

Spring 2025 Youth Services Survey

Supplemental Questions

Perspectives on Health Equity among Caregivers and Youth Accessing Mental Health Services

San Diego County Behavioral Health Services

YOUTH SERVICES SURVEY BACKGROUND

In May of 2025, outpatient clients ages 13 and older (13-20) and the caregivers of all child and youth clients receiving outpatient mental health services from the San Diego County Behavioral Health Services (BHS) system were asked to complete the Spring 2025 Youth Services Survey (YSS). In addition to the standard YSS, a supplementary survey was added to gather information about clients' experiences accessing services.

The Spring 2025 YSS marked the third consecutive year (2023-2025) that the YSS included a set of supplemental questions focused on health equity. These questions were asked identically across all three years and provide a longitudinal view of how youth and caregivers perceive service quality, equitable treatment, and the importance of provider identity and representation.

This report presents the 2025 YSS findings and compares responses over three years. These insights support the BHS system in its commitment to providing culturally responsive mental health services for diverse youth and families, and provide a critical feedback opportunity to help inform health equity improvement for youth and their caregivers in San Diego County.

YSS CAREGIVER HEALTH EQUITY QUESTIONNAIRE

2025 SAMPLE AND METHODS

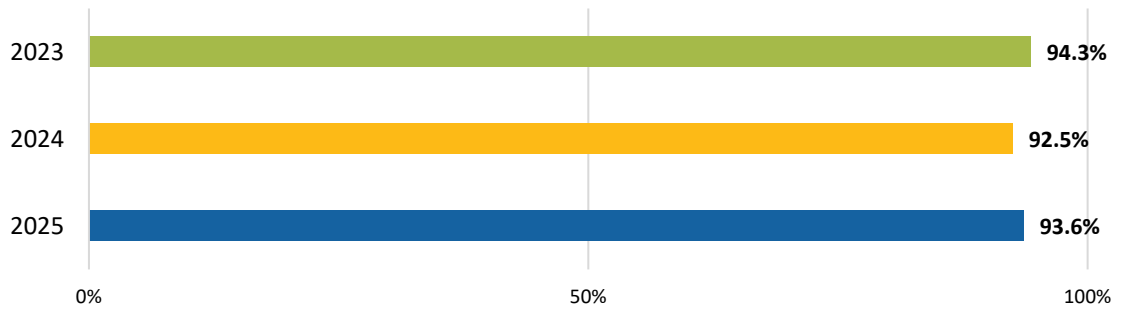
A total of 825 caregivers responded to the 2025 YSS. Surveys were administered both online and on paper, with 77.2% completed in English and 22.7% in Spanish (less than one percent were completed in Vietnamese). Seventy percent of caregivers (70.1%) reported that their child was of Hispanic origin, 48.4% reported their child was male, 46.5% was female, and 2.8% was trans or nonbinary (2.8% did not specify their child's gender identity). The caregivers' children ranged in age, with 11.8% zero to five years old, 49.6% six to twelve, and 38.6% thirteen or older. The average age of caregivers' children was between ten and eleven years old.

HOW CAREGIVERS VIEWED THEIR CHILDREN’S TREATMENT

Caregiver satisfaction remained consistently high across the three years, with more than 90% agreeing or strongly agreeing that they were satisfied with services (Figure 1.1).

Figure 1.1

Percentage of caregivers who agreed with the statement: “Overall, I am satisfied with the services my child received,” 2023-2025.

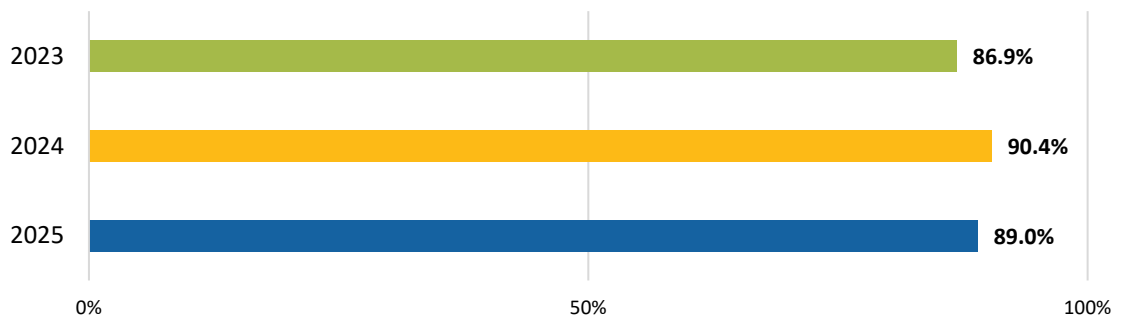


2023-2025 Youth Services Surveys | 2023, N=1,046 | 2024, N=666 | 2025, N=823

Reports of inequitable treatment were low overall. Across all three years, the majority of caregivers strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement, “My child is treated with less courtesy or respect than other clients in this program” (Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1

Percentage of caregivers who disagreed with the statement: “My child is treated with less courtesy or respect than other clients in this program,” 2023-2025.

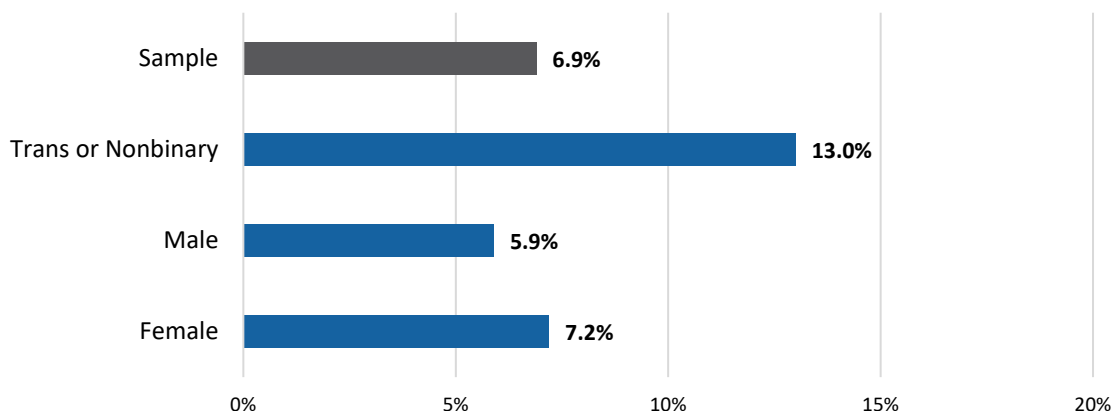


2023-2025 Youth Services Surveys | 2023, N=995 | 2024, N=631 | 2025, N=785

In 2025, only 6.9% of caregivers reported that their child was treated with less courtesy than their peers in the same mental health services program. However, this percentage was notably higher among caregivers of trans or nonbinary youth (13.0%) compared with caregivers of youth identified as male (5.2%) and female (7.2%) (Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2

Percentage of caregivers who agreed with the statement: “My child is treated with less courtesy or respect than other clients in this program,” compared by gender identity in 2025.



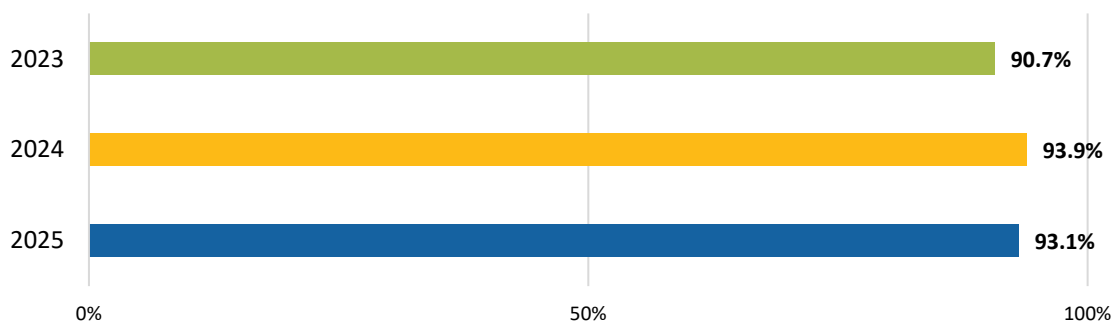
Note: Percent Strongly Agree or Agree with the statement: “My child is treated with less courtesy or respect than other clients in this program.”

2025 Sample, N=784 | Female, n=373 | Male, n=387 | Trans or Nonbinary, n=23.

Caregivers were also asked whether they felt that their child received poorer treatment or services than other clients in the program. In all three years, more than 90% strongly disagreed or disagreed with this statement (Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1

Percentage of caregivers who disagreed with the statement: “My child receives poorer treatment or services than other clients in this program,” 2023-2025.

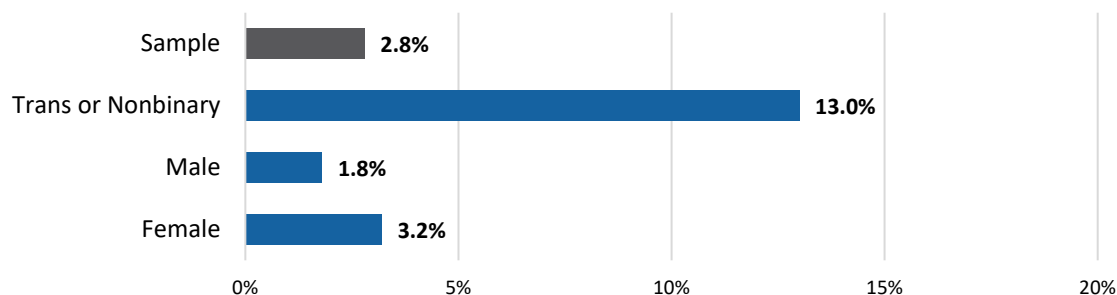


2023-2025 Youth Services Surveys | 2023, N=997 | 2024, N=630 | 2025, N=782

In 2025, only 2.8% of caregivers agreed or strongly agreed that their child received poorer treatment or services than other clients in the program. However, agreement was substantially higher among caregivers of trans or nonbinary youth (13.0%) compared with caregivers of youth identified as male (1.8%) or female (3.2%) (Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2

Percentage of caregivers who agreed with the statement: “My child receives poorer treatment or services than other clients in this program,” compared by gender identity in 2025.



