

# 2023 LGBTQ+ Youth Report

*HRC Foundation, August 2023 | 40 Minute Read*



# Introduction



**In 2022, nearly 13,000 LGBTQ+ youth, from all 50 states and Washington, DC, participated in the 2022 Youth Survey, reporting on their health, well-being, and experiences across all aspects of daily life.**

In 2012, HRC's groundbreaking research, [Growing up LGBT in America](#), reported on the experiences of over 10,000 LGBTQ+ youth aged 13-17 and painted a stark picture of the difficulties they faced.

In 2017, the Human Rights Campaign Foundation partnered with researchers at the University of Connecticut to deploy a comprehensive survey capturing the experiences of LGBTQ+ youth in their family settings, schools, social circles, and communities. Over 12,000 youth aged 13-17 participated in the survey, with representation from all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Since then, LGBTQ+ Americans have seen strides toward equality and acceptance. More Americans of all ages are proudly and openly

The Covid-19 pandemic, and subsequent lockdowns of 2020-2021 resulted in [worsening mental health](#) for adolescents across the United States, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity (SOGI), while also exacerbating the disparity between LGBTQ+ and cisgender/heterosexual youth. In 2021, the CDC reported that [42% of all high school aged youth](#) in the US experienced "persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness", the highest percentage reported in over a decade. That same year, almost 70% of LGBTQ+ youth reported experiencing this, twice that of non-LGBTQ+ youth (35%).

The results of HRC's 2022 Youth Survey reveal persistent, serious challenges for LGBTQ+ youth, continuing trends observed in the 2017

identifying as LGBTQ+ than ever before, and public acceptance for marriage equality and non-discrimination protections are the highest it has ever been.<sup>1</sup>

Yet, at the same time, the LGBTQ+ community has seen an intensifying wave of attacks, aimed at pushing LGBTQ+ Americans back into the closet, and out of all aspects of daily life. Each year has seen an increase in anti-LGBTQ+ state legislation, with more bills introduced—and passed—in 2022 and 2023 than ever before. The vast majority of these bills directly target LGBTQ+ youth, and transgender, non-binary, gender non-conforming, and other non-cisgender gender-expansive (referred to as “transgender and gender-expansive youth” throughout this report for brevity) youth in particular, banning or regulating their ability to live openly and freely as their true selves in everywhere from school bathrooms and athletics, to accessing gender-affirming care. Anti-LGBTQ+ legislative attacks were so pervasive in 2023, the Human Rights Campaign issued a [National State of Emergency for LGBTQ+ Americans](#) for the first time in their 40+ year history.

study. In many cases, the cards remain stacked against LGBTQ+ youth in terms of acceptance and support from their families, their mental health and safety in schools. Transgender and gender-expansive youth also face unique challenges, with harmful anti-trans laws, and a lack of inclusive school policies and procedures, creating obstacles to their safety and well-being.

However, there is also room for hope. Across the country, LGBTQ+ youth are advocating for inclusivity and equality in their homes, schools and communities. Parents, caregivers, school administrators, educators, counselors and other youth-serving professionals can support LGBTQ+ youth by following their lead and implementing the actionable guidelines at the end of this report, in order to create safe, affirming, and welcoming spaces for LGBTQ+ youth.



**Parents and families have an important role to play in the lives of their LGBTQ+ children. Family support can be one of the strongest assets and sources of confidence and resilience LGBTQ+ youth have—or, in its absence, the biggest threat to LGBTQ+ youth’s ability to live safely, happily, and openly as their true authentic selves.**

## Outness to Family

“Coming out” to one’s parents and close family members can be an important and self-affirming developmental milestone in one’s sexual orientation/gender identity journey. The choice to come out to one’s parents and family is often driven by the pre-existing strength of their relationships, with LGBTQ+ youth more likely to disclose identity to their parents, and to do so earlier, when they already feel loved, supported, and cared for. Being met with parental and familial acceptance and affirmation after disclosing one’s identity can further have a substantial impact on youth health and well-being, including increased self-esteem, and lower risk of depression and suicidality.

**A plurality of LGBTQ+ youth are out to at least one member of their immediate family (parent/guardian and siblings)—but many remain fully closeted (Table 1).**

**82.7%** of youth in our sample have disclosed their LGBTQ+ sexual orientation and/or gender identity (SOGI) to at least one member of their immediate family

- **Over half (56.3%)** have disclosed to some members, but not all

- **A quarter (26.4%)** have disclosed to all

**Lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, and other non-heterosexual (LGBQ+) youth are less likely to be closeted to their immediate family, compared with** transgender, non-binary, gender non-conforming, and other non-cisgender gender-expansive (“transgender and gender-expansive”) youth.

- **80.1%** LGBQ+ youth vs. **67.4%** of transgender and gender-expansive youth are **out to at least one** member of their immediate family.

## **LGBTQ+ youth were not equally out to members of their family**

- Among all LGBTQ+ youth:
  - **Four in ten (40.9%)** were out to all their **parent(s)/guardian(s)**
  - **A third (34.3%)** were out to all of their **sibling(s)**
  - **Less than one in 20 (4.1%)** were out to all of their grandparents and other members of their **extended family**

## **Transgender and gender-expansive youth were less likely to be out to their families than LGBQ+ youth:**

- **Less than 6 in 10 (58.9%) transgender and gender-expansive youth** have disclosed their gender identity to at least some of their sibling(s), compared with **7 in 10 (70.9%) LGBQ+ youth** who have disclosed their sexual orientation

- **4 in 10 (43.9%)** transgender and gender-expansive youth are out to all of their parent(s)/guardian(s), compared with over half **(54.2%) of LGBTQ+ youth**

## **Spotlight: Transgender and Gender-Expansive Youth Outness and Gender Expression at Home**

**Transgender and gender-expansive youth report mixed experiences around their ability to live openly at home, and have their identities affirmed. While some are able to openly express themselves, for many, their families have been slow to adjust their language to catch up (Table 2).**

**When parents accept and affirm their child’s gender identity, the positive mental health impact can be substantial –and the harm in its absence could be life threatening.**

For instance, two-thirds (65.5%) of transgender and gender-expansive youth who report their families never refer to them with correct pronouns screened positive for depression;

in comparison, less than half (49.6%) of transgender and gender-expansive youth who report their families always use correct pronouns did (Figure 5a).

