



**LGBTQIA PRIDE MONTH – ACCEPTANCE
WITHOUT EXCEPTION**



CHALLENGES

Due to increased levels of stigma, discrimination, and victimization Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning or Intersex (LGBTQIA+) youth face particular challenges in society. In the UK, the LGBTQIA+ community experiences increased levels of common mental health problems, including depression and anxiety (Hendernson and Varney, 2017).



According to a research project, 52% of LGBTQIA+ people reported self-harming, compared to 35% of heterosexual non-trans young people (Chances, 2016). Whilst a further 44% of the LGBTQIA+ community reported suicidal thoughts, compared to 26% of heterosexual non-trans respondents (Chances, 2016). The LGBTQIA+ community are also affected by other mental health problems such as substance abuse, where it was found that 16% of LGBT people said they had drunk alcohol almost every day over the last year, compared to 10% of the general population (Stonewall, 2018) This also increases with age, as 33% of LGBT people over 65 years of age reported drinking almost every day (Stonewall, 2018). Since the coronavirus lockdown restrictions more people from the community are seeking suicide-prevention support (Hunte, 2020) and many are experiencing negative effects on their mental health.



These facts and figures are particularly concerning as many claim that we are progressing as a society, that the equality fight is well and truly won. Yet, there are many factors that uniquely affect the LGBTQIA+ community that continue to contribute to the disproportionate amount of mental health problems in this community. These factors include:

Hate Crime: People who identify as LGBTQ+ are at a greater risk of experiencing hate crime compared to heterosexual people (Mental Health Foundation, 2020). Certain groups within this community are particularly at risk of this too, including LGBTQ+ people from BAME backgrounds (Hudson-Sharp and Metcalf, 2016). According to a report by Stonewall, experiencing hate crime significantly increased the risk of mental health problems. It was found that 69% of LGBT people who had been a victim of a hate crime experienced depression and 76% reported episodes of anxiety (Stonewall, 2018).

Bullying: A BBC report showed that people being bullied in schools for being lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender is the most common form of bullying. In a school report by Stonewall, it was also found that nearly half of all LGBT pupils experienced bullying for their sexual orientation.

Discrimination in Healthcare: In 2018, parliament's Women and Equalities Committee accused the NHS of treating the needs of LGBTQ+ people as "less important" than the rest of the population. According to a national health report by Stonewall, one in seven LGBTQ+ people avoided seeking healthcare for fear of discrimination from staff, while one in four had witnessed negative remarks about LGBTQ+ people from healthcare staff while accessing services.

POSITIVES:

2017: The Children and Social Work Bill is amended, making relationships and sex education (RSE) mandatory in all schools in England and Wales as of 2019.

2017: The 1-year ban on MSM for donating blood is changed to 3 months. Northern Ireland still has the 1-year ban in place.

2019: The World Health Organisation declassifies transgender health issues as a mental illness. Graeme Reid (LGBT rights director at Human Rights Watch) said the changes would have a “liberating effect on transgender people worldwide”.

Same-sex marriage legalised in Northern Ireland. The first marriage ceremony occurred on 11th February 2020.





As you can see, there have been so many important events in the timeline of LGBT history that were turning points for greater equality and freedom. Same-sex relationships are finally legally permitted and their rights as couples to marriage and adoption are finally equal to their straight counterparts. Health organisations no longer stigmatise homosexuality or transgender issues with dated definitions, and Pride events across the country give LGBTQ+ people a place to feel included, heard, and valued.

HOW YOU CAN HELP



- Always take LGBTQ+ discrimination seriously. For example, by reporting instances of hate-crime or bullying, or by establishing strong anti-discrimination policies in workplace settings.
 - Support LGBTQ+ charities, such as through donations, fundraising, or volunteering. Or shop at businesses that support LGBTQ+ equality
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- Listen to and respect the language people use to describe their identity, gender, sexual orientation and relationships.
 - Support public LGBTQ+ events, such as Pride month and National Coming Out Day.
 - Avoid making assumptions about people's sexual orientation or gender identity. Instead, consider using gender neutral terms, for example 'partner'.
 - Avoid derogatory or outdated language. For example, the word 'homosexual' or 'homo' is typically seen as an offensive word when used by those outside the LGBTQ+ community. This is because of its association with outdated clinical terminology which treated gay people as mentally ill. You can find more information on what terms to avoid on the [GLAAD](#) website.
 - Speak about LGBTQ+ issues with friends, family, or colleagues to help create more open, comfortable and welcoming environments.

