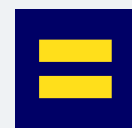


2018

LGBTQ Youth Report



**HUMAN
RIGHTS
CAMPAIGN**®



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Introduction

In 2012, HRC's groundbreaking research, *Growing up LGBT in America*, reported on the experiences of over 10,000 LGBTQ-identified youth aged 13-17 and painted a stark picture of the difficulties they faced.

Since 2012, LGBTQ Americans have seen tremendous strides toward equality and inclusion in the workplace, in health care, in public opinion and under the law. Marriage equality is now the law of the land, transgender candidates are being elected to public office, and mainstream television and movies routinely feature LGBTQ characters portrayed in a positive light. These significant cultural changes, milestones and achievements provide hope to many LGBTQ people.

And yet, the results of HRC's 2017 Youth Survey reveal persistent, serious challenges for LGBTQ youth. In many cases, the cards remain stacked against LGBTQ-identified youth in terms of acceptance and support from their families, their mental health and safety in schools. For LGBTQ youth of color these challenges are compounded by racism and race-related stressors. Transgender and gender-expansive youth also face unique challenges. In school, a lack of inclusive policies and procedures creates obstacles to their safety and well-being.

Equally compelling, however, are the stories of empowerment, resilience, activism and advocacy from the survey respondents. Across the country, LGBTQ youth are taking a stand and advocating for inclusivity and equality in their homes, schools and communities.

Parents, school administrators, teachers, counselors and other youth-serving professionals can stand with LGBTQ youth by following their lead and implementing the actionable guidelines in this report to create safe, affirming and welcoming spaces for LGBTQ youth.

About the Study

In 2017, the Human Rights Campaign Foundation partnered with researchers at the University of Connecticut to deploy a comprehensive survey capturing the experiences of LGBTQ youth in their family settings, schools, social circles and communities. Over 12,000 youth aged 13-17 participated in the survey, with representation from all 50 states and the District of Columbia. More information about the survey process, materials and respondent profiles can be found in the methodology on page 22.



"I am lucky to have the best parents who will love and support whoever I am or whomever I want to be with."



"I'm homeschooled by my conservative Christian mother, who is rather queerphobic, even though she claims not to be. Any resurgence of the topic of queer people typically results in attacks on my identity."

The Importance of Family

Parents and families play an essential role in promoting adolescent health and well-being. Studies have shown the positive health outcomes for LGBTQ youth whose families are supportive and accepting, including greater self-esteem and resilience, and a lower risk of negative health outcomes such as depression, distress, hopelessness and substance use.³

Most LGBTQ youth are aware of their sexual orientation or gender identity by the start of adolescence.⁴ While "coming out" to their parents and close family members is an important and self-affirming developmental milestone, it is often fraught with worry. Many LGBTQ youth report coming out, being outed or being found out by their family as extremely stressful. Moreover, more than three-quarters of youth in our sample rate coming out as LGBTQ to their parents as extremely stressful.

"Being in the closet as trans/non-binary, I'm always scared of my parents finding out or others not accepting me or maybe even not using my preferred pronouns."

ONLY
24%

OF LGBTQ YOUTH CAN "DEFINITELY" BE THEMSELVES AS AN LGBTQ PERSON AT HOME¹

ONLY
25%

OF LGBTQ YOUTH HAVE FAMILIES WHO SHOW SUPPORT FOR THEM BY GETTING INVOLVED IN THE LARGER LGBTQ AND ALLY COMMUNITY²

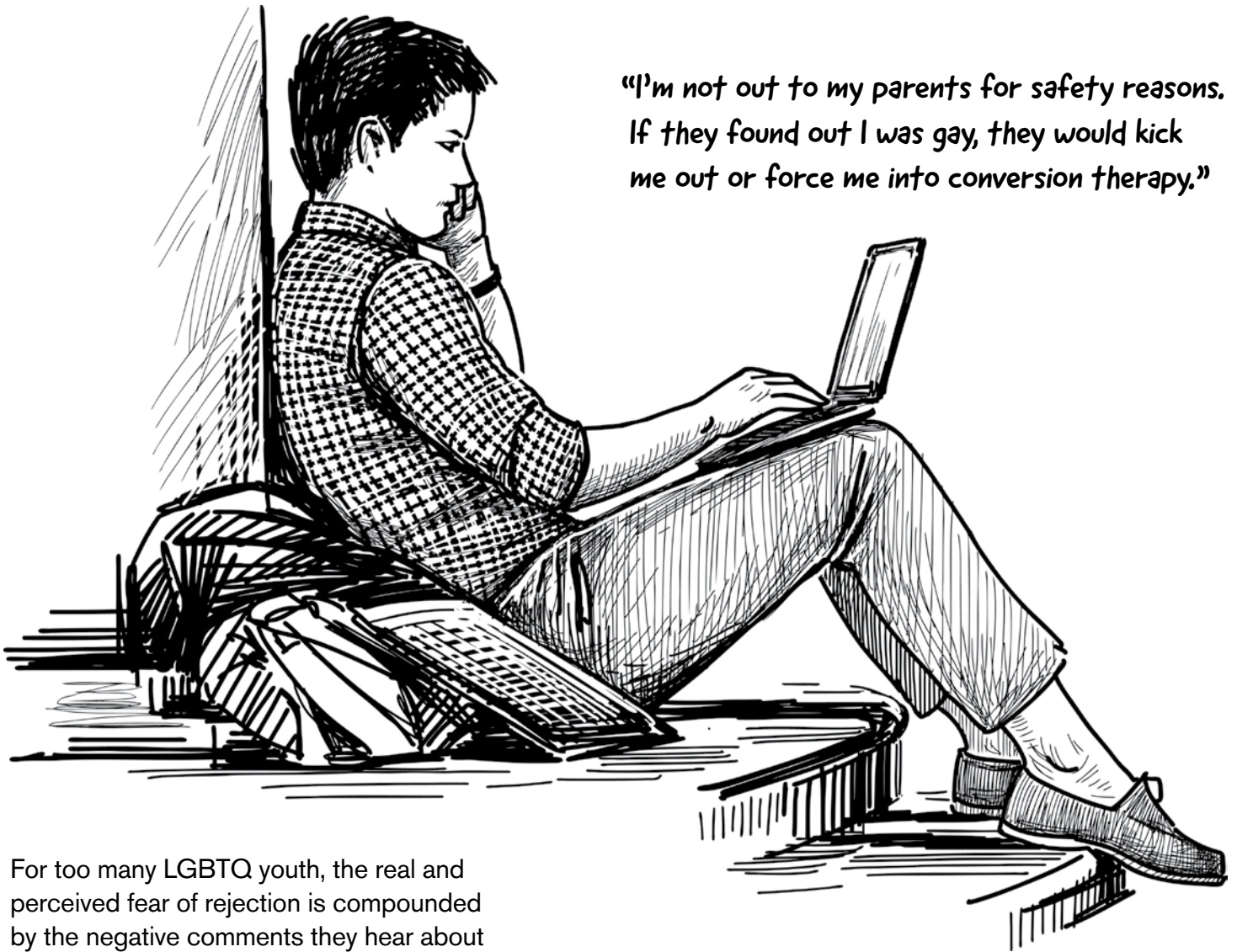
67%

OF LGBTQ YOUTH HEAR THEIR FAMILIES MAKE NEGATIVE COMMENTS ABOUT LGBTQ PEOPLE⁵



78%

OF YOUTH NOT OUT TO THEIR PARENTS AS LGBTQ HEAR THEIR FAMILIES MAKE NEGATIVE COMMENTS ABOUT LGBTQ PEOPLE⁶



"I'm not out to my parents for safety reasons. If they found out I was gay, they would kick me out or force me into conversion therapy."

For too many LGBTQ youth, the real and perceived fear of rejection is compounded by the negative comments they hear about the LGBTQ community from their parents or family members. These negative attitudes and beliefs may make them reluctant to come out or disclose their sexual orientation or gender identity to their families.

"If my parents found out I'm gay, they would disown me and kick me out."

48%

OF LGBTQ YOUTH OUT TO THEIR PARENTS SAY THAT THEIR FAMILIES MAKE THEM FEEL BAD FOR BEING LGBTQ⁷

TRANS YOUTH ARE
OVER 2X

MORE LIKELY TO BE TAUNTED OR MOCKED BY FAMILY FOR THEIR LGBTQ IDENTITY THAN CISGENDER LGBTQ YOUTH⁸

LGBTQ YOUTH OF COLOR

REPORT HEARING FAMILY EXPRESS NEGATIVITY ABOUT LGBTQ PEOPLE MORE FREQUENTLY THAN THEIR WHITE PEERS⁹



"Because of the way many LGBTQ+ people are treated, many of us suffer from a range of mental illnesses, myself included."



The Burden of Rejection

The mental health disparities between LGBTQ youth and non-LGBTQ youth continue to be an alarming trend. Today's LGBTQ youth face a variety of stressors — harassment, family and peer rejection, bullying from their peers, isolation and a lack of a sense of belonging — that have a major impact on their overall well-being. Studies have shown that, compared to their non-LGBTQ peers, LGBTQ youth report much higher rates of depression, anxiety, alcohol and drug use, and lower self-esteem.¹⁰

"My fear keeps me from seeing a counselor about things like my anxiety and depression. I don't know how they might react [to my LGBTQ identity], so I'd rather go online or talk to my other queer friends about it."

