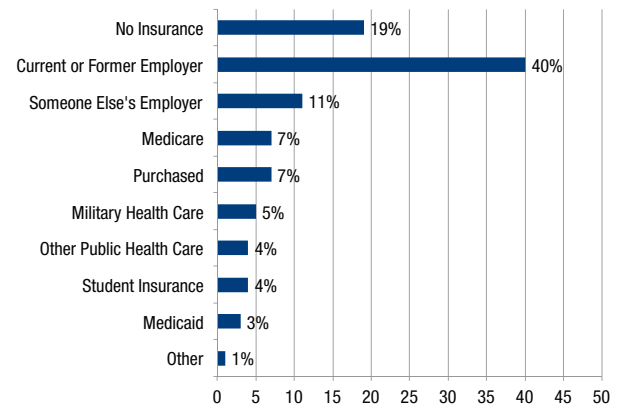


Undocumented non-citizens had very low rates of coverage: 26% reported private insurance, 37% public insurance, and 36% no insurance. The South was the worst region for coverage where 59% of respondents reported private insurance, 17% public insurance and 25% no insurance.

Transgender women reported private insurance at 54%, public insurance at 24% and 22% were uninsured. Transgender men reported private insurance at 68%, public insurance at 13% and 19% with no insurance. Transgender respondents, overall, reported private insurance at 60%, public insurance at 20% and 20% had no insurance. Gender non-conforming respondents were insured at higher rates than their transgender counterparts, with 73% reporting private insurance, 11% public insurance, and 17% uninsured.

*“I have been living with excruciating pain in my ovaries because I can’t find a doctor who will examine my reproductive organs.” (from a transgender man)*

**Source of Insurance**



## Transition-related Care

Most survey respondents had sought or accessed some form of transition-related care. Counseling and hormone treatment were notably more utilized than any surgical procedures, although the majority reported wanting to “someday” be able to have surgery. The high costs of gender-related surgeries and their exclusion from most health insurance plans render these life-changing (in some cases, life-saving) and medically necessary procedures inaccessible to most transgender people.

The majority of survey participants have accessed some form of transition-related medical care despite the barriers.

Throughout this section, we focus primarily on transgender people rather than on gender non-conforming people, though they too may also desire and sometimes use various forms of gender-related medical care.

The World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) publishes Standards of Care<sup>8</sup> which are guidelines for mental health, medical and surgical professionals on the current consensus for providing assistance to patients who seek transition-related care. They are intended to be flexible to assist professionals and their patients in determining what is appropriate for each individual. The Standards of Care are a useful resource in understanding the commonly experienced pathways through transition-related care.

*“My choices for health coverage at my employer all exclude any treatment for transgender issues, even though they cover things like hormones for other people.”*

## COUNSELING

Counseling often plays an important role in transition. Because of the WPATH Standards of Care, medical providers often require a letter from a qualified counselor stating that the patient is ready for transition-related medical care; transgender people may seek out counseling for that purpose. Counseling may also play a role in assisting with the social aspects of transition, especially in dealing with discrimination and family rejection.

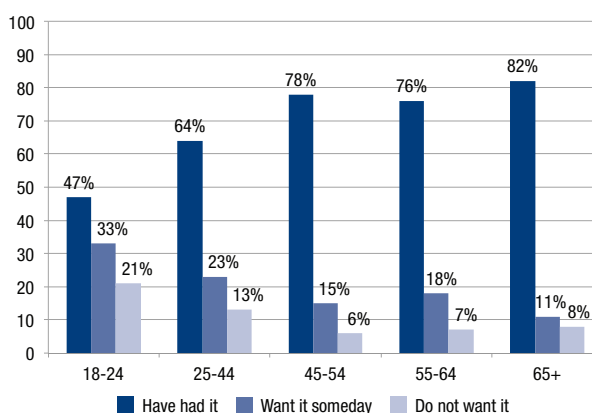
Seventy-five percent (75%) of respondents received counseling related to their gender identity and an additional 14% hoped to receive it someday. Only 11% of the overall sample did not want it. Those who identified as transgender were much more likely to have had counseling (84%) than those who are gender non-conforming (48%). Eighty-nine percent (89%) of those who medically transitioned have received counseling, as have 91% of those who had some type of surgery.

Part of counseling can involve receiving a gender-related mental health diagnosis such as “Gender Identity Disorder.” Many doctors require this diagnosis before providing hormones or surgical treatment, but the diagnosis itself is widely criticized for categorizing naturally occurring gender variance as pathological.<sup>9</sup> Fifty-percent (50%) of study participants have received a gender-related mental health diagnosis. Transgender women reported a higher rate of diagnosis (68%) than transgender men (56%); and transgender-identified participants had a substantially higher rate of diagnosis (63%) than gender non-conforming respondents (11%).

## HORMONE THERAPY

Sixty-two percent (62%) of respondents have had hormone therapy, with the likelihood increasing with age; an additional 23% hope to have it in the future. Transgender-identified respondents accessed hormonal therapy (76%) at much higher rates than their gender non-conforming peers, with transgender women more likely to have accessed hormone therapy (80%) than transgender men (69%). Almost all respondents who reported undertaking transition-related surgeries also reported receiving hormone therapy (93%).

Hormone Therapy by Age of Respondent

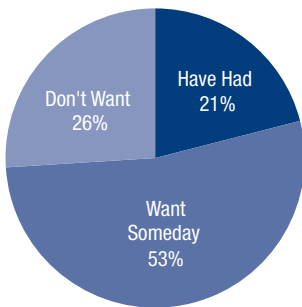


*“I can no longer afford health care of any kind. I am fully transitioned and thus reliant upon estradiol as my body produces neither estrogens nor androgens in sufficient quantity. I am unable to go to the doctor for my prescriptions, and thus have been unable to buy my hormones for over one year. Thus I watch my hair falling out, my nails dissolve and am weak and tired like a far older lady than I am.”*

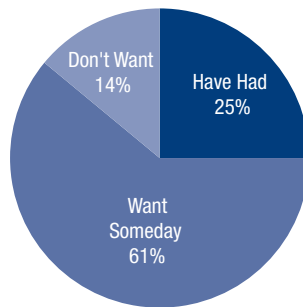
**SURGERY—MALE-TO-FEMALE**

Transgender women may elect to undertake a variety of surgeries, including breast augmentation, orchiectomy (removal of testes), vaginoplasty (creation of a vagina and/or removal of the penis), and facial feminization surgeries. We asked respondents to report on whether they had, or wanted, breast augmentation surgery, orchiectomies and vaginoplasties. As the charts below show, most transgender women reported wanting or having these surgeries. In addition, 17% reported having had facial surgery.<sup>10</sup> However, it is impossible to know how many others would desire or utilize surgery if it was more financially accessible.

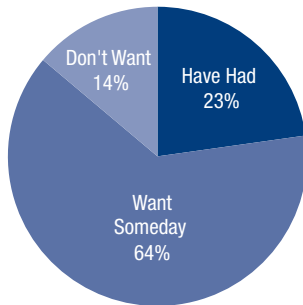
MTF Breast Augmentation Surgery



MTF Orchiectomy



MTF Vaginoplasty

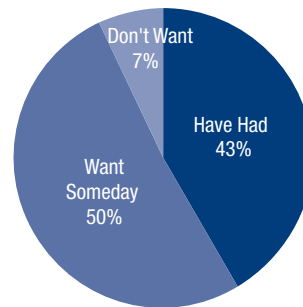


*“I cannot afford gender reassignment surgery which is crucial to my mental well being and thoughts of suicide are always present.”*

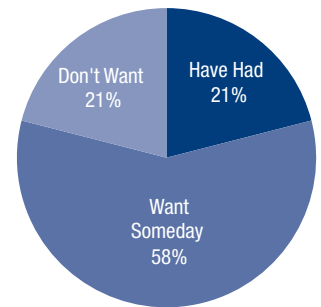
**SURGERY—FEMALE-TO-MALE**

Transgender men may elect to undertake a variety of surgeries, including chest reconstruction, hysterectomy, metoidioplasty and other genital surgeries. We asked respondents to report on chest surgery; hysterectomy; metoidioplasty, which releases the clitoris; surgeries that create testes; and phalloplasty, which surgically creates a penis and testes. The majority of FTM transgender-identified respondents wanted to have, or have already had, chest surgery and a hysterectomy. However, when it came to genital surgeries, very few reported having such surgeries; a slim majority (53%) reported desiring other genital surgery such as metoidioplasty in addition to the 3% that have had it; and one-quarter (27%) wanted to have a phalloplasty in addition to the 1% who have had it. It is impossible to know how these rates would change if these surgeries were more financially accessible.

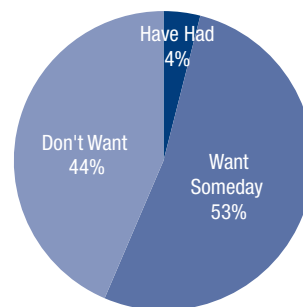
FTM Chest Surgery



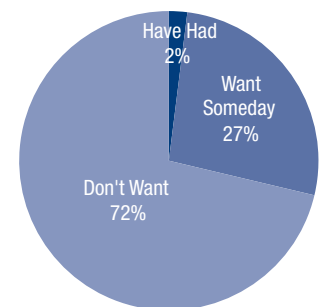
FTM Hysterectomy



FTM Metoidioplasty/  
Creation of Testes



FTM Phalloplasty



*“I have also have had several bouts with depression and anxiety disorders and once ended up in the emergency room for depression. I still bounce in and out of depression due to not being able to get the appropriate surgical procedures.”*

## Health Vulnerabilities

Survey participants reported poorer health outcomes than the general population in a variety of critical health areas.

### PHYSICAL VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT

In questions related to experiences in educational settings, at work, in interactions with police and with family members, at homeless shelters, accessing public accommodations, and in jails and prisons, respondents were asked about physical violence or sexual violence, or both, committed against them because of their gender identity/expression. There was no *general question* asked about whether respondents had ever experienced any bias-motivated violence, and further, there was no question that asked to report on violence that was not *specifically motivated* by anti-transgender bias.

*“As a child because I acted “girly,” I was a victim of severe child abuse, and was sexually assaulted. I avoided transitioning until I came to the point of suicide.”*

Twenty-six percent (26%) of respondents had been physically assaulted in at least one of these contexts because they were transgender or gender non-conforming. Ten percent (10%) of respondents were sexually assaulted due to this bias.

Having been physically or sexually assaulted aligned with a range of other negative outcomes, as described below in each relevant section.

### HIV

Respondents reported an HIV infection rate of 2.64%,<sup>11</sup> over four times the rate of HIV infection in the general United States adult population (0.6%) as reported by the United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and the World Health Organization.<sup>12</sup> People of color reported HIV infection at substantially higher rates: 24.90% of African-Americans, 10.92% of Latino/as, 7.04% of American Indians, and 3.70% of Asian-Americans in the study reported being HIV positive. This compares with national rates of 2.4% for African Americans, .08% Latino/as, and .01% Asian Americans.<sup>13</sup> Non-U.S. citizens in our sample reported more than twice the rate of HIV infection of U.S. citizens (2.41%), with documented non-citizens at 7.84% and undocumented at 6.96%.

