

FACT SHEET



“I was 18 when I left my family home due to increasing hostility from my parents regarding my identity. They raised me as a boy, I felt I would be happier as a girl. They couldn't accept that.”

Gender diverse young people and mental health

7 year analysis, 2015-2022

Brisbane Youth Service (BYS) assists vulnerable young people to find and maintain appropriate housing, address physical and mental health issues, and establish successful relationships and support networks.

BYS has collected self-reported mental health diagnoses and self-rated mental health data from everyone accessing ongoing planned support since 2015. We've analysed this data to compare demographic factors such as age, gender, cultural identities, sexuality, experience of disability, and parenthood.

Over 2,800 young people provided information about their gender and mental health at intake. This factsheet summarises the mental health assessment data for **gender diverse young people**. Over the last 7 years, 4% of young people supported by BYS identified as gender diverse. This includes those who identified as transgender, non-binary or other gender identities.

Gender diverse people and homelessness:

Queer youth frequently become homeless following their “coming out,” or disclosing their sexuality or gender identity to friends and family, increasing the likelihood of them needing support from organisations such as BYS.

Australian research indicates over a quarter of all queer respondents and nearly half of all trans respondents felt that their experience with homelessness was related to their sexuality or gender identity.ⁱ

Gender diverse people and mental health:

Research and real-life experiences have found that LGBTIQ+ people have an increased risk of depression and anxiety, substance abuse, self-harming and suicidal thoughts.ⁱⁱ

One recent study reported that almost two thirds (64%) of sexuality and gender diverse young people in Australia report having a mental health diagnosis.ⁱⁱⁱ

Many gender diverse young people who access BYS health services often recount multiple attempts to access

treatment from mainstream health services, where providers lack understanding of their healthcare needs.

Worse still, young people have frequently reported traumatic discrimination in healthcare settings. This can range from the use of incorrect name and pronouns to mistreatment or overt refusal of treatment. These experiences prevent gender diverse young people from accessing essential care including mental health treatment, sexual health screening and cancer screening.

ⁱHill et al., 2021. *Writing Themselves in 4: The Health and Wellbeing of LGBTQA+ Young People in Australia*. Melbourne: Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University

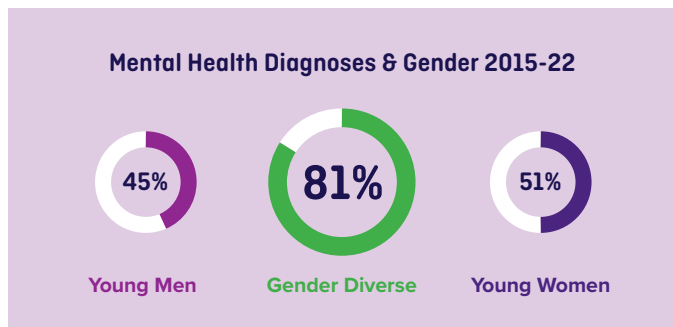
ⁱⁱ<https://www.beyondblue.org.au/who-does-it-affect/lesbian-gay-bi-trans-and-intersex-lgbti-people/factors-affecting-lgbti-people>

ⁱⁱⁱHill et al., 2021.

Gender diverse young people and mental health

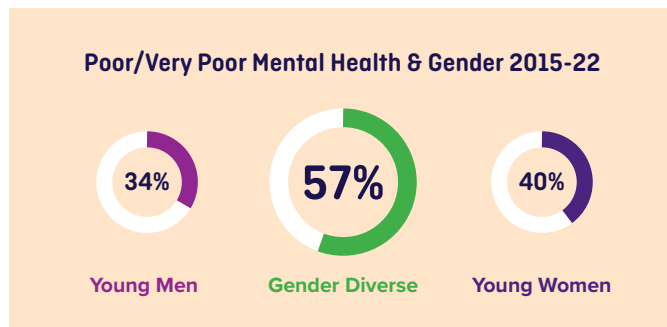
7 year analysis, 2015-2022

Our data on mental health diagnosis - 2015-2022:

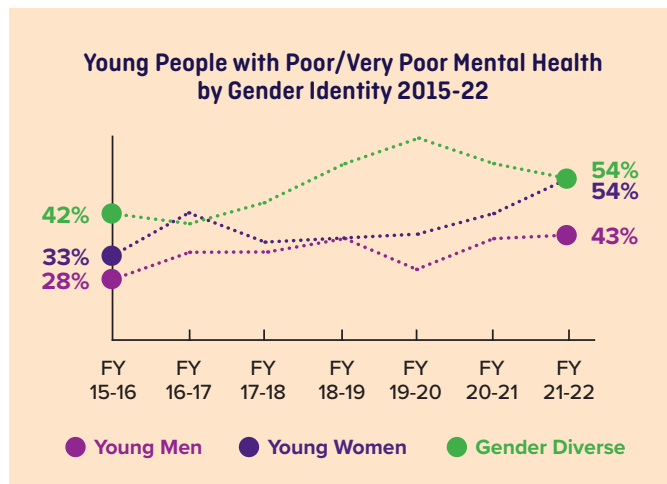
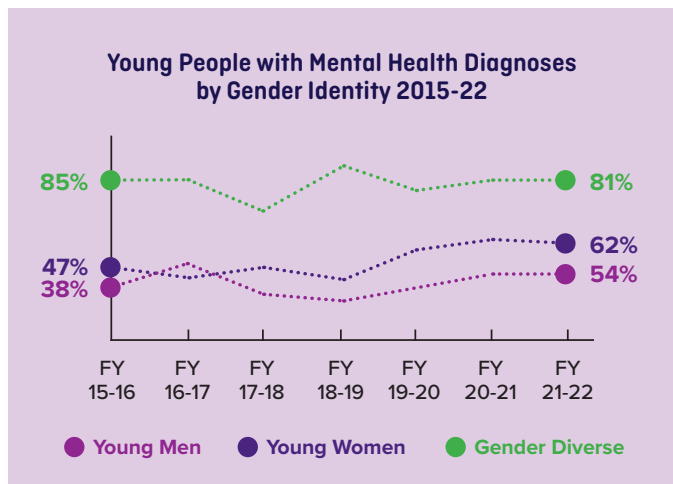


At intake, we found that gender diverse young people were **much more likely** to report having a mental health diagnosis (81%) compared to those who identified as exclusively female (51%) or male (45%).

Our data on self-rated mental health - 2015-2022:



We found that gender diverse young people were **much more likely** to self-rate their mental health as poor/very poor (57%) compared to those who identified as exclusively female (40%) or male (34%).



When compared to other demographic groups across the 7 years, gender diverse young people consistently had the **highest rate** of mental health diagnoses.

All young people's rates of poor/very poor self-rated mental health increased across the 7 years, with gender diverse young people's rates **amongst the highest**.

CONCLUSION

The findings in this report highlight the need for expanded mental health supports for gender diverse young people. There are mild/ moderate early intervention supports and acute mental health crisis services available, but few free, accessible, and timely support for young people who fit between acute crisis and early intervention in Brisbane.