

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES: IMPLICATIONS OF GENDER AND SEXUAL IDENTITY RESEARCH WITH UNSTABLY HOUSED LGBTQ+ YOUNG ADULTS

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BACKGROUND

- The ANCHOR Project (2014-2017) provided trauma-informed, culturally responsive services to unstably housed young adults who identified with LGBTQ+ communities
- Helped participants achieve health and wellness in multiple facets of their lives
- Third iteration of programs designed to serve the LGBTQ+ community in Southern Arizona over the past 15 years
- Accurately depicting gender identity and sexual orientation is more complex than checking a box
- Traditional data collection tools reinforce a binary system and assume straight cisgender identity, thereby excluding members of the LGBTQ+ community



RESULTS

Gender Identity *	Percent
Woman	35.5
Man	49.4
Transgender	29.5
Female-to-Male	14.5
Male-to-Female	16.3
Genderqueer	15.7
Two-Spirit	14.5
Questioning	4.2
Different term	10.8

*Identities were not mutually exclusive

89% (n=84) felt there was a mismatch between their assigned birth gender and how they felt inside

84% (n=80) identified with a different gender than the one assigned at birth

10.4 Average age **13.5**

57% (n=94) of participants experienced discomfort with the biological sex or gender they were assigned at birth

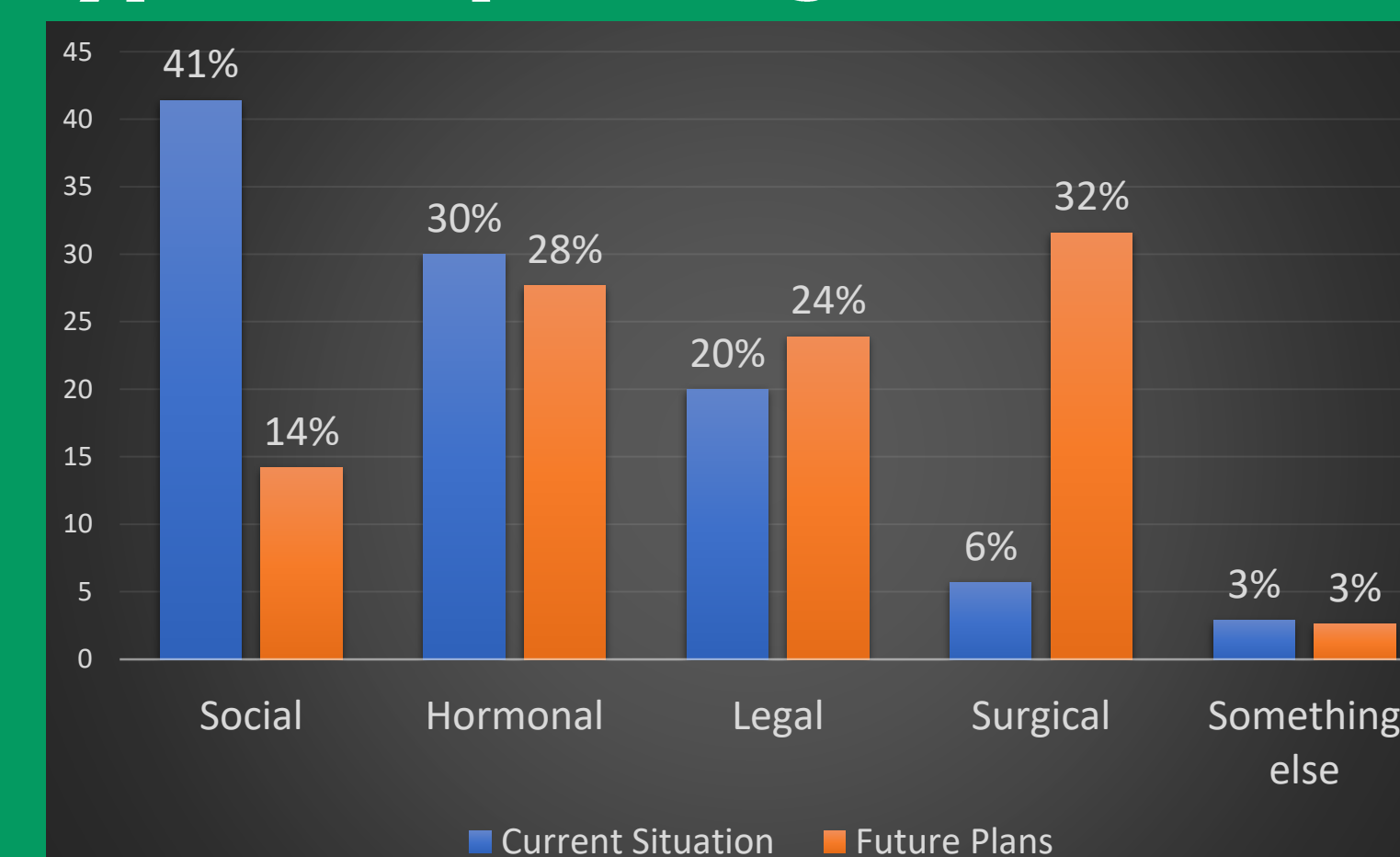
72% (n=64) had begun a type or aspect of transition

