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Sexual Minority Youth: Definition of Issues

Sexual Minority Youth are routinely deprived of support in every critical area of their lives!

Lack of Family Support

- ❖ One study of homeless youth revealed that LGBT youth leave home more often, experience higher levels of physical victimization, substance abuse and depression than their heterosexual counterparts (Cochran, et al, May 2002). In another study, 50% of lesbian and gay youth interviewed report that their parents rejected them due to their sexual orientation. As many as 26 % of gay youth are forced to leave home because of conflicts over their sexual identity (Remafedi, 1987)
- ❖ In a study of lesbian and gay youth in New York City, 46% of the violence reported by subjects was perpetrated by family members (Hunter, 1990)
- ❖ A national survey of parents in 2001 (Horizon Foundation, San Francisco, CA) found that although support is improving, 44 % of parents opposed the creation of school based prejudice reduction.
- ❖ Sexual minority youth generally can not rely on their families to provide them with the skills or the validation necessary to negotiate hostile societal waters (Morrow, 1993)

Lack of Positive School Experiences

- ❖ 28% of LGBT youths are forced to drop out of school because of harassment resulting from their sexual orientation (Hershberger, 1995). Gay youth are more than 4 times as likely to skip school because they feel unsafe. (Massachusetts Department of Education, 1995) In 1/3 of a reported 92 incidents of anti-gay harassment of students in Washington State Schools, adults witnessed the harassment but did nothing to help. Of the students victimized in those incidents, 10 attempted suicide, two successfully. (Safe Schools Coalition of Washington State, 1999)
- ❖ There is little training, education or support for students or helping professionals. A 2004 National School Assessment commissioned by Parents, families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays indicated that 95% of school counseling services had little or no gay, lesbian, or bisexual resources and 99% had little or no transgender resources; 70% had no training for educators or staff on how to stop GLBT bullying while 92% had no training for students; 84% had little or no resources for parents about GLBT issues; 59% did not include gay, lesbian, or bisexual students in their harassment or nondiscrimination policies and 75% did not include gender identity or expression.
- ❖ Key findings of the 2003 Survey of 887 LGBT students by GLSEN include: Unchecked harassment correlates with poor performance (lower GPAs) and diminished aspirations (fewer aspire to college) – and that supportive teachers can make a real difference in both areas. In addition, harassment continued at unacceptable levels (84% report verbal harassment) with little teacher intervention (82.9 % of students report that faculty never or rarely intervene when present.)
- ❖ The intense stigma associated with sexual minority status makes it difficult for these youth to interact authentically with peers. The lack of cohort comparisons, societal confirmation, and peer affirmation contributes to difficulties in achieving many of the developmental tasks of adolescence including the development of a positive sexual identity. (Telljohann, 1993; Fontaine, 1996)

Lack of Opportunity for Community Participation

- ❖ There are few mainstream (or LGBT programs) which are designed to provide opportunities for Sexual Minority Youth to participate in non-adult centered community activities – activities which help build a young person’s sense of self, of making a contribution and of personal and social competency. In addition, with the exception of a handful of LGBT youth support groups, few opportunities exist for on-going social interactions in safe environments.

Lack of Opportunity to Participate in Religious Communities

- ❖ Although some pockets of support exist within some communities of faith, the overwhelming majority of churches, synagogues and clergy continue to condemn and ostracize Sexual Minority youth and adults in a “soul-wounding experience that (asks) them to choose between their God, their spiritual connection, and their own integrity.” (Bass, 1996)

Potential Impact of the Pervasive Lack of Support

- ❖ Severe social, emotional and cognitive isolation which results in a higher incidence of mental health issues including bouts of depression, lower self esteem, problems with anxiety. Often these young people exist in complex, unstable family situations due in part to issues of coming out, silence and secrecy. (Cochran, 2001). In addition, the typical “concealment strategies” designed to hide the youth’s orientation becomes an “unending and extremely stressful chore” (Grossman, 1997) that is emotionally and socially crippling (Dempsey, 1994).
- ❖ Significant substance abuse problems: A 1995 Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey found that LGB youth were more likely to report using tobacco, marijuana and cocaine before 13 years of age. A number of studies indicate that a significant percentage of Sexual Minority youth use drugs and alcohol as a coping strategy. In one study, (Hunter, 1992) as many as 68% of gay boys and 83% of lesbian girls reported alcohol use; 44% of boys and 56% of girls reported drug use with 8% considering themselves drug dependent.
- ❖ Higher incidence of homelessness, dropping out, running away, and sexual acting out. At the same time, there are few external resources in place to support, safe, culturally competent, identity-affirming out of home care such as foster homes and group homes.
- ❖ Significantly higher risk of HIV/AIDS transmission: Up to half of the gay/bisexual boys forced out of their homes engage in prostitution to support themselves, greatly increasing their risk of HIV infection (Savin-Williams, 1988). A 1991 San Francisco study of gay and bisexual men revealed that 14% of the young men between the ages of 17 and 22 were HIV positive, a figure 4% higher than men in the 23 to 25 age group. Recent figures released by the Centers for Disease Control indicate that 50% of all new infections are among young people under the age of 24.
- ❖ Significantly higher incidence of multiple suicide attempts and suicide completions, with nearly 30% of all completed youth suicides being committed by Sexual Minority Youth. A number of studies have indicated that between 29% and 40% of Sexual Minority youth have recurring suicidal ideation at least once during their adolescence, and a significant number have made multiple attempts.

PLEASE NOTE: None of the ‘parade of horrors’ listed above are either set in stone or experienced by all LGBT youth. In fact, many of these risks factors can be ameliorated when youth receive support in one or more areas of their lives. The emotional distress that can lead to suicide, substance abuse, etc. is caused, in large part, by social isolation and stigma. Remove the social isolation and stigma, and much of the emotional distress is relieved. Evidence suggests that LGBT youth who receive support not only survive – but thrive! (D’Augelli, 1992) In addition, **harassment has been identified as a critical factor in predicting outcomes for youth.** The greater the level of harassment a youth experiences, the greater the likelihood that s/he will engage in risky behaviors. (Bontempo & D’Augelli, 2002)

DEFINITIONS *

Bisexual — (female or male) a person who is (or can be) attracted emotionally, romantically and sexually to both males and females. Individuals can be attracted to either sex equally or to one more than the other.

Cross-dresser — Men and women who enjoy wearing the clothes of, or appearing as, other than their birth sex. Both heterosexuals and homosexuals can be cross-dressers, though the majority of cross-dressers are heterosexual men. (Replaces the outdated term 'transvestite')

Gay Male — A male who is attracted emotionally, romantically and sexually to males.

Gender Identity — One's inner sense of gender as male, female, transgender, genderqueer, androgynous, etc.

Genderqueer — A term used to create expressions of gender and identity that transcend binary male/female constructs. Other terms might include but not be limited to: boy-dykes, bio-girlz, trannie-boys, trykes, Riotgirl, etc.

Gender Roles — What one's society and culture says that 'males and 'females are like. The socially constructed and culturally specific behavior and appearance expectations imposed on females (femininity) and males (masculinity).

Heterosexism — The institutionalized assumption that everyone is heterosexual and that heterosexuality is inherently superior to and preferable to homosexuality or bisexuality.

Heterosexuals — Males and females who are attracted emotionally, romantically and sexually to members of the opposite sex. They are sometimes also referred to as "straight".

Homophobia — The irrational fear or hatred of, aversion to, or discrimination against, homosexuals or homosexual behavior.

Homosexuals — Males and females who are attracted emotionally, romantically and sexually to members of the same sex. Most people prefer the terms gay or lesbian.