**Respondents reported over four times the national average of HIV infection.**

Doing sex work for income clearly was a major risk factor, with 61% of respondents who were HIV positive reporting they had done sex work for income. To consider this from a different angle, of all the people in our sample who had done sex work, 15.32% reported being HIV positive.

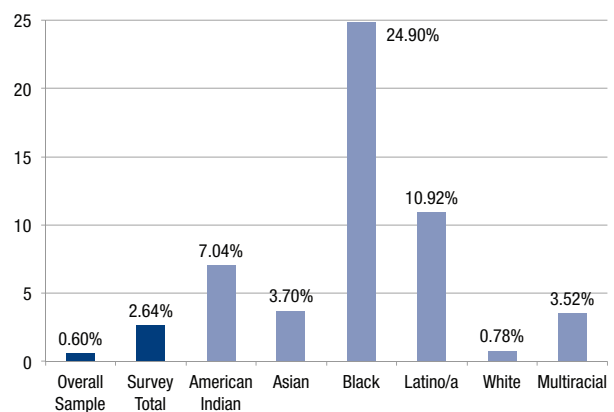
Among survey participants, 88% of those who reported being HIV positive identified as either MTF or gender non-conforming on the male-to-female spectrum. The reported rate of HIV infection for the MTF transgender respondents was 4.28%. The reported rate of HIV infection for FTM respondents was .51%, lower than the national average.

Other categories that reported substantially higher HIV rates than the sample as a whole were:

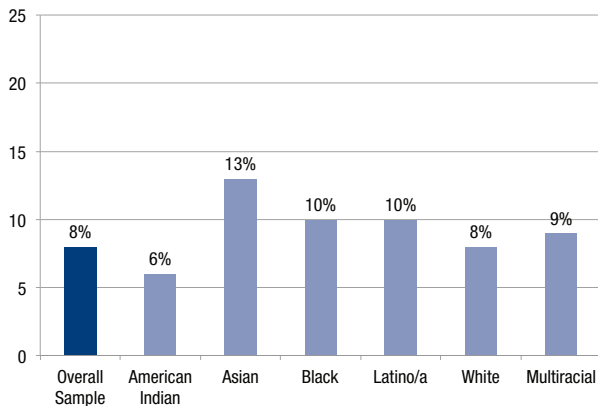
- Those without a high-school diploma (13.49%)
- Those who had been sexually assaulted due to bias (10.13%)
- Those with household income below \$10,000 a year (6.40%)
- Those who had lost a job due to bias (4.59%) or reported being unemployed (4.67%)

Eight percent (8%) of our sample reported that they did not know their HIV status. Transgender women and transgender men had equal rates of not knowing, both 8%, with transgender respondents also at 8% and gender non-conforming respondents at 9%. Those most likely not to know their HIV status include undocumented non-citizens (17%), those with household incomes under \$10,000/year (14%), and those with lower educational attainment (those with no high school diploma and high school diploma only, both at 13%). With regard to race, Asian respondents were least likely to know their status (13%).

HIV Infection By Race, Compared to U.S. General Population



HIV Status Unknown By Race



**DRUG AND ALCOHOL USE**

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) estimate that 7.3% of the general public abuses or is dependent on alcohol, while 1.7% abuses or is dependent on non-prescription drugs.<sup>14</sup> Eight percent (8%) of study participants reported currently using alcohol or drugs specifically to cope with the mistreatment that they received as a result of being transgender or gender non-conforming, while 18% said they had done so in the past but do not currently. We did not ask about general use of alcohol and drugs, only usage which the respondents described as a coping strategy for dealing with the mistreatment they face as transgender or gender non-conforming persons.

Doing sex work, drug sales, and other work in the underground economy for income more than doubles the risk of alcohol or drug use because of mistreatment, with 19% of these respondents currently using alcohol and/or drugs while 36% reported that they had done so in the past. Those who have been the physically attacked due to bias also had a higher rate of current alcohol and drug misuse (15%) as did those who have been sexually assaulted due to bias (16%). Also at elevated

26% use or have used alcohol and drugs to cope with the impacts of discrimination.

*“I do not use drugs but my drinking has increased over the past 3 years due to stress and loneliness.”*

*“When I started coming out, I stopped the drinking and stopped the depression medicines. When I started living full time in my real gender, I blossomed into an outgoing, loving, giving person.”*

risk were those who had lost a job due to discrimination; 12% reported currently using drugs and alcohol, while 28% have done so in the past.

Alcohol and drug use decreased by age among our participants, as they did in studies of the general population,<sup>15</sup> with those 65 years and above reporting less than half the rate of use (4%) of those who are the 18-44 age range (9%). This contrasts with studies of LGBT populations that show a less dramatic decrease in use over the life cycle;<sup>16</sup> however, because our study only asked about use connected to mistreatment, the comparisons with both the general population and LGBT studies are not precise.

**SMOKING**

Thirty percent (30%) of our sample reported smoking daily or occasionally, compared to 20.6% of U.S. adults.<sup>17</sup> Studies of LGBT adults show similar rates to those in our study, with elevated rates of 1.1-2.4 times that of the general population,<sup>18</sup> and a 2004 California study found a 30.7% smoking rate for transgender people.<sup>19</sup> In the general population, men smoke at higher rates than women, but in LGBT studies, women smoke at higher rates than men. Our sample resembled the LGBT data regarding elevated smoking levels but differed in that more men than women in our sample smoke, a pattern that is closer to that of the general population. When asked if they would “like to quit,” 70% of smokers in the study selected yes.

Comparative Smoking Rates from Other Studies,<sup>20</sup> Compared to Our Study

	General Population	Lesbian and Gay	Bisexual	Our Sample
Men	23.1%	26.5-30.9%	29.5-38.1%	33%
Women	18.3%	22.3-26%	30.9-39.1%	29%

Visual conformers were less likely to be current smokers (27%) than visual non-conformers (37%), suggesting that the stress caused by the additional mistreatment that visual non-conformers face may be involved in the development of an addiction to nicotine. Similarly, those who have been physically assaulted due to bias (40%) and sexually assaulted due to bias (45%) have higher smoking rates than their peers who were not assaulted.



**SUICIDE ATTEMPTS**

When asked “have you ever attempted suicide?” 41% of respondents answered yes. According to government health estimates, five million, or 1.6% of currently living

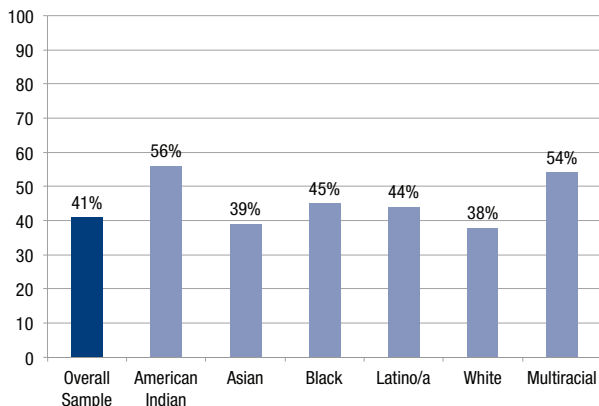
41% of respondents reported attempting suicide.

Americans have attempted suicide in the course of their lives.<sup>21</sup> Our study asked if respondents had ever attempted suicide while most federal studies refer to suicide attempts within the last year; accordingly it is difficult to compare our numbers with other studies. Regardless, our findings show a shockingly high rate of suicidality.

The National Institute for Mental Health (NIMH) reports that most suicide attempts are signs of extreme distress, with risk factors including precipitating events such as job loss, economic crises, and loss of functioning.<sup>22</sup> Given that respondents in this study reported loss in nearly every major life area, from employment to housing to family life, the suicide statistics reported here cry out for further research on the connection between the consequences of bias in the lives of transgender and gender non-conforming people and suicide attempts.<sup>23</sup>

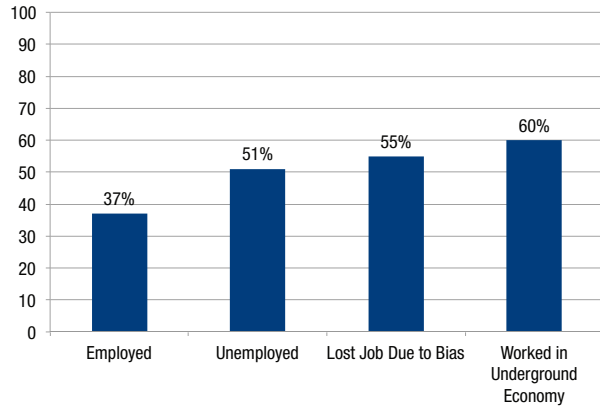
NIMH also reports that generally African-Americans, Latino/as and Asians have much lower suicide rates than whites and American Indians; our sample showed a different pattern of risk for suicide by race, with Black and Latino/a respondents showing dramatically elevated rates in comparison to their rates in the general population.

Suicide Attempt by Race



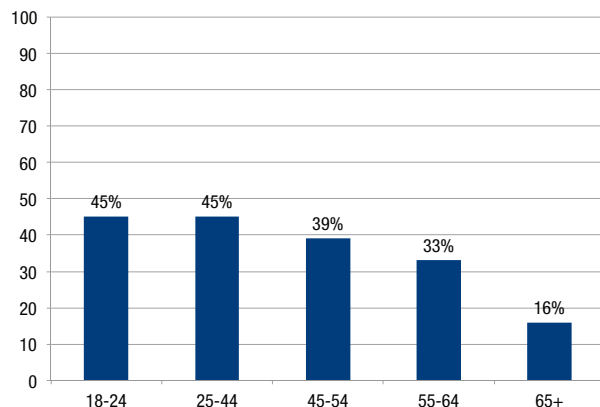
Respondents’ work status and experiences of discrimination in employment also had a sizable impact on their likelihood of having attempted suicide.

Suicide Attempt by Employment



In terms of age group risk, the highest rates of suicide attempts in this study were reported among those in the 18-24 age group (45%) and 25-44 age group (45%), with only 16% of those over 65 reporting a suicide attempt. These rates are inverse to the general population, which shows a higher incidence of attempts among older Americans than youth.<sup>24</sup>

Suicide Attempts by Age



Our questionnaire did not ask at what age the respondents made suicide attempts and therefore it is difficult to draw conclusions about the risk of suicide over their life spans.

However, there are a number of attributes that align with an increased rate of attempted suicide. High risk groups include visual non-conformers (44%) and those who are generally out about their transgender status (44%). Those who have medically transitioned (45%) and surgically transitioned (43%) have higher rates of attempted suicide than those who have not (34% and 39% respectively).

Over half of those bullied, harassed, assaulted, or expelled due to bias in school attempt suicide.

Those who were bullied, harassed, assaulted, or expelled because they were transgender or gender non-conforming in school (at any school level) reported elevated levels of suicide attempts (51% compared with 41% of our sample as a whole). Most notably, suicide attempt rates rise dramatically when teachers were the reported perpetrators: 59% for those harassed or bullied by teachers, 76% among those who were physically assaulted by teachers and 69% among those who were sexually assaulted by teachers. These numbers speak to the urgency of ending violence and harassment of transgender students by both their peers and their teachers.

