



Hate Crimes Survey Report

September 2022

Research & Data Analysis
by Fran Simon



To better understand the lived experiences of Coloradans, this study sought to estimate the incidence of hate crimes and bias-motivated incidents in Colorado, as well as how these crimes/incidents were reported—if at all.

Methodology

A statewide survey was conducted in English and Spanish from May 2 - July 7, 2022. Respondents were reached via SMS/text message (the SMS survey) or through online outreach from Hate Free Colorado's partner organizations (the online survey), generating **5,177 responses from Coloradans ages 18+**.

The SMS survey gathered 3,346 responses. The online survey gathered an additional 1,831 responses to the same questionnaire, as well as open-ended questions. While there were some demographic differences in the survey pools, there were no statistically significant differences in major hate crime metrics.

Quantitative data are reported from the SMS survey and are weighted by age, gender, race, ethnicity, region, and religion to be **representative of Coloradans ages 18+**. Qualitative responses are reported from the online survey.

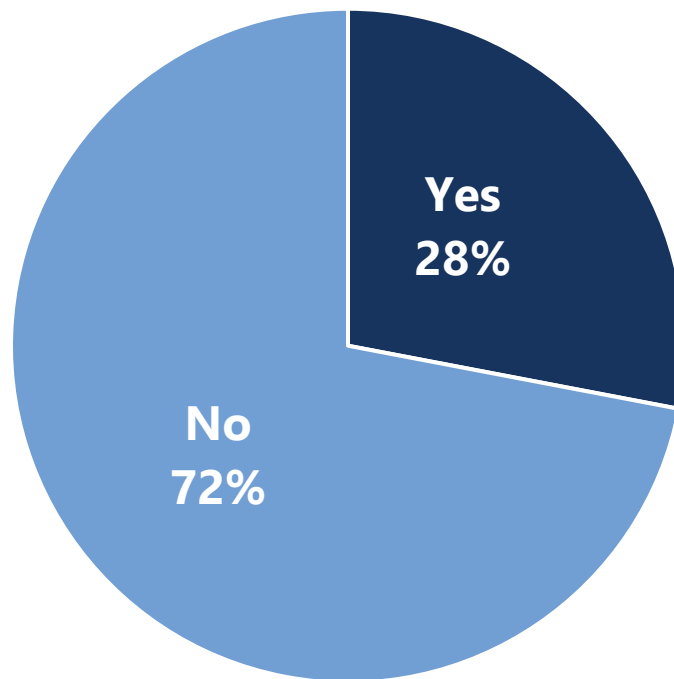
*Special thanks to **Benenson Strategy Group** for donating their consulting services on research design and methodology.*

Key Findings

- 1. Hate crimes in Colorado are significantly under-represented in official data.** In 2020, the FBI received a total of 281 hate crime reports from law enforcement agencies in Colorado. However, the survey found that **in the last 5 years, 28% of adult Coloradans experienced a hate crime or bias-motivated incident.** That represents an estimated 1.25 million Coloradans ages 18+.
- 2. Among those who experienced a hate crime, 61% said it was due to race/ethnicity/ancestry.** Members of racial/ethnic minority groups are 1.5-2 times as likely as white, non-Hispanic Coloradans to have experienced a hate crime.
- 3. Members of other impacted groups—based on gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, and/or disability—also experienced hate crimes at significantly higher rates than the average among all Coloradans.**
- 4. The vast majority of hate crimes in Colorado go unreported to the police—or to anyone.** Only 18% of those who experienced a hate crime reported it to the police, and only 29% reported it to anyone at all.

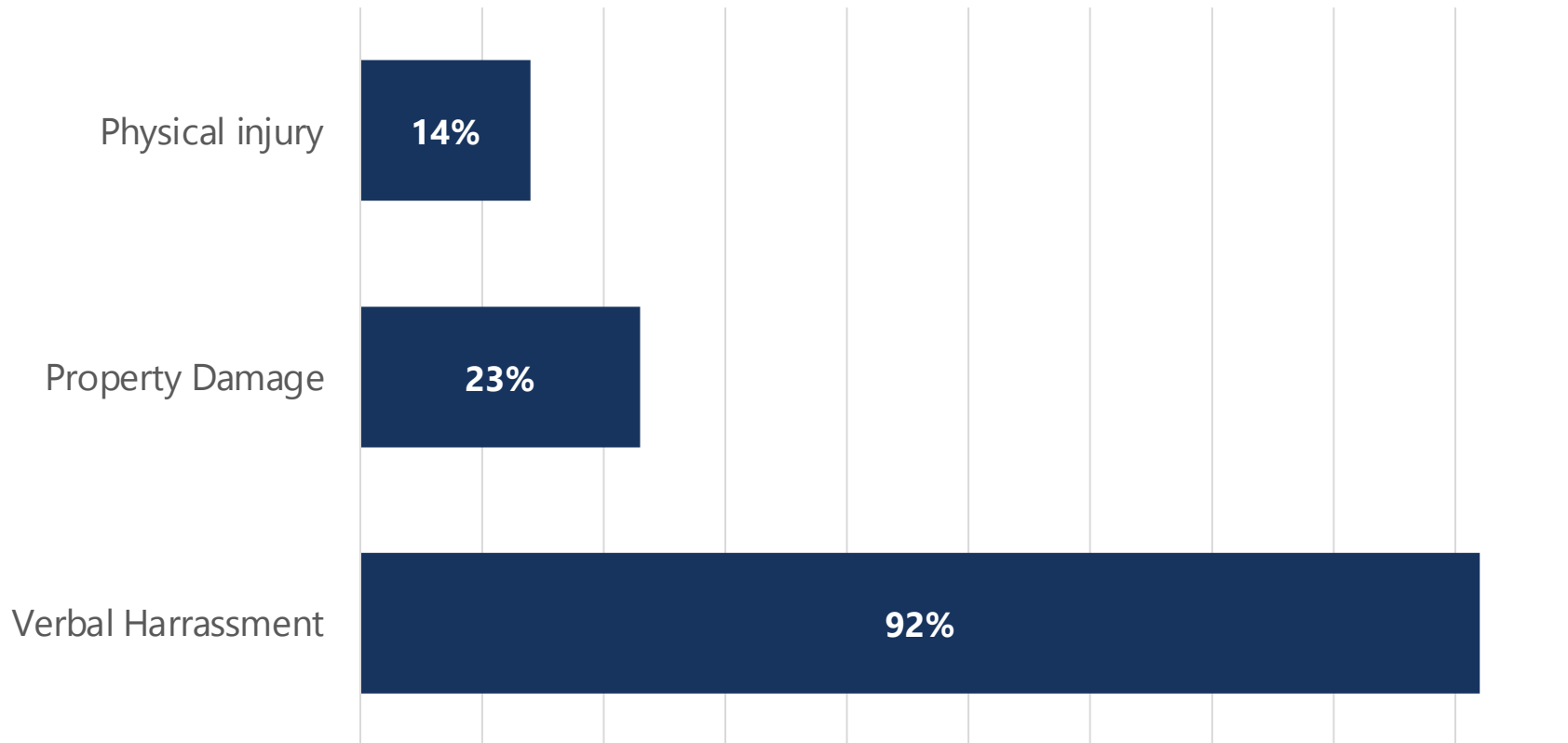
Nearly 3 in 10 adult Coloradans experienced a hate crime or bias-motivated incident in the last 5 years—significantly higher than official hate crime statistics.

