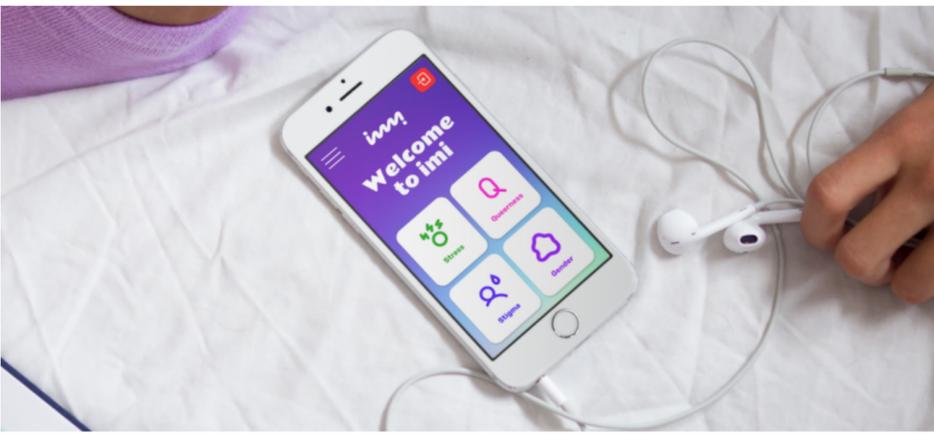


# JMIR Journal of Medical Internet Research | An Identity-Affirming Web Application to Help Sexual and Gender Minority Youth Cope With Minority Stress: Pilot Randomized Controlled Trial

On August 1, 2022 | Edit This



Source: The Authors/Placeit  
Copyright: The Authors/Placeit  
URL: <https://www.jmir.org/2022/8/e39094/>  
License: Licensed by the authors

- *imi* (pronounced as "eye-me") was designed with and for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) youth to help them explore and affirm their identity and learn practical approaches to cope with sexual and gender minority stress in ways that are supportive, relevant, inclusive, and joyful.
- Data from a randomized control trial conducted by researchers at the University of Pennsylvania indicate that *imi* boosts positive coping skills and mindsets that are important for supporting the mental health of LGBTQ+ youth.
- These results suggest that *imi* may play an important role in helping LGBTQ+ teens cope with sexual and gender minority stress. *imi* may also help overcome access and engagement barriers faced by in-person interventions by being freely accessible on demand, scalable, and confidential.

**San Francisco, California, Aug 1, 2022**—Today, Hopelab published the findings of their study on the efficacy of *imi*, a free, research-backed, mental health web app developed by the innovation lab, in partnership with [CenterLink](#), the [It Gets Better Project](#), and hundreds of LGBTQ+ youth. Findings from a randomized controlled trial (RCT), conducted by researchers at Hopelab and University of Pennsylvania's Program on Sexuality, Technology, and Action Research ([PSTAR](#)), show that *imi* boosts positive coping skills and mindsets that are important for supporting the mental health of LGBTQ+ youth.

*imi*, (pronounced "eye-me") helps LGBTQ+ youth explore and affirm their identity and learn practical approaches to cope with sexual and gender minority stress in ways that are supportive, relevant, inclusive, and joyful. The web app provides affirming resources, activities, and stories of lived experiences from LGBTQ+ youth on important topics including stress, LGBTQ+ identity, internalized stigma, and gender identity and expression.

Data from the RCT indicate that *imi* is effective in supporting the well-being of LGBTQ+ youth. A diverse group of LGBTQ+ youth randomly assigned to receive *imi* reported significantly greater improvements in coping skills and significantly greater confidence in their coping abilities than youth randomly assigned to receive a web-based list of freely available, vetted resources for LGBTQ+ youth. These results suggest that *imi* may play an important role in helping LGBTQ+ teens cope with sexual and gender minority stress.

*Investing in interventions that improve the resilience of sexual and gender minority youth is critical to their survival. Due to the stress arising from stigma and discrimination, LGBTQ+ youth are more than twice as likely to report feeling sad and hopeless, and more than three times as likely to have contemplated suicide than their straight and cisgendered peers. And these problems are further compounded for youth who face multiple sources of discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, or gender including bias, discrimination, and increased hate speech. We need to help LGBTQ+ young people – especially BIPOC youth – affirm their identities and manage stress using research-backed tools that they can freely access online, where they're already seeking support.* [Dr José Bauermeister, lead researcher]

While *imi* is neither a crisis tool, nor is it designed to help teens cope with suicidal thoughts, early data suggest that the interventions delivered through *imi* can boost positive coping skills and mindsets, which are critical supports for LGBTQ+ mental health over the long term.

