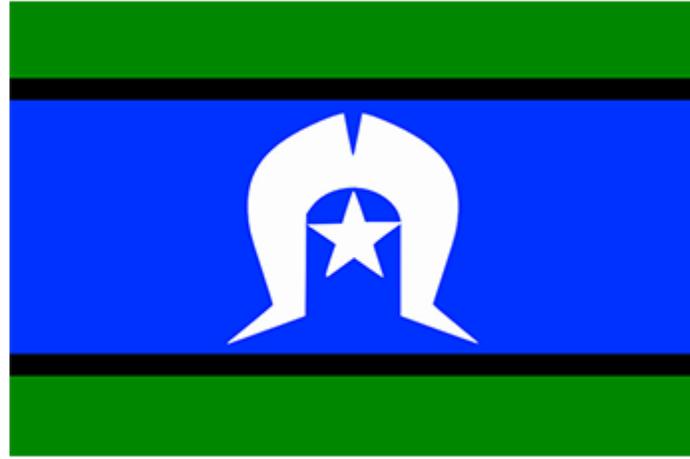


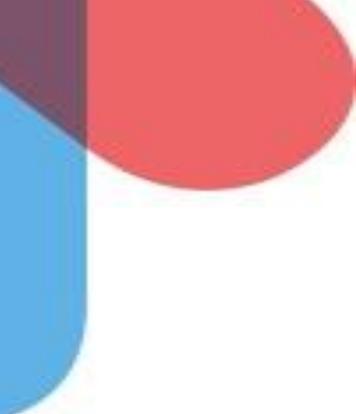
Rainbow Network

An introduction to supporting gender and sexual diversity and challenging homo/bi/trans-phobia



