



BART Street Harassment Survey (SB 434)

Nov 2024



Early Actions on Gender-Based Harassment: BART's Commitment Since 2019

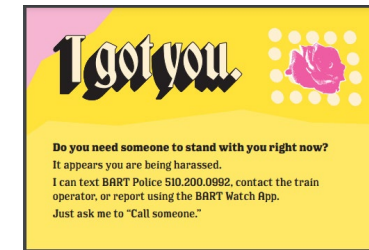
2019-2021 (Phase I)

- BART partnered with Alliance for Girls, Betti Ono Foundation, Black Girls Brilliance, and the Unity Council's Latinx Mentorship Program to launch the [Not One More Girl](#) (NOMG) initiative.
- Focused on uplifting the voices of girls and gender-expansive youth of color, the initiative sought non-policing solutions to prevent and address sexual harassment and gender-based violence on BART.
- Ads were posted throughout the rail system to raise awareness of the issue and a question on experiencing gender-based harassment on BART was added to BART's quarterly tracking Passenger Experience Survey (*results in the next slide*).



2023-2024 (Phase II)

- In the second phase of the [Not One More Girl](#) initiative, emphasis was placed on enabling people to have a greater sense of empowerment in a harassment situation and providing tools that fellow riders could use to provide support when harassment occurs.
- The “*I got you*” and “*You got me?*” cards, as developed by BART and the Betti Ono Foundation with participating youth, were made available throughout the system. Riders can discreetly pass these cards to people to prompt safe bystander intervention actions and report harassment when it is taking place.
- In 2024 BART and the Alliance for Girls conducted participatory learning exchanges with girls and gender expansive youth of color to develop a [Youth-Informed Radical Visions of Safety Evaluation Framework](#) for BART summarizing the findings.

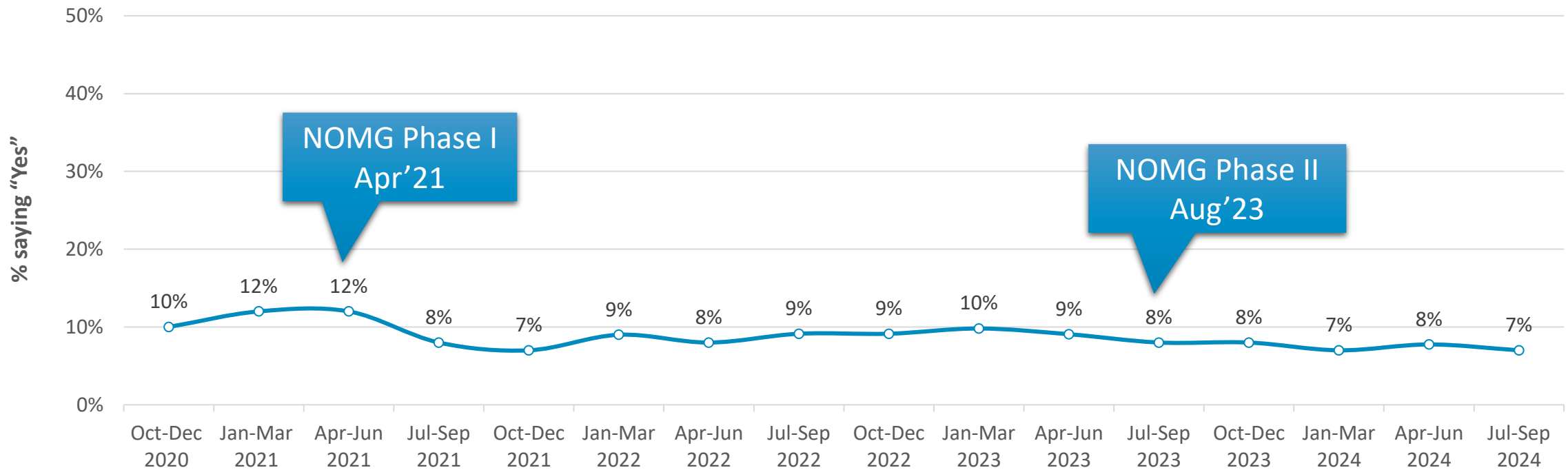


BART's ongoing effort to collect data on harassment

As a result of the Not One More Girl initiative, BART introduced a question about gender-based harassment into its quarterly random sample surveys, conducted on trains.

Q: Have you experienced gender based sexual harassment at BART in the last six months?

Source: BART's Quarterly Passenger Experience Survey (PES); Sample size varies but is over 2,000 each quarter.



BART Street Harassment Survey (SB 434)

Background & Methodology

Background of the Street Harassment Survey (SB 434)

- SB 434 was signed into law in 2023. It requires California’s ten largest transit agencies to collect comprehensive survey data identifying the leading causes of street harassment as part of a larger strategy to increase ridership and incentivize more Californians to take public transit.
- The bill defines “street harassment” as words, gestures, or actions directed at a specific person in a public place, without the consent of that person, because of a characteristic listed or defined as discrimination in the California Government Code, that the person experiences as intimidating, alarming, terrorizing, or threatening to their safety.
- Transit agencies must collect and publish survey data by December 31, 2024. At a minimum, the survey must collect demographic information including a rider’s race, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, income, primary language, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation. Agencies must also collect information regarding a rider’s experience with safety while waiting at public transit stops and riding public transit.
 - BART conducted the survey in September 2024 and posted the results in late November 2024.
- To gain insight into the perspectives of riders who are underrepresented in surveys and impacted by street harassment, agencies shall conduct outreach activities such as focus groups, participatory workshops, or other methods of engaging riders.
 - BART conducted outreach and community learning exchanges with the Alliance for Girls in 2024 and published a [Youth-Informed Radical Visions of Safety Evaluation Framework](#) in late November 2024.

