

LGBTQIA+SB lives, intersectional stories, and suicide prevention that listens

*LGBTQIA+SB is an acronym representing the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, Sistergirl, and Brotherboy communities

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Research Centre
researchers**

Professor Katherine Johnson

Project partners

Suicide Prevention Australia, Switchboard Victoria,
University of Sydney, Roses in the Ocean,
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“I learnt about intersectionality and how different identities come together in the context of suicidality. And the importance of knowing each consumer is an expert and has existing coping strategies and know what they need.”

Anonymous

What if suicide prevention centered not just on those affected, but on those who've been marginalised and too often overlooked in mainstream approaches?

That question drove this research that set out to listen deeply to the lives, identities, and struggles of **LGBTQIA+SB people**—especially those from **First Nations** and **culturally diverse backgrounds**—and to understand their experiences of suicidal distress and support.

Led by Professor Katherine Johnson and an interdisciplinary team, the project brings together researchers, community organisations, like **Suicide Prevention Australia, Switchboard Victoria, University of Sydney** and **Roses in the Ocean**, and people with lived experience of suicide to generate insight that health systems have often ignored these people.

The result was a **world-first qualitative study grounded in intersectional lived experience for suicide prevention**. Participants shared their stories of navigating stigma, racism, isolation, queer community connection, and family rejection—with many saying they'd never been asked about their suicidality before.

But this wasn't research for the shelf.

The team used these findings to create **composite narratives** that are now transforming how practitioners understand suicide risk. This research is at the heart of a novel training program delivered by Switchboard across Victoria's hospital outreach suicide response services, already reaching

143 staff

across

18 sites.

The research has also shaped **policy briefings** for Suicide Prevention Australia, informed service delivery guidelines, and reached international audiences through publications, podcasts, and national peak body webinars. It's already helping services rethink their assumptions and speak more meaningfully to the lived realities of **LGBTQIA+SB people at the intersections** of race, gender, culture and identity.

This is suicide prevention that affirms, includes, and dignifies.