

WEBINAR | SEPTEMBER 2026

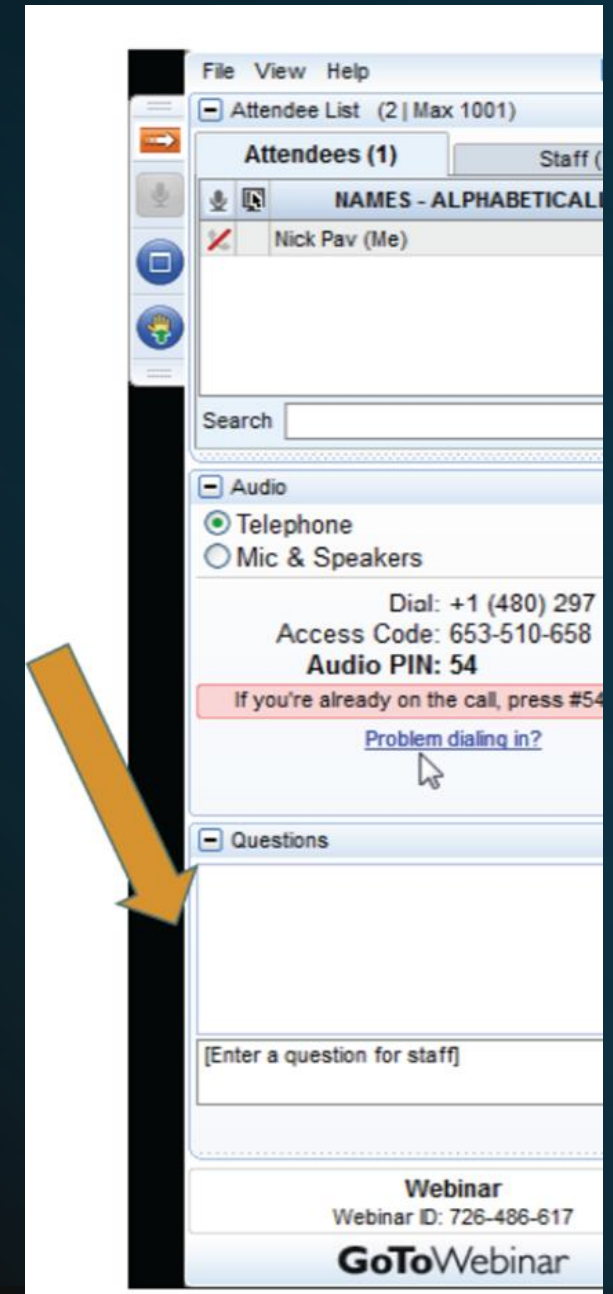
Implementation of AB 2802: Why Gender Flexibility in Housing Options Matters for Transition Age Youth

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California
Alliance

Empowering lives. Enriching futures.

**AB 2802 Implementation:
Why Gender Flexibility in Housing Options Matters for
Transition Age Youth**

September 23, 2026

cacfs.org

AB 2802 (Chapter 245, Statutes of 2024) (Link to Language [HERE](#))

What were we solving for?

- California's programs to help older foster youth and young adults, called Transitional Housing Placement (THP) Programs, were set up with outdated, binary rules in mind.
- Men must live with men and women must live with women. Such inflexibility goes against the programs' goal as a secure housing setting where people transitioning out of the child welfare system can learn to live independently and practice self-sufficiency.
- Our society doesn't operate under that binary anymore, and neither should our laws.

AB 2802 – What We Did

This law expands gender flexibility in THP programs, allowing providers to have more flexibility when placing youth in units together and allowing participants to have more opportunities to live together with their siblings and co-parents, regardless of whether they share the same gender identity or not.

This law also requires that county contracts be more inclusive to prevent exclusionary practices of requiring participants to be the same gender to live together, which can result in discrimination towards gender- expansive youth (including transgender and gender nonconforming youth), and coparenting youth.

Additional Context

All youth should be able to feel secure in their homes, whether that means living their true gender identity, being surrounded by their brothers and sisters, or learning how to parent with their partner alongside them.

As youth move from the child welfare system and learn to live as adults, having a safe place to come home to is critical.

After all, how many of us can be productive at work or school without having a comfortable place to sleep every night?

