



Data from the National
HIV Behavioral
Surveillance Study, 2024:

Violence is a public
health emergency for
trans women in San
Francisco

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Who am I?

Heluna Health Contractor working for the Center for Public Health Research,
Population Health Division

Extramural grants to serve trans women, men, nonbinary communities
in San Francisco, 2010-2024
(NIH, SAMHSA, HRSA, CDC, RWJF)



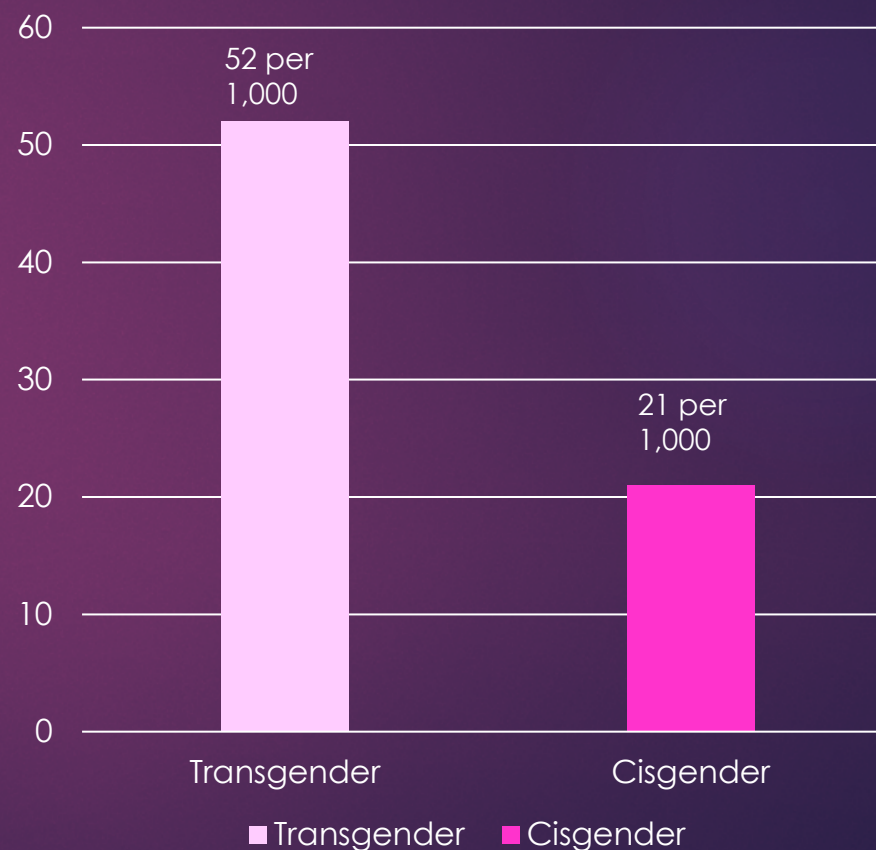
SUMMER 2023 –
SPRING 2024

N= 339 trans
women



SUMMER-
WINTER 2023
N= 545 cis and trans
men who have sex
with men

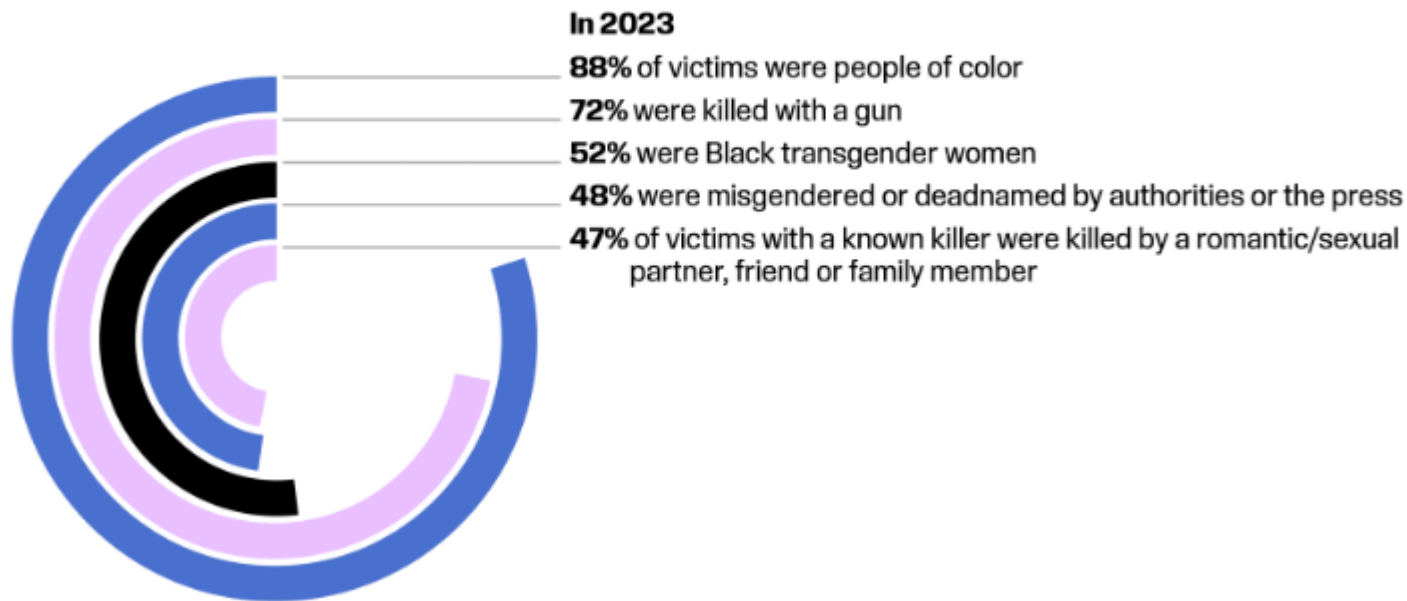
Trans people experience violence at more than twice the rate of cisgender people in the U.S.



Bureau of Justice Statistics' Violent Victimization by SOGI, 2017-2020, Appendix Table 1

Black trans women face the highest burden of fatal violence

Fatal Violence Against the Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Community



Source: Human Rights Campaign, "Fatal Violence Against the Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Community in 2023," HRC.org, 2023, www.hrc.org/resources/fatal-violence-against-the-trans-and-gender-non-conforming-community-in-2023.



In California, trans people face significant disparities in violence compared to cisgender people

- ▶ Findings from California Violence Experiences Survey 2023
 - ▶ Transgender adults are 7x more likely to report past year physical violence than cisgender adults (27% vs 4%)
 - ▶ Transgender adults are 5x more likely to report past year sexual harassment or assault than cisgender adults (40% vs 8%)
- ▶ Higher than data from 2022 US Trans Survey
 - ▶ Three percent (3%) of trans people s reported that they were physically attacked in the last 12 months because of their gender identity or expression.



Violence is a driver of co-occurring individual health epidemics among trans women

Mental Health Disorders and Suicidality

Data indicate that 82% of transgender individuals have considered killing themselves and 40% have attempted suicide, with suicidality highest among transgender youth (Austin, 2022).

