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Buried Above Ground: A University-Based Study of Risk/Protective Factors for Suicidality Among Sexual Minority Youth in Canada

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Abstract

This study examined differences in suicidal behavior between lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer/questioning (LGBTQ) and non-LGBTQ university students as well as investigated the importance of risk and protective factors in the prediction of suicidality between these two groups. A total of 1,205 university students participated in the survey. Findings show, compared to non-LGBTQ respondents, sexual minority youth are at a greater risk for serious suicidal ideation (8.9% versus 23%, respectively) and suicide attempt (3.5% versus 26.2%). Among LGBTQ respondents, significant risk covariates for suicidality were depressive symptoms, socioeconomic status, being

bullied, age, and childhood trauma. The only significant protective factor was self-esteem.

KEYWORDS:

- At-risk youth
- bullying
- Canada
- higher education
- mental health
- minority stress theory
- protective factors
- sexual minority youth
- students
- Suicide Behavior Questionnaire
- suicidality

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