2015 U.S. TRANSGENDER SURVEY

Report on the Experiences of Black Respondents



BLACK TRANSMEN
Equality · Advocacy · Empowerment

Black Transwomen, Inc
Every Voice Matters

National Black Justice Coalition
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National Center for TRANSGENDER EQUALITY

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Introduction

The 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey (USTS) is the largest survey examining the experiences of transgender people in the United States, with 27,715 respondents nationwide. The USTS was conducted by the National Center for Transgender Equality in the summer of 2015, and the results provide a detailed look at the experiences of transgender people across a wide range of issues, such as education, employment, family life, health, housing, and interactions with the criminal justice system.

The Report of the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey documented the experiences of USTS respondents, including differences based on demographic and other characteristics.[1] Among the most important findings was that many respondents were impacted by the compounding effects of multiple forms of discrimination, and transgender people of color who completed the survey experienced deeper and broader forms of discrimination than white USTS respondents and people in the U.S. population overall.

This report focuses on the unique experiences of the 796 USTS respondents who identified as Black or African American,[2] highlighting disparities between the experiences of Black transgender people, other USTS respondents, and the U.S. population. While the findings in this report reflect a range of Black transgender people in the United States, the survey likely did not fully capture the experiences of those who were most affected by factors that may limit access to online surveys, such as factors related to education, economic and housing stability, and disabilities. All findings in this report are presented as weighted percentages.[3]

Key Findings

- **20% of Black respondents were unemployed**, twice the rate among Black people in the U.S. population (10%).
- **38% of Black respondents were living in poverty**, compared to 24% of Black people in the U.S. population.
- **42% of Black respondents have experienced homelessness at some point in their lives**, compared to 30% in the USTS sample overall, and **22% experienced homelessness in the past year because of being transgender**.
- **53% of Black respondents have been sexually assaulted at some point in their lifetimes**, compared to 47% in the USTS sample overall. **13% of Black respondents were sexually assaulted in the past year**, compared to 10% in the USTS sample overall.
- **67% of Black respondents said they would feel somewhat or very uncomfortable asking the police for help**, compared to 57% of respondents in the USTS sample overall.
- **34% of Black respondents who saw a health care provider in the past year reported having at least one negative experience related to being transgender**, such as being refused treatment, being verbally harassed, being physically or sexually assaulted, or having to teach the provider about transgender people in order to get appropriate care.
- **6.7% of Black respondents were living with HIV**, nearly five times the rate in the USTS sample overall (1.4%) and more than twenty times the rate in the U.S. population (0.3%).
- **41% of Black respondents experienced serious psychological distress in the month before completing the survey** (based on the Kessler 6 Psychological Distress Scale), more than eight times the rate in the U.S. population (5%).

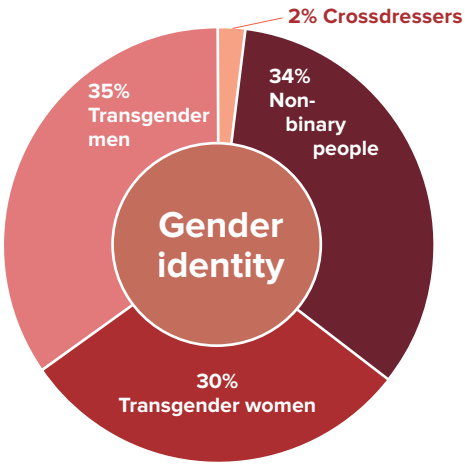
Portrait of Black Respondents

This section outlines aspects of Black respondents' identities and demographic characteristics, such as gender, age, geographic location, and educational attainment, to provide important context for their experiences.

Gender Identity

Thirty-five percent (35%) of Black respondents identified as transgender men, 34% were non-binary,[4] 30% were transgender women, and 2% identified as crossdressers[5] (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Gender identity



Experiences with Transitioning

Seventy-three percent (73%) of Black respondents were currently living full time in a gender that was different from the one on their original birth certificates, referred to in this report as having transitioned. This included 85% of transgender men and women and 53% of non-binary respondents. Sixteen percent (16%) transitioned before the age of 18, nearly half (44%) transitioned between the ages of 18 and 24, 28% transitioned between ages 25 and 34, and 11% transitioned at age 35 or older.

Respondents were asked how much time had passed since they began transitioning. Nearly one-third (29%) began their transition within one year of taking the survey, 33% transitioned 2 to 5 years prior, 14% transitioned 6 to 9 years prior, and 24% transitioned 10 or more years prior.

Outness

Respondents were asked whether different groups of people in their lives knew that they were transgender to determine if they were "out" about their transgender identity to family members, friends, supervisors and coworkers, classmates, and health care providers. Specifically, they were asked whether all, most, some, or none of the people in each of those groups knew they were transgender.

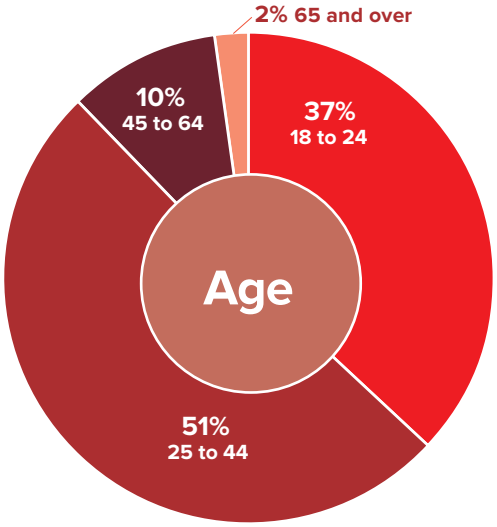
Results for outness to any particular group reflect only those respondents who had people from that group in their lives. Overall, 11% reported that they were out to all of the people in their lives, across all groups of people, 47% were out to most, 40% were out to some, and 2% were out to none of the people in their lives.

Sixty-one percent (61%) of respondents were out to all or most of the immediate family that they grew up with, and 40% were out to all or most of their extended family. Respondents were less likely to be out to at work or school: nearly one-half reported that none of their current supervisors (46%) or coworkers (42%) knew that they were transgender, and 47% reported that none of their classmates at their current school knew they were transgender.

Age

Most respondents were between the ages of 25 and 44 (51%) or 18 and 24 (37%) (Figure 2).

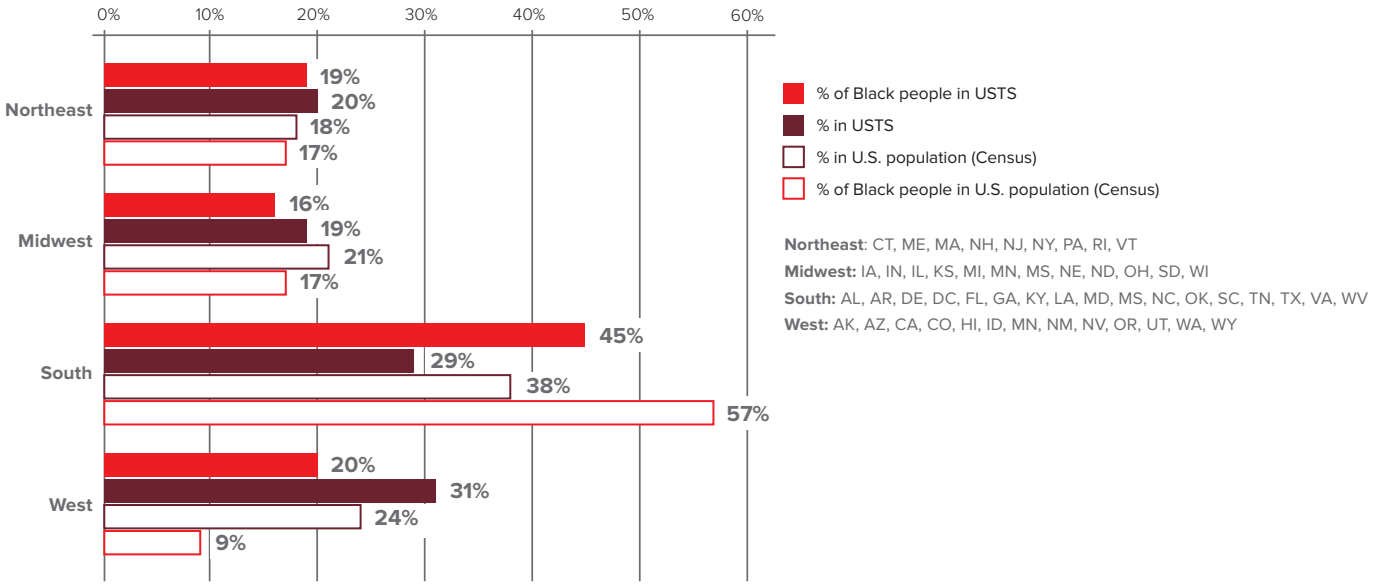
Figure 2: Age



Location

Respondents lived in 44 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and military bases overseas. The geographical distribution of USTS Black respondents differed from the distribution in the USTS sample overall but was generally similar to the distribution of Black people in the U.S. population. Black respondents were more likely to live in the South (45%) than respondents in the USTS sample overall (29%), similar to the trend in the U.S. population, where Black people were more likely to live in the South (57%) than the U.S. population overall (38%).[6] One notable exception to this pattern is that Black USTS respondents were more than twice as likely to live in the West as Black people in the U.S. population (Figure 3).

