

Only Reporting on Consensual Sex:

"...[for] a lot of people their first experience may not have been something they chose, but I think [the statement about only reporting consensual activity is] very affirming towards those people and their experiences."

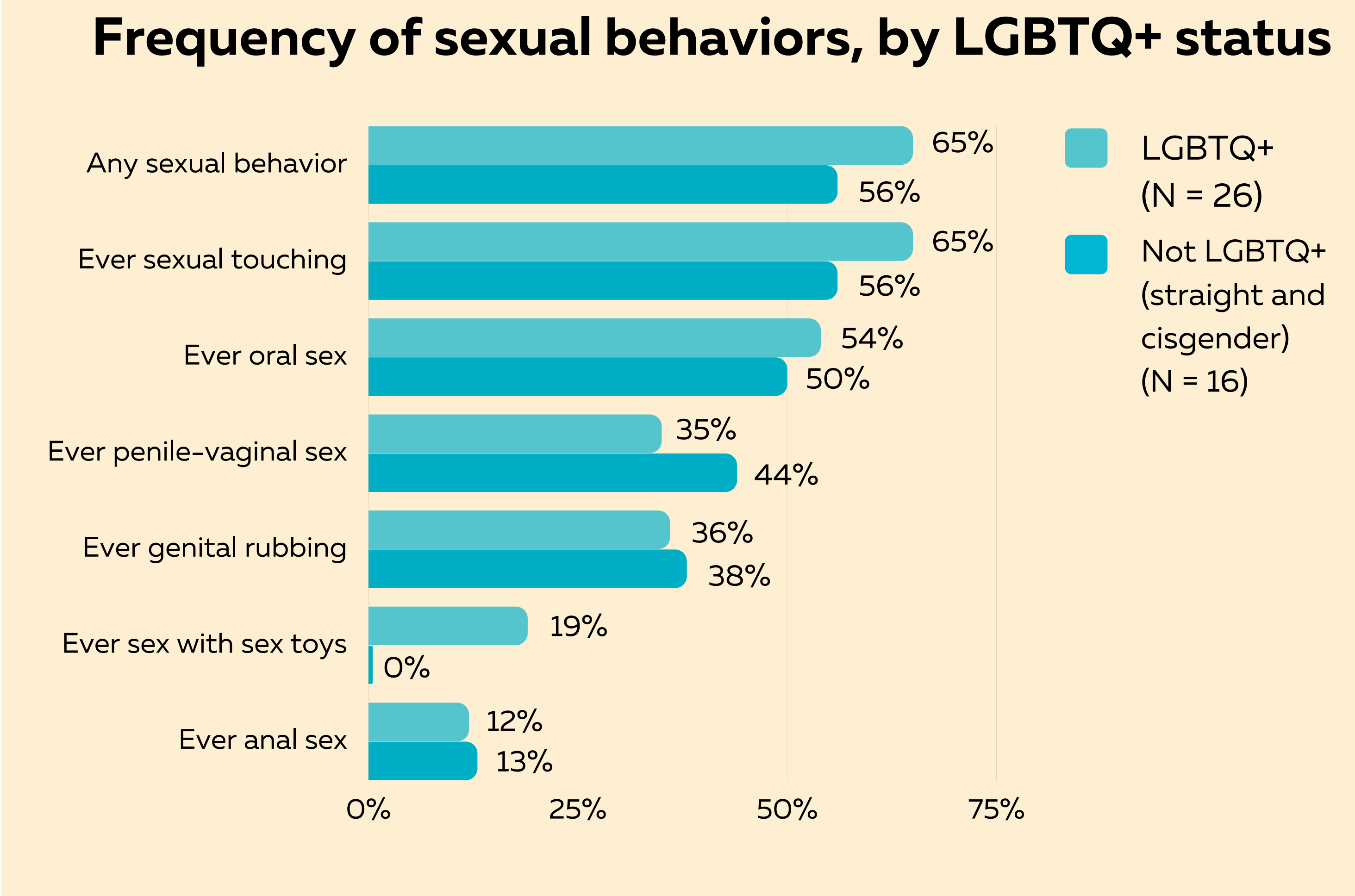
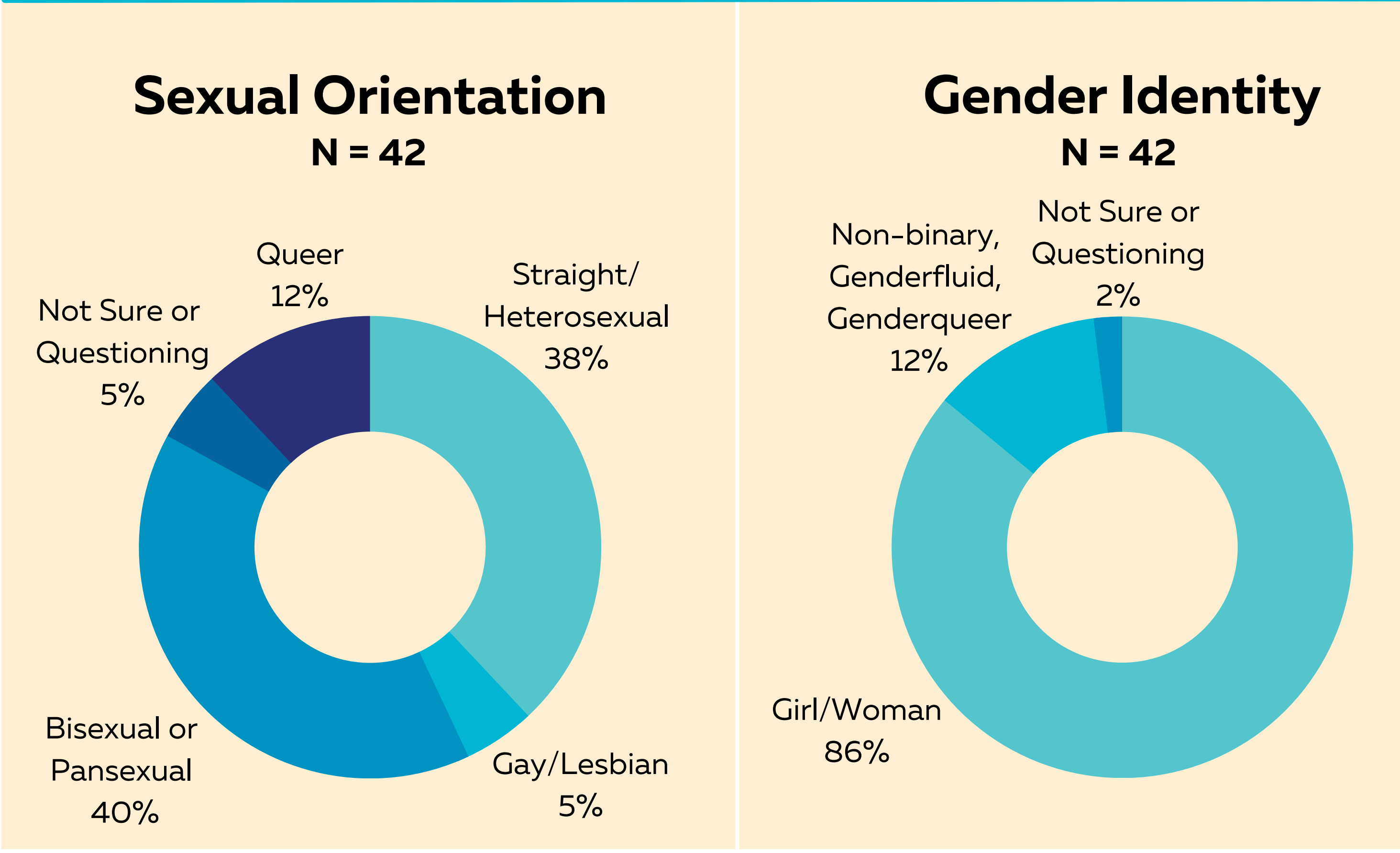
Private Parts:

