



2023

STATE OF HIV STIGMA



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INTRODUCTION

This is the fourth year that GLAAD, in partnership with the Gilead COMPASS Initiative[®], is releasing data tracking Americans' knowledge and attitudes around HIV and HIV stigma.

We have noted continued progress in important areas including awareness that medications exist to prevent HIV and treat HIV to the point of becoming undetectable and therefore untransmittable (U=U). This recognition is critical to the national goal of ending the HIV epidemic by 2030.

This year, for the first time, we noted an alarming generation gap. Gen Z, the youngest generation in population surveys, is the most diverse and most out LGBTQ generation in history. According to our study, Gen Z is also the least knowledgeable about HIV.

Members of Gen X are nearly twice as knowledgeable about HIV than Gen Z. It is perhaps not surprising since Gen Xers like me came of age in the earliest days of HIV/AIDS and witnessed the horror of millions of lives lost amid rampant

homophobia, ignorance, and neglect in our government and in the media.

Despite decades of scientific and medical advances chronicling people living long and healthy lives with HIV, stigma about HIV and discriminatory efforts to criminalize people with HIV remain entrenched.

To this day, our study shows, more Americans inaccurately believe HIV mostly affects LGBTQ people, when the truth is, anyone can contract HIV.

Rising visibility and acceptance of LGBTQ people is part of the solution, as is taking action against ongoing threats to everyone's health, safety, and freedoms. Fringe extremists are working overtime to spread disinformation and encourage violence against LGBTQ people.

They are proposing bans on essential health care for transgender people, stripping access to abortion and all reproductive care, and banning books and free speech in classrooms. Draconian funding cuts to HIV prevention and

treatment programs are woven into this truly dangerous extremist agenda.

We urgently need to accelerate bridging all the gaps — generational, knowledge,



empathy and understanding — to end HIV. We must tap the talents and conscience of all generations, especially Gen Z, and engage their proven commitment to racial

justice, LGBTQ equality and diversity in all forms, as well as to the environment, and to our democracy. Attention in all of these areas is crucial to ending HIV.

Our study showed more people reported seeing stories in the media about HIV and people living with HIV. We need to see many more. As classrooms increasingly become political battlegrounds, accurate, lifesaving information must reach young people through news and entertainment, as well as through our own stories we share.

GLAAD's 2023 State of HIV Stigma Study is one chapter in a story that spans generations. As you read this report, we hope you are moved to share what you have learned and add to your own stories. Ending HIV should be every generation's lasting achievement.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Sarah Kate Ellis".

