

SECTION 2...

Results by Sexual Orientation (countywide data)

The 2003 Boulder County Youth Risk Behavior Survey included a demographic question allowing students to identify their sexual orientation. National data show that students that identify themselves as being gay, lesbian, bisexual, or questioning (GLBQ) their sexual orientation were at risk for significant health disparities when compared to their heterosexual counterparts.¹⁶ Research shows that GLBQ youth often internalize negative societal messages regarding sexual orientation. This, in turn, may influence them to use negative coping mechanisms, such as substance abuse, in an attempt to manage stigma and shame, to deny same-sex sexual feelings, or as a defense against ridicule and violence.¹⁷

Gay male adolescents are two to three times more likely than their peers to attempt suicide. Evidence suggests lesbians have higher rates of smoking, obesity, alcohol abuse, and stress than heterosexual females.¹⁸ In one nationwide survey, over 83% of GLBQ students reported verbal harassment at school, and over 39% of all GLBQ youth reported being punched, kicked, or injured with a weapon at school because of their sexual orientation.¹⁹ Another study found that GLBQ students were significantly more likely to use crack cocaine, cocaine, anabolic steroids, and inhalants than their heterosexual peers.²⁰

The issues surrounding personal, family, and social acceptance of sexual orientation can place a significant burden on mental health and personal safety.¹⁸ We have known that these risk factors are present for GLBQ youth on a national level, yet we had no reliable local data to show us whether health disparities in this population occurred in Boulder County as well. This was the impetus for collecting information on sexual orientation.

Although this report primarily documents the risk behaviors of youth within the Boulder Valley School District, these countywide data by sexual orientation are important to include. The analysis by sexual orientation utilized countywide data in order to get the most accurate picture of GLBQ youth in Boulder County. These data, which reveal disturbing disparities in health risk behaviors, are relevant for both St. Vrain Valley and Boulder Valley School Districts.

The following tables provide a view of the countywide data according to sexual orientation. For this analysis, the data are categorized as “Heterosexual” or “Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, & Not sure.” An additional response option to the question regarding sexual orientation, “None of the above,” was not included in this analysis. Those identifying as “Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, & Not sure” comprise 5.6% of our sample population, with 92.5% identifying as “Heterosexual.” Based on enrollment figures for both SVVSD and BVSD high schools, the 5.6% of the sample population who identified as “Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, & Not Sure” represents approximately 858 Boulder County high school students, or the equivalent of all of the 2003 graduating seniors at both Fairview and Skyline High Schools.

Unintentional Injury - seatbelts & drinking/driving

<i>Rarely or never wore seatbelts*</i>	<i>Rode with a driver who had been drinking alcohol†</i>	<i>Drove after drinking alcohol‡</i>
Total 5.2% (4.6-5.7)	Total 24.4% (23.3-25.4)	Total 11.7% (10.9-12.4)
Heterosexual 4.6% (4.1-5.1)	Heterosexual 23.6% (22.5-24.7)	Heterosexual 10.8% (10.0-11.6)
Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure 14.1% (10.0-18.1)	Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure 37.0% (31.5-42.4)	Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure 26.1% (21.3-31.0)

* When riding in a car driven by someone else

† One or more times during the 30 days preceding the survey

Tobacco Use - cigarettes

<i>Smoked a whole cigarette before age 13 years</i>	<i>Current cigarette use*</i>	<i>Current frequent cigarette use‡</i>
Total 14.0% (13.1-14.9)	Total 22.2% (21.1-23.2)	Total 8.9% (8.2-9.6)
Heterosexual 13.0% (12.1-13.8)	Heterosexual 20.6% (19.5-21.6)	Heterosexual 7.9% (7.2-8.6)
Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure 32.0% (26.4-37.5)	Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure 48.9% (43.2-54.6)	Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure 26.1% (21.3-31.0)

* Smoked cigarettes on 1 or more of the 30 days preceding the survey

‡ Smoked cigarettes on 20 or more of the 30 days preceding the survey

Tobacco Use - smokeless tobacco & cigars

<i>Current smokeless tobacco use*</i>	<i>Current cigar use†</i>	<i>Current tobacco use‡</i>
Total 8.2% (7.6-8.9)	Total 15.3% (14.4-16.2)	Total 30.3% (29.1-31.4)
Heterosexual 7.8% (7.1-8.5)	Heterosexual 14.8% (13.9-15.7)	Heterosexual 28.8% (27.7-30.0)
Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure 14.8% (11.2-18.4)	Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure 23.9% (19.2-28.6)	Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure 54.4% (48.8-60.1)

* Used chewing tobacco or snuff on 1 or more of the 30 days preceding the survey

† Smoked cigars on 1 or more of the 30 days preceding the survey

‡ Smoked cigarettes or cigars or used chewing tobacco on 1 or more of the 30 days preceding the survey

Alcohol Use

<i>Drank alcohol before age 13 years*</i>		<i>Current alcohol use†</i>		<i>Binge drinking‡</i>	
Total	25.6% (24.5-26.7)	Total	46.3% (45.1-47.6)	Total	31.0% (29.9-32.1)
Heterosexual	24.3% (23.2-25.5)	Heterosexual	45.3% (44.0-46.5)	Heterosexual	30.0% (28.9-31.2)
Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	46.1% (40.3-51.8)	Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	64.4% (58.8-70.0)	Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	46.6% (40.9-52.3)

