



American Red Cross
Training Services

Barriers to Accessing Swim Lessons and Water Safety Information for American Indian and Alaska Native Persons

Project conducted by the
American Red Cross

With financial and technical support from the
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and
National Network of Public Health Institutes

Project Overview

- Beginning in October 2022 through July 2023, the American Red Cross examined access to drowning prevention and swim lesson programs for American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) peoples who historically are at higher risk for drowning.
- Funding for this initiative was provided to the National Network of Public Health Institutes (NNPHI) through a Cooperative Agreement with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC – 6 NU38OT000303-03-01, CFDA 93.421). NNPHI and the Red Cross collaborated with the CDC's National Center for Injury Prevention and Control on this initiative.
- This report contains the findings of this project.
- The findings of this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



Background

- From December 2020 through July 2021, the Red Cross undertook a two-phased project:
 - Phase 1 examined barriers to accessing swim lessons and water safety information for certain populations at higher risk of drowning, including:
 - Children and youth 0 to 19 years of age
 - Black and African American (AA) persons
 - AI/AN persons
 - Phase 2 examined at what developmentally appropriate ages young children may acquire unsupported swim skills through group swim lessons.
 - This phase was intended to specifically include Black and African American, American Indian(AI) or Alaska Native (AN), and Hispanic/Latino children, but no AI/AN children were recruited.



Background *Continued*

- For Phase 1, online surveys were developed, pilot tested and deployed for each of the following groups:
 - Parents/Caregivers who had children between the ages of 1 and 19 years
 - Teens between the ages of 13 and 19 years
 - Training providers who delivered swim lessons
- Because of known disparities, oversampling from Black or AA and AI or AN populations ensured that respondents from demographic groups at highest risk of drowning were well represented.
- The full technical report, *Barriers to Accessing Swim Lessons and Water Safety Information*, was provided to the CDC and NNPHI in July 2021.
 - A [link to the report](#) is available at [redcross.org/science](https://www.redcross.org/science) in Recent Research.



Background *Continued*

Among AI/AN survey respondents, the following were identified as primary barriers:

- Related to access and convenience:
 - **Affordability** (21%* Caregivers, 16%* Teens)
 - **Transportation** (16%* Caregivers, 16%* Teens) and nearby pool access (16%* Caregivers, 11% Teens)
 - **Conflicts** with other activities (14% Caregivers, 15%* Teens) or Caregiver(s) work schedule (16%* Caregivers, 13% Teens)
- Related to interest and motivation:
 - **Being too busy** (14%* Caregivers, 28% Teens)
 - **Having other resources** (e.g., family, neighbors) who can teach the child/self to swim (18%* Caregivers, 21%* Teens)
 - **Not perceiving that the child/self is at risk of drowning** (10% Caregivers, 17% Teens) or **not perceiving lessons as a priority** (11%* Caregivers, 14%* Teens)
- In addition, AI/AN respondents indicated that a more welcoming environment and changing/locker room accommodations would aid enrollment.

*Indicates that this racial or ethnic group had the highest percentage of respondents indicating this barrier



Background *Continued*

- For Phase 2, data were obtained through observational skills assessments during one session of in-person group swim lessons at two separate locations. The intention was to include AI/AN children.
- Due to COVID-19 pandemic protocols, the project sites were limited to Florida: Miami-Dade and Indian River counties. Data was not able to be collected on AI/AN populations due to the absence of the demographic in either community.
- The full technical report, Evaluating Water Competency Skill Attainment for Children, was provided to the CDC and NNPHI in July 2021. A [link to the report](#) is available at [redcross.org/science](https://www.redcross.org/science) in Recent Research.



Background *Continued*

- Continuation funding was provided to apply lessons learned and to scale the Phase 2 project in 2021/22 by:
 - Increasing the water competency components assessed from 5 to 9.
 - Increasing the number of swim lessons each child received from 4–8 to 12–24.
 - Engaging different states of the U.S. (El Centro, CA; Prince George's County, MD; and Atlanta, GA).
 - Surveying caregivers pre- and post-intervention about their motivations and expectations related to enrolling their young children in swim lessons and their knowledge about water safety.



Justification for Expanded Assessment

- As mentioned previously, this phase was intended to specifically include AI/AN families. During the previous project phases, the team was unable to locate a program for children 1 to 5 years of age that was operational during the project period.
- This was partly due to surges in the COVID-19 pandemic that resulted in continuation of safety protocols and program closures, but the team believed that there may be additional barriers related to access to swim lessons for AI/AN peoples that should be explored.
- Continuation funding was provided to explore these barriers specific to AI/AN persons. The findings of this exploration are provided in this technical report.



The Approach



Purpose



The American Red Cross, in collaboration with the NNPHI, CDC, and Indiana University, engaged with Southpaw Insights (SPI), a market research firm, to seek to understand barriers to swim lessons and water safety education for AI/AN persons and water by:



1

Understanding the relationship between the AI/AN community and water.

2

Providing insights on exposure and access to water among AI/AN peoples.

3

Capturing the experiences of water safety education programs for AI/AN peoples.



Methodology - Survey



- SPI conducted a 20-minute online survey between 2/27/2023 to 5/9/2023, specifically for a sample of AI/AN persons aged 13 and above.
 - The survey was written by Red Cross and NNPHI with assistance from CDC and Southpaw Insights. It was programmed in Qualtrics by NNPHI.
- Recruiting was carried out with assistance from Echo, the Red Cross, and Debbie Atuk, an AI/AN subject matter expert.
 - Recruiting involved using Echo's community of 20,000 researchers and implementing a snowball strategy that included network referrals.
 - Additionally, social media ads were placed on Facebook and Instagram to direct potential respondents to the survey.
 - It is important to note that recruiting efforts did *not* specifically seek out swim facilities or pools.
- Recruiting AI/AN people for market research presents distinctive challenges due to historical mistrust, cultural differences, language barriers, and data misuse concerns.
 - To address these obstacles, SPI collaborated with Echo and Debbie Atuk to establish trust, forge partnerships with tribal communities and colleges, and implement culturally sensitive recruitment strategies and language adaptation.



Methodology – In-Depth Interviews

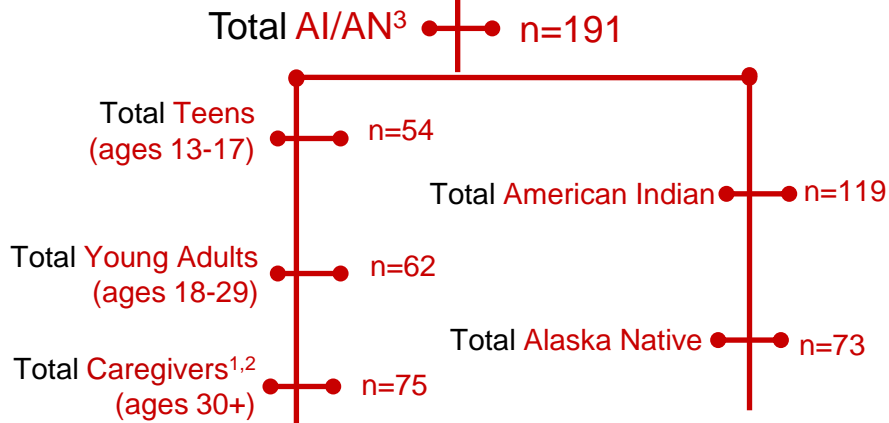


- SPI also conducted 20, 30-minute, one-on-one in-depth virtual interviews (IDIs) with Teens, Young Adults, and Parents/Caregivers. The interviews were fielded in April and May of 2023 and recruited from the pool of respondents from the quantitative survey.
- A detailed interview guide was created prior to conducting the interviews. During the interview process, there were some alterations, builds and deep dives that happened during the natural flow of an interview. These included asking the following questions:
 - What is your access to bodies of water like where you live now and where you grew up?
 - Is there anything related to your upbringing as a Native American that would restrict your time in the water?
 - Can you share any positive or negative experiences when you think about your community in and around water?
 - What role do you think alcohol might play in water safety?
 - Is there a difference between how you interact with water and how the next generation of kids interact with it?
 - Tell me about that. Is there anything else that came up for you regarding the intersection of Native identity and water?

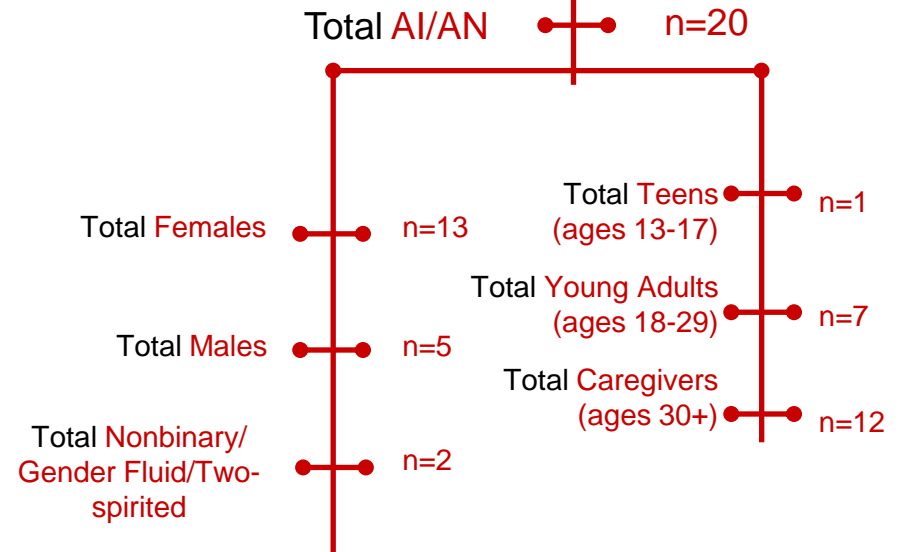


SAMPLE SIZES

Quantitative



Qualitative



Notes:

1. For simplicity, parents/guardians/caregivers are referenced as “Caregivers” throughout this report. Findings labeled “Caregivers” indicate results regarding themselves. Findings shown based on the age of their children indicate results regarding their children.
2. Caregivers who are Young Adults are counted as Young Adults. Their caregiver experience is included in the section of findings related to their children.
3. One respondent identifies as both AI and AN.

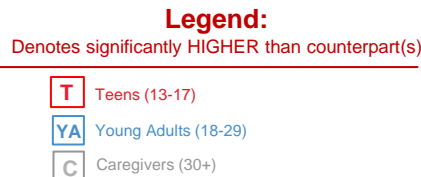


Statistical Testing

All statistical testing was performed using a t-test and at the 95% confidence level. Significance is denoted in the following way:

Next to the number that has a significant difference, there is an icon of the group that is statistically greater (as shown on the legend on each slide).

As an example, for this report, teens are compared to caregivers.



In this example shown here, since this bar in the graph has a C, teens are significantly more likely at 95% confidence to say that they swim in semi-private pools compared to caregivers.



Note: Due to the overrepresentation of AN in younger age groups (Teens) and underrepresentation of AN in older age groups (Young Adults and Caregivers), and vice versa for AI, differences shown by age group may also be attributed to AI vs. AN differences.

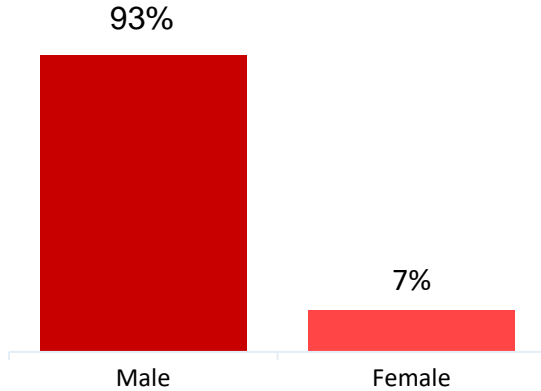


Demographics



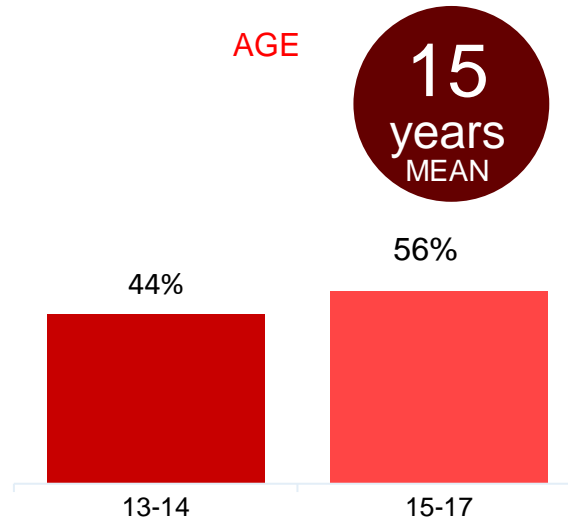
Teenager Demographic Profile

GENDER



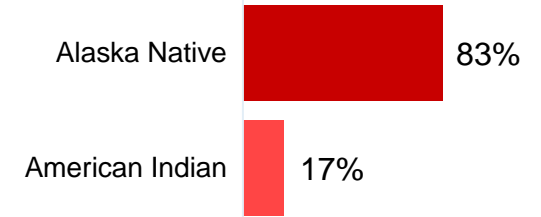
Q9: Which of the following do you identify as:
0% selected non-binary, two spirit, and transgender

AGE



Q5: What is your age?

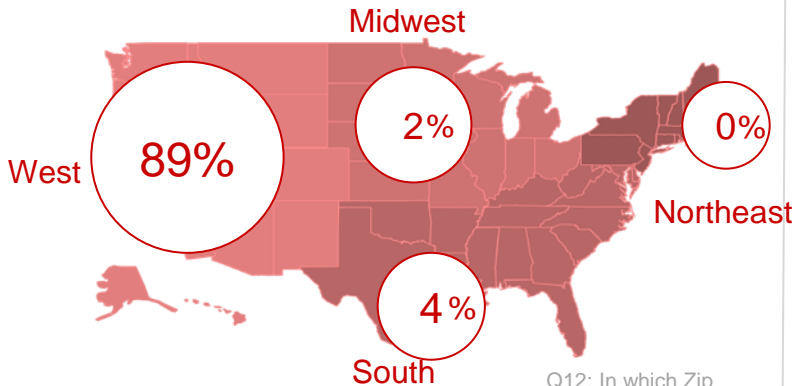
RACE/ETHNICITY



Q1: What race/ethnicity do you consider yourself?
Q4: Do you consider yourself to be part of the Hispanic population (Hispanic/Spanish/Latino descent)?

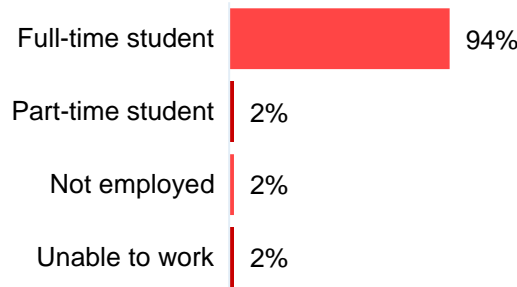
0% selected white, Black, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, Asian-American, other, or Hispanic

REGION



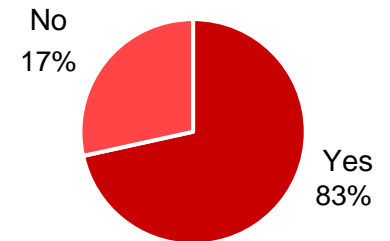
Q12: In which Zip code do you reside?
0% selected retired, work full-time, and prefer not to answer
5% selected none

EMPLOYMENT STATUS



Q15: Which of the following best describes you?
0% selected retired, work full-time, and prefer not to answer

TRIBE AFFILIATION



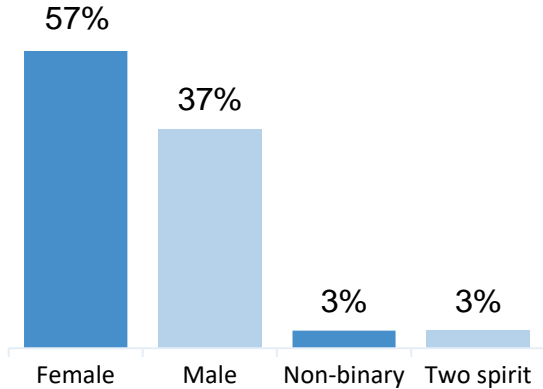
Q2: You selected American Indian or Alaska Native. Are you enrolled or affiliated with a federally or state recognized tribe(s)?



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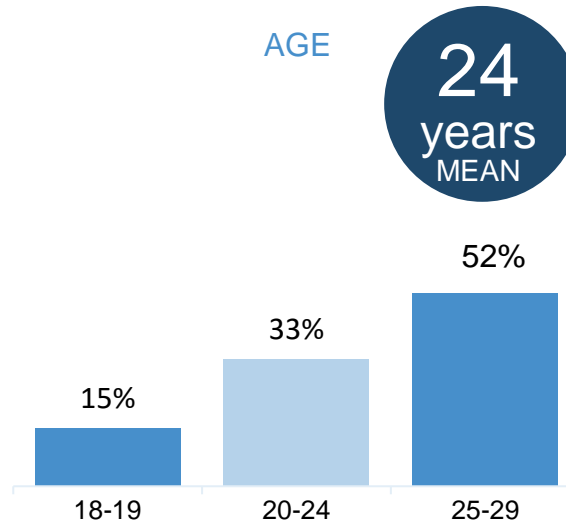
Young Adult Demographic Profile

GENDER



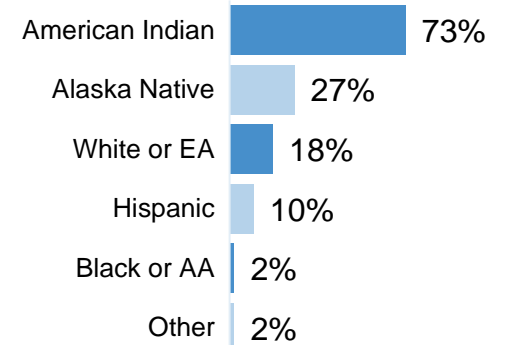
Q9: Which of the following do you identify as:
0% selected transgender

AGE



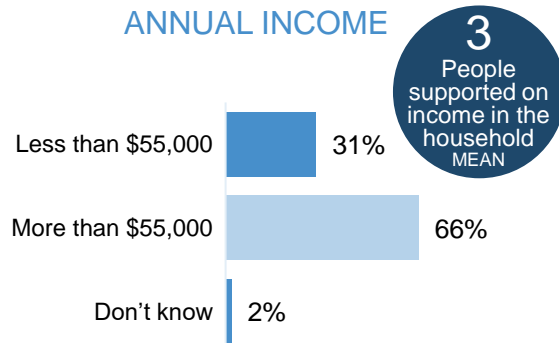
Q5: What is your age?