Seven in ten (72.1%) transgender and gender-expansive youth who report their families never refer to them with the correct name screened positive for anxiety, whereas six in ten (61.9%) of those whose families always use the correct name did so. (Figure 5b)

## Parental Support and Rejection

**Many parents and family members are on their own journey towards acceptance and understanding, adapting and adjusting over time to be more knowledgeable about their child's identity, and better able to express their support and to advocate on behalf of their children.**

Parents and other family members of LGBTQ+ youth may at first be reticent or unsure how to respond when their child comes out. At times, parents can respond in ways that cause harm, shaming or punishing their child, or at worst, subjecting their child to so-called "conversion" therapy or even expelling them from the family and kicking them out of the home. But parents can—and often are—loving, supportive, accepting, and affirming.

Within the present survey, LGBTQ+ youth reported a number of both positive and negative experiences with their parents, highlighting the complexity of these relationships. However, on average, parental support (Table 3) was more frequent than parental rejection (Table 4):

**Almost two-thirds (63.1%)** of LGBTQ+ youth reported at least one POSITIVE experience of parental support (Figure 6).<sup>2</sup>

**Over half (57.4%)** of LGBTQ+ youth reported at least one negative/rejecting experience (Figure 7).



## Age When Realized LGBTQ+ Identity

**On average, LGBTQ+ youth first realized their sexual orientation and/or gender identity (SOGI) in their preteen years.**

## Age of Disclosure

**On average, LGBTQ+ youth disclosed their sexual orientation (SO) to their friends earlier than their parents.**

**Well over half of LGBTQ+ youth first disclosed their sexual orientation to friends—though a third disclosed to friends and family at the same age.**

**Transgender and gender-expansive youth were even older when first disclosing their gender identity (GI).**

## Outness to Others

**Throughout adolescence—and, in fact, throughout life—LGBTQ+ youth grapple with when, and to who, to disclose their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. However, the vast majority of LGBTQ+ youth are out to at least some people in their lives (Table 7).**

Trends are similar between LGBTQ+ youth disclosing their sexual orientation (Figure 8), and transgender and gender-expansive youth disclosing their gender identity (Figure 9).

- Both LGBTQ+ and transgender and gender-expansive youth are most likely to be out to peers and friends their own age, including, in

descending order, LGBTQ+ friends, non-LGBTQ+ friends, and classmates.

- LGBTQ+ and transgender and gender-expansive youth are least likely to be out to their athletic coach(es) and/or their religious community.

# **LGBTQ+ Inclusive School Resources**

**LGBTQ+ youth have mixed access to inclusive school resources (Table 8).**

**LGBTQ+ youth are attending a school with a gender and sexuality alliance (sometimes referred to as a ‘gay -straight alliance’ GSA) or other similar club. This is a substantial increase from the three-fifths of youth who had access to a GSA through their school in the [2017 HRC Youth survey](#).**

**LGBTQ+ youth have access to LGBTQ+ inclusive sex education.<sup>4</sup>**

**LGBTQ+ youth have ever been taught about LGBTQ+ history.<sup>5</sup>**

In the absence of inclusive education, LGBTQ+ youth are taking their education into their own hands, and turning to the internet.

Over **8 in 10 (82.5%)** LGBTQ+ youth have ever used the internet to seek out LGBTQ+ specific sexual health and behavior information, and well over **9 in 10 (95.3%)** have used

the internet to seek out information about LGBTQ+ identities, and their own identity as an LGBTQ+ person (Table 9).

## Spotlight: Regional Differences

**Access to inclusive school resources differs by geographic region – with access much lower in those geographic regions of the United States with worse policy environments for LGBTQ+ people.<sup>6</sup>**

As ranked by the [Movement Advancement Project](#), states in the Northeast and West almost exclusively are categorized as having a high policy 'score' — meaning their policy environment is the most welcoming to LGBTQ+ people. States in the Midwest are mixed, whereas states in the South are almost exclusively ranked as having a low, or even negative, policy score, indicating a much more hostile political environment, with fewer protections and access to rights.

This same pattern is replicated in access to inclusive school resources.

For instance, over 8 in 10 LGBTQ+ youth in the Northeast and West are attending schools with a GSA, compared with 72% of LGBTQ+ youth in the Midwest, and less than two-thirds (63.5%) of youth in the South (Table 10).

Over a quarter of LGBTQ+ youth in both the Northeast and West received LGBTQ+-inclusive sex education, compared with 16% of LGBTQ+ youth in the Midwest, and just 11.5% of LGBTQ+ youth in the South.

## **Sports and Extracurricular Activity Participation**

Participating in school sports and other extracurricular activities can have numerous positive benefits for youth—regardless of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. Prior research has found that student athletes report lower levels of anxiety and depression,<sup>7</sup> higher levels of self-esteem and self-confidence,<sup>8</sup> and better grades and higher levels of academic performance.<sup>9</sup> Participation in school clubs, arts programs, and other extracurricular activities have similarly been linked to improved peer social support,<sup>10</sup> academic performance,<sup>11</sup> and positive youth development. Both sports and extracurricular activity participation are associated with school connectedness,<sup>12</sup> which in turn is associated with reduced risk behaviors, higher grades and graduation rates, and lower levels of suicidality and poor mental health.<sup>13</sup>

**1 in 5 (22.5%) of LGBTQ+ youth were playing sports, including 17.6% who were playing sports in school (Table 11). LGBTQ+ youth were less likely than U.S. youth overall to be playing sports: as reported in the CDC’s 2021 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), half (49.1%) of high school aged youth nationwide played on at least one sports team at the time of the survey.<sup>14</sup>**

**Transgender and gender-expansive youth** were less likely to be playing sports than LGBQ+ youth.

Extracurricular activity participation was substantially higher:

**2 in 3 (64.8%)** LGBTQ+ youth were participating in at least one extracurricular activity (Table 10), including:

- 65% of **LGBQ+ youth**
- 64% of **transgender and gender-expansive youth**

## **Spotlight: Transgender and Gender-Expansive Youth Experiences at School and Anti-LGBTQ+ Legislation**

Transgender and gender-expansive youth face unique barriers to being able to show up and live authentically at school, such as being barred from using locker rooms or

bathroom facilities that match their gender identity, or not being addressed by the appropriate pronouns or their chosen names. These negative school experiences have damaging implications for transgender and gender-expansive youth, and further contribute to hostile learning environments where they feel unsafe and unprotected.

Data from the present survey shows that transgender and gender-expansive youth still struggle to be visible and affirmed in their schools.

