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EMPIRICAL ARTICLE

Disclosure of direct and witnessed police stops among Black youth in Baltimore City, Maryland: Implications for posttraumatic stress symptoms

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Abstract

Youth-police contact is increasingly acknowledged as a stressor and a racialized adverse childhood experience that can undermine youths' mental health. There is limited empirical research, however, on youths' disclosure of police stops to trusted others and how disclosure might mitigate adverse mental health responses to police stops. The present study examines patterns of disclosure following direct and witnessed police stops and their implications for posttraumatic stress among a diverse sample of Black youth. Data come from the Survey of Police-Adolescent Contact Experiences (SPACE), a cross-sectional survey of a community-based sample of Black youth ages 12–21 in Baltimore City, Maryland ($n = 341$), administered from August 2022 to July 2023. Logistic and negative binomial regression methods were employed to examine key predictors of disclosure and associations between disclosure to recipients (e.g., family members, friends, nonfamilial adults) and police-initiated posttraumatic stress symptoms (PI-PTSS) following memorable stops. Results reveal most youth disclosed direct (65.18%) and witnessed (53.59%) stops. Still, in multivariable models, older youth, lesbian/gay and bisexual youth, and children of immigrant parents were less likely to disclose direct (but not witnessed) stops. Disclosure to a wider range of individuals—and to family members specifically—was associated with reduced PI-PTSS stemming from direct stops, whereas disclosure to nonfamilial adults (e.g., teachers, counselors) was associated with reduced PI-PTSS stemming from witnessed stops. Overall, our findings suggest disparities in Black youths' disclosure of police stops and that disclosure is generally associated with fewer trauma symptoms.

KEYWORDS
Black youth, disclosure, mental health, policing, urban

INTRODUCTION

Relative to other age groups, youth are more likely to come into contact with police (Tapp & Davis, 2024), due to the widespread presence of police in schools (Hirschfield, 2018), youths' extensive use of public spaces (Lieberg, 1995), their greater likelihood of arrest (Tuttle, 2024), and the ubiquitous deployment of proactive policing strategies in the United States (US) (Majmundar & Weisburd, 2018). National research on youth from urban communities in the US reveals that, by age 15, more than one in four have been directly stopped by police (Jackson, Fahmy, et al., 2019), and that once stopped, Black and Hispanic youth are about three times as likely to experience police violence as White youth (Geller, 2021). Additionally, 3 in 4 youth from urban communities have witnessed in-person police stops, with Black and multiracial youth being more likely than White youth to witness acts of police violence (Jackson, Del Toro, et al., 2021).

Given these features, youth-police contact is frequently conceptualized as a stressor (McFarland et al., 2019; Turney, 2021; Turney et al., 2022), particularly among minoritized youth. This framing echoes Pearlin's stress process perspective (Pearlin, 1989; Pearlin et al., 1981, 2005), which underscores how stressors are not only unequal across social groups but also can proliferate from an individual directly experiencing a stressor (e.g., a person stopped by police) to

those connected to them (e.g., someone witnessing a police stop of a family member, friend, or neighbor), exacerbating negative health consequences. This similarly reflects the core tenets of Agnew's General Strain Theory (Agnew, 2006; Agnew & White, 1992), which proposes that direct or vicarious strains (e.g., the imposition of negatively valued stimuli) can engender negative emotions that undermine positive mental health. Recently DeVylder et al. (2020, 2022) developed the structural-psychological model of police violence, which posits that police violence is a form of trauma that has mental health impacts independent of other adversities, largely due to the structural and historical context of police violence (e.g., *over-policing of Black communities*), features and characteristics that set it apart from other violence-related traumatic stressors (e.g., *police are armed with firearms; the threat of legal consequences*), and factors that impede long-term coping and recovery (e.g., *pervasive police presence in communities and schools; stigma of reporting police violence*).

While these theoretical frameworks do not speak exclusively or directly to the experiences of youth, young people—particularly those in urban settings—are disproportionately impacted and regularly surveilled by police (Geller, 2021; Tapp & Davis, 2024), and the critical developmental period of adolescence and emerging adulthood may make young people more sensitized to negative experiences with police (Harris & Jones, 2020). While youth-police contact can vary in its features and outcomes (Fix et al., 2023), it typically occurs in a context of salient age, power, and status differentials that disadvantage youth (Testa et al., 2022). Although all young people possess characteristics that increase their vulnerability to police violence and harmful outcomes, national data reveal that Black and Hispanic youth are disproportionately exposed to police violence (Geller, 2021), making it a "racialized adverse childhood experience" (Jackson, 2021) that can undermine mental health (Del Toro et al., 2022; Jackson, Fahmy, et al., 2019; Jackson, Johnson, et al., 2019; Jackson, Del Toro, et al., 2021; Turney, 2021). To be precise, mounting research has revealed that youth and emerging adult experiences of both direct and witnessed police stops—including exposure to acts of officer aggression and/or intrusion during these stops—have been linked to increases in depressive and anxiety symptoms (Del Toro et al., 2019, 2022; Turney, 2021), self-injury (Jackson, Testa, et al., 2021, 2024; Woodward et al., 2025), emotional distress (Jackson, Del Toro, et al., 2021), and posttraumatic stress (Gearhart et al., 2023; Jackson, Fahmy, et al., 2019), as well as reductions in happiness (Jackson, Testa, et al., 2022). Research on traumatic stress was recently summarized in a systematic review (Oppenheim et al., 2024), which yielded strong evidence that both direct and vicarious police violence exposures heighten traumatic stress among youth. This work suggests that early life adverse encounters with police may contribute to inequities in myriad mental health outcomes over time, especially given the developmental timing of and racial disparities in police contact and violence (Geller, 2021).

Despite growing evidence of the mental health harms of police contact and violence for young people, comparatively little research has examined factors that might reduce the mental health harms of youth-police contact after its occurrence. The limited evidence to date, however, suggests that social support may mitigate adverse mental health outcomes among youth following police interactions (Tummala-Narra & Sathasivam-Rueckert, 2013). For instance, youth who are close to their mothers report reduced anticipated stigma following police contact (Turney et al., 2023). Beyond these findings, two recent studies have examined a critical step youth may need to take to receive support in the wake of police stops: disclosing them (i.e., sharing police stop experiences with trusted others). This work has revealed that (1) about two-thirds of youth experiencing direct police stops (i.e., those personally stopped by police) disclosed these experiences to trusted others, most commonly to mothers (Jackson, Semenza, et al., 2022), and (2) disclosure of direct police stops was associated with reduced anxiety, especially among Black youth and boys (Turney et al., 2022).

While the above mentioned research on youth disclosure of police contact experiences is only in its infancy, it aligns with a larger body of literature demonstrating that young people's disclosure of a variety of distressing life events is associated with improved mental health outcomes (Shaw et al., 2019; Zhang, 2017), including reduced posttraumatic stress symptoms (PTSS) (Broman-Fulks et al., 2007). Disclosure may support mental health both through social support obtained from others and also through benefits associated with the act of disclosing itself. Theory and literature have explored how sources of social support might mitigate PTSS and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) among youth (Allen et al., 2021; Xiong et al., 2022). Specifically, disclosure of traumatic experiences (e.g., neglect or abuse) has been linked to lower PTSS, particularly when trusted adults respond in a way that reduces youth's feelings of guilt, shame, and stigma (Bloomfield, 2019).

