

# BE TRUE AND BE YOU

A Basic  
Mental  
Health  
Guide for  
**LGBTQ+**  
Youth



# YOU ARE

# NOT ALONE

If you are, or think you might be LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, and other identities), and going through a tough time, you're not alone. Whether you're trying to figure out your own identity or want to learn how to talk to others, it can be hard to know where to find support. The stigma and discrimination LGBTQ+ individuals may face from family, friends and society can increase risk for mental health challenges. However, it is important to remember that we are all unique and being LGBTQ+ doesn't necessarily increase our risk for mental health issues. As an LGBTQ+ young person, there are certain stressors you may face from people who do not accept your orientation or gender identity. These pages don't have all the answers; in fact, this is just the beginning—a basic guide for how to talk and think about sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, and mental health, some ways to cope with stress and emotions, and how to get support for yourself and others.

Let's start with defining the terms we use to describe the concepts of sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. Since words mean different things to different people, it's important to have some common understanding before entering into a deeper discussion.





## SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Sexual orientation refers to who we are attracted to emotionally, physically, and romantically. Sexual orientation is sometimes referred to simply as "orientation" to emphasize that your orientation is not just about sexual attraction, but encompasses a combination of romantic, emotional, and/or physical attraction that manifests differently for everyone. We will use the terms sexual orientation and orientation interchangeably in this booklet.

Sexual orientation may not be obvious in the way one speaks, acts, or dresses. There are over a hundred terms people have used to describe their orientation. Some terms you may have heard are: gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, sexually-fluid, queer, asexual, two-spirit, same-gender-loving, or straight. These terms are constantly changing and evolving, and each person should choose (or create!) the words that feel most authentic to them. Orientation is self-defined and very personal; you get to decide what words fit you best, and what they mean to you. Research shows that orientation is not something that you can change,<sup>1</sup> nor can anyone else decide your orientation for you. How you define and label your orientation may be different from how your peers, family members, friends, or other people define theirs, and that's okay.

**“Our symptoms are not black-and-white, and everyone should have equal understanding and validation for our troubles.”**

– Anonymous, Rainbow Community Center of Contra Costa County

<sup>1</sup> Just the Facts Coalition. (2008). *Just the facts about sexual orientation and youth: A primer for principals, educators, and school personnel*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. Retrieved from [www.apa.org/pi/lobc/publications/justthefacts.html](http://www.apa.org/pi/lobc/publications/justthefacts.html).

Mikalson, P., Pardo, S., & Green, J. (2012) *First, do no harm: Reducing disparities for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning populations in California*. Sacramento, CA: Mental Health America of Northern California and Equality California Institute.

**“I identify as transgender, more specifically gender fluid and genderqueer...Above all, I always feel that my spirit is of a gender that is neither male nor female, and being born in a female human body, it is not possible to have a body that matches the gender in which I spiritually exist.”**

– First, Do No Harm: Reducing Disparities for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Questioning Populations in California (2012)<sup>2</sup>

## GENDER IDENTITY & EXPRESSION

How you sense yourself inside as a man, a woman, a blend of both, something in-between, or any other way, is what we call “gender identity.” Your gender identity can be the same or different than the sex you were assigned at birth (the sex that’s listed on your birth certificate). Gender is also not binary—meaning there are more than two genders and people may use many terms to describe their gender identity. Terms you may have heard are transgender, genderqueer, intersex, agender, bigender, gender nonconforming, gender expansive, gender fluid, two-spirit or cisgender. Like with orientation, these terms are constantly evolving, and each person should choose the words that feel most appropriate and authentic to them. People whose gender identity is different from their sex assigned at birth may want to change their name, pronouns, and/or physical appearance to better match how they feel inside. Some people also choose to use hormones and/or have surgery to help change their appearance. Some people may choose not to, or may not be able to make these changes. If this is something you’re interested in doing, it’s important to find a medical provider experienced in transgender healthcare. Like orientation, gender identity is self-defined and very personal. Your gender identity is not something that someone else can decide for you. Although seeking support from friends and providers can be helpful, only you can determine how best to describe the way you understand and experience your own gender.