RACE/ETHNICITY



Q1: What race/ethnicity do you consider yourself?
Q4: Do you consider yourself to be part of the Hispanic population (Hispanic/Spanish/Latino descent)?
2% chose prefer not to answer

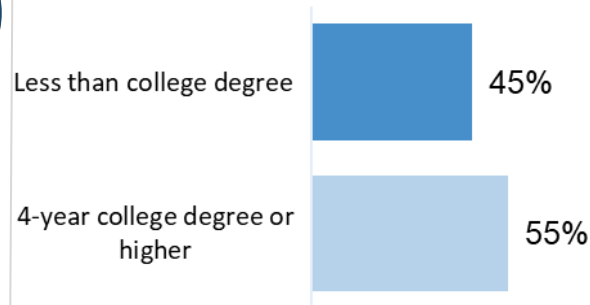
ANNUAL INCOME



Q10: Which of the following includes your TOTAL household income before taxes in 2021?
1% chose prefer not to answer

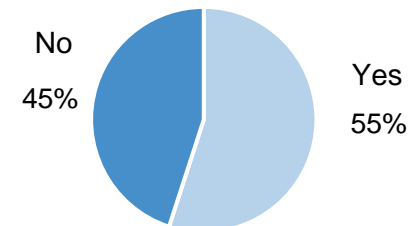
Q11: How many people are supported by your household income?

EDUCATION LEVEL



Q14: What is the highest level of education you completed?

TRIBE AFFILIATION



Q2: You selected American Indian or Alaska Native. Are you enrolled or affiliated with a federally or state recognized tribe(s)?

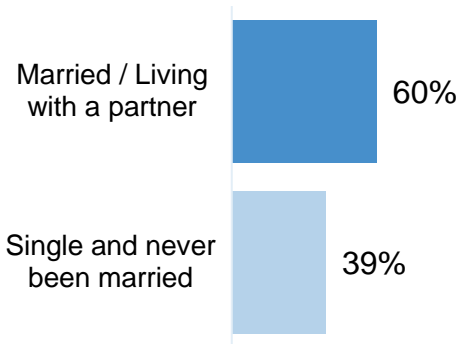


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Continued

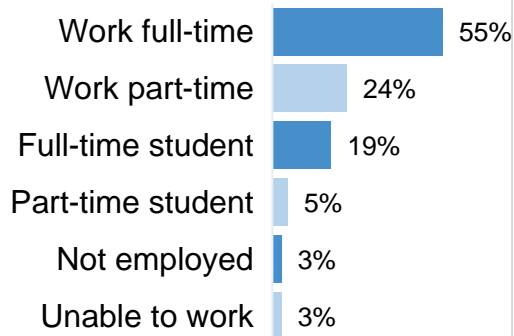
Young Adult Demographic Profile *Continued*

MARITAL STATUS



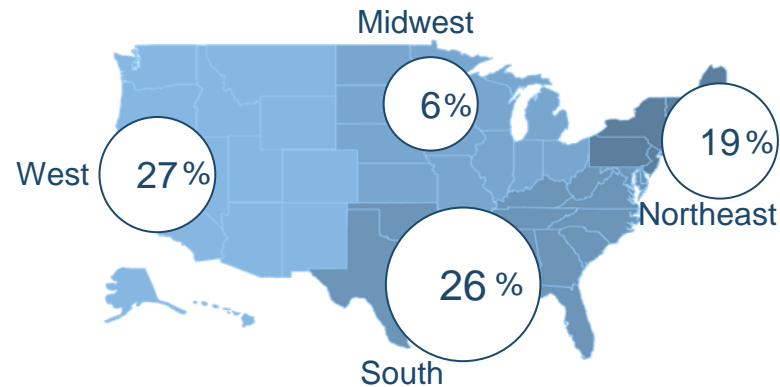
Q13: What is your current marital status?
1% chose prefer not to answer

EMPLOYMENT STATUS



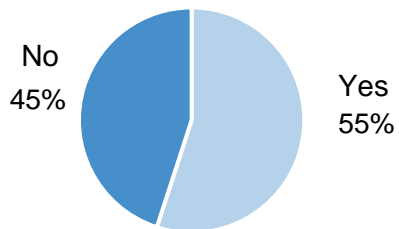
Q15: Which of the following best describes you?
2% selected prefer not to answer, 0% selected retired

REGION



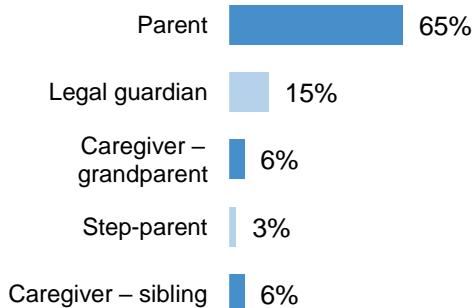
Q12: In which Zip code do you reside?
21% selected none

GUARDIANSHIP



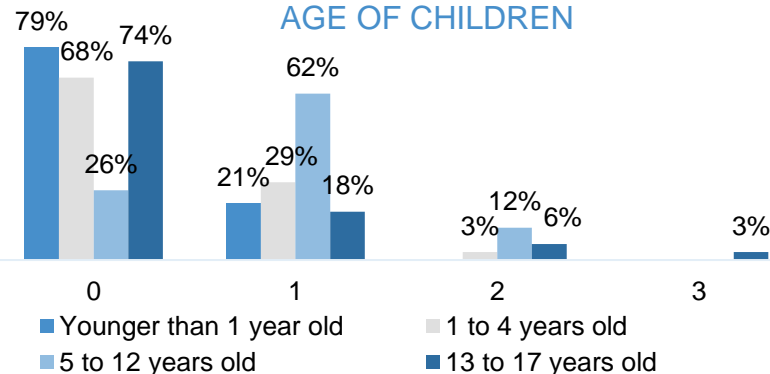
Q6: Are you a parent, guardian or caregiver of a child younger than 18 years of age?

RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD



Q8: Overall, how would you describe your relationship to the children in your care?
5% chose prefer not to answer
Base: Cares for child, n=34

AGE OF CHILDREN

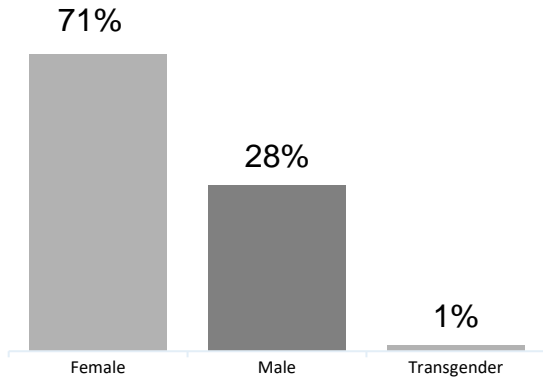


Q7: Indicate the number of children under your care within the age groups below. 0% selected 4 and 5 children in their care within an age range



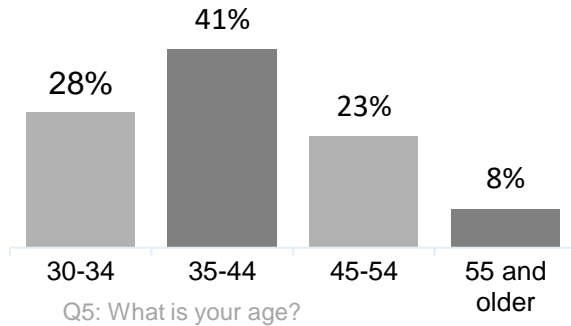
Caregiver Demographic Profile

GENDER



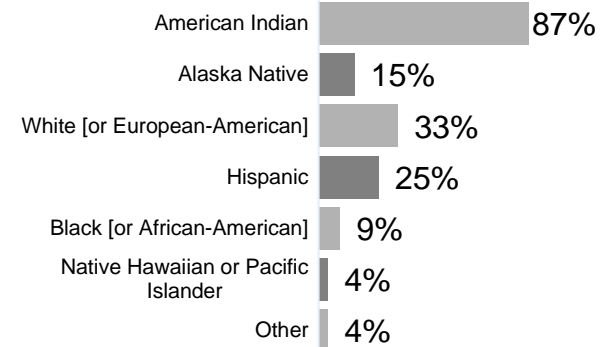
Q9: Which of the following do you identify as: (0% selected non-binary, two spirit, other and prefer not to answer)

AGE



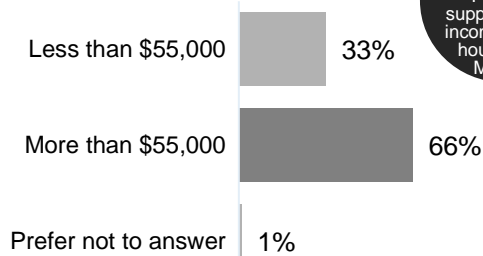
Q5: What is your age?

RACE/ETHNICITY



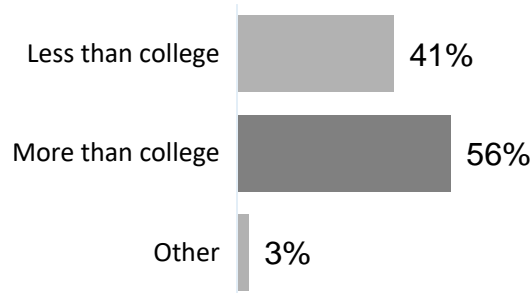
Q1: What race/ethnicity do you consider yourself?
Q4: Do you consider yourself to be part of the Hispanic population (Hispanic/Spanish/Latino descent)?

ANNUAL INCOME



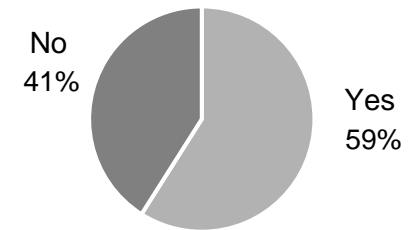
Q10: Which of the following includes your TOTAL household income before taxes in 2021?
Q11: How many people are supported by your household income Base: s: TOTAL=75

EDUCATION LEVEL



Q14: What is the highest level of education you completed?

TRIBE AFFILIATION

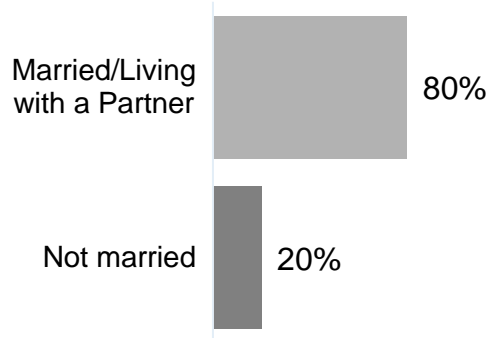


Q2: You selected American Indian or Alaska Native. Are you enrolled or affiliated with a federally or state recognized tribe(s)?



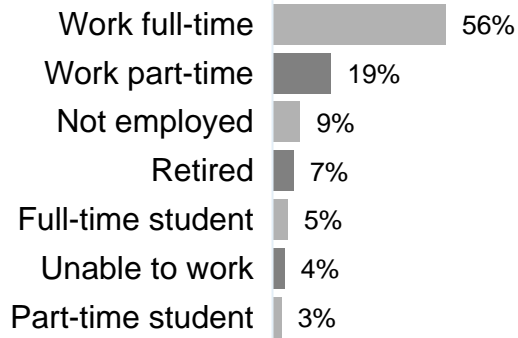
Caregiver Demographic Profile *Continued*

MARITAL STATUS



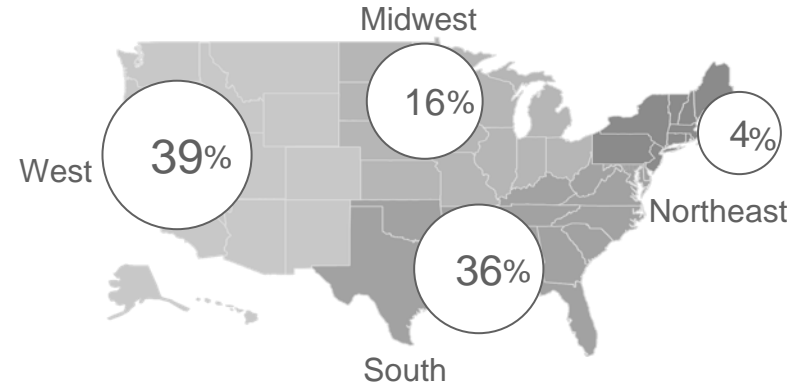
Q13: What is your current marital status? Base: Adults: TOTAL=75

EMPLOYMENT STATUS



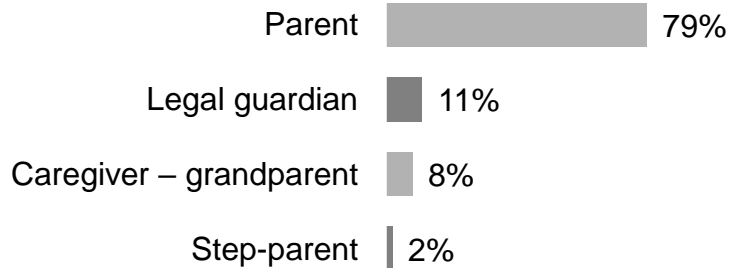
Q15: Which of the following best describes you? 1% chose Prefer not to answer

REGION



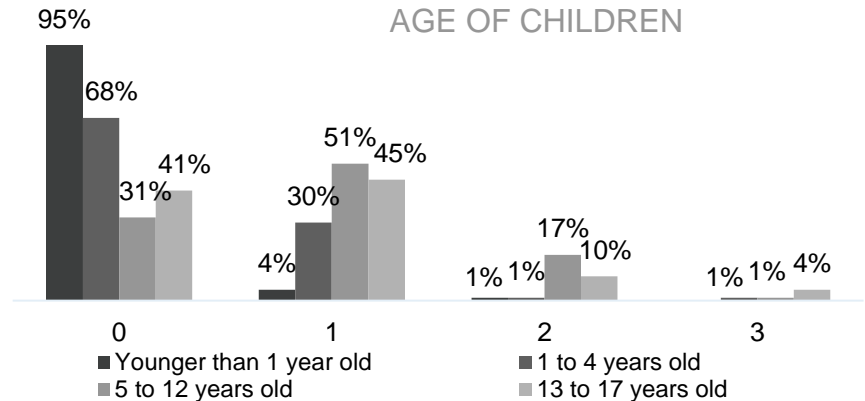
Q12: In which Zip code do you reside? 5% chose none

RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD



Q8: Overall, how would you describe your relationship to the children in your care? Base: s: TOTAL=75 0% chose caregiver – sibling, other, and prefer not to answer

AGE OF CHILDREN



Q6: Indicate the number of children under your care within the age groups below. 0% chose 4 and 5



Findings: Exploring the Waterscape



Exercise, sports and recreation are top ways the AI/AN community spends time in water, with Teens showing a particular affinity for religious reasons

Top Reasons to Spend Time In/Around a Body of Water*

*Full list can be found in Appendix

**Circling indicates top reason, among those who chose multiple



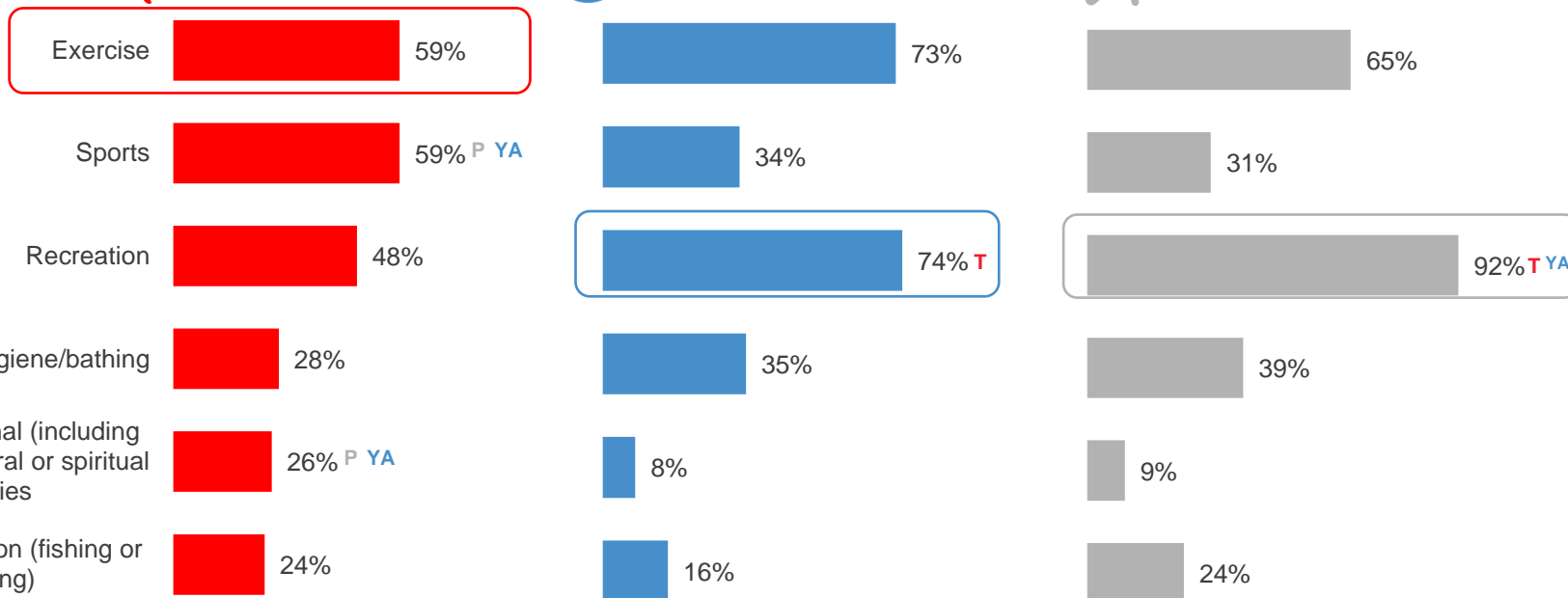
Teens (13-17)



Young Adults (18-29)



Caregivers (30+)



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Q20: For which of the following reasons do you spend time in or on a body of water? Base: Total Respondents: Teens, n=54; Young Adults, n= 62; Caregivers, n=75; Q21: You just selected the following reasons that you spend time in or on a body of water. Of these, which is your top reason? Base: Selects more than 1 response in Q20: Teens, n=47; Young Adults, n= 53; Caregivers, n=59

