

Sexuality and Gender: A Social Science Perspective

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Agenda

What is gender?

Beyond the binary - sexuality and gender research

How we know what we know - the cycle of socialization

Breaking the cycle

Youth development and thriving

Centering belonging

Belonging and faith



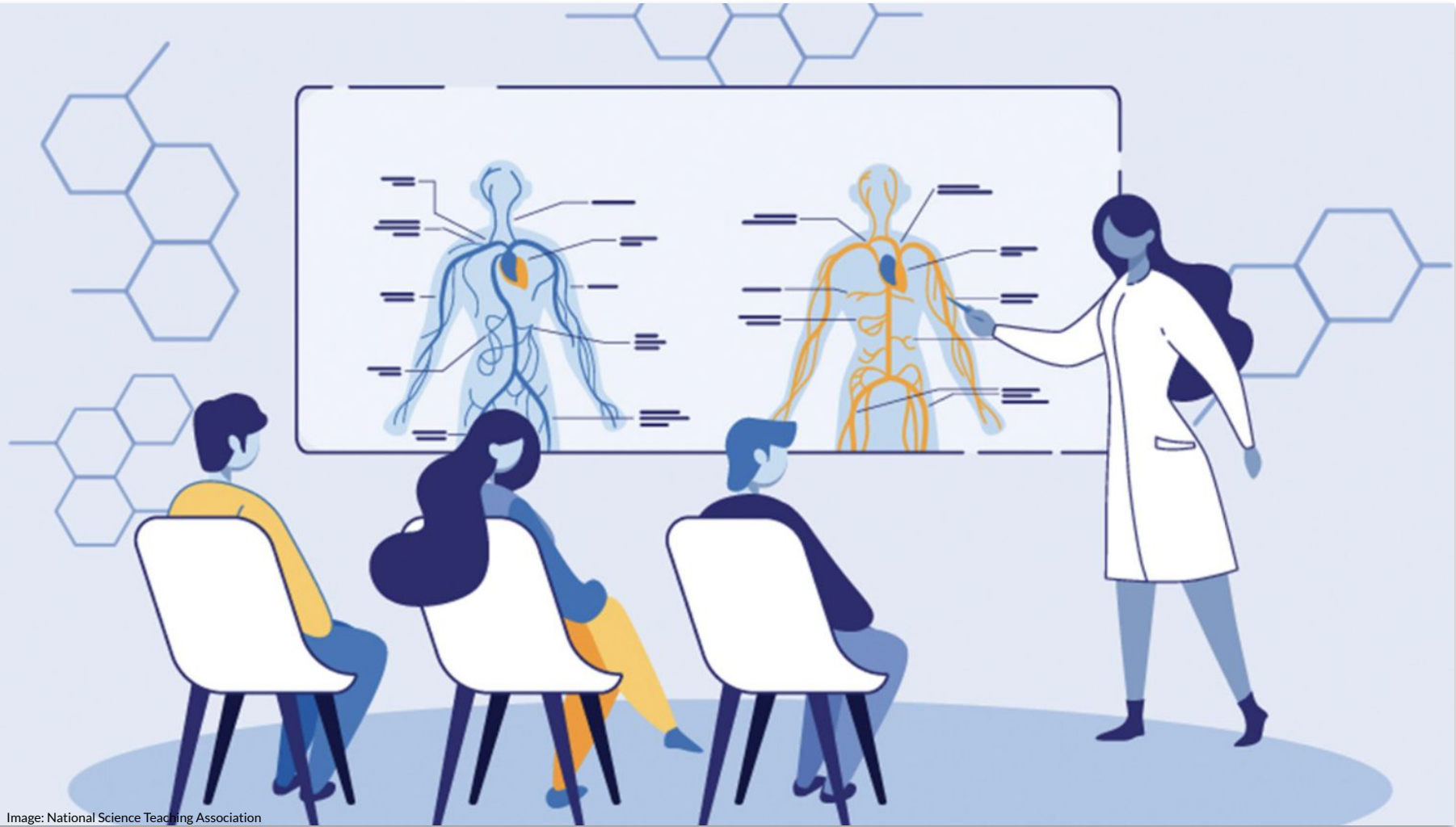


Image: National Science Teaching Association

BINARY

2 GENDERS



MALE
FEMALE



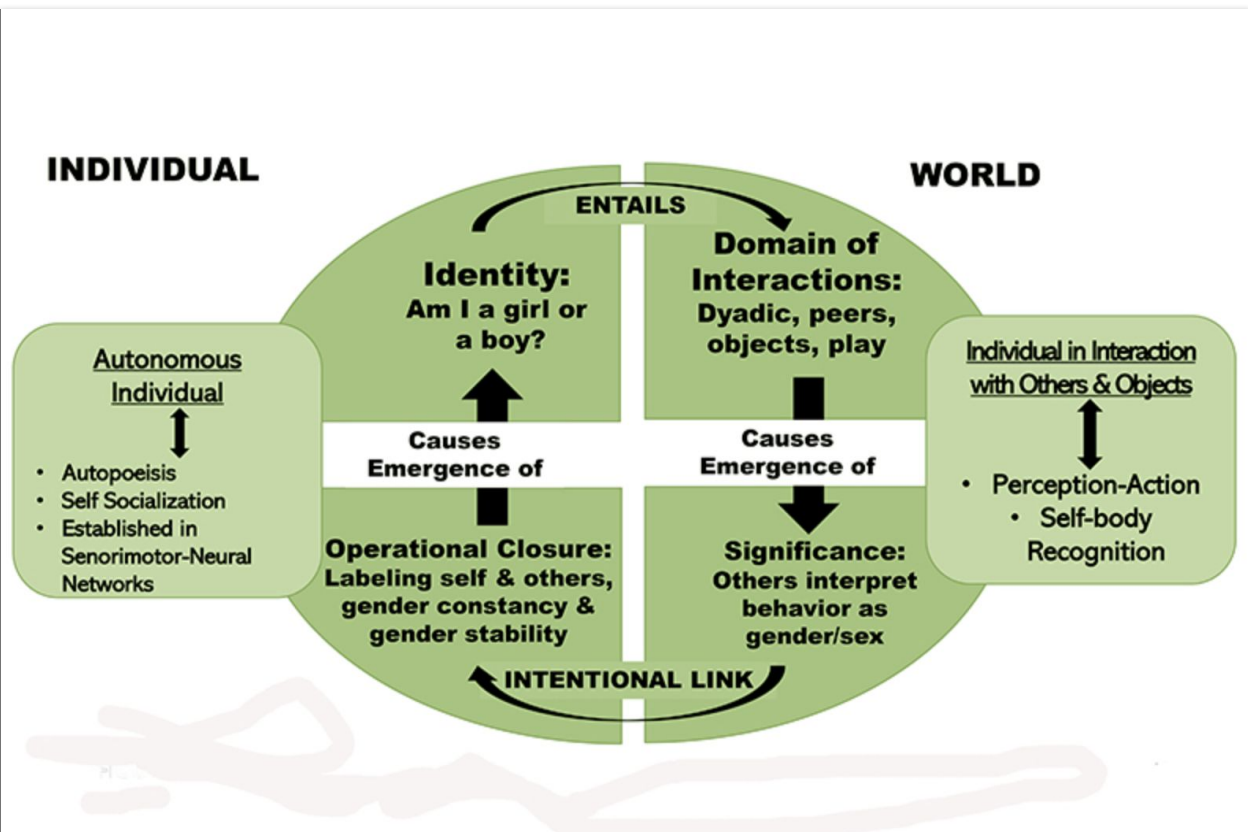
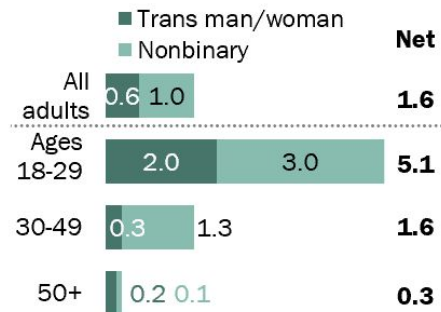


FIGURE 10.6. An embodied cognition model of the development and maintenance of gender/sex identity
(conceptualized by Anne Fausto-Sterling; illustrated by Patti Isaacs. © AFS & Basic Books)

In U.S., young adults are the most likely to be transgender or nonbinary

% of U.S. adults who say their gender is different from their sex assigned at birth



Note: Trans men are those who said they were assigned female at birth and described their gender as a man. Trans women are those who said they were assigned male at birth and described their gender as a woman. Figures may not add to subtotals due to rounding.

