Results and Lessons from a National Survey of Over 6,300 Latinx, Black and African American, and Asian and Pacific Islander Youth

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Introduction

HRC and UConn's 2017 Youth Survey

- Captures experiences of LGBTQ youth 13-17 in:
  - School
  - Family settings
  - Community settings
  - Personal settings

- N= 17,112 (completed at least 10%)
  - Over 2,900 Latinx respondents
  - Over 1,600 Black and African American respondents
  - Over 1,200 Asian and Pacific Islander respondents
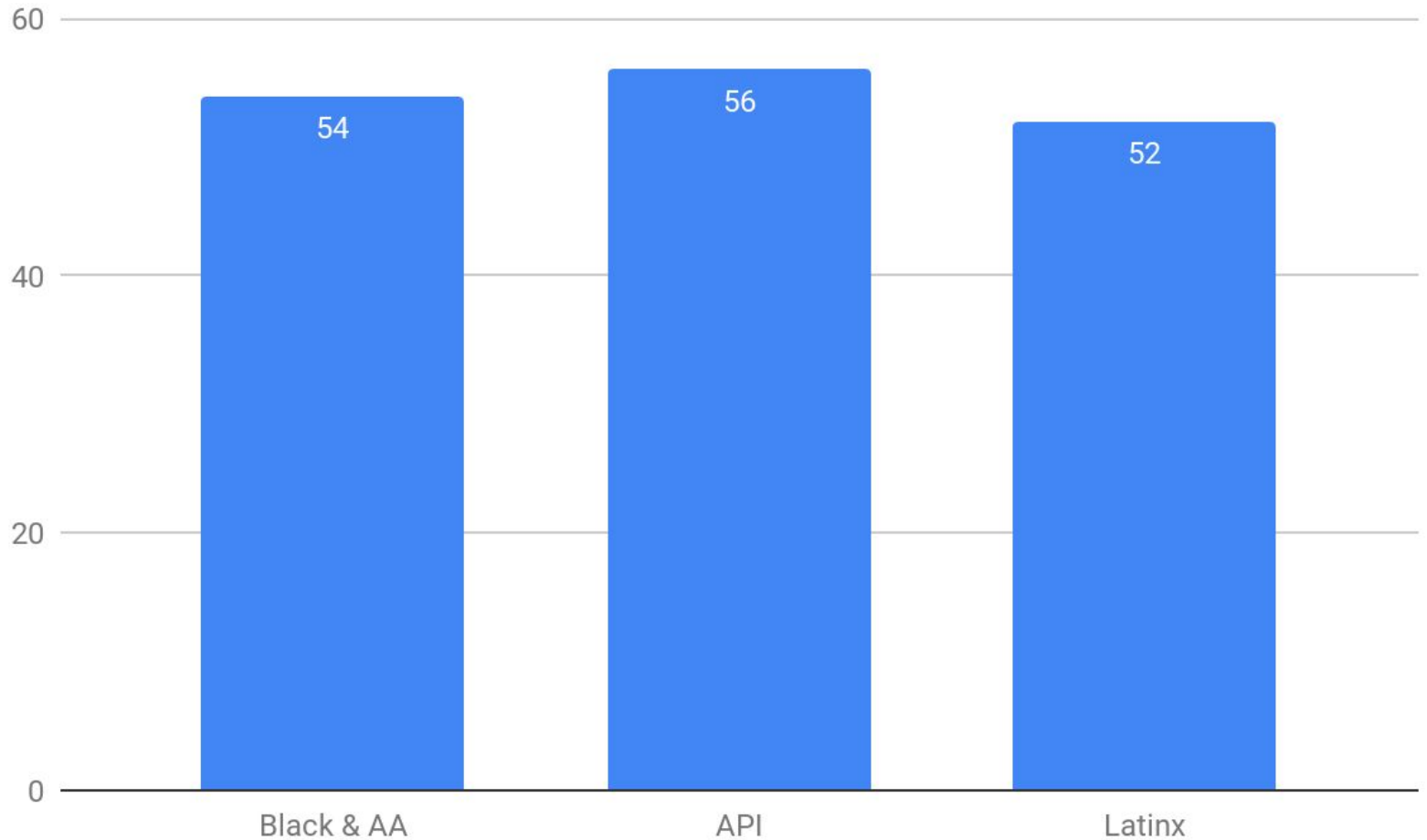
Research Considerations