Have you experienced a hate crime or bias-motivated incident (e.g., verbal harassment, property damage, or physical injury) in Colorado in the last 5 years?



Of those who experienced a hate crime or bias-motivated incident, 1 in 7 experienced physical injury and nearly 1 in 4 experienced property damage.

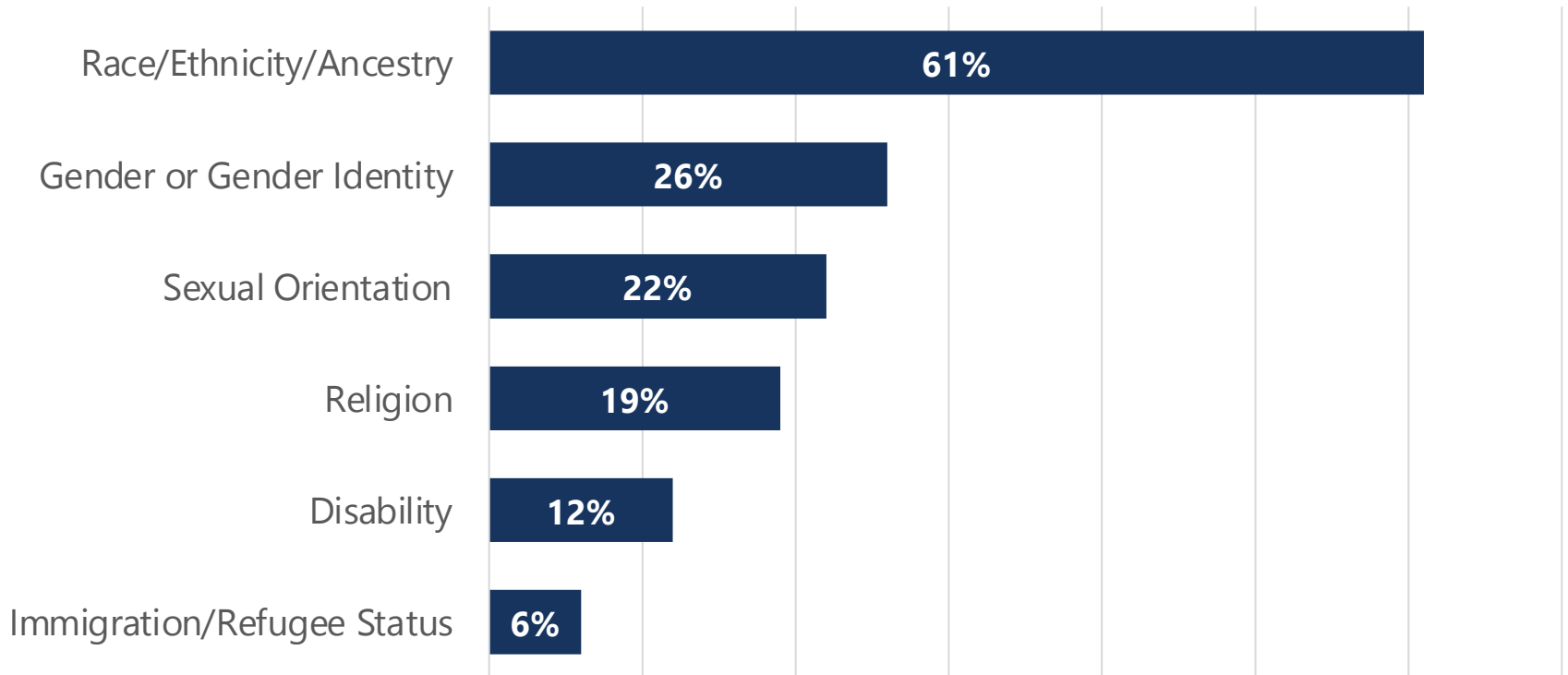
For those who experienced a hate crime or bias-motivated incident, was it _____? *Select all that apply.*



**3 in 5 attributed the incident to race/ethnicity/ancestry.
1 in 4 attributed it to gender or gender identity.
1 in 5 attributed it to sexual orientation.**

