

# Putting “Community” Back In To Community Needs Assessments

**Summary:** Recognizing the expertise of communities and empowering them to define issues of inequity is a first step in moving towards health equity.

## PARTNERS

OUT Maine, Healthy Communities Of The Capital Area, Maine Center for Disease Control

## METHODS

1. A literature review;
2. A community profile utilizing publicly available data sets, assessments and tobacco policy maps;
3. Secondary analysis of the Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey (MIYHS) data;
4. Establishment of a community advisory council to inform and contribute to the development of the assessment, review and interpretation of the findings and to develop priorities.

## RESULTS

- ❑ LGBT youth who use tobacco are also significantly more likely to use substances\*.
- ❑ LGBT students are more likely to experience violence and bullying;
- ❑ Mental health is a problem among LGBT students;
- ❑ Overall, youth who are not sure about the sexuality or transgender identity:
  - ❑ tend to fare slightly better when compared to LGBT youth for most health-related behaviors;
  - ❑ Yet, when compared to heterosexuals and non-transgender youth, they are at significantly higher risks for :
    - Substance use\*.
    - Adverse childhood experiences.
    - Experiencing violence and bullying.
    - Experiencing mental health problems.

\* "Substance use" refers to the use of alcohol, marijuana, cocaine, heroin, methamphetamines, steroids, hallucinogenic drugs, pain medicine, etc.

The community advisory council concluded that prevention efforts addressing LGBTQ+ youth tobacco disparities in Maine must: acknowledge that LGBTQ+ Youth are a community defined by shared identity (not geography or school district), let resiliency guide programming and recognize the importance of working with parents, families, communities and tobacco prevention partners, reciprocate efforts to make Q+ programming more inclusive of tobacco prevention resources and develop tobacco prevention resources specifically for Q+ Youth.

In Maine tobacco use is significantly higher among LGBT students when compared to non-LGBT youth.

Questions	2017				2019			
	Non-LGBT	LGBT	LGBT tobacco users	LGBT marijuana users	Non-LGBT	LGBT	LGBT tobacco users	LGBT marijuana users
Recently smoked cigarettes	8%	16%	70%	42%	6%	13%	53%	32%
Recently used chewing tobacco, snuff, dip, snus, or dissolvable tobacco products	8%	10%	40%	24%	4%	5%	19%	10%
Ever used an electronic vapor product	33%	38%	93%	79%	44%	50%	97%	89%
Recently used an electronic vapor product	15%	18%	71%	43%	28%	31%	93%	71%
Recently smoked cigars, cigarillos, or little cigars	5%	6%	25%	13%	5%	7%	28%	18%
Any tobacco use in the past 30 days	30%	40%	100%	75%	37%	44%	100%	83%
Ever used marijuana	31%	46%	90%	100%	35%	49%	89%	100%
Recently use marijuana	18%	29%	73%	100%	21%	30%	70%	100%
Inhaled nicotine the last time they used an electronic vapor product	26%	22%	27%	27%	58%	48%	57%	50%

■ Significantly higher than the non-LGBT percentage (at 95% confidence)  
■ Significantly lower than the non-LGBT percentage (at 95% confidence)

Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey, 2017 and 2019

## Words Matter

Youth “not sure” of their gender identity or sexual orientation were not included in either the LGBT group or the non-LGBT one for MIYHS analysis.

