



Photo by Ian Argo, Argonian Photography



JUNE 2026

# Full Community Report and Recommendations



Greater Mahoning Valley  
**LGBTQ+**  
Community Needs Assessment

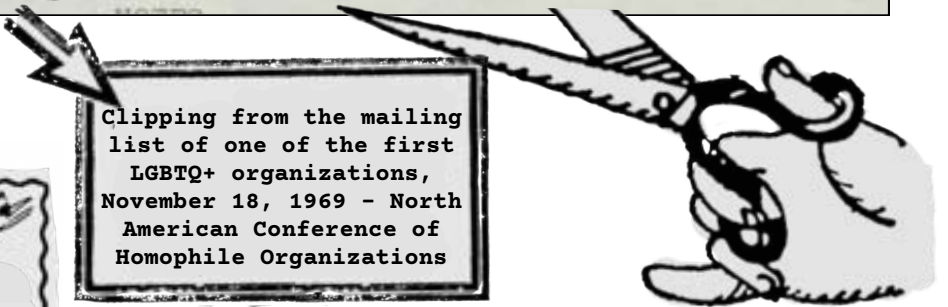




## MAHONING VALLEY HISTORY IS QUEER HISTORY

For years LGBTQ+ stories have been shared across all forms of local media, the front and back covers of this report contain selected newspaper clippings from archived newspapers and other archival documents in the Mahoning Valley.

Youngstown Mattachine Society (YMS)--c/o [REDACTED], P.O. Box 2522, Youngstown, Ohio 44507 (head and phone unknown) 69



Clipping from the mailing list of one of the first LGBTQ+ organizations, November 18, 1969 - North American Conference of Homophile Organizations

Church welcomes all, regardless of sexual orientation  
*First Unitarian Universalist Church wanted to make a public statement on its position.*  
 By LINDA M. LINONIS

**Gay rights group to fight ballot issue**  
 ■ Youngstown is among Ohio governments with laws prohibiting discrimination against gays.  
 said last week. The Colorado amendment has been stayed by a federal court studying its constitutionality has stayed the Colorado



**Greater Mahoning Valley**

**LGBTQ+**

**Community Needs Assessment**

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**“Being loved and accepted as I am by the people around me gives me the most joy in life. No compromising, no silencing myself.”**

**-Columbiana County Resident, Age 24**



# A Foreword From the Research Team

The Greater Mahoning Valley LGBTQ+ Community Needs Assessment reflects a shared commitment to one another and to the future of our community. Across Mahoning, Trumbull, Columbiana, and Ashtabula counties, LGBTQ+ people have long demonstrated resilience, care, and determination, often in the face of limited resources, geographic isolation, and systems that have not always recognized or affirmed our lived experiences. This assessment was created to honor that reality and to ensure that the voices of LGBTQ+ people in the Mahoning Valley are seen, heard, and taken seriously.

While the region is rich in community pride and connection, LGBTQ+ residents continue to navigate disproportionate challenges related to health, economic stability, housing, safety, and belonging. These challenges are often compounded by rural and small city contexts, fewer affirming services, and barriers to visibility. Too often, decisions about programs, funding, and policy are made without a clear understanding of what LGBTQ+ people here actually need. This project exists to change that.

At its core, this assessment is about more than collecting information. It's about trust, participation, and collective responsibility. The data shared throughout this report represents real people, our neighbors, family members, coworkers, and friends, who took time to share their experiences with honesty and courage. These insights offer both a clear picture of where gaps remain and a hopeful vision of what is possible when communities invest in inclusion and care.

We are deeply grateful to every individual who participated, every organization that partnered in outreach and engagement, and every community leader who saw the value and supported this effort. Your contributions have helped build a stronger foundation for action, collaboration, and accountability across the Mahoning Valley. This report is not an endpoint, but a starting place that invites continued dialogue, shared learning, and meaningful investment in the wellbeing of LGBTQ+ people throughout the region.

With gratitude and solidarity,

**The Greater Mahoning Valley LGBTQ+ Community Needs Assessment Research Team**



**Andrew M. Snyder | he, him**  
Research Fellow, Center for Community Solutions



**Leandrah Alexis | they, them**  
Field Organizer, Equality Ohio



**Heather Waltz | she, her**  
Graduate Assistant, Kent State University

# Thank You to Our Generous Funders

The impact of the Greater Mahoning Valley LGBTQ+ Community Needs Assessment would not have been possible without our generous funders, sponsors, and donors. We are grateful for your trust and philanthropic commitment to the success of our community-wide effort to improve the day-to-day lives of our local LGBTQ+ community.

## VISIONARIES



**COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION**  
— OF THE MAHONING VALLEY —



THE  
**YOUNGSTOWN**  
FOUNDATION

## CHAMPIONS



THE CENTER FOR  
COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS EST. 1913

## MOBILIZERS

The Butler Institute  
OF AMERICAN ART



## ADVOCATES



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.  
Youngstown City Health District

THE  
*Schwebel Family*  
FOUNDATION

Samie Winick  
Alyson Winick



Mahoning County  
Mental Health &  
Recovery Board



TRUMBULL COUNTY  
Mental Health and Recovery Board

## GRASS ROOTS



Jonathon Rauvie  
Rebecca Davis

KEY COMMUNITY PARTNERS



**We would like to thank the many helping hands who contributed to the success of this project. We would also like to extend special recognition to those listed below for their support.**

**Steering Committee**

Erin Bishop  
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Carol Holmes Chambers  
Becky Davis  
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Mae Medore  
John Noga  
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**Safety and Law Enforcement Committee**

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**Recreation & Leisure Committee**

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**Community Stakeholders and Community Members**

Wes Agee  
Mai Alie  
Jack Acri  
Holly Ann  
Tim Bortner  
Rev. Joseph Boyd  
Daphne Carr  
Katie Coriston  
Nikki Crawford  
Tim Deeter  
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Sarah Lowry  
Rowan Mentzer  
Mitch Moomau  
Erica Putro  
Joey Shilot  
Sam Tillery  
Heidi Weisel  
Gerald Wolfe

# About Equality Ohio and The Center for Community Solutions



Equality Ohio is a statewide nonprofit advocacy organization working to secure full equality and lived dignity for LGBTQ+ people across Ohio. Based in Columbus and active throughout the state, Equality Ohio advances social, legal, and political change through policy advocacy, education, coalition building, and direct engagement with communities and decision makers.

Equality Ohio is grounded in the belief that LGBTQ+ people deserve safety, fairness, and opportunity in every aspect of life. Its work centers the voices and experiences of LGBTQ+ Ohioans, particularly those most impacted by discrimination and exclusion. Through partnerships with community organizations, advocates, and residents across urban, suburban, and rural regions, Equality Ohio works to confront inequities, strengthen protections, and ensure LGBTQ+ people are reflected in the policies, systems, and decisions that shape life in Ohio.

Learn more at [equalityohio.org](http://equalityohio.org)

## How to Cite this Report

Snyder, A.M., Alexis, L., Waltz, H. (2026) Greater Mahoning Valley LGBTQ+ community needs assessment. The Center for Community Solutions. [www.lgbtqohio.org](http://www.lgbtqohio.org)



The Center for Community Solutions is a nonprofit, nonpartisan research and policy organization based in Cleveland, Ohio. Founded in 1913, Community Solutions works to improve health, social, and economic conditions by producing credible analysis, elevating community voice, and supporting better public decisions that strengthen opportunity and well-being across our region.

Community Solutions is committed to advancing equity for LGBTQ+ people across Ohio. We approach this work with the belief that communities are experts in their own needs and that research should not only document challenges, but also support belonging, safety, and opportunity. Through partnerships with Equality Ohio and local LGBTQ+ organizations, leaders, and residents, Community Solutions works to reduce data gaps, strengthen inclusive systems, and ensure LGBTQ+ people are visible in the information that shapes policy, funding, and services.

Learn more at [communitysolutions.com](http://communitysolutions.com)

# Introduction, Purpose, and Goals of this Community Needs Assessment

Community needs assessments are tools used in public health to collect, synthesize, and share information that supports informed decision making and guides commitments to community health interventions, resources, and investments. By capturing insight into current health status, existing strengths, and gaps in services and resources, community needs assessments help inform key stakeholders, both within and beyond the healthcare sector, who are working to deliver culturally competent and affirming services to LGBTQ+ communities. This process contributes to improving overall community health and wellbeing.

Community needs assessments are also essential for identifying the strengths, opportunities, and assets that exist within a community, alongside unmet needs. They provide valuable information that can be used to develop innovative solutions to service gaps and to strengthen the system and relationships that support people where they live.

As LGBTQ+ individuals and as a community in the Greater Mahoning Valley, we possess deep strength, resilience, and resourcefulness. At the same time, our community continues to experience disproportionate impacts related to physical, mental, and behavioral health, as well as economic, social, legal, and political challenges. Too often, organizations overlook LGBTQ+ needs simply because they lack clear, localized information about what those needs are. This assessment was designed to help address that gap by centering community voice and experience.

## Goals:

- Increase awareness of public health issues as they relate to the LGBTQ+ community in the Greater Mahoning Valley
- Grounding findings in local LGBTQ+ demographic realities, recognizing that LGBTQ+ people are not directly counted in the US Census and are often represented only through estimates and generalizations
- Describe the status of the local LGBTQ+ community holistically, highlighting not only challenges and unmet needs but also strengths and accomplishments
- Develop community driven recommendations based on participants input to inform future investments, programs, and decision making that affects LGBTQ+ people
- Strengthen partnerships and collaboration among organizations within the local public health system



# Research Methodology

## Planning

The Greater Mahoning Valley LGBTQ+ Community Needs Assessment was conducted using a community based participatory research (CBPR) approach. This approach prioritized collaboration with LGBTQ+ community members and stakeholders across diverse sectors throughout Trumbull, Mahoning, Columbiana, and Ashtabula counties. The project was guided by a Steering Committee and seven topic specific subcommittees, reflecting a holistic approach to community health. These subcommittees included Health and Wellness; Religion and Spirituality; Education and Literacy; Housing, Food, and Basic Needs; Business, Employment, and Commerce; Safety and Law Enforcement; and Recreation and Leisure.

Leadership teams were composed of LGBTQ+ community members, subject matter experts, professionals, and organizational stakeholders representing health services, educational institutions, social service providers, and LGBTQ+ advocacy organizations across the Greater Mahoning Valley. The planning process, facilitated by the project's core research team, involved establishing clear objectives, developing recruitment strategies, and identifying priority community issues to assess.

Each subcommittee participated in a structured series of 90-minute meetings. These meetings supported teams in the creation of a unified definition of the Greater Mahoning Valley community, conducting SWOT analyses, identifying key concerns, developing researchable questions, and selecting appropriate data collection methods. Subcommittee work was reviewed by the Steering Committee, with feedback incorporated through ongoing coordination and review to ensure alignment, rigor, and equity throughout the assessment process.

## Data Collection

### Community Survey

The primary method of data collection was a comprehensive digital community survey co-developed with project committees to address critical health domains and community priorities. Survey recruitment occurred through social media outreach, in person engagement at LGBTQ+ community events and trusted spaces, and flyer distribution in collaboration with community partners across Trumbull, Mahoning, Columbiana, and Ashtabula counties.

Participants included individuals aged 12 or older, with parental consent for those under 18, who identified as LGBTQ+ or LGBTQ+ allies and lived in or accessed services within the Greater Mahoning Valley. Survey participants were incentivized through a raffle for gift cards.

The community survey collected a total of 463 unique survey responses. Of these respondents, 345 identified as LGBTQ+, including 325 adults and 20 youth. An additional 118 respondents identified as LGBTQ+ allies. The BIPOC LGBTQ+ response rate was 17 percent. The overall survey completion rate was 74 percent. Surveys were also available in Spanish. In total, the community survey generated 78,451 unique data points.

# Research Methodology (Continued)

## Stakeholder Interviews

Semi structured stakeholder interviews were conducted with 15 key informants representing community based organizations, healthcare providers, service agencies, and local systems. These interviews were designed to gather in depth insight into systemic challenges affecting LGBTQ+ people in the Mahoning Valley and to identify opportunities for intervention and collaboration.

Stakeholders were selected based on expertise, lived experiences, and direct involvement in serving LGBTQ+ communities and were reviewed and approved by the Steering Committee. Interviews were conducted confidentially and thematically analyzed to identify recurring challenges, strengths, and strategic recommendations for improving community health outcomes.

## Intersectionality Listening Sessions

Intersectionality listening sessions, also referred to as focus groups, were held with historically underrepresented LGBTQ+ subcommunities, identities, and shared lived experiences. These sessions used a qualitative, community centered approach to create a safe and affirming spaces for participants to share their specific challenges, needs, and priorities.

A total of 56 participants engaged in 15 90-minute listening sessions hosted in collaboration with trusted community organizations and partners throughout the Mahoning Valley. Participants were compensated with a gift card in recognition of their time and contributions. Facilitators guided structured discussions focused on identifying unmet needs, existing resources, barriers to access, and community driven solutions and calls to action. Insights from these sessions were critical to ensuring that underrepresented voices were central to the assessment process.

## Analysis

Data analysis included both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. Quantitative survey data are organized into tables and charts throughout this report to provide a broad overview of LGBTQ+ community experiences and needs in the Greater Mahoning Valley. Qualitative data, included open ended survey responses, stakeholder interviews, and listening session notes, were analyzed thematically through a structured coding and categorization process using a multi reviewer protocol. Independent reviewers identified recurring themes related to challenges, strengths, fears, concerns, and suggested improvements. An intersectional analytic lens was applied to better understand how overlapping identities shaped experiences and outcomes, strengthening the depth and relevance of the findings.

# Research Methodology (Continued)

## Dissemination

Findings from the community needs assessment were shared through multiple dissemination strategies to promote accessibility, transparency, and community engagement. Preliminary results were shared at community meetings, stakeholder convenings, and LGBTQ+ events to encourage dialogue and validation.

This comprehensive final report, including both quantitative and qualitative findings, was prepared and made publicly available on LGBTQOhio.org. In addition, infographics and summary materials highlighting key findings and actionable recommendations were developed for distribution through community organizations and social media platforms to support broader outreach and impact.

## Strengths

- **Robust Participation:** The assessment collected 463 valid and unique survey responses in rural Ohio, resulting in a rich dataset with a strong completion rate that reflects diverse experiences within the Greater Mahoning Valley LGBTQ+ community that until now has never existed.
- **Mixed Methods Approach:** The integration of quantitative and qualitative data provided a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of community needs and priorities.
- **Community Partnered Recruitment:** The project utilized a recruitment model that engaged community organizations and individuals with trusted access to hard to reach LGBTQ+ subcommunities. These partners worked closely with the project team to support outreach for surveys and listening sessions, increasing diversity and representation within the final sample.


## Limitations

- **Sampling Bias:** The non probability, convenience sampling approach may have resulted in underrepresentation of certain groups including LGBTQ+ people under age 21 and over age 45, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), People experiencing housing insecurity and homelessness, People from diverse religious or spiritual backgrounds, People living with HIV/AIDS, and People living in Columbiana and Ashtabula counties.
- **Age Restrictions:** Data did not include LGBTQ+ community members under age 12 and representation of LGBTQ+ youth ages 12-17 is limited in the study sample potentially limiting insight into younger experiences.
- **Self Reported Data:** Findings rely on self reported information, which may be subject to recall bias, social desirability bias, or under or over reporting.
- **Response Bias:** Individuals who were more engaged or held stronger opinions may have been more likely to participate, potentially influencing results.
- **Limited Generalizability:** Due to the nonrandom sampling approach, findings may not be fully generalizable beyond the study population or to other regions. The needs identified may reflect the experiences of respondents rather than the entire LGBTQ+ population of the Greater Mahoning Valley.

# LGBTQ+ Community Recommendations

The following is a prioritized list of community recommendations derived from our qualitative community survey question, “What do you need to address your biggest fear, worry, or concern for yourself as a member of the LGBTQ+ community?” These recommendations aim to identify and address the most pressing fears, concerns, and worries expressed directly by community members. Responses to this survey item were individually reviewed and thematized by the research team seeking to categorize them by theme.

The recommendations are sorted by priority, with the most frequently identified priorities at the top. Through a three-person thematizing analysis, 657 themes were identified from 226 qualitative responses, which were organized into 31 community recommendations. The top 10 recommendations are presented here.



**1** **STRENGTHEN COORDINATED ADVOCACY EFFORTS TO ADVANCE AND PROTECT LGBTQ+ RIGHTS THROUGH LOCAL, STATE, AND FEDERAL POLICY ENGAGEMENT, INCLUDING COMMUNITY-INFORMED LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES AND CIVIC PARTICIPATION INITIATIVES**

**2** **EXPAND PUBLIC EDUCATION AND AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS THAT REDUCE STIGMA AND INCREASE UNDERSTANDING OF LGBTQ+ IDENTITIES, WITH A FOCUS ON COMMUNITY-WIDE CULTURAL COMPETENCY**

**3** **INVEST IN COMMUNITY-LED SAFETY PLANNING, DE-ESCALATION TRAINING, AND EVENT SECURITY SUPPORTS TO ENSURE LGBTQ+ SPACES AND GATHERINGS ARE SAFE AND AFFIRMING**

**4** **SUPPORT TARGETED ADVOCACY, LEGAL PROTECTIONS, AND RAPID RESPONSE EFFORTS THAT CENTER AND DEFEND THE RIGHTS OF TRANSGENDER AND NONBINARY INDIVIDUALS**

## Additional Community Recommendations

5. Increase access to affordable, comprehensive, and affirming healthcare coverage, including mental health and gender-affirming services, through policy change and expanded provider networks
6. Develop and sustain inclusive, accessible LGBTQ+ community spaces and improve communication systems that connect individuals to events, resources, and social networks
7. Expand economic support programs, including emergency assistance, employment pathways, and resource navigation services to address financial instability and basic needs
8. Increase access to confidential support services, family education programs, and affirming counseling that support individuals navigating disclosure and family dynamics
9. Improve outreach and information-sharing efforts to ensure LGBTQ+ individuals are aware of available resources, rights, and supports within their community
10. Advocate for policies and legal protections that prevent discrimination, profiling, and unjust treatment by government systems based on sexual orientation or gender identity

# Key Stakeholder Community Recommendations

These recommendations were developed by reviewing and organizing themes that repeatedly emerged throughout stakeholder interviews conducted for the Greater Mahoning Valley LGBTQ+ Community Needs Assessment. Stakeholders included LGBTQ+ community leaders, healthcare providers, nonprofit organizations, public officials, educators, advocates, and funders from across the region. The research team reviewed interview responses to identify common concerns, needs, barriers, and ideas for improving the lives of LGBTQ+ people in the Mahoning Valley. Recommendations were prioritized based on issues that were mentioned consistently across interviews, especially around healthcare, basic needs, community safety, collaboration, visibility, education, and support services. The final recommendations reflect the most common priorities and action steps shared by stakeholders throughout the process.

1. Develop a coordinated LGBTQ+ community infrastructure strategy that brings organizations, advocates, providers, and allies together to improve collaboration, reduce duplication of services, and rebuild trust across the community
2. Increase access to affirming healthcare by expanding LGBTQ+-inclusive provider training, improving visibility of affirming providers, and supporting access to transgender care, HIV prevention and treatment, mental health services, dental care, and reproductive healthcare
3. Establish and sustain LGBTQ+ safe spaces and third spaces outside of bars and nightlife, including community centers, drop-in spaces, social groups, arts programming, support groups, and intergenerational gathering opportunities
4. Expand support for basic needs programs that are affirming and accessible to LGBTQ+ people, including housing assistance, emergency shelter, food access, transportation, hygiene resources, and economic support services
5. Create a centralized LGBTQ+ resource and information network that improves awareness of available services, safe spaces, affirming providers, and community opportunities across the Mahoning Valley
6. Invest in leadership development and civic engagement opportunities for LGBTQ+ people, especially youth, transgender individuals, older adults, and historically marginalized groups, to strengthen local advocacy and representation
7. Strengthen public education and outreach efforts focused on LGBTQ+ inclusion, HIV prevention, health literacy, anti-stigma education, and community awareness through schools, healthcare systems, public events, and local institutions
8. Encourage local businesses, nonprofits, healthcare systems, and community organizations to adopt visible and actionable LGBTQ+-affirming practices, policies, and messaging that help community members identify safe and welcoming environments
9. Build stronger partnerships between LGBTQ+ organizations and other community sectors, including racial justice organizations, immigrant-serving groups, schools, labor groups, public health agencies, faith leaders, and social service providers, to address overlapping systems issues collaboratively
10. Advocate for policies and funding that protect LGBTQ+ people from discrimination and improve long-term community stability, including investments in affordable housing, accessible healthcare, transportation, youth support, and sustainable funding for LGBTQ+ organizations and programs



# Community Survey Demographics and the Lived Experience

For the purpose of this project, when referring to the Greater Mahoning Valley LGBTQ+ community, we prioritize inclusion over exclusion. While the widely used acronym “LGBTQ+” serves as an umbrella term for ALL sexual and gender minorities, we take this opportunity to bring visibility and acknowledgment to the many diverse identities that together form our community.

This region includes Trumbull, Mahoning, Columbiana, and Ashtabula counties in Ohio, as well as parts of our community that intersect with Appalachia and neighboring areas such as Western Pennsylvania, where individuals actively participate in or contribute to LGBTQ+ life in the Greater Mahoning Valley. To that end, we include anyone who lives in, has lived in, works in, or maintains a meaningful connection to the local community.

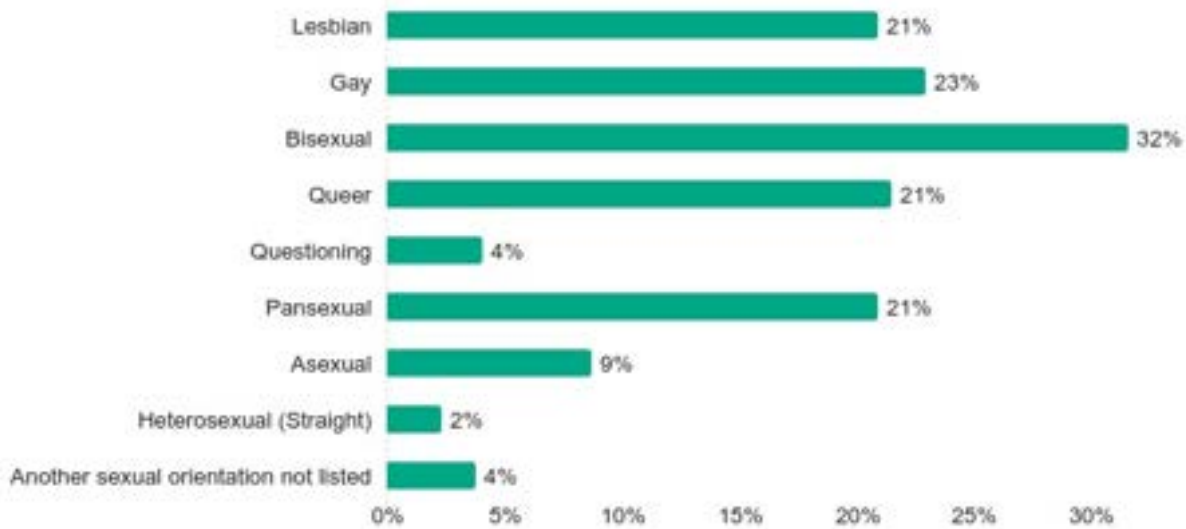
Living as an LGBTQ+ person across different parts of this geographic region can result in vastly different lived experiences. We acknowledge that with many lived experiences, a wide range of sexual orientations and gender identities, historical divisions both within and outside the LGBTQ+ community, and differing perspectives on community engagement are inevitable. We make space for these differences while maintaining a shared commitment to building a fuller and more inclusive future for all LGBTQ+ people and communities.

Our community is diverse and complex, comprising individuals at various stages of self acceptance, openness, and visibility. It includes people who express their identities fully, as well as those who do not outwardly express or acknowledge their identities. These differences may stem from concerns about safety or from a lack of interest in embodying a minoritized identity in a hetero and cis normative world. We also recognize that community complexity includes differing levels of privilege and marginalization within the community itself, such as the concept of passing.

Ultimately, this project seeks to honor all LGBTQ+ people of the Greater Mahoning Valley in their full complexity and diversity, while working toward a future rooted in affirmation, unity, equity, inclusion, belonging, safety, and access to care for all.

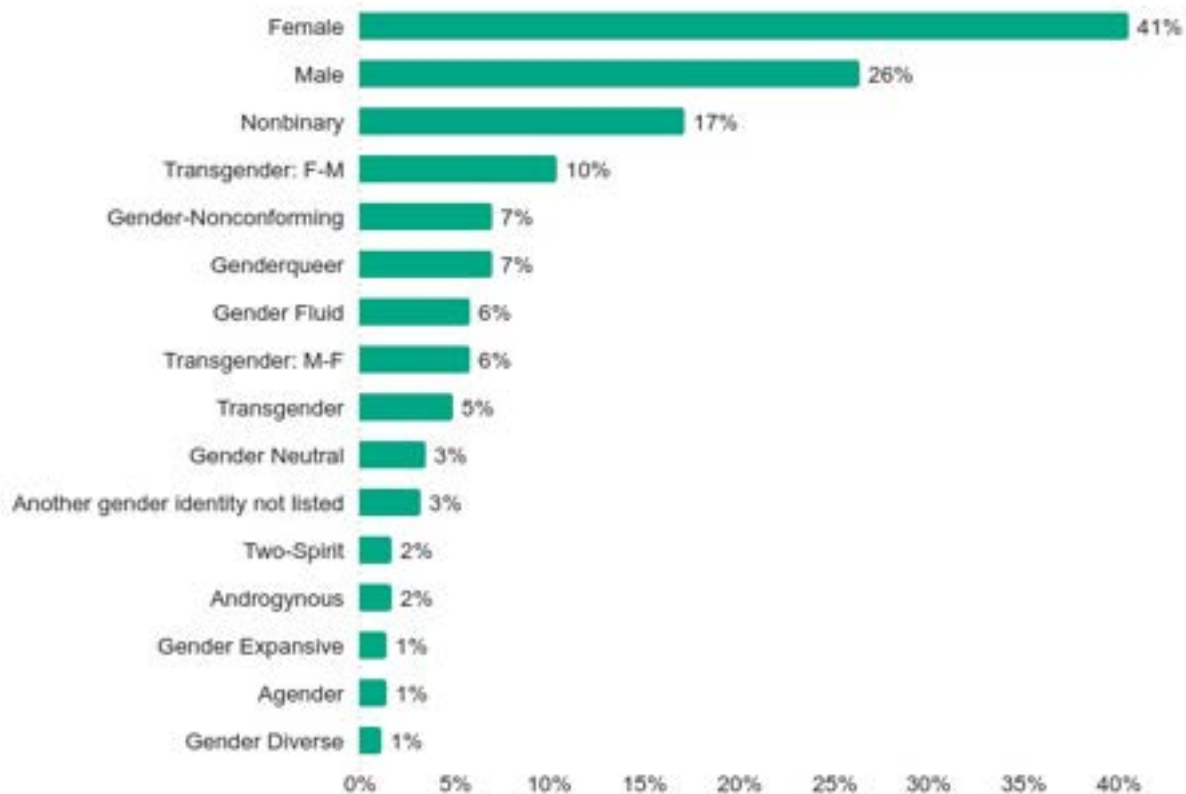
### What is your sexual orientation? (select all that apply)

345 Responses



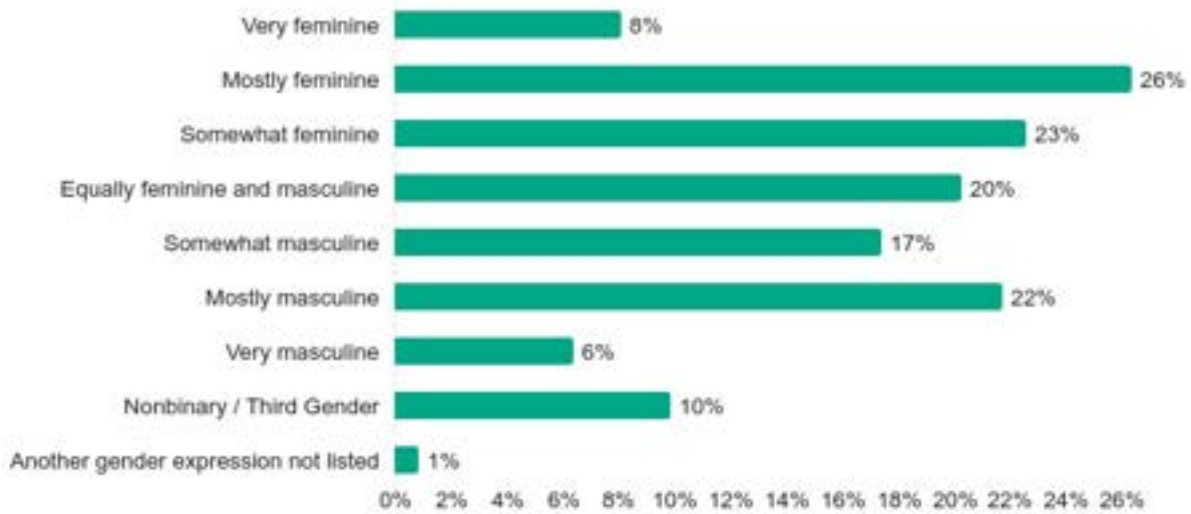
### What is your current gender identity? (Select all that apply)

345 Responses



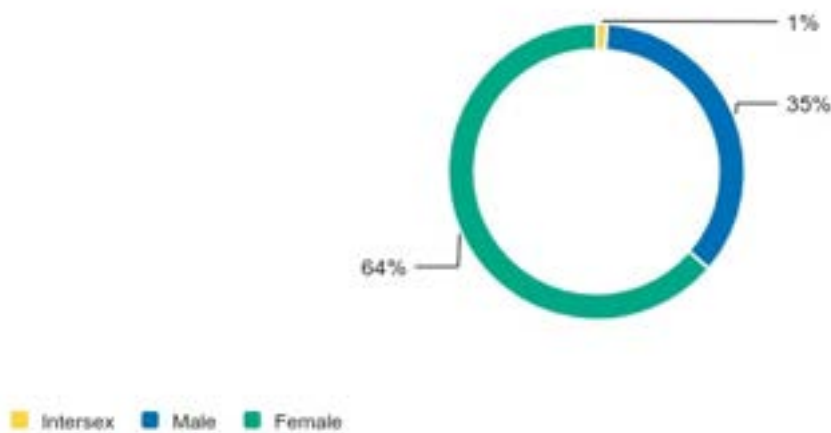
### What is your gender expression? (select all that apply)

345 Responses



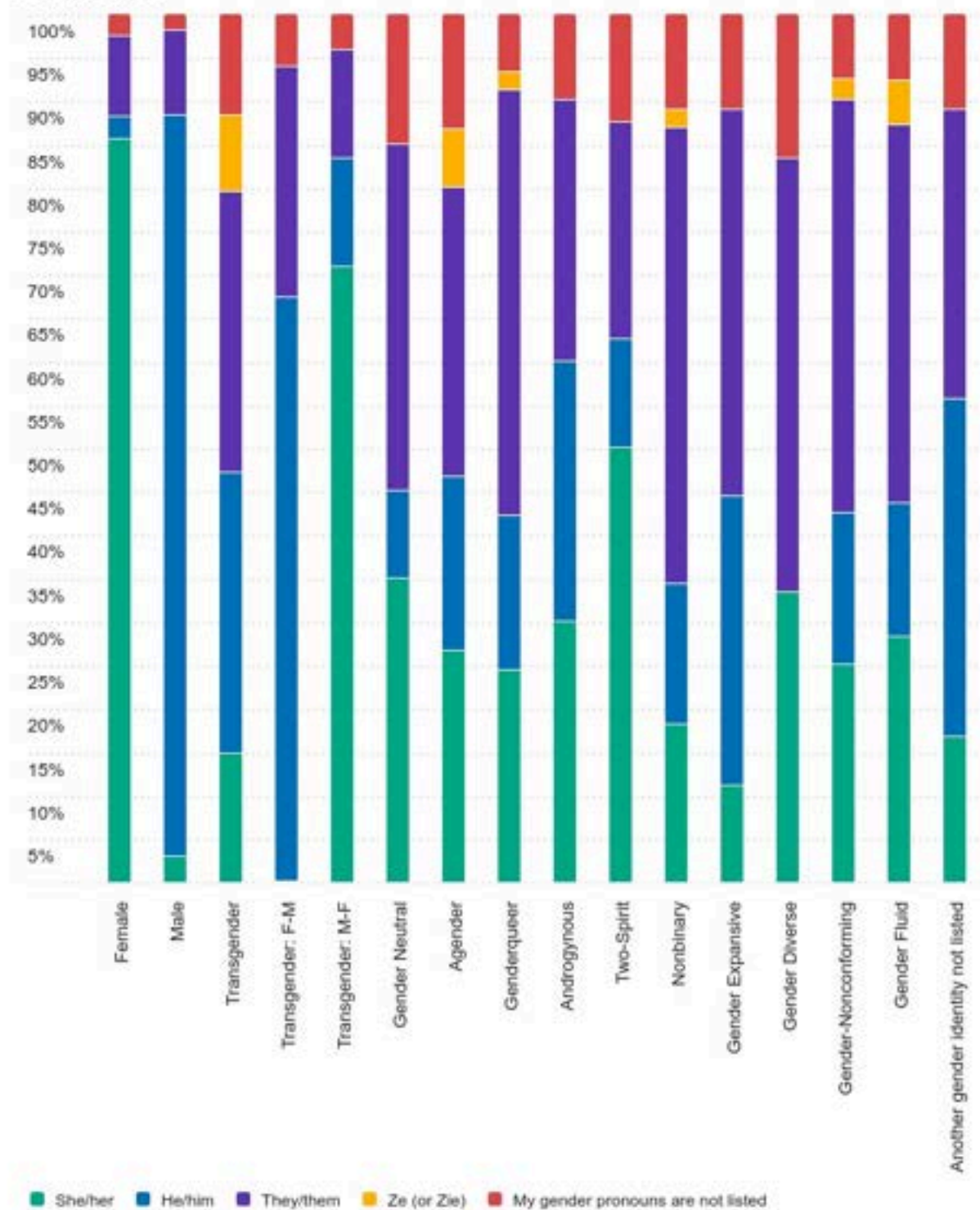
### What sex were you born as or assigned at birth?

341 Responses



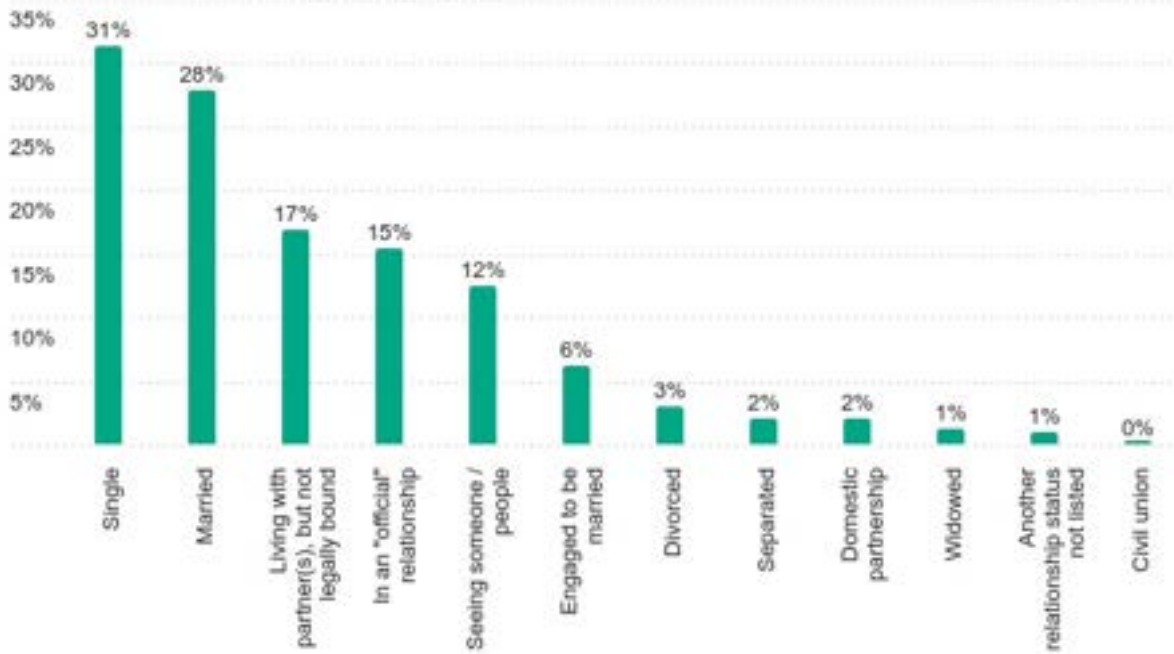
### What are your pronouns? (select all that apply) - Broken out by gender identity

345 Responses



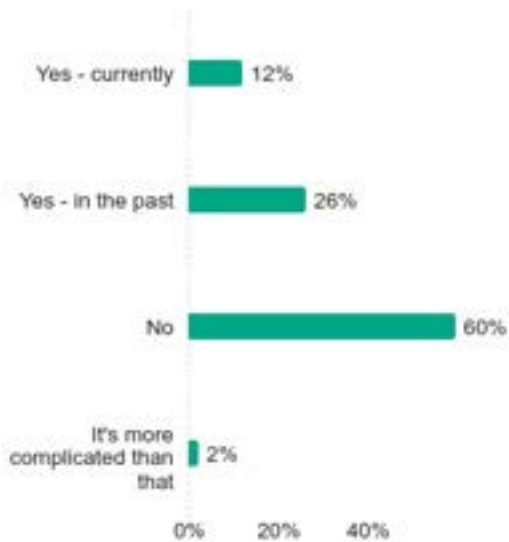
**What is your current relationship status? (select all that apply)**

345 Responses



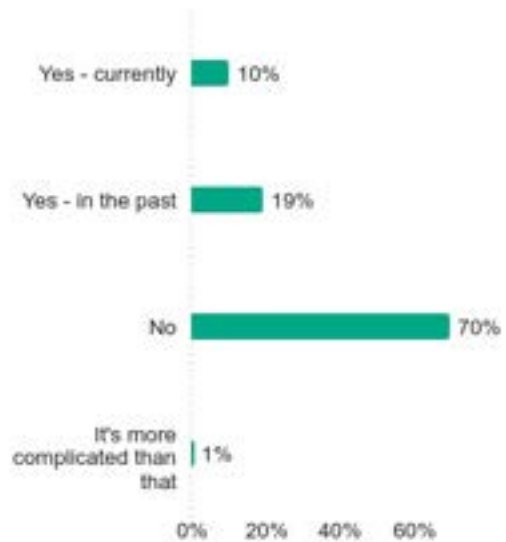
**Are you currently in, or have you ever been in, an open relationship?**

322 Responses



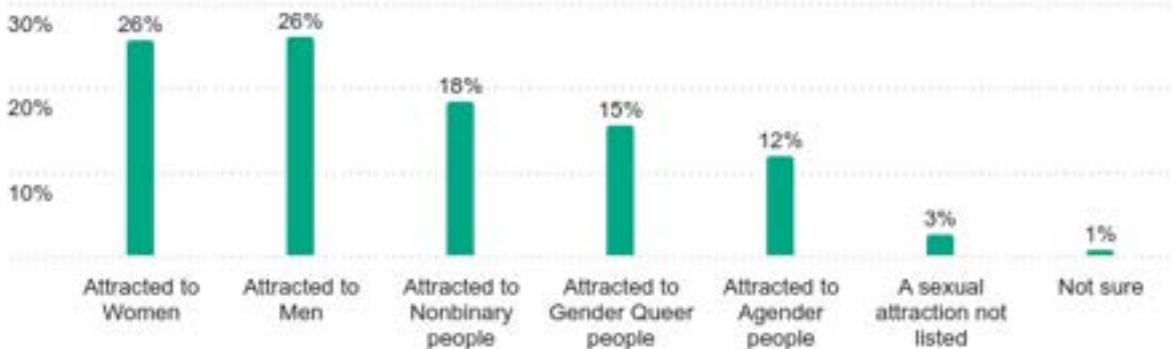
**Are you currently in, or have you ever been in, a polyamorous relationship?**

322 Responses



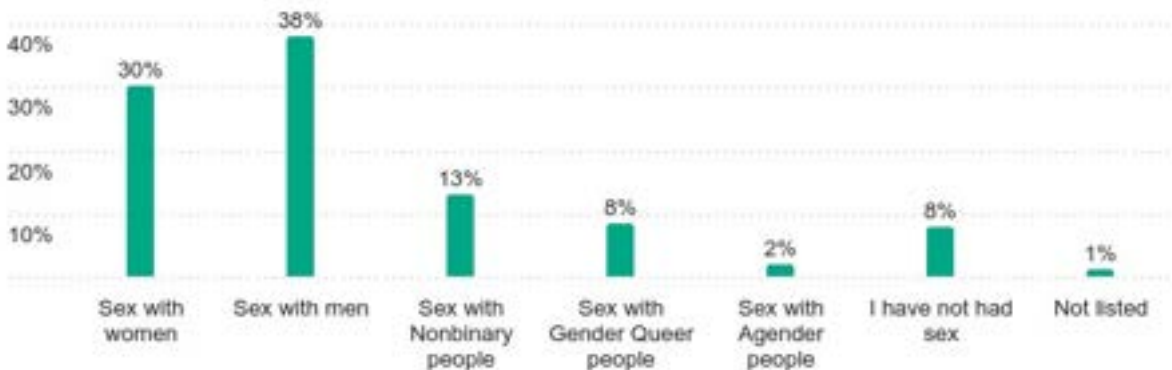
How would you best describe your sexual attraction(s)? (select all that apply)

324 Responses



How would you best describe your sexual behavior(s) over the past five (5) years? (select all that apply)

323 Responses

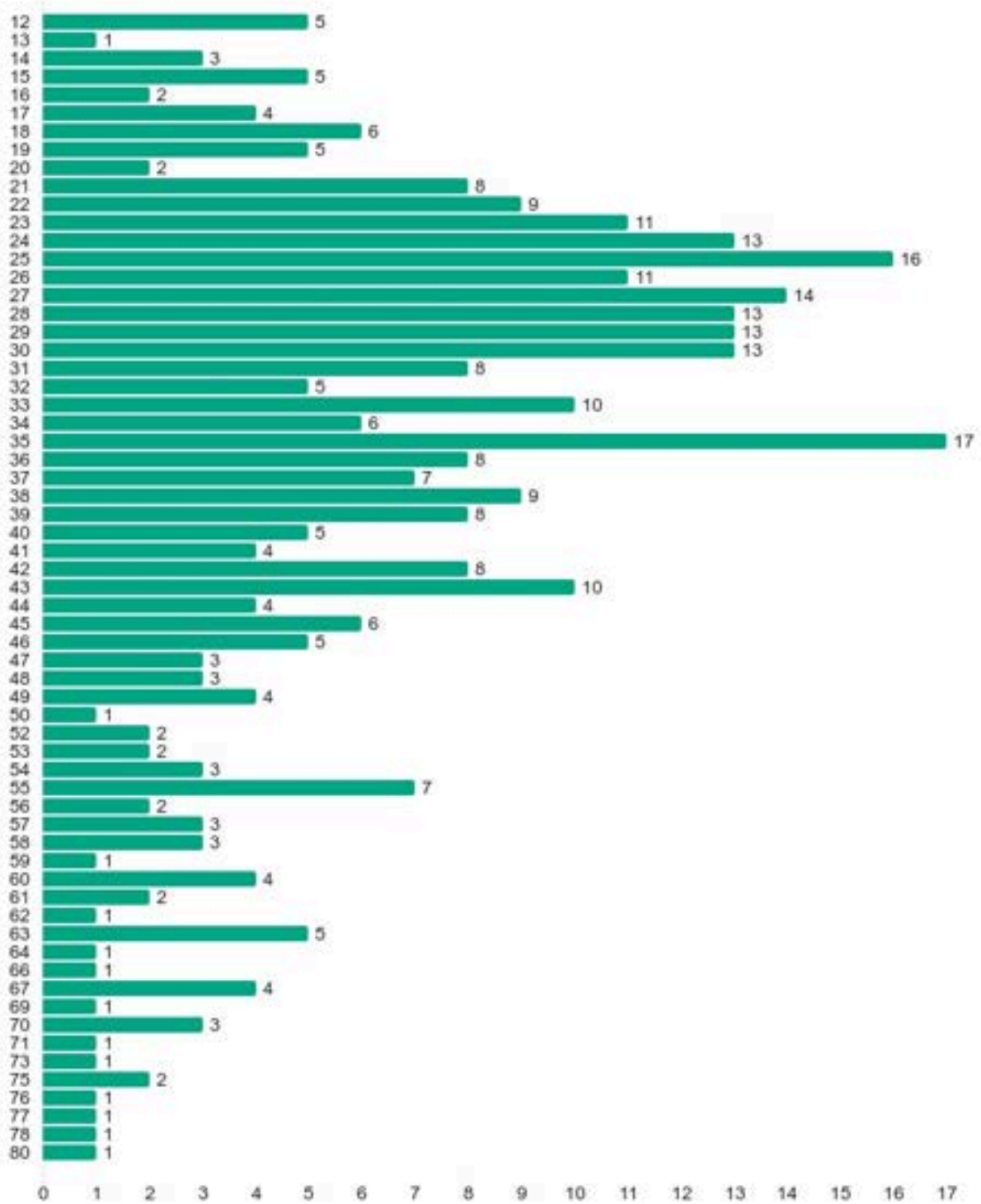


“The freedom of life/expression and the love and respect that a supportive community can bring regardless of race, gender identity, socioeconomic status, religious and/or spiritual beliefs, and social norms brings me joy.”

-Columbiana County Resident, Age 24

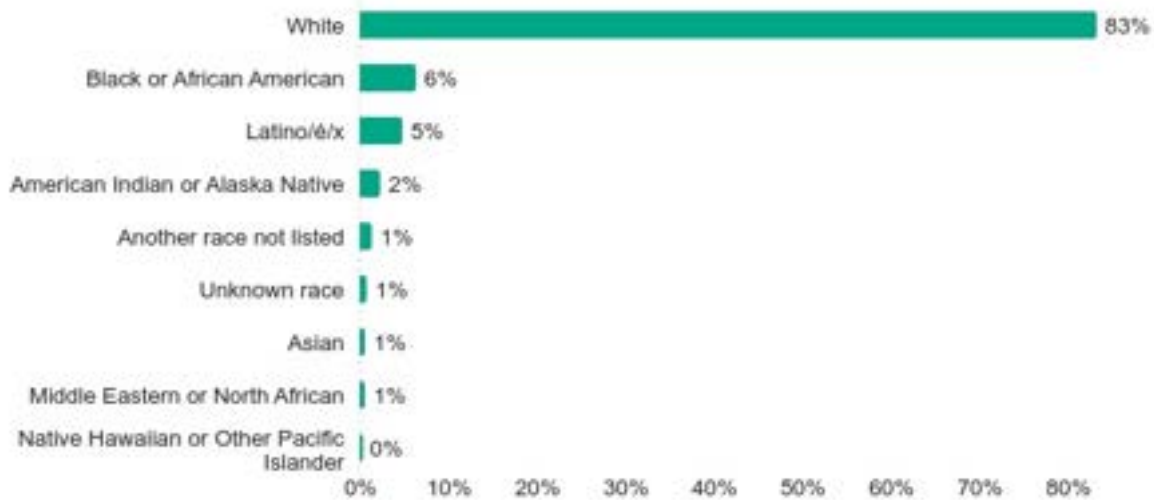
## How old are you?

338 Responses



### What is your race and ethnicity? (select all that apply)

344 Responses

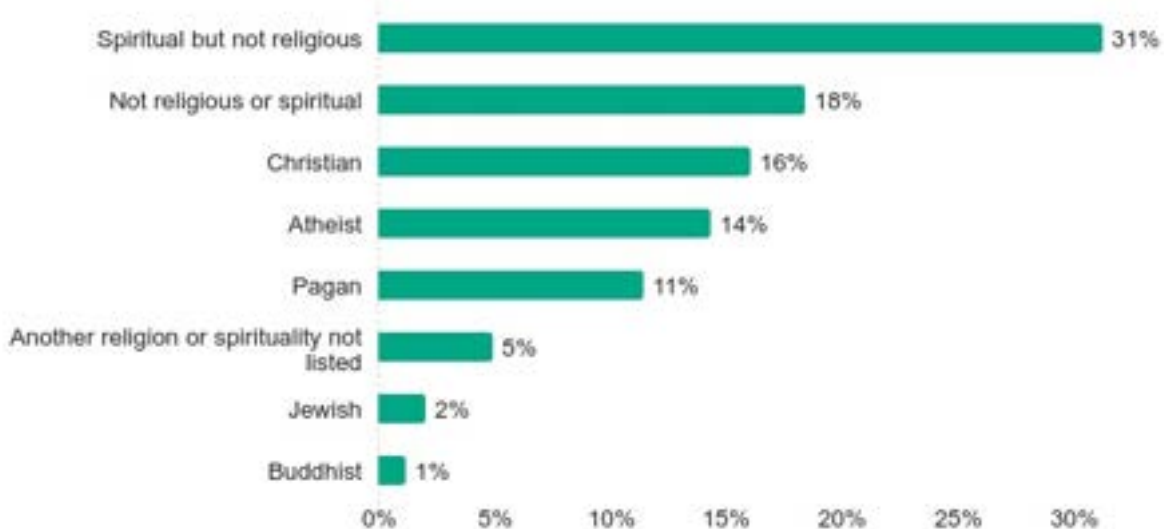


“Being in the small super white neighborhood I live in; I feel like I stick out like a sore thumb. Like they can smell the queerness on me. I wish we could just make a safe place but I know that’s not realistic so I’m not sure.”

-Mahoning County Resident, Age 25

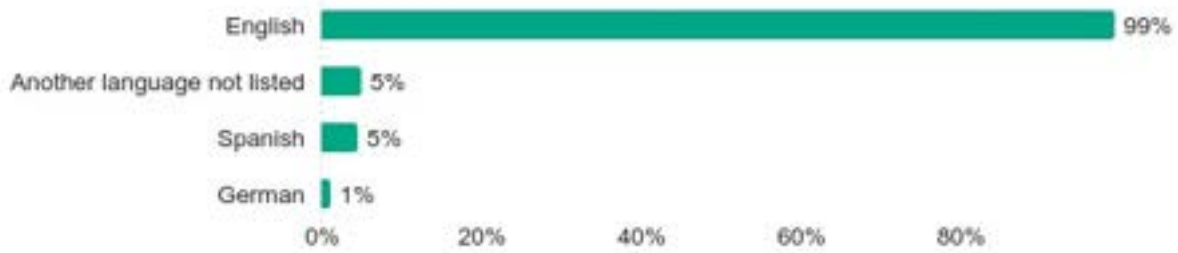
### How would you describe your religion or spirituality?

342 Responses



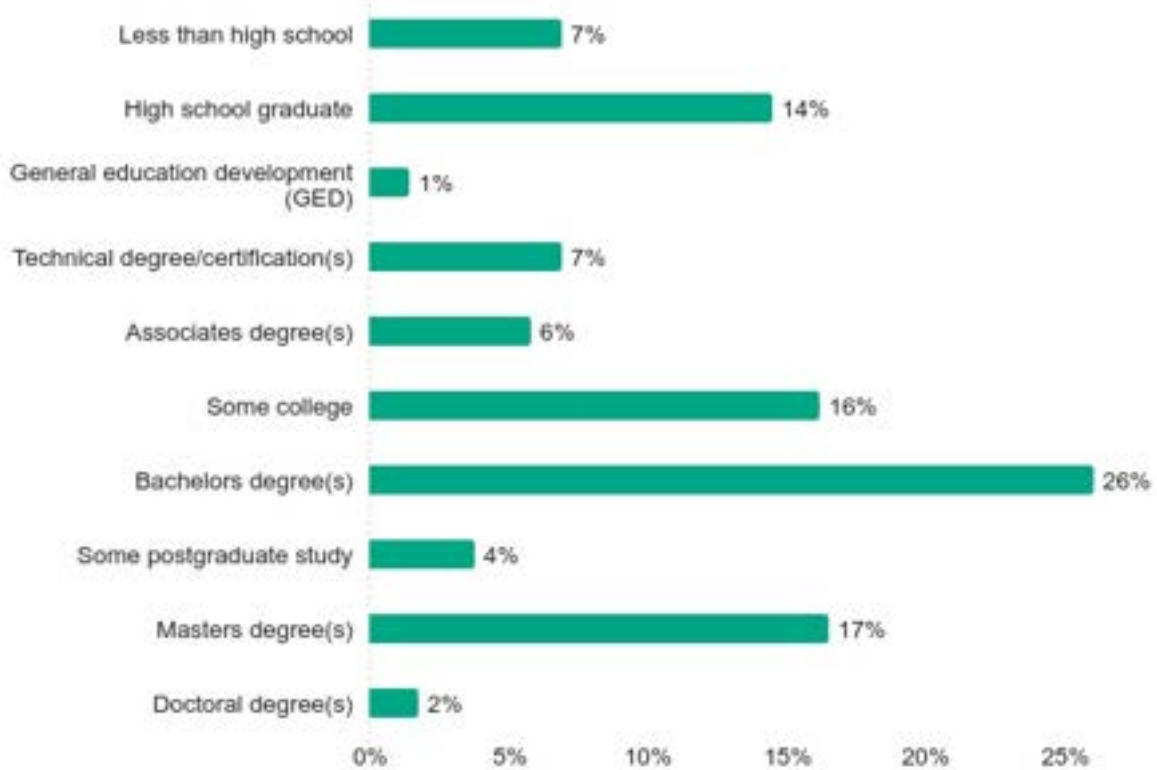
### What language(s) do you speak at home? (select all that apply)

345 Responses



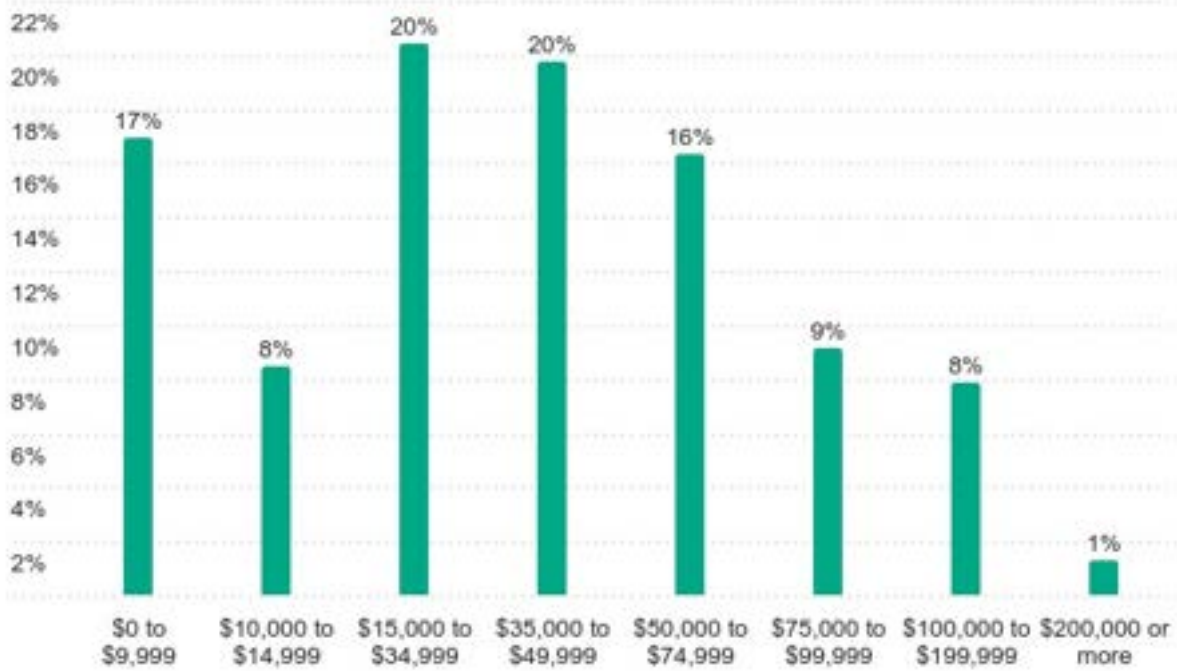
### What is the highest level of education you have completed?

