

# BEING OUT

# INTRO DUCTION TION

---

*Growing Up LGBT in America*—the Human Rights Campaign’s groundbreaking research among more than 10,000 LGBT-identified youth ages 13 to 17—illustrated how the deck is stacked against young people growing up lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. Survey responses revealed that many LGBT youth are profoundly disconnected from their communities, in sometimes stark ways. Still, LGBT youth often report resilience in facing today’s challenges and optimism about tomorrow’s possibilities.

This report for National Coming Out Day explores the coming out experiences of the LGBT youth who responded to the survey—to whom they come out, in what settings, obstacles they experience, and the ways in which coming out may be related to their personal well-being, sense of safety, and their connections to family, school and community.

# SUMMARY

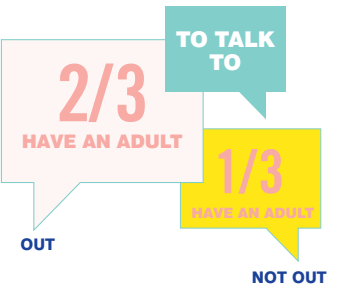
## NOT OUT SCHOOL OUT

About two-thirds (**64%**) are out to their classmates; **61%** are out at school.



**Youth who are out to their immediate family and those who are out at school are more likely to report being happy than those who are not out in those settings.**

**41%** of youth who are out to immediate family say they are “pretty happy” or “very happy” while **33%** of youth who are not out say the same; **40%** of youth who are out at school say they are “pretty happy” or “very happy” while **33%** of youth who are not out say the same.



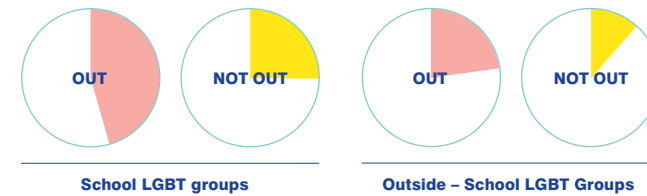
**Youth who are out to their immediate family are twice as likely to report having an adult in their family they could talk to if they were sad.**

**63%** of youth who are out to their immediate family say they have an adult in their family they could talk to if they were sad; **31%** of youth who are not out say the same.

## NOT OUT FAMILY OUT

More than half (**56%**) are out to their immediate family.

**Youth who are out at school are more likely than those who are not out to be involved in LGBT groups at school or in the community.**



**43%** of youth who are out at school participate in LGBT groups at school “very often” or “sometimes,” while a quarter (**26%**) of youth who are not out say the same. **23%** of youth who are out at school participate in LGBT groups outside of school; **11%** of youth who are not out at school say the same.

Among youth who are not out to their family, the most frequent obstacle they describe is that their family is not accepting or is homo/bi/transphobic.

Among youth who are not out at school, the most frequent obstacle they describe is that teachers or classmates will treat them differently or judge them.

**Nearly half of youth who are not out to their immediate family say they do not have an adult in their family they could talk to if they were sad.**

**47%** of youth who are not out to their immediate family say they do not have an adult in their family they could talk to if they were sad; **25%** of youth who are out say the same.

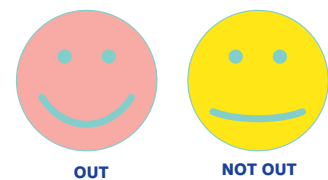
**Youth who are out to their immediate family or at school report a higher likelihood to achieve several life goals compared to those who are not out, if asked to imagine their future while living in their current city or town.**



**About half of LGBT youth—out and not out—participate in online communities that address LGBT youth issues.**

**53%** of youth who are out at school say they participate in an online community that addresses LGBT youth issues and **49%** of youth who are not out at school say the same.

Importantly, 9 in 10 LGBT youth (**91%**) in this survey are out to their close friends. This is generally the case regardless of region, religion, race/ethnicity, gender identity or sexual orientation. Friends matter, and peers are the most important supporters in the lives of many LGBT youth.



Youth who are out to their immediate family or out at school report higher levels of happiness, optimism, acceptance and support through multiple measures. Not surprisingly, they also report higher levels of in-person participation with LGBT organizations at school and in the community.



CUT OFF

Youth who are not out are more likely to be cut off from key forms of support: adults in their family or community they could talk to and LGBT organizations at school or elsewhere.

**Friends matter, and peers are the most important supporters in the lives of many LGBT youth.**

**About half of LGBT youth—out and not out—experience little or no harassment at school. At the same time, youth who are out at school are slightly more likely than those who are not out to experience verbal harassment at school and outside of school.**

**17%** of youth who are out say they are harassed at school “frequently;” **12%** of youth who are not out say the same. **10%** of youth who are out at school say they are harassed outside of school “frequently;” **6%** of youth who are not out say the same.