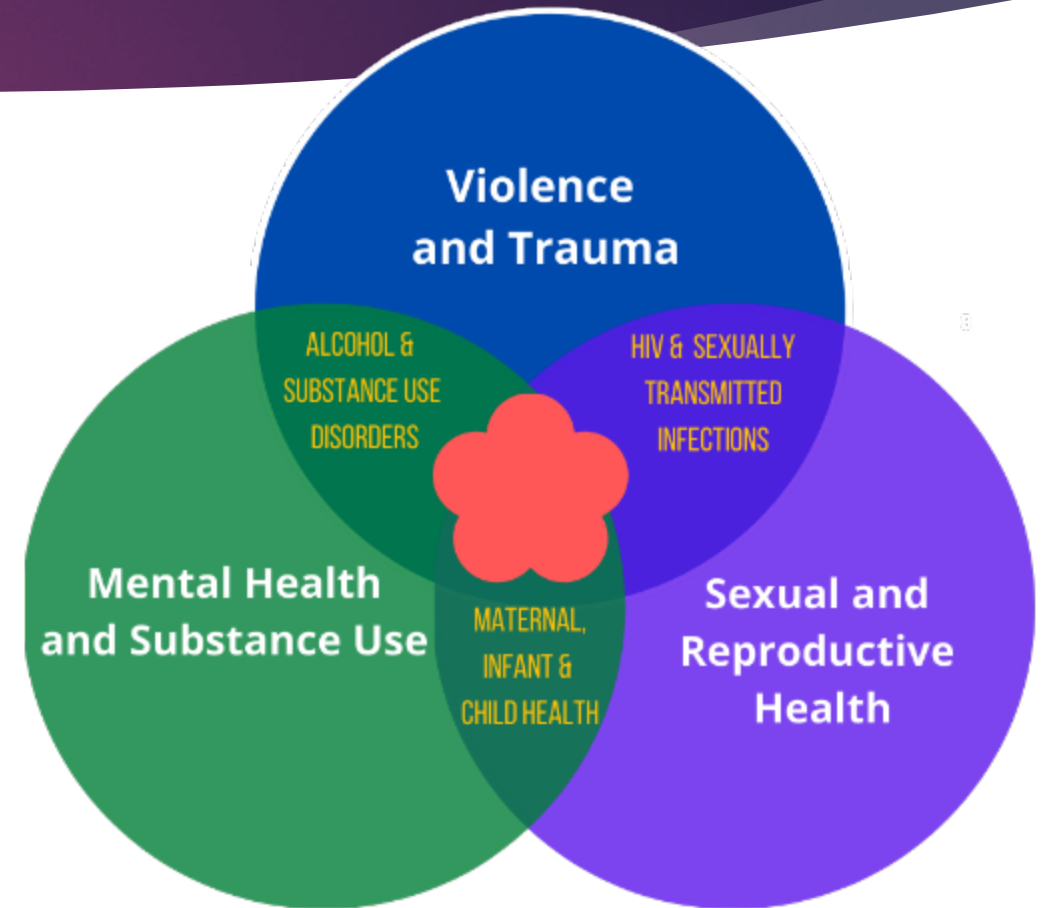
Violence is associated with anxiety, depression and post traumatic Stress Disorder among trans women (Budwani et al, 2018)

Substance use is a coping mechanism to deal with the mental health sequelae of violence (Baguso et al, 2024)

Mental distress and substance use are drivers of HIV

Between 35-40% of trans women in San Francisco are living with HIV
Recent violence has been associated with increased odds of having a detectable viral load, indicating poor treatment adherence and health outcomes (Veras, 2024).

Mental Distress and substance use are barriers to HIV prevention uptake and adherence (Ogunbajo et al., 2021)



A global cautionary tale: discrimination and violence against trans women worsen despite investments in public resources and improvements in health insurance access and utilization of health care

Sean Arayasirikul^{1 2 3}, Caitlin Turner⁴, Dillon Trujillo⁴, Sofia L Sicro⁴, Susan Scheer⁴, Willi McFarland^{4 5}, Erin C Wilson^{4 5}

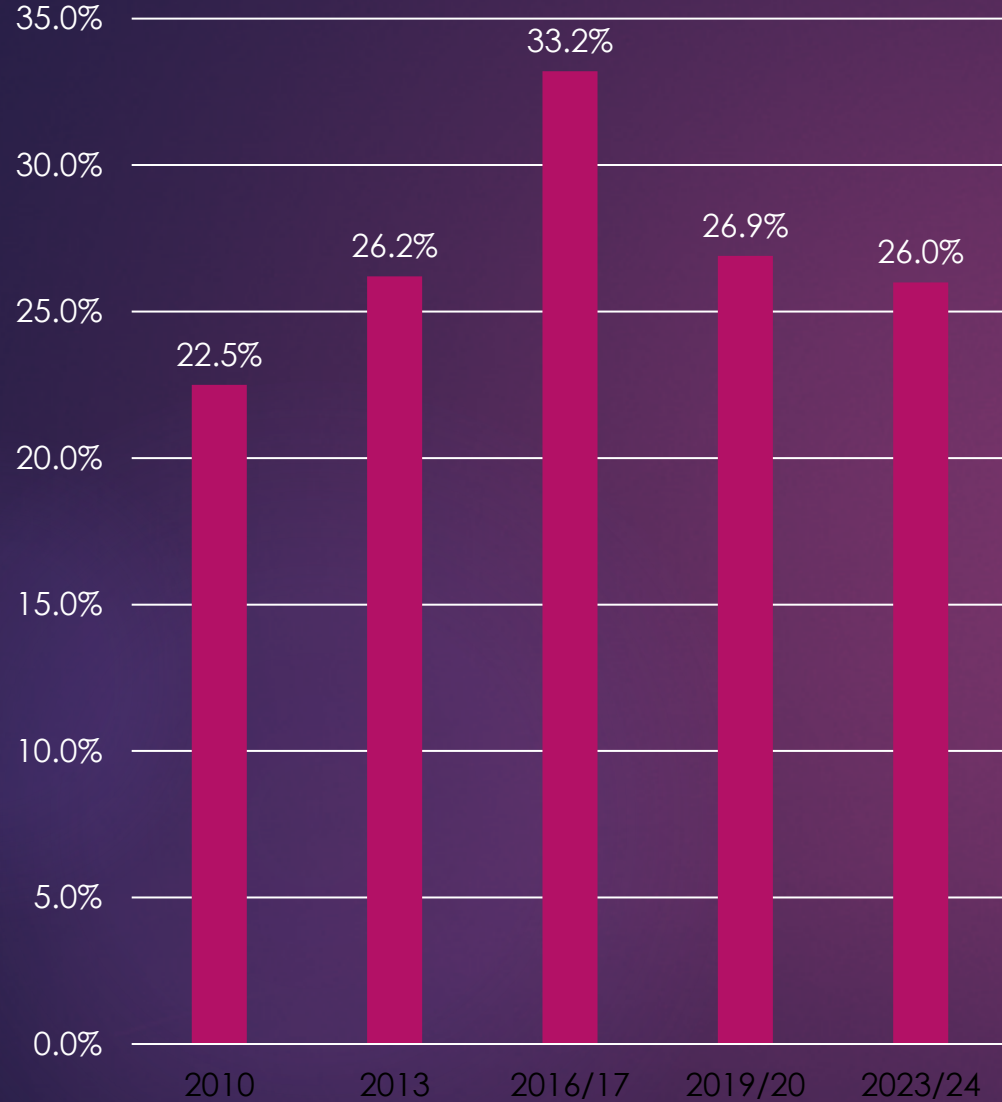
Table 3 Adjusted Trends in Transphobic Discrimination and Violence among Trans Women, San Francisco, California, 2010-2016

