



New report finds LGB youth experience more violence

Today, CDC released the first nationally representative data on the health risks of lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) high school students. The report found that LGB youth experience substantially higher levels of physical and sexual violence, and bullying, and are at increased risk for suicide, and other serious negative outcomes. These data highlight the need for accelerated action to protect the health and wellbeing of our vulnerable youth.



Findings from the report *Sexual Identity, Sex of Sexual Contacts, and Health-Related Behaviors Among Students in Grades 9-12 – United States and Selected Sites, 2015* show that LGB students experience physical and sexual violence and bullying at levels multiple times higher than that of their heterosexual peers, with very serious consequences. For example, LGB students are significantly more likely to report:

- Being forced to have sex (18% LGB vs. 5% heterosexual)
- Sexual dating violence (23% LGB vs. 9% heterosexual)
- Physical dating violence (18% LGB vs. 8% heterosexual)
- Being bullied at school or online (at school: 34% LGB vs. 19% heterosexual; online: 28% LGB vs. 14% heterosexual)

These experiences can place LGB students at substantial risk for serious outcomes:

- More than 40% of LGB students seriously considered suicide and 29% reported attempting suicide in the past year.
- Sixty percent of LGB students reported having been so sad or hopeless that they stopped doing some usual activities.
- LGB students were up to 5 times more likely than other students to report using several illegal drugs.
- More than 1 in 10 LGB students have missed school during the past 30 days because of safety concerns.

These newly available data are published in today's *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*. The national [2015 National Youth Risk Behavior Survey \(YRBS\)](#) is the principal source of data for tracking health risk behaviors among the nation's high school students.

Although YRBS data do not tell us why we see these disparities between LGB and heterosexual students, other research suggests a number of issues that may put youth at risk for sexual and physical abuse and other types of violence. These include social isolation, lack of parental or caregiver support, or even not being perceived as being masculine or feminine enough. While there is no simple solution to address the risks shown in the report, research does point to the importance of support for LGB youth through comprehensive, community-wide prevention efforts that can reduce the risk of multiple types of violence for LGB and other vulnerable youth.

Parents, schools and communities can take action to help LGB youth survive, and thrive. CDC's Injury Center works with partners on multiple violence prevention efforts, many which address key LGB youth issues, and to incorporate LGB youth issues into programs like [Green Dot](#), and [Dating Matters](#). Our collaborative efforts help to prevent violence and associated health outcomes among all youth, including LGB youth.

Learn More

- [Sexual Identity, Sex of Sexual Contacts, and Health-Related Behaviors Among Students in Grades 9-12 – United States and Selected Sites, 2015](#)
- [CDC's school violence prevention strategies](#)
- CDC's report on the [Health Risks of Sexual Minority Youth](#)
- [Dating Matters](#), a comprehensive teen dating violence prevention initiative based on the current evidence about what works in prevention
- [2015 National Youth Risk Behavior Survey \(YRBS\)](#)