Note: Percent Strongly Agree or Agree with the statement: “My child receives poorer treatment or services than other clients in this program.”

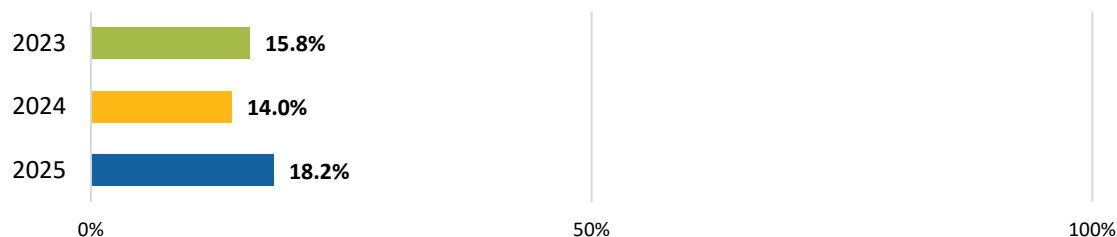
2025 Sample, N=781 | Female, n=371 | Male, n=386 | Trans or Nonbinary, n=23.

CAREGIVER’S COMFORT WITH PROVIDERS

Caregivers were asked whether they were more comfortable if their child’s mental health provider had the same racial or ethnic background as their child. In 2025, the majority (61.2%) disagreed or strongly disagreed, while 18.2% indicated that a racial/ethnic match between their child and their mental health provider influenced their comfort with services (Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1

Percentage of caregivers who agreed with the statement: “I am more comfortable if my child’s mental health provider has a racial/ethnic background like theirs,” 2023-2025.

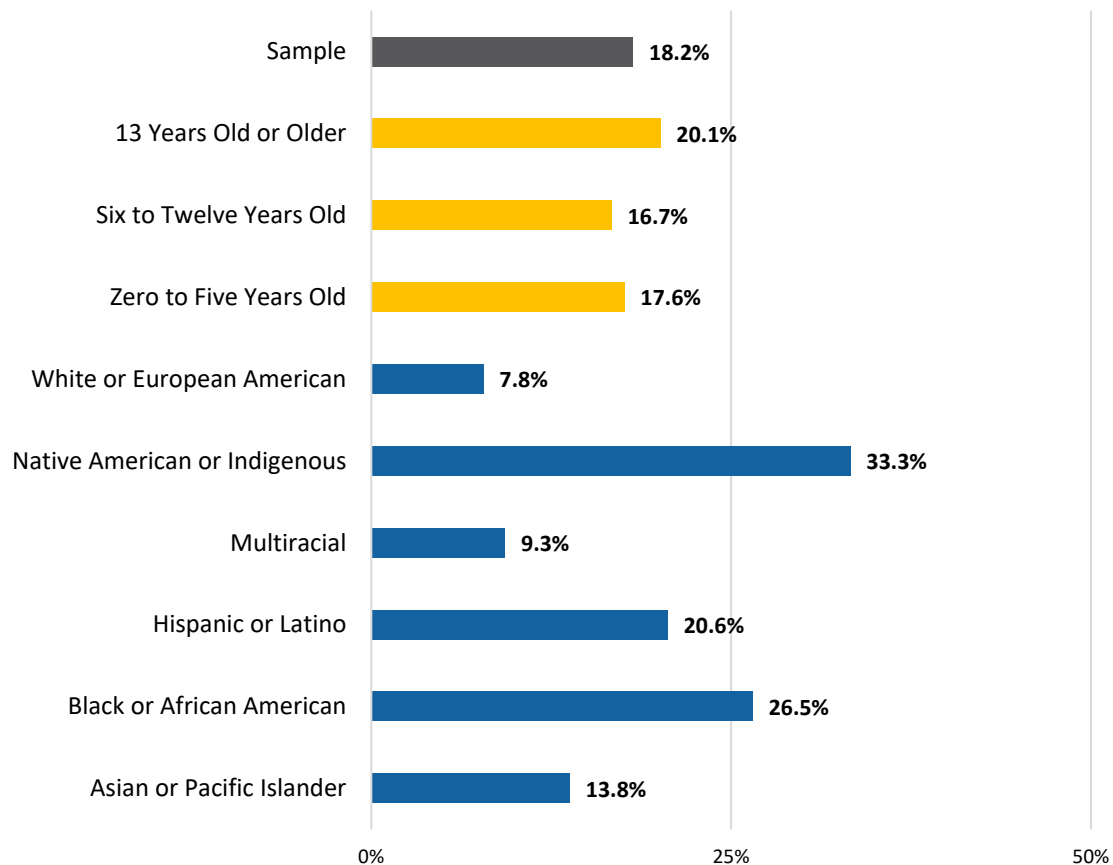


2023-2025 Youth Services Surveys | 2023, N=982 | 2024, N=625 | 2025, N=777

However, preferences for race/ethnicity-matched providers were higher among caregivers of teenagers (20.1%), and caregivers of youth identified as Native American or Indigenous (33.3%) and Black or African American (26.5%) (Figure 4.2).

Figure 4.2

Percentage of caregivers who agreed with the statement: “I am more comfortable if my child’s mental health provider has a racial/ethnic background like theirs,” compared by age and race/ethnicity in 2025.



Note: Percent Strongly Agree or Agree with the statement: “I am more comfortable if my child’s mental health provider has a racial/ethnic background like theirs.”

2025 Sample, N=777 | Ages 0-5, n=91 | Ages 6-12, n=389 | Ages 13+, n=294 | White or European American, n=116 | Native American or Indigenous, n=12 | Multiracial, n=54 | Hispanic or Latino, n=462 | Black or African American, n=83 | Asian or Pacific Islander, n=29.

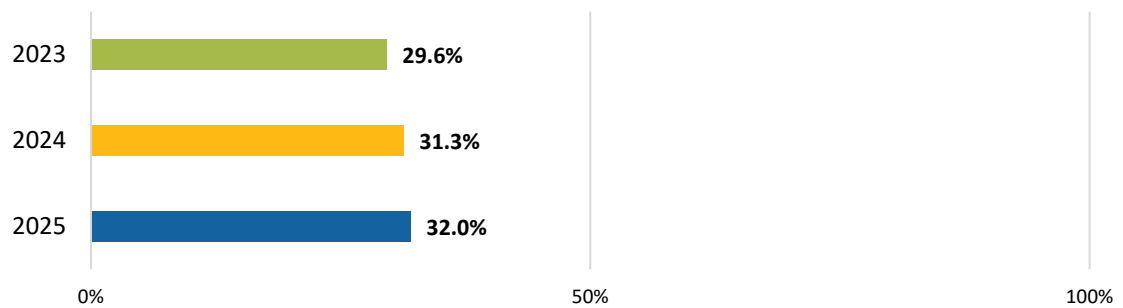
Caregivers were asked whether they were more comfortable if their child’s mental health provider had the same gender as their child. In 2025, 32.0% agreed or strongly agreed (Figure 5.1).

In 2025, caregivers of girls (54.2%) more frequently agreed or strongly agreed that they were more comfortable if their child’s mental health provider had the same gender as their child. Caregivers of teenagers (36.6%) also more frequently agreed that they were more comfortable with a gender-match provider than caregivers of younger children (Figure 5.2).

Caregivers of Black or African American youth (38.6%) and multiracial youth (38.9%) agreed they were more comfortable with a gender-match provider more frequently than did caregivers of White or European American youth (25.9%) (Figure 5.2).

Figure 5.1

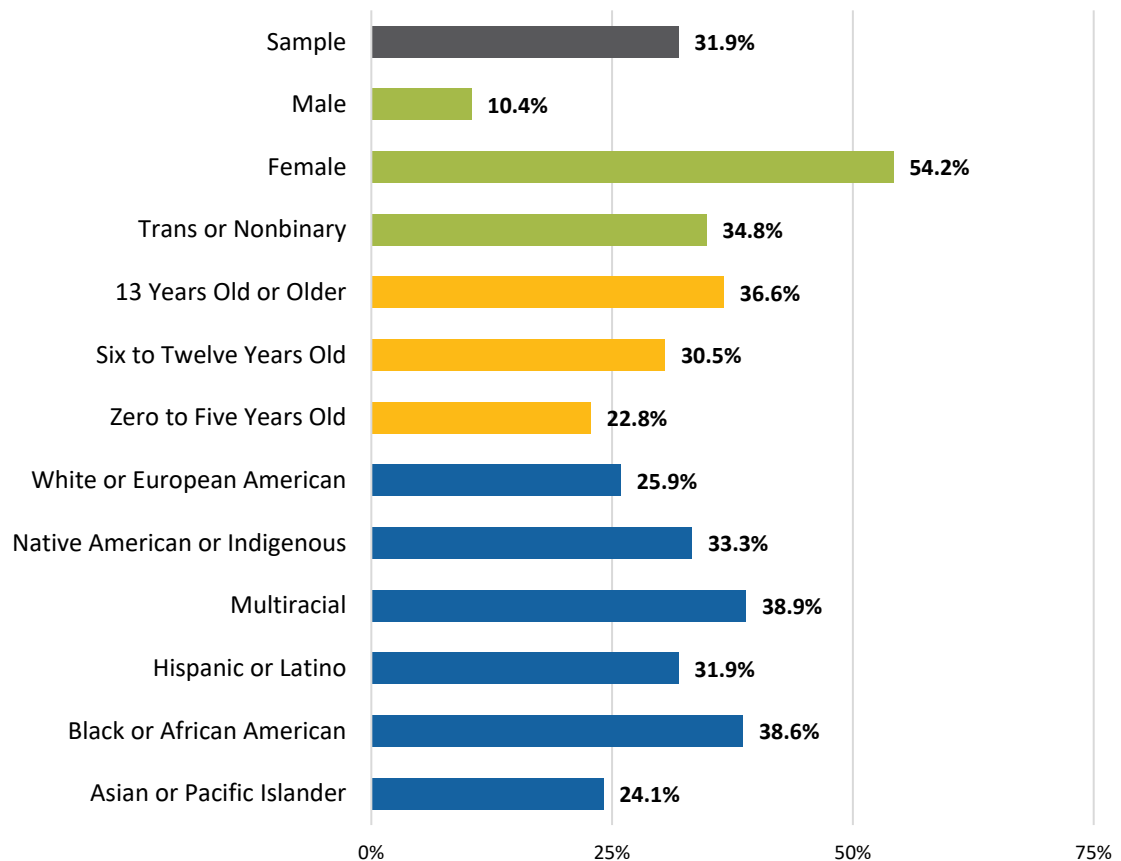
Percentage of caregivers who agreed with the statement: "I am more comfortable if my child's mental health provider has the same gender as my child," 2023-2025



