



5H– Creating Safe & Affirming Spaces for Everyone in the PBIS Framework

Presenters:

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*With support from Dr. Jennifer Freeman

- **Topic:** Equitable Supports
- **Keywords:** Climate; Tier 1; Tier 2



Learning Objectives

1. *Describe current challenges faced by underrepresented youth*
2. *Identify a range of actions and supports at each tier to support underrepresented youth in schools*
3. *Identify local and national resources available to support underrepresented youth*



Norms for this Session

- Stay engaged
- Be prepared to experience discomfort
- Expect and accept non-closure
- Speak your truth
- Take care of your needs





**A little bit
about your
presenters**

Erik Maki (he/him/his)

- Clinical Consultant with the May Institute
- Licensed Psychologist
- Nationally Certified School Psychologist
- Son, Husband, & Puppy Dad
- Skier, Runner, Dancer, Beach Lover, Traveller

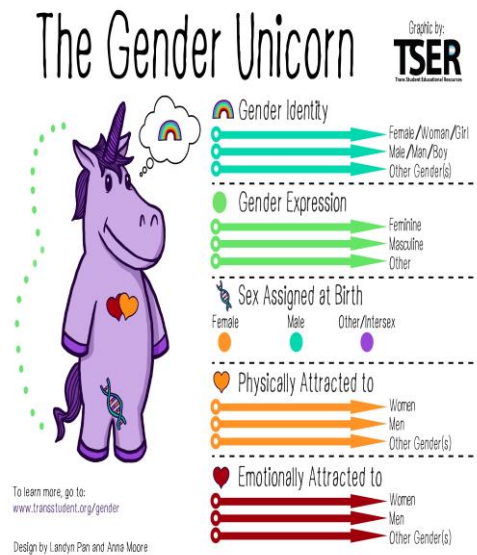


Emily Baton (She/her/hers)

- Assistant Director, PBIS - May Institute
- BCBA-D
- Wife/Daughter/Cat Parent
- Baking, Knitting, Salsa Dancing, and Disney geek



Priming Background Knowledge: Sex/Gender/Identity Language ([GLAAD](#), [n.d.](#))



Sex at Birth

Determined by doctor based on your physical structures

Gender Identity

The internal experience of an individual, whether they feel that they are male, female, nonbinary, etc. This may or may not be congruent with sex at birth.

Gender Expression

How an **individual outwardly expresses** his, her, or their gender through pronouns, clothes, behaviors

Sexual Orientation

An individual's **emotional, physical, and/or romantic attraction** towards others

Cisgender

An individual whose **sex at birth is aligned with their gender identity**

Transgender/Trans

Adjective for an individual whose **gender identity is different than their sex at birth**

Nonbinary

Adjective for an individual whose **gender identity doesn't fit the typical categories of man or woman**. May or may not consider themselves to be trans.

Gender Non-Conforming

Adjective for an individual whose **gender expression does not align with what is typically considered to be masculine or feminine**.

Challenges Faced by LGBTQ+ Youth: A Brief Selection

Trigger warning: Discussion
about harassment, assault, &
suicidality.



Acknowledgments

GLSEN's National
School Climate
Survey

- National online survey of 22k+ LGBTQ youth ages 13 - 21

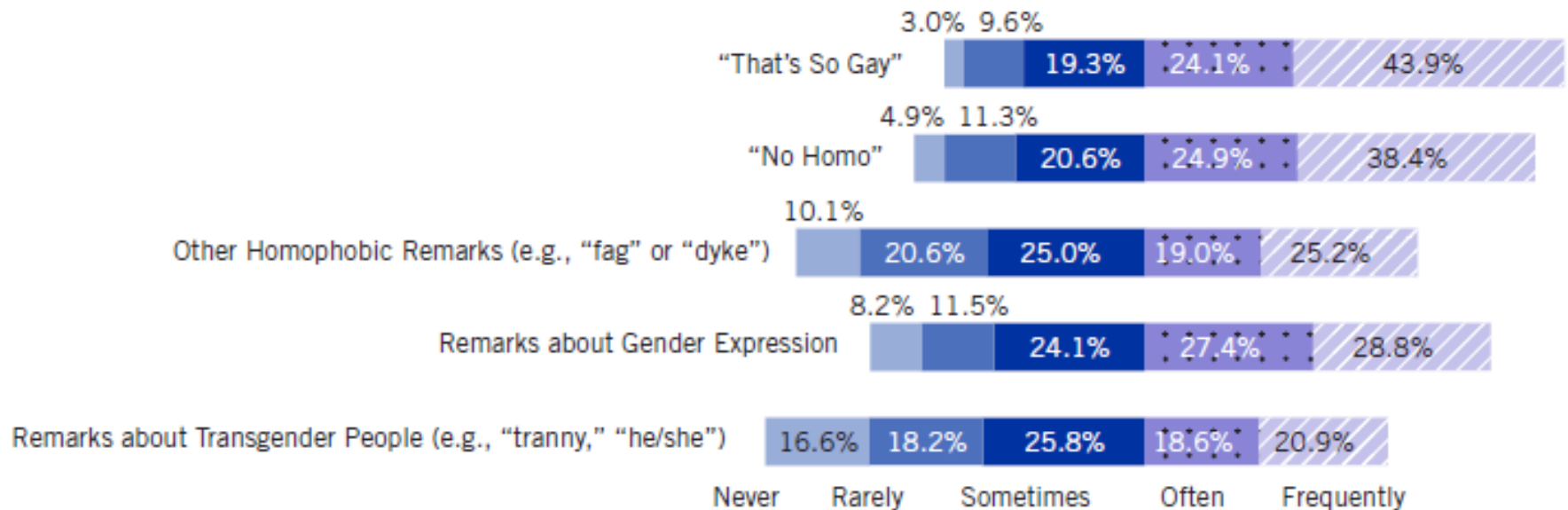
The Trevor Project's
National Survey on
the Mental Health
of LGBTQ Young
People