Levi's Speech on AB 2802



Additional Gender Related Issues in Housing

- In a Center for American Progress study of 100 homeless shelters, most were unwilling to offer transgender women housing consistent with their gender identity.
- According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, between 2019 and 2023, the combined number of gender non-binary and gender-questioning people experiencing homelessness increased by at least 183%.
 - These disparities are exacerbated by race and age. Gender-expansive youth of color are twice as likely to experience homelessness compared with their white counterparts.
- Men are overrepresented among homeless and especially unsheltered homeless people.
 - Homeless men are less likely than homeless women to be provided access to supportive services, according to qualitative studies.
- According to Harvard Law Review, women receive disproportionately high rates of housing supports – public housing + vouchers compared to men.
- Women are overrepresented in public housing programs – 72-75% of households in Section 8, public housing, or Section 202 headed by females.
 - Exception: men slightly overrepresented in Section 811 housing.
- 83% of households receive vouchers headed by women.



Berkeley Social Welfare

UCLA

Luskin
Social Welfare



School of Social Work
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

The Developmental Implications of Extended Foster Care for Sexual Minority Youth

Anthony Gómez, PhD

Keunhye Park, PhD

Andrea Lane Eastman, PhD

Mark E. Courtney, PhD

Kevin Yu, MSW

Thank you!



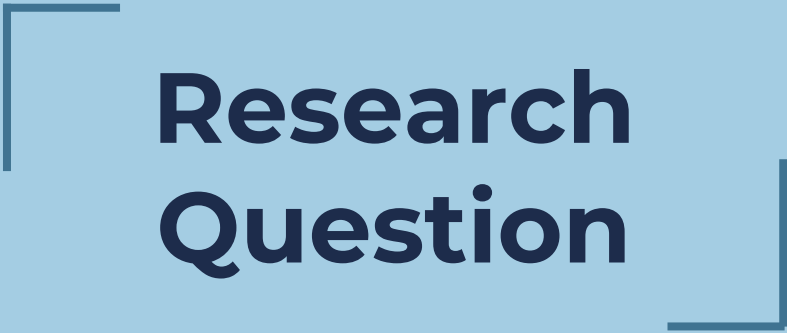
Berkeley Social Welfare



Background

- Sexual minority youth (SMY) are overrepresented in the U.S. child welfare system: an estimated 15% to 30% of youth in foster care identify as a sexual or gender minority¹⁻⁵
- Sexual minority youth (SMY) transitioning from foster care experience worse outcomes in early adulthood than their heterosexual peers⁵⁻⁸
- No research has examined if extended foster care (EFC) influences outcomes for SMY





Research Question

Do sexual minority and heterosexual youth experience the same benefits from remaining in EFC?

Data & Method



Data

Data were sourced from the CalYOUTH study, a longitudinal evaluation of California's EFC program.



Sample

616 youth who completed interviews at Waves 1 (age 17) and 3 (age 21).



Analysis

We examined associations between SMS at age 17, EFC participation at age 19, and seven key outcomes at age 21.

Measures

Age 17 Sexual minority status

Self-reported romantic attraction at age 17: 100% heterosexual (non-SMY) or not 100% heterosexual (SMY). Nearly a quarter (23.2%) of youth identified as a sexual minority.

Age 19 EFC

Dichotomous indicator of EFC participation at age 19 derived from administrative data. About 70% of youth were in care at age 19.

