ANNUAL REPORT 2014–2015

LGBTI
Since 2009, beyondblue has been working to reduce prejudice and discrimination that can lead to higher rates of depression, anxiety and suicidal thoughts for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people. beyondblue will continue to develop partnerships with LGBTI stakeholders to deliver initiatives that benefit the mental health of all people in these communities.
Stop. Think. Respect. Left Handed

is a TV and online campaign working to reduce the impact of discrimination on the mental health of LGBTI people.

In March 2015, we ran the campaign again after its initial launch in 2012, reaching out to the next generation of teenage males aged 14 to 17.

Research shows that LGBTI people are up to three times more likely to experience depression and anxiety than the broader population, and are at greater risk of suicide and self-harm.

Almost half hide their sexuality or gender identity in a range of situations fearing violence or discrimination, with young people aged 16 to 24 years more likely to do so than any other age group.

Stop. Think. Respect. Left Handed encourages everyone to stop discrimination, think about how the things you say and do affect others, and respect people who are different from you.
The campaign featured an ad which was shown in cinemas and on gaming sites, in which a group of boys bullies a left-handed teenager, calling him a ‘freak’. The campaign draws a parallel between discriminating against someone because they are left-handed and discriminating against someone who is LGBTI. It poses the question:

**Why should anyone be made to feel like crap just for being who they are?**

The ad was seen by more than 1.1 million people through the cinema ads and online videos on our website and YouTube. The online videos were viewed more than 600,000 times. Facebook posts generated 22,000 likes, shares and comments and 90,000 viewings of the ad.

An independent evaluation of the campaign found that after seeing the ad, three-quarters of 14 to 17 year old males agreed that discrimination affects the mental health of LGBTI people.
IS IT OK TO BE LEFT HANDED?

#STOPTHINKRESPECT
17 May 2015
International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia

336,368 people reached

20,368 likes, comments and shares
24 April 2015

#stopthinkrespect
appeals for personal stories

229,888 people reached

5,322 likes, comments and shares
The *Take Action* campaign encouraged LGBTI people to take action against depression and anxiety by improving their understanding of the signs and symptoms of these conditions, learning about how to get help and encouraging everyone to develop an action plan to maintain good mental health.

Although the campaign was directed at older people, it appealed to all LGBTI people aged 18 years or older.

A picture of the rainbow flag with a widened–blue stripe was promoted on social media, to provide a visual representation of ‘the blues’ taking over.

The campaign was aimed at LGBTI people aged 30 to 55 years. When compared to younger people, this group is not often targeted in awareness and education campaigns.

The picture pointed people to the *beyondblue* website for information and resources: [beyondblue.org.au/lgbti](http://beyondblue.org.au/lgbti)

---

Almost 9,000 people visited the *Take Action* webpage during the campaign.
The campaign complemented the *beyondblue* Pride Festival sponsorship during February and March 2015.

A new 15 second TV commercial appeared on SBS TV as part of its *Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras* festival of programming, reaching more than 1 million viewers during the *Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras* parade telecast.

Of the people who completed the online anxiety and depression quiz (K10), 63 per cent scored highly, while 35 per cent scored moderately, indicating that LGBTI people experiencing signs and symptoms of anxiety and depression were prompted to take action and go to *beyondblue’s* webpage after seeing the campaign.
Sean’s story
I grew up in a typical suburban Aussie family, the youngest of three very sporty boys. I captained a lot of the teams throughout my teens and early twenties, and had no trouble getting girlfriends.

Although I had this seemingly ‘macho’ upbringing, during this time I was deeply in the closet. The constant fear of being discovered, and the stress it caused, led to me developing depression and anxiety.

I knew from a young age that I was gay, but the thought of telling my friends and family truly terrified me. Things worse as I behaved badly when I drank and felt even more ashamed. There were many times when I thought it would just be easier to end my life.

Even though my family and friends never indicated that they would react badly to me being gay, I had assumed their reaction would be negative. In part, this was because of the casual homophobia that I observed all the time, with words like ‘poof’, ‘homo’, and ‘faggot’ bandied about. Even in a joking context, these words can be really hurtful and influential, particularly to people in the closet.
I know, from my own experience, why beyondblue’s ‘Left Handed’ campaign is so important. By highlighting the impact of homophobia on the mental health of LGBTI people, the ‘Left Handed’ ad is helping everyone, particularly teenagers, realise the effect their words can have. If there had been greater awareness of this when I was growing up, life would’ve been much easier.

As a beyondblue Speaker, I show the ‘Left Handed’ video to school groups and every time I do, a young queer person approaches me to tell me about their experience and their gratitude for sharing the video. The message it sends and the impact it has makes me proud to be associated with beyondblue.

Eventually, with help from a friend, I was able to find the courage to come out at age 25 and get the support I needed for depression and anxiety. When I came out, my friends and family defied my expectations by being incredibly supportive. I still captain a footy team, and my teammates are very accepting.
Families Like Mine

Families Like Mine, which was launched in November 2013, is an online multimedia guide accessible via the beyondblue website.

It offers advice and guidance for families on how to support and provide an inclusive environment for their young lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender diverse family members.

The guide features video interviews with people talking about when they came out, and interviews with parents talking about their reactions to learning their child was same-sex attracted or gender-diverse.

Research shows family support can have a significant, positive impact on the mental health of young LGBT people.

From its launch in November 2014 to 30 June, 2015, Families Like Mine was accessed 5,990 times with an average viewing time of 15 minutes.

Visit beyondblue.org.au/families-like-mine
In 2014/15, beyondblue allocated $1,511,253 to fund 13 research projects focused on the mental health of LGBTI people.
One of these research projects investigated the best way to address the needs of lesbians and gay men in e-therapies, which is therapy delivered via the internet or smartphone apps.

There were 25 recommendations for developers to consider, including the content and language used in their online therapies, and how users could adapt therapies to suit their sexual orientation.

*Improving Online Therapy for Mood Disorders Among Lesbians and Gay Men* was conducted by The Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society and La Trobe University from a *beyondblue* National Priority Driven Research Program Grant of $218,257.

Download the toolkit at beyondblue.org.au/resources/research/research-projects
National Pride and Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Festivals

*beyondblue* continued to sponsor national Pride events in 2014 and 2015, with staff and volunteers participating in festivals and marches across Australia, accompanied by the *beyondblue* minibus.
31 March 2015

stopthinkrespect Left Handed campaign

548,096 people reached

12,952 likes, comments and shares
6 March 2015

Mardi Gras

142,080 people reached

5,239 likes, comments and shares
beyondblue Support Service

1300 22 4636 — 24/7

Web chat at beyondblue.org.au — 3pm to 12am AEST

Find help online

beyondblue.org.au/get-support

Get involved

beyondblue.org.au/get-involved