SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

BLACK HEALTH MATTERS INITIATIVE SPOTLIGHT

2021

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INTRODUCTION

"We know that what gets measured gets done. Our goal is to use the collected data as an opportunity to partner with local elected officials and community leaders. Together, we can begin to address the disparities outlined in our county's declaration that racism is a public health crisis. This is our moment to include the diverse and vibrant voices of the Black community as we work together to create a healthy, thriving, and safe Santa Cruz County for all of us."

Keisha Browder, CEO, United Way of Santa Cruz County

Since 2020, United Way of Santa Cruz County and the Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative (SCCBHMI) have worked to increase visibility of the social determinants of health impacting the Black/African American community in Santa Cruz County. Applied Survey Research (ASR) was brought on to create the data snapshot, **"Making the Invisible, Visible"** released in December of 2020. Following that, ASR gathered additional secondary data and primary data, completed the analysis and authored this spotlight report.

"Making the Invisible, Visible"
Data Snapshot
December 2020

Racism and its associated injustices have engendered tragic consequences for people of color including unequal medical care, and discrimination in housing, employment, education, and the justice system. Research shows that this history of individual and structural racism spanning generations denies opportunity to people of color and robs them of their physical and mental health. The life expectancy of people of color is often a decade or more shorter than their white neighbors just a few blocks away, an injustice that has not moved in generations. These health disparities, and often the diseases themselves, stem in part from the stress of being silenced, ignored, oppressed, and targeted for violence—too often by those institutions and individuals entrusted to protect all people.

Source: Besser, R. (2020, June 3). Statement from Richard Besser, MD, on Racial Injustice, Violence, and Health in America. Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Retrieved January 7, 2022 from https://www.rwjf.org/en/library/articles-and-news/2020/06/statement-from-richard-besser-on-racial-injustice-violence-and-health-in-america.html

WHY NOW

The Black/African American community has been historically underrepresented in Santa Cruz County data, often categorized in the "Other" category. Local and national events created momentum to address these and other disparities impacting the Black/African American community in Santa Cruz County, including:

- **COVID-19 Pandemic**
- **Black Lives Matter (BLM) local and national movements and advocacy**
- **Murder of George Floyd and the resulting demonstrations and activism**
- **Emergence of local organizations to build connection and community for Black/African Americans in Santa Cruz County**

Additionally, in August 2020, the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors adopted a resolution declaring racism a public health crisis, acknowledging the urgency to address inequities impacting marginalized populations, no matter how small their presence. “While resolutions and formal statements themselves are not necessarily legally enforceable, they are an important first step in calling attention to racism and shifting the narrative in a way that can drive changes to policies, laws and resource allocation. These resolutions create the opportunity for strategic action to eliminate racist policies and practices and adopt those that advance racial equity.”^ The passing of this resolution is a major milestone for Santa Cruz County. It also provides parameters by which stakeholders can track progress and ensure accountability.

The Black Health Matters Spotlight, can be used to inform policies and practices for various agencies and organizations to improve quality of life for all county residents. This report is the first ever of its kind devoted to the lives and experiences of Black/African American people in Santa Cruz County. The Black/African American community has long been underrepresented and misrepresented in research, especially owing to small sample size and the tendency to “Other” this population/community. This report uplifts the voices of the Black/African American community in Santa Cruz County.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We are grateful to the United Way of Santa Cruz County and the SCCBHMI who contributed to data development and provided focus group facilitation support. We would like to specifically acknowledge the hard work, expertise, and partnership of the following organizations:

- **SCC Black Health Matters Initiative**
- **Santa Cruz County Coalition for Justice and Racial Equity**
- **NAACP Santa Cruz County**
- **Tannery World Dance & Cultural Center**
- **Black Surf Club**
- **The Black Kings of Santa Cruz County**
- **Black Girl Magic**
- **Blended Bridges**
- **Santa Cruz County Park Friends**

This work would not have been possible without the generous financial support of these local partners:

- **City of Capitola**
- **City of Watsonville**
- **Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County**
- **County of Santa Cruz**
- **Kaiser Permanente**
- **Sutter Health**

^Advancing Racial Equity. Analysis: Declarations of Racism as a Public Health Crisis. (2021). American Public Health Association. https://www.apha.org/-/media/Files/PDF/topics/racism/Racism_Declarations_Analysis.ashx

Photo by Kevin Painchaud

METHODOLOGY

ASR and the SCCBHMI design team developed research questions and a set of measures that can be used to assess the status of children, families, and the community in general. The measures are organized into three domains to track the well-being of Black/African Americans in Santa Cruz County: Health and Well-being, Parenting and Education, and Belonging and Safety.

Primary data was collected via an online survey and online focus groups. Survey and focus group questions related to the social determinants of health, with additional questions focused on the impact of race/ethnicity on well-being, feelings of safety, and the experience of being Black/African American in Santa Cruz County. Secondary data was collected from a variety of sources, including but not limited to, the U.S. Census Bureau; federal, state, and local government agencies; health care institutions; and other credible sources from online databases and internet sites.

Survey and focus group participants were asked two screening questions to ensure that they:

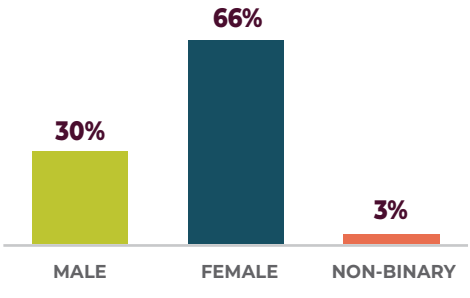
- **Identified as Black, African American or of the African Diaspora;**
- **and primarily lived, worked or went to school in Santa Cruz County.**

In total, 87 adults and four youth participated in the online survey, and 31 people participated in four focus groups.

INFORMATION ON PARTICIPANTS

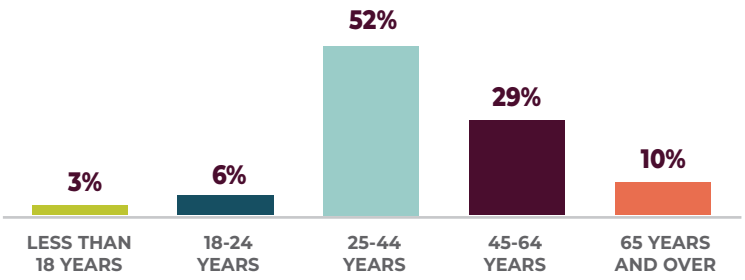
Survey Participants

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING BEST DESCRIBES YOUR GENDER IDENTITY?



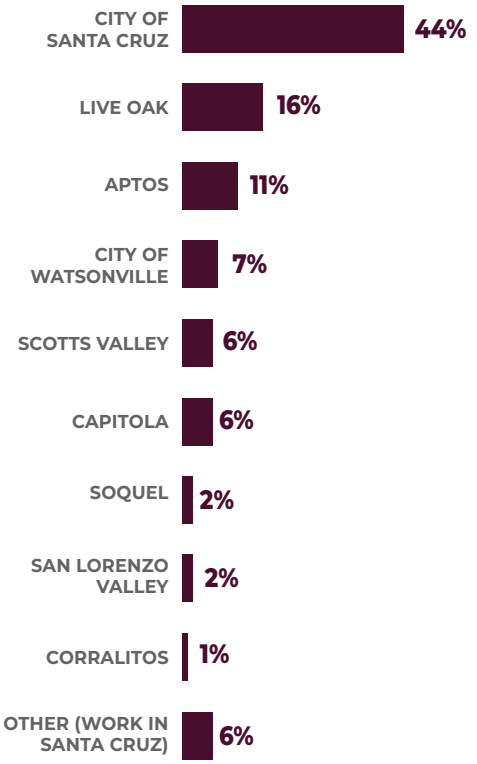
n=89; Male n=27; Female n=59; Non-binary n=3.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).
Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING AGE GROUPS ARE YOU IN?



n=89.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS DO YOU CURRENTLY LIVE CLOSEST TO?

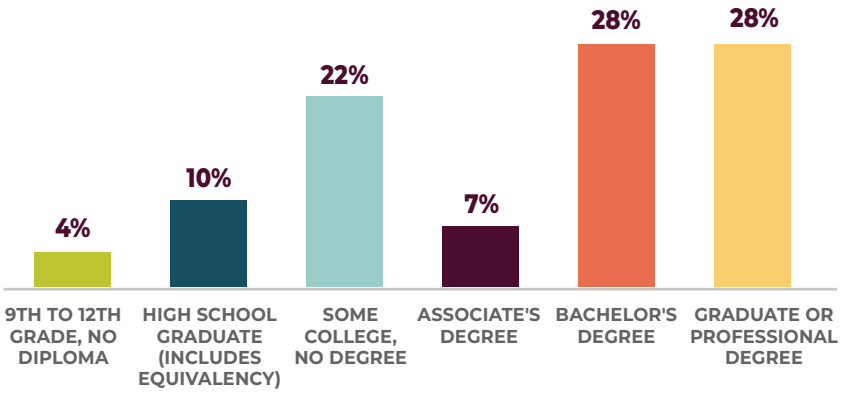


n=89.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).
Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

29% of respondents identified with an additional racial/ethnic group. Additional identities included White, Native American, Latina/x, Bi-Racial, Jewish, Asian, African, and Filipino.

n=89.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).

WHAT IS THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION YOU COMPLETED?



n=89.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).
Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Focus Group Participants

Demographic information for focus group participants was not collected. Below is information about when the focus groups were held, who hosted each group and how many participated.

SEPTEMBER 7, 2021	NAACP Santa Cruz County	9
SEPTEMBER 7, 2021	Santa Cruz County Coalition for Justice and Racial Equity	10
SEPTEMBER 8, 2021	Black Girl Magic	7
SEPTEMBER 9, 2021	Youth/Young Adult	5
	Total Number of Community Participants:	**31**

NOTES TO THE READER

This report is organized into three sections, each including primary and secondary data related to the experience of being Black/African American in Santa Cruz County:

Health and Well-Being – Physical, mental, and financial health and well-being are critical for individuals and communities to thrive. The health indicators in this section include data on access to and quality of healthcare, physical activity, and COVID-19. Well-being data includes indicators related to mental/behavioral health and financial well-being.

Parenting and Education – Parenting and caregiving play a determining role in the development and growth of children and youth, while education is a strong predictor of quality of life. Indicators related to parenting, youth assets, and educational attainment are included in this section.

Belonging and Safety – Cultivating a sense of belonging and safety is crucial for positive life outcomes. Belonging and safety data includes indicators related to social support, quality of life, community safety, law enforcement, and racism and discrimination.

When sharing secondary data, ASR used the more accurate and inclusive category label, "Another Race/Ethnicity" instead of "Other".

While the findings of this report reflect a range of Black/African American people in Santa Cruz County, the sample sizes for the participants in the focus groups and the survey were too small to be representative of the entire Black/African American community in Santa Cruz County.

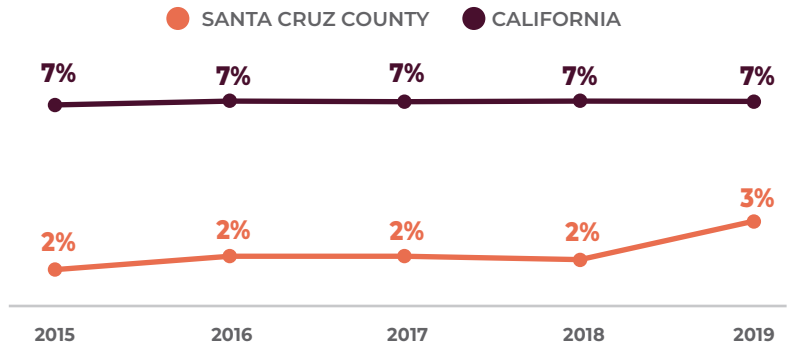
The focus group and survey questions, as well as selected quotes from open-ended survey questions and focus groups can be found in the appendices.

A check mark icon indicates a survey question

Photo by David Lee

DEMOGRAPHICS

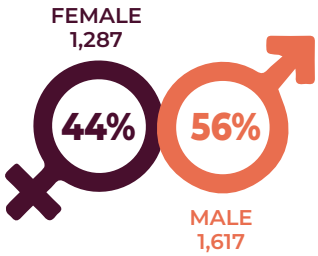
BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN POPULATION (ALONE OR IN COMBINATION WITH ONE OR MORE RACES)



Source: Data retrieved 2021 from United States Census Bureau. 2015-2019 American Community Survey 1-year estimates.

Often racial data is reported as "Race Alone" categories, not including "Race Alone or in Combination" categories that respondents who identify with one or more additional race(s) can select. In the table below, both categories are included to show the multi-faceted racial and ethnic composition of Santa Cruz County.

BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN GENDER DISTRIBUTION, SANTA CRUZ COUNTY (2019)



TOTAL 2,904

Source: Data retrieved 2021 from United States Census Bureau. 2019 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

RACIAL/ETHNIC DISTRIBUTION, SANTA CRUZ COUNTY (2019)

	NUMBER	PERCENT
Black or African American alone	2,230	1%
Black or African American alone or in combination with one or more races	8,572	3%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	435	<1%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone or in combination with one or more races	5,246	2%
Asian alone	13,699	5%
Asian alone or in combination with one or more races	21,205	8%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	92,921	34%
Native Hawaiian and Another Pacific Islander alone	76	<1%
Native Hawaiian and Another Pacific Islander alone or in combination with one or more races	862	<1%
White alone	154,075	56%
White alone or in combination with one or more races	222,855	82%
Another race	817	<1%
Another race or in combination with one or more other races	29,895	11%
Two or more races*	8,960	3%
TOTAL POPULATION (ALONE)	273,213	

Source: Data retrieved 2021 from United States Census Bureau. 2019 American Community Survey 1-year estimates.
*The "Two or More Races" category includes people who identify with combinations of two or more race categories, according to the US Census Bureau.
Note: Multiple response question totals may not add up to 100.

BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN AGE DISTRIBUTION, SANTA CRUZ COUNTY (2019)

Under 5-9 yrs.	218 (8%)
10-17 yrs.	269 (9%)
18-24 yrs.	555 (19%)
25-34 yrs.	615 (21%)
35-44 yrs.	315 (11%)
45-54 yrs.	312 (11%)
55-64 yrs.	341 (12%)
65+ yrs.	279 (10%)
TOTAL	2,904

Source: Data retrieved 2021 from United States Census Bureau. 2019 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.
Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Photo by Kevin Painchaud

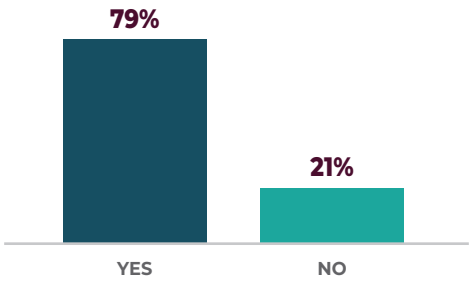
HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Physical, mental, and financial health and well-being are critical for individuals and communities to thrive. The health indicators in this section include data on access to and quality of healthcare, physical activity, and COVID-19. Well-being data includes indicators related to mental/behavioral health and financial well-being.

ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

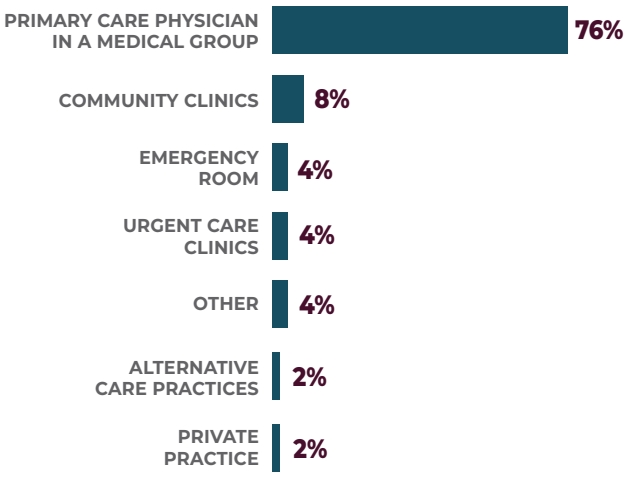
Seventy-nine percent (79%) of survey respondents reported that they were able to receive the healthcare they needed in the last 12 months.

IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS, WERE YOU ABLE TO RECEIVE THE HEALTH CARE YOU NEEDED?



n=76.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).

MOST OFTEN, WHERE DID YOU GO FOR YOUR HEALTH CARE?



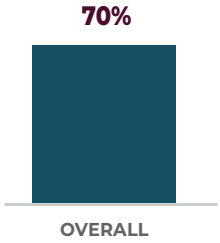
n=84.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).
Note: The "Primary Care Physician in a Medical Group" category includes PAMF, Dignity and Kaiser. The "Community Clinics" category includes Salud para la Gente and Santa Cruz Community Clinics.

Photo by Kevin Painchaud

PHYSICAL HEALTH AND ACTIVITY

For the 2018-19 school year, the percent of Black/African American 9th grade students achieving physical fitness goals in Santa Cruz County was higher (94%) than the overall California percent (50%).

IN GENERAL, HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH YOUR PHYSICAL HEALTH? (SURVEY RESPONDENTS ANSWERING "SATISFIED" OR "VERY SATISFIED")



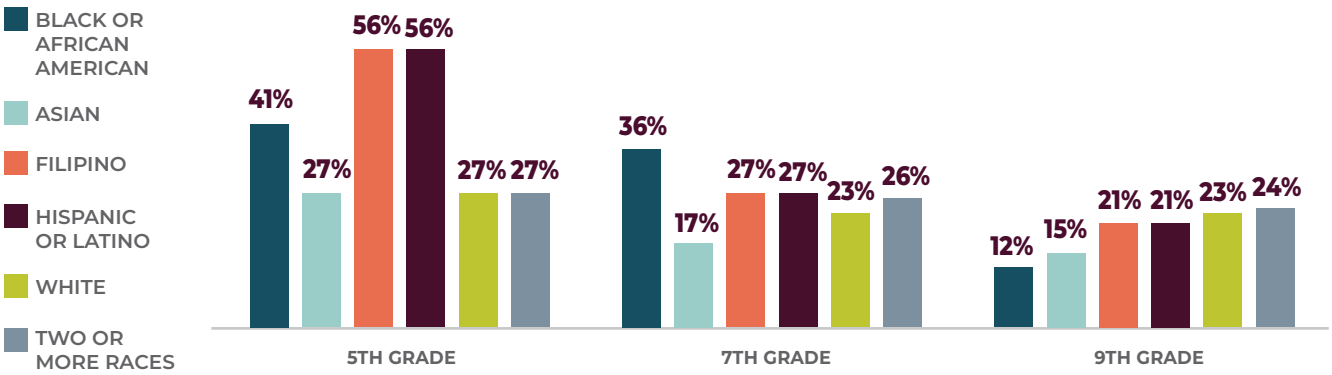
n=84.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).

BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS ACHIEVING PHYSICAL FITNESS GOALS (IN AT LEAST 5 OUT OF 6 FITNESS AREAS^), BY GRADE LEVEL

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
SANTA CRUZ COUNTY					
5TH GRADE	47%	54%	54%	67%	56%
7TH GRADE	65%	57%	63%	63%	48%
9TH GRADE	72%	80%	67%	52%	94%
CALIFORNIA					
5TH GRADE	47%	46%	45%	44%	42%
7TH GRADE	51%	51%	51%	49%	47%
9TH GRADE	55%	54%	52%	52%	50%

Source: Data retrieved 2021 from California Department of Education. 2014-2019 Physical Fitness Testing Research Files.
^The Fitness Areas include aerobic capacity, body composition, abdominal strength, trunk extension strength, upper body strength, and flexibility.

STUDENTS IN GRADES 5, 7 AND 9 WHO ARE OVERWEIGHT OR OBESE, BY RACE/ETHNICITY, SANTA CRUZ COUNTY (2018-2019)

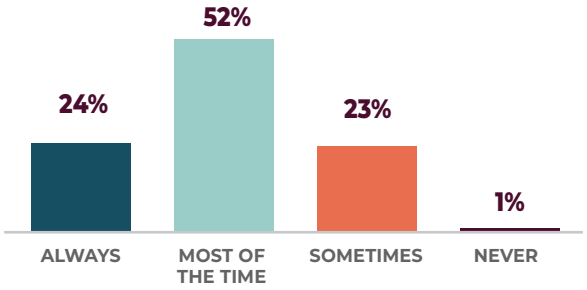


Source: Data retrieved 2021 from California Department of Education. 2018-2019 Physical Fitness Testing Research Files.

QUALITY OF HEALTH CARE

While 76% of survey respondents reported feeling that their health care provider addressed their health concerns "always" or "most of the time", 54% reported feeling that their race and/or ethnicity has impacted the quality of health care they have received in Santa Cruz County.

DO YOU FEEL YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER ADDRESSES YOUR HEALTH CONCERNS?



n=84.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).

DO YOU FEEL LIKE YOUR RACE AND/OR ETHNICITY HAS EVER IMPACTED THE QUALITY OF HEALTH CARE YOU'VE RECEIVED IN SANTA CRUZ COUNTY?

n=84.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).

ALL BIRTHS (ALL AGES), BY RACE/ETHNICITY, SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
ALL BIRTHS					
Black	<1%	1%	1%	<1%	1%
Asian and Pacific Islander	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%
Latina	56%	56%	54%	55%	54%
White	38%	40%	41%	40%	38%
Another race/ethnicity*	3%	1%	2%	2%	3%

Source: Data retrieved 2021 from Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency, Public Health Division. 2014-18 Births, Santa Cruz County.
*The "Another race/ethnicity" category includes people who identify as American Indian/Alaskan Native and Multi-Racial.
Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

BIRTHS TO ADOLESCENTS (19 AND UNDER), BY RACE/ETHNICITY, SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
ALL BIRTHS					
Black	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%
Asian and Pacific Islander	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Latina	88%	93%	85%	84%	90%
White	10%	6%	12%	14%	6%
Another race/ethnicity*	2%	0%	2%	0%	2%

Source: Data retrieved 2021 from Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency, Public Health Division. 2014-18 Births, Santa Cruz County.
*The "Another race/ethnicity" category includes people who identify as American Indian/Alaskan Native and Multi-Racial.
Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

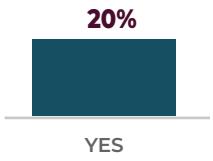
The infant mortality three-year average rate in Santa Cruz County from 2015-2017 for Black/African Americans mothers is 0 compared to the state average of 8.7 per 1,000 Black/African American live births.

Source: Data retrieved from 2021 California Department of Public Health. County Health Status Profile, 2020

COVID-19

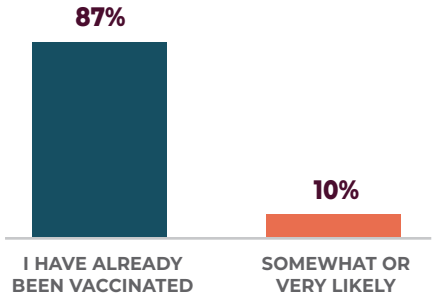
One-fifth (20%) of survey respondents reported that they or someone in their household had ever tested positive for COVID-19. Eighty-seven percent (87%) reported being vaccinated with an additional 10% reporting they are “somewhat likely” or “very likely” to get vaccinated. As of January 13, 2022, the Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency reported 154 known cases of COVID-19 among Black/African American residents of Santa Cruz County. This represents 0.58% of total cases, which is less than the overall percentage of Black/African Americans in the county (0.87%).

HAVE YOU OR ANYONE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD EVER TESTED POSITIVE FOR COVID-19?



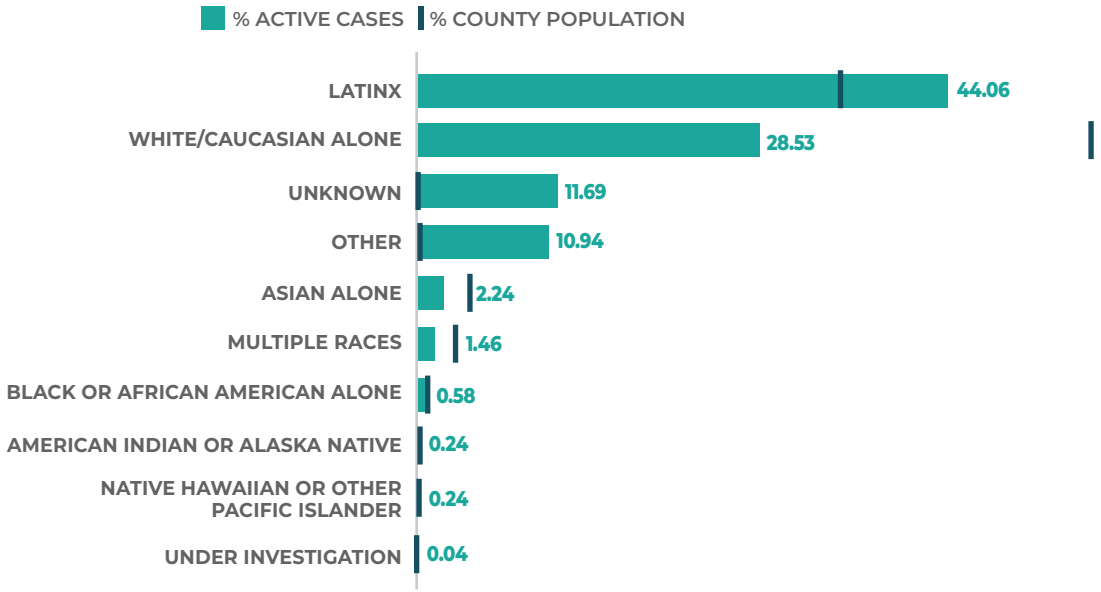
n=81.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).

HOW LIKELY ARE YOU TO GET VACCINATED FOR COVID-19?



n=79.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).

COVID-19 KNOWN CASES, BY RACE/ETHNICITY, SANTA CRUZ COUNTY (2/20/2020-1/13/2022)

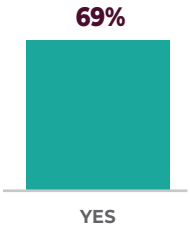


Source: Data retrieved 2021 from Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency. COVID-19 Data Dashboard: Demographics of Known Cases Among Santa Cruz County Residents. Accessed on January 13, 2022 from https://www.santacruzhealth.org/HSAHome/HSADivisions/PublicHealth/CommunicableDiseaseControl/CoronavirusHome.aspx

MENTAL/BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

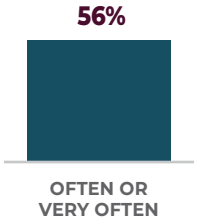
Over half of survey respondents (56%) reported that racial discrimination that they have personally experienced (or witnessed) affected their mental health “often” or “very often”. Nineteen percent (19%) of Black/African American students in 9th and 11th grades (and non-traditional programs) had seriously considered attempting suicide in the 2017-2019 school years, more than the California percent (13%). Students identifying as Multi-racial and Another Race/ Ethnicity were higher at 24% and 26% respectively.

IF YOU OR ANYONE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD NEEDED MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT, COUNSELING OR OTHER HELP, IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS, WERE YOU ABLE TO RECEIVE IT?



n=61.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).

HOW OFTEN DOES RACIAL DISCRIMINATION THAT YOU HAVE PERSONALLY EXPERIENCED (OR WITNESSED) AFFECT YOUR MENTAL HEALTH?

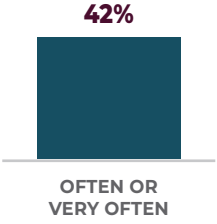


n=84.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).

SOCIAL ISOLATION can be defined as an absence of social interactions, contacts, and relationships with family, friends and/or neighbors.

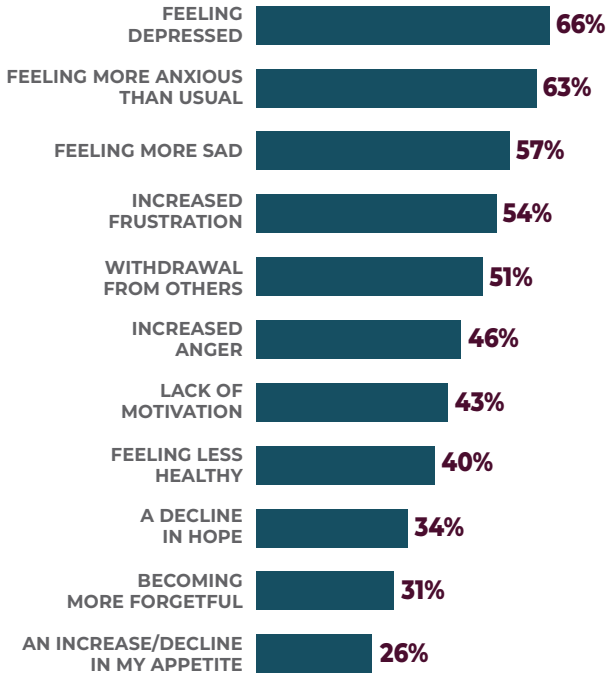
Source: American Association of Retired Persons and United Health Foundation. (2021). The Pandemic Effect: A Social Isolation Report, 2020.

THINKING ABOUT THIS DEFINITION, HOW OFTEN HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED SOCIAL ISOLATION AS A RESULT OF BEING BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN IN SANTA CRUZ COUNTY?



n=83.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).

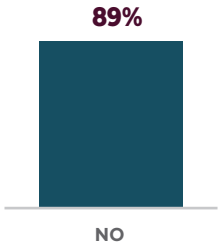
BECAUSE OF SOCIAL ISOLATION, WHAT KIND OF CHANGES HAVE YOU SEEN IN YOURSELF?



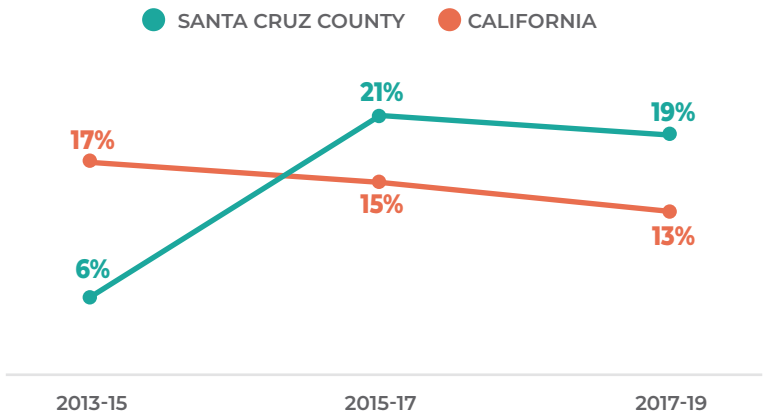
n=35 respondents offering 182 responses.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).
Note: Multiple response question totals may not add up to 100.

IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS, HAVE YOU OR ANYONE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD HAD A PROBLEM WITH SUBSTANCE USE (I.E., ALCOHOL AND/OR DRUGS)?

n=83.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).



BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS IN GRADES 9, 11 AND NON-TRADITIONAL^ PROGRAMS WHO SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED ATTEMPTING SUICIDE IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS



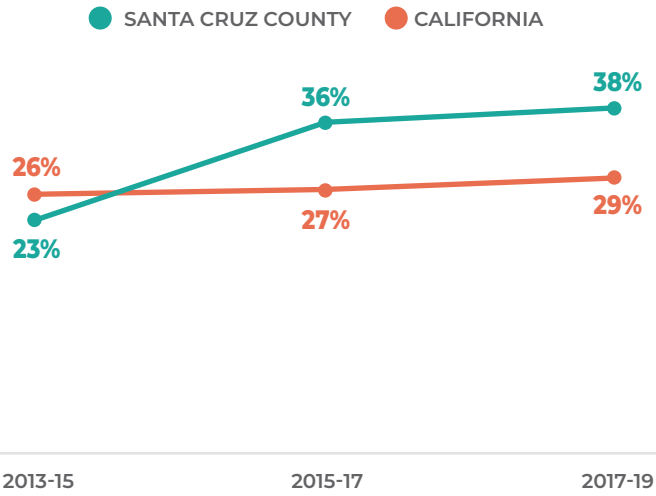
Source: Data retrieved 2021 from Kidsdata.org. California Healthy Kids Survey Suicidal Ideation (Student Reported), by Race/Ethnicity, 2013-2019.
^Non-traditional includes continuation, community day, and other alternative school types.

STUDENTS IN GRADES 9, 11 AND NON-TRADITIONAL^ PROGRAMS WHO SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED ATTEMPTING SUICIDE IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS, BY RACE/ETHNICITY (2017-2019)

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY	
Black or African American	19%
American Indian or Alaska Native	17%
Asian	15%
Hispanic or Latino	12%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	16%
White	17%
Multiracial	24%
Another race/ethnicity	26%

Source: Data retrieved 2021 from Kidsdata.org. California Healthy Kids Survey Suicidal Ideation (Student Reported), by Race/Ethnicity, 2017-2019.
^Non-traditional includes continuation, community day, and other alternative school types.

BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS IN GRADES 7, 9, 11 AND NON-TRADITIONAL^ PROGRAMS WHO EXPERIENCED CHRONIC SAD OR HOPELESS FEELINGS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS



Source: Data retrieved 2021 from Kidsdata.org. California Healthy Kids Survey Depression-Related Feelings, by Race/Ethnicity, 2013-2019.
^Non-traditional includes continuation, community day, and other alternative school types.

STUDENTS IN GRADES 7, 9, 11 AND NON-TRADITIONAL^ PROGRAMS WHO EXPERIENCED CHRONIC SAD OR HOPELESS FEELINGS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS, BY RACE/ETHNICITY (2017-2019)

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY	
Black or African American	38%
American Indian or Alaska Native	23%
Asian	30%
Hispanic or Latino	34%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	43%
White	30%
Multiracial	38%
Another race/ethnicity	27%

Source: Data retrieved 2021 from Kidsdata.org. California Healthy Kids Survey Depression-Related Feelings, by Race/Ethnicity, 2017-2019.
^Non-traditional includes continuation, community day, and other alternative school types.

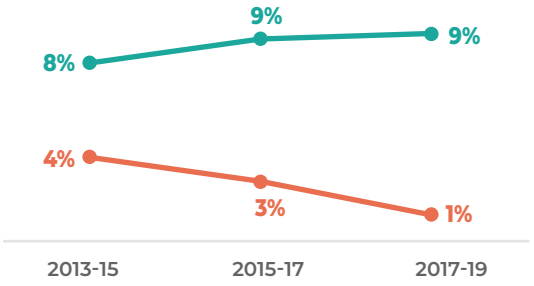
SUBSTANCE USE IN THE PAST 30 DAYS AMONG STUDENTS IN GRADES 7, 9, 11 AND NON-TRADITIONAL^ PROGRAMS, BY RACE/ETHNICITY (2017-2019)

	CIGARETTE USE	ALCOHOL USE	MARIJUANA USE
BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN	9%	20%	34%
AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE	3%	14%	11%
ASIAN	3%	7%	7%
HISPANIC OR LATINO	3%	10%	13%
NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER	0%	14%	18%
WHITE	5%	17%	19%
MULTIRACIAL	7%	15%	16%
ANOTHER RACE/ ETHNICITY	2%	11%	10%

Source: Data retrieved 2021 from Kidsdata.org. California Healthy Kids Survey Cigarette Use, Alcohol Use and Marijuana Use in Past Month, by Race/Ethnicity, 2017-2019.
^Non-traditional includes continuation, community day, and other alternative school types.

CIGARETTE USE IN THE PAST 30 DAYS AMONG BLACK/ AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS IN GRADES 7, 9, 11 AND NON-TRADITIONAL^ PROGRAMS

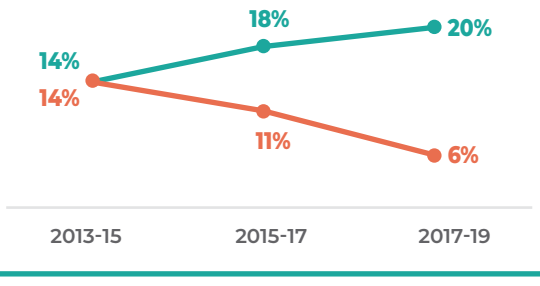
- SANTA CRUZ COUNTY
- CALIFORNIA



Source: Data retrieved 2021 from Kidsdata.org. California Healthy Kids Survey Cigarette Use in Past Month, by Race/Ethnicity, 2013-2019.
^Non-traditional includes continuation, community day, and other alternative school types.

