



**Research into the needs of young people in Northern Ireland  
who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender (LGBT)**



**YouthNet  
The Warehouse  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
7 James Street South  
Belfast  
BT2 8DN**

**Tel: 028 9033 1880**

**Email: [info@youthnet.co.uk](mailto:info@youthnet.co.uk)**

**[www.youthnetni.org.uk](http://www.youthnetni.org.uk)**

**Research Document December 2003**

**Commissioned by**



**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

**AN ROINN OIDEACHAIS  
MÄNNYSTRIE O LEAR**

## **The needs of young people in Northern Ireland who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender (LGBT)**

This research has been commissioned by the Department of Education as part of their statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998).

Analysis of the Census 2001 indicates that between 2 and 10% of the population may be lesbian, gay or bisexual. This would indicate that there are between 12,190 and 60,953 LGB people under 25 years in Northern Ireland.

The publication of the data provides an insight into the experiences of young people in Northern Ireland who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender as well as highlighting the support needs for organisations in responding to issues of sexual orientation/transgenderism.

It is hoped that this research will promote open discussion and debate within the formal and non-formal education sectors, helping to inform and influence the development of future policies in relation to young people who identify as LGBT.

The research was authored by Fidelma Carolan and Sharon Redmond of YouthNet (The Voluntary Youth Network for NI) and supported by a steering group comprised of the following representatives:

- Rhoda Cassidy YouthAction NI
- Sean Morrin Foyle Friend
- Seamus Keeley Foyle Friend
- Paul Hindley Rainbow Project
- David Hiles Rainbow Project
- Amanda Stephens Young Citizens in Action

Also supporting the research were:

- Terry Sargent – Gay Lesbian Youth Northern Ireland; and
- Keith Kerrigan who carried out statistical analysis
- Dr Katrina McLaughlin who provided editorial support
- Dr Tony Morgan, University of Ulster who provided guidance

**A SUMMARY OF THIS REPORT IS ALSO AVAILABLE.**

The full report and the summary report can be downloaded at [www.youthnetni.org.uk](http://www.youthnetni.org.uk)

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>Chapter One – Introduction</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Chapter Two – Methodology</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Chapter Three – Questionnaire Results</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Chapter Four – Context and Commentary</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>Chapter Five – Institutional Response</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>Chapter Six – Recommendations</b>	<b>107</b>
<b>References</b>	<b>111</b>
<b>Appendices</b>	<b>117</b>
I Questionnaire distributed to young people	
II Questionnaire distributed to organisations working with young people	
III Questionnaire distributed to public sector organisations	
IV Promotion list for young person’s questionnaire	
V List of organisations working with young people who responded	
VI List of public sector organisations who responded	
VII Contact Details for Organisations Working On LGBT Issues	
VIII Online Resources on Issues of Sexuality and Homophobia	

<b>Tables</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>Young Person's Questionnaire</b>	
3.1.1 Age of Respondents	18
3.1.2 Gender of Respondents	18
3.1.3 Sexual Orientation of Respondents	19
3.1.4 Number and percentage of respondents who identified as transgender or transsexual	20
3.1.5 Number and percentage of respondents registered disabled	20
3.1.6 Number and percentage of respondents who identify themselves as being a member of an ethnic minority	21
3.1.7 Religious Background of Respondents	21
3.1.8 Number and percentage of responses from respondents living in urban or rural areas.	22
3.1.9 Occupational Status of respondents	23
3.1.10 Number and percentage responses from young people in relation to who they were out to.	24
3.1.11 Age of respondents when they came out to someone else	26
3.1.12 Age of respondents when they realised they were lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered.	26
3.1.13 Number and percentage of responses of respondents in relation to who they told when they first came out.	27
3.1.14 Number and percentage of responses of respondents in relation to who they felt they could not tell when they first came out.	29
3.1.15 Number and percentage of responses of respondents in relation to where/who they got their support from.	30
3.1.16 Number and percentage of responses of respondents in relation to negative life experiences.	31
3.1.17 Number and percentage of negative occurrences experienced while at school.	35
3.1.18 Number and percentage of respondents who attend a gay bar/pub	37
3.2.1 Number and percentage of respondents who are or were members of a youth organisation	38
3.2.2 Type of youth organisation respondents are or were involved in.	38
3.2.3 Number and percentage of respondents who experienced a positive attitude towards sexual orientation within a youth organisation	39
3.2.4 Number and Percentage of respondents who have sought or experienced support around sexual orientation as a member of a youth organisation	40
3.2.5 Number and percentage of respondents who believed that youth organisations/groups should deal with the needs of young people who identify as LGBT	41
3.2.6 Number and percentage of respondents who believe that youth projects specifically designed for young people who identify as LGBT could meet some of their needs	41
3.2.7 Number and percentage of respondents who would be interested in getting involved with a youth group for LGBT people	43

## Youth Organisations Questionnaire

3.3.1	Which of the following best describes your organisation?	44
3.3.2	Would you describe your organisation as..?	45
3.3.3	Number and percentage of organisations that have an Equal Opportunity Policy	48
3.3.4	Number and Percentage of organisations that have an Anti-Bullying Policy	48
3.3.5	Number and Percentage of Organisations that have an Anti-Harassment Policy	49
3.3.6	Number and Percentage of organisations that have a Volunteers Policy	50
3.3.7	Number and Percentage of Organisations that have a Grievance/Complaints Procedure	50
3.3.8	Number and Percentage of Organisations that provide training for Staff/volunteers	51
3.3.9	Number and Percentage of organisations that would like to receive training for staff/volunteers to engage more effectively with young people who identify themselves as LGBT	52
3.3.10	Number and Percentage of organisations that provide any general resources to support staff/volunteers working with young people who identify themselves as LGBT	52
3.3.11	Number and Percentage of organisations that provide general resources to support young people who identify themselves as LGBT	53
3.3.12	Number and percentage of organisations that have publicity aimed at encouraging young people who identify themselves as LGBT to use their services	53
3.3.13	Number and percentage of organisations that have formal links with LGBT organisations	54
3.3.14	Number and percentage of organisations that make provision specifically for young LGBT people	54
3.3.15	Number and Percentage of organisations that would like to make provision specifically for young people who identify themselves as LGBT.	55
3.3.16	Number and Percentage of organisations that have any monitoring and evaluation systems for young people who identify themselves as LGBT.	55

## Chapter One: Introduction

*“Give a sense of belonging and show us that in this day and age who we are and what sexual preference we have does not make us any less human, we are all the same with the same rights”*

### **(what one young LGBT person wants from youth organisations)**

The aim of this research is to identify the needs of young people in Northern Ireland who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender (LGBT) focusing particularly on youth provision and the education sector. This research examines the experience of young people as participants within the youth sector and as beneficiaries of formal education. It also highlights the role and responsibility of these sectors to protect, nurture and develop young people in their care. The research is one of a series of reports commissioned by the Department of Education to inform their policy analysis and development in relation to those designated by Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998). This act requires public authorities to consult with those who are impacted by their policies, however people who identify as LGBT have been ‘invisible’ in Northern Ireland. They cannot be easily recognised by skin colour, gender, declared religious or political affiliation, visible disability or the presence of dependents and often have not been considered in a policy environment which assumes the constituents are heterosexual.

#### *The Position of People In Society Who Identify As LGBT*

A number of studies have attempted to quantify the number of people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender. The most noted was Kinsey’s study in the 1940’s, he put forward the much disputed figure of 10%, which came from an average of 13% of men who considered themselves either “more or less exclusively homosexual” or “exclusively homosexual”, and 7% of women who put themselves into comparable categories in a similar study some years later (Kinsey et al, 1948; Kinsey et al, 1953). Laumann et al (1994) conducted a study, which concluded a figure of 2.8% for men and 1.4% for women, a British survey estimated 2% – 6% of young people are

likely to be lesbian or gay (Johnson et al, 1994), while a French study arrived at a figure of 1.1% for men (Spira et al, 1993). These percentages are those who identified as predominantly or exclusively homosexual, all of the studies found that those figures tripled with regard to those “who ever had a homosexual experience”. In a survey of young people in Northern Ireland 10.9% of men and 3.6% of women reported sex with same sex partners on at least one occasion (Schubotz et al, 2002). Based on the 2001 Census population data of 5 – 25 year olds taking the 2 - 10% possibility, this means that between 12,190 and 60,953 young people in Northern Ireland may identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual.

Regardless of the fact that so many people may identify as LGBT, it is surprising that heterosexism is very much prevalent in our society. Heterosexism can be defined as “the belief and practice that heterosexuality is the only natural form of sexuality” (Cooper, 1994). Furthermore, not only can this discrimination occur at an individual level, but at the institutional and societal level also. Cultural heterosexism can be seen to be expressed through the major institutions for example, religion, law or the media, and leads to the denial of equal rights, stigmatisation, and hostility (Herek, 1992). According to Feenan (2001) laws, policies and practice in Northern Ireland discriminate extensively against lesbian, gay and bisexual people. Moreover, this discrimination pervades most areas of law, policy and practice, including: criminal law, employment, education, health care, housing, immigration, and the taxation and social security systems. For instance, when the legal position of gay and lesbian people is examined in comparison to that of a heterosexual the impact of cultural heterosexism is highly evident. Such discrimination is entrenched in the nature and effect of laws and impacts on everyone.

An example of this is where the age of consent for sex between two men has been brought into line with that for the heterosexuals – 17 years in Northern Ireland, 16 in the rest of the UK, However, there is no age of consent legislation for women who have sex with women, and as such renders them as invisible. Additionally, two “fathers” or two “mothers” cannot be registered on a birth certificate of a child (nor jointly adopt a child) and as they are

unable to marry their partners. Lesbian, gay or bisexual people who are not the biological parent are excluded from having joint parental rights, unless a specific agreement is made. If one dies, or the couple separate, the non-biological parent can be excluded completely from the parenting role.

There is no provision in Northern Irish (or English) law, which explicitly recognises same-sex partnerships. However, a consultation paper has recently been published by government on civil partnerships in England and Wales, and a similar consultation is scheduled for Northern Ireland, which may result in positive change for same sex couples. Currently the common law proposition on marriage is enshrined in the Matrimonial Causes (Northern Ireland) Order 1978, Article 13(1)(e) of which provides that a marriage shall be void if the parties are not respectively male and female. Moreover, the law around relationship breakdowns in Northern Ireland exclusively applies to married couples; it follows that lesbian, gay or bisexual people, like heterosexual co-habitees remain unprotected and vulnerable when their relationships breakdown. It is in relation to the rules of intestacy that same-sex partners suffer significant detriments. Where no will is made by a same-sex partner, the Administration of Estates Act (Northern Ireland) 1955, as amended by the Succession (Northern Ireland) Order 1996, distributes her/his estate according to well-established rules. If the deceased has a spouse and/or children, the estate will be distributed amongst them. There is no provision for same sex partners to be treated even as a co-habitee.

Gender Reassignment was added into the Sex Discrimination Act (1995) with the 'Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations' (Northern Ireland) 1999 – this made it illegal to discriminate against someone on the basis of gender reassignment in terms of employment and vocational training, provision of goods, facilities or services. However religious organisations are exempt. In July 2002 at the European Court of Human Rights Christine Goodwin took the UK government to court about the lack of legal recognition of her post-operative sex and about the legal status of transsexuals in the UK, with particular reference to her treatment to employment, social security, pensions and her inability to marry. The court upheld her complaint. The UK



government has recently reconvened the Interdepartmental Working Group on Transsexual People in the light of this ruling and is due to make recommendations to Ministers in 2003. Alongside this is the Gender Recognition Bill, which is due to be debated in Parliament in early 2004.

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity – between persons of different religious beliefs, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation; between men and women generally; between persons with a disability and persons without; and between persons with dependents and persons without.

Additionally, a public authority is also required to have due regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of a different religious belief, political opinion or racial group. Sexual orientation is generally defined within this designated category as heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, lesbian or gay man. This is for guidance purposes and is not an exclusive definition. In addition within the 'gender' designation the terms 'transgender' and 'transsexual' are specified.

Certainly this is the first time in the UK where legislation affords protection to people on the grounds specifically of sexual orientation, however as it is only in the process of being implemented it has not yet been tested. Moreover, it only applies only to designated public sector bodies, for example, Education and Library Boards, Universities and Colleges of Further Education, Health Trusts and Local Councils.

While this covers a huge number of organisations which affects the lives of people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender, it does not apply to other substantial areas such as the private sector, the voluntary and community sector, primary and post primary schools and G.P.s.

In addition to the legal system, the resistance of the churches in Northern Ireland to treat sexual orientation in a healthy, respectful and positive way has been well documented (Feenan, Fitzpatrick, Maxwell and O'Hare, 2001). Moreover, the ethos of religion in Northern Ireland is clearly apparent in much of cultural, social, educational and legal doctrine, which in turn impacts on society. As a result, society's perception of the 'norm' is clearly evident and any deviation from this is automatically regarded as 'abnormal' or 'not right'. This is illustrated by findings of a survey of almost 1100 young people from 14 – 25 years in Northern Ireland. Almost 50% of the participants stated that sex between men is always or mostly wrong, whilst one third believed the same of sex between women (Schutobz, 2002).

Additionally, as Feenan et al (2001) argue the influence of the churches over education in Northern Ireland is significant. Of the four types of State-funded schools (controlled, voluntary maintained, voluntary grammar and grant-maintained) only controlled schools do not have to have a particular religious denominational ethos. In practice, mainly Protestant children attend them. Voluntary maintained and voluntary grammar schools may have denominational status, and are in large part controlled by the Catholic Church. The only State-funded schools oriented towards non-denominational admissions are grant-aided integrated schools. There are just over twenty independent schools in Northern Ireland, which do not receive State funding and are subject to less educational regulation. Thus, the role of churches in schools is therefore significant across education.

According to Sprecher and McKinney (1993) homophobia has been identified as negative and/or fearful attitudes about homosexuals or homosexuality. However, Herek & Berrill (1992) question the suitability of the term homophobia, which was first used in early 1970s. Whilst this fear is often described as irrational, Herek & Berrill (1992) argue that the term is problematic because it implies that heterosexuals, deemed to be homophobic would usually display the physiological reactions normally associated with a phobia, or that homophobia is a clinical response rather than merely a social

or cultural reaction. However, homophobia seems to be less associated with physiological reactions and more to do with ignorance and stereotyping.

These reactions can have quite dangerous consequences for gay and lesbian people in terms of being the victim of acts of violence, at it's most extreme, physical violence results in death. Plummer (2001) highlights research conducted by Tomsen which reveals that at least for the past 20 years, homophobia has been a significant factor in one quarter of all the stranger murders in New South Wales (Tomsen, 1997). Studies elsewhere indicate that homophobic harassment and assault is common and homicides are typically very brutal and involve much more violence that is required simply to kill the victim (Berrill, 1992; Herek & Berrill, 1992). Additionally, Millers & Humphreys (1980) investigated the murders of gay men in the US and found stabbing to be the cause of death in 54% of cases with gay victims compared to only 18% of murders nationally, with overkill and excessive mutilation common to these murders of gay men. This is supported in some countries by a legal claim of homosexual panic defense or Portsmouth defense where in the case of murder the accused claims that the victim made a homosexual advance that caused him to lose control and attack the victim. This has been used successfully to gain reduced sentences or even acquittal in the UK, US, Canada and Australia.

Both Section 75 and the development of a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland have recognised that inequality exists and this report is intended to add to other research recently carried out by Feenan et al (2002), Quiery (2002), Jarman & Tennant (2003) and Loudes (2003) to contribute to a more equitable and inclusive society irrespective of sexual orientation.

## Chapter Two: Methodology

Following discussions with a number of organisations YouthNet circulated the research proposal to its membership inviting organisations to get involved in a research steering group. From this invitation, The Rainbow Project, Voluntary Service Bureau's Young Citizens in Action and Youth Action Northern Ireland expressed an interest. Foyle Friend, who were not YouthNet members had expressed an interest in running a similar study in the North West and were recommended to YouthNet by the Department of Education.

A Research Steering Group was formed comprised of representatives from interested organisations and YouthNet.

The research incorporated quantitative and qualitative data and included evidence from young people, youth organisations and public authorities. Three separate questionnaires were developed. One questionnaire was designed for young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender, another questionnaire was designed for organisations working with young people and a third was designed for public sector organisations. These focused on auditing existing services, identifying the needs and experiences of young people who identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender and identifying support needs of organisations to work with this target group and with the issues generally. Each questionnaire was developed by the Research Steering Group and was circulated to the representatives from the Department of Education, the Executive Committee of YouthNet and Dr Tony Morgan from the University of Ulster for comment. All suggestions were taken on board by the research steering committee.

Additionally focus groups were conducted with young people with a view to further explore the issues raised in the questionnaires. Also case studies of three LGBT organisations in Northern Ireland and ten in the London and Brighton areas were conducted to identify models of best practice within the youth sector.

### ***Young Person's Questionnaire***

Participants: 362 young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT) completed at least 50% of the questionnaire.

213 hard copies were completed in the North West and Belfast.

149 were completed online.

#### *Materials*

Questionnaires were designed by the research steering group, and focused on the experiences of young people in the youth and education sectors. A questionnaire already developed by Foyle Friend was used as a template.

The young person's questionnaire focused on five general areas. The initial questions were used to get a profile of respondents, the second section looked at coming out issues, the third at lifestyle, the next set of questions asked about experiences in the school environment and the last section concentrated on experiences in the youth sector (Appendix I).

#### *Procedure*

The steering group was particularly keen to gain access to those young people who are not involved in gay and lesbian support services. At the time of carrying out the research only three organisations in Northern Ireland were working specifically with gay and lesbian young people, and only three gay venues operated in Northern Ireland. Therefore the questionnaire was available via the internet, in addition to hard copies being distributed. This ensured that the questionnaire was accessible to young people who did not frequent the gay venues located exclusively in Derry/Londonderry and Belfast.

The online version of the questionnaire was hosted by the Gay & Lesbian Youth Northern Ireland (GLYNI) website [www.glyni.org.uk](http://www.glyni.org.uk). GLYNI was particularly suitable for these purposes as it has an active and up to date website with practical and supportive information regarding LGBT issues. The online questionnaire was set up to ensure privacy and included a monitoring function that detected multiple responses from the same location. Given the fact that the questionnaire contained over forty questions, it is likely that this dissuaded multiple submissions.

Questionnaires were also distributed by volunteers from Foyle Friend, The Rainbow Project and Youth Action's Out and About Young Women's Lesbian Project in the Kremlin, Parliament and Milk clubs in Belfast and in Pepe's bar in Derry/Londonderry over a period of four weekends in June 2002. Respondents were asked to complete them at the time and volunteers collected them afterwards. In addition questionnaires were distributed to a number of gay organisations and they were asked to promote them to their members. All respondents were assured that the information given was entirely confidential. Moreover, respondents were given the opportunity to provide contact details on the questionnaires if they were interested in participating in follow up focus groups.

The research, in general, and in particular the online questionnaire was promoted in a number of ways. 1500 posters were distributed to organisations working directly with young people and on community development issues, for example, libraries, youth and community organisations, women's organisations, rural community organisations, gay venues, universities, and colleges of Further and Higher Education. A covering letter outlining the purpose of the research, in addition to a copy of the questionnaire was also included. It was not possible to obtain accurate figures on the number of organisations that chose to display the poster.

Furthermore, the research was also publicized via a number of websites, publications and email lists (Appendix IV). In addition a press release was circulated to all local and regional media. Again it was not possible to obtain accurate figures on the number of newspapers that covered the press release. However, one radio station (Radio Foyle) featured an interview with the Director of Foyle Friend.

## ***Questionnaire for Organisations Working with Young People***

### *Participants*

In total 343 questionnaires were distributed to a diverse range of organisations working with young people. 76 questionnaires were returned, representing a 22% response rate (Appendix V).

### *Material*

This questionnaire aimed to (a) identify work with young LGBT people in the youth sector, (b) identify youth sector support needs and (c) models of good LGBT practice within the youth sector. Questions for the organisational questionnaire were derived from an Agency Questionnaire used by The Lesbian Information Service in their research into the needs of young people who identify as Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual in Calderdale and discussion with Dr Tony Morgan and YouthNet. Once designed, a draft questionnaire was piloted with the YouthNet Executive Committee, five YouthNet member organisations and the Research Steering Group.

The questionnaire concentrated on four general areas, which comprised of a general profile of the organisations, policies within the organisations, training issues and organisational support (Appendix II).

### *Procedure*

Three databases were then used to identify which youth organisations should receive a copy of the questionnaire. All YouthNet membership organisations (65), Youth organisations with full time workers that responded to YouthNet's Audit questionnaire in 2000 (98), and every community youth organisation with full time workers that applied through YESIP for funding from the EU Special Support Programme for Peace & Reconciliation (60) were targeted. Also, it was decided that organisations providing a service for lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered people (11) plus other organisations working with young people not identified via the three databases (5) should receive a copy of the questionnaire.

All organisations received an initial letter to outline the rationale behind the research. One week later an information pack containing a cover letter, a youth organisational questionnaire, a copy of the young person's questionnaire, a poster publicising the research and online questionnaire and a self addressed envelope was distributed.

