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Tulsa's Sexual and Gender Minority Community Needs Report, 2019

Sponsored by Tulsa Reaches Out, a fund of Tulsa Community Foundation

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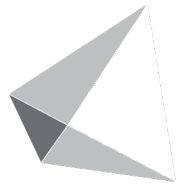   e. Workplace experiences

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ABOUT THE REPORT

About the Report

The title of this report, **The Prism Project,** is meant to convey two things:

First, this report is the product of extensive input from members of the SGM community in the Tulsa region, and it is meant to shine a light on the issues and project a variety of solutions on the other side.

Second, we chose the word "project" because it implies the work is not done. Rather, this serves as one more step forward in contributing to an ongoing conversation.

About the Report

- The **first LGBT Needs Assessment** was commissioned in 2004 by Tulsa Reaches Out (TRO)

- The **purpose** was to promote access to needed social and health services and to inform the community of the gaps in inclusive policies and practices involving the LGBTQ population

- 585 completed the 2004 survey or participated in a focus group

About the Report

- TRO commissioned The Hope Research Center at the University of Oklahoma's Tulsa Campus for this 2019 Report

- Our goals in providing this Report are three-fold:

  1. **Outreach to community partners**

  2. **Inform advocacy groups**

  3. **Guide policymakers & policy implementers**

About the Report

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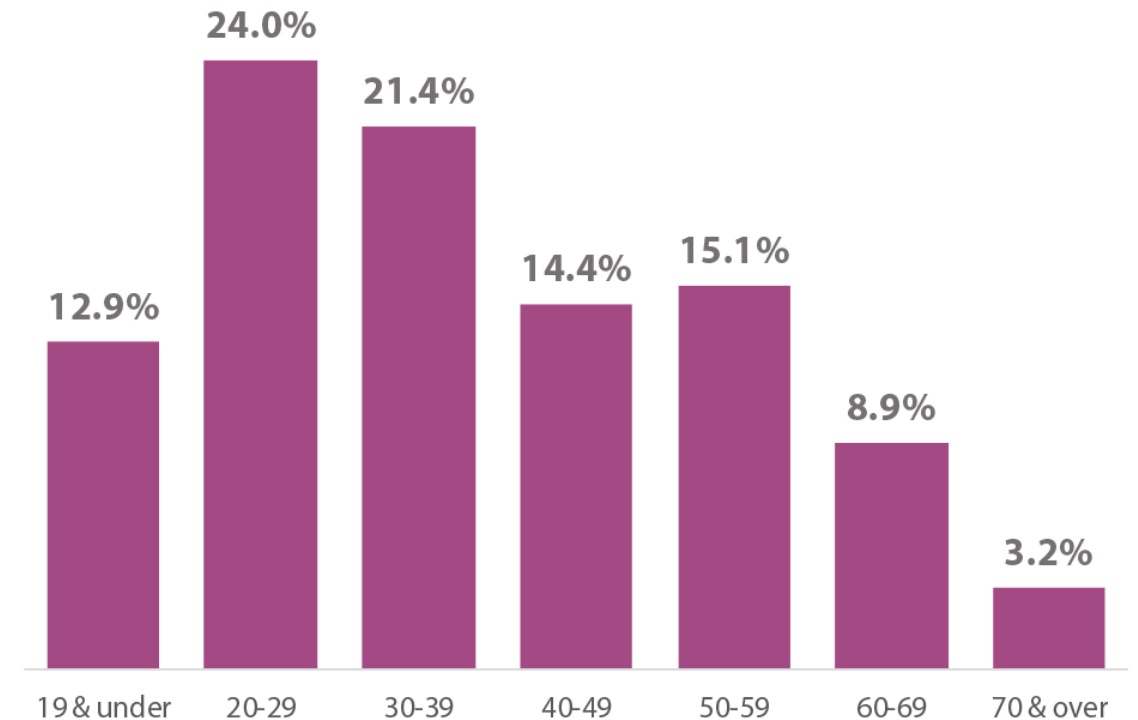- **Mark Wilson**

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SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS
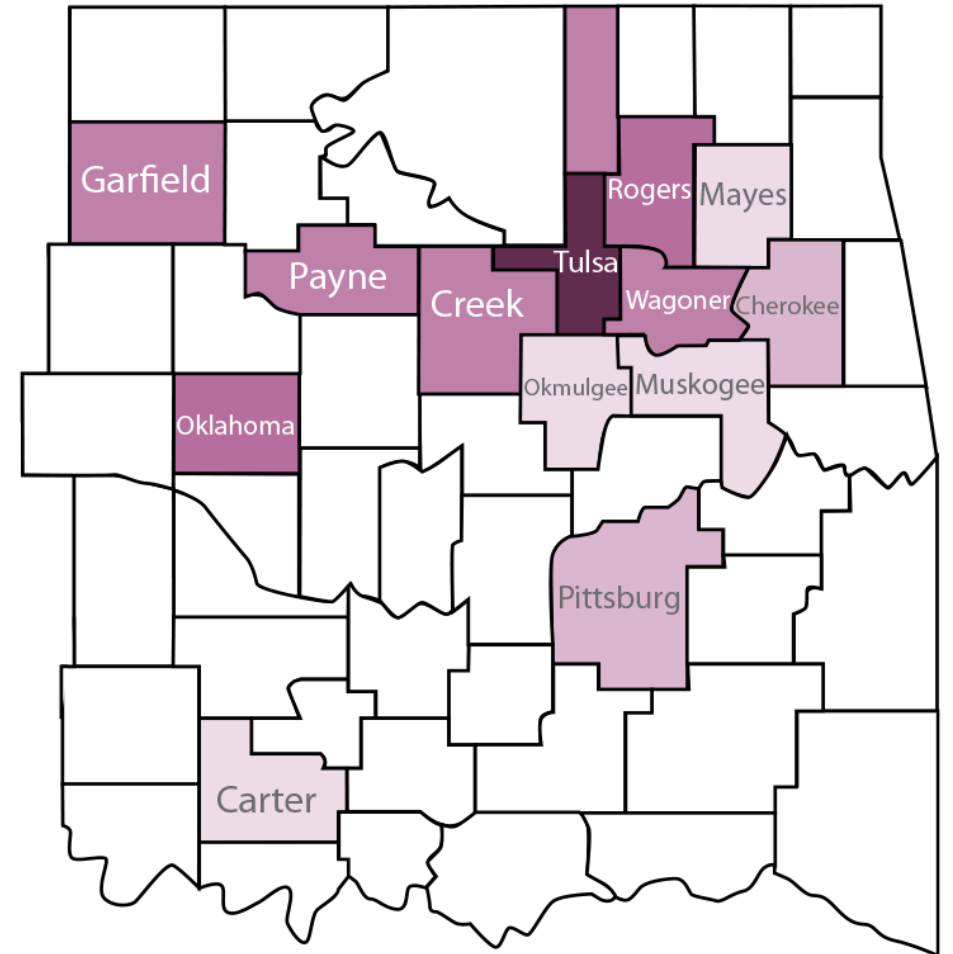
Sample Characteristics

- Final sample consisted of **818 participants**

- Mean age was **38.2 years old**

- Majority (71.9%) identified as white-only as their race or ethnicity

**The mean age of 818 participants was 38.2 years old.**

19 & under	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70 & over
12.9%	24.0%	21.4%	14.4%	15.1%	8.9%	3.2%

Sample Characteristics

- 82.1% live within the **Tulsa Metropolitan Statistical Area** (TMSA)