95%

OF LGBTQ YOUTH REPORT THEY HAVE TROUBLE GETTING TO SLEEP AT NIGHT¹¹

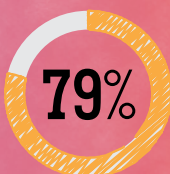


STRESS

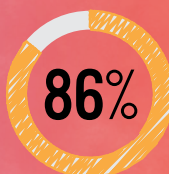
85%

OF LGBTQ YOUTH RATE THEIR AVERAGE STRESS LEVEL AS '5' OR HIGHER ON A 1-10 SCALE¹²

PERCENTAGE OF YOUTH WHO RATE THEIR AVERAGE STRESS LEVEL AS '5' OR HIGHER BY GENDER IDENTITY:



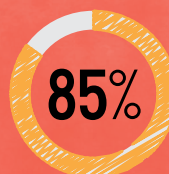
CIS BOY



CIS GIRL



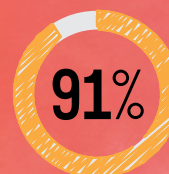
TRANS BOY



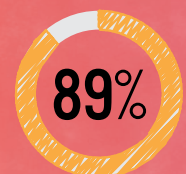
TRANS GIRL



NON-BINARY



NON-CONFORMING



DIFFERENT
IDENTITY



ADDRESSING SEXUAL VIOLENCE

LGBTQ young people may be at an increased risk of sexual violence, which can be particularly problematic given the lack of resources, family support and community support that too many continue to face due to their identities.

11%

OF LGBTQ YOUTH REPORT THAT THEY HAVE BEEN SEXUALLY ATTACKED OR RAPED BECAUSE OF THEIR ACTUAL OR ASSUMED LGBTQ IDENTITY¹³

77%

OF LGBTQ YOUTH REPORT RECEIVING UNWANTED SEXUAL COMMENTS, JOKES AND GESTURES IN THE PAST YEAR¹⁴

20%

OF LGBTQ YOUTH REPORT THAT THEY WERE FORCED TO DO SEXUAL THINGS THEY DID NOT WANT TO DO IN THE PAST YEAR¹⁵

While research on this sensitive topic is understandably limited and difficult to conduct, one thing is certain: we must continue to do better to support LGBTQ young people in the face of sexual violence and intimate partner violence. These efforts go hand in hand with accepting and affirming LGBTQ youth for who they are, establishing safe spaces and communities, as well as ensuring that all youth have access to fully inclusive physical and mental health resources.

"A stranger, even a school counselor, is very dangerous to LGBTQ+ people and children. They can ruin your entire life, get you kicked out of your home by your parents, or make other teachers treat you awfully and make your school experience miserable. They can even get you killed by outing you without your permission, which they are usually 'expected' to do."

LGBTQ youth also face challenges to accessing affirming and supportive counseling services.¹⁶ In particular, the youth in our survey report a scarcity of service providers whom they trust to be equipped to address LGBTQ-specific issues or relate to their life experiences.



Seventy-seven percent of LGBTQ youth surveyed report that on average they had felt down or depressed in the past week.¹⁷ Alarming, only 41 percent had received psychological or emotional counseling to address these issues in the past 12 months.¹⁸ LGBTQ youth of color face even greater challenges in accessing counseling services, with large disparities and an average of 37 percent of respondents having received psychological or emotional counseling in the past 12 months.¹⁹ Importantly, youth who had received counseling reported better mental health outcomes.

Access to culturally competent, LGBTQ-affirming mental health providers, both within schools and in the broader health care system, is essential to the well-being of LGBTQ teens. There are many learning opportunities available to professional counselors and therapists who wish to enhance their skills and knowledge for effectively working with LGBTQ youth, from web-based learning modules to large-scale conferences dedicated solely to this topic.

"In freshman year I spoke to one of my counselors about my depression and anxiety, but I don't think they're trained in helping LGBTQ+ kids."

"The counselors at my school have never said whether we can come to them about LGBTQ subjects or not. So you really don't know if they are well educated about the LGBTQ community."



"I go to a conservative school where being a lesbian is frowned upon. I don't want them to send me to something like conversion therapy if I talk about being a part of the LGBTQ community."

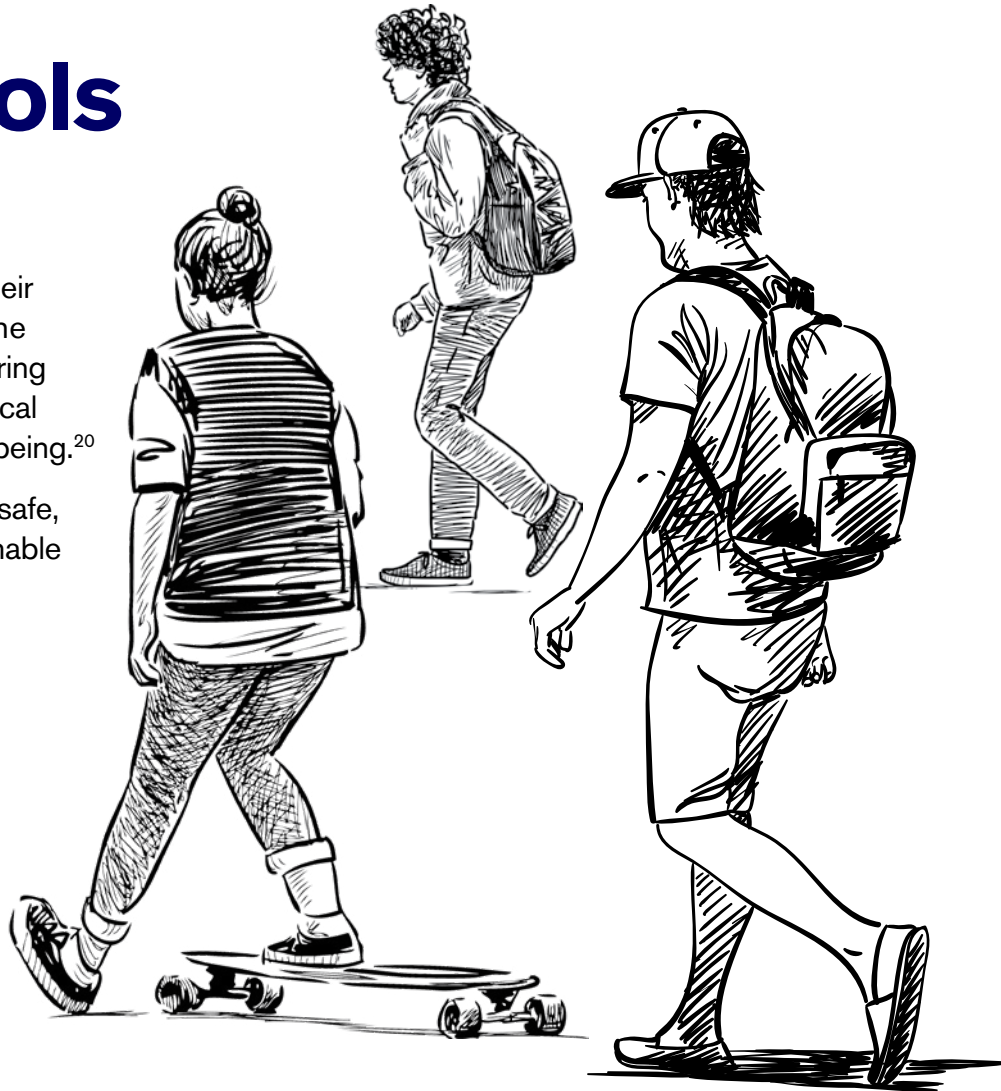
When Schools Fall Short

Because youth spend the majority of their time in school, their experiences in the classroom, in the halls, at lunch and during extracurricular activities can have a critical impact on their overall health and well-being.²⁰

For some LGBTQ youth, schools offer safe, supportive and affirming spaces that enable them to realize their full potential.

The majority of LGBTQ youth, however, still experience negative and even hostile school environments.

"At my school LGBTQ topics aren't really discussed. Ever. I wish they were but they're usually avoided."



"I am a peer educator for Planned Parenthood. There, LGBTQ topics are discussed respectfully and enthusiastically!"

In my public school education, however, it was quite the opposite. My teacher brought up the LGBTQ community once or twice, just in context of HIV/AIDS."