345 Responses



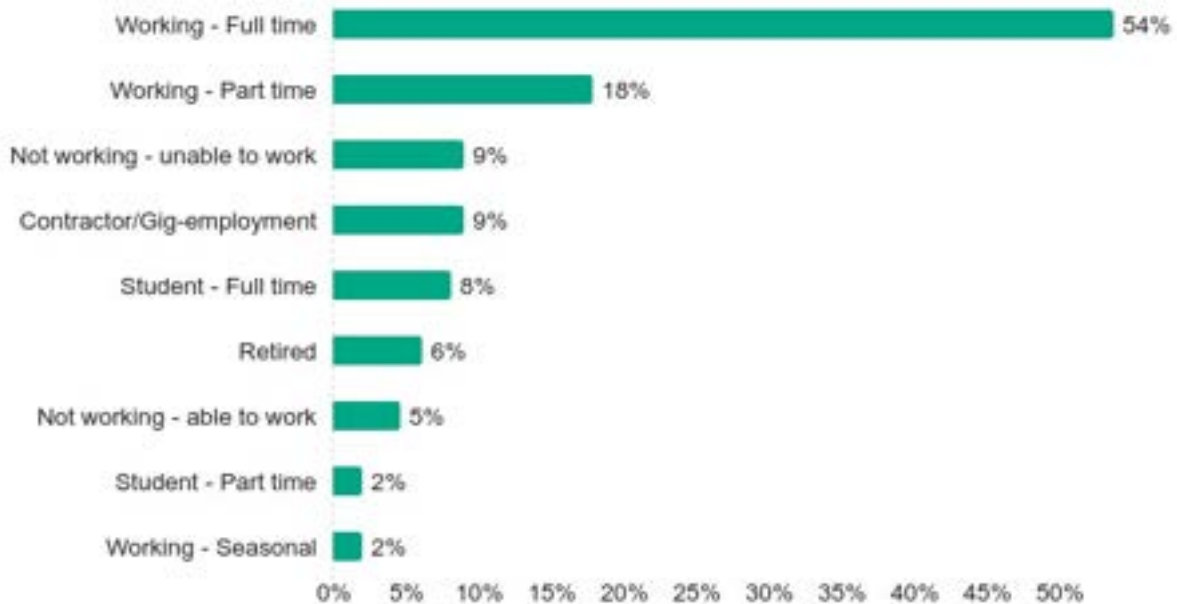
### How much do you make in a year from all sources before taxes?

319 Responses



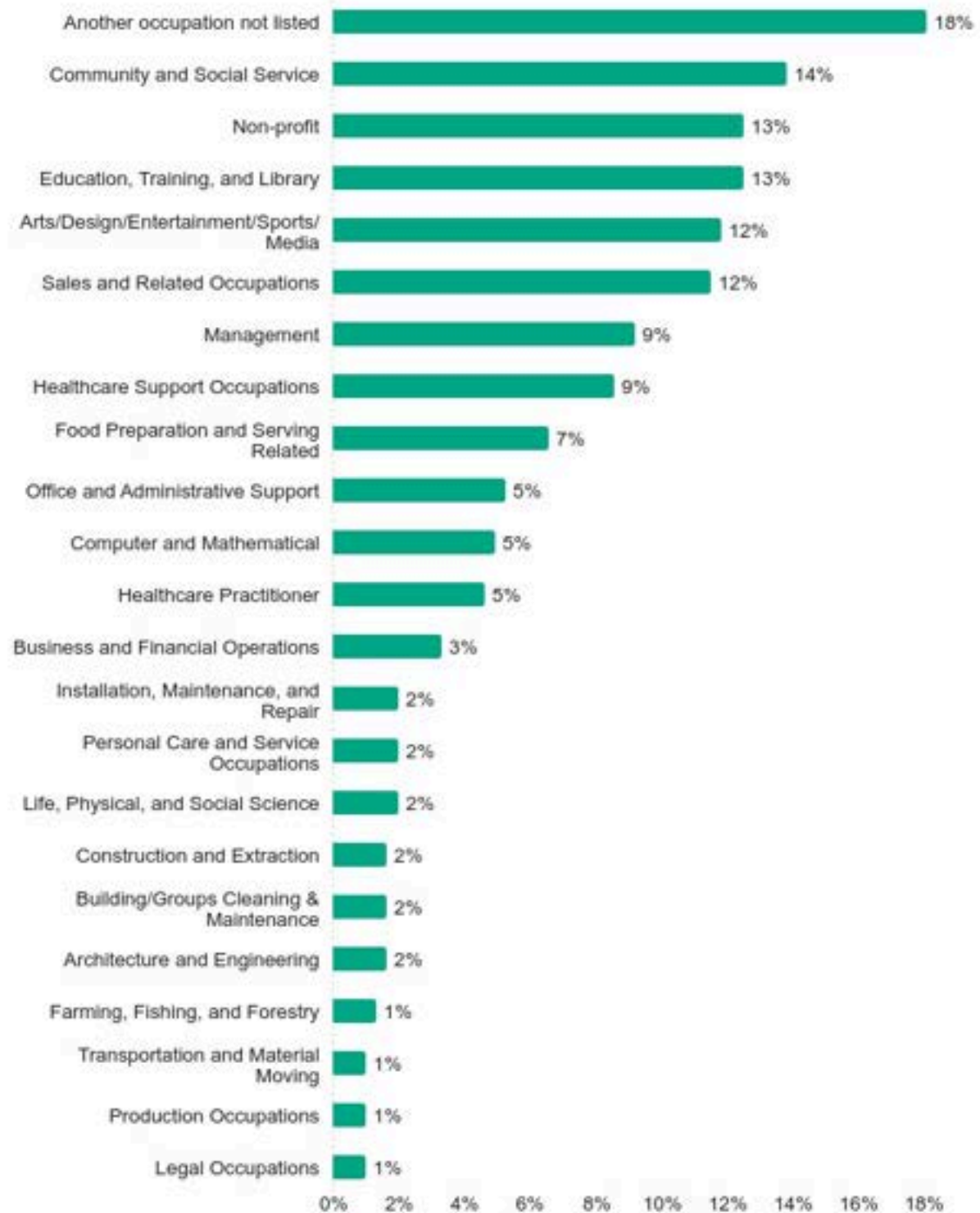
### What is your employment status? (select all that apply)

342 Responses



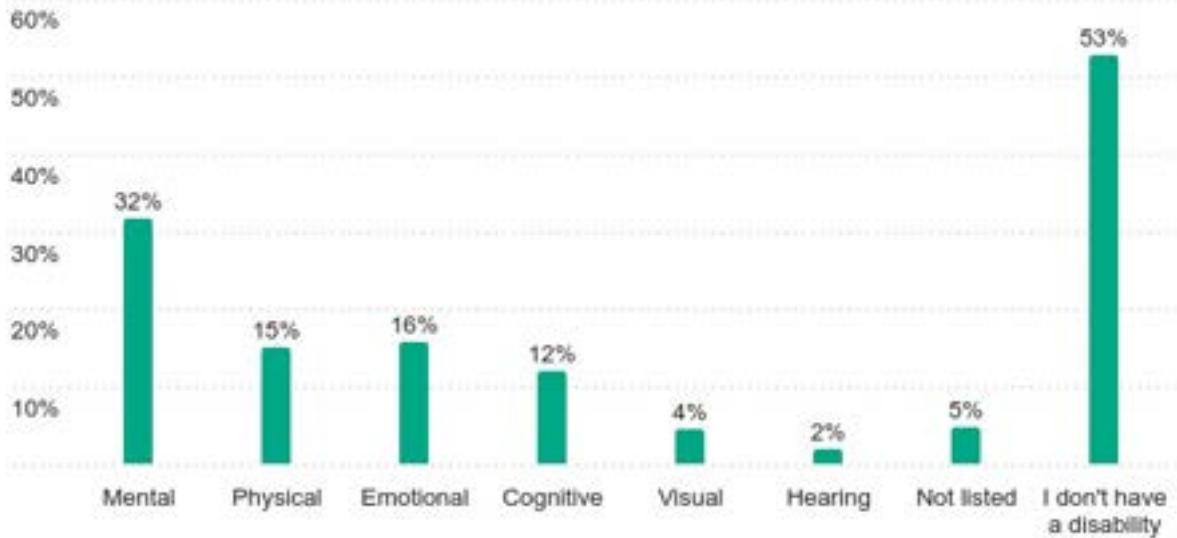
## What is your occupation? (select all that apply)

304 Responses



**Do you have any disabilities as defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)?  
(select all that apply)**

339 Responses



“My biggest concern is being openly transgender, racialized, disabled, and trying to find work. I cannot drive due to my disability so this severely limits my options as for employment.”

-Columbiana County Resident, Age 24







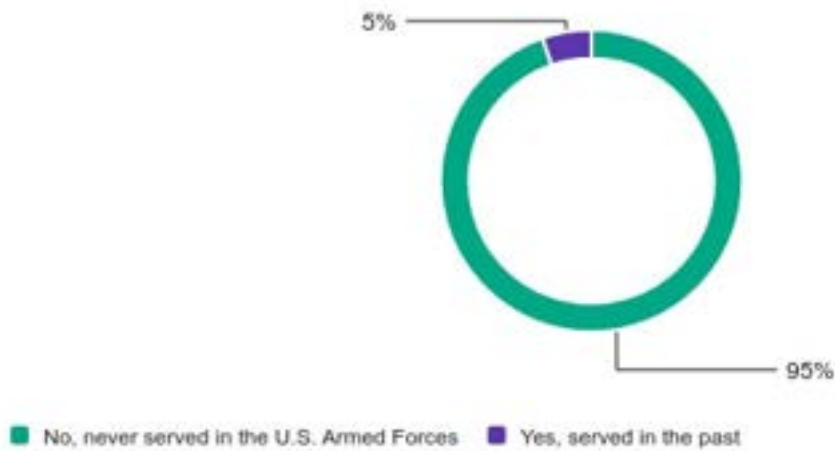
**“In the Mahoning Valley, it has never been fully accepted or embraced to be a member of the LGBTQ+ community and in fact, I believe many of us to still interact "underground" in some ways.**

**For most of us, we've accepted this fate but being someone who works and has interacted in communities that do, strongly believe we can make some progress, though the road will be very long and tough.”**

**-Trumbull County Resident, Age 35**

### Have you ever served in the U.S. Armed Forces?

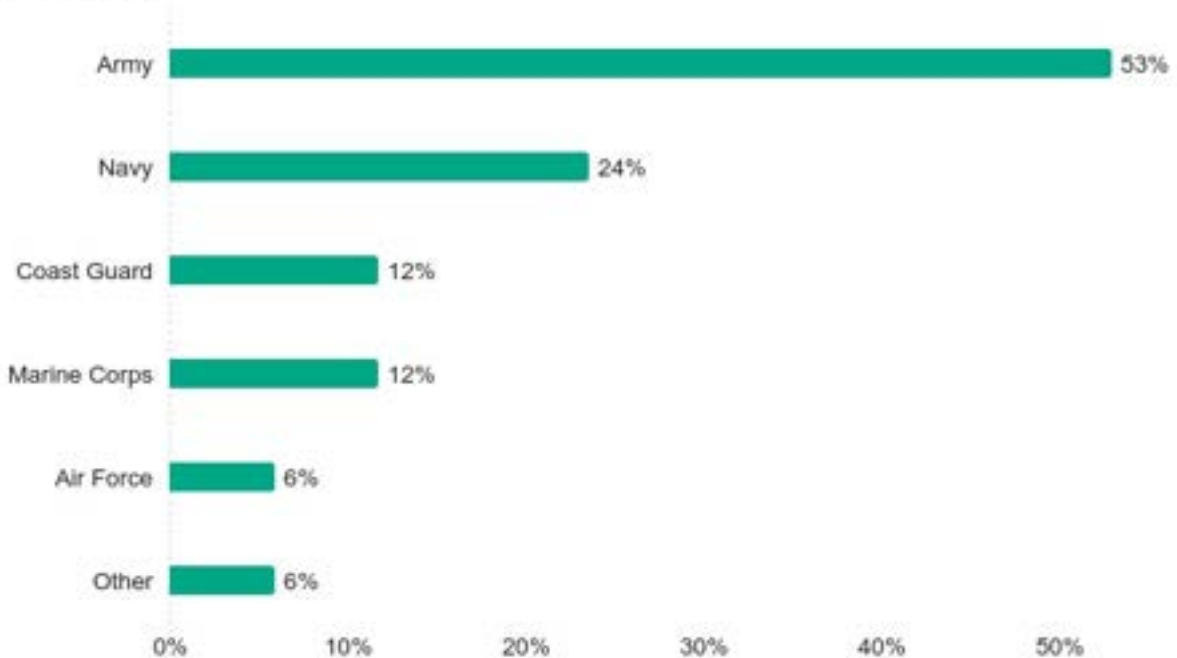
323 Responses



### In which branch or branches did you or do you serve on active duty? (select all that apply)

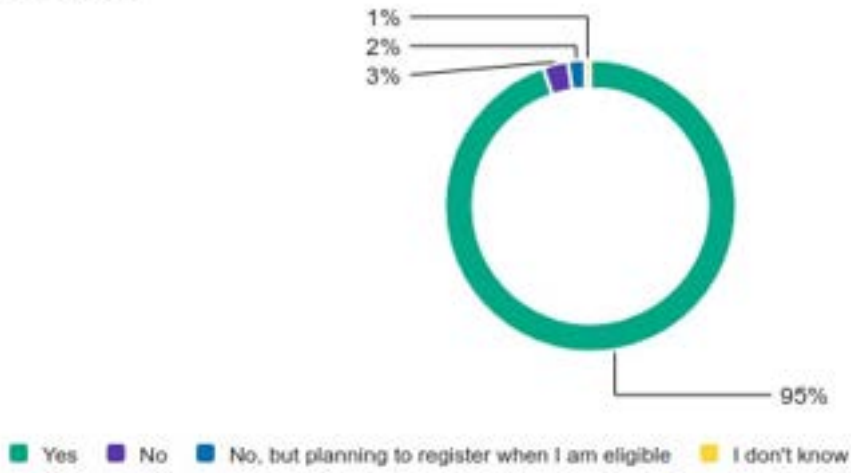
Only respondents indicating "yes, currently serving" or "yes, served in the past" to the question "Have you ever served in the U.S. Armed Forces?" were asked this question.

17 Responses



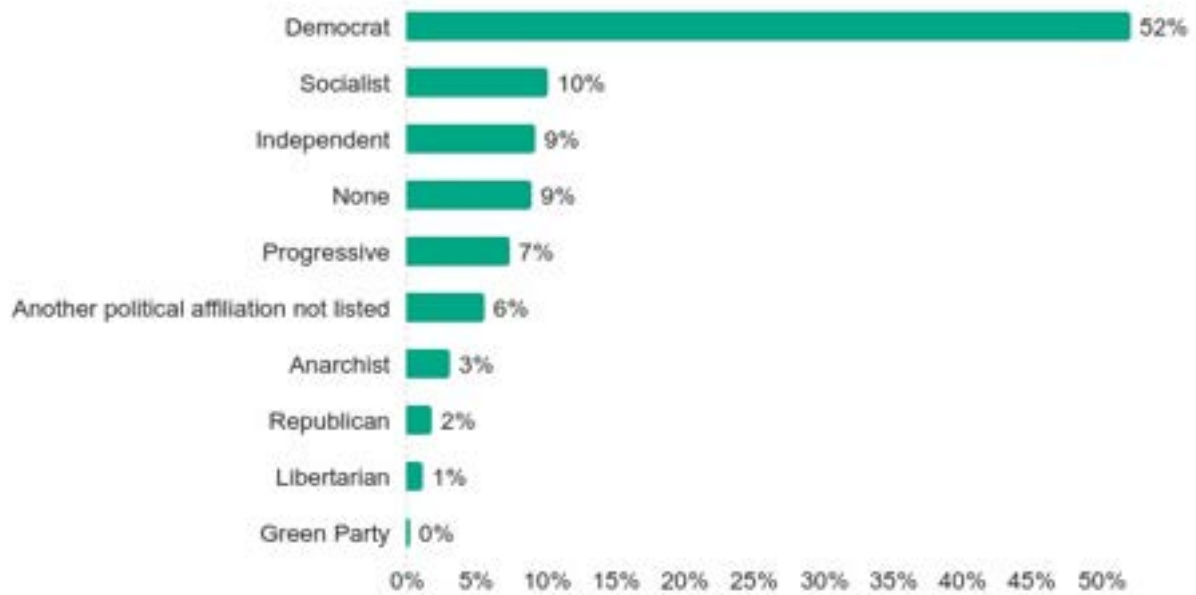
### Are you registered to vote?

324 Responses



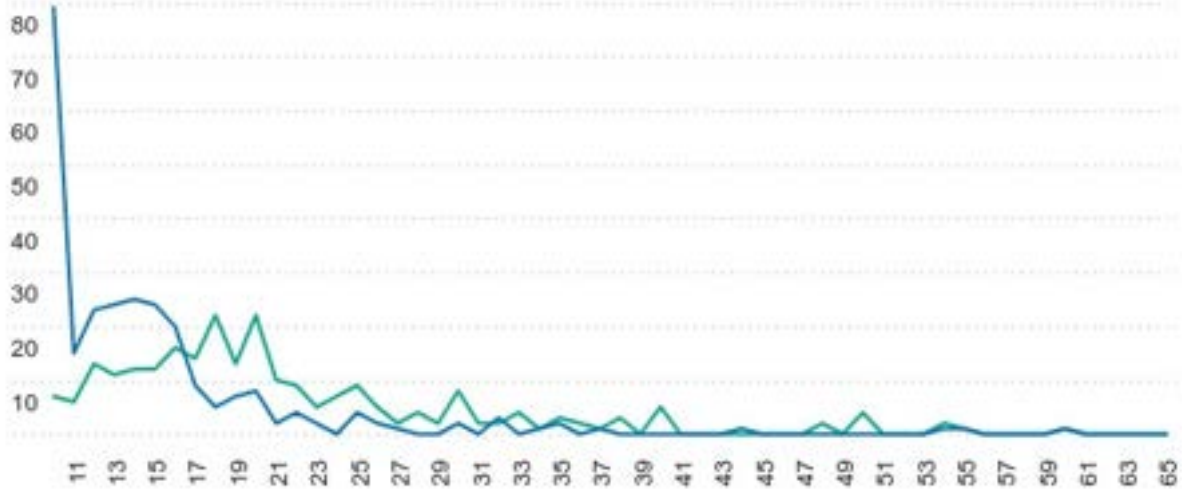
### What is your political affiliation?

324 Responses



## Coming Out

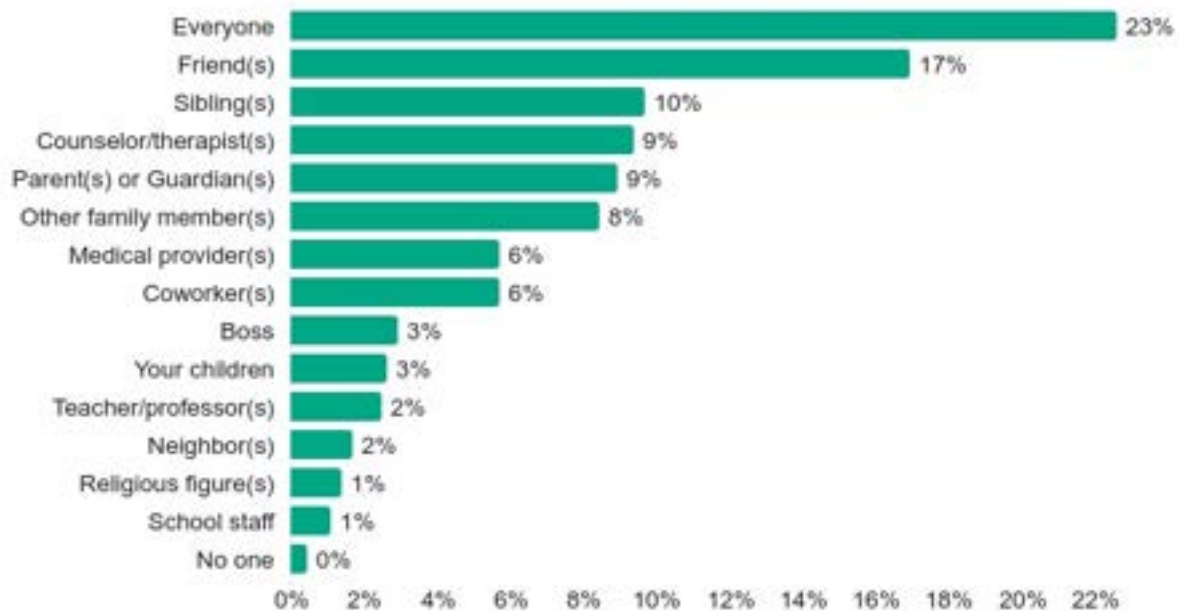
269 Responses



- If you are "out", at what age did you begin coming "out"?
- How old were you when you first realized you were LGBTQ+?

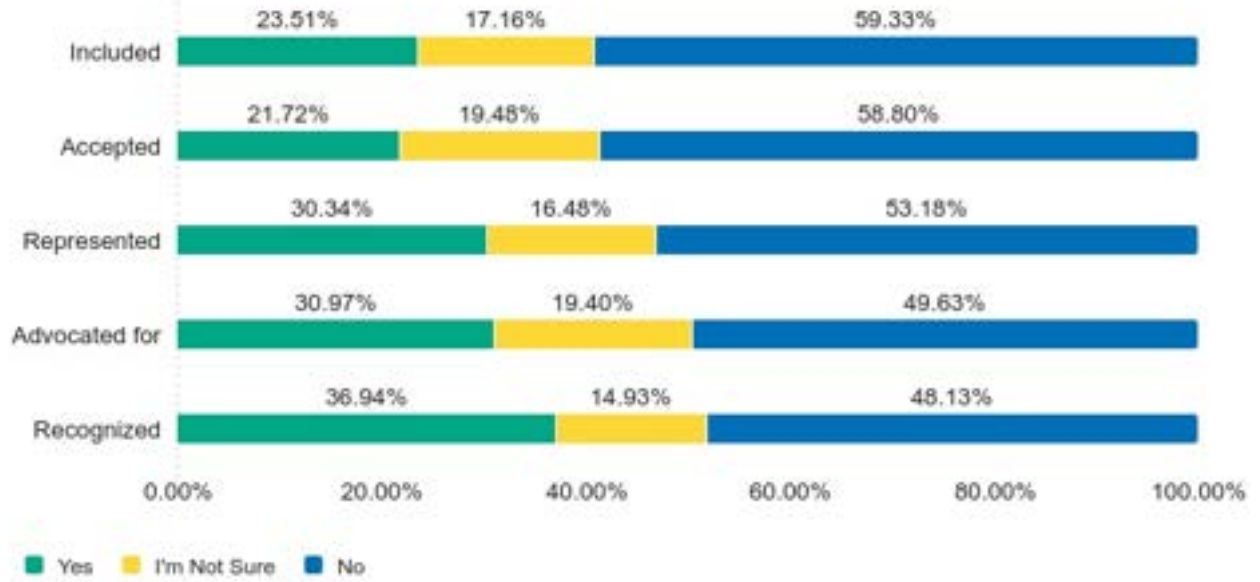
## Which of the following people are you "out" to? (select all that apply)

268 Responses



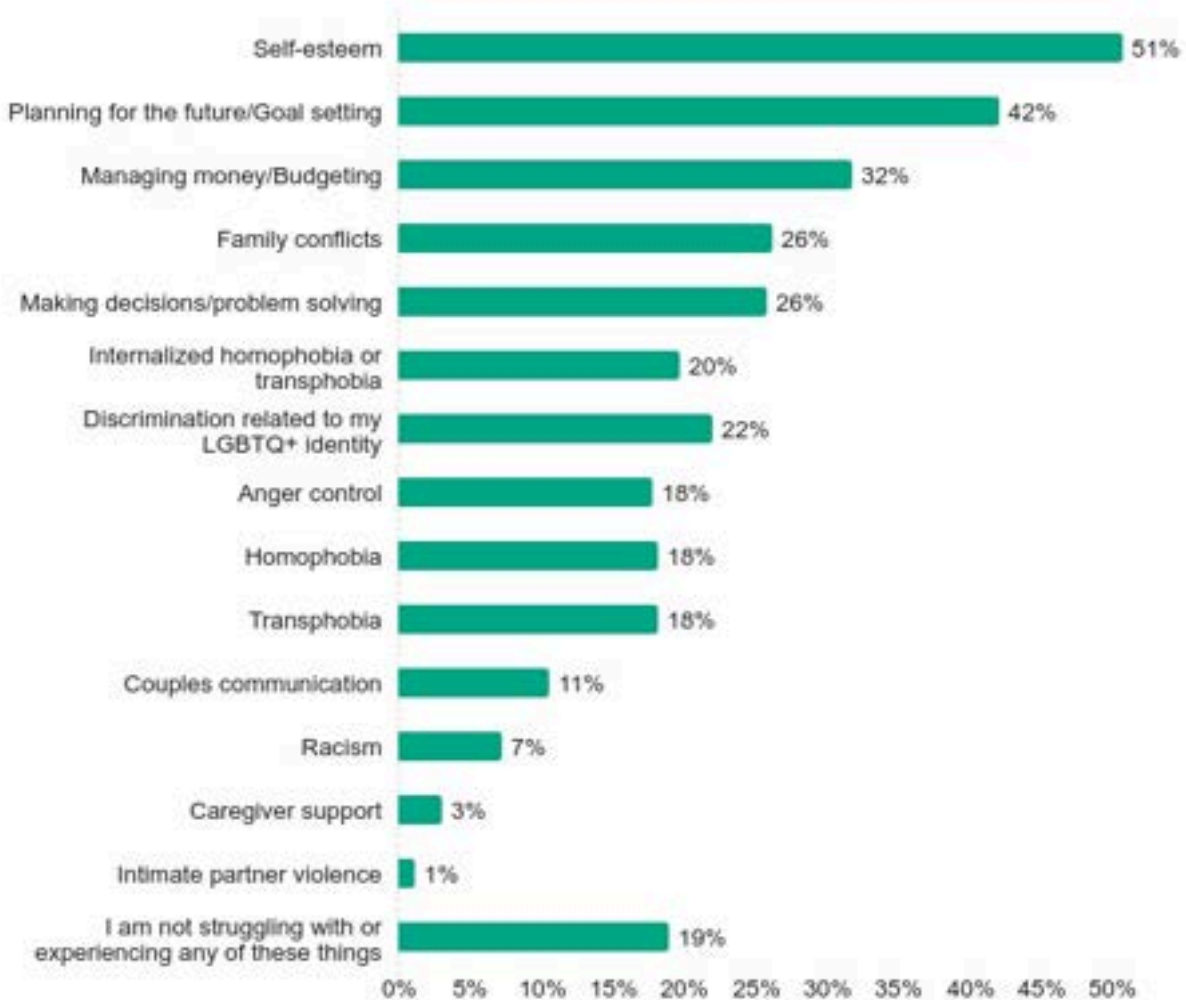
23 - In your own experience, do you feel you and your needs are represented, rec...

268 Responses



### Are you experiencing difficulty with any of these things? (select all that apply)

264 Responses



“As someone who identified as gender non conforming/non binary, I am not sure where I fit in. I feel lonely quite a lot, even though I am happily married.”

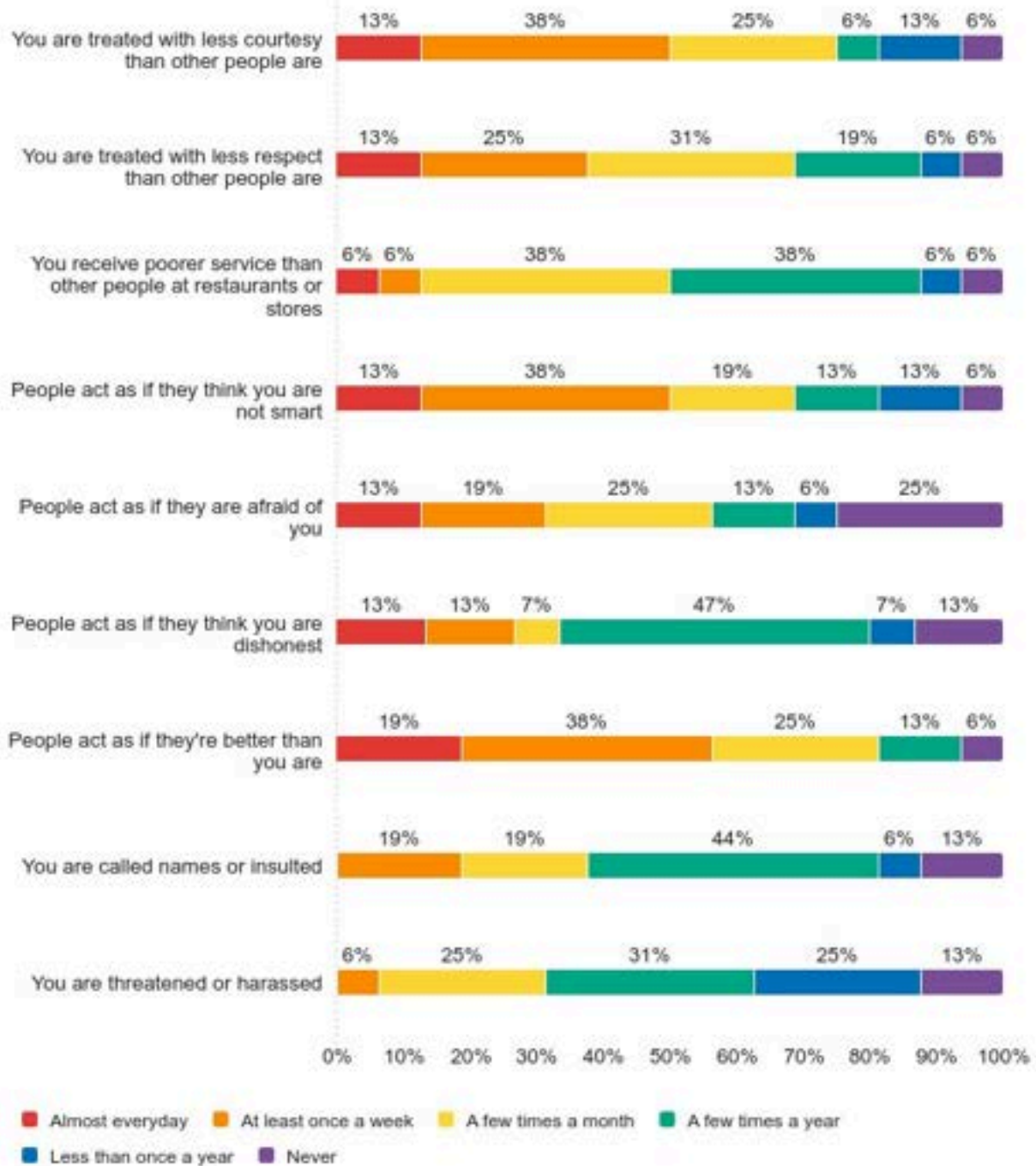
-Trumbull County Resident, Age 35



**In your day-to-day life, how often do any of the following things happen to to you related to your experience of racial discrimination?**

Only respondents indicating "Racism" to the question "Are you experiencing difficulty with any of these things?" were asked this question.

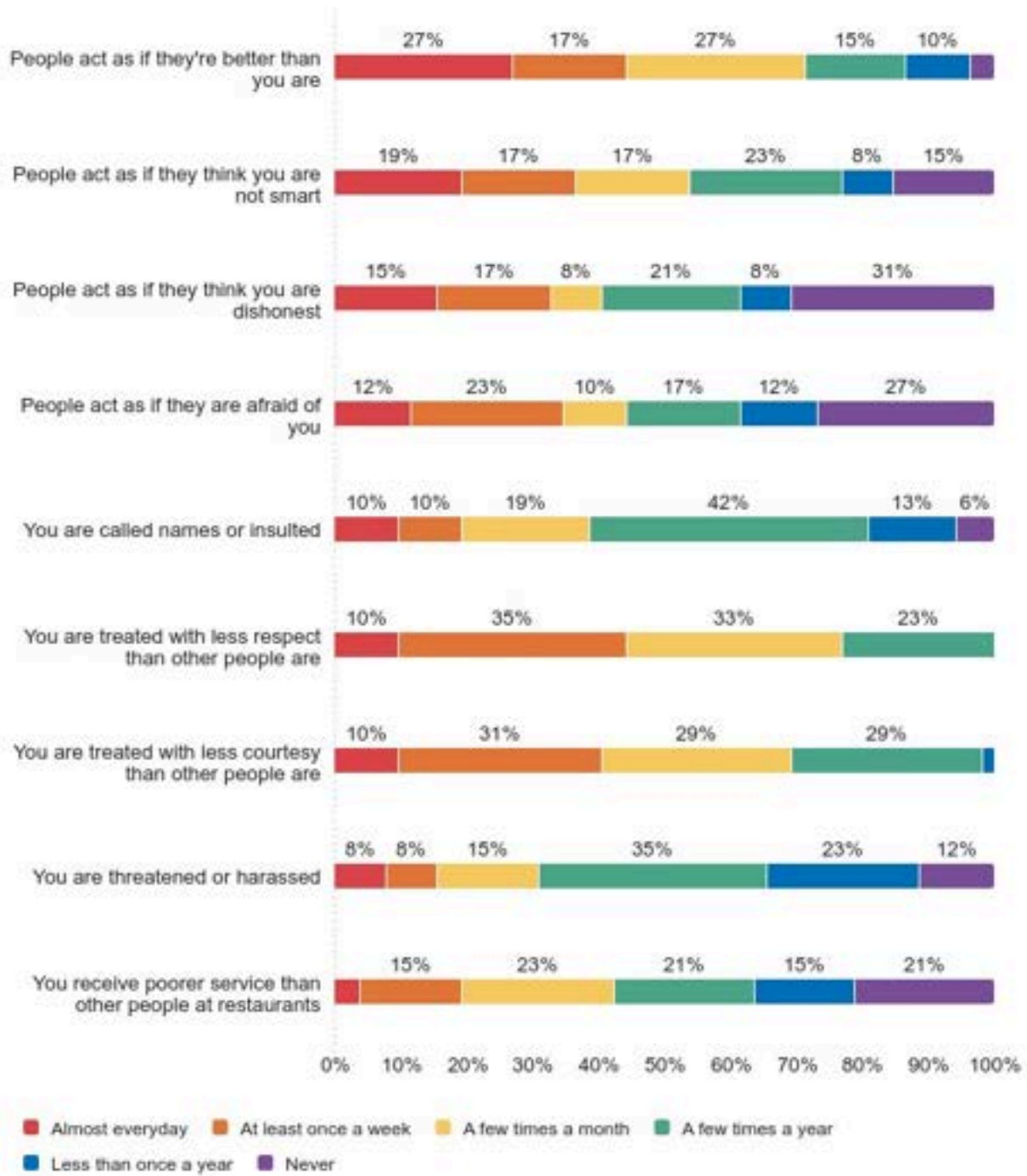
16 Responses



**In your day-to-day life, how often do any of the following things happen to you related to your experience of LGBTQ+ discrimination?**

Only respondents indicating "Discrimination related to my LGBTQ+ identity" to the question "Are you experiencing difficulty with any of these things?" were asked this question.

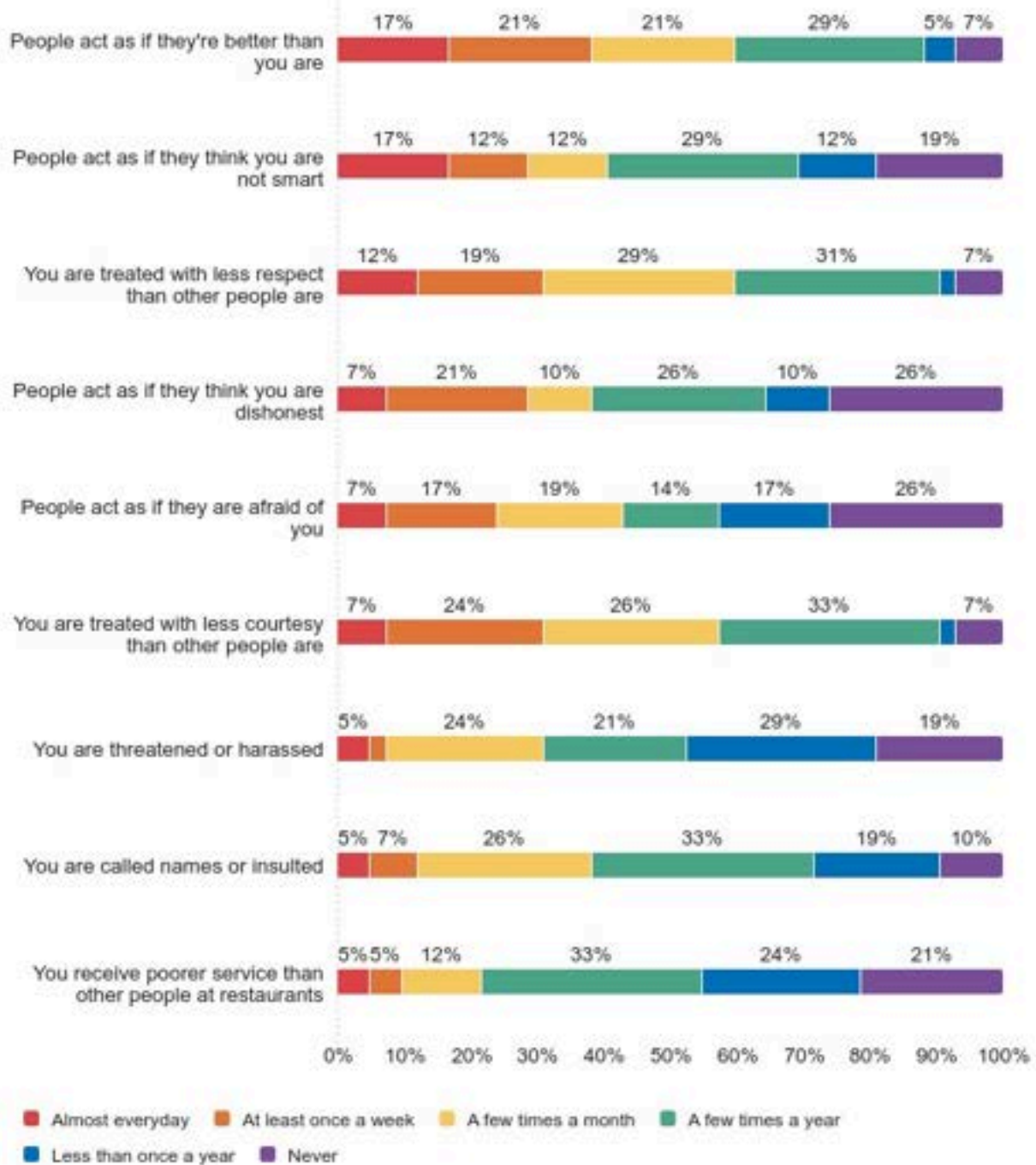
52 Responses



**In your day-to-day life, how often do any of the following things happen to you related to your experience of homophobia?**

Only respondents indicating "Homophobia" to the question "Are you experiencing difficulty with any of these things?" were asked this question.

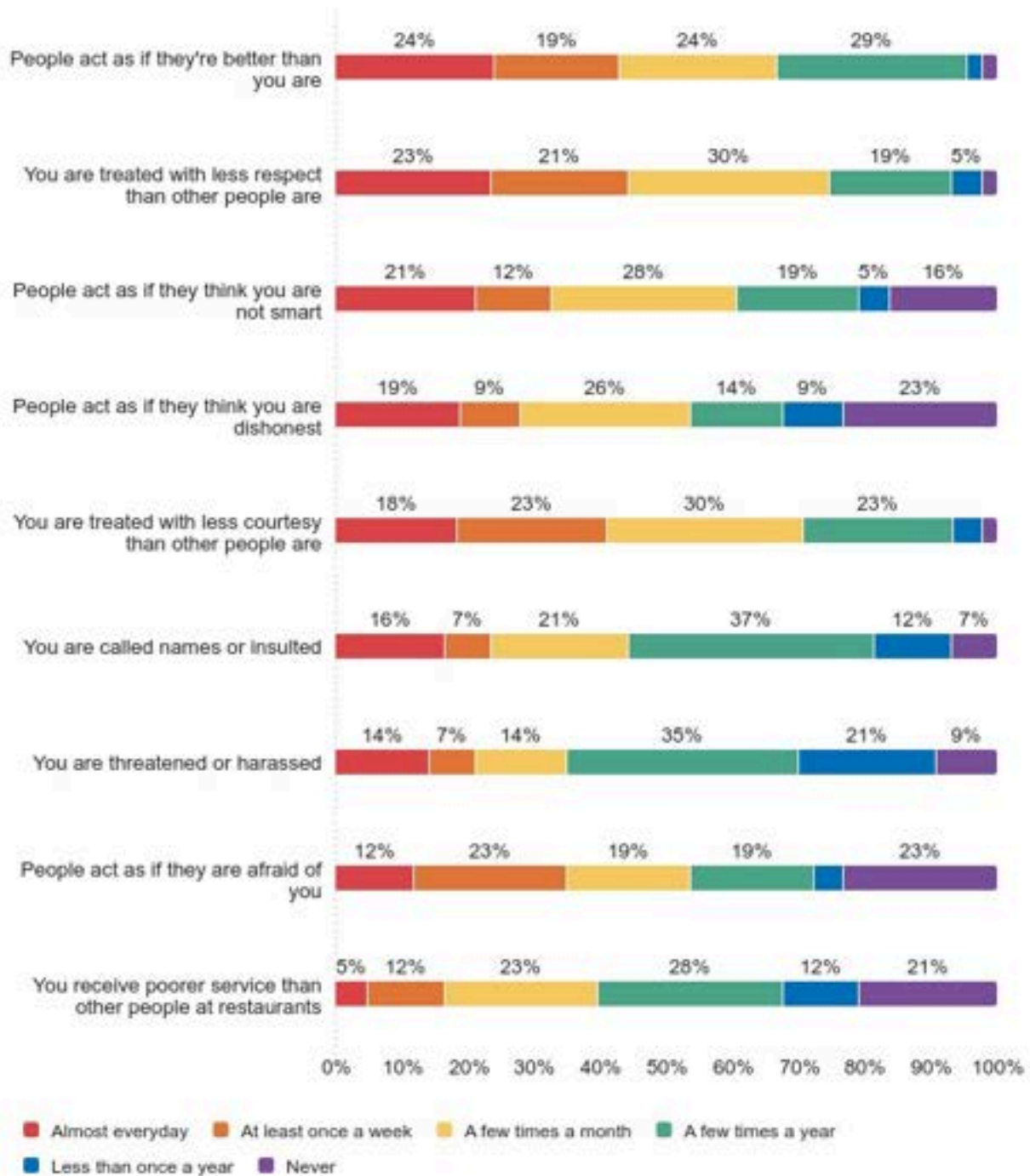
42 Responses



## In your day-to-day life, how often do any of the following things happen to you related to your experience of transphobia?

Only respondents indicating "Transphobia" to the question "Are you experiencing difficulty with any of these things?" were asked this question.

44 Responses



The background of the page is a blurred image of a person's face, likely a healthcare professional, with a rainbow heart held in their hands. The heart is the central focus, with its colors (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple) visible. The person's face is out of focus, showing their eyes and part of their nose. The overall tone is professional and caring.

# Health and Wellness

For the purpose of this project, we define health and wellness as a holistic and community informed state of wellbeing that includes physical, mental, emotional, social, behavioral, and spiritual concerns and needs, with specific attention to the lived experiences of LGBTQ+ individuals in the Greater Mahoning Valley of Ohio. We recognize that wellness for LGBTQ+ people is shaped not only by freedom from disease and pain, but also by the presence of dignity, safety, and affirmation across all areas of life.

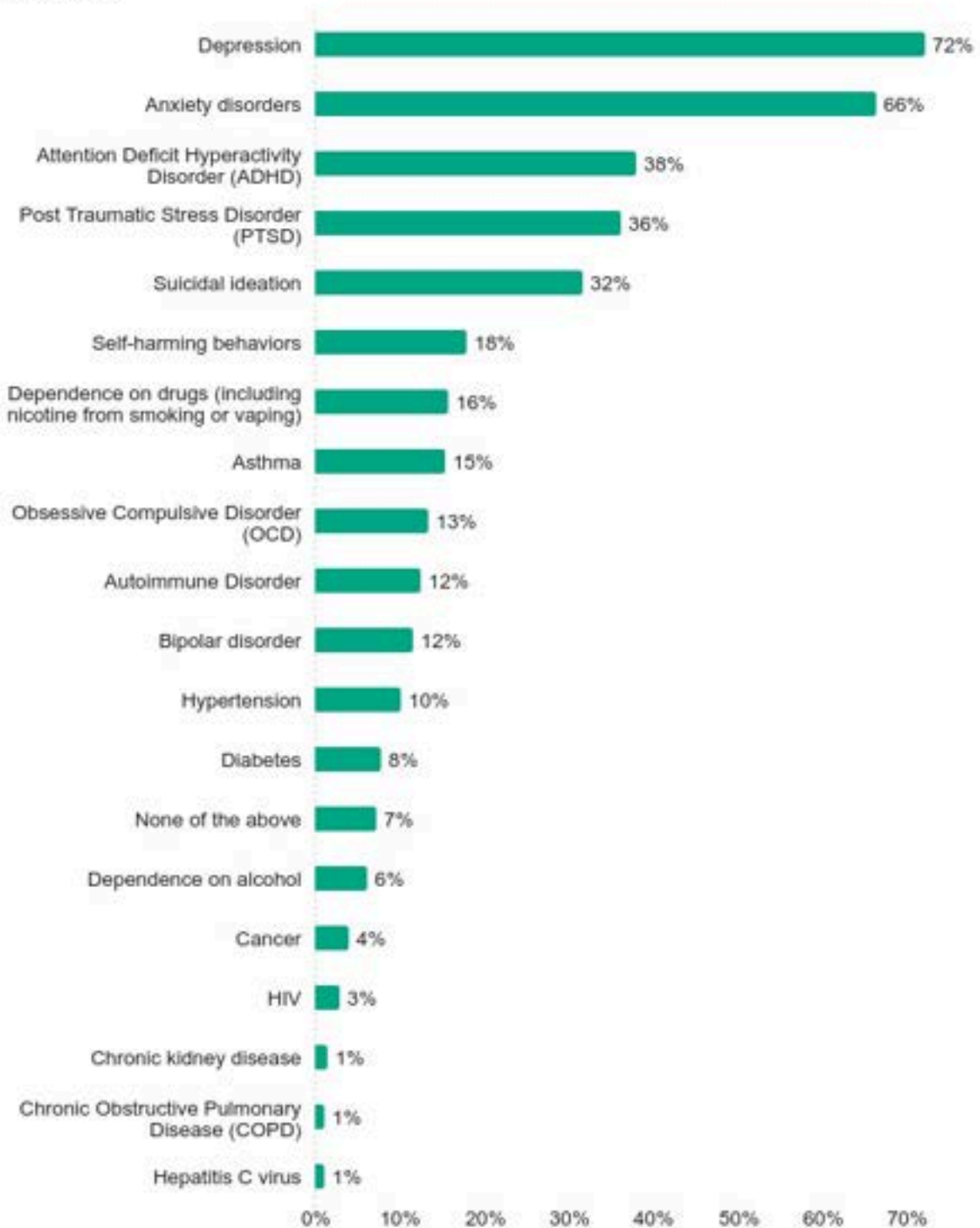
We understand that access to healthcare and support services is not equal across the region and that policies, geography, provider availability, and insurance coverage often dictate the type and quality of care individuals receive. We also recognize that barriers such as lack of public transportation, housing instability, and fear of discrimination further limit access to essential services.

Health and wellness for LGBTQ+ people in the Greater Mahoning Valley must include accessible and affordable gender affirming care, both mental and physical, as well as trauma informed, culturally competent, and inclusive care across all systems. Safety, whether in healthcare settings, public spaces, schools, or homes, is a necessary condition for health.

Social determinants of health, such as income, education, transportation, and housing, must be understood not as separate from health, but as integral to it. We center accessibility in all forms and recognize that wellness is not possible without equitable access to care and the removal of barriers.

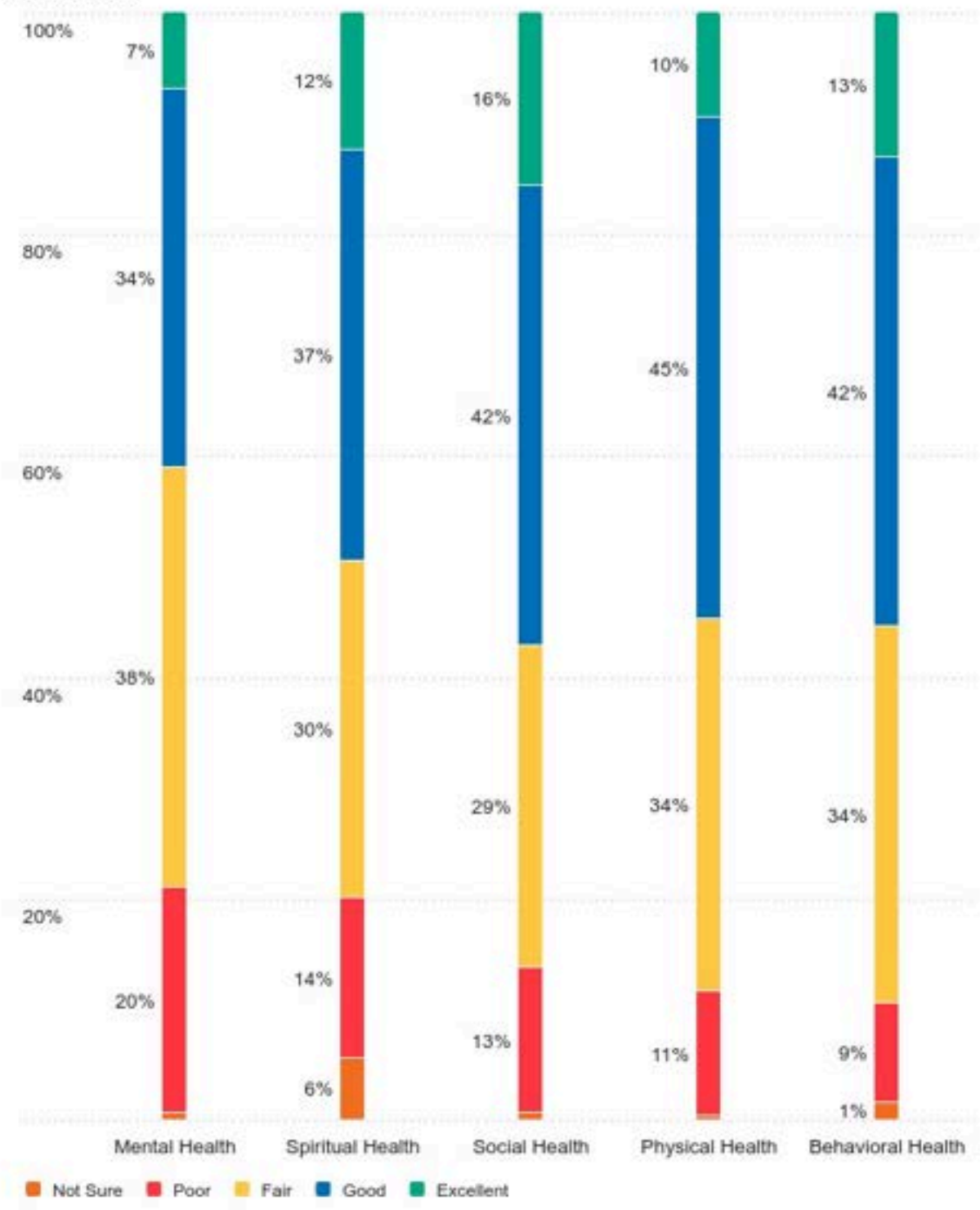
**Have you ever been diagnosed with or experienced any of the following health events in the past five (5) years? (select all that apply)**

345 Responses



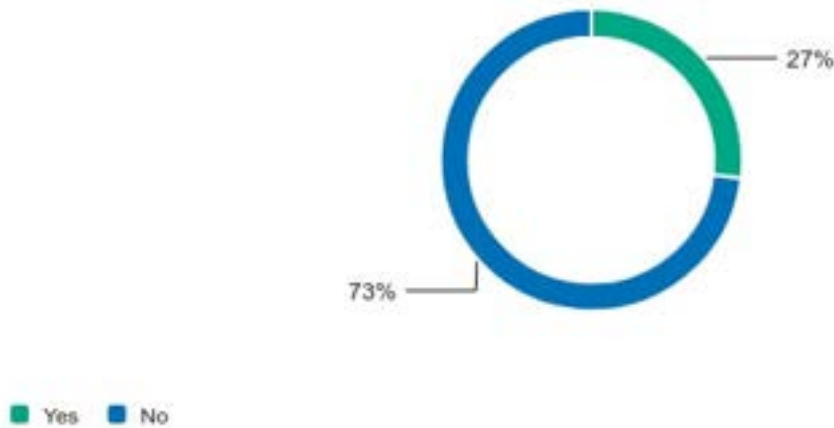
### How would you rate your overall physical, mental, behavioral, spiritual, and social health?

345 Responses



### Do you currently use any tobacco product(s)?

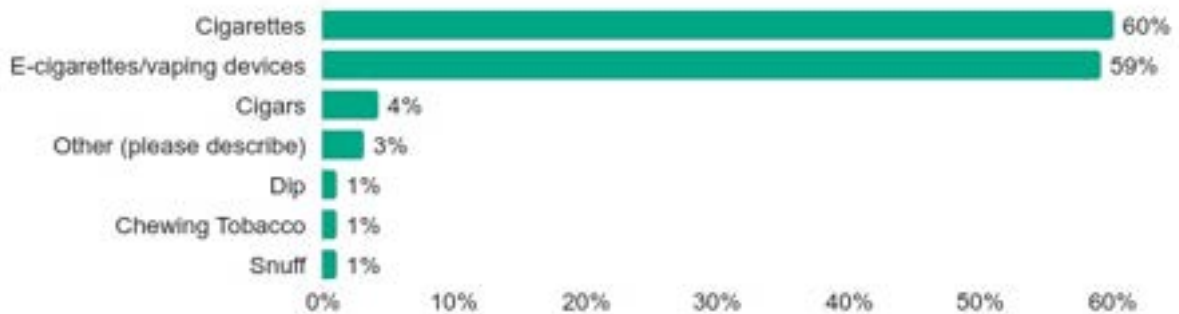
345 Responses



### What kind of tobacco product(s) do you use? (select all that apply)

Only respondents indicating "Yes" to the question "Do you currently use any tobacco products?" were asked this question.

93 Responses



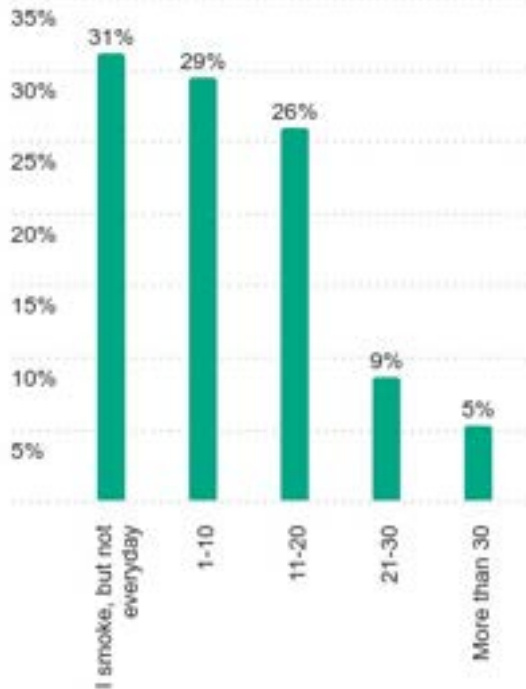
**“Legislation that has been passed must be reversed. The laws are not protective of children, they are dangerous. Health care workers need to be educated on LGBTQ concerns and specific needs.”**

**-Mahoning County Resident, Age 82**

### On average, how many cigarettes/cigars per day do you smoke?

Only respondents indicating "Cigarettes" or "Cigars" to the question "What kind of tobacco product(s) do you use?" were asked this question.

