



the lgbtq+ youth homelessness report

2021



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jo bhandal
akt

matt horwood
akt

akt

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foreword



The findings contained in this report are as shocking as they are timely.

We have lived through a year like no other and are about to embark on a collective process of defining the kind of society we want to live in for ourselves and future generations post-Covid. Clearly we have much to learn and reflect on when it comes to the experiences of young LGBTQ+ people who find themselves without a place to call home. I do not believe it is an overstatement to say we are currently failing these young people. Change is needed, and fast.

This report shines a light on the experiences of abuse, discrimination and suffering faced by young people who are marginalised due to their sexuality or gender identity. Whilst there is extensive research about how early experiences of adversity impact on health and social welfare, this research provides an explicit picture of how these experiences lead to and sustain young LGBTQ+ people's homelessness, and risk of further abuse and exploitation.

Echoing research from across the sector the young people interviewed spoke of not knowing where to turn for help; whether they needed support around their housing, their safety, their mental health or their sexual health. In our own 2020 'Young and Homeless' research we called for a government-led public information campaign on youth homelessness, that represents all young people's experiences, including sofa surfing and hidden homelessness.

This research shows:

The need to be innovative in our approaches to reaching young people, recognising that their usual sources of information are each other

That we need to work much harder to reach out to marginalised groups

That collaborative cross-sector/department work is essential

This research sadly shows the abuse many LGBTQ+ young people experience in their family home and how they are isolated from their family and the community they grew up in. The experience of homelessness is isolating and can inhibit young people's opportunities to build relationships and communities with their peers. We must do more to ensure community-based support for young people is both available and accessible when people need it most.

I commend this report to you. Please do read, reflect, and plan for genuine collaborative action to rectify what is a shocking indictment of our current approaches to this issue. As a society and as a sector we can and must do better for our young people.

Rick Henderson
CEO
Homeless Link

foreword



My mum kicked me out after I came out as being gay. I was a teenager and unemployed and had never lived away from home.

I had no idea of the services available to me, or housing benefit and other forms of support I could have made use of. Knowing that would have made life a lot easier than it was.

I felt like a burden to friends who supported me because I couldn't contribute to bills.

When I was homeless, I never felt secure in one place. I still don't.

When you're rejected because of who you are, by the people who are supposed to support you no matter what, it can be really isolating. That, compounded with not knowing who or what is out there to support you financially or otherwise, is really difficult. You don't feel like you're living, you feel like you're just existing.

It's really important that more safe and secure housing options are available to young people, and that vulnerable LGBTQ+ young people in particular can be housed near to their communities and friends. That is so important for people who've lost that connection with their parents or families, just because of who they are.

Today, I deliver youth work to support other LGBTQ+ young people, and I love theatre.

I'm renting privately in shared accommodation, but it's really expensive and so doesn't feel secure or permanent. When I first moved in, I had to rely on support from my network to help cover the first month of rent because of a delay in receiving housing benefits.

Despite reaching back out to my mum, after pressure from wider family, she's made it clear she still has an issue with me being gay. I feel like I've lived so many lives, and have had so

many difficult experiences and decisions to make on my own, despite still only being 21.

“My experience is not an isolated one. There are so many LGBTQ+ young people who face rejection or abuse at home because of who they are, and who struggle to find support elsewhere and be independent. Together, it's really important we all do our bit to help make life easier and less lonely for those people, like me those years ago.”

**Penelope, 21
London**

**imagine being
invisible a
thousand
times a day,
because a
thousand
people walk
in front of you
and no one
knows your
story because
you're alone.**



faye (she/they)

introduction



It is five years since akt launched the UK's first national scoping report on LGBTQ+ youth homelessness, which has been widely cited and utilised in shaping provision across government and the statutory and voluntary sectors.

This report is well-timed as a nationally significant piece of research to update the evidence on LGBTQ+ youth homelessness whilst offering opportunities to bring a fresh perspective to responding to this issue.

We believe this report provides evidence for rethinking how organisations respond to supporting young LGBTQ+ people at risk of homelessness, including:

Introducing mandatory monitoring of gender and sexuality as a first vital step across housing and homelessness services, to improve visibility of this over-represented group, leading to faster and more responsive interventions;

A stronger emphasis on prevention focused intervention to limit the longer term impact of homeless, including poor mental health and perpetual journeys of abuse, both of which come through strongly in the experiences of participants in this study;

Developing referral pathways between specialist and mainstream services which ensure the complex impacts of homelessness are addressed; cross sector partnerships could limit the social and economic impacts of youth homelessness on the individual and society.

This report supports evidence from akt's services nationally that specific groups within the LGBTQ+ community are at higher risk of homelessness and when homeless do not receive the support they need. These young people, in particular disabled LGBTQ+ young people, trans young people and LGBTQ+ young people of colour, also often face multiple layers of discrimination.

This findings highlights the prevalent and dangerous impact of homelessness on young people's mental health and wellbeing, with 92 per cent of respondents saying being homeless has had a negative impact on their mental health. Other impacts cited includes rejection, abuse, joblessness, financial insecurity and an inability to make positive friendships and relationships.

With 78 per cent of LGBTQ+ young people citing an absence of family support, it's clear community and statutory services must play a greater role in reaching those who are at risk, especially those young people in rural or other areas with little specialist provision.

Moreover, digital based support should play a critical role in prevention and capacity-building, providing an affordable way to form and manage referral pathways between mainstream and specialist services.

We must urgently rethink how we respond to and support LGBTQ+ young people facing or at risk of homelessness. We believe this report can support providers, policy makers and funders to make more considered judgements which ensure the 24 per cent* of young people at risk of homelessness who identify as LGBTQ+ have the support they need to avoid lifetimes of homelessness.

Tim Sigsworth
Chief Executive
akt

Terry Stacy MBE
Chair
akt

*National Scoping of LGBT Youth Homelessness, akt (2015)

**they don't
talk to me on
the phone, it's
just texting
because of
them not
wanting to see
me transition.**

mahan (he/him)



key findings



Just **13 per cent** of LGBTQ+ young people surveyed felt supported by parents or stepparents while homeless.

One in six (16 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people who were happy to answer, were forced to do sexual acts against their will by family members before they became homeless. The same number had experienced this with a romantic partner.

Almost two thirds (61 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people who were happy to answer felt frightened or threatened by their family members before they became homeless. **One in five** experienced this from romantic partners.

Half of LGBTQ+ young people (50 per cent) who were happy to answer said they feared that expressing their LGBTQ+ identity to family members would lead to them being evicted. **Almost one in ten (7 per cent)** said the same about romantic partners.

Two thirds (64 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people said homelessness made it hard for them to establish or maintain new relationships, including friendships.

Almost one fifth (17 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people felt like they had to have casual sex to find somewhere to stay while they were homeless.

Less than half (44 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people were aware of housing support services the last time they experienced homelessness. **Almost one quarter (24 per cent)** weren't aware of any support services available to them.

Only 35 per cent of LGBTQ+ young people who have accessed a service whilst homeless recall being asked by service providers to provide information about their gender identity and sexual orientation. Just **one third (33 per cent)** felt safe to disclose this information.

Over half (59 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people have faced some form of discrimination or harassment while accessing services.

abuse from family members

Most LGBTQ+ young people experienced abuse from their family members before becoming homeless and whilst homeless. Many felt they could not express their LGBTQ+ identity and feared that they would be evicted if they did.

These questions were asked to LGBTQ+ young people who confirmed they were happy to answer questions of this nature in the survey.

One in six LGBTQ young people said they were forced to commit sexual acts against their will by their family members before becoming homeless. Trans young people were significantly affected by most forms of abuse from their family members.

Two thirds (66 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people said they were repeatedly belittled by their family members to the extent that they felt worthless before they became homeless.

74 per cent of disabled people experienced this compared to 58 per cent who aren't disabled, and 74 per cent of trans people compared to 58 per cent who aren't trans.

More than half (52 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people said they experienced this abuse while homeless.

This was the experience for 54 per cent of trans people whilst they were homeless compared to 49 per cent who aren't trans.