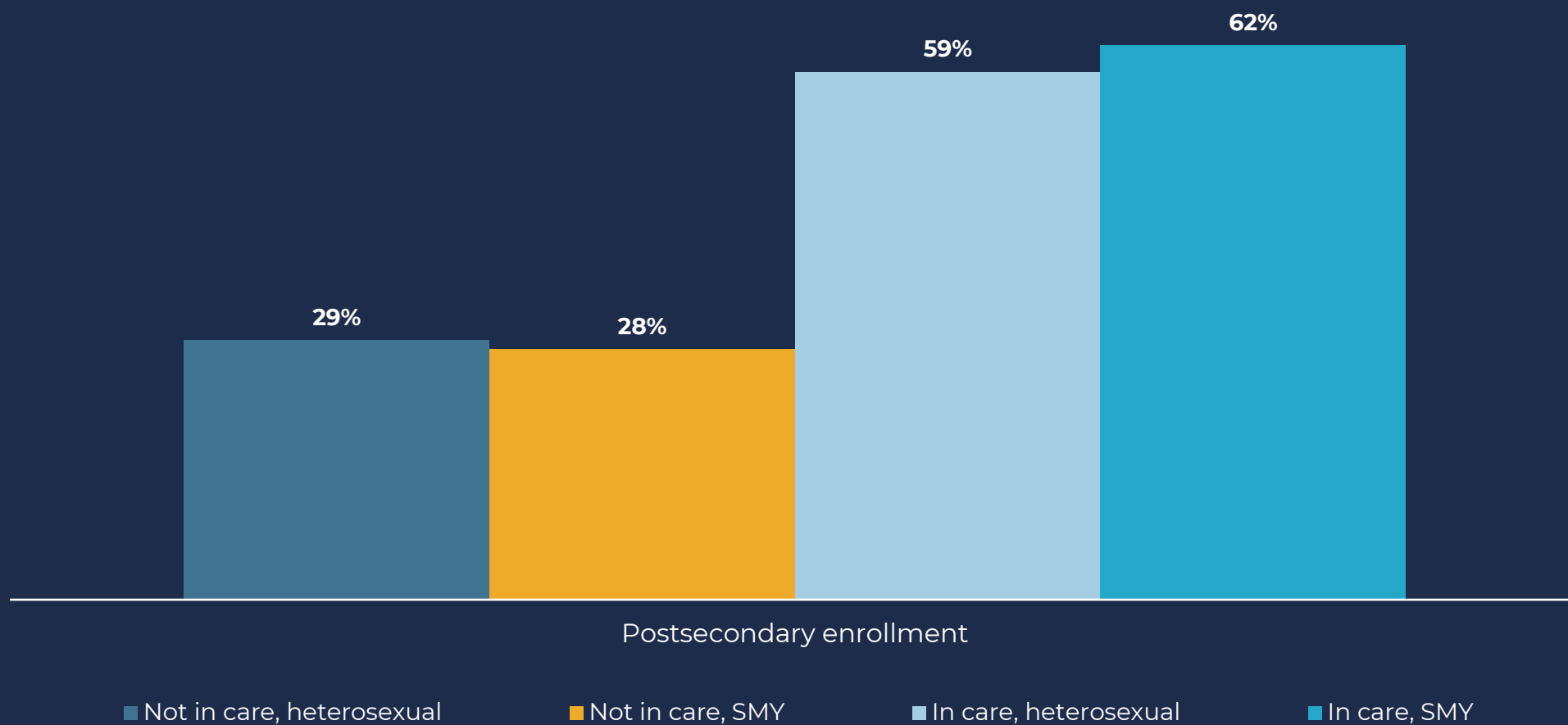
Age 21 Outcomes

Seven self-reported outcomes at age 21: college enrollment, employment, parental status, homelessness, economic hardship, behavioral health diagnosis, and incarceration

