



# **Perinatal Mental Health**

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She/Her



**PowerPoint and all  
worksheets will be accessible  
on my website under  
“Shefest 2024”**

**[www.EmilyBeltranLCSW.com](http://www.EmilyBeltranLCSW.com)  
(Use QR code on back of my  
business card)**

# Introduction

## Who is Emily?

- Private practice therapist specializing in trauma, perinatal mental health and OCD.
- Over 15 years experience working with children and families.
- Queer cis woman who came out later in life.
- Mom to three highly sensitive kids.
- Experienced my own pregnancy and postpartum anxiety, birth trauma and multiple pregnancy losses.

# Why am I here today?

- To educate on Perinatal Mental Health.
- I wish I had more information on perinatal mental health when I was thinking of starting a family.
- This is a treatable health issue when there is accessible support and resources.
- I have seen a large gap in education and support for LGBTQIA+ individuals in the perinatal period.
- Lack of education among individuals and providers has a negative impact on mental and physical health.
- Individuals and families should not be suffering in silence.
- The LGBTQIA+ community is at higher risk for Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders.


Source:

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/womeninfants/pmad/lgbtq.html>



# What are Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders?

- Perinatal refers to the period of time during a pregnancy and up to a year after giving birth.
- The following mood and anxiety disorders are included.



**What comes to mind  
when you think of  
perinatal mental  
health?**

# Depression During Pregnancy & Postpartum

- Feelings of anger or irritability
- Lack of interest in the baby
- Appetite and sleep disturbance
- Crying and sadness
- Feelings of guilt, shame or hopelessness
- Loss of interest, joy or pleasure in things you used to enjoy
- Possible thoughts of harming the baby or yourself

# Anxiety During Pregnancy & Postpartum

- Constant worry
- Feeling that something bad is going to happen
- Racing thoughts
- Disturbances of sleep and appetite
- Inability to sit still
- Physical symptoms like dizziness, hot flashes, and nausea



# Pregnancy & Postpartum OCD

- Obsessions/intrusive thoughts; persistent, repetitive thoughts or mental images related to the baby..
- Compulsions; do certain things over and over again to reduce fears and obsessions.
- A sense of horror about the obsessions
- Fear of being left alone with the infant
- Hypervigilance in protecting the infant
- Individuals with postpartum OCD know that their thoughts are bizarre and are very unlikely to ever act on them.

# Postpartum Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

- Intrusive re-experiencing of a past traumatic event (which in this case may have been the childbirth itself)
- Flashbacks or nightmares
- Avoidance of stimuli associated with the event, including thoughts, feelings, people, places and details of the event
- Persistent increased arousal (irritability, difficulty sleeping, hypervigilance, exaggerated startle response)
- Anxiety and panic attacks
- Feeling a sense of unreality and detachment

# Bipolar Mood Disorder

- Periods of severely depressed mood and irritability
- Mood much better than normal
- Rapid speech
- Little need for sleep
- Racing thoughts, trouble concentrating
- Continuous high energy
- Overconfidence
- Delusions (often grandiose, but including paranoid)
- Impulsiveness, poor judgment, distractibility
- Grandiose thoughts, inflated sense of self-importance
- In the most severe cases, delusions and hallucinations

# Postpartum Psychosis

- Delusions or strange beliefs
- Hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that aren't there)
- Feeling very irritated
- Hyperactivity
- Severe depression or flat affect
- Decreased need for or inability to sleep
- Paranoia and suspiciousness
- Rapid mood swings
- Difficulty communicating at times



# Statistics

# Perinatal Mood & Anxiety Disorders (PMADS) Stats from the Cisgender Heterosexual Population

## Depression During Pregnancy & Postpartum

15% birthing people

## Anxiety During Pregnancy & Postpartum

6% pregnant people & 10% postpartum birthing people

## Pregnancy or Postpartum OCD

3-5% New birthing parents

## Postpartum Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

9% of birthing people after childbirth

## Bipolar Mood Disorders

50% of women who have bipolar are diagnosed postpartum

## Postpartum Psychosis

Rare 1 or 2/ 1,000 birthing people

## A large share of LGBTQ+ birthing people felt their care was impacted by any bias or discrimination.

PERCENTAGE OF BIRTHING PEOPLE REPORTING FEELING THEIR CARE WAS IMPACTED BY ANY BIAS OR DISCRIMINATION:



NOTE: Care includes pregnancy, birth, and postpartum care.  
SOURCE: Morning Consult online poll of 1,206 birthing people (April 2022).