Evidence also suggests that the act of disclosing is itself therapeutic; inhibition of traumatic experiences has been found to act as a chronic stressor, with adverse physiological effects that increase long-term risk for stress-related disorders, whereas disclosure has been found to improve health outcomes, including improved immune function and fewer medical visits (Pennebaker et al., 1988; Pennebaker & Susman, 1988). It is theorized that talking about traumatic experiences with a trusted person can promote emotional processing of the event (Bedard-Gilligan et al., 2012; Foa & Kozak, 1986). During this emotional processing, individuals can learn how to label their emotional experiences, which facilitates the process of assimilation or accommodation of the traumatic experience (Pérez et al., 2017). This is consistent with the organismic valuing process (OVP) theory, which describes the process of rebuilding of assumptions about one's self and the world after experiencing a traumatic event (Payne, Joseph, & Tudway, 2007). In line with this theory, we anticipate that youth who disclose police stops to trusted persons

(e.g., parents, teachers, peers) will have more opportunity to process the event—including their emotions and beliefs about themselves, the event, and the world—and will therefore be at lower risk of developing PTSS.

Notwithstanding the contribution of the two extant studies on youth disclosing police stops, this work is limited in key respects. First, these studies have examined *direct* police stops only, overlooking in-person witnessed police stops. This limitation is concerning, given the growing evidence that youth who witness police stops in their communities also exhibit poor mental health outcomes (Jackson, Del Toro, et al., 2021; Jackson, Testa, et al., 2022), and may therefore also benefit from disclosing their experiences to trusted others. Second, prior work has conceptualized disclosure as a binary—something that did or did not happen. In practice, however, disclosures may vary based on (1) the identity of the individual to whom a young person discloses and the nature of their relationship to the young person, and (2) the number of different people to whom a young person discloses. It is not yet known whether or how the identity and number of individuals to whom young people disclose are associated with adolescent mental health following police stops (Lindsey et al., 2010). Even so, a scoping review and meta-analysis of the literature on the role of social support in mitigating PTSS for children and adolescents suggests the strongest associations in the case of familial social support (Xiong et al., 2022). The authors of the review suggest that this may be explained in part by the unique ability of families (particularly parents and caregivers) to supply social resources, including affection, enhancement of worth, and instrumental aid (see also Barrera & Li, 1996). Some research also suggests that the diversity of a social network may be more protective against PTSD than perceived support strength (Platt et al., 2014). Still, the extent to which these findings generalize to police stop disclosure among Black youth in urban settings is an open question. Third, due to data limitations, prior studies did not examine disclosure patterns among multiply marginalized groups of young people (e.g., Black LGBTQ+ youth), who—due to a range of factors such as stigma and compounding systematic inequities—may be more reluctant to disclose their police encounters with others (Calton et al., 2016; Hughes et al., 2018). Finally, research on adolescent police stop disclosure has not explored whether disclosure is relevant for PTSS—a well-established consequence of youth-police contact, especially when it features officer aggression or intrusion (Gearhart et al., 2023; Jackson, Fahmy, et al., 2019; Jackson, Johnson, et al., 2019).

Addressing these gaps is essential for advancing adolescent mental health equity. Recent evidence suggests that multiply marginalized youth may be disproportionately susceptible to the mental health harms associated with police exposures (Jackson, Fix, et al., 2024). Support from caring individuals in a young person's life may be a powerful tool to facilitate healing for this population. Understanding whether and how disclosure is associated with youths' posttraumatic stress can inform the development and adaptation of interventions for target youth populations. For instance, educating young people about the importance of identifying adults with whom they can talk about difficult topics may increase the frequency of disclosures. Providing training and resources to adults has the potential to equip them with the tools to respond compassionately and effectively to youth disclosures by providing both emotional support and resources if available.

This study sought to examine the associations between key demographic factors (e.g., youth sex, age, sexual identity), officer intrusion (e.g., harsh language, threats of force, use of force), and patterns of stop disclosure following both direct and witnessed police stops among a sample of Black youth (ages 12–21) in a US urban setting. While national research on youth-police contact to date tends to focus on early to middle adolescence (Jackson, Fahmy, et al., 2019; Jackson, Johnson, et al., 2019), our focus on this broader age range is grounded in literature revealing that (1) the typical age of police contact is beginning to skew older into emerging adulthood (Tuttle, 2024), and (2) police stops among youth transitioning into adulthood are still impactful for their development and mental health (Jackson et al., 2025). Additionally, we investigated whether these disclosure patterns were linked to youth PTSS following police stops. We hypothesized that: 1) youth would be more likely to disclose stops involving higher levels of officer intrusion, and 2) youth who disclosed their stops—particularly to (a) family members and/or (b) a broader range of individuals—would report significantly lower levels of PTSS, regardless of the level of officer intrusion experienced during stops.

METHOD

Data come from the Survey of Police-Adolescent Contact Experiences (SPACE) (Jackson, Fix, et al., 2024). SPACE is a recent, cross-sectional, nonprobability sample survey of Black youth aged 12–21 in Baltimore City, Maryland. The survey was designed to better understand the relationship between police exposures and health among young people in an urban setting. Data collection occurred from August 2022 to July 2023. Community-based recruitment involved collaboration between SPACE investigators at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and 12 youth-serving organizations in Baltimore City, including organizations serving particularly vulnerable groups of youth (e.g., LGBQ youth, youth disconnected from school and/or work). These organizations partnered with the research team to share the survey opportunity and assist youth in completing it, both on-site and online. The project was co-developed with the Johns Hopkins Center for Adolescent Health (CAH) Youth Advisory Board (YAB) to ensure youth co-production of materials and the inclusion of diverse youth participants in the survey. Surveys were conducted via Qualtrics, with youth participants receiving

$30. To ensure data quality, attention checks were integrated into the survey, and respondents were screened out if data quality was compromised. Prior to participation in the survey, youth were screened on their place of residence, their self-reported racial-ethnic identity, and their age. To be eligible for participation, youth were required to (1) reside in Baltimore City, (2) identify as Black or African American, and (3) be 12–21 years old. In terms of racial-ethnic identity, youth were provided an "select all that apply" item with the following racial-ethnic categories: "Black or African American," "Hispanic or Latino/a," "White," "Asian or Pacific Islander," "American Indian or Alaskan Native," and "Other, please specify." Youth selecting "Black or African American," regardless of any other racial or ethnic group endorsed, were considered eligible for the study if they also resided in Baltimore City and were between the ages of 12 and 21. However, only 3.52% of eligible youth in our analytic sample endorsed an additional racial-ethnic group (i.e., were multiracial).

The final sample size for SPACE is 345 youth. For the present study, we dropped eligible cases that were missing data on disclosure items, resulting in a final analytic sample of 341 youth. Critically, subsample analyses of youth reporting direct police stops and in-person witnessed police stops were also conducted for this study. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants ages 18 and older, whereas written parental permission and written youth assent were obtained from all participants under age 18.

