

# LGBTQIA+

## A Community at Risk

7.1% of adults and 9.5% of youth ages 13-17 identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex or asexual (LGBTQIA+) in the US. More and more LGBTQIA+ people are growing up in families and communities that celebrate their sexual orientations and gender identities. Sadly, it's still common for LGBTQIA+ individuals to be rejected by their families and harassed by their peers. Anxiety and loneliness due to negative stigma and discrimination can lead to drug abuse, addiction and death.



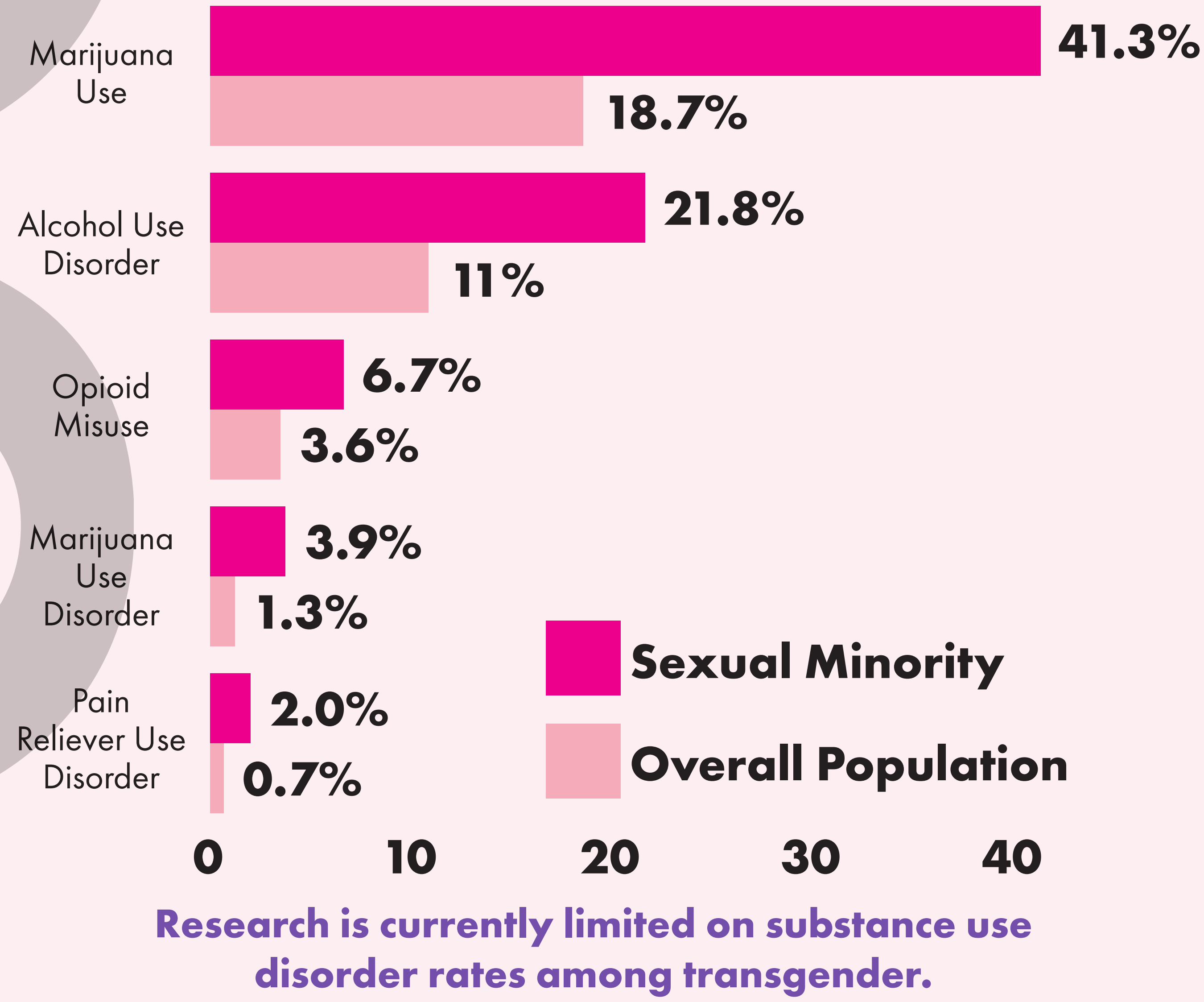
### LGBTQIA+ INDIVIDUALS:

- May be 2x as likely to be bullied, excluded or assaulted at school.
- Have higher rates of drug and alcohol abuse if they are victimized.
- 49% don't feel they could seek help from their family.
- Up to 40% of homeless youth and young adults are LGBTQIA+.

