

LGBTQ Youth Suicide Risk During Covid-19

Amy E. Green, Ph.D.

she/her/hers

Vice President of Research

About The Trevor Project

The Trevor Project is the world's largest suicide prevention and crisis intervention organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer & questioning young people.



TrevorLifeline

The only nationwide, 24/7 crisis and suicide prevention lifeline offering free and confidential counseling for LGBTQ youth.



TrevorText

A free, confidential, 24/7, secure service for LGBTQ youth to text a trained Trevor counselor for support and crisis intervention.



TrevorChat

A free, confidential, 24/7, secure instant messaging service that provides live help for LGBTQ youth by trained volunteers.



TrevorSpace

The world's largest safe space social networking community for LGBTQ youth, their friends, and allies.



Trevor Research

Our programmatic evaluations ensure we significantly reduce suicidality with our services, and we also publish external research to help peers support LGBTQ youth.



Trevor Advocacy

Our advocacy work at the federal, state, and local levels includes publicly advocating for/against particular bills and filing/joining amicus briefs in major cases.



Trevor Education

Our online education programs include information about school policies and training programs for teachers and guidance counselors.

Minority Stress Model

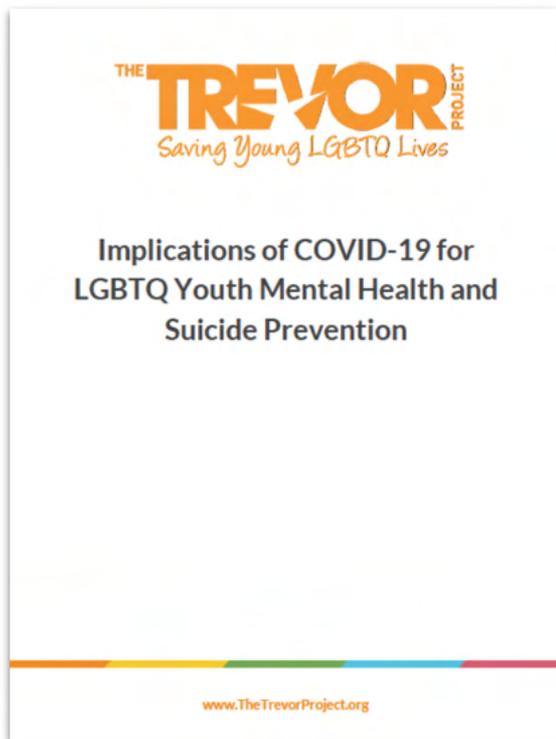
Higher rates of suicide risk among LGBTQ people result from increased internalized stigma, discrimination, and rejection from others

(Meyer, 2003).



Minority stress may be most persistent and problematic for individuals who occupy multiple marginalized social positions (Cyrus, 2017).

COVID-19 Implications for LGBTQ Youth



- Youth and young adults not immune to the consequences of COVID-19
- LGBTQ youth may be particularly vulnerable
 - Physical distancing
 - Economic strain
 - Increased anxiety and depression

Nearly 35,000 LGBTQ youth took part in our 2021 National Survey

THE **TREVOR** PROJECT

NATIONAL SURVEY ON LGBTQ YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH 2021

TREVOR National Survey on LGBTQ Youth Mental Health 2021

INTRODUCTION

The past year has been incredibly difficult for so many, but we also know that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning (LGBTQ) youth have faced unique challenges. The Trevor Project's 2021 National Survey on LGBTQ Youth Mental Health sheds light on these challenges by capturing the experiences of nearly 35,000 LGBTQ youth ages 13-24 across the United States.

Our third annual survey provides brand new data on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, mental health care disparities, discrimination, food insecurity, conversion therapy, and suicide – in addition to the benefits of LGBTQ-affirming spaces and respecting the pronouns of transgender and nonbinary youth.

We are also proud that this sample is our most diverse yet, with 45% being LGBTQ youth of color and 38% being transgender or nonbinary.

