



**WIRRAL
INTELLIGENCE
SERVICE**

**Future in Mind
Evidence Base:
Short Briefing on
LGBTQi children
and young people**

**Wirral Future in
Mind Steering
Group and Wirral
Intelligence Service**

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Future in Mind Evidence Base: Short Briefing on LGBTQi children and young people

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Introduction

[Future in Mind](#) is the government's approach to improve the emotional health and wellbeing of children and young people. It was published in 2015 and calls for action on five themes:

- Promoting resilience, prevention and early intervention.
- Improving access to effective support – a system without tiers.
- Care for the most vulnerable.
- Accountability and transparency.
- Developing the workforce.

Wirral's local approach in response to this national direction and local need is set out in our annually refreshed [Local Transformation Plan published on our Children and Young People: Mental Health webpage](#). This evidence base underpins that plan and our work and is outlined below.

Facts, figures, information (Wirral and beyond)

The following estimates have been produced for the recent updated State of Borough report for Wirral, now titled '[This is Wirral](#)' and with a far more extensive and detailed analysis of the key issues and needs affecting residents.

As part of that process a number of key data sources were collated into a Population section.

This included estimates of local population for sexuality and this information is detailed in the following section

Please also see [Wirral Intelligence Service website](#) content for [Protected Characteristics](#)

Sexuality

[Extract taken from Wirral Intelligence Service - This is Wirral: Population](#)

There most recent estimate of the size of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual (LGB) population in the UK comes from the 2017 Annual Population Survey (APS). The **table 1** below shows the results of the APS; the percentage of the population by their identified sexual identity have been extrapolated to the Wirral population (aged 16+ as the Annual Population Survey is only conducted among those aged 16+).

This is a crude way of estimating likely populations which does not consider local variation, but in the absence of more robust local data, remains the best way of estimating likely numbers of people of different sexualities in Wirral.

Table 1: Estimates of sexuality in Wirral (using Annual Population Survey 2017 data)

Sexual orientation	National %	Wirral Estimate
Heterosexual or straight	93.2%	244,950
Gay or lesbian	1.3%	3,417
Bisexual	0.7%	1,840
Lesbian, gay or bisexual	2.0%	5,256
Other	0.6%	1,577
Do not know or refuse	4.1%	10,776
Total	100%	262,822

Source: [ONS Annual Population Survey for 2017](#) and [2018 Mid-Year Estimates](#)

Notes: LGBTQ is acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning

As the **table 1** above shows, the estimates indicate that there may be around 5,250 people in Wirral who identify as LGB. Younger people were more likely than older people to report being bisexual than gay or lesbian and as estimates are also available by gender and age band, these national survey results have also been extrapolated to Wirral. See **table 2** below for breakdown.

Table 2: Estimates of sexuality in Wirral by gender and age band (using Annual Population Survey 2017 data)

Gender	Age band	% who identify as LGB (Nationally)	Total population in Wirral	Estimated LGB in Wirral
Male	16-24	3.7	15,281	565
Male	25-34	3.6	18,235	656
Male	35-49	2.2	28,152	619
Male	50-64	1.9	32,326	614
Male	65+	0.8	31,427	251
Female	16-24	4.7	14,254	670
Female	25-34	2.3	19,255	443
Female	35-49	1.6	30,465	487
Female	50-64	1.3	35,043	456
Female	65+	0.6	38,384	230
Total	Blank	Blank	262,822	4,993

Source: [ONS Annual Population Survey for 2017](#) and [2018 Mid-Year Estimates](#)

Notes: LGBTQ is acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning

As the **table 2** shows, when numbers are extrapolated to consider age, the estimated figure is slightly lower, but still around 5,000.

There is a large degree of uncertainty about the estimates above, for example, they may be an underestimate, given that the North-West has a higher proportion of LGB than any area outside London and surveys are likely to under-report LGB due to continuing levels of stigma and discrimination meaning that many people may not wish to reveal their sexuality to anybody.

