



# **Erasing the stigma between the LGBT Community and Faith Based Communities**

**A time for Dialogue, Understanding, & Healing**

# THE CLOSET?

- Take 1 minute to write everything down that is important in your life.
- Now try to have a conversation for the next 2 minutes without mentioning anything on your list.
- Conclusions





## Terms you may hear in this presentation **GLBTQIA**

- **Gay / Lesbian** "Homosexual" : Someone who is attracted to the same gender that they identify as.
- **Bisexual** : Someone who is attracted to 2 genders.
- **Transgender** : An Umbrella term that refers to a wide range of Gender non conforming or Gender Variant individuals.
- **Queer** : Is a term that used to have a negative meaning that the community is taking back as a positive self descriptive umbrella term. Can refer to anyone outside the mainstream.
- **Intersex** : Is a variation in sex characteristics including chromosomes, gonads, or genitals that do not allow an individual to be distinctly identified as male or female.



- **Ally** : Typically any non-LGBT person who supports and stands up for the rights of LGBT people, though LGBT people can be allies, such as a lesbian who is an ally to a transgender or bi person.
- **Asexual** : Without sexual feelings or associations.
- **Cisgender** : A person who identifies as the gender they were assigned at birth.
- **Heterosexual** : A person who is attracted to the opposite gender.
- Much easier to say LGBTQ+ when referring to the community.

# THE LGBTQ+ & FAITH PARADOX



- Usually in Suicide Prevention situations we like to use Faith Based Communities as protective factors.
- But when working with LGBTQ+ individuals Faith Based Communities can have the opposite effect.
- In-fact depending on the study the risk of a suicide attempt is four to six time greater if they have a strong faith Based background and that Background is not LGBT Affirming.

# Missing voices project



- In this research project it was shown that there is a disproportionate reliance on anti LGBTQ+ religious voices commenting on LGBTQ+ people and issues in mainstream media.
- There is also an underrepresentation of religious voices from Tradition and faith communities that are supportive and embracing of the LGBTQ+ Community and Equality.



- In fact 2 out of 4 religious messages in media came from people whose religions have formal policies opposing LGBTQ+ Equality.
- Despite the fact that acceptance of LGBTQ+ people is growing across multiple Faith Traditions

