



In 2022, HRC and the University of Connecticut surveyed nearly 13,000 LGBTQ+ youth (age 13-18) from across the United States on their health, well-being, school and home experiences, and more. Full results from this survey are presented in the [2023 LGBTQ+ Youth Report](#). Below, we present key findings every mental health professional should know, along with action steps you can take to support the LGBTQ+ youth in your community.

## Key findings you should know:

**+ LGBTQ+ YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH:** LGBTQ+ youth are experiencing a mental health crisis, even worse than the one seen for youth and adolescents in general

- **55.1%** of LGBTQ+ youth, including **60%** of transgender and gender expansive youth, screened positive for depression (on the [PHQ-2 included in the survey](#))
  - In comparison, **42%** of all high school youth, and **35%** of heterosexual high school youth, surveyed on the [2021 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey \(YRBS\)](#) report persistent feelings of sadness
- **63.5%** of LGBTQ+ youth, and **68.2%** of transgender and gender-expansive youth, screened positive for anxiety (on the [GAD-2](#))
- **30.9%** of LGBTQ+ youth screened positive for severe psychological distress (on the [PHQ-4](#))

**+ ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES:**

Many LGBTQ+ youth report an unmet need for mental health care—though, of those who receive it, the vast majority are able to access LGBTQ-informed mental health care

- **64.7%** LGBTQ+ youth reported fair or poor ability to manage stress

- Over 4 in 10 (**41.7%**) LGBTQ+ youth wanted to receive therapy but were unable to do so
- Of the **48.9%** of LGBTQ+ youth who received therapy in the prior year, almost 8 in 10 (**79%**) reported that their therapist was very (**38.2%**) or somewhat (**40.8%**) informed on LGBTQ+ issues

**+ PRIDE AND RESILIENCY:** LGBTQ+ youth have mixed feelings about their own LGBTQ+ identity, and the role it will play in their futures

- More than **90%** of LGBTQ+ youth, including **92%** of transgender and gender-expansive youth, are proud to be part of the LGBTQ+ community. However...
  - 1 in 4 (**23%**) wish they were not LGBTQ+
  - 1 in 3 (**34%**) feel depressed when they think about being LGBTQ+
  - 4 in 10 (**43.5%**) feel critical about themselves when they think about being LGBTQ+
- More than half (**56.8%**) of LGBTQ+ youth believe that the LGBTQ+ community is accepted more and more each day. However...
  - Over a quarter (**29%**) of LGBTQ+ youth, including a third (**33.9%**) of transgender and gender-expansive youth, fear their LGBTQ+ identity will negatively affect their college / higher education opportunities

- Two-thirds (**69.2%**) of LGBTQ+ youth—and over three quarters (**77.3%**) of transgender and gender-expansive youth—are afraid they will be discriminated against at work in the future due to their LGBTQ+ identity.
- Over 4 in 10 LGBTQ+ youth (**43%**), and half of transgender and gender-expansive youth (**49.1%**) think their LGBTQ+ identity will negatively affect their entire future career.

## What Can You Do to Support LGBTQ+ Youth

### ...In Your Practice

- Ensure your school, organization, or practice has an inclusive non-discrimination statement that explicitly includes sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression—both for patients/students and staff.
- Seek out clinical training on supporting LGBTQ+ youth in their mental wellness.
- Provide training and professional development to front line staff on working with LGBTQ+ clients.
- Ensure intake forms and youth files allow for chosen names and add a section for pronouns of clients.
- Have a policy and practice to encourage transgender and gender expansive youth to be able to be their full authentic self in counseling sessions without fear of being outed to their parents, caregivers, and/or family by ensuring their chosen names and pronouns are kept confidential.

### ...In Your Community

- Provide referrals, including letters of support, to providers of gender affirming care for transgender and gender expansive youth and their families.
- Provide LGBTQ+ affirming local resources to support LGBTQ+ youth and families.
  - Check out the database of local LGBTQ+ community centers with our partners at CenterLink - <https://www.lgbtqcenters.org/LGBTCenters>.
- Connect with local schools and youth-serving organizations to share information about your LGBTQ+ affirming services and help reduce the stigma of seeking counseling.

To read the full 2023 Youth Survey Report, visit: [hrc.im/YouthReport2023](https://hrc.im/YouthReport2023)