**And youth who are out to their immediate family or at school are more likely than their peers to have been called names involving anti-gay slurs.**

**57%** of youth who are out to their immediate families have been verbally harassed or called names involving anti-gay slurs “frequently,” “often,” or “sometimes;” **49%** of youth who are not out to their families say the same. **60%** of youth who are out at school have experienced such harassment; **46%** of youth who are not out at school have experienced the same.

# FINDINGS

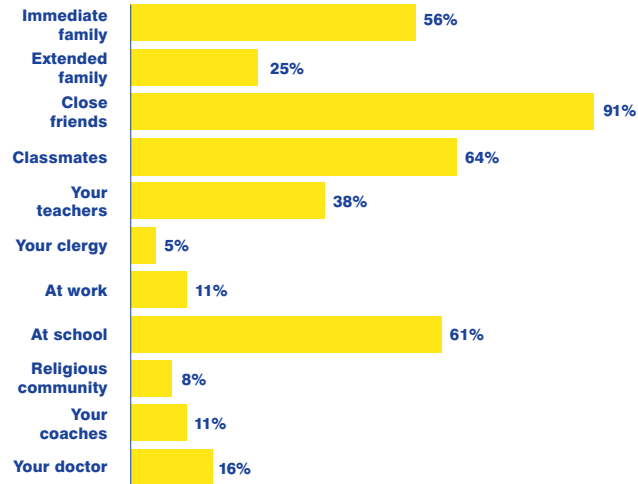
## OUT TO WHOM?

### 1 OVERALL "OUT" CHART

9 in 10 LGBT youth (91%) are out to their close friends

Nearly two-thirds (64%) are out to their classmates; 61% are out at school

More than half (56%) are out to their immediate family



### 2 GENDER

# FEMALE

57% (5699)

"OTHER" GENDER  
6% (606)

# MALE

34% (3406)

TRANSGENDER  
3% (319)

Of the 10,030 LGBT youth, 57% (5699) identify as female, 34% (3406) as male, 3% (319) as transgender, and 6% (606) as "other gender."

Across the gender spectrum, LGBT youth report similar levels of being out in many settings. Differences by gender are in the following areas:

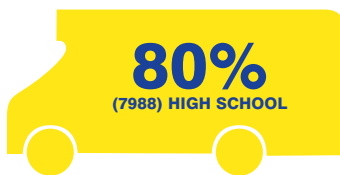
Two-thirds (66%) of transgender youth say they are out to their immediate family; 60% of youth who identified as "other

gender," 59% of male youth and only half (53%) of female youth say the same.

Nearly half of males and transgender youth (46%) are out to their teachers; compared to 41% of youth who identified as "other gender," and a third (32%) of females.

More than a quarter of transgender youth (29%) are out to their doctors; compared to 21% of youth who identified as "other gender," and just 18% of male youth and 14% of females.

### 3 SCHOOL STATUS



14% (1399) MIDDLE/JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

3% (298) HOME SCHOOLED

3% (345) COLLEGE, OUT OF SCHOOL, OR OTHER

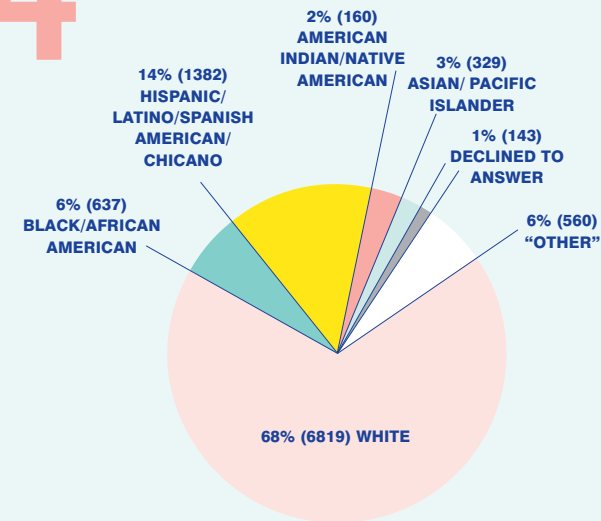
Not surprisingly, higher percentages of high school youth say they are out in various settings compared to middle school youth.

40% of high school youth say they are out to teachers; 26% of middle school youth say the same.

64% of high school youth say they are out at school; 54% of middle school youth say the same.

Home-schooled youth are most likely to come out to immediate family; high school youth are much more likely than middle school youth to come out to immediate family. Two-thirds of home-schooled youth (67%) say they are out to immediate family; 57% of high school youth say the same as do 44% of middle school students.