- National online survey of 28k+ LGBTQ youth ages 13-24



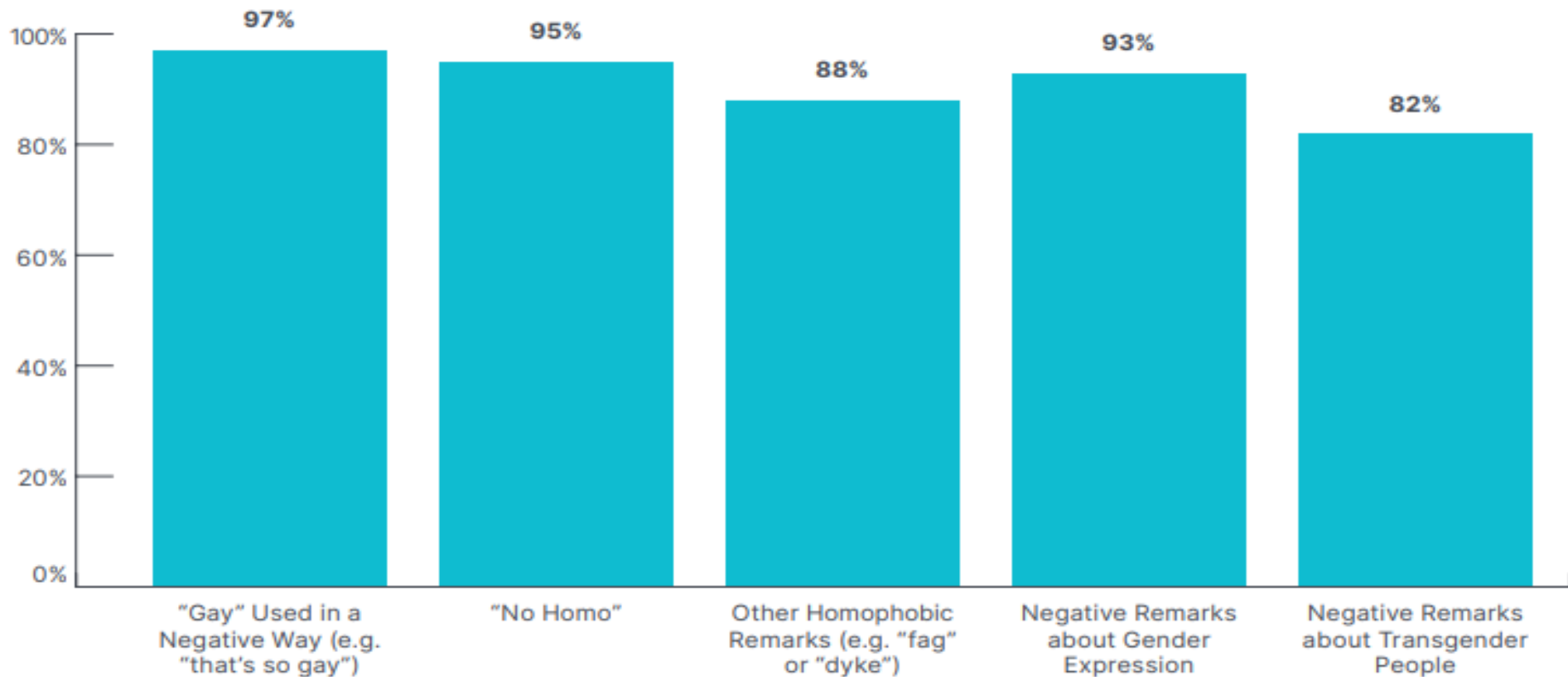
National Stats: Freq of Hearing Anti LGBTQ Remarks at School (GLSEN, 2022)

Figure 1.7 Frequency of Hearing Anti-LGBTQ+ Remarks at School



Illinois Stats: % Hearing Anti-LGBTQ Remarks at School (GLSEN, 2021)

Figure 1. Hearing Anti-LGBTQ+ Remarks from Students in Illinois Schools
(percentage of LGBTQ+ students ever hearing remarks)

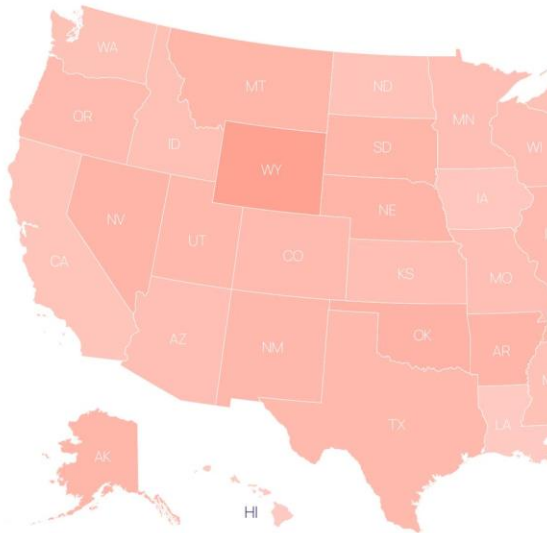


LGBTQ+ Young People Who Seriously Considered Suicide

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Who
State

g
s



0%

15% - 56%

45% of transgender and nonbinary young people reported that they or their family have considered moving to a different state because of LGBTQ+-related politics and laws.

45%

Share:



Experiences at School (Trevor Project, 2024).

I was verbally harassed because people thought I was LGBTQ+

32%

I wasn't allowed to dress in the way that I wanted

21%

I was disciplined for fighting back against bullying

11%

I experienced unwanted sexual contact

9%

I believe I was disciplined more harshly than my peers

9%

I left a school because of the mistreatment I experienced

7%

I was physically attacked because of my sexual orientation or gender identity

4%

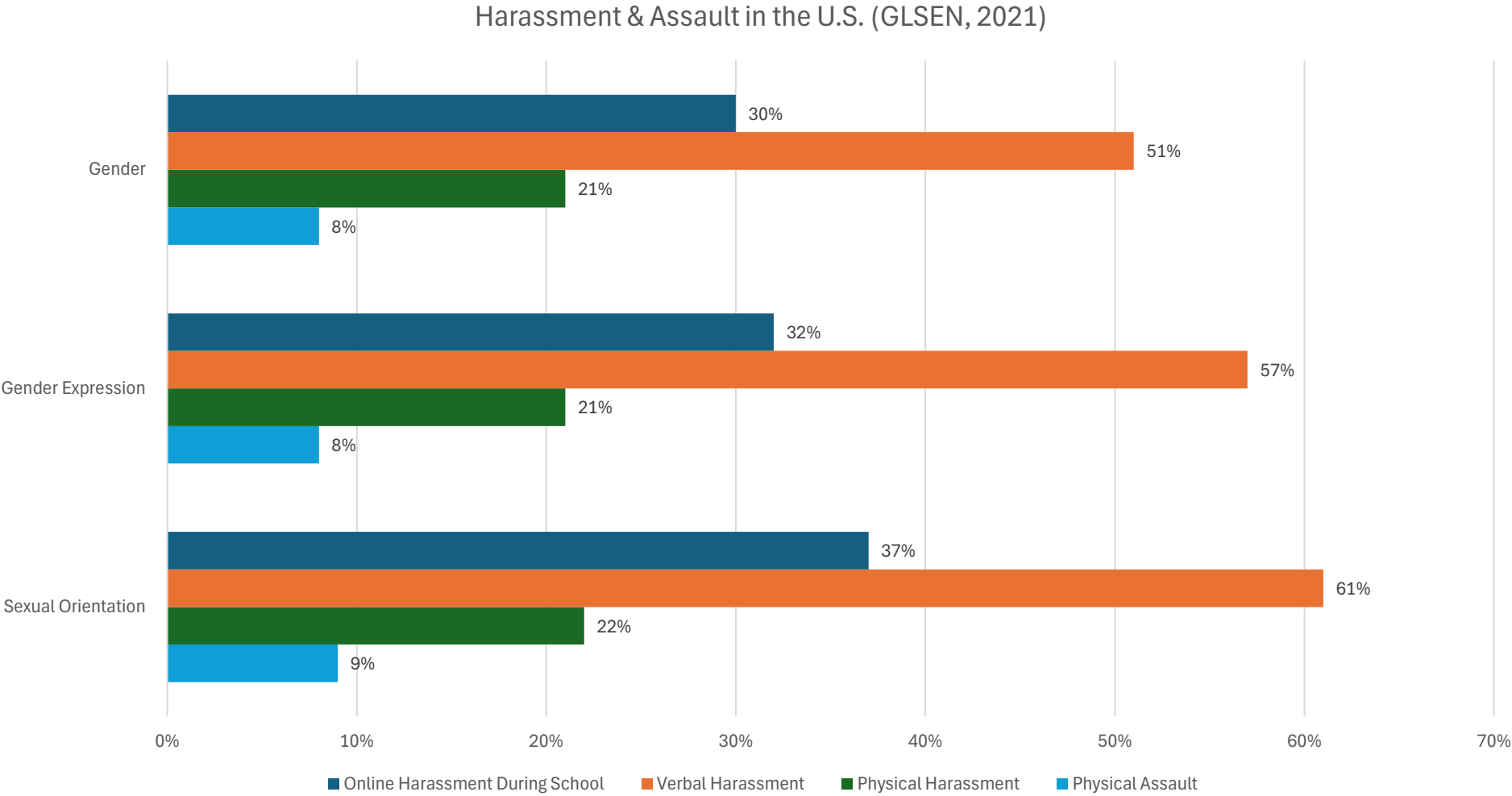
Nearly half (49%) of LGBTQ+ young people ages 13-17 experienced bullying in the past year, and those who did reported significantly higher rates of attempting suicide in the past year than those who did not experience bullying.