In addition to gender identity, everyone has their own gender expression. While gender identity is your internal sense of self, gender expression refers to the ways you communicate your gender to the outside world. This can include your behavior, clothing, haircut, makeup, voice, body characteristics, etc. Some people have a more fluid gender expression, and may present differently day-to-day, while others have a more consistent gender expression. Gender expression does not always match up with gender identity, and that’s okay. Only you can decide what gender expression makes you feel most comfortable and genuinely yourself.

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<sup>2</sup> Retrieved April 25, 2017, from [https://media.wix.com/ugd/c82a51\\_b3071dd8fe6043d8a308f39ae12e0d4b.pdf](https://media.wix.com/ugd/c82a51_b3071dd8fe6043d8a308f39ae12e0d4b.pdf)

# COMING OUT

Coming out can be an empowering process for many LGBTQ+ youth when they are ready to share their sexual orientation and/or gender identity with others. Some youth choose to disclose multiple identities, one of their identities, or none of their identities to their friends, family, and community. The coming out process looks different for every individual. Some people choose not to come out for various reasons, including personal safety, fear of rejection by family or other loved ones, or to avoid being subjected to stigma and discrimination around their identity. The decision to come out or not come out is deeply personal, and is different for everyone.

If you think you are ready to come out, there are some things that can help ensure that it is a positive – and even empowering – experience. First, consider your emotional and physical safety when choosing who to tell. Look for allies, or individuals who have shown that they support and affirm LGBTQ+ people. If you want to come out to one person or a small group of people, make clear that it is your right, not theirs, to share your orientation or gender identity with others. When you are ready, choose safe, affirming people to share your identity with, and consider how and when you want to come out to them. There is no “right” order or process for who you choose to tell, and just because you tell some people doesn’t mean you need to tell others. In fact, if you are financially or otherwise dependent on your family and unsure if they will be supportive, this may be a consideration in deciding when and how to tell them.

**Looking for more information about sexual orientation and gender identity? Check out these support resources:**

**Each Mind Matters Fact Sheets at ReachOut.com**

*Being LGBTQ:*

[us.reachout.com/facts/lgbtq](http://us.reachout.com/facts/lgbtq)

*Coming Out:*

[us.reachout.com/facts/factsheet/coming-out](http://us.reachout.com/facts/factsheet/coming-out)

**The Trevor Project**

*Trevor Lifeline:* 866-488-7386

[www.thetrevorproject.org](http://www.thetrevorproject.org)

**Trans Lifeline**

877-565-8860

**LGBT National Youth Talkline**

1-800-246-PRIDE (7743)

[www.glnh.org](http://www.glnh.org)



# LGBTQ+ AND MENTAL HEALTH

What is mental health? According to MentalHealth.gov, “mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood.”<sup>3</sup>

Simply being LGBTQ+ does not mean you will automatically experience mental health challenges. However, as an LGBTQ+ young person, there are certain stressors you may face from people who do not accept your orientation or gender identity. These may include: stigma and discrimination; homophobia/biphobia/transphobia; rejecting behaviors from friends, family, or religious community; and bullying, harassment, hate speech, or violence. These experiences can be traumatic and hurtful, and stressors like these can affect your mental health and wellbeing.

The stressors you may experience are also affected by the intersection of other parts of your identity, such as your race/ethnicity, social class, culture, religion, age, disability, and more. Being subject to stressors and other traumatic experiences can contribute to mental health challenges. But there is hope too: If you find yourself struggling with a mental health challenge, support and treatment is available and effective. In fact, 70-90% of people who seek help for mental health challenges report decreased symptoms and improved quality of life.<sup>4</sup> Most people with mental health challenges get better, and many recover completely.

