

LGBTQ+ Community Health in Alameda County

November 25, 2024 | Special Series on Community Health

George Ayala, PsyD

Deputy Director

Alameda County Public Health Department

Julia Raifman

Director of Community Assessment, Planning, and Evaluation (CAPE)

Alameda County Public Health Department

Kimi Watkins-Tartt

Director

Alameda County Public Health Department



Alameda County Health

Framework for Health Committee Special Series

Identify trends and shifts in demographics and health needs for Alameda County residents

Focused discussion on needs by sexual orientation, gender identity, race/ethnicity, and age

Highlight innovation and partnerships with community-based organizations



Today's Focus: The LGBTQ+ Community

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH DISPARITIES

- There are disparities in poverty, housing, and other structural drivers of health among LGBTQ people.
- LGBTQ+ experience bullying and violence at much higher rates than non-LGBTQ+ populations.
- Data is incomplete by SOGI, but health and mental health statuses are worse among LGBTQ+ people.

COMMUNITY STRENGTHS AND WHAT IS WORKING

- Alameda County continues to make partnerships with community-based organizations in its effort to address the unique needs of LGBTQ+ people across programs.
- There is an increased focus on SOGI data collection in various stages of health planning and policy.



Historical & Demographic Overview

Key milestones and events affecting LGBTQ+
Communities in Alameda County



**RED
RIBBONS
WON'T
SAVE
LIVES**

ACT UP



Historical Structural Drivers

Discriminatory policies, practices, and attitudes throughout the 20th century created structural barriers for LGBTQ+ people that contribute to health disparities.

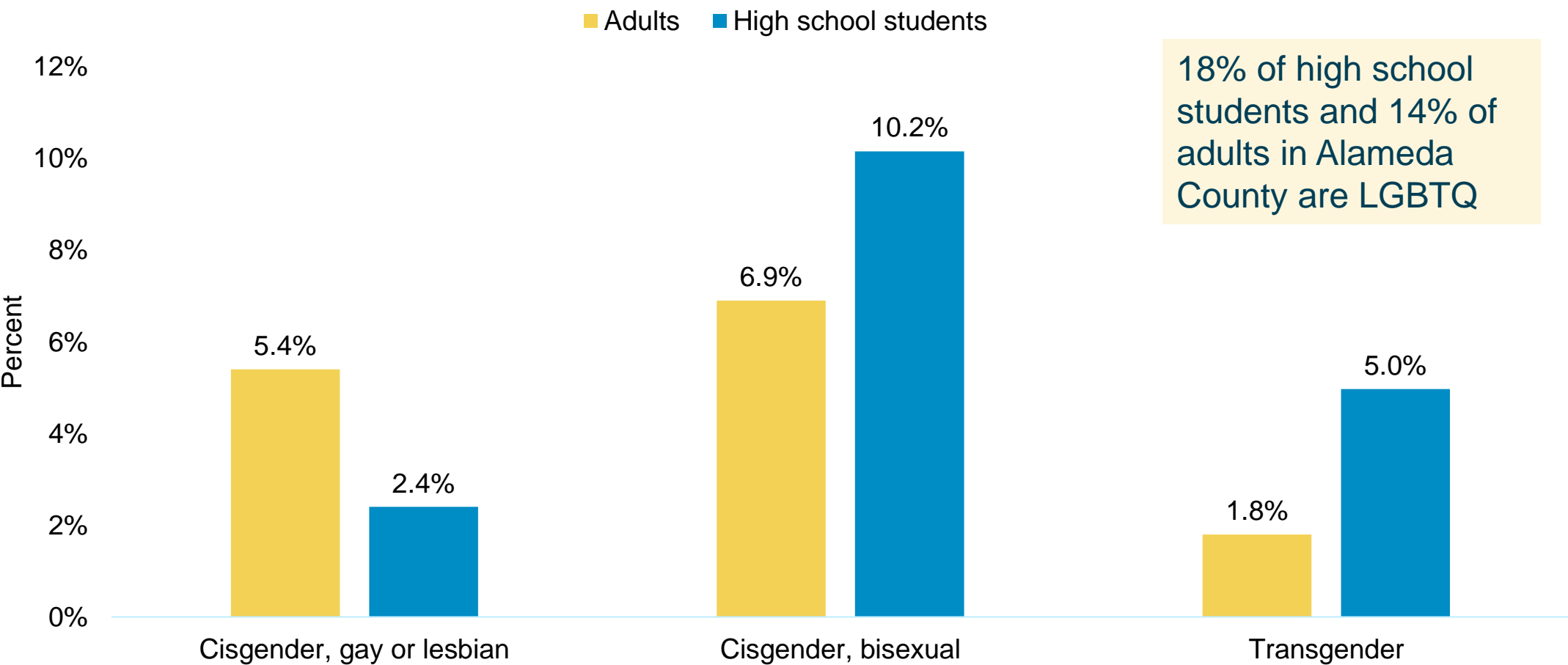
- **Homophobia/Transphobia:** LGBTQ people face social stigma and systemic discrimination based on biases which contributed to exclusion, discrimination, and violence. This stigma would influence the creation of discriminatory policies that targeted LGBTQ+ communities.
- **Healthcare access:** LGBTQ+ people faced discrimination from healthcare providers and insurance companies. Providers often had little knowledge on LGBTQ+ health.
- **Employment:** Discriminatory and biased employment practices and lack of workplace protection throughout the 20th century left LGBTQ+ people vulnerable to workplace harassment and termination.
- **Education:** LGBTQ+ students faced harassment and violence due to a lack of protection and widespread acceptance of LGBTQ+ discrimination. This created barriers for students to receive a quality education.

