

Edmonton Vital Signs is an annual check-up conducted by Edmonton Community Foundation, in partnership with Edmonton Social Planning Council, to measure how the community is doing. This year we will also be focusing on individual issues, **VITAL TOPICS**, that are timely and important to Edmonton. Watch for these in each issue of Legacy in Action, and in the full issue of Vital Signs that will be released in October of this year.

# Sexual ORIENTATION & GENDER IDENTITY

Unless otherwise stated, "Edmonton" refers to Census Metropolitan Area and not solely the City of Edmonton.

## ECF VITAL Work

**ARC FOUNDATION** received \$38,000 in 2018 for SOGI 123 Alberta, to expand the capacity of Alberta's educators to create inclusive schools for all K-12 students regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. SOGI 1 2 3 helps students of all sexual orientations and identities feel safe and welcome.

## WHAT'S IN A NAME?

LGBTQ+ has commonly been used to represent the community of people who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Gender Queer, Asexual, Transsexual, Androgynous, Intersex, Two-Spirit, Pansexual or other identities.



Since the goal is to be inclusive, and by using a list we may inadvertently exclude someone, we are using the term Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity/ expression (SOGI).

## VITAL DEFINITIONS

Throughout this report you may see a mix of terms (LGBT, LGBTQ2, etc...) depending on who was included in the research. We hope the definitions below will help define who is included in the stat.

**LESBIAN** - A woman (or girl) who has an emotional or sexual attraction to other women.

**GAY** - A person who is attracted to people of the same sex or gender. This term is most often used for a man (or boy) who is attracted to other men.

**BISEXUAL** - A person who has an emotional or sexual attraction to men and women.

**TRANSGENDER** - An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from what is typically associated with the sex they were assigned at birth. Some people may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms.

**QUEER** - A reclaimed term used by some people who identify as sexual and/or gender diverse and also used as a positive, inclusive term to describe communities and social movements.

**CISGENDER/CIS** - A person whose gender matches the sex they were assigned at birth.

**ALLY** - A person who advocates for the human rights of sexual and gender diverse people by challenging discrimination and heterosexism.

**BINARY** - The idea that gender is strictly an either/or option - male or female. Non-binary refers to gender identities that are not exclusively male or female.

## WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SEX AND GENDER?

**GENDER** - Social and cultural expectations of roles and presentation. For most people their gender matches the sex they were assigned at birth; others identify as being transgender or gender diverse.

**GENDER EXPRESSION** - Presentation of a person's gender expressed through an individual's name, pronouns, appearance, behaviour, or body characteristics. What society identifies as masculine or feminine changes over time and varies by culture.

**GENDER IDENTITY** - A person's deep-seated, felt sense of gender, or how a person feels on the inside, regardless of what their body looks like.

**SEX AT BIRTH (Sex)** - Refers to the categories people are typically assigned at birth. This often appears on identity documents.

## ECF VITAL Work

**THE RAINBOW FUND** at ECF supports registered charities that support, research, and enhance SOGI activities and initiatives in greater Edmonton and Northern Alberta. Go to [Ecfoundation.org](http://Ecfoundation.org) to make a donation.

MAY 14,  
1969

Amendments to the Criminal Code pass, decriminalizing homosexuality in Canada.

APR 2,  
1998

The Supreme Court of Canada unanimously rules in the Vriend case that the exclusion of homosexuals from Alberta's Individual Rights Protection Act is a violation of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

JUL 20,  
2005

The right for same-sex couples to marry becomes law.

JUN 19,  
2017

Gender expression and gender identity is added to the Canadian Human Rights Act and the Criminal Code.