- Mean number of **others living in the household** was 1.7

- Nearly all (97.9%) respondents reported **English being spoken** in the home, whether English alone or in addition to another language
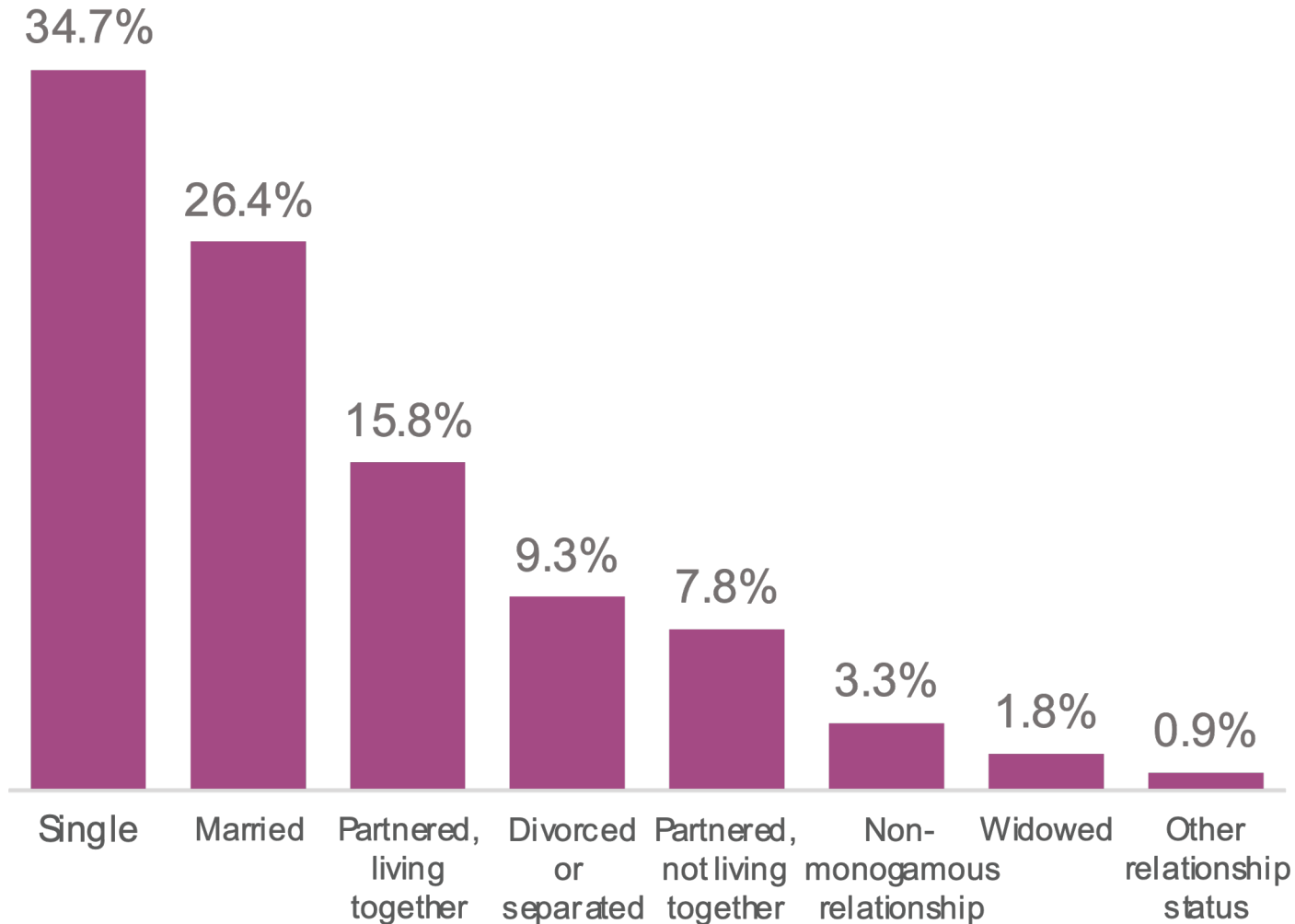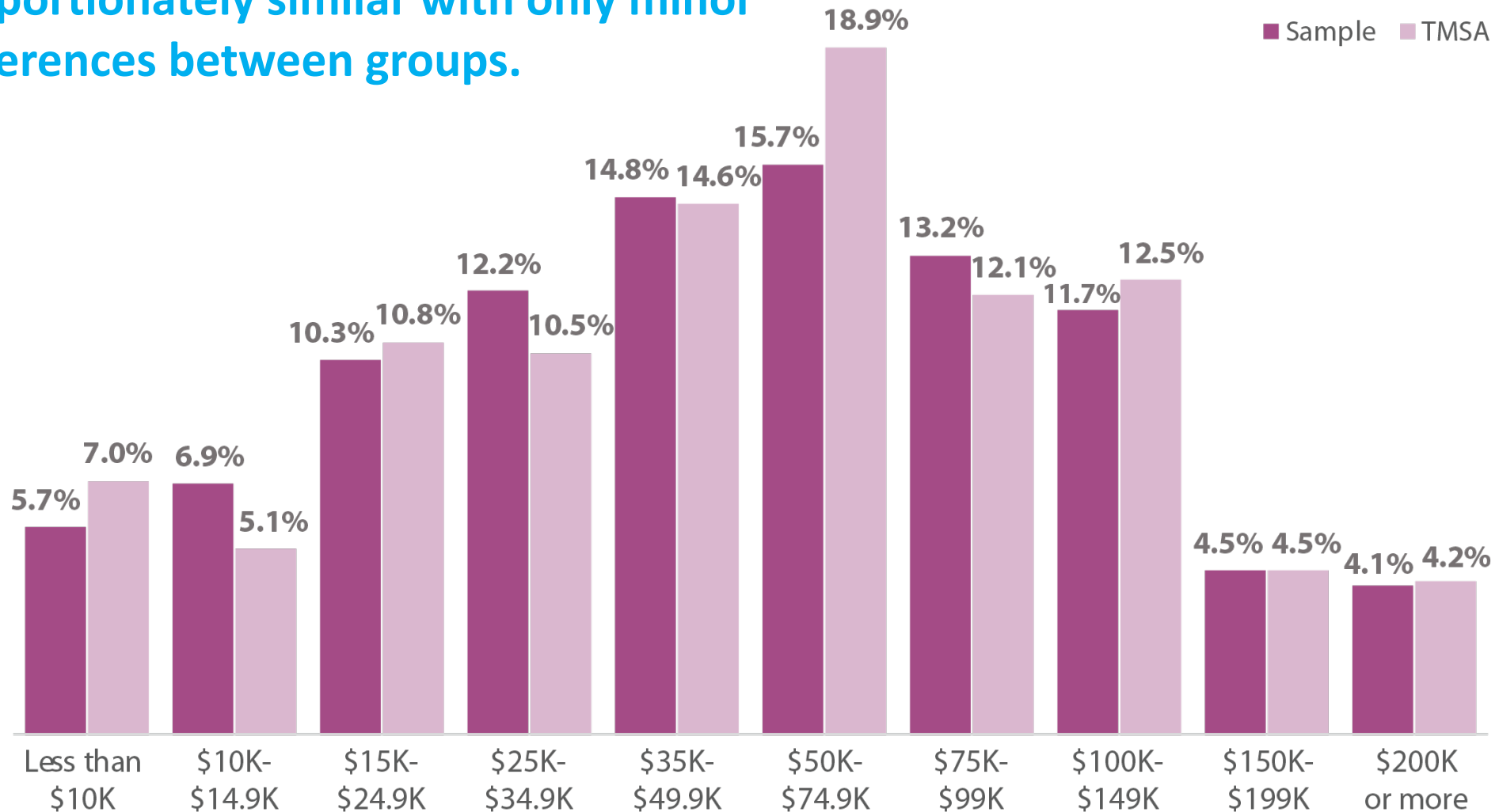
SEXUAL IDENTITY

Sexual Identity

- 92.1% of participants were categorized as **sexual minorities**

- 21.9% were categorized as **gender minorities**
  - 78.1% of respondents reported being **cisgender**
  - 10.6% reported being **transgender**
  - 9.8% reported being **nonbinary**
  - 1.5% gender minorities were left **uncategorized**

Sexual Identity

Table 4: *Coded Sexual Identity Characteristics[1]*

Gender identity	Frequency	Percent
Cisgender man	296	36.20%
Cisgender woman	343	41.90%
Transgender man	48	5.90%
Transgender woman	39	4.80%
Gender nonbinary	40	4.90%
Genderqueer	13	1.60%
Genderfluid	19	2.30%
Other gender minorities	20	2.40%

Sexual orientation		
Straight or heterosexual	65	7.90%
Gay	266	32.50%
Lesbian	145	17.70%
Bisexual	170	20.80%
Asexual	26	3.20%
Queer	20	2.40%
Pansexual	77	9.40%
Androphilic[2]	10	1.20%
Gynophilic[2]	19	2.30%
Other sexual minorities	20	2.40%

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS:
Family & Community
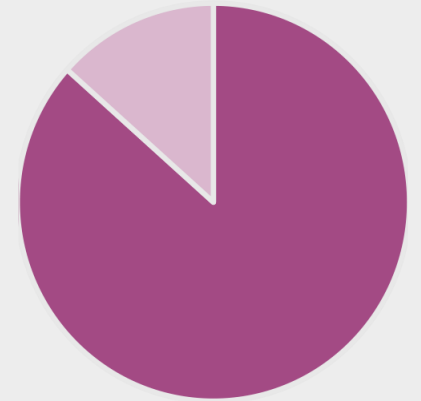
Family & Community

- Adults are reporting **high levels of hope** (84.8%) and **civic engagement** (71.3%)

- Many are **living with others** and in **relationships**

  - Nearly 4 in 5 are living with at least one other person

  - Over half are in a relationship

Family & Community

- Many are reporting **generally positive experiences with family**

  - Over half of respondents reported none of the listed negative experiences with family

  - 2/3 of respondents reported at least one of the listed positive experiences with family

86.6% reported **being open** with at least **some family members**

Of those open with at least some family members,

1 in 8

reported that immediate family members were **unsupportive**

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Family & Community

- Many respondents are **accessing agencies, programs, and services** in the community

- Many are reporting **few instances of the listed negative experiences** with law enforcement

