



Mental Health Action Day

One Colorado continues to ensure the voices of the LGBTQ community, especially the most vulnerable among us, are heard. We are actively fortifying our rights and protections, moving towards the future of lived and legal equality for all LGBTQ Coloradans and their families. We have put together a toolkit to make it very easy to understand how you can take action on LGBTQ mental health during Mental Health Action Day, Mental Health Awareness Month, and every day. You can be part of the incredible work we are undertaking by taking any of the action steps below!

Take action, raise your voice.

Tell your Colorado legislators you are proud of HB22-1267 and remind them about the impact inclusive, affirming healthcare will have in our communities.

One Colorado and Envision:You partnered to run [House Bill 22-1267](#), the “Culturally Relevant Healthcare Training” Act during this year’s legislative session. HB22-1267 improves Coloradans’ access to competent, inclusive healthcare providers who are trained and able to meet their unique health needs. Thanks to hundreds of supporters like you who came to testify, emailed their legislators, attended LGBTQ Lobby Day, and donated to fund these efforts, the bill passed and is waiting to be signed into law by Governor Polis! This bill would not have been successful without the support of co-prime sponsors Reps. Alex Valdez and Andrew Boesenecker and Sens. Rhonda Fields and Joann Ginal. Make your support known and your voice heard by taking 30 seconds to [generate a message to your State Congressperson!](#)

[Research existing and upcoming mental health legislation in Colorado.](#) Learn who the bill sponsors are in the House and Senate, and find out more about ways you can connect with organizations like Envision:You and One Colorado to share your voice through testimony on bills you support during Colorado’s next legislative session. If you’re interested in testifying about your experience, send an email to info@envision-you.org or info@one-colorado.org, and we’ll put you on the list!

Exercise your voting rights.

During elections, your vote is your voice! Vote informed by engaging with candidates at open community forums and learning more about the issues that matter most to you, and support candidates who want to make a positive impact on mental health access statewide.

Voting pro-equality means we can continue to ensure our rights and protections are uncompromising. Every vote counts towards fortifying our hard-won rights and our ability to continue making progress.

[Update your voter registration and/or register to vote in Colorado](#). Or, help someone you know register to vote. If you are trans or nonbinary and voting in Colorado, [learn more](#) about gender markers and your voting rights. And if you're passionate about increasing voting participation, [volunteer with One Colorado to GOTV \(get out the vote\)](#).

Join the community, get connected.

Access the resources and groups that are created specifically for the queer community and mental health.

LGBTQ Youth Health/Mental Health Resources:

https://one-colorado.org/new/2022-national-lgbtq-health-awareness-week/#lgbtq_youth_title

- [I Matter](#) – I Matter is a public behavioral health program funded by the Colorado Department of Human Services Office of Behavioral Health. I Matter provides at least 3 free counseling sessions for every youth in Colorado.
- [Queer Asterisk](#) – Queer Asterisk Therapeutic Services provides queer-informed counseling services “with an emphasis on queer resilience and vitality.” They accept Medicaid, most private insurance providers, and offer sliding scale and full/partial scholarships. (Telehealth appointments available.)
- [YouthSeen](#) – Youth Seen offers mental health services, youth support groups, training & education, and short term case-management for youth. Youth Seen specifically works toward supporting QTBIPOC folks in Colorado.
- [Joy As Resistance](#) – Joy as Resistance provides one-on-one therapy, group sessions, and family consultation for folks ages 10-24. They also have a “Big Queer, Little Queer” mentorship program to connect youth with queer adult mentors. (Telehealth appointments available.)
- [i Am Clinic](#) – i Am Clinic serves the LGBTQ+ community and their family members, and offers individual, couples, and family counseling. They specialize in sexuality, trans identity, parents of LGBTQ+ children, anger management, anxiety/depression, and trauma therapy. (Telehealth appointments available.)
- [The True Center by Children’s Hospital Colorado](#) – In addition to gender-affirming medical care, the TRUE Center for Gender Diversity provides counseling services for gender-expansive youth in Colorado. They have a pediatric clinical

psychologist, psychiatrist, art therapist, and multiple social workers on staff.
(Telehealth appointments available.)

