

# The Challenge of Recruiting Teens: Examining Recruitment Methods for a Nationally Representative Probability-based Teen Panel

---

**AUTHORS:** Lindsay Liebert, Ipek Bilgen, Erlina Hendarwan,  
Roopam Singh, Vicki Pineau, J. Michael Dennis

Presented at AAPOR 76<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference  
May 11, 2021



# Agenda

01 Introduction / Business Need

---

02 Recruitment Strategies

---

03 Research Questions

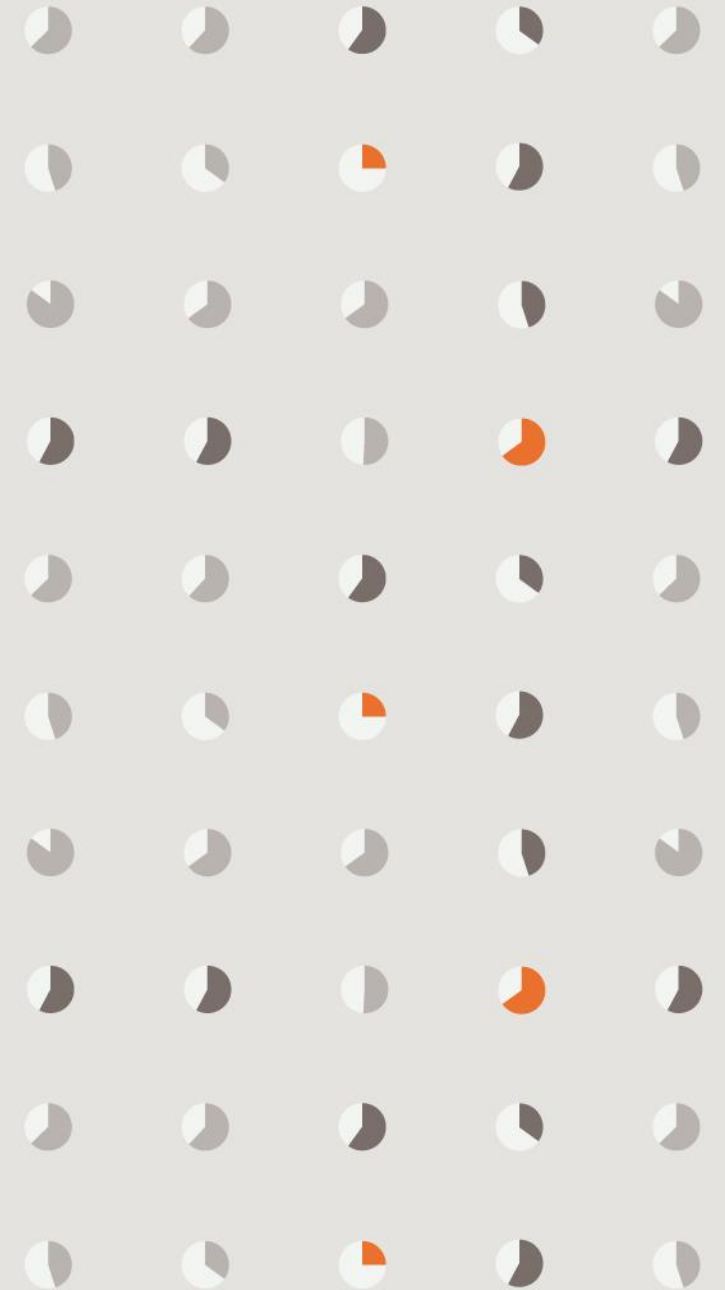
---

04 Findings

---

05 Summary

---



# Agenda

01 Introduction / Business Need

---

02 Recruitment Strategies

---

03 Research Questions

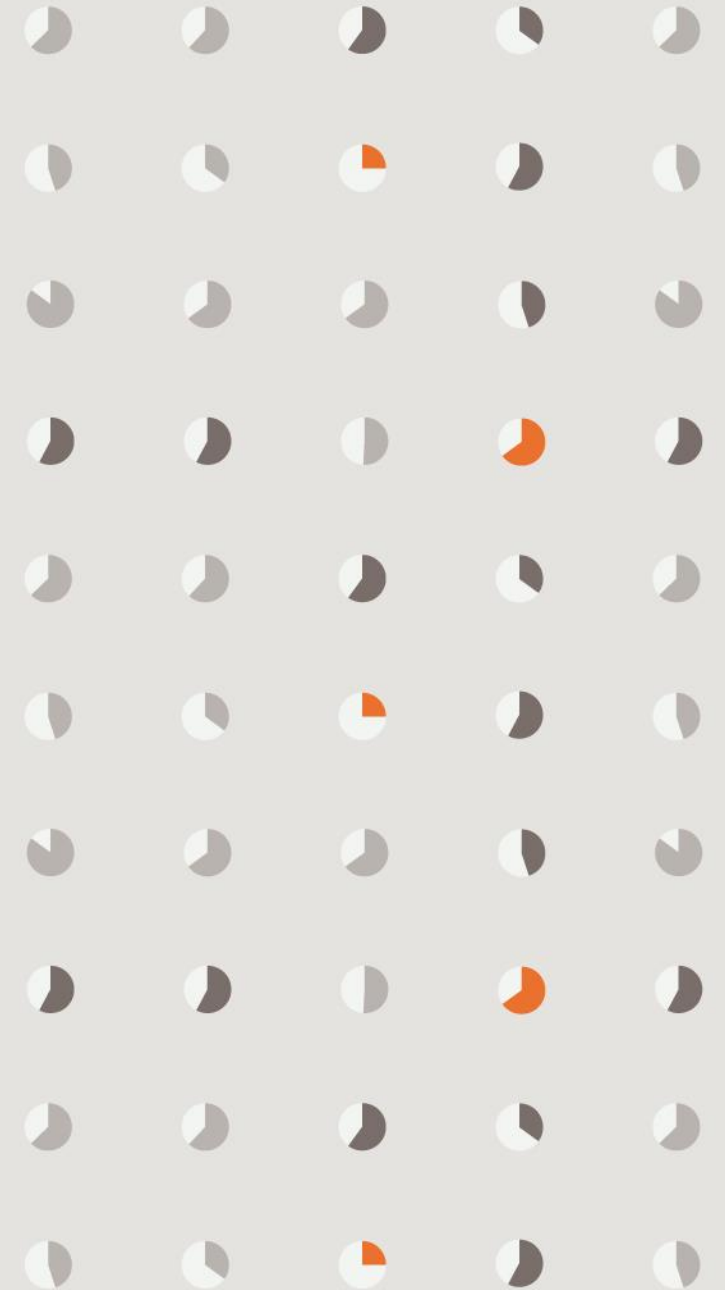
---

04 Findings

---

05 Summary

---



## Why Construct a Probability-based Teen Panel?

- **Increased market interest in teen opinions related to substance use, dating violence, mental health, etc.**
- **Removes challenges related to interviewing teens outside of a panel setting**
  - Minors require parental consent each time regardless of topic
  - Hard to reach using methods such as Random Digit Dialing (RDD) or Address-Based Sampling (ABS)
  - Difficult to obtain nationally-representative teen sample
- **More time and cost effective**
  - Avoids double surveying parent and teen each time
  - Can achieve needed interviews with smaller sample size

## The Research Challenge: Recruit a nationally-representative teen panel via the AmeriSpeak panel

- AmeriSpeak is a nationally-representative probability-based panel housed at NORC
- **Ideal method for constructing a teen panel**
  - Panelists already familiar with how we conduct surveys, what topics we administer
  - Received positive feedback from in-depth interviews with parent panelists about nominating teens to join panel
- **Aim to enlist teens in the household to the panel through existing panelist**
- **Examine successful methods for recruiting teens to the panel**
  - Use multi-mode engagement for both parent and teen (mail, email, text)
  - Experiment with impact of mailing designs for parents (Portal v. URL)
  - Effect of adding mailing for teens