2023-2025 Youth Services Surveys | 2023, N=995 | 2024, N=629 | 2025, N=776

Figure 5.2

Percentage of caregivers who agreed with the statement: "I am more comfortable if my child's mental health provider has the same gender as my child," compared by gender, age, and race/ethnicity in 2025.



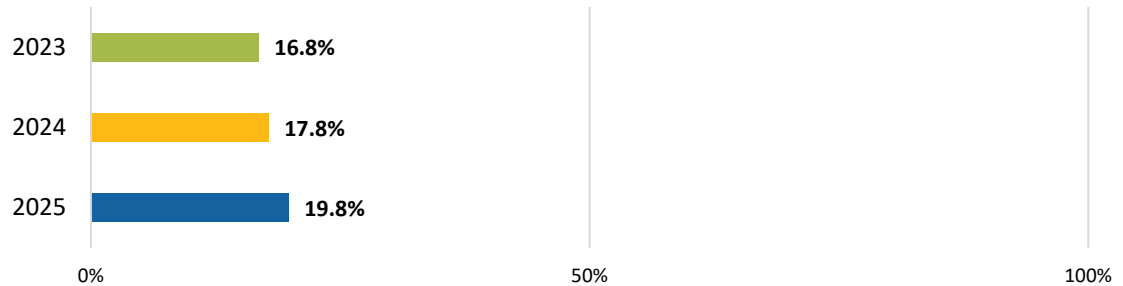
Note: Percent Strongly Agree or Agree with the statement: "I am more comfortable if my child's mental health provider has the same gender as my child."

2025 Sample, N=776 | Female, n=369 | Male, n=383 | Trans or Nonbinary, n=23 | Ages 0-5, n=92 | Ages 6-12, n=387 | Ages 13+, n=295 | White or European American, n=116 | Native American or Indigenous, n=12 | Multiracial, n=54 | Hispanic or Latino, n=461 | Black or African American, n=83 | Asian or Pacific Islander, n=29.

Caregivers were asked whether they would feel more comfortable if their child’s mental health provider shared their child’s sexual orientation. In 2025, 19.8% agreed or strongly agreed, slightly higher than in previous years (Figure 6.1).

Figure 6.1

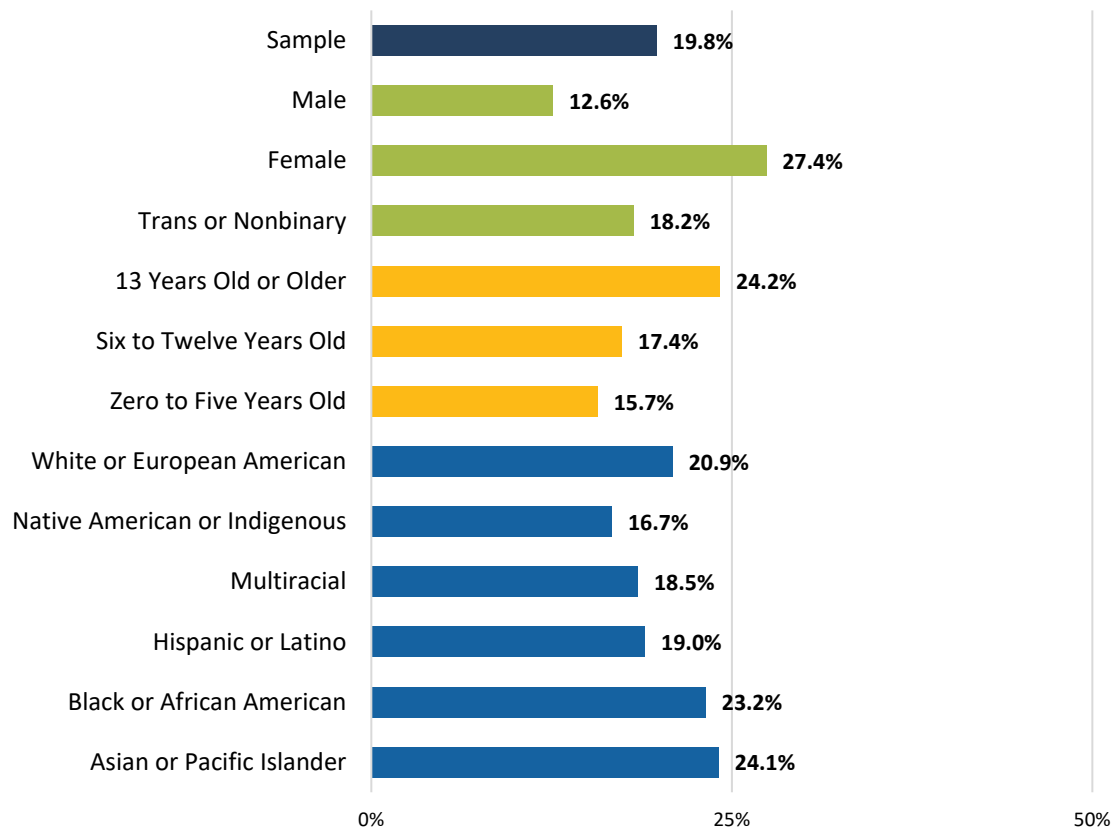
Percentage of caregivers who agreed with the statement: “I am more comfortable if my child’s mental health provider has the same sexual orientation as my child,” 2023-2025.



2023-2025 Youth Services Surveys | 2023, N=987 | 2024, N=624 | 2025, N=771

Figure 6.2

Percentage of caregivers who agreed with the statement: “I am more comfortable if my child’s mental health provider has the same sexual orientation as my child,” compared by gender, age, and race/ethnicity in 2025.



Note: Percent Strongly Agree or Agree with the statement: “I am more comfortable if my child’s mental health provider has the same sexual orientation as my child.”

2025 Sample, N=771 | Female, n=365 | Male, n=382 | Trans or Nonbinary, n=22 | Ages 0-5, n=89 | Ages 6-12, n=386 | Ages 13+, n=293 | White or European American, n=115 | Native American or Indigenous, n=12 | Multiracial, n=54 | Hispanic or Latino, n=458 | Black or African American, n=82 | Asian or Pacific Islander, n=29.

Caregivers of girls (27.4%), teenagers (24.2%), and Asian American or Pacific Islander (24.1%) and Black or African American youth (23.2%) most frequently agreed with the statement (Figure 6.2).

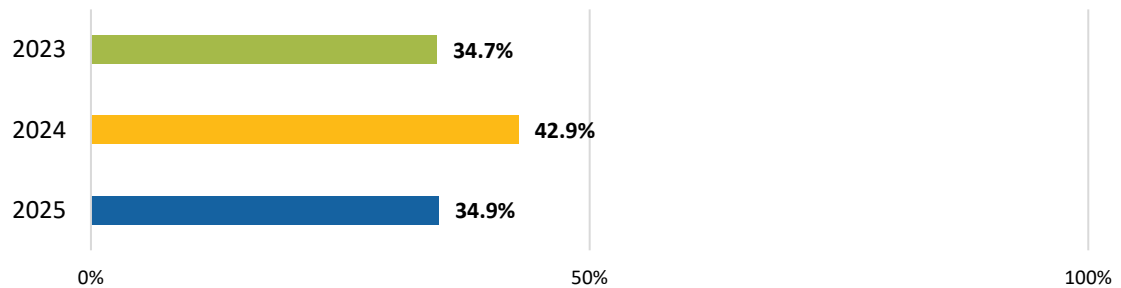
PROVIDER DIVERSITY AND REPRESENTATION

Figures 7.1 through 7.3 display caregivers' responses when asked about the diversity and representation among their children's mental health providers across all three years.

In 2025, 34.9% of caregivers reported that their child had a mental health provider with a similar racial or ethnic background Figure 7.1).

Figure 7.1

Percentage of caregivers who responded "yes" to the question: "My child's mental health provider's racial/ethnic background is like theirs," 2023-2025.

