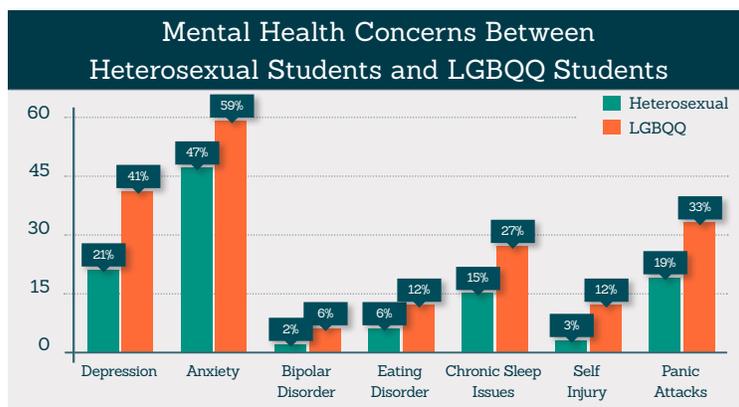


Mental Health Concerns & Suicidal Ideation among LGBQQ Students

As Missouri's consortium focused on increasing health and safety on college campuses, Partners in Prevention (PIP) works to reduce mental health concerns and thoughts of suicide among college students. PIP implements the Missouri Assessment of College Health Behaviors (MACHB) on an annual basis to gain a better understanding of health behaviors and experiences on campuses across Missouri. This brief will focus on mental health among students, primarily those who identify as LGBQQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer, and Questioning). Students who identified as transgender are not included in this brief, unless they also reported their sexual orientation as LGBQQ. As sexual orientation and gender are different constructs, the stressors and experiences of the transgender student population cannot be conflated with those of LGBQQ student population.

Mental Health

When assessing mental health concerns among heterosexual students compared to individuals who identified as LGBQQ, the differences are striking. For instance, approximately 21% of heterosexual students indicated experiencing depression in the past year, whereas this number is nearly double (41%) among LGBQQ students across Missouri. This trend remains stable among other mental health concerns such as; anxiety (47% vs. 59%), bipolar disorder (2% vs. 6%), eating disorders (6% vs. 12%), chronic sleep issues (15% vs. 27%), self-injury (3% vs. 12%), and frequency of panic attacks (19% vs. 33%).



The MACHB also prompts students to indicate whether they sought assistance for mental health concerns, and if yes, where they received services. Among heterosexual students, 57% indicated that

they sought services for a mental health concern. However, LGBQQ individuals had a healthier response (61%) in willingness to seek services. Although campuses should aim for this number to be as high as possible, it may be a sign that although students are facing a higher amount of mental health issues, a majority of LGBQQ students are more proactive in seeking services to address these concerns.

For individuals that sought services, the University Counseling Center was ranked highest among all students. LGBQQ students also tend to utilize this service at higher rates than their heterosexual counterparts (16% and 11%, respectively). The University Health Center was also utilized at higher rates among LGBQQ students (6% vs 3%), as was an off-campus mental health provider (12% vs 9%). There were a few responses that were significantly lower among LGBQQ students compared to their heterosexual peers, such as a religious/spiritual advisor (2% and 4%, respectively) and assistance from family and friends (37% and 39%, respectively).

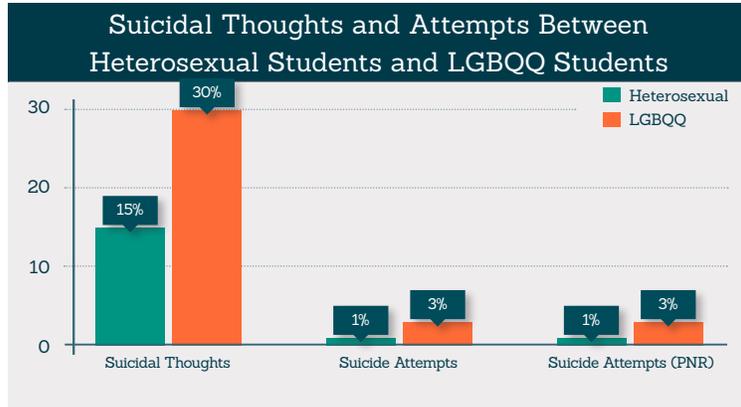
Suicidal Ideation

Similar to mental health concerns, rates of suicidal thoughts and attempts among LGBQQ students is nearly doubled compared to heterosexual students on Missouri college campuses. For example, when

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referring to the question, “In the past year, have you had suicidal thoughts?”, 15% of heterosexual students indicated ‘yes’, whereas 30% of LGBQQ students indicated ‘yes’. In regards to suicide attempts, 1% (and 1% indicated ‘prefer not to respond’) of heterosexual students indicated an attempt in the past year, whereas 3% (and 3% indicating ‘prefer not to respond’) of LGBQQ students indicated a past attempt.



There have been programs on campuses across the state that serve to educate and raise awareness about suicide and signs of suicide in fellow peers, such as Ask. Listen. Refer (ALR). ALR is an online suicide prevention training program that educates about the warning signs of suicide among college students, risk and protective factors of suicide, common myths about suicide, how to discuss the topic of suicide with someone who may be at risk, and how to get them help. Participants are given a pre-and post-test to evaluate knowledge, attitudes, and willingness to intervene, and they have the option to take 3 follow-up surveys to assess the use and effectiveness of the program. Although not all campuses require completion of ALR, a large number of PIP campuses now require the ALR training to all students, staff, and faculty members on their campus.

Resources for Behavioral Health Concerns

If you or a fellow peer are experiencing distress, the following resources can be utilized for prevention & crisis intervention:

National Suicide Prevention Hotline

- 1-800-273-8255

Missouri Crisis Line

- 1-888-761-4357 or text HAND to 839863

Trans Lifeline

- 1-877-565-8860

LGBT National Youth Talkline (ages 15-25)

- 1-800-246-7743

LGBT National Hotline

- 1-888-843-4564

Rainbow Youth Hotline (ages 15-24)

- 1-877-LGBT-YTH

The Trevor Project

- Phone, chat, and text support for LGBTQ youth, visit thetrevorproject.org/get-help-now

SAFE LGBT Elder Hotline (support for older adults)

- 1-888-234-SAGE

For more information on confidential peer support & crisis lines, please visit glbthotline.org.

April is Campus Pride Month. For more information on upcoming events and Campus Pride resources, please visit campuspride.org/cpmonth.

Contact Partners in Prevention at (573) 884-7551.
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