Among some of the key findings of the survey:

- **42% of LGBTQ youth** seriously considered attempting suicide in the past year, including **more than half of transgender and nonbinary youth**.
- **12% of white youth** attempted suicide compared to **31% of Native/Indigenous youth**, **21% of Black youth**, **21% of multiracial youth**, **18% of Latinx youth**, and **12% of Asian/Pacific Islander youth**.
- **94% of LGBTQ youth** reported that recent politics negatively impacted their mental health.
- **More than 80% of LGBTQ youth** stated that COVID-19 made their living situation more stressful – and **only 1 in 3 LGBTQ youth** found their home to be LGBTQ-affirming.
- **70% of LGBTQ youth** stated that their mental health was "poor" most of the time or always during COVID-19.
- **48% of LGBTQ youth** reported they wanted counseling from a mental health professional but were unable to

- **75% of LGBTQ youth** reported that they had experienced discrimination based on their sexual orientation or gender identity at least once in their lifetime.
- **Half of all LGBTQ youth of color** reported discrimination based on their race/ethnicity in the past year, including **67% of Black LGBTQ youth and 60% of Asian/Pacific Islander LGBTQ youth**.
- **13% of LGBTQ youth** reported being subjected to conversion therapy, with **83% reporting** it occurred when they were under age 18.
- **Transgender and nonbinary youth** who reported having pronouns respected by all of the people they lived with attempted suicide at half the rate of those who did not have their pronouns respected by anyone with whom they lived.
- **Transgender and nonbinary youth** who were able to change their name and/or gender marker on legal documents, such as driver's licenses and birth certificates, reported **lower rates** of attempting suicide.
- **LGBTQ youth who had access to spaces** that affirmed their sexual orientation and gender identity reported **lower rates** of attempting suicide.
- **An overwhelming majority of LGBTQ youth** said that social media has both positive (**96%**) and negative (**88%**) impacts on their mental health and well-being.

This data underscores many of the serious challenges experienced by LGBTQ youth over the last year and should serve as an urgent call to action. But it also speaks to the diversity and resiliency of LGBTQ youth and provides valuable insights into their everyday sources of strength and positivity.

We hope these findings will be used by fellow researchers, policymakers, and other youth-serving organizations to better support LGBTQ youth across the country and around the globe.

education, advocacy, and direct services, we strive to amplify the experiences of LGBTQ youth and to facilitate the implementation of comprehensive, intersectional policy solutions.

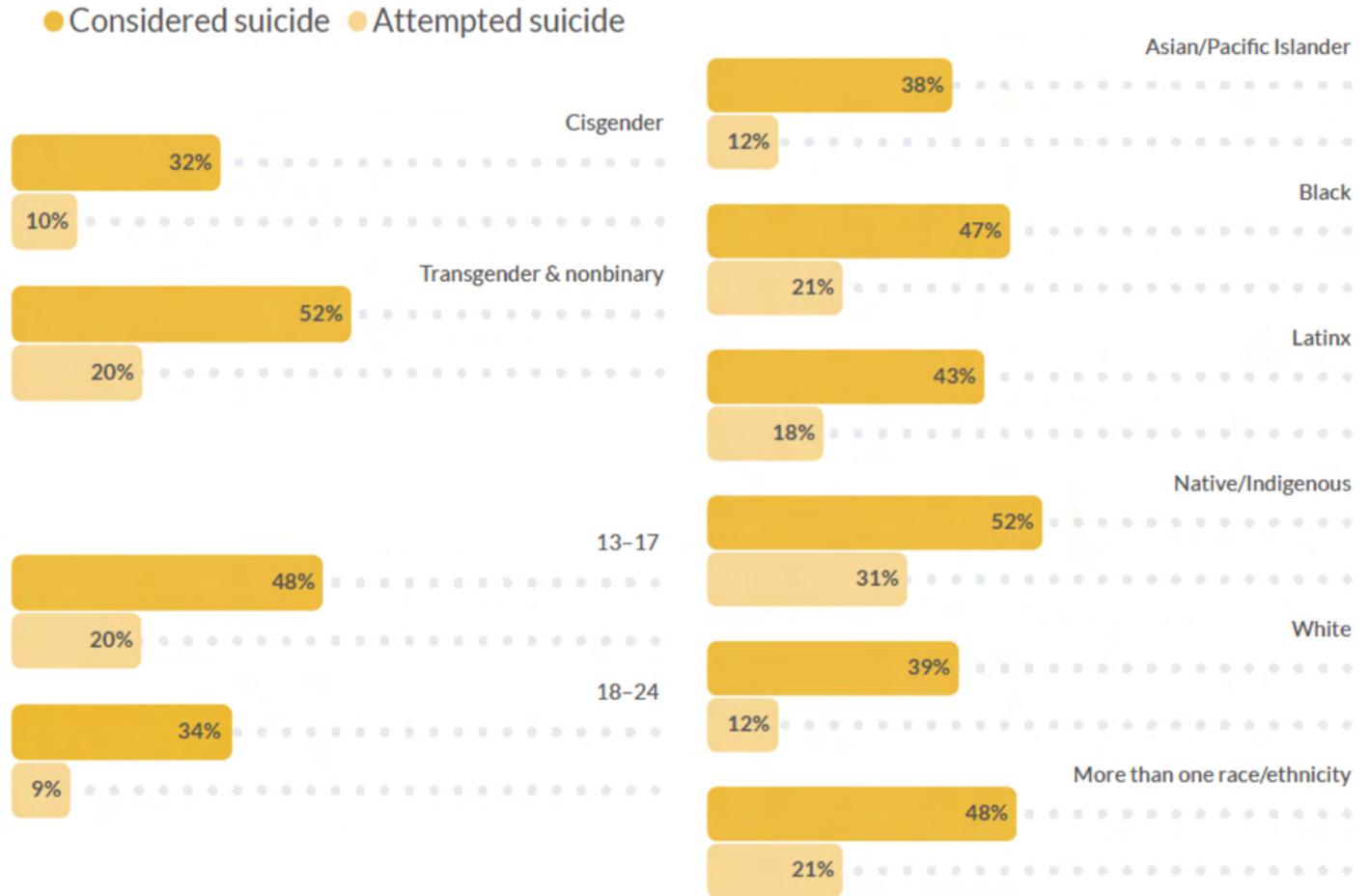
And as always, we will continue to do all we can to remind LGBTQ youth that they deserve love and support and the ability to live their lives without fear, discrimination, and violence. If you are an LGBTQ young person, please know that you are never alone and The Trevor Project is here to support you 24/7.



