2019

LGBTQ ASIAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER

YOUTH REPORT

HUMAN
RIGHTS
CAMPAIGN
FOUNDATION™

FOR YOUTH-SERVING PROFESSIONALS

This resource draws on a subset of data from the *2018 HRC LGBTQ Youth Report* to highlight the experiences of respondents who identified part or all of their ethnoracial identity as Asian and/or Pacific Islander. We hope this information helps to encourage youth-serving professionals to apply an intersectional lens to their work.

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Supporting LGBTQ Asian and Pacific Islander Youth

In 2017, the Human Rights Campaign Foundation partnered with researchers at the University of Connecticut to conduct a groundbreaking survey of over 12,000 LGBTQ youth and capture their experiences in their families, schools, social circles and communities. More than 1,200 LGBTQ Asian and Pacific Islander youth responded to the survey. This resource presents data collected from these young people, shedding light on their challenges and triumphs encountered while navigating the world.

While there is immense power in being both a person of color and LGBTQ, holding multiple marginalized identities can magnify discrimination. We know that this is true for the many LGBTQ Asian and Pacific Islander young people that were surveyed. Harmful policies and practices, negative or nonexistent portrayals in the media, challenges in finding culturally competent support, and historically maintained systems of racial oppression complicate the ability of LGBTQ API youth to fully express, explore and embrace their intersecting racial, cultural and LGBTQ identities.

Young LGBTQ Asian and Pacific Islanders face a variety of challenges — from navigating norms and experiences in multiple cultures and languages to finding holistic support and community where they can share both their struggles and triumphs as LGBTQ API people. Supportive parents, school administrators, teachers, counselors and other youth-serving professionals play an essential role in combating the harmful systems of discrimination that impede the ability of LGBTQ API youth to thrive. The support of these adults is especially important when youth struggle in the absence of affirmation or recognition from their families and communities regarding their sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.

Above all, LGBTQ API youth continue to be their own powerful forces of change; their stories of empowerment, resilience, activism and advocacy are pronounced in these findings. Across the country, they are demanding due respect and equity. They need us to do the same.

We must support LGBTQ API youth in their pursuit of collective equity, inclusion and racial justice.

The Importance of Family

Parents and families have a critical role to play in creating open environments that foster positive self-esteem, mental health and well-being among LGBTQ API youth.

LGBTQ API youth whose families provide safe, supportive and affirming homes are more likely to experience positive health outcomes across several dimensions, including: greater self-esteem and resilience; a lowered risk of depression, distress and feelings of hopelessness; and a reduced risk of substance use.

In general, supportive and affirming families can act as buffers against some of the discrimination, harrassment and bullying that LGBTQ API youth might experience in their schools and communities. However, youth in our survey report that sharing their sexual orientation or gender identities with their families is often stressful. It can be difficult for API youth to be authentic in family spaces, particularly if they grew up in a traditional culture that emphasizes parental sacrifice, familial duty and/or rigid gender norms.

More than six in ten API Americans are immigrants, and many API youth are raised by parents who left their home countries, families and friends in search of a better life. An estimated 22.5 million API people live in the United States, and nearly one in 10 API immigrants are undocumented. Growing up amid these significant sacrifices and family challenges in the United States, API American youth can feel indebted to their parents and may fear "disappointing" them by expressing their LGBTQ identities.[1]

1. Data from Williams Institute research

30%
of LGBTQ API youth say they have heard family members say negative things about LGBTQ people

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ONLY
19%
say they can "definitely" be themselves at home

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

ONLY
17%
have had family get involved in the larger LGBTQ community

Examples could include attending pride events, advocating for LGBTQ inclusion in their workplaces, or learning about LGBTQ identities and experiences

"I first came out when I was 11 to my parents and was surprised by the negative reaction they had. Being 11 and not having researched much, I kind of sprang both my gender identity and sexuality on them at the same time and was, I think, kind of shot down with things like, 'We won't support [your identity] at this age' or 'You're too young to know' or 'We won't financially support any medical procedures,' despite the fact that I had not even brought the latter up. I understand that it was a lot to process, but I feel like they could have been more positive and supportive."

43%

say their families make them feel bad for being LGBTQ including

57%

of transgender and gender-expansive youth

36%

of cisgender LGBQ youth

CISGENDER: A term used to describe a person whose gender identity, expression or lived experience aligns with what is typically associated with the sex they were assigned at birth.

We use both transgender and gender-expansive to describe all non-cisgender respondents because every person defines their identity differently. For example, some non-binary people identify as transgender, but not all do.

Despite this, many LGBTQ API youth across the country are fully embraced by their families and communities. These loved ones all have a critical role to play as advocates for LGBTQ API youth.

As a youth-serving professional, family member or community member, you can provide life-changing support to LGBTQ API youth who may not receive it from their parents or immediate family. Where possible, you may also be able to play a role in educating others and supporting families in your community.

Negative attitudes voiced by family members, peers and other community members can make LGBTQ API youth reluctant to disclose or embrace their identities. Living openly, whether at school, home or elsewhere in daily life, is a deeply personal process. Youth-serving professionals who wish to better understand the specific challenges that API youth face when coming out as LGBTQ are encouraged to read _HRC's Coming Out: Living Authentically as LGBTQ Asian and Pacific Islander Americans_.

"My adopted family is very conservative, at least on one side. No one in my family has ever really claimed that they're supportive of the LGBTQ community. There's been times when they have talked bad about it. It makes me afraid that other people, like the school counselor, are like that."

