

Project Q's Working with LGBTQ Youth: What You Really Need to Know - Training Outcomes for Organizational Change



fostering hope, transforming lives, securing futures

Sheri Strahl, MPH & Pauline Tan, MPH, CHES



WELLNESS • RECOVERY • RESILIENCE

Session Objectives

- Learn strategies for developing your own cultural competency trainings
- Identify 2 strategies for engagement and retention of LGBTQ persons
- Participate in one of Project Q's nine modules:
The Coming Out Process

Project Q

Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health

- Prop 63

The Need

- culturally competent services

Health disparities

- 5-10% of the American youth are LGBTQ
- 20-40% of the American homeless Youth are LGBTQ (National Alliance to End Homelessness, 2012)

Project Q's Youth Advocates

Recruitment strategies

Ages 12-22

Diverse

- Year 1 (2012) 12 youth
- Year 2 (2013) 16 youth

Project Q Training

Full Day training-Nine Modules

- LGBTQ 101: What You Really Need to Know
- The Experience of Being LGBTQ and Latina/Latino
- Providing Behavioral Healthcare Services for LGBTQ Youth
- Harassment and Bullying
- Working with LGBTQ Youth and Coming-Out Challenges
- Trauma Informed Care-TIC Talk
- Working with Transgender Youth-Beyond the Gender Binary
- Foster Care and LGBTQ Youth
- How to Become Affirming

Who was trained in 2012

10 Youth Servicing Agencies

- 9 Mental Health Agencies
- 1 Legal and Civil Rights Advocacy Agency

Average of 25 participants per training

- Maximum 30, Minimum 13

Pre and Post Measures

Self-Assessment Checklist for Personnel Providing Services and Supports to LGBTQ Youth and Their Families

4 point Likert scale (I do this Frequently, Occasionally, Rarely/Never, N/A)