Over 6 in 10 (61 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people felt frightened or threatened by their family members before they became homeless.

Almost three-quarters (71 per cent) of trans people experienced this compared to 58 per cent who aren't trans, as did 66 per cent of disabled people compared to 54 per cent who aren't disabled.

Nearly half (48 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people experienced this while homeless.

Over half (51 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people said that, before becoming homeless, their family members stopped them from expressing their LGBTQ+ identity.

Nearly two thirds of trans people (64 per cent) experienced this compared to 58 per cent who aren't trans, as well as 55 per cent of disabled people compared to 47 per cent who aren't disabled.

More than a third (35 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people also experienced this while homeless.

Four in ten trans people (43 per cent) experienced this compared to 27 per cent who aren't trans, and 33 per cent of disabled people compared to 38 per cent who aren't disabled.

Half of LGBTQ+ young people (50 per cent) said that before they were homeless, they feared that expressing their LGBTQ+ identity to family members would lead to them being evicted.

58 per cent of people of colour experienced this compared to 48 per cent of white respondents, and 55 per cent of trans people compared to 45 per cent who aren't trans.

45 per cent of people of colour felt this way while homeless compared to 33 per cent of white respondents. 41 per cent of trans people



**i've been living
on my own since
i was sixteen,
i've been kicked
out because of
being queer.**

fran (he/him)

said the same, compared to 31 per cent who aren't trans.

More than one third (35 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people were stopped by their family from seeing friends, relatives or partners before becoming homeless.

This was true for 37 per cent of trans people compared to 31 per cent who aren't trans and 32 per cent of people of colour compared to 36 per cent of white respondents.

Whilst homeless, 34 per cent of trans people experienced this, compared to 26 per cent who aren't trans.

One-fifth of LGBTQ+ young people were threatened to be outed as LGBTQ+ by family members before becoming homeless.

This rises to 25 per cent of trans people compared to 16 per cent who aren't trans.

One in ten (12 per cent) LGBTQ+ young people also experienced this while homeless.

World Habitat identifies corrective rape and honour-based violence as forms of abuse driven by homophobic, biphobic and transphobic attitudes.

One in six LGBTQ+ young people (16 per cent) were forced to do sexual acts against their will by family members before becoming homeless.

This impacted 21 per cent of disabled people, compared to 11 per cent who aren't disabled.

One in ten LGBTQ+ young people had abusive content published about them online by family members, such as private photos and videos before becoming homeless.

This rises to 14 per cent of trans people compared to 4 per cent who aren't trans and 12 per cent of disabled people compared to 7 per cent who aren't disabled.

7 per cent of LGBTQ+ young people experienced this while homeless.

familial support

The majority of LGBTQ+ young people who have faced homelessness did not feel supported by their parents, siblings or extended family. Trans and disabled LGBTQ+ young people, in particular, did not feel supported by parents, while LGBTQ+ young people of colour felt less supported than other groups by both siblings and extended family members. Most young people believe this is due to their family's lack of awareness of LGBTQ+ issues and the community.

Just 13 per cent of LGBTQ+ young people surveyed felt supported by parents or stepparents while facing homelessness.

This drops to less than one in ten (8 per cent) trans people compared to 18 per cent who aren't trans.

Only one fifth (21 per cent) of LGBTQ young people felt supported by siblings (including step-siblings) while facing homelessness.

Just 18 per cent of disabled people said this compared to 24 per cent who aren't disabled,

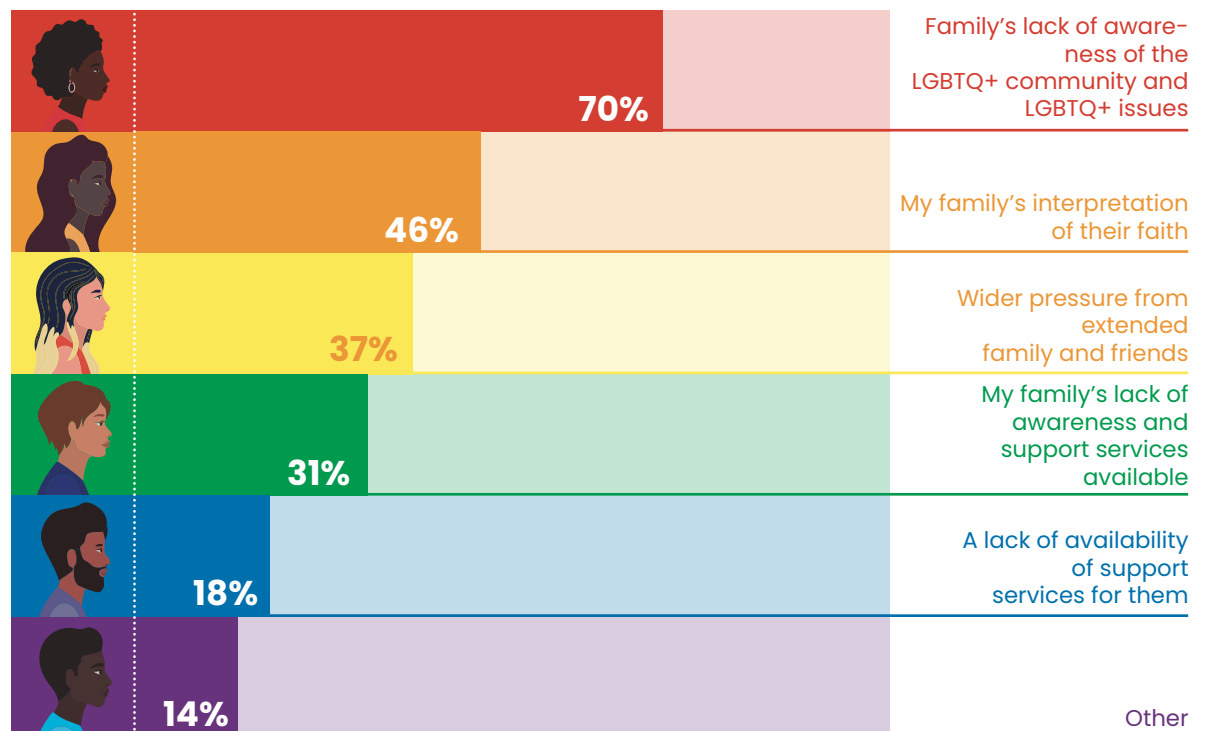
and 16 per cent of trans people compared to 27 per cent who aren't trans.

Just 16 per cent of LGBTQ+ young people felt supported by their extended family members (aunts, uncles, cousins or grandparents) while facing homelessness.

Just over one in ten (12 per cent) people of colour said this compared to 18 per cent of white respondents, and 14 per cent of trans people compared to 19 per cent who aren't trans.

Respondents who said they had been homeless as a result of a bad relationship with their family were asked:

which of the following do you think are the reasons for your family not supporting you more with being lgbtq+?



Other responses included: language barriers, lack of resources available in different languages, parents' learning difficulties, and parents' substance misuse issues.

they were quite vocal about their beliefs that anyone who was queer wouldn't have a place in their culture, in the family and society.

bobbie (she/her)



abuse from romantic partners

One quarter (25 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people were belittled by a romantic partner to the extent that they felt worthless before becoming homeless.

This rises to 29 per cent of disabled people compared to 22 per cent who aren't disabled, and to 32 per cent of trans people compared to 19 per cent who aren't trans.

One in five (20 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people said that, before they became homeless, a romantic partner threatened or frightened them.

Over a quarter (26 per cent) of trans people experienced this compared to 15 per cent who aren't trans, as did 25 per cent of disabled people compared to 15 per cent who aren't disabled.

18 per cent of LGBTQ+ young people said a romantic partner stopped them from seeing friends, relatives or partners before becoming homeless.

Almost one quarter (22 per cent) of trans people said this, compared to 14 per cent who aren't trans. 22 per cent of disabled people also stated this compared to 12 per cent who aren't disabled.

5 per cent of LGBTQ+ young people said that before becoming homeless, a romantic partner threatened to out them about their sexual orientation or gender identity.