Importantly, having experienced a direct or witnessed police stop (in-person) was *not* one of the eligibility criteria to participate in SPACE. However, key independent and dependent variables in the present study (e.g., disclosure measures, police-initiated posttraumatic stress symptoms [PI-PTSS]) were only administered to participants who reported experiencing in-person police stops, whether direct or witnessed. While some measurement tools may be similar across variables pertaining to direct and witnessed stops (e.g., officer intrusion), items are asked separately for youth who endorse direct police stops and youth who endorse witnessed police stops. In short, all items for the key independent and dependent variables in this study are asked in reference to either a memorable direct stop or a memorable witnessed stop. SPACE was designed so that participants are filtered into the appropriate questions based on the type of in-person stop they endorse (or excluded from questions that do not pertain to them). Questions may be asked of the same participant twice if they endorse both types of in-person police stops. This approach exactly mirrors that of the teen survey (year 15) of the Future of Families and Child Wellbeing Study (FFCWS), a national birth cohort study of predominantly Black and Hispanic youth in 20 urban settings across the US. Importantly, the FFCWS is among the primary national data sources to study the mental health repercussions of youth-police contact in the 21st century (Geller, 2021; Jackson, Fahmy, et al., 2019; Jackson, Johnson, et al., 2019; Jackson, Del Toro, et al., 2021).

Measures

For more details on the measurement of all study variables, see the Appendix A (Tables A1–A4).

Police-initiated posttraumatic stress symptoms (PI-PTSS)

Our primary dependent variable is PI-PTSS, which was adapted from the year 15 (Y15) teen self-report survey measure in the FFCWS. Specifically, the PI-PTSS items have been employed in multiple published studies on the mental health of Black and Hispanic youth participating in the FFCWS (Gearhart et al., 2023; Jackson, Fahmy, et al., 2019; Jackson, Johnson, et al., 2019). SPACE—and by extension the present study—is focused on a similar population of youth (i.e., Black youth residing in one of the urban settings included in the FFCWS study), reinforcing the utility of this measure for this research. Notably, while FFCWS PI-PTSS items pertained only to direct police stops, SPACE included these questions for both direct and in-person witnessed stops. The measure assesses a variety of PTSS following an in-person police encounter (e.g., distressing dreams about the event, negative emotions, recurrent/involuntary/intrusive thoughts). For this study, items referenced PI-PTSS following a memorable lifetime direct or in-person witnessed police stop. To identify youth who had experienced a lifetime direct or in-person witnessed police stop, SPACE followed the lead of the FFCWS, asking youth separately about direct and in-person witnessed stops and following up with a series of questions about these experiences and their impacts (for more details, see the Appendix A: Tables A1–A4). Though the original FFCWS measure included nine binary items, the present measure was expanded to 12 items for direct stops (alpha = 0.93) and the same 12 items for witnessed stops (alpha = 0.94). Items added include references to upsetting dreams (i.e., I have upsetting dreams about the stop) as well as shifts in arousal and emotional reactivity (i.e., I have strong negative feelings about the stop such as fear, horror, anger, guilt, or shame; since the stop, I have felt more irritated, angry, or acted more aggressively). For the current study, we employed both a count measure (0–12) and a binary measure (any symptoms vs. none).

Disclosure measures

After reporting on a memorable lifetime direct or in-person witnessed police stop, youth were asked, "Did you tell anyone about this incident? (Y/N)" This question had the potential of being presented to youth twice; therefore, "this incident" referred to a memorable direct stop for youth endorsing direct stops and a memorable in-person witnessed stop for youth endorsing witnessed stops. Following these disclosure items (for both the

direct and witnessed stops), youth were asked, "Who did you tell?" Response options were "select all that apply" and included: *mother*, *father*, *sibling*, *cousin*, *aunt/uncle*, *grandparent*, *friend*, *teacher*, *school counselor or other mental health counselor*, and *official agency or local community organization*. While a *someone else* option was offered after all other options, no youth with direct stops endorsed this option and only one youth endorsed this option for their memorable witnessed stop (but did not provide further details). Disclosure items—including recipient identities—were also adapted from the FFCWS (Jackson, Semenza, et al., 2022), with *school counselor/mental health counselor* being a novel addition suggested by our study YAB.

Our final disclosure measures pertaining to both direct and witnessed stops for the current study include both *Any* (Yes/No) and *Count* measures. This approach was taken to capture both the presence and the amount of disclosure. The count measure represents a sum of the total distinct identities of individuals who were recipients of the disclosed information (potential range of 0–11). Additionally, due to low frequencies in some categories (e.g., teachers, local community organizations), disclosure identities were grouped into the following categories for a subset of analyses: *family members* (i.e., mother, father, sibling, cousin, aunt/uncle, grandparent), *friends* (i.e., friend), and *nonfamilial adults* (teacher, school counselor or other mental health counselor, and official agency or local community organization). Ancillary analyses also examine disclosures to specific family member identities.

Covariates

The following covariates were included in each of the multivariable models to minimize the likelihood of spurious results: youth age (in years); youth sex (male = 1); youth LGBQ identity (lesbian/gay, bisexual, and queer, with heterosexual as the reference category); youth disconnection (not working or in school = 1); youth multiracial (Black/African American in conjunction with other race/ethnicity = 1); neighborhood disorder (i.e., trash/litter, graffiti/broken windows, rundown buildings); biological parents' relationship status (married, cohabiting, and other as reference); parent immigrant (yes/no); maternal education (i.e., from *less than high school* to *completed graduate degree*); and household size (i.e., number of people living in current residence). In addition to these covariates, a 9-item count measure of officer intrusion was included in these analyses, given its well-documented relationship with PI-PTSS (Gearhart et al., 2023; Jackson, Fahmy, et al., 2019; Jackson, Johnson, et al., 2019). This measure expanded upon items available in the FFCWS and includes the following intrusive actions by officers (separately for both direct and witnessed stops): frisk, search bags and pockets, harsh language, racial slurs, threats of force, use of force, handcuffs, officer gunpoint, and other.

ANALYTIC PLAN

The analysis proceeded as follows. First, we calculated descriptive statistics among the full analytic sample ($n = 341$), and then among the direct ($n = 112$) and in-person witnessed ($n = 153$) stop subsamples, further stratified by youth who did and did not disclose those stops. Second, we employed multivariable logistic and negative binomial regression to examine associations between all study covariates (including officer intrusion) and the main disclosure measures (i.e., the *any* and *count* measures). Analyses were estimated separately for the direct ($n = 112$) and in-person witnessed ($n = 153$) stop subsamples. Ancillary analyses also re-estimated these models using individual identities where possible (e.g., mother, father). Finally, we employed multivariable logistic and negative binomial regression to examine associations between multiple disclosure indicators (i.e., the count measure, as well as the *family members*, *friends*, and *nonfamilial adults* measures) and PI-PTSS (both the binary and count measures) in both direct and witnessed stops. Ancillary analyses also re-estimated models predicting PI-PTSS using individual family member identities (e.g., mother, father). Missing data were imputed in STATA 18.1 using mi commands, which offer advantages over listwise deletion (e.g., resolves issues related to wastefulness as well as biased covariances, *p*-values, and confidence intervals) (van Ginkel et al., 2020). In the present study, we employ multiple imputation with chained equations, resulting in 20 multiply imputed data sets.

RESULTS

Descriptive statistics are provided in Table 1. To summarize, the analytic sample was on average 17.83 years of age, 53.37% male, 21.41% lesbian/gay, 13.78% bisexual, 6.45% queer, 3.52% multiracial, 34.60% disconnected (not working or in school), 8.21% children of immigrant parents, and 76.83% had biological parents who were neither married nor cohabiting. Furthermore, 32.84% reported direct police stops and 44.86% reported in-person witnessed stops in their communities. Among those with direct stops, 65.18% reported disclosing their most memorable direct stop; among those with in-person witnessed stops, 53.59% reported disclosing their most memorable witnessed stop. The most common disclosure recipients—regardless of whether stops were direct or witnessed—were mothers (direct stop: 64.38%; witnessed stop: 50.00%), followed by siblings (direct stop: 53.42%; witnessed stop: 37.81%) and friends (direct stop: 45.21%; witnessed stop: 36.59%). For more details, see Table 1.

