



FROM AT-RISK TO ACTIVIST

Re-imagining Resilience for LGBTQ+ Youth

Props to the CGP Youth Advisory Board!

common goodness PROJECT



Professional Development: Gender Inclusive Schools, HIB and Discriminatory Harassment, Trauma-Informed LGBTQ+ practice, LGBTQ+ Youth Resilience



Technical Assistance: Guidance regarding support for individual youth/families, solutions for systemic challenges, thought partner, community relations



Support: Responding to hurtful experiences or incidents, human-to-human conversations

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 1 Reconsider what resilience may look like in LGBTQ+ youth
- 2 Build nuance on the complexities of defining and focusing on resilience
- 3 Identify specific individual and collective LGBTQ+ youth behaviors that demonstrate resilience
- 4 Develop ideas for how to name, foster, and celebrate the unique skills, creativity, and strengths of LGBTQ+ youth

FOSTERING PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY



We share common ground.



Learning takes risks.



Bring your best intentions and assume the best of one another.



Not a space for policing language.

LGBTQ+ youth are doing work...
that supports the common good...
while living in systems that were
never designed to support them.



LGBTQ+ YOUTH! GENDER IDENTITY AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION OF 10TH GRADERS IN WASHINGTON STATE

What % of 10th grade students in Washington State do you think are gender diverse?

11% of students are gender diverse.

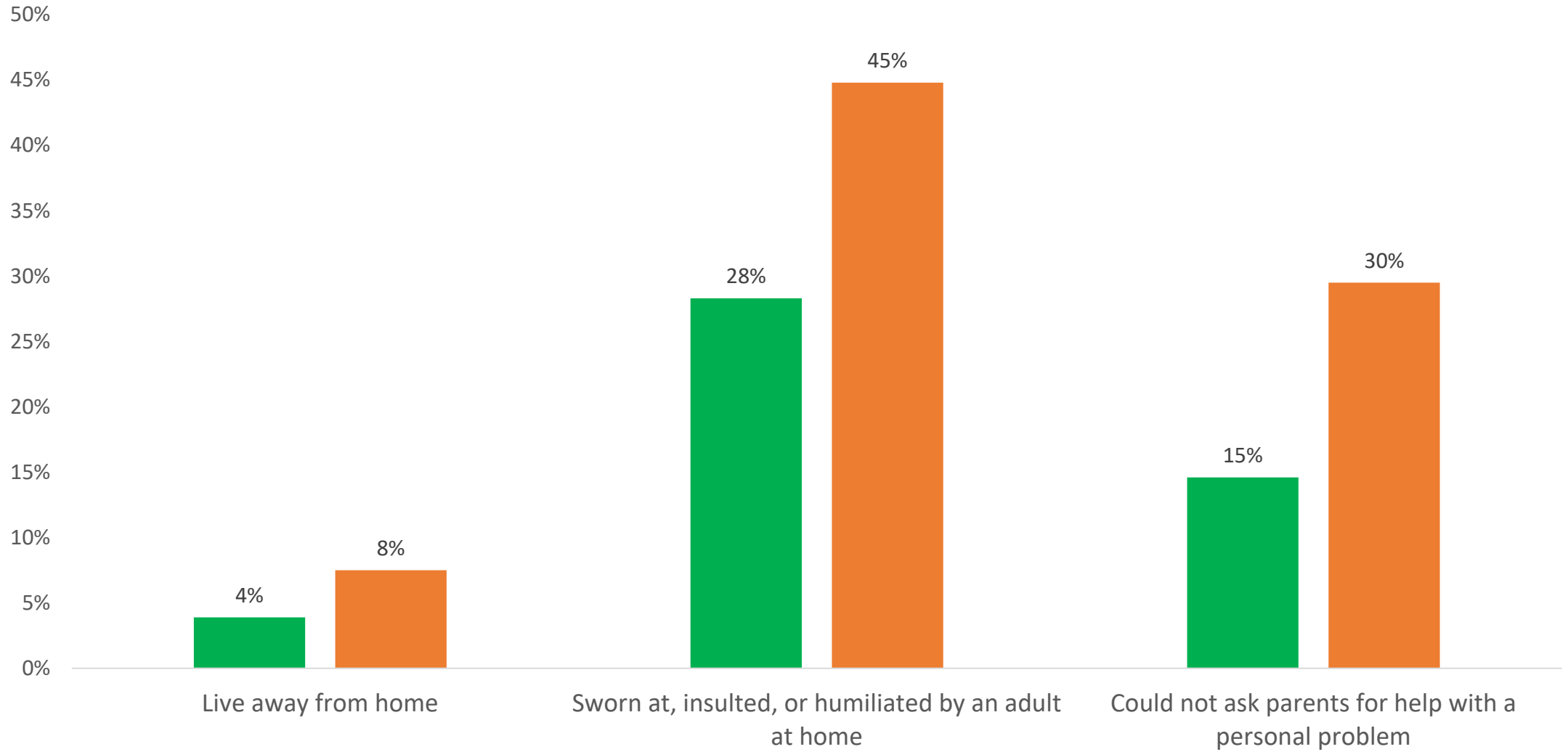
This includes transgender, questioning, something else fits better, and more than one selected answer.