Compared with transgender and gender-expansive youth surveyed on HRC's [2017 Youth Survey](#), transgender and gender-expansive youth in 2022 were less likely to present authentically and have their gender identity affirmed at school.

## **In 2017:**

**were able to use a  
restroom that matches  
their gender identity**

**were able to always  
dress or express  
themselves in a way**

**that reflects their  
gender identity**

**were always referred to  
with the correct  
pronoun**

The intervening years between surveys also saw a spike in anti-LGBTQ+ legislation, much of which specifically targeted transgender and gender-expansive youth, and the spaces they can freely access at school while living authentically. In 2017, less than 50 anti-transgender bills were introduced into state houses, none of which were enacted into law. In 2022, almost 150 anti-transgender bills were introduced, fewer than 20 of which passed. As of this writing in July 2023, however, over 500 anti-LGBTQ+ bills, including over 200 anti-transgender bills, were introduced into state legislatures during the 2023 legislative session, and over 80 were signed into law, including:

- **10 states** have passed “bathroom bills,” which ban transgender and gender-expansive K-12 students’ from using school bathrooms, locker rooms, and other gendered facilities in accordance with their gender identity.
- **23 states** have passed “sports bans,” which heavily regulates or outright bans transgender and gender-expansive students from participating in school sports and competing on sports teams in accordance with their gender identity.
- **6 states** have passed “forced outing” bills, which require school staff and teachers to disclose to the parents of transgender and gender-expansive youth if their child is using a different name, pronoun, style of dress, etc. — even if doing so would risk harm to the child.

- **6 states** have passed “Don’t Say LGBTQ+” bills, which censor or ban curriculum content which discusses LGBTQ+ people, sexual orientation, and/or gender identity.

All of these bills serve to heavily regulate where, when, and how transgender and gender-expansive youth can live authentically –if not outright exclude them from spaces of daily adolescent life. And some of them seem to be working:

- Transgender and gender-expansive youth in states that had a bathroom ban as of year-end 2022 were significantly less likely than those in states without a ban to ever use school bathrooms in accordance with their GI (Figure 12).<sup>15</sup>
- Similarly, transgender and gender-expansive youth in states with a transgender and gender-expansive sports ban were significantly less likely to be currently playing at least one school sport, than transgender and gender-expansive youth living in states without a ban.<sup>16</sup>



# School Safety

**Almost half (46.1%)** of LGBTQ+ youth report feeling unsafe in at least one school setting (Table 13).<sup>17</sup>

Transgender and gender-expansive youth are more likely to report feeling unsafe in school than their LGBQ+ peers:



- **Over half (53.9%)** of transgender and gender-expansive youth, versus **46% LGBQ+ youth**, feel unsafe in at least one school setting.

**The least safe places for LGBTQ+ youth are locker rooms and bathrooms. In both settings, transgender and gender-expansive youth are substantially more likely to report feeling unsafe.**

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## Physical and Verbal Harassment and Violence

### Almost 6 in 10 (59.4%)

LGBTQ+ youth—including **62.6%** of transgender and gender-expansive youth—have been “teased, bullied, or treated badly” at school for at least one reason<sup>18</sup> in the prior year (Table 14).



**More than half each** of LGBTQ+ youth (51.7%), and transgender and gender-expansive youth (55.6%) were victimized specifically due to their sexual identity, gender identity, and/or gender expression (SO/GI/GE; Figure 14).<sup>19</sup>

## School Responsiveness to Bullying

**Despite pervasiveness of school bullying, many teachers and staff remain unaware—or are explicitly unhelpful when informed.**

**Only 1 in 5 (22.4%)** of LGBTQ+ youth ever told a teacher or staff member about bullying encountered at school (Table 16). Of those who told

- **Almost 1 in 4 (23.3%)** said the adult “didn’t help me at all”
- **Only 1 in 5 (20.0%)** said the adult “helped me a lot.”

Transgender and gender-expansive youth were **more likely** to have told an adult than LGBTQ+ peers — but were **less likely** to report this adult helped them a lot (Figure 15).



# Depression, Anxiety, and Stress

The mental health disparities between LGBTQ+ youth and non-LGBTQ+ youth continue to be an alarming trend. Today's LGBTQ+ youth face a variety of stressors — harassment, family and peer rejection, bullying from their peers, isolation and a lack of a sense of belonging — that have a major impact on their overall well-being. Compared to their non-LGBTQ+ peers, LGBTQ+ youth report much higher rates of depression, anxiety, and lower self-esteem than their cisgender and heterosexual peers, as well as higher rates of maladaptive coping mechanisms such as substance use.<sup>21</sup>

Data from the present study, which included the clinical screening tools, the [PHQ-2](#) (to screen for depression), the [GAD-2](#) (to screen for anxiety), and the [PHQ-4](#) (to screen for psychological distress), reveals that many LGBTQ+ youth are experiencing a mental health crisis (Table 17).

## Among all LGBTQ+ youth surveyed:

**Transgender and gender-expansive youth were more likely than LGBQ+ youth to report all four poor mental health outcomes.<sup>22</sup>**

# Access to LGBTQ+ Inclusive Mental Health Services

**Despite the high burden on mental health seen among LGBTQ+ youth, utilization of mental health services is mixed.**

**Less than half (48.9%)** of LGBTQ+ youth received therapy in the prior year (Table 18).

- **Over 4 in 10 (41.7%)** youth overall –and over **8 in 10 (81.7%)** of those who did not receive therapy—had an unmet need for therapy, defined as wanting to receive therapy, but being unable to do so.

Of those who used therapy or counseling services in the prior year, the majority were able to access LGBTQ+ inclusive care.

- **Almost 8 in 10 (79%)** youth reported their therapist was **very (38.2%)** or **somewhat (40.8%)** informed about LGBTQ+ issues.



## Pride and Internalized Homophobia/Transphobia

**LGBTQ+ youth have mixed feelings about their sexual orientation and/or gender identity.**

**However, substantial proportions have strong negative feelings about their LGBTQ+ identity.**



## Hopes, Fears, and Dreams

**LGBTQ+ youth have a mixture of hope and fear when looking towards their future educational and career opportunities.**

# Higher Education Aspirations

The vast majority of LGBTQ+ youth are considering attending college (Table 20).<sup>23</sup> But many fear their LGBTQ+ identity will negatively affect their future college and higher education opportunities.<sup>24</sup>

As a result, LGBTQ+ youth are looking for colleges and universities to have the resources and policies they need to ensure they can feel safe when in attendance:

**LGBTQ+ youth report it would be important that the college or university they attend has an LGBTQ+ inclusive non-discrimination policy, and/or an LGBTQ+ resource center on campus.**

## **Career Aspirations – and Fears**

## **Future LGBTQ+ acceptance**

**But, despite it all, LGBTQ+ youth remain hopeful for the future.**





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educators and school administrators should know.

and media specialists should know.

