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Image 1- Canva ND

I confirm that I have not used any AI tools in the research or creation of this assignment. I confirm that I have not presented any AI generated materials as my own work. I confirm that I have copied of my drafts, notes, and other resources I have used, which I may be asked to provide in evidence.

A Community profile on LGBTQ+ young people in Wales

Introduction

A community profile is an important aspect of youth work, as when a youth worker enters a community, they must be able to identify its risks and protective factors. Understanding these may “generate ideas for improvements to existing services or evidence a need for new ones” (Sapin, 2019, p.171). A profile on LGBTQ+ young people was chosen as the author works with this community. Understanding a community and the barriers they face means that a youth worker can help them reach “self-actualisation” (Pichère & Cadiat, 2015).

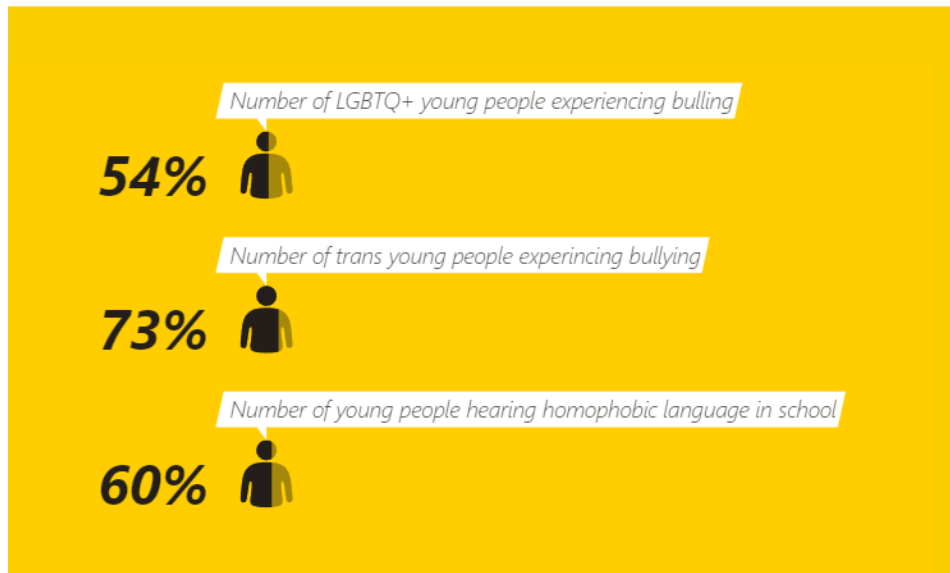


Education

Image 2- Canva ND

School can be hard for young people, with 35% of secondary school pupils reporting being bullied (Welsh Government, 2017-2018). Bullying can be counted as an adverse childhood experience (ACEs), as Reisen *et al* (2019, quoted by Nora Trompeter, UCL, 2024, p. 10) states, “Victims of bullying are more likely to report a history of ACEs compared to non-victims”. Bullying affects all young people, but for LGBTQ+ young people it can be a lot worse.

LGBTQ+ YOUNG PEOPLE AND BULLYING



Stonewall (2017) (Graph created by author)

How are schools combatting this? According to the LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales (Welsh Government, 2023) the Welsh Government will

- Provide national trans guidance for schools and local authorities.
- Support LGBTQ+ young people and tackle homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic bullying.
- Design and implement a whole school approach that is fully LGBTQ+ inclusive.
- Ensure that all colleges and universities in Wales are LGBTQ+ inclusive environments for learners, students, and staff.

(Welsh Government, 2023, section E)

