

# Belonging in Unshamed Authenticity

## LGBTQ Religious Youth and Young Adults

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### **Slide: Presentation Title**

### **Slide: Introduction**

In 2020, the Williams Institute at the UCLA School of Law reported that 47% of LGBTQ adults were moderately or highly religious. This equates to 5.3 million religious LGBTQ adults in America. We cannot ignore this population.

When making the transition into young adulthood, many religious LGBTQ youth feel they must make a choice between their spiritual well-being or their queerness. As a university community interested in the success of the rising generation, we can provide support through this time of transition for religious queer young adults. Spirituality and religiosity are not synonymous terms. Spirituality is personal belief in God or a higher power. Religiosity is the adherence to institutionally based beliefs, systems, or dogma. Today we will be focusing on religiosity—religious LGBTQ individuals.

### **Slide: Take Aways**

What I hope for you to take away from today's presentation is an understanding of:

1. What is happening in this transition from youth to young adulthood and why is there a transition in the first place.
2. The wellbeing needs of religious queer young adults.
3. Specific actions to take to support and increase the overall well-being of queer young adults in their personal religious choices.

### **Slide: Topics we will cover this morning:**

1. The often-hidden LGBTQ religious community.
2. The interconnected dimensions of overall well-being such as: physical, mental, emotional, social, intellectual, spiritual, and relational.
3. Conditions facing religious LGBTQ young adults when they are striking out on their own away from the home and their home community; independently beginning to assign meaning to their own experiences of being queer, their personal spirituality, their sense of belonging, and community.
4. The harm of labeling queer people as an ideology.
5. Specific actions to support and increase the overall well-being of queer young adults.

### **Slide: About Me**

I am the president emeritus of Affirmation: LGBTQ Mormons, Families & Friends a 46-year-old LGBTQ organization supporting both current and former Mormons as they navigate their

personal intersection with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The Church is widely known for its nickname “Mormons” or “Latter-day Saints, and I will use both today. I served as elected president of Affirmation for four years from 2019-2022. My experience centers directly on creating world-wide communities of safety, love, and hope for queer Latter-day Saints as they navigate their spirituality in this world. In this presentation, I will use both the words “queer” and “LGBTQ” synonymously as an inclusive community identifier.

### **Slide: Content**

This morning we will talk about suicide and suicide prevention. I am a certified suicide prevention trainer with the QPR Institute and will follow best practices as we touch on this subject. If you are experiencing hopelessness or are considering suicide, the National Suicide Hotline at 988 is available 24/7 where you can confidentially talk with mental health professionals.

### **Slide: Affirmation at World Pride in 2019**

## 1. The often-hidden LGBTQ religious community

The reason why I say “often hidden” is because a stereotype persists that being queer is incompatible with religious adherence or faith, that they are like oil and water. I hope to dismantle this stereotype this morning.

This photo is from when Affirmation marched at World Pride in New York City in June of 2019. Affirmation was one of 695 groups marching that day and five million people packed into lower Manhattan to show their pride and support. It was an incredible feeling to march in this historic event.

2019 marked the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Stonewall riots in Greenwich Village on the west side of lower Manhattan. Stonewall was the pivotal moment in history when police raided the Stonewall Inn, a gay bar, during the early morning hours of June 28<sup>th</sup>, 1969. Tired of continued police harassment, the patrons and nearby residents engaged with the police. The scene became explosively violent as the LGBTQ community stood up for itself against government harassment for six days.

Today’s LGBTQ civil rights movement rose from the gay liberation movement that took off in the aftermath of the Stonewall riots. Along with the rise of the LGBTQ civil rights movement, came queer visibility.

In 2022 Dr. Neil Young at the University of Utah spoke about this moment of visibility during this time period,

“Across the entire swath of American Christianity, [this] visibility and presence of homosexuality is causing religious groups to have to articulate and develop a theology that for most of them wasn’t there or certainly wasn’t developed. This is happening really

in every sort of denomination of American Christianity, even mainline Protestantism and its more liberal wings.”

A significant number of religions developing a theology in response to LGBTQ visibility, ended up creating a rejecting stance for LGBTQ people, which in turn, created a hostile environment for LGBTQ people in their spiritual home. And when churches are rejecting, this often translates into family rejection as well.

A September 2022 journal article in *Health & Social Care in the Community* acknowledged that “most of the major religions, especially the more orthodox elements, are doctrinally opposed to LGBTQ people.”