Education and household income both align with suicide rates, with those earning \$10,000 annually or less at extremely high risk (54%), while those making more than \$100,000 are at comparatively lower risk (26%), while still tremendously higher than the general population. Those who have not completed college attempted suicide at higher rates (48% among those with no high school diploma, 49% for those with a high school diploma only, and 48% for those with some college education) while those who have completed college (33%) or graduate school (31%) have lower rates.

Those who had survived violence perpetrated against them because they were transgender or gender non-conforming were at very high risk; 61% of physical assault survivors reported a suicide attempt, while sexual assault survivors reported an attempt rate of 64%.

*“My suicide attempt had a lot to do with the fact that I felt hopeless and alone in regards to my gender identity.”*

## CONCLUSIONS FOR HEALTH

Respondents reported serious barriers to health care and outrageous frequencies of anti-transgender bias in care, from disrespect to refusal of care, from verbal harassment to physical and sexual abuse. Transgender people of color and low-income respondents faced substantially elevated risk of abuse, refusal of care, and poor health outcomes than the sample as a whole.

The data gathered here speak to a compelling need to examine the connection between multiple incidences of discrimination, harassment and abuse faced by our respondents in the health care system and the high risk for poor health outcomes. Additionally, our data suggest that discriminatory events are commonplace in the daily lives of transgender people and that this has a cumulative impact—from losing a job because of bias to losing health insurance; from experiencing health provider abuse to avoiding health care; from long-term unemployment to turning to work on the streets. The collective impact of these events exposed our respondents to increased risk for HIV infection, smoking, drug/alcohol use, and suicide attempts.

It is important to note that the traumatic impact of discrimination also has health care implications. Transgender people face violence in daily life; when this risk is compounded by the high rates of physical and sexual assault they face while accessing medical care, health care costs increase, both to treat the immediate trauma as well as ongoing physical and psychological issues that may be created.

As we have seen across a number of categories in the survey, the ability to work substantially impacts transgender health. In particular, those who have been fired due to anti-transgender bias and those who have done sex work, drug sales, or other work in the underground economy are much more likely to experience health risks that are shown to lead to poorer health outcomes.

Discrimination in the health care system presents major barriers to care for transgender people and yet a majority of our survey participants were able to access some transition-related care, with 75% receiving counseling and 62% obtaining hormones. Genital surgery, on the other hand, remains out of reach for a large majority, despite being desired by most respondents. This is one important reason why legal rights for transgender people must never be determined by surgical status.

*“I saw a doctor in New York and told her how I wanted [chest surgery]. She looked at me sternly and said, ‘I can’t believe you are wasting my time. Do you know what your problem is? You just want to be a boy. You want to be a boy and that’s never gonna happen so just do yourself a favor and get over it.’ Then she left the room abruptly. I grabbed my things and bolted down the street, feeling like the biggest freak in the world.”*

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HEALTH

- Anti-transgender bias in the medical profession and U.S. health care system has catastrophic consequences for transgender and gender non-conforming people. This study is a call to action for the medical profession:
  - The medical establishment should fully integrate transgender-sensitive care into its professional standards, and this must be part of a broader commitment to cultural competency around race, class, and age;
  - Doctors and other health care providers who harass, assault, or discriminate against transgender and gender non-conforming patients should be disciplined and held accountable according to the standards of their professions.
- Public and private insurance systems should cover transgender-related care; it is urgently needed and is essential to basic health care for transgender people.
- Ending violence against transgender people should be a public health priority, because of the direct and indirect negative effect it has on both victims and on the health care system that must treat them.
- Medical providers and policy makers should never base equal and respectful treatment and the attainment of appropriate government-issued identity documents on:
  - Whether an individual has obtained surgery, given that surgeries are financially inaccessible for large majorities of transgender people because they are rarely covered by either public or private insurance;
  - Whether an individual is able to afford or attain proof of citizenship or legal residency.
- Rates of HIV infection, attempted suicide, drug and alcohol abuse, and smoking among transgender and gender non-conforming people speak to the overwhelming need for:
  - Transgender-sensitive health education, health care, and recovery programs;
  - Transgender-specific prevention programs.
- Additional data about the health outcomes of transgender and gender non-conforming people is urgently needed:
  - Health studies and other surveys need to include gender identity as a demographic category;
  - Information about health risks, outcomes and needs must be sought specifically about transgender populations;
  - Transgender people should not be put in categories such as “men who have sex with men” (MSM) as transgender women consistently are and transgender men sometimes are. Separate categories should be created for transgender women and transgender men so HIV rates and other sexual health issues can be accurately tracked and researched.

## Endnotes

- 1 HIV rates are presented with two decimal places for more accurate comparison with general population figures.
- 2 See for example P. Foraselli, C. DeAngelis, and A. Kaszuba, "Compliance with follow-up appointments generated in a pediatric emergency room," *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 1, no. 3 (1985); V.T. Chande, S.E. Krug, and E.F. Warm, "Pediatric emergency department utilization habits: a consumer survey," *Pediatric Emergency Care*, 12, no. 1 (1996).
- 3 These results were based on question 30, which was prefaced by: "Based on being transgender/gender non-conforming, please check whether you have experienced any of the following in these public spaces," and asked respondents to indicate whether they had been "denied equal treatment or service" for each of the various locations.
- 4 These results were based on question 43, which was prefaced by: "Because you are transgender/gender non-conforming, have you had any of the following experiences?" and asked respondents to indicate whether "a doctor or other provider refused to treat me because I am transgender/gender non-conforming."
- 5 U.S. Census Bureau, "Current Population Reports, Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States" (2008): <http://www.census.gov/prod/2009pubs/p60-236.pdf>. Data for those 18 and over were used.
- 6 U.S. Census Bureau, "Current Population Reports, Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States" (2008): <http://www.census.gov/prod/2009pubs/p60-236.pdf>. Data for those 18 and over were used.
- 7 U.S. Census Bureau, "Current Population Reports, Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States" (2008): <http://www.census.gov/prod/2009pubs/p60-236.pdf>. Data for those 18 and over were used.
- 8 World Professional Association of Transgender Health, "Standards of Care for Gender Identity Disorders, Sixth Version" (2001): <http://www.wpath.org/documents2/socv6.pdf>
- 9 The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force's statement on reform of the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) can be accessed at [http://www.transgenderlaw.org/medicalhealthcare/NGLTF\\_DSM\\_Statement.pdf](http://www.transgenderlaw.org/medicalhealthcare/NGLTF_DSM_Statement.pdf). The National Center for Transgender Equality's position may be found at <http://transgender-equality.wordpress.com/wp-admin/post.php?post=264&action=edit>
- 10 The facial feminization surgery rate was determined differently than the other surgery data. We determined the rate by looking at how many respondents reported spending a valid dollar amount in Question 45.
- 11 HIV rates are presented with two decimal places for closer comparison with general population figures.
- 12 United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and World Health Organization (WHO), "2007 AIDS Epidemic Update" (2007): [http://data.unaids.org/pub/EPISlides/2007/2007\\_epiupdate\\_en.pdf](http://data.unaids.org/pub/EPISlides/2007/2007_epiupdate_en.pdf)
- 13 Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, "The HIV/AIDS Epidemic in the United States" (2007): <http://www.kff.org/hiv/aids/upload/3029-071.pdf>
- 14 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, "Results from the 2008 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: National Findings" (2009): <http://www.oas.samhsa.gov/nsduh/2k8nsduh/2k8Results.pdf>
- 15 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Office of Applied Studies, NSDUH Series H-38A, HHS Publication No., "Results from the 2009 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Summary of National Findings," 1, SMA 10-4586, (2010): 30, Chart 3.1.
- 16 National Institute on Alcohol and Alcoholism, "Sexual Orientation and Alcohol Use Disorders" (2005): <http://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/social/Module10GSexualOrientation/Module10G.html>
- 17 American Lung Association, "Smoking Out a Deadly Threat: Tobacco Use in the LGBT Community" (2010): <http://www.lungusa.org/assets/documents/publications/lung-disease-data/lgbt-report.pdf>
- 18 Review of literature aggregated in American Lung Association, "Smoking Out a Deadly Threat: Tobacco Use in the LGBT Community" (2010): <http://www.lungusa.org/assets/documents/publications/lung-disease-data/lgbt-report.pdf>
- 19 California Department of Health Services, "California Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, and Transgender (LGBT) Tobacco Use Survey — 2004" (2005): <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/tobacco/Documents/CTCP-LGBTobaccoStudy.pdf>
- 20 The general population, lesbian and gay, and bisexual data in this table is from California Department of Health Services, "California Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, and Transgender (LGBT) Tobacco Use Survey — 2004." The data on transgender persons is ours.
- 21 "U.S.A. Suicide: 2002 Official Final Data," prepared for the American Association of Suicidology by John L. McIntosh, Ph.D. Official data source: Kochanek, K.D., Murphy, S.L., Anderson, R.N., & Scott, C. (2004). Deaths: Final data for 2002. National Vital Statistics Reports, 53 (5). Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics DHHS Publication No. (PHS) 2005-1120. Population figures source: table I, p.108. of the National Center for Health Statistics (Kochanek et al., 2004), see [http://www.sprc.org/library/event\\_kit/2002datapgv1.pdf](http://www.sprc.org/library/event_kit/2002datapgv1.pdf)
- 22 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institute of Mental Health, "Suicide in the U.S.: Statistics and Prevention" (2010): <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/suicide-in-the-us-statistics-and-prevention/index.shtml>
- 23 American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, "Risk Factors for Suicide" (2010): [http://www.afsp.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=home.viewPage&page\\_id=05147440-E24E-E376-BDF4BF8BA6444E76](http://www.afsp.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=home.viewPage&page_id=05147440-E24E-E376-BDF4BF8BA6444E76) According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, adults who have had a major depressive episode—the leading risk factor for suicide—in the previous twelve months had an attempt rate of 10.4%.
- 24 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institute of Mental Health, "Suicide in the U.S.: Statistics and Prevention" (2010): <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/suicide-in-the-us-statistics-and-prevention/index.shtml>



# FAMILY LIFE

Respondents answered several questions about family life, specifically about relationships with their families, partners/spouses, and children. We wanted to know how living, parenting and partnering as a transgender or gender non-conforming person had impacted relationships; we also wanted to know if participants were the primary providers for the economic security of children or others.

Our results showed a combination of improved relationships and successful development of families alongside major challenges in retaining friendships, partnerships, and relationships with children. Among some groups of respondents, coming out to family members and friends had a positive impact, while for others, relationships faced considerable challenges.