* More than a few sips

† Drank at least 1 drink of alcohol on 1 or more of the 30 days preceding the survey

‡ Drank 5 or more drinks of alcohol in a row (within a couple of hours) on 1 or more of the 30 days preceding the survey

Marijuana Use

<i>Tried marijuana before age 13 years</i>		<i>Lifetime marijuana use*</i>		<i>Current marijuana use†</i>	
Total	9.4% (8.7-10.2)	Total	42.4% (41.2-43.7)	Total	23.9% (22.9-24.9)
Heterosexual	8.9% (8.2-9.7)	Heterosexual	41.2% (40.0-42.5)	Heterosexual	22.6% (21.6-23.6)
Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	18.0% (13.6-22.5)	Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	62.0% (56.5-67.5)	Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	45.3% (39.8-50.9)

* Ever used marijuana

† Used marijuana 1 or more times during the 30 days preceding the survey

Substance Use on School Property

<i>Smoked cigarettes on school property*</i>		<i>Drank alcohol on school property*</i>		<i>Used marijuana on school property*</i>	
Total	8.9% (8.2-9.6)	Total	5.9% (5.4-6.5)	Total	7.1% (6.5-7.7)
Heterosexual	7.7% (7.0-8.4)	Heterosexual	4.9% (4.4-5.4)	Heterosexual	6.3% (5.7-6.9)
Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	29.1% (24.2-34.1)	Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	22.9% (18.3-27.5)	Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	20.8% (16.5-25.1)

* One or more times during the 30 days preceding the survey

School Climate

<i>Can talk to adult at school if having a problem*</i>		<i>Felt too unsafe to go to school†</i>		<i>Feel unsafe or afraid at school‡</i>	
Total	66.3% (65.1-67.4)	Total	4.1% (3.6-4.6)	Total	1.8% (1.5-2.2)
Heterosexual	66.9% (65.7-68.1)	Heterosexual	3.0% (2.5-3.4)	Heterosexual	1.3% (1.0-1.7)
Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	55.6% (50.0-61.2)	Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	22.9% (18.0-27.8)	Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	10.1% (7.6-12.6)

* At least 1 teacher or other adult

† On 1 or more of the 30 days preceding the survey

‡ Most or all of the time

Harassment – race/ethnicity & GLB (gay, lesbian, or bisexual)

<i>Harassed*</i>		<i>Harassed because of race or ethnic origin*</i>		<i>Harassed because someone thought they were gay, lesbian, or bisexual*</i>	
Total	32.6% (31.4-33.7)	Total	7.1% (6.4-7.7)	Total	6.5% (5.9-7.2)
Heterosexual	30.9% (29.7-32.1)	Heterosexual	6.1% (5.5-6.8)	Heterosexual	4.9% (4.3-5.5)
Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	59.9% (54.3-65.6)	Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	22.4% (17.8-27.0)	Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	33.3% (27.8-38.7)

* At school (or on the way to or from school) during the 12 months preceding the survey

Harassment – religion, appearance, & unwanted sexual attention

<i>Harassed because of religious beliefs*</i>		<i>Harassed because of weight, size or physical appearance*</i>		<i>Received unwanted sexual comments or attention*</i>	
Total	6.2% (5.6-6.8)	Total	15.4% (14.4-16.3)	Total	19.2% (18.3-20.2)
Heterosexual	5.5% (4.9-6.0)	Heterosexual	14.1% (13.1-15.1)	Heterosexual	17.8% (16.8-18.8)
Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	17.9% (14.1-21.7)	Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	36.6% (31.1-42.1)	Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	43.1% (37.6-48.6)

* At school (or on the way to or from school) during the 12 months preceding the survey

Violence – weapons & physical fights

<i>Carried a weapon*</i>		<i>Carried a gun*</i>		<i>In a physical fight†</i>	
Total	13.8% (12.9-14.7)	Total	3.5% (3.0-4.0)	Total	25.3% (24.2-26.4)
Heterosexual	12.8% (11.9-13.6)	Heterosexual	3.0% (2.6-3.5)	Heterosexual	24.2% (23.1-25.3)
Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	32.1% (26.7-37.4)	Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	11.6% (7.9-15.2)	Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	44.3% (38.7-49.8)

* On 1 or more of the 30 days preceding the survey

† One or more times during the 12 months preceding the survey

Violence – weapons & physical fights on school property

<i>In a physical fight on school property*</i>		<i>Carried a weapon on school property†</i>		<i>Threatened or injured with a weapon on school property*</i>	
Total	11.9% (11.1-12.8)	Total	5.9% (5.3-6.5)	Total	5.3% (4.7-5.8)
Heterosexual	11.3% (10.4-12.1)	Heterosexual	5.0% (4.4-5.5)	Heterosexual	4.6% (4.1-5.2)
Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	23.1% (18.0-28.3)	Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	22.3% (17.6-27.0)	Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	16.0% (11.9-20.1)