Information on the transgender population is also difficult to determine. Using estimates produced by the charity [GIREs in 2009](#) (and applying them to the Wirral population), would mean around 50 people in Wirral are likely to be experiencing gender dysphoria/ trans-sexualism. The majority of these would be males (the ratio is 4:1 males to females). The GIREs research found that the average age at presentation for treatment was 42.

Background information Mental Health, Young People and LGBTQ

The following content is based on information sessions provided by NHS England exploring Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning+ (LGBTQ+) children and young people's mental health and wellbeing as attended by Future in Mind Project Manager.

Highlights from that include:

[School Report 2017](#) is Stonewall's most recent research with the Centre for Family Research at the University of Cambridge into the experiences of over 3,700 lesbian, gay, bi and trans (LGBT) pupils in Britain's schools. The study shows that while progress has been made over the last decade, many LGBT young people continue to face significant challenges in Britain's schools.

[Stonewall School Report \(2017\)](#) showed:

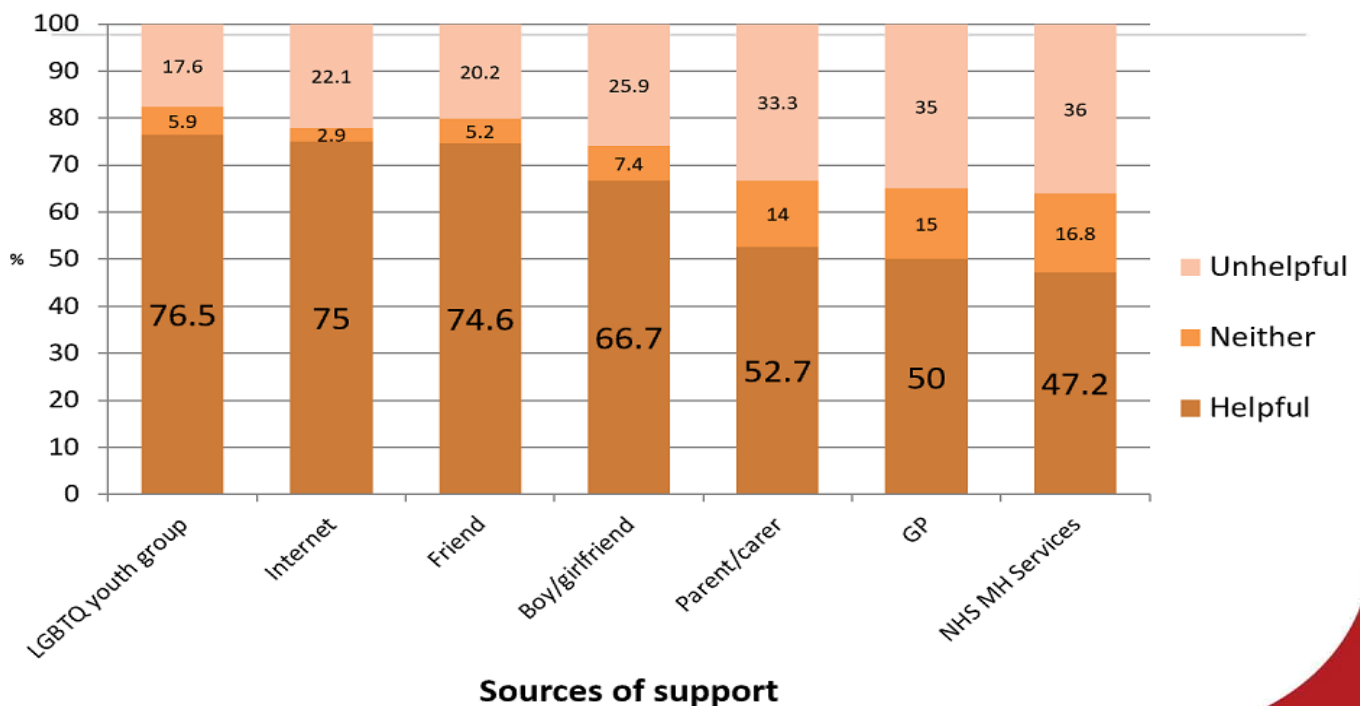
- More than 4 in 5 trans young people (84%) have deliberately harmed themselves at some point. For lesbian, gay and bi pupils who are not trans, 3 in 5 (61%) have self-harmed. This compares to NHS estimates that roughly 1 in 10 young people have deliberately harmed themselves.
- 9 in 10 trans young people (92%) have thought about taking their own life. For lesbian, gay and bi pupils who are not trans, 7 in 10 (70%) have thought about this. This is far higher than for young people in general: Young Minds estimates that one in 4 young people have had these thoughts.
- LGBT people bullied for being LGBT are more likely to have thought about taking their own life (84%) compared with those who have not been bullied (67%).