SARAH KATE ELLIS
President & CEO, GLAAD

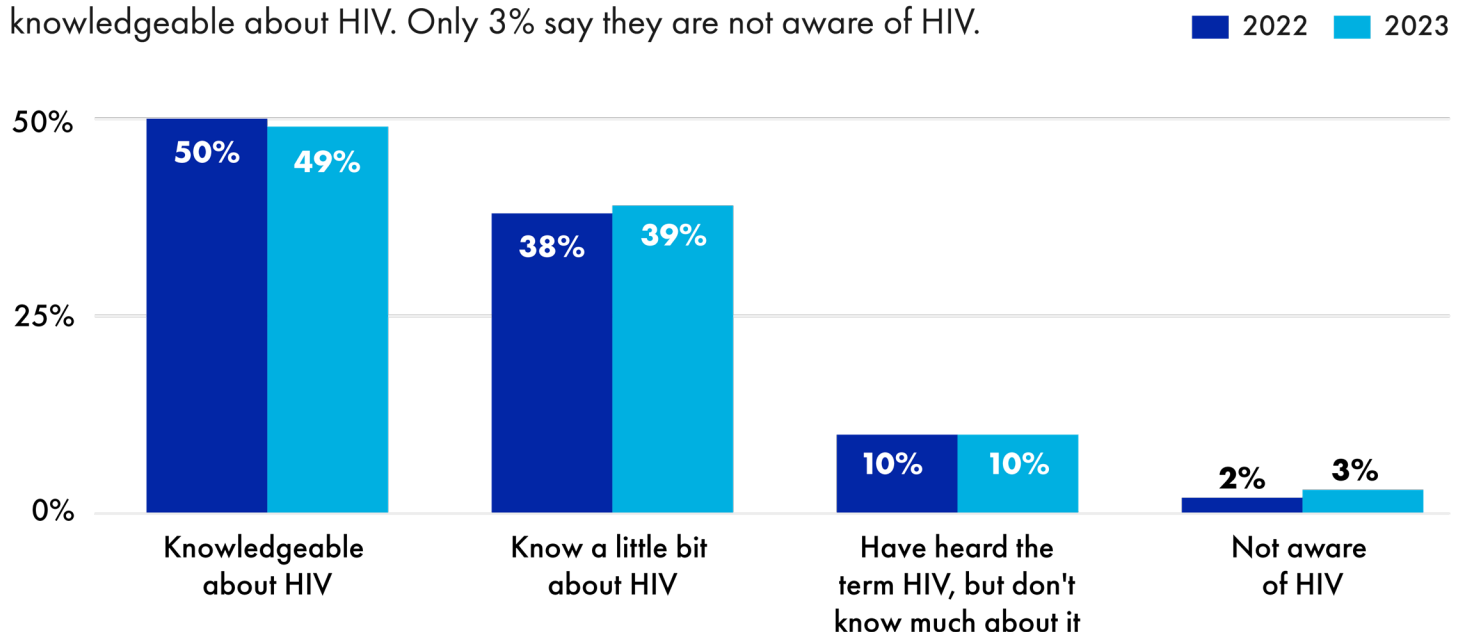
2023 STATE OF HIV STIGMA STUDY

Key Findings: The findings track progress against HIV stigma, transmission and prevention of HIV, and attitudes and knowledge of people living with HIV in the United States.

glaad.org/endhivstigma

Stable knowledge of HIV year over year

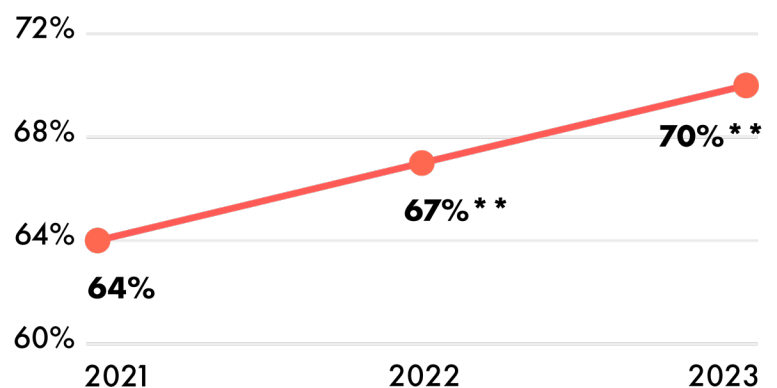
We continue to see stability in the percentage of Americans that are knowledgeable about HIV. Only 3% say they are not aware of HIV.



Continued understanding of PrEP benefits

For the second consecutive year, more Americans believe there are medications today that can protect against contracting HIV.