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<sup>3</sup> What Is Mental Health? (2013, March 12). Retrieved February 21, 2017, from <https://www.mentalhealth.gov/basics/what-is-mental-health/>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.nami.org/>

## **How do you know if you should reach out for support?**

Everyone experiences mental health challenges differently. Below, we discuss some of the signs and symptoms of common mental health challenges.

**Depression** is a common mental health challenge that includes deep feelings of sadness, apathy, and hopelessness that may not go away on their own. Depression can change the way you think, feel, and act, and can make your body feel sick as well. It's possible to feel depressed even if your life looks good "on the surface." Feelings of depression can make it difficult to work, go to school, or participate in other important areas of your life.

**Anxiety** is a feeling of fear that makes you feel uncomfortable and scared. Anxiety is a normal emotion that can help you deal with stressful situations, but some people feel anxious very often or very strongly. Anxiety can make situations feel much worse than they are. Strong, sudden feelings of fear and anxiety are called "panic attacks." In addition to strong feelings of fear or worry, anxiety and panic attacks can include physiological symptoms such as restlessness, irritability, insomnia, racing thoughts, and poor concentration. Anxiety can make it difficult to keep up with everyday tasks and responsibilities.

**Trauma or PTSD** (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder) can happen if you see or live through something very frightening or hurtful. It's normal to feel afraid sometimes, but those with PTSD or trauma-related mental health challenges may continue to feel scared for a long time after the event is over. Even if they are now very safe, the fear and danger can continue to feel quite real. Trauma can have long-lasting effects that may not go away on their own, and can affect everyday functioning.

These descriptions include signs of some common mental health challenges; however, symptoms can manifest differently for each individual. If you are, or think you may be experiencing mental health challenges, help is available. See the last page of this booklet for a list of recommended resources.

Everyone does their best to deal with difficult emotions and situations. When faced with stress, trauma or mental health challenges, some people turn to less healthy coping strategies such as using drugs or alcohol, self-harm, or unsafe sexual behavior to help manage difficult feelings.

**Self-harm** is a way of coping that causes a person to physically harm their body. People who practice self-harm often share that it is their attempt to experience temporary relief from painful feelings or situations. However, there are healthier ways to release painful feelings and to deal with tough situations. For specific ideas see “What You Can Do” in the section below, or visit **ReachOut.com** for strategies to stop or cope with self-harm: [us.reachout.com/facts/factsheet/deliberate-self-harm](http://us.reachout.com/facts/factsheet/deliberate-self-harm)

**Eating disorders** may cause people to harm or exert control over their bodies as a way of dealing with tough situations or painful feelings. An eating disorder can exist when a person’s thoughts and behaviors become overly focused on food and/or body weight. Three of the most common eating disorders are anorexia, bulimia and extreme overeating or binging.

Being healthy means more than the absence of illness; mental health means having positive, helpful ways to deal with your emotions, thoughts and feelings. Your coping strategies help you to deal with the stressors you face on a daily basis, and are important in managing your overall wellness. One way to learn about and practice healthier coping strategies is with the help of a supportive mental health professional.

Talking to a mental health professional can help you understand your feelings and identify healthy ways to process your emotions. While only a trained physician or mental health professional can diagnose a mental illness, there are many tools you can use on your own to help you feel better or stay well. If you’re experiencing difficulties managing these or other challenges in your life, consider seeking help.





# WHAT YOU CAN DO

## TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

Practicing self-care is a vital part of getting and staying well. Finding a healthy way to care for yourself can be as simple as talking to a friend, spending some time outside, going to the doctor, having a good cry, listening to music, getting adequate sleep, cooking, exercising, or practicing a creative hobby. Spending time with loved ones may make you feel better, or you may need to take some time for yourself. However you need to take care of yourself, make yourself a priority. If you want to learn more about self-care for wellness, check out the Wellness Recovery Action Plan movement at [www.mentalhealthrecovery.com](http://www.mentalhealthrecovery.com).