### 4 RACE/ETHNICITY

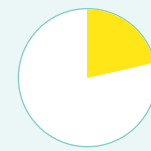


Across all races/ethnicities, there is little difference in the percentage of youth who are out to close friends. Generally, 9 in 10 youth are out to close friends—from 89% among Asian/Pacific Islander youth to 93% among Hispanic/Latino youth.

In this sample, American Indian/Native American youth report the highest percentages for being out in 8 of 11 categories (immediate family, extended family, teachers, clergy, at work, at school, at congregation, to their doctor).

Hispanic/Latino youth report the highest percentages of being out to classmates, at school and with coaches.

### 6 RELIGIOUS IDENTITY



Among the 10,030 LGBT youth, 20% (1955) chose a religious identity among 8 choices (Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, Mormon, Orthodox, Other Christian, Other Not Christian) and attend a congregation every week or one or two times a month.

Among the religious-identified LGBT youth who attend religious services regularly, 19% are out at their congregation and 11% are out to their clergy.

### 7 AREA OF RESIDENCE

RURAL/SUBURBAN/URBAN

28% (2793) LIVE IN URBAN/CITY AREAS

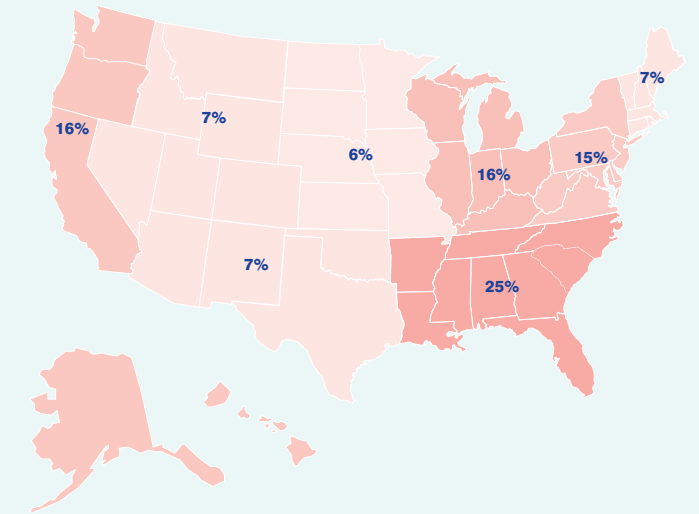
21% (2077) LIVE IN RURAL AREAS

51% (5135) LIVE IN SUBURBAN AREAS

<1% (25) DECLINED TO ANSWER

### 5 REGION

AMONG THE 10,030 LGBT YOUTH, 7% (729) LIVE IN NEW ENGLAND, 15% (1475) IN THE MIDDLE ATLANTIC, 16% (1622) IN THE EAST NORTH CENTRAL, 6% (636) IN THE WEST NORTH CENTRAL, 25% (2531) IN THE DEEP SOUTH, 7% (697) IN BORDER STATES, 7% (739) IN MOUNTAIN STATES, AND 16% (1601) IN PACIFIC STATES.



Youth from the Mountain states tend to report the largest percentages of being out across most categories except "out to doctor."

Youth from Middle Atlantic states consistently report the smallest percentages of being out in most categories compared to the other 7 regions.

Across all regions, there is little difference in the percentage of youth who are out to close friends. Generally, 9 in 10 youth are out to close friends.

Across all regions, there is little difference in the percentage of youth who are out to clergy (5-6%).

Among the three other institutions/types of people where youth are most likely to be out (e.g. immediate family, classmates, at school), there are greater differences between regions.

62% of youth in the Middle Atlantic and East North Central states are out to their classmates; 68% of youth in the Mountain States are out to classmates.

58% of youth in the Middle Atlantic states are out at school; 67% of youth in the Mountain States are out at school.

52% of youth in the Middle Atlantic states are out to their immediate family; 60% of youth in W. North Central states are out to immediate family.

LGBT youth across all three residence areas (rural, suburban and urban) are similarly likely to be out to close friends (91 or 92%) and immediate family (55 or 57%).

28% of urban and rural youth say they are out to extended family; 21% of suburban youth say the same.

70% of urban youth say they are out to classmates; 63% of rural and 62% of suburban youth say the same.

67% of urban youth say they are out at school; 61% of rural and 58% of suburban youth say the same.

# REASONS YOUTH DON'T COME OUT TO FAMILY

**19%**  
SAY THEY ARE  
**SCARED  
OF  
REACTION,**  
AFRAID, OR DON'T  
KNOW HOW THEIR  
FAMILY WILL REACT

"I'm scared of what they might think about me. I love them and I want them to love me back."