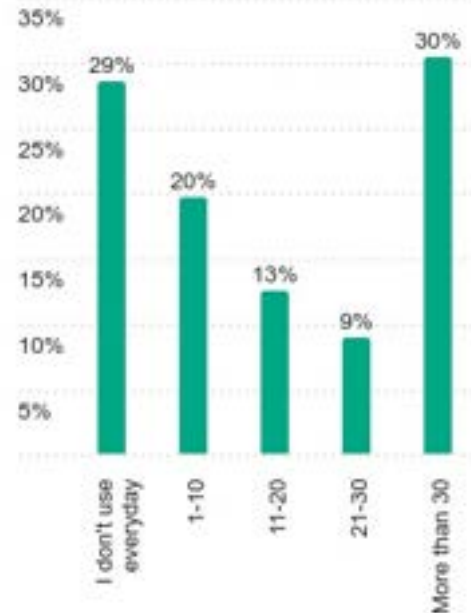
58 Responses



### If you use a form of tobacco other than cigarettes or cigars, how many times per day do you use it?

Only respondents indicating "E-cigarettes/vaping devices", "Dip", "Chewing Tobacco", "Snuff", or "Other" to the question "What kind of tobacco product(s) do you use?" were asked this question.

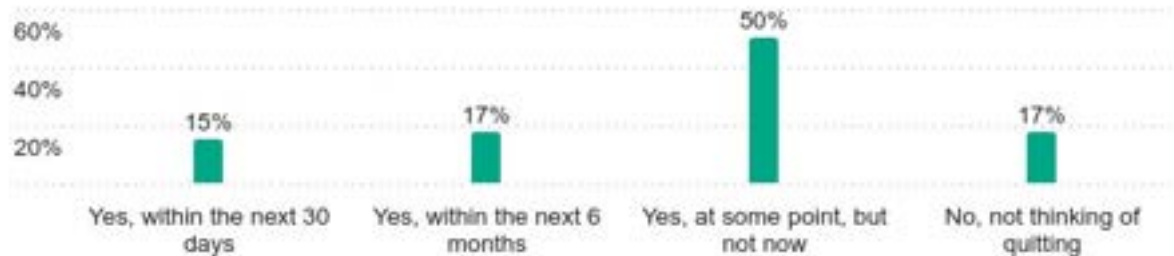
56 Responses



### Are you seriously considering quitting smoking/using tobacco product(s)?

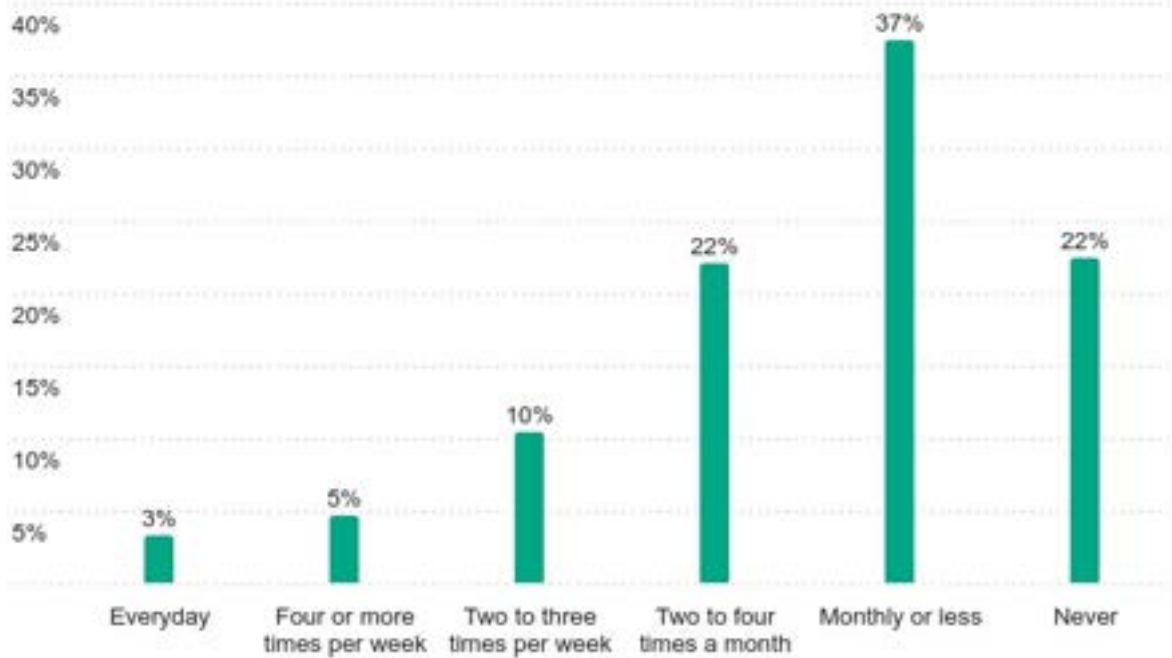
Only respondents indicating "Yes" to the question "Do you currently use any tobacco products?" were asked this question.

92 Responses



### How often do you have a drink containing alcohol?

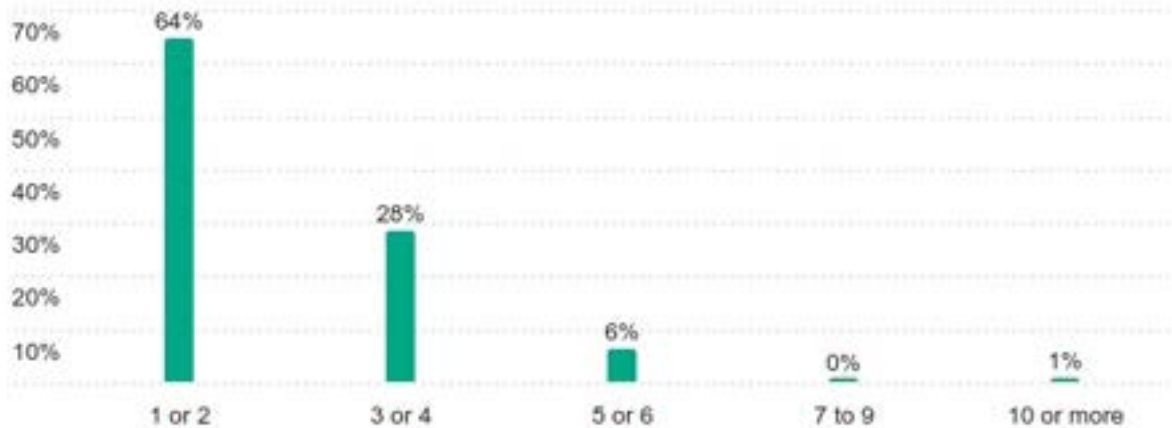
345 Responses



### How many drinks containing alcohol do you have on a typical day when you are drinking?

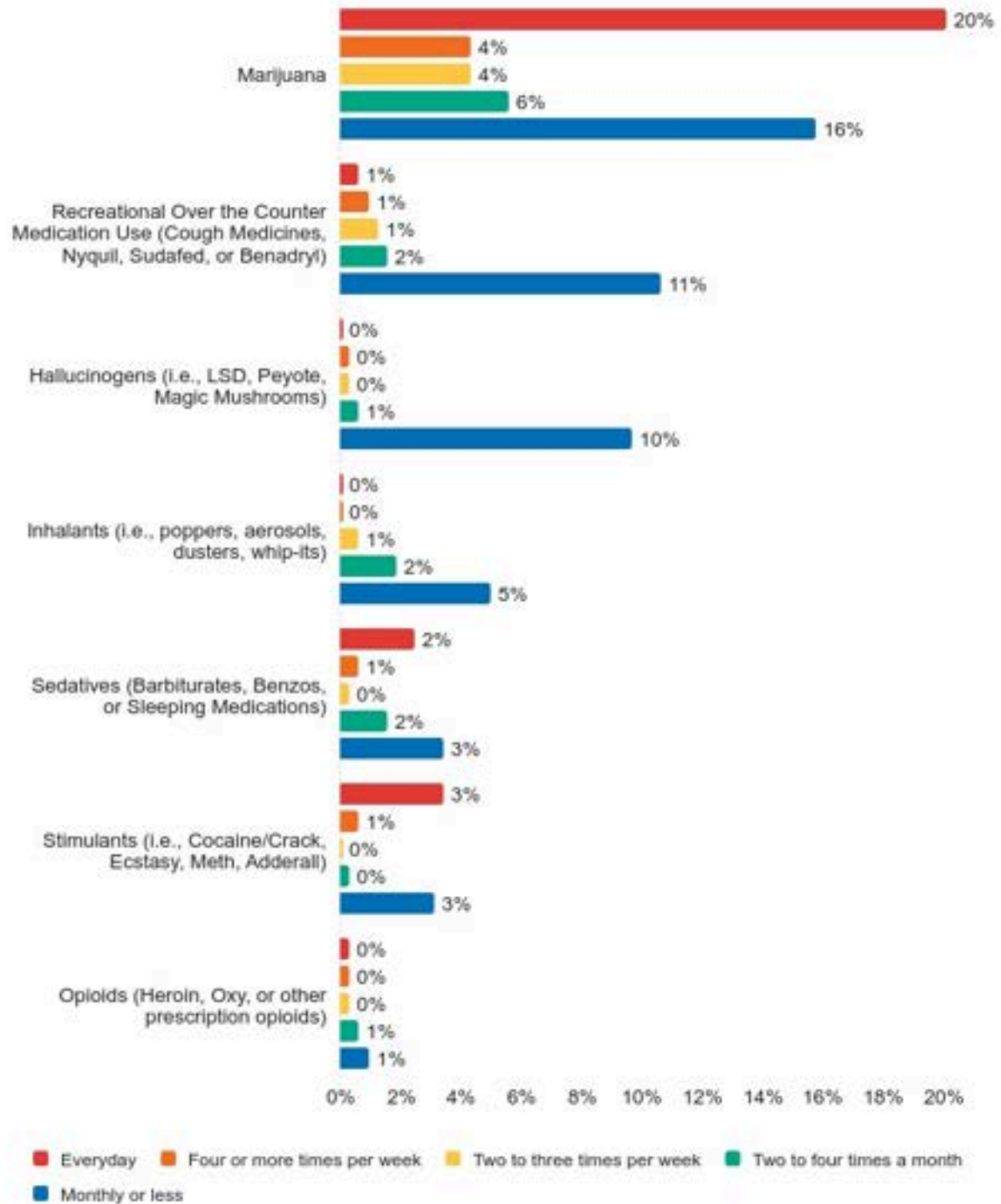
Only respondents who indicated "Everyday", "Four or more times per week", "Two to three times per week", "Two to four times a month" or "Monthly or less" to the question "How often do you have a drink containing alcohol?" were asked this question.

259 Responses



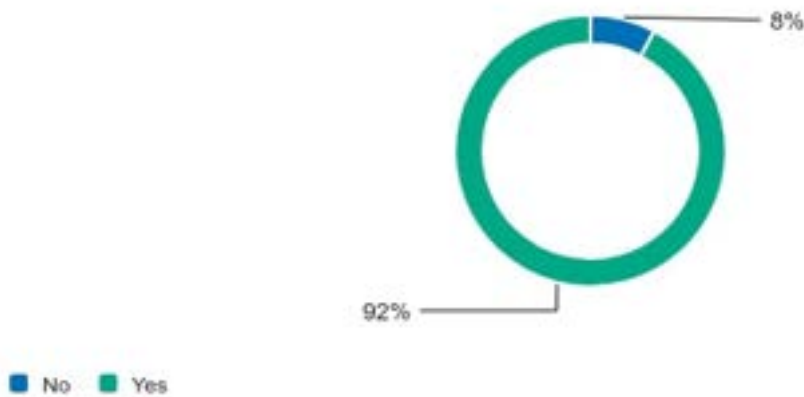
**Describe the frequency you use any of the following substances recreationally (i.e., for the experience or feeling not the intended medical use.)**

323 Responses



### Do you currently have health insurance coverage?

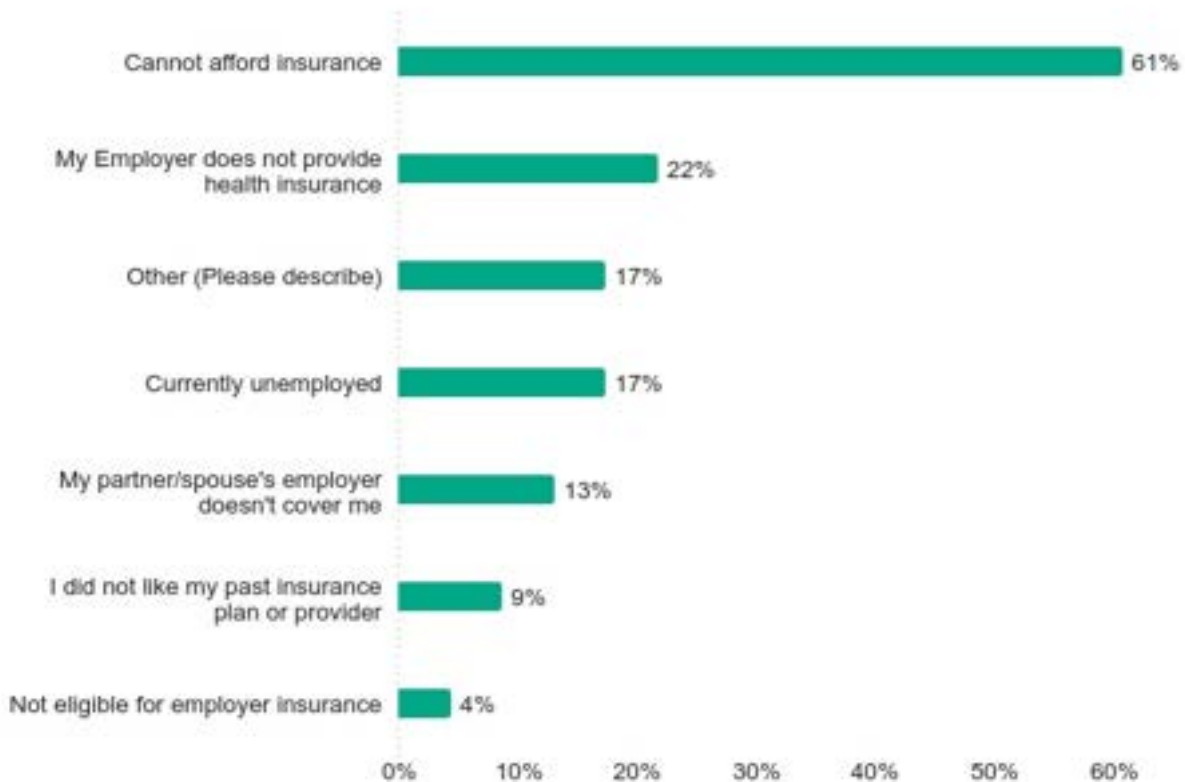
321 Responses



### What are the reason(s) you are currently uninsured? (select all that apply)

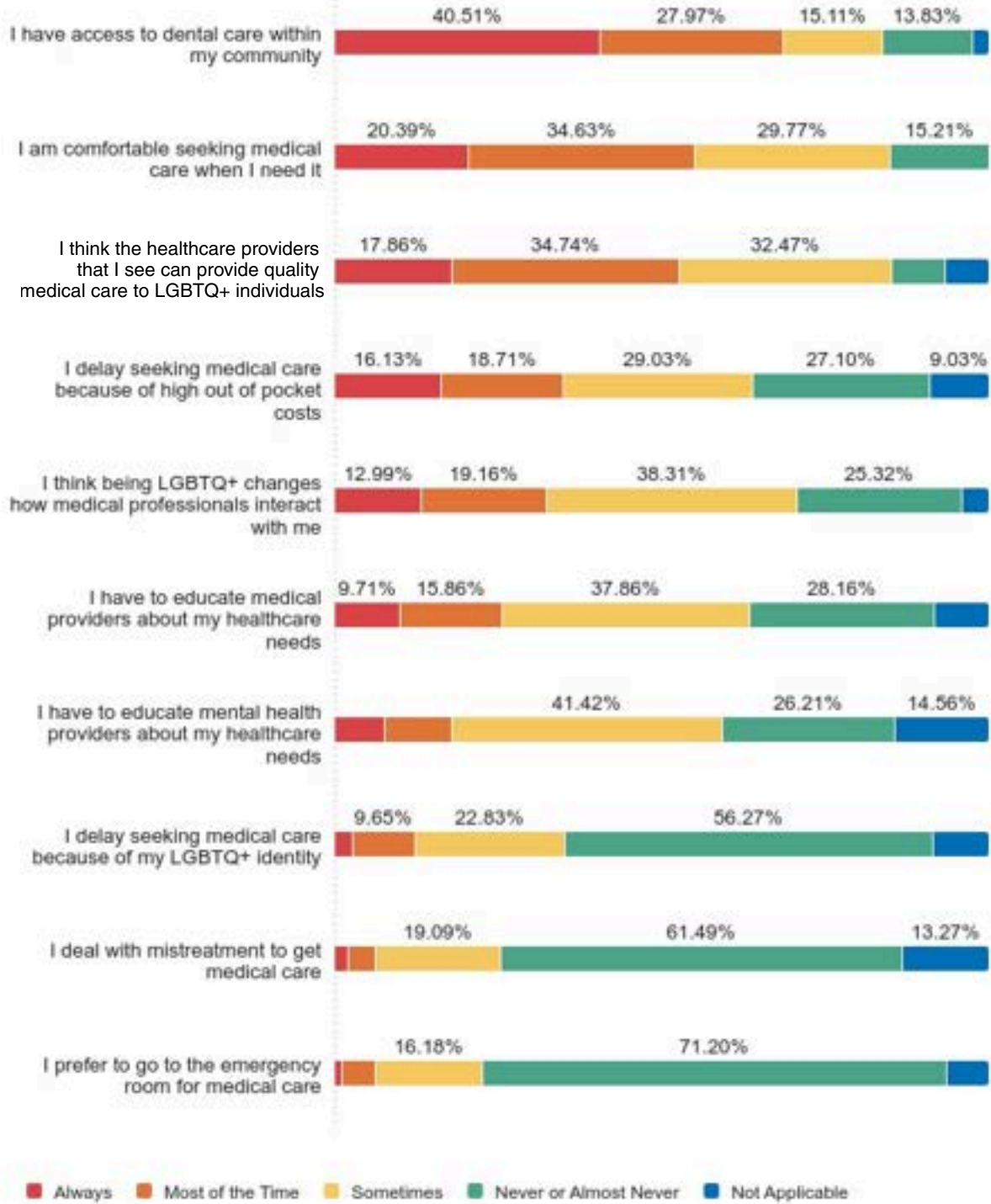
Only respondents who indicated "No" to the question "Do you currently have health insurance?" were asked this question.

23 Responses



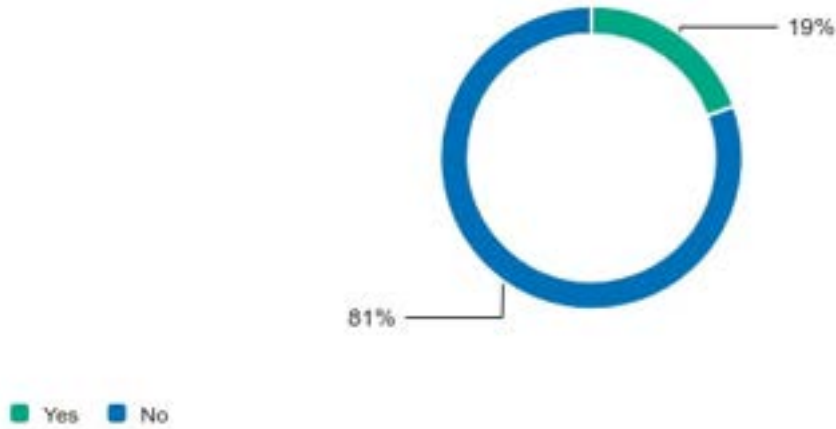
**Please tell us more about your typical experience getting healthcare-related services in the past 5 years.**

311 Responses



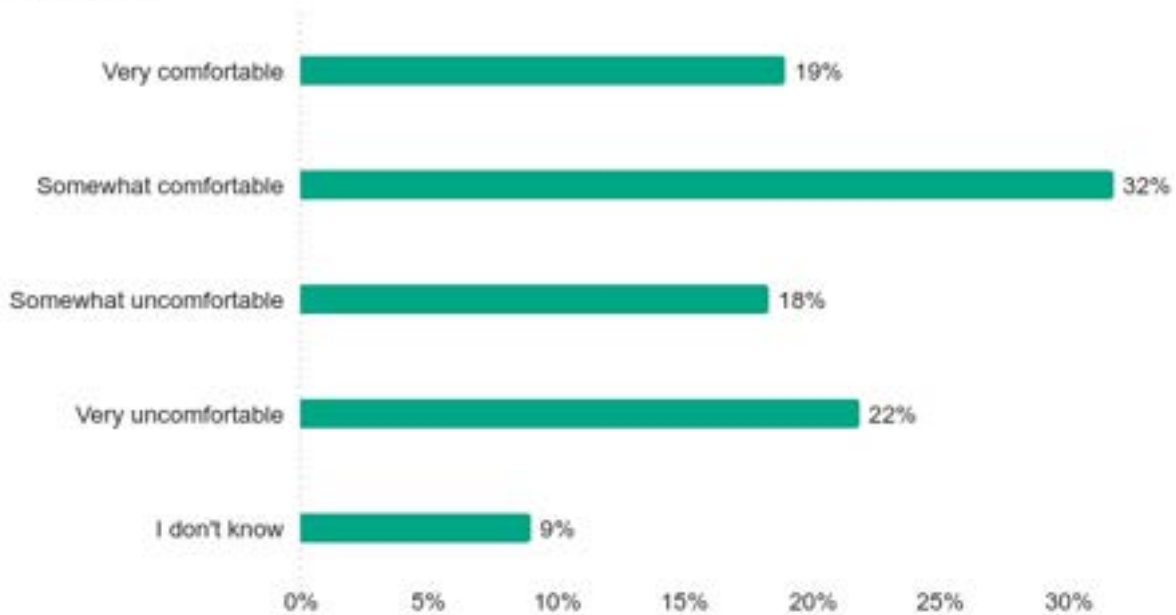
Have you gone to an **LGBTQ+ specific** doctor's office in the past five (5) years? (i.e.: an LGBTQ+ clinic, gender-affirming clinic, or other LGBTQ+ specialized practice)

308 Responses



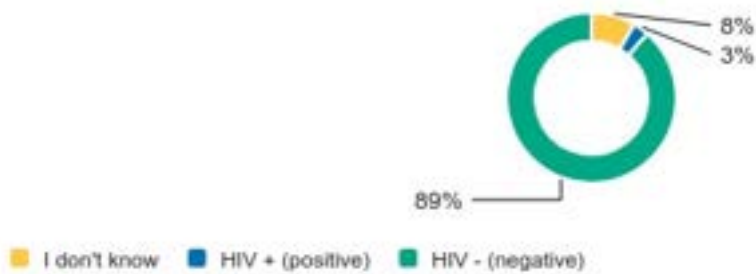
Would you feel comfortable having your health care organization(s) collecting sensitive data such as sexual orientation or gender identity in your patient file?

311 Responses



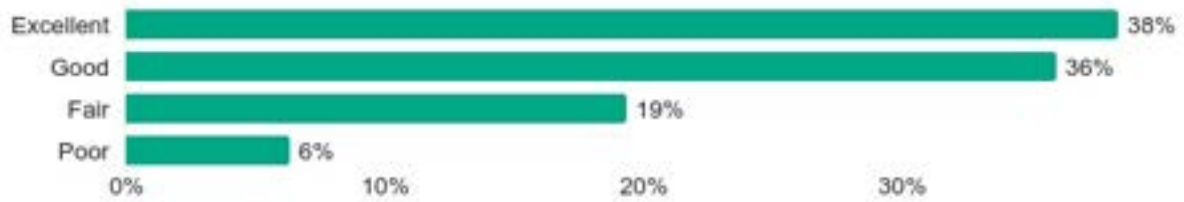
### What is your HIV status?

332 Responses



### How would you rate your knowledge about HIV and HIV prevention?

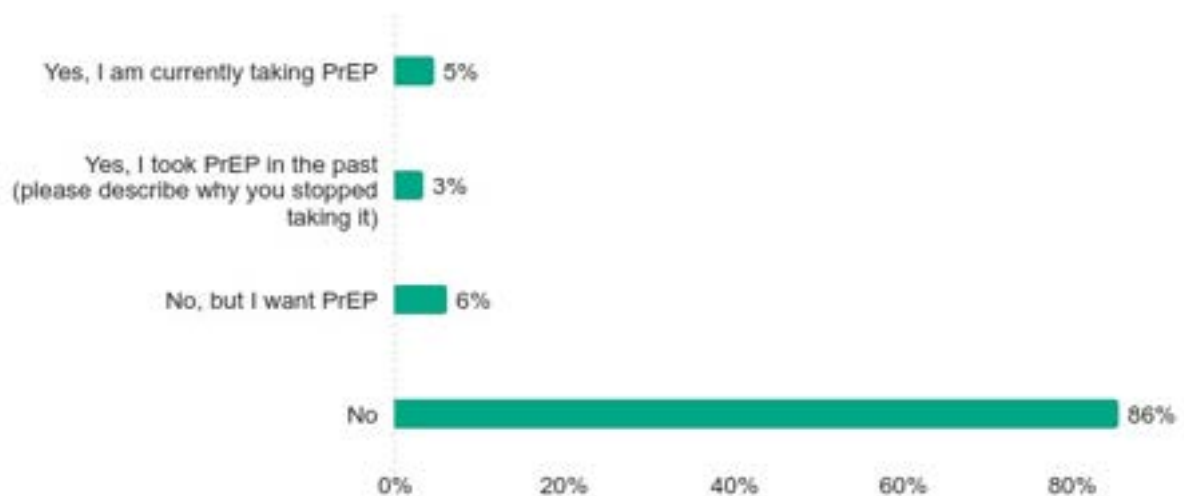
331 Responses



### Have you ever taken pre-exposure prophylaxis (also known as PrEP) for HIV prevention?

Only respondents indicating "HIV - (negative)" or "I don't know" to the question "What is your HIV status?" were asked this question.

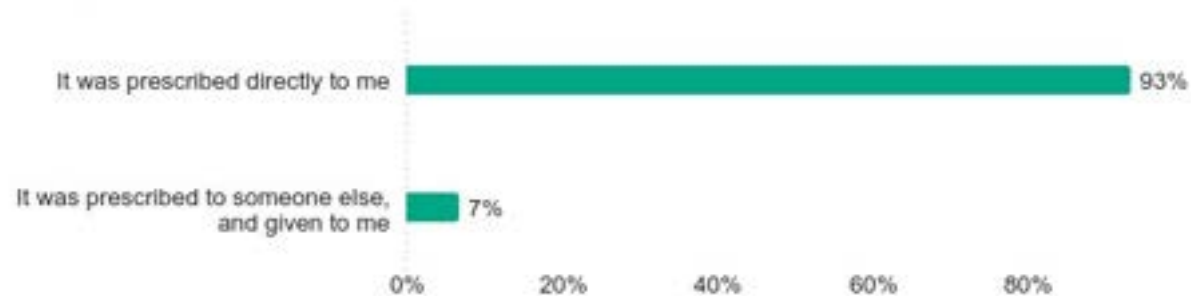
318 Responses



### How did you last get your PrEP medication?

Only respondents indicating "Yes, I am currently taking PrEP" to the question "Have you ever taken pre-exposure prophylaxis (also known as PrEP) for HIV prevention?" were asked this question.

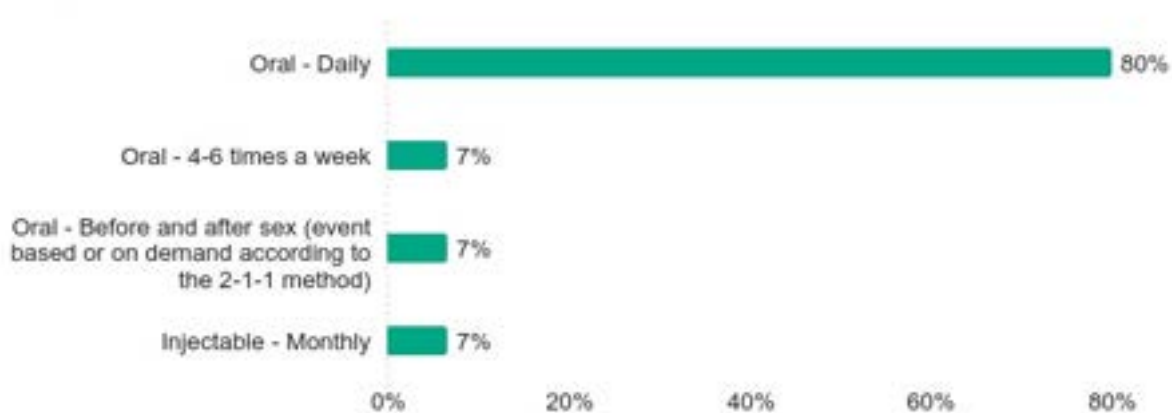
15 Responses



### How often do you take your PrEP medication?

Only respondents indicating "Yes, I am currently taking PrEP" to the question "Have you ever taken pre-exposure prophylaxis (also known as PrEP) for HIV prevention?" were asked this question.

15 Responses



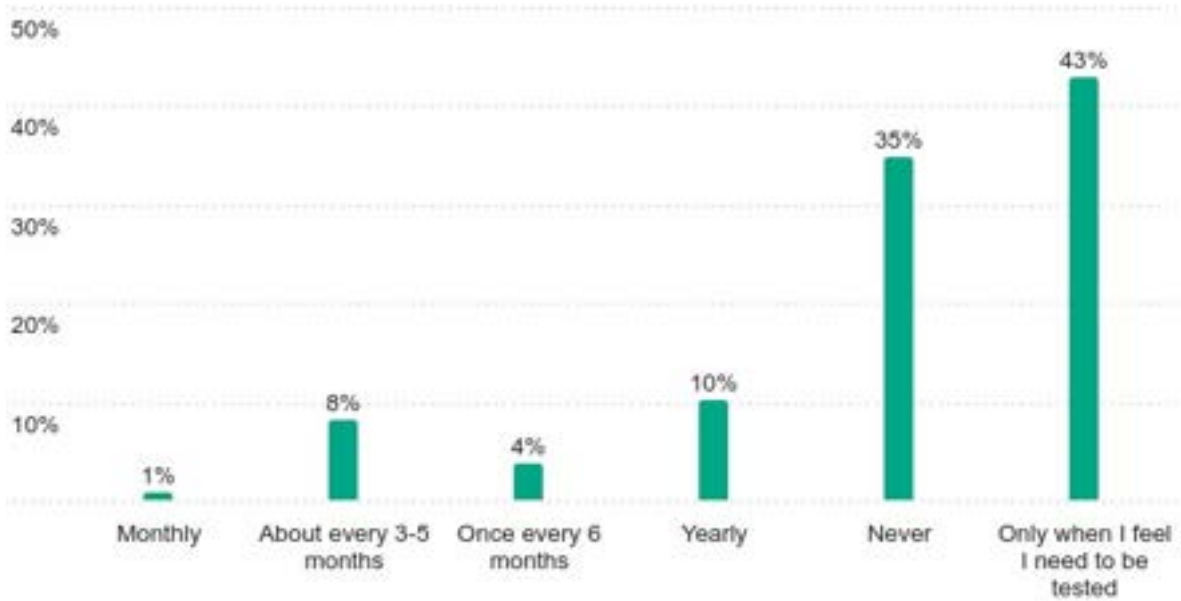
“I fear not getting proper medical care being HIV+. The HIV care is fine, the concern lies in other aspects of medical care. I’ve experienced doctors in the past who were unwilling to treat me after seeing my status. The HIV clinic, understandably, prefers to only treat the HIV and nothing more. A clinic with Primary Care physician(s) willing to care for all members of the LGBT community would help.”

-Mahoning County Resident, Age 47

### Which of the following best describes how often you get tested for HIV?

Only respondents indicating "HIV - (negative)" or "I don't know" to the question "What is your HIV status?" were asked this question.

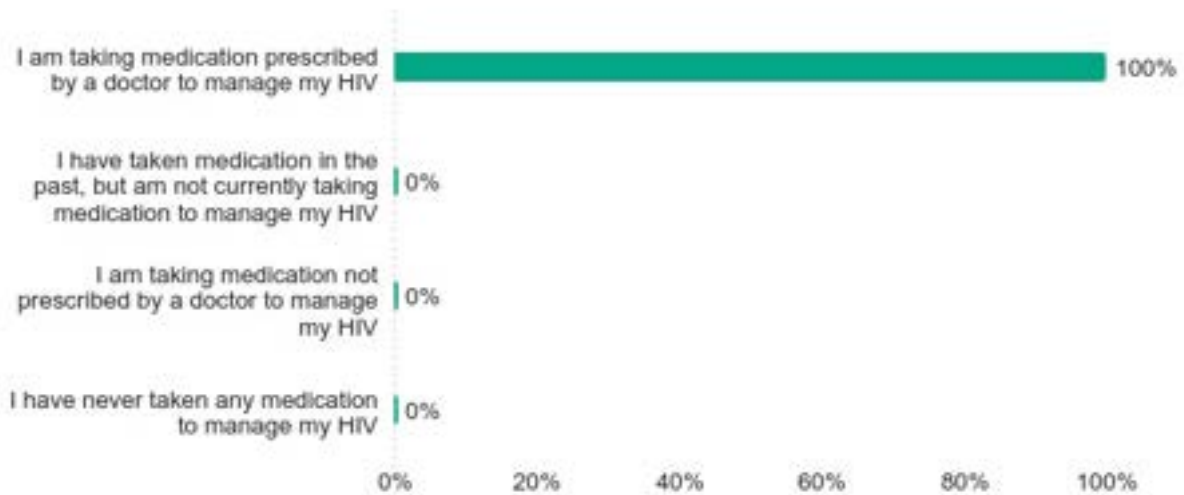
297 Responses



### Choose all options that best fit your approach to your HIV medication(s)? (select all that apply)

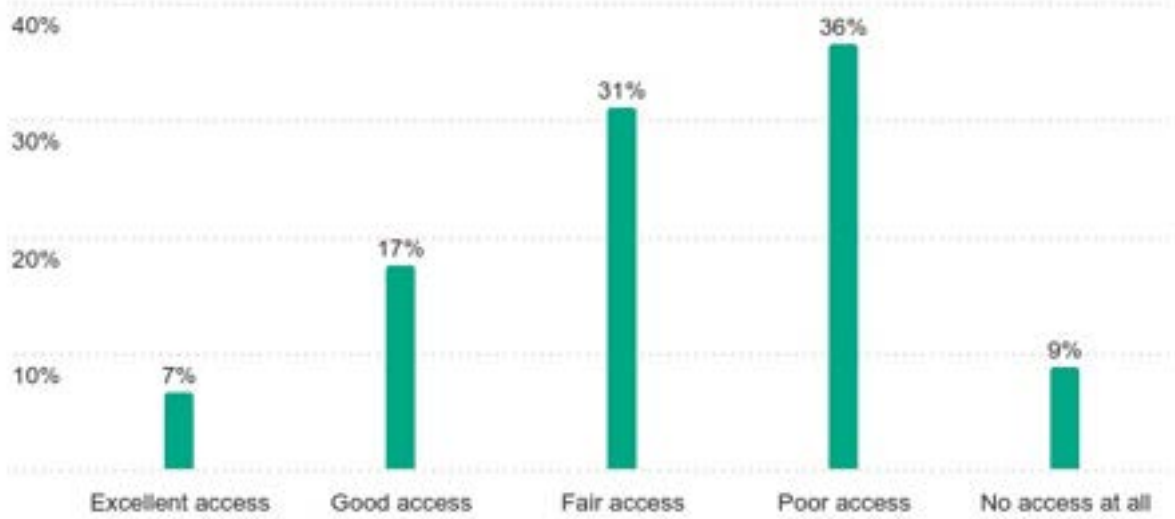
Only respondents indicating "HIV + (positive)" to the question "What is your HIV status?" were asked this question.

10 Responses



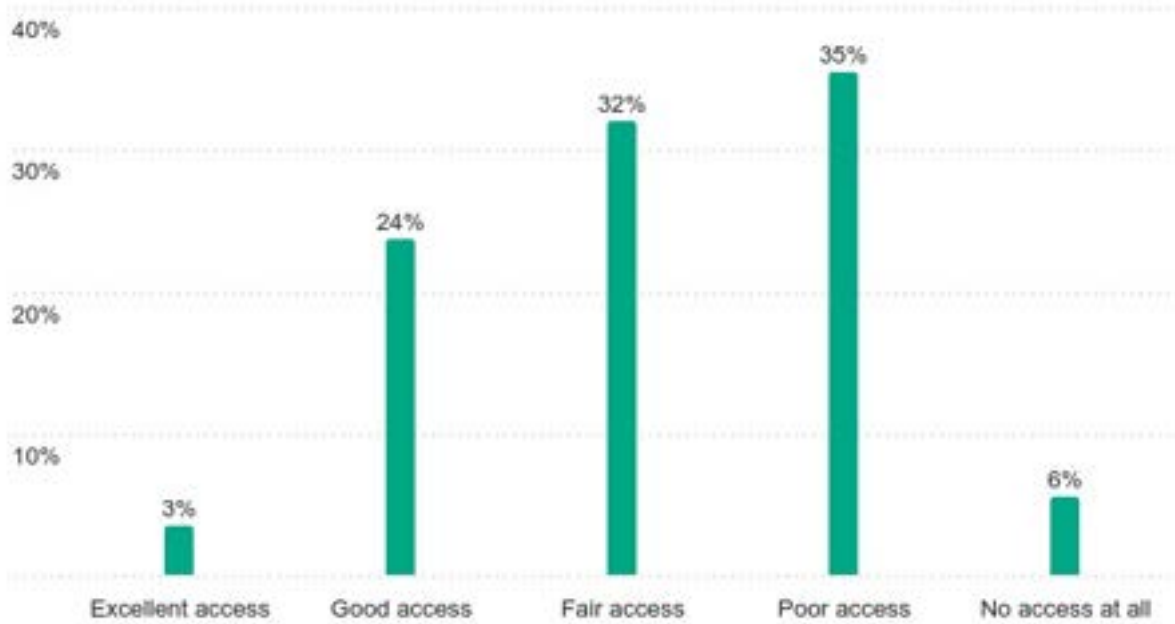
**How would you rate your current access to LGBTQ+ affirming family planning services (such as fertility treatment, birth control, adoptions support, or parenting support or resources)?**

184 Responses



**How would you rate your access to LGBTQ+ affirming substance use treatment services (such as rehab, peer recovery support, outpatient care)?**

144 Responses



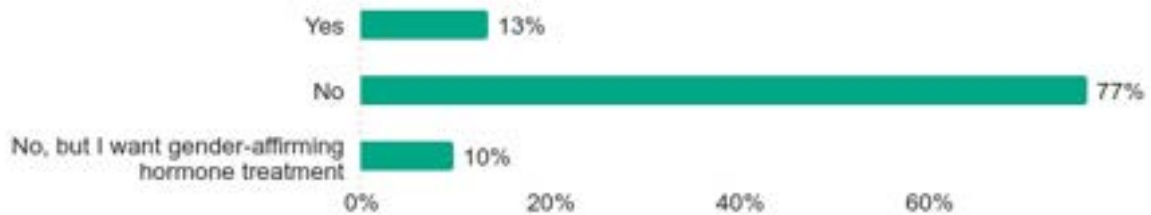
**“My biggest fears are for safety and access to healthcare. Resources that build safe spaces in universities and communities are being taken away through defunding. Organizations are being threatened and bullied out of existence. Healthcare access is being increasingly restricted through defunding and legal changes. Hate and violence are actively endorsed and enabled by the current administration.”**

**-Mahoning County Resident, Age 49**



### Are you currently receiving gender-affirming hormone treatment?

298 Responses



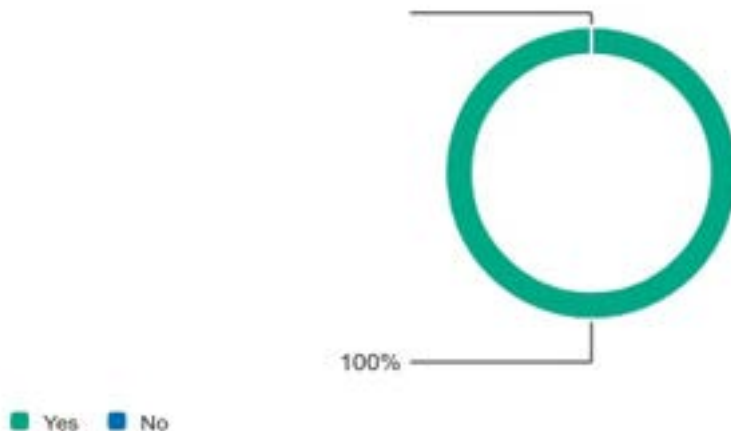
“The concern that haunts me is living with the fear my HRT or VA benefits will be removed. I truly feel that even if I lived through a forced detransition I wouldn't survive it.”

-Mahoning County Resident, Age 49

### Are you under the supervision of a licensed medical professional for your gender-affirming hormone treatment?

Only respondents indicating "Yes" to the question "Are you currently receiving gender-affirming hormone treatment?" were asked this question.

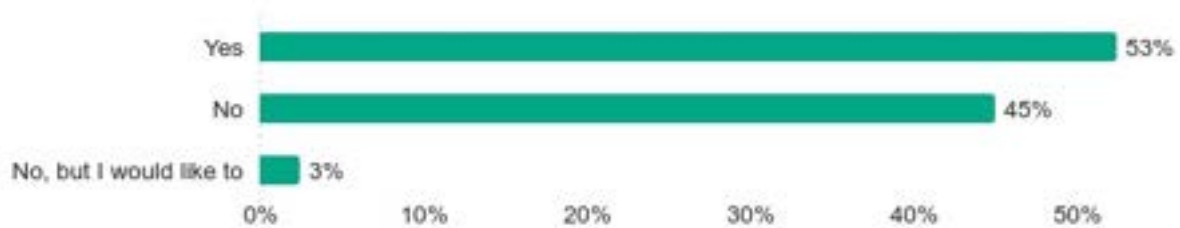
40 Responses



### Do you use telemedicine to access your gender-affirming hormone treatment licensed medical provider?

Only respondents indicating "Yes" to the question "Are you under the supervision of a licensed medical professional for your gender-affirming hormone treatment?" were asked this question.

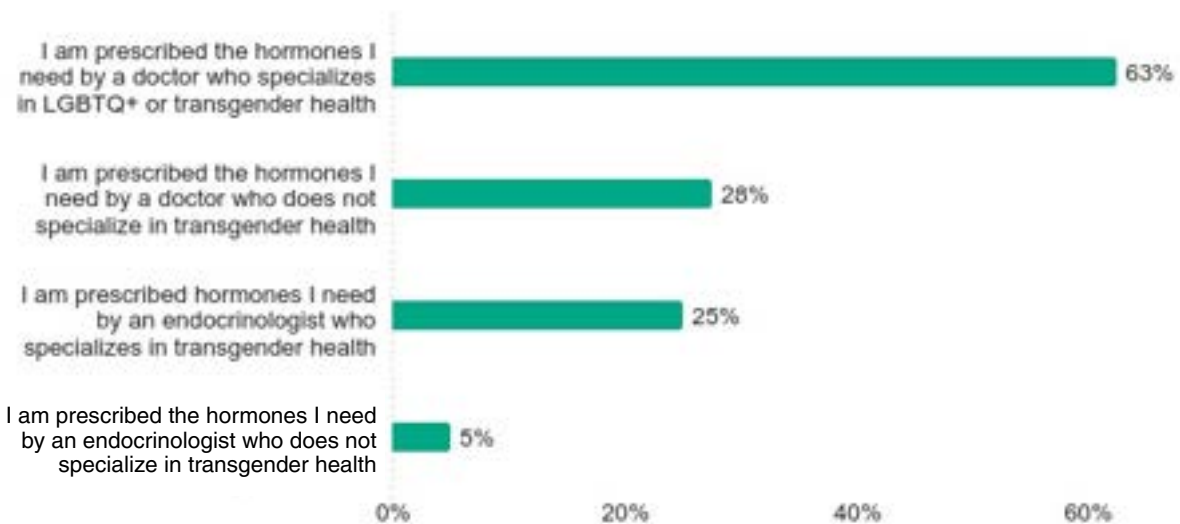
40 Responses



### Which of the following best describes your gender-affirming hormone treatment access? (select all that apply)

Only respondents indicating "Yes" to the question "Are you currently receiving gender-affirming hormone treatment?" were asked this question.

40 Responses





# Religion and Spirituality

For the purpose of this project, when referring to religion and spirituality, we acknowledge respondents' religious and spiritual beliefs and practices as integral to their identities. We aim to assess the inclusion of LGBTQ+ individuals within religious and spiritual communities and examine the impact of religion and spirituality on the physical, mental, social, spiritual, and behavioral health and wellbeing of LGBTQ+ individuals.

We recognize that definitions of religion and spirituality are diverse and individual, and that seeking guidance beyond oneself and connecting with a higher power can take many forms. This domain emphasizes identifying concerns related to the inclusion of LGBTQ+ individuals in religious and spiritual communities, exploring the impact of religion and spirituality on health, promoting greater understanding and acceptance, and assessing the historical religious trauma experienced by LGBTQ+ individuals across diverse religious and spiritual traditions.

It also recognizes the need for sensitivity and understanding toward individuals who have been marginalized or discriminated against in religious and spiritual contexts, while creating a safe space for LGBTQ+ individuals to explore their spirituality and religion without fear of judgment or harm.

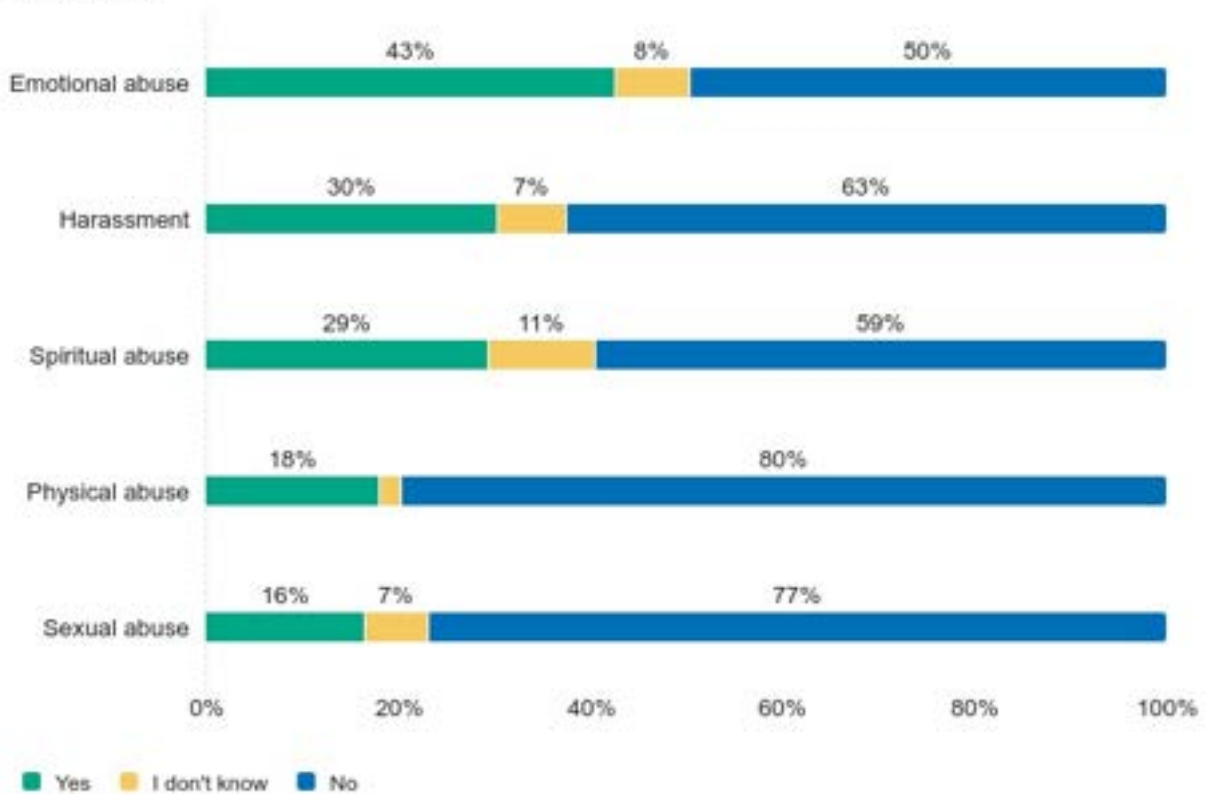
**Have you ever felt forced to participate in religious or spiritual activities that you did not want to participate in to receive help or support (such as food assistance, temporary shelter, or other basic needs)?**

226 Responses



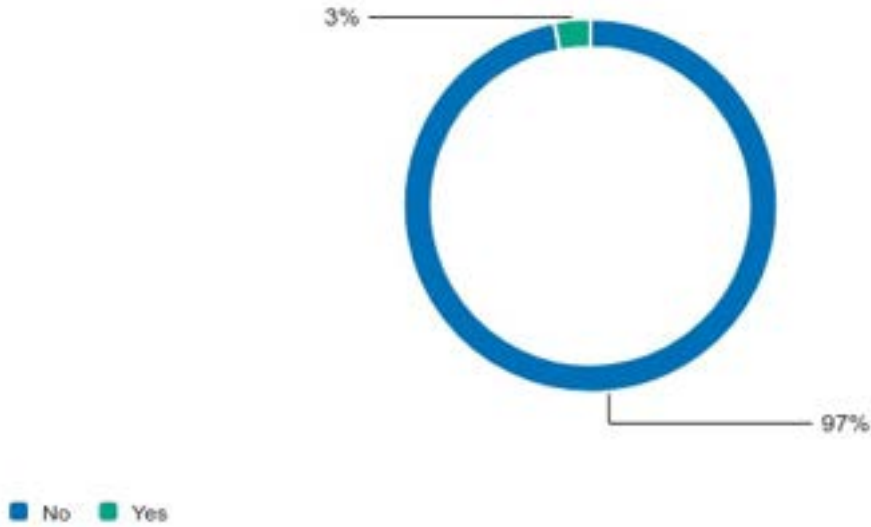
**Are you a survivor of sexual, physical, spiritual, emotional abuse or harassment that occurred in a spiritual setting?**

226 Responses



**Conversion therapy is any attempt to change a person's sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. Have you ever received conversion therapy?**

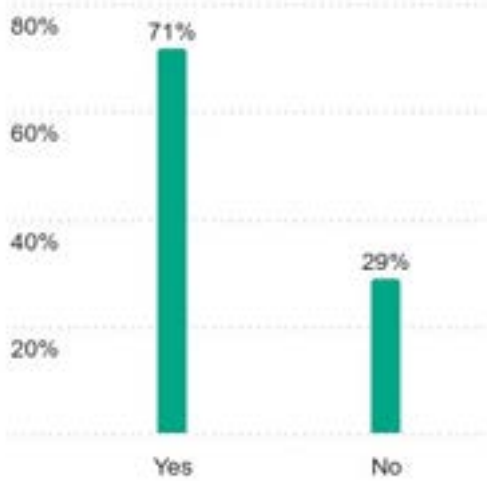
226 Responses



**Were you forced or coerced to participate in conversion therapy?**

Only respondents indicating "Yes" to the question "Have you ever been involved in conversion therapy?" were asked this question.

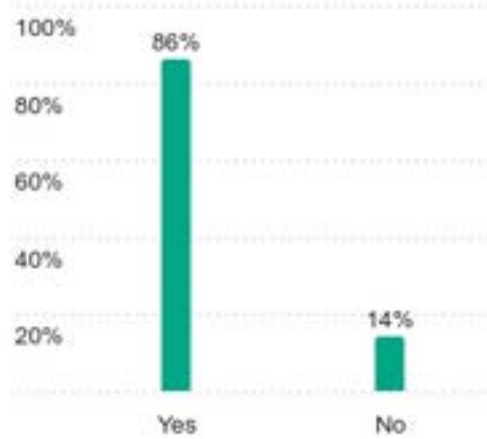
7 Responses



**Was your participation in conversion therapy in response to a religious or spiritual belief or concern?**

Only respondents indicating "Yes" to the question "Have you ever been involved in conversion therapy?" were asked this question.

7 Responses



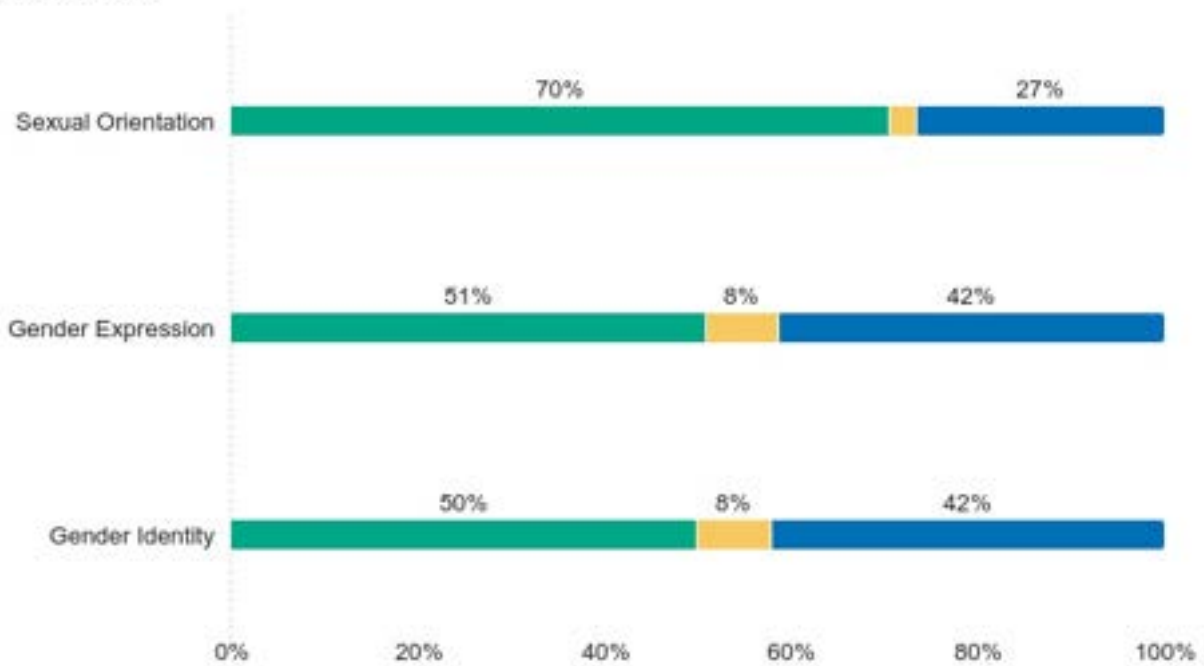
Was this experience with conversion therapy in Trumbull, Mahoning, Columbiana, or Ashtabula counties in Ohio?



■ No ■ Yes

Have religious teachings about gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation ever made you feel a diminished sense of self-worth?