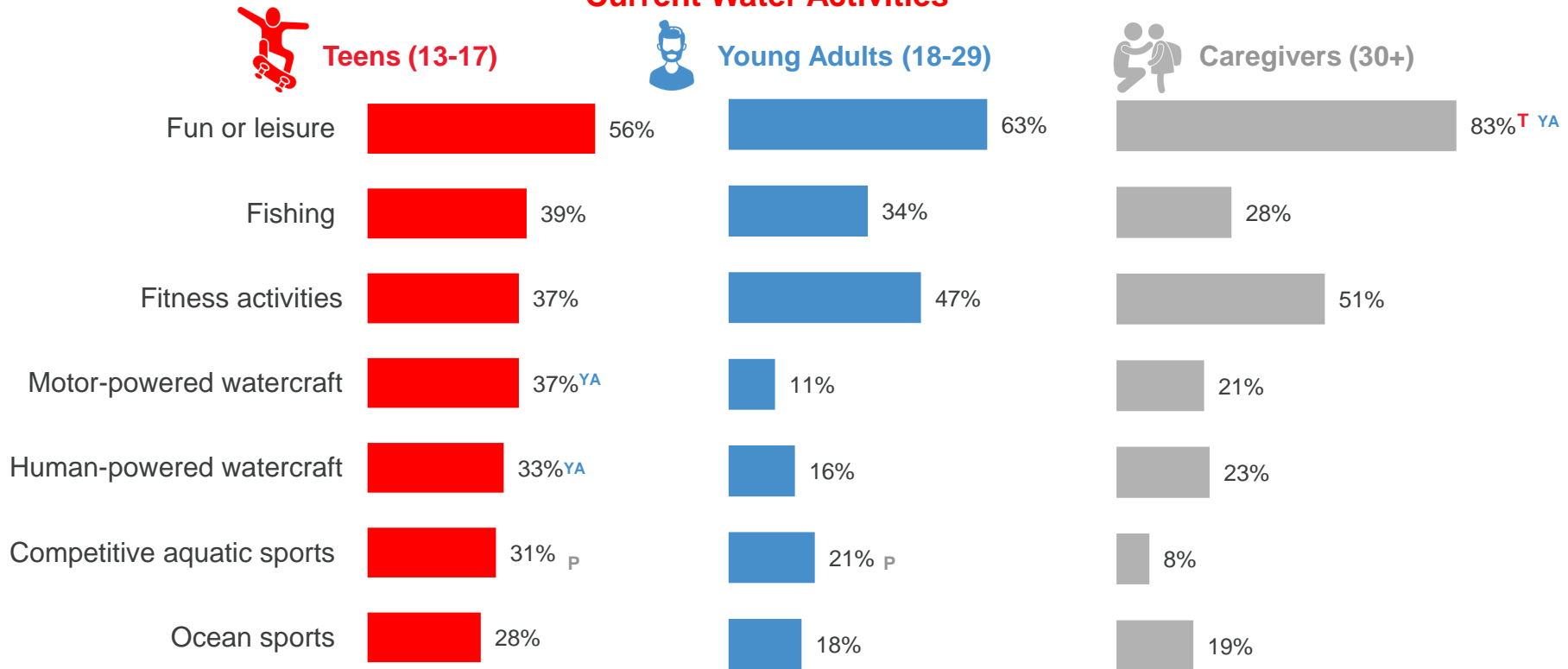
Legend:

Denotes significantly HIGHER than counterpart(s)

- T** Teens (13-17)
- YA** Young Adults (18-29)
- C** Caregivers (30+)

While all groups enjoy the water for fun and leisure, Teens report a greater frequency of most water-related activity categories

Current Water Activities



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Q27: What, if any, types of water activities do you currently participate in?
 Base: Total Respondents: Teens, n=54; Young Adults, n= 62; Caregivers, n=109
 2% of Young Adults and 4% of Caregivers chose None
 2% of Young Adults chose Prefer not to Answer

Legend:

Denotes significantly HIGHER than counterpart(s)

- T Teens (13-17)
- YA Young Adults (18-29)
- C Caregivers (30+)

Pools are the most common swimming locations across groups; Undesignated natural water areas are more popular among Teens

Swimming Locations



Teens (13-17)

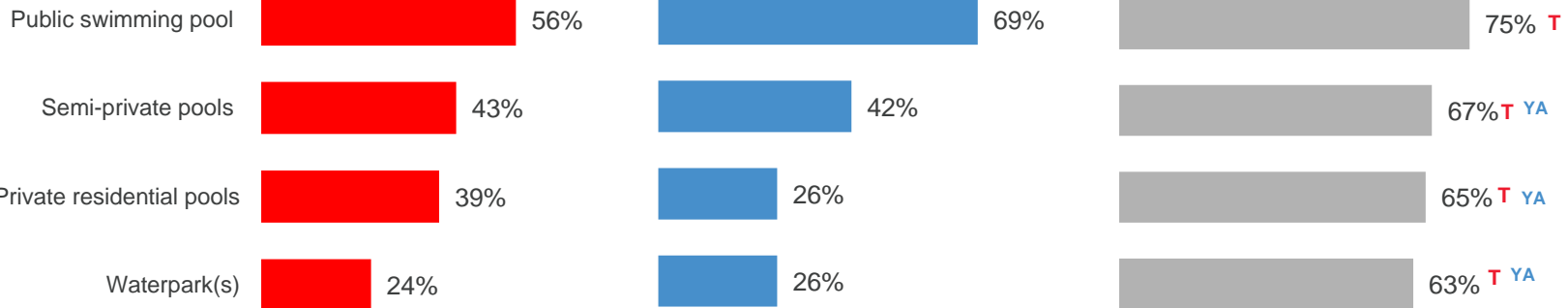
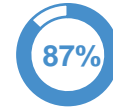


Young Adults (18-29)

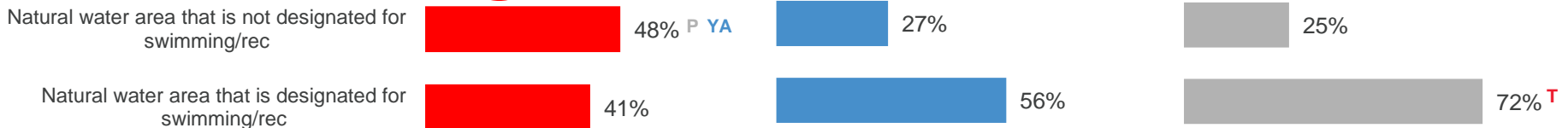


Caregivers (30+)

Pools NET



Natural Water NET



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Q22: Where might people in your community choose to swim or recreate in or near water? Base: Total Respondents: Teens, n=54; Young Adults, n= 62; Caregivers, n=75
2% of Young Adults chose None

Legend:

Denotes significantly HIGHER than counterpart(s)

- T Teens (13-17)
- YA Young Adults (18-29)
- C Caregivers (30+)

Qualitative spotlight: The AI/AN community has strong connections to water; Respect and fear intersect to create a high reverence for its strength

Connections to Water: In Their Own Words

*“Water means a lot more to us than just something to play with. When I was younger, I was really scared of the water. Now, **it’s a healthy respect, a reverence so to speak.** Much like you would have for a cougar or an earthquake. It’s a part of nature that shouldn’t necessarily be feared but should be respected for the power that it holds. Sometimes that power is good, sometimes that power can cause pain and hurt. That’s how life works.”*

– AI Two-spirit, Young Adult

“Water is scary and a powerful thing. Every year I attend a Native American ceremony where we get in the water and make a big circle. We like to soak up nature... trying to be as powerful as the water.”

– AI Female, Young Adult

*“Water is a part of my life as a Native American. **We respect it and keep it clean because it’s important to our world...** I have a great fear and respect for water. I’m not intimidated but I am very respectful about how I interact with it.”*

– AI Female, Caregiver

*“It’s very ingrained in my culture to have **reverence for water**, whether that be folklore or a general respect.”*

– AI Female, Young Adult

*“We grew up around the water. **We were taught to respect the water** in nature as we were growing up from our elders.”*

– AI Male, Caregiver



When asked what makes an area safe for swimming, the presence of lifeguards and clear, calm, shallow water are top considerations

What makes an area SAFE for swimming

Top Reasons

Area is staffed with lifeguards, bodyguards, or attentive caregivers

#1

Water is clear and calm

#2

Area provides flotation devices

#3

Area has proper signage

#4

Water is not deep

#5

6% chose do not know

“A safe area to swim has depth markers, signage, and a lifeguard.”
– AI Female, Caregiver

“Having lifeguards, having proper tools to assist in water rescue, clear signs to indicate any changes to the swimming area.”
– AI Female, Caregiver

“Clear water, knowing how deep it is, having a way to get out like steps or a ladder, being fenced, and having adults watching children.”
– AI Female, Caregiver

“An area that seems safe is one that has ATTENTIVE lifeguards and safe water that has the proper chemicals in it.”
– AI Female, Caregiver



Swimming environments are recognized as unsafe by the lack of trained staff or fast-moving and/or murky water

What makes an area UNSAFE for swimming

Top Reasons

Insufficient/lack of presence of lifeguards, trained staff and adults

#1

Area is poorly secured

#2

Unclear/contaminated water

#3

Presence of a rip current or fast-moving water

#4

Presence of aquatic animals/plants

#5

8% chose do not know

“Contaminated water, no supervision from a trained professional, water of unknown depth.”
– AI Non-binary, Young Adult

“If there is a presence of hazards such as dams, underwater obstacles/rocks and debris, improper design, and poorly maintained water circulation systems.”
– AI Female, Young Adult

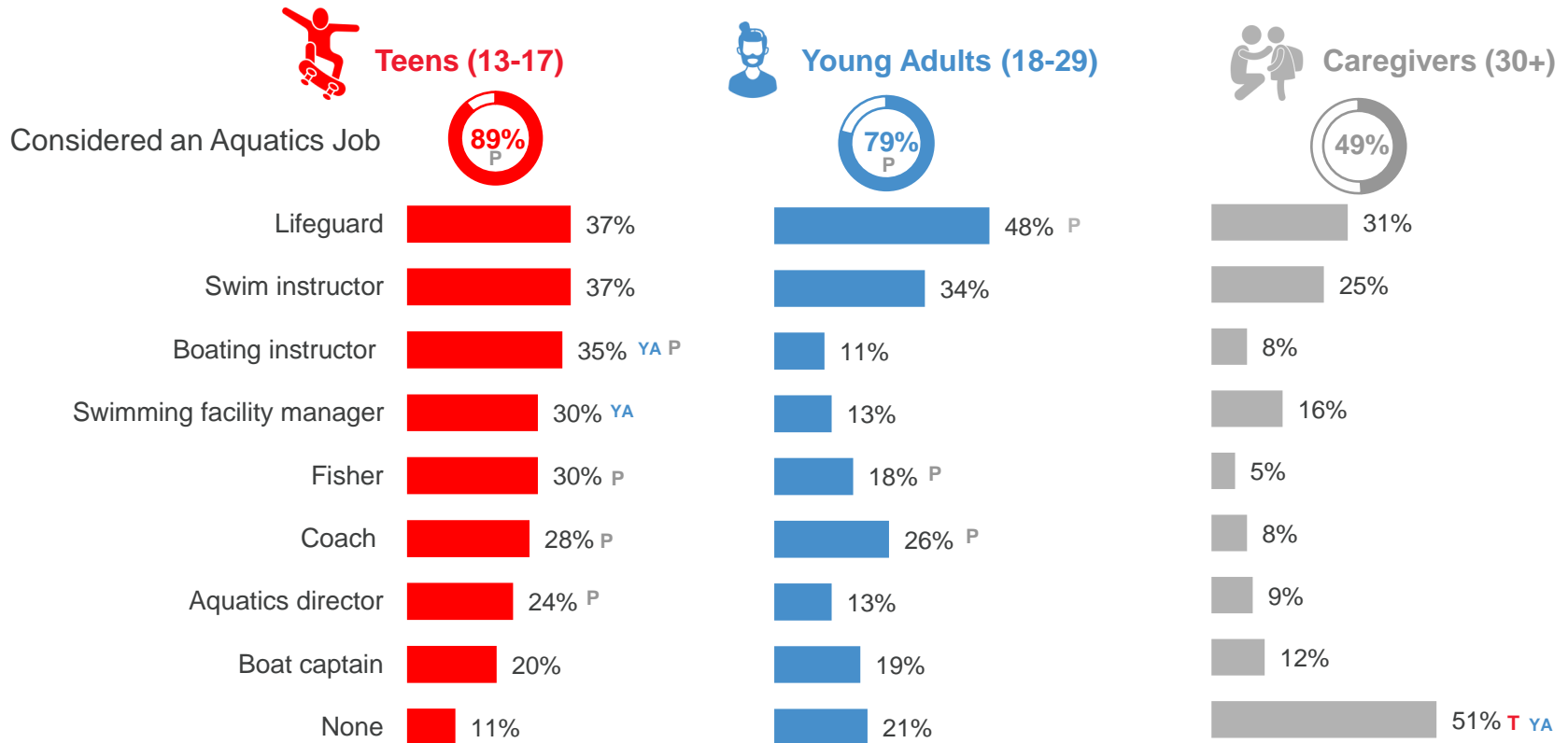
“Dangerous or difficult entry and exit points, rapidly changing depths, tides or waves and animals that could be a danger to people.”
– AI Male, Young Adult

“Unsafe swimming conditions are murky water, water with a lot of rip tides, no lifeguard on duty, standing water.”
– AI Female, Caregiver



Teens report greater frequency of interest across all aquatic-related jobs

Aquatics-based Opportunities Considered



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Q45: Which, if any of the following aquatics-based job opportunities have you considered? Base: Total Respondents: Teens, n=54; Young Adults, n= 62; Caregivers, n=75

Legend:

Denotes significantly HIGHER than counterpart(s)

- T Teens (13-17)
- YA Young Adults (18-29)
- C Caregivers (30+)

Some have not considered an aquatics job because of inconvenience, irrelevancy, and/or skill level limitations

Top Reason for not Considering Aquatics-based Opportunities

*Full chart can be found in appendix

Teens
(13-17)



The certification process is a hassle/
The training takes too long

Young Adults
(18-29)



These types of jobs will not help me in my chosen
career field

Caregivers (30+)



I do not think my skill level is good enough to
successfully complete the training

Caution: Small base sizes. Results should be interpreted with caution and considered directional only.



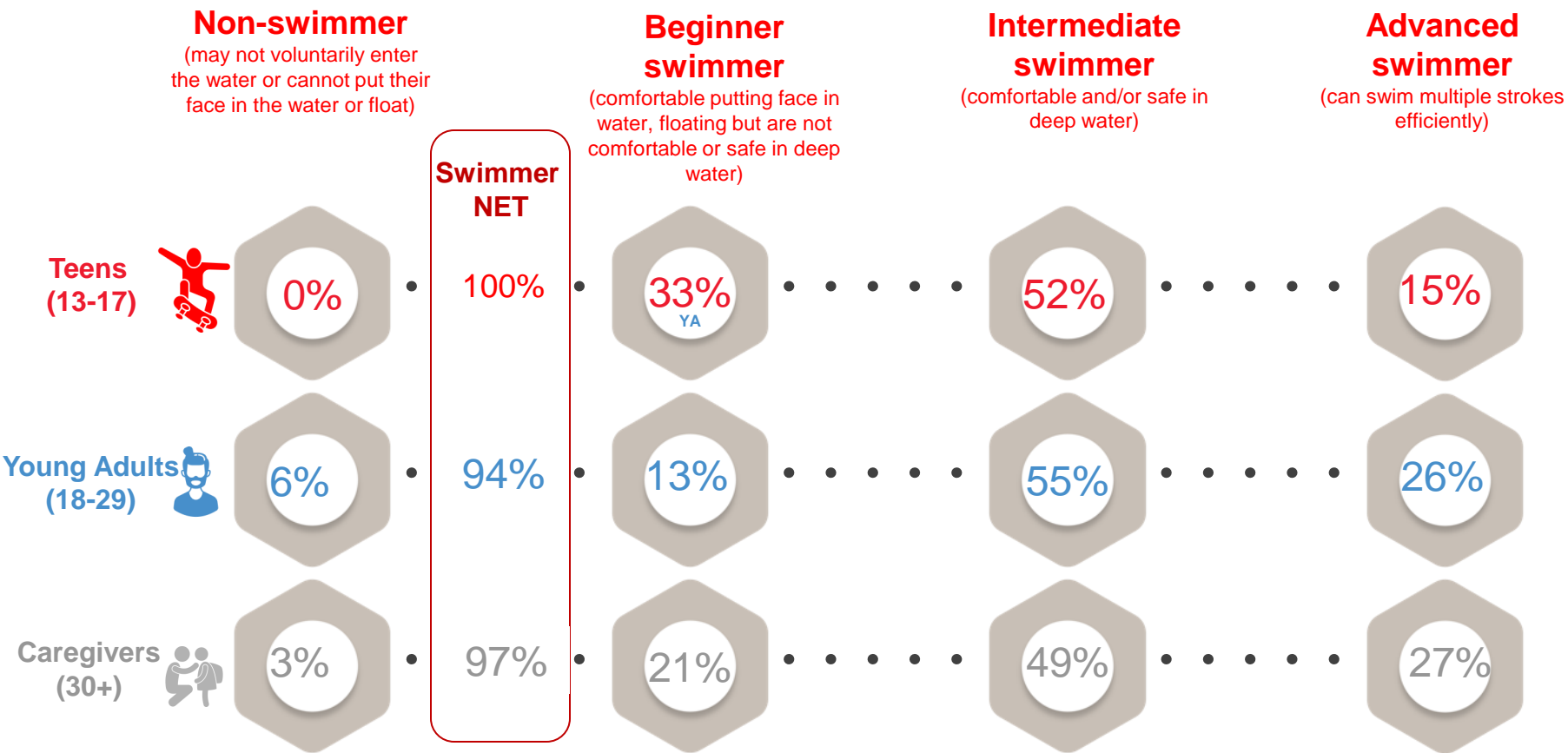
American Red Cross
Training Services

Q46: You indicated that you have not considered any aquatics-based job. Why not? Base: Has not considered aquatic-based opportunities
Teens, n=5; Young Adults, n= 13; Caregivers, n=38

