

AN ECOLOGICAL MODEL OF **NEGATIVE** IMPACTS ON HEALTH FOR LGBTQ+ CHILDREN & YOUTH

A ONE PAGE GUIDE FOR PUBLIC HEALTH ADVOCATES

Socio-ecological model definition: A health promotion framework that emphasizes intersecting and overlapping levels of impact on human health outcomes and behaviors.



SYSTEMIC & STRUCTURAL

Structural-level stigma and bias against the LGBTQ+ community impact LGBTQ+ youth at every level of the ecological model. Social structures and systems of oppression shape policies, rights, and health outcomes for children and families seeking gender-affirming and inclusive care. Systemic and structural-level bias can directly impact policy, community, family/peer, and individual-level experiences of LGBTQ+ discrimination.

POLICY

Currently 113,900 transgender children and youth currently live in states that have enacted bans on access to gender-affirming care. Approximately six states have enacted laws making it a felony crime to provide gender-affirming care for transgender youth. Anti-LGBTQ policies and laws impact health insurance coverage for gender-affirming care, access to mental and behavioral health services, and prevent medical practitioners from best practice-based gender-affirming care. Anti-LGBTQ policies also impact funding for gender-affirming centers and programs that directly service LGBTQ+ youth.



COMMUNITY

Several studies found that United States medical schools dedicate only five hours of LGBTQ+ health in their curriculums. Additionally, adequately trained providers may face legal barriers from states that ban access to gender-affirming care. The lack of adequately trained medical providers, combined with legal restrictions, reduces the number of available & competent healthcare professionals for LGBTQ+ families and fosters distrust between the LGBTQ+ community and the medical field.

FAMILY & PEERS

Parents of LGBTQ+ children are more likely to experience barriers to access including geographical limitations, insurance coverage, and general lack of knowledge about gender-affirming services. Additionally, lack of sufficient family acceptance for LGBTQ+ youth has a direct impact on increased mental health challenges (ex: anxiety, depression, suicidal ideation) and increased engagement in risky behaviors (ex: smoking, drinking) during adolescence.



INDIVIDUAL

Children who are exposed to negative messages about gender, love & families may be more susceptible to negative internal perceptions of their LGBT identity as they get older. The Trevor Project 2022 survey reports that LGBTQ+ youth suicide attempt rates drop from 16% to 6% if there is high social support from their family for their identity.





REFERENCES



[Addressing Social Determinants of Health for Sexual & Gender Minority People](#)

[Trevor Project 2022 Survey](#)

[“Difficult to Find, Stressful to Navigate”: Parents' Experiences Accessing Affirming Care for Gender-Diverse Youth](#)

[Structural stigma and LGBTQ+ health: a narrative review of quantitative studies](#)

[How Social Policies Shape the Health and Well-being of Sexual- and Gender-minority Youth: pathways of influence, social side effects and implications for life course trajectories](#)

[The Impact of 2024 Anti-Transgender Legislation on Youth](#)

[Bans on Best Practice Medical Care For Transgender Youth](#)

[Health and Access to Care and Coverage for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender \(LGBT\) Individuals in the U.S.](#)

[Recommendations for improving sexual health curricula in medical schools: results from a two-arm study collecting data from patients and medical students](#)

[Inaugural State of LGBTQ Health National Survey 2022](#)

[LGBT Youth and Family Acceptance](#)

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AN ECOLOGICAL MODEL OF POSITIVE IMPACTS ON HEALTH FOR LGBTQ+ YOUTH

A ONE PAGE GUIDE FOR PUBLIC HEALTH ADVOCATES

Socio-ecological model definition: A health promotion framework that emphasizes intersecting and overlapping levels of influence on humans health outcomes and behaviors.

SYSTEMIC & STRUCTURAL



At the structural level, addressing stigma and bias related to negative perceptions of the LGBTQ+ community protects how LGBTQ+ children and youth are influenced at every level of the ecological model. Social structures and systems of oppression that target LGBTQ+ individuals influence the policies, rights, and health outcomes of children and families seeking gender-affirming and inclusive care.

POLICY



Despite several anti-LGBTQ policies being rolled out each year, 16 states have implemented laws to protect access to gender-affirming care for trans community members. Additional state and local policies that advocate for school climate safety have been shown to decrease risky coping behaviors and increase overall trust and safety of school environments for LGBTQ youth.

COMMUNITY



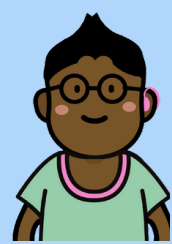
More LGBTQ+ centered training for healthcare professionals should include cultural humility, disruption of bias, and multi-level change to address health outcomes adequately. Increasing training can advance the number of providers for parents seeking gender-inclusive care, decrease mistrust between the LGBTQ community and health systems, and support the longevity of healthy lives for LGBTQ+ youth.

FAMILY & PEERS



The role of parents and caretakers of LGBTQ children influences the longterm health outcomes of LGBTQ youth. Research shows that parents who make meaningful efforts to expose their LGBTQ children to welcoming environments increase self-esteem, social support, and overarching health outcomes. Additionally, supportive parent-child relationships have been studied to be associated with lower outcomes of future risky behaviors such as smoking, drinking, etc.

INDIVIDUAL



Research demonstrates that LGBTQ+ children & youth who are surrounded by strong social support systems decrease rates of risky behaviors impacting mental and physical health outcomes. The Trevor Project 2022 survey highlights that LGBTQ youth feel most supported when parents use their correct name and pronouns, support their gender expression journey, and are open to talking about LGBTQ+ identities.

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REFERENCES

[Trevor Project 2022 Survey](#)

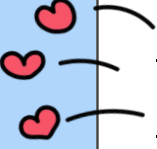
[Behaviors of Supportive Parents and Caregivers for LGBTQ Youth](#)

[The Influence of Families on LGBTQ Youth Health: A Call to Action for Innovation in Research and Intervention Development](#)

[LGBTQ + cultural competency training for health professionals: a systematic review](#)

[Do LGBTQIA+ Health Care Providers Improve LGBTQIA+ Well-being?](#)

[Bans on Best Practice Medical Care For Transgender Youth](#)



[Safe School Laws](#)

[LGBTQ state policies: A lever for reducing SGM youth substance use and bullying](#)

[State-Level Policies and Health Outcomes in U.S. Transgender Adolescents: Findings from the 2019 Youth Risk Behavior Survey](#)

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