

*ISSUES IN GLBT MENTAL
HEALTH CARE*

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- *Definitions and historical data*
- *Adolescence*
- *Sexual and gender issues for youth*
- *Consequences and precipitants for GLBT-identified youth*
- *Protective Factors*

TERMINOLOGY

➤ Sexual Identity

- The biological determined gender of an individual. [Primary and secondary characteristics, hormonal levels and DNA **may** define sexual identity.]

➤ Gender Identity

- An individual's subjective experience of their own gender.

➤ Gender Role

- The behavioral manifestations of ones gender. It should be thought of as a voluntary expression of gender.

Sexuality

*A homosexual identity is not
precluded upon homosexual
behaviors*

SUICIDE

- 40% of 5000 homosexual men and women seriously considered or attempted suicide in a 1979 study by Jay and Young

Jay K, Young, A, Eds. The Gay Report: Lesbians and Gay Men Speak About Their Sexual Experiences and Lifestyles. New York, NY Simon and Schuster; 1978

- White homosexual men are 3x more likely than heterosexual men to report suicidal ideation or attempts. Black homosexual men are 12x as likely.

Bell A, Weinberg, M. Homosexualities: A Study of Diversity Among Men and Women. New York, NY Simon and Schuster; 1978

Background

Freud, in his own words:

- *“... I am... of the firm conviction that homosexuals must not be treated as sick people, for a perverse orientation is far from being a sickness. Would that not oblige us to characterize as sick many great thinkers and scholars of all times, whose perverse orientation we know for a fact and whom we admire precisely because of their mental health? Homosexual persons are not sick.”*

Freud, Sigmund, “Die Zeit” Vienna, 1903

Background

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders is published in 1952.

- In it, homosexuality is listed as one of the Sexual Deviations. The diagnosis requires further specification as to the “type of pathologic behavior, such as homosexuality, transvestism, pedophilia, fetishism and sexual sadism (including rape, sexual assault, mutilation).”

A.P.A. Position Statements

- **Discrimination Based on Gender or Sex. Orientation, 1988**
- **Homosexual Issues Concerning the Military, 1984**
- **Homosexuality & the Armed Services, 1990(<-1984)**
- **Homosexuality & the Immigration & Naturalization Service, 1991**
- **Homosexuality (discrimination internationally), 1992**
- **Same Sex Unions, 2000**
- **Adopting & Co-parenting of Children by Same-sex Couples, 2002**
- **HIV &: - Adolescents; -Infection and Pregnant Women; -Antibody Testing; Confidentiality, Disclosure, & Protection of Others; Recognition & Management of HIV-Related Neuropsychiatric Findings & Associated Impairments; 2003 (1986 & on)**

Youth

Remafedi, et al. in 1991 analyzed 68 suicide attempts by gay and bisexual youth and found:

- Mean age for attempt was 15.5 years
- 80% involved ingestion of prescription and/or nonprescription drugs and self-laceration
- The remainder: hangings, carbon monoxide poisonings, jumping, firearms, and automotive crashes



