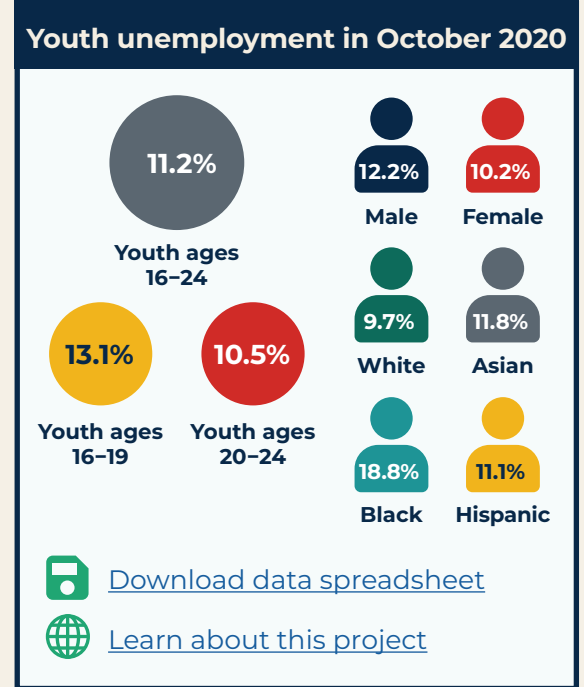


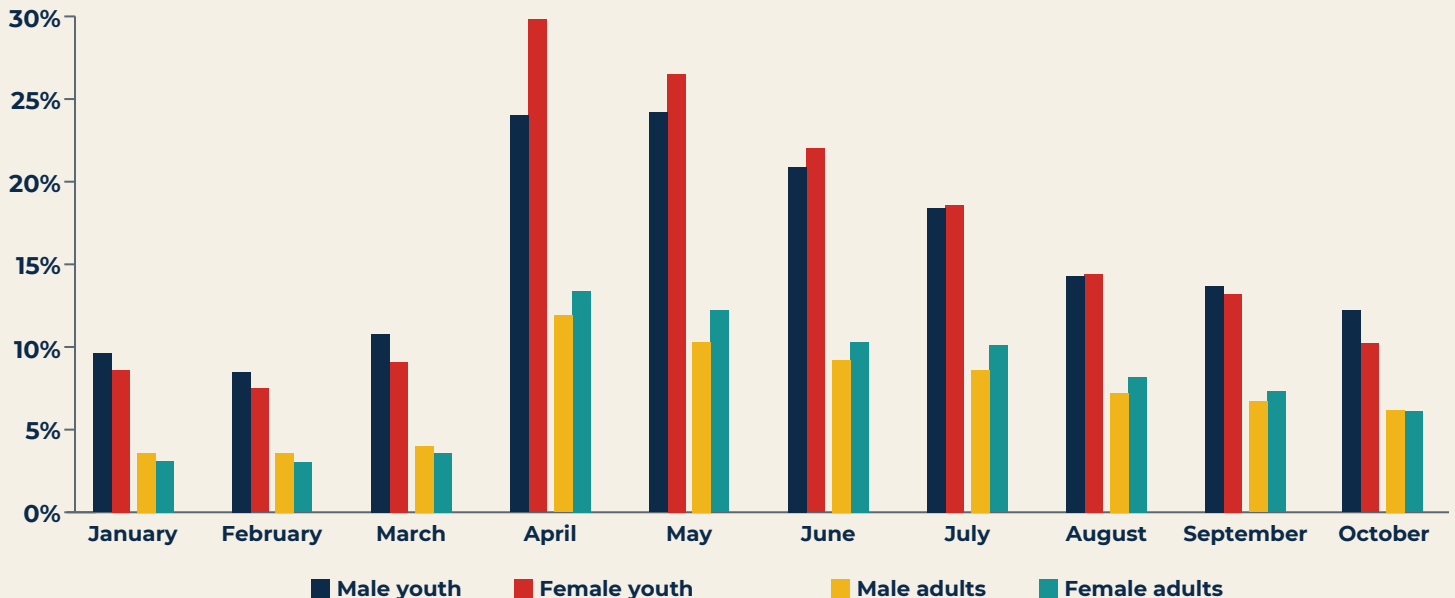
COVID-19 and Youth Unemployment by Gender

Traditionally, unemployment among men is higher than it is among women. The COVID-19 pandemic, however, caused nonessential businesses to close, which primarily impacted female-dominated industries such as hospitality, education, health care, and retail. As a consequence, unemployment increased more dramatically for women when the COVID-19 pandemic hit the country in March 2020. In April 2020, youth unemployment (for ages 16 to 24) was 29.8 percent among women versus 24.0 percent among men. A similar pattern emerged among adults (ages 25 to 54): the unemployment rate was 13.4 percent among women and 11.9 percent among men. Thereafter, unemployment remained higher for women than men.

Since the April 2020 spike, unemployment rates have been steadily declining. For youth, gender differences in unemployment rates disappeared and then reversed as the schools reopened in September. In October 2020, youth unemployment was 12.2 percent for males and 10.2 percent for females. Adult unemployment declined to 6.2 percent and 6.1 percent for men and women, respectively, indicating a slower recovery in employment opportunities for adult women than for female youth.



Unemployment rate by age and gender, 2020



Source: Mathematica compilation based on the Bureau of Labor Statistics' monthly Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey (<https://www.bls.gov/cps/data.htm>).

¹ Bureau of Labor Statistics. "Current Employment Statistics Highlights."