Trevor Project, 2024

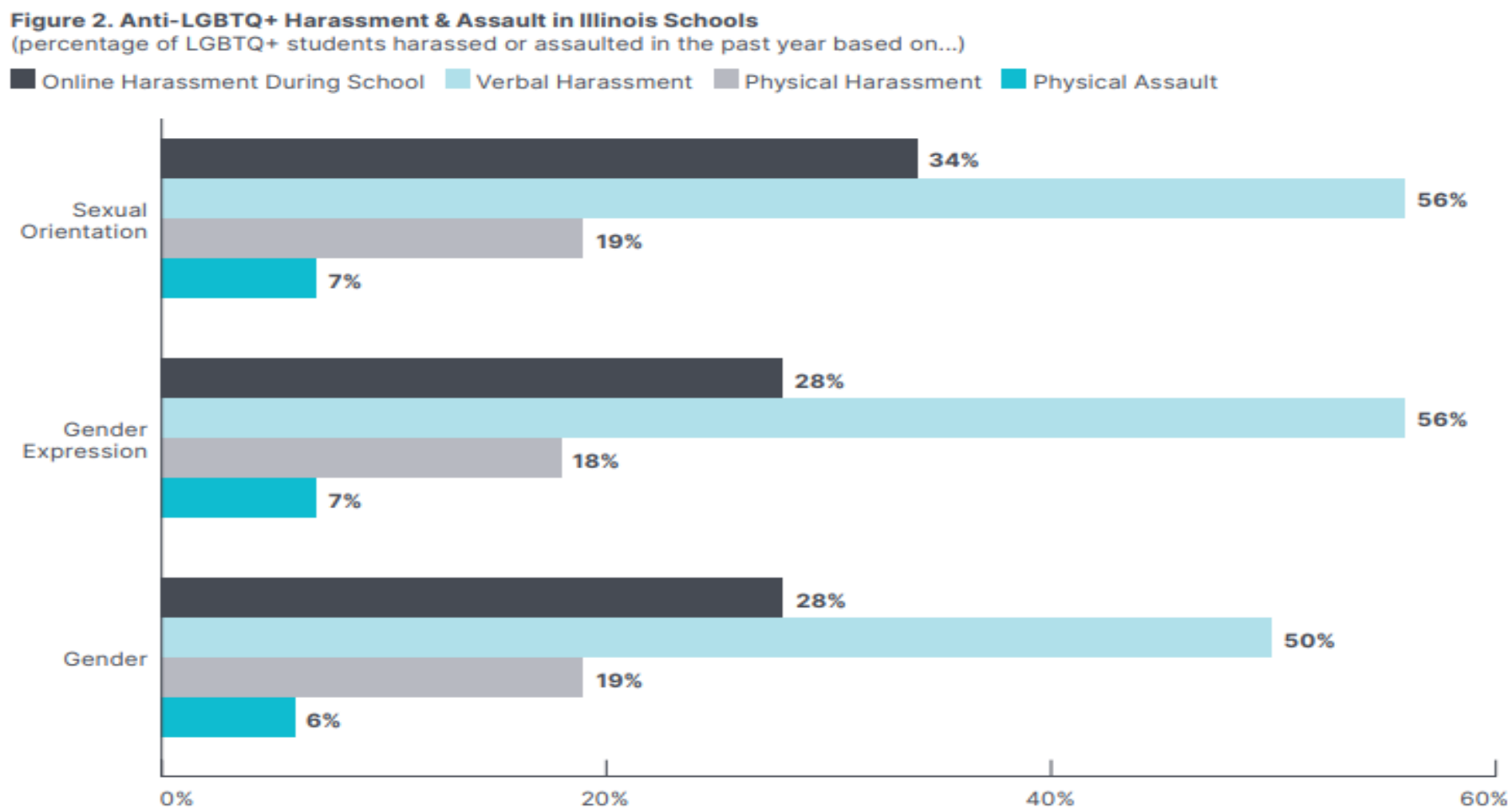
49%



Harassment & Assault Nationally (GLSEN, 2021)

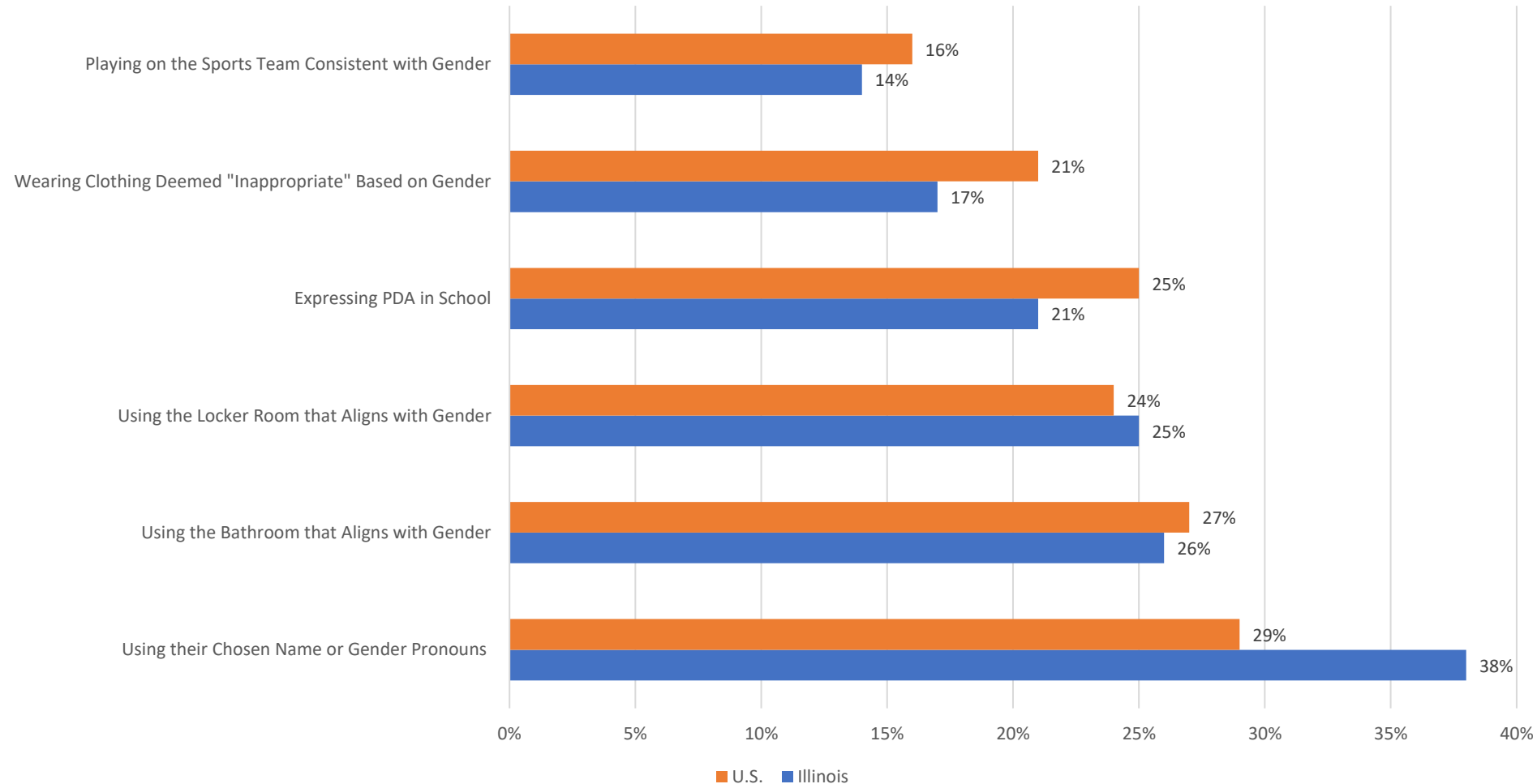


Harassment & Assault in Illinois ([GLSEN, 2021](#))