Download

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In 2022, HRC and the University of Connecticut surveyed nearly 13,000 LGBTQ+ youth (age 13-18) from across the United States on their health, well-being, school and home experiences, and more. Full results from this survey are presented in the 2023 LGBTQ+ Youth Report. Below, we present key findings every mental health professional should know, along with action steps you can take to support the LGBTQ+ youth in your community.

**Key findings you should know:**

- LGBTQ+ YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH:** LGBTQ+ youth are experiencing a mental health crisis, even more than the one seen for youth and adolescents in general.

  - 88% of LGBTQ+ youth, including 98% of transgender and gender-expansive youth, assessed positive for depression (on the PHQ-9, included in the report).**

    - In comparison, 42% of all high school youth, and 58% of heterosexual high school youth, surveyed on the 2021 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBS) report perceived feelings of sadness.**
    - 63.9% of LGBTQ+ youth, and 68.2% of trans, gender and gender-expansive youth, assessed positive for anxiety (on the GAD-7).**
    - 59% of LGBTQ+ youth assessed positive for serious psychological distress (on the PCSD-10).**
  - ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES:** More LGBTQ+ youth report an unmet need for mental health care through all three vehicles, and the need is greatest for trans, gender and gender-expansive youth.

    - 64.7% of LGBTQ+ youth reported fair or poor ability to manage stress.**
  - Over 4 in 10 (41.2%) LGBTQ+ youth wanted to receive therapy but were unable to do so.**

    - Of the 48.8% of LGBTQ+ youth who received therapy in the prior year, almost 8 in 10 (82%) reported that their therapist was not LGBTQ+ affirming (49.8%) (based on LGBTQ+ issues assessed positive for depression (on the PHQ-9, included in the report).**
  - PRIDE AND RESILIENCE:** LGBTQ+ youth have mixed feelings about their own LGBTQ+ identity and the role it will play in their future.

    - More than 50% of LGBTQ+ youth, including 59% of transgender and gender-expansive youth, are proud to be part of the LGBTQ+ community. However:**

      - 1 in 4 (24%) wish they were not LGBTQ+.**
      - 1 in 4 (24%) had decreased when they think about being LGBTQ+.**
      - 4 in 10 (40%) feel critical about themselves when they think about being LGBTQ+.**
    - More than half (56.1%) of LGBTQ+ youth believe that the LGBTQ+ community is accepted more and more each day. However:**

      - Over a quarter (27%) of LGBTQ+ youth, including a third (33%) of transgender and gender-expansive youth, fear their LGBTQ+ identity will negatively affect their college or higher education opportunities.**

## For Mental Health Professionals

Download these recommendations, along with key report findings all mental health professionals should know.

Download

# Ways to Support LGBTQ+ Youth

## For Parents & Caregivers



...At Home and With Family

Regardless of whether your young person identifies as LGBTQ+, speak positively about LGBTQ+ people and share age-appropriate books, movies, and resources with them that teach about LGBTQ+ people, histories, and identities.

• Check out Welcoming Schools Booklists for ideas <https://welcomingschools.org/resources/books>

Affirm your LGBTQ+ young person by sharing your pride in their identity, positive messages of love and acceptance, and your hope for their future.

Use the name and pronoun LGBTQ+ youth in your life go by, and allow them to express themselves and dress in accordance with their gender identity in age-appropriate ways.

Support your LGBTQ+ young person in sharing their identity (including name and pronoun) with their siblings as well as extended family if it is safe to do so.

### *...At School*

Learn about and engage with your local school board to advocate for inclusive policies, practices, and curriculum for all LGBTQ+ students.

Show up for your LGBTQ+ young person in school by advocating for inclusive practices in their classrooms and professional development training for their teachers.

• Check out Welcoming Schools Training Program -

<https://welcomingschools.org/resources/training>.

Check in with your young person about bullying at school and ask for specific details to determine if they are being teased or verbally harassed, being physically harassed, or otherwise being bullied.

### *...In Your Community*

Connect with local LGBTQ+ organizations in your community.

• Check out the database of local LGBTQ+ community centers with our partners at CenterLink -

<https://www.lgbtqcenters.org/LGBTCenters>.

Seek out LGBTQ+ affirming mental health providers and resources in your community.

• Check out the national [LGBTQ+ Healthcare Directory](#) from GLMA and the Tegan and Sara Foundation, or with your local LGBTQ+ community center, to find an affirming provider near you.

- Familiarize yourself with anti-LGBTQ+ and pro-equality legislation and policy in your state and community: <https://www.hrc.org/campaigns/national-state-of-emergency-for-lgbtq-americans>.
  - Speak up and fight back against anti-LGBTQ+ legislation, through having honest conversations with people in your community, contacting your legislators, and getting involved with local efforts
  - Check out HRC's Count Me In campaign to learn more about getting engaged in your local community - <https://www.hrc.org/campaigns/count-me-in>.
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## For Educators & School Administrators



### *...In Your Classroom*

- Where possible, post positive and LGBTQ+ affirming symbols, such as pride flags and safe space stickers, in your classroom and your school.
  
- Where possible, provide age-appropriate books in your classroom that teach about LGBTQ+ people, histories, and identities.
  - Check out Welcoming Schools Booklists for ideas <https://welcomingschools.org/resources/books>.
  
- Intentionally check-in on LGBTQ+ students about their experiences with harassment and violence in school and report incidents to administration.
  
- Consistently use the correct name and pronoun for all students and provide this information to substitutes and other educators in your school.
  - For more classroom inclusion ideas, check out Welcoming Schools' "[Checklist for Creating an LGBTQ+ Inclusive School](#)"

### *...In Your School*

- Advocate for LGBTQ+ inclusive practices in your school and professional development training on bias-based bullying for you and your fellow educators.
  - Check out Welcoming Schools Training Program - <https://welcomingschools.org/resources/training>.
  
- Ensure your school has a process to address bias-based harassment and violence that explicitly protects LGBTQ+ students.