# Agenda

01 Introduction / Business Need

---

**02** Recruitment Strategies

---

03 Research Questions

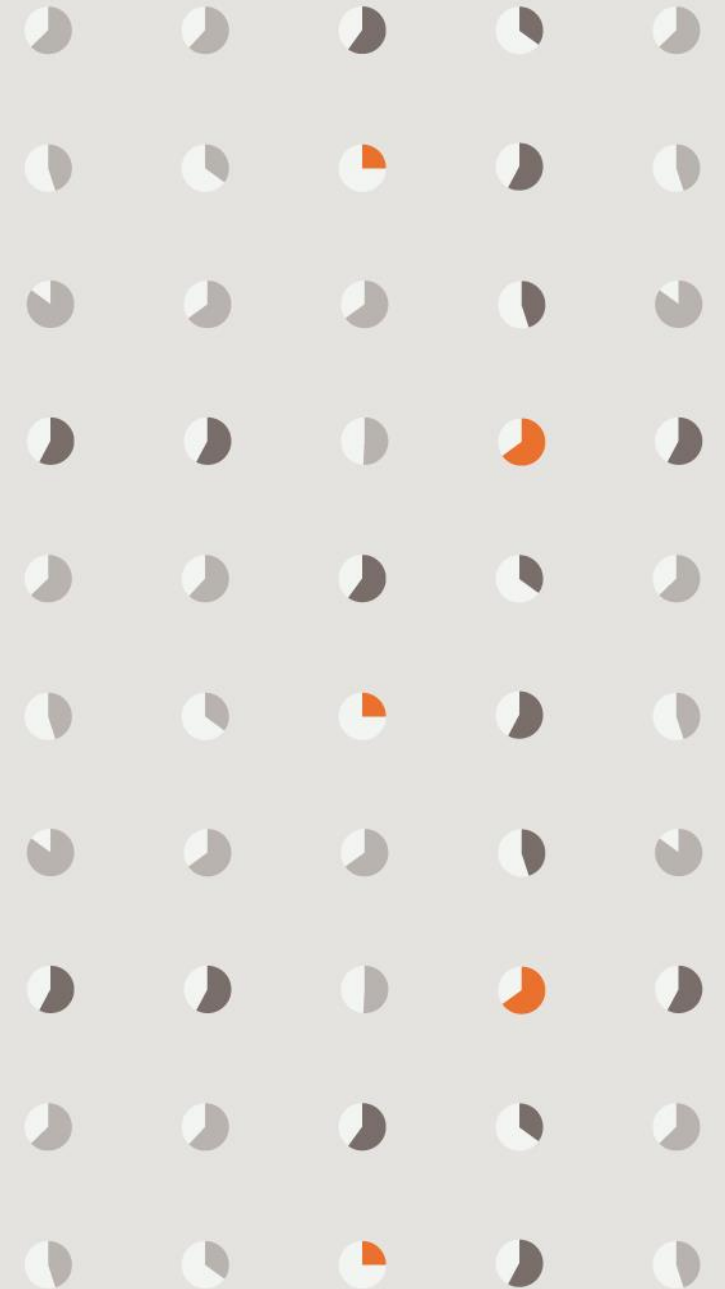
---

04 Findings

---

05 Summary

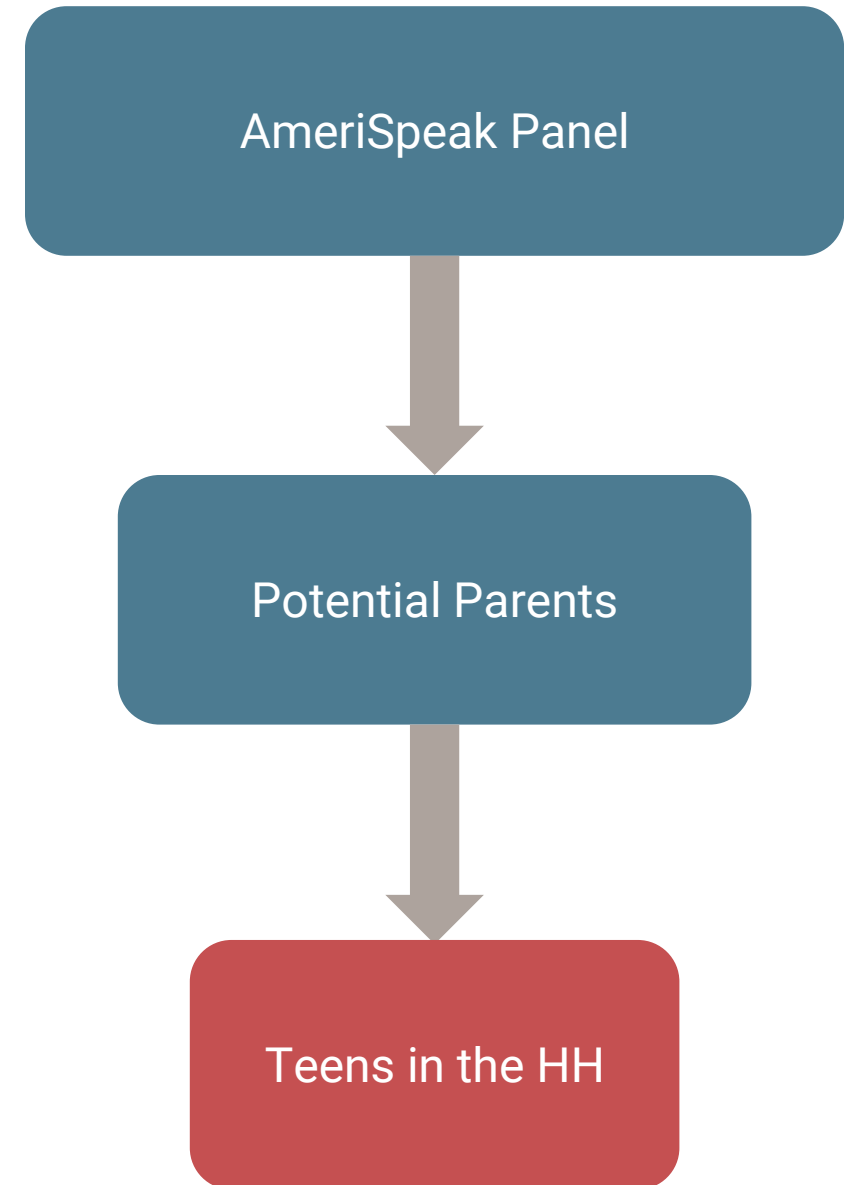
---



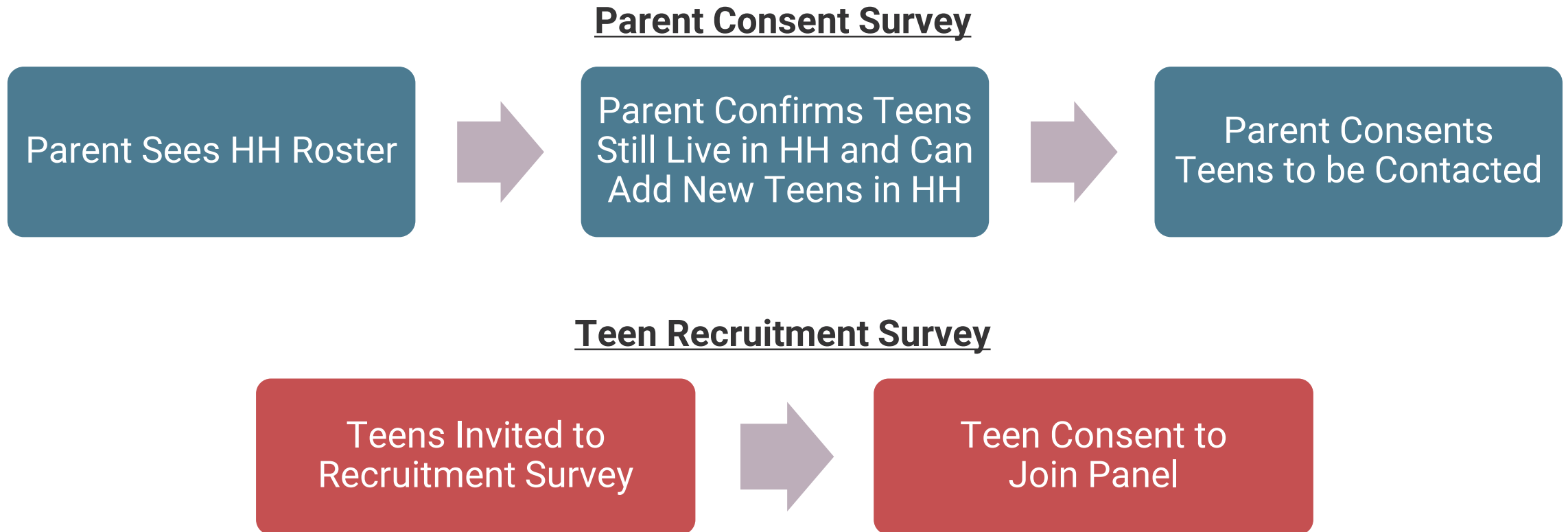
## Teen Recruitment Strategies

Identified potential parents from variety of data sources:

- Household rostering information collected at time of parent recruitment
- External vendors like TargetSmart, MSG, etc.
- Prior client surveys



## Custom Survey Functionality



Throughout fielding parents and teens sent multiple reminders via email, text, mail



# Agenda

01 Introduction / Business Need

---

02 Recruitment Strategies

---

**03** Research Questions

---

04 Findings

---

05 Summary

---



## Research Questions

*What is the impact of outreach by email, text, and mail to parents on completion rates for the parent consent survey?*

- What is the impact of outreach methods over time for the parent consent survey?
- Do the different mailings sent to parents (directing to AmeriSpeak member portal vs. directing to survey landing page) result in different completion rates?
- Is the composition of nominated teens impacted by methods used to contact parents?

## Research Questions

*What is the impact of outreach to teens by email, text, and mail on teen recruitment to the panel?*

- What is the impact of outreach methods over time for the teen recruitment survey?
- Does the mailing sent to teens result in more recruited teens?
- How is the composition of recruited teens impacted by teen outreach methods?

