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Fact Sheet: Black Same-Same Sex Households in Georgia

Prevalence

- 29% of gay couples in GA are Black
- 29% of the population of GA is Black (28.7% according to 2000 US census data <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/13000.html>)
- The Atlanta metro area has the 9th largest concentration of same-sex households among all households in the U.S.
- 14% of Black residence in Non-metro areas are same-sex couples

Income

- White gay and lesbian couples reported greater household income than Black gay and lesbian couples. White gay male couples reported over \$20,000 more in average income than Black gay male couples. White lesbian earned an average of 22, 400 more than Black lesbian couples.
- Black lesbian couples report only 64% of the household income of White lesbian couples. Black gay male couples report 71% of the household income of White gay males. Black same-sex couples reported 67% white same-sex couples.
- Nationwide, Black families report only 62% of the median income of white families.

Housing & Residential Patterns

- Black same-sex couples in GA were almost as likely as married heterosexual Black couples, and more likely than Black heterosexual co-habiting couples, to report living in the same residence five years ago.
- 41% of Black gay male couples and 42% of Black lesbian couples reported living in the same residence five years ago, compared to 53% of their married heterosexual counterparts.
- Only 18% of cohabitating Black couples reported the same residence five years ago.

Family Structure

- Black lesbian couples in GA parent at about the same rate as Black married heterosexual couples (67% to 72%), while Black gay men parent at about two-thirds the rate of married heterosexual couples (46% to 72%).
- Black lesbian couples were raising nonbiological (fostered or adopted) children at a much higher rate than Black married heterosexual couples (19% to 13%).
- Although Black gay male couples parent at lower rates than Black married couples, Black gay male parent non-biological children at similar rates as Black married heterosexual couples (11% to 13%).
- Black gay male couples were raising children at twice the rate of white gay male partnered households (49% to 22%).
- Black lesbian couples were raising children at nearly twice the rate of white lesbian partnered households (67% to 38%).

Military Service

- Partnered Black women in same-sex households reported veteran status at nearly three times the rate of Black women married to or living with a male partner (11% vs. 4 %).
- Black men in same-sex couples reported veteran status at two-thirds the rate of Black married men (20% vs. 32%) and at the same rate as Black men cohabitating with women (20% vs. 21%).
- Black women are discharged from the military under "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" at rates far exceeding their representation among servicemembers: although they make up less than one percent of the military, they represent three percent of all those discharged under "Don't Ask, Don't Tell." Despite

documented, widespread harassment and violence against gay and lesbian people in the military, Black gay and lesbian people continue to serve their country at high rates.

Discrimination & Religion

- Black LGBT people faced high rates of discrimination based on racial and ethnic identity (53%) and sexual orientation (42%).
- 85% of Black LGBT people surveyed indicated they were affiliated with a religion.
- About half said their religious institutions influenced their daily lives and even more than half said their religion condemned homosexuality.

Conclusions and Policy Implications

- This study refutes common conservative claims that gays and lesbians are White, wealthy people who change partners frequently and do not have children. Federal and state governments provide policies to promote family formation and stability, home ownership and other values that contribute to community strength and the common good. Black gay and lesbian families are excluded from many of the benefits of these policies because of discrimination, despite the fact that they make great efforts to maintain their families. Many anti-gay leaders portray gay and lesbian people as economically privileged, when in fact gay and lesbian households report lower income than married couples. Lesbian couples are particularly less well off than heterosexual married couples. Allowing same sex couples in Georgia to formalize their partnerships will allow them greater access economic security, legal protection, and peace of mind. This is especially important as couples age or during times of crisis, such as one partner's sickness or death. Thousands of Black same-sex couples, most of them raising children will be hurt if Georgia voters approve the anti-gay amendment ballot November 2, 2004