What % of 10th grade students in Washington State do you think have a minority sexual orientation?

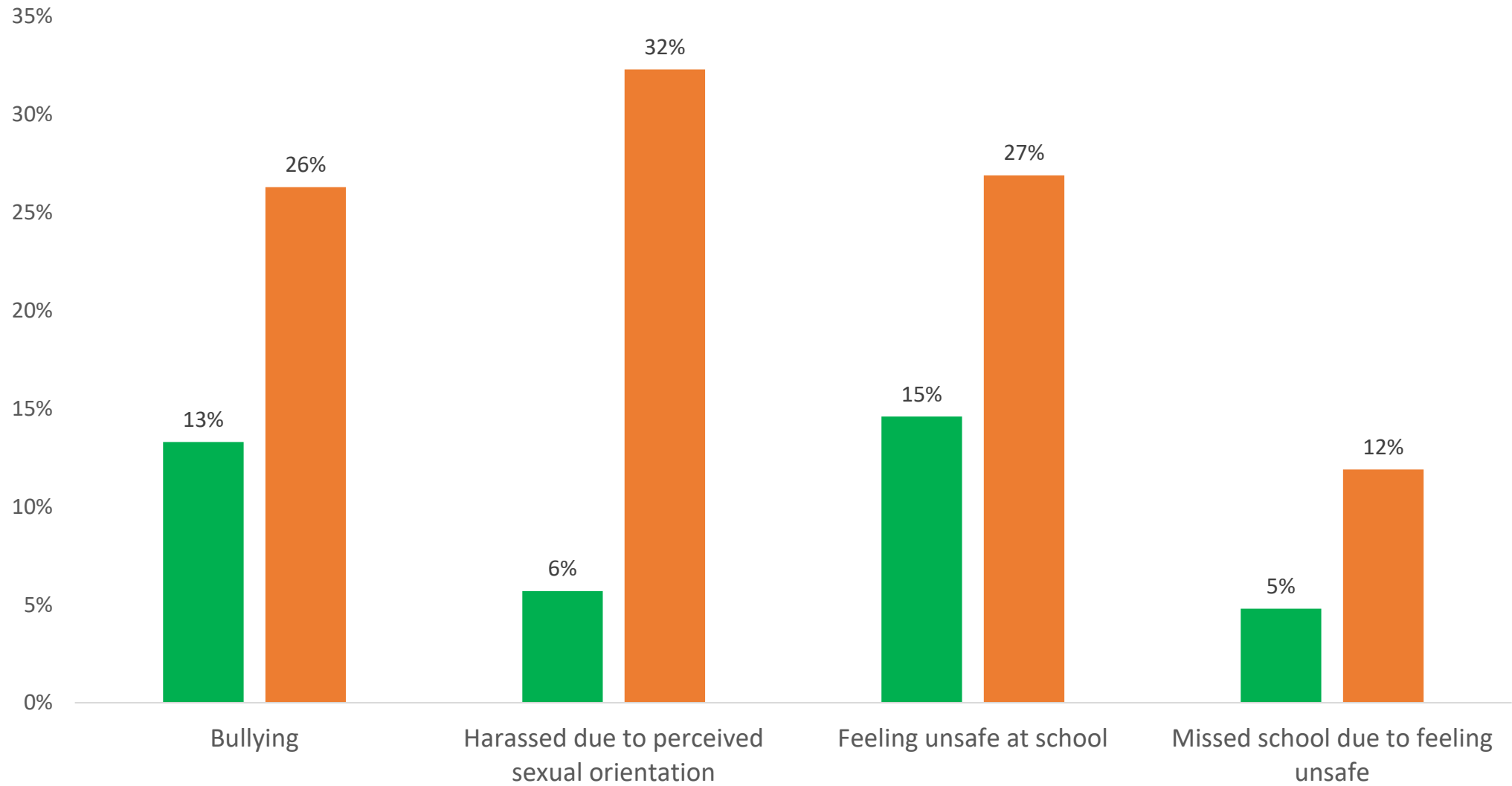
More than 25% of students hold a minority sexual orientation.