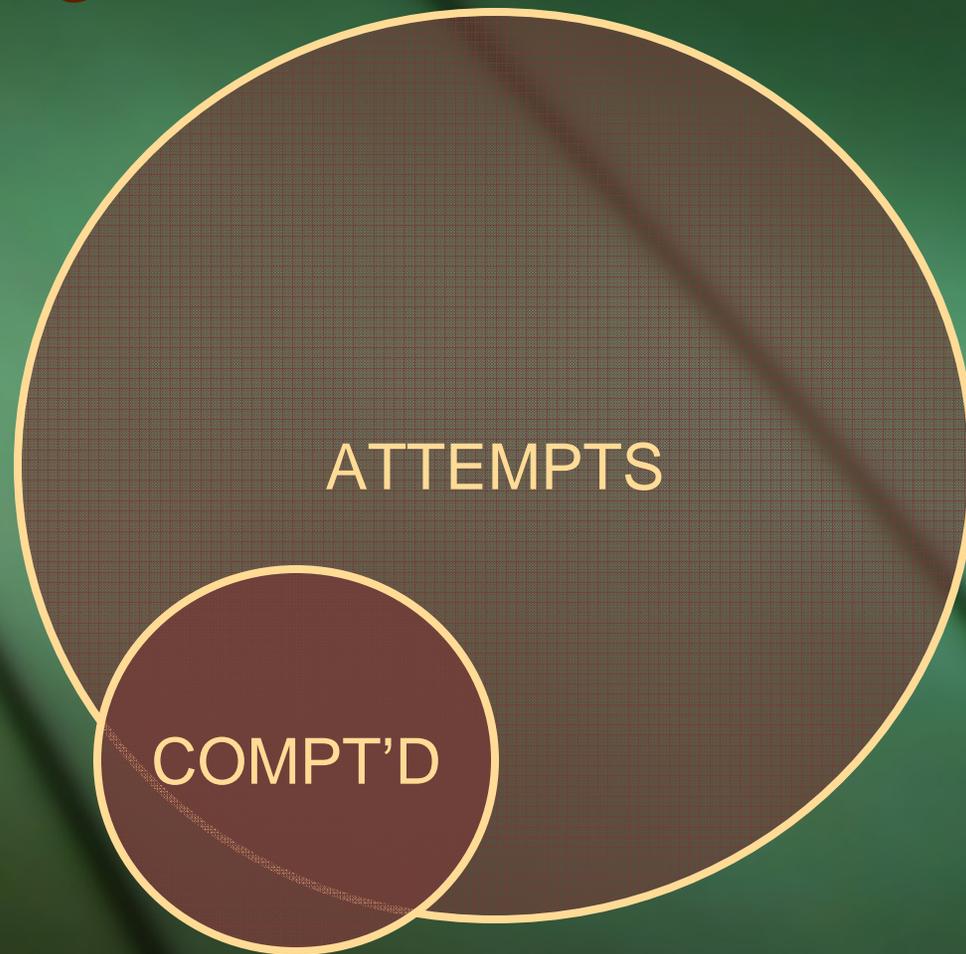


- Feminine gender role and illicit drug use were each associated with greater than a three-fold risk of attempted suicide.
- 21% of the attempts resulted in a medical or psychiatric attention
 - 3 out of 4 attempts did not receive any medical attention

Major Depression in Youth

- Adolescent rates range from 0.4%- 8.3% prevalence among all adolescents. Lifetime prevalence rates of Major Depressive Disorder as in adults, 15%-20%.
- As in adults, female to male ration is 2:1.
- 40%-70% have co-morbid disorders [anxiety, disruptive, and substance abuse d/o]
- Mean length of untreated episode: 7-9 mos.
- 20%-40% develop Bipolar Disorder w/in 5 years
 - Bipolar II maybe missed, and diagnosed as a disruptive or personality d/o

Suicidality



Adolescence

- Immense changes in emotional and cognitive functioning
 - Increasing autonomy
 - Need for privacy and confidentiality
 - Development of self-importance and invulnerability
 - Biol., sexual, psychological, and cognitive growth do not occur at the same time
- Early adolescence [ages 10-14, puberty] coincides w/ gender role intensification + routine turmoil at this stage
 - Psychological and social problems may arise w/ burgeoning homosexual identity, esp. in a hostile social environment.

Adolescence

- Youth who self-identify as gay and adolescents w/ same-sex romantic attractions have higher levels of physical victimization compared to hetero youth
- Significant rel. exists between adol. bullying by peers and suicide attempts

Friedman, M., et al Journal of Adol Med; May 2006

In the past 12 months, how many times has someone ...

- threatened or injured you with a weapon such as a gun, knife or club on school property?
- stolen or deliberately damaged your property such as your car, clothing or books on school property?

During the past 30 dys, how many dys didn't you go to school because you felt you would be unsafe at school or on your way to or from school?

- School victimization disproportionately associated w/ being LGBTQ
- Highly victimized LGBTQ youth experienced more health risk behavior such as using alcohol or drugs, having sex that was unsafe or while intoxicated, than their highly victimized heterosexual peers.

"Effects of At-School Victimization and Sexual Orientation on LGB Youth Health Risk Behavior" Bontempo, D. et al; Jour of Adolescent Health, May 2002

Suicidality

- The CDC's Youth Risk Behavior Survey [YBRS] is a self-administered questionnaire designed to measure the prevalence of morbidity and mortality among U.S. high school students

Suicidality

- GLBN were 3.4x more likely to report a suicide attempt in the past year
 - GLBN males 6.5x more likely
 - GLBN females 2.02 more likely
- Drug and alcohol use-->4x the risk of SAs in the past 12 mos.
- Substance use with sex-->3x the risk of SAs in the past 12 mos.
- Missing school b/c of safety fears --> 3x the risk of SAs in the past 12 mos.

