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Introduction

Mental health has become an ongoing issue throughout all social groups, ethnic groups, age groups, and so forth. While some mental health disorders/diseases are very serious, some can go unnoticed. After learning that many people develop a mental illness at such a young age, I was curious to see how many LGBTQ+ youth individuals develop a mental illness. Researchers have found that LGBTQ+ youth individuals are among those who are more likely to face mental health challenges compared to their counterparts (youth.gov, nd). While there are many events that may alter the health status of a young LGBTQ+ individual, I focused my finding on their events, discrimination, disclosing their sexual orientation to family and peers, and acceptance.

Misperceptions

- LGBTQ+ individuals can be identified by certain mannerisms or physical characteristics.
- Being LGBTQ+ is "just a phase" and a choice.
- School policies and laws protect all students.
- Sex education is inclusive to all students.

Questions

The following study have designed to answer the following:

- Why are LGBTQ+ youth individuals more likely to experience a mental health disorder than their heterosexual peers in the United States?
  - Is discrimination the leading cause of mental health disorders with the LGBTQ+ youth community?
  - How does being accepted or rejected by family, peers, and society interfere with LGBTQ+ youth individuals mental health?
  - How does the "coming out process" interfere with an LGBTQ+ youth individuals mental health?
  - How can school systems educate the youth on the issues faced by the LGBTQ+ youth community and how can they be sure each student is being taught how the maintain a healthy sexual life?

Statistics

- 71% of respondents done in a study of 34,000 LGBTQ+ youth individuals reported discrimination due to either their sexual orientation or gender identity.
- In the same study mentioned above less than half of those respondents were out to an adult at school. LGBTQ+ youth individuals are also less likely to disclose their gender identity than their sexual orientation.
- LGBTQ+ youth are twice as likely to have thoughts about suicide.
- Only 14 states addressed discrimination against students based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Only two states addressed discrimination based on sexual orientation.

https://www.lgbtmap.org/equality-maps/safe_school_laws/discrimination

References

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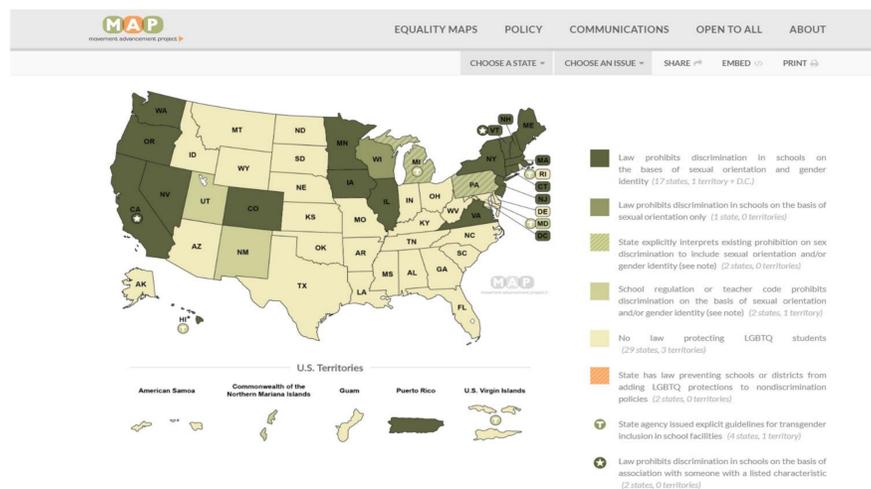
Goals

The following goals listed are what I want my audience to take away from my research:

- Become more aware that there are young people who identify as LGBTQ+.
- To educate themselves on this community and ways they can help to decrease the number of LGBTQ+ youth individuals who experience a mental health disorder.
- That many students are not learning about the different sexual orientations in school.
- Some states do not protect students from discrimination in the school setting based on their sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

Conclusion

The evidence in this research reveals that discrimination brings upon great stress to those who identify with the LGBTQ+ youth community. While there being many health disparities with this community, it is important that as a society we work together to lower the symptoms that these individuals experience as a child. This includes the educational setting being that many students are more comfortable with their peers than their parents. Although, it is also important for parents to recognize that their child need support and guidance. Finding ways to decrease or eliminate discrimination toward younger LGBTQ+ individuals, teaching them ways to help them disclose their sexual orientation, and also being sure that the parent positively accepts their child being non-heterosexual will help to decrease the number of those who experience a mental disorder.