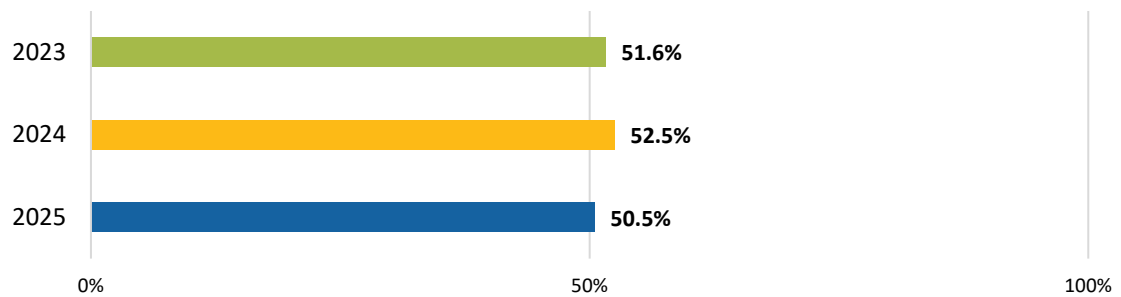


2023-2025 Youth Services Surveys | 2023, N=695 | 2024, N=361 | 2025, N=530

Fifty-one percent (50.5%) reported that their child's mental health provider had the same gender as their child (Figure 7.2).

Figure 7.2

Percentage of caregivers who responded "yes" to the question: "My child's mental health provider's gender is like theirs," 2023-2025.

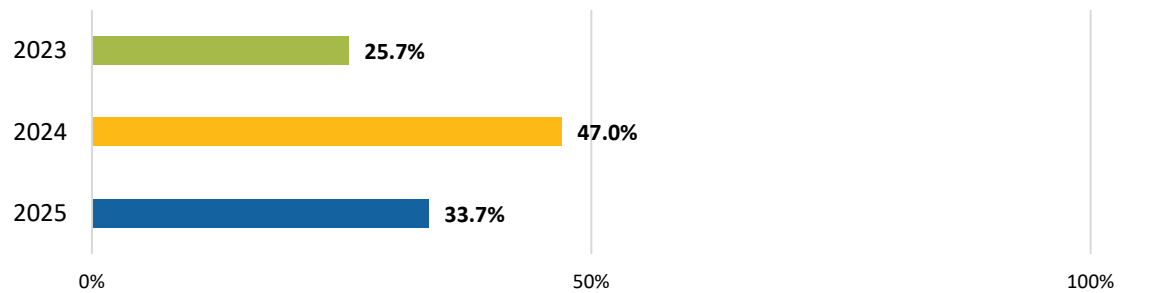


2023-2025 Youth Services Surveys | 2023, N=819 | 2024, N=484 | 2025, N=650

Thirty-four percent (33.7%) of caregivers reported that their child’s mental health provider had the same or similar sexual orientation as their child (Figure 7.3).

Figure 7.3

Percentage of caregivers who responded “yes” to the question: “My child’s mental health provider’s sexual orientation is like theirs,” 2023-2025.



2023-2025 Youth Services Surveys | 2023, N=490 | 2024, N=181 | 2025, N=350

YSS YOUTH HEALTH EQUITY QUESTIONNAIRE

2025 SAMPLE AND METHODS

A total of 546 youth between the ages of 13 and 20 responded to the 2025 YSS supplemental questionnaire. 533 surveys were completed in English (97.6%), and 13 were completed in Spanish (2.4%).

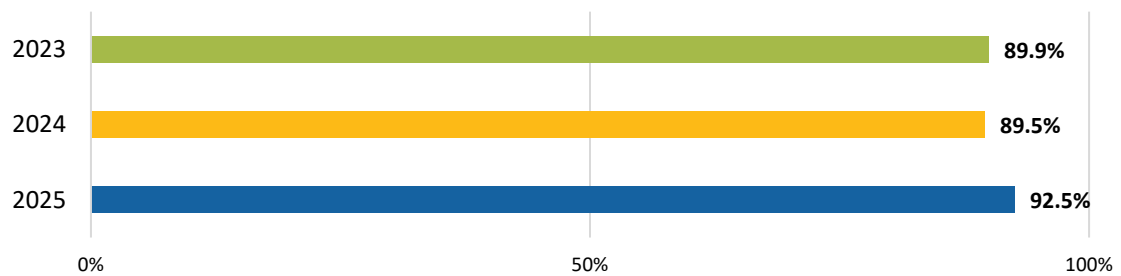
The average age of the youth was 15.5 years old. 280 identified themselves as female (51.3%). 185 identified themselves as male (33.9%). 71 identified themselves as transgender, nonbinary, or another gender (13.0%), and 10 declined to identify their gender (1.8%). Youth reported their race or ethnicity: 7.9% as Asian American or Pacific Islander, 9.7% as Black or African American, 54.8% as Hispanic or Latino, 4.4% as multiracial, 4.0% as Native American or Indigenous, 13.7% as White non-Hispanic, and 5.5% declined to specify their ethnicity or racial identity. Overall, 65.8% of the youth identified as having Hispanic origin.

SATISFACTION WITH SERVICES

In the YSS, youth were asked about their satisfaction with the services they received. Most of the youth (92.5%) reported that they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, “Overall, I am satisfied with the services I received.” This high rate of satisfaction was a slight improvement from previous years, in which almost 90% of youth agreed that they were satisfied with the services they received (Figure 8.1).

Figure 8.1

Percentage of youth who agreed with the statement: "Overall, I am satisfied with the services I received," 2023-2025.

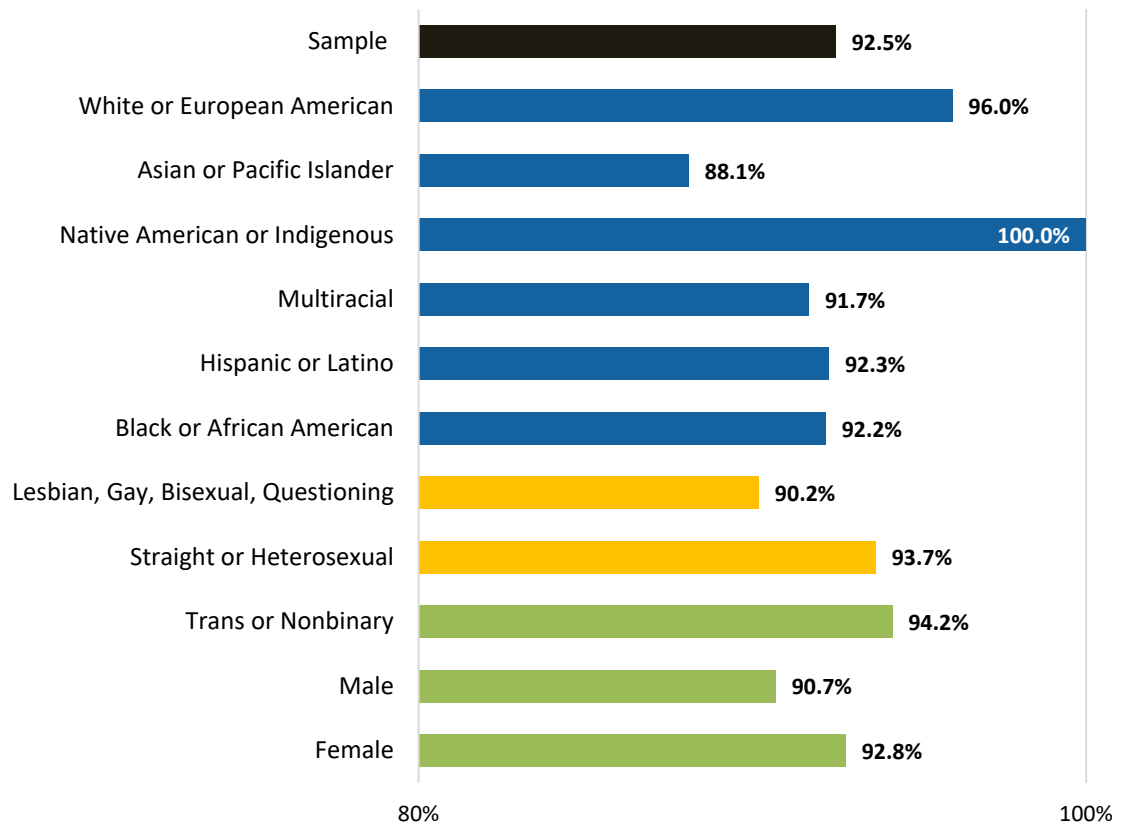


Note: 2023-2025 Youth Services Surveys | 2023, N=761 | 2024, N=475 | 2025, N=540

Across demographic groups, over 90% of youth agreed that they were satisfied with the services they received, with the exception of youth identified as Asian or Pacific Islander, among whom 88.1% agreed (Figure 8.2).

Figure 8.2

Percentage of youth who agreed with the statement: "Overall, I am satisfied with the services I received," compared by race/ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation in 2025.



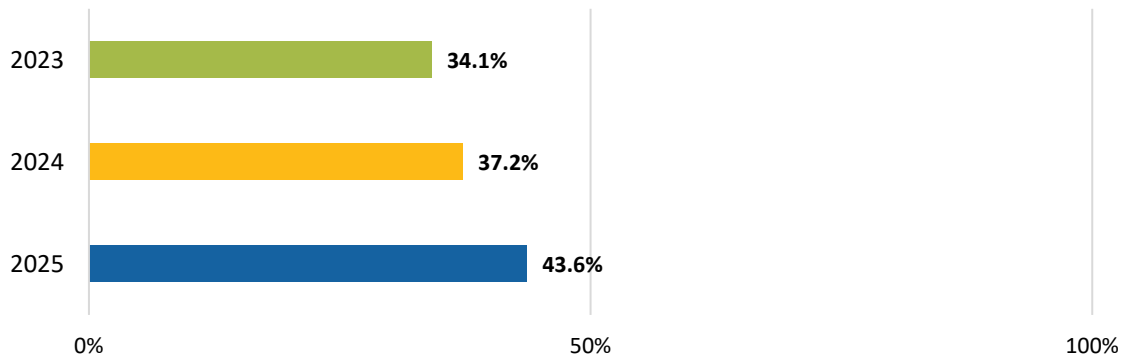
Note: Percentage of youth who agreed with the statement: "Overall, I am satisfied with the services I received." 2025 Sample, N=540 | White or European American, n=72 | Asian or Pacific Islander, n=37 | Native American or Indigenous, n=22 | Hispanic or Latino, n=274 | Black or African American, n=47 | Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Questioning, n=148 | Straight/Heterosexual, n=295 | Tran or Nonbinary, n=65 | Male, n=166 | Female, n=259.

