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# More Social Needs Endorsed by Caregivers of Young Children Experiencing Everyday Discrimination

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## **More social needs endorsed by caregivers of young children experiencing everyday discrimination**

**Background:** Both discrimination and social needs are underlying risk factors for poor health outcomes; however, there are no studies looking at how feelings of discrimination impact reporting of social needs in the pediatric health care setting.

**Objective:** To compare caregiver report of social needs and desire for help addressing social needs in the pediatric primary care setting based on respondents' experiences with discrimination.

**Methods:** We conducted a cross-sectional study of caregivers of children aged 2-5 in an urban primary care setting. Caregivers completed a tool to screen for 15 social needs and desire for help to address these needs, with in-person assistance available. The tool was adapted based on qualitative data with this same population and included items from the PHQ-2, 2-item food insecurity screener, and WE CARE survey. The short version of the "Everyday Discrimination Scale" was also completed, and caregivers were categorized as experiencing everyday discrimination if they responded "rarely", "sometimes", or "often" on any of 5 types of discrimination. If caregivers experienced everyday discrimination, they were also asked about perceived basis for discrimination. T-tests were conducted to compare the number of reported social needs and number of needs for which a caregiver desired help between groups based on experience of everyday discrimination and type of discrimination.

**Results:** One hundred seventy-eight caregivers (94% mothers, mean age 32) of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds (29% white, 61% black; 10% Hispanic) completed the screening tool. Sixty-seven percent had public insurance, and 35% were from households with an annual income below \$20,000.

Fifty-three percent of caregivers reported everyday discrimination, especially in regards to being treated with less respect and receiving poorer service in stores and restaurants (Figure 1) and most commonly on the basis of race (48%), gender (38%), and age (31%). Both caregivers who endorsed everyday discrimination in general, and those endorsing discrimination specifically by gender and age, reported a significantly higher number of social needs and number of social needs for which they wanted help (Table 1).

**Conclusions:** In an urban population of mostly young Black mothers, the majority endorsed feeling some degree of everyday discrimination. Despite this, caregivers who endorsed feelings of discrimination, especially because of their gender and age, reported more social needs and a greater desire for help addressing these needs. This suggests that caregivers feel comfortable reporting sensitive social needs in the context of a child's healthcare setting even though they may experience everyday discrimination. These findings may also suggest an association between experienced discrimination and social needs, with both potentially influenced by similar sociodemographic factors.

Figure 1. Percent endorsing varying degrees of discrimination on Everyday Discrimination Scale (Short Version)

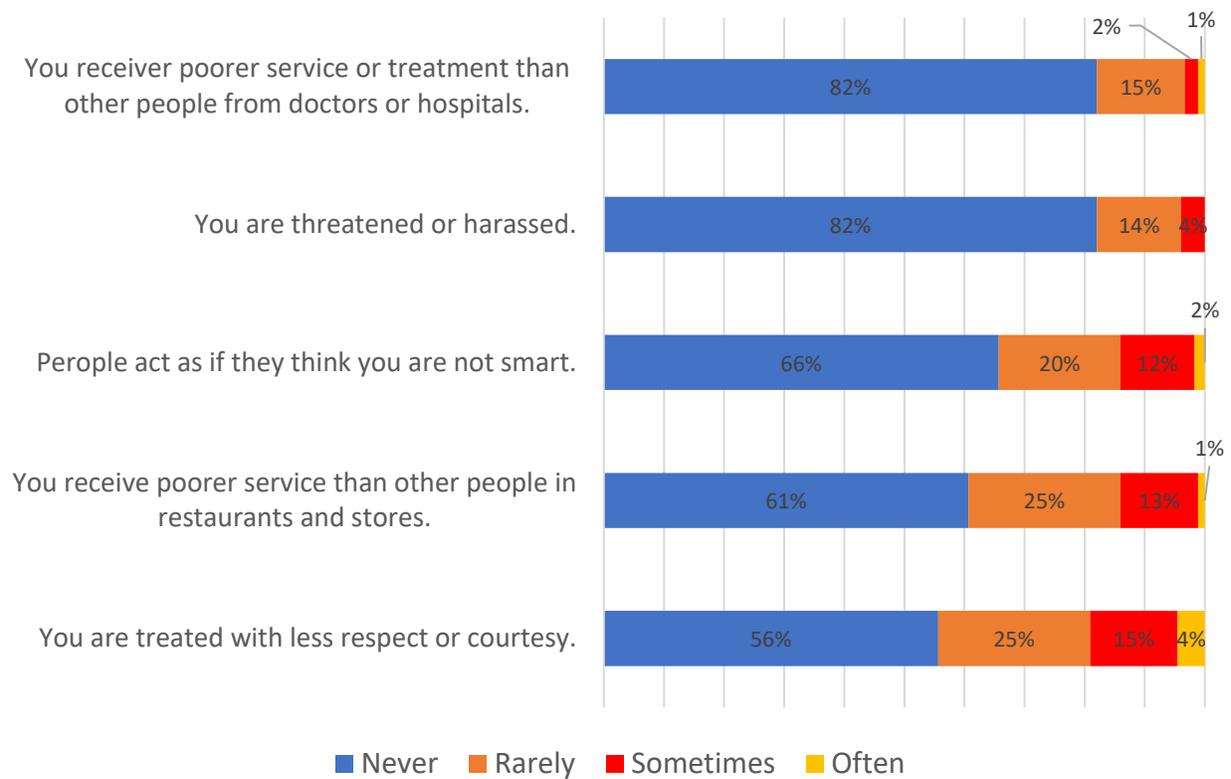


Table 1. Number of social needs that caregivers report and want help addressing based on endorsement of discrimination

	Type of discrimination endorsed	Type of discrimination not endorsed	P
<b>Number of reported social needs [mean (SD)]</b>			
Experience everyday discrimination	3.5 (0.49)	2.3 (0.45)	<0.001
Discrimination by race	3.4 (0.69)	2.8 (0.39)	0.166
Discrimination by gender	3.9 (0.90)	2.7 (0.36)	0.005
Discrimination by age	3.7 (0.89)	2.8 (0.37)	0.04
<b>Number of social needs caregiver desires help addressing [mean (SD)]</b>			
Experience everyday discrimination	3.6 (0.55)	2.1 (0.58)	<0.001
Discrimination by race	4.0 (0.82)	2.6 (0.47)	0.003
Discrimination by gender	3.9 (0.99)	2.7 (0.45)	0.01
Discrimination by age	4.2 (1.09)	2.7 (0.44)	0.01