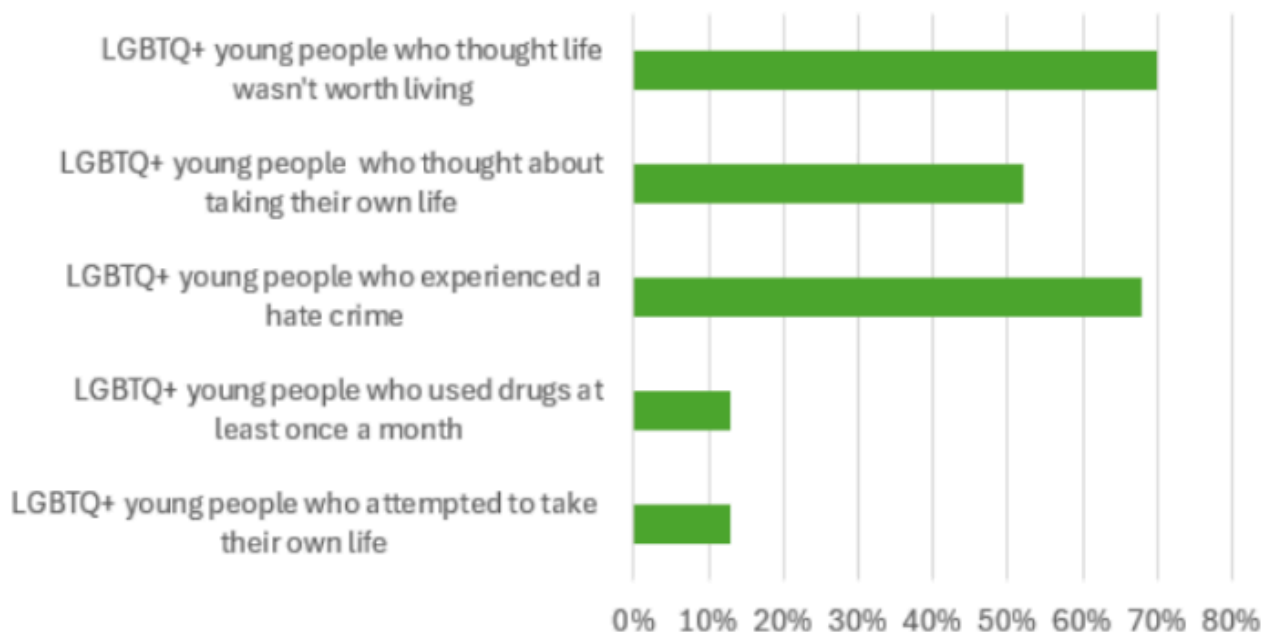
But has this been evidenced? According to the Welsh Government's progress update, they are "working with various groups to provide national trans guidance for schools and local authorities"(Welsh Government, 2023, section E) . They updated the New Curriculum for Wales, which impacted RSE (Relationship and Sexuality Education), where schools are now required to include LGBTQ+ identities. However, there is no clear evidence as to whether this is being implemented in schools or if it has reduced bullying in schools.

HEALTH + WELLBEING

Image 3- Canva ND

A person's health and wellbeing can be negatively affected by many things, for example their family. Voda (2024) states that 59.9% of trans people list "family rejection as one of their main mental health challenges." However, a person's living situation can also negatively affect their mental health as a person needs "safety and security" to reach "self actualisation" (Pichère & Cadiat, 2015). According to Llamau (2019) LGBTQ+ young people are four times more likely to become homeless than their peers. Accessing services to help with this can be more difficult for LGBTQ+ young people, with most feeling "singled out" or that they "would be judged" (Llamau, 2019). This theme continues with mental health services.

LGBTQ+ Young people (18-25) health report-2018



Stonewall (2018) (Graph created by author)

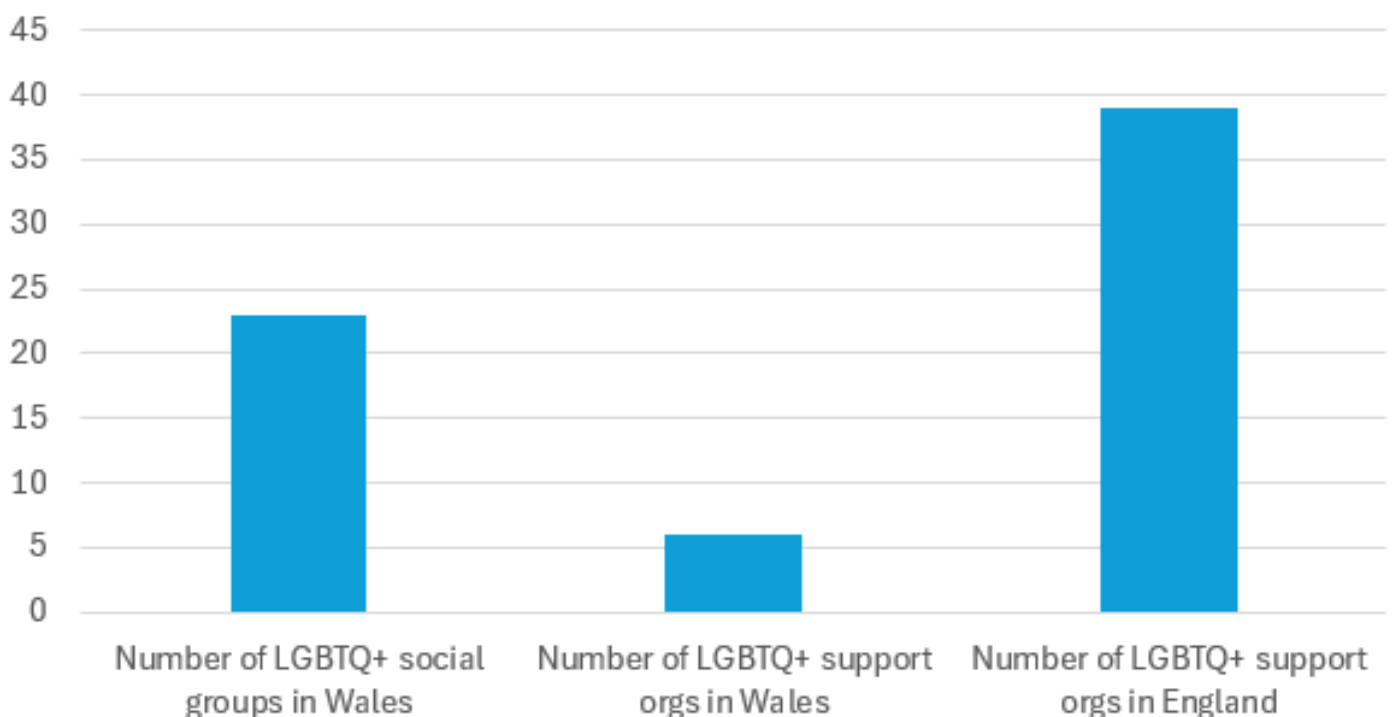
According to McDermott *et al.* (2024, p.2), longitudinal evidence demonstrates that in the UK mental health issues can “start as early as 10 years old, increasing throughout adolescence and peaking between the ages of 13 and 19.” However, it has been found that LGBTQ+ young people “underuse mental health services compared to their cis-heterosexual peers” (McDermott *et al.* 2024, p.3). Research by McDermott *et al* (2024) and Llamau (2019) shows that this is because they are afraid of discrimination or their mental health problems being blamed on the fact they are LGBTQ+.