"I'm already out, but my mother hates that I'm lesbian and doesn't want me telling anyone about my 'flaw.'"

The Burden of Rejection

Along with the fear of familial tension or rejection, LGBTQ API youth face a variety of other stressors from their environments — harassment, peer rejection, bullying and isolation — that can take a major toll on their overall well-being.[2]

2. 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.

"My whole town seems to not be very supportive of LGBTQ [people]. There are a lot that are, but they are outnumbered... I am a sensitive person, and I don't like to disappoint people... as horrible as it seems, I feel like if I told other people I questioned my sexuality, they would be disappointed in me or see me as lesser than I was before."

93%

have had **trouble getting to sleep**

Unfortunately, many LGBTQ API youth face significant challenges accessing affirming, competent counseling services or mental health support. Some resources point to the role of cultural stigma in preventing API people from seeking mental health services and care. However, overemphasizing the influence of these cultural norms can reinforce harmful stereotypes and place the onus on Asian and Pacific Islanders while ignoring the roles of systemic racism and marginalization in preventing access to care.

For instance, many API youth and their families struggle in finding LGBTQ-affirming providers who have cultural competency or language fluency, and they may not see themselves or their experiences in the resources created for so-called "mainstream" LGBTQ audiences. Disconcertingly, even when LGBTQ API youth do receive support, it is often reported to be less helpful than the support their peers can access and can be fraught with both intentional and unintentional discrimination or lack of competency, including microaggressions.[3]

3. Frank R., Dillion, Lilian Ordera, Alia Fons-Scheyd, Hung-Bin Sheu, Ryan C. Ebersole, Lisa B. Spanierman, 2016. A Dyadic Study of Multicultural Counseling Competence, Journal of Counseling Psychology, Vol 63., No.1 57-66.

84%
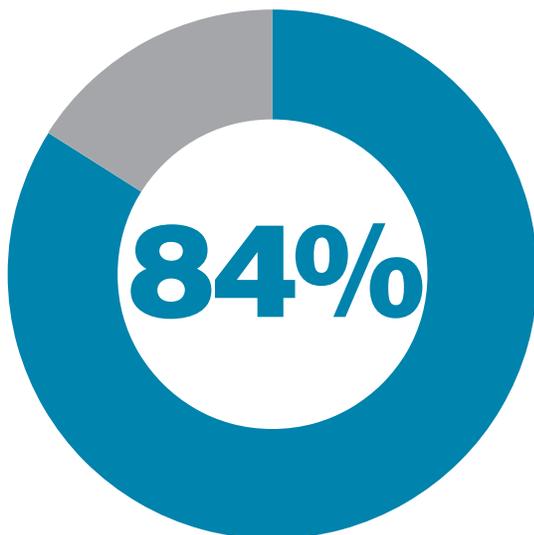
rate their **average stress level a 5 or higher** on a 10 point scale

"I was raised in a household where we don't talk about what makes us comfortable or uncomfortable, so whenever my counselor encouraged me to talk about my feelings, I was out of my comfort zone but appreciative. She made sure I knew she was seeing things through my perspective and did everything she could to help, comfort and inform me."

16%

have been **forced to do unwanted sexual acts**, including

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

23%

of transgender and gender-expansive youth

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

13%

of cisgender LGBQ youth

A note about 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.

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 API LGBTQ young people in the face of sexual violence and intimate partner violence.

These efforts go hand in hand with accepting and affirming them for who they are, establishing safe spaces and communities, as well as ensuring that all youth have access to fully inclusive and culturally competent physical and mental health resources.

LGBTQ API youth are also wary of discussing their sexual orientation or gender identity in counseling settings; only nine percent of respondents said they would be very comfortable discussing a question about their LGBTQ identity with a counselor. This may be because counselors do not seem open to or comfortable with discussing LGBTQ topics, especially those at the intersections of API and LGBTQ identities. However, several respondents indicated that they would be more willing to seek support if they knew their counselors were affirming and understanding of the interconnectedness of LGBTQ and ethnoracial identities.

We must be a resource to help address the challenging ways the intersections of cultural, ethnoracial and LGBTQ identities can complicate daily life and support systems, while also uplifting the ways such intersectionality can be beautiful and self-empowering. For youth-serving professionals looking to improve their skills, knowledge and competence to best serve LGBTQ API youth, please read HRC's Coming Out and Living Authentically as LGBTQ Asian and Pacific Islander Americans and refer to resources offered by the National Queer Asian and Pacific Islander Alliance.

8%

have been sexually attacked or raped

"I am a very private person and do not like sharing details about myself to someone who is essentially a stranger. Additionally, my counselor is a straight, white, middle-aged male who has not expressed his opinions on the LGBTQ community. I would rather be cautious than expose myself to more discrimination and hatred from a faculty member, especially one with so much influence."