But this is not a mutual feeling between many queer people and religion. Like all humans, queer people exist on a spiritual spectrum from highly believing to non-belief. And with this spirituality, queer people affiliate with religion. Nearly half of LGBTQ adults in the United States are religious.

In 2020, this meant that there were 5.3 million religious LGBTQ adults in America. In 2020, Gallup found 5.6% of all adults identified as LGBTQ. In Gallup’s newest poll in 2022, this number rose to 7.1% which would increase the total number of religious LGBTQ adults closer to the 7 million mark today

Concerning religious LGBTQ adults, the Gallup Organization reports that the overall number of religious LGBTQ people is “found across the age spectrum, in every racial-ethnic group, among married and single people, among those who are parenting, and among rural and urban dwellers.”

#### **Slide: Religious LGBTQ people by the numbers**

To break this down by generations, here are the groupings of religious LGBTQ people by age range.

In this study, the total religious LGBTQ people was the sum of those determined moderately and highly religious. The moderate classification indicated religion was important and the LGBTQ person attend monthly to weekly. Highly religious classification indicated that religion was a defining facet of the LGBTQ person’s life their daily life and they attended regularly.

Starting at the bottom of the graph, of the total number (47%) of religious LGBTQ people in the United States:

- 38.5 percent of those are 18 to 24
- 40 percent of those are 25 to 34
- 51 percent of those are 35 to 49
- 56 percent of those are 50 to 64
- 65 percent of those are 64 and older

A couple of interesting notes. This is 2020 data. In 2022, an astounding 21% of all Gen Z young adults (18-24) identified as LGBTQ, up from 17% in 2020. This is 1 in 5. The other generations remained relatively stable. Religious identity remaining the same, this would also increase the number of religious LGBTQ young adults as well.

It is also interesting to note that queer people are trending alongside their non-queer peers in religious identity in their respective generations. Keith Conron, the lead author at the Williams Institute observes that,

“Fewer and fewer people in young adulthood are choosing religion. It’s a pattern we see in non-LGBT people as well. People are consciously deciding to step away from the religion of their youth because it doesn’t embrace their values.”

What is also surprising in these findings is that 2/3rds of senior LGBTQ people over the age of 64 are religious. This speaks to the tenacity of LGBTQ faith, for this was the generation that grew up side by side extreme hostility and rejection that was present in society and religion sixty, seventy years ago.

We cannot discount the religious LGBTQ population, no matter their age or other demographics.

**Slide: Seven Facets of Wellbeing**

## 2. The interconnected dimensions of overall wellbeing

Our over-all wellbeing is a web of interconnected facets of health. This graphic from the University of Chicago highlights seven dimensions of wellbeing.

Notice that spirituality is front and center, not hidden. And for almost half of LGBTQ people, spirituality translates into religiosity. The LGBTQ community understands this, and even in the face of rejecting speech and behavior in many religious communities, organizations of both LGBTQ people and allies work for inclusion and acceptance in religious spaces that LGBTQ people want to be a part of.

An example of this community self-awareness is HRC, the Human Rights Campaign. By far the largest LGBTQ lobbying and advocacy group in the United States, its footprint is not just in the political. HRC has an entire Religion and Faith division. As president of Affirmation, HRC would often collaborate with us in our work to eliminate homophobia and transphobia within the Latter-day Saint church, spurring the faith to become increasingly more welcoming, inclusive, and affirming. Faith based, queer centric, LGBTQ groups are not at all uncommon and they are a part of the larger LGBTQ picture.

It is important to note that each individual component of wellbeing contributes to overall personal wellbeing. Trauma to one component can affect other components of wellbeing

What happens when one or more of these wellbeing components is disrupted?

Let’s look at environmental.

Research by the Albert Kennedy Trust, an organization that supports young people at risk for homelessness, reports that nearly half of young LGBTQ people who are left homeless after coming out are from non-affirming religious backgrounds. Overall, one in four young homeless people identify as LGBTQ.

Loss of housing affects a young person's entire web of wellbeing. It is a loss of general security.

At a session for church leaders at Affirmation's International Conference in 2022, Dr. Tyler Lefevor, a professor of Psychology at Utah State University, stated that LGBTQ Latter-day Saints tend to come out later in life. Much of this has to do with perceived safety. It would be reasonable to think that this is not just a phenomenon unique to Latter-day Saints but to all LGBTQ people in non-affirming faiths.

