

Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Among Massachusetts High School Students



Summary of LGBTQ Data in 2020 Annual Report

The Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey (MYRBS) is a biannual, representative study of youth statewide. In the most recent 2017 MYRBS, 15.2% of Massachusetts youth identified as LGBTQ. 14.3% of students surveyed described themselves as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or not sure (questioning) of their sexual orientation and 2.9% identified themselves as transgender or questioning their gender identity. These categories overlapped, with 78% of transgender/questioning youth also identifying as LGBTQ. More female- than male-identified adolescents were LGBTQ (20.2% vs. 10.0%). The percent of youth who said they were LGBTQ varied across racial and ethnic groups, with LGBTQ youth comprising 14% of White, 12% of Black, 18% of Hispanic/Latinx, 12% of Asian, and 22% of multiracial youth. For a full analysis, see our 2020 Annual Report at mass.gov/annual-recommendations.

Percent of Students Who Reported Risk Behaviors and Experiences	LGBTQ Students	Others Students	Relative Risk for LGBTQ Students
Bullied at school in the past year	22.3	12.8	1.7x
Skipped school in past month because felt unsafe	11.5	3.3	3.5x
Been in a physical fight at school in the past year	9.8	5.2	1.9x
Threatened or injured with weapon at school	9.0	4.4	2.1x
Bullied electronically in the past year	20.7	11.9	1.7x
Hurt self on purpose in the past year (e.g., by cutting, burning self)	35.6	11.2	3.2x
Seriously considered suicide in the past year	31.2	9.9	3.2x
Made a suicide attempt in the past year	16.3	4.1	3.9x
Can talk to parents about "things that are important to you"	73.9	81.1	0.9x
Any lifetime heroin use	5.2	0.9	5.8x
Experienced sexual contact against their will	16.3	6.1	2.7x
Homelessness	2.2	0.8	2.8x

All differences between LGBTQ and other students are statistically significant, $p < .01$.

<http://mass.gov/annual-recommendations>