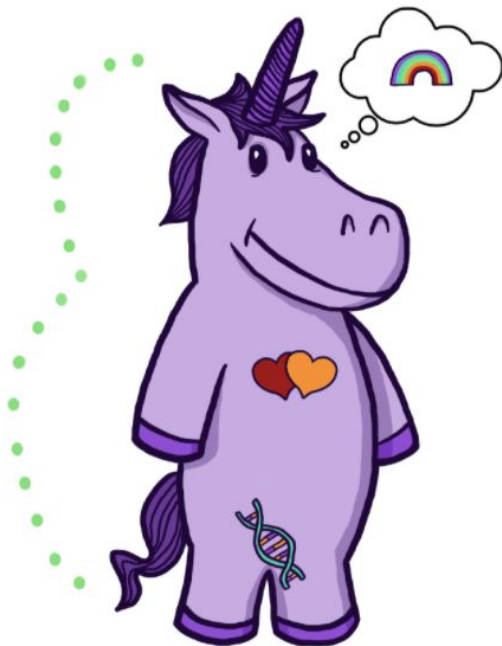
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted May 16-22, 2022.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER



The Gender Unicorn

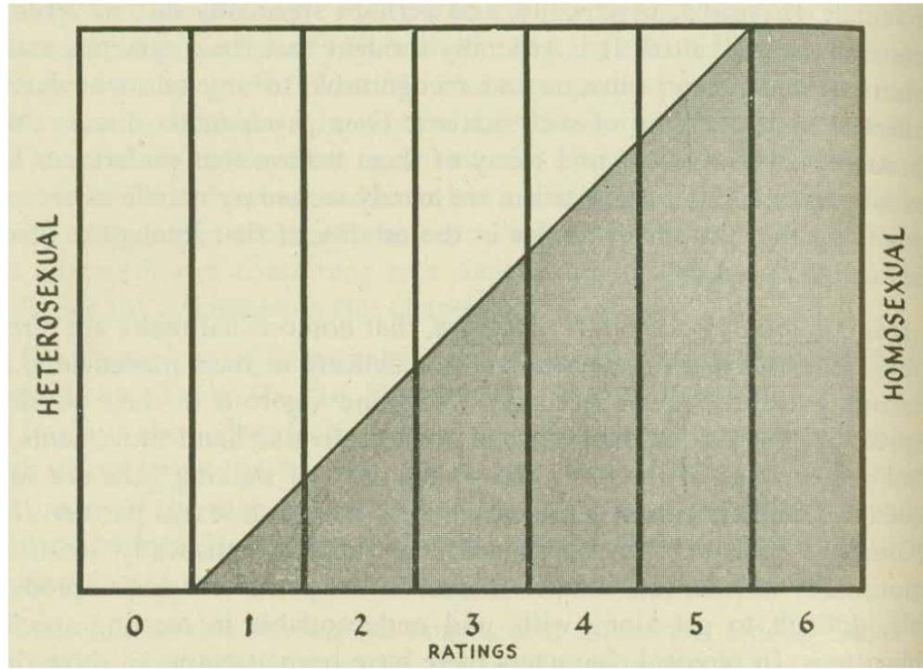
Graphic by:
TSER
Trans Student Educational Resources