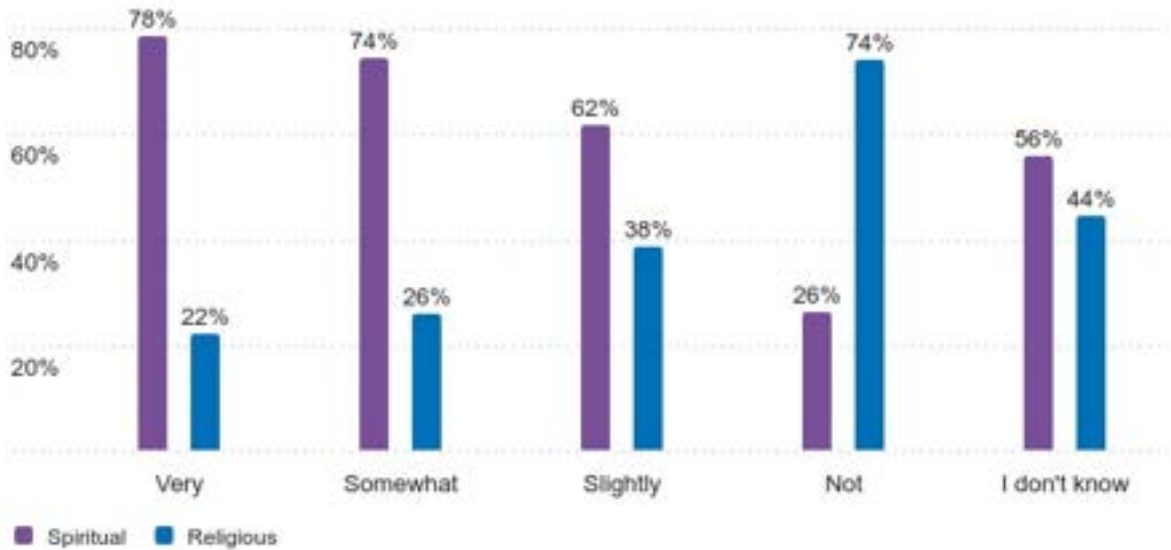
237 Responses



■ Yes ■ I don't know ■ No

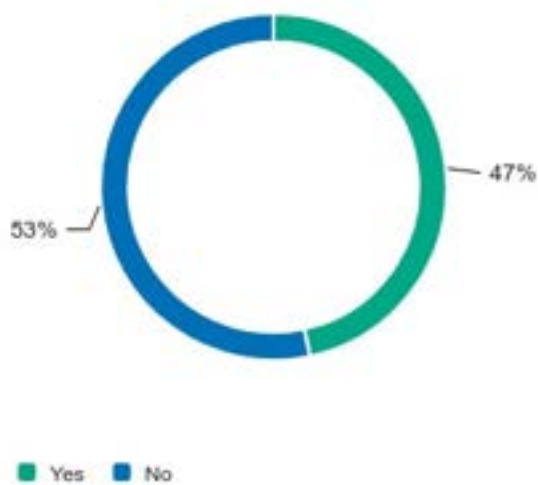
### To what level do you consider yourself to be religious or spiritual?

237 Responses



### Would you like to know more about which local religious and spiritual organizations are LGBTQ+ welcoming, friendly, and affirming?

236 Responses



### As a member of the LGBTQ+ community, do you feel you have a safe place to explore and/or practice your religion or spirituality to the degree that you would like to?

Only respondents who indicated "Very", "Somewhat", "Slightly", or "I don't know" to the question "To what level do you consider yourself to be religious or spiritual?" were asked this question.

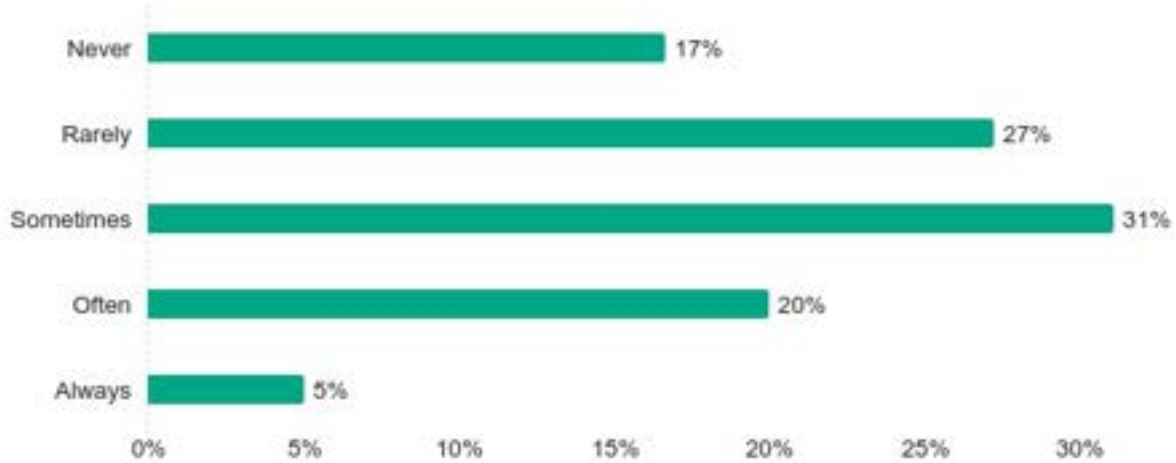
176 Responses



### How often do you turn to your religion or spirituality to help you deal with problems in your life?

Only respondents who indicated "Very", "Somewhat", "Slightly", or "I don't know" to the question "To what level do you consider yourself to be religious or spiritual?" were asked this question.

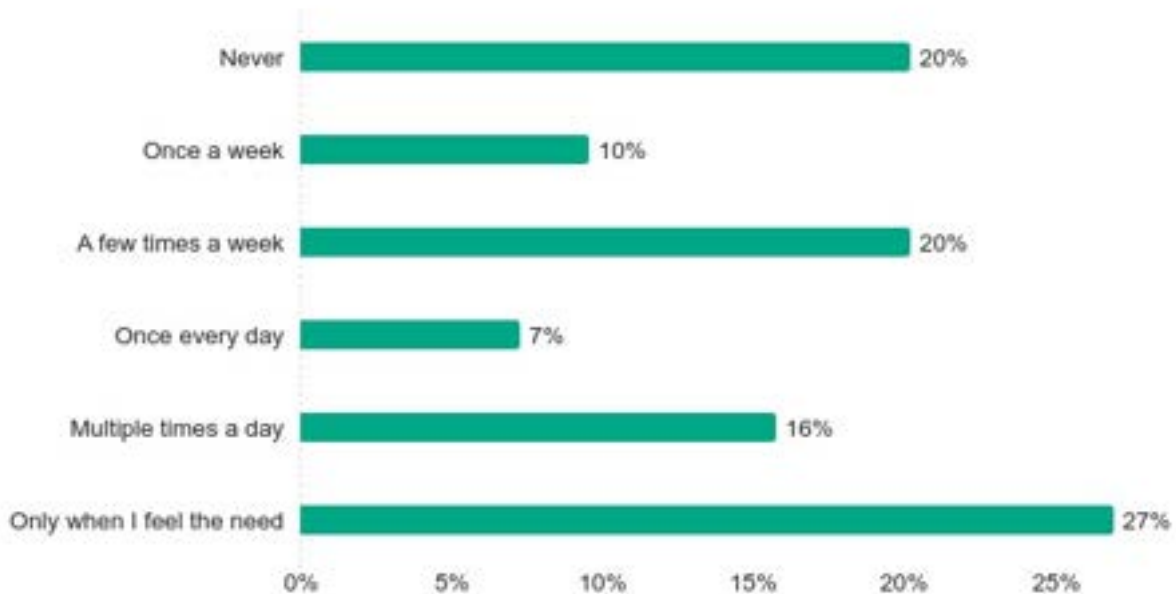
180 Responses



### How often do you participate in individual spiritual practices alone? (such as praying, meditating, or some other individual spiritual practice)

Only respondents who indicated "Very", "Somewhat", "Slightly", or "I don't know" to the question "To what level do you consider yourself to be religious or spiritual?" were asked this question.

178 Responses



### Do you feel the religious or spiritual leaders in your place of worship need more LGBTQ+ diversity training?

Only respondents who indicated "Very", "Somewhat", "Slightly", or "I don't know" to the question "To what level do you consider yourself to be religious or spiritual?" were asked this question.

179 Responses



### Do you feel your religious or spiritual organization claims to be LGBTQ+ welcoming, friendly, and affirming outwardly, but the culture internally is not welcoming, friendly, and affirming?

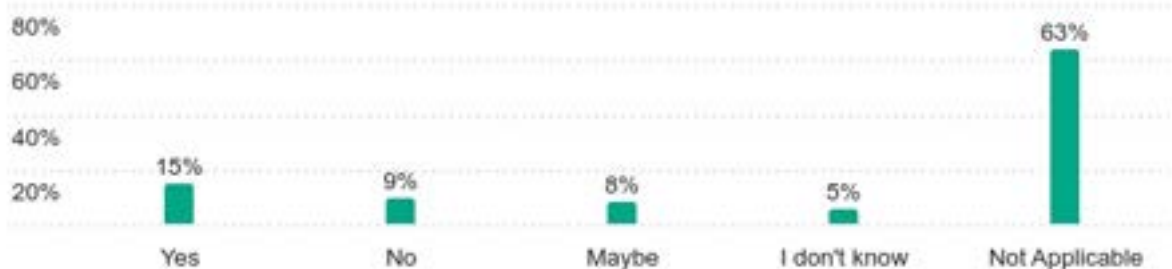
Only respondents who indicated "Very", "Somewhat", "Slightly", or "I don't know" to the question "To what level do you consider yourself to be religious or spiritual?" were asked this question.

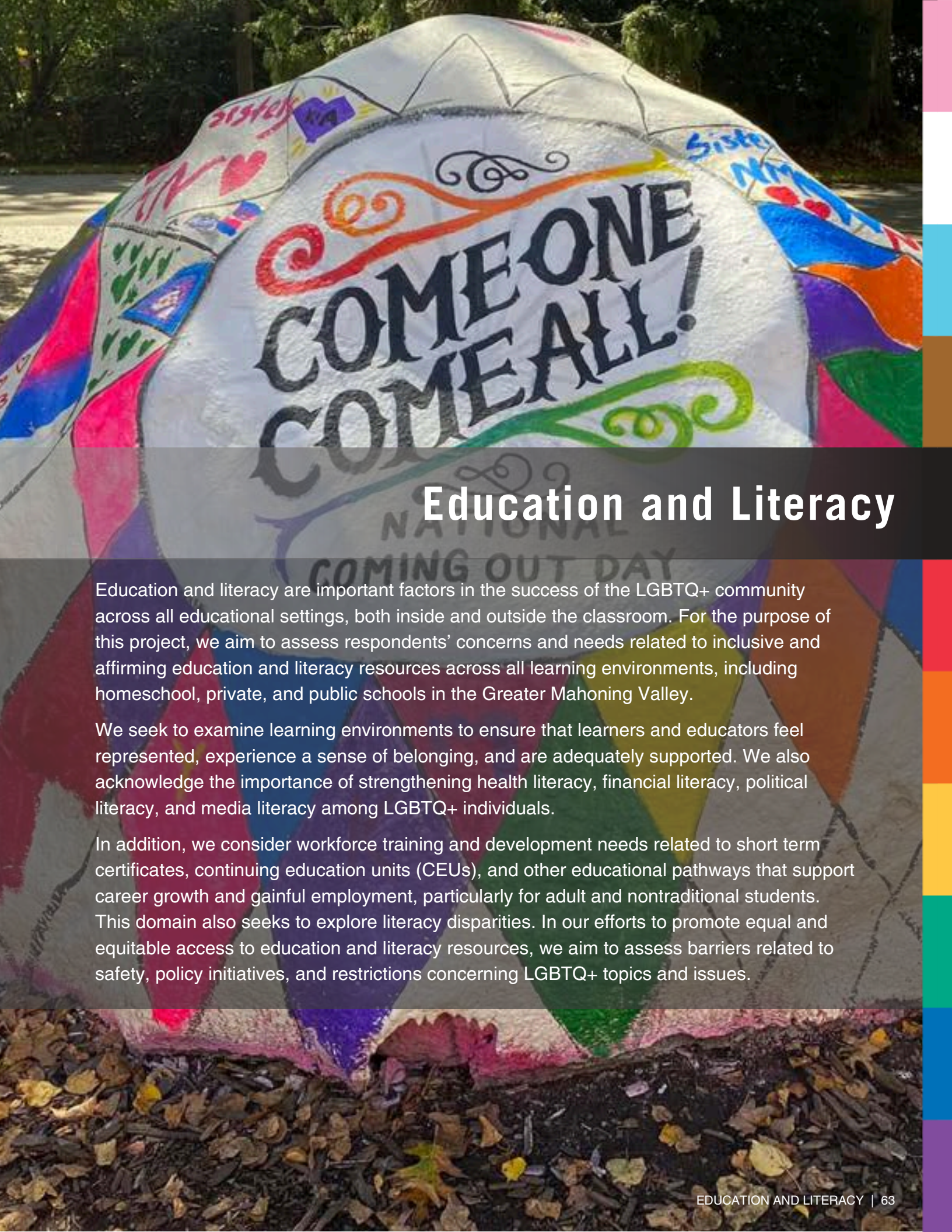
178 Responses



### Do you feel the members of your religious or spiritual organization are as welcoming, friendly, and affirming as the organization's leaders?

177 Responses





## Education and Literacy

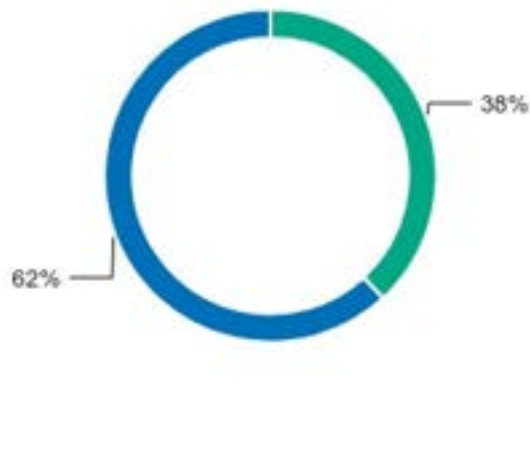
Education and literacy are important factors in the success of the LGBTQ+ community across all educational settings, both inside and outside the classroom. For the purpose of this project, we aim to assess respondents' concerns and needs related to inclusive and affirming education and literacy resources across all learning environments, including homeschool, private, and public schools in the Greater Mahoning Valley.

We seek to examine learning environments to ensure that learners and educators feel represented, experience a sense of belonging, and are adequately supported. We also acknowledge the importance of strengthening health literacy, financial literacy, political literacy, and media literacy among LGBTQ+ individuals.

In addition, we consider workforce training and development needs related to short term certificates, continuing education units (CEUs), and other educational pathways that support career growth and gainful employment, particularly for adult and nontraditional students. This domain also seeks to explore literacy disparities. In our efforts to promote equal and equitable access to education and literacy resources, we aim to assess barriers related to safety, policy initiatives, and restrictions concerning LGBTQ+ topics and issues.

### Have you been enrolled as a student in the past five (5) years?

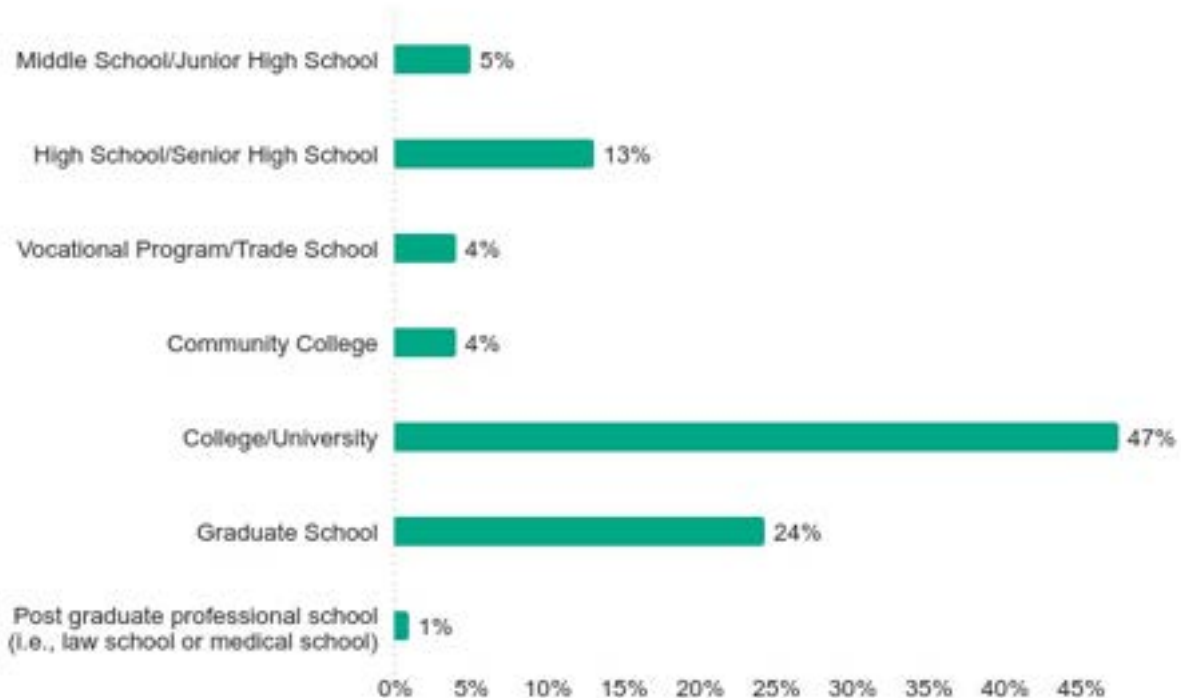
262 Responses



### What kind of education program, certification, or training are/were you enrolled in?

Only respondents who indicated "Yes" to the question "Have you been enrolled as a student in the past five (5) years?" were asked this question.

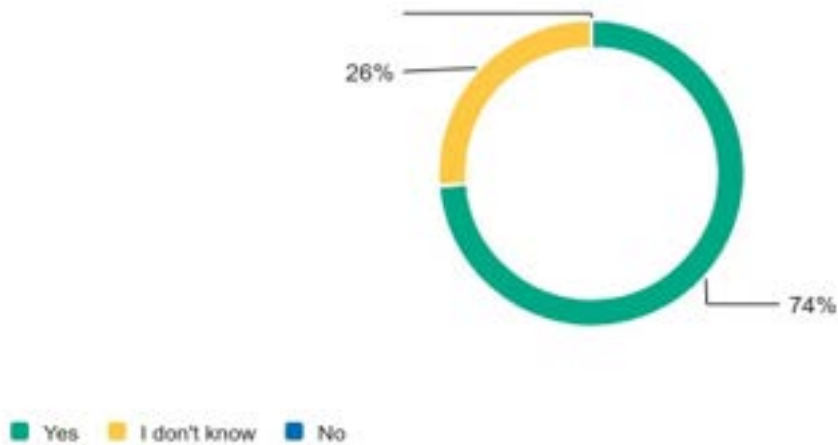
99 Responses



### Do you plan to continue your education after high school?

Only respondents who indicated "Middle School/Junior High School" or "High School/Senior High School" to the question "What kind of educational program, certification, or training are/were you enrolled in?" were asked this question.

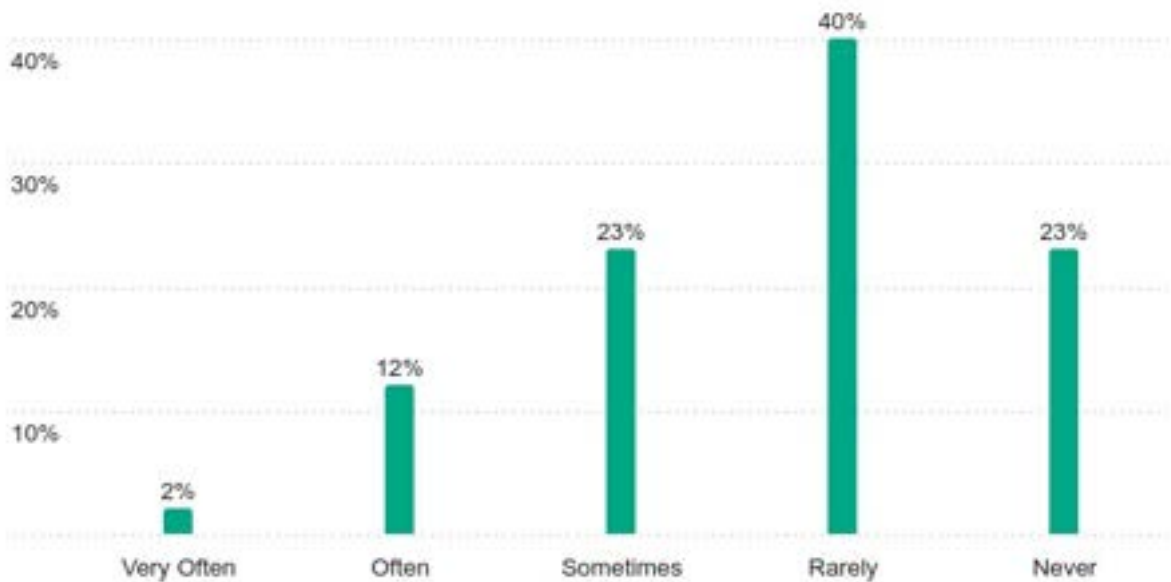
19 Responses



### How often have you been worried about your physical safety in your educational setting(s)?

Only respondents who indicated "Yes" to the question "Have you been enrolled as a student in the past five (5) years?" were asked this question.

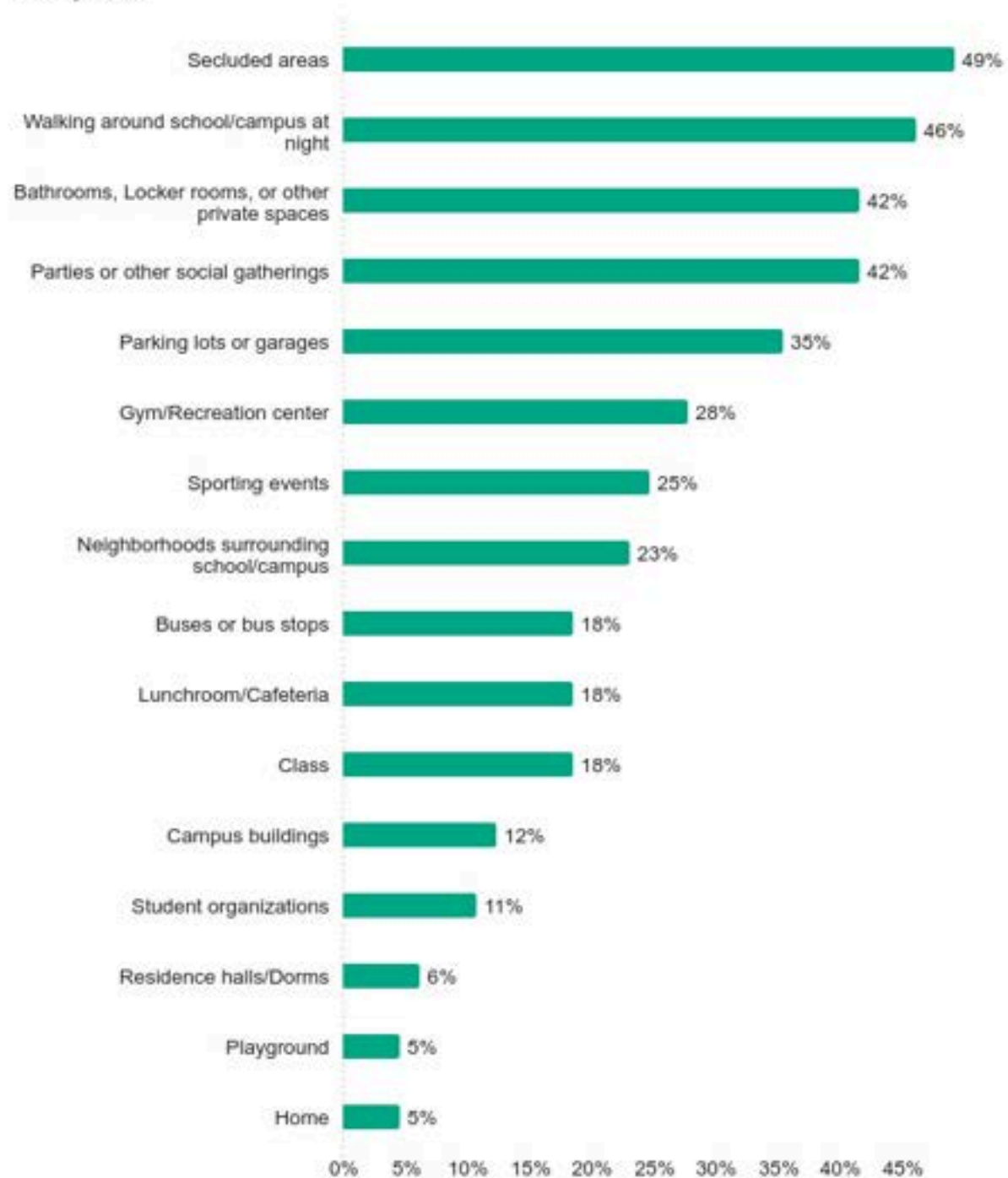
100 Responses



### Which of the following settings have you avoided due to fear for your physical safety (select all that apply)

Only respondents who indicated "Very Often", "Often", "Sometimes", or "Rarely" to the question "How often have you been worried about your physical safety in your educational setting(s)?" were asked this question.

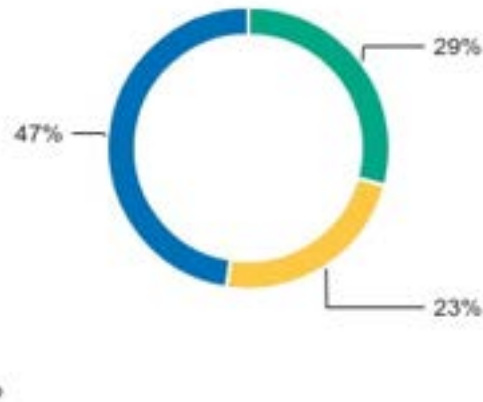
65 Responses



### In general, have you felt discriminated against in an educational setting because you are LGBTQ+?

Only respondents who indicated "Yes" to the question "Have you been enrolled as a student in the past five (5) years?" were asked this question.

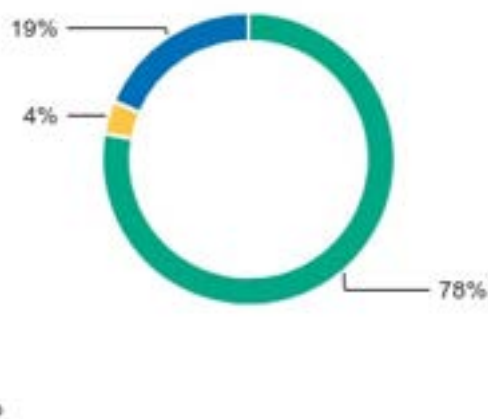
99 Responses



### Did this/these events happen in Mahoning, Trumbull, Columbiana, or Ashtabula County, Ohio?

Only respondents who indicated "Yes" to the question "In general, have you felt discriminated against in an educational setting because you are LGBTQ+?" were asked this question.

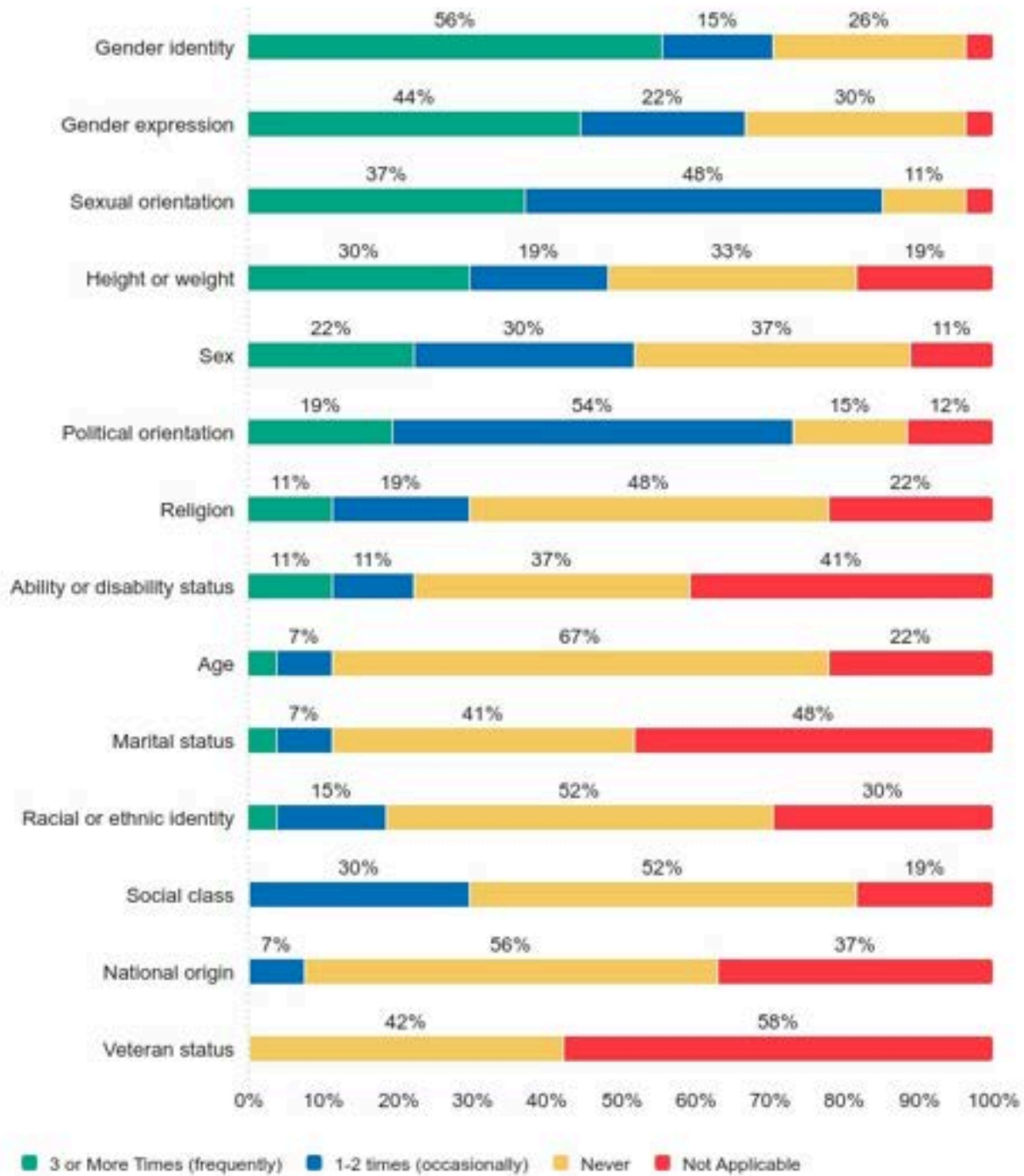
27 Responses



## How often have you experienced any of the following types of discrimination in an educational setting?

Only respondents who indicated "Yes" to the question "In general, have you felt discriminated against in an educational setting because you are LGBTQ+?" were asked this question.

27 Responses



“My biggest concern is health care for members of the LGBTQ+ community, especially for youth. With teachers and social workers and medical staff required to inform parents of a child's questioning, a non-supportive home is dangerous. I fear the increase in the suicide rate for all ages.”

-Retired Mahoning County Teacher, Age 82

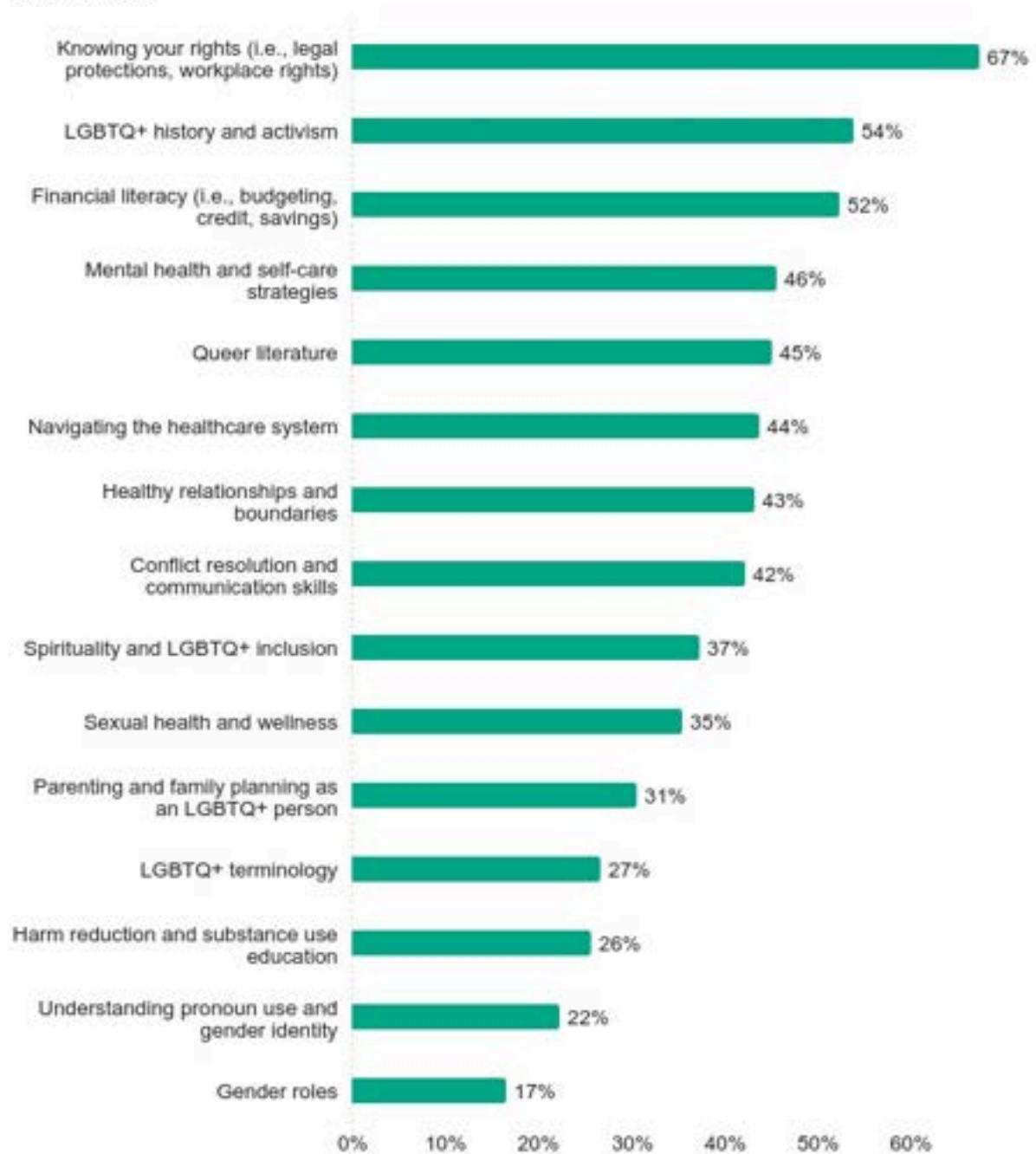


“My area is very conservative. I have some classmates who would beat me up if they knew. So my fear is my safety.”

-Trumbull County Student, Age 17

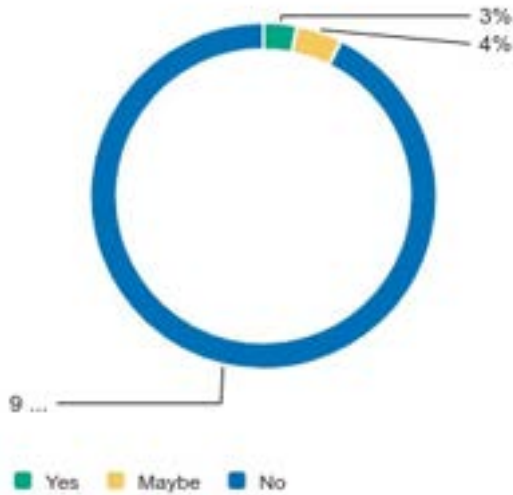
### Which educational topics or trainings have you wanted, but never received? (select all that apply)

206 Responses



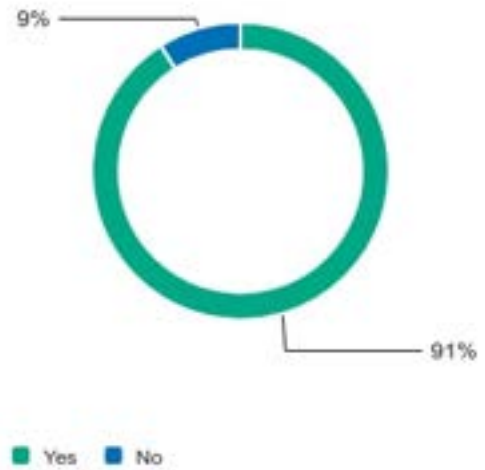
### Do you feel you received enough LGBTQ+ sex education in school?

257 Responses



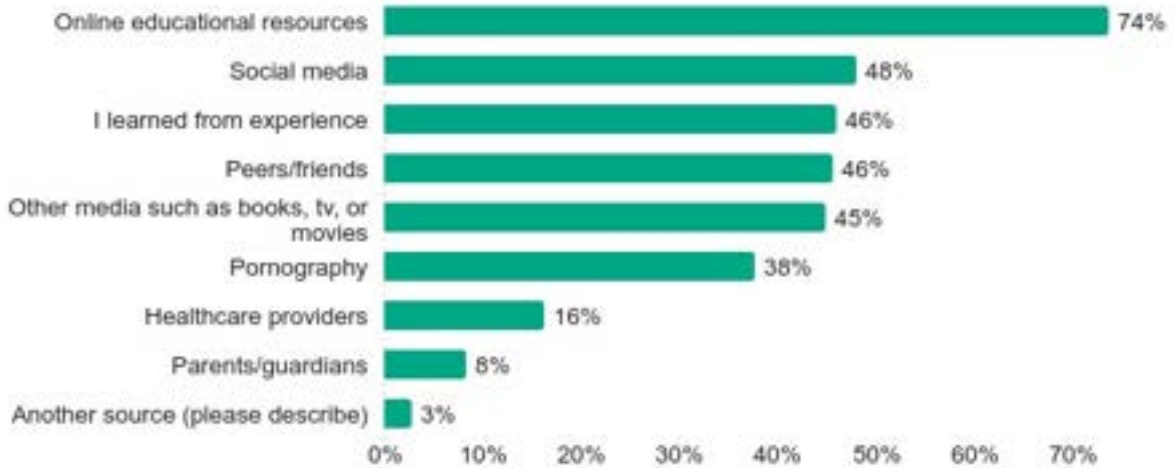
### Did you have to find any LGBTQ+ sex education or information on your own?

255 Responses



### Where did you typically get your LGBTQ+ sex education/information? (select all that apply)

252 Responses





## Housing, Food, and Basic Needs

This project affirms that housing, food, and access to basic needs are human rights. Meeting these needs requires an approach that centers safety, affirmation, and dignity, particularly for LGBTQ+ people navigating environments where they are often erased or excluded.

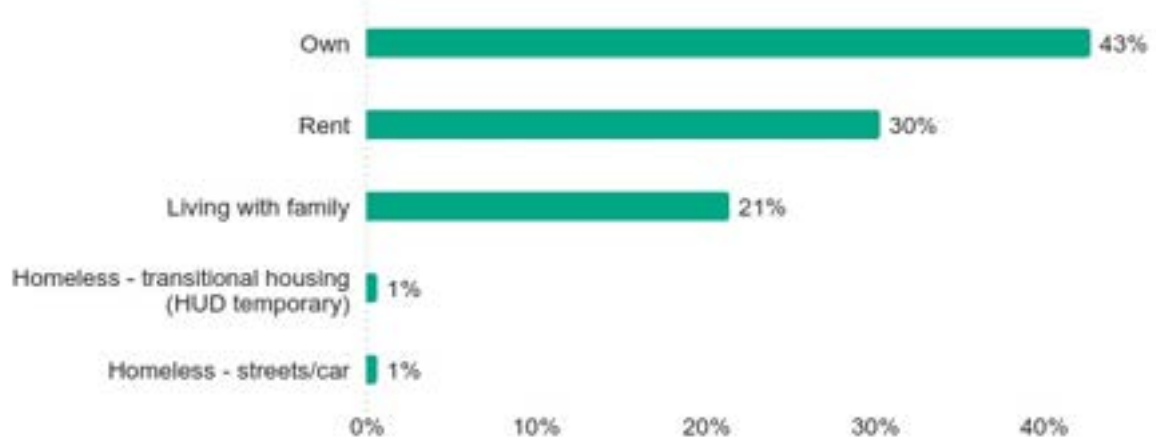
In the Greater Mahoning Valley, access to housing, food, and basic needs is shaped by systemic inequities, stigma, and identity based discrimination. These challenges are present across the region and are especially pronounced in more rural areas such as Columbiana County, where barriers to care, housing, and food security are compounded for LGBTQ+ people.

Housing insecurity includes not only those who are unhoused, but also individuals who are couch surfing, living in doubled up arrangements, or staying in environments where they are not safe or affirmed, including with unsupportive or hostile family members. Many LGBTQ+ people, particularly trans women, face rejection from landlords or housing programs because of their identity, especially within systems that require sobriety or lack harm reduction approaches.

Food insecurity is widespread and often tied to generational poverty. Feelings of shame and fear of discrimination at food pantries or resource centers, particularly those that do not affirm LGBTQ+ identities, continue to deter access to essential resources.

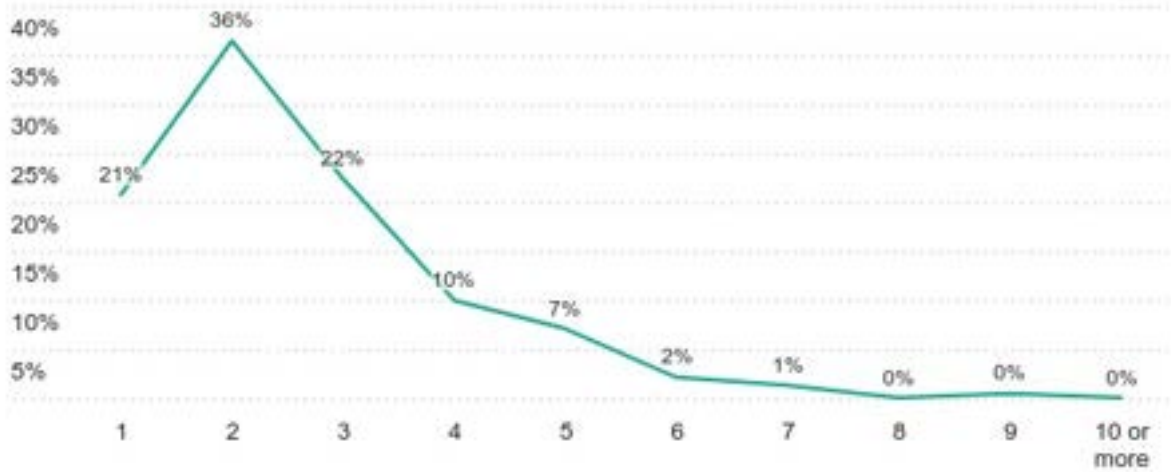
### What is your current housing status?

313 Responses



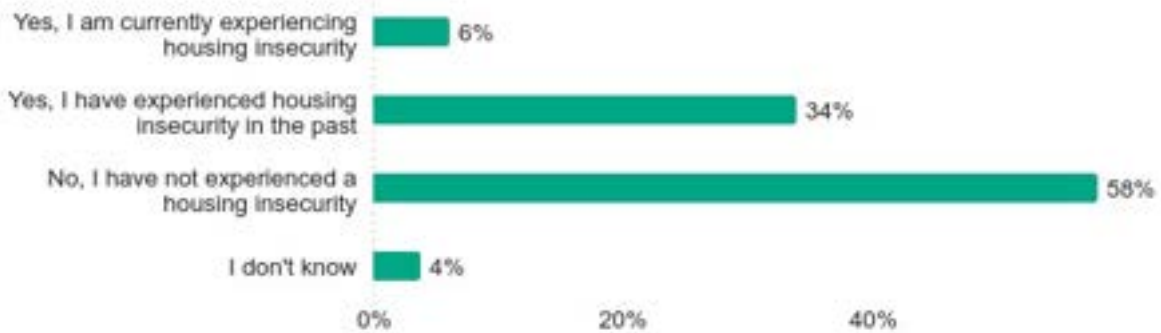
### How many people live in the place where you stay? (including yourself)

242 Responses



**Housing insecurity is when you are unable to access or afford enough housing consistently. Have you ever in your life experienced housing insecurity? (select all that apply)**

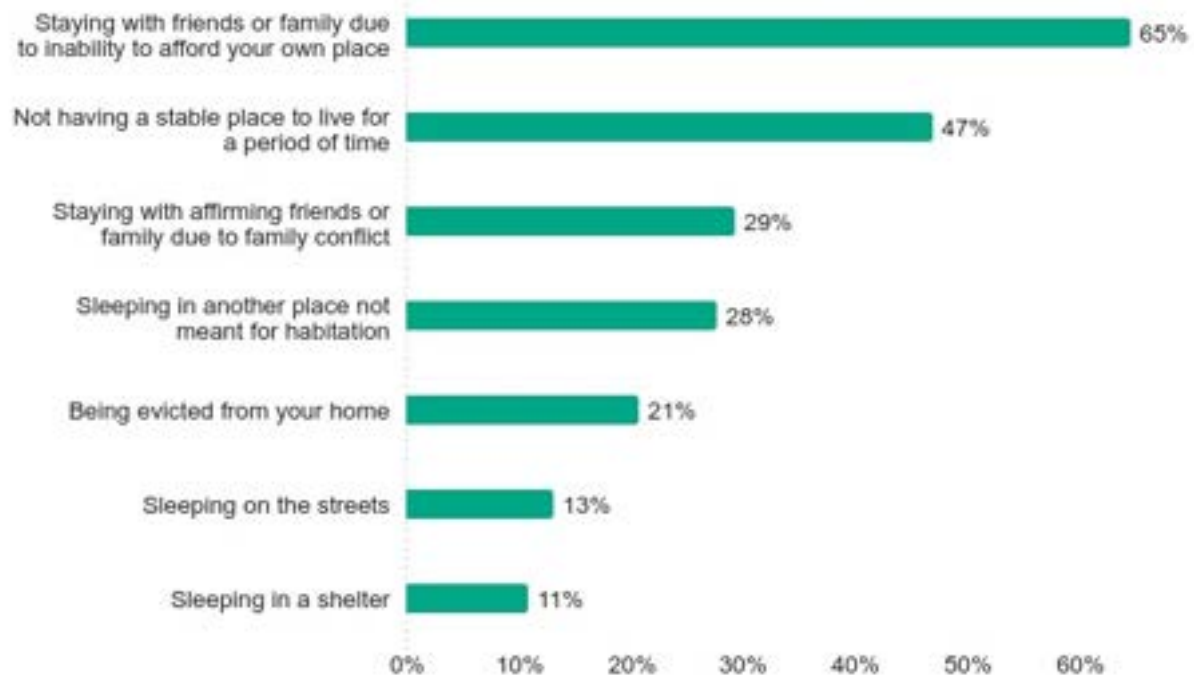
313 Responses



**Have you ever experienced any of the following housing insecurity or homeless situations?**

Only respondents indicating "Yes, I am currently experiencing a housing insecurity", "Yes, I have experienced a housing insecurity in the past", or "I don't know" to the question "Have you ever in your life experienced housing insecurity?" were asked this question.

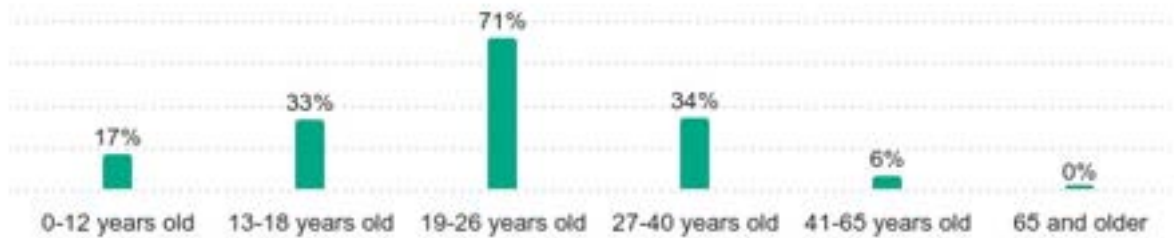
130 Responses



### At what age range(s) have you experienced these housing insecurities or homelessness? (select all that apply)

Only respondents indicating "Yes, I am currently experiencing a housing insecurity" or "Yes, I have experienced a housing insecurity in the past" to the question "Have you ever in your life experienced housing insecurity?" were asked this question.

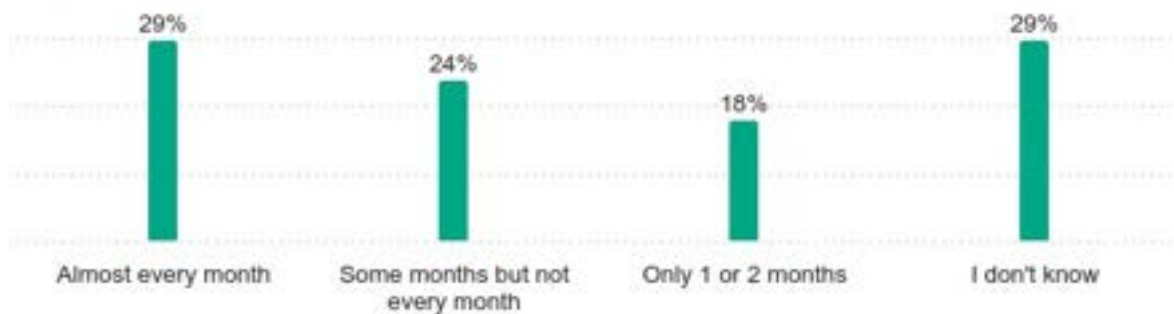
115 Responses



### How often do you experience these housing insecurities or homelessness?

Only respondents indicating "Yes, I am currently experiencing a housing insecurity" to the question "Have you ever in your life experienced housing insecurity?" were asked this question.

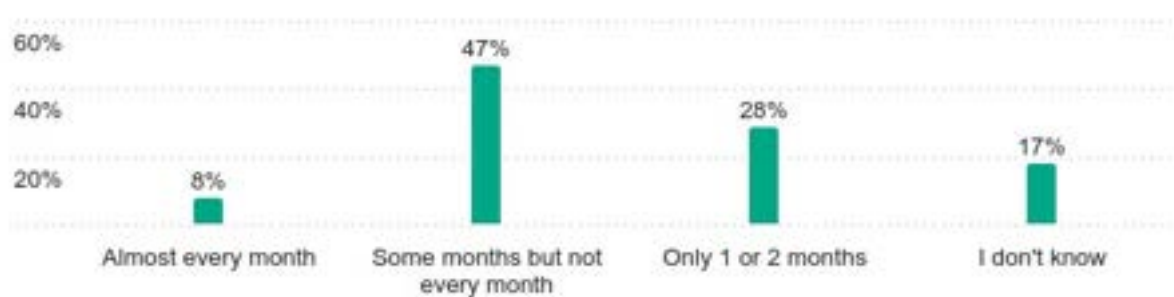
17 Responses



### How often did you experience these housing insecurities or homelessness in the past?

Only respondents indicating "Yes, I have experienced a housing insecurity in the past" to the question "Have you ever in your life experienced housing insecurity?" were asked this question.

103 Responses



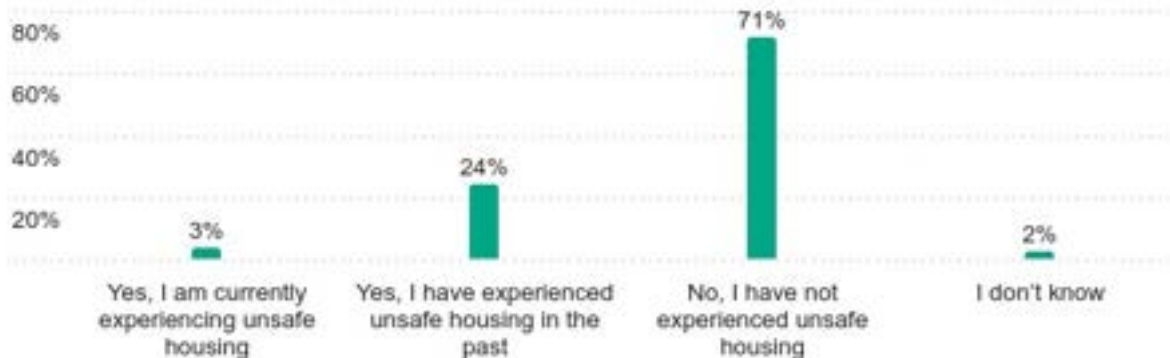


“I am concerned that there is not housing available for the community. With many fearing going to a regular homeless shelter and the closest shelters in my area being up in Kent, Cleveland, or Pittsburgh there are not a lot of options.”

- Mahoning County Resident, Age 28

Unsafe housing refers to housing that jeopardizes the health, safety, or welfare of its occupants. Unsafe housing can include, but is not limited to, environmental hazards, unsanitary living conditions or unstable access to electricity, heat or clean running water. Have you ever in your life experienced unsafe housing? (select all that apply)

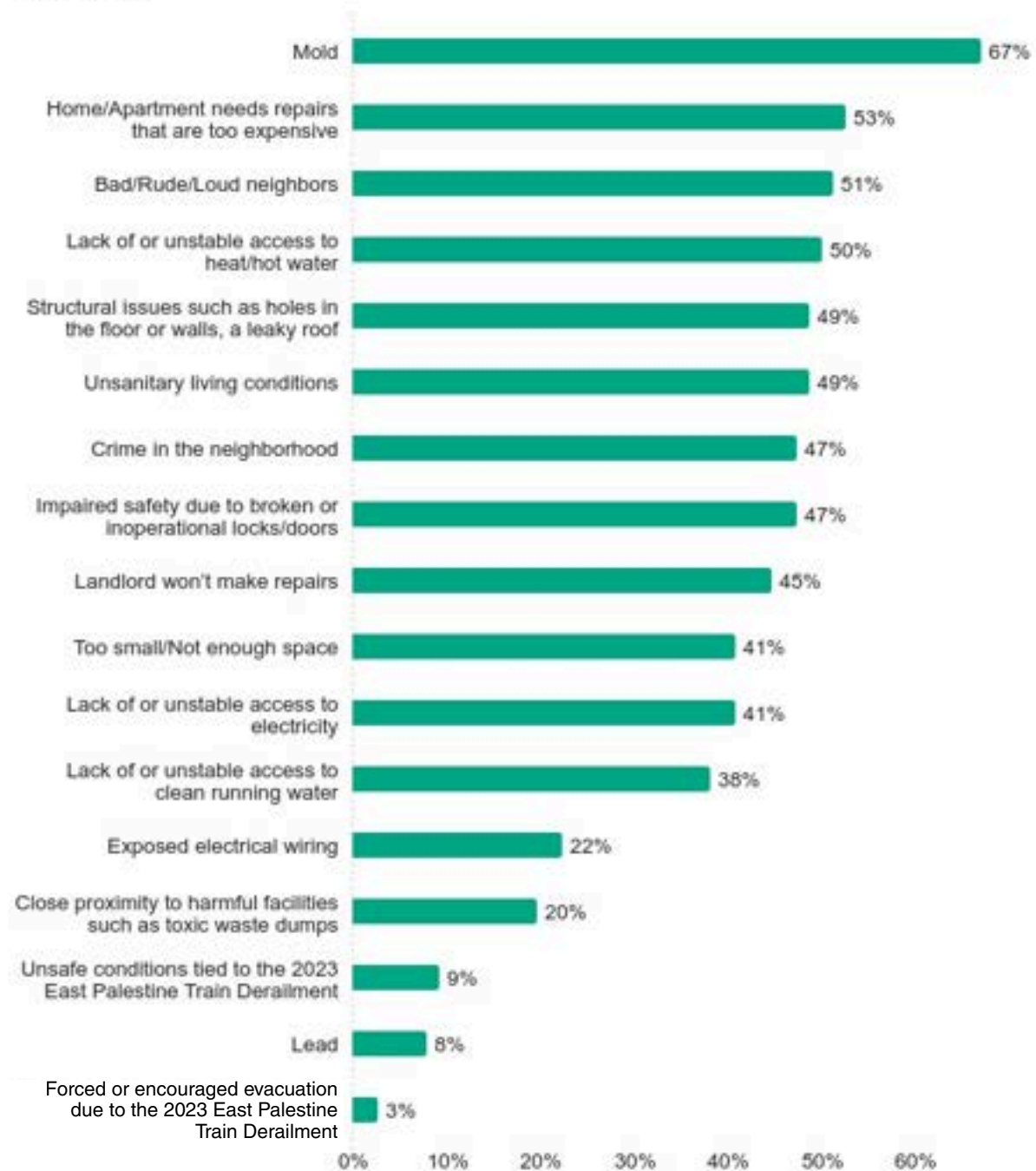
293 Responses



### Have you ever experienced any of the following unsafe housing situations? (select all that apply)

Only respondents indicating "Yes, I am currently experiencing unsafe housing" or "Yes, I have experienced unsafe housing in the past" to the question "Have you ever in your life experienced unsafe housing?" were asked this question.