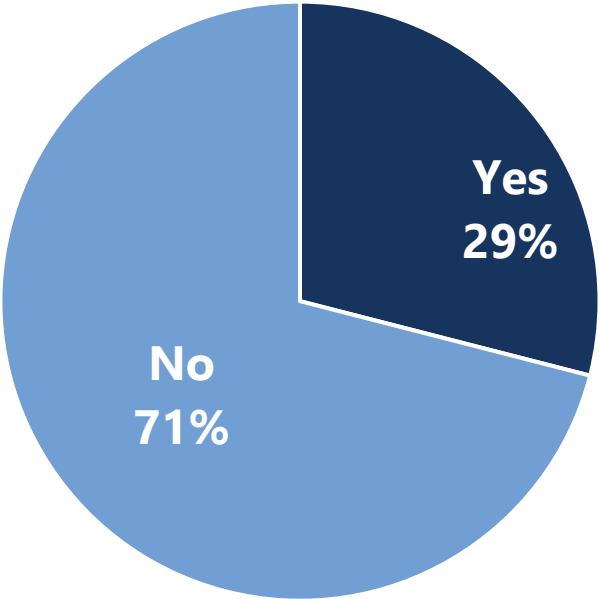
For those who experienced a hate crime or bias-motivated incident, was it because of your actual/perceived _____?

Select all that apply.

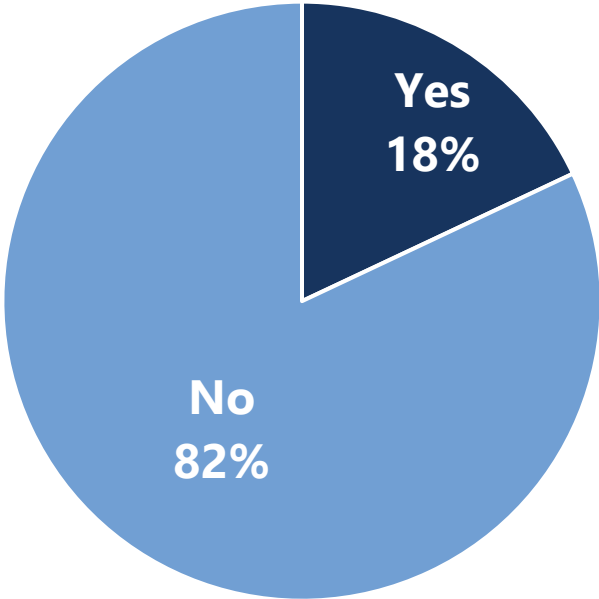


**Less than 3 in 10 of those who experienced a hate crime or bias-motivated incident reported it at all.
Less than 2 in 10 reported it to the police.**

For those who experienced a hate crime or bias-motivated incident, did you report it to anyone*?



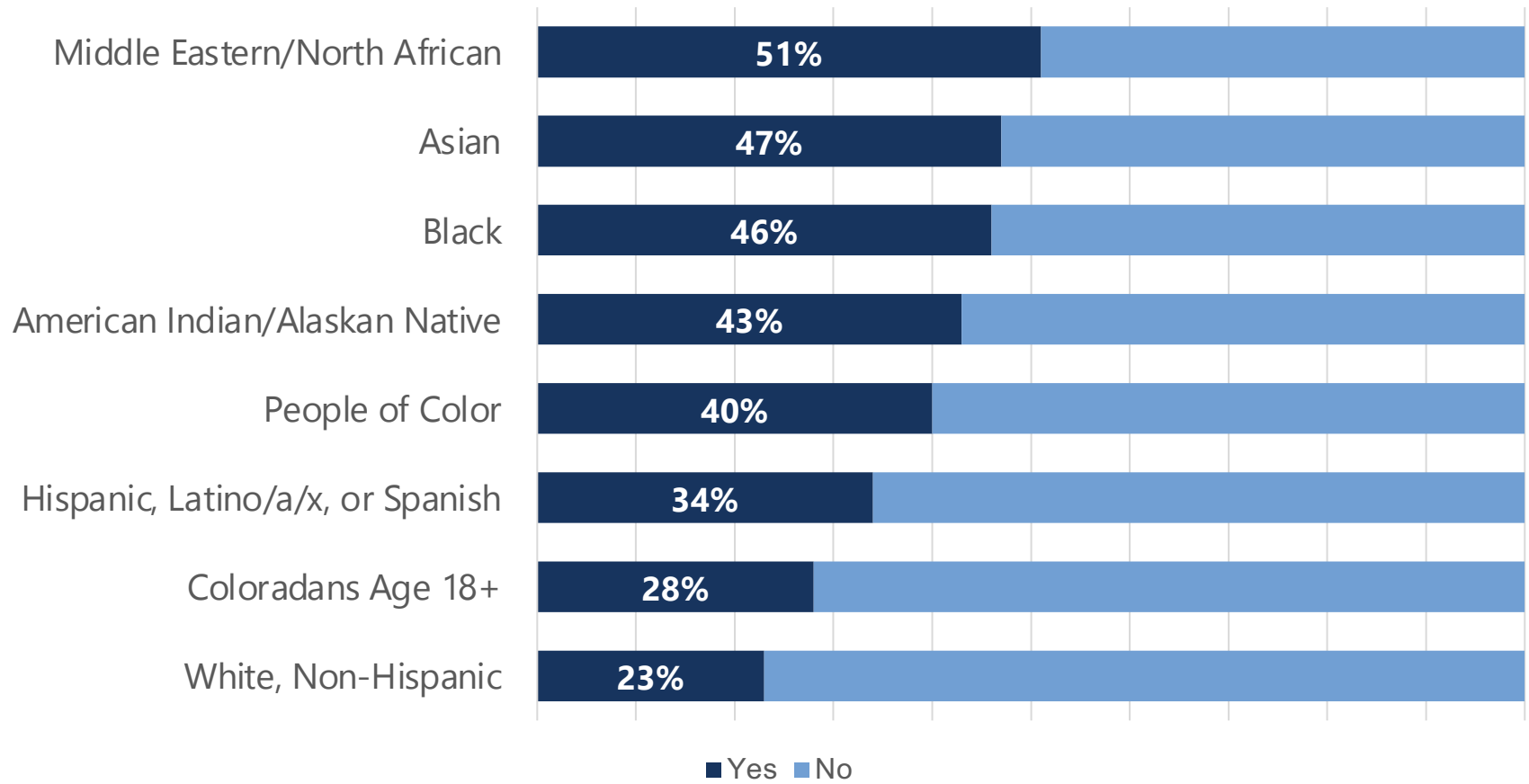
For those who experienced a hate crime or bias-motivated incident, did you report it to the police?