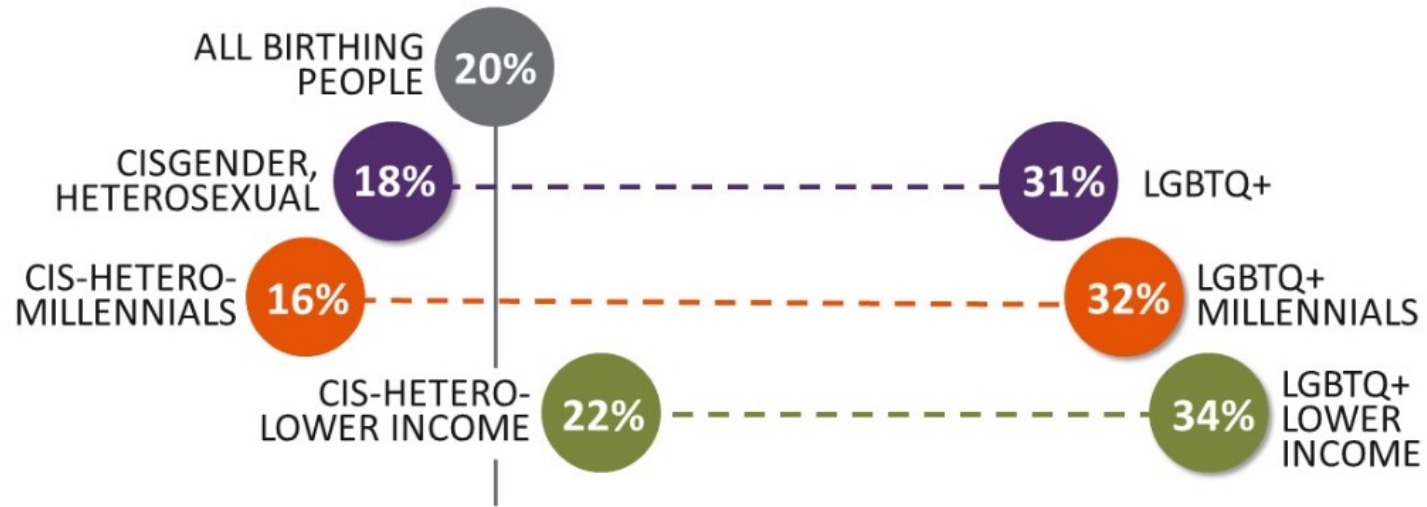
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Figure 2

# LGBTQ+ birthing people reported worse birthing experiences than cisgender, heterosexual birthing people.

PERCENTAGE OF BIRTHING PEOPLE REPORTING A FAIR, POOR, OR VERY POOR BIRTHING EXPERIENCE:



NOTE: Lower income signifies birthing people with incomes below \$50,000 annually.  
SOURCE: Morning Consult online poll of 1,206 birthing people (April 2022).