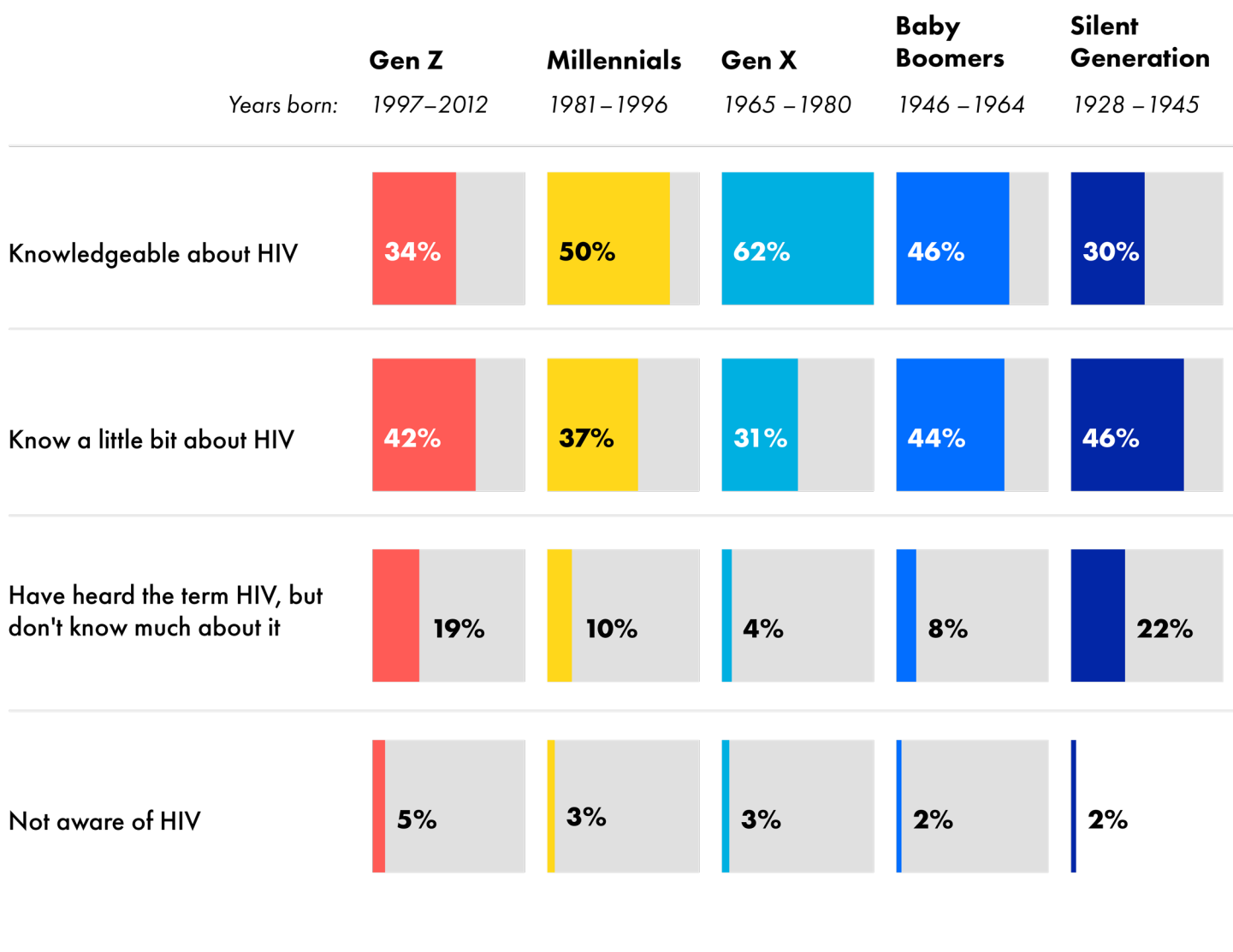
% who agree medications exist today that, when taken correctly, can protect someone from contracting HIV



**Statistically significant at 90% confidence.

Gen X is the most knowledgeable about HIV

While over 60% of Gen X say they are knowledgeable about HIV, only 34% of Gen Z adults say the same. There is a need to educate and raise awareness and knowledge of HIV among Gen Z.



New HIV diagnoses by age group in 2020



Source: [HIV.gov](https://www.hiv.gov)

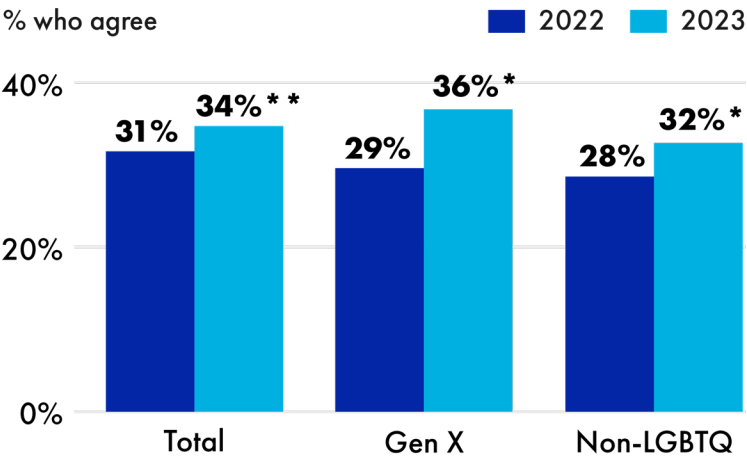
People aged **13 to 34** accounted for **57%** of new diagnoses

People aged **25 to 34** accounted for **37%** of new diagnoses

More Americans have seen stories about real people living with HIV in media this year

Anywhere in media, Americans say they are seeing more stories about real people living with HIV, with particular year over year increases seen in Gen X and Non-LGBTQ adults.