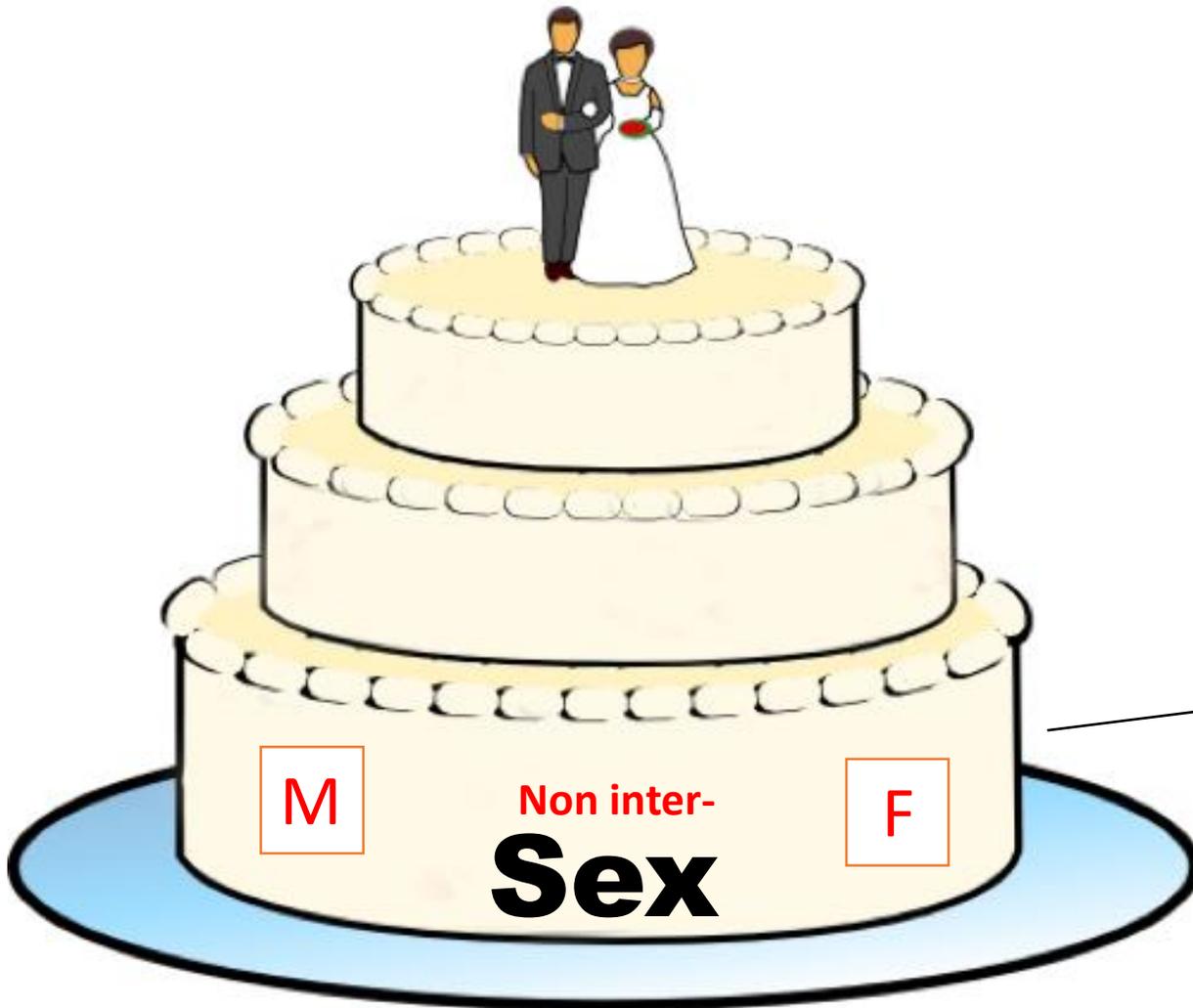
Jami Jones
Coordinator





Rainbow Network

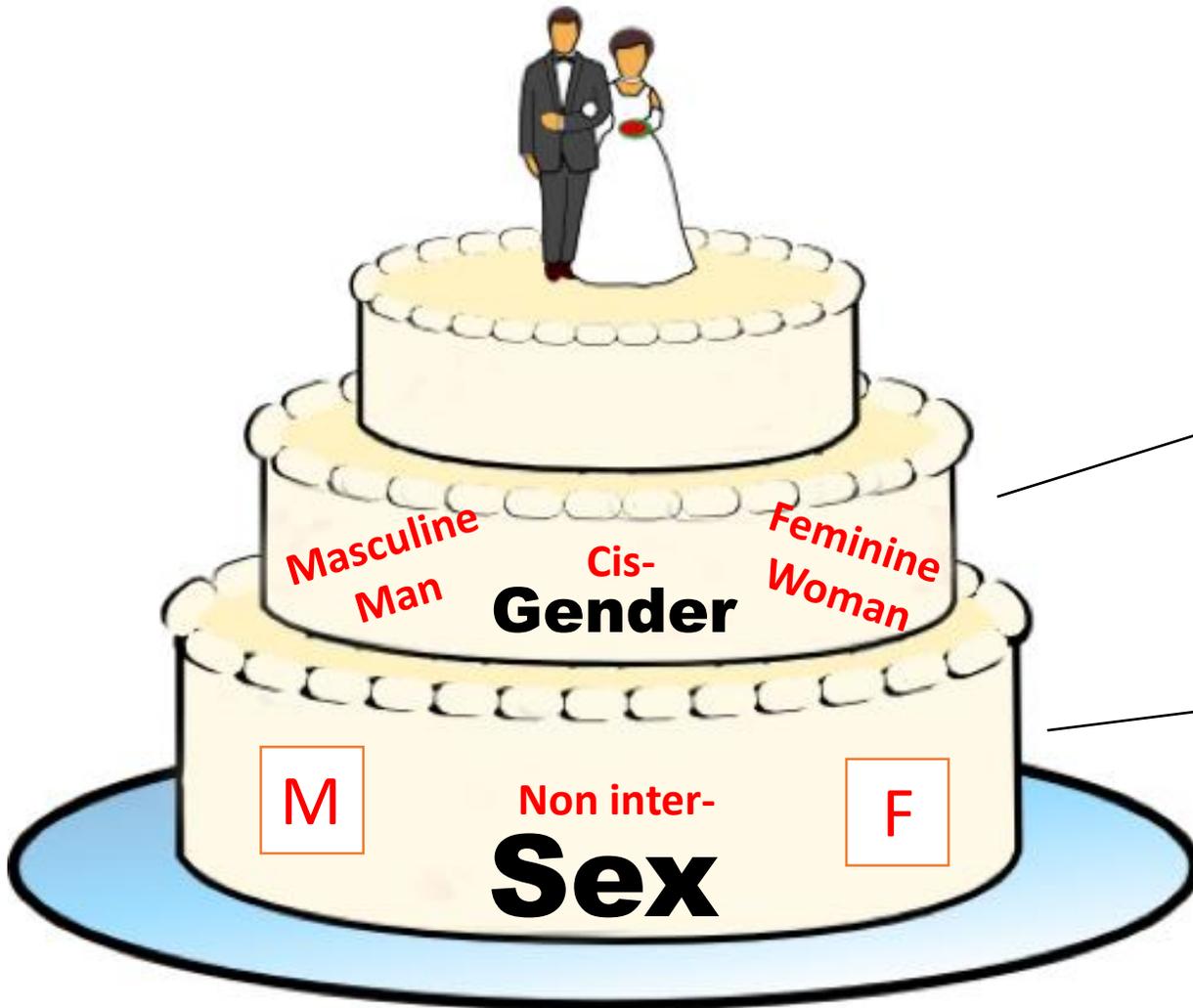
- 800+ members
 - Victorian Govt funded
 - Healthy Equal Youth project
 - Professional development
 - Secondary consultation
 - Professional supervision
 - Resource distribution
 - Advocacy
 - Research and policy into practice
- 



Intersex

1.7%

Adapted from: Leonard W, Heterosexism or the wedding cake model – ‘Queer occupations: Development of Victoria’s Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex health and wellbeing Action Plan’ Figure 1, Volume 1, Number 3, p92 – 97, Gay and Lesbian Issues and Psychology, 2005