	<u>2010</u> aOR (95%CI) P-value	<u>2013</u> aOR (95%CI) P-value	<u>2016</u> aOR (95%CI) P-value
Ever experienced trouble getting a job because of gender identity or presentation	Ref	0.83 (0.59 - 1.17) 0.29	0.95 (0.69 - 1.32) 0.77
Ever been denied housing or been evicted because of gender identity or presentation	Ref	0.87 (0.59 - 1.28) 0.48	1.41 (1.00 - 1.98) 0.049
Ever experienced problems getting health or medical services because of gender identity or presentation	Ref	1.24 (0.83 - 1.87) 0.30	1.32 (0.91 - 1.92) 0.14
Ever been verbally abused or harassed because of gender identity or presentation	Ref	1.18 (0.73 - 1.88) 0.51	1.23 (0.79 - 1.92) 0.35
Ever been physically abused or harassed because of gender identity or presentation	Ref	1.35 (0.95 - 1.92) 0.10	1.39 (1.00 - 1.92) 0.049

Notes: Multivariable logistic regression models specify year (2013 vs. 2010 and 2016 vs. 2010) as the exposure and experiences of discrimination/violence as outcomes in 5 independent models adjusting for age, gender identity, and race/ethnicity

FROM 2010-2016, WE
OBSERVED NO
SIGNIFICANT
REDUCTION IN
ANTI-TRANS
VERBAL OR
PHYSICAL
VIOLENCE FOR
TRANS WOMEN IN
SAN FRANCISCO

Homelessness and Violence among trans women



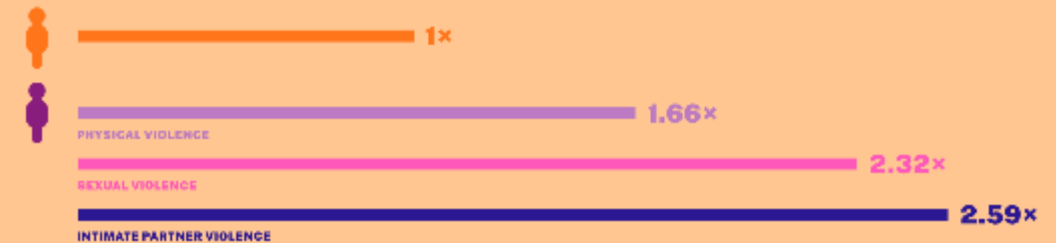
Trans Women, Violence, & Homelessness

More than one third of trans women in a community survey experienced violence within 2019 and over 75% of violent experiences occurred to trans women who experienced homelessness.



Likelihood to Encounter Violence

Trans women who experienced homelessness encountered significantly more instances and types of violence.

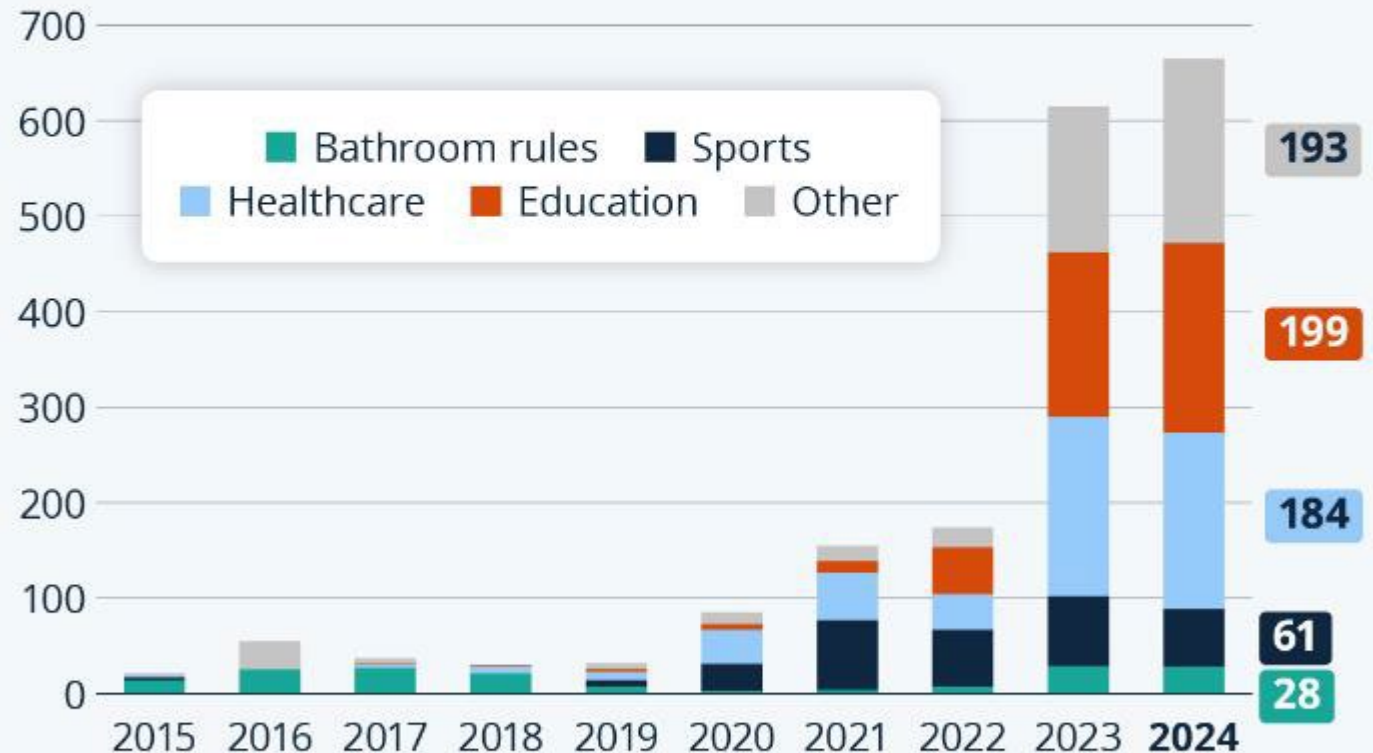


Anti-trans bills & violence

2022 saw the highest # of anti-trans hate crimes reported to the FBI to date

Anti-Trans Bills Surged in Last Two Years

Number of U.S. anti-trans national/state-level bills considered by legislatures per year