A meta-analysis ([Marshall et al, 2011](#)) showed that whereas 12% of heterosexual youth had a history suicidality, 28% of LGB youth did and that the disparity widened as the severity of the suicidality increased.

[Irish et al \(2018, in The Lancet\)](#) showed that differences in mental health were visible by the age of 10 for people who are LGBTQ.

[Lancaster University \(2018\)](#) has shown (graphic below) that young people who are LGBTQ are likely to prefer to seek support from LGBTQ organisations and online than from schools of NHS services, and to find these LGBTQ groups more useful.

How helpful was the support, advice or information?



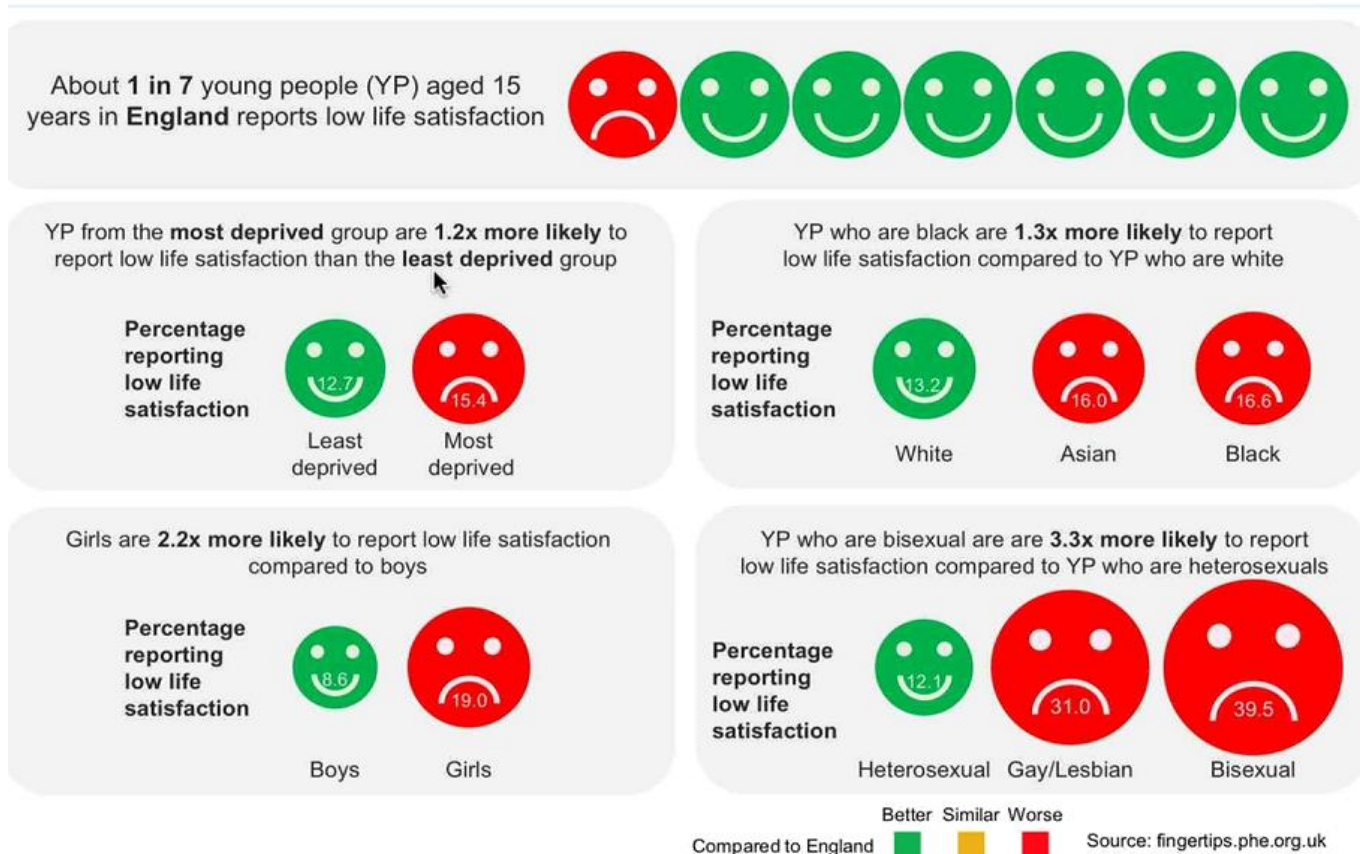
Source: [Lancaster University \(2018\)](#)