"They won't be accepting; I don't want to be hated by my family. I want to be happy to go home from college, and I want to spend Christmas with my family."

"I am scared that they will shun me and not accept me for who I am."

**10%**  
SAY THEY ARE  
**NOT  
READY**

"When I tell them I want to be ready for whatever they may say or throw at me. Whether this means kicking me out or accepting me for who I am, I want to be ready. Right now, I'm not ready because I am not yet able to support myself."

"I'm waiting for 'the right time,' whatever that means. I want to be absolutely positive about who I am and absolutely sure and confident when I tell them."

"I still feel slightly in the questioning stage although I am about 90% sure that I identify as queer. Until I feel absolutely certain, I do not want to come out to my extended family."

**30%**  
SAY THEIR FAMILY IS  
**NOT  
ACCEPTING  
OR IS  
HOMO/  
BI/TRANS-  
PHOBIC**

"Most of my extended family is homophobic. They also love using gay slurs and other remarks. I am out to a few extended family members though."

"They are very unaccepting. An aunt of mine actually took me aside when I was younger to tell me that 'gays aren't right in the head.' Her goal was to scare me into being straight."

"They would throw me out if I told anyone in my extended family. So I have to keep my mouth shut, otherwise I would end up penniless and homeless."

**10%**  
**DON'T OR CAN'T  
TALK WITH  
THEIR FAMILY**

"I don't really have a strong relationship with my extended family. I don't really see them that often either."

**16%**  
SAY THEY HAVE  
**"RELIGIOUS"  
REASONS**

"I am not out to my family because I know that some of them believe that being gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender is a mental disorder and that the congregation can 'cure' them."

"My mom has taught the children of my family to believe that being LGBT is disgusting and an abomination because of her religious beliefs."

"My entire extended family is blindly religious and frequently refers to those who are LGBT as 'disgusting' or 'diseased.'"

"Because they are very religious and hate gays and I don't want them to hate and disown me. I don't want to disappoint them or lose them."

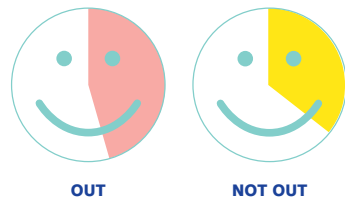


# HAPPINESS, OPTIMISM, ACCEPTANCE, PARTICIPATION & HARASSMENT

Youth who are out to their immediate family or out at school report higher levels of happiness, optimism, acceptance and support through multiple measures. Not surprisingly, they also report higher levels of in-person participation with LGBT organizations at school and in the community. They also report slightly higher levels of harassment than youth who are not out.

Youth who are not out are more likely to be cut off from key forms of support: adults in their family or community they could talk to and LGBT organizations at school or elsewhere. Those who are not out may rely especially on support online—about half of LGBT youth who are out and not out participate in online communities that address LGBT youth issues.

## 1 HAPPINESS



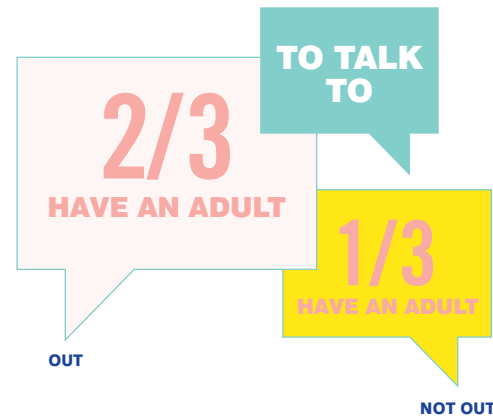
Those who are **out to immediate family** are more likely to report being happy (very/pretty happy) than those who are not out—**41%** of those out to immediate family report being happy; **33%** of those not out to immediate family report being happy.

Those who are **out at school** are more likely to report being happy (very/pretty happy) than those who are not—**40%** of those out at school report being happy; **33%** of those not out at school report being happy.

Those who are **not out to immediate family** are more likely to report being unhappy (pretty/very unhappy) than those who are out—**21%** of those who are not out to immediate family report being unhappy; **16%** of those who are out to immediate family report being unhappy.

Those who are **not out at school** are more likely to report being unhappy (pretty/very unhappy) than those who are out—**21%** of those who are not out at school report being unhappy; **16%** of those who are out at school report being unhappy.

## 2 ADULTS TO TALK TO



Youth who are **out to their immediate family** are twice as likely as youth who are not out to say they have an adult in their family they could talk to if they were sad—**63%** of youth who are out to their immediate family say there is an adult in their family they could talk to; **31%** of youth who are not out to their immediate family say the same.