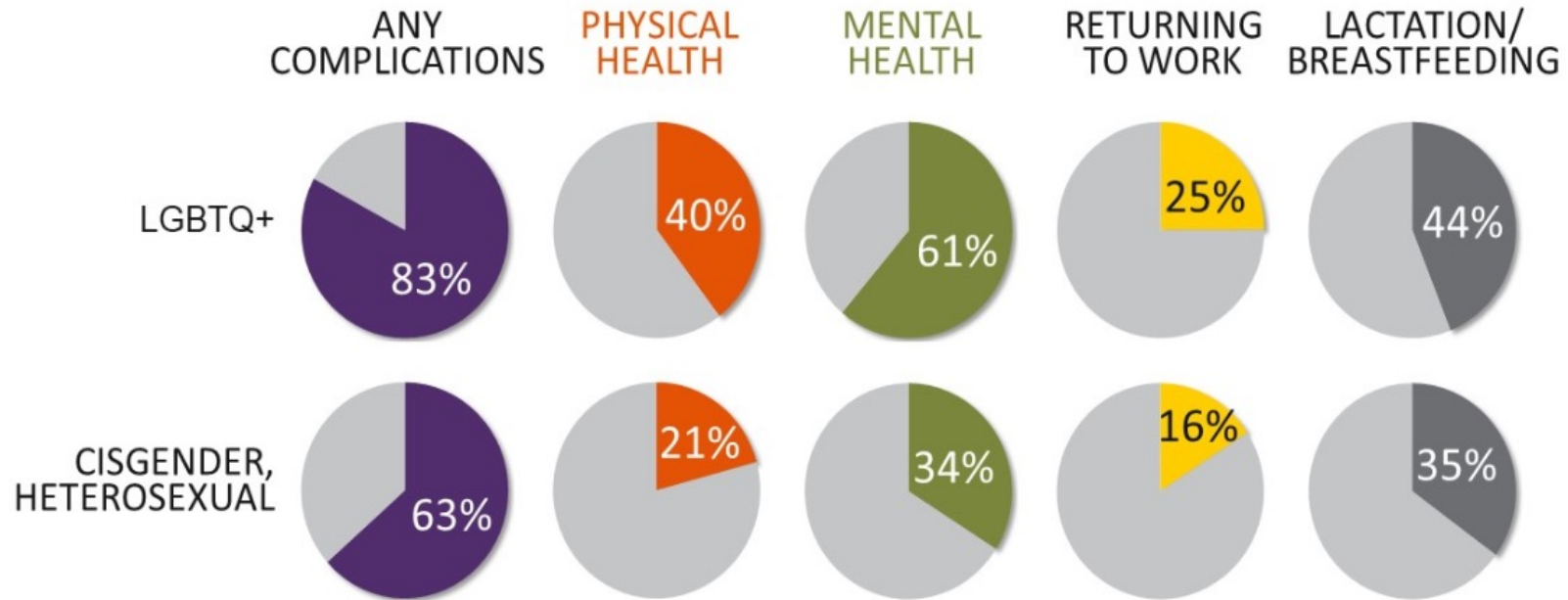
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Figure 1



## A large share of LGBTQ+ birthing people reported experiencing complications following childbirth.



NOTE: LGBTQ+ and cis-/hetero- birthing people have statistically significant differences across all complication categories at the  $p < 0.05$  level.  
SOURCE: Morning Consult online poll of 1,206 birthing people (April 2022).

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# **Parenting Journey Expectations vs Reality Activity**



# Family Building Story

**Expectations**

**Reality**



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# **Risk Factors**

# PMADS

## Risk Factors

Below are some risk factors for perinatal mood and anxiety disorders.

LGBTQIA+	Limited access to quality care	Financial stress	Relationship stress
Pregnancy complications	Major recent life event	History of PMDD or PMS	Traumatic birth
Feeding issues with infant	Inadequate support	Medical problems (Ex. Thyroid imbalance)	Family or personal history of mental health issues
Infertility	Young age	Unplanned/unwanted pregnancy	History of trauma or abuse
Unresolved grief over miscarriage/abortion	Baby in the NICU	Negative relationship with own parents	Difficult baby temperament



# **Resource Sharing Activity**

# Resource Sharing

- At your table use the large sticky note to list resources that have helped you during the perinatal period.
- Add websites if you have them.
- I will collect at the end and update my website with gathered resources under the Shefest 2024 page.



# Thank you for joining me today!

Visit my website for more resources  
and/or to connect with me.

[www.EmilyBeltranLCSW.com](http://www.EmilyBeltranLCSW.com)

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