

# KINDNESS IN THE WORKPLACE

Understanding Mental Health Resource Availability  
and Preferences for Young Workers

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At Born This Way Foundation, we know from our decade of research that there is an undeniable link between kindness and mental wellness. The two coexist in our homes, in our schools, in our communities, and in our workplaces. That's why we are so proud to partner with Indeed, a leading job site, to survey 1,200 young people across the United States who are currently employed, or who are expecting to be employed in the next two years, about their experiences and access to needed workplace resources.

We found 79% of young people believe it's important to work in a place that prioritizes mental health, which can affect whether they choose to stay at their job. We also found 74% of young people say it's important to work in a place that feels like a kind community, which has an effect on whether they find their work to be of value to their lives.

While the results are hopeful, there is much work to be done to ensure that all people feel affirmed and validated in the workplace and beyond.

There are great opportunities for companies to be more welcoming for their young workers, as well as attract and retain talent. You'll find in this report young people are asking for mental health resources at work, mental health coverage included within their health coverage, and Transgender-affirming health care. Survey respondents also report having to work multiple jobs to support their lives, this is especially true for Black and LGBTQ+ workers, and 40% of young workers shared they have had their hours reduced, were laid off, or took a salary cut in the last two years.

There are also ways companies can build kinder workplace communities that don't require cost or policy change, like encouraging managers to check in with their young workers (something that mattered to a majority of survey takers), publicly listing kindness and supporting mental health as a value for the company (more than 7-in-10 respondents said they were more likely to apply to a job if that were the case), and making it a policy for colleagues to share their pronouns (56% of overall respondents and 67% of Transgender or Genderqueer respondents listed this as an important action).

Our goal with this report is to share the lived experiences of young workers and provide a platform for them to share their needs and hopes. To us, success will include meaningful actions as a result of this report, reminding us we each have a role to play in encouraging kind communities and supporting mental wellness.

In Kindness,



Maya Enista Smith  
Executive Director



Misty Gaither  
Global Head of Diversity, Inclusion + Belonging

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FOUNDATION**



## METHODOLOGY

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On behalf of Born This Way Foundation and Indeed, Benenson Strategy Group conducted 1200 online interviews with 18-29 year olds currently or soon to be employed across the nation, including oversamples of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and LGBTQ+ individuals, from February 24<sup>th</sup> to March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022.



1200 online interviews with 18-29 year olds across the United States including:

- 690 BIPOC individuals
- 437 LGBTQ+ individuals

- The margin of error for the entire data set is  $\pm 2.83\%$  at the 95% confidence level.
  - Note: the margin of error is higher among subgroups
  - Due to rounding, answer choices may not always add up to 100%
- Questions asked only of relevant groups:
  - **Employed:** Asked of those who currently have full or part-time employment
  - **Soon to be employed:** Asked of those who plan to be employed in the next 2 years
- Explanation of key groups:
  - **Kind Workplace:** Those who said they work in a community where most people are kind to them
  - **Unkind or Neither Kind/Unkind Workplace:** Those who said they work in a community where most people are neither kind or unkind to them OR those who said they work in a community where most people are unkind to them
  - **Workplace Prioritizes Mental Health:** Those who said mental health was a very important priority in their workplace
  - **Workplace Does Not Prioritize Mental Health:** Those who said mental health was not a very important priority in their workplace

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## SNAPSHOT:

**THE STATE OF  
KINDNESS AND  
MENTAL HEALTH IN  
YOUNG PEOPLE'S  
WORKPLACES**

# SNAPSHOT: THE STATE OF KINDNESS AND MENTAL HEALTH IN YOUNG PEOPLE'S WORKPLACES

## Mental Health Prioritization

Mental health is a top priority, but there's a gap between how much young people prioritize their mental health and how much they feel their employers prioritize their mental health.

**89%**

say their mental health is a priority to them

**78%**

say their mental health is a priority for their employer<sup>1</sup>

## Workplace Kindness and Mental Health Importance

Mental health and kindness in the workplace are of equal importance to young people and young people want employers to prioritize both.

**79%**

believe it's important to work in a place that prioritizes mental health

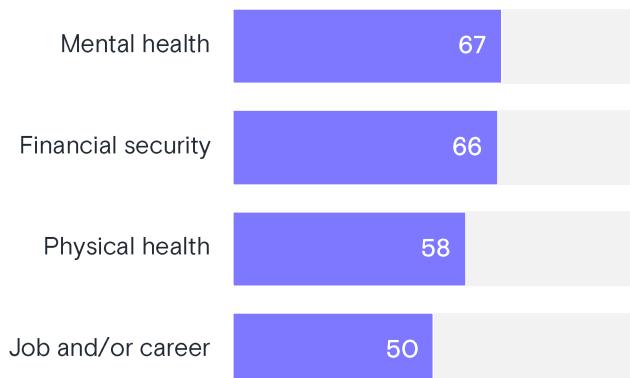
**74%**

believe it's important to work in a place that feels like a kind community

## Personal Priorities

Young people list mental health as a top priority as they navigate other interconnected stressors including finances, career, and physical health.

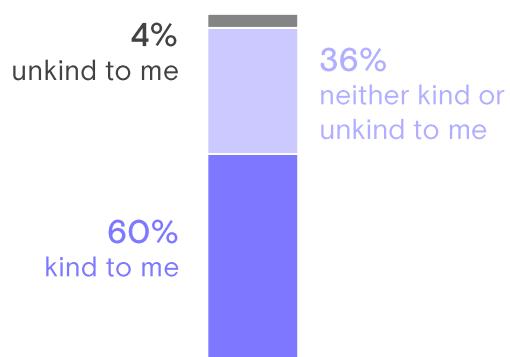
% Very important to me



## Workplace Kindness<sup>1</sup>

Just 6 in 10 young people work in a kind community.

% I work in a community where most people are...



## When it comes to accessing mental health services, how big of a barrier is this for you?

While nearly all young people say their mental health is a priority, around 3 in 4 can't access the mental health resources they need because of cost.



**72%** say not being able to pay for mental health services is a barrier

# SNAPSHOT: THE STATE OF KINDNESS AND MENTAL HEALTH IN WORKPLACES AMONG BIPOC AND WHITE YOUNG PEOPLE

BIPOC

WHITE

## Mental Health Prioritization

BIPOC and White young people highly prioritize mental health, but their employers have space to catch up.

**86% | 90%**

say their mental health is a priority to them

**78% | 78%**

say their mental health is a priority for their employer<sup>1</sup>

## Workplace Kindness and Mental Health Importance

BIPOC young people are slightly less likely to say it's important for a workplace to prioritize mental health but working in a kind community is of equal importance to BIPOC and White young people.

**75% | 82%**

believe it's important to work in a place that prioritizes mental health

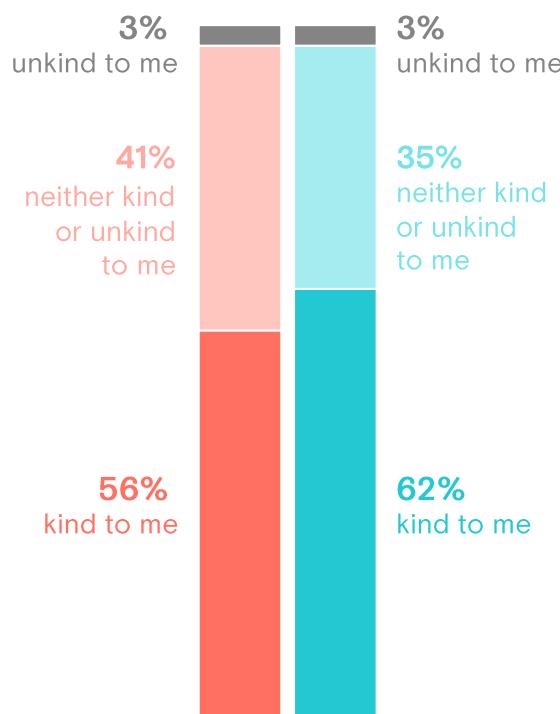
**73% | 74%**

believe it's important to work in a place that feels like a kind community

## Workplace Kindness<sup>1</sup>

BIPOC young people are less likely to work in communities where they are treated with kindness than White young people.

% I work in a community where most people are...



## Workplace Experiences<sup>1</sup>

BIPOC young people are less likely to have workplaces that support diverse backgrounds, allow them to have a good work-life balance, or opportunities to advance compared to their White peers. They are also less likely to work in places that foster kindness or support mental health.

Does your current job do any of the following?



# SNAPSHOT: THE STATE OF KINDNESS AND MENTAL HEALTH IN WORKPLACES AMONG LGBTQ+ AND NON-LGBTQ+ YOUNG PEOPLE

LGBTQ+

NON-LGBTQ+

## Mental Health Prioritization

LGBTQ+ young people feel their employers have the most room to grow in closing the gap between how much they prioritize mental health compared to how much their employer does.

**88% | 89%**

say their mental health is a priority to them

**71% | 80%**

say their mental health is a priority for their employer<sup>1</sup>

## Workplace Kindness and Mental Health Importance

Mental health and kindness are two sides of the same coin for LGBTQ+ and non-LGBTQ+ young people.

**88% | 89%**

say their mental health is a priority to them

**71% | 80%**

say their mental health is a priority for their employer<sup>1</sup>

**77% | 80%**

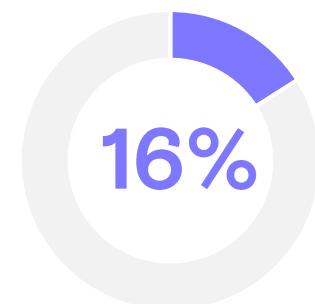
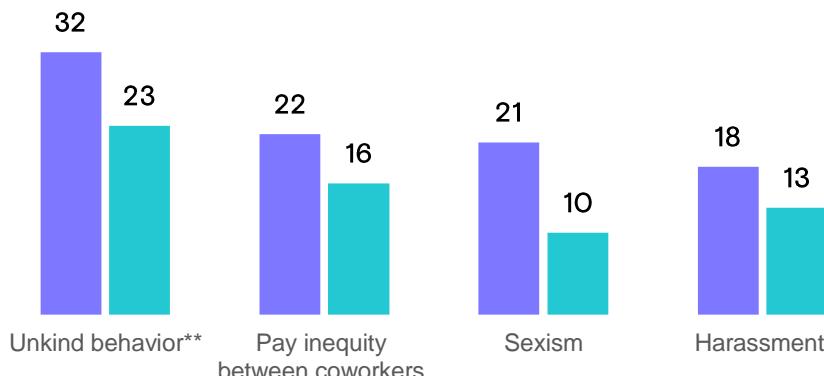
believe it's important to work in a place that prioritizes mental health

**73% | 74%**

believe it's important to work in a place that feels like a kind community

## Have you experienced any of the following workplace challenges?<sup>1</sup>

LGBTQ+ young people are far more likely to have dealt with a negative workplace experience than their non-LGBTQ+ peers. Over 1 in 3 have encountered unkind behavior in the workplace\*\*. Almost 1 in 4 have been paid less than their coworkers. Roughly 1 in 5 have dealt with sexism or harassment at work.



of LGBTQ+ (and 39% of Trans/Non-Binary\*) young people have experienced anti-LGBTQ+ discrimination, homophobia, and/or transphobia and discrimination in the workplace.