## KEY FINDINGS IN FAMILY LIFE

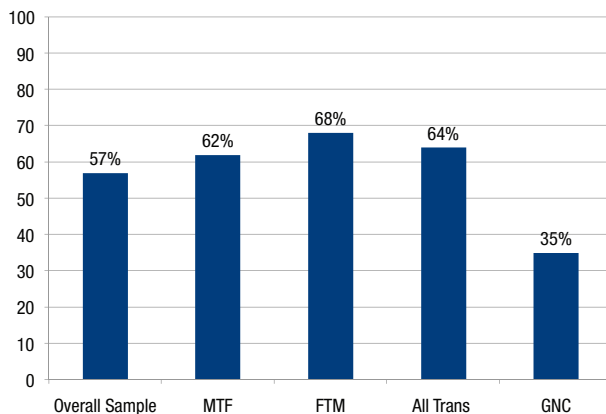
- **Forty-five percent (45%) of respondents reported that their family is as strong today** as it was before coming out.
- **Forty-three percent (43%) maintained the majority of family bonds.**
- **Thirty-eight percent (38%) of the sample were parents** with 18% reporting that they currently have at least one dependent child.
- **Seventy percent (70%) of respondents reported that their children continued to speak to them** and spend time with them after coming out.
- **Fifty-seven percent (57%) of respondents experienced family rejection.**
- **Relationships ended for 45% of those who came out to partners.**
- **Twenty-nine percent (29%) of those with children experienced an ex-partner limiting their contact with their children.**
- **Courts limited or stopped relationships with children for 13% of respondents**, with Black, Asian, and multiracial respondents experiencing higher rates of court interference.
- **Nineteen percent (19%) of respondents reported experiencing domestic violence by a family member** because they were transgender or gender non-conforming.
- **Family acceptance was strongly connected with a range of positive outcomes while family rejection was connected with negative outcomes.** Those who were rejected by family members had considerably elevated negative outcomes, including homelessness (three times the frequency), sex work (double the rate), and suicidality (almost double), compared to those that were accepted by their family members.
- **Domestic violence at the hands of a family member was also strongly connected to negative outcomes**, with domestic violence survivors reporting **four times the rate of homelessness, four times the rate of sex work, double the HIV rate, and double the rate of suicide attempts** compared to their peers who did not experience family violence.

*“When I asked my father to sign a ‘consent to treat’ form so I could start hormone therapy in 1970, he tore it up and threatened to kill me if I went ahead with transition.”*

## Outness to Family

We asked about outness to family members or “at home” in two different ways. First, we asked respondents whether they tell family members they are transgender or gender non-conforming.<sup>1</sup> Overall, 57% reported telling family members they are transgender or gender non-conforming. Transgender respondents reported this more often (64%) compared to gender non-conforming respondents (35%).

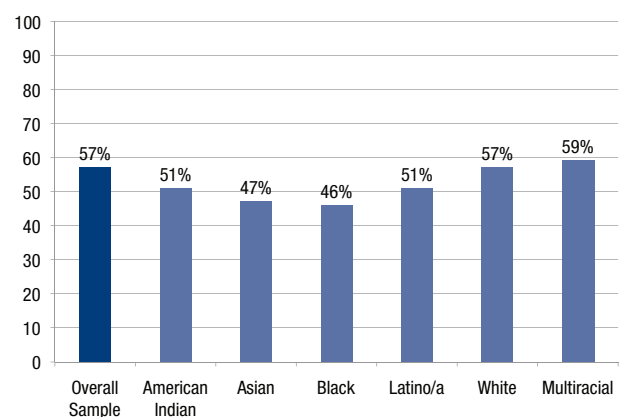
Outness to Family by Gender Identity/Expression



Whether or not respondents reported telling family members varied somewhat by race; multiracial (59%) and white (57%) respondents more often reported doing so.

*“My partner knows about my cross-dressing but is not and does not want to be involved. My partner is afraid my being found out will affect our relationship and our lives dramatically. If there was not such a stigma with appearing or acting like another gender to any degree, she would be fine with my dressing. I know in my lifetime this probably will not change.”*

Outness to Family by Race



We also asked how many people they were out to “at home.” Because home does not necessarily include family members, and may instead include friends, roommates, and other non-family members, this is not an exact measure of outness to family.

Overall, 73% reported they were out at home to “most” or “all,” 17% were out to “some” or “a few,” and 10% were out to no one.

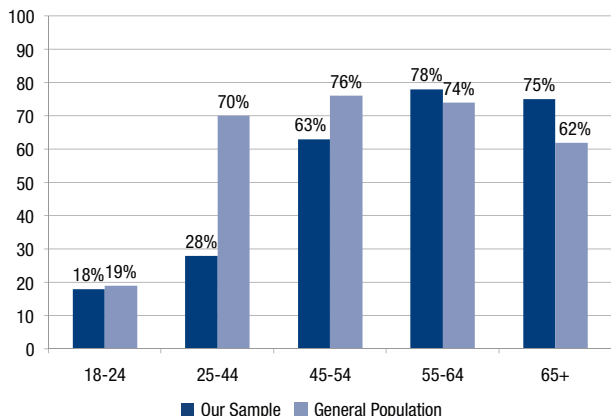
Of those who had transitioned, 88% were out to “most” or “all” at home, 8% were out to “some” or “a few,” and 4% were out to no one.



## Parenting

Only 38% of respondents identified themselves as parents, compared to 64% of the general population.<sup>2</sup> Part of this difference may be due to the relative age of our sample compared to the general population. Yet, looking at status as a parent by age, reveals different patterns of parenting by age compared to the general population.

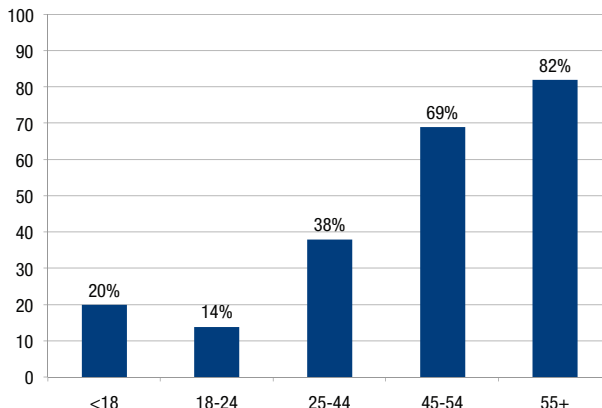
Parenting Rate by Age Compared to the General Population<sup>3</sup>



Being a parent appears to be strongly related to age of transition. Those who transitioned later in life were much more likely to be parents; 82% of those who transitioned at age 55 or older were parents compared to 38% of those who transitioned between the ages of 25 and 44.

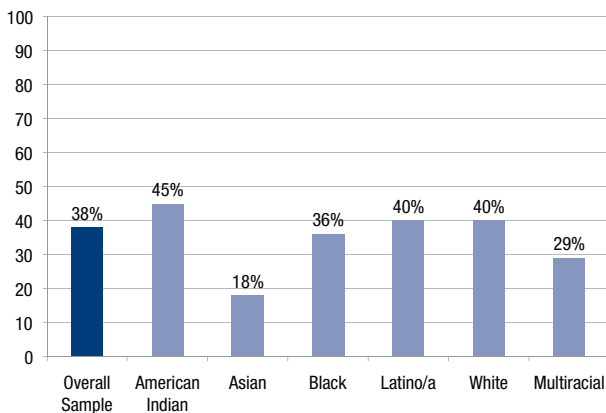
*“My partner and I are in the process of adopting a child whom we’ve been fostering for the past two years. We’ve been engaged in a legal battle since November of 2007, when a social worker decided (primarily, we’ve been told by a number of sources, because of my transgender status) to try to remove her from our home.”*

Parenting Rate by Age of Transition



Latino/a and white respondents reported the highest rates of parenting of any racial/ethnic groups at 40% each. Asian respondents had the lowest rate at 18%.

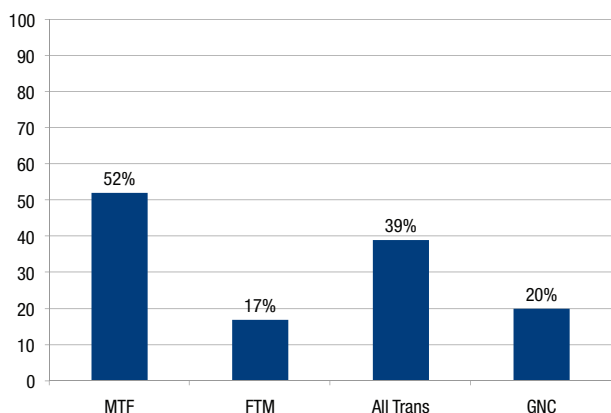
Parenting Rate by Race



Transgender women were parents (52%) considerably more often than transgender men (17%). However, our transgender female sample was considerably older (44% were 45 or older) than the transgender male respondents (11% were 45 or older) and age is associated with increased rates of parenting.

Transgender respondents, overall, reported being parents at 41%, compared to 20% of gender non-conforming respondents (again, this may be partly explained by differences in the age of these groups). Sixty-one percent (61%) of male-born cross-dressers said they were parents.

Parenting Rate by Gender



*“I am about to initiate change-of-name procedures, so that my name on my child’s birth certificate is the name I intend to have for the rest of my child’s life.”*

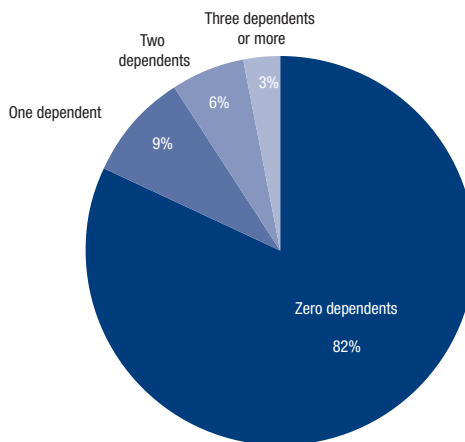
## Dependents

We asked respondents how many children currently rely on their income. Note that the question did not ask whether the children were under 18 years of age, or specify a biological or legal relationship.

Federal surveys generally ask respondents about the number of children in a household, rather than the number of dependents, so it is difficult to compare federal statistics to these data.

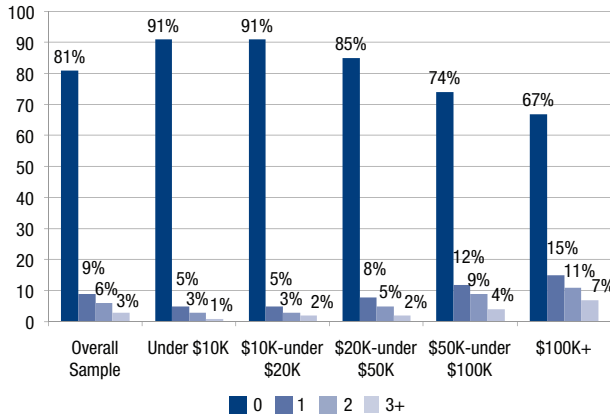
Eighteen percent (18%) of the sample reported at least one dependent.