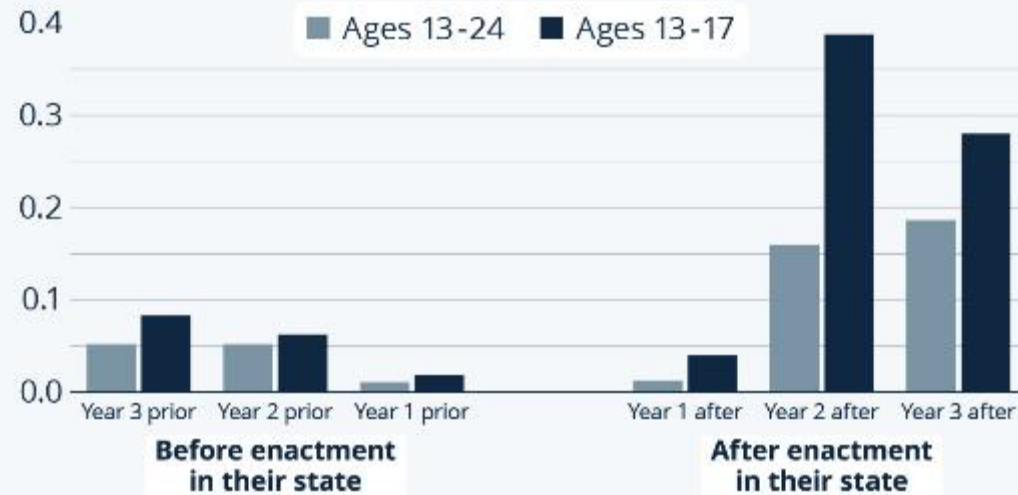


Source: Trans Legislation Tracker



Study Links U.S. Anti-Trans Legislation and Suicide Attempts

Change in the number of reported suicide attempts per trans/non-binary young person in relation to U.S. state-level laws



Enactment years 2017 to 2021.

60,000+ trans/non-binary young people surveyed in 50 U.S. states/D.C./Puerto Rico

Source: Lee et al. State-level anti-transgender laws increase past-year suicide attempts. Nature Human Behavior (2024)

Extreme mental distress

Results on Violence experienced by trans women in San Francisco

National HIV Behavioral Surveillance study of Trans Women, San Francisco 2023/2024

- ▶ Follow-up of 1st CDC-funded HIV Behavioral Surveillance Cycle with trans women in 2019/2020;
 - ▶ 5th follow-up of self-funded research run by our research group (TEACH5)
- ▶ Recruited 339 participants between June 2023 and May 2024
- ▶ Formative research with foundation funding to inform inclusion of local violence questions

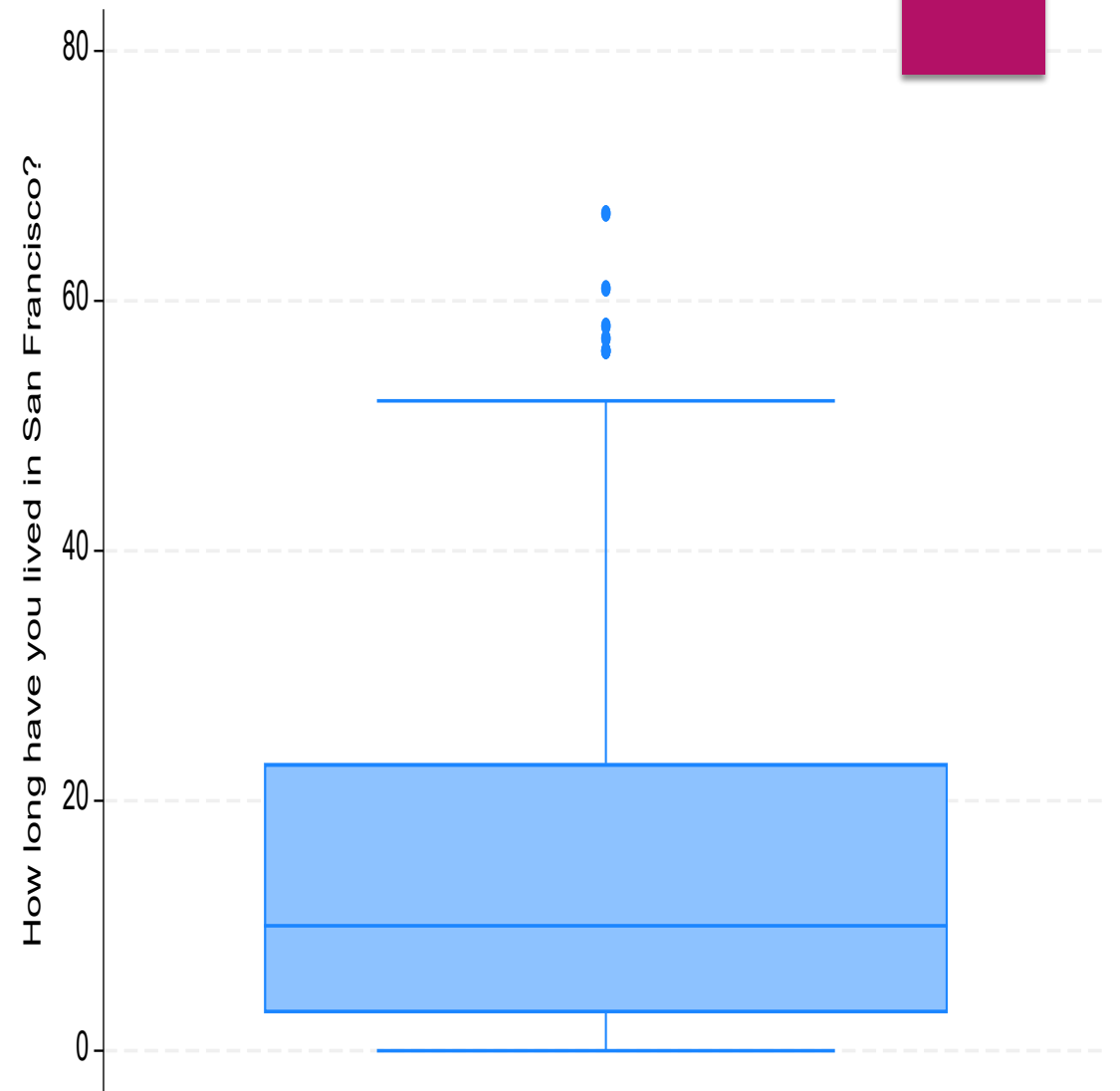


Characteristics	NHBS-Trans, 2023-2024 N=326 (%)
Age group	
18-29	50 (15)
30-39	79 (24)
40-49	70 (22)
50+	127 (39)
Race/ethnicity	
Hispanic	146 (46)
Black/African American	65 (20)
White	56 (18)
Asian/NH/PI	27 (8)
Other/Multiracial	26 (8)
Country of birth	
United States	194 (60)
Mexico	56 (17)
Other	76 (23)