Amit Paley
CEO & Executive Director
The Trevor Project

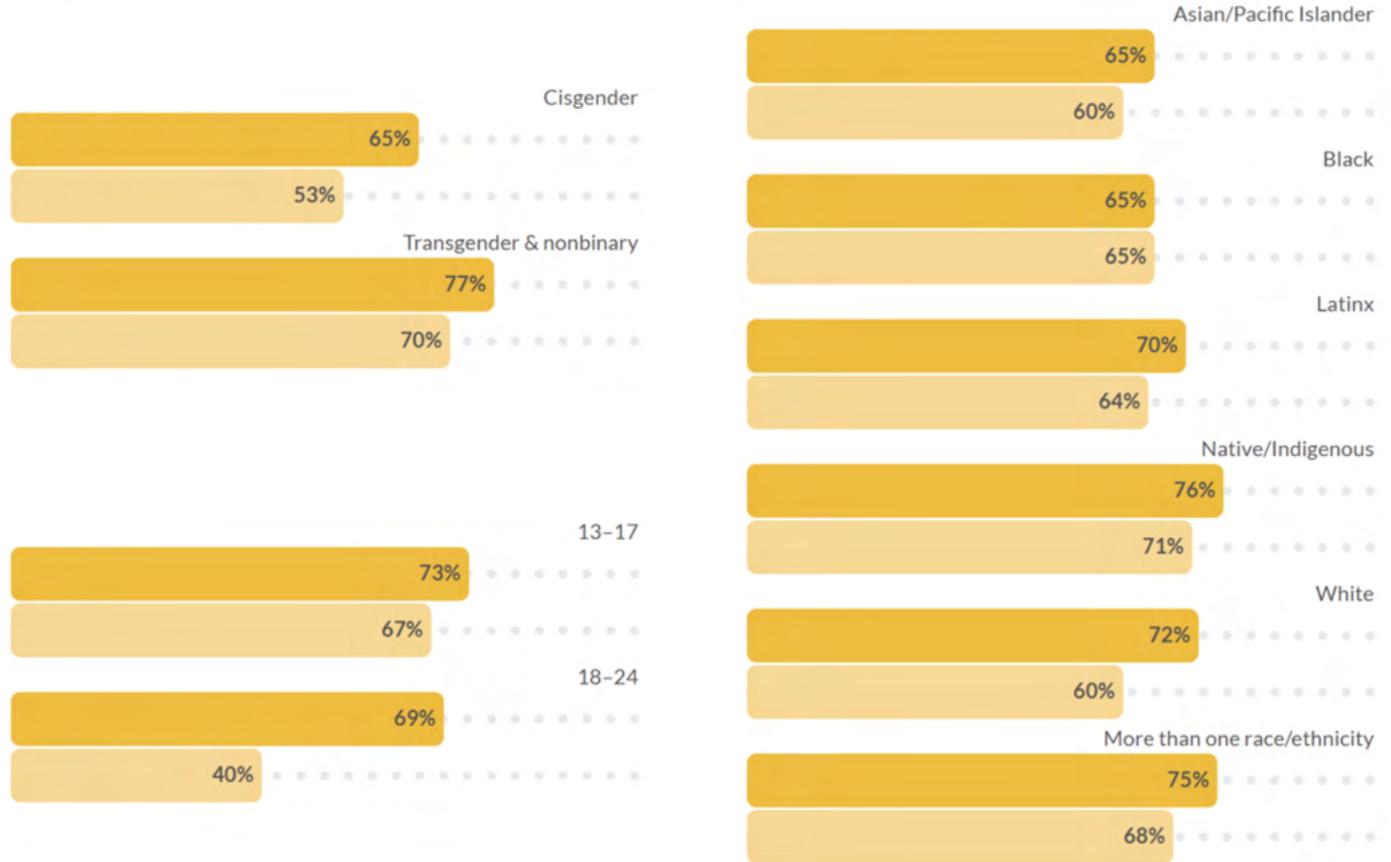
- 📄 SUICIDE & MENTAL HEALTH
- 🔍 FINDING SUPPORT
- 📅 COVID-19
- 👤 SUPPORTING TRANSGENDER & NONBINARY YOUTH
- 🍲 FOOD INSECURITY
- 🔄 CONVERSION THERAPY
- ⚖️ DISCRIMINATION
- 🏠 AFFIRMING SPACES
- 👤 FINDING IDENTITY
- 📊 RESEARCH & METHODOLOGY