ONLY

27%

OF LGBTQ YOUTH CAN "DEFINITELY" BE THEMSELVES IN SCHOOL AS AN LGBTQ PERSON²¹

ONLY

13%

OF LGBTQ YOUTH REPORT HEARING POSITIVE MESSAGES ABOUT BEING LGBTQ IN SCHOOL²²

↓
ONLY **12%**

received information about safe sex that was relevant to them as an LGBTQ person²³

ONLY

26%

OF LGBTQ YOUTH REPORT THAT THEY ALWAYS FEEL SAFE IN THE CLASSROOM²⁴

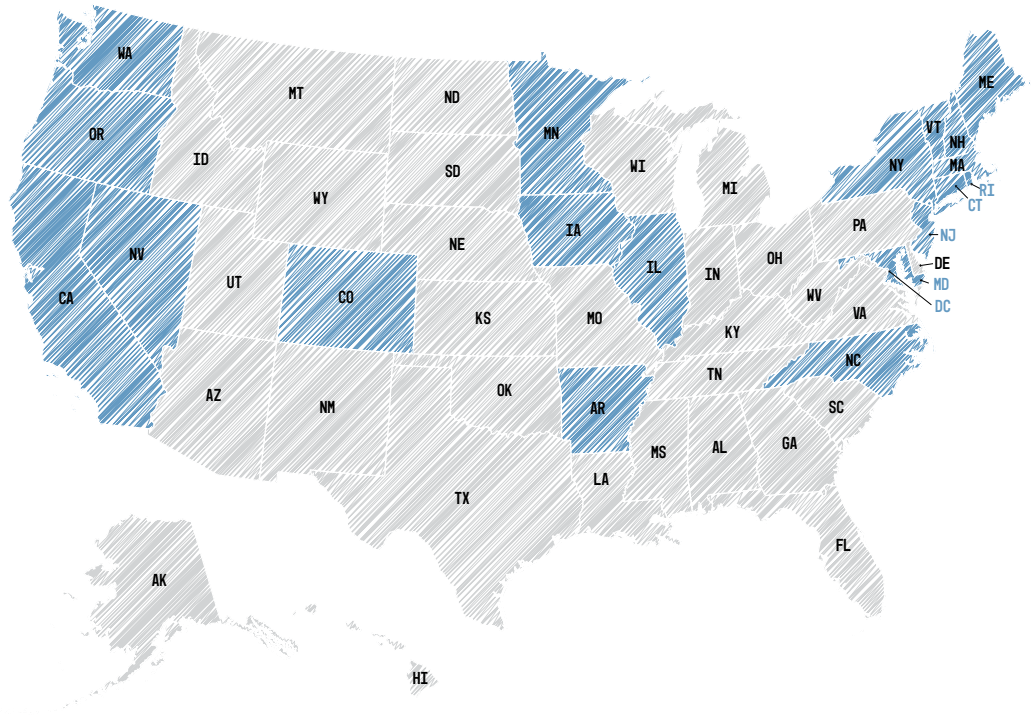


States That Have Enacted Anti-Bullying Laws to Protect LGBTQ Students

To date, only 19 states and the District of Columbia have enacted anti-bullying laws to protect LGBTQ students from being bullied by students, teachers and school staff on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

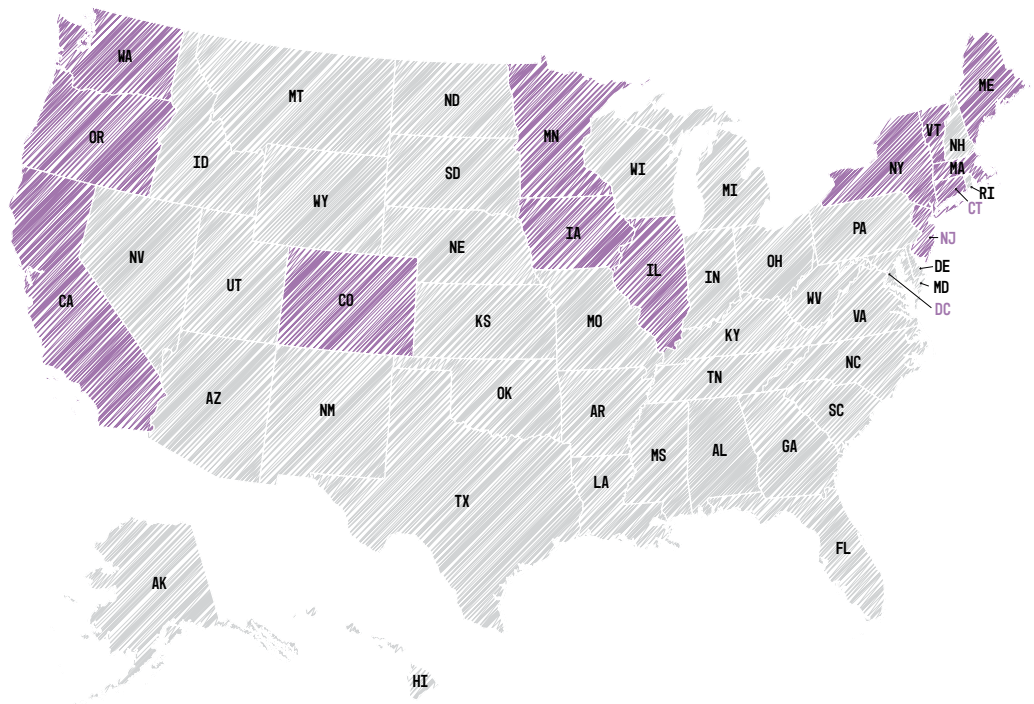
Meanwhile, just 13 states and the District of Columbia have passed school non-discrimination laws and state-wide regulations to protect LGBTQ students from discrimination in schools on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, including being unfairly denied access to facilities, sports teams and clubs.

Without such policies in place nationwide, the majority of LGBTQ youth remain vulnerable to discrimination, harassment and bullying from peers, teachers and administrators.



“At school, I have been bullied and called slurs by other students. When I asked the principal to help my situation, he laughed at me and told me I was overreacting. I’ve also had teachers look me in my eyes and tell me they do not support same-sex marriage and transgender people, so I find it extremely hard to trust the adults at my school because they more than likely share the same opinions.”

States That Have Passed Non-Discrimination Laws and State-Wide Regulations to Protect LGBTQ Students





“I overhear anti-LGBTQ slurs on the bus every single school day.”

While these laws and policies provide critically important legal protections — and legal recourse if needed — they alone are not enough to solve the problem of anti-LGBTQ bullying and harassment. There is wide variation on the extent to which school administrators and other key leaders enforce and implement LGBTQ-inclusive policies. Schools must be intentional about creating a welcoming, safe environment for LGBTQ students. First steps can include providing professional development opportunities, LGBTQ-inclusive anti-bias programs and ongoing monitoring of policy compliance.



LGBTQ youth who attend schools with Gay-Straight Alliances or Gender/Sexuality Alliances (GSAs) or other LGBTQ student clubs have found that these formal systems of support can mitigate negative experiences, reduce risky behaviors and lower distress. Further, the presence of a GSA or other LGBTQ student club has been found to have a positive impact on the perceptions LGBTQ youth have of their school experiences: they help students identify teachers and staff who are affirming and supportive and promote LGBTQ advocacy among students.²⁵

3 IN 5 students have access to a GSA or similar support group²⁶

LGBTQ youth continue to experience bullying because of their actual or perceived LGBTQ identity

73%

OF LGBTQ YOUTH HAVE EXPERIENCED VERBAL THREATS BECAUSE OF THEIR ACTUAL OR PERCEIVED LGBTQ IDENTITY²⁷

18%

were bullied because someone thought they were LGBTQ²⁸

3 IN 10

have received physical threats due to their LGBTQ identity²⁹

50%

of transgender girls have been physically threatened³⁰

70%

HAVE BEEN BULLIED AT SCHOOL BECAUSE OF THEIR SEXUAL ORIENTATION³¹

43%

HAVE BEEN BULLIED ON SCHOOL PROPERTY IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS³²

“I am the president of my school’s GSA and am looked to as a role model for younger students, so I try to talk to adults frequently about my sexual orientation and experience [as an LGBTQ person].”

“I know my school is generally accepting. The GSA gave out safe space stickers to all teachers and most of them put them up, so I know that I won’t be judged for talking about my identity.”



Adolescence at an Intersection:

LGBTQ Youth of Color Face Additional Challenges

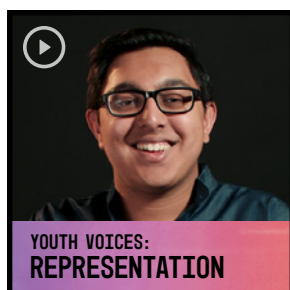
“Being black already makes life hard. Adding being gay on top on that is extremely difficult.”

LGBTQ youth of color often experience additional stress and adverse effects to their health and well-being as a result of bias around their intersecting identities. In addition to homophobia or transphobia, LGBTQ youth of color may encounter racism and discrimination on a daily basis and in various forms that can further complicate their ability to express, explore and/or manage their LGBTQ identities.

For LGBTQ youth of color, the challenges in finding LGBTQ counselors of color or programs that relate directly to their experiences with LGBTQ- and race-based discrimination often lead to feelings of isolation and a lack of a sense of belonging.



"I go to a Catholic school, where I've heard that my counselor has made some racist comments in class. Unless 110 percent trusted and were close to my counselor, I wouldn't feel comfortable confiding in them."



To address these disparities, programs are needed that address the specific needs of LGBTQ youth of color, including anti-racism and LGBTQ-specific programs. Youth-serving professionals also require training that addresses the multiple and intersecting identities of LGBTQ youth and specifically of LGBTQ youth of color.

"My town is very tiny, racist and homophobic. I don't trust anyone to talk about LGBTQ issues."