*In addition to the police, this includes reports to employers, community organizations, family members, friends, clergy, and/or counselors.

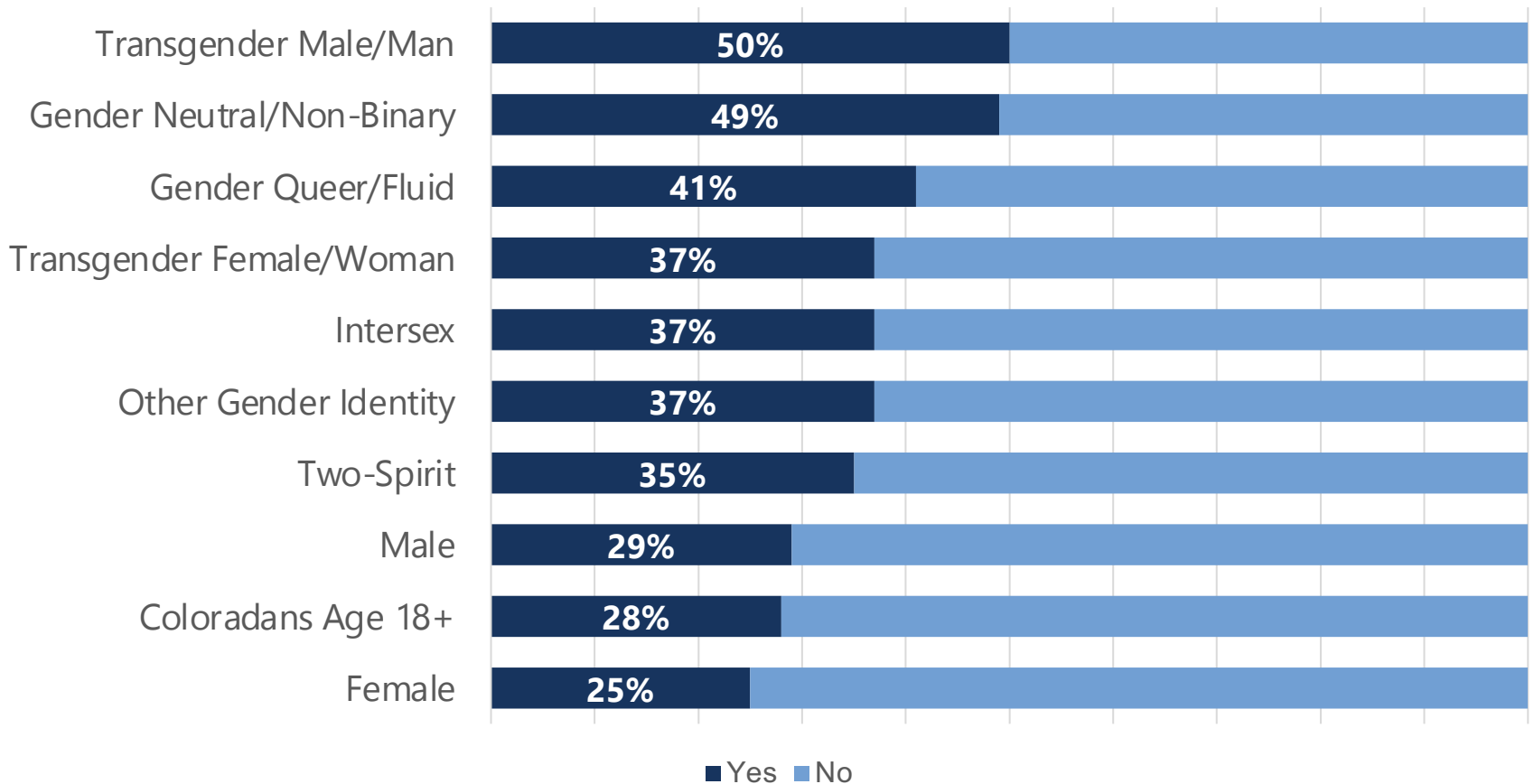
Members of racial/ethnic minority groups are 1.5-2 times as likely as white, non-Hispanic Coloradans to have experienced a hate crime.

Have you experienced a hate crime or bias-motivated incident in Colorado in the last 5 years?