## When it comes to accessing mental health services, how big of a barrier is this for you?

And when it comes to the obstacles standing in the way of getting necessary mental health resources, LGBTQ+ young people struggle to find services that speak to their life experiences and identities.

Not sure where to find mental health resources that understand your identity or life experience



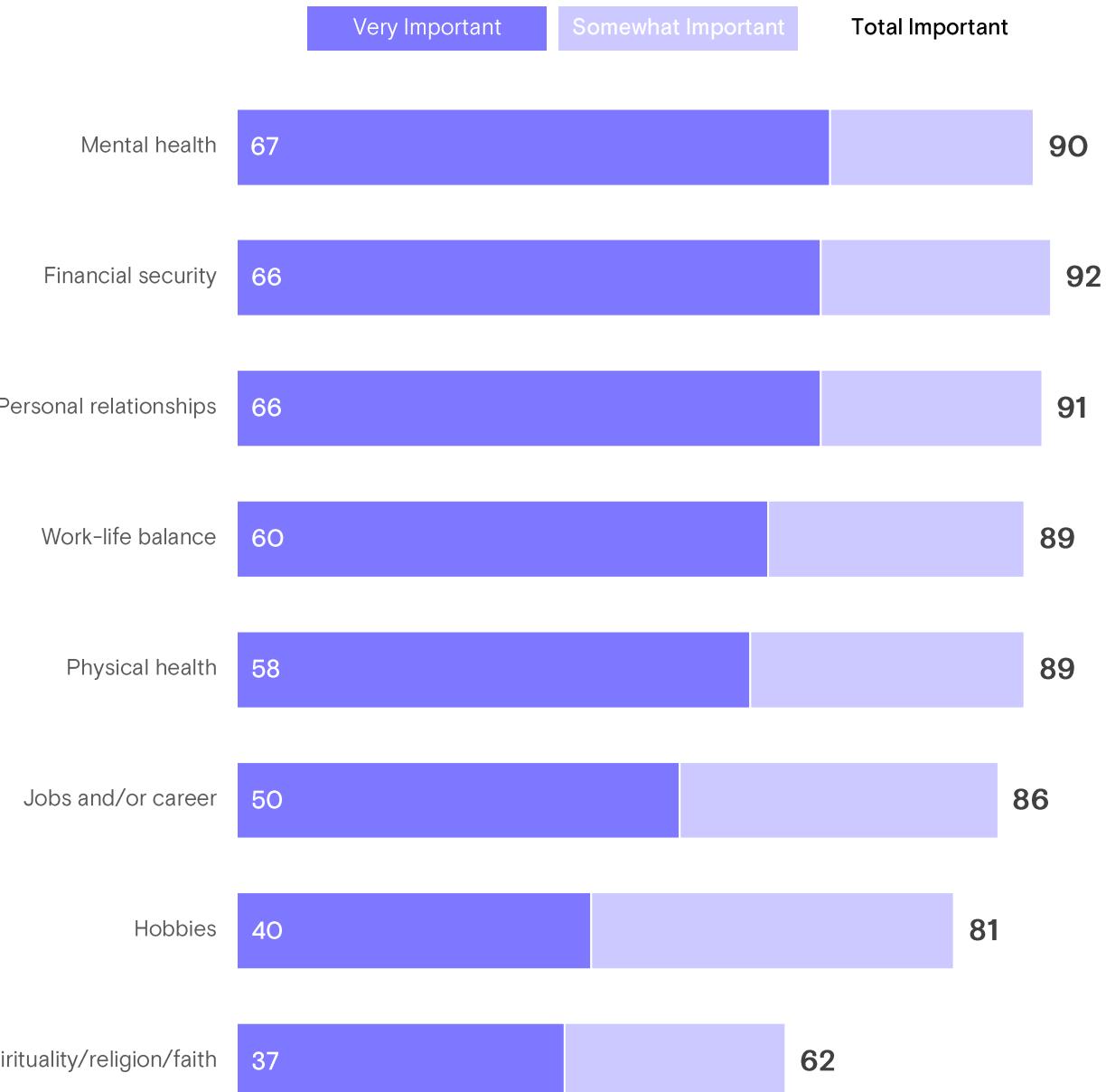
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# MENTAL HEALTH, KINDNESS, AND THE WORKPLACE

## For young people, mental health and financial security are top priorities

Mental health and financial security are “very important” priorities for 7 in 10 young people, and notably more likely to be prioritized than a job or career.

### How important are each of the following to you?



## 8 in 10 young people say workplaces must prioritize mental health

Over 75% of young people across key demographic groups say it is important for workplaces to prioritize mental health. When asked to describe the ways in which their workplace influences their mental health, young people say that teamwork, checking in, and supportive feedback are all crucial. But unfortunately, some are stuck in jobs that harm their mental health, citing a lack of caring about their personal lives and personal emotional needs.

### How important is it to you to work in a place that prioritizes mental health?

% who say important

Overall

79

### How does your job or workplace influence your mental health?<sup>1</sup>

The **teamwork** that I practiced around my job and the **frequent sit downs with evaluations given by our supervisors** are what **help good mental health**.

- Cis Man, AAPI, 25-29

**My jobs influence my mental health in a very negative way.** I work long hours and what ends up happening is that it **takes away time from me and my children.** I wish they realized how hard I work and receive very little in return. - Cis Man, Black/AAPI, 18-24

My **job makes me stressed out, tired, depressed, and overwhelmed.** - Trans/Non-binary Youth, Latinx, 18-24

**If I have a bad day at work, it carries into my performance** throughout the rest of the day, so it's important that I start the day on a good note at work. - Cis Woman, Black, 18-24

I work 3rd shift, and the workload is extreme and **mentally/physically exhausting**, plus **alienating** as we work alone in the dark for 8 hours at a time.

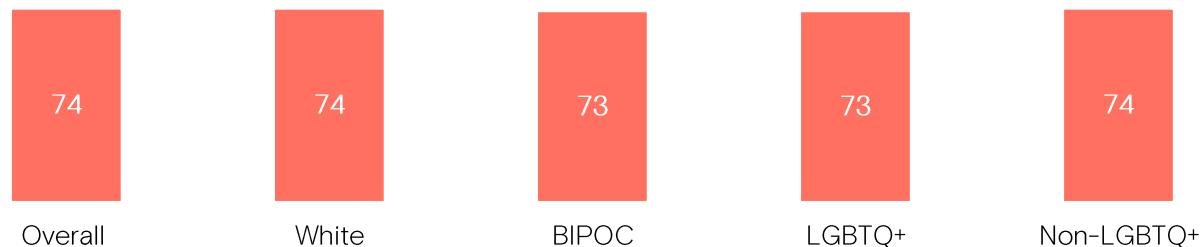
- Trans/Non-binary Youth, White, 25-29

**My job can influence my mental health in good and bad ways.** It can sometimes affect my mental health in bad ways where I have **terrible self-love** and **feel worthless**. Sometimes it affects my mental health in good ways, especially when they **tell me that I am a good worker, and they will help me if I need anything.** - Cis Woman, White, 18-24

It gives me a **sense of security and consistency**. - Cis Man, Latinx, 18-24

## The majority of young people believe it is important to work in a kind community

### How important is it to you to work in a place that feels like a kind community? % who say important



### In your own words, how would you describe what a “kind workplace” looks like or feels like to work in?<sup>2</sup>

A kind workplace doesn't have to look nice to be comfortable, but rather the overall **aura is welcoming**. Even **greeting someone a good morning can make someone's day!**  
– Cis Man, AAPI 18-24

Being able to **laugh and enjoy yourself while doing your tasks** makes a nice environment to work. You **feel at ease** and like **you can take a break because of your physical or mental exhaustions and not be ridiculed for it.**  
– Cis Man, Black, 18-24

A kind workplace is full of **diverse people who won't judge you.** – Trans/Non-Binary Youth, White, 18-24

There will always be different opinions, it's just the matter of how they are voiced. In a “kind workplace”, **opinions should always be voiced without any negativity following it.** – Cis Woman, Black, 25-29

Everybody **communicating effectively** and constantly **helping each other reach a common goal.** – Cis Man, Black, 18-24

Somewhere **you feel comfortable**, and you **can talk to your co-workers or managers about how you feel** without having major consequences. – Cis Woman, AAPI, 18-24

Where **everyone treats everyone with respect.**  
– Cis Woman, Latinx, 18-24

The **supervisors showing compassion and consideration** how major decisions are handled around the employees.  
– Cis Man, Latinx, 25-29

A kind workplace to me is a place where **anyone can feel comfortable** in their day to day.  
– Cis Woman, Latinx, 25-29

### In your own words, how would you describe what a “unkind workplace” looks like or feels like to work in?<sup>3</sup>

An unkind workplace is a place where I am **consistently insulted or yelled at. Customers yell at me and insult me and coworkers insult me in ways that cannot be reported.** – Trans/Non-binary Youth, Latinx, 18-24

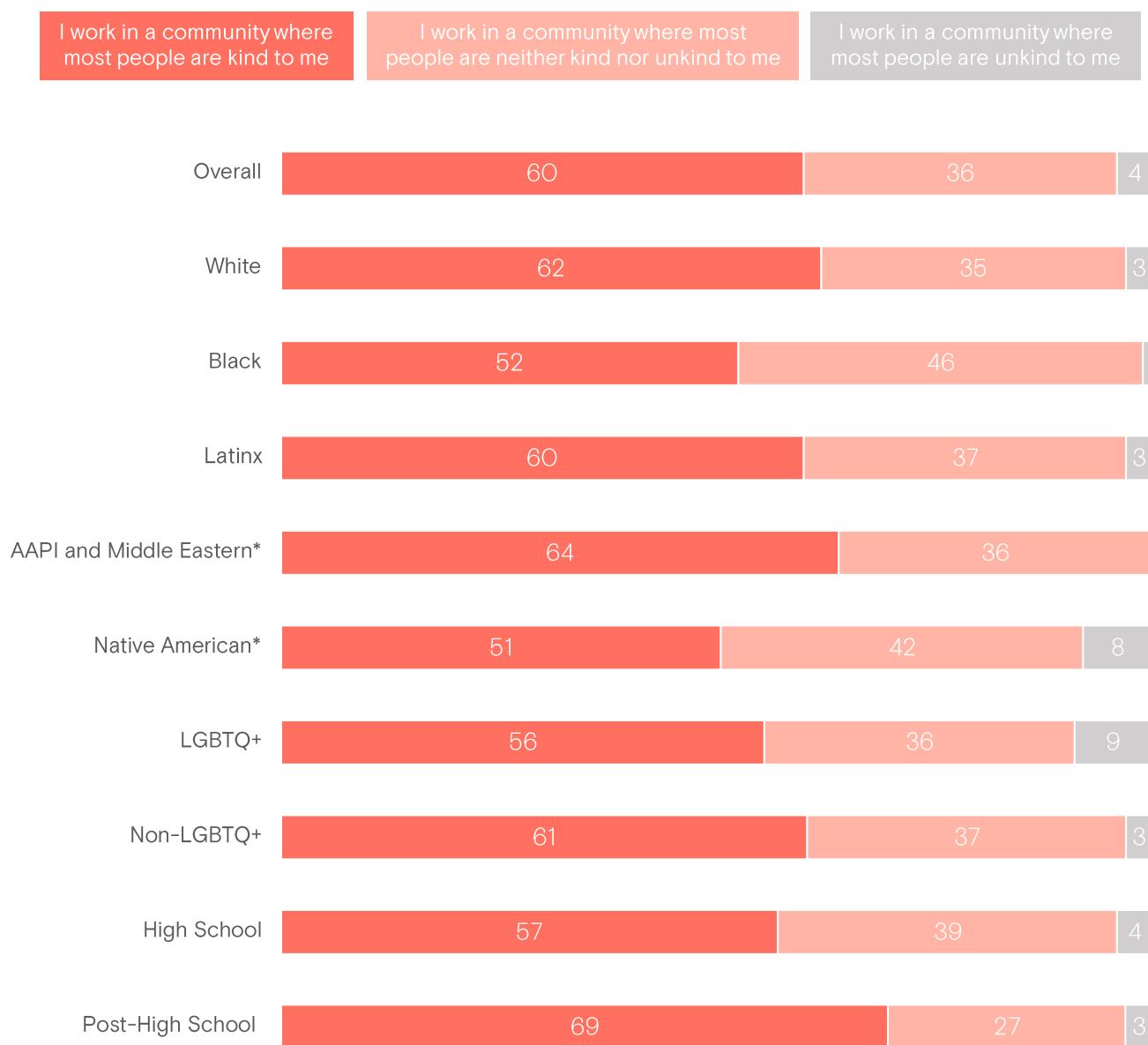
An unkind workplace has an **environment that makes me feel unsafe.** – Cis Man, Black, 18-24