Number of Dependent Children

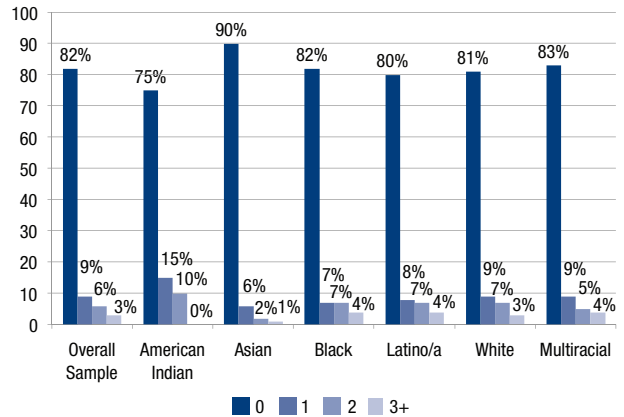


Generally, those with higher levels of household income and education were more likely to be responsible for children, with 18% of respondents making more than \$100,000 annually reporting two or more dependents. People in the workforce reported more dependents than those who were unemployed or out of the workforce.

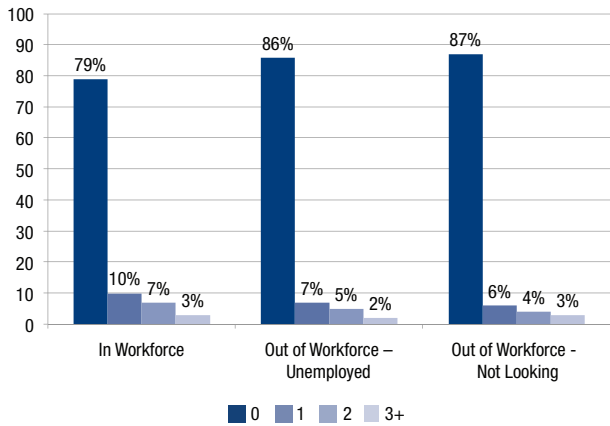
Number of Dependent Children by Household Income



Number of Dependent Children by Race

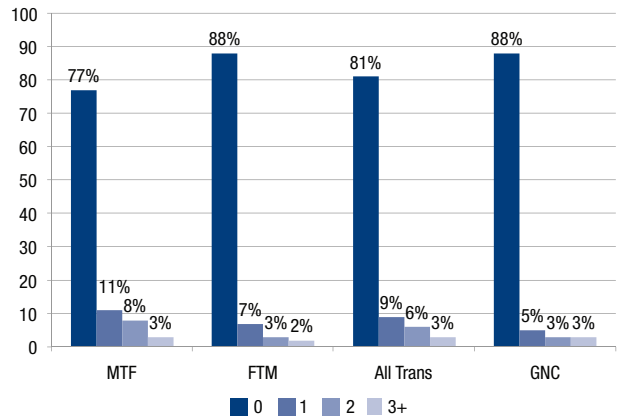


Number of Dependent Children by Employment Status



MTF respondents were supporting dependents much more often (22%) than their FTM peers (12%).

Number of Dependent Children by Gender Identity/Expression



Black and Latino/a respondents were slightly more likely to be providing for two or more children.

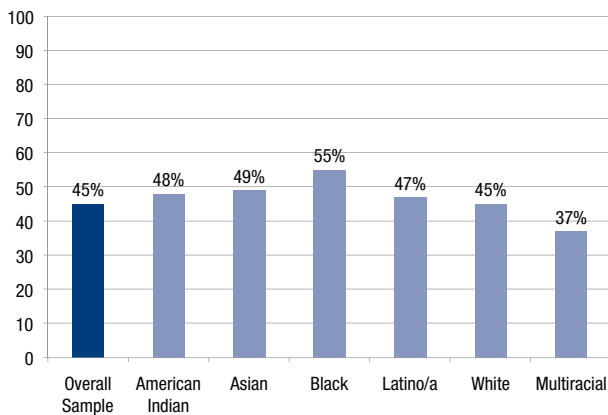
## Family Strength and Acceptance

### “AS STRONG TODAY”

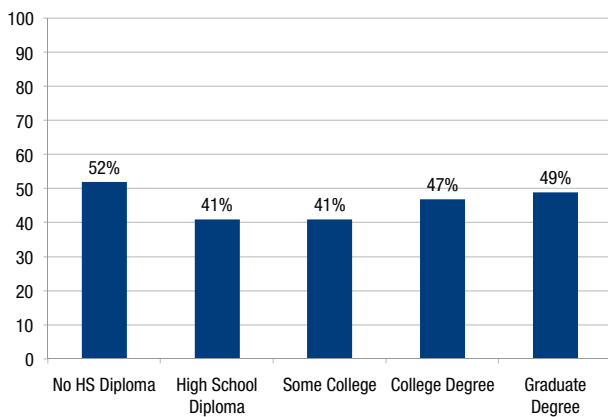
We asked three general questions about our respondents’ family relationships. Depending on the individual respondent, answers to these questions may relate to parents and siblings (family of origin), spouse/partner and children, or both.

Almost half of the sample (45%) reported that their family is as strong today as before coming out. Conversely, 55% indicated their family was not as strong today. Those who reported a higher level of family resilience include Black (55%) and Asian (49%) respondents as well as 52% of respondents without a high school diploma. These data counters prevailing mythologies about race, culture and class and family acceptance of transgender and gender non-conforming people.

“As Strong Today” by Race



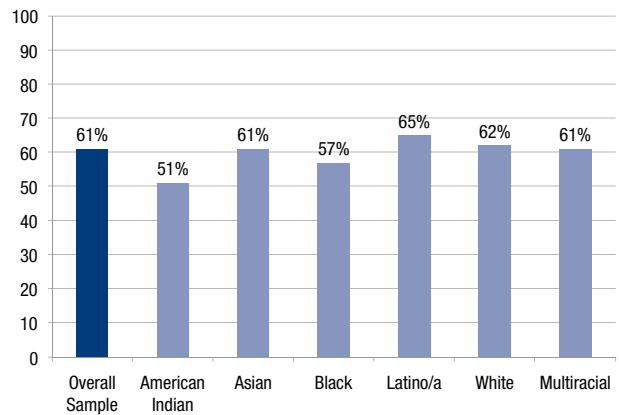
“As Strong Today” by Educational Attainment



### “IMPROVING AFTER COMING OUT”

A majority of respondents (61%) reported that their family relationships have slowly improved after coming out, with Latino/a (65%) and white (61%) respondents reporting the highest percentages of improvement. Those who had made medical (63%) and surgical (66%) transitions, and visual conformers (67%) also reported high rates of improving family relationships.

“Improving After Coming Out” by Race



*“I have been very fortunate to live in the state where I do, where people for the most part, are open-minded and accepting. I have also been fortunate to have the support of my parents and my, now, 11 year-old son who I came out to when he was age 6.”*

*“After coming out to my family last year, I was told they ‘support me 100%’ and then they proceeded to change their phone number and discontinued any contact.”*

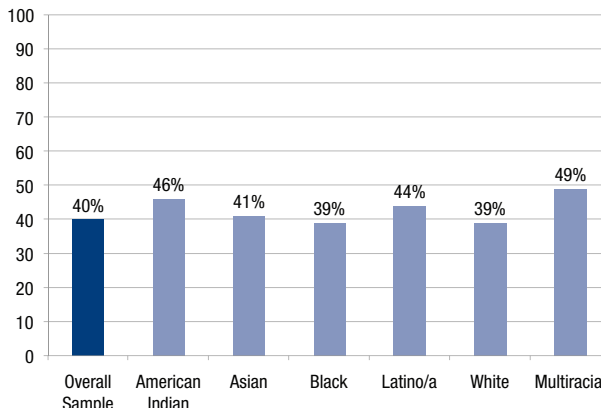
**FAMILY ACCEPTANCE/REJECTION**

Two-fifths (40%) of respondents reported that their parents or other family members “chose not to speak or spend time with me” due to their gender identity/expression. Sixty percent (60%) did not experience this type of family rejection.

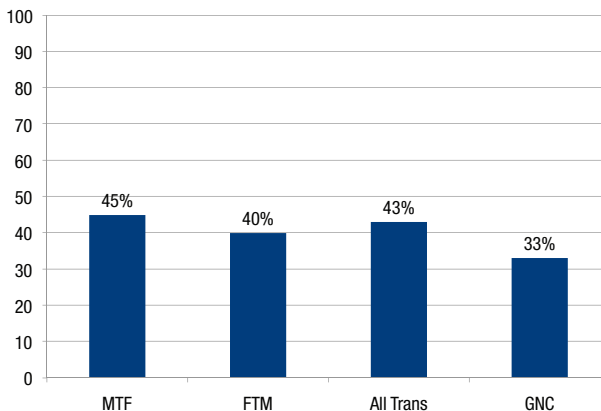
*“I just wish my daughter would come back to me. I fear I have lost her.”*

Family rejection was worse for multiracial (49%), American Indian (46%), and Latino/a (44%) participants. Also at higher risk than the full sample for family rejection were those earning \$10,000 or less annually (47%), those earning between \$10,000 and \$20,000 annually (48%), the unemployed (47%), those working in the underground economy (52%) and those who reported they lost a job due to bias (57%). MTFs and transgender participants fared worse with their families than their FTM and gender non-conforming counterparts.

Family Rejection by Race



Family Rejection by Gender

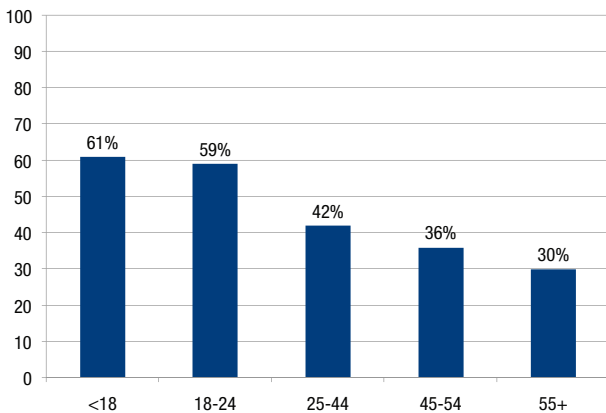


## Partner and Spousal Relationships

Nearly half (45%) of those who responded to the statement “my relationship with my spouse or partner ended” reported that their relationship with that spouse or partner ended due to their transgender identity or gender non-conformity; over half (55%) stayed in their relationship (or the relationship ended for other reasons). These data indicate that relationships are maintained at a much higher rate than some might expect.

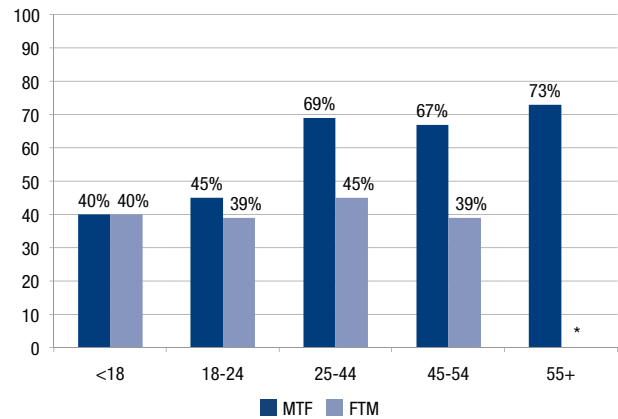
Those respondents who had transitioned did see their relationships end at a higher rate, with 55% of relationships ending. Additionally, the age the respondent began living full time was closely connected to whether a relationship ended. Those who transitioned at a younger age were more likely to have maintained their relationship through a transition, with 59% of people maintaining their relationship if they transitioned between the ages of 18-24 compared to only 36% of relationships lasting for those between the ages of 45-54.