This includes gay, lesbian, bisexual, questioning, and something else fits better.

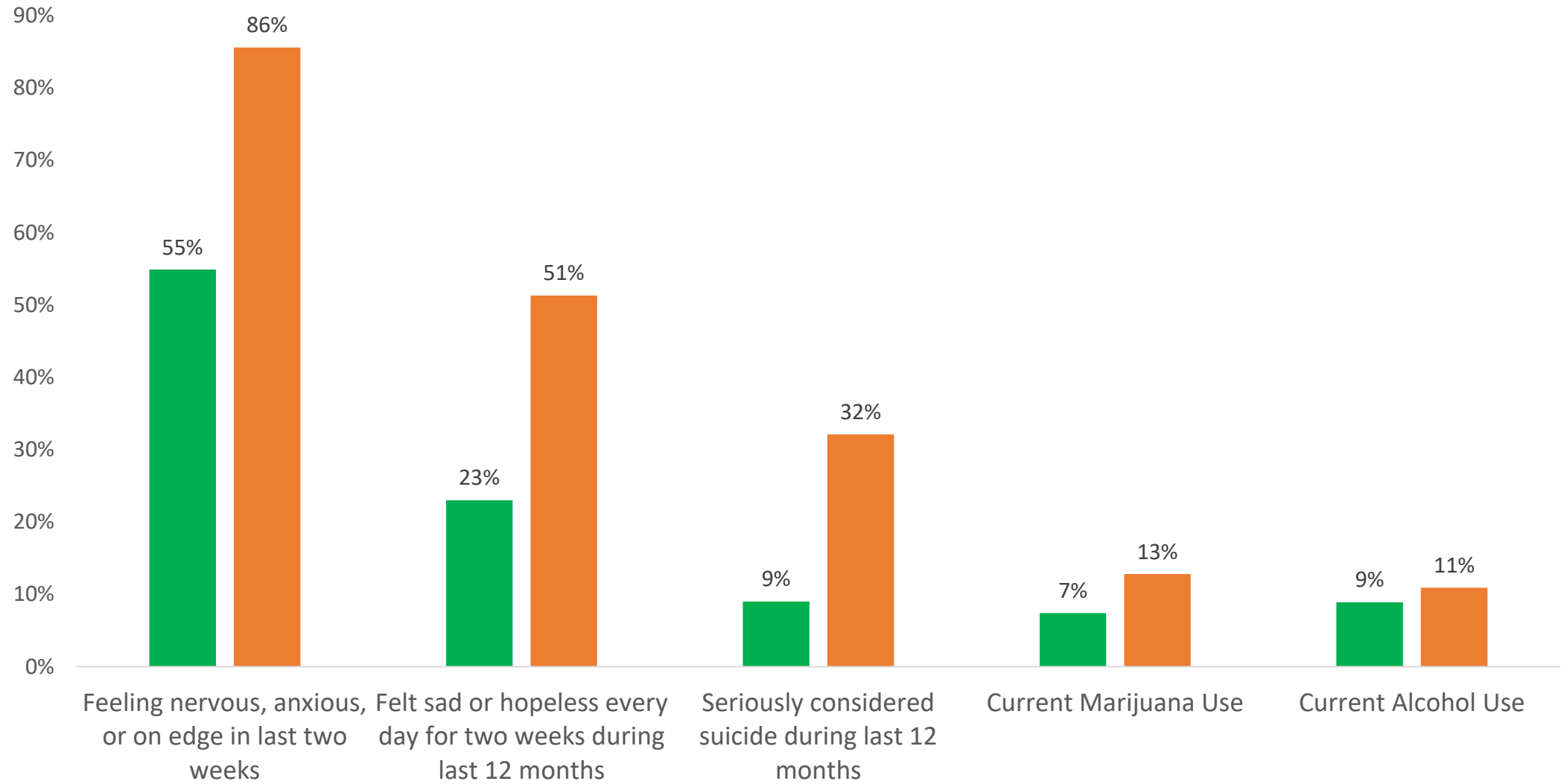
LIFE AT HOME



LIFE AT SCHOOL



BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

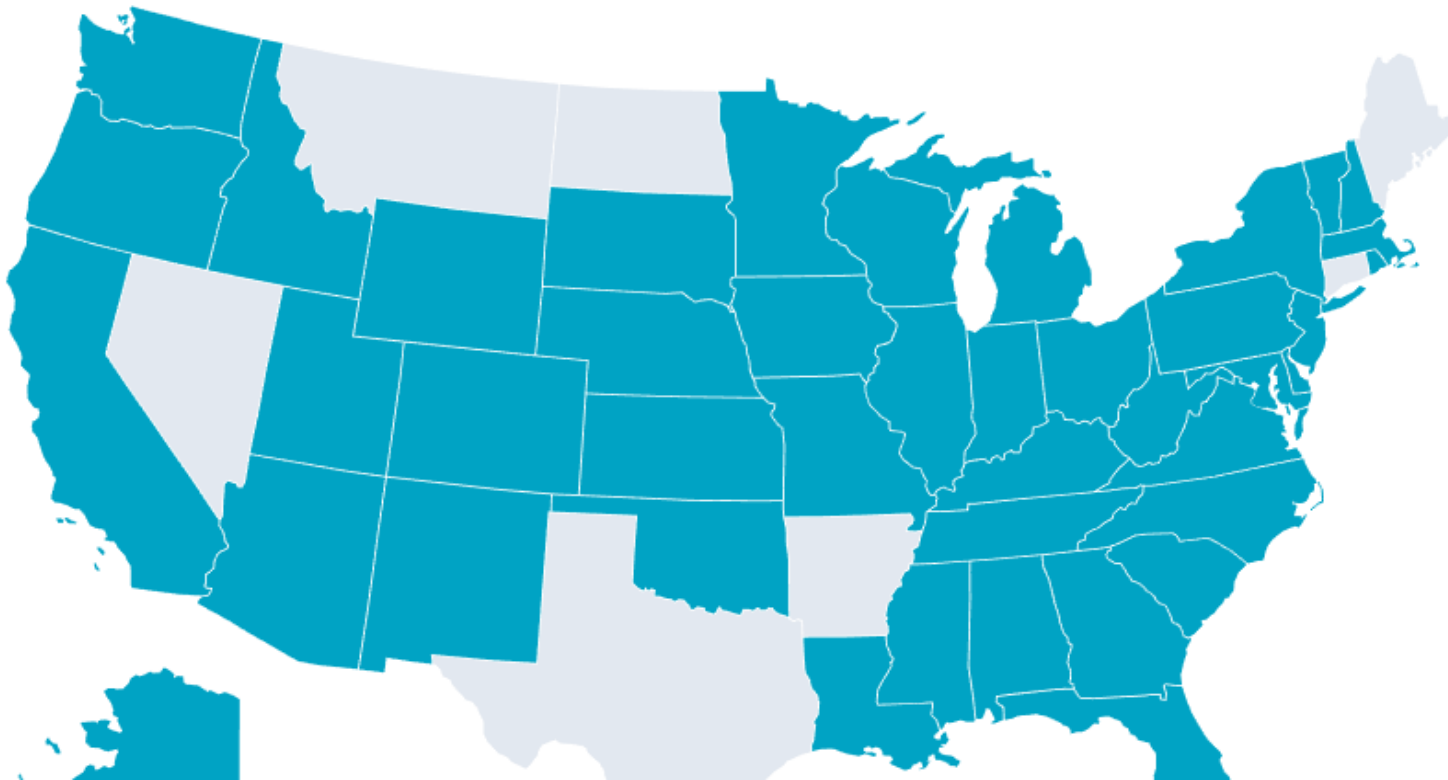


2024 anti-trans bills tracker

In 2024, anti-trans bills continue to be introduced across the country. We track legislation that seeks to block trans people from receiving basic healthcare, education, legal recognition, and the right to publicly exist.