# Agenda

01 Introduction / Business Need

---

02 Recruitment Strategies

---

03 Research Questions

---

**04** Findings

---

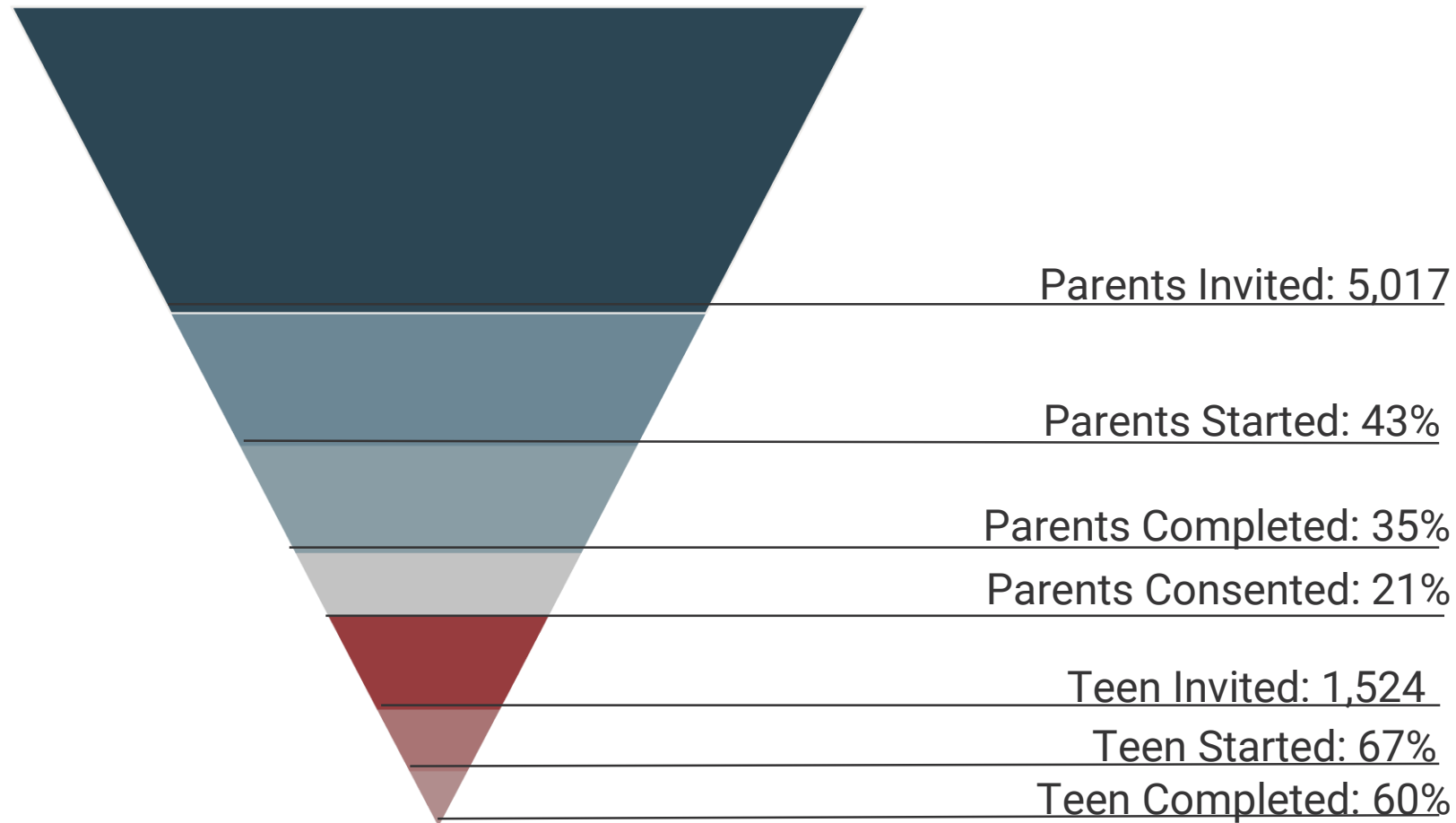
05 Summary

---

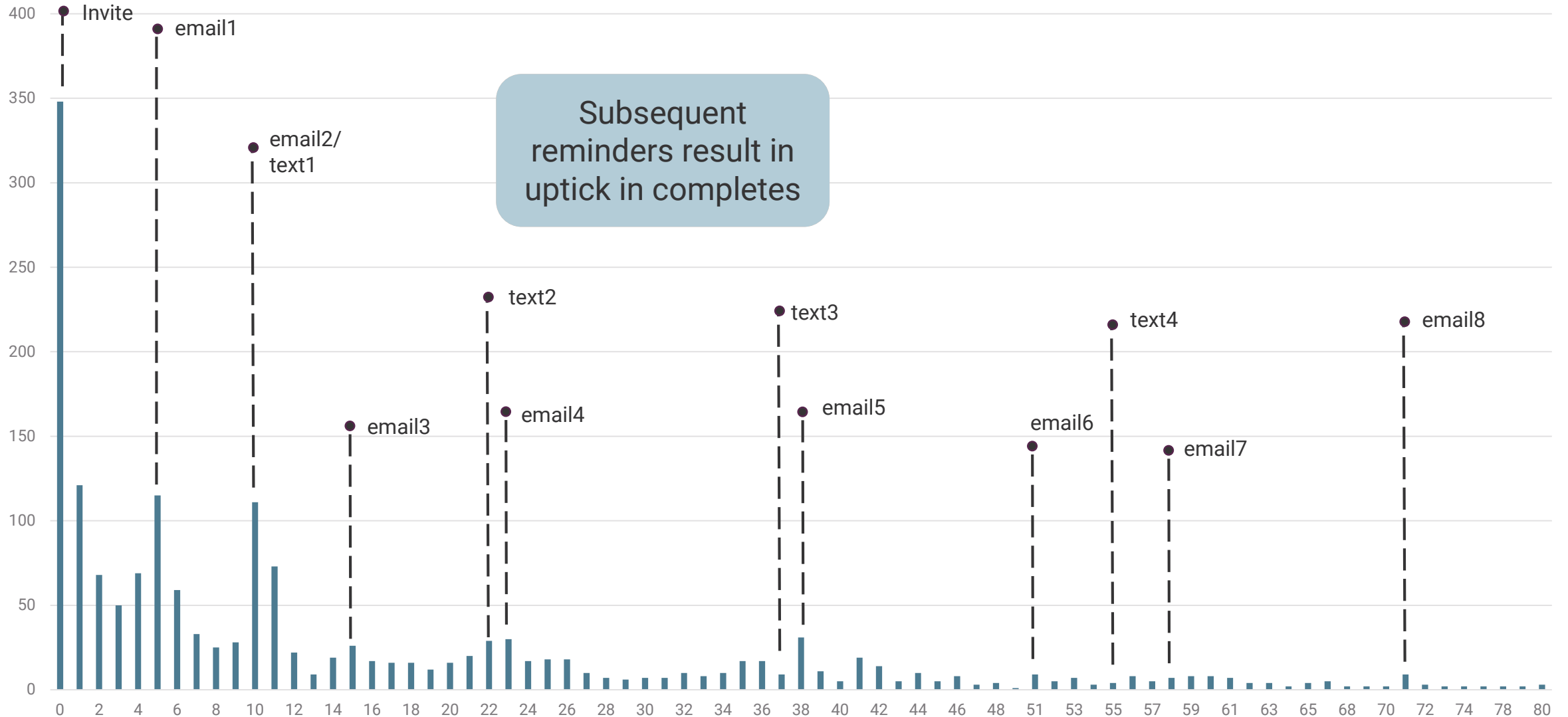


## Overall Completion Rate

Teen recruitment resulted in a substantial amount of newly empaneled teens. 2020 recruitment empaneled 34% more teens than 2017 recruitment.



# Parent Completions by Number of Days and Impact of Outreach



## Completed Parent Interviews by Mailing Type

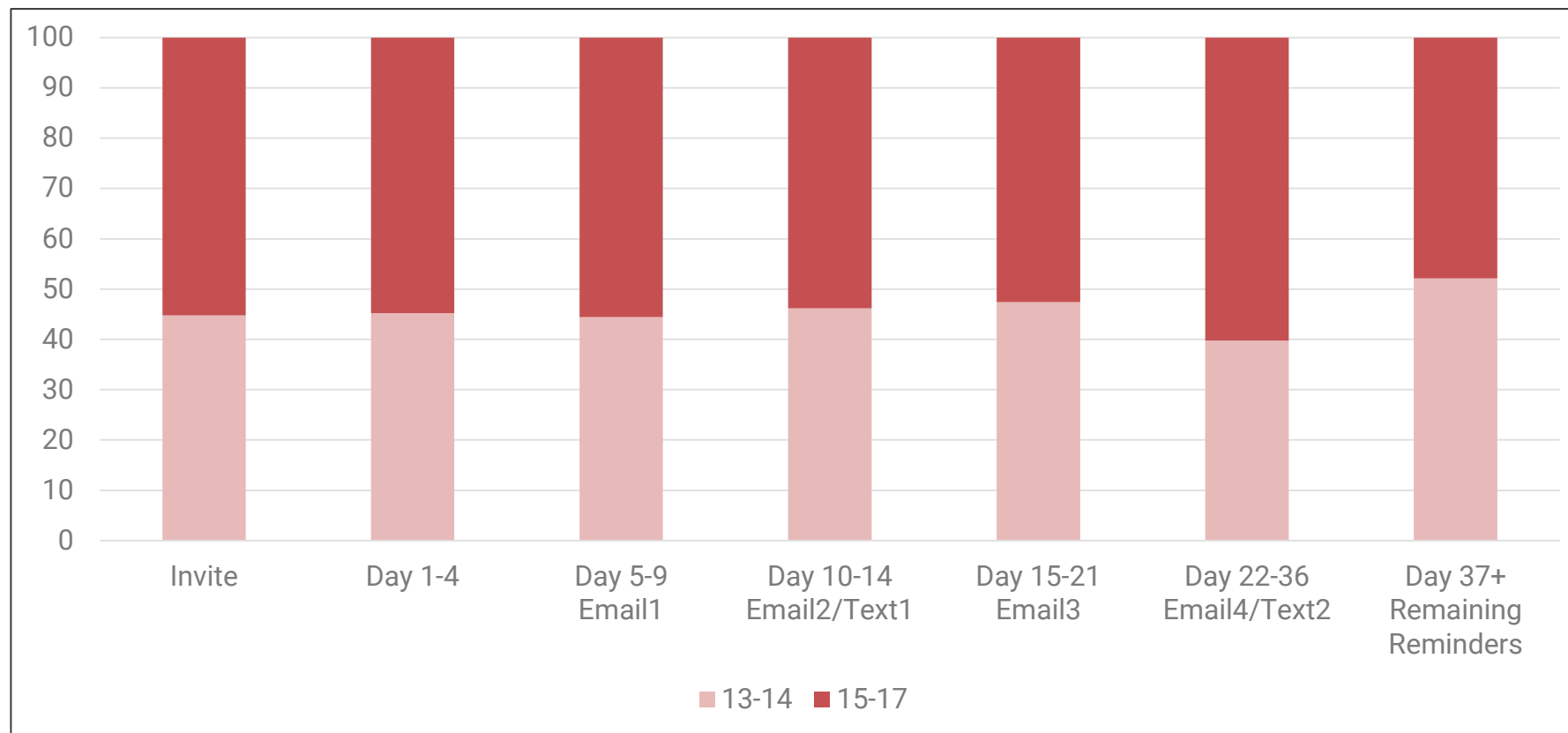
- In addition to email and text, all nonrespondent parents were sent a mailing around 3 weeks into fielding
- Mailings included two letter types – text directing the panelist to the AmeriSpeak member portal or included an URL link to the survey landing page
- Completion rates among parents who received mailings did not significantly differ based on the letter type

Letter Directing to Portal	Letter Directing to URL
11.1% Completion Rate	10.7% Completion Rate

## Composition of Teens Nominated by Parents

Age of nominated teens is fairly consistent over time at various contact points to parents, with slight fluctuation later in fielding

