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Understanding the Experiences of LGBTQ High School Students in California by Race/Ethnicity

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Acknowledgments

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Table of Contents

LIST OF TABLES

Introduction

Adolescence is a critical period in a young person's cognitive, emotional, and identity development. For students who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, or questioning (LGBTQ), providing them with targeted social and emotional supports that foster positive development can be crucial in ensuring that they are able to meet their full potential (Russell et al., 2010). This report highlights the intersectionality of gender identity and sexual orientation with race and ethnicity among California high school students.

This report presents data from adolescents in 9th and 11th grades who responded to items on the California Healthy Kids Survey regarding their social and emotional well-being, their school experiences, their school engagement, and the supports they received at school. Results are disaggregated by race and ethnicity as well as by gender identity and sexual orientation. The report also further disaggregates the data for Asian students by Asian group. By exploring the interactions between race, ethnicity, gender identity, and sexual orientation, the results provide key information about the experiences of all high school students in California. Perhaps most importantly, these data contribute to understanding how the provision of key supports may help schools and communities mitigate disparities in student outcomes and promote positive student experiences in school.

KEY TERMS USED IN THIS REPORT

Descriptors for gender identity and sexual orientation and for each race and ethnicity vary across the country. Some terms are widely accepted while others are dependent on region, community, or personal preference. For the purposes of this report, the nomenclature to refer to each gender identity, sexual orientation, race, and ethnicity is based on the CHKS survey items from the 2017–19 school years. A common definition for each of these terms is provided below.

Every person has a gender identity and a sexual orientation. These aspects of identity are separate and distinguishing between them is important.

Gender identity is "how you identify and see yourself" (GLSEN, 2019a). If your gender identity matches the sex you were assigned at birth, then you might describe yourself as **cisgender**. If your gender identity does not match the sex you were assigned at birth, then you might describe yourself as **transgender**. If you are neither cisgender nor transgender, you might also describe yourself as **gender fluid**, **gender nonconforming**, **genderqueer**, **nonbinary**, or **queer**, among other terms. If you are still exploring your gender identity or gender expression, then you might describe yourself as **questioning** (GLSEN, 2014).

Sexual orientation is "a person's emotional, sexual, and/or relational attraction to others" (SAMHSA, 2014). If you are attracted to others of the same gender, then you might describe yourself as **lesbian** or **gay**. If you are attracted to others of a different gender, then you might describe yourself as **straight** or **heterosexual**. If you are attracted to your own gender and genders other than your own, then you might describe yourself as **bisexual**. If you are attracted to people of all genders, then you might describe yourself as **pansexual**. If you are still exploring your sexual orientation, then you might describe yourself as **questioning**. If your sexual orientation is not heterosexual, or straight, you might describe yourself as **queer** (GLSEN, 2014).

LGBTQ is an acronym referring to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning or queer people and identities. It is also commonly used as an umbrella term encompassing the diversity of sexual orientations and gender identities that are not straight or cisgender.[1]

Race and ethnicity are complex social constructs. While these two aspects of identity can be related, they are distinct in important respects. **Race** refers to physical differences that groups and cultures consider socially significant (American Sociological Association, 2021). **Ethnicity** refers to a common identity-based culture or language that comprises a shared group identity. Often this shared identity is based on ancestry, customs, religion, practices, and beliefs (Schiebinger et al., 2021).

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[1] For definitions of these and other terms describing sexual orientation and gender identity, see GLSEN's gender terminology discussion guide and GLSEN's summary of key concepts and terms.

Sample and Survey Items

The California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS) was developed in 1998 by WestEd for the California Department of Education (CDE). The CHKS is an anonymous modular assessment for students ages 10 (grade 5) and above that California school districts can elect to administer.[2] Although participation in the CHKS is voluntary, the great majority of districts across the state administer it, usually at least every other year, at times of their own selection.

Tables in this report use pooled data from the administration of the CHKS in the two academic years spanning 2017–19.[3] A two-year period is used because the majority of participating California districts administer the CHKS biennially and at different times within any year. The high school data presented here combine survey responses from 559,120 students from grades 9 and 11 in school districts across the state.

Student Demographics

Table 1 details the CHKS items used in this study related to respondents' race; Hispanic or Latino ethnicity; Asian group identity, for students who identify their race as Asian; gender identity; and sexual orientation. This report uses these five demographic indicators to disaggregate data on student perceptions and experiences.

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[2] Schools in districts that receive Tobacco-Use Prevention Education (TUPE) funding are required to participate in the biennial CHKS. For more information, see http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/at/chks.asp.

[3] WestEd previously released a report, *Understanding the Experiences of LGBTQ Students in California* (Hanson et al., 2019), summarizing findings of a study that used 2017–19 CHKS data to analyze LGBTQ students' experiences and perceptions of school. The high school data set used in that study is a subset of the data presented here, and therefore the sample sizes are not identical. More information about the previous study is available at https://www.wested.org/resources/lgbtq-students-in-california/.

Table 1. Demographic Items on the California Healthy Kids Survey

Demographic Item	Survey Item	Response Options
Race	What is your race?	A) American Indian or Alaska Native B) Asian C) Black or African American D) Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander E) White F) Mixed (two or more) races
Ethnicity	Are you of Hispanic or Latino origin?[4]	A) No B) Yes
Asian Group Identity	If you are Asian or Pacific Islander, which groups best describe you? (Mark all that apply.) If you are *not* of Asian/Pacific Islander Background, mark "A) Does not apply."	A) Does not apply; I am not Asian or Pacific Islander B) Asian Indian C) Cambodian D) Chinese E) Filipino F) Hmong G) Japanese H) Korean I) Laotian J) Vietnamese K) Native Hawaiian, Guamanian, Samoan, Tahitian, or other Pacific Islander[5] L) Other Asian
Gender Identity	Some people describe themselves as transgender when their sex at birth does not match the way they think or feel about their gender. Are you transgender?	A) No, I am not transgender B) Yes, I am transgender C) I am not sure if I am transgender D) Decline to respond[6]
Sexual Orientation	Which of the following best describes you?	A) Straight (not gay) B) Gay or Lesbian C) Bisexual D) I am not sure yet E) Something else F) Decline to respond[7]

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[4] The survey asked students to indicate both their race and whether they identified as being of Hispanic or Latino origin. Students who identify as Hispanic or Latino are identified by their ethnicity only.

[5] Data for students identifying as Native Hawaiian, Guamanian, Samoan, Tahitian, or another Pacific Islander are included in the race/ethnicity tables under "Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander."