- No new data

- Be wary of comparison

- Consider resilience effect in social sciences

Family Environments

Family Acceptance

- Positive outcomes related to family acceptance:
    - Greater self-esteem
    - Higher degree of resilience
    - More health-related behaviors
    - Lower prevalence of substance use
    - Lowered rates of depression and anxiety
    - More frequent achievement-seeking behavior

- **More than three-quarters** of youth in our sample rate coming out as LGBTQ to their parents as extremely stressful.

Percent of youth taunted or mocked for being LGBTQ by family members

Family Acceptance

26% of Black LGBTQ youth have families that are involved in the LGBTQ community

20% of Latinx LGBTQ youth have family that are involved in the LGBTQ community

17% of API LGBTQ youth have family that are involved in the LGBTQ community

Family of choice

- 34% of respondents are not out as LGBTQ to any of their family members

- 8% of respondents are not out as LGBTQ to any of their non-LGBTQ friends

- 5% of respondents are not out as LGBTQ to any of their LGBTQ friends

Quotes from respondents

"I first came out when I was 11 to my parents and was surprised by the negative reaction they had. Being 11 and not having researched much, I kind of sprang both my gender identity and sexuality on them at the same time and was, I think, kind of shot down with things like "We won't support [your identity] at this age" or "You're too young to know" or "We won't financially support any medical procedures" despite the fact that I had not even brought the latter up. I understand that it was a lot to process, but I feel like they could have been more positive and supportive"

-Story shared by an API survey respondent

Quotes from respondents

"I never actually came out to my parents, they just asked me. When I said yes, I do like girls, my mom said something I will never forget: 'I just need you to know that what you're doing is not right.' It tore me."

-Story shared by a Latinx survey respondent

"I have discussed my sexuality a bit with my family but it is not quite a comfortable topic yet. Me coming out was met with mixed reviews; they were accepting, but they also still feel like it's just hormonal changes or something."

-Story shared by a Black & AA survey respondent

Quotes from respondents

"When I told my mom, she said: 'Honey I want you to come home and bring the love of your life with you. I don't see why you have to announce this. Just bring a girl over and I'll treat her with all my love as well. What's wrong with falling in love?' So it's normal. Not a praise or mistake, it's normal. "

-*Story shared by a Latinx survey respondent*
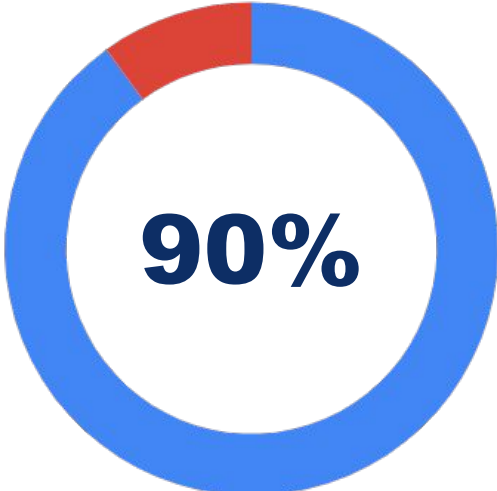
Mental Health and Stress

Mental Health and Stress

- Persistent stressors for LGBTQ youth, youth of color

- Lack of research that highlights experience of LGBTQ youth of color; often LGBTQ research **or** race/ethnicity/national origin research

