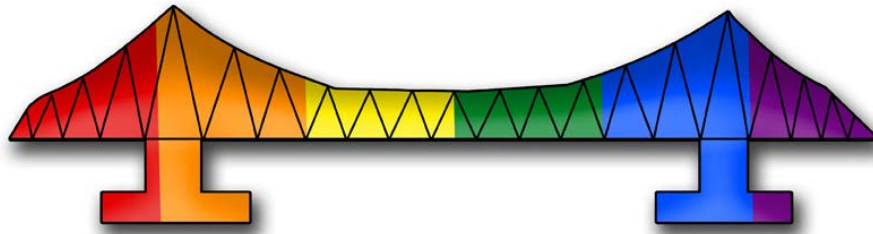


From: [Brisbane Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Intersex and Queer Action Group \(BLAG\)](#)
To: [Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee](#)
Subject: Submission: Relationships (Civil Partnerships) and Other Acts Amendment Bill 2015.
Date: Monday, 19 October 2015 1:46:38 PM
Attachments: [Supporting Evidence of harm to LGBTIQ people from discrimination..doc](#)



Brisbane LGBTIQ Action Group

The Secretariat
Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee
Queensland Parliament

Dear Secretariat,

Please accept this as our submission to the committee's inquiry into the Relationships

(Civil Partnerships) and Other Acts Amendment Bill 2015.

Note - I am happy to address the committee members at the public hearing day, if so required.

Submission: Relationships (Civil Partnerships) and Other Acts Amendment Bill 2015

Brisbane Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Intersex and Queer Action Group (BLAG) strongly supports this bill being passed into law. Our members are grateful that despite civil unions being a different and inferior form of relationship recognition compared to marriage equality, this is the most the Queensland government can do, and if this bill becomes law, they will be afforded greater respect and recognition. This is commendable as a further step toward equal recognition and treatment of all citizens leading to further breaking down of divisions within society, and boosting the mental health of LGBTI Queenslanders.

As BLAG Convenor, I contributed to a joint media release with the Human Rights Law Commission, praising the intentions of this bill. In the 17 September 2015 media release "*Proposed law to deliver greater dignity and recognition for same-sex couples in Queensland*", I stated:

"The Queensland government is to be praised for doing the most they can under state law to formally recognise all loving couples as equal. The legal and social recognition to be gained, including from the proposed state-sanctioned civil ceremonies, will benefit the health and well-being of LGBTI Queenslanders"

See the media release here <http://hrlc.org.au/new-law-delivers-greater-dignity-and-recognition-for-same-sex-couples-in-queensland/>

Personal stories from our members.

Some of our members wish to take advantage of the reforms contained in this bill, and are happy to share their personal stories. These couples have been in loving committed relationships varying from 3 years to 46 years duration.