[6] Tables summarizing data on students' gender identities omit data from students who declined to respond to this question.

[7] Tables summarizing data on students' sexual orientations omit data from students who declined to respond to this question.

The CHKS asked students to indicate their race and whether they identify as being Hispanic or Latino. In compliance with state data collection requirements, the survey also asked respondents about any of 11 Asian group categories with which they might identify. Students who identify as Hispanic or Latino on the survey are not included in any racial category in this report but are represented only in the columns and rows labeled "Hispanic or Latino." For students who responded to the survey item indicating Asian or Pacific Islander identity, results are also further disaggregated by Asian group identity.

Student Perceptions and Experiences

This report examines results on 14 measures of student perceptions and experiences organized into the following five domains (see Table 2):

- school supports (presence of caring relationships with adults at school, being held to high expectations at school, opportunities for meaningful participation in school, promotion of parental involvement in school)

- school safety (perceived safety, fear of physical violence, and experiences of harassment and bullying)

- mental health (chronic sadness, suicide ideation)

- school engagement (academic motivation, school connectedness, attendance)

- academic performance (high self-reported grade point average)

Table 2. Selected Measures

Construct	CHKS Survey Measure and Operationalization
School Supports Domain	
Caring Adult Relationships scale (in school)	(Three-item scale) At my school, there is a teacher or some other adult...who really cares about me; …who notices I'm not there; …who listens to me when I have something to say. Agreement was measured by computing the average percentage of students who responded "pretty much true" or "very much true" across all the questions that measure this domain.[8]

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[8] For example, if a respondent marks one out of three items in a three-item scale as "pretty much true" or "very much true," the scale score would be 33 percent. The tables presented in the following sections report the average score for each scale.

Construct	CHKS Survey Measure and Operationalization
High Expectations scale (in school)	(Three-item scale)
	At my school, there is a teacher or some other adult…who tells me when I do a good job; …who always wants me to do my best; …who believes that I will be a success.
	Agreement was measured by computing the average percentage of students who responded "pretty much true" or "very much true" across all the questions that measure this domain.
Opportunities for Meaningful Participation scale (in school)	(Three-item scale)
	At school…I do interesting activities; …I help decide things like class activities; …I do things that make a difference.
	Agreement was measured by computing the average percentage of students who responded "pretty much true" or "very much true" across all the questions that measure this domain.
Promotion of Parental Involvement scale	(Three-item scale)
	Teachers at this school communicate with parents; Parents feel welcome to participate at this school; School staff take parent concerns seriously.
	Agreement was measured by computing the average percentage of students who agreed or strongly agreed across all the questions that measure this domain.
School Safety Domain	
Perceived school safety	How safe do you feel when you are at school?
	% of students responding "*very safe*" or "*safe*"
Fear of being beaten up	In the past 12 months at school, have you been afraid of being beaten up?
	% of students responding "1 time," "2–3 times," or "4 or more times"
Any harassment or bullying	In the past 12 months at school, have you been harassed or bullied for any of the following reasons? Your race, ethnicity, or national origin; Your religion; Your gender; Because you are gay, lesbian, or bisexual or someone thought you were; A physical or mental disability; You are an immigrant or someone thought you were; Any other reason.
	% of students responding "1 time," "2–3 times," or "4 or more times"
Mean rumors or lies	In the past 12 months at school, have you had mean rumors or lies spread about you?
	% of students responding "1 time," "2–3 times," or "4 or more times"
Mental Health Domain	
Chronic sadness	In the past 12 months, did you ever feel so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more that you stopped doing some usual activities?
	% of students responding "*yes*"
Suicide ideation	In the past 12 months, did you ever seriously consider attempting suicide?
	% of students responding "*yes*"

Construct	CHKS Survey Measure and Operationalization
School Engagement Domain	
Academic Motivation scale	(Four-item scale)
	I try hard to make sure that I am good at my schoolwork; I try hard at school because I am interested in my work; I work hard to try to understand new things at school; I am always trying to do better in my schoolwork.
	Agreement was measured by computing the average percentage of students who agreed or strongly agreed across all the questions that measure this domain.
School Connectedness scale	(Five-item scale)
	I feel close to people at this school; I am happy to be at this school; I feel like I am part of this school; The teachers at this school treat me fairly; I feel safe in my school.
	Agreement was measured by computing the average percentage of students who agreed or strongly agreed across all the questions that measure this domain.
Missed school	During the past 30 days, did you miss an entire day of school for any reason?
	% of students responding "1 day," "2 days," or "3 or more days"
Academic Performance Domain	
Self-reported grades earned	During the past 12 months, how would you describe the grades you mostly received in school?
	% of students responding "mostly Bs," "mostly As or Bs," or "mostly As"

Sample Sizes by Race/Ethnicity

The tables in this section present data disaggregated by three gender identity categories (transgender, not transgender, and "not sure") and by five sexual orientation categories (straight, gay/lesbian, bisexual, "not sure yet," and "something else"). Results for gender identity and sexual orientation are further disaggregated by seven race/ethnicity categories (American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, White, Mixed [Two or More Races], and Hispanic or Latino).

Table 3 presents the distribution of high school survey respondents by race/ethnicity and gender identity.

- The sample includes 559,120 students who responded to questions about both their gender identity and their race and/or Hispanic or Latino ethnicity.[9]

- Samples of students identifying as both American Indian or Alaska Native, Black or African American, or Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander and as either transgender or "not sure" if they are transgender are relatively small (fewer than 300).

- In most race and ethnic groups, the number of students reporting that they are "not sure" if they are transgender is similar to the number of transgender students. However, among Asian students, the number reporting that they are "not sure" if they are transgender is over twice as large as the number who identify as transgender.

Table 3. High School Survey Respondents, by Race/Ethnicity and Gender Identity

Gender Identity	No, I am not transgender	Yes, I am transgender	Not sure if I am transgender	Total
American Indian or Alaska Native	3,870	109	98	4,077
Asian	63,028	465	1,112	64,605
Black or African American	18,149	297	279	18,725
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	7,418	105	109	7,632
White	124,928	1,784	1,961	128,673
Mixed (Two or More Races)	47,116	756	930	48,802
Hispanic or Latino	279,504	3,202	3,900	286,606
Total	544,013	6,718	8,389	559,120

Note: The survey asked students to indicate their race and whether or not they identify as Hispanic or Latino. Students who identified as being of Hispanic or Latino origin on the survey are included in this table only in the row labeled "Hispanic or Latino."