Stressors in the U.S. ([GLSEN, 2021](#))

Stressors in the U.S. vs Illinois (GLSEN, 2021)



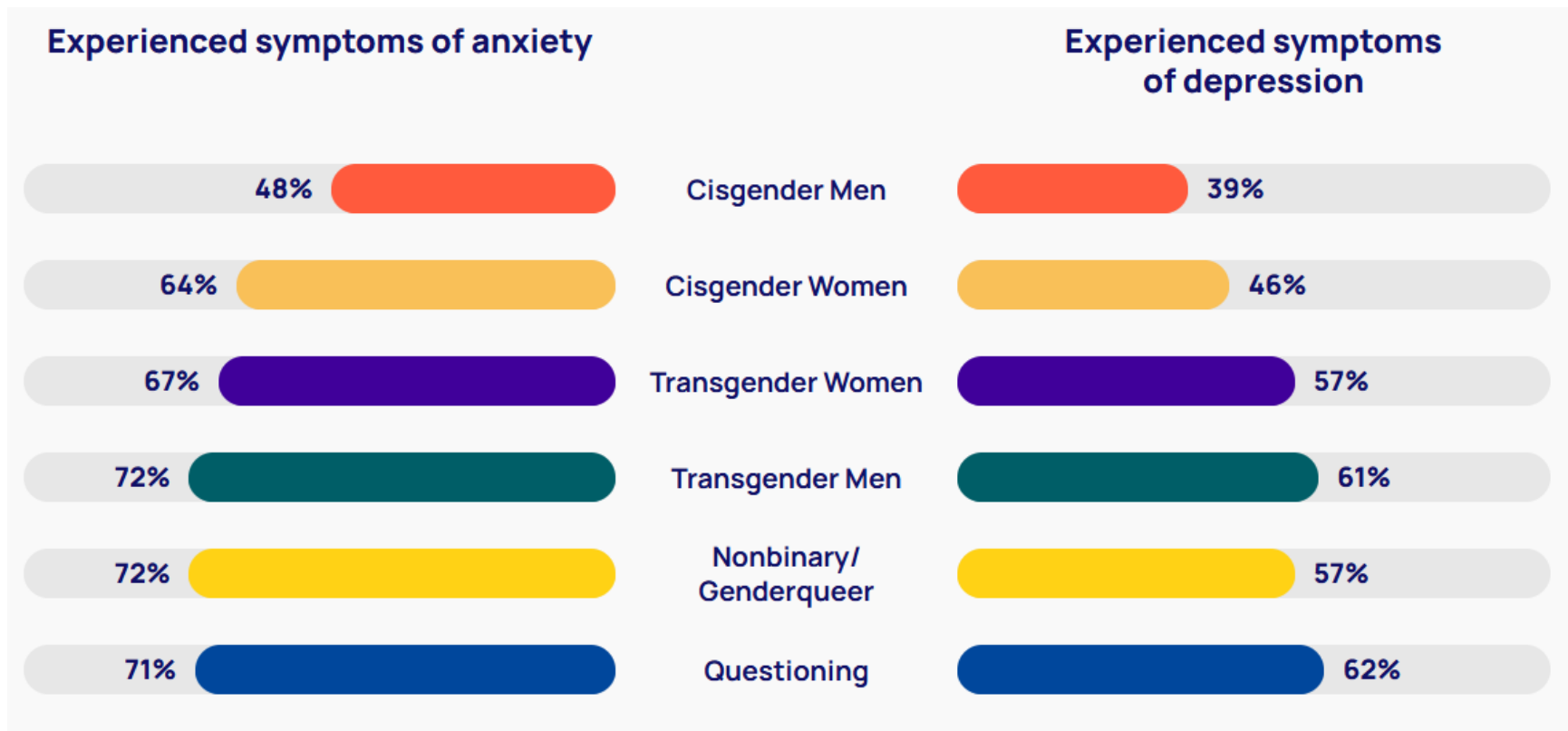
Relationship Between School Climate and Mental Health for LGBTQ+ Youth

- Policies unsupportive to LGBTQ youth & lack of supportive staff → increased suicide risk (Colvin et al., 2019; Denny et al., 2016, Rimes et al., 2018)
- Greater school support and connectedness → reduced suicide risk (Colvin et al., 2019; Marraccini & Brier, 2017; Whitaker et al., 2016)

- **-HOWEVER-**

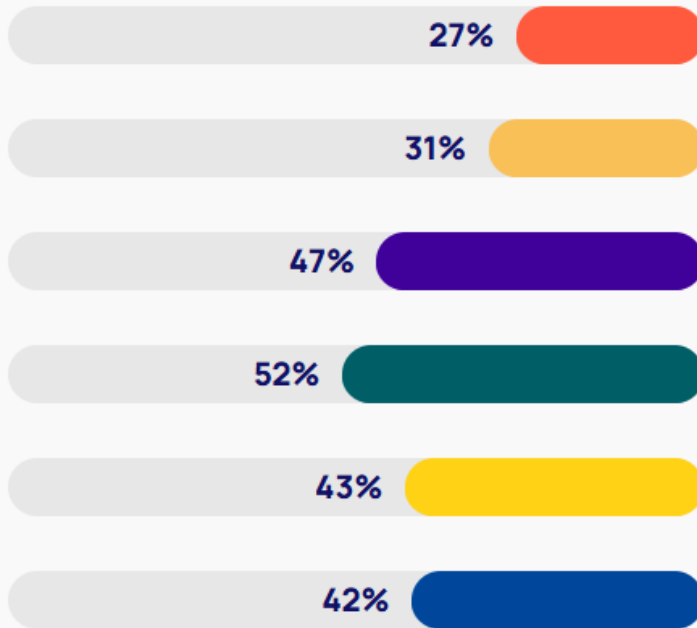
- Clear rules and consistent enforcement → positive mental health outcomes (Colvin et al., 2019; Sandfort et al., 2010)
- Inclusive policies around displays of affection and gender norms → positive outcomes (Colvin et al., 2019; Snapp et al., 2015; Wernick et al., 2017)

Anxiety & Depression Symptoms Among LGBTQ Youth (Trevor Project, 2024)



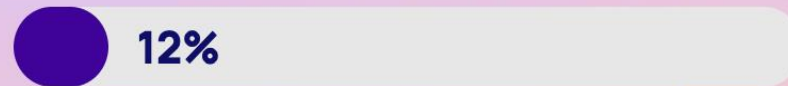
Rates of Considered & Attempted Suicide Among LGBTQ Youth (Trevor Project, 2024).

Considered suicide in the past year



Attempted suicide in the past year

More than 1 in 10 (12%) LGBTQ+ young people attempted suicide in the past year.



(Trevor Project, 2024)

Share:



Top 10 Reasons LGBTQ Youth Unable to Get Mental Health Care

(Trevor Project, 2024).