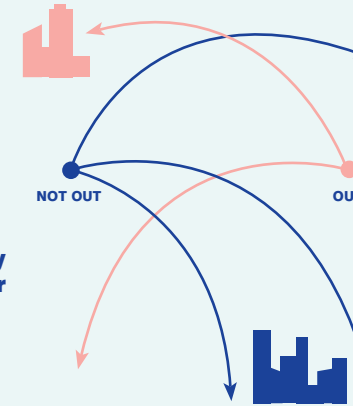
**Nearly half (47%) of youth who are not out to their immediate family say they do not have an adult in their family they could talk to if they were sad; a quarter (25%) of youth who are out say the same.**

Youth who are **not out to their immediate family** are also more likely to say they are unsure if there is an adult they could talk to in their family if they were sad. Nearly a quarter of youth (**21%**) who are not out to their immediate family chose “don’t know” when responding to that question; **12%** of youth who are out to their immediate family say the same.

Youth who are **out to their close friends** are much more likely than youth who are not to say they have an adult in their community who they could talk to if they were sad—**62%** of youth who are out to their close friends say there is such an adult they can talk to; **42%** of youth who are not out to close friends say the same.

## 3 OPTIMISM ABOUT THE FUTURE

Youth who are out to family or at school and those who are not out report similar levels of optimism about achieving life goals. However, when asked to imagine if they stayed in their same city or town, youth who are out to family or at school report a higher likelihood for several life achievements than their peers who are not out to family or at school.



**58%** of youth who are out to their family believe they can establish a life-long partnership with someone they love, if they stayed in their same town; **51%** of youth who are not out to their family say the same.

**58%** of youth who are out at school believe they can establish a life-long partnership with someone they love, if they stayed in their same town; **49%** of youth who are not out at school say the same.

**47%** of youth who are out at school also believe they could be an active part of their community, if they stayed in their same town; **41%** of youth who are not out at school say the same.

**47%** of youth who are out at school believe they could get married to someone they love, if they stayed in their same town; **41%** of youth who are not out at school say the same.

**53%** of youth who are out at school believe they could be happy, if they stayed in their same town; **44%** of youth who are not out at school say the same.

In comparing their likelihood to be happy in general versus if they were to stay in their same town, youth who are not out at school displayed a greater drop in likelihood to be happy compared to their peers who are out.

## 5 LGBT GROUP PARTICIPATION

**Youth who are out at school are much more likely than those who are not out to participate in LGBT groups at school or outside of school.**

**43%** of youth who are out at school participate in LGBT groups at school “very often” or “sometimes,” while a quarter (**26%**) of youth who are not out say the same. **23%** of youth who are out at school participate in LGBT groups outside of school; **11%** of youth who are not out at school say the same.

Meanwhile, participation in online LGBT groups varies little between those who are out at school and those who are not. **53%** of youth who are out at school say they participate in an online community that addresses LGBT youth issues and **49%** of youth who are not out at school say the same.

## 4 LEVELS OF ACCEPTANCE OF LGBT PEOPLE

Among youth who are out at school, **28%** say their school is “very accepting” of LGBT people; among youth who are not out at school, **16%** say their school is “very accepting.”

Among youth who are out at school, **38%** say their peers are “very accepting”; among youth not out at school, **19%** say their peers are “very accepting.”

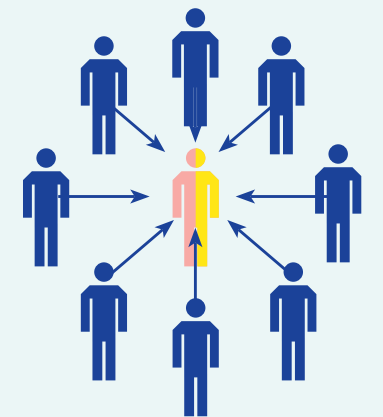
Among youth who are out to their immediate families, **42%** say their families are “very accepting” of LGBT people and **7%** say their families are “not at all

accepting;” among youth who are not out to their immediate families, **16%** say their families are very accepting and **24%** say their families are “not at all accepting.”

Among youth who are out to a close friend, **32%** say their peers are “very accepting;” among those not out to close friends, **14%** say their peers are “very accepting.” Among youth out to a close friend, **19%** say their peers are “not very” or “not at all” accepting; while among youth who are not out to a close friend, **40%** say their peers are “not very” or “not at all” accepting.

