

Differential HIV risk for racial/ethnic minority trans*female youth and socio-economic disparities in housing, residential stability and education

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Introduction: One of the biggest threats to the health of trans*females is HIV, particularly for those who are part of racial/minority groups. Yet health disparities for racial/ethnic minority trans*female youth remain understudied.

Methods: We examined baseline data from 282 trans*female youth ages 16-24 years old in the San Francisco Bay Area. We conducted Chi-squared tests for distributional differences between racial/ethnic minority and white participants in socio-demographic factors, HIV-related risk behaviors and syndemic factors.

Results: A total of 4.8% of trans*female youth were HIV positive. Racial/ethnic minority and white trans*female youth differed significantly in their gender identities and sexual orientations. Racial/minority youth also had significantly lower educational attainment, were less likely to live with their parents of origin as a child, and were significantly more likely to engage in recent condomless anal intercourse compared to whites.

Conclusions: Important disparities in HIV-related sexual risk behavior, education, and residential stability exist between racial/ethnic minority and white trans*female youth. Efforts to assess the impact of multiple minority stress for racial/minority trans*female youth are imminently needed. Additionally, macro-level disparities must be addressed in prevention efforts for trans*female youth, especially for those from racial/ethnic minority groups, in order to prevent incident cases of HIV and reduce disparities.