A random selection of 140 organisations was also contacted by telephone to address any concerns or issues representatives may have had, and also to encourage them to return the completed questionnaires. Additionally in order to include statutory youth clubs, the information pack was also sent to all five of the Education and Library Boards. Board Youth Advisors were then contacted and asked to distribute the questionnaires to all youth officers and full time youth workers in their area. Following requests from Board advisors, 57 questionnaires were sent to the Southern Education and Library Board, 27 to the South Eastern Education and Library Board, and 20 to the North Eastern Education and Library Board. Respondents had the option of completing the questionnaire and returning it by post or requesting it as a text file and returning it by email.

### ***Questionnaire for Public Sector Organisations***

#### *Participants*

138 questionnaires were posted to Public Sector organisations .

48 questionnaires were completed and returned, representing a 35% response rate (Appendix VI).

#### *Material*

The questionnaire focused on issues such as equality of opportunity, training opportunities for staff, and support for LGBT young people (Appendix III)

#### *Procedure*

138 questionnaires were posted to Equality Officers or persons in public sector organisations designated to take forward the Equality Schemes resulting from Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. Respondents



were given the option of completing the questionnaire and returning it by post, or requesting the questionnaire as a text file and returning it by email.

### *Data Analysis*

Data for all three questionnaires was analysed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). Descriptive statistics were calculated and results are presented in tabulated form. Further analysis consisted of cross tabulating data on various combinations of responses.

### **Focus Groups**

Information was also collected using focus groups. The primary aim of the focus groups was to further explore issues raised in the young person's questionnaires. Focus groups were predominately comprised of young people who had already completed questionnaires and who identified as LGBT, however Foyle Friend conducted a focus group in the North West based on their original proposed study. Whilst one fifth of the respondents provided contact details when they were completing the initial questionnaire, the majority did not reply to the email or stated that they were no longer interested when contacted by telephone. This highlights the reluctance of many young LGBT people to discuss their sexual orientation in an open forum.

Invitations to participate were also circulated to several Northern Ireland email lists. Again, participants were assured that all information would be strictly confidential and anonymous. In total four focus groups were carried out, two in Belfast and two in Derry/Londonderry. Focus groups scheduled for Newry and Enniskillen were cancelled due to insufficient numbers. The groups were run from 10.30am to 4.00pm, travel expenses and lunch were provided. Each focus group was co-facilitated by a male and female person both of whom were members of the research steering group or external facilitators recommended by LGBT organisations. In addition two note takers were also present to record the focus groups. Participants were asked to complete an anonymous information sheet to monitor the profile of those taking part, and also an evaluation sheet at the end. Focus group findings were written up without quotes being attributed to any one individual.

## Chapter Three - Questionnaire Results

This section includes the quantitative data taken from the three questionnaires with some tabulated data and correlations with other sources. All percentages are rounded up to two decimal places.

### 1. Young People

362 valid responses.

#### A profile of respondents

**Table 3.1.1: Age of Respondents**

	Number	%
16 years or under	31	9
17 – 20 years	159	44
21 – 25 years	172	48
Total	362	100.

- 9% (n= 31) of the respondents were 16 years or under.
- 44% (n= 159) of the respondents were aged between 17 and 20 years
- 48% (n=172) of the respondents fell within the 21-25 year age group

**Table 3.1.2: Gender of Respondents**

	Number	%
Female	130	36
Male	232	63
Total	362	100

- 36% (n=130) of the respondents were female,
- 63% (n=232) of the sample were male

The higher percentage of men may be due to the fact that the questionnaires were completed in gay bars and online, and as Crabtree et al (2002) points out men tend to dominate both of these spheres. Attempts to encourage women to input were adopted by targeting women only email lists and spaces as well as using volunteers from Youth Action's Out & About Young Lesbian's Project to distribute questionnaires in gay venues.

**Table 3.1.3: Sexual Orientation of Respondents**

	Number	%
Lesbian	88	24
Gay	196	54
Bisexual	52	14
Unsure	21	6
Other	5	2
Total	362	100.

For the purpose of analysis – respondents who ticked 'gay' and 'female' were counted as 'lesbian'.

- 24% (n=88) of respondents identified as lesbian
- Over half 54%, (n=196) of the respondents identified as gay
- 14% (n=52) of respondents identified as bisexual
- 21 respondents representing 6% of the sample were unsure
- 2% (n=5) of respondents identified as other.

Of those who identified as 'Bisexual' (52), 23 were male and 29 were female. Of those who identified as 'Unsure' (21) 12 were male and 9 were female. Of those who identified as 'Other' 2 were male and 3 were female.

The 'category' of heterosexual was included in this question specifically to enable a person who identified as transgender or transsexual to indicate a heterosexual orientation. However no respondents indicated this.

**Table 3.1.4: Number and percentage of respondents who identified as transgender or transsexual**

	Number	%
Transgender/transsexual	14	4
Not transgender/transsexual	348	96
Total	362	100

- 4% (14) of the sample identified as being transgender/transsexual
- 96% (348) of respondents did not identify as being transgender/transsexual

The transgender population is marginalised within even the gay community. Figures for a percentage of those who identify as transgender in the general population are limited, however The Gender Trust estimates it could be around 1 in 10,000. The questionnaire did not specify pre-op or post-op transgender, instead allowing the respondent to self identify.

**Table 3.1.5: Number and percentage of respondents registered disabled**

	Number	%
Registered Disabled	15	4
Not registered Disabled	347	96
Total	362	100.

- 4% of the respondents were registered disabled, 96% were not registered disabled.

The definition of 'registered disabled' was not specified in the questionnaire, however it was used to indicate those with a disability who were registered with government agencies for the purpose of accessing benefits. The general population of under 25's with disabilities in Northern Ireland is 6% (Disability Action). Hence 4% is slightly lower than the general population.

**Table 3.1.6: Number and percentage of respondents who identify themselves as being a member of an ethnic minority**

	Number	%
Member of ethnic minority	13	4
Not member of ethnic minority	349	96
Total	362	100

- 4% (n=13) of the respondents identified themselves as being a member of an ethnic minority
- The majority (96%, n=149) of respondents did not identify themselves as being from an ethnic minority.
- Of the 13 members from ethnic communities - 3 identified as Chinese, 2 as Asian and one as mixed race, the others did not specify.

The percentage of those who identified as a member of an ethnic community in the 2001 Census is 0.85% though the Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities believes the real figure is closer to 1.5%. A statistically higher percentage number completed this survey than the general population albeit representing 13 individuals.

**Table 3.1.7: Religious Background of Respondents**

	Number	%
Catholic	193	53
Protestant	122	34
Other	47	13
Total	362	100

- 53% (n=193) of respondents identified themselves as Catholic
- 34 % (n=122) of the sample identified themselves as Protestant
- Other' religions, where specified were Buddhist (2), Hindu (1), Jewish (1) and Humanist (1).

It is likely that some respondents who selected 'Other' did have a perceived 'Catholic' or 'Protestant' background but chose not to state it. This can be inferred from a number of comments in the 'Other' category, which said "Christian", "None", "No longer practicing" and "Don't believe in anything". The questionnaire was promoted equally to young people through youth and community organisations working in different communities, however it is not possible to determine whether these organisations in turn promoted the questionnaire regardless of religious or political affiliations.

**Table 3.1.8: Number and percentage of responses from respondents living in urban or rural areas.**

	Number	%
Urban	233	64
Rural	129	36
Total	362	100

- 64% (n=233) of the sample were from an urban area,
- 36% (n=129) of respondents were from a rural area

Those who completed the questionnaires online demonstrated a slight variation with 55% from urban and 45% from rural. As it was not specified what was meant by 'urban' and 'rural' it is likely that some participants indicated 'urban' if they lived in a town and 'rural' for the countryside. The breakdown of district council area of online respondents illustrates that 59% were living outside Belfast and Derry/Londonderry Council areas. This may indicate more of a reliance on the Internet to connect young people outside the main conurbations to gay information and support.

**Table 3.1.9: Occupational Status of respondents.**

	Number	%
At school	58	16
In further education	71	20
In university	48	13
Employed full time	135	37
Employed part time	15	4
Not working	35	10
Total	362	100

- 58 respondents were still at school, representing 16% of the sample
- Just over one third of people stated that they were in full time employment, 37% (n=135)
- One fifth (n=71) of respondents are in further education.
- 48 respondents (13%) were in university
- 4% (n=15) were in part time employment
- 10% of respondents are not working, (n=35).

10% who identified as 'not working' in line with government statistics, ie. 9.9% 18-24 year olds are unemployed (NISRA, 2002). However 'not working' could also include those in receipt of benefits such as income support and disability benefits.

## Personal Experiences

### *Coming Out*

**Table 3.1.10: Number and percentage responses from young people in relation to who or whom they were out.**

The term 'coming out' is where a person accepts to themselves their sexual orientation and wishes to share it with someone else. The term is in common usage in this context and was not defined in the questionnaire.

	None		Some		All		Not Applicable	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Friends	36	10	181	50	145	40	-	-
Family	131	36	134	37	93	26	4	1
Work Colleagues	108	30 (42)	76	21 (29)	74	20 (29)	104	29
School / College	85	23 (38)	92	25 (42)	46	13 (20)	139	38
Youth Organisation	98	27 (48)	44	12 (22)	61	17 (30)	159	44

The percentage given is that of the total number of questionnaire respondents i.e. 362. The numbers in brackets are the percentages in proportion of those



to whom that question was applicable, e.g. of the 258 who responded to having work colleagues 42% of those were not out to them.

- Only 10% of respondents (n=36) were not out to any of their friends, with 40% (n=145) of participants out to all of their friends and the remainder out to some.
- Only 26% of young people stated that they were out to all of their family (n=93), with 36% (n=131), representing over one third of respondents not out to any family members and the remainder out to some, (37%, n=134).
- Of the 258 young people who work, almost half of them (42%, n=108) were not out to any of their work colleagues.
- This question did not differentiate between school and college, so the findings are composite. Of the 223 young people who attend school or college, over one third (38%, n=85) of participants stated that they were not out in school or college. Only one fifth of respondents are completely out at school or college with a percentage of 42% (n=94) out to some.
- Of the 362 respondents 69% (n=250) of respondents are or were members of youth organisations. This is not surprising as the questionnaire was actively promoted using the infrastructure of youth and community organisations. Of these respondents almost half (48%) were not out to anyone in this environment. This figure is further qualified by the fact that members from gay and lesbian youth organisations also completed this questionnaire and may indicate a significant element of those 30% who are completely out in that environment.

**Table 3.1.11: Age of respondents when they came out to someone else**

	Number	%
10-13 years	21	6
14-17 years	192	53
18-21 years	98	27
22-25 years	24	7
not specified	27	7
Total	362	100

The mean for males was 17 years and for females 18 years.

- 6% (n= 21)of respondents had already told someone else by the time they were 13 years old
- 53% of respondents (n=192) had disclosed their sexuality by the time they were 17 years of age,
- Over one quarter of the sample 27% (n=98) did not reveal their sexual orientation until they were between 18-21 years of age.
- Only 7% had not disclosed their sexuality by the age of 22 years.

**Table 3.1.12: Age of respondents when they realised they were lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered.**

	Number	%
0-5 years	8	3
6-9 years	34	9
10-13 years	145	40
14-17 years	134	37
18-21 years	27	7
22-25 years	5	1
not specified	9	3
Total	362	100

The mean for males was 12 years and females 14 years.

- 52% (n=187) of respondents realised that they were gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered by the age of 13 years old.
- The majority (89%, n=321) of the sample realised they were gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered by the age of 17 years old
- Only 1% did not know until their twenties.

**Table 3.1.13: Number and percentage of responses of respondents in relation to who they told when they first came out.**

***When You Came Out, Did You Tell.....?***

	Number	%
Friends	284	78
Parents	91	25
Brothers/Sisters	101	28
Extended Family	46	13
Youth Worker/Leader	22	6
Clergy	18	5
A Social Worker	13	4
A Sports Coach	8	2
A Teacher	30	8
An Lgbt Helpline/ Organisation	56	15
Another Person/Organisation	20	6

Of the 362 respondents, some ticked two or more options, for example, came out to both friends and brothers/sisters.

Coming out is a lifelong process, in that with each new person encountered or met, a decision must to be taken whether or not to disclose sexual orientation. In this questionnaire the phrase “when you came out...” refers to the initial period of disclosing sexual orientation.

- Friends accounted for the highest category with 78% of respondents (n=284) telling friends when they first came out.
- A quarter of the sample informed parents (25%, n=91)
- 28% (n=101) of the respondents told siblings and 13% (n=46) of the participants disclosed to extended family.
- LGBT helpline and organisations featured with only 15% (n=56) of respondents while less than 10% of respondents told youth worker/leader, clergy, social worker, sports coach or a teacher.

This is in line with other responses to the questionnaire where ‘friends’ play a key role in the coming out process. It cannot be assumed that those who did not indicate a category believed they could not tell people in that group.

**Table 3.1.14: Number and percentage of responses of respondents in relation to who they felt they could not tell when they first came out.**

***When You Came Out, Did You Feel You Could Not Tell.....?***

	Number	%
Friends	57	16
Parents	229	63
Brothers/Sisters	165	46
Extended Family	187	52
Youth Worker/Leader	93	26
Clergy	138	38
A Social Worker	80	22
A Sports Coach	102	28
A Teacher	139	38
An Lgbt Helpline/ Organisation	38	10
Another Person/Organisation	6	2

Of the 362 respondents some ticked two or more options, for example, they did not feel they could tell parents or teachers.

- Family featured most strongly here, with 63% (n=229) of respondents indicating that they could not tell parents,
- 45.5% (n=165) of the sample did not disclose to siblings and 52% (n=187) of participants could not inform extended family members.
- Over one quarter (26%, n=93) stated they could not tell a youthworker/leader
- 38.5% (n=138) of participants did not feel they could tell a teacher.

Not all categories were relevant to all young people, e.g. not everyone would have been in contact with a social worker or youthworker/leader. Additionally,

it cannot be assumed that those who did not indicate a category believed they could tell people in that group.

**Table 3.1.15: Number and percentage of responses of respondents in relation to where/who they got their support from.**

***Where Did You Get Support/Information From.....?***

	Number	%
School	14	4
College	18	5
LGBT Group	80	22
Church Group	0.3	1
Youth Group/Org.	25	7
LGBT Helpline	65	18
LGBT Venue	61	17
Books/Magazines	130	36
Internet	182	50
Media	75	21
Other Sources	55	15

Of the 362 respondents some ticked more than one option having received support from a variety of sources.

- Over half the respondents (n=182) got support/information from the Internet with 36% (n=130) seeking it from books and magazines.
- LGBT services were sought by 22% (n=80), 18% (n=65) of the sample made use of the helpline, with 17% (n=61) of the respondents accessing information/support at LGBT venues. This is not surprising as the questionnaire was promoted via LGBT groups and venues.
- The media also provided information/support to over one fifth of respondents, (21%, n=75).
- Only 4% (n=14) of respondents stated that they got support/information from school and 5% (n=18) from college.

- Youth groups and organisations accounted for 7% (n=25) of participants with only 0.3% receiving support/information from a church group.

This question only indicates where people received support/information from, it does not indicate where it was sought from and refused. These findings are particularly important in terms of developing mechanisms to promote relevant information to young people who identify as LGBT. It is also relevant in terms of promoting LGBT services to the general population.

**Table 3.1.16: Number and percentage of responses of respondents in relation to negative life experiences.**

***Have You Ever Personally Experienced.....?***

	Number	%
Physical Abuse	126	35
Verbal Abuse	237	65
Sexual Abuse	63	17
Homelessness	57	16
Attempted Suicide	104	29
Being In Care	27	7
Self Harm	95	26
Medicated For Depression	87	24
Eating Disorder	76	21
Alcohol Misuse	124	34
Drug Misuse	82	23
Practice Unsafe Sex	98	27
Being Paid For Sex	27	7
Sex In Public Places e.g. Public Toilets, Parks, Cruising etc	111	31

Total sample 362 - 232 male: 130 female; Total transgender sample - 14

Some respondents ticked more than one option, for example some had experienced physical and verbal abuse in addition to alcohol misuse.

### Physical Abuse

- 35% of respondents (n=126) indicated they had experienced physical abuse, this accounted for 38% (n=88) of male and 29% (n=38) of female respondents.
- The percentage increases significantly for those who identify as transgender with 57% (n =8) indicating they had experienced physical abuse.

### Verbal Abuse

- 65% of respondents (n=237) indicated they had experienced verbal abuse, this accounted for 69% (n=160) of male and 59% (n=77) of female respondents.
- This percentage increases significantly for those who identify as transgender with 86% (n = 12) indicating they had experienced verbal abuse.

### Sexual Abuse

- 17% of respondents (n=63) indicated they had experienced sexual abuse, this accounted for 16% (n=37) of males and 19% (n=25) of female respondents.
- 29% (n=4) of people who identify as transgender indicated they had experienced sexual abuse.

### Homelessness

- 16% of respondents (n=57) indicated they had experienced homelessness, this accounted for 37% (n=86) of male and 15% (n=20) of female respondents.



- This percentage increases significantly for those who identify as transgender with 29% (n=4) reporting homelessness.
- In addition 70% (n=253) of all respondents indicated that they had experienced homophobic attitudes from family members and as a result 45% (n =163) felt compelled to leave the family home.

#### Attempted Suicide

- 29% (n=105) of respondents indicated that they had attempted suicide, this accounted for 28% (n=65) of male and 30% (n=39) of female respondents.
- This percentage increases significantly for those who identify as transgender with 64% (n=9) indicating they had attempted suicide.

#### Being In Care

- 7% of respondents (n=25) indicated that they had experienced being in care, this accounted for 7% (n=16) of male and 8% (n=10) of female respondents.
- This percentage increases significantly for those who identify as transgender with 21% (n=3) indicating they had experienced being in care.

#### Self Harm

- 26% of respondents (n=95) indicated that they had experienced self harm, this accounted for 22% (n=60) of male and 33% (n=43) of female respondents.
- This percentage increases significantly for those who identify as transgender with 50% (n=7) reporting that they had self-harmed.

#### Being Medicated For Depression

- Almost one quarter (24%, n=87) of respondents indicated that they had been medicated for depression, this accounted for 23% (n=53) of male and 26% (n=34) of female respondents.

- This percentage increases significantly for those who identify as transgender with 50% (n=7) indicating that they had been medicated for depression.

#### Eating Disorder

- 21% (n=76) of respondents indicated that they had experienced an eating disorder, this accounted for 19% (n=44) of male and 25% (n=33) of female respondents.
- This figure increases significantly for those who identify as transgender with 57% (n = 8) stating they had experienced an eating disorder.

#### Alcohol Misuse

- 34% (n=123) of respondents indicated that they had experienced alcohol misuse, this accounted for 35% (n=81) of male and 33% (n=43) of female respondents.
- This percentage increases significantly for those who identify as transgender with 50% (n=7) stating they had experienced alcohol misuse.

#### Drug Misuse

- 23% (n=82) of respondents indicated that they had experienced drug misuse, this accounted for 23% (n=53) of male and 22% (n=29) of female respondents.
- This percentage increases significantly for those who identify as transgender with 43% (n=6) stating they had experienced drug misuse.

#### Practice Unsafe Sex

- 27% (n=98) of respondents indicated that they had practiced unsafe sex, this accounted for 28% (n=65) of male and 26% (n=34) of female respondents.
- This figure is on a par with those who identify as transgender with 28% (n=4) indicating they had practiced unsafe sex.

### Control

- 50% (n=181) of overall respondents stated that they had experienced not being in control of a sexual situation; of these respondents 43% (n=77) had practiced unsafe sex.

### Being Paid For Sex

- 7% (n=25) of respondents indicated that they had been paid for sex, this accounted for 8% (n=19) of male and 6% (n=8) of female respondents.
- This figure is on a par with those who identify as transgender with 7% (n=1) indicating they had been paid for sex.

### Sex In Public Places

- 31% (n=112) of respondents indicated that they had experienced sex in public places, this accounted for 36% (n=84) of male and 20% (n=26) of female respondents.
- This percentage is on a par with those who identify as transgender with 36% (n=5) indicating they had experienced sex in public places.

**Table 3.1.17: Number and percentage of negative occurrences experienced while at school.**

***At School, Because Of Your Sexual Orientation, Did You Experience.....?***

	Number	%
Being Bullied	160	44
Achieving Lower Results	121	33
Truancy	90	25
Dropping Out	54	15
Changing School	32	9
Other Effects	43	12

Some of the respondents ticked more than one option.

- 44% of respondents (n=160) indicated that they been bullied at school because of their sexual orientation
- 33% of the sample (n=121) believed that they achieved lower results because of their sexual orientation.
- One quarter (n=90) of young people truanted with 15% (n=54) actually dropping out and 9% (n=32) changing school.
- 12% stated that they had experienced other non-defined effects while at school.
- 86% (n=311) in this survey indicated that they were aware of their sexual orientation while at school
- Only 11% (n=40) of respondents stated that they had received any information/support of issues around sexual orientation in school.
- 44% (n=159) stated that they were bullied at school because of their sexual orientation with 63% (n=228) indicating that they had experienced negative attitudes, of these only 13% (n=30) sought support/education.
- 20% (n=72) of respondents stated that they had to leave a job because of their experience as a young person who identified as LGBT.