4 IN 5 LGBTQ YOUTH OF COLOR HAVE PERSONALLY EXPERIENCED RACISM³³

↙
94%
say racism affects the lives of people of their same racial/ethnic group³⁴

↓
86%
say racism has impacted the life experiences of people close to them³⁵

↓
1 IN 5
thinks about racism every day³⁶

ONLY
11%

OF LGBTQ YOUTH OF COLOR BELIEVE THEIR RACIAL/ETHNIC GROUP IS REGARDED POSITIVELY IN THE UNITED STATES³⁷

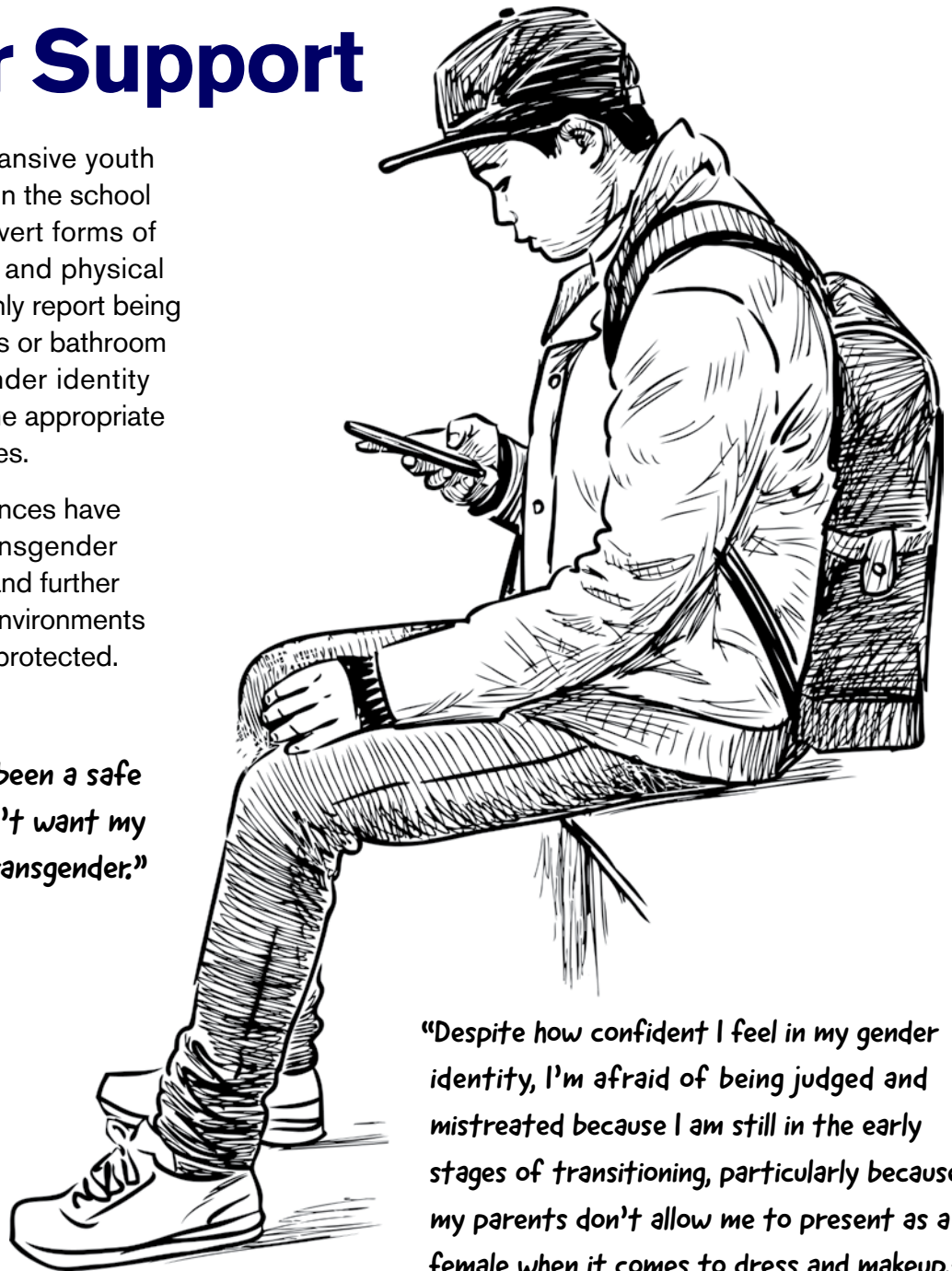
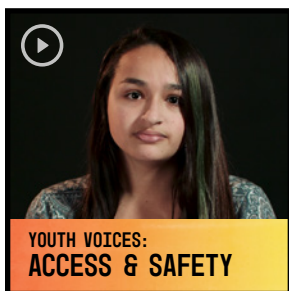


Trans Youth Need Our Support

Transgender and gender-expansive youth face many serious challenges in the school system. In addition to more overt forms of discrimination such as verbal and physical harassment, they also commonly report being barred from using locker rooms or bathroom facilities that match their gender identity and not being addressed by the appropriate pronouns or their chosen names.

These negative school experiences have damaging implications for transgender and gender-expansive youth, and further contribute to hostile learning environments where they feel unsafe and unprotected.

"I feel that school has never been a safe space for me to be me. I don't want my parents to hear that I am transgender."



"Despite how confident I feel in my gender identity, I'm afraid of being judged and mistreated because I am still in the early stages of transitioning, particularly because my parents don't allow me to present as a female when it comes to dress and makeup."

51% OF TRANS YOUTH CAN NEVER USE THE RESTROOMS OR LOCKER ROOMS THAT MATCH THEIR GENDER IDENTITY³⁸

↳ **ONLY 31%**
can express themselves in a way that completely reflects their gender identity in school³⁹

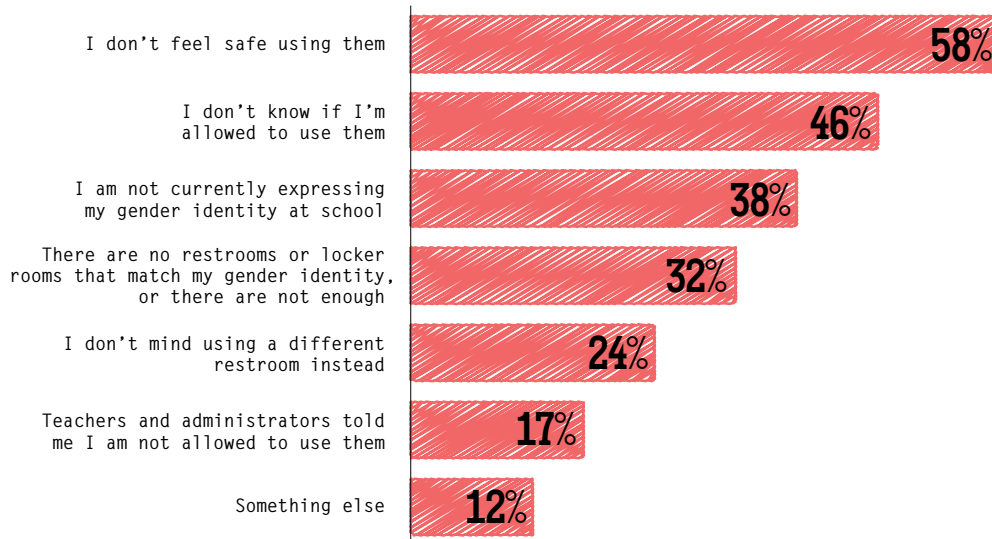
↳ **ONLY 1 IN 3**
are always called by their true name in school⁴⁰

↳ **ONLY 1 IN 5**
are always called by their pronouns in school⁴¹



Trans and gender-expansive youth often are unable to use school restrooms or locker rooms corresponding to their gender identity.

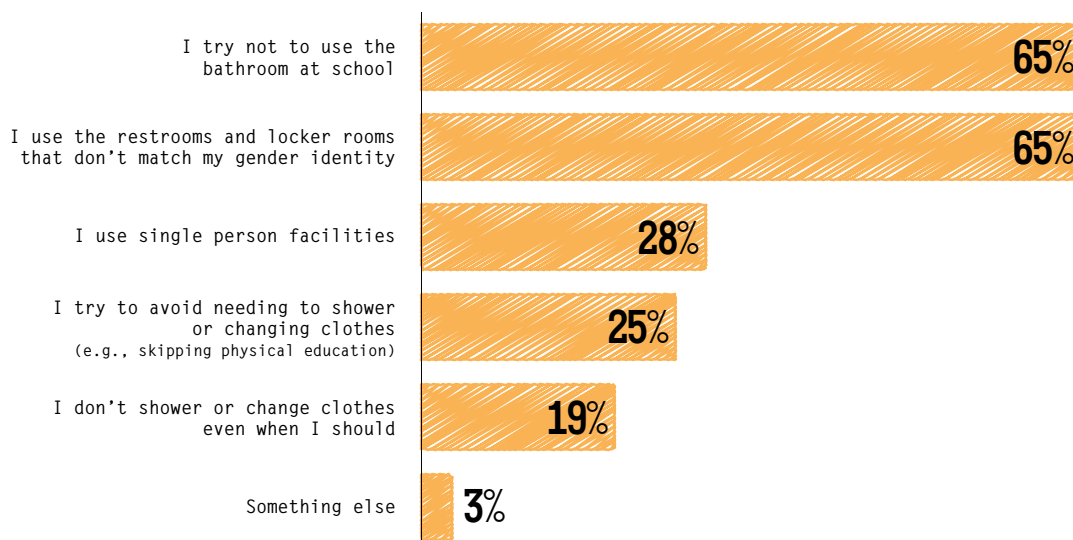
Reasons Why Trans Youth Can't Use the Restroom or Locker Room That Best Reflects Their Gender⁴²



"I would like to talk about socially transitioning at school, but I have no clue what the school's policy for this is."

