

BUCKS SUPPORT SERVICES



Preventing Suicide in LGBTQ+ Community

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Introductions

➤ Name

➤ Pronouns

➤ Identities



Reviewing Language

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Terms associated with gender and sexual identity



Gender identity

Our inner sense of being a man, woman, non-binary, or another gender; “how the mind and the heart regard the body.”



Man – Woman – Cisgender – Transgender –
Agender – Androgyne – Bigender – Pangender –
Gender Fluid – Genderqueer – Gender Non-
Conforming – Gender Non-Binary – Demigirl –
Demiboy – Gender Expansive – Gender Diverse

Sexual Identity

Sexual orientation is a component of identity that includes sexual and emotional attraction to another person

Asexual – Allosexual – Autosexual – Aromantic –
Bisexual – Gay – Lesbian – Pansexual – Queer –
Polysexual

Setting the Stage

Why do we see such high rates of suicidal ideation, attempts and completed suicide?

Brainstorming



"The only way I will rest in peace is if one day transgender people aren't treated the way I was, they're treated like humans, with valid feelings and human rights. Gender needs to be taught about in schools, the earlier the better. My death needs to mean something" - Leelah Alcorn

UK: 48% of trans people under 26 attempt suicide (2014)
US: 41% of trans people attempt suicide (2014)
Canada: 43% of trans people attempt suicide (2012)

genderagenda.net

THE **TREVOR** PROJECT National Survey on LGBTQ Youth Mental Health 2020

- ▶ 40 % of LGBTQ respondents seriously considered attempting suicide in the past twelve months, with **more than half** of trans and nonbinary youth having seriously considered suicide
- ▶ 48% of LGBTQ youth reported engaging in **self-harm** in the past twelve months, including over 60% of trans and nonbinary youth
- ▶ 29% of LGBTQ youth have experienced **homelessness**, been kicked out, or run away 10% of LGBTQ youth reported undergoing conversion therapy, with 78% reporting it occurred when they were under age 18
- ▶ 1 in 3 LGBTQ youth reported that they had been **physically threatened or harmed** in their lifetime due to their LGBTQ identity

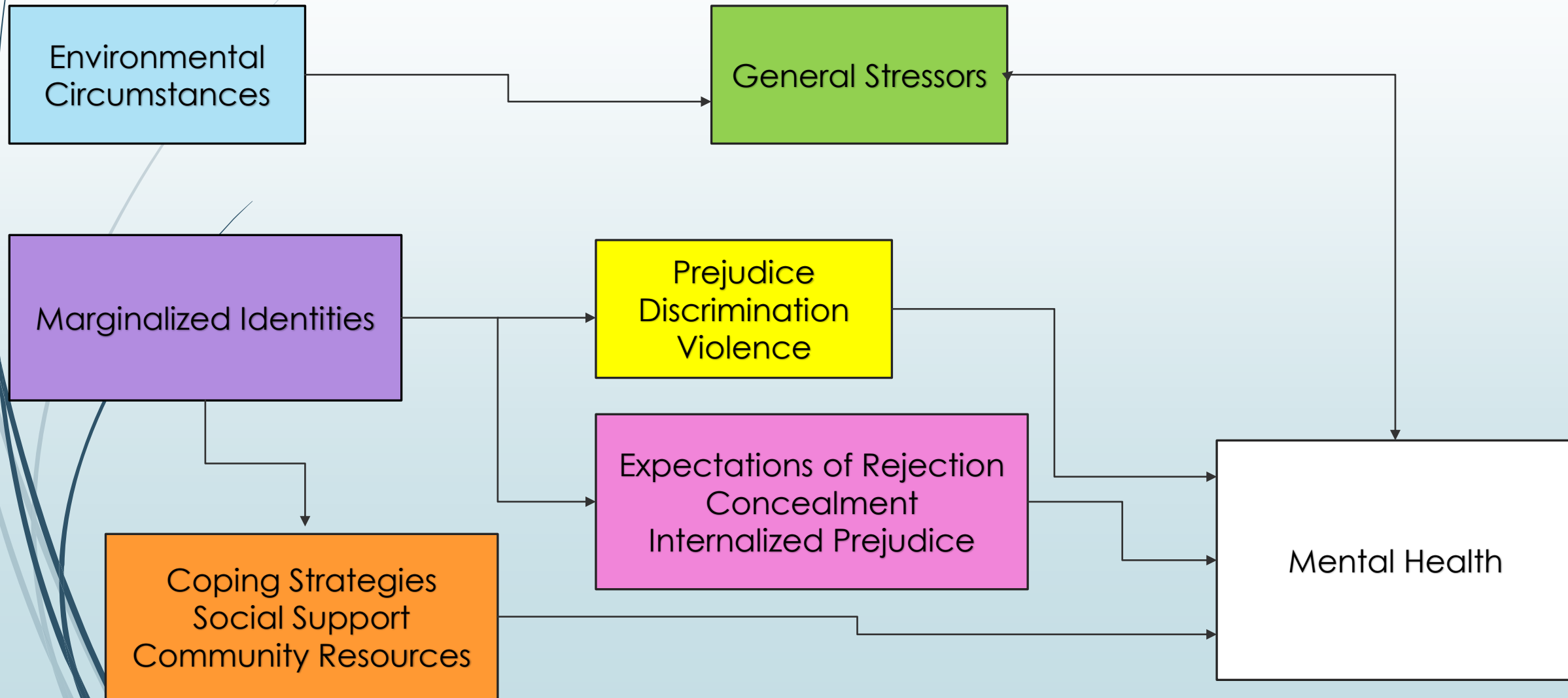
THE **TREVOR** PROJECT National Survey on LGBTQ Youth Mental Health 2020