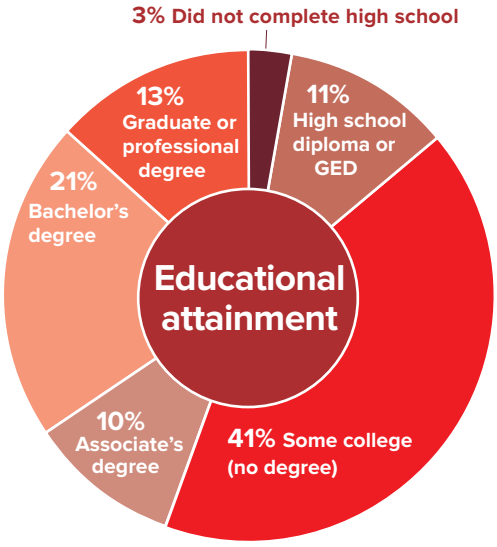
Figure 3: Location by region



Educational Attainment

Respondents were asked about the highest level of education that they had completed. Fourteen percent (14%) had a high school diploma or GED or did not complete high school. Forty-one percent (41%) had completed some college but had not obtained a degree, and 34% had received a bachelor's degree or a higher degree (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Educational attainment



Disability

Respondents received questions about their disability status based on questions from the American Community Survey (ACS) in order to compare the USTS sample to the U.S. population. Disabilities listed in the ACS included (1) being deaf or having serious difficulty hearing, (2) being blind or having serious difficulty seeing even when wearing glasses, (3) having serious difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition, (4) having serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs, (5) having difficulty dressing or bathing, and (6) having difficulty doing errands alone, such as visiting a doctor's office or shopping because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition. Forty percent (40%) of Black respondents indicated that they had one or more disabilities listed in the ACS, similar to the rate in the USTS sample overall (39%). In contrast, only 15% in the U.S. population had a disability listed in the ACS.[7]

Respondents were also asked if they identified as a person with a disability to better capture disabilities that were not outlined in the ACS.

Thirty-two percent (32%) of Black respondents identified as people with disabilities, compared to 28% in the USTS sample overall. The term "people with disabilities" used in this report refers to respondents who identified as people with disabilities.

Relationship Status

Twenty-six percent (26%) of respondents were living with a partner, 14% were partnered and living separately, 56% were single, 1% were in a polyamorous relationship, and 2% had a relationship status that was not listed. Respondents were asked about their current legal marital status for the purpose of comparison to the U.S. population. Eleven percent (11%) of Black respondents were currently married, in contrast to 32% of Black people in the U.S. population.[8] Eighty-two percent (82%) of respondents had never been married, compared to 50% of Black people in the U.S. population.

Sexual Orientation

Respondents were asked which terms best described their sexual orientation. Respondents were most likely to identify as straight (26%) or queer (23%), and they also identified as pansexual (17%), gay, lesbian, or same-gender-loving (12%), bisexual (10%), and asexual (6%).

Family Life and Faith Communities

Family Life

Eighty-eight percent (88%) of respondents were out as transgender to a current or former partner. Of those who were out to a current or former partner, 26% had a partner end their relationship solely or partly because they were transgender, including 10% who had a partner end their relationship solely because they were transgender. Nearly two-thirds (62%) of respondents who had children were out to one or more of their children, and 16% of those respondents had a child stop speaking to them or spending time with them after coming out as transgender.

Fifty-nine percent (59%) of respondents who were out to at least some of the immediate family they grew up with reported that their family was generally supportive, 17% had unsupportive families, and 24% had families that were neither supportive nor unsupportive. Nearly one-half (47%) experienced at least one form of family rejection outlined in the survey, such as having a family member who stopped speaking to them for a long time or ended the relationship, experiencing violence by a family member, or being kicked out of the house for being transgender (Table 1).

Table 1: Forms of family rejection

(of those out to immediate family)	% of Black people in USTS	% in USTS
Stopped speaking to them or ended relationship	30%	26%
Did not allow them to wear clothes that matched gender	30%	27%
Sent them to a professional to stop them from being transgender	14%	14%
Were violent towards them	12%	10%
Kicked them out of the house	12%	8%
One or more experiences listed	**47%**	**44%**

Transgender women (44%) were more likely to have an immediate family member stop speaking to them for a long time or end a relationship because they were transgender, in contrast to transgender men (28%) and non-binary people (12%). Transgender women (19%) were more than twice as likely to experience violence by a family member because they were transgender as non-binary people (9%) and transgender men (8%). Transgender women

(20%) were also more than twice as likely to have been kicked out of the house as transgender men (8%) and non-binary people (4%).

Additionally, 15% of those who were out to their immediate family ran away from home because they were transgender, with transgender women (24%) being more than twice as likely to have run away as transgender men (10%) and non-binary people (9%).

Although approximately half of those who were out to their immediate family reported at least one experience of rejection by a family member, more than three-quarters (79%) reported that at least one immediate family member supported them through one or more specific acts, such as using their preferred name or pronouns, giving them money to support their transition, or helping them to change the name or gender on their identity documents (Table 2).

Table 2: Supportive family behaviors

(of those out to immediate family)	% of Black people in USTS	% in USTS
Told respondent they respect or support them	62%	65%
Used their preferred name	56%	58%
Used the correct pronouns	52%	55%
Stood up for them with family, friends, or others	38%	36%
Did research to learn how to best support them	27%	33%
Gave money to help with gender transition	16%	18%
Supported them in another way	13%	11%
Helped them change their name and/or gender on an identity document	9%	10%
One or more experiences listed	**79%**	**82%**

Faith Communities

More than three-quarters (77%) of respondents had been part of a spiritual or religious community ("faith community") at some point in their lives. Of these, nearly one-quarter (24%) left a faith community because they were rejected as a transgender person. That experience was more likely among transgender women (34%) than transgender men (19%) and non-binary people (20%). Forty-two percent (42%) of those who had been rejected by a faith community found a new faith community that welcomed them as a transgender person.

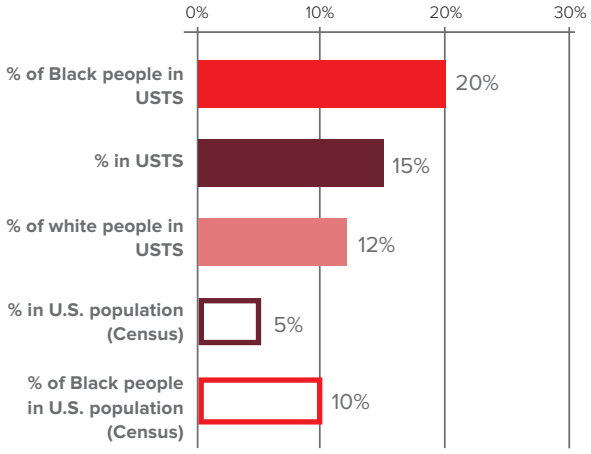
More than one-third (34%) of respondents who had ever been part of a faith community were part of one in the year prior to taking the survey. These respondents reported a range of experiences within their faith communities. Ninety-three percent (93%) experienced one or more accepting behaviors from members of their faith community, such as having a community leader or member who accepted them or made them feel welcome as a transgender person or being told that their religion or faith accepts them as a transgender person. However, 25% had one or more experiences of rejection, such as being asked to stop coming to services or faith community functions or having a community member tell them that being transgender is a sin or that their religion does not approve of them.[9]

Income and Employment

Unemployment

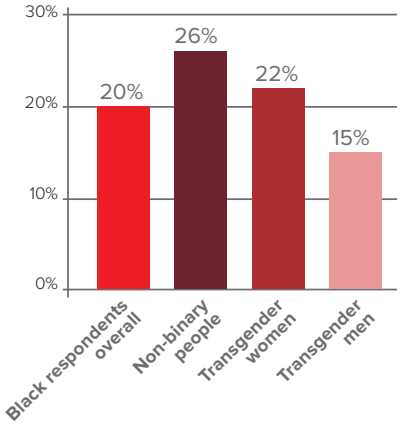
One in five (20%) Black respondents were unemployed, compared to 15% in the USTS sample overall. The unemployment rate among Black respondents was four times higher than the unemployment rate in the U.S. population overall (5%)[10] and twice the rate among Black people in the U.S. population (10%) (Figure 5).[11]

Figure 5: Unemployment



The unemployment rate differed by gender, with Black non-binary respondents (26%) being more likely to be unemployed (Figure 6). Respondents with disabilities (30%) were also more likely to be unemployed.

