

LGBTQ+ Student Health

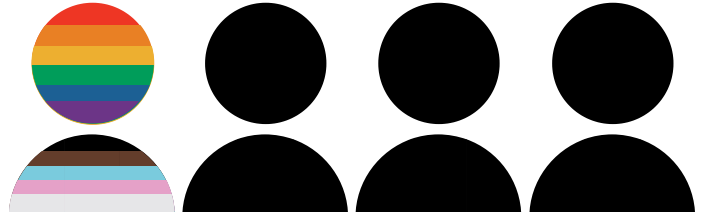


High school-level data from the 2021 Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey (MIYHS)

The 2021 MIYHS definition of **LGBTQ+** includes lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, and other non-heterosexual, non-cisgender identities. **These data are not comparable to the 2019 LGBT Student Health Report.**



26.2% of Maine high school students identify as **LGBTQ+** (more than 14,000).

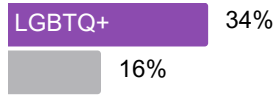


That's more than 1 in 4 students.

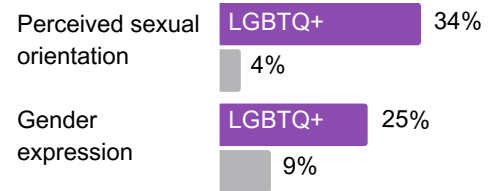
LGBTQ+ students are more likely to experience violence and discrimination at home and at school than non-LGBTQ+ students.



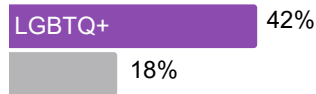
LGBTQ+ students are **twice as likely** to say that violence or the threat of violence in their home made them consider leaving home.



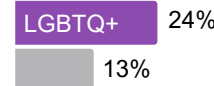
LGBTQ+ students are **more likely** to experience offensive comments or be attacked at school because of:



LGBTQ+ students are **twice as likely** to have four or more adverse childhood experiences.*



LGBTQ+ students are **more likely** to be bullied at school in the past 12 months.



LGBTQ+ students are less likely to have support from adults in their lives.



Parents help them succeed



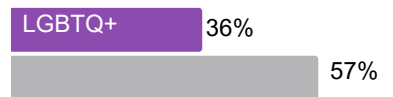
Support from adults other than parents



Family provides love and support



Feel they matter to the community



Definitions: Transgender (trans): those who identify with a gender that is different than the sex they were assigned at birth
Cisgender: those whose gender is the same as sex they were assigned at birth

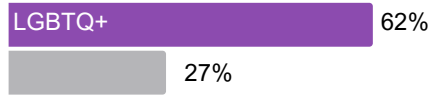
*Learn more about adverse childhood experiences at:

https://www.maine.gov/miyhs/sites/default/files/2021-01/2019MIYHSACESInfographic_0.pdf

LGBTQ+ students face many challenges and have fewer supports. Their mental health outcomes are significantly worse.



LGBTQ+ students are more than **twice as likely** to feel sad or hopeless for two or more weeks in the past year.



LGBTQ+ students are more than **three times** as likely to have **seriously considered suicide** in the past year (LGBTQ+: 38% vs non-LGBTQ+: 12%).

2,600 LGBTQ+ high school students in Maine seriously considered suicide in the past year. **That's enough to fill 54 school buses.**

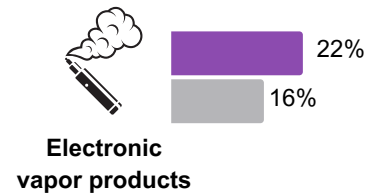
To cope with violence and discrimination, many LGBTQ+ students may turn to harmful substance use.



LGBTQ+ students are **twice as likely** to have smoked cigarettes in the past 30 days.



LGBTQ+ students are **more likely** to have used marijuana or an electronic vapor product in the past 30 days.



Compared to their non-LGBTQ+ peers, **LGBTQ+** students are **twice as likely** to have: ever used heroin (**2%** vs 1%), ever used cocaine (**4%** vs 2%), ever used inhalants (**12%** vs 6%), or have used prescription drugs in the past month without a doctor's permission (**6%** vs 3%). **LGBTQ+** students are **nearly twice as likely** to have ever used prescription pain medicine without a doctor's permission (**14%** vs 8%) compared to their non-LGBTQ+ peers.

Support the health and well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, and other non-heterosexual, non-cisgender students in Maine:



Create or support a Gay/Straight/Trans Alliance (GSTA) in your school. A Canadian study reported students in schools with an established GSTA for 3 or more years had a **50% reduction in discrimination and suicide ideation for ALL students.**¹



Provide **LGBTQ+** youth opportunities to connect with each other and with supportive adults in your school or community.



Create a welcoming and affirming environment in your school, organization, or community by actively reaching out to **LGBTQ+** youth, and using inclusive language and programming.



Learn how your school, organization, or community can better serve and support **LGBTQ+** young people and their families.

Request a free guide on GSTAs, inclusive youth programming, or **LGBTQ+** friendly workplaces, here: outmaine.org/resources/

If you know an **LGBTQ+** young person who is struggling with thoughts of suicide, contact The Trevor Project for 24/7, year round, crisis support. Call 1-866-488-7386, text START to 678-678, or visit thetrevorproject.org

For more information about MIYHS or this factsheet: visit: <https://data.mainepublichealth.gov/miyhs/home>

Source: Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey 2021. Note: All differences presented are statistically significant based on non-overlapping 95% confidence intervals. Created September 2023

¹Saewyc EM, Konishi C, Rose HA, Homma Y. School-Based Strategies to Reduce Suicidal Ideation, Suicide Attempts, and Discrimination among Sexual Minority and Heterosexual Adolescents in Western Canada. Int J Child Youth Family Stud. 2014 Jan 1;5(1):89-112. doi: 10.18357/ijcfs.saewyc.512014.