61%
have experienced **unwanted gestures, jokes** or **comments**

79%
"usually" feel **worried, nervous** or **panicked**

77%
"usually" feel **depressed** or **down**

71%
"usually" feel **worthless** or **hopeless**
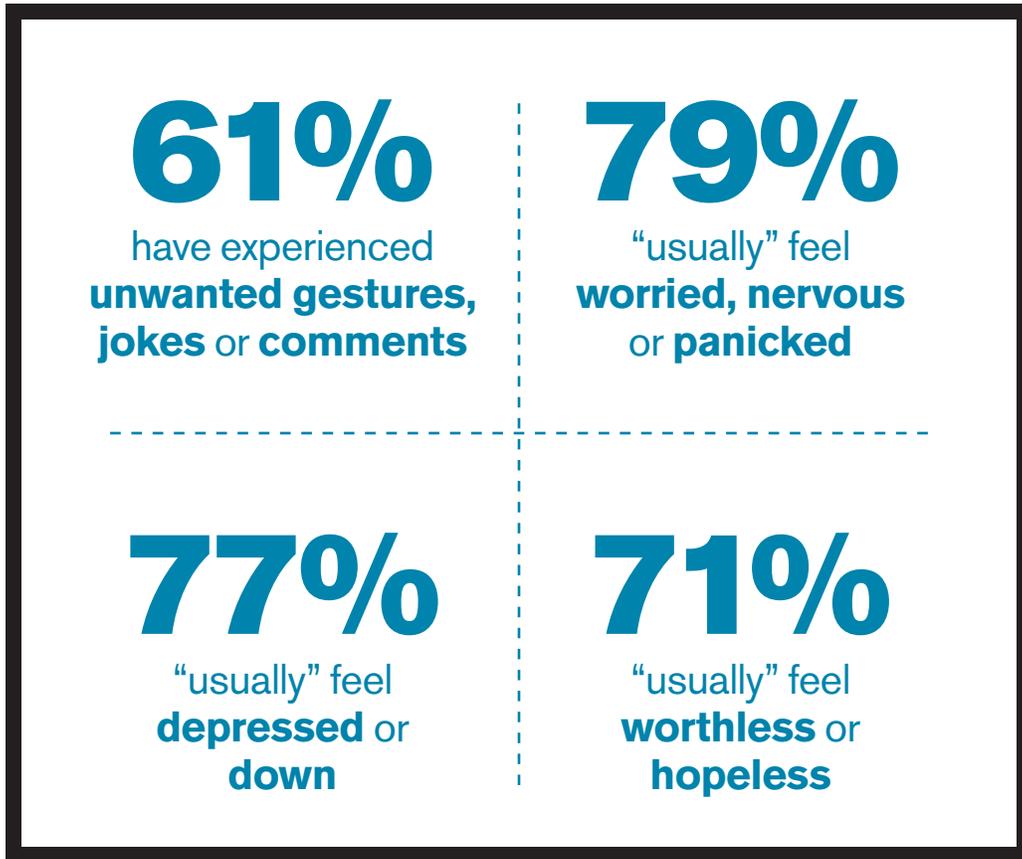
ONLY
31%
received counseling in the **past year**

46%
feel critical of **their LGBTQ identities**

"I go to a lot of protests and marches for the many things that I believe in and I always see my school counselor there marching as well!"

"Sometimes I feel like I'm more knowledgeable about the topic than the counselors and a lot of the time I end up teaching them something about LGBTQ people/issues. They're very supportive people and they know a lot, I just know more and it's frustrating."

When Schools Fall Short

While some schools offer safe and affirming spaces that enable LGBTQ youth to thrive, many young people still experience negative — and even hostile — school environments.

"I attend a private Catholic school, so even though my counselor says we can talk to them about anything, I can't be sure how they would respond to discussing my identity. It simply feels taboo. It would be far more comfortable if they were able to express general support and openness to such a discussion."

"I mainly feel that it is me personally being insecure in myself and the validity of my identity. Lack of participation in GSA by the counselors and a lack of LGBTQ+ activities at my school also make it difficult for me to feel comfortable speaking to my counselor."

ONLY

29%

say they can "definitely" be themselves in school, including

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

21%

of transgender and gender-expansive youth

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

32%

of cisgender LGBQ youth

Without non-discrimination laws and state-wide policies to protect LGBTQ students, comprehensive cultural competency training for youth-serving professionals, and increased visibility, the majority of LGBTQ API youth remain vulnerable to discrimination and bullying from peers, teachers and administrators. Even in schools that seek to protect students from discrimination and bullying based on LGBTQ identities, API youth still face unique barriers.

In many areas of life, Asian and Pacific Islanders often encounter the "model minority" myth, a notion grounded on ethnoracial stereotypes that places harmful, rigid and often unattainable standards of perfection and high achievement on API people. This expectation is based on an unfair and incorrect belief that success or self-worth as Americans requires academic/career success and assimilation ("The American Dream"), while ignoring the discrimination and glass ceilings API people face as a result of white supremacy. The pressure created by these unrealistic expectations can make it challenging for API youth to simply be themselves, and it can manifest in the way educators and youth-serving professionals interact with API youth — they may hold these young people to different standards or provide less support.[4]

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4   Wong, Vivian Wu. Getting It Right: Schools and the Asian-American Experience. The Myth of the Model Minority, 2011.
    Lee, Jennifer & Zhou, Min. The Asian American Achievement Paradox. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2015.

"Teachers usually just say that everyone is allowed to love whoever they want but never get into deeper details such as to prevent bullying, etc."

"I just don't want to tell my school that I'm non-binary because there aren't many non-binary kids, and I don't feel like I can really tell them anything because they'll go back to my parents or something."

"Because LGBTQ identities are not discussed in any public way at school, I don't feel comfortable letting a non-LGBTQ person know my identity."