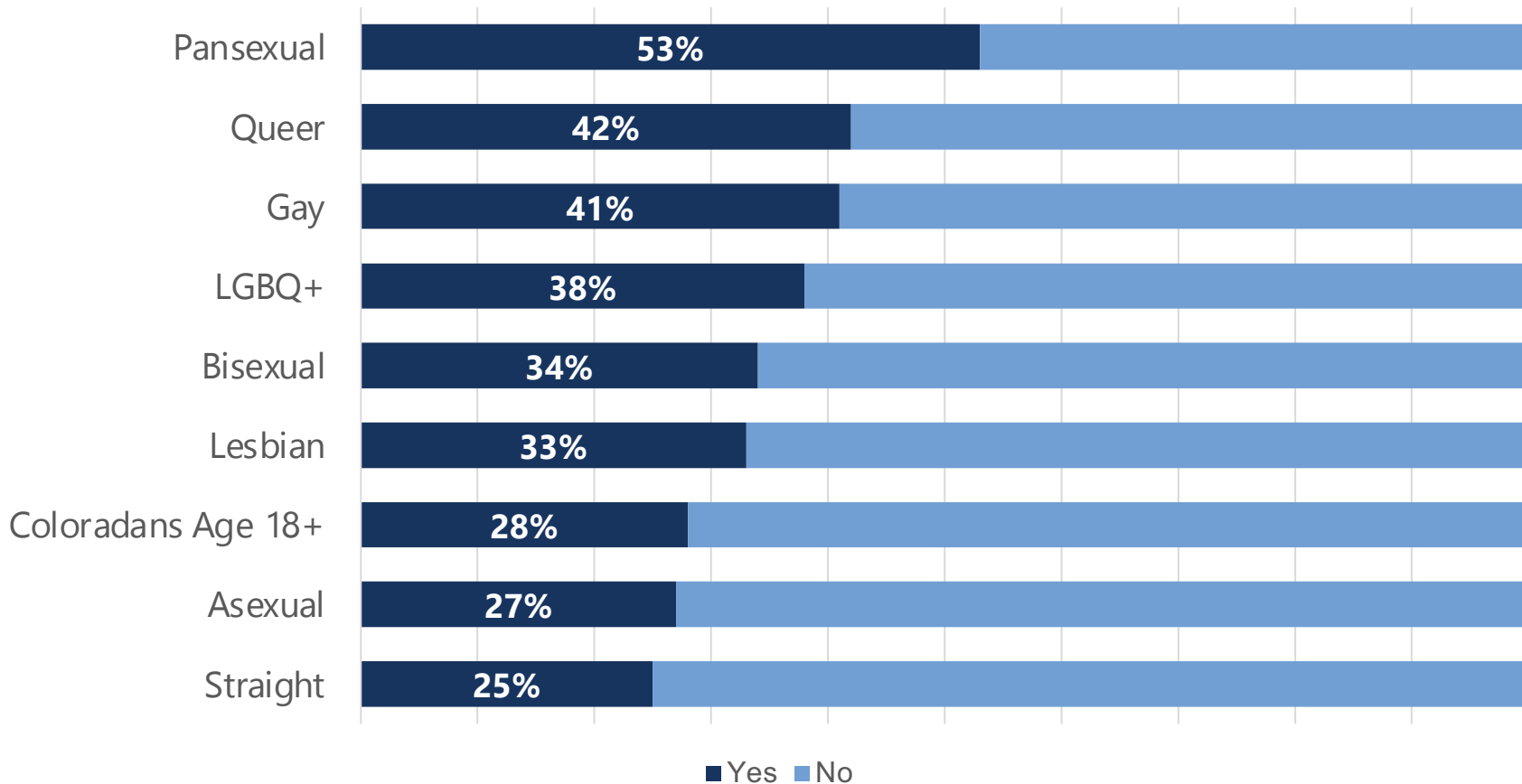
One third to one half of transgender and gender diverse Coloradans have experienced a hate crime or bias-motivated incident.

Have you experienced a hate crime or bias-motivated incident in Colorado in the last 5 years?



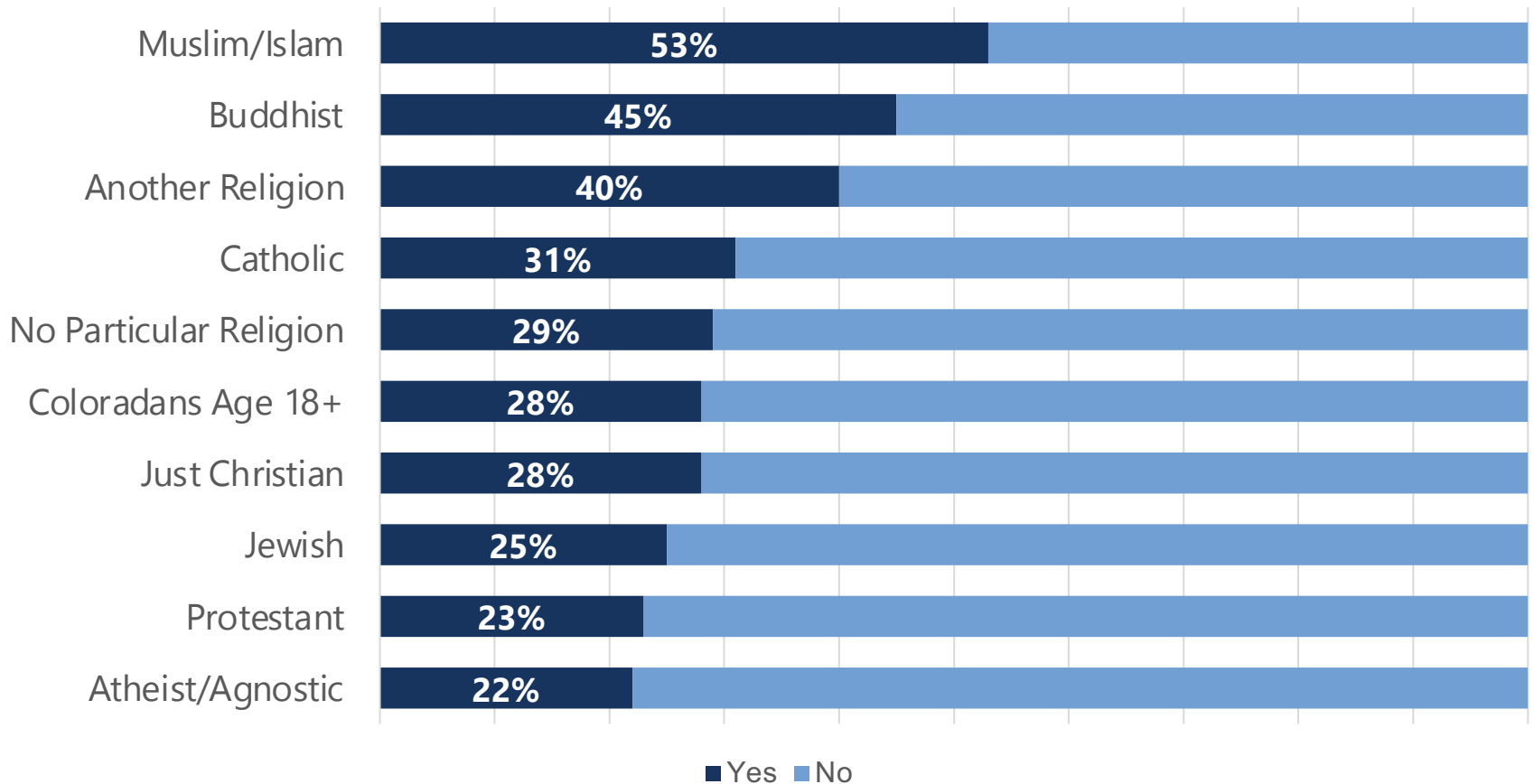
Collectively, Coloradans who identify as LGBTQ+ are more than 1.5 times as likely as straight Coloradans to have experienced a hate crime.