**“There are so many people out there struggling with the same mental illness that we are. It is so important to reach out. If you’re hurting, ask for help. If you can’t find it, there’s resources out there, I guarantee it. And there’s people out there who are gonna relate, who are gonna want to help you any way they can. Even when it feels like no one would want to, or you feel like you don’t deserve that help, it’s out there. And it’s meant just for you.”**

– Alexandra, EMM Story

## SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Opening up to someone you trust about what's on your mind can be a healthy and important way to get support. Allies can be good sources of support, and can listen to you and remind you that you're not alone. Think of someone you trust and feel safe around, who has expressed love and acceptance in the past. If you're having trouble getting up the courage to say something, try writing a note or email or sending a text to let them know that you need a helping hand. If you don't feel comfortable talking to friends or family members, a trusted counselor, teacher, or youth leader may be able to offer support. You can also look for LGBTQ+ support groups, either at a local LGBTQ+ center, or in your school.

Sadly, it's possible that some people in your life may respond negatively instead of offering support. According to a 2012 survey, 26% of LGBTQ+ youth say that one of their biggest problems is not feeling accepted by their family.<sup>5</sup> Some LGBTQ+ youth don't feel safe or supported in their home or at school, and may experience emotional or physical abuse from family and peers. If you are facing situations like this, remember that you never have to feel alone and that help is available to you. You can take steps to find the support you need, including:

- Talking to a trained counselor at The Trevor Project (1-866-488-7386 or [thetrevorproject.org](http://thetrevorproject.org)).
- If you feel unable to stay or return home, services like the National Runaway Safeline (1-800-RUNAWAY or [www.1800runaway.org](http://www.1800runaway.org)) can help you find the resources and support you need to stay safe.

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<sup>5</sup> Growing up LGBT in America (Rep.). (2012). Retrieved February 24, 2017, from Human Rights Campaign website: <http://www.hrc.org/youth-report/about-the-survey>

## **Is my relationship healthy?**

Everyone has the right to a safe and healthy relationship – one that is based on mutual honesty, trust, respect and open communication. Remember that both people should always feel like an equal in the relationship and feel free to speak their mind. Disagreements are normal in a relationship, but how you choose to resolve your disagreements is what really counts. At the end of the day you should feel happy and safe in your relationship.

You know your relationship is probably healthy if your partner:

- Respects your gender pronouns and chosen name.
- Respects your boundaries.
- Gives you space to hang out with friends and family without thinking you're cheating.
- Doesn't take your money or tell you what to buy.
- Never threatens to out you to people.
- Never tells you you're not a real lesbian, gay man, trans person, etc.

**“A common thread among LGBTQ people is loneliness and fear that drives them away from social contact with other people. It makes us pull back from the thing that heals us—which is being in contact with others.”** – First, Do No Harm: Reducing Disparities for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Questioning Populations in California (2012)

## How do I know if I'm in an abusive relationship?

Teen dating abuse is a *deliberate* and *escalating* pattern of abuse in which one partner in a significant or intimate relationship attempts to exercise power and maintain control over the other partner. The abusive person may use many different actions and behaviors such as threats of or actual use of verbal, emotional, physical, sexual abuse, or online abuse to control the victim.

When the abuse is physical or sexual, it may be easier to recognize. Emotional abuse is much harder to recognize but no less damaging. Relationship violence often starts as emotional or verbal abuse and can quickly escalate into physical or sexual violence.

## My Relationship is Unhealthy or Abusive, What Can I Do?

Abusive partners may say that disrespectful or violent behavior in an LGBTQ+ relationship is normal, but it's not. LGBTQ+ youth often experience dating and relationship abuse in much the same ways as heterosexual youth. However, lack of social support for their relationships is an added stress for LGBTQ+ youth. You can face unique obstacles in identifying abuse and seeking help.

The **National Domestic Violence Hotline** has highly trained advocates who can talk confidentially with anyone experiencing relationship violence, seeking resources or information, or questioning unhealthy aspects of their relationship. The Love is Respect hotline is available 24/7 by calling **1-866-331-9474** or through online chat at **loveisrespect.org**. You can call, text or chat with someone, and the website offers LGBTQ+ affirmative information and resources. If you're in an unhealthy or abusive relationship, you have many options – including obtaining a restraining order and/or meeting with a counselor. Whether or not you're ready to end the relationship, there is help available for you.