* It is imperative that counselors and other youth-serving professionals uphold a student's right to confidentiality, and should not disclose a student's sexual orientation or gender identity to others (including parents and families) without a student's explicit consent

Heightened discrimination for those with darker skin color shows the prevalence and impact of colorism. Colorism is a term coined by Alice Walker used to discuss an implicit or explicit skin color bias where people with lighter skin experience less discrimination than those with darker skin — even within the same ethnoracial community.[5]

5   Norwood, Kimberly Jade. *If You Is White, You's Alright… Stories About Colorism in America.* 14 Washington University Global Studies Law Review, 2015. 585.

Additionally, API youth may be unfairly disciplined or targeted in school settings. This is particularly true for youth of South Asian descent, who can face interconnected forms of discrimination related to their religion, socioeconomic status, and/or skin color. The increased discrimination faced by LGBTQ API youth can threaten their ability to thrive and succeed, especially when combined with cultural barriers to expression and systemic challenges also faced by other people of color, including the school-to-prison pipeline. To combat these multiple sources of oppression, youth-serving professionals must address both LGBTQ inclusion and anti-racism when designing policies and programs to support LGBTQ API youth in schools.

33%
always feel safe in the classroom

33%
have been **bullied on school property within the last 12 months**

"My counselor has been assigned to my homeroom since freshman year, and during that first year, she handed us all a piece of paper to fill out so that she could get to know us better, as she would be our counselor for the entirety of our high school career. She asked several personal questions, and one of them asked about our sexual orientation and our experience regarding that. I felt like just having that be addressed when asking someone about themselves is quite indicative about their open-mindedness and their attempt to be inclusive, and so I felt pretty comfortable sharing my orientation with her and talking to her about it."

65%

have been **verbally insulted because of their LGBTQ identity**

24%

have been **physically threatened because of their LGBTQ identity**
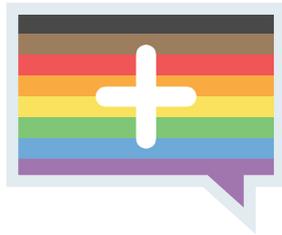
18%

have **heard positive messages about being LGBTQ in school**
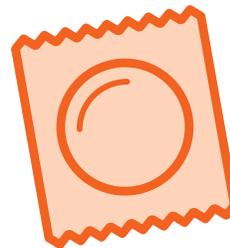
13%

have **received information about safer sex** that was **relevant to them in school**

"Recently with the banned books week being celebrated, my English and Language Arts teacher had brought in examples of books that had either been banned or challenged (that included LGBTQ or transgender characters). Many of my peers in the class were enraged and shocked by how many individuals are still not fully accepting (or at all) the LGBTQ community."

At the Intersection: Racism-related Stress

Negative experiences, whether in the classroom, in the halls, at lunch or during extracurricular activities, can have a tremendous impact on LGBTQ API youth as they navigate interconnected forms of discrimination related to their ethnoracial and LGBTQ identities.

Note: When we discuss white supremacy, we are referring to an intentionally created and historically maintained political, social and economic system in which white people, both individually and collectively, are able to control power and resources and maintain conscious and/or unconscious beliefs about their superiority.[6]

The historical impact of white supremacy can be observed in the many systemic barriers impacting API people in the United States. This includes targeted hate violence, discriminatory policing, cultural appropriation, prohibitive immigration policies, cultural insensitivity, voter suppression, myths of "meritocracies," and the school-to-prison pipeline, among many others.

White supremacy can also manifest itself when youth-serving professionals fail to acknowledge, address and/or examine their own roles in perpetuating harmful systems of discrimination for API youth. It is possible to unintentionally perpetuate white supremacy. Individuals often are ill-equipped and/or react negatively when asked to do the difficult work of confronting their own roles in oppression and societal discrimination.

However, in building a world where API youth can thrive, we all must dismantle the barriers that deprive them of equal opportunities, dignity and respect. Both white and non-API people of color allies must actively work to eliminate the forms in which anti-API biases appear in our daily lives, communities and society as a whole. These efforts must also include examining our own personal experiences or implicit biases, and how our complicity upholds white supremacy, while questioning how our society continues to hold API people to differing standards and actively and passively discriminates against them in all areas of life.

6   Adapted from Frances Lee, Ansley, *Stirring the Ashes: Race, Class and the Future of Civil Rights Scholarship*, 74 Cornell L. Rev 993, 1024 n.129, 1989.

"My counselor is a straight, cis, white woman. And while I wholeheartedly believe she has no issue with [me], it is just hard to relate to her enough to talk at length about these topics with her."

"All the teachers at my school are white and a lot of mental issues I have stem from racism, something that a white teacher could never understand or relate to."

85%

have **experienced racial discrimination**

Note: The word anti-Blackness is used to capture the unique discrimination, harm and historical oppression that is imposed on Black and African American people specifically.[7]

Whiteness refers to a set of characteristics and experiences that are typically associated with white skin and racial identity. Whiteness also refers to the perceived "normalcy" of these white-associated experiences and characteristics that therefore others, ostracizes and exoticizes people of differing racial and ethnic groups.[8]

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7   Adapted from the Movement for Black Live's Glossary
8   Adapted from Dr. Nicki Lisa Cole's The Definition of Whiteness

We can observe anti-API racism in virtually every aspect of our daily systems and institutions. From the objectification of femininity and/or emasculation of API individuals, to the reality of post-9/11 violence and policing, to histories of internment and exclusion — the realities of racism and white supremacy are pronounced, pervasive and uniquely impact different groups of API Americans.

