

**Building welcoming and
affirming communities for
Maine's LGBTQ+ youth**

**Safe and welcoming
communities**

**Informed and
supported families**

**Safe and affirming
schools**

**A strong, educated
provider safety net**

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OUT Maine
she/her



OUT Maine

OUT Maine's mission is to build welcoming and affirming communities for Maine's LGBTQ+ youth.

The only statewide organization focused exclusively on LGBTQ+ youth for the last 25 years.



OUT Maine's approach

Building youth communities/connections

Safe and welcoming communities



20% - 11,000

1000+ annually

Supporting parents and families

Informed and supported families

- Parent group (monthly)
- Family events to connect families in communities
- One-on-one consulting

40%



OUT Maine's approach

Creating welcoming and affirming school districts

Safe and affirming
schools

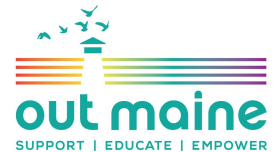
- Strengthening policies/procedures
- Staff & student training/education and supports
- Safe Spaces - Gay Straight Trans Alliances
- Consulting with administration/staff

Building a Network of trained professionals

A strong, educated
provider safety net

- Regional training
- Individual school/organization training
- Online self paced training

9000+



Self-reported sexual orientation & gender identity Maine high school students, 2019



17%

of Maine high school students identified as gay/lesbian or bisexual or unsure of their sexual orientation..

3.2%

of Maine high school students identified as transgender or unsure of their gender identity.

11,000 high school students
nearly 1 in 5



Health/wellbeing disparities for Maine's Transgender youth

Violence

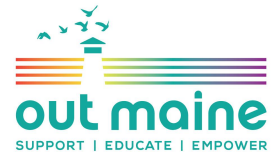
- **44%** are **bullied** regularly
- **49%** have **violence or threat of violence in their homes**
- **41%** have experienced **forced sexual contact**



Health/wellbeing disparities for Maine's Transgender youth

Mental health

- **72%** have **depressive symptoms** (compared to 31% of cisgender teens)
- **52%** have **thought about suicide** (compared to 15% of cisgender teens)



Health/wellbeing disparities for Maine's Transgender youth

Substance use

- 3x more likely to be smoke cigarettes
- 1.5x more likely to use marijuana
- 4x more likely to misuse prescription drugs

High risk of STDs and unintended pregnancy



Steroid use without a doctor's prescription?

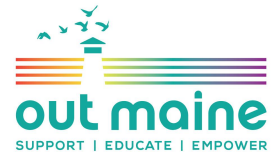
	Total	Female	Male
All Maine HS Students	2.9%	1.8%	3.7%
<p>4.5 - 5.5x more likely to use steroids without a doctor's prescription</p>			
Not Sure SO	7.6%	4.8%	7.9%
Transgender	13.2%	7.5%	19.3%
Not Sure GI	12.7%	6.0%	20.7%

Why are these youth using anabolic steroids?

Gender dysphoria

The feeling of distress or discomfort because of the difference between a person's gender (assigned at birth) and their gender identity.

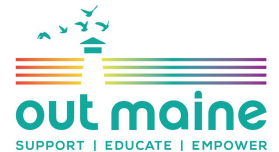
- to feel better about themselves
- to align physical appearance with internal sense of self
- to reduce dysphoria
- lack of access to medical care
- don't need parental permission
- easy to get
- lack of education



Results of taking steroids

Secondary sex characteristics they are seeking

- growth of facial hair or excess body hair
- decreased breast size
- increased muscular build
- changes in or stop in the menstrual cycle
- deepened voice



Other results

Physical concerns

- stunted growth (when high hormone levels from steroids signal to the body to stop bone growth too early)
- stunted height (if teens use steroids before their growth spurt)

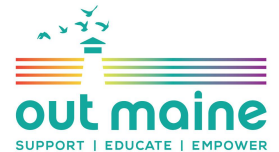
Mental health concern

- paranoid (extreme, unreasonable) jealousy
- extreme irritability and aggression (“roid rage”)
- delusions—false beliefs or ideas
- impaired judgment
- mania



Risk Factors

- Isolation
- Homelessness
- Unsupportive families & communities
- Feeling unsafe in schools, homes, communities
- Depression, anxiety, suicide ideation, substance use



Protective Factors

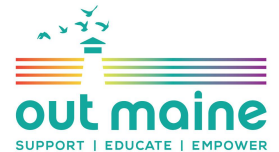
- **Unconditional support** of child's identity, whatever it is
- **One** supportive adult/family support
- **Access** to safe and supportive healthcare and mental health services, community resources like OUT Maine, welcoming and affirming schools.
- **Inclusive** policies, procedures, forms, resources, educational materials.
- **Educate** all youth on the impact of these substances and about LGBTQ+ topics.



Trans Health Action Team

Key themes that were explored in more depth throughout the project:

- The importance of **listening** by providers,
- The importance of **intersectionality** within the trans experience, and
- The **isolation** experienced by trans patients in their journey.



Recommendations

Provider Resources: To help increase the understanding and trans competent health care practices among providers in Maine.

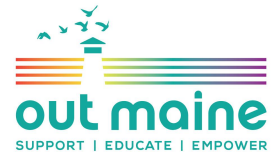
- Training
- Educational materials
- Best practices guide

Practice tools for providers to use with patients

- Explore gender identity
- Navigate individual journey

Patient Resources

- Educational materials
- FAQs
- Community resources



Questions & Resources

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Trans Youth Action Team Healthcare
Provider Resource survey
<https://forms.gle/Ny37EK1aoCyXZx7fA>