Image 4- Canva ND

While the LGBTQ+ community may experience more setbacks, they remain strong no matter what, and support each other. For example, during the AIDS crisis, lesbian women were one of the few people willing to nurse those suffering from AIDS (Yale University, 2023). This support has continued into today's society, where those older in the community offer advice to those who are younger. But how can young people support each other? .

Access to support



(Information from Mind (2024) + Umbrella Cymru (ND), Graph created by author)

The main way to do this would be through social groups; however, the graph above shows the limited specific support available for LGBTQ+ young people in Wales.

Recommendations + Theory

Image 5- Canva ND

Policy + theory

Currently, in the UK, an indefinite ban on puberty blockers has been put in place. This ban stops transgender people under 18 from accessing possible life-saving puberty blockers, and many trans-focused charities worry that this will negatively affect their mental health (The Kite Trust, 2024; Mermaids, 2024).

The Well-being of Future Generations Act aims for "a healthier Wales" (Welsh Government, 2015), and a subgoal for Wales to be more equal. The LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales also works towards this goal, which led to the passage of a law banning all conversion practices in the UK.

The Five Pillars and National Occupational Standards for Youth Work both state that youth work should be 'inclusive'. While this also covers disabled and young people of colour, it also covers LGBTQ+ young people, and many organisations are now working to do better and educate themselves about LGBTQ+ identities and the problems young people of the community face (42ndstreet.org, ND; LGBT Youth Scotland, ND; Stonewall, ND).

Recommendations

Based on the above research, there needs to be more LGBTQ+ specific support organisations, and this does not just include mental health support, but also homelessness and housing support. More support organisations should be educated on LGBTQ+ identities and the problems they face, this may prevent LGBTQ+ young people feeling judged by non-specific organisations. Due to the fact that transgender affirming healthcare is not available to under 18's, non-specific mental health organisations need to be more accepting and aware of transgender identities. Additionally, practitioners also need to be aware that someone's identity is rarely the cause for poor mental health. While the Welsh Government's LGBTQ+

Action plan for Wales, has stated that they will train more staff on LGBTQ+ rights and barriers, there is no current evidence to whether this has been implemented.

Another recommendation is for more youth centres to run an LGBTQ+ club, as the evidence shows there are few in Wales. There are online groups available which means anxious young people can access support from social groups. Because of the limited number of social groups, young people may be accessing groups online as they are the only option available to them. Therefore, youth workers need access training to help them facilitate more LGBTQ+ youth groups to create more safe spaces.

More education about LGBTQ+ identities in schools is needed, this prevents misinformation which may prevent bullying. Schools also need to be more pro-active when it comes to discriminative language and educate young people about slurs and how harmful they can be. Whilst more inclusive sexual education is being introduced into schools with the LGBT+ Action Plan, schools need to make sure that it is being implemented by teachers in their classrooms. Teachers also may need to be educated around LGBTQ+ identities, and to be taught how to respond if a student came out to them.

Reference list

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