Summary

- Overall, a majority of riders (65%) feel safe using BART.
 - Males, White riders, English speakers, and those who identify as LGBTQIA+ tend to feel safer in the BART system.*
- Overall, females, Hispanic riders, and low-income riders report having been victims of street harassment.
- Verbal and non-verbal harassment are the most common experiences.
 - 23% were victims, while 56% witnessed or heard hostile comments, sounds or gestures in the past year.
 - Physical harassment, e.g., unwanted touching or sexual assaults are rare.
 - More riders report being witnesses of incidents rather than victims.
- Harassment incidents mostly occur on trains, which correlates to where riders spend the most time during their commute, followed by stations.
- Incidents peak during the afternoon commute hours and into the night.
- Overall, 66% of the incidents go unreported. When incidents are reported, they are typically directed to BART Staff (BART Police: 11%; Other BART staff: 8%) .
- Gender or gender expression is the most cited reason for being victims of harassment (21%), followed by race (18%).
 - 39% felt that such incidents were “random.”

**For details on how the demographic groups differ, please refer to [this file](#).*

Methodology

The Mineta Transportation Institute developed a survey under SB 1161 to document street harassment on public transit.

- The survey is designed to collect data on incidents and victim demographics to help improve passenger safety.
- BART adapted this survey for its own use, making some BART-specific changes, and this report summarizes the findings.
- **Survey Methodology**
 - Four trained survey takers requested riders to take the anonymous, online survey. They used the signs that had a QR code and a short survey URL for easy access.
 - Riders were surveyed on all lines, across all days of the week, and during all operating hours.
 - Survey was offered in English, Spanish, and Traditional Chinese (poster images on the right)
 - Sample size = 1,626
- **Survey dates:** Sep 7-15, 2024
- **No Weighting:** Key demographic data from the survey closely aligned with BART's 2022 Customer Satisfaction data, with most differences within ± 3 percentage points, making weighting unnecessary.
- **No Incentive:** BART did not collect any data to identify respondents, given the sensitive nature of the topic.
- **Privacy Policy:** The survey includes responses from minors (riders under 18). In compliance with [BART's Privacy Policy](#), COPPA, and CalOPPA regulations, we ensured that all demographic questions were omitted for riders under 18 ($n=23$).

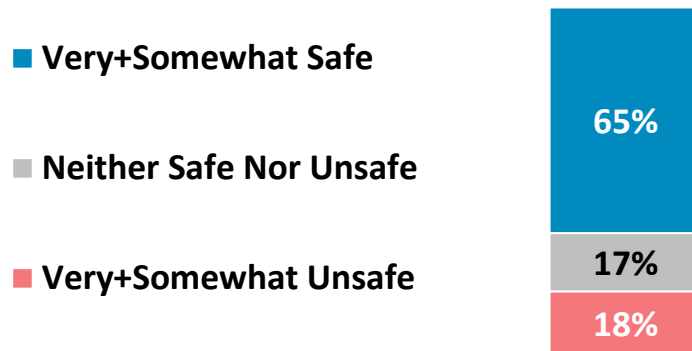
Signs used by Survey Takers for requesting riders to take the survey



BART Street Harassment Survey (SB 434) *Findings*

- Overall, a majority of riders (65%) feel safe using BART.
- 65% of riders take safety precautions by considering their seat, train car, or moving if needed.
 - Other precautions include avoiding night/non-commute hours (46%), avoiding certain routes/stations (27%), carrying pepper spray/mace (19%), and not riding alone (10%).
 - 14% of riders do not take any safety precautions.

Q: In general, how safe do you feel using BART?
 5-point Very Safe-Very Unsafe scale | n=1,626



Who feel the safest?

- Males
- White riders
- English speakers
- Those who identify as LGBTQIA+

Q: Do you currently take any safety precautions when using BART? n=1,626
 Multiple choice question; answers won't add to 100%

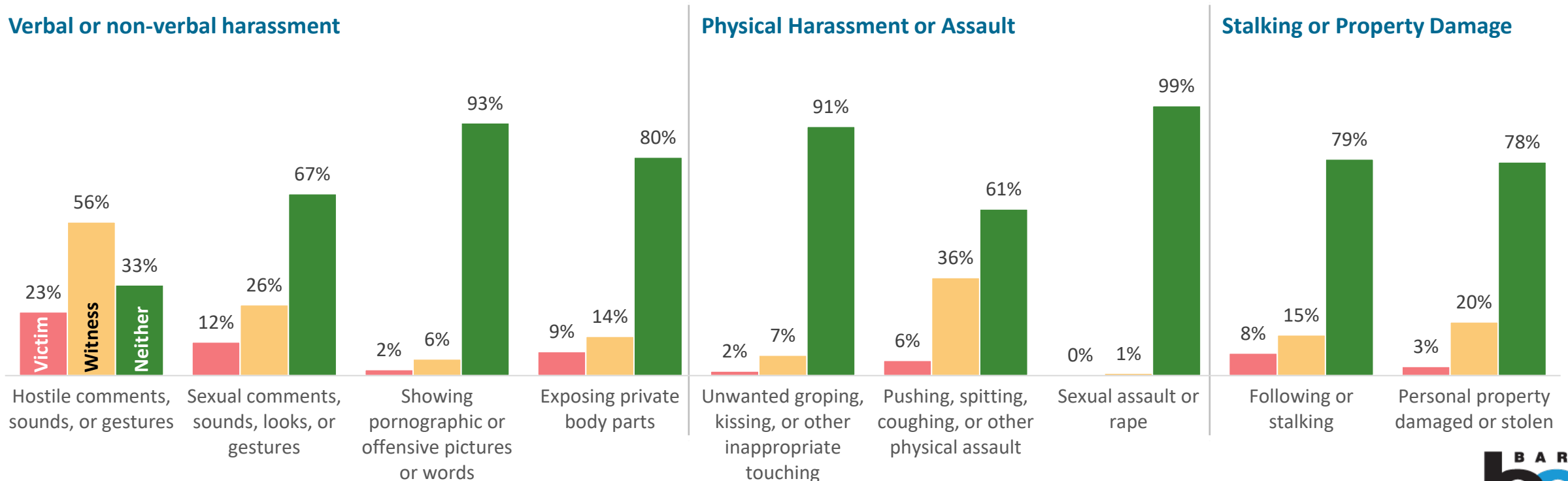


Safety precautions are more likely to be taken by:

- Females
- AAPI & Hispanic riders
- Younger riders

- Verbal or non-verbal harassment are the most common experiences.
 - 23% were victims, while 56% witnessed or heard hostile comments, sounds or gestures in the past year.
- Physical harassment, e.g., unwanted touching or sexual assaults are rare.
- More riders report having been witnesses of incidents, rather than victims.
 - Females, Hispanic riders, and low-income riders report having been victims of street harassment.*

Q: Have you experienced any of the following yourself or seen them happen to others while using BART in the past year? *n=1,626*

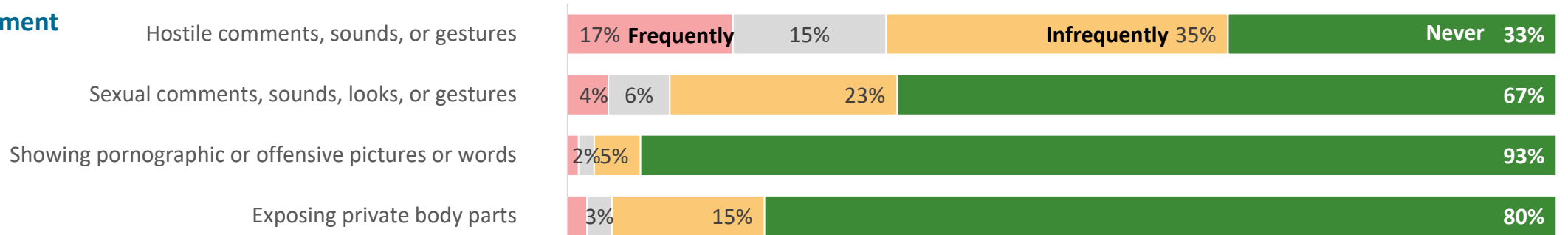


*For differences by demographic groups differ, please refer to [this file](#).

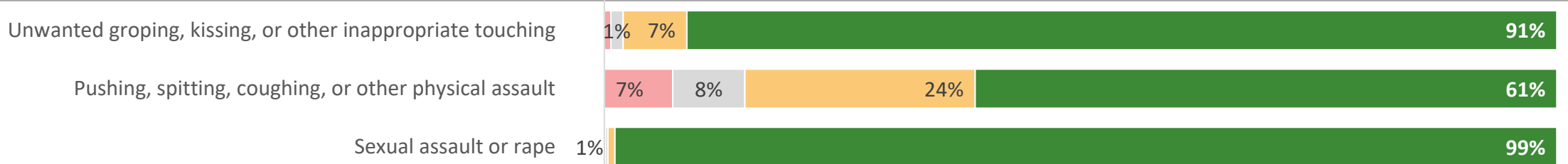
- The most prevalent harassment, *hostile comments, sounds, or gestures*, are experienced / witnessed frequently by 17% of BART riders.
- All of the other behaviors were experienced or witnessed frequently by 7% or fewer BART riders

Q: How often did you experience or see any of these behaviors when using BART in the past year?
 5-pt Frequently-Infrequently Scale; n=1,626

Verbal or non-verbal harassment



Physical Harassment or Assault



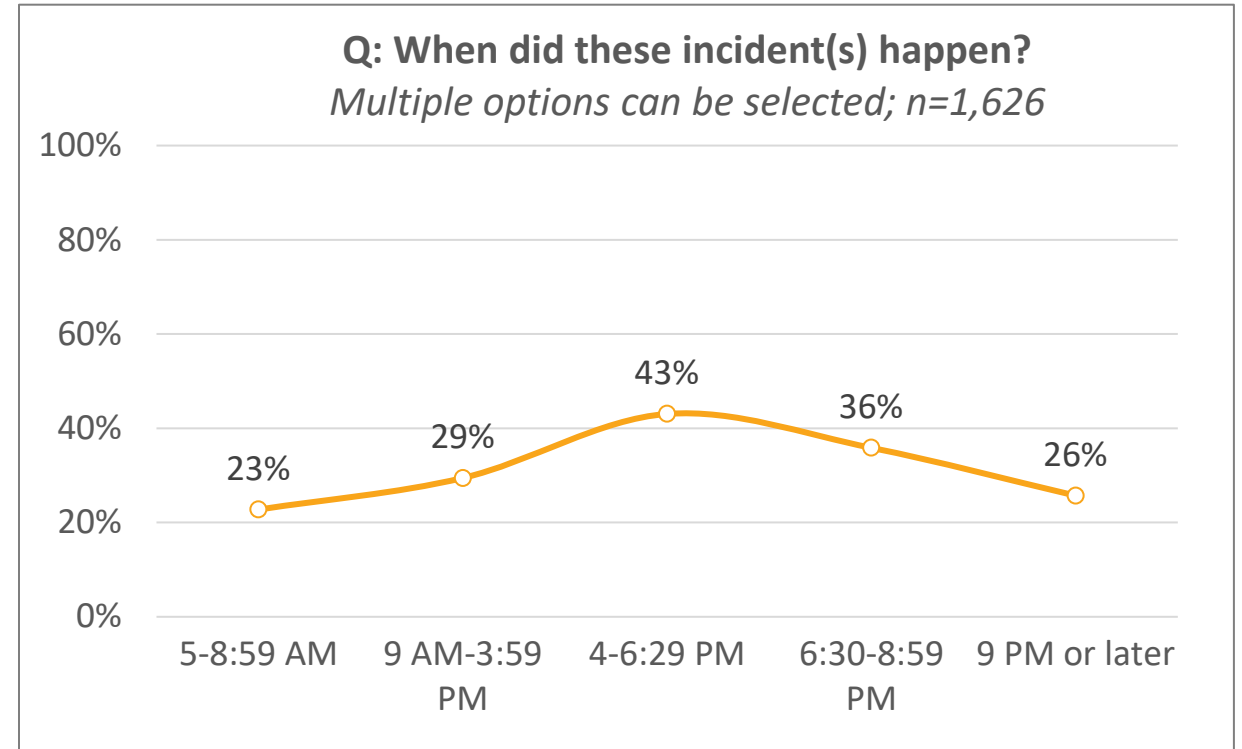
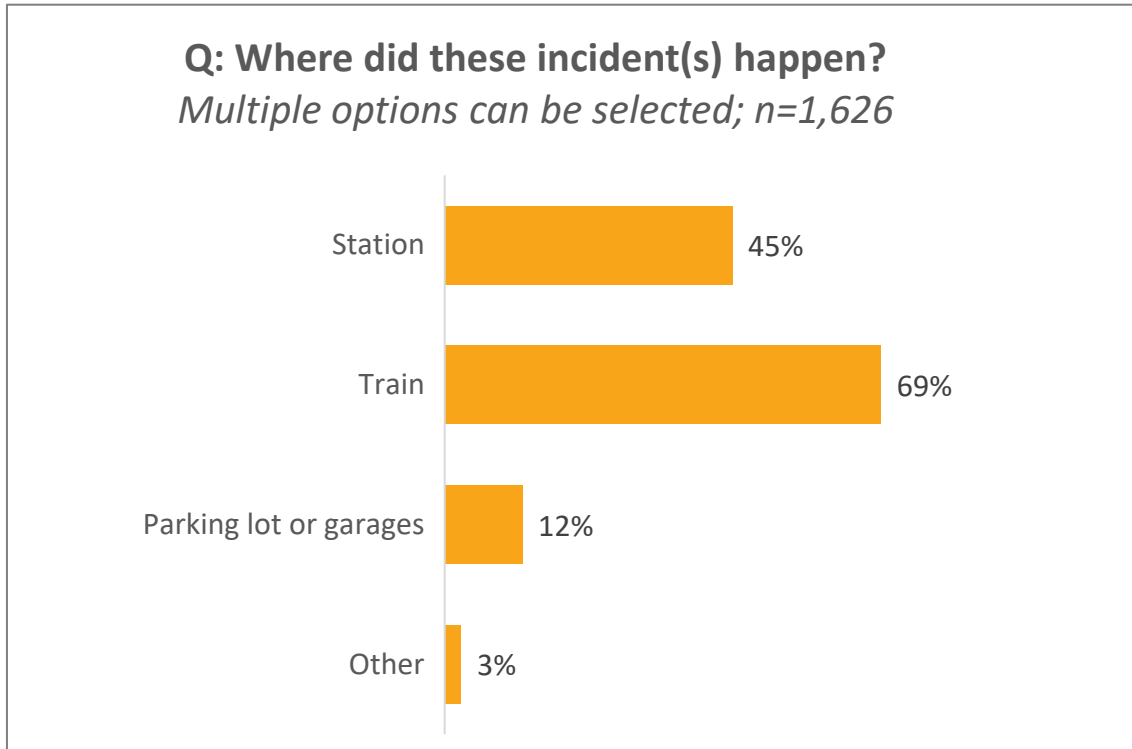
Stalking or Property Damage



