

Introduction

There is a common belief that religion is inherently anti-LGBTQ. However, as Jews, we believe that we are all created in the image of G-d - B'tselem Elohim. This value is central to my advocacy, as it is for many others. In a world where both antisemitism and anti-LGBTQ+ hatred are on the rise, it is important that the Jewish community can be a safe haven for LGBTQ+ individuals, especially transgender youth, who are often the targets of attacks by conservative movements and politicians.

This work was inspired by [Threads of Identity](#), a report detailing the experiences of LGBTQ+ Jews of Color, as well as the [GLSEN National School Climate Survey](#). When fearmongering and misinformation run rampant, facts are one of the most powerful tools we have. This survey was created with the intention to provide numbers and statistics to describe the experiences of LGBTQ+ Jewish youth in today's world.

Thank you for taking the time to read this initial report.

Madeline
Keshet Summer Youth Advocacy Intern

Survey Design

The survey was created initially using Google Forms, later converted to SurveyMonkey for long term use.

In the first section of the survey, respondents are asked demographic questions. These include date of birth, high school graduation year, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious denomination, and racial identity. Asking these questions fulfills two distinct goals. Collecting respondents' date of birth and high school graduation year confirms that the data included in the final analysis at least partially represents the target population: today's LGBTQ+ Jewish youth*.

Additionally, collecting data on demographics allows one to analyze differences in experiences between different populations. For example, respondents of some identity may experience more discrimination and harassment than those of other identities.

The second section of the survey is divided into two sections, each utilizing a likert scale numbered one to five. The first part asks respondents to select how strongly they agree or disagree with a prompt. These are labeled from a 1 (strongly disagree) to a 5 (strongly agree). The second part asks respondents to select how often some experience occurs. These scales are numbered from 1 (never) to 3 (sometimes) to 5 (always).

Additionally, if a respondent selects that they identify as an LGBTQ+ Jew of Color, they will be prompted to answer two additional questions relating to their experience specifically.

The final section of the survey asks respondents for an optional safe contact if they would like a follow-up interview.

Terms & Definitions

GENDER IDENTITY (n): A person's inner understanding of the gender(s) with which they identify. This is each person's unique knowing or feeling, and is separate from a person's physical body or appearance (although often related).

SEXUAL ORIENTATION (n): A pattern of emotional, romantic, and/or sexual attractions. A sense of one's personal and social identity based on attractions. Describes whether and to whom one is attracted sexually, physically, romantically, etc.

LGBTQ+ Jew of Color: a person who identifies as both an LGBTQ+ Jew and as a Person of Color

***Youth:** ages 13+ in high school or recently graduated

Demographics

Of 17 respondents...

Sexual Orientation

- 47% identified as Queer
- 41% identified as Asexual
- 41% identified as Gay
- 29% identified as Lesbian
- 24% identified as Bisexual
- 12% identified as Pansexual
(non-exclusive)

Racial Identity

- 88% selected White/European
- 29% selected Middle Eastern
- 6% selected Asian
(non-exclusive)

Gender Identity

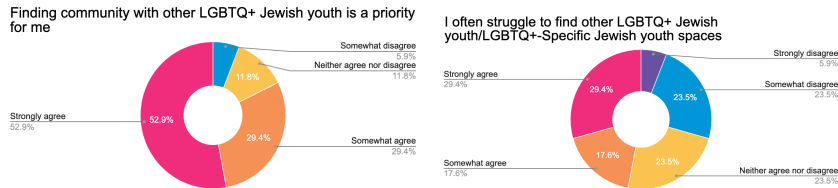
- 65% identified as outside the gender binary
- 59% identified as Transgender
(non-exclusive)

Jewish Identity

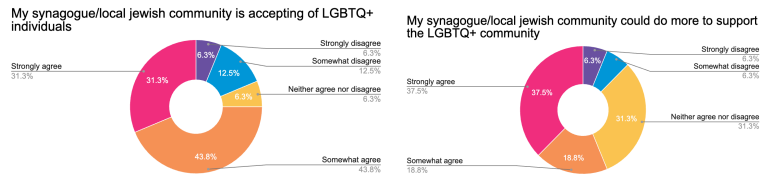
- 29% selected Reform
- 18% selected Conservative
- 12% selected Modern Orthodox
- 12% selected Open Orthodox
- 6% selected Reconstructionist
(non-exclusive)