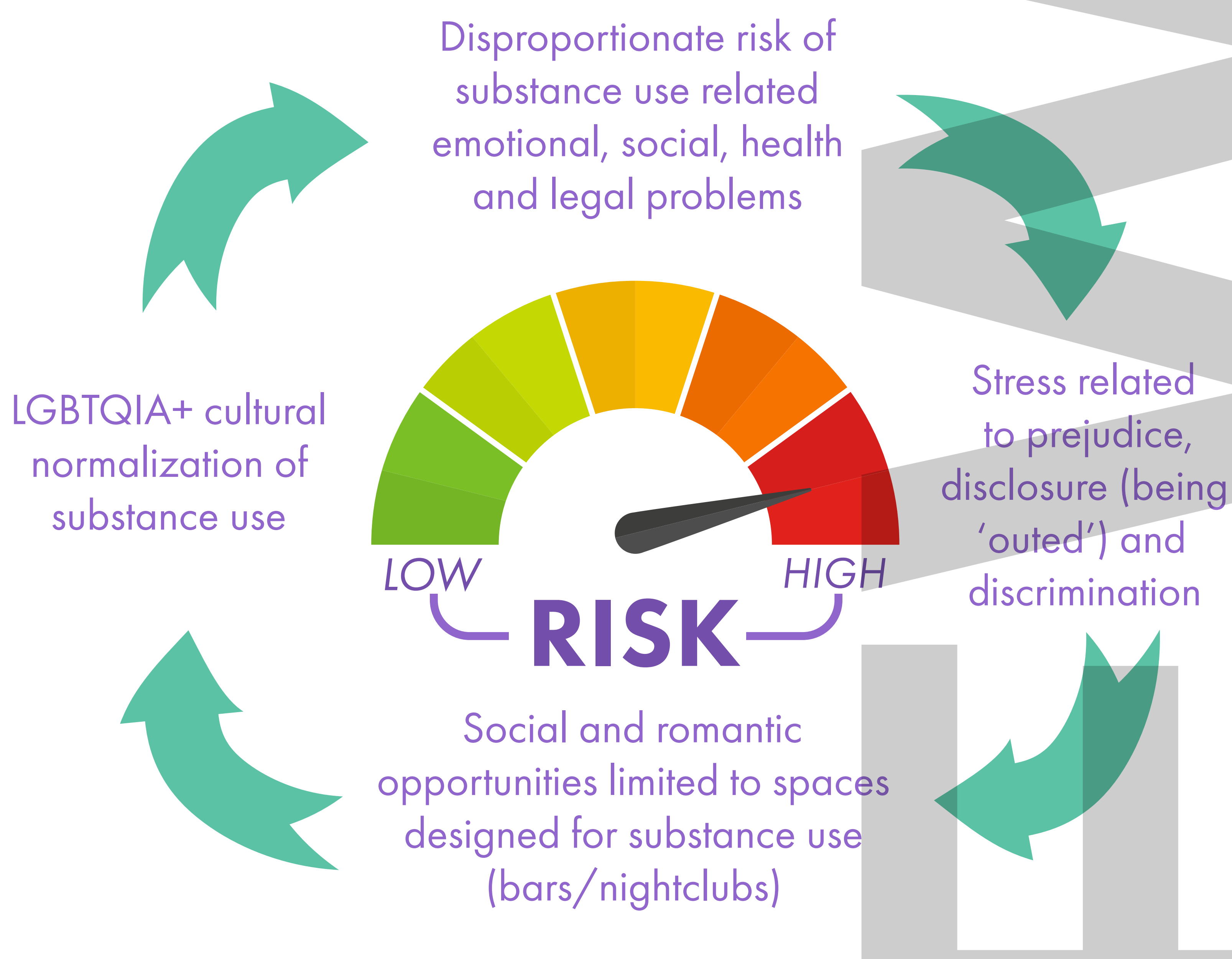


Even though society has grown more accepting, many LGBTQIA+ individuals have dealt with challenges in the fight for equality. Some turn to drugs and alcohol as an escape or to feel more comfortable being who they are.

### Substance Misuse Disorder Among Sexual Minority vs. Overall Population



## THE CYCLE OF RISK



## THE IMPORTANCE OF SUPPORT

Lack of support and gaps in care systems has led to the struggle with addiction in the LGBTQIA+ community. A solution to this problem is to increase support and acceptance for all. Counselling programs and group recovery can also provide help to those who need it in order to lead better lives. If you or someone you know is experiencing addiction, help is out there. It is never too late to turn to someone who can help.



## THE CHALLENGES FACED

Being LGBTQIA+ does not cause substance abuse. Instead, specific stress factors compound and lead to abuse, such as:

- Lack of acceptance from loved ones
- Stigma from society
- Peer pressure to try drugs or alcohol
- Lack of LGBTQIA+ support resources
- Verbal or physical harassment
- Bullying, assault or exclusion at school or the workplace
- Discrimination & Stigma
- Abandonment



## HELP IS OUT THERE

Substance abuse is never the answer and can end in harm. However, it is never too late and organizations like the **The Trevor Project** are here for you. The Trevor Project is the world's largest crisis intervention organization for LGBTQIA+ young people.



If you are a parent, caretaker or simply know an LGBTQIA+ individual, it is important to support them in their choices. Resources such as the **Strong Family Alliance** can help you by providing insight and more information.

## GET THE HELP YOU NEED

Know when to get help. The resources provided can help you or someone you know to receive the care and attention needed to recover and be who they are.

### The Trevor Project

### The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

### The Strong Family Alliance



The world's largest crisis intervention organization for LGBTQIA+ people.



(SAMHSA) is for anyone struggling with addiction or a mental health issue.



Works to help young people come out and helps parents become informed supporters and allies.



# Be Who You Are. Be Drug Free