- **Janine and Emily** want to protect and celebrate their love with a future civil union and take advantage of a state-sanctioned ceremony, which would show their love is just the same as other couples - this *"would be a natural extension of our love and relationship."*
- **David and Collin** have been a loving couple for 25 years and were married in South Africa in 2010. They celebrated their Queensland civil union on the first day legally possible in 2010, "as a way of recognising our relationship in the light of our marriage not being legally valid in Australia." Dave states when civil unions were changed to a register "it had a seriously detrimental impact on our mental well-being." Collin adds that this *"made us feel once again relegated to the status of second class citizens."* *"People underestimate the impact that legal recognition, including a state-sanctioned ceremony, has on the validity of a relationship"*, says Dave.
- **Kristiana and Jane** want to have a civil union so they *"can formally have their relationship recognised in a long awaited ceremony with their closest family and friends"*. Soon Kristiana and Jane will welcome their baby into their family and they *"want the protections (actual and perceived) that a formally recognised relationship offers their child and family."*
- **Craig and Gary** want their love recognised as a marriage and will fly from Brisbane to marry in New Zealand in 2016. *"We have been amazed and humbled that over 50 of our family and friends have decided to make the trip with us to help celebrate our marriage. To us this means they all understand the importance of two people declaring their love for one another and making a serious commitment."* Upon returning to Australia, sadly they will be stripped of their marriage *"Unfortunately as soon as we disembark in Brisbane our marriage will not be recognised."* However, they *"want the Queensland government to value our love and commitment by automatically recognising our overseas marriage as a civil union at home."*
- **Norah and Karen.** Norah comments *"I am in disbelief that anyone could continue to support legislation which denies same-sex attracted people, such as my partner Karen and I, the right to choose whether we have a state-sanctioned ceremony to celebrate our relationship."*
- **Simon and Timo** celebrated their civil union soon after legislation was introduced. Their civil union *"represented our relationship and summed up the spirit of our love and strong commitment to each other."* Simon adds that he sees *"Civil Partnerships allowing a modern and secular way in which committed couples like ourselves can celebrate our love for each other"*. Commenting on the human toll the watering down of this legislation had on their mental health, Simon states *"Words do not begin to describe the pain and deep level of hurt we experienced ... we felt so alienated and rejected by the decision of the government and the swift and heartless way it was brought into being."* Simon believes *"this Bill and submission the most important political issue in my life"*.
- **Sharon and Elaine** have been a couple for 14 years and married in Canada in 2008. The previous Queensland Labor government recognised their overseas marriage as a civil union. *"We simply request the current Queensland government acknowledge and respect the fact that we are already in a legal overseas relationship (marriage), and, as such, automatically recognise our relationship as at least having the same legal status as a state sanctioned civil partnership. Expecting us to register our relationship again would be degrading and dismissive of the fact we are already in a long-term valid relationship."*

This is not marriage - civil unions are an inferior class of relationship recognition with lesser rights and protections!

It must be made clear that we are not talking about allowing marriage for same-sex couples, but a different, legally inferior and socially less understood form of relationship recognition, civil partnerships. While supporting this bill, knowing it's the best a state government can do to treat all relationships equally, we recognise the federal parliament has a duty to represent the people and legislate for full marriage equality.

- This bill will not grant couples full and equal rights and protections as granted under

the federal Marriage Act - this includes recognition of marriages across all state borders, and immigration rights to overseas citizens who are spouses of Australians.

- This bill will not allow for automatic recognition of Queensland civil unions under laws of other Australian states. This means that when Queensland couples with Queensland civil unions cross state borders to go on interstate holidays, they could still be regarded as legal strangers. For example, if one partner had a life-threatening medical emergency interstate, their partner may be not recognised as legal next of kin and could be denied hospital visitation and consenting to emergency medical procedures for their loved one.
- Even the name civil union or civil partnership does not carry the same degree of automatic recognition and credit as is carried when someone can say "*we are married*". Couples in civil unions report other people often do not understand when they say we are "*civil unioned*", or "*civil partnershiped*". This can include some staff in emergency departments when a person presents with a life-threatening medical emergency. Stating "*we are married*" grants automatic access as next of kin for your loved one. Stating "*we are civil unioned*" or "*civil partnershiped*", can involve providing explanation to bewildered staff who may not know what this means, resulting in delayed access to your loved one who may be gravely ill or dying.

This is not only a bill for same-sex unions, but for all Queenslanders.

- This bill applies to all Queensland couples equally, whether they love someone of the same sex or someone of the opposite sex. Some heterosexual couples choose a state civil union over a federally recognised marriage. It's fair and just that people who choose civil unions, should also be allowed a state-sanctioned ceremony if they wish. Unlike our heterosexual friends and relatives, same sex couples do not have the luxury of a choice of different relationship recognition modes.

Strong public support for marriage equality - even stronger support for civil unions.

To our knowledge no scientific poll has gauged public support for Queensland civil unions. However, for over a decade every scientific poll conducted has shown growing majority support for full marriage equality with a ceremony under the Marriage Act. The 2014 Crosby Textor poll showed 72% support for marriage equality, with only 21% opposing. The poll also showed majority support in every demographic, including people of faith, people in regional and rural areas and older people - see <http://www.crosbytextor.com/news/crosby-textor-same-sex-marriage-research-2014/>

It's known that some people who oppose marriage equality, do support civil unions, so it would likely be accurate to suggest the rate of public support for this bill would be higher than the 72% public support for marriage equality - and the level of opposition would be less than the 21% in this poll. Civil Unions with a state-sanctioned ceremony were legal for some time in 2011/2012, and state-sanctioned same-sex ceremonies were performed. The world did not end and nobody was harmed by allowing this - just as nobody will be harmed by restoring this reform in 2015. The outcome from passing this bill will be providing greater validation, respect and dignity to citizens in same-sex relationships - as well as heterosexual relationships - who wish to have a civil union.