Notes: LGBTQ is acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning

The national data published on [Public Health Outcomes Framework \(Fingertips\) for data sourced in 2014/15](#) suggested that the percentage reporting low life satisfaction at age 15 for Wirral was 12.5%, which is better when compared to 13.3% in North West Region and 13.7% for England. Note of caution – this is a survey from 2014/15.

It is assumed that the information in the graphic below was sourced from the same survey, [What About YOUth \(WAY\) survey 2014/15](#), that would appear to have suggested according to the original author that young people who are bisexual are 3.3 times more likely to report low life satisfaction than heterosexual young people.

Inequalities in reporting low life satisfaction (2014/15)



Source: Original full source is [What About YOUth? Survey 2014](#) but was presented in content linked to NHS England Webinar (August 2019)

Notes:

- LGBTQi is acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning
- The statement that Young People who are bisexual are 3.3x more likely to report low life satisfaction compared to Young People who are heterosexuals was originally sourced from Public Health Outcomes Framework Indicator 91813 - Percentage reporting low life satisfaction at age 15 – that was only measured in this way for 2014/15. More details here <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/search/low%20life%20satisfaction#page/4/gid/1/pat/6/par/E1200002/ati/102/are/E0800015/iid/91813/age/44/sex/4>

Being LGBTQi can impact on mental health throughout life:

The life long impact of LGBTphobia on mental health and wellbeing

Home & EYS	Primary age 7-11	High School/College age 11-19	Work	Late age
<p>Feeling different may result in the child isolating themselves and not expressing how they feel.</p> <p>Loneliness is a significant problem that can predispose young children to immediate and long-term negative consequence.</p>	<p>Chronic loneliness can be the aftermath of early emotional neglect.</p> <p>This kind of neglect is often invisible to others.</p> <p>A child may grow up in a family where everything seems ok on the outside.</p>	<p>Isolation, loneliness, anxiety, depression, self-harm, suicide ideation</p> <p>LGBT+ young people drop out of sport and physical activity</p> <p>Eating disorders</p> <p>School refusal</p> <p>LGBT+ Children and young people are referred to CAMHS</p> <p>nearly a third of children aged 2 to 15 are overweight or obese</p> <p>Use of drugs and alcohol to cope</p> <p>£250,000 per suicide</p>	<p>Isolation, loneliness, anxiety, depression, self-harm, suicide idealization, school refusal</p> <p>increased risk of certain cancers, including being 3 times more likely to develop colon cancer</p> <p>more than 2.5 times more likely to develop high blood pressure - a risk factor for heart disease</p> <p>5 times more likely to develop type 2 diabetes</p> <p>Alcohol and drug use</p> <p>25.8 sick days per person for Stress, depression or anxiety</p> <p>Alcohol and drug use</p> <p>£250,000 per suicide</p>	<p>Chronic loneliness; earlier death and higher risks of dementia.</p>

Source: Original full source is unknown but was presented in content linked to NHS England Webinar (August 2019)

Notes: LGBTQ is acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning

What does this suggest as further action?

This short briefing should be considered by the Future in Mind Steering Group and partners to ascertain how representative is the data of local Wirral circumstances and what subsequent action could and should be taken to support LGBTQi children and young people in the area.

Contact us

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