* One or more times during the 12 months preceding the survey

† On 1 or more of the 30 days preceding the survey

Violence – sexual assault & dating violence

<i>Ever forced to have sexual intercourse</i>		<i>Ever touched sexually when they did not want to be touched*</i>		<i>Hurt by boyfriend/girlfriend‡</i>	
Total	6.0% (5.4-6.6)	Total	18.7% (17.7-19.7)	Total	7.2% (6.6-7.9)
Heterosexual	4.2% (3.7-4.7)	Heterosexual	16.6% (15.7-17.6)	Heterosexual	6.4% (5.8-7.0)
Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	35.1% (29.7-40.5)	Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	53.4% (47.7-59.0)	Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	20.5% (16.1-24.9)

* Other than forced sexual intercourse

‡ Hit, slapped, or physically hurt on purpose during the 12 months preceding the survey

Suicide

<i>Felt sad or hopeless*</i>		<i>Seriously considered attempting suicide†</i>		<i>Attempted suicide‡</i>	
Total	25.5% (24.4-26.6)	Total	19.5% (18.5-20.5)	Total	15.2% (14.3-16.2)
Heterosexual	24.1% (23.0-25.2)	Heterosexual	16.8% (15.9-17.8)	Heterosexual	13.5% (12.6-14.4)
Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	49.5% (43.8-55.2)	Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	63.3% (57.9-68.7)	Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	44.0% (38.3-49.7)

* Almost every day for 2 weeks or more during the 12 months preceding the survey

† One or more times during the 12 months preceding the survey

Other Drug Use - lifetime cocaine, inhalant, & ecstasy use

<i>Lifetime cocaine use*</i>		<i>Lifetime inhalant use†</i>		<i>Lifetime ecstasy use‡</i>	
Total	10.1% (9.4-10.9)	Total	10.6% (9.8-11.3)	Total	6.5% (5.9-7.1)
Heterosexual	9.0% (8.3-9.7)	Heterosexual	9.1% (8.4-9.8)	Heterosexual	5.3% (4.8-5.8)
Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	28.9% (23.9-33.8)	Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	34.4% (28.8-40.0)	Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	27.3% (22.3-32.3)

* Ever tried any form of cocaine (e.g., "powder," "crack," or "freebase")

† Ever sniffed glue or breathed the contents of aerosol spray cans or inhaled any paints or sprays to get high

‡ Ever used ecstasy

Sexual Behaviors - sexual activity & multiple partners

<i>Ever had sexual intercourse*</i>		<i>Currently sexually active*</i>		<i>Four or more sex partners during lifetime</i>	
Total	34.3% (33.2-35.4)	Total	25.2% (24.1-26.2)	Total	8.7% (8.0-9.4)
Heterosexual	32.9% (31.7-34.0)	Heterosexual	24.1% (23.0-25.1)	Heterosexual	7.4% (6.7-8.0)
Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	57.7% (51.9-63.5)	Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	43.6% (37.9-49.2)	Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	32.0% (26.8-37.2)

* One or more times during the 30 days preceding the survey

Sexual Behaviors – pregnancy, 13 or younger, & alcohol/drugs

<i>Have been pregnant or gotten someone pregnant</i>		<i>First sexual intercourse at 13 years of age or younger</i>		<i>Alcohol or drugs at last intercourse*</i>	
Total	2.4% (2.0-2.8)	Total	7.9% (7.2-8.5)	Total	23.2% (21.1-25.3)
Heterosexual	1.9% (1.6-2.3)	Heterosexual	6.7% (6.0-7.3)	Heterosexual	20.6% (18.5-22.7)
Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	11.2% (7.6-14.7)	Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	28.5% (23.5-33.5)	Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	48.2% (40.4-55.9)

* Among currently sexually active students

Body Weight

<i>At risk for becoming overweight*</i>		<i>Overweight*</i>		<i>Thought they were overweight</i>	
Total	9.5% (8.8-10.2)	Total	6.6% (5.9-7.2)	Total	25.6% (24.5-26.7)
Heterosexual	9.2% (8.5-9.9)	Heterosexual	6.3% (5.6-6.9)	Heterosexual	23.9% (22.8-25.0)
Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	14.5% (10.7-18.4)	Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	11.8% (8.1-15.4)	Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	53.0% (47.4-58.5)

* Based on body mass index reference data from the National Center for Health Statistics

Nutrition and Physical Activity

<i>Ate 5+ servings of fruits and vegetables per day*</i>		<i>Played on one or more sports teams †</i>		<i>Watched TV 2 or less hours/day ‡</i>	
Total	21.2% (20.2-22.3)	Total	62.4% (61.2-63.5)	Total	72.9% (71.9-74.0)
Heterosexual	20.9% (19.8-22.0)	Heterosexual	63.5% (62.3-64.7)	Heterosexual	73.2% (72.1-74.3)
Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	26.5% (21.6-31.5)	Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	43.9% (38.5-49.4)	Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual, and Not Sure	68.4% (63.2-73.6)

* During the 7 days preceding the survey

† During the 12 months preceding the survey, including those run by school or community groups

‡ During an average school day

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