



LGBQ YOUTH in Fairfax County


Self-reported by 8th, 10th and 12th grade LGBQ students on the Fairfax County Youth Survey


25% had been sexually harassed 

11% get four or fewer hours of sleep on an average school night

51% of LGBQ males who have had sex did not use a condom at last sexual intercourse 

16% have been victims of emotional abuse by dating partners

17% have used unhealthy weight loss methods 

50% experienced depressive symptoms 

What You Need to Know

Seventeen percent of teens in Fairfax County self-identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or questioning (LGBQ). Many report involvement and support in their families, schools, and community; however, some LGBQ youth face disproportionate challenges.

Depressive symptoms (feeling so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more that they stopped doing some usual activities) affect 50% of LGBQ youth and 32% have seriously considered suicide.

Twenty-seven percent of LGBQ youth have used alcohol, tobacco or other drugs in the past 30 days. LGBQ and non-LGBQ youth report similar levels of use of most drugs, including alcohol (16% vs. 15%), marijuana (9% vs. 10%), cigarettes (2% vs. 1%), vaping (15% for each), painkillers for non-medical reasons (4% vs. 2%), and other prescription drugs for non-medical reasons (4% vs. 3%).

Twenty-one percent of LGBQ youth report that they have been bullied in the past year. These youth are about 70% more likely

to report being a victim of bullying as non-LGBQ youth.

LGBQ youth also face greater risk of becoming a victim of sexual harassment, dating abuse or cyberbullying.

LGBQ youth who can turn to family and other people in their lives for support are at relatively less risk. They are less likely to abuse drugs, report depressive symptoms and have sex than LGBQ youth without support.

What Can You Do?

UNDERSTAND, ENCOURAGE, LEARN, AND ACT

- ▶ Engage your teen. Parents should talk openly with their teen about any problems or concerns and be watchful of risk factors such as bullying, depression or expression of suicidal thoughts.
- ▶ Understand the link between your reaction and your teen's mental and physical health. Supportive reactions can help youth cope with the challenges they face. Negative reactions are linked to higher rates of homelessness, running away, and mental and physical problems. Parents should have honest conversations with their teens about sex, and about how to avoid risky behavior and unsafe

or high-risk situations. Parents who make an effort to know their teen's friends and know what their teen is doing can help their teen stay safe and feel cared about.

- ▶ Familiarize yourself with local and national resources. When youth reveal same-sex attractions and relationships, this is an opportunity to better inform and support LGBQ youth and families by linking them with community resources. LGBQ youth may also need access to qualified health care professionals with experience in working with LGBQ youth.

- ▶ Find out what kind of support, services and education are in place at your teen's school.

A positive school climate has been associated with a decreased risk for mental health concerns, substance abuse and unexcused school absences among LGBQ youth. In schools with LGBQ support groups (such as gay-straight alliances), LGBQ students were also more likely to have positive outcomes.

- ▶ Ask your teen before you "come out" to others on your teen's behalf. Disclosure of a youth's sexual orientation or gender identity is a process. Be careful in your discussion with others to protect your teen's privacy.

Adapted from www.cdc.gov/lgbthealth/youth.htm and www.stopbullying.gov/at-risk/groups/lgbt

Who Can Help?