- **Stigma and Distrust**
 - Includes fears of judgment, being misunderstood, ineffective treatment, and identity-related concerns.
- **Financial and Structural Barriers**
 - Focuses on affordability and lack of autonomy due to caregiver control

Barriers to Accessing Mental Health Care



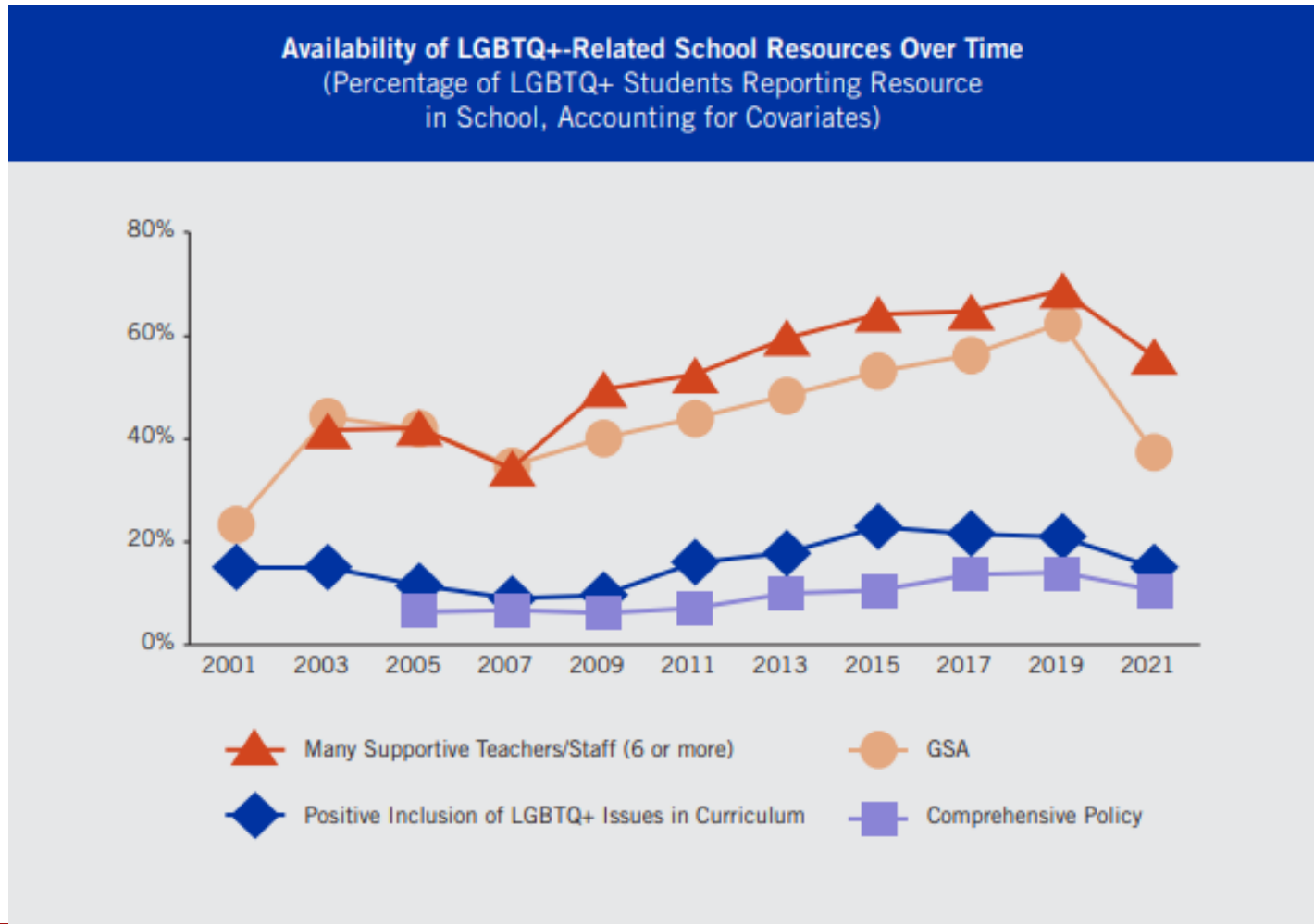
50% of LGBTQ+ young people who wanted mental health care in the past year were not able to get it.



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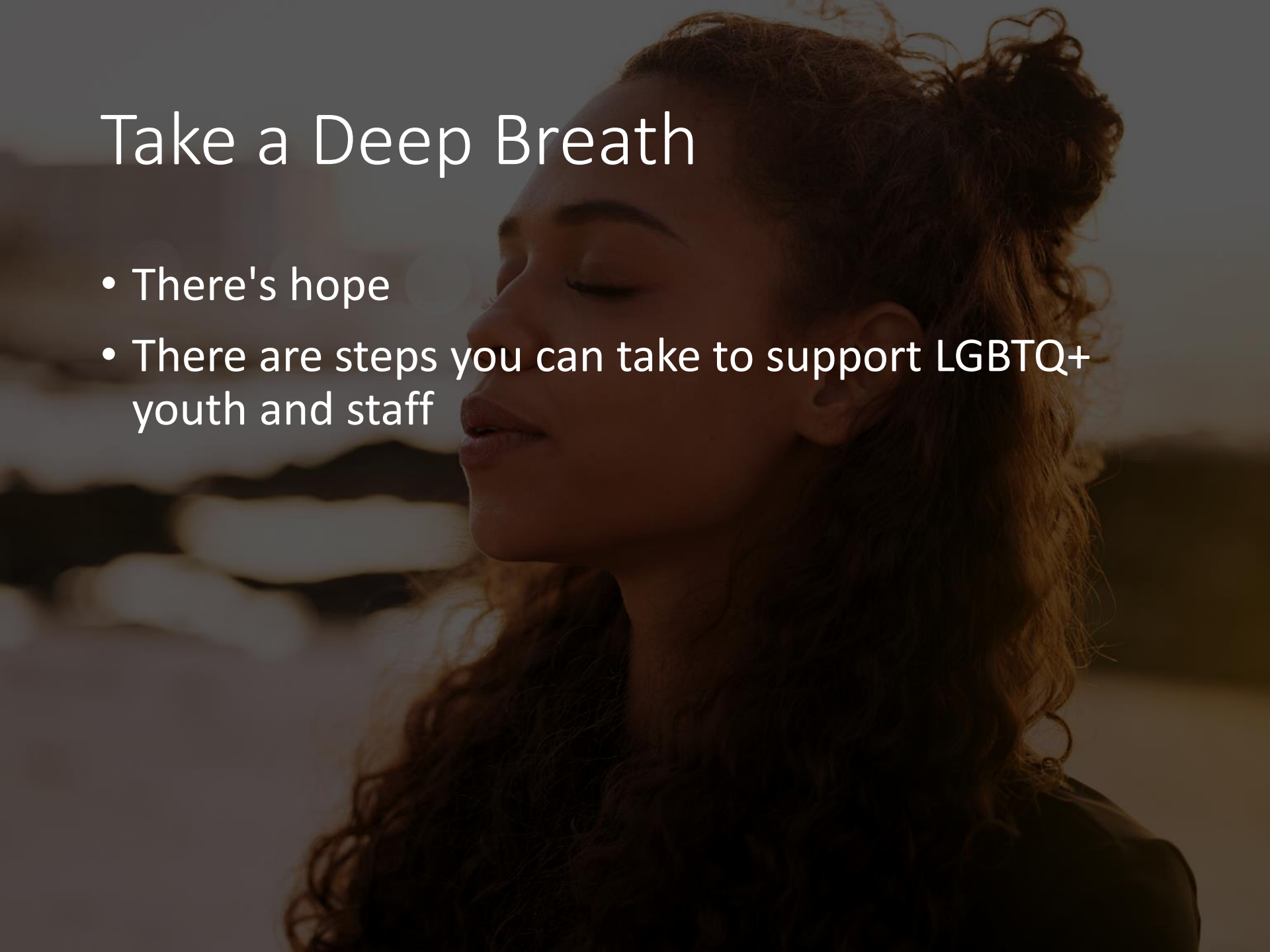
(Trevor Project, 2024)

Availability of LGBTQ+ Related School Resources Over Time (GLSEN, 2021)