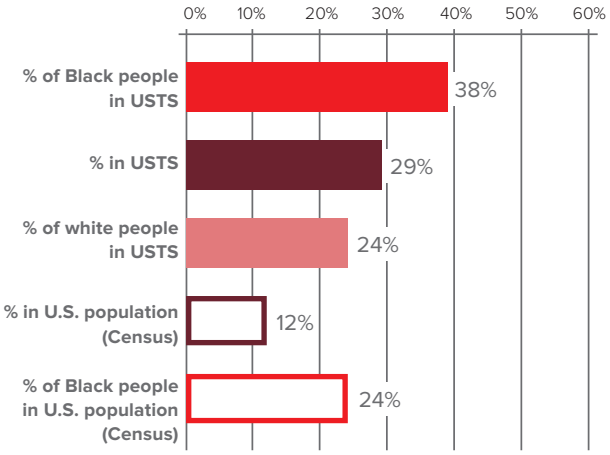
Figure 6: Unemployment (by gender)



Poverty

Nearly four out of ten (38%) Black respondents were living in poverty,[12] compared to 29% in the USTS sample overall. This was substantially higher than the poverty rate in the U.S. population overall (12%)[13] and the poverty rate among Black people in the U.S. population (24%) (Figure 7).[14] Black non-binary people (46%) and transgender women (44%) were more likely to be living in poverty than transgender men (27%). Respondents who had not completed high school (49%), those with a high school diploma or GED only (46%), and those who had completed some college but did not have a

Figure 7: Living in poverty



degree (46%) were more likely to be living in poverty. People with disabilities (48%) were also more likely to be living in poverty.

Sources of Income

Black respondents' most common source of income was from their own employment or a partner's employment alone (37%), similarly to those in the USTS sample overall (36%). Sixteen percent (16%) of Black respondents reported that their sole source of income was Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or disability benefits, nearly twice the rate in the USTS sample overall (9%). More than one-third (36%) of Black respondents reported that they received income from multiple sources, in contrast to 45% in the USTS sample overall (Table 3).

Table 3: Current sources of income

Sources of income	% of Black people in USTS	% in USTS
Employment only (from their own employment, partner's employment, or self-employment)	37%	36%
Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or disability benefits only	16%	9%
Pay from sex work, drug sales, or other work that is currently criminalized only	3%	1%
Pension or retirement income only	3%	3%
Unemployment benefits or public cash assistance program only	2%	1%
Other sources only	3%	3%
No income	2%	2%
Multiple sources	36%	45%

Military Service

Fifteen percent (15%) of Black respondents have served in the military, including respondents who were currently serving in the military on active duty (1%) and those who were currently on active duty for training in the Reserves or National Guard (1%). Thirteen percent (13%) of respondents were veterans, in contrast to 8% in the U.S. population overall and 7% among Black people in the U.S. population.[15]

Individual and Household Income

Respondents reported their annual individual and household income levels from 2014, the last full year prior to completing the survey. Nearly one-third (30%) of Black respondents reported an *individual income* of $1 to $9,999, compared to 22% in the USTS sample overall.

Figure 8: Annual individual income (2014)

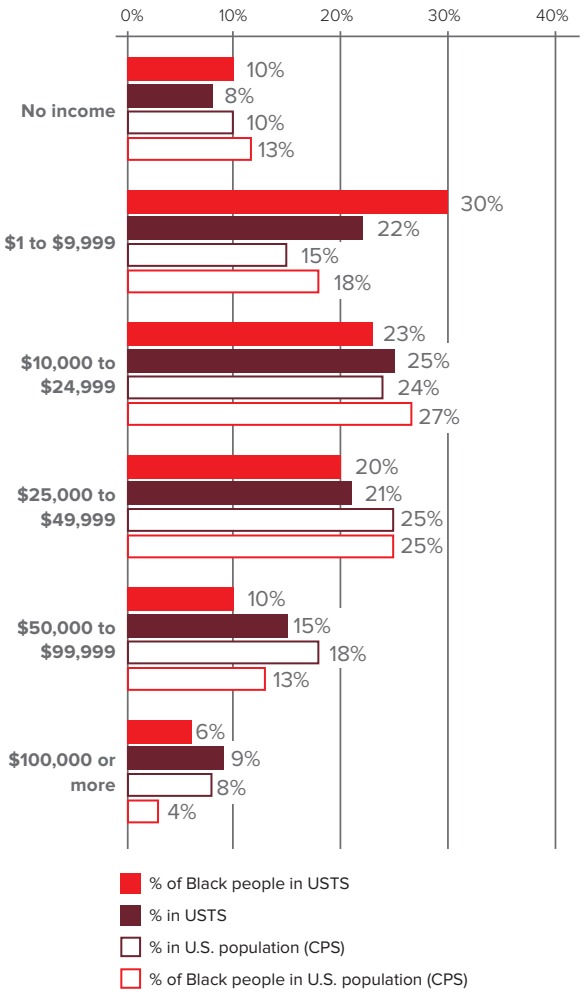
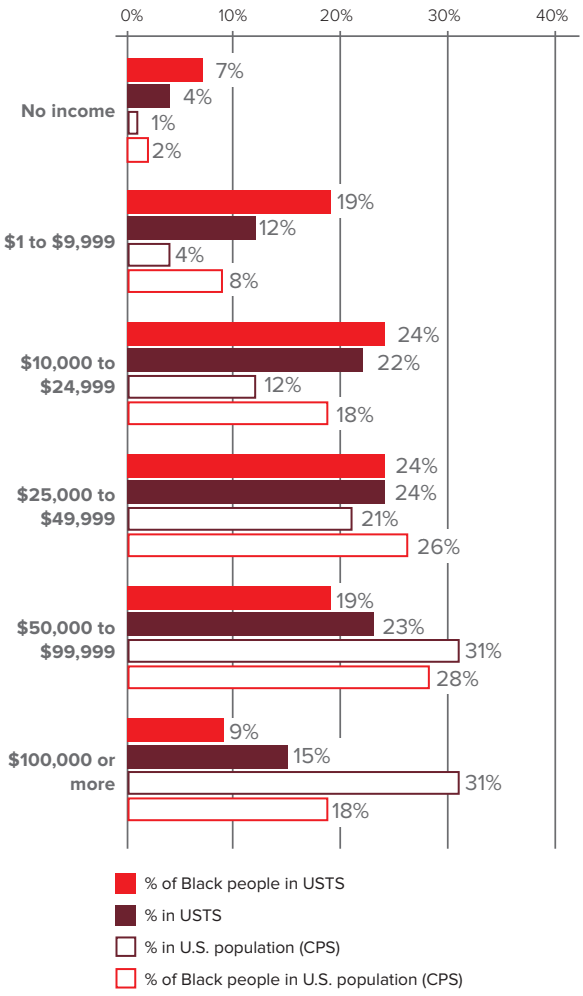


Figure 9: Annual household income (2014)



Black respondents were also substantially more likely to report this low individual income than Black people in the U.S. population (18%)[16] (Figure 8).

Nearly one in five (19%) Black respondents reported a *household income* of $1 to $9,999, compared to 12% in the USTS sample overall and 8% among Black people in the U.S. population (Figure 9).

Sex Work and Other Underground Economy Work

Twenty-eight percent (28%) of Black respondents have participated in the underground economy for income at some point in their lives, including in sex work, drug sales, and other currently criminalized work, compared to 20% in the USTS

sample overall. Fourteen percent (14%) of Black respondents participated in the underground economy for income in the past year, compared to 9% in the USTS sample overall.

More than one in five (21%) Black respondents participated in sex work for income, in contrast to 12% in the USTS sample overall. Examining the composition of those who have done sex work, transgender women represent more than one-half (60%) of Black respondents who have done sex work for money in their lifetimes. Although Black women represent a disproportionately high percentage of those who have done sex work, it is also important to recognize that non-binary people with "female" on their original birth certificates and transgender men account for a large proportion of those who have done sex work. Non-binary people with "female" on their original birth certificates represent nearly one-fifth (18%) of respondents who have done sex work for money in their lifetimes, and transgender men represent 16% (Figure 10).

More than one in ten (11%) Black respondents participated in sex work for income in the past year, compared to 5% in the USTS sample overall. Examining the makeup of those who did sex work for income in the past year, Black transgender women represent nearly two-thirds (65%), 17% were non-binary people with "female" on their original birth certificates, and 11% were transgender men (Figure 11).