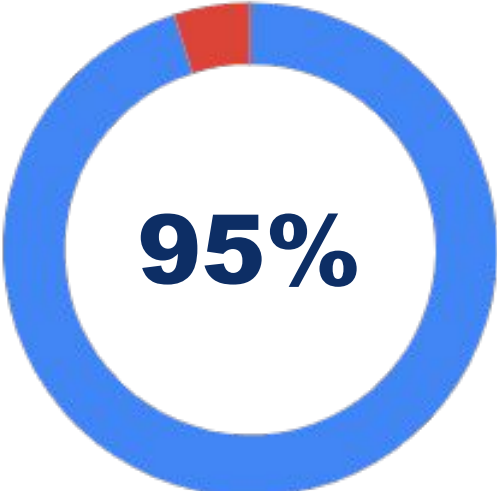- Toll of experiencing both racism and anti-LGBTQ attitudes

Mental Health

- 79% of respondents usually felt down or depressed

- 73% of respondents usually felt hopeless
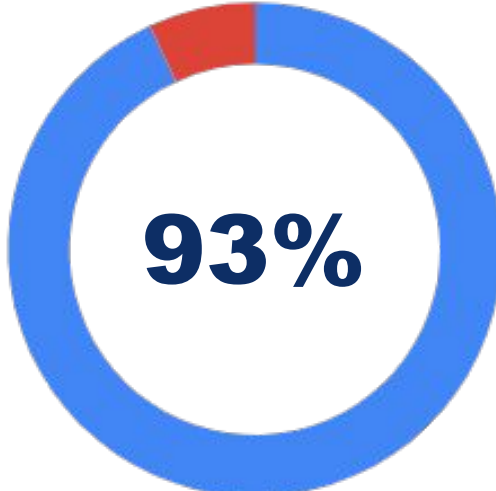
- 82% of respondents usually felt anxious

What % of respondents report that they have trouble falling asleep at night?

90%

of Black & AA LGBTQ youth

95%

of Latinx LGBTQ youth

93%

of API LGBTQ youth

Mental Health Support

- Only 35% of respondents have received counseling in the past year.

- Only 9% of respondents would be very comfortable discussing their LGBTQ identity with a counselor

Pride

- 91% of respondents say that they are proud to be LGBTQ

Quotes from respondents

"I don't like to disappoint people... as horrible as it seems, I feel like if I told other people I questioned my sexuality, they would be disappointed in me or see me lesser than I was before."

-Story shared by an API survey respondent

"The oppression that I'm stepping into makes me afraid and unwilling to talk to people so sometimes advisors need to have a lot of nuance when addressing an LGBTQ person instead of asking targeted questions they won't want to answer."

-Story shared by a Black & AA survey respondent

School Experiences

School Experiences

- Majority of time spent in school
  - School experiences have large impact on well-being

- School environments can be hostile and even discriminatory, especially impacting LGBTQ youth of color

- Few states protect LGBTQ students from discrimination in schools on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity

