

TORONTO, ONTARIO  
AUGUST 6-9, 2015

AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

2015 ANNUAL  
CONVENTION

# ***Symposium: Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity in Youth---The Role of Parents and Schools***

**Cochairs:**

Clinton W. Anderson, PhD and Lacey L. Rosenbaum, MEd

**August 9, 2015  
11:00AM - 12:50PM**

# Overview

- **Dr. Caitlin Ryan:** *Helping Diverse Families to Support Their LGBT Children: Strategies and Approaches for Psychologists*
- **Dr. Karla Anhalt:** *Safe, Welcoming, and Inclusive Schools for Transgender, Intersex, and Gender Diverse Students*
- **Dr. Kristen Varjas:** *Sexual Orientation Diversity in Youth: The Role of Schools*
- **Lacey Rosenbaum:** *APA's Safe and Supportive Schools Project: Engaging Psychologists, Schools, and Parents*
- **Dr. Lauren Fasig Caldwell:** Comments and Questions



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# **Helping Diverse Families to Support their LGBT Children: Approaches and Resources for Psychologists**

Caitlin Ryan, PhD, ACSW  
Family Acceptance Project  
San Francisco State University

# Overview

- Historical context - lack of parent / family engagement & increased need for family support
- *Family Acceptance Project* – research, education, intervention & policy initiative – developed to fill key gap
- Paradigm shift – from family exclusion to engagement in prevention, programs, services and care
- Core principles in working with parents and families
- Consultation, training, identifying opportunities for educating staff and students about family support and increasing family engagement
- Resources and approaches for educating and increasing parent and family support

# Major Issues Affecting Services & Care for LGBT Youth

- Historical lack of research on LGBT youth and families (focus on experiences of youth)
- Long-standing perception of families of LGBT youth as an “adversary”
  - LGBT youth served either as individuals or through peer support
  - Resistance to parent / family engagement among providers, in general, and in schools
  - Avoidance of parent-related systems (e.g., PTAs, PTOs, parent community groups)
- Concurrent shift to adolescent-centered services & care
- Impact of widespread access to information and influence of social media
  - Increase in coming out in younger adolescence (and childhood)
  - Greater need for family & caregiver support

# ***Family Acceptance Project***

**Building healthy futures** for LGBT children and youth through:



## **RESEARCH**

on family acceptance and rejection

## **EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

to decrease risk and promote well-being  
by increasing family acceptance

## **FAMILY-ORIENTED SERVICES**

to help diverse families support their  
LGBT children

## **INFORMED PUBLIC POLICY**

to promote well-being – not just protect  
from harm



# ***Family Acceptance Project***

## **Goals**

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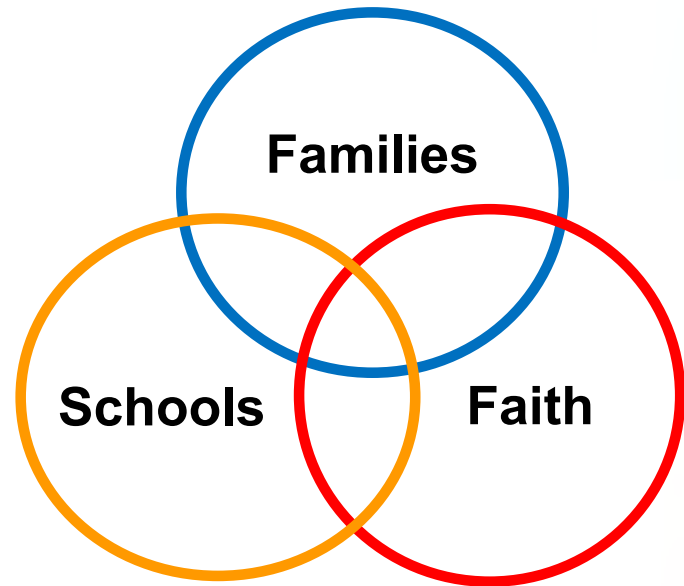
- Strengthen and help ethnically and religiously diverse families to support their LGBT children
- Prevent / decrease risk & promote well-being for LGBT children and youth through family support
- Help families maintain LGBT children in their homes
- Reconnect families and promote permanency

# Primary Institutions that Socialize & Support Children & Youth

## FAP Research & Interventions

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- Families
- Schools
- Faith Communities





# Developing Family Support Model

## Participatory Process

- ***Qualitative Study*** – LGBT Youth & Families  
100+ family accepting & rejecting behaviors
- ***Quantitative Study*** – LGBT Young Adults
- ***Family Briefing Sessions*** – Ethnically Diverse Families with LGBT Children; Youth & Young Adults; Providers & Clergy
- ***Family Interventions*** – Ethnically Diverse Families with LGBT, questioning & gender diverse children

# Examples: Rejecting Family Reactions

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- Call youth derogatory names related to their sexual orientation, gender expression or identity
- Don't believe that youth is LGBT ("just a phase")
- Restrict access to LGBT positive information, including peers and community resources
- Tell LGBT youth that the way they look, act or behave is shameful to the family
- Use religion to condemn youth's LGBT identity
- Don't talk about youth's LGBT identity
- Try to change sexual orientation / gender expression

# Examples: Accepting Family Reactions

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- Express affection and caring for LGBT youth
- Talk with youth and listen respectfully to understand LGBT identity and experiences
- Support gender expression
- Require that other family members treat LGBT youth with respect
- Advocate for youth when they are mistreated because of LGBT identity in homes, schools, congregations & communities
- Find positive role models to provide options for the future
- Believe that LGBT youth can have a happy future
- Help congregations to support and welcome LGBT members and families
- Welcome youth's LGBT friends & partners to family events & activities

# Key Findings

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- *Family rejecting behaviors* are linked with health & mental health problems for LGBT youth
- *Family accepting behaviors* are protective and help promote well-being for LGBT youth