HOW TO SUPPORT LGBT YOUTH IF YOU ARE AN EDUCATOR, PARENT, FRIEND ETC:



[CLICK HERE.](#)

If you identify as LGBTQIA+ and are facing any of the issues discussed in this article, remember there are places to seek support. Here are some resources:

Local Services

Lancashire LGBT <https://lancslgbt.org.uk/>

Some young people who identify as LGBT can experience a lack of support, awareness and acceptance from their family, friends and other people in their lives. LGBT groups can provide additional advice, support or a safe space to meet other young people who have had similar experiences. Lancashire LGBT supports a number of groups and activities across Lancashire which provide a diverse range of opportunities for LGBT people.

It includes four youth groups run by Lancashire County Council for young people aged 12-19 years:

Power To Be Out (POUT) in the South Ribble area Tel: 01772 532930 or email pout@lancashire.gov.uk.

Proud Youth Are Out (PYRO) in the Lancaster and Morecambe area, send Text to: 07887631335

Power To Be Out (POUT) in the Burnley area Tel: 07929847448 or email POUTBurnley@lancashire.gov.uk.

Power To Be Out (POUT) in the Pendle area Tel: 07876790731 or email POUTPendle@lancashire.gov.uk.

Other organisations offering support and information:

LGBT Consortium a national charity that supports LGBT groups, organisations and projects.

The Proud Trust in Manchester and surrounding areas has details of main events such as Manchester Pride and has support information on a range of issues on their website.

National Services

Stonewall: <http://www.stonewall.org.uk/>

LGBT Switchboard - Switchboard is an LGBT+ helpline - a place for calm words when you need them most. They're here to help you with whatever you want to talk about. Nothing is off limits and conversations are 100% confidential. Call 0300 330 0630 (10am-10pm daily).

RU Coming Out? - Real life coming out stories.

Meetup - allows people to search for relevant groups in their area. You can also set up your own.

FFLAG - supports friends and family members of LGBT people.

Maytree - provides support for people who are feeling suicidal and provides a 4-day or 5-day stay. Call 020 7263 7070 for more details and to be assessed. Email address: maytree@maytree.org.uk. The site is in London and they are hoping to open another house in Manchester in 2020.

Papyrus - the national charity for prevention of young suicide. They run HOPELineUK which is a National Confidential Helpline. Phone: 0800 068 41 41 / Text: 0778 620 9697 / email: pat@papyrus.org.uk (Mon-Fri 10am-10pm / Weekends & Bank Holidays 2-10pm)



General useful support and advice

Equality Advisory Support Service (EASS) – advises and assists individuals on issues relating to equality and human rights across England, Scotland and Wales. Phone number 0808 800 0082.

Citizens Advice (CA) – provides free, confidential, impartial and independent advice on a broad range of subjects, including debt, benefits, housing, legal matters, employment, immigration and consumer issues. You can find details of local CAs on their website.

Support for trans people, families and allies

Mermaids UK – family and individual support for gender diverse and transgender children and young people. Mermaids is passionate about supporting children, young people, and their families to achieve a happier life in the face of great adversity.

The Gendered Intelligence (GI) Network for Therapists and Counsellors – aims to support therapists and counsellors to enable a positive experience in a therapy setting for trans people (including young people) and their families. Here's a [link](#) to the PDF version.

MindLine Trans+ – a confidential emotional, mental health support helpline for people who identify as transgender, agender, gender fluid and non-binary. Phone number 0300 330 5468.

Violence and abuse

See our pages [here for hate crimes](#) and [here for domestic violence](#). A key contact is Galop.

Galop – If you've experienced hate crime, sexual violence or domestic abuse, GALOP is there for you. They also support lesbian, gay, bi, trans and queer people who have had problems with the police or have questions about the criminal justice system.

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