Learning About and Practicing Water Safety

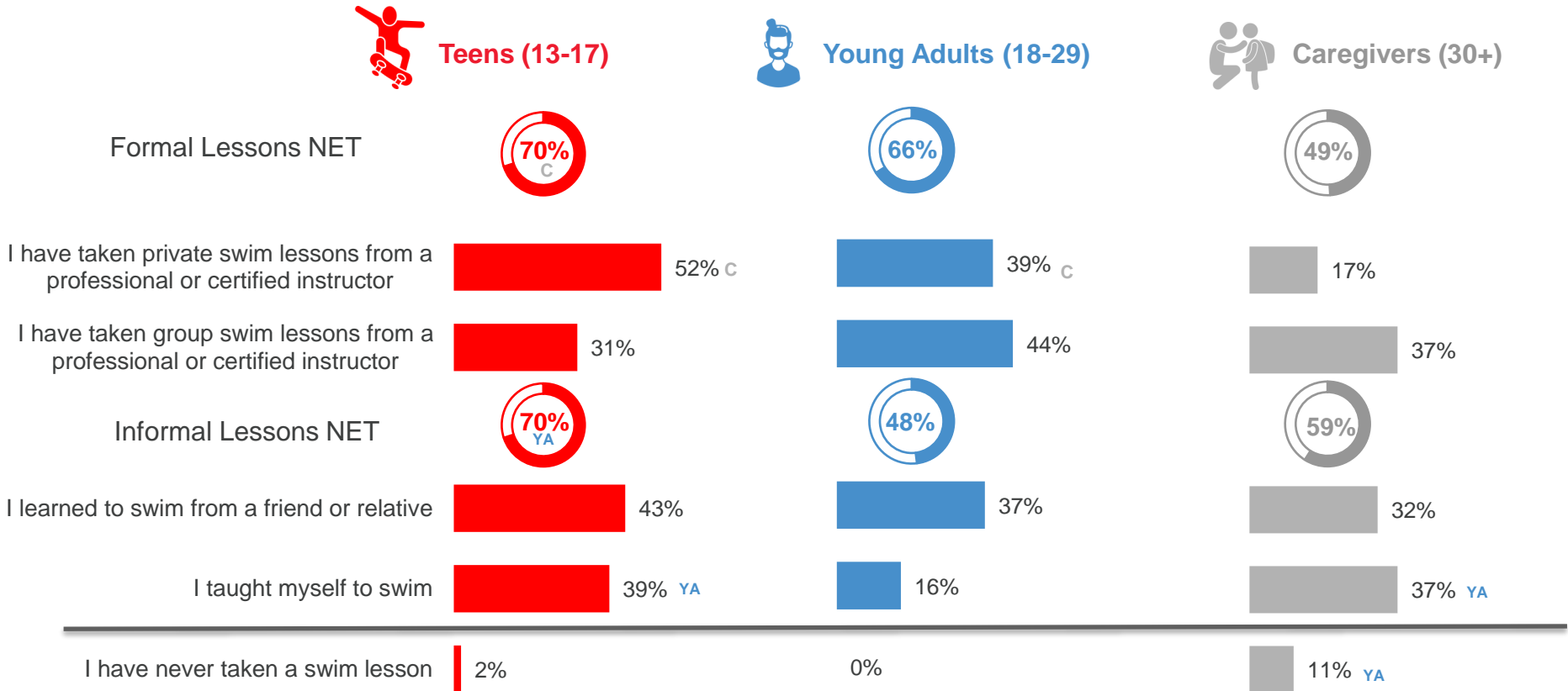


While a majority of AI/AN people report being swimmers, one in four self-assess their skill level as a beginner or below; Young Adults report higher skill levels (intermediate and advanced) among all groups



Younger AI/AN people tend to have taken formal swim instruction in addition to informal learning, while 1 in 10 Caregivers have never taken a swim lesson

Mode of Learning to Swim



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Training Services

Q17: Which of these apply to you? Base: Total Respondents: Teens, n=54; Young Adults, n= 62; Caregivers, n=75

Legend:
Denotes significantly HIGHER than counterpart(s)

- T Teens (13-17)
- YA Young Adults (18-29)
- C Caregivers (30+)

Qualitative spotlight: Caregivers tend to value swim lessons for their children, though they themselves may have learned to swim informally

Learning to Swim: In Their Own Words

*“Swim lessons helped my daughter understand a lot more about controlling her own body. **She is learning to relax in the water and know that she has control over her environment as long as she's aware of her surroundings.** I think that swim lessons helped her with that. Then after that, she's been much more gutsy about swimming in deep water.”*

– AI Female, Caregiver

“The majority of Natives in Oklahoma learn how to swim through those natural, Mother Earth sources, like rivers... There's a general idea [of] ‘why pay for swimming lessons? Just go out in the river.’ It's a little nontraditional, but it makes sense for us because we're more in tune with Mother Earth and we believe that we have all the resources we need without the normal world of the colonizers... But, I've had absolutely terrifying experiences in the water growing up. Because of those experiences, I made sure that my son had swimming lessons when he turned two.”

– AI Genderfluid, Caregiver

*“I kind of taught myself. I don't remember taking any swim classes... **I wasn't taught formally** but I got tips and tricks from others around me.”*

– AI Female, Young Adult

*“[In my community] it's a lot of experience by doing. There are a decent number of people who've had swim lessons over time, **but the majority are learning by doing.**”*

– AI Male, Young Adult



Teens reported less variability in the age of learning to swim than did the Young Adults and Caregivers

Age of Learning to Swim



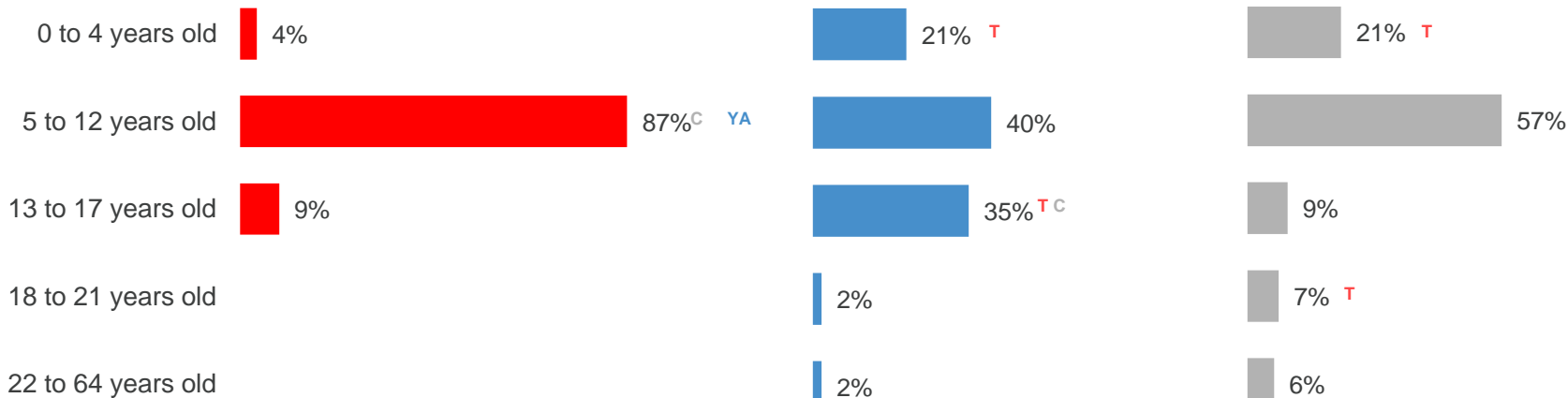
Teens (13-17)



Young Adults (18-29)



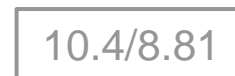
Caregivers (30+)



Median Age
Learned to Swim



Mean Age/Standard Deviation



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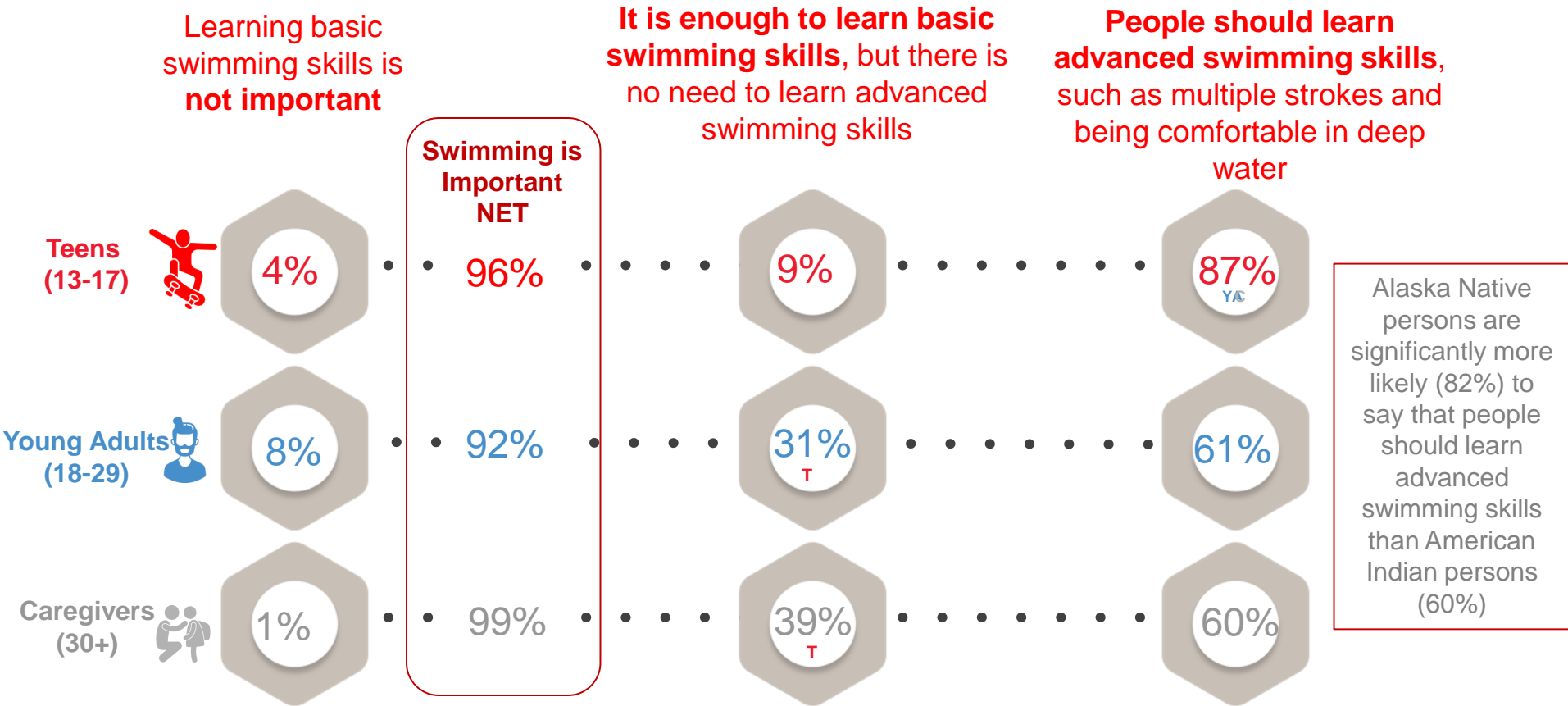
Q18: At what stage in your life did you begin to learn to swim? Base: Learned to swim: Teen, n=53, Young Adults, n=62, Caregivers, n=67

Legend:

Denotes significantly HIGHER than counterpart(s)

- T Teens (13-17)
- YA Young Adults (18-29)
- C Caregivers (30+)

A majority of all 3 groups advocate for advanced swimming skills, while 1 in 3 Young Adults and Caregivers prioritize basic proficiency



Young Adults and Caregivers show a higher inclination towards swimming in unsupervised areas; 2/3 of Teens swim alone but avoid swimming where lifeguards are not on duty

% Always/Most of the Time

Full chart can be found in appendix

Swim Where No Lifeguard Is On Duty



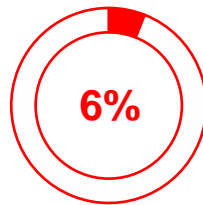
Teens (13-17)



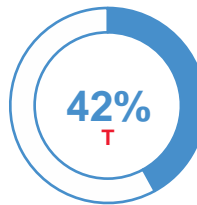
Young Adults (18-29)



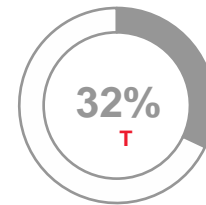
Caregivers (30+)



6%

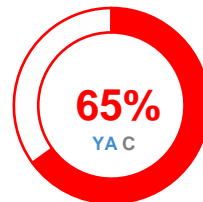


42%
T

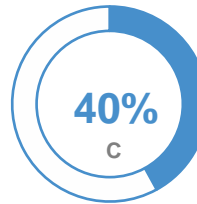


32%
T

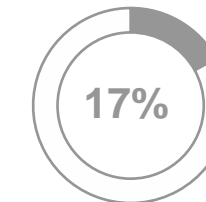
Swim Alone



65%
YAC



40%
C



17%



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Training Services

Q28: Thinking about all the times you are in or on a body of water, how often do you swim in a location where there is no lifeguard on duty; Swim alone [RATE ON 5-POINT SCALE OF ALWAYS, MOST OF THE TIME, SOMETIMES, NEVER, DOES NOT APPLY TO ME] Base: Total Respondents: Teens, n=54; Young Adults, n= 62; Caregivers, n=75

Legend:

Denotes significantly HIGHER than counterpart(s)

- T Teens (13-17)
- YA Young Adults (18-29)
- C Caregivers (30+)

Teens stand out as life jacket enthusiasts; Caregivers and Young Adults report slightly lower rates, but still high levels of life jacket usage

% Always/Most of the Time

Full chart can be found in appendix



Teens (13-17)

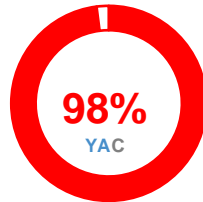


Young Adults (18-29)

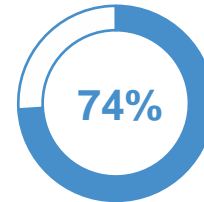


Caregivers (30+)

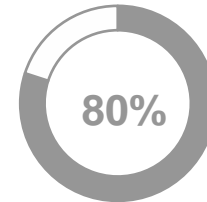
Wear a Life Jacket While On a Boat



98%
YAC

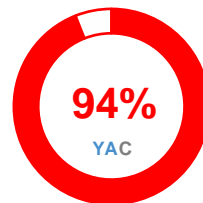


74%

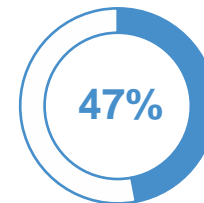


80%

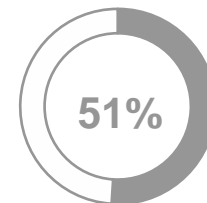
Where a Life Jacket While Fishing



94%
YAC



47%



51%



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Q28: Thinking about all the times you are in or on a body of water, how often do you wear a life jacket while on a boat; where a life jacket while fishing [RATE ON 5-POINT SCALE OF ALWAYS, MOST OF THE TIME, SOMETIMES, NEVER, DOES NOT APPLY TO ME] Base: Total Respondents: Teens, n=54; Young Adults, n=62; s, n=75

Legend:

Denotes significantly HIGHER than counterpart(s)

T Teens (13-17)

YA Young Adults (18-29)

C Caregivers (30+)

Most AI/AN Caregivers require their children to wear a life jacket on a boat or fishing; however, this slightly decreases as children grow older

% Always/Most of the Time

Full chart can be found in appendix



Caregivers of 0-4 year olds

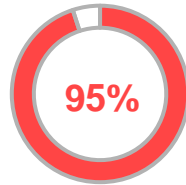
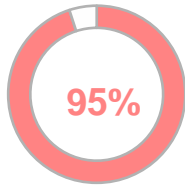


Caregivers of 5-12 year olds



Caregivers of 13-17 year olds

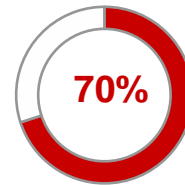
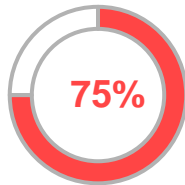
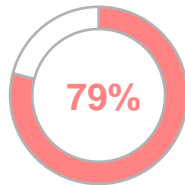
Require Your Child(ren) to Wear a Life Jacket on a Boat



Reasoning for Sometimes/Never Requiring their Child to Wear a Life Jacket while Fishing or on a Boat

Top Reasons

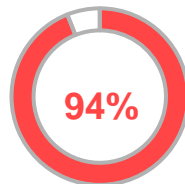
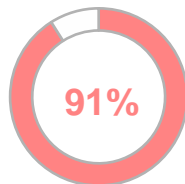
Require Your Child(ren) to Wear a Life Jacket While Fishing



My child swims well

#1

Stay Within Arm's Reach of any Young Child who is in my Care



There are lifeguards present

#2



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Q28: Thinking about all the times you are in or on a body of water, how often do you [RATE ON 5-POINT SCALE OF ALWAYS, MOST OF THE TIME, SOMETIMES, NEVER, DOES NOT APPLY TO ME] Base: Caregivers of 0-3, n=46; Caregivers of School-Aged Children, n= 77; Caregivers of 13-17 year olds, n=53; Q29: You answered that you sometimes or never require your child to wear a life jacket. Why not? Base: IFQ28= sometimes/never to "Require your child(ren) to wear a life jacket while on a boat", "Require your child(ren) to wear a lifejacket while fishing": Caregivers, n=16

Confidence in one's own swimming skills is cited as the top reason for inconsistently wearing life jackets

Reasoning for Sometimes/Never Wearing Life Jacket while Fishing or on a Boat

Top Reasons

I'm confident with my skills /
Know how to swim

#1

Water is not too deep

#2

It's not required

#3

I want to feel comfortable

#4

They are not available /
I do not own one

#5

8% chose do not know

"I feel good about my swimming abilities and don't usually swim anywhere that deep or with a strong current."
– AI Male, Young Adult

"You're not required to wear a life jacket when you go fishing on the bank, which is dangerous. I know a lot of people don't wear life jackets and they'll almost make fun of you if you do. That probably contributes to the lack of safety here."

– AI Female, Young Adult

"There is not a good reason. I just generally consider the situation I'm in - water condition, depth, and weather-wise and determine whether I feel I would be fine. I realize this is not the best idea though."

– AI Male, Young Adult

"If I am fishing on land, I don't think it's necessary to wear a life jacket. If I am on a vessel, such as a boat, I wear a life jacket. It just depends on the setting, context, and activity."