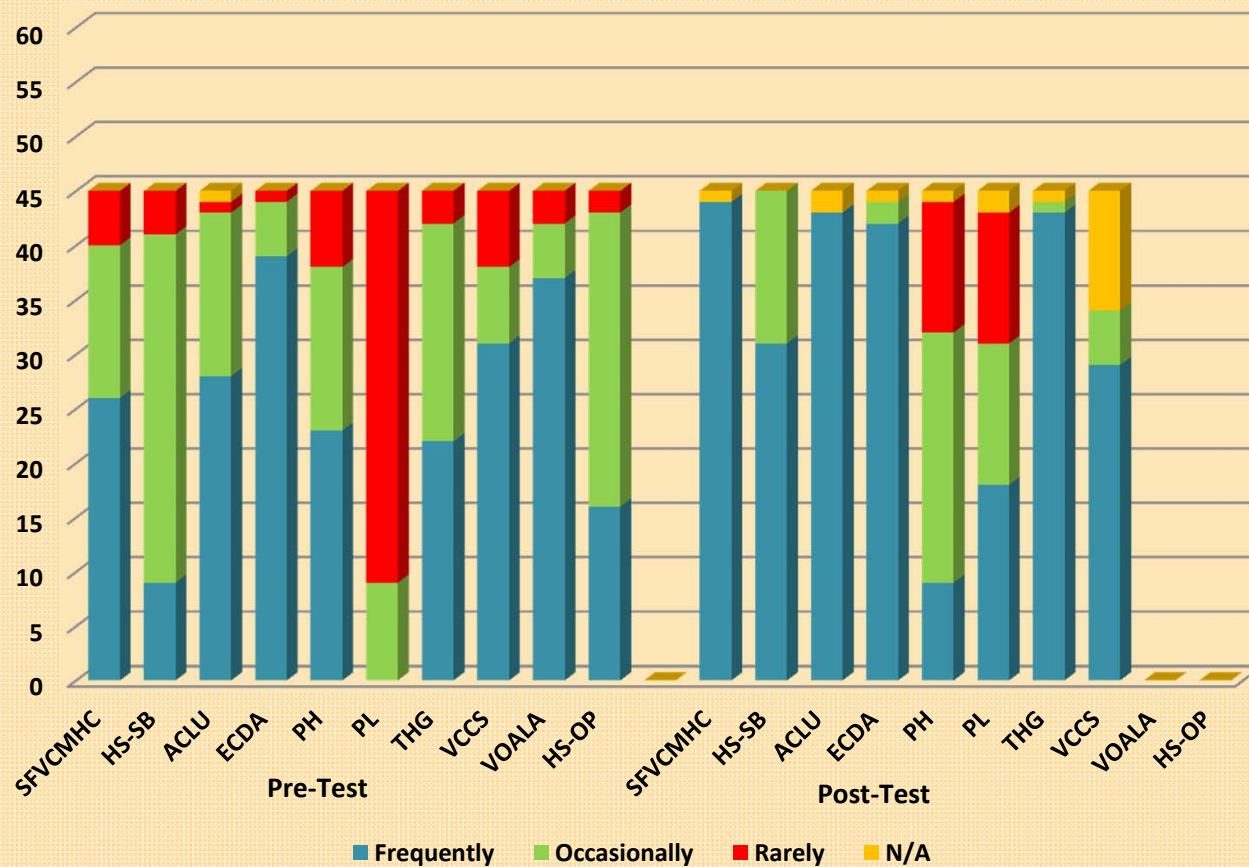
29 question across 3 categories

- Physical environment, Materials, and Resources
- Communication Practices
- Values and Attitudes

Tawara D. Goode, M.A. and Sylvia K. Fisher, Ph.D. (2009). Promoting Cultural Diversity and Cultural Competency: Self-Assessment Checklist for Personnel Providing Behavioral Health Services and Supports to Children, Youth and Their Families. *National Center for Cultural Competence, Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development*. Georgetown, DC.

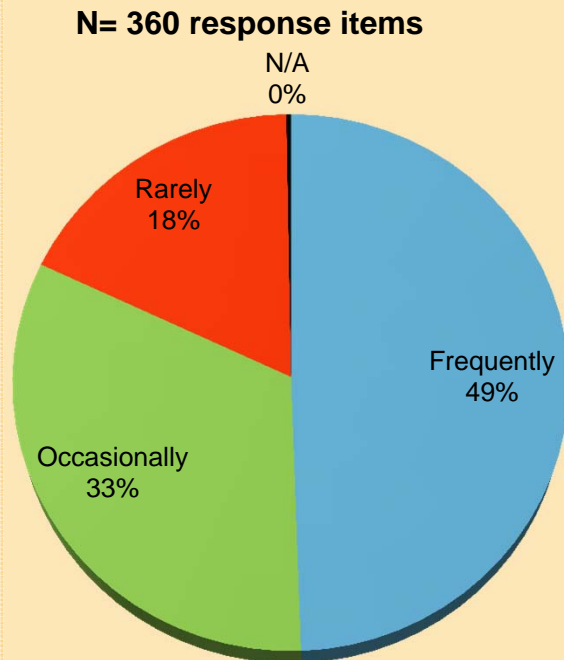
Outcomes

Self-Assessment at Pre- and Post-Training Frequency of Responses 2012

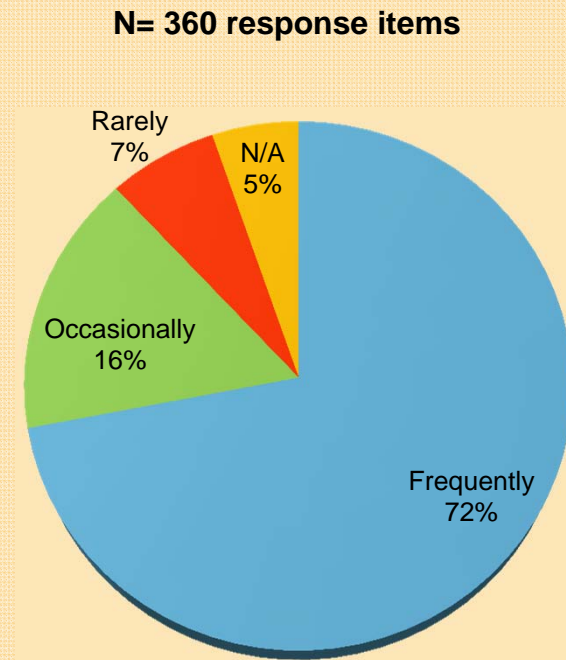


Outcomes

Aggregate Frequency of Responses for 8 Agencies at Pre-Training



Aggregate Frequency of Responses for 8 Agencies at Post-Training





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LGBTQ Youth and the Coming Out Experience



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Session Objectives

- Identify common challenges that LGBTQ youth face when coming out
- Identify potential risks associated with social isolation and family and peer rejection
- Identify specific behaviors that families do that raise and lowers risks for LGBTQ youth

Culturally Competent Care

- Competent care involves understanding basic facts about LGBTQ youth and the issues they face