Maintaining Relationships through Transition by Age of Transition



We also saw that whether or not relationships ended was connected to gender identity. Transgender women were more likely to experience the end of a relationship, compared to transgender men, except for those transitioned under the age of 18. This gender difference increased as the age of transition for respondents increased.<sup>4</sup>

End of Relationships by Gender Identity and Age of Transition



\* Sample size too low to report

Unemployed respondents (50%) and those who had lost jobs due to bias (62%) reported higher rates of relationship disruption. Male-to-female transgender respondents also reported higher rates of disruption (57%) than their FTM peers (39%) and transgender respondents lost their partnerships more often (50%) than gender non-conforming respondents (22%).

For information on current relationship status of the survey respondents, see the Portrait chapter.

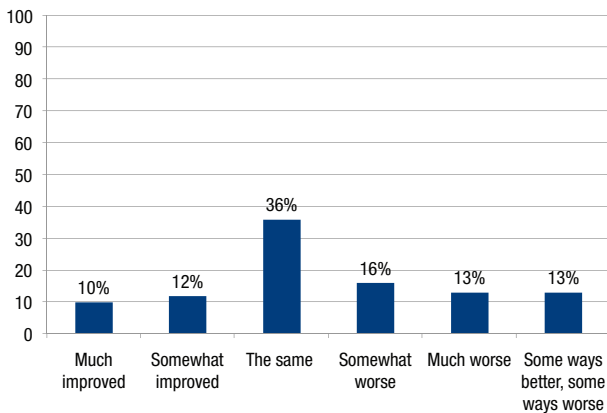
*“I am married, and my wife knew about my status by the time of our second date. She said she could accept me as I was. After we were married, and she was pregnant with our son, she told me I could not be who I wanted/was. Out of a sense of commitment, I have stayed with her, and have not been able to fully express who I really am. I have considered suicide. After all, smoking and drinking are a civilized way of committing suicide.”*

## Relationships with Children

For the majority of our respondents, relationships with children remained the same, although for a sizable minority, contact with their children was limited or denied.

When asked if being transgender or gender non-conforming had impacted their situation as parents, 22% of respondents reported an improved situation and 29% reported that their situation was worse. Almost half (49%) reported that their situation as parents either “remained the same” or was “in some ways better, in some ways worse.”

How Respondents' Situation as a Parent Changed

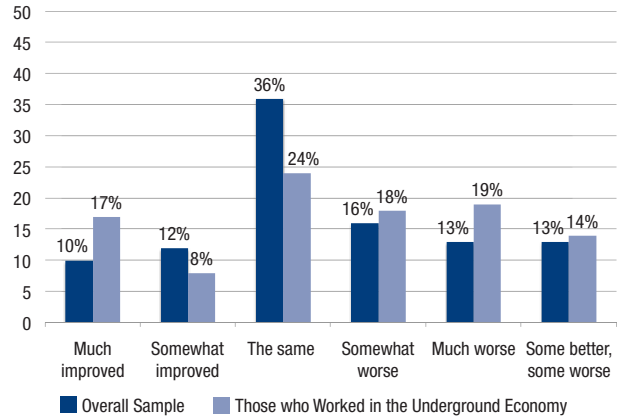


Asian (21%), Latino/a (20%) and Black (14%) respondents all had higher rates of improvement in their parenting situations after coming out than their white counterparts (9%).

Lower household income respondents (under \$10,000/year) experienced a much improved situation somewhat more often (15%) than their peers earning over \$100,000 annually (11%). However, they were also more likely to report a “much worse” situation (24%) versus those with high household income (7%).

Respondents who had worked in the underground economy reported a higher level of improvement (17%) than the sample as a whole, as well as a higher rate of reporting “much worse.”

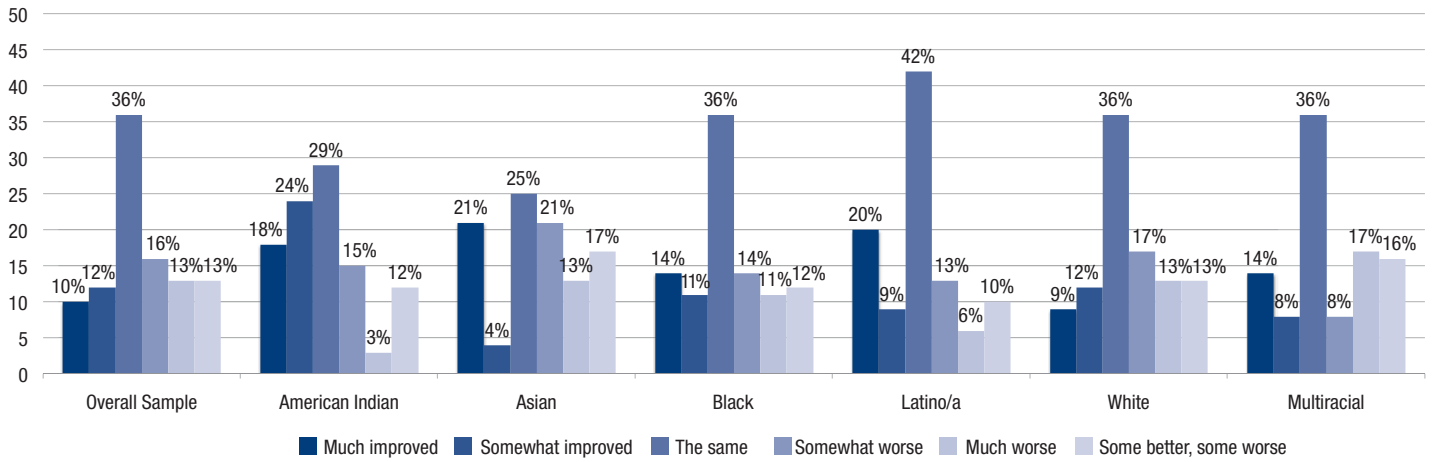
How Respondents' Situation as a Parent Changed by Underground Economy



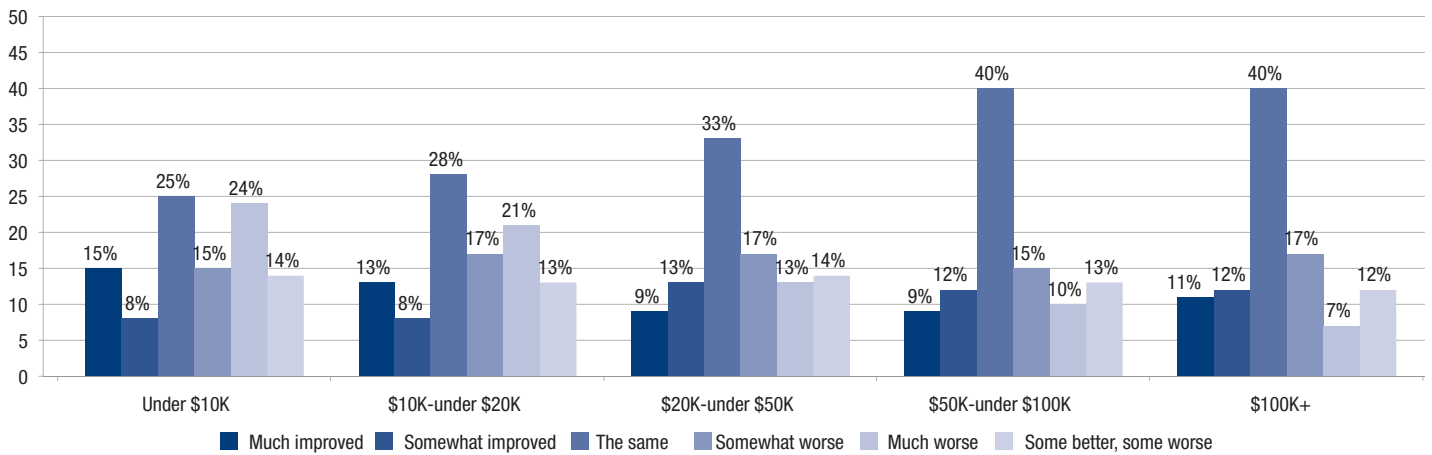
Those without a high school diploma were more likely to report a much improved parenting situation (26%) versus the overall sample (10%) and, in general, those without a high school diploma and those with only a high school diploma were least likely to report any of the “worse” options.

Others reported that their parenting situation was “much worse.” This includes 23% of respondents who have lost a job due to bias and 16% of the unemployed.

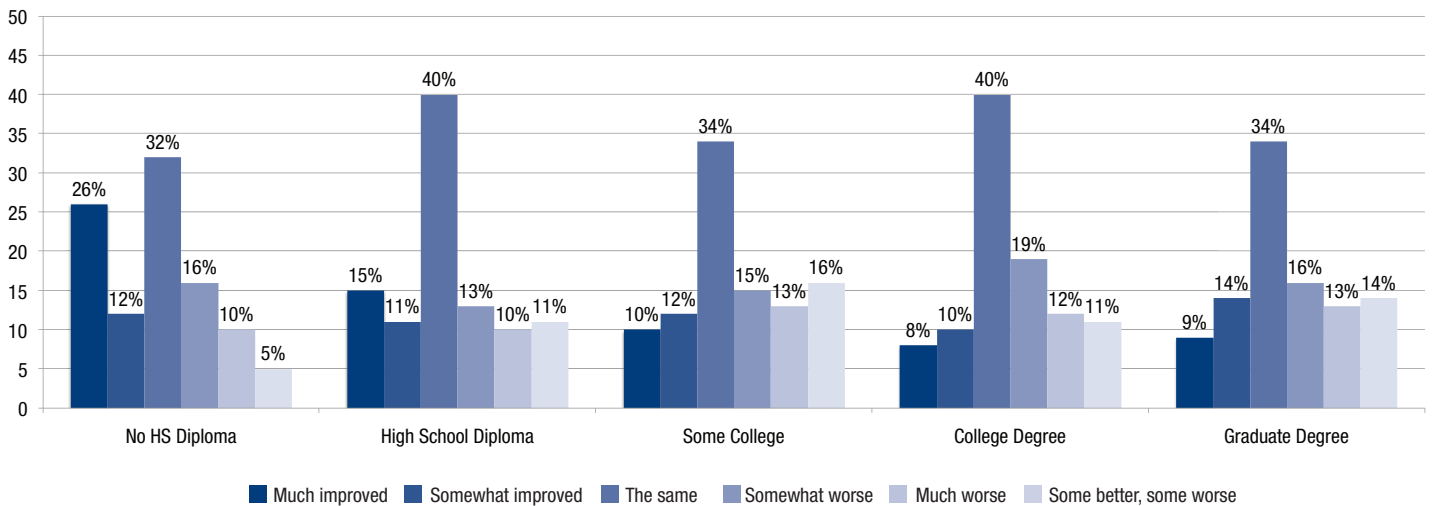
How Respondents' Situation as a Parent Changed by Race



How Respondents' Situation as a Parent Changed by Household Income



How Respondents' Situation as a Parent Changed by Educational Attainment





**EX-PARTNER/SPOUSE LIMITING OR STOPPING RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN**

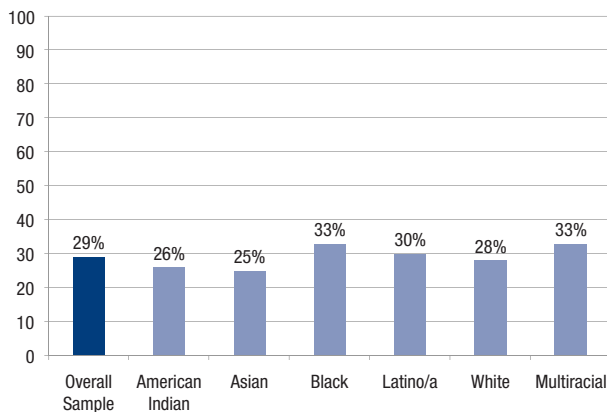
Of respondents who had children and were in a relationship that ended, 29% reported that their ex-spouse or partner limited or stopped their relationships with their children because of their transgender identity or gender non-conformity. However, 71% have maintained their relationships with their children, or if they were limited or stopped it was not due to bias.