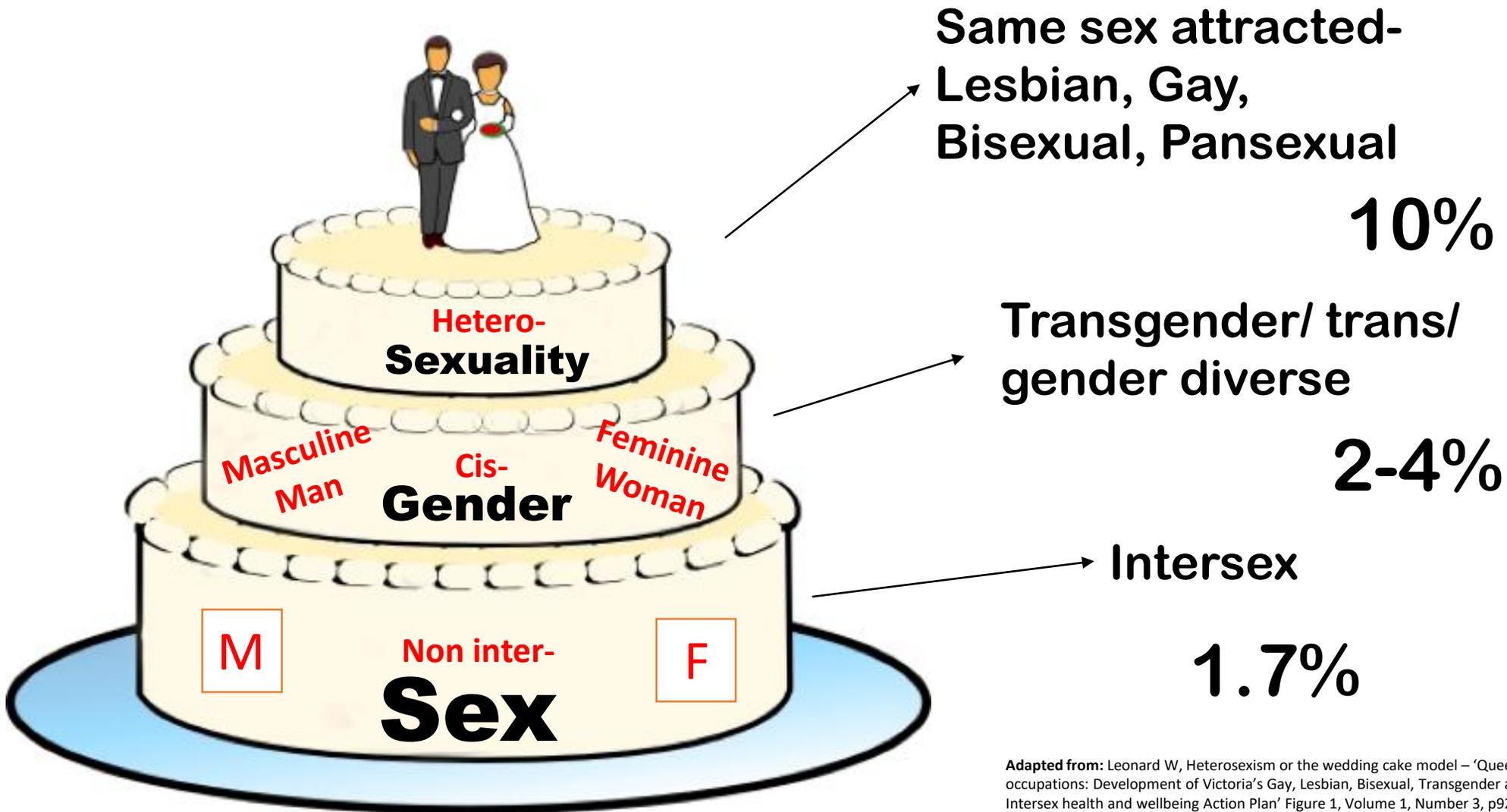
Transgender/ trans/
gender diverse

2-4%

Intersex

1.7%

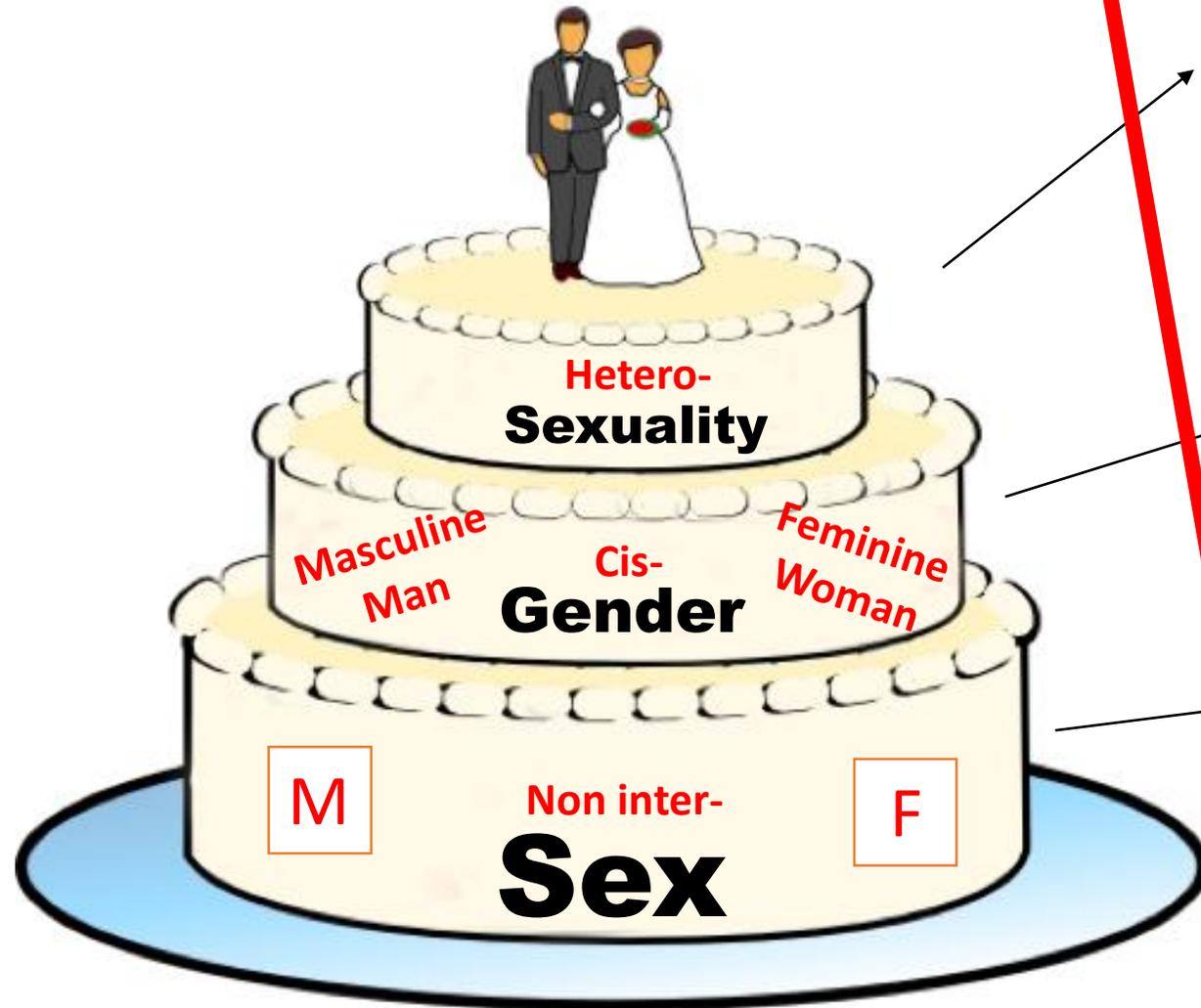
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Heteronormativity

L.G.B.T.I.Q



Same sex attracted-
Lesbian, Gay,
Bisexual, pansexual

10%

Trans and gender
diverse

2-4%

Intersex

1.7%

Adapted from: Leonard W, Heterosexism or the wedding cake model – 'Queer occupations: Development of Victoria's Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex health and wellbeing Action Plan' Figure 1, Volume 1, Number 3, p92 – 97, Gay and Lesbian Issues and Psychology, 2005

Policy and legal frameworks

In 2013, amendments to the federal Sex Discrimination Amendment Act made it illegal to discriminate against a person on the grounds of their:

- sexual orientation
- gender identity
- intersex status

COMPLAINTS

Australian Human Rights Commission

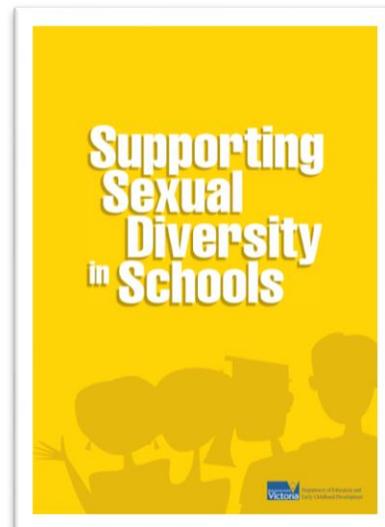
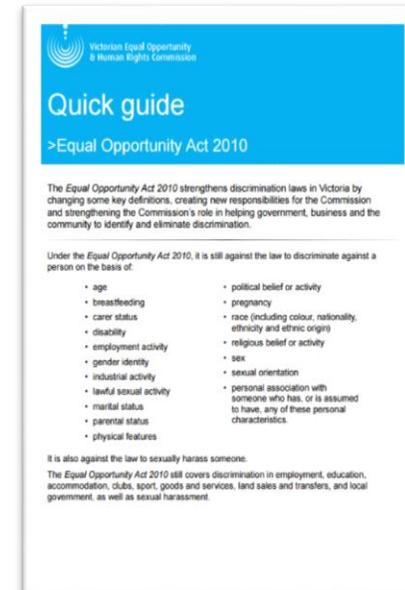
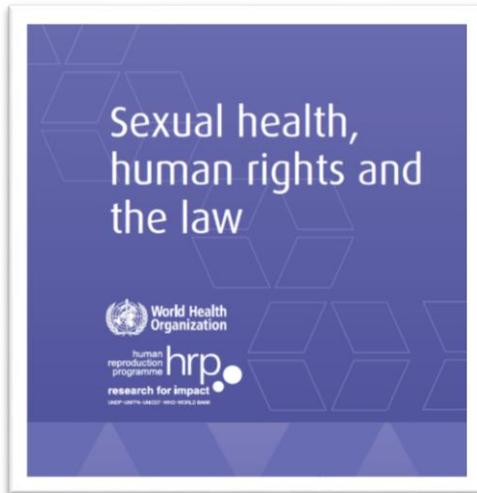
Victorian Equal Opportunity & Human Rights Commission

