



# Mental health and wellbeing support for LGBTI people

Many lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) Victorians live healthy, connected, happy and positive lives, but overall LGBTI people experience poorer physical and mental health, are more likely to have problems with alcohol and other drugs, and have a higher rate of suicide. LGBTI people are also frequently subject to discrimination and can have problems accessing healthcare that's right for them.

If you or someone you know is LGBTI and needs support, help is available ... you are not alone.

## Mental health services

A range of services is available specifically for LGBTI Victorians needing mental health support. These services (also available to family members and friends) include mental health counselling, resources and peer support activities.

Key providers of LGBTI mental health services in Victoria include:

- **drummond street services** – including **Queerspace** mental health and wellbeing services delivered by specialist queer and queer affirmative mental health practitioners, and **QHealth** - queer-affirmative drug and alcohol counselling services
- **Thorne Harbour Health** (formerly Victorian AIDS Council) Tel. **(03) 9865 6700** or **1800 134 840** – confidential, non-judgmental, counselling for members of the LGBTI community
- **Switchboard** Tel. (03) 9663 6733 – a peer based, volunteer-run support service for LGBTQI people and their friends, families and allies
- **rainbow families Victoria** – supports and promotes equality for 'rainbow' families (parents, carers and prospective parents who identify as lesbian, gay, bi, transgender, gender diverse or intersex) in Victoria.
- **The Mind Equality Centre** in Fitzroy North is a safe, healing environment that offers specialist support for sexually and gender diverse people.

Other mental health services provide help and support for all Victorians:

- **headspace** Tel. 1800 650 890 – a youth mental health foundation that helps young people aged 12–25 years who are going through a tough time
- **beyondblue** and **youthbeyondblue** (Tel. 1300 22 4636) provide free online and telephone helplines for people experiencing depression, anxiety or other mental health issues. You can talk to trained mental health professionals who can give you support and advice

- **ReachOut** is an online mental health service for young people. It provides practical support to help young people manage any issues they might face, from everyday struggles to much tougher situations
- **Kids Helpline** (Tel. 1800 55 1800) is a 24-hour telephone service that is available for young people (aged between five and 25) who need advice, counselling or just someone to talk to – no problem is too big or too small
- **Lifeline** (Tel. 13 11 14) is an anonymous and confidential 24-hour crisis support line. You can call Lifeline to discuss all types of personal difficulties, including thoughts of suicide, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Lifeline provides immediate support by phone, via online chat or face to face
- **SuicideLine** (Tel 1300 651 251) is a confidential 24-hour crisis support line available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You can call SuicideLine if you or someone you know is at risk of suicide, or if you have been affected by suicide
- **SANE Australia** (Tel. 1800 18 7263) is a national organisation helping all Australians affected by mental illness to lead a better life – through support, training and education.

## Peer support

Peer support is about giving and receiving help in a respectful environment, with people who understand what you are experiencing because they have experienced it too. Peer support for LGBTI young people is available across Victoria.

To access LGBTI peer support services for young people in Victoria contact:

- **Youth Affairs Council Victoria** Tel (03) 9267 3799
- **Minus18** – this national organisation for LGBTI youth provides peer support and mentoring to young LGBTI people wanting to make a change
- **headspace** Tel. 1800 650 890 – **Qheadspace** provides online peer support for young LGBTIQ+ people. It's hosted by young people who identify as LGBTIQ+ and have experienced a mental health difficulty
- **WayOut** Tel. 1300 026 229 – is a suicide prevention program for LGBTI young people in rural Victoria
- **GASP** Tel. 5272 6120 – GASP offers a safe space, as well as social and support groups, services and support for young LGBTI people in the Geelong region aged 12–25
- **Ygender** – is a peer-led support and advocacy organisation for trans and gender diverse young people.

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