■ Frequently (4 or 5 rating)
 ■ Middle box (3 rating)
 ■ Infrequently (1 or 2 rating)
 ■ Never



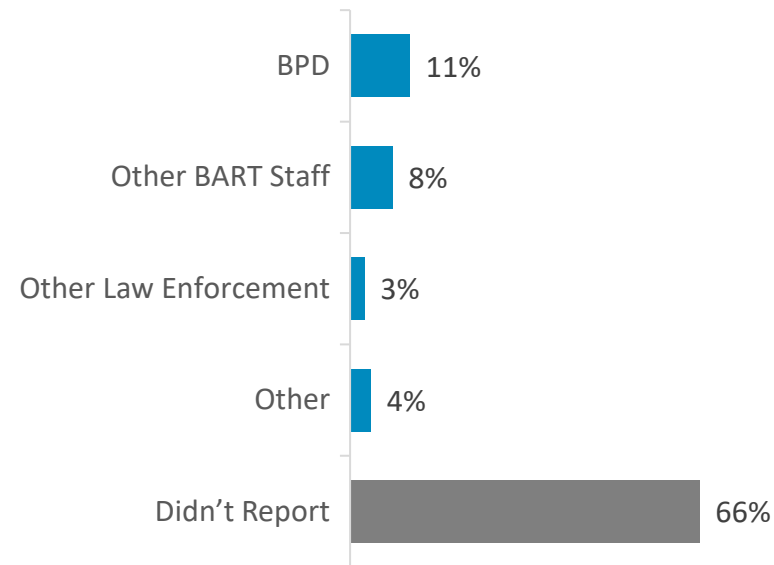
- Harassment incidents mostly occur on trains, which correlates to where riders spend the most time during their commute, followed by stations.
- Incidents peak during the afternoon commute hours and into the night.



- Overall, 66% of the incidents go unreported
- When incidents *are* reported, they are typically directed to BART Staff (BART Police, 11%; Other BART staff, 8%)
- *Riders have noted in the “Other” text box that in some cases another passenger has already reported the issue, making additional reports unnecessary.*

Q: When these incident(s) happened, did you report any of them?

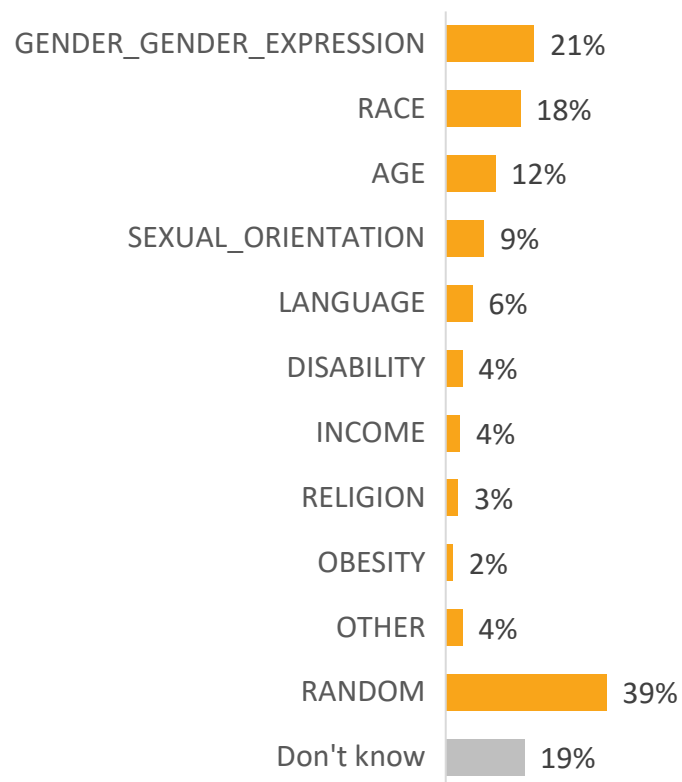
n=1,626



- Gender or gender expression is the most cited reason for being victims of harassment (21%); followed by race (18%).
 - 39% felt that such incidents were “random.”
- Riders used the "Other" text box to explain reasons for someone being targeted on the train. Common themes in “Other” included erratic behavior from the perpetrator, likely due to mental illness, drug use, etc.