### Age

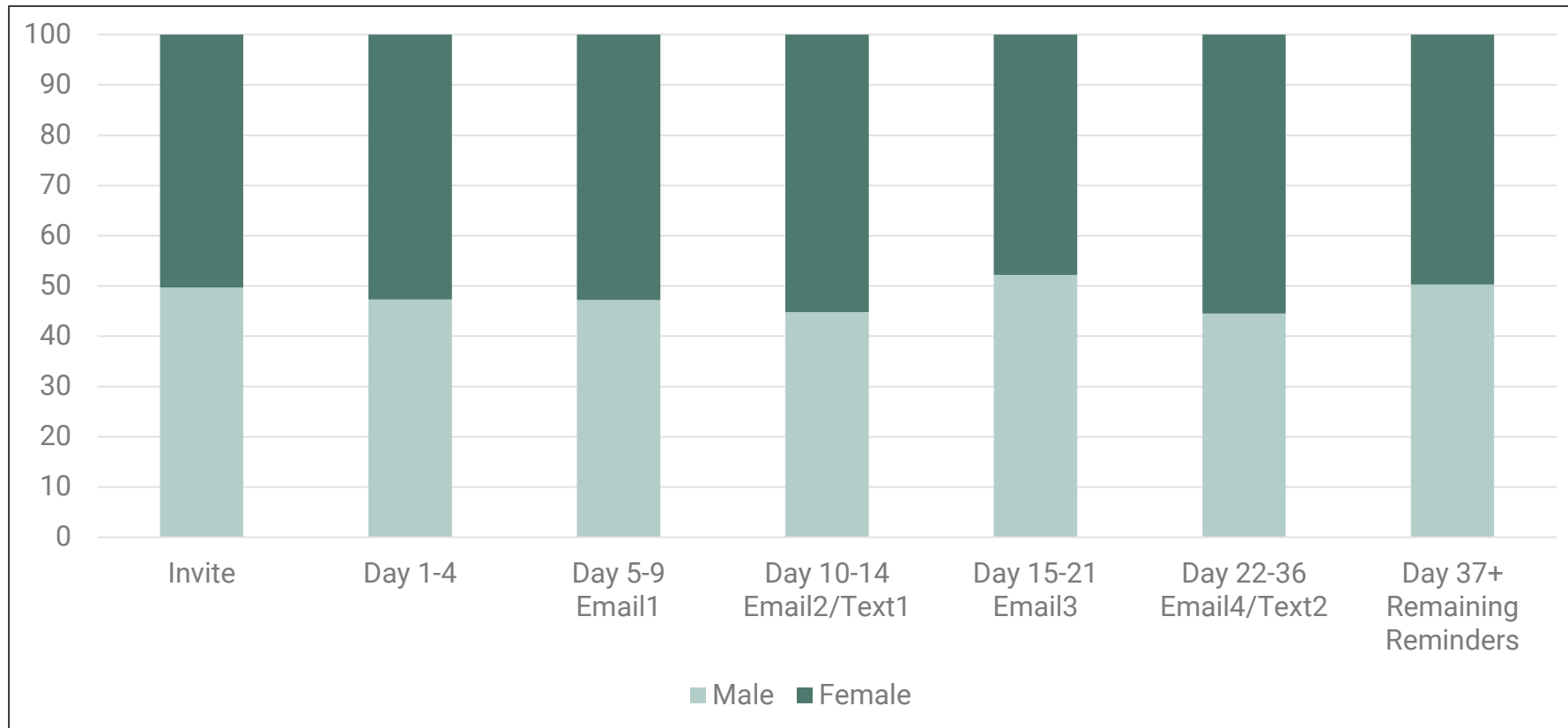




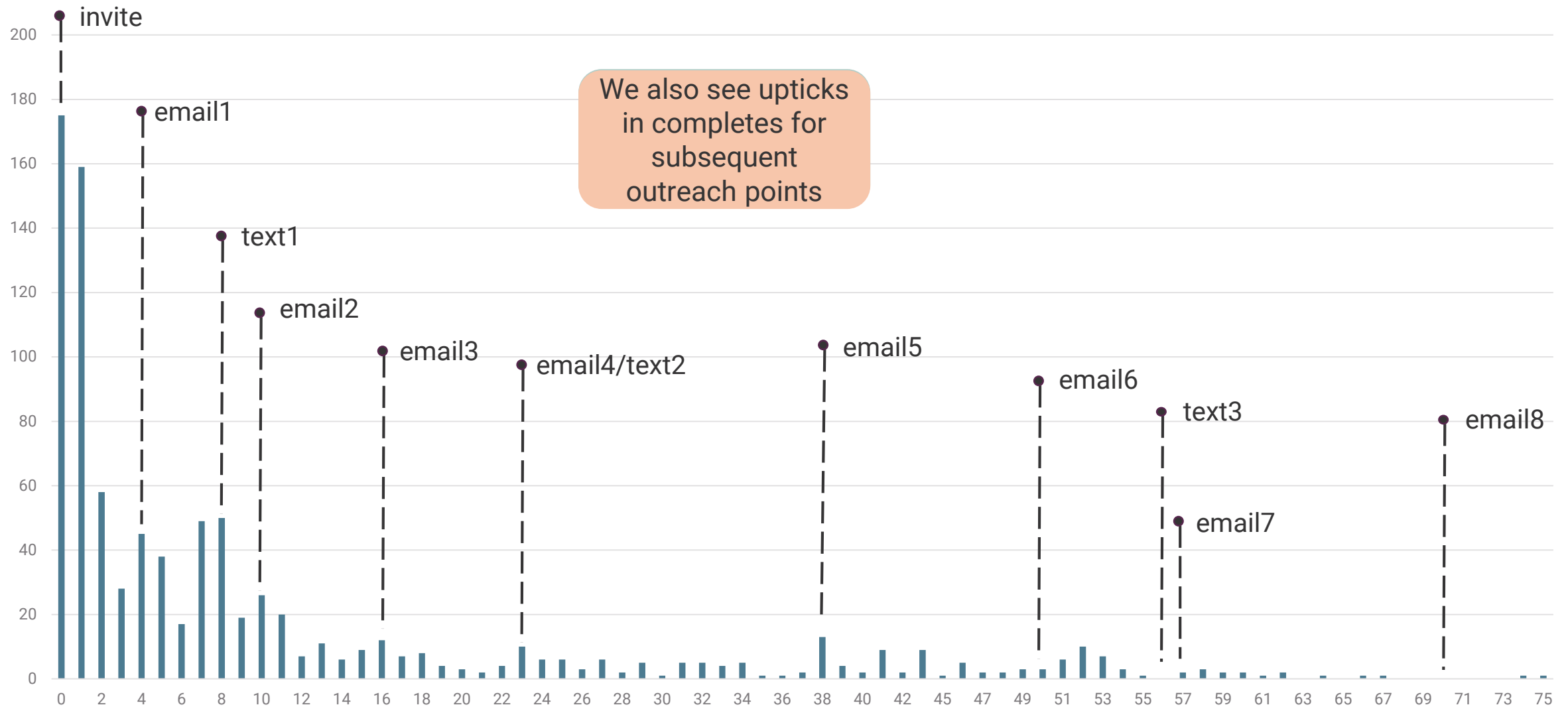
## Composition of Teens Nominated by Parents

Gender of nominated teens is relatively even throughout parent fielding period.

### Gender



# Teen Completions by Number of Days and Impact of Outreach



## Completed Teen Interviews with Addition of Mailing

- In addition to email and text, nonrespondent teens invited prior to June 29, 2020 were sent a mailing to encourage completion
- Completion rates among teens who received the mailing were significantly higher than those who did not mailing. However, there was no significant difference in demographics of completes with addition of letter.