A cross tabulation of individual experiences and being bullied because of their sexuality indicated that those who were bullied made up

- 69% (n =37) of those who dropped out of school
- 65% (n=77) of those who believed that they had achieved lower results,
- 53% (n=46) of those who had been on medication for depression,
- 54% (n=51) of those who had self harmed,
- 57% (n=59) of those who had attempted suicide,
- 63% (n=34) of those who had experienced homelessness
- 70% (n=88) of those who had experienced physical abuse.

**Table 3.18: Number and percentage of respondents who attend a gay bar/pub**

	Number	%
Never attend	61	17
Occasionally attend	156	43
Regularly attend	140	39
Not specified	5	1
Total	362	100

- 43% (n=156) of respondents occasionally go to a gay bar/pub
- 39% (n=140) of respondents regularly go to a gay bar/pub
- 17% (n=61) of respondents never attend a gay bar/pub
- 1% (n=5) of respondents did not specify

## 2. Experiences in the Youth Sector Environment

**Table 3.2.1: Number and percentage of respondents who are or were members of a youth organisation**

	Number	%
Are/Were member of youth organisation	249	69
Are/were not a member	113	31
Total	362	100.

- 69% (n=249) of the respondents stated that they are or were a member of a youth organisation.
- 113 respondents representing 31% of the sample stated that they are or were not a member of a youth organisation.

**Table 3.2.2: Type of youth organisation respondents are or were involved in.**

	Number	%
Youth Club	160	44
Youth Group	99	27
Uniformed Organisation	90	25
Church Based Youth Group	74	21

\* Respondents could select more than one option

- 160 respondents (44%) stated that they are or were a member of a youth club
- 27% of the sample (n=99) indicated that they are or were members of a youth group.
- One quarter (25%, n=90) of the participants are or were involved in a uniformed organisation.
- 21% (n=74) of the sample said that they are or were a member of a church based youth group.

**Table 3.2.3: Number and percentage of respondents who experienced a positive attitude towards sexual orientation within a youth organisation**

	Number	%
Did experience a positive attitude	51	14
Did not experience a positive attitude	211	58
Never attended a youth organisation	100	28
Total	362	100.

- 14% (n=51) of the sample stated that they did experience a positive experience towards sexual orientation while a member of a youth organisation.
- 58% (n=211) of the sample stated that they did not experience a positive experience towards sexual orientation while a member of a youth organisation.
- 28% of the sample had never attended a youth organisation.

Of those that did attend a youth organisation:

- 51% (n=132) did experience a negative attitude towards sexual orientation while being a member of a youth organisation.
- 49% (n=130) did not experience a negative attitude towards sexual orientation while being a member of a youth organisation.

Of these, negative experiences occurred for

- 58% (n=92) of those who attended a youth club
- 49% (n=48) of those who attended a youth group
- 50% (n=45) of those who were a member of a uniformed organisation
- 58% (n=43) of those who were a member of a church based group

**Table 3.2.4: Number and Percentage of respondents who have sought or experienced support around sexual orientation as a member of a youth organisation**

	Number	%
Have sought/experienced support	45	12
Have not sought/experienced support	217	60
Never attended a youth organisation	100	28
Total	362	100

- 12% (n=45) of the sample stated that they had sought or experienced support around sexual orientation as a member of a youth organisation.
- 60% (n=217) of the sample stated that they had not sought or experienced support around sexual orientation as a member of a youth organisation.
- 28% (n=100) of the sample stated that they had never attended a youth organisation.

Of those who experienced or sought support

- 19% (n=30) did so as a member of a youth club
- 27% (n=27) did so as a member of a youth group
- 14% (n=13) did so as a member of a uniformed organisation
- 15% (n=11) did so as a member of a church based organisation

Some respondents selected more than one option.



**Table 3.2.5: Number and percentage of respondents who believed that youth organisations/groups should deal with the needs of young people who identify as LGBT**

	Number	%
Youth organisations should	329	91
Youth organisation should not	18	5
Did not answer the question	15	4
Total	362	100

- 91% (n=329) of the sample believed that youth organisations/groups should deal with the needs of young people who identify as LGBT.
- 5% (n=18) of the sample believed that youth organisations/groups should not deal with the needs of young people who identify as LGBT.
- 4% (n=15) of the sample did not answer the question.

**Table 3.2.6: Number and percentage of respondents who believe that youth projects specifically designed for young people who identify as LGBT could meet some of their needs**

	Number	%
Yes	318	88
No	31	9
Did not specify	13	3
Total	362	100

- The majority (88%, n=318) of the sample stated that youth projects specifically designed for young people who identify as LGBT could meet some of their needs
- 9% (n=31) of the respondents stated that youth projects specifically designed for young people who identify as LGBT could not meet some of their needs
- 3% (n=13) of the sample did not answer the question
- 91% (n=41) who have sought or experienced support around sexual orientation while attending a youth organisation believe that youth projects specifically for young LGBT people could meet some of their needs.

Responding to a list of possible benefits of youth projects for young LGBT people -

- Over three quarters 78% (n=284) of the sample stated that youth projects specifically designed for young LGBT people could provide a sense of identity and belonging
- 63% (n=229) of the respondents reported that youth projects specifically designed for young LGBT people could provide an opportunity to socialise in an alcohol free environment
- 85% (n=308) of the respondents believed that youth projects specifically designed for young LGBT people could offer a feeling of support
- 70% (n=253) of the participants stated that youth projects specifically designed for young people could be a way to access LGBT news or information
- 65% (n=235) of the sample said that youth projects specifically designed for young LGBT people could allow for collective action.

**Table 3.2.7: Number and percentage of respondents who would be interested in getting involved with a youth group for LGBT people**

	Number	%
Would be interested	197	54
Would not be interested	82	23
Already involved in a youth group	67	19
Did not answer the question	16	4
Total	362	100

- More than half (54%, n=197) of the sample said that they would be interested in getting involved with a youth group for young LGBT people
- 23% (n=82) of the respondents said that they would not be interested in getting involved with a youth group for young LGBT people
- 19% (n=67) of participants said that they were already involved in a youth group for young LGBT people
- 4% (n=16) of the sample did not answer the question

### 3. Youth Organisations

76 questionnaires were returned

All percentages are calculated to the nearest integer from two decimal places.

#### Profile of Organisations

**Table 3.3.1 Which of the following best describes your organisation?**

	Number	%
Local	34	45
Regional NI	25	33
Regional UK/ROI	6	8
Umbrella	7	9
Other	4	5
Total	76	100

- 34 (45%) of organisations describe themselves as Local
- 25 (33%) of organisations describe themselves as Regional NI
- 6 (8%) of organisations describe themselves as Regional UK/ROI
- 7 (9%) of organisations describe themselves as Umbrella
- 4 (5%) of organisations describe themselves as Other

The 34 local organisations are based in the following District Council Areas

Belfast City	15	Craigavon	5
Newry & Mourne	1	Lisburn	2
Newtownabbey	1	Strabane	1
Derry	1	Down	1
Fermanagh	1	Carrickfergus	1
Armagh	3	C/D and M *	2

\* Cookstown, Dungannon and Magherafelt

The 25 Regional NI organisations are based in the following District Council Areas

Belfast City	17	Down	1
Derry	1	Ballymena	1
All NI	4	Antrim	1

The 6 organisations that describe themselves as Regional UK/Republic of Ireland are based in the following District Council Areas

Belfast	3	All NI	3
---------	---	--------	---

The 7 umbrella organisations are based in the following District Council Areas

Belfast	3	Derry	1
Newry and Mourne	1	Lisburn	1
Newtownabbey	1		

The 4 organisations which describe themselves as Other are based in the following District Council Areas

Belfast	1	Larne	1
Derry	1	Omagh	1

**Table 3.3.2: Would you describe your organisation as..?**

	Number	%
Statutory	10	13
NGO (Regional)	16	21
Church Based Youth	6	8
Uniformed	3	4
Health Based	2	3
Community (Local)	30	40
Other	9	12
Total	76	100

- 10 (13%) of organisations describe themselves as Statutory
- 16 (21%) of organisations describe themselves as an NGO (Non Governmental Organisation) Regional
- 6 (8%) of organisations describe themselves as Church Based Youth Organisations
- 3 (4%) of organisations describe themselves as Uniformed
- 2 (3%) of organisations describe themselves as Health Based
- 30 (40%) of organisations describe themselves as Community (Local)
- 9 (12%) of organisations describe themselves as other

10 (13%) of organisations describe themselves as Statutory

Statutory organisations are based in the following District Council Areas

Newry & Mourne	1	Craigavon	2
Newtownabbey	2	Down	1
Derry	1	Omagh	1
Armagh	1	Ballymena	1

16 (21%) of organisations describe themselves as NGO (Regional)

NGO (Regional) organisations are based in the following District Council Areas

Belfast	12	Carrickfergus	1
All NI	3		

6 (8%) of organisations describe themselves as Church Based Youth organisations

Church Based Youth organisations are based in the following District Council Areas

Belfast	3	Craigavon	1
All NI	2		

3 (4%) of organisations describe themselves as Uniformed

Uniformed organisations are based in the following District Council Areas

Belfast	1	All NI	2
---------	---	--------	---

2 (3%) of organisations describe themselves as Health Based

Health Based organisations are based in the following District Council Areas

Belfast	2
---------	---

30 (40%) of organisations describe themselves as Community (Local)

Community (Local) organisations are based in the following District Council Areas

Belfast	16	Armagh	2
Newry & Mourne	1	Craigavon	2
Derry	2	Antrim	1
Fermanagh	1	Lisburn	3
C, D and M	2		

\* Cookstown, Dungannon and Magherafelt

9 (12%) of organisations describe themselves as Other

Other organisations are based in the following District Council Areas

Belfast	5	Strabane	1
Derry	1	Down	1
Larne	1		

**Table 3.3.3: Number and percentage of organisations that have an Equal Opportunity Policy**

	Number	%
EO policy	71	94
No EO policy	4	5
Did not specify	1	1
Total	76	100

Of the 71 organisations that have an Equal Opportunity Policy:

- 87% (n=62) of organisations include sexual orientation
- 11% (n=8) of organisations do not include sexual orientation.
- 1% (n=1) did not specify

Of the 71 organisations that have an Equal Opportunity Policy:

- 87% (n=62) of organisations apply the policy to service provision as well as employment
- 9% (n=6) of organisations do not apply the policy to service provision as well as employment
- 4% (n=3) of organisations did not specify.

**Table 3.3.4: Number and Percentage of organisations that have an Anti-Bullying Policy**

	Number	%
Anti-Bullying Policy	36	47
No Anti-Bullying Policy	36	47
Did not specify	4	6
Total	76	100



36 (47%) of organisations have an Anti-Bullying Policy

36 (47%) of organisations do not have an Anti-Bullying Policy

4 (6%) of organisations did not specify.

Of the 36 organisations that have an Anti-Bullying Policy:

- 80.5% (n=29) of organisations include sexual orientation
- 16.5% (n=6) of organisations do not include sexual orientation
- 3% (n=1) of organisations did not specify.

**Table 3.3.5: Number and Percentage of Organisations that have an Anti-Harassment Policy**

	Number	%
Anti-Harassment Policy	48	63
No Anti-Harassment Policy	26	34
Did not specify	2	3
Total	76	100

48 (63%) organisations have an Anti-Harassment Policy

26 (34%) organisations do not have an Anti-Harassment Policy

2 (3%) organisations did not specify.

Of the 48 organisations that have an Anti-Harassment Policy:

- 79% (n=38) of organisations include sexual orientation
- 19% (n=9) of organisations do not include sexual orientation
- 2% (n=1) of organisations did not specify.

**Table 3.3.6: Number and Percentage of organisations that have a Volunteers Policy**

	Number	%
Volunteers Policy	59	78
No Volunteers Policy	15	19
Did not Specify	2	3
Total	76	100

78% (n=59) of organisations have a Volunteers Policy

19% (n=15) of organisations do not have a volunteers Policy

3% (n=2) of organisations did not specify.

Of the 59 organisations that have a Volunteers Policy:

- 40 (68%) organisations include sexual orientation
- 15 (25%) organisations do not include sexual orientation
- 4 (7%) organisations did not specify.

**Table 3.3.7: Number and Percentage of Organisations that have a Grievance/Complaints Procedure**

	Number	%
Grievance/Complaints Procedure	72	95
No Grievance/Complaints Procedure	4	5
Total	76	100

72 (95%) organisations have a Grievance/Complaints Procedure

4 (5%) organisations do not have a Grievance/Complaints Procedure

Of the 72 organisations that have a Grievance/Complaints Procedure:

- 27 (37%) organisations include sexual orientation/homophobia as an example

- 40 (57%) organisations do not include sexual orientation/homophobia as an example
- 5 (7%) organisations did not specify

Of the 72 organisations that have a Grievance/Complaints Procedure:

- 16 (22%) organisations include biphobia as an example
- 53 (74%) organisations do not include sexual biphobia as an example.
- 3 (4%) organisations did not specify.

Of the 72 organisations that have a Grievance/Complaints Procedure:

- 16 (22%) organisations include transphobia as an example
- 53 (74%) organisations do not include transphobia as an example
- 3 (4%) organisations did not specify.

**Table 3.3.8: Number and Percentage of Organisations that provide training for Staff/volunteers**

	Number	%
Provide Training	74	97
Do Not Provide Training	2	3
Total	76	100

97% (n=74) of organisations provide training for their staff/volunteers

3% (n=2) of organisations do not provide training for their staff/volunteers

Of the 74 organisations that provide training for their staff/volunteers:

- 39 (53%) organisations look at issues concerning sexual orientation
- 34 (46%) organisations do not look at issues concerning sexual orientation
- 1 organisation did not specify

**Table 3.3.9: Number and Percentage of organisations that would like to receive training for staff/volunteers to engage more effectively with young people who identify themselves as LGBT**

	Number	%
Organisations that would like to	60	79
Organisations that would not like to	15	20
Organisations that did not specify	1	1
Total	76	100

78% (n=60) of organisations would like to receive training for staff/volunteers  
 20% (n=15) of organisations would not like to receive training for staff/volunteers

1% (n=1) of organisations did not specify

**Table 3.3.10: Number and Percentage of organisations that provide any general resources to support staff/volunteers working with young people who identify themselves as LGBT**

	Number	%
Organisations that provide general resources	26	34
Organisations that do not provide	50	66
Total	76	100

- Just over one third 34% (n=26) of organisations provide general resources to support staff/volunteers working with young people LGBT people
- 66% (n=50) of organisations do not provide general resources to support staff/volunteers working with young people LGBT people

**Table 3.3.11: Number and Percentage of organisations that provide general resources to support young people who identify themselves as LGBT**

	Number	%
Provide general resources	28	37
Do not provide general resources	48	63
Total	76	100

- 28 (37%) of 76 organisations provide general resources to support LGBT young people.
- Over half 48 (63%) of 76 organisations do not provide general resources to support young LGBT people.

**Table 3.3.12: Number and percentage of organisations that have publicity aimed at encouraging young people who identify themselves as LGBT to use their services**

	Number	%
Organisations that have publicity	11	14
Organisations that have not	65	86
Total	76	100

- Only 14% (n=11) of 76 organisations have publicity aimed at encouraging young LGBT people to use their services.
- The majority (86%, n=65) of organisations do not have publicity aimed at encouraging young LGBT people to use their services.

**Table 3.3.13: Number and percentage of organisations that have formal links with LGBT organisations**

	Number	%
Organisations that have formal links	17	22
Organisations that do not have	59	78
Total	76	100

4 organisations that responded to this question are LGBT organisations.

- Less than one quarter, (22%, n=17) of 76 organisations have formal links with LGBT organisations.
- Over three quarters, 78% (n=59) of 76 organisations do not have formal links with LGBT organisations

**Table 3.3.14: Number and percentage of organisations that make provision specifically for young LGBT people**

	Number	%
Organisations that make provision	8	11
Organisations that do not	67	88
Did not specify	1	1
Total	76	100

- Only 11% (n=8) of 76 organisations make provision specifically for young LGBT people. Of these 4 are LGBT organisations and 4 are mainstream youth organisations.
- The majority (89%, n=67) of 76 organisations do not make specific provision specifically for young LGBT people.
- 1 organisation did not specify.

**Table 3.3.15: Number and Percentage of organisations that would like to make provision specifically for young people who identify themselves as LGBT.**

	Number	%
Organisations who would like to	44	58
Organisations who would not like to	28	37
Organisations that did not specify	4	5
Total	76	100

- 44 (58%) of 75 organisations would like to make provision specifically for young LGBT people.
- 28 (37%) of 75 organisations would not like to make provision specifically for young people.
- 3 (5%) of organisations did not specify.

**Table 3.3.16: Number and Percentage of organisations that have any monitoring and evaluation systems for young people who identify themselves as LGBT.**

	Number	%
Organisations that have systems	9	12
Organisations that do not have	66	87
Organisations that did not specify	1	1
Total	76	100

- 9 (12%) of 76 organisations have monitoring and evaluation systems for young LGBT people. It should be noted that 4 organisations that responded to this question are LGBT organisations.
- The majority, 66 (87%) of 76 organisations do not have monitoring and evaluation systems for young LGBT people.
- 1 of 76 organisations did not specify.

#### 4. Public Sector Organisations

48 public organisations returned a questionnaire. All of these public bodies had produced an equality scheme in accordance with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998).

Of the 48 public organisations:

- 13% (n=6) of organisations collated baseline data around LGBT issues
- 85%(n= 41) of organisations did not collate baseline data.
- 2% (n=1) of organisations used secondary data from the Rainbow Project

Of the 48 public organisations:

- 45% (n=22) of organisations provide training opportunities for staff to look at issues concerning sexual orientation
- 19% (n=9) of organisations do not provide training opportunities for staff to look at issues concerning sexual orientation
- 36% (n=17) intend to provide training opportunities for staff to look at issues concerning sexual orientation

Of the 48 public organisations:

- 13% (n=6) of organisations provide or support programmes that target young LGBT people
- 85% (n=41) of organisations do not provide or support programmes that target young LGBT people
- 2% (n=1) of organisations consult The Rainbow Project.



## Chapter Four – Context and Commentary

### Personal & Social Development of Young LGBT People

#### *An Institutional Commitment*

At the heart of youth sector and education policy is a commitment to the personal and social development of all young people. It aims to prepare young people for participation in society, to promote acceptance and understanding of others and to develop appropriate values and beliefs.

*“All young people irrespective of ethnicity, sexual orientation or disability, should be able to participate in the life of the unit on the basis of equality”* (Northern Ireland Youth Work Curriculum (2002): Discussion Paper for the Curriculum Development Unit)

An important aspect of the youth work curriculum is to help young people explore and question the origins of their values and beliefs and those of others. Whilst there may be justification at times for not tackling controversial issues, to omit informing about and discussing them with young people is to leave a wide gap in their educational experience and development. *“When dealing with issues, controversial or otherwise, youth workers should encourage young people to recognise bias, and to be open minded to develop objective viewpoints based on concrete evidence rather than relying on others’ opinions and beliefs”* (Northern Ireland Youth Work Curriculum, 2002). The Department of Education is currently developing a new formal education curriculum which aims to broaden options, address issues of citizenship and engage with the student in a holistic way (CCEA, 2002). In addition the Children Order NI (1995) recognises the role of the youth service and education in the care and protection of children and young people: it places upon such agencies a statutory responsibility *“to develop policies and practices which safeguard young people, to implement procedures to protect them from physical, social, emotional and intellectual harm and to provide appropriate support to those in need”* (Education and Training Inspectorate,

1999-2000). The new Education & Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 reinforces that responsibility for schools “*to determine the measures to be taken (whether by the Board of Governors, the staff of the school or other persons) with a view to protecting pupils from abuse, where "abuse" includes sexual abuse and abuse causing physical or mental harm to a child* (HMSO, 2003).

Moreover, the Northern Ireland Youth Work Curriculum (2002) points out that youth workers are role models, and have a responsibility to impart to young people key values and attitudes such as compassion, understanding, and acceptance of others. “*By their example and using their youth work skills they can enable young people to respect and value themselves and others, to appreciate interdependence of people within society and to be committed to equality of opportunity for all*” (Northern Ireland Youth Work Curriculum, 2002).

Young people have to cope with both physical and emotional change as they grow up. In addition they are also trying to come to terms with the establishment, development and maintenance of relationships with both their peers and adults (Department of Education, 1997). Youth work creates opportunities for young people to gain the knowledge, understanding, and the personal and social skills, which are necessary for them to relate effectively with others and to participate fully in society. Additionally youth work should provide a safe and supportive environment whereby young people can clarify their values and beliefs, and express their thoughts, emotions and aspirations through challenging and creative activities (Department of Education, 1997).

Of the 362 respondents to this questionnaire 69% are or were members of youth organisations and all had experience of the formal education sector.

#### *The experience of people who identify as LGBT in Northern Ireland*

This research has highlighted a range of experiences for young people who identify as LGBT, which, were they heterosexual, they would not have to face. For those young people who are questioning their sexuality, the usual

challenges of adolescence are compounded by wider society's lack of tolerance of LGBT people. Whilst many young people, not only those who are attracted to the same sex, may experience discrimination at home, school or work, research indicates that there are specific emotional and physical challenges facing young lesbians and young gay men.