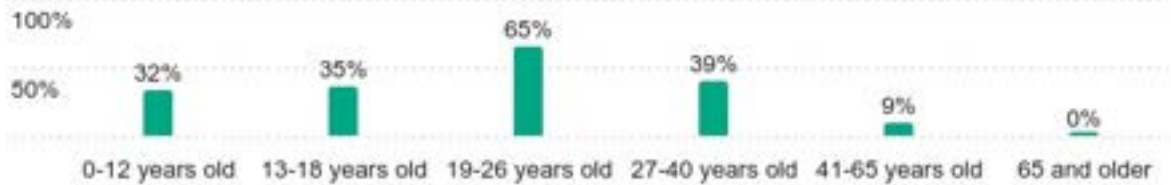
76 Responses



### At what age range(s) have you experienced unsafe housing? (select all that apply)

Only respondents indicating "Yes, I am currently experiencing unsafe housing" or "Yes, I have experienced unsafe housing in the past" to the question "Have you ever in your life experienced unsafe housing?" were asked this question.

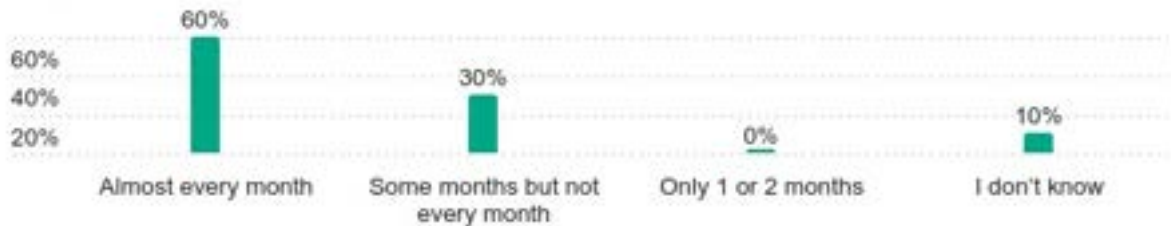
77 Responses



### How often do you experience unsafe housing?

Only respondents indicating "Yes, I am currently experiencing unsafe housing" to the question "Have you ever in your life experienced unsafe housing?" were asked this question.

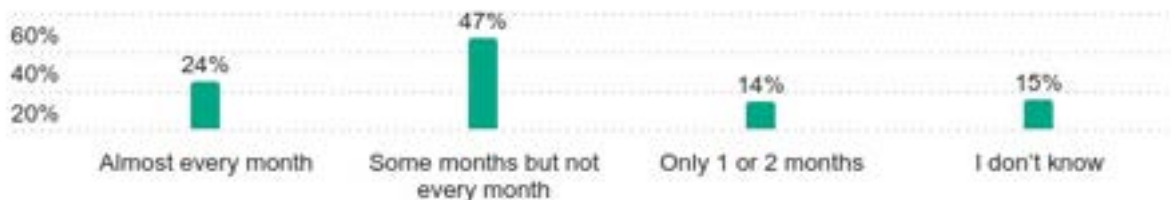
10 Responses



### How often did you experience unsafe housing in the past?

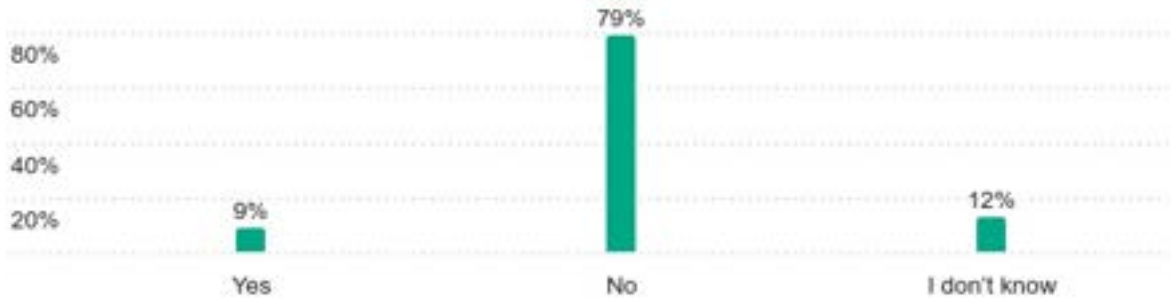
Only respondents indicating "Yes, I have experienced unsafe housing in the past" to the question "Have you ever in your life experienced unsafe housing?" were asked this question.

66 Responses



**Have you been impacted by the 2023 East Palestine Train Derailment? (On February 3, 2023 a Norfolk Southern freight train carrying hazardous materials derailed in East Palestine, Ohio.)**

293 Responses

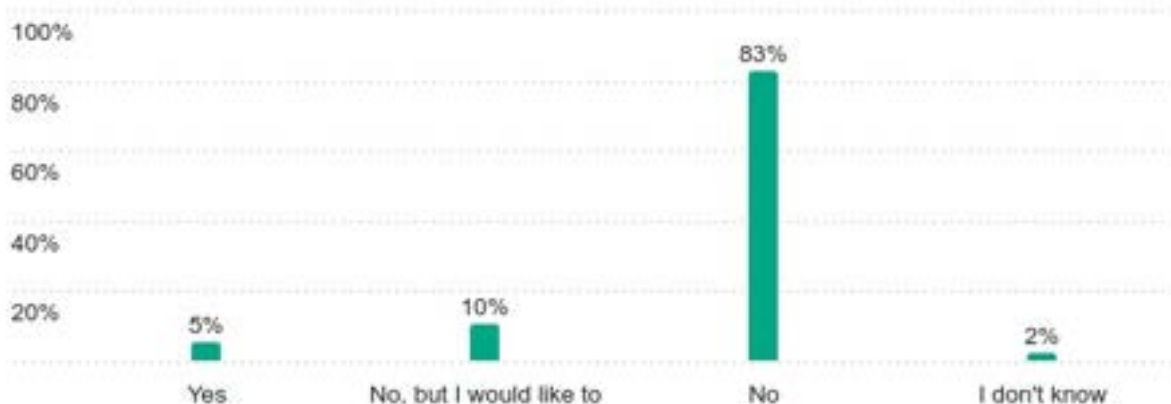


“I had to evacuate my home in a rush in the middle of the night and we stayed away for almost a week. When we came back, I started to experience intermittent and worsened breathing problems coupled with intense migraines. The migraines went away after awhile but the breathing issues have remained persists to this day.”

-Columbiana County Resident, Age 29

**Are you currently receiving housing assistance such as programs and/or services designed to provide support and resources to individuals or families who are in need of affordable housing or experiencing housing-related difficulties?**

286 Responses



## Are you satisfied with your current living arrangements?

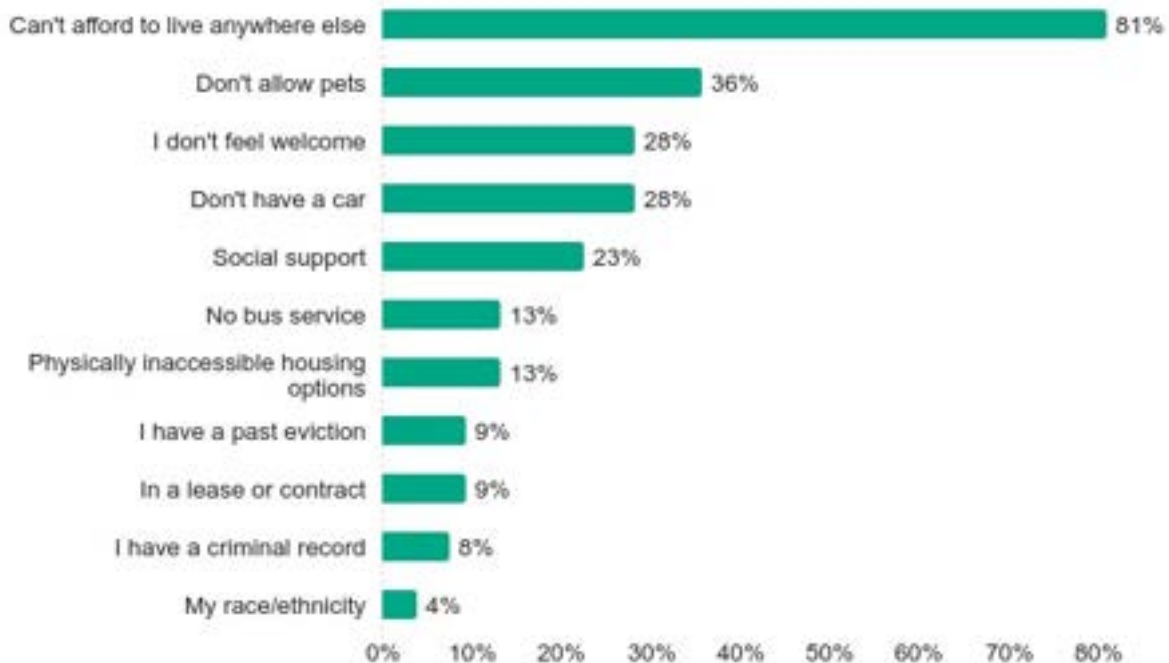
271 Responses



## What are the barriers, if any, that keep you from living in another part of your community? (select all that apply)

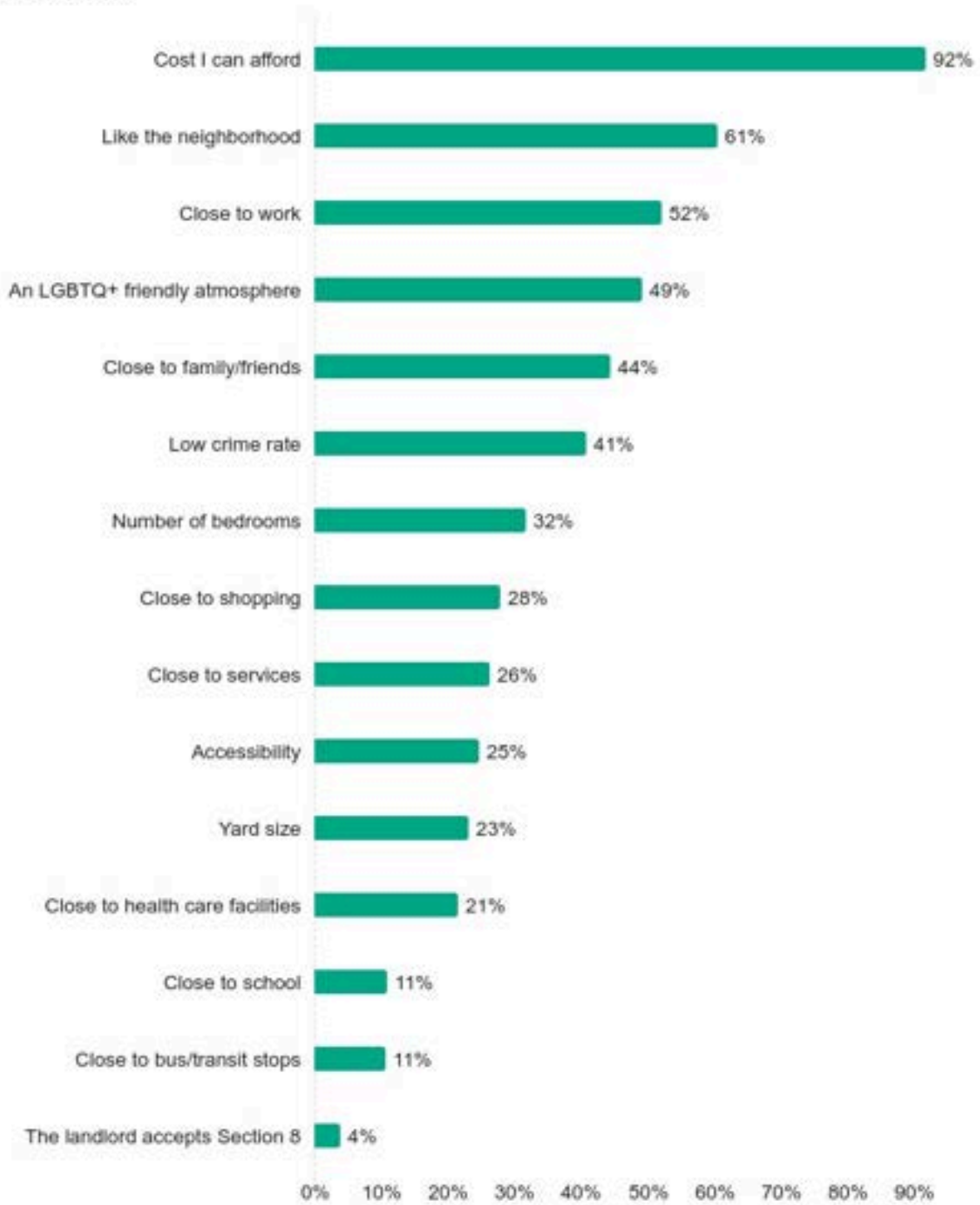
Only respondents indicating "No" to the question "Are you satisfied with your current living arrangements?" were asked this question.

53 Responses



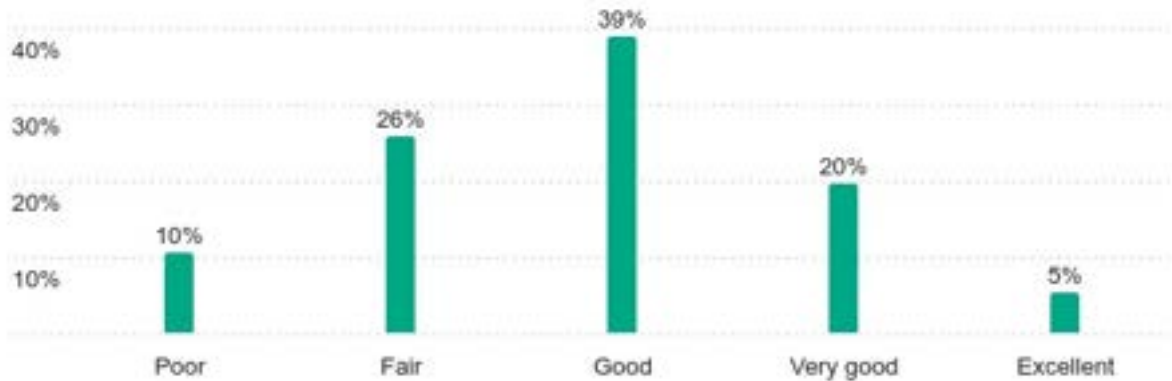
### What factors are most important to you when choosing your home or apartment? (select all that apply)

284 Responses



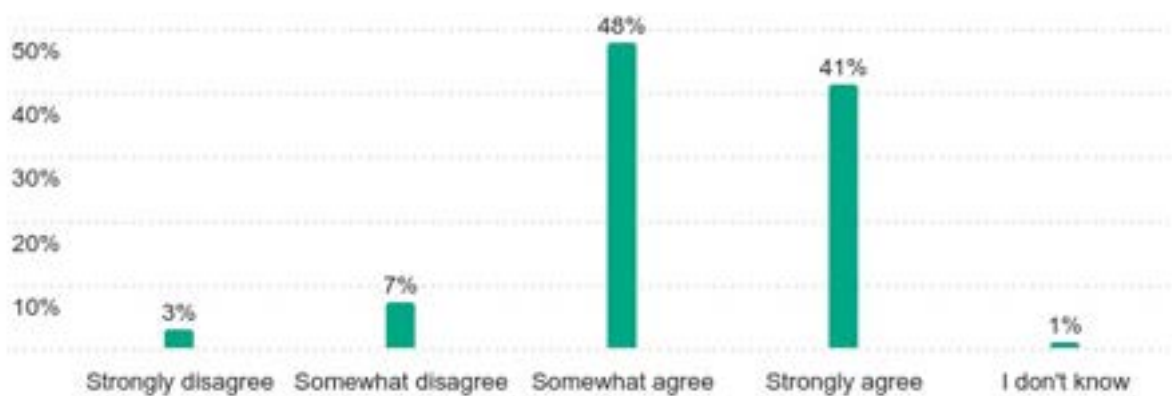
### In general, how healthy do you feel your overall diet is?

306 Responses



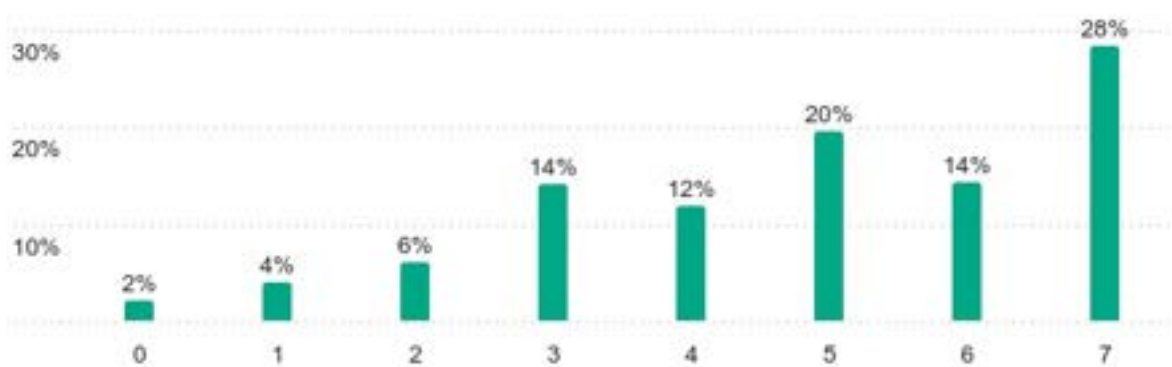
### I am confident that I know how to choose healthy foods.

306 Responses



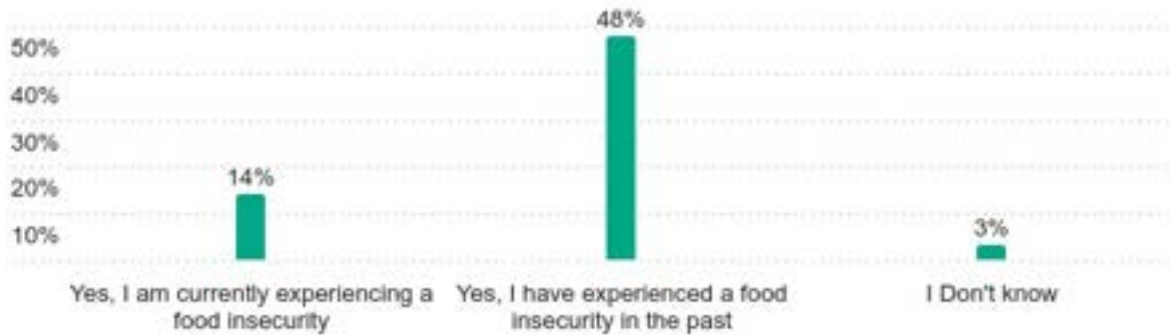
### How many days per week do you eat meals prepared in your home?

286 Responses



**Food insecurity is when you are unable to access or afford enough food consistently. Have you ever in your life experienced food insecurity? (select all that apply)**

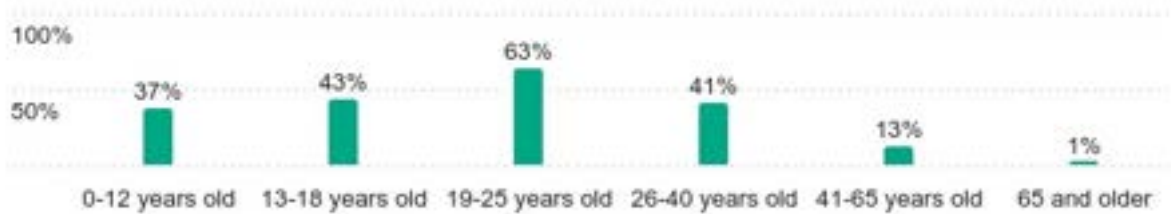
305 Responses



**At what age range(s) have you experienced food insecurity? (select all that apply)**

Only respondents who indicated "Yes, I am currently experiencing a food insecurity" or "Yes, I have experienced a food insecurity in the past" to the question "Have you ever in your life experienced a food insecurity?" were asked this question.

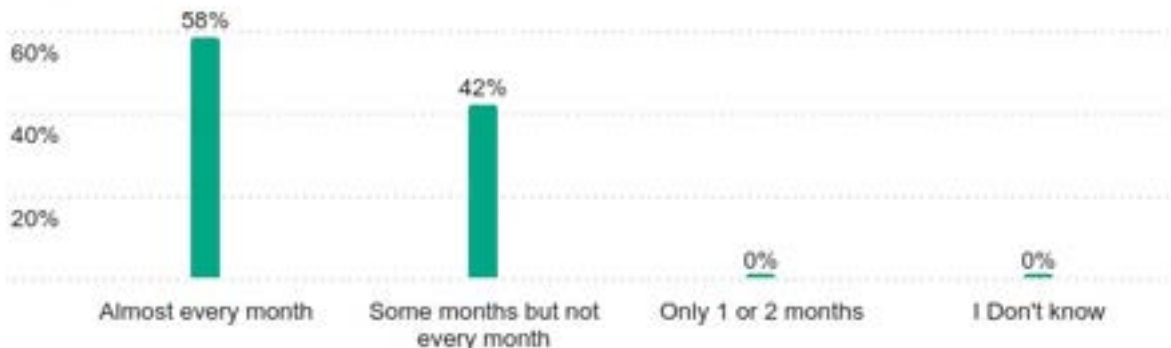
168 Responses



**How often do you experience food insecurity?**

Only respondents who indicated "Yes, I am currently experiencing a food insecurity" to the question "Have you ever in your life experienced a food insecurity?" were asked this question.

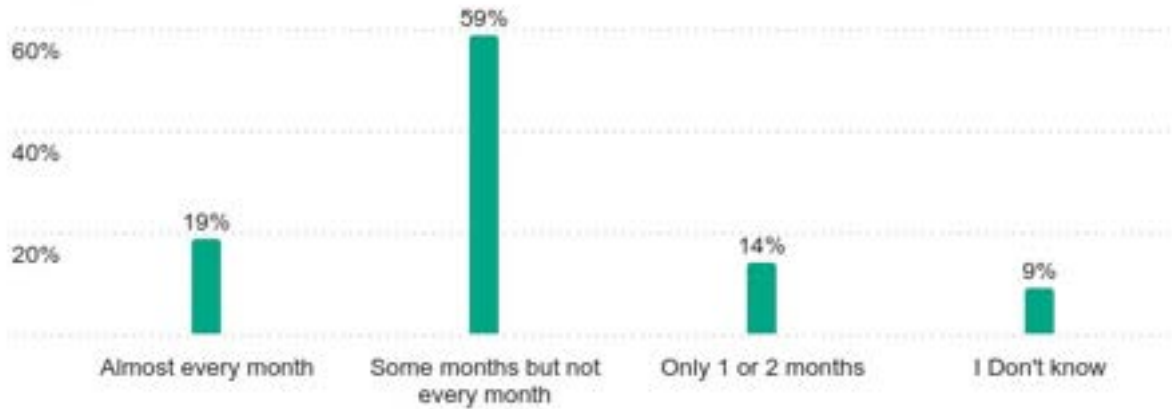
43 Responses



### How often did you experience food insecurity in the past?

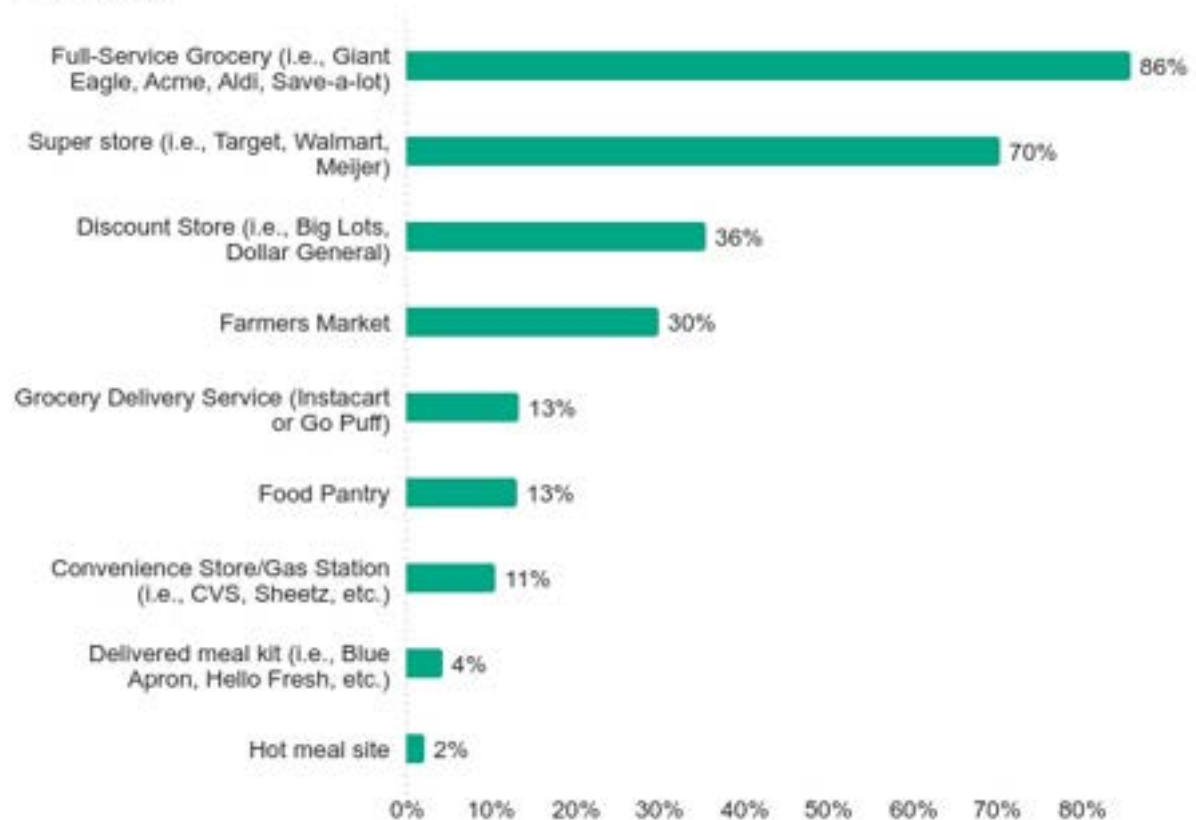
Only respondents who indicated "Yes I have experienced a food insecurity in the past" to the question "Have you ever in your life experienced a food insecurity?" were asked this question.

145 Responses



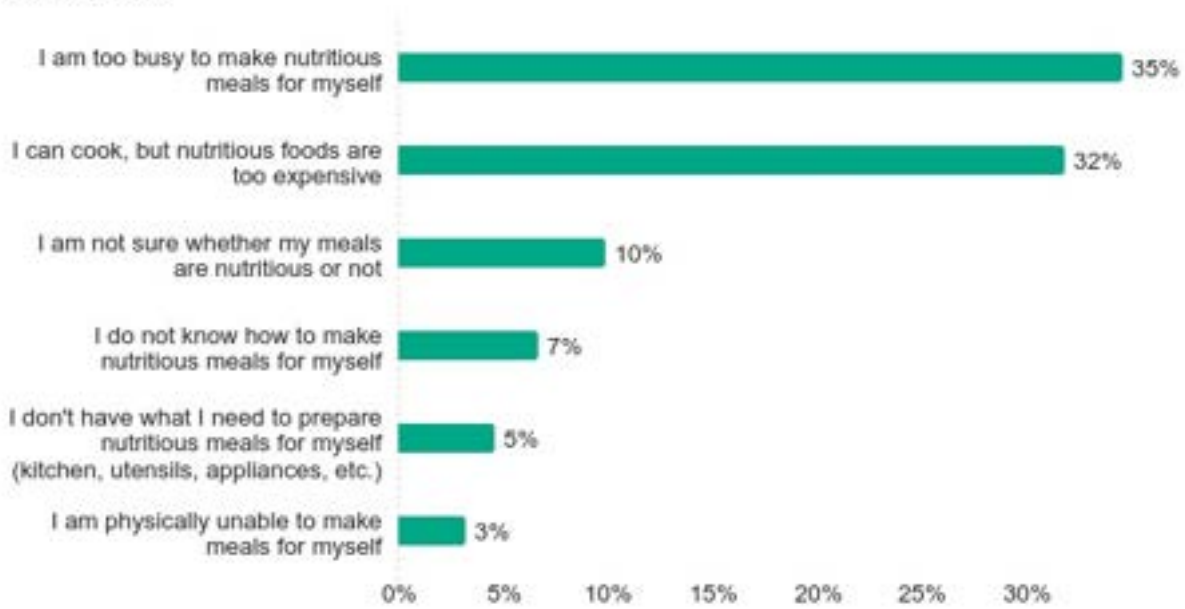
### Where do you usually get your groceries? (select all that apply)

284 Responses



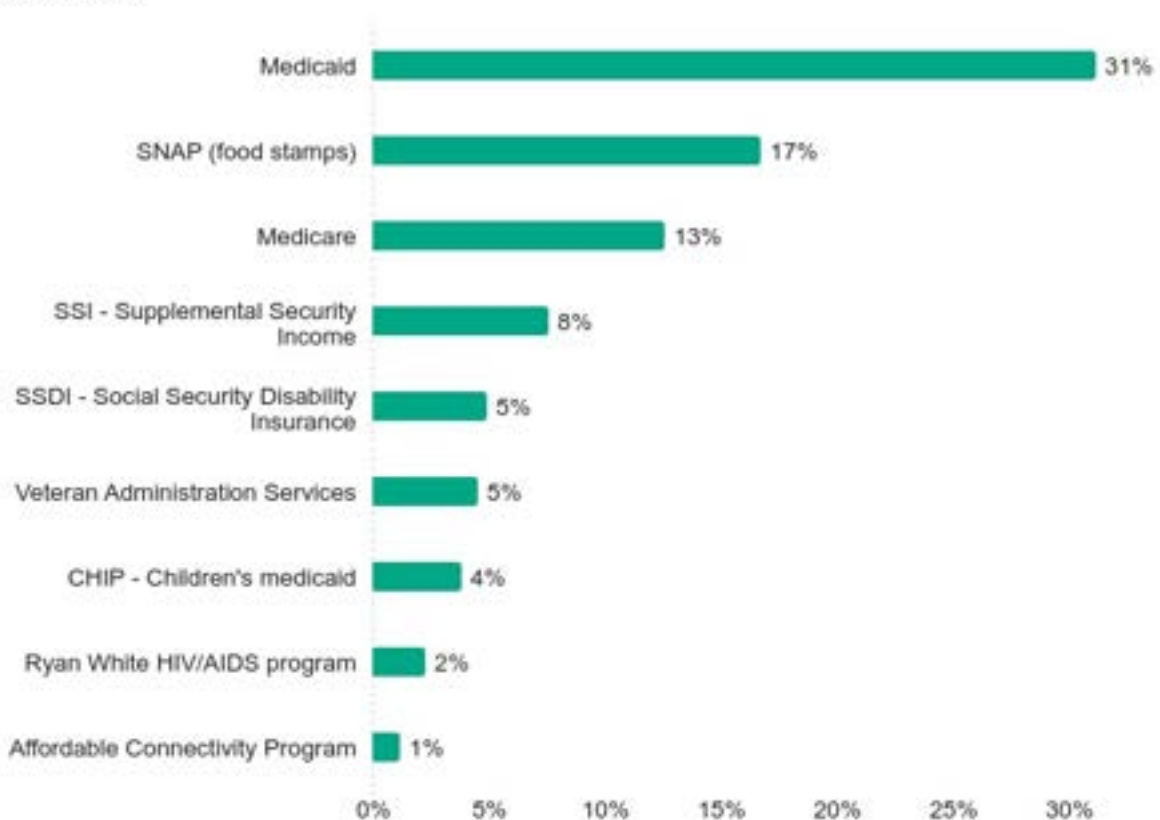
**Please select all of the following statements that you feel apply to you about food and nutrition. (Select all that apply)**

283 Responses



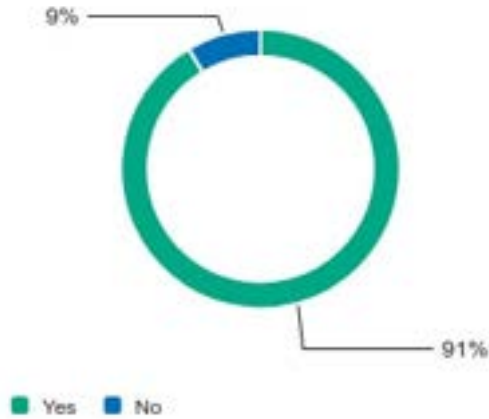
**Do you or a member of your household receive any of these types of assistance? (select all that apply)**

263 Responses



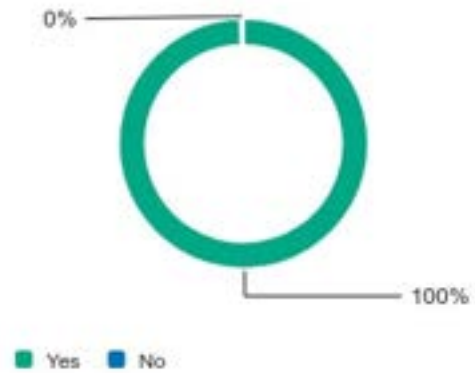
**Do you have a computer or laptop with internet access at the place you live or stay that you can use?**

303 Responses



**Do you have a smartphone with internet access? (a phone that also has computer capabilities and accesses the internet)**

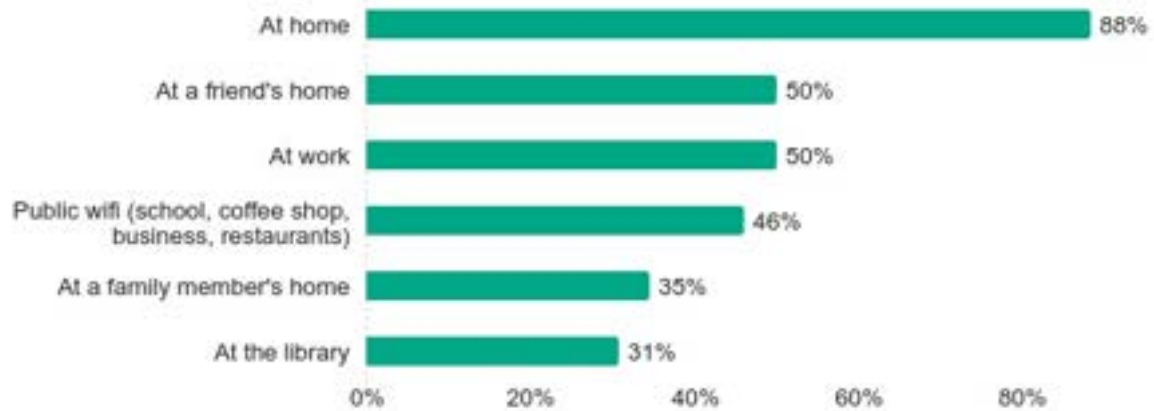
303 Responses



**Where do you usually access/use the internet? (select all that apply)**

Only respondents who indicated "No" to the question "Do you have a computer or laptop with internet access at the place you live or stay that you can use?" or "Do you have a smartphone with internet access?" were asked this question.

26 Responses



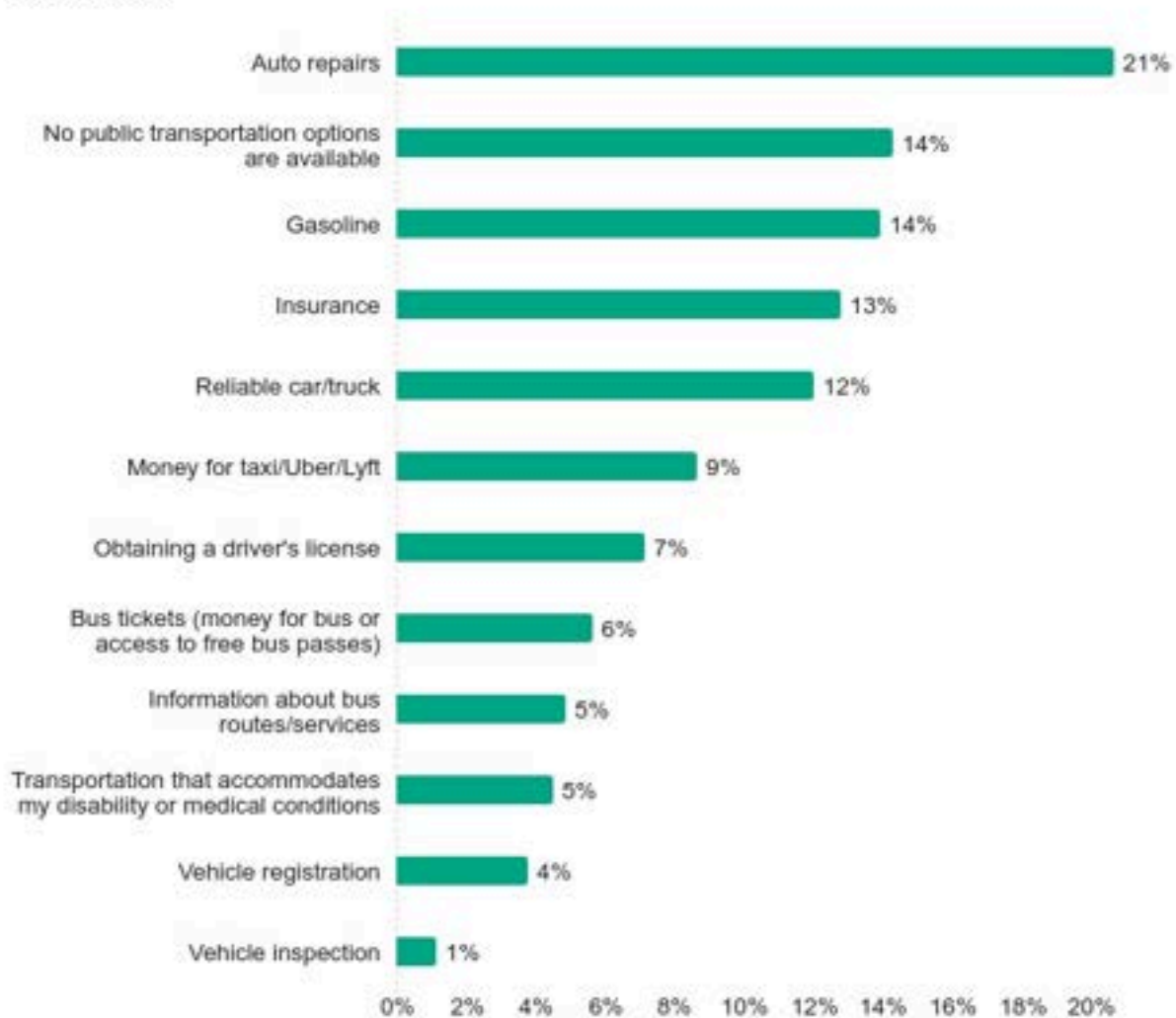
### Do you have access to a reliable form of transportation?

278 Responses



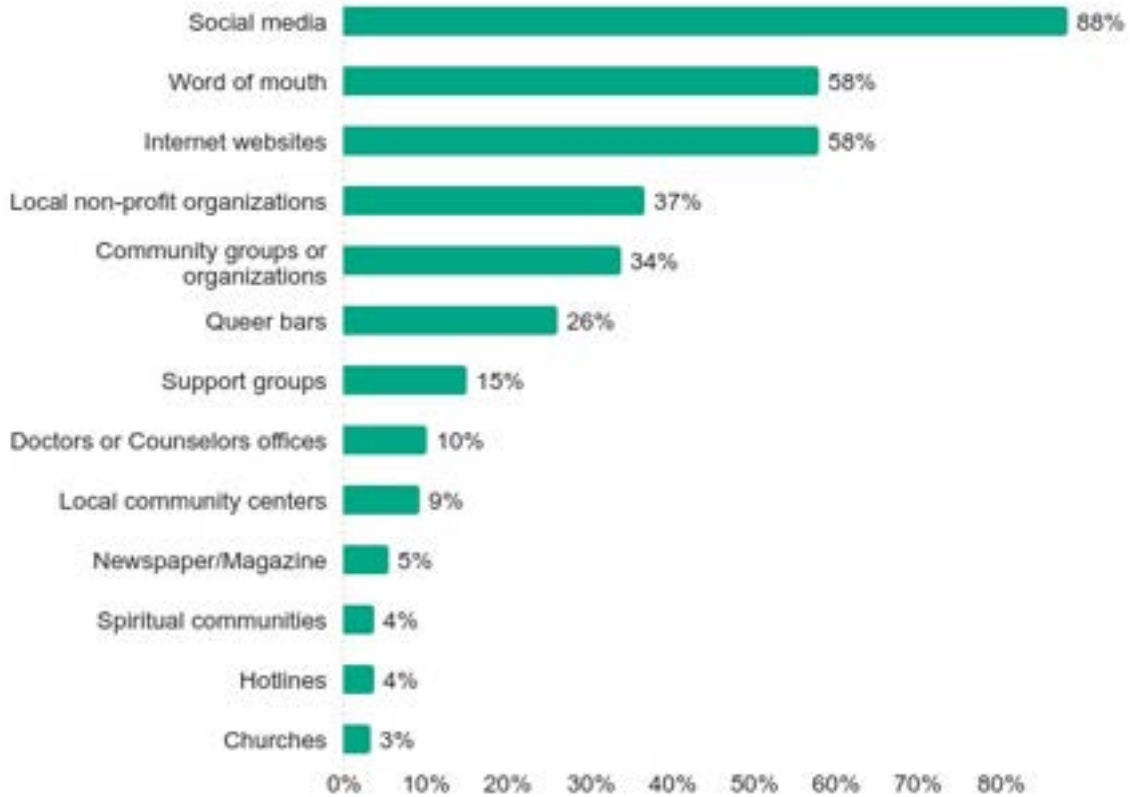
### Is it hard for you to use or get any of the following transportation related needs? (select all that apply)

266 Responses



**Where do you go to find LGBTQ+ community information, support, or resources? (select all that apply)**

292 Responses



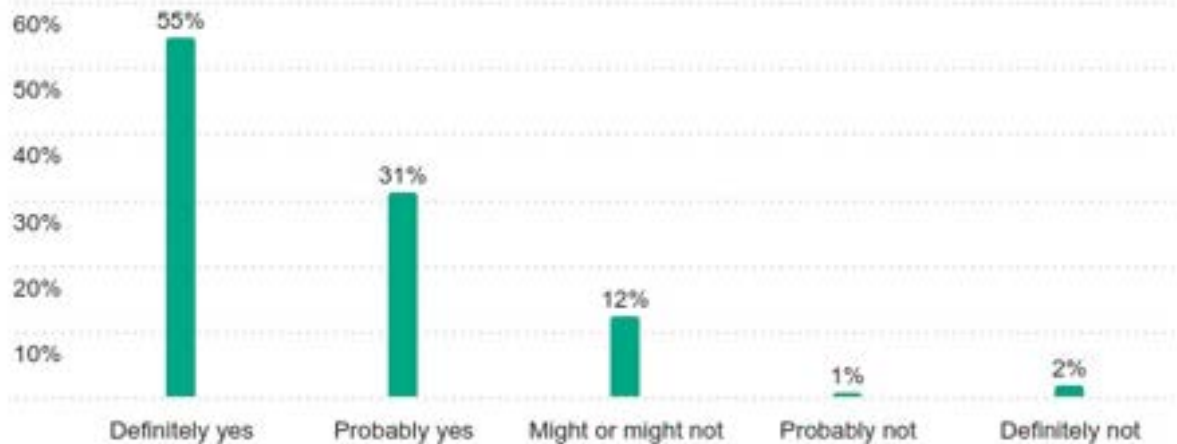
“The Mahoning Valley is not a perfect place but we have good bones, good people, and plenty of hope to go around when you know where to look for it. That brings me a lot of joy.”

**-Mahoning County Resident, Age 28**



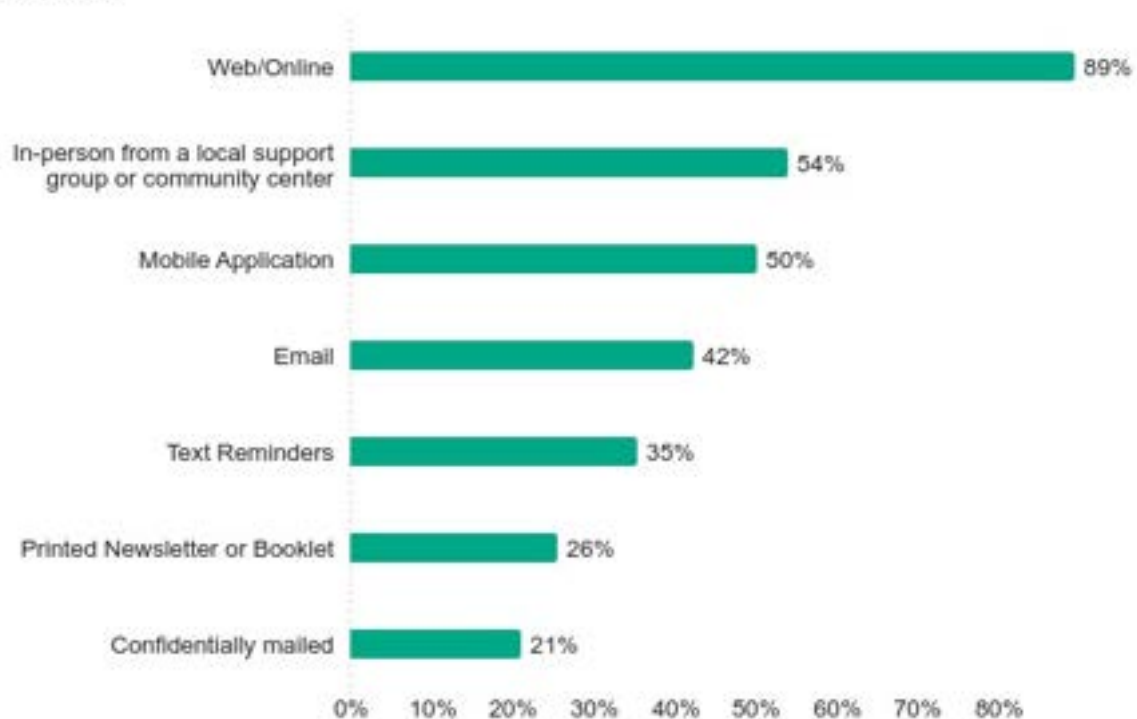
**Do you think it would be helpful to have one centralized place to house all LGBTQ+ affirming community support and resource information, so you don't have to go to different places to find it?**

297 Responses



**What format would you prefer this type of information to be available? (select all that apply)**

285 Responses





“My hometown can be very judgmental, overly religious, and often times too conservative. Food banks can be scarce and public transportation isn’t the best. It can feel the police don’t do much for protecting.”

-Columbiana County Resident, Age 30





## Business, Employment and Commerce

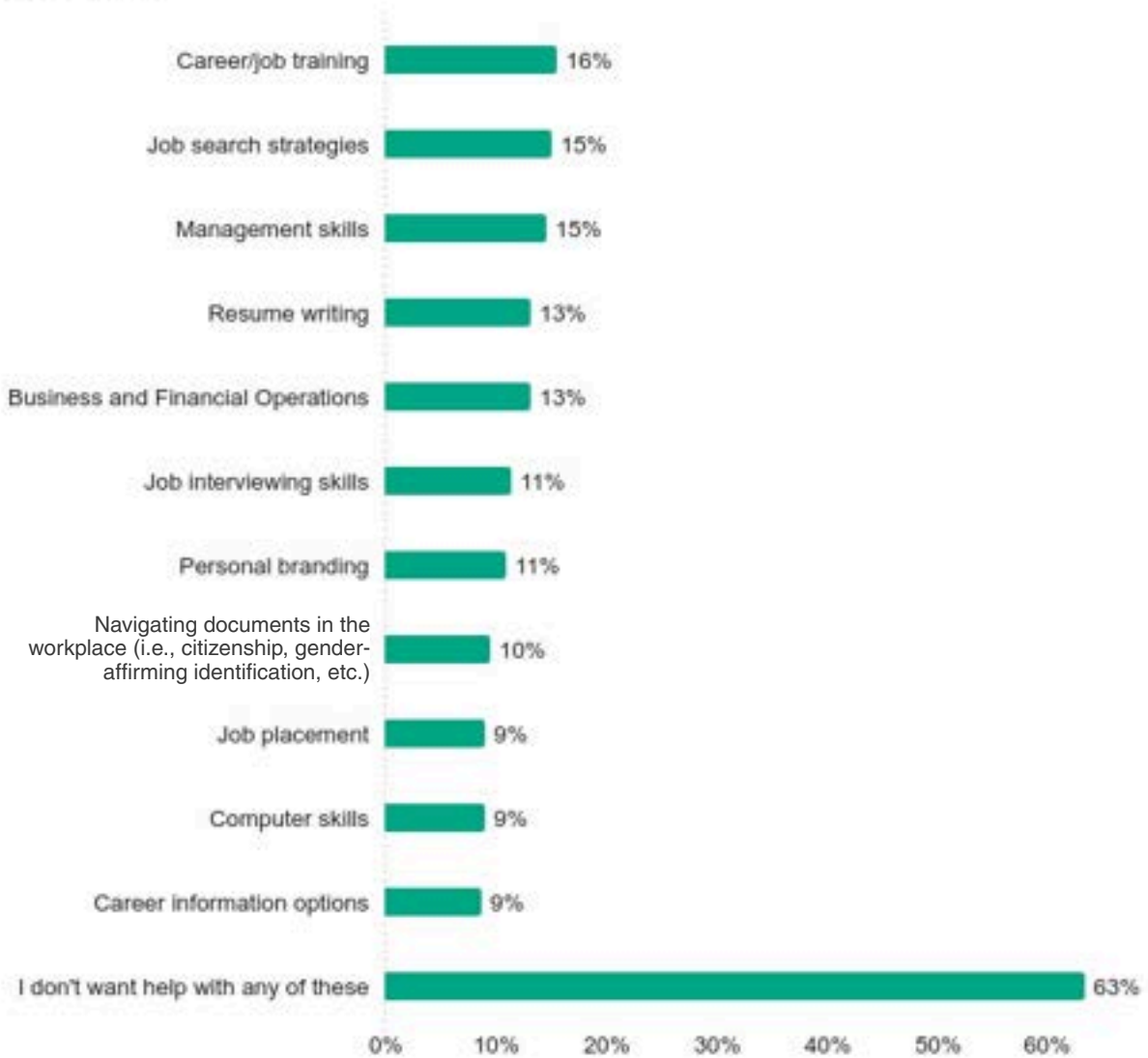
For the purpose of this project, when referring to business, employment, and commerce, we included respondents' experiences, concerns, and needs as business owners, employees, or consumers, with special consideration for barriers that prevent respondents from receiving fair and equitable treatment free from discrimination in these settings.

In this project, we recognize and assess the unique experiences, concerns, and needs of individuals at the intersection of race, gender, class, culture, and ability.

Our goal is to promote inclusivity, support, and meaningful experiences for individuals who identify as LGBTQ+ or who prefer not to disclose their identity.

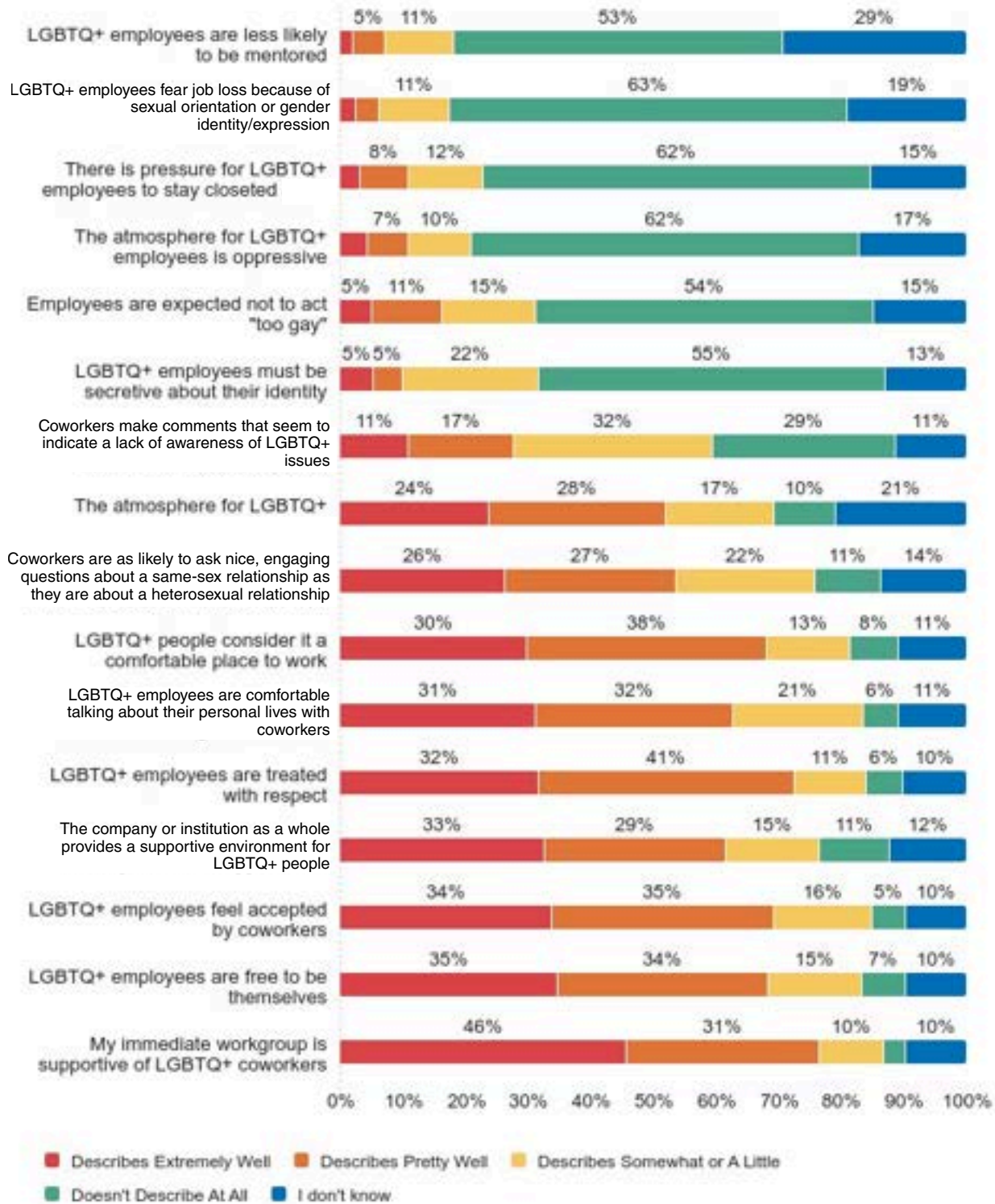
### Would you like help with any of these job-related activities? (select all that apply)

219 Responses



## Tell us what attitudes exist at your job/workplace towards LGBTQ+ employees.

178 Responses



**Tell us about how often you experience any of the following in the hiring process or during interviews that you have had in the past.**

204 Responses

**Exclusionary job postings:** HR may post job openings that use gendered language or require specific gender markers on job applications, which can exclude LGBTQ+ individuals who do not identify within the binary gender system.