PROVIDER DIVERSITY AND REPRESENTATION

Youth were asked about the diversity and representation among their mental health providers. In 2025, forty-four percent of youth (43.6%) reported that their provider was from a similar racial or ethnic background. Sixty-four percent (63.8%) reported that their provider was of the same gender, and fifty-eight percent (57.7%) reported that their mental health provider had the same or similar sexual orientation. Figures 9.1 through 9.3 display the responses of youth when asked about the diversity and representation among their mental health providers.

Figure 9.1

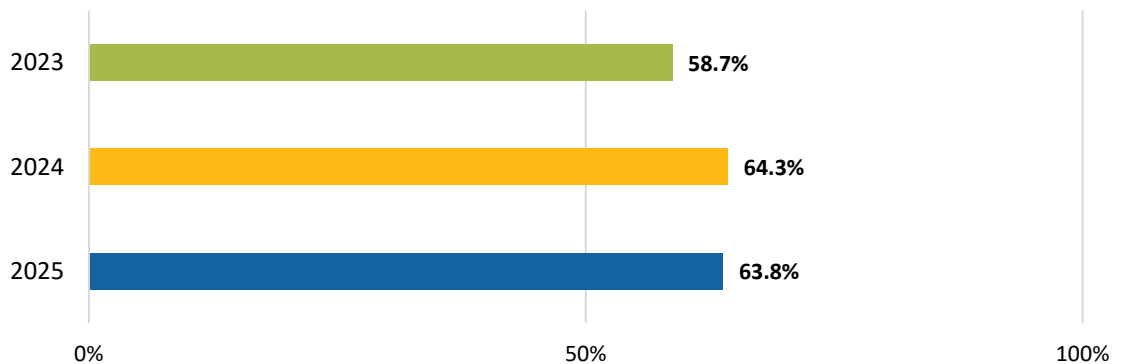
Percentage of youth who agreed with the statement: "My mental health provider's racial/ethnic background is like mine," 2023-2025.



2023-2025 Youth Services Surveys | 2023, N=451 | 2024, N=325 | 2025, N=275

Figure 9.2

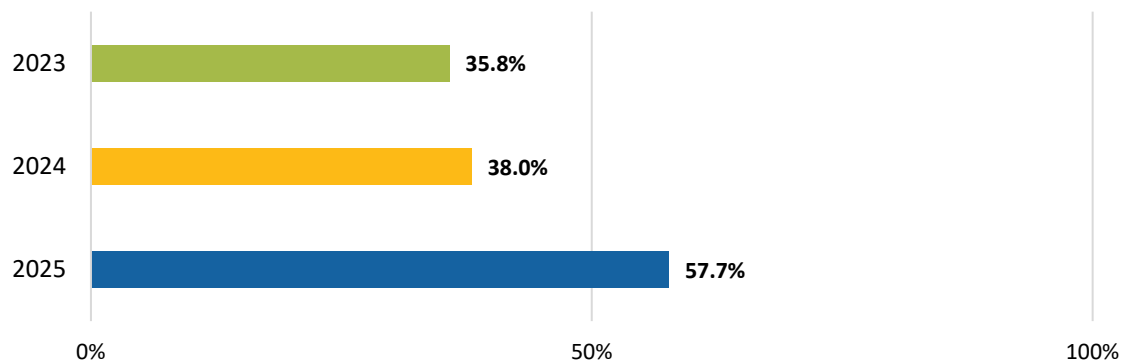
Percentage of youth who agreed with the statement: 'My mental health provider's gender is like mine,' 2023-2025.



2023-2025 Youth Services Surveys | 2023, N=615 | 2024, N=479 | 2025, N=448

Figure 9.3

Percentage of youth who agreed with the statement: "My mental health provider's sexual orientation is like mine," 2023-2025.



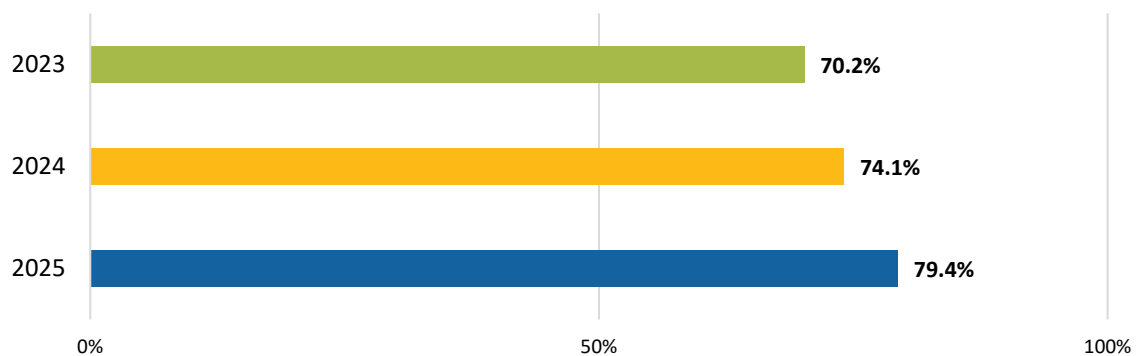
2023-2025 Youth Services Surveys | 2023, N=332 | 2024, N=234 | 2025, N=175

HOW YOUTH VIEWED THEIR TREATMENT

Youth were also asked if they felt as though they were treated with less courtesy than other clients in their programs. The majority of youth strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement across all three years (Figure 10.1).

Figure 10.1

Percentage of youth who disagreed with the statement, "I am treated with less courtesy or respect than other clients in this program," 2023-2025.



2023-2025 Youth Services Surveys | 2023, N=717 | 2024, N=564 | 2025, N=521

In 2025, while most youth (79.4%) disagreed when asked if they were treated with less courtesy or respect than other clients in their programs, 11.7% were unsure about the statement, and 8.8% of the sample agreed with the statement.

Among the nearly nine percent of the sample who agreed, there were differences relative to youth racial/ethnic, gender, and sexual identities (Figure 10.2).

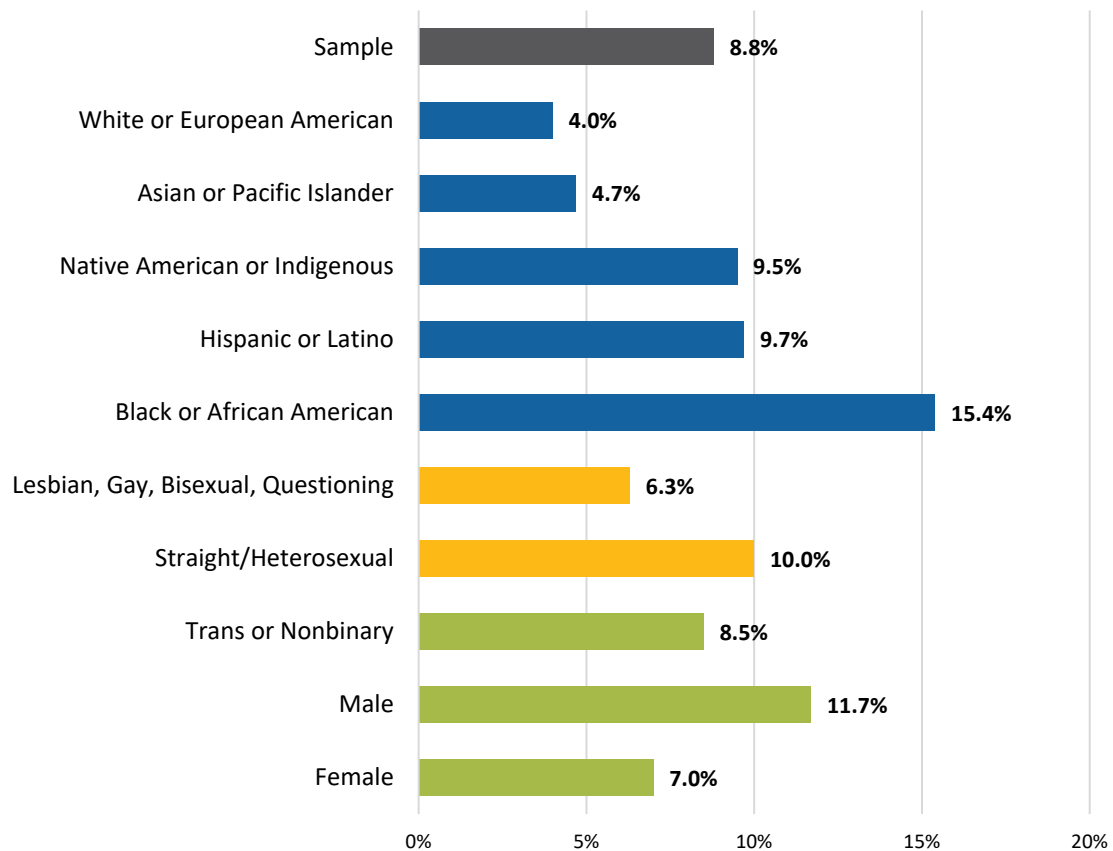
Among youth who identified as Black or African American, fifteen percent (15.4%) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, compared to 4.0% among White or European American youth and 4.7% among Asian or Pacific Islander youth (Figure 10.2).

