

SOUNDCHECK

Mental Health in the Canadian Music Industry

LGBTQ+ FINDINGS | May 2026



The following data is drawn from the LGBTQ+ subset of the 2025 Soundcheck survey, the most comprehensive study of mental health and workplace culture in the Canadian music industry, led by Catherine Harrison, M.Psych., Founder and President of Revelios. This subset includes 283 respondents who identified as LGBTQ+. Data reflects the perspectives of music industry professionals across roles and sectors.

WHO RESPONDED

The 283 respondents in this subset represent a diverse cross-section of LGBTQ+ music industry professionals. The majority identified as artists (57%), and 55% were under the age of 36. On gender identity, 50% identified as cisgender women, 17% as non-binary or genderqueer, 15% as cisgender men, and 3% as transgender women, with additional respondents preferring to self-describe or not disclose. On sexual orientation, 65% identified as non-heterosexual: bisexual (21%), lesbian (13%), gay (7%), queer (11%), pansexual (4%), and asexual (10%).

PREVALENCE OF MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES

The data from LGBTQ+ respondents reflects near-universal exposure to mental health challenges in the music industry. Ninety-five percent reported personally experiencing mental health challenges in their work. Ninety-seven percent have personally witnessed them in others. Seventy-one percent said mental health issues are everywhere in the Canadian music industry; a further 27% said they are common.

Rates of formal diagnosis are high. Seventy-one percent of respondents reported having been diagnosed with a mental health condition at some point in their lives. Of those, 22% were currently in treatment at the time of the survey.

95% of LGBTQ+ respondents have personally experienced mental health challenges in the music industry.

97% have personally witnessed mental health challenges in colleagues or peers.

71% have been diagnosed with a mental health condition.

On suicidality, the data demands attention. Sixty-one percent of respondents said they had wished they were dead. Fifty-nine percent reported having thought about taking their own life. Of those who answered the question about feeling at some point that life was not worth living, 71% said yes. These data are much higher than the full dataset averages (between 43-53%).

61% of respondents have wished they were dead.

59% have thought about taking their own life.

KNOWLEDGE, RESOURCES, AND SUPPORT

Despite near-universal exposure to mental health challenges, access to support is limited and awareness of industry-specific resources is low. Eighty-one percent of respondents were unaware of any mental health resources specifically tailored to the Canadian music industry: more than four in five.

Only 29% of respondents disagreed that they have the knowledge and tools to support their own mental health. That means 71% felt at least somewhat equipped, but confidence in self-management does not translate to access to formal support. Sixty-nine percent reported experiencing stigma around reaching out for mental health support at all.

81% are unaware of mental health resources specifically tailored to the Canadian music industry.
69% experience stigma around reaching out for mental health support.

WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT AND LEADERSHIP

LGBTQ+ respondents described a work environment that actively works against mental health. Eighty-four percent disagreed that the overall work environment in the Canadian music industry supports mental health and well-being. Only 16% agreed.

On whether people in charge put measures in place to support their mental health, only 11% strongly agreed, nearly identical to the national figure of 10%.

Eighty-four percent said their interactions with leadership and persons in power directly impact their well-being. Sixty-eight percent said they feel comfortable sharing mental health concerns with colleagues and superiors, a higher rate than the national findings suggest for the industry overall, though it still leaves nearly one in three without that confidence.

84% disagree that the overall work environment in the Canadian music industry supports mental health and well-being.

84% say their interactions with leadership and persons in power impact their well-being.

Ninety-six percent agreed that the Canadian music industry could do more to address mental health challenges.

FINANCIAL STRESS AND PRECARITY

Financial precarity registers as one of the sharpest stressors in this dataset. Ninety-two percent agreed that their financial situation causes them stress, 69% strongly. Ninety-one percent said their financial situation is directly related to their mental health, with 61% strongly agreeing. Seventy-eight percent said they do not believe they have job security; 55% strongly disagreed that they do.

92% agree their financial situation causes them stress.

91% say their financial situation is directly related to their mental health.

78% do not believe they have job security.

These numbers align with and in some cases exceed the national Soundcheck findings, where 84% reported financial stress directly impacting their mental health and only 5% felt a sense of job security.

MODERN INDUSTRY CHANGES AND WORK SCHEDULES

The structural demands of the modern music industry are registering as direct stressors. Eighty-eight percent agreed that the all-on/all-off nature of music industry work schedules negatively impacts their mental health, 58% of them strongly.

Sixty-two percent disagreed that modern industry changes, including streaming, social media, and AI, support their ability to do their best work. Sixty-six percent disagreed that those same changes support their ability to sustain their work at all. Seventy-nine percent disagreed that modern changes support their ability to manage their mental health. Eighty-six percent said they find the modern music industry stressful and overwhelming.

