



Mental Health Awareness

LGBT

*They also stand for
Love, Grace, Beauty And Truth.*

LGBT

These letters stand for
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Or Transgender.

*They also stand for
Love, Grace, Beauty And Truth.”*

Some of us identify ourselves as LGBT, which means we may be lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer or questioning – or we may define our gender and sexuality in other ways.

LGBT people can be at a higher risk of experiencing a mental health problem than the wider population. If you are LGBT and have experienced mental health issues, you are not alone.

You might also experience rejection, negative reactions or hostility from family members, friends, strangers, employers or members of the religious community.

This can have a big impact on your self-esteem and mean you might feel unable to be open about your sexuality or gender identity at work, at home or in the world at large.

Mental health and being LGBT

- ▶ The recent rapid increase in LGBT depression isn't because an individual is gay, but rather because LGBT people live in a society that shows stigma and discrimination towards sexual minority populations. Having to continually deal with LGBT discrimination and stigma can affect your mental health.
- ▶ Studies carried out by the NHS have revealed LGBT people show higher levels of depression, anxiety and suicidal feelings than heterosexual men and women.
- ▶ Suicide is the leading cause of death amongst LGBT YOUTH
- LGBT youth who come from highly rejecting families are 8.4 times as likely to have attempted suicide as LGBT peers who reported no or low levels of family rejection
- Rates of drug and alcohol misuse have also been found to be higher. But the real picture is uncertain because of the reluctance of some patients to disclose their sexuality, and some healthcare staff feeling uncomfortable asking the question.
- Poor levels of mental health among gay and bisexual people have often been linked to experiences of homophobic discrimination and bullying.
- It may not be easy, but getting help if you're feeling stressed, depressed, anxious or suicidal is one of the most important things you can do.

Many LGBT people have experienced:

- Hostility or rejection from family, parents and friends
- Bullying and name calling at school
- Rejection by most mainstream religions
- Danger of violence in public places
- Harassment from neighbours and other tenants
- Casual homophobic comments on an everyday basis
- Embarrassed responses (and occasionally prejudice) from professionals, such as GPs
- No protection against discrimination at work
- Negative portrayal of gay people in the media



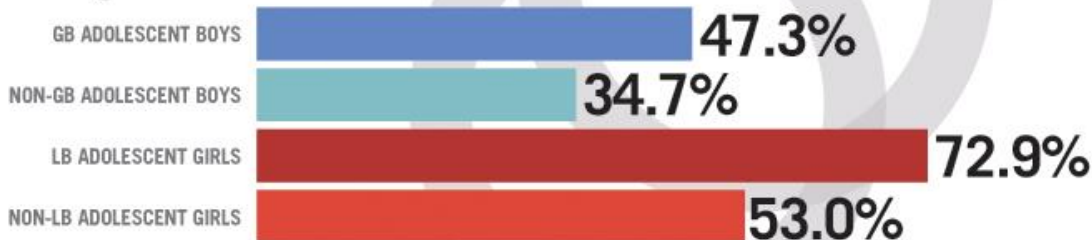
DEPRESSION

ANXIETY

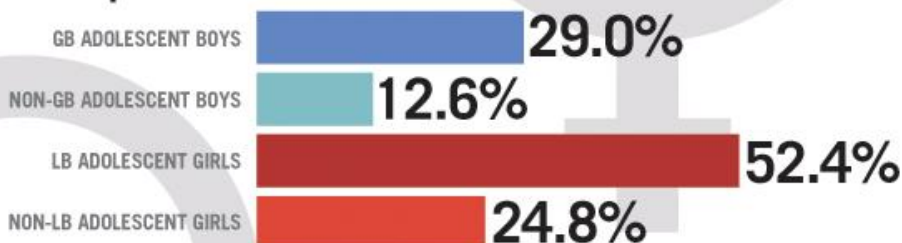
SUICIDE

- ▶ If you're LGBTQ I'd wager a bet that you're really good at reading a situation to determine how much you can safely be yourself. This skill, while adaptive, comes at a cost because it was developed in response to being subjected to high levels of persistent prejudice, bullying and discrimination...
- ▶ It's worth noting that gay and lesbian depression may be made worse due to interpersonal, religion and family/friend rejection, societal stigma and internalized homophobia. As one gay person expressed:
- ▶ "Knowing what was facing me religion-wise and with my family, I was pretty suicidal between the ages of about 16 and 19 . . . Not so much because of people's homophobia but because of feeling totally trapped between a religion/family that didn't accept homosexuality and being who I was."