Table 2 presents the multivariable logistic and negative binomial regression models examining associations between all study covariates (including officer intrusion) and the main disclosure measures (i.e., the *any* and *count* measures). Findings in Model 1 of Table 2 revealed that, net of all covariates, older youth, lesbian/gay (vs. heterosexual) youth,

TABLE 1 Descriptive statistics, stratified by type of in-person police stop and any youth disclosure of stops.

Type of in-person stop	Full sample	Direct ($n = 112$)		Witnessed ($n = 153$)	
	($n = 341$)	Yes ($n = 73$)	No ($n = 39$)	Yes ($n = 82$)	No ($n = 71$)
Any disclosure	**Mean (SD) or %**	**Mean (SD) or %**	**Mean (SD) or %**	**Mean (SD) or %**	**Mean (SD) or %**
Dependent variable					
PI-PTSS	–	2.96 (3.79)	2.85 (3.94)	4.00 (4.49)	3.20 (4.02)
Independent variable					
Count of disclosure recipients	–	3.07 (2.01)	–	2.23 (1.39)	–
Covariates					
Officer intrusion	–	2.82 (2.81)	2.10 (2.65)	3.17 (2.98)	3.09 (2.96)
Youth age	17.83 (1.59)	17.42 (2.15)	18.28 (1.45)	17.65 (1.93)	17.82 (1.81)
Youth sex (Male = 1)	53.37%	54.79%	43.59%	63.41%	49.29%
Youth heterosexual	58.36%	63.01%	43.59%	60.98%	56.34%
Youth lesbian/Gay	21.41%	10.96%	30.77%	18.29%	12.68%
Youth bisexual	13.78%	15.07%	17.94%	13.42%	19.72%
Youth queer	6.45%	10.96%	7.69%	7.32%	11.27%
Youth disconnected	34.60%	32.87%	28.21%	40.24%	32.39%
Youth multiracial	3.52%	1.37%	0%	3.66%	2.82%
Neighborhood disorder	1.39 (0.98)	1.42 (1.05)	1.38 (0.91)	1.48 (0.98)	1.52 (1.04)
Bio parents married	17.89%	24.66%	25.64%	21.95%	19.72%
Bio parents cohabiting	5.28%	8.22%	2.56%	6.10%	7.04%
Bio parents other relationship status	76.83%	67.12%	71.79%	71.95%	73.24%
Parent immigrant	8.21%	9.59%	10.26%	9.76%	7.04%
Maternal education	4.03 (1.96)	4.09 (2.10)	3.83 (1.87)	4.26 (2.11)	3.95 (2.09)
Household size	4.15 (1.97)	4.73 (2.42)	4.00 (1.72)	4.67 (2.29)	3.96 (1.71)
Disclosure recipient identities					
Mother	–	64.38%	–	50.00%	–
Father	–	45.21%	–	30.49%	–
Sibling	–	53.42%	–	37.81%	–
Cousin	–	31.51%	–	26.83%	–
Aunt or uncle	–	24.66%	–	19.51%	–
Grandparent	–	26.03%	–	7.32%	–
Friend	–	45.21%	–	36.59%	–
Teacher	–	5.48%	–	4.88%	–
School counselor	–	6.85%	–	6.10%	–
Other agency/Organization	–	4.11%	–	2.44%	–

and bisexual (vs. heterosexual) youth exhibited significantly *lower* odds of disclosing direct stops to anyone. Even so, officer intrusion was not significantly associated with the odds of disclosing direct stops.

In Model 2 of Table 2, however, youth reporting more officer intrusion in their direct stops were significantly more likely to disclose direct stops to a wide range of individuals ($B = 0.08$; SE = 0.04; IRR = 1.09; $p < .05$). Findings pertaining to lesbian/gay and bisexual youth held when examining the count of disclosure identities in Model 2. To illustrate, youth identifying as lesbian/gay ($B = -0.72$; SE = 0.32; IRR = 0.48; $p < .05$) and bisexual ($B = -1.01$; SE = 0.33; IRR = 0.36; $p < .01$) were significantly less likely than youth identifying as heterosexual to disclose direct stops to a wide range of individuals. Ancillary analyses reveal that, compared with heterosexual youth, lesbian/gay youth are significantly less likely to disclose direct stops to siblings and nonfamilial adults (e.g., teachers, counselors), whereas bisexual youth are significantly less likely than heterosexual youth to disclose direct stops to mothers, fathers, cousins, and nonfamilial adults (see the Appendix A). Still, additional ancillary analyses show that, among youth disclosing direct police stops, LGBQ youth (collectively) are significantly less likely to disclose to their fathers compared with heterosexual youth (see the Appendix A). Additionally, household size was positively and significantly associated

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TABLE 2 Logistic and negative binomial regression models of predictors of disclosure of direct and witnessed police stops.

Type of in-person stop	Direct		Witnessed	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
	Any	Count	Any	Count
	B/OR	B/IRR	B/OR	B/IRR
Disclosure	SE	SE	SE	SE
Officer intrusion	0.12/1.13	0.08**/1.09	−0.01/0.99	0.04/1.04
	0.09	0.04	0.06	0.04
Youth age	−0.34***/0.71	−0.14/0.94	−0.03/0.97	0.00/1.00
	0.13	0.25	0.09	0.06
Youth sex (Male = 1)	0.01/1.02	−0.06/0.86	0.49/1.62	−0.02/0.98
	0.51	0.05	0.37	0.24
Youth lesbian/gay	−1.49**/0.22	−0.72**/0.48	0.43/1.53	0.07/1.07
	0.64	0.32	0.51	0.31
Youth bisexual	−1.20*/0.30	−1.01***/0.36	−0.28/0.76	−0.34/0.72
	0.65	0.33	0.51	0.33
Youth queer	−0.25/0.78	0.18/1.19	−0.07/0.94	0.46/1.58
	0.81	0.36	0.64	0.39
Youth disconnected	−0.08/0.92	−0.01/0.99	0.19/1.21	−0.10/0.91
	0.56	0.26	0.38	0.24
Youth multiracial	–	0.66/1.95	0.24/1.28	0.04/1.04
		1.13	1.00	0.61
Neighborhood disorder	−0.08/0.92	−0.03/0.98	−0.11/0.89	−0.05/0.95
	0.25	0.11	0.18	0.11
Bio parents married	0.01/1.01	0.02/1.02	0.08/1.09	−0.15/0.86
	0.54	0.26	0.45	0.28
Bio parents cohabiting	0.92/2.51	−0.04/0.96	−0.50/0.61	−0.60/0.55
	1.24	0.46	0.74	0.49
Parent immigrant	−0.89/0.41	−0.78*/0.46	0.36/1.44	0.12/1.13
	0.82	0.41	0.65	0.39
Maternal education	0.06/1.06	0.05/1.06	0.10/1.11	0.09*/1.09
	0.11	0.05	0.09	0.05
Household size	0.23**/1.26	0.14***/1.15	0.19**/1.21	0.08/1.08
	0.11	0.05	0.09	0.05
N	112		153	

Note: Multiracial was excluded from model 1 ($n = 112$) because it perfectly predicted any disclosure (i.e., all multiracial youth with direct stops disclosed their stops to someone; see Table 1). The reference category for youth lesbian/gay, bisexual, and queer is "heterosexual"; the reference category for bio parent married and cohabiting is "other relationship status."