# **FAP Family Intervention Strategies**

**Community Engagement**

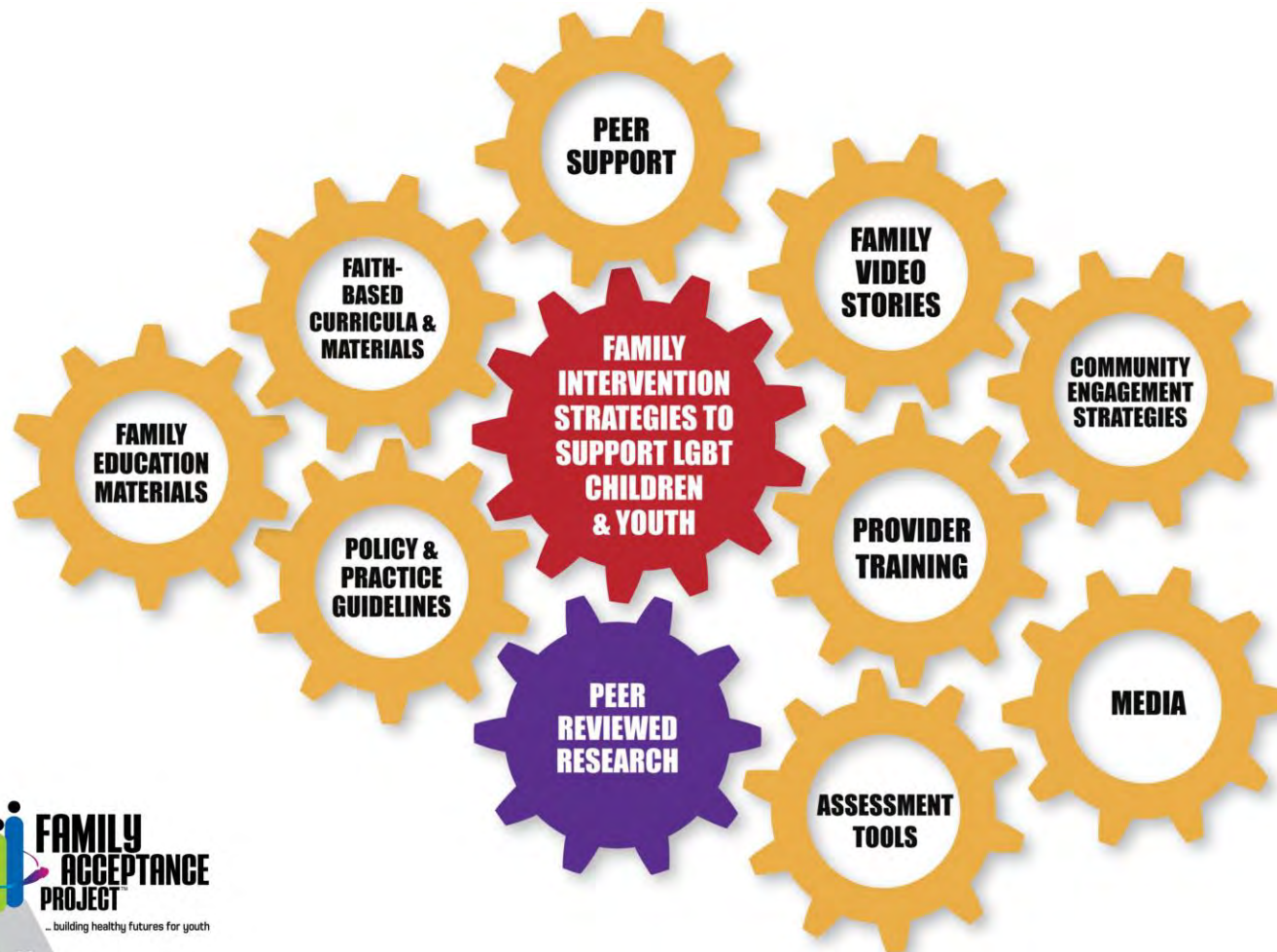
**Family Education**

**Skill Building &  
Counseling**

**Culturally Relevant  
Peer Support**

# FAP Intervention Components

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# Parent and Provider Education Materials



## Supportive Families, Healthy Children

Helping Families with Lesbian, Gay,  
Bisexual & Transgender Children



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## “我們必須從 家人開始。”

認識到，如果同志孩子不被接受，不被疼愛，成長的過程會很困難，會變成對身體健康有害。不過，如果我們公開的談論，家長能開始接受和支持他們的同志子女，不是排斥他們。就會有更多的同志孩子能夠在家裡茁壯成長，我們的家庭從而變得更加堅強。”

以下的故事來自一位有同志女兒的母親



## Niños saludables con el apoyo familiar

Ayuda para familias con hijos e hijas lesbianas,  
gays, bisexuales y transgénero



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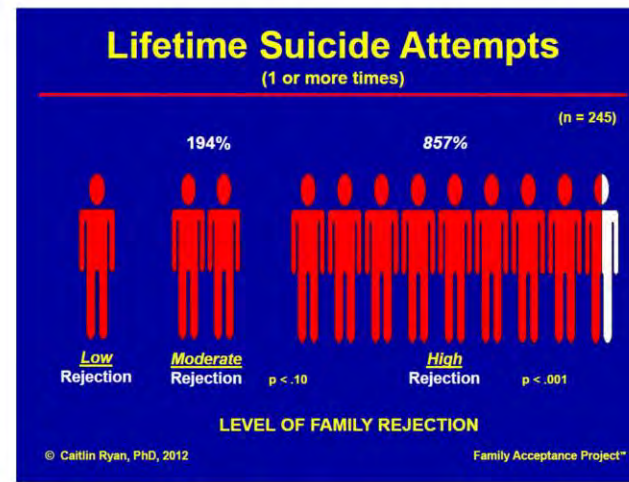
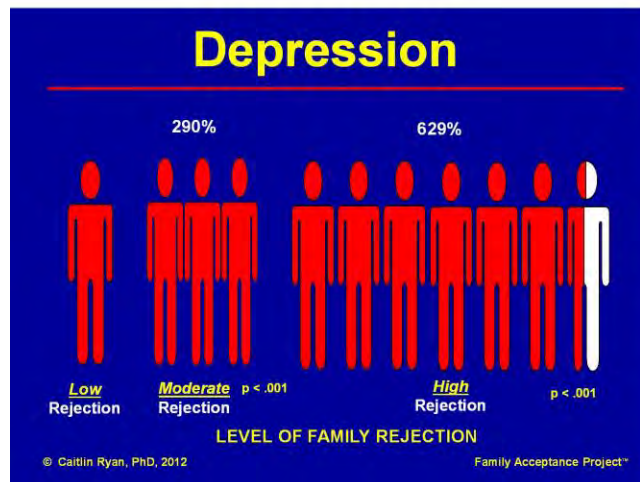
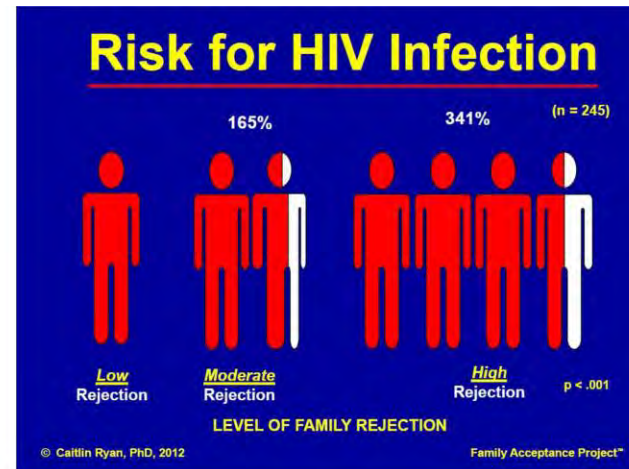
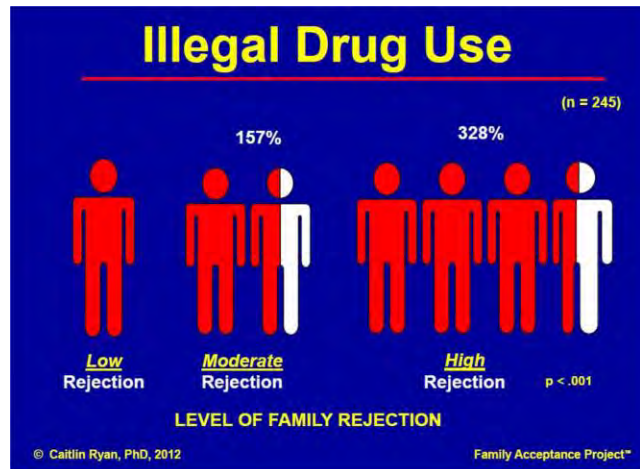
**Family Education Booklet Series** - Download & print copies

Lower literacy levels and versions for families from specific faith traditions in development.

<http://familyproject.sfsu.edu/publications>



# Examples of Risk-Related Images to Motivate Families to Reduce High Levels of Family Rejection (included in Family Education Materials)



# FAP Family Video Series

*Series of short research-based documentary films that show the journey of diverse families from struggle to support of their LGBT children*

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**For family intervention, training & public education**



## **AIMS**

- Give LGBT youth & families hope
- Show family accepting & rejecting behaviors
- Show the process of family transformation & growth
- Humanize LGBT young people & their families

<http://www.familyacceptanceproject.org/>



# FAPrisk Screener

## Provider's Guide for Using the FAPrisk Screener

For Family Rejection & Related Health Risks in LGBT Youth

Family Acceptance Project™  
San Francisco State University



### Provider Toolbox for Assessing Risk for Family Rejection & Related Health Risks in LGBT Youth

Family Acceptance Project™

The resources in this toolbox were developed by the research and clinical team from the Family Acceptance Project™ (FAP) — a research, intervention, education and policy initiative that is using research and evidence-informed practice to promote healthy futures for ethnically diverse lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) youth in the context of their families. We developed these resources with guidance, direction and advice from many health, mental health and social service providers and from LGBT adolescents, young adults and families.

