* Thank you for your interest in this presentation. Please note that analyses included herein are preliminary. More recent, finalized analyses may be available by contacting CiPHR for further information.

Technology-mediated Benefits and Risks for LGBT Youth versus non-LGBT Youth

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Background

- Online world is transforming the experiences and relationships of youth in both positive [1-3] and negative [4-6] ways.
- Because of contextual factors such as prejudice and social isolation, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) youth consistently report victimization rates higher than heterosexual youth [7-15].
- It is possible LGBT youth may similarly face increased risk for victimization online.
- Alternatively, because the Internet equalizes the playing field by allowing people to communicate and find social support that may be lacking in face-to-face relationships [16], the Internet may represent a positive influence in the lives of LGBT youth.

Aims

- Identify benefits posed by the Internet to LGBT and non-LGBT youth, focusing on the potential for increased social support and availability access to health information.

- Identify threats posed by the Internet for LGBT and non-LGBT youth, focusing on victimization (i.e., bullying and sexual harassment).

Benefits

Health information seeking (%)

Type of health information	Hetero-sexual (n=3380)	Bisexual (n=655)	Gay/ lesbian / queer (n=1282)	Questioning / unsure / other (n=225)	X²
Any health information	49	89	85	59	752.5***
Any sexual health information	19	77	82	38	1910.8***
Sexuality	11	68	75	33	2067.4***
HIV/AIDS	5	15	27	7	456.6***
Condoms / birth control	11	33	23	12	249.7***
Any non-sexual health information	52	89	83	59	565.4***
Fitness	41	63	57	39	185.0***
Drugs or alcohol	8	29	25	11	322.5***
Violence	4	18	13	9	185.8***
Medications	17	37	33	19	228.5***
Depression	11	61	52	27	1249.0***

Health information seeking (%)

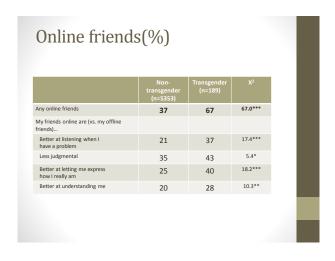| Type of health information	Non-transgender (n=5353)	Transgender (n=189)	X²
Any health information	61	94	81.1***
Any sexual health information	40	84	148.0***
Sexuality	32	79	179.1***
HIV/AIDS	11	15	3.2
Condoms / birth control	16	26	14.8***
Any non-sexual health information	63	88	48.3***
Fitness	47	51	1.1
Drugs or alcohol	14	22	8.9**
Violence	8	19	32.7***
Medications	22	42	40.8***
Depression	25	73	211.8***

Political involvement (%)

Type of political involvement	Hetero-sexual (n=3380)	Bisexual (n=655)	Gay/ lesbian / queer (n=1282)	Questioning / unsure / other (n=225)	X²
Used Internet to…					
Participate in or recruit people for a gathering	18	62	61	33	1019.5***
Support or get word out about issue or cause	39	85	87	57	1113.2***
Take part in online community that support issues or cause	36	85	85	55	1206.0***
Write blog post or make comments about issue or cause	34	76	76	55	878.0***
Use text messaging to….					
Participate in or recruit people for a gathering	16	48	48	23	637.7***
Support or get word out about issue or cause	25	57	58	30	572.0***

Political involvement (%)

Type of political involvement	Non-transgender (n=5353)	Transgender (n=189)	X²
Used Internet to…			
Participate in or recruit people for a gathering	33	63	75.5***
Support or get word out about issue or cause	55	86	69.8***
Take part in online community that support issues or cause	53	90	105.4***
Write blog post or make comments about issue or cause	48	80	73.6***
Use text messaging to….			
Participate in or recruit people for a gathering	27	47	37.7***
Support or get word out about issue or cause	36	55	28.5***

Online friends (%)

	Hetero-sexual (n=3380)	Bisexual (n=655)	Gay/ lesbian / queer (n=1282)	Questioning / unsure / other (n=225)	X²
Any online friends	24	61	66	39	845.7***
My friends online are (vs. my offline friends)…					
Better at listening when I have a problem	13	30	27	28	69.6***
Less judgmental	28	43	39	44	45.6***
Better at letting me express how I really am	15	37	30	30	91.7***
Better at understanding me	12	27	24	26	58.5***

Online and offline friends (%)

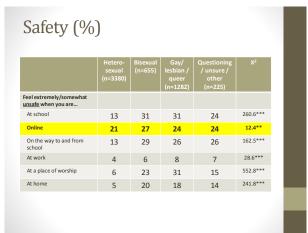| Social support	Hetero-sexual (n=3380)	Bisexual (n=655)	Gay/ lesbian / queer (n=1282)	Questioning / unsure / other (n=225)	X²
I can talk about my problems					
Online friends	28	57	52	43	128.2***
Offline friends	59	58	64	52	17.3***
I can share my happy and sad moments					
Online friends	33	55	53	45	86.7***
Offline friends	65	65	71	59	16.7**
I can count on when things go wrong					
Online friends	22	39	36	30	45.2***
Offline friends	60	61	63	52	9.6*
Really try to help me					
Online friends	26	46	44	37	74.5***
Offline friends	60	62	66	56	15.4**