Themes around transition

Unsure, want to know more	Desired changes, steps needed	Insurance coverage, financial barriers	Pain from inability to transition as desired
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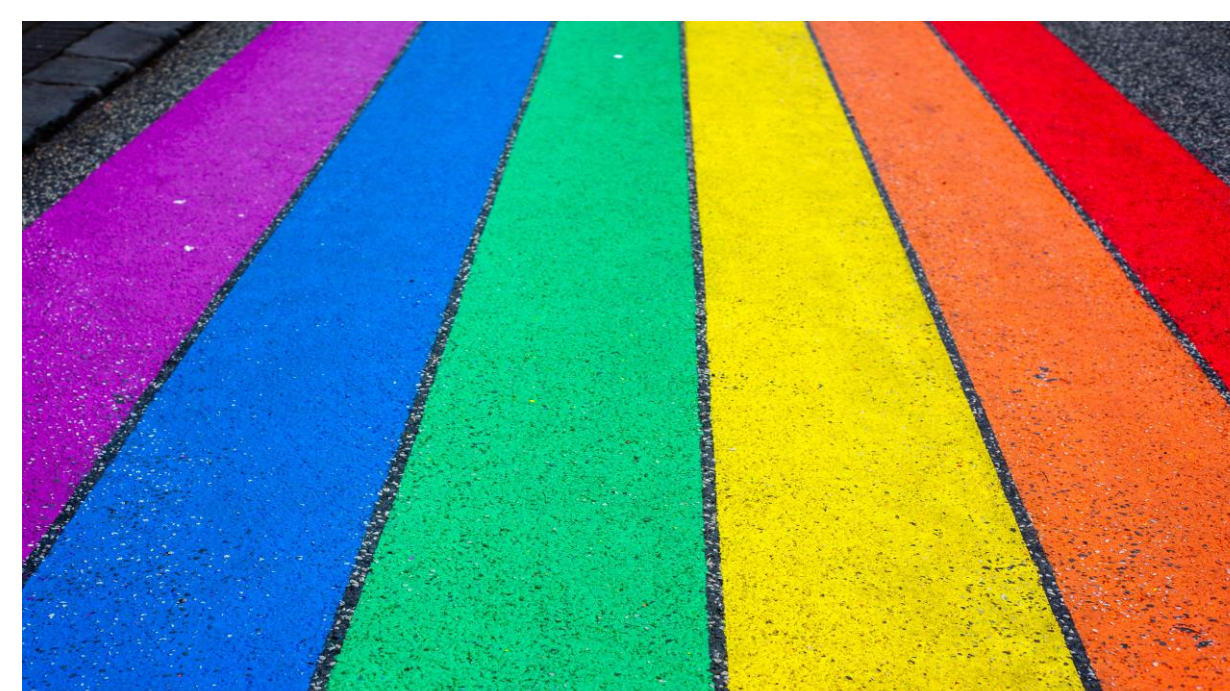
No changes desired, transition is more than physical

Types or aspects of gender transition



METHODS

- 148 LGBTQ+-identified participants enrolled in ANCHOR's evaluation study
- The Supplemental Questionnaire affirmed and explored participants' understandings of: gender identity; sexual orientation; gender transition; the experience of coming out to family members; and pride and shame around LGBTQ+ identity



RESULTS

Sexual Identity *	Percent
Lesbian	12.7
Gay	30.1
Bisexual	24.7
Queer	20.5
Questioning	7.2
Two-Spirit	9.0
Straight	19.9
Pansexual	24.1
Different term	12.1