This content was provided by Catalyst  
Domestic Violence Services of Butte County.

## WHERE TO FIND MORE SUPPORT

Everybody has the right to be safe at school, home and work. You do not have to accept violence, threats, harassment, bullying or hateful speech.

No matter what you're going through, it can be helpful to talk to a supportive friend, family member, school counselor, doctor or other person whom you trust. If you don't have anybody to talk to, there are online communities and local organizations you can reach out to for help. Asking for help does not mean you are weak; in fact, it's a very brave step. Please see the back of this booklet for more resources and specific places to find support.



**“My recovery from depression helped me realize I could live a full life as a gay man without shame. It was like a huge weight was lifted off my shoulders”**

– Excerpt from “Harry’s Story,”  
[www.walkinourshoes.org/our-stories/harry](http://www.walkinourshoes.org/our-stories/harry)



## MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

We all experience varying levels of mental health throughout our lives. In fact, half of U.S. adults will experience some type of mental health challenge over their lifetime.<sup>6</sup> Sometimes these challenges can become more serious and require more attention. However, recovery is also common and many forms of help are available.

Different approaches work for different people: for some talk therapy is their tool of choice, for others it may be medication, LGBTQ+ youth support groups, or a self-directed tool such as a “WRAP” plan (short for Wellness Recovery Action Planning). If you choose to seek counseling, a mental health professional can help you sort through your challenges and choices so that you know what is available and can decide what works best for you.

## YOUR RIGHTS

While some young people find their parents or guardians to be a source of support when they are struggling, others may experience rejection or negative consequences for sharing their orientation, gender identity, or mental health challenges. What can you do if you need support, and don’t feel safe asking your parents or guardians for consent to see a mental health therapist? California has laws (Health and Safety Code § 124260 and Family Code § 6924) which allow minors age 12-17 to receive mental health services without their parent’s or guardian’s consent. Your privacy is also protected, and in the majority of cases the therapist cannot share information.



For more information about your rights in California:  
[www.teenhealthlaw.org](http://www.teenhealthlaw.org)

For more information about California law:  
[www.tinyurl.com/glmc5hq](http://www.tinyurl.com/glmc5hq)

For legal information and assistance:  
[www.transgenderlawcenter.org](http://www.transgenderlawcenter.org)

<sup>6</sup> Fact Sheet, CDC Report: Mental Health Surveillance Among Adults in the United States. (2011). Retrieved February 24, 2017, from [https://www.cdc.gov/mentalhealthsurveillance/fact\\_sheet.html](https://www.cdc.gov/mentalhealthsurveillance/fact_sheet.html)

# HOW TO FIND MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Working with a mental health professional is a type of relationship; and, like all relationships, finding the right person can take time and often takes more than one try. If the first professional you meet doesn't work for you, don't give up – keep trying until you find the right match.

The good news is that there are some things you can do to increase your chances of finding the right person. Keep in mind that, in the end, you are the expert on you. Trust your feelings when selecting a helper or a type of treatment. Below are a few tips to try:

- Don't be afraid to ask the counselor if they have experience working with youth from your cultural background (such as race, ethnicity, religion, etc.) who have the same orientation or gender identity as you, or working with youth who are questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity.
- Check to see if your insurance network has therapists that specialize in working with LGBTQ+ people and/or young adults. Some providers will allow you to search for mental health professionals that specialize in working with specific populations.
- Search online for LGBTQ+-friendly therapists in your area.
- Call your local LGBTQ+ community center or organization for recommendations. Your friends or other people you trust may also know the names of good therapists in your area.