This toolbox contains research-generated assessment and family education materials to enable health, mental health and social service providers to identify LGBT youth in need of immediate support with guidelines for assessment, referral and follow up care.

#### Contents

- **FAPrisk Screener for Family Rejection & Related Health Risks in LGBT Youth** — a research-generated screening instrument based on findings from Family Acceptance Project™ studies that have identified and assessed family and caregiver behaviors that are highly predictive of negative health and mental health outcomes for LGBT young people. These include depression, suicide attempts, problems related to substance use and prior diagnosis with a sexually transmitted disease (or STD).
- **Provider's Guide for Using the FAPrisk Screener** — guidelines for using the FAPrisk Screener in a wide range of care-related settings. This includes direction for administering and scoring the screener, discussing findings with youth, engaging the family and related follow up and accessing additional resources and materials.
- **FAP Family Education Booklets** — family education materials to help providers educate and inform parents, foster parents and caregivers on the importance of decreasing rejecting behaviors and increasing supportive behaviors identified in FAP research that either promote or protect against risk for LGBT young people. These materials were developed with extensive input from ethnically diverse families with LGBT children and from providers and LGBT youth.

To provide feedback and for additional information on these resources, contact us at: [fap@sfu.edu](mailto:fap@sfu.edu)

Family Acceptance Project™  
San Francisco State University  
<http://familyproject.sfsu.edu>



### Scoring & Follow Up Care

Young people with scores of 3 or more should be considered to be experiencing high levels of family rejection. Our research has shown that the family behaviors indicated in the screener are highly predictive for depression, substance problems with substance use and being diagnosed with an STD. Use appropriate screeners to assess mental health and mental health risk and consult our guidelines for family follow up related to the youth's screening, as needed.

Intervention — particularly from health and mental health professionals — is critical in helping decrease rejection. The screener and other resources provide an important intervention resource to intervene on how to support their LGBT children and to help prevent negative health outcomes related to family behaviors. These resources are predictive of negative health outcomes — further below report on health outcomes in LGBT young adults ages 21-25, who experienced these family behaviors during adolescence.

For comments on using this screening tool.

Scores & Risk Indicators		
Depression CIDI-P 14 or KID-RADS	Illegal Drug Use (Past & Pres.)	STD Diagnosis (Ever)
p < .001	p < .01	p < .01
17%	46%	25%
4%	51%	20%
46%	20%	33%
78%	46%	46%

Screening tool to quickly identify LGBT youth who are experiencing family rejection & related health risks to provide immediate intervention & care

# FAP Underlying Principles

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- Meet families where they are
- Approach parents and families as allies and assume that parents want the best for their LGBT children
- Use a strengths framework to align FAP findings and family support approach with the family's values (including cultural and religious values)
- Support the need for families to be heard and understood
- Recognize that families seen as rejecting are motivated by care and concern to help their children “fit in,” have a “good life,” etc.
- Link family reactions to child's health and well-being – based on FAP's research
- Use harm reduction approach for families that are struggling
- Shift the discourse from *morality* to child's health & well-being
- Understand that family's lack of knowledge about sexual orientation and gender identity is disempowering
- Focus on helping families to *support* their LGBT children even if they believe that being LGBT is wrong

# Approach for Struggling Families

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- Help parents & families to reframe caring for an LGBT child
- Uncouple *acceptance* from *support*
  - *Supporting* your LGBT child and changing rejecting behaviors that increase risk does not have to mean “accepting” an identity or behavior you believe is wrong
  - Emphasis on *support* helps families that are struggling to decrease conflict and change rejecting behaviors that increase risk
  - Families can *support* their LGBT child to reduce risk without choosing between their LGBT child & their faith
- Focus on increasing empathy for LGBT child through family education, skill building, counselling & culturally relevant peer support



# Family Advocacy

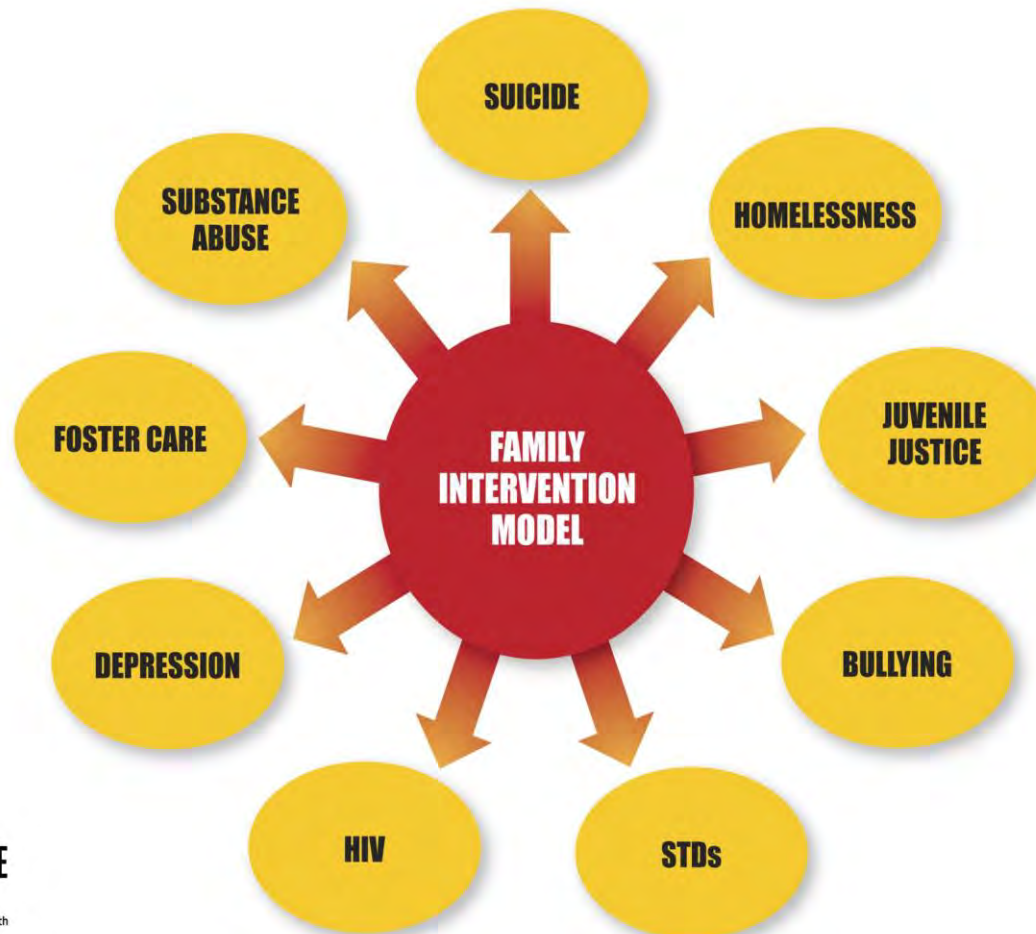
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Parental, family and caregiver advocacy –  
in schools, families, congregations &  
communities –  
is a key protective factor for LGBT youth

*Families can support their LGBT child without  
accepting an identity or “behavior” they think is wrong*

