



# PREVENTION PARTNERS OF NORTHERN MIDDLESEX

June 23, 2023

## Bullying Among LGBTQIA+ Youth

<https://www.stopbullying.gov/bullying/lgbtq>

Bullying puts all youth at increased risk for depression, suicidal ideation, misuse of drugs and alcohol, experiencing sexual violence, engaging in unsafe sex practices, and can affect academics as well. For LGBTQIA+ youth, that risk is even higher. There are important and unique considerations for strategies to prevent and address bullying of LGBTQIA+ youth that this link provides.

## The Power of Peers & Social Influence

<https://newsinhealth.nih.gov/2021/09/power-peers>

Teens are especially responsive to peer influence. That's because their brains undergo changes that make them highly attuned to social situations. At the same time, the reward system in the teen brain becomes extra sensitive. Understanding other people's values and being influenced by them are important parts of socializing. Being influenced on things like clothing choices and musical taste can help teens learn to fit in and make friends. But taking part in risky behaviors,

## WHO ARE WE?

Prevention Partners of Northern Middlesex (PPNM) is a collaboration of eight communities who work closely together to help reduce substance misuse with specific intentions for youth under the age of 18

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# How Peer Pressure Leads to Bullying

<https://www.verywellfamily.com/peer-pressure-and-bullying-what-is-the-connection-460496>

Typically, when kids give in to peer pressure it is because they want to be liked or fit in. They fear that if they do not go along with the group or clique, then other kids might make fun of them. As a result, bullying sometimes is an act of self-preservation. Additionally, some kids accept the idea that "everyone's doing it" and often mistakenly feel less responsibility for bullying when it is done as a group.

## Bystander Effect

<https://www.verywellmind.com/the-bystander-effect-2795899>

The bystander effect occurs when the presence of others discourages an individual from intervening in an emergency situation, against a bully, or during an assault or other crime.

The greater the number of bystanders, the less likely it is for any one of them to provide help to a person in distress. People are more likely to take action in a crisis when there are few or no other witnesses present. If we do not intervene, we risk our LGBTQIA+ peers, colleagues, or loved ones to become more at risk. This link provides a real case scenario of the bystander effect and why it happens.

## How to Be An Active Bystander

<https://www.cfchildren.org/blog/2018/10/addressing-bullying-teaching-children-to-be-active-bystanders/>

Addressing bullying has less to do with the person who's bullying and more to do with those who observe it, whether in the classroom, a social setting, or online. Bystanders have the power to significantly reduce unwanted, ongoing, and aggressive actions directed toward another person or group of people. By intervening nonaggressively in the first few seconds, bystanders can reduce bullying by at least 78%. Knowing this, we should prepare our children not only for what to do when being bullied but also how to be active bystanders to reduce bullying.

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