

***COVID-19-Related
Stress Among
LGBTQ+ College
Students***

Counseling Center
&
Office of Equity
and Inclusion

01. *Introduction*



02. *Results*



03. *Recommendations
& Resources*



U.S. NATIONAL SURVEY

- An online survey: **May-August 2020**
- Full-time LGBTQ+ undergraduate (70%) and graduate (30%) students
- Average **Age**=22 years; N=565
- **Race and Ethnicity:** 75% white, 14% Asian, 11% Black or African American, 14% Hispanic or Latina/o/x.
- **Gender:** 54% ciswoman; 15% cis-man; 10% transgender; 12% nonbinary; 6% genderqueer.
- **Sexual Orientation:** 32% bisexual; 14% gay; 18% lesbian; 16% queer; 7% asexual; 9% pansexual



● ***Pandemic-Related Stress: Academic, Financial, and Basic Needs***

- **62% said their living arrangements changed as a result of COVID-19**
 - 82% of these moved back home with their parents after the COVID-19 outbreak
 - 88% of those displaced said their living arrangements have not gone back to normal.
- **43% lost their job; 26% had a job offer rescinded**
- **37% reported an increase in coursework**
 - 25% said their grades suffered
 - 10% dropped a class.

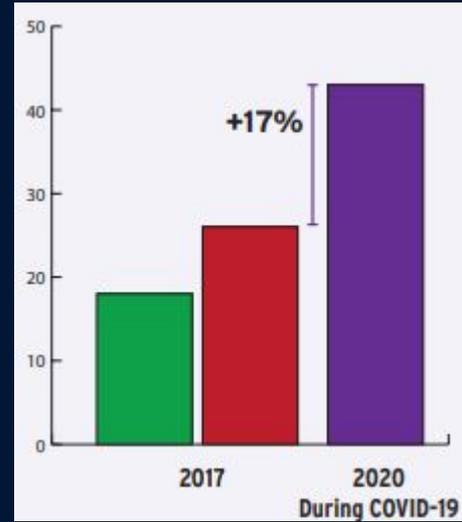
"After losing my job... it has been increasingly difficult to find another one... because of my gender identity and presentation... this has in turn put me under a lot of strain financially..."



Psychological Distress, Social Isolation and Support, and Substance Use

- 65% met the clinical criteria for moderate or severe psychological distress.
- 17% had issues accessing medical/mental health care
- 18% had issues obtaining prescription meds.
- 40% often felt very isolated from others
- 26% received no social/emotional support
- 32% were drinking more alcohol since COVID-19
- 22% reported more recreational cannabis use

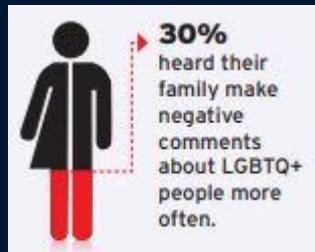
"Cut off from all the queer support groups and friends that I had. I was very alone and had to basically go back to the closet when I went to my parents."



- 18% of heterosexual students suffered from severe psychological distress (2017)
- 26% of LGBQ students suffered from severe psychological distress (2017)
- 43% of LGB(T)Q students surveyed in Summer 2020 suffered from severe psychological distress

● **Sexual and Gender Minority-Related Stress**

- Compared to before the start of the COVID-19 pandemic...
 - **36% were cautious about their actions around heterosexual people more often**

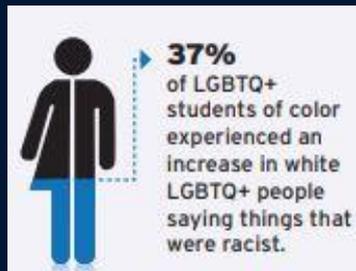


"I don't have the same support system for that part of my life. I don't get to express myself that way. It's like before college when I just decided it was easier and safer to just "be straight"

● **Intersectional Racial Oppression Among LGBTQ+ Students of Color**

Compared to before the start of the COVID-19 pandemic...

- 38% reported an **increase in mistrust of white LGBTQ+ people**
- 38% felt **misunderstood by white LGBTQ+ people** more often
- 43% were spending more time **educating white LGBTQ+ people** about race



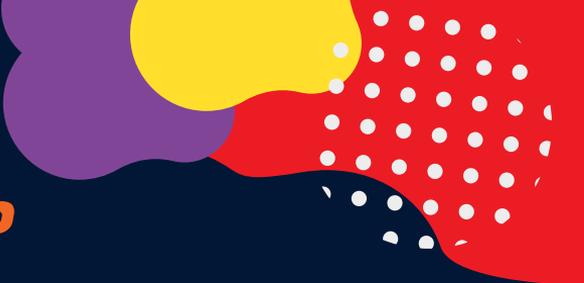
“The rise in xenophobia, white terrorism... policing... COVID panic, and... brutal and unrelenting oppression has absolutely affected my life and... loved ones. The constant threat of death is a suffocating shadow.”