Characteristics	NHBS-Trans, 2023-2024 N=326 (%)
Education	
Less than or equal to high school	169 (52)
Some college	105 (32)
Bachelor's degree	41 (13)
Post graduate studies	9 (3)
Annual income	
<\$40,000	231 (79)
\$40,000-\$99,999	49 (17)
>=\$100,000	13 (4)
Occupation[2]	
Employed full or part time	106 (33)
Unemployed	107 (33)
Unable to work due to health	82 (25)
Other	28 (9)

Number of years living in San Francisco, NHBS-Trans, 2023-2024

▶ AVERAGE = 14.7
YEARS, SD = 14.2,
MEDIAN = 10 YEARS,
IQR = [3, 23]



REASONS FOR MOVING TO SAN FRANCISCO

NHBS-
TRANS,
2023-2024
N=330 (%)

• <u>San Francisco is a safe city for trans people</u>	100 (30)
• Gender affirming care services available	73 (22)
• Moved with friend or partner	41 (12)
• School or job opportunity	36 (11)
• Family rejection of gender identity	29 (9)
• California is a safe state for trans people	21 (6)
• Other	167 (51)





In 2023/2024, trans women continued to face extremely high rates of recent violence



59% OF THE HARASSMENT WAS BY
STRANGERS
ON THE STREET



SCAN TO GET INVOLVED

SCUPL: 1-646-546-1140/USCU/2023/21

47% OF THE ATTACKS WERE BY
STRANGERS
ON THE STREET



SCAN TO GET INVOLVED

SCUPL: 1-646-546-1140/USCU/2023/21

33% OF THE ASSAULTS WERE BY
STRANGERS
ON THE STREET

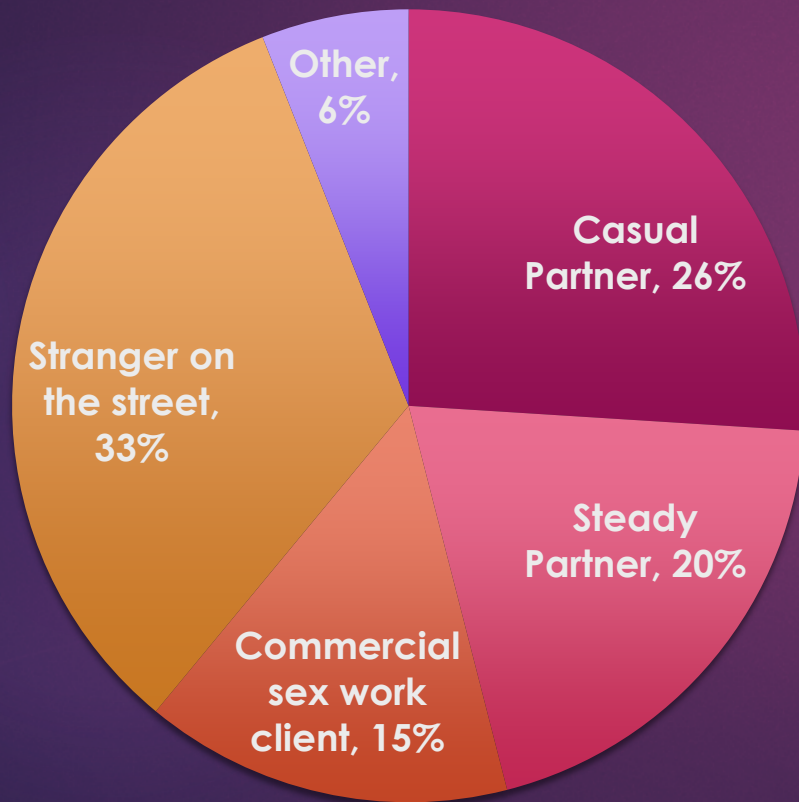


SCAN TO GET INVOLVED

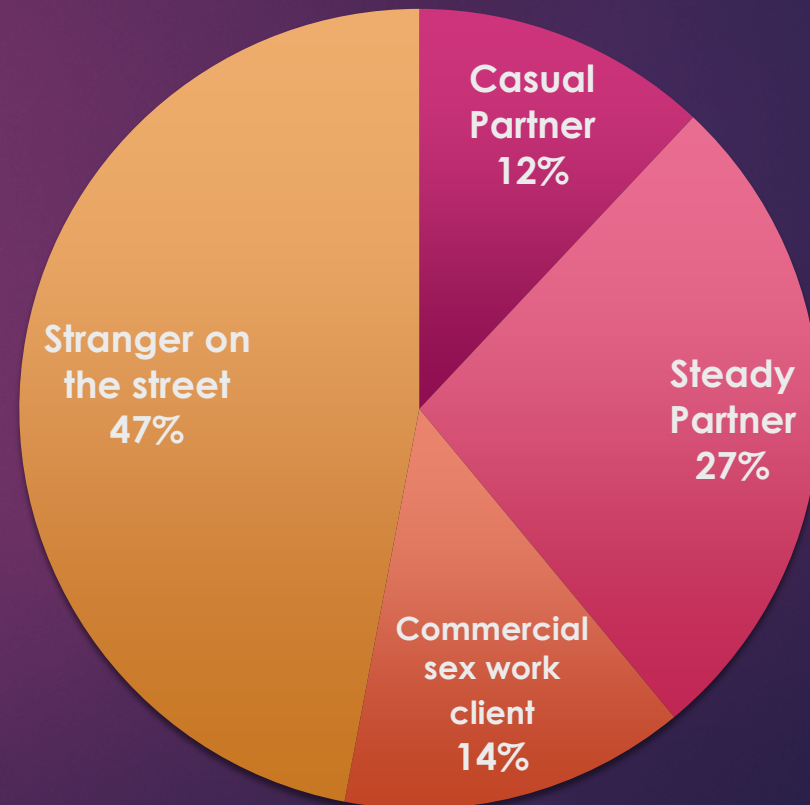
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Perpetrators of violence against trans women in San Francisco in 2023-2024

