Data Snapshot:
Behavioral Health & Wellness of LGBTQ+ Coloradans
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This report summarizes findings across surveys of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Questioning (LGBTQ+) Coloradans within the past 5 years. The findings focus primarily on behavioral health and wellness and access to health care services, along with related factors such as experiences of violence, harassment, and isolation. Available data sources were limited as sources either did not have breakdowns around sexual orientation and/or gender identity, or data was not available at a state level. Where data was unavailable at a state level, national data was substituted. Sections have been broken down into youth and adult subpopulations as data was available. This Data Snapshot serves as an early exploration into currently available data, and an initial step in the process of developing a State of the State survey to better understand the mental health and substance use realities of LGBTQ+ Coloradans.

Mental Health

- **Adult**
  - Approximately 2 out of 3 LGBTQ adults sometimes or often felt isolated from others, left out, and/or a lack of companionship.¹
  - 50% of LGBTQ adults reported an anxiety disorder diagnosis, compared to 17.7% among the general public.¹
  - 55% of LGBTQ adults reported a depressive disorder diagnosis, compared to 17.7% among the general public.¹

- **Youth**
  - 63% of LGB youth felt sad or hopeless every day for at least two weeks in the past year, compared to 27% of heterosexual youth.²
  - 67% of transgender youth felt sad or hopeless every day for at least two weeks in the past year, compared to 30.6% of cisgender youth.²
Transgender youth are more likely to have **seriously considered suicide** as well as to have **attempted suicide** in the past 12 months.  

Transgender youth are more likely to have **seriously considered suicide** as well as to have **attempted suicide** than any other group.  

Respondents have experienced both **homophobia** and **transphobia** at comparable rates.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adult</th>
<th>Transgender</th>
<th>LGB</th>
<th>General Public</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verbal Harassment</td>
<td>Transgender</td>
<td>LGB</td>
<td>General Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace harassment or discrimination</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual harassment</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Violence**

2 in 5 LGB youth will experience bullying, 1.9 times more likely than their heterosexual peers.  

3 in 5 Transgender youth will experience bullying, making them 2.7 times more likely to than their cisgender peers.

Of **Transgender youth** have ever been forced to have sex, compared to 5.7% cisgender youth, 18.5% LGB youth, and 4.5% heterosexual youth.

**Suicide**

More trans respondents have **contemplated suicide** and **attempted suicide** than any other group.
Access to Care

1 in 2
LGBTQ+ Coloradans said their primary care provider is LGBTQ-competent

34%
of transgender respondents have been denied coverage for an LGBTQ-specific medical service, such as HIV medications, hormones, PrEP, PEP, HPV vaccine, or gender-affirming care.

Barriers to Care

45%
of LGBTQ+ say they or a family member didn’t get needed mental health or substance use services, compared to 18% of their peers.3

56% of LGBTQ+ Coloradans feel that mental health care is getting worse in Colorado, compared to 31% of their peers.3

31%

78%
of LGBTQ+ Coloradans say that most people in their state are not able to get mental health services and it is a problem.3

71%
of LGBTQ+ Coloradans say that most people in their state are not able to get substance abuse services and it is a problem.3

36%
of LGBTQ Coloradans identified cost as a barrier to seeking care compared to 12% among the general public.1

LGBQ | Trans
66% | 84%say that they don’t have the resources to pay out of pocket
61% | 84%say there are not enough mental/behavioral health providers adequately trained
65% | 69%say that Medical personnel assume they are heterosexual
62% | 77%say that community fear, bias, or dislike of LGBTQ people keeps them from seeking care1

OMNI
Substance Use

17% of LGB adults aged 18 and older in the United States had a substance use disorder (SUD).4

12% of LGB adults had BOTH a SUD and a mental illness.4

1 in 4 LGB respondents reported binge drinking, compared to 16% heterosexual respondents.5

1 in 10 LGB adults ages 26 and older misused opioids.4

Tobacco Use

Transgender and LGB youth were more likely to engage in cigarette and vaping use than their Cisgender and Heterosexual peers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cigarettes</th>
<th>Vape Products</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trans</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cis</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGB</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heterosexual</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Marijuana Use

Transgender and LGB youth were significantly more likely to engage in substance use than their peers

Trans | Cis | LGB | Heter
Inhalants | 31% | 5% | 11% | 5%
Ecstasy | 31% | 5% | 8% | 3%
Cocaine | 25% | 5% | 9% | 4%
Methamphetamines | 25% | 2% | 4% | 2%
Heroin | 21% | 1% | 3% | 1%

31% of transgender youth reported binge drinking, compared to 16% cisgender youth, 20% LGB youth, and 16% heterosexual youth.

24% of transgender youth have used prescription drugs in the past month, compared to 5% cisgender youth, 9% LGB youth, and 5% heterosexual youth.
Survey Demographics

The following demographics represent the survey respondents from the One Colorado 2019 survey data.¹

One in four respondents identified as Queer.

89% Respondents identified as White

Breakdown of respondents who do not identify as white.

1 in 10 respondents identified as gender queer/gender fluid and/or gender neutral/non-binary.

Income breakdown of the general public and survey respondents identifying as LGBQ, and trans.
Citations


2. Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment. *Healthy Kids Colorado Survey*, 2017. [https://drive.google.com/file/d/11mBxAOyl2GTLVfYkEoHn6H6Ta17sKmB/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/11mBxAOyl2GTLVfYkEoHn6H6Ta17sKmB/view), Accessed 29 May 2020.


Data Notes

1. n=2,572. All survey respondents identified as LGBTQ+.

2. n=56,000. LGB= approx. 5,768, transgender = approx. 616

3. n=1,800. n for LGB respondents not reported.

4. n=67,500. n for LGB respondents not reported.

5. n is unclear. *Data was aggregated from multiple years of Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System data to achieved a large enough sample size.*