

2SLGBTQIA+ Mental Health

The mental health and wellbeing of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community must be supported through the creation of safe spaces at home, in schools and workplaces.



Issue Summary

2SLGBTQIA+ individuals have higher rates of mental health challenges than the general population and often struggle with depression, anxiety, trauma and self-acceptance due to ongoing discrimination.³⁶



Solution

Alberta can support the mental health of 2SLGBTQIA+ people by

- Creating overarching multiagency priorities to improve wellbeing
- Increasing access to affordable, high-quality, non-discriminatory health care services and insurance benefits
- Promoting economic security and financial stability by fostering inclusive labour practices and workplace policies
- Fostering inclusive, safe, welcoming and affirming schools for youth

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Research

2SLGBTQIA+ individuals are more likely to experience depression, anxiety, and substance abuse^{37,38} and are double the risk for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) than heterosexual people.³⁹ Further, 2SLGBTQIA+ youth are more at risk for suicide than their straight peers, with these youth five times more likely to consider suicide and seven times more likely to attempt suicide.³⁷ Certain factors that 2SLGBTQIA+ people experience can place them at a higher risk for suicide than others. These risk factors may include discrimination, lack of support, and mental illness including depression, anxiety and substance use, among others.



Alberta Examples

Brite Line is Edmonton's first mental health and wellness helpline dedicated to supporting people in Edmonton's 2SLGBTQIA+ community.⁴⁰ Created by members of the community for the community, Brite Line is a safe place to call to connect with hope, courage, support, understanding and the freedom to be who one is.

³⁶ Visions (2010). *BC's Mental Health and Addictions Journal*, 6(2). Retrieved from https://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/sites/default/files/visions_lgbt.pdf

³⁷ Centre for Suicide Prevention (2018). *Sexual minorities and suicide*. Retrieved from <https://www.suicideinfo.ca/resource/sexual-minorities-suicide-prevention/>

³⁸ Meyer, I.H. (2003). Prejudice, social stress, and mental health in lesbian, gay and bisexual populations: conceptual issues and research evidence. *Psychological Bulletin*, 129(5), 674-697. doi: <https://dx.doi.org/10.1037%2F0033-2909.129.5.674>

³⁹ Roberts A.L., Austin S.B., Corliss H.L., Vendermorris A.K., & Koenen K.C. (2010). Pervasive trauma exposure among US sexual orientation minority adults and risk of posttraumatic stress disorder. *American Journal of Public Health*, 100(12), 2433-2441. doi: <https://dx.doi.org/10.2105%2FAJPH.2009.168971>

⁴⁰ Here for you 24/7 (n.d.). *Brite Line*. Retrieved from <https://www.briteline.ca/>