When these incidents happened, do you think the victim was targeted because of...?

Multiple options can be selected; n=1,626



Other:

- *No clear target/victim; perpetrator seemed to be mentally ill/yelling at everyone.*
- *Mental instability. Had his pants [down] on the train.*
- *It was a homeless man cleaning himself.*
- *Invoke fear, intoxicated or mental illness.*
- *Homeless - mental illness.*
- *Harassment by homeless, thuglife, mentally ill.*
- *Druggies, psycho, homeless, criminals.*
- *I saw a guy pooping in the train. It was a victimless crime but it really grossed the passengers out.*

- Respondents were able to provide comments or experiences related to safety/harassment on BART at the end of the survey. Over 300 provided comments which were coded into the following categories:

Comments or experiences related to safety/harassment on BART:		
<i>Results of 328 coded comments</i>	n	%
Mentally Ill / Transient	128	39%
Drugs/ Intoxicated/ Smoking/substance abuse	72	22%
Need more police/quicker police response / enforcement of rules	45	14%
Feeling unsafe	38	12%
Fare Evaders	22	7%
Trash/Unsanitary	19	6%
Off hours feel unsafe	12	4%
Fights	11	3%
Loud music	6	1.8%
Theft/robbery/mugged	6	1.8%
Obscene comments/gestures	5	1.5%
Feeling harassed when teens misbehave	5	1.5%
BART Watch App is not reliable	4	1.2%
Harassed, <i>unspecified</i>	2	0.6%
Packed trains	2	0.6%
Assault/ spat on	2	0.6%
Employees rude	2	0.6%
Saw weapons (knives)	2	0.6%
Other	3	0.9%

Appendix I

Demographics

Demographics of respondents

Age	n	1616
12 or younger	0.1%	
13 - 17	1%	
18 - 24	19%	
25 - 34	27%	
35 - 44	22%	
45 - 54	14%	
55 - 64	11%	
65+	5%	
Mean	38.1	

Total annual HH income before taxes	n	1436
Under \$30,000	14%	
\$30,000 - \$39,999	5%	
\$40,000 - \$49,999	6%	
\$50,000 - \$59,999	4%	
\$60,000 - \$74,999	8%	
\$75,000 to \$84,999	6%	
\$85,000 - \$99,999	8%	
\$100,000 to \$149,999	18%	
\$150,000 to \$199,999	11%	
\$200,000 or above	21%	
Median	\$ 92,500	

Religion	n	1444
Christianity	22%	
Hindu	3%	
Judaism/Jewish	2%	
Islam	2%	
Buddhist/Tao/Jain	1%	
Sikhism	<1%	
None/Unspecified	70%	

Primary language	n	1533
English	92%	
Spanish	5%	
Mandarin/ Cantonese	2%	
Other	1%	

Ethnicity	n	1537
White	32%	
AAPI	31%	
Hispanic	22%	
Af-Am	9%	
Am-Indian/Alaska Native	<1%	
Other	3%	
Mixed	4%	

Gender	n	1554
Male	47%	
Female	51%	
Non-binary/self-describe	2%	

Identify as LGBTQIA+	n	1446
Yes	17%	
No	83%	

Disabilities that may affect experience riding BART	n	1578
Yes	3%	
No	97%	

Appendix II

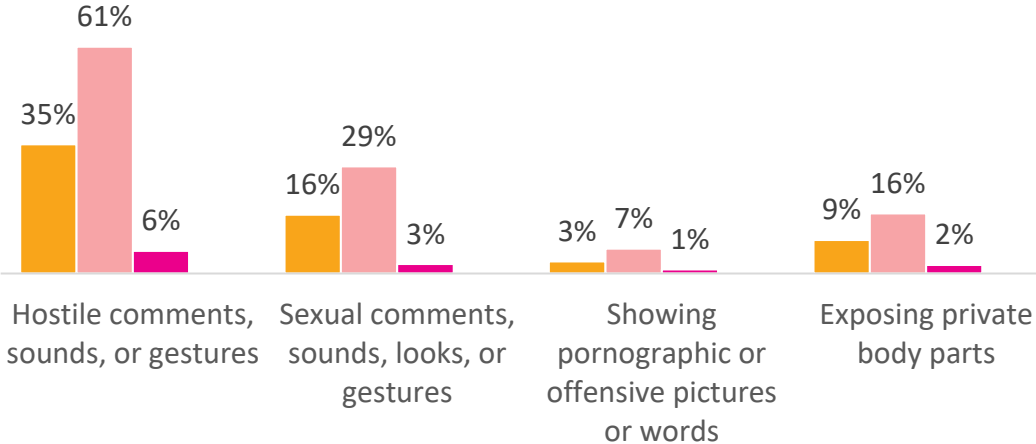
Additional Details by Incident Type

Incident Location

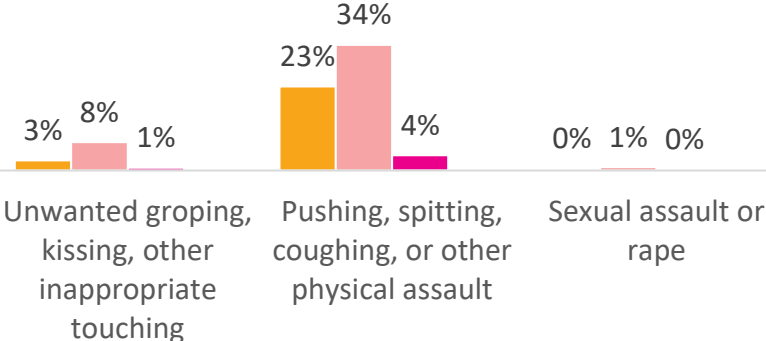
Q: Where did these incident(s) happen?