### **Coming Out**

A young person who begins to acknowledge to themselves and to others that they are not heterosexual and starts to think about other possibilities has begun the 'coming out' process. It has been documented that men 'come out' at an earlier age than women. The mean age of first same-sex sexual activity for boys is 13 while for girls it is around the age of 15 years. (Savin-Williams, 1990). This gender difference may increase the risk for suicide in gay male adolescents as they are more likely to feel isolated at an earlier age than their lesbian counterparts (Morrison & L'Hereux, 2001).

This research demonstrated that 52% were aware of a different sexuality by the age of 13 years and 89% of the sample had realised it by the age of 17 years. 86% of respondents stated that they were aware of their sexuality while in school. While 53% disclosed their sexuality by the time they were 17 years of age, only 6% of respondents had already told someone else by the time they were 13 years old with over one quarter not revealing it until they were 21 years. Still a further 7% had not disclosed their sexuality by the age of 25 years. The average difference between the age that a young person knew about their sexual orientation and the age that they told someone is 3 years. This is in line with previous studies, which indicate that most young people are aware at an early age of a difference in their sexual orientation even if they don't have the language to articulate it (Bell et al, 1981).

This meant that the majority of young people were aware of their sexuality while going through the education system and involved in youth activities. The three year difference between knowing and disclosure implies it took a long time for the respondents to feel secure enough in themselves to talk to someone else. While coming out is a lifelong process, in that with each new

person encountered or met, a decision must to be taken whether or not to disclose sexual orientation, the initial phase of telling people for the first time is particularly difficult. Coming out is a fundamental aspect of a young person's personal and social development and can be a particularly emotionally challenging time for young people, who are caught between their developing sense of sexual identity which is different to what is around them, and wanting to fit in with their peers. Morrison and L'Hereaux, (2001) state that this delay in self disclosure can result in problems with self identity, decrease their self esteem and thereby increase their suicide risk. This research indicated that young people's experience of reaction from friends, family, peers and those in authority impacted on them in a range of psychological and social ways.

### ***Coming out To friends***

In this research friends played a key role in providing support. Only 10% of respondents were not out to any of their friends, with 40% out to all of their friends and the remainder out to some. This means that 60% of young people had not disclosed their sexuality to any or some of their friends. Other research has highlighted the ostracisation of young people by their peers when their sexuality was known or suspected (Rivers et al, Lock, 1999), so this finding is not surprising. A number of respondents indicated that it would have been easier to come out if they believed friends would have been supportive.

*"Knowing that my friends wouldn't hate me"*

*"Some friends know, others don't, am concerned about how they will take it. I hate lying to people, and don't see why I should!"*

Focus group participants also highlighted negative experiences around friends.

*"I lost friends because I came out. I was known as a freak".*

*"When I was in school in my last year, I contemplated telling people but someone would make a derogatory remark about queers and I would keep quiet"*

However for others, friends provided essential support. This is indicated by the fact that 90% of respondents had told at least one friend. Moreover, the research demonstrates the immense relief that some young people feel when they do come out. Additionally it also highlights the burden of keeping one's sexual orientation a secret, and the negative impact this can have on health related behaviours. One young man reported,

*“Before I came out I was drinking, gambling, I told a friend who was very angry that I didn't tell her sooner. I didn't like the person I was then and since I came out I've felt liberated”*

Nevertheless, whilst it can be a relief for some young people when they do come out, one young woman draws attention to the downside of disclosing one's sexual orientation.

*“Friends in school stood by me. It was outside school that I received most abuse”.*

Johnson (2000) highlights the importance of peers in adolescent's sense of self and self esteem. She contends that gay adolescents often feel a total lack of connectedness, largely due to the institutionalised heterosexuality into which they have socialised. The importance of supportive responses from friends upon disclosure cannot be underestimated in reducing or preventing negative and high risk behaviours, which will be looked at later in the report. This is juxtaposed by findings of a survey of almost 1100 young people from 14 – 25 years in Northern Ireland where almost 50% stated that sex between men is always or mostly wrong and one third believed the same of sex between women (Schutobz, 2002). As negative responses are generally due to homophobia (an irrational fear of gay people) predicated on ignorance and stereotyping, it is essential to provide non judgemental opportunities for young people generally to explore these issues of prejudice and make informed decisions about their attitudes to diverse sexual orientation.

### **Coming out to family**

Only one quarter of young people stated that they were out to all of their family, with 36% not out to any family members and the remainder out to some. 80% of respondents who cited concerns about coming out or reasons for not coming out mentioned fear of rejection by family.

*“That my dad and extended family will hate me and my brother (they’re homophobic) my mum kinda knows but she’s in denial”.*

*“I am out to everyone I know except family. I don’t want to lose my parents. A fear of being disowned”*

Similar fears were expressed in some of the focus groups. Unfortunately these fears of rejection that young people have after coming out very often become a reality. One young woman described the consequences of her coming out and the pressure and guilt that she now feels. This research also highlights the practical difficulties that young people are faced with. She reported,

*“I came out to parents and my brothers and sisters and was told that I had two months to get out of the house. I left after a week and spent some time abroad. Relationships in the family broke down, my mother accused me of tearing the family apart and I feel that she’s right.”*

Rejection by the family can leave young people not just emotionally vulnerable but also can leave them at risk. 70% (n=253) of all respondents indicated that they had experienced homophobic attitudes from family members and as a result 45% (n =163) felt compelled to leave the family home. One young person said,

*“A neighbour told my parents and they threw me out, they said I was disgusting. I then stayed with some friends but I couldn’t get my own place because I was still at school”.*

Many of the participants discussed the internal conflict and the turmoil that they endure before coming out. In addition to anger and conflict within a family, one young person also highlighted the need for parents to acknowledge their sexual orientation.

*“My parent’s reaction was disbelief. They just don’t believe me. I was 17, it was just before university when I told them. Mum replied – no you’re not. Then I went to GLYNI meetings. I heard some negative talk among university friends, and began to retreat again. I came out again later. My brother was okay with it. I don’t talk about it with my parents. But I will have to bring it up again. If I start a long-term relationship I don’t want them to be disconnected from my life.”*

This fear is further illustrated by Terry Sanderson in his book ‘A Stranger in the Family’ (1996) when he writes *“Children suspect that not only will parents not understand, but they may be actively hostile, and so they keep quiet and simply endure the isolation.”*

Young people expressed a number of emotions in relation to family members, there was fear of rejection, in terms of emotional rejection *“being disowned”* and also fear of physical rejection where they felt that they would be put out or have to leave the family home. Also there were concerns around not disappointing or embarrassing their family. A few of respondents also made reference to religion in relation to family *“My ‘Christian’ family doing the rip”* and *“My family are religious so this made it difficult”*.

The importance of family and a Christian religious ethos in Northern Ireland is enshrined in much of cultural, social, educational and legal doctrine which impacts on society. As they influence society’s perception of the ‘norm’, then anything outside of this is automatically regarded as ‘abnormal’. This can impact on a young person’s view of their sexual identity. Anderson (1987) contends that gay adolescents tend to view themselves as the problem, and fear the ostracism to which revealing their ‘difference’ might lead. This self perception of a young gay person as a ‘problem’, can result in feelings of self hate and consequently high risk taking behaviour.

However some families can also be a significant source of support. A few of the focus group participants described this support. One young man reported,

*“I told my sister, she was great and brought me down to the Kremlin (gay bar)”*

Having the support of your family helps to increase levels of self-acceptance, which in turn appears to relate to fewer mental health problems (Hershberger and D’Augelli, 1995). Moreover, another study looked into the relationship between self-esteem, supportiveness and emotional distress. Their results indicated higher self esteem correlated with lower levels of emotional distress, especially for young lesbians (Grossman and Kernel, 1998). One respondent in this research explained the significance of having family support and acceptance and the positive effect this has on everything else. He added,

*“When I got up the courage to tell my parents they were okay with it, that made everything so much easier”*

### ***Coming out in work***

Of the 258 young people who work 42% of them were not out to colleagues, with 29% out to some and all respectively. Those in the public sector in Northern Ireland are now protected by Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998). But up until recently there was no legislation in the UK to prevent people being dismissed from the private or voluntary sector because of their sexuality. The new EU Framework Employment Equality Directive which was introduced into Northern Ireland in December 2003 will confer protection on employees who believe that they have been unfairly treated because of their sexuality. However, church and religious organisations have successfully lobbied for an exemption from this Directive. This could potentially affect any employee of a school or youth organisation with a religious ethos. Though it’s not just fear of being dismissed that may prevent young people being open about their sexuality, it can also be fear of harassment from colleagues (Snape et al, 1995). 20% of respondents stated that they had to leave a job because of their experience as a young person who identified as LGBT.



### ***Coming out in school / college***

The school and college environment can be very different. Third level colleges are generally more tolerant of difference, and as young people may be living away from home, it can be easier to be more out (Storm, 2000). Studies in the US have found that undergraduates tend to be less homonegative generally than high school students and non-students (Pratte, 1993). However other studies indicated high levels of intolerance to gay students (D'Augelli, 1992) This question did not differentiate between school and college, so the findings are composite. 38% stated that they were not out in school or college. Only 20% of respondents are completely out at school or college with 42% out to some people in that environment. This is reflected in the findings in relation to the number of respondents out to friends. Respondents indicated that a reluctance to come out in a school environment related to concerns around how they would be treated by their peers and those in authority. A culture of homophobia in schools attended by respondents was evident in the ways in which homosexuality as an issue was dealt with

. For instance, one young person remarked,

*“Even in sex ed in school there was no mention of homosexuality”.*

Another respondent stated,

*“Just by ignorance of things and always presuming straight sex in sex education and always discussing man and wife in example stories in any subjects”.*

Not only did many teachers focus exclusively on heterosexual relationships, but where homosexuality was mentioned it was often in a subjective and negative way. Young people were given very definite messages by teachers,

*“Even teachers agreed in sexual education that gay sex was wrong”*

*“Teachers claimed that homosexuality was wrong and immoral as well as being sordid and perverted”*

*“Being told that homosexuality was ok but was not normal and gay people deserved to be treated as second class”*

Another respondent cited his experience

*“...some teachers were also guilty of spreading homophobia. One of my teachers came into class and discussed how disgusting Queer As Folk was. Or another who described in lavish detail how some dirty homosexual in a mac tried to lure him into the public loos? This was the most we heard about homos in school”.*

In addition respondents cited incidences where teachers disclosed the student’s sexuality to their parents or other teachers. This kind of breach of confidence means that young LGBT people would be very reluctant to confide in teachers or seek support from them. One participant stated,

*“Teachers gossiped about my sexual orientation and outed me to my parents”.*

The issue of confidentiality for teachers can be difficult, particularly in balancing it with obligations under child protection legislation. However dilemmas generally arise if a student who is under 17 years discloses that he or she is sexually active, it is not an issue if a student merely discloses he or she is gay, no more than a heterosexual disclosing their sexuality.

Whilst many participants reported negative experiences at school, 8% of respondents did confide in a teacher and some young LGBT people described instances where teachers were very supportive. One young person stated,

*“I approached one of my teachers who was very supportive. Also received counselling as this was mandatory”.*

Another respondent discussed receiving support from a teacher, however also highlighted how some teachers may be constrained and influenced by school policy. She stated,

*“Gained support from another lesbian (teacher). She tried to influence school policy but was subsequently released from her contract.”*

This research indicated that the environment which many young people experienced in school was not conducive to coming out. This requires support and affirmation, rather than hostility and homophobia particularly from those who have a responsibility to protect and enable young people to develop. In this research only 20% of those respondents at school or college are completely out with 38% not out at all. This is not surprising given the experience that 44% had been bullied in school because of their sexuality and 63% suffered negative experiences with only 13% seeking help or support. Of those who identified as completely out in school or college, 88% had experienced verbal abuse with 55% experiencing physical abuse. This is in line with a series of surveys commissioned by Stonewall, which reported that an alarming 93% of young gay, lesbian or bisexual people who are ‘out’ at school suffer verbal abuse (Stonewall, 1999).

However 4% of respondents stated that they did get support and/or information at school with 5% receiving it at college. Respondents explained what they would have liked to happen in school. One participant stated that all he wanted was simply a little reassurance and support, he stated,

*“Someone to talk to. No education as such but I needed someone to tell me that being a bit different wasn’t necessarily bad”.*

Another participant remarked,

*“Insight into gay relationships, and teaching that it should be accepted and was common”*

### ***Coming out in youth organisations***

69% of respondents are or were members of youth organisations. This is not surprising as the questionnaire was actively promoted using the infrastructure of youth and community organisations. However it does have the highest percentage of places where young people are not out with 48%. The fact that members from gay and lesbian youth organisations also completed this questionnaire qualifies to some extent the 30% of those who are completely out in that environment.

Certainly the benefits of youth work for young people are well documented. Research conducted by the Youth Council for Northern Ireland (1998) suggests that the youth service can undoubtedly make an impact on the lives of those who regularly participate in it. It revealed that attending a youth group may help to increase young people’s self worth and confidence. For instance, results showed that the young people who attended youth groups felt more valued at the youth groups than at school, and full time members felt only marginally more valued at home. Moreover, regular attendance was significantly associated with having a positive regard with the youth worker/leader, feeling valued within the groups, being more aware of the range of activities in the groups/units, feeling valued in the community, and feeling confident to share opinions with adults.

The experience of young people who identify as LGBT appears to be different. Only 19% of those who are or were members of youth organisations experienced a positive attitude towards sexual orientation, this included members of the four LGBT organisations who completed questionnaires. However, not only do the majority of youth organisations not promote a positive attitude towards sexual orientation, many also foster negative attitudes. 53% of those who are or were members of youth

organisations stated that they had experienced a negative attitude towards sexual orientation. Some participants described how some youth organisations refuse to acknowledge or accept homosexuality. One participant stated,

*“Everyone thought gays were disgusting and I had to go along with it”.*

Another echoed a commonly cited experience of youth groups where we were told that

*“gay people should burn in hell”*

A number of respondents highlighted negative impacts of coming out in a youth organisation environment

*“In my church group I helped for my Duke of Edinburgh Award. When they discovered my sexuality they asked me to leave as they didn't feel it was appropriate to have someone like me working in such an environment i.e. religious setting with an influence over young children. I never joined my local youth club out of fear of physical or verbal assault because from a young age I was perceived as different.*

*“Boys didn't want to be friends”*

*“I helped with younger children in church (I'd been a regular Church goer my whole life). I was asked to leave when my sexual orientation was openly discussed – I wasn't 'appropriate'”*

*“Would not accept who I was. Forced to leave the church youth group”*

*“Said it was better for me to leave coz I caused trouble”*

Incidences where young people gave examples of being asked to leave, it was invariably a youth leader or adult volunteer who made the request. This goes against the Department of Education's philosophy of those in youth work imparting to young people key values and attitudes such as compassion,

understanding, and acceptance of others. Only 17% of those involved with youth organisations did seek and experience support around their sexuality. However, even where young people sought support from their youth worker they did not always receive a supportive response. One young person stated,

*“I approached a youth leader for support however I was told to go home and not talk about being gay”.*

As the majority of examples cited by respondents of negative experiences relate to faith/church based youth organisations, it would be easy to presume that it is only in a few traditionally conservative youth groups with a strong religious ethos that these opinions prevail. However 58% of those attending youth clubs and 49% of those in youth groups also stated that they had negative experiences related to their sexuality. This compares to 57% of those attending church based organisations and 50% of those involved in uniformed groups. This indicates that no segment of the youth sector, statutory or voluntary, can be exempt from bringing their practice up in line with not only fundamental child protection and youth service policies but also basic human rights.

19% of relevant respondents stated that they had experienced a positive attitude in youth organisations around their sexual orientation

One respondent cited an example in Corrymela where

*“open-mindedness of volunteers helped open eyes and raise awareness among peers and younger members of the group, mainly through group discussion.”*

Another positive experience was

*“When I came out to people within a youth/Christian organisation I received their normal everyday attitude to me which was love and support.”*

A young woman highlighted a further affirmation

*“Yes someone in the group said that they did not care that a person was gay that it didn’t matter as long as they were good people”*

Of those who did experience a positive attitude (19%), 36% of young people experienced it in a youth group environment. This, however, may be further qualified by the fact that young people attending a number of gay and lesbian youth groups completed the questionnaire. For those others, 18% experienced a positive attitude in a youth club, 22% in a uniformed organisation and 20% as members of church based organisations. This is similarly reflected by those who sought and experienced support around their sexuality, and indicates that where there is openness and willingness, support can come from a range of sources.

According to Morrison & L’Hereux (2001) it may appear ambiguous to say that both those who come out at an early age and those who do not come out are both at risk. However research suggests that psychological isolation may affect both these groups. A youth who has disclosed their sexual orientation to others is often at increased risk of harassment and assault. Similarly, someone who does not feel comfortable enough to ‘come out’ to others will also feel more psychologically isolated. Certainly, this double-edged sword was very much in evidence in the present research. Many of the respondents discussed this inner turmoil whereby they felt isolated, and very much wanted to talk about their feelings, get support from others, and not have to live a lie, however at the same time they were also painfully aware of the negative attitudes of others. Paradoxically, when they did ‘come out’ to others they were sometimes isolated even further, and were often the victims of verbal and physical abuse, with some even being made homeless. Moreover as Kitzenger (1996) states a climate of terror has been created whereby most people who identify as LGBT voluntarily and of their own free will choose to stay silent and invisible. Therefore, it seems that for some LGBT young people they are damned if they do ‘come out’ and damned if they don’t.

Many of the respondents involved in LGBT groups highlighted the support they received and the significance of that support. Young participants remarked:

*“Because I am a member of a gay youth group (GLYNI), I receive loads of support around my sexuality”.*

*“I have joined the personal development course at Foyle Friend. Even after one session, I feel a lot better about myself*

Other participants discussed the importance of being accepted, especially when they do not receive support at home or at school. This highlights the great need for supportive organisations. Young people reported,

*“I get accepted here, I don’t at home or in school” (Foyle Friend)*

*“I like being part of the group – I feel that we are able to talk about our feelings and experiences without being judged which is what normally happens” (YouthAction NI)*

All of the young LGBT people involved in these groups described how being part of the group enhances their self esteem and self respect. They also highlighted the significant and positive impact being a member of a LGBT organisation can have on their lives. In addition, many of the young people pointed out that these groups are very different from most other youth organisations. For instance, one respondent reported,

*“The project is absolutely fabulous. The people are friendly and open and give you confidence and support. When I first came I started to feel alive. My ideas are respected and encouraged. This is so different to what I have been used to. It’s a new beginning. I love it” (Foyle Friend)*

Another participant described how privileged they feel being a part of the group and how it has given them hope for the future. She stated,



*“I am happy and feel privileged to be part of this group. I feel excited about what we can achieve” (YouthAction NI)*

88% of respondents believed that youth organisations specifically for young LGBT people could meet some of their needs including providing a sense of identity and belonging (78%), support (85%), opportunity to socialise in an alcohol free environment (63%), access information (70%) and collective action (65%). Other needs which were cited included meeting other young lesbian and gay people, discussing issues with others, accessing counselling, personal development programmes, advice on coming out, legal information and working with other general youth organisations to promote change. The fact that 54% were interested in and 19% already involved with a LGBT specific organisation indicates that if they were more widely available and accessible young people would use them. Currently there are only three LGBT specific organisations in Northern Ireland and only two of those are youth focused and all are based in Belfast or Derry/Londonderry. Since starting this research, one organisation Foyle Friend had to close due to financial difficulties.

However, it is clear from the number of suggestions to the question on what general youth organisations could do for young LGBT people, that many respondents regard this as vital, but feel a lack of confidence in their ability or willingness to do so.

*“I think that youth orgs have a real opportunity to encourage positive discussion around a range of issues including sexuality and other forms of discrimination but I don't think that youth workers I know would know how to even broach the subject let alone support people around it.”*

*“Young people should be able to discuss personal issues with their youth workers. For many young LGBT people this may be their only*

*avenue of support. Often young LGBT people need a lot of support especially when coming out to others”.*

91% of young people responded to this question, more than the number who were or are involved in youth organisations. Suggestions focused on a number of key issues

- Provision of confidential support (advice, guidance, counselling, signposting etc) to young LGBT people and their families.
- Information on LGBT issues and organisations in general information bulletins, directories, posters etc
- Acknowledging the validity of same sex relationships in personal development programmes
- Challenging stereotypes and discrimination with young people generally through discussion of homosexuality in an open, unbiased and non judgemental way
- Raising awareness of issues for young LGBT people with staff, volunteers, management committees and parents in order that they understand the issues and know how to address them in a supportive way.
- Provision of LGBT role models by inviting people from specific organisations to give a talk and answer questions.

It is clear it is mainly in youth groups dedicated to young LGBT people that a young person will not be judged on his or her sexuality or transgender identity. Though it is important to acknowledge that these groups are not utopian and other issues may arise such as class, gender, religion or race. However the experience of young people surveyed indicates that where general youth organisations have a positive attitude, young people can gain considerable support and wellbeing while coming out. Similarly where negative attitudes prevail they can have a detrimental impact on the personal and social development of that young person.

## **Bullying**

The impact of bullying on young people has been widely researched and can include low self-esteem, anti-social behaviour, truancy, self harm (Hawker & Boulton, 2000). Research indicates that gay, lesbian and bisexual youth experience isolation, fear and violence at school more than heterosexual pupils as a result of bullying. This peer victimisation can lead to a range of adverse social, emotional and physical consequences (Elliott & Kilpatrick, 1994), and probably contribute to higher rates of suicide (Rivers, 1996). Nevertheless, a mere 6% of high schools have any policy to deal specifically with homophobic bullying (Douglas, et al 1997; Stonewall, 1999).