Take a Deep Breath

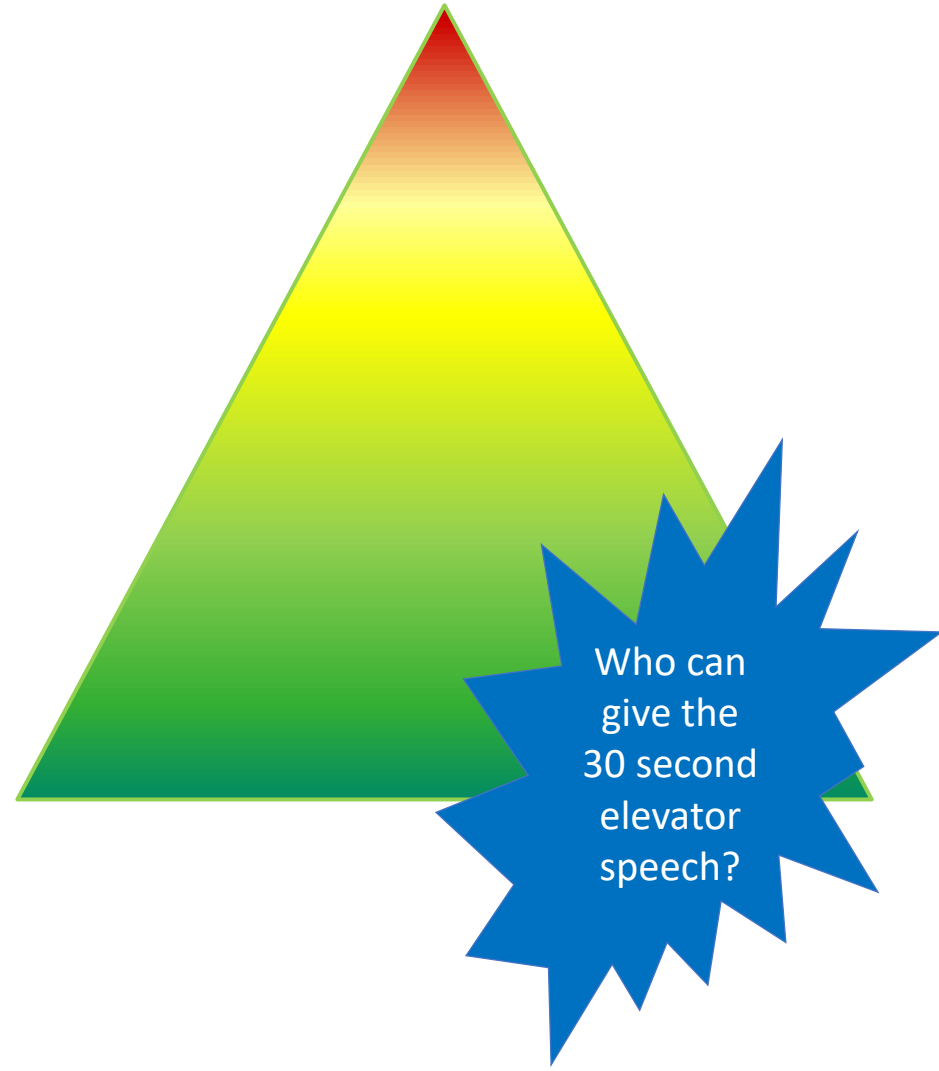
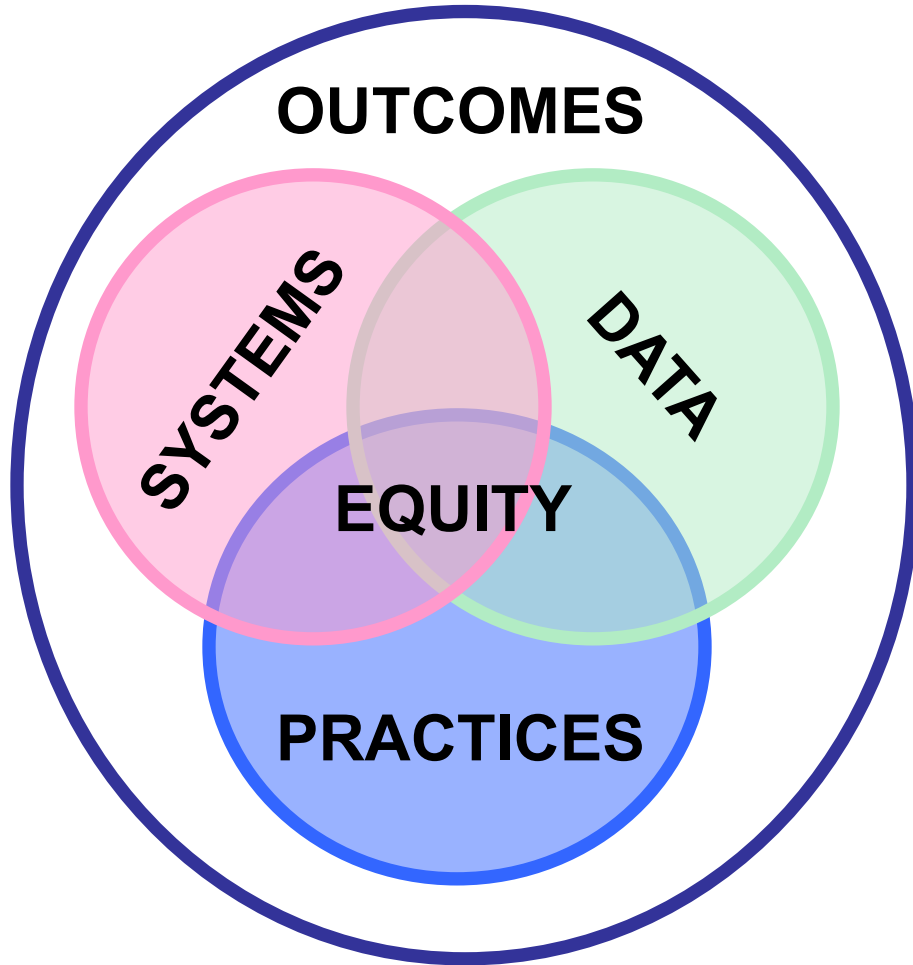
- There's hope
- There are steps you can take to support LGBTQ+ youth and staff

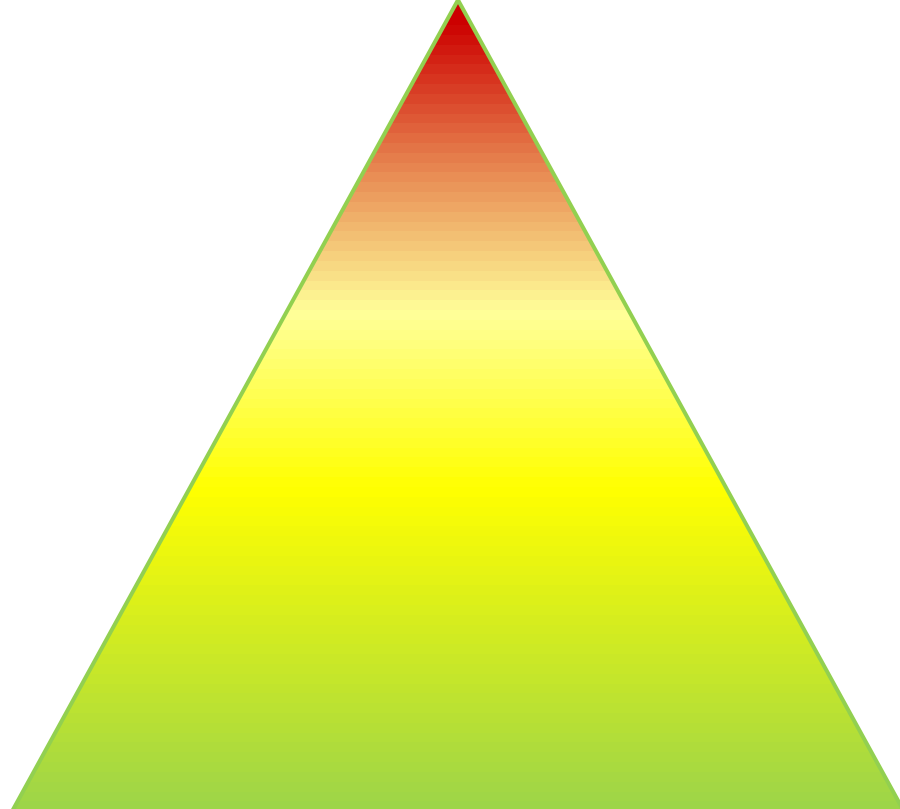


Range of Actions to Support LGBTQ+ Students and Staff



PBIS Framework





Tier 1



Know and Use Names/Pronouns

Smallest Easiest Action

- Names carry cultural and family significance

- Hearing our names:

- Promotes a feeling of belonging
- Increases on-task behavior
- Promotes empathy

- Mis-pronouncing or not using names is a lack of respect and caring

- This is true for all kids and adults, and schools are more likely to experience this

- Trans-kids who could use their names at work, school, home and with friends

- 71 percent less symptoms

- 34 percent less reported anxiety and depression
- 65-percent reduction in self-harm
- There was a 29-percent reduction in suicidal thoughts for kids who used their names even in one the

More than half (54%) of transgender and nonbinary young people found their school to be gender-affirming, and those who did reported lower rates of attempting suicide.



Share:



Trevor Project, 2024

Create a Representative and Safe Physical Environment

- Organized and reflective of student cultures and interests
- Student work and photos posted
- [Safe space](#) symbols
 - [Establishing an Allies-Safe](#)
 - [Zone program](#)

GLSEN research shows that 64.9% of students who have seen a Safe Space sticker or poster at school feel comfortable talking with teachers about LGBT issues. Of students who have not seen a poster or sticker, only 47.6% feel comfortable having these conversations.



Smallest Easiest Action

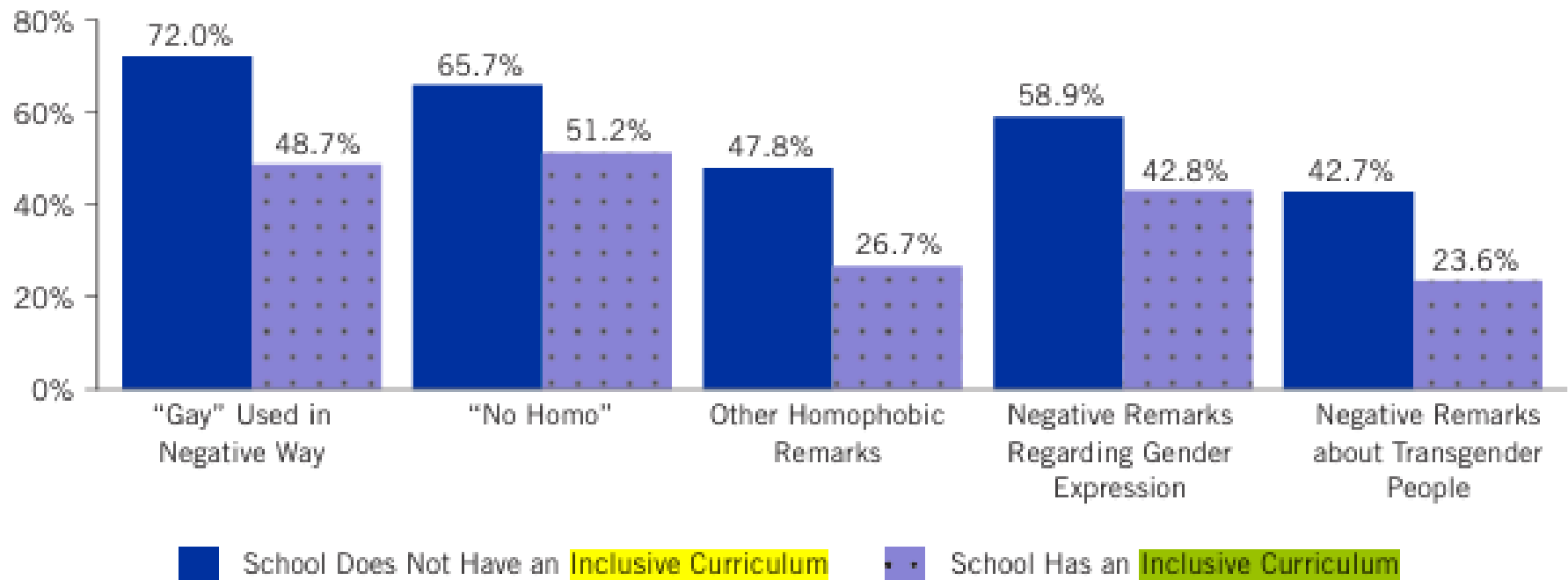
- Put up a safe space sticker or other small visual signal for students
- Verbally indicate your willingness to support LGBTQ students
- Provide information for students to find safe/inclusive online communities (e.g., trevorspace)

Larger Scale Change to Consider

- Intentionally include LGBTQ representation and history in the physical space
- Review school library offerings and ensure they are representative

Teach an Inclusive Curriculum and Provide Access to Resources

Figure 2.18 **Inclusive Curriculum** and Frequency of Hearing Anti-LGBTQ+ Remarks
(Percentage of LGBTQ+ Students Hearing Remarks Often or Frequently)



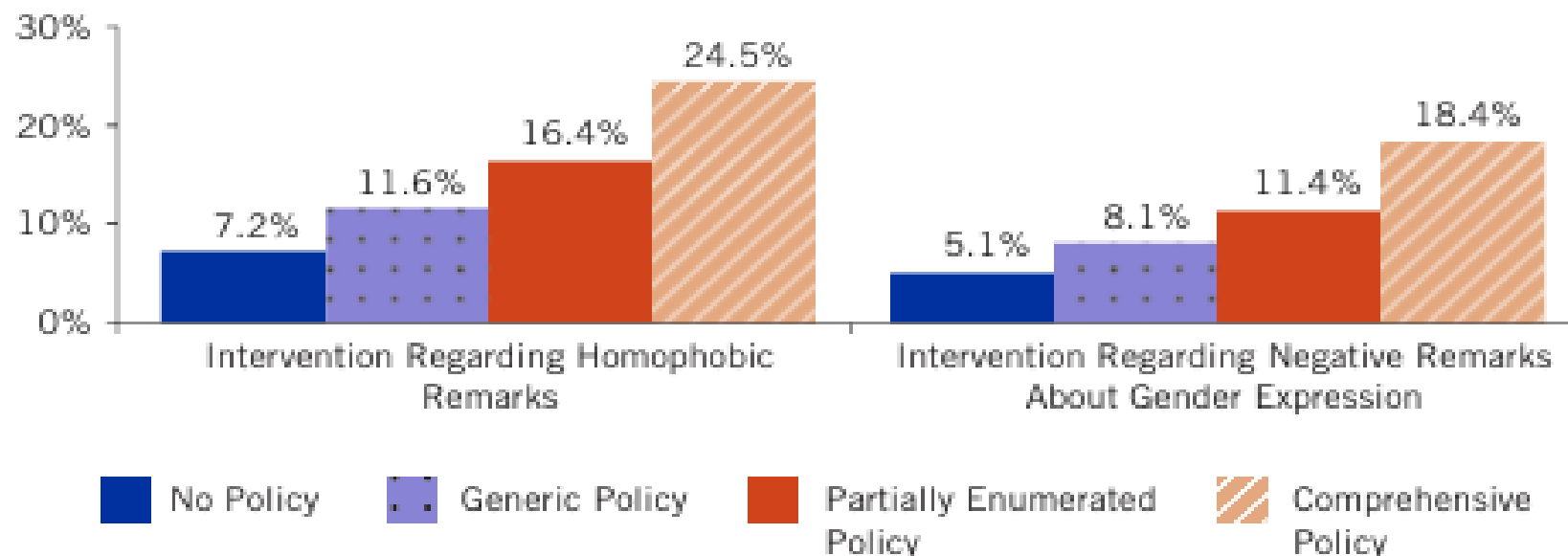
Teach Students and Staff How to Respond to Bullying