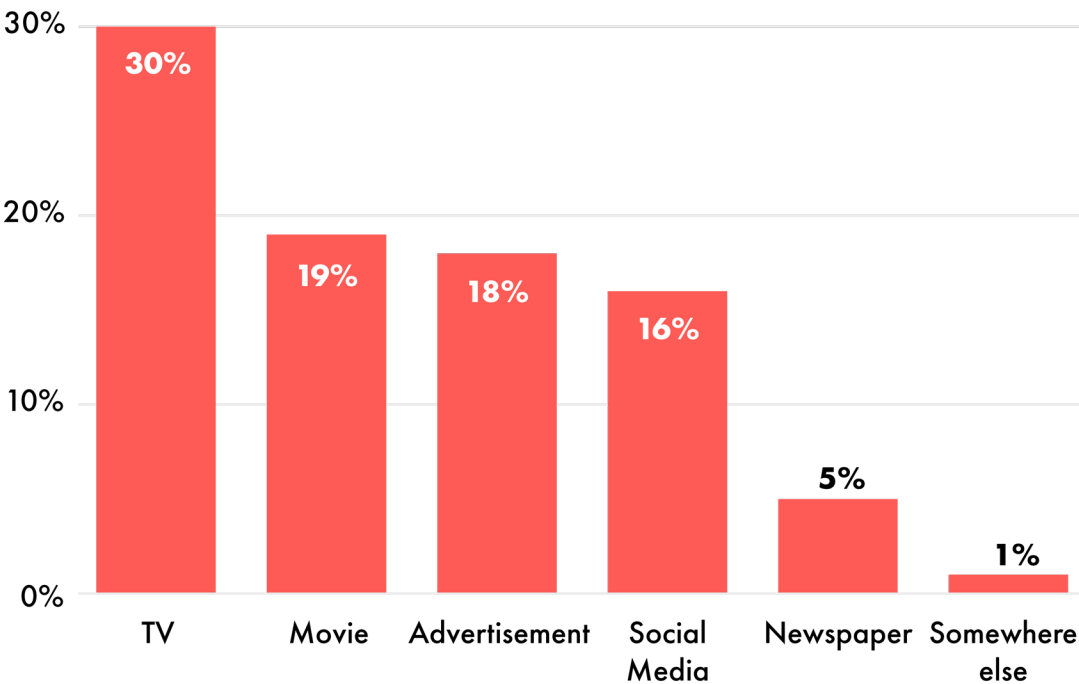
*Statistically significant at 95% confidence.
**Statistically significant at 90% confidence.



TV and movies are the biggest platforms for seeing stories about people living with HIV

GLAAD’s [Where We Are On TV report](#) found an increase in the number of characters living with HIV in the 2022-23 season, although none of these characters is set to return next year. With restrictions that give young adults and viewers less accurate information regarding HIV and restrict access to affordable care, entertainment can continue to be a source of widespread education, learning, and understanding.