ALCOHOL USE IN THE PAST 30 DAYS AMONG BLACK/ AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS IN GRADES 7, 9, 11 AND NON-TRADITIONAL^ PROGRAMS

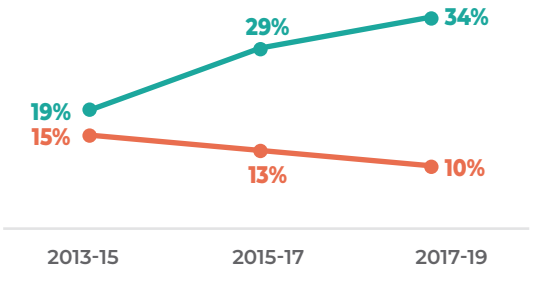
- SANTA CRUZ COUNTY
- CALIFORNIA



Source: Data retrieved 2021 from Kidsdata.org. California Healthy Kids Survey Alcohol Use in Past Month, by Race/Ethnicity, 2013-2019.
^Non-traditional includes continuation, community day, and other alternative school types.

MARIJUANA USE IN THE PAST 30 DAYS AMONG BLACK/ AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS IN GRADES 7, 9, 11 AND NON-TRADITIONAL^ PROGRAMS

- SANTA CRUZ COUNTY
- CALIFORNIA

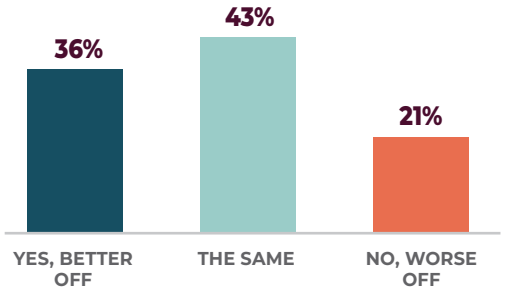


Source: Data retrieved 2021 from Kidsdata.org. California Healthy Kids Survey Marijuana Use in Past Month, by Race/Ethnicity, 2013-2019.
^Non-traditional includes continuation, community day, and other alternative school types.

FINANCIAL WELL-BEING

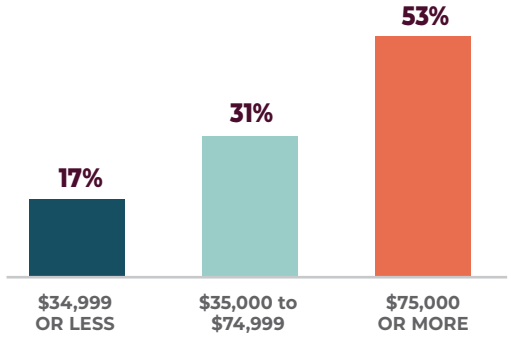
When surveyed, 79% of respondents reported that they were financially "the same" or "better off" this year compared to last year. Seventy-one percent (71%) of survey respondents reported that they pay more than one-third of their income for housing and 35% reported that it has been "somewhat difficult" or "very difficult" for their household to pay for usual household expenses in the last 12 months.

DO YOU FEEL YOU ARE BETTER OFF FINANCIALLY THIS YEAR THAN LAST YEAR?



n=80.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).

WHICH INCOME RANGE BEST DESCRIBES YOUR HOUSEHOLD INCOME FOR THE YEAR?



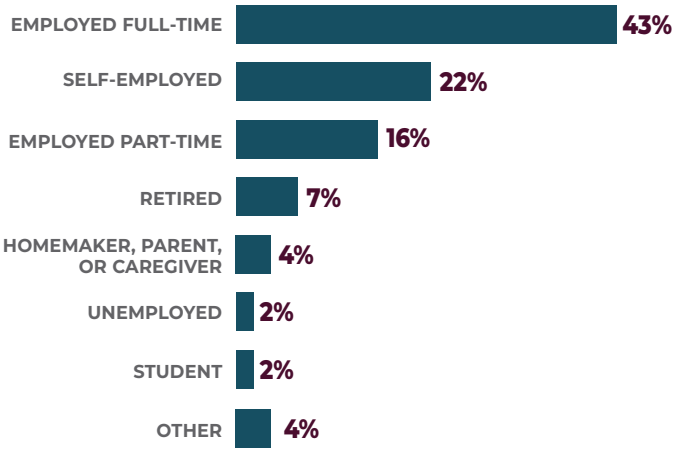
n=78.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).
Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME^, BY RACE/ETHNICITY (2019)

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY	
Black or African American	$77,859
Asian	$73,529
Hispanic or Latino	$78,254
White	$98,782
Two or more races	$91,279
Another race/ethnicity	$65,631

Source: Data retrieved 2021 from United States Census Bureau. 2019 American Community Survey 1-year estimates.
^For households and families, the median income is based on the distribution of the total number of households and families including those with no income.

WHAT IS YOUR EMPLOYMENT STATUS?



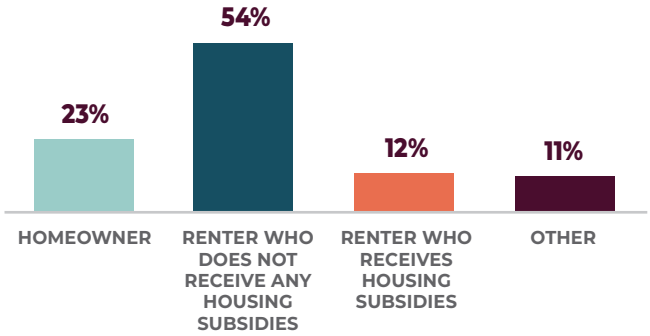
n=83.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).

HOUSING STATUS, BY RACE/ETHNICITY, SANTA CRUZ COUNTY (2019)

	HOMEOWNER	RENTER
Black or African American	**322 (45%)**	**398 (55%)**
American Indian and Alaska Native	324 (51%)	307 (49%)
Asian	2,338 (60%)	1,579 (40%)
Native Hawaiian and Another Pacific Islander	69 (68%)	32 (32%)
Hispanic or Latino	8,501 (39%)	13,549 (61%)
White	45,172 (68%)	21,679 (32%)
Two or more races	1,662 (50%)	1,650 (50%)
Another race/ethnicity	3,073 (36%)	5,542 (64%)

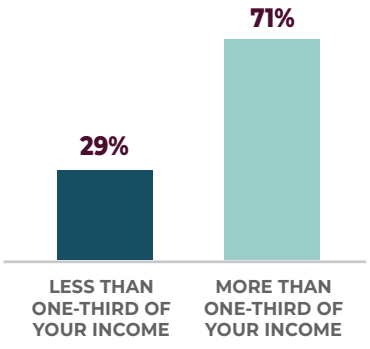
Source: Data retrieved 2021 from United States Census Bureau. 2019 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

WHICH HOUSING STATUS CURRENTLY APPLIES TO YOU?



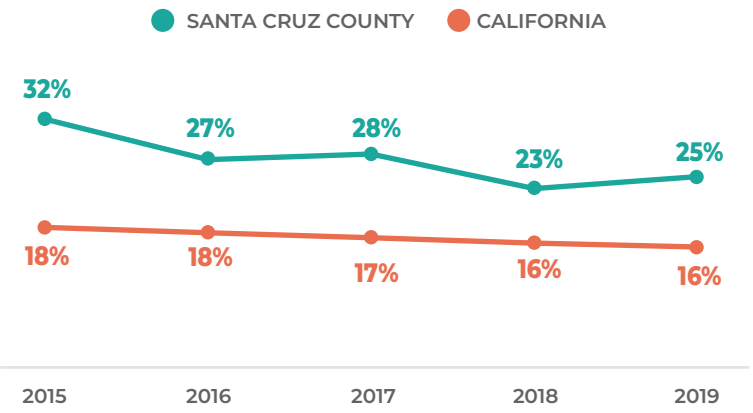
n=83.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).

IS THE AMOUNT OF MONEY YOU USE TO PAY FOR HOUSING, EXCLUDING UTILITIES, SUCH AS GAS AND ELECTRICITY...?



n=79.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).

BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN MOBILITY (HAVE MOVED WITHIN A YEAR)



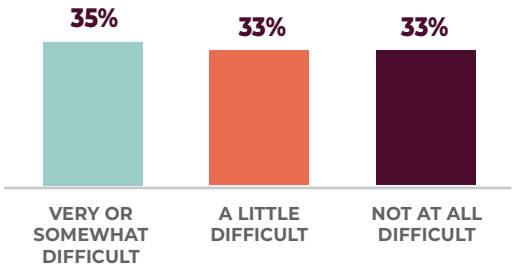
Source: Data retrieved 2021 from United States Census Bureau. 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.
Note: The category "Have moved within a year" includes people who have "Moved within Santa Cruz County", "Moved from different county within California", "Moved from different state", and "Moved from abroad".

MOBILITY (HAVE MOVED WITHIN A YEAR), BY RACE/ETHNICITY (2019)

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY	
Black or African American	25%
American Indian and Alaska Native	9%
Asian	30%
Hispanic or Latino	11%
Native Hawaiian and Another Pacific Islander	26%
White	15%
Two or more races	18%
Another race/ethnicity	10%

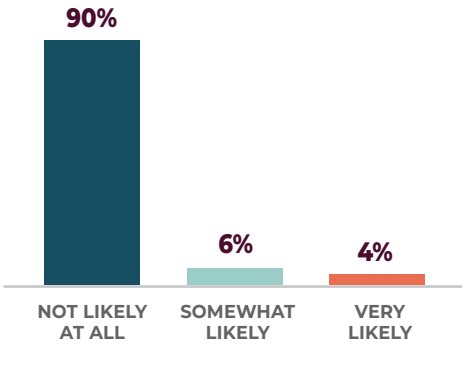
Source: Data retrieved 2021 from United States Census Bureau. 2019 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS, HOW DIFFICULT HAS IT BEEN FOR YOUR HOUSEHOLD TO PAY FOR USUAL HOUSEHOLD EXPENSES, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO FOOD, RENT OR MORTGAGE, CAR PAYMENTS, MEDICAL EXPENSES, STUDENT LOANS, AND SO ON?



n=79.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).
Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

WITHIN THE NEXT 3 MONTHS, HOW LIKELY IS IT THAT YOUR HOUSEHOLD WILL HAVE TO LEAVE YOUR HOME OR APARTMENT BECAUSE OF EVICTION?



n=83.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).

IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS, HAVE YOU ACCESSED ANY PUBLIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAM(S) OR SOCIAL SERVICE(S)?

n=83.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).

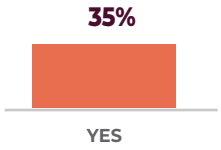
PARENTING & EDUCATION

Parenting and caregiving play a determining role in the development and growth of children and youth, while education is a strong predictor of quality of life. Indicators related to parenting, youth assets, and educational attainment are included in this section.

PARENTING

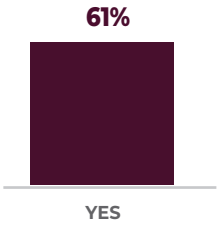
Thirty-five percent (35%) of survey respondents reported being a parent, with 61% of these respondents reporting that they have been a single parent or guardian before.

ARE YOU A PARENT OR GUARDIAN OF A CHILD (OR CHILDREN) UNDER THE AGE OF 24?



n=82.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN A SINGLE PARENT/GUARDIAN?

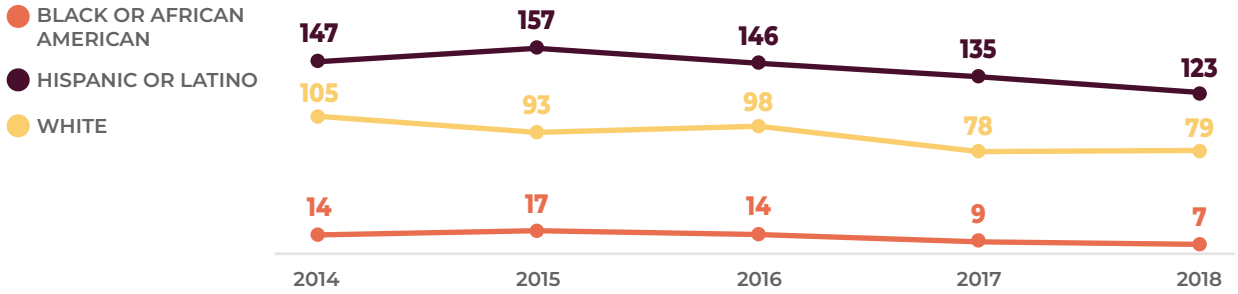


n=28.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).

75% of survey respondents with children reported that finding quality, affordable childcare in their area was a 'very serious' or 'somewhat serious' problem.

n=28.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).

NUMBER OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH (AGES 0-20) IN FOSTER CARE, SANTA CRUZ COUNTY



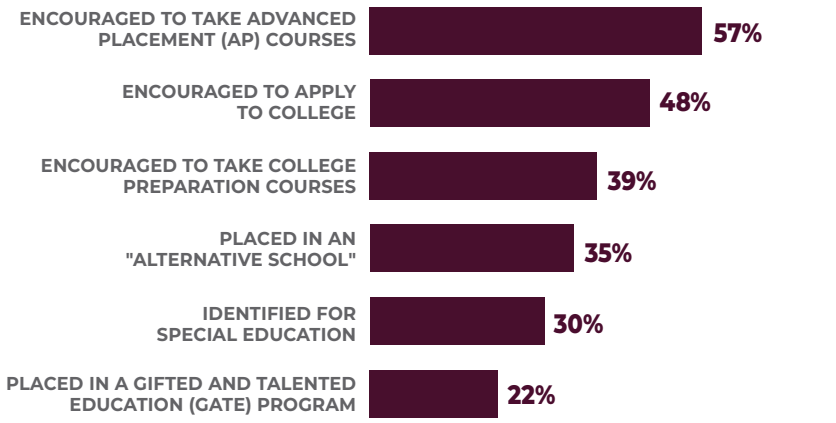
Source: Data retrieved 2021 from Kidsdata.org. Webster, D., et al. California Child Welfare Indicators Project Reports. UC Berkeley Center for Social Services Children in Foster Care, by Race/Ethnicity, 2014-2018.

Photo by Kevin Painchaud

YOUTH ASSETS

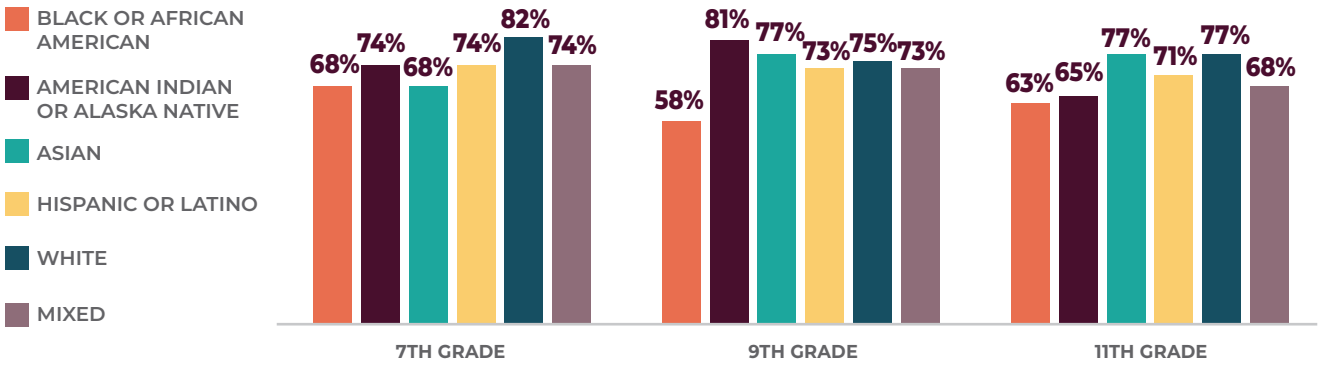
Fifty-seven percent (57%) of parents reported that at least one of their children or youth had been encouraged to take advanced placement courses, and 48% had been encouraged to apply to college. The percent of Black/African American students in grades 7, 9 and 11 who reported high levels of school connectedness during the 2017-2019 school years was lower than the rest of the racial/ethnic groups. Among 9th grade Black/African American students in the same timeframe, the reported high levels of parent involvement were lower than the rest of the racial/ethnic groups.

HAVE ANY OF YOUR CHILDREN AND/OR YOUTH EVER BEEN...



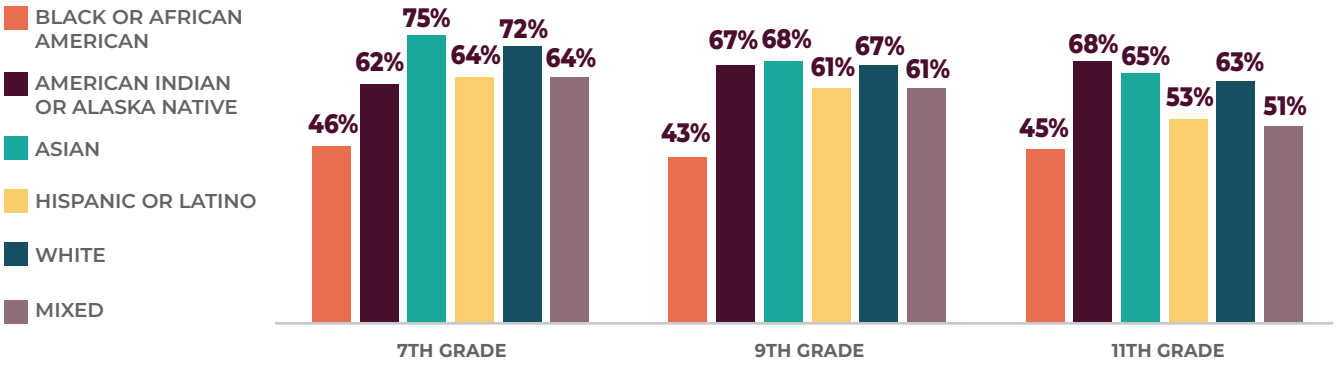
n=23 respondents offering 53 responses.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).
Note: Multiple response question totals may not add up to 100.