School Experiences

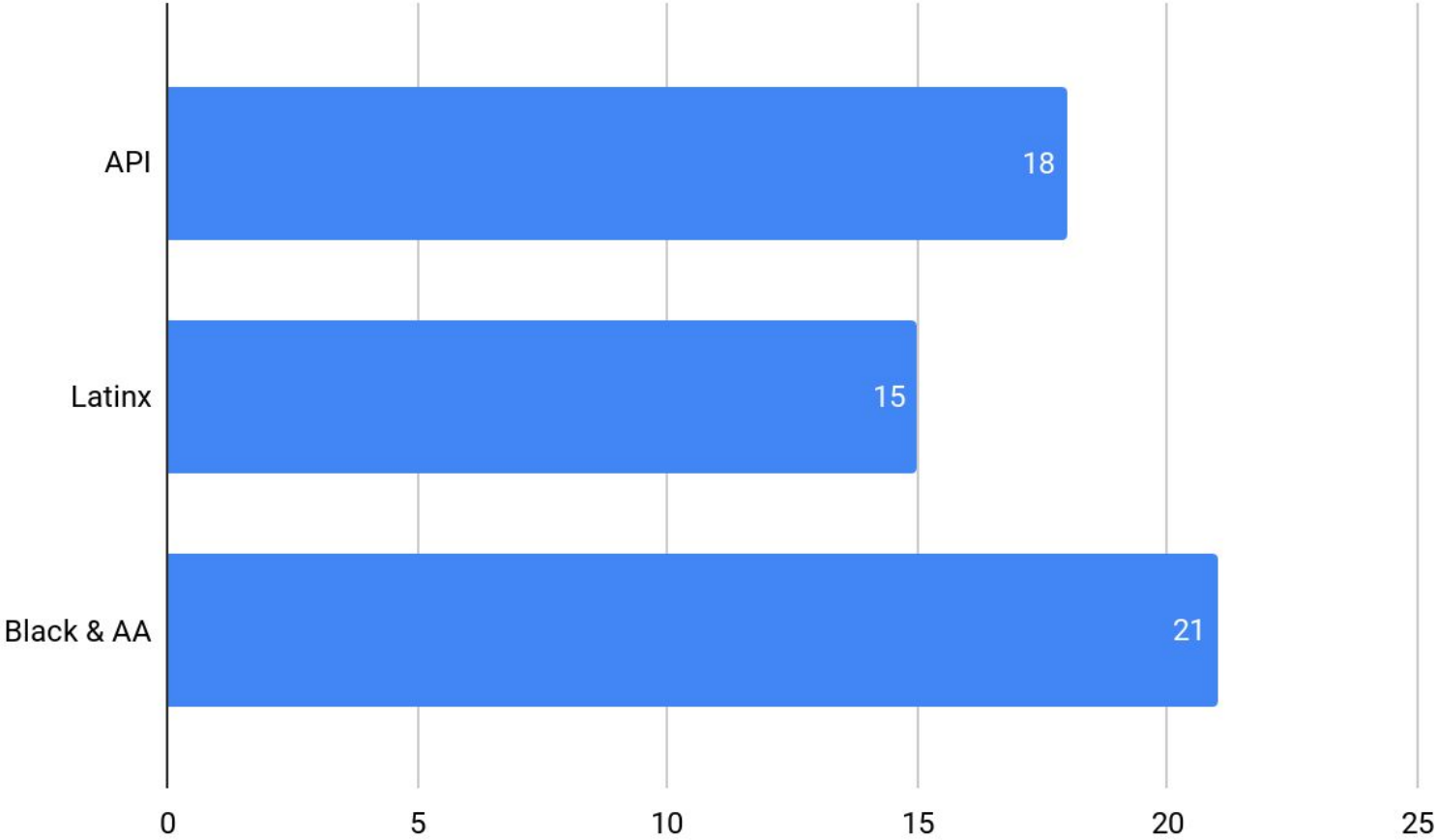**32%** of Black & AA LGBTQ youth always feel safe in the classroom

Latinx LGBTQ youth who always feel safe in the classroom **28%**

33% of API LGBTQ youth always feel safe in the classroom

What % of respondents reported hearing positive messages about being LGBTQ in school?

School support

- 60% of respondents have a GSA or similar support club at their school

- Only 31% of respondents are definitely able to be themselves in school

- 43% of respondents aren't out as LGBTQ to any teachers at their school

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Quotes from respondents

"Teachers usually just say that everyone is allowed to love whoever they want but never get into deeper details such as to prevent bullying, etc."

-Story shared by an API survey respondent

"If my school showed a more accepting attitude towards other cultures, or different groups of people, I'd feel comfortable. It'd be nice to see a LGBTQ flag, or a sign that says "Safe Place" to know that what I say won't go to anywhere else, nor will I feel like I'm being judged."