665 bills^① 43 states

45 passed 128 active 492 failed



Enacting state-level anti-transgender laws increased incidents of past-year suicide attempts among TGNB young people by 7–72%. - Trevor Project

Lee, W. Y., Hobbs, J. N., Hobaica, S., DeChants, J. P., Price, M. N., & Nath, R. (2024). State-level anti-transgender laws increase past-year suicide attempts among transgender and non-binary young people in the USA. *Nature Human Behaviour*. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41562-024-01979-5>



How do you define resilience?

What behaviors would be on your top three list of resilient behaviors?

From where did you get this list?

WHAT IS RESILIENCE?

Resilience is *“the process of, capacity for, or outcome of successful adaptation despite challenging or threatening circumstances.”*

Youth are considered resilient when they experience “prosocial” development despite adversity.

Highly correlated with long term wellbeing.

Resilience is a learned behavior that can become internalized, become a mindset.

Some level of resilience is attainable for everyone.

RESILIENCE- IN COMMUNITY

Resilience is individual *and also* communal.

Communities that have experienced adversity develop community-level adaptive behaviors, language, rituals, and values.

What is a recent example of collective resilience in a community that has experienced adversity?



RESILIENCE IN INDIVIDUAL LGBTQ+ YOUTH



In one study LGBTQ+ youth define their resilience as “showing up while still in pain.”

