

Study finds an estimated 150,000 US youths ages 13-17 identify as transgender

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Credit: University of California, Los Angeles

An estimated 0.7 percent of youth ages 13 to 17, or 150,000 youth, identify as transgender in the United States, according to a new study released by the Williams Institute at the UCLA School of Law. This

study is the first to provide population estimates for youth who identify as transgender in each of the 50 states, plus the District of Columbia.

The Williams Institute study was done by research fellow Jody Herman, public opinion and policy fellow Andrew Flores, policy analyst Taylor Brown, senior public policy scholar Bianca Wilson and Kerith Conron, the Blachford-Cooper Distinguished Scholar and research director.

The study provides new estimates of the age composition of individuals who identify as [transgender](#) in the U.S. and estimates of the size of the transgender-identified population by age group. The youngest age group, 13 to 17, has the highest estimated percentage of individuals who identify as transgender.

"Current policy debates in several states have involved legislation that would impact transgender students," said Herman. "Our estimates suggest that thousands of youth could be negatively impacted by laws that would limit their access to school facilities and undermine protections against discrimination."

Here are key findings from the report:

- In the U.S. population, the study [estimates](#) that 0.7 percent of youth (ages 13 to 17), 0.7 percent of young adults (ages 18 to 24), 0.6 percent of adults (ages 25 to 64), and 0.5 percent of adults (ages 65 and older) identify as transgender.
- About 150,000 youth (13 to 17) and 1.4 million adults (18 and older) identify as transgender in the U.S.
- Of individuals ages 13 and older who identify as transgender in the U.S.; 10 percent are youth (13 to 17); 13 percent are young adults (18 to 24); 63 percent are ages 25 to 64; and 14 percent are ages 65 and older. This distribution is similar to the age distribution of the general population.

- Mirroring the relative population size of U.S. states, the largest populations of youth that identify as transgender are found in California, Texas, New York and Florida. The smallest populations are found in North Dakota, Vermont, and Wyoming.

"Agencies and institutions that have a responsibility to protect and promote the well-being of adolescents now have an idea of how many transgender youth should be served in every state in the U.S.," said Conron.

For the study, the authors utilized data from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, a national, state-administered survey, which collected data on transgender identity among adults in 19 states for the first time in 2014. The surveillance system represents the best available population-based data to study the size and characteristics of adults who identify as transgender.

The authors used an advanced statistical method to produce [population estimates](#) for youth, as well as adults. Inclusion of gender identity measures in population-based youth surveys remains necessary to advance knowledge about the size, characteristics and needs of the transgender [youth population](#).

Provided by University of California, Los Angeles

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