The impact of previously downgrading the Civil Partnerships Act 2011 to a registrations scheme.

- When the Civil Partnerships Act 2011 was downgraded in 2012 to a registration

scheme and removed the option to have a state-sanctioned ceremony, this had a profoundly negative impact on many LGBTI Queenslanders, plus their families and friends. Queenslanders were offended that their rights and recognition were downgraded without the bill going to a parliamentary committee or the public being consulted.

- It was common to hear people who had entered a civil union say they felt devalued now the law had been downgraded. Community members said you register a dog or a trailer - not a committed loving relationship.
- One of our members, Simon, and his partner Timo had a civil union prior to the previous Act being downgraded in 2012 to a registration scheme, and removing the option to have a state-sanctioned ceremony. Commenting on the human toll the watering down of this legislation had on their mental health, Simon states *"Words do not begin to describe the pain and deep level of hurt we experienced ... we felt so alienated and rejected by the decision of the government and the swift and heartless way it was brought into being."* Simon believes *"this Bill and submission the most important political issue in my life"*.
- Our member Simon adds that the 2012 downgrading of civil unions is *"the only case I am aware of in Australian history where a human right was deliberately and callously reversed."*
- Our members Collin and Dave also entered a Queensland civil union - Dave states when civil unions were changed to a register "it had a seriously detrimental impact on our mental well-being." Collin adds that this *"made us feel once again relegated to the status of second class citizens."* *"People underestimate the impact that legal recognition, including a state-sanctioned ceremony, has on the validity of a relationship"*, says Dave.

This bill is about recognising love, and providing respect and dignity for Queenslanders.

- This bill would elevate the status of couples choosing this form of relationship recognition, from that of an inferior registrations scheme to that of a civil union. This name change is important as it shows respect and dignity for the love of people entering these unions - most of whom will be same-sex couples (as this is the only form of relationship recognition they can choose) ,
- It must always be remembered a civil union is a different, legally inferior and socially less understood far form of relationship recognition compared with marriage. If given the choice of marriage over a civil union, University of Queensland research shows the majority of Queensland same-sex couples would choose marriage, (Dane et al., 2010, www.notsoprivatelives.com.au https://espace.library.uq.edu.au/view/UQ:205948/Not_So_Private_Lives_Report.pdf
-)
- Removing the ability for couples to have a state-sanctioned ceremony to publicly declare love and commitment, reduced the worth of the Act. Restoring this state-sanctioned ceremony option is a hugely important aspect of any civil union, and shows a progressive caring humane society.
- Few Australians would not know any LGBTI people in 2015. People know LGBTI people as their friends, their relatives and their workmates - and therefore they can not justify discrimination against these people by removing their rights under law (albeit inferior rights), to protect and honour their relationship and love. Aussies support a Fair Go for all. Queenslanders, like all Australians, do not support discrimination against some of our fellow citizens - especially our own relatives and friends.

The need to provide automatic recognition of overseas same-sex marriages and civil unions, as Queensland civil unions.

Our members are concerned about an apparent omission to this bill. Lawyers from the (Queensland based) LGBTI Legal Service and the Human Rights Law Centre advise that the regulations in this bill do not allow for couples with overseas same-sex marriages or civil unions, to be automatically recognised as civil unions under Queensland law.

Apparently this automatic recognition was provided under the previous Queensland Act, but appears to be omitted from this bill. This feature is included in

relationship recognition schemes in other states that allow for the automatic recognition of overseas same-sex marriages and civil unions. For example, in Tasmania a same-sex couple married in the UK would be automatically recognised under Tasmanian law without the need for the couple to register their relationship.

For same-sex couples that have already entered into an overseas legal marriage or civil partnership, expecting them to have to register their relationship again, would be degrading and dismissive of the fact they are already in a valid relationship.