Get involved with gender and sexuality alliances (GSAs).

What is a GSA? GSAs are student-initiated and student-led clubs, and at times receive support from a school advisor. Since 2011, One Colorado has worked with both statewide education associations, as well as community leaders, local educators, parents, and students to create and sustain the Colorado GSA Network to support and empower LGBTQ+ young people and their allies against the bullying, harassment, homophobia, and transphobia often experienced in their schools. As a statewide GSA Network affiliate, One Colorado supports local Colorado GSA clubs with student and school resources, as well as guidance and training when appropriate and requested. [Learn more.](#)

Apply to be part of One Colorado's [GSA Leadership Council!](#) Applications open through July 11, 2022.

What is One Colorado's GSA Leadership Council? The Gender & Sexualities Alliance (GSA) Leadership Council is made up of middle school, high school and college students from across Colorado intended to facilitate the growth and development of council members as advocates for LGBTQIA2+, Gender-Expansive, QTBIPOC, and Queer youth! This is a **compensated opportunity** (*b/c youth deserve to get paid for time, effort, energy, everything!*), that will meet on a bi-weekly basis. As a council member, youth can:

- Collaborate to develop trainings, activities, and projects to support GSA's and LGBTQIA2+ youth
- Get connected to state-wide opportunities, resources and events to share with your GSA's and peer communities
- Connect with other Queer youth & form affirming community together and more!

Interested in learning more about GSAs or starting a club at your school? Check out these resources and more from [GLSEN](#):

- [Starting a GSA club](#)
- [How to find your GSA advisor](#)
- [Making your GSA inclusive](#)

Learn more, dig deeper.

Know your rights when it comes to [LGBTQ health](#) and legal issues.

The Colorado Anti-Discrimination Act provides protections to LGBTQ Coloradans in housing, employment, and places of public accommodation, including schools and healthcare facilities. The Colorado Civil Rights Division enforces the Colorado Anti-Discrimination Act and takes complaints of cases where CADA is violated. <https://ccrd.colorado.gov/>

- There is also a calendar of webinars for public to register for Public Accommodations 101, Employment discrimination 101, and/or Fair Housing 101 on this site!

The Department of Insurance has released a brief to give information on how [insurance in Colorado is required to cover some version of behavioral health care](#), and a [set of mental health resources](#) to commemorate Mental Health Awareness Month in May 2022.

Read the research around health and other disparities for the LGBTQ+ community.

Over many years, through research, social and political advocacy, and community activism, together we have made significant strides in the effort to benefit the lived and legal equality of LGBTQ Coloradans and our families, particularly as it pertains to mental and physical healthcare. *And there is still much more to do.* One Colorado's [Closing the Gap](#) report states: "LGBTQ Coloradans and their families continue to experience barriers in achieving better health – from access to affordable insurance coverage to a lack of LGBTQ-competent providers, to higher rates of behavioral health issues and instances of discrimination. Furthermore, transgender people face unique barriers to healthy, affirming lives. One Colorado continues to look specifically at transgender health and at eliminating barriers including insurance coverage and enrollment, provider education, treatment and competency. One Colorado continues to empower LGBTQ Coloradans to take an active role in and advocate for their own health. We also know that improvements to LGBTQ health happen at all levels of government and our continued efforts to work with policy makers, stakeholders, and community leaders on these issues will improve the health experiences of LGBTQ people. Creating welcoming, accepting, and inclusive environments – regardless if it's at the doctor's office or in everyday life – is the only way to truly allow LGBTQ Coloradans to live healthy and affirmed lives."

Learn more about One Colorado's health equity research, particularly how experiences of discrimination and social determinants of health impact mental health (p 25-26) – and our overall recommendations in [Closing the Gap: The Turning Point for LGBTQ Health](#) (2015).