

YOU ARE VALID.
YOU DESERVE SUPPORT.

Your identity is not the problem.
Discrimination is. Together, we can break the stigma and build healthier futures.

Need Help Now?

You're not alone. Reach out:

- Trevor Project (LGBTQ+ Youth)
– 1-866-488-7386 / Text "START" to 678678
- Trans Lifeline – 877-565-8860
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – 988
- NYC Well – 1-888-NYC-WELL



Improving the lives of LGBTQ+ youth

Sources & Further Reading

Meyer, I. H. (2003). Prejudice, social stress, and mental health in lesbian, gay, and bisexual populations: Conceptual issues and research evidence. *Psychological Bulletin*, 129(5), 674–697. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.129.5.674> (This is the foundational research introducing the Minority Stress Model.)

The Trevor Project. (2023). 2023 National Survey on LGBTQ Youth Mental Health. <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/survey-2023/> (Annual survey highlighting mental health trends among LGBTQ+ youth.)

American Psychological Association (APA). Health Disparities in LGBTQ Populations. <https://www.apa.org/topics/lgbtq-health> (Outlines mental health risk factors and recommendations.)

National LGBTQIA+ Health Education Center. Understanding the Health Needs of LGBTQ+ People. <https://www.lgbtqihealtheducation.org/> (Free CME resources and in-depth data on LGBTQ+ health disparities.)

Human Rights Campaign Foundation. Healthcare Equality Index (HEI). <https://www.hrc.org/hei> (Sets benchmarks for LGBTQ+ inclusive hospital and clinic policies.)

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LGBTQ+ **MENTAL HEALTH**



UNDERSTANDING & NAVIGATING MINORITY STRESS

What Is Minority Stress?

Minority stress refers to the chronic stress LGBTQ+ people experience due to stigma, discrimination, and social exclusion. This stress is in addition to general life stressors and can significantly affect mental and physical well-being.

LGBTQ+ individuals are at increased risk for:

- Depression & Anxiety Disorders
- Substance Use
- Suicidal Ideation and Attempts
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

These risks are not due to one's identity—but to how society treats LGBTQ+ individuals.

Sources of Minority Stress

- **Healthcare Discrimination** – Being denied care, or facing uninformed providers
- **Family Rejection** – Lack of support from loved ones
- **Bullying & Harassment** – Especially in schools or workplaces
- **Legal Barriers** – Limited protections in housing, employment, and marriage
- **Internalized Stigma** – Negative beliefs internalized over time

Take Action: Mental Wellness Tips

- ✓ Prioritize self-care and mental check-ins
- ✓ Avoid spaces and relationships that invalidate your identity.
- ✓ Speak to a licensed professional about minority stress.
- ✓ Educate allies to create inclusive environments.
- ✓ Connect with LGBTQ+ advocacy or peer-led health initiatives.

PROTECTIVE FACTORS: WHAT HELPS

- Affirming Mental Health Care
- Find LGBTQ+ competent therapists or counselors. Look for keywords like “LGBTQ+ affirming,” “trauma-informed,” or “minority stress model.”
- Community Support
- Join LGBTQ+ centers, peer support groups, or online forums where you can share experiences and resources safely.
- Chosen Family
- Build supportive relationships with people who affirm and respect your identity.
- Healthy Coping Tools
- Practice mindfulness, journaling, art therapy, movement (yoga, dance), or any expression that grounds you.
- Know Your Rights
- Organizations like Lambda Legal and the Human Rights Campaign offer tools to advocate for your rights in healthcare, education, and employment.