

YOUTH EXPERIENCES

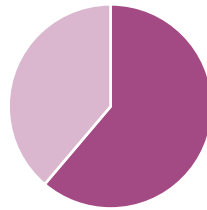


Tulsa's Sexual and Gender Minority Community Needs Report, 2019

Bright Spots and Progress

Many youth are reporting generally positive experiences with family.

- For participants under 20, **61.2%** reported none of the listed negative experiences with family.
- For participants 19 and younger, **3 out of 4** reported at least one such positive experience.



61.2% of participants under 20 reported none of the listed negative experiences with family.

Youth reported utilizing a range of community programs and services.

- **Nearly 3 in 5** participate in Gender & Sexuality Alliances.
- **Roughly 1 in 3** benefit from Youth Services of Tulsa, Oklahomans for Equality, and the support of a mental health counselor or teacher.
- Others reference support from Girl Scouts, Camp Fire, and PFLAG.

Many are reporting lower rates of negative experiences in school so long as they are aware of antidiscrimination policies in place.

- **3 in 4** students who reported policies for gender identity and/or gender expression said they were able to present in accordance with their gender identity in school.



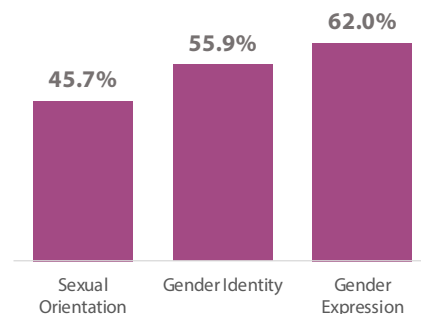
Challenges

Negative experiences are **common**.

- **Nearly two-thirds** reported at least one of the listed negative experience happening to them in school — **15% higher** than the percentage of youth who reported bullying or harassment at school in 2009.

A **high percentage** of participants reported that their schools do not have, or that they are unaware of, antidiscrimination policies regarding sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression — indicating that there is **room for improvement** among districts to adopt such policies and ensure that students are aware of them.

A high percentage of students responded 'No' or 'Unsure' about their schools having antidiscrimination policies



Among students who did not report their school having all 3 policies, **half** said they were **not** allowed to dress in accordance with their gender identity

The Prism Project - to better inform the community of issues involving Tulsa's LGBTQ+ members.

In 2019, Tulsa Reaches Out (TRO) partnered with several Tulsa-area organizations to conduct a needs assessment survey to provide outreach, create advocacy groups and guide policymakers about the needs of Tulsa's sexual and gender minorities, commonly referred to as the LGBTQ+ community.

TRO commissioned The Hope Research Center at the University of Oklahoma-Tulsa to conduct the survey within Tulsa's LGBTQ+ community. More than 800 anonymous surveys were completed and analyzed. From this effort, a 73-page report was released in November 2019.

From the findings and the report, TRO established three goals:

1. **Provide outreach** to community partners to inform practices and ensure responsive services to the needs of sexual and gender minorities (SGM);
2. **Inform advocacy groups** working to increase public awareness and support goals to improve the well-being of the SGM community, and
3. **Guide policymakers** with data and analysis about the SGM community to inform future policy recommendations and actions.

The Prism Project tracks changes in the LGBTQ+ community since TRO first conducted a LGBTQ+ Needs Assessment in 2004-2005.

This brief is one in a series of five which summarize key findings in the report:

- Family & Community Experiences
- Health & Healthcare Access
- Mental Health
- Workplace Experiences
- Youth Experiences

The complete report, the briefs, a PowerPoint and other supportive materials can be found at link.ou.edu/tulsa-lgbtq

About Tulsa Reaches Out (TRO)

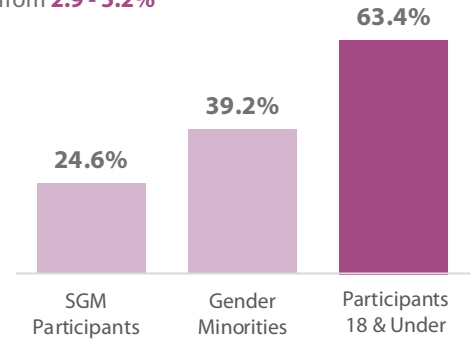
Tulsa Reaches Out is an advisory council within the Tulsa Community Foundation whose goal is to raise awareness and address changes needed for sexual and gender minorities.

Challenges

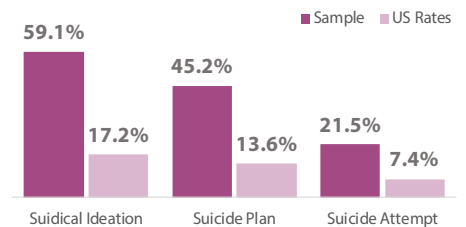
Youth are struggling with mental health and psychological distress.

- Regarding the 4 measures of wellbeing used in this study — hope, flourishing, social support, and civic engagement — youth reported **significantly lower** levels than adults.
- **Nearly two-thirds** of youth reported anxiety depression, or serious psychological distress — **significantly higher** than the rates reported by adult SGM respondents. The rate of psychological distress among SGM youth is **12-15x higher** than the rate of the general population.
- Suicidality is **strikingly high** among SGM youth. **59.1%** of youth (**3x** the national average) reported suicidal ideation, and **21.5%** of youth (**3x** the national average) reported having attempted suicide.
- Youth participants reported relatively high rates of substance use. **30%** reported using tobacco products and **28%** reported marijuana use without a prescription within the past month, and nearly **1 in 4** reported having used illicit drugs in their lifetime.

Youth reported an **alarmingly high** rate of serious psychological distress, with national estimates of the general population ranging from **2.9 - 5.2%**



Suicidality is **strikingly high** among SGM youth



The survey indicates important priorities moving forward:

Regarding the most important services needed for SGM individuals:

Youth indicated preferences for:

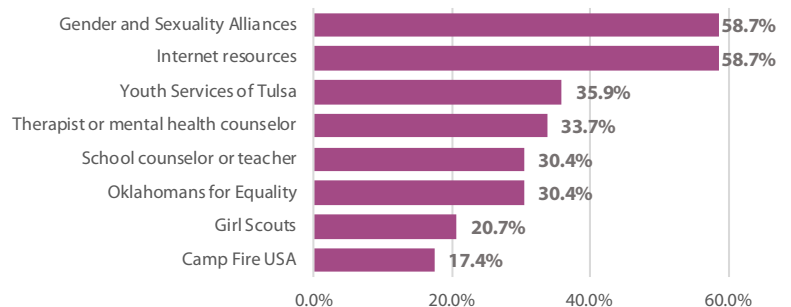
- mental health and counseling services
- public awareness about LGBTQ+ issues
- programs for LGBTQ+ youth
- sexual health education

Adults indicated preferences for:

- mental health and counseling services
- advocacy at the state legislature
- physical and medical health services
- public awareness about LGBTQ+ issues

We hope readers will consider **committing** their resources, influence, and networks to come up with **creative solutions** to the persistent challenges faced by sexual and gender minorities so that we can continue making progress together as **one community**.

The **top 8** agencies, programs, and services accessed by **youth**



The **top 8** agencies, programs, and services accessed by **adults**