42% of LGBTQ youth seriously considered attempting suicide in the past twelve months.

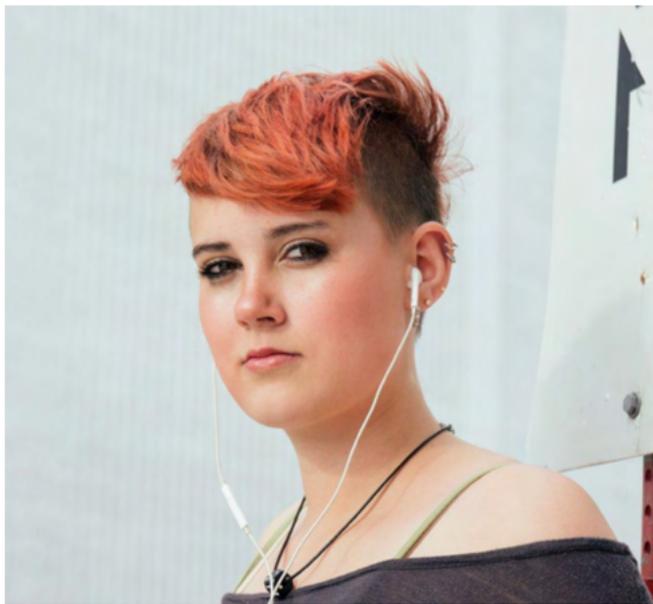


72% of LGBTQ youth reported symptoms of an anxiety disorder and 62% reported symptoms of a depressive disorder

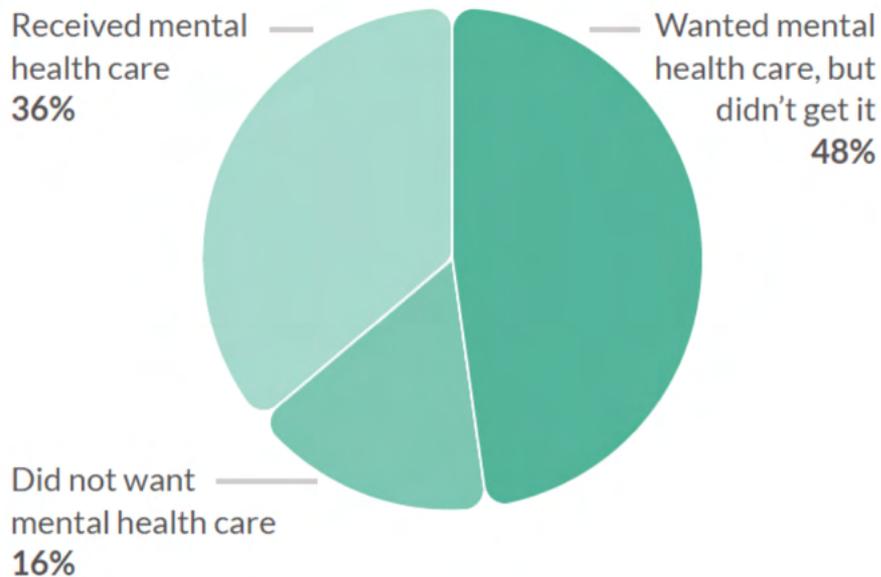
● Generalized anxiety disorder ● Major depressive disorder