"...liked private parts better than genitalia because it encompasses more than just genitalia because many people have different views of modesty"

Sexual Pleasure & Asexual Identity:

"It could throw someone off if they were asexual or ace flux. Maybe conforming the questions to something they were willing to do and comfortable with, but not necessarily for their pleasure."

Baseline Pilot Study Results



Key Takeaways

Expanding measures of gender identity, sexual orientation, and types of sexual behavior can help ensure that evaluations are more inclusive of LGBTQ+ youths' experiences. Incorporating feedback from LGBTQ+ youth, researchers, and equity experts helps to develop and refine survey measures to ensure they are relevant to LGBTQ+ youth.

In fact, these measures may better represent experiences of all youth, as even non-LGBTQ youth engage in many types of sexual behaviors aside from penile-vaginal sex.

These measures allow the sexual health education field to provide a more holistic description of youth's sexual behaviors and experiences, by moving away from a heteronormative hierarchy that prioritizes penile-vaginal sex.

Expanding survey measures ensures our impact evaluation is comprehensive and inclusive of LGBTQ+ youths' experiences.



Demographic & Sexual Behavior Measures

Gender Identity

Gender identity is how someone feels about their own gender. There are many ways a person can describe their gender identity and many labels a person can use.

Which of the following terms best describes your current gender identity?

- Girl or woman
- Boy or man
- Nonbinary, genderfluid, or genderqueer
- I am not sure or questioning
- I don't know what this question means
- Decline to answer
- A gender not listed here: _____

Sexual Orientation

Sexual orientation is a person's emotional, romantic, and/or sexual attractions to another person. There are many ways a person can describe their sexual orientation.

Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?

- Gay or lesbian
- Bisexual or pansexual
- Queer
- Asexual
- I am not sure or questioning
- I don't know what this question means
- Decline to answer
- An orientation not listed here: _____

Sexual Touching

Have you and another person **ever touched each other's private parts** for your or their pleasure?

This includes fingering, hand jobs, or touching breasts.

Oral Sex

Have you **ever** given or received **oral sex**?

By oral sex, we mean a person's mouth touching another person's vagina, penis, or anus (butthole) for their own or their partners' pleasure.

Penile-Vaginal Sex

Have you **ever** had **penis-vagina sex**?

By penis-vagina sex, we mean a penis goes inside a vagina.

Genital Rubbing

Have you **ever** rubbed your genitals or anus against another person's genitals or anus without penetration?

Sex using Sex Toys

Have you **ever** had **sex using sex toys** with another person?

By sex using sex toys, we mean using vibrators, dildos, or butt plugs with another person for your or their pleasure.

Anal Sex

Have you **ever** had **anal sex**?

By anal sex, we mean a penis goes in an anus (butthole).

Each of the sexual behavior questions were followed by the following statement: "Remember, only answer about times you willingly chose to participate."

Please note that the measures included here were those used at baseline for the pilot study. Since then, we have continued internal refinement of the measures to ensure maximum clarity, which will be incorporated and used in the full impact evaluation.

Making Survey Measures Inclusive of LGBTQ+ Experiences in Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Evaluations



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Conference (May 23-25, 2023)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Children, Youth and Families (ACYF), Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB) Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Program Grantee Conference: Reunite, Reignite, Re-Energize: Innovating for the Future

Introduction

SafeSpace is a 10-week mobile app intervention that provides users with sexual health information and resources. The lessons cover a range of topics including healthy relationships, identity, pregnancy and STI/HIV prevention, communication and decision making, and accessing healthcare. Each lesson is composed of:

- A real story written by a young person with lived experience,
- Key facts developed by sexual health experts,
- A reflection prompt, and
- Reputable resources.

Child Trends is evaluating SafeSpace among youth ages 14-18 who were assigned female at birth, with a particular focus on youth of color, LGBTQ+ youth, and/or youth living in rural areas in southeastern U.S. states. We conducted a pilot study with 42 youth and plan to recruit 1,000 youth into a two-arm randomized control trial evaluation between June 2023 and March 2025.