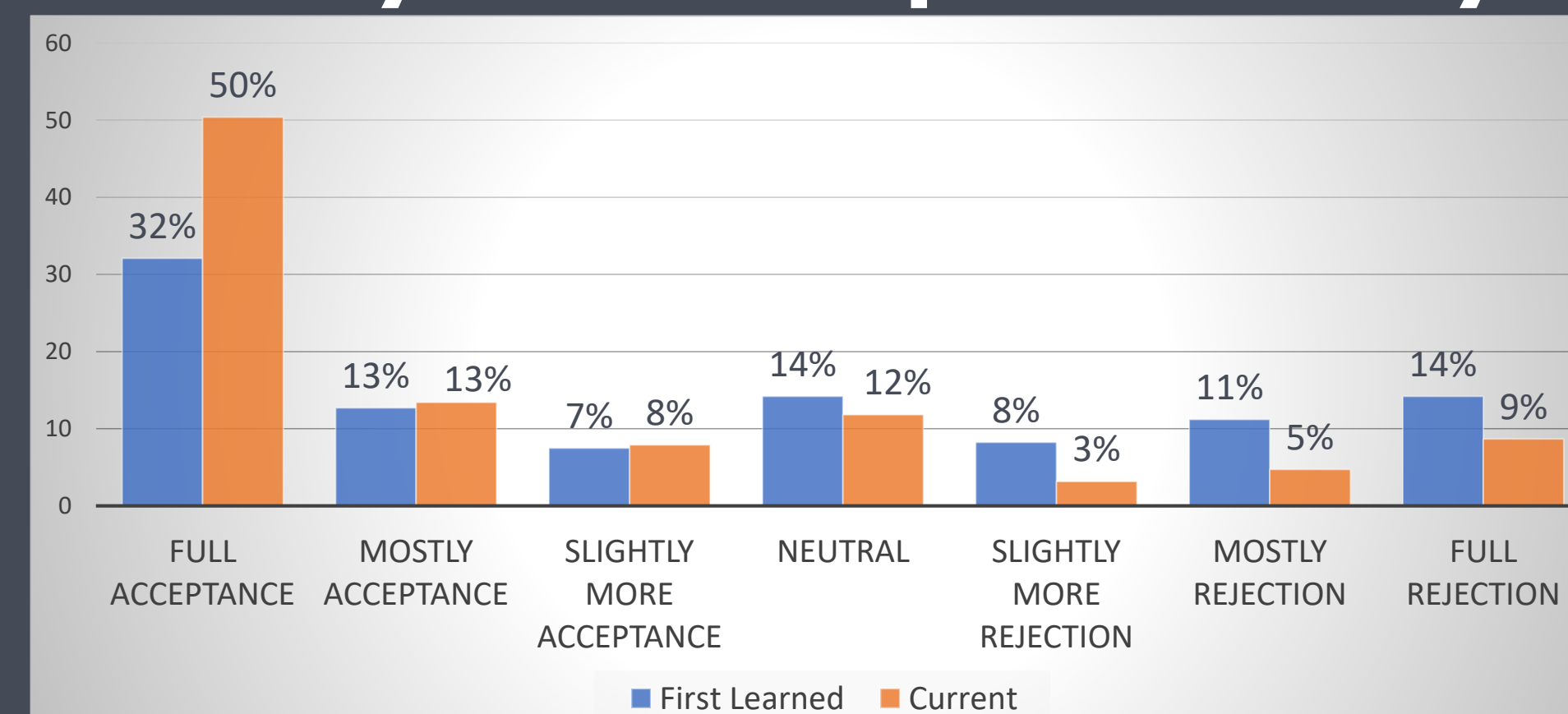
*Identities were not mutually exclusive

Average age
when participants were first aware that they were LGBTQ **11.2**
when family member learned about your sexual and/or gender identity **18.3**
7 year gap

Pride and shame around LGBTQ identity

83% (n=124) were glad to be LGBTQ	81% (n=120) were proud of their LGBTQ identity	78% (n=115) saw themselves as part of the LGBTQ community	32% (n=48) felt so bad at times that they wanted to be dead	23% (n=34) wished they were straight or cisgender
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Family member's response to identity



IMPLICATIONS

- About 16% of participants felt discomfort around their gender but did not identify with a different gender.
 - This underscores the limiting nature of binary systems.
- Understanding perceptions of transition is important for fostering access to affirming services and care.
- Resources for helping people navigate their sexual and gender identities should be available at a young age, as well as access to supportive communities.
- LGBTQ+ pride can be harnessed as a protective factor.
- Family members' response to LGBTQ+ identity was more positive over time.
 - A better understanding of the factors influencing this shift is needed, as this may foster hope for individuals who face initial rejection.