*Family Acceptance Project*  
**MULTI-OUTCOME IMPACT**

**Family Intervention Approach Can Help Address Multiple Negative Health & Social Outcomes for LGBT Children & Youth**



# **Immediate Application to Help Increase Parent Engagement & Student Support**

## **Educate & Change Perceptions of Parents & Families Among School Providers, Staff and Students**

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- Educate teachers, school providers and administrators on the critical role of family support, accepting / rejecting behaviors and family support resources
- Assess how school personnel and GSA / school club advisors talk about parents / caregivers with LGBT children and reframe negative perceptions
- Start parent / family booster clubs for GSAs and diversity clubs
- Invite diverse younger, accepting parents / families / caregivers of LGBT students to participate in school activities, panel presentations, class discussions, back-to-school events and health fairs
- Host parent education events – use FAP family education videos, educational materials, and framing and to educate, empower & mobilize parents and families

# **Increase Parent / Student Connectedness & Support for LGBTQ Students**

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- Provide access to FAP family education materials for parents, families and caregivers
- Use harm reduction framework with families that are struggling with having an LGBT child – does not have to be “all or nothing,” etc.
- Create a “lending library” in tandem with school clubs and school counselors, etc. to make family education and discussion materials available to parents and families for home discussion and use. Link with school provider staff for follow up, counseling, referrals, access to support, etc.
- Use family education videos as resources for student discussion - provides opportunity to reframe perceptions of parents and families, helps identify LGBTQ students who are experiencing family rejection & related health risks and increases awareness of critical role of families
- As a follow up - help us find other diverse families for family video series


## References & Resources

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## References & Resources

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**Caitlin Ryan, PhD, ACSW**

Director, Family Acceptance Project

E-mail: [fap@sfsu.edu](mailto:fap@sfsu.edu) <http://familyproject.sfsu.edu>



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# **Creating Safe, Welcoming, and Inclusive Schools for Transgender, Intersex, and Gender Diverse Students**

Karla Anhalt, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor of School Psychology  
Kent State University

# Presentation Overview

- Terminology
- Why these students?
- APA and NASP Resolution items
- Advocacy and support recommendations
- Student rights and model district policy
- Intersex/DSD considerations
- Conclusion

# Terminology

(APA, 2012; Meier & Labuski, 2013; NASP, 2014)

- Sex – Assigned at birth and typically categorized as male or female based on physical attributes (e.g., external and internal anatomy).
- Intersex/DSD – Intersex or Differences/Disorders of Sex Development (DSD) is an umbrella term covering a wide variety of conditions in which sex traits (chromosomes, genitals, and/or reproductive organs) do not fit typical definitions of male or female sex development. Families may be aware of intersex/DSD conditions at birth or later in child's development ([accordalliance.org](http://accordalliance.org); [oii-usa.org](http://oii-usa.org))
- Gender: Socially/culturally constructed roles, behaviors, interests that a given culture considers appropriate for boys/men and girls/women.
- Gender expression. The many ways that individuals choose to communicate gender to oneself or others. This can be through behaviors, clothing, physical appearance, etc.
- Gender identity. The person's *internal* sense of gender. Identities include male, female, genderqueer, transgender, and others.

## Terminology (continued)

(APA, 2012; Meier & Labuski, 2013; NASP, 2014)

- Cisgender. Individuals whose gender identity aligns with their body and sex assigned at birth
- Transgender. An umbrella term that includes individuals whose gender identity does not match sex assigned at birth. It includes persons assigned female at birth who wish to live as men (transgender men) and those assigned male at birth who wish to live as women (transgender women). Others may not want body modifications to express their asserted gender. This term also includes persons who do not feel they fit into the traditional gender binary (e.g., genderqueer).
- Gender diverse – Individuals whose gender identity, role, or expression may differ from what expected for that individual's natal sex. This includes people who identify outside the prescribed gender binary. This term is preferred over the potentially stigmatizing terms 'gender nonconforming' or 'gender variant'. Other terms that can have similar meanings are gender creative and gender expansive.

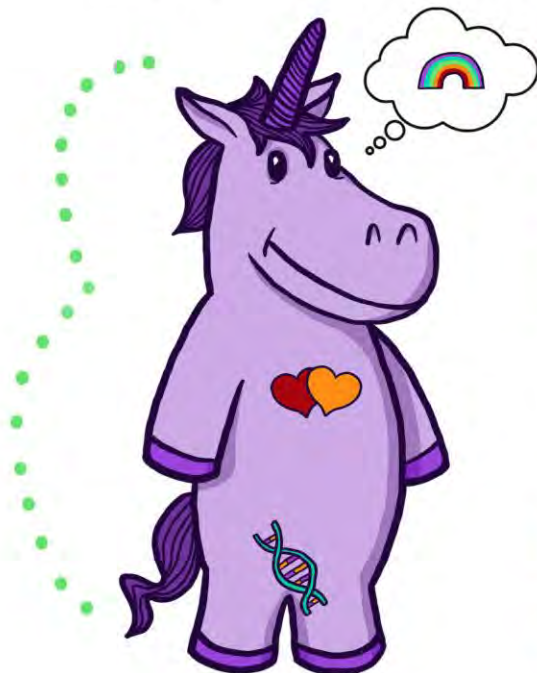


# Visual Representation of Terminology

(Retrieved from <http://transstudent.org/gender>)

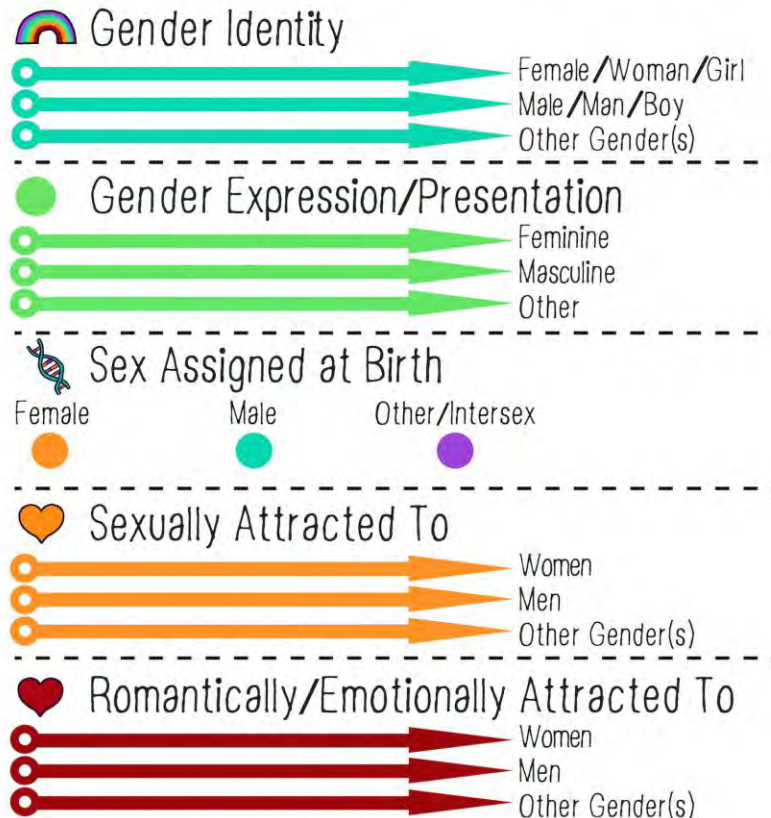
## The Gender Unicorn

Graphic by:  
**TSER**  
Trans Student Educational Resources



To learn more, go to:  
[www.transstudent.org/gender](http://www.transstudent.org/gender)

Design by Landyn Pan



# Why these students?

- Victimization, harassment, and discrimination by peers and school personnel
- Increased mental health concerns
- Poorer educational outcomes
- Hostile school environment; fear and isolation
- Limited intervention from school staff