However, fully understanding the effect of racism on API youth requires an acknowledgement of the great variation in lived experiences among API Americans. The API community is one of the most diverse ethnoracial groups in America, representing dozens of countries, cultures and religions. Differences in ethnicity, socio-economic status, skin tone, features, immigrant status, language, and many other identities and experiences shape the many forms of discrimination facing API communities in the United States.

For instance, East Asians are sometimes portrayed in media or otherwise appear to benefit from the relative race privilege afforded to them by systems of colorism, anti-Blackness and white supremacy. However, this appearance of privilege is usually rooted in their proximity and association with whiteness — a deeply problematic standard that centers whiteness while minimizing the identities and experiences of those to which these tropes are applied. In one common example, studies often detail academic or career outcomes for API young people that are similar to their white peers, while failing to acknowledge that these outcomes differ tremendously within the API community, the reasons these disparities may exist, and the cost of these observed outcomes.

In this example, we can see this appearance of relative race privilege for what it truly is: a direct function of white supremacy. This harmful system and its resulting pressures and stereotypes contribute to the stress, anxiety and danger that API LGBTQ youth face daily.

Only

17%

believe **Asian and Pacific Islanders are regarded positively** in the United States

97%

say **racism affects the lives of Asian and Pacific Islanders**

86%

say **racism has impacted the lives of their friends** and **family**

To best understand the experiences of LGBTQ API youth, we must acknowledge the impact of these historical and contemporary realities around race, as well as the effect of LGBTQ-based discrimination. Taken together, these forces complicate the ability of LGBTQ API youth to fully and safely explore their intersecting identities.

Youth-serving professionals looking to support API youth will be most effective when they are open to learning from, affirming and understanding youth as individuals, rather than casting broad strokes about API cultural experiences.

More than

1 in 5

think about racism every day
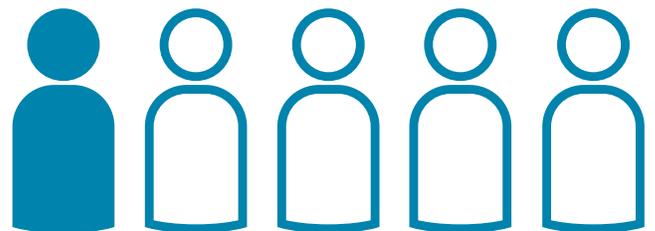
Gender-Expansive Youth Need Our Support

Transgender and gender-expansive youth of all backgrounds and experiences face particularly serious challenges in the school system.

However, for gender-expansive API youth, these challenges can be magnified by peers, teachers and staff harboring both anti-transgender and anti-API biases. Furthermore, "mainstream" coverage of the transgender community often exclusively features white narratives or perpetuates white standards of beauty, leaving out the power and legacies of transgender individuals of color and further impeding their ability to receive necessary and overdue support from people in their lives.

Transgender and gender-expansive API youth report that they often feel unsafe and unprotected at school. They also report being barred from using locker rooms and bathroom facilities that match their gender identity, being misgendered, and getting called the wrong name by adults and peers.

Combined, the effects of this verbal and physical harassment, along with overtly discriminatory practices, can have damaging implications for transgender and gender-expansive API youth.

31

RESTROOM

OVER
50%
of transgender and gender-expansive API youth **can never use the restroom that aligns with their gender identity at school**

61%
don't feel safe
using them

47%
don't know if
they're allowed

62%
try to **avoid using the restroom during the school day**

HELLO
my name is

Only
40%
are **always called by the name they want to be called**

In some languages, such as Korean, Chinese and Japanese, gender pronouns are not used. This can be an additional barrier to coming out as gender-expansive for API youth and complicate their ability to share their identities and experiences with loved ones.
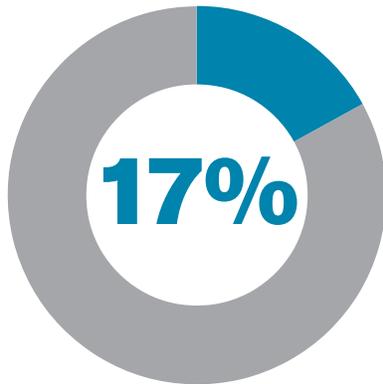
ONLY
17%
are **always called by the pronouns they want to be called**
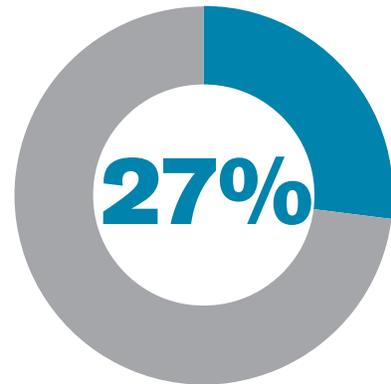
ONLY
27%
are able to **dress in a way that completely reflects their gender identity**

"I am a transman and if I asked [my counselor], 'Could I make a GSA?' or 'Should I come out?' I know the answer would probably be, 'You can, but you'll probably be mocked and bullied.' My friend who's a trans girl isn't out, but everyone notices how 'flamboyant' she is and she's gotten punched when getting off the school bus and has been shoved in the hallways. I've been called a freak and other names."