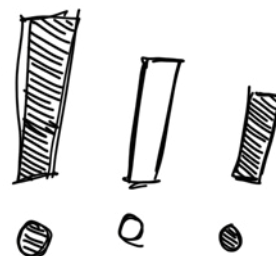
As a result, many youth are forced to resort to other measures — sometimes extreme, such as avoiding the bathroom altogether — due to the barriers they face to facility access.

Options for Trans Youth That Are Unable to Use the Restroom or Locker Room That Best Reflects Their Gender⁴³





"I wait until I get home to use the bathroom, even when I'm at school for 10+ hours... I wear my gym clothes over my normal clothes to avoid changing in locker rooms."



"I transitioned in 7th grade and was bullied profusely by my peers. I asked my health teacher to educate the class. She said that it was too complicated for the students."

"When in health class, my teachers never address any sex education when it comes to the LGBTQ+ community. The most oppressed group in the LGBTQ+ community is the transgender community who are ignored and alone and yet still receive even less information on their identities and how they can be safe in a sexually active environment."





"I think being open with myself has made me prouder of my identity as a queer person. I know that. Regardless of what others think of my sexual orientation, I am able to love who I love and not be ashamed of it. I think that being able to love myself enough to be proud has been the biggest stepping stone to being open to talk to anyone about my identity."



To Be or Not To Be Out

LGBTQ youth typically begin to disclose their sexual orientation or gender identity during adolescence. The coming out process varies widely for LGBTQ youth as they make decisions about who they can come out to and in which contexts they feel the most safe disclosing their LGBTQ identity.

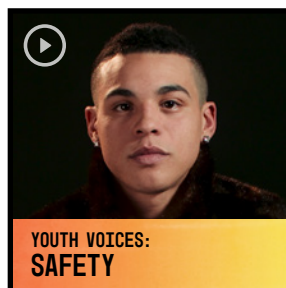
Studies show that outness usually brings more positive outcomes, including better academic performance, higher self esteem and lower anxiety and depression.⁴⁴ Similarly, the youth in our survey who report that being out was a positive and affirming experience for them also report better outcomes in terms of their overall health and well-being.

"Being able to speak about Diversity, Inclusivity and Equity at my school has led me to leadership opportunities as a vocal activist on campus. I am very comfortable standing up for any identity I am a part of including my multicultural background and bisexuality."



"I feel very comfortable with my sexuality and gender, so if someone were to challenge it I could defend myself to the point where I don't worry about that stuff."

Alternatively, LGBTQ youth can experience greater stress and negative outcomes when they're managing their identity. We use the term "manage" to describe a scenario in which LGBTQ youth are not out to everyone in their life and therefore must constantly evaluate and decide in which environments and scenarios they are safe to selectively share information about their LGBTQ identity.



"After coming out to my parents and them not believing me, we haven't talked about my sexuality since. I couldn't just open up to someone at school after a whole year of living like I don't matter. I haven't come out to anyone else because of the negative talk I hear and the anxiety I get from thinking about what their reaction would be."

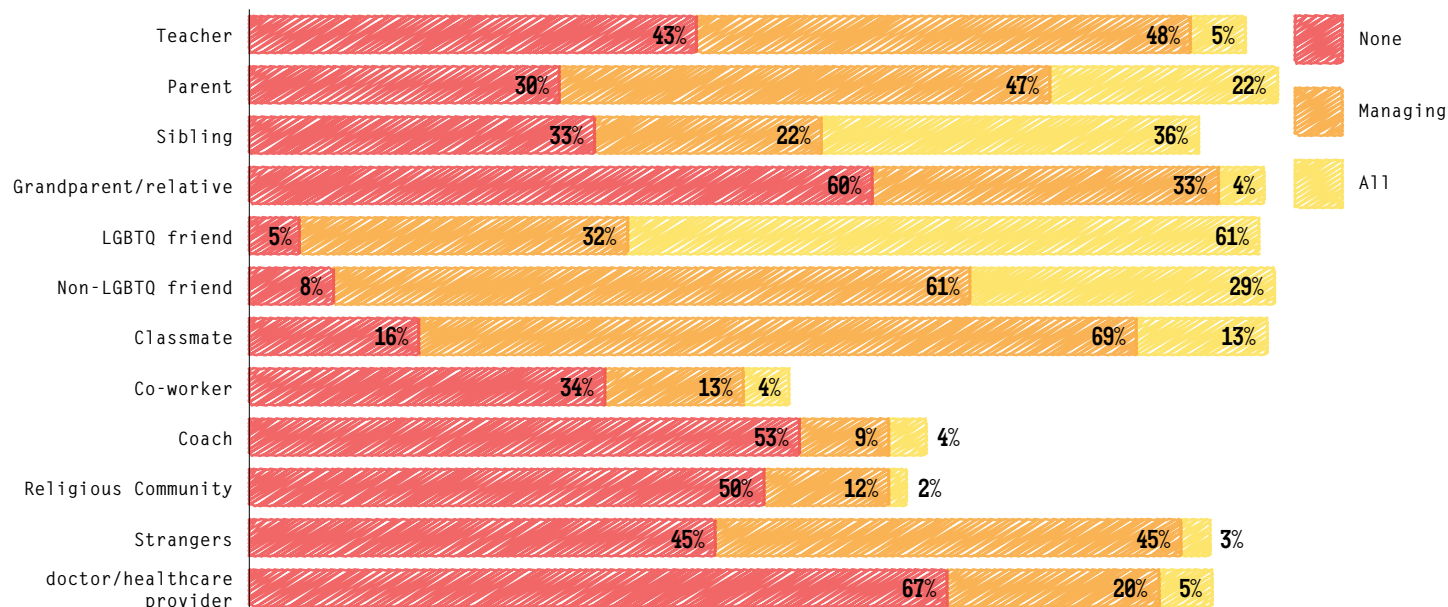
AS PARENTS, YOUTH-SERVING PROFESSIONALS AND ALLIES, WE ALL HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO CREATE SAFE AND AFFIRMING SPACES SO EVERY LGBTQ YOUTH CAN BE OUT, PROUD AND ABLE TO THRIVE

"As I'm at the stage where I'm kind of half out and half not, I feel comfortable talking about it if someone straight up asks but I don't go and point it out to people. So for me, as long as I feel my counselor is relatable or just nice in general, I would feel comfortable talking to them about it. As with most people, if they act like it's normal it makes me feel ok to talk about it."

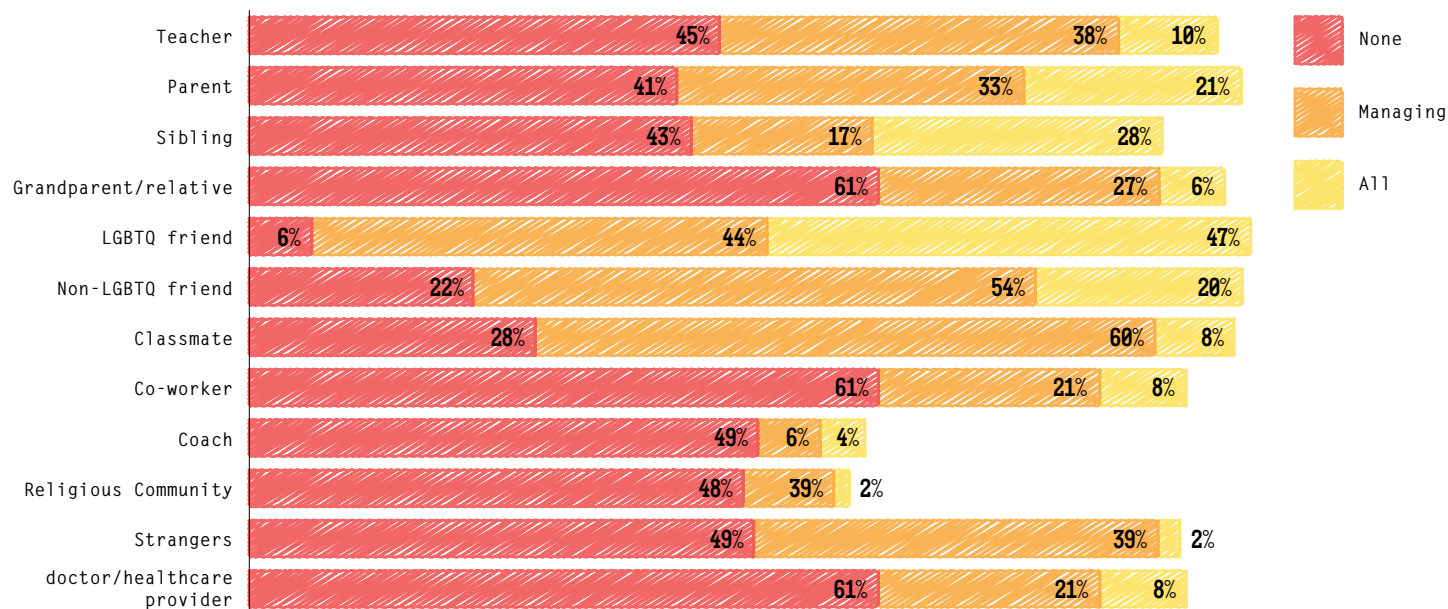


LGBTQ youth are out at varying levels. Many LGBTQ youth continue to manage to whom and in what contexts they are out regarding their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Sexual Orientation Outness⁴⁵



Gender Identity Outness⁴⁶





What You Can Do

Every adult can play a role in changing the landscape for LGBTQ youth, sometimes simply through small actions that help to reinforce inclusive, supportive and loving environments in homes and communities.