(Greytak, Kosciw, & Diaz, 2009; Grossman et al., 2009; McGuire, Anderson, Toomey, & Russell, 2010)

<http://transgenderlawcenter.org/programs/truth>

# **APA and NASP Resolution items**

(APA & NASP, 2014)

APA and NASP Resolution highlights for transgender, gender diverse, and intersex students

- Promote safe and positive school environments free of bullying and harassment
- Allow access to activities and facilities consistent with gender identity
- Respect right to privacy and decisions of students and families
- Support affirming interventions, exploration and acceptance of gender identity and expression
- Promote cross-agency collaboration

# Advocacy and Support Recommendations

- Comprehensive anti-bullying policies
- Access to spaces and activities consistent with gender identity; availability of safe and non-stigmatizing alternatives
- Advocate for privacy and confidentiality
- Support family and student decisions regarding identity, expression, and social and physical transition
- Consider intersectional aspects of identity
- Outside agencies and providers as partners and resources

(APA & NASP, 2014)

# GLSEN and NCTE Model District Policy

Additional recommendations from policy:

- School district should not require proof of medical treatment to respect a student's asserted gender identity
- Students have right to be addressed by names and pronouns of their choosing
- Student's gender identity and preferred name should be respected regardless of issued state and federal documents
- If dress codes exist, allow students to dress consistent with gender identity

GLSEN & NCTE, 2014

# The Impact of Anti-Bullying Policies

- A recent GLSEN report on anti-bullying policies in U.S. school districts found that 70.5% of districts have such policies
- Only a minority of those districts (i.e., 14.1%) enumerated protections based on gender identity and/or gender expression
- LGBT students who were in schools that included protections based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or gender expression reported a more positive school climate and better school experiences.
- These students reported lower rates of victimization and harassment, more effective and supportive staff, and greater feelings of safety and belongingness in schools

(Kull, Kosciw, & Greytak, 2015)



# Student rights protected by federal law

Guidance from NCTE:

- Title IX has been interpreted as including transgender and gender diverse students
- Unlawful to bully, harass, and discriminate on the basis of gender identity
- Students have right to equal access to all educational activities, including athletic and extra-curricular opportunities and school events. Exclusion based on gender expression or gender identity violates rights.
- Right to wear clothing and present oneself in a way consistent with gender identity
- Right to privacy: Transgender status and any transition information should be treated as confidential and not disclosed without consent.

NCTE, 2014



# Additional considerations for students with intersex/DSD conditions

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cAUDKEI4QKI>  
What it's like to be intersex? From Inter/Act youth/BuzzFeed
- History of silence, stigma, and shame regarding physical appearance and medical procedures imposed on individuals with intersex/DSD conditions
- Students and families may or may not disclose information about condition to school staff. Allow students to self-label regarding this aspect of their identity
- Individuals with some DSD conditions may have associated medical needs. Collaboration and communication with families and health care providers is necessary to facilitate the best supports in school settings
- Access to a private/gender neutral restroom and other spaces (e.g., locker rooms) as needed or requested

(APA & NASP, 2014; Malouf & Baratz, 2012)

# CONCLUSION

- Transgender, intersex, and gender diverse students have many needs in school settings that are often ignored or inappropriately handled
- The recently adopted 'Resolution on gender and sexual orientation diversity in children and adolescents in schools' (APA & NASP, 2014) affirms that school-based professionals are in an ideal position to:
  - Advocate for system-wide protections for these students
  - Facilitate cross-agency and family collaborations
  - Support decisions of children, adolescents, and families regarding a student's gender identity or expression and respect the right to privacy
  - Ensure access to sex-segregated facilities, activities, and programs that are consistent with a student's gender identity
  - Provide resources and educate school staff, students, families, and community members about the full range of sex development, gender expression, gender identity, and sexual orientation

# RESOURCES


- Gender Spectrum - <https://www.genderspectrum.org/>
- TransYouth Family Allies - <http://www.imatyfa.org/>
- GLSEN - <http://www.glsen.org/>
- Welcoming Schools - <http://welcomingschools.com/>
- Resources specific to individuals with intersex/DSD conditions:
  - AIS-DSD Support group: <http://aisdsd.org/>
  - Inter/Act - <http://interactyouth.org/>
  - Advocates for Informed Choice – <http://aiclegal.org/>
  - Accord Alliance: <http://www.accordalliance.org/>
  - OII-USA - <http://oii-usa.org/>

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**Karla Anhalt, Ph.D.**

Associate Professor, Kent State University

E-mail: [kanhalt@kent.edu](mailto:kanhalt@kent.edu) Phone: 330-672-0582





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# Sexual Orientation Diversity in Youth: The Role of Schools

Kris Varjas, Psy.D.

Professor of School Psychology

The Center for Research on School Safety,  
School Climate and Classroom Management  
Georgia State University



# Learning Objectives:

Participants will:

- understand APA and NASP's joint resolution
- describe the role of the school psychologists in consultation, counseling, and policy;
- examine and advocate for model policies; and
- become resource informed.

# APA and NASP Joint Resolution (2014)

- K-12 schools should be places of safety and support for all students through the...
  - Promotion of safe and supportive school policies and legislation
  - Development of anti-bullying efforts that promote academic success and resiliency
  - Development of programs to increase school engagement
  - Promotion of cross-agency collaboration
  - Protection of the right to privacy surrounding identity
  - Collection of inclusive data ensuring student anonymity
  - Funding of research in these areas
  - Increases access to facilities and programs based on gender identity, not assigned gender

# Ecological Systems

- Child/Youth
- Family
- Peers
- **Schools\*\***
- Community
- Society

# Role of Schools

- Educate all youth (norms, values, beliefs, attitudes, expectations, behaviors)
- Create safe and supportive environments
- Provide equal access to curriculum, health and mental health services and extracurricular activities

# School Issues

- Homophobia, Transphobia
- Bullying/Cyberbullying, biased remarks
- Harassment
- Intimate Partner Violence
- School Safety

# Negative Health and Mental Health Outcomes

- Absenteeism
- Academic, social-emotional, and behavioral challenges due to victimization
- Mental health issues
- Substance use/abuse and other risky behaviors



# **Data-based Decision Making: Youth Risk Behavior Survey (CDC, 2015)**

- Existence of gay-straight alliances (GSAs) or similar student organizations in schools
- Identification of safe spaces for LGBTQ youth
- Prohibition of harassment and bullying
- Provision of health and mental health services to LGBTQ youth

# **Data-based Decision Making: Youth Risk Behavior Survey (CDC, 2015)**

- Professional development and training for school staff about the needs of LGBTQ youth
- Inclusion of LGBTQ-related topics in sex education curricula
- Classroom teaching about sexual orientation
- Referrals to health and mental health service providers experienced in serving LGBTQ youth

# Organizational Consultation & Policies

- Does your school district have a policy that protects and supports transgender and gender diverse youth?
- Have you discussed school policies with your principals?

