

Magellan
FEDERAL



Webinar Series *Presents:*

CREATING SAFE COMMUNITIES

Protecting LGBTQIA+
Youth Mental Health





Magellan FEDERAL

We inspire healthier, more productive communities by delivering innovative, total well-being solutions to the Federal Government, military personnel, government employees, and their families.



Meet Our Speakers



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AGENDA

- ✓ WELCOME & OVERVIEW
- ✓ MENTAL HEALTH AMONG LGBTQIA+ YOUTH
- ✓ LIVED EXPERIENCE WITH MILITARY YOUTH
- ✓ RESOURCES
- ✓ Q&A



Welcome and Overview

DE ANDRA JUDGE



Overview

- **7.2%** of the population, more than **20 million** Americans, identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or something other than heterosexual.¹
- The LGBTQ+ community is comprised of individuals from all socioeconomic, racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds, with diverse gender and sexual identities.
- Best estimates suggest that between **7–9% of youth** identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer.²
- Specifically, there are approximately **3.2 million LGBTQ** youth between the ages of 8 and 18, more than half of whom (52%) are youth of color.²

(Gallup, 2023)¹
(Movement Advancement Project, 2023)²

Mental Health Among LGBTQIA+ Youth

JANE CAREY



Mental Health Among Military Connected LGBTQ+ Youth

- Of the 3 million+ LGBTQ+ youth in America. **5% have parents in the military.**⁴
- There is limited research – *The Trevor Project*.
- LGBTQ+ youth with one parent in the military have significantly higher rates of mental health concerns, including suicide risks.

(Trevor Project, 2022)⁴

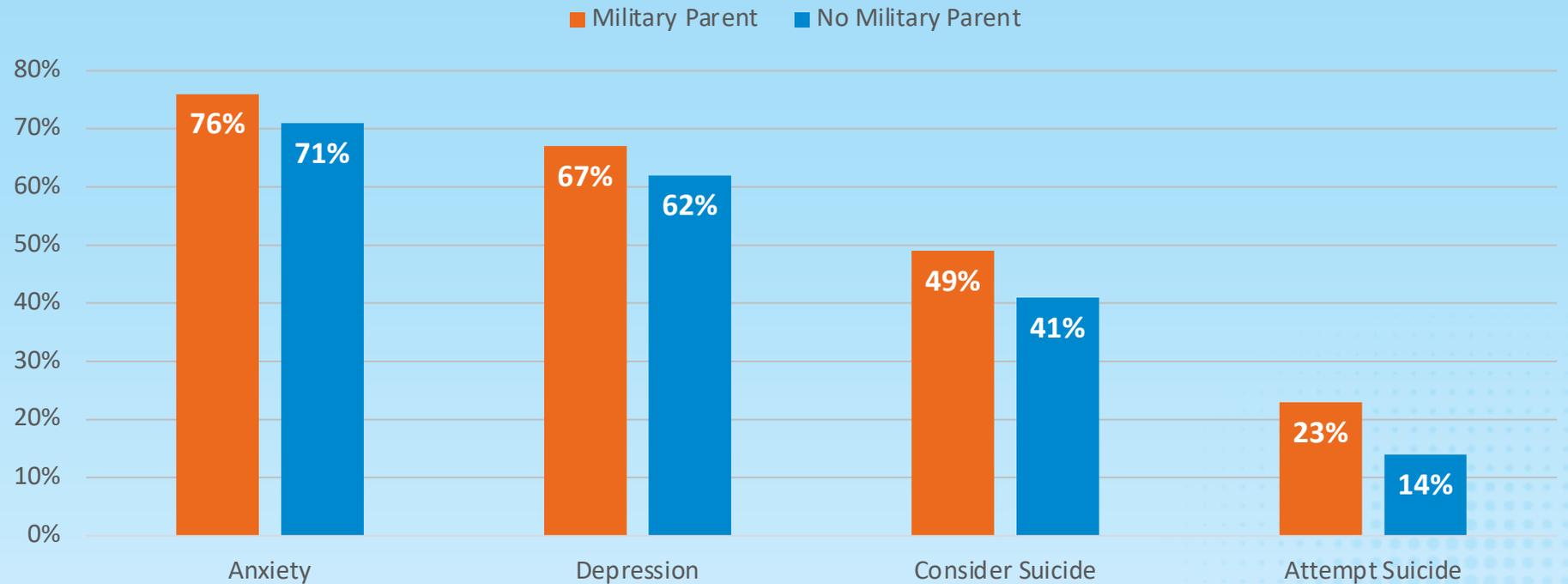
Mental Health Among Military and Non-Military Connected LGBTQ+ Youth

- 67% of LGBTQ+ youth reported experiencing symptoms of **anxiety**.⁴
- 54% of LGBTQ+ youth reported experiencing symptoms of **depression**.⁴
- 41% of LGBTQ+ youth seriously **considered** suicide.⁵
- 14% of LGBTQ+ youth **attempted** suicide.⁵

(Trevor Project, 2023)^{4,5}

Mental Health Among Non-Military Connected LGBTQ+ Youth

MENTAL HEALTH SYMPTOMS BY MILITARY PARENT STATUS



(Trevor Project, 2022)³



SUICIDAL RISK

“LGBTQ+ youth are NOT inherently prone to suicide risk because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. They are placed at higher risk because of how they are treated and stigmatized in society.”