Have you experienced a hate crime or bias-motivated incident in Colorado in the last 5 years?



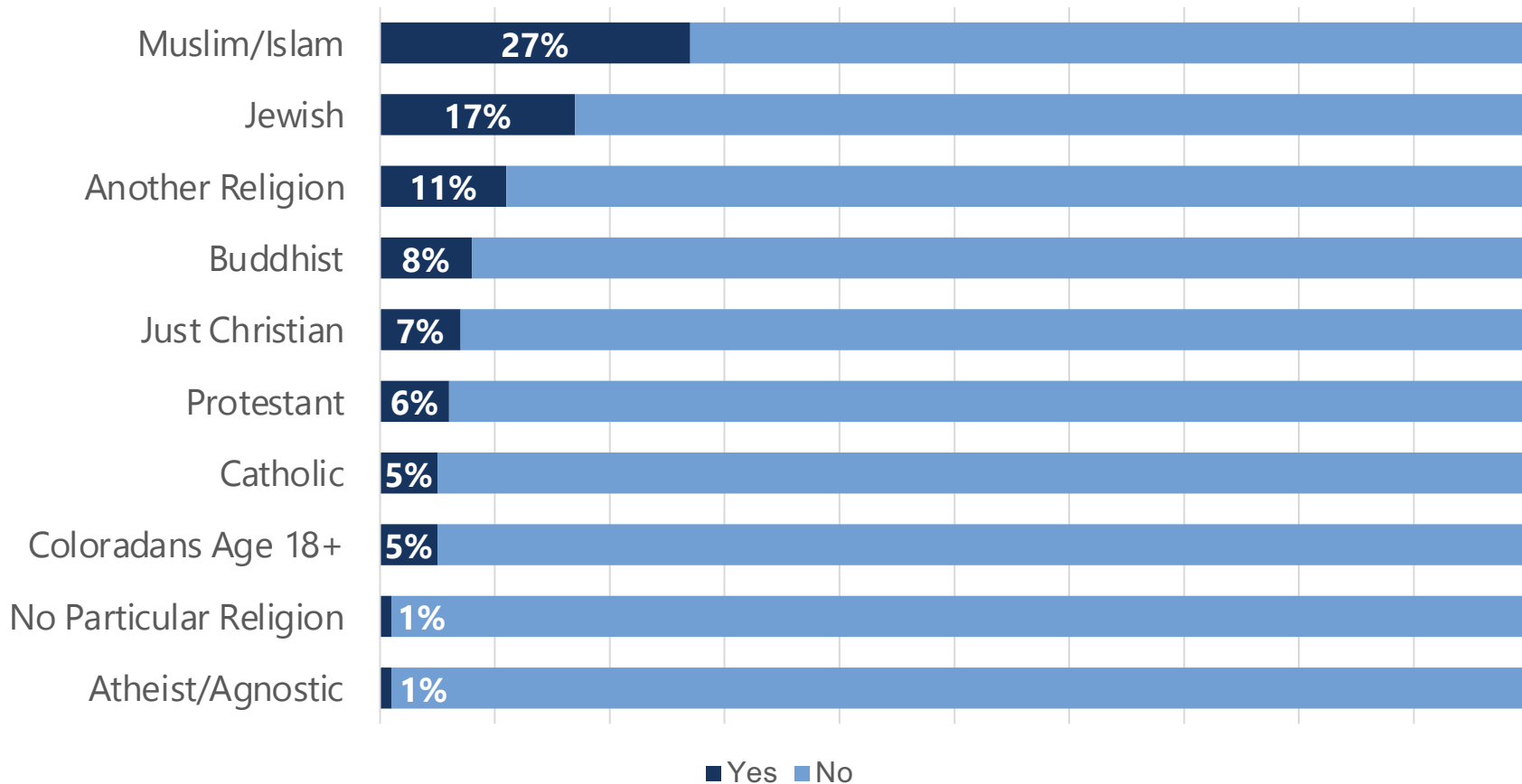
Approximately half of Muslim and Buddhist Coloradans report experiencing hate crimes or bias-motivated incidents...

Have you experienced a hate crime or bias-motivated incident in Colorado in the last 5 years?