# **Portland Public Schools Legal Memo Supporting Transgender Students**

- Definitions/choice versus expression
- Pronouns
- Registration/enrollment forms & transitions
- Confidentiality
- Bathrooms/locker rooms/sports teams
- Dress codes/overnight field trips
- Curricula
- Resources and community supports

# Organizational Consultation & Curriculum

- Health
- Literature
- History
- Psychology
- Child Development

# Empirically-Supported Interventions for LGBTQ Students

- Limited research on interventions with LGBTQ students
- CBT is an empirically-based intervention with various school-aged populations



# **Affirmative and Culturally Competent Counseling**

- Legal and ethical issues working with minors
- Legal and ethical issues working with LGBTQ children and youth
- Health care/insurance
- Presenting problem
- Visibility management
- Community Resources

# **Affirmative and Culturally Competent Counseling**

- Child development
- Sexual Identity Development
- Gender Identity Development
- Adolescence
- Coming Out
- Stigma
- Homophobia, Transphobia,

# Advocacy

- Being in tune to the needs of LGBTQ students and staff
- Responding to all forms of harassment
- Providing counseling, and tending to social–emotional needs
- Keeping a transgender student's status or history confidential and in the student's control at all times
- Acquiring and providing information on community agencies that provide services and supports

# Advocacy

- Employing best practices for integrating LGBTQ students in school
- Advocating for the civil rights of all students
- Fostering a climate of acceptance and security for all, including LGBTQ staff and parents
- Creating gender-neutral spaces, minimizing bias, and avoiding gender stereotypes
- Providing staff training as needed regarding transgender and gender-diverse student issues
- Supporting GSAs in middle and high schools for students

# NASP Position Statements

## Safe Schools for Transgender and Gender Diverse Students (2014)


“NASP supports efforts to ensure that schools are safe and inclusive learning environments for all students, family members, and school staff, including those who are transgender or gender diverse. NASP respects a person’s right to express gender identity, and the right to modify gender expression when necessary for individual well-being. In addition, NASP supports all students’ right to explore and question their gender identity....NASP acknowledges that having a transgender identity or being perceived as gender diverse are not disorders, and that efforts to change a person’s gender identity are ineffective, harmful, and discriminatory. NASP works to ensure that settings in which school psychologists work are safe and welcoming and provide equal opportunity to all persons regardless of actual or perceived characteristics, including gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, and any other personal identity or distinguishing characteristics.”

# NASP Position Statements

## Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning Youth (2011)

“NASP believes that school psychologists are ethically obligated to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity for the development and expression of their personal identity in a school climate that is safe, accepting, and respectful of all persons and free from discrimination, harassment, violence, and abuse. To achieve this goal, education and advocacy must be used to reduce discrimination and harassment against LGBTQ youth by students and staff and promote positive social-emotional and educational development.”





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**Kris Varjas, Psy.D.**

Professor, Georgia State University

E-mail: [kvarjas@gsu.edu](mailto:kvarjas@gsu.edu)

Twitter: @kvarjas  
@gsuschoolsafety



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# **APA's Safe and Supportive Schools Project: Engaging Psychologists, Schools, and Parents**

**Lacey Rosenbaum, M.Ed  
American Psychological Association**

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# Overview

- Overview of APA's Safe and Supportive Schools Project (SSSP)
- Three key activities:
  - Training school professionals to create inclusive environments for LGBT students
  - Promoting parent engagement in schools
  - Disseminating resources to support work with schools, parents, and LGBT students
- Ways to get involved in the SSSP

# APA's Safe and Supportive Schools Project (SSSP)

- Funded by a 5 Year Cooperative Agreement with CDC/DASH
- **Purpose:** Provide capacity building services to 19 State Education Agencies (SEA) to increase their capacity to support their priority districts with establishing Safe and Supportive School Environments (SSE) for all students and staff as an approach to HIV/ STD prevention among adolescents.

# CDC/DASH Funded State Education Agencies



# CDC/DASH

**APA**

1.) Establishing **safe and supportive environments (SSE)** for students and staff



2.) Delivering **exemplary sexual health education (ESHE)** emphasizing HIV and other STD prevention



**Advocates  
for Youth**

**National  
Coalition of  
STD Directors  
(NCSD)**

3.) Increasing adolescent access to key **sexual health services (SHS)**



**19 State Education Agencies**

**15 Priority  
School  
Districts Each**

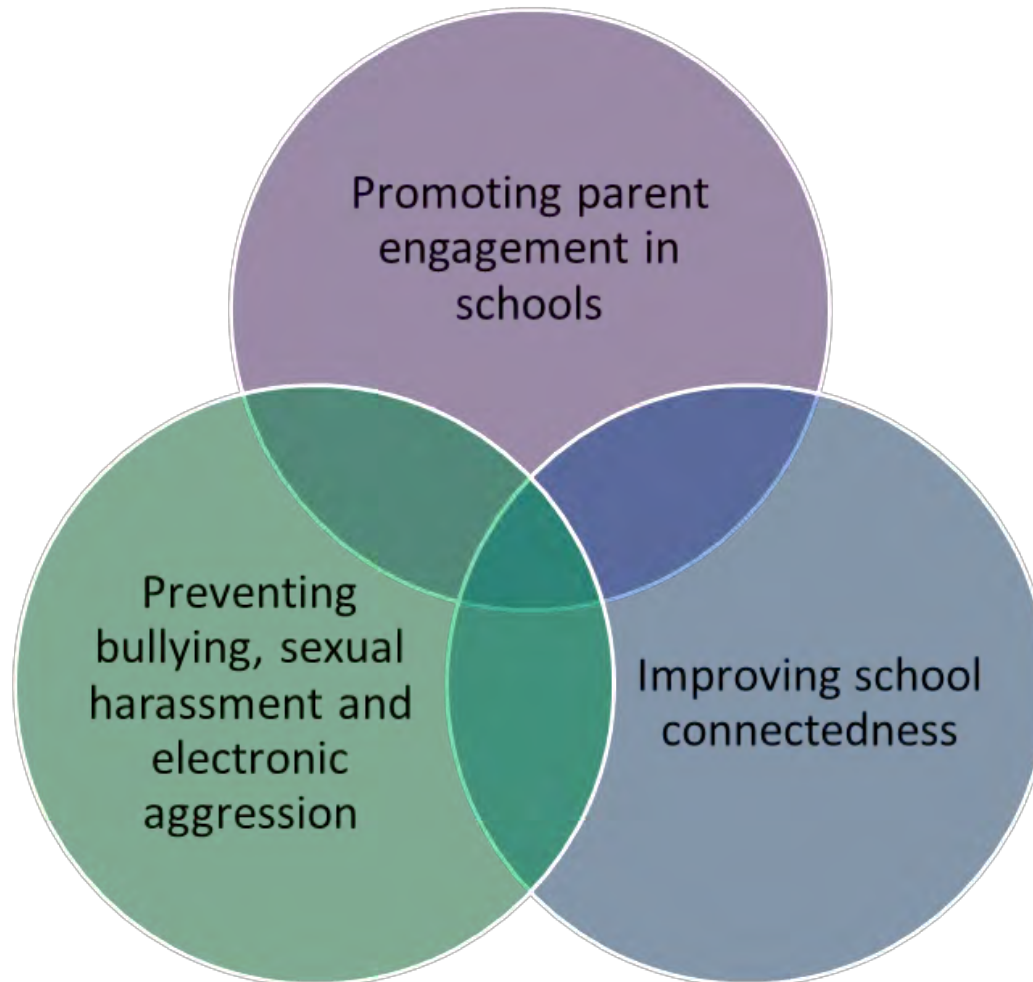
**Total: 285 School Districts**



# APA's Safe and Supportive Schools Project (SSSP)

- Addressing Safe and Supportive School Environments:
  - For all middle and high school students and staff
  - For youth at disproportionate risk (YDR): lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth, with an emphasis on young men who have sex with men; homeless youth; and youth enrolled in alternative schools
- 9 states have selected LGBT youth as the group of youth they want to target for the reduction of health disparities.