7 per cent of LGBTQ+ young people said they feared that expressing their LGBTQ+ identity to romantic partners would lead to them being evicted.

8 per cent of LGBTQ+ young people said that before becoming homeless, a romantic partner stopped them from expressing their LGBTQ+ identity.

16 per cent of LGBTQ+ young people said a romantic partner forced them to do sexual acts against their will before becoming homeless.

Almost one in ten (8 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people said that, before becoming homeless, a romantic partner published abusive content of them online.

This rises to 11 per cent of trans people, compared to 5 per cent who aren't trans.

**our relationship
was really
bad, he'd
constantly call
me a doormat
and things like
that and was
just generally
really horrible
to me about
my trauma
symptoms.**

harry (they/them)



the impact of homelessness



Becoming homeless has a negative impact on almost all LGBTQ+ young people, with money worries and struggling to establish and maintain relationships also being common experiences. Trans and disabled young people were disproportionately impacted by many of these experiences, including substance misuse and job worries.

These findings are backed up with akt's 2015 research which found that once homeless, LGBTQ+ young people are more likely to face violence, develop substance misuse issues and be exposed to sexual exploitation than their non-LGBTQ+ peers.

92 per cent of LGBTQ+ young people surveyed said that being homeless had a negative impact on their mental health.

This increases to 95 per cent of disabled people compared to 90 per cent who aren't disabled.

85 per cent of LGBTQ+ young people said that being homeless made them worry about money.

Almost two thirds (64 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people said homelessness made it hard for them to establish or maintain new relationships, including friendships.

Over two thirds (69 per cent) of disabled people said this, compared to 60 per cent who aren't disabled. This rises to 70 per cent of trans people compared to 58 per cent who aren't trans.

Over half (58 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people said being homeless had a negative impact on their physical health.

there's been a lot of alcohol use and substance abuse and a lot of promiscuous sex, and you know, all the things that you do when you're sad and you're young.

fran (he/them/sometimes she)

This increases to almost two thirds (62 per cent) of trans people, compared to 53 per cent who aren't trans. It also rises to 67 per cent of disabled people, compared to 50 per cent who aren't disabled.

42 per cent of LGBTQ+ young people said that being homeless had a negative impact on them being able to stay in their job or search for a job.

This impacted 45 per cent of disabled people compared to 40 per cent who aren't disabled, and 46 per cent of trans people compared to 39 per cent who aren't trans.

One third (32 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people felt like they had to move to a new town or city when they became homeless.

More than one quarter (29 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people said they started drinking as a way to cope with being homeless.

More than one fifth (22 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people took drugs for the first time because of being homeless.

Over one quarter (28 per cent) of disabled people echoed this compared to 15 per cent who aren't disabled.

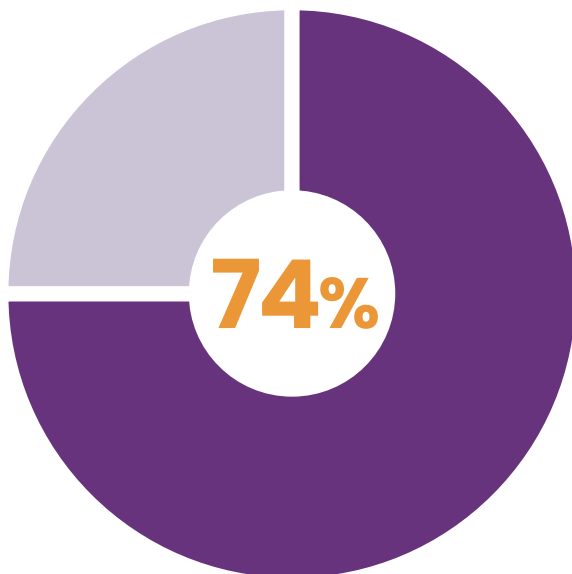
Almost one fifth (17 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people felt like they had to have casual sex to find somewhere to stay while they were homeless.

16 per cent of LGBTQ+ young people engaged in sex work as a direct impact of their homelessness.

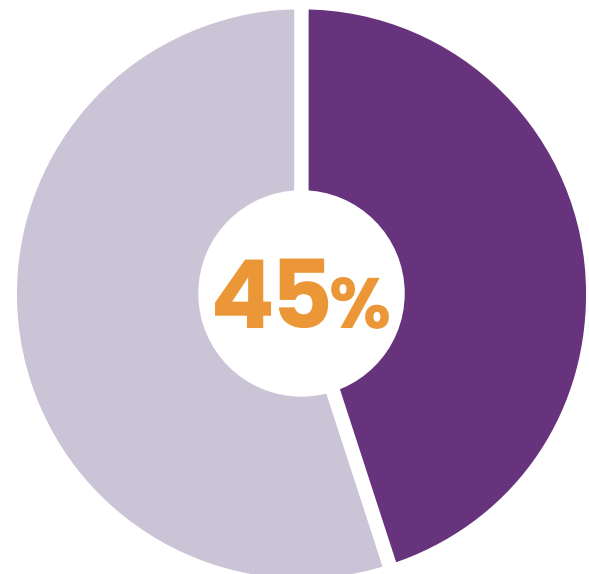
This increases to one in five (21 per cent) disabled people, compared to 12 per cent who aren't disabled.

support sought while homeless

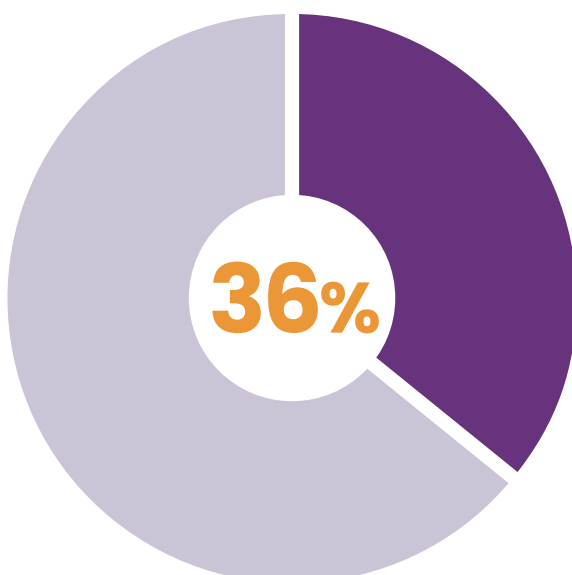
Worryingly, only a third of LGBTQ+ young people sought support from their local authority when they were homeless. Instead, many turned to their friends for support with low numbers seeking support from their family. LGBTQ+ young people of colour, in particular, were less likely to seek support from their extended family members while homeless.



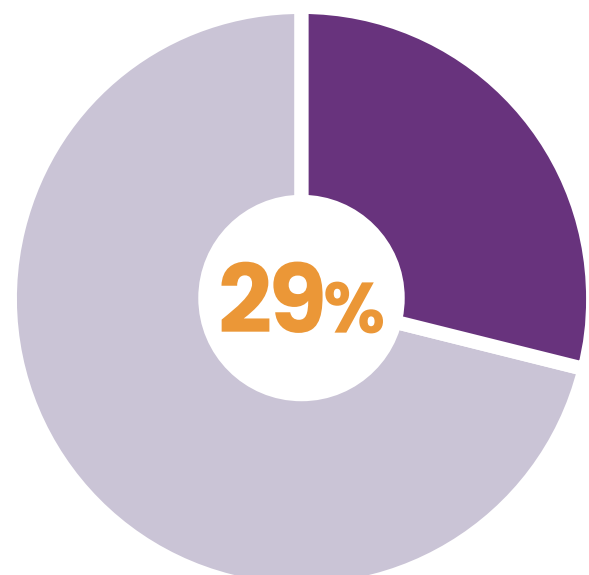
Almost three quarters (74 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people said they sought support from friends while homeless.