"My parents have constantly forced my transgender identity back into the closet. They are the only ones allowed to know, and I am only 'allowed' to have the identity as long as I keep it completely hidden and they reserve the right to make fun of me for it."

Coming Out

Every coming out story and process is unique. API youth who identify as LGBTQ can face a more complex process than some of their peers as they learn to reconcile multiple and intersecting identities.

Cultural norms, religious identities, language barriers and family dynamics can pull youth in different directions as they navigate the coming out process.

Yet, studies show that LGBTQ youth who can live openly are more likely to experience positive outcomes such as better academic performance, higher self-esteem, and lower rates of anxiety and depression.[9]

To best support LGBTQ API youth through the coming out process, youth-serving professionals must take into account how multiple factors shape each individual's experience.

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

Despite the benefits associated with coming out, too many LGBTQ API youth are unable to live authentically.

Percentage of **transgender and gender-expansive youth** who are **out regarding their gender identity** to **all** of their

LGBTQ friends	40%
siblings	31%
non-LGBTQ friends	17%
parents	18%
teachers and adults at school	10%
classmates at school	9%
doctors and healthcare providers	9%
athletic coaches	9%
coworkers	7%
grandparents and extended family	4%
religious community	3%
strangers/new acquaintances	3%
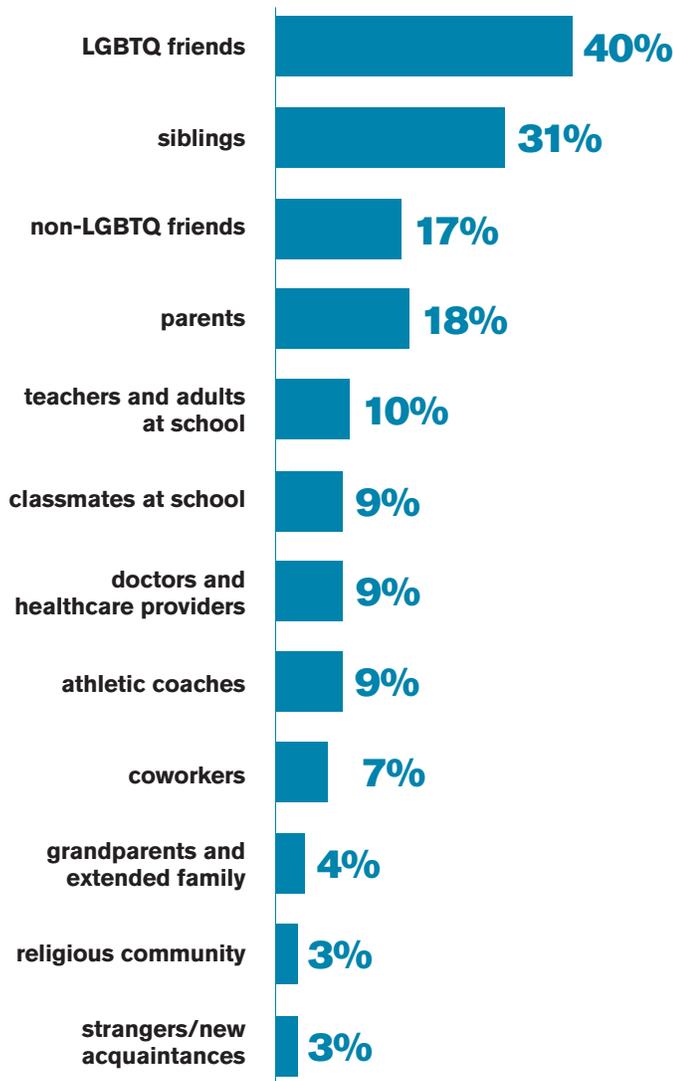
Percentage of **LGBQ youth** who are **out regarding their sexual orientation** to **all** of their

LGBTQ friends	53%
siblings	34%
non-LGBTQ friends	22%
parents	14%
classmates at school	10%
coworkers	7%
teachers and adults at school	5%
doctors and healthcare providers	5%
athletic coaches	4%
strangers/new acquaintances	3%
grandparents and extended family	2%
religious community	2%
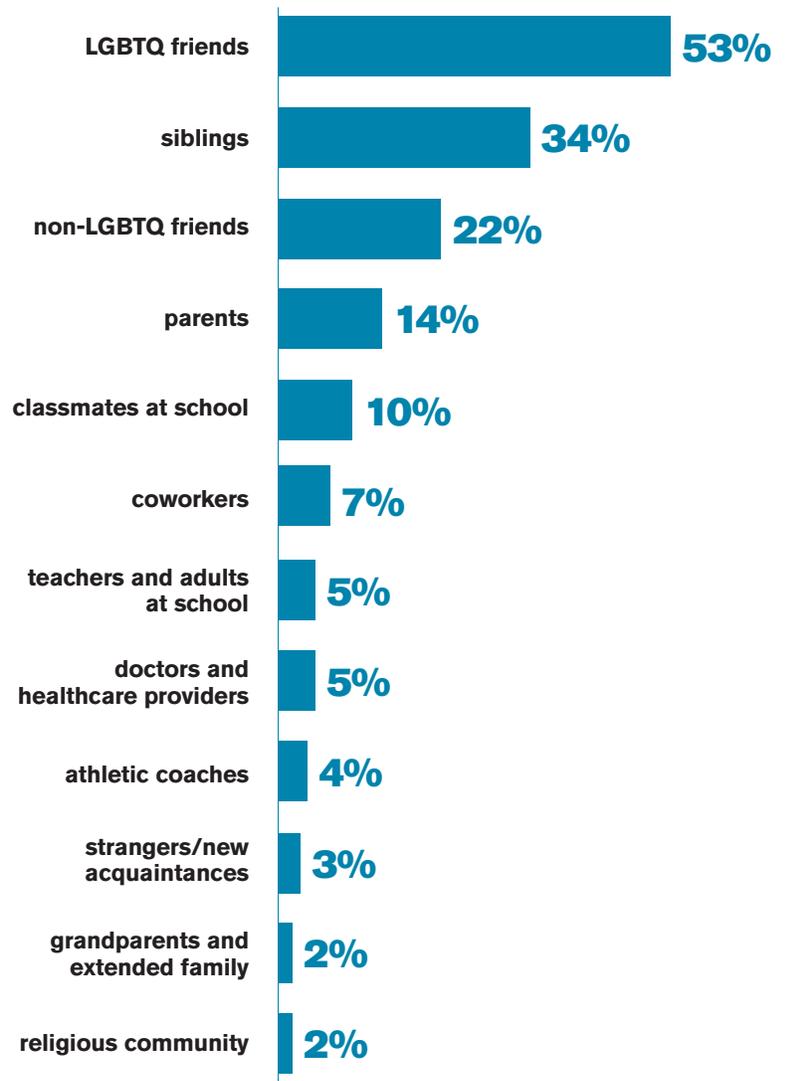
"For the longest time I felt like I was alone, until I started to see a lot more as the years passed. When people started to get LGBTQ clubs at school and same sex marriage finally happened, I had a realization that I wasn't alone."

