

Count Me In Too Research Project

‘With us, by us, for us’

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans people
and LGBT/public services exploring
issues for, and needs of LGBT people
in Brighton & Hove

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***Count Me In Too
publications
may be useful in
developing
resources
relating to the
following QCA
Schemes of
Work***

Curriculum/Schemes of work

Citizenship Key Stage 1 &2, Unit 05:

Living in a diverse world

Citizenship Key Stage 3 Unit 4:

Britain a diverse society

Citizenship Key Stage 3 Unit 16:

Celebrating Human Rights

Citizenship Key Stage 4 Unit 01:

Human Rights

Citizenship Key Stage 4 Unit 03:

Challenging racism

Citizenship Key Stage 4 Unit 07:

Taking part planning a community event

Geography Key Stage 3 Unit 24:

Passport to the world

History Key Stage 3 Unit 22:

The Role of the individual for good or ill

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What is Count Me In Too?

Count Me In Too is a research project where lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) people shared their views and experiences, and worked with service providers and others to gather and present evidence that would promote positive changes for LGBT people.

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How was the research carried out?

- The project was a community-university partnership, where academic and community researchers worked together to run the project.
- LGBT people came together to design, implement and analyse the research, working with local groups and services.
- The project worked in phases: different steering and analysis groups designed the tools for data collection, analysed the data and published findings with recommendations, and worked on disseminating the findings.

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The project worked to create robust data that is useful in making marginalised people's lives better

- LGBT people worked with and alongside service providers to work out together:
 - What are the issues for and needs of LGBT people?
 - How can these be addressed?
- The project has been guided by local LGBT people who came forward as volunteers to work on the project.
- Services and organisations were involved as 'stakeholders' and kept informed of opportunities to work with and learn from the project through 'stakeholder events'.

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Initial phase: design and data collection (2005-2006)

- A steering group of LGBT people worked with researchers to design the tools for data collection. These included:
 - Questionnaires with routed sections that asked more detailed questions about specific issues such as experiences of bi people, and use of drugs and alcohol.
 - Focus groups with identities that the steering group felt are marginalised.
- The steering group worked with researchers on publicising the project. People were recruited through local gay and mainstream press and websites, as well as local networks with which the Steering Group members were connected.

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Questionnaire (819 respondents) routed sections to address specific areas of multiple marginalisation

- Bi people
- Trans people
- Black and Minority Ethnic people
- Travellers
- Deaf, hard of hearing, deafened or deaf-blind
- Physical disability or long-term health impairment
- Young people
- Older people
- Religious/cultural tradition
- Low income
- Those who are isolated
- Those who experienced hate crime
- Those who experienced Domestic violence and abuse
- Those who experience mental health difficulties
- Sex workers
- Parents
- Those who live in residential, sheltered, supported or institutional care
- Those who have had problems with housing
- Those who have been homeless

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Focus groups

- 20 focus groups were held to explore LGBT voices and needs that were often not included in large scale questionnaires (e.g. bi and trans people), and those who experience multiple marginalisation (e.g. LGBT people with mental health difficulties).
- People were recruited through local gay and mainstream press and websites, as well as local networks that Steering Group members were connected to.
- For some, this was the first time they shared their experiences with people 'like them'.

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Including marginalised groups in research: 20 focus groups, 69 participants

- Bisexual
- BME group x2
- Deaf
- Disabled
- Domestic Violence Survivors
- Elderly
- First generation immigrant
- General focus group x2
- Hate Crime Survivors
- Mental Health
- People living on an outlying estate
- Parents
- Pilot
- Trans group x2
- Women's
- Young People group x2

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Data analysis

- Initial analysis was carried out in Spring 2007 by local LGBT people working with the researchers, who identified some key areas and themes.
- Initial findings were presented to a packed stakeholder meeting and included testimonies shared through the questionnaire and focus groups, as have all project publications since.

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Data collection processes

- Pilot study
 - With services, groups and individuals
- Questionnaires (impossible to get a random sample for this population)
 - Online and distributed in a paper version
 - Sampling:
 - Mainstream and national press
 - Local email-based forums (including employee forums)
 - Snowball sampling
- Focus groups
 - Target key areas of vulnerability/ marginalisation to offer further depth and insights

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Further themed analyses

- The data was analysed by Analysis Groups made up of people from local service providers and LGBT community groups.
- These Analysis Groups also made recommendations for change based on the data, and worked with the researchers to produce reports and set up dissemination events where findings and recommendations were presented to stakeholders.
- Further themed analyses took place around themes identified following initial analysis, and were carried out in 2007-2009.