More than one-quarter (27%) of respondents participated in sex work for money, food, a place to sleep, or other goods or services, compared to 19% in the USTS sample overall.

Survey respondents were asked if they had ever interacted with police either while doing sex work or when police thought they were doing sex work. Of those who interacted with the police while doing or thought to be doing sex work, 90% of respondents reported some form of police harassment, abuse, or mistreatment, including being verbally harassed, physically attacked, or sexually assaulted by police, compared to 86% in the USTS sample overall.

Figure 10: Gender identity of those who have done sex work for income in their lifetimes

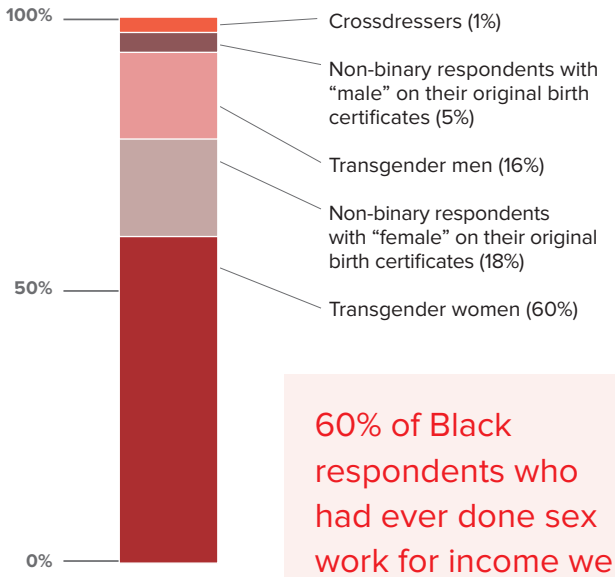
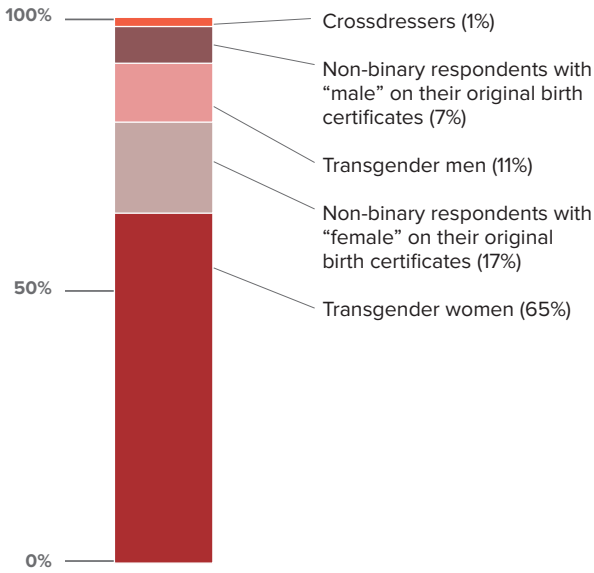


Figure 11: Gender identity of those who have done sex work for income in the past year

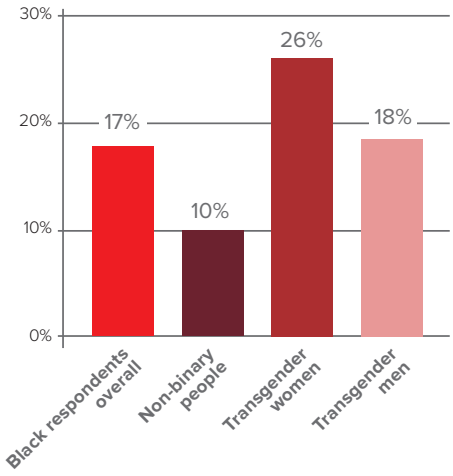


60% of Black respondents who had ever done sex work for income were transgender women.

Experiences in the Workplace

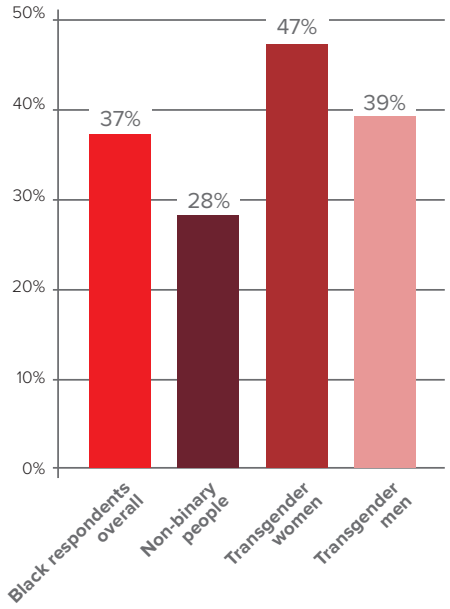
Nearly one-quarter (22%) of Black respondents who have ever been employed reported losing a job at some point in their lives because of being transgender. This represents 17% of all Black respondents, compared to 13% all respondents in the USTS. Black transgender women were substantially more likely to report being fired because of being transgender (Figure 12).

Figure 12: Ever lost job because of being transgender (by gender)



In the past year, 37% of those who held or applied for a job during that year reported being fired, being denied a promotion, or not being hired for a job they applied for because of being transgender, compared to 27% in the USTS sample overall (Figure 13).

Figure 13: Fired, denied promotion, and/or not hired in the past year because of being transgender (by gender)



Many respondents who had a job in the past year reported that they had been verbally harassed (14%) and sexually assaulted (2%) at work during that year because of being transgender. One in four (25%) respondents who were employed reported other forms of mistreatment based on their gender identity or expression during that year, such as being forced to use a restroom that did not match their gender identity, being told to present in the wrong gender in order to keep their job, or having a boss or coworker share information about their transgender status with others without their permission.

Education

Nearly three-quarters (74%) of Black respondents who were out or perceived as transgender at some point between Kindergarten and Grade 12 (K–12) experienced mistreatment, such as being verbally harassed, prohibited from dressing according to their gender identity, disciplined more harshly, or physically or sexually assaulted because people thought they were transgender.

More than half (51%) of those who were out or perceived as transgender in K–12 were verbally harassed, 28% were physically attacked, and 19% were sexually assaulted in K–12 because of being transgender. Twenty-two percent (22%) faced such severe mistreatment as a transgender person that they left a K–12 school, and 10% were expelled from school (Table 4).

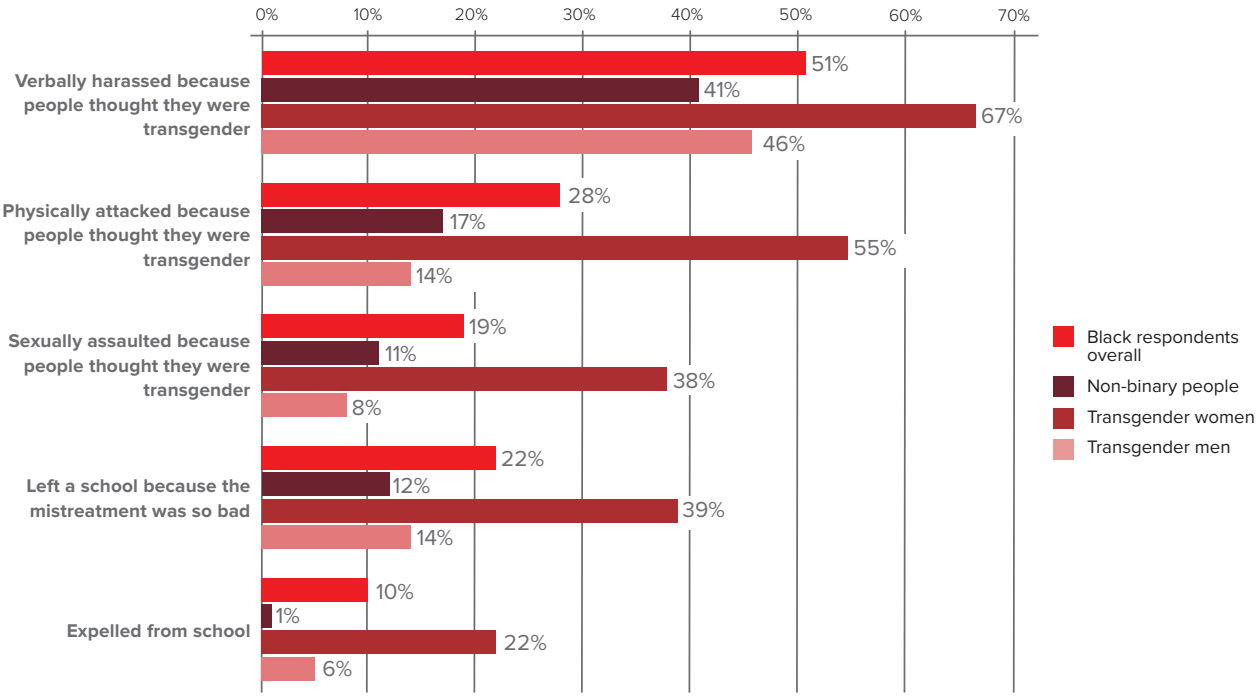
Table 4: Experiences of people who were out as transgender in K–12 or believed classmates, teachers, or school staff thought they were transgender

