

Queer young people in Australia face disproportionate challenges

May 30 2022



Credit: Pixabay/CC0 Public Domain

New research from the Monash University Center for Youth Policy and Education Practice has found that queer young people in Australia face disproportionate challenges in contrast to their heterosexual peers in key

areas such as education, health and employment.

A comprehensive survey of more than five hundred young Australians aged 18–24, and in-depth interviews with an additional 30, encompassed areas such as [education](#), employment, technology, [health](#) and well-being, finances, housing, civic participation and the impact of COVID-19.

The findings reveal more needs to be done urgently to ensure safe and inclusive communities, and offers particularly striking insights in relation to three key areas: [mental health](#) and well-being, education and employment.

Among a wide list of findings from the report released today, Queer Young People in Australia: Insights from the 2021 Australian Youth Barometer, the researchers have found that queer young people:

- are 33% more likely to experience significant stress about interacting with other students than cisgender/heterosexual young people
- are 21% less likely to feel like they belong at their educational institution than cisgender/heterosexual young people
- are 85% more likely to feel pessimistic or very pessimistic about working in a meaningful job
- are 1.4 times more likely to rate their own mental health as poor or very poor
- were 71% more likely to have sought but not received mental health support in the last two years

Co-author of the report Professor Lucas Walsh said that by reporting on the disproportionate challenges faced by queer young people, the report aims to highlight how these experiences reflect broader systemic influences in our society.

Professor Lucas says more needs to be done by all levels of government as a matter of urgency.

"While queer young people are well aware of the challenges faced by their community, their concerns are not being heard, especially by the Australian Government and particularly during this election. We need to be doing more to create safer schools and in the provision of mental health and well-being support," he says.

Blake Cutler, the lead author of the report and researcher at the Center for Youth Policy and Education Practice, says schools should be places of care and safety where young people can thrive, and yet for many this is not the case.

"For many queer young people, schools are places where they face regular harassment and discrimination. These negative experiences contribute to poorer well-being outcomes and queer young people face significant challenges when accessing crucial queer-affirming health and mental health care. The onus to address these issues is on us all," Mr. Cutler says.

For the purposes of the survey, queer young people shared the terms that they use when referring to themselves. Subsequently, the researchers did not feel it was appropriate to possibly misrepresent or leave out their self-identification by using a form of LGBTIQ+ acronym in the paper, using the term "queer" to refer to [young people](#) who use one or more of the identities represented within and beyond the LGBTIQ+ acronym.

More information: Queer Young People in Australia: Insights from the 2021 Australian Youth Barometer. [bridges.monash.edu/articles/re ...
h_Barometer/19719532](https://bridges.monash.edu/articles/report/Queer_Young_People_in_Australia:_Insights_from_the_2021_Australian_Youth_Barometer/19719532)

Provided by Monash University

Citation: Queer young people in Australia face disproportionate challenges (2022, May 30)
retrieved 26 April 2024 from

<https://phys.org/news/2022-05-queer-young-people-australia-disproportionate.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.