



# The PRIDE Project Newsletter (May '22)

The PRIDE Project's newsletters aim to keep our partners up to date with the project's progress and emerging results.

This is our second newsletter - May 2022.

## In this issue

This edition brings you an overview of what we have been up to since February 2022:

- **Progress to date**
- **What LGBTQI+ young people have already highlighted**
- **Introducing Bluestep Solutions**
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## Progress to date

As of May 2022, we have now started the project's Phase 1, Step 2. This has involved:

- Finding a suitable company to develop our digital toolkit (Bluestep Solutions).

- Drawing from the information gathered during focus groups with LGBTQI+ youths and interviews with adult experts (Phase 1, Step 1), we have been organising two co-design workshops where we'll be asking LGBTQI+ young people how to best create our digital toolkit to enhance wellbeing. Discussions with young people will determine the most important problems or challenges facing LGBTQI+ youth that should be addressed in the toolkit, and the best ways LGBTQI+ young people can manage these. Comments on design features and the proposed look and feel of the toolkit will also be covered. These will take place at the end of May and beginning of June.
- Data processing/analysis: We are currently running qualitative data analyses on our interviews with 6 youth focus groups using the software NVivo. We are just about to start a third-level coding of the data and are hoping to publish the results in the next few months.

We have also been busy finishing a final version our scoping review and hope to submit it for publication to *JMIR Mental Health Journal*.

Finally, we have been taking in suggestions from our two advisory groups.

- Our **youth advisory group** comprises 9 LGBTQI+ youths between 13 and 15 years old. Last April, they helped jot ideas to make our Phase 1, Step 2 co-design workshops more youth-friendly and engaging.
- Our **adult advisory group** comprises commissioners, community-based professionals and health or social care professionals. They have been providing helpful feedback on our data gathering strategies, our scoping review and safeguarding.

## What LGBTQI+ young people have already highlighted

Our scoping review has analysed 59 papers to establish the recommended coping strategies and interventions for building resilience and enhancing the mental wellbeing of LGBTQI+ young people. 20 of them were clinical intervention-based studies. We found several adaptive coping strategies within these papers, some of which we have included below.

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### COMMUNITY

*“...being surrounded by so many LGBTQ community members and allies convinced me that I can one day feel as happy, safe, and loved all the time.” (Transgender and gender-expansive young adult, USA).*

*Wagaman et al., 2019, p. 55.*

## **HOPE**

*"The things I experienced because I'm gay have made me more optimistic, it makes you stronger. Of course, that's a cliché but... You learn to stick up for yourselves... you learn to tackle new problems..."*  
(Gay boy, 18 years old, Belgium).

Dewaele, 2013, p. 700 and 702.

## **INTERNET**

*"It's [social media] public. Which is both a blessing and a curse because you can connect with all these people but also you are open to a lot of hate."* (Transgender adolescent, 15-18 years old, USA).

Selkie et al., 2020, p. 278.

## **PROACTIVENESS**

*"Today, if someone pushes me cause I am gay, I ask him who gave him the permission to touch me, or how dare he do that! I have a stronger character, and I'll make it clear to him that I am not comfortable with his unacceptable behavior. I am not the one used to sitting quietly without uttering a word, as if you can do with me whatever you want! [...]"* ('Closeted gay in school', 17 years old, Israel).

Erhard, 2016, p. 210.

*"What I used to do, I would go up before class and make sure they knew to call by my right name if it was a sub."* (Transgender youth, unknown exact age, USA).

Johns et al., 2021, p. 887.

## **RELIGION**

*"I believe God made everybody, so if God didn't want people to be gay, then God wouldn't have made them gay."* (Sexual minority adolescent, 14 years old, USA).

Gibbs, 2021, p. 2202-3.

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## **References**

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Wagaman, M. A., Shelton, J., Carter, R., Stewart, K., & Cavaliere, S. J. (2019). "I'm totally transariffic": Exploring how transgender and gender-expansive youth and young adults make sense of their challenges and successes. *Child & Youth Services*, 40(1), 43-64. doi: <https://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0145935X.2018.1551058>

## Introducing Bluestep Solutions

Since February 2022, we have been working with Bluestep Solutions as the company that will help bring to life the PRIDE Project's toolkit.

To quote their own words:

'Bluestep are extremely happy to continue our support to The Open University, where we've been involved in some incredible behavioural change campaigns. These campaigns have offered signposting alongside educational tools, covering important topics targeted at a specific range of demographics.

We're so excited for the summer ahead, getting the opportunity to add value and deliver another top tier campaign which will go along way in making a difference.'

We are working hand in hand with Mark Craig and Harley Jacquest, both of whom will be joining us in our design workshops as well. Meet them below!



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*"I'm honoured to have the opportunity to be involved in such an exciting project that has the power to make a difference to the lives of LGBTQ+ young people. I am really looking forward to taking part in workshops to gain valuable insight to enhance the impact of the creative work that we develop." - Mark Craig*

*"This is a really exciting and progressive project to be involved in, where our design skills will be put to the test and subjected to important feedback from LGBTQ+ youth. To be a part of something that can really help the lives of young people is very humbling." - Harley Jacquest*

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## Contact Us

If you'd like to learn more about the project, do not hesitate to contact us.

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