



# Confronting Adolescent Chlamydia:

Investigating Sociodemographics of Prevalence in Georgia's Department of Public Health (GA DPH) District 2

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## Background

- Chlamydia is a common sexually transmitted infection (STI) caused by the bacterium *Chlamydia trachomatis*<sup>1</sup>.
- Symptoms of chlamydia can include abnormal discharge, burning during urination, and pain during intercourse, but many individuals experience no symptoms at all<sup>1</sup>.
- However, it can lead to serious reproductive and health complications if left untreated, so regular screening is important<sup>2</sup>.
- As of 2023, chlamydia is the most frequently reported bacterial infection in the United States, with an estimated 2.9 million new cases each year<sup>3,4</sup>.
- It is also more prevalent among young adults than any other age group<sup>1</sup>.
- In 2022, Georgia unfortunately ranked 5th nationwide for the greatest number of chlamydia cases<sup>5</sup>.

## Methodology

- Chlamydia cases from 2018-2022 among adolescents between the ages of 10-19 years of age confirmed with positive laboratory results were reported from providers/health departments within the 13 counties of the Georgia Department of Public Health (GA DPH) District 2.
- Cases were reported to the State Electronic Notifiable Disease Surveillance System (SENDSS) of the GA DPH. Variables of interest included age, race/ethnicity, and gender.
- Online Analytical Statistical Information System (OASIS) was used to collect the racial/ethnic group population data from GA DPH District 2.
- Data analysis was performed using Microsoft Excel.