To learn more, go to:
www.transstudent.org/gender

Design by Landyn Pan and Anna Moore

Beyond the Binary



Rating | Description

0 | Exclusively heterosexual

1 | Predominantly heterosexual, only incidentally homosexual

2 | Predominantly heterosexual, but more than incidentally homosexual

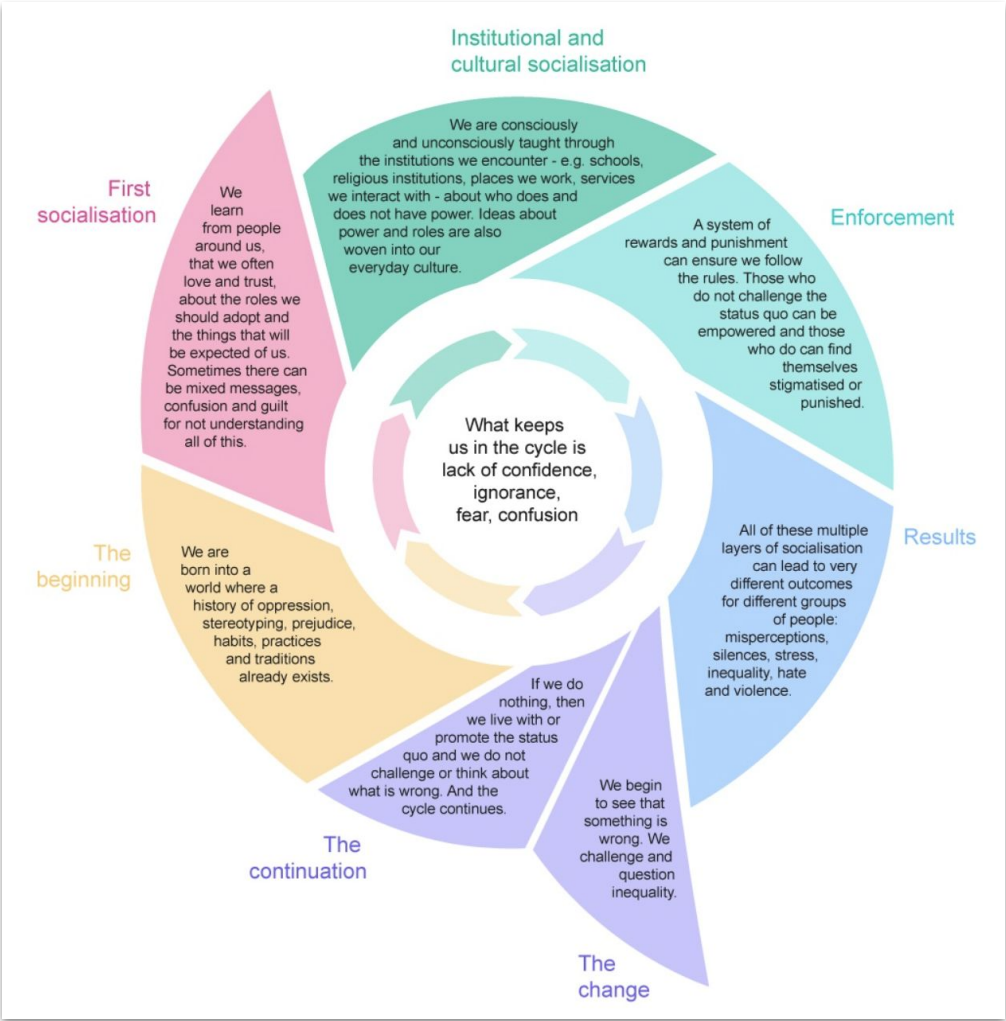
3 | Equally heterosexual and homosexual

4 | Predominantly homosexual, but more than incidentally heterosexual

5 | Predominantly homosexual, only incidentally heterosexual

6 | Exclusively homosexual

X | No socio-sexual contacts or reactions





**LGBTQ+
Youth &
Belonging**

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



Self-actualization



Esteem



Love/Belonging



Safety



Physiological



Belonging

The experience of being valued and establishing consistent, meaningful interpersonal relationships within a group (Baumeister & Leary, 1995).

I believe all youth deserve to feel respected, supported, and included.



ALL youth want & deserve to feel:

- Liked
- Respected
- Supported
- Included
- Understood



“Only when youth feel safe emotionally, as well as physically, are they able to present themselves in an authentic manner and engage in **positive development**.”



Nadal, et al., 2011

Social Realities of LGBTQ+ Youth

- 71% of LGBTQ+ youth reported discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender.
- 39% of LGBTQ+ youth seriously considered attempting suicide in the past 12 months, with more than half of trans and non-binary youth having seriously considered.
- LGBTQ+ youth who come from highly rejecting families are 8.4 times more likely to have attempted suicide.