Where possible, include LGBTQ+ people and events in history curriculum and provide LGBTQ+ inclusive sexual health education.

Create or support a Gender & Sexuality Alliance (GSA) in your middle school and/or high school to provide support for LGBTQ+ students and allies.

### *...In Your District*

Provide LGBTQ+ affirming local resources including affirming mental health resources to support LGBTQ+ students and families.

• Check out the database of local LGBTQ+ community centers with our partners at CenterLink <https://www.lgbtqcenters.org/LGBTCenters>.

Where possible, advocate for trans-inclusive participation in school sports and physical education.

Where possible, advocate for LGBTQ+ inclusion at your local school board.

## **For Librarians & Media Specialists**



### *...In Your Library*

Where possible, post positive and LGBTQ+ affirming symbols, such as pride flags and safe space stickers, in your library.

Where possible, provide age-appropriate books in your library that teach about LGBTQ+ people, histories, and identities.

• Check out Welcoming Schools Booklists for ideas - <https://welcomingschools.org/resources/books>.

Ensure your library's internet protection software or parental control software does not block youth's access to appropriate LGBTQ+ content such as information about LGBTQ+ identities and age-appropriate sexual health information.

Add pronouns to library accounts to decrease misgendering of patrons and add staff pronouns to name plates, name badges, and the library's website to normalize pronoun use for everyone.

### *...In Your Community*

- Host all-ages LGBTQ+ community events such as Drag Story Hour and Pride Book Clubs to celebrate LGBTQ+ culture within your library.
  
  - Ensure your library provides professional development training on bias-based bullying for your full team.
    - If you are based in a school, check out Welcoming Schools Training Program - <https://welcomingschools.org/resources/training>.
  
  - Provide LGBTQ+ affirming local resources including affirming mental health resources to support LGBTQ+ youth and families.
    - Check out the database of local LGBTQ+ community centers with our partners at CenterLink <https://www.lgbtqcenters.org/LGBTCenters>.
  
  - Allow all patrons, especially youth, the option of using a chosen name instead of a legal name on their library card and library account.
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## For Mental Health Professionals



### *...In Your Practice*

- Ensure your school, organization, or practice has an inclusive non-discrimination statement that explicitly includes sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression—both for patients/students and staff.
  
- Seek out clinical training on supporting LGBTQ+ youth in their mental wellness.
  
- Provide training and professional development to front line staff on working with LGBTQ+ clients.
  
- Ensure intake forms and youth files allow for chosen names and add a section for pronouns of clients.
  
- Have a policy and practice to encourage transgender, gender non-conforming, and non-binary youth to be able to be their full authentic self in counseling sessions without fear of being outed to their parents, caregivers, and/or family by ensuring their chosen names and pronouns are kept confidential.

### *...In Your Community*

Provide referrals, including letters of support, to providers of gender affirming care for transgender and gender-expansive youth and their families.

Provide LGBTQ+ affirming local resources to support LGBTQ+ youth and families.

• Check out the database of local LGBTQ+ community centers with our partners at CenterLink <https://www.lgbtqcenters.org/LGBTCenters>.

Connect with local schools and youth-serving organizations to share information about your LGBTQ+-affirming services and help reduce the stigma of seeking counseling.

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## Methodology

[Download Report Tables](#)

### About the survey

This study was designed to follow up on [HRC and the University of Connecticut's 2017 LGBTQ+ Youth Survey](#) and the growing body of research highlighting disparities and unique challenges for LGBTQ+ youth. Following, in 2022, HRC Foundation and faculty at the University of Connecticut once again created and fielded a survey to assess the multiple factors and experiences that influence the wellbeing of queer youth.

The 150+ question quantitative survey, the 2022 LGBTQ+ Youth Survey, was fielded between January and October 2022, via Qualtrics.com. The survey was advertised through social media

(1) Participants could send a photo to the research team of any government- or institution-issued photo identification (e.g., school ID, college ID, Driver's license or passport). Participants were told that photos could be redacted from their image of their ID. Through this method, the research team verified that the person's identity, age, and name, matched what was reported.

(2) Participants could video chat (via Facetime, Zoom, Webex, Facebook messenger) with the research team to verify their identity in a way that keeps them anonymous (e.g., their name does not need to be attached to their video), and were

both to HRC followers and a general LGBTQ+ online audience. It was also promoted and shared by other LGBTQ+ focused and allied organizations, social media influencers and celebrities.

All youth who were interested in participating in the survey were first screened for eligibility (more information on this below). Individuals that were both eligible and deemed to not be scammers or bots were sent a link to an anonymous, online, self-report Qualtrics.com survey through an email address they provided at the end of the screener survey.

Respondents consented to participate in the survey by filling on an online consent form and were given the option to receive a \$5 gift card (to Amazon or Starbucks), and/or a free one-year membership to the Human Rights Campaign, as an optional thanks for completing the survey. The consent form, survey questionnaire, and research protocol were reviewed and approved by the University of Connecticut Institutional Review Board.

### **About the sample**

Youth were eligible to participate in the survey if they (a) self-identified as LGBTQ+; (b) were 13-18 years of age; (c) resided in the United States of America at the time of survey completion; and (d) consented to be part of the survey. All respondents were screened into the survey as part of providing a qualifying answer or combination of answers to the survey questions about sexual orientation, gender identity and sex assigned at birth. The research team also reviewed IP Addresses to determine if a

then able to provide an email through which they could receive remuneration.

Two research assistants processed all payments and identity verification. Through these two methods, 95 participants had their identity verified with photo identification (e.g., state driver's license, passport, military ID), 106 participants had their identity verified with their school identification, and nine participants had their identity verified over a video call (e.g., Zoom, Facetime). If consensus could not be reached over verification, we opted to provide the payment to the participant. An additional 714 participants were labeled as needing to be verified but were unable to receive remuneration as they did not follow up with the research team through one of the two options mentioned above. This information was not available to HRC Foundation staff.

All names and other identifying information were kept separate from the survey data analysis file, and was not provided to HRC researchers, ensuring responses remained de-identified.

17,578 respondents were deemed eligible, consented to participate, and started the survey, a total of 12,706 (72.3%) of whom completed at least half of the questions and thus were eligible for inclusion in data analysis. Respondents were further excluded if they were missing data on sexual orientation and gender identity (n=40 respondents excluded) or age and race/ethnicity (n=51 excluded), for a final analysis sample of 12,615 youth (71.8% of all respondents who initiated the survey), from all 50 states and Washington, DC.

screened participant had filled out duplicate screener surveys.

