

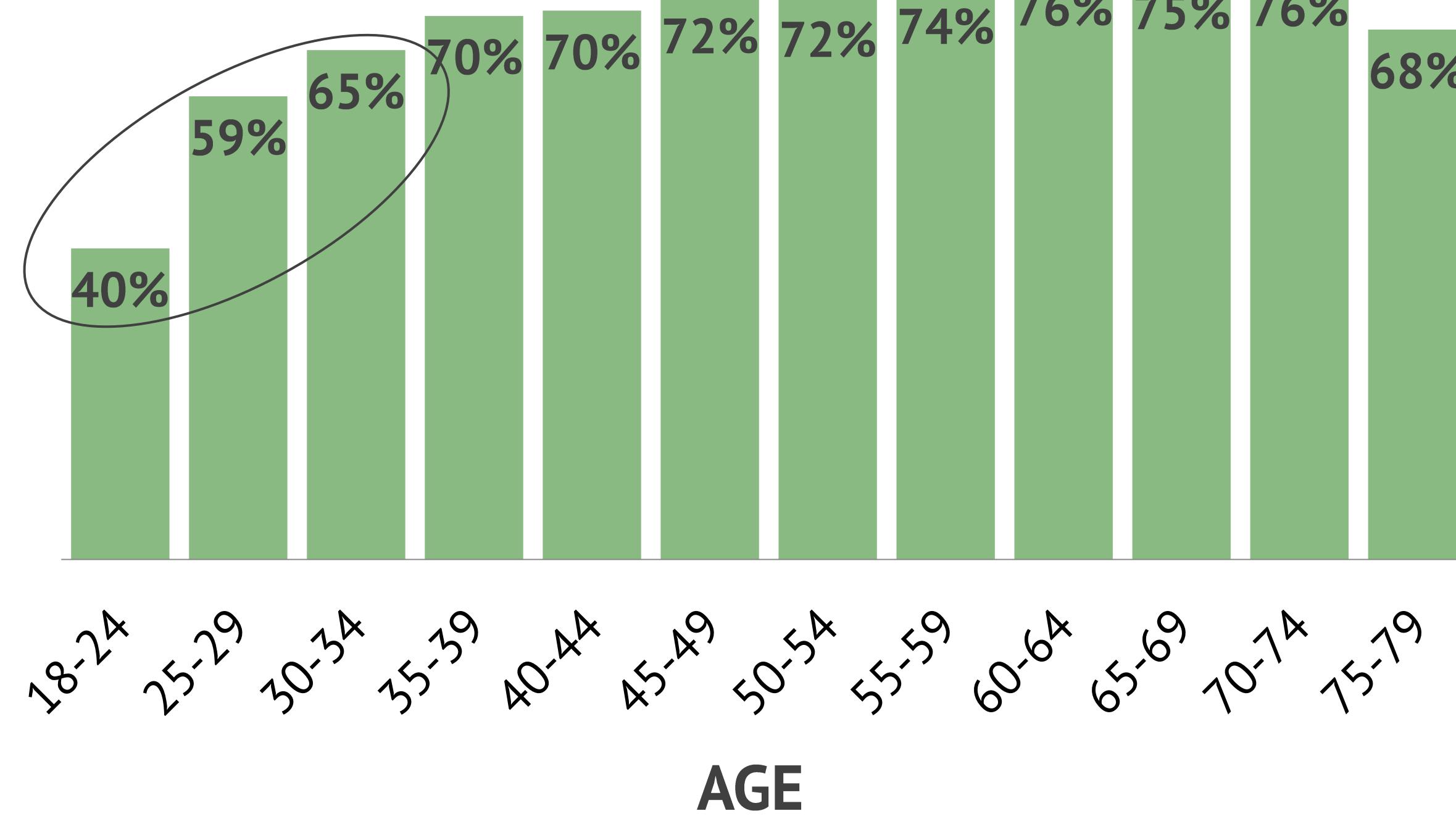
Characteristics Associated With Overweight and Obesity in People Ages 18-29, Wisconsin, 2011-2015

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BACKGROUND

In Wisconsin, there is a steep incline of overweight and obesity (O&O) from 40% in 18-24 year olds to 65% in 30-34 year olds. The purpose of this study is to analyze characteristics associated with O&O to see if there is new information we could use to adapt our obesity prevention strategies.