## References

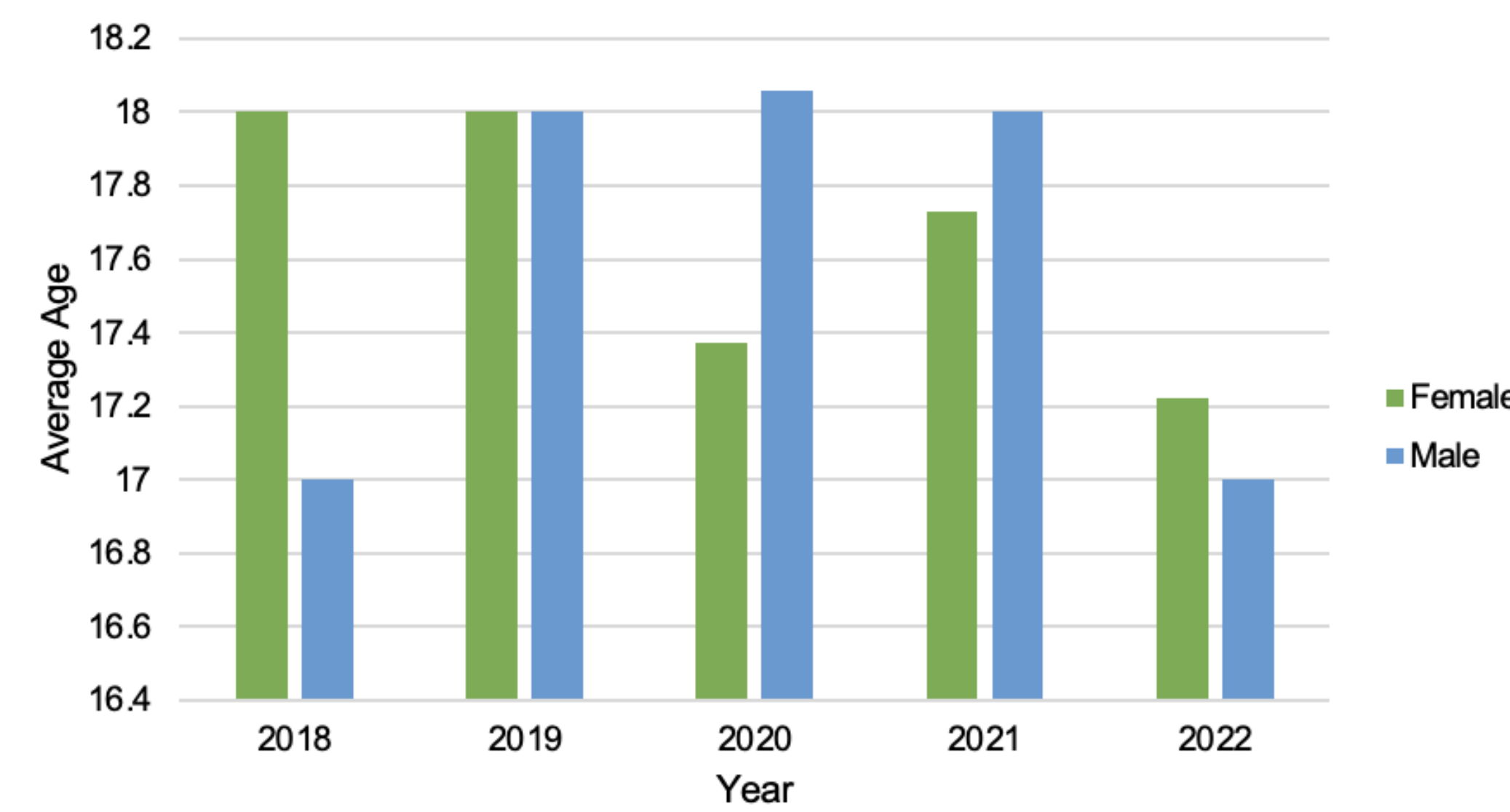


## Results

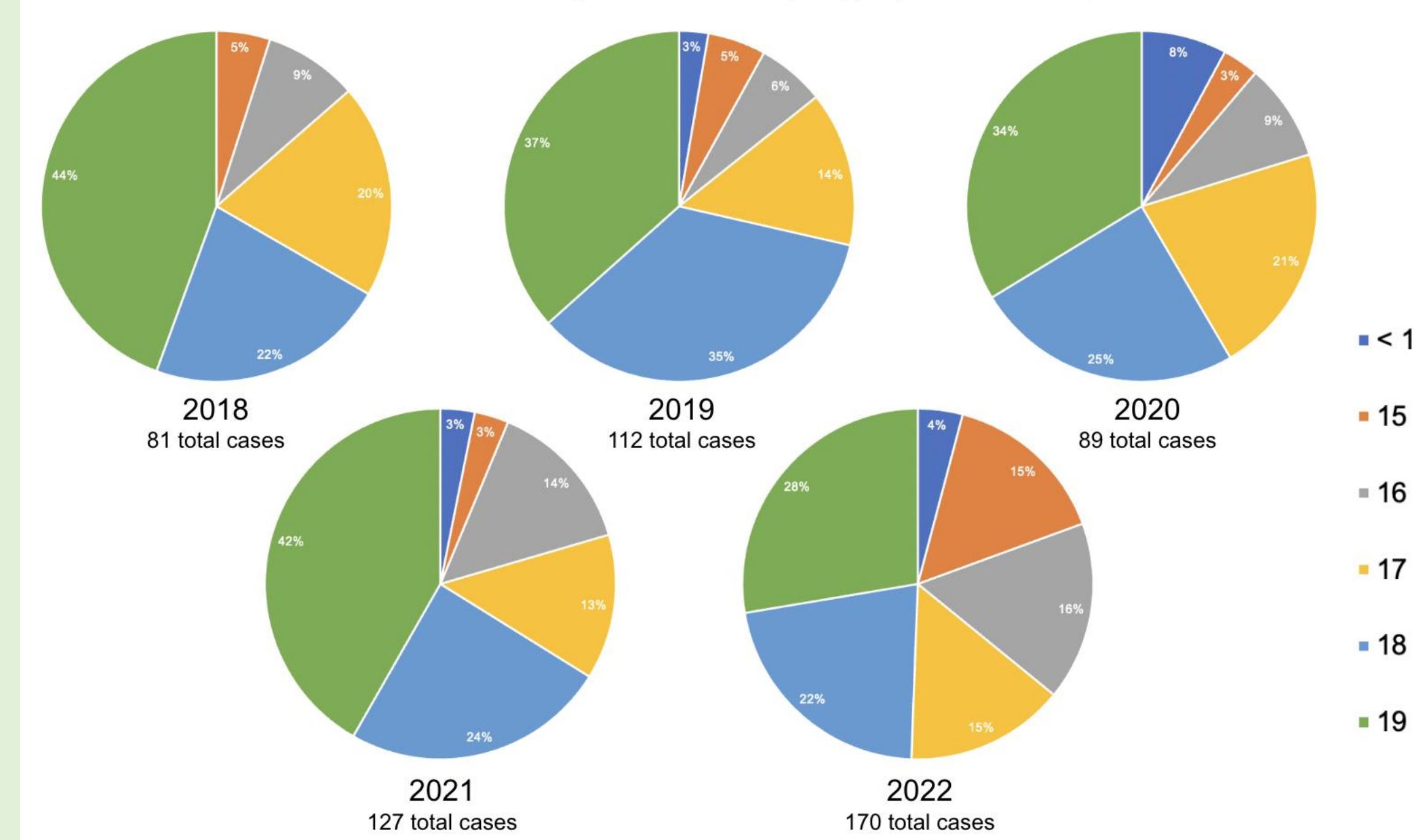
Average Age of Adolescent Chlamydia (2018-2022)