Less than half (45 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people approached community organisations while homeless



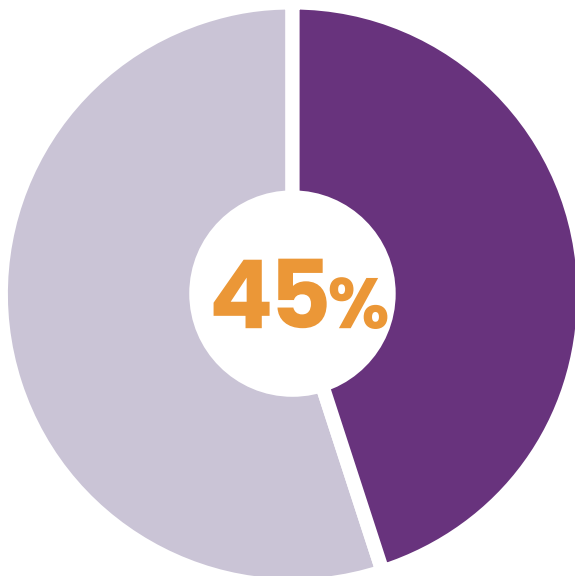
Over a third (36 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people said they sought support from an intimate partner while homeless.



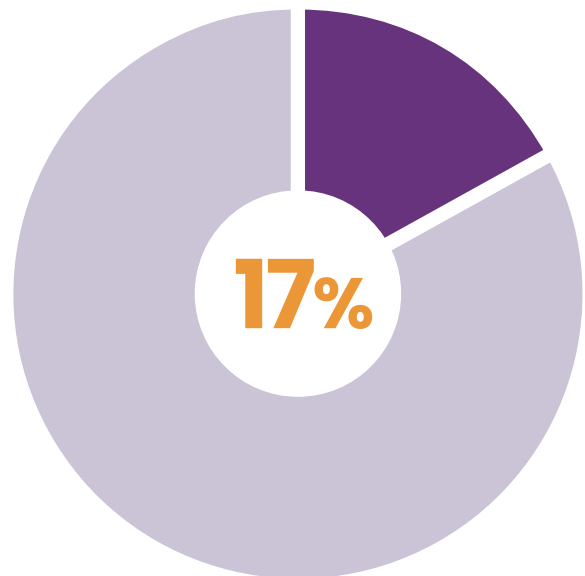
Just over a quarter (29 per cent) of people of colour sought support from an intimate partner compared to 39 per cent of white respondents.

there was a situation where I set fire to a pot of pasta. there were quite a few situations where there were fires in that kitchen because I didn't know how to use appliances safely.

harry (they/them)

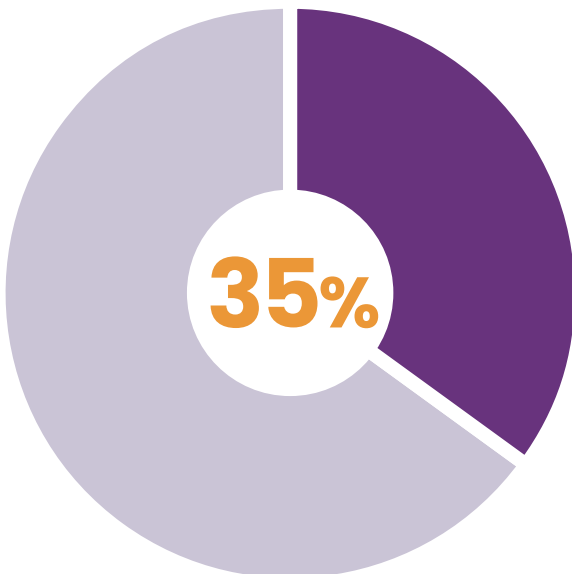


Less than half (45 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people approached community organisations while homeless

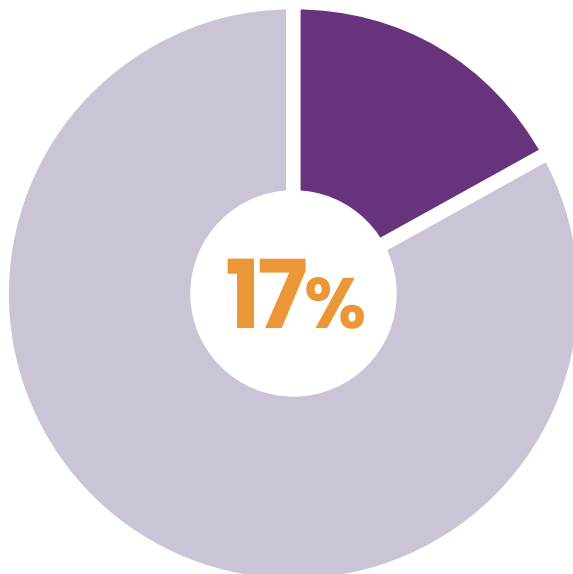


This drops to 17 per cent of people of colour compared to 29 per cent of white respondents.

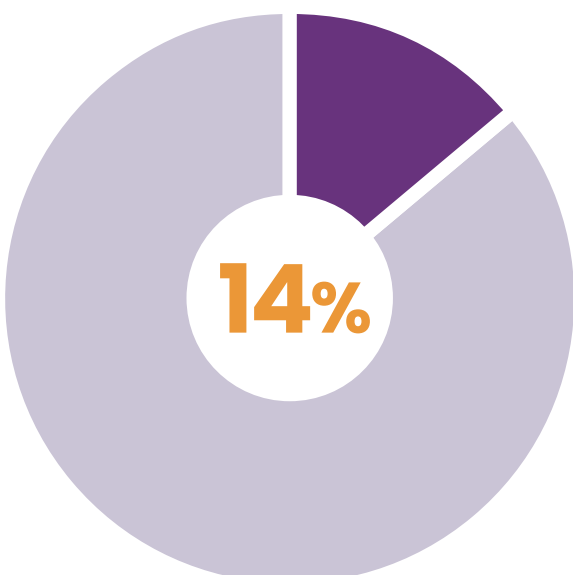
support sought while homeless



Just one third (35 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people sought support from their local authority while homeless.



Almost one fifth (17 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people sought support from other homeless people.



Just 14 per cent of people of colour sought support from other homeless people than 18 per cent of white respondents.

**it's difficult to
be the queer
person and also
the homeless
person**

fran

(he/them/sometimes she)



understanding and accessing services

Less than half of LGBTQ+ young people who are homeless are aware of housing support services available to them.

There is even lower awareness amongst mental health, welfare and benefit, sexual health and money advice services. This is reflected in the numbers of LGBTQ+ young people who are accessing these services. This demonstrates an urgent need for services to look into how to be more visible to LGBTQ+ young people.

Those from other marginalised backgrounds were even less likely to know about and access support services, particularly people of colour, trans or disabled people.

Awareness of services available during last experience of homelessness

Less than half (44 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people were aware of housing support services.

Just 38 per cent of people of colour were aware of housing support services compared to 46 per cent of white respondents.

Less than half (42 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people were aware of mental health support.

Just 38 per cent of disabled people were aware of mental health support compared to 45 per cent who aren't disabled. Only 40 per cent of people of colour were aware of these services compared to 43 per cent of white respondents.

Just one third (33 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people were aware of benefit and welfare support.

This drops to two in ten (21 per cent) people of colour compared to 37 per cent of white

respondents and less than three in ten (29 per cent) trans people compared to 34 per cent of those who aren't trans.

Less than three in ten (28 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people were aware of sexual health services.

Just one quarter (26 per cent) of disabled people and 27 per cent of trans people were aware of sexual health services.

Less than one in five (18 per cent) were aware of employment and training support services.

Just 17 per cent of people of colour were aware of employment and training support services compared to 18 per cent of white respondents.