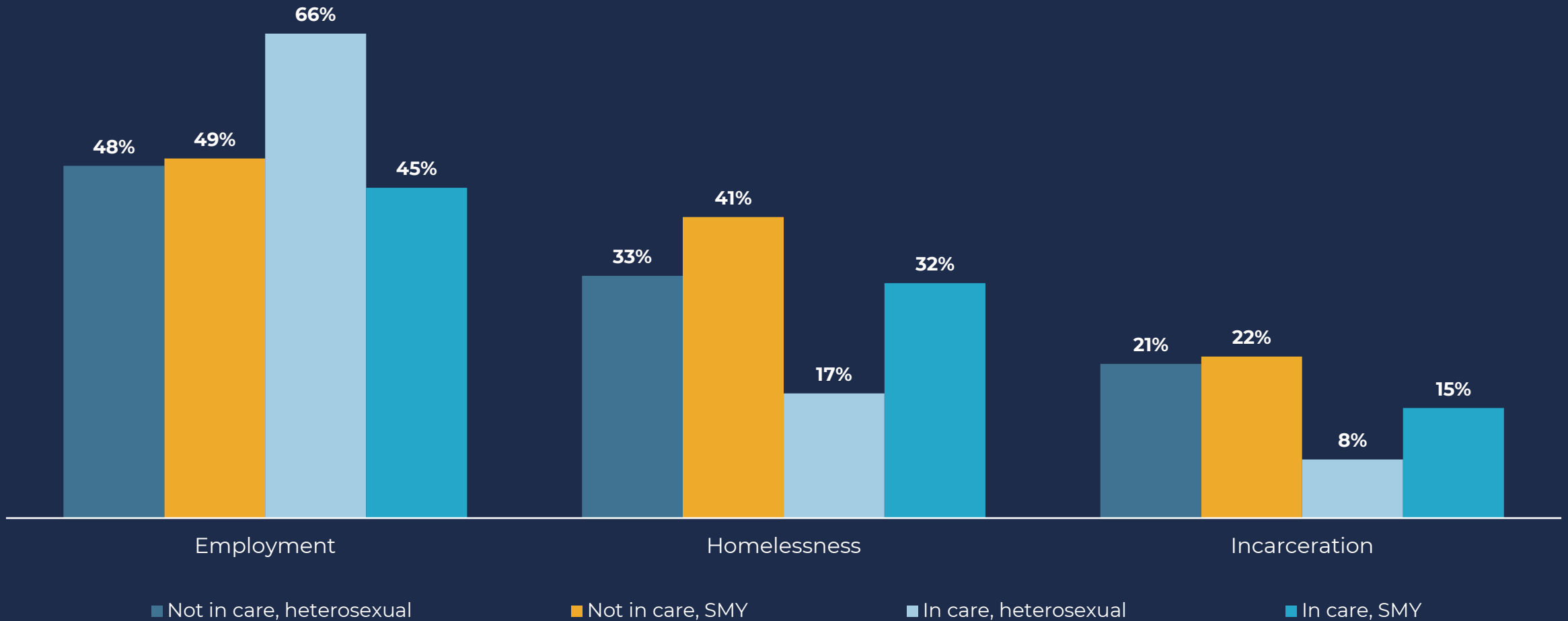
Control variables

Controlled for baseline (age 17) demographic, health, and foster care characteristics

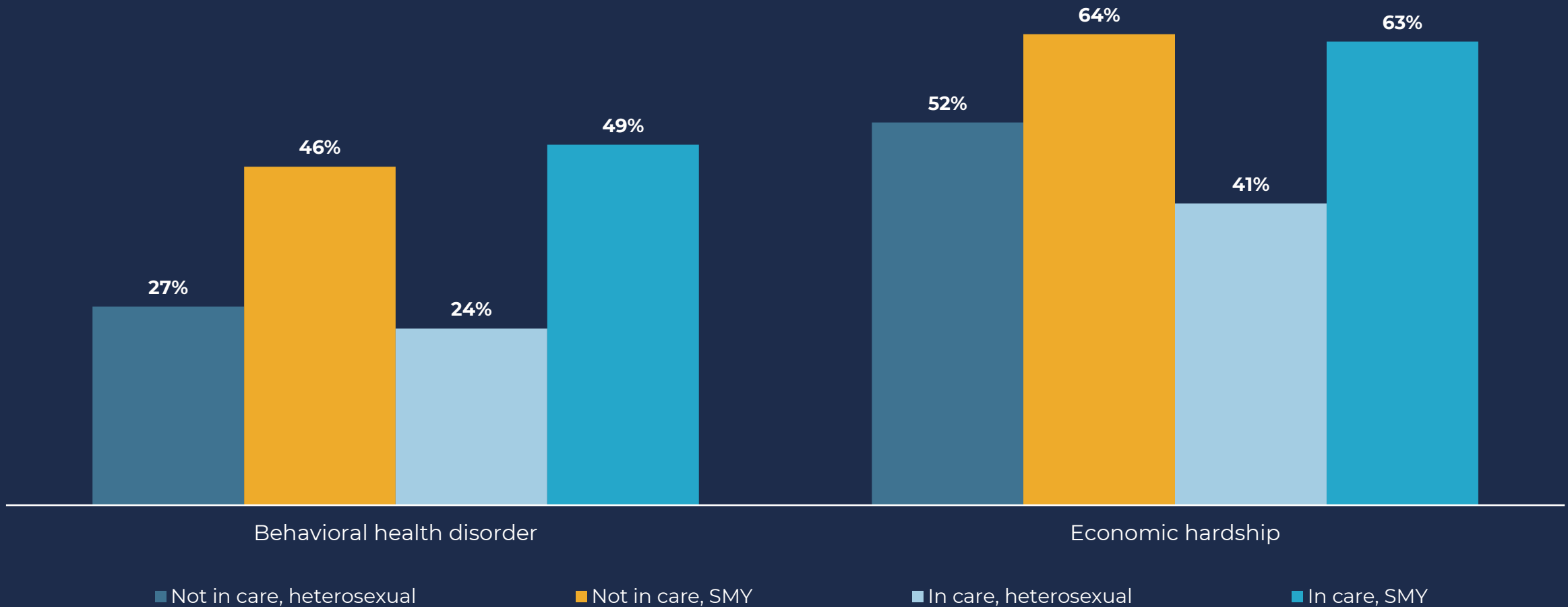
Finding 1 EFC increased postsecondary enrollment rates for all youth