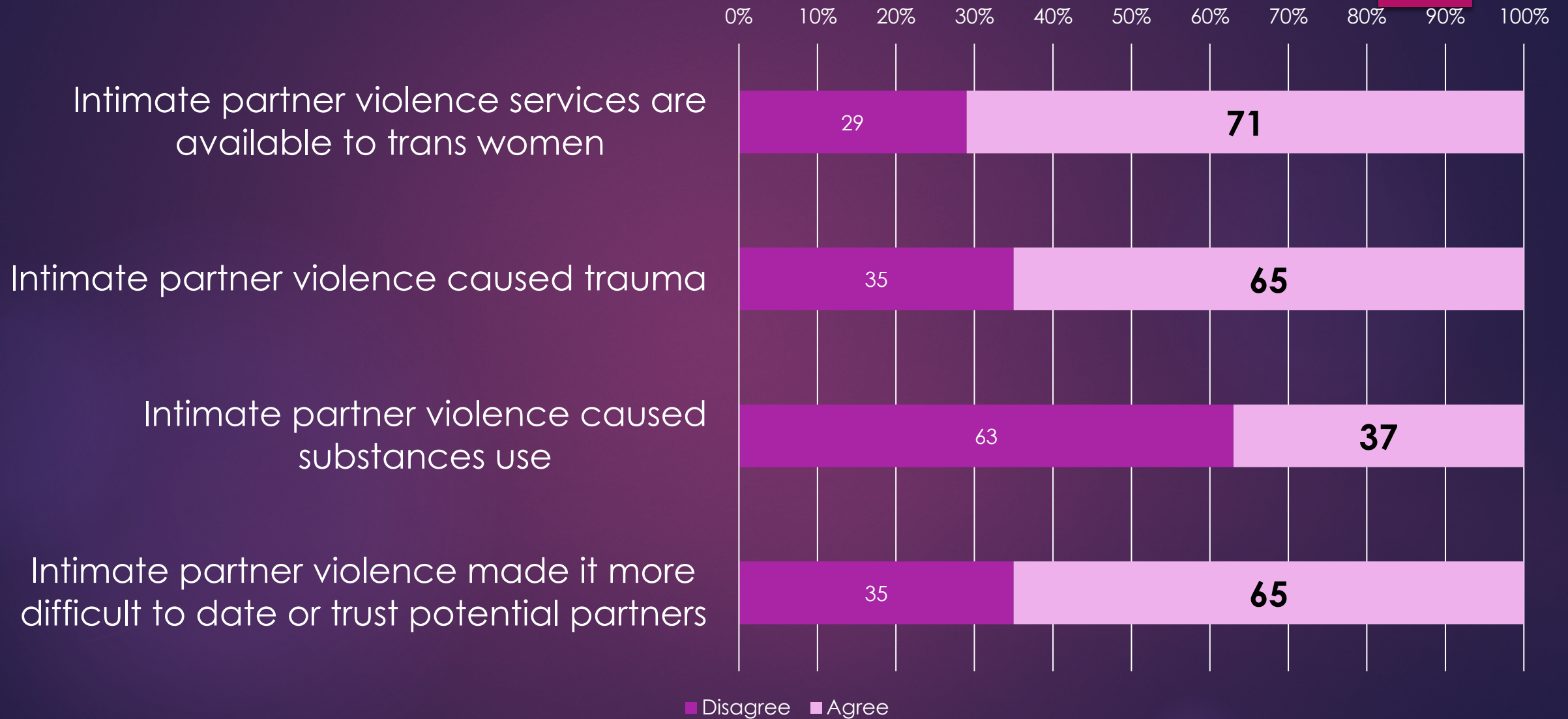
Sexual Assault



Physical Attack



Intimate Partner Violence, NHBS-Trans, 2023-2024

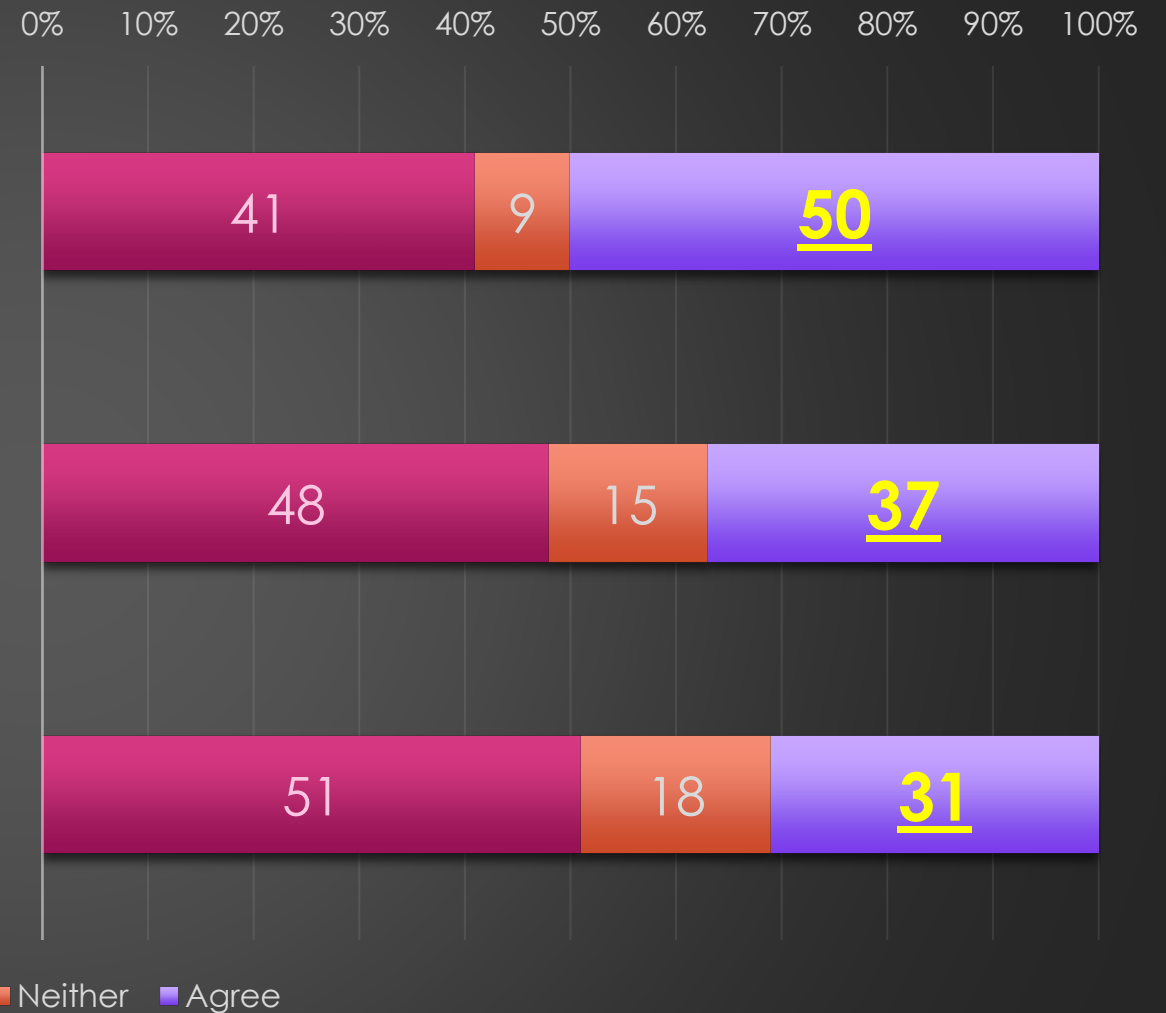


Help from Bystanders

In the past, I needed help from a bystander, but they did not help me

In the past, I needed help from a family member, friend, or acquaintance, but they did...