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[9] An additional 15,779 students declined to respond to the survey item asking about their gender identity but answered survey items asking about their race and/or Hispanic or Latino ethnicity.

Table 4 presents the distribution of high school survey respondents by race/ethnicity and sexual orientation.

- A total of 557,109 students chose to respond to the survey items asking about their race/ethnicity and about their sexual orientation.[10]
- Samples of students identifying as both American Indian or Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander[11] and as gay/lesbian, bisexual, "not sure," or "something else" are relatively small (fewer than 300).

Table 4. High School Survey Respondents, by Race/Ethnicity and Sexual Orientation

Sexual Orientation	Straight	Gay/ Lesbian	Bisexual	Not Sure	Something Else	Total
American Indian or Alaska Native	3,431	93	270	194	114	4,102
Asian	54,896	1,037	3,173	3,667	1,198	63,971
Black or African American	15,914	478	1,269	726	339	18,726
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	6,596	156	468	281	133	7,634
White	108,882	2,755	8,439	5,501	2,463	128,040
Mixed (Two or More Races)	40,002	1,086	3,877	2,420	1,178	48,563
Hispanic or Latino	247,925	5,555	17,899	10,036	4,658	286, 073
Total	477,646	11,160	35,395	22,825	10,083	557,109

Note: The survey asked students to indicate their race and whether or not they identify as Hispanic or Latino. Students who identified as being of Hispanic or Latino origin on the survey are included in this table only in the row labeled "Hispanic or Latino."

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[10] An additional 18,951 students declined to respond to the survey item asking about their sexual orientation but answered survey items asking about their race and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity.

[11] In an exception to this trend, 7 percent of students identifying as Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (n=468) also identify as bisexual.

Survey Responses by Gender Identity and Race/Ethnicity

Across nearly all of the race and ethnicity groups, transgender students were markedly less likely than their non-transgender peers to indicate the presence of key school supports, feeling safe at school, academic motivation, school connectedness, and positive academic outcomes. Most responses from students who are "not sure" if they are transgender were more positive than those of their transgender peers but more negative than those of their non-transgender peers. However, there are some important exceptions to these trends, and actual disparities vary by race and ethnicity groups. High school students' responses to these survey items are summarized in Table 5.

- Black or African American transgender students **were more likely to report** having opportunities for meaningful participation in school than other Black or African American students (34% versus 29–30% among Black or African American students who are "not sure" whether they are transgender or do not identify as transgender). The percentage of Black or African American transgender students reporting that they have opportunities for meaningful participation was also higher than it was among any other race/ethnicity group, including students who are transgender, who are not transgender, or who are "not sure" if they are transgender.

- No more than 35 percent of transgender students indicated that their schools promote parental involvement (across all race/ethnicity groups); in comparison, 45 percent or more of the non-transgender students reported that their schools promote parental involvement. American Indian or Alaska Native transgender students were **least likely** (25%) of any group in the table to report promotion of parental involvement at school.

- Transgender students were **less likely** than non-transgender students to indicate a sense of school connectedness (across all race/ethnicty groups). **Fewer** American Indian or Alaska Native and Black or African American transgender students (31%) reported a sense of school connectedness than students in any other racial or ethnic group who are transgender, non-transgender, or "not sure."

- Transgender students were **most likely** to report having a caring relationship with an adult at school if they identify as Mixed (two or more races) (48%) or White (50%); they were **least likely** to report these types of relationships if they are Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (40%), Black or African American (39%), or American Indian or Alaska Native (34%).

Table 5. Percentage of High School Students Reporting the Presence of Key School Supports, Sense of Safety at School, Positive Academic Outcomes, Academic Motivation, and School Connectedness, by Race/Ethnicity and Gender Identity

Race/Ethnicity	American Indian or Alaska Native			Asian			Black or African American			Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander			White			Mixed (Two or More Races)			Hispanic or Latino		
Gender Identity	NT	T	NS	NT	T	NS	NT	T	NS	NT	T	NS	NT	T	NS	NT	T	NS	NT	T	NS
Caring relationship with an adult	59	34	42	61	45	53	61	39	47	61	40	45	66	50	52	60	48	47	57	42	44
High expectations	68	37	50	72	57	61	71	42	50	72	46	57	75	55	60	70	57	56	67	48	54
Opportunities for meaningful participation	31	28	27	30	29	26	30	34	29	30	24	32	30	25	24	27	25	21	25	27	24
Promotion of parent involvement	48	24	43	49	33	44	44	27	35	45	23	34	46	35	37	44	35	36	47	33	36
Perceived school safety	59	41	43	65	41	48	51	36	38	57	40	40	65	38	42	57	34	41	55	35	37
High self-reported GPA	57	41	61	86	70	78	54	38	48	69	54	65	75	58	66	66	53	58	53	42	49
Academic motivation	69	37	59	76	50	66	69	32	42	72	37	57	71	51	56	69	50	57	71	47	55
School connectedness	57	30	49	60	39	48	50	29	38	57	35	40	64	43	45	57	41	43	54	35	39

Note: NT = non-transgender; T = transgender; NS = not sure

Across race and ethnicity groups, transgender students and students who indicate being "not sure" if they are transgender were more likely than their non-transgender peers to report fearing physical violence, experiencing harassment, having mean rumors or lies spread about them, and missing school. These groups of students also reported experiencing chronic sadness and suicide ideation at higher rates than their non-transgender peers. However, there are some important exceptions, and these disparities vary by race and ethnicity groups. High school students' responses to these survey items are summarized in Table 6.

- Transgender students were **more likely** than their non-transgender peers of the same race or ethnicity to report fear of violence in every race/ethnicity group, and students who are "not sure" if they are transgender also reported fear of physical violence at **higher rates** than their non-transgender peers. Higher proportions of American Indian or Alaska Native (54%) and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (49%) transgender students reported fear of physical violence than did transgender students in any other race/ethnicity group; Asian transgender students were least likely (37%) of transgender students in any race/ethnicity group to report fear of physical violence.

- Transgender students were at least **twice as likely** to report experiencing harassment as their non-transgender peers in each race/ethnicity group. Regardless of race/ethnicity, 60 percent or more of all transgender students in the sample indicated that they have experienced harassment. In comparison, no more than 32 percent of non-transgender students in any race/ethnicity group reported experiencing harassment.

- Transgender students who identify as White or Mixed (two or more races) were **most likely** to indicate that they had experienced chronic sadness.