Negative experiences in school (out of those who were out or perceived as transgender)	% of Black people in USTS	% in USTS
Verbally harassed because people thought they were transgender	51%	54%
Not allowed to dress in a way that fit their gender identity or expression	50%	52%
Disciplined for fighting back against bullies	34%	36%
Physically attacked because people thought they were transgender	28%	24%
Left a school because the mistreatment was so bad	22%	17%
Believe they were disciplined more harshly because teachers or staff thought they were transgender	21%	20%
Sexually assaulted because people thought they were transgender	19%	13%
Expelled from school	10%	6%
One or more experiences listed	**74%**	**77%**

Transgender women were most likely to have been verbally harassed (67%), physically attacked (55%), and sexually assaulted (38%) because people thought they were transgender in K–12. Transgender women were also most likely to have left a school because of mistreatment (39%) and to have been expelled from school (22%) (Figure 14).

Black respondents also reported high levels of mistreatment in post-secondary schools. More than one-quarter (28%) of those who were out or perceived as transgender in college or vocational school were verbally, physically, or sexually harassed because of being transgender.

Figure 14: Experiences of people who were out as transgender in K–12 or believed classmates, teachers, or school staff thought they were transgender (by gender)



Housing, Homelessness, and Shelter Access

Forty-two percent (42%) of Black respondents have experienced homelessness at some point in their lives, compared to 30% in the USTS sample overall. Transgender women (51%) were most likely to have experienced homelessness in their lifetimes (Figure 15).

In the past year, 40% of respondents experienced some form of housing discrimination or instability, such as being evicted from their home or denied a home or apartment because of being transgender.[17] Twenty-two percent (22%) experienced homelessness in the past year because of being transgender, 12% were denied a home or apartment, and 9% were evicted because of being transgender (Table 5). Transgender women (49%) were more likely to have experienced one or more of these forms of housing discrimination or instability (Figure 16).

Figure 15: Lifetime homelessness rate (by gender)

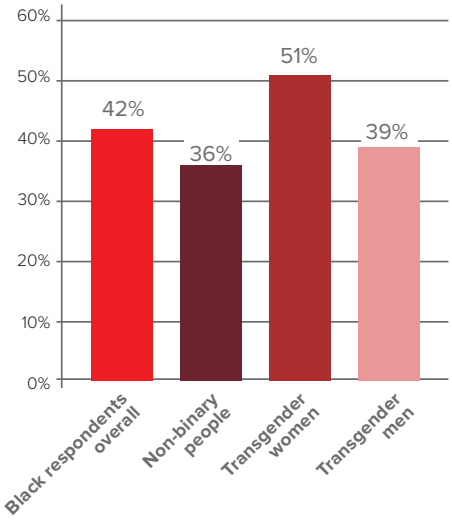
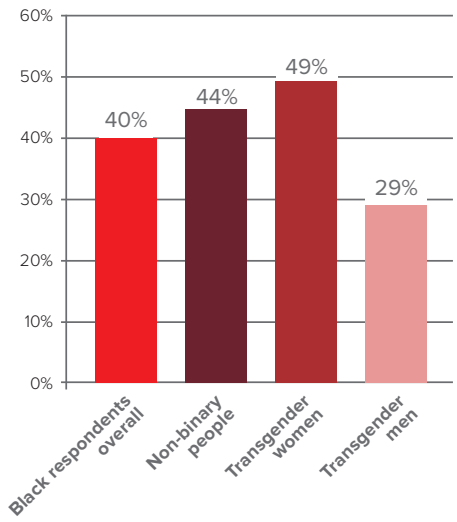


Table 5: Housing situations that occurred in the past year because of being transgender

Housing situation (out of those to whom situation applied)	% of Black people in USTS	% in USTS
Had to move back in with family or friends	26%	20%
Slept in different places for short periods of time	23%	15%
Experienced homelessness	22%	12%
Had to move into a less expensive home or apartment	18%	13%
Were denied a home or apartment	12%	6%
Evicted from a home or apartment	9%	5%
One or more experiences listed	**40%**	**30%**

Figure 16: Housing discrimination or instability in the past year due to being transgender (by gender)



One in four (25%) respondents who experienced homelessness in the past year avoided staying in a shelter because they feared being mistreated as a transgender person.

Public Accommodations

Respondents reported being denied equal treatment or service, verbally harassed, or physically attacked at many places of public accommodation—places that provide services to the public, like retail stores, hotels, and government offices. In the past year, out of respondents who visited a place of public accommodation where staff or employees thought or knew they were transgender, 36% experienced at least one type of mistreatment. This included 16% who were denied equal treatment or service, 28% who were verbally harassed, and 2% who were physically attacked because of being transgender (Table 6).

Transgender women (20%) were more likely to have been denied equal treatment or service compared to transgender men (14%) and non-binary people (11%). Transgender women (34%) and non-binary people (34%) were nearly twice as likely to have experienced verbal harassment as transgender men (18%).

Table 6: Experiences in places of public accommodation in the past year due to being transgender

Experience at a place of public accommodation (out of those who believe staff at location knew or thought they were transgender)	% of Black people in USTS
Denied equal treatment or service	16%
Verbally harassed	28%
Physically attacked	2%
One or more experiences listed	**36%**

Harassment and Violence

Overall Experiences of Unequal Treatment, Harassment, and Physical Attack

Nearly half (47%) of respondents reported being denied equal treatment, verbally harassed, and/or physically attacked in the past year because of being transgender. Sixteen percent (16%) were denied equal treatment or service in a public place and 44% were verbally harassed in the past year because of being transgender. Nearly one in ten (9%) were physically attacked in the past year because of being transgender (Table 7).

Non-binary people (52%) were more likely to be verbally harassed in the past year because of being transgender than transgender women (45%) and men (36%). Transgender women (14%) were more likely to be physically attacked in the past year because of being transgender, compared to non-binary people (8%) and transgender men (7%).

Table 7: Denial of equal treatment or service, verbal harassment, and physical attack in the past year because of being transgender

Experience in the past year due to being transgender	% of Black people in USTS
Denied equal treatment or service	16%
Verbally harassed	44%
Physically attacked	9%
One or more experiences listed	**47%**

Sexual Assault

More than half (53%) of Black respondents have been sexually assaulted at some point in their lifetimes, compared to 47% in the USTS sample overall. Non-binary people with "female" on their original birth certificates (65%) were most likely to have been sexually assaulted in their lifetimes (Figure 17). People with disabilities (64%) also reported a high rate of sexual assault in their lifetimes.

Thirteen percent (13%) of Black respondents were sexually assaulted in the past year, compared to 10% in the USTS sample overall. Transgender women (16%) and non-binary people with "male" on their original birth certificates (16%) were more likely to have been sexually assaulted in the past year (Figure 18). One-third (33%) of respondents who worked in the underground economy (such as in sex work, drug sales, and other currently criminalized activities) in the past year were sexually assaulted during that year.