Mason & Palmer (1996) highlight a study which revealed that 79% of respondents reported been subjected to homophobic verbal bullying, 24% endured homophobic physical bullying and 19% have been the victims of severe homophobic physical bullying. All of these respondents were under 18 years old. Additionally, Rivers (1996) in a similar study describes some of the attacks reported by respondents, namely, having clothes set alight, being urinated upon, being burned with cigarettes while being held down, and being raped by teachers or pupils.

Without a doubt, the level and extent of bullying and victimisation that many young lesbian and gay people endure can be particularly traumatic (Rivers, 1996). Nevertheless, there is a dearth of research on the nature and scale of homophobic bullying in Northern Ireland. Foyle Friend (1999) reported the results of a survey of 31 young respondents in Derry, Donegal and Tyrone who identified as gay, lesbian or bisexual. More than one third felt that their schoolwork had been adversely affected. Combat Poverty Agency (1995) conducted a survey in Ireland and revealed that 57% of respondents had experienced a range of problems at school due to homophobia, including isolation, depression, poor self-esteem, harassment and bullying. Similarly, Stonewall (1996) conducted a survey of 4,000 people in Britain. Results indicated that almost half of respondents under the age of 18 had experienced violence, 61% had been harassed, and almost all of the respondents had been called names because of their sexuality. Additionally, one quarter of all

respondents under the age of 18 had been attacked by fellow students, whilst 79% had been called names by fellow students. Significantly, 40% of violent attacks took place in school.

In Northern Ireland generally a recent study by the University of Ulster found that 30% of post-primary pupils stated that they had recently been bullied, while 25% of primary and 28% of post-primary pupils said they had bullied another pupil. The most common form of bullying in schools was found to be name-calling (Collins et al, 2002)

### ***Bullying in school / college***

The findings of this research concur with studies conducted in both the UK and US. 44% of respondents indicated that they been bullied at school directly because of their sexual orientation. With 63% of the sample stating that they had suffered negative experiences around their sexuality it is clear that actual bullying was only one manifestation of that negativity. Their perceived sexuality also meant that 33% believed that they achieved lower results, one quarter of young people truanted with 15% actually dropping out and 9% changing school. 12% stated that they had experienced other non defined effects while at school. This question was phrased in such a way so as respondents could express experiences that were not necessarily related, e.g. not all of those who dropped out necessarily truanted. However the impact of bullying is stark in that those who stated they had been bullied also made up 69% of those who said that they left school earlier than they would have preferred and 65% of those who believed that they had achieved lower results. One respondent believed that she was “*chucked out – not said coz I was gay but that was the real reason*”

The impact of bullying went further than just affecting school experience also providing a disproportionate correlation between being bullied and negative self behaviour such as self harm, being medicated for depression and high risk sexual activity, which will be explored in a later section.

The bullying experienced by respondents and those in the focus groups gives a frightening indication of both the subtle and blatant torment experienced by young LGBT people. In general 65% of respondents experienced verbal abuse with 35% stating that they had experienced physical abuse. The most explicit examples were given in a school context.

One young man outlined being

*“Being stripped naked and beaten with hockey sticks - also having my balls kicked”*

Another young man described the range of abuse that he endures. He said,

*“Getting the crap kicked out of me a few time, held down and guys stick their dicks in my face to simple name calling”.*

Other forms of bullying were less blatant but equally traumatic. One young man described how he felt isolated after other pupils found out that he was gay and how this had a negative impact on his attendance at school.

*“Those at school found out I am gay. I was ostracised. Did not go to school a lot because I did not like it”.*

Some participants discussed trying to ‘fit in’ with the rest of the pupils. The research highlights the importance of peer pressure and a desire to be ‘normal’. One young man described how he had to pretend he wasn’t gay to avoid getting called names. He reported,

*“Made efforts to fit in with everyone else. Was called “a queer”. Accepted it and tried to deal with it without confirming that I was. I tried to pretend that I was not”.*

Additionally, respondents described the ongoing abuse that a lot of LGBT people have to live with. For example, one participant discussed ,

*“Constant verbal abuse and derogatory remarks from pupils”*

Another young man described how this constant abuse has a detrimental impact on an individual’s self esteem and self confidence. He stated,

*“Almost all the (male) pupils at school are homophobic and are always sneering at each other in homophobic ways, which does make you feel like shit”*

Stereotypes such as being good or not good at sport were promoted by pupils and teachers

*“Not being able to play rugby meant that you were a ‘gay bastard’”.*

Additionally, some young people expressed situations where they were bullied by pupils and by teachers. One respondent described how it was so bad at school they had to leave. For example, he remarked,

*“I left school early and moved to tec. I was bullied from 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> year. I had to leave. I didn’t come out at school, but people said I was gay. I didn’t really understand what gay was. Teachers would say: Don’t be such a sissy / girl to me too”.*

Another young person discussed the bullying in school, and believed that the teachers were worse than the pupils. They remarked,

*“Discrimination from teachers more so than peers. Told by teachers that it wasn’t normal or not to think it was ‘cool’. “It’s not like a handbag you know” I was told”.*

Participants described how they felt teachers ignored the bullying and one young man discussed how he couldn't complain to them as he believed they would tell his parents. He recalled,

*"I was bullied and it was completely ignored by members of staff, couldn't complain because they would have spoken to my parents"*

Other participants described how teachers would condone bullying directed towards them and talk about them with other teachers. One respondent described how he was made to feel abnormal and his feelings ignored and denied by those in authority. He stated,

*"Teachers had more of a problem than pupils. Teachers would talk/gossip about it, even in the corridors, and allowed verbal abuse directed towards me by other pupils, even in front of them. The school also made it clear to me that my sexual orientation was abnormal and not to be talked about in school".*

In a parliamentary inquiry in 2001, Dr David Plummer, reported that attitudes to male homophobia and masculinity began early in life in primary school playgrounds and before children had any understanding of sex. Labels of "faggot" and "poofter" were routinely given to boys whose behaviour was perceived as in any way different from the "norm", although what the "norm" constituted was unclear. As with all forms of bullying, the reasons appear to be a specious justification for bullies to indulge in premeditated violence for the purpose of gratification. Any behaviour, which did not appear to conform to peer group culture, was considered fair game by the bullies. The homophobic attribute seemed to be a convenient vehicle for justifying violent behaviour which took place away from teachers' gaze in areas such as school toilets, changing rooms, sports grounds and any secluded area. Dr Plummer felt that because bullying took place in these areas out of sight of teachers, the levels of bullying, and especially homophobic bullying, cited by teachers might be grossly underestimated. (Plummer, 2001)

### ***Bullying in youth organisations***

The same question on bullying was not asked in relation to youth organisations though asking young people to leave because they were not fit to be a member is certainly a form of bullying. However several respondents did specify bullying as an example of a negative experience in that environment such as

*“Homophobic attitudes – name calling”*

*“Bullying from other members”*

The crucial difference between school and youth organisations seems to be that young people could leave youth organisations voluntarily if they were not pushed. However in a school environment they often had to endure it or take action such as truanting or dropping out to protect themselves. Warwick, Aggleton and Douglas (2001) looked at the extent of bullying in UK schools. They revealed that factors such as a lack of experienced staff, or a lack of school policy would hinder pupils from attempting to get help or support with homophobic bullying. Schools have a statutory obligation under the Northern Ireland Children’s Order 1998 to protect young people in their care. In addition the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 2003 includes provisions to safeguard and promote the welfare of all registered pupils while in the care of the school; and to ensure that every school develops and implements a child protection policy. Article 19 specifically states that prevention of bullying be specifically addressed and to ensure consultation with pupils (HMSO, 2003). The Bill to implement this Order was being debated by the Northern Ireland Assembly when it was suspended, however it is likely that the Bill will eventually be passed and the welfare aspects of it unchanged.

This research indicates that schools and youth organisations in Northern Ireland are failing to protect many young people who identify as LGBT from bullying and discrimination and their policies and approach are not only complicit in this but in some cases exacerbate negative experiences. Even though they are regulated by child protection and anti bullying policies,



homophobic bullying was usually not explicit in these policies and in many cases teachers and youth workers were not trained to deal with the issue and were often influenced by personal prejudice. Certainly some of the respondents discussed a reluctance to complain about homophobic bullying because they were frightened that their teachers would 'out' them to their parents.

Collins et al (2002) research found that almost 50% of post primary pupils had reported being bullied to a teacher. It is less likely that a young person who is being bullied because of a different sexual orientation will report it because of concern about the consequences of outing themselves and being victimised twice, firstly by the bully and then potentially by the adult responsible for their welfare. The homophobic messages that young people receive from their peers and the adults effectively silence them and in doing so deny them access to services and rights open to other young people, often leaving them to cope alone. These messages which young people generally pick up from their peers, adults around them, churches, society and in the media often state that being gay is evil, abnormal, something to be feared, a danger to children, perverted and immoral. This gives bullies a reason validated by society to pick on this person and also perhaps explains the often brutal nature of homophobic bullying. It also reduces effective intervention by adults who would not fail to respond if the bullying was related to disability, race, religion or physical appearance. These findings underline the importance of appropriate and effective anti-homophobic bullying policies in schools and youth organisations, protecting all young people regardless of their identity. However this will not work without the education of young people in general about the breadth of sexuality and also of the adults who purport to support their social and personal development.

### **Emotional and Physical Health**

It has been argued that certain social psychological experiences, like bullying or peer victimization play a central role in the development of depression and other forms of psychological maladjustment. For instance, Hawker & Bolton (2000) revealed that victims of peer aggression suffer a variety of feelings of

psychosocial distress. They feel more anxious, socially anxious, depressed, lonely, and feel worse about themselves than do non victims. Not only are there short-term effects but longer term effects also, namely depression and anxiety, feelings of guilt and shame, social isolation and exceptional timidity (Elliot & Kilpatrick, 1994).

Nevertheless, UK research suggests that mental health services may actually undermine the mental health of gay and lesbian users of mental health services. In a survey by MIND in 1997, half of the respondents were told they would have fewer problems if they tried to alter their sexuality (Barlett & Sandland, 2000). According to Feenan et al (2001) the pathologising of gay, lesbian and bisexual people, which remains widespread within health care, may breach Article 5 in relation to involuntary psychiatric admission (right to security of the person) and/or Article 3 (torture, inhuman or degrading treatment) of the European Convention on Human Rights, whether or not tied to Article 14 of the Convention.

Undoubtedly, mental health problems that may develop with lesbian and gay young adults tend to be explained in social or socio-political rather than in psychological terms (Erwin, 1993). An examination of the experiences that young lesbians and gay men may encounter when developing their sexual identity most certainly reveals a potential range of psychologically demanding situations arising largely from the social context, including negative social representations of lesbian and gay sexuality (Coyle, 1998). These negative social representations translate into a heightened psychological vulnerability of young lesbians and gay males as a sexual minority (Remafedi, 1990).

Not surprisingly, studies have also shown that suicidal behaviour amongst gay and lesbian youth is significantly higher than amongst heterosexual youth (Erwin, 1993; Millard, 1995). For instance a study conducted in London in the 1980s revealed that one in five of gay or lesbian youth had attempted suicide as a direct result of their experience of being lesbian or gay (Trenchard & Warren, 1984). A report commissioned by the US Government concluded that lesbian and gay youth were 2 or 3 times more likely to attempt suicide than

other young people, and that they may account for 30% of suicides in young people (Gibson, 1989). In comparison, the Samaritans North London Youth Project found that around 11% of a large sample of 13-17 year olds had at some time attempted suicide. They contended that age is a significant factor for lesbians and gay men, since young people who are in the process of coming to terms with their sexuality are therefore particularly vulnerable to isolation and stigma among their friends and families.

For young gay men particularly, it is perhaps this emotional abuse which is so worrying that it has led this group to be considered as one of the most 'at risk' groups among the growing teenage suicide rates in the UK. Research indicates that young gay men are between 6 and 30 times more likely to attempt suicide than their heterosexual counterparts (White, 1998). Undoubtedly, the high levels of mental health problems and suicide reported by gay men is a major health issue, however this is only recently being addressed by health and social services in Northern Ireland (Rhyder, 2001).

### ***Attempted suicide***

Young people who participated in this research indicated significant levels of negative self and high risk behaviours. 29% of respondents had attempted suicide, with 59% of them also stating that they had been bullied at school. While there are no definitive statistics for the UK, MIND estimates that each year approximately 19,000 young people under 25 attempt suicide with 4,000 attending hospital having injured or poisoned themselves which equates to 0.02% of UK population under 25 (Donnellan, 2000). In addition almost half of those identifying as transgender had attempted suicide.

### ***Self harm***

26% of respondents indicated that they had self-harmed, with a significantly higher percentage of women (33%) than men (22%). Of those who identified as transgender 50% admitted to self-harming. Exact statistics for the general youth population are not available, however in a survey involving more than 6,000 teenagers 10.2% reported carrying out a deliberate act of self-harm (Centre for Suicide Research, 2003). Meltzer's (2001) research on children

and young people found that the rate of self harm among 5 – 15 year olds with no mental disorder was 1.2%, but this rises to 9.4% where anxiety disorders are evident and 18% of those who had been diagnosed with depression. It is significant that 54% of those who self harmed also were bullied at school.

### ***Medicated for depression***

Almost one quarter of respondents indicated that they had been medicated for depression, accounting for 23% of male and 26% of female respondents. This percentage increases significantly for those who identify as transgender with 50% indicating that they had been medicated for depression. The figure rises further in relation to experiencing bullying at school with 53% of the sample providing a correlation. In the UK, 4 per cent of children aged 5-15 are diagnosed with an emotional disorder such as anxiety or depression, according to a 1999 study by the Office for National Statistics.

### ***Eating disorder***

21% of respondents indicated that they had experienced an eating disorder, this accounted for 19% of male and 25% of female respondents. This figure increases significantly for those who identify as transgender with 57% stating they had experienced an eating disorder. There is little research information available on this, however in one case which has been documented the author and the patient both concluded transgenderism to be a risk factor for an eating disorder because of the “estrangement from body, emphasis on biological gender, and expected social role” (Surgenor et al, 1998). While there are no definitive figures for numbers of young people generally who experience an eating disorder, incidence rates for detection of cases by GPs in 1993 was 12.2 per 100,000 population for bulimia nervosa, and 4.2 per 100,000 for anorexia nervosa. The relative risks of females to males was 47:1 for bulimia and 40:1 for anorexia, with the most commonly used proxy of 10% of all cases of eating disorders will be male. (Eating Disorders Association UK). While it is acknowledged that many people will not present to a GP, the best estimates suggest that about one young woman in a hundred has bulimia nervosa and probably somewhat fewer have anorexia nervosa (Palmer,

1996). There appears to be a much higher incidence of eating disorders in male respondents than in the general population.

### ***Alcohol misuse***

34% of respondents indicated that they had experienced alcohol misuse, accounting for 35% of male and 33% of female respondents. Once again this percentage increases significantly for those who identify as transgender with 50% stating they had experienced alcohol misuse. Younger people aged 16-24 are the heaviest drinkers in Britain, with 36% of males in this group and 25% of young women drinking more than the recommended weekly levels (Office of National Statistics).

### ***Drug misuse***

23% of respondents indicated that they had experienced drug misuse, with little difference in terms of gender. However 43% of those who identify as transgender with 43% stated they had experienced drug misuse. Among 16 to 24 year olds in England and Wales in 2000: 29% had used drugs in the last year, however of these only 9% self identified as 'misusing or being somewhat addicted to drugs' (Dept of Health, 2001).

### ***Unsafe sex***

27% of respondents indicated that they had practiced unsafe sex, with only slight difference for males (28%) to females (26%) . This figure is on a par with those who identify as transgender with 28% (n=4) indicating they had practiced unsafe sex. 48% of respondents stated that they had received information at school on issues such as safer sex including HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. 92% of those who practiced unsafe sex did receive information in schools on safer sex. This would indicate other factors may be stronger than a correlation between having information and practicing safe sex. One of these may be that respondents highlighted that often sex education made the presumption that all members of the class were heterosexual.

50% of overall respondents stated that they had experienced not being in control of a sexual situation, of which 43% had practiced unsafe sex. There was no data available for the general youth population on this issue.

### ***Being paid for sex***

7% of respondents indicated that they had been paid for sex, this accounted for 8% of male and 6% of female respondents. This figure is on a par with those who identify as transgender with 7% indicating they had been paid for sex. Again there are no statistics available for young people in the general UK population who practice unsafe sex or who have being paid for sex. However this response rate may have implications for those who work with sex workers and those in health education/promotion fields.

### ***Sex in public places***

31% of respondents indicated that they had experienced sex in public places, this accounted for 36% of male and 20% of female respondents. This percentage is on a par with those who identify as transgender with 36% indicating they had experienced sex in public places. Once again there are no statistics available for young people in the general UK population who experience sex in public places, however these statistics have particular implications for young gay and bisexual men who may face prosecution if they are caught by the police.

The profile of respondents indicates a strong predisposition to mental instability, high risk behaviour taking and negative self image. Young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender in this research are approximately at least three times more likely to attempt suicide, two and a half times more likely to self harm, five times more likely to be medicated for depression, and twenty times more likely to suffer from an eating disorder than their heterosexual counterparts. They drink and take drugs on a par with heterosexuals though it's impossible to compare levels of misuse due to the subjective nature of it. In addition a significant percentage have experienced sexually risky situations such as practicing unsafe sex, being paid for sex or not being in control of a sexual situation. The impact of

bullying in schools is stark here and while the question was not about experience because of bullying, the correlation cannot be ignored. Though there is some general gender distinction, the main distortion appears to be that experienced by those who identified as transgender. Even allowing for the small sample (14), the percentages are significant and raise the debate around particular support and understanding which needs to be developed around transgenderism apart from issues around sexual orientation.

A small minority of respondents indicated that they had been paid for sex. Additionally, almost one third of participants stated that they had experienced sex in public places. Examples of public places given in the questionnaire included public toilets, parks, cruising. The Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2000 decriminalised “homosexual acts in private” between consenting males who have attained the age of 17 years in Northern Ireland. However an act will not be regarded as done in private when two or more persons take part or are present, or when two or more people take part in an act in a lavatory to which the public have access. Therefore, even the presence of another person will render many sexual activities between consenting men unlawful. There is no comparable offence in relation to vaginal intercourse between persons of the opposite or same sex. (Feenan et al, 2002). The Sexual Offences Bill (SOB) which is to be introduced into the House of Lords will equalise current gay offences and penalties as between gay and straight, will end the 'privacy' rule whereby a third party present makes gay sex illegal and abolishes the crimes of buggery and gross indecency and provides for a new definition of what constitutes indecent behaviour in a public place. Unfortunately this Bill will only apply to England and Wales and there is debate on whether or not it will be extended it to Northern Ireland. Findings from this research have particular relevance in terms of informing young people about the risks they are taking with regard to prosecution.

These results strongly indicate that young LGBT people may be more likely to engage in high risk behaviour. Certainly these findings would support other research, which suggests that there is a relationship between negative self perception of sexual orientation to high risk taking behaviour. (Anderson 1987;

Lock 1999). Half to three quarters of those who cited being bullied or negative experiences in school also cited evidence of high risk taking behaviour and mental health issues. This is consistent with a significant body of research which links negative societal attitudes to negative self perception, low self esteem, poor performance depression and mental health issues (DiPlacido 1998, Bagley & Tremblay, 1997; Rivers, 2002). However Vincke et al (2002) advocates that good social support and confidants can mitigate some of the negative societal influences thereby reducing the chance of high risk taking and mental health issues. Morrison & L'Hereaux (2001) point out access to a supportive lesbian and gay organisation such as Project 10 in California or Outright in New England can decrease isolation and self destructive behaviours. According to Morrison & Garthwaite (1999) those who participated in the Outright project reported feeling more supported in the coming out process (78%), whereas 82% felt less isolated. Moreover, 42% of the young people that attended the project reported practicing safer sex due to the education they received at Outright, whilst 39% of the participants stated that they used less drugs and alcohol since attending the program. Thus attending organisations or programmes that accept and support all young people may help to lessen the risk of self destructive behaviour and suicide attempts.

Additional findings may have implications for workers in other fields

17% of respondents experienced sexual abuse. Research indicates that 25% of females and 14% of males irrespective of orientation experience sexual abuse before the age of 18 (Ghate et al, 1995). No research produces evidence of a link between sexual abuse and sexual orientation, however findings may have implications for counsellors working in this area.

7% of respondents indicated that they are or had been in care, again there is no known correlation between sexual orientation and being in care, however, the findings may have relevance for workers in the care and leaving care field.



## Chapter Five - The Institutional Response

### Public Sector

The experience of organisations working with LGBT people generally is that as a result of the Section 75 legislation, public sector organisations have proactively been inviting responses to a variety of consultation documents. The LGBT community has responded primarily through the Coalition on Sexual Orientation (CoSo) and which produced a booklet entitled “Consulting With Sexual Minorities” specifically for the public sector. Part of the implementation of legislation requires public sector bodies to identify policies which may have an adverse impact on an individual because they are a member of one of the designated categories. These policies are then subject to an equality impact assessment utilising consultation and baseline data to assess the extent of the adverse impact and where possible put forward mitigating alternatives.

