

APPLIED RESEARCH • REAL IMPACT • STRONGER COMMUNITIES

# PUBLIC SUMMARY REPORT

Identify the training needs of the Northern Ontario community with respect to understanding and knowing about the **LGBTQ** community



**JULY 2025**



Canadore College



**CANADORE**  
RESEARCH CENTRE



**UNDERSTAND**

Listening to lived experiences



**INCLUDE**

Creating welcoming and safe spaces



**EMPOWER**

Building knowledge and skills



**COLLABORATE**

Working together for stronger communities

Driving inclusion.  
Advancing equity.  
Strengthening our  
**communities.**



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## 1. Project Purpose

The primary objective of this project was to assess and identify the training needs of the Northern Ontario community in relation to understanding and supporting the LGBTQ population. Recognizing that inclusion and cultural competency are foundational to building equitable services, this report focused on the lived experiences of LGBTQ individuals in North Bay. Through a comprehensive community survey, the project aimed to better understand the barriers, opportunities, and areas for growth in service provision. The insights derived from this study serve as a basis for designing responsive training programs to advance equity and inclusion across the region.

## 2. Survey Overview and Community Insights

A total of 195 individuals participated in a detailed survey that explored various dimensions of LGBTQ life in North Bay. The survey examined:

- Demographics and identities
- Sense of belonging and community connection
- Access and usage of services
- Involvement in local LGBTQ activities and workshops
- Barriers to participation
- Service gaps
- Mental health and well-being

Overall, the findings reveal a community that is diverse in gender identity, sexual orientation, age, and lived experiences, with a strong presence of younger adults and a significant representation of transgender and gender-diverse individuals. Many respondents reported feeling a sense of connection and belonging, highlighting supportive spaces such as OUTLoud North Bay and Pride events as critical lifelines that provide validation, inclusion, and opportunities to celebrate identity. Numerous participants described attending activities and workshops as transformative and empowering, noting that they create environments where people feel safe expressing themselves authentically and develop supportive relationships.

Despite these strengths, the survey uncovered numerous ongoing challenges. Many respondents reported they had not accessed available services, often due to:

- Poor visibility and promotion of services
- Inconvenient scheduling



- Transportation and financial barriers

In addition, there was a reported lack of inclusive programming for parents, adults, and older LGBTQ individuals. Participants noted discrimination in workplaces, healthcare settings, and housing. A shortage of gender-affirming care, culturally competent mental health professionals, and inclusive social spaces were also major concerns. Still, there was strong evidence of community resilience and willingness to engage in advocacy and collaboration to enhance support systems.

### **3. Action Plan Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the following action plan is proposed to strengthen supports for LGBTQ individuals in North Bay:

#### ***Enhance Communication and Visibility***

- Develop a centralized online portal and targeted social media campaigns to share information about programs, events, and resources.
- Distribute information through schools, workplaces, healthcare providers, and community channels to ensure reach across all age groups.

#### ***Expand Inclusive Programming***

- Initiate intergenerational events and family-friendly activities.
- Introduce programming for older adults, queer sports teams, art-based workshops, and peer-led education initiatives.

#### ***Strengthening Healthcare and Mental Health Supports***

- Advocate for more gender-affirming healthcare services and culturally competent mental health providers.
- Collaborate with health institutions to deliver sensitivity and inclusion training for staff.

#### ***Foster Safe and Equitable Environments***

- Implement anti-discrimination policies in workplaces and schools.
- Offer training to address harassment, promote inclusive language, and support Gender and Sexuality Alliances.



### ***Build Collaborative Networks***

- Facilitate partnerships among LGBTQ organizations, healthcare providers, local government, and advocacy groups to share knowledge, pool resources, and coordinate programming.

### ***Evaluate and Adapt Continuously***

- Conduct ongoing community consultations and periodic surveys to monitor progress and inform service improvements.

## **4. Training Priorities**

The study revealed several urgent areas for training to improve inclusivity, cultural competency, and the quality of services delivered to LGBTQ individuals:

### ***LGBTQ Cultural Competency and Sensitivity Training***

- Target Audience: Healthcare workers, educators, law enforcement, social workers, and service providers
- Focus: Understanding diverse identities, inclusive communication, and use of affirming practices such as correct pronoun usage

### ***Mental Health and Trauma-Informed Care Training***

- Target Audience: Therapists, counselors, crisis workers
- Focus: LGBTQ-specific mental health challenges, trauma from systemic discrimination, and affirming care models

### ***Anti-Discrimination and Inclusion Training in Workplaces and Schools***

- Target Audience: Employers, HR professionals, educators
- Focus: Policy implementation, inclusive education environments

### ***Community Engagement and Outreach Training***

- Target Audience: Service providers, community organizers
- Focus: Effective outreach strategies, inclusive marketing, event planning that reaches marginalized groups



### ***Intersectionality and Inclusive Program Design Training***

- Target Audience: Program developers, community leaders
- Focus: Designing programs that reflect intersectional identities (e.g., LGBTQ and racialized, disabled, or elderly individuals)

### ***Advocacy and Allyship Training***

- Target Audience: General public, allies, community leaders
- Focus: Supporting LGBTQ individuals, promoting civic engagement, and addressing bullying and discrimination

### **Conclusion**

This report presents a clear call to action to improve the experiences of LGBTQ individuals in North Bay through strategic, evidence-based training and collaboration. By addressing communication gaps, expanding inclusive programming, and promoting systemic change through training and advocacy, Northern Ontario can foster a community where all individuals feel safe, supported, and celebrated.