Defining LGBTQ+ Terms

- **LGBTQ+:** Acronym that stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, plus.
- **Sexual Orientation:** A person's inherent emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction to another person. (i.e., Gay, bisexual, lesbian, etc.)
- **Gender Identity:** A person's internal sense of their gender (Non-binary, cisgender, male, female, gender nonconforming)
- **Transgender:** An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or expression is different than the sex they were assigned at birth
- **SOGI:** Acronym that stands for Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity. This term is mainly used in reference to data collection.
- **Queer:** An umbrella term often used to express a spectrum of identities and orientations and is often used as a catch-all to include people who don't identify as exclusively straight and/or who have non-binary or gender-expansive identities.
- **Gender Expression:** External appearance of a person's gender identity, usually expressed through their appearance, dress, and behavior, typically associated with being either masculine or feminine.
- **MSM:** Men who have sex with men. Term usually used to reference behavior when discussing data or diseases and is not considered an identity.

Sexual orientation and gender identity

Sexual orientation and gender identity among Alameda County residents



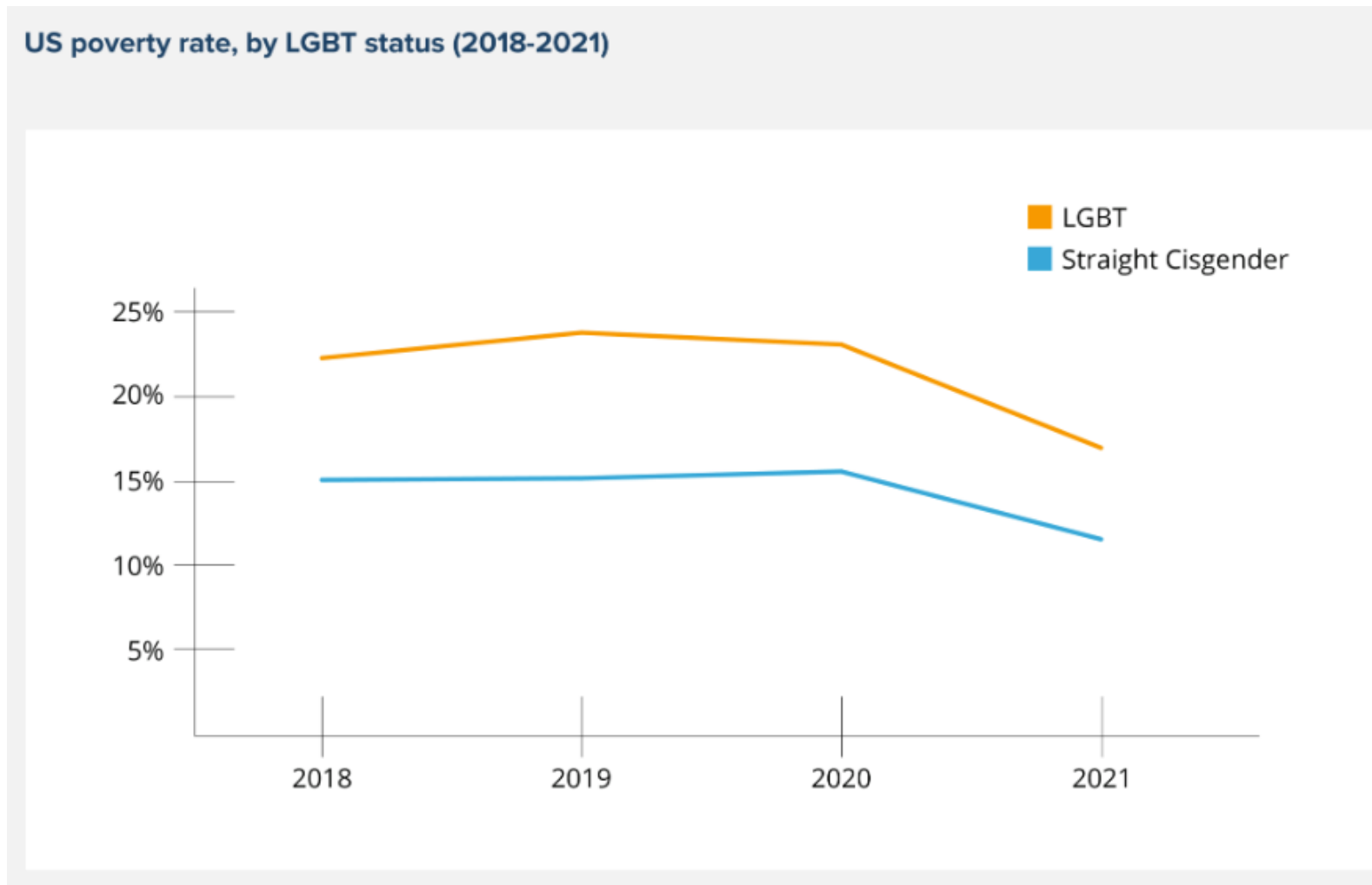
18% of high school students and 14% of adults in Alameda County are LGBTQ

Source: California Health Interview Survey, 2021-2022; California Healthy Kids Survey, 2021-2023