– AI Female, Caregiver

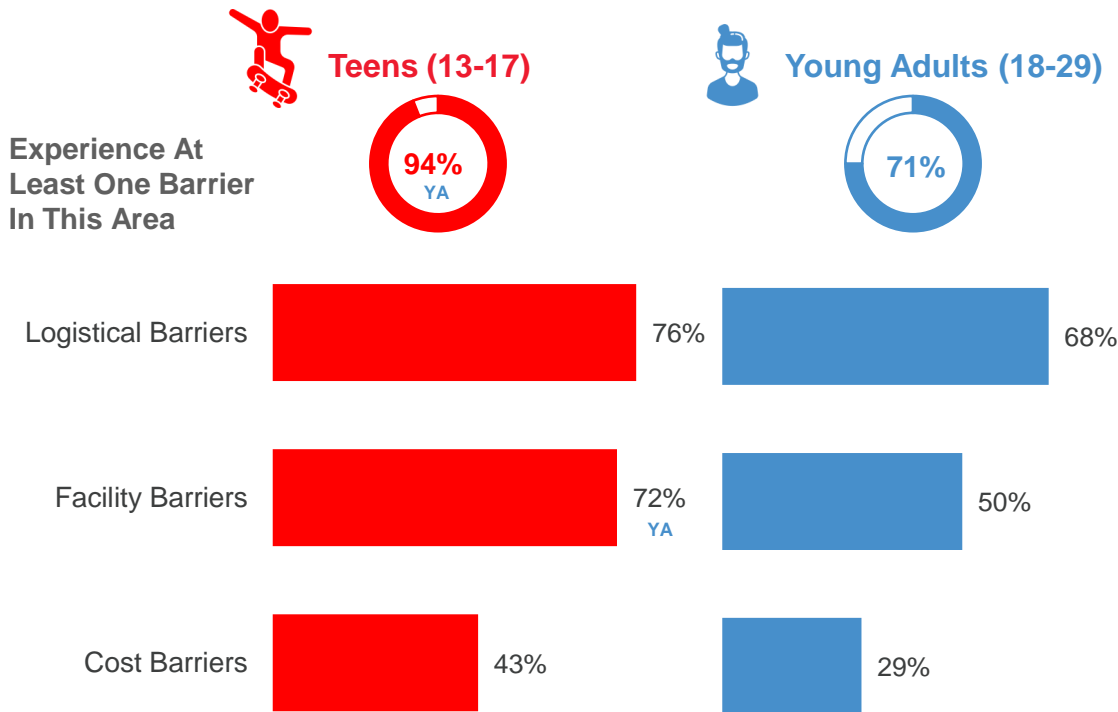


Teens and Young Adults: Access and Barriers to Swimming



The majority of Teens and Young Adults face barriers to swim lessons related to lack of access and inconvenience, with logistical conflicts being the most common

Barriers to Swim Lessons Related to Access and Convenience



“Not everybody has access to a pool in their yard. The community pool we do have is farther down the road. It’s hard for people to get to. I feel like places that do lessons and places to get information [about water safety] is lacking.”
 – AI Female, Young Adult



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Q34A: There are a variety of reasons related to access or convenience around why someone may not participate in swim lessons. Mark all the reasons that apply to you. Base: Total Teens and Young Adults: Teens, n=54; Young Adults not Caregivers, n= 28

Legend:
 Denotes significantly HIGHER than counterpart(s)

T Teens (13-17)
YA Young Adults (18-29)

Scheduling issues, class space and chemicals in the water arise as key barriers to taking swim lessons; Affordability also is a barrier

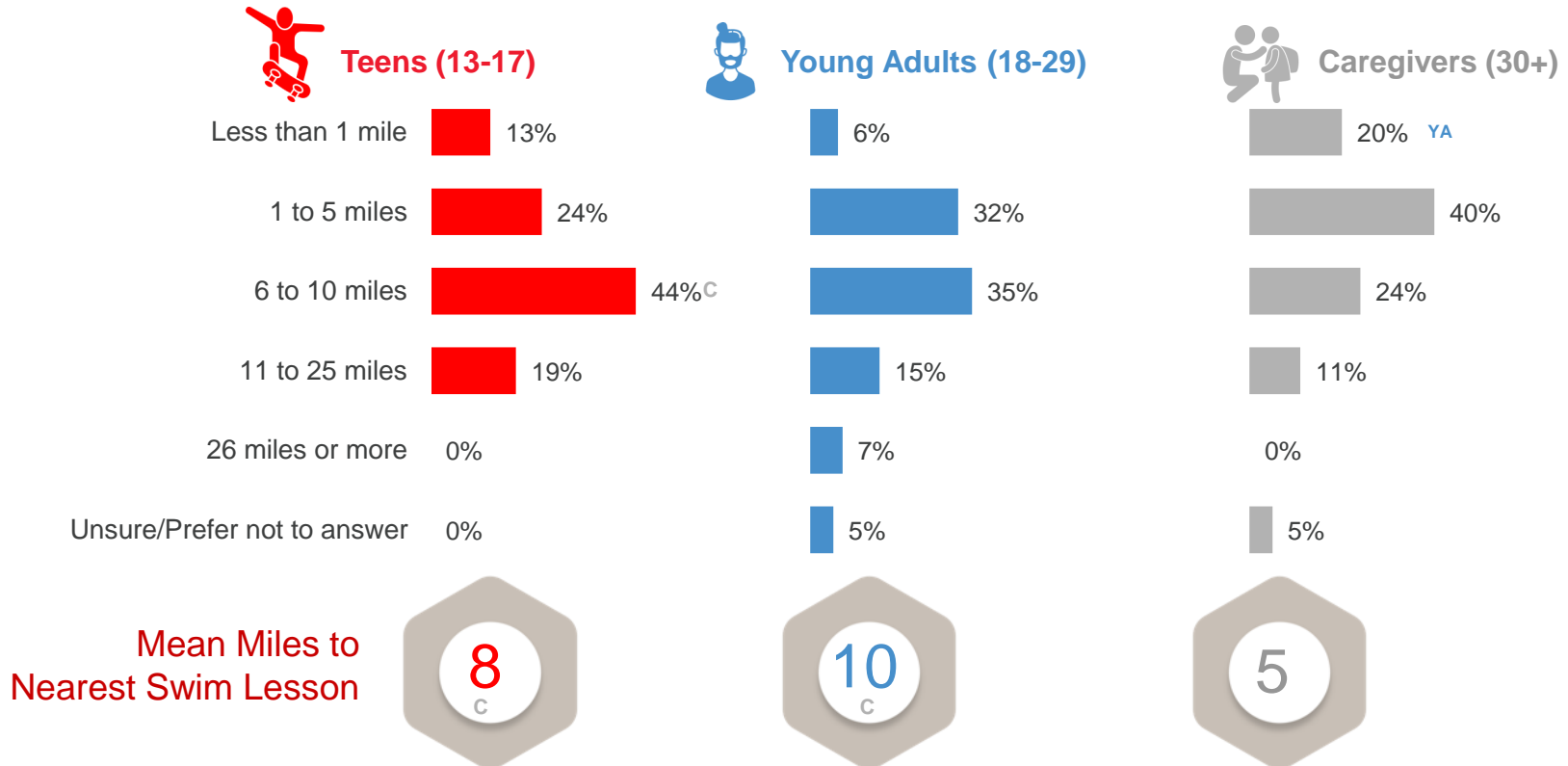
**Circling indicates top reason, of those who chose multiple
Full chart can be found in appendix

Barriers to Swim Lessons	Teens (13-17)	Young Adults (18-29)
Logistical Barriers		
<i>Scheduling conflicts</i>	30%	39%
<i>The registration process is too challenging</i>	22%	14%
<i>I do not have access to a nearby aquatic facility that offers swim lessons</i>	20%	14%
<i>I do not have transportation to get to swim lessons</i>	22%	7%
<i>I do not know where to find information about swim lessons in my community</i>	13%	14%
Facility Barriers		
<i>Class space for me is never available</i>	28%	11%
<i>The chemicals in the water are too harsh on my skin or hair</i>	17%	32%
<i>There are issues of facility accessibility</i>	20%	18%
<i>Locker room/changing areas do not meet my needs</i>	20%	7%
<i>I do not feel welcome at the facility</i>	17%	4%
<i>Aquatic facility staff do not speak my language</i>	13%	7%
Cost Barriers		
<i>I cannot afford the gear needed for swim lessons</i>	28%	14%
<i>I cannot afford swim lessons</i>	17%	18%



Teens and Young Adults generally live farther away from swimming lessons

Miles to Nearest Swim Lessons



More schedule-friendly options could motivate both Teens and Young Adults to enroll in swim lessons; lower costs would also help Young Adults

Factors to Encourage Enrolling in Swim Lessons

Teens
(13-17)

Young Adults
(18-29)

**Circling indicates top reason, of those who chose multiple
Full chart can be found in appendix

Factors to Encourage Enrolling in Swim Lessons	Teens (13-17)	Young Adults (18-29)
Offerings that better suit my schedule	28%	40%
A more accessible facility	28%	29%
Aquatic facility staff who look like me	28% ^{YA}	5%
More ways to register	26%	18%
Aquatic programming options for multiple children of different ages and skill levels offered at the same time	24%	21%
A more welcoming environment at the facility	22%	29%
Accommodations to the physical swim lesson environment that adhere to my religious or cultural beliefs	22%	21%
Transportation to or from the facility	22%	16%
Accommodations to the locker room/changing room environment that adhere to my religious or cultural beliefs	19%	23%
Single gender group lessons	19%	8%
Guarantee of instructors who are the same gender as me	19%	24%
Adapted swim offerings at the facility	17%	23%
Swim lessons that are more affordable	15%	39% ^T
Aquatic facility staff who speak my language	11%	18%
None of these	2%	5%

Legend:

Denotes significantly HIGHER than counterpart(s)

T Teens (13-17)

YA Young Adults (18-29)

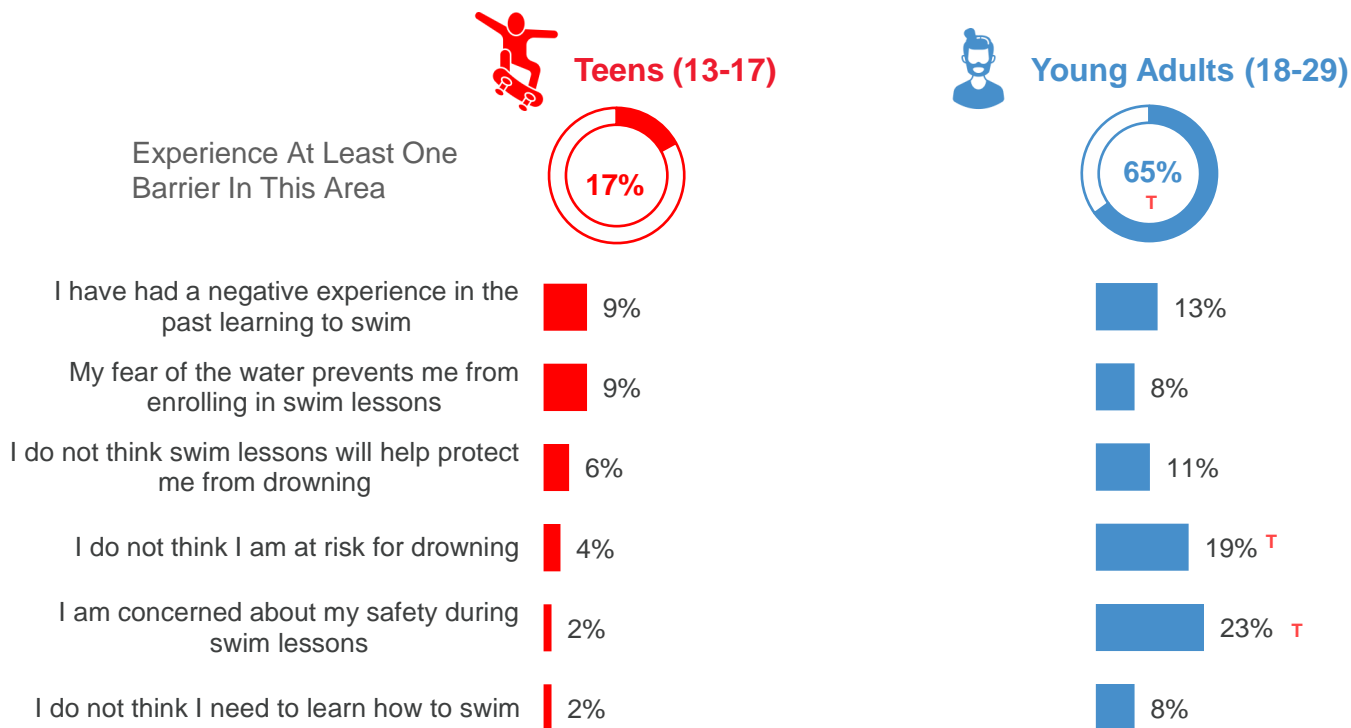


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Q43A: Which of the following, if any, would make YOU enroll in swim lessons? (Select all that apply) Base: Total Teens and Young Adults: Teens, n=54; Young Adults, n= 62; Q44A: You just selected the following factors would help YOU enroll in swim lessons. Of these, which is your top reason? Base: Teens and Young Adults who selected more than 1 response in Q43A: Teens, n=48; Young Adults, n=42

Young Adults feel less at risk for drowning vs. Teens, but are significantly more concerned about their safety during swim lessons

Drowning Concerns as a Barrier to Swim Lesson Enrollment



Q36: Some people do not enroll in swim lessons for reasons related to risk of drowning. Please mark all the reasons that apply to you. Base: Total Teens and Young Adults: Teens, n=54; Young Adults, n= 62

Note: There was insufficient sample sizes to report on Q37

Q37: You just selected the following reasons related to risk of drowning around why someone may not participate in swim lessons. Of these, which is your top reason? Base: Teens and Young Adults who selected more than 1 response in Q36: Teens, n=8; Young Adults, n= 9

Young Adults, compared to Teens, are significantly more likely to be embarrassed to take lessons, and think they are less important than other activities

Psychological Barriers to Swim Lesson Enrollment

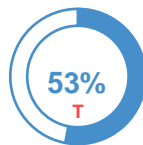


Teens (13-17)



Young Adults (18-29)

Experience At Least One Barrier In This Area



I am embarrassed about how I look in a swimsuit or in swim trunks



I have cognitive, mental or physical disabilities that makes participation too challenging



I am embarrassed to be taking swim lessons



When compared to other activities or commitments, swim lessons are not a priority for me



I am embarrassed that I don't know how to swim



“My teenage son’s friends are not that interested in knowing how to swim. I guess kids nowadays are more enticed by the digital world than we were... Some kids gravitate more towards technology than nature.”

– AI Male, Caregiver

*“I’ve seen that sometimes Native families glorify certain sports and they’ll put in time for softball, baseball, etc. **Swimming is still a sport and it’s a survival skill, but it’s not enough on their tier to really focus on.** They’re like, ‘Oh, you’ll learn how to swim in a lake. That’s all you need.’ No, there’s so much more involved in that.”*

– AI Female, Caregiver

Legend:

Denotes significantly HIGHER than counterpart(s)

T Teens (13-17)

YA Young Adults (18-29)

Q38: Some people do not enroll in swim lessons for reasons related to interest, motivation or physical challenges. Please mark all the reasons that apply to you. Base: Total Teens and Young Adults: Teens, n=54; Young Adults, n= 62

Note: There was insufficient sample sizes to report on Q39

Q39: You just selected the following reasons related to interest, motivation or physical challenges around why you may not participate in swim lessons. Of these, which is your top reason? Base: Teens and Young Adults who selected more than 1 response in Q38: Teens, n=8; Young Adults, n=10



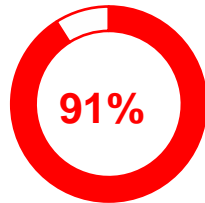
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Nearly all Teens have learned about water safety in school; social media, mobile apps, and intergenerational folklore are other key sources of information

Teens (13-17)

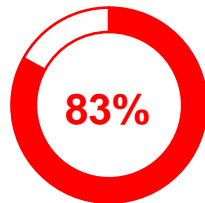


Received Water Safety Education in School



9% did not answer

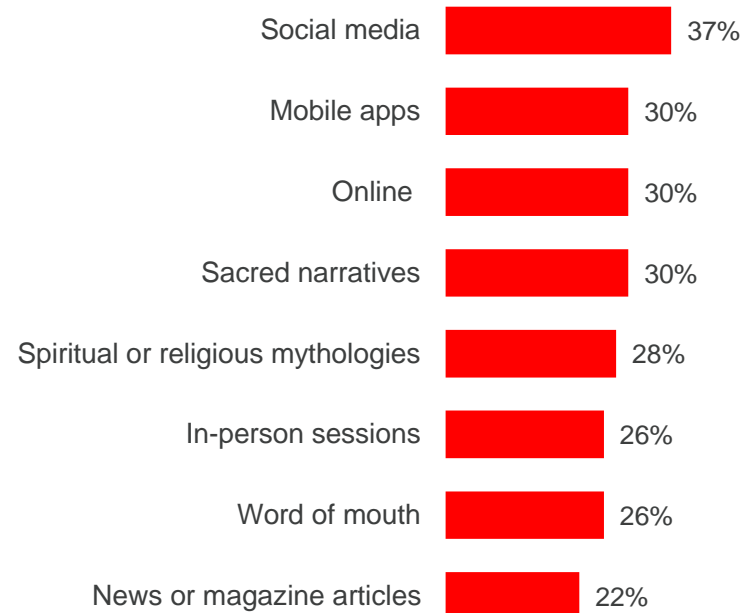
Learned about Water Safety in Ways Other than School



7% choose No
9% did not answer

“When I was in elementary school, we had someone come in and teach us about boating, and we had the opportunity to earn our boating license if we passed the test.”
– AI Female, Young Adult

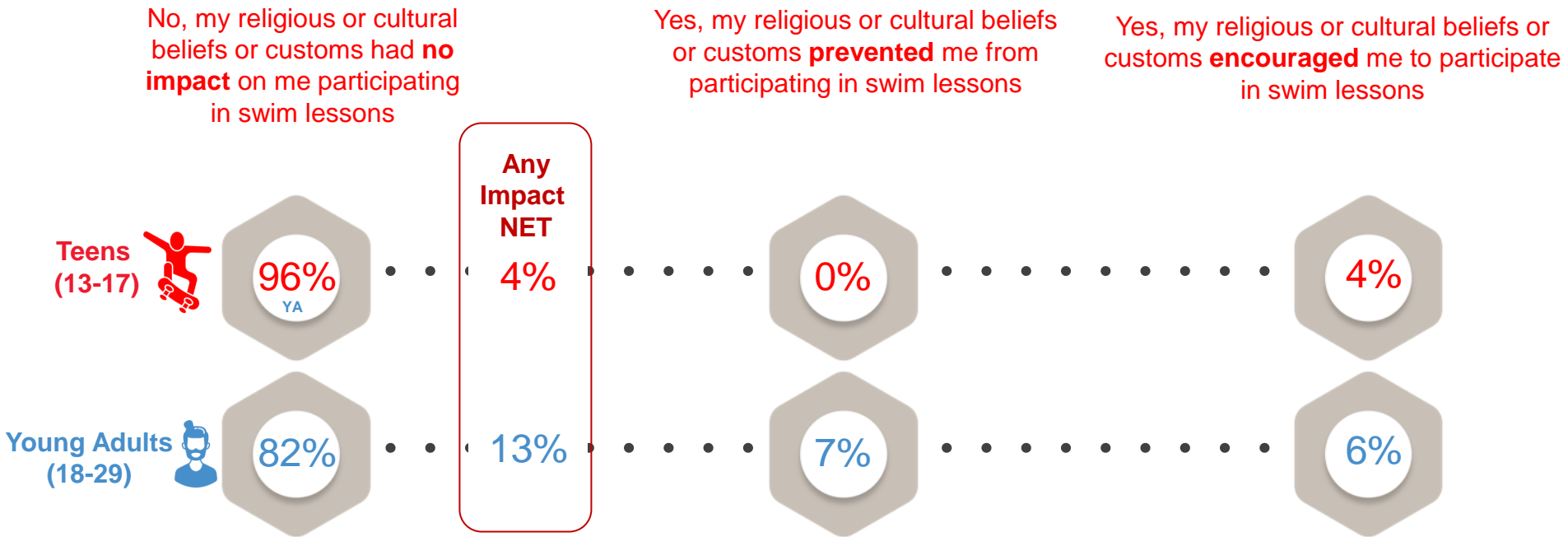
Where Teens Learn about Water Safety



American Red Cross
Training Services

Q47: Have you ever received water safety education in school?; Q48: Have you learned about water safety in ways other than school?/In what ways have you learned about water safety? Base: Teens n=54

At first glance, religious and cultural beliefs are unlikely to have an impact on participation in swim lessons for Teens and Young Adults



American Red Cross
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Q40A: Are there religious or cultural beliefs or customs that have or may impact your participation in swim lessons .Base: Total Teens and Young Adults: Teens, n=54; Young Adults, n= 62
Young Adults: 5% prefer not to answer

Legend:

Denotes significantly HIGHER than counterpart(s)

T Teens (13-17)

YA Young Adults (18-29)

Qualitative spotlight: A deeper dive into the topic of swim lessons suggests some AI/AN Young Adults feel an expectation that they should already know how to swim, possibly leading to shame as a barrier

Culture and Attitudes about Swimming Lessons: In Their Own Words

*“I’ve come across this with a lot of people, **this assumption that just because you’re Native, you automatically know how to swim.** There’s that expectation because of my heritage...They make comments like, ‘Don’t you guys learn how to swim when you’re really, really young?’ Maybe it comes down to the [incorrect] belief that Natives are ‘savages.’ This [prejudicial] expectation can prevent parents from putting their kids in swim lessons because of a shame that the kids don’t know how to swim.”*

– AI Two-Spirit, Young Adult and Caregiver

“People [wrongly] think that because we’re Native, we are just born ready to swim.”