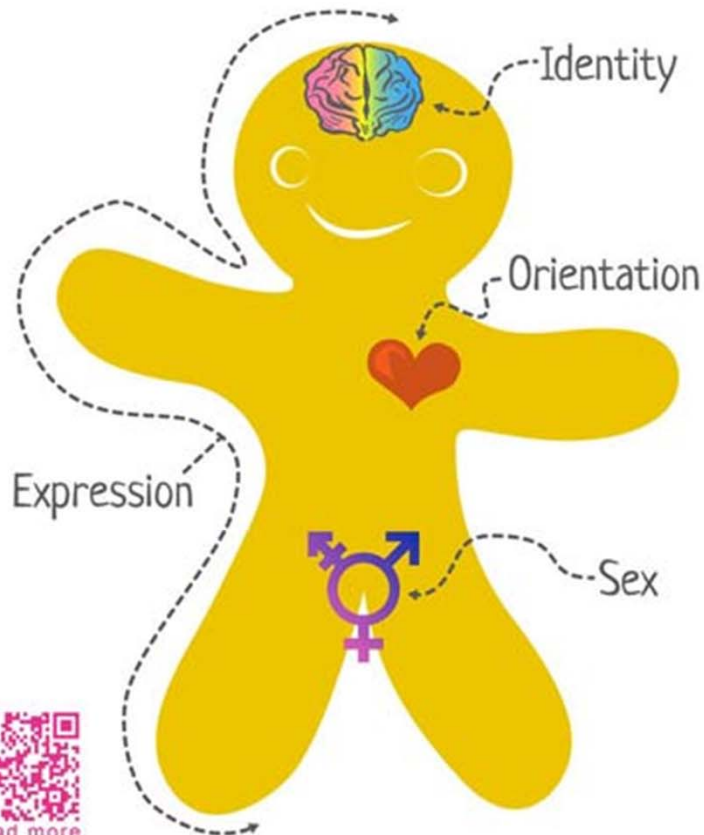
What does LGBTQ mean?

- LGBTQ: includes all individuals and communities who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender or those who are questioning their sexual orientation and/or gender identity
- Other acronyms: GLBTQ, LGBTQQIA

Spectra

The Genderbread Person

by www.ItsPronouncedMetrosexual.com



Gender identity is how you, in your head, think about yourself. It's the chemistry that composes you (e.g., hormonal levels) and how you interpret what that means.



Gender expression is how you demonstrate your gender (based on traditional gender roles) through the ways you act, dress, behave, and interact.



Biological sex refers to the objectively measurable organs, hormones, and chromosomes. Female = vagina, ovaries, XX chromosomes; male = penis, testes, XY chromosomes; intersex = a combination of the two.



Sexual orientation is who you are physically, spiritually, and emotionally attracted to, based on their sex/gender in relation to your own.



“I came out because I couldn’t stand not being myself anymore.”

-Linda Villarosa, Lesbian Author/Journalist

“I came out at 16, shortly after I discovered I was gay. To me, coming out was all about being true to myself. However, my strong feelings on the subject didn’t exactly prepare me for how difficult stepping out of “the closet” into the big, bright world would be or how deeply it would affect me and those around me.”

-Dana Buzzelli, Teen

What is Coming Out?

Coming out means something different to everyone and is always a process

- Attracted to people of the same sex, both sexes, all sexes
- Identifies as a LGBTQ person
- Coming out to self v. others
- Deciding to tell others about your feelings and attractions (sometimes without identifying themselves and remaining label free)

Coming Out Stars



Growing Up LGBT in America

- More than 1/2 (56%) of LGBT youth say they are out to their immediate family
- 1/4 (25%) of this population are out to their extended family

(HRC, “Growing Up LGBT in America,” 2012)



Most Important Problem Right Now

LGBTQ Youth

1. Non-accepting families
2. School/bullying problems
3. Fear of being out or open

Non-LGBTQ Youth

1. Classes/exams/grades
2. College/career
3. Financial pressures related to college or job

(HRC, "Growing Up LGBT in America," 2012)

One Thing You Would Like to Change Right Now

LGBTQ Youth

1. Understanding/tolerance/hate
2. My Parents/family situation
3. Where I live/who I live with

Non-LGBTQ Youth

1. Money/debt/finances
2. Appearance/weight
3. Improving mental health

(HRC, "Growing Up LGBT in America," 2012)

Benefits and Risks of Coming Out

Through the coming out process one may feel:

- Scared
- Confused
- Vulnerable
- Empowered
- Exhilarated
- Relieved
- Abnormal
- Proud
- Uncertain
- Brave
- Affirmed
- Alone
- Insecure
- Doubtful
- Free

Real v. Perceived Loss

- What does a young person think they might lose when they come out?
- What will a young person lose when they come out?
- What do families/caregivers think their child could lose?
- What are the realities of their child's life after coming out?
- How do these impact youth and parental behavior?