Internalized Homophobia — The experience of shame, aversion or self-hatred in reaction to one's own attraction's to a person of the same sex.

Intersex — a person with an intersex condition is born with sex chromosomes, external genitalia, or an internal reproductive system that is not considered "standard" for either male or female (Replaces the outdated term "hermaphrodites") (from www.isna.org)

Lesbian — A female who is attracted emotionally, romantically and sexually to females.

Pansexual: One who exhibits or suggests a sexuality that has many different forms, objects and outlets. One who exhibits many forms of sexual expression. (from www.lesbianworld.com)

Same Gender Loving (SGL) — A term that emerged in the early 1990's with the intention of offering Black women who love women and Black Men who love men (and other groups of color) a voice, a way of identifying and being that resonated with the uniqueness of Black culture in life. While many black lesbians and gay men do prefer to identify as lesbian and gay, many prefer the more Afrocentric SGL or Same Gendered Loving. It is best to ask the individual for their preference and not to assume. (from www.GLAAD.org)

Sexual Behavior — Sexual acts individuals of any orientation may choose to participate in with a partner or alone.

Sexual Minority — Gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people (5 to 15% of the population depending upon the study).

Sexual Orientation — Defined by who you are ATTRACTED to emotionally, romantically and sexually: People of the same sex (lesbian, gay), the other sex (heterosexual), or either sex (bisexual). Note that these dimensions are not absolutes and can be somewhat fluid over time. In addition, some people, especially those who reject gender binaries, may identify as 'pansexual' or use other terms.

The Down Low — The Down Low (also known as "DL") refers to closeted bisexual men who have sex with men without the knowledge of their female partners. (from www.GLAAD.org)

Transgender — A broad term used to describe the continuum of individuals whose gender identity and expression, to varying degrees, does not correspond with the social or cultural norms or expectation of their genetic sex.

Transsexual — An individual who presents him/her/hirself and lives as a gender different to his/her/ze genetic sex at birth. Transsexuals may identify as heterosexual, bisexual or homosexual. (note: "hir" and "ze" are gender neutral pronouns and do not denote gender as male or female).

Womanist — A term introduced by author Alice Walker to describe women of color who are concerned about the oppression of other women. This term was introduced to embrace women of color who have felt left out of the "feminist" movement due to institutionalized racism

* adapted from **Tackling Gay Issues in School, (GLSEN, CT, GLAAD) and other resources.**

Note: Language continues to evolve both around gender and orientation. Feedback and discussion regarding the definitions above are welcome. Please call True Colors at: 888-565-5551 or use our website: www.OurTrueColors.org

DEFINICIONES

(Texto derivado de *ABORDANDO LA TEMÁTICA GAY EN LA ESCUELA, GLSEN CT, GLAAD, ISNA, and LESBIAN WORLD*) adaptado por Robin McHaelen y traducido por Nila Marrone):

Bisexual – (hombre o mujer) Una persona que siente atracción afectiva y sexual tanto hacia hombres como hacia mujeres.

Bisexual no asumido – (The Down Low or DL) Se refiere a hombres bisexuales no asumidos que tienen sexo con hombres sin el conocimiento de su pareja mujer.

Comportamiento sexual - Actos sexuales que los individuos eligen para realizarlos solos o con otros (masturbación, sexo oral, sexo vaginal o anal; entre personas del mismo sexo o el opuesto).

Crosdreser - Hombre y mujer que disfruta usando ropas del otro sexo, o aparentando ser del sexo opuesto. Tanto heterosexuales como homosexuales pueden ser crosdreseres, aunque la mayoría son hombres heterosexuales (Antes se usaba “travesti”).

Enamorados del mismo género – Un término utilizado desde principios de los años 90 para denominar a mujeres de color que aman a mujeres y hombres de color que aman a hombres como una forma de identificar este tipo de vida en la cultura afroamericana. Si bien muchos hombres gays y mujeres lesbianas de color prefieren ser identificados simplemente como gays y lesbianas, muchos otros prefieren la denominación de Afrocentricos SGL o Enamorados del mismo Género (del inglés Same Gender Loving). Al respecto, antes de referirse a ellos lo mejor es no asumir y preguntar la preferencia de cada persona.

Gay - Un hombre que siente atracción afectiva y sexual hacia otros hombres. “Gay” a veces se usa también para mujeres.

Género “Queer” o Raro – (genderqueer) Término usado para crear palabras que identifiquen a hombres/mujeres de género no tradicional. Se puede incluir otros términos despectivos en un proceso de “recuperación y desafío” (“boy-dykes”, “bio-girlz”, “trannie-boys”, “trykes”, “Riotgirl”, etc.).

Heterosexismo - La creencia institucionalizada que todos son heterosexuales o deberían serlo y que la heterosexualidad es intrínsecamente superior y preferible a la homosexualidad y bisexualidad.

Heterosexual - Hombre o mujer que siente atracción afectiva y sexual hacia personas del sexo opuesto. A veces se los llama “heteros”.

Homofobia - El odio o miedo irracional, la aversión o discriminación contra los homosexuales. Similar al racismo: por ejemplo discriminación que sufren los latinos en Estados Unidos.

Homofobia internalizada - Experimentar vergüenza, aversión u odio contra uno mismo como reacción al sentimiento de sentirse atraído hacia personas de su mismo sexo.

Homosexual - Siente atracción instintiva, afectiva y sexual, hacia personas del mismo sexo. (Gay: hombre hacia hombres, lesbiana: mujeres hacia mujeres).

Identidad de género - Nuestro sentido interior de género de ser hombre o mujer, bisexual, transgénero, transexual, etc.

Intersexual - Una persona intersexual es alguien que ha nacido con los cromosomas que definen el sexo, los genitales externos (ambiguos), o los órganos reproductores internos, considerados no “estándar”, sea para hombre o mujer (reemplaza la palabra fuera de uso “hermafrodita”).

Lesbiana – Mujer que siente atracción instintiva, afectiva y sexual, hacia otras mujeres.

Minorías sexuales - gays, lesbianas, bisexuales, transexuales y transgéneros. (5 al 15% de la población dependiendo del estudio que se prefiere).

“Mujerista” – Un término puesto en uso por la autora Alice Walker para describir a la mujer de color que está comprometida con el tema de la opresión a otras mujeres. Este término se utiliza también para las mujeres de color que se han sentido relegadas por el movimiento “feminista”, por racismo o discriminación institucionalizados.

Orientación sexual - La atracción instintiva, afectiva y sexual, que se siente hacia otras personas. Personas del mismo sexo (lesbianas, gays), del sexo opuesto (heterosexuales) o de ambos sexos (bisexuales). Se hace notar que estas definiciones no son categóricas y pueden ser modificadas con el tiempo, en suma a aquellos que rechazan la dualidad de género se los puede identificar como “pansexuales” o usar otros términos.

Pansexual – Persona que manifiesta su sexualidad en formas variadas, con objetos y expresiones diversos. El/la que manifiesta muchas formas de expresión sexual.

Roles de género - El comportamiento social y culturalmente creado, y la apariencia impuesta a las mujeres (feminidad) y a los hombres (masculinidad).

Transexual - Una persona que se presenta a sí misma y vive como si fuera del género "opuesto" al del género genético con que nació. Los transexuales pueden ser heterosexuales, bisexuales u homosexuales en su orientación sexual.

Transgénero - Un término muy amplio, utilizado para describir a una serie de personas cuya identidad y expresión de género, en diferentes grados, no corresponde al de su sexo genético.

Nota: El lenguaje sobre género y orientación sexual continúa evolucionando y True Colors agradece comentarios y opiniones de los lectores .

