ENSURING THE SAFETY, PERMANENCY AND WELL-BEING OF LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER AND QUESTIONING (LGBTQ) YOUTH IN CARE OF CHILD WELFARE SYSTEMS

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Training Objectives
• Approach the topic of LGBTQ youth in child welfare systems with cultural humility
• Learn about the concepts and terminology related to SOGIE, and examine common myths
• Increase understanding of the legal and professional standards governing child welfare services to LGBTQ youth
• Examine the objectives of safety, permanency and well-being as they apply to LGBTQ youth
Cultural Humility Embraces:

– a willingness to **openly assess oneself**
– acceptance of **one’s limitations**
– acknowledging **gaps in one’s knowledge**
– openness to new & **contradictory ideas**

Cultural Humility Involves:

a) A lifelong process
b) Serious self-reflection and self-critique
c) A commitment to respecting different viewpoints
e) Engaging with others from a place of learning
f) An attitude that acknowledges that culture is individual & can only be understood individually

Culturally Humble Practice:

"Those who practice cultural humility work to **increase self-awareness** of their own biases and perceptions and engage in a **life-long process of self reflection** about how to put these aside and learn from **clients.**"

(Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998)
Sexuality & Gender

Sexuality includes:
1. Sexual orientation
2. Sexual identity
3. Sexual behavior

Gender includes:
1. Birth sex
2. Gender identity
3. Gender expression

Biological Sex (anatomy, chromosomes, hormones)
- Male
- Intersex
- Female

Gender Identity (sense of self)
- Man
- Transgender
- Woman

Gender Expression (how you present yourself)
- Androgynous
- Non-Binary
- Gender Non-Conforming

Sexual Orientation (who you like)
- Attracted to Women
- Bisexual
- Attracted to Men
- Non-Binary
- Gender Non-Conforming
“Let us not forget that this great nation was founded by a bunch of men wearing wigs.”
Mrs. Madrigal, “You don’t have to keep up dear, you just have to keep open.”
Context and intent:

A father is asked, “Have you ever set your son on fire? He responds, “Yeah, a few times. He loved it.”

Huh?

Digital Stories:

• Captain

The Impact of Silence
What does it feel like to have a secret?

Laws in California

AB 458
Foster Care Nondiscrimination Act

- The right to fair and equal access to services, placement, care, treatment and benefits
- The right to NOT to be subjected to discrimination or harassment on the basis of actual or perceived SO/GI
California Student Safety & Violence Prevention Act
AB 537/SB 777

- Protects students and employees in California public schools against discrimination or harassment based on
  - Sexual orientation
  - Gender identity
  - Gender nonconforming appearance or behavior

AB 394
The Safe Place to Learn Act

Requires CA Department of Education to:

- Monitor whether school districts comply with Student Safety and Violence Prevention Act of 2000
- Make available resources that address bias-motivated discrimination and harassment in schools
- Develop model handout describing schools’ obligations to address bias-related discrimination and harassment
The School Success and Opportunity Act
AB 1266
• Requires schools to permit students to participate in sex-segregated programs, activities and facilities consistent with their gender identity regardless of the gender listed in their school records.

AB 1172
Conversion Therapy
• Prohibits licensed therapists in CA from administering conversion therapy to any person under the age of 18
• #BornPerfect -- campaign to end conversion therapy

LGBT Competency Training
AB 1856 and 868
• Cultural competency and sensitivity relating to, and best practices for, providing adequate care to LGBT youth in training of:
  – Group home administrators
  – Foster parents and relative caregivers
  – Family law judges and bench officers
  – Dependency court judges and bench officers
  – Dependency attorneys for children
  – CASAs
Core Objectives

• Safety
• Permanency
• Well-being

Ensuring the Safety of LGBTQ Youth in Care
• What makes someone feel safe?
• What are some safety concerns for LGBTQ youth in care?
• What can child welfare practitioners do to ensure the safety of LGBTQ youth in care?

Street Child by Justin Reed Early
San Diego Study
Child Welfare Journal Article
National Alliance to End Homelessness Best Practice Guide
Digital Stories:

• George

• Darryn

Ensuring Permanency for LGBTQ Youth in Care

• What do we mean by “permanency?”
• What role can child welfare practitioners play in ensuring permanency for LGBTQ youth?

Family Acceptance Project
Family Acceptance Project: Optimism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Acceptance</th>
<th>See a Future as a Happy LGBT Adult</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Extremely Accepting</td>
<td>92%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family Very Accepting</td>
<td>77%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family A Little Accepting</td>
<td>59%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family Not at All Accepting</td>
<td>35%</td>
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Lifetime Suicide Attempts

- Low Rejecting Family
- Moderately Rejecting Family
- Severely Rejecting Family

(Family Acceptance Project 2009)

**Behaviors that help**
- Talk with your child about their SO/GI
- Advocate for your child when he or she is mistreated
- Express affection when you learn your child is LGBT
- Require that family members respect your child

**Behaviors to avoid**
- Pressuring your child to be more of less feminine or masculine
- Telling your child that God will punish them
- Blaming your child when they are mistreated
- Making your child keep their LGBT identity a secret
Foster Parent Survey

1. Would you be willing to care for an LGBTQ youth?
2. Have you ever attended a training about LGBTQ youth in out-of-home care?
3. If yes, do you feel as though you have sufficient information to be able to provide a safe and stable home for LGBTQ youth?
4. Would you be willing to attend training (or additional training) on the needs of LGBTQ youth?
5. Are you currently aware of, or connected to, supportive services for LGBTQ Youth?
6. What types of support do you think you would need in order to care for LGBTQ youth?

Permanency

• Engage families to increase acceptance
• Decrease reliance on group care
• Work with youth to identify permanent connections
• Increase and diversify LGBT affirming placements
• Train and support caregivers

Always My Son
### Ensuring Well-being of LGBTQ Youth

**Home, School & Community**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Risk Factors</th>
<th>Protective Factors</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• School-based victimization increases risk</td>
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<td>– Truancy</td>
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<td>– School failure</td>
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<td>– Depression</td>
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<td>– Low self esteem</td>
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<td>– Lack of positive peer connections</td>
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<td>• Safe and affirming schools increase well-being</td>
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<tr>
<td>– School engagement</td>
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<td>– Academic success</td>
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<td>– Positive peer relations</td>
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<td>– Hope for the future</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Risk Factors</th>
<th>Protective Factors</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Isolation</td>
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<td>• Rejecting faith community</td>
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<td>• Biased politicians and laws</td>
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<td>• Anti-LGBT violence or harassment</td>
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<td>• Lack of LGBT affirming space</td>
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<td>• Lack of local role models</td>
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<td>• Anti-discrimination laws and policies</td>
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<td>• Openly LGBT community leaders</td>
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<td>• Affirming congregations</td>
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<td>• LGBT Community Center</td>
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<td>• Pride events</td>
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<td>• Public protest against anti-LGBT incidents</td>
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“When you learn to love yourself you will dissolve all the stones that are cast.”

~Indigo Girls

TYLER/BERDIE

Q & A

WRAP-UP