Among youth who identified themselves as male, there was more frequent agreement with the statement (11.7%) compared to those who identified as female (7.0%) or trans or nonbinary (8.5%) (Figure 10.2).

Among youth who identified themselves as straight or heterosexual, there was more frequent agreement (10.0%) compared to those who identified themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or questioning (6.3%) (Figure 10.2).

Figure 10.2

Percentage of youth who agreed with the statement: "I am treated with less courtesy or respect than other clients in this program," compared by race/ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation in 2025.

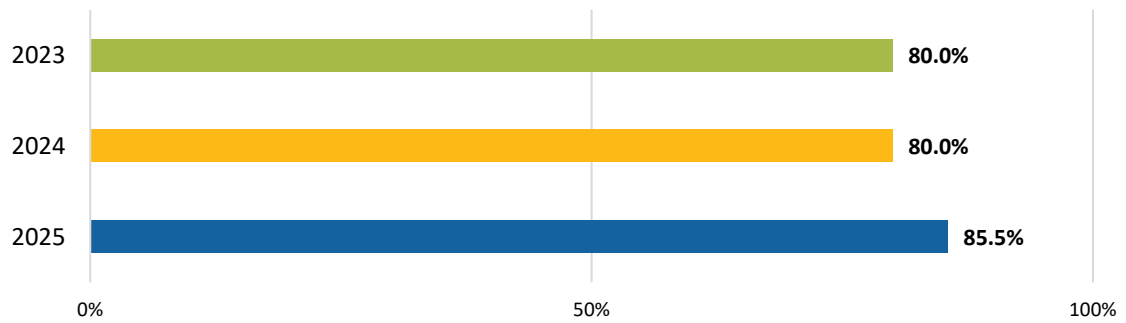


2025 Sample, N=521 | White or European American, n=75 | Asian or Pacific Islander, n=43 | Native American or Indigenous, n=21 | Hispanic or Latino, n=290 | Black or African American, n=52 | Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Questioning, n=160 | Straight/Heterosexual, n=311 | Tran or Nonbinary, n=71 | Male, n=180 | Female, n=270.

Youth were asked if they had poorer treatment or services than other clients in their program. In 2025, 85.5% strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement, a slight improvement from previous years (Figure 11.1).

Figure 11.1

Percentage of youth who disagreed with the statement: "I receive poorer treatment or services than other clients in this program," 2023-2025.

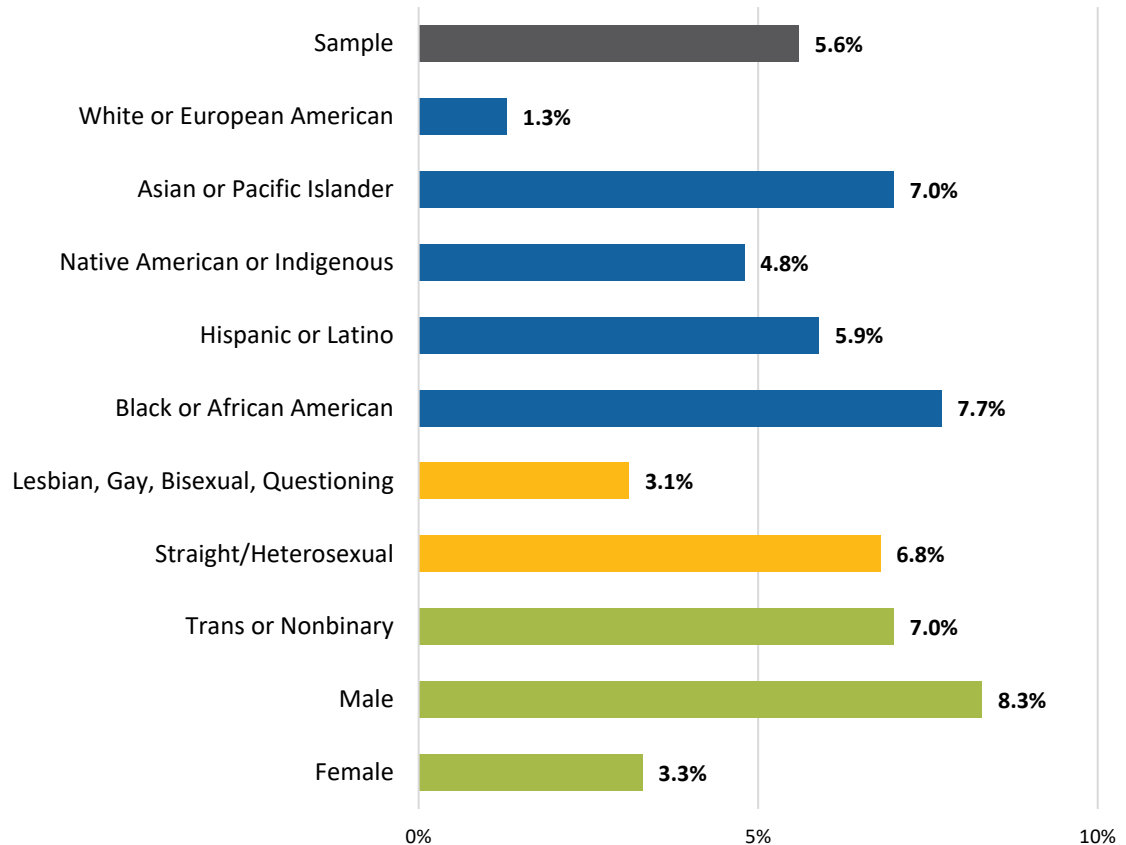


2023-2025 Youth Services Surveys | 2023, N=719 | 2024, N=565 | 2025, N=521

Among youth who agreed with the statement, those who identified as male (8.3%) and youth who identified as Black or African American (7.7%) more frequently reported that they felt as though they received poorer services than their peers (Figure 11.2).

Figure 11.2

Percentage of youth who agreed with the statement: "I receive poorer treatment or services than other clients in this program," compared by race/ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation in 2025.



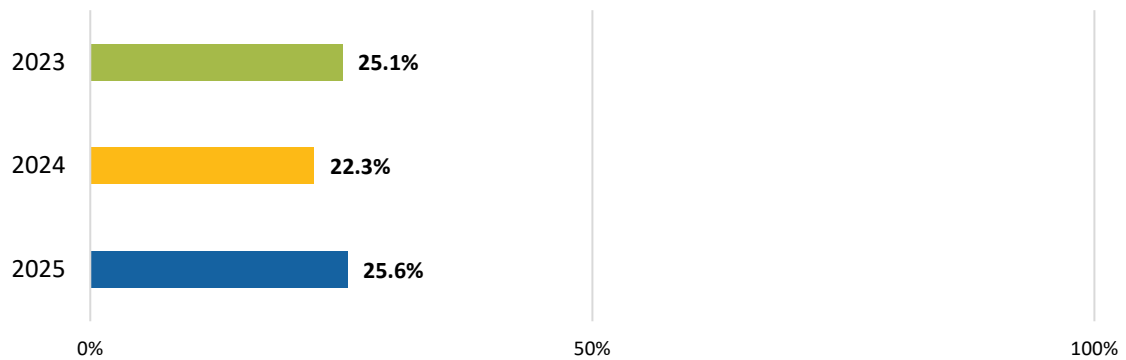
2025 Sample, N=521 | White or European American, n=75 | Asian or Pacific Islander, n=43 | Native American or Indigenous, n=21 | Hispanic or Latino, n=290 | Black or African American, n=52 | Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Questioning, n=160 | Straight/Heterosexual, n=311 | Tran or Nonbinary, n=71 | Male, n=180 | Female, n=270.

YOUTH'S COMFORT WITH PROVIDERS

Youth were asked whether they were more comfortable if their mental health provider had the same racial or ethnic background. In 2025, one quarter (25.6%) of youth agreed or strongly agreed, and 33.6% disagreed, while forty-one percent (40.8%) reported that they were undecided about whether they were more comfortable with a mental health provider who had the same racial or ethnic background. These numbers were consistent with youth reporting in the 2023 and 2024 YSS (Figure 12.1).

Figure 12.1

Percentage of youth who agreed with the statement: "I am more comfortable with a mental health provider who has a racial/ethnic background like mine," 2023-2025.