  - 5 out of 6 participants who interacted with law enforcement in the past 3 years reported none of the listed negative experiences

Family & Community

- Those who have been involved in spiritual or religious communities in the past three years are **more open about their SGM identity** with their communities

- And SGM individuals are more likely to remain involved in their spiritual and religious communities in the past three years if they have had a **more SGM-affirming experience**

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Family & Community

- 58% of those who have been involved within the past 3 years are **open with members and leaders in their spiritual and religious communities**

- Of adults who reported being open with at least some members, **just 10%** reported that members were unsupportive

- Those who report being white or identifying as Christian report a more SGM-affirming experience

Family & Community

- A **high percentage** of respondents reported leaving their spiritual or religious communities, driven by fear of rejection or actual rejection by their communities

- Half of respondents had been involved in such communities but not in the past 3 years

3 in 5 participants who had ever been involved in a spiritual or religious community reported **leaving** out of fear of **rejection** or **actual rejection**

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Family & Community

- Several respondents have experienced homelessness, yet have **not utilized shelters**

  - 1 in 8 have experienced homelessness in their lifetimes

  - Of those who have stayed at a shelter, **over 1/3 reported negative experiences** as an SGM person
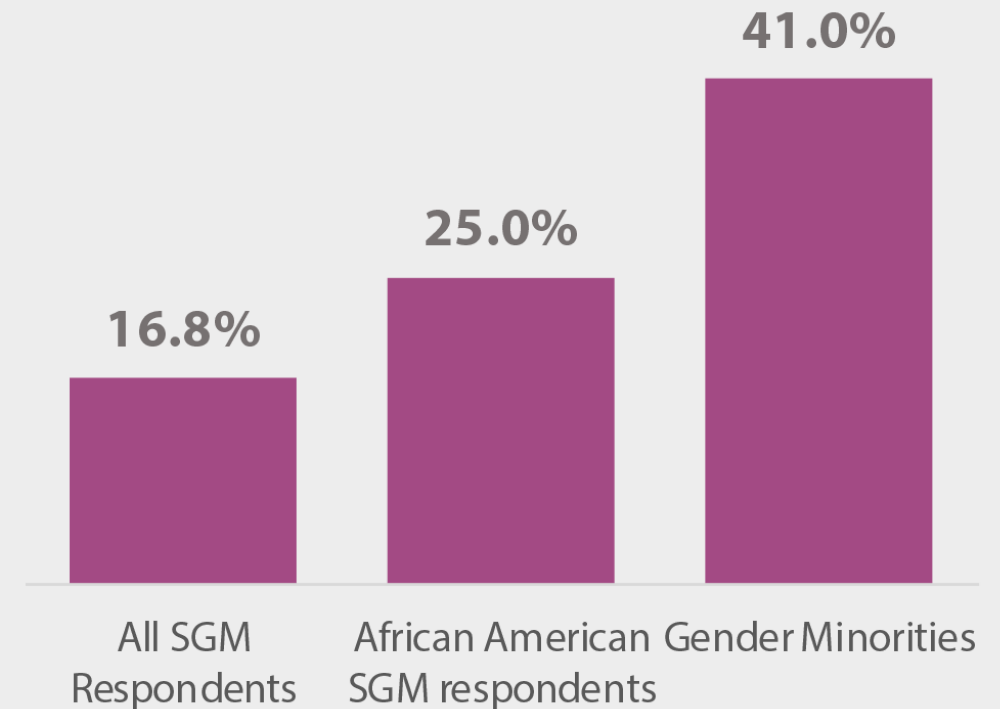
9 in 10 of those who have experienced homelessness **did not utilize** a **homeless shelter**, with nearly...

30% not doing so out of concerns of **safety** and **fear of mistreatment**

Family & Community

- Gender minorities and Black/African American respondents reported **high rates of negative experiences** with law enforcement

Gender minorities and African American respondents reported **high rates of negative experiences** with law enforcement
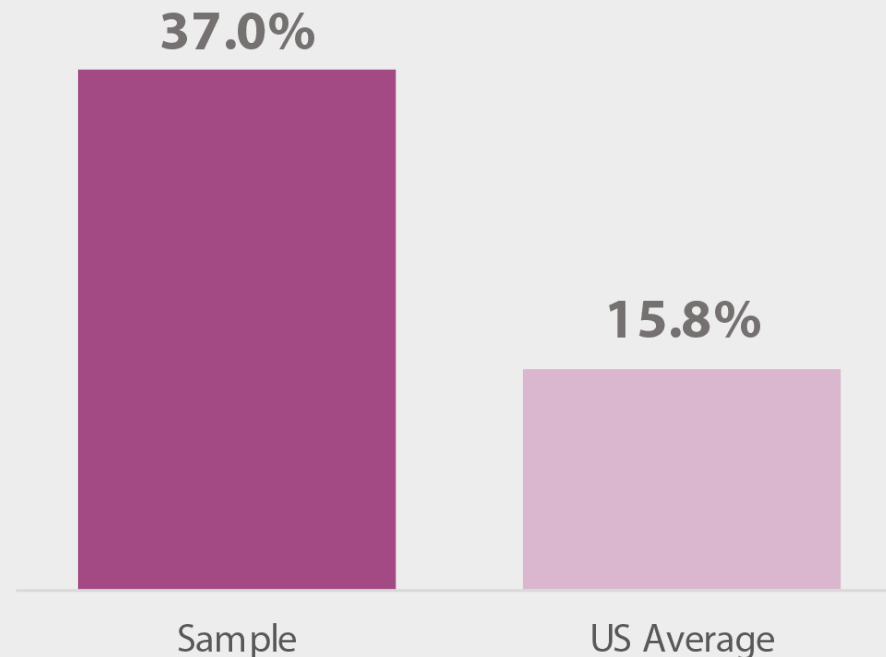
41.0%

25.0%

16.8%

All SGM Respondents

African American SGM respondents

Gender Minorities

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Mental Health & Trauma

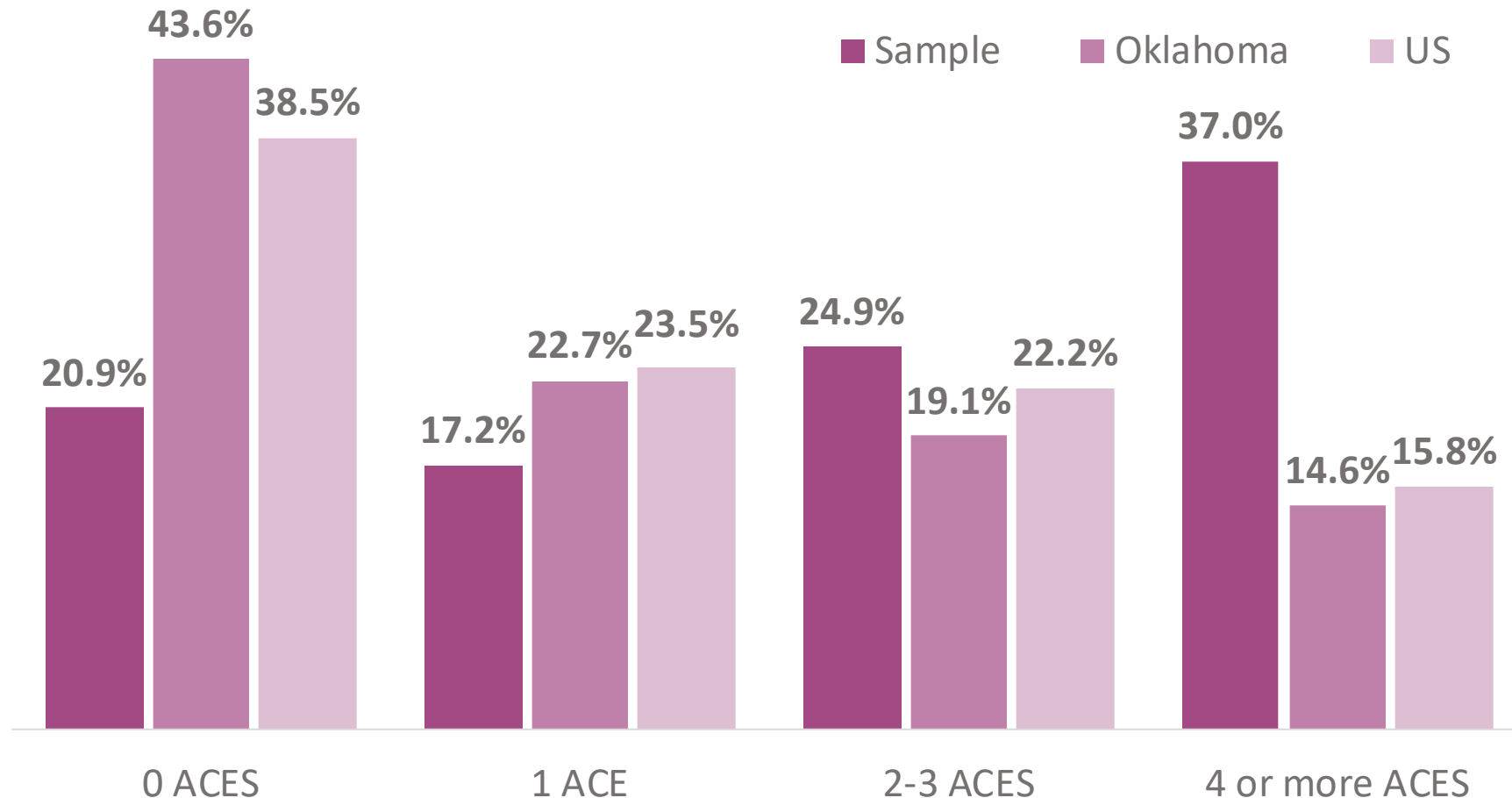Study participants reported **significantly higher exposure to childhood trauma** than the national population