% who have seen people living with HIV on each platform



TV characters living with HIV



William Chris Sumpter
Spencer on Netflix’s *The Midnight Club*



Fin Argus
Mingus on Peacock’s *Queer as Folk*



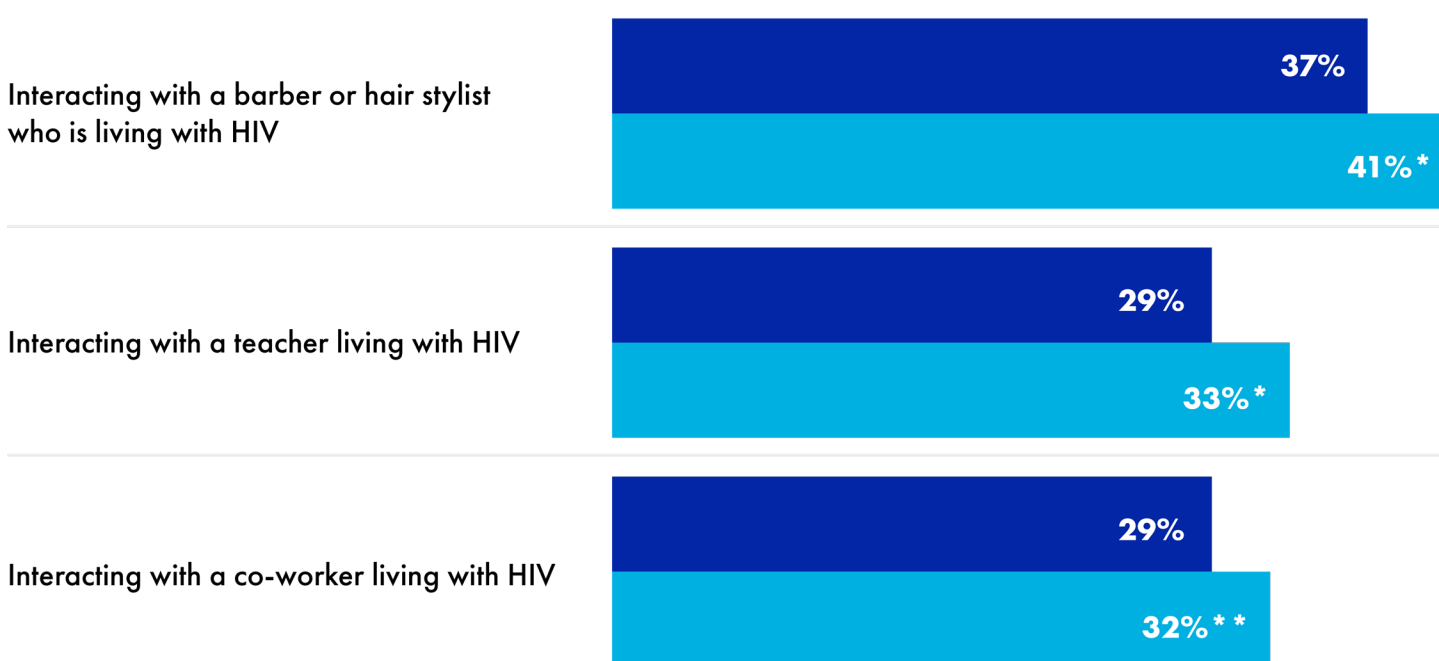
Joe Mantello
Gino on FX’s *American Horror Story: NYC*

Comfortability interacting with people living with HIV has changed year over year in a few professions

Americans' discomfort interacting with those living with HIV increased vs. 2022 for interactions with hairstylists, teachers, and co-workers, professions where we have been separated from each other due to COVID. The South has higher discomfort levels in these areas than other regions of the country.

■ 2022 ■ 2023

% Strongly/Somewhat uncomfortable in given situations

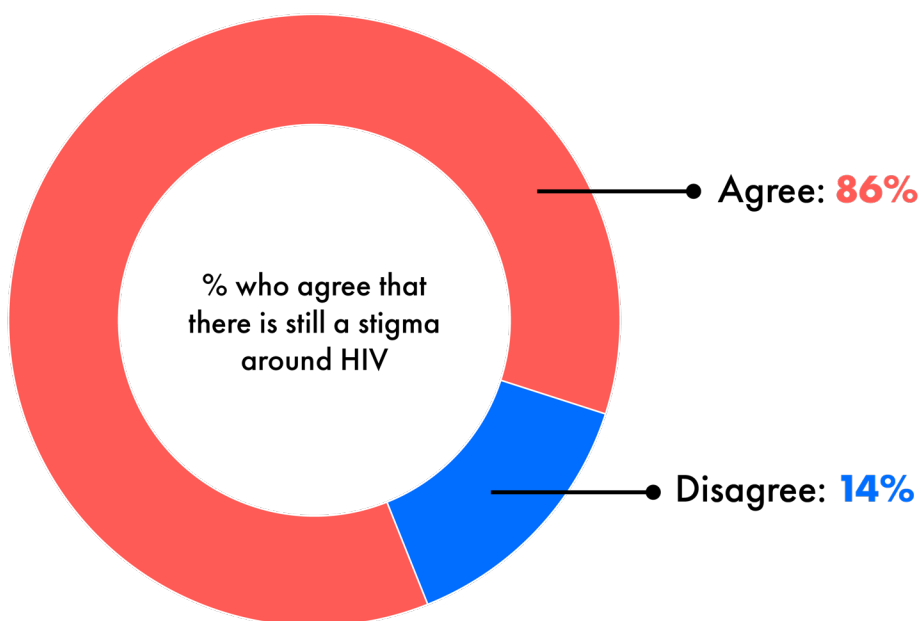


*Statistically significant at 95% confidence.

**Statistically significant at 90% confidence.

A majority of Americans believe a stigma around HIV still exists

This number has remained stable year over year.