Online friends(%)

	Non-transgender (n=5353)	Transgender (n=189)	X²
Any online friends	**37**	**67**	**67.0***
My friends online are (vs. my offline friends)…			
Better at listening when I have a problem	21	37	17.4***
Less judgmental	35	43	5.4*
Better at letting me express how I really am	25	40	18.2***
Better at understanding me	20	28	10.3**

Online friends(%)

Social support	Non-transgender (n=5353)	Transgender (n=189)	X²
I can talk about my problems			
Online friends	43	59	13.8***
Offline friends	60	54	2.5
I can share my happy and sad moments			
Online friends	44	63	18.0***
Offline friends	67	60	3.8*
I can count on when things go wrong			
Online friends	30	46	13.6***
Offline friends	60	53	3.7
Really try to help me			
Online friends	36	55	19.4***
Offline friends	61	61	0.02

Possible Risks

Safety (%)

	Hetero-sexual (n=3380)	Bisexual (n=655)	Gay/ lesbian / queer (n=1282)	Questioning / unsure / other (n=225)	X²
Feel extremely/somewhat <u>unsafe</u> when you are...					
At school	13	31	31	24	260.6***
Online	**21**	**27**	**24**	**24**	**12.4****
On the way to and from school	13	29	26	26	162.5***
At work	4	6	8	7	28.6***
At a place of worship	6	23	31	15	552.8***
At home	5	20	18	14	241.8***

Safety (%)

	Non-transgender (n=5353)	Transgender (n=189)	X²
Feel extremely/somewhat <u>unsafe</u> when you are...			
At school	18	47	96.4***
Online	**23**	**25**	**0.5**
On the way to and from school	18	38	48.7***
At work	5	8	3.7*
At a place of worship	13	32	54.7***
At home	10	27	60.5***

Bullying (%)

	Hetero-sexual (n=3380)	Bisexual (n=655)	Gay/ lesbian / queer (n=1282)	Questioning / unsure / other (n=225)	X²
<u>Overall</u>					
No past year bullying	58	24	24	42	741.8***
Non-technology bullying only	22	20	24	30	
Any technology bullying	21	56	53	228	
<u>Mode</u>					
In person	37	65	68	52	436.8***
Telephone	10	19	22	8	139.0***
Text messaging	13	28	26	13	165.5***
Online	16	50	47	25	644.0***
Some other way	9	28	31	17	411.2***

Bullying (%)

	Non-transgender (n=5353)	Transgender (n=189)	X^2
Overall			
No past year bullying	46	16	78.7***
Non-technology bullying only	22	24	
Any technology bullying	32	59	
Mode			
In person	47	76	59.4***
Telephone	13	19	5.7**
Text messaging	18	24	4.5*
Online	26	55	77.8***
Some other way	16	30	25.0***

Sexual harassment (%)

	Hetero-sexual (n=3380)	Bisexual (n=655)	Gay/ lesbian / queer (n=1282)	Questioning / unsure / other (n=225)	X^2
Overall					
No past year sex harassment	81	42	45	67	815.3***
Non-technology sex harassment only	7	13	11	12	
Any technology sex harassment	12	45	43	21	
Mode					
In person	14	44	39	23	481.7***
Telephone	5	13	11	7	86.5***
Text messaging	8	27	25	13	325.3***
Online	9	38	37	16	673.5***
Some other way	2	6	5	4	42.2***

Sexual harassment (%)

	Non-transgender (n=5353)	Transgender (n=189)	X^2
Overall			
No past year sex harassment	69	39	77.1***
Non-technology sex harassment only	9	13	
Any technology sex harassment	22	48	
Mode			
In person	23	47	55.4***
Telephone	7	14	14.4***
Text messaging	14	25	17.2***
Online	18	43	71.1***
Some other way	3	6	4.9*

Summary

LGBTQ youth experience many benefits of being online. Compared to heterosexual youth, LGBQT youth are:

- More likely to look for information about health and disease online
- More likely to use technology to be politically involved
- More likely to have online friends
- Online friends are better than offline friends at listening, more understanding, less judgmental, and let them be who they really are

Summary

LGBTQ youth also more likely to experience negative experiences related to being online. Compared to heterosexual youth, LGBTQ youth are:

- Somewhat more likely to feel very unsafe online
- More likely to experience victimization (i.e., bullying or sexual harassment)online or via text messaging

Adolescent health professionals need to work with LGBTQ young people to maximize noted benefits while simultaneously minimizing noted risks associated with being online.

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