## 6 LEVELS OF HARASSMENT & ABUSE

**About half of the LGBT respondents said they were “rarely” or “never” harassed or called names at school. 46% of youth who are out at school said they are “rarely” or “never” harassed or called names at school; 52% of youth who are not out at school say the same.**



Youth who are out at school are slightly more likely than youth who are not out to report that they are verbally harassed or called names at school “frequently” — **17%** of youth who are out compared with **12%** of youth who are not.

Youth who are out at school are also more likely to report that they are verbally harassed or called names outside of school “frequently” — **10%** of youth who are out compared to **6%** of youth who are not. **41%** of youth who are out report they are verbally harassed or called names outside of school “frequently,” “often,” or “sometimes;” **30%** of youth who are not out report the same.

**Youth who are out to their family and those who are out at school are more likely than their peers to have been verbally harassed and called names involving anti-gay slurs.**

**57%** of youth who are out to their families have experienced such harassment; **49%** of youth who are not out to their family have experienced such harassment. **60%** of youth who are out at school have experienced such harassment; **46%** of youth who are not out at school have experienced such harassment.

# REASONS YOUTH DON'T COME OUT AT SCHOOL

**7%**  
SAY THEIR  
TEACHERS  
AND/OR  
SCHOOL  
ARE VERY  
CONSERVATIVE

"As I attend a Catholic school, most teachers are very homophobic and speak of LGBTs in a negative light. My classmates, especially straight males, find LGBTs 'disgusting' and a wrong part of society."

**26%**  
SAY THEY DID NOT SEE THE  
NEED TO COME OUT OR  
IT IS NOT  
ANYONE'S  
BUSINESS

"I'm out to classmates but not teachers only because they don't really need to know and I fear they will tell my parents."

"I believe it is not their business and I don't want it to interfere with my learning."

**31%**  
SAY THEY WILL BE  
TREATED  
DIFFERENTLY  
OR JUDGED

"I am out to my friends but not everyone in the school, and not teachers because I think they're going to treat me different from everyone else."

"I'm scared of not being accepted and treated differently, and I don't know if I'm strong enough to deal with all of the hate yet."

"I'm afraid that they won't view me the same way and that our relationship will slowly deteriorate. I'm afraid of abandonment."

"Because the majority of people at my school are not my closest friends; they are merely acquaintances. My teachers play little or no role in my life therefore I don't feel the need to tell them, mainly in fear that they may grade my academic performance differently than they would anyone else in the class."

**9%**  
SAY THEY ARE  
AFRAID  
OF  
BULLYING

"I would feel threatened by students and teachers. My school addresses bullying a lot but never LGBT bullying."

"I don't want to be bullied more than I already am."

"I am not out because high school is harsh and I would be bullied and harassed. There is another lesbian couple at my school, and they get bullied and discriminated against so much it's not even funny. So I'm scared."

"People are cruel and I don't want to be beaten up for my sexual orientation. I know living in fear sucks but it's the only thing I can do at the moment."

# CALL TO ACTION

## LGBTQ YOUTH

If you are LGBT or questioning and you are considering coming out to close friends or someone in your family, it's good to make a plan. What kind of signals are you getting from your friend or family member? Do you have enough information to answer the types of questions they might have about being LGBT? Do you know what you want to say? Do you have support? Is it the right time? Reactions may vary, and you should be prepared. Tips for coming out are available through the Human Rights Campaign ([www.hrc.org](http://www.hrc.org)).

If you need other information or support, resources include the Trevor Project ([www.thetrevorproject.org](http://www.thetrevorproject.org)), It Gets Better ([www.itgetsbetter.org](http://www.itgetsbetter.org)), and the American Academy of Pediatrics ([www.healthychildren.org](http://www.healthychildren.org)).

## FRIENDS & PEERS

Close friends matter. With 9 in 10 LGBT youth out to their close friends, young people are relying on close friends to be understanding and supportive. Be brave—be a friend. Learn more about being a friend and supporter through the Give a Damn campaign ([www.wegiveadamn.org](http://www.wegiveadamn.org)) and the Gay–Straight Alliance Network ([www.gsanetwork.org](http://www.gsanetwork.org)).

At the same time, LGBT youth are twice as likely as their peers to be harassed at school. Make your school safer by being more than a bystander—be a friend to those who are bullied, tell a trusted adult, help someone being bullied get away from a bad situation, and don't be a bully. Check out the youth section of Stop Bullying ([www.stopbullying.gov/kids](http://www.stopbullying.gov/kids)).