Only six public sector organisations stated that they had collected any baseline data and one had used secondary data from the Rainbow Project. The dearth of baseline data on the lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgendered community has been a considerable dilemma for public bodies in addition to the difficulty of engaging directly with lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgendered individuals, who are not easily identifiable and not always willing to come forward. It was therefore surprising that only 48 public bodies (35%) responded to the questionnaire, given that they all have a statutory obligation to consider sexual orientation in implementing their Equality Schemes.

The guidelines from the Equality Commission on the implementation of this legislation state clearly that all staff must receive training on the Statutory Duty. However there are concerns that many public sector organisations have interpreted this to mean that the training is focused on the legal obligations of the Scheme rather than training around the issues which affect particular groups (CAJ general response to Equality Scheme consultations). Respondents to this questionnaire indicated that almost half had conducted

some training with staff which looked at the issues around sexual orientation, with 34% intending to in the future and 19% had not.

A large number of public sector organisations have core or partial remit for children and young people, e.g. Department of Education, Education & Library Boards, Youth Council of Northern Ireland (education and youth service provision), Northern Ireland Office (juvenile justice), Health Boards and Trusts (youth centred health provision) and Department of Social Development (youth welfare programmes). In relation to service provision, 13% stated that they provided or supported programmes, which targeted young people who identified as LGBT. Qualitative responses indicated that all of these public bodies supported through funding rather than delivered any provision. This highlights the fact that there is no mainstream statutory provision for young people who identify as LGBT.

### **Schools**

The present research indicates that schools do not address the sex educational needs of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender. For instance, much of the sex education that is provided in schools fails to acknowledge homosexuality. While there is no formal legal requirement that schools provide education in sex and sexuality, the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 requires schools' curricula to prepare pupils for the "opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life". It is argued that failure to provide some form of sex education may breach this requirement (Lundy, 2000). The Regional Strategy for Health and Social Well Being 1997–2002 identified as a key target that "A comprehensive health programme for schools in relation to sexual and reproductive health, which emphasises the importance of personal relationships, self esteem and decision making skills" should be developed and implemented.

Research shows that many schools do not address the sex educational needs of gay, lesbian and bisexual young people. In a 1996 survey, only 50% of secondary schools, 65% of grammar schools and 15% of primary schools had

a sex education policy with homosexuality covered in 59% of those secondary schools (HPA, 1996). Save the Children and the Children's Law Centre in Belfast found in their research in 1998 that sex education in schools did not provide young people with enough information to make informed choices (Geraghty, 1999).

The Department of Education provided new guidance to schools on the provision of relationships and sexuality education (RSE) (2001). These supersede the 1987 guidelines and unlike those makes specific reference to sexual orientation. The guidance makes many positive statements about the role of RSE. It states that "*RSE is an equal opportunities issue. All pupils have a right to an education which adequately prepares them for adult life, and good RSE plays an integral part. ....RSE can have a positive effect on self-esteem*". Many of the aims outlined are relevant to all young people regardless of their sexual orientation, e.g. "*to enhance the personal development, self esteem and well-being of a young person; to help a young person develop healthy and respectful friendships and relationships; to promote responsible behaviour and the ability to make informed decisions*". It also states that "*To ensure that the learning experiences are effective, positive and relevant to all pupils, the programme should be developmental, accessible and be appropriate to the age and maturity of the pupils. It should meet the needs of both genders and be a positive experience for all participants.*" "*As they mature, pupils should come to understand the importance of self restraint, dignity, respect for themselves and others, including those of a different sexual orientation and acceptance of responsibility*".

Within these guidelines topics which might be covered are suggested, it states "*the outline is not intended to be definitive or prescriptive*". The guidelines for Post Primary Key Stage 4 includes a module on 'Sexuality' which specifies "sexual identity and orientation" as a suggested topic. This is further qualified within the section entitled 'Teaching Sensitive Issues' where it states that "*The issue of sexual orientation should be handled by schools in a sensitive, non-*

*confrontational and reassuring way.... Teachers, whatever their own views, should counteract prejudice and support the development of self-esteem and a sense of responsibility".* This is of particular pertinence to the findings of this study, which indicate that some teachers use their position of authority to put forward their own personal views on sexual orientation, which are not always respectful to all pupils.

Generally the Department has put forward guidelines which could potentially impact positively on thousands of young people going through the school system. However this impact has been greatly reduced by the underpinning 'opt out' option in addressing this topic, which states "*relationships and sexuality education should be taught in a sensitive manner which is in harmony with the ethos of the school and in conformity with the moral and religious principles held by parents and school management authorities*". As the majority of schools in Northern Ireland have a religious affiliation, the influence of this statement cannot be underestimated. Currently the Catholic Relationship Support Agency ACCORD is carrying out research on developing an RSE curriculum more in line with the catholic ethos. The impact is borne out in a survey of sexual attitudes of young people in Northern Ireland which found that "*even schools which operated an otherwise comprehensive and long-term sex and relationships education programme often asked teachers not to discuss homosexuality and bisexuality in the classroom. On some occasions the survey's openness about homosexuality resulted in teachers and school governors refusing to participate in the research*" (Schubotz et al, 2002).

Even in non-denominational schools, Buston et al (2001) identified overt homophobia and heterosexism from teachers in delivering sex education to co-educational schools in Scotland.

Moreover as Warwich et al (2001) points out the multi-faceted and multi-levelled nature of schools needs to be taken into account, namely many settings within any school, for example, playgrounds, dining hall or changing rooms. They argue it is insufficient to tackle sex education within classrooms

and ignore what is happening in the playground or the changing rooms. Thus change needs to be incorporated at all levels.

Without a doubt, there should be a general ethos in schools which addresses equality and diversity. The present research indicates that teachers are unable or unwilling to address the needs of pupils who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender. Moreover, LGBT pupils are being victimised and often are not in a position to access support mechanisms afforded to heterosexual pupils. Despite current Government concern about assisting all schools to be healthy schools (Department of Health, 1999), schools often appear to be anything but this for many LGBT pupils. It is certainly worrying that within schools, which are meant to be safe and healthy environments, little has been done to promote the emotional and physical safety of lesbian, gay and bisexual youth and the few guidelines which exist are being actively ignored or circumvented. While the new curriculum with its emphasis on citizenship and diversity may afford an opportunity for more openness, much will depend on the confidence and opinions of individual teaching staff.

*It should be noted that the Research Steering Group was unable to get permission or support to promote the online questionnaire to young people in schools, even though the research was commissioned by the Department of Education.*

### **Youth Organisations**

A key purpose of this questionnaire was to find out about any work that was going on, identify training and support needs as well as good practice. 76 organisations responded representing a range of local, regional, statutory, community, faith based and secular youth provision across Northern Ireland. Organisations were asked to comment on a number of issues for example, training, support for both staff/volunteers and young people, efforts aimed at encouraging young people to use their services, formal links with LGBT organisations, provision specifically for young LGBT people, assistance needed to address the needs of young LGBT people, improvements to be

made in relation to current youth work, and monitoring and evaluation systems. The very fact of carrying out the questionnaire had some positive impact

*“This questionnaire has highlighted a real need for community projects to become more aware of the needs of young LGBT people within the community. We will become more pro-active in providing services and policies that are inclusive of all sexual orientations”*

*“This is the first time we have ever really thought about this issue”*

### **Policies**

The majority of organisations indicated that they had various policies for instance, equal opportunities, anti-harassment policy, volunteering and/or grievance.

Those which included sexual orientation should be applauded – Equal Opportunities (86%), Anti Bullying (73%), Anti Harassment (76%), Volunteers (68%), Grievance/Complaints (38%). 22% of those with Grievance/Complaints procedures also included biphobia and transphobia. These statistics are unexpectedly high and this may be in part the fault of the question posed, which did not ask whether sexual orientation was included explicitly in policies, rather than just inferred along with the usual other categories. In many cases it can be assumed that sexual orientation is only included implicitly once the operationalisation of policies is examined. Of those with Equal Opportunities policies, which is the most basic statement of inclusion, 65% do not provide resources to support staff around LGBT issues, 20% would not like to receive training for their staff to engage more effectively with young LGBT people, 46% do not provide training opportunities for their staff on sexual orientation, 62% do not provide general resources to young LGBT people and only 17% have links to LGBT organisations. In addition, the fact that 22% of those with Grievance/Complaints procedures stated that it included biphobia and transphobia would indicate inference, as neither expression is in common usage in the youth sector.

It is important that sexual orientation is included explicitly in all relevant policies. The inclusion of the phrase sends a clear message to young LGBT people, that the organisation welcomes their participation and will endeavour to provide the same experience as for heterosexual young people. It also indicates to volunteers and staff that as a youth organisation, it is not just 'open to all young people' but is attempting to be genuinely inclusive. They then have a right to be supported to implement that policy of inclusion. Inclusive policies should also impact on a range of organisational issues. This means that they do not just sanction a young person who calls another person a 'poof', but acknowledges through the curriculum, recruitment strategy, partnerships/alliances, provision, publicity and publications, the diversity of the young people in their care.

### ***Provision***

Only 8 organisations surveyed made provision specifically for young LGBT people, this includes 4 LGBT groups and 4 mainstream youth organisations. 37% of organisations stated that they had provision to support young LGBT people generally. This included things such as information leaflets on sexual health. However most organisations stated that young LGBT people are treated in the same way as all young people. These organisations address the generic needs of all young people and do not focus specifically on the needs of any one particular group. This was supported by phrases such as

*"We are open to all young people"*

While 58% of organisations stated that they would not be in a position to make provision specifically for young LGBT people they would encourage young LGBT people to participate in their existing youth work programmes. Only one mainstream youth organisation stated that young LGBT people were not welcome in their community.

When asked what provision would they like to make for young LGBT people, that data there was a mixed response, with some organisations unsure of the

type of provision they could make for young LGBT people. However, other mainstream youth organisations did identify the types of provision they felt they could make for young LGBT people. Some, but not all of this provision is in line with what young LGBT people have suggested.

Mainstream youth organisations believe that they could

- Involve young LGBT people in the design and delivery of youth work programmes, and in the decision-making structures of their organisation
- Involve young LGBT people in discussions, debates, workshops on sexual orientation
- Provide confidential advice and support for young LGBT people
- Provide LGBT information including LGBT contact details for mainstream youth work staff/volunteers/management committees and young people
- Provide and advertise safe LGBT spaces
- Establish, develop and maintain partnerships with specific LGBT organisations/projects
- Provide Advocacy, Befriending, Counseling and Mentoring services
- Provide legal information
- Provide accommodation
- Provide support to facilitate young LGBT people to lobby for their specific needs
- Provide support to parents of young LGBT people
- Establish LGBT support groups facilitated by members of the LGBT community
- Provide staff, venues, facilities and resources

For young people themselves, the key request was that mainstream youth provision would

*“Acknowledge that homosexuality exists and accept that some young people attending their youth organisation may be homosexual”*



Some organisations stated that they include LGBT information and contact details for LGBT support groups in publications for their 14+ age group. One positive example of the way in which information for young LGBT people can be included in a mainstream publication is VSB' s Young Citizens in Action, "Sex, Drugs, Rock and Dough", a peer education booklet providing young people with information about where they can access confidential support to deal with health issues.

A number of organisations stated that they would provide general resources to support staff/volunteers working with young LGBT people and to support young LGBT people if the need arose within their organisation. Whether a young person will have the confidence to expose themselves is likely to depend on the explicit organisational attitude to the issue of sexual orientation.

As highlighted in previous chapters, coming out is a major step for most young LGBT people. Prior to talking about their sexuality with others, young people need to feel safe and be certain that support will be available. Nevertheless, the present research indicates that youth organisations say that they will provide support for young LGBT people when the need arises. Additionally, the majority of these youth organisations (85%) state that they do not have publicity aimed at encouraging young LGBT people to use their services. This makes it less likely that the need will arise as a young LGBT person is more likely to seek support when they are certain it will be available to them. Organisations must take the initiative and encourage these young people, who are a particularly vulnerable group, by publicising their services which should be supportive of all young people irrespective of sexual orientation.

A number of organisations stated that their youth programmes are open to all young people. Some of these organisations however, stated that they did not wish to positively discriminate in favour of young LGBT people by making provision specifically for them. Such provision, they believed could lead to

segregation and discrimination. However proactive measures to ensure young LGBT people's involvement in their youth work programmes, does not necessarily mean having to positively discriminate. Given that almost half of young respondents were not at all out in their youth organisation, it is clear that there is a need to identify and remove barriers, which prevent young LGBT people from accessing services.

Promotion to young LGBT people is one way to encourage participation. However 86% of organisations do not target LGBT young people in their publicity. One organisation stated that they would not have publicity aimed at encouraging young LGBT to access their services, as this could be dangerous. This organisation did not expand on this statement. Another organisation stated that it is currently reviewing its' literature and hopes to interview young LGBT people about their views on how and where its services should be publicized. This approach would be beneficial but should be supported with staff training and progressive policies.

LGBT specific youth organisations have a distinct role to play in supporting not just individual young people, but also the wider youth and community sector on issues around sexual orientation. Organisations working directly with young LGBT people exist because of the way in which wider society currently discriminates against and treats lesbian, gays and bisexuals. Mainstream youth organisations can play a positive role in militating against negative societal influences and 91% of young people believed that they should. However, while 84% of young people felt that specific LGBT organisations could meet some of their needs, it is unrealistic that an LGBT youth group would be established in every town or district. It is also unrealistic that there are separate gay and lesbian scout groups, sports clubs, arts groups etc. If mainstream youth organisations (which do exist in every town and district) are more inclusive and young people can access their services regardless of sexuality, then LGBT organisations can focus on specialised provision to meet specific needs.

## **Training**

39 (53%) of 74 organisations that provide training opportunities for staff look at issues concerning sexual orientation. However, this training is often provided as part of a generic (Equality of Opportunity/Sexual Health/Gender/Human Rights etc) Training programme and is delivered in house e.g. as part of an induction programme. Also organisations in receipt of funding from the Education and Library Boards stated that they have a responsibility under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998) to provide training that looks at issues concerning sexual orientation for staff/volunteers. In addition a number of organisations stated that they only provide training that looks at issues concerning sexual orientation when appropriate to do so. However 79% of all organisations would like to receive training for staff/volunteers to engage more effectively with young LGBT people.

The Coalition On Sexual Orientation, Foyle Friend and The Rainbow Project in Northern Ireland, have designed and delivered LGBT Awareness Training. Also, a number of organisations in the G.B. e.g. Allsorts, North London Line, Out on Thursday, OutZone, The LGBT Youth Workers Forum, The Metro Centre have designed and delivered LGBT Awareness Training to youth workers and young people in mainstream youth organisations. Additional online resources such as [www.schools-out.org.uk](http://www.schools-out.org.uk) provide invaluable tools on an ongoing basis. Representatives from these organisations stated that following LGBT training, young people in mainstream youth organisations reported that they could develop better relationships with their heterosexual and homosexual peers. In some local authorities in Great Britain ongoing LGBT Awareness Training is available via the Youth Service. There is no similar training in Northern Ireland, as it tends to be delivered on an ad-hoc basis depending on individual youth workers.

The majority of organisations stated that they would require assistance to make provision specifically for young LGBT people and/or to address LGBT issues with young people in mainstream youth organisations. Identified support needs included

- Guidelines and models of best practice for working with young LGBT people.
- Support to develop and implement policies and procedures to include sexual orientation
- Knowledge of how to promote their services to young LGBT people
- Resources to work with young LGBT people for example grant aid, professional staff to work with young people
- Contact details of organisations that deliver LGBT Awareness training
- LGBT Awareness training for management, staff, volunteers, young people
- Contact details for organisations working with young LGBT people and knowledge of the services they provide. Many youth organisations stated the importance of referring young LGBT people to organisations where professional workers are on hand to meet their specific needs.
- The opportunity to work in partnership with other youth and LGBT organisations
- Qualitative and quantitative data on young LGBT people
- Information in different languages regarding the needs of young LGBT people

LGBT organisations stated that they would require the following assistance to work more effectively with young LGBT people

- Access to youth facilities, youth services, youth information and youth work programmes

Mainstream youth organisations need support from (1) Organisations offering services to young LGBT people and (2) Department / Education and Library Boards to

- Deliver LGBT Awareness training to youth work staff, volunteers, management committees and young people
- Design and deliver current youth work programmes to include sexual orientation

- Develop policies and procedures for working with young LGBT people
- Develop links with organisations that offer services to young LGBT people. Youth workers need access to LGBT workshops, seminars, conferences etc where the needs of young LGBT are being discussed, if they are to be effective in addressing LGBT issues with young people in general
- Develop publicity aimed at encouraging young LGBT people to access mainstream youth organisations
- Develop resource materials for working with young LGBT people in mainstream youth organisations

Mainstream youth organisations made the following suggestions as to how current youth work programmes could be enhanced to take account of the specific needs of young LGBT people

- Youth work staff/volunteers/management committees could be trained to work with young LGBT people and to address LGBT issues with young people in general. Furthermore, it is essential that youth workers are not homophobic and feel comfortable addressing LGBT issues in mainstream youth organisations. Sexual orientation should be included in an overall accredited anti-discriminatory training programme
- Management Committees could be trained to support youth work staff and volunteers working with young LGBT people and/or addressing LGBT issues with young people in general
- Training materials and resources could be developed and sexuality proofed
- Policies and procedures for working with issues of sexual identity could be introduced into organisations
- Pilot projects for working with young LGBT people and addressing LGBT issues with young people in general could be developed

- Further research could be undertaken to specifically look at ways in which current youth work programmes could be enhanced to take account of the specific needs of young LGBT people
- Sexual orientation could be incorporated into youth work programmes e.g. LGBT issues could be included in relationship, sex, sexuality, sexual health education, personal development, community relations programmes etc, positive LGBT images, information, details for support groups could be displayed within mainstream youth organisations, etc. These types of initiatives would increase awareness and respect for sexual difference amongst all young people, staff, volunteers, management etc
- Mainstream youth organisations could work in partnership with organisations that offer services to young LGBT people to enhance their youth work programmes
- Specific youth work programmes e.g. Peer Education programmes could be designed for young LGBT people. These programmes could involve young LGBT people in their design and where appropriate their delivery

### ***LGBT Organisations***

Less than one quarter of youth organisations have contact with LGBT organisations. Those who have contact with organisations in Northern Ireland stated that they had contact with Aids Care Education and Training (ACET), The Coalition on Sexual Orientation Foyle Friend, Gay Lesbian Youth Northern Ireland, HIV Support Centre, Lesbian Line, NAMES Project, The Rainbow Project and Voluntary Aids Forum. Organisations that have contact with LGBT organisations in the U.K. and Ireland cited The Terrance Higgins Trust, National Aids Helpline and Mens Health Forum.

A number of organisations stated that they also had associations with LGBT organisations. These included

- Working alongside representatives from LGBT organisations on e.g. The Equality Coalition, Human Rights Consortium
- Working with LGBT organisations on specific projects e.g. training with public authorities
- Inviting LGBT representatives in to engage young people in educational work
- Providing safe spaces for LGBT groups to meet
- Participating in LGBT research
- Referring young LGBT people to specific LGBT organisations

There are only two organisations working specifically with young LGBT people, YouthAction NI and GLYNI. Foyle Friend (now closed) and Rainbow Project work with young people as part of a wider LGBT constituency.

### **Youth Action NI**

YouthAction NI is the only youth organisation in Northern Ireland that makes provision specifically for young Lesbians via their Out and About: Supporting Young Lesbians Programme. This programme has been running for two years and was established in response to direct need. During the past 18 months, twelve young lesbians (16-25) from a range of locations in the Greater Belfast area have been meeting in a safe environment, sharing experiences and identifying key issues impacting on the lives of young Lesbians in Northern Ireland. Presently a core group of eight is in the process of developing ways to address some of these issues. They have recently produced a good practice guide to working with young lesbians and bisexual women.

YouthAction NI also supports young LGBT people in its' mainstream youth provision. Through the ongoing work of The Rainbow Factory, Part-Time School of Performing Arts, many young people, particularly young gay men,

have been supported to come out. YouthAction NI have organised a number of workshops exploring sexual orientation issues with young people.

### **Foyle Friend**

Foyle Friend's Youth Group provided a safe space for approximately 100 young LGBT people in the North West of Northern Ireland. Young LGBT people attending the Youth Group were able to access support, advice, information and training. Other facilities included Foyle Friend's Coffee Bar, Drop-In Centre, Family Support Scheme, Homophobic Incident Support, Listening Ear Service and Self Help Groups. Young LGBT people attending the Youth Group got the opportunity to share their views and feelings, participate in workshops, focus groups, recreational weekends etc. Also they had the opportunity to access Foyle Friend's library (Books, Videos, Internet etc). Foyle Friend's Youth Group was publicized via their Youth Project Brochures, OGAY Newsletter, Posters, Mailing List, Email List, Text Service and Website.

### **Gay Lesbian Youth Northern Ireland (GLYNI)**

GLYNI was set up as an alcohol free, social, safe space for young LGBT people, particularly for those who were just coming out. Approximately 30 young people, usually male (under 25) attend the group. Often the initial contact is by email. GLYNI provides a weekly support and activity group where young LGBT people can befriend others; discuss issues and access information and support. It also offers one to one and email support via an email discussion group "Out Youth". Recently requests for email support have increased from young women.