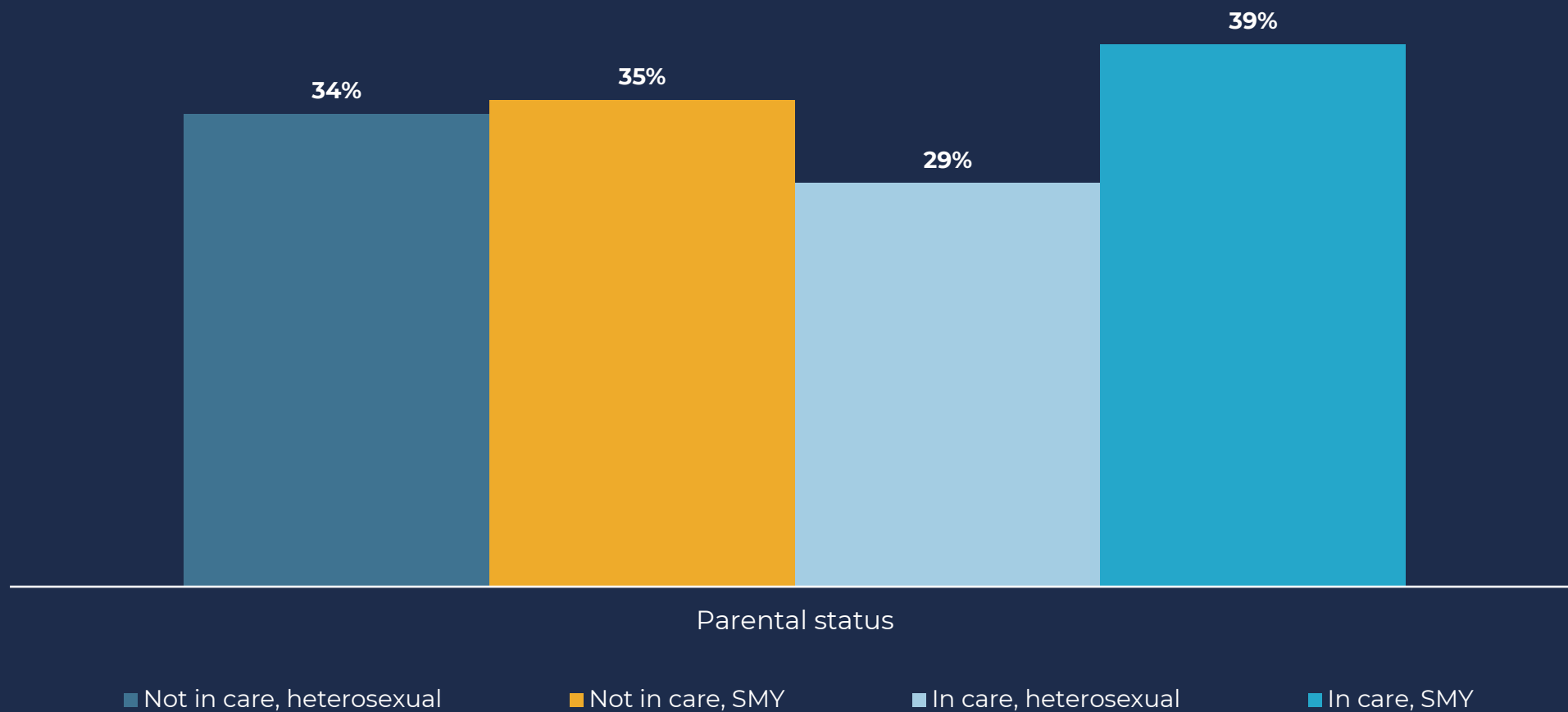
Finding 2 Some of EFC's benefits varied by sexual minority status



Finding 3 EFC did not address disparities in behavioral health and economic hardship



Finding 4 Parental status did not differ by sexual minority status or EFC participation



Implications for AB 2802



Housing insecurity is prevalent among SMY in EFC

Consistent with prior research, SMY in EFC experienced homelessness at nearly twice the rate of their heterosexual peers.^{5,8}



Identity-affirming housing options are needed

Prioritize housing options with affirming service providers, resources, and roommates.



THPs might be a lever for improving equity

Ensuring SMY have equitable access to THPs can ensure they receive services that improve housing and other outcomes in early adulthood.