Social Determinants of Health

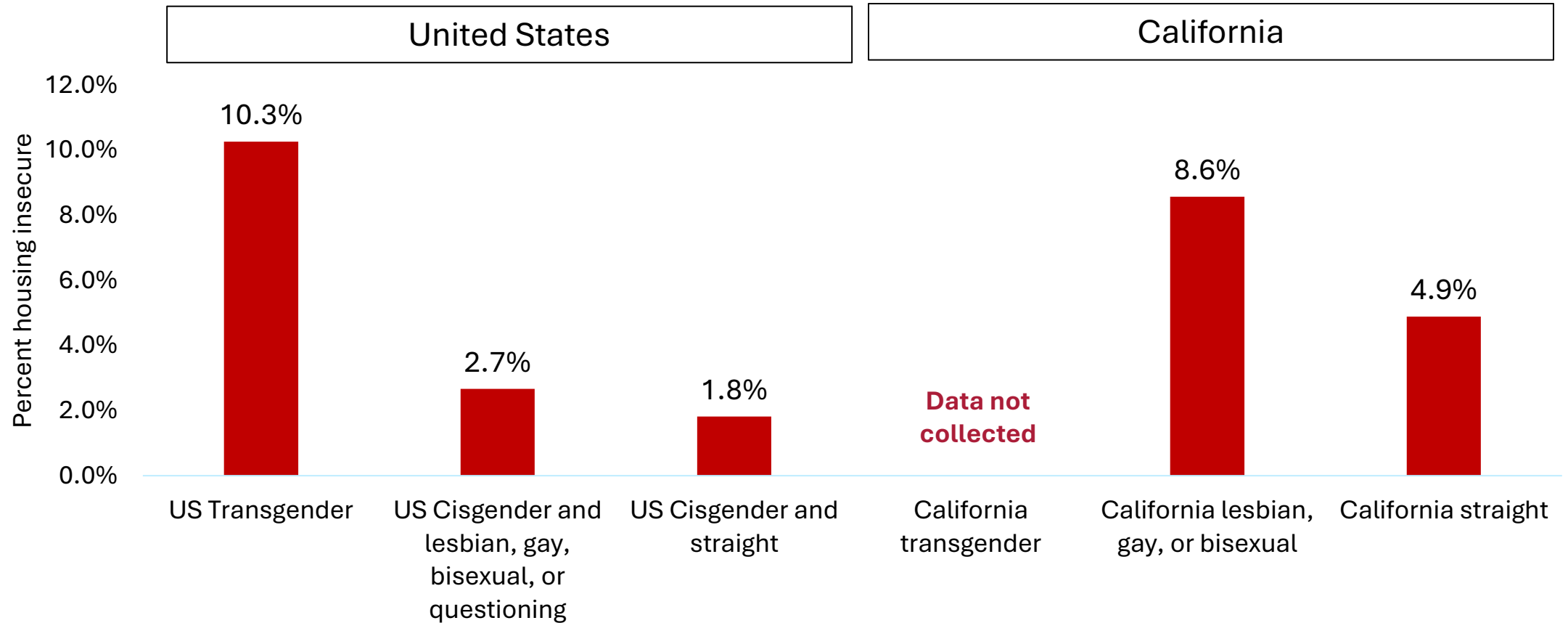
Poverty, Housing, Access to Services

Inequities in poverty



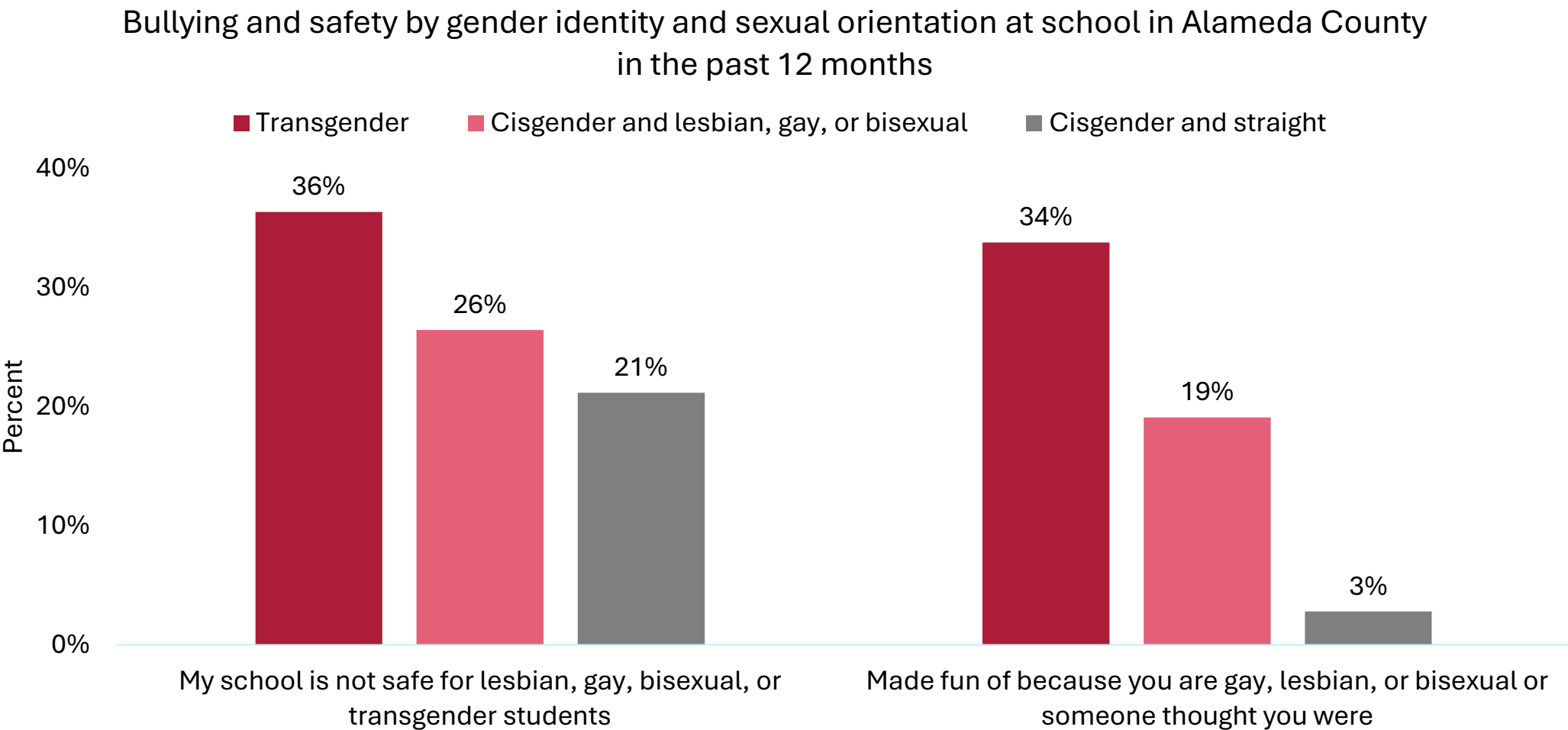
Inequities in housing

High school student housing insecurity by gender identity and sexual orientation