Year:	Average Age:
2018	18
2019	18
2020	17.51
2021	17.77
2022	17.18

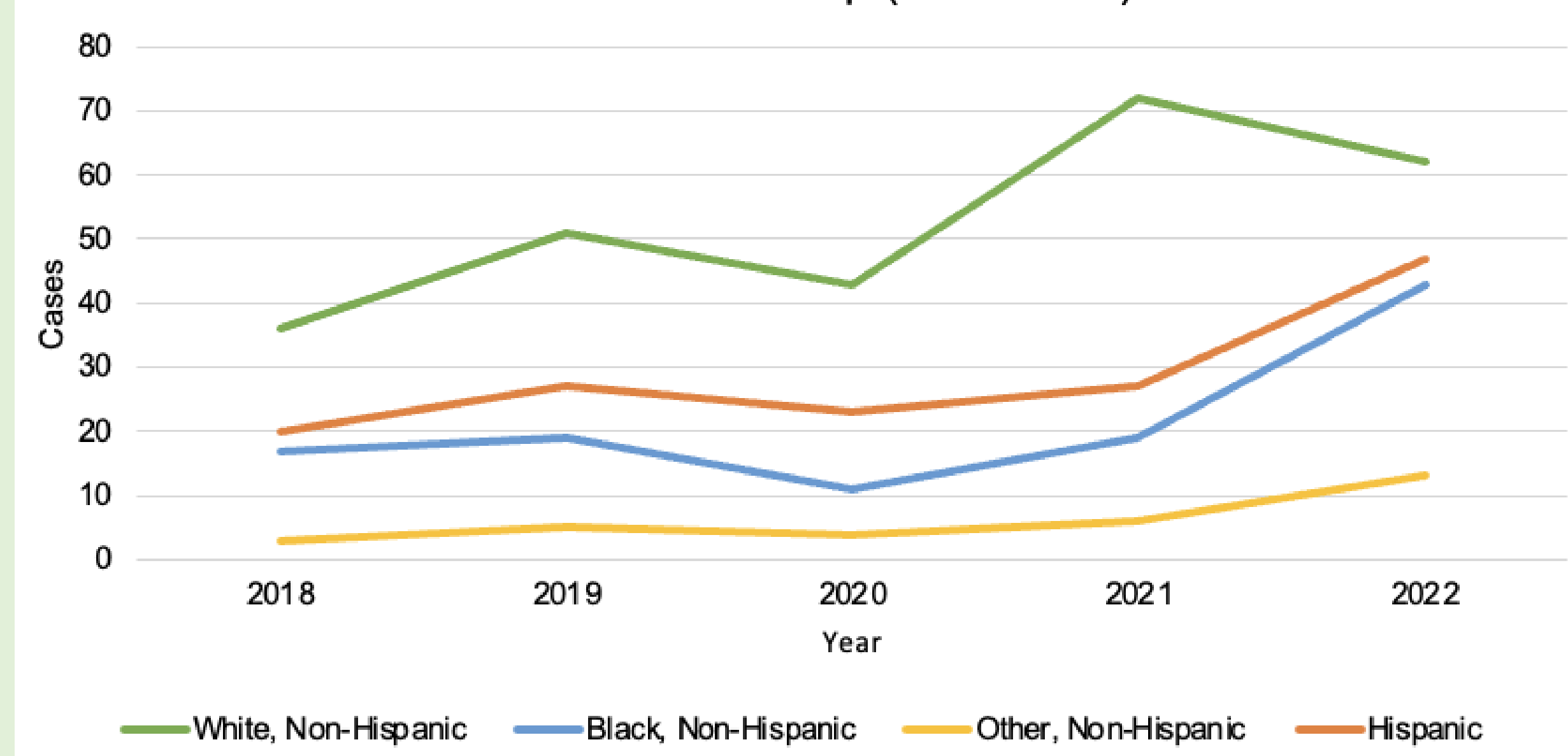
Average Age of Adolescent Chlamydia Incidence by Gender (2018-2022)