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Partner Updates

Kamali'I Foster Family Agency (THP) Utilization of AB 2802

Expanding individualized, family-centered housing solutions for transition age foster youth

Our agency has used the flexibility associated with AB 2802 to create housing arrangements that better reflect each youth's family relationships, identity, and individual needs.

1 Supporting Young Parents

- Eligible young mothers have been able to live with their child's father in the transitional housing setting.
- Both parents can participate in raising their child together while working toward stability and independence.
- Case managers and agency staff provide ongoing coaching, support, and accountability.
- Housing assistance is connected to parenting, education, employment, and independent-living goals.

2 Promoting Family Stability

- Creates opportunities for young parents to develop healthy co-parenting relationships.
- Reduces barriers that can prevent parents from parenting together.
- Supports a stable home environment while youth build independent-living skills.
- Reinforces the agency's commitment to individualized, youth-centered service planning.



Creating Inclusive & Family-Centered Housing

Using transitional housing to remove placement barriers and preserve important relationships

1 Inclusive Housing

- The agency has been able to house transgender youth in accordance with their gender identity.
- This supports dignity, safety, stability, and an appropriate living environment.
- Placement decisions can be responsive to the individual youth rather than limited by traditional placement models.

2 Sibling Reunification

- The agency has been able to house sibling sets together, including siblings of opposite genders.
- This has helped address occupancy barriers that previously contributed to separation in foster care.
- Keeping siblings together supports family connections and continuity during transition to adulthood.
- Shared housing can strengthen natural support systems and reduce the emotional impact of separation.

Bottom line: We are not simply providing a bed—we are providing a safe, stable home that supports identity, family, relationships, and long-term independence.

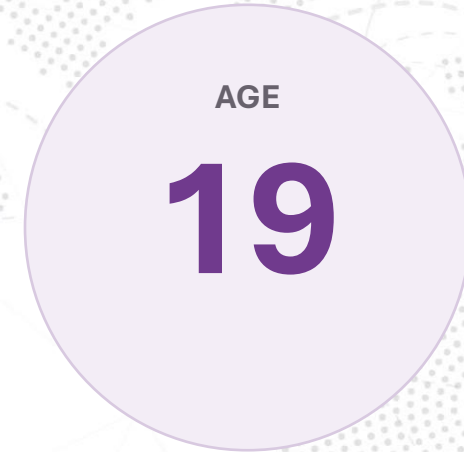
CASE EXAMPLE

Supporting Young Parents to Raise Their Child Together

Anna, age 19 • Family-centered housing through AB 2802

Anna's background

- Participating in the Transitional Housing Program at age 19.
- Parenting a newborn son with her boyfriend.
- Her boyfriend was the child's father, but was not enrolled in the program.



NEW PARENT

**Family-centered housing
through AB 2802**

THE BARRIER

Before AB 2802, housing arrangements could have created significant barriers to the parents living together and sharing parenting responsibilities.



How AB 2802 Supported the Family

Living together enabled shared childcare, continued employment, and consistent care at home.

WORK

CARE

HOME

Opposite shifts make shared parenting possible

How the arrangement works

- Anna and her son's father live together in transitional housing.
- They work opposite shifts and alternate childcare responsibilities.
- Their son remains at home with one parent rather than requiring traditional daycare.
- Both parents maintain employment while sharing responsibility for raising their child.

Agency support

- Anna continues to receive case management and independent-living support.
- Staff coach the family on parenting, employment, household responsibilities, and housing stability.
- The arrangement helps the family build a sustainable parenting and employment routine in a stable home.

IMPACT

AB 2802 helps this young family remain together, share parenting, maintain employment, and provide consistent care in their own home.



Impact of AB 2802 – Sue Evans

1 Youth Choice & Voice

- Youth choice and voice with whom and where they live supports:
 - Successful transition to adulthood
 - Recognizes youth as active stakeholders in their future.
 - Recognizes and preserves important family, friend and community connections.
 - Keeps siblings and relatives together.
 - Provides opportunities for parenting youth to co-parent.
 - Increases engagement, empowerment, and well-being for TAY.

2 County Contracts TAY Providers' Responsibilities

- Advocate for youth choice.
- Educate county partners on updated legislation.
- Promote the use of gender-neutral language in intake forms, program materials, and housing/opening lists.
- Ensure policies, procedures, and documentation align with current legislative requirements and inclusive practices.

Youth voice and choice supports housing stability!



Questions?

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