THE TREVOR PROJECT



Unique Risk Factors for LGBTQ+ Youth

- LGBTQ+ based physical harm and bullying
- Discrimination
- Housing Instability
- Rejection From Family and Community
- Lack of Social Support & Affirming Spaces
- Hostile or Unsafe School Experiences



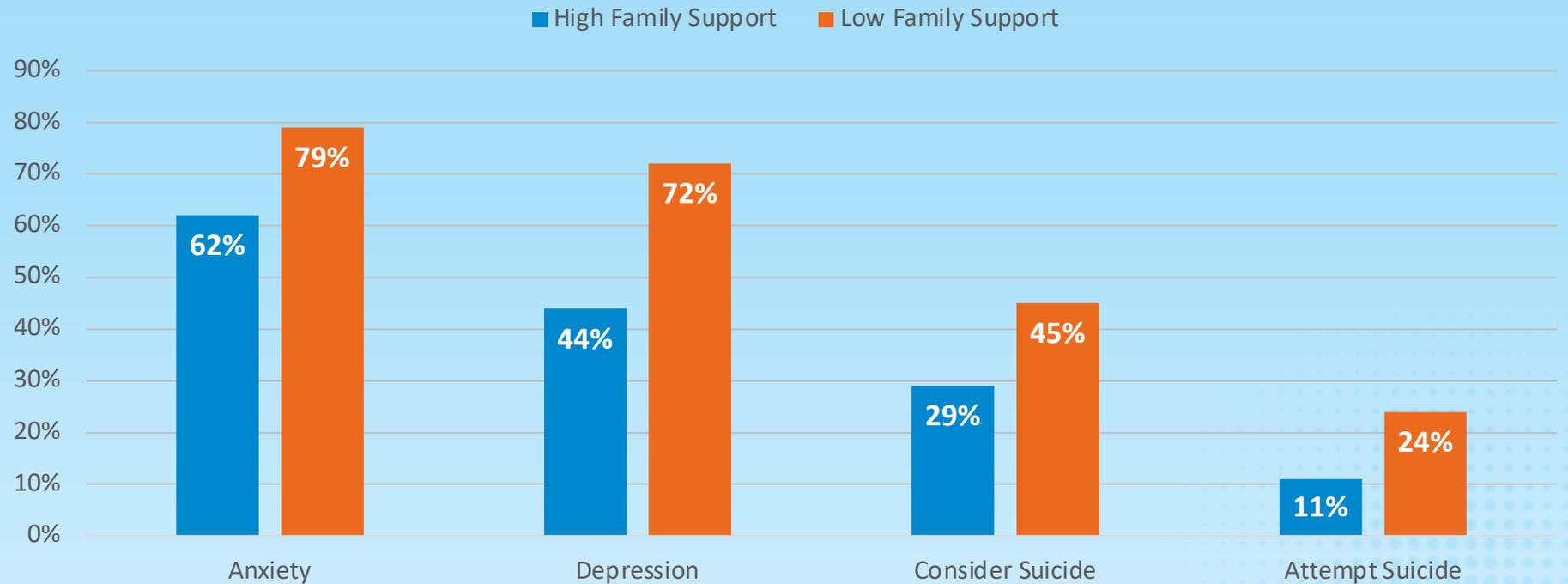
Good News: Ways to Reduce Risks for LGBTQ+ Youth

- Supportive Environment in School and Community
- Cultural and/or Community Connections
- Seeing Representation in Society and The Media
- Access to Resources
- Supportive Family Relationships
 - Having at least one accepting adult reduces the risk of suicide by 40% ⁷
 - Being valued by family teaches kids to value and care about themselves
 - Families can support even when they feel uncomfortable with the youth's identity

(Trevor Project, 2019) ⁷

Support by Military Parents of Their LGBTQ+ Youth

MENTAL HEALTH SYMPTOMS AMONG LGBTQ YOUTH WITH A MILITARY PARENT BY FAMILY SUPPORT LEVEL



(Trevor Project, 2022)³

There Is Hope For LGBTQ+ Youth and Families

RESOURCES FOR LGBTQIA+ YOUTH AND FAMILIES

- **The Trevor Project** – Crisis Support, Advocacy, Research, and Education – TrevorSpace
- **PFLAG** – Virtual, moderated monthly meetings for military-connected families
- **MilPride** – A program of the Modern Military Association of America – For military families with LGBTQIA+ youth.