Figure 18: Sexual assault in the past year (by gender)

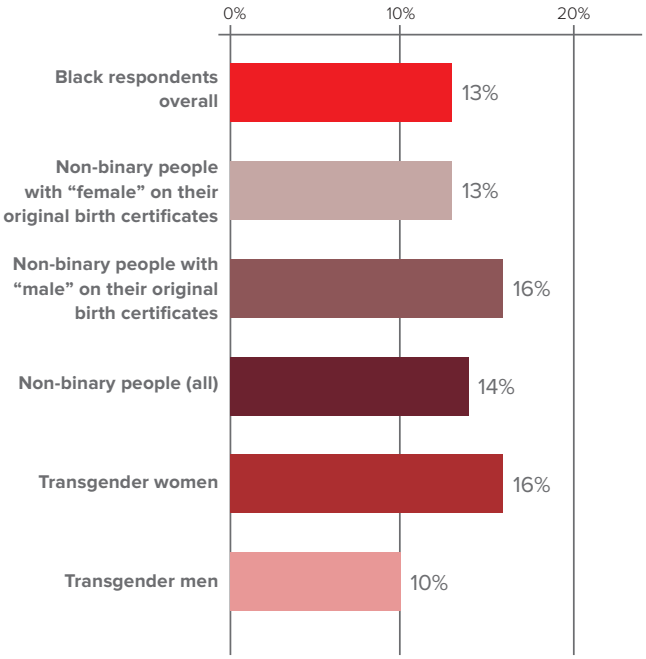
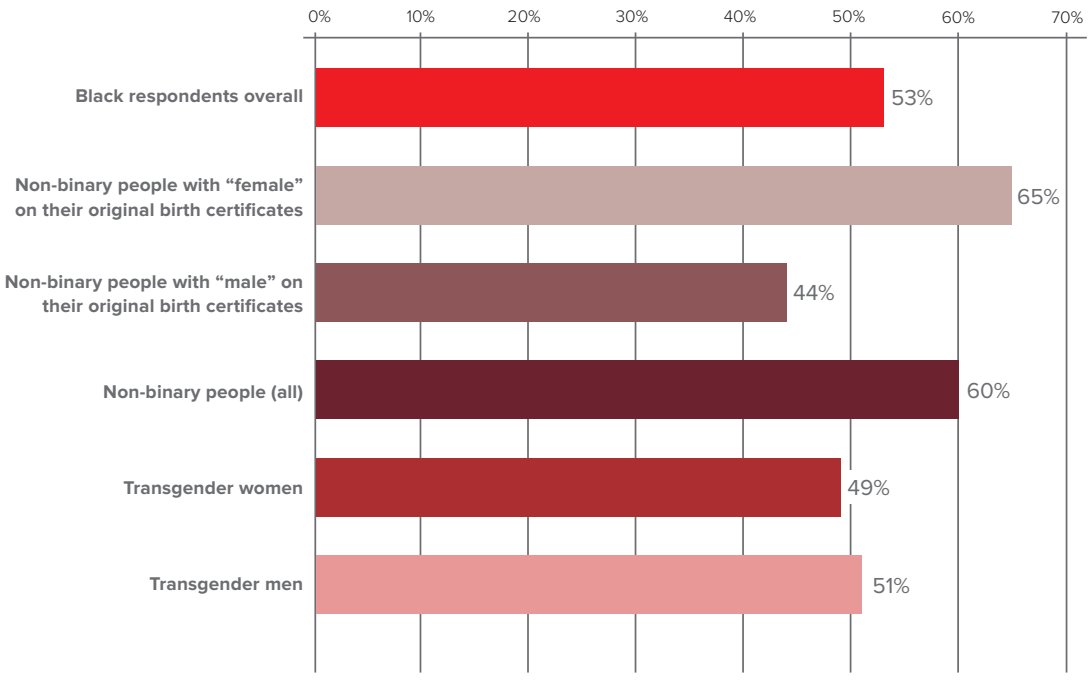


Figure 17: Sexual assault in lifetime (by gender)

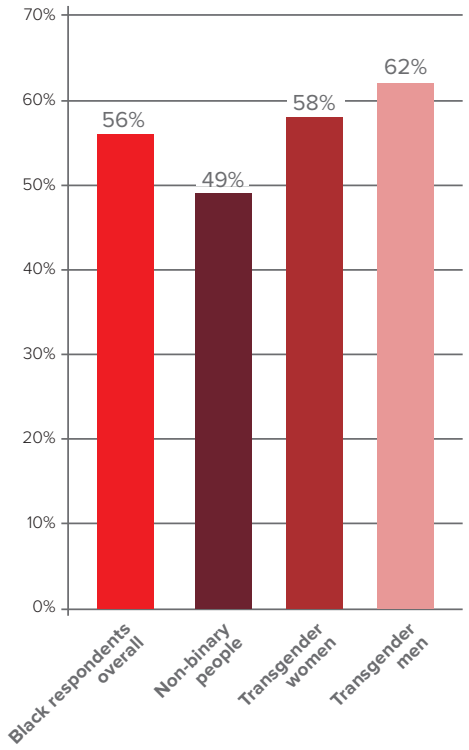


Intimate Partner Violence

Fifty-six percent (56%) of respondents experienced some form of intimate partner violence, including acts of coercive control[18] and physical violence. Transgender men (62%) were most likely to have experienced some form of intimate partner violence (Figure 19). More than three-quarters (76%) of respondents who worked in the underground economy experienced intimate partner violence.

Nearly one-third (29%) of respondents reported acts of coercive control by an intimate partner related to their transgender status, including being told that they were not a "real" woman or man, threatened with being "outed" by having their transgender status revealed to others, or prevented from taking their hormones. Forty-four percent (44%) experienced physical violence by an intimate partner.

Figure 19: Experienced intimate partner violence (by gender)



Police Interactions and Prisons

Respondents experienced high levels of mistreatment and harassment by police. In the past year, out of respondents who interacted with police or other law enforcement officers who thought or knew they were transgender, 61% experienced some form of mistreatment. This included being verbally harassed, repeatedly referred to as the wrong gender, or physically or sexually assaulted (Table 8).

More than two-thirds (67%) of Black respondents said they would feel somewhat or very uncomfortable asking the police for help if they needed it, in

Table 8: Mistreatment by police or other law enforcement officers in the past year

Experiences of mistreatment in the past year	% of Black people in USTS	% in USTS	% of white people in USTS
Officers kept using the wrong gender pronouns (such as he/him or she/her) or wrong title (such as Mr. or Ms.)	51%	49%	46%
Verbally harassed by officers	22%	20%	17%
Officers asked questions about gender transition (such as about hormones or surgical status)	22%	19%	16%
Officers assumed they were sex workers	**21%**	**11%**	**8%**
Physically attacked by officers	**12%**	**4%**	**2%**
Sexually assaulted by officers	**6%**	**3%**	**2%**
Forced by officers to engage in sexual activity to avoid arrest	3%	1%	<1%
One or more experiences listed	**61%**	**58%**	**55%**

Figure 20: Comfort asking the police for help

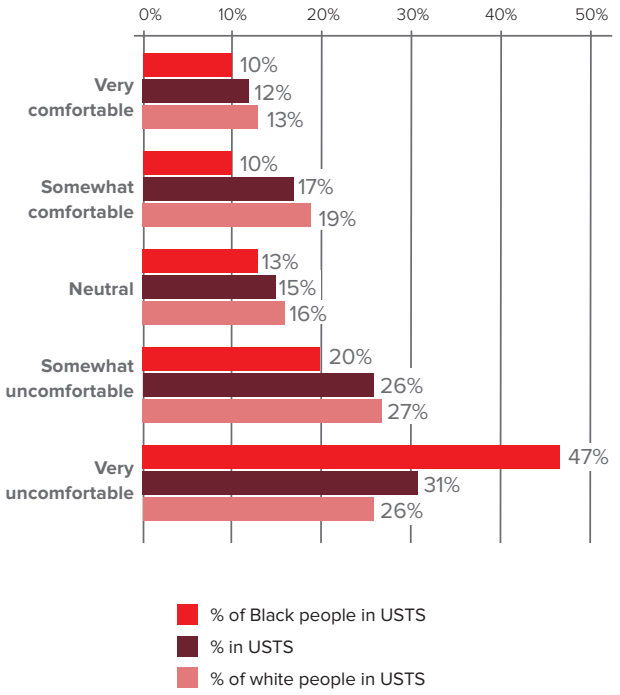
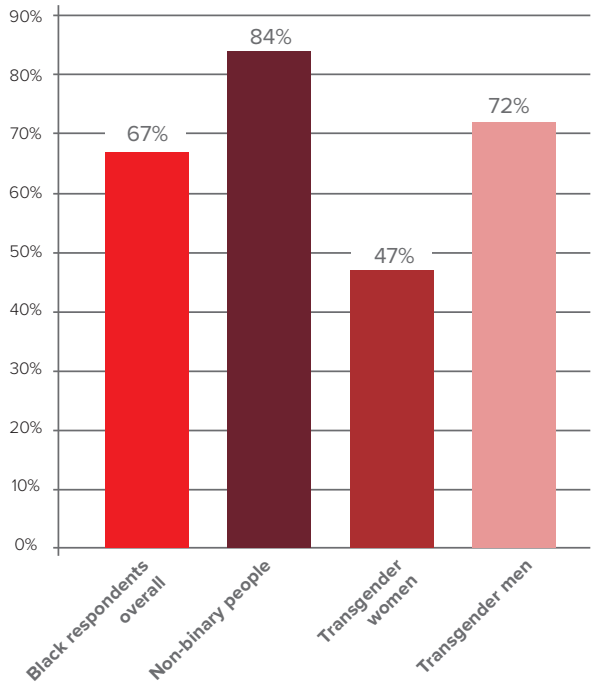


Figure 21: Somewhat or very uncomfortable asking the police for help (by gender)



contrast to 57% of respondents in the USTS sample overall and 53% of white USTS respondents (Figure 20). Non-binary people (84%) and transgender men (72%) were more likely to be uncomfortable asking the police for help, in contrast to transgender women (47%) (Figure 21). More than three-quarters (76%) of people with disabilities were uncomfortable asking the police for help.