## PARENTS

While these youth are heading towards greater independence, parents, families & friends still shape and influence their feelings of safety and well-being. Your words and actions are being watched. Do not use demeaning speech about LGBT people. Be open to your children's experiences, even if you are unsure or uncomfortable. Stand up for your children if they are harassed or abused due to their identity. Support and information is available at Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians and Gays/PFLAG ([www.pflag.org](http://www.pflag.org)), the Family Acceptance Project ([www.family-project.sfsu.edu](http://www.family-project.sfsu.edu)), and the American Academy of Pediatrics ([www.healthychildren.org](http://www.healthychildren.org)).

## TEACHERS

Educators set the tone in their classrooms and influence the climate throughout a school—the hallways, gyms, cafeterias, and study halls. Many LGBT youth are justly afraid to come out at school because they fear being bullied. Make your classroom safe and inclusive for all. Respond to bullying and name-calling. Consider ways to include LGBT issues and themes in your curriculum. Great resources are available at Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network ([www.glsen.org](http://www.glsen.org)), Gay–Straight Alliance Network ([www.gsanetwork.org](http://www.gsanetwork.org)), and HRC's Welcoming Schools ([www.welcoming-schools.org](http://www.welcoming-schools.org)).

## CLERGY & RELIGIOUS LEADERS

Congregations can be a place where LGBT youth can feel most accepted and embraced. Sadly, though, because of religious-based homophobic and transphobic messages, clergy and religious people are often the least likely group to be sought out by young people. Religious leaders need to be overt in their literature, their signage and in the pulpit about their embrace of LGBT people. Make your congregation more open through HRC's resource, Living Openly in Your Place of Worship. If you're Christian, see HRC's weekly preaching and devotional commentary, Out In Scripture, for ideas about how to craft affirming LGBT messages from the pulpit or other religious resources ([www.hrc.org/resources/category/religion-faith](http://www.hrc.org/resources/category/religion-faith)).

## ELECTED OFFICIALS

**68%** of LGBT youth say they hear negative messages about being LGBT from elected officials; only **16%** hear positive messages from politicians. Change your rhetoric—end attacks on LGBT people and instead support your LGBT constituents. Stand strong for legislation that moves equality forward. See [www.hrc.org](http://www.hrc.org).



# METHODOLOGY

Two methodologies were used to collect data for this sample.

This study includes a review of frequencies and cross-tabulations of raw data from research conducted by Greenberg Quinlan Rosner. That original data included 10,030 LGBT-identified youth and more than 500 non-LGBT youth. This report analyzed only those responses by LGBT-identified youth regarding various questions about their coming out experience. Below is a full description of the original methodology. Most of the LGBT youth were recruited through the public URL described below; the 5% of respondents to the Harris Poll Online who identified as LGBT were also included in these findings.

## PUBLIC URL

Working with the Human Rights Campaign and Harris Interactive Service Bureau, who hosted the web survey, Greenberg Quinlan Rosner created a link that allowed participants to take this survey online. Participants invited to the study were screened for (self-identified) LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer) status. This method was used to collect the overwhelming majority of LGBT interviews in this study and ultimately produced a sample of 10,030 participants ages 13–17 who self-identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer. Certain questions in the survey were directed only to self-identified LGBT respondents.

During April and May of 2012, the Human Rights Campaign advertised this link through a partnership with The Trevor Project, through its social media, as well as through direct communication with dozens of LGBT youth

centers across the country. This method of collecting interviews is common in exploring hard-to-reach populations, but it does not represent a truly random opt-in sample. Traditional measures of margin of error do not apply and the results here may not be representative of this population as a whole.

## ONLINE PANEL

In addition, this research includes 510 interviews among respondents ages 13–17 drawn from the Harris Poll OnlineSM (HPOL.) These interviews were not screened for LGBT status and comprise the “non-LGBT” population in this study. Note, however, that five percent of these interviews self-identified as LGBT and were asked questions directed at this population.

Harris Poll OnlineSM (HPOL) is a multimillion-member panel of cooperative online respondents. Panelists have joined the Harris Poll Online from over 100 different sources. Diverse methods are leveraged to gain panelists including: co-registration offers on partners’ websites, targeted emails sent by online partners to their audiences, graphical and text banner placement on partners’ websites (including social media, news, search and community portals), trade show presentations, targeted postal mail invitations, TV advertisements and telephone recruitment of targeted populations.

When respondents are recruited into this panel, it is made very clear to them that they are joining a market research panel and that they will be asked periodically to participate in

online research. They are shown the terms and conditions of panel membership as well as our privacy policy. Panelists must agree to our Terms of Use which state that panelists are limited to a single membership and can be removed if they are found in violation of this rule.