Abbreviations: *B*, unstandardized coefficient; IRR, incidence rate ratio; SE, standard error; OR, odds ratio.

*$p < .10$; **$p < .05$; ***$p < .01$.

with disclosure in Models 1 and 2. Findings from Model 2 also revealed that, net of covariates, youth with immigrant parents were marginally significantly less likely to disclose direct stops to a wide range of individuals ($B = -0.78$; SE = 0.41; IRR = 0.46; $p < .10$).

Unlike in Model 2, Model 4 revealed null associations between the count measure of disclosure and LGBQ identity, parent immigrant status, and officer intrusion. Even so, household size was significantly associated with increased odds of disclosing witnessed stops (Model 3), whereas maternal education was positively and significantly associated with disclosing witnessed stops to a wide range of individuals (Model 4).

Table 3 displays the results of multivariable logistic and negative binomial regression models that examine associations between multiple disclosure indicators (i.e., the count measure, as well as the *family members*, *friends*, and *nonfamilial adults* measures) and PI-PTSS (both the binary and count measures) in both direct and witnessed stops. For PI-PTSS stemming

TABLE 3 Logistic and negative binomial regression models of police-initiated posttraumatic stress symptoms (PI-PTSS) following direct and witnessed police stops.

	Direct police stops		Witnessed police stops	
	Police-initiated posttraumatic stress symptoms (PI-PTSS)			
	Any	Count	Any	Count
	B/OR	*B*/IRR	*B*/OR	*B*/IRR
	SE	SE	SE	SE
Disclosure (Count of recipient identities)	−0.42***/0.65	−0.06/0.94	−0.06/0.94	−0.01/0.99
	0.15	0.06	0.08	0.08
Disclosure recipient: Family members	−1.80***/0.16	−0.65**/0.52	−0.13/0.88	0.24/1.27
	0.63	0.28	0.23	0.22
Disclosure recipient: Friends	−0.06/0.95	0.26/1.29	0.03/1.03	0.01/1.01
	0.59	0.27	0.28	0.29
Disclosure recipient: Nonfamilial adults	0.75/2.12	0.20/1.22	−0.47/0.63	−1.03**/0.35
	0.94	0.45	0.63	0.53
N	112		153	

Note: The following covariates are included in all models are suppressed to conserve space: officer intrusion (count), youth age, youth sex, youth lesbian/gay, youth bisexual, youth queer, youth disconnected, youth multiracial (for count models), neighborhood disorder, parents married, biological parents cohabiting, parent immigrant, maternal education, and household size. The "Family Member" recipients include mother, father, sibling, cousin, aunt/uncle, and grandparent. The "Nonfamilial Adult" recipients of disclosure (which were the least common) include teachers, school or mental health counselors, and representatives of an official agency or local community organization.

Abbreviations: *B*, unstandardized coefficient; IRR, incidence rate ratio; SE, standard error; OR, odds ratio.

**$p < .05$; ***$p < .01$.

from *direct stops*, findings indicate that (1) a single unit increase in the count of disclosure recipient identities was associated with a 35% reduction in the odds of youth exhibiting any PI-PTSS symptoms ($B = -0.42$; SE = 0.15; OR = 0.65; $p < .01$), (2) disclosure to family members was associated with an 84% reduction in the odds of youth exhibiting any PI-PTSS symptoms ($B = -1.80$; SE = 0.63; OR = 0.16; $p < .01$), and (3) disclosure to family members was also associated with a 48% reduction in the rate of PI-PTSS symptoms ($B = -0.65$; SE = 0.28; IRR = 0.52; $p < .05$). Ancillary analyses reveal that disclosure to mothers is most consistently protective against PI-PTSS stemming from direct police stops (for more details, see the Appendix A). In the case of PI-PTSS stemming from *witnessed stops*, however, only disclosure to nonfamilial adults (e.g., teachers, school counselors) was associated with a statistically significant reduction (65%) in the rate of PI-PTSS symptoms ($B = -1.03$; SE = 0.53; IRR = 0.35; $p < .05$).

DISCUSSION

Given the mounting evidence of the mental health harms of youth-police contact (Del Toro et al., 2022; Jackson, Fahmy, et al., 2019; Jackson, Johnson, et al., 2019; Jackson, Del Toro, et al., 2021; Turney, 2021), particularly for minoritized youth (Del Toro et al., 2019; Jackson, Fix, et al., 2024; Jindal et al., 2022), it is vital to understand youths' disclosure of these stops to trusted others because there is potential for disclosure to increase opportunities for youth to receive social supports that may otherwise be lacking. Even so, very few studies have explored youths' disclosure of police stops (Jackson, Semenza, et al., 2022) and its potential mental health benefits (Turney et al., 2022). Using data from a recent community-based sample of Black youth ages 12–21 from Baltimore City, Maryland, the current study yielded five key findings.

First, the majority of youth in our sample disclosed both direct (65.18%) and witnessed (53.59%) police stops. These results underscore that disclosure of police stops to trusted others is relatively common and may be an asset that youth can draw upon to promote their wellbeing. Furthermore, the findings both echo and expand upon previous research. Similar to the current findings, a FFCWS study on youth disclosure of direct police stops in 20 US urban areas (Jackson, Semenza, et al., 2022) found that just over two-thirds of youth disclosed direct police stops (~69% of the Black youth subsample). Even so, the present study offers the first analysis of disclosure related to witnessed stops, which appear to be a somewhat less common phenomenon. This contribution provides new insights into how youth process and share their experiences of police encounters, whether directly involved or as witnesses, which is critical for understanding the broader mental health implications of police exposures.

Second, results from multivariable models revealed that older youth, lesbian/gay and bisexual youth, and children of immigrant parents were less likely to disclose direct (but not witnessed) police stops. Among this sample of youth (ages 12–21), lower rates of disclosure among older youth may reflect reduced contact with sources of support (particularly family members, such as parents) in the transition to adulthood as young people may leave home (Fang et al., 2021). In

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terms of sexual minoritized youth specifically, queer theory (Callis, 2009; Clarke et al., 2010) and intersectional frameworks (Opara et al., 2022) highlight how LGBTQ+ youth (including LGBTQ+ youth of color) must negotiate norms (e.g., around gender expression as well as peer, family, and romantic relationships) in relation to their sexuality that might influence whether and how they seek help in times of need (McDermott et al., 2018). In the case of LGBTQ+ youth, it is important to acknowledge that they already contend with disclosing their sexual identity given the heteronormative culture in the US that privileges (and presumes) heterosexuality (Bates et al., 2020; Mousavi et al., 2024; Pollitt et al., 2021). Thus, the lower rates of disclosure of direct police stops among LGBQ youth in this sample may mirror the reluctance that many sexual minoritized youth feel to disclose their own identity as a means of preserving their day-to-day functioning (Wainipitapong et al., 2025) and may also stem from heightened concerns about stigma, fear of negative reactions, or cultural and familial dynamics that might inhibit support-seeking behavior (Mousavi et al., 2024).