- ▶ 61% of trans and nonbinary youth reported being prevented or discouraged from using a bathroom that corresponds with their gender identity
- ▶ Trans and nonbinary youth who reported having pronouns respected by all or most people in their lives attempted suicide at **half the rate** of those who did not have their pronouns respected
- ▶ These statistics did not include statistics on family rejection, which has been cited in prior studies to increase SI and reported suicide attempts

Minority Stress Theory

Overview of Minority Stress Theory

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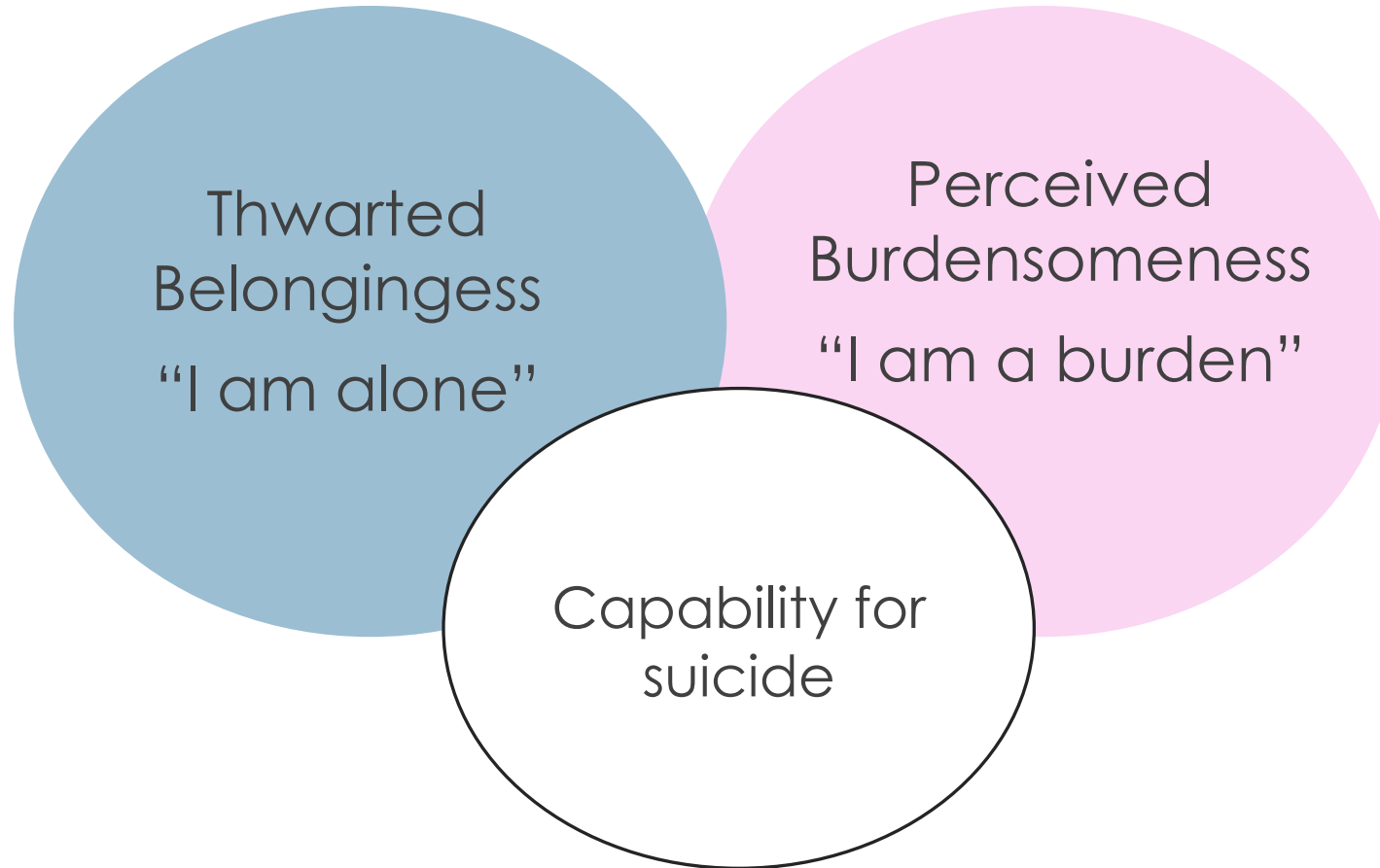