-Story shared by a Black & AA survey respondent

Quotes from respondents

"This school year, I am working together with a group of my friends to make a LGBTQ club that will provide a safe place for our classmates from all grade levels and allow them to freely express who they really are. There are a total of six of us, including our sponsor, and I am grateful to say that I am part of that community. I am one of the few who is out and proud in our school. I am so excited to be able to help and to see all those who identify as LGBTQ who are still hiding in the shadows finally come out and shine."
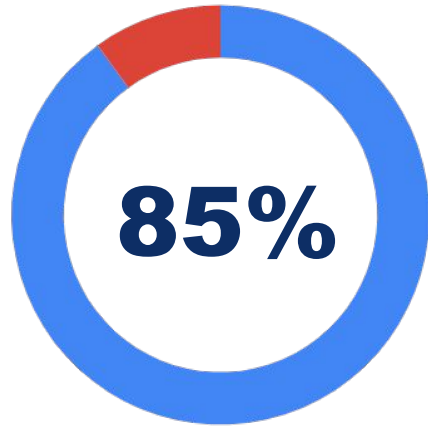
-Story shared by a Latinx survey respondent
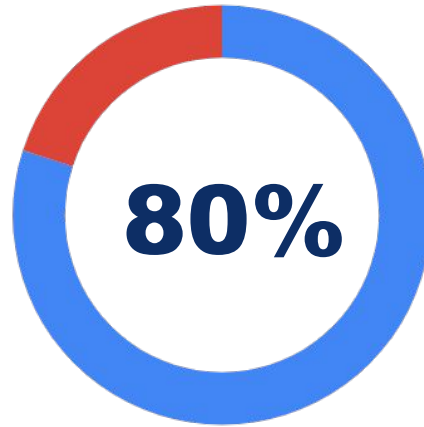
Racism-related stress

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- Compounded pervasive historical discrimination and stigma around multiple parts of identity

- Burden of education and microaggressions in both racial/ethnic community and in LGBTQ community

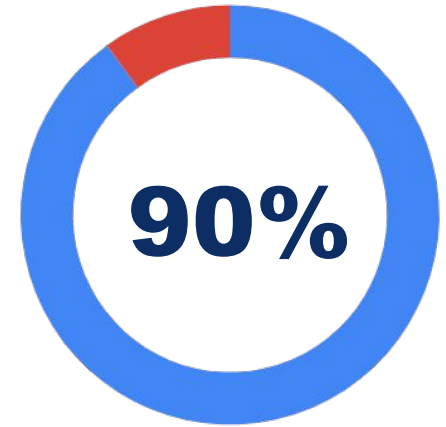- Representation importance in many places that lack sense of community and understanding

Racism-related stress

85%

of API LGBTQ youth experienced racial discrimination

80%

of Latinx LGBTQ youth experienced racial discrimination

90%

of Black & AA LGBTQ youth have experienced racial discrimination

Impact

- **17%** of API LGBTQ youth think that API people are regarded positively in the US

- **7%** of Latinx LGBTQ youth think that Latinx people are regarded positively in the US

- **5%** of Black & AA LGBTQ youth think that Black people are regarded positively in the US

Prevalence

- About **25%** of API, Black & AA, and Latinx LGBTQ youth think about racism every day

- 3 out of 4 API, Black & AA, and Latinx LGBTQ youth experienced varied microaggressions -- ranging from having to educate white LGBTQ people about race issues to being misunderstood by people within their own racial or ethnic community

Quotes from respondents

"All the teachers at my school are white and a lot of mental issues I have stem from racism, something that a white teacher could never understand or relate to."

   -Story shared by an API survey respondent

"Being in a predominantly white school who is set in their ways, talking about being LGBTQ (something that is not necessarily praised) is very awkward and uncomfortable."

