

The 2024 State Health Assessment is an overview of what we know about the health and well-being of people in Vermont. This data brief reflects findings about the health needs and experiences of LGBTQ+ Vermonters. It includes information from publicly available data and focus groups and interviews with community partners and individuals with lived expertise.

Key Findings

- The LGBTQ+ population in the U.S. has **doubled in the last 10 years** but is often underrepresented in national survey data. Questions on gender identity and sexual orientation are not consistently asked. This can negatively impact the understanding of social, cultural, and health needs.
- In 2021, **10% of Vermonters** identified as part of the LGBTQ+ community. 6% said they were Bisexual, 2% said Lesbian/Gay, 2% as another Orientation, and 1% as Transgender.
- LGBTQ+ students of color are three times more likely to **experience hunger or housing insecurity** than White, Non-Hispanic students.
- People in the LGBTQ+ community in Vermont **experience discrimination in multiple forms**, which directly influences physical health, mental health, and substance use challenges.

"It sounds like a simple thing, but when somebody is misgendering you every single time, when it feels like it's purposeful, then it feels like the healthcare system is purposefully not going to be providing you appropriate care."

- Among LGBTQ+ youth, the higher rates of bullying and discrimination can lead to **isolation and lack of social supports**. These risks go down with the presence of supportive adults and the availability of affirming, safe spaces.
- LGBTQ+ adults are more likely to **delay health care access** due to cost than non-LGBTQ+ Vermonters (13% to 5%).

"I haven't been able to find any mental health providers who understand the experience of trans folx. That is really hard because I don't want to have to educate my providers or answer constant questions about my identity."

Health Needs of LGBTQ+ Vermonters

- The number of people in the LGBTQ+ community that are **unhoused** has increased greatly in recent years.
- The lack of **medical and mental health services providers** from the LGBTQ+ community makes many services unwelcoming, leading many to not seek the support they need.

“If families were using this kid's name and pronouns, would they have the acute need for medication? If the communities that these young people were navigating were accepting of their whole authentic selves...would they experience that same level of anxiety?”

- LGBTQ+ youth in Vermont experience notably greater **emotional challenges** compared to Vermont youth as a whole:
 - Feeling sad or hopeless almost every day (52% compared to 21%)
 - Feeling nervous or anxious at least most of the time (62% to 27%)
 - Experiencing poor mental health most of the time (59% to 35%)
 - Attempted suicide in the last 12 months (14% to 7%)
- There are large **physical and mental health disparities** for LGBTQ+ adults too.

	Reporting poor mental health	With depressive disorder	With a disability	With asthma	Recent binge drinking
All US	15%	19%	29%	10%	15%
All VT	16%	25%	25%	12%	17%
LGBTQ+ in VT	31%	45%	34%	20%	23%

“This [climate change] has real implications for mental health concerns and for suicidal ideation. As young people think about the future that they are poised to head into, they are seeing very little action from the adults in their lives to take these crises seriously. And that is enormously stressful.”

In collaboration with



References:

- [County Health Rankings](#), University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute. Resources include:
 - [VT Department of Health Population Health Surveys and Data](#)
 - [VT Agency of Education Data and Reporting](#)
 - [VT Cancer Registry](#)
 - [VT Crime Information Center](#)
 - [VT Department of Health Environmental Public Health Data Tracking](#)
 - [VT State Highway Safety Office](#)
 - [VT Vaccination coverage](#)
- [CARES database](#), University of Missouri. Data compilation is from many sources, including but not limited to:
 - US Census Bureau
 - American Community Survey (ACS)
 - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
 - United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
 - Department of Transportation
 - Federal Bureau of Investigation
- [Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System \(BRFSS 2021\)](#)
- [Youth Risk Behavior Survey](#)
- [Department of Mental Health Vision 2030](#)
- [State Youth Advisory Group Health Equity Report](#)
- [Health Disparities Faced by LGBT Students of Color](#), April 2022