TEACHER INTERVENTION REPORTED BY STUDENTS

Smallest Easiest Action

- Intervene if you hear or see bullying or hear derogatory comments about any aspect of a student's identity

Figure 2.33 School Harassment/Assault Policies and Staff Intervention Regarding Anti-LGBTQ+ Remarks
(Percentage of LGBTQ+ Students Reporting That Staff Intervened Most of the Time or Always)



Create Support Systems for LGBTQ+ Students or Staff

- [Gay-straight alliance \(GSA\)](#)



Smallest Easiest Action

- Provide an informal safe space for LGBTQ students in your room
- Provide connections to online communities or resources

Larger Scale Change to Consider

- Be visible as a member of the LGBTQ community or ally
- Sponsor or support LGBTQ affinity groups for students and staff
- Consider attending PD around safe zones or supporting lgbtq+ students

Partnership with Community Organizations and Families

- Family engagement ([GSA](#) or [PFLAG](#))
- Listening conference
- Home school connections

LGBTQ+ Youth are at increased risk of family rejection (Grossman & D'augelli, 2006)

Coming out can result in physical assault and/or homelessness (Ray, 2006)

Smallest Easiest Action

- Provide access to family resources (e.g., PFLAG)

Larger Scale Change to Consider

- Provide connections for families to support each other
- Work with local advocacy centers to raise awareness of issues in your community



Advanced Tiers

Tier II and Tier III Practices (Cannava & Lorig, 2023)

Outreach and Resources

- Family Outreach
 - Provide education around sexuality, gender, strategies to affirm their child, identify local support groups
- Share Resources
 - Sharing local and national crisis lines (e.g. Trevor Project: Lifeline, Trevor Text, & Trevor Chat)

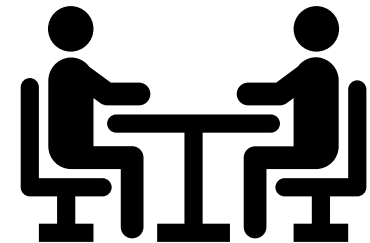
Mental Health Interventions and Psychoeducation

- LGBTQ+ Student Support Groups
- Affirming Group and Individual Counseling
- Victim counseling & offender education
 - Ex. Restorative Circles
- Ensuring that those receiving intensive supports have access to affirming curricula

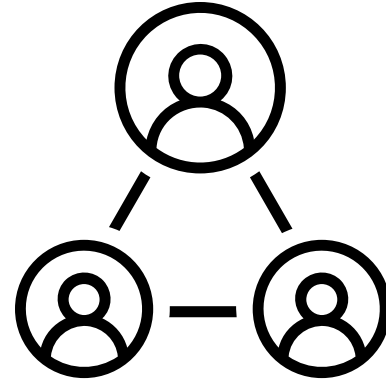
Discussion:

What Challenges Do You See? What Has Worked for Your Students & Peers?

- Families of choice
- Signature Blocks and Invitations
- Family trees
- “That’s so Gay”
- “They don’t match”, “they aren’t a family”
- “Which mom/dad is the real one”
- Prejudice and stereotypes – explicit and implicit bias
- Having to “come out” over and over
- Assumption about family gatherings-families of choice
- “Need for male (or female) role models”
- Name changes
- Preferred pronouns
- School records
- Dress Codes
- Gay/Straight Alliances
- Confidentiality



Resources



Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network (GLSEN)

- Teacher Resources
 - LGBT
 - Transgender and non-conforming youth
- National School Climate Survey
- Safe Space kits
- Think B4 You Speak

✕ QUICK EXIT: Press ESC 3x

Find Your Chapter

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GLSEN®
RESPECT AWARDS
2024 • NYC

MON
APRIL 29, 2024
6:00pm
7:00pm Dinner & Awards
Dessert Reception
Gotham Hall • 1356 Broadway

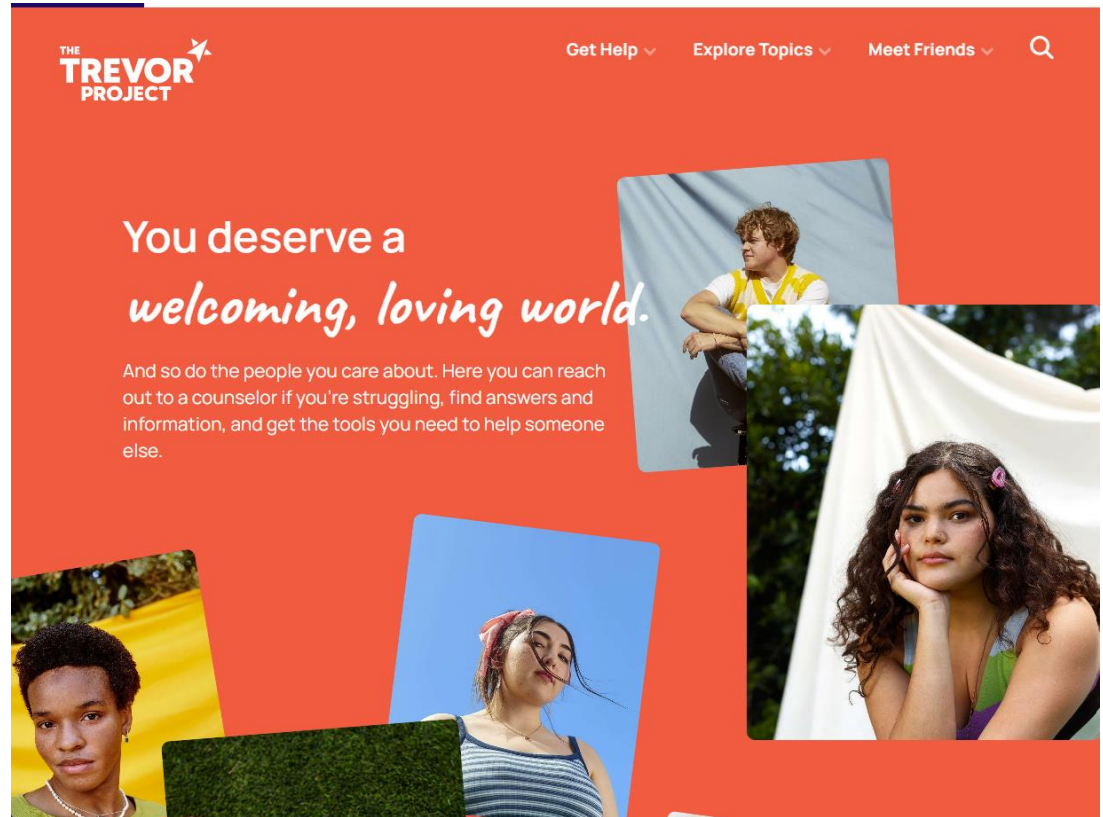
Honorees & Special Guests
Join GLSEN for an inspirational evening in support of our mission
advocating for over 2 million LGBTQ+ students

the loop! You'll be the first to hear any relevant news from GLSEN.

Join now

The Trevor Project

- Provides an online community and 24/7 support lines for students
- Suicide prevention resources- including modules for middle and high school classrooms
- Links to local resources



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10/23

5H – Creating Safe & Affirming Spaces for Everyone in the PBIS Framework

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