"I think being open with it and being open with myself has made me be proud 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. I am the president of my school's GSA and am looked to as a role model for younger students."

What You Can Do

Every adult can play a role in changing the landscape for LGBTQ API youth. Often, small but impactful actions can reinforce inclusive, supportive and loving environments in homes, schools and communities.

We must also confront the very real and present discrimination and institutional obstacles that hinder too many LGBTQ API youth from fully thriving and living as who they are.

Five things you can do to support LGBTQ API young people:

1. Elevate narratives of LGBTQ API people

In schools and community settings, it is imperative to highlight the experiences of LGBTQ API people. LGBTQ API young people in our research cite struggling to find relatable role models. Highlighting a variety of narratives — across the very diverse API ethnicities and cultures — can improve representation while combating stigma and misconceptions about API people more broadly.

2. Expand opportunities and resources for parents and families to become better advocates for the LGBTQ API youth in their lives

Develop culturally appropriate, linguistically accessible LGBTQ resources that center the experiences of Asian and Pacific Islanders, including educational materials, support groups, community centers, and others. Too often, resources for LGBTQ people and their families are centered on white narratives, which may neglect the experiences of people of color. Further, recognize that many API youth are raised in multilingual family structures and settings, so English-language resources may not be as widely accessible to their communities.

3. **Advocate for more inclusive educational spaces that provide opportunities for API youth to succeed and grow**

Evaluate the impact and way your school's policies, procedures and practices may perpetuate or even enforce systems of discrimination for LGBTQ API youth. This includes programs for underserved youth of color that may lack relatable resources or targeted support for API youth specifically. Partner with advocates and organizations to do staff trainings or adjust your policies and procedures in order to create an environment where LGBTQ API youth feel safe and are not targeted by unjust systems, pressures or misconceptions.

4. **Encourage youth-serving professionals, especially healthcare professionals, to adapt their practices to actively dismantle systems of oppression that harm LGBTQ API youth**

API people face significant barriers to accessing affirming and appropriate healthcare. We must reconcile historical and generational traumas, socioeconomic barriers, language barriers, lack of providers and stigma, that prevent access to necessary and competent healthcare.

5. **Support and address policy reform that uniquely impacts LGBTQ API youth**

Mental health, harassment and bullying, familial challenges, income inequality, healthcare access and sexual violence are just some of the areas where LGBTQ API young people face rampant disparities due to historically maintained systems of bias and discrimination. When undergoing policy work, ensure you are comprehensively viewing your advocacy through both an LGBTQ equity and anti-racism lens. Listen to the experiences of LGBTQ Asian and Pacific Islanders and their families and acknowledge and uplift their advocacy work, while continuing to use your organization, network or resources as a supportive platform.

To best support LGBTQ API youth, it is imperative to address anti-LGBTQ attitudes, racism and other systems of oppression that present undue challenges to their well-being. Youth-serving professionals, parents, school staff, policy-makers and community members can find more tips here that, as always, should be viewed through an intersectional lens.

Respondent Profile

N = 1,243

This data set does not break down race or ethnicity further other than identifying respondents as Asian or Pacific Islanders. For example, this means the data can not distinguish between respondents that are Vietnamese and those who are Korean. This is a major limitation of our research, as we know that experiences and outcomes differ drastically within the diverse API community. It is important that we center the necessity of data disaggregation in future research so we can better capture the identities, experiences and needs of underserved and/ or further marginalized members of all communities.

Gender (select all that apply)

	N Values
Cisgender boy	294
Cisgender girl	564
Transgender boy	86
Transgender girl	13
Non-binary	166
Genderqueer	104
Different identity	53

Note: Cisgender boy, cisgender girl, transgender boy and transgender girl numbers are a combination of self-identification and concordance with sex assigned at birth. N values may add up to more than 1,243 as some respondents self-identify with more than one answer choice provided.

