



Free2B Alliance

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Health Watch Survey



Question one: What do you think are the main mental health challenges faced by the LGBT community?

A variety of concerns were raised by respondents, ranging from emotional to the practical problems.

- A recurrent challenge related to **depression and anxiety**, with 11% citing “self-harm” and “suicide” as the main mental health challenges faced by the LGBT community.
- Other respondents emphasised the following as the main challenges faced by the LGBT community:
 - **lack of support**, in relation to service provision - tailored or otherwise
 - **family understanding**
 - **finding a safe space to talk**

The responses demonstrate that **challenges faced are various, complex and require a holistic approach to address the stigma and discrimination attached to mental ill health; and to identifying as LGBT.**



Free2B Alliance officially Launched in 2015

Offers:

Free2Talk mentoring 13-18 years old

Free2Talk 18+

Parent Support

Training

The Gap LGBTQ Youth Club

Terms of Reference



Throughout this presentation I will be using a number of terms & acronyms:

- LGBTQ - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning & / or Queer
- Transgender (abbreviated to Trans) - Gender identity & biological sex do not match. I.e. someone who is biologically female and identifies as male & vice versa (we will use the term to refer to Trans individuals at *any* stage of their transition)
- Transition - The process of making changes & / or undergoing treatment to bring your biological gender in line with your gender identity (e.g. gender specific clothing, name change, hormone treatment, surgical gender reassignment)



Introductions & Icebreaker

Activity designed by youth participants from
The Gap LGBTQ+ youth club

Picture pairs - celebrating difference

Option A

Option B





Option A

Option B

Option A

Option B



Option A

Option B



Christmas

New Year's eve



Why do we need to create an LGBTQ inclusive environment?

The Teachers Report, Stonewall (2014):

Stonewall findings report that nine in ten secondary school teachers say young people, regardless of their sexual orientation, experience homophobic bullying, name calling or harassment.



Why do we need to create an LGBTQ inclusive environment?

The LGBTQ+ community are far more likely to experience mental health issues including self-harm and drug & alcohol issues (Mind.org.uk, 2015).

Research indicates that 41% of gender variant people will self-harm or attempt to take their own life. This is in comparison to 1.6 % general population (*Trans Mental Health Study 2012*).

Health Watch Survey



What mental health support do you think the LGBT community may need or want?

- Free2Talk provides tailored LGBTQ+ specific service
- Training to organisations including Camhs ~ improve therapy services available to LGBTQ + YP

Mentoring service development



- The Gap LGBTQ Youth Club ~ 88 active membership (May 2016).
- 25% use mainstream specialist support ~ social workers, support workers, counsellors
- 93% agreed for specific LGBTQ services.

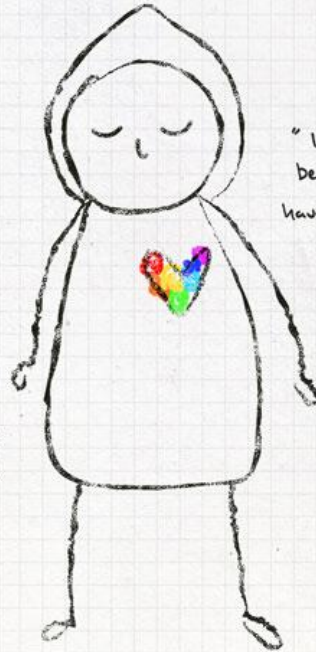


Comments from Young people

- “I’m not out about my sexuality, because my support workers have a very limited understanding of that particular topic”
- “She doesn’t understand anything to do with gender, she thinks gender and sex are the same thing”.

IT'S GOOD TO BE YOU

#FREE2TALK



"I'm not out about my sexuality because my support workers have a very limited understanding of that particular topic."

"She doesn't understand anything to do with gender. She thinks gender and sex are the same thing."

LGBTQ+ mentoring service

1:1 mentoring support:

We provide a safe space where individuals can explore their situations and develop the necessary skills and strategies to manage the difficulties they face.

- Increasing self-esteem ✓
- Building personal resilience ✓
- Improving aspirations ✓

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Based in Wandsworth and available to any young person able to access the borough.

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Health Watch Survey



Question three: Do you know of a service or group that does well in supporting the LGBT community with mental health issues? *If yes, please tell us more*

A number of services were named as providing a supportive service to the LGBT community with mental health issues and some were outside of London. This highlights the lack of available services or awareness of services available.

The three services which were consistently cited were:

- Tavistock
- The GAP Youth Club
- Free2B Alliance

Why do we need to create an LGBTQ inclusive environment?



Impact of Homophobia, Biphobia & Transphobia (HBT-phobia) and inequality

There wasn't much education into anything about LGBT

Teachers aren't very supportive

My school takes the p*** out of gay people and it's sad

Teach students more about LGBT matters

Teach about all the different genders & sexualities

We have so many LGBTQ+ people and no support from adults....but we set up a club anyway!

Why do we need to create an LGBTQ inclusive environment?



*Impact of Homophobia, Biphobia & Transphobia
(HBT-phobia) and inequality*

TRANS

"So you want
to be a boy"

"What's in
your
pants?!"

"Why do you
feel the need to
be gay?"

"Why don't you
make up your
mind"

Bisexual

"You're just
greedy"

Gay / lesbian

"You don't look
gay"

"God hates
you"

"Don't worry
you'll find a man"

"You're too
pretty to be a
lesbian"

"Who's the guy in
your relationship?"