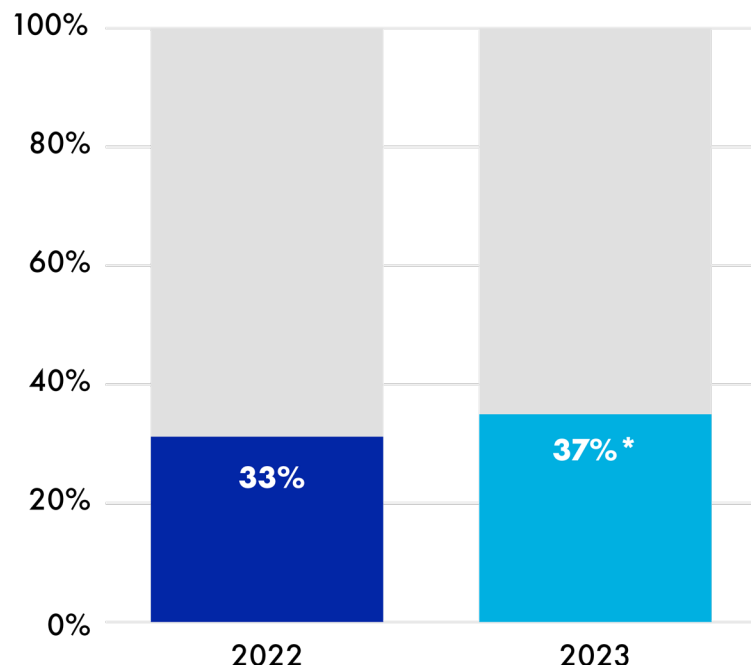


More Americans believe that HIV mostly impacts LGBTQ people

More Americans believe that HIV mostly impacts LGBTQ people, which is stigmatizing because anyone can contract HIV, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. This illustrates the need for more awareness, education, and stories of people living with HIV thriving, and living long, healthy lives.

This section has been updated to reflect differing interpretations about original phrasing in this report. Anyone can contract HIV, not just LGBTQ people. When HIV is viewed as a virus acquired only by LGBTQ people, it contributes to stigma and can harm HIV prevention, testing, and treatment.

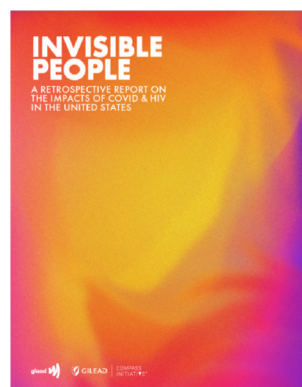
% who agree HIV mostly impacts LGBTQ people, not non-LGBTQ people



** Statistically significant at 95% confidence.*

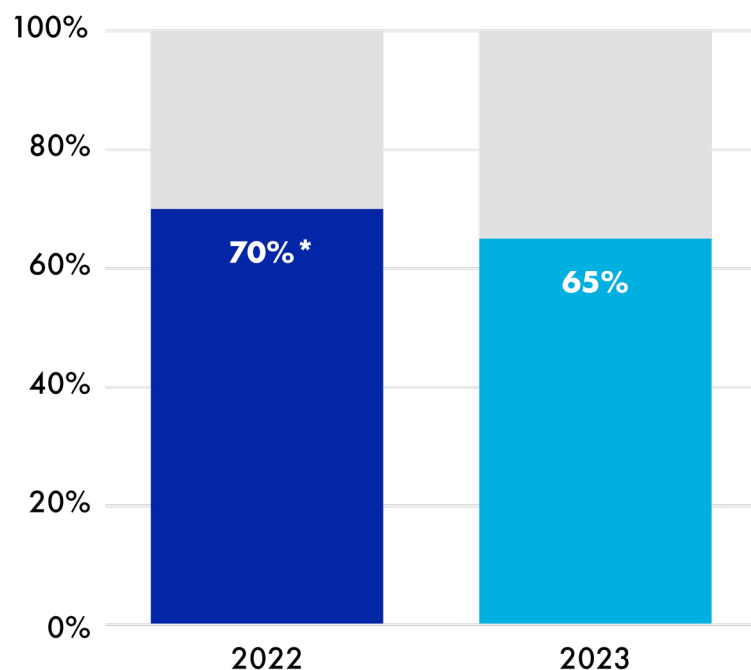
Significant decreases year over year that everyone should be tested for HIV in their lifetime

According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) nearly 40% of new HIV infections are transmitted by people who don't know they have the virus. [GLAAD's Invisible People report](#) examined the impacts of COVID-19 on prevention, testing and treatment in the U.S.



In it, we detail how HIV testing rates were greatly reduced during the stay-at-home order period in 2020.