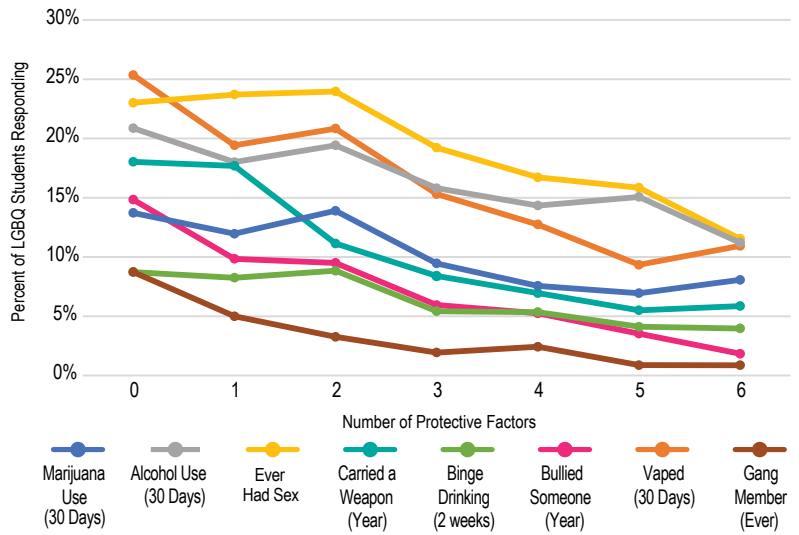
Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board (CSB) <http://bit.ly/FairfaxCSB>
Entry & Referral 703-383-8500, TTY 711
24-Hour Emergency Services 703-573-5679, TTY 711
FCPS Intervention and Prevention Services 571-423-4020 <http://bit.ly/FCPSspecialsvcs>

PRS CrisisLink 24-Hour Hotline
Call 703-527-4077 or text CONNECT to 855-11
Trevor 24-Hour Lifeline
Call 866-488-7386



Data from the Youth Survey reinforces decades of research that shows that when youth have protective factors (also known as assets) in their lives, they do better in lots of different areas. **Having just three protective factors dramatically reduces the likelihood that youth will engage in risky behaviors.** The Youth Survey shows that every protective factor makes a difference.

Young people in Fairfax County report positive influences from the people and opportunities in their lives. Take action to be an asset in a young person's life and help to build a stronger, more positive community that benefits ALL children and youth.



Protective Factors

- Accepting responsibility for one's actions
- Having community adults to talk to
- Performing community service
- Participating in extracurricular activities
- Having teachers recognize good work
- Having parents available for help

Victimization

	LGBQ	NON-LGBQ
BULLYING	21%	12%
CYBERBULLYING	11%	8%
SEXUAL HARASSMENT	25%	11%
RACIAL OR CULTURAL HARASSMENT	49%	46%

Sexual Health

	LGBQ	NON-LGBQ
EVER HAD SEX	19%	17%
EVER HAD ORAL SEX	21%	19%
HAD SEX BEFORE AGE 13*	16%	8%
4 OR MORE SEX PARTNERS*	23%	20%

* Among youth who have ever had sex

WEBSITES FOR MORE INFORMATION

Fairfax County Youth Survey
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/youthsurvey

Fairfax County Prevention System
<http://bit.ly/FairfaxPrevention>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:
 LGBT Youth Resources
www.cdc.gov/healthyouth/disparities/smy.htm
www.cdc.gov/lgbthealth/youth-resources.htm

FCPS: Mental Health and Resiliency
<http://bit.ly/FCPSresilient>

Mental Health and Suicide

	LGBQ	NON-LGBQ
HIGH STRESS	48%	35%
DEPRESSIVE SYMPTOMS	50%	26%
CONSIDERED SUICIDE	32%	11%
ATTEMPTED SUICIDE	14%	4%

Teen Dating Abuse Victimization

	LGBQ	NON-LGBQ
CONTROLLING BEHAVIOR	12%	12%
VERBAL ABUSE	10%	5%
PRESSURE TO HAVE SEX	6%	3%
PHYSICAL ABUSE	4%	2%

Protective Factors

LGBQ youth in Fairfax County report they:

- Have teachers who notice their good work (60%).
- Volunteer for community service (62% in past year).
- Have parents they can go to for help (70%), although this is lower than for non-LGBQ youth (84%).
- Are involved in family decisions that affect them (61%).

The LGBQ data presented represent the responses of youth who self-identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or questioning (not sure). The survey does not ask if students identify as transgender. The Fairfax County Youth Survey was administered in the fall semester of 2019.



Fairfax County is committed to nondiscrimination on the basis of disability in all county programs, services and activities. Reasonable accommodations will be provided upon request. For information, call 703-324-4600, TTY 711.



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