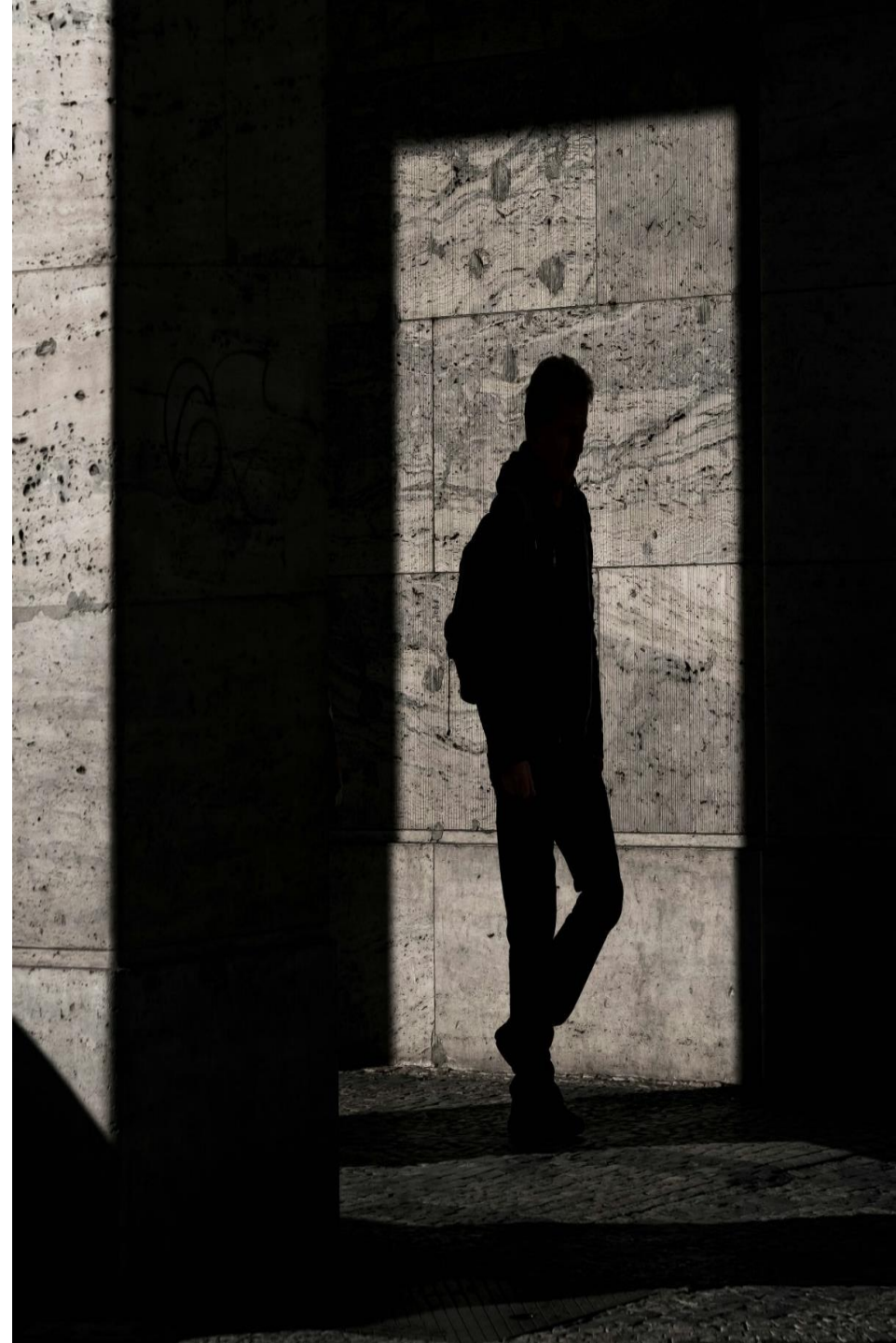


Resilience may sometimes look different in LGBTQ+ youth.



LGBTQ+ identities are still stigmatized.

What is the shadow
side of focusing on
resilience when
supporting
marginalized
youth?





What are some ways
LGBTQ+ youth
demonstrate individual
or collective resilience?



Finding LGBTQ+ friends
Seeking out trusted adults
Creating chosen families
Finding queer-friendly spaces (QSA/GSA, drama, anime clubs, online)
Self-identifying
Choosing to stay closeted
Continuing to explore their identity after coming out
Finding literature, music, movies, and celebrities who share the same or similar identity
Integrating LGBTQ+ histories, perspectives and contributions in their schoolwork
Ending unsupportive friendships
Leaving unwelcoming faith communities
Renaming body parts to reduce symptoms of gender dysphoria


RESISTANCE IN LGBTQ+ YOUTH

Nearly 40% of incarcerated girls identify as LGB and 85-90% of incarcerated LGBTQ youth are youth of color.

26% of LGBTQ+ 10th graders in WA experienced bullying

6% of non-LGBTQ+ 10th graders in WA were bullied for their perceived sexual orientation

We can discourage, punish, even criminalize, resilient behaviors of LGBTQ+ youth when we fail to appreciate their purpose. All behaviors make sense!



What are some ways
LGBTQ+ youth
demonstrate individual
or collective resistance?



Correcting others when misgendered

Seeking gender affirming care

Defending LGBTQ+ friends when they are misgendered or bullied

Expressing gender in ways that challenge norms

Challenging binary statements about sex and gender made by professors

Coming out in faith communities and/or finding affirming faith communities

Organizing or participating in Queer events

Developing or delivering peer-to-peer or youth-to-adult education pieces

Wearing Pride themed clothing or pins

Protesting anti-LGBTQ+ policies or culture in public or at school (ie. Day of Silence)

Public displays of affection in queer relationships

THE UNIQUE VALUES, SKILLS, AND RESOURCES OF LGBTQ+ YOUTH

Key Values

Inclusion
Consent
Empathy
Self-determination
Self-expression

Core Skills

Self-knowledge
Reading others
Creative self-expression
Navigating unfriendly systems

Key Resources

Queer community
LGBTQ+ Pride images and events
LGBTQ+ history



Cool. What now?

