



MARCH 7, 2025*

KNOW! THE FACTS ABOUT TRANSGENDER AND NONBINARY YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

March 31st is International Transgender Day of Visibility (TDOV), a day to celebrate the lives, contributions, and achievements of transgender and nonbinary people. It's also an opportunity to raise awareness about the discrimination and challenges the trans community continues to face.

Transgender and nonbinary youth are at a higher risk for suicide and substance use compared to their cisgender peers. Research shows that much of this risk comes from social stigma, discrimination, and prejudice. Many young trans and nonbinary individuals experience rejection, harassment, bullying, and even physical violence—factors that take a serious toll on their mental health. These challenges are often even greater for trans youth of color.

As TDOV approaches, it's a great time to learn more about the mental health struggles faced by transgender and nonbinary youth—and, more importantly, how you can support them. Small actions, like using the right name and pronouns, creating inclusive spaces, and standing up against discrimination, can make a big difference in a young person's life.

KNOW! THE FACTS

Suicide is the third leading cause of death among young people ages 15-24, and LGBTQ+ youth face an even greater risk. Research shows that they are two to seven times more likely to die by suicide than their heterosexual and cisgender peers. In 2023, 41% of LGBTQ+ youth seriously considered suicide, including half of transgender and nonbinary youth. Alarming, nearly one in five trans and nonbinary youth attempted suicide that year.

It's important to understand that being transgender or nonbinary does not make someone inherently prone to suicide. The real issue lies in the bias, discrimination, family rejection, stigma, and mistreatment that many transgender and nonbinary youth face. These external factors contribute to higher rates of mental health challenges.

KNOW! THE PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Certain factors can help protect transgender and nonbinary youth from mental health struggles and significantly lower their risk of suicide. Research shows that **strong social support, community acceptance, and access to inclusive care** all play a crucial role in fostering well-being.

- **Support from Family, Trusted Adults, and Friends**
 - In 2022, LGBTQ+ youth who felt high levels of family support were less than half as likely to attempt suicide compared to those with little or moderate support (6% vs. 16%). Additionally, transgender youth whose families affirm their gender identity show the same level of psychological well-being as their cisgender peers.
- **Community Acceptance of LGBTQ+ People**
 - LGBTQ+ youth who live in accepting communities reported significantly lower rates of suicide attempts than those in less accepting environments (8% vs. 21%).
- **Access to LGBTQ-Inclusive Medical and Mental Health Care**
 - Inclusive healthcare providers who affirm gender identity and understand LGBTQ+ experiences help reduce barriers to seeking mental health support.
- **LGBTQ-Inclusive, Drug-Free Spaces**
 - Safe, supportive environments—like after-school programs and community centers—offer young people a place to connect, build confidence, and feel accepted.

KNOW! WHAT YOU CAN DO

Research shows that the support system surrounding transgender and nonbinary youth plays a huge role in their mental health and well-being. Studies from the [Family Acceptance Project](#) reveal that affirming behaviors—such as promoting self-esteem, strengthening relationships, and fostering a sense of belonging—can help protect against suicide, depression, and substance use. Here are some meaningful steps you can take to support the young trans and nonbinary people in your life:

Welcome Their LGBTQ+ Friends and Partners

Support systems that include other LGBTQ+ people are essential for a young person's well-being. Make an effort to welcome their LGBTQ+ friends into your home and life—it shows acceptance and helps them feel valued.

Talk Respectfully About Their LGBTQ+ Identity

Engage in conversations about their identity with an open mind and listen without judgment when they share their experiences. Let them come out on their own terms—unless they've given you permission, do not disclose their LGBTQ+ identity to others.

Use Their Name and Pronouns Correctly

Respect their identity by using their correct name and pronouns. If you make a mistake, apologize briefly and move forward without dwelling on it. A simple, "I'm sorry, I'll do better," goes a long way. What matters most is your commitment to improving.

Support Their Gender Expression

Gender expression includes clothing, hairstyles, and how someone presents themselves. Help them explore what feels right by taking them shopping for clothes that affirm their identity or supporting a haircut they've been wanting.

Educate Yourself About LGBTQ+ Identities

Take the initiative to learn about transgender and nonbinary experiences. Seek out books, documentaries, and online resources to better understand what your young person may be going through. The more you know, the more supportive you can be.

Advocate for Their Rights

With more than [650 anti-trans bills](#) currently proposed across the U.S., including two in Ohio, trans and nonbinary youth are very aware of the challenges they face. Community acceptance significantly reduces suicide risk—by speaking out against harmful policies, you can help create a more accepting world for them.

Stand Up for Them

If friends or family members mistreat your young person because of their gender identity, be their advocate. Make it clear that they deserve respect and dignity, regardless of anyone's personal beliefs.

Own Your Mistakes and Keep Growing

No one is perfect—supporting someone through their gender journey is a learning process. If you slip up or say the wrong thing, acknowledge it, apologize, and commit to doing better. Growth happens when we listen, learn, and strive to be more affirming every day.

By taking these steps, you can make a profound, positive impact on the life of a transgender or nonbinary young person. Your support matters more than you may ever realize.

KNOW! IMPORTANT TERMS

Transgender, or trans, is an umbrella term for people whose gender identity is different from the sex assigned to them at birth.

Nonbinary is an identity embraced by some people who do not identify exclusively as a man or a woman.

Cisgender, or cis, generally refers to people who do not identify as transgender. Cisgender describes people whose gender identity or expression aligns with traits typically associated with the sex assigned to them at birth.

Gender identity refers to one's innermost concept of self as a man, a woman, or a blend of both or neither – how individuals perceive themselves and what they call themselves. One's gender identity can be the same or different from their sex assigned at birth.

Gender expression refers to the external appearance of one's gender identity, usually expressed through behavior, clothing, body characteristics, or voice, and which may or may not conform to socially defined behaviors and characteristics typically associated with being either masculine or feminine.

RESOURCES

[Trans Lifeline - \(877\) 565-8860](#)

[Transgender Resources | GLAAD](#)

[Being an Ally to Transgender and Nonbinary](#)

[Young People | The Trevor Project](#)

[Transgender Youth | National Association of School Psychologists](#)

[Transgender Children & Youth: Understanding the Basics | HRC](#)



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