Preventing suicide among LGBTQIA2+ youth

YOU can make a difference

INSIDE OUT
YOUTH SERVICES

What is Inside Out Youth Services?

Established in 1990, Inside Out is the region's **only** LGBTQ+-youth serving nonprofit.

Our mission: To build access, equity and power with LGBTQIA2+ youth.

Little Language Lesson

LGBTQIA2+ — stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/ Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, Two Spirit and more.

- Sometimes LGBT or LGBTQ+
- Sometimes just "queer"

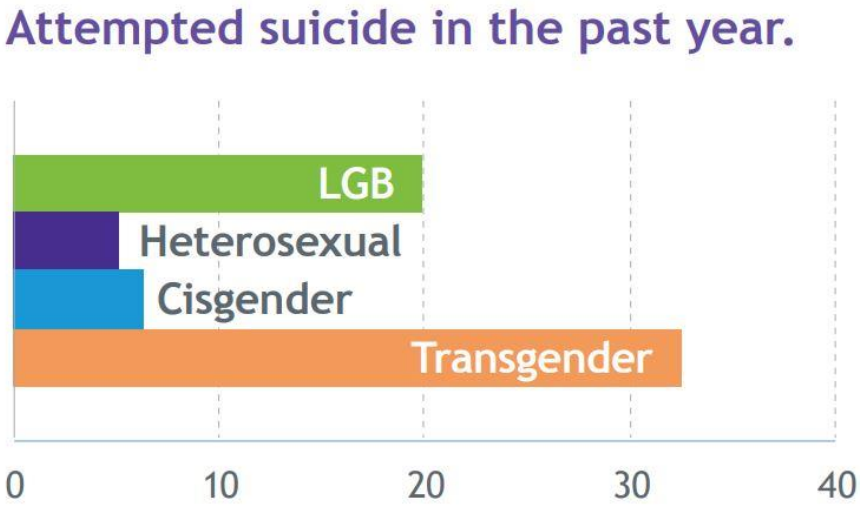
Cisgender — Someone whose gender identity matches what they were assigned at birth.

Transgender— Someone whose gender identity does not match what they were assigned at birth

Comprehensive sexual education— or "comp sex ed," meaning school curricula that is inclusive and competent in LGBTQ+ identities and also teaches consent and healthy relationships.

Suicide among LGBTQ+ youth

- Lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth experience suicidal thoughts **nearly three times** as much as heterosexual young people, and are almost **five times more likely** to attempt suicide
- **40% of transgender adults** in the US report having made a suicide attempt; 92% did so **before the age of 25.**
- Suicide attempts are highest among transgender youth, but overall LGBTQ+ youth face rates of attempts at 4 or 5 times those of their peers.



Source: Healthy Kids Colorado Survey 2017

Suicide risk factors among LGBTQ+ youth

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Important note: Queerness itself is not a risk factor. Queer people are at higher risk for suicide and other negative health outcomes because of systemic and interpersonal discrimination and stigma.

LGBTQIA2+ youth are more likely to...
Use substances as a coping mechanism
Suffer sexual assault or harassment
Experience bullying
Experience homelessness
And more.

All of these issues are compounded and even more complex in LGBTQ+ youth of color due to systemic racism.

However, we know some ways to help

Many of these youth have experienced adults giving up on them time and time again. **Don't give up on them, too.**

1. Youth who have a **trusted adult** in their life are at least 40% less likely to attempt suicide.

2. Youth whose **pronouns and chosen name** are respected are up to 56% less likely to attempt suicide.

3. Youth who have access to **comprehensive sexual education** are less likely overall to engage in unhealthy/risky behaviors that could lead to depression and suicide.

1. Becoming a trusted adult

Educate yourself on LGBTQ+ people, and vocab. Start at *insideoutys.org/resources* !

Practice having tough conversations with young people. Learn how to address drugs, sex, identity, and more. Remove stigma in the spaces you occupy. Answer questions honestly.

Be loud with your support.

2. Respect pronouns and chosen names

- Ask before assuming!
- Introduce yourself with your own pronouns.
- Make room for exploration of identity. Pronouns can change!
- Remember: You're human. You are not a bad person if you make a mistake.
- Respecting =/= Understanding. You don't have to understand to save a life.

3. Help promote access to comprehensive sex ed

- Colorado schools may opt out of comp sex ed, so research and advocate!
- Join the Pikes Peak Safe at Schools Coalition, which does this work and more to make schools safer for LGBTQ+ youth, meaning ALL youth benefit.
  - We meet the last Monday of each month via Zoom! 4-5:30 p.m.!
  - Facebook.com/PPSASC

What can you do TODAY to help LGBTQ+ youth and prevent suicide?

- Add pronouns to your email signature / begin introducing yourself with your pronouns
- Make a concentrated effort to use others' correct names and pronouns
- Commit to educating yourself on LGBTQ+ identities. We can help!
- Join the Pikes Peak Safe at Schools Coalition!

Questions?

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Inside Out Youth Services: insideoutys.org

Pikes Peak Safe at Schools Coalition: facebook.com/PPSASC

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to go to our website!