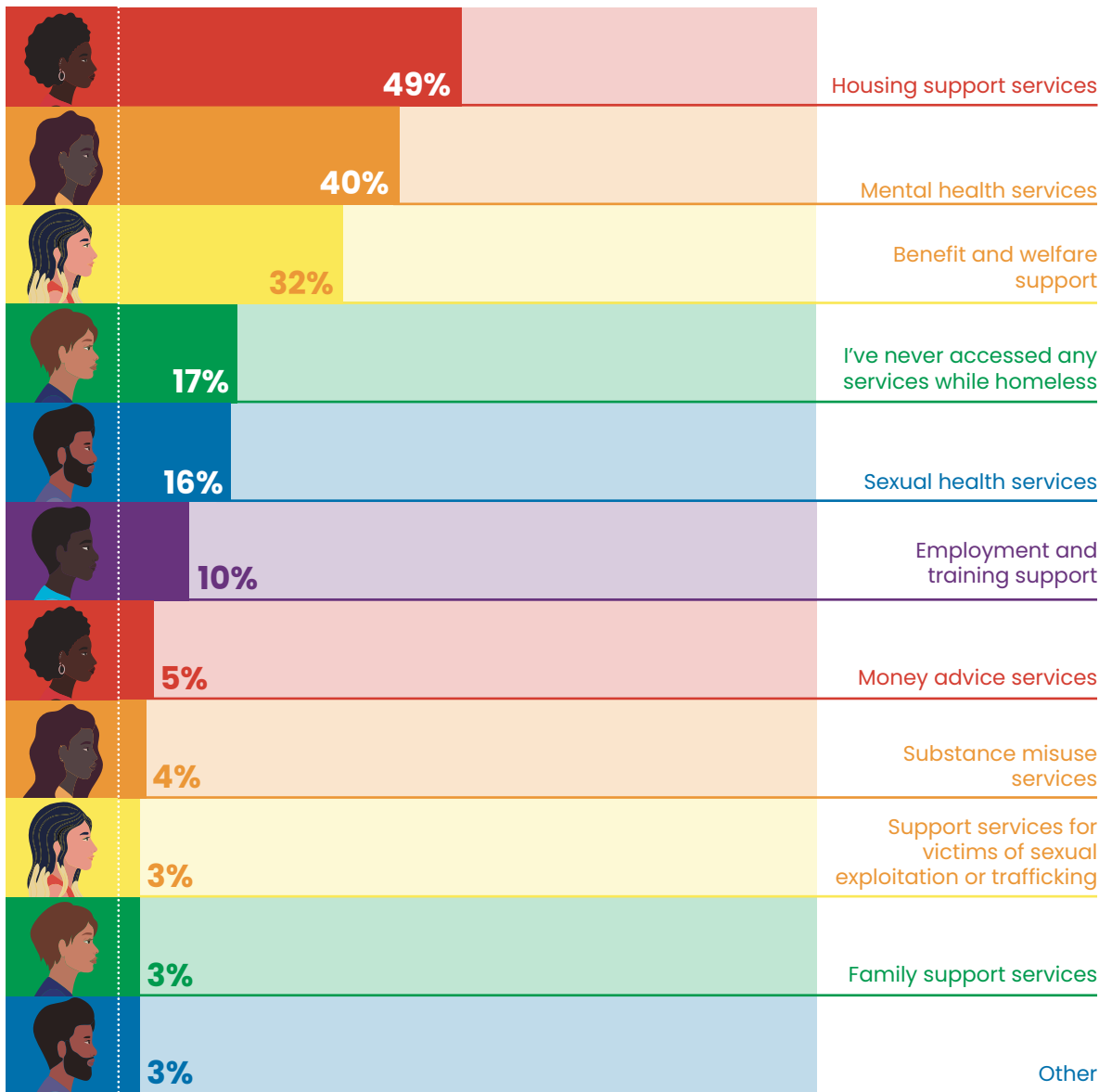
15 per cent of LGBTQ+ young people were aware of money advice services.

Only 7 per cent of people of colour were aware of these services compared to 18 per cent of white respondents. 9 per cent of disabled people were aware of these support services compared to 19 per cent who aren't disabled. Only 13 per cent of trans people were aware of these services.

Just one in ten (11 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people were aware of substance misuse services.

This drops to 8 per cent of trans people compared to 13 per cent of those who aren't trans and less than one in ten (10 per cent) people of colour.

what support did LGBTQ+ young people access while homeless? (of those who were aware of services)



Other responses included: college services and support from Student Unions.

Less than one in ten (8 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people were aware of services that supported sexual exploitation or trafficking victims.

This decreases to 6 per cent of trans people and to 7 per cent of people of colour.

Only 7 per cent of LGBTQ+ young people were aware of family support services.

Just 2 per cent of people of colour were aware of these services compared to 8 per cent of white respondents. Only 4 per cent of trans people were aware of family support services compared to 10 per cent who aren't trans and 5 per cent of disabled people.

Nearly one quarter (24 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people facing homelessness weren't aware of any support services available to them.

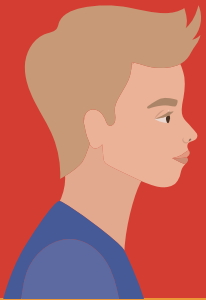
One third (33 per cent) of people of colour facing homelessness weren't aware of any support services available to them compared to 21 per cent of white respondents.

Research from Homeless Link found that poor access to information and low levels of awareness of services, places young people at higher risk of becoming 'hidden homeless' or street homeless.

Only half (56 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people who accessed housing support services while homeless were satisfied with their experience.

they didn't do a very good job of showing me how to bid for council properties, so it turns out i'd been doing it wrong for five months and none of the bids i'd been putting through had gone through properly.

harry (they/them)



experiences while accessing services

Most LGBTQ+ young people did not feel supported by services, with many feeling that they did not understand the reasons for why they became homeless and how to support them because of their LGBTQ+ identity.

Experiences of misgendering and deadnaming when accessing services were also reported. Many LGBTQ+ young people were not asked by services to provide monitoring information about their gender identity or sexual orientation, with a concerning number also not feeling safe to disclose this information.

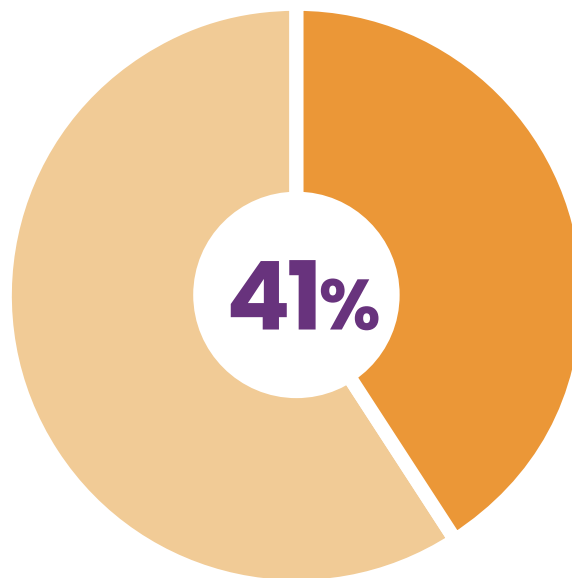
When accessing services:

Less than half (40 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people felt that services staff understood why they'd become homeless.

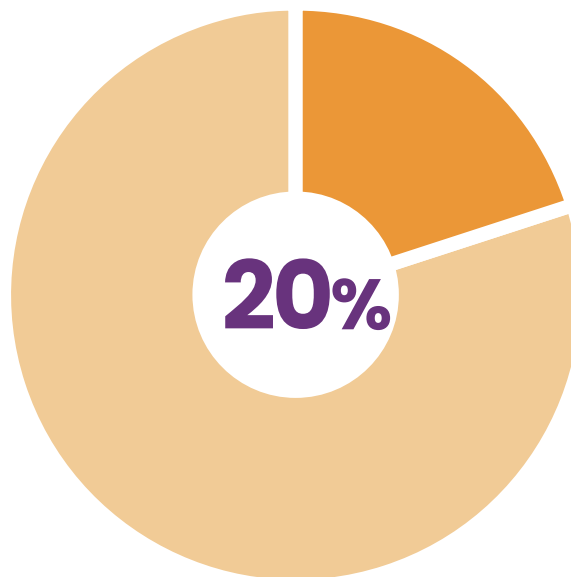
Only one third (35 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people recall being asked to provide information about their gender identity and sexual orientation. In turn, just 33 per cent felt safe to disclose this information.