PERCENTAGE REPORTING 4 OR MORE ACES

37.0% — Sample
15.8% — US Average

- Nearly 2/3 reported 2 or more Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)—**much higher** than the national rate of 38%

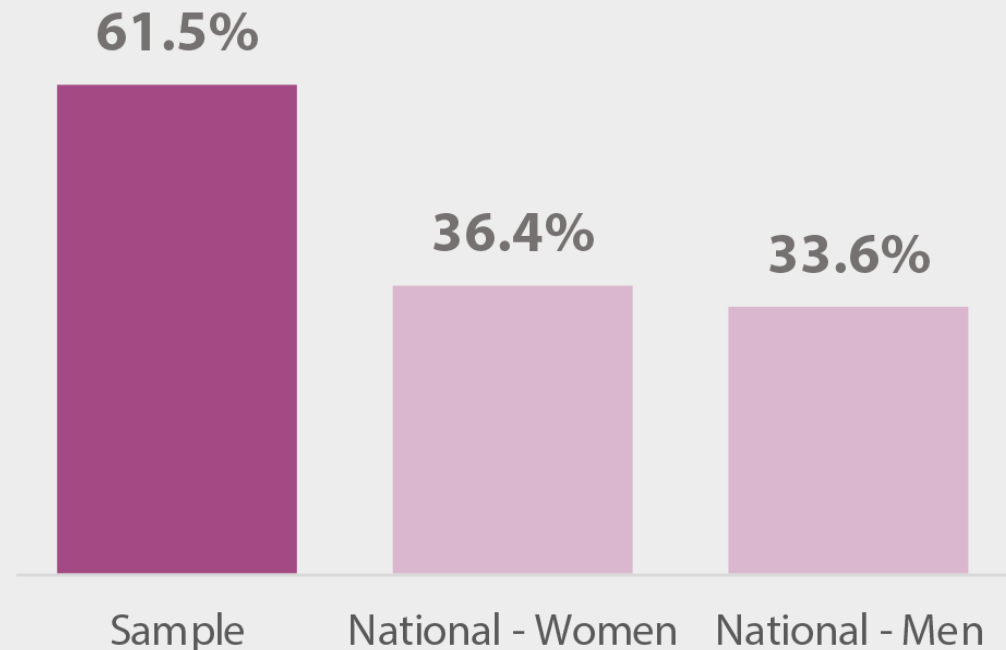- 37% reported 4 or more ACEs, compared to 15.8% nationally

Mental Health & Trauma

Rates of intimate partner violence and unwanted sexual contact are **high**, especially among SGM individuals assigned **female at birth**

61.5% Sample
36.4% National - Women
33.6% National - Men

- 42.1% of individuals assigned female at birth reported **at least one instance of IPV** before their 18th birthday, compared with 25.8% nationally

- Half reported ever experiencing **unwanted sexual contact**

- Nearly 2/3 of SGM individuals assigned female at birth experienced unwanted sexual contact, **25 percentage points higher** than the general female population

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Mental Health & Trauma

- Mental health diagnoses and serious psychological distress are prevalent among SGM respondents, **especially among youth and gender minority individuals**

  - The rate of those experiencing anxiety is 15% **higher** than in the 2005 study

  - 39.2% of gender minorities reported **serious psychological distress**

  - 24.5% of sexual minorities reported **serious psychological distress**

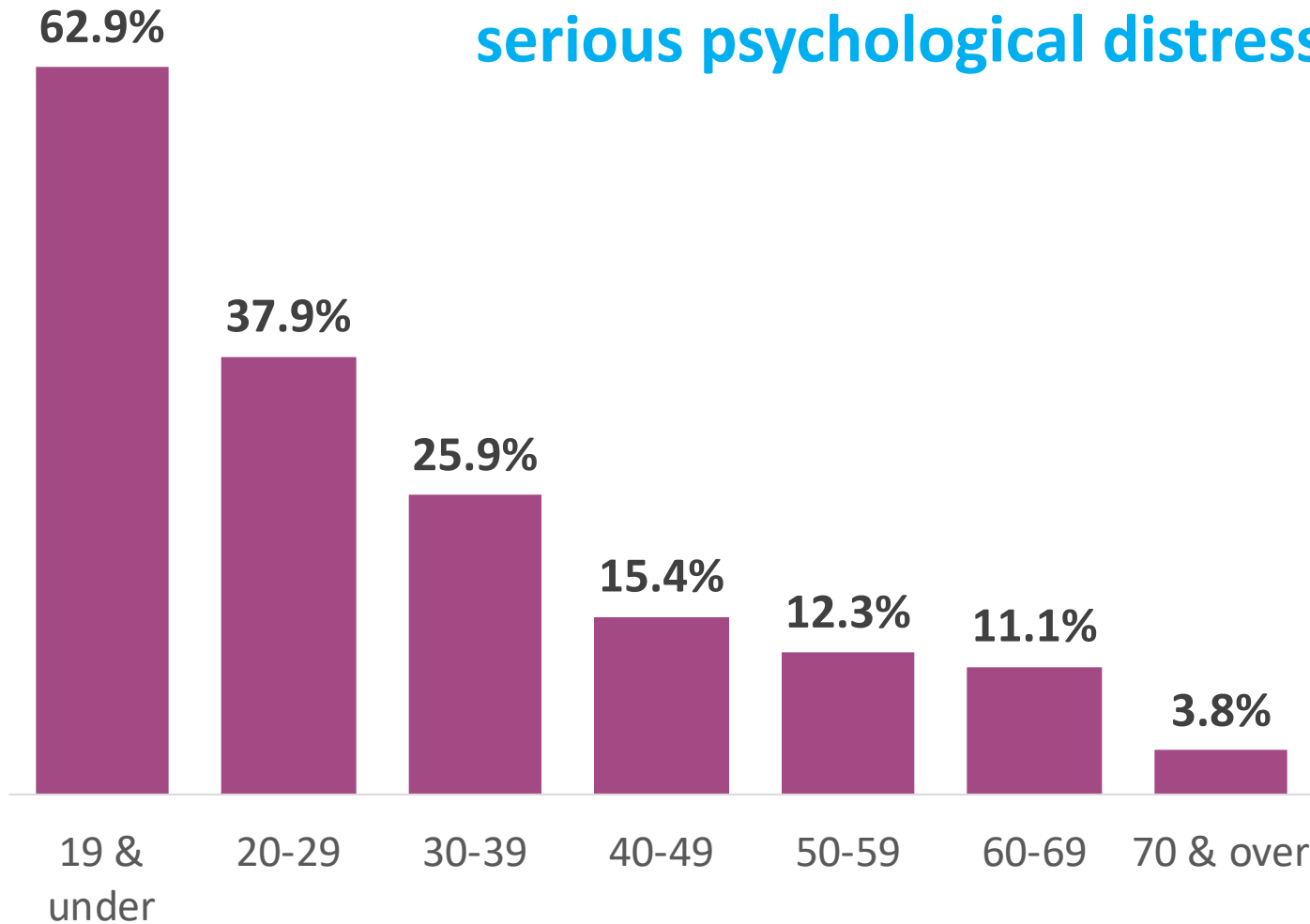**2/3**
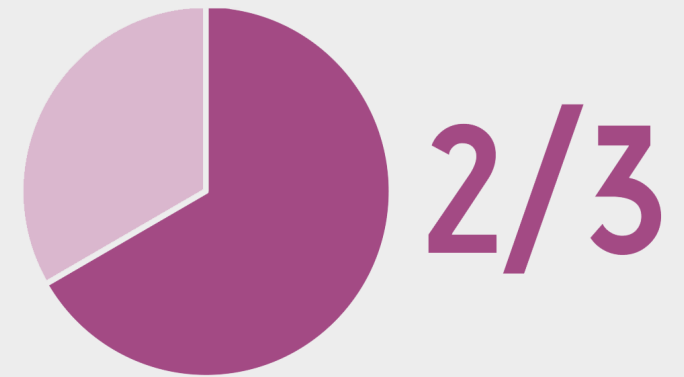
reported diagnoses related to **Anxiety** or **Depression**