Referring to the need to include automatic recognition of overseas civil unions/same-sex marriages as Qld civil unions, the Human Rights Law Centre's Director of Advocacy and Litigation, Anna Brown, states:

"This is a very welcome reform and we would encourage the government to draw from the experiences in other jurisdictions to strengthen the Bill even further, such as providing for the recognition of growing numbers of same-sex couples resorting to marriage overseas,"

See the 17 September 2015 media release "Proposed law to deliver greater dignity and recognition for same-sex couples in Queensland" here <http://hrlc.org.au/new-law-delivers-greater-dignity-and-recognition-for-same-sex-couples-in-queensland/>

From conversations with lawyers from the LGBTI Legal Service, I understand that this recognition of overseas same-sex marriages and civil unions can be incorporated in the Regulations of this bill. I request that this be included in the Regulations please to provide automatic legal protections to Queenslanders, including some of our group's members who have overseas same-sex marriages. The submission received from lawyer Stephen Page also supports this call.

Mental health benefits from this bill.

It's important that government realise that while most LGBTI people have positive well-being, they have a much higher risk of experiencing poor mental health and social outcomes, including suicide, compared to their heterosexual counterparts. This happens not from being LGBTI, but from the higher rates of discrimination, prejudice, stigma and non-representation LGBTI people experience. This harm is recognised by government and non-government organisations, mental health and suicide prevention agencies, Australian Bureau of Statistics and many university studies.

Please see the attached document containing supporting evidence outlining the worse social, mental health and suicide statistics for LGBTIQ Australians, as a result of living with prejudice, discrimination, stigma and non-representation.

The horrific statistics in this doc are not just numbers - but real people. They represent:

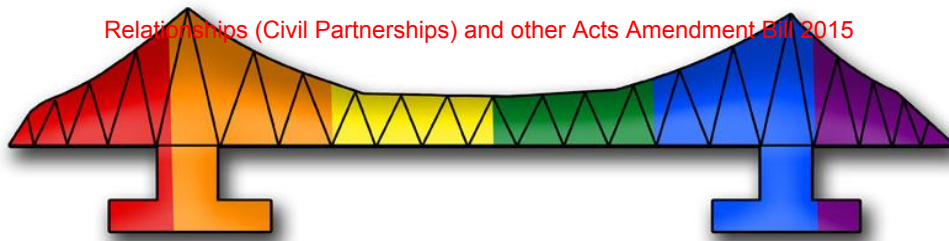
- The 17 y/o boy being bullied at his Longreach School because he is gay – noting the university study revealing Qld has the highest school homophobic bullying rates in Australia.
- The 16 y/o girl living on the streets after being kicked out of the family home at Roma for being bisexual – noting the higher rates of LGBTI homelessness resulting from rejection by family.
- The 15 y/o being bullied by his Brisbane football team for being gay – noting the study of sports participants showing 70% believe youth sport is not safe for gay people.
- The Mackay woman being taunted by neighbours because she is transgender – noting the research shows trans* people are even more at risk of suicide than are gays, lesbians and bisexuals.

By passing legislation that acknowledges in a "meaningful way" the validity of same-sex relationships (as far as possible by a state govt), the Queensland government can help reduce this discrimination, and thereby improve the health and well-being of LGBTI Queenslanders.

Thank you for considering this submission.

Sincerely.

Phil Browne
Convenor,
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Brisbane LGBTIQ Action Group

Supporting evidence of harm LGBTIQ people experience from discrimination

Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Intersex and Queer (LGBTIQ) residents experience alarming social, mental health and suicide statistics. This happens not from being LGBTIQ, but from the higher rates of discrimination, prejudice, stigma and non-representation LGBTIQ people experience.

This harm is recognised by government and non-government organisations, mental health and suicide prevention agencies, Australian Bureau of Statistics and many university studies. Multiple agencies, including Councils, recognise the need for and have implemented, LGBTIQ-specific programs.