Three in 10 (30 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people felt like the services they accessed did not understand what to support them with, because of their LGBTQ+ identity.

One fifth (20 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people had experienced misgendering or dead-naming, i.e. referring to a trans person by the name they were assigned at birth) while accessing services.



41 per cent of LGBTQ+ young people felt that they were asked to provide a lot of evidence and paperwork.



Just one fifth (20 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people felt fully supported when accessing services.

discrimination faced while accessing services

More than half of LGBTQ+ young people have faced some form of discrimination from services while homeless. This includes discrimination due to sexual orientation, gender identity, illness or disability and the fact that they're homeless. For those from marginalised backgrounds, this can lead to multiple and simultaneous forms of discrimination.



being trans is such a taboo with housing associations, within housing units and local authorities. there's such a gap between housing officers and the people who walk through the door.

mahan (he/him)

Over a third (39 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people have faced discrimination from services due to an illness, disability or mental health condition.

One quarter (25 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people have faced discrimination from services for being homeless.

Around one-quarter of LGBTQ+ young people have faced discrimination from services for being gay (27 per cent), trans (20 per cent) while 13 per cent had for being bisexual.

Over half (59 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people have faced some form of discrimination or harassment while accessing services.

i had a second support worker and she kept misgendering me. when i brought it up, she denied it and got angry with me. i didn't know how to stand up for myself or raise concerns.

harry (they/them)



improving services

LGBTQ+ young people would like to see a range of additional support services, from wellbeing and mental health services to services that support young people who have been victims of sexual exploitation or trafficking. The need for more specialised services, such as those for trans and non-binary and young people of colour is also important for LGBTQ+ young people.

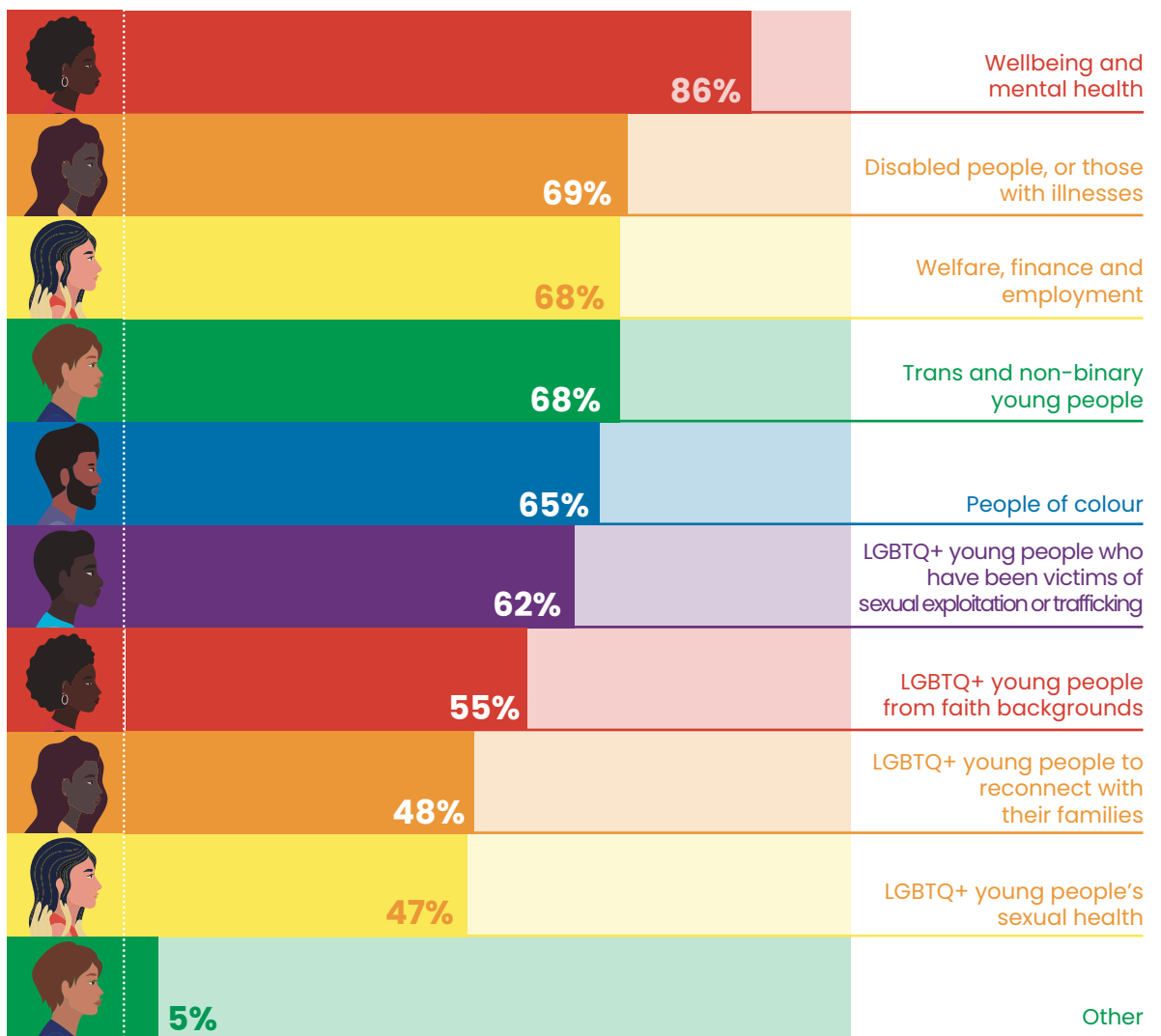
The majority of young people would like to see services adopt more inclusive language and imagery in their communication materials. This is particularly important to disabled and LGBTQ+ young people of colour. Other examples of recommendations to services from LGBTQ+ young people include shorter copies of communication materials, more individualised

support and more group support in their communities. LGBTQ+ young people also told us about what they would like to see services do more of:

Two thirds (63 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people want to see services offer more individualised, face to face support.

Aside from housing and homelessness, LGBTQ+ young people who've faced homelessness told us they'd also like to see services that support...

Other suggested services included: awareness training for housing staff to support non-UK citizens; substance misuse issues; LGBTQ+ South Asian specific support services; localised support; support for LGBTQ+ young people to get back into education; LGBTQ+ supported accommodation; trans safe houses



This is important to 73 per cent of trans people compared to 51 per cent who aren't trans, 65 per cent of disabled people compared to 60 per cent who aren't disabled.

More than half (60 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people want to see services offer more group support in their communities.

Seven in ten (70 per cent) of trans people said this was important to them compared to 51 per cent who aren't trans, and 64 per cent of disabled people compared to 56 per cent who aren't disabled.

Over half (53 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people want to see services offer more virtual individualised face to face support.

Six in ten (63 per cent) of disabled people said this was important to them compared to 46 per cent who aren't disabled, as did 61 per cent of trans people compared to 44 per cent who aren't trans.

Half of LGBTQ+ young people want to see services use more inclusive language which recognises their identity.

This is important for 68 per cent of trans people compared to 32 per cent who aren't trans and 60 per cent of disabled people compared to 41 per cent who aren't disabled. 57 per cent of people of colour also said that this is important to them compared to 48 per cent of white respondents.

Almost half (45 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people want to see services use more people who look like them in communications materials.

This is important to 57 per cent of trans people compared to 34 per cent who aren't trans, 55 per cent of people of colour compared to 41 per cent of white respondents and 47 per cent of disabled people compared to 42 per cent who aren't disabled.

Almost half (44 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people want to see services communicate more on social media platforms.

This rises to 57 per cent of trans people compared to 34 per cent who aren't trans and 55 per cent of people of colour compared to 39 per cent of white respondents.

Over one third (35 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people want to see services communicate more interactively.

Four in ten (43 per cent) people of colour said this was important to them compared to 33 per cent of white respondents.

Over one third (34 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people want to see services use shorter, physical copies of communications materials.

More than four in ten (41 per cent) disabled people said this was important to them, compared to 27 per cent who aren't disabled.

Almost one third (30 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people want to see services use more video and digital content.