"It's a phase...
you will grow
out of that"



Health Watch Survey

What can be done to support the LGBTQ Community?

- Training
- GP's
- Camhs
- Schools



Healthwatch survey

What are the barriers to accessing services?

- Stigma
- Lack of confidence
- Fear of being judged
- Discrimination
- Lack of understanding



Health Watch Survey

- How can services be more accessible for the LGBTQ community?
- What can be done to promote better mental health

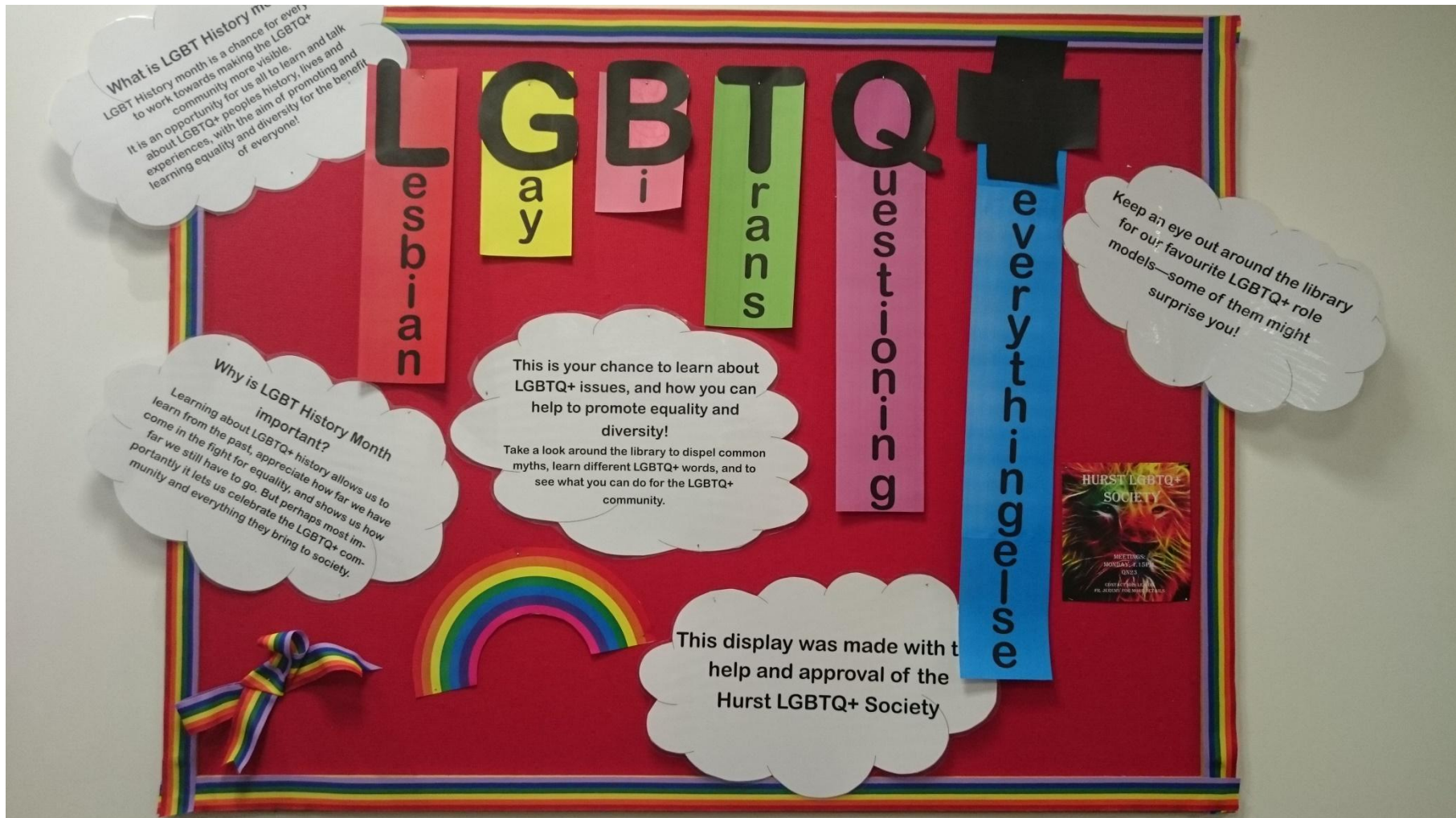
Practical & Simple Ways to Develop an LGBTQ Inclusive Environment



Visual displays to clearly demonstrate inclusive environment

- Stonewall posters - free to download:
Some people are Gay / Trans / Bi get over it
- LGBT History month displays & / or events
- Trans remembrance day display & / or events - 20 November
- IDAHO display & / or event - 17th May
- Pride flag
- Develop and display equalities pledge

Visual display examples:



Visual display examples:



Visual display examples:



Visual display examples:



Cambridgeshire's Equality Pledge

“We believe in the dignity of all people and their right to respect and equality of opportunity. We value the strength that comes with difference and the positive contribution that diversity brings to our community. Our aspiration is for Cambridge and the wider region to be safe, welcoming and inclusive”



Healthwatch survey

Question eight: Is there anything else you think the London Assembly Health Committee should consider?

More than 35% of responses stressed that increased funding is critical to addressing LGBT mental health.

In order to raise awareness of LGBT mental health, provide “**faster treatments**” and **access to support**, must be provided and a higher proportion of health funding must be targeted at LGBT mental health.

Further suggestions include a greater focus on **campaigning**, celebrity endorsement and compulsory LGBT awareness training for health and social care staff.

The future?