- Among Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander and Hispanic or Latino students, students who are "not sure" if they are transgender reported chronic sadness at rates **almost as high** as their transgender peers in their same race/ethnicity group. American Indian or Alaska Native students who are "not sure" were slightly more likely (by 1 percentage point) than transgender students in the same racial group to indicate that they had been chronically sad.

- No more than 20 percent of the non-transgender students in each race/ethnicity group reported seriously considering suicide in the past year. Suicide ideation was reported **at higher levels** (45–57%) by transgender students across all race/ethnicity groups.

- Across most race/ethnicity groups, **more than 50 percent** of students who are transgender, non-transgender, and "not sure" if they are transgender reported missing school in the last 30 days. Black or African American transgender students were most likely to report missing school; Asian students who are transgender, non-transgender, and "not sure" were least likely to report missing school.

Table 6. Percentage of High School Students Reporting Fear of Physical Violence, Harassment, Mean Rumors or Lies, Chronic Sadness, Suicide Ideation, and Missed School, by Race/Ethnicity and Gender Identity

Race/Ethnicity	American Indian or Alaska Native			Asian			Black or African American			Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander			White			Mixed (Two or More Races)			Hispanic or Latino		
Gender Identity	NT	T	NS	NT	T	NS	NT	T	NS	NT	T	NS	NT	T	NS	NT	T	NS	NT	T	NS
Fear of physical violence	13	54	32	10	37	25	8	44	32	12	49	31	11	42	30	12	42	32	10	42	33
Experienced harassment	29	73	55	28	60	42	30	62	54	30	61	50	30	64	53	32	68	53	24	61	52
Mean rumors or lies	34	68	43	26	44	31	30	53	45	33	60	41	35	51	45	36	55	44	30	52	45
Chronic sadness	32	60	61	31	63	51	29	55	47	38	62	62	32	69	59	36	67	59	35	61	60
Suicide ideation	17	57	39	16	52	38	15	52	41	20	45	46	16	56	44	19	57	47	15	50	45
Missed school	59	63	60	35	49	34	56	71	61	50	65	51	57	69	60	55	66	56	57	67	60

Note: NT = non-transgender; T = transgender; NS = not sure

Survey Responses by Sexual Orientation and Race/Ethnicity

Students in most race and ethnicity groups who identify as gay/lesbian, bisexual, unsure about their sexual orientation, or another sexual orientation ("something else") were less likely than straight students to indicate the presence of key school supports, sense of safety at school, positive academic outcomes, academic motivation, and school connectedness. However, there are some important exceptions, and these disparities vary by race/ethnicity group. High school students' responses to these survey items are summarized in Tables 7a and 7b.

- Respondents who identify as Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander and "something else" were **more likely** than students in any other sexual orientation and race/ethnicity category to report the presence of meaningful opportunities for participation in school (40%).

- Within each race/ethnicity group, students who identify their sexual orientation either as gay or lesbian or as "something else" were **less likely** to report a high level of academic motivation than students of other sexual orientations.

- Among most race/ethnicity and sexual orientation groups, 60 percent or fewer students reported feeling safe at school. The lowest rates of perceived school safety were among students who identify as both gay or lesbian and American Indian or Alaska Native (39%) and among students who identify as "something else" and either Black or African American (37%), Mixed (two or more races) (38%), or Hispanic or Latino (38%). The highest rates of perceived safety were among students who identify as straight and Asian (66%) and among those who identify as straight and White (67%).

Table 7a. Percentage of High School Students Reporting the Presence of Key School Supports, Sense of Safety at School, Positive Academic Outcomes, Academic Motivation, and School Connectedness, by Race/Ethnicity and Sexual Orientation

Race/Ethnicity	American Indian or Alaska Native					Asian					Black or African American					Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander				
Sexual Orientation	S	GL	B	NS	SE	S	GL	B	NS	SE	S	GL	B	NS	SE	S	GL	B	NS	SE
Caring relationship with an adult	60	40	46	58	47	62	59	56	56	52	62	50	57	55	48	61	54	54	52	44
High expectations	68	42	57	65	54	72	68	68	68	64	71	55	67	68	56	72	61	69	68	59
Opportunities for meaningful participation	31	19	24	36	33	31	31	26	27	27	31	28	26	28	24	31	31	25	25	40
Promotion of parent involvement	48	38	37	46	40	50	40	43	45	44	45	36	39	39	33	46	37	35	38	37
Perceived school safety	60	39	41	56	50	66	54	52	60	49	53	42	41	45	37	58	47	44	50	49
High self-reported GPA	57	42	52	58	51	86	79	82	86	80	55	46	46	54	47	69	60	68	74	67
Academic motivation	68	56	64	74	54	77	68	70	72	66	69	58	61	62	48	72	65	67	67	56
School connectedness	58	43	40	61	41	61	53	51	54	49	51	39	43	45	30	57	47	51	51	53

Note: S = straight; GL = gay/lesbian; B = bisexual; NS = not sure; SE = something else

Table 7b. Percentage of High School Students Reporting the Presence of Key School Supports, Sense of Safety at School, Positive Academic Outcomes, Academic Motivation, and School Connectedness, by Race/Ethnicity and Sexual Orientation

Race/Ethnicity	White					Mixed (Two or More Races)					Hispanic or Latino				
Sexual Orientation	S	GL	B	NS	SE	S	GL	B	NS	SE	S	GL	B	NS	SE
Caring relationships with an adult	67	60	58	61	51	61	55	53	56	48	57	53	51	50	48
High expectations	75	69	67	71	62	70	64	64	67	58	68	61	62	62	57
Opportunities for meaningful participation	31	26	23	27	23	28	24	23	24	25	25	26	22	23	25
Promotion of parent involvement	47	39	38	43	37	45	42	36	41	33	48	41	39	42	38
Perceived school safety	67	49	49	59	43	59	45	43	53	38	56	44	42	45	38
High self-reported GPA	76	70	66	77	66	66	60	59	70	60	53	51	50	57	51
Academic motivation	72	62	64	68	58	70	61	62	67	58	71	62	64	65	59
School connectedness	65	53	52	58	48	58	49	45	52	42	55	46	45	46	43

Note: S = straight; GL = gay/lesbian; B = bisexual; NS = not sure; SE = something else

Across race/ethnicity groups, students who identify as gay/lesbian, bisexual, unsure about their sexual orientation, or another sexual orientation ("something else") were more likely than their straight peers to report fearing physical violence, experiencing harassment, having mean rumors or lies spread about them, and missing school. However, these disparities vary by race/ethnicity group. Students who identify as gay/lesbian, bisexual, unsure about their sexual orientation, or "something else" also reported experiencing chronic sadness and suicide

ideation at higher rates than their straight peers. High school students' responses to these survey items are summarized in Tables 8a and 8b.