1. The federal Department of Health and Ageing released a document titled "*National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) Ageing and Aged Care Strategy*". In his Ministerial foreword, Minister Mark Butler states:

"These initiatives recognise that:

- *there have been decades of inequitable treatment for LGBTI people;*
- *many LGBTI people have suffered stigma, family rejection and social isolation; and*
- *many LGBTI people have had a life experience of fear of rejection and persecution, coupled with the impact of potential or actual discrimination.*

For these reasons, LGBTI ageing is a unique and important experience warranting particular attention."

See

https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/08_2014/national_ageing_and_aged_care_strategy_lgbti_print_version.pdf

2. The Australian Human Rights Commission June 2015 report "*Resilient Individuals: Sexual Orientation Gender Identity & Intersex Rights 2015*", states:

"Despite progress being made in recent years, LGBTI people continue to face a range of significant challenges in Australia including:

- *people on the basis of SOGII (Sexual Orientation Gender Identity & Intersex) status, particularly in relation to gender identity and intersex status.*
- *Unacceptably high rates of marginalisation, bullying, harassment and violence."*

It further reports:

"Research has established a strong correlation between the experience of discrimination and lower enjoyment of health and wellbeing. It also highlights that a lived experience of unjust discrimination can significantly limit an individual's sense of security to publicly participate in activities such as employment and sports."

"Research has consistently identified higher than average rates of violence, harassment and bullying towards LGBTI people in Australia. It is well established that violence, harassment and bullying affect the wellbeing and quality of life of the people who experience it."

*"Research suggests that **the rate of suicide for LGBT people is 3.5 to 14 times higher than the general population.** LGBT people are also at a higher risk for a range of mental diagnoses and significantly more likely to be diagnosed with depression or anxiety"*

See <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/sexual-orientation-sex-gender-identity/publications/resilient-individuals-sexual>

3. The Lifeline report "*LGBTIQ and Suicide Prevention*" states:

"For LGBTIQ people, the experiences of harassment, discrimination, ostracism and marginalisation, including rejection often by families and friends, are often cited as contributing factors to poor mental health and wellbeing, and the onset of suicidal thoughts."

"Many LGBTIQ people struggle to find family and social supports which can act as protective factors against suicidal thoughts and actions. Lesbian, gay and bisexual Australians are twice as likely as heterosexual Australians to have no contact with family or no family to rely on for serious problems."

"Communities can work constructively to reduce stigma and discrimination, as well as eliminate homophobic or transphobic attitudes in their midst. Community outlooks can impact positively on school, workplace and social environments for LGBTIQ people. In doing so, all of us can contribute to mentally healthy communities that enable diversity and health to co-exist."

See <http://mhaustralia.org/general/lgbtiq-and-suicide-prevention>

4. In "*Are LGBT Populations at a Higher Risk for Suicidal Behaviors in Australia? Research Findings and Implications*" Skerrett, KoLves and De Leo of the Australian Institute for Suicide Research and Prevention at Griffith University state:

"While there is nothing inherently "suicidogenic" about sexual minority identity or status (non-heterosexual identity and/or engagement in non-heterosexual behaviors as well as non-identification with biological birth gender), a degree of continued stigma—"the co-occurrence of [...] labeling, stereotyping, separation, status loss, and discrimination" (Link & Phelan, 2001, p. 363)—at family and societal levels in relation to minority sexualities (Blosnich & Bossarie, 2012) and genders (Fitzpatrick et al., 2005) has led researchers to believe, for some time, that there is a relationship between suicidal behavior and sexual minorities, especially in adolescence."

11.1.7e “Nevertheless, it seems clear that a reduction in public stigma as well as the private experience of this would reduce (LGBTI suicide) risk factors while fostering protective influences. For example, normalisation of sexual diversity at the societal level (e.g., with marriage equality reforms) could promote acceptance at the family level, thereby decreasing the likelihood of rejection of LGBTI youths.”

See

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0ByUHzRTDFvIFNEV4Q1ZpWXJsUzNPeXMzTEFEVmd1XzdNUUNv/view?usp=sharing>

5. The Australian Senate, Community Affairs Reference Committee report “*The Hidden Toll: Suicide in Australia*”, notes:

“the stigma and discrimination experienced by GLBT(I) youth is likely to seriously impact on their mental health, increasing their chances of experiencing social isolation and family rejection.”

