

LGBTQ: Information and Overview

REAMS



What Does LGBTQ Mean?

Lesbian

Gay

Bisexual

Transgender

Questioning

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Additional Information

- **Heterosexual:** A person who is emotionally or physically attracted to members of the opposite sex.
- **Homosexual:** A person who is emotionally or physically attracted to members of the same sex.
- **Lesbian:** A woman who is emotionally or physically attracted to other women.
- **Gay:** A term that may be used to refer to a homosexual male or female.
- **Bisexual:** A person who is emotionally or physically attracted to members of both sexes.
- **Transgender:** Refers to anyone whose behavior or identity falls *outside* of the stereotypical expectations for their gender.
- **Questioning:** The process of examining one's sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

Bullying and LGBTQ Students

The teen years are a challenging time for most of us. However, LGBTQ teens sometimes deal with harassment, threats and violence that is directed at them *on a daily basis*.

They may hear anti-gay slurs such as “homo” and “sissy” up to **26 times a day**.

Even more troubling, a study found that **thirty-one percent of gay youth** had been *threatened or injured* at school in the last year alone.

For LGBTQ students, their mental health and education, not to mention their physical well-being, may be at-risk every day.

How is Their Mental Health Being Affected?

- **1/3 to 1/2** of LGBTQ High School Students are victimized on a daily basis.
- LGBTQ teens are *three times* more likely to become anxious or depressed.
- LGBTQ teens are twice as likely to engage in self-harming activities.
- LGBTQ youth are **two to three times** more likely to attempt suicide than their heterosexual classmates.
- LGBTQ teens are more likely to grow up to be drug and/or substance abusers.

How is Their Education Being Affected?

- **Gay teens are sometimes subjected to such intense bullying that they're unable to receive an adequate education.** They're often embarrassed or ashamed of being targeted and may not report the abuse.
- LGBTQ students are more likely to skip school due to the fear and threats being directed at them. *They often do not feel safe at school.*
- Twenty-eight percent of LGBTQ students will drop out of school. **This is more than three times the national average for heterosexual students.**

What Can You Do to Help?

Help end bullying at your school with the following actions:

Take a Stand and Speak up!

Do not ignore any form of bullying!

Encourage anyone who's being bullied to tell a counselor, teacher, principal, coach or his or her parents/guardians. And if the bullying continues, **KEEP REPORTING** it.

Remember, by standing up for a classmates' rights, you are standing up for *your* rights too!