Community Based Sexual Minority Youth Groups

GASP (Gay and Straight People)

(203) 245-5645

GASP is an anti-bias group focusing on the reduction of homophobia, heterosexism and bias in schools and communities. The group meets on the last Tuesday of the month after school at Madison Youth Services, 7:30 pm. The meeting is facilitated by Taffy Bowes.

Lifestyles United

(203) 576-7679

Lifestyles United is a support group for LGBT and questioning youth in the greater Bridgeport area. In addition to education and support, the group writes and performs various works about their experiences. Interested people can call Angel at the number above.

Out Now

1-888-429-9990

Social and support group for LGBT youth, ages 22 and under in the Greater Springfield area. Meets on Fridays from 4-6 PM, 125 Main Street, Springfield, MA 01105. Funded in part by the MA Dept of Public Health & The Governor's Commission on Lesbian & Gay Youth.

OutSpoken Norwalk

(203) 227-1755 or toll free 1-866-86ctgay

OutSpoken meets every Sunday from 4:00 to 6:00 PM at the Triangle Community Center, 16 River Street in Norwalk. The group which is evenly divided between male and female, high school and college age young people, has five co-facilitators and is designed to provide a safe place for GLBT and questioning youth to meet for support and social activities. Check out their web site at: www.ctgay.com. You may also reach them by email at dwoog@optonline.net

Rainbow Friends

(203) 387-2252

This group targets LGBT people, 18-30, and meets at the Gay and Lesbian Community Center, 50 Fitch Street, New Haven.

RainbowRoom

(860) 278-4163

This group meets on Sundays from 3-6 PM at the Project 100 Community Center, 1841 Broad Street in Hartford. The Rainbow Room is a 1 hour discussion followed by two hours of social time and activities in a safe and affirming LGBTQ space. Special events (such as the QUEER PROM) are held quarterly. (Formerly called Your Turf). Contact facilitator Stacey Pitcher at the number above.

The Real World

(860) 826-3366

This group is a school partnership between New Britain Youth Services and E.C. Goodwin Technical High School in New Britain and provides peer support and advocacy for sexual minority youth and their friends. For more information about meeting times, please call David Smith at the number above.

ROOTZ

(860) 951-4833

ROOTZ is primarily a HIV intervention program of AIDS Project Hartford, that empowers young men of color, particular those of African descent through a series of methods and educational components, including workshops, social events and activities. The group meets weekly at Project 100 Community Center, 1841 Broad Street in Hartford. For more information, call the group's facilitator, Gary Pines at the number above.

Note: Meeting times and places are subject to change. Please call contact number to confirm.

School Based Sexual Minority Youth/Ally Groups

Public School Gay Straight Alliances

Al Prince Technical School, Hartford
 Amity High School, PLAHD
 Bassick High School, Bridgeport
 Berlin High School
 Bethel High School
 Bloomfield High School
 Bolton High School
 Branford High School
 Brian McMahon High School, Norwalk
 Bristol Central High School
 Brookfield High School
 Buckeley High School, Hartford
 Bunnell High School, Stratford
 Canton Jr Sr High School
 Central High School, Bridgeport
 Cheshire High School, Cheshire
 Conard High School, West Hartford
 Coventry High School, Coventry
 Danbury High School
 Daniel Hand High School, GASP, Madison
 Darien High School
 East Hartford High School
 East Lyme High School
 East Windsor High School
 Emmit O'Brien V-T School
 Enfield High School
 E.C. Goodwin Technical High School
 EO Smith High School, Storrs
 Ethel Walker School
 Fairfield High School
 Farmington High School

 Francis T. Maloney High School
 Guilford High School
 Glastonbury High School
 Granby High School
 Greenwich High School
 Griswold Senior High School
 Guilford High School
 Hall High School, West Hartford
 Hamden High School
 Harding High School
 Hartford Public High School
 High School in the Community, New Haven
 Housatonic Valley Regional High School, Falls Village
 Joel Barlow High School, Redding
 Joseph A Foran High School
 Ledyard High School
 Lyman Hall, Wallingford
 Lyman Memorial High School, Lebanon
 Manchester High School
 Middletown High School
 New Britain High School
 New Canaan High School
 New London High School, New London
 New Milford High School
 Newington High School
 Newtown High School, Newtown
 Old Saybrook High School
 Plainville High School
 Pomperaug High School, Southbury (Spectrum)
 RHAM High School
 Ridgefield High School

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 (860) 622-5200
 (860) 739-6946
 (860) 623-3361
 (203) 732-1826
 (860) 253-5540
 (860) 826-3371
 (860) 487-0877
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 (203) 255-8449
 (860) 673 2514, ext 1152
 (860) 673 2514, ext 1148
 (203) 238-2334, ext 162
 (203) 453-2741
 (860) 652-7200
 (860) 844-3014
 (203) 625-8000
 (860) 376-7640
 (203) 453-2741
 (860) 232-4561, ext. 1067
 (203) 407-2040
 (203) 576-7330
 (860) 695-1304
 (203) 946-7022
 (860) 824-5123
 (203) 938-2508
 (203) 783-3502, ext 5018
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 (203) 294-5379
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 (860) 347-8571
 (860) 225-6351
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 (860) 437-4624
 (203) 350-6647, ext 2316
 (860) 666-5611, ext. 325
 (203) 426-7646
 (860) 395-3175
 (860) 793-3220
 (203) 262-3200
 (860) 228-7494
 (203) 438-3785

Sheehan High School, Wallingford	Pam Krombel	(203) 294-5915
Somers High School	Lynn Sigal	(860) 749-0719
Southington High School	Regina Moss	(860) 628-3229
South Windsor High School	Deb Field	(860) 648-5003
Stamford High School	Emily Sigal	(203) 977-5511
Staples High School, Westport	Dan Woog	(203) 227-1755
Stratford High School	Michael Fiorello	(203) 385-4230
Suffield High School	Christine Hoffacker	(860) 668-3810
Tourtellotte Memorial, North Grosvenordale	Lynne O'Brien	(860) 923-3508
Waterford High School	Matt Cadorette	(860) 437-6956
West Haven High School	Jackie Grady, Bernie Lattanzi	(203) 937-4360
Westhill School, Stamford	Miss Goudrin, Miss Anderson	(203) 977 4477
Wethersfield High School	Cynthia Bryan; Judith Emmick	(860) 571 -8200
Wilbur Cross High School, Waterbury	Tom Sugrue	(203) 946-8748
Wilton High School	Eric Fischman	(203) 762-0381
Windham High School	Beth Hankins-Hawkins	(860) 465-2460
Windsor High School	Holly Bebyn	(860) 687-2020, ext 474
Wolcott High School	Roseanne Monteleone	(203) 879-8164
Woodland Regional High School	Nancy Siebel CISW	(203) 881-5551, ext 236

Independent School Gay Straight Alliances

Bacon Academy
 Cheshire Academy
 Choate Rosemary Hall, Wallingford
 Ethel Walker School (WINGS), Simsbury
 Green Farms Academy
 Hamden Hall Day School, Hamden
 Hopkins School, New Haven
 Kent School
 Kingwood- Oxford (Mosaic), Hartford
 Loomis Chaffee, Windsor
 Miss Porter's School, Farmington
 Norwich Free Academy
 Taft School, Watertown
 Watkinson School, Hartford
 Williams School (New London)
 Woodstock Academy
 Westover School

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 (860) 927-6075
 (860) 233-9631, ext. 2298
 (860) 687-6812
 (860) 409-3670
 (860) 887-2505
 (860) 945-7777
 (860) 236-5618 x 169
 (860) 443-5333
 (860) 928-6575
 (203) 758-2423

TO ADD OR UPDATE YOUR SCHOOL: VISIT www.Ourtruecolors.org

To order LGBT “Safe Zone” or other Stickers:

National Youth Advocacy Coalition: (202) 319-7596 or via e-mail at: nyac@nyacyouth.org

Donnelly-Colt Buttons and Bumper Stickers:

Phone: (860) 455-9621.