All panelists recruited have completed a ‘confirmed’ or ‘double’ opt-in (COI/DOI) process. This process requires that each registrant confirm his or her desire to join our panel by clicking on a link within an email that is sent to the registrant’s email address upon registering. The content of the email specifies that by clicking on the link the registrant is expressly stating his or her desire to take part in the panel. Once they consent to join the panel, members are invited to participate in various surveys through email invitations which include a short description of the research and indicate the approximate survey length.

Our research policies for U.S.-based research comply with the legal codes of conduct developed by the Council of American Survey Research Organizations (CASRO). According to CASRO guidelines, the minimum age to consent to participate in survey research in the U.S. is 13 years old.

Data collected for this survey were collected by Harris Interactive Service Bureau (HISB) on behalf of the Human Rights Campaign. HISB was responsible for the data collected and Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Client was responsible for the survey design, data weighting, data analysis and reporting any/all methods that apply.

A key issue in interviewing children both responsibly and legally is appropriate parental consent, which is required before conducting research with children under the age of 13. For 8–12 year olds, Harris Interactive obtains consent from their parents, who are HPOL panelists themselves, using well-defined parental permission policies. Panelists identified as age 18+ with an 8–12 year old child living in the household are sent email invitations with a link to the child survey. The invites specify that the survey is intended for their child and explain the content and approximate length of the survey. If the parent agrees to allow their child to participate in the survey, they are asked to provide the link to their child. This process is also used to supplement the 13–17 year old panel through targeted panelists age 18+ with a 13–17 year old in the household.

**This study includes a review of frequencies and cross-tabulations of raw data from research conducted by Greenberg Quinlan Rosner. That original data included 10,030 LGBT-identified youth and more than 500 non-LGBT youth. This report analyzed only those responses by LGBT-identified youth regarding various questions about their coming out experience.**

---

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

## HRC COMING OUT MATERIALS

### A La Familia

[www.hrc.org/resources/entry/a-la-familia](http://www.hrc.org/resources/entry/a-la-familia)

### A Resource Guide to Coming Out

[www.hrc.org/resources/entry/resource-guide-to-coming-out](http://www.hrc.org/resources/entry/resource-guide-to-coming-out)

### A Resource Guide to Coming Out for African Americans

[www.hrc.org/resources/entry/resource-guide-to-coming-out-for-african-americans](http://www.hrc.org/resources/entry/resource-guide-to-coming-out-for-african-americans)

### Guia de Recursos para Salir del Closet

[www.hrc.org/resources/entry/guia-de-recursos-para-salir-del-closet](http://www.hrc.org/resources/entry/guia-de-recursos-para-salir-del-closet)

### Transgender Visibility: A Guide to Being You

[www.hrc.org/resources/entry/transgender-visibility-guide](http://www.hrc.org/resources/entry/transgender-visibility-guide)

### Living Openly in Your Place of Worship

[www.hrc.org/resources/entry/living-openly-in-your-place-of-worship](http://www.hrc.org/resources/entry/living-openly-in-your-place-of-worship)

### Coming Out as a Straight Supporter: A Guide to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Americans

[www.hrc.org/straight](http://www.hrc.org/straight)

---

## ORGANIZATIONS FOR PARENTS, FRIENDS, TEACHERS, OTHERS

### American Academy of Pediatrics

[www.healthychildren.org](http://www.healthychildren.org)

### American Veterans for Equal Rights

[www.aver.us](http://www.aver.us)

### Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice

[www.astraeafoundation.org](http://www.astraeafoundation.org)

### Campus Pride

[www.campuspride.org](http://www.campuspride.org)

### Centerlink: The Community of LGBT Centers

[www.lgbtcenters.org](http://www.lgbtcenters.org)

### COLAGE [People with a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender or Queer Parent]

[www.colage.org](http://www.colage.org)

### Family Acceptance Project

[familyproject.sfsu.edu](http://familyproject.sfsu.edu)

### Family Equality Council

[www.familyequality.org](http://www.familyequality.org)

### Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network

[www.glsen.org](http://www.glsen.org)

### Gay and Lesbian Medical Association

[www.glma.org](http://www.glma.org)

### Gay Asian Pacific Support Network

[www.gapsn.org](http://www.gapsn.org)

### Gay–Straight Alliance Network

[www.gsanetwork.org](http://www.gsanetwork.org)

### Immigration Equality

[www.immigrationequality.org](http://www.immigrationequality.org)

### National Black Justice Coalition

[www.nbjc.org](http://www.nbjc.org)

### Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians & Gays

[www.pflag.org](http://www.pflag.org)

### Straight for Equality

[www.straightforequality.org](http://www.straightforequality.org)

### The Transgender Center

[www.ntac.org](http://www.ntac.org)

### Welcoming Schools

[www.welcomingschools.org](http://www.welcomingschools.org)