1 in 4

participants reported **serious psychological distress** — **much higher** than national estimates of the general population ranging from 2.9 - 5.2%

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Mental Health & Trauma

SGM youth reported higher rates of serious psychological distress

Age group	Percentage
19 & under	62.9%
20-29	37.9%
30-39	25.9%
40-49	15.4%
50-59	12.3%
60-69	11.1%
70 & over	3.8%

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Mental Health & Trauma

- Despite such high rates of mental health diagnoses and psychological distress, **just over 1 in 4** adult participants report currently seeing a mental health professional

- Of those who have ever discussed their SGM identity with a professional, **nearly 20%** reported that the professional attempted to change their sexual orientation or gender identity

Mental Health & Trauma

- Suicidality is **strikingly high** among the study's sample, especially among youth

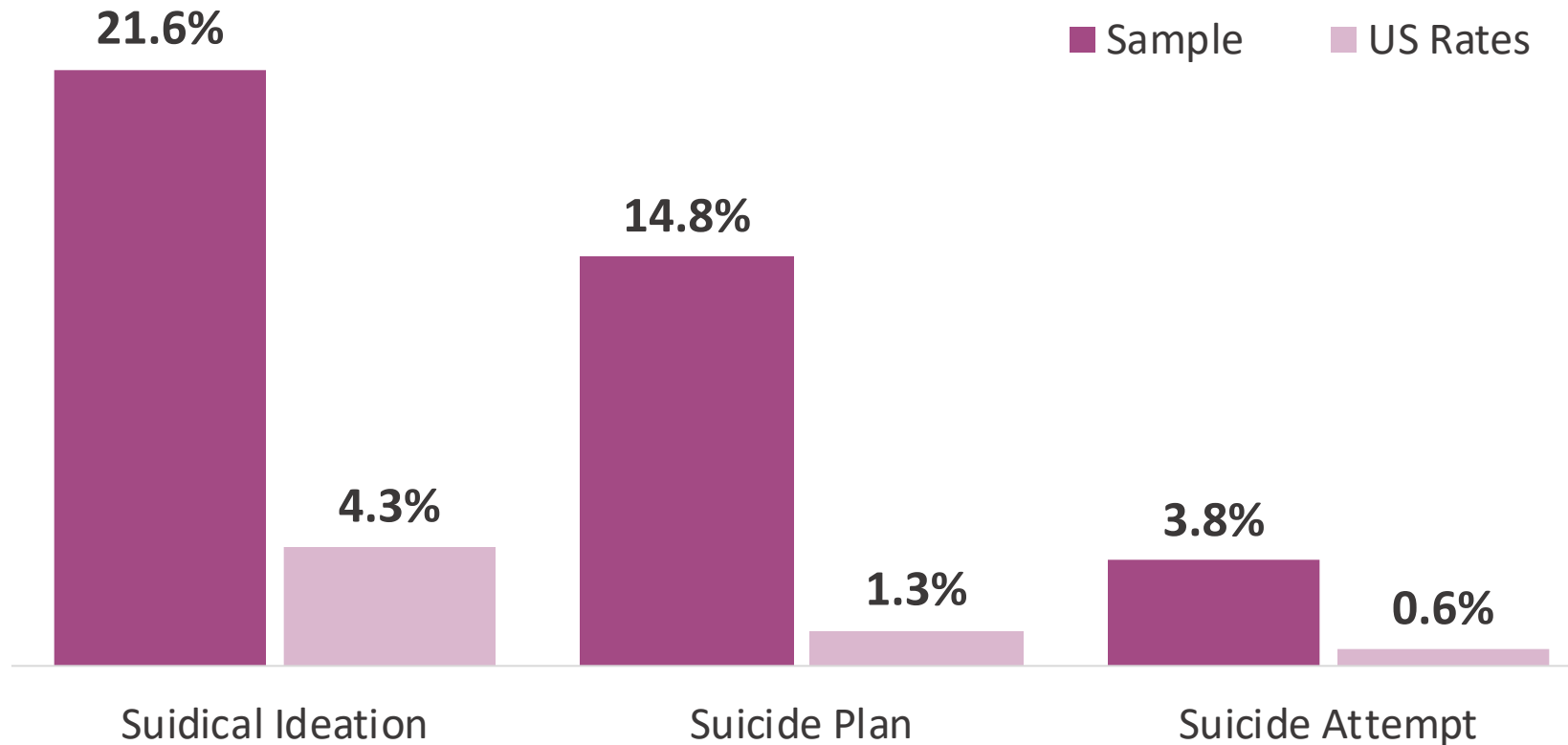Reports of **suicide attempts** are...

6x the national rate for **adults**

3x the national rate for **youth**

Mental Health & Trauma

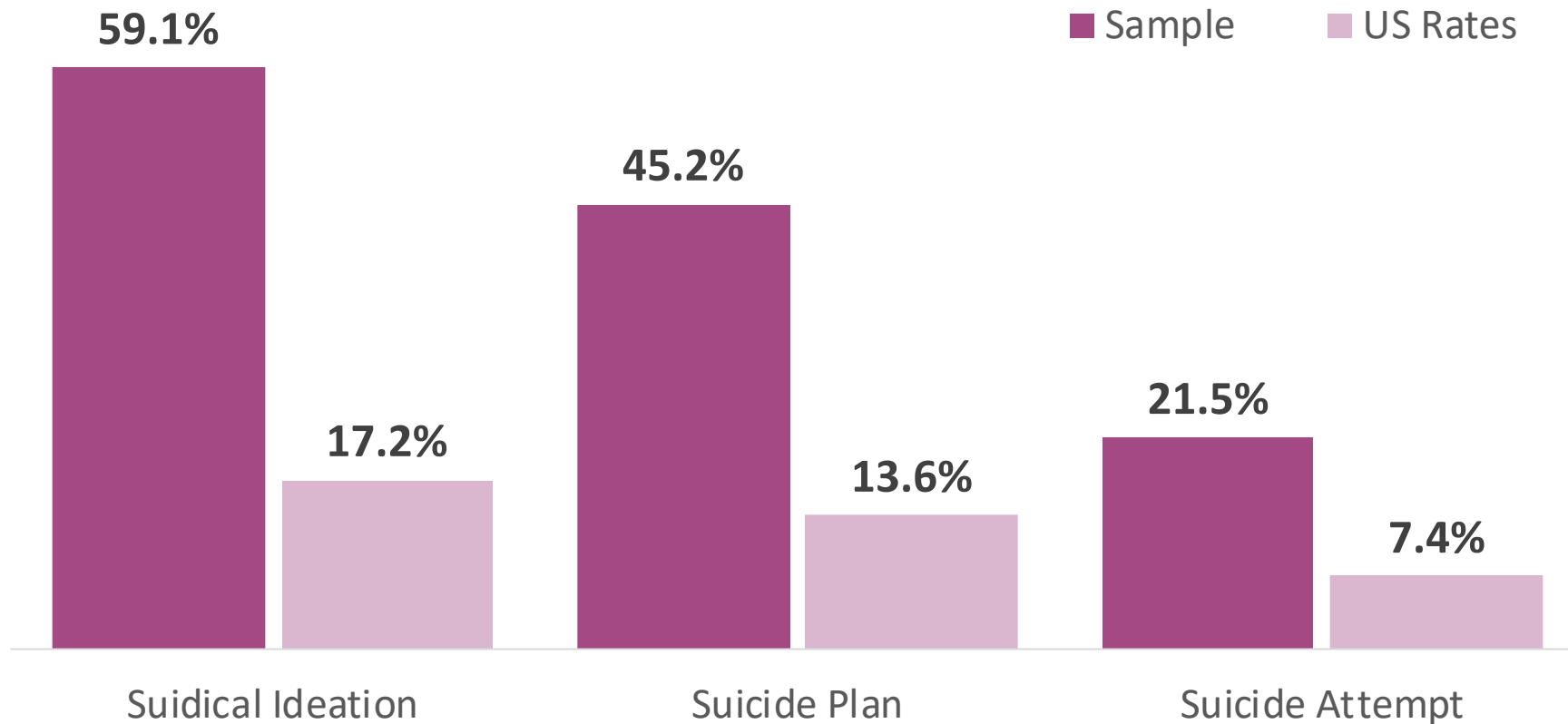## Compared to national estimates, participants age 18 and older report strikingly higher rates of suicidality

Mental Health & Trauma

Participants age 18 and younger also report high rates of suicidality compared to national estimates

	Sample	US Rates
Suidical Ideation	59.1%	17.2%
Suicide Plan	45.2%	13.6%
Suicide Attempt	21.5%	7.4%

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SUMMARY OF FINDINGS:
Physical Health & Health Care