Four percent (4%) of Black respondents were arrested in the past year, compared to 2% in the USTS sample. Four percent (4%) of Black respondents were incarcerated—held in jail or prison—in the past year, compared to 2% in the USTS sample and 0.9% in the U.S. population overall.[19] Transgender women (9%) were more than twice as likely to have been incarcerated in the past year compared to Black respondents overall.

Black respondents who were held in jail or prison in the past year faced high rates of physical and sexual assault by facility staff and other inmates. In the past year, 40% were physically assaulted by *staff or other inmates*, nearly twice the rate in the USTS sample overall (23%). Nearly one-third (29%) were sexually assaulted by *staff or other inmates*, compared to 20% in the USTS sample overall.

One in five (20%) Black respondents were sexually assaulted by *facility staff* in the past year during their time in jail or prison, a rate nearly twice as high as in the USTS sample overall (11%) and ten times higher than in the incarcerated U.S. population in prisons (2%) and in jails (2%).[20]

Health

Insurance

One in five (20%) Black respondents did not have health insurance, compared to 14% in the USTS sample overall. This was nearly twice as high as the rate in U.S. population (11%) and higher than the rate among Black people in the U.S. population (13%).[21] The most common forms of insurance reported by Black respondents included coverage they or their family member received through an employer (46%), followed by Medicaid (18%) (Table 9).

Table 9: Type of health insurance or health coverage plan

Health insurance source	% of Black people in USTS	% in USTS	% in U.S. (ACS)
Insurance through current or former employer or union (belonging to respondent or a family member)	46%	53%	56%
Medicaid	18%	13%	15%
Insurance they or someone else purchased directly from an insurance company or through a health insurance marketplace (such as healthcare.gov)	11%	14%	16%
Medicare	6%	5%	22%
TRICARE or other military health care	3%	2%	3%
VA	3%	2%	3%
Another type of insurance	5%	6%	---

More than one-quarter (27%) of respondents experienced a problem in the past year with their insurance related to being transgender, such as being denied coverage for care related to gender transition or being denied coverage for other kinds of health care because they were transgender.

Experiences with Providers

More than one-third (34%) of respondents who saw a health care provider in the past year reported having at least one negative experience related to being transgender. This included being refused treatment, being verbally harassed, being physically or sexually assaulted, or having to teach the provider about transgender people in order to get appropriate care.

In the past year, more than a quarter (26%) of respondents did not see a doctor when they needed to because of fear of being mistreated as a transgender person, and 40% did not see a doctor when needed because they could not afford it.

HIV Status

Seventy percent (70%) of Black respondents had been tested for HIV, compared to 55% in the USTS sample overall and 34% in the U.S. adult population.[22] Among those who had not been tested, 76% of Black respondents said that it was primarily because they were unlikely to have been exposed to HIV. Black respondents who had not been tested were less likely to cite this reason than USTS respondents overall (86%) and those in the general U.S. population (86%), but gave this reason at a rate similar to Black people in the U.S. population (77%).[23]

Among Black respondents, 6.7% reported that they were living with HIV. This is nearly five times higher than the rate in the USTS sample overall (1.4%), more than twenty times higher than the rate in the U.S. population (0.3%),[24] and five times higher than the rate among Black people in the U.S. population (1.3%).[25] Transgender women (19.0%) were nearly three times more likely than Black USTS respondents overall to be living with HIV (Figure 22) and respondents who did not complete high school (25.6%) were nearly four times more likely to

6.7% of Black USTS respondents were living with HIV.

- **5X** higher than the rate in the USTS sample overall (1.4%)
- **20X** higher than the rate in the U.S. population overall (0.3%)
- **5X** higher than the rate among Black people in the U.S. population (1.3%)

19.0% of Black transgender women were living with HIV, 60X the rate in the U.S. population (0.3%).

Figure 22: Living with HIV (by gender)

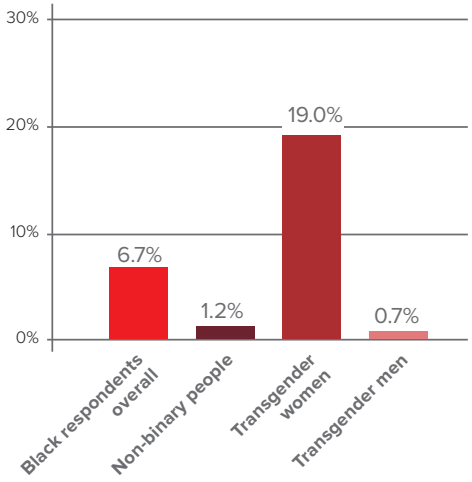
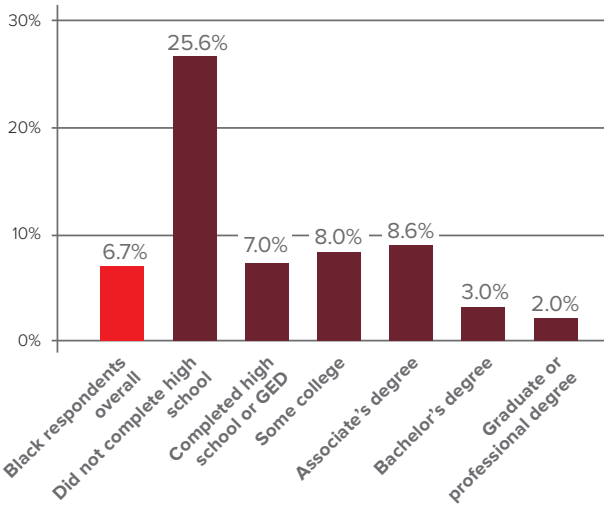


Figure 23: Living with HIV (by educational attainment)



be living with HIV (Figure 23). Additionally, 61% of Black respondents were HIV negative, and 32% had not been tested or did not know the results of their HIV test.

Eighty-seven percent (87%) of those living with HIV saw a doctor or health care provider for HIV care in the past twelve months, and 93% of respondents who did so saw doctor or health care provider for HIV care in the past six months.

Psychological Distress

Forty-one percent (41%) of Black respondents experienced serious psychological distress in the month before completing the survey (based on the Kessler 6 Psychological Distress Scale),[26] more than eight times the rate in the U.S. population (5%) and nearly seven times the rate among Black people in the U.S. population (6%).[27]

Conversion Therapy

More than one in ten (11%) reported that a professional, such as a psychologist, counselor, or religious advisor, tried to stop them from being transgender.

Suicidal Thoughts and Behaviors

Nearly half (47%) of Black respondents have attempted suicide at some point in their lives, compared to 40% in the USTS sample overall and 4.6% in the U.S. population.[28] Black respondents with disabilities (56%) were more likely to have attempted suicide in their lifetimes.

Nearly one in ten (9%) Black respondents attempted suicide in the past year, compared to 7% in the USTS sample overall. This rate was fifteen times higher than the rate in the U.S. population (0.6%) and eighteen times higher than the rate among Black people in the U.S. population (0.5%).[29] Black respondents with disabilities (15%) were more likely to have attempted suicide in the past year.

Identity Documents

Only 12% of respondents reported that *all* of their identity documents (IDs) had the name and gender they preferred, while 65% reported that *none* of their IDs had the name and gender they preferred. The cost of changing IDs was one of the main barriers respondents faced, with 38% of those who have not changed their legal name and 33% of those who have not updated the gender on their IDs reporting that it was because they could not afford it.

One-third (33%) of respondents who have shown an ID with a name or gender that did not match their gender presentation were verbally harassed, denied benefits or service, asked to leave, or assaulted.

Experiences of Multiracial Black Respondents

In addition to respondents who identified as Black alone in the USTS, 485 respondents identified as multiracial *and* Black or "a racial/ethnic identity not listed" *and* Black. This section provides a brief overview of the experiences of these respondents, referred to here as multiracial Black respondents. Additional research is needed to further examine the experiences of multiracial respondents in the USTS.

- 30% of multiracial Black respondents were unemployed.
- 52% were living in poverty.
- 23% of multiracial Black respondents who have been employed reported losing a job at some point in their lives because of being transgender.
- In the past year, 31% of those who held or applied for a job during that year reported being fired, being denied a promotion, or not being hired for a job they applied for because of being transgender.
- In the past year, 19% were denied equal treatment or service in a public place and 48% were verbally harassed because of being transgender.
- In the past year, 12% were physically attacked because of being transgender and 15% were sexually assaulted. More than half (57%) have been sexually assaulted at some point in their lives.