The perceived threat of homelessness is but one reason why youth and young adults stay in the closet in households where LGBTQ rejecting speech and behavior is present. When considering their risks: Fear of physical and emotional abuse, social shunning, and—concerning spiritually—the very real perceived loss of salvation, staying in the closet becomes a protective factor.

**Slide: Relational Wellbeing**

One of the hot topics in LGBTQ wellbeing right now is the component of relational wellbeing. Relational wellbeing reflects a willingness to know yourself and to know others in a genuine way. For youth and young adults, family is a huge part of their relational wellbeing. Building and maintaining relationships rooted in trust, support, and respect increases the wellbeing of the entire family and in turn the community.

**Slide: Family Acceptance Project**

Dr. Caitlin Ryan the director of the Family Acceptance Project at San Francisco State University has developed an evidence base resource booklet called "Supportive Families, Healthy Children" thoughtfully presenting the research on how families can help support their LGBTQ children. This booklet has been designated as "Best Practice" resources for suicide prevention for LGBTQ people by the Best Practices Registry for Suicide Prevention.

I highly recommend this resource to all educators to help understand family dynamics in highly religious households and how these best practices do not berate personal religious belief but support reflective dialogue which has been shown to increase not only the wellbeing of the LGBTQ child but of the entire family. This booklet is offered as a download free of charge.

Reflective dialogue is a concept in relational wellbeing where all parties consider how their own speech and behavior can cause trauma in the relationship. When families enter therapy, one of the things a therapist will work on is reflective dialogue, creating better connectedness and belonging within a family.

As part of my training in my profession as a dentist, I was a resident at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics. I was a part of a trauma team to take care of the dental component of any trauma coming in to the hospital for care. It was not unusual for me to be reimplanting teeth next to a physician sewing up a facial laceration, next to another working down at the chest.

However, trauma is not just physical. We can experience trauma in any of our individual parts of our wellbeing under harm or threat of harm. To care for physical trauma, we see the physician or dentist, emotional or mental trauma we see therapists. It is important to note that we do not have to be a trauma specialist to get people to help when we recognize something amiss in any area of someone's wellbeing.

One of the possible manifestations of untreated trauma in youth and young adults is suicide. We will talk more about this in a moment.

### **Slide: Conditions**

## 3. Conditions facing religious LGBTQ young adults

For religious LGBTQ people, tension often exists within their spiritual wellbeing. So far today we have learned that many LGBTQ young adults retain their religious belief even if they experience rejecting behavior or speech.

In addition, we know that many religious young adults delay coming out when so much of their wellbeing is dependent on stable relational (home, friends, and community) wellbeing. So, what happens now as young religious LGBTQ people leave home and begin to build their own relational health in an environment outside their familiar boundaries of community and family?

Putting the queer aside for a moment, as humans we all do this building of relational health in this important and exciting period in our young adult life as we become independent and grow as an individual. We learn about ourselves, we question our beliefs and build a personal set of values and ethics, we make friends and meet new people who expand our horizons.

Let's talk specifically about the possible things that may be happening internally in this period for religious LGBTQ young adults.

### 1. Coming out.

For religious LGBTQ people, coming out creates conflict. It is a moment where as a queer person of faith you believe in yourself, but your religious does not believe in you.

Often religious LGBTQ youth will delay coming out until they are in a new environment. Either they have been waiting to leave home to do this or they experience the well-known phenomenon that a new environment can spur questions thought too unsafe to ask in familiar surroundings.

Every queer person comes to the closet door in their own way and in their own time. Some come walking out of the closet spectacularly with poise and composure. Some fall out, awkwardly tripping over the threshold, heels breaking, voices stammering, feeling shame, experiencing that unsettling step into nothingness like when you think you've reached the bottom of the stairs, but you haven't—there's one more left.

As an educator or trusted adult, an LGBTQ person may come out to you. For those falling out of the closet, just know that the religious LGBTQ student is often falling into loss—spinning and reaching for a hand to stabilize them. They crave a safe space to land. This can be incredibly

disorienting to the LGBTQ person and it can be overwhelming to you as an educator or trusted adult. We will talk about what you can do at the end of the presentation.

## 2. Internal homophobia or transphobia.

It is absolutely 100% possible that a highly religious young adult has never entertained the thought that they may be gay, transgender, or nonbinary. Recalling the mantra that a new environment can spur questions thought too unsafe to ask in familiar surroundings, a university campus may be the new environment that awakens this relational understanding of self.