STUDENTS IN GRADES 7, 9 AND 11 WHO REPORTED HIGH EXPECTATIONS FROM ADULTS AT SCHOOL, BY RACE/ETHNICITY, SANTA CRUZ COUNTY (2017-2019)



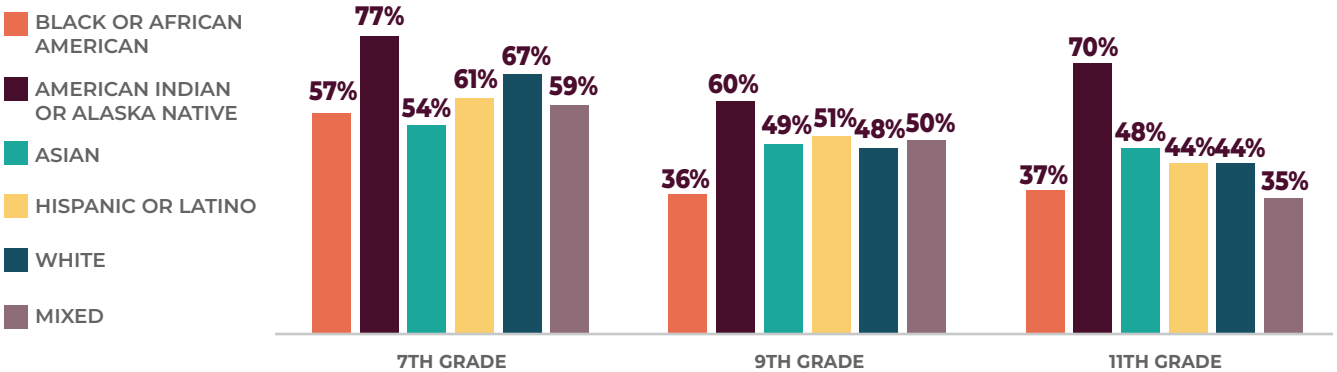
Source: Data retrieved 2021 from WestEd for the California Department of Education. 2017-2019 California Healthy Kids Survey, Santa Cruz County.

STUDENTS IN GRADES 7, 9 AND 11 WHO REPORTED HIGH LEVELS OF SCHOOL CONNECTEDNESS, BY RACE/ETHNICITY, SANTA CRUZ COUNTY (2017-2019)



Source: Data retrieved 2021 from WestEd for the California Department of Education. 2017-2019 California Healthy Kids Survey, Santa Cruz County.

STUDENTS IN GRADES 7, 9 AND 11 WHO REPORTED HIGH LEVELS OF PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL, BY RACE/ETHNICITY, SANTA CRUZ COUNTY (2017-2019)

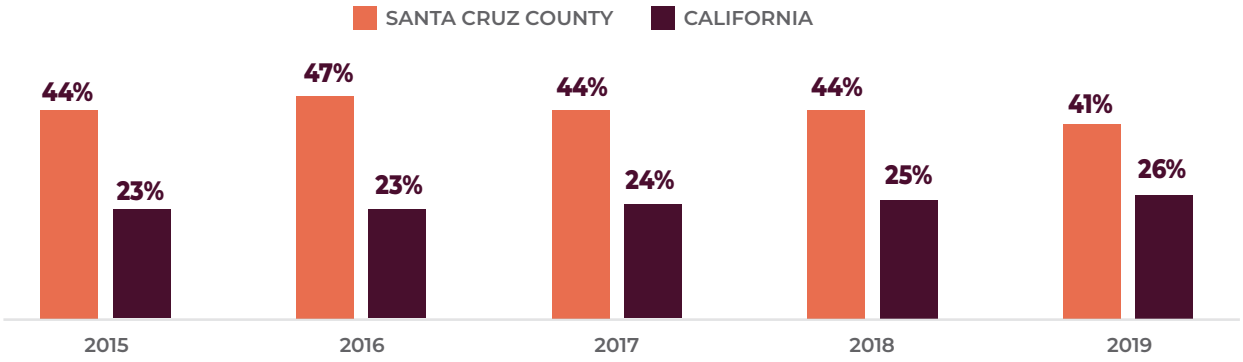


Source: Data retrieved 2021 from WestEd for the California Department of Education. 2017-2019 California Healthy Kids Survey, Santa Cruz County.

HIGHER EDUCATION

College-going rates among Black/African American high school students is higher in Santa Cruz County (64%) than the state percentage (60%). The percent of Black/African Americans with a bachelor's degree or higher in Santa Cruz County is consistently higher than the California percentage. In 2019, 41% of Black/African Americans in Santa Cruz County had a bachelor's degree or higher, more than Hispanic or Latino residents at 20% and less than White residents at 47%.

BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN ADULTS (AGES 25 YEARS AND OLDER) WITH A BACHELOR'S DEGREE OR HIGHER



Santa Cruz County – 2015 n=1,588; 2016=n=1,656; 2017 n=1,550; 2018 n=1,582; 2019 n=1,862.
California – 2015 n=1,475,578; 2016=n=1,489,010; 2017 n=1,507,055; 2018 n=1,524,748; 2019 n=1,544,982.
Source: Data retrieved 2021 from United States Census Bureau. 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

ADULTS (AGES 25 YEARS AND OLDER) WITH A BACHELOR'S DEGREE OR HIGHER, BY RACE/ETHNICITY (2019)

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY	
Black or African American	695 (41%*)
Asian	4,366 (54%)
Hispanic or Latino	10,084 (20%)
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	91 (35%)
White	68,770 (47%)
Two or More Races	3,036 (49%)
Another Race/Ethnicity	2,666 (16%)

Source: Data retrieved 2021 from United States Census Bureau. 2019 American Community Survey 1-year and 5-year estimates.
*Data are 5-year estimates from the American Community Survey.

BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN ADULTS (AGES 25 AND OLDER) HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

ATTAINMENT LEVEL	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Less than High School Diploma	154 (10%)	133 (8%)	156 (10%)	175 (11%)	236 (13%)
High School Graduate (includes equivalency)	202 (13%)	210 (13%)	161 (10%)	160 (10%)	237 (13%)
Some College or Associate's Degree	537 (34%)	528 (32%)	556 (36%)	555 (35%)	634 (34%)
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	695 (44%)	785 (47%)	677 (44%)	692 (44%)	755 (41%)

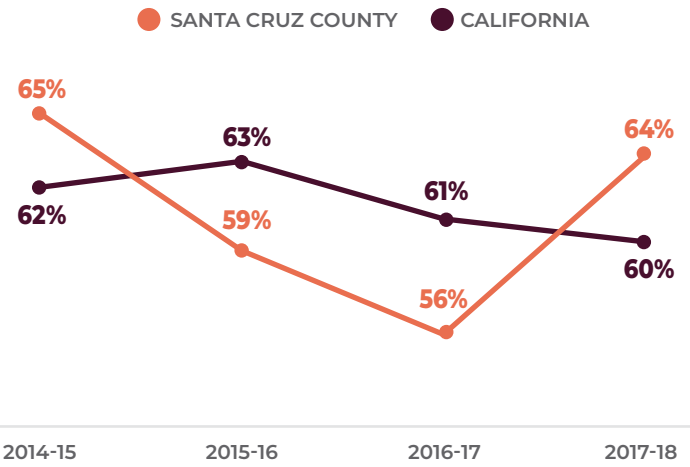
Source: Data retrieved 2021 from United States Census Bureau. 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.
Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

COLLEGE-GOING RATES^ FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS, BY RACE/ETHNICITY (2017-2018)

	HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETERS ENROLLED IN COLLEGE	COLLEGE-GOING RATE
African American	14	64%
Asian	43	80%
Filipino	22	71%
Hispanic or Latino	875	62%
White	786	70%
Two or More Races	48	62%
SANTA CRUZ COUNTY	1,808	66%

Source: Data retrieved 2021 from California Department of Education. 2017-2018 Educational Demographics Office.
^The total percentage of California public high school completers who enrolled in any public or private postsecondary institution (in-state or out-of-state) within 12 or 16 months of completing high school.

BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN COLLEGE-GOING RATES^ FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS



Santa Cruz County – 2014-2015 n=26; 2015-2016 n=27; 2016-2017 n=27; 2017-2018 n=22.
California – 2014-2015 n=26,624; 2015-2016 n=26,160; 2016-2017 n=25,460; 2017-2018 n=24,954.
Source: Data retrieved 2021 from California Department of Education. 2014-2018 Educational Demographics Office.
^The total percentage of California public high school completers who enrolled in any public or private postsecondary institution (in-state or out-of-state) within 12 or 16 months of completing high school.

STUDENT ENROLLMENT, READINESS AND HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

The adjusted cohort graduation rate for Black/African Americans was higher (89%) than California (73%) in the 2020-2021 school year, and slightly higher than Hispanic or Latino residents (82%) of Santa Cruz County.

SCHOOL ENROLLMENT, BY RACE/ETHNICITY, SANTA CRUZ COUNTY (2019)

ENROLLED IN...	NURSERY, PRESCHOOL, KINDERGARTEN	GRADE 1 TO 8	GRADE 9 TO 12	COLLEGE OR GRAD SCHOOL	TOTAL SCHOOL ENROLLMENT
Black/African American	**0 (0%)**	**817 (65%)**	**112 (9%)**	**322 (26%)**	**1,251**
Asian	165 (2%)	581 (9%)	479 (7%)	5,547 (82%)	6,772
Hispanic/Latino	4,297 (12%)	12,467 (35%)	6,303 (18%)	12,669 (35%)	35,736
White	2,793 (7%)	9,779 (25%)	5,382 (14%)	21,232 (54%)	33,492
Two or more races	975 (14%)	2,240 (32%)	1,211 (17%)	2,664 (38%)	7,090
Another race/ ethnicity	1,147 (11%)	2,722 (26%)	1,651 (16%)	4,890 (47%)	10,410

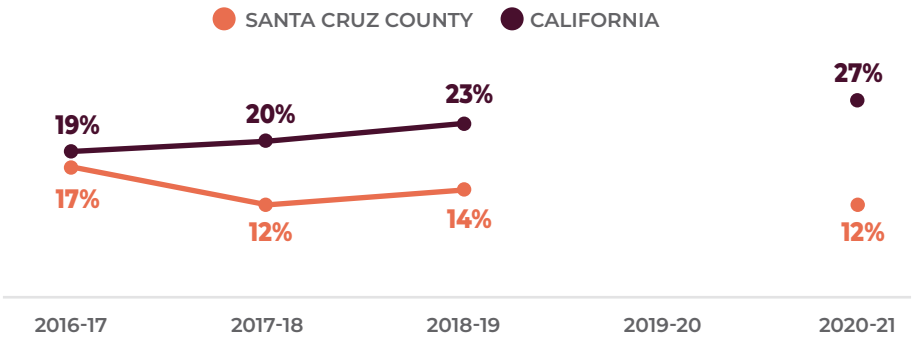
Source: Data retrieved 2021 from United States Census Bureau. 2019 American Community Survey 1-year estimates.
Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM RATE^ AMONG STUDENTS IN GRADES K-12, BY RACE/ETHNICITY (2018-2019) AND (2020-2021)

	2018-2019		2020-2021	
	CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM COUNT	CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM RATE	CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM COUNT	CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM RATE
African American	45	14%	33	12%
American Indian or Alaska Native	27	16%	18	15%
Asian	26	3%	29	3%
Filipino	16	5%	12	4%
Hispanic or Latino	2,585	11%	3,436	15%
Pacific Islander	12	19%	6	10%
White	1,400	10%	922	7%
Two or More Races	123	9%	99	7%
Not Reported	63	13%	52	10%
SANTA CRUZ COUNTY	4,297	10%	4,607	12%

Source: Data retrieved 2021 from California Department of Education. 2018-2019 and 2020-2021 Educational Demographics Office.
^Students are chronically absent if they are absent at least 10 percent of the instructional days that they are enrolled to attend in a school.
Note: As a result of the statewide physical school closures that occurred in February/March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the California Department of Education (CDE) has determined that the 2019-2020 absenteeism data are not valid and reliable for the 2019-2020 academic year; therefore the CDE has not processed these data and they are unavailable for public release.

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM RATE^ AMONG BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS IN GRADES K-12



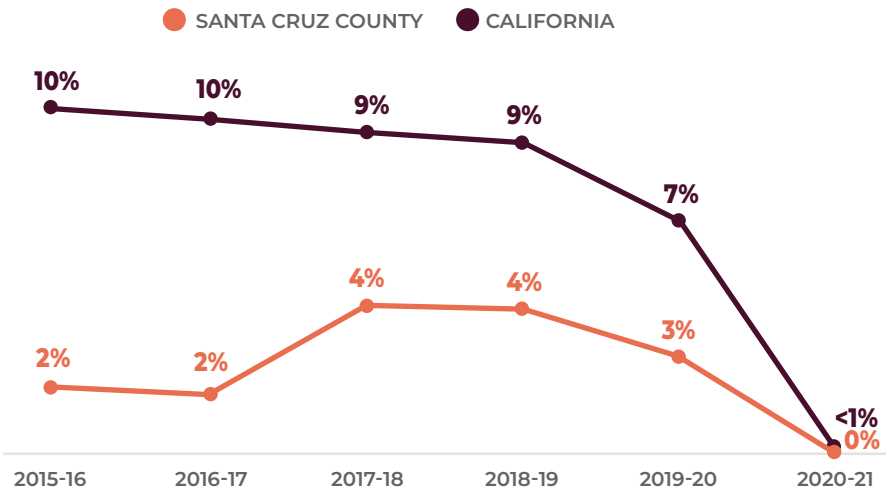
Santa Cruz County – 2016-2017 n=337; 2017-2018 n=357; 2018-2019 n=324; 2020-2021 n=282.
California – 2016-2017 n=360,897; 2017-2018 n=351,274; 2018-2019 n=340,471; 2020-2021 n=317,368.
Source: Data retrieved 2021 from California Department of Education. 2016-2019 and 2020-2021 Educational Demographics Office.
^Students are chronically absent if they are absent at least 10 percent of the instructional days that they are enrolled to attend in a school.
Note: As a result of the statewide physical school closures that occurred in February/March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the California Department of Education (CDE) has determined that the 2019-2020 absenteeism data are not valid and reliable for the 2019-2020 academic year; therefore the CDE has not processed these data and they are unavailable for public release.

SUSPENSION RATES^ AMONG STUDENTS IN GRADES K-12, BY RACE/ETHNICITY (2019-2020) AND (2020-2021)

	2019-2020		2020-2021	
	CUMULATIVE ENROLLMENT	TOTAL SUSPENSIONS AND SUSPENSION RATE	CUMULATIVE ENROLLMENT	TOTAL SUSPENSIONS AND SUSPENSION RATE
African American	323 (1%)	12 (3%)	290 (1%)	0 (0%)
American Indian or Alaska Native	162 (<1%)	9 (4%)	129 (<1%)	0 (0%)
Asian	896 (2%)	9 (1%)	939 (2%)	0 (0%)
Filipino	293 (1%)	4 (1%)	293 (1%)	0 (0%)
Hispanic or Latino	23,748 (57%)	1,141 (3%)	23,310 (57%)	10 (<1%)
Pacific Islander	66 (<1%)	2 (2%)	63 (<1%)	0 (0%)
White	14,302 (34%)	236 (1%)	13,799 (34%)	12 (<1%)
Two or More Races	1,578 (4%)	54 (2%)	1,544 (4%)	0 (0%)
Not Reported	577 (1%)	19 (2%)	527 (1%)	0 (0%)
SANTA CRUZ COUNTY	41,495 (100%)	1,486 (2%)	40,894 (100%)	22 (<1%)

Source: Data retrieved 2021 from California Department of Education. 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 Educational Demographics Office.
^The unduplicated count of students suspended divided by the cumulative enrollment at the selected entity for the selected population using the available filters.
Note: The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in statewide physical school closures in February/March 2020 followed by the widespread implementation of distance learning during the 2020-2021 academic year. The California Department of Education recommends caution when comparing discipline data across academic years.

SUSPENSION RATES^ AMONG BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS IN GRADES K-12



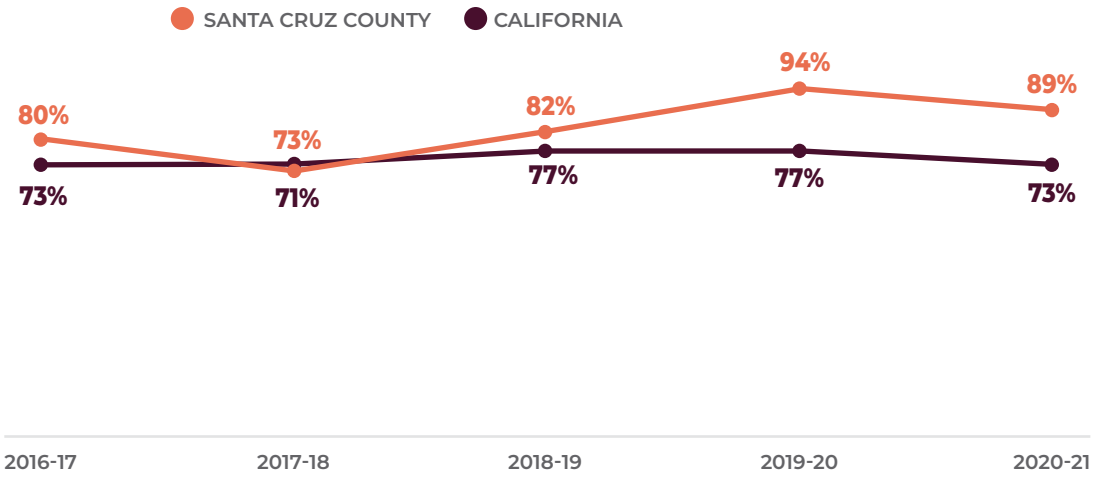
Source: Data retrieved 2021 from California Department of Education. 2015-2021 Suspension Data.
^The unduplicated count of students suspended divided by the cumulative enrollment at the selected entity for the selected population using the available filters.
Note: The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in statewide physical school closures in February/March 2020 followed by the widespread implementation of distance learning during the 2020-2021 academic year. The California Department of Education recommends caution when comparing discipline data across academic years.