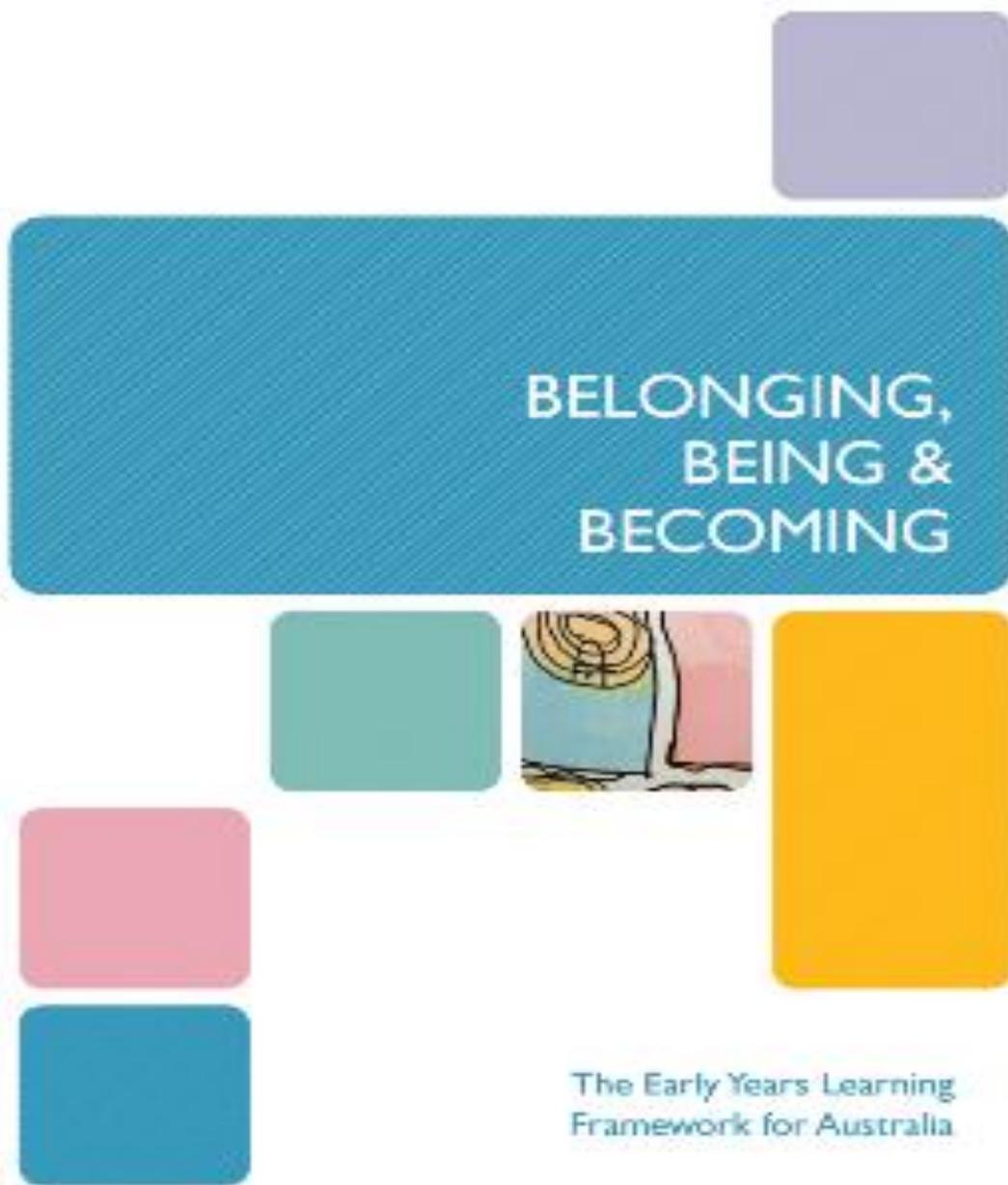
Victorian Government's three LGBTI inclusive practice principles

www.health.vic.gov.au/rainbowequality

- Affirmation – Affirm the dignity and value of LGBTI people's sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status
- Freedom from discrimination – Ensure LGBTI people live their lives free from discrimination
- Access and equity – Provide LGBTI-inclusive services.

Legal and policy frameworks



A decorative graphic consisting of several colored squares and a central illustration. At the top right is a light purple square. Below it is a large blue rounded rectangle with a fine grid pattern containing the text 'BELONGING, BEING & BECOMING'. Below the blue rectangle are a teal square, a central illustration of a stylized figure with a sun-like head, and a tall yellow rectangle. To the left of the teal square is a pink square, and below that is a blue square.

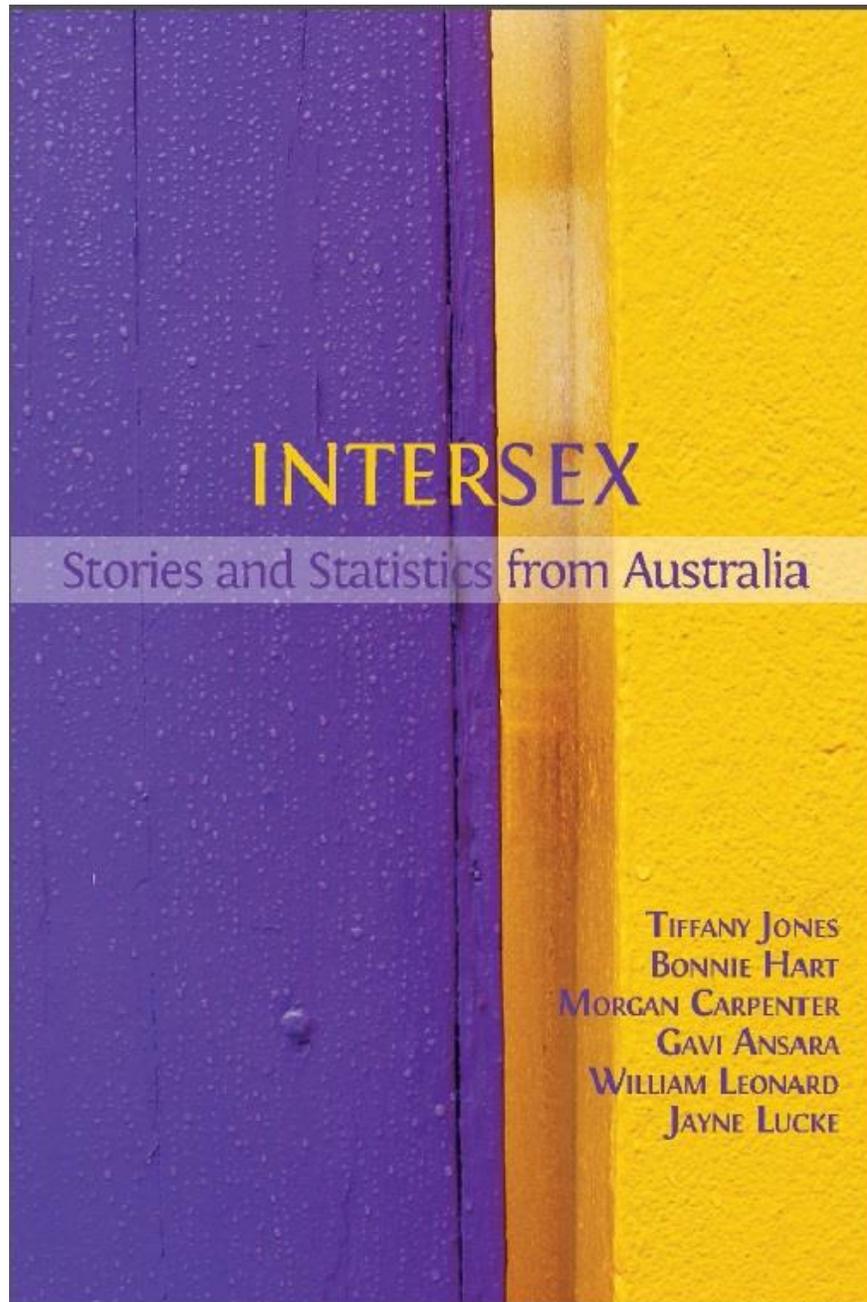
BELONGING,
BEING &
BECOMING

The Early Years Learning
Framework for Australia

Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity

Children develop knowledgeable and confident self-identities when educators ...