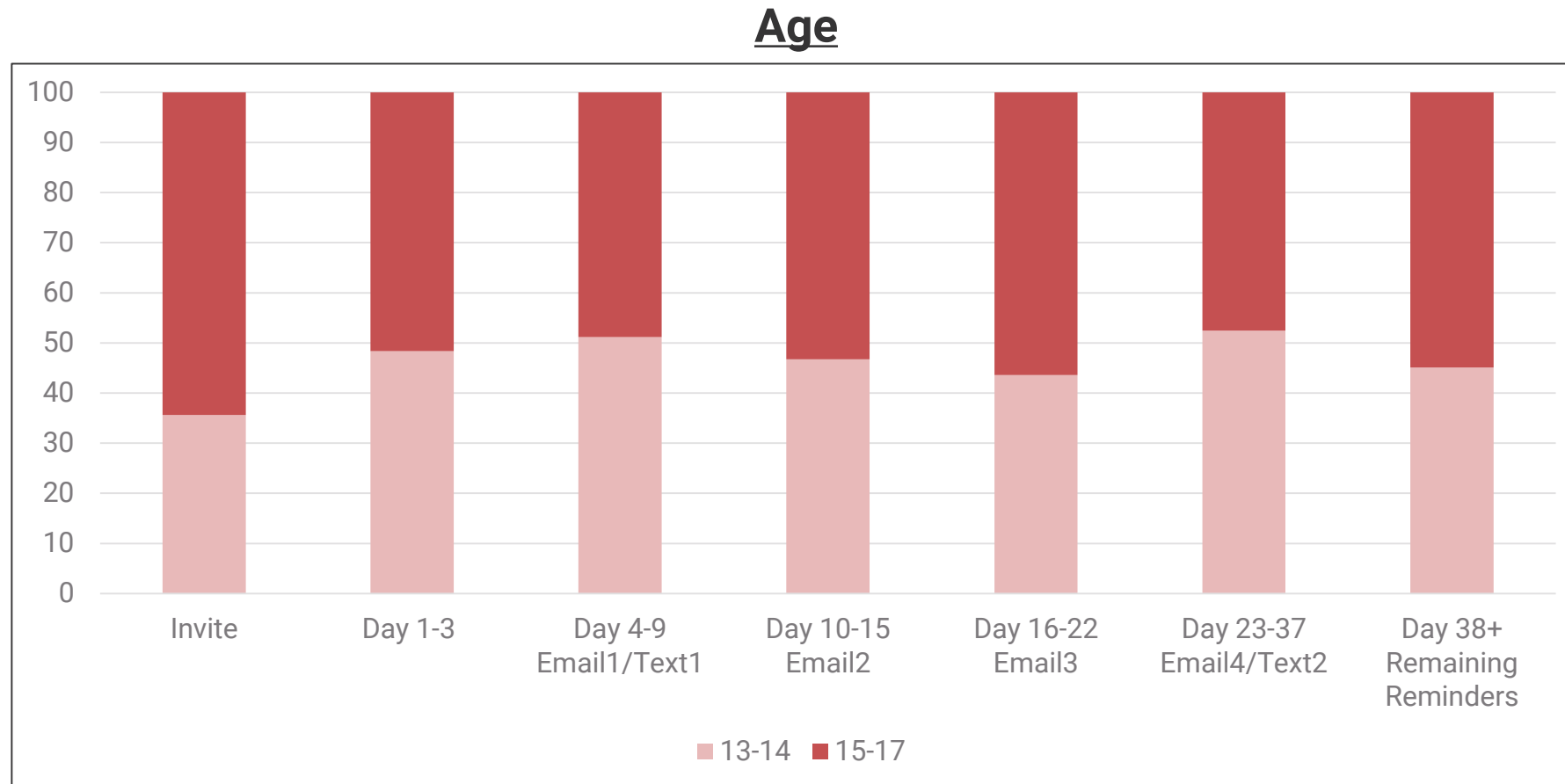
Mailing Sent	No Mailing Sent
45.8% Completion Rate	32.1% Completion Rate

p-value = 0.001

- While significant, not conducted as true experiment

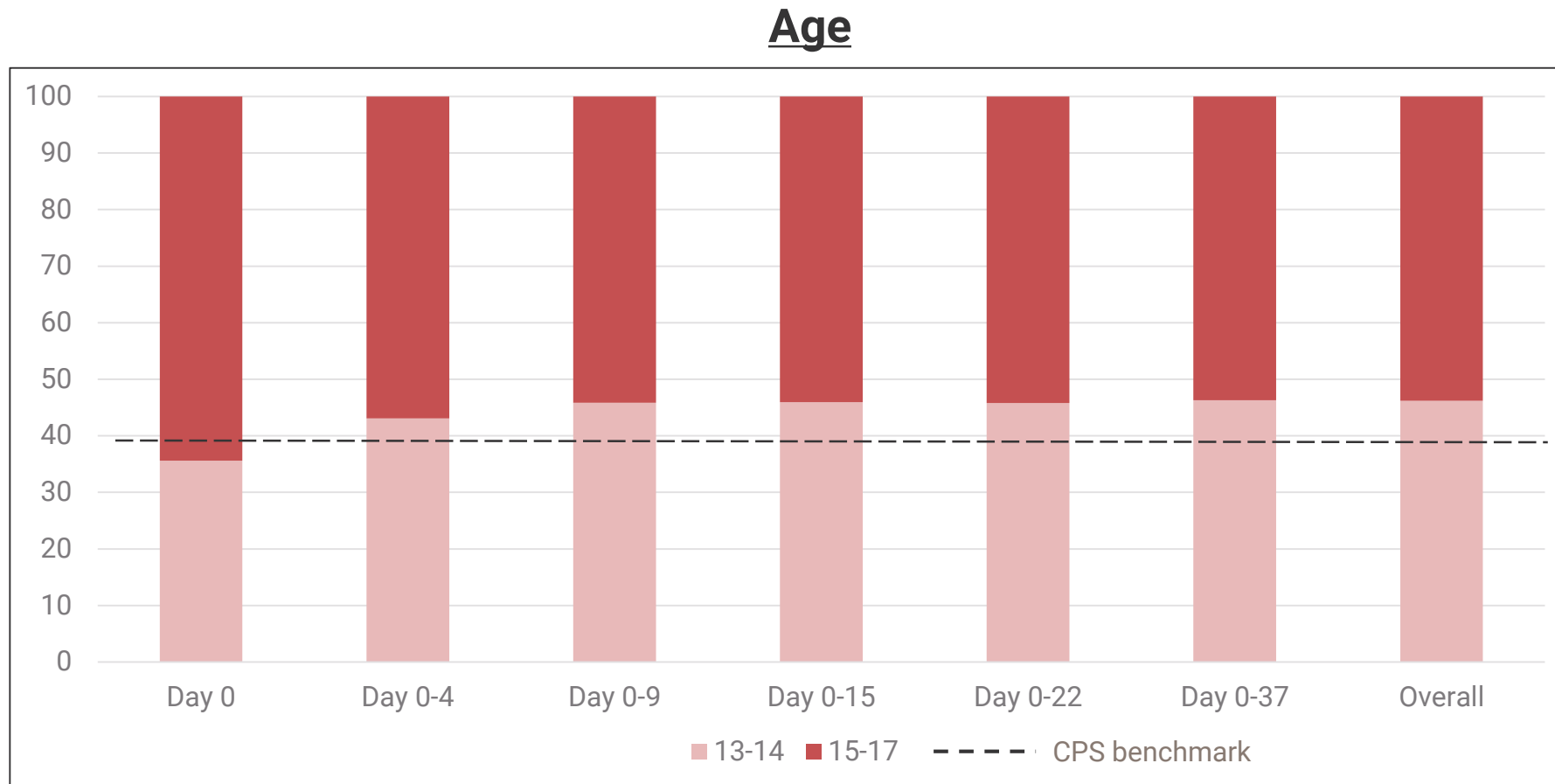
## Composition of Teen Panel Over Time

Older teens completed recruitment earlier in fielding, with younger teens completing later after multiple contact attempts



## Composition of Teen Panel Compared to Benchmark

Continued outreach helped increase representation of younger teens on the panel.