To me an unkind workplace would be **rude staff and management who just care about the money and not about the employees** who are making that money for them.  
– Cis Female, White, 25-29

## Most young people feel they work in kind communities but there is room for improvement to put kindness into action on the job

Today, 6 in 10 young people say that most people treat them with kindness in their workplaces. However, more than 1 in 3 feel that while they are not treated unkindly at work, no one is taking proactive steps to show them kindness either. This middle-ground experience is most common among young Black workers. Moreover, there's much work to be done to improve the experience of many in the LGBTQ+ community, of whom 1 in 10 report being treated unkindly in their work community.

### Thinking about your workplace, would you say most of the time you feel...?



## Prioritizing employee mental health needs to come from all levels within a company

Young people have stated how critical it is for them that their workplaces put employees' mental health first. But well under half of all young employed people believe that their workplace makes mental health a "very important", or top priority. Worryingly, LGBTQ+ employees are the least likely to say their workplace prioritizes mental health.

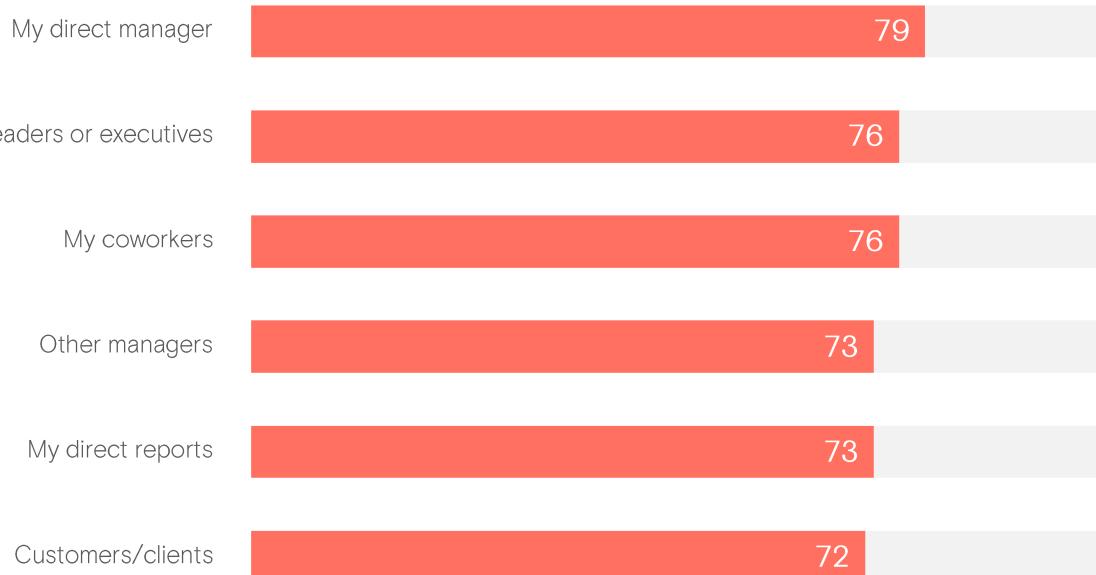
### How much of a priority is employee mental health to your workplace?<sup>1</sup>



Kindness at work should flow in all directions. While employees put the onus on their direct manager to show kindness (8 in 10), more than 7 in 10 say everyone from the executive level, to coworkers, and clients also have a responsibility to help foster kindness in any working environment.

### How important is it that each of the following show kindness while at work?<sup>1</sup>

% say important



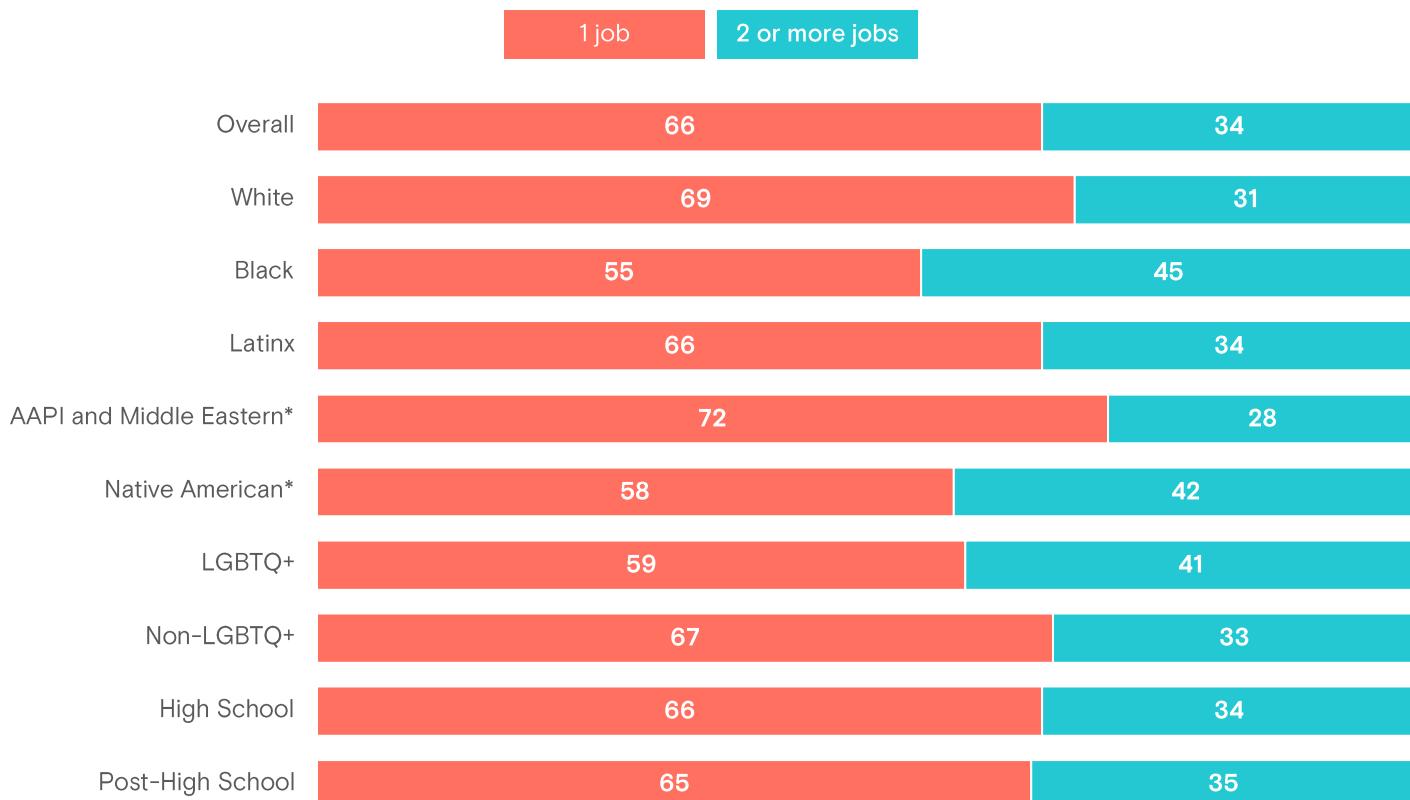
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# YOUNG PEOPLE'S WORKPLACE OUTLOOK AND EXPERIENCES

## More than 1 in 3 young people work multiple jobs

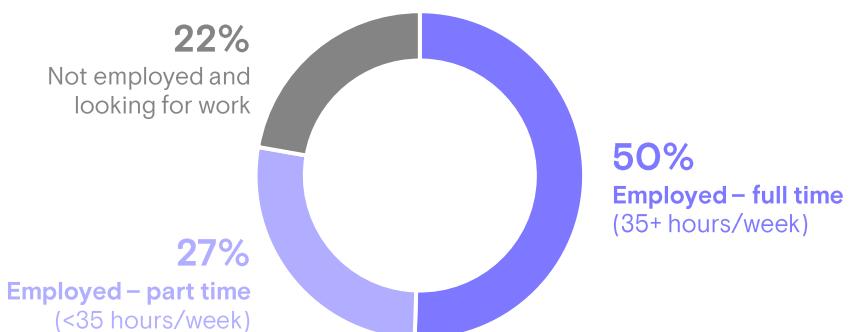
In this economy, young people are juggling multiple jobs to make ends meet. More than a third of young people who work have two or more jobs. Young Black and LGBTQ+ workers are even more likely to have to work multiple jobs and having a college degree seems to make no difference in the need to have multiple sources of income. Young Native American workers also report a higher likelihood of having two or more jobs, though this finding should be considered directional given the smaller base size among this group within the overall sample.