In the past, I needed help from the police, but they did not help me



0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

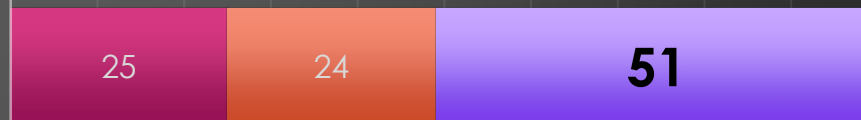
Law enforcement officers sometimes hide information from people who are trans



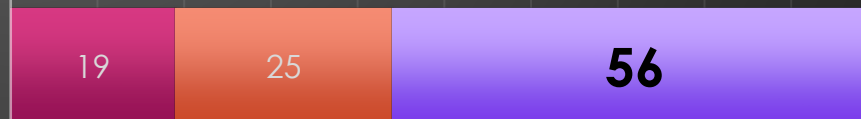
Law enforcement officers have the best interests of trans people in mind



Trans people should not confide in law enforcement officers because it will be used against them



Trans people should be suspicious of information from law enforcement officers



Disagree Neither Agree

Trust of law enforcement

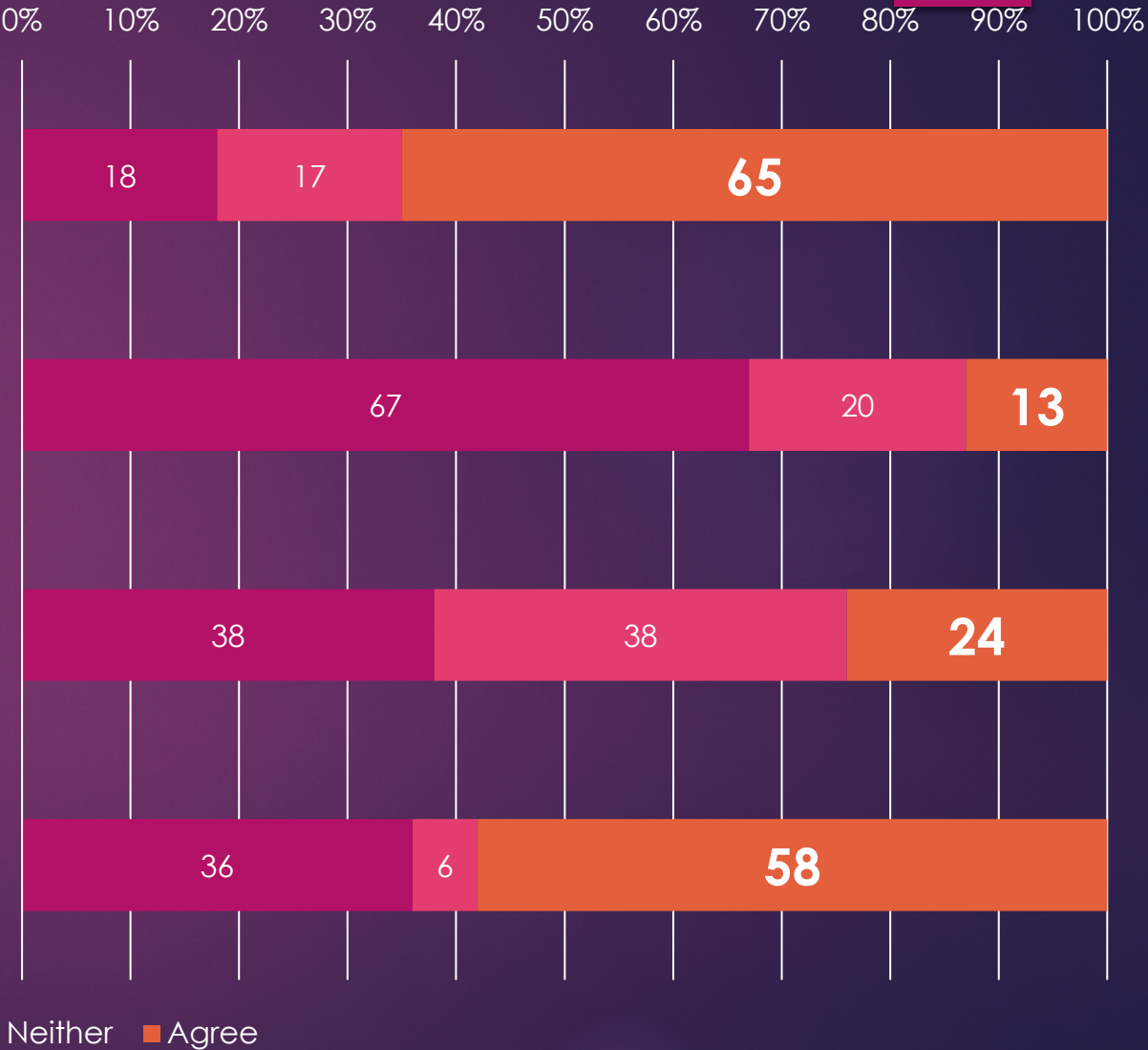
Experience with law enforcement & courts, NHBS-Trans, 2023-2024

Law enforcement officers do not take the complaints of trans people seriously

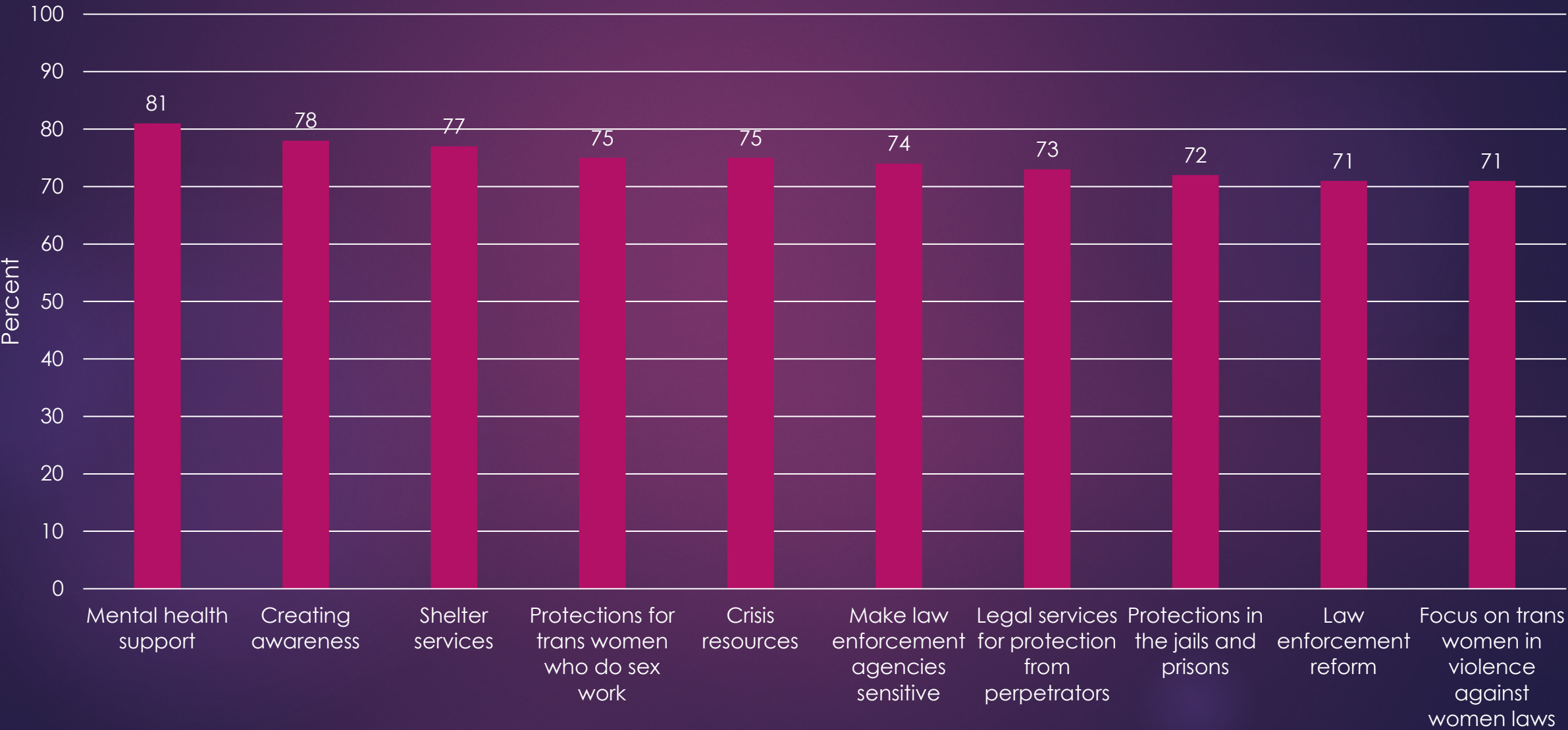
Trans people are treated the same as people of other groups by law enforcement officers