– AI Genderfluid, Caregiver

“My son feels really bad about not knowing how to swim. It’s hard. He’s like, I’m a grown adult, I should know how to swim. And I’m like, ‘Honey, it’s not embarrassing at all. There’s a lot of people that don’t know how to swim as an adult.’”

– AI Female, Caregiver

*“Getting made fun of for taking swim lessons might be cultural. You’re learning from your family, generationally going down to the river. It’s an odd case for someone to have learned from a swim instructor. **I got made fun of for taking swim lessons.** My cousins would say, ‘Oh, you didn’t learn how to swim well enough from [elder]? Why do you have to go and pay for someone to teach you how to swim?’”*

– AI Female, Young Adult

*“You might honestly be made fun of if you tell people, ‘I’m going to take swimming lessons’ because **people don’t really do that here.** You just go down to the local access areas and then you just learn how to swim from your family. That’s like pretty much how they do it here.”*

– AI Female, Young Adult



Qualitative spotlight: In addition, consumption of alcohol in and near water could potentially be a risk factor for drowning

Swimming and Alcohol Use: In Their Own Words

“There are spots on the river where they’ve made it illegal to have alcohol and I honestly think that’s contributed to the lower rates of drowning. When parents are drinking, chances are they’re not going to be paying as much attention to their children. Their reaction time is going to be a lot slower. When teenagers and young adults are drinking, it lowers their inhibitions, and they’ll take more chances. All of a sudden, you think it’s cool to jump off a bridge.”

– AI Two-Spirit, Young Adult and Caregiver

“My husband grew up in New Mexico where the tribe was on a pueblo. They don’t go swimming. He’s like, “I never heard of anyone saying they’re going to go in the lake and swim. It’s mostly about going to the lake to drink and party.’

– AI Female, Caregiver

“In Oklahoma, you can’t really do a lot. It’s just a whole bunch of nothing. So people just drink and party. You park your car and walk up to this sandy beach and there’s just a bunch of country people blaring their music, drinking beer.”

– AI Female, Young Adult

“Alcoholism and drug use are rampant where I’m from and that’s playing a part in drowning. When people’s perceptions are off, the ability to drown is there.”

– AI Female, Caregiver



Children: Access and Barriers to Swimming



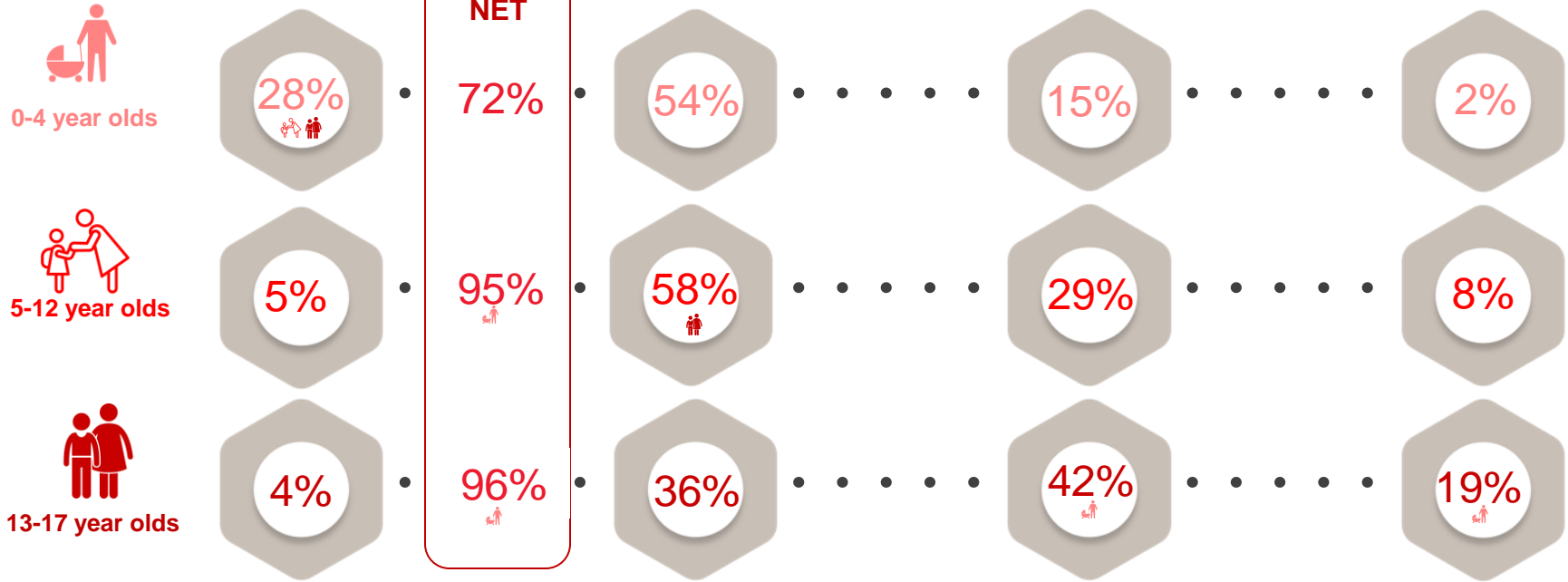
The majority of AI/AN children under 12 have limited swimming skills; only 1 in 5 AI/AN teens are said by their caregivers to have advanced proficiency

Non-swimmer
(may not voluntarily enter the water or cannot put their face in the water or float)

Beginner swimmer
(comfortable putting face in water, floating but are not comfortable or safe in deep water)

Intermediate swimmer
(can swim multiple strokes efficiently)

Advanced swimmer
(can swim multiple strokes efficiently)



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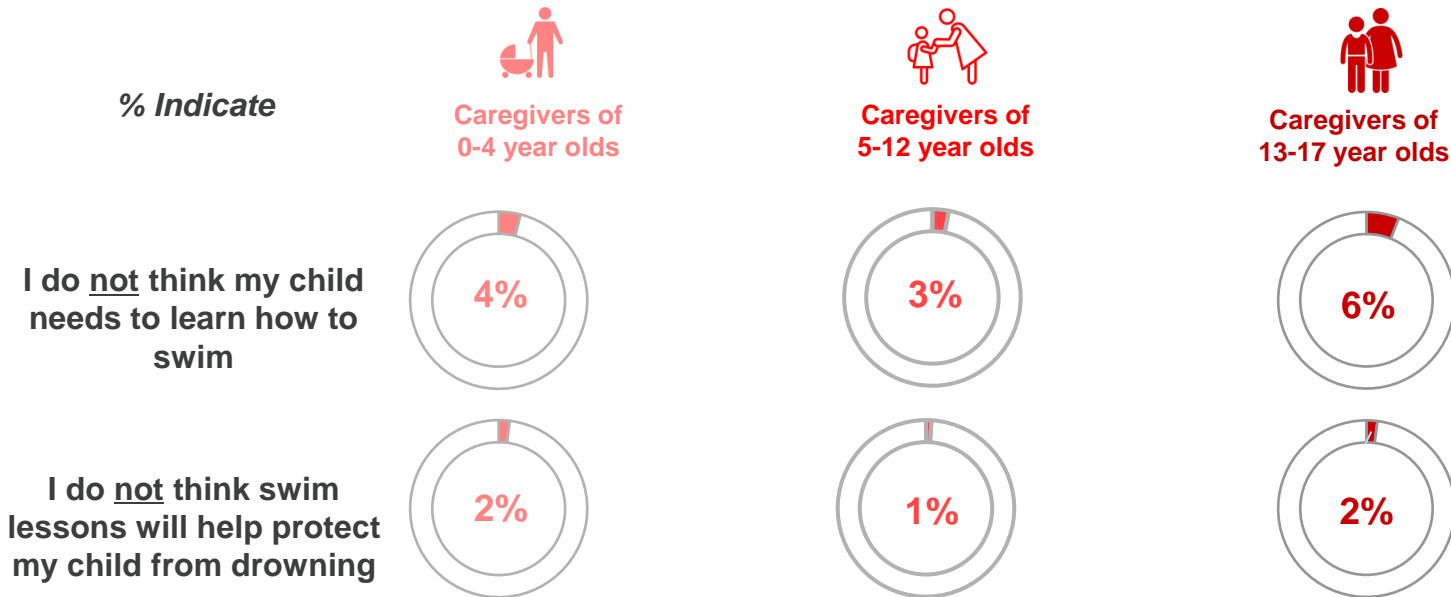
Q53/Q63/Q73/Q83: How would you rate this child's swimming skill level? Base: Caregivers of 0-4 year olds, n=46; Caregivers of 5-12 year olds, n= 77; Caregivers of 13-17 year olds, n=53

Legend:
Denotes significantly HIGHER than counterpart(s)

- Caregivers of 0-4 year olds
- Caregivers of 5-12 year olds
- Caregivers of 13-17 year olds

Nearly all AI/AN Caregivers acknowledge that swim lessons are important and can help protect their children from drowning

Children's Swim Lesson Importance



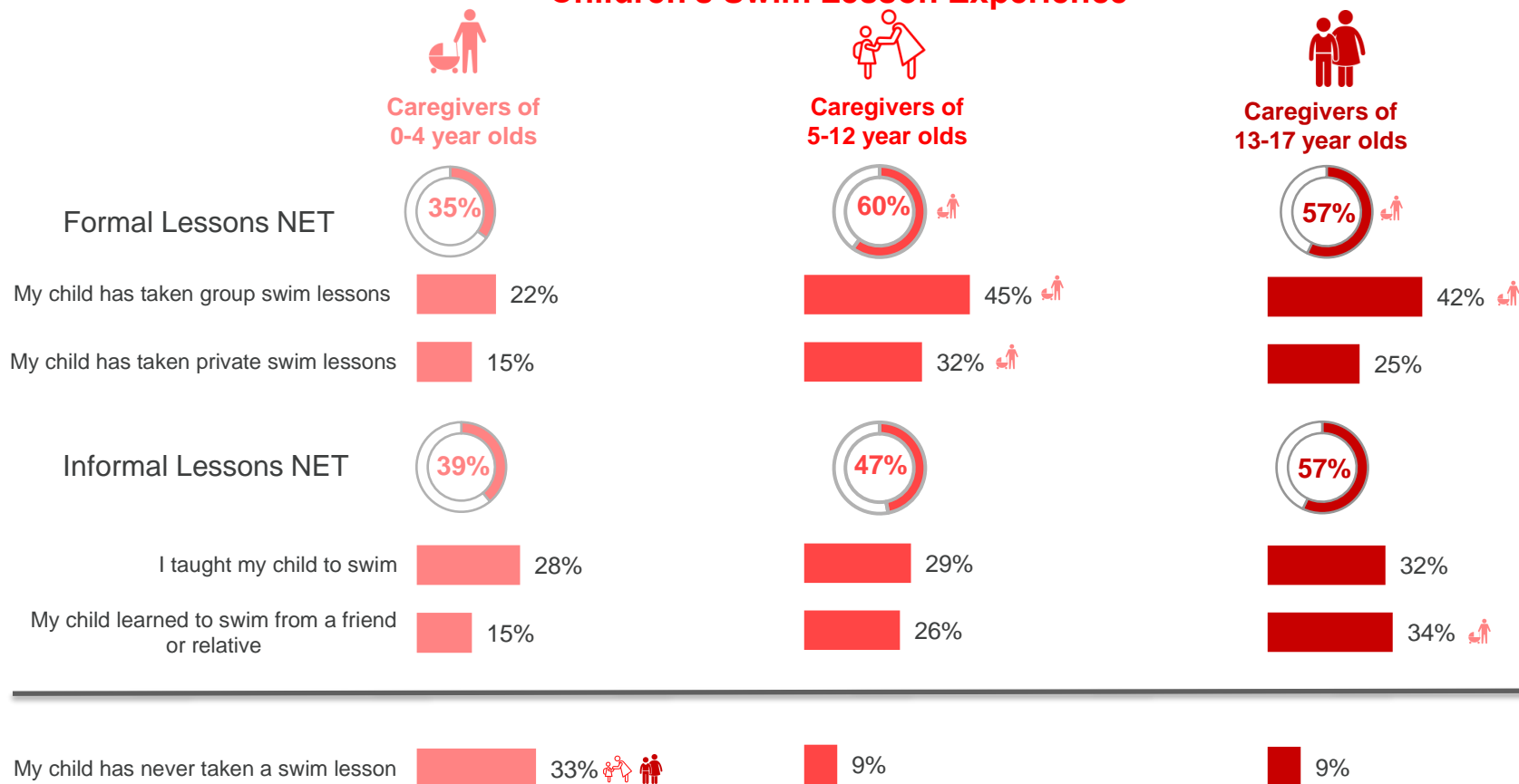
“Swim lessons were not a priority when I was growing up, or as my kids were growing up (they’re both in their 40s). But as my grandchild is here and we are in that environment, it has become more of a priority than it ever was in the history of time.”

–AI Female, Caregiver



AI/AN Caregivers of children aged 5 and older are more likely to enroll their kids in formal swim lessons compared to Caregivers of younger kids

Children's Swim Lesson Experience



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Q54/Q64/Q74/Q84: Which of these apply to this child? (Select all that apply). Base: Caregivers of 0-4 year olds, n=46; Caregivers of 5-12 year olds, n= 77; Caregivers of 13-17 year olds, n=53

Legend:
Denotes significantly HIGHER than counterpart(s)

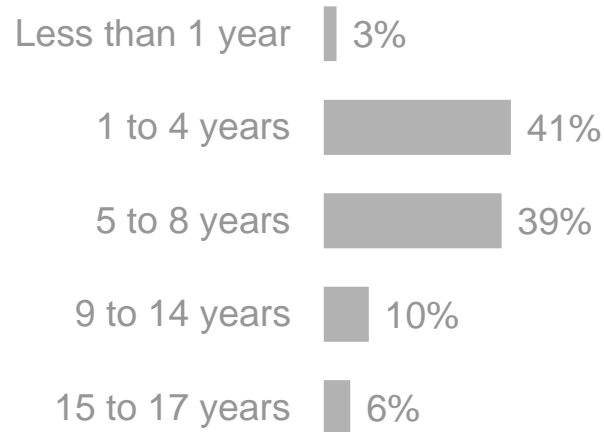
- Caregivers of 0-4 year olds
- Caregivers of 5-12 year olds
- Caregivers of 13-17 year olds

Most AI/AN Caregivers whose children have received formal swim lessons started lessons when their child was around 5 years old

Youngest Age Participated in Formal Swim Lessons



All Caregivers



Average Age
Started Formal
Swim Lessons



1% of s chose "prefer not to say"

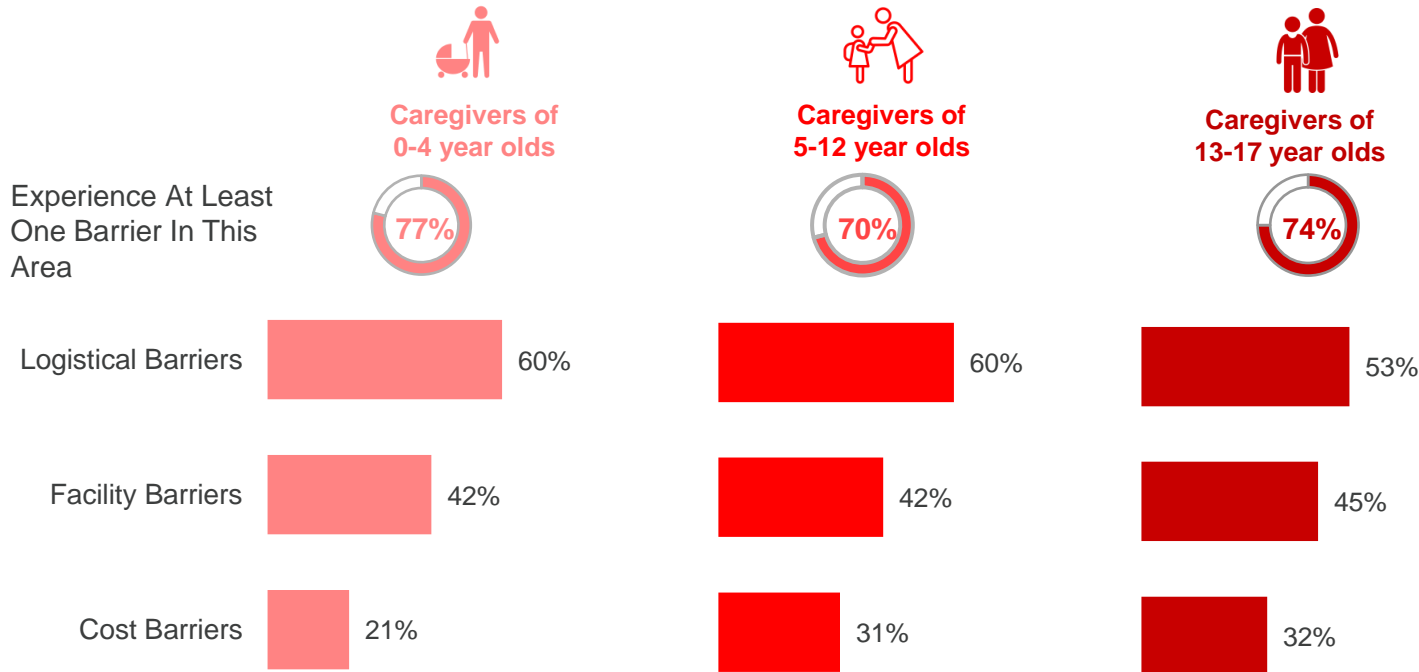


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Q19: What is the youngest age that any of your child(ren) participated in formal swim lessons? Base: s Whose Children Have Received Formal Lessons: N=109