### How many different paid jobs do you currently have, including part-time, freelance, independent contracts, or gig economy work?<sup>1</sup>



### Employment Status

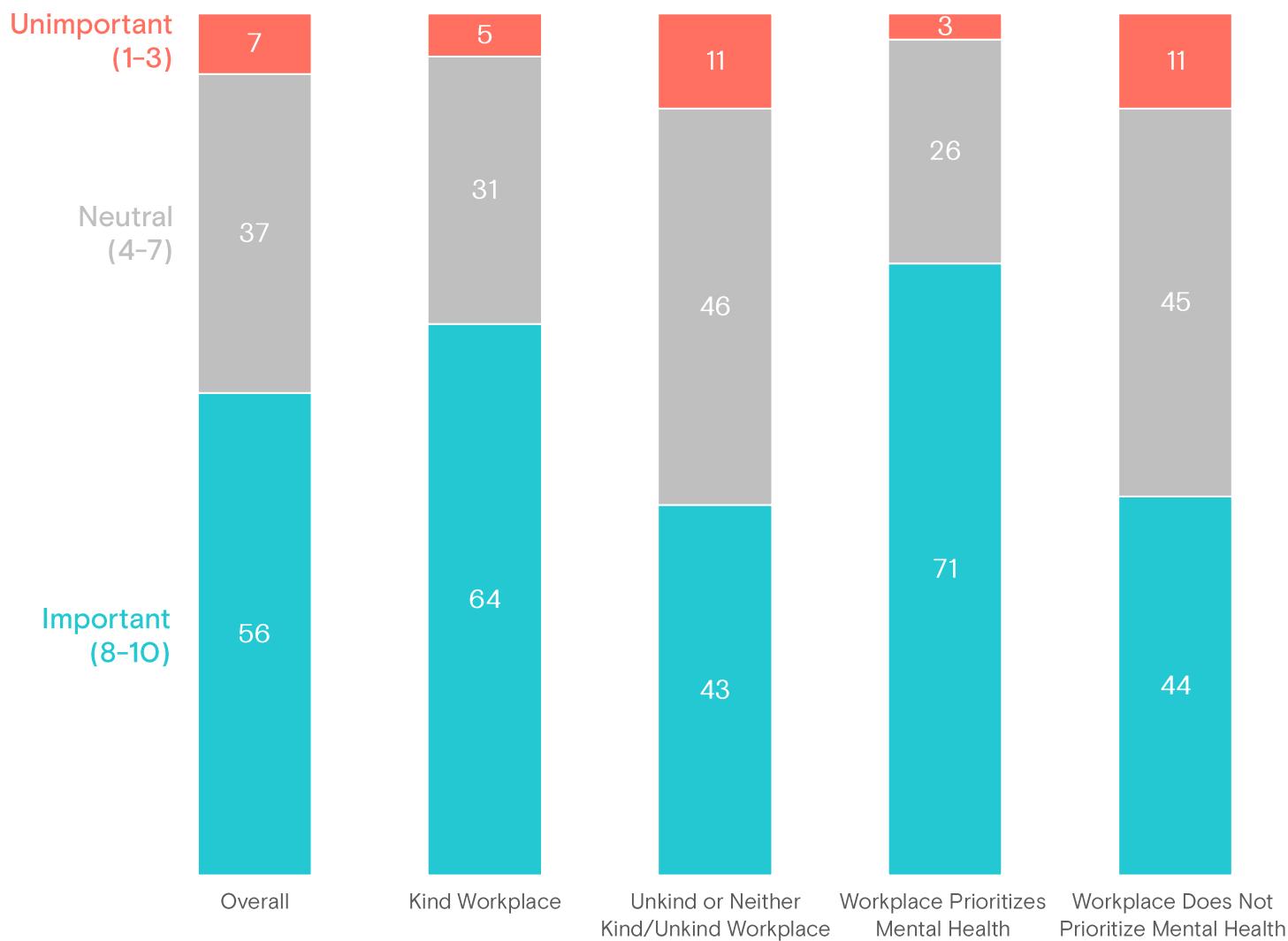
Just half of all young people under 30 are employed full-time, while a quarter work part-time. Among those working, the norm is working as a part of a company or organization, while only 16% of young people are either working as freelancers, independent contractors in the gig economy or self-employed.



## Young people in kind workplaces are more likely to say their work is important to them on a personal level

The majority of young people say their work is “important” to them on a personal level, but there are key differences among sub-groups. Notably, whether or not a young worker was inclined to say their work was personally important to them closely tracked with if a workplace was considered “kind” and if it prioritized employees’ mental health. It’s a helpful reminder for employers to create kind workplaces where employees are respected and affirmed both because it is the right thing to do and helps employees feel invested in their work.

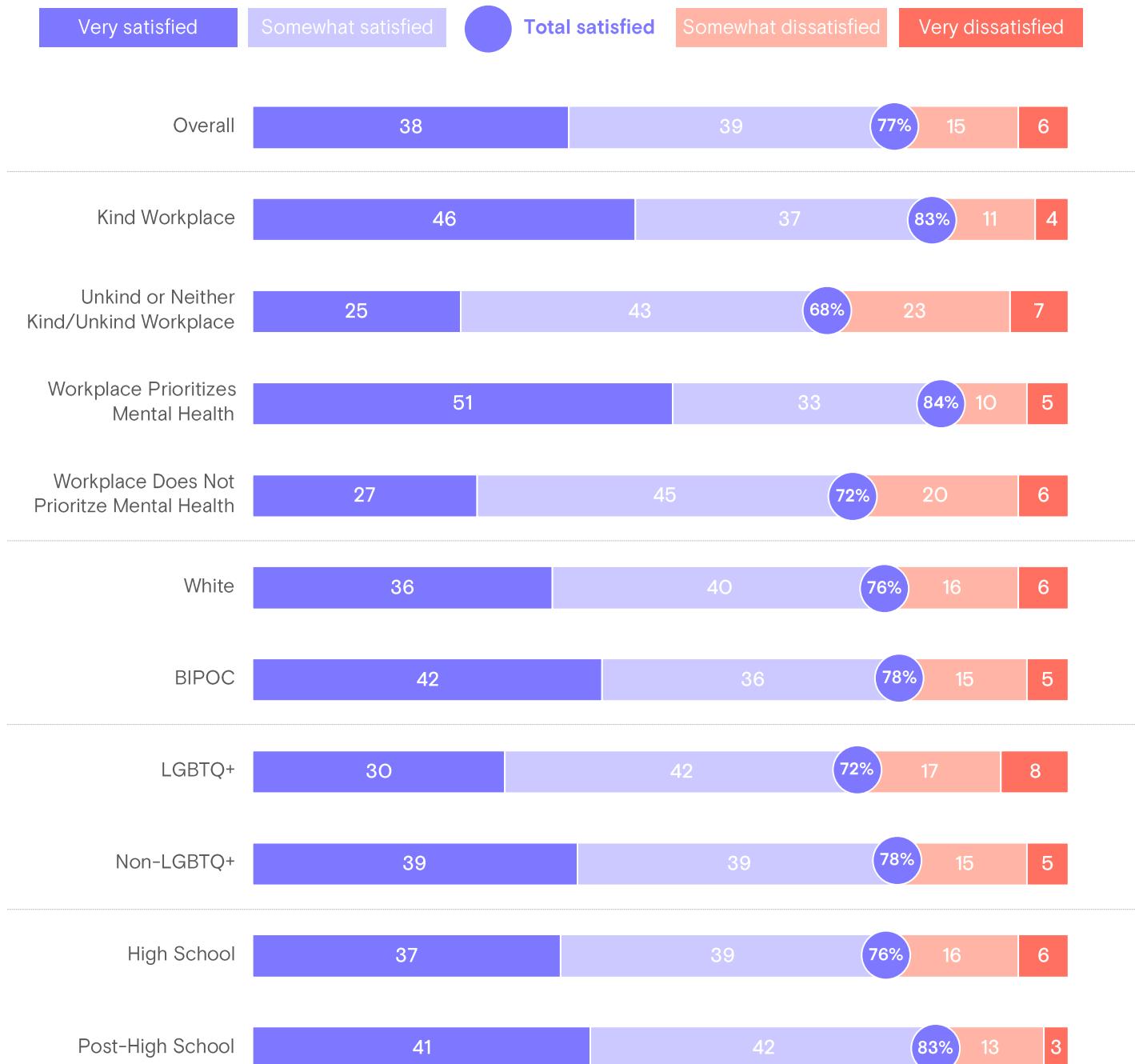
Which of the following comes closest to how you feel about working and/or your career?<sup>1</sup>



## There is also a strong correlation between kindness at work and job satisfaction – suggesting retention benefits for companies who prioritize kindness and mental health

Broadly speaking, young people are satisfied with their jobs, but just 4 in 10 young people report that they are “very satisfied” with their current job. Employers have the most room to improve job satisfaction among their young high school-educated workers and LGBTQ+ workers, who report significantly lower job satisfaction than non-LGBTQ+ workers.

### How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your current job?<sup>1</sup>



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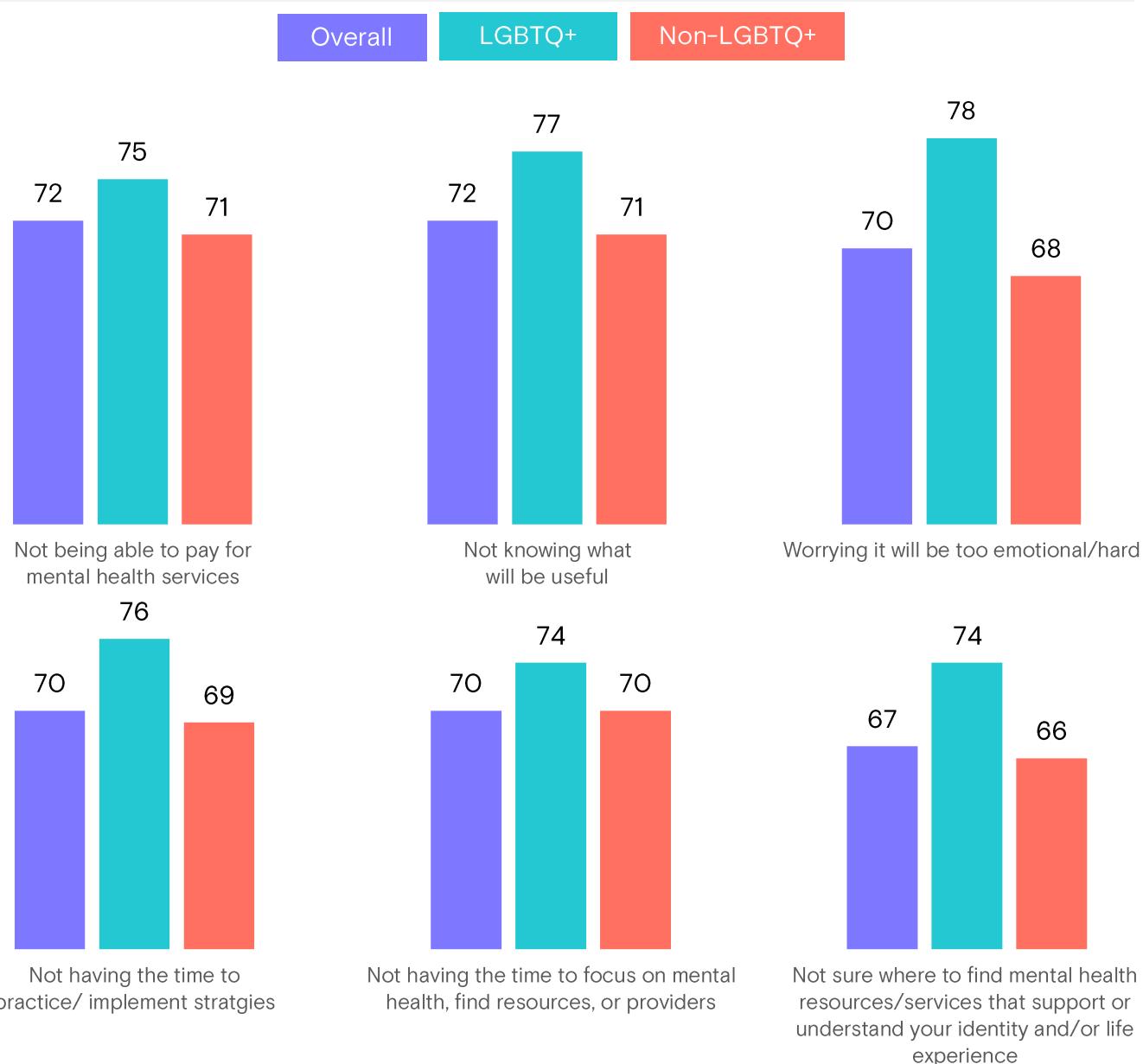
# ACCESS AND BARRIERS TO MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES AT WORK

## LGBTQ+ young people face the most obstacles to mental health resource access

Cost is the leading barrier, with nearly 3 in 4 young people reporting being unable to afford mental health resources or supports. But knowing where to look, giving yourself the space and time to take care of your mental health, and believing that the resources available will speak to your specific life experience are nearly just as much of a barrier – most of all among LGBTQ+ young people. Employers have the opportunity to provide workplace mental health resources and create a culture that tells employees their mental health is a priority.