*imi* is available for free at [imi.guide](#).

To learn more about the new data, please visit this [link](#).

## About JMIR Publications

[JMIR Publications](#) is a leading, born-digital, open-access publisher of 30+ academic journals and other innovative scientific communication products that focus on the intersection of health and technology. Its flagship journal, the [Journal of Medical Internet Research](#), is the leading digital health journal globally in content breadth and visibility, and it is the largest journal in the medical informatics field. To learn more about JMIR Publications, please visit <https://www.jmirpublications.com> or connect with us via [YouTube](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), or [Instagram](#). If you are interested in learning more about promotional opportunities, please contact us at [communications@jmir.org](mailto:communications@jmir.org). The content of this communication is licensed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution License](#), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work, published by JMIR Publications, is properly cited. JMIR is a registered trademark of JMIR Publications.

## About Hopelab

Hopelab is a social innovation lab and impact investor advancing entrepreneurs, research, digital health, and solutions that support and empower young people, especially those from historically underserved communities. The organization works to remove systemic barriers to youth mental health and emotional well-being through targeted social impact investments, hands-on design and research support for digital innovation, and translational science partnerships. Learn more at [hopelab.org](http://hopelab.org).

## About PSTAR

PSTAR advances research and intervention methods aimed at decreasing sexuality-related health disparities and improving equity for sexual and gender minority populations through innovative science and community engaged approaches. PSTAR is founded and directed by José A Bauermeister, PhD, MPH, who is the [Albert M Greenfield Professor of Human Relations and Chair of the Department of Family and Community Health at the School of Nursing at the University of Pennsylvania](#). Learn more at <https://www.pennstar.org>.

## Original article:

Bauermeister J, Choi SK, Bruehlman-Senecal E, et al. An Identity-Affirming Web Application to Help Sexual and Gender Minority Youth Cope With Minority Stress: Pilot Randomized Controlled Trial.

J Med Internet Res 2022;24(8):e39094

URL: <https://www.jmir.org/2022/8/e39094/>

doi: 10.2196/39094

Previous Post: [JMIR Public Health and Surveillance | Diagnostic Accuracy of Self-test for Influenza](#)

Next Post: [JMIR Human Factors | Health Records for Communication in Colorectal Cancer Networks](#)

🔍

## Recent Posts

- [Journal of Medical Internet Research | Blood Pressure Monitoring, a Digital Tool for Diabetes](#)
- [JMIR Serious Games | Virtual Reality Balance Training for Parkinson Disease](#)
- [JMIR Infodemiology | COVID-19 and Vitamin D Misinformation on YouTube: Content Analysis](#)
- [JMIR mHealth and uHealth | Remote Automated Blood Pressure Monitoring With Wearable Tech](#)
- [JMIR Cardio | Impact of a Mobile App on Participation in Cardiac Rehabilitation](#)

## Archives

- [August 2022](#)
- [July 2022](#)
- [June 2022](#)
- [May 2022](#)
- [April 2022](#)
- [March 2022](#)
- [February 2022](#)
- [January 2022](#)
- [December 2021](#)
- [November 2021](#)
- [October 2021](#)
- [September 2021](#)
- [August 2021](#)
- [July 2021](#)
- [June 2021](#)
- [May 2021](#)
- [April 2021](#)
- [March 2021](#)
- [February 2021](#)
- [December 2020](#)
- [November 2020](#)
- [October 2020](#)
- [September 2020](#)
- [August 2020](#)
- [June 2020](#)
- [May 2020](#)
- [April 2020](#)
- [February 2020](#)
- [May 2019](#)
- [April 2019](#)
- [January 2019](#)
- [December 2018](#)
- [November 2018](#)
- [October 2018](#)
- [July 2018](#)
- [May 2018](#)
- [March 2018](#)

## Categories

- [Industry News](#)
- [Job Postings](#)
- [Press Releases](#)
- [Uncategorized](#)