See http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Community_Affairs/Completed_inquiries/2008-10/suicide/report/c06#anc13

6. Suicide Prevention Australia's position statement “*Suicide and self-harm among Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender communities*” states:

“Research findings demonstrate that suicide attempt and self-harm rates among gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) communities are significantly higher than among non-GLBT populations.”

“The risk of suicide and self-harm among GLBT communities is complex and is compounded by experiences of stigma, discrimination, and ‘minority stress’. Sexual orientation and gender identity alone do not necessarily elevate risk; rather, experiences of heterosexism, homophobia and transphobia are known to contribute to social isolation, poorer mental health outcomes, substance misuse, and other sociocultural and economic problems and conditions, which in turn place GLBT individuals at greater risk of suicide and self-harm.”

See <http://suicidepreventionaust.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/SPA-GayLesbian-PositionStatement.pdf>

7. The Salvation Army Suicide Prevention program document “*Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer and Questioning youth (GLBTIQQ) and Suicide*”, states:

“Researchers have found that suicide among gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer and questioning youth (GLBTIQQ) is comparatively higher than among the general population (Hatzenbuehler, McLaughlin, Keyes, Hasin).

It is important to note that it is not their sexuality or gender identity that causes this, rather experiences of discrimination, prejudice and misunderstanding because of their sexuality that can lead to feelings of despair, hopelessness and isolation.”

See <http://suicideprevention.salvos.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/LGBT-factsheet.pdf>

8. The National LGBTI Health Alliance document *"LGBTI People Mental Health and Suicide"* states: Submission 022
11.1.7e Relationships (Civil Partnerships) and other Acts Amendment Bill 2015

"LGBTI people have significantly poorer mental health and higher rates of suicide than other Australians"

"Discrimination and exclusion are the key causal factors of LGBTI mental ill-health and suicidality"

See <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/docs/default-source/default-document-library/bw0258-lgbti-mental-health-and-suicide-2013-2nd-edition.pdf?sfvrsn=2>

9. Headspace, the national youth mental health foundation, position paper *"Young people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex"* states:

- *"A survey of 1749 same sex attracted young Australians in 2004 found that many young people experienced homophobia, manifest through verbal abuse (44%) and unfair treatment on the basis of sexuality (38%). The most common site for the experience of abuse was within the school environment (78%)."*
- *"ABS statistics indicate that people who identify themselves as being homosexual/bisexual were more than twice as likely to have experienced a mental disorder in the previous 12 months. Depression and anxiety rates amongst lesbian and bisexual women are at least twice those of heterosexual women."*
- *"Young people who are LGBTI are at higher risk of experiencing mental health concerns due to the difficulties associated with disclosure and community attitudes, and not due to their sexual or gender identity"*
- *"Young people who are LGBTI face particular pressures in their relationships with family, peers and schools, which can lead to vulnerability to depression, homelessness and drug use in response to lack of acceptance and bullying."*
- *"Initiatives that challenge homophobia and promote a safe environment for all Australians are crucial, particularly within the school environment."*

See <http://headspace.org.au/assets/Uploads/Corporate/LGBTI-Position-Paper.pdf>

10. The *LGBT Fact File* is a compilation of ABS and University research findings, including:

- *a four times higher rate of suicide attempts (ABS)*
- *a twice higher rate of mental health disorders in the last year (ABS)*
- *a twice higher rate of having no family members for support (ABS)*
- *a four times higher rate of ever being homeless (ABS)*
- *higher rates of use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare)*
- *higher rates of chronic health conditions (ABS)*
- *an 82% rate of experiencing homophobic/transphobic abuse or violence in their lifetime (Berman & Robinson).*

See <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0ByUHRTDFvIFWEV2V1JHZUhkWIk/view?usp=sharing>

11. BeyondBlue, the national campaign to reduce anxiety and depression, *LGBTI-specific webpage* states:

"LGBTI people are at least two to three times more likely to experience depression and anxiety than the broader community."