The majority of AI/AN Caregivers face barriers to swim lessons related to lack of access and inconvenience, with logistical conflicts being the most common

Family's Barriers to Swim Lessons



*"The swim lessons started at 7:00 pm. Well, that's on a school night and virtually impossible for us."
– AI Female, Caregiver*



The number one barrier AI/AN Caregivers face when accessing swim lessons for their children is scheduling conflicts; cost is a secondary barrier

Family's Barriers to Swim Lessons	Caregivers of 0-4 year olds	Caregivers of 5-12 year olds	Caregivers of 13-17 year olds
Logistical Barriers			
<i>Scheduling conflicts</i>	56%	51%	45%
<i>The registration process is too challenging</i>	9%	16%	6%
<i>We do not know where to find information about swim lessons</i>	16%	10%	9%
<i>We do not have access to a nearby aquatic facility</i>	7%	13%	8%
<i>We do not have transportation to get to swim lessons</i>	5%	10%	8%
Facility Barriers			
<i>The chemicals in the water are too harsh on my family's skin or hair</i>	19%	21%	17%
<i>Class space for my family is never available</i>	16%	16%	15%
<i>There are issues of facility accessibility</i>	9%	10%	17%
<i>Locker room/changing areas do not meet my family's needs</i>	12%	6%	6%
<i>Aquatic facility staff do not speak my family's language</i>	2%	4%	4%
<i>We do not feel welcome at the facility</i>	2%	4%	8%
Cost Barriers			
<i>We cannot afford swim lessons</i>	21%	26%	28%
<i>We cannot afford the gear needed for swim lessons</i>	2%	8%	9%

**Circling indicates top reason, of those who chose multiple
Full chart can be found in appendix

*"I do know the challenges I've noticed with other families and swim lessons are **mostly due to cost and scheduling.**"*
– AI Two-Spirit, Young Adult and Caregiver

*"I would love for my kids to get taught by someone that's used to training people in the water. But **that's not feasible because of the cost.**"*
– AI Male, Caregiver



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Q34B: There are a variety of reasons related to access or convenience around why someone may not participate in swim lessons. Mark all the reasons that apply to you. Base: Caregivers of 0-4 year olds, n=46; Caregivers of 5-12 year olds, n= 77; Caregivers of 13-17 year olds, n=53; Q35B: You just selected the following reasons related to access or convenience around why someone may not participate in swim lessons. Of these, which is your top reason that applies to you? Base: Selected more than one in Q34B; Caregivers of 0-4 year olds, n=22; Caregivers of 5-12 year olds, n= 41; Caregivers of 13-17 year olds, n=25

Legend:
Denotes significantly HIGHER than counterpart(s)

- Caregivers of 0-4 year olds
- Caregivers of 5-12 year olds
- Caregivers of 13-17 year olds

AI/AN Caregivers desire swim lessons with evening and weekend hours that mesh with their busy lives

Barriers to Swim Lessons: Caregivers In Their Own Words

*“If my schedule would allow it, I would put my two kids in swim lessons. Swim lessons are not common for my part of the Native community. I can’t speak for every individual, but I think it’s an accumulation of **lack of resources, lack of funding, and lack of time.**”*

– AI Female, Caregiver

*“If the local place would **offer more times for swim lessons**, I would have my kids in there.”*

– AI Female, Caregiver

“On the reservation, we don’t have access to swim lessons [for our kids]. There’s an outdoor swimming pool that’s open through the summer, and there are lifeguards, but they don’t provide swim safety. The resources are just not there.”

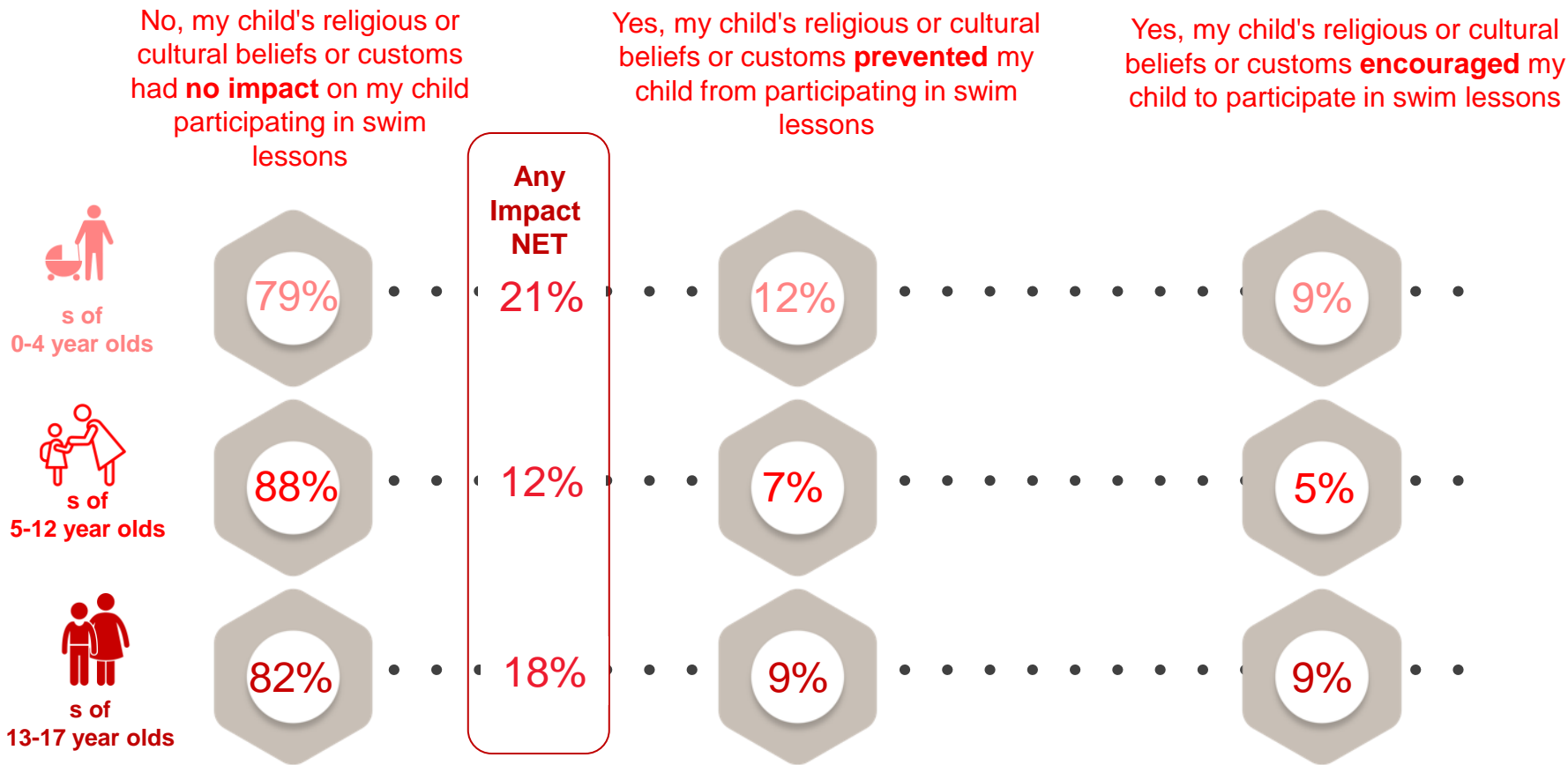
– AI Female, Caregiver

*“He’s in a learning daycare. I can’t jerk him out of school to go to a swimming lesson for his age. We don’t have that luxury. And for my oldest, if they could offer a time one night a week, or a weekend class, I would be there. Unfortunately, **their availability doesn’t work with my work schedule.**”*

– AI Female, Caregiver



For the majority of AI/AN Caregivers, religious or cultural beliefs do not impact their children's participation in swim lessons



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Q40B: Are there religious or cultural beliefs or customs that have or may impact your child's participation in swim lessons? Base: Caregivers of 0-4 year olds, n=46; Caregivers of 5-12 year olds, n= 77; Caregivers of 13-17 year olds, n=53

Barriers to enrolling their child in swim lessons include concerns about the child's safety

Drowning Concerns as a Barrier to Swim Lesson Enrollment for their Child(ren)

**Circling indicates top reason, of those who chose multiple
Full chart can be found in appendix



Caregivers of 0-4 year olds

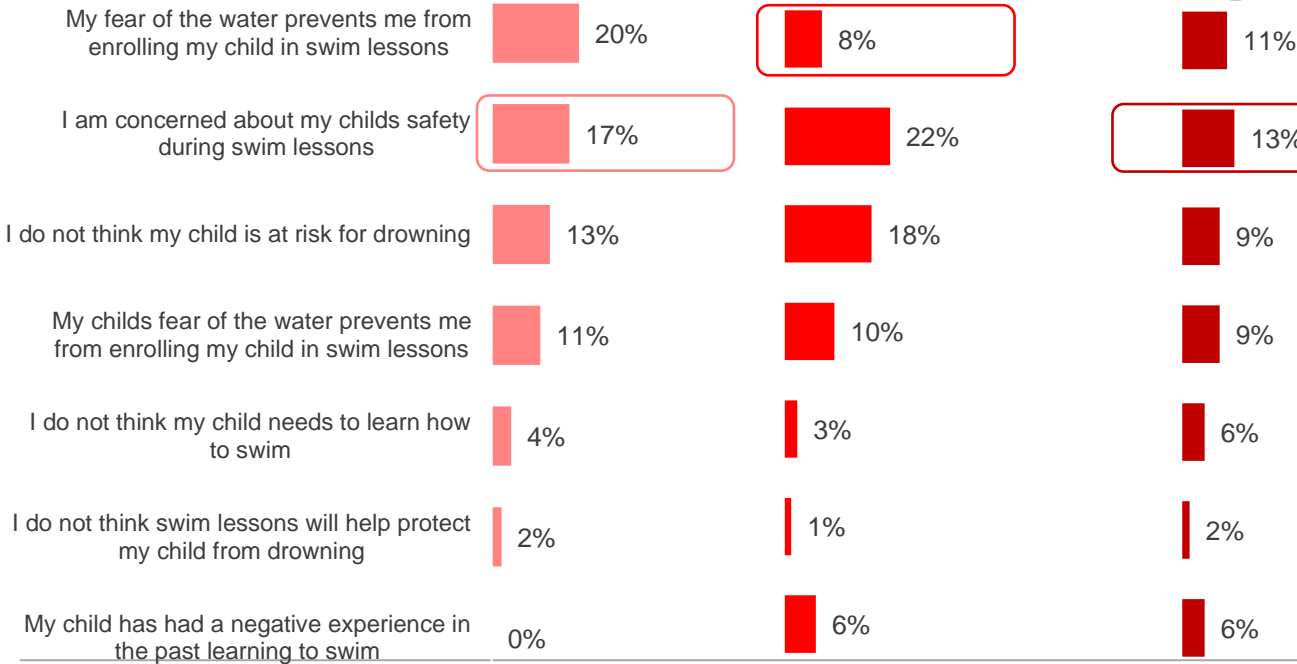


Caregivers of 5-12 year olds



Caregivers of 13-17 year olds

Experience At Least One Barrier In This Area



*"I felt like swim lessons weren't being offered in a way that they were really trying to teach water safety to kids. It felt like it was another way to make money. One time my child was going down the slide during class and the lifeguard was not paying attention to him. He was fine, but I was pregnant in full clothing, and I was this close to jumping in myself. It scared me so bad."
- AI Female, Caregiver*

*"The biggest hardship was finding consistent teachers, because they rotate out quite a bit... It's helpful to have people you trust."
- AI Female, Caregiver*



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Q55/Q65/Q75/Q85: Some people do not enroll in swim lessons for reasons related to risk of drowning. Please mark all the reasons that apply to Base: Caregivers of 0-4 year olds, n=46; Caregivers of 5-12 year olds, n= 77; Caregivers of 13-17 year olds, n=53; Q56/Q66/Q76/Q86: You just selected the following reasons related to risk of drowning around why someone would not enroll in swim lessons. Of these, which is your top reason? Base: chose more than one in Q55/Q65/Q75/Q85: Caregivers of 0-4 year olds, n=5; Caregivers of 5-12 year olds, n= 11; Caregivers of 13-17 year olds, n=2

Some AI/AN children have faced psychological barriers to swim lessons, with embarrassment and low prioritization being the main reasons

Psychological Barriers to Swim Lesson Enrollment



Caregivers of 0-4 year olds



Caregivers of 5-12 year olds

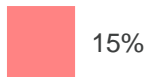


Caregivers of 13-17 year olds

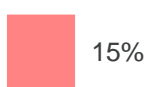
Experience At Least One Barrier In This Area



My child is embarrassed to be taking swim lessons



When compared to other activities or commitments, swim lessons are not a priority for my child



My child is embarrassed about how they look in a swimsuit or in swim trunks



My child is embarrassed that they don't know how to swim



My child has cognitive, mental or physical disabilities that makes participation too challenging








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Q57/Q67/Q77/Q87: Some people do not enroll in swim lessons for reasons related to interest, motivation or physical challenges. Please mark all the reasons that apply to you. Base: Caregivers of 0-4 year olds, n=46; Caregivers of 5-12 year olds, n= 77; Caregivers of 13-17 year olds, n=53;



Note: There were insufficient sample sizes to report on Q58/Q68/Q78/Q88

Expanding the availability of swim lessons to accommodate schedules can support AI/AN Caregivers in enrolling their children, as well as lowering costs and removing other barriers

Factors to Encourage Enrolling their Child(ren) in Swim Lessons		 Caregivers of 0-4 year olds	 Caregivers of 5-12 year olds	 Caregivers of 13-17 year olds
**Circling indicates top reason, of those who chose multiple Full chart can be found in appendix	Offerings that better suit my family's schedule	51% 	51% 	38%
	Swim lessons that are more affordable	44%	45%	40%
	A more welcoming environment at the facility	35%	29%	25%
	Aquatic programming options for multiple children of different ages and skill levels offered at the same time	33%	40%	36%
	More ways to register	33%	30%	23%
	A more accessible facility	23%	23%	17%
	Transportation to or from the facility	14%	16%	8%
	Single gender group lessons	12%	10%	6%
	Guarantee of instructors who are the same gender as my child	12%	16%	13%
	Adapted swim offerings at the facility	9%	14%	13%
	Accommodations to the locker room/changing room environment that adhere to our religious or cultural beliefs	9%	12%	13%
	Aquatic facility staff who speak our language	9%	9%	6%
	Aquatic facility staff who look like us	7%	9%	8%
	Accommodations to the physical swim lesson environment that adhere to our religious or cultural beliefs	5%	8%	8%

Q43B: Which of the following, if any, would make YOUR FAMILY enroll in swim lessons? (Select all that apply) Base: Caregivers of 0-4 year olds, n=46; Caregivers of 5-12 year olds, n= 77; Caregivers of 13-17 year olds, n=53; Q44B: You just selected the following factors would help YOUR FAMILY enroll in swim lessons. Of these, which is your top reason? Base: Caregivers who selected more than 1 response in Q4BA: Caregivers of 0-4 year olds, n=31; Caregivers of 5-12 year olds, n= 60; Caregivers of 13-17 year olds, n=34

Legend:
 Denotes significantly HIGHER than counterpart(s)

-  Caregivers of 0-4 year olds
-  Caregivers of 5-12 year olds
-  Caregivers of 13-17 year olds



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Summary of Findings



AI/AN Community's Interaction with Water

- **The AI/AN community values water and swimming** for exercise, sports and recreation. Teens participate in the greatest frequency of varied water activities.
- While **pools are the most common place** to swim, there is also **high usage of natural areas** (i.e., lakes, rivers) for swimming, with and without lifeguards.
- Attitudinally, the AI/AN community has **strong connections to water**; respect and fear intersect to create a **high reverence** for its strength as well as risk.
- **Safety around water** is most strongly associated with **lifeguards, but having clean and calm water** are also of key importance to feeling safe when swimming.
- While the **majority report being swimmers**, about **one in five** AI/AN individuals self-assess their skill level as **beginner or below**. **Young Adults** report the **highest skill level** overall.
- **Young Adults reported** learning to swim through **formal lessons**, while **Caregivers** are more likely to have **learned through friends, relatives or on their own**. Interestingly, **Teens are most engaged in learning to swim**, learning equally through informal and formal methods.
- **Teens demonstrate safer water behavior** than Caregivers and Young Adults. They almost always swim where lifeguards are present, emphasize the importance of advanced swimming skills, and show a strong inclination towards wearing life jackets while boating and fishing.



Teens and Young Adults: Access & Barriers to Swim Lessons

- The majority of **Teens and Young Adults** encounter **barriers to swim lessons** due to **limited access, inconvenience, and affordability**, with logistical conflicts being the most common issue.
- **Teens** identify **swimming in non-designated areas** and also **swimming alone**.
- **Psychological barriers** to swim lessons are stronger among Young Adults than Teens. Young Adults are less likely to feel at risk of drowning yet have more concerns about their safety during lessons. They are more likely to feel embarrassed if they don't know how to swim, and place lessons at a lower priority versus other activities.
- **Religious and cultural beliefs** are not a top-of-mind barrier to swim lessons among the AI/AN Teen and Young Adult community but did emerge as a secondary finding. **Young Adults** in particular **feel an expectation** that they should already know how to swim, possibly leading to shame as a barrier.



Children: Access & Barriers to Swimming

- **Even though most Caregivers say their children know how to swim, most only have beginner levels of skill.**
 - The majority of children under 12 years old have limited swimming skill levels.
 - According to Caregiver reports, only 1 in 5 teenagers exhibit advanced proficiency, highlighting room for growth in swimming skill levels within this age group.
- **Most Caregivers hold favorable views about swim lessons and their importance.**
 - Very few Caregivers believe that their child does not need to learn how to swim; only 2% doubt that swim lessons can effectively protect their child from drowning.
 - Most AI/AN Caregivers whose children have received formal swim lessons say that their kids started lessons at around 5 or 6 years old.



Limitations

- There was an overrepresentation of AN in younger age groups (Teens) and underrepresentation of AN in older age groups (Young Adults and Caregivers), and vice versa for AI. Differences shown by age group may also be attributed to AI vs. AN differences.
- Geographic representation was not equal across the nation.
- Participants self-identified their alignment with the AI/AN community when completing the survey.
- Most of the Teen respondents were male but most of the Young Adults and Caregivers respondents were female.
- Water safety behaviors were self reported and may have been impacted by social desirability bias.
- Some branching questions resulted in small base sizes. These results are being interpreted with caution and considered directional only.



Recommendations



Recommendations:

Build Trust and Use Data Driven Approaches

- Take steps to identify key stakeholders and build trust and partnerships for effective engagement with AI/AN populations, including in advance of attempts to conduct needs assessments.
- Consistent with the recommendations from the Phase 1 project, use data-driven approaches to learn about your community—rather than assumptions—which can help illuminate:
 - Barriers (or the lack thereof) among and between groups.
 - Factors that aid enrollment.
- Examples of mechanisms to achieve data-driven information include:
 - Conduct community needs assessments—especially for multiple facility organizations that serve diverse populations.
 - Conduct routine customer satisfaction surveys to assess facilities, programs, schedules, fee structure, processes, instructors and staff.
 - Utilize data from relevant and recent academic or industry reports to inform decision-making, such as this report.
- Create action plans to execute findings.