Experiences of Multiracial Black Respondents (continued)

- In the past year, out of respondents who interacted with police or other law enforcement officers who thought or knew they were transgender, 73% experienced some form of mistreatment. This included being verbally harassed, repeatedly referred to as the wrong gender, physically assaulted, or sexually assaulted.
- 75% of those who were out or perceived as transgender at some point between Kindergarten and Grade 12 (K–12) experienced some form of mistreatment, such as being verbally harassed (51%), physically attacked (29%), or sexually assaulted (15%) in K–12 because of being transgender.
- 41% of multiracial Black respondents have experienced homelessness at some point in their lives.
- 20% experienced homelessness in the past year because of being transgender.
- In the past year, 28% of multiracial Black respondents did not see a doctor when they needed to because of fear of being mistreated as a transgender person, and 41% did not see a doctor when needed because they could not afford it.
- 33% of those who saw a health care provider in the past year reported having at least one negative experience related to being transgender, such as being refused treatment, being verbally harassed, being physically or sexually assaulted, or having to teach the provider about transgender people in order to get appropriate care.

Endnotes

1. James, S. E., Herman, J. L., Rankin, S., Keisling, M., Mottet, L., & Anafi, M. (2016). *The Report of the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey*. Washington, DC: National Center for Transgender Equality. Available at: www.USTransSurvey.org.

2. Throughout this report, respondents who identified as Black or African American are referred to as Black. For additional information about terminology and conventions used throughout the report, see the *Guide to Report and Terminology* chapter in the full USTS report. The findings for Black respondents reflect the experiences of respondents who identified as Black alone and do not include the experiences of those who identified as multiracial and Black. Some findings for respondents who identified as multiracial and Black are included on page 20 of this report.

3. The number of Black respondents (n=796) is an unweighted value. All reported percentages are weighted to allow for comparison to the U.S. population when appropriate. Findings related to income, unemployment, and poverty are weighted differently than other reported percentages. For more information on the weighting procedures used to report 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey data, see the full survey report. Findings from statistical tests are not included in this report.

4. "Non-binary" is a term often used to describe people whose gender is not exclusively male or female, including those who identify with a gender other than male or female, as more than one gender, or as no gender.

5. Due to a low sample size, it was often not possible to include the experiences of crossdressers in gender-based comparisons in this report.

6. U.S. Census Bureau. (2015). *Annual Estimates of the Resident Population: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2015*. Available at: https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=PEP_2015_ PEPANNRES&src=pt.

7. U.S. Census Bureau. (2015). *2015 American Survey 1-Year Estimates: Disability Characteristics*. Available at: http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_15_1YR_ S1810&prodType=table. Calculations were completed by the research team.

8. U.S. Census Bureau. (2015). *2015 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates: Sex by Marital Status for the Population 15 Years and Over (Black or African American Alone).* Available at: https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_15_1YR_B12002B&prodType=table. Findings include those who are currently married and living with a spouse and those who are married but separated, based on the ACS definitions. See the full report for more information. The percentage of Black people in the U.S. who are currently married and who have never been married includes those who are 15 years of age and older, in contrast to the USTS sample, which includes respondents who are 18 and older. Therefore, the comparison to USTS Black respondents should be interpreted with caution.

9. Black respondents' experiences of rejection also included being asked to meet with faith leaders to stop them from being transgender and being asked by community leaders or members to seek medical help to stop them from being transgender.

10. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2015). *The Employment Situation—August 2015*. Available at: http://www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/empsit_09042015.pdf; Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2015). *The Employment Situation—September 2015*. Available at: http://www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/empsit_10022015.pdf.

11. The unemployment rate by race and ethnicity among adults in the U.S. population was calculated by the research team using CPS data available via the CPS Table Creator (http://www.census.gov/cps/data/cpstablecreator.html). CPS Table Creator data utilizes data from the March 2015 Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement, in which the overall U.S. unemployment rate was 5.5%. See the full USTS report for more information about unemployment rate calculations and interpretation.

12. "Living in poverty" means living at or near the poverty line. The research team calculated the USTS poverty measure using the official poverty measure, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau. USTS respondents were designated as living in poverty if their total family income fell under 125% of the official U.S. poverty line. See the full report for more information about this calculation.

13. Proctor, B. D., Semega, J. L., & Kollar, M. A. (2016). *Income and Poverty in the United States: 2015*. (p. 13). Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau. Available at: https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2016/demo/p60-256.pdf.

14. Proctor, B. D., Semega, J. L., & Kollar, M. A. (2016). *Income and Poverty in the United States: 2015*. (p. 53). Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau. Available at: https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2016/demo/p60-256.pdf.

15. U.S. Census Bureau. (2015). *American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates: Veteran Status*. Available at: https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_15_1YR_S2101&prodType=table.

16. U.S. Census Bureau (2014). *Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement*. Available at: https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/income-poverty/cps-pinc/pinc-01.2014.html.

17. For each form of housing discrimination or instability listed, respondents could select "does not apply to me" if the housing situation could not have happened to them in the past year. For example, those who did not attempt to rent or buy a home in the past year could not have been denied a home or apartment and were instructed to select "does not apply to me" for that question. The results for each form of discrimination or instability do not include those who answered "does not apply to me."

18. Intimate partner violence involving coercive control included acts of intimidation, emotional and financial harm, and physical harm to others who were important to respondents.

19. Kaeble, D. & Glaze, L. (2016). *Correctional Populations in the United States, 2015*. (p. 4). Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics. Available at: https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/cpus15.pdf.

20. Beck, A. J., Berzofsky, M., Caspar, R., & Krebs, C. (2013). *Sexual Victimization in Prisons and Jails Reported by Inmates 2011–12*. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics. Available at: https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/svpjri1112.pdf. Rates of physical assault by facility staff were not available. See full report for more information about this comparison.

21. U.S. Census Bureau. (2015). *2015 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates: Health Insurance Coverage Status by Age (Black or African American Alone).* Available at: https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_16_1YR_B27001B&prodType=table.

22. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2015). *BRFSS Prevalence & Trends Data*. Available at: http://www.cdc.gov/brfss/brfssprevalence.

23. Centers for Disease Prevention and Control. (2016). *2015 National Health Interview Survey: Sample Adult File*. Available at: https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhis/nhis_2015_data_release.htm.

24. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2015). Diagnoses of HIV infections in the United States and dependent areas, 2015: Table 20b. *HIV Surveillance Report* (vol. 27). Available at: https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/pdf/library/reports/surveillance/cdc-hiv-surveillance-report-2015-vol-27.pdf. The HIV Surveillance Report provides data for those who were living with a diagnosed HIV infection in the U.S. population in 2014. The U.S. population data includes those who are 15 years of age and older and does not include the rate for adults above the age of 18 alone, so it was not possible to exactly match the USTS sample with the U.S. population data. See the full report for more information on use of the U.S. population figure.

25. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2015). Diagnoses of HIV infections in the United States and dependent areas, 2015: Table 20b. *HIV Surveillance Report* (vol. 27). Available at: https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/pdf/library/reports/surveillance/cdc-hiv-surveillance-report-2015-vol-27.pdf. See also note 24.

26. The Kessler Psychological Distress Scale, or K6, uses a series of questions to assess psychological distress based on how often in the past 30 days respondents felt so sad that nothing could cheer them up, nervous, restless or fidgety, hopeless, that everything was an effort, or worthless. See the National Health Interview Survey for additional information about the K6 mental health screening instrument and measure of serious psychological distress in adults (available at: http://www.healthindicators.gov/Indicators/Serious-psychological-distress-adults-percent_50055/Profile).

27. Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. (2016). *Results from the 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables*. Table 8.87B. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Available at: https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/NSDUH-DetTabs-2015/NSDUH-DetTabs-2015/NSDUH-DetTabs-2015.pdf.

28. Kessler, R. C., Borges, G., & Walters, E. E. (1999). Prevalence of and risk factors for lifetime suicide attempts in the National Comorbidity Survey. *Archives of General Psychiatry*, 56(7), 617–626.

29. Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. (2016). *Results from the 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables*. Table 8.73B. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Available at: https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/NSDUH-DetTabs-2015/NSDUH-DetTabs-2015/NSDUH-DetTabs-2015.pdf.

2015 U.S. Transgender Survey:
Report on the Experiences of Black Respondents

by: Sandy E. James, Carter Brown, and Isaiah Wilson

September 2017

The full report and Executive Summary of the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey are available at www.USTransSurvey.org.

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Recommended Citation: James, S. E., Brown, C., & Wilson, I. (2017). *2015 U.S. Transgender Survey: Report on the Experiences of Black Respondents*. Washington, DC and Dallas, TX: National Center for Transgender Equality, Black Trans Advocacy, & National Black Justice Coalition.

Rev. October 2017