# Safe and Supportive Environments Approach



# SSSP Partners

- Promote the leadership of school-based counselors, nurses, psychologists and social workers in establishing safe and supportive schools environments for all students and staff.
- Partner with the following associations:
  - ❖ American Counseling Association
  - ❖ American School Counselor Association
  - ❖ National Association of School Nurses
  - ❖ National Association of School Psychologists
  - ❖ School Social Work Association of America

# Professional Development for School Professionals

***APA's Respect Workshop: Preventing health risks and promoting healthy outcomes among lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning students.***

- Teaches school professionals about individual and school-level evidence-based practices they can use to decrease risk behaviors and promote healthy outcomes among LGBTQ youth.
- In-person training
- Online version of the course





# RESPECT Workshop: Participant Survey Findings

2014-15 school year

101 participants

4 State Education Agencies

*Delaware \* District of Columbia \*  
Minnesota \* Rhode Island*



# Participant Pre-Post Survey Findings

Following the RESPECT workshop, participants were statistically ( $p < .05$ ) **more likely to:**

1. Motivate students to consistently practice effective methods to prevent HIV and other sexually transmitted infections
2. Motivate sexually active students to seek testing for HIV and other STIs.
3. Refer LGBTQ students and their families to appropriate resources and community services.





# Participant Follow-Up Survey Findings

3-6 months following the RESPECT Workshops, participants described their continued progress and action steps related to the workshop goals as follows:

*“Our school is beginning to formulate a Respect Week to celebrate diversity of all students.”*

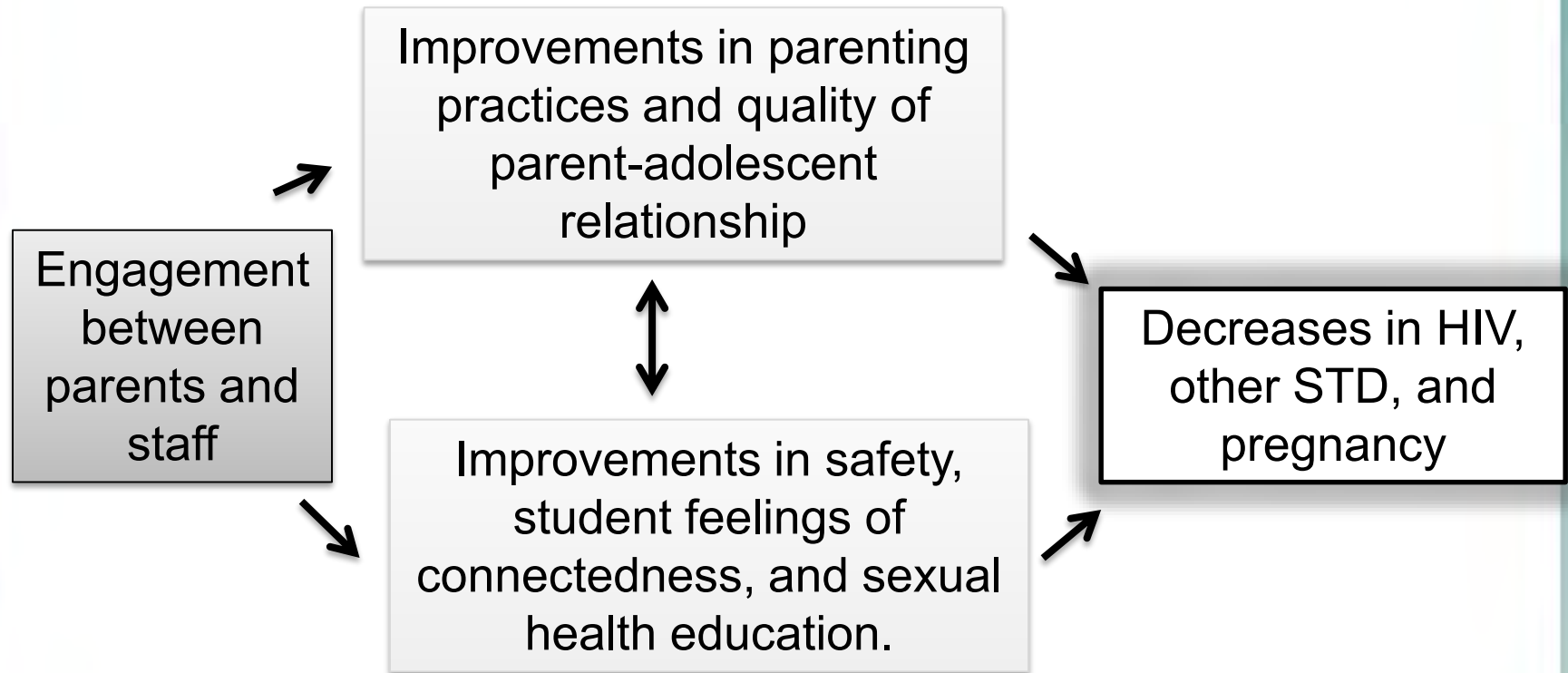
*“Began work at the school level to increase the number and kind of LGBT resources we have available.”*

*“A PD [professional development] seminar for elementary and middle school PE teachers.”*

*“Started a Gay Straight Alliance [GSA] club at our school”*

# Parent Engagement In Schools

Address parental and community-level factors that influence adolescent sexual and reproductive health so as to improve the health and well-being of young people.



# Parent Engagement In Schools

1. Partnering with Johns Hopkins University's National Network for Partnership Schools and Dr. Joyce Epstein to help schools establish school-family-community partnerships programs that are linked to health outcomes for all students.
2. Partnering with the Family Acceptance Project and Dr. Caitlin Ryan to help schools use an evidence-based family model of wellness, prevention and care to strengthen families and promote positive development and healthy futures for LGBT youth.

# **Dissemination of APA and NASP Resolution on Gender and Sexual Orientation Diversity in Children and Adolescents in Schools**

## **Key Recommendations:**

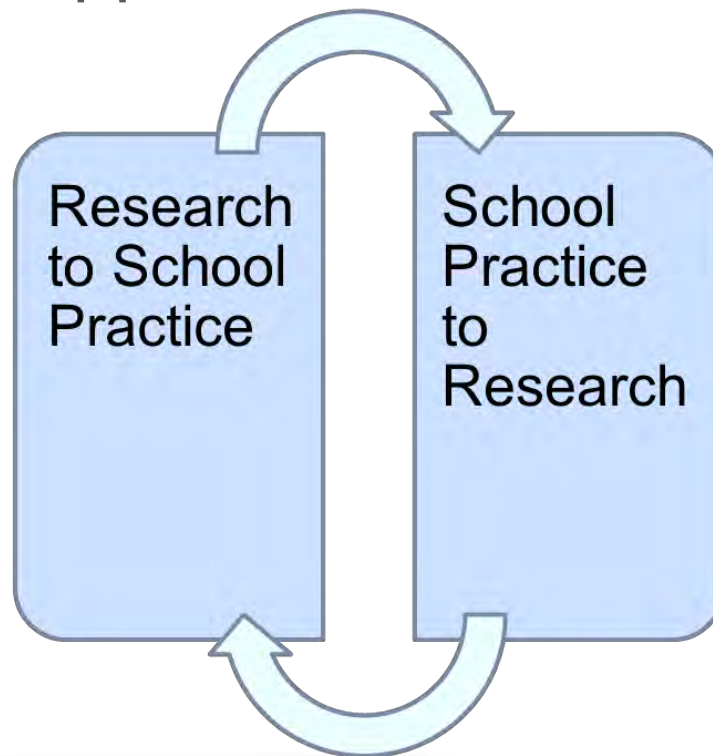
1. Promoting safe and supportive school policies for all children and youth;
2. Protecting the right to privacy around sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity for children and youth in schools;
3. Collecting data on sexual orientation and gender identity in schools;
4. Developing anti-bullying efforts within schools;
5. Developing programs to increase school engagement for sexual orientation and gender identity minority children and youth;
6. Increasing access to facilities and programs for youth and children based on their gender identity, not their assigned gender.