GLYNI host its' own website [www.glyni.org.uk](http://www.glyni.org.uk) which has had over 20,000 hits since November 2000. (This figure includes repeat visits to the site). GLYNI has run a number of 12-month Personal Development Programmes in conjunction with Challenge For Youth. It is hoped that both youth organisations will work together over the next 12 months to run a Media Programme. Challenge For Youth also provides activity-based programmes for GLYNI members. GLYNI publicise their services in The Buzz, which is a



free entertainments listing magazine, in gay publications, online and occasionally in The Belfast Telegraph. It has a general mailing list of 250. LGBT information is sent out to young LGBT people and interested voluntary organisations on a regular basis. GLYNI have produced an information booklet for young LGBT people, leaflets and fact sheets for youth organisations.

### **Monitoring**

The majority of youth organisations stated that they do have monitoring and evaluation systems in place for young people however only 12% of organisations monitor for numbers of young LGBT people. This may be because collection of this type of data is difficult to ask for outright and may conflict with the privacy rights of young people.

Examples of systems of monitoring and evaluation for young LGBT people used in mainstream youth organisations are as follows

- Staff noting on monitoring forms issues raised by young LGBT people
- Staff monitoring observations in relation to LGBT young people
- Staff dealing with LGBT issues at staff meetings
- Staff meeting with young LGBT people to discuss LGBT issues
- Young LGBT people evaluating the service they receive

### **General Comments**

The comments received at the end of the questionnaire were very supportive and encouraging. Moreover, they indicated that the vast majority of organisations are willing to support and address the needs of young LGBT people. Many organisations stated that they would welcome the opportunity to work with young LGBT people and to address LGBT issues with young people in general. Furthermore, the majority of organisations stated that they were looking forward to seeing the findings and committed to future constructive work. Indeed the comments received were most encouraging. A selection of comments are included below.

*“This research is long overdue. I hope that the project will serve to raise awareness among youth organisations of the needs of young LGBT people”*

*“As a youth agency, we are delighted to see this research taking place”*

*“We are aware that we are not targeting this issue as much as maybe we should be”*

*“We would welcome suggestions/ideas for improving our service, letting people know about our service provision and providing for particular needs”*

*“Has been quite difficult to answer some of the questions”*

## Chapter Six - Recommendations

Proposal to Progress The Outcomes of The Research Into The Needs Of Young People Who Identify As Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual And/or Transgender (LGBT)

This summary of the recent research into *'The needs of young people in Northern Ireland who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual and/ or transgender'* concluded that, in order for both the formal and non-formal education sectors to engage effectively with young LGBT people and to address LGBT issues with young people in general; action needs to be taken in the following areas:

- Development of support services for young people who identify as LGBT
- Development and delivery of appropriate training
- Production of specific information materials on sexual orientation for young people and the incorporation of LGBT issues into existing youth information strategies.
- Curriculum and programme development which will address issues of sexual orientation and recognize the needs of young people who identify as LGBT
- Inclusion of sexual orientation matters in all pertinent policies, procedures and guidelines.
- Further research

In order to progress this programme of work YouthNet recommends that the key organisations identified below are approached to carry out specific tasks.

### **The Department of Education**

The Department of Education should, as a matter of urgency, initiate a taskforce inclusive of:

- The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and the Department of Social Development;

- Community and Voluntary sector organisations with relevant expertise in rights based and development work and/or who have experience of work with young people who identify as LGBT; and
- LGBT organisations.

The purpose of the Taskforce would be to progress the outcomes of the research into the needs of young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender (LGBT). In particular the Taskforce should seek to reduce the incidence of bullying because of sexual orientation and reduce negative and risk taking behaviours such as alcohol misuse, practicing unsafe sex, self harm and suicide; by:

- Piloting and developing LGBT awareness training programmes targeted all those involved in the development and implementation of services to young people in formal and non-formal education, in both the statutory and voluntary sectors.
- Securing funding for resource staff in voluntary organisations to provide the support needed to implement training programmes in the formal and non-formal education sectors.
- Securing funding for the creation of safer spaces and services for young people who identify as LGBT.
- Producing and disseminating information posters, leaflets and booklets including positive information and support to young people who identify as LGBT.
- Developing support mechanisms for parent, guardians of young people who identify as LGBT.
- Encouraging organisations in the formal and non-formal education sectors to review existing policies and where appropriate incorporate

sexual orientation issues into their policies, procedures and guidelines; and to be proactive in implementing subsequent measures.

- Specific LGBT projects for young LGBT people under 16 years old. Presently these young LGBT people cannot access any support despite the fact that they may have similar needs to those over 16 years old.
- Include sexuality as a core topic in both the new Citizenship curriculum and as a compulsory topic in the Relationships and Sexuality Education programme.
- Develop and pilot a training pack for teachers and youthworkers around working with issues of sexuality in a positive way

### **The Youth Service Liaison Forum**

The Youth Service Liaison Forum should actively develop partnerships between and working groups with youth and LGBT organisations to promote the personal, social and educational development of young people who identify as LGBT. These joint initiatives should focus on supporting young LGBT people to engage in structured personal and social development programmes; where appropriate leading to peer facilitation and integrated work with generic youth activities. All such work would need to be supported by - and link into - the production of information posters, leaflets and booklets including positive information and support to young people who identify as LGBT.

### ***The Youth Council for Northern Ireland***

The Youth Council for Northern Ireland should seek resources to enable LGBT organisations develop joined-up support structures including direct services to young people such as help lines, personal development programmes and counselling services.

### **The Education and Training Inspectorate**

The Education and Training Inspectorate, as part of their common framework for evaluation, should evaluate the effectiveness of institutions and individual organisations in the formal and non-formal education sectors in addressing the needs of young people who identify as LGBT.

### **The Curriculum Development Unit**

The Curriculum Development Unit should commission the production of and seek out existing resource materials that will contribute to increased awareness of LGBT issues and enable youth organisations to better address the personal and social development needs of young people who identify as LGBT.

### **The Youth Work Training Board**

The Youth Work Training Board should support relevant youth work organisations to design and deliver specific training programmes to effectively address the needs of young people who identify as LGBT. The development and implementation of such a programme(s) should be evaluated by the Education and Training Inspectorate and where appropriate disseminated widely as best practice.

### **General**

- Extend the Sexual Offences Bill in full to Northern Ireland.
- Commission further research into the needs of young people in the transgendered community.

## References

- Anderson, D. (1987). *Family and Peer Relations of Gay Adolescents*. *Adolescent Psychiatry*, 14, 162-178.
- Bagley, C., & Tremblay, P. (1997). Suicidal behaviors in homosexual and bisexual males. *Crisis*, 18.
- Bartlett, P. & Sandland, R. (2000). *Mental Health Law: Policy and Practice*. London: Blackstone Press, 45.
- Berrill, K. T. (1992). Antigay violence and victimisation in the United States: an overview. In G. M. Herek & K. T. Berrill (Eds.), *Hate Crimes: confronting violence against lesbian and gay men*. London: Sage.
- Buston, K. M. & Hart, G. (2001). *Heterosexism and homophobia in Scottish school sex education: exploring the nature of the problem*. *Journal of Adolescence*.
- Census Report 2001  
Source: Northern Ireland Statistics website: [www.nisra.gov.uk](http://www.nisra.gov.uk)  
Crown copyright material is reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO.
- Centre for Suicide Research (2203) Youth & Self Harm Perspectives – report commissioned by The Samaritans [www.samaritans.org.uk](http://www.samaritans.org.uk)
- Collins, Dr. K., McAleavey, Prof. G & Adams, Dr. G (2002) Bullying in Schools – A Northern Ireland Survey available from the Department of Education Northern Ireland
- Combat Poverty Agency Poverty: *Lesbians and Gay Men; The Economic and Social Effects of Discrimination*. (1995) Dublin: Gay and Lesbian Network and Nexus Research Cooperative.
- Cooper, D. (1994). *Sexing the City: Lesbian and Gay Politics Within the Activist State*. London: Rivers Oram Press.
- Coyle, A. (1998). Developing lesbian and gay identity in adolescence. In J. Coleman & D. Roker, (Eds.), *Teenage Sexuality: Health, Risk and Education*. London: Harwood Academic.
- D'Augelli, A.R. (1992) 'Lesbian and gay male undergraduate experiences of harassment and fear on campus' *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 7:383-395.
- DENI, (1997) *Youth Work: A Model For Effective Practice*. Department for Education, Northern Ireland, .

Department for Education and Employment (1999a). *National Healthy Schools Standard Guidance*. London: Department for Education and Employment.

Department of Health (2002) Drug use, smoking and drinking among young people in England in 2001. HMSO.

DiPlacido, J. (1998). Minority stress among lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals: A consequence of heterosexism, homophobia, and stigmatization. In G. M. Herek (Ed.), *Stigma and sexual orientation: Understanding prejudice against lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals*. Thousand Oaks, CA; Sage.

Donnellan, C (2000). *Self-harm and Suicide*. Independence Educational Publishers.

Douglas, N., Warwick, I., Kemp, S. and Whitty, G. (1997). *Playing it safe: Responses of Secondary School Teachers to Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Pupils, Bullying, HIV and AIDS Education and Section 28*. London: Health Education Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London.

Elliott, M. & Kilpatrick, J. (1994). *How to Stop Bullying: A KIDSCAPE Guide to Training*. London: KIDSCAPE.

Erwin, K. (1993). *Interpreting the evidence: Competing paradigms and the emergence of lesbian and gay suicide as a 'social fact'*. International Journal of Health Services, 23

ETI (Education and Training Inspectorate) 1999-2000: *Report on Personal Safety and Child Protection in the Youth Service*, (P1).

Feenan, D., Fitzpatrick, B., Maxwell, P., O'Hare, U. (2001). *Enhancing the rights of gay, lesbian and bisexual people in Northern Ireland*. Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission Report: Belfast.

Flowers, P., & Buston, K. (2001). *"I was terrified of being different": exploring gay men's accounts of growing-up in a heterosexist society*. Journal of Adolescence, 24, 51-65.

Foyle Friend (1999). *The Experiences of Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual People in the Northwest of Ireland*. Derry: Foyle Friend.

Geraghty, T. (1999) *Getting it Right? The State of Children's Rights in Northern Ireland at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*. Belfast: Save the Children and Children's Law Centre.

Gibson, P. (1989). *Gay male and lesbian youth suicide: Report of the Secretary's task force on youth suicide (Vol. 3)*. Washington DC: Department Of Health and Human Services.



Grossman, A. H., & Kerner, M. S. (1998). *Self-esteem and supportiveness as predictors of emotional distress in gay male and lesbian youth*. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 35(2), 25-39.

Harris, M. B. (1997). *School Experiences of Gay and Lesbian Youth*. New York: The Harrington Press.

Hawker, D. S. & Boulton, M. J. (2000). *Twenty Years' Research on Peer Victimization and Psychosocial Maladjustment: A Meta-analytic Review of Cross-sectional Studies*. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 41, 4, 441-455.

Health Promotion Agency for Northern Ireland (1996). *Sex Education in Northern Ireland, views from Parents and Schools*. Belfast: Health Promotion Agency for Northern Ireland.

Herek, G. M. (1992). The social context of hate crimes: Notes on cultural heterosexism. In G. M. Herek, & K. T. Berrill ((EDS.), *Hate Crimes: Confronting violence against lesbian and gay men*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Herek, G. M. & Berrill, K. T. (1992). *Hate Crimes: Confronting Violence Against Lesbians and Gay Men*. London: Sage.

Hershberger, S. L., & D'Augelli, A. R. (1995). *The impact of victimization on the mental health and suicidality of lesbian, gay and bisexual youths*. *Developmental Psychology*, 31(1), 65-74.

HMSO (2003) Education & Libraries Order Northern Ireland 2003  
<http://www.hmso.gov.uk/si/si2003/20030424.htm>

Jarman, N & Tennant, A. (2003) An Acceptable Prejudice? Homophobic Violence and Harrassment in Northern Ireland. Published by Institute for Conflict Research  
[http://www.conflictresearch.org.uk/publications/icrpubs/homoph\\_report.pdf](http://www.conflictresearch.org.uk/publications/icrpubs/homoph_report.pdf)

Johnson, A.M., Wadsworth, J., Wellings, K. & Field, J. (1994). *Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles*. London: Blackwell Scientific Press.

Kinsey, A., Pomeroy, W. & Martin, C. (1948) *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*. Philadelphia: Saunders

Kinsey, A., Pomeroy, W., Martin, C. & Gebhard, P (1953) *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female*. Philadelphia: Saunders.

Kitzenger, C. (1996). *Speaking of oppression: Psychology, Politics and the Language of Power*. In E.D. Rothblum & L. A. Bond (Ed.), *Preventing Heterosexism and Homophobia*. Sage Publications.

- Laumann, E., Gagnon, J., Michael, R & Michaels, S (1993) *The Social Organisation of Sexuality*. University of Chicago Press.
- Lock, J. (1999) 'Gay, lesbian and bisexual youth risks for emotional, physical and social problems: results from a community based survey' *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, March.
- Loudes, Dr. C. (2003) *Learning To Grow Up. Multiple Identities of Young Lesbians, Gay Men and Bisexual People in Northern Ireland*. Published by Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission [www.nihrc.org](http://www.nihrc.org)
- Lundy L. (2000) *Education: Law, Policy and Practice in Northern Ireland*. Belfast: SLS Legal Publications (NI), The Queen's University of Belfast
- Mason, A. and Palmer, A. (1996). *Queer Bashing: A National Survey of Hate Crimes Against Lesbians and Gay Men*. London: Stonewall.
- Meyer, I. H. (1995). *Minority stress and mental health in gay men*. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 36, 38-56.
- Millard, J. (1995). *Suicide and suicide attempts in the lesbian and gay community*. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Mental Health Nursing*, 4, 181-189.
- Morrison, L. M. & Garthwaite, L. (1999). *Outcome Efficacy for a Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgendered Youth Gendered Agency*. Unpublished Manuscript.
- Morrison, L. L. & L'Heureux, J. (2001). *Suicide and gay/lesbian/bisexual youth: implications for clinicians*. *Journal of Adolescence*, 24, 39-49.
- National Youth Agency (2002). *The NYA guide to Youth Work and Youth Services*. [www.nya.org.uk](http://www.nya.org.uk).
- Nayak, A. and Kehily, M. J. (1996). *Playing it straight: masculinities, homophobia and schooling*. *Journal of Gender Studies*, 5(2), 211-230.
- Northern Ireland Youth Work Curriculum (2002): *Discussion Paper for the Curriculum Development Unit*.
- Plummer, D. (2001). *The quest for modern manhood: masculine stereotypes, peer culture and the social significance of homophobia*. *Journal of Adolescence*, 24:1
- Pratte, T. (1993). *A comparative study of attitudes towards homosexuality 1986 and 1991*. *Journal of Homosexuality* 26:1.

Quiery, M (2002). *A Might Silence. A Report on the Needs of Lesbian and Bisexual Women in Northern Ireland.* LASI c/o Women's Support Network Belfast

Remafedi, G., French, S., & Story, M. (1998). *The relationship between suicide risk and sexual orientation: Results of a population-based study.* American Journal of Public Health, 88.

Rivers, I. (1996). *Young, gay and bullied.* Young People Now, January, 18-19.

Rivers, I. (2001). *The bullying of sexual minorities at school: its nature and long term correlates.* Educational and Child Psychology, 18:1

Rivers, I. (2002). Developmental issues for lesbian and gay youth. In A. Coyle & C. Kitzinger (Eds.), *Lesbian and gay psychology: New perspectives* (pp. 30-45). Oxford: BPS Blackwell.

Ryder (2001). *Ulster to tackle record male suicide rate.* The Sunday Times 4 February.

Rivers, I. (2001). *The bullying of sexual minorities at school: its nature and long term correlates* Educational and Child Psychology, 18:1

Sanderson, T. (1996) *A Stranger in the Family.* Other Way Press : London.

Savin-Williams, R. (1990). *Gay and Lesbian Youth: Expressions of Identity.* New York: Hemisphere.

Schubotz, D, Simpson, A & Rolston, B (2002). *Towards Better Sexual Health – A survey of sexual attitudes and lifestyles of young people in Northern Ireland.* Family Planning Association London.

Snape, D., Thomson, K. & Chetwynd, M. (1995) *Discrimination against gay men and lesbians: a study of the nature and extent of discrimination against homosexual men and women in Britain today.* London: SCPR

Spira, A. (1993) *Les Comportements Sexuels en France.* Paris: La documentation France.

Sprecher, S & McKinney, K. (1993). *Sexuality.* Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Storm, A.L. (2000). *Developing tolerance for gay, lesbian students.* School Administrator, February.

*The Children (Northern Ireland) Order: A Guide for Youth Workers.* Published by the Youth Council for Northern Ireland.

Tomsen, S. (1997). Was Lombroso queer? Criminology, criminal justice and the heterosexual imaginary. In G, Mason & S. Tomsen, (ED.), *Homophobic violence.* Sydney: Hawkins Press.

Trenchard & Warren (1984). *Something to Tell You: The Experiences and Needs of Young Lesbians and Gay Men in London*. London: London Gay Teenage Group.

Vincke, J. & Van Heeringen, K. (2002) *Confidant Support and the Mental Wellbeing of Lesbian and Gay Young Adults: A Longitudinal Analysis* – not just published in a Journal.

Warwick, I., Aggleton, P., & Douglas, N. (2001). *Playing it safe: Addressing the emotional and physical health of lesbian and gay pupils in the UK*. *Journal of Adolescence*, 24, 129-140.

White, R. (1998). *Growing Up as a Gay Young Person in Ireland – So What's the Story?* (research conducted at Queen's University Belfast in conjunction with the Rainbow Project).

# Appendix I

## Young Person's Questionnaire

### Questionnaire On The Needs Of Young People Who Identify As Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender

YouthNet has been commissioned by the Department of Education to pilot a study on the needs of young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) and carry out an audit of existing provision within the statutory and voluntary sector. This is one of a series of projects being carried out to ascertain information about the needs of young people in the categories specified in Section 75 of the NI Act 1998. This work is being carried out in partnership with Foyle Friend, Rainbow Project, VSB's Young Citizen's In Action and YouthAction NI.

This questionnaire is completely confidential and should take about 10 minutes to complete. If you wish to participate in follow up focus groups you can contact us separately or include your details at the end of the questionnaire. This questionnaire is also available at [www.glyni.org.uk](http://www.glyni.org.uk)

#### 1. Which of these best describes your sexual orientation ?

Lesbian  Bisexual  Heterosexual  Unsure  Other

2. Are You ? Male  Female

3. Do you identify as being Transgender or Transsexual ? Yes  No

4. How old are you ? 16 or under  17-20  21-25

5. What District Council area do you live in ? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Do you live in ? Urban Area  Rural Area

7. Are you registered disabled ? Yes  No

8. Do you identify as being a member of an ethnic minority ? Yes  No   
 If 'Yes' which \_\_\_\_\_

9. What is your perceived religious background ?

Catholic  Protestant  Other   
 \_\_\_\_\_

10. Are you ? At school  In Further Education  In University

Employed full time  Employed part time  Not working

11. I am Out :

	None	Some	All	N/A
To friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To work Colleagues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
At school/college	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
At youth organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12. What age were you when you realised you were lesbian, gay, bisexual ? \_\_\_\_\_

13. If you identify as transgender what age were you when you realised this ?  
 \_\_\_\_\_

14. What age were you when first came out to someone else ? \_\_\_\_\_

**15. When you came out – who did you tell ?**

Friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	Parents	<input type="checkbox"/>	Brothers / Sisters	<input type="checkbox"/>
Extended family	<input type="checkbox"/>	Youth worker/leader	<input type="checkbox"/>	Clergy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Worker	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sports coach	<input type="checkbox"/>	Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>
LGBT helpline / organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>			Other	
_____					

**16. When you came out – who could you not tell ?**

Friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	Parents	<input type="checkbox"/>	Brothers / Sisters	<input type="checkbox"/>
Extended family	<input type="checkbox"/>	Youth worker/leader	<input type="checkbox"/>	Clergy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Worker	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sports coach	<input type="checkbox"/>	Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>
LGBT helpline / organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>			Other	
_____					

**17. Where did you get support / information from ?**

School	<input type="checkbox"/>	College	<input type="checkbox"/>	LGBT group	<input type="checkbox"/>
Church group	<input type="checkbox"/>	Youth group / org.	<input type="checkbox"/>	LGBT helpline	<input type="checkbox"/>
LGBT venue	<input type="checkbox"/>	Books / Magazines	<input type="checkbox"/>	Internet	<input type="checkbox"/>
Media	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	_____		

**18. What would have made it easier for you coming out ?**

19. If you are not out what are your main concerns about coming out ?

20. Have you ever personally experienced ?

Physical abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Verbal abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sexual abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>
Homelessness	<input type="checkbox"/>	Attempted suicide	<input type="checkbox"/>	Being in care	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self harm	<input type="checkbox"/>	On medication for depression	<input type="checkbox"/>	Eating disorder	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alcohol misuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Drug misuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Practice unsafe sex	<input type="checkbox"/>
Being paid for sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sex in public places	<input type="checkbox"/>		

e.g. public toilets, parks, cruising grounds

21. Have you ever felt not in control of a sexual situation ?

Yes  No

22. While living at home have you ever experienced homophobic attitudes from family members ?

Yes  No

23. As a result of the above have you felt compelled to leave the family home and seek accommodation elsewhere?

Yes  No

24. Are / were you aware of your sexual orientation while at school ?

Yes  No



25. Did your experience as a young lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender person result in leaving school earlier than you would have preferred ?

