



Stand With Pride: LGBTQ+ Youth and HIV Risk

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Though progress has been made in the fight against AIDS, there is still more work to do.

“The LGBTQ+ community were among the first to sound the alarm about government inaction in response to HIV and the urgent need for treatment research,” says Kyle Clifford, amfAR CEO. “amfAR proudly stood with this community then and will continue to do so during these challenging times.”

According to the UN, criminalization of LGBTQ+ people directly fuels the HIV epidemic. Homophobia, racism, stigma and discrimination, and bans on disseminating information about LGBTQ+ people, among other factors, continue to create barriers to health among people of all sexual orientations and gender identities.

In the U.S., LGBTQ+ scientific research has been defunded on the federal level and prevention efforts directed at gay and bi men and transgender people are being thwarted, for example.

Notably, younger members of the LGBTQ+ community continue to carry a disproportionate burden of HIV.

According to the latest [GLAAD State of HIV Stigma Report](#), Gen Z in the U.S. continues to be among the least knowledgeable generations about HIV. Only 37% of Gen Z adults (ages 18 to 26) said they feel knowledgeable about HIV, a percentage significantly lower than Millennials (49%) and Gen X (61%) surveyed.

In the U.S. and dependent areas in 2023, gay, bisexual, and other men who engage in male-to-male sexual contact (MMSC) were the population most affected by HIV in the U.S., making up 66% of all new HIV diagnoses in 2023. Of these new diagnoses, males aged 13–24 years accounted for 23%.

In 2023, among males aged 13–24 years, Black/African American males accounted for the highest percentage (47%) of diagnoses attributed to MMSC and Hispanic/Latino males accounted for the second highest percentage (36%) of diagnoses attributed to MMSC. Note the disproportionate impact in relation to population size: Black/African Americans and Hispanic/Latino individuals only make up about 12% and 19% of the U.S. population, respectively.

Among persons aged 13–24 years across all transmission categories, the U.S. South accounted for more than half (56%) of all diagnoses.

Racial/ethnic disparities in HIV risk exist among transgender and AGI people. Among transgender/AGI people diagnosed in 2022, 40% were Black/African American and 38% were Hispanic/Latino.

By age group, the second highest percentage of new diagnoses among transgender and additional gender identity (AGI) people occurred among people ages 13–24 (31%).

Notably, the CDC is no longer collecting national data about how HIV impacts transgender women and men, young or old. Globally, according to UNAIDS, the estimated risk of acquiring HIV was 20 times higher for transgender women than for other adults aged 15–49 years. For the U.S., this crucial information about risk is missing, making the HIV response targeting this population much more challenging.

“When we think about the LGBTQ+ community and HIV in the U.S., we often focus on older, white gay men. However, we need to spotlight younger members of the LGBTQ+ community, especially youth of color, so that the national HIV response follows all of the data,” said Greg Millett, amfAR VP and Director of Public Policy. “Many of our federal programs are effectively erasing the health needs of the LGBTQ+ population and we need to correct this.”

For more information about the basic facts about HIV/AIDS, click [here](#).

amfAR is a leading nonprofit dedicated to advancing scientific discovery and transforming global health with a primary and enduring commitment to ending the HIV/ AIDS epidemic. Serving as a catalyst for breakthrough science, amfAR supports innovative research in areas where viruses and the immune system play a defining role, including cancer, neurological conditions, autoimmune disorders, and other viral diseases. Through strategic investments, global research partnerships, and evidence-based policy leadership, amfAR helps accelerate discoveries that improve health and save lives. Since 1985, amfAR has raised more than \$950 million and awarded in excess of 3,900 grants to scientists worldwide. Learn more at www.amfar.org.