- Promote in all children a strong sense of who they are and their connectedness to others
- Show respect for diversity, acknowledging the varying approaches of children, families, communities and cultures
- Demonstrate deep understanding of each child, their family and community context in planning for children's learning
- Provide children with examples of the many ways identities and culture are recognised and expressed
- Talk with children in respectful ways about similarities and differences in people
- Provide rich and diverse resources that reflect children's social worlds



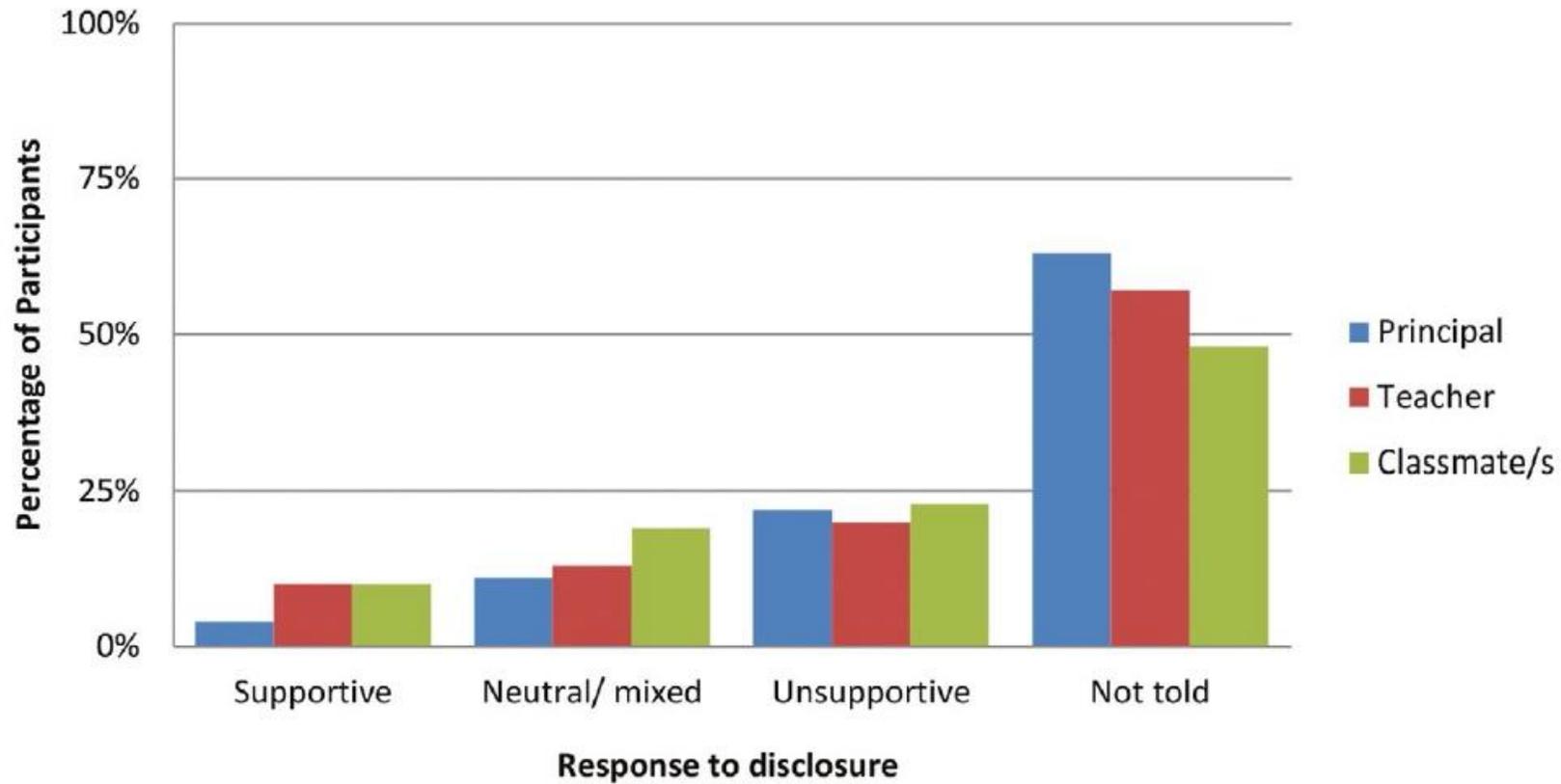
Published by

Open Book Publishers

Participants

272 people with intersex variations across Australia, aged 16-85

School experiences of intersex people



***43%** reported experiences of bullying

School experiences of intersex people

34% rated school experience as 'negative'

- (**24%** rated school experience as 'bad')
- (**14%** rated school experience as 'very bad')



FROM BLUES TO RAINBOWS

The mental health and well-being of gender diverse
and transgender young people in Australia