Garofolo, R. et al; "Sexual Orientation and Risk of Suicide Attempts Among a Representative Sample of Youth,"
Arch Pediatr Adol Med; May 1999

Homelessness

- In January 2007, a study released by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force and the National Coalition for the Homeless showed that 20% of homeless youth under the age of 21 in urban areas are gay, though they may only make up 3-5% of the general population.

Homelessness

375 adolescents aged 13-21 in the Seattle area

- GLBT youths were more likely to leave as a result of physical abuse in the home
- GLBT youths experienced higher levels of both physical and sexual victimization [and by greater nos. of partners] than hetero youth since becoming homeless
- GLBT youths showed statistically significantly greater psychopath. Than hetero youth in all parameters tested
- Also showed more substance abuse and more unprotected sexual encounters

Protective Factors

Minnesota Student Survey of 21,927 sexually active youth were compared as GLB and non-GLB groups for protective factors influencing rates of SI and SAs.

- 2,255 reported some same-gender sexual experience
- Most GLB males and females reported having partnered with both genders.

Confidentiality

- Payment for treatment does not imply the purchasing of information.
- APA Model Law:
 - Pts ≥ 12 y.o. may give consent for disclosure of confidential info
 - Such info should not be disclosed to parents or others w/o the adolescent's permission
- Resistance to info sharing can be negotiated
- Parents can be reassured that info re: dangerous or self-destructive behaviors will be relayed when clinically--not legally--indicated.

Models of Provider Care

- Medical confidentiality is the foundation of primary care in working with adolescents
 - A study of 100 18-23 identified as gay, lesbian or bisexual were asked about their health care experiences between the ages of 14-18
 - 65% never received info about confidentiality, though 72% would have been more likely to discuss sexual orientation if they knew their right to medical confidentiality

- 78 never discussed their sexual orientation to their MDs
- Of the 13 that disclosed:
 - 9 were assured they were normal
 - 2 thought their provider “seemed offended”
 - 2 had the info told to their parents by the MD w/o their consent
 - only half the males were told about safer sex
 - 2 women were told they were at risk for HIV

Adolescent Health Care Experience of Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Young Adults; Allen, et al; J of Adol Health '98

Religion

- Growth of conservative religious movements [fundamentalist Christian, Church of Latter-Day Saints, Jehovah's Witness] have historically been tolerant of *apologetic* [chaste] homosexuality if not overtly hostile
- Faith can still provide a powerful structure for developing self-esteem and connection to peers
- Culturally-syntonic but non-mainstream religious practices may embrace rather than merely tolerate homosexuality



“What should we attach shame to today?”

Schizophrenia

Face-to-face interviews were conducted with 95 inpts and outpts w/ schizophrenia to determine sexual practices.

- Only 8% reported always using condoms
- 50% participated in sex exchange behavior (sex bought & sold for money, drugs, other goods). 50% of these never used condoms.
- Men were more likely to buy sex, and women more likely to sell it
- 22% reported homosexual activity in the last 6 mos. yet none identified as being homosexual

Sexual Activity and Risk of HIV Infection Among Patients With Schizophrenia; Cournos, F., et al; Am J Psych 151:2, Feb.ry 1994

Schizophrenia

Causes for persons' higher HIV risk when severe & persistently mentally ill:

- having frequent or anonymous sex, or generally manifesting hypersexuality
- tendency toward multiple sexual partners
- less frequent use of Use contraception

HIV risk reduction training typically requires challenging skills for the SPMI:

- capacity to provide a clear and accurate sexual history
- good self-esteem
- ability to refuse sexual overtures
- understanding of the cause and effect relationship between risky behavior and symptoms

Issues

On-going issues related to identity that define this population as having distinct needs

- Reparative Therapy
- Sexually repressive religious traditions
- Transgender rights
- Legal debates re: gay parenting, gay marriage, right to privacy, equal access, immigration/ asylum issues, HIV, etc.

<http://www>

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