Health Behaviors and Experiences of LGBTQ Youth in the MetroWest Region (Grades 9-12)
Highlights from the 2016 MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey

14% of high school youth identify as lesbian/gay, bisexual, questioning, or transgender (LGBTQ).*

LGBTQ youth face higher rates of harassment and bullying than their peers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Past 12 months</th>
<th>LGBTQ</th>
<th>Heterosexual cisgender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bullied on school property</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>28%</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Missed school due to feeling unsafe</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>2%</td>
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Many LGBTQ youth feel connected with their school, but reports are lower than their peers. For example, 54% of LGBTQ youth agree/strongly agree that they feel like “part of their school,” compared to 74% of heterosexual cisgender youth.

Mental health problems are elevated among LGBTQ youth.

- Depressive symptoms†: 14% LGBTQ, 41% heterosexual cisgender
- Self-injury†: 9% LGBTQ, 34% heterosexual cisgender
- Considered suicide†: 9% LGBTQ, 36% heterosexual cisgender
- Attempted suicide†: 3% LGBTQ, 12% heterosexual cisgender

Nearly half of LGBTQ youth report symptoms of anxiety that impact their physical and mental health:§

- Had sleep difficulties: 49%
- Had a poor appetite or ate too much: 45%
- Had trouble concentrating in school: 43%
- Felt like a failure: 45%

Adult support is a significant protective factor for LGBTQ youth.

While adult support is lower among LGBTQ youth compared to heterosexual cisgender youth, the majority of LGBTQ youth have a supportive adult at school (69%) and outside of school (82%). Mental health problems and substance use are lower among LGBTQ youth with a supportive adult in their lives than those without adult support.

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* Questioning includes youth who are not sure of their sexual orientation
† Past 12 months
‡ At school or on their way to/from school; past 30 days
§ Past 2 weeks

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