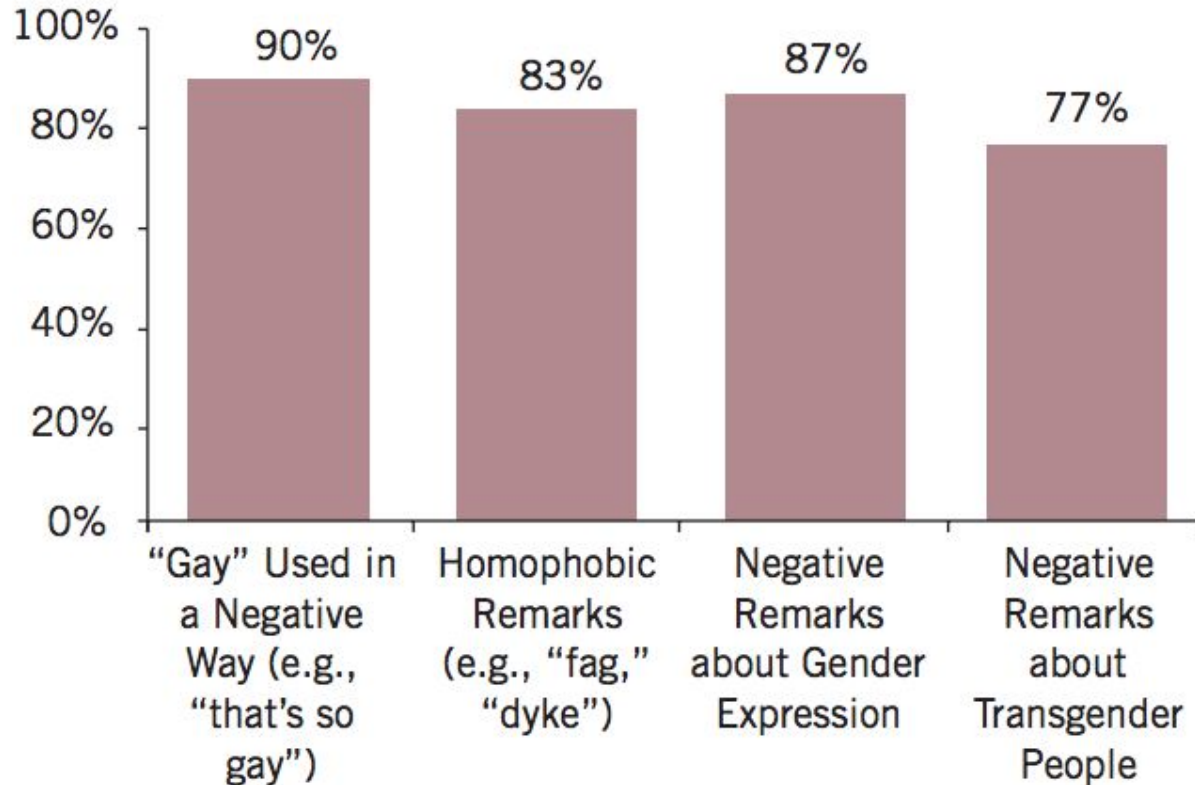
LGBTQ+ Mental Health



LGBTQ+ people of all ages are more likely to experience:

- Substance use disorders
- Suicidality
- Anxiety
- Depression

Figure 1. Hearing Anti-LGBTQ Remarks from Students in North Carolina Schools
(percentage of LGBTQ students hearing remarks regularly)