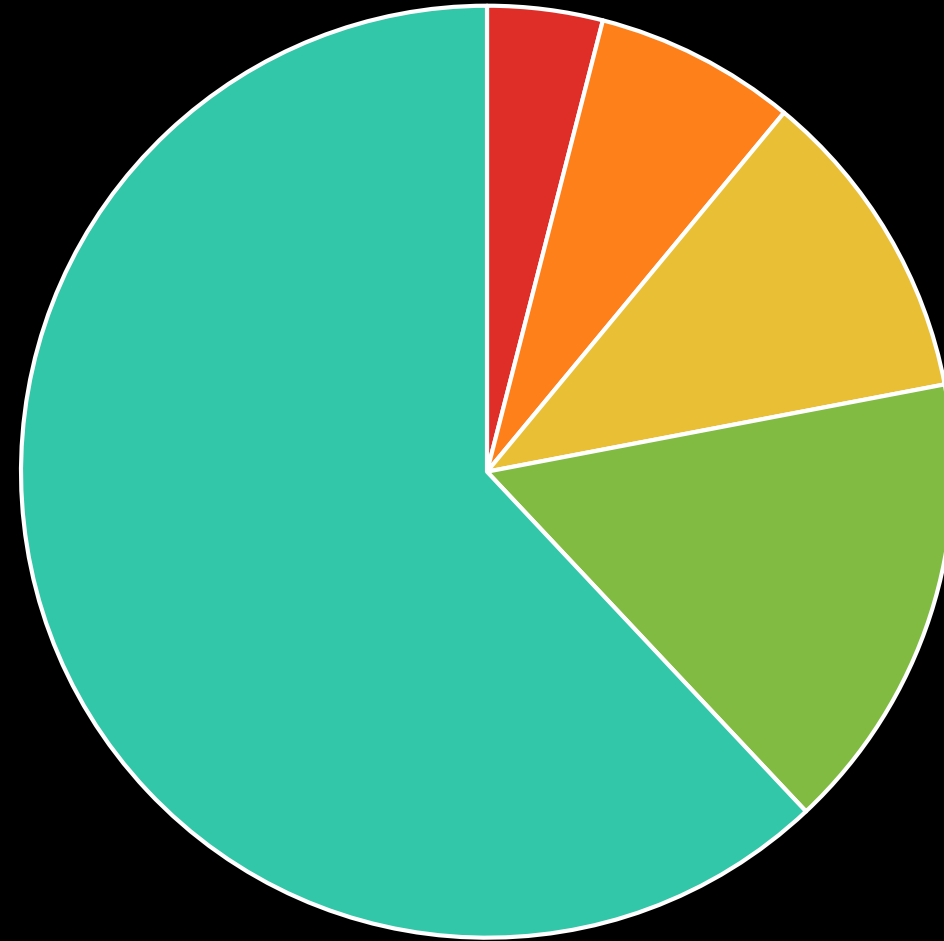
## ASSOCIATION OF RELIGIOSITY WITH SEXUAL MINORITY SUICIDE IDEATION & ATTEMPT

- In the next few slides you will see two pie charts that show the differences between the LGBTQ+ Community and Faith based communities that are not Welcoming and Affirming and that of the Hetero & Cis communities





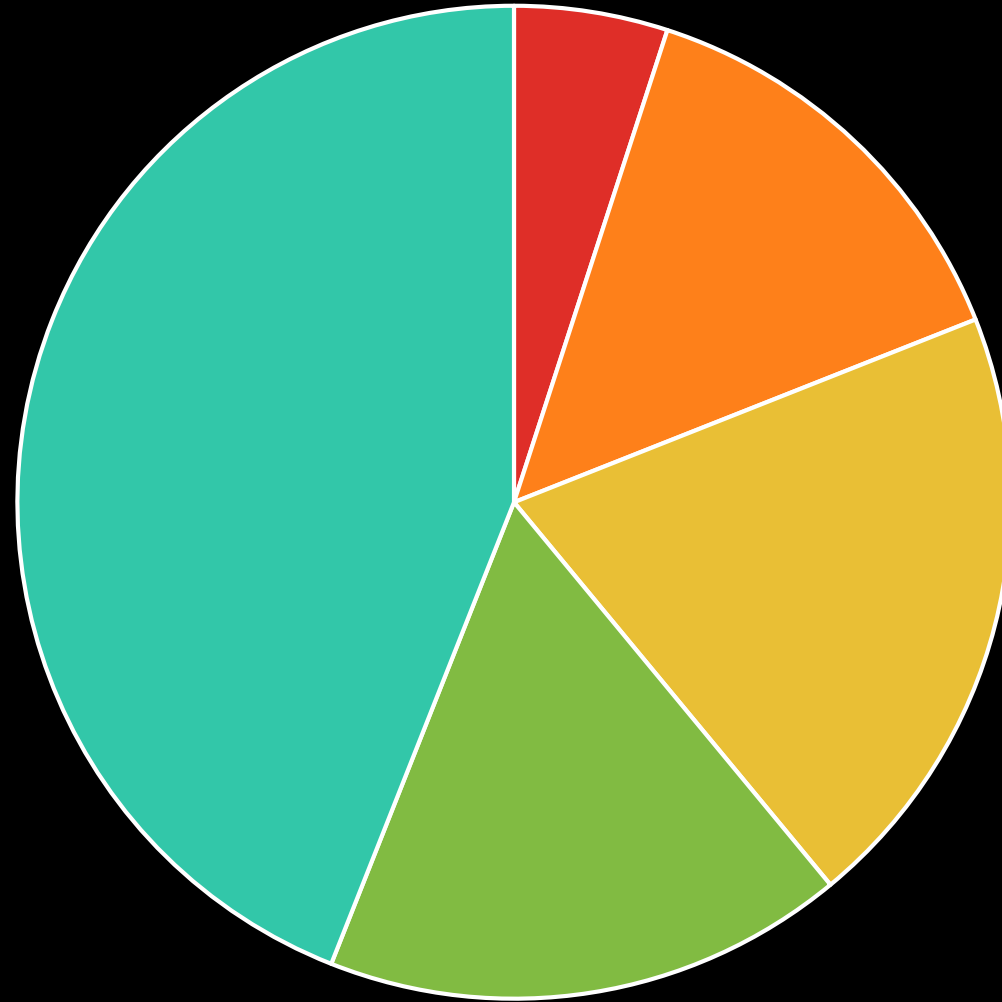
## Recent Suicidal Thoughts



■ Heterosexual ■ Homosexual ■ Bisexual ■ Questioning ■ Not Answered



Attempted within their lifetime



■ Hetrosexual ■ Homosexual ■ Bisexual ■ Questioning ■ Unanswered





- “Religious groups who stigmatize LGBT people should be aware of the potential damage they can do to an individual and families, and honestly the damage they do to themselves as an organization,” study co-author John R. Blosnich
- Amelia Markham is a queer Christian activist with [The Reformation Project](#), which works for the inclusion of LGBTQ people in the Christian church. They think Blosnich’s study demonstrates that for many queer people, non-affirming theology is at best problematic and at worst lethal — “no matter how kindly or compassionately” it is articulated.