E-mail address: donco@neca.com

Fax line: 1-800-553-0006

Queer Gear (stickers, diversity posters, T-Shirts, etc.)

<http://www.queer-gear.com>

College and University Groups

Albertus Magnus College: Outspoken Gay/Straight Alliance; email amc@yahoo.com;
Central Connecticut State University: PRIDE; (860) 832-3545; email: pride@ccsu.edu; website [Http://clubs.ccsu.edu/PRIDE](http://clubs.ccsu.edu/PRIDE)
Connecticut College: SOUL; (860) 439-2896 email: soul@conncoll.edu;
Eastern Connecticut State College: ABIGAYLE; e-mail abigayleECSU@easternct.edu, Co-Advisors Theresa Picard & Kim Dugan
Fairfield University: Alliance; Advisor: Dr. Sally O'Driscoll (203) 254-2804, email: sodriscoll@fairfield.edu
Quinnipac University: G.L.A.S.S.; (203) 582-8322; Glass@quinnipac.edu
Sacred Heart University: Gay/Straight Alliance or SHUGSA; Student Activities Department: (203) 371-7969
Southern Connecticut State University: LGBT PRISM; (203) 392-5525; Advisor- Cynthia Stretch
St. Joseph College: Gay/ Straight Alliance or SAPPHO; email sappho@sjc.edu.
Trinity College: GLBT Safe Zone or EROS; EROS@trincoll.edu Website: www.trincoll.edu/prog/safezone/;
Coordinator: Anna Matos (860) 297-4290, email: Anna.Matos@trincoll.edu
University Of Connecticut: The Rainbow Center; Website: <http://www.rainbowcenter.uconn.edu>;
Director: Stephanie Marnin (860) 486-5821, email: rnbwdir@uconn.edu
University Of Connecticut: AQUA; email: Aqua@huskymail.uconn.edu;
University of Hartford: Spectrum; (860) 768-5108, Email: Spectrum@Hartford.edu
University of New Haven: GLBSA; Email: glbsa@newhaven.edu; Advisor: Andrea Hogan, email: ahogan@newhaven.edu
Wesleyan University: Queer Resource Center, SPECTRUM; (860) 685-2425, website: www.wesleyan.edu/queer/,
email: grc@wesleyan.edu. Contact person: Nina Barrett x 4044.
Western Connecticut State University: Gay Straight Alliance; e-mail club_president@hotmail.com
Yale University Undergraduate: LBGT Cooperative; Email: lgbt@yale.edu;
Yale University Graduate: Outland, Email: outland-core@contra.punctus.net
Yale University Law School: Outlaws, Email: yls.outlaws@yale.edu

COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Housatonic CC: Gay/Straight Alliance; Mickey Reed (203) 332-5214; Linda Wolfson (203) 332-5181; e-mail: Mreed@hcc.commnet.edu.
Manchester CC: MCC PRIDE; Advisor: Co-Advisors: Florence Sheilds (860) 512-3242 and Jason Scappaticci (512-3224)
Norwalk CC: Gay/Straight Alliance; Advisor: Joseph Karnowski (203) 857-3378, email: jkarnowski@ncc.commet.edu
Three Rivers CC: WINGS
Tunxis Community College, SLGBT Alliance: Charles Cleary, Advisor (email: ccleary@txcc.commnet.edu)
Bill Reyor, President (email: wreyor@comcast.net).

NATIONAL QUEER STUDENT COALITION

LGBT Student Empowerment Project: United States Student Association: (202) 347-8772
lgbt@usstudents.org or www.usstudents.org

General Resources

Hotline Numbers:

InfoLine (CT)	(suicide/crises intervention)	211 (24 hr referrals)
New York Hotline	(peer counseling) (M-F evenings; Saturday afternoon)	(888) THE-GLNH
The Trevor Project	(LGBT youth suicide/crises intervention)	1-866-4-U-Trevor (24 hrs)
Fenway Peer listening Line	(M-F, 4-10 PM)	1-800-399-PEER
Fenway Helpline	(M-F, 6-10 PM; Sat/Sun 5-10 PM)	1-888-340-4528

News Magazines: (Note: These magazines may target an adult audience and may contain adult material)

YGA (Young Gay America, launched December 1, 2004):	www.YGAmag.com	(902) 430-6069
Metroline (CT)	www.metroline-online.com	(860) 233-8334
InNewsWeekly (MA/CT)	www.innewsweekly.com	(617) 426-8246
Bay Windows: 637 Tremont Street, Boston, MA 02118	www.baywindows.com	(617) -266-6670
The Advocate (National)	www.advocate.com	
Curve The Best Selling Lesbian Magazine (National)	www.curvemagazine.com	(818) 760-8983
Genre (National)	www.genremagazine.com	
Venus Magazine (African American LGBT magazine)	www.venusmagazine.com	(609) 695-4500.
POZ Magazine (News, information for people living with HIV/AIDS)	www.poz.com	

Other Resources:

Bloodroot Bookstore and Café: 85 Ferris Street, Bridgeport	www.bloodroot.com	(203) 576-9168
Deaf Rainbow Alliance of Connecticut:	DeafCTGaynLes@aol.com	
Gay Men's Domestic Violence Project	www.gmdvp.org , (617) 354-6056 - business	(800) 832-1901 - crisis
Gay and Lesbian Infoline in Massachusetts	www.glnh.org ("resources" for local information)	(413) 731-5403
Hartford Gay and Lesbian Health Collective	www.hglhc.org	(860) 278-4163 (referral resource)
InfoLine (CT)	(also offers suicide/crises intervention)	211 (24 hr referrals)
LGBT AA, NA or other 12 step program:	www.ct-aa.org	
National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association	www.nljja.org	
OUT in Comics (queer comics, with bios and contact info)	www.prismcomics.org	
Straight Spouse Network:	www.ssnetwork.org	(510) 525-0200
VIBES, Gift Shop, Coffee House, Groups & Gallery: 116 Water Street. Wooster MA		(508) 753-9969
Who What When & Aware Newsletter (on-line, activities calendar)	www.whowhatwhenaware.com	

Open and Affirming Communities of Faith: For a current lists, see the following:

The Coalition, United Church of Christ Coalition for LGBT Concerns	(800) 653-0799
PMB 230, 800 Village Walk, Guilford, CT 06437	www.uccoalition.org/programs/onahtmlpages.htm
Welcoming Congregations, Unitarian Universalist	http://www.uua.org/obgltc/wcp/stateal.html
Interfaith Coalition Listing:	http://www.christianlesbians.com/churches/connecticut.html
Metropolitan Community Church (Interfaith LGBT ministry)	http://www.mcccchurch.org/
Al-Fatiha Foundation (http://www.al-fatiha.net/) is dedicated to Muslims who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, questioning, those exploring their sexual orientation or gender identity, and their allies, families and friends.	
WWW.GayJews.org (though this site focuses on Orthodox LGBT Jewish issues, it offers many links to general Jewish LGBT Sites and organizations. Also, visit http://www.glbtejews.org/ the world congress of LGBT Jews for news, chat rooms, etc.	