**29%**  
My ex limited or stopped my relationship with my children.

**71%**  
My ex did not limit or stop my relationship with my children.

Multiracial (33%) and Black (33%) respondents were more vulnerable to having their relationships with their children limited or stopped as were those who worked in the underground economy (35%) or had lost jobs due to bias (43%). Male-to-female transgender respondents had their relationships with their children limited or stopped more often (34%) than FTM respondents (20%), and transgender participants were more vulnerable (32%) than gender non-conforming respondents (19%).

Ex-Spouse/Partner Limited or Stopped Relationships with Children by Race

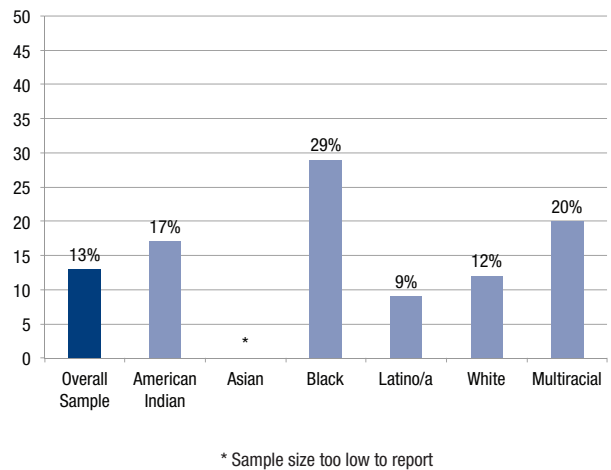


Of respondents who had children and were in a relationship that ended, 13% reported that a court or judge stopped or limited their relationships with children because of their transgender identity or gender non-conformity. However, this does not necessarily mean that 87% of transgender parents who appeared before a court in a custody dispute did not experience discrimination. The way we posed this question suggests that 87% of respondents either came to an agreement with their ex-spouse or partner over the issue of custody outside of court or, if they went to court, had a positive outcome.

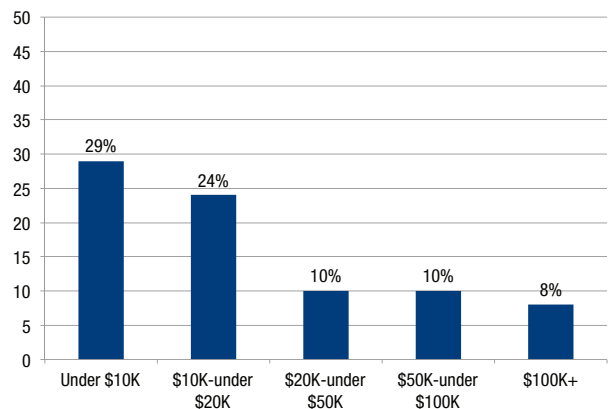
Compared to the 13% of the overall sample that experienced court interference, Black (29%) and multiracial (20%) respondents were much more vulnerable to court interference, as were respondents earning a household income of \$10,000/year or less (29%), those working in the underground economy (27%) and those who had lost jobs due to bias (26%).

Male-to-female transgender respondents suffered court interference more often (16%) than their FTM peers (8%).

Court Stopped/Limited Relationships with Children by Race



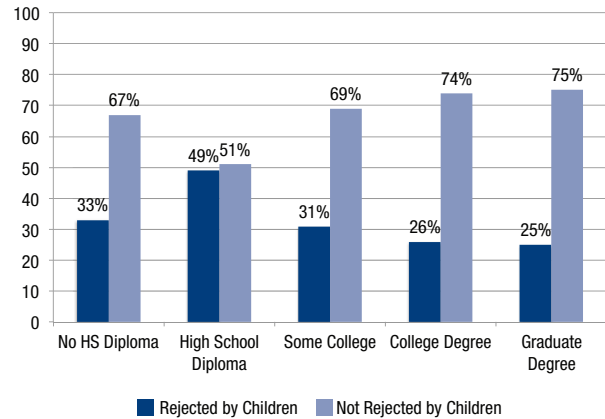
Court Stopped/Limited Relationships with Children by Household Income



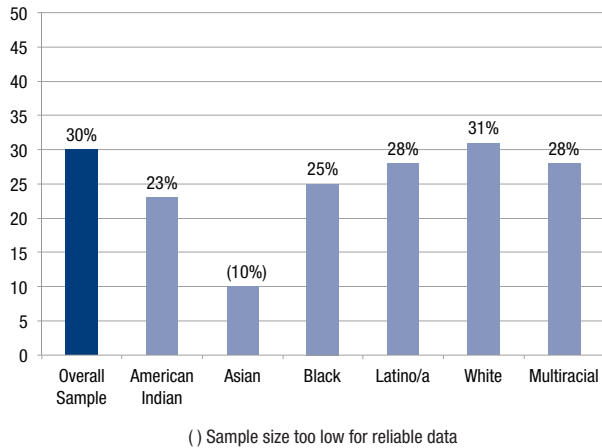
Thirty percent (30%) of respondents reported that their children have chosen not to speak with them or spend time with them due to their gender identity/expression. Still, a large majority (70%) reported that their children chose to continue their relationship.

White respondents experienced child rejection at the highest rate of any racial group (31%). Respondents whose household income was \$10,000/year or less (33%), those without a high school diploma (37%), and those who had lost jobs due to bias (43%) all reported high level of rejection by their children. Male-to-female transgender respondents experienced child rejection more often (37%) than female-to-male transgender participants (10%). Transgender respondents endured child rejection more often (33%) than gender non-conforming participants (10%). Those who reported living full time in their preferred gender (37%), and those who had undertaken a medical (35%) or surgical (37%) transition all reported higher rates of child rejection.

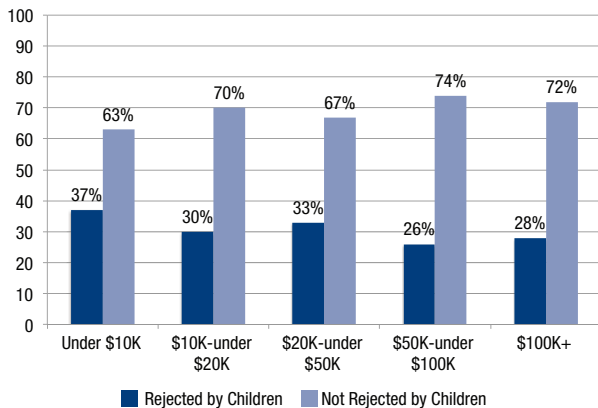
Children Rejecting Parents by Respondent's Education



Children Rejecting Parents by Race



Children Rejecting Parents by Respondent's Household Income

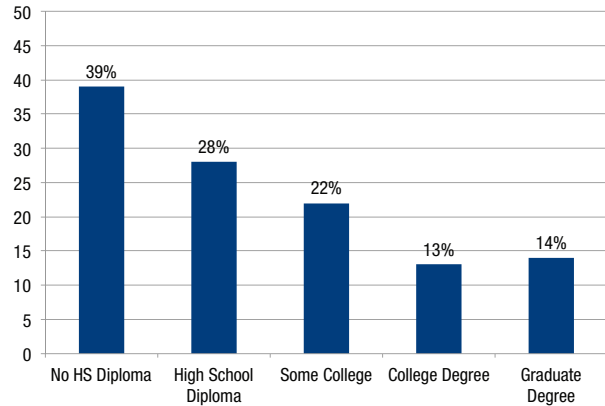


## Family Violence

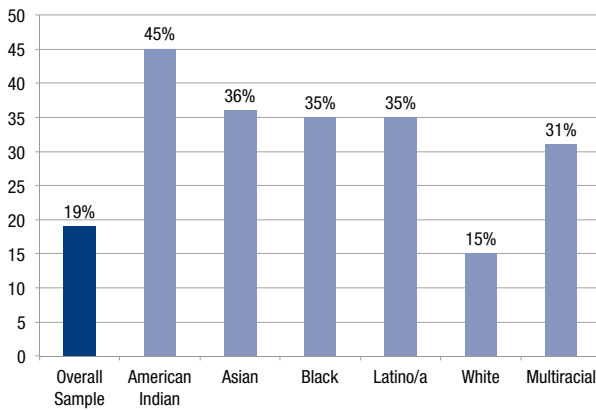
Nineteen percent (19%) of respondents have experienced domestic violence at the hands of a family member because of their transgender identity or gender non-conformity.

American Indian (45%), Asian (36%), Black (35%) and Latino/a (35%) respondents reported higher rates of domestic violence than the full sample, as well as undocumented non-citizens (39%), those earning under \$10,000 annually (38%), those without a high school diploma (39%), the unemployed (30%), respondents who have lost jobs due to bias (35%) and those who worked in the underground economy (42%). MTF respondents endured family violence more often (22%) than FTM respondents (15%), while gender non-conforming respondents were victimized more often (21%) than their transgender peers (19%).

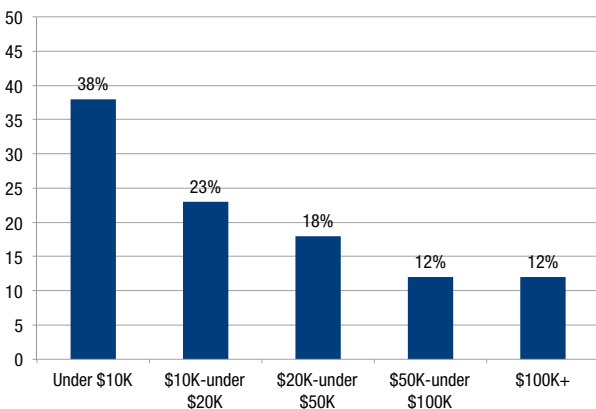
Family Violence by Educational Attainment



Family Violence by Race



Family Violence by Household Income

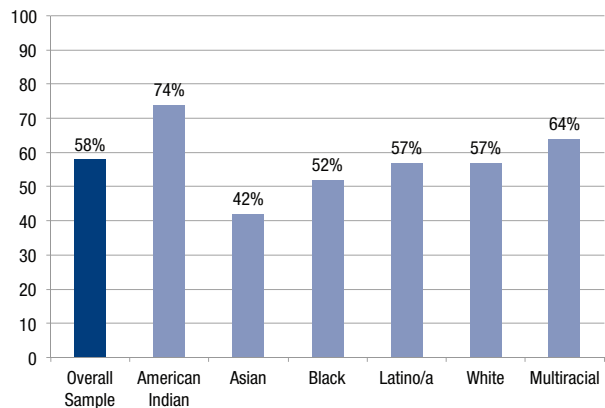


## Friendships

Over half the sample (58%) experienced the loss of close friendships as a result of their gender identity/expression.