Physical Health & Health Care

- Most reported at least a **decent quality of health** and have health insurance

  - 94.1% reported being HIV negative

  - Nearly 90% of all respondents who reported living with HIV also reported receiving health care related to HIV within the past 12 months

96.1% reported their health as **fair or better**

Physical Health & Health Care

- The medically uninsured rate among respondents is **low** (8.6%) and comparable to the national rate (8.8%)

- The rate reported in this study is 10.4% **lower** than the rate reported in the 2005 study

The **medically uninsured rate** among respondents is **low**

19.0%

8.6%

8.8%

Sample

U.S. Rate

2005 Study Sample

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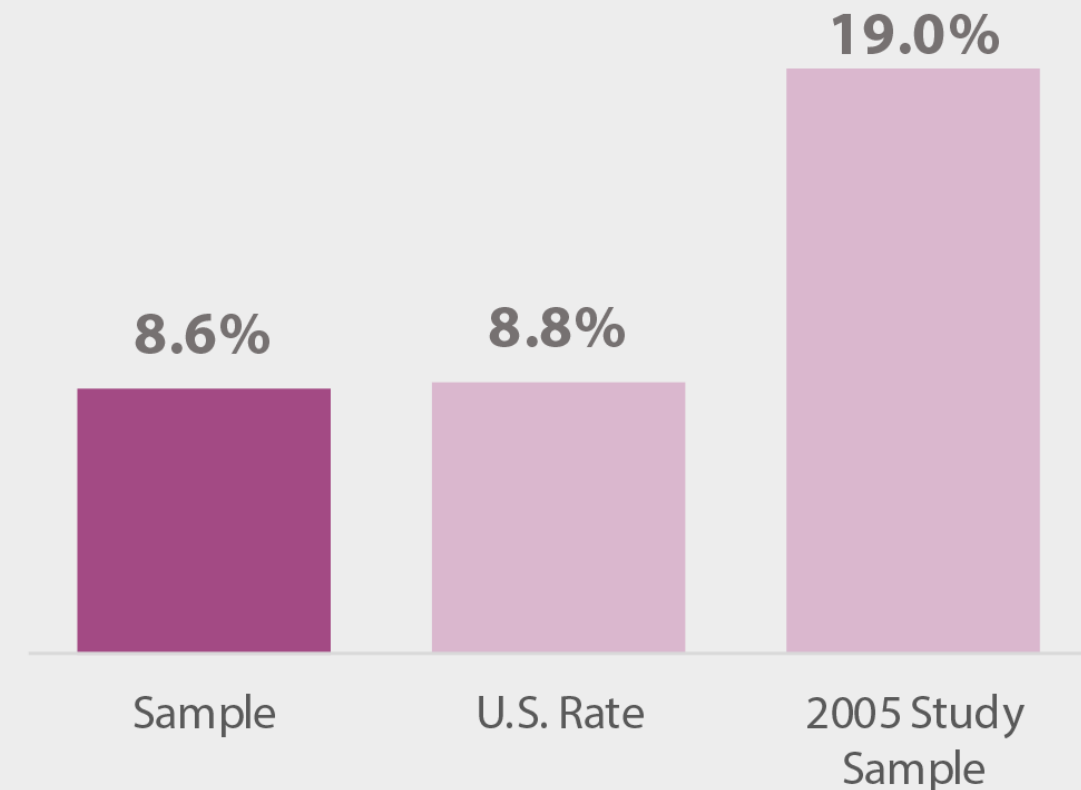
Physical Health & Health Care

- There are concerns with respect to the physical health of SGM respondents and access to healthcare

    - 1/3 reported having a **serious health issue**, including nearly 70% of respondents aged 70 and over

The **uninsured rate** remains **high** among **Latinx** and **African American** respondents

	8.6%	21.1%	26.1%
	Sample	African American	Latinx

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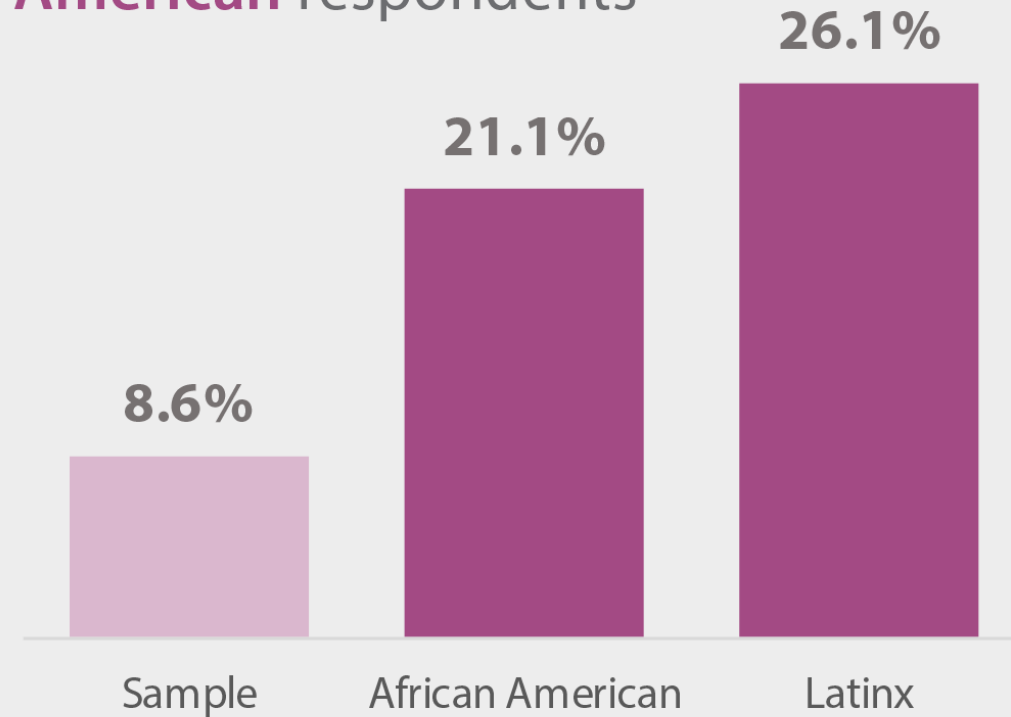
Physical Health & Health Care

- 1 in 4 report **not having a primary care provider**, including 34.8% of Latinx and 30% of American Indian respondents

- Of those without a primary care provider, 27.8% report they **do not seek healthcare** because **they can't afford it**

- Nearly 2/3 reported at least one of the **listed negative experiences** with their health care provider in the past 3 years
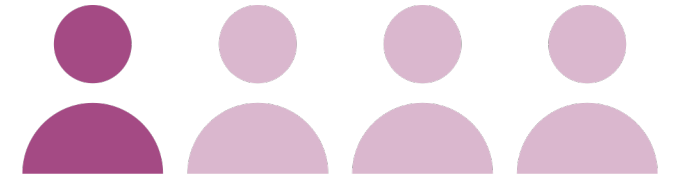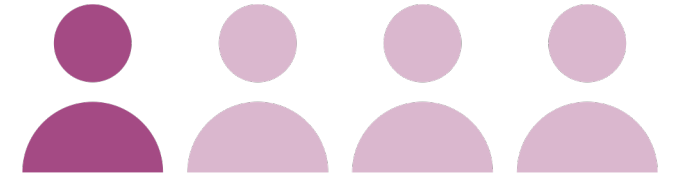
1 in 4 gender minority adults who requested gender affirming treatment and procedures reported being **denied** by their **insurance providers**

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS:
SGM Youth Report Challenges

SGM Youth Report Challenges

- Negative experiences are **common** for SGM youth
- Outside of any specific social group, 3 in 5 youth reported experiencing teasing, bullying or intimidation

2 in 3 reported at least one of the listed negative experiences happening to them **in school**