Recommendations

Schedule, Affordability and Welcoming Environment

- Findings and recommendations that are also consistent with the Phase 1 project are related to schedule, affordability and a welcoming environment:
 - Understand scheduling challenges of your population and offer schedule-friendly options to adjust for diverse and hectic schedules of families.
 - Provide programming options that allow for multiple children of different skill levels to attend at the same time.
 - Assess fee structure to make swim lessons more affordable (e.g., reduction of course fees, discounts, scholarship opportunities).
 - Take steps to better understand interpersonal and structural barriers among Caregivers related to fostering a welcoming environment.



Recommendations

Barriers to Swim Lessons

- Start the water safety conversation early and provide a continuum of learning water safety education, water competency skills and more advanced swimming skills to help address the findings that:
 - The average age when AI/AN respondents reported that they learn to swim is 8 to 10 years old. The average age that Caregivers report that the youngest age they enrolled their children in swim lessons is 5 years old.
 - Most children only have beginner swimming skills.
 - One in three Young Adults and Caregivers responded that it is enough to learn basic swimming skills over advanced swimming skills.
- Recruit and hire AI/AN staff, lifeguards and swim instructors to give a representation of what is possible which could reduce feelings of shame and embarrassment around not knowing how to swim, especially for Teens and Young Adults.



Recommendations

Water Safety

- Highlight the safety aspects of your programs, such as that lifeguards are on duty, that a national instructional curriculum is followed, that instructors are trained and certified and receive regular in-service training and professional development.
- Integrate these content areas into water safety education:
 - The importance of wearing life jackets, including for children with low swimming skills when near the water.
 - For Teens, on risks of swimming in areas that are not designated for swimming or swimming alone.
 - The risks of alcohol consumption when around water activities – for self and when supervising others.



Recommendations

Aquatics Activities and Employment Opportunities

- Because Teens are interested in a wide range of aquatic-related activities, to include job opportunities, provide varied programs to help keep them:
 - Advancing in the acquisition of aquatic skills.
 - Interested and ready for training and certification for roles as lifeguards, swim instructors and more.
- Young Adults and Caregivers have an interest in aquatics jobs, with lifeguarding and swim instructors at the top:
 - Highlight the benefits of these types of jobs and how they can relate to other to career paths (for Young Adults).
 - Provide attractive training opportunities to help more mature potential candidates gain skill and confidence for participation in training (for Caregivers).



Appendix



Communities and Tribes Represented

Agdaagux Tribe of King Cove
Akiachak Native Community
Aleut
Allakaket Village
Asa'carsarmiut Tribe
Atmautluak Traditional Council
Aztec
Beaver Village Council
Big Pine Paiute Tribe of the Owens Valley
Birch Creek Tribal Council
Blackfeet
Central Council Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska
Chalkyitsik Village
Cheesh-Na Tribal Council
Cherokee
Chevak Native Village
Chickasaw
Choctaw
Coharie
Fon du Lac
Fond du lac Tribe of Ojibwe, Minnesota
Fort Yukon
Gila River Indian Community
Hopi-Navajo
Inupiaq
Kaw
Lakota Sioux
Lumbee

Mayan
Mescalero, Apache
Muscogee Creek Nation
Narragansett
Native Village of Buckland
Native Village of Chignik Lagoon
Native Village of Gakona
Native Village of Georgetown
Native Village of Napakiak
Native Village of Napaskiak
Native Village of Nelson Lagoon
Navajo Nation
Nenana Native Association
Haliwa-Saponi
Haudenosaunee
Ohlone/Costanoan
Orutsaramuit Native Council
Perryville
Pitka's Point
Poarch Creek
Pomo and Yokut Northern California
Potawatami
Red Cliff
Rosebud Sioux
Seminole Nation
Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians
Tanacross
Ute
Upper Skagit
White Earth Mountain
White Mountain Apache
Yurok



Perceived Age Community Members Start Swim Lessons



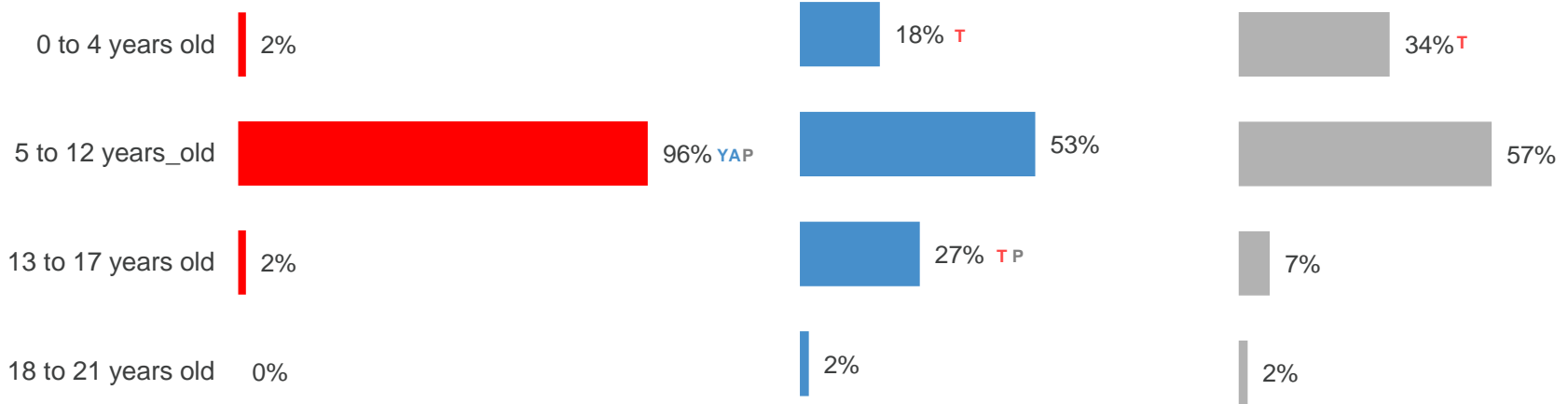
Teens (13-17)



Young Adults (18-29)



Caregivers (30+)



Average Age
Community
Learned to Swim



Q33: To the best of your knowledge, at what age do people in your network generally begin swim lessons? Base: Participates in lessons: Teen, n=52, Young Adults, n=49, Caregivers, n=58



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Legend:

Denotes significantly HIGHER than counterpart(s)

^T Teens (13-17)

^{YA} Young Adults (18-29)

^C Caregivers (30+)

Reasons to Spend Time In/Around a Body of Water

	Teens (13-17)	Young Adults (18-29)	Caregivers (30+)
Exercise	59%	73%	65%
Sports	59% YA C	34%	31%
Recreation	48%	74% T	92% T YA
Hygiene/bathing	28%	35%	39%
Religious, traditional, cultural or spiritual ceremonies	26% YA C	8%	9%
Food acquisition, such as fishing or hunting	24%	16%	24%
Collecting water	17% YA C	5%	5%
Transportation	9%	6%	9%
Your job	7%	18% C	4%
Watering livestock	7%	6%	3%
Other reason	0%	0%	1%



Legend:

Denotes significantly HIGHER than counterpart(s)

T Teens (13-17)

YA Young Adults (18-29)

C Caregivers (30+)

Top Reason to Spend Time In/Around a Body of Water

	Teens (13-17)	Young Adults (18-29)	Caregivers (30+)
Exercise	36% C	23%	15%
Sports	34% YA C	11%	3%
Recreation	9%	32% T	61% T YA
Hygiene/bathing	9%	9%	15%
Food acquisition, such as fishing or hunting	6%	4%	2%
Religious, traditional, cultural or spiritual ceremonies	6%	2%	2%
Your job	0%	13% T C	2%
Transportation	0%	2%	0%
Collecting water	0%	2%	0%
Watering livestock	0%	0%	0%
Prefer not to answer	0%	2%	0%



Legend:

Denotes significantly HIGHER than counterpart(s)

- T** Teens (13-17)
- YA** Young Adults (18-29)
- C** Caregivers (30+)

Frequency of Swimming Alone	Teens (13-17)	Young Adults (18-29)	Care-givers (30+)
	Always/Most of the Time NET	65% CYA	40% C
Always	26% C	21% C	7%
Most of the Time	39% CYA	19%	10%
Sometimes/Never NET	35%	58%	80%
Sometimes	30%	34%	36%
Never	5%	24% T	44% TYA

2% of Young Adults chose Prefer not to answer
 3% of s chose Does not apply to me

Frequency of Swimming Where There is No Lifeguard Present	Teens (13-17)	Young Adults (18-29)	Care-givers (30+)
	Always/Most of the Time NET	6%	42% T
Always	2%	21% T	13% T
Most of the Time	4%	21% T	19% T
Sometimes/Never NET	94%	58%	65%
Sometimes	52%	40%	45%
Never	42% YA C	18%	20%

3% of Caregivers chose Does not apply to me



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Q28: Thinking about all the times you are in or on a body of water, how often do you [RATE ON 5-POINT SCALE OF ALWAYS, MOST OF THE TIME, SOMETIMES, NEVER, DOES NOT APPLY TO ME] Swim alone; Swim in a location where there is no lifeguard on duty Base: Total Respondents: Teens, n=54; Young Adults, n= 62; Caregivers, n=75

Legend:
 Denotes significantly HIGHER than counterpart(s)

- T Teens (13-17)
- YA Young Adults (18-29)
- C Caregivers (30+)

Frequency of Life Jacket Wearing while on a Boat

	Teens (13-17)	Young Adults (18-29)	Caregivers (30+)
Always/Most of the Time NET	98% YAC	74%	80%
Always	48%	39%	55%
Most of the Time	50% P	35%	25%
Sometimes/Never NET	2%	18%	16%
Sometimes	2%	15% T	12% T
Never	0%	3%	4%

8% of Young Adults chose Does not apply to me
4% of s chose Does not apply to me

Frequency of Life Jacket Wearing while Fishing

	Teens (13-17)	Young Adults (18-29)	Caregivers (30+)
Always/Most of the Time NET	95% YAC	47%	51%
Always	52% YAC	31%	23%
Most of the Time	43% YA	16%	28%
Sometimes/Never NET	2%	42%	31%
Sometimes	2%	31% TC	15%
Never	0%	11% T	16% T

3% of Teens chose Does not apply to me
11% of Young Adults chose Does not apply to me/Prefer not to answer
18% of s chose Does not apply to me







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Q28: Thinking about all the times you are in or on a body of water, how often do you [RATE ON 5-POINT SCALE OF ALWAYS, MOST OF THE TIME, SOMETIMES, NEVER, DOES NOT APPLY TO ME] Wear a life jacket while on a boat; Wear a life jacket while fishing.
Base: Total Respondents: Teens, n=54; Young Adults, n= 62; Caregivers, n=75






Legend:

Denotes significantly HIGHER than counterpart(s)




- T Teens (13-17)
- YA Young Adults (18-29)
- C Caregivers (30+)

Require Your Child(ren) to Wear a Life Jacket on a Boat	 Caregivers of 0-4 year olds	 Caregivers of 5-12 year olds	 Caregivers of 13-17 year olds
Always/Most of the Time NET	95%	95%	94%
<i>Always</i>	79%	88%	85%
<i>Most of the Time</i>	16% 	6%	9%
Sometimes/Never NET	2%	4%	4%
<i>Sometimes</i>	2%	4%	4%
<i>Never</i>	0%	0%	0%

3% of s of 0-4 chose Does not apply to me
 1% of s of 5-12 chose Does not apply to me
 2% of s of 13-17 chose Does not apply to me

Require Your Child(ren) to Wear a Life Jacket while Fishing	 Caregivers of 0-4 year olds	 Caregivers of 5-12 year olds	 Caregivers of 13-17 year olds
Always/Most of the Time NET	79%	76%	70%
<i>Always</i>	63%	64%	55%
<i>Most of the Time</i>	16%	12%	15%
Sometimes/Never NET	12%	14%	9%
<i>Sometimes</i>	7%	8%	9%
<i>Never</i>	5% 	6% 	0%

9% of s of 0-4 chose Does not apply to me
 10% of s of 5-12 chose Does not apply to me
 21% of s of 13-17 chose Does not apply to me

Stay Within Arm's Reach of any Young Child who is in my Care	 Caregivers of 0-4 year olds	 Caregivers of 5-12 year olds	 Caregivers of 13-17 year olds
Always/Most of the Time NET	91%	94%	94%
<i>Always</i>	58%	69%	72%
<i>Most of the Time</i>	33%	25%	22%
Sometimes/Never NET	9%	6%	6%
<i>Sometimes</i>	7%	5%	6%
<i>Never</i>	2%	1%	0%






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Q28: Thinking about all the times you are in or on a body of water, how often do you [RATE ON 5-POINT SCALE OF ALWAYS, MOST OF THE TIME, SOMETIMES, NEVER, DOES NOT APPLY TO ME] Base: Caregivers of 0-4 year olds, n=46; Caregivers of 5-12 year olds, n=77; Caregivers of 13-17 year olds, n=53

Legend:

Denotes significantly HIGHER than counterpart(s)

-  Caregivers of 0-4 year olds
-  Caregivers of 5-12 year olds
-  Caregivers of 13-17 year olds

Reasons for not Considering Aquatics-based Opportunities	Teens (13-17)	Young Adults (18-29)	Caregivers (30+)
The certification process is a hassle	20%	8%	5%
The training takes too long	20%	0%	3%
It is too much responsibility	20%	15%	24%
I do not like being in a position of leadership	20%	8%	5%
These types of jobs will not help me in my chosen career field	0%	62% T C	26%
I do not think my skill level is good enough to successfully complete the training	0%	23%	32%
I do not have access to this type of training	0%	8%	13%
It does not pay enough	0%	8%	18%
I am concerned about too much exposure to the sun	0%	8%	11%
It is too boring	0%	8%	0%
I do not like working with children	0%	0%	3%
I cannot afford this type of training	0%	0%	5%
It is too hot	0%	0%	11%
Other	0%	0%	16%
Prefer not to answer	20%	0%	5%

Caution: Small base sizes. Results should be interpreted with caution and considered directional only.



American Red Cross
Training Services

Q46: You indicated that you have not considered any aquatics-based job. Why not? Base: Has not considered aquatic-based opportunities Teens, n=5; Young Adults, n= 13; Caregivers, n=38

Legend:

Denotes significantly HIGHER than counterpart(s)

T Teens (13-17)

YA Young Adults (18-29)

C Caregivers (30+)

Top Barrier to Swim Lessons	Teens (13-17)	Young Adults (18-29)
Logistical Barriers		
<i>Scheduling conflicts</i>	15%	29%
<i>The registration process is too challenging</i>	9%	14%
<i>I do not have access to a nearby aquatic facility that offers swim lessons</i>	13%	7%
<i>I do not have transportation to get to swim lessons</i>	11%	0%
<i>I do not know where to find information about swim lessons in my community</i>	2%	0%
Facility Barriers		
<i>Class space for me is never available</i>	15%	0%
<i>The chemicals in the water are too harsh on my skin or hair</i>	0%	29% T
<i>There are issues of facility accessibility</i>	2%	7%
<i>Locker room/changing areas do not meet my needs</i>	4%	0%
<i>I do not feel welcome at the facility</i>	9%	0%
<i>Aquatic facility staff do not speak my language</i>	2%	14%
Cost Barriers		
<i>I cannot afford the gear needed for swim lessons</i>	13%	0%
<i>I cannot afford swim lessons</i>	6%	0%

Caution: Small base sizes. Results should be interpreted with caution and considered directional only.



Legend:





Denotes significantly HIGHER than counterpart(s)

T Teens (13-17)

YA Young Adults (18-29)

C Caregivers (30+)


Top Reasons Not to Enroll in Swim Lessons Related to Risk of Drowning

	 Caregivers of 0-4 year olds	 Caregivers of 5-12 year olds	 Caregivers of 13-17 year olds
I'm concerned about my child's safety during swim lessons	40%	9%	100% 
I do not think my child is at risk for drowning	20%	9%	0%
I do not think swim lessons will help protect my child from drowning	20%	0%	0%
Prefer not to answer	20%	9%	0%
My fear of the water prevents me from enrolling my child in swim lessons	0%	46%	0%
My child's fear of the water prevents me from enrolling my child in swim lessons	0%	18%	0%
My child has had a negative experience in the past learning to swim	0%	9%	0%
I do not think my child needs to learn how to swim	0%	0%	0%



Legend:





Denotes significantly HIGHER than counterpart(s)

-  Caregivers of 0-4 year olds
-  Caregivers of 5-12 year olds
-  Caregivers of 13-17 year olds

Top Reasons to Help Enroll in Swim Lessons	Teens (13-17)	Young Adults (18-29)
Offerings that better suit my schedule (i.e., frequency, daytime vs. nighttime, weekends vs. weekdays)	13%	24%
Aquatic programming options for multiple children of different ages and skill levels offered at the same time	13%	5%
Accommodations to the physical swim lesson environment that adhere to my religious or cultural beliefs	11%	10%
Guarantee of instructors who are the same gender as me	11%	10%
A more accessible facility (example: means of entry and exit to the facility itself, pool, locker room/changing room)	8%	10%
Swim lessons that are more affordable	8%	14%
Transportation to or from the facility	8%	5%
Aquatic facility staff who look like me	8%	0%
Adapted swim offerings at the facility (example: accommodating physical and cognitive/mental disabilities)	4%	7%
A more welcoming environment at the facility	4%	2%
More ways to register (such as online or in-person registration)	4%	0%
Aquatic facility staff who speak my language	4%	5%
Single gender group lessons	2%	1%
Accommodations to the locker room/changing room environment that adhere to my religious or cultural beliefs	2%	7%



Top Reasons to Help Enroll Their Family in Swim Lessons

	 Caregivers of 0-4 year olds	 Caregivers of 5-12 year olds	 Caregivers of 13-17 year olds
Offerings that better suit my family's schedule	36%	30%	26%
Swim lessons that are more affordable	16%	13%	21%
A more welcoming environment at the facility	13% 	2%	6%
Aquatic programming options for multiple children of different ages and skill levels offered at the same time	10%	10%	9%
Accommodations to the physical swim lesson environment that adhere to our religious or cultural beliefs	7%	5%	6%
Single gender group lessons	3%	0%	3%
More ways to register	3%	5%	6%
A more accessible facility	3%	7%	3%
Guarantee of instructors who are the same gender as my child	3%	5%	0%
Adapted swim offerings at the facility	0%	7%	6%
Transportation to or from the facility	0%	3%	6%
Accommodations to the locker room/changing room environment that adhere to our religious or cultural beliefs	0%	2%	0%
Aquatic facility staff who look like us	0%	3%	3%
Aquatic facility staff who speak our language	0%	0%	0%
Other	3%	7%	5%
Prefer not to answer	3%	1%	0%



Thanks!