Produced by

La Trobe University
and University of
New England, and
funded by
beyondblue

Participants

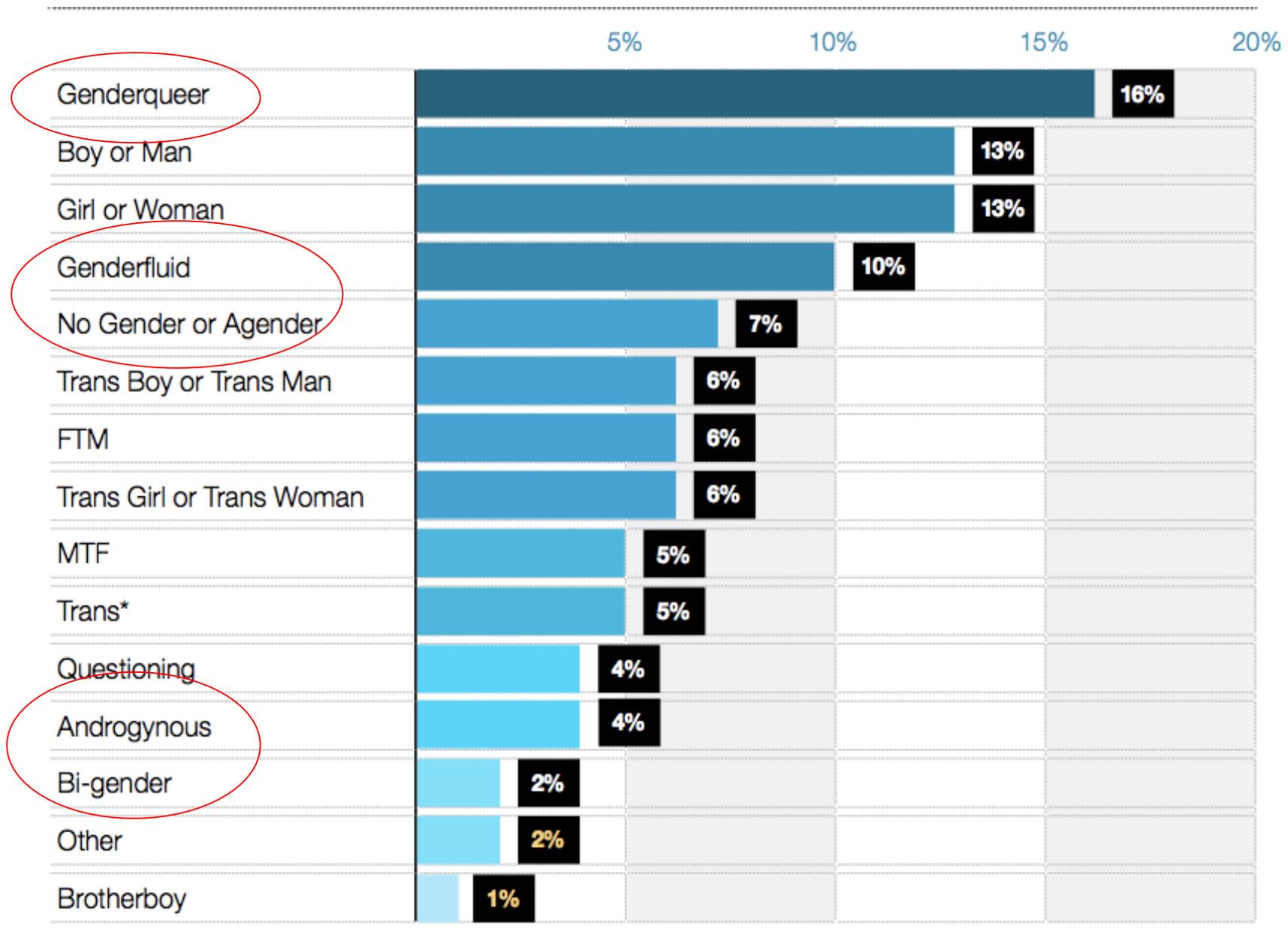
189 gender diverse
and transgender
young people aged
14-25 in Australia.

Legal definition of Gender Identity

Sex Discrimination Act (2013)

'the gender-related identity, appearance or mannerisms or other gender-related characteristics of a person (whether by way of medical intervention or not), with or without regard to the person's designated sex at birth'.

This includes people who identify as women, men or as neither male nor female.





65

% experienced **verbal abuse** because of their gender identity or expression



21

% experienced **physical abuse** because of their gender identity

The impact of transphobia on health and wellbeing

Of the young people who had experienced abuse, harassment or discrimination;

80% had thought about self harm

70% had self harmed

81% had thought about suicide

37% had attempted suicide

Impact of transphobia on students

49% missed days

47% marks dropped

46% couldn't concentrate

44% missed classes

41% hid at school

35% didn't/couldn't use the toilets

23% didn't/couldn't use change rooms

23% moved schools

22% dropped out of extra curricula activities

20% left school

Experiences of transphobia at school **when teachers use appropriate language**

Social exclusion – 33% (68)

Deliberate use of wrong pronouns – 30% (64)

Discriminatory language – 28% (63)

Humiliation – 28% (56)

Graffiti – 6% (13)

Writing Themselves In 3 (2010)

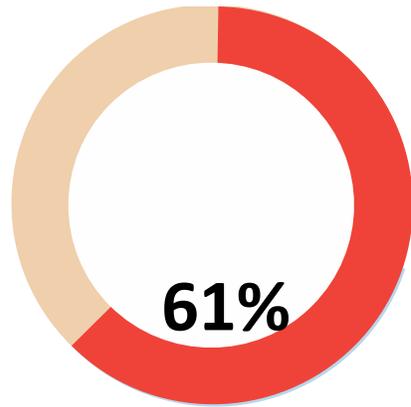
The third national report into the health and well-being of same sex attracted and gender questioning young people.

The Young People

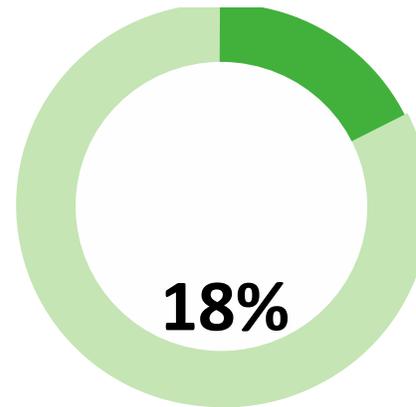
- 3134 SSAGQ young people surveyed
- Ranged in age from 14-21
- 57% young women
- 41% young men
- 3% gender questioning (GQ)
- 1 in 5 from CALD background
- 1 in 5 from rural and remote