### When it comes to accessing mental health services, how big of a barrier is this for you?

% who say this is a barrier



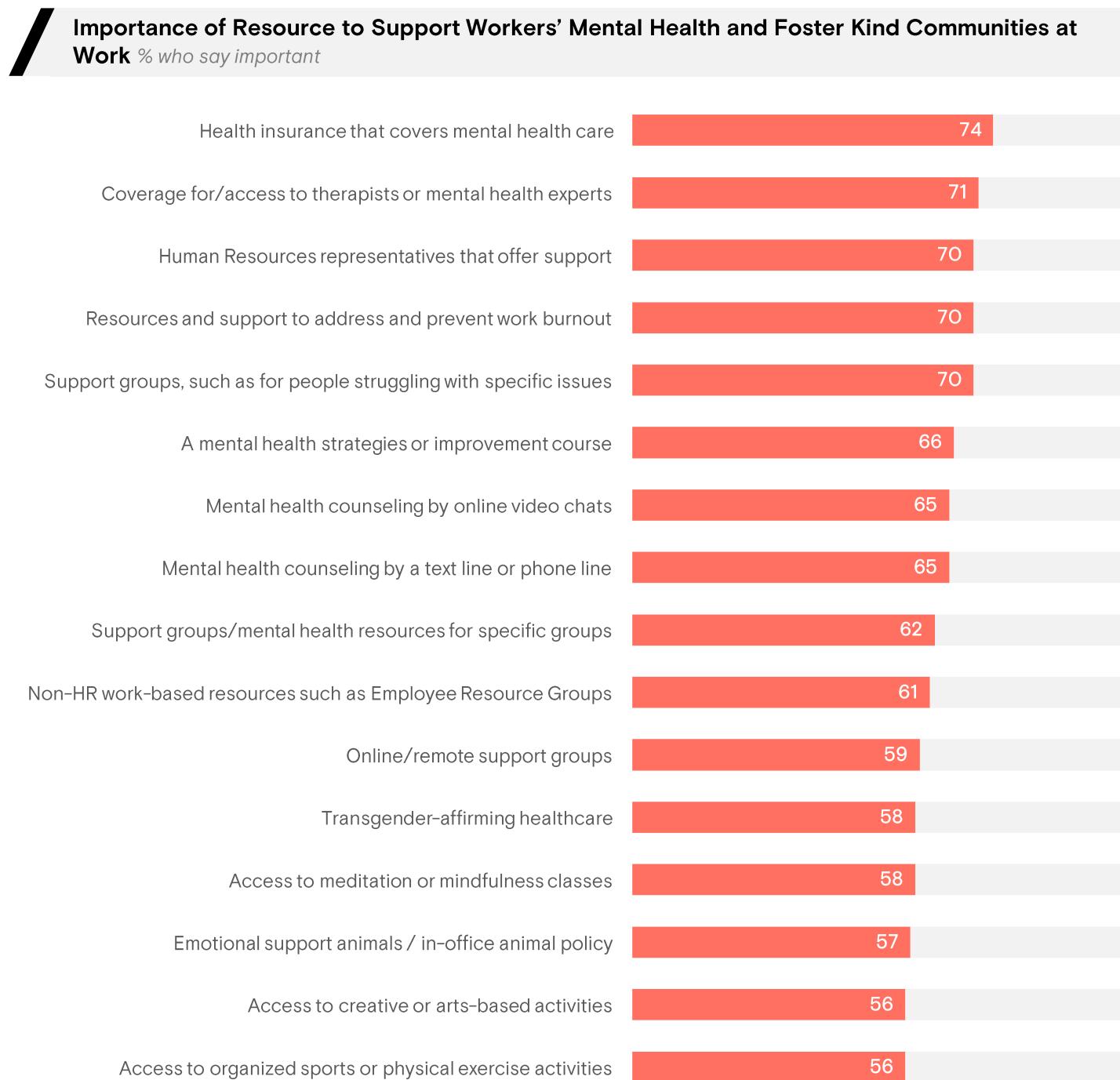
## Few young people say their workplaces provide mental health resources

Only 1 in 3 young workers' health care insurance covers mental health care. Just 1 in 4 feel they have support from general HR professionals or specialized mental health care professionals. Fewer still enjoy access to a long list of important (and often cost effective) measures employers could provide to help their employees work on their mental health on an ongoing basis. Young people who do receive mental health resources at work give their employers top marks.

Workplace Mental Health Resource Availability and Satisfaction <sup>1</sup>	% Say Resource Definitely Available at Workplace	% Satisfied with Workplace Resource
Health insurance that covers mental health care	29	83
Human Resources representatives that offer support	26	82
Coverage for/access to therapists or mental health experts	24	82
Resources and support to address and prevent work burnout	22	82
Access to organized sports or physical exercise activities	21	84
Mental health counseling by a text line or phone line	20	79
Emotional support animals/in-office animal policy	20	82
Access to creative or arts-based activities	19	80
Support groups, such as for people struggling with specific issues	19	79
Mental health counseling by online video chats	19	79
Online/remote support groups	18	79
Support groups or mental health care resources for specific groups	18	76
A mental health strategies or improvement course	17	77
Access to meditation or mindfulness classes	17	78
Non-HR work-based resources that offer support	16	81
Transgender-affirming healthcare coverage*	24	76

## Young people expect employers to invest in mental health and kindness

Young people understand a workplace's ability to support its employees' mental health and foster kind communities as inextricably linked to it providing paid mental health resources. If employers are going to make good on their word to support mental health and kindness, young people expect them to make meaningful investments.



## Young people know supporting mental health is about understanding, empathy, and respect

### What is the most important thing your employer could do or understand about you to support your mental health more?<sup>1</sup>

Working me to the limit will only produce bad quality work. If they want the most out of me, then they need to understand that I am human and need breaks and time away from work.

- Cis Man, Latinx, 18-24

They could practice a bit more trust and do less micromanaging. Most people can deliver, but when they're being micromanaged, they end up over-thinking everything out of performance anxiety. It's reasonable to ask for updates, but let the employees breathe.

- Cis Woman, AAPI, 25-29

It would be nice if managers could spend time in the entry level area to find out what is causing stress.

- Cis Woman, White, 25-29

I would love to have an employer take more time to understand the ups and downs of mental health and understand that it is not a linear progression or idea.

- Cis Woman, Black, 18-24

Empathize with me. Check in on me more often, ask me questions like 'Hey how are you? Is everything okay? How is the wife and kids?' Also compliments on my performance would be nice.

- Cis Man, White, 18-24

Poor mental health means a poor worker, if you fix that you have a better employee who is now more likely to be loyal to the company because you've helped them in a real way. - Trans/Non-binary Youth, Latinx, 18-24

### What other resources would you like to see a workplace provide to support employees' mental health and foster kind communities at work?

Flexible work hours for parents to young children.

- Cis Woman, Black, 18-24

A mental health timeout space where we can go for 10 or 15 minutes no questions asked if we're having an especially tough day.

- Cis Woman, White, 25-29

Workshops that break down the myths and stigmas of seeking help and promote equitable opportunities for receiving mental health care.

- Trans/Non-binary Youth, Black/Latinx, 18-24

One where there's some kind of relaxation therapy or breathing relaxations to relieve stress.

- Cis Man, Latinx, 25-29

Paid personal days branded as personal or mental health. Make it clear. Stop guiltizing employees if they aren't physically ill before they become physically ill - or fall deeper into depression, addiction, abuse.

- Cis Woman, White, 25-29

I would like to see a counseling department for our workplace, especially for coping with loss or grief.

- Cis Man, Latinx, 18-24

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# FOSTERING KIND COMMUNITIES AND SUPPORTING MENTAL HEALTH AT WORK

## 1 in 4 young people have experienced unkind behavior at work

With so many employed young people having faced upsetting workplace interactions, it is of the highest importance to foster more kindness in the workplace. Whether through explicit acts of abuse or things done out of carelessness or thoughtlessness that hurt all the same, the level of harm being experienced in the workplace by young people shows employers have room to grow and proactive actions to take to better their work communities.