- In every race/ethnicity group, bisexual students reported chronic sadness levels at rates more than twice as high as straight students.

- In most race/ethnicity groups, between 53 percent and 66 percent of students reported having missed school in the past 30 days, with limited variation (7–11 percentage points) within these groups based on sexual orientation. However, among students who identify as Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, 50 to 57 percent reported missing school, while only 33 to 42 percent of Asian students reported missing school. The lowest rates of missed school were among Asian students who identify as straight (34%) or "not sure yet" about their sexual orientation (33%).

Table 8a. Percentage of High School Students Reporting Fear of Physical Violence, Harassment, Mean Rumors or Lies, Chronic Sadness, Suicide Ideation, and Missed School, by Race/Ethnicity and Sexual Orientation

Race/Ethnicity	American Indian or Alaska Native					Asian					Black or African American					Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander				
Sexual Orientation	S	GL	B	NS	SE	S	GL	B	NS	SE	S	GL	B	NS	SE	S	GL	B	NS	SE
Fear of physical violence	12	39	29	28	32	9	22	18	14	21	8	21	15	18	27	11	32	26	18	28
Experienced harassment	27	60	56	39	53	27	39	41	31	42	29	43	44	43	53	29	44	47	37	48
Mean rumors or lies	33	52	56	36	50	25	36	37	26	32	29	43	43	37	41	32	50	48	42	45
Chronic sadness	29	61	74	44	50	28	53	65	43	54	25	48	60	49	52	35	59	75	58	58
Suicide ideation	14	44	49	27	39	14	37	45	26	39	12	36	40	32	43	17	37	52	35	43
Missed school	58	66	66	61	56	34	42	42	33	39	55	65	66	60	60	50	56	53	52	57

Note: S = straight; GL = gay/lesbian; B = bisexual; NS = not sure; SE = something else

Table 8b. Percentage of High School Students Reporting Fear of Physical Violence, Harassment, Mean Rumors or Lies, Chronic Sadness, Suicide Ideation, and Missed School, by Race/Ethnicity and Sexual Orientation

Race/Ethnicity	White					Mixed (Two or More Races)					Hispanic or Latino				
Sexual Orientation	S	GL	B	NS	SE	S	GL	B	NS	SE	S	GL	B	NS	SE
Fear of physical violence	12	39	29	28	32	11	28	23	19	25	8	21	15	18	27
Experienced harassment	27	60	56	39	53	30	45	50	42	54	29	43	44	43	53
Mean rumors or lies	33	52	56	36	50	34	44	52	39	44	29	43	43	37	41
Chronic sadness	29	61	74	44	50	31	58	69	50	60	25	48	60	49	52
Suicide ideation	14	44	49	27	39	15	44	51	34	46	12	36	40	32	43
Missed school	58	66	66	61	56	55	60	62	53	58	55	65	66	60	60

Note: S = straight; GL = gay/lesbian; B = bisexual; NS = not sure; SE = something else

Sample Sizes by Asian Groups

In order to provide a more complete and nuanced picture of LGBTQ students' experiences in school, this section further disaggregates data on gender identity and sexual orientation by a set of more specific Asian identities. The CHKS asks students who identify as Asian to also select any specific Asian group they identify with, if they choose, from a list of 11 options. This section disaggregates student survey responses by 10 of these Asian identities. The data presented here include survey responses from students who identify as Asian and were in 9th or 11th grade when they took the CHKS in one of the two academic years spanning 2017–19.[12]

Table 9 presents the distribution of high school survey respondents by Asian group and gender identity.

Some of the data in Table 9 and subsequent tables are drawn from extremely small sample sizes. For example, a particularly small number of Cambodian and Laotian respondents (fewer than 10) identify as transgender or "not sure" of their gender. **Data from these samples have been italicized in the following tables. It is important to use caution when interpreting these results.**

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[12] WestEd previously released a study, *Understanding the Experiences of LGBTQ Students in California,* that used 2017–19 CHKS data to analyze LGBTQ students' experiences and perceptions of school. The data used in that study are a subset of the data presented here, and therefore the sample sizes are not identical. More information about the previous study is available at https://www.wested.org/resources/lgbtq-students-in-california/.

Table 9. High School Survey Respondents, by Asian Group and Gender Identity

Asian Group	Not Transgender	Transgender	Not Sure	Total
Asian Indian	9,412	45	102	9,559
Cambodian	603	*1*	*7*	611
Chinese	12,079	55	263	12,397
Filipino	10,096	82	159	10,337
Hmong	2,000	14	51	2,065
Japanese	1,244	10	27	1,281
Korean	4,946	36	64	5,046
Laotian	504	*2*	*9*	515
Vietnamese	9,066	67	163	9,296
Other Asian	11,925	132	236	12,293
Asian missing	1,153	21	31	1,205
Total	63,028	465	1,112	64,605

Note: "Asian missing" includes students who indicated that they identify as Asian but did not select a specific Asian group identity. "Other Asian" includes students who selected "Other Asian" as well as those who selected two or more of the Asian groups listed in this table. Sample sizes smaller than 10 are italicized. Use caution when interpreting these results.

Table 10 presents the distribution of high school survey respondents by Asian group and sexual orientation.

Table 10. High School Survey Respondents, by Asian Group and Sexual Orientation

Asian Group	Straight	Gay/ Lesbian	Bisexual	Not Sure	Something Else	Total
Asian Indian	8,502	72	299	459	103	9,435
Cambodian	507	11	34	25	12	589
Chinese	10,494	150	498	906	238	12,286
Filipino	8,475	272	778	523	205	10,253
Hmong	1,792	41	97	103	39	2,072
Japanese	1,100	18	52	77	22	1,269
Korean	4,559	39	129	212	77	5,016
Laotian	439	16	24	34	3	516
Vietnamese	7,716	167	520	574	188	9,165
Other Asian	10,279	228	696	688	288	12,179
Asian missing	1,033	23	46	66	23	1,191
Total	54,896	1,037	3,173	3,667	1,198	63,971

Note: "Asian missing" includes students who indicated that they identify as Asian but did not select a specific Asian group identity. "Other Asian" includes students who selected "Other Asian" as well as those who selected two or more of the Asian groups listed in this table. Sample sizes smaller than 10 are italicized. Use caution when interpreting these results.