METHODS

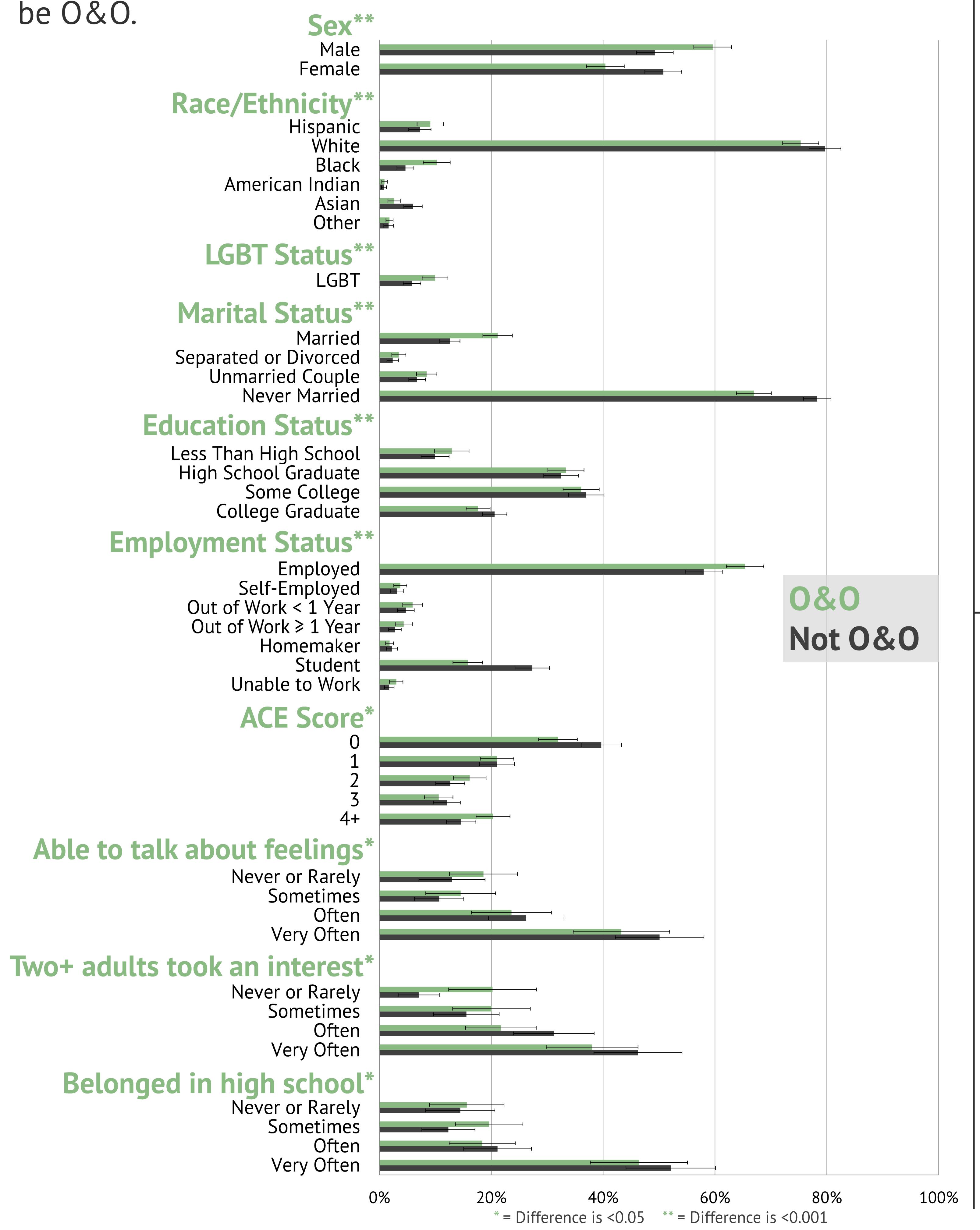
Data Source: Wisconsin Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS), 2011-2015

Sample: The dataset was restricted to people ages 18-29 and split into two independent groups, O&O (BMI ≥ 25) and Not O&O (BMI < 25).