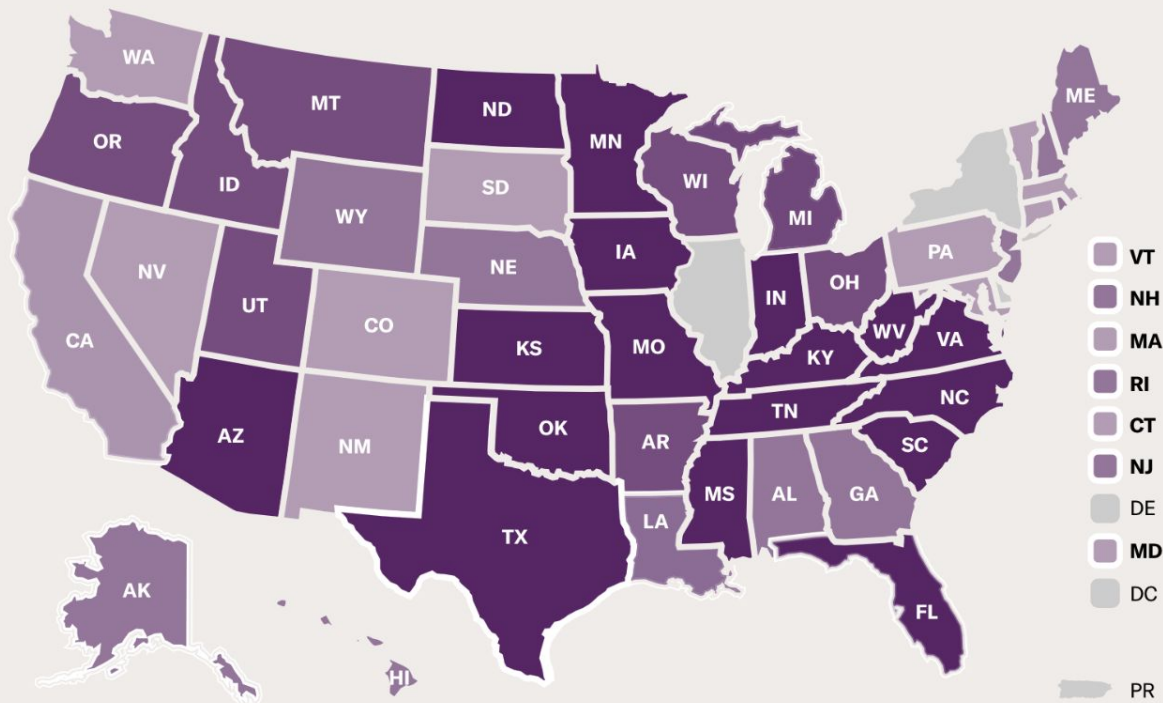
2023 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The ACLU is tracking **501** anti-LGBTQ bills in the U.S.

Choose a state on the map to show the different bills targeting LGBTQ rights and take action. While not all of these bills will become law, they all cause harm for LGBTQ people.

[View past legislative sessions.](#)

Bills per state



Nearly 1 in 3 LGBTQ young people said their mental health was poor most of the time or always due to anti-LGBTQ policies and legislation.