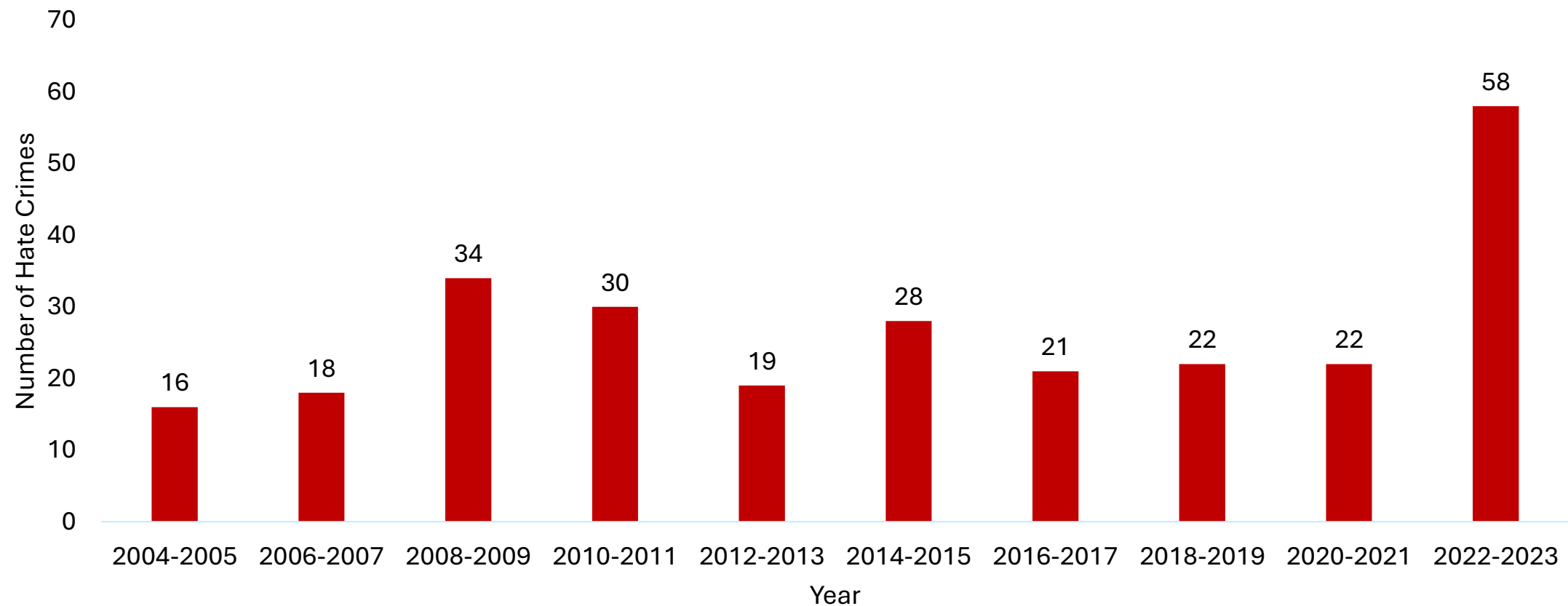
Source: CDC, 2023 High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data

School safety and bullying for LGBTQ+ youth



Rise in anti-LGBTQ hate crimes

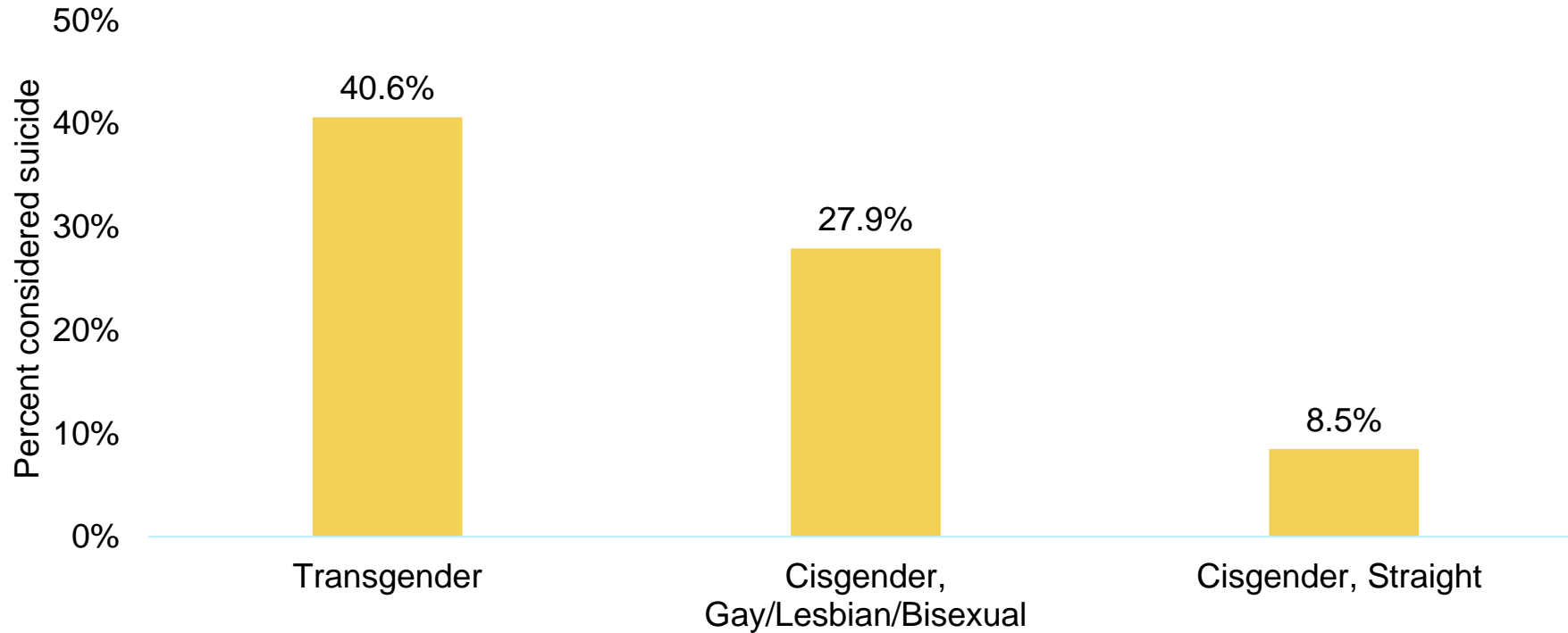
Anti-LGBT Hate Crimes Reported by Law Enforcement,
Alameda County, 2004-2023