% who agree everyone should get tested for HIV in their lifetime



** Statistically significant at 95% confidence.*

Annual wellness visits declined during COVID-19

[Research](#) showed delays and deferments of care during COVID, particularly among African Americans and people with chronic health conditions. As annual health screenings resume post-COVID, it's possible Americans are prioritizing other screenings and testing as opposed to HIV testing. It's important to keep the focus and awareness on testing as another important measure of prevention.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

The Consequences of Skipping Doctor Appointments During the Covid Pandemic

A year of postponed checkups, mammograms, colonoscopies and other medical care could have serious health repercussions, researchers warn.

More than **1 in 3 Adults** delayed or didn't seek care due to COVID-19 fear or limited healthcare services



COVID-19 impact on HIV cure and treatment

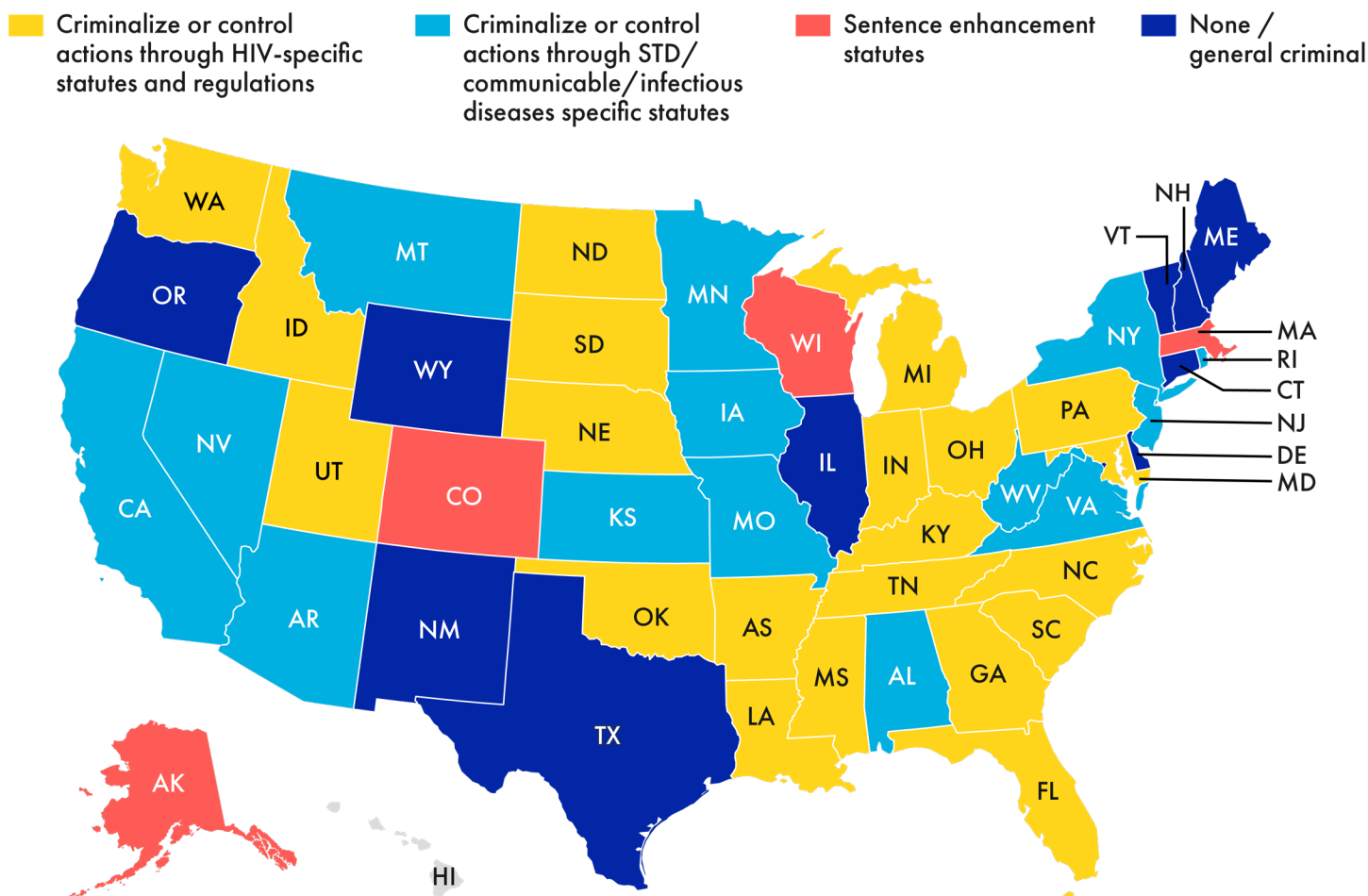
Relatedly, regarding cure and treatment, our research shows more than 4 in 10 Americans believe COVID has stalled advancements.