   -Story shared by a Black & AA survey respondent

"Being in such a conservative state, talking about the LGBTQ+ community, while also being a minority, isn't the easiest thing to do."
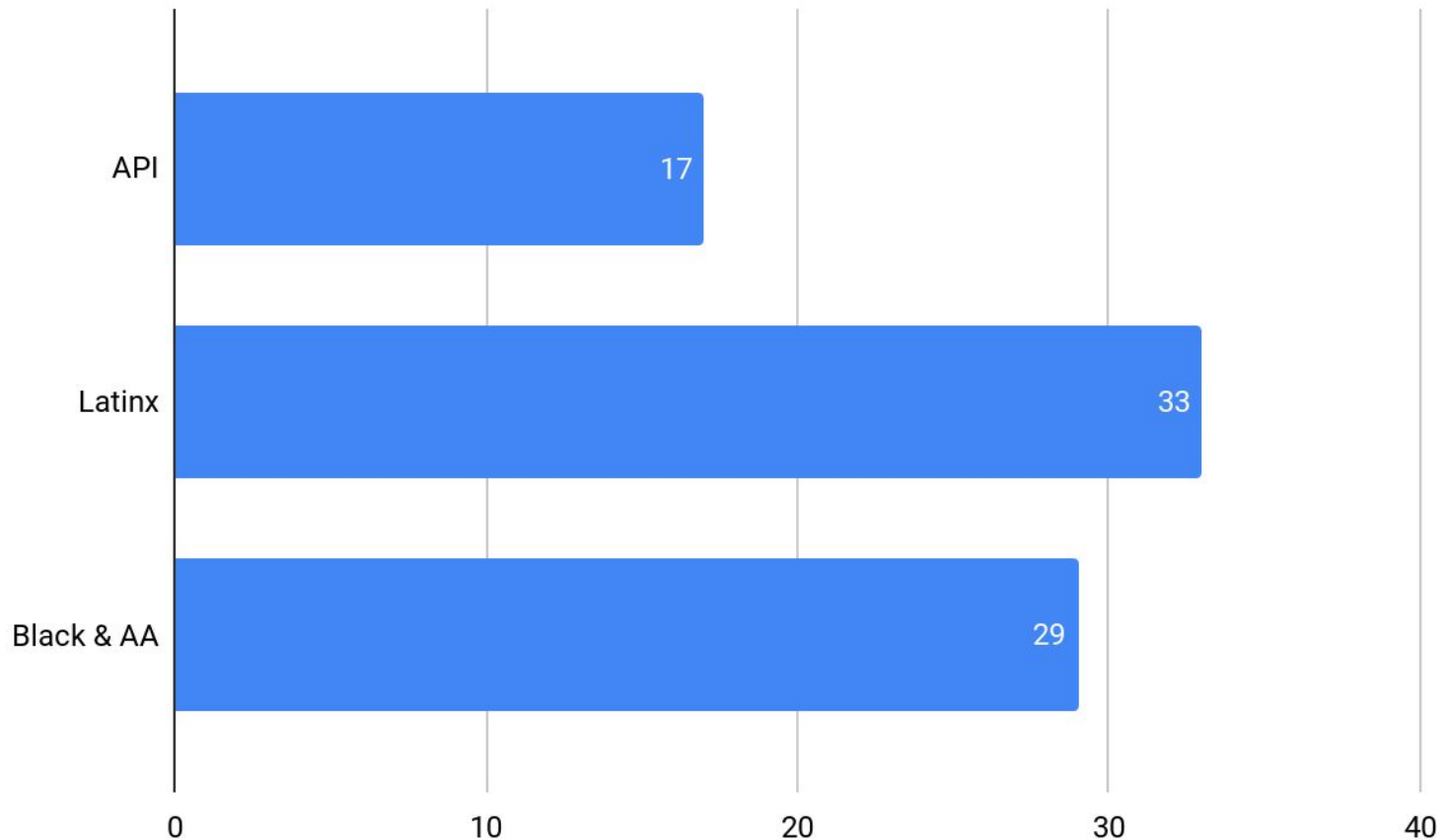
   -Story shared by a Latinx survey respondent