# Implementation of Recommendations

- LGBT Youth Resources on APA Safe and Supportive Schools Website
- [www.apa.org/pi/lgbt/programs/safe-supportive/lgbt/default.aspx](http://www.apa.org/pi/lgbt/programs/safe-supportive/lgbt/default.aspx)
  - American Psychological Association (APA) Divisions 16 and 44. “Promoting resiliency for gender diverse and sexual minority students in schools.”
  - Series 1: [How Educators Can Support Families With Gender Diverse And Sexual Minority Youth](#)
  - Series 2 : [Supporting Transgender and Gender Diverse Students in Schools](#)

# Next Steps for SSSP

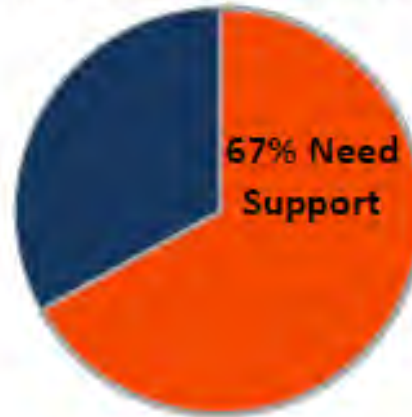
Promote consultative relationships between psychologists and education agencies related to safe and supportive school environments.



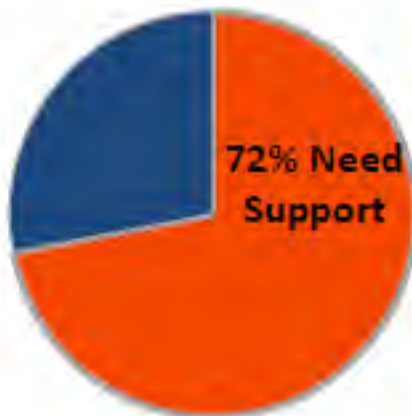


# Department of Educations' Identified Needs

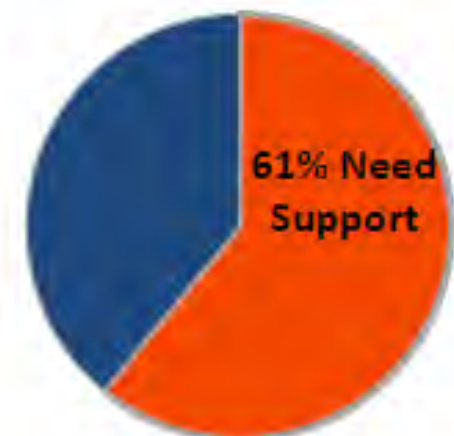
BUILD STAFF AND STUDENT  
COMPETENCIES AND TECHNIQUES TO  
PROMOTE SSE FOR ALL STUDENTS



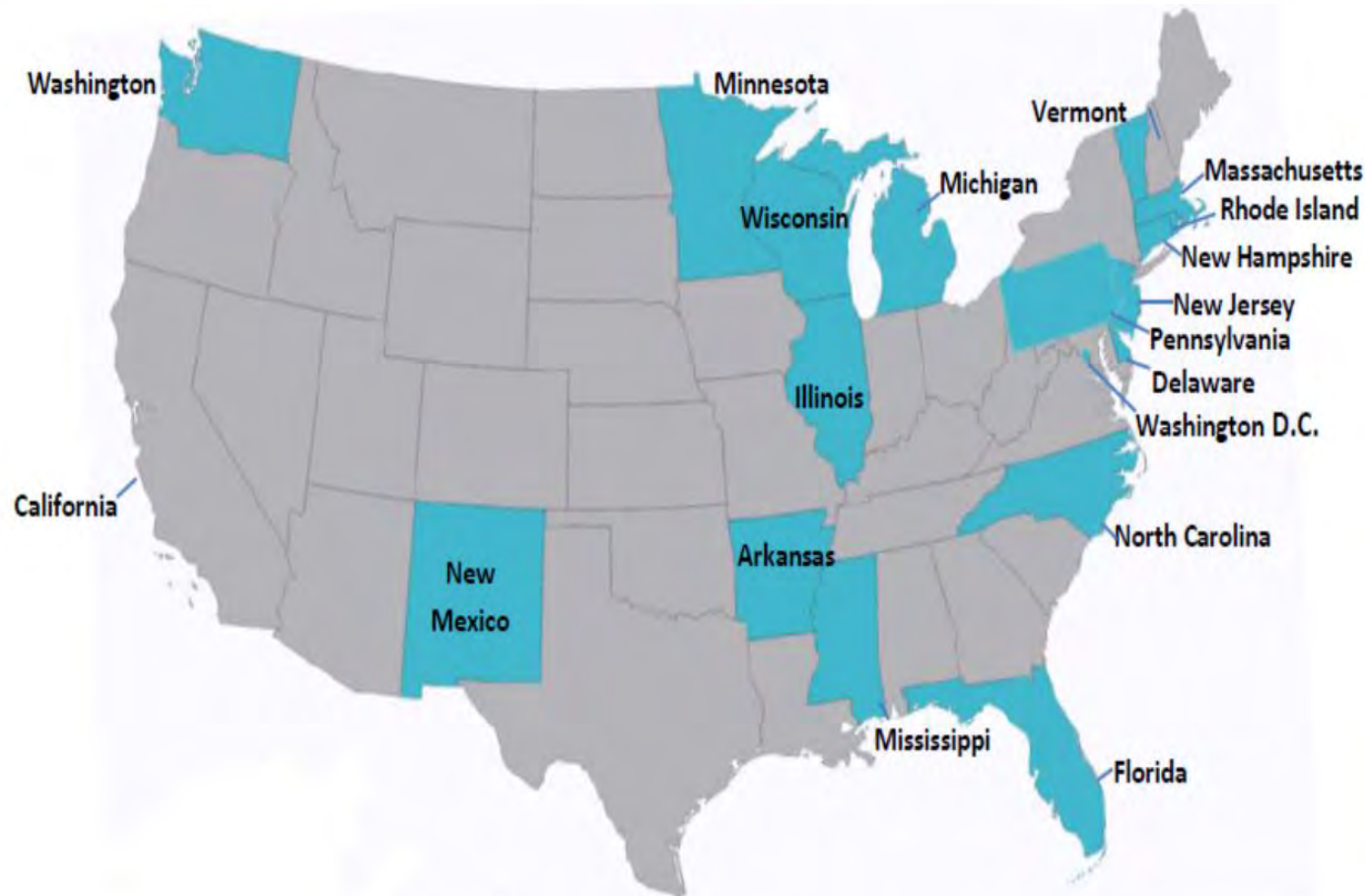
SELECT PARENT ENGAGEMENT  
STRATEGIES



ASSESS SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE  
ENVIRONMENT POLICIES



# Get Involved with the SSSP



- Training school professionals or pre-service professionals.
- Promoting parent engagement in schools.
- Disseminating resources to support collaborative work with schools, parents, and LGBT students.

# Recap and Resources

## **APA Safe and Supportive Schools Project:**

<http://www.apa.org/pi/lgbt/programs/safe-supportive/default.aspx>

- Div. 44 and 16 Series- “Promoting resiliency for gender diverse and sexual minority students in schools.”


## **APA and NASP Resolution Text:**

<http://www.apa.org/about/policy/orientation-diversity.aspx>

- Introduction to the Resolution
- Context for the Resolution
- Definitions and Limitations of Language
- References for Definitions

## **APA LGBT Concern's Office Website:**

<http://www.apa.org/pi/lgbt/resources/index.aspx>



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Lacey Rosenbaum M.Ed. | Director  
Safe and Supportive Schools Project  
Public Interest Directorate  
American Psychological Association  
Email: [lrosenbaum@apa.org](mailto:lrosenbaum@apa.org)



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# **Discussant**

**Dr. Lauren G. Fasig Caldwell**