Yes  No

**26. At school because of your sexual orientation did you experience?**

Being bullied  Achieving lower results  Truancy   
Dropping out  Changing school  Others   
\_\_\_\_\_

**27. Have you ever sought or experienced any support / education around sexual orientation while at school ?**

Yes

If 'Yes' what kind of support / education ?

**Have you experienced negative attitudes to your sexual orientation while at school?  
(please do not name the school)**

Yes  No

If 'Yes' please detail

**29. While in school did you receive information on issues such as safer sex including HIV and other sexually transmitted infections ?**

Yes  No

**30. Did you experience any difficulty in focusing on your career path because of your sexual orientation ?**

Yes  No

**31. Have you ever had to move jobs because of your experience as a young person who identifies as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender?**

Yes  No

**32. Do you go to a gay bar / club ?**

Never  Occasionally  Regularly

**33. Are / were you ever a member of ?**

Youth club  Youth group   
Uniformed organisation e.g. scouts, guides  Church based youth group

34. As a member of a youth organisation did you ever experience a positive attitude towards sexual orientation?

Yes  No

If 'Yes' please detail.

35. As a member of a youth organisation did you ever experience a negative attitude towards sexual orientation ? (please do not name the organisation)

Yes  No

If 'Yes' please detail.

**36. Have you ever sought or experienced any support around your sexual orientation as a member of a youth organisation ?**

Yes  No

If 'Yes' what kind of support ?

37. Do you believe youth organisations / groups should deal with the needs of young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender?

Yes  No

**38. What could they do ?**

39. Do you believe that youth projects specifically for young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people could meet some of your needs?

Yes  No

**40. Would they ?**

- Provide a sense of identity and belonging
- Offer a feeling of support
- Provide an opportunity to socialize in alcohol free environment
- Be a way to access LGBT news or information
- Allow opportunities for collective action

**What else would you like them to do ?**

41. Would you be interested in getting involved with a youth group for young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender ?

Yes  No  Already Involved

Thank you for your time and interest. If you would like to participate in a confidential follow up focus group, please include an email address or mobile phone number. This will only be used to let you know about the focus group and will not be passed on to a third party. You can also contact us via the Gay & Lesbian Youth Northern Ireland site [www.glyni.org.uk](http://www.glyni.org.uk). The final report will be available in October. If you wish to post this back please return to TSN / Equality Officer, YouthNet, 7 James St. South Belfast BT2 8DN

**Email** \_\_\_\_\_ **or Mobile** \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix II**  
**Questionnaire for Organisations Working with Young People**

## Appendix II

# Questionnaire for Organisations Working with Young People

### Questionnaire to Audit Services that Address the Specific Needs of Young People who Identify Themselves as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender

YouthNet has been commissioned by the Department of Education in Northern Ireland to undertake a pilot project to support young people who identify themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT). Part of this pilot project is to complete an audit of existing services that address the personal and social development of young LGBT people within the statutory and voluntary sector.

YouthNet is carrying out this audit in partnership with Foyle Friend, The Rainbow Project, Voluntary Service Belfast's Young Citizens in Action and YouthAction NI.

This questionnaire is available as a Word Document or as a Rich Text Format.

Please contact [redmond@youthnet.co.uk](mailto:redmond@youthnet.co.uk) to request it in either of these formats.

All completed questionnaires will be treated in strictest confidence.

Also if you have any queries or would like some assistance to complete the questionnaire, please contact Sharon Redmond at the above email address.

**Name of Organisation (Optional)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**PostCode** \_\_\_\_\_

**District Council (Please State)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact Person** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Number** \_\_\_\_\_ **Fax** \_\_\_\_\_

**Number** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email Address** \_\_\_\_\_ **Web Address** \_\_\_\_\_

(1) **Which of the following best describes your organisation?** Please tick one

Local

Regional NI

Regional UK/ROI

Umbrella

Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

(2) **Would you describe your organisation as?** Please tick one

Statutory   
Church Based   
Health Based

NGO (Regional Organisation)   
Uniformed   
Community (Locally Based)

Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

(3) **If you are a Regional or Umbrella Organisation please estimate the number of groups your organisation works with?** \_\_\_\_\_

(4) **Please estimate the number of young people your organisation provides support or services to in an average year?**

Age Group	How many	Male	Female
4-9 years	_____		
10-15 years	_____		
16-20 years	_____		
21-25 years	_____		

(5) **Does your organisation have an Equal Opportunities policy?**

Please circle Yes No

(a) If yes, does it include sexual orientation?

Please circle Yes No

(b) Does this policy apply to service provision as well as employment?

Please circle Yes No

(6) **Does your organisation have an Anti-Bullying policy?**

Please circle Yes No

(a) If yes, does it include sexual orientation?

Please circle Yes No

(7) **Does your organisation have an Anti-Harassment policy?**

Please circle Yes No

(a) If yes, does it include sexual orientation?

Please circle Yes No

(8) **Does your organisation have a Volunteers policy?**

Please circle Yes No

(a) If yes, does it include sexual orientation?

Please circle Yes No

(9) **Does your organisation have a grievance/complaints procedure?**

Please circle Yes No

(a) If yes, does it include sexual orientation/homophobia as an example?

Please circle Yes No

(b) Does it include biphobia as an example? (Discrimination against bisexual people)

Please circle Yes No

(c) Does it include transphobia as an example? (Discrimination against transgendered people)

Please circle Yes No

(10) **Does your organisation provide training opportunities for staff/volunteers?**

Please circle Yes No

(a) If yes, does any of the training look at issues concerning sexual orientation?

Please circle Yes No

If yes, please outline below

(11) **Would your organisation like to receive training for staff/volunteers to engage more effectively with young people who identify themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT)?**

Please circle Yes No

(12) **Does your organisation provide any general resources to support STAFF/VOLUNTEERS working with young people who identify themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) e.g. books, videos, leaflets etc?**

Please circle Yes No

If yes, please outline below

- (13) **Does your organisation provide any general resources to support YOUNG PEOPLE who identify themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT)?**

Please circle    Yes                      No

If yes, please outline below

- (14) **Does your organisation have publicity aimed at encouraging young people who identify themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) to use your services?**

Please circle    Yes                      No

If yes, please outline below

- (15) **Does your organisation have any formal links with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) organisations?**

Please circle    Yes                      No

If yes, please outline below

- (16) **Does your organisation make any provision specifically for young people who identify themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT)?**

Please circle    Yes                      No

If yes, please outline below



(17) **Would your organisation like to make provision specifically for young people who identify themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT)?**

Please circle      Yes                      No

If yes, why?                      If no, why not?

Please outline below

(18) **What provision would your organisation like to make for young people who identify themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT)?**

(19) **What assistance would your organisation need to make provision for young people who identify themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT)?**

(20) **What support would your organisation need to address lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) issues with young people in general?**

- (21) **Please outline below how current youth work programmes could be enhanced to take account of the specific needs of young people who identify themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT).**

- (22) **Does your organisation have any monitoring and evaluation systems for young people who identify themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT)?**

Please circle      Yes                      No

If yes, please outline

**Please return this questionnaire to Sharon Redmond (TSN/Equality Officer), YouthNet, The Warehouse, 7 James Street South, Belfast, BT2 8ND by 10<sup>th</sup> of June '02**

## Appendix III

### Questionnaire for Public Sector Organisations

#### Questionnaire Into Provision For Young People Who Identify As Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgendered

YouthNet has been commissioned by the Department of Education to pilot a study on the needs of young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered and carry out an audit of existing provision within the statutory and voluntary sector. This is one a series of projects being carried out to ascertain information about the needs of young people in the categories specified in Section 75 of the NI Act 1998. This work is being carried out in partnership with Foyle Friend, Rainbow Project, VSB's Young Citizens in Action and YouthAction NI.

*This questionnaire is available in a Word document or as a Rich Text File and can be emailed to you if you prefer to complete it in this format. Please email [fcarolan@youthnet.co.uk](mailto:fcarolan@youthnet.co.uk) with "Agency Questionnaire" in the subject line.*

**Organisation Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Postcode** \_\_\_\_\_

**Tel** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email** \_\_\_\_\_

**Web** \_\_\_\_\_ **Contact Person** \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Have you produced an Equality Scheme?** (please tick)

Yes                      No

**2. In response to Section 75 what are you currently doing to promote equality of opportunity between people of different sexual orientations?**

**3. Has your organisation collated any baseline data around the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered population?** (please tick)

If Yes please outline                      Yes                      No

4. Do you provide training opportunities for your staff to look at issues concerning sexual orientation? (please tick)

Yes

No

Intend To

4. Please outline responsibilities / provision you may have for the personal and social development of young people? e.g. direct services, funding

5. Do you provide or support any programmes which target young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered? (please tick)

Yes

No

If yes please outline

Any Other Comments

**Please return this to**

Fidelma Carolan, TSN / Equality Officer, YouthNet, The Warehouse, 7 James St. South,  
Belfast BT2 8DN by Friday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2002

## Appendix IV - Online Questionnaire Promotion

<b>Websites</b>	<a href="http://www.gayderry.com">www.gayderry.com</a> <a href="http://www.glyni.org.uk">www.glyni.org.uk</a> <a href="http://www.gayyouth.co.uk">www.gayyouth.co.uk</a> <a href="http://www.nistudents.com">www.nistudents.com</a> <a href="http://www.gayteens.org">www.gayteens.org</a> <a href="http://www.ruralcommunitynetwork.org">www.ruralcommunitynetwork.org</a> <a href="http://www.childrens-express.org">www.childrens-express.org</a> <a href="http://www.gay-ireland.com">www.gay-ireland.com</a>
<b>Publications</b>	Diva Lesbian Magazine Women's News Gay Community News NI Youth Forum mag
<b>Email Lists</b>	Foyle Friend NI Lesbians WERRC CoSo Womenslink GLYNI NUS-USI NICVA Epipe
<b>Poster Directly To</b>	Rural Community Network (600) North Eastern Board libraries (43) South Eastern Board libraries (31) Western Board libraries (20) Belfast libraries (22) Southern Board libraries (30) Belfast Women Support Network (50) YouthAction NI database (190) VSB Young Citizens database (296) YouthNet database (90)
<b>Press</b>	Interview with Radio Foyle Derry Journal Londonderry Sentinel Belfast Telegraph Gay Radio – Northern Visions

## **Appendix V - Organisations working with young people that returned questionnaires**

- Ardoyne Women's Group
- Ardoyne Youth Club
- Armagh Youth Club
- Army Cadet Force Association (NI)
- Ballybeen Peer Education Project
- Ballymagroaty and Hazelbank Community Partnership
- Ballymore Open Centre
- Barnardos - Strabane Family Centre
- Beechmount Community Project
- Belfast Community Circus School
- Black Youth Network
- Boy's Brigade
- Brook Belfast
- Carrickfergus YMCA
- Cathog
- Children's Law Centre
- Clann Eireann Youth Club
- Community Relations Youthwork Network
- Confederation of Community Groups
- Contact Youth
- Corner House Family Centre
- Corrymela
- Down Community Arts
- Drumgor Youth Centre
- Extern
- Family Planning Association (NI)
- Fermanagh Shadow Youth Council
- Foyle Friend
- Gay Lesbian Youth Northern Ireland
- Holy Trinity Youth Centre
- International Voluntary Services
- Larne Lynx
- Lesbian Line
- Lisburn YMCA
- Loughshore Youth Forum
- Musicians of Antrim & District Development
- National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
- Newry Youth Information Centre
- Newstart Education Project
- North & West Housing
- North Eastern Education and Library Board
- Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities
- Northern Ireland Children's Holiday Scheme
- Northern Ireland Deaf Youth Association
- NUS-USI, The Student Movement in Northern Ireland
- Old Warren Partnership
- Ogras Youth Club

- Parents Advice Centre
- Raleigh International
- Rathcoole Youth Club
- Red Cross Youth
- Seagoe Youth Centre
- South Eastern Education and Library Board
- Spirit of Enniskillen Trust
- Spring
- Springvale Training
- St. John Ambulance
- St. Mary's Youth Club
- Streetbeat Youth Project
- Taghnevan Youth Club
- The Bridge Community Association
- The Duke of Edinburgh Award
- The Girl's Brigade
- The Guide Association
- The Rainbow Project
- Townsend Street Social Outreach Centre
- Training For Life Programme (Upper Springfield Development Trust)
- Twinbrook and Poleglass Community Forum
- Voluntary Service Belfast
- West Belfast Parent Youth Support Group
- Western Education and Library Board
- Western Education and Library Board Youth Service
- Wheelworks
- YouthAction (NI)
- YouthLink

## Appendix VI

### List of Public Sector Organisations that returned questionnaires

- Ards Borough Council
- Arts Council for NI
- Ballymena Borough Council
- Belfast City Council
- Belfast City Hospital
- Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA)
- Castlereagh College of Further & Higher Education
- Central Services Agency
- Coleraine Borough Council
- Community Fund
- Community Relations Council
- Construction Industry Training Board
- Craigavon Borough Council
- Department of Education
- Department of the Environment
- Department for Regional Development
- Down Lisburn HSS Trust
- East Antrim Institute of Further & Higher Education
- East Down Institute of Further & Higher Education
- Eastern Health & Social Services Board
- Enterprise Ulster
- Green Park Healthcare Trust
- Homefirst Community Trust
- Housing Executive
- Laganside Corporation
- Limavady Borough Council
- Limavady College of Further & Higher Education
- Lisburn Institute
- Mater Hospital HSS Trust
- North Down & Ards Institute of Further & Higher Education
- North Down Borough Council
- North West Institute of Further & Higher Education
- NI Guardian Ad Litem Service Agency
- Northern Health & Social Services Council
- Northern Ireland Museums Council
- Northern Ireland Policing Board
- Northern Ireland Tourist Board
- Office of the First and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM)
- Police Service of Northern Ireland
- Probation Board for Northern Ireland
- Rural Development Council
- Southern Health & Social Services Board
- Southern Health & Social Services Council
- Staff Commission for Education & Library Boards
- 5 Education & Library Boards (composite response)
- Viridian Group PLC
- Western Health & Social Services Council
- Youth Council for Northern Ireland



## Appendix VII - Contact Details for Organisations Working On LGBT Issues

### Northern Ireland

#### **Cara Friend**

PO Box 44, Belfast, BT1 2GT

Telephone: (028) 9027 8636 (Admin) Web: [www.cara-friend.org.uk](http://www.cara-friend.org.uk)

Cara-Friend is an information & befriending service for gay men, lesbians & bisexuals. It operates the Cara-Friend gay helpline every Monday-Wednesday from 7:30pm - 10pm and Belfast Lesbian Line every Thursday from 7:30pm - 10pm.

Gay Helpline: (028) 9032 2023

Lesbian Line: (028) 9023 8668

#### **Coalition on Sexual Orientation (CoSO)**

2-6 Union Street, Belfast, BT1 2JF

Tel: (028) 9031 9030 | Fax: (028) 9031 9031 Web: [www.coso.org.uk](http://www.coso.org.uk)

CoSO was established to bring together all the lesbian, bisexual, gay and transgender organisations in Northern Ireland to ensure a coherent and coordinated response to the Equality Commission's work on the Section 75 Equality Duty and the Human Rights Commission's work on a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland.

#### **Gay & Lesbian Youth Northern Ireland (GLYNI)**

64 Donegall Street, Belfast, BT1 1SH

Tel/Fax: (028) 9027 8636 Web: [www.glyni.org.uk](http://www.glyni.org.uk)

GLYNI is an organisation for young people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or unsure about their sexuality. We provide a range of services to young people that include a popular youth group, a befriending scheme, face-to-face support, and an email support service

#### **Northern Ireland Gay Rights Association (NIGRA)**

c/o Cara-Friend, PO Box 44, Belfast, BT1 1SH

NIGRA acts as a voice for the LGBT people to ensure equal rights for our community. It holds a monthly meeting at Cathedral Buildings on the 1st Thursday of every month. Everyone is welcome at these meetings regardless of sexual orientation.

#### **Out and About Young Lesbians Group**

c/o YouthAction NI, Hampton, Glenmachan Park Belfast BT4 2PJ

Tel (028) 9076 0067 Web: [www.youthaction.org/genderequality/outandabout](http://www.youthaction.org/genderequality/outandabout)

YouthAction NI facilitates this group which meets on a regular basis and offers young lesbian and bisexual women the opportunity to engage in personal development programmes and social events.

#### **Queer Space**

PO Box 160, Belfast, BT1 2AU

Tel: (028) 9058 0257 Web: [www.queerspace.org.uk](http://www.queerspace.org.uk)

Queerspace is a community based organisation which is run by volunteers. The group holds collective meetings every Wednesday night @ 8pm in Cara-Friend Offices. Everyone is welcome. Queerspace organises a number of social activities for its members and operates a popular drop-in at Cathedral Buildings every Saturday afternoon from 3pm.

**Rainbow Project**

2-6 Union Street, Belfast, BT1 2JF

Tel: (028) 9031 9030

37 Clarendon Street, Derry/Londonderry, BT48 7ER

Tel: 028 7128 3030 Web: [www.rainbow-project.com](http://www.rainbow-project.com)

The Rainbow Project is a gay men's sexual health organisation. It is a strong, youthful, dynamic group which exists to improve the emotional, physical and mental health of gay men, living in, working in, or visiting Northern Ireland. It also provides a confidential counselling service and a daily drop-in service.

**Sunday Scene at Lesbian Line**

PO Box 44, Belfast, BT1 1SH

Tel: (028) 9023 8668 (Thursday: 7:30pm - 10pm)

Web: [www.lesbianlinebelfast.org.uk](http://www.lesbianlinebelfast.org.uk)

Sunday Scene meets on the 3rd Sunday of every month at Lesbian Line, Cathedral Buildings. The group is for lesbians & bisexual women of all ages.

**United Kingdom****Albert Kennedy Trust**

Unit 305a Hatton Square, 16.16a Baldwin Gardens, London EC1N 7RJ

Tel: 020 7831 6562 Web : <http://www.akt.org.uk> Supports lesbian, gay & bisexual young people who are homeless or living in a hostile environment by providing accommodation with lesbian or gay carers. Has started doing some work in Northern Ireland

**Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays**

P.O. Box No. 84 Exeter EX4 4AN

<http://www.fflag.org.uk>

Supports parents and families of gay, lesbian and bisexual people

**Lesbian and Gay Employment Rights**

UNIT 1G, LEROY HOUSE, 436 ESSEX ROAD, LONDON, N1 3QP

Tel 020 7704-2205 Web <http://www.lager.dircon.co.uk>

Provides advice, information and support to lesbians, gay men and bisexual people who are having trouble at work.

**Stonewall**

46 Grosvenor Gardens, London SW1W 0EB

Tel 020 78819440 Web: [www.stonewall.org.uk](http://www.stonewall.org.uk)

Campaigning organisation which lobbies on a wide range of lesbian and gay issues

**Appendix VIII**  
**Online Resources on Issues of Sexuality and**  
**Homophobia**

## Appendix VIII - Online Resources on Issues of Sexuality and Homophobia

### Lesbian & Gay Issues in Education

<http://www.schools-out.org.uk> - resources on issues of homophobia in schools

<http://www.antihomophobia.org.uk/> - campaign to address homophobic bullying against young lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people in schools and other young people's settings. It is based in the city of Brighton and Hove, East Sussex

<http://www.eachaction.org.uk> - Educational Action Challenging Homophobia especially supports lesbian and gay young people and seeks to challenge homophobic bullying and attitudes, and helps teachers, through training, to better understand the issues

<http://www.intercomtrust.org.uk/goodschools/> Joint Action Against Homophobic Bullying is the national lead agency in tackling homophobic bullying in schools

<http://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk> - LGBT Youth Scotland site, includes resources for schools on homophobia

[http://www.stonewall.org.uk/stonewall/issue\\_bank/education/homophobic\\_bullying/resources.html](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/stonewall/issue_bank/education/homophobic_bullying/resources.html) - a range of resources and reports which are available to look at issues of homophobia in education

<http://www.data.teachers.org.uk/resources/word/support2716.doc> - National Union of Teachers Advice to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans Teachers

### Lesbian and Gay Youth Groups/Organisations

<http://www.allsortsyouth.org.uk> All Sorts Youth Group, Brighton -

<http://www.outzone.org/> Pace Youthwork Service, London

### Transgender Information

<http://www.gendertrust.org.uk> - The Gender Trust is a registered UK charity which supports people who are transgender or transsexual

<http://www.pfc.org.uk> - Press for Change is a campaign organisation which lobbies for issues relevant to transpeople

### General

<http://www.lesbianinformationservice.org/> - Lesbian Information Services is one of the most comprehensive online lists of research, resources and publications on lesbian and gay issues

<http://www.bgiok.org.uk> - Being Gay is Okay, support site aimed at young people

<http://www.gayyouthuk.org.uk/> information and support for young gay people in the UK