88% say the all-on/all-off nature of work schedules negatively impacts their mental health.

86% find modern changes in the music industry stressful and overwhelming.

Sixty-four percent reported being unable to get the rest required to perform at their best.

DISCRIMINATION, IDENTITY, AND REPRESENTATION

A significant portion of respondents connected experiences of discrimination directly to their mental health. Among those who answered the relevant questions: 69% agreed their experience with harassment is directly related to their mental health; 72% agreed the same about ageism. For racism, 49% agreed it impacts their mental health. Experiences of bullying and sexism showed similar patterns, particularly among cisgender women and non-binary respondents.

On representation, 68% disagreed that they feel accurately represented in the Canadian music industry. Only 32% agreed.

68% do not feel accurately represented in the Canadian music industry.

69% say their experience with harassment is directly related to their mental health.

SUBSTANCE USE AND STIGMA

Eighty-four percent of respondents agreed there is a stigma associated with having a substance use challenge in the music industry. Seventy percent also reported stigma around sobriety, abstinence, or recovery, a double-edged dynamic that discourages open conversation from both directions.

Thirty-five percent reported consuming alcohol frequently or always in the context of their work. Twenty-three percent said the same about recreational drug use.

84% agree there is stigma associated with substance use challenges in the music industry.

70% also report stigma around sobriety or recovery.

TRAINING, EDUCATION, AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Formal mental health training is largely absent from respondents' professional experience. Sixty-two percent reported no training or development to support their own mental health. Eighty-two percent reported no training to support their peers' mental health. Among Part 2 respondents, 73% had never participated in any leadership development program.

Demand for change is nearly unanimous. Ninety-seven percent of Part 2 respondents agreed that ongoing mental health training for music industry professionals is important, 71% strongly. Eighty-eight percent said they are interested in learning more about managing their own mental health. Ninety-five percent wanted to learn how to better support their peers.

Eighty-six percent were not satisfied with the current availability of mental health literacy and skill development programs in the industry, with 45% strongly dissatisfied.

On accountability, 90% of Part 2 respondents said industry organizations bear responsibility for mental health literacy and skill development. Seventy-nine percent named employers.

97% agree that ongoing mental health training for music industry professionals is important.

86% are not satisfied with the current availability of such programs.

LGBTQ+ FINDINGS IN CONTEXT

The LGBTQ+ subset represents 283 of the 1,216 respondents in the national Soundcheck study, roughly one in four. Comparing this cohort to the full sample reveals where LGBTQ+ music industry professionals track with their peers and where the gap is significant.

On some measures, the two groups are nearly indistinguishable. Ninety-five percent of LGBTQ+ respondents reported personally experiencing mental health challenges, compared to 86% nationally. Ninety-seven percent had witnessed challenges in colleagues or peers, compared to 95% nationally. Ninety-six percent agreed the industry could do more to address mental health, compared to 95% nationally. The near-identical numbers on that last point are worth noting: the demand for change is not a subgroup finding. It is a sector-wide consensus.

On suicidality, the gap is harder to ignore. Sixty-one percent of LGBTQ+ respondents said they had wished they were dead, compared to 53% nationally. Fifty-nine percent had thought about taking their own life, compared to 43% nationally. These are not marginal differences. A 16-point gap on active suicidal ideation points to

something specific about the experience of LGBTQ+ professionals in this industry that the aggregate numbers do not capture.

Seventy-one percent of LGBTQ+ respondents reported having been diagnosed with a mental health condition at some point in their lives. The national study does not surface this figure prominently, making direct comparison difficult, but it stands as one of the more striking findings in this subset.

On awareness of mental health resources specifically tailored to the Canadian music industry, 81% of LGBTQ+ respondents were unaware of any. The national infographic does not report this figure directly but given that resource awareness was low across the full sample, the LGBTQ+ number likely reflects an industry-wide gap rather than a cohort-specific one.

On leadership, 11% of LGBTQ+ respondents strongly agreed that people in charge put measures in place to support their mental health. The national figure is 10%. The two cohorts are essentially the same on this measure, and both numbers point to the same conclusion: strong confidence in leadership on mental health is absent across the industry.

About the Soundcheck Study

Soundcheck is the most comprehensive study of mental health and workplace culture in the Canadian music industry. Led by Catherine Harrison, M.Psych., Founder and President of Revelios, the study drew on 1,250+ respondents nationwide. The full Soundcheck Report was published in February 2026. Revelios is the Official Music Industry Mental Health Partner of the 2026 JUNO Awards.

Media Inquiries: phil@annexe.media | 514 844 8864 | annexe.media

Other Inquiries: info@revelios.com | 416-995-8618 | revelios.com