Black and Asian respondents were least likely to have lost a close friend than other racial cohorts. Those most at risk for losing close friends included undocumented non-citizens (66%), those who had lost jobs due to bias (79%) and those engaged in the underground economy (70%). MTFs lost friends more often (67%) than FTMs (51%) and transgender respondents lost friends at a higher rate (61%) than their gender non-conforming peers (49%).

Lost Close Friendships by Race



*“I cannot come out of the closet until I have graduated college and/or have a steady job, because I would be disowned by my parents and they would stop paying for my education.”*

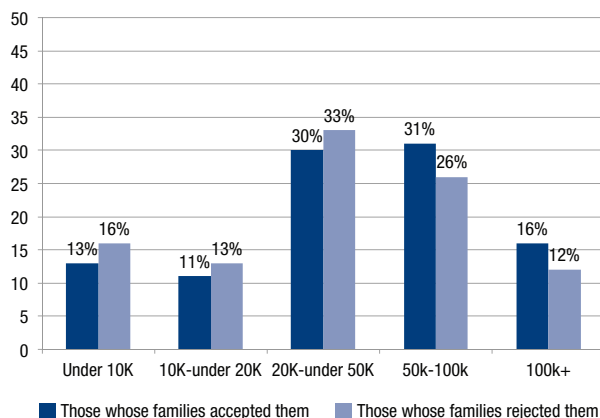
## Making the Connections: Family Rejection and Domestic Violence, Homelessness, Incarceration, and Health

In this section, we examine the connections between negative experiences at home and how they relate to income, incarceration, homelessness, work in the underground economy and health outcomes.

### FAMILY REJECTION OR ACCEPTANCE

To compare the experiences of respondents who had been accepted by their families with those who were rejected, we created a new variable using the answers to several statements about family acceptance.<sup>5</sup> Fifty-seven percent (57%) faced some rejection by their family and 43% were accepted.

Family Acceptance/Rejection by Household Income



### Household Income

Those whose families accepted them tended to have higher current household incomes than those who experienced family rejection. For example, 47% of those whose families accepted them made more than \$50,000/year compared to 38% of those whose families rejected them.

### Homelessness

Twenty-six percent (26%) of those who experienced family rejection also reported having experienced homelessness, nearly three times higher than those whose families were accepting (9%).

### Incarceration

Nineteen percent (19%) of those who experienced family rejection had been incarcerated compared to only 11% of those whose families were accepting.

### Underground Economy

Nineteen percent (19%) of those who experienced family rejection had worked in the underground economy for income, compared to only 11% of those whose families were accepting.

Specifically, 13% of those who experienced family rejection had done sex work for income, compared to 7% of those whose families were accepting.

### HIV

The contrast between HIV rates of the two groups was less stark, with 2.46% of those who experienced family rejection also reporting an HIV-positive status, compared to 2.04% of those whose families were accepting.<sup>6</sup>

### Suicide

Family rejection dramatically increased the likelihood of suicide attempts. Fifty-one percent (51%) of those who experienced family rejection reported having attempted suicide, compared to 32% of those whose families were accepting.

### Smoking

Thirty-two percent (32%) of those who experienced family rejection reported being current smokers. For those whose families were accepting, the rate was slightly lower at 27%.

### Drugs and Alcohol

Thirty-two percent (32%) of those who experienced family rejection also reported having used drugs or alcohol to deal with the mistreatment they faced as a transgender or gender non-conforming person. This compared with 19% of those whose families were accepting.

*“My parents threatened to disown me. ‘It was a sin,’ ‘I was sick,’ ‘I wanted to mutilate my body,’ etc. I drank fairly heavily from when I was 14 on. And I just kept drinking.”*

## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Of those who experienced family rejection, we found that those who experienced domestic violence by family members experienced other negative outcomes at particularly alarming rates, explained below.

### Homelessness

Family violence had a strong apparent link to homelessness. Forty-eight percent (48%) of those who experienced domestic violence also reported having experienced homelessness, nearly four times the rate of those whose families were accepting (9%).

### Incarceration

Twenty-nine percent (29%) of those who experienced domestic violence reported having been incarcerated, compared to only 11% of those whose families were accepting.

### Underground Economy

Thirty-eight percent (38%) of those who experienced domestic violence also reported having worked in the underground economy for income, compared to only 11% of those whose families were accepting.

Specifically, 29% of those who experienced domestic violence also reported having done sex work for income, a rate more than four times as high than those whose families were accepting (7%).

### HIV

Five and a half percent (5.5%) of those who experienced domestic violence also reported being HIV-positive. This compared to 2.04% of those whose families were accepting and our overall sample rate of 2.64%.<sup>7</sup>

### Suicide

Sixty-five percent (65%) of those who experienced domestic violence also reported having attempted suicide, compared to 32% of those whose families were accepting.

### Alcohol and Drugs

Forty-seven (47%) of those who experienced domestic violence also reported drinking or misusing drugs to cope with the mistreatment they faced as transgender or gender non-conforming people. This compared with 19% of those whose families were accepting.

## CONCLUSIONS FOR FAMILY LIFE

Our analysis shows that many transgender and gender non-conforming people experienced improvement in their family relationships after coming out. Others endured considerable challenges including rejection by partners, friends, and family members. A majority experienced both good and bad, and this didn't differ much by race.

Occasionally, family rejection took severe forms including domestic violence, which was associated with some of the most alarming rates of negative outcomes later in life.

Nonetheless, these data contradict the assumption that coming out as transgender or gender non-conforming always causes relationships with spouses or partners to end; we found about half of respondents staying in the same relationship (or having broken up for other reasons).

Children of transgender and gender non-conforming parents were generally accepting although their relationships were sometimes limited by ex-partners/spouses or family court judges. It appears that partner and judicial biases towards transgender and gender non-conforming parents often obstruct ties with children.

While family rejection was shown to be related to a number of negative outcomes including homelessness, HIV and suicide attempts, those respondents whose families accepted them had better health outcomes and enjoyed higher levels of social and economic security than the full sample. It appears that family support and safety nets can have a major positive impact on the lives of transgender and gender non-conforming people even in the face of pervasive mistreatment and discrimination outside of the home.

All of these statistics appear to confirm the groundbreaking findings of the Family Acceptance Project (FAP),<sup>8</sup> a multi-year study that examines the impact of family rejection on LGBT youth health outcomes. Aligned with FAP findings, data in this study show a strong correlation between family acceptance and health as well as social and economic security for adult transgender and gender non-conforming adults, making a strong case for more research in this emerging arena of study.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FAMILY LIFE

- Family members of transgender and gender non-conforming people who are coming out should educate themselves so that they can accept and continue to support their loved one and provide a place to turn to in the face of mistreatment or discrimination in wider society.
- Those involved with the family court system should be educated about transgender and gender non-conforming people, their continuing ability to be good parents, and the destructive consequences of separating parents and children.
  - Family court judges should be educated about research<sup>9</sup> showing that remaining in a strong relationship with a transgender or gender non-conforming parent is in “the best interest of the child,” and that transgender or gender non-conforming children need to be in custody of parents or guardians who accept them. Furthermore, transgender and gender non-conforming parents should not be restricted from expressing their identity or gender non-conformity during visitation.
  - Guardians *Ad Litem* and Court Appointed Special Advocates should be trained to understand that transgender and gender non-conforming children need to be in custody of parents or guardians who are accepting of their gender identity/expression. They also need to understand that it is in “the best interest of the child” to have contact with their transgender or gender non-conforming parent.
  - Lawyers involved in family court issues should not make arguments to limit custody or contact with children a parent is transgender or gender non-conforming.
  - Experts or professionals that the court relies on for analysis and advice who express bias against transgender or gender non-conforming children or adults should be removed from their cases.
- Adoption and foster care agencies should similarly be educated and establish policies of nondiscrimination for potential parents based on gender identity/expression and race.
- Social service providers should be aware of the likelihood of family rejection and domestic violence for transgender and gender non-conforming people and be prepared to be a resource or intervene as appropriate.
  - School counselors should be aware of the potential challenges transgender and gender non-conforming youth may be facing at home as well as in school, so that they can provide needed assistance.
  - Social workers should provide services friendly to transgender and gender non-conforming people as well as develop referral lists of other social service providers accessible to transgender and gender non-conforming people including homeless shelters and domestic violence shelters.
- Counselors and therapists in private practice should be prepared to counsel individuals and families who have a transgender or gender non-conforming family member and assist these families in accepting and supporting their identity.
- Family and marriage counselors should be able to assist spouses and partners dealing with gender identity/expression issues and what they may mean for their relationship. They should encourage understanding on the part of all parties and, if separation is warranted, they should also assist with an amicable breakup and ensure that any children continue to have relationships with their parents.

Endnotes

---

- 1 We included those that tell “everyone” in this calculation.
- 2 U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census and U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, “Current Population Survey” (Washington, DC: GPO, November 2008).
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 No data is available in this study to explain the differences between MTF and FTM respondents in relationship preservation. However, based on anecdotal evidence, this may be due to a difference in the sexual orientation of the partner of the transitioning individual and the norms that go with that sexual orientation.
- 5 Those who responded “Yes” to any of the following statements were in the family rejection group: “my relationship with my spouse or partner ended,” “my ex limited or stopped my relationship with my children,” “a court/judge limited or stopped my relationship with my children,” “my children chose not to speak with me or spend time with me,” “my parents or family chose not to speak with me or spend time with me,” or “I was a victim of domestic violence by a family member.”
- 6 HIV rates have not been rounded for better comparison to national rates.
- 7 HIV rates have not been rounded for better comparison to national rates.
- 8 For more, see The Family Acceptance Project at <http://familyproject.sfsu.edu/home>.
- 9 T. White and R. Ettner, “Children of a Parent Undergoing a Gender Transition: Disclosure, Risk, and Protective Factors,” (paper presented at XVI Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association Symposium, London, England, August 17 — 21, 1999): <http://www.symposium.com/ijt/greenpresidential/green17.htm>; R. Green, “Sexual Identity of 37 Children Raised by Homosexual or Transsexual Parents,” *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 135 (1978): 692; R. Green, “Transsexuals’ Children,” *International Journal of Transgenderism*, 2 (1998):4. <http://www.symposium.com/ijt/ijt0601.htm>.