This increases to 36 per cent of disabled people compared to 23 per cent who aren't disabled and 33 per cent of trans people compared to 23 per cent who aren't trans.

Other responses included: more advertisements on public transit and preventative services.

recommendations

Our research illustrates the devastating impact that homelessness has on LGBTQ+ young people, and the barriers that young people face when trying to access support.

It's also clear that further marginalised groups such as people of colour, trans and disabled LGBTQ+ young people are often disproportionately impacted by the issues covered in this report.

We must see urgent action to improve the support available to all LGBTQ+ young people, and in this section we make recommendations to key stakeholders who can help make this happen.

The Government should:

- 1. Implement uniform mandatory monitoring of sexual orientation and gender identity in publically commissioned housing and homelessness services.**
- 2. Revise gender monitoring information in Homelessness Case Level Collection Data to be inclusive of gender diverse, trans and non-binary identities.**
- 3. Adopt prevention and early action-focused solutions to LGBTQ+ youth homelessness, working in partnership with service providers. This includes more investment in emergency housing (such as akt's Purple Door) and long-term housing options, by increasing the supply of social housing and ensuring shared accommodation is affordable for LGBTQ+ young people.**
- 4. Ensure that LGBTQ+ youth homelessness is also explicitly in the LGBT Action Plan's commitments around LGBTQ+ homelessness.**
- 5. Develop a LGBTQ+ youth homelessness strategy that's inclusive of further marginalised groups including people of colour, trans and disabled LGBTQ+ young people. Incorporate an interdepartmental approach within this strategy by outlining priorities for various government departments, for example ensuring the Home Office includes measures to support LGBTQ+ young people who have no recourse to public funds or are seeking asylum.**

The housing and homelessness sector should:

- 1. Implement uniform mandatory monitoring of sexual orientation and gender identity on referral forms**
- 2. Ask for monitoring information on sexual orientation and gender identity as part of Homelessness Case Level Collection data.**
- 3. Refer to akt's inclusive service delivery toolkit to help create inclusive environments where LGBTQ+ young people feel safe to disclose their gender identity and sexual orientation.**
- 4. Implement changes to services based on LGBTQ+ young people's recommendations in this report, including specific recommendations highlighted by people of colour, trans and disabled LGBTQ+ young people. Build upon these recommendations by involving young people in the design of services.**
- 5. Commission training programmes for housing staff to raise awareness of the needs and experiences of LGBTQ+ young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. This should include a focus on further marginalised groups such as people of colour, trans and disabled LGBTQ+ young people.**

Local authorities should:

Implement all recommendations for the housing and homelessness sector and these additional recommendations:

1. **Ensure equal opportunity monitoring policies are up to date and reflect the protected characteristic of gender reassignment and gender, helping services better understand the needs of gender diverse, trans and non-binary young people.**
2. **Consider the particular vulnerabilities of LGBTQ+ young people (including people of colour, trans and disabled LGBTQ+ young people) and their experiences of domestic abuse, familial abuse, homophobic, biphobic and transphobic harrasment, mental and physical harm when establishing priority need and determining intentional homelessness.**
3. **Refresh and review homelessnsess strategies to determine how effective they have been in supporting LGBTQ+ young people.**
4. **Conduct an audit to identify why so many LGBTQ+ young people don't turn to their local authority for support when facing homelessness, addressing potential issues around gatekeeping, and gathering research and insight from akt and other relevant service providers.**
5. **Ensure that cases where LGBTQ+ young people (particularly those who are gender diverse, trans and non-binary) have experienced domestic abuse are accurately recorded in internal case management software and Homelessness Case Level Collection Data.**

The LGBTQ+ sector should:

1. **Ensure that LGTBQ+ youth homelessness is treated as a priority, and commission training for all staff members where appropriate.**
2. **Refer LGBTQ+ young people who are facing homelessness or experiencing housing issues to akt, and explore strategic partnerships to provide further help for these young people.**
3. **Ensure safeguarding provisions are in place for all LGBTQ+ service users that may be at risk of homelessness.**
4. **Implement changes to services based on LGBTQ+ young people's recommendations in this report, including specific recommendations highlighted by people of colour, trans and disabled LGBTQ+ young people. Build upon these recommendations by involving young people in the design of services.**

All other support services should:

1. **Carry out a marketing audit that addresses the lack of awareness of support services among LGBTQ+ young people (including people of colour, trans and disabled LGBTQ+ young people) and identify a course of action to help improve this. This could involve partnership working with akt or other revelant organisations.**
2. **Refer to akt's inclusive service delivery toolkit to help make services more inclusive of all LGBTQ+ young people.**

methodology

161 LGBTQ+ young people who experienced any form of homelessness in the last five years in the UK whilst between the ages of 16–25 completed the online survey. The survey was designed by akt and administered by YouGov. The research was completed between 24th July 2020 – 15th January 2021.

Participants for the online survey were openly recruited through akt’s social media channels and with the support of other organisations and community groups.

All differences highlighted in the report are statistically robust, i.e. had more than 50 respondents, except for stats specific to LGBTQ+ young people of colour where the data set was 42 respondents.

Survey sample

35 per cent are female, 31 per cent are male and 24 per cent are non-binary. 10 per cent of respondents chose to describe their gender in an alternative way. Examples included transgender FTM and AFAB.

42 per cent are gay or lesbian and 33 per cent are bisexual. 20 per cent chose to describe their sexual orientation in an alternative way. Examples included pansexual, queer, questioning, polysexual and asexual.

49 per cent are trans.

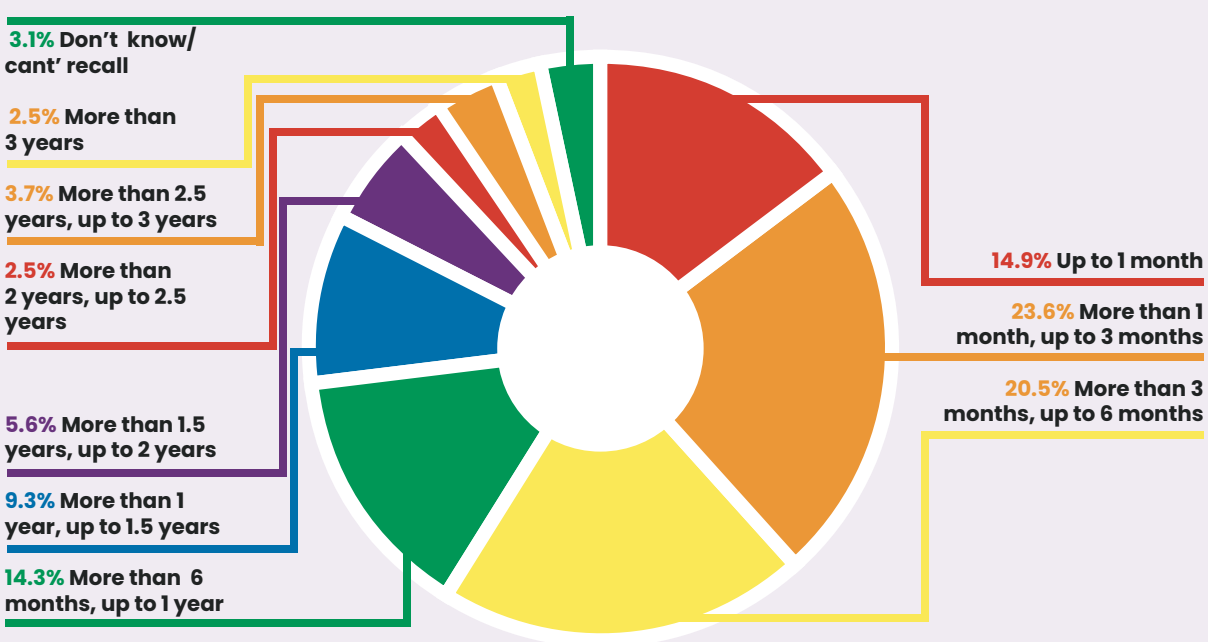
48 per cent considered themselves to be disabled.

26 per cent are People of Colour.