Multiple options can be selected; n=1,626

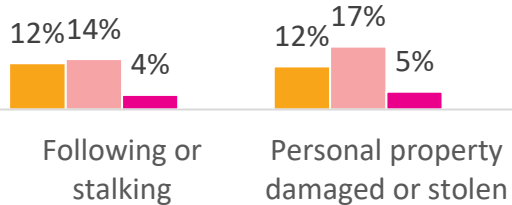
Verbal or non-verbal harassment



Physical Harassment or Assault



Stalking or Property Damage



■ BART station ■ BART Train ■ BART parking lot or garage

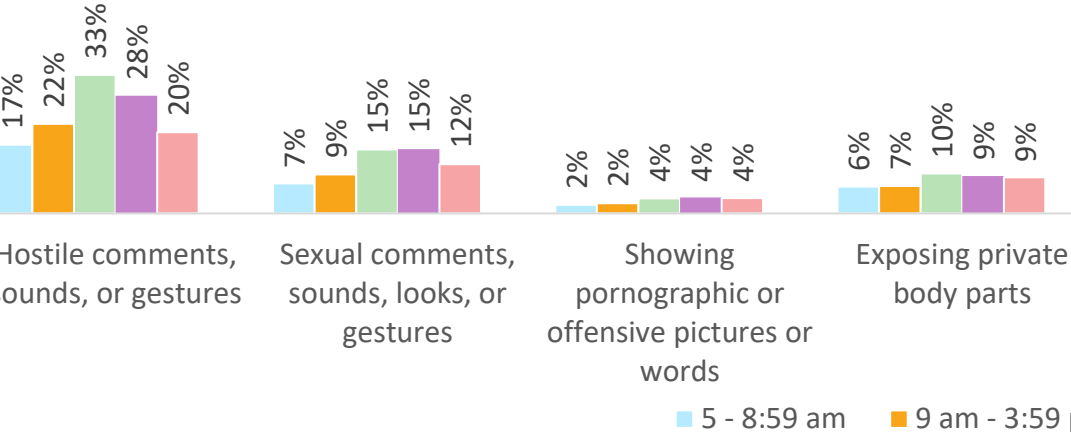


Time of Incidents

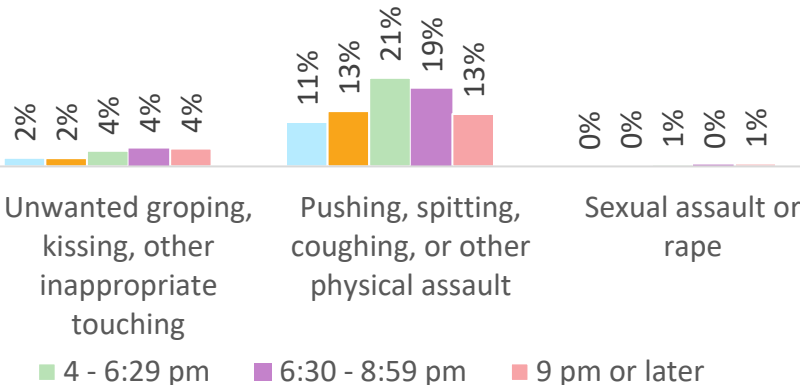
Q: When did these incident(s) happen?