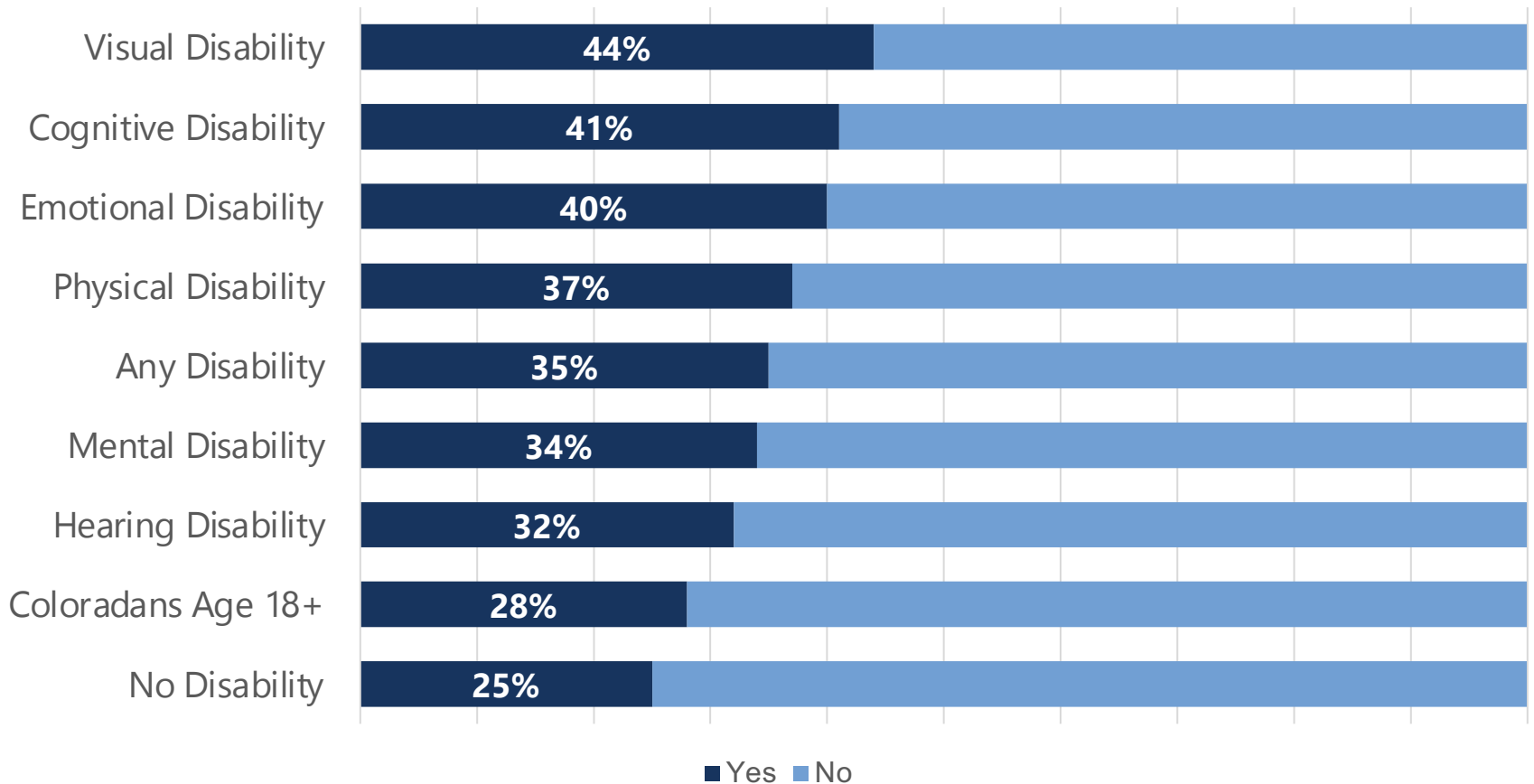
...and more than 1 in 4 Muslim Coloradans and 1 in 6 Jewish Coloradans said they experienced a hate crime because of their religion.

Have you experienced a hate crime or bias-motivated incident **because of your actual/perceived religion?**



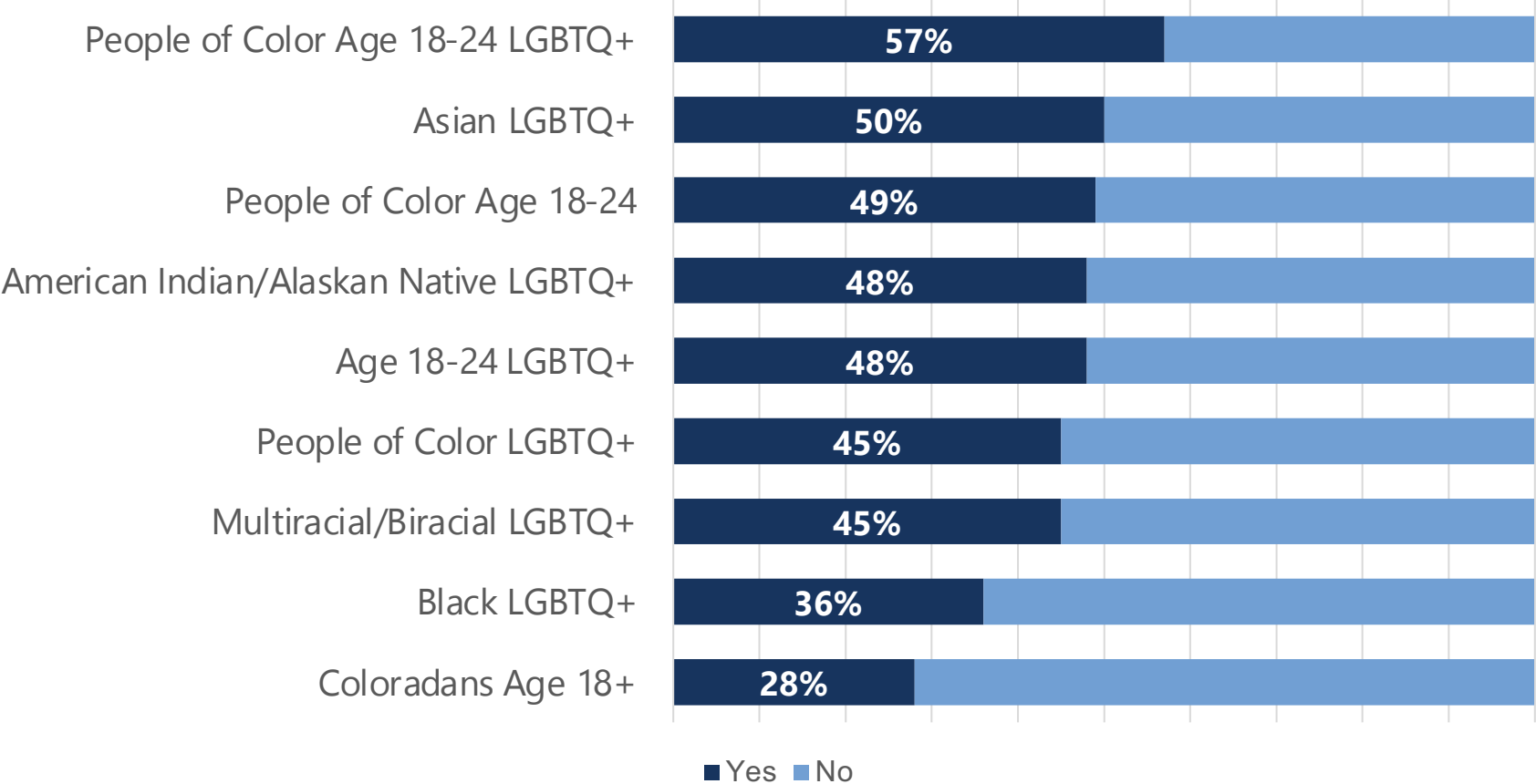
Collectively, Coloradans who have disabilities are nearly 1.5 times as likely as those without disabilities to have experienced a hate crime.