Concurrently, grounded theories of resilience suggest that a lack of disclosure (e.g., of police stops) may also stem from personal resilience (i.e., youths' own sense of "doing well" in the face of adversity), derived from LGBTQ+ youths' desire and/or capacity to build on emotional pain inflicted by external adversities to "carve out pathways to resilience" (Asakura, 2017, p. 521). Relatedly, disclosing direct police stops as a means of help-seeking among sexual minoritized youth may be less common in part because the threshold for help-seeking may be "the point at which young people feel they can no longer help themselves" (McDermott et al., 2018, p. 158). Ultimately, future research is needed to unpack sources of strength and support upon which LGBTQ+ youth can draw to cope with police contact experiences, such as romantic or intimate partnerships (Whitton et al., 2018). Regardless of the precise explanation for our findings, identifying ways to meet the needs of multiply marginalized groups of youth via disclosure of police stops to trusted others is critical, as it may help resolve the trauma of stressful experiences (like police stops) and prevent further compounding of the mental health disparities that already disproportionately affect these groups (Jackson, Fix, et al., 2024; Plöderl & Tremblay, 2015; Salas-Wright et al., 2014).

Third, youth experiencing greater officer intrusion during direct police stops were most likely to disclose those stops to a wide range of individuals. This finding aligns with our expectation that, in the wake of officer intrusion or aggression, youth would seek to draw upon social support via disclosure to a wider variety of individuals in their social circle in an effort to cope with the psychological distress that can stem from these experiences (Jackson, Fahmy, et al., 2019; Jackson, Johnson, et al., 2019). For witnessed stops, however, the level of officer intrusion was not associated with our main disclosure measures, contrary to our expectations. Exposure to officer intrusion during witnessed stops may feel less urgent for youth to disclose, especially if the witnessed stop involved one or more community members not personally familiar to the youth. Under these circumstances, youth may also feel that disclosing is unlikely to result in actions that help the person who was stopped. Future qualitative research is critical to unpack differences in motivations to disclose (or not disclose) direct and witnessed stops featuring officer intrusion.

Fourth, disclosure to a wider range of individuals was associated with reduced odds of exhibiting PI-PTSS stemming from direct stops, but not witnessed stops. In the case of direct stops, this is consistent with our expectation that youth who share their experience with several different individuals in their social circle would be better equipped to cope and, as a result, exhibit reduced PI-PTSS. This aligns with research highlighting the role of robust social support in reducing trauma symptoms in the face of adversity. For instance, one study found that the diversity of one's social network—more than the perceived strength of the support from any person—was particularly protective against PTSD (Platt et al., 2014). It is also possible that disclosing to multiple individuals is therapeutic for youth because it represents multiple opportunities for processing the experience and related emotions. Even so, the same pattern did not emerge in the case of witnessed stops.

Fifth and finally, disclosure to family members specifically was associated with reduced PI-PTSS stemming from direct stops, whereas disclosure to nonfamilial adults (e.g., teachers, counselors) was associated with reduced PI-PTSS stemming from witnessed stops. The first finding aligns with our expectation that disclosure to family members might be especially protective against PI-PTSS, given the prior literature on family support and PTSS (Barrera & Li, 1996; Xiong et al., 2022). Broadly, these findings highlight the potential value of promoting structured, proactive conversations with Black youth about police encounters, where youth are encouraged to disclose either direct or witnessed interactions in a safe, supportive environment. While additional research is needed to further unpack these findings, initiatives that promote an open dialogue in family and school settings about systemic policing inequities—and equip parents, teachers, and school counselors with the tools and skills to create a safe space for the disclosure of direct and witnessed police contact—could help mitigate psychological harms (Cintron et al., 2019). Although these findings provide a valuable contribution to the literature on youth disclosure of police stops, they should be interpreted in light of certain limitations. First, the data are cross-sectional and focus on lifetime police stops. Thus, we were unable to explore the time to disclosure following the stop or how the timing of stops in the early life course shapes disclosure. Even so, no existing dataset can address these questions, highlighting the need for future collection of rich, longitudinal data on these themes. Second, the generalizability of this study is limited by its focus on Black youth in Baltimore City, Maryland. Future research should explore patterns of youth disclosure of direct and witnessed police stops across more diverse populations and geographic locations to enhance the broader applicability of these findings. Third, our data do

not include youths' underlying motivation(s) to disclose, information on the content of disclosure conversations, or potential additional resources and supports provided to youth due to the disclosure. Additional qualitative or mixed methods research is needed to identify the mechanisms by which disclosure may reduce PI-PTSS for impacted youth. Fourth, while we included numerous covariates to address the potential for residual confounding, not all covariates have been explicitly designed for or validated among samples of Black youth in urban settings. Fifth, beyond our measure of maternal education, we were unable to ascertain household SES given reliance on youth reports. It is possible that the absence of additional SES measures may have resulted in unobserved confounding. Finally, given the infrequency of disclosure to certain groups of nonfamilial persons (e.g., teachers, school and mental health counselors, and local community organizations), we were unable to examine these groups separately in ancillary analyses. Future studies using larger samples should examine disclosure to these groups individually when possible.

Regarding practice and policy, our findings underscore an urgent need to curtail harmful youth-police contact in the first place as a primary strategy to promote adolescent mental health equity (Jackson, Fix, et al., 2024). To reduce negative impacts of police contact that has already occurred, promoting safe and supportive avenues for disclosure is a promising area for future research and practice. Given that social support following disclosure of distressing and traumatic events has been associated with improved health and developmental outcomes (Shaw et al., 2019; Zhang, 2017), education and training for parents/caregivers, teachers, school counselors, and other community organization leaders in how to encourage youth communication and how to respond in a supportive and helpful manner to disclosures should be prioritized. Existing research and resources, such as the Search Institute's work on developmental relationships (Houltberg et al., 2023), may be useful in this context. Schools, after-school programs, and other youth-serving settings can also educate young people about the importance of identifying caring individuals who can support them, including not only family members but also trusted teachers, coaches, health and mental health care providers, neighbors, and faith leaders, who can form an important part of a young person's support network (Beam et al., 2002). This type of education should also instruct young people about the health and mental health benefits of communicating painful thoughts, experiences, and emotions and the potential harms of "holding it in." Given the evidence that disclosure of trauma, whether verbal or written, can itself be therapeutic (Pennebaker et al., 1988; Pennebaker & Susman, 1988), future work should explore how to expand the number of positive avenues for youth disclosure, potentially including help lines and diaries/journaling as additional or alternative options when needed. The strategies proposed above have potential not only to facilitate youth disclosures and supportive responses but also to teach young people to express and process their experiences and to strengthen ties more broadly between young people and caring adults, a key resource for promoting positive youth development (Bowers et al., 2015).

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Dylan B. Jackson: Conceptualization, investigation, funding acquisition, writing—original draft, methodology, writing—review and editing, project administration, supervision, resources, data curation, formal analysis, visualization; **Rebecca L. Fix:** Investigation, funding acquisition, writing—review and editing, supervision, project administration; **Alexander Testa:** writing—review and editing, investigation, writing—original draft; **Lindsey Webb:** Writing—original draft, investigation, writing—review and editing; **Laura K. Clary:** Investigation, writing—review and editing; **Tamar Mendelson:** Investigation, writing—review and editing; **Kristin Turney:** Writing—review and editing, investigation.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest associated with this manuscript.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

ETHICS STATEMENT

Ethical approval was obtained from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health Institutional Review Board (#18323).

PATIENT CONSENT STATEMENT

No patients were included in the study.

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APPENDIX A

TABLE A1 Description of study variables.