Thought About Suicide



Attempted Suicide



Homosexuality is found in 450 species.
Homophobia is found in 1

We must continue the fight.

Silence about our oppression does not facilitate change.



Knowledge and information are the keys to acceptance and understanding.

Fear and ignorance are the locks.

When one person shares, it is like putting a key in a lock.
When one person listens, the key turns and the lock opens.
Another human being has a bright, new, shiny key.

Together one person at a time, we change the world.



Not everyone fits in
an “L” box, a “G” box, a “B” box, or a “T” box.

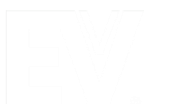
Some people they do not even fit in any box.

We, as human beings, are far more relevant to the universe than that.

We can be found in all the colors of the rainbow, in all the areas where one color blends into another color, in a different light or an undefinable space.

Gay Pride was not born of a need to celebrate being Gay, but our right to exist without persecution.

So instead of wondering why there isn't a Straight Pride movement, be thankful you DON'T need one.



Mental health issues if you're Gay, Lesbian Or Bisexual

How therapy can help

It might not be easy, but getting help with issues you may be struggling to deal with on your own is one of the most important things you can do.

Talking with a therapist trained to work with LGBT people may help you deal with issues such as:

- difficulty accepting your sexual orientation
 - coping with other people's reactions
 - feeling your body does not reflect your true gender (gender dysphoria)
 - transitioning
 - low self-esteem
 - self-harm
 - suicidal thoughts
 - depression from long-term effects of bullying and discrimination
 - hostility or rejection from family, friends or your community
 - fear of violence in public places
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When should I get help?

Don't suffer in silence.

You should get help as soon as you feel the need. It's never too late to get help, no matter how big or small your problem might seem.

You could benefit from getting help if you:

- feel tired or lack energy
- feel tearful
- shut yourself away from people
- no longer want to do things you usually enjoy
- use alcohol or drugs to cope with feelings
- harm yourself or have thoughts about self-harming
- have thoughts of taking your own life

If you're struggling to cope right now, call the **Samaritans on 116 123**. They offer a safe place for you to talk about whatever's on your mind at any time.



Who can help?

Speak to your GP

Consider talking to your GP. Some doctors may know what help is available locally and can help you decide which treatment is best for you.

When discussing your situation, try to be as honest as possible with them so they can find the best type of support for you.

Support groups

These organisations offer mental health advice, support and services, including helplines, for LGBT people:

- **Albert Kennedy Trust**
The trust supports young LGBT people, between 16 and 25 years old. They can help with finding specialist LGBT mental health services.
- **Gendered Intelligence**
The organisation works with the trans community, especially young people, and those who affect trans lives.
- **Imaan**
Imaan is a support group for LGBT Muslims, providing a safe space to share experiences, factsheets and links to relevant services.
- **LGBT Consortium**
The consortium develops and supports LGBT groups and projects around the country. Use the site's directory to find local mental health services.
- **London Friend**
London Friend aims to improve the health and mental wellbeing of LGBT people in and around London.
- **Mind LGBTQ**
Get information about mental health support for people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer or questioning.
- **Pink Therapy**
Pink Therapy has an online directory of therapists who work with LGBTIQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and questioning), and gender- and sexual-diversity (GSD) clients.
- **Stonewall**
Find LGBT mental health services near you using Stonewall's "What's in my area?" search box.



Thank You for Reading!

LGBT

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