# 2014 NY study of 388 sexual minorities adults



- Found that individuals who sought religious based treatment for mental health had Higher frequencies of attempted & completed suicides.

American Journal of Preventative Medicine

Dr. Susan De Luca PHD

# LGB Suicide Statistics

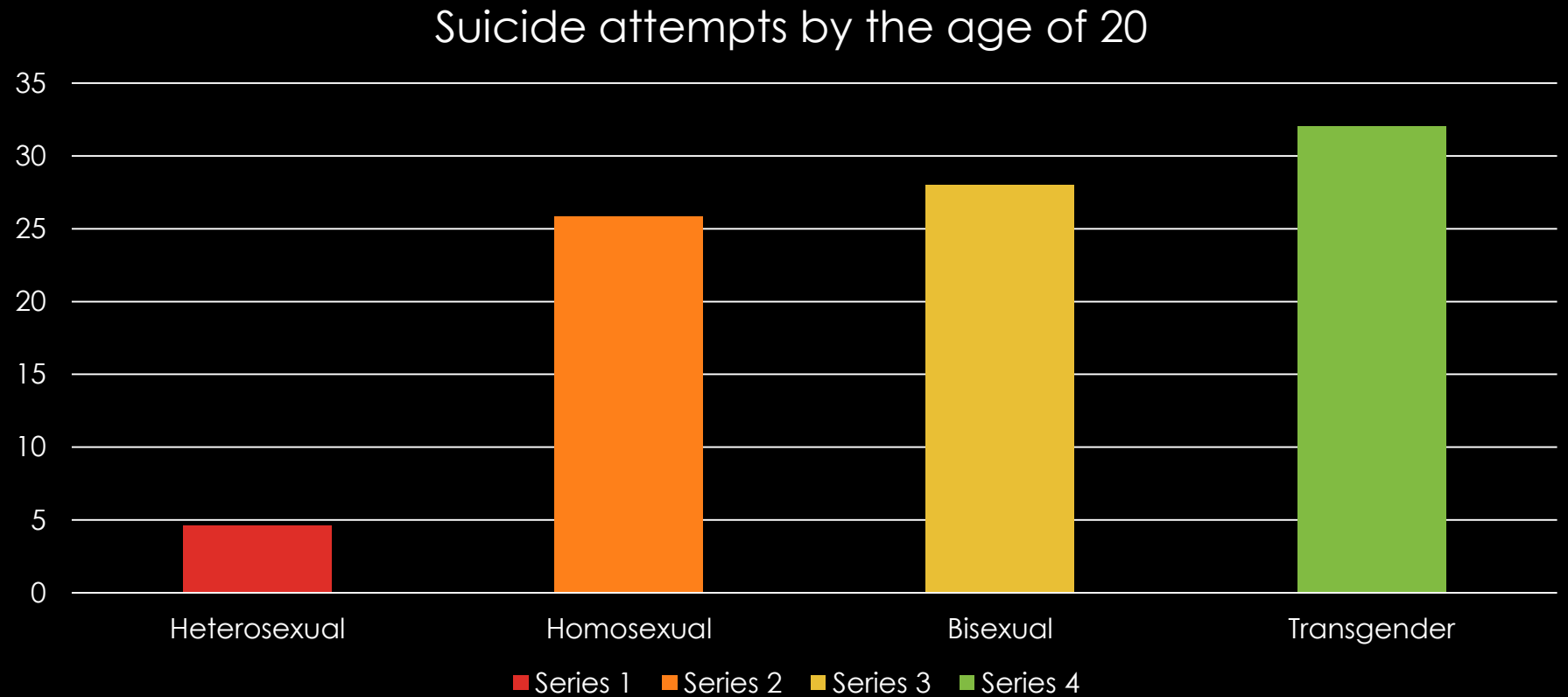
- The Suicide Prevention Resource Center estimates between 30 - 40% of LGB youth have attempted suicide.
- Suicide is the third leading cause of death among LGB youth 14 to 24.
- LGB youth are four times more likely than their heterosexual peers to attempt Suicide.





- There is not a lot of data on the transgender community.
- Only two studies include gender, gender identity and gender expression.
- The chart on the next slide represents the findings from one of the studies.

# Suicide attempts by the age of 20



# TRANSGENDER STATS



- Pre-op male to female transsexuals have a suicide rate of 31%. 50% of those are attempted before the age of 20.
- 33.2% of transgender youth have attempted suicide





**"My pain is not  
caused because  
I am gay.**

**My pain was  
caused by  
how I was  
treated  
because  
I am gay"**



*Eric James Borges*  
*Died 01.14.12. 19 years old*



- “The most devastating effects for youth in non-affirming religious environments in my opinion is an identity distortion that teaches the youth to feel valueless as a relational being.”
- When a child feels unwelcome and too damaged for relationships, we strip them of their very purpose and sense of worth.