### Have you experienced any of the following workplace challenges within your workplace?<sup>1</sup>

Lack of adequate staffing 28

Unkind behavior\* 25

Inadequate pay 24

No time off when needed 22

Not enough professional development or training 22

Micromanaging 18

Pay inequity or unfair differences in pay between coworkers 17

Harrassment 14

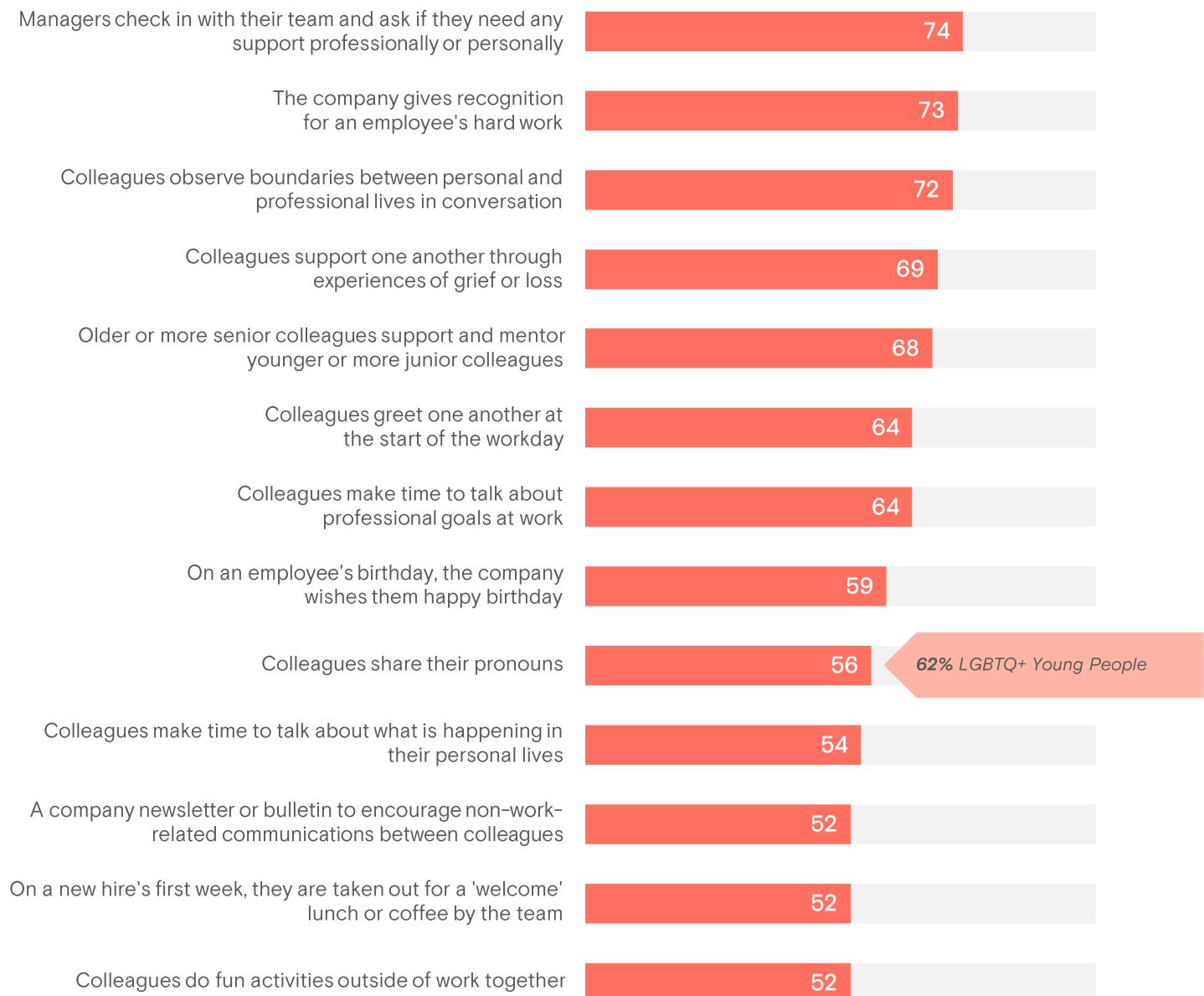
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## Fostering kind workplaces is about taking action and investing in staff

Improving mental health and fostering kindness at work isn't just about expensive investments – there are many easy and impactful actions that employers, managers, and colleagues alike can take to do their part in creating positive work environments for all. A simple check-in to make sure everything is okay – especially when you know someone is going through a hard time at work or off the clock – or taking the time to acknowledge successes and accomplishments will go a long way. At the end of the day, fostering kind workplaces is about showing up, validating, being there for, and investing in your coworkers.

### How important are the following experiences to fostering kindness at work?

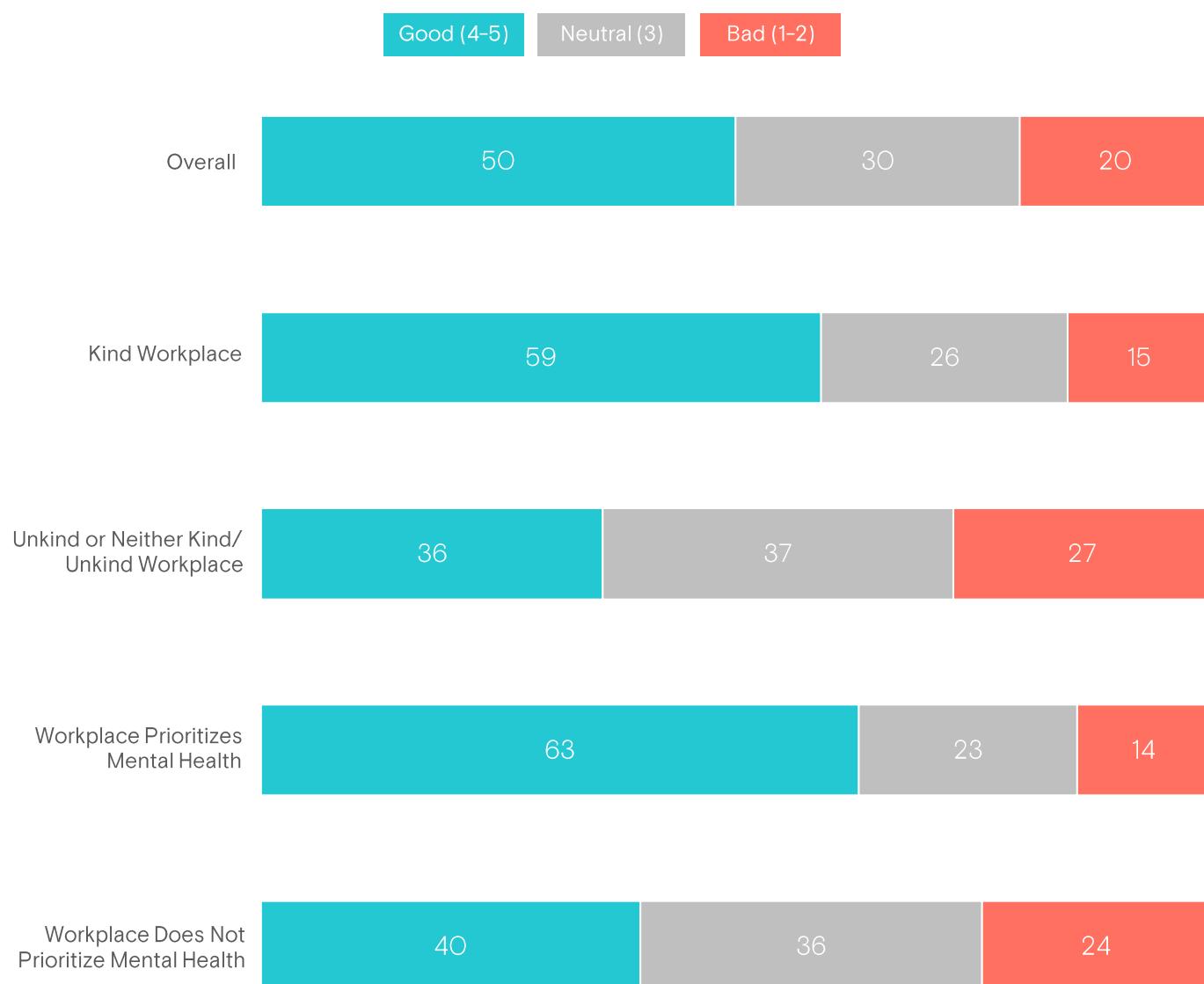
% who say *important*



## Only half of young workers report a good work-life balance, but there is a correlation between balance and employer care for kindness and mental health

Only half of all young workers say they have a “good” work-life balance and nearly 1 in 5 report their work-life balance as “bad”. Those in workplaces where mental health is a strong priority are nearly twice as likely to say that they have a “good” work-life balance compared to those who say mental health is not a priority in their workplace.

### Which of the following would you say best describes your current work-life balance?<sup>1</sup>



## Young people want their workplaces to cultivate a strong sense of community

### What words or phrases would you use to describe the values of your ideal workplace?

Ideally, my workplace would be one that **cares more about the employees than it does about profit.**

– Cis Man, Latinx, 18-24

Somewhere I feel **comfortable to speak and share my ideas** and somewhere I feel **safe making mistakes or asking questions.** – Cis Woman, White, 18-24

My ideal workplace would understand that **an emotionally and physically healthy worker is the best type of worker.** **An overworked worker will eventually get burnt out and quit** or start working less, so not only is this great for the workers, but it's also great for the employers.

– Cis Woman, AAPI, 25-29

My ideal workplace would **value their employee's lives outside of work and aim not to intrude** on that time. Then people would have the **time to do hobbies, see family/friends, and take care of their health.**

– Cis Woman, White, 25-29

Ideally, I would work for a **company that is compassionate** to their employees and **understands the limitations of productivity in a given day.** Previous companies I have worked for only care about the end of day numbers and in turn working for them left me feeling anxious most days.

– Cis Man, Latinx, 25-29

### What information would you look for in a job description or posting to figure out if a workplace is kind?

I look at **reviews.** I see **how many people of color they have on the work force.** I see how the **health expectation is and the health benefits.** I need to see how the history of the workplace is and **how management treats their employees.**

– Cis Woman, Black, 25-29

I would **look for a team player type of atmosphere to figure out if a workplace is kind.** Team player atmospheres **have to work together as a team in order to succeed on certain tasks** and therefore, in a way when working as a team, people are usually obligated to be kind to one another. – Cis Woman, White, 25-29

They are **committed to providing a safe and inclusive workplace environment.** – Cis Man, Latinx, 25-29

I would **look at their community areas** and **how much paid time off they offer** since the more stressed their employees are, the less kind they will likely be.

– Cis Man, Latinx, 18-24

**Work life balance, cultural talking points, work family connections, advancement opportunities, and timeframe of skills to be learned.**

– Cis Man, White, 25-29

**General guidelines/expectations** (or lack thereof) for **how an employee should behave when interacting with co-workers** and how repeated infractions may be dealt with.

– Trans/Non-binary Youth, Latinx, 18-24

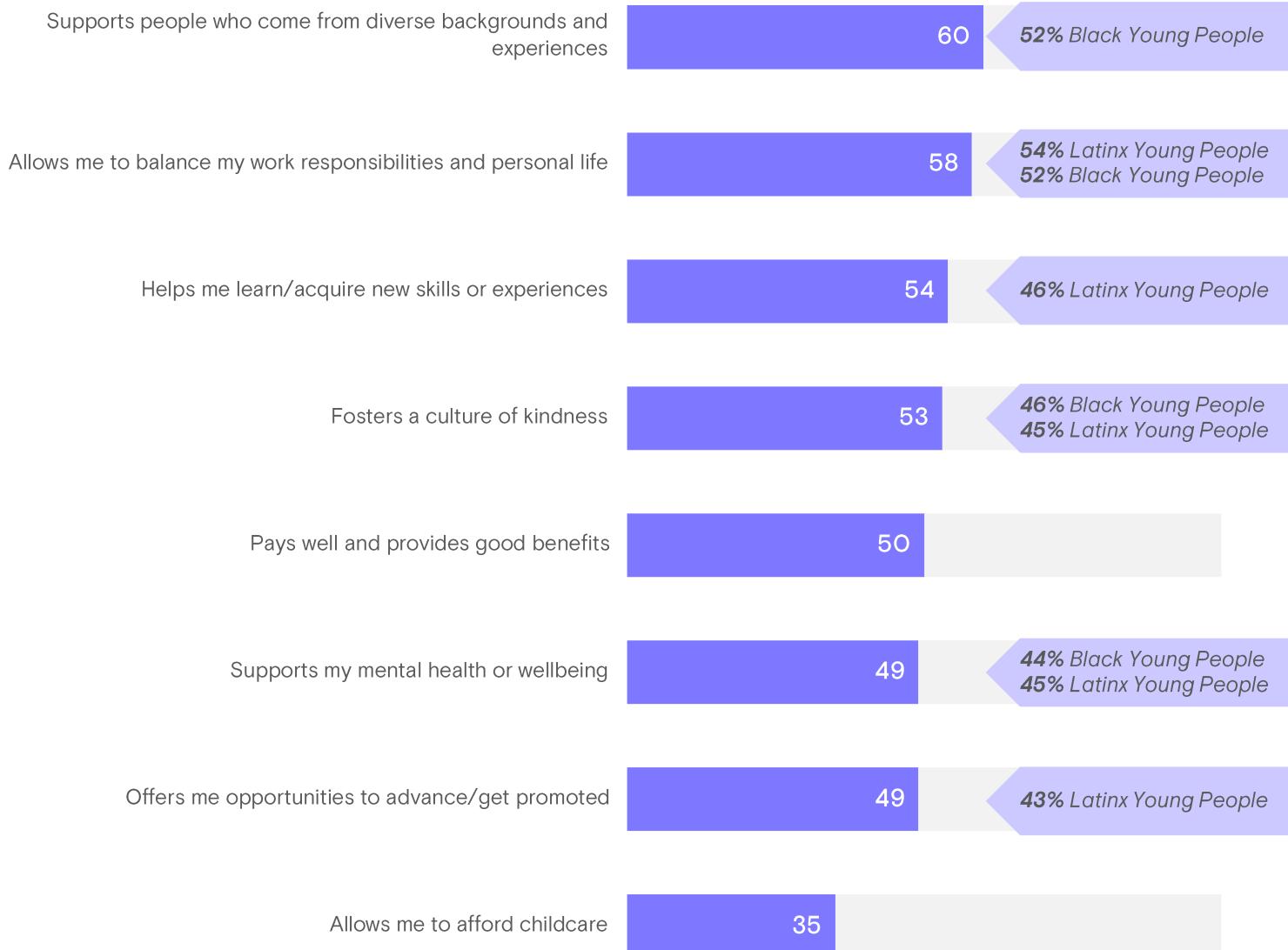
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# RETENTION AND RECRUITMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN TODAY'S WORKFORCE