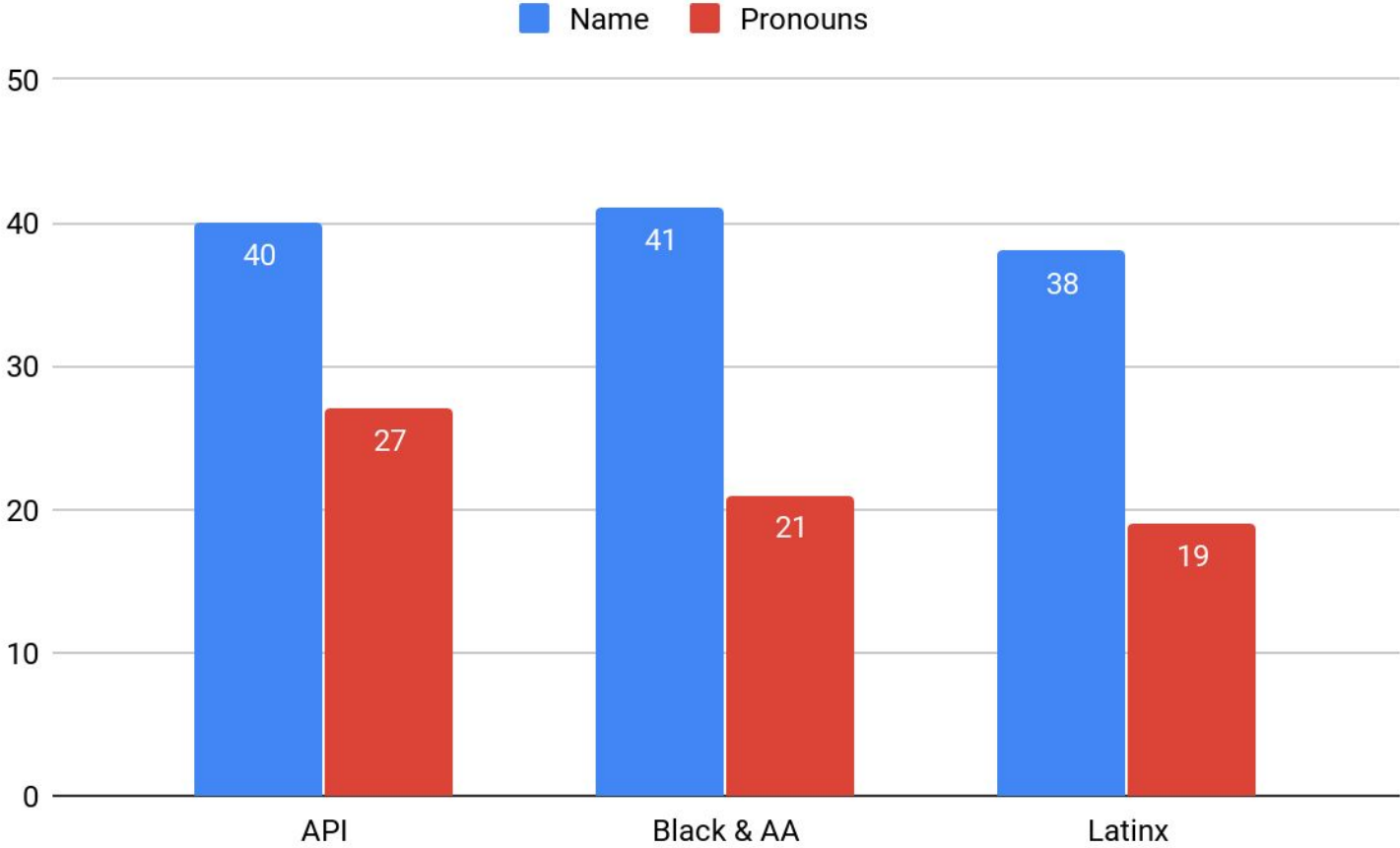# Supporting Transgender and Gender-Expansive Youth of Color

Supporting Transgender and Gender-Expansive Youth of Color

- 29% of respondents are transgender or gender-expansive

- Policies, practices, and attitudes can create harmful or hostile environments for TGE youth in school

What % of transgender respondents are able to dress in a way that completely reflects their gender identity?

What % of transgender respondents are always called by their true name/pronouns?

Quotes from respondents

"My counselor has already met with me telling me not to transition while in high school and threatening to kick me out of school for being transgender."

-*Story shared by a Black & AA survey respondent*

General Themes

- Importance of finding community
  - Finding either LGBTQ community or racial/ethnic community, challenge in finding one that is both

- Experience in school has large impact

- Frustration with having to educate self and then educate adults around them

Data Questions

Panel Discussion

Mark Lee, he/him

Grace Zweng, she/her

CeeCee Alfaro, she/her

Christian Randle, he/him