FOUR-YEAR ADJUSTED COHORT GRADUATION RATES^, BY RACE/ETHNICITY (2020-2021)

	REGULAR HIGH SCHOOL DIPOLOMA GRADUATES	COHORT GRADUATION RATE
African American	32	89%
American Indian or Alaska Native	14	100%
Asian	68	94%
Filipino	24	96%
Hispanic or Latino	1,539	82%
White	1,079	89%
Two or More Races	80	87%
SANTA CRUZ COUNTY	2,884	85%

Source: Data retrieved 2021 from California Department of Education. 2020-2021 Educational Demographics Office.
^The four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate is the number of students who graduate from high school in four years with a regular high school diploma divided by the number of students who form the adjusted cohort for the graduating class.

BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN FOUR-YEAR ADJUSTED COHORT GRADUATION RATES^



Santa Cruz County – 2016-2017 n=30; 2017-2018 n=28; 2018-2019 n=22; 2019-2020 n-31; 2020-2021 n=36.
California – 2016-2017 n=31,730; 2017-2018 n=31,158; 2018-2019 n=29,058; 2019-2020 n=27,914; 2020-2021 n=28,294.
Data retrieved 2021 from California Department of Education. 2016-2021 Educational Demographics Office.
^The four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate is the number of students who graduate from high school in four years with a regular high school diploma divided by the number of students who form the adjusted cohort for the graduating class.

Photo by Kevin Painchaud

BELONGING & SAFETY

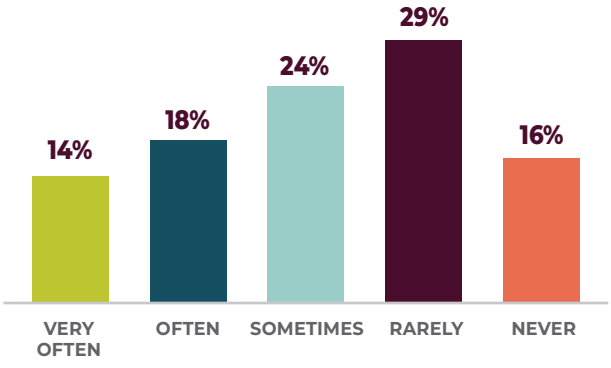
Cultivating a sense of belonging and safety is crucial for positive life outcomes. Belonging and safety data includes indicators related to social support, quality of life, community safety, law enforcement, and racism and discrimination.

Photo by Kevin Painchaud

SOCIAL SUPPORT

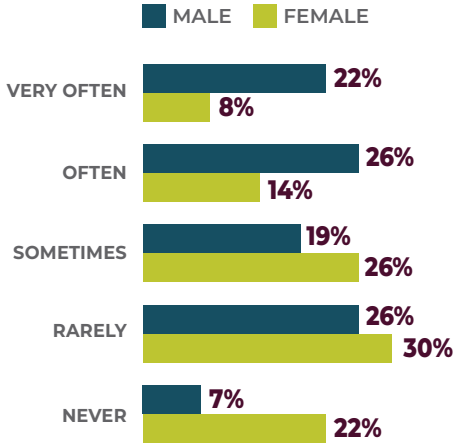
Sixty-three percent (63%) of survey respondents reported that "community groups" were the space that gave them an opportunity to form meaningful relationships, bonds and/or friendships with other Black/African American people. Survey respondents identifying as female reported fewer interactions with other Black/African Americans in the week before completing the survey, with only 22% reporting "often" or "very often", compared to 48% of respondents who identified as male.

IN THE PAST WEEK, HOW OFTEN DID YOU INTERACT WITH BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN PEOPLE OTHER THAN THOSE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD OR CLOSE FRIENDS?



n=80.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).
Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

IN THE PAST WEEK, HOW OFTEN DID YOU INTERACT WITH BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN PEOPLE OTHER THAN THOSE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD OR CLOSE FRIENDS?



Male n=27; Female n=50.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).
Note: While it is important to present the responses of those who identify as non-binary (n=3), in this report it was not possible in gender-based comparsions due to a low sample size. As a result, Male and Female n's may not add up to the Overall n.

Photo by Kevin Painchaud

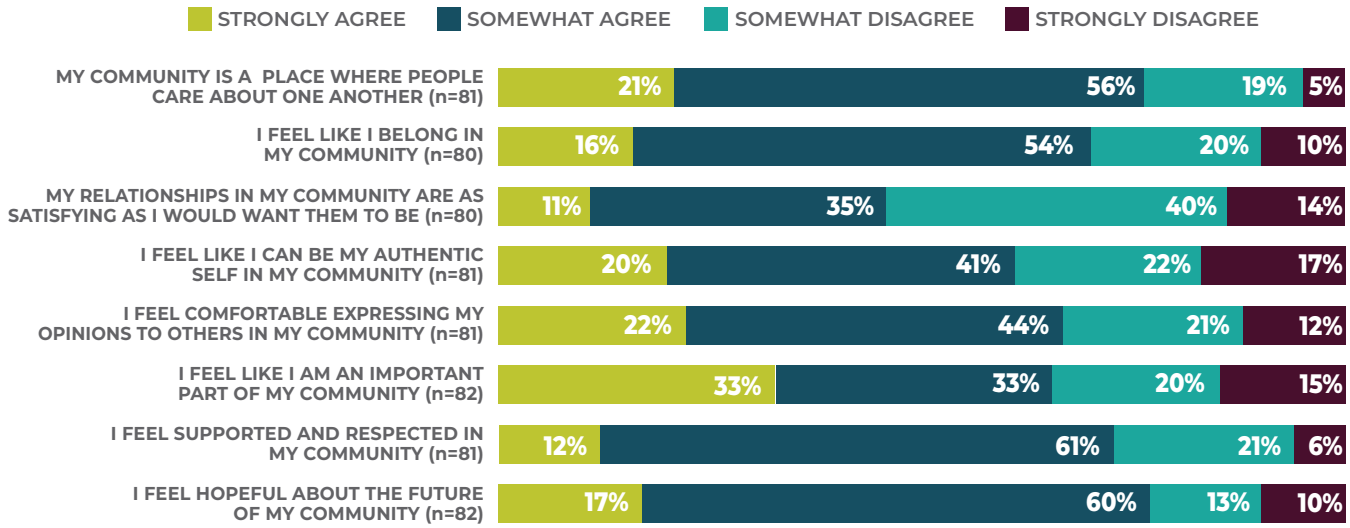
WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING SPACES IN YOUR COMMUNITY GIVE YOU THE OPPORTUNITY TO FORM MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS, BONDS OR FRIENDSHIPS WITH BLACK/ AFRICAN AMERICAN PEOPLE OTHER THAN THOSE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD OR CLOSE FRIENDS? (TOP THREE RESPONSES)

n=80 respondents offering 165 responses.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).
Note: Multiple response question totals may not add up to 100.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Seventy-seven percent (77%) of survey respondents "strongly agreed" or "somewhat agreed" that they are hopeful about the future of their community, 46% "strongly agreed" or "somewhat agreed" that their relationships in the community are as satisfying as they would want them to be. Factors related to race/racism, housing and jobs were identified as the most common challenges to attracting and retaining Black/African American people to live in Santa Cruz County that were mentioned by focus group participants. Over half of survey respondents (52%) reported visiting a park or recreation facility in Santa Cruz County six or more times in the last 12 months.

HOW MUCH DO YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS ABOUT YOUR COMMUNITY?



Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).
Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS, HAVE YOU DONE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING CIVIC OR SOCIAL PARTICIPATION ACTIVITIES (EITHER ONLINE OR IN-PERSON)?

ACTIVITIES	PERCENT INDICATING "YES"
Spent time socializing with people outside of my home (people who do not live with me)	64%
Voted	63%
Signed a petition	61%
Attended a town meeting, public hearing or public affairs discussion group	53%
Joined a protest or demonstration	50%
Met with, texted, e-mailed, called or sent a letter to any local politician	45%
Made a monetary donation to a community-based organization/non-profit	44%
Volunteered with a community-based organization/non-profit	40%
Made an in-kind donation to a community-based organization/non-profit (e.g., household goods or technology items)	25%
Attended meeting/events related to my child's school	25%
Participated in faith/ spirituality-based events	25%
Joined a neighborhood group or association	18%
Joined an on-line political advocacy group	16%

n=80 respondents offering 422 responses.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).

FOCUS GROUP THEMES

Factors that contribute to feeling a sense of connection to the Black/African American community in Santa Cruz County

Focus group participants were asked *"What makes you feel a sense of connection to the Black/African American community here in Santa Cruz County?"*

- Organizations/groups
- Family
- Friends, including from childhood
- Co-workers
- Church
- Celebratory events
- Living around other Black people
- Advocacy, marches & rallies
- Specific people/community leaders
- Specific spaces/places

n=31 focus group participants

VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY

"I long, always, for association with my Black kin"

"This last year has been very dramatic for all of us. But in some ways, it's a continuation of the alienation and isolation we have experienced"

Focus Group Participants

FOCUS GROUP THEMES

Challenges attracting and retaining Black/African Americans to live in Santa Cruz County

Focus group participants were asked *"What are the challenges to attracting and retaining Black/African Americans to live in Santa Cruz County?"*

FACTORS RELATED TO RACE AND RACISM IN SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

- Visibility: want to see others who look like us; don't want to always be the only one
- Few Black people plays a role in not having enough support in our community; need to increase safety net
- Racial profiling and racism; Systemic racism within the judicial and child protective system

HOUSING AND JOBS

- Cost of living is too high; can't afford to live here; gentrification
- Limited housing; High rent
- Lack of jobs with adequate pay; inequitable job creation
- Racism in trying to get housing; specific areas feel unsafe

n=31 focus group participants

Change needed to make Santa Cruz County more attractive to Black/ African Americans as a place to live

Focus group participants were asked *"What needs to change to make Santa Cruz County more attractive to Black/African Americans as a place to live?"*

BUILDING COMMUNITY

- Events and activities that bring Black people together; support each other to come out/ show up
- Opportunities for intergenerational connection and mentorship
- Establish safe spaces; Create a cultural center for the Black community

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

- Recruit and hire Black people
- Pay wages that allow for local home ownership
- More Black business owners; build network of businesses that support the Black community
- Businesses write measurable commitments to equity into their policies

n=31 focus group participants

VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY

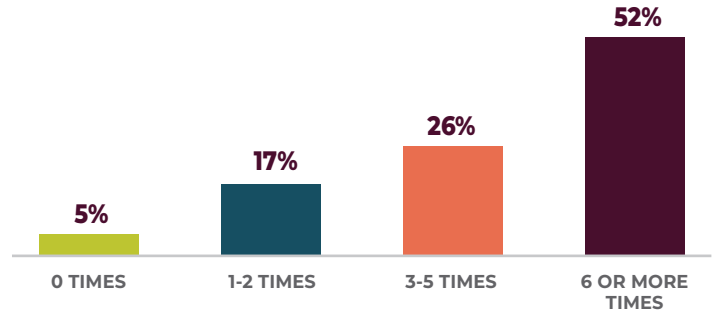
"Racism has been here; it's been here despite the liberal attitudes people talk about"

"It wasn't until I hit college that I had a black teacher"

Focus Group Participants

Photo by Devi Pride

IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS, HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU VISITED A PARK OR RECREATION FACILITY IN SANTA CRUZ COUNTY?



n=81.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).

VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY

"We have many organizations getting people outside, if you look, its just the fact we get into economics, social standing, get into money. We don't talk about who can afford things, 'cuz it's not polite, but it's a part of it"

"For me it's about knowing about what's happening so I can participate and reach out. Where we can have a sense of community – where I can feel belonging"

Focus Group Participants

FOCUS GROUP THEMES

Factors impacting Black/African Americans use of parks, recreational facilities, or other natural environments and what is needed to increase utilization of these spaces.

Focus group participants were asked *"Black/African Americans use of parks, recreational facilities, or other natural environments: Is it more or less than other groups of people, why this is, and what would need to change to increase Black/African American utilization of these spaces?".*

DON'T FEEL SAFE/WELCOMED

- Want to avoid conflicts with White people or police
- History of bad things happening to Black people in the woods; Don't feel safe
- History of public land being privatized
- History of Black people not going outside if they don't need to
- Feel watched; People looking at us

ECONOMIC FACTORS RELATED TO USE

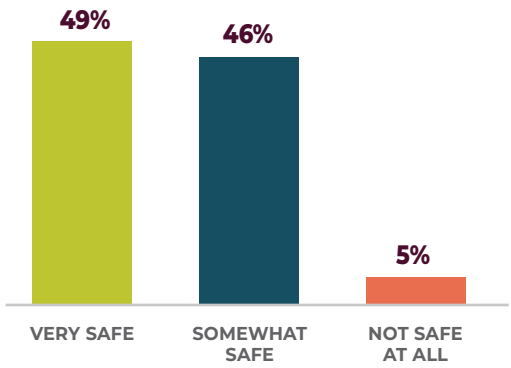
- Located in more affluent areas
- Being outside costs money
- High cost of living leaves little time or energy after work
- Use more because they are usually free and deserted

n=31 focus group participants

COMMUNITY SAFETY AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

Survey respondents were almost equally split between feeling "somewhat safe" (46%) and "very safe" (49%) in their neighborhood, with 5% reporting feeling "not safe at all". Forty-seven percent (47%) of survey respondents described their general level of trust with local law enforcement as "very trustworthy" or "somewhat trustworthy". When asked about specific aspects of how police interact with the community, 0% of survey respondents reported feeling "completely confident" that local law enforcement would keep them safe, with 27% reporting feeling "somewhat confident", and 27% "fairly confident". Thirty-three percent (33%) of survey respondents reported feeling "not confident at all" that local law enforcement would act *without prejudice or discrimination.*

HOW SAFE WOULD YOU SAY YOU FEEL IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD?



n=80.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).

FOCUS GROUP THEMES

Areas of Santa Cruz where Black/ African Americans feel more safe

Focus group participants were asked *"Are there areas of Santa Cruz County where you feel more safe as an Black/African American?".*

Focus group participants found it difficult to identify areas in Santa Cruz County where they felt more safe. However, participants identified where they did not feel safe, with San Lorenzo Valley (Felton, Ben Lomond and Boulder Creek), Scotts Valley, and Capitola being mentioned most frequently.

n=31 focus group participants

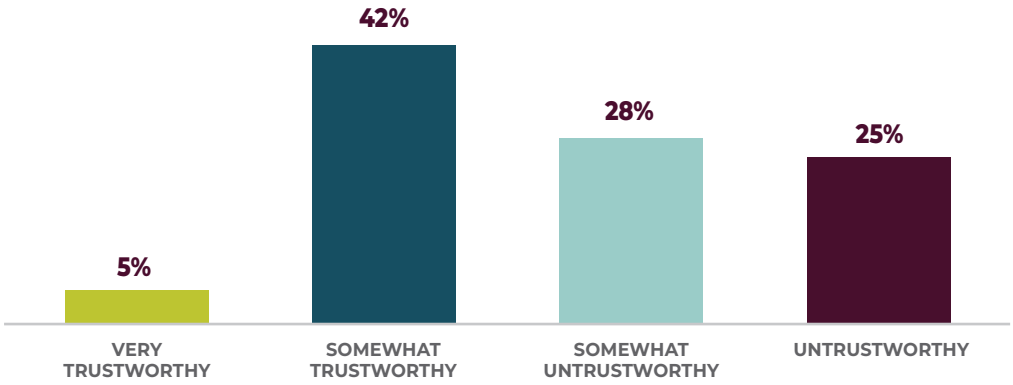
VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY

"Growing up here I have gotten very comfortable being uncomfortable – anywhere is going to be uncomfortable"

"In general, I do feel safe until someone gives me a reason not to"

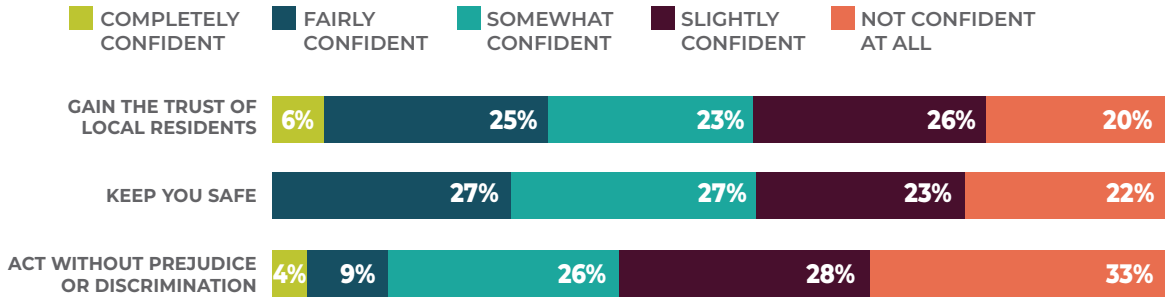
Focus Group Participants

DESCRIBE YOUR GENERAL LEVEL OF TRUST WITH LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT:



n=76.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).

HOW CONFIDENT ARE YOU IN LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT TO:



n=81.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).
Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Photo by Allison Garcia

FOCUS GROUP THEMES

How interactions with local law enforcement shaped thinking about police and race in Santa Cruz County

Focus group participants were asked *"If you have interacted with local law enforcement, describe how the experience shaped the way you think about policing and race in Santa Cruz County?".*

FELT PROFILED, STEREOTYPED OR DISCRIMINATED AGAINST

- Unnecessarily rough treatment during stops
- Being the only Black person in a group that is confronted and being the only one who faces any consequences
- By the way Black activists and organizers are treated
- Different treatment for Black people versus White people in the legal system
- Harassment of Black people experiencing homelessness
- Think they are breaking in when they actually live there

FEAR/LACK OF TRUST

- Don't feel safe calling the cops; Not who I would call in an emergency
- Make me nervous, anxious, afraid
- Feel attacked
- Will always pull over when I see a POC pulled over by police
- Feeling thankful to be with White people when confronted by police

n=31 focus group participants

IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS, HAVE YOU OR ANYONE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD BEEN A VICTIM OF CRIME?

n=81.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).

VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY

"Law enforcement just makes me nervous - always - even if I'm doing absolutely nothing wrong"

"We need accountability in the criminal justice system, it shows us that there is so much more work to be done. Black people need to be at the forefront of those conversations, and the decisions being made... Black people in Santa Cruz do not have the power and oversight needed to

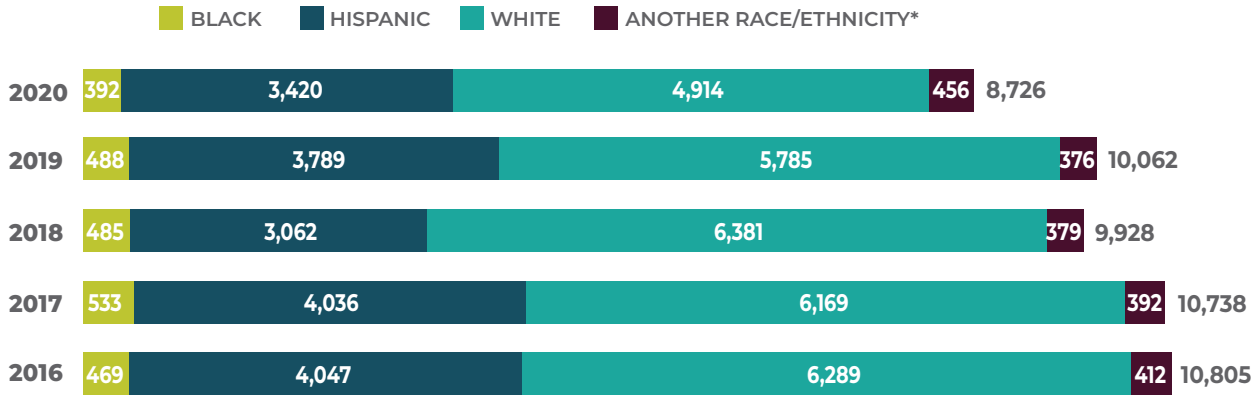
Focus Group Participants

ARREST RATES PER 1,000, BY RACE/ETHNICITY, SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

	2016	2017	2018	2019
Black	**85.8**	**97.2**	**93.3**	**56.9**
Hispanic	43.9	43.1	32.8	40.8
White	29.3	29.0	30.0	26.0
Another race/ ethnicity*	9.5	8.5	8.3	12.6

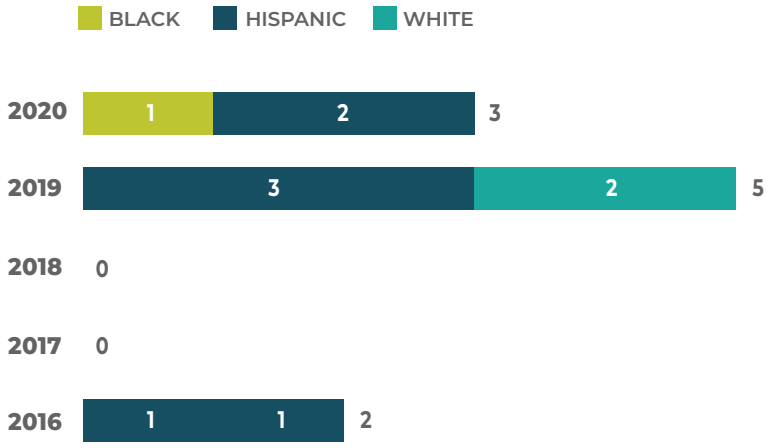
Source: Data retrieved 2021 from California Department of Justice. 2016-2019 OpenJustice Arrests. United States Census Bureau. 2016-2019 American Community Survey 1-year estimates.
*The "Another race/ethnicity" category includes people who identify as Multi-Racial.

ARREST RATES, BY RACE/ETHNICITY, SANTA CRUZ COUNTY



Source: Data retrieved 2021 from California Department of Justice. 2016-2020 OpenJustice Arrests.
*The "Another race/ethnicity" category includes people who identify as Multi-Racial.

IN CUSTODY DEATHS, BY RACE/ETHNICITY, SANTA CRUZ COUNTY



Source: Data retrieved 2021 from California Department of Justice. 2016-2020 OpenJustice Deaths in Custody.

Photo by Allison Garcia

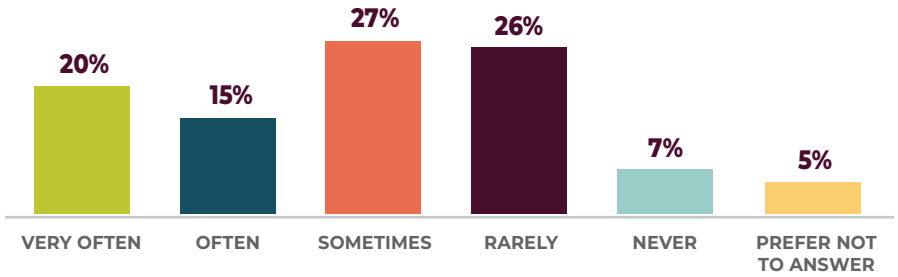
RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION

Thirty-five percent (35%) of survey respondents reported experiencing systemic racism "often" or "very often" in Santa Cruz County during the last 12 months. Forty-four percent (44%) reported experiencing microaggressions "often" or "very often" in the same time frame.

SYSTEMIC RACISM is defined as policies and practices that exist throughout a whole society, organization, or institution that result in and support a continued unfair advantage to some people and unfair or harmful treatment of others based on race.

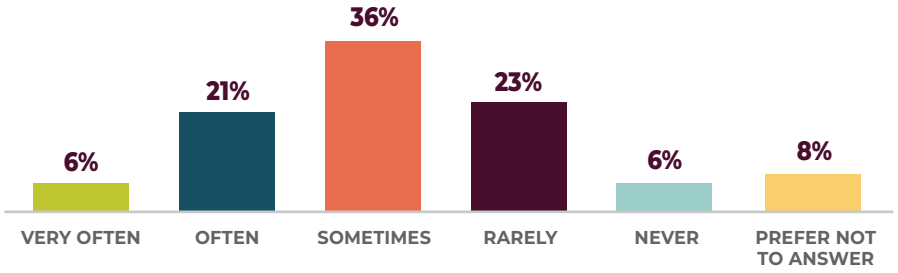
Source: Cambridge Dictionary. (n.d.). Systemic Racism. Retrieved January 7, 2022 from https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/systemic-racism

IF YOU'VE EXPERIENCED SYSTEMIC RACISM IN SANTA CRUZ COUNTY DURING THE LAST 12 MONTHS, HOW OFTEN?



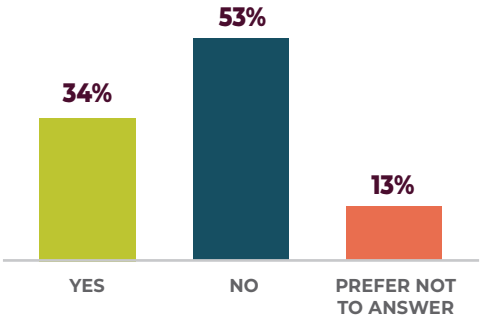
n=81.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).

IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS, HOW OFTEN HAVE YOU WITNESSED RACISM IN SANTA CRUZ COUNTY?



n=80.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).

IF YOU'VE WITNESSED RACISM 'SOMETIMES', 'OFTEN' OR 'VERY OFTEN' IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS IN SANTA CRUZ COUNTY, DID YOU EVER REPORT IT TO AN AUTHORITY?



n=53.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).

FOCUS GROUP THEMES

Experiences with racism or discrimination in Santa Cruz County and the impacts

Focus group participants were asked *"If you have experienced or seen racism or discrimination in Santa Cruz County, describe how it has affected you or people you know."*

IMPACT ON WELL-BEING

- Worried to go out in public alone
- Feel isolated
- Shove down feelings, deeply painful, devastating effect on mental health
- Makes us feel like you don't want us here
- Feel like we're not accepted in the community
- Thinking about where to live
- Constantly thinking about how to speak and behave
- Try to fit into what people want me to be
- Consider how actions reflect on other People of Color

VERBAL OR PHYSICAL ABUSE/HARASSMENT

- Racial slurs
- Racist jokes
- Eggs thrown from a passing car

PROFILED/STEREOTYPED

- Police drawing guns upon approach; asking everyone in the vehicle if they are on probation or not
- Neighbors calling cops thinking there is a break in happening, when actually they just live there
- Assumptions based on physical characteristics, e.g., lips
- Always having "eyes on" them
- Looked at/watched

n=31 focus group participants

VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY

"The mural being messed up was a pretty big deal and every day that it's not fixed its heavy on my heart"

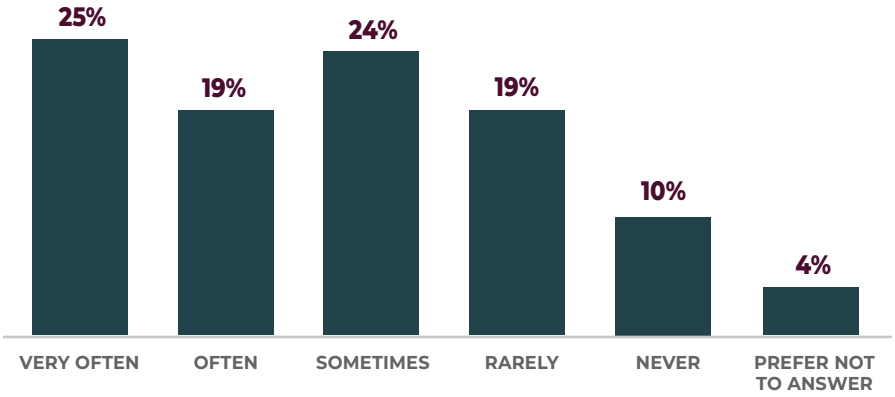
"These things are deeply painful to live through, to realize, and then get up the next day and go to work, make dinner that night, etc. when your heart is beating out of your chest. These types of slights, we don't just get up from them. We don't just walk away to the next day. Its cumulative. It has an absolute effect"

Focus Group Participants

MICROAGGRESSIONS are the everyday verbal, nonverbal and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership.

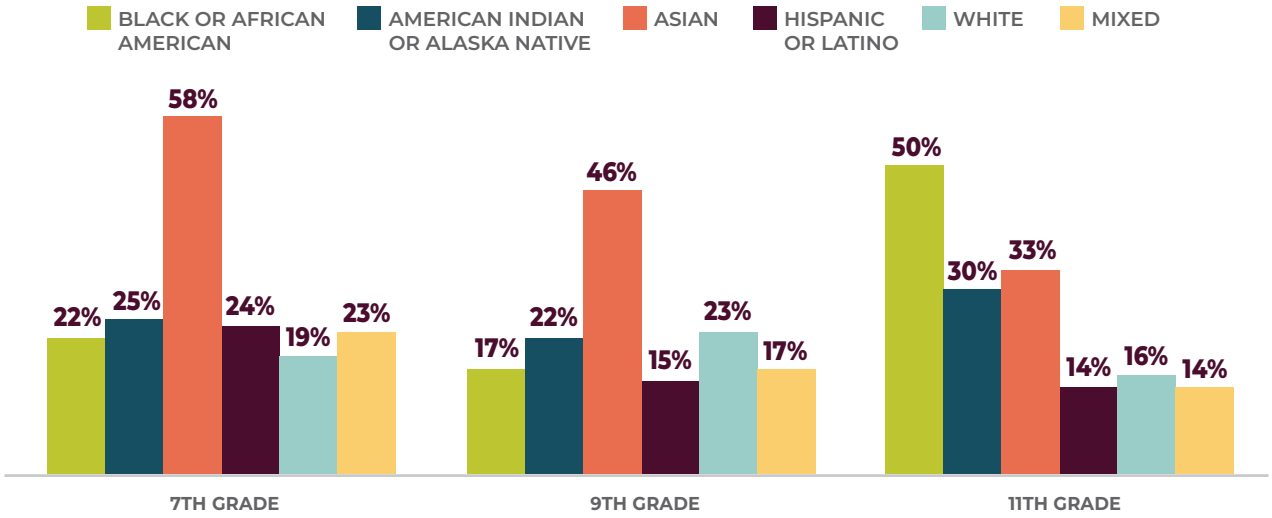
Source: Sue, D. W. (2010). Microaggressions: More than just race. Psychology Today, 17.

IF YOU'VE EXPERIENCED MICROAGGRESSIONS IN SANTA CRUZ COUNTY DURING THE LAST 12 MONTHS, HOW OFTEN?



n=80.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).
Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

HARASSMENT DUE TO DISCRIMINATION^ AT SCHOOL IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS, BY RACE/ETHNICITY, SANTA CRUZ COUNTY, (2017-2019)



Source: Data retrieved 2021 from West Ed for the California Department of Education. 2017-2019 California Healthy Kids Survey, Santa Cruz County.
^The six reasons include race, ethnicity or national origin; religion; gender (being male or female); sexual orientation; a physical or mental disability; and immigrant status.

OPEN-ENDED SURVEY QUESTION THEMES

Survey respondents were asked in two open-ended questions to first describe their experience of systemic racism and then describe their experience with microaggressions in the county. They were also asked to share generally about their experience being Black/African American in Santa Cruz County. Responses to all three questions were combined and themed into the following categories:

- Areas Where Respondents Reported Experiencing Racism in Santa Cruz County
- How Respondents Reported Experiencing Racism in Santa Cruz County
- Reported Impacts of Racism in Santa Cruz County on Survey Respondents

VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY

"Passed over in restaurant or that type of setting for a white patron"

"I've seen a distinct difference in pay equity at my workplace. My white coworkers make more money than me even though we have the same job title and I work more hours"

Survey Respondents

Aspects of life where survey respondents reported experiencing racism in Santa Cruz County

LIVE

- Housing: Passed over, had to disguise voice/name to get call backs, have to spend more to rent in apartment complexes rather than from private owners to ensure legal protections
- Healthcare: not believed, not given options like others in the same situation, unable to find reflective providers
- Education: guidance counselor not preparing son for college, being treated differently than White classmates, inaccurate curriculum
- Law Enforcement & Emergency Services: profiled by police, provided different emergency resources than White peers

PLAY

- Stores/Restaurants: Passed over, ignored, refused service, profiled as a potential thief, treated harshly

WORK

- Seen as less qualified than white applicants
- Less pay than peers
- Differential treatment

n=91 respondents providing 106 responses to survey open-ended questions

OPEN-ENDED SURVEY QUESTION THEMES

How survey respondents reported experiencing racism in Santa Cruz County

DISRESPECTED/OVERLOOKED/MINIMIZED

- Ignored or disregarded in public spaces
- Questioning their authority
- Unable to express self without criticism

PROFILED/STEREOTYPED

- Followed in stores
- Assumed to be the help
- Questions and comments based on physical traits
- Considered aggressive rather than assertive

VERBALLY OR PHYSICALLY ATTACKED

- Called racial slurs
- Shoved while walking down the street
- Being told to "go back home"
- Threatening gestures

Reported impacts of racism in Santa Cruz County on survey respondents

DIMINISHED SENSE OF COMMUNITY & OTHER IMPACTS ON WELL-BEING

- Few opportunities to be with other Black/African Americans in the community
- Isolated, lonely, alienation
- Reduced social circles
- Depression
- Often think about moving away, unable to retain Black community members/youth

n=91 respondents providing 106 responses to survey open-ended questions

VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY

"I am often talked down to until I have "proven" myself"

"My daughter was called a racial slur by a neighbor"

"It has taken a toll on my well-being, spiritually, psychically, physically and psychologically"

"It's sort of a good place to raise a family, but sadly many youth refuse to return or stay once grown, including my own"

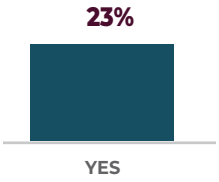
Survey Respondents

A HATE CRIME or incident is any incident, which constitutes a criminal offense and is motivated by prejudice. In California, hate crimes are offenses "where a victim is singled out because of their actual or perceived disability, gender, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics" (California Department of Justice, 2020). Hate crimes can take many forms including physical assault, offensive graffiti, verbal abuse, offensive literature, criminal damage and abusive gestures.

Source: Oxford City Council. (2015, June 17). Reporting Hate Crime. Retrieved January 7, 2022 from https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20101/community_safety/264/reporting_hate_crime#:~:text=A%20Hate%20crime%20or%20incident,criminal%20damage%20and%20abusive%20gestures.

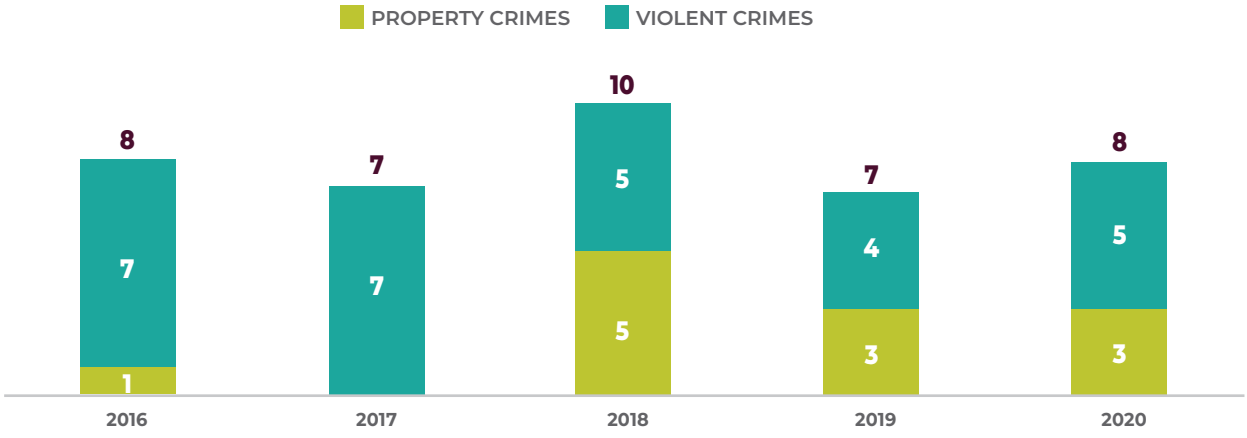
Photo by Allison Garcia

IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS, HAVE YOU BEEN A VICTIM OF A HATE CRIME IN SANTA CRUZ COUNTY?



n=78.
Source: Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative Survey, (2021).