Given the massive proliferation in scam and bots, the University of Connecticut research team further worked to screen out scammers before enrolling participants in the survey. While the research team planned to send survey invitation links to all educational institutional emails (.edu, .us, .net, .org) without added verification, it became clear that scammers could obtain “.edu” emails from community colleges. These scammers were identified as screener responses from the same community college .edu would be submitted very quickly in a short time span with very similar responses (e.g., same sexual orientation, same gender identity).

Those with non-institutional affiliated accounts (e.g., @gmail.com) had to engage in one of two verification methods in order to participate:

### **About the data**

Data was imported from Qualtrics into SPSS and Excel for initial data cleaning by University of Connecticut researchers. For the present report, HRC Foundation researchers imported data into Stata (v.17) for final data cleaning, variable creation, and analysis.

This report provides an overview of key findings from the 2022 LGBTQ+ Youth Survey, but does not attempt to represent all of the data or the different intersectional experiences across the LGBTQ community. The HRC Foundation will be releasing future analyses of this survey data exploring how different experiences, identities and variables interact to contribute to the well-being of queer and trans youth, as well as exploring additional outcomes and sectors of daily life.

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## **Respondent Profile**

**The HRC 2023 LGBTQ Youth Report features responses from 12,615 young people aged 13-18 who identify broadly as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and/or other non-heterosexual sexual identities or non-cisgender gender identities.**

## **Sexual Orientation**

Over 98% of the sample (n=12,455) identified as at least one non-heterosexual sexual identity. Respondents could either select a single sexual identity from a presented list, or write in a second or alternative identity by selecting something not listed; write-in answers were back coded to existing categories if available (or new categories were created if >30 people wrote in an identity), and respondents were allowed to be included in multiple identity groups (e.g. if a person selected “bisexual” and wrote in “pansexual” they would be included in both groups).

The most common identities were gay or lesbian (29.5%) or bisexual/biromantic (27.7%), followed by pansexual, asexual/ace, and queer.

## Gender Identity

Over two-thirds of youth in the survey (69.5%: n=8,768) identified as at least one non-cisgender gender identity and are included in the transgender and gender-expansive group used throughout this report (respondents were able to report multiple gender identities, as well as write in gender identities).

Approximately a third of the sample (31.4%) identified specifically as transgender, including those who identified as transgender girls/women, and transgender boys/men. Over a quarter (26.6%) of the sample identified as non-binary – over twice that identified as such in 2018 (12.2%). More than a quarter (28.4%) identified as another non-cisgender identity, such as gender non-conforming, genderqueer, agender, demigender, genderfluid, and more.

## **Race/Ethnicity**

Approximately two-thirds of the sample (64%) identified exclusively as white, non-Hispanic/Latinx. A little under a fifth (17.8%) identified as Hispanic/Latinx, and 1 in 20 (4.8%) identified as Black.

A substantially higher percentage of youth in the present sample identified as white, and a substantially lower percentage identified as Black or Latinx, than is seen in the general U.S. youth population – according to the [2021 YRBS](#), a national survey of high school aged youth conducted by the CDC, only 50.7% of high school aged youth identify as white, a quarter (25.4%) identify as Hispanic/Latino, and over 1 in 10 (12.1%) identify as black.

## **Grade and Age**

Respondents were, on average, 15.8 years old

## **Geographic Region**

Respondents reside in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

## Other characteristics

- **35.4% (n=3,669)** respondents self-identify as having a physical, learning or mental disability.
- **93.9% (n=11,833)** currently live with a parent(s) or guardian (s)
  - **1.3% (n=169)** are currently unhoused, or living in a shelter, foster home, or group home
- **23.8% (n=3,002)** are currently employed at least part-time, and earning a paycheck

# Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Jeffrey M. Jones, “U.S. LGBT Identification Steady at 7.2%,” (Gallup, 2023), Available at <https://news.gallup.com/poll/470708/lgbt-identification-steady.aspx>; “Table 4: Number and percentage of students, by sexual identity — United States and selected U.S. sites, Youth Risk Behavior Surveys, 2021” (Centers for Disease Control Division of Adolescent and School Health, National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention, 2023), Available at [https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/supplemental-mmwr/students\\_by\\_sexual\\_identity.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/supplemental-mmwr/students_by_sexual_identity.htm)

<sup>2</sup> Experiencing an instance of parental support and/or rejection defined as stating that the event in question occurred “rarely,” “sometimes,” or “often” in response to the question “How often do your parents or caregivers...”

<sup>3</sup> The survey did not assess age of gender identity disclosure to friends and families, it only asked for the age transgender and gender-expansive people first told “anyone” they were not cisgender

<sup>4</sup> “Does your school offer curriculum related to sexual education?” Across the sample, half (49.8%) reported their school offers sex

<sup>15</sup> Three states had bathroom bans as of year-end 2022: Tennessee, Oklahoma, and Alabama

<sup>16</sup> 18 states had transgender and gender-expansive sports bans as of year-end 2022: Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Montana, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, and West Virginia.

<sup>17</sup> Feeling unsafe defined as reporting “never” or “rarely” (vs. “sometimes”, “usually”, or “always”) feeling safe in at least one of the following settings “while at school”: classrooms; bathrooms; locker rooms; hallways and stairwells; school library; cafeteria; school grounds; getting to /from school; and/or on the school bus;

<sup>18</sup> Youth reported the frequency they were “teased, bullied, or treated badly by other students at your school” in the prior year because of specific characteristics (e.g. “because of your sexual identity”). Respondents were considered to have experienced this if they reported it occurring “sometimes,” “often,” or “very often” (as opposed to “rarely” or “never”) for at least one of the reasons specified (“body weight”; “gender”; “race/ethnicity”; “sexual

education, but it is not LGBTQ+ inclusive. And 30.5% reported their school does not offer sex education at all.

<sup>5</sup> “Have any of your history classes ever had a lesson, unit, or chapter on LGBTQ+ history?”