70% of LGBTQ youth said their mental health was “poor” most of the time or always during Covid-19



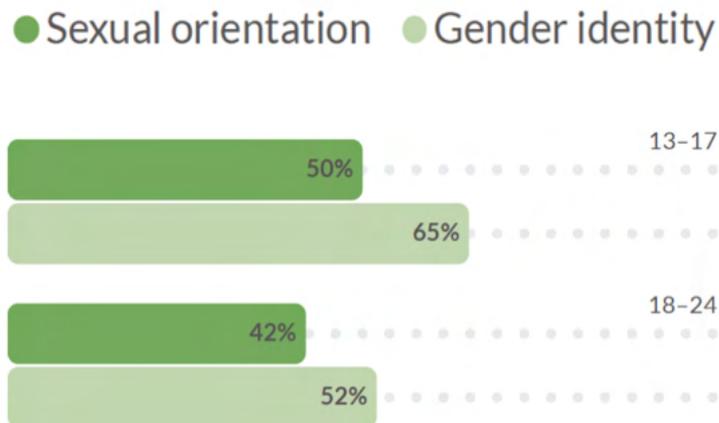
Yet, nearly **half** wanted mental health care but didn't get it



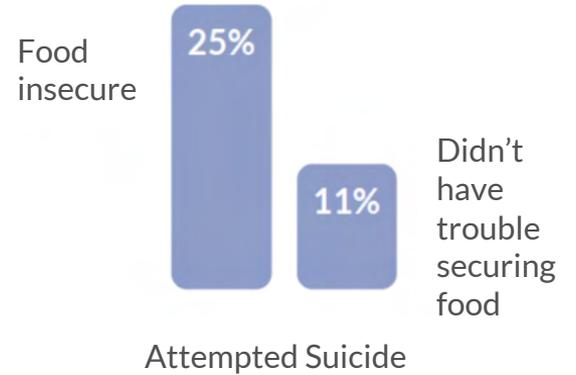
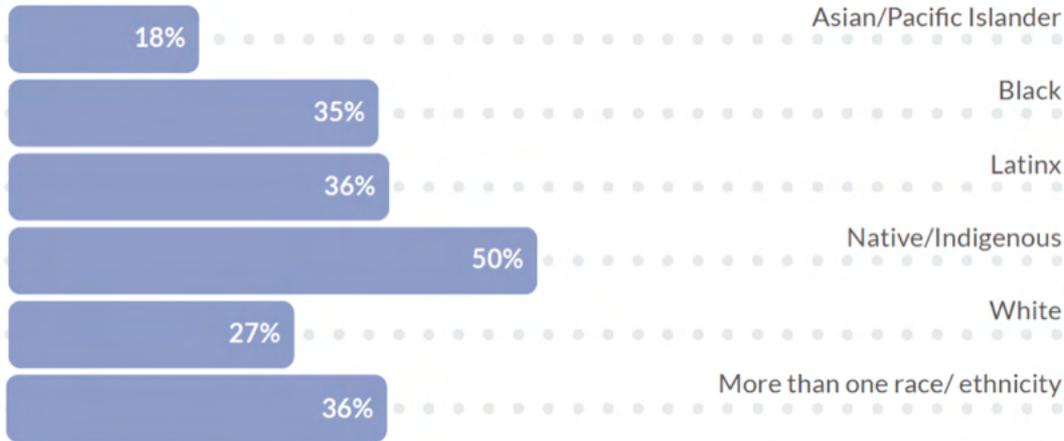
Nearly **half** of LGBTQ youth, including **60%** of transgender and nonbinary youth, said COVID-19 impacted their ability to express their LGBTQ identity.