Survey Responses by Gender Identity and Asian Group

Across nearly all of the Asian groups, transgender students and students who are "not sure" if they are transgender were less likely than their non-transgender peers to indicate the presence of key school supports, sense of safety at school, positive academic outcomes, academic motivation, and school connectedness. However, there are some important exceptions, and these disparities vary by race/ethnicity group. High school students' responses to these survey items are summarized in Tables 11a and 11b.

- Japanese, Filipino, Korean, and Hmong students who are transgender reported meaningful opportunities for participation in school at higher rates than non-transgender students in the same groups. Transgender Filipino students were also more likely than their non-transgender peers to report being held to high expectations at school.

- Over 70 percent of transgender students who identify as Chinese, Korean, Laotian, and Vietnamese reported maintaining a high GPA.

- Among respondents who identify as Filipino, transgender students were more likely to report being held to high expectations at school (78%) than non-transgender peers in any Asian group.

Table 11a. Percentage of High School Students Reporting the Presence of Key School Supports, Sense of Safety at School, Positive Academic Outcomes, Academic Motivation, and School Connectedness, by Asian Group (Asian Indian, Cambodian, Chinese, Filipino, Hmong) and Gender Identity

Race/Ethnicity	Asian Indian			Cambodian			Chinese			Filipino			Hmong		
Gender Identity	NT	T	NS	NT	T	NS	NT	T	NS	NT	T	NS	NT	T	NS
Caring relationships	66	45	46	57	*0*	*67*	60	37	58	60	55	49	52	27	41
High expectations	74	43	52	68	*0*	*100*	70	47	62	74	78	58	69	33	44
Opportunities for meaningful participation	37	33	34	25	*0*	*20*	30	26	27	29	30	20	23	28	25
Promotion of parent involvement	54	35	42	46	*0*	*67*	48	35	38	49	30	49	44	33	33
Perceived school safety	73	27	58	53	*0*	*43*	70	38	49	60	50	47	47	36	41
High self-reported GPA	92	69	89	68	*0*	*43*	91	84	86	80	66	70	69	21	68
Academic motivation	82	47	73	69	*0*	*100*	76	54	62	77	61	65	75	20	58
School connectedness	67	38	60	53	*0*	*40*	62	46	48	59	49	44	51	32	28

Note: NT = non-transgender; T = transgender; NS = not sure. Results based on data from samples smaller than 10 are italicized. Use caution when interpreting these results.

Table 11b. Percentage of High School Students Reporting the Presence of Key School Supports, Sense of Safety at School, Positive Academic Outcomes, Academic Motivation, and School Connectedness, by Asian Group (Japanese, Korean, Laotian, Vietnamese, Other Asian) and Gender Identity

Race/Ethnicity	Japanese			Korean			Laotian			Vietnamese			Other Asian		
Gender Identity	NT	T	NS	NT	T	NS	NT	T	NS	NT	T	NS	NT	T	NS
Caring relationships	66	*33*	22	61	42	47	56	*33*	*67*	62	47	61	60	42	55
High expectations	74	*40*	44	68	51	57	69	*0*	*83*	73	63	73	70	51	62
Opportunities for meaningful participation	31	*12*	7	29	33	18	23	*0*	*70*	29	35	25	29	25	26
Promotion of parent involvement	51	*40*	33	45	31	35	49	*0*	*67*	50	50	55	48	25	43
Perceived school safety	71	*40*	44	65	39	41	47	*50*	*56*	64	48	49	62	37	46
High self-reported GPA	88	*60*	63	90	72	84	60	*100*	*78*	87	74	79	84	69	74
Academic motivation	77	*35*	50	72	42	57	68	*0*	*100*	74	52	72	75	49	70
School connectedness	64	*32*	34	59	45	41	51	*0*	*60*	59	32	50	59	33	50

Note: NT = non-transgender; T = transgender; NS = not sure. Results based on data from samples smaller than 10 are italicized. Use caution when interpreting these results.

Compared to non-transgender students, transgender students of every Asian group except for Laotian (n=2) were more likely than their non-transgender peers to report fearing physical violence, experiencing harassment, having mean rumors or lies spread about them, and missing school. Similar but smaller disparities also exist across Asian groups between non-transgender

students and students who are not sure if they are transgender. High school students' responses to these survey items are summarized in Tables 12a and 12b.

- Eighteen percent (18%) or fewer of non-transgender students in each Asian group reported seriously considering suicide in the prior year. Transgender students across all Asian groups reported suicide ideation at **higher rates** than non-transgender peers, with the highest rates among transgender Cambodian (100%, n=1) and Hmong (79%, n=14) respondents. Due to the small sample sizes of transgender Cambodian and Hmong students, these results should be interpreted with caution.

- Transgender students were **more likely** to report experiencing harassment than their non-transgender peers in Asian groups. Fifty-eight percent or more of transgender students indicated that they had experienced harassment, regardless of Asian group identity. In comparison, no more than 32 percent of non-transgender students in any Asian group reported experiencing harassment.

Table 12a. Percentage of High School Students Reporting Fear of Physical Violence, Harassment, Mean Rumors or Lies, Chronic Sadness, Suicide Ideation, and Missed School, by Asian Group (Asian Indian, Cambodian, Chinese, Filipino, Hmong) and Gender Identity

Race/Ethnicity	Asian Indian			Cambodian			Chinese			Filipino			Hmong		
Gender Identity	NT	T	NS	NT	T	NS	NT	T	NS	NT	T	NS	NT	T	NS
Fear of physical violence	8	39	23	13	*100*	*29*	7	36	20	14	31	26	13	43	33
Experienced harassment	28	64	44	26	*100*	*71*	22	60	34	31	59	43	31	64	37
Mean rumors or lies	27	45	39	27	*100*	*57*	20	40	23	28	38	34	23	43	27
Chronic sadness	26	60	54	36	*100*	*71*	23	58	39	40	69	65	38	46	51
Suicide ideation	13	48	42	18	*100*	*29*	13	48	29	19	59	45	17	79	31
Missed school	38	62	50	42	*100*	*57*	27	36	24	41	49	40	48	64	43

Note: NT = non-transgender; T = transgender; NS = not sure. Results based on data from samples smaller than 10 are italicized. Use caution when interpreting these results.