Variables	Description
Police-initiated posttraumatic stress symptoms (PI-PTSS)	You were asked whether, since the time of the police stop, they (1) feel upset when remembering the stop, (2) have upsetting dreams about the stop, (3) suddenly feel or act as though they were reliving the stop, (4) have felt distant or cut off from other people, (5) have physical reactions (e.g., heart pounding, trouble breathing) when something reminds them of the stop, (6) have lost interest in things they used to enjoy, (7) try to avoid the place where the stop occurred, (8) have been aware of more possible dangers to themselves, (9) have had more difficulty concentrating, (10) try not to think about the stop, (11) have strong negative feelings about the stop (e.g., fear, horror, shame, anger), and (12) have felt more irritated, angry, or acted more aggressively. For this study, items referenced PI-PTSS following a memorable lifetime direct or in-person witnessed police stop (Direct Stop PI-PTSS: alpha = 0.93; Witnessed Stop PI-PTSS: alpha = 0.94). For the current study, we employed both a count measure of PI-PTSS (0–12), as well as a binary measure (any symptoms vs. none). These items were adapted from the Future of Families and Child Wellbeing Study (FFCWS) (Waldfogel et al., 2010)—a national longitudinal birth cohort study across 20 urban areas in the United States (US). These items have been employed in numerous published studies on health outcomes among Black and Hispanic youth across 20 urban areas following direct and witnessed police stops (Jackson, Fahmy, et al., 2019; Jackson, Johnson, et al., 2019; Jackson, Semenza, et al., 2022; Jackson, Testa, et al., 2022; McFarland et al., 2019)
Disclosure	After reporting on a memorable lifetime direct or in-person witnessed police stop, youth were asked, "Did you tell anyone about this incident? (Y/N)." This question was asked separately for memorable direct and witnessed stops. Following these items, youth were asked, "Who did you tell?" Response options were "select all that apply," and included: *mother*, *father*, *sibling*, *cousin*, *aunt/uncle*, *grandparent*, *friend*, *teacher*, *school counselor or other mental health counselor*, and *official agency or local community organization*. Our final disclosure measures include both *Any* (Yes/No) and *Count* measures, which represent a sum of the total distinct identities who were recipients of the disclosed information (potential range of 0–11). Additionally, due to low disclosure rates in some categories (e.g., teachers, local community organization), disclosure identities were grouped into the following categories for a subset of analyses: *family members* (i.e., mother, father, sibling, cousin, aunt/uncle, grandparent), *friends* (i.e., friend), and *nonfamilial adults* (teacher, school counselor or other mental health counselor, and official agency or local community organization). These items were also adapted from the FFCWS (Waldfogel et al., 2010) and have been employed in two published studies on Black and Hispanic youths' disclosure following direct police stops (Jackson, Semenza, et al., 2022; Turney et al., 2022)
Officer intrusion	A 9-item count measure of officer intrusion was included in these analyses. This measure expanded upon items available in the FFCWS and includes the following intrusive actions by officers (separately for both direct and witnessed stops): frisk, search bags, and pockets, harsh language, racial slurs, threats of force, use of force, handcuffs, officer gunpoint, and other. These items were also adapted from the FFCWS (Waldfogel et al., 2010) and have been employed in numerous published studies on health outcomes among Black and Hispanic youth across 20 urban settings following direct and witnessed police stops (Jackson, Fahmy, et al., 2019; Jackson, Johnson, et al., 2019; Jackson, Semenza, et al., 2022; Jackson, Testa, et al., 2022; McFarland et al., 2019)
Youth age	Screener question: "How old are you?"; response options were in years and ranged from "11 years or younger" to "22 years or older"; Respondents were screened out of the survey if they responded "11 years or younger" or "22 years or older" due to study eligibility criteria (ages 12–21)
Youth sex	In the demographic information section (Part VI) at the end of the survey, respondents answered whether their sex was male (coded as 1) or female (coded as 0). A separate question on gender identity was also asked, but too small of a portion of the sample responded with noncisgender categories to yield reliable estimates in the model (e.g., transgender $n = 3$)

(Continues)

TABLE A1 (Continued)

Variables	Description
Youth sexual identities	In the demographic information section (Part VI) at the end of the survey, respondents were asked "What best describes your sexual orientation? (1) heterosexual/straight, (2) homosexual/gay, (3) bisexual, (4) other (fill in the blank), (5) prefer not to say, and 6) unsure. Youth who responded "prefer not to say" were coded as missing; otherwise, heterosexual youth were coded as such and youth with nonheterosexual responses were coded as LGBQ. Specifically, youth who responded "homosexual/gay" were classified as lesbian/gay, youth who responded "bisexual" were classified as bisexual, and all other nonheterosexual responses were classified as "queer," including the "other" category. Open-ended responses to the "other" category varied, but most commonly were queer or pansexual. This item has been employed in previously published research on LGBQ youth's experiences with police violence and police violence stress (Jackson, Fix, et al., 2024; Jackson, Testa, et al., 2024)
Youth multiracial	Screener question: What is your race or ethnicity (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY); response options included "Black or African American," "Hispanic or Latino/a," "White," "Asian or Pacific Islander," "American Indian or Alaskan Native," and "Other, please specify"; respondents were screen out of the survey if they did not select "Black or African American," as this was an explicit eligibility criterion of the study. However, youth were permitted to select other races and ethnicities with which they identify. If youth selected any of the other racial or ethnic categories in addition to Black or African American, they were coded as multiracial (1); otherwise, they were coded as a 0 on this variable
Youth disconnected (i.e., not working or in school)	In the demographic information section (Part VI) at the end of the survey, respondents were asked "What is your current employment status?" Response options included "unemployed," "employed, part time," "employed, full time," "self-employed," and "student, but not currently employed." Youth who responded unemployed were coded as 1 (i.e., neither working nor in school), whereas youth endorsing any other response were coded as 0. This item was developed according to a conceptual model on youth disconnection found in Mendelson et al. (2018) and was included given its high prevalence among our intended sample and its overlap with risk factors across ecological levels (as illustrated in Mendelson et al., 2018)
Neighborhood disorder	Youth were asked, "in your neighborhood, is there (select all that apply): (1) litter or garbage on the street or sidewalk? (2) rundown housing like buildings with boarded up windows? and (3) broken windows or graffiti? Items were summed into a count measure, ranging from 0 to 3. This item was derived from the National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH), which has been conducted annually by the US Census Bureau since 2016 and is funded by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau of the Health Resources and Services Administration (Ghandour et al., 2018). Multiple studies examining the health impacts of violence and adverse childhood experiences have employed these items (Blair & Ford, 2019; Jackson, Fahmy, et al., 2019; Jackson, Johnson, et al., 2019)
Biological parents relationship status	In the demographic information section (Part VI) at the end of the survey, respondents answered whether their biological or birth parents were married to each other (yes = 1, no = 0 on "married"), cohabiting (yes = 1, no = 0 on "cohabiting"), or had another relationship status (yes = 1, no = 0 on "other relationship status") at the time of the survey
Parent immigrant	In the demographic information section (Part VI) at the end of the survey, respondents were asked, "Were both of your parents born in the United States?" If they answered no, they were coded as a 1; otherwise, they were coded as 0
Maternal education	In the demographic information section (Part VI) at the end of the survey, respondents were asked, "What is your mother's highest level of education? If you are unsure, please provide your best guess." Response options included "less than high school," "some high school but no diploma," "High school graduate/GED," "Trade of vocational training," "some college," "completed college," "some graduate degree," "completed graduate degree." The final item ranged from 1 to 8
Household size	Youth were asked how many people (including them) live in their current household. Response options range from 1 (1) to more than 10 (10)

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TABLE A2 Logistic regression models of predictors of direct stop disclosure to select identities ($N = 112$).