HATE CRIMES REPORTED WITH RACE/ETHNICITY/ANCESTRY BEING REASON, SANTA CRUZ COUNTY



Source: Data retrieved 2021 from California Department of Justice. 2016-2020 OpenJustice Hate Crime Events.

KEY FINDINGS

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

- Seventy-nine percent (79%) of survey respondents reported that they were able to receive the healthcare they needed in the last 12 months.
- For the 2018-19 school year, the percent of Black/African American 9th grade students achieving physical fitness goals in Santa Cruz County was higher (94%) than California (50%).
- While 76% of survey respondents reported feeling that their health care provider addressed their health concerns "most of the time" or "always", 54% reported feeling that their race and/or ethnicity has impacted the quality of health care they have received in Santa Cruz County.
- One-fifth (20%) of survey respondents reported that they or someone in their household had ever tested positive for COVID-19. Eighty-seven percent (87%) reported being vaccinated with an additional 10% reporting they are “somewhat likely” or “very likely” to get vaccinated. As of January 13, 2022, the Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency reported 154 known cases of COVID-19 among Black/African American residents of Santa Cruz County. This represents 0.58% of total cases, which is less than the overall percentage of Black/African Americans in the county (0.87%).
- Over half of survey respondents (56%) reported that racial discrimination that they have personally experienced (or witnessed) affected their mental health “often” or “very often”. Nineteen percent (19%) of Black/African American students in 9th and 11th grades (and non-traditional programs) had seriously considered attempting suicide in the 2017-2019 school years, more than the California percent (13%). Students identifying as Multi-racial and Another Race/Ethnicity were higher at 24% and 26% respectively.
- When surveyed, 79% of respondents reported that they were financially “the same” or “better off” this year compared to last year. Seventy-one percent (71%) of survey respondents reported that they pay more than one-third of their income for housing and 35% reported that it has been “somewhat difficult” or “very difficult” for their household to pay for usual household expenses in the last 12 months.

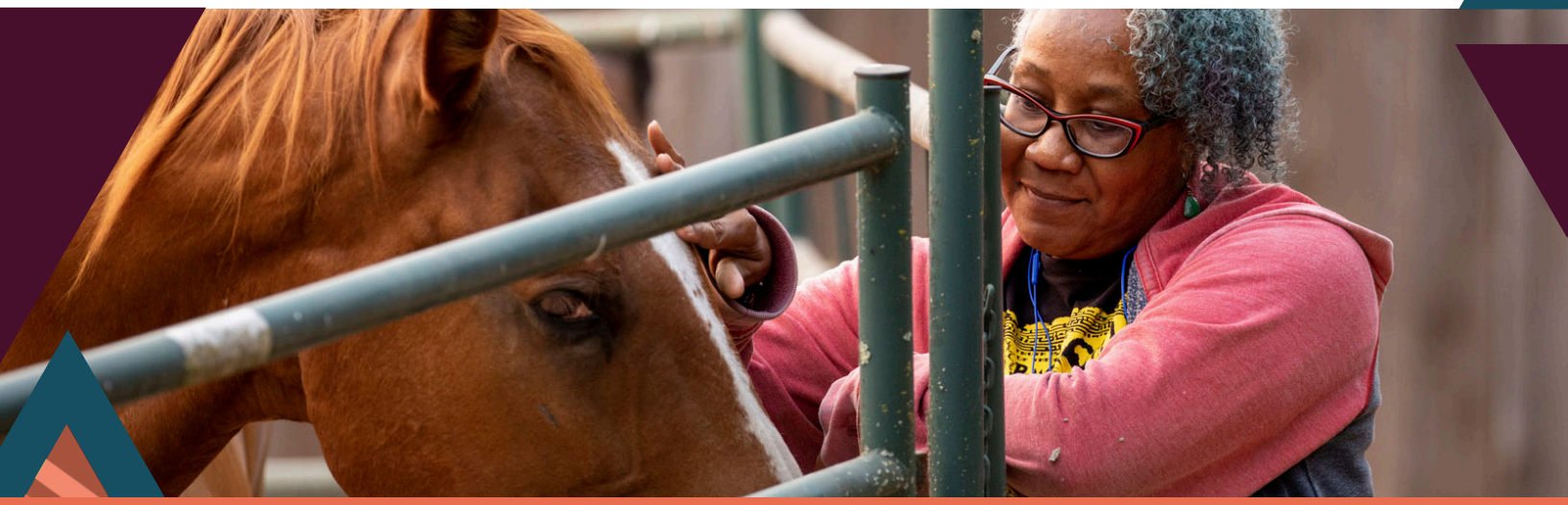
PARENTING AND EDUCATION

- Thirty-five percent (35%) of survey respondents reported being a parent, with 61% of these respondents reporting that they have been a single parent or guardian before.
- Fifty-seven percent (57%) of parents reported that at least one of their children or youth had been encouraged to take advanced placement courses, and 48% had been encouraged to apply to college. The percent of Black/African American students in grades 7, 9 and 11 who reported high levels of school connectedness during the 2017-2019 school years was lower than the rest of the racial/ethnic groups. Among 9th grade Black/African American students in the same timeframe, the reported high levels of parent involvement were lower than the rest of the racial/ethnic groups.
- College-going rates among Black/African American high school students is higher in Santa Cruz County (64%) than California (60%). The percent of Black/African Americans with a bachelor's degree or higher in Santa Cruz County is consistently higher than the California percentage. In 2019, 41% of Black/African Americans in Santa Cruz County had a bachelor's degree or higher, more than Hispanic or Latino residents at 20% and less than White residents at 47%.
- The adjusted cohort graduation rate for Black/African Americans was higher (89%) than California (73%) in the 2020-2021 school year, and slightly higher than Hispanic or Latino residents (82%) of Santa Cruz County.

BELONGING AND SAFETY

- Sixty-three percent (63%) of survey respondents reported that “community groups” were the space that gave them an opportunity to form meaningful relationships, bonds and/or friendships with other Black/African American people. Survey respondents identifying as female reported fewer interactions with other Black/African Americans in the week before completing the survey, with only 22% reporting “often” or “very often”, compared to 48% of respondents who identified as male.
- Seventy-seven percent (77%) of survey respondents “strongly agreed” or “somewhat agreed” that they are hopeful about the future of their community, 46% “strongly agreed” or “somewhat agreed” that their relationships in the community are as satisfying as they would want them to be. Factors related to race/racism, housing and jobs were identified as the most common challenges to attracting and retaining Black/African American people to live in Santa Cruz County that were mentioned by focus group participants. Over half of survey respondents (52%) reported visiting a park or recreation facility in Santa Cruz County six or more times in the last 12 months.
- Survey respondents were almost equally split between feeling “somewhat safe” (46%) and “very safe” (49%) in their neighborhood, with 5% reporting feeling “not safe at all”. Forty-seven percent (47%) of survey respondents described their general level of trust with local law enforcement as “somewhat trustworthy” or “very trustworthy”. When asked about specific aspects of how police interact with the community, 0% of survey respondents reported feeling “completely confident” that local law enforcement would keep them safe, with 27% reporting feeling “somewhat confident”, and 27% “fairly confident”. Thirty-three percent (33%) of survey respondents reported feeling “not confident at all” that local law enforcement would act without prejudice or discrimination.
- Thirty-five percent (35%) of survey respondents reported experiencing systemic racism “often” or “very often” in Santa Cruz County during the last 12 months. Forty-four percent (44%) reported experiencing microaggressions “often” or “very often” in the same time frame.

Photo by Devi Pride



CONCLUSION

Casting a spotlight on the well-being of the Black/African American community of Santa Cruz County provided a rich opportunity to conduct a community assessment predicated upon the principles of community-based participatory research, while being led by the distinguished and active Santa Cruz County Black Health Matters Initiative (SCCBHMI). ASR and the SCCBHMI leadership team sought to ensure that this effort would yield an expansive exploration of well-being and belonging. Of special note, this collaboration determined which aspects of well-being on which to focus during key points in the project, including indicator selection, co-designing safe and meaningful ways to best collect data, creating innovative and appropriate ways of engaging participation in the secondary data, survey and focus groups, and supporting meaning making now and for the future.

The data, collected and analyzed, are meant to reflect the meaningful and impactful conversations which informed every aspect of this report. This group's commitment to being community driven and methodologically rigorous, resulted in a completely customized study rooted in authentic engagement, which can be used to inform future efforts. The committee will act together to determine next steps and continue to honor the voices of those represented. This type of focus and commitment on this special and unique population gives stakeholders and community an opportunity to make good on the promise of well-being for ALL in Santa Cruz County.

APPENDIX A
METHODOLOGY

For this report, both primary and secondary data was collected. Prior to data collection, a collaborative indicator selection process was done with local community partners including SCCBHMI, to ensure timeliness and relevancy, and ultimately provided specific, local insight on the broad array of issues impacting what it means to be Black/African American in Santa Cruz County.

The indicator selection process not only guided the development of the data collection, but also yielded a substantial data development agenda that community partners continue to explore. This report shares the prioritized indicators from this work. Outlined below are the specific methodologies for both primary and secondary data collection for this report.

PRIMARY DATA

Primary data was collected via an online survey and online focus groups. Survey and focus group questions related to the social determinants of health, with additional questions focused on the impact of race/ethnicity on well-being, feelings of safety, and the experience of being Black/African American in Santa Cruz County. Survey and focus group participants were asked two screening questions to ensure that they:

- Identified as Black, African American or of the African Diaspora,
- and primarily lived, worked, or went to school in Santa Cruz County.

In total, 87 adults and four youth (under 18 years old) participated in the online survey, and 31 people participated in four different focus groups.

Photo by Kevin Painchaud

Online Survey

The online survey was provided in English and distributed via an email invitation through community networks and trusted partners. Participants were asked to share their initials and date of birth for the purpose of deduplicating the surveys. Basic demographic data was collected, but no identifying information was requested to ensure anonymity and promote comfort with participation. Survey distribution started on August 9, 2021 and collection ended on September 6, 2021.

Focus Groups

Four online focus groups with 5 to 10 people each, were conducted during August and September of 2021. Focus groups participants were recruited by members of four local organizations: NAACP Santa Cruz County, Black Girl Magic, Black Surf Club, and the Santa Cruz County Black Coalition for Racial Justice and Equity. Black/African American members of these groups were trained by ASR and acted as facilitators for the focus group their organization held. ASR staff participated in the focus groups as neutral, verbatim scribes, with cameras and microphones turned off after being introduced to focus group participants. Staff shared the verbatim transcript with facilitators after each focus group to confirm that content was captured accurately.

We wish to thank **Jacquelyn Galbreath Rabouin,** LMFT, PhD for her generous donation of time, energy and expertise.

Participant Protections

A number of steps were taken to ensure that participants were informed, supported, and protected when they participated, including:

- Consent forms were completed prior to the survey and focus groups.
- A local, culturally appropriate mental health professional with an African, Black, Caribbean focused practice, was identified and volunteered to support all project participants, including facilitators.
- The purpose of the data collection was shared in the sessions and in the survey.
- Each focus group began by adopting conversation agreements that uplifted the values of respect, privacy and well-being.
- All identifying information was removed from the reporting of findings.

SECONDARY DATA

Secondary data was collected from a variety of sources, including but not limited to, the U.S. Census Bureau; federal, state, and local government agencies; health care institutions; and computerized sources through online databases and the internet. Whenever possible, multiple years of data were collected to present trends. State-level data were also collected for comparison with local data. The data presented reflects the most current data available for each source.

All racial/ethnic categories used by secondary data sources are shown in this report, with the exception of 'Other'. 'Another race/ethnicity' was used as a more accurate and inclusive alternative to the 'Other' grouping.

LIMITATIONS

Because the data gathering methodology was different for the online survey and the focus groups, results are unique data sets and should not be compared. Additional limitations include:

- Demographic data was not collected from participants in focus groups.
- Participants in the focus groups reflect targeted outreach based on recommendations from the Santa Cruz County Black Health Matter Initiative and their partners.
- Sample size for participants in the focus groups and the online survey were too small to be a representative sample of the entire Black/African American community in Santa Cruz County.
- Participation may have been impacted by the potentially sensitive nature of the topic areas.
- While the findings of this report reflect a range of Black/African American people in Santa Cruz County, it did not fully capture the experiences of the entire community, nor does it explore the complex intersection of identities that impact individual experience.

Photo by Kevin Painchaud

APPENDIX B
SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. **DO YOU IDENTIFY AS BLACK, AFRICAN AMERICAN, AND/OR OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA?**
   a. Yes
   b. No

2. **DO YOU SPEND THE MAJORITY OF YOUR TIME IN SANTA CRUZ COUNTY LIVING, WORKING OR GOING TO SCHOOL? NOTE: "LIVING" MEANS YOUR PRIMARY RESIDENCE IS IN SANTA CRUZ COUNTY. "WORKING" MEANS YOUR WORKPLACE IS IN SANTA CRUZ COUNTY (YOU ARE PRIMARILY WORKING PHYSICALLY IN SANTA CRUZ COUNTY).**
   a. Yes
   b. No

3. **WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING AGE GROUPS ARE YOU IN?**
   a. Less than 18
   b. 18 to 24 years
   c. 25 to 44 years
   d. 45 to 64 years
   e. 65 years and over

4. **IN ADDITION TO BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN, DO YOU IDENTIFY WITH ANY OTHER RACIAL/ETHNIC GROUPS? IF YES, WHAT ARE THEY?**
   a. African
   b. Asian
   c. Bi-Racial
   d. Filipino
   e. Jewish
   f. Latina
   g. Latinx and Jewish
   h. Native American
   i. White
   j. Other (please specify)

5. **WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING BEST DESCRIBES YOUR GENDER IDENTITY?**
   a. Self-identify (please specify):
   b. Male
   c. Female
   d. Non-binary
   e. Self-identify

6. WHAT IS THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION YOU COMPLETED?

a. Less than 9th grade
b. 9th to 12th grade, no diploma
c. High school graduate (includes equivalency)
d. Some college, no degree
e. Associate's degree
f. Bachelor's degree
g. Graduate or professional degree
h. Never attended school

7. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS DO YOU CURRENTLY LIVE CLOSEST TO?

a. Aptos
b. Capitola
c. City of Santa Cruz
d. City of Watsonville
e. Corralitos
f. Davenport / Bonny Doon
g. Freedom
h. La Selva Beach
i. Live Oak
j. Pajaro
k. San Lorenzo Valley
l. Scotts Valley
m. Soquel
n. Other (Work in Santa Cruz)

8. WHAT IS YOUR ZIP CODE?

9. DO YOU FEEL YOU ARE BETTER OFF FINANCIALLY THIS YEAR THAN LAST YEAR?

a. Yes, better off
b. The same
c. No, worse off

10. WHICH INCOME RANGE BEST DESCRIBES YOUR HOUSEHOLD INCOME FOR THE YEAR?

a. $34,999 or less
b. $35,000 to $74,999
c. $75,000 or more

11. WHAT IS YOUR EMPLOYMENT STATUS?

a. Employed full-time
b. Employed part-time
c. Self-employed
d. Unemployed
e. Retired
f. Student
g. Homemaker, parent, or caregiver
h. Volunteer
i. Other

12. WHICH HOUSING STATUS CURRENTLY APPLIES TO YOU?

a. Renter who receives housing subsidies
b. Renter who does not receive any housing subsidies
c. Homeowner
d. Other

13. IS THE AMOUNT OF MONEY YOU USE TO PAY FOR HOUSING, EXCLUDING UTILITIES, SUCH AS GAS AND ELECTRICITY... ?

a. Less than one-third of your income
b. Between one-third and one-half of your income
c. More than one-half of your income

14. IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS, HOW DIFFICULT HAS IT BEEN FOR YOUR HOUSEHOLD TO PAY FOR USUAL HOUSEHOLD EXPENSES, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO FOOD, RENT OR MORTGAGE, CAR PAYMENTS, MEDICAL EXPENSES, STUDENT LOANS, AND SO ON?

a. Very difficult
b. Somewhat difficult
c. A little difficult
d. Not at all difficult

15. WITHIN THE NEXT 3 MONTHS, HOW LIKELY IS IT THAT YOUR HOUSEHOLD WILL HAVE TO LEAVE YOUR HOME OR APARTMENT BECAUSE OF EVICTION?

a. Very likely
b. Somewhat likely
c. Not likely at all

16. IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS, HAVE YOU ACCESSED ANY PUBLIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAM(S) OR SOCIAL SERVICE(S)? NOTE: IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SKIP THIS QUESTION, SELECT "PREFER NOT TO ANSWER".

a. Yes
b. No
c. Prefer not to answer

17. HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAM(S) OR SOCIAL SERVICE(S)?

a. Friends/family
b. Social services
c. Medical service provider
d. Community based organization
e. School/university
f. Church/faith-based organization
g. Website/other media
h. Other

18. ARE YOU A PARENT OR GUARDIAN OF A CHILD (OR CHILDREN) AND/OR YOUTH UNDER THE AGE OF 24? NOTE: IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SKIP THIS QUESTION, SELECT "PREFER NOT TO ANSWER".

a. Yes
b. No
c. Prefer not to answer

19. HAVE YOU EVER BEEN A SINGLE PARENT/GUARDIAN?

a. Yes
b. No

20. HOW SERIOUS OF A PROBLEM IS FINDING QUALITY, AFFORDABLE CHILDCARE IN YOUR AREA?

a. Very serious problem
b. Somewhat serious problem
c. Not a serious a problem
d. I don't need childcare

21. HAVE ANY OF YOUR CHILDREN AND/OR YOUTH EVER BEEN...

a. Identified for special education
b. Placed in an alternative school
c. Placed in a Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) program
d. Encouraged to take Advanced Placement (AP) courses
e. Encouraged to take college preparation courses
f. Encouraged to apply to college

22. IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS, WERE YOU ABLE TO RECEIVE THE HEALTH CARE YOU NEEDED? NOTE: IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SKIP THIS QUESTION, SELECT "PREFER NOT TO ANSWER".

a. Yes
b. No
c. I didn't need health care
d. Prefer not to answer

23. WHY WERE YOU UNABLE TO RECEIVE THE HEALTH CARE YOU NEEDED?

a. No insurance
b. Lack of cultural competence (including language barriers)
c. Discriminatory experience
d. Insurance wouldn't cover it
e. Couldn't afford co-pay
f. Couldn't afford the premium
g. Lack of services or services unavailable
h. Transportation issues
i. Fear of exposure to COVID-19
j. Didn't know where to go
k. Didn't know what steps to take to get health care
l. Other