Problem Statement

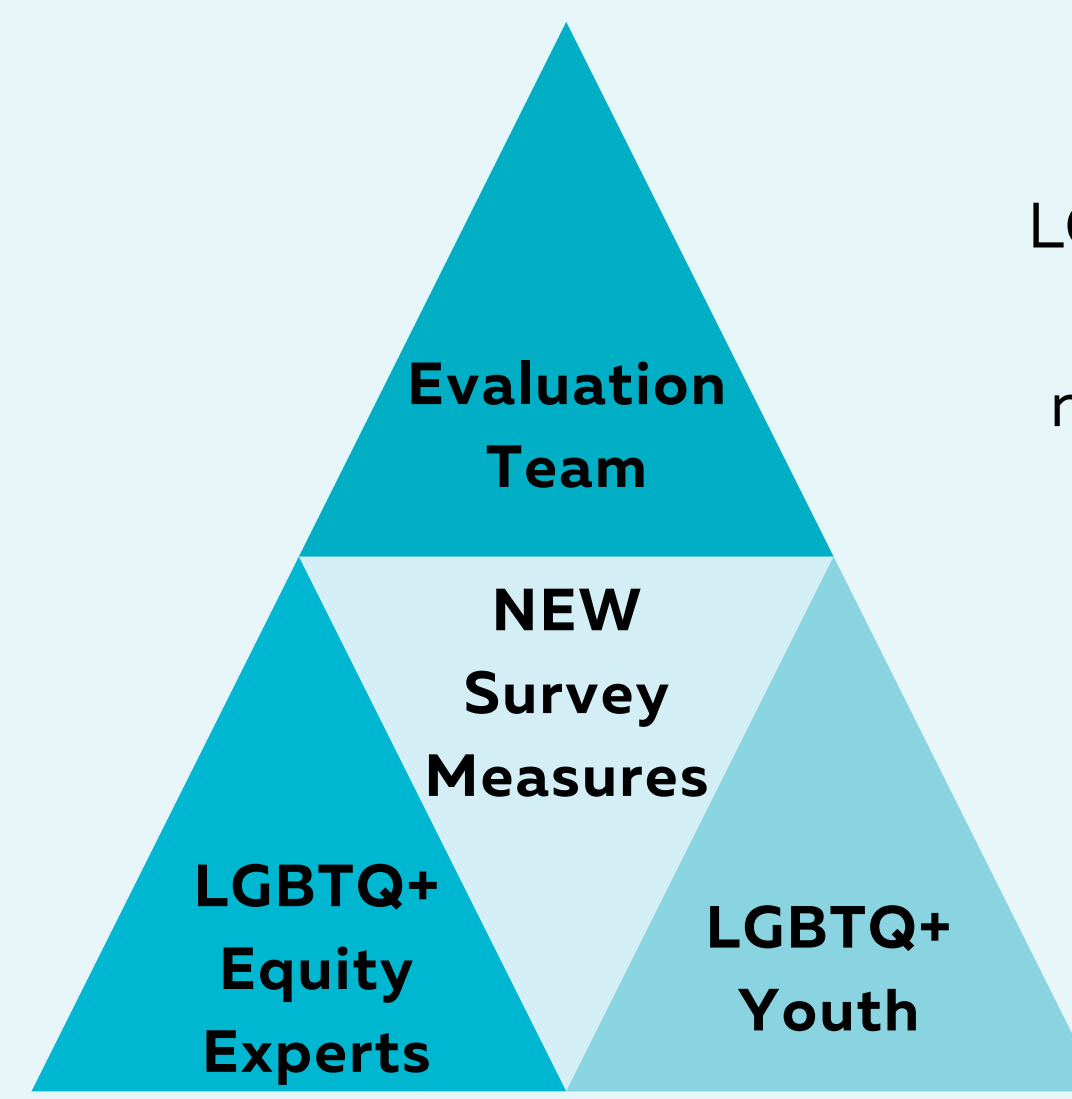
Evaluations of adolescent pregnancy prevention programs often measure only three types of sexual behavior: penile-vaginal, oral, and anal sex. Doing so excludes the full range of sexual activities LGBTQ+ youth engage in and results in missed opportunities to measure other STI risk behaviors and make LGBTQ+ participants feel seen.

The Process of Creating LGBTQ+ Inclusive Survey Measures

We used an iterative process to build consensus among the evaluation team, Child Trends' LGBTQ+ equity experts, and LGBTQ+ youth about the development of LGBTQ+ inclusive survey measures.

The Evaluation Team

What was their role? We led the development of the new measures. Our process began by reviewing published research from The Trevor Project and other equity focused institutions, along with internal Child Trends' resources on equity-centered survey design. Later in the process, we incorporated feedback from LGBTQ+ equity experts and LGBTQ youth.



LGBTQ+ Equity Experts

What was their role? Using their expertise in LGBTQ+ content and equity-centered research, two Child Trends LGBTQ+ equity experts reviewed the new survey measures for inclusion of, clarity of, and respectfulness to LGBTQ+ youth experiences.

What was their feedback? Experts suggested feedback removing the term 'private parts' when describing sexual touching and genital rubbing, defining genitals as separate from anus, and including an 'I don't know what this question means' option to the gender and sexual identity questions.

LGBTQ+ Youth

Who did we interview? We conducted seven cognitive interviews with LGBTQ+ youth who were assigned female at birth, living in a southern U.S. state, and were ages 14-18.

What did we talk about? One-hour phone interviews focused on survey questions about sexual activities, gender identity, and sexual orientation. Youth read aloud some of the questions, provided feedback, and offered any suggestions they had for clarity, comfort, and inclusiveness. Interviews were conducted via phone call and lasted for about 1 hour.

What did we learn? Youth responded positively to the definitions of terms and types of sexual activities and appreciated statements about reporting only on consensual activity. Specific feedback included 1) ensuring inclusion of asexual experiences in framing sex for participants' own or their partners' pleasure, 2) using the term 'butthole' to define anus may be humorous but is helpful, and 3) suggested using 'private parts' instead of genitals in defining sexual touching because sexual touching encompasses more than just genital touching.

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