Social Identity Wheel



Image via http://web.jhu.edu/dlc/resources/diversity_wheel/



● **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADMINISTRATION AND LEADERSHIP**

Academics, Finances, and Basic Needs

- **Disseminate this report** to educate staff/faculty about the unique stressors faced by LGBTQ+ students (of color) in the context of the pandemic and online learning.
 - Encourage them to engage in LGBTQ+-affirming actions and practices.
- Educate faculty/staff about LGBTQ+-affirming **resources on and off-campus** and strongly encourage the inclusion of these resources and **referrals in their syllabi**.
- Invest in initiatives that **increase hiring** of LGBTQ+ students (of color) in affirming campus jobs.
- Initiate or extend LGBTQ+-affirming **programs that provide emergency basic needs support**.



● **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADMINISTRATION AND LEADERSHIP**

Mental Health Support

- Develop and increase **capacity and reach of mental health and social support services** for LGBTQ+ students (of color) who may face barriers to quality care (e.g. lack of access to technologies, socioeconomic resources, and **racially and intersectionally-sensitive care**).
 - **Counseling Center:** Telehealth (therapy, Mental Health Monday), diversity-sensitive care, referrals.
- Develop and disseminate **resources for parents and families** to support their LGBTQ+ children.
- Develop and implement innovative approaches to support mental health services that **protect the privacy and safety of LGBTQ+ students not out to their families**
 - **Counseling Center:** Let's Talk/Consultations, Talk Campus, and psychotherapy services

"I can't talk to my therapist...because my mom listens to our appointments. I feel like I'm stuck and I cannot be myself due to being ripped away from college just as things were getting brighter. I don't have a job now and things are getting really dicey with paying for my medication and new living arrangements."



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADMINISTRATION AND LEADERSHIP



Mental Health Support: Assisting Students in Distress

ACADEMIC INDICATORS

- Sudden decline in quality of work and grades.
- Repeated absences.
- Disturbing content in writing or presentations (e.g., violence, death).
- You find yourself doing more personal rather than academic counseling during office hours.
- Continuous classroom disruptions.

SAFETY RISK INDICATORS

- Unprovoked anger or hostility.
- Making implied or direct threats to harm self or others.
- Academic assignments dominated by themes of extreme hopelessness, rage, worthlessness, isolation, despair, acting out, suicidal ideations/violent behaviors.

PSYCHOLOGICAL INDICATORS

- Self-disclosure of personal distress that could include family problems, financial difficulties, depression, grief or thoughts of suicide.
- Excessive tearfulness, panicked reactions, irritability or unusual apathy.
- Verbal abuse (e.g., taunting, badgering, intimidation).
- Expressions of concern about the student by his/her peers.

PHYSICAL INDICATORS

- Marked changes in physical appearance including deterioration in grooming hygiene, or weight loss/gain.
- Excessive fatigue/sleep disturbance.
- Intoxication, hangovers or smelling of alcohol.
- Disoriented or "out of it".

Protocol for Response

Resources

For students

San Gabriel Valley LGBTQ Center

Latino Equity Alliance

Los Angeles LGBT Center

Trans Wellness Center

South Bay Center

Rose City Center (Psychodynamic
therapy offered at a sliding scale)

Trans Lifeline

The Trevor Project

For Parents and Families:

The PFLAG Chapter Network



● **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADMINISTRATION AND LEADERSHIP**

General

- Provide **financial and institutional support** to develop and implement affirming academic, financial, and social services.
- Acknowledge the disparate impacts of COVID-19 and connect them to identity-relevant and affirming **on and off-campus resources**.
- Adopt **inclusive policies** and practices that allow student records and technology to affirmatively, correctly, and accurately reflect pronouns, gender identity, and chosen name.

Whittier College

- OEI, Counseling Center, DOS, TOBGLAD, Gender Inclusive Housing, Gender Inclusive Restrooms
- Change of name - rosters, emails, ID
- Pronouns - Zoom display name, signature, introductions

Off Campus

- [Los Angeles LGBT Center](#)
- [The LGBTQ Center Long Beach](#)
- [Bienestar](#)
- [Transgender Map](#)
- [Healthcare Equality](#)
- [CDC LGBT Health](#)

● **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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THANKS!

Do you have any questions?

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