See <http://www.beyondblue.org.au/resources/for-me/lesbian-gay-bi-trans-and-intersex-lgbti-people>
The BeyondBlue fact sheet, *"Depression and Anxiety in Gay Lesbian Bisexual Transgender and Intersex (GLBTI) people"* states:

11.1.7e *"Despite increasing acceptance of difference over the last few decades, people who are same-sex attracted (gay, lesbian and bisexual), people who are transgender, and people who are intersex, still face stigma and discrimination resulting from ingrained cultural attitudes about sexuality, gender and sex diversity in Australia" and "GLBTI people do experience anxiety and depression at higher rates than many other people and are at greater risk of suicide and self-harm."*

See <http://resources.beyondblue.org.au/prism/file?token=BL/0648>

BeyondBlue further state:

"THE IMPACT OF HOMOPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC ABUSE

Unlike those who are discriminated against for a characteristic they share with their family or community, such as race or religion, many GLBTI young people have frequently made this journey alone and in secret. They may have not been taught strategies for coping with prejudice, and are less likely to call on (and perhaps be given) family and community support if they are victimised.

Any type of homophobic or transphobic discrimination can have a negative impact on a person's mental health, and it's not surprising that many young people react to this sort of stress and anxiety by feeling anxious or down. Research shows us that compared with young people who have not experienced abuse, young people who have experienced homophobic or transphobic abuse:

1. *experience more feelings of depression and anger*
2. *feel less safe at school, home, on social occasions and at sport*
3. *are more likely to skip school or drop out completely*
4. *are more likely to experience homelessness, to have unsafe sex, to use alcohol and drugs and to deliberately self-harm."*

See <http://resources.beyondblue.org.au/prism/file?token=BL/0643>

12. The *Growing Up Queer Study* 2014, a national study of LGBTIQ youth, states:

"The findings of this study overwhelmingly highlight the serious impact that homophobia, transphobia and heteronormativity can have on the health and wellbeing of young people who are gender variant or sexuality diverse – supporting the findings of similar research in this area ..."

"Particularly disturbing are the findings around self-harm and suicide ideation amongst the young people who participated in the online national survey. 41% had thought about self-harm and/or suicide; 33% had harmed themselves; and 16% had attempted suicide."

See <http://www.youngandwellcrc.org.au/homophobia-transphobia-linked-mental-health-issues-many-growing-queer>

13. *Writing Themselves in 3* is the third national University study on the sexual health and wellbeing of 3134 same sex attracted and gender questioning young people.

11.1.7e *The study found that increased verbal abuse correlated with increasing risk of self harm and suicide, as well as increased illicit drug use by young gay and gender diverse people in Australia.* Relationships (Civil Partnerships) and other Acts Amendment Bill 2015 Submission 022

See http://www.glhv.org.au/files/wti3_web_sml.pdf

14. A *University of New England study* showed Queensland schools have the highest level of homophobia of all Australian schools.

"TEACHERS are being accused of bullying gay and lesbian students and condoning similar behaviour in Queensland schools, which have been found to be more homophobic than in any other state."

"A university study has found Queensland has the most homophobic schools in the country, with more than 80 per cent of gay and lesbian students reporting (anti-gay) bullying."

"Federal School Education Minister Peter Garrett warned yesterday that bullying of gay and lesbian students was a "real and present issue for young people in our schools" "

See <http://www.couriermail.com.au/news/queensland/bullying-teachers-peers-make-school-hell-for-gays-and-queensland-is-most-homophobic-of-all/story-e6freoof-1226582239965>

15. Out on the Fields, 2015 international study of homophobia in sport reveals disturbing findings. Key Australian findings:

- *80% of participants have experienced or witnessed homophobia in sport.*
- *50% of gay men and 48% of lesbians have been targeted.*
- *80% believe gay people are "not at all accepted" or "accepted a little" or "moderately accepted" in sporting culture.*
- *70% believe youth sport is not safe for gay people.*

See <http://www.outonthefields.com/media.html>

16. Beyondblue launches new campaign after March 2015 study reveals widespread homophobia.

"Australian teenage boys are engaging in homophobia at an alarming rate, a new study has revealed, harming the mental health of lesbian, gay, bi, trans and intersex youth and placing them at risk of suicide."

See <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/about-us/news/news/2015/03/30/major-campaign-aims-to-stamp-out-discrimination-against-lgbti-people>

Compiled August 2015 by:

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