

# PUBLIC POLICY & ADVOCACY

The Trevor Project supports policy change at the federal and state level to enhance the mental health and well-being of LGBTQ young people through targeted interventions that address risk factors for suicide. LGBTQ young people are subject to disproportionate levels of victimization, discrimination, family rejection, homelessness, and criminalization, which can lead to negative mental health outcomes, including anxiety, depression, and suicidality. Trevor supports upstream, public health approaches to these difficult problems – prevention-oriented solutions can reduce risk factors for suicidality and enhance protective factors in a way that is both effective and cost-efficient.

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## Federal Legislative Advocacy

At the federal level, The Trevor Project supports legislation that addresses key risk factors for suicide, including school victimization, homelessness, and lack of access to mental health care. LGBTQ youth face a patchwork of state protections, and federal legislation can be an important tool to ensure that all our youth enjoy a safe environment where they can learn and grow. To advance federal initiatives, The Trevor Project works closely in coalition with national partners to engage on mental health, safe schools, and LGBTQ issues. Trevor also seeks to educate lawmakers about LGBTQ youth mental health and well-being by developing close relationships with decision-makers and hosting briefings by national experts on our issues.

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## Federal Administrative Advocacy

The Trevor Project works to ensure that federal laws are implemented in ways that are culturally competent and nondiscriminatory towards LGBTQ youth. Seeking to create safer and more supportive environments for at-risk LGBTQ youth, Trevor advocates for enhanced data collection so that we are able to better understand LGBTQ health needs, guidance clarifying harassment and nondiscrimination requirements for youth, better services for LGBTQ homeless youth, and implementation of the Affordable Care Act that emphasizes mental health and inclusive medical care.

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## State & Local Advocacy

The Trevor Project closely coordinates with volunteers, advocates, and partner organizations at the state and local level to support passage and implementation of policies that improve the mental health and well-being of LGBTQ youth. Focusing on policies that encourage access to mental health care, suicide prevention training for educators and providers, protections for homeless youth, nondiscrimination for LGBTQ youth, and elimination of practices that harm LGBTQ youth such as sexual orientation change efforts, Trevor hopes to address health disparities which place LGBTQ youth at higher risk for suicide. Trevor supports the advocacy efforts of state and local partners through a coalition centered approach, providing resources such as advocacy training, legislative drafting, model policies, strategic advice, and other technical assistance.

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## Resources

**Trevor Public Policy and Advocacy Webpage** – Information about Trevor’s public policy agenda and other resources is available at: <http://www.thetrevorproject.org/advocate>

**Trevor Advocacy** – Network of supporters who advocate for federal and state initiatives to enhance youth mental health and well-being. For more information about our current initiatives, please see the [Trevor Action Center](#).