

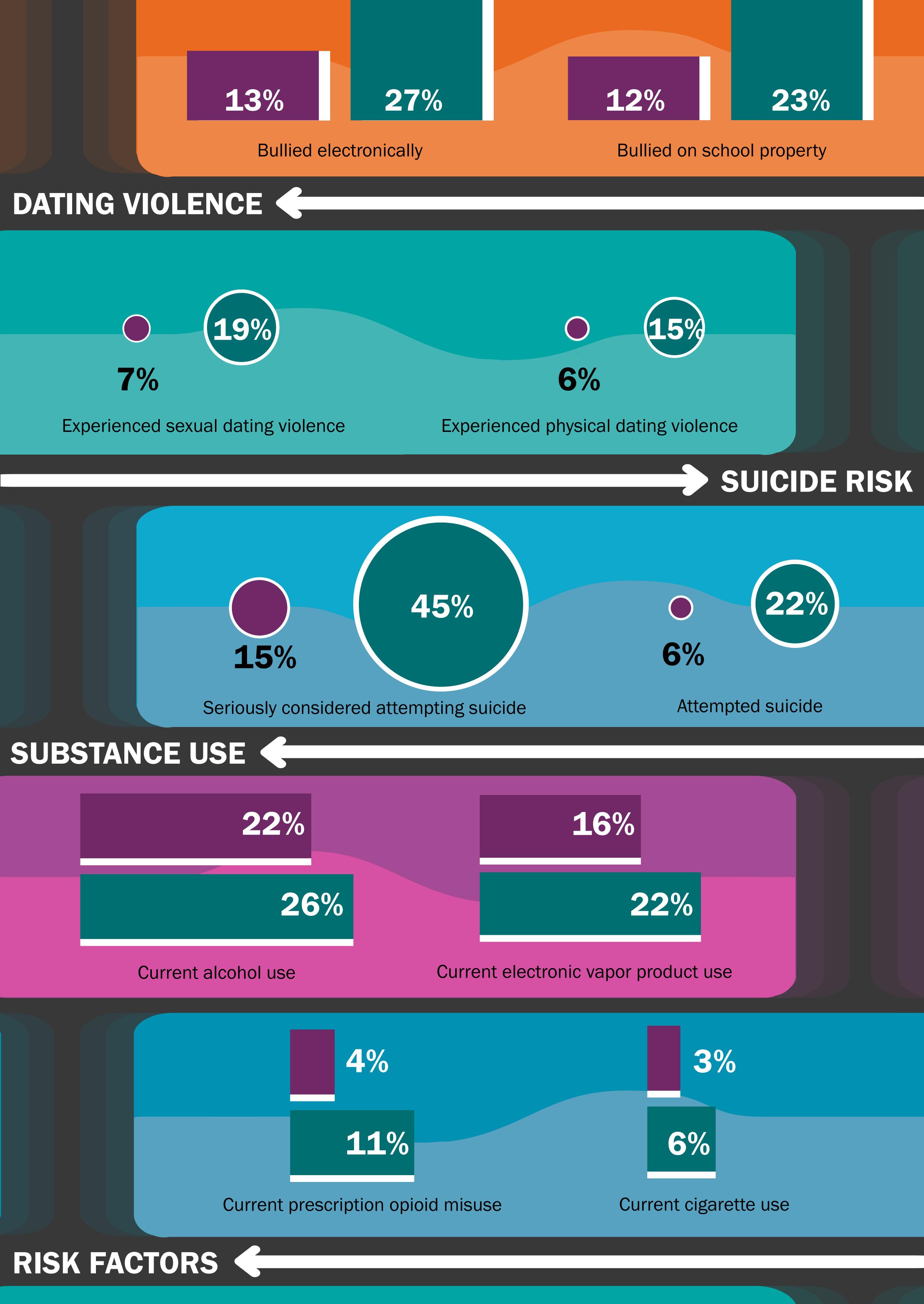
DSPARTES between LGBQ+ and Heterosexual Youth Heterosexual youth C LGBQ+ youth

BULLYING

INTRODUCTION

Youth who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, questioning, or other non-heterosexual identity (LGBQ+) are resilient¹ and diverse, representing every racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic group and are present in every community across the U.S.² They make up 24% of the high-school aged population.³

While acceptance, affirmation, and inclusion of youth with these identities has increased, significant yet preventable disparities persist. Data from the 2021 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS; a survey that is representative of 45 states)³ show that sexual minority youth have disproportionately higher rates of experiencing bullying and dating violence, risk for suicide, and substance use, compared to their heterosexual peers.



There are several risk factors that help us understand these disparities experienced by sexual minority youth, including:

- Stigma coming from peers, family, society, and even the self (internalized stigma).
- Discriminatory policies against sexual minority individuals.
- Disproportionate access to quality mental and physical health care.



It is important to focus on protective factors to prevent disparities. Recommendations include:

- Build resilience.
- Form affirming, inclusive, welcoming, and supportive communities.
- Adapt school programs to include sexual minority youth, for example anti-bullying programs and teen dating violence interventions.
- Make use of evidence-based, culturally responsive, programs that inform and train healthcare providers.

SOURCES

- ¹ Lira, A. N., & Morais, N. A. (2018). Resilience in lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) populations: An integrative literature review. Sexuality Research and Social Policy: A Journal of the NSRC, 15(3), 272–282. <u>https://doi.org/10.1007/s13178-017-0285-x</u>
- ² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2019). Health considerations for LGBTQ youth. <u>https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/disparities/health-considerations-lgbtq-</u> youth.htm
- ³ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2021 Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data. Available at: <u>www.cdc.gov/yrbs</u>. Accessed on January 23, 2024.





CSN is committed to achieving health equity for all infants, children, and adolescents, and views the health disparities that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning, or other non-heterosexual identity (LGBTQ+) youth experience in the context of social determinants of health. Root causes related to LGBTQ+ youth disparities must be identified and addressed to achieve true health equity. Structural discrimination and inequitable access to health care has put LGBTQ+ youth at greater risk of negative health outcomes. Social stigma regarding sexual and romantic preferences and identities contribute to disparities experienced by LGBTQ+ youth. These youth often experience discrimination, harassment, family rejection, and social rejection, placing them at greater risk for violence and injury.

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