Lived Experience with Military Youth

AUSTIN HOFFMAN



Mental Health Among LGBTQ+ Youth

LIVED EXPERIENCE WITH MILITARY YOUTH

- As a military spouse, I worked in the Navy's pediatric intensive care unit for six years and with many military dependents for 18 months before working directly with the Navy.
- The facility served as the primary training center for pediatric care, so patients and staff represented all branches of the military.
- During my Navy tenure, I saw many youths affected by anxiety, depression, eating disorders, illicit substance use, and suicide attempts.
 - Eating disorders were more prevalent as the youth felt their food habits were something they could control when they had no perceived control (frequent moving, always being new, etc.).

Mental Health Among LGBTQ+ Youth

BARRIERS TO PROTECTIVE FACTORS IN MILITARY YOUTH

- The protective factors in place for the general public don't exist with the same equity for military youth.
- Support systems can be strained as military families move around and don't always have local support from family and long-term friends.
- Moving every few years strains youth to maintain friendships and develop new ones.
- Youth may be at higher risk of mental health concerns directly before or shortly after a PCS (permanent change of station) move.
- School support staff are less familiar with the youth's "normal" presentation, so they may not identify warning signs as quickly.
- Youths may not have developed a relationship with a local support person if they contemplate self-harm.



Mental Health Among LGBTQ+ Youth

CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING PROTECTIVE FACTORS FOR MILITARY YOUTH

- Legislation being proposed across the country impacts the mental health of LGBTQ+ youth.
- Legislation can directly or indirectly impact youth.
- Legislation can limit care to the individual or the community.
- It may also decrease representation and support systems.
- Even if youth live in a location where legislation does not/is unlikely to pass, it still affects their mental health as it may feel like an attack on their identity/community.



Mental Health Among LGBTQ+ Youth

ACTIONS TO ENHANCE PROTECTIVE FACTORS FOR MILITARY YOUTH

- Foster a sense of social support.
 - Introduce yourself and check-in regularly.
 - Be that person a youth in distress can turn to.
 - Show interest in background and hobbies.
 - Introduce the youth to peers.
 - This simple step can enhance support among peers.
 - Connect youth to activities that fit interests
 - Use your knowledge of local resources to connect youth activities/resources.

Mental Health Among LGBTQ+ Youth

ACTIONS TO ENHANCE PROTECTIVE FACTORS FOR MILITARY YOUTH

- Be an Ally
 - Listen and be open-minded, non-judgmental, and willing to talk.
 - Don't ask about relationships in gendered terms unless the youth shares additional information.
 - "Are you dating anyone?" vs. "Do you have a boyfriend/girlfriend?"
- Anti-LGBT comments/jokes are harmful; correct people and tell them you find the remarks offensive.
 - Confront your prejudices and bias, even if it is uncomfortable.
 - Believe that all people, regardless of gender identity and sexual orientation, should be treated with dignity and respect.



Resources

DE ANDRA JUDGE



RESOURCES TO INFORM, EDUCATE, AND AFFECT POSITIVE CHANGE

Organization	Overview	Resource Type	Primary Audience
<u>PFLAG</u>	PFLAG is the nation's largest organization dedicated to supporting, educating, and advocating for LGBTQ+ people and those who love them.	Virtual, moderated monthly meetings for military families.	Parents, family members, and LGBTQ+ individuals who are part of the military community.
<u>The Trevor Project</u>	The world's largest suicide prevention and crisis intervention organization for LGBTQ youth. They provide crisis services, peer support, research, public education and advocacy. TrevorSpace - Community for LGBTQ+ Youth.	LGBTQ+ Youth Resource	LGBTQ+ Youth, Parents, School Personnel, Healthcare Professionals.
<u>The Fenway Institute</u>	Delivers innovative, equitable, accessible health care, supportive services, and research and education for LGBTQIA+ people, BIPOC individuals, and other underserved communities.	Healthcare, research, and education	LGBTQIA+ Adults; Parents of LGBTQIA+ youth; healthcare professionals.
<u>LGBTQ+ Healthcare Directory</u>	A free, searchable database of doctors, medical professionals, and healthcare providers who are knowledgeable and sensitive to the unique health needs of LGBTQ+ people in the USA.	Healthcare Directory	Everyone.
<u>MilPride</u>	MilPride is a Modern Military Association of America program dedicated to military families with LGBTQ youth.	Military Families Resource	Military families with LGBTQ+ youth.

Q&A



References

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6. <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/research-briefs/accepting-adults-reduce-suicide-attempts-among-lgbtq-youth/>
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