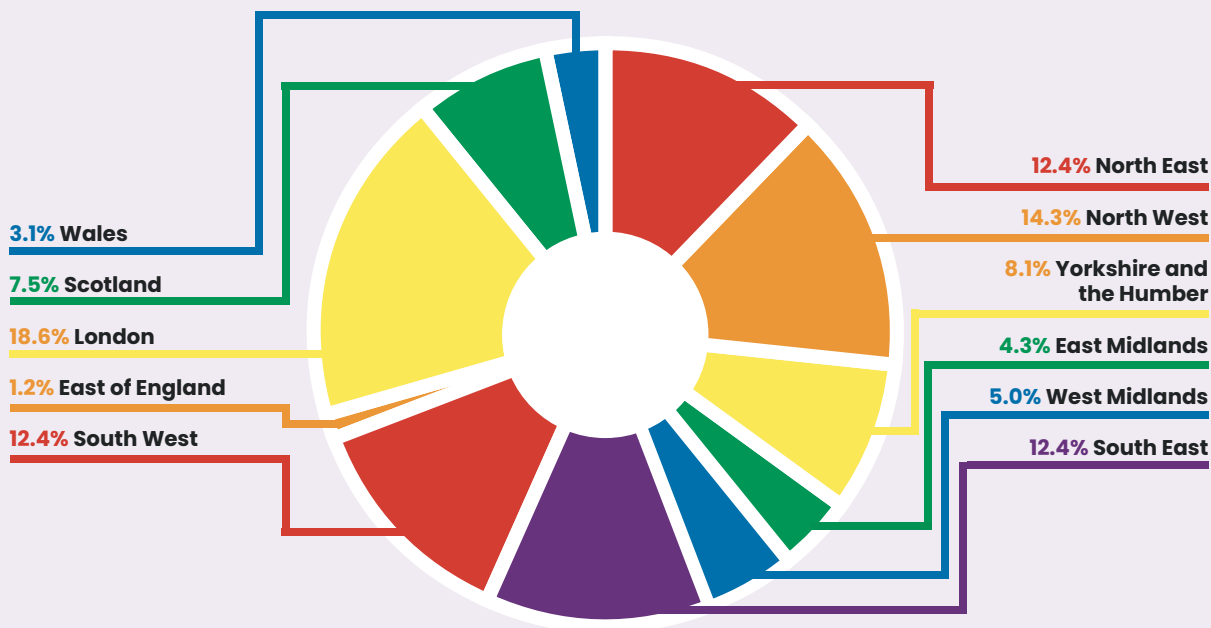
24 per cent identify as belonging to a particular religion.

Experiences of homelessness

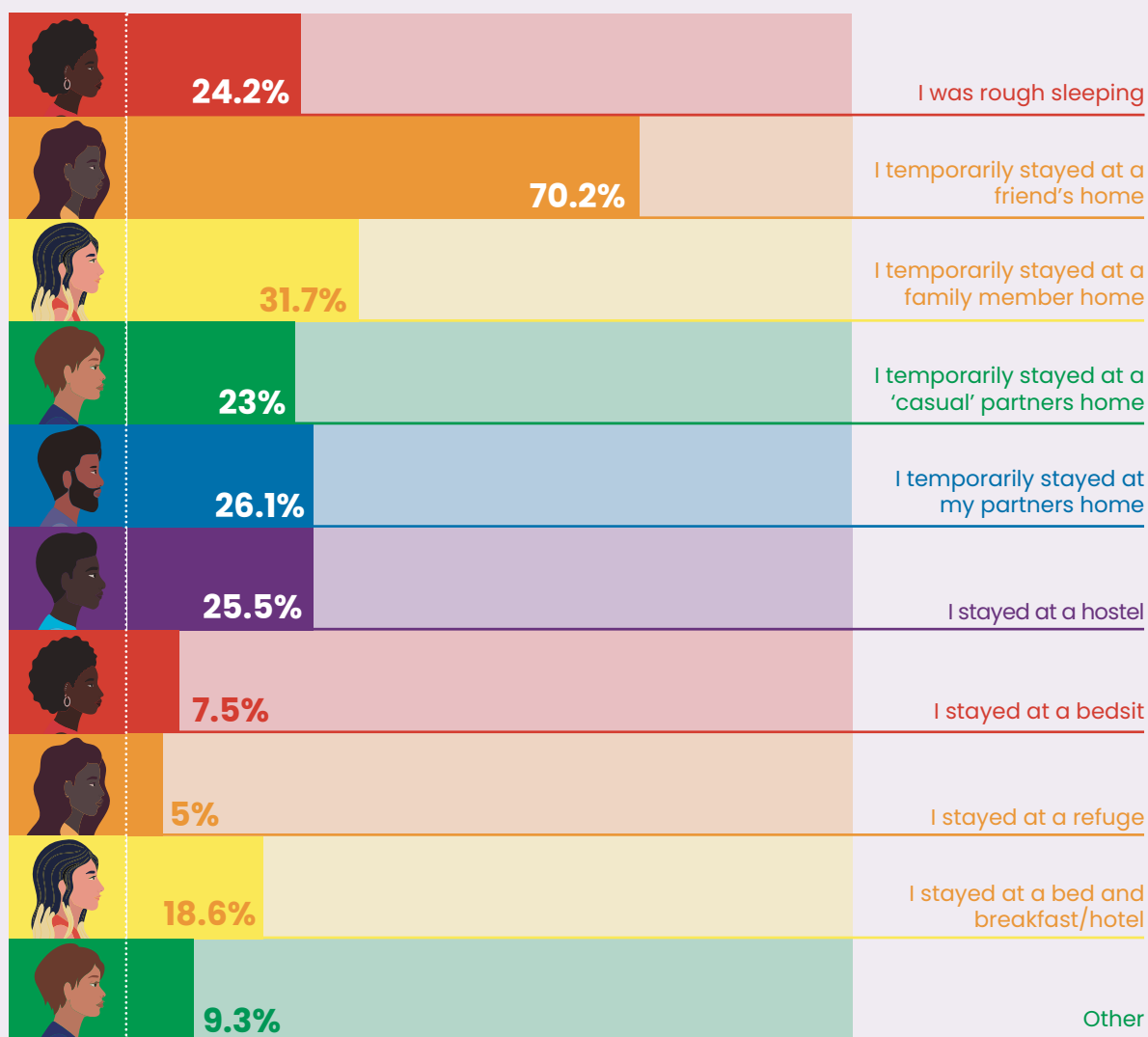
Longest length of homelessness experienced:



Where they last experienced homelessness:



Type of homelessness ever experienced:



Qualitative data

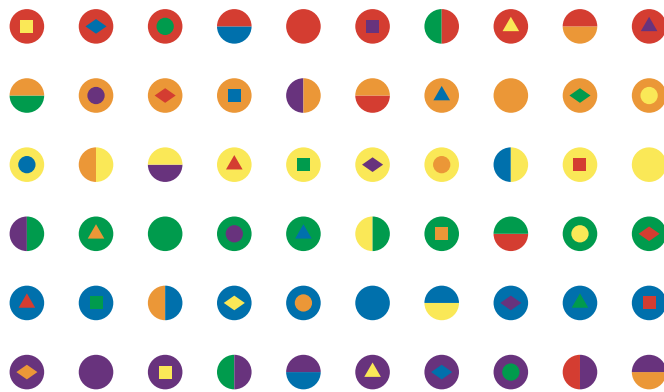
Ten interviews with LGBTQ+ young people who have faced any form of homelessness while aged 18-25, in the last five years. The sample was representative of the LGBTQ+ community, including gender, ethnicity and sexual orientation. All interviews were conducted and transcribed by Chaka Bachmann (Impact Culture).

methodology

People of colour identified themselves as belonging to the following ethnic groups (from 42 respondents):







akt

**safe homes and
better futures for
lgbtq+ young people**

aktcharity



akt • 19-20 parr street, london n1 7gw • 020 7831 6562 • **akt.org.uk**

company registration no 04494989 • charity registration no 1093815

report design: grahame robertson (akt)