15% **higher** than youth reports on bullying or harrassment **in 2009**

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SGM Youth Report Challenges

A **high percentage** of students responded 'No' or 'Unsure' about their schools having **anti-discrimination policies** regarding...
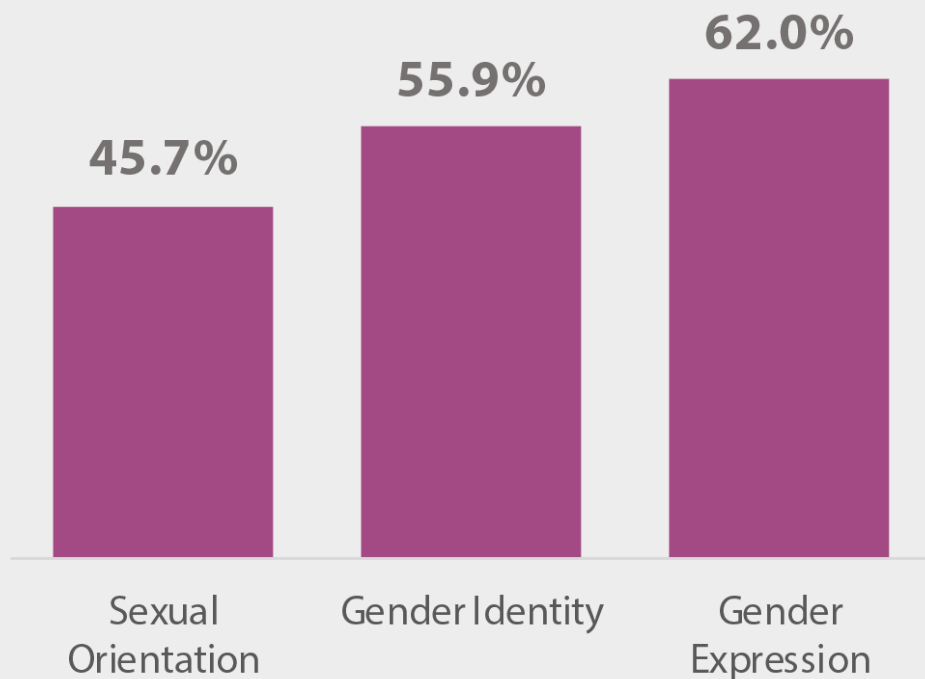
45.7% Sexual Orientation
55.9% Gender Identity
62.0% Gender Expression

- There is **room for improvement** among school districts to adopt anti-discrimination policies policies and ensure that students are aware of them

3 in 4 students who reported policies for gender identity and/or expression said they were able to **present in accordance** with their **gender identity** in school

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SGM Youth Report Challenges

- Youth participants reported relatively **high rates of substance use**

  - 30% reported using tobacco products

  - 28% reported marijuana use without a prescription within the past month

  - nearly 1 in 4 reported having used illicit drugs in their lifetime

- Youth reported **significantly lower levels** than adults on measures of wellbeing, including:

  - hope

  - flourishing

  - social support

  - civic engagement
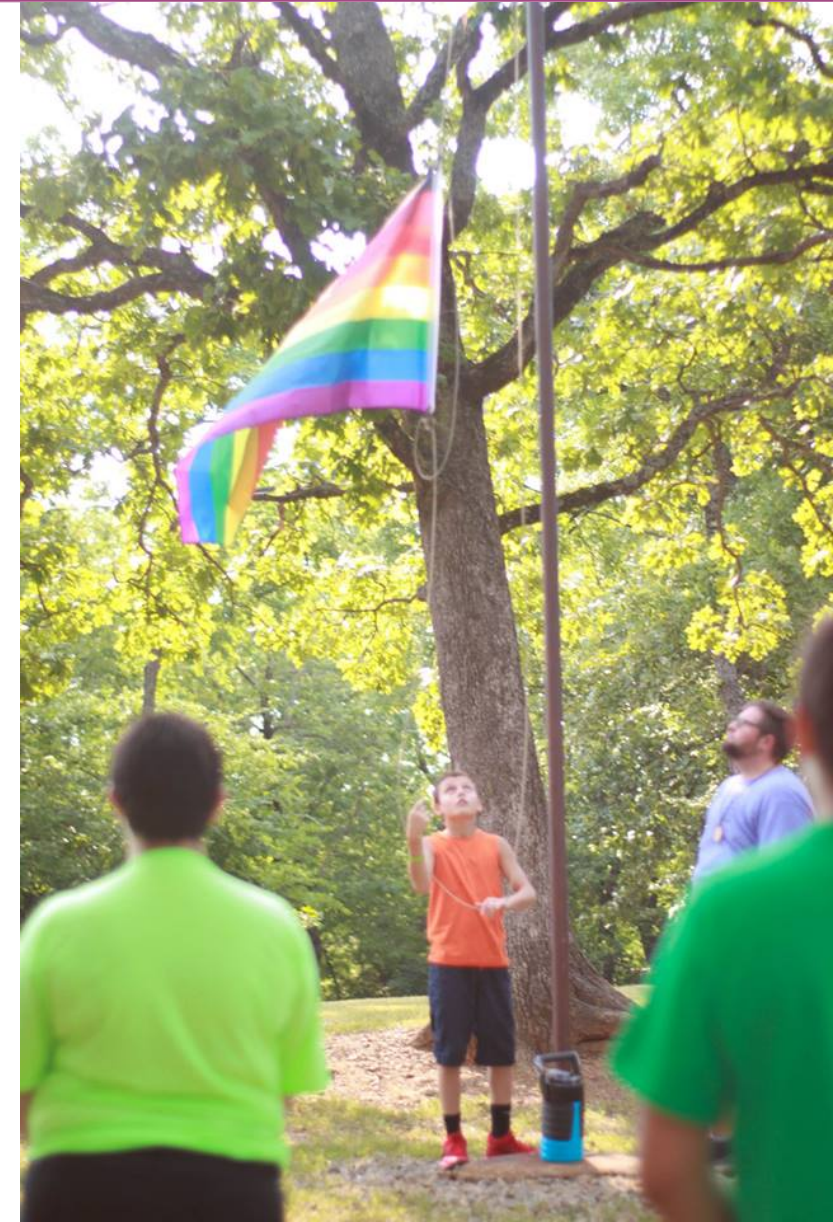
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS:
Workplace Experiences

Workplace Experiences

- Many are employed and **making contributions** to the economy

  - Nearly 4 in 5 participants 18 and older reported full-time employment, part-time employment, or being self-employed

Workplace Experiences

Since the 2005 study, there is **greater awareness** of **anti-discrimination policies** in the **workplace**

67.70%

■ 2019 ■ 2005

45.1%

48.90%

25.8%

Sexual Orientation   Gender Identity
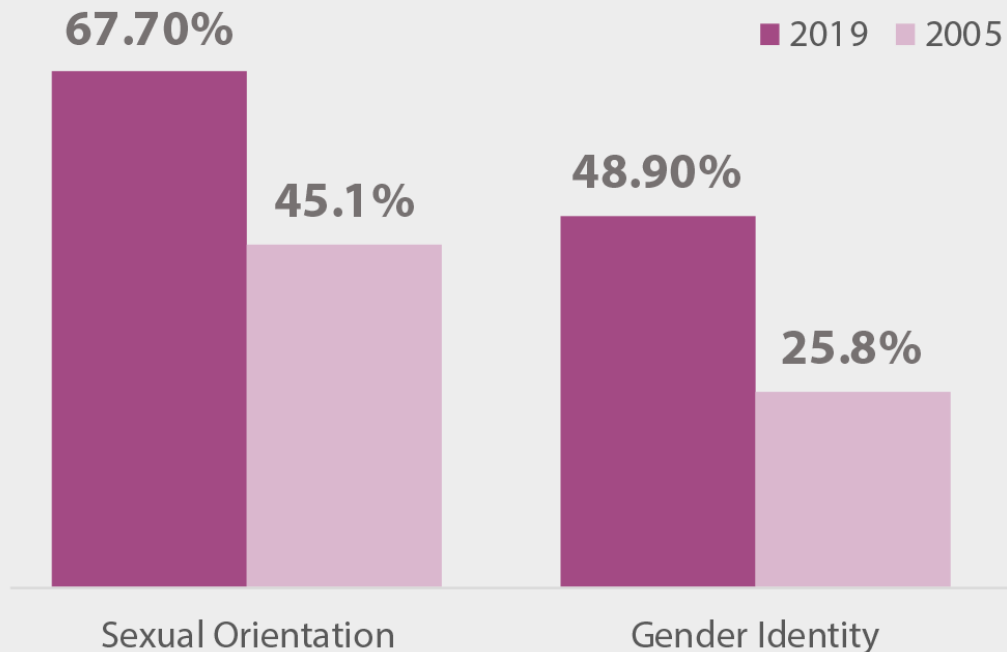
- Over 2/3 reported awareness of their employers' antidiscrimination policy regarding **sexual orientation**—an **increase of 22.6%**

- Nearly half reported awareness of their employers' anti-discrimination policy regarding **gender identity**—an **increase of 23.1%**

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Workplace Experiences

- Despite gains over the past 15 years, a **high percentage** reported that their employers do not have, or that they are unaware of, antidiscrimination policies

Despite gains, a **high percentage** of participants responded 'No' or 'Unsure' about their employers having **anti-discrimination policies** regarding...