LGBTQ youth who said COVID-19 impacted ability to express their:



30% of LGBTQ youth had trouble affording enough food in the past month, including half of all Native/Indigenous LGBTQ youth

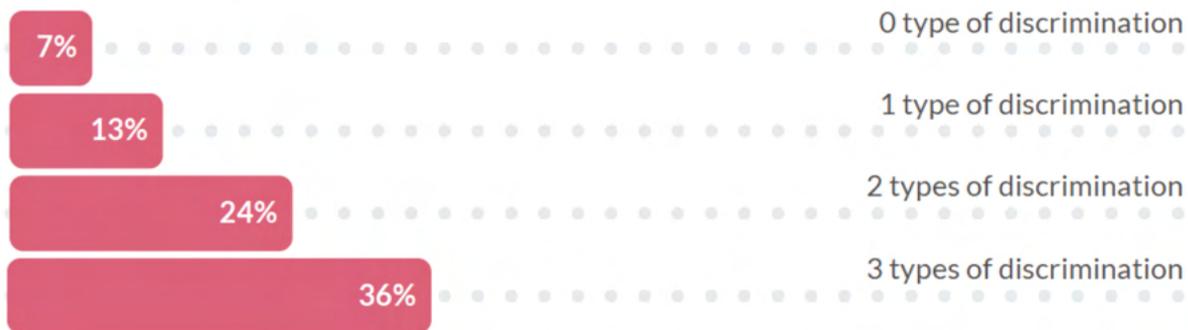


LGBTQ youth who attempted suicide, comparison across those who have been discriminated against in the past year:



LGBTQ youth who attempted suicide in the past year, comparison across the number of types of discrimination experienced:

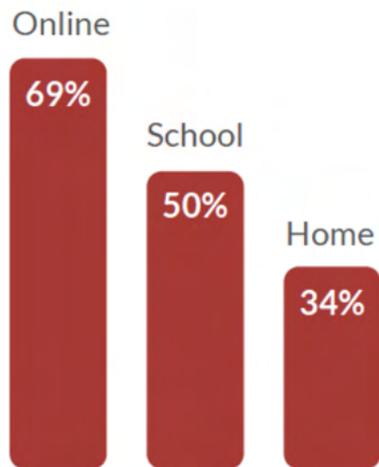
By number of types



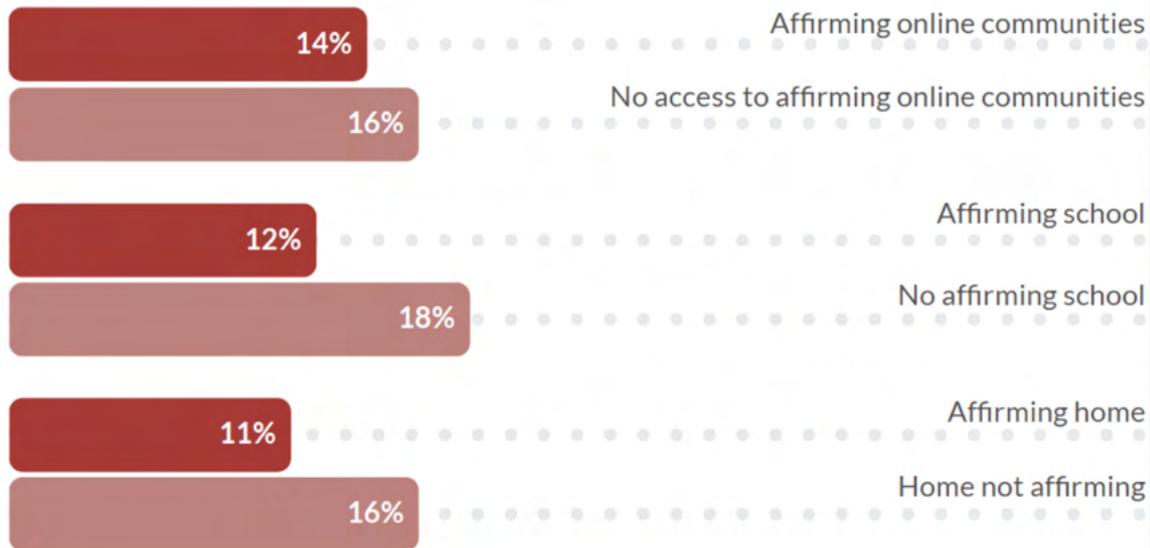
More than half of LGBTQ youth said they had experienced discrimination based on their sexual orientation in the past year.

Half of LGBTQ youth of color reported discrimination based on their race/ethnicity in the past year, including **67% of Black LGBTQ youth** and **60% of Asian Pacific Islander LGBTQ youth**.

Where LGBTQ youth access LGBTQ-affirming spaces:



LGBTQ youth who attempted suicide in the past year, comparison across access to LGBTQ-affirming spaces:



Although LGBTQ youth described a number of challenges in their lives, they also listed hundreds of ways they find joy and strength including:



Question and Comments!

Amy.Green@TheTrevorProject.org