## More than half of young people say their job isn't delivering on the things that matter most to them

Employers focused on retention should note that only about half of young people employed today say their current employer is providing meaningful resources and experiences that encourage them to stay at their jobs.

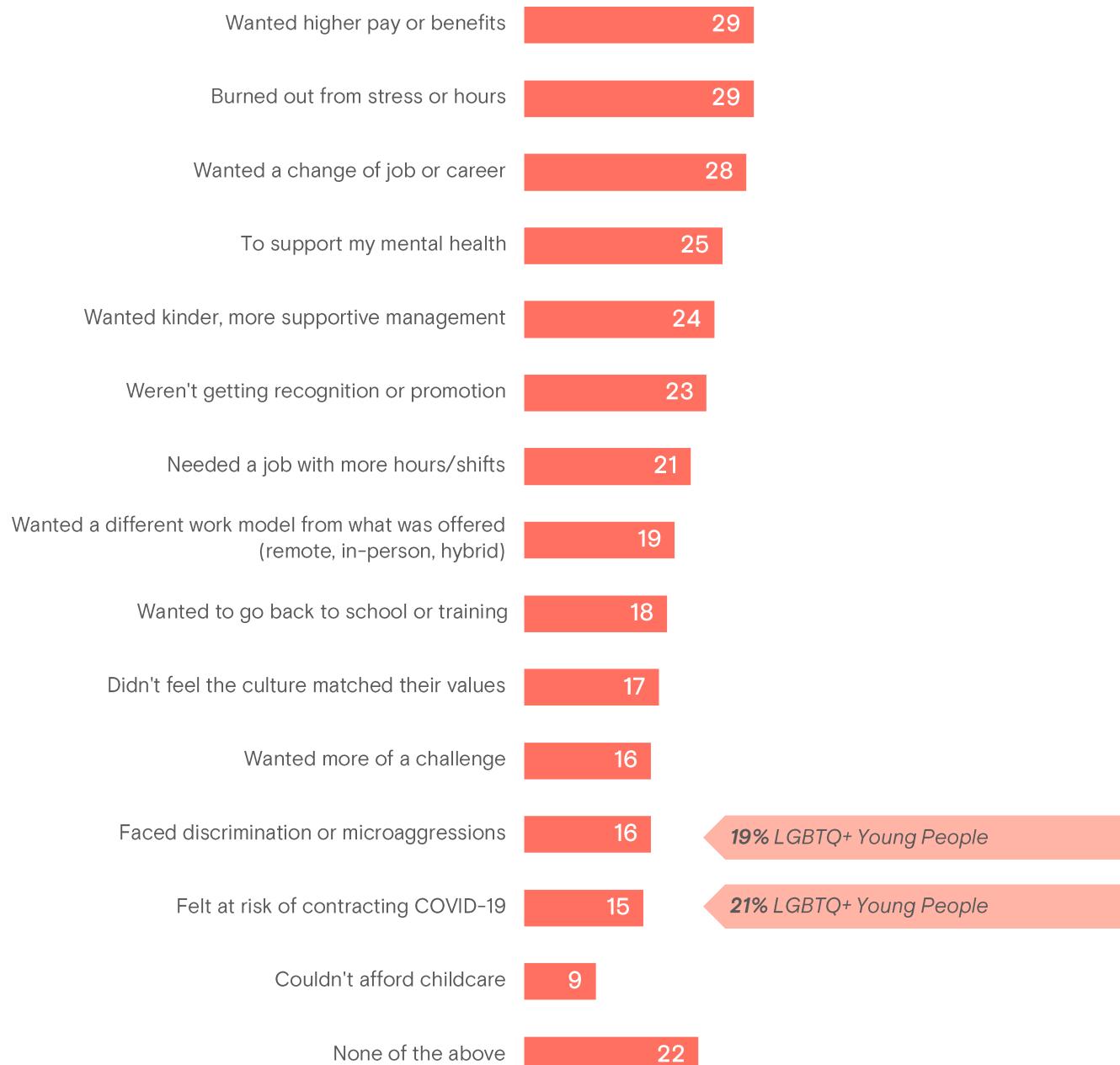
### Does your current job do any of the following?<sup>1</sup>



## More than 1 in 3 young people have quit a job in the past to protect their mental wellbeing

Young people are just as likely to leave a job for more money as they are to quit in order to protect their mental wellbeing. 1 in 3 have left or quit a job for higher pay or for a change, but 1 in 3 have quit to prevent burnout, and at least 1 in 4 have quit because they needed more support for their mental health or because they wanted a kinder management style.

### Have you ever left or quit a job for any of the following reasons?<sup>1</sup>



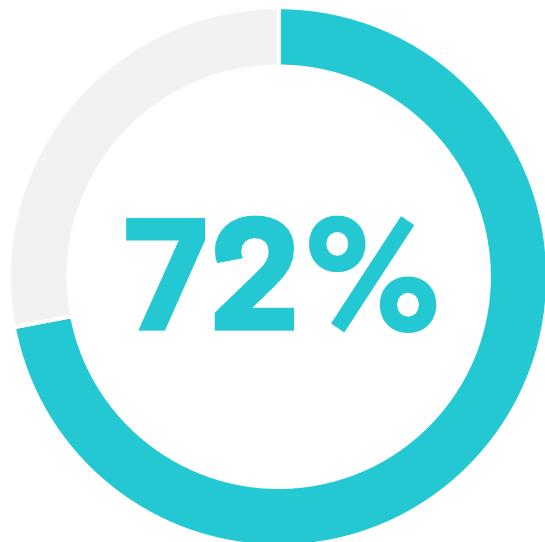
## Young people are weighing a workplace's commitment to mental health and kindness in their job searches

To attract talented candidates, employers must explicitly name their commitment to fostering working communities that support mental health and are kind. Failure to do so could mean losing out on half of the pool of potential candidates.

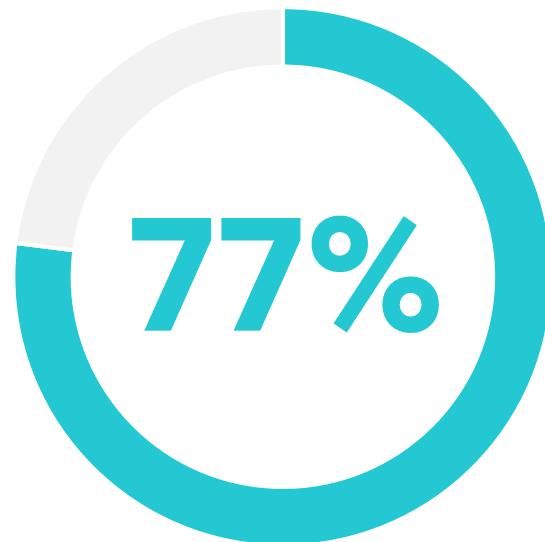
Employers who've made it their business to value employee mental health would be well-served by expressly naming it – or else risk losing out on valuable candidates. More than 7 in 10 people under 30 say they would be more likely to apply to a job posting where “supporting employee mental health” was named in the description.

Imagine you came across a job opening that you were interested in applying for, and on the posting, it listed **Supporting employee mental health** or **Kindness** as an important value of the company. Would seeing this make you more or less likely to apply for the job?

“Supporting employee mental health”



“Kindness”



*% more likely to apply*

THIS  
WAY//

# YOUNG PEOPLE'S PANDEMIC WORKING EXPERIENCES

## The last two years have been hard on all of us; young workers are no exception

Around 1 in 3 had their hours cut back, 1 in 4 were laid off or moved back in with their families, and almost 1 in 5 took a salary cut. In some ways, young people experienced the negative impacts of COVID-19 similarly—especially regarding lay-offs and pay-cuts. But in other ways the lives of LGBTQ+ young people were most uprooted.

LGBTQ+ young workers reported much higher concerns of getting sick from COVID-19 at work: 21% of LGBTQ+ workers felt at risk of contracting COVID-19 at work, compared to 13% of non-LGBTQ+ workers. It is perhaps then no surprise that this group was most likely to resign or quit and move back in with their family in the last two years.

### In the past 2 years, which of the following have you experienced?

Among those who report having been negatively impacted by COVID-19

Stayed working in person

35

Reduced hours

32

Resigned or quit a job

29

35% LGBTQ+ Young People

Moved back in with family

21

25% LGBTQ+ Young People

Laid off by employer

19

Reduced salary

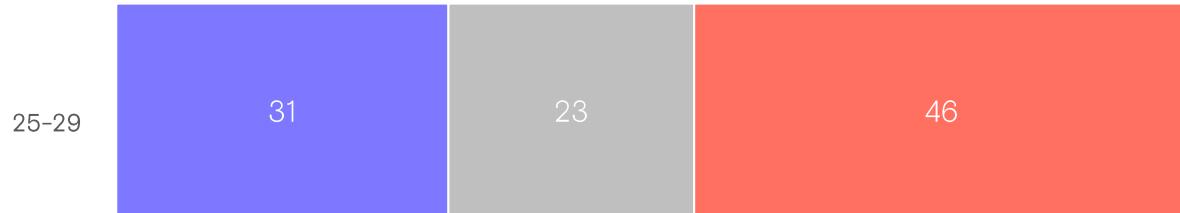
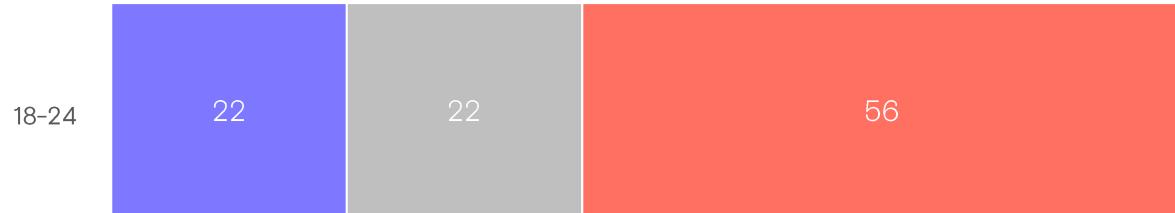
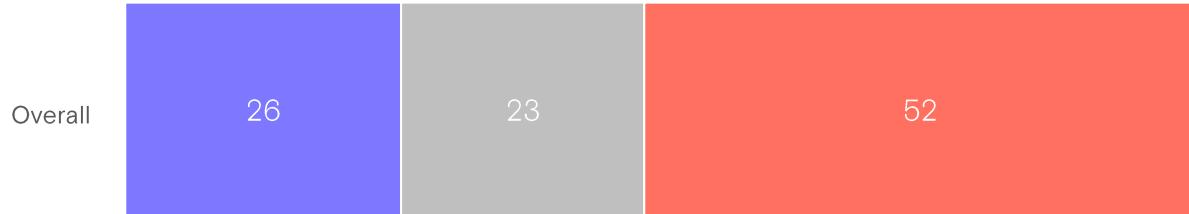
16

## Even as remote work has become more common, a majority of young people are exclusively working in person

Only a quarter of young people work exclusively from home. For nearly all groups – particularly those ages 18 to 24 – working in-person remains the norm.

