

## **An Analysis of Indiana Youth Group Demographics**

**Rachel Gross**<sup>1,2,3</sup> and **Olivia Abraham**<sup>1,2,3</sup>, Niki Messmore<sup>1,3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Indiana University School of Medicine, Indianapolis, IN; <sup>2</sup>Indiana Youth Group, Indianapolis, IN;  
<sup>3</sup>Hoosier Public Health Corps, Indianapolis, IN

This study examines the demographics of the youth attending Indiana Youth Group (YIG) programs and how the demographics of the YIG attendees compare to youth in Marion County, Indiana at large. Indiana Youth Group is a center based in Indianapolis that serves LGBTQ+ youth ages 12-24 that creates safer spaces to build community and offers harm-reduction programs that empower youth to build confidence, explore their identities, and foster friendships. YIG provides a wide array of programs free of charge, including basic needs, support groups, arts and crafts, sexual health education, STI/HIV testing, case management, mental health counseling, and affinity groups to lessen the impact of stressors most faced by LGBTQ+ youth and increase self-efficacy. Based on our analysis of demographic data from the 2020 YIG Annual Report and the 2020 Indiana Youth Institute (IYI) County Snapshots, we found that YIG attendees are less diverse than the greater Marion County youth population in terms of race in 2020. YIG serves a higher proportion of white youth and a lower proportion of Black and Hispanic/Latinx compared to the Marion County population. Our study proposes the following strategies to broaden outreach to racially minoritized populations: identify and build relationships with trusted community-based organizations (CBOs) within Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities, invest in health education and health literacy, and increase language access by conveying program information through trusted community messengers. Organizational changes could include cultural competency and social justice training for staff that specifically focuses on the intersection between systemic racism and LGBTQ+ oppression.