	Family members	Mother	Father	Sibling	Cousin	Aunt or uncle	Grandparent	Friends	Nonfamilial adults
	Model 1	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8
	B/OR	*B*/OR	*B*/OR	*B*/OR	*B*/OR	*B*/OR	*B*/OR	*B*/OR	*B*/OR
Disclosure to	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE
Officer intrusion	0.11/1.12	0.04/1.04	−0.02/0.98	0.18**/1.20	0.07/1.08	0.16/1.17	0.25**/1.28	0.19**/1.21	0.12/1.13
	0.09	0.08	0.09	0.08	0.09	0.10	0.11	0.08	0.09
Youth age	−0.33**/0.72	−0.04/0.97	−0.07/0.93	−0.04/0.96	−0.13/0.88	−0.08/0.93	−0.09/0.92	−0.13/0.88	−0.35***/0.71
	0.13	0.11	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.14	0.14	0.12	0.13
Youth sex (Male = 1)	0.10/1.10	−0.35/0.70	0.04/1.04	−0.13/0.88	−0.39/0.68	−0.07/0.93	0.18/1.20	0.27/1.30	0.01/1.02
	0.51	0.51	0.54	0.52	0.58	0.65	0.67	0.54	0.51
Youth lesbian/gay	−1.23*/0.29	−0.78/0.46	−0.85/0.43	−1.44*/0.23	−0.23/0.79	−0.78/0.46	−1.07/0.34	−0.63/0.53	−1.53**/0.22
	0.63	0.64	0.69	0.77	0.70	0.91	0.96	0.73	0.65
Youth bisexual	−1.42**/0.23	−1.95***/0.14	−2.18***/0.11	−0.78/0.46	−1.46*/0.23	−1.27/0.28	−1.16/0.31	−0.37/0.69	−1.22*/0.30
	0.66	0.72	0.87	0.66	0.88	0.95	0.92	0.69	0.65
Youth queer	−0.28/0.75	0.56/1.75	−1.18/0.31	0.50/1.66	−1.01/0.37	−0.35/0.71	−0.56/0.57	1.07/2.94	−0.22/0.78
	0.77	0.76	0.92	0.78	1.14	1.15	1.23	0.77	0.81
Youth disconnected	0.13/1.14	0.05/1.06	0.38/1.47	−0.35/0.71	0.12/1.13	0.61/1.84	−0.14/0.87	−0.57/0.56	−0.10/0.92
	0.55	0.54	0.57	0.55	0.60	0.65	0.69	0.59	0.56
Youth multiracial									
Neighborhood disorder	0.16/1.18	−0.01/0.99	−0.08/0.93	−0.29/0.75	0.22/1.24	−0.03/0.97	−0.40/0.67	0.08/1.08	−0.08/0.92
	0.25	0.24	0.27	0.26	0.27	0.32	0.34	0.26	0.25
Bio parents married	0.05/1.05	−0.50/0.61	0.22/1.25	−0.28/0.75	0.30/1.36	0.12/1.13	0.84/2.32	0.34/1.40	0.01/1.01
	0.54	0.53	0.56	0.54	0.59	0.67	0.66	0.54	0.54
Bio parents cohabiting	0.33/1.39	0.82/2.26	1.42/4.13	−0.94/0.39	−0.37/0.69	–	−0.58/0.56	0.35/1.41	0.92/2.51
	1.04	1.02	1.04	1.04	1.24		1.39	0.96	1.24
Bio parent immigrant	−1.52*/0.22	−1.61*/0.20	0.19/1.21	−1.66*/0.19	–	–	−1.39/0.25	−0.15/0.86	−0.89/0.41
	0.82	0.91	0.81	0.94			1.40	0.84	0.82
Maternal education	0.02/1.02	0.12/1.13	0.10/1.11	0.06/1.06	0.08/1.08	0.18/1.20	0.24/1.27	0.05/1.05	0.06/1.06
	0.11	0.11	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.15	0.15	0.12	0.11
Household size	0.34***/1.40	0.24**/1.27	0.22*/1.24	0.30***/1.35	0.05/1.05	0.27**/1.30	0.29**/1.34	−0.02/0.98	0.23*/1.25
	0.12	0.11	0.12	0.11	0.11	0.13	0.14	0.11	0.12

Note: Specific variables (e.g., multiracial) were excluded from models when they perfectly predicted any disclosure or failure to disclose to a particular recipient. The reference category for youth lesbian/gay, bisexual, and queer is "heterosexual"; the reference category for bio parent married and cohabiting is "other relationship status." The "Family Member" recipients include mother, father, sibling, cousin, aunt/uncle, and grandparent. The "Nonfamilial Adult" recipients of disclosure (which were the least common) include teachers, school or mental health counselors, and representatives of an official agency or local community organization. These categories of nonfamilial adults were collapsed together for model 8 to achieve sufficient statistical power to garner meaningful estimates.

Abbreviations: *B*, unstandardized coefficient; OR, odds ratio; SE, standard error.

*$p < .10$; **$p < .05$; ***$p < .01$.

TABLE A3 Prevalence of disclosure to select identities among youth disclosing direct stops, by LGBQ identity ($N = 73$).

Disclosure to	Family members	Mother	Father	Sibling	Cousin	Aunt or uncle	Grandparent	Friends	Nonfamilial adults
LGBQ youth	88.89%	59.26%	29.63%**	51.85%	25.93%	18.52%	22.22%	48.15%	11.11%
Heterosexual youth	93.48%	67.39%	54.35%	54.35%	34.78%	28.26%	28.26%	43.48%	13.04%

Note: Statistical significance was determined using chi-squared tests, given the categorical nature of the variables. The "Family Member" recipients include mother, father, sibling, cousin, aunt/uncle, and grandparent. The "Nonfamilial Adult" recipients of disclosure (which were the least common) include teachers, school or mental health counselors, and representatives of an official agency or local community organization.

**$p < .05$.

TABLE A4 Logistic and negative binomial regression models of the association between family member disclosure recipients and police-initiated posttraumatic stress symptoms following direct police stops.

	Direct police stops	
	Police-initiated posttraumatic stress symptoms	
	Any	Count
Disclosure recipient: Family member	*B*/OR SE	*B*/IRR SE
Mother	−1.98***/0.14	−0.66***/0.51
	0.66	0.25
Father	−1.47**/0.23	−0.48/0.62
	0.65	0.30
Sibling	−1.24*/0.29	−0.20/0.82
	0.65	0.27
Cousin	−1.48**/0.23	−0.10/0.90
	0.71	0.31
Aunt or uncle	−1.03/0.36	−0.06/0.95
	0.77	0.34
Grandparent	−1.36*/0.26	0.15/1.15
	0.82	0.34
N	112	

Note: The following covariates are included in all models are suppressed to conserve space: officer intrusion (count), youth age, youth sex, youth lesbian/gay, youth bisexual, youth queer, youth disconnected, youth multiracial (for count models), neighborhood disorder, parents married, biological parents cohabiting, parent immigrant, maternal education, and household size.

Abbreviations: *B*, unstandardized coefficient; IRR, incidence rate ratio; SE, standard error; OR, odds ratio.

*$p < .10$; **$p < .05$; ***$p < .01$.