



Injustice at Every Turn:

A look at multiracial respondents in the National Transgender Discrimination Survey

In 2008, the National Center for Transgender Equality (NCTE) and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force launched a nationwide study of anti-transgender discrimination in the United States. Over a six-month period, 6,456 transgender and gender non-conforming people answered a seventy-question survey, reporting on their experiences of discrimination and abuse at home, in school, in the public sphere, and in the workplace, as well as with landlords, doctors, and public officials, including judges and police. The survey results revealed that transgender and gender non-conforming people face pervasive discrimination in virtually all aspects of their lives.

One of the most important findings of the study was that the combination of anti-transgender bias with structural and interpersonal racism meant that transgender and gender non-conforming people of color, including those who are multiracial, experience particularly devastating levels of discrimination. In response, the Trans People of Color Coalition (TPOCC) has partnered with the National Center for Transgender Equality (NCTE) and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force to offer this report on discrimination against multiracial transgender and gender non-conforming people.

The information in this report is based on the experiences of the 736 respondents who described themselves on the survey as more than one race. This includes 433 who checked the box for white; 91 Black; 108 Latino or Latina; 75 Asian American, South Asian, Southeast Asian, or Pacific Islander; 39 Arab or Middle Eastern; and 254 American Indian or Alaskan Native.

When this report uses the phrase “due to bias,” it refers to questions on the survey that asked about respondents’

experiences of anti-transgender bias, but the results also show the complex interactions of that bias with race and socioeconomic status.

Key Findings

- Discrimination was pervasive for all respondents who took the National Transgender Discrimination Survey, yet the combination of anti-transgender bias and persistent structural and interpersonal acts of racism was especially devastating for multiracial transgender people and other people of color.
- Multiracial transgender and gender non-conforming people often live in extreme poverty, with 23% reporting a household income of less than \$10,000/year. This is higher than the rate for transgender people of all races (15%), the general U.S. multiracial population rate (15%), and almost six times the general U.S. population rate (4%).ⁱ
- Over half (54%) of multiracial respondents reported having attempted suicide, compared to 41% of all study respondents and 1.6% of the general U.S. population.
- Thirty-seven percent (37%) of multiracial respondents reported experiencing significant family acceptance, and over half (61%) reported that their relationships with family slowly improved after coming out as transgender. Those respondents who were accepted by their families were much less likely to face discrimination.



Education

88% of multiracial respondents who attended school expressing a transgender identity or gender non-conformity faced harassment.

Multiracial respondents who attended school expressing a transgender identity or gender non-conformity reported overwhelming rates of **harassment (85%), physical assault (45%), and sexual assault (18%) at school**; harassment was so severe that it led 22% to leave school.

Respondents who were harassed and abused by



teachers in K-12 settings showed **dramatically worse health and other outcomes** compared to those who did not experience such abuse. Peer harassment and abuse also had highly damaging effects.



Employment Discrimination

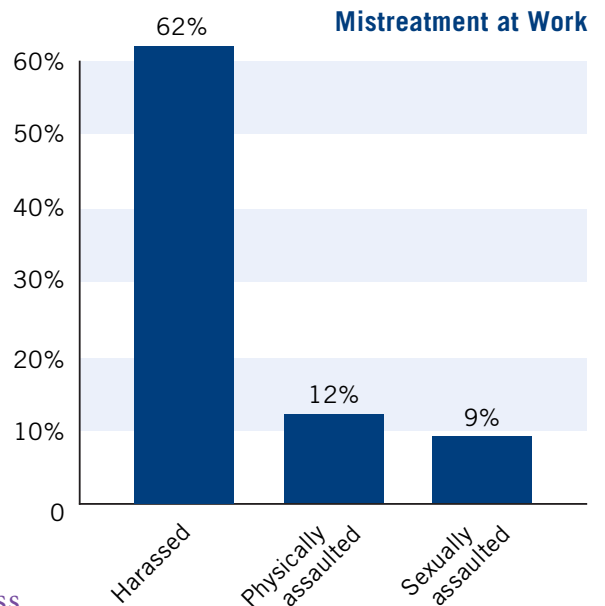
Multiracial transgender and gender non-conforming people had a **very high unemployment rate** at 18%, higher than the rate of the overall sample (14%) and **over twice the rate of the general U.S. population (7%)** at the time the survey was fielded.ⁱⁱ

Thirty-six percent (36%) of multiracial respondents **lost a job** due to bias, and 56% were **denied a job** because of their transgender identity or gender non-conformity.

Sixty-two percent (62%) of multiracial respondents were **harassed**, 12% were **physically assaulted**, and 9% were **sexually assaulted at work**.

Thirty percent (30%) of multiracial respondents reported being forced to participate in the

underground economy for income, including **sex work and drug sales**.



Housing Discrimination and Homelessness

Multiracial transgender and gender non-conforming people endured various forms of direct housing discrimination; 32% reported being **refused a home or apartment** due to bias, and 16% reported being **evicted** due to bias.

Multiracial respondents were **much less likely to own homes** than the general population with a rate of 21%. This compares to 32% of transgender people of all races in the study and 67% of the general U.S. population.ⁱⁱⁱ Also, for comparison, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development reports that “minority home ownership” nationwide is 49.7%.^{iv}

Thirty-two (32%) of multiracial respondents reported experiencing **homelessness** at some point in their lives, over four times the rate of the general U.S. population (7.4%).^v Of those who had experienced homelessness, many tried to access shelters but were either **denied access** altogether (23%) or experienced harassment (55%), physical assault (27%), or sexual assault (25%) at the shelter.

32% of multiracial transgender and non-conforming people reported having been refused a home or apartment due to bias.



