Coping During the Pandemic: How to Support LGBTQ+ Youth

LGBTQ+ youth may be especially vulnerable to the effects of social distancing because many of them rely on school staff and friends for validation and affirmation. Schools often provide a needed inclusive sanctuary where they can be their authentic selves.

The Power of One
School staff can continue to inspire, empower, and promote protective factors for already resilient LGBTQ+ youth. Together, with the support of even one caring adult they depend on, youth can feel less alone.


- **95% of LGBTQ youth** report trouble sleeping at night.
- **67% of LGBTQ youth** hear parents make negative comments about LGBTQ people.
- **Trans youth are 2x more likely to be mocked by their family for their gender.**
- **78% of LGBTQ youth** who are NOT out to their parents hear negative comments about LGBTQ people.
- **48% of LGBTQ youth** who are out to their parents say their family makes them feel bad for being LGBTQ.
- **24% of LGBTQ youth** can “definitely” be themselves as an LGBTQ person at home.

Coping Skills

Coping skills are necessary for everyone to manage when life gets stressful. They are **not** a substitute for counseling, therapy, or medication, but can be used alongside these interventions. Questions to ask youth:

- Are they keeping a daily sleep/wake schedule?
- Are they using phone apps for meditation, calming, stress release?
- Are they listening to music?
- Are they engaging with friends via text/social media?
- Are they engaging in daily physical activity?
- Do they have a trusted adult to whom they can reach out?
- Is a trusted adult checking in on them?
- Are they taking care of themselves?
- Are they engaging in adaptive skills (e.g., personal hygiene, cleaning)?

For additional guidance, visit http://www.nasponline.org/LGBTQI2-S© 2020 National Association of School Psychologists
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**Crisis Resources**

If youth are not able to effectively use coping skills to de-escalate, refrain from self-harming, or are having suicidal thoughts, emergency services may be needed.

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<tr>
<th>The Trevor Project</th>
<th>Trans Lifeline</th>
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<td>Talk to a trained crisis counselor 24/7 via the phone, chat, or text. 1-866-488-7386 or Text “START” to 678678</td>
<td>Peer support crisis service run by trans* persons. Trans Lifeline does not utilize non-consensual rescue. 1-877-565-8860</td>
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**Virtual National Resources**

**PFLAG**

www.pflag.org

Sometimes the best support is the love of one’s own family. PFLAG helps family members to understand and accept gender identity and or/sexuality.

**Ally Parents**

www.standwithtrans.org/ally-parents

Ally parents are parents of trans* and nonbinary youth who volunteer their time to support young people who may lack or not yet have parental support. Youth can select ‘parents’ by location to call or text.

**Chat Rooms**

**Gender Spectrum Lounge**

Space for teens, parents, and professionals to connect with one another and have conversations about gender outside of the boxes. https://genderspectrum.org/lounge

**Q Chat**

Online facilitated discussion groups for LGBTQ+ teens ages 13-19 https://www.qchatspace.org/

**How You Can Help**

Generally what young people really need is just to be heard – without judgement or questioning. What can you say to a youth in crisis?

- I’m here for you.
- How can I help you?
- What supports do you need?
- It sounds like things are really hard right now.
- I support you.
- I hear you.
- You are loved.
- I need to keep you safe.

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