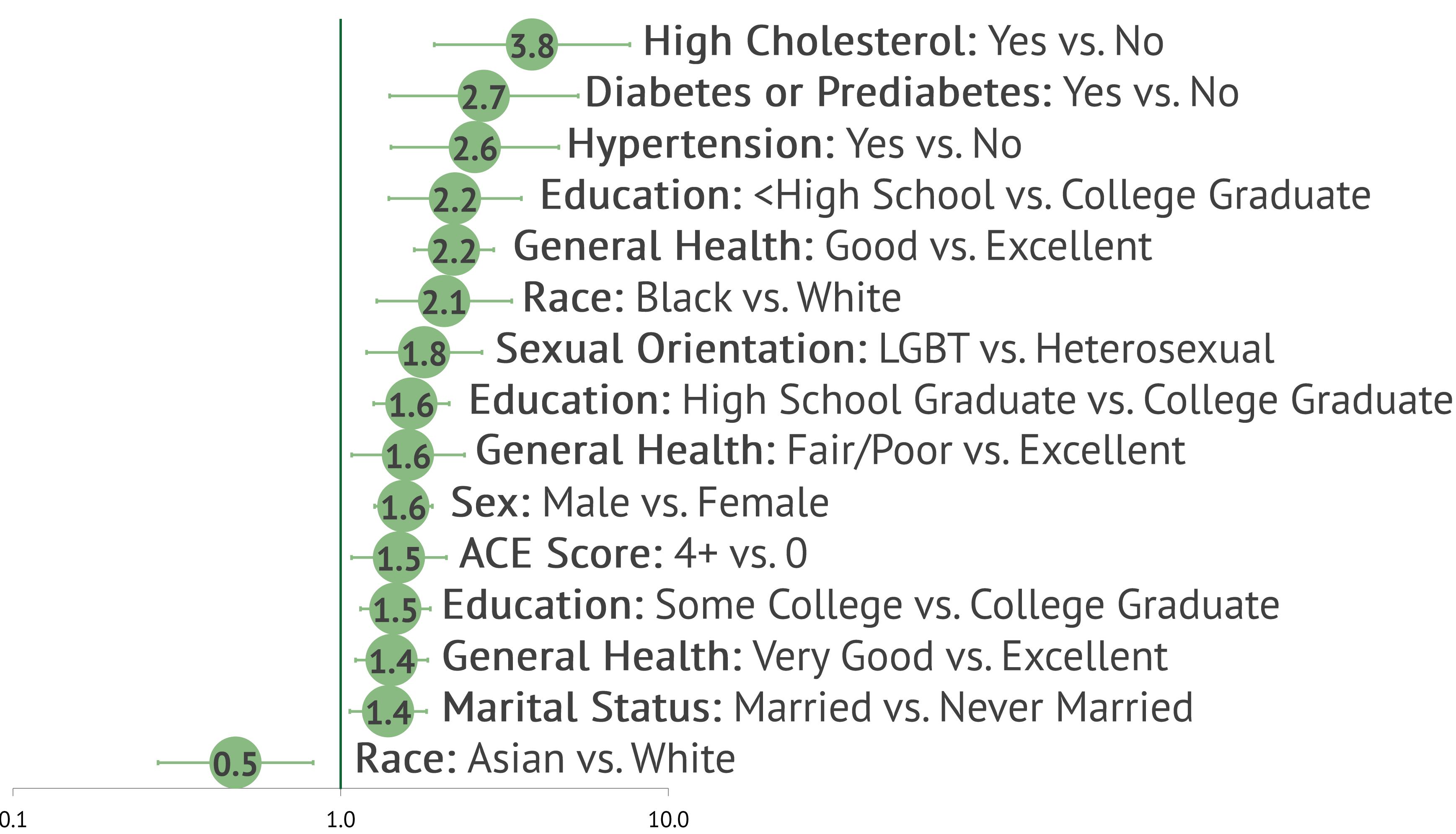
Calculations: Analyses examined differences between the two groups on demographics, social determinants, behaviors, and health outcomes. Descriptive analyses were performed using Chi-square or Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney tests ($p < 0.05$) and logistic regression was used to calculate odds ratios (adjusting for age, sex, race/ethnicity, and education). SAS 9.4 was used for all analyses.

RESULTS

Characteristics associated with O&O include being male, black or Hispanic, LGBT, married, having a high school education or less, living in a rural area (not shown), and being employed. Those who experience 4+ adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) or feel less supported by friends, family, or other adults are also more likely to be O&O.



The following are all of the significant odds ratios (ORs) among the characteristics that were tested. The largest ORs show people who are O&O are more likely to have high cholesterol, diabetes, prediabetes, or hypertension.



CONCLUSIONS

- Even in this young age group, we are already seeing an increased risk of diseases associated with O&O among those who are O&O compared to those who are not.
- Events that occur before age 18 (ACEs, feeling supported by friends, family, or other adults) may have a large impact on whether someone becomes O&O later in life. Perhaps more needs to be done during youth and young adulthood that can improve peoples' mental and social health, which could potentially improve their physical health down the road.
- Worksite wellness activities (including trauma informed care) may need to play a bigger role than they currently do in obesity prevention as employment is significantly associated with O&O in this age group.