Health Outcomes

Inequities in youth suicidal ideation

Percent of High School Students Who Reported Seriously Considering Suicide in Past 12 Months by Sexual Orientation, Alameda County



Data source: California Healthy Kids Survey, 2021 to 2023

Citations: Hatzenbuehler, Mark L., et al. "Protective school climates and reduced risk for suicide ideation in sexual minority youths." *American journal of public health* 104.2 (2014): 279-286.

Lee, Wilson Y., et al. "State-level anti-transgender laws increase past-year suicide attempts among transgender and non-binary young people in the USA." *Nature Human Behaviour* (2024): 1-11.

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/lgbtq-youth-calls-to-mental-health-crisis-line-spiked-by-700-percent-after-election-day>

Inequities in serious psychological distress

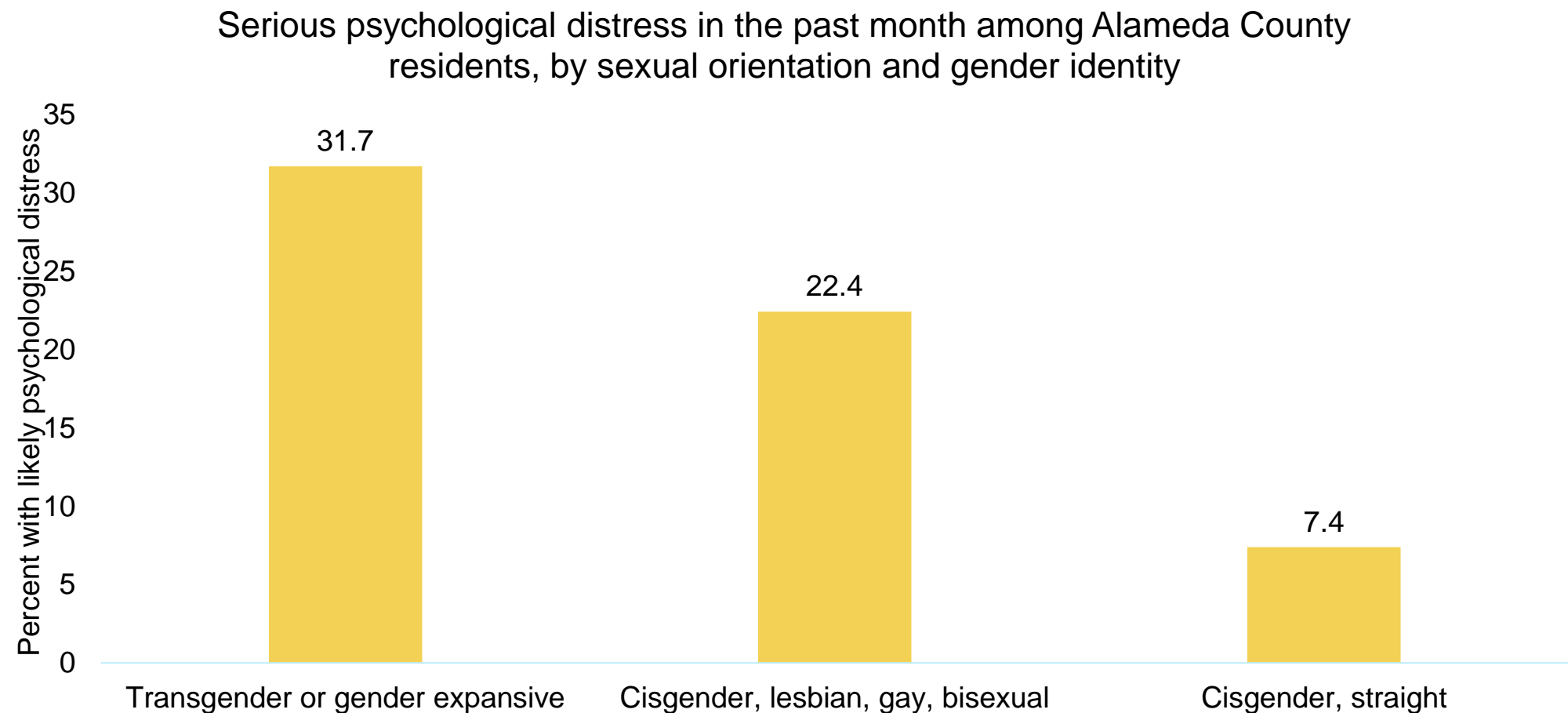


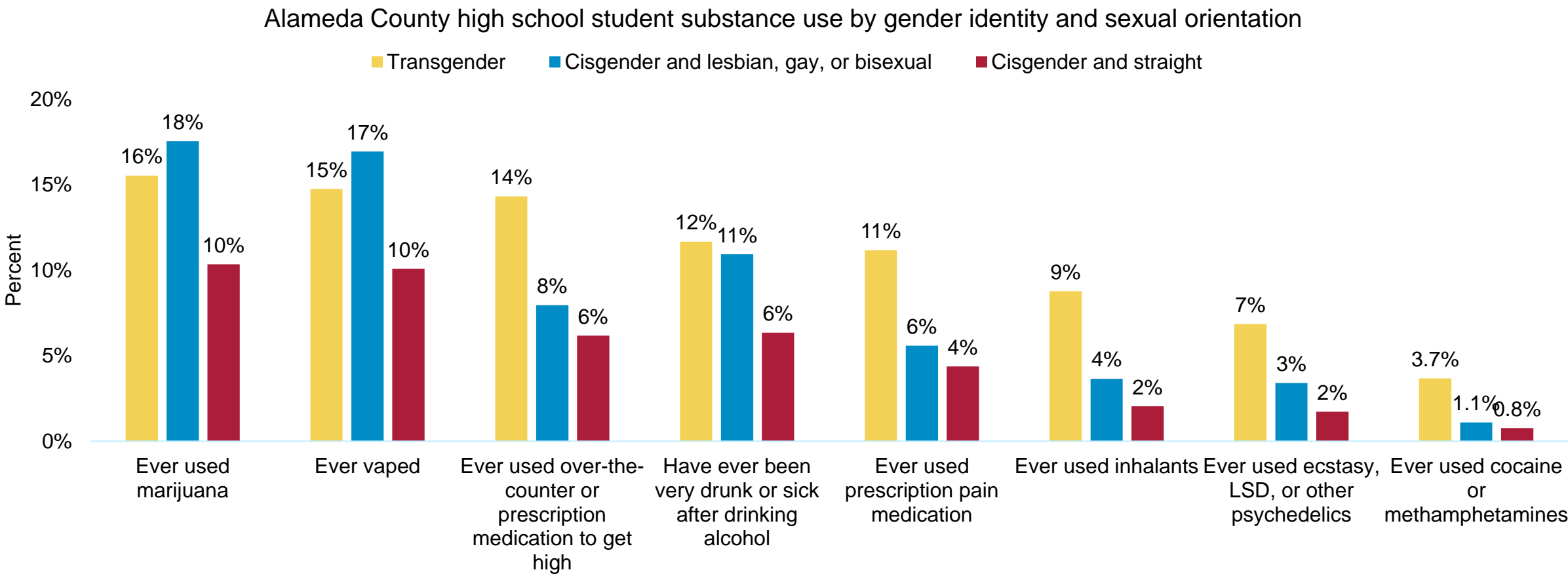
Figure Source: Community Health Interview Survey, 2020 to 2022

Citations:

Hatzenbuehler, Mark L., et al. "Effect of same-sex marriage laws on health care use and expenditures in sexual minority men: A quasi-natural experiment." *American journal of public health* 102.2 (2012): 285-291.

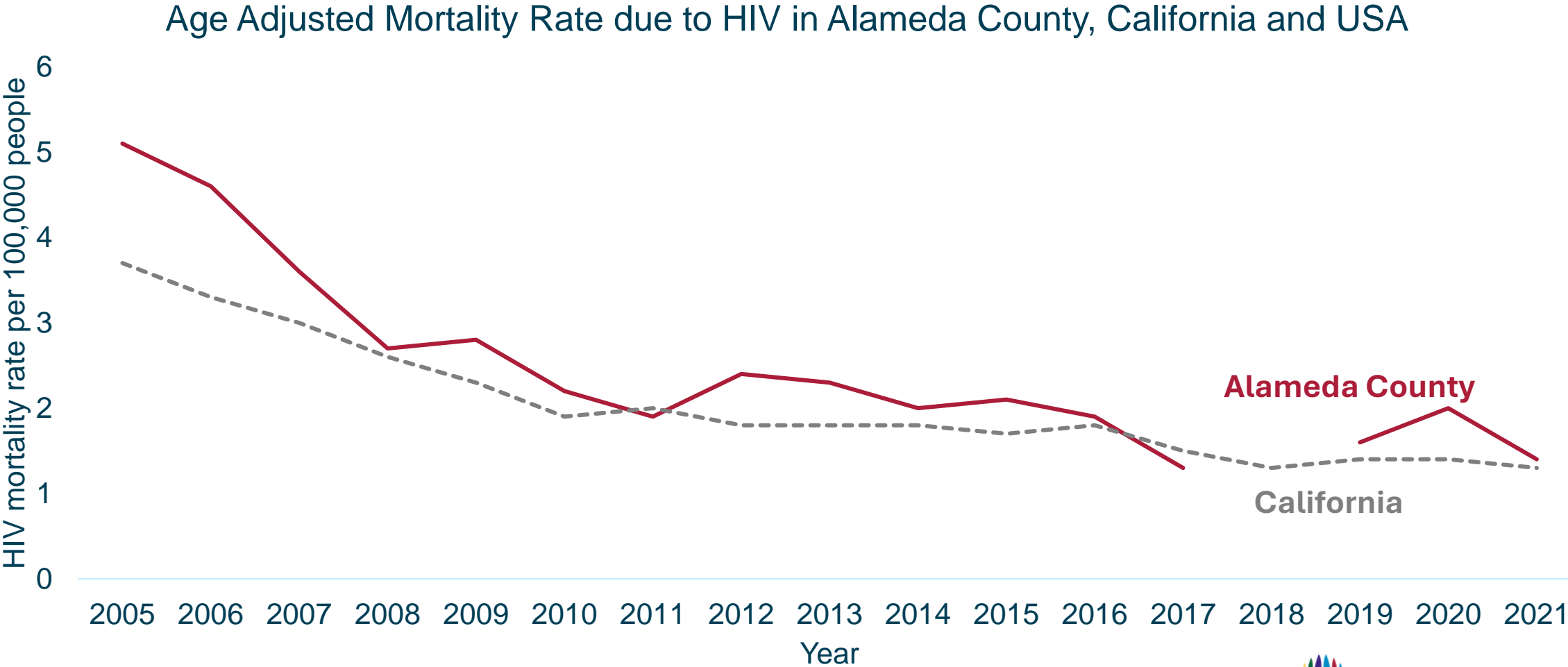
Raifman, Julia, et al. "Association of state laws permitting denial of services to same-sex couples with mental distress in sexual minority adults: A difference-in-difference-in-differences analysis." *JAMA psychiatry* 75.7 (2018): 671-677.

