Victimization and Community Safety among LGBTQ People in Waterloo Region

For this fact sheet, OutLook worked in collaboration with Breaking the Silence, a Rainbow Community Council (RCC) working group concerned with hate crimes, violence and feelings of safety experienced by Waterloo Region’s LGBTQ community members. We hope that our fact sheets are helpful in your work to create change.
OutLook explores the well-being of the LGBTQ communities in Waterloo Region, Ontario, Canada. A coalition of community, academic and public health stakeholders came together with the Waterloo Region Rainbow Community Council (RCC) with the aim of creating change for LGBTQ individuals locally.

WHO WE SURVEYED

- 526 people in the study
- 57% under age 30
- 112 Cisgender
- 414 Transgender

Cisgender * Transgender

- Gay
- Bisexual
- Lesbian
- Queer
- Asexual
- Not sure or Questioning
- Straight/Heterosexual
- Other

*Cisgender refers to people who identify with the sex assigned to them at birth. Also referred to as non-transgender.
Over 90% said growing up they heard that people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans were abnormal.

42% had to move away from their family or friends because of their gender identity.

86% of trans respondents have tried to pass as non-trans.

30% had to move away from their family or friends because of their sexual orientation.

92% of respondents have pretended to be heterosexual.

65% have been objectified or fetishized.

59% worry about growing old alone.

73% fear they will die young.
PLACES PEOPLE AVOID

Trans people fear harassment in malls/clothing stores (38%) and at the gym (38%)

Cisgender people fear harassment in clubs or social clubs (18%) and at the gym (15%)

PLACES WHERE PEOPLE FEEL SAFE

64% cisgender and 57% transgender feel safe in LIBRARIES

Trans people feel safe on social media/online spaces (40%) and in public spaces (37%)

Cisgender people feel safe in grocery stores/pharmacies (59%) and in malls/clothing stores (59%)

25% cisgender people avoid places of worship

57% transgender people avoid public washrooms

21% report experiencing some form of police harassment because of their gender identity

16% report experiencing some form of police harassment because of their sexual orientation
COMMUNITY

61% cisgender 77% transgender
feel it is important to be a member of an LGBTQ organization

Over 90% say there is a need for LGBTQ friendly spaces to socialize in Waterloo Region

42% cisgender 31% transgender report strong sense of community belongingness

Likely to attend LGBTQ support group

- 52% cisgender
- 39% transgender

Likely to attend LGBTQ-safe community centre

- 75% cisgender
- 57% transgender

Likely to attend Pride events

- 80% cisgender
- 78% transgender

Access these spaces

- 57% cisgender
- 68% transgender

Aware of these spaces

- 48% cisgender
- 77% transgender

HOW LGBTQ PEOPLE CONNECT

62% cisgender 72% transgender

- Facebook

28% cisgender 47% transgender

- LGBTQ+ organizations

35% cisgender 25% transgender

- Online dating

26% cisgender 26% transgender

- LGBTQ bars

FACE TO FACE

73% cisgender 79% transgender

- YouTube videos

20% cisgender 35% transgender

- Location based apps

31% cisgender 15% transgender

- Twitter

20% cisgender 23% transgender
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