**Unconscious bias during interviews:** HR personnel may hold implicit biases towards LGBTQ+ individuals, leading to negative assumptions and stereotypes during interviews that can ultimately affect the hiring decision.



**Discriminatory questions during interviews:** HR personnel may ask inappropriate questions during interviews that target an individual's sexual orientation, gender identity, or personal life, which is not relevant to the job requirements and can be a form of discrimination.



**Limited benefits and policies:** HR may not provide sufficient benefits and policies that support LGBTQ+ individuals, such as non-discrimination policies, equal access to healthcare, or support for transitioning in the workplace, which can make it difficult for LGBTQ+ individuals to feel safe and supported in the workplace.

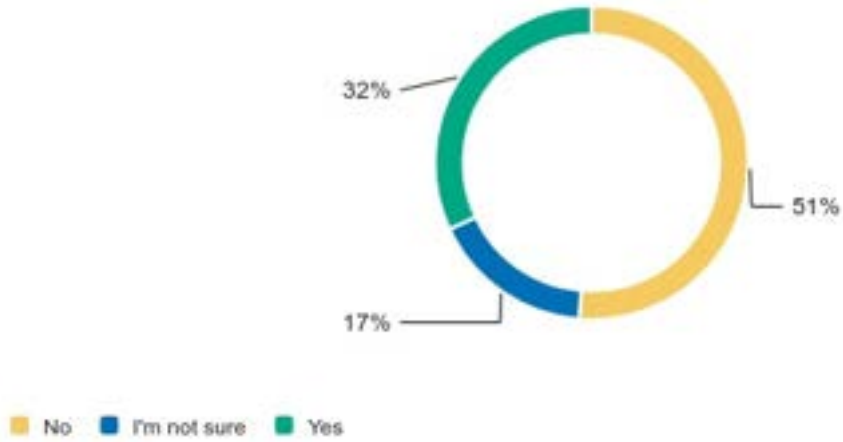


0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

■ Almost every time
 ■ Frequently
 ■ Sometimes
 ■ Rarely
 ■ Never
 ■ Not Applicable

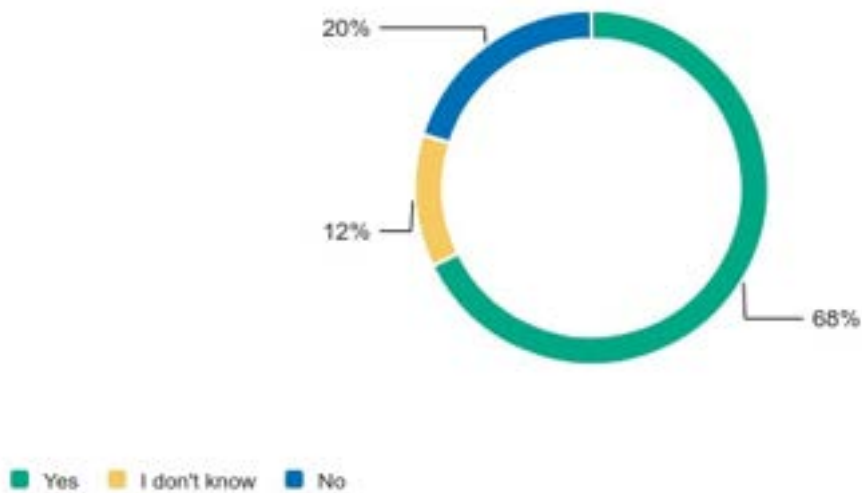
### Have you ever felt discriminated against based on your sexual orientation or gender identity at work?

197 Responses



### Do you feel safe being "out" in your current work environment? (Please answer this question about your primary work environment if you work more than one job)

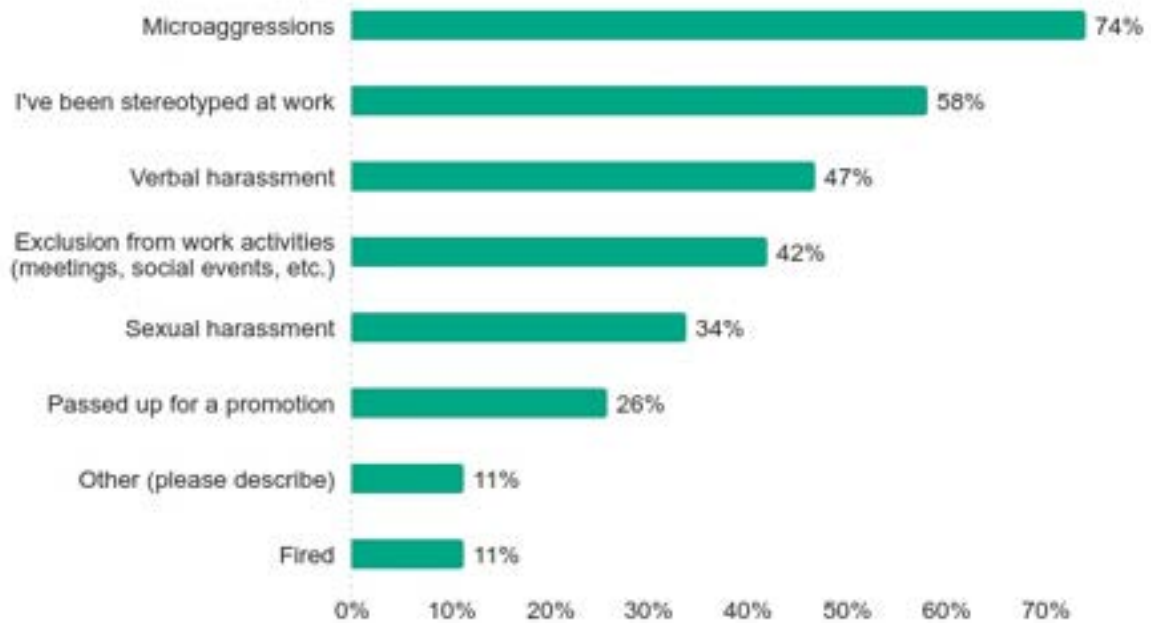
189 Responses



**What kind of workplace discrimination have you experienced based on your sexual orientation or gender identity (select all that apply)**

Only respondents indicating "Yes" to the question "Have you ever felt discriminated against based on your sexual orientation or gender identity at work?" were asked this question.

62 Responses



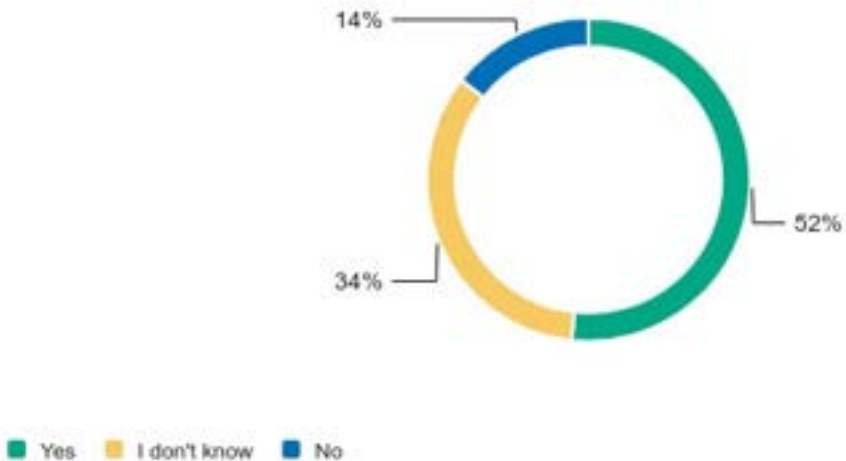
“Safety. I am not out because I fear it will be used against me. I work in a conservative industry and worry that if I was out I would not be able to find work.”

-Mahoning County Resident, Age 24



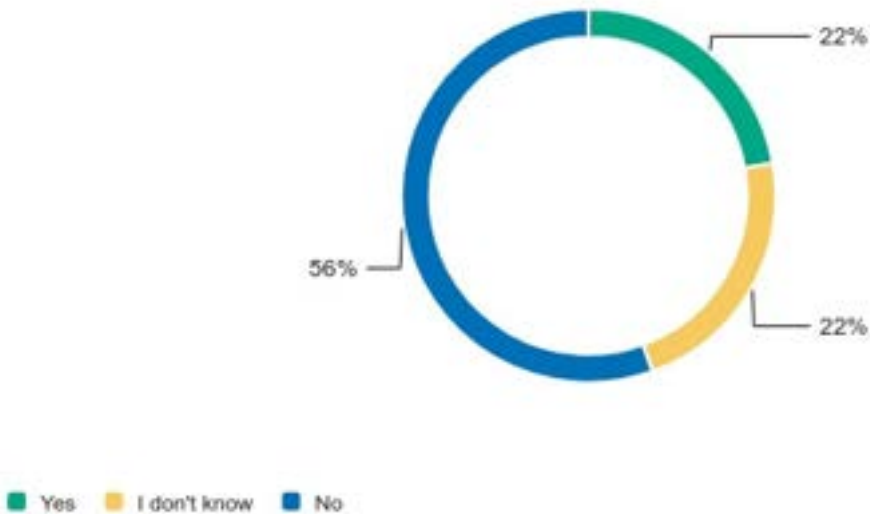
**Does your current employer have rules/regulations/policies in place for those who have experienced workplace discrimination based on their sexual orientation or gender identity?**


180 Responses



**Does your place of employment have an LGBTQ+ employee resource group (ERG), LGBTQ+ affinity group, or LGBTQ+ employee resource network (ERN)?**

180 Responses





For the purpose of this project, safety and law enforcement refers to both the perceived and actual safety of LGBTQ+ individuals across public and private spaces, as well as their treatment by systems of authority. Community input makes clear that safety is not simply about policing or enforcement; it is about knowing where to go, who to trust, and where one can be safe, supported, or, if necessary, hidden.

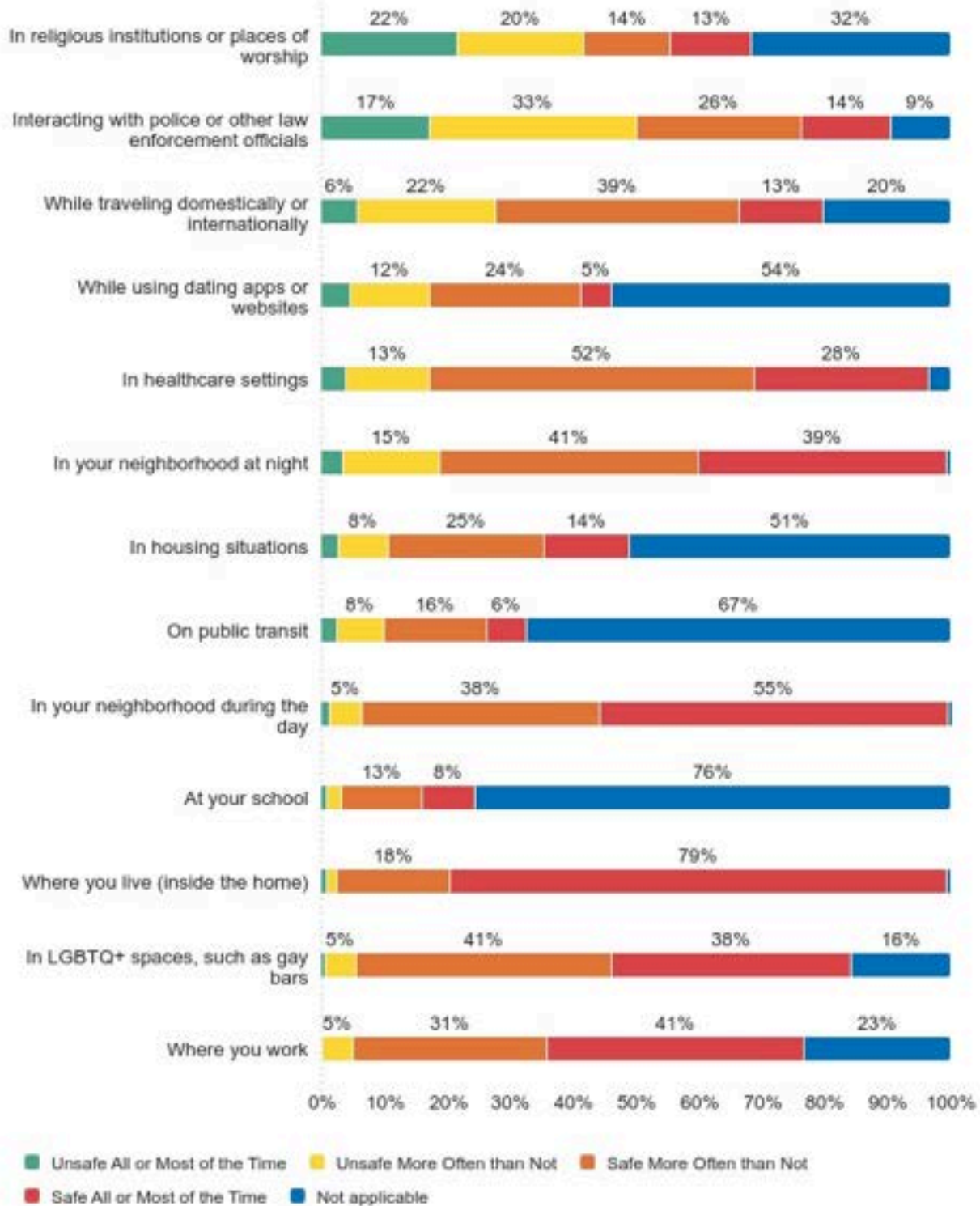
Safety includes access to safe overnight spaces, emergency shelters, and environments free from harassment or judgment. It also means being able to express one's gender or sexuality without being profiled, misjudged, or reported to law enforcement.

This assessment recognizes that safety is shaped by systemic power dynamics, institutional bias, and the historical and ongoing mistrust between law enforcement and marginalized LGBTQ+ people, especially those with multiple oppressed identities. We seek to understand how law enforcement and other institutions of power impact community members' experiences and to identify alternative pathways to safety that are rooted in trust, community care, and culturally competent responses.

## Safety and Law Enforcement

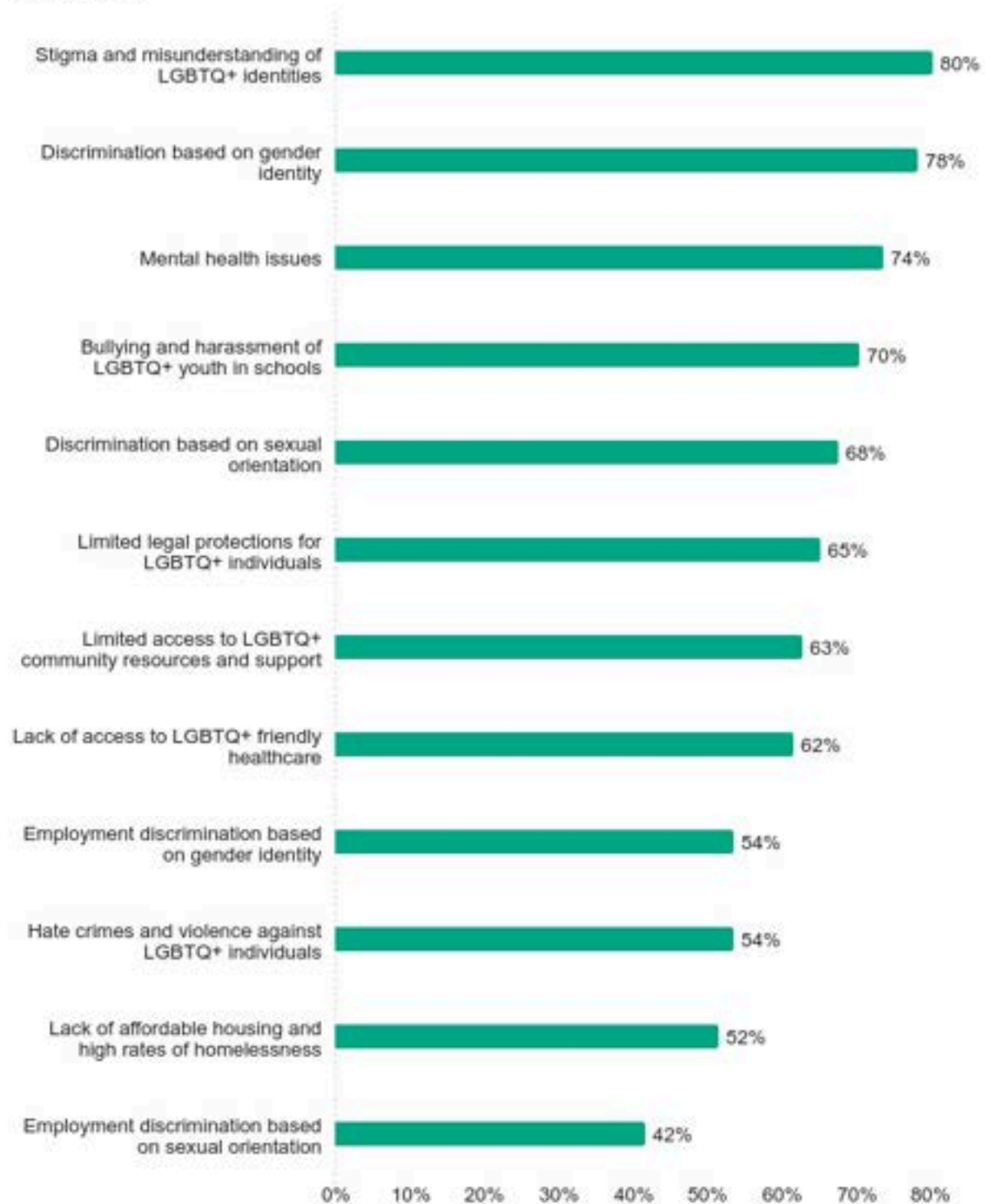
## How physically safe do you feel in the following situations and settings?

266 Responses



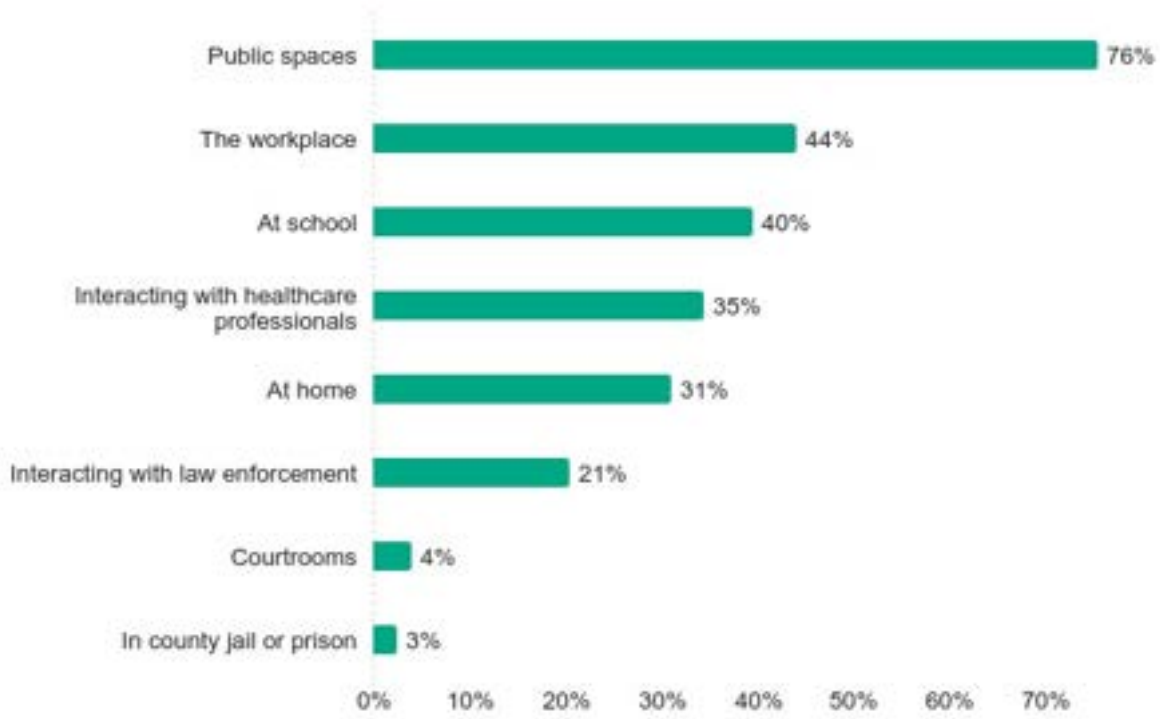
**Please select the issues that you think are problems specifically related to the LGBTQ+ community in your local area. (select all that apply)**

250 Responses



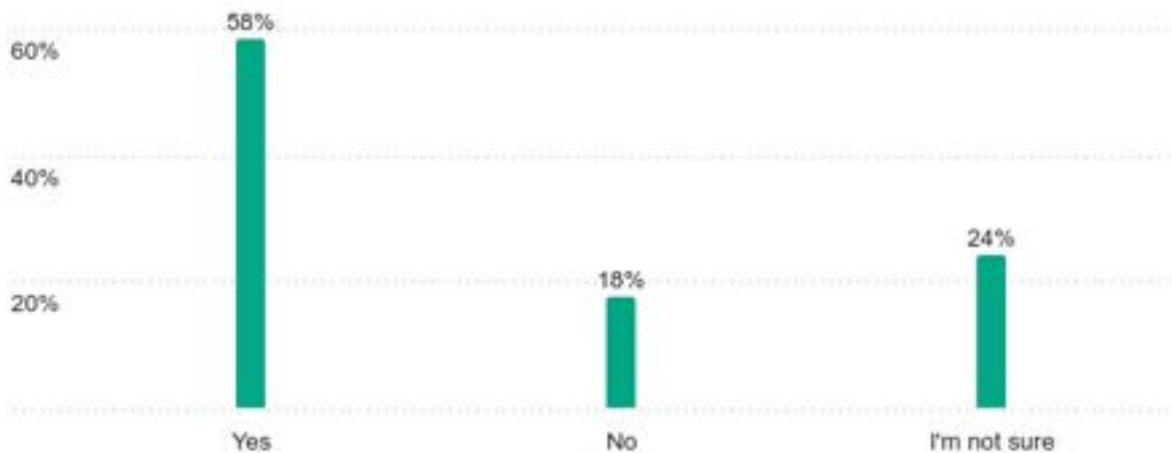
**Have you ever experienced LGBTQ+ discrimination in the following places or situations?  
(select all that apply)**

200 Responses



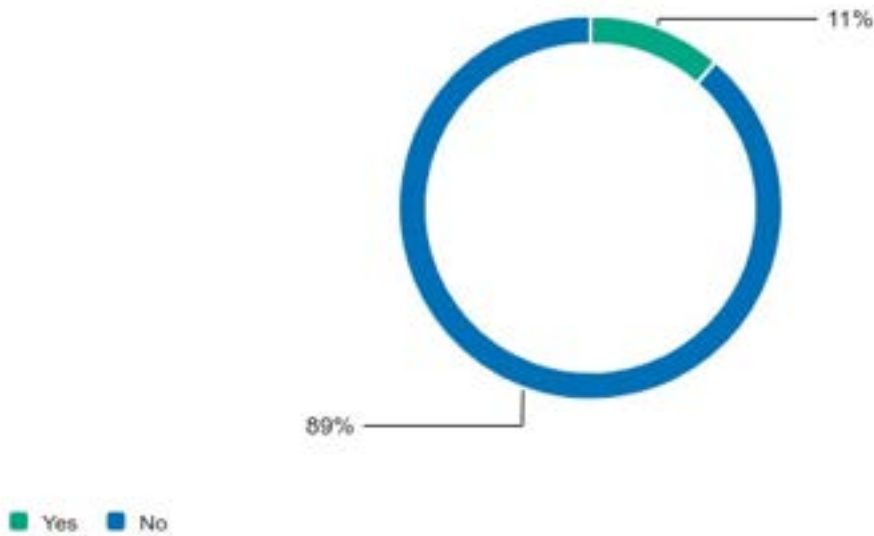
**Are there certain parts of Trumbull, Mahoning, Columbiana, or Ashtabula counties that you worry about your safety or acceptance because of your LGBTQ+ identity?**

262 Responses



**Have you been arrested, detained by, or had a negative interaction(s) with a law enforcement officer or the justice system in the past five (5) years?**

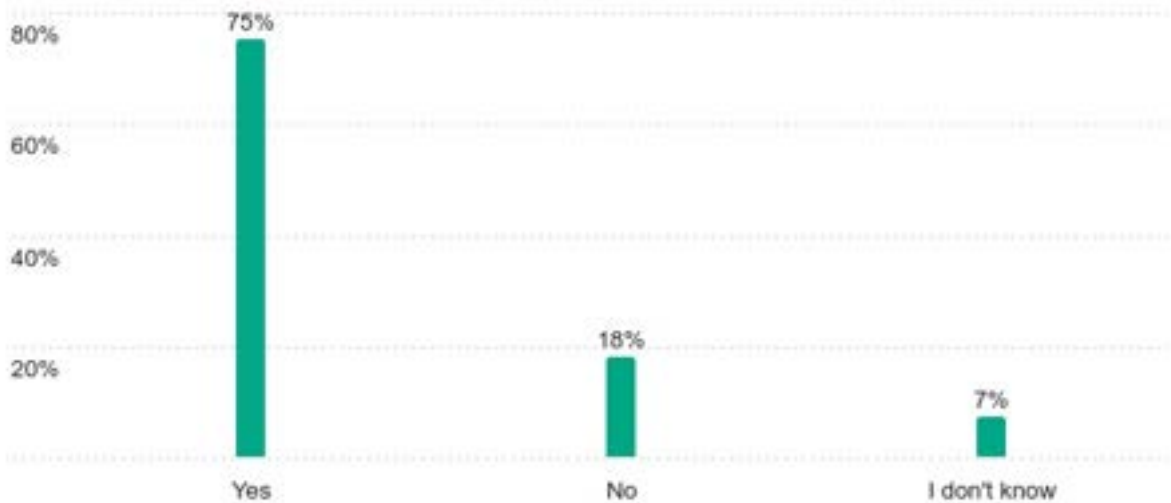
248 Responses



**Was this arrest, detention, or negative interaction(s) with a law enforcement officer or the justice system in Trumbull, Mahoning, Columbiana, or Ashtabula County, Ohio?**

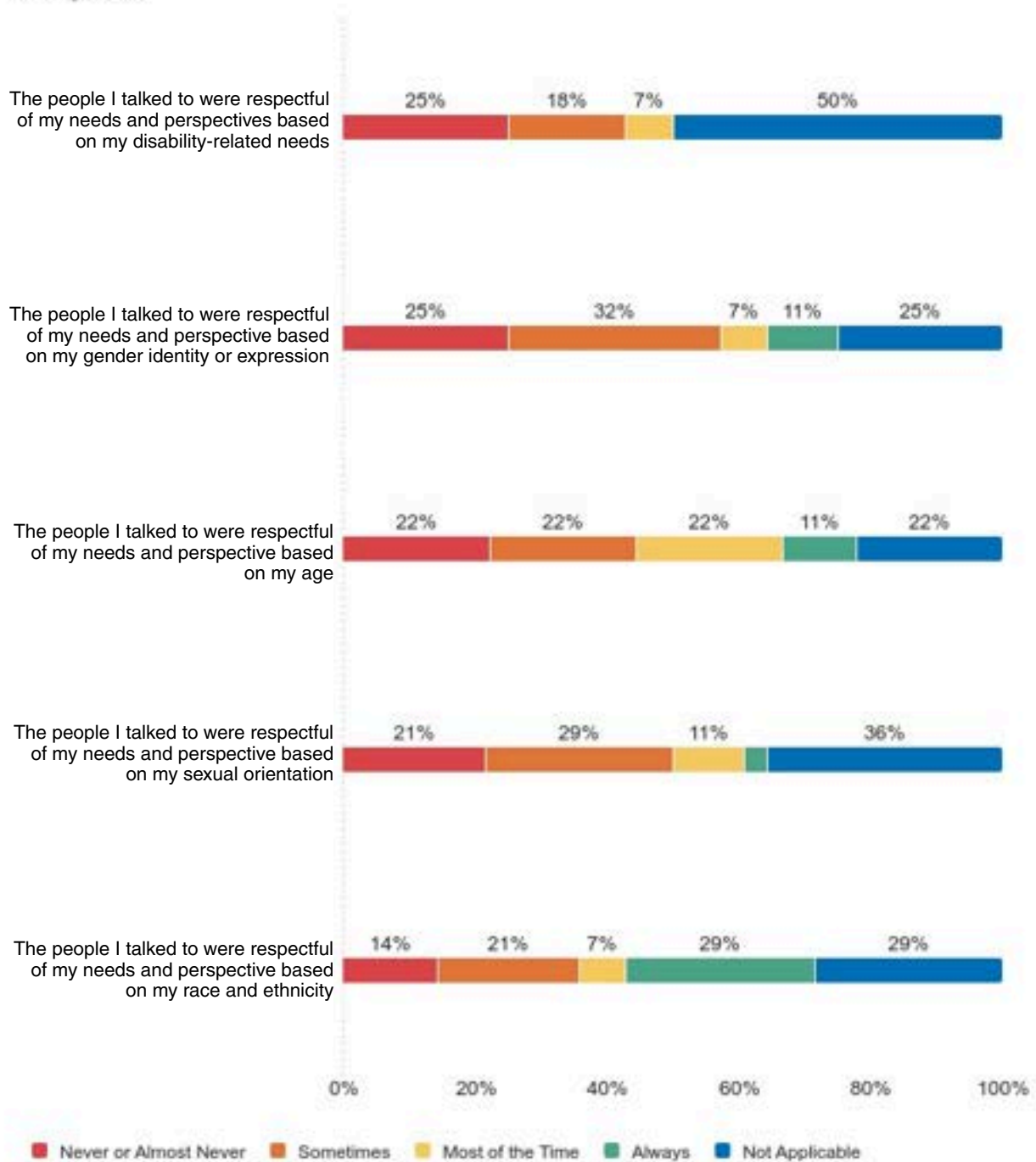
Only respondents who indicated "Yes" to the question "Have you been arrested, detained by, or had a negative interaction(s) with a law enforcement officer or the justice system in the past five (5) years?" were asked this question.

28 Responses



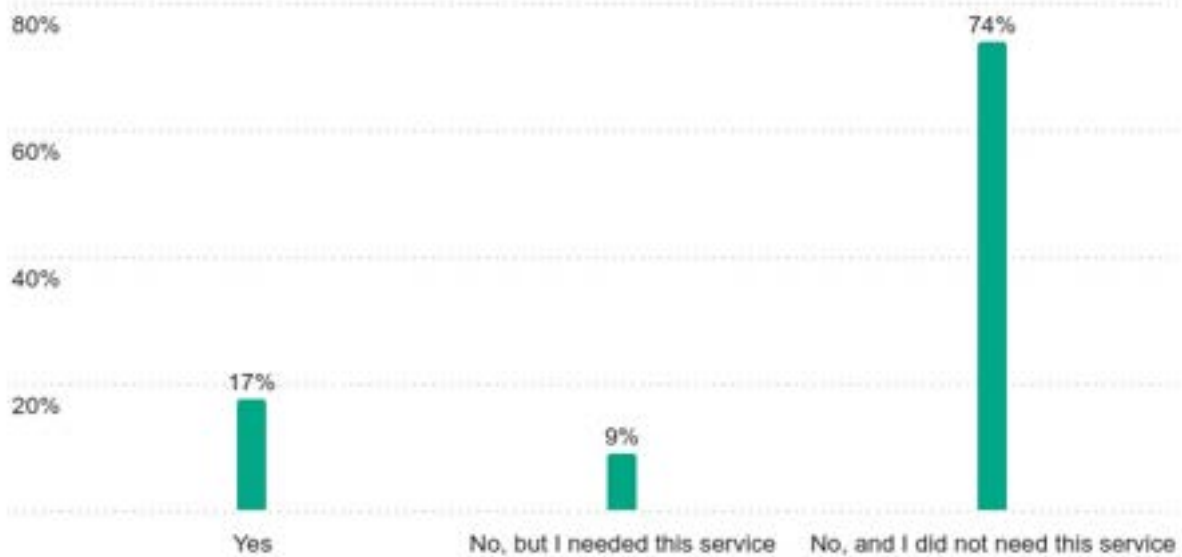
## How often are the following statements true pertaining to your arrest, detainment or interactions with the justice system?

Only respondents who indicated "Yes" to the question "Have you been arrested, detained by, or had a negative interaction(s) with a law enforcement officer or the justice system in the past five (5) years?" were asked this question.  
28 Responses



### Did you use any kind of personal legal help or services in the past five (5) years?

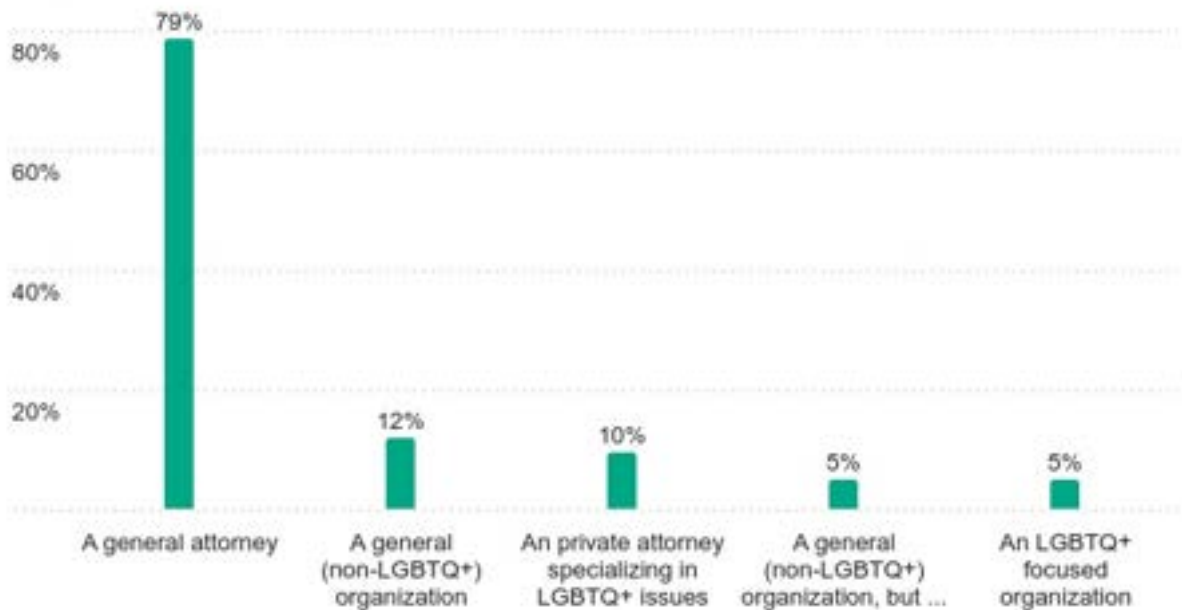
247 Responses



### Where did/do you usually get these legal services? (Select all that apply)

Only respondents who indicated "Yes" to the question "Did you use any kind of personal legal help or services in the past five (5) years?" were asked this question.

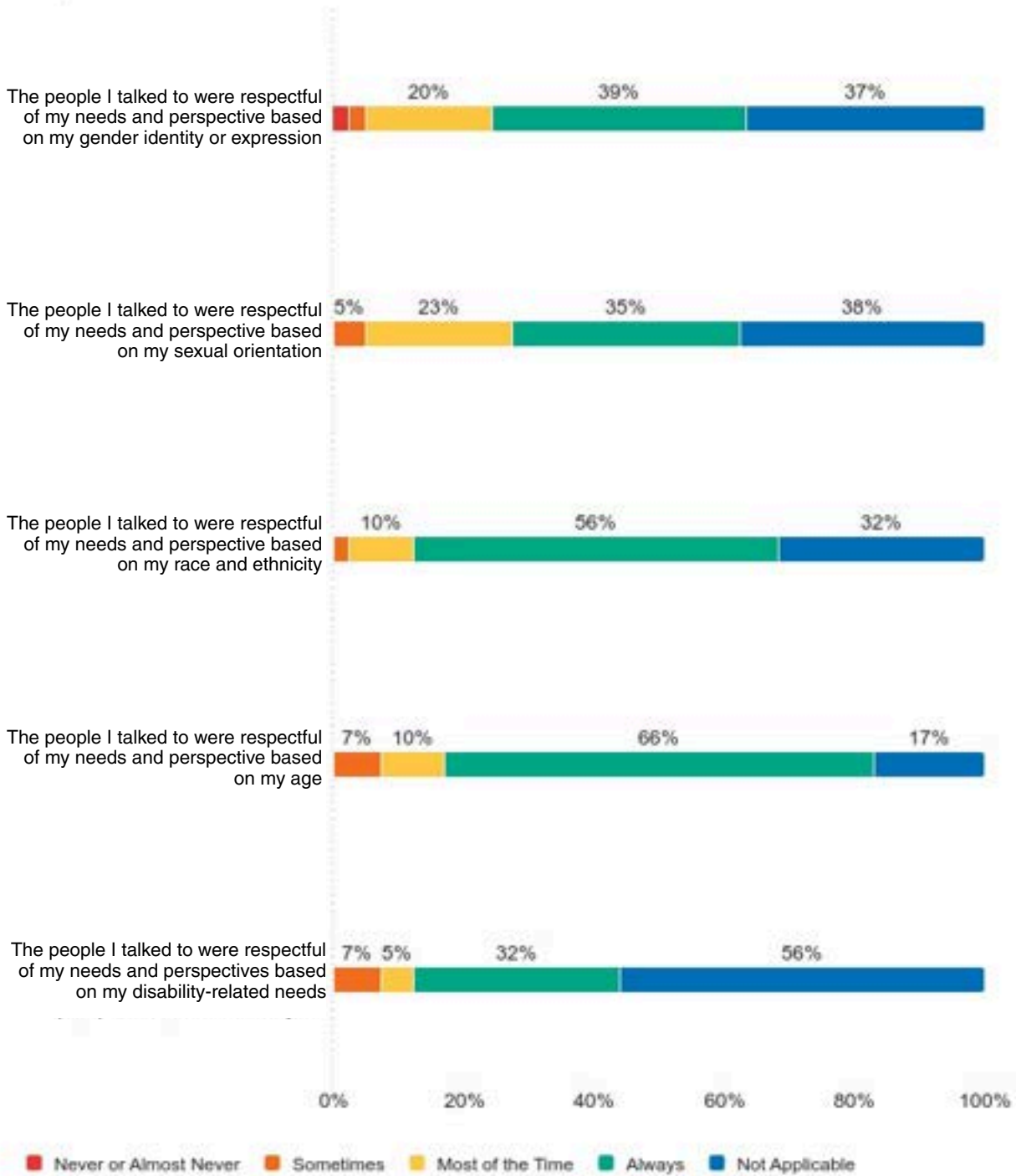
42 Responses



### How often are the following statements true pertaining to your interactions with legal services?

Only respondents who indicated "Yes" to the question "Did you use any kind of personal legal help or services in the past five (5) years?" were asked this question.

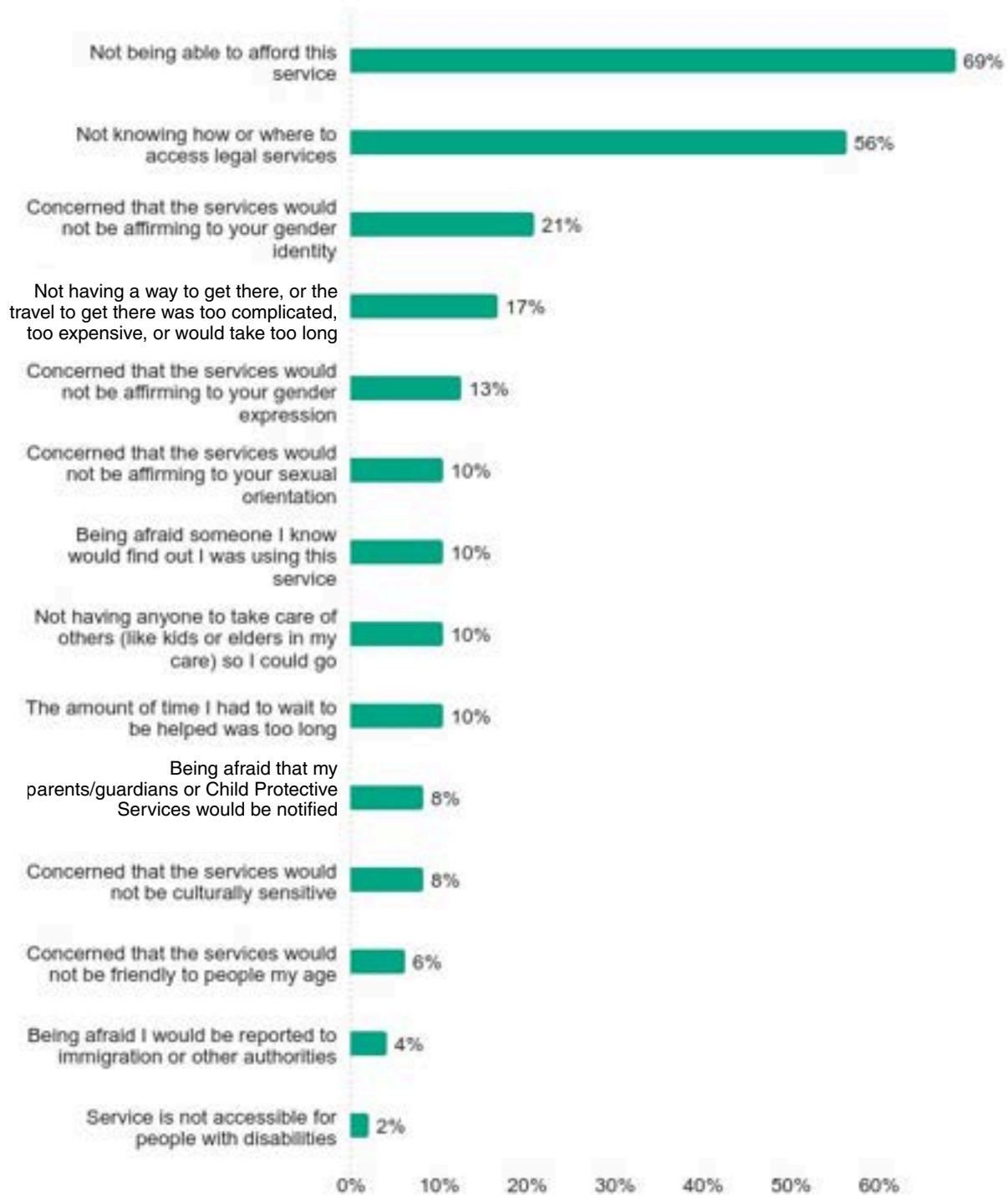
41 Responses



### Do any of these make it hard for you to get legal support? (select all that apply)

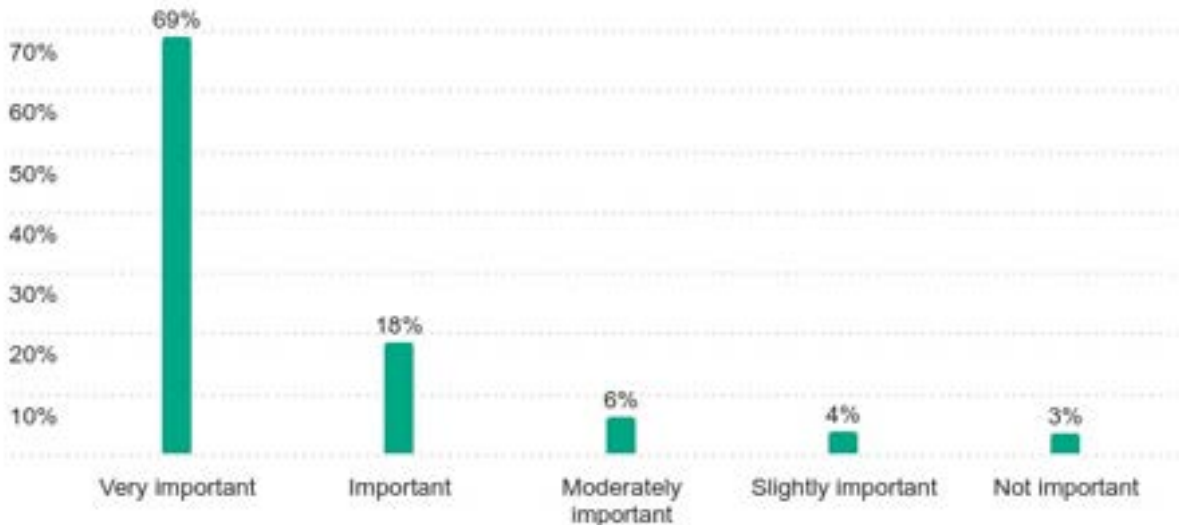
Only respondents who indicated "Yes" or "No, but I needed this service" to the question "Did you use any kind of personal legal help or services in the past five (5) years?" were asked this question.

48 Responses



Whether or not you have personally needed legal help, how important do you feel it is that LGBTQ+ specific lawyers or other legal services are available?

247 Responses



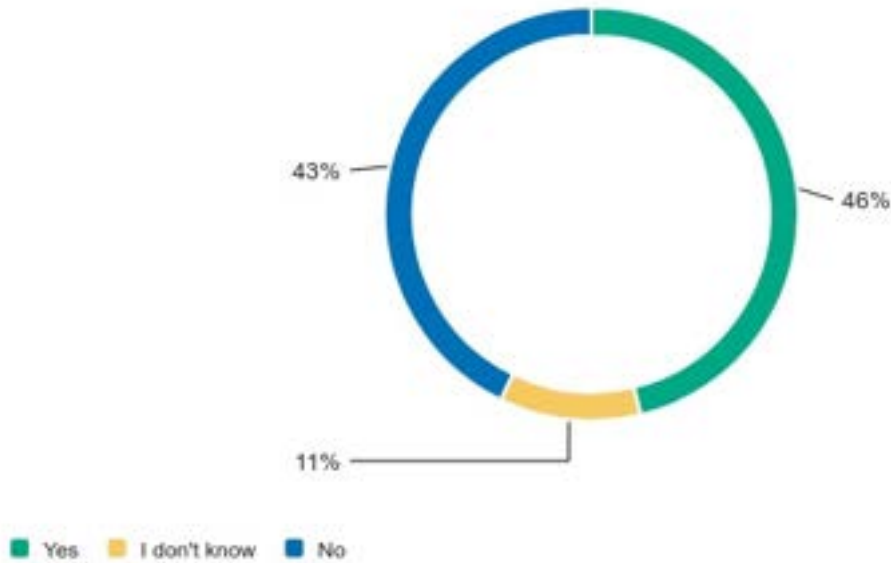
“I actually have changed my physical appearance, at honestly significant cost, to appear less queer because my daily interactions were becoming so fraught and I genuinely felt it was just a matter of time till I was physically assaulted.”

-Mahoning County Resident, Age 28



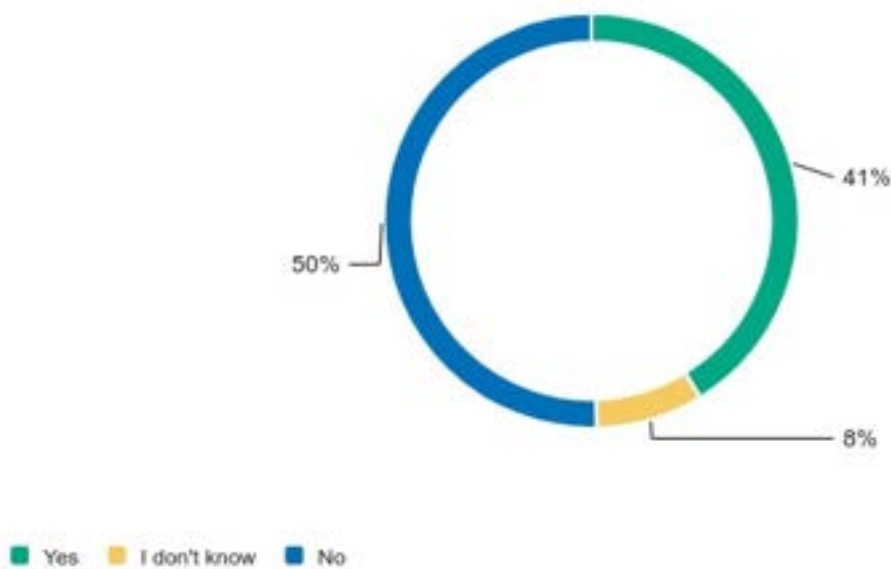
**In the past five years, have you ever been bullied because of your LGBTQ+ identity?**

262 Responses



**In the past five years, have you ever been electronically bullied (count being bullied through texting, Instagram, Facebook, or other social media)?**

262 Responses





For the purpose of this project, recreation and leisure refers to the full range of activities, both active and passive, that individuals engage in for enjoyment, relaxation, self care, and connection. These activities are not tied to work or productivity, but instead offer opportunities to unwind, recharge, and find joy. They include everything from visiting museums, playing video games, and going to coffee shops or parks, to attending game nights or simply spending time in safe and welcoming spaces.

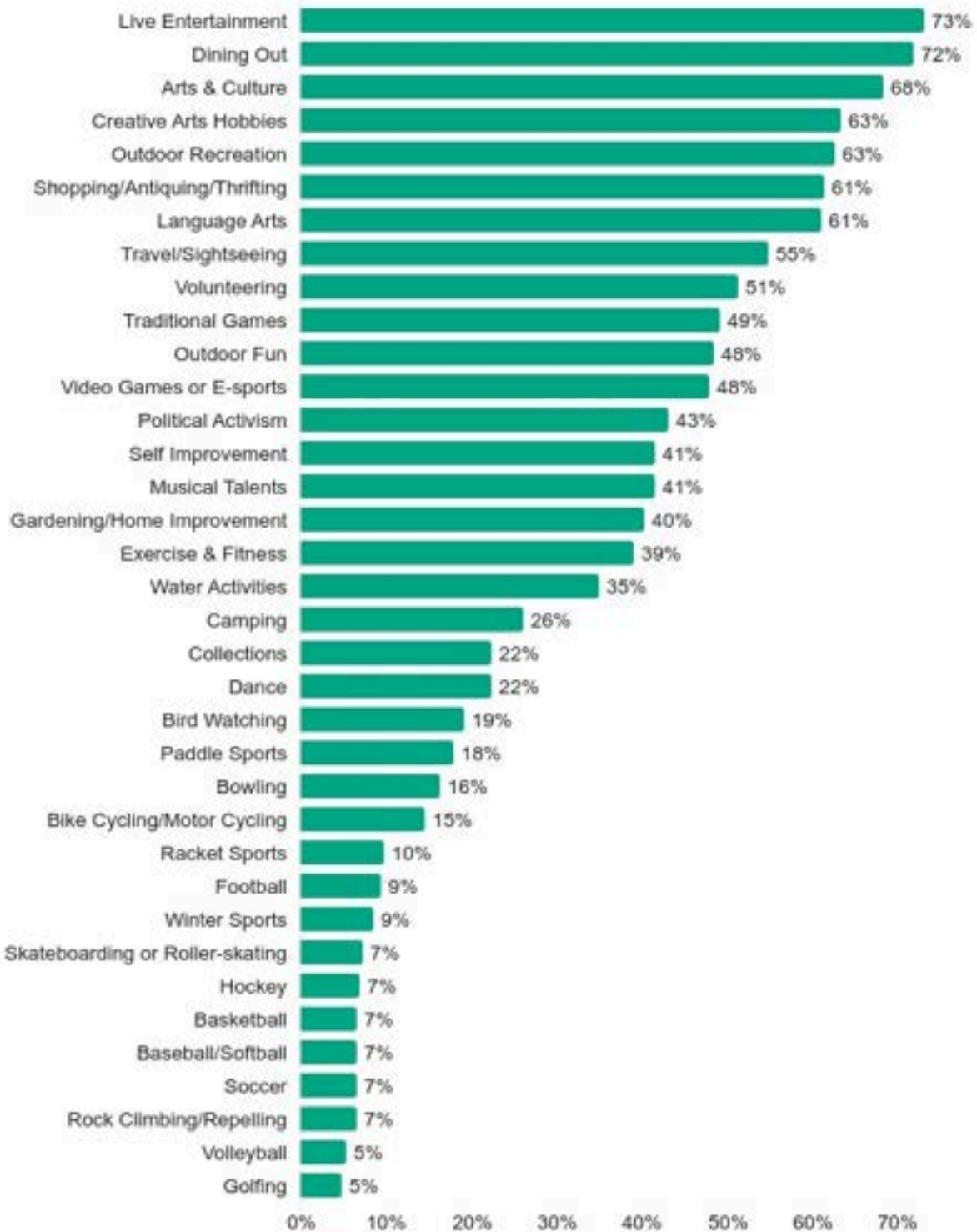
For LGBTQ+ people, recreation and leisure also serve a deeper function. These activities help strengthen community bonds, foster belonging, and provide affirming alternatives to spaces that have historically centered nightlife and alcohol. Community members emphasized the need for spaces beyond bars, where people of all ages can safely express themselves and build joyful connections.

We recognize that recreation and leisure look different across the lifespan and across identities. This project values these spaces and experiences as essential to individual and collective wellbeing within the Greater Mahoning Valley LGBTQ+ community.