Are you currently working from home/remotely or are you working in-person?<sup>1</sup>

Only Work from Home/Remotely      Sometimes Work from Home/Remotely      Only In-person Work



## Young people want to work in places that are up-to-date on supporting worker health and safety

Over the course of the pandemic, some employers introduced policies to improve flexibility and mental health resources. Young people want these policies to be fixtures of their working experience longer-term. Flexible hours, paid sick leave, and mental health resources are the three most important workplace benefits for young people. When employees show up to work, these issues don't just disappear. Young people want their employers to keep up with and consider the environments in which they live when thinking about employee health and safety.

### Thinking about the possibility of going back to work in-person, what is the most important thing your employer would need to do or understand to help you make that transition successfully?

**Extra benefits to compensate for the lost time commuting.** – Cis Man, Latinx, 18-24

My employer would need to let everyone know all the **safety procedures that are set in place** and **what they are doing to keep everyone socially distant**. They would also need to **make everybody take a Covid-19 test** to be sure that they are negative so that they aren't passing it on. If anyone develops symptoms, they should be **notifying everyone who has come in contact with that person.** – Cis Woman, White, 25-29

I will need to **keep the flexibility that working at home gave me** and that **more breaks are needed to avoid burnout and work effectively.** – Cis Man, Latinx, 18-24

**Take into account that everybody forgot how to socialize**, so **promote social activities** would be great. – Cis Woman, White, 25-29

I really **wouldn't like to go back to office working unless there was a good reason** it was necessary. – Transgender/Non-binary Youth, White, 25-29

### What other COVID-19 policies would you like to see when looking for a job?

**Available testing** to anyone who needs it and **paid sick leave.** – Cis Woman, Black, 18-24

A concerted effort to **keep employees protected during the pandemic.** – Transgender/Non-binary Youth, White, 18-24

It's important to have a **Covid fund for employees who end up catching Covid to support them while they are out since no one recovers at the same rate.** – Cis Woman, White, 25-29

**Temperature checks, daily SMS messages** on how you're feeling. – Cis Man, Latinx, 18-24

Some other Covid-19 policies I would look for is showing a **green-card symptoms check** in the morning. – Cis Man, AAPI, 18-24

## Young people feel there's been little follow through on meaningful changes at work during the pandemic

The pandemic upended working lives, but in many ways did nothing to change key elements of work. A majority of workers under 30 said their employers made no meaningful changes to look after the mental health of their employees, foster a kinder work environment, or implement policies to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion, even among kind communities.

Over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, has your employer become more or less focused on the following?<sup>1</sup>

More Focused

No Change

Less Focused

### Physical health care of employees

### Mental health care of employees

38

48

13

Overall

33

53

14

46

45

9

Kind Workplace

40

49

10

27

54

20

Unkind or Neither Kind/Unkind Workplace

23

59

18

46

43

11

Workplace Prioritizes Mental Health

43

46

10

32

53

16

Workplace Does Not Prioritize Mental Health

25

59

16

### Fostering a kind work culture for employees

### Diversity, equity, and inclusion

28

56

16

Overall

27

60

14

34

54

12

Kind Workplace

32

58

10

19

60

22

Unkind or Neither Kind/Unkind Workplace

18

62

20

36

52

12

Workplace Prioritizes Mental Health

35

57

8

22

59

19

Workplace Does Not Prioritize Mental Health

20

62

18

## RESOURCES

The following resources and calls to action include several ways that employers and employees can support their mental health and that of those around them. Born This Way Foundation and Indeed applaud all individuals, workplaces, and communities who work tirelessly to support and uplift young people, and people young at heart, everyday.

**Young people say that teamwork, checking in, and supportive feedback are all ways to support their mental wellness at work.**

### Be There Certificate

Earning a [Be There Certificate](#) can help managers do just that for their teams. This online mental health course is free, self-paced, interactive, available in English, French, and Spanish, and teaches young people (and anyone!) how to recognize signs of someone struggling, understand their role, and learn how to connect them to the help they need and deserve. Created by Jack.org in partnership with Born This Way Foundation, the Be There Certificate is mental health education for all. Learn more and earn your certificate at [BeThereCertificate.org](#).

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**Cost is the leading barrier to mental health resource access. Employers can connect employees to free and accessible resources, including:**



Please Stay is a platform, created by Born This Way Foundation and Find Your Anchor, where anyone can find resources to support their mental health, evidence-based self-care tips, and a #PleaseStayPledge you can take, promising to stay. Learn more at [pleasestay.us](#).



[Find A Helpline](#) is an online global directory that connects everyone with free, confidential support from a real human over the phone, text, or webchat. Learn more at [bekind.findahelpline.com](#).

**Employees put the onus on their direct manager to show kindness, and most say everyone from the executive level, to coworkers, and clients also have a responsibility to help foster kindness in any working environment.**



Employers can foster kindness at work by directing their teams to [Channel Kindness](#), a digital platform that invites everyone to put compassion into action through community engagement and storytelling. Find and share stories of kindness, bravery, hope, and community at [ChannelKindness.org](#).

**Young people who receive mental health resources at work give their employers top marks.**

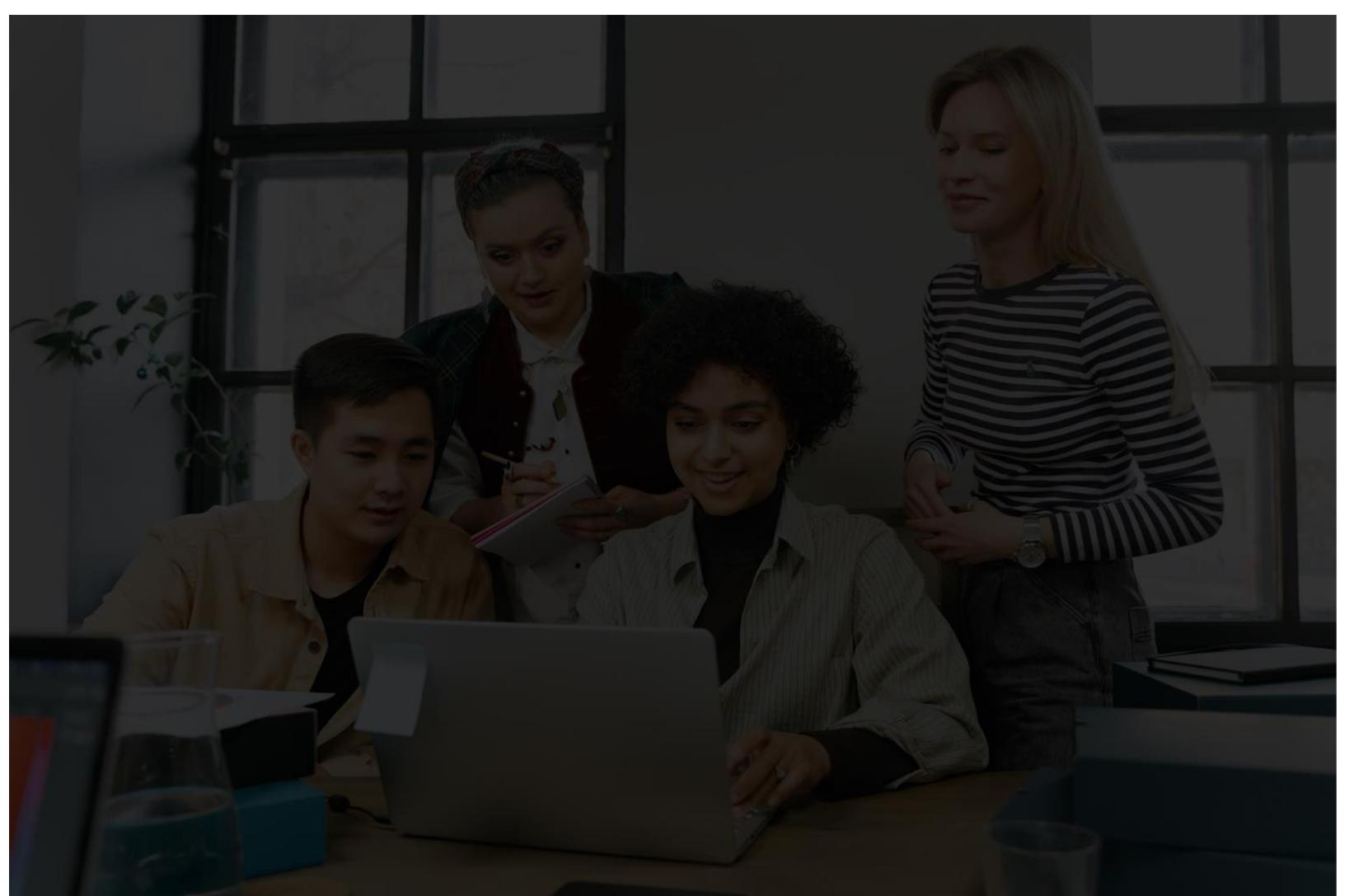
### Five Ways To Improve Employee Mental Health\*

1. Train your managers to promote health and wellbeing.
2. Increase employees' options for where, when, and how they work.
3. Reexamine health insurance policies with a focus on employee mental health.
4. Listen to what your employees need and use their feedback to evolve.
5. Take a critical look at equity, diversity, and inclusion policies.

*Kindly provided by the American Psychological Association, which offers science-backed recommendations for [mental health excellence in the workplace](#).*

**Check out these resources from Indeed:**

- [DEI guide](#): To foster diversity, inclusion, and a sense of belonging in your workplace.
- [LEAD](#): For employers to find resources, insights, and tools to lead their teams.
- [Career Guide](#): For job seekers to find advice on how to search for a job, write your resume and cover letter, ace your interviews, start your new job, and choose a career path.

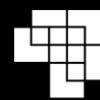


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