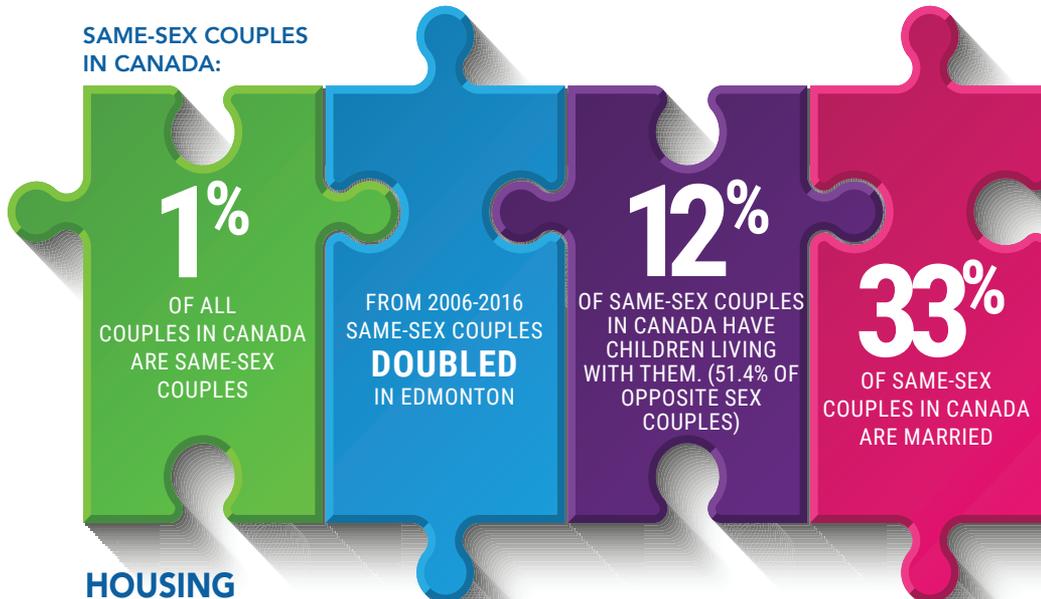
NOV 28,  
2017

Prime Minister Trudeau apologizes to LGBTQ people for discrimination faced as a result of federal legislation, policies and programs.

**LIMITATIONS IN RESEARCH:** It is important to note that statistics and data are most compiled in binary categories (male or female). Similarly, often it is assumed that there are gay or straight couples only.

## SOGI EDMONTONIANS

**SAME-SEX COUPLES IN CANADA:**



### ACCEPTANCE & BELONGING

**ALBERTA TRANS YOUTH SURVEY** represents the experiences of 114 younger (14-18 years) and older (19-25 years) trans youth living in Alberta.

**KEY FINDINGS:**

- Safety, violence, and discrimination are major issues. 75% of youth under 18 report discrimination because of their gender
- 80%+ of trans youth (14-18) reported their family did not understand them
- Almost 70% of trans youth reported experiences of sexual harassment

### HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS

**8%** OF RESPONDENTS IDENTIFIED AS **LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, QUEER, OR TWO-SPIRIT** IN THE 2016 EDMONTON HOMELESS COUNT

Top reasons why LGBT youth are at risk/or homeless (multiple responses allowed):

**46%**  
**RAN AWAY**  
because of family rejection

**43%**  
**FORCED OUT**  
by parents

**32%**  
**ABUSED**  
physically, emotionally, or sexually

### HEALTH & WELL BEING

Young LGBTQ Adults who experienced high levels of rejection were:

**6x** LIKELY TO HAVE HIGH LEVELS OF **DEPRESSION**

**8x** LIKELY TO HAVE ATTEMPTED **SUICIDE**

**3x** LIKELY TO USE **ILLEGAL DRUGS**

**3x** LIKELY TO ENGAGE IN UNPROTECTED SEX -INCREASING RISK OF **STDs**

TRANS PEOPLE REPORT **DIFFICULTY ACCESSING PRIMARY AND SPECIALIST CARE.**

### ECF VITAL Work

**UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA** received \$7,700 for the Gender Program in 2018, for equipment to facilitate new group therapy sessions at the Gender Program (a multidisciplinary health program for transgender and gender diverse people).



### SENIORS

Current research estimates that up to seven per cent of the senior population is openly LGBTQ.

#### EDMONTON LGBTQ SENIORS HOUSING REPORT

According to a needs assessment, compared to their heterosexual counterparts:

- LGBTQ2 older adults are often more likely to have a difficult time securing housing.
- Older adults are reluctant to be open about sexual orientation or gender identity due to lifetime experiences with discrimination.

### TWO-SPIRIT

An English-language 'term' to reflect and restore Indigenous traditions forcefully suppressed by colonization, honouring the fluid and diverse nature of gender and attraction and its connection to community and spirituality. It is used by some Indigenous people rather than, or in addition to, identifying as LGBTQ. Two-spirit individuals are held in high honour in their communities.

### NEWCOMERS & REFUGEES

Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers and the Pride Centre have partnered to support LGBTQ+ Newcomers in Edmonton. 43 individuals have accessed services between Sept 2017 and Mar 2018.

**BE AN ALLY – Words matter.** When talking with and about sexual and gender minority people, use inclusive language and avoid reinforcing stereotypes and assumptions of the gender of people who perform various roles.

For example: "spouse" instead of husband or wife. Ask a person's pronouns and state yours, creating a safe space for others.

**Be an advocate.** Create a space for all voices to be heard. Take action against discrimination or hate in your community.

**Educate yourself.** Learn the terms, definitions and language used. Never make assumptions. If you don't know, ask. Check your privilege and do not assume to know the sexual orientation or gender identity of another person.