However, it is also imperative that we address discrimination, bias and institutional obstacles that threaten the potential of LGBTQ youth to thrive and achieve their full potential.



Parents & Family Members

- ✓ Learn the facts and be informed about issues that impact LGBTQ youth
- ✓ Be aware of the LGBTQ inclusion policies that impact LGBTQ youth — in your state, city and local school district
- ✓ Advocate for LGBTQ-inclusive curriculums, programming and clubs
- ✓ Watch for signs of bullying
- ✓ Get involved with local LGBTQ organizations
- ✓ Make your home a safe and affirming space for LGBTQ youth — whether or not you have openly LGBTQ children

School Administrators & Teachers

- ✓ Establish clear and inclusive policies to support LGBTQ youth
- ✓ Provide annual LGBTQ-inclusive training for all school staff
- ✓ Be intentional about creating safe spaces for LGBTQ youth
- ✓ Be a visible advocate for LGBTQ inclusion and equality
- ✓ Provide educational resources for teachers, parents and students

Continued on
next page





Continued from
previous page

Mental Health & Medical Professionals

- ✓ Be open to discussing sexual orientation and gender identity
- ✓ Seek additional training to increase proficiency in LGBTQ issues
- ✓ Be an advocate for LGBTQ youth at all levels of health care
- ✓ Provide educational resources for teachers, parents and students

Policy Makers & Advocacy Leaders

- ✓ Enact LGBTQ non-discrimination laws at the national, state and local level
- ✓ Advocate for LGBTQ-inclusive anti-bullying laws and policies in schools
- ✓ Support prohibitions on outdated and harmful practices such as conversion therapy
- ✓ Promote protections in areas where LGBTQ youth are over-represented, including youth homelessness services, foster care and the juvenile justice system



**For more information
and resources about how
you can support LGBTQ
youth, please visit:
www.hrc.org/youth**



What's Next?

Given the lack of reliable data about LGBTQ people in the United States and the heightened vulnerability of queer youth, HRC is committed to sharing this critical research with partner organizations in education, health and human services, child welfare, youth development, LGBTQ advocacy and beyond.

The Human Rights Campaign Foundation and the University of Connecticut will continue to analyze this data — producing additional sub-reports, infographics, briefs, webinars and more — to explore how different intersectional experiences and identities interact to influence the well-being of LGBTQ youth.



Methodology

This study was designed to follow up on HRC's 2012 youth survey and the growing body of research highlighting disparities and unique challenges for LGBTQ youth. The HRC Foundation created this survey with the University of Connecticut to assess multiple factors and experiences that influence the well-being of queer youth.

To do this, HRC deployed a 150+ question survey between April and December 2017. Eligible respondents identified as LGBTQ, were 13-17 years of age, and resided in the United States of America at the time of survey completion.

The survey was advertised through social media both to HRC followers and a general LGBTQ online audience. It was also promoted and shared by other LGBTQ-focused and allied organizations, social media influencers and celebrities.

All respondents self-identified as part of the LGBTQ community by providing a qualifying answer or combination of answers to the survey questions about sexual orientation, gender identity and sex assigned at birth.

Respondents that were ineligible did not have the opportunity to complete the survey. A post-hoc mischievous responder's sensitivity analysis was conducted to identify and delete mischievous or intentionally misleading cases, resulting in 96 deleted cases.⁴⁷

In total, 29,291 youth entered the survey website. Among these respondents, 17,112 completed at least 10 percent of the survey, 12,005 completed at least half, and 9,460 completed the entire survey. In this report, the 50 percent and up sample (n=12,005) was utilized for analyses.

While this report provides an overview of the survey data, it does not attempt to represent all of the data or the different intersectional experiences across the LGBTQ community. The HRC Foundation will be releasing future analyses of this survey data exploring how different experiences, identities and variables interact to contribute to the well-being of queer youth.



Respondent Profile

The HRC 2018 LGBTQ Youth Report features responses from 12,005 young people aged 13-17 who identify broadly as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and/or queer. The mean age of the sample is 15.5 years old.

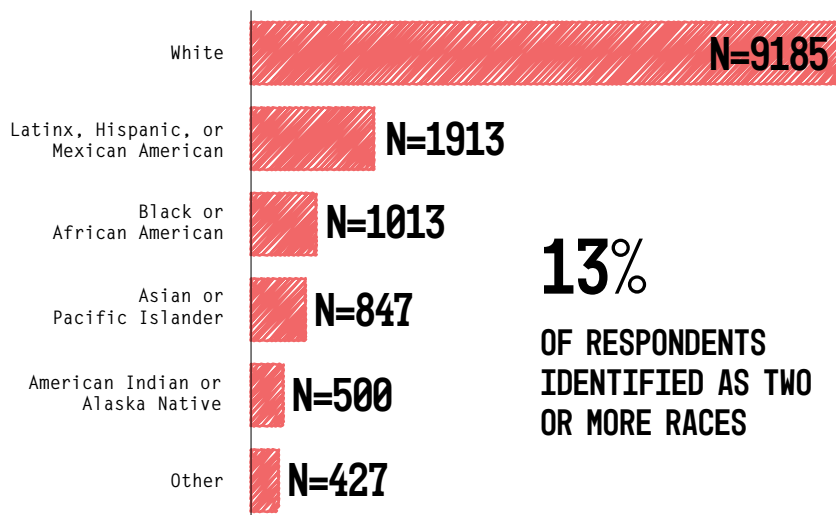
This sample includes at least 4,132 transgender and non-binary respondents (34 percent), including those who identify as agender, genderqueer, genderfluid, men, women, non-binary, questioning, two spirit, genderflux and more.

Respondents reside in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The majority of respondents live with their parents. Fifteen percent of respondents self-identify as having a physical, learning or mental disability.

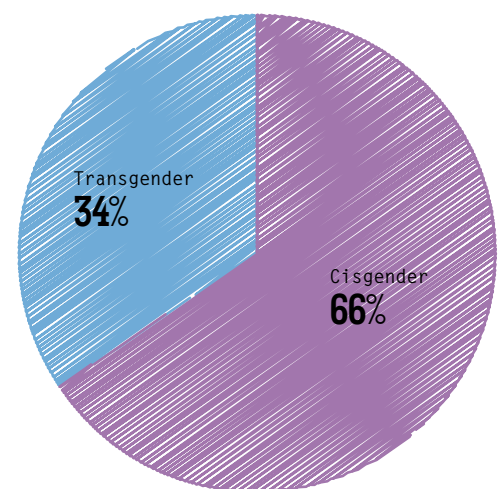
A Note on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Terminology

The vast range of sexual orientation and gender identity experiences can often be difficult to capture and/or quantify in traditional research settings. As such, education, advocacy and programming often does not fully reflect or elevate the lived experiences of many members of the LGBTQ community. Our survey results show that a large number of LGBTQ youth identify with terms that have yet to gain wider awareness and/or acceptance among the general public, highlighting the continuing need for research, educational and programmatic work to ensure all young people are supported for who they are.