Internet Resources

World Wide Web: On-Line Internet Addresses (For Transgender Resources, See Next Page)

- ❖ <http://www.outproud.org> (QueerAmerica database)
- ❖ www.youthresource.com (Youth Resources with lots of special communities - like trans youth, bi youth, African American youth, Latina(a) youth, etc.)
- ❖ www.ambientejoven.org (website for Latino/Latina YMSM and GLBTQ youth)
- ❖ www.MySistahs.org (created by and for young women of color to provide holistic sexual health information)
- ❖ <http://www.gsanetwork.org> (on line GSA support, also see www.GLSen.org)
- ❖ www.gayyearbook.com (high school pictures of LGBT youth and what they are doing now – some great role models!
- ❖ <http://www.biresource.org> (offers extensive resources for bi youth, adults and families)
- ❖ www.bisexual.org (chat rooms, conferences, research, books, etc. Hosted by the American Institute of Bisexuality)
- ❖ <http://www.binetusa.org> (lots of bi-specific contacts, pamphlets, etc.)
- ❖ www.i-out.com (the advocate newspaper website on queer living in the northeast)
- ❖ www.blackgaychristian.com (info, chat room, articles, etc concerning Black GLBT Spirituality)
- ❖ <http://www.planetout.com> (a virtual community)
- ❖ <http://www.deafqueer.org> (Queer Deaf community, also has a E-News service that includes CT listings)
- ❖ www.washburn.edu/sobu/broach/glbtscholar.html (clearinghouse for LGBT scholarships)
- ❖ www.rcym.org (Rainbow Christian Youth Ministries, info on the biblical passages often used against LGBT people)
- ❖ <http://psychology.ucdavis.edu/rainbow> (good source of facts and articles, maintained by Gregory M. Herek, Ph.D.)
- ❖ <http://www.siecus.org/index> (sexuality information and education. Good source of accurate information)
- ❖ www.health.org/features/lgbt (national Clearing House for Alcohol and Drug Information & LGBT specific resources)

Connecticut Based Pages:

- ❖ <http://www.OurTrueColors.org> True Colors website, created & maintained by Brande Schweitzer)
- ❖ <http://www.ctgay.org> (created by OutSpoken & maintained by Doug Nissing)

National Organizations

- ❖ www.nyacyouth.org / www.advocatesforyouth.org / www.hrc.org / www.nglft.org / www.lambdalegal.org / www.ncirights.org / www.LLEGO.org / www.pflag.org / <http://www.glsen.org>

Some Internet Safety Tips:

The Internet is a great source of support for LGBT teens. For some, it is may be the only support. It is a place where you can find and make friends, find acceptance and be yourselves, get advice, read magazines, talk to friends, form activist groups and more. Unfortunately, not everyone you meet on the ‘net’ has such innocent intentions. And, sometimes, when a young person is lonely, you can become the perfect ‘prey’ – especially if you would be afraid to tell your parents if something happened because it would mean coming out to them. Here are some things to pay attention to:

- ✓ **People are not always what they say they are.** Appearances can be deceiving and people may try to talk you into doing things you might feel badly about later. Trust your instincts. If you catch someone in one lie, chances are there are others... You may want to be careful how much information you provide about yourself in your profile.
- ✓ **Be careful if you decide to meet.** Meet in a public place a few times first, before deciding to go to a more private location. Always tell someone where and with whom you are going! Make sure you use your own or public transportation in case things don't go as you planned and you want to make an earlier exit.
- ✓ **You have the right to expect respect.** If something happens to you that you think is harassment, assault or rape, then you need to take some actions. Tell someone you trust. Then get help.
- ✓ **Remember your body is yours and yours alone.** You have a right to stop things whenever you feel uncomfortable – even if the other person doesn't want to. You have the right to say NO!
- ✓ **Trust Your Instincts.** If you feel unsafe, you probably are. Act on your feelings and get out.

Transgender Resources

TRANSGENDER (GENDER VARIANCE): A spectrum of thoughts, beliefs, feelings, behaviors ranging along a continuum from an occasional interest in **Cross-Dressing** (presenting as another gender) to **Transexuality** (aligning one's external physical gender presentation with one's internal perception of gender) to **GenderQueer** (an individual who does not identify within the gender binary systems (as male/masculine or female/feminine) and which does not imply specific sexual attractions or orientation).

Regional and CT Resources: (most are adult focused)

CT. Outreach Society. PO Box 163, Farmington, CT 06034 www.ctoutreach.org (860) 604-6343

Offers a monthly newsletter, special events, a membership director, support and social events.

The ConnecticutView c/o Denise Mason, PO Box 2281, Milford, CT 06460 masonD@aol.com

Offers a monthly newsletter, special events, a membership director, support and social events. www.transgender.org/ctv.

East Coast Female to Male Support Group, PO Box 60585, Florence Station, Northampton, MA 01062

Offers monthly support groups

Gender Identity Clinic of New England, Inc. (won't work with youth under 18) (860) 225-4672

c/o Central CT Counseling Associates, 82 Vine Street, New Britain, CT 06052 <http://www.gicne.org>

Provides coordinated services re: attaining sex reassignment surgery through adherence to the Harry Benjamin Standards of Care.

International Foundation for Gender Education,

(781) 899-2212

PO Box 540229 Waltham, MA 02454-Web Page: www.ifge.org

Offers a variety of support services including MTF and FTM groups, books, articles, resources etc.

Sylvia Rivera Transgender Law Center

(646) 602-5634

Offers a variety of informational legal services such as dealing with discrimination, transitioning on the job, etc.

TransAdvocacy Coalition

www.transadvocacy.com

To Make CT a Safe And Tolerant Place for the Trans-identified Individual and Community through Political and Social Advocacy.

XX Club, Po Box 387, Hartford, CT 06141 www.twentyclub.org

(860) 646-8651

Offers peer support/information to transsexual persons, publishes a newsletter, maintains a speakers bureau www.twentyclub.org

Other informational, youth and political sites:

Bending the Mold: An Action Kit for Transgender Youth: Lambda Legal and NYAC Publication. Available for download at www.lambdalegal.org or by calling NYAC at 800-541-6922

<http://www.transkids.us/> (By and for FtM trans youth. Comprehensive information with essays, support, and resources.)

<http://www.girlsnotchicks.com> (gender blending/bending coloring book and other cool stuff)

<http://www.amboyz.org> (for anyone born female who feels that is not an adequate or complete description of who they are)

www.butchdykeboy.com (out of Boston, gender activist information, resources)

www.youthresource.com (offers trans youth space)

www.geocities.com/westhollywood/park/6484 (Transboy Resource Network) (under construction)

<http://www.ren.org> (renaissance transgender association web page)

<http://transgenderlegal.com> (legal association information and resources)

<http://www.nyagra.tripod.com> (NY Based Gender Rights Advocacy)

www.HBIGDA.org (standards of care document with information regarding the role of the therapists)

www.shadesbeyondgray.com (dykes transgressing gender)

<http://www.gpac.org> (National Gender Rights Advocacy)

GAIN@tggender.org (Educational and news list serve)

<http://www.ingersollcenter.org> (information and referral site)

www.gender.org (informational and referral site)

www.transgenderlegal.com (created to accelerate the legal freedom of transgenders)

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/transallies> (list serve for allies of the trans community)

On- Line Intersex Resources

All website descriptions are taken directly from the website as direct quotes.

Bodies Like Ours: www.bodieslikeours.org

“Bodies Like Ours seeks to end the shame and secrecy that surrounds people born intersexed and/or with atypical genitals through community and peer support. Our goals are to make it okay to be born different and to recognize that we are not defined by what is between our legs. Instead, we seek to be defined by what makes us whole as human beings--our soul, our gender, and our presence.”