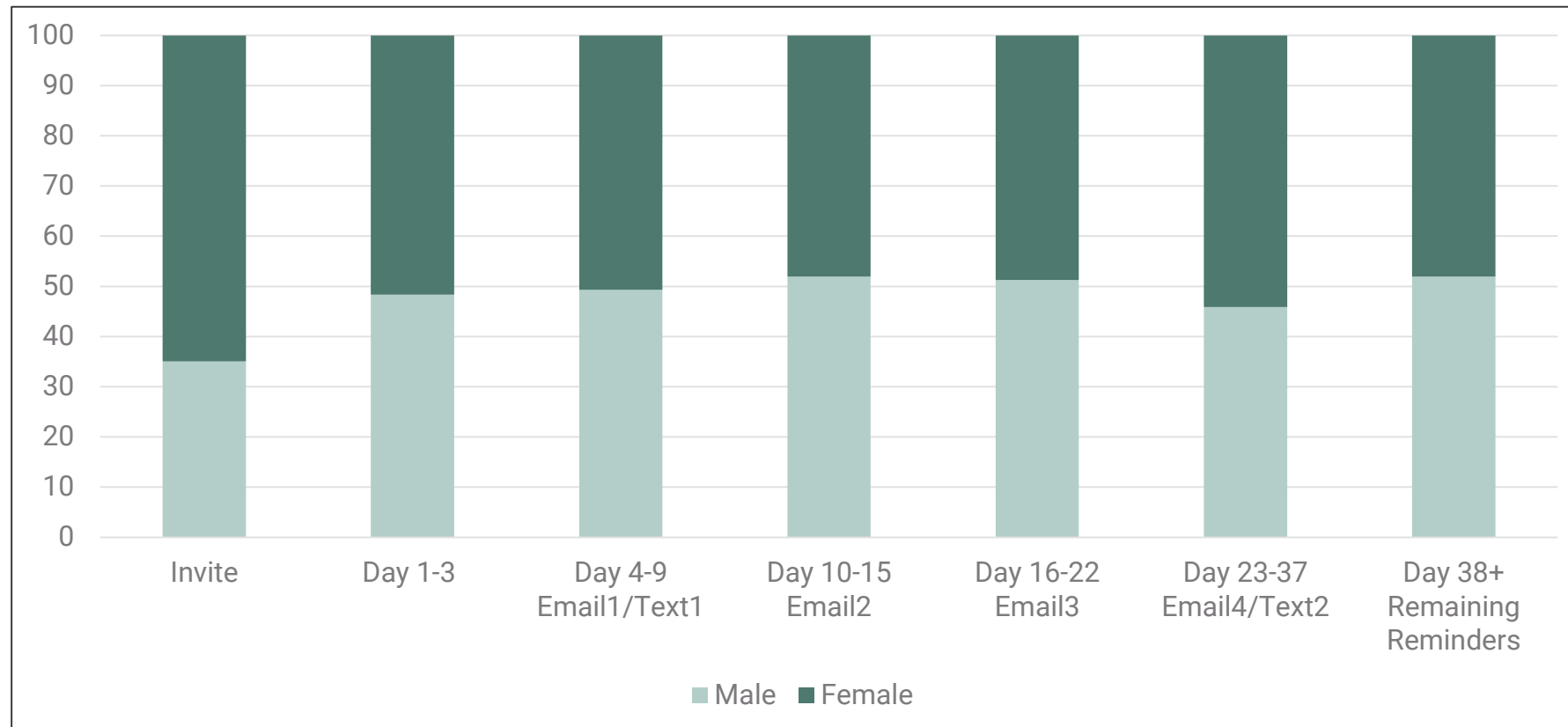


Note: dotted line represents national benchmark from March 2020 Current Population Survey (CPS)

## Composition of Teen Panel Over Time

Fewer male teens completed recruitment survey at the beginning of fielding. Gained more male recruits throughout fielding.

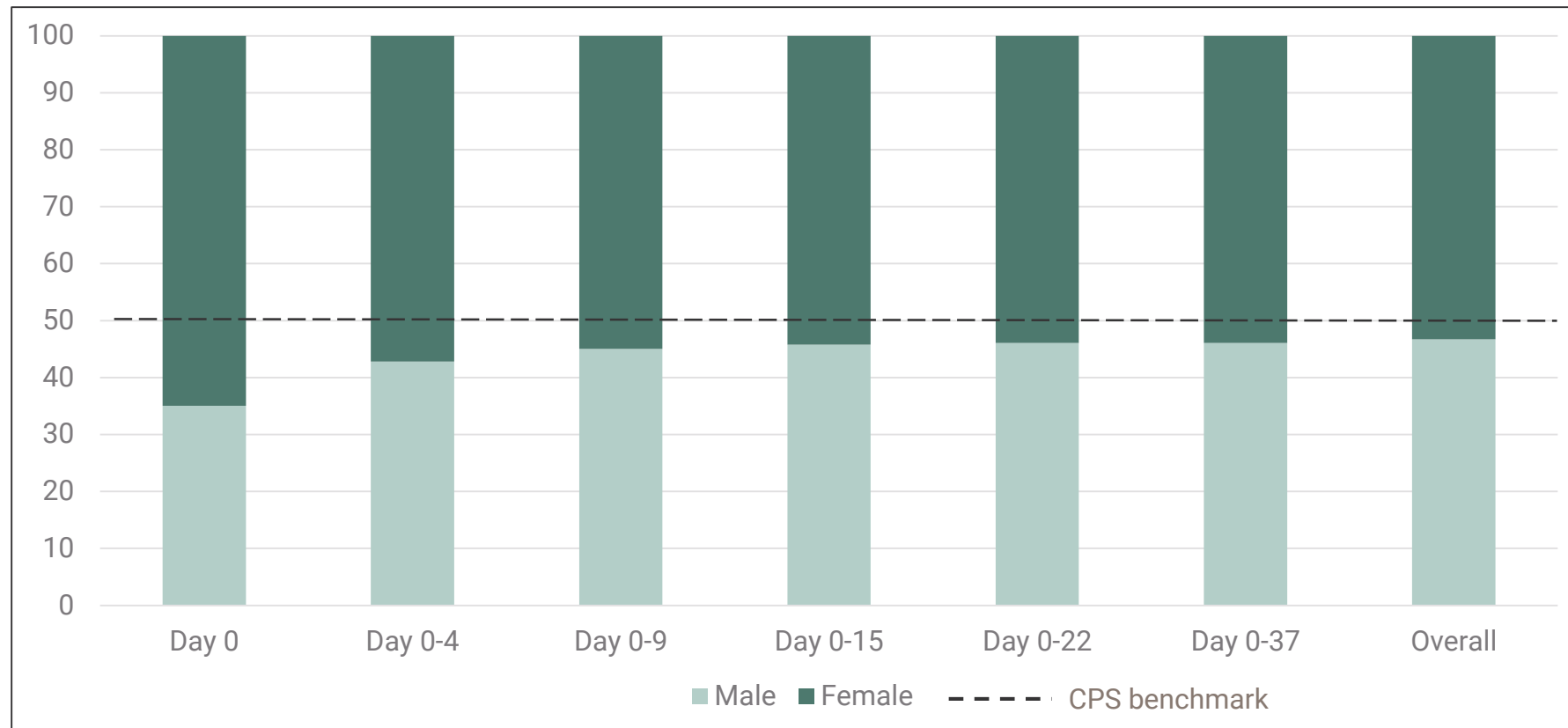
### Gender



## Composition of Teen Panel Compared to Benchmark

Additional male teens recruited later in the fielding period aided in achieving a more balanced teen panel.