Table 12b. Percentage of High School Students Reporting Fear of Physical Violence, Harassment, Mean Rumors or Lies, Chronic Sadness, Suicide Ideation, and Missed School, by Asian Group (Japanese, Korean, Laotian, Vietnamese, Other Asian) and Gender Identity

Race/Ethnicity	Japanese			Korean			Laotian			Vietnamese			Other Asian		
Gender Identity	NT	T	NS	NT	T	NS	NT	T	NS	NT	T	NS	NT	T	NS
Fear of physical violence	7	20	26	7	49	29	10	*50*	22	10	32	20	11	39	31
Experienced harassment	27	60	33	28	72	53	31	*50*	56	26	54	35	32	58	49
Mean rumors or lies	21	30	26	25	54	34	26	*50*	22	26	45	25	28	45	36
Chronic sadness	24	60	44	29	76	51	37	*50*	67	34	65	52	34	61	55
Suicide ideation	14	50	41	17	59	47	18	*50*	22	17	42	36	18	52	44
Missed school	34	50	31	33	33	31	48	*50*	22	27	47	28	37	51	38

Note: NT = non-transgender; T = transgender; NS = not sure. Results based on data from samples smaller than 10 are italicized. Use caution when interpreting these results.

Survey Responses by Sexual Orientation and Asian Group

Students in most Asian groups who identify as gay/lesbian, bisexual, unsure about their sexual orientation, or another sexual orientation ("something else") were slightly less likely than straight students to indicate the presence of key school supports, sense of safety at school, positive academic outcomes, academic motivation, and school connectedness. However, there are some important exceptions, and these disparities vary by Asian group. High school students' responses to these survey items are summarized in Tables 13a, 13b, and 13c.

- Cambodian students who identify as gay/lesbian were more likely to report being held to high expectations, opportunities for meaningful participation at school, promotion of parental involvement at school, high GPA, academic motivation, and sense of school connectedness than their straight peers.

- Japanese, Hmong, Vietnamese, and Cambodian students who identify as gay/lesbian were more likely than their peers of other sexual orientations to report the presence of caring relationships with an adult at school.

Table 13a. Percentage of High School Students Reporting the Presence of Key School Supports, Sense of Safety at School, Positive Academic Outcomes, Academic Motivation, and School Connectedness, by Asian Group (Asian Indian, Cambodian, Chinese, Filipino) and Sexual Orientation

Race/Ethnicity	Asian Indian					Cambodian					Chinese					Filipino				
Sexual Orientation	S	GL	B	NS	SE	S	GL	B	NS	SE	S	GL	B	NS	SE	S	GL	B	NS	SE
Caring relationships	67	47	57	56	51	58	53	48	67	53	60	62	57	60	49	61	59	55	59	58
High expectations	75	54	68	68	60	69	80	63	77	73	70	68	66	67	61	75	74	70	72	69
Opportunities for meaningful participation	38	27	28	33	28	27	36	9	24	36	31	31	24	27	22	30	33	26	26	29
Promotion of parent involvement	54	29	43	46	44	44	60	33	57	60	49	46	44	44	42	50	36	42	49	45
Perceived school safety	74	59	60	64	58	53	40	52	52	64	71	58	60	67	53	61	54	49	55	50
High self-reported GPA	91	90	92	93	85	68	91	59	68	67	91	87	90	89	84	79	78	76	82	76
Academic motivation	83	76	73	80	61	70	90	42	78	90	76	67	72	69	61	77	69	70	75	68
School connectedness	68	50	57	60	45	54	64	41	44	56	63	57	54	54	48	60	52	50	54	52

Note: S = straight; GL = gay/lesbian; B = bisexual; NS = not sure; SE = something else. Results based on data from samples smaller than 10 are italicized. Use caution when interpreting these results.

Table 13b. Percentage of High School Students Reporting the Presence of Key School Supports, Sense of Safety at School, Positive Academic Outcomes, Academic Motivation, and School Connectedness, by Asian Group (Hmong, Japanese, Korean, Laotian) and Sexual Orientation

Race/Ethnicity	Hmong					Japanese					Korean					Laotian				
Sexual Orientation	S	GL	B	NS	SE	S	GL	B	NS	SE	S	GL	B	NS	SE	S	GL	B	NS	SE
Caring relationships	53	80	30	34	33	64	81	50	63	11	62	55	52	58	35	57	50	58	43	*83*
High expectations	69	83	52	55	52	74	81	61	70	22	68	64	62	64	50	71	47	69	63	*83*
Opportunities for meaningful participation	23	30	19	17	23	31	47	21	26	7	30	30	23	27	18	25	8	22	18	*70*
Promotion of parent involvement	45	46	39	28	31	51	67	36	51	67	45	43	47	39	29	50	33	39	47	*50*
Perceived school safety	48	41	37	42	34	71	78	46	71	41	65	61	46	54	43	51	31	13	47	*0*
High self-reported GPA	69	61	64	66	62	88	83	73	88	82	90	68	84	87	84	59	50	67	65	*67*
Academic motivation	75	81	69	63	73	76	83	74	72	75	73	66	68	62	57	71	38	65	65	*88*
School connectedness	52	61	42	38	37	64	73	52	60	50	60	60	48	53	44	54	31	32	44	*70*

Note: S = straight; GL = gay/lesbian; B = bisexual; NS = not sure; SE = something else. Results based on data from samples smaller than 10 are italicized. Use caution when interpreting these results.

Table 13c. Percentage of High School Students Reporting the Presence of Key School Supports, Sense of Safety at School, Positive Academic Outcomes, Academic Motivation, and School Connectedness, by Asian Group (Vietnamese, Other Asian) and Sexual Orientation

Race/Ethnicity	Vietnamese					Other Asian				
Sexual Orientation	S	GL	B	NS	SE	S	GL	B	NS	SE
Caring relationships	62	66	61	56	56	60	54	56	53	54
High expectations	73	74	75	67	69	71	64	66	67	64
Opportunities for meaningful participation	29	35	32	25	34	30	28	26	26	25
Promotion of parent involvement	51	54	45	47	45	49	35	41	44	45
Perceived school safety	65	61	54	58	48	64	45	48	60	46
High self-reported GPA	87	88	86	88	83	84	74	81	84	76
Academic motivation	74	71	74	72	72	76	63	66	75	66
School connectedness	60	55	53	54	52	60	49	50	52	49

Note: S = straight; GL = gay/lesbian; B = bisexual; NS = not sure; SE = something else. Results based on data from samples smaller than 10 are italicized. Use caution when interpreting these results.