<sup>6</sup> Geographic regions reflect official Census Regions and Divisions, as described in “Census Regions and Divisions’ of the United States,” available at

[https://www2.census.gov/geo/pdfs/maps-data/maps/reference/us\\_regdiv.pdf](https://www2.census.gov/geo/pdfs/maps-data/maps/reference/us_regdiv.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Lindsay A. Babiss and James E. Gangwisch, “Sports participation as a protective factor against depression and suicidal ideation in adolescents as mediated by self-esteem and social support,” *Journal of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics* 30 (5) (2009): 376–384; Kathleen E. Miller and Joseph H. Hoffman, “Mental Well-Being and Sport-Related Identities in College Students,” *Sociology of Sports Journal* 26 (2) (2009): 335–356; Michael J. Panza and others, “Adolescent Sport Participation and Symptoms of Anxiety and Depression: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis,” *Journal of Sports & Exercise Psychology* (2020), available at <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32438339/>; Emily Pluhar and others, “Team Sport Athletes May Be Less Likely To Suffer Anxiety or Depression than Individual Sport Athletes,” *Journal of Sports Science & Medicine* 18 (3)

identity”; “religion”; “disability”; “because I am an immigrant to the US”; “how masculine or feminine I am.”)

<sup>19</sup> Includes those who stated they were categorized as having been victimized due to their “gender” or “how masculine or feminine I am” (gender expression)

<sup>20</sup> The question prompt(s) asked “in the last 30 days, how often did the following happen to you in person at school?” and respondents could answer “Never” ; “1 or 2 times”; “3 or 4 times”; “5 or 6 times”; or “7 or more times” for four different forms of bullying:

- Other students called me names
- Other students made fun of me
- Other students picked on me
- I got hit and pushed by other students.

A respondent was considered to have been bullied if they reported that any of the items occurred at any frequency other than “never.”

<sup>21</sup> For example: Choukas-Bradley, S., Thoma, B.C. (2022). *Mental Health Among LGBT Youth*. In: VanderLaan, D.P., Wong, W.I. (eds) *Gender and Sexuality Development. Focus on Sexuality Research*. Springer, Cham. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-84273-4\\_18](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-84273-4_18); Stephen T. Russel and Jessica T. Fish, “Mental

(2019): 490–496.

<sup>8</sup> Carly B. Slutzky and Sandra D. Simpkins, “The link between children’s sport participation and self-esteem: Exploring the mediating role of sport self-concept,” *Psychology of Sport and Exercise* 10 (3) (2009): 381–389; Scott L. Zuckerman and others, “The behavioral, psychological and social impacts of team sports: a systematic review and meta-analysis,” *The Physician and Sports Medicine* (2020), available at <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33196337/>

<sup>9</sup> Burns and others, “Sports Participation Correlates With Academic Achievement”; Susan Rankin and others, “The Influence of Climate on the Academic and Athletic Success of Student-Athletes: Results from a Multi-Institutional National Study,” *Journal of Higher Education* 87 (5) (2016): 701–730; Dara Shifrer and others, “College-Going Benefits of High School Sports Participation: Race and Gender Differences over Three Decades,” *Youth & Society* 47 (3) (2015): 295–318.

<sup>10</sup> Andrew Martinez and others, “Involvement in extracurricular activities: Identifying differences in perceptions of school climate,” *Educational and Developmental Psychologist* 33(1)(2016): 70-85  
<https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1017/edp.2016.7> ; Eve Oberle and others, “Benefits of extracurricular participation in early adolescence: Associations with peer belonging and mental health,” *Journal of Youth and*

*Health in lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) Youth,” Annual Reviews in Clinical Psychology* 12(2016):465-487. Available at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4887282/>

<sup>22</sup> Screening positive for depression is based on the PHQ-2, a 2-question screening tool which assesses frequency, over prior two weeks, of being

- “bothered by the following problems”
- “little interest or pleasure in doing things”
- “feeling down, depressed, or hopeless”

Screening positive for anxiety is based on the GAD-2, a 2-question screening tool which assesses frequency, over prior two weeks, of being

- “bothered by the following problems”
- “feeling nervous, anxious, or on edge”
- “not being able to stop or control worrying”

Screening positive for severe psychological distress is based on the PHQ-4, a 4-questions screening tool which combines the question prompts from the PHQ-2 screening tool for depression, and GAD-4 screening tool for anxiety (see above). Scores are categorized into 4 categories: none, mild, moderate, or severe psychological distress.

Adolescence, 38(2019): 2255-2270.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-019-01110-2>

<sup>11</sup> Nancy Darling and others, "Participation in school-based extracurricular activities and adolescent adjustment," *Journal of Leisure Research*, 37(1)(2005): 51-76. Available at <https://doi.org/10.1080/00222216.2005.11950040>; Misha D. Haghighat and Casey A. Knifsend, "The longitudinal influence of 10th grade extracurricular activity involvement: Implications for 12th grade academic practices and future educational attainment," *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 48(2019): 609-619. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-018-0947-x>

<sup>12</sup> Andrew Martinez and others, "Involvement in Extracurricular Activities: Identifying Differences in Perceptions of School Climate," *The Educational and Developmental Psychologist* 33 (1) (2016): 70–84; Benjamin Oosterhoff and others, "Activity-specific pathways among duration of organized activity involvement, social support, and adolescent well-being: Findings from a nationally representative sample," *Journal of Adolescence* 60 (2017): 83–93.

<sup>13</sup> "School Connectedness," (Atlanta, GA: Centers for Disease Control, Division of Population Health, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, 2022) available at: [https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/school\\_connectedness.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/school_connectedness.htm)

Ability to manage stress over past 30 days is based on response to the question "On a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 being ineffective and 10 being effective, how would you rate your ability to manage stress in the past 30 days?" Those who answered 4 or lower were categorized as having fair or poor ability to manage stress.

<sup>23</sup> Restricted to respondents in grades 10 or higher

<sup>24</sup> Defined as "strongly" or "somewhat" agreeing to the statement "My LGBTQ+ identity will negatively affect my future college and higher education opportunities."

<sup>14</sup> Shannon L. Michael and others, "Dietary and physical activity behaviors in 2021 and changes from 2019 to 2021 among high school students – Youth Risk Behavior Survey, United States, 2021," *MMWR* 72(1)(2023):75-83. Available at [https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/72/su/su7201a9.htm?s\\_cid=su7201a9\\_w](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/72/su/su7201a9.htm?s_cid=su7201a9_w)

# Acknowledgements

## HRC Foundation

The HRC Foundation — a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization — envisions a world where all LGBTQ+ people can participate fully in the systems that shape our daily lives. Through public education, research, and policy and practice change, the Foundation's impact can be felt in schools, on factory floors and corporate suites, and in places of worship. It touches LGBTQ+ lives from childhood through end-of-life, people of all races, ethnicities, sexual orientations, gender identities, abilities and religious beliefs, in big cities and small towns, in the United States and across the globe.