Ethnoracial Category



Trans Status





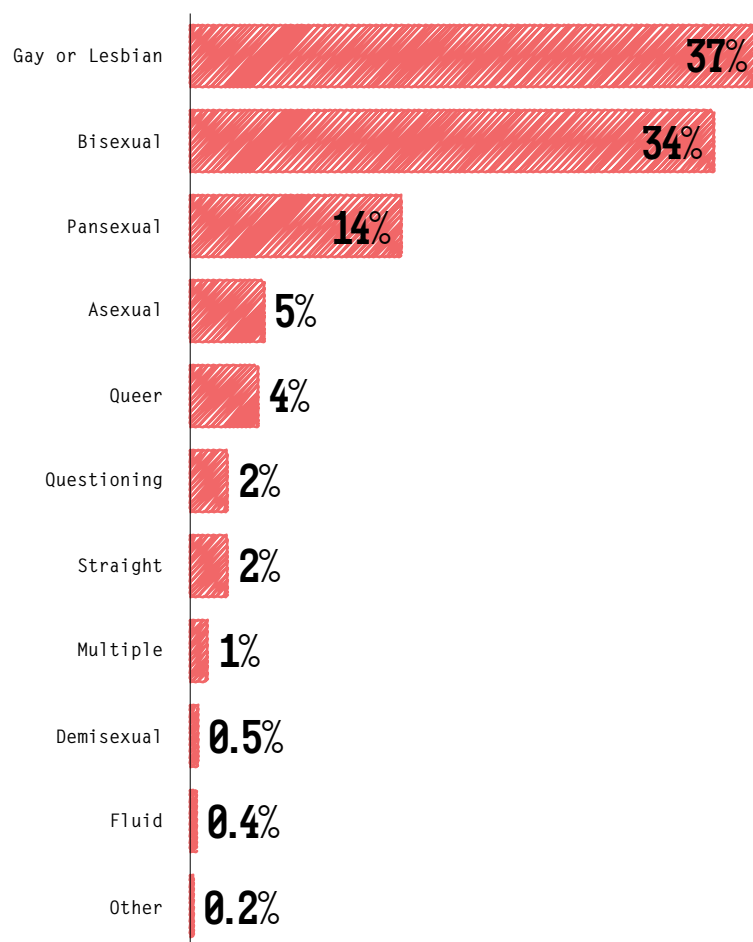
Gender Identity

	N Values
Cis Boy	2692
Cis Girl	5786
Trans Boy	1913
Trans Girl	216
Non-binary	1461
Genderqueer / Gender Non-conforming	1109
Different Identity	545

Cis boy, cis girl, trans boy, and trans girl numbers are a combination of self-identification and concordance with sex assigned at birth. N-values may add up to more than 12,005 as some respondents self-identify with more than one answer choice provided.

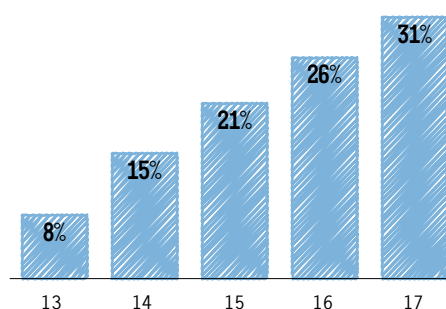
Includes write-ins such as: agender, androgynous, bigender, confused/don't know, demigender, genderfluid/flux, questioning, not listed and more.

Sexual Orientation



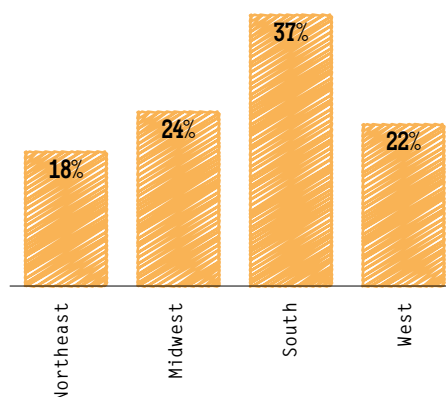
Percentages may add up to over 100 due to rounding.

Age



Percentages may add up to over 100 due to rounding.

Location



Percentages may add up to over 100 due to rounding.



Acknowledgments

Human Rights Campaign Foundation Public Education & Research Program

The HRC Foundation's Public Education & Research Program spearheads a wide variety of LGBTQ advocacy and outreach campaigns, working to ensure that the HRC Foundation's resources and programs are timely, impactful and inclusive. In addition to publishing resource guides, informational materials and reports, the team conducts original quantitative and qualitative research exploring the lived experiences of LGBTQ people. The program also collaborates with academic researchers and provides guidance to other HRC initiatives in support of efforts to advance LGBTQ equality and well-being.

Children, Youth & Families Program

Becoming a parent, sending your 5-year-old to kindergarten, watching your teenager graduate from high school — these are life's biggest moments. For LGBTQ parents and LGBTQ children, they can also be some of life's most challenging moments. That's where HRC's Children, Youth and Families Program comes in.

Through innovative training and direct consultation with schools, child welfare agencies and other service providers, HRC's Children, Youth and Families Program creates welcoming, affirming and supportive environments for LGBTQ prospective parents, LGBTQ-led families and LGBTQ youth.

The program's projects include:

- **All Children — All Families**, which trains child welfare professionals to improve agency policies and practices around LGBTQ foster and adoptive families, as well as LGBTQ children and youth;
- **Welcoming Schools**, which offers professional development and curriculum for schools to create learning environments that embrace family diversity, avoid gender stereotyping and end bullying; and
- **Youth Well-Being**, which is anchored by the annual Time To Thrive conference, and promotes safety, inclusion and well-being for LGBTQ youth.



Research Team Leaders: Liam Miranda, Dr. Rebecca Puhl, Dr. Ryan Watson
Report Authors: Ellen Kahn, Ashland Johnson, Esq., Mark Lee, Liam Miranda

Ellen Kahn, *Director of the Children, Youth & Families Program*

Since 2005, Ellen Kahn has served as Director of the Human Rights Campaign Foundation's Children, Youth & Families Program. In her role, Ellen provides national leadership and expertise in public education and advocacy efforts to achieve full equality for LGBTQ families. Under Ellen's leadership, HRC Foundation launched three highly successful, innovative programs that promote fair and inclusive policies and practices; All Children — All Families; Welcoming Schools; and the Youth Well-Being Project, which features the annual Time to Thrive conference to support LGBTQ youth. Ellen is sought out as an expert on LGBTQ adoption, speaking at numerous national and regional conferences, and providing training for hundreds of child welfare and adoption professionals.

Ashland Johnson, Esq., *Director of Public Education & Research*

As Director of Public Education & Research, Ashland Johnson shapes HRC's approach to generating research and educational campaigns. As a civil rights advocate, she focuses on the intersection of law, policy and public education with an emphasis on engaging underserved communities. Several key issue areas include health equity, sports equality, economic justice, trans inclusion, reproductive justice and racial justice. Ashland is a graduate of Furman University where she played Division I women's basketball. She graduated with a J.D. from the University of Georgia School of Law as a National Point Scholar and a Bill and Anne Shepherd Equal Rights Scholar. In 2016, she was named as one of the best LGBTQ lawyers under 40 by the National LGBT Bar Association. Ashland currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Point Foundation.

Mark Lee, *Senior Writer, Public Education & Research*

Mark Lee serves as project manager, content strategist and editor for a wide range of LGBTQ-focused public education campaigns and research studies within the HRC Foundation, including surveys, polls, op-eds, blogs, reports, guides and other resources. Prior to joining HRC, Mark was the Manager of Research & Strategic Insights at Government Executive Media Group, leading a team that studied policy implementation and federal agency management. He has authored governmentwide workforce studies on diversity & inclusion and telework initiatives, presenting at major conferences and for agency leaders within the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, Department of Labor and General Services Administration. Mark holds a degree in business administration from the UC Berkeley Haas School of Business.

**Liam Miranda, Senior Research Manager, Public Education & Research**

Liam Miranda conducts, synthesizes and collaborates on research and data analysis that helps shape and strengthen the HRC Foundation's public education and programmatic work. Liam was formerly the Research and Program Manager at Athlete Ally — where he designed, led and organized around research initiatives exploring the intersection of sports and LGBTQ equality. He is also involved in principal data analysis and/or collection for a variety of projects — ranging from assessing the FDA's LGBTQ public health campaigns to increasing diversity and equity in nonprofit leadership. Liam is a former student-athlete and holds a degree with distinction in psychology with minors in both neuroscience and philosophy from Duke University.

Dr. Rebecca Puhl, Professor, University of Connecticut

Dr. Puhl serves as the co-PI on the 2017 LGBTQ Youth Survey project. She is a Professor of Human Development and Family Studies and the Deputy Director of the Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity. Dr. Puhl earned her Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from Yale University. She is a leading national expert on weight bias has published over 100 studies on weight-based bullying in youth, weight bias in health care and the media, interventions to reduce weight bias, and the impact of weight stigma on health. Dr. Puhl's research has had a far-reaching translational impact; she has developed evidence-based trainings used in health care facilities across the country; created resources to reduce weight bias in national news coverage of obesity; provided expert testimony in state legislative hearings to address weight discrimination; and received awards for her policy work by national advocacy organizations.

Dr. Ryan Watson, Assistant Professor, University of Connecticut

Dr. Watson serves as the co-PI on the 2017 LGBTQ Youth Survey project. He is an Assistant Professor of Human Development and Family Studies. He earned his PhD from the University of Arizona and a Bachelor's in Psychology from UCLA. His research explores the health and well-being of LGBTQ+ young people with special focus on sexual and mental health. Dr. Watson has previously used national data to explore the experiences of LGBTQ+ youth, but not until now has the ability to investigate such a diverse data set from across the United States been made available. He has published more than 25 peer-reviewed academic journal articles that have advanced the scholarship around sexual and gender minority health and well-being.



Special Acknowledgments

This project reflects the collaborative efforts of various HRC team members who continuously work to ensure that LGBTQ youth nationwide are protected and supported.

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Thank you to Gabe Murchison for his efforts and vision in designing and shaping this project. Additional thanks to Dialectic for their assistance throughout the creation of this report.

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ABOUT THE HRC FOUNDATION

The Human Rights Campaign Foundation improves the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) people by working to increase understanding and encourage the adoption of LGBTQ-inclusive policies and practices.