Intersex Society of North America: www.insa.org

“The Intersex Society of North America (ISNA) is devoted to systemic change to end shame, secrecy, and unwanted genital surgeries for people born with an anatomy that someone decided is not standard for male or female. We urge physicians to use a model of care that is [patient-centered](#), rather than concealment-centered”

Intersex Initiative: <http://www.ipdx.org/> Intersex Initiative

“(IPDX) is a Portland, Oregon based national activist organization working to end the medical abuse of children born with intersex conditions. We also challenge the medical and social erasure of intersex existence through raising the awareness of issues faced by intersex people. In addition to Portland, Oregon area, we have bases in the San Francisco Bay Area and in Japan, and work with various national organizations. Emi Koyama has been an intern-turned-staffer at Intersex Society of North America before founding Intersex Initiative. Since January 2003, she has been the full-time director of Intersex Initiative.”

The Survivor Project: <http://www.survivorproject.org/links.html>

Survivor Project is a non-profit organization dedicated to addressing the needs of intersex and trans survivors of domestic and sexual violence through caring action, education and expanding access to resources and to opportunities for action. Since 1997, we have provided presentations, workshops, consultation, materials, information and referrals to many anti-violence organizations and universities across the country, as well as gathered information about issues faced by intersex and trans survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

Some additional support groups:

- Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome Support Group (AISSG)
<http://www.medhelp.org/www/ais>
- Congenital Adrenal Hyperplasia
<http://www.caresfoundation.org/what.html>
- Klinefelter Syndrome and Associates
<http://www.genetic.org>
- Hypospadias & Epispadias Association
<http://www.heainfo.org/>
- The Turner Syndrome Society of the United States
<http://www.turner-syndrome-us.org>

Recursos En Español

PFLAG (Padres, Madres, Familiares y Amigos de Lesbianas, Gays, Bisexuales y Transgéneros). Bienvenidos/as los hispanohablantes:

CALIFORNIA:

Orange County y Pasadena: PFLAG en Español: Leonor Holmstrom, (818) 243-5306 FAX: (818) 547-4847

San Francisco: PFLAG chapter, PFLAG en Español, Michelle Olivan, swimmin@mindspring.com, H: 415 701-7010 y Carlos Rosales, crosales@levi.com.

CONNECTICUT:

CT Latino PFLAG, la única filial de PFLAG que utiliza español solamente. Las reuniones son el primer y tercer miércoles del mes, a las 6:30PM en Hispanos Unidos, 116 Sherman Ave, New Haven, CT 06515 ctlatinopflag@e-mayu.org

NEW YORK:

NYC Latino (subgrupo de PFLAG NYC). Las reuniones son el segundo domingo del mes, de 3 a 5PM en Saint Bartholomew Community House, 109 E. 50th St., entre las avenidas Lexington and Park, Directora: Nila Marrone, nilajoe@optonline.net, 914-787-8738. Ud. encontrará una extensa fuente de recursos en español apretando el botón "ESPAÑOL" de www.pflagnyc.org.

TEXAS:

PFLAG HOUSTON, www.pflag.org. Los hispanohablantes son bienvenidos. Para más información, escriba o llame a Sara Fernández, sarafer13@aol.com, 713-520-7017, 832-428-7463.

LIBROS, FOLLETOS, VIDEOS, PORTALES (WEBSITES):

ABORDANDO LA TEMÁTICA GAY EN LA ESCUELA. (280 páginas). Es un manual de recursos muy amplio que contiene: fundamentos para la inclusión de temas LGBT en la escuela, sugerencias para hacer que la escuela sea un lugar seguro para todos los estudiantes, un currículo fácil de seguir, actividades para el entrenamiento del personal docente y mucho más. La versión en español contiene también cinco anexos entre ellos: 1) Un extenso vocabulario gay en español. 2) Una lista de cientos de grupos hispanos de apoyo, información, educación y activismo en Estados Unidos, Hispanoamérica y España, 3) Una lista de más de 100 personas LGBT hispanas de renombre de los Estados Unidos, Hispanoamérica y España. Para conseguirlo: <http://www.ppct.org/Abordando/abordando-toc.htm>

DE COLORES (27 minutos): Una documental sobre familias latinas y sus comunidades que muestra como se puede superar las hondras raíces de la homofobia con las todavía más profundas raíces del amor y el respeto. Pedidos a: Peter Barbosa, EyeBite Productions, 4150 17th Street #1, San Francisco, CA 94114, Tel. 415-431-6411, Fax: 415-551-1723 - www.eyebite.com, peter@eyebite.com (Extensive guide available.)

GUÍA DE DISCUSIÓN PARA DE COLORES: La extensa Guía (disponible en inglés y español), cubre los temas de cómo se enteran los hispanos/latinos acerca de la homosexualidad, la importancia de la familia para la gente hispana/latina: lo que significa que un miembro de la familia sea gay, lesbiana o bisexual, haciendo que el amor familiar triunfe sobre la homofobia y el camino hacia la liberación de la homofobia. Contiene también preguntas y respuestas sobre temas de minoría sexual y mucho más. 65 páginas, www.pflagnyc.org.

LA INTERSEXUALIDAD: Comuníquese con ISNA: Intersex Society of North America, www.isna.org. Para información en español, vea www.pflagnyc.org.

NUESTRAS HIJAS Y NUESTROS HIJOS: PREGUNTAS Y RESPUESTAS PARA PADRES DE GAYS, LESBIANAS Y BISEXUALES. PFLAG, 1726 M Street, NW, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20036. Llamar a 202/467-8180 o envíe un mensaje a info@pflag.org

NUESTROS/AS HIJOS/AS TRANS, Preguntas y respuestas para padres de transgéneros, <http://www.Youth-Guard.Org/pflag-net/index.htm>

CONVERSACIONES: RELATOS POR PADRES Y MADRES DE HIJAS LESBIANAS E HIJOS GAY. Recopilación y redacción de Mariana Romo-Carmona. (2002) Cleis Press. Conversaciones, un libro publicado en español, reúne a familias de los Estados Unidos, Puerto Rico y Canadá. Veintitrés padres y madres latinos hablan de su relación con sus hijos/as gays y lesbianas con franqueza, sentido de humor y cariño. El libro también contiene las narraciones de doce hijos e hijas y un epílogo de Jaime Manríque.

PAPÁ, MAMÁ, SOY GAY. Una guía para comprender las orientaciones y preferencias sexuales de los hijos, de Rinna Riesenfeld. México, D.F.: Editorial Grijalbo, S.A., 2000. Desde Estados Unidos: 011-52-5-286-0895 fax 011-52-5-286-0895, <http://www.elarmarioabierto.com>

PORTALES (WEBSITES): Existe información en español en muchos portales. Los principales son: www.pflagnyc.org, www.pflag.org, www.freedomtomarry.org, www.hrc.org, www.isna.org.

Fact Sheets, Tool Kits, Pamphlets

Mostly web-based, each of these resources offers a variety of fact sheets, questions and answers, summaries of relevant facts, etc.