2023-2025 Youth Services Surveys | 2023, N=719 | 2024, N=561 | 2025, N=520

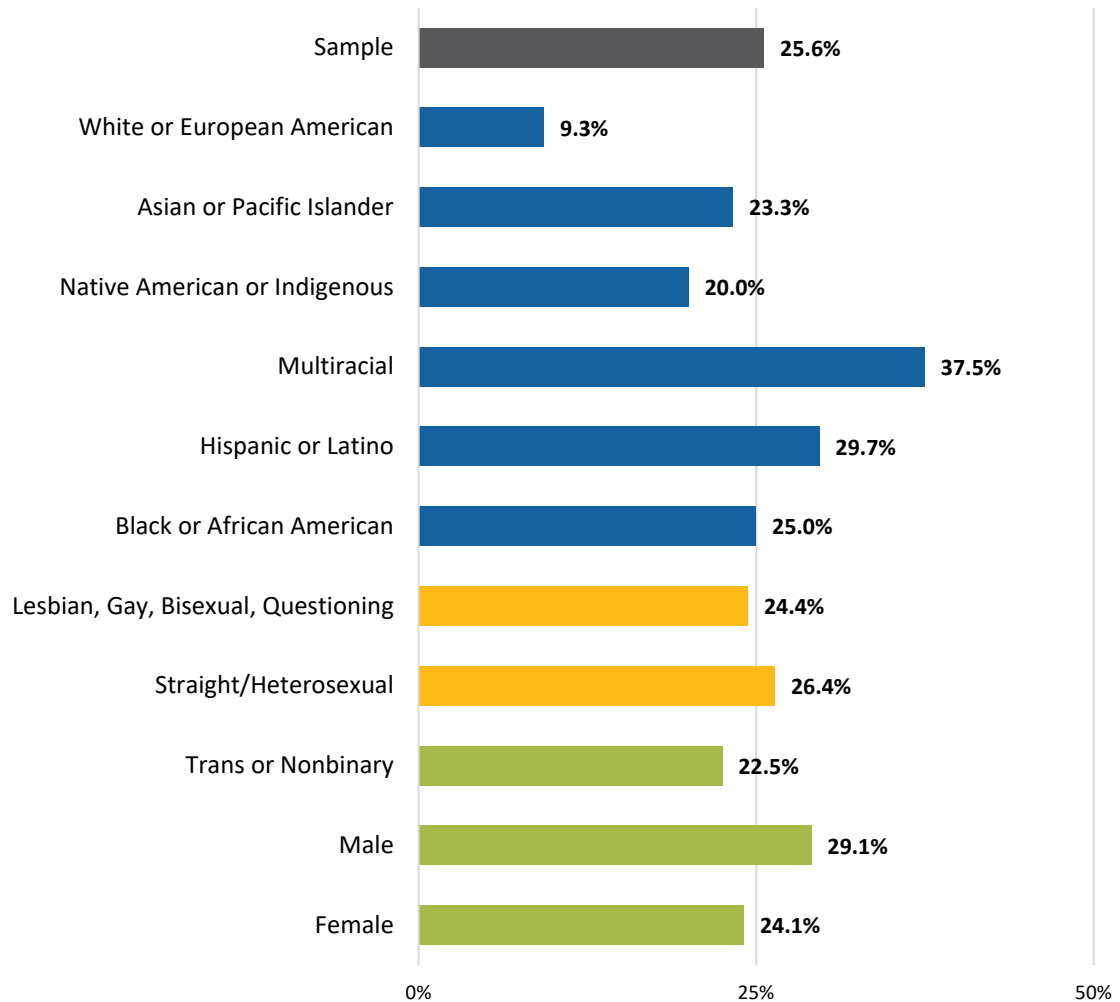
In 2025, youth who identified as multiracial (37.5%) and those who identified as Hispanic or Latino (29.7%) more frequently reported that they would be more comfortable with a mental health provider of the same race or ethnicity.

Youth identified as White or European American reported that they would be more comfortable with a race/ethnicity-matched provider substantially less frequently than their peers (9.3%) (Figure 12.2).

Youth identified as male also reported that they would be more comfortable with a race/ethnicity-matched provider more frequently (29.1%) than their female (24.1%) and trans or nonbinary (22.5%) peers (Figure 12.2).

Figure 12.2

Percentage of youth who agreed with the statement: “I am more comfortable with a mental health provider who has a racial/ethnic background like mine,” compared by race/ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation in 2025.

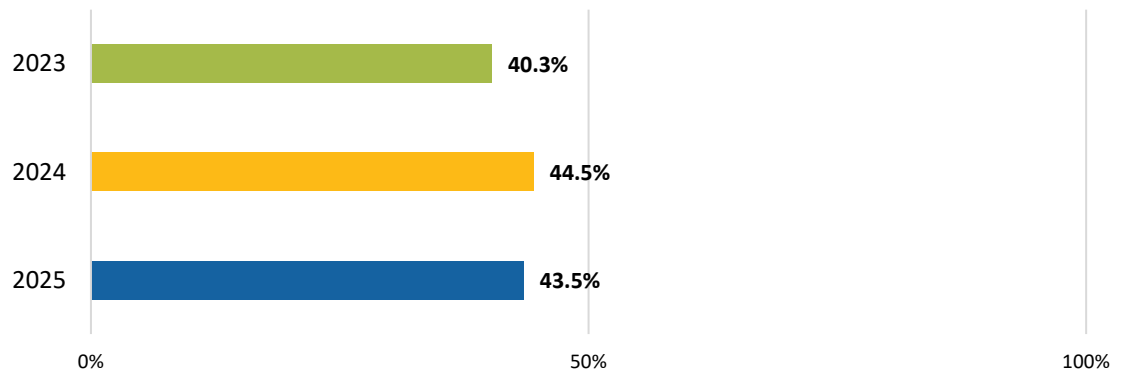


2025 Sample, N=520 | White or European American, n=75 | Asian or Pacific Islander, n=43 | Native American or Indigenous, n=20 | Multiracial, n=24 | Hispanic or Latino, n=290 | Black or African American, n=52 | Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Questioning, n=160 | Straight/Heterosexual, n=311 | Trans or Nonbinary, n=71 | Male, n=179 | Female, n=270.

Youth were also asked whether they were more comfortable if their mental health provider had the same gender. In 2025, 43.5% agreed or strongly agreed, 24.2% disagreed or strongly disagreed, and 32.2% were undecided. These numbers were also consistent with youth reporting in the 2023 and 2024 YSS (Figure 13.1).

Figure 13.1

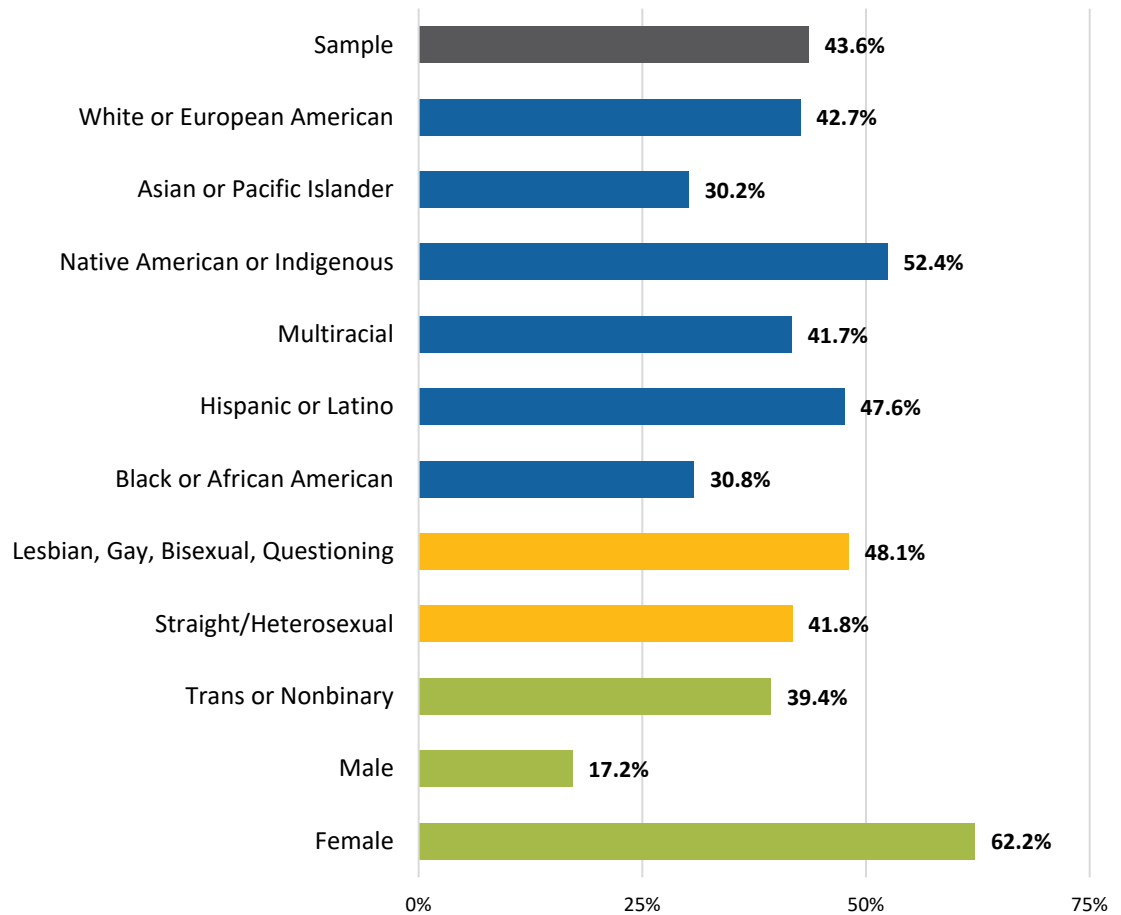
Percentage of youth who agreed with the statement: "I am more comfortable with a mental health provider whose gender is like mine," 2023-2025.



2023-2025 Youth Services Surveys | 2023, N=719 | 2024, N=562 | 2025, N=521

Figure 13.2

Percentage of youth who agreed with the statement: "I am more comfortable with a mental health provider whose gender is like mine," compared by race/ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation in 2025.



2025 Sample, N=521 | White or European American, n=75 | Asian or Pacific Islander, n=43 | Native American or Indigenous, n=21 | Multiracial, n=24 | Hispanic or Latino, n=290 | Black or African American, n=52 | Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Questioning, n=160 | Straight/Heterosexual, n=311 | Tran or Nonbinary, n=71 | Male, n=180 | Female, n=270.