In medicine, a phenomenon exists called “anesthesia awareness,” where while under general anesthesia during an operation, you as a patient become fully aware of what is happening, and you can feel the procedure. This is rare, but terrifying.

Coming out in the middle of a religion that is not affirming can feel much like anesthesia awareness for a LGBTQ person. It can be terrifying. Imagine spending your entire life in an environment condemning the LGBTQ community, only to come to the realization that you are part of this community.

Without the exposure, education, tools, or support to contextualize sexual orientation or gender identity, the fallback resource for a religious LGBTQ person is the learned rejecting religious teaching and behavior accumulated over a lifetime. As a gay highly orthodox Mormon teenager I absolutely hated myself. I dealt with an extreme amount of internal homophobia.

Self-hate can be hidden for a long time. In this hiding it will eat away at your soul. Without a source of safe communication about internal queer-phobia, this can be a risk factor for suicide. At the end we will talk about how a supportive University community can mitigate this.

## 3. Risky Behavior

Risky behavior is not unique whatsoever to religious LGBTQ young adults, but as a leader of an organization that supports queer Latter-day Saints, we noted anecdotally that as an organization, we served a population that learned the absolute prohibitions (No drinking, no smoking, no drugs, no premarital sex...and for Mormons, no coffee) through a system of abstinence, complete avoidance. No exposure.

In our orthodox LGBTQ population in Affirmation, there was often no knowledge of consent, safe sex, or sexually transmitted infections. Providing education to LGBTQ adults in health matters is not to promote lasciviousness, but to promote health and life. Sometimes when a religious LGBTQ young adult comes out, they want to try “all the things,” and to have a community of mentors to help contextualize what is happening is protective, if not lifesaving.

## 4. Suicidal Ideation

Isolation, self-hate, untreated trauma in any facet of wellbeing, rejecting speech and behaviors are some of the fundamental risk factors of suicide for LGBTQ people. It is important to note that studies have shown time and again that being an LGBTQ person is not a risk factor for suicide.

All people can manage suicide risk factors fairly well without ever contemplating suicide. The QPR Institute identifies that certain risk factors are a “trigger or final straw.” The more risk factors a person is carrying, the more consequential a “last straw” event is. As a rule of thumb, the greater number of losses, the greater the risk for suicide.

I’ll point out a couple “triggers or final straws” important to know concerning religious LGBTQ people. First is a “Crisis in Relation.” An example of this is when an LGBTQ person comes out and their family—the center of their relational wellbeing—rejects them, cuts them off, or kicks them out.

Another “trigger or final straw” is being expelled from school. This becomes a huge factor for religious LGBTQ people at religious universities that will expel LGBTQ students for being or simply “acting queer.”

For example, my alma mater Brigham Young University has a policy that any chaste romantic behavior between queer people—be it hand holding, kissing, or dating—is grounds for expulsion while at the same time such behavior is openly encouraged for their straight/cisgender peers.

Risk factors weigh the scale, but “triggers and last straw” events tip the scale and the situation can become a moment of suicidal ideation. Suicidal ideation is a moment of feeling hopelessness and dying seems the only solution.

So, what are some solutions and resources that can support religious LGBTQ students in higher education?

Before we finish on this topic, let me present a moment of reflection.

**Slide: Labels**

#### 4. The harm of labeling queer people as an ideology

What do you do as a human being when you become someone’s sincerely held religious belief?

Queer people ask themselves this question daily when searching for community, services, housing, and a spiritual home.

During the rise of the LGBTQ civil rights movement in the 1960s, the visibility of LGBTQ people happened alongside the rise of counter culture. Society—be it government, medicine, or education—not only pushed back on the counterculture, but it was not kind to LGBTQ people.

In addition, as you will recall, in this historical moment of seemingly sudden LGBTQ visibility, all religious groups had to develop a theology about LGBTQ people. For many, the resulting policies and theology outcomes were hostile and rejecting towards LGBTQ adherents.

Today, 70 years later, many parts of society have made progress, other parts have not. Today we have mainstream religions that have worked out inclusion and equality in their theology for LGBTQ people, yet we have many religions that still hold a religious belief that LGBTQ people are not worthy of inclusion and equality.