In most courts, trans people receive the same kind of treatment from the judge

You have personally been treated poorly or unfairly by law enforcement officers because of your gender identity



Resources trans women need, NHBS-Trans, 2023-2024



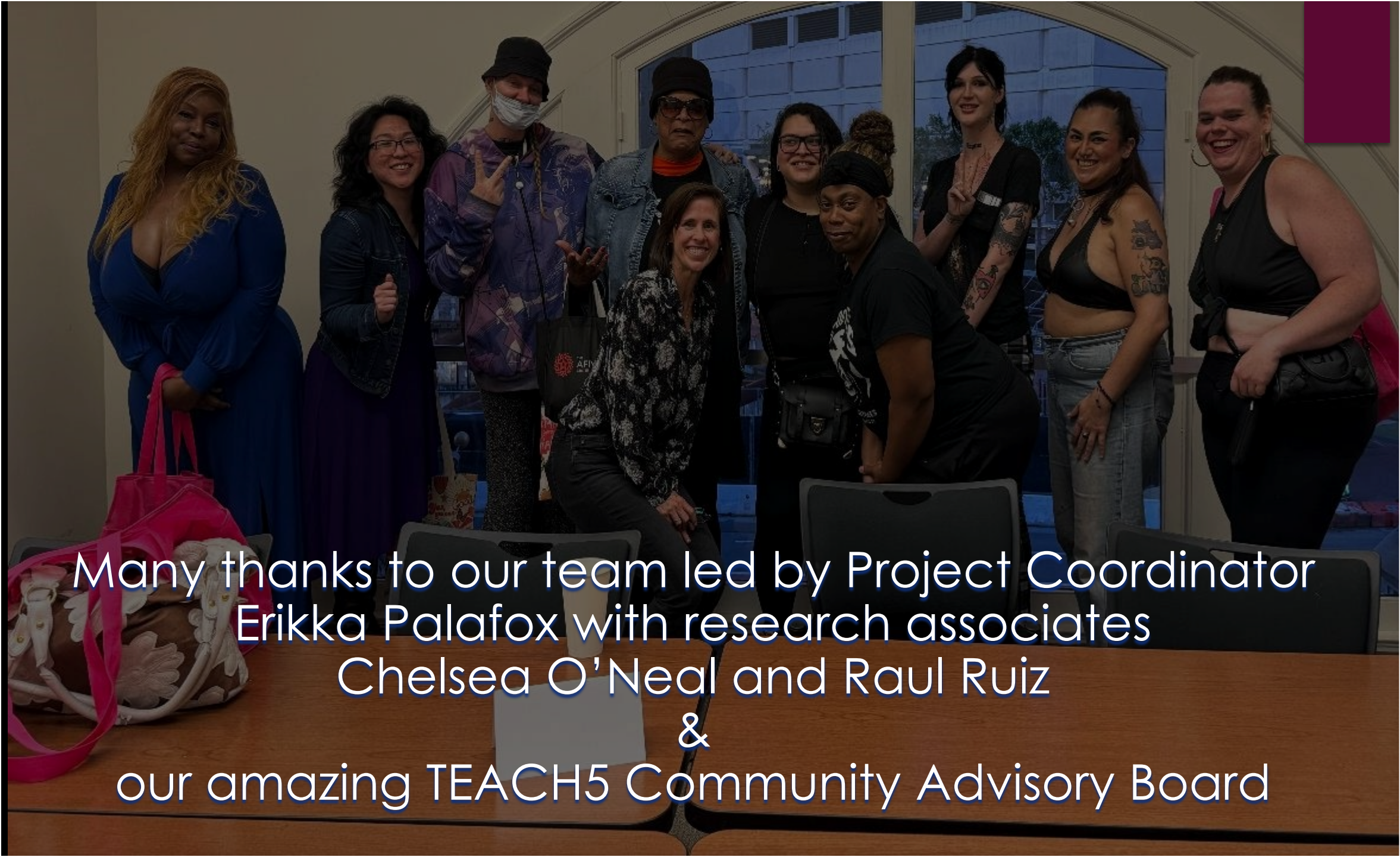
Conclusions

- ▶ **San Francisco is not a safe city for many trans women**
 - Alarming levels of violence recently experienced in San Francisco
 - 1/5 experienced sexual assault in the last year
 - 1/4 experienced physical attacks in the last year
 - Many trans women cannot rely on the public to interrupt violence
 - Many trans women do not trust law enforcement to help them
- ▶ **Violence is a crisis for trans women**
 - ▶ **The epidemic of violence against trans women requires action from the health department to address trauma, co-occurring health sequelae and prevention**

Actions to date and Next Steps



- ▶ TAJA Co release of 'Call to Action' campaign in public transportation spaces throughout San Francisco
 - Launch coincided with Trans Day of Remembrance on Nov 20
 - Focus on calling in the public to improve safety among trans women in public places
- ▶ Dissemination data to stakeholders
- ▶ Elevate violence against trans women as a priority public health focus in San Francisco
- ▶ Interventions needed
 1. Build local systematic violence tracking system
 2. Bystander Interventions
 3. Improve reporting to law enforcement
 4. Combat anti-trans rhetoric
 5. Institutionalize effective violence screening across systems
 1. Establish safety planning and wellness strategies



Many thanks to our team led by Project Coordinator
Erikka Palafox with research associates
Chelsea O'Neal and Raul Ruiz
&
our amazing TEACH5 Community Advisory Board



Want to Acknowledge out
TRUE partners, advisors &
mentors in research &
advocacy for trans
communities in San
Francisco