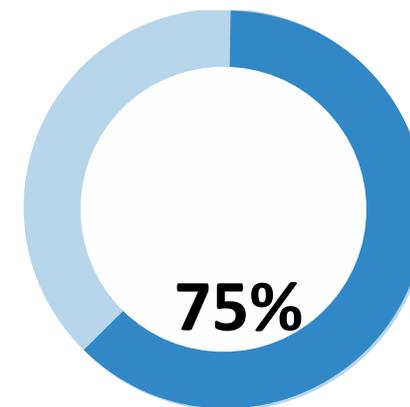
Experiences of homophobia



Verbally Abused

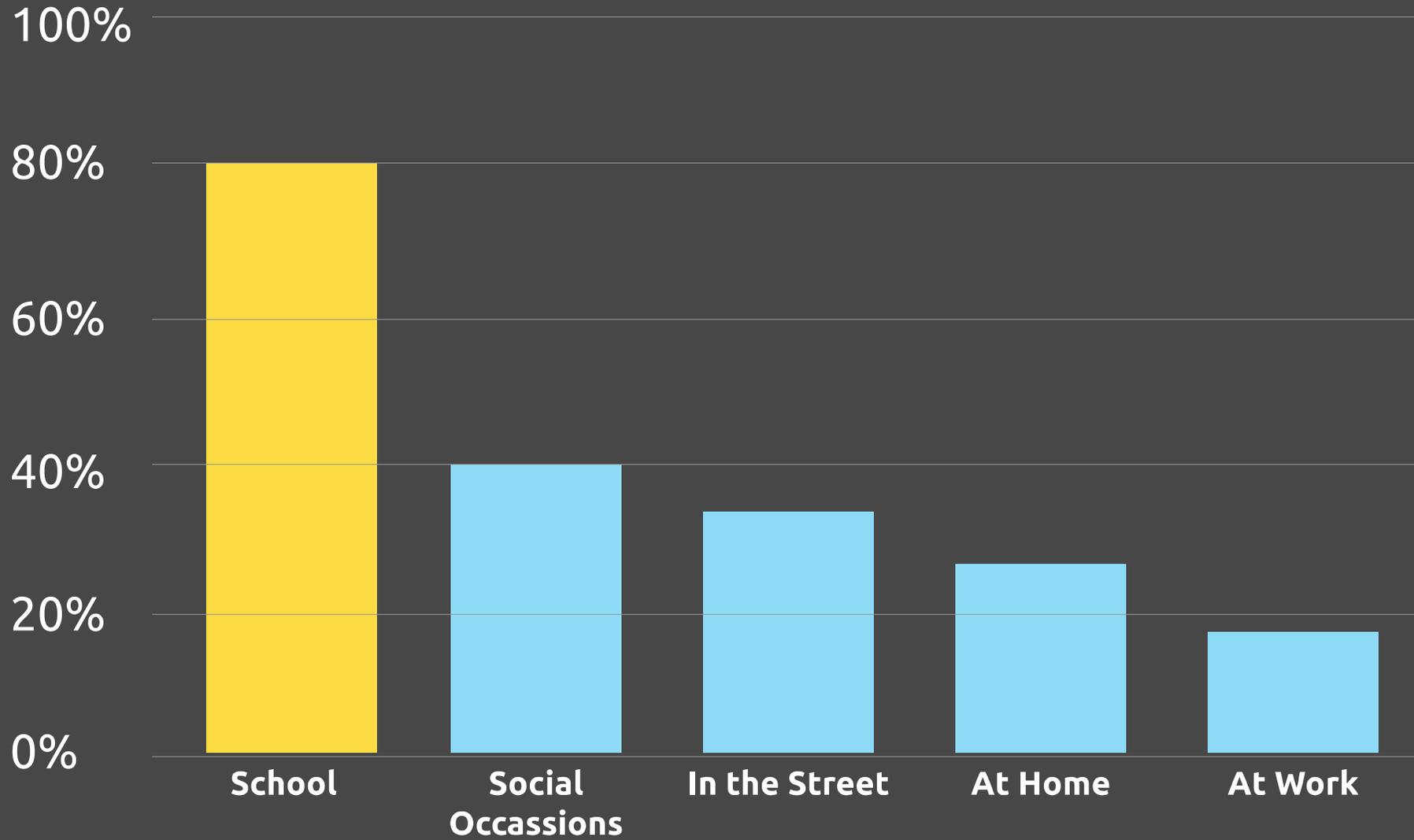


Physically Abused



Experience
Homophobia

Where did the abuse take place?



What impact does abuse have?