At least 38-40% of queer students you meet on campus are religious. Queer religious students have been experiencing the crossfire of opposition above their heads begun long before they were born between their religion and LGBTQ civil rights and acceptance.

Not only are they acutely aware of this struggle going on above their heads, but they face various levels of internal religious tension that can be manifested in many ways, some of which we have talked about today. Some of which can be dangerous or harmful.

Regardless of personal feelings, research in relational wellbeing has shown that it is possible to be a supportive factor in the overall wellbeing of queer people no matter where you are on your own faith spectrum.

Let's finish by talking about specific resources and help.

### **Slide: Actions**

## **5. Specific actions to take to increase the overall wellbeing of religious queer young adults**

### **1. Suicide prevention**

Let's talk about suicide prevention first. I am a certified trainer with the QPR Institute's suicide prevention program. QPR stands for Question, Persuade, and Refer. QPR is not the only suicide prevention program in the United States and all prevention programs will teach you what to do as a community citizen if you encounter someone contemplating suicide. I would highly recommend that as an educator, if you haven't already, to take a suicide prevention course. You very well could save a life. The QPR institute will have a list of certified trainers near you on their website.

QPR sounds like CPR on purpose. In CPR, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, you learn what to do as a non-medical person to keep blood flowing and oxygen in the lungs until help arrives. This is the same idea behind QPR suicide prevention. It can be just as scary to encounter someone contemplating suicide as it is encountering someone having a heart attack. But with a short 90-minute training, you can be prepared to save a life of someone who is contemplating suicide.

When you take a QPR suicide prevention course you learn how to ask the question, "Are you thinking about killing yourself?" This may seem a harsh question, but research has shown that having the courage to boldly ask this very question does not plant the idea in someone's brain, for it is already there.

This can be a scary question to ask, but it is a lifesaving question. In a suicide prevention course, you learn to look for the signs—both verbal and non-verbal—and then how to have the courage to ask the question.

If you get a positive response to your question, you then persuade the individual to not complete the action, but remind them of hope and discuss how to get the person to help.

Finally, the “R” in the QPR acronym is most important. You refer the person to licensed help, either the emergency department, a therapist, a crisis team—even calling 988. Any suicide prevention course you take will provide you with a list of local community resources to get a person to help.

Please consider becoming suicide prevention certified. I have seen firsthand the QPR suicide prevention program save lives within our community of Affirmation. It is a way for you to increase the health and safety of your campus community.

This brings up the take home point.

As an educator or trusted adult, you do not have to fix things in a queer person’s life—don’t take that burden on—just be a part of a wider community support system to objectively listen, affirm, cast hope, and provide connections to others.

**Slide: On campus support**

## **2. On campus support: The Center for Gender and Sexual Diversity here on campus.**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has published that study after study shows that Gay-Straight Alliances also known as Genders and Sexualities Alliances in high schools and on campuses have been associated with improvements in school safety, a key component of school connectedness, for all students—not just LGBTQ students. Think about that. All students. Together we rise.

This is an amazing, evidence based protective factor and Eastern Illinois University has such a resource on campus. Not only is this center a comprehensive resource for LGBTQ students, but the center also includes a comprehensive Safe Zone Training program for all students that includes LGBTQ awareness and ally training workshops. The Center for Gender and Sexual Diversity is offering Safe Space training here at the RISE conference right after lunch and I would highly recommend attending. It can be life-saving, especially with religious LGBTQ population on campus.

**Slide: BYU**

Not every University provides the space for this connectedness and belonging on campus. One in my realm that will not allow any LGBTQ support group on campus is my alma mater, Brigham Young University. In 2019, I was invited by BYU to help conduct a roundtable to facilitate the discussion on how to “promote better understanding and discussion of LGBTQ+ concerns at BYU.”

What prompted this introspection was the Classical Association of the Middle West and South (CAMWS) had just withdrawn its invitation to BYU to host its annual conference on BYU’s campus. The invitation was withdrawn citing that upon further review, BYU’s honor code, speaker policy, and non-discrimination policy did not include any sexual orientation or gender identity protections, making the association question the safety of LGBTQ individuals on campus.

Instead, CAMWS chose to rent out a convention center off campus to hold their prestigious four-day conference. Moving the CAMWS meeting off the BYU campus was a significant and embarrassing academic loss for the university.

During my time at this roundtable event, we were able to discuss certain aspects of safe zone training, which the faculty received well, but without the support from administration or strong nondiscrimination policies protecting sexual orientation and gender identity, such information falls by the wayside.