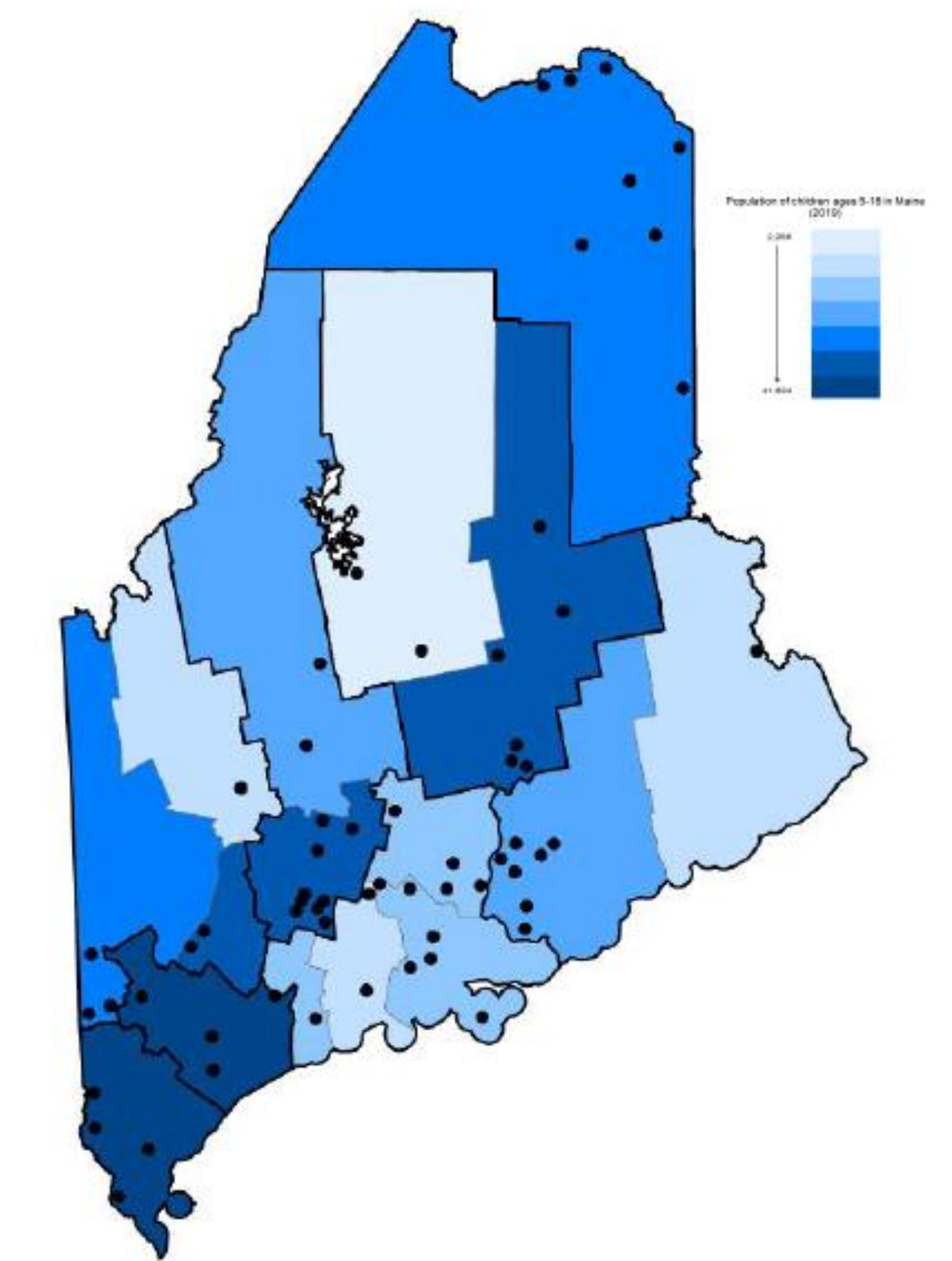
## Community Assets

are key to addressing this health disparity- gay-straight alliances, tobacco prevention partners, Maine Resilience-Building Network, LGBTQ+ organizations and Q+ adults are all part of the solution.

## School Policies Matter

School districts with more comprehensive tobacco-free policies (i.e. alternatives to suspension) were more likely to have stronger anti-discrimination policies.

School Districts that Strengthened or Adopted New Tobacco Policies by Child Population in Maine Oct. 2016 – Sept. 2020



Reading the map: The shades of blue categorize counties according to where children in Maine live. A school district that has strengthened their tobacco policies through the District Tobacco Prevention Partners between 2016 and 2020. This is the Maine Prevention Services Initiative.



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