## Recreation and Leisure

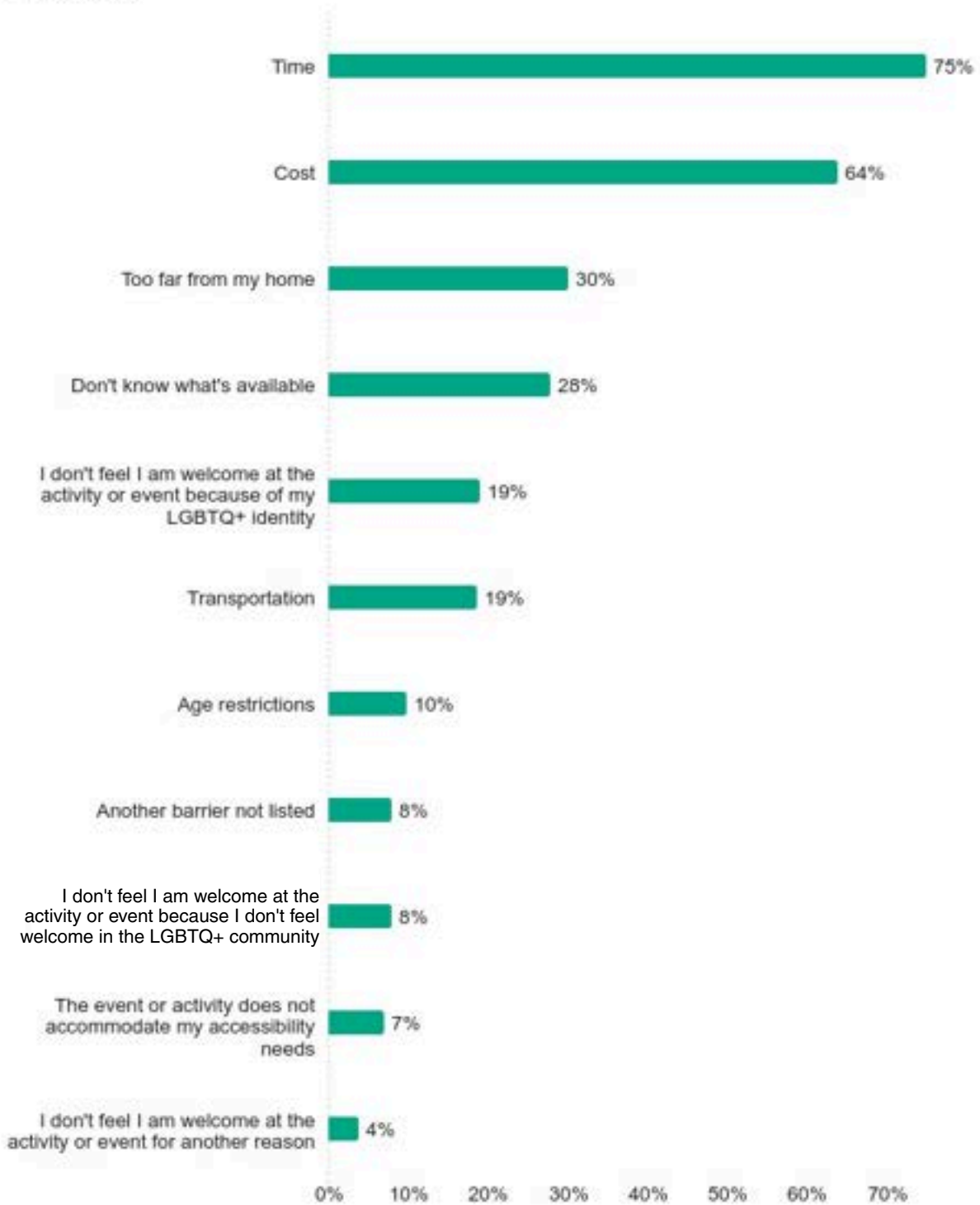
## Select the types of activities you enjoy watching or participating in? (select all that apply)

246 Responses



**Do any of the following barriers prevent you from participating in recreation and leisure activities that you enjoy as much as you would like to? (select all that apply)**

216 Responses



**“We used to frequent a gay bar that felt safe, but it closed and the other solely gay bars in our area do not seem very trans or femme friendly. It’s isolating.”**

**-Trumbull County Resident, Age 35**

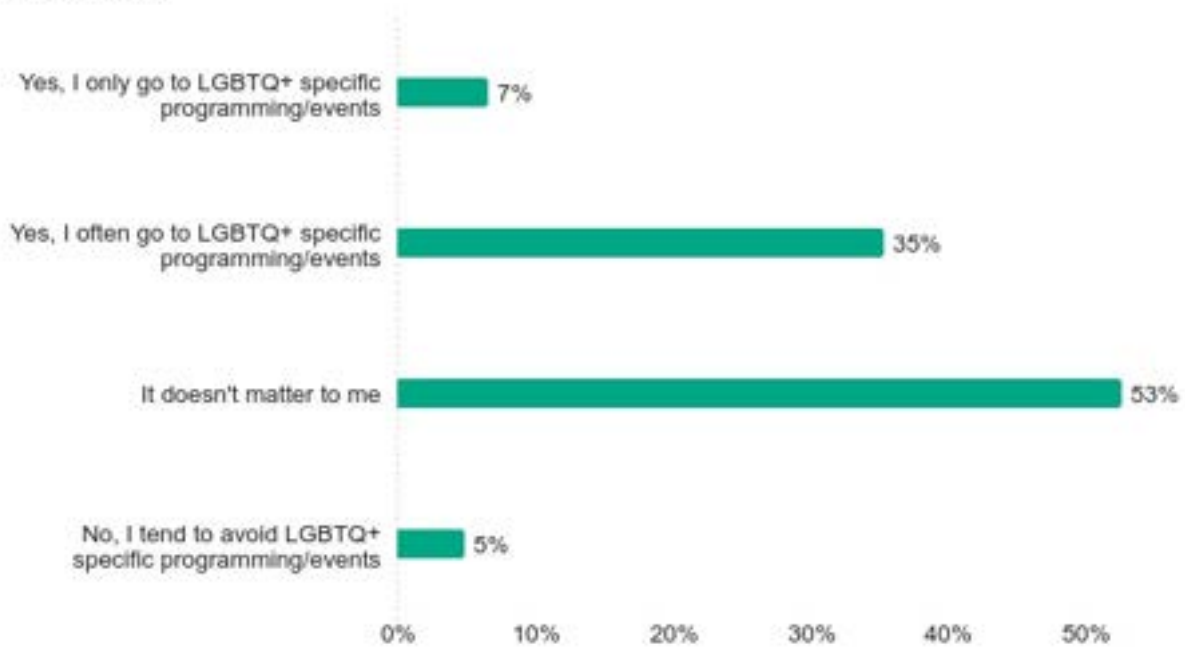


**“I think just having more LGBTQ+ group spaces that queer people can attend and go to in person beyond just bars! Somewhere everyone can get a real sense of community and togetherness.”**

**-Mahoning County Resident, Age 28**

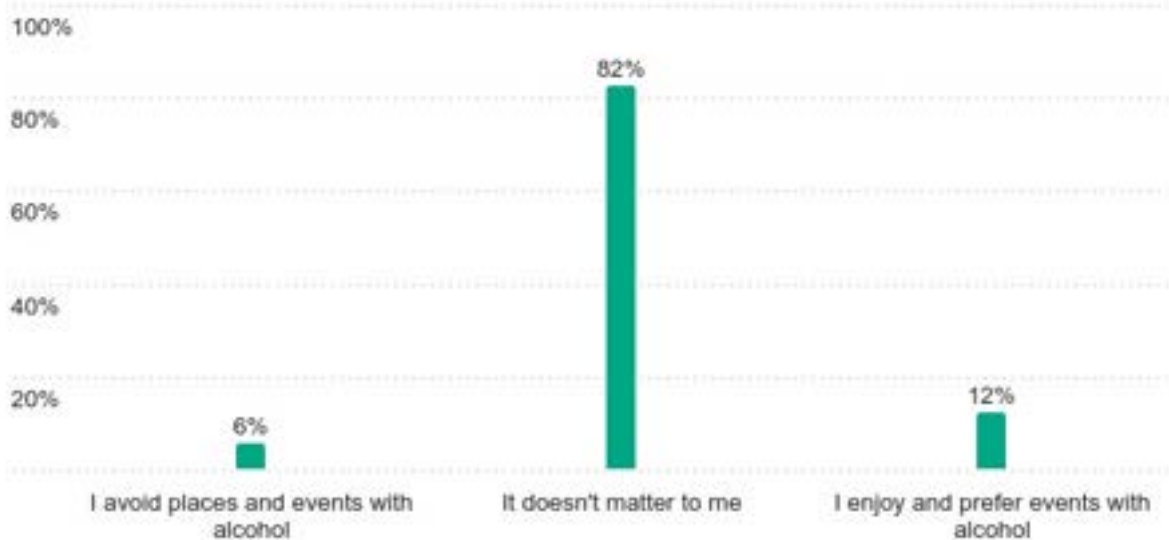
### In general, do you prefer LGBTQ+ specific programming and events over general community programming and events?

226 Responses



### If there is alcohol at an LGBTQ+ event does it keep you from attending?

231 Responses





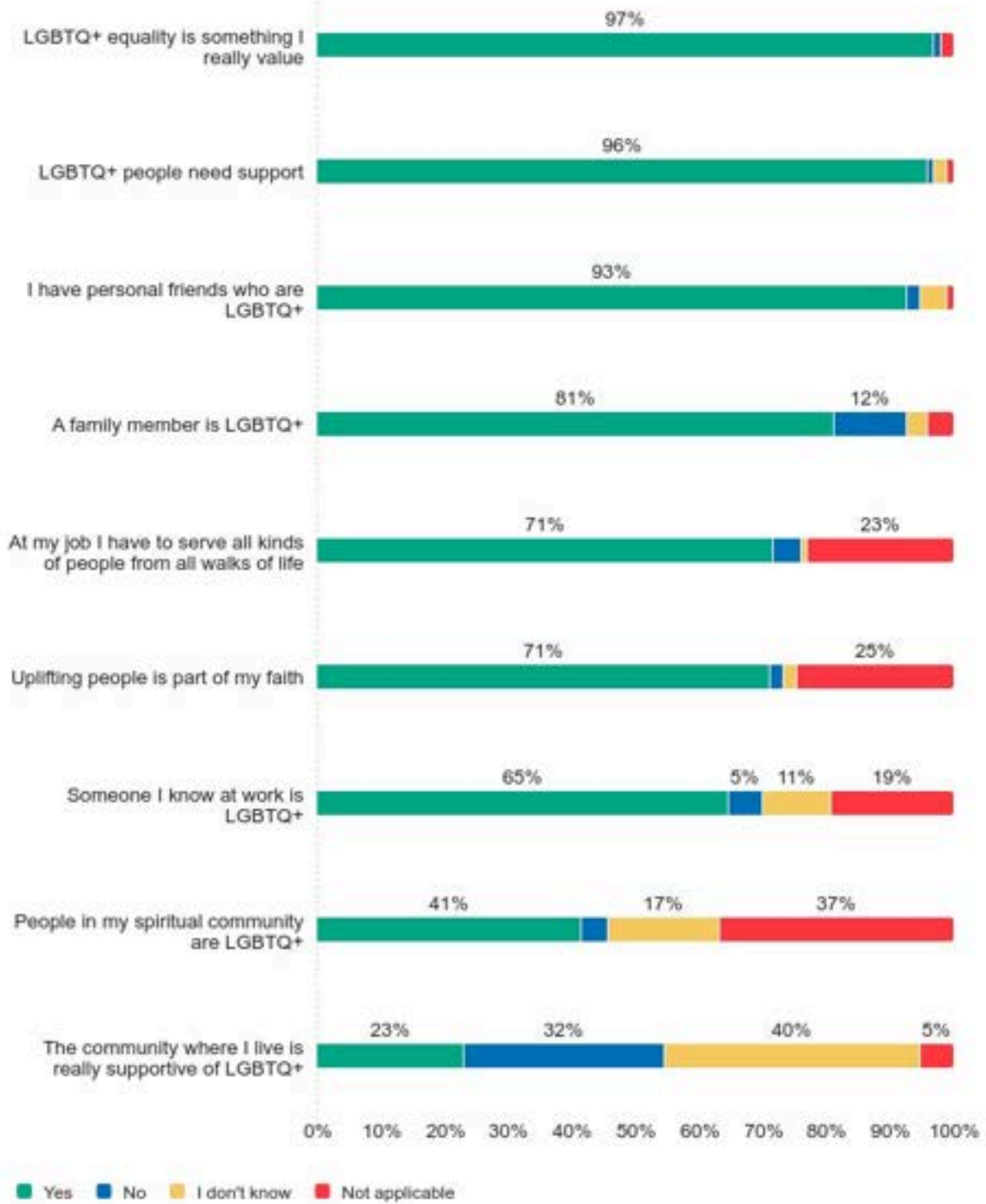
We recognize LGBTQ+ allyship as important, valued, and often essential to progress. While this assessment centers the voices and lived experiences of LGBTQ+ people, allies are welcome and encouraged to support and participate in this work. An LGBTQ+ ally is someone who actively supports and advocates for the rights, inclusion, and wellbeing of LGBTQ+ individuals. Although allies may not identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community, they stand in solidarity with LGBTQ+ people by challenging discrimination and promoting equality.

At the same time, we acknowledge that allyship carries inherent privileges and is not equivalent to identifying as LGBTQ+. This project is committed to understanding and fostering effective allyship by identifying and addressing the needs of allies and empowering them to be informed, accountable, and supportive partners in the ongoing pursuit of equity, inclusion, and justice for LGBTQ+ individuals.

## LGBTQ+ Allyship

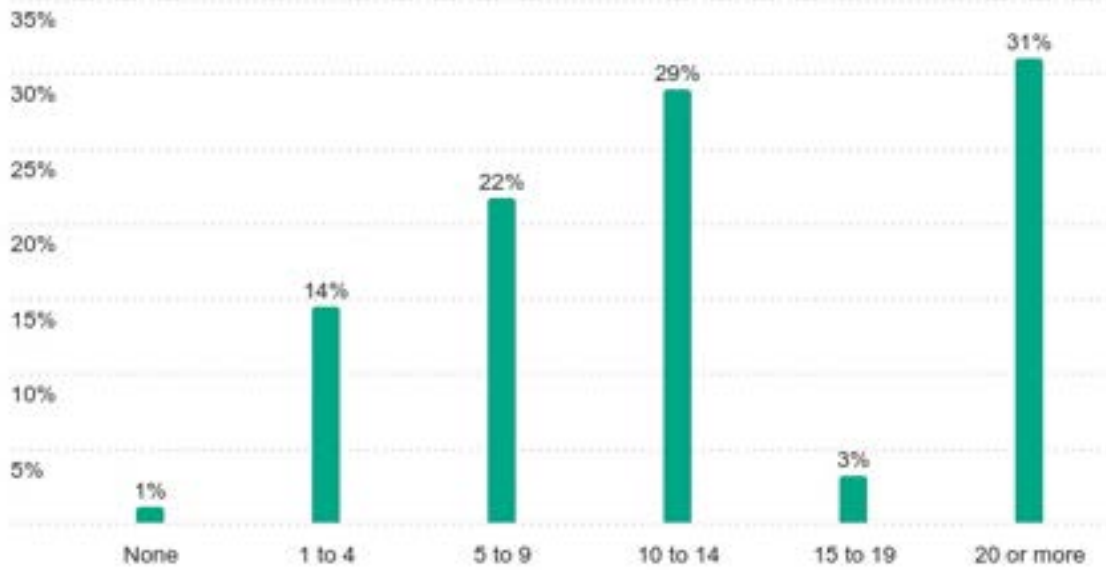
## Tell us about how you became an ally. Which of the following impacted your decision?

97 Responses



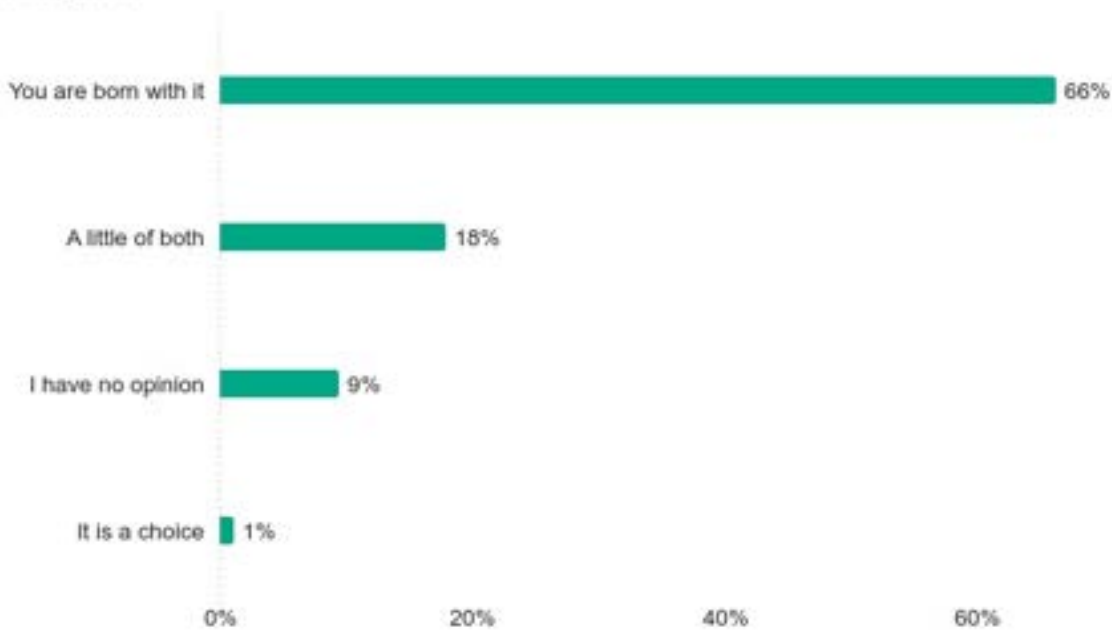
### How many people in your life do you know who identify as LGBTQ+

97 Responses



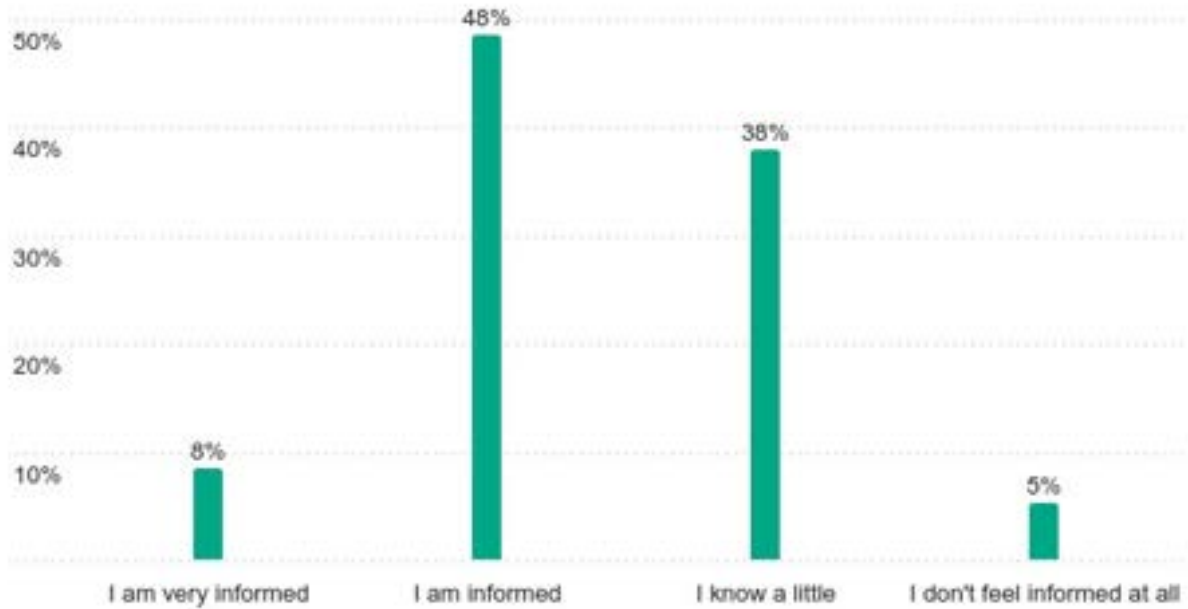
### Do you think being LGBTQ+ is a choice or something you are born with?

95 Responses



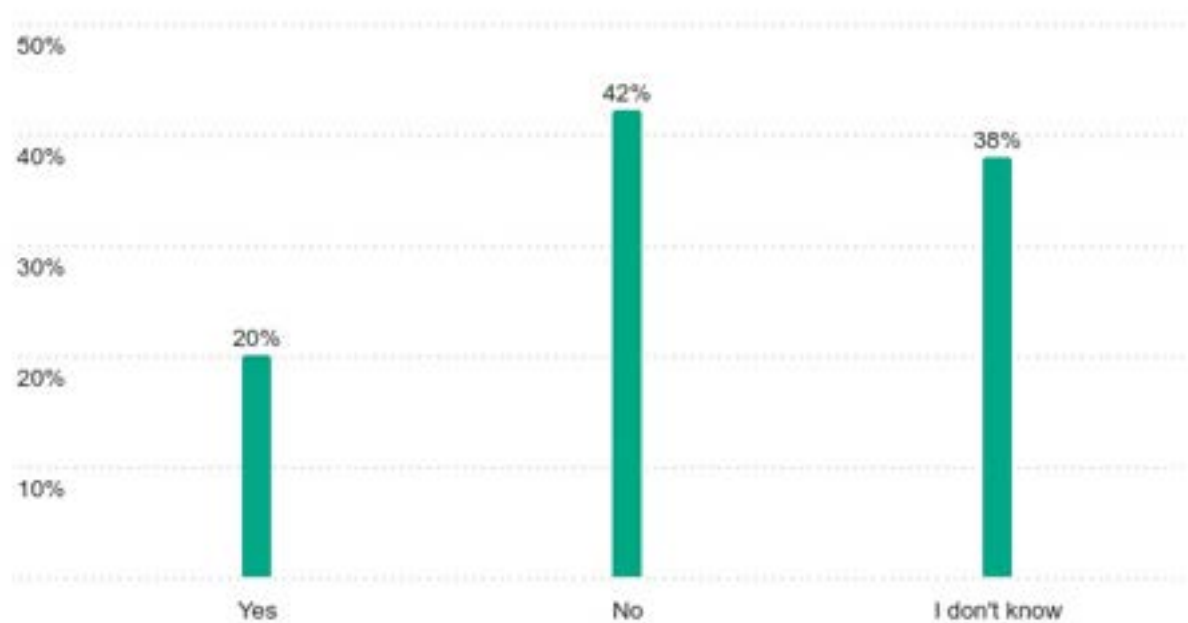
**Do you feel like you are up to date and generally know what LGBTQ+ issues are most important right now?**

95 Responses



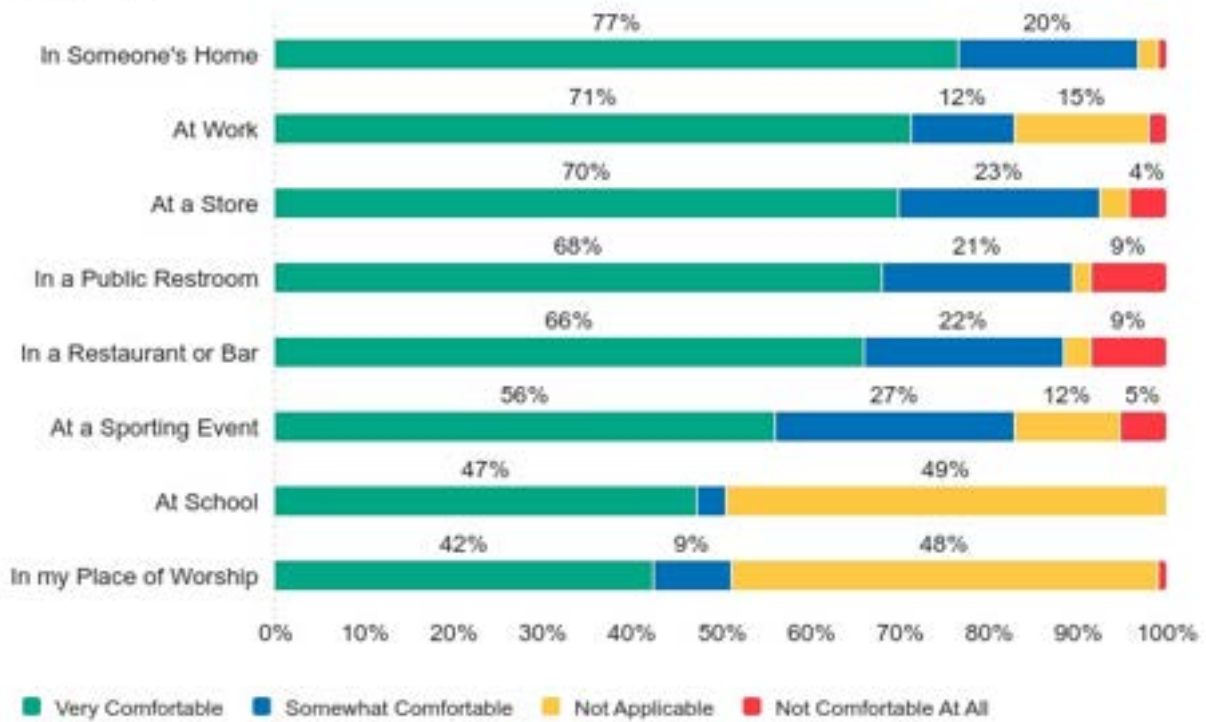
**To the best of your knowledge, are LGBTQ+ individuals protected from employment, housing, and public accommodation discrimination in Ohio?**

95 Responses



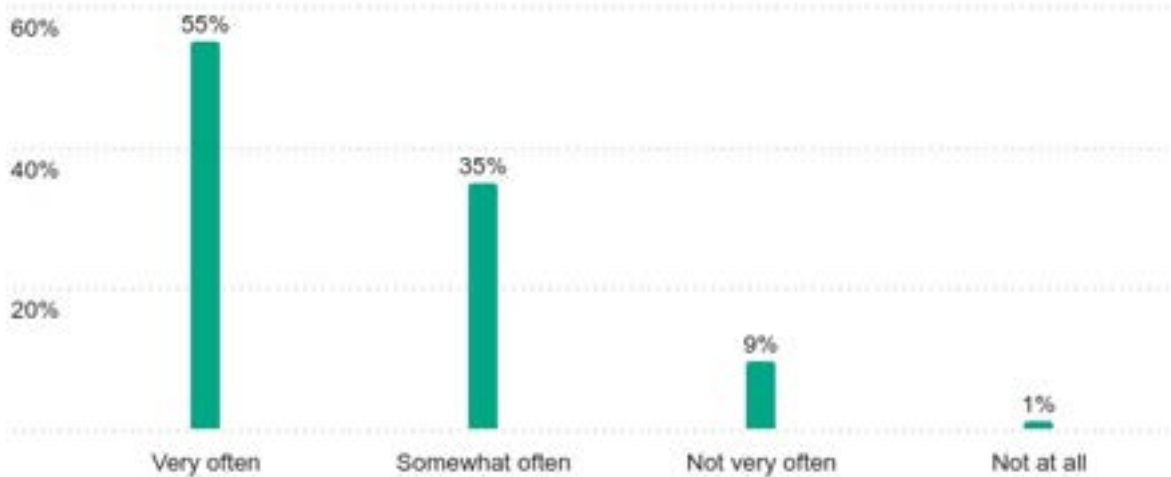
## How comfortable do you feel standing up for LGBTQ+ people as an Ally at the following places?

95 Responses



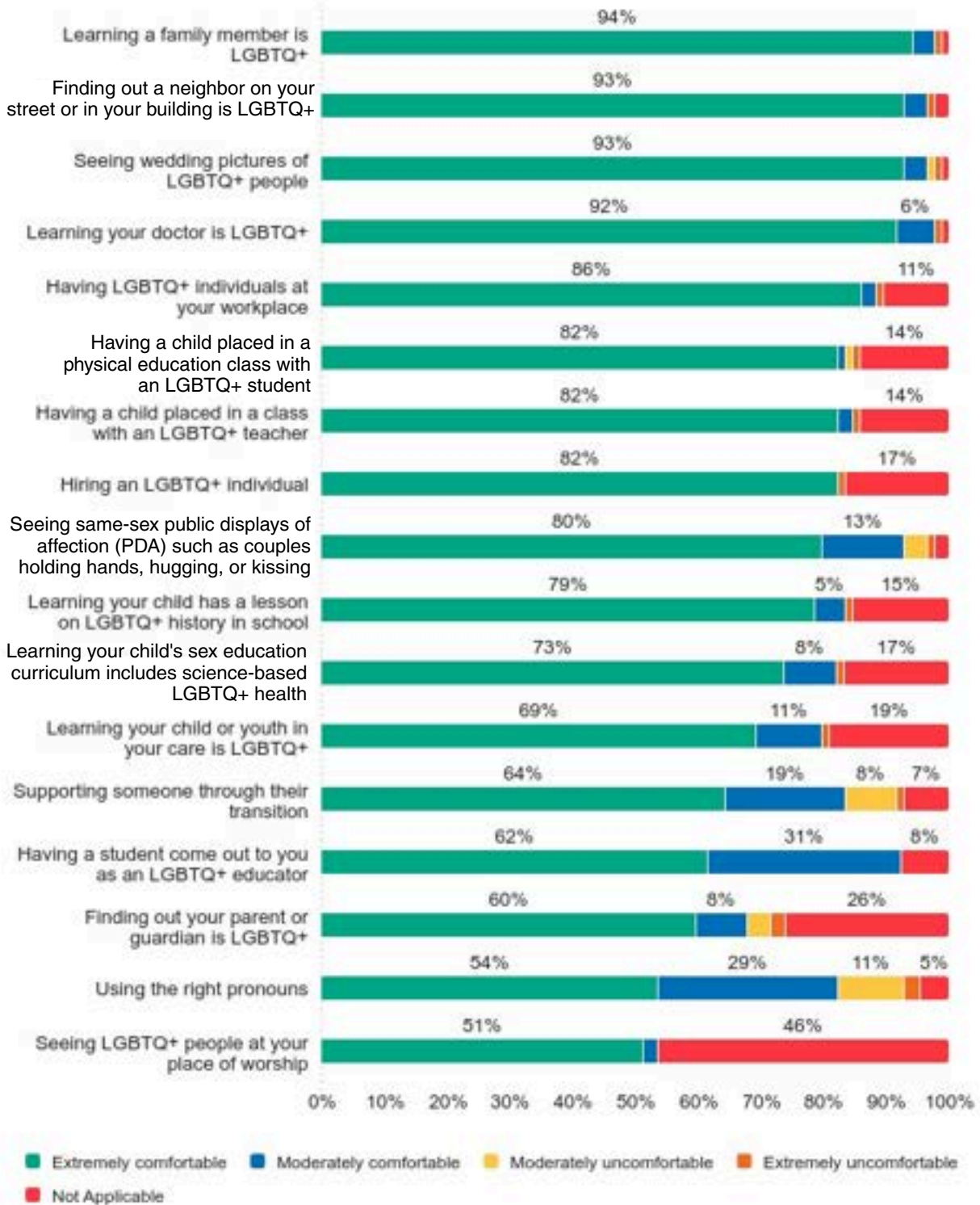
## In the past year, how often would you say you have supported an LGBTQ+ person or people?

95 Responses



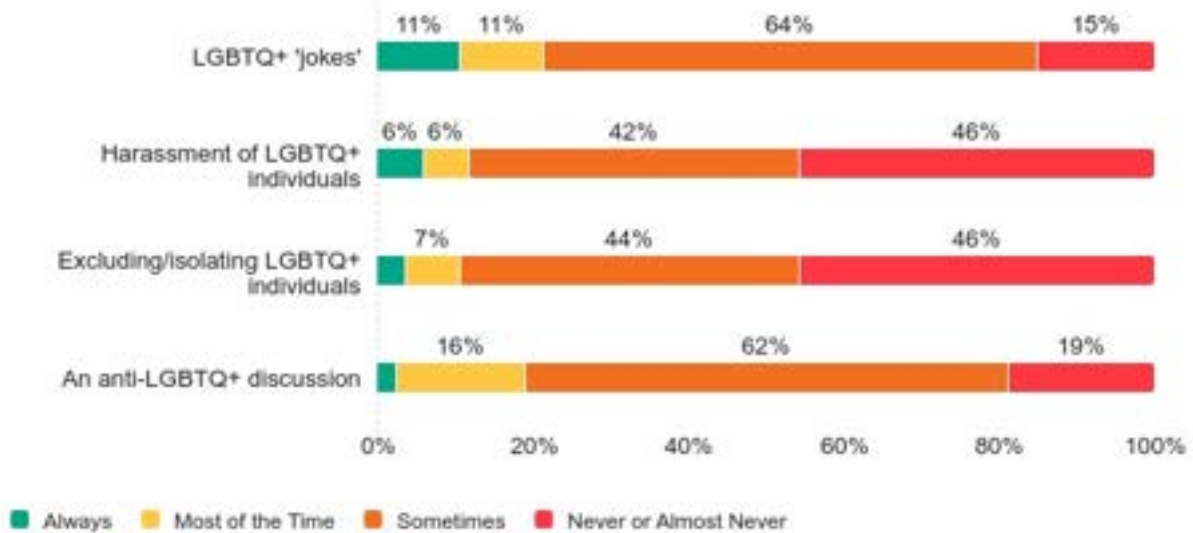
## How comfortable in the following situations do you feel?

85 Responses



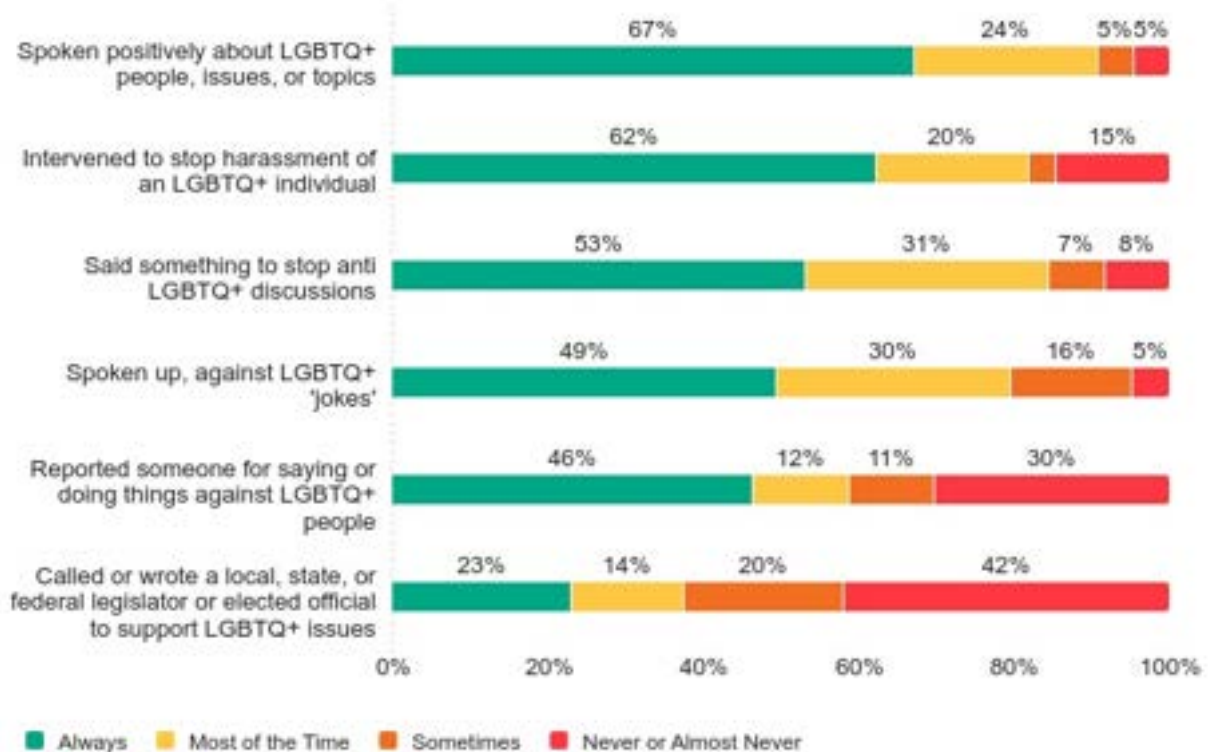
### How often do you hear or see the following things happening by others?

86 Responses



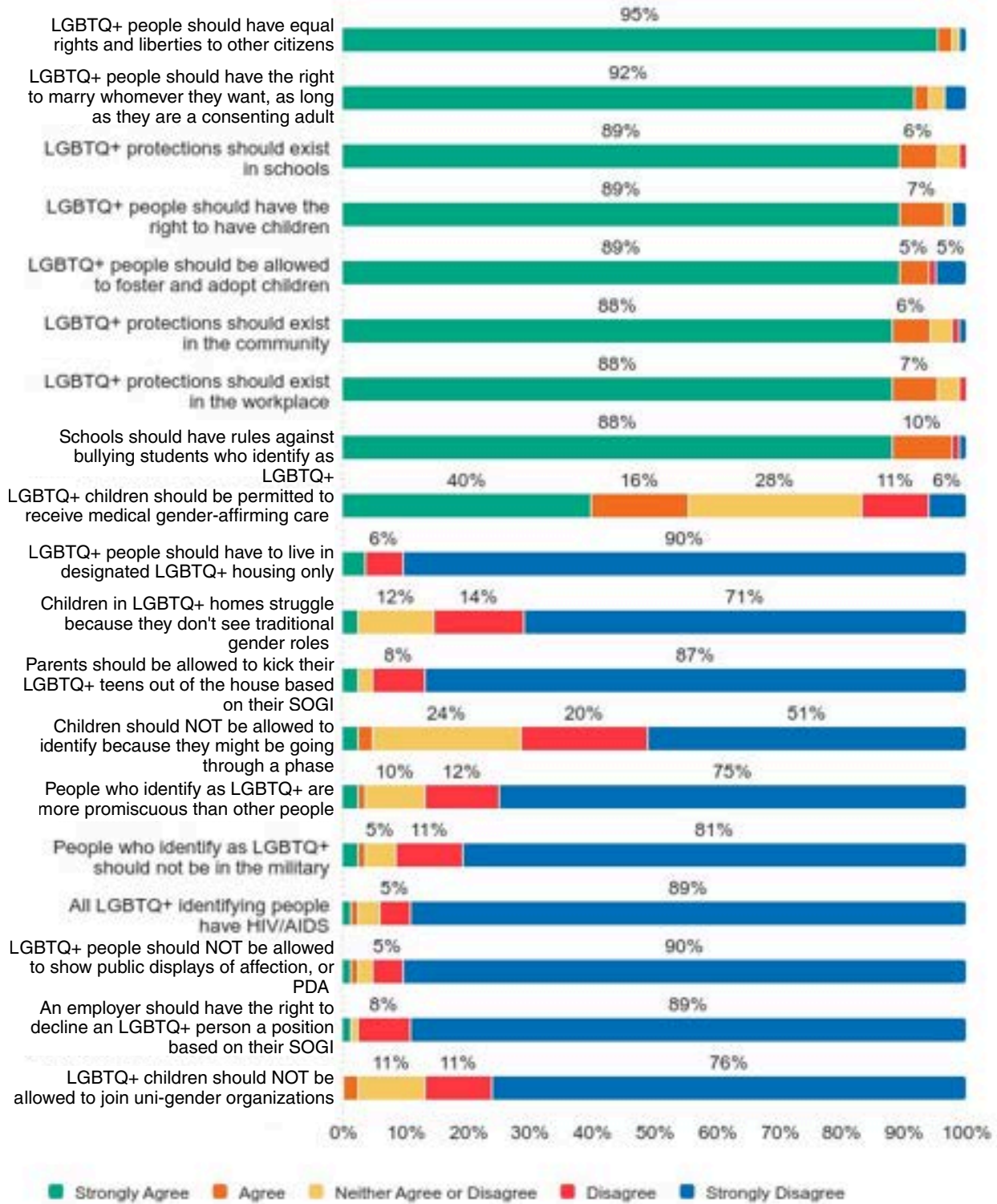
### How often have you done, or would you do, any of the following things?

85 Responses



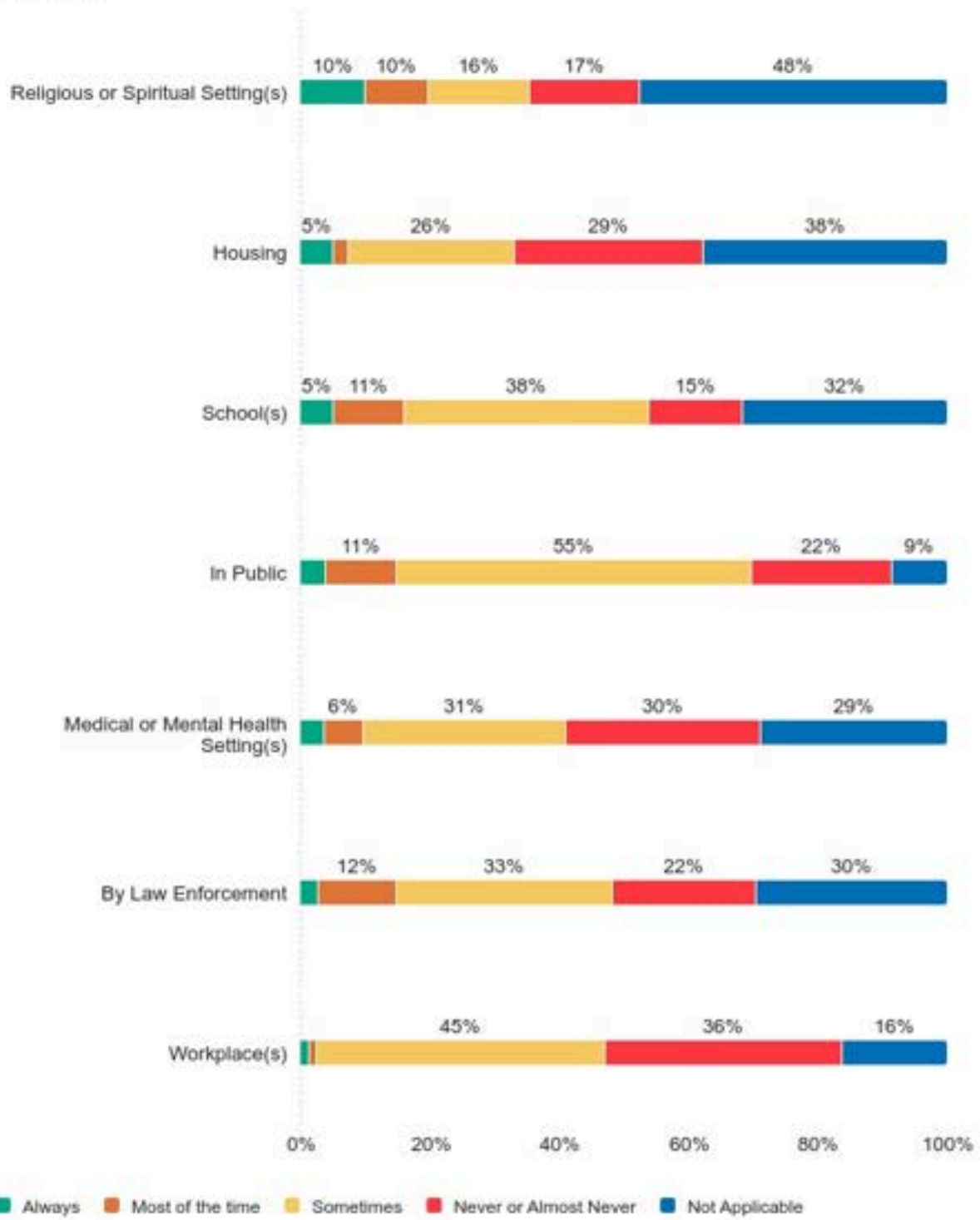
**Choose the response that best represents your answer to the following statements.**

85 Responses



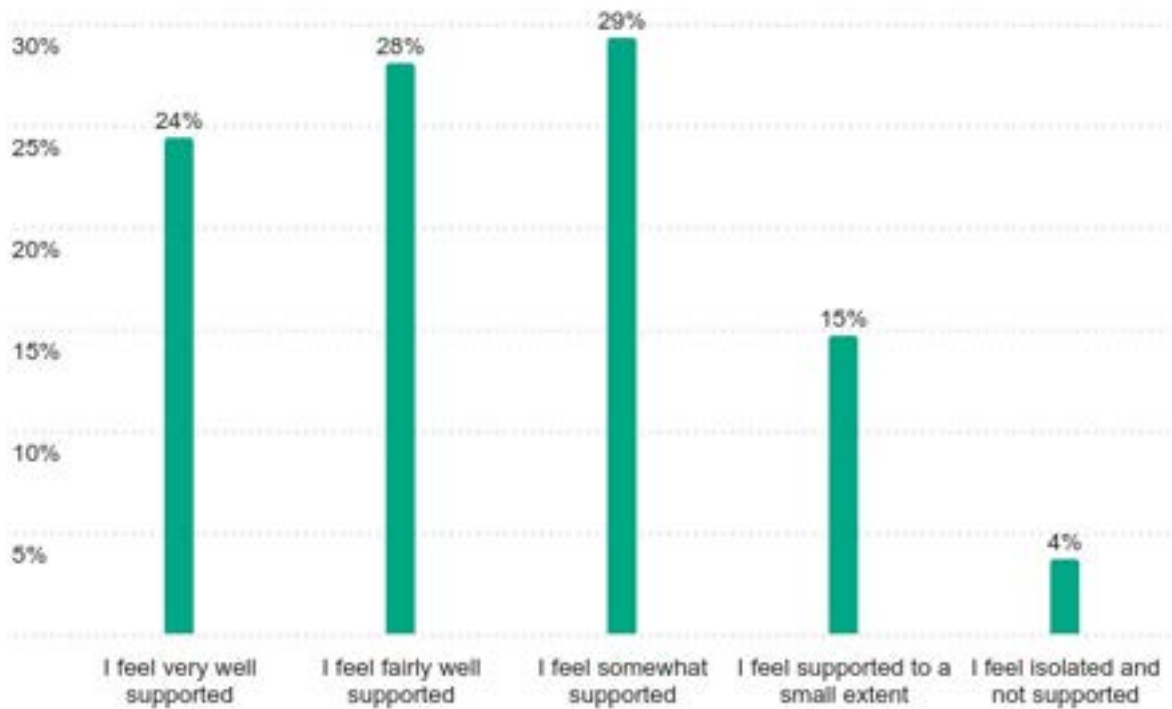
**To what level or degree have you observed an LGBTQ+ person being discriminated against in the following settings?**

85 Responses



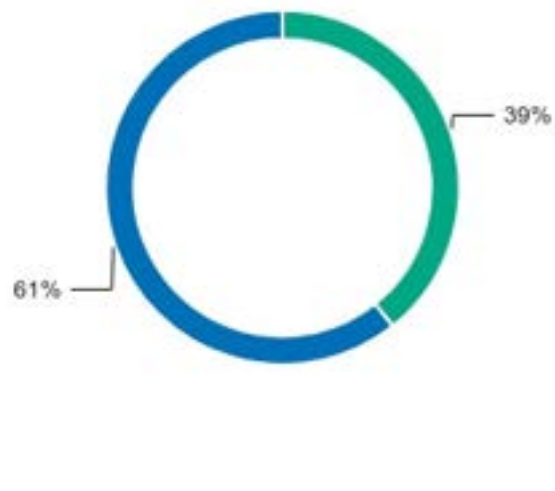
### Do you feel supported by others as an LGBTQ+ Ally?

82 Responses



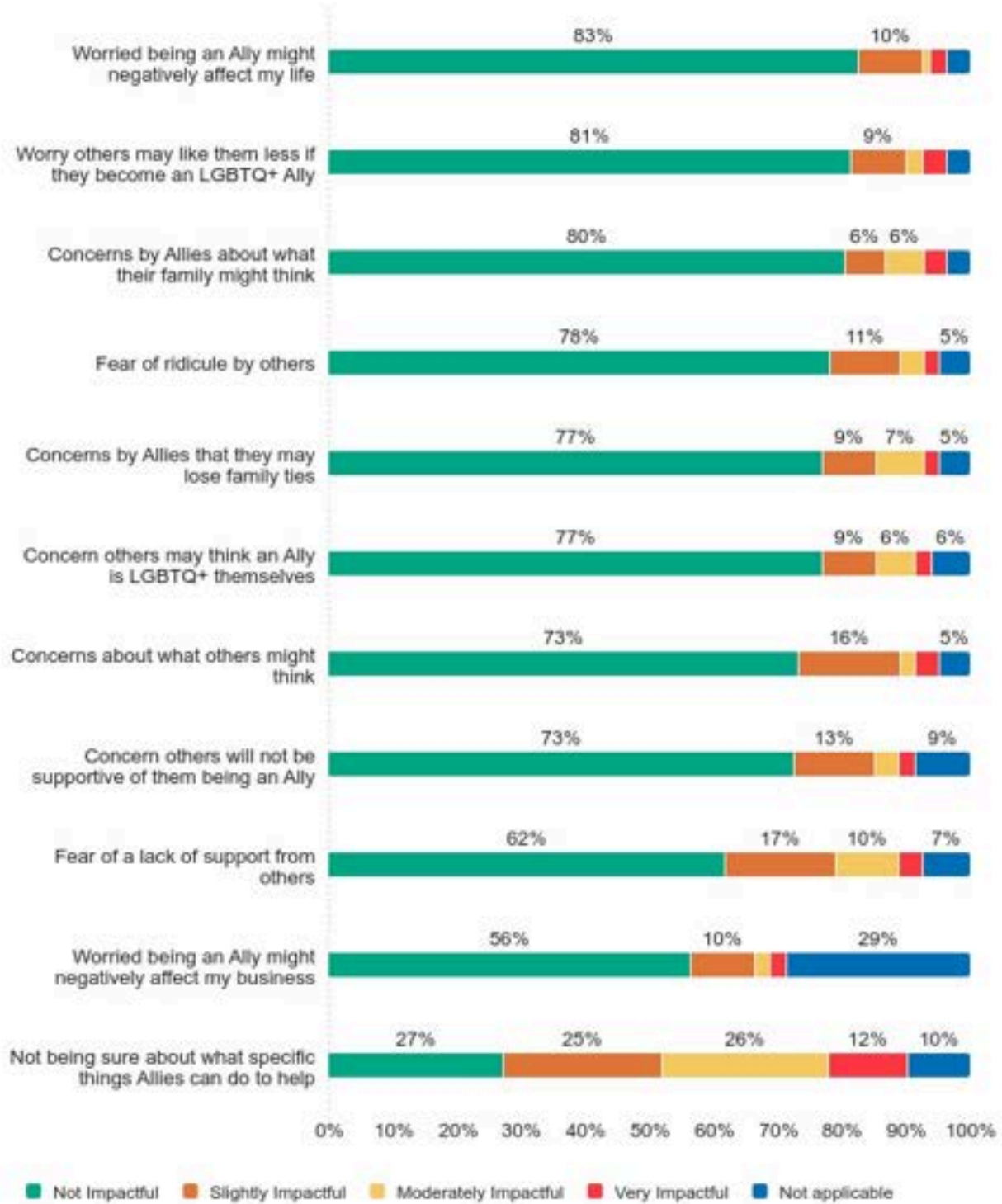
### Have you ever wanted to say something in support of LGBTQ+ people but something stopped you?

84 Responses



## In your experience, how impactful have these factors been in identifying as an LGBTQ+ Ally yourself?

83 Responses



**“In many ways I think the world is much more open and accepting of queer folks, but the enormous backlash that is happening now is scary.”**

**-Parent of an LGBTQ+ Child in Mahoning County, Age 44**

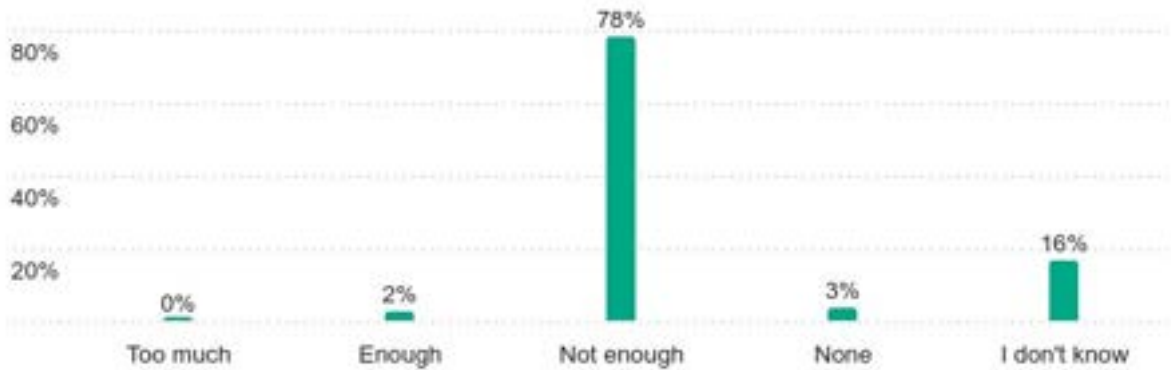


**“As an ally, I believe allies need to have the courage to come out of their own closets, publicly claim those they love who are LGBTQ+ (in ways that are safe for their loved ones), and be vocal within their own churches, social circles, areas of political influence, workplaces of their support of those they love.”**

**-Columbiana County LGBTQ+ Ally, Age 52**

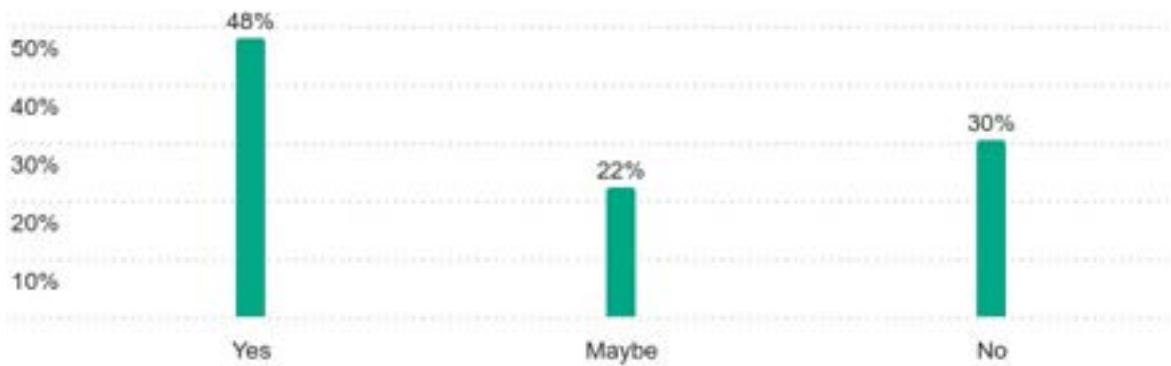
### How much LGBTQ+ support would you say there is in the community where you live?

86 Responses



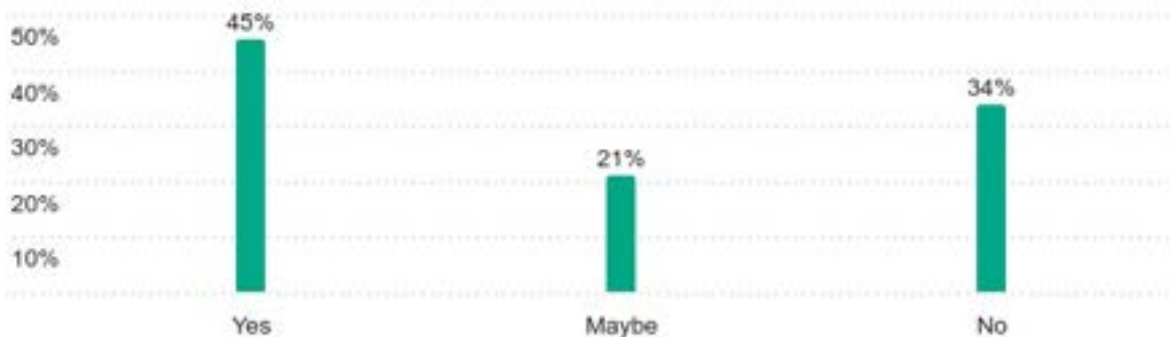
### Do you know where you can get LGBTQ+ information and educational support?

86 Responses



### Are you aware of LGBTQ+ resources in your local community that you can refer your LGBTQ+ friends/family to?

86 Responses





# Intersectionality Community Spotlights



# Understanding Our Intersectionality Community Spotlights

We are excited to introduce our intersectionality community spotlights, a series of printable information sheets designed to bring awareness to the health status, community priorities, and calls to action from members of historically marginalized, underserved, and hard-to-reach identities and experiences within the LGBTQ+ community.

These spotlights are compilations of data and insights gathered from our intersectionality listening sessions (focus groups) and community survey.

## Data Included in Each Spotlight

When possible, the intersectionality community spotlights include the following data points:

- Health Insurance Coverage: The percentage of community members sampled without health insurance. Note: LGBTQ+ youth under 18 were not asked this question
- Housing Insecurity: The percentage of community members sampled who reported experiencing housing insecurity at the time of taking the community survey
- Food Insecurity: The percentage of community members sampled who reported experiencing food insecurity at the time of taking the community survey
- Depression: The percentage of community members sampled who reported experiencing depression in the last five years
- Self-esteem: The percentage of community members sampled who reported experiencing difficulty with self-esteem
- Bullying: In the absence of collecting health insurance coverage data for LGBTQ+ youth, we replaced these data points in the community spotlights with the percentage of participants surveyed who experienced bullying because of their LGBTQ+ identity
- Community Priorities and Calls to Action: Insights from our qualitative intersectionality listening session and survey data that highlight the key priorities and actionable steps identified by community members

We hope that these spotlights will serve as valuable resources for understanding and addressing the unique challenges faced by various sub-communities within the LGBTQ+ population. By raising awareness and promoting informed action, we aim to foster a more inclusive and supportive environment for all community members.