Adolescent Chlamydia Cases by Age (2018-2022)



Number of Adolescent Chlamydia Cases per Year by Racial/Ethnic Group (2018-2022)



Case Count and Rate of Adolescent Chlamydia by Racial/Ethnic Group in 2022

Racial/Ethnic Group:	2022 Adolescent Population:	Case Count:	Rate per 100,000:
White, Non-Hispanic	65,628	62	94.47
Black, Non-Hispanic	6,034	43	712.63
Other, Non-Hispanic	13,246	13	98.14
Hispanic	21,985	47	213.78

## Discussion

- Across all populations, there was a net decrease in the average age of chlamydia incidence from 18 y/o in 2018 to 17.18 y/o in 2022. This decrease is most clearly highlighted in the female population.
- Each year, older ages typically corresponded with a greater number of cases.
- The number of 15-year-olds who tested positive for chlamydia averaged < 5 from 2018 to 2021. However, in 2022, there was an unusual spike with 26 confirmed cases, a greater than fivefold increase from the previous 4 years.
- Among all racial/ethnic groups, the number of adolescent chlamydia cases showed a net increase from 2018 to 2022.
- In 2022 specifically, adolescent chlamydia most disproportionately impacted the non-Hispanic Black population, with a rate of 712.63 cases per 100,000 people. This was followed by the Hispanic population, with a rate of 213.78 cases per 100,000 people.

## Conclusions

- Chlamydia presents a serious public health concern in Georgia due to its high prevalence and potential for long-term health consequences.
- Although the data may not be entirely representative of GA DPH District 2's total population, minority populations seem to be disproportionately burdened.
- Factors that may have contributed to the trends seen in the past 5 years include decreased use of condoms, lack of sex education, social stigma around sexually transmitted infection (STI) testing, and increased rates of sexual activity.
- With the average age of adolescents testing positive for chlamydia seemingly decreasing, and the number of cases increasing, addressing this issue is essential to stop disease spread.
- Outreach activities such as sex education programs, free screening clinics, and accessible treatment services can help reduce transmission by promoting awareness and prevention.
- Expedited partner therapy allows sexual partners of individuals diagnosed with STIs to begin treatment before a conclusive test result<sup>6</sup>.