

2023 Fact Sheet on Risk Factors Related to Mental Health and School Climate among LGBTQ+ Youth in Utah.



Risk Factors Related to Mental Health and School Climate among LGBTQ+ Youth in Utah

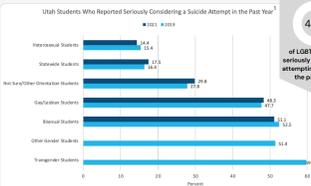
Maureen Boyle, Abigail Durham, Cameron Wight, and Jayme Walters
Department of Social Work, Utah State University

Looking at the Utah SHARP Survey

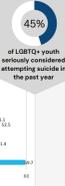
The Utah State Health and Risk Prevention (SHARP) Survey is a state survey given to Utah students every two years. The survey identifies risk and protective factors related to mental and social health, suicide, substance use, and other areas. Starting in 2019, the survey included questions about gender identity and sexual orientation for 8th, 10th, and 12th graders. In 2021, the survey was impacted by COVID-19, and data for transgender and gender diverse students were not reported.



Suicide Indicator Data



National Suicide Indicator Data²

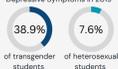


Data on suicidal ideation from the SHARP Survey indicate that **LGBTQ+ students in Utah are at disproportionately higher risk for suicide** compared with their heterosexual peers. About half of transgender, bisexual, gender diverse, and gay or lesbian students who responded to the survey reported seriously considering a suicide attempt in the past year.

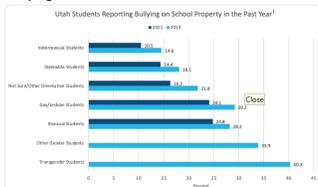
Mental Health

In 2021 and 2019, **LGBTQ+ student respondents reported disproportionately higher rates of high depressive symptoms** compared with their heterosexual peers. In 2021, bisexual students (36.2%) and gay or lesbian students (34%) reported **four times** the rate of high depressive symptoms compared with their heterosexual peers (7.5%).

Utah Students Reporting High Depressive Symptoms in 2019³



Bullying



LGBTQ+ student respondents reported higher rates of bullying at school compared with their heterosexual peers: In 2019, transgender students (40.3%) and gender diverse students (33.9%) reported **disproportionately higher rates of bullying** compared with their heterosexual peers (14.6%).

School Safety

In 2019, the majority (86%) of Utah student respondents to the SHARP Survey reported **feeling safe at school**. Only about half (54%) of transgender students reported feeling safe at school the same year.¹



To learn more about USU's Transforming Communities Institute

Sources: 1. Utah State Health and Risk Prevention (SHARP) Statewide Survey. Retrieved from <https://sumh.utah.gov/data-reports/sharp-survey>. 2. The Trevor Project 2022 National Survey on LGBTQ+ Youth Mental Health. Retrieved from <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/survey-2022/>.