Homelessness

**Self
Harm**

Suicide

**Sexually
Transmissible
Infections**

**Feeling Less
Safe in Public**

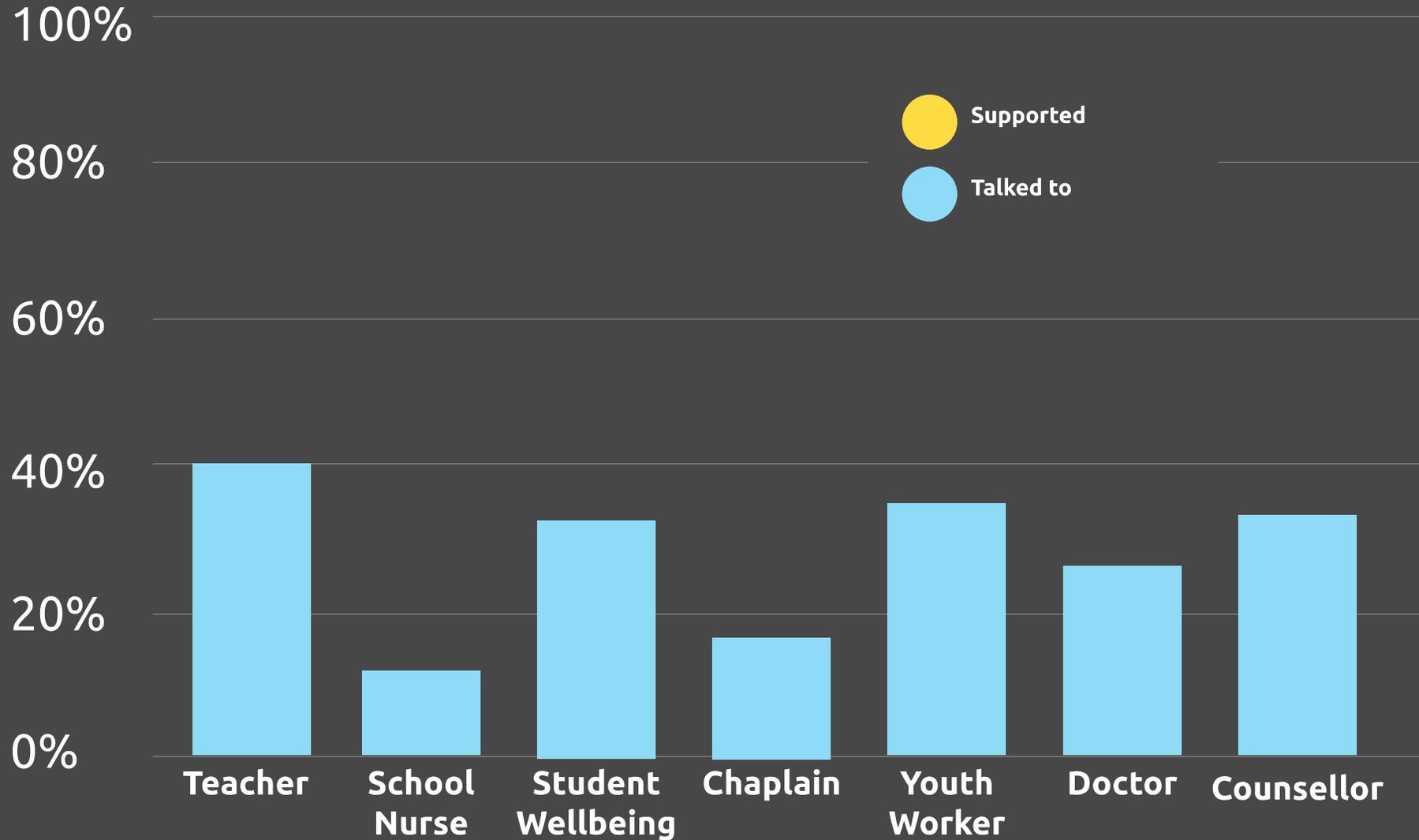
**Drug and
Alcohol
Misuse**



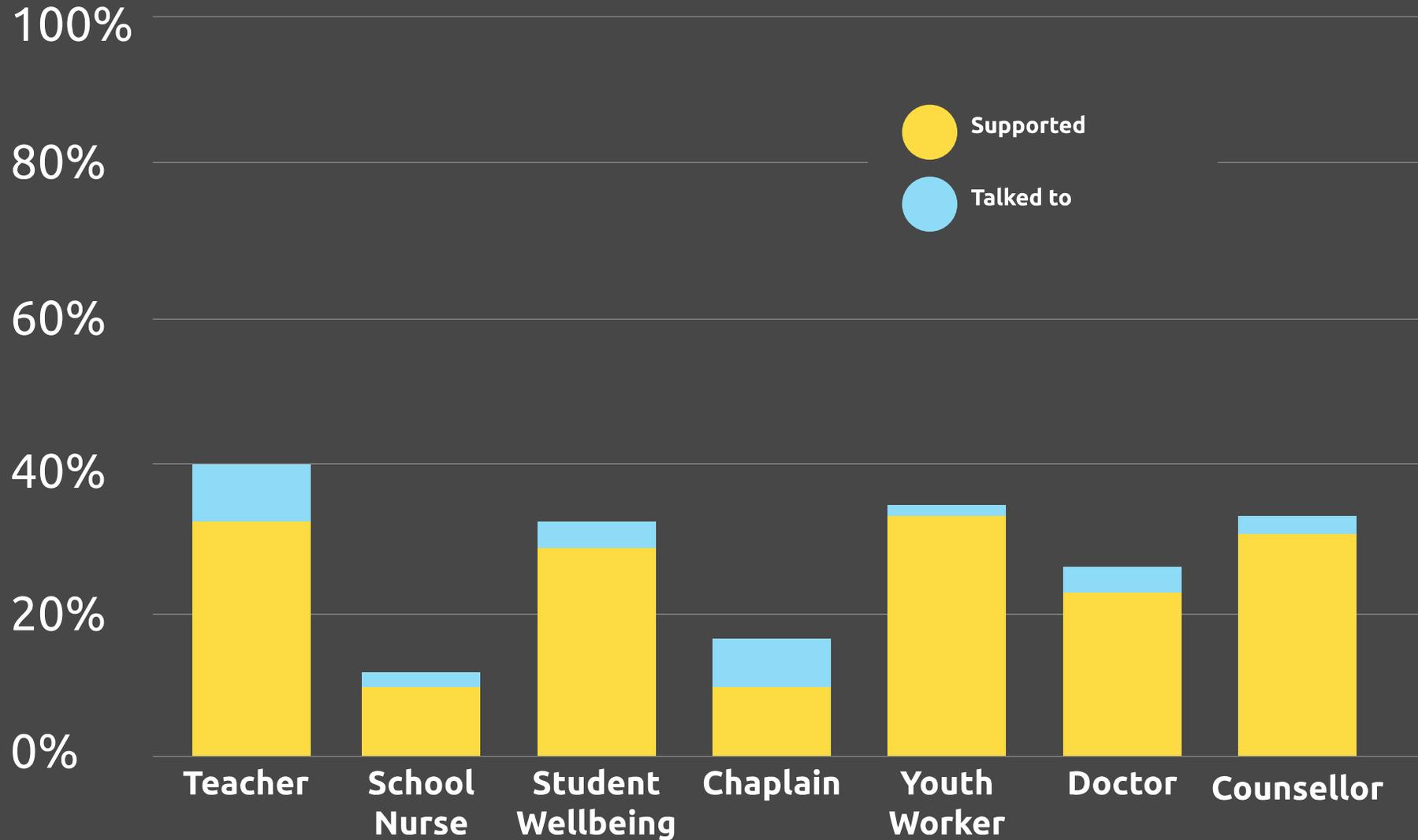
'I have had multiple thoughts of suicide. I have acted and failed on those thoughts a few times. I am never able to actively harm myself (i.e cut myself) but I've wanted to many times. I would say any gay person who says that they have never even thought about suicide is lying. Not being able to act on any of your desires, having to actively hide your true self, often having to pretend to hate the very thing you are. All of these things equates to a deep feeling that you don't deserve to live, or failing that, a deep desire to end the suffering. On a happier note, coming out has turned my life around. All of those things mentioned are starting to become a thing of the past' (Christopher, 20 years)

'there's not really much to say, aside from six years of depression, i feel that being treated like dirt re: my sexuality added to my lack of self esteem, depression and definitely contributed to self harm and thoughts of suicide' (Tracey, 20 years)

Who do young people talk to?



Who do young people talk to?



Disclosure and support

- 97.5% of young people had disclosed their same sex attractions to at least one person, a continuing trend from 1998 and 2004.
- Rejection following disclosure was associated with higher rates of self harm and suicide attempts in these young people.
- Friends continue to be the most popular choice as confidantes for young people disclosing their sexual feelings.



The research on SSA and religion

Those who mentioned religion (n=267) were:

- More likely to feel bad about their same sex attraction.
- More likely to have experienced social exclusion or had to tolerate homophobic language from friends.
- More likely to report homophobic abuse in the home.
- More likely to report feeling unsafe at home.
- More likely to not be supported by their mother, father, brother, teacher or student welfare coordinator/counsellor, when disclosing their SSA.
- More likely to report thoughts of self harm and suicide or to carry out self harm.
- More likely to report having never told significant people in their lives about their sexuality including their mothers, brothers, teachers, and student welfare coordinators/counsellors.

How negative religious beliefs about gender and sexuality impact young people

My mother threw me out of the house and said don't come back til you give your heart to Jesus – **Dan 20 years**

We have four priests in the family and live in a very strict Catholic house, so my parents decided that I'd made the decision to 'follow the path of the devil' – **Garrett 18 years**

Came out to everyone except my family and religious friends and then attempted to turn in to a celibate, non-practicing lesbian, got lonely and more and more depressed = suicidal and self harming. Suicidal because I couldn't see how I could NOT be a lesbian and I couldn't see how I could NOT live without my family/religion so stuck between the proverbial rock and a hard place- death looked like a good and logical option- **Kiley 20 years.**

How young people overcame these beliefs

Over the last few years I have gradually learnt to accept myself more and over the last few months I have started to actually feel pretty good about who I am. This is thanks to talking to a lot of people, coming out, going to counselling, working to resolve my past issues with religion, and in general a philosophy to be honest and the 'real' me - **Markus 17 years**

I delved deeper into the bible and homosexuality and realised that there was nothing in it that says homosexuality is wrong- nothing substantial. There were so many holes in the religion and bible that I realised it was ridiculous to take it seriously- **Sam 19 years**

Having to choose

I kept on telling myself that homosexuality was immoral and wrong, and I prayed and told myself that I liked people of the opposite sex. This caused me a great deal of depression and alienation from my peers... Being a Christian made me hate myself and who I was, and I really believed that God could change me. By the time I hit puberty I had renounced my faith and accepted myself for who I was - Oscar, 14 years

Religion as a protective factor

Some days the whole issue of homosexuality makes me feel depressed, alone and confused. I've been to the point where I've felt like it needs to end, that I shouldn't have to suffer like this. But there are two things that always have gotten me through the tough times. These are: 1 I would cause a lot of harm in my family. And 2 that God does not give a man more than he can handle. Therefore what ever comes my way, God will get me through it - **Daniel, 20 years**



The good news

Young people are more likely to have disclosed:

- 82% in 1998
- 95% in 2004
- 97.5% in 2010

Young people feel better about their sexuality:

- 60% in 1998
 - 74% in 2004
 - 79% in 2010
- 

Protective factors

- Supportive family
- Social connection- social and support groups
- Feeling good about their sexuality and gender identity
- Friendships



What should I do if someone comes out to me?

- Respect their privacy and confidentiality.
 - It is likely they will just want a supportive adult to listen, but be open and responsive to what the young person has to say about how they feel and what they want from you.
 - Don't assume they are having negative experiences and feelings related to their sexuality or gender identity.
- 

Small changes make a big difference

1. Challenge all homophobic and transphobic language and behaviours
2. Give positive examples and avoid heteronormativity in conversation and in class
3. Be available to support same sex attracted, intersex and gender diverse students
4. Make sexual diversity, gender diversity and intersex visible
5. Support student led activity to create change