Inequities in substance use



Sources: California Healthy Kids Survey, 2021 to 2023

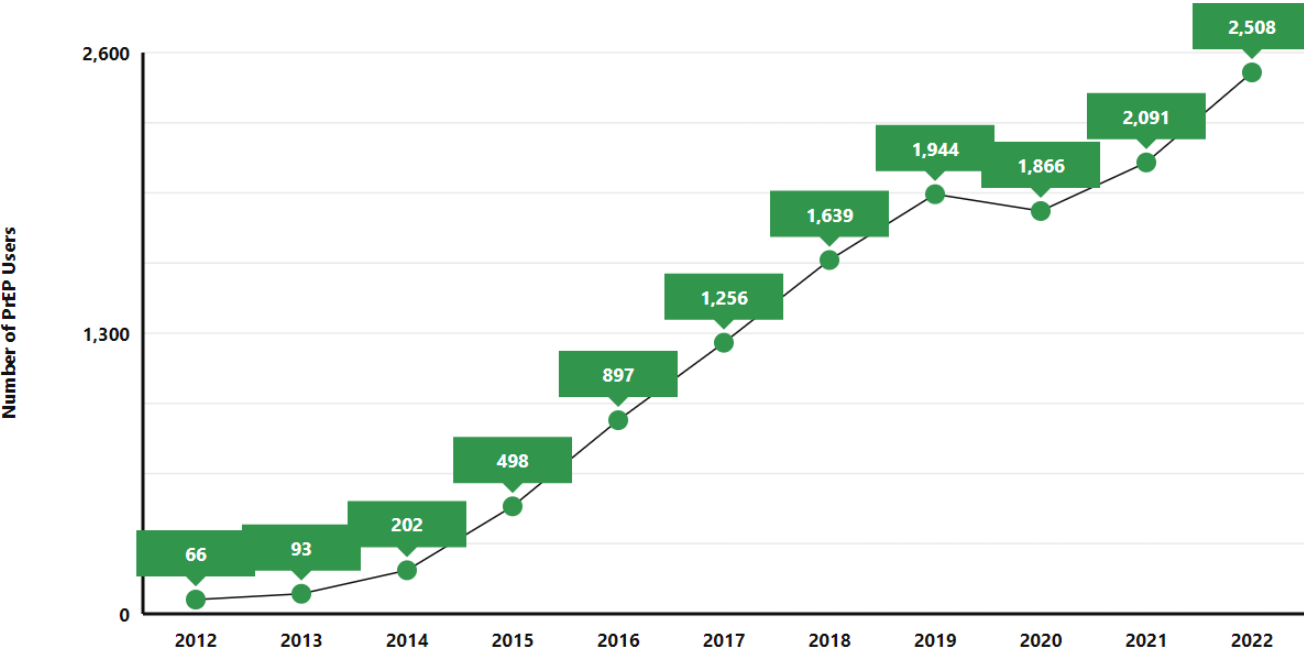
HIV mortality in Alameda County, California, and the US