43% of Adults agree the COVID-19 pandemic has stalled advancements in curing/treating HIV



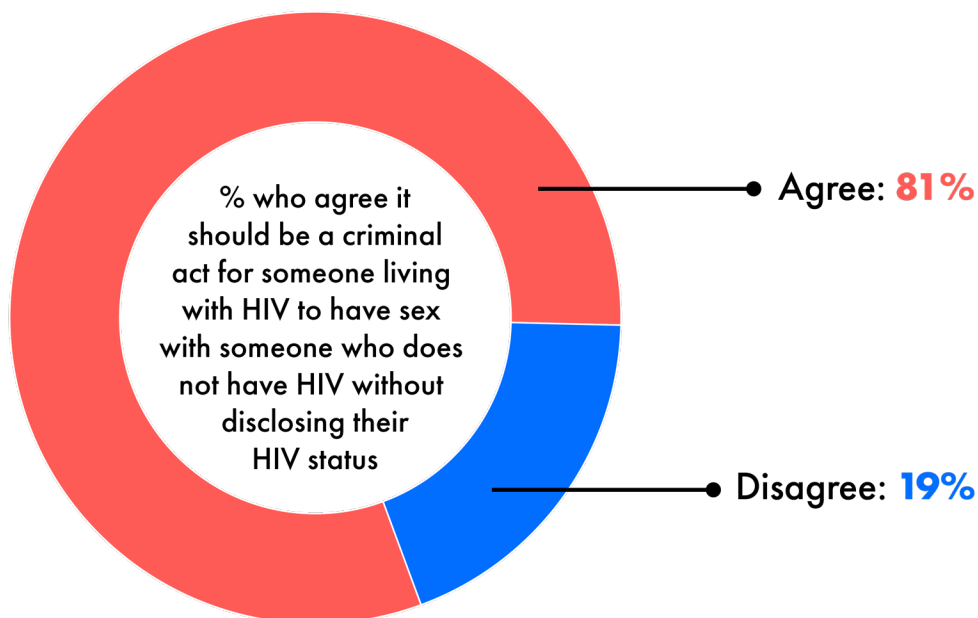
U.S. HIV and STD Criminalization Laws 2022

According to the [CDC](#), there are currently 35 states that criminalize HIV exposure. After more than 40 years of HIV research and significant biomedical advancements to treat and prevent HIV transmission, many state laws are now outdated and do not reflect our current understanding of HIV.



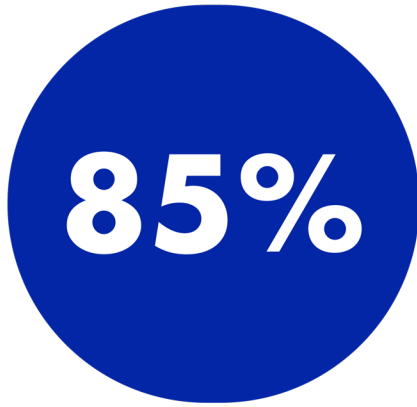
80% of Americans agree with criminalizing non-disclosure HIV status

This further stigmatizes and discriminates against people living with HIV.



Accessibility of information and education on HIV is key

Having easily accessible information on HIV and methods of HIV prevention taught in school is of high importance to Americans. These numbers have remained high year over year, pointing to a knowledge gap and a desire to have more readily available information on HIV in communities and schools.




Agree it's important that
information about HIV be easily
available in the community



Agree HIV prevention
should be taught in schools

Methodology:

The 2023 State of HIV Stigma Study was conducted through an online survey in February 2023 among a sample of 2,533 U.S. adults 18+. The sample was sourced and aggregated through CINT, who has the world's largest consumer network for digital survey-based research.



GLAAD rewrites the script for LGBTQ acceptance. As a dynamic media force, GLAAD tackles tough issues to shape the narrative and provoke dialogue that leads to cultural change. GLAAD protects all that has been accomplished and creates a world where everyone can live the life they love.

Gilead provided grant funding to support the development of this report.

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