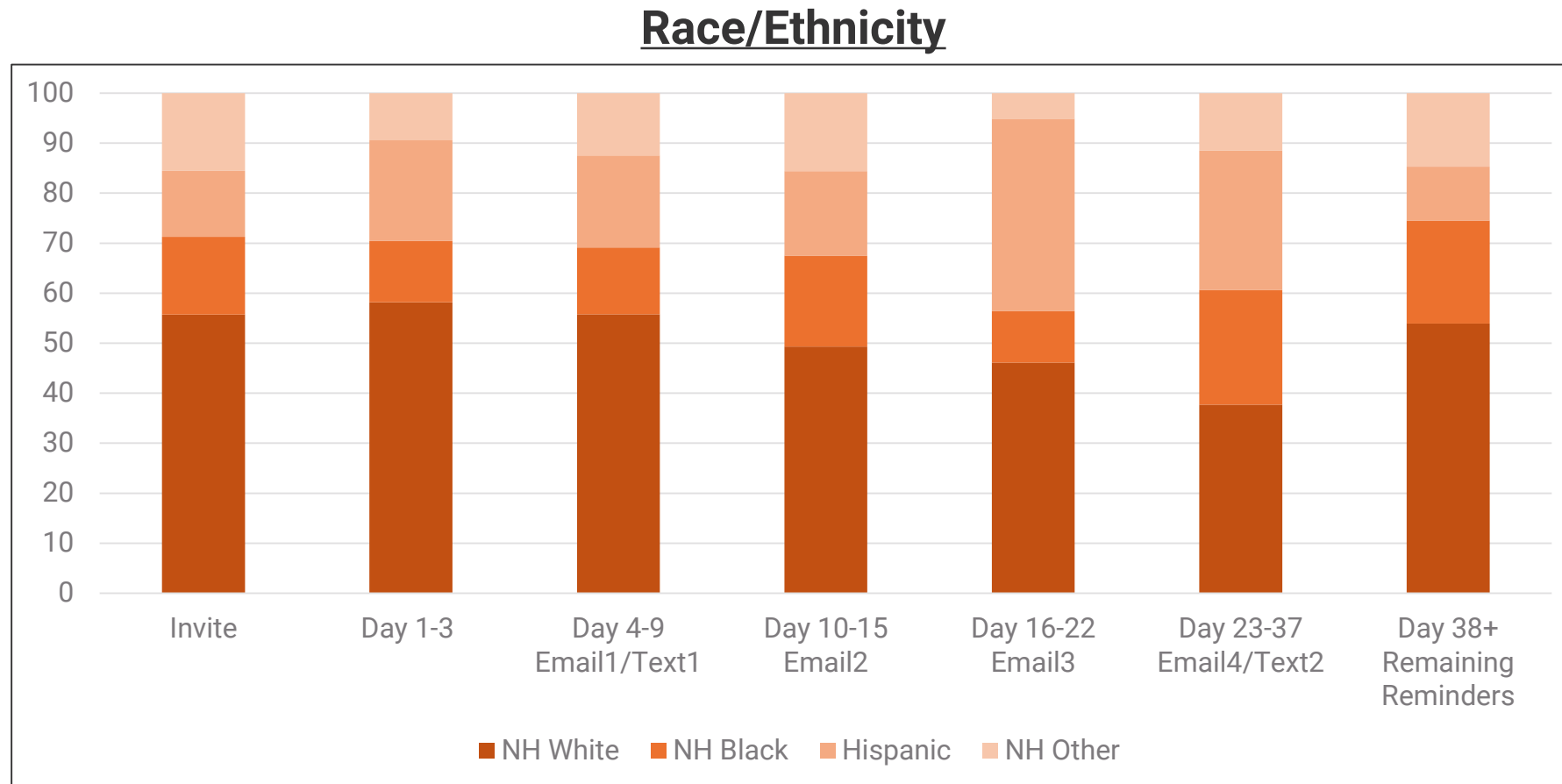
### Gender



Note: dotted line represents national benchmark from March 2020 Current Population Survey (CPS)

## Composition of Teen Panel Over Time

Non-Hispanic White teens completed the recruitment survey earlier in fielding, while Hispanic and Non-Hispanic Black teens completed later in fielding

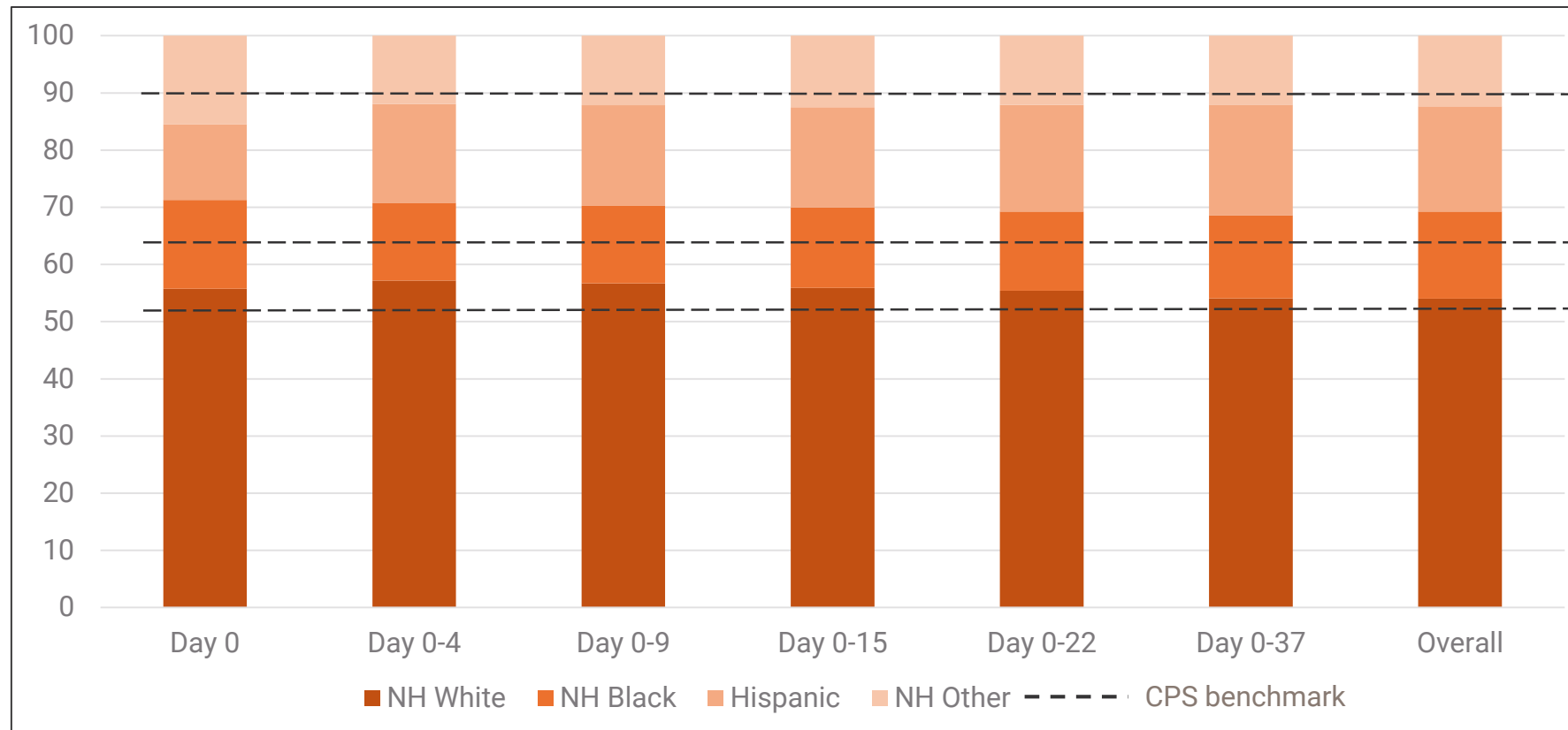




# Composition of Teen Panel Compared to Benchmark

Longer field period and continuous outreach improved diversity of teen panel

## Race/Ethnicity



Note: dotted line represents national benchmark from March 2020 Current Population Survey (CPS)

# Agenda

01 Introduction / Business Need

---

02 Recruitment Strategies

---

03 Research Questions

---

04 Findings

---

**05** Summary

---



## Summary

- Targeted sampling coupled with custom survey functionality served as a backbone for effective way of recruiting teens
- Teens are responsive to both mail and email engagement – with email alone being a viable option if interviews are needed quickly
  - Majority of teens completed after receiving only the initial invite and 1<sup>st</sup> reminder email
  - Mailings had significant impact on teen completion rates
- **Persistent multi-mode engagement over time resulted in a diverse teen panel**
  - While additional outreach to parents did not greatly affect type of teens nominated over time, additional outreach to teens did affect type of teens who joined the panel
  - Encouraged more males, younger teens, Hispanic and non-Hispanic black teens to join over time

# Thank you.

**Lindsay Liebert**  
Statistician II  
Liebert-Lindsay@norc.org

---

 Research You Can Trust™

---

 **NORC** at the  
University of  
Chicago