## Youth Well-Being

The HRC Foundation's Youth Well-Being Program is dedicated to improving the lived experience of LGBTQ+ youth in everyday institutions of daily life--families, schools, after-

## Report authors:

**[Shoshana K. Goldberg, PhD MPH](#), Director of Public Education & Research, HRC Foundation**

Shoshana K. Goldberg is the Director of Public Education & Research at the HRC Foundation. In her role, she oversees research projects that use quantitative and qualitative data to better understand the lived experiences of LGBTQ+ individuals in all aspects and dimensions of daily life, as well as public education products that aim to educate and inform advocates, policy makers and the general public.

Prior to joining to HRC, Goldberg held both research and academic positions in the fields of LGBTQ+ health and policy, working with organizations such as The Williams Institute at the UCLA School of Law, UNC-Chapel Hill, and Strength in Numbers Consulting Group. Through

school enrichment programs, community centers, health and wellness programs, child welfare, and other systems of care. The Youth Well-Being Program includes the [Time to THRIVE](#) conferences, [Project THRIVE](#), the [Youth Ambassador program](#), the [Parents for Transgender Equality Council](#) and a portfolio of training and educational resources to help youth-serving professionals promote the overall well-being of LGBTQ+ youth.

### **The Public Education & Research Program**

The HRC Foundation's Public Education & Research Program spearheads a wide variety of LGBTQ+ advocacy and outreach campaigns, working to ensure that the HRC Foundation's resources and programs are timely, impactful and inclusive. In addition to publishing resource guides, informational materials and reports, the team conducts original quantitative and qualitative research exploring the lived experiences of LGBTQ+ people. The program also collaborates with experts and provides guidance to other HRC initiatives in support of efforts to advance LGBTQ+ equality and well-being.

### **Welcoming Schools**

HRC Foundation's Welcoming Schools (<https://welcomingschools.org>) is the most comprehensive bias-based bullying prevention program in the nation to provide LGBTQ+ and gender inclusive professional development training, lesson plans, booklists and resources specifically designed for educators and youth-serving professionals. Our program uses an

her prior work, she has co-authored numerous academic articles, book chapters and research briefs, gaining expertise in the use of population-based data to understand the demographics of the LGBTQ+ population, as well as how existing social, structural and political factors contribute to vulnerabilities, marginalization and health disparities faced by the LGBTQ+ community.

Goldberg holds a Master's of Public Health in Maternal and Child Health, and a Ph.D. in Maternal and Child Health and Epidemiology, both earned from the Gillings School of Global Public Health at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. She is currently based in Brooklyn, N.Y.

### **[Ted Lewis, MEd](#), Director of Youth and Family Programs**

Ted Lewis, MEd, serves as the director of Youth & Family Programs in HRC's Foundation. In this role, they work with the All Children-All Families program, HRC Foundation's LGBTQ+ advocacy program within child welfare and social services systems, and the Youth Well-Being program, which is dedicated to improving the lived experience of LGBTQ+ youth in everyday institutions of daily life.

Ted brought nearly two decades of experience to their role at HRC. Prior to this role, Ted served as the executive director of Side by Side, a Richmond-based LGBTQ+ youth organization and was the founding LGBTQ+ staff position at UNC Charlotte and the University of Richmond. Ted has also consulted with Fortune 500 companies, K-12 schools, colleges and

intersectional, anti-racist lens dedicated to actionable policies and practices. We uplift school communities with critical tools to embrace family diversity, create LGBTQ+ and gender inclusive schools, prevent bias-based bullying, and support transgender and non-binary students.

### **University of Connecticut Research team:**

#### **[Dr. Ryan Watson](#), Associate Professor, University of Connecticut**

Dr. Ryan Watson is an Associate Professor at the University of Connecticut and was the lead researcher who ran both the 2017 and 2022 iterations of the LGBTQ+ Youth Survey, as well as co-led the [2018 LGBTQ+ Youth Report](#) which utilized data from the 2017 survey. His program of research is focused on reducing health disparities among sexual and gender minority (SGM) youth and young adults. Motivated by the urgent need to reduce the inequities in health for vulnerable populations, he has focused his scholarship on SGM youth and young adults, their relationships within family and school contexts, and their health experiences. Collaborating with a prolific team of scholars, he has been awarded over a million dollars in federal funding and published more than 125 peer-reviewed papers in the spirit of better understanding the mechanisms that drive well-documented injustices in health, school, and community experiences for SGM individuals.

universities, and nonprofit organizations on LGBTQ+ inclusion. They hold a Master's of Education from the University of South Carolina.

#### **[Ellen Kahn](#), Senior Director, Programs and Partnerships**

Ellen Kahn is the senior director, programs and partnerships at the Human Rights Campaign. Since joining HRC in 2005, Kahn has provided vision and deep expertise in shaping public education and advocacy efforts on behalf of LGBTQ youth and families. Kahn oversees a portfolio of highly successful programs and initiatives that advance LGBTQ+ inclusive policies and practices in key institutions of daily life; All Children—All Families; Welcoming Schools; the HBCU Program, Health and Aging, and Youth Well-Being, which includes HRC's Time to Thrive summits and the Project THRIVE campaign. Kahn is the staff lead for the Parents for Transgender Equality and brings high level thought leadership to HRC's work to protect transgender youth at home, at school and in the public square.

Prior to joining HRC, Kahn spent 12 years at the Whitman-Walker Health in various roles; director of the Lesbian Services Program, associate director of LGBTQ Health Promotion, and as supervisor of a behavioral health program for people with living with HIV. While at Whitman-Walker Health, Kahn established "Choosing Children," a robust program for LGBTQ+ parents and prospective parents, including "Maybe Baby" groups, an annual "Parenting Day," and a range of support groups for LGBTQ+ parents.

Kahn was a founding board member of Rainbow Families DC, the capital area’s support and education organization for LGBTQ+-headed families. She has facilitated “Maybe Baby” groups for over 15 years and consults with dozens of prospective LGBTQ parents each year. Kahn received her B.S. from Temple University and her M.S.S. from the Bryn Mawr College School of Social Work and Social Research.

Goldberg S. K., Lewis T., Kahn E., Watson R. J. (2023). *2023 LGBTQ+ Youth Report*. Human Rights Campaign Foundation. [hrc.im/youthreport2023](https://hrc.im/youthreport2023)

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