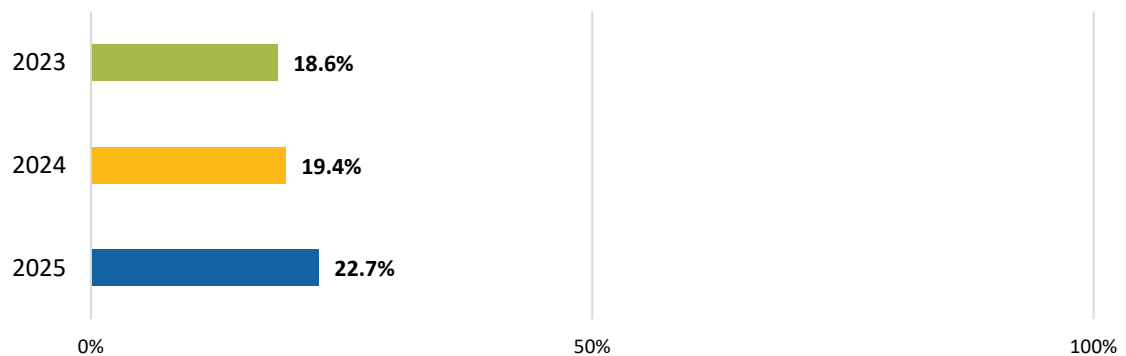
Youth who identified as female reported that they were more comfortable with a mental health provider with the same gender, much more frequently (62.2%) than youth who identified as male (17.2%) and youth who identified as trans, nonbinary, or another gender (39.4%) (Figure 13.2).

Youth who identified as Native American or Indigenous (52.4%) and those who identified as Hispanic or Latino (47.6%) more frequently reported that they were more comfortable with a mental health provider of the same gender than the sample average (43.6%) (Figure 13.2).

When youth were also asked about whether they were more comfortable if their mental health provider had the same sexual orientation, 22.7% agreed or strongly agreed, 32.4% disagreed or strongly disagreed, and 44.9% were undecided (Figure 14.1).

Figure 14.1

Percentage of youth who agreed with the statement: "I am more comfortable with a mental health provider whose sexual orientation is like mine," 2023-2025.



2023-2025 Youth Services Surveys | 2023, N=720 | 2024, N=561 | 2025, N=519

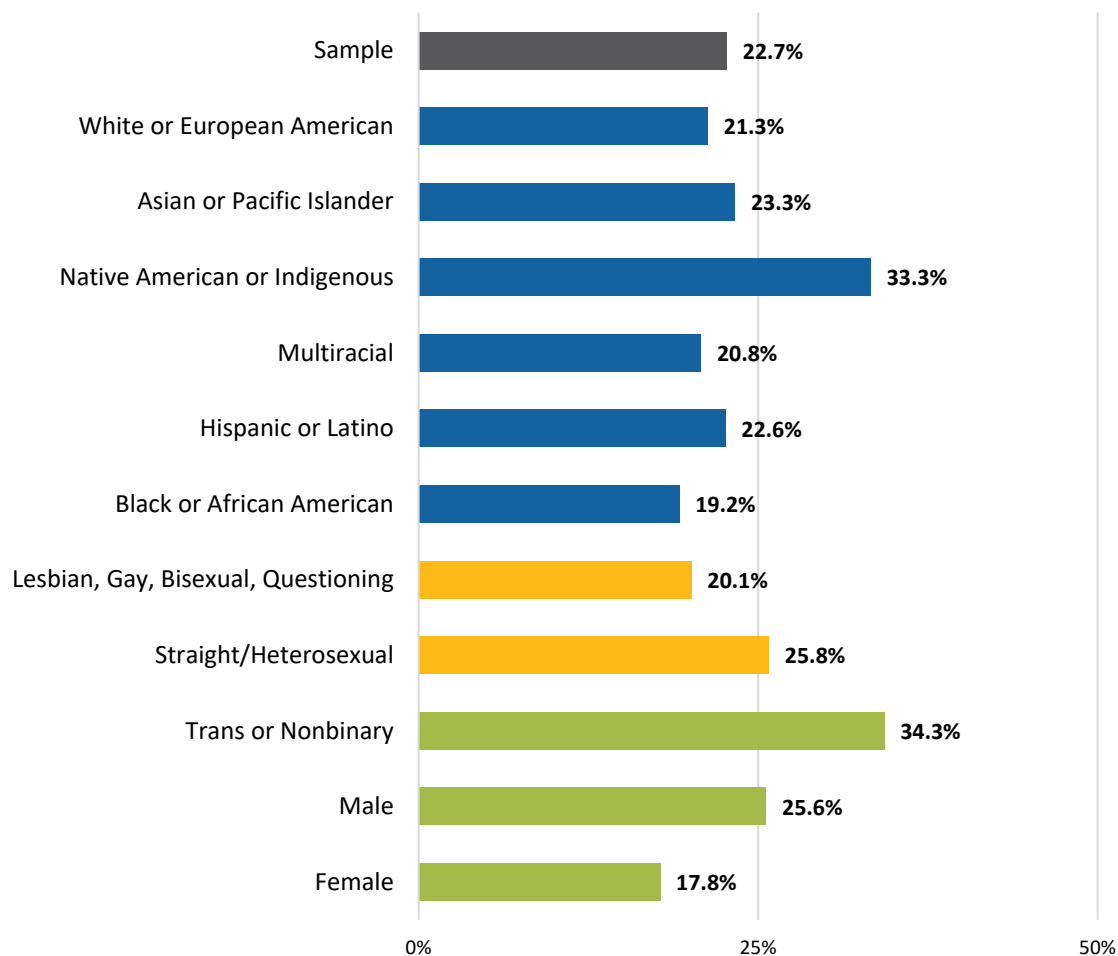
Thirty-four percent (34.3%) of youth who identified as trans or nonbinary reported that they felt more comfortable with a mental health provider with the same sexual orientation as them, compared to 25.6% among youth who identified as male and 17.8% who identified as female (Figure 14.2).

Youth who identified as straight or heterosexual agreed that they were more comfortable with a gender-matched provider more frequently (25.8%) than youth who identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, questioning, or another sexual orientation (20.1%) (Figure 14.2).

Youth identified as Native American or Indigenous also agreed that they were more comfortable with a gender-matched provider more frequently (33.3%) than their peers (Figure 14.2).

Figure 14.2

Percentage of youth who agreed with the statement: “I am more comfortable with a mental health provider whose sexual orientation is like mine,” compared by race/ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation in 2025.



2025 Sample, N=519 | White or European American, n=75 | Asian or Pacific Islander, n=43 | Native American or Indigenous, n=21 | Multiracial, n=24 | Hispanic or Latino, n=288 | Black or African American, n=52 | Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Questioning, n=159 | Straight/Heterosexual, n=310 | Tran or Nonbinary, n=70 | Male, n=180 | Female, n=269.

KEY FINDINGS

- **Strong Satisfaction with Services.** In 2025, both caregivers (93.6%) and youth (92.5%) reported very strong satisfaction with the mental health services they received through the BHS system, demonstrating systemwide service quality.
- **Persistent Disparities in Perceived Equity.** While low overall, inequitable treatment concerns were concentrated among specific groups.

- Caregivers of trans or nonbinary youth reported markedly greater concerns. Overall, 6.9% of caregivers reported their child was treated with less courtesy, but that percentage rose to 13.0% among caregivers of youth identified as trans or nonbinary.
- Youth who identified as Black or African American and those who identified as male reported higher rates of perceived inequitable treatment. Among youth who identified as male, 11.7% felt they were treated with less courtesy than their peers, and that percentage rose to 15.4% among youth who identified as Black or African American.
- **Identity-matched Providers Support Comfort with Services.** Identity-matched providers influence youth and caregivers' level of comfort with services—but unevenly. Among caregivers in 2025, 34.9% reported their child's provider shared their racial or ethnic background, 50.5% shared the same gender, and 33.3% shared a similar sexual orientation. Among youth, 43.6% reported their provider shared their racial or ethnic background, 63.8% shared the same gender, and 57.7% shared a similar sexual orientation as their provider. Many caregivers and youth expressed higher comfort with providers who shared gender, racial/ethnic, or sexual identity characteristics. However, gender matching produced the strongest preferences across groups.
 - One-third (32.0%) of caregivers preferred gender-matched providers, with preferences highest among caregivers of girls (54.2%), Black or African American youth (38.6%), and multiracial youth (38.9%). Almost half (43.5%) of youth preferred gender-matched providers, especially those who identified as female (62.2%), Native American or Indigenous (52.4%), Hispanic or Latino (47.6%), and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or Questioning (48.1%).
 - Although most caregivers did not feel a racially matched provider was necessary, caregivers' comfort with their child's provider was strongly influenced by the youth's racial identity. Caregivers of Native American or Indigenous youth (33.3%) and Black or African American youth (26.5%) much more frequently noted more comfort with providers who shared a racial or ethnic identity with their child.
 - A quarter of youth (25.6%) preferred racially matched providers, especially multiracial (37.5%) and Hispanic or Latino youth (29.7%).
 - 19.8% of caregivers and 22.7% of youth preferred providers matched by sexual orientation, with the highest preference among caregivers of girls (27.4%) and among Native American or Indigenous youth (33.3%), and trans or nonbinary youth (34.3%).
 - Caregivers of older youth were more likely to prefer identity-matched providers, suggesting the increasing importance of representation as youth age.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Strengthen equity initiatives** and enhance monitoring for groups with higher reports of inequitable treatment while receiving mental health services, such as trans and nonbinary youth, Black or African American youth.
- **Expand and support workforce diversity**, focusing on recruiting and retaining providers from Black or African American, Native American or Indigenous, multiracial, and Latino backgrounds to better match youth preferences.
- **Increase provider training** on culturally responsive and identity-affirming care. Develop specialty training tracks for providers who work with populations who report higher inequitable treatment, such as youth who identify as trans or nonbinary or Black or African American.
- **Improve provider–client matching options**. Strengthen intake processes that allow youth and caregivers to express preferences for provider gender, race/ethnicity, language, and LGBTQ+ competency.
- **Expand communication and transparency efforts**. Provide youth and caregivers with clear information about their rights, how to report concerns, and the process for requesting provider changes.
- **Support continuous community engagement**. Regularly engage youth and caregiver advisory groups to refine equity strategies and co-develop future revisions of the YSS supplemental health equity questionnaire to capture evolving needs and emerging disparities.