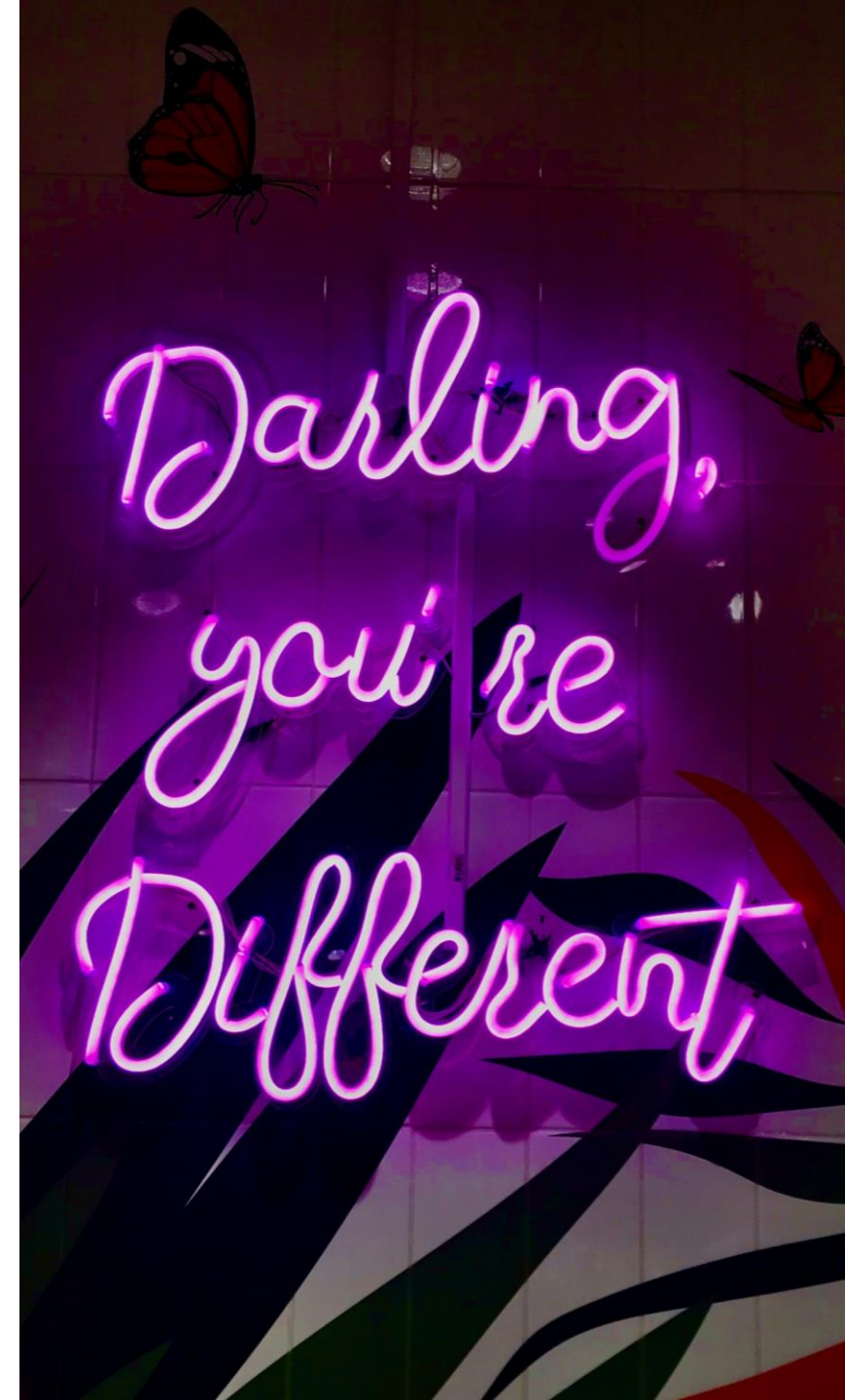


HELP THEM NAME IT

Seeing queer culture and behavior as a strength may take time.

Many LGBTQ+ youth exist in a context that largely continues to shame and reject their identity.

Naming queer culture and behavior as serving the common good, as moral guidance, can be a transformative revelation for LGBTQ+ youth.