Students in most Asian groups who identify as gay/lesbian, bisexual, unsure about their sexual orientation, or another sexual orientation ("something else") were slightly more likely to report fearing physical violence, experiencing harassment, having mean rumors or lies spread about them, and missing school. However, there are some important exceptions, and these disparities vary by Asian group. High school students' responses to these survey items are summarized in Tables 14a, 14b, and 14c.

- Among Asian Indian, Cambodian, Chinese, and Laotian students, bisexual respondents reported chronic sadness at rates more than twice as high as straight students. Japanese students who identify as bisexual were more than three times as likely to report chronic sadness than their straight peers.

Table 14a. Percentage of High School Students Reporting Fear of Physical Violence, Harassment, Mean Rumors or Lies, Chronic Sadness, Suicide Ideation, and Missed School, by Asian Group (Asian Indian, Cambodian, Chinese, Filipino) and Sexual Orientation

Race/Ethnicity	Asian Indian					Cambodian					Chinese					Filipino				
Sexual Orientation	S	GL	B	NS	SE	S	GL	B	NS	SE	S	GL	B	NS	SE	S	GL	B	NS	SE
Fear of physical violence	8	24	11	12	17	11	27	33	21	8	6	16	12	8	15	13	25	19	21	21
Experienced harassment	28	39	38	34	46	24	18	50	40	25	22	32	31	26	33	29	36	43	33	43
Mean rumors or lies	26	37	39	32	35	26	45	45	32	33	20	30	27	19	24	28	35	36	28	38
Chronic sadness	23	47	68	38	57	33	45	68	44	42	21	46	51	33	46	37	57	69	55	63
Suicide ideation	11	39	44	26	38	14	27	62	24	36	11	36	38	22	34	16	40	49	33	43
Missed school	38	38	48	39	52	43	18	56	24	25	27	38	32	27	27	40	46	48	40	51

Note: S = straight; GL = gay/lesbian; B = bisexual; NS = not sure; SE = something else. Results based on data from samples smaller than 10 are italicized. Use caution when interpreting these results.

Table 14b. Percentage of High School Students Reporting Fear of Physical Violence, Harassment, Mean Rumors or Lies, Chronic Sadness, Suicide Ideation, and Missed School, by Asian Group (Hmong, Japanese, Korean, Laotian) and Sexual Orientation

Race/Ethnicity	Hmong					Japanese					Korean					Laotian				
Sexual Orientation	S	GL	B	NS	SE	S	GL	B	NS	SE	S	GL	B	NS	SE	S	GL	B	NS	SE
Fear of physical violence	12	27	29	17	26	7	11	20	9	23	7	18	12	13	26	9	7	25	15	*33*
Experienced harassment	30	49	40	36	54	27	33	42	25	59	28	51	47	30	51	31	38	50	29	*33*
Mean rumors or lies	23	35	38	22	33	21	28	41	17	32	25	42	34	29	37	25	44	38	32	*33*
Chronic sadness	36	53	67	46	51	22	39	73	29	59	27	61	69	47	47	33	69	67	56	*67*
Suicide ideation	16	37	43	17	41	12	11	54	25	43	16	37	50	30	34	16	31	42	32	*33*
Missed school	48	54	51	46	54	34	44	44	26	45	33	44	38	35	28	48	44	46	39	*67*

Note: S = straight; GL = gay/lesbian; B = bisexual; NS = not sure; SE = something else. Results based on data from samples smaller than 10 are italicized. Use caution when interpreting these results.

Table 14c. Percentage of High School Students Reporting Fear of Physical Violence, Harassment, Mean Rumors or Lies, Chronic Sadness, Suicide Ideation, and Missed School, by Asian Group (Vietnamese, Other Asian) and Sexual Orientation

Race/Ethnicity	Vietnamese					Other Asian				
Sexual Orientation	S	GL	B	NS	SE	S	GL	B	NS	SE
Fear of physical violence	10	19	16	14	20	10	24	22	16	23
Experienced harassment	25	36	41	29	37	31	43	47	37	46
Mean rumors or lies	25	30	38	27	25	27	42	42	28	38
Chronic sadness	31	45	63	48	55	31	59	69	46	57
Suicide ideation	14	25	40	26	33	16	45	48	29	44
Missed school	27	32	33	24	32	37	43	43	36	39

Note: S = straight; GL = gay/lesbian; B = bisexual; NS = not sure; SE = something else. Results based on data from samples smaller than 10 are italicized. Use caution when interpreting these results.

Conclusion

School communities have an opportunity to improve the well-being of LGBTQ students and students of color. The previous companion study, *Understanding the Experiences of LGBTQ Students in California,* found that LGBTQ youths reported more negative results than straight and non-transgender peers across indicators of well-being and positive school experiences, engagement, and supports. The analyses indicated that if transgender students experienced the same levels of school supports and safety as non-transgender students, disparities between these groups in the areas of mental health, academic motivation, and school absences would be reduced, and the disparity in school connectedness would be eliminated. If gay, lesbian, and bisexual students experienced the same level of supports and safety in school as their straight

peers, disparities in connectedness, mental health, academic motivation, and academic performance would be reduced (Hanson et al., 2019).

Similarly, previous studies using CHKS data have found racial/ethnic disparities in experiences of school climate, with potential consequences including racial/ethnic differences in students' academic achievement, school connectedness, and perceived safety at school (Voight, 2013). Research indicates that these gaps could be substantially reduced if Black or African American, Native/Indigenous, and Hispanic or Latino students experienced the same levels of caring adult relationships and academic supports as their White peers (Hanson et al., 2012).

This report highlights the added layer of intersectionality of sexual orientation and gender identities with race/ethnicity and provides additional insights into the experiences of high school students in California. Additionally, on several indicators, although more positive outcomes and experiences are reported for Asian students in the aggregate, disaggregating the CHKS results by Asian group identity unearths differences masked by the aggregate data.

Data from the CHKS offer an important source of information about the experiences, needs, and resilience of youth living in multiple systems of oppression — based on race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation. LGBTQ youths of color often experience a combination of racism, homophobia, and transphobia, and schools need to provide supports that are responsive to the full range of student experiences and needs (GLSEN, 2019b; Calzo et al., 2020; Baams & Russell, 2021). These supports need to be inclusive of all youths and should respect all aspects of student identities. Providing key supports and creating an inclusive, affirming, and safe learning environment can help mitigate the challenges that LGBTQ students of color face.

To find resources for supporting LGBTQ youth of color, visit:

GenderSpectrum.org

GLSEN.org/lgbtq-youth-color

GSANetwork.org

TheTrevorProject.org

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