Multiple options can be selected; n=1,626

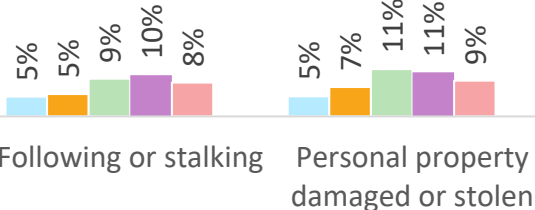
Verbal or non-verbal harassment



Physical Harassment or Assault



Stalking or Property Damage

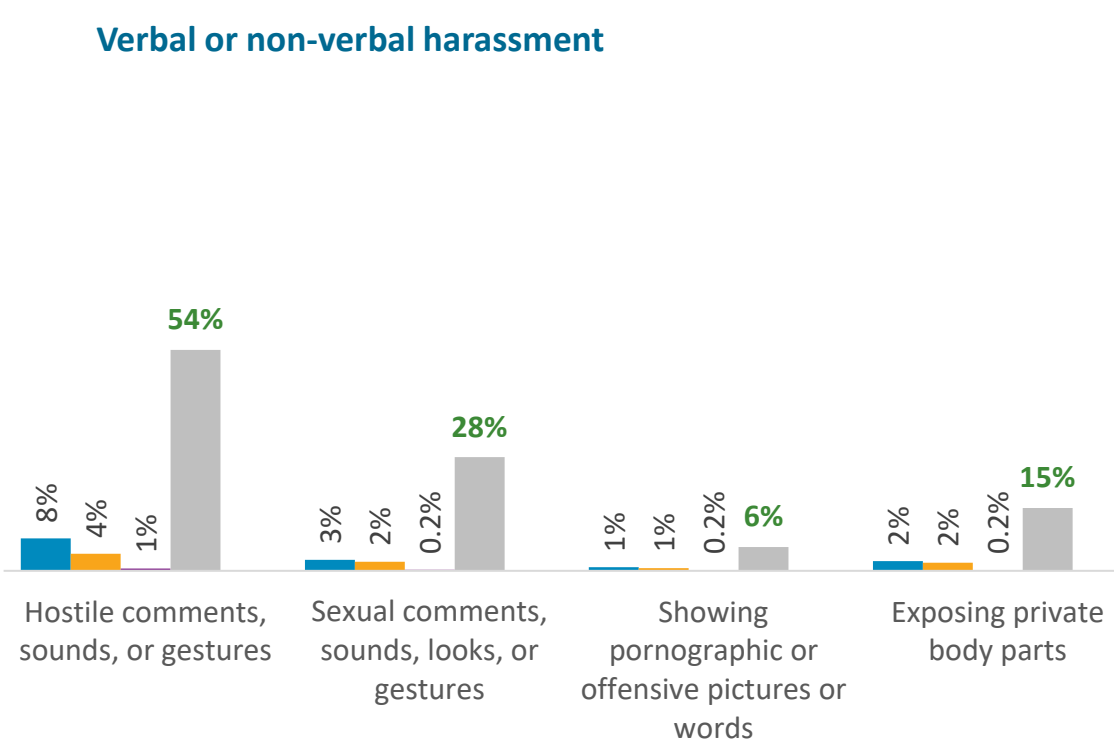


Incident Reporting

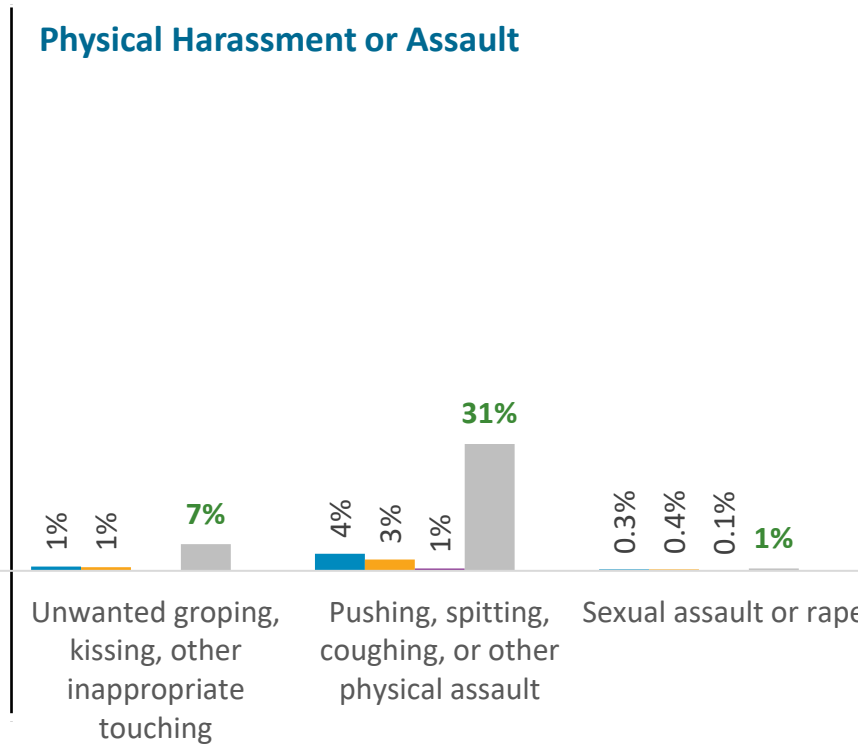
Q: When these incident(s) happened, did you report any of them?

Multiple options can be selected; n=1,626

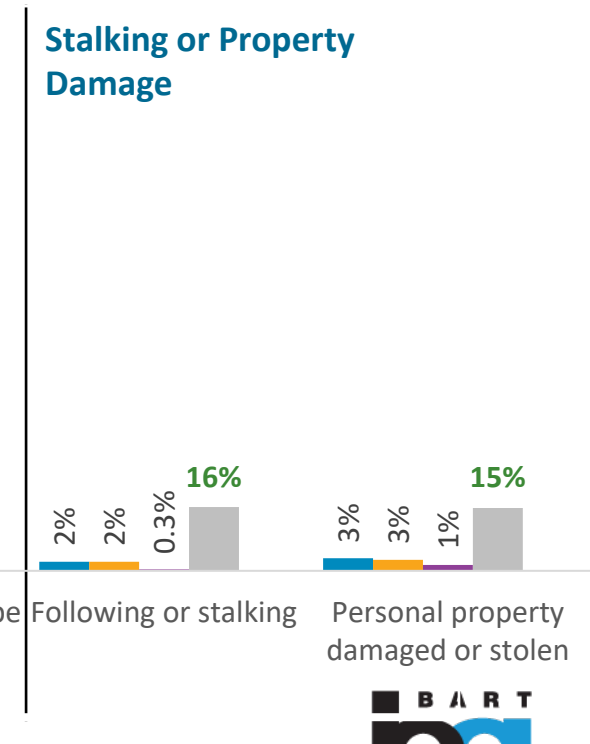
Verbal or non-verbal harassment



Physical Harassment or Assault



Stalking or Property Damage



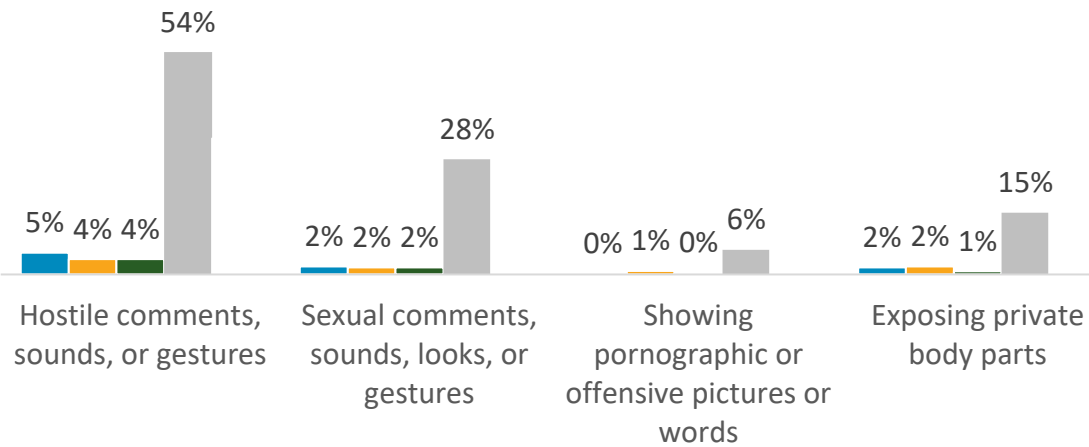
■ BART Police ■ Other BART staff ■ Other law enforcement ■ Didn't report