Interpersonal Psychological Theory of Suicide (IPTTS)

(Joiner, 2005)

Key Factors in IPTS

Desire for Suicide



Overall Contextual Features

- Rejection and lack of support
- Gender dysphoria
- Stigma, discrimination & violence
- Other psychological disorders
 - Drug/alcohol abuse
 - Eating disorders
 - Depression

Triggering Events

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- Recent rejection by social support
- Gender dysphoria/ misgendering
- Minority stress: stigma, discrimination and violence
- Loss of job, home
- Lack of support for transition
- Psychological Illness

(Dalzell & Protos, 2020; Joiner, 2005; Testa et al., 2017)



Resiliency Factors

- Community connectedness/sense of belonging
- Family acceptance
- Pride
- Safe person/Mentor
- Affirming validating support system

(Dalzell & Protos, 2020; Joiner, 2005; Testa et al., 2017)



Assessment Questions

- ▶ Is individual demonstrating desire to end life as evidenced by increased depression, thoughts of suicide, suicidal intent?
- ▶ Is there evidence of social isolation, lack of social connectedness, loneliness? Lack of reciprocally caring relationships? Limited social supports?
- ▶ Does the individual show a lack of effectiveness or competence? See self as flawed or as a liability/burden to important others? Psych illness?
- ▶ Is the individual experiencing marginalization/discrimination?

Assessment Questions

- ▶ What are the possible consequences of intersectional identities on emotional well-being?
- ▶ Have there been recent “painful and provocative” life events (such as trauma or family rejection)?
- ▶ Does the individual demonstrate “fearlessness about confronting pain, injury, and indeed death” (Joiner, 2005), including past suicide attempts and/or repeated, deliberate self-injury (habituation)?
- ▶ Access plan, access and means



How can providers aid prevention efforts?

A group brainstorm

Prevention

- Build on resilience factors (as discussed previously)
- Support close family relationships or “family of choice”
- Provide access to and use of LGBTQ inclusive medical and mental health care
- LGBTQ+-affirming counseling



Prevention

- ▶ Knowledge of minority stress treatment principles:
 - ▶ Normalize adverse impact of minority stress
 - ▶ Facilitate emotional awareness, regulation and acceptance
 - ▶ Empower assertive communication
 - ▶ Validate strengths of LGBT people
 - ▶ Foster supportive relationships and community
 - ▶ Affirm healthy expressions of gender and identity
- ▶ Support social and medical transition (hope)
 - ▶ Name and pronouns, gender expression
 - ▶ Puberty blockers, hormone replacement therapy (HRT), affirming surgeries



National Resources

Health centers can support their LGBTQ patients by keeping local and national resources on hand, such as the ones provided here. In addition, providers in need of additional education and training can access materials and additional learning resources from the sites mentioned below.

For LGBTQ Youth

■ **The Trevor Project:** www.thetrevorproject.org

- 24-hour, toll-free, crisis intervention phone line: 1.866.488.7386
- Online, social networking community for LGBTQ youth (13 to 24 years) and allies
- Educational programs for schools

■ **Peer Listening Line:** <http://fenwayhealth.org/care/wellness-resources/help-lines>

- Anonymous and confidential help line for accessing support from other LGBTQ youth (not specific to suicide): 800.399.PEER
- Offers LGBTQ young people a safe place to call for information, referrals, and support with coming out, locating LGBTQ groups and services, safer sex and relationships, and HIV/AIDS.

■ **It Gets Better Project:** <https://itgetsbetter.org>

- A nonprofit organization that empowers and connects LGBTQ youth through education and inspiring stories.

For Everyone

■ **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:** <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org>

- 24 hour, toll-free crisis line: 1.800.273.8255
- National network of local crisis centers that provides free and confidential emotional support to people and their families in suicidal crisis or emotional distress

Please contact us if
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Thank you!

