



EMPOWERED

IMPROVING LGBTQ+ MENTAL HEALTH

Nurturing LGBTQ+ Youth Mental Health: A Path to Understanding and Support

By Liz Attaway (she/they)

LGBTQ+ youth face a myriad of challenges in today's society, and mental health is among the most pressing. During our formative years, the journey of self-discovery and acceptance can be tumultuous and impact mental health. Understanding these challenges and implementing effective support strategies is crucial in fostering the well-being of LGBTQ+ youth.

LGBTQ+ youth often encounter discrimination and stigma from both external and internal voices. Society's lingering prejudices can lead to feelings of shame, guilt, and self-doubt, exacerbating mental health conditions like anxiety and depression. Alarming, LGBTQ+ teens are significantly more likely to attempt suicide than their heterosexual peers. Studies have shown rates up to four times higher among this demographic ([The Trevor Project](#)).

Additionally, the fear of rejection from family, peers, or society at large can contribute to a sense of isolation and loneliness. The lack of representation and support within schools, healthcare systems, and other institutions can leave LGBTQ+ youth feeling unseen and invalidated. Creating inclusive policies and practices within these communities is essential to ensuring equal access and support for LGBTQ+ youth. The absence of inclusive policies in schools, limited access to affirming healthcare, and limited resources tailored to their needs can all contribute to feelings of alienation and despair ([HRC 2023 LGBTQ+ Youth Report](#)).

To effectively support LGBTQ+ youth, it's essential to create safe and inclusive environments where they feel accepted and valued. This starts with education and awareness, fostering empathy and understanding among peers, educators, healthcare providers, and family members. Training programs and workshops can help dispel myths and misconceptions, address personal biases about LGBTQ+ identities, and promote a culture of respect and acceptance. Envision:You offers programs like these for both [behavioral health providers](#) and [adults in the lives of LGBTQ+ youth](#)!



Encouraging open dialogue and providing opportunities for LGBTQ+ youth to connect with supportive peers and role models can help combat feelings of isolation. LGBTQ+ support groups, youth centers, and online communities offer spaces where they can express themselves authentically and find solidarity in shared experiences.

Envision:You's work is part of a multifaceted approach that prioritizes inclusivity, education, and support to address the mental health needs of LGBTQ+ youth. By fostering acceptance, providing access to affirming resources, and promoting resilience, we can create a more supportive and nurturing environment where LGBTQ+ youth can thrive in all aspects. It's not just about recognizing their struggles; it's about actively working to alleviate them and create a brighter, more inclusive future for all.

[Click here to see Envision:You in the news](#)



5 Simple Ways to Support the LGBTQ+ Youth in Your Life

- 1. Introduce LGBTQ+ role models:** Expose youth to LGBTQ+ adults, either in person or through media, to validate their identity and boost self-worth.
- 2. Provide resources and support:** Connect youth with affirming resources like support groups and counseling services, empowering them to navigate their identity confidently. For Denver locals, explore the Center on Colfax's Rainbow Alley program.
- 3. Create safe spaces:** Foster environments where youth can express themselves freely. Listen attentively, validate feelings, and offer support without judgment.
- 4. Be an Inclusive role model:** Stand against discrimination and advocate for LGBTQ+ rights. Challenge anti-LGBTQ comments and behaviors in your community.
- 5. Educate yourself:** Take responsibility for learning about LGBTQ+ identities and experiences. Utilize resources like [Envision:You's Q is for Questioning](#) program to better support LGBTQ+ youth in your life.



Q is for Questioning Grant Update

We're thrilled to announce exciting news! We've been awarded \$218,165 from [Caring for Denver Foundation](#) to support our Q is for Questioning workshops. This generous grant will allow us to expand and improve this vital community resource. [Q is for Questioning](#) provides foundational support and education for the adults in LGBTQ+ youth lives in Colorado, and because of Caring for Denver, we can expand our reach within Denver specifically. This also allows us to connect with additional community partners and hire more Q is for Questioning team members. Thank you, Caring for Denver Foundation, for supporting healing and recovery in our community!

Awareness to action: Free event!

Mental Health Action Day is a global movement designed to shift the focus from raising awareness about mental health issues to taking concrete actions to improve mental health and well-being. While experiencing mental health challenges is common, unfortunately stigma still exists around talking about mental health, and even asking for help. We're here to change that!

Thanks to generous grant funding from Viacom

Entertainment, Envision:You is excited to announce that we will be co-hosting a FREE event with fellow Colorado nonprofit, Colorado Artists in Recovery. Join us on May 15th from 6pm-9pm at Green Spaces (2590 Walnut St., Denver CO 80205) for this collaborative event, featuring joyful movement, a sound bath, and creative meditation.

Take action and register today for this free event [here](#). We look forward to having you.