We build support for LGBTQ people among families and friends, co-workers and employers, pastors and parishioners, doctors and teachers, neighbors, and the general public. Through the following programs and projects, we are enhancing the lived experiences of LGBTQ people and their families, as we change hearts and minds across America and around the globe.

The HRC Foundation is a nonprofit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization.



As the largest civil rights organization working to achieve equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer Americans, the Human Rights Campaign represents a force of more than 3 million members and supporters nationwide — all committed to making HRC's vision a reality.

HRC envisions a world where lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer people are embraced as full members of society at home, at work and in every community.



References

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¹ Percentage of respondents who indicated they could definitely be themselves as an LGBTQ person at home, n=10,544.

² Number of respondents who indicated their family gets involved in the larger LGBTQ and ally community, n=10,716.

³ Ryan, C., Huebner, D., Diaz, R.M. & Sanchez, J. (2009). Family Rejection as a Predictor of Negative Health Outcomes in White and Latino Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Young Adults. *Pediatrics*, 123 (1), 346-352.

Ryan, C., Russell, S., Huebner, D., Diaz, R., & Sanchez, J. (2010). Family Acceptance in Adolescence and the Health of LGBT Young Adults. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Nursing*, 23(4), 205-213.

⁴ Russell, S. and Fish, J.N., (2016). Mental Health in Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Youth. *Annual Review of Clinical Psychology*, 12, 465-487.

⁵ Percentage of respondents who indicated they hear negative comments from their family, n=10,735.

⁶ Average of respondents who indicated they weren't out to any of their parents and heard negative comments. n=3,091 (sexual orientation) and n=1,470 (gender identity).

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⁷ Percentage of respondents who indicated they were out to "all" of their parents and indicated that their family makes them feel bad for being LGBTQ, n=3,083.

⁸ Percentage of respondents who indicated they were often taunted or mocked by family, n=10,735.

⁹ Based on number of respondents that indicated they heard negative comments about LGBTQ people, n=10,725.

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¹⁰ Birkett, M., Newcomb, M.E., & Mustanski, B. (2014). Does it Get Better? A Longitudinal Analysis of Psychological Distress and Victimization in Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning Youth. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 56 (3), 280-285.

¹¹ Percentage of respondents who indicated that they have trouble getting to sleep at night, n=11,037.

¹² Based on percentages of respondents who ranked their average stress a "5" or higher by gender identity, n=11,059.

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¹³ Percentage of respondents who indicated they have been sexually attacked/raped in the past year as a result of their LGBTQ identity, n=10,860.

¹⁴ Percentage of respondents who indicated they have received unwanted sexual comments, jokes, and/or gestures in the past year, n=10,960.

¹⁵ Percentage of respondents who indicated they have been forced to do sexual things they did not want to do in the past year, n=11,071.

¹⁶ Ahuja, A., Webster, C., Gibson, B., Brewer, A., Toledo, S., & Russell S. (2015) Bullying and Suicide: The Mental Health Crisis of LGBTQ Youth and How You Can Help. *Journal of Gay and Lesbian Mental Health*, 12 (2), 125-144.

¹⁷ Percentage of respondents who indicated that they had felt down or depressed on average in the past week, n=10,882.

¹⁸ Percentage of respondents who indicated that they received psychological or emotional counseling in the past 12 months, n=10,892.

¹⁹ Percentage of respondents of color who indicated that they received psychological or emotional counseling in the past 12 months, n=3,707.

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²⁰ Zewditu, D., Rasberry, C., Steiner, R., Brener, N., & McManus, T. (2018). Trends in Secondary School's Practices to Support Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning Students, 2008-2014. *American Journal of Public Health*, 108 (4), 557-564.

²¹ Percentage of respondents who indicated that they can definitely be themselves in school as an LGBTQ person, n=10,566.

²² Percentage of respondents who indicated that they hear positive messages about being LGBTQ in school health lessons, n=11,051.

²³ Percentage of respondents who indicated that they received information about safe sex that was relevant to them as an LGBTQ person, n=11,055.

²⁴ Percentage of respondents who indicated that they always feel safe in the classroom, n=11,103.

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²⁵ Heck, N., Flentje, A. & Cochran, B.N., (2011). Offsetting Risks: High School Gay-Straight Alliances and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Youth. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 26 (2), 161-174.

²⁶ Percentage of respondents who indicated that their school has a GSA or similar student support group, n=10,741.

²⁷ Percentage of respondents who indicated that they have experienced verbal insults because of their actual or perceived LGBTQ identity, n=10,903.

²⁸ Percentage of respondents who indicated that they were bullied because someone thought they were LGBTQ, n=11,026.

²⁹ Number of respondents who indicated that they received physical threats due to their LGBTQ identity, n=10,902.

³⁰ Based on number of transgender girls who indicated that they have been physically threatened, n=10,902.

³¹ Percentage of respondents who indicated that they have been bullied at school because of their sexual orientation, n=11,037.

³² Percentage of respondents who indicated that they have been bullied on school property in the past 12 months, n=10,971.



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³³ Number of respondents of color who indicated that they have personally experienced racism, n=3,684.

³⁴ Percentage of respondents of color who indicated that racism affects the lives of people of their same racial/ethnic group, n=3,679.

³⁵ Percentage of respondents of color who indicated that racism has impacted life experiences of people close to them, n=3,685.

³⁶ Number of respondents of color who indicated that they think about racism every day, n=3,652.

³⁷ Percentage of respondents of color who indicated that they believe their racial/ethnic group is regarded positively in the United States, n=3,642.

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³⁸ Percentage of transgender respondents who indicated that they can never use the restrooms or locker rooms that match their gender identity, n=3,715.

³⁹ Percentage of transgender respondents who indicated that they can express themselves in a way that completely reflects their gender identity in school, n=3,765.

⁴⁰ Number of transgender respondents who indicated that they are always called by their true name in school, n=3,759.

⁴¹ Number of transgender respondents who indicated that they are always called by their pronouns in school, n=3,765.

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⁴² Reasons why trans youth can't use the restroom or locker room that best reflects their gender, n values in descending order: n=1,664, n=1,328, n=1,110, n=947, n=688, n=494, n=351.

⁴³ Options for trans youth that are unable to use the restroom or locker room that best reflects their gender, n values in descending order: n=1,871, n=1,859, n=822, n=726, n=562, n=89.

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⁴⁴ Russell, S. & Fish, J.N., (2016) Mental Health in Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Youth. Annual Review of Clinical Psychology, 12, 465-487.

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⁴⁵ Sexual Orientation Outness:

Percentage of respondents that indicated they were out as LGBQ to none, some, or all of their teachers: n=10,651.

Percentage of respondents that indicated they were out as LGBQ to none, some, or all of their parents: n=10,662.

Percentage of respondents that indicated they were out as LGBQ to none, some, or all of their siblings: n=10,639.

Percentage of respondents that indicated they were out as LGBQ to none, some, or all of their grandparents and extended family: n=10,639.

Percentage of respondents that indicated they were out as LGBQ to none, some, or all of their LGBTQ friends: n=10,646.

Percentage of respondents that indicated they were out as LGBQ to none, some, or all of their non-LGBTQ friends: n=10,650.

Percentage of respondents that indicated they were out as LGBQ to none, some, or all of their classmates: n=10,654.

Percentage of respondents that indicated they were out as LGBQ to none, some, or all of their coworkers: n=10,619.

Percentage of respondents that indicated they were out as LGBQ to none, some, or all of their coaches: n=10,628.

Percentage of respondents that indicated they were out as LGBQ to none, some, or all of their religious community: n=10,636.

Percentage of respondents that indicated they were out as LGBQ to none, some, or all strangers: n=10,638.

Percentage of respondents that indicated they were out as LGBQ to none, some, or all doctors: n=10,610.

⁴⁶ Gender identity outness:

Percentage of transgender respondents that indicated they were out as transgender to none, some, or all of their teachers: n=3,769.

Percentage of transgender respondents that indicated they were out as transgender to none, some, or all of their parents: n=3,785.

Percentage of transgender respondents that indicated they were out as transgender to none, some, or all of their siblings: n=3,770.

Percentage of transgender respondents that indicated they were out as transgender to none, some, or all of their grandparents and extended family: n=3,775.

Percentage of transgender respondents that indicated they were out as transgender to none, some, or all of their LGBTQ friends: n=3,780.

Percentage of transgender respondents that indicated they were out as transgender to none, some, or all of their non-LGBTQ friends: n=3,782.

Percentage of transgender respondents that indicated they were out as transgender to none, some, or all of their classmates: n=3,777.

Percentage of transgender respondents that indicated they were out as transgender to none, some, or all of their coworkers: n=3,754.

Percentage of transgender respondents that indicated they were out as transgender to none, some, or all of their coaches: n=3,776.

Percentage of transgender respondents that indicated they were out as transgender to none, some, or all of their religious community: n=3,758.

Percentage of transgender respondents that indicated they were out as transgender to none, some, or all strangers: n=3,782.

Percentage of transgender respondents that indicated they were out as transgender to none, some, or all of their doctors: n=3,781.

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⁴⁷ Robinson-Cimpian, J. P. (2014). Inaccurate estimation of disparities due to mischievous responders: Several suggestions to assess conclusions. Educational Researcher, 43(4), 171-185.