- ❖ **Advocates for Youth:** Rights, Respect, Responsibility: www.advocatesforyouth.org a general youth information site that includes articles, resources, information targeting LGBT youth as well as LGBT youth of color.
- ❖ **American Civil Liberties Union:** Lesbian and Gay Rights, information for GSAs, etc. <http://www.aclu.org/>
- ❖ **American Medical Student Association:** Health Concerns in the LGBT Community <http://www.amsa.org/adv/lgbtpm/concerns.cfm>
- ❖ **American Psychological Association Position Paper on Same Sex Families and Parenting:** <http://www.apa.org/ppo/issues/lgbfamilybrf604.html> (Psychological research provides no evidence to justify discrimination against same-sex couples and families.)
- ❖ **Bending the Mold: An Action Kit for Transgender Youth:** Lambda Legal and NYAC Publication. Available for download at www.lambdalegal.org or by calling NYAC at 800-541-6922
- ❖ **CT Women’s Education and Legal Fund (CWEALF):** offers a number of publications including Legal Rights of Lesbians Gay Men and Bisexuals in CT. (860) 247-6090 www.cwealf.org
- ❖ **Dealing with Legal Matters Surrounding Students’ Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity** National School Boards Association. <http://www.nsba.org/site/docs/34600/34527.pdf>
- ❖ **Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues:** http://www.lgbtfunders.org/lgbtfunders/key_issues.htm
- ❖ **Gay and Lesbian Medical Association:** www.GLMA.org Great population specific (gay, lesbian, bi, trans, intersex) health care information
- ❖ **GSA Network** <http://www.gsanetwork.org/> This is a great resource with information on how to set up and maintain GSAs; legal resources; building an anti-racist GSA
- ❖ **infoSource:** Bibliographies, abstracts and summaries, PHD. Theses and other information on gay youth suicide. www.virtualcity.com/youthsuicide/gbsuicide3.htm
- ❖ **Journalists Toolbox: How to Cover LGBT People: Education and Resources for Journalists.** National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association (www.nlgja.org)
- ❖ **Just the Facts:** Sexual Orientation & Youth, A Primer for Principals, Educators and School Personnel <http://www.apa.org/pi/lgbc/publications/justthefacts.html>
- ❖ **Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund:** Has a variety of great pamphlets and fact sheets including: Out, Safe & Respected: Your Rights at School (fact kit) and Gay & Lesbian Youth in Schools (fact sheet): http://www.lambdalegal.org/binary-data/LAMBDA_PDF/pdf/158.pdf
- ❖ **Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund:** A Report on the Unmet Needs of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Adolescents in Foster Care. Including a Survey of Fourteen States and Proposals for Reform. <http://www.lambdalegal.org/cgi-bin/iowa/documents/record?record=899>
- ❖ **Language and Reference Guide for the Black LGBT/SGL Community:** www.GLAAD.org/publications/resources_doc-detail.php?id=3091
- ❖ **National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR): Toolkit on LGBTQ youth in Foster Care and Juvenile Justice** www.nclr.org (they offer toolkits on a wealth of subjects including talking points for schools boards, transgender specific inclusion, organizing and policies and more.)
- ❖ **Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS) :** http://www.siecus.org/pubs/fact/FS_lgbt_youth_issues.pdf <http://www.siecus.org/pubs/fact/fact0013.html>
- ❖ **U.S. Politics (Gay Youth Issues and Resources):** Online resources about issues surrounding gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender youth <http://uspolitics.about.com/cs/gayyouthissues/>
- ❖ **“What Does Gay Mean? How to Talk with Kids about Sexual Orientation and Prejudice”** Lynn Ponton, M.D. National Mental Health Association. 800-969-6642 or www.nmha.org/whatdoesgaymean

Posters/Videos

LGBT Family Resources: www.familypride.org <http://www.colage.org/ylap/posters.html>
Videos: www.newday.com www.wmm.com www.frameline.org
Posters: <http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org/RG-posters.html> <http://www.cafepress.com/>

Recommended Videos:

All God's Children (25 min). Documentary by & about gay and lesbian African Americans and the church. High School + www.Mediarights.org

A Question of Equality (a public television series which documents the LGBT struggle for civil rights from the Stonewall riots of 1969 to the mid 1990's. 4 tapes, 55 minutes each). Available from www.COLAGE.org

Before Stonewall: The Making of a Gay and Lesbian Community. (87 min). Documentary about gay life before 1969. Available at www.amazon.com High School +

Both My Moms' Names are Judy: Children of Lesbians and Gays Speak Out (10 Min). Children 7-11 describe their experiences growing up in same sex headed households (415) 522-8773.
www.youth.org/loco/PERSONproject/resources/videos (intermediate grades)

Daughters of Dykes (1980, 14 minutes); teenage daughters of lesbian moms talk about their experiences.
www.mediareights.org

The "Different and the Same" Video Series (short discussion starters). (800) 228-4630 (Elementary)

Let's Get Real (2004): Documentary about name calling and bullying with curriculum guide. Produced by Women's Educational Media and available at New Day Films, 1-888-367-9154 or www.newday.com (Middle School)

Love Makes a Family: Gay Parents in the 90's (1991, 16 minutes) various LGB parents talking about their lives. Fanlight Productions. 800-937-4113

Out of the Past: Sundance Audience award winning film featuring historic photos, clips, celebrity voice-overs and an investigation of a GSA situation in Utah. GLSEN National: <http://www.glsen.org> or www.amazon.com .

Straight From the Heart: Stories of Parent's Journeys to a New Understanding of Their Gay and Lesbian Children (24 min) (Adult) Transit Media Library 800-343-5540.

Teaching Respect for All: For teachers, administrators and parents (51 min) Call GLSEN: (212) 727-0135

"It's Elementary!" and "That's a Family!" Two videos for elementary/middle school children and parents, teachers and others about diverse families and reducing homophobia. Contact: www.womedia.org or 415-641-4616

Our House Sugar Pictures, 259 W. 30th Street, 14th Floor, NYC, NY 10001 212-279-1461 (A Video Documentary About Growing up in an LGBT family)

Out of My Parent's Closet: play written and performed by the adolescent and adult children for LGBT parents. 1994 (ages 18+) COLAGE and Piper Dreams Productions, 415-861-5437

Sample Posters (many available at the websites listed above):

Degrading Ethnic, Racial, Sexist or Homophobic Remarks Not Acceptable Here: Norwest Center for Equity and Diversity, Edmonds Community College. (poster) 2000 68th Ave. W. Lynnwood, WA 98036 425-640-1065

Freedom Posters (anti-gay bashing posters): PO Box 1792, Lawrence, KS 66044

What Can You Do? Your Best Friend Has Just Told You, "I'm Gay." (206) 632-0662, ext. 201 or WNGSPAN@aol.com (poster)

Will You Be there for Every Friend? NW Coalition Against Malicious Harassment. (poster)

Regional Resources

Please call True Colors at 860-649-7386 to add or edit resources

Community and Health Centers in CT*:

Hartford Gay and Lesbian Health Collective
1841 Broad Street, Hartford, CT 06114

(860) 278-4163
www.hglhc.org

New Haven Gay & Lesbian Community Center
50 Fitch Street, New Haven, CT 06515

(203) 387-2252
www.nhglcc.org

Project 100, Gay and Lesbian Community Center
1841 Broad Street, Hartford, CT 06114.

(860) 724-5542
www.project100.org

Rainbow Center at UCONN
1315 Storrs Road, U-4096, Storrs, CT 06269

(860) 486-5821
www.rainbowcenter.uconn.edu

Triangle Community Center
16 River Street, Norwalk, CT 06855

(203) 853-0600
www.ctgay.org

Women's Center of South Eastern CT (Norwich)

(860) 886-4370

Women's Center of South Eastern CT (New London)

(860) 447-0366

Women's Center of Greater Danbury (offers a Lesbian support group)
2 West Street, Danbury 06810

www.danbury.org/womenctr
(203) 731-5200

* Most offer LGBT AA or NA meetings, offer info and referrals; and provide meeting space for activities, including support groups, youth groups, parenting groups, etc.