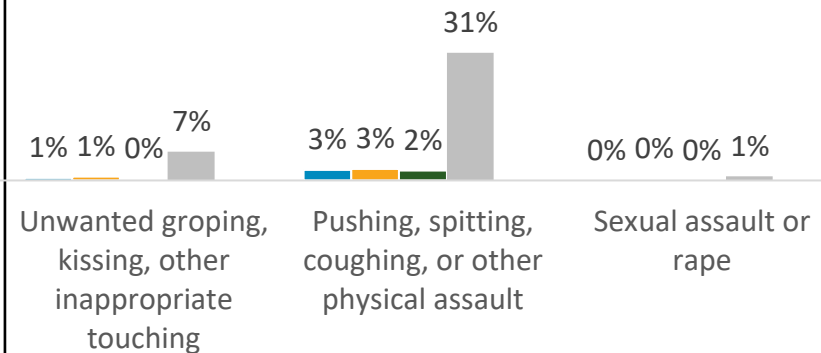
Response to reported incidents

Q: Did you receive an appropriate response when you reported the incident(s)?
n=1,626

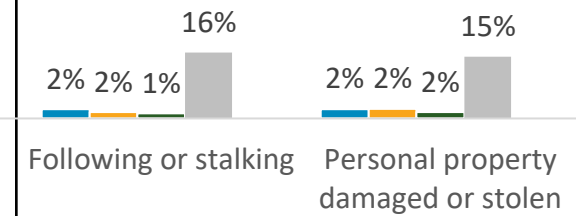
Verbal or non-verbal harassment



Physical Harassment or Assault



Stalking or Property Damage



■ Yes ■ No ■ Sometimes ■ Didn't report

Appendix III

Survey Questions

Programming instructions are highlighted in **yellow**

Q1 BART would like to better understand if riders feel safe using its service. The following questions are sensitive, but will help BART improve safety. Your response is important even if you choose to skip some questions. This is an anonymous survey, and all responses will be kept confidential.

Q2 About how often do you currently ride BART?

6 or 7 days a week

5 days a week

4 days a week

3 days a week

2 days a week

1 day a week

A few days a month

Less than once a month, but at least once in the past year

Participation in this survey is voluntary. The survey includes questions on rider experience and demographics. Information provided in the survey will be used to evaluate BART products and services. Data will be reported in aggregate. BART takes appropriate precautions to protect respondent provided information and keep data secure. Please review [BART's privacy policy](#).

Q4 In general, how safe do you feel using BART?

Very Safe (5)

Somewhat Safe (4)

Neither safe nor unsafe (3)

Somewhat unsafe (2)

Very unsafe (1)



Q5 Do you currently take any safety precautions when using BART?

Please check all that apply.

Don't ride at night

Avoid certain routes, stops, or stations

Don't ride alone

Carry pepper spray/mace

Consider seat location / which train car to board

Sound warning device, e.g., whistle, personal safety alarm

Other (specify) _____

No – don't take any safety precautions when riding BART

The following questions ask about your experiences riding BART *in the past year*. Please think about all parts of your BART trip, both onboard and while waiting at BART stations, while answering these questions.

Q7 Have you experienced any of the following yourself or seen them happen to others while using BART in the past year?

	Happened to me	Saw it happen to others	Neither
Hostile comments, sounds, or gestures			
Sexual comments, sounds, looks, or gestures			
Following or stalking			
Unwanted groping, kissing, or other inappropriate touching			
Pushing, spitting, coughing, or other physical assault			
Personal property damaged or stolen			
Showing pornographic or offensive pictures or words			
Exposing private body parts			
Sexual assault or rape			

Q8 How often did you experience or see these when using BART in the past year?

Carry forward selections from Q7	Infrequently (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Frequently (5)
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Q9 Where did these incident(s) happen? Please select all that apply.

Carry forward selections from Q7	BART station	BART Train	BART parking lot or garage	Other
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Q10 You selected "other". Where else did these incident(s) happen? _____

Q11 When did these incident(s) happen?

Carry forward selections from Q7	5 - 8:59 am	9 am - 3:59 pm	4 - 6:29 pm	6:30 - 8:59 pm	9 pm or later
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Q12 When these incident(s) happened, did you report any of them?

To BART Police (used the BART Watch App, texted/called/spoke to BART Police)	To other BART staff (Station Agent, Train Operator, BART Customer Services)	Reported to other law enforcement	Other	Didn't report
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Q13 You selected "other". Who else did you report these incident(s) to? _____

Q14 Did you receive an appropriate response when you reported the incident(s)?

Carry forward selections from Q7	Yes	No	Sometimes
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Q15 When these incident(s) happened, do you think that the victim was targeted because of...?

Please check all that apply.

Carry forward selections from Q7
Race or ethnicity
Religion
Language spoken
Income
Gender/gender expression
Sexual orientation
Age
Disability
Obesity
Other
None-it was random
Don't know

Q16 You selected "other". What are the other reasons you think the victim was targeted?

Q17 Comments or experiences related to safety/harassment on BART:

ABOUT YOU

These questions are included to be sure we survey a mix of riders.

Age

- 12 or younger [skip to end of survey]
- 13 - 17 [skip to end of survey]
- 18 - 24
- 25 - 34
- 35 - 44
- 45 - 54
- 55 - 64
- 65 or older

What is your home ZIP code?

(If you don't live in the U.S., enter "99999")

What is your primary language?

- English
- Spanish
- Cantonese
- Mandarin
- Other (specify) _____

Race or ethnic identification. *Please check all that apply.*

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Black or African American
- Hispanic/Latino
- White
- Other (specify): _____

Do you have any disabilities that affect your experience riding BART?

Yes No

Gender

- Female
- Male
- Non-binary
- Prefer to self-describe: _____

Do you identify as LGBTQIA+ (lesbian, gay, etc.)?

Yes No

Annual household income before taxes.

- Under \$30,000
- \$30,000 - \$39,999
- \$40,000 - \$49,999
- \$50,000 - \$59,999
- \$60,000 - \$74,999
- \$75,000 to \$84,999
- \$85,000 - \$99,999
- \$100,000 to \$149,999
- \$150,000 to \$199,999
- \$200,000 or above

What would you say is your religion? (If none, please indicate.)

None

Thank you