60.0%

51.1%

32.3%

Sexual Orientation

Gender Identity

Gender Expression

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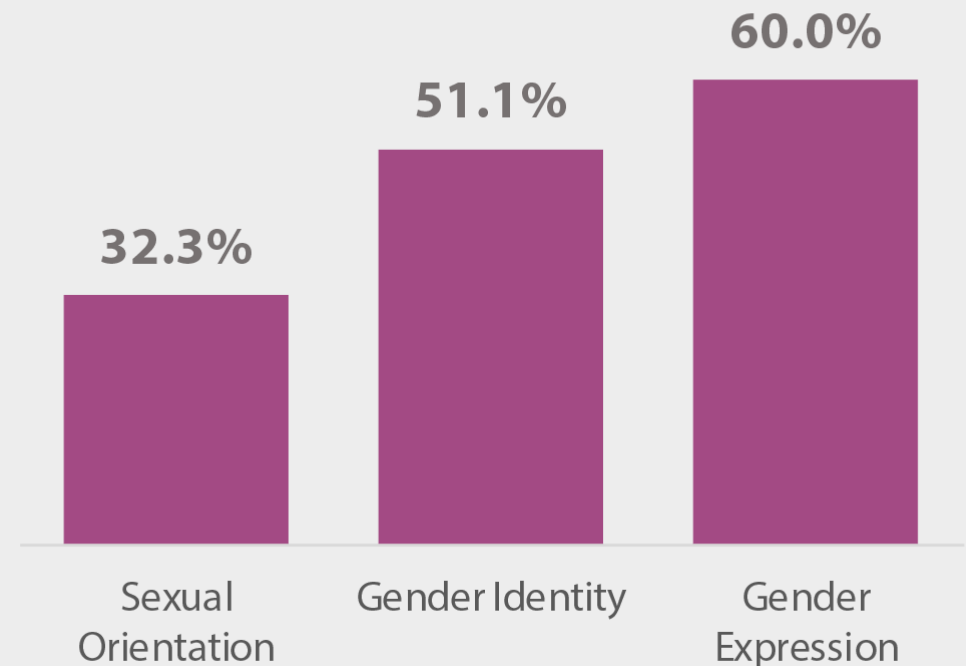
Workplace Experiences

- High rates of SGM employees have taken actions in the past three years to avoid discrimination in the workplace
  - 13.7% quit their job
  - 42.6% had to stay in the closet

- These rates are **higher** among those **who did not report** that their workplaces had **all three antidiscrimination policies**

Workplace Experiences

- Of participants who said their employers had antidiscrimination policies in place, a **lower rate** reported that they have taken actions to avoid discrimination—such as:

  - feeling as though they had to **quit their job** (6.3% vs. 12.0%)

  - feeling as though they had to **stay in the close**t (26.1% vs. 44.7%)

Priorities & Recommendations

Regarding the most important services needed for SGM individuals:
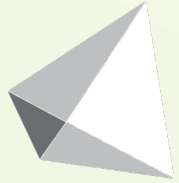
- **Youth** indicated preferences for
  - mental health and counseling services
  - public awareness about LGBTQ+ issues
  - programs for LGBTQ+ youth
  - sexual health education
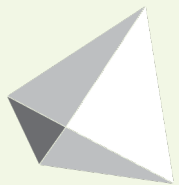
- **Adults** indicated preferences for
  - mental health and counseling services
  - advocacy at the state legislature
  - physical and medical health services
  - public awareness about LGBTQ+ issues

Recommendations
For Educators

- Implement **pre-service training** in regional colleges of education to build competencies among future educators in working with and supporting LGBTQ youth.

- Ensure that **emergency-certified educators receive training** in working and supporting LGBTQ youth early in their employment.

- Hold **staff training** on understanding the basics of working with and supporting LGBTQ youth.

- Implement **visible LGBTQ-affirming signs and messaging** in school buildings and identify staff in each building who are willing to be visible allies of LGBTQ students

- Adopt and implement **LGBTQ-affirming**, evidence-based social-emotional learning, bullying prevention, and medically accurate sex education **programming** in schools.

- **Connect families to resources** that will help them support their children in "coming out" as an LGBTQ person, such as Oklahomans for Equality, Youth Services of Tulsa, and PFLAG.

- **Adopt anti-discrimination policies** covering sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression and regularly communicate those policies to all staff, teachers, and students.

- Embed **Hope-building practices** into all touch-points with youth and families.

- Provide students and families with a **general resource guide** listing LGBTQ youth-supporting agencies and services.

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Recommendations
For Youth-serving Agencies

- **Adopt goals, accountability measures, and action plans** regarding program services provided to LGBTQ youth.

- Hold **staff training** on understanding the basics of working with and supporting LGBTQ youth and families.

- Implement visible LGBTQ-affirming signs and **messaging** in facilities.

- **Connect parents to resources** that will help them support their children in "coming out" as an LGBTQ person, such as Oklahomans for Equality, Youth Services of Tulsa, and PFLAG.

- **Adopt anti-discrimination policies** covering sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression and regularly communicate those policies to all staff and clients.

- Embed **Hope-building practices** into all touch-points with youth and families.

- Provide youth and families with a general **resource guide** listing LGBTQ-supporting agencies and services.

Recommendations
For Funders

- Require that **grantees adopt anti-discrimination policies** covering sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.

- Request that grantees **set goals, identify outcome measures, and collect data** through application and reporting processes regarding program services provided to LGBTQ individuals.

- **Fund the development and delivery of training** for agencies and professionals working with and supporting LGBTQ youth and families.

- **Fund community programs and initiatives** that explicitly seek to improve the experiences and outcomes of LGBTQ individuals, as described in the Prism Project Report.

Recommendations
For Employers

- Hold training for all **managerial positions** on understanding the basics of building an LGBTQ-affirming workplace culture.

- Adopt **anti-discrimination policies** covering sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression and regularly communicate those policies to all employees.

- Implement visible LGBTQ-affirming signs and **messaging** in the workplace.

- **Connect employees to resources** that will help them support their children in "coming out" as an LGBTQ person, such as Oklahomans for Equality, Youth Services of Tulsa, and PFLAG.

- Provide employees with a general **resource guide** listing LGBTQ-supporting agencies and services (available through Oklahomans for Equality).

Recommendations
For Healthcare and Mental Health Professionals

- Participate in the ongoing efforts of Oklahomans for Equality to **establish a directory** of culturally responsive mental health and medical professionals.

- Implement **pre-service training** in regional schools of medicine, social work, counseling and other healthcare and mental health preparation programs to build competencies among future practitioners in working with and supporting LGBTQ youth and adults.

- **Provide culturally competent and affirming care** to LGBTQ youth and adults.

- Hold **staff training** on understanding the basics of working with LGBTQ youth and adults.

- Implement **visible LGBTQ-affirming signs and messaging** in hospitals and healthcare facilities.

- **Connect parents to resources** that will help them support their children in "coming out" as an LGBTQ person, such as Oklahomans for Equality, Youth Services of Tulsa, and PFLAG.

- **Adopt anti-discrimination policies** covering sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression and regularly communicate those policies to all staff and patients.

- Provide patients with a **general resource guide** listing LGBTQ-supporting agencies and services.

Recommendations
For Faith-based Institutions

- **Establish a definition and process** in line with accepted standards for determining the institution's commitment as an open and affirming community.

- Assist Oklahomans for Equality in **maintaining a directory** of open and affirming faith-based institutions.

- Hold **training for staff** on understanding the basics of working with and supporting LGBTQ youth and families.

- Implement visible **LGBTQ-affirming signs and messaging** in facilities.

- **Connect parents to resources** that will help them support their children in "coming out" as an LGBTQ person, such as Oklahomans for Equality, Youth Services of Tulsa, and PFLAG.

- Adopt **anti-discrimination policies** covering sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression and regularly communicate those policies to all constituents.

- Provide constituents with a **general resource guide** listing LGBTQ-supporting agencies and services.

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Recommendations
For Law Enforcement

- Implement **pre-service officer training** to build competencies among future practitioners in working with LGBTQ youth and adults.

- **Hold training for officers** on understanding the basics of working with LGBTQ individuals.

- Adopt **anti-discrimination policies** covering sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression and regularly communicate those policies to all constituents.

Recommendations
For Policymakers and Policy Implementers

- Require the creation of a plan to **recruit more LGBTQ-friendly foster homes**.

- Require the inclusion of an **SGM identifying question** on existing statewide survey instruments such as the State Department of Mental Health's Oklahoma Prevention Needs Assessment.

- Adopt **anti-discrimination policies** covering sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression and regularly communicate those policies to all constituents.

- Adopt policies supporting the **implementation of trauma-informed and Hope-building practices** across all government agencies.

- Fund the development and delivery of **training for agencies and professionals** working with and supporting LGBTQ youth and families.

- Conduct and **audit of current practices and needs** across all state agencies that affirm or deter identifying as an LGBTQ person.

- State Licensing Boards should require **culturally competent and affirming curricula** in all professional training programs.

This Report and supporting documents are housed at the following link:
link.ou.edu/tulsa-lgbtq

If you have questions, comments or concerns about the Report or request additional data analysis or other support not available on the website, please contact Dennis Neill at 918.808.1010 or dneillok@mac.com

Suggested Citation

Nay, E.D.E. (2019). The Prism Project: Tulsa's sexual and gender minority needs report, 2019. Tulsa, OK: Tulsa Reaches Out, Hope Research Center. Retrieved from link.ou.edu/tulsa-lgbtq