

LGBT+ SUPPORTS

LOCAL SUPPORTS

LGBT+ Support Groups KDYS

(Under 18 and 18-24 years groups)
Countywide every week.
Contact: Gareth Hartevelde 087 057 6213

Transformers

(Young Trans people under 18 yrs)
Second Tuesday of every month
Contact: Kerry Adolescent Counselling Service (KACS)
066 718 1333

TRANSKerry

(Over 18 years)
Second Friday every month 6-9pm.
Facebook: TransKerry Support Group
Contact: 086 787 2107

LINC Outreach Kerry

First Wednesday of every month.
Linc is an advocacy service for lesbian and bisexual women in Ireland. This is a group for Lesbian and Bisexual women living in the Kerry area who would like to access LINC's new service based in Tralee.

Contact: 021 4808600
Find on Facebook: LINC
Email: ciara@linc.ie
www.linc.ie



FAMILIES AND FRIENDS

TRANSPARENTCI

Support group for parents of young transgender people. Second Tuesday every month
Contact: Kerry Adolescent Counselling Service (KACS)
066 718 1333

Listowel FRC

Family & friends of LGBT+ Group
Contact: Bridie Mulvihill 086 855 6431



NATIONAL SUPPORTS

BeLong To

(Monday-Friday from 9am-1pm & 2pm-5pm)
BeLong To Youth Services is the national organisation supporting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI+) young people in Ireland.
Contact: 01 670 6223
www.belongto.org

ShoutOut

(Inclusion through Education - Taking the '?' out of LGBTQ+)
www.shoutout.ie
FaceBook: ShoutoutIRL
Twitter: @ShoutOut_IE

TENI

Transgender Equality Network Ireland
Contact: 01 873 3575
www.teni.ie

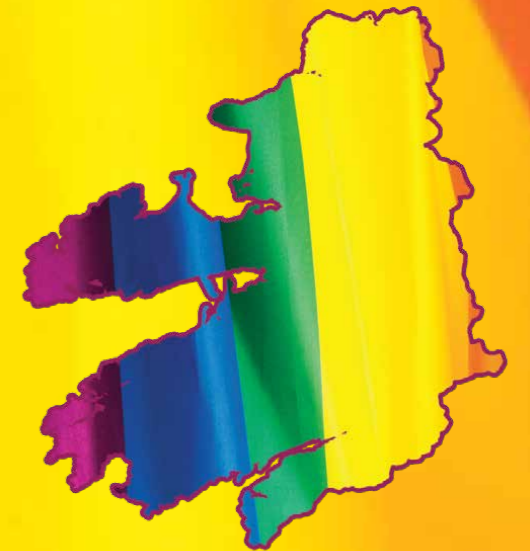
Gender Identity Family Support Line

(Sundays 6-9pm)
Contact: 01 907 3707

LGBT Hotline

Contact: 1890 929 539

VISIBLE IN KERRY an LGBT+ perspective



Niamh Bowen

2019

Summary of Research

Commissioned by Listowel Family Resource Centre in partnership with the Health Service Executive and Kerry Diocesan Youth Service



BACKGROUND

- Research was carried out over 5 months in 2018/19.
- The aim was to document peoples' experiences of being LGBT+ and living in Kerry. Based on the findings recommendations would be made to support the community living in Kerry.
- 138 people took part in the research.
- 25 people took part in focus groups and interviews.
- 113 people took part in an online survey.

Full research report Visible in Kerry available here:

<https://listowelfrc.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/visible-in-kerry-oct-19.pdf>

Information on supports available here:

<https://listowelfrc.ie/support-groups/>

KEY FINDINGS

- Early experiences of being LGBT+ are difficult for young people, Many young people in this research said they did not feel safe in the school environment and often felt overt and insidious threats of physical assault on corridors because of their sexual and/or gender identity.
- Feelings of uncertainty, anxiety and fear about the reactions of others are common.
- Young people reported being subject to unwanted commentary and in some cases anti LGBT+ bullying.
- Respondents said they feel more confident and happier in their lives when they can openly identify as LGBT+.
- Ongoing need for education and awareness about sexuality and gender issues across society.

- Most adults in the study reported positive experiences of being LGBT+ and living in Kerry though it was noted by most that living in a rural area presents more challenges for LGBT+ people.
- Most adults said they would not feel comfortable showing affection as an LGBT+ person in public places.
- Transgender people have a particular set of challenges to face, both internally and from society, and as a result they tend to experience significant mental health difficulties.
- Friendship and support from immediate family were cited as being very important to people.
- Online resources were also viewed as a source of support, though young people reported having negative experiences online.
- LGBT+ role models are seen as valuable, although not everyone has access to them.
- There is a lack of visibility of LGBT+ generally and most particularly in the workplace.

IN OUR WORDS....

"In my village, I felt I was the only one there, it turns out there was 10 or 12 lesbians in a small village!"

"I went to hospital for an operation, I had to name next of kin and I named my wife: the nurse was delighted, she said I was the first."

"My mother said I don't care what you do, I only want you to be happy, she said 'don't bring it home', but I did and my mother gave her sweet cake, and it was fine after that."

(Gay women)

"I would like a symbol, it could be quite discreet - that this employer welcomes and supports." (Gay man)

"You feel better about you, makes you more daring, gives you more confidence."

"I feel confident to know that I'm in such a loving community and can talk to others about it."
(Young people)

"I kept it to myself that I was gay, I used to think about it often, why can't I do what I really want. I just couldn't bring myself to do it at the time. When I did decide to come out I thought that ... well I'm retiring now and I'm going to enjoy the rest of my life." (Gay man)

"Somebody to talk to, someone to say it's okay. But you still have to access somebody like that. I wanted an adult. It didn't matter what their role was."
(Young person, 17)

"I knew when I was two that I was a girl, I realised my biological gender is not the right one. I was born in the wrong body. It is very hard because it makes me suffer, makes me feel like I am in jail. I have feminine brain but male's body."
(Transgender woman, 19)

"I had fibroids, and a lady doctor examined me and said you are pregnant, I said I'm gay I can't be pregnant. I had a battle with her."
(Gay woman)

"I came out to my family this year, with my parents that didn't go so well, some (family) were okay and some were against it, I was expecting it from them, I wish it was better but life is life."
(Young person, 14)

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

At a glance. . .

- A Kerry LGBT+ Solidarity Campaign.
- A Kerry Role Model Network to be formed for peer support.
- A Kerry Virtual LGBT+ Resource Centre to be established.

In more detail. . .

It is recommended that an LGBT+ solidarity campaign to be funded and established in the county. Such a campaign would allow allies of LGBT+ people to publicly show welcome to and solidarity with LGBT+ people. It would give employers, public bodies, places of education and communities an opportunity to engage in a practical, visible activity which would increase LGBT+ visibility, create opportunities for conversations, show visitors to the county a public welcome for LGBT+ people. Such a campaign would show Kerry to be a champion of LGBT+ equality.

A further recommendation is the establishment of an an LGBT+ Role Model Network. This network would serve to harness a database of volunteers who would donate time to the project. The project would encompass a befriending/peer support service which could be rooted within the local Family Resource Centre network, would feed into the solidarity campaign mentioned above, would serve as an activism hub for LGBT+ interests and also integrate into a recommended Virtual LGBT+ resource centre.

It is recommended that for Co. Kerry a Virtual LGBT+ Resource Centre be established. A centre with no fixed abode would reduce costs substantially and also give far flung areas an opportunity to host the resource once a year. The resource centre would have a permanent active online presence and would travel to different parts of the county once a month for public events.