Have you experienced a hate crime or bias-motivated incident in Colorado in the last 5 years?



Those with multiple marginalized identities experienced incidents at higher rates. Nearly 6 in 10 People of Color who are 18-24 and LGBTQ+ experienced a hate crime.

Have you experienced a hate crime or bias-motivated incident in Colorado in the last 5 years?



Recommended Actions

- 1. Hate Crime Hotlines:** Establish non-emergency numbers at the local and/or state level for individuals to report a suspected hate crime.
- 2. Law Enforcement Training:** Expand training for law enforcement officers who are most likely to interact with individuals targeted by hate crimes. Training should specifically address recognizing indicators of a hate crime, conducting victim interviews, and filing reports with the proper notes and categorizations.
- 3. Outreach to Impacted Groups:** Create special law enforcement units to develop relationships with communities that are most frequently targeted by hate crimes. Provide them with victim resources and agency policies/procedures.
- 4. Education for Impacted Groups:** Conduct information sessions for community organizations, service providers, and non-profits that serve those who are most frequently targeted by hate crimes. Share information on victim resources and help agencies develop effective processes for handling incident reports from impacted community members.



For more information on this research, data, and methodology,
please contact info@hatefreeco.org or 720-799-9680.

Appendix A: Reasons for Not Reporting

- **No one will do anything / take it seriously**
- **Police don't care**
- **Don't trust the police / no faith in the police**

Comments from respondents to online survey:

"My daughter, who wears hijab, accidentally cut someone off in the parking lot. They yelled at her, and later we discovered the car had been keyed. We didn't report this because:

- 1) we didn't know who to report it to,*
- 2) she's had so many people be jerks to her she's 'used to it,'*
- 3) there's no way to prove it's because she wears a headscarf, and*
- 4) we didn't believe they would ever catch the person."*

*"I don't know how you deal with it. However, during the incident I was afraid it would escalate into a physical assault so I moved to get away. Once away I just wanted to forget it happened. **I never even thought about the police because I was not physically assaulted just shamed and afraid.**"*

*"These incidents feel increasingly normal for my friends and me, and **the police seem to dismiss our concerns, but [I] am also worried about reporting to the police because they often over-respond to issues at the moment and are too violent, and even if the police do something, as we navigate the judicial system our attackers are set free to torment us and can even file defamation claims...**"*

Appendix B: Interactions with Police

Some comments in the online survey were **positive**...

*"Police were responsive, dispatched to the scene. **I appreciated being taken seriously because I was quite shaken.**"*

*"**They were compassionate, listened & provided support** through victim services and officers."*

*"Police were very helpful. **They assigned a detective in their hate crimes unit to my case.**"*

Some were **negative**...

*"My crime was not taken seriously, I was not supported or heard, **my concerns were dismissed and the overall situation was very disappointing and disheartening.**"*

*"Officer mentioned that if I had video or audio recordings of the incident that it would help them. **But how are you supposed to do that when you are suddenly in a high-stress situation—that you desperately want to either defuse or get away from?** They told me that if it happened again that they might be able to do something, but it was unlikely, and **I needed to handle it myself.**"*

*"**Police did NOTHING** after a neighbor verbally harassed and physically attacked me and my roommate for walking our dogs and being "faggots," continued to throw rocks at us from the street. **We recorded incident and spoke with police—they did nothing**, not even an offer to file a report."*

Appendix C: Opportunities for Improvement

Comments from respondents to online survey:

***“Listen.** Be understanding. Take it seriously. Acknowledge the situation.*

***Don’t be dismissive,** minimize it, or be quick to judge.*

***Interview the perpetrator** in addition to the complainant.*

***Record everything.** File report. File charges.*

***Follow up.** Give updates. Keep in contact.”*

***“Very little awareness around cultural particularities by those responding.** It would make a lot of difference in the overall outcome for victims.”*

***“Thank you for doing this work!** I am glad that this survey is happening. It’s essential to capture these kinds of data. I hope this survey helps you change things. **I love this state and I want to feel like I can stay here and be welcome.**”*