

SUPPORTING HIGH SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH

Increasing Access to Mental Health for All

What is mental health?

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being, which affects how we think, feel, and act. Mental health also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. Mental health issues can include diagnosed mental health illness. Mental health is treatable, yet many suffer in silence.

We all have mental health, and it exists on a spectrum. Like our physical health, our mental health can be thriving, can be just fine, or perhaps ailing - and sometimes all at the same time! Circumstances we experience, diagnoses we live with, and the environments we live in can all impact our mental health profoundly.

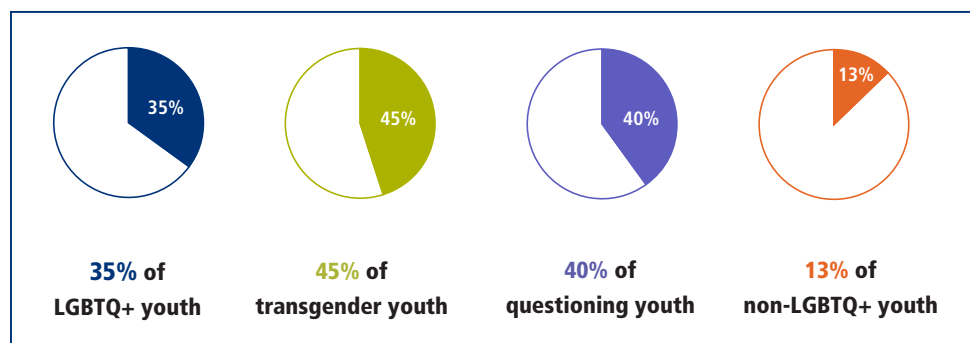
While this generation of youth and young adults are working to destigmatize talking about mental health, barriers still exist to accessing mental health supports, in school and in their communities.

What is health equity?

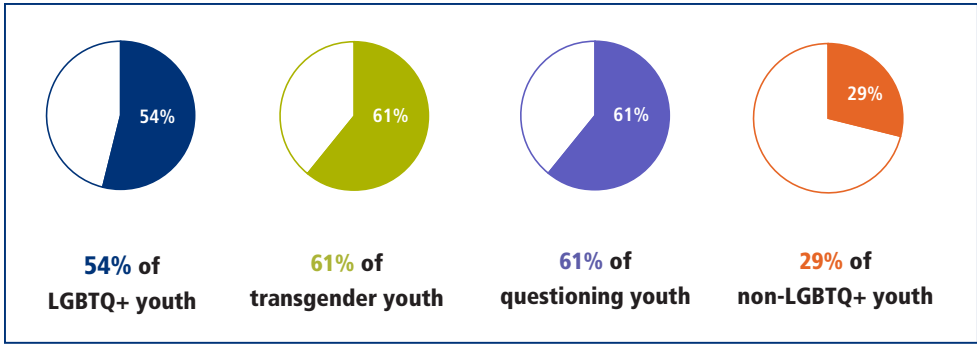
The goal of health equity is that everyone is able to live a healthy life and live to their full health potential. Equity means fair and just access and opportunities for all students.

Why focus on BIPOC and LGBTQ+ mental health?

Black, Indigenous, and People of color (BIPOC) and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning (LGBTQ+) young adults experience higher rates of negative physical and mental health outcomes due to social, economic, and environmental inequities that are rooted in systemic oppression and discrimination. The stress of navigating this in society can often lead to BIPOC and LGBTQ+ youth and young adults feeling like they do not have a caring or supportive community to help navigate mental health conversation or struggles.

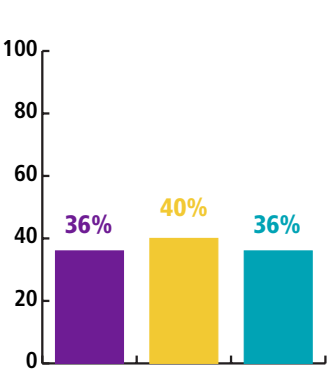


**SERIOUSLY
CONSIDERED
ATTEMPTING
SUICIDE**

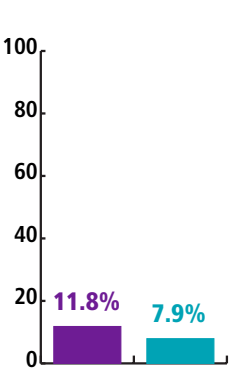


BATTLING SYMPTOMS OF DEPRESSION

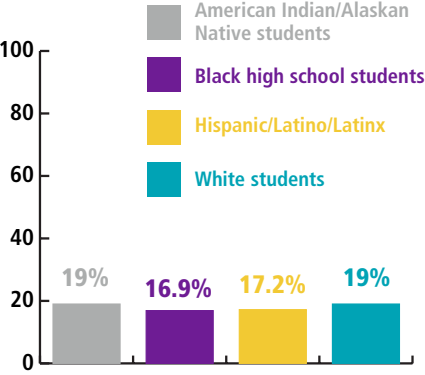
Project Thrive - LGBTQ Youth Are Living In Crisis: Key Findings from HRC Foundation Analysis of CDC Data



EXPERIENCED FEELING SAD OR HOPELESSNESS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS (2019 YRBS)



ATTEMPTED SUICIDE IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS (2019 YRBS)



SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED SUICIDE IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data Summary & Trends Report: 2009-2019

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services - Mental and Behavioral Health - American Indians/Alaska Natives

What you can do to support BIPOC and LGBTQ+ youth and young adults

Amplifying the lived experiences of BIPOC and LGBTQ+ youth and young adults in conversations, programs, and school culture is important to ensuring that they feel supported and know where to go for help. For example, you can support students in the launch of an Active Minds Chapter at their school.

Districts and schools should intentionally involve their staff in trainings to ensure they are engaging in strategies that are culturally responsive and inclusive. For example, districts can host a racial equity workshop for staff and administrators.

Districts and schools should inform and engage parents and families around school policy and programming efforts to support mental health and well-being. Inviting families to be part of district wellness or accountability committees is an important step towards ensuring policies are responsive to the needs of the community. Including mental health and inclusivity language in the foundational values of the campus and/or district is a strong start to an ongoing conversation about equity.