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

31%
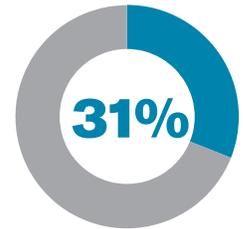
of respondents **are gender-expansive**

Race

46%
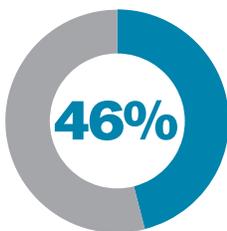
of respondents **are multiracial**

Ability

13%

have a disability

15%

don't know

Location

19% Northeast
14% Midwest
28% South
39% West

Sexual Orientation

Bisexual **37%**
Gay or Lesbian **33%**
Pansexual **13%**
Asexual **5%**
Queer **5%**
Questioning **4%**
Straight **1%**
Something else **1%**

Age

7% 13
18% 14
21% 15
25% 16
30% 17
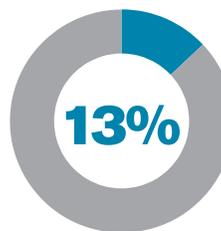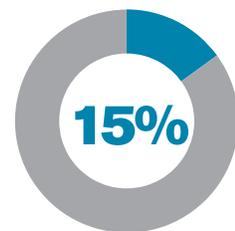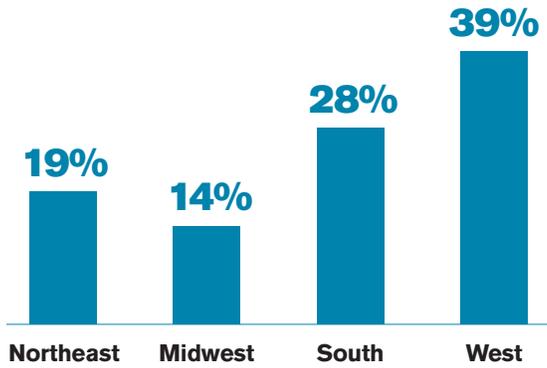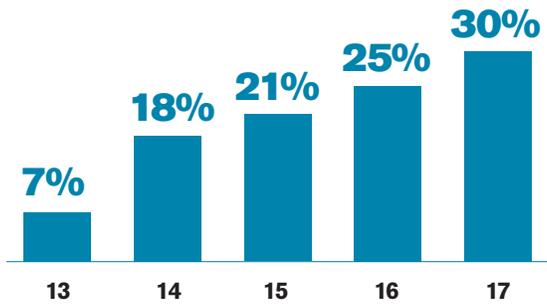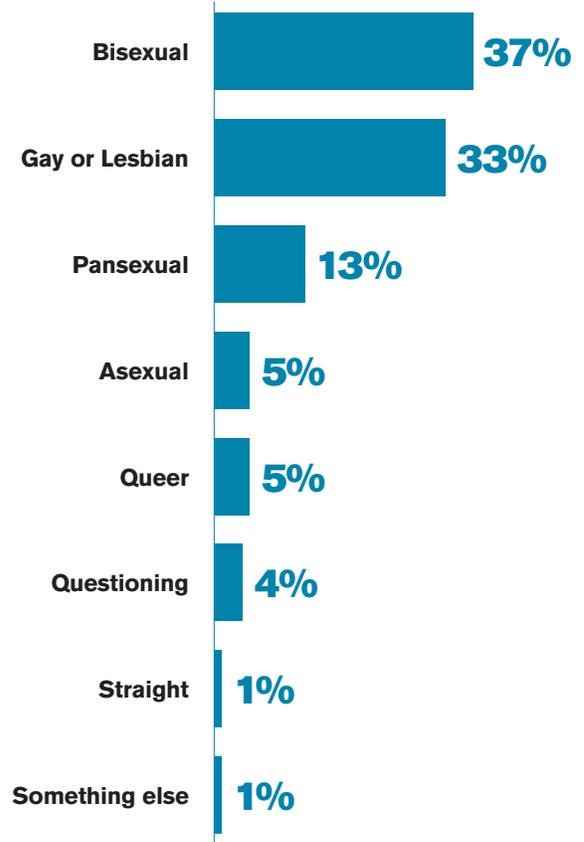
Percentages may add up to over 100 due to rounding.

Acknowledgements

The HRC Foundation's 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. Special thanks to Senior Research Manager **Liam Miranda**, Outreach and Research Coordinator **Katalina Hadfield** and current Public Education & Research Interns **Sadies Yanes** and **Naomi Cunningham** for their leadership and work on this resource. Additional thanks to former Senior Content Manager **Mark Lee** for his vision and contributions. Thank you to **Ty Cobb** for his leadership of the Public Education and Research team and resources.

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. Special thanks to **Ellen Kahn** and **Jay Brown** for their leadership and guidance on this and similar resources related to the well-being of LGBTQ youth.
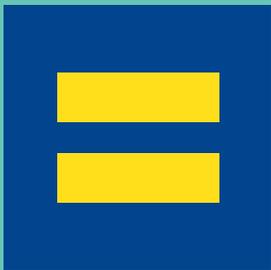
As the largest civil rights organization working to achieve equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer Americans, the Human Rights Campaign represents a force of more than 3 million members and supporters nationwide — all committed to making HRC's vision a reality.

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.