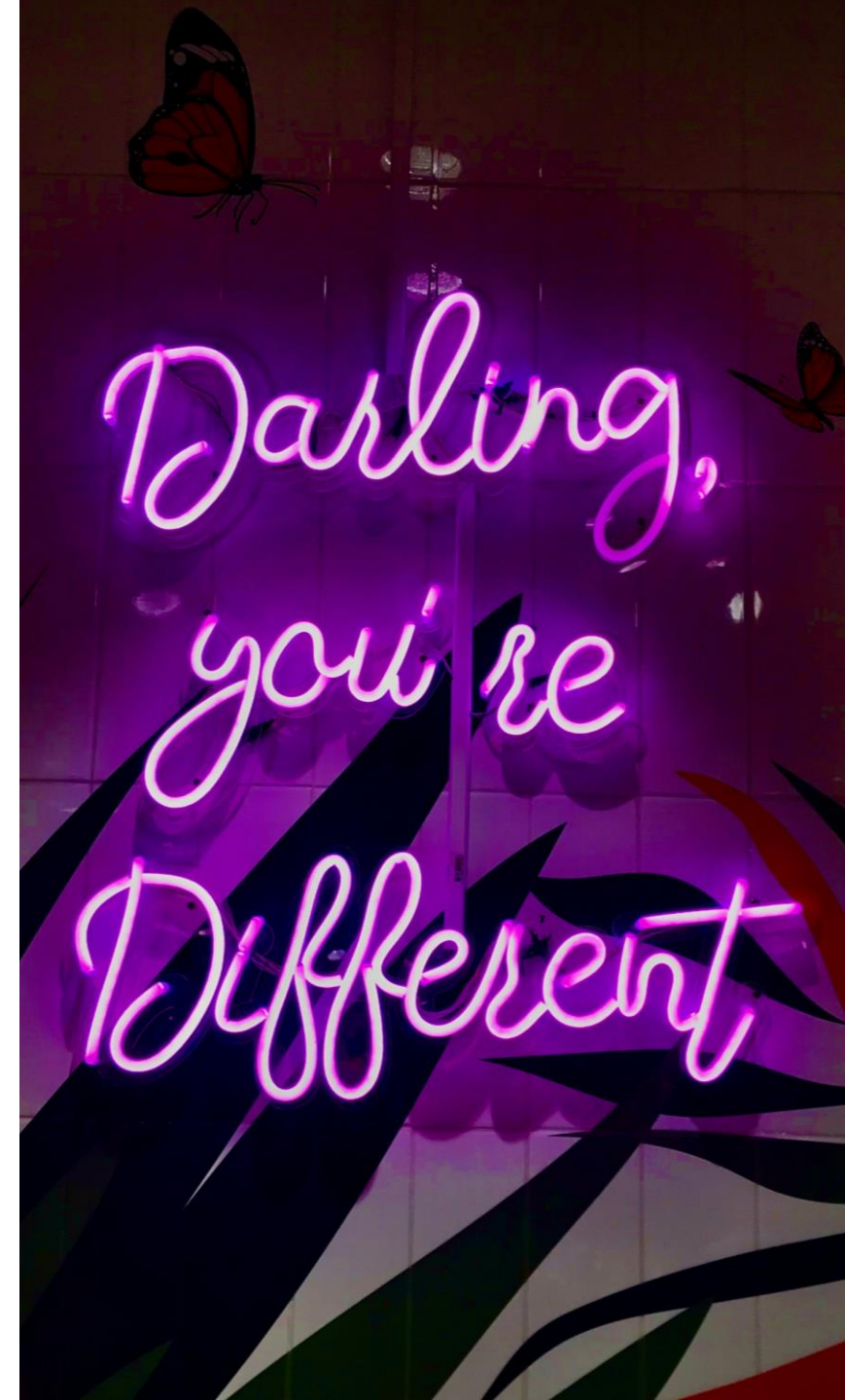
HELP THEM NAME IT

“What are do you love most about being queer?”

“What do you most admire about the queer community?”

“What values do you have, as a queer person, that makes you who you are?”

“What insight do you have, as a queer person, that helps you in this situation?”





FOSTER AND CELEBRATE

Respond immediately and clearly to any anti-LGBTQ+ language or behavior.

Create funding and institutional parity for LGBTQ+ scholarship, community, and events.

Cultivate a diverse staff that includes LGBTQ+ identities.

Build *physical* spaces that reflect the queer and trans community.

Include gender affirming care in student health centers.

HOW THIS COULD LOOK (*better advice- ask them!*)

Clothing swaps/Fashion shows

Art shows/Open mic nights

Queer film events/series

Queer scholar events

Art projects around name and pronoun/identity/flags

Peer-to-Peer education events

Train the teachers, student panels

Mentorship program between generations of LGBTQ+ people

Individual and collective coming out celebrations, anniversaries

Pride events- organize, attend

How this could look in your context?

How might you leverage the unique skills, creativity, and values of LGBTQ+ yya in your context:

1. **In what ways are you already naming, fostering, and celebrating LGBTQ+ strengths?**
2. **What new ideas do you have for bringing more queer cultural strengths into your work?**
3. **What barriers do you foresee, and what might you need to make these ideas a reality?**

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that supports the common good...

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Citations

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