Key takeaways

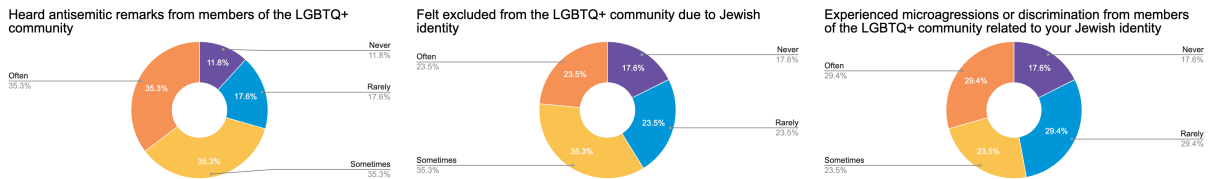
- For most respondents, **finding community with fellow Jewish LGBTQ+ youth was a priority (82.3%)**. However, many indicated that **they often struggle to find other LGBTQ+ Jewish youth or LGBTQ+-Specific Jewish youth spaces (47%)**



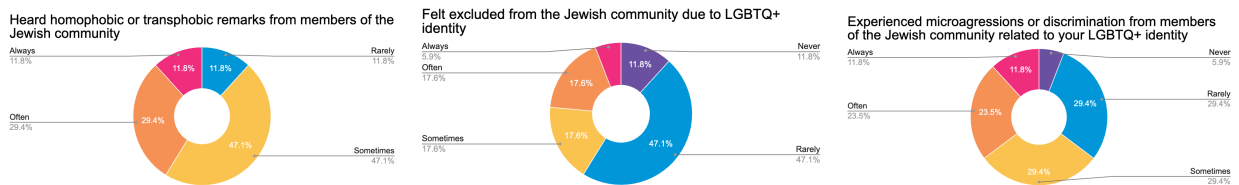
- Most respondents marked that their synagogue or local Jewish community is accepting of LGBTQ+ individuals (75.1%). Simultaneously, most marked that **their synagogue or local Jewish community could do more to support the LGBTQ+ community (56.3%)**.



- While 41.2% expressed agreement with the statement “I feel safe being openly Jewish in LGBTQ+ spaces”, **35.3% often heard antisemitic remarks, 23.5% often felt excluded, and 29.4% often experienced microaggressions or discrimination from members of the LGBTQ+ community on the basis of their Jewish identity.**



- On the other hand, while 44.5% expressed agreement with the statement “I feel safe being openly LGBTQ+ in Jewish spaces”, **41.2% always or often heard homophobic or transphobic remarks, 23.5% always or often felt excluded, and 35.3% always or often experienced microaggressions or discrimination from members of the Jewish community on the basis of their LGBTQ+ identity.**



* Trans and LGBTQ+: the T in the LGBTQ+ acronym is brought to the forefront to bring attention to attacks on Trans youth

Next steps

The majority of respondents indicated that their synagogue or local Jewish community could do more to support the LGBTQ+ community.

For clergy, staff, and board members:

- Be outspoken about your support for LGBTQ+ people
- Stay up to date on issues LGBTQ+ youth face today, especially locally
- Sign on to Keshet's [Thrive Coalition](#), a Jewish coalition to defend Trans and LGBQ+* Youth

Less than 50% of respondents marked that they felt safe being openly Jewish in LGBTQ+ spaces. Similarly, less than 50% of respondents marked that they felt safe being openly LGBTQ+ in Jewish spaces.

- Speak up against both antisemitism and anti-LGBTQ+ hatred when you encounter it
- Utilize the resources provided in Keshet's [Community Belonging Guides](#) to ensure that your Jewish community is a safe and welcoming space for LGBTQ+ youth

In conclusion,

As attacks on Trans and LGBQ+* youth escalate and antisemitism continues to spike, it is more important than ever that the Jewish community is a safe space for LGBTQ+ Youth to exist wholly and unapologetically. As Jews, we are guided by the principle Kol Yisrael arevim zeh bazeh (כל ישראל ערבים זה בזה) - all Israel is responsible for one another. LGBTQ+ Jewish youth must be included in this responsibility. To include, support, and defend LGBTQ+ Jewish youth in today's world is a necessity.