The Benefits of Coming Out

- Living an open and authentic life
- Developing closer, more genuine relationships
- Building self-esteem from being known and loved for who they really are
- Reducing the stress of concealment and imposed silence
- Connecting with others who are LGBTQ and allies

The Benefits of Coming Out (Cont.)

- Being part of a strong and vibrant community
- Helping dispel myths and stereotypes about who LGBTQ people are and what their lives are like
- Becoming a role model for others
- Making it easier for younger LGBTQ people who will follow in their footsteps

The Risks of Coming Out

- Not everyone will be supportive, understanding or accepting
- Family, friends or community members may be shocked, confused, or even hostile
- Some relationships may permanently change or end
- One may experience bullying, harassment or discrimination
- One's physical safety may be at risk

The Risks of Coming Out (Cont.)

- One could be thrown out of their home, lose financial support from families/caregivers or run away from a toxic home environment
- Have their sexual orientation and gender identity define them
- Pressure to change to “normal ways”
- Family and caregivers suspicious of youths’ actions

Positive Reactions to Hope For

- Acceptance
- Support
- Understanding
- Comfort
- Reassurance that one's relationship won't be negatively affected
- Confidence that one's relationship will be closer
- Acknowledgement of one's feelings
- LOVE**

Possible Reactions to Prepare For

- Surprised
- Honored
- Uncomfortable
- Scared
- Unsure how to react
- Supportive
- Disbelieving
- Violent
- Relieved
- Curious
- Angry
- Anxious
- Unsure what to do next
- Disappointed
- Disrespect
- Dishonor
- Brushed-off

Making a Coming Out Plan

Coming out is a life long process and ideally begins when a person is ready...

Youth should ask themselves:

- Are you well informed about LGBTQ issues?
- Do you know what you want to say?
- Do you have support/safety net?
- Is this a good time?
- Can you be patient?
- Are you safe?
- Are you prepared?

Family Acceptance

- Research has shown that the single most significant factor in predicting mental health outcomes for LGBTQ youth is the response of their families when they come out
- LGBTQ youth from highly-rejecting families are at a far higher risk for major mental health problems as young adults
- Problems may include: suicidal ideation and attempts, depression, substance abuse, and higher risk behaviors (Ryan, 2009)

Family Behaviors that Increase Risk for Mental Health Issues, Incl. Suicide

- Physically hurting a child because they are LGBTQ
- Verbal/emotional harassment because they are LGBTQ
- Excluding LGBT youth from family events
- Blocking access to LGBT friends, events, and resources
- Blaming your child when they are discriminated against because of LGBT identity (Ryan, 2009)

Family Behaviors that Increase Risk for Mental Health Issues, Incl. Suicide (Cont.)

- Pressuring your child to be more (or less) masculine or feminine
- Telling your child that God will punish them because they're LGBT
- Telling your child that you're ashamed of them or that the way they act will shame the family
- Making your child keep their LGBT identity a secret in the family and not letting them talk about it (Ryan, 2009)

Family Behaviors that Reduce Risk for Suicide

- Talk with your child about their LGBT identity or questioning that identity
- Express affection when you learn that your child is LGBT
- Support your child's LGBT identity even though you may be uncomfortable
- Advocate for your child when he or she is mistreated because they identify as LGBT
- Require that other family members respect your LGBT child (Ryan, 2009)

Family Behaviors that Reduce Risk for Suicide (Cont.)

- Bring your child to LGBT organizations or events
- Connect your child with an LGBT role model to show them options for the future
- Welcome your child's LGBT partners and friends into your home
- Support your child's gender expression
- Believe your child can have a happy future as an LGBT adult (Ryan, 2009)

The Village Family Services Free Resources

LGBTQ Youth Resource Guide

- Los Angeles, California, and Nationally
- Available in English and Spanish

LGBTQ Youth Outreach and Engagement Best Strategies

- Manual for professionals

www.thevillagefs.org

Under Publications & Resources tab

Any Questions or Comments?

Sheri Strahl

SStrahl@thevillagefs.org

Pauline Tan

Ptan@thevillagefs.org



6736 Laurel Canyon Blvd., Suite 200
North Hollywood, CA 91606

p 818-755-8786
f 818-755-8789

www.thevillagefs.org