

# Nearly 1/3 of Young People in Out-of-Home Care Identify as LGBTQ+

**32%-34% of young people in out-of-home placements between the ages of 12-21 identify as LGBTQ+.**<sup>1, 2</sup>

Over half of young people reported their social worker either did not know they were LGBTQ+ or they were unsure if they knew.<sup>2</sup>

**WHY ?**

They didn't tell their social worker because they feared their worker's reactions or that their identity would impact their placement.<sup>2</sup>

**1 5** of LGBTQ+ foster youth were criticized for how they behaved, vs 1 in 20 non-LGBTQ+ youth.<sup>1</sup>

**LGBTQ+ youth were less likely to feel treated well by the foster care system.**<sup>1, 2, 3</sup>

LGBTQ+ foster youth are more likely to be hospitalized, and more often for mental health needs when compared to non-LGBTQ+ peers.<sup>2, 3</sup>



**LGBTQ+ young people more frequently heard that they were “hard to place.”**<sup>1</sup>

LGBTQ+ young people experience a higher number of placements in group or residential settings and are less likely to be placed with families.<sup>1, 3</sup>

**For more information on how to support LGBTQ+ young people in out-of-home care, visit [The National SOGIE Center](#).**

1. Sandfort, T. G. M. (2020). Experiences and well-being of sexual and gender diverse youth in foster care in New York City (Report). New York City Administration for Children's Services. <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/acs/pdf/about/2020/WellBeingStudyLGBTQ.pdf>

2. Matarese, M., Greeno, E., Weeks, A., Hammond, P., Smith, L. K., & Wilson, B. D. M. (2024). The Cuyahoga youth count: One county's prevalence of and experience data from LGBTQ+ youth in out-of-home placements. Journal of Public Child Welfare. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15548732.2024.2375309>

3. Wilson, B. D. M., Cooper, K., Kastanis, A., & Nezhad, S. (2014). Sexual and Gender Minority Youth in Foster care: Assessing Disproportionality and Disparities in Los Angeles. Los Angeles: The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/SGM-Youth-in-Foster-Care-Aug-2014.pdf>.