Sources: CAPE analyses of vital statistics data

PrEP use in Alameda County

Number of PrEP Users, 2012-2022



RACE/ETHNICITY

Black

14.6% of new cases

4.6%
of PrEP users

Hispanic/Latino

57.0%

28.6%

White

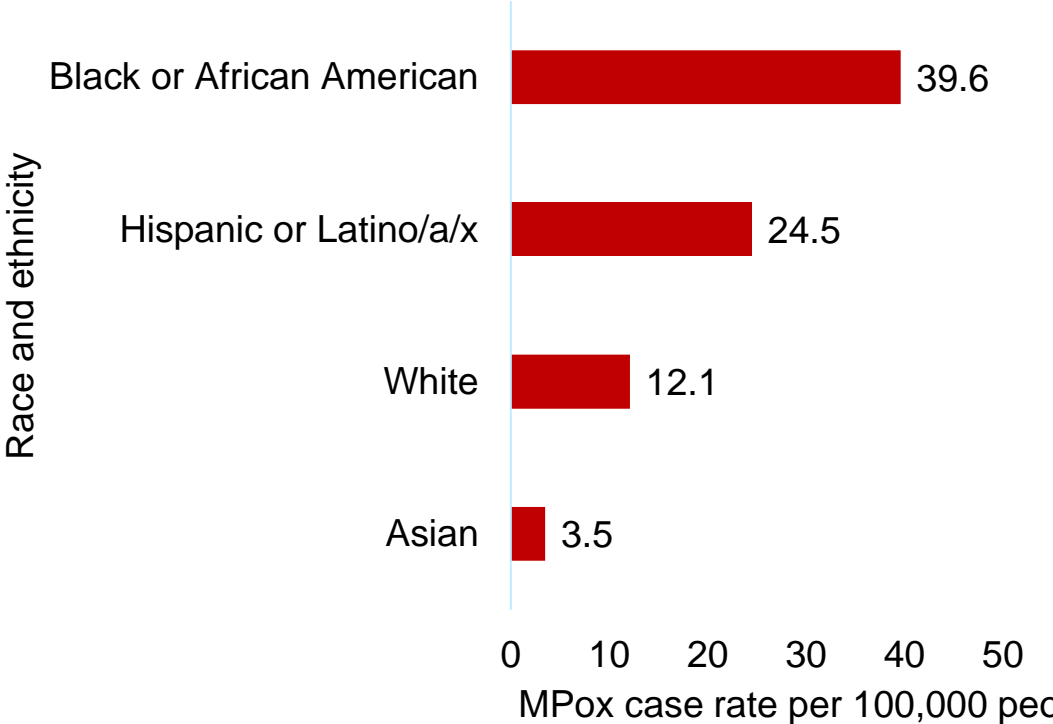
20.6%

57.0%

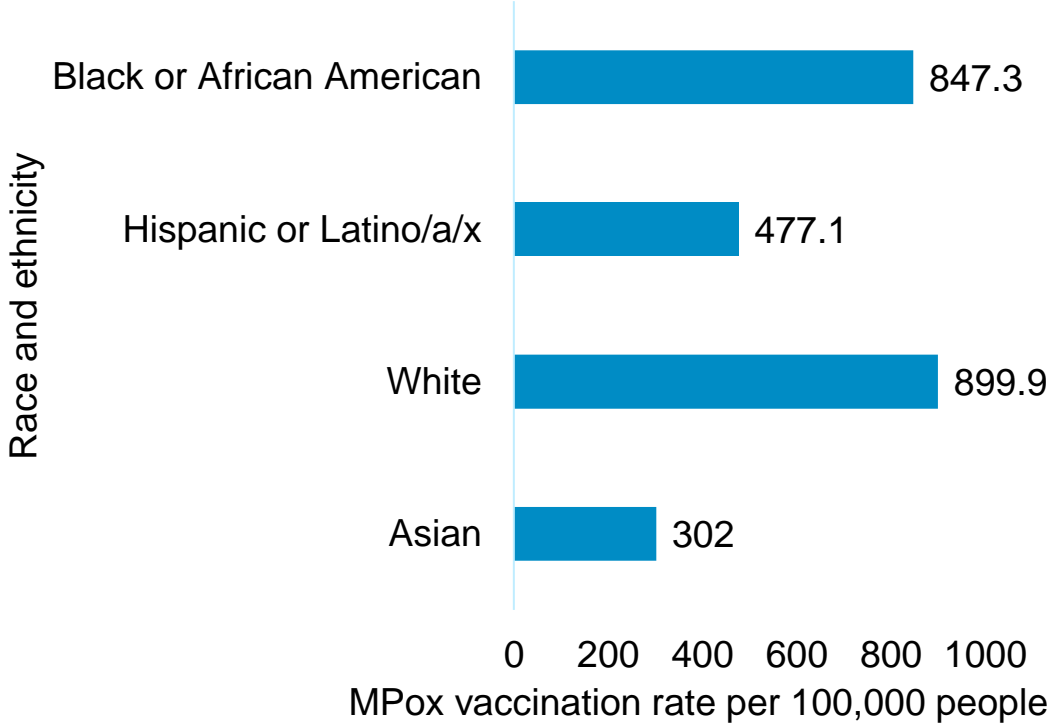
Source: AIDSvu County Summary: <https://aidsvu.org/local-data/united-states/west/california/alameda-county/>
<https://map.aidsvu.org/profiles/state/california/prevention-and-testing#1-2-PnR>

Mpox cases and vaccinations

Alameda County Mpox cases per 100,000 people by race and ethnicity



Alameda County Mpox vaccines per 100,000 people, by race and ethnicity



Sources: Cases – The California Reportable Disease Information Exchange (CalREDIE);
Vaccinations – The California Immunization Registry (CAIR)

Programs and Services

LGBTQ+ Inclusion and Culturally Affirming Practices

- Communicating support and inclusivity of the LGBTQ+ community to create an affirming and supportive environment.
- Strengthening ties with the LGBTQ+ community.
- Using gender affirming pronouns such as “they” instead of “he/she”.
- Strive to have staff that identify as LGBTQ+.
- Regular cultural competency training for staff and contractors on how to work with LGBTQ+ communities.
- Improving the collection of SOGI data and training staff on how to properly collect data.
- Increasing contracted partnerships with providers that provide LGBTQ+ competent & affirming services.



A Sampling of LGBTQ+ Centered Programming

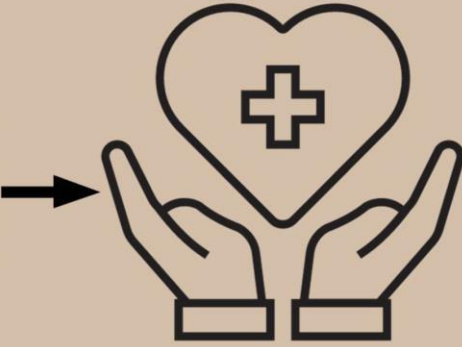
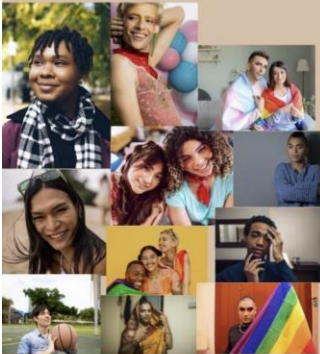
Sexual Health

- **Alameda County Public Health Department** funds 8 community-based organizations that work with LGBTQ+ communities to provide HIV and STD testing, including to priority populations like African American and Latinx gay men, and trans women of color.
- Sponsored the health pavilion at the Oakland Pride event. The health pavilion includes contracted partners like Dream, Asian Health, and Health PAC to provide HIV and STD testing, as well as outreach.
- Black and Brown Gay, Bisexual, Trans Men Round Table

Behavioral Health

- **ACBH partners with Horizon and Side by Side** to offer mental health services and harm reduction programs to transitional age youth aged 12-24. These programs also provide spaces that are safe for LGBTQ+ youth, and organize events and programs to engage and foster community with youth.
- Partners with the **Pacific Center** to offer in person and virtual mental health services, and case management to older adults and senior (55+) LGBTQ+ people.


Gender-Affirming Health Care for Californians



"Gender-affirming care offers a model for all health care, one that is patients-centered and based on the human story" -Dallas Ducar

BE Well

ALAMEDA COUNTY HEALTH CARE SERVICES AGENCY



Summary and Recommendations

Summary of Recommendations

The incoming federal administration may pursue policy changes that have significant impacts on the rights of LGBTQ+ communities. It is essential to establish robust protections to safeguard Alameda County's LGBTQ+ population. **To this end, we recommend:**

- Promote policies for consistent sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) data collection across Alameda County departments and agencies.
- Establish continued, uninterrupted, equitable access to gender affirming care and LGBTQ+ specific healthcare in Alameda County.
- Develop county communications to communities about continued availability of services.
- Promote robust non-discrimination policies and protect disparate impact analyses for LGBTQ+ individuals in schools, workplaces, businesses, housing, healthcare, and county services.
- Invest in social, behavioral, and violence prevention supports for LGBTQ+ individuals.
- Ensure equitable access, funding, and programming for LGBTQ+ communities of color, and specific supports tailored to the needs of Black and Latinx transgender women and men.