Belonging and a sense of community through visible tangible efforts, symbols, and spaces is huge for LGBTQ students. Educators can be a big part of this connectedness in the educational community.

For LGBTQ individuals, the default is to assume that a space is unsafe until there is a visible marker that indicates otherwise. To be supported fully in your sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression is gold, decreasing anxiety and increasing overall wellbeing.

**Slide: PFLAG**

### **3. Specific Faith Resources**

Sometimes a newly out or conflicted queer religious student will not feel comfortable seeking resources at an on-campus resource center. For example, they may be out to themselves but not publicly. Many want to participate in affirming communities that center around their particular faith. For example, for Queer Latter-day Saints that would be Affirmation. Every denomination has an LGBTQ faith-based support group designed by fellow LGBTQ faith peers to be that landing space in a religious but affirming context.

If you have given a safe space signal (such as a pride pin, your email signature to students that includes your pronouns, or even stating in your syllabus that you are a safe space for LGBTQ+ students) you may be lucky to be a trusted adult that a religiously queer student feels comfortable to come out to.

A reference list of faith-based LGBTQ support groups can be found on the PFLAG website. PFLAG is the nation's largest organization dedicated to supporting, educating, and advocating for LGBTQ+ people and those who love them. Other comprehensive lists exist as well. I am sure the Center for Gender and Sexual Diversity here on campus could assist you finding specific resources for LGBTQ religious students.

**Slide: The Goal**

### **The Goal**

Make no judgement on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or the religious affiliation. Religious belief is personal and LGBTQ young adults are of the age that they need to negotiate for themselves their own belief system with the world around them. Telling a religious LGBTQ person to either stay or leave their faith will cause trauma either way. We want to avoid causing trauma.

The goal of all of us who surround our religious LGBTQ peers is to facilitate and foster connectedness and belonging, creating hope as you become a part of the relational wellbeing of our religious LGBTQ population. Healthy people make healthy decisions and we can be that network of support as religious LGBTQ young adults use their self-determination to stand in places that feel safe and healthy for them.

## Conclusion:

### Slide: Quote from Francis DeBernardo

I hope that today's presentation has been helpful for you to understand some of the particular challenges queer religious students face. I don't want you to leave today thinking I am anti-religion. Religion has an important role to play for queer people, as it does for all people, who choose to participate if it is a space that feels safe and healthy for them. Many faith-based queer organizations exist that are queer centric, to help provide context to their fellow queer peers of the religion so that they may land among friends in Faith.

Thank you.

“The reason there has been such tension between LGBTQ people and institutional religious groups has not been because LGBTQ people are not religious but because faith groups have vilified them and excluded them. I have seen an enormous number of LGBTQ people whose faith and religious identity are so strong that they continue to push for acceptance even against mammoth walls of opposition.”

Francis DeBernardo  
Executive Director, New Ways Ministry  
Building bridges between LGBTQ people and the Catholic Church

## **Web resources from the presentation:**

1. Nearly half of LGBTQ adults are religious, U.S. study finds

<https://www.nbcnews.com/feature/nbc-out/nearly-half-lgbtq-adults-are-religious-u-s-study-finds-n1249273>

2. Religious-based negative attitudes towards LGBTQ people among healthcare, social care and social work students and professionals: A review of the international literature

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9543796/>

3. University of Chicago Student Wellness

<https://wellness.uchicago.edu/healthy-living/outreach/>

4. LGBT people are “being made homeless due to religion.”

<https://www.bbc.com/news/newsbeat-49150753>

5. The Family Acceptance Project

<https://familyproject.sfsu.edu/>

6. HRC: Religion and Faith

<https://www.hrc.org/resources/religion-faith>

7. EIU Center for Gender and Sexual Diversity

<https://www.eiu.edu/lgbtqa/index.php>

8. The Protective Role of Gay-Straight Alliances for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Questioning Students: A Prospective Analysis

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5193472/>

9. CDC: Gay-Straight/Genders & Sexualities Alliances. Establishing and strengthening GSAs

<https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/safe-supportive-environments/sexuality-alliances.htm>

10. PFLAG Religious Organization Resource List

<https://pflag.org/resource/faith-resources-for-christians/>

11. The QPR Institute. Suicide and Suicide Prevention training

<https://qprinstitute.com/>