Working Respectfully with LGBTQ Youth and Adults

HCHN Training

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Objectives

Be familiar with common terms related to sexual orientation and gender identity

Understand risk factors and common concerns regarding gender expansive youth

Understand best practice in supporting LGBTQ youth and young adults

Increase skills and comfort in working wonderfully with LGBTQ Youth
Definitions Activity

- Biological Sex
- Gender Identity
- Sexual Orientation
- Sexual Behavior
Trans*

An umbrella term that refers to all of the identities within the gender identity spectrum. Trans* includes all transgender, non-binary, and gender nonconforming identities.
(Trans)Gender Identity Development

0-5
Gender Identity established

May begin living as other gender
May begin hormone blockers

6-10

11-17
May begin hormone therapies
Risk of adverse outcomes high

18 and beyond
Transgender kids with good support go on to do well
Others continue to face adverse outcomes
1:250 – 1:500 children are transgender or significantly gender variant
Gender Non-Conforming Behavior ≠ Mental Illness

No inherent connection to:

• Mental Illness
• Sexually Predatory Behavior
Risk and Protective Factors

Adverse outcomes across domains

- Mental health (depression, suicidality)
- Sexual health (STDs, HIV and pregnancy)
- Academic achievement (truanty, dropout, GPA, post-secondary)
- Substance use (alcohol, drugs, tobacco)
- Basic safety (abuse, homelessness, school violence, sexual violence)
Risk and Protective Factors

Positive representations
Family acceptance
School and peer support
School-based policies
Support networks
Sexual health education

Family discord/lack of acceptance
Earlier age at coming out
Conflict with the law
Atypical gender presentation
Victimization by peers
Poor school attachment
Protective Factors

Certain protective factors have significant impact especially on suicidality

Family Connectedness

Adult Caring

School safety
Trans Youth with Supportive Parents

Reported Life Satisfaction
72% 33%

Described Mental Health As “Very Good” or “Excellent”
70% 15%

Suffered Depression
23% 75%

Trans Youth with Unsupportive Parents

Reported High Self-Esteem
64% 13%

Faced Housing Problems
0% 55%

Attempted Suicide
4% 57%
How could such a young child know that they are transgender?
Shouldn’t we help them learn to live with the gender they were assigned?
Aren’t we putting them in danger?
OPINIONS

OPINIONS EVERYWHERE

DIYLOL.COM
Now what?
Best Practice
HELLO
PLEASE ADDRESS ME AS

PLEASE USE: THEY, THEM, THEIRS
privacy
ARE YOU IN THE RIGHT BATHROOM?
Additional Tips!

- Follow the client’s lead and use the language that the client chooses for pronouns and physical body.
- Know your own personal biases and limitations and your organizational limits.
- Your personal opinion or belief about someone’s gender identity (sexual orientation) is not relevant.
- Don’t make assumptions about gender identity, sexual orientation, pronouns, surgery and hormone plans, or words used to define body parts.
1. You are working with someone and are unsure of which gender they are and which pronoun they use. How do you proceed?

2. You overhear a client call another client a faggot and tell them that they are disgusting. What do you do?

3. You misgender a client who walks into your office. How do you proceed?

4. A transgender woman comes into your office and is very upset. She just used the bathroom and someone told her she was in the wrong bathroom. Aside from offering emotional support, what additional ways can you support her?
Other Scenarios / Questions?
Resources

• A Place of Respect: A Guide for Group Care Facilities Serving Transgender and Gender Non-conforming Youth

• Family Acceptance Project
  http://familyproject.sfsu.edu/home

• Gender Spectrum
  https://www.genderspectrum.org/resources/

• Trans* Access Guide