In addition to finding a therapist who specializes in working with youth and LGBTQ+ people, it's a good idea to ask a few questions during the phone interview or first meeting, such as:

- What experience do you have working with the types of problems I am experiencing?
- What is your approach to doing therapy in a situation such as this one?
- How much experience do you have treating LGBTQ+ people?
- What if I disagree with or question something you tell me?



**“(My experiences) really drove me to seek help – professional help, mental health – because I know that there’s really no way that I could just resolve it on my own. I’m trying to find out: how do I deal with all these things? I had a psychotherapist who is Latino and he’s gay. Working with him, it really helped me to understand that I can never put limitations on myself, that there are a lot of possibilities. I feel really thankful that I was able to work with psychotherapists that were gay-affirming.”**

– Dennis, EMM Story

## **REPARATIVE OR CONVERSION THERAPY**

Not all types of therapy are helpful, safe, or legal. “Reparative therapy” or “conversion therapy” are terms that refer to any therapy or effort that tries to change someone’s orientation or gender identity or expression. You might also hear it called by other names such as “ex-gay therapy.” These types of efforts have been proven by research to not only be ineffective, but harmful.

California has outlawed reparative or conversion therapies for anyone under the age of 18. If you are 18 or older, you also have the right to refuse services from any therapist who tries to change your orientation, gender identity or expression. For more information, visit [www.hrc.org/resources/the-lies-and-dangers-of-reparative-therapy](http://www.hrc.org/resources/the-lies-and-dangers-of-reparative-therapy)

**“I was introverted and deeply depressed, I had virtually no friends at my school and the only other queer people I knew were in movies. I felt so alone, like no one could ever understand. I remember when I first came to the [Rainbow Community Center].... I felt like I had finally found a place.”**

– C.K., Rainbow Community Center  
of Contra Costa County



## AFFORDING THERAPY

The cost of therapy shouldn't be a barrier to reaching out for help. Many types of insurance, including MediCal, offer coverage for mental health services. In addition, there are community-based clinics that may offer free treatment, health care clinics on school/college campuses with free mental health services, and private practitioners who offer free or "sliding-scale" fees that are adjusted according to your ability to pay.

Here are a few places to look for affordable mental health care:

- Call 2-1-1 or go to 211.org for a referral to community mental health centers in your area
- The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) offers an online locator for mental health and substance abuse treatment facilities nationally. <https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/>
- The Network of Care ([www.networkofcare.org](http://www.networkofcare.org)) offers a directory of mental health and substance use services in California.
- Mental Health America has a network of affiliate organizations that may offer community-based services: <http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/find-affiliate>
- If you have an LGBTQ+ center in your community, they may also have support groups, services, or information available to help you find services in your area.



## GET HELP NOW

If you are thinking about suicide, you deserve immediate help—please call the **Trevor Lifeline at**

**866-488-7386.** Counselors who are trained to help LGBTQ+ youth are available to talk 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. You can also call the Trans Lifeline at 877-565-8860.

If it's not safe for you to be heard talking to a crisis worker, you can reach out for help via text at the **Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 741-741**

The Trevor Project also has text and chat options at **[thetrevorproject.org](http://thetrevorproject.org)**, and you can get peer support by joining TrevorSpace at **[www.trevorspace.org/login](http://www.trevorspace.org/login)**.

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is also available for support (free, confidential): **800-273-TALK (8255)**

If urgent medical attention is required, call **9-1-1** or go to the emergency room of the nearest hospital.

## If you're worried about someone else:

1. Don't be afraid to reach out to the person you care about and create a safe space for them to talk about what they're going through.
2. Talk to the person openly and directly about suicide. It's okay to ask someone "Are you thinking about suicide?" To learn more about what to say, visit the "Find the Words" section at [www.SuicidelsPreventable.org](http://www.SuicidelsPreventable.org)
3. Don't leave the person alone.
4. Find a trusted adult to help you. Saving someone's life is not a betrayal.

If you see one or more of the three critical warning signs below, especially if the behavior is new, increased, or seems related to a painful event, loss or change, seek help by calling the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline or the Trevor Lifeline right away.