THE TREVOR PROJECT 

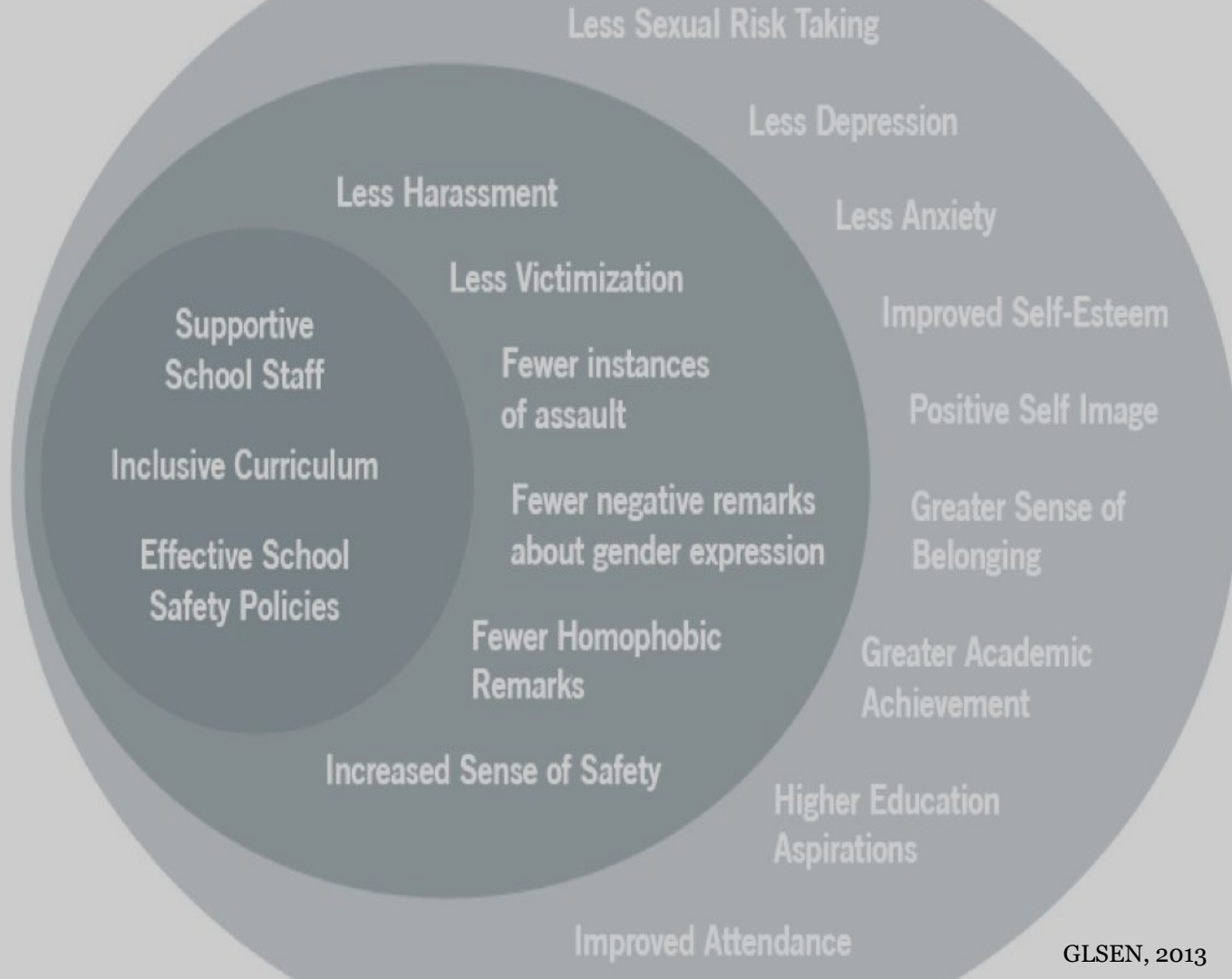
2023 U.S. National Survey on the Mental Health of LGBTQ Young People

Nearly 2 in 3 LGBTQ young people said that hearing about potential state or local laws banning people from discussing LGBTQ people at school made their mental health a lot worse.



THE TREVOR PROJECT 

2023 U.S. National Survey on the Mental Health of LGBTQ Young People



The Power of Family Belonging

Among LGBTQ+ youth, family acceptance and supportive behaviors contribute to a sense of belonging and lead to:

- Higher self-esteem
- Improved mental and physical health
- Improved academic success
- Decreased rates of depression, substance abuse, and suicidal ideation



Gender, Sexuality, and Faith

- Religion is a protective health factor for most, but not for LGBTQ+ people of faith
- LGBTQ+ Christians are often excluded from religious life, and as such experience higher feelings of depression, anxiety, and suicidal ideation than non-LGBTQ+ Christians (Subhi and Geelan, 2012; Lytle et. al, 2018)
- Religion can be a source of joy and healing, if people are empowered to bring their whole selves (Gandy et. al, 2021)

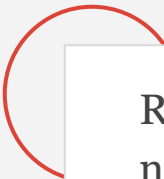


Practices for Building Belonging with LGBTQ+ Youth

Assess your biases

- ★ Take stock of your personal biases
- ★ Seek opportunities for personal development and reflection

Use Gender-Affirming Language

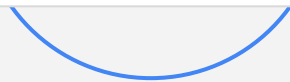


Refer to trans and gender nonconforming youth by their chosen name.



Use pronouns that affirm youth's gender identity.

Do not make assumptions about a young person's gender and/or sexual orientation.



Refrain from using terms such as *tranny* and *transvestite*.



Using a transgender youth's chosen name at work, at school, with friends, and at home:



reduces
depression
symptoms by

71%



reduces
thoughts of
suicide by

34%



reduces
suicide
attempts by

65%

Russell, S., Pollitt, A., Li, G., & Grossman, A. (2018). Chosen name use is linked to reduced depressive symptoms, suicidal ideation, and suicidal behavior among transgender youth. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 63*(4), 503-505. doi:10.1016/j.jadohealth.2018.02.003

**Value & include the
voices and experiences
of LGBTQ+ people**



Thank you!