24. IN GENERAL, HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH YOUR PHYSICAL HEALTH?

a. Very satisfied
b. Satisfied
c. Dissatisfied
d. Very dissatisfied

25. MOST OFTEN, WHERE DO YOU GO FOR YOUR HEALTH CARE?

a. Primary Care Physician in a medical group (PAMF, Dignity, Kaiser, etc.)
b. Community clinics (Salud para la Gente, Santa Cruz Community Clinics, etc.)
c. Urgent care clinics
d. Emergency room (Watsonville Hospital or Dominican Hospital)
e. Private practice
f. Alternative care practices
g. Other (please specify)

26. DO YOU FEEL YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER ADDRESSES YOUR HEALTH CONCERNS?

a. Always
b. Most of the time
c. Sometimes
d. Never

27. DO YOU FEEL LIKE YOUR RACE AND/OR ETHNICITY HAS EVER IMPACTED THE QUALITY OF HEALTH CARE YOU'VE RECEIVED IN SANTA CRUZ COUNTY?

a. Yes
b. No

28. HOW OFTEN DOES RACIAL DISCRIMINATION THAT YOU HAVE PERSONALLY EXPERIENCED (OR WITNESSED) AFFECT YOUR MENTAL HEALTH?

a. Very often
b. Often
c. Sometimes
d. Rarely
e. Never

29. IF YOU OR ANYONE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD NEEDED MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT, COUNSELING OR OTHER HELP IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS, WERE YOU ABLE TO RECEIVE IT?

a. Yes
b. No
c. I/we didn't need mental health treatment

30. IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS, HAVE YOU OR ANYONE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD HAD A PROBLEM WITH SUBSTANCE USE (I.E., ALCOHOL AND/OR DRUGS)?

a. Yes
b. No
c. Not sure

31. SOCIAL ISOLATION CAN BE DEFINED AS AN ABSENCE OF SOCIAL INTERACTIONS, CONTACTS, AND RELATIONSHIPS WITH FAMILY, FRIENDS AND/OR NEIGHBORS. THINKING ABOUT THIS DEFINITION, HOW OFTEN HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED SOCIAL ISOLATION AS A RESULT OF BEING BLACK/AFRICAN IN SANTA CRUZ COUNTY? Source: American Association of Retired Persons and United Health Foundation. (2021). The Pandemic Effect: A Social Isolation Report, 2020.

a. Very often
b. Often
c. Sometimes
d. Rarely
e. Never
f. Prefer not to answer

32. BECAUSE OF SOCIAL ISOLATION, WHAT KIND OF CHANGES HAVE YOU SEEN IN YOURSELF?

a. Lack of motivation
b. Becoming more forgetful
c. An increase/decline in my appetite
d. Don't know
e. Prefer not to answer
f. Feeling more anxious than usual
g. Feeling more sad
h. Feeling depressed
i. Increased anger
j. Increased frustration
k. Withdrawal from others
l. Feeling less healthy
m. A decline in hope
n. Other

33. HAVE YOU OR ANYONE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD EVER TESTED POSITIVE FOR COVID-19?

a. Yes
b. No
c. Prefer not to answer

34. HOW LIKELY ARE YOU TO GET VACCINATED FOR COVID-19?

a. I have already been vaccinated
b. Very likely
c. Somewhat likely
d. Not at all likely
e. Prefer not to answer

35. IN THE PAST WEEK, HOW OFTEN DID YOU INTERACT WITH BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN PEOPLE OTHER THAN THOSE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD OR CLOSE FRIENDS?

a. Very often
b. Often
c. Sometimes
d. Rarely
e. Never

36. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING SPACES IN YOUR COMMUNITY GIVE YOU THE OPPORTUNITY TO FORM MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS, BONDS OR FRIENDSHIPS WITH BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN PEOPLE OTHER THAN THOSE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD OR CLOSE FRIENDS?

a. Community groups
b. Gyms/recreational facilities
c. Music venues
d. Local shops/cafes
e. Places of worship
f. Libraries
g. Parks/outdoor spaces
h. Community centers
i. Schools
j. Youth centers
k. Workplace
l. Other

37. IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS, HAVE YOU DONE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING CIVIC OR SOCIAL PARTICIPATION ACTIVITIES (EITHER ONLINE OR IN-PERSON)?

a. Attended a town meeting, public hearing or public affairs discussion group
b. Made an in-kind donation to a community-based organization/non-profit (e.g., household goods or technology items)
c. Attended meeting/events related to my child's school
d. Participated in faith/spirituality-based events
e. Spent time socializing with people outside of my home (people who do not live with me)
f. None of the above
g. Met with, texted, e-mailed, called or sent a letter to any local politician
h. Joined a protest or demonstration
i. Signed a petition
j. Joined an on-line political advocacy group
k. Voted
l. Joined a neighborhood group or association
m. Volunteered with a community-based organization/non-profit
n. Made a monetary donation to a community-based organization/non-profit
o. Other

38. HOW MUCH DO YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS ABOUT YOUR COMMUNITY? [STRONGLY AGREE, SOMEWHAT AGREE, SOMEWHAT DISAGREE, STRONGLY AGREE]

a. My community is a place where people care about one another.
b. I feel like I belong in my community.
c. My relationships in my community are as satisfying as I would want them to be.
d. I feel like I can be my authentic self in my community.
e. I feel comfortable expressing my opinions to others in my community.
f. I feel like I am an important part of my community.
g. I feel supported and respected in my community.
h. I feel hopeful about the future of my community.

39. IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS, HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU VISITED A PARK OR RECREATION FACILITY IN SANTA CRUZ COUNTY?

a. 0 times
b. 1 time
c. 2 times
d. 3-5 times
e. 6-11 times
f. 12 or more times

40. HOW SAFE WOULD YOU SAY YOU FEEL IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD?

a. Very safe
b. Somewhat safe
c. Not safe at all

41. IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS, HAVE YOU OR ANYONE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD BEEN A VICTIM OF A CRIME?

a. Yes
b. No

42. DESCRIBE YOUR GENERAL LEVEL OF TRUST WITH LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT:

a. Very trustworthy
b. Somewhat trustworthy
c. Somewhat untrustworthy
d. Untrustworthy
e. Don't know

43. HOW MUCH CONFIDENCE DO YOU HAVE IN LOCAL POLICE OFFICERS TO: [COMPLETELY CONFIDENT, FAIRLY CONFIDENT, SOMEWHAT CONFIDENT, SLIGHTLY CONFIDENT, NOT CONFIDENT AT ALL]

a. Gain the trust of local residents
b. Keep you safe
c. Act without prejudice or discrimination

44. IF YOU'VE EXPERIENCED SYSTEMIC RACISM IN SANTA CRUZ COUNTY DURING THE LAST 12 MONTHS, HOW OFTEN? NOTE: IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SKIP THIS QUESTION, SELECT "PREFER NOT TO ANSWER".

Systemic racism is defined as policies and practices that exist throughout a whole society, organization, or institution that resulted in and support a continued unfair advantage to some people and unfair or harmful treatment of others based on race. Source: Cambridge Dictionary. (n.d.). Systemic Racism. Retrieved January 7, 2022 from https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/systemic-racism.

a. Very often
b. Often
c. Sometimes
d. Rarely
e. Never
f. Prefer not to answer

45. IF YOU'VE EXPERIENCED SYSTEMIC RACISM 'VERY OFTEN', 'OFTEN' OR 'SOMETIMES' IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS IN SANTA CRUZ COUNTY, PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE(S):

46. IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS, HOW OFTEN HAVE YOU WITNESSED RACISM IN SANTA CRUZ COUNTY? NOTE: IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SKIP THIS QUESTION, SELECT "PREFER NOT TO ANSWER".

a. Very often
b. Often
c. Sometimes
d. Rarely
e. Never
f. Prefer not to answer

47. IF YOU'VE WITNESSED RACISM 'VERY OFTEN', 'OFTEN' OR 'SOMETIMES' IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS IN SANTA CRUZ COUNTY, DID YOU EVER REPORT IT TO AN AUTHORITY? NOTE: IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SKIP THIS QUESTION, SELECT "PREFER NOT TO ANSWER".

a. Yes
b. No
c. Prefer not to answer

48. IN GENERAL, WERE YOU SATISFIED WITH THE RESOLUTION(S)?

a. Yes
b. No
c. There was no resolution

49. IF YOU'VE EXPERIENCED MICROAGGRESSIONS IN SANTA CRUZ COUNTY DURING THE LAST 12 MONTHS, HOW OFTEN? NOTE: IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SKIP THIS QUESTION, SELECT "PREFER NOT TO ANSWER".

Microaggressions are the everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership. Source: Sue, D. W. (2010). Microaggressions: More than just race. Psychology Today, 17.

a. Very often
b. Often
c. Sometimes
d. Rarely
e. Never
f. Prefer not to answer

50. IF YOU'VE EXPERIENCED MICROAGGRESSIONS 'VERY OFTEN', 'OFTEN' OR 'SOMETIMES' IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS IN SANTA CRUZ COUNTY, PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE(S):

51. IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS, HAVE YOU BEEN A VICTIM OF A HATE CRIME IN SANTA CRUZ COUNTY? NOTE: IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SKIP THIS QUESTION, SELECT "PREFER NOT TO ANSWER".

A hate crime or incident is any incident, which constitutes a criminal offence and is motivated by prejudice. In California, hate crimes are offenses "where a victim is singled out because of their actual or perceived disability, gender, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics" (California Department of Justice, 2020). Hate crimes can take many forms including physical assault, offensive graffiti, verbal abuse, offensive literature, criminal damage and abusive gestures. Source: Oxford City Council. (2015, June 17). Reporting Hate Crime. Retrieved January 7, 2022 from https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20101/community_safety/264/reporting_hate_crime#:~:text=A%20Hate%20crime%20or%20incident,criminal%20damage%20and%20abusive%20gestures.

a. Yes
b. No
c. Prefer not to answer

52. IF YOU'VE BEEN A VICTIM OF A HATE CRIME IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS IN SANTA CRUZ COUNTY, DID YOU EVER REPORT IT TO LAW ENFORCEMENT? NOTE: IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SKIP THIS QUESTION, SELECT "PREFER NOT TO ANSWER".

d. Yes
e. No
f. I reported the incident to a different authority (other than law enforcement)
g. Prefer not to answer

53. IN GENERAL, WERE YOU SATISFIED WITH THE RESOLUTION(S)?

a. Yes
b. No
c. There was no resolution

54. IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE BEING BLACK/ AFRICAN AMERICAN IN SANTA CRUZ COUNTY?

APPENDIX C
FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

Discussion Section 1: COMMUNITY & SUPPORT

Question 1: What makes you feel a sense of connection to the Black/African American community here in Santa Cruz County?

Question 2: Do you think there are challenges attracting and retaining Black/African Americans to live/work in Santa Cruz County? If yes, what do you think needs to change to make Santa Cruz County more attractive to Black/African Americans as a place to live?

Discussion Section 2: LIVING, THRIVING & PLAYING

Question 1: Are there areas of Santa Cruz County that you feel are more safe for Black/African Americans? If yes, where are they and why do you feel this way?

Question 2: Do you think Black/African Americans use parks, recreational facilities, or other natural environments more or less frequently than other groups of people? Why is this? What would need to change to make you/your family utilize these spaces more often?

Discussion Section 3: DISCRIMINATION & RACISM

Question 1: If you have experienced or seen racism or discrimination in Santa Cruz County, describe how it has affected you or people you know.

Question 2: If you have interacted with local law enforcement, describe how the experience shaped the way you think about policing and race in Santa Cruz County?

APPENDIX D

SELECT QUOTES FROM FOCUS GROUPS AND OPEN-ENDED SURVEY QUESTIONS

SELECT QUOTES FROM FOCUS GROUPS

What are the challenges to attracting and retaining Black/African Americans to live in Santa Cruz County? What needs to change to make Santa Cruz County more attractive to Black/African Americans as a place to live?

- "Racism has been here; it's been here despite the liberal attitudes people talk about"
- "It wasn't until I hit college that I had a black teacher"
- "You learn where the places where you are welcomed and where you are not"
- "I have seen a lot of gentrification that has happened in the last 10-15 years, pushes communities of color out, you want to afford where you grew up but you can't anymore"

What makes you feel a sense of connection to the Black/African American community here in Santa Cruz County

- "My experience has been lonely… most of the time I'm the only black person in most situations."
- "This last year has been very dramatic for all of us. But in some ways, it's a continuation of the alienation and isolation we have experienced."
- "This past Juneteenth was the first time I felt like I was a part of the Black community"
- "I long, always, for association with my Black kin"
- "These police killings, COVID, and everything else have helped us realize we have to open up, stand up and be in community"
- "Some threw out Louden Nelson or the Tannery - this is the de facto spot to be around other Black people. That's really changed everything. To be around other Black folks, to be Black unabashedly."

Black/African Americans use of parks, recreational facilities, or other natural environments: Is it more or less than other groups of people, why this is, and what would need to change to increase Black/African American utilization of these spaces?

- "We have many organizations getting people outside, if you look, its just the fact we get into economics, social standing, get into money. We don't talk about who can afford things, 'cuz it's not polite, but it's a part of it."

- "I would love to see Black kids playing outside. I'd love to see us all outside."
- "For me it's about knowing about what's happening so I can participate and reach out. Where we can have a sense of community – where I can feel belonging."

Are there areas of Santa Cruz County where you feel more safe as a Black/African American?

- "Growing up here I have gotten very comfortable being uncomfortable – anywhere is going to be uncomfortable"
- "In general, I do feel safe until someone gives me a reason not to."
- "I love when we come together because we remind each other that we are here, we laugh together, we heal together, being safe enough to play"
- "I don't feel safe in Santa Cruz County, I put on my mental armor when I leave my house, I don't feel safe, but I do what I need to do."
- "The spaces I've made for myself are the places where I feel are the safest"

If you have experienced or seen racism or discrimination in Santa Cruz County, describe how it has affected you or people you know.

- "The mural being messed up was a pretty big deal and every day that it is not fixed its heavy on my heart."
- "It's the water in which we swim. Not so much overt things that happened, but small reminders that people see me as different."
- "These things are deeply painful to live through, to realize, and then get up the next day and go to work, make dinner that night, etc. when your heart is beating out of your chest. These types of slights, we don't just get up from them. We don't just walk away to the next day. Its cumulative. It has an absolute effect."

If you have interacted with local law enforcement, describe how the experience shaped the way you think about policing and race in Santa Cruz County?

- "Law enforcement just makes me nervous - always - even if I'm doing absolutely nothing wrong."
- "My experience has been that they don't show up for me, if anything, they make me feel less safe."
- "We need accountability in the criminal justice system, it shows us that there is so much more work to be done. Black people need to be at the forefront of those conversations, and the decisions being made… Black people in Santa Cruz do not have the power and oversight needed to change."
- "Statistics don't get at what people actually feel."

SELECT QUOTES FROM THE OPEN-ENDED SURVEY QUESTIONS

Aspects of life where survey respondents reported experiencing racism in Santa Cruz County:

- "Had to change voice/name to get callbacks about rentals"
- "Not given options like others in health situations, not listened to or believed in health situations", "not being treated or believed about symptoms without strong advocation."
- "My son's guidance counselor refuses to prepare him for college with A through G requirements and also told my son that a D is a passing grade."
- "Not being offered the same services in an emergency. When being evacuated during the CZU fires we were given different options than our White counterparts."
- "Passed over in a restaurant or that type of setting for a White patron"
- "I have to make the case for taking vacation or time off while others can "unplug" and simply state it's about self-care."
- "I've seen a distinct difference in pay equity at my workplace. My White coworkers make more money than me even though we have the same job title and I work more hours."

How survey respondents reported experiencing racism in Santa Cruz:

- "I am often talked down to until I have "proven" myself."
- "Disregarded in lines or in public spaces or being bumped on the sidewalk as if you are invisible."
- "When you share your experiences of racism, and in particular anti-Black racism, they are dismissed, and you're told not to racialize anything in spite of things already being racialized."
- "Whenever I wear my Cabrillo College shirt in public, the first thing that's said to me is, "Are you the football coach?", as if Black people cannot do anything else except play sports."
- "For instance, being followed in a store by security; woman changing the location of their purse when you walk by."
- "My daughter was called a racial slur by a neighbor."
- "Sneering from White men passing by in a car on the road in Boulder Creek who followed me and turned their lights off while waving their middle finger and yelling out of the window."
- "Someone miming that they were shooting me to kill me while driving."

Reported impacts of racism in Santa Cruz County on survey respondents:

- "There is so much involved with being one of the few in the room or community. People leave because of this. We have to address this."
- "It has taken a toll on my well-being, spiritually, psychically, physically and psychologically."
- "I feel isolated and very alone as a person of color in this County."
- "I often think about moving back to Los Angeles or somewhere in the Bay where I see more people that look like me and who have similar cultural connections."
- "It's sort of a good place to raise a family, but sadly many youth refuse to return or stay once grown, including my own."

Other Key Quotes from Survey Respondents related to Racism in Santa Cruz County:

- "If anything, I feel it's worse cause now (after the rise of the BLM movement) more people know about it, but nothing has been done. It's one thing to be ignorant and not know about it, and it's another to be conscience of it and still do nothing. Or rather claim to be an ally but have no repercussions on "your" actions."
- "Race and racism have always been problems in this community which has been smug and self-satisfied, infamous for patting itself on the back for its progressivism while still perpetuating the same kinds of elitist and racialist actions that pertain anywhere and everywhere else in this hypocritical nation."
- "It is so hard on so many levels being Black in Santa Cruz."
- "The micro aggressions in this community are exhausting from not being listened to, to disparaging looks and attitudes. The privilege and entitlement seep through everywhere making it very challenging to go about day-to-day life sometimes."
- "Being black is not necessarily easy. Santa Cruz seems liberal but there are pockets of micro aggressions every day. It is good to note however that I feel much safer and supported here than any other city in the United States."
- "The BLM mural vandalism was a hate crime I take personally"

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HARRIS