- Talking about death or suicide
- Seeking methods for self-harm, such as searching online or obtaining a gun
- Talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason to live

# JOIN THE MOVEMENT, EACH MIND MATTERS

We all have mental health, and our voices are amplified when we speak up together. California's Mental Health Movement grows stronger every day as millions of people and thousands of organizations are working to advance mental health. There are many ways to add your voice and strengthen the movement.

## SPEAK UP

We believe in healing through action, strength through diversity, and power through collaboration. Everyone deserves the opportunity to live a healthy, happy and productive life. People experiencing mental health challenges can and do get better. By talking openly and honestly about mental health, we can help make that happen.

## SPREAD THE WORD

Each Mind Matters (EMM) is gaining momentum every day as people join California's Mental Health Movement. Together we can create supportive communities where no one feels alone.

Every person plays an important role in helping people feel comfortable by having open conversations and encouraging those who need it to seek support. Below are some things you can do to help.

To learn more about what EMM does or find ways to get involved in your community, visit [www.eachmindmatters.org](http://www.eachmindmatters.org).





## SHARE THE FACTS ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

Share these facts and more by downloading the Each Mind Matters Mental Health Support Guide to distribute to friends, family and colleagues at [www.eachmindmatters.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Mental-Health-Support-Guide-2.pdf](http://www.eachmindmatters.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Mental-Health-Support-Guide-2.pdf).

## SHOW OFF YOUR LIME GREEN

Lime green is the national color for mental health awareness. Wearing the lime green ribbon is a great way to open an honest dialogue with friends, family, classmates and co-workers about mental health. And it's an easy way to show your support.

## SHARE YOUR STORY

Mental health challenges are common and shouldn't be a topic that gets left in the dark. We all have a reason to wear lime green and when you share your story, you let others know it's okay to talk about mental illness. It's by talking openly that we are able to offer each other support and break down the barriers that prevent people from seeking help.

### Directing Change

Create and submit a 60-second film about suicide prevention and mental health explored through the lens of LGBTQ+ youth. Use existing films created by youth to raise awareness about issues that matter. Visit [directingchange.org](http://directingchange.org) to learn about the program, how to get involved and to view films.



# RESOURCES

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## Crisis Text Line

Text HOME to 741-741

## Each Mind Matters Fact Sheets

at ReachOut.com

[us.reachout.com/facts/lgbtq](http://us.reachout.com/facts/lgbtq)

## Know the Signs

[www.suicideispreventable.org](http://www.suicideispreventable.org)

## LGBT National Youth Talkline

1-800-246-PRIDE (7743)

[www.glnh.org](http://www.glnh.org)

## Love is Respect

1-866-331-9474

[loveisrespect.org](http://loveisrespect.org)

Text LOVEIS to 22522

## Mental Health America

[www.mentalhealthamerica.net](http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net)

## PFLAG

[www.pflag.org/getsupport](http://www.pflag.org/getsupport)

## Teen Health Law

[www.teenhealthlaw.org](http://www.teenhealthlaw.org)

## Teen Health Rights

[www.teenhealthrights.org](http://www.teenhealthrights.org)

## The National Domestic Violence Hotline

1-800-799-7233

[thehotline.org](http://thehotline.org)

## The National Runaway Safeline

1-800-RUNAWAY

## The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

1-800-273-TALK (8255)

## The Network of Care

[www.networkofcare.org](http://www.networkofcare.org)

## The Trevor Project

Trevor Lifeline 866-488-7386

[www.thetrevorproject.org](http://www.thetrevorproject.org)

[www.trevorspace.org/login](http://www.trevorspace.org/login)

## Trans Lifeline

877-565-8860

## Transgender Law Center

[www.transgenderlawcenter.org](http://www.transgenderlawcenter.org)

## Wellness Recovery Action Planning

[www.mentalhealthrecovery.com](http://www.mentalhealthrecovery.com)



California's Mental Health Movement



Funded by counties through the voter-approved  
Mental Health Services Act (Prop. 63).