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Count Me In Too has produced 10 reports, which have accessible community summaries:

- Initial Findings (Community)
- Initial Findings (Academic)
- Domestic Violence & Abuse
- Safety
- Housing
- Mental Health
- General Health
- Trans People
- Bi People
- Drugs & Alcohol

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Initial Findings:
Community
June 2007



Initial Findings:
Academic
June 2007



Domestic Violence &
Abuse
Dec. 2007



Community
Safety
Feb. 2008



Housing
April 2008



Mental Health
May 2008



General Health
July 2008



Bi People
Dec. 2008



Trans People
Dec. 2008



Community
summaries
April 2009



Drugs & Alcohol
June 2009

All published findings reports and summaries are downloadable from
www.countmeintoo.co.uk

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What next?

- An LGBT community strategy will be put together using evidence from Count Me In Too and other sources to set out a plan of how to address the issues and needs of LGBT people.
- This will include initiatives planned by local agencies such as the Council and Health Services as well as community and voluntary groups.

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Further dissemination

- The project also fed back about its work and findings through events and exhibitions in Brighton and Hove, and further afield.
- The project worked to promote the use of evidence gathered with and by LGBT people to promote positive social change.
- The Count Me In Too conference in 2010 linked up with others from academic and practitioner backgrounds who are doing this type of work, to learn from each other.

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Highlights of Count Me in Too's findings

Overall Brighton & Hove was understood to be 'better than' other places for LGBT people with LGBT services in the city being valued. Equalities legislation had a positive impact on some LGBT people's lives. However, there continued to be clear areas of need related to gender and sexual difference, as well as multiple marginalisation.

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Success of equalities legislation

Nicola: One day my boss just called me into his office and said, 'there's no easy way to say this: are you going for a sex change?'

I thought I was going to get a P45, but I wasn't really going to live a lie any more, so I said 'Yes'.

He just said 'Get a letter from your GP saying you're undergoing gender reassignment, we'll support you 100%'.

That's because a policy had just been developed and had addressed trans issues following legislation.

Trans focus group 1

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Gender
and
sexual
identities
are still
important

Peter: Mental health is a huge issue for the [LGBT] community because you grow up in a heterosexual society is going to have some mental health ramifications basically

(Hate crimes focus group)

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Only one in 5 people did not have
mental health issues

23% have had serious thoughts of
suicide during this time

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Mental health

Being an LGBT person with mental health difficulties can result from and in discrimination, prejudice, and isolation.

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Housing

Almost a quarter of LGBT people
had been homeless at some
point in their lives.

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73% of respondents had
experienced some form of hate
crime in the past 5 years

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Safety

Hate crimes continue to be extensively perpetrated against LGBT people (73% of respondents experienced some form of abuse related to their gender or sexual identity 'in the past five years').

Certain groups of LGBT people (including trans people, bi people, young people and people who are isolated) are more likely to experience hate crime.

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Use of mainstream services

LGBT Domestic violence and abuse survivors are more likely to be disengaged from services than LGBT people who have not experienced domestic violence and abuse

- 46% felt much more excluded/uncomfortable using mainstream services both because of their sexuality and for other reasons than those who have not experienced domestic violence and abuse.
- 15% said there were services that they did not use that were designed to meet their needs.
- 9% said that that they find the council and other mainstream services unfriendly (compared to 1% of the rest of the sample).

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Multiple marginalisation- L/G/B/T

It's been my experience that
neither the LG community nor
the straight community is even
prepared to accept bi people,
let alone provide truly inclusive
services or an inclusive scene

Questionnaire 646

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Bi People

Bisexual people said that they encountered common negative stereotypes about bi people on a regular basis (including being 'greedy' and 'indecisive'). Therefore accessing both LGBT and straight spaces could be difficult.

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Trans people

More than two thirds of trans people said that the quality of care received at NHS Gender Identity Clinics (which support people who seek to transition) was poor or very poor.

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Drugs & Alcohol

'I think a lot of people go out and get hammered at weekends because it's the only way that gay men can meet each other'.

57% of LGBT people surveyed had, at some point, been concerned about how much they drink.

50% had taken illegal drugs or legal drugs without prescription or medical advice.

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Drugs & Alcohol

Those who use drugs and drink alcohol were found to be at risk of issues beyond specific health concerns.

However, those who do not drink alcohol were found to be more likely to have experienced hate crime and difficulties with mental health, suicide and homelessness than those who did drink alcohol.

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'I was delighted to see the display and research reports in the library - brilliant! [...]Also delighted to see inclusion of trans people - we are so often marginalised even within LGBT community. Well done to all involved.'

'Bring this precious information/data to school in order to create awareness.'

'I noticed the comments of Rita on inacceptance of bi people in a gay context... I will modify my bi-phobia.'

Count Me In Too continues to respond to feedback generated via community consultation events. It has showcased its findings at exhibitions in Brighton & Hove and London.

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