Health Care

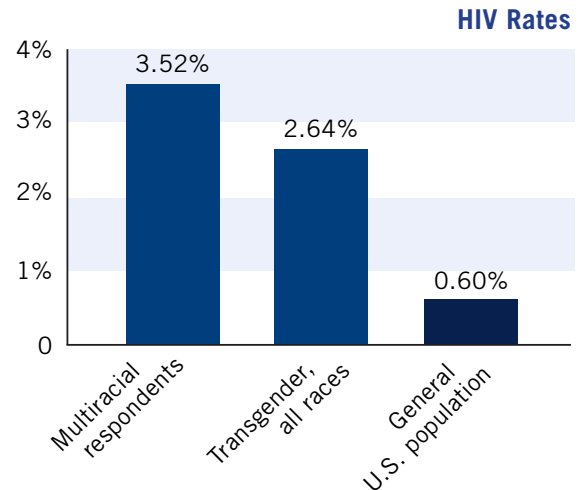
Health outcomes for multiracial transgender and gender non-conforming people show the appalling effects of **social and economic marginalization**, including much **higher rates of HIV infection, smoking, drug and alcohol use and suicide attempts** compared to the general population.

Twenty-seven percent (27%) of multiracial respondents reported being **refused medical care due to bias**.

Fifty-four percent (54%) of multiracial respondents reported having **attempted suicide**, compared to 41% of all study respondents and 1.6% of the general U.S. population.

Multiracial respondents were **affected by HIV in devastating numbers**; 3.52% reported being HIV positive and an additional 9% reported that

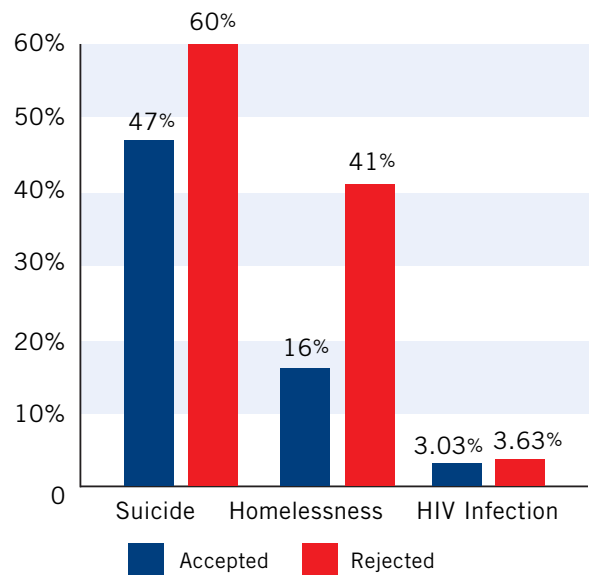
they did not know their status.^{vi} This compares to rates of being HIV positive of 2.64% for transgender respondents of all races, and 0.60% for the general U.S. population.



Family Life

Thirty-seven percent (37%) of multiracial respondents reported experiencing **significant family acceptance**, and over half (61%) reported that their relationships with family slowly improved after coming out as transgender. Those respondents who were accepted by their families were much less likely to face discrimination.

Family Acceptance and Negative Outcomes



Abuse by Police and in Prison

Thirty-six percent (36%) of multiracial transgender people who had interacted with the police reported harassment, 10% reported physical assault, and 6% reported sexual assault. Over half (55%) **reported discomfort seeking police assistance**.

Physical and sexual abuse in jail or prison is a serious problem. Seventeen percent (17%) of multiracial respondents who had been to jail or prison reported being physically assaulted and 16% reported being sexually assaulted while in custody.



Methodology

The National Transgender Discrimination Survey was developed and fielded by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force and the National Center for Transgender Equality. Links to the on-line NTDS survey instrument were distributed through a network of more than 900 trans-serving and trans-led advocacy and service organizations, support groups, list-serves and online social networks. Nearly 2,000 paper surveys were distributed to hard-to-reach transgender and gender non-conforming populations. A total of 6,456 completed questionnaires were included in the final data set, 736 of which were multiracial.

A Note on Language: At the Task Force and NCTE, we always strive to use inclusive language that reflects the current conversation about how we self-identify. The challenges around language can be particularly pronounced for those of us who are multiracial ourselves when no survey's boxes seem to fully capture our lived reality. The language in this report reflects the language we used in the original survey questionnaire.

For the full report and detailed recommendations, please visit our websites at www.TheTaskForce.org or www.TransEquality.org (see: http://www.thetaskforce.org/reports_and_research/ntds or <http://transequality.org/Resources/index.html>). More information about the survey is available at www.EndTransDiscrimination.org.

Notes

- i. U.S. Census Bureau, "Current Population Survey," Annual Social and Economic Supplement (Washington, DC: GPO, 2008).
- ii. Seven percent (7%) was the rounded weighted average unemployment rate for the general population during the six months the survey was in the field, based on which month questionnaires were completed. See seasonally unadjusted monthly unemployment rates for September 2008 through February 2009. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, "The Employment Situation: September 2008," (2008): http://www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/empst_10032008.htm.
- iii. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, "U.S. Housing Market Conditions, 2nd Quarter, 2009" (Washington, DC: GPO, 2009): http://www.huduser.org/portal/periodicals/ushmc/summer09/nat_data.pdf.
- iv. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, "U.S. Housing Market Conditions, 2nd Quarter, 2009" (Washington, DC: GPO, 2009): http://www.huduser.org/portal/periodicals/ushmc/summer09/nat_data.pdf. HUD did not define "minority" in this report.
- v. United States Conference of Mayors, "Hunger and Homelessness Survey" (2006): 48, <http://usmayors.org/hungersurvey/2006/report06.pdf>.
- vi. Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, "2010: A Global View of HIV Infection" (2010): http://www.unaids.org/documents/20101123_2010_HIV_Prevalence_Map_em.pdf.



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