Issac Archuleta



- When more Faith Communities affirm LGBTQ+ youth as their whole and Authentic selves it will lead to healthier adult LGBTQ+ people of faith.
- Ross Murray from The Naming Project



# PROTECTIVE FACTORS



- Only refer the person to a Welcoming and Affirming Faith Community.
- We are passing out a resource guide with a list of Welcoming and Affirming Faith Communities in Delaware County.

# Resources of LGBT Welcoming and Affirming Faith Communities

- Baptist : [www.AWAB.org](http://www.AWAB.org)
- Roman Catholic : [www.equaly-blessed.org](http://www.equaly-blessed.org)
- Lutheran : [www.reconcilingworks.org](http://www.reconcilingworks.org)
- Presbyterian : <https://mlp.org/>
- Episcopal : <http://www.integrityusa.org/>
- Disciples of Christ : <https://disciplesallianceq.org/>
- Unitarian Universalist : <https://www.uua.org/lgbtq>





- Mormon: <https://affirmation.org>
- Jewish : <http://gltjews.org/>
- Muslim : <http://www.calem.eu/>
- Buddhist : <http://www.buddhanet.net/>
- 
- Hindu : [www.chtna.org](http://www.chtna.org)
- Transfaith : <http://www.transfaithonline.org/>



## Suicide Prevention is Intersectional: We All Play a Part

Connect, Communicate,  
and Care with

THE **TREVOR** PROJECT



## Ways to Connect

1. Share facts about LGBTQ youth suicide at [thetrevorproject.org/Facts](http://thetrevorproject.org/Facts)
2. Be of service by advocating for LGBTQ issues [thetrevorproject.org/Advocacy](http://thetrevorproject.org/Advocacy)
3. Let youth-serving professionals know about Trevor's online suicide prevention education hub: [thetrevorproject.org/Lifeguard](http://thetrevorproject.org/Lifeguard)
4. Find helpful LGBTQ resources in your area at [glbtnearme.org](http://glbtnearme.org)



## Ways to Care

If you know someone  
who's feeling suicidal . . .

1. Learn the warning signs for suicide [thetrevorproject.org/Signs](http://thetrevorproject.org/Signs)
2. Share Trevor's lifesaving resources on social or order stickers and posters to raise awareness in your community: [thetrevorproject.org](http://thetrevorproject.org)
3. Volunteer with Trevor: [thetrevorproject.org/Volunteer](http://thetrevorproject.org/Volunteer)
4. Donate to Trevor at [trvr.org/Donate](http://trvr.org/Donate)



## Ways to Communicate

If you're feeling suicidal . . .

1. Call the Trevor Lifeline, available 24/7 at 866-488-7386
2. Chat at [TrevorChat.org](http://TrevorChat.org), available 3-9pm ET/12-6 pm PT 7 days a week
3. Text the word "Trevor" to 1-202-304-1200 Thurs-Fri 4-8pm ET/1-5 pm PT
4. Join a safe, supportive online international community at [TrevorSpace.org](http://TrevorSpace.org)



AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR  
Suicide Prevention

20%

**YOU ARE NOT ALONE**  
Trans Suicide Prevention  
Listen • Support • Education • Friendship • Advocacy • Love

**USA**  
**877.565.8860**

**CANADA**  
**877.330.6366**

provided by Trans Lifeline,  
and is coordinated here as  
a public service message by the  
International Inquest Court System

Local Help International

visit us @ [www.inquest.org](http://www.inquest.org)




**LGBTQ+**

# Suicide Prevention Resources

 **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**  
1-800-273-TALK (8255)  
Veterans: Press 1

 **Trans Lifeline**  
Support for transgender people,  
by transgender people  
1-877-565-8860

 **Text TALK to 741741**  
Text with a trained counselor from  
the Crisis Text Line for free, 24/7

 **SAGE LGBT Elder Hotline**  
Peer-support and local resources  
for older adults  
1-888-234-SAGE

 **The Trevor Project**  
Phone, chat, and text support  
for LGBTQ+ youth  
[thetrevorproject.org/get-help-now/](http://thetrevorproject.org/get-help-now/)

[afsp.org/lgbtq](http://afsp.org/lgbtq)



**American  
Foundation  
for Suicide  
Prevention**



# QUESTIONS



# Bibliography



- Missing Voices Project: GLAAD & University of Missouri Center on Religion.
- Association of Religiosity with sexual minority suicide ideation & attempt American Journal of Preventative Medicine  
Co-Author John R. Blosnich.
- Suicide Prevention Resource Center
- NYU Study
- Study done by the CDC on LGBT Suicide