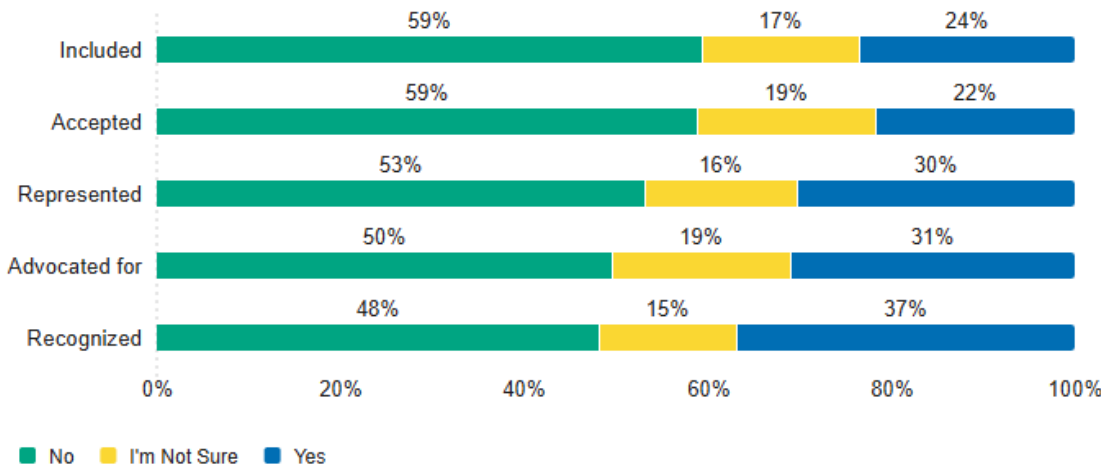
# General LGBTQ+ Community

Four general LGBTQ+ community listening sessions were hosted to provide community members with an opportunity to discuss broad and shared concerns, challenges, and priorities impacting the overall LGBTQ+ community.



In your own experience, do you feel you and your needs are represented, recognized, included, advocated for, and accepted?

268 Responses



## Community Priorities and Calls to Action Identified:

- Concerns surrounding anti-LGBTQ+ legislation, political rhetoric, and policy changes were recurring themes across all general community listening sessions. Participants emphasized the need for stronger advocacy efforts, political engagement, and policy-focused organizing to protect LGBTQ+ rights at the local, state, and federal level. Participants expressed fears that standard legislative efforts are inadequate to support the current political climate and cited pre-emption, weak local jurisdiction, and ambiguous or incomplete language as concerning factors. Participants highlighted the opportunity for advocacy organizations to advocate for more comprehensive legislation and support efforts to dismantle oppressive bureaucratic processes.
- Digital security and literacy as well as fears surrounding the general increase of AI were recurring conversations in the general listening sessions. Participants recommended that local organizations create accessible educational opportunities to share best practices across digital platforms, offer more secure alternatives, and help community members increase their digital literacy including being able to identify AI use online. Many participants expressed concerns over the cultural and environmental impacts of AI use and encouraged organizations to avoid its implementation completely.
- Policing and distrust in broader political and institutional systems were also discussed throughout the listening sessions. Participants described concerns about discrimination, safety and unequal treatment within systems intended to protect the public and emphasized the need for community-centered safety approaches, accountability and violence prevention efforts.

**“If you are wealthy, your asks are going to be much different. For example, a wealthy white trans person, their needs will align with their class, compared to a poor Black trans person.”**

**-Key Stakeholder Interview**



Data Source: Qualitative insights from the Greater Mahoning Valley LGBTQ+ Community Needs Assessment intersectionality listening session for General Community (n=15), and quantitative data on health insurance coverage, housing insecurity, food insecurity, tobacco use, and perceptions of inclusion from the Greater Mahoning Valley LGBTQ+ Community Needs Assessment community survey (n=345).

View the Full Community Report at [www.lgbtqohio.org](http://www.lgbtqohio.org)



# Youth Under 18 Years of Age

LGBTQ+ community members ages 12-17 who reside in Trumbull, Mahoning, Columbiana, or Ashtabula county.

SELF-ESTEEM

**40%**

report experiencing difficulty with self-esteem. (n=15)

BULLYING

**86%**

reported experiencing bullying because of their LGBTQ+ identity. (n=14)

FOOD INSECURITY

**11%**

report currently experiencing a food insecurity. (n=18)

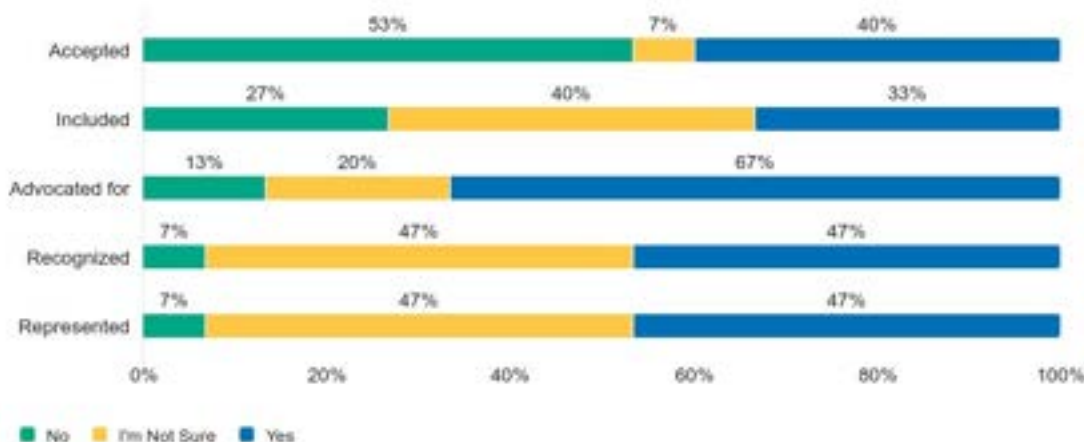
DEPRESSION

**65%**

report experiencing depression. (n=20)

In your own experience, do you feel you and your needs are represented, recognized, included, advocated for, and accepted?

15 Responses



While this community spotlight aims to shed light on the experience and needs of LGBTQ+ youth, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of our study. LGBTQ+ youth are underrepresented in our sample, which may be attributed to several factors. Despite many attempts by our team to host intersectionality listening sessions for this important part of our community, this spotlight relies on a small sample size of two, coupled with data collected in our community survey by twenty LGBTQ+ youth.

Community Priorities and Calls to Action Identified:

- LGBTQ+ youth described limited access to affirming and gender-affirming health care providers in the region. Participants recommended the development of Pride clinics, affirming health resources, and stronger connections to LGBTQ+ inclusive care providers.
- Participants described experiences of bullying, religious scrutiny, and feeling unsafe in school environments, particularly in Columbiana County. Opportunities exist for schools to strengthen anti-bullying efforts, improve LGBTQ+ competency training, and increase diverse and affirming staff and school security representation.
- Youth participants identified broader stressors including concerns about the current political climate, food insecurity, and a lack of safe recreational and social spaces for youth. Participants emphasized the need for more LGBTQ+ affirming youth spaces, community programming, and policies that improve youth well-being and food access.
- Participants also discussed challenges securing employment as LGBTQ+ teenagers and expressed a desire for more affirming workplaces, economic opportunities, and youth-focused job readiness support.

**“My area is very conservative. I have some classmates who would beat me up if they knew. So my fear is my safety.”**

**-Trumbull County Resident, Age 17**



Data Source: Qualitative insights from the Greater Mahoning Valley LGBTQ+ Community Needs Assessment intersectionality listening session for LGBTQ+ Youth Ages 12-17 (n=2), and quantitative data on health insurance coverage, housing insecurity, food insecurity, tobacco use, and perceptions of inclusion from the Greater Mahoning Valley LGBTQ+ Community Needs Assessment community survey (n=20).

View the Full Community Report at [www.lgbtqohio.org](http://www.lgbtqohio.org)

# Adults Age 65+

Individuals who identify as LGBTQ+ over the age of 65 and reside in Trumbull, Mahoning, Columbiana, or Ashtabula county.

SELF-ESTEEM

**25%**

report experiencing difficulty with self-esteem. (n=16)

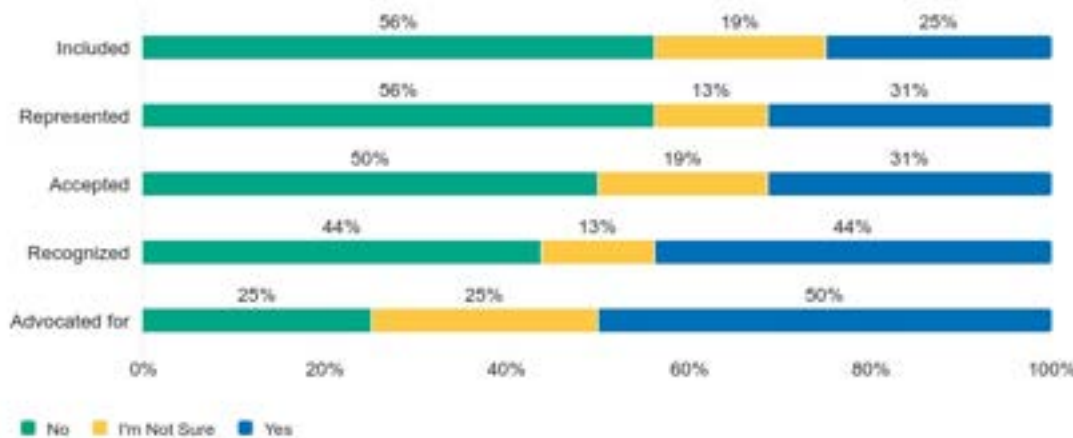
DEPRESSION

**53%**

report experiencing depression. (n=17)

In your own experience, do you feel you and your needs are represented, recognized, included, advocated for, and accepted?

16 Responses



While this community spotlight aims to shed light on the experience and needs of LGBTQ+ older adults, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of our study. LGBTQ+ older adults are underrepresented in our sample, which may be attributed to several factors. Despite many attempts by our team to host intersectionality listening sessions for this important part of our community, a small sample size of one, coupled with data collected in our community survey by seventeen LGBTQ+ older adults.

### Community Priorities and Calls to Action Identified:

- Participants described a generational divide within the LGBTQ+ community related to evolving terminology, priorities, and community narratives. Participants recommended intergenerational programming and LGBTQ+ educational opportunities designed specifically for older adults to help foster understanding, inclusion, and dialogue across generations.
- LGBTQ+ seniors emphasized the importance of creating spaces where older adults feel comfortable expressing their needs, concerns, and lived experiences while remaining engaged in conversations about emerging LGBTQ+ issues and identities.
- Participants identified physical accessibility as a significant barrier to participation in LGBTQ+ community events and spaces. Opportunities exist for organizations and municipalities to invest in accessibility improvements and advocate for funding that supports the needs of older adults and people with disabilities.
- One senior expressed fear and uncertainty surrounding aging, long-term care, and the potential loss of Medicare or other supportive services. Survey participants reinforced this issue and identified a strong need for affordable, LGBTQ+ affirming senior housing, assisted living options, and aging support services that allow older adults to age with dignity and community connection.

**My biggest fear is not having a way to age gracefully. I never want to be dependent upon my family for basic needs.”**

**-Ashtabula County Resident, Age 67**

**I worry about being old and alone. I’m 75 years old and I already feel alone. I wish I had a better LGBTQIA+ support system**

**-Mahoning County Resident, Age 75**

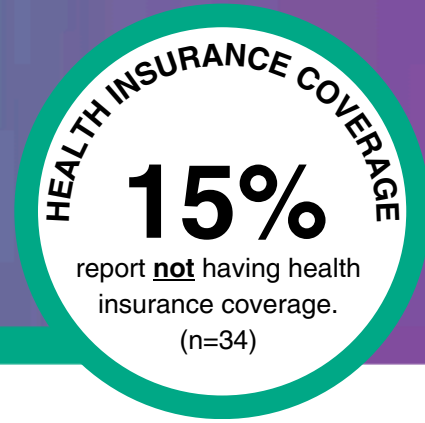


Data Source: Qualitative insights from the Greater Mahoning Valley LGBTQ+ Community Needs Assessment intersectionality listening session LGBTQ+ Adults Age 65 and Older (n=1), and quantitative data on health insurance coverage, housing insecurity, food insecurity, tobacco use, and perceptions of inclusion from the Greater Mahoning Valley LGBTQ+ Community Needs Assessment community survey (n=17).

[View the Full Community Report at www.lgbtqohio.org](http://www.lgbtqohio.org)

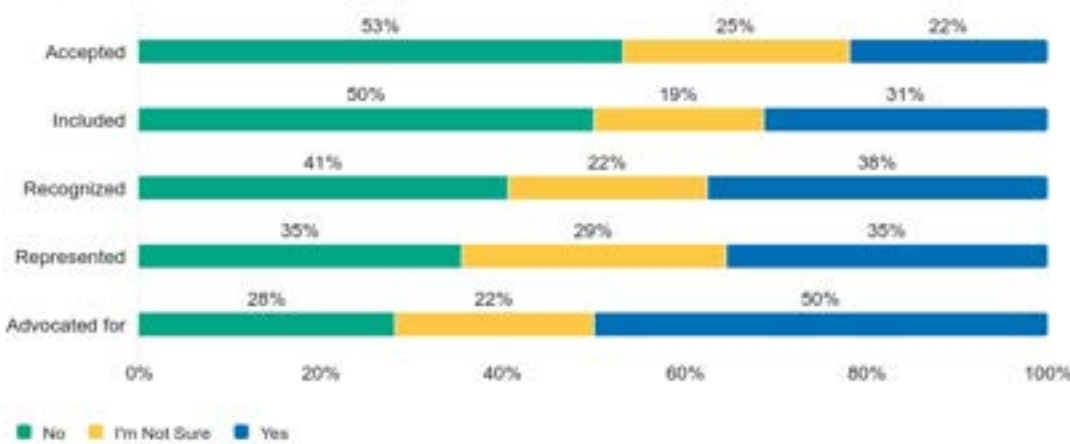
# Columbiana County

LGBTQ+ community members over the age of 18 who reside in Columbiana county.



In your own experience, do you feel you and your needs are represented, recognized, included, advocated for, and accepted?

32 Responses



Community Priorities and Calls to Action Identified:

- Participants described limited access to affirming health care providers in Columbiana County, including long travel distances, transportation barriers, and non-inclusive health care experiences. Participants recommended LGBTQ+ competency trainings for health care and mental health providers focused on intersectionality, diverse identities, and inclusive care practices.
- Stable and affirming employment was identified as a major concern. Participants described experiences of workplace discrimination, including racism, homophobia, and transphobia, along with wages that make it difficult to afford food, housing, and health care. Participants emphasized the need for fair wages, inclusive workplace policies, and stronger connections between LGBTQ+ individuals and affirming employers.
- Safety and discrimination were recurring concerns across community spaces, workplaces, and interactions with law enforcement. Participants recommended the creation of more safe and affirming spaces and events for LGBTQ+ people, expanded LGBTQ+ competency training across sectors, and greater investment in community-based services and supports.
- Participants described broader systemic barriers including housing insecurity, financial instability, limited employment opportunities, difficulty accessing public assistance programs, student loan debt, and challenges associated with faith-based services that were perceived as non-affirming. Participants emphasized the need for systemic and policy-level changes that reduce barriers and improve quality of life for LGBTQ+ community members.

**“I don’t feel a part of my community because I have to seek help in other places.”**

**-Listening Session Participant**



Data Source: Qualitative insights from the Greater Mahoning Valley LGBTQ+ Community Needs Assessment intersectionality listening session for LGBTQ+ Columbiana County Adult Residents (n=6), and quantitative data on health insurance coverage, housing insecurity, food insecurity, tobacco use, and perceptions of inclusion from the Greater Mahoning Valley LGBTQ+ Community Needs Assessment community survey (n=39).

[View the Full Community Report at www.lgbtqohio.org](http://www.lgbtqohio.org)

# Ashtabula County

LGBTQ+ community members over the age of 18 who reside in Ashtabula county.

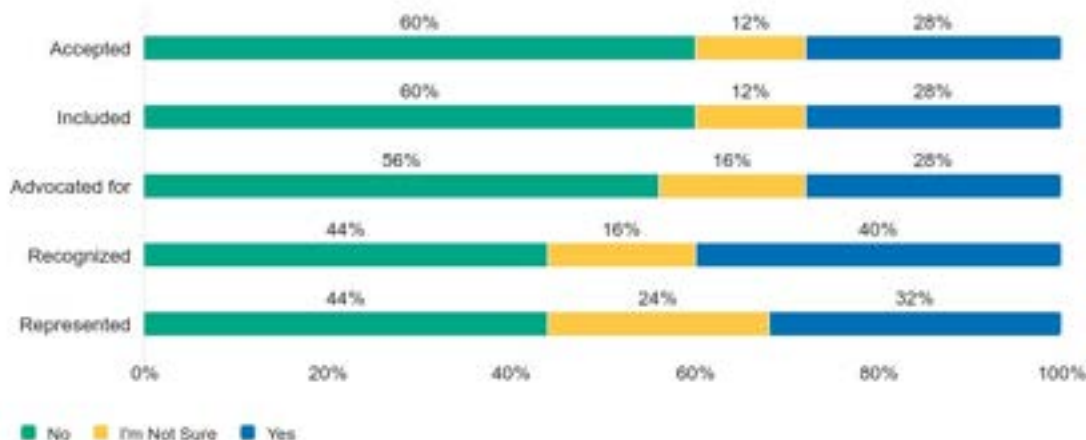
LGBTQ+ DISCRIMINATION

72%

report experiencing discrimination in public.  
(n=18)

In your own experience, do you feel you and your needs are represented, recognized, included, advocated for, and accepted?

25 Responses



HOUSING INSECURITY

7%

report currently experiencing a housing insecurity.  
(n=29)

FOOD INSECURITY

17%

report currently experiencing a food insecurity.  
(n=29)

DEPRESSION

77%

report experiencing depression.  
(n=30)

## Community Priorities and Calls to Action Identified:

- Participants described a lack of LGBTQ+ programming and community spaces in Ashtabula County compared to neighboring communities. Participants emphasized the need for welcoming “third spaces,” community programming, and opportunities to discuss current and emerging LGBTQ+ issues. Limited organizational capacity was identified as a barrier, creating opportunities to strengthen community organizing efforts and establish an LGBTQ+ drop-in or community center space.
- LGBTQ+ representation and visibility were described as limited within the county, which participants frequently identified as rural and isolated. Participants recommended the development of visible markers for affirming businesses and an LGBTQ+ affirming business directory to help community members identify safe and supportive spaces.
- Physical safety was a significant concern, particularly for LGBTQ+ individuals who are visibly gender nonconforming or perceived as LGBTQ+. Many participants described balancing visibility with personal safety. Austinburg and Jefferson were specifically identified as areas where participants felt particularly unsafe or unsupported.
- Participants identified several concerns related to education, including non-inclusive curriculum, limited educator knowledge on LGBTQ+ issues, and inadequate sex education that excludes LGBTQ+ sexual health information. Participants recommended more inclusive curriculum models, LGBTQ+ competency training for educators, and expanded LGBTQ+ inclusive sexual health education.
- Participants described limited access to LGBTQ+ affirming legal resources and support within Ashtabula County. Opportunities exist for legal advocacy organizations to expand outreach, education, and affirming legal services for LGBTQ+ residents.

**“I’m worried about reproductive rights as it concerns me and other transmasc/transmen. I’m also concerned about book bans, raiding of queer places/events. I fear being detained or arrested, or member of our community going through that as well.”**

**-Ashtabula County of Resident, Age 42**



Data Source: Qualitative insights from the Greater Mahoning Valley LGBTQ+ Community Needs Assessment intersectionality listening session for LGBTQ+ Ashtabula County Adult Residents (n=8), and quantitative data on health insurance coverage, housing insecurity, food insecurity, tobacco use, and perceptions of inclusion from the Greater Mahoning Valley LGBTQ+ Community Needs Assessment community survey (n=30).

View the Full Community Report at [www.lgbtqohio.org](http://www.lgbtqohio.org)

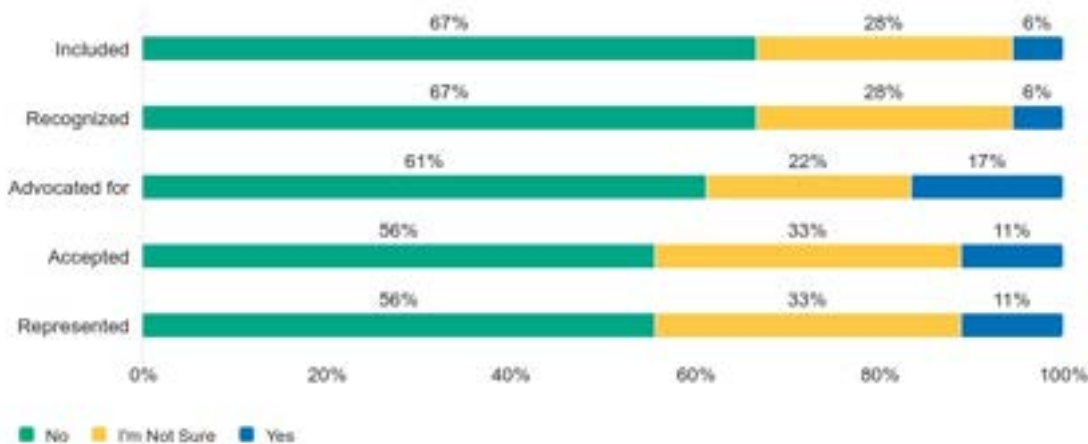
# Black and African American Community

Black, African American, and /or Afro-Latino LGBTQ+ community members over the age of 18, and reside in Trumbull, Mahoning, Columbiana, or Ashtabula county.



In your own experience, do you feel you and your needs are represented, recognized, included, advocated for, and accepted?

18 Responses



While this community spotlight aims to shed light on the experiences and needs of Black and African American LGBTQ+ community members, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of this analysis. Black and African American LGBTQ+ individuals were underrepresented in our sample despite multiple outreach and engagement efforts by the research team. Several factors may have contributed to this underrepresentation, including geographic isolation, historical marginalization, limited organizational capacity, and mistrust of research initiatives rooted in historical exploitation and cultural insensitivity. Despite repeated attempts to host intersectionality listening sessions focused on this important community, the project team was ultimately unable to collect qualitative lived experience data directly from Black and African American LGBTQ+ participants.



## Future Priorities for Community Engagement and Representation:

- Build trust with Black and African American LGBTQ+ communities through culturally responsive engagement practices and sustained relationship building.
- Increase outreach and accessibility through intentional engagement strategies, trusted messengers, and outreach efforts located within Black and African American communities.
- Strengthen partnerships with historically trusted Black-led organizations, faith leaders, advocates, and community institutions.
- Promote inclusive policies, advocacy efforts, and systems-level changes that address the unique experiences and barriers impacting Black and African American LGBTQ+ individuals.
- Increase investment, funding, and resources dedicated to programs, leadership development, and initiatives led by and for Black and African American LGBTQ+ communities.



Data Source: Qualitative insights from the Greater Mahoning Valley LGBTQ+ Community Needs Assessment intersectionality listening session for the Black and African American LGBTQ+ community (n=0), and quantitative data on health insurance coverage, housing insecurity, food insecurity, tobacco use, and perceptions of inclusion from the Greater Mahoning Valley LGBTQ+ Community Needs Assessment community survey (n=24).

View the Full Community Report at [www.lgbtqohio.org](http://www.lgbtqohio.org)

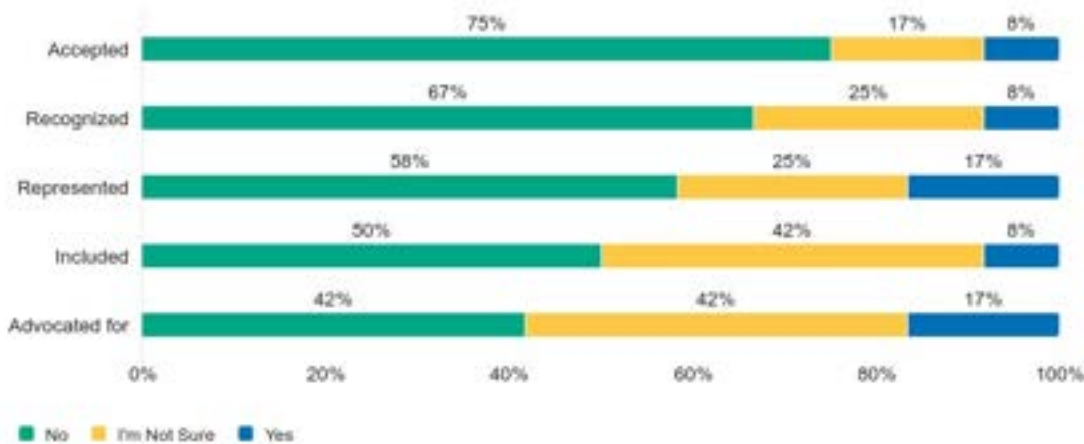
# Latiné, Latinx, Latino, Hispanic or Spanish Community

Latiné, Latinx, Latino, Hispanic, Spanish or Afro-Latino LGBTQ+ community members over the age of 18, and reside in Trumbull, Mahoning, Columbiana, or Ashtabula county.



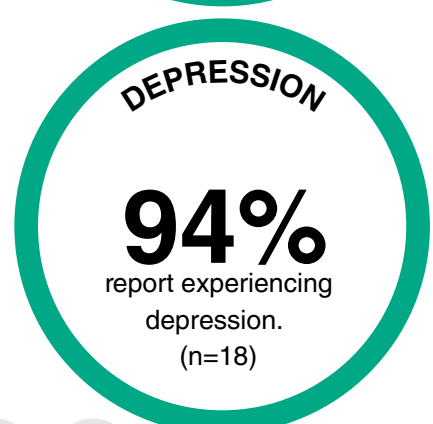
In your own experience, do you feel you and your needs are represented, recognized, included, advocated for, and accepted?

12 Responses



### Community Priorities and Calls to Action Identified:

- Participants described fear, instability, and isolation connected to immigration enforcement and anti-immigrant rhetoric, particularly for undocumented LGBTQ+ Latiné community members and mixed-status families. Participants emphasized the need for stronger legal advocacy, systems-level policy change, and organizing efforts at the local and state level.
- Participants expressed objections about any governmental involvement including, but not limited to, providing resources such as housing detainees in correctional facilities or using government resources that strengthens ICE's ability to carry out deportation efforts that causes harm to communities.
- Participants described barriers related to racism, discrimination, and inequitable access to education, employment, and opportunity. Participants emphasized the need to increase opportunities for marginalized and immigrant communities through advocacy, policy reform, and community investment.
- Participants discussed limited representation and investment in Latiné LGBTQ+ communities, expressing concerns that nonprofits, funders, and institutions are often disconnected from the communities they serve. Participants called for increased accountability among nonprofits and funders, more collective decision-making processes, equitable pay practices, and greater Latiné representation in leadership and city council positions.
- Participants described feelings of cultural disconnection, fear, and exclusion within both LGBTQ+ and broader community spaces. Participants emphasized the importance of direct community engagement strategies that move beyond social media outreach and instead focusing on building trusted, in-person relationships and culturally responsive community networks.



**“We are all equally other ‘other’ in the game of fascism and this includes queer people, trans people, Latiné people, poor people, etc.”**

**-Listening Session Participant**



Data Source: Qualitative insights from the Greater Mahoning Valley LGBTQ+ Community Needs Assessment intersectionality listening session for Latiné, Latinx, Latino, Hispanic or Spanish Community (n=2), and quantitative data on health insurance coverage, housing insecurity, food insecurity, tobacco use, and perceptions of inclusion from the Greater Mahoning Valley LGBTQ+ Community Needs Assessment community survey (n=20).

[View the Full Community Report at www.lgbtqohio.org](http://www.lgbtqohio.org)

# Trans+ Umbrella

LGBTQ+ community members who identify as transgender, nonbinary, or any other gender expansive identity regardless of their sexual orientation who live in Trumbull, Mahoning, Columbiana, or Ashtabula county.

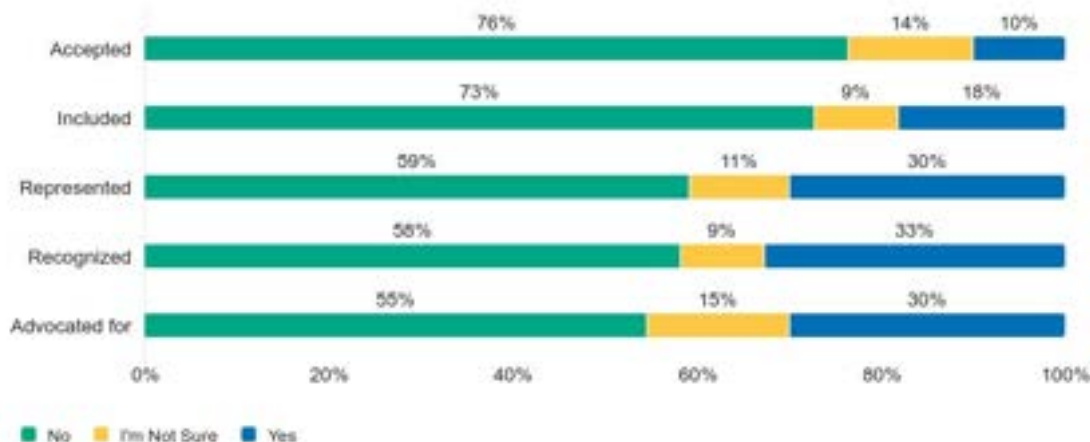
HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE

6%

report **not** having health insurance coverage. (n=135)

In your own experience, do you feel you and your needs are represented, recognized, included, advocated for, and accepted?

110 Responses



HOUSING INSECURITY

7%

report currently experiencing a housing insecurity. (n=135)

FOOD INSECURITY

14%

report currently experiencing a food insecurity. (n=130)

DEPRESSION

78%

report experiencing depression. (n=147)

## Community Priorities and Calls to Action Identified:

- Participants described growing concerns about the current political climate and its impact on the rights, safety, and well-being of Trans+ individuals. Participants emphasized the need for strong LGBTQ+ leadership, increased political advocacy, and educational opportunities that help Trans+ community members engage in political systems and policy discussions impacting their lives.
- Access to legal gender marker changes was described as inconsistent and difficult to navigate across counties. Participants identified an opportunity for organizations to develop educational materials and guides that explain the gender marker change process and available resources within surrounding counties.
- Participants described feelings of isolation and disconnection within the Trans+ community and emphasized the need for more affirming social spaces, community-building opportunities, and dedicated LGBTQ+ community spaces or centers.
- Limited access to gender-affirming health care was identified as a major concern, particularly due to transportation barriers and concerns surrounding religiously affiliated health systems in the region. Many participants reported traveling to Cleveland or Pittsburgh to access affirming care. Participants recommended increased investment in affirming providers, mental health services, and community health initiatives such as LGBTQ+ health fairs.
- Participants emphasized the continued need for advocacy efforts that support Trans+ individuals across health care, mental health, legal protections, and broader systems impacting quality of life and community safety.

**“Having my hormones taken away, to have to put “M” back on my license, to have to put “M” on my passport, that my medical files say I’m male and be treated as such, losing healthcare overall as well as disability”**

**-Mahoning County Resident, Age 28**



Data Source: Qualitative insights from the Greater Mahoning Valley LGBTQ+ Community Needs Assessment intersectionality listening session for Trans+ Community Members (n=4), and quantitative data on health insurance coverage, housing insecurity, food insecurity, tobacco use, and perceptions of inclusion from the Greater Mahoning Valley LGBTQ+ Community Needs Assessment community survey (n=147).

View the Full Community Report at [www.lgbtqohio.org](http://www.lgbtqohio.org)

# Performers and Entertainers

LGBTQ+ community members who are performers or entertainers over the age of 18 who reside in Trumbull, Mahoning, Columbiana, or Ashtabula county.

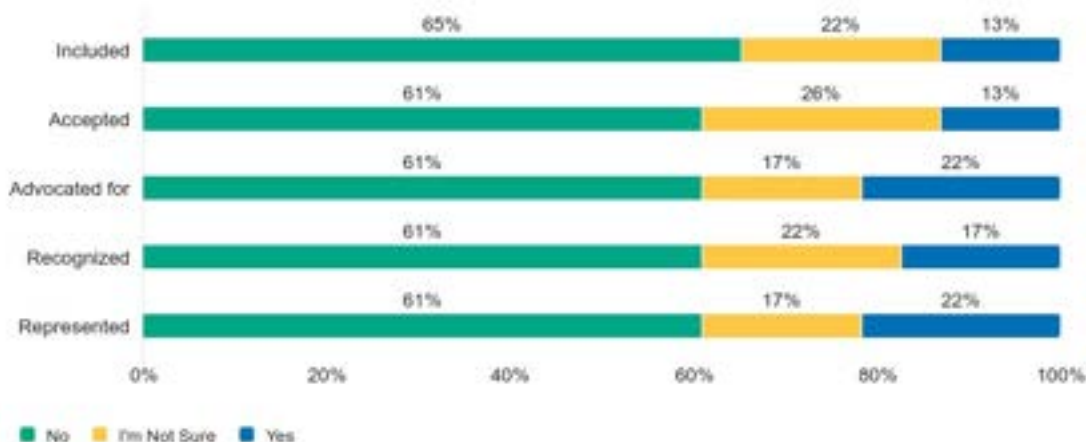
HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE

6%

report **not** having health insurance coverage. (n=36)

In your own experience, do you feel you and your needs are represented, recognized, included, advocated for, and accepted?

23 Responses



HOUSING INSECURITY

9%

report currently experiencing a housing insecurity. (n=31)

FOOD INSECURITY

15%

report currently experiencing a food insecurity. (n=29)

DEPRESSION

81%

report experiencing depression. (n=36)

## Community Priorities and Calls to Action Identified:

- Concerns related to the oversexualization and safety of LGBTQ+ performers and entertainers, including inappropriate audience behavior, harassment, and lack of understanding surrounding performer boundaries and consent. Participants emphasized the need for stronger audience education, clearer event etiquette expectations, visible security, and safety planning. Participants emphasized the importance of trained security personnel, emergency preparedness planning, self-defense education, and trusted community advocates who can support performers in and out of event spaces.
- Participants identified inconsistencies in how venues and producers support drag and entertainment events, particularly in non-LGBTQ+ spaces. Performers expressed concerns related to performer compensation, communication, professionalism, and event logistics, and recommended the development of standardized practices, performer advocacy structures, and stronger accountability.
- Participants described division, isolation, and lack of coordination within the performer community itself. Participants recommend creating opportunities for performers to convene, build relationships, collectively problem-solve, and establish stronger support networks and communication systems across the region. Additionally, a mediated performer-organized town hall was a recommended starting point to address division in the community.
- Participants also identified a need for greater recognition of performers as workers and community leaders rather than solely entertainers. Participants recommend stronger investment in performers, equitable pay practices, directories of affirming venues, partnerships between entertainers and community organizations, and increased access to LGBTQ+ community resources and support.

**“As a drag performer, I seriously worry for my safety when I perform. I have seen so many instances of hate crimes and harassment happening at drag shows, and every time I have to think, Is it going to happen this time?”**

**-Allegheny County, PA, Age 23**



Data Source: Qualitative insights from the Greater Mahoning Valley LGBTQ+ Community Needs Assessment intersectionality listening session for LGBTQ+ Performers and Entertainers (n=7), and quantitative data on health insurance coverage, housing insecurity, food insecurity, tobacco use, and perceptions of inclusion from the Greater Mahoning Valley LGBTQ+ Community Needs Assessment community survey (n=36).

View the Full Community Report at [www.lgbtqohio.org](http://www.lgbtqohio.org)

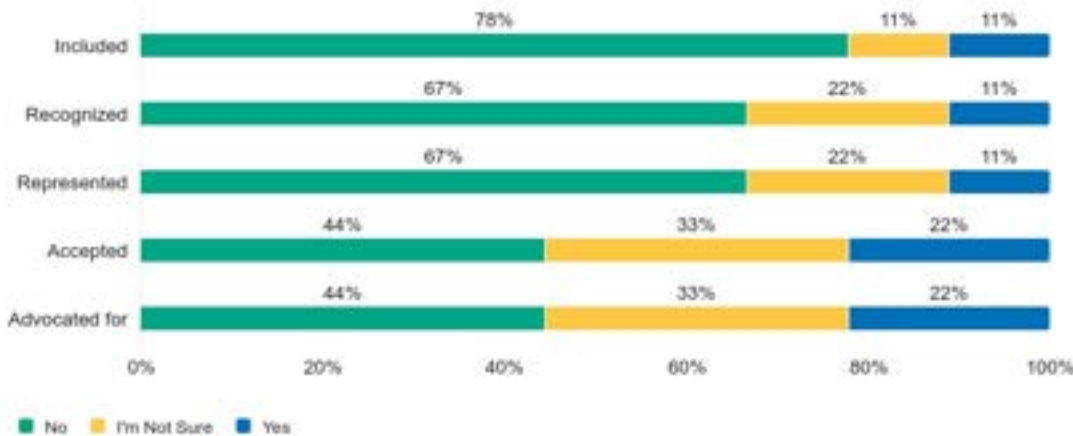
# People Living with HIV/AIDS

LGBTQ+ community members living with HIV/AIDS who are over the age of 18 and reside in Trumbull, Mahoning, Columbiana or Ashtabula county.



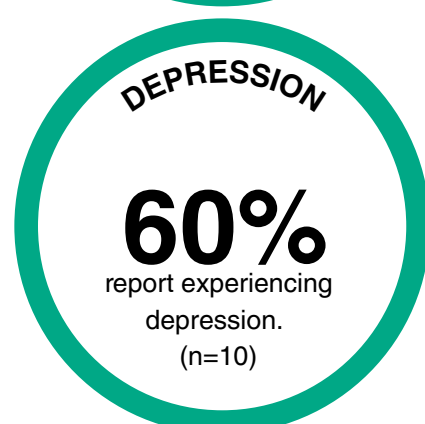
In your own experience, do you feel you and your needs are represented, recognized, included, advocated for, and accepted?

9 Responses



## Community Priorities and Calls to Action Identified:

- Participants expressed concern about increasing HIV prevalence in the Mahoning Valley, particularly among younger LGBTQ+ adults. Many participants connected the current anti-LGBTQ+ political and legislative climate to increased stigma, fear, and barriers to HIV prevention, testing, and care.
- Fear surrounding HIV testing and disclosure was a major concern, particularly due to HIV criminalization laws and fear of discrimination. Participants described existing legislation as outdated and stigmatizing and identified opportunities for advocacy organizations to support HIV modernization efforts and policy reform.
- Participants emphasized the need for expanded education related to HIV transmission, the rights of people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA), and LGBTQ+ cultural competency among health care professionals and community-based HIV testers.
- HIV-related stigma remained a consistent theme throughout the discussion. Participants identified a need for broader community education efforts that both reduce stigma toward people living with HIV/AIDS and strengthen prevention, testing, and support strategies for individuals at increased risk of HIV exposure.



“I’ve experienced doctors in the past who were unwilling to treat me after seeing my status.”

-Mahoning County Resident, Age 47

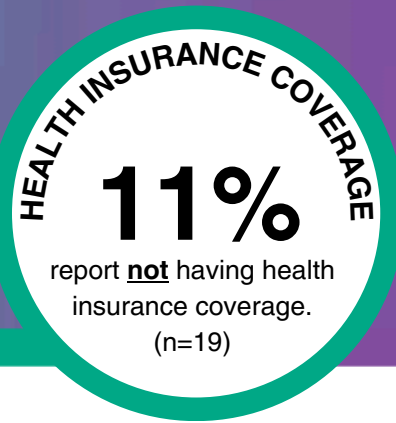


Data Source: Qualitative insights from the Greater Mahoning Valley LGBTQ+ Community Needs Assessment intersectionality listening session on LGBTQ+ People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) (n=3), and quantitative data on health insurance coverage, housing insecurity, food insecurity, tobacco use, and perceptions of inclusion from the Greater Mahoning Valley LGBTQ+ Community Needs Assessment community survey (n=10).

View the Full Community Report at [www.lgbtqohio.org](http://www.lgbtqohio.org)

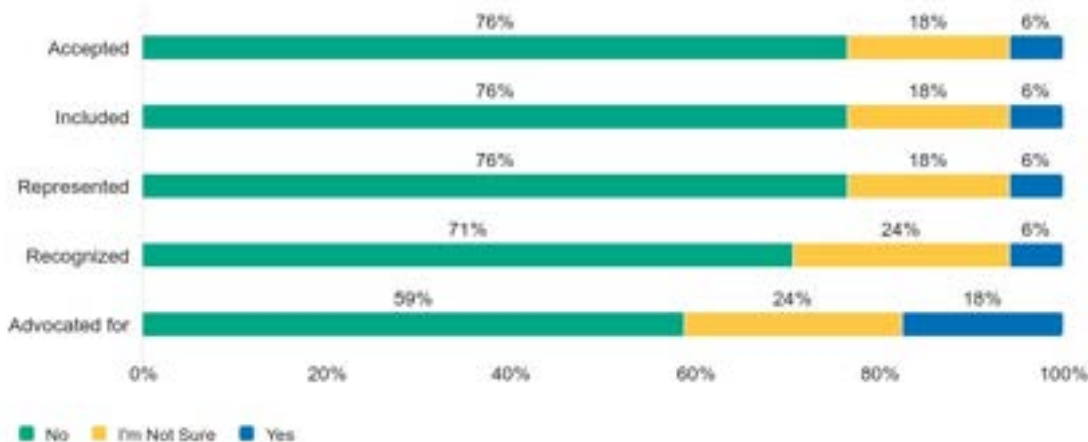
# Housing Insecurity

LGBTQ+ community members over the age of 18 who are currently homeless, housing insecure or at risk of becoming homeless in Trumbull, Mahoning, Columbiana, or Ashtabula county.



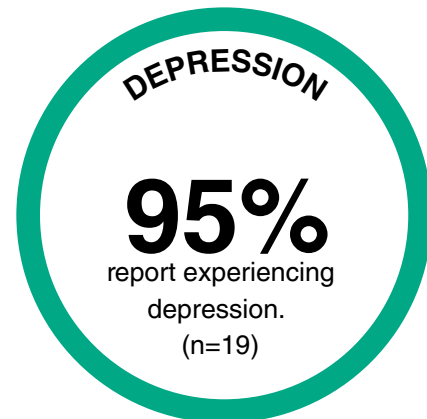
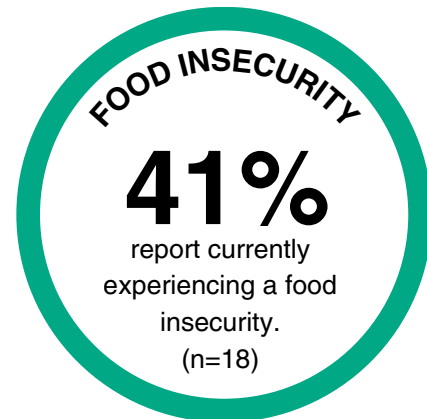
In your own experience, do you feel you and your needs are represented, recognized, included, advocated for, and accepted?

17 Responses



### Community Priorities and Calls to Action Identified:

- Participants described housing affordability and financial instability as major concerns, particularly for LGBTQ+ individuals living on fixed incomes, receiving disability benefits, or working low-wage jobs. Participants identified a need for affordable housing resources, housing assistance, and LGBTQ+ affirming case management.
- Transportation barriers were consistently identified as impacting access to housing, employment, food, and supportive services. Participants recommended expanded public transportation routes and hours, safer bus stops, and calling on organizations to work together to fix existing transportation infrastructures through advocating in local governments to address these barriers identified.
- Participants described unsafe and non-affirming housing environments, including discrimination, poor living conditions, and restrictive faith-based shelter policies. Participants emphasized the need for affirming housing spaces, trauma-informed shelter practices, and LGBTQ+ affirming support staff. Advocacy organizations were suggested as well positioned to educate community members about tenant rights and advocate for increased accountability for landlords in local government.
- Housing insecurity was described as contributing to isolation, worsening mental health, and pressure to hide LGBTQ+ identities in order to access resources. Participants highlighted the compounded impact of racism, poverty, disability, and stigma on housing stability and overall well-being. Among other solutions, both Universal Basic Income (UBI), vouchers for housing applications, and credit counseling were named as potential solutions.

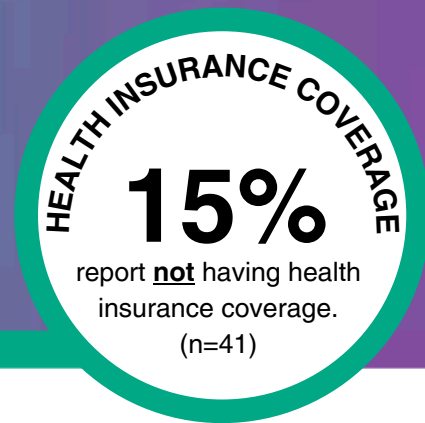


Data Source: Qualitative insights from the Greater Mahoning Valley LGBTQ+ Community Needs Assessment intersectionality listening session on Homelessness and Housing Insecurity in the LGBTQ+ Community (n=4), and quantitative data on health insurance coverage, housing insecurity, food insecurity, tobacco use, and perceptions of inclusion from the Greater Mahoning Valley LGBTQ+ Community Needs Assessment community survey (n=19).

View the Full Community Report at [www.lgbtqohio.org](http://www.lgbtqohio.org)

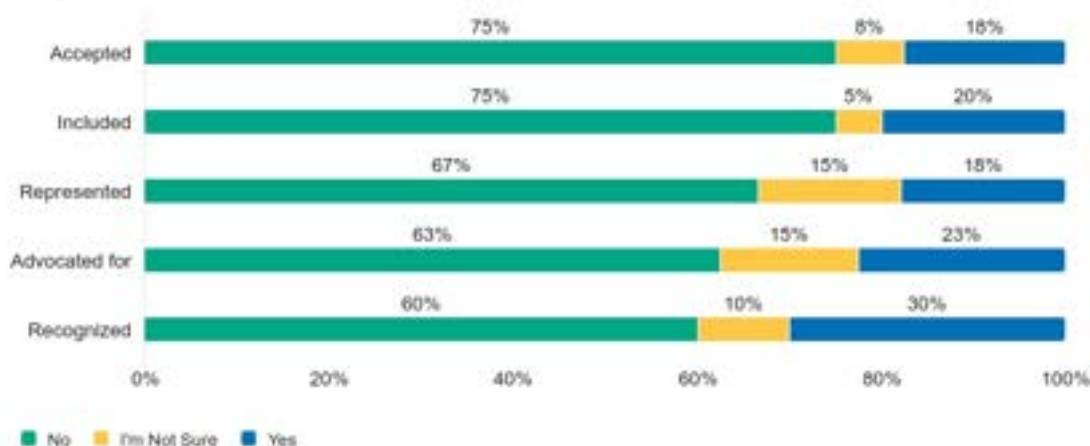
# Food Insecurity

LGBTQ+ community members over the age of 18 who are currently experiencing or have experienced food insecurity in Trumbull, Mahoning, Columbiana, or Ashtabula county.



In your own experience, do you feel you and your needs are represented, recognized, included, advocated for, and accepted?

40 Responses



## Community Priorities and Calls to Action Identified:

- Participants described food insecurity as closely connected to poverty, housing instability, and transportation barriers. Participants emphasized the need to protect and expand programs such as SNAP, increase access to affordable healthy food, and support policies that reduce economic hardship for community members through organizational advocacy efforts.
- Due to expressed transportation barriers, participants recommended increasing walkable neighborhood food access points and organizations working together to develop community-based food distribution programs.
- Participants described discomfort with food assistance programs connected to mandatory religious participation and emphasize the importance of affirming, low-barrier food resources. Participants called for more LGBTQ+ affirming food assistance programs that prioritize dignity, accessibility, and individual choice.
- Participants identified gaps in education related to healthy food options and food preparation, which they described as contributing to higher rates of food waste and continued consumption of low-quality, heavily processed, and non-nutritious foods. Participants emphasized the need for increased education and resources that support healthy eating, meal preparation, and food sustainability to improve overall health and well-being.
- Pet owners described inconsistent access to pet food and would like to see pet food assistance for community members struggling to feed their animals.
- Participants highlighted the need for more accessible and practical food resources, including foods that do not require extensive preparation, cooking tools, or appliances. Participants recommended expanding community meals, cooking education, community gardens, and culturally responsive food support programs that consider disability, dietary restrictions, and neurodivergence.



**“I worry about access to resources and educational information, I also worry about housing and access to food for those around me.”**

**-Ashtabula County, Age 37**



Data Source: Qualitative insights from the Greater Mahoning Valley LGBTQ+ Community Needs Assessment intersectionality listening session on Food Insecurity in the LGBTQ+ Community (n=6), and quantitative data on health insurance coverage, housing insecurity, food insecurity, tobacco use, and perceptions of inclusion from the Greater Mahoning Valley LGBTQ+ Community Needs Assessment community survey (n=43).

View the Full Community Report at [www.lgbtqohio.org](http://www.lgbtqohio.org)

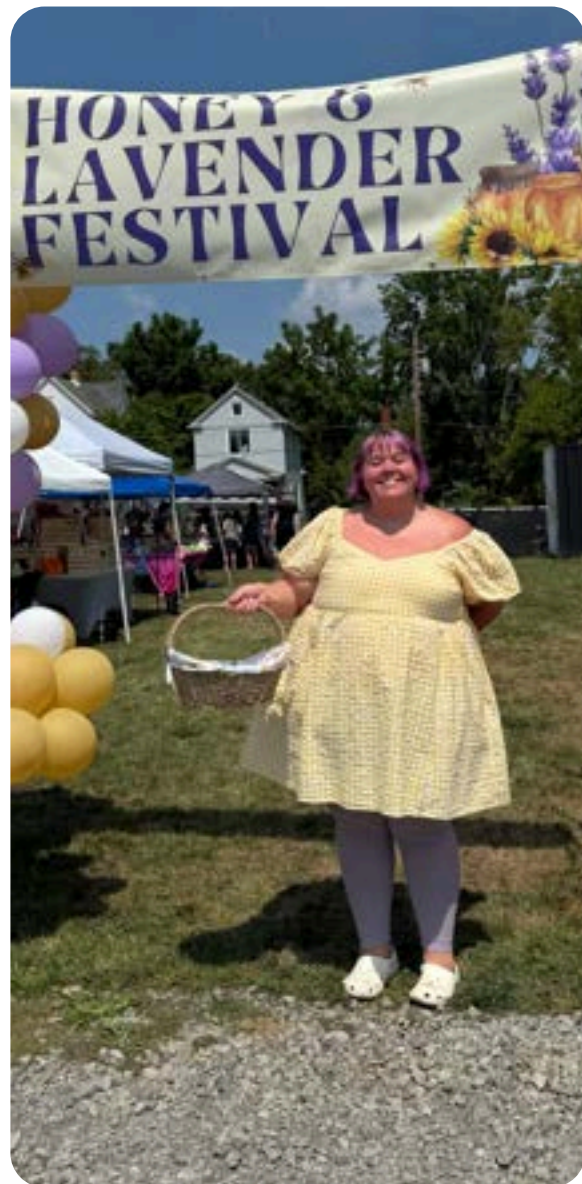
## More Information and Data Requests

The intention of this community needs assessment is to collect information directly from the local LGBTQ+ community and provide it in an organized, accessible, and easy-to-use format for community members, stakeholders, and organizations who serve the LGBTQ+ community to carry out their mission.

Please visit our website at [lgbtqohio.org](http://lgbtqohio.org) for more information and to stay up to date with this project and future related work.

By visiting the website, you will be able to:

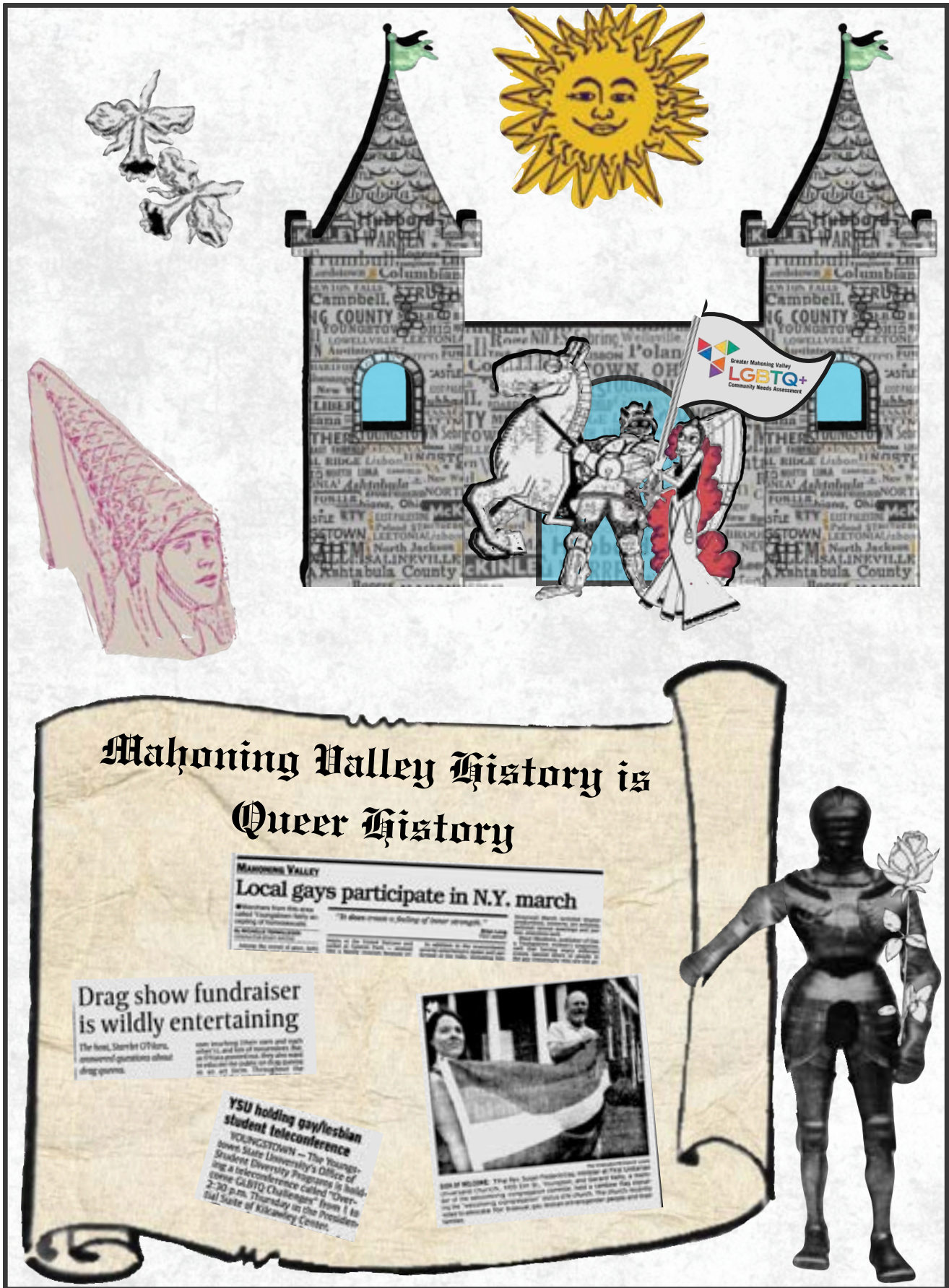
- Download a .pdf copy of this Full Community Report and Recommendations
- Access other LGBTQ+ community reports completed across Northeast Ohio
- Access the interactive Self-reported Health and Sociodemographic Dashboard
- Access the Local Resource Linktree
- Learn more about expanding and adapting this work to a statewide initiative
- Request a presentation of this information to your group or organization
- Connect for future opportunities to engage and participate



**Greater Mahoning Valley**

**LGBTQ+**

**Community Needs Assessment**



# Mahoning Valley History is Queer History

**MAHONING VALLEY**  
**Local gays participate in N.Y. march**  
 "It shows there is feeling of inner strength."

**Drag show fundraiser is wildly entertaining**  
 The best, Sherri O'Hara, answered questions about drag shows.

**YSU holding gay/lesbian student teleconference**  
 YOUNGSTOWN — The Youngstown State University's Office of Student Diversity Programs is holding a teleconference called "Overcoming GLBTQ Challenges" from 1 to 2:30 p.m. Thursday in the Presidential State of Kikawing Center.





Greater Mahoning Valley  
**LGBTQ+**  
Community Needs Assessment

