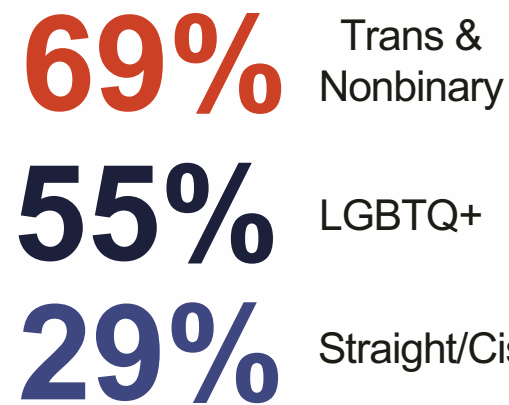


The Effects of COVID-19 on 2SLGBTQIA+ and Minority Mental Health

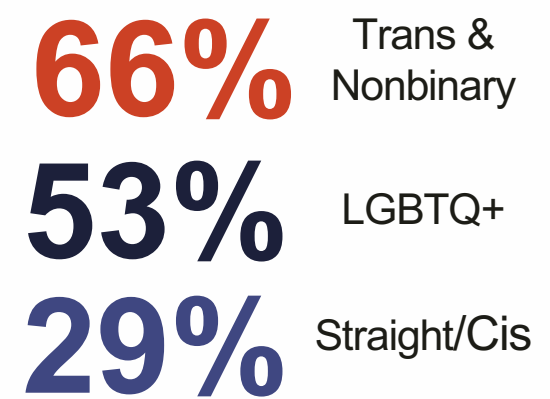
While youth across all indicators of gender and ethnicity reported feeling “stressed,” “tired,” “nervous,” and “lonely” during the COVID-19 pandemic in the U.S., black and white members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community have been disproportionately affected, with 2SLGBTQIA+ youth additionally reporting difficulty accessing mental health care (The Trevor Project, 2020).

Straight cis/youth are 1.75x more likely than LGBTQ youth and 2.4 more likely than trans and nonbinary youth to exhibit no signs of either anxiety or depression (3). Unlike their straight/cis peers, 2SLGBTQIA+ youth face a unique set of challenges in addition to the anxiety and loneliness felt by all surveyed youth during the pandemic. These challenges include stressful living situations and inaccurate health information on COVID-19 from close family members (4). In this poll, 2SLGBTQIA+ youth were asked “over the last two weeks, how often have you been bothered by the following problems?”

SYMPTOMS OF ANXIETY



SYMPTOMS OF DEPRESSION

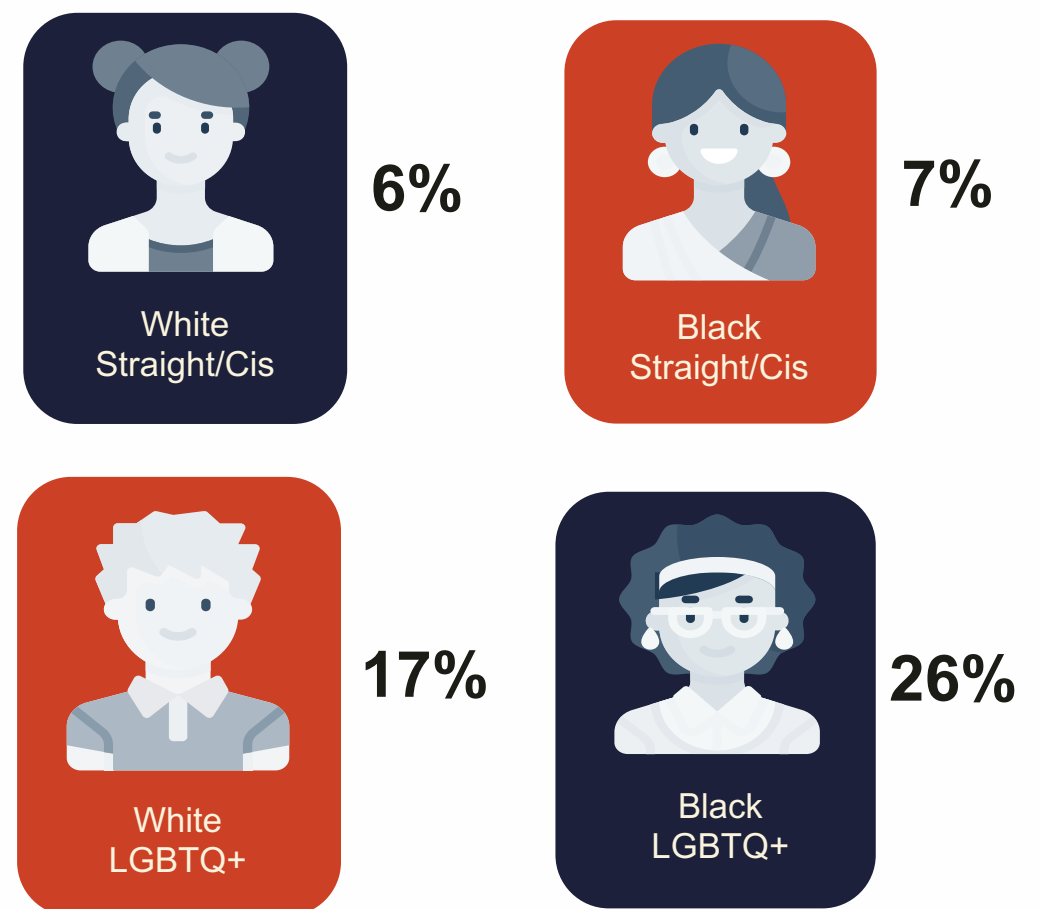


FEEL DIFFICULTY ACCESSING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES






LGBTQ, trans, and nonbinary youth are more likely to face difficulty accessing mental health care during the COVID-19 pandemic in comparison to their straight/cis peers. 2SLGBTQIA+ have specialized mental health needs including coping mechanisms for unsupportive households, and strategies in dealing with homophobic discrimination. There are only around 200 2SLGBTQIA+ health clinics in the U.S. (2).

NOT RECEIVING ENOUGH MENTAL HEALTH CARE



POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

-  **Greater funding** and development of 2SLGBTQIA+ mental health clinics
-  Transition to **specialized online mental health services** for 2SLGBTQIA+ youth in particular
-  Increase 2SLGBTQIA+ **affirming activities** in academic, professional, and community spaces

1. Bauer, S. (2020). Coronavirus pandemic strains LGBTQ health clinics. *NBC News*. Retrieved from <https://www.nbcnews.com/feature/nbc-out/coronavirus-pandemic-strains-lgbtq-health-clinics-n1200341>. 2. Bauer, S. (2020). Majority of LGBTQ youth experiencing anxiety, depression amid Covid, poll finds. *NBC News*. Retrieved from <https://www.nbcnews.com/feature/nbc-out/majority-lgbtq-youth-experiencing-anxiety-depression-amid-covid-poll-finds-n1242111>. 3. The Trevor Project (2020). *How Covid-19 is impacting LGBTQ youth: Polling presentation*. Retrieved from https://www.thetrevorproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Trevor-Poll_COVID19.pdf. 4. Salerno, J. et al (2020). “Sexual and gender minority stress amid the COVID-19 pandemic: Implications for LGBTQ young persons’ mental health and well-being.” *Public Health Reports*, 135(6), 721-727. 5. Salerno, J. et al (2020). “LGBTQ populations: Psychologically vulnerable communities in the Covid-19 pandemic.” *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, 12(S1), S239-S242. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/tra0000837>