Community and Health Centers outside of CT*:

Fenway Community Health Center, (MA) Haviland St. Boston, MA www.fenwayhealth.org (888) 242-0900

Stonewall Center (MA)
256 Sunset Ave. Office, Crampton House/ SW, UMASS, Amherst 01003. (413) 545-4824
www.umass.edu/stonewall

Callen/ Lourde Community Health Center (NY) 356 W 18th Street, NY (212) 271-7200

Community Services Center, (NY)
208 W. 13th Street, New York, NY 10011 (212) 620-7310
www.gaycenter.org

Hetrick-Martin Institute: (NY) 2 Astor Place, New York, NY www.hmj.org (212) 674-2400

The Loft: (NY) 180 East Post Road, Lower Level, White Plains, NY www.loftgaycenter.org (914) 948-2932

* Most offer LGBT AA or NA meetings, offer info and referrals; and provide meeting space for activities, including support groups, youth groups, parenting groups, etc.

LGBT Support Group for LGBT People with Developmental Disabilities

Rainbow Support Group

(203) 387-2252

The Rainbow Support Group meets on the second Monday of the month at the New Haven Gay and Lesbian Community Center, 50 Fitch Street, from 5:00 – 6:30 PM.

Regional Resources, Cont.:

Aids Project Greater Danbury 30 West Street, Danbury, CT 06810 (203) 778-2437
(HIV/AIDS and Substance Abuse: Case management, residence; housing referrals, mental health clinicians, substance abuse counselors, support groups, transportation and emergency financial assistance, HIV counseling and testing, youth and community outreach and education, needle exchange)

Bloodroot Bookstore and Café, Bridgeport, 85 Ferris St., www.bloodroot.com (203) 576-9168

Bread and Roses, Stamford (alternative HIV/AIDS support and therapies) (203) 388-0100
www.stlukeslifeworks.org/breadroses.htm

Rainbow Friends, Norwalk, New Haven (social events, ages 18-35) (860) 464-7189
Sundays, 6:30 –8:30 at Triangle Community Center, Also at the New Haven Community Center

Job Corps, New Haven (residential academic and vocation education) (203) 397-3775
(a great alternative to foster care or shelters when appropriate space is not available)

PFLAG (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays): see Page 74 for days/times

Danbury PFLAG HerbTJ@aol.com (203) 797-4743

Hartford PFLAG HfdPflag@aol.com (860) 633-5111

Hartford PFLAG, Transgender concerns (860) 231-8582

Norwich: Jeanbeancarter@aol.com (860) 889-4940

Latino PFLAG, CT ctlatinopflag@e-mayu.org

Madison/Shoreline ebarese@aol.com (203) 453-1395

Northwestern CT (860) 435-2738

Southwestern CT PFLAGSWCT@yahoo.com (203) 226-0257

Southeastern CT jeanbeancarter@aol.com (860) 889-4940

(860) 822-8726

Springfield (413) 732-3240

(413) 783-7709

LGBT Health and Well-Being Resources:

Adoption and Home Study Resources (LGBT-Affirming):

Adoption Resources of Glastonbury www.arcct.org (860) 657-2626

Jewish Family Services, Hartford www.jfshartford.org (860) 236-1927

Rainbow Center for Children & Families, Wethersfield, www.rainbowadoptions.org (860) 729 - 0489

National Gay and Lesbian Hot Line (888) 843-4564

Birth Centers: During a survey conducted by True Colors, the following birthing centers said **YES** to the following three questions: Do they welcome and affirm LGBT couples; Do they allow partners to stay overnight; and Do they accept birth plans (with consent from the doctor or mid-wife)?

Bristol Hospital
Charlotte Hungerford, Torrington
Day Kimball Hospital, Putnam
Greenwich Hospital
Hartford Hospital
Johnson Memorial, Stafford Springs

Lawrence & Memorial, N. London
Manchester Hospital
Middlesex Hospital, Middletown
New Britain General Hospital
New Milford Hospital
Norwalk Hospital

Rockville General Hospital
Sharon Hospital
Stamford Hospital
UCONN Health Center, Farmington
William Backus Hospital, Norwalk Yale
New Haven Hospital

Chiropractors: O'Malley Chiropractic Health Center (860) 257-9400 (Hartford)
West Side Chiropractic (860) 523-5833 (West Hartford)

Day Care: Rainbow Center for Children & Families (860) 529-5229 (Wethersfield)
Liz Sherwin (860) 236-7684 (Hartford)

Fertility/Surrogacy: UConn OB Reproductive & Infertility (860) 679-4580 (Farmington)

Regional Resources, Cont.:

Gateway Program, Westchester Medical Center, Valhalla, NY (914) 493-1753 (New York)
(Provides LGBT youth, group, family and couple therapy, LGBT specific substance abuse counseling, with an expertise in transgender experience)

Healing Energy/Meditation:	Jocelyn Lebowitz Marlow Shami, Natural Sense	(860) 648-1055 (Manchester) (860) 491-2067
Health Care:	Hartford Gay & Lesbian Health Collective Planned Parenthood (PPCT): PPCT provides affordable reproductive health care services to all genders	(860) 278-4163 (Hartford) (800) 230-PLAN
Homopathic/Naturpathic:	Natural Health Association Robin Ritterman Nancy White, N.D. Merri Korn (Acupressure, Herbal)	(203) 230-2200 (New Haven) (203) 230-220 (Hamden) (860) 236-2166 (Hartford) (860) 242-0105 (Hartford)
Legal Resources:	Murphy, Murphy, Ferrara & Nugent Vincent A. Liberti, Jr. CWEALF (information & referral) Romana Mercado-Espinoza Art Feltman Greater Hartford Legal Assistance Jan Carol Rosenthal, JD Joseph P. Rigoglioso Mary-Elizabeth LeDuc	(203) 787-6711 (New Haven) (203) 931-1830 (New Haven) (860) 524-0601 (Hartford) (860) 560-8188 (Hartford) (860) 527-2283 (Hartford) (860) 541-5000 (Hartford) (860) 236-3332 (Hartford) (203) 922-0188 (Huntington) (203) 630-9201 (Meriden)
Massage:	Richard D. Godfrey Tollie Miller Serenity Solutions	(860) 231-9637 (Hartford) (860) 232-3812 (Hartford) (860) 833-4917 (Hartford)
OB-GYNs:	Dr. Liliana Plisic Drs. Victoria Biondi, Amy Breakstone Hartford Gynecological Center Birth and Beyond, Nurse Mid-wives Rachel Donovan, CNM Catherine McDermott, APRN, CNM Dr. Julie Flaggs Dr. Isabelle Morais Dr. Frederick Rau S.H.E. Medical	(203) 488-8306 (Branford) (860) 584-4240 (Bristol) (860) 525-1900 (Hartford) (203) 318-8884 (Madison) (860) 649-1120 (Manchester) (860) 649-1120 (Manchester) (860) 344-9993 (Middletown) (203) 789-2011 (New Haven) (860) 264-8568 (Simsbury) (860) 236-5431 (Hartford, Enfield)
Pediatricians/Family Practice:	Nima Patel, MD Asylum Hill Family Practice Susan Wiskowski, MD Min Hanh, MD, Family Practice Sydney Speisel, MD Jay Sutay, MD Jerome Lahman, MD	(860) 236-9779 (Hartford) (860) 714-4212 (Hartford) (860) 242-2048 (Hartford) (860) 646-7178 (Manchester) (203) 379-5211 (Meriden) (860) 644-5458 (South Windsor) (860) 871-2102 (Vernon)

Regional Resources, Cont.:

Therapists:

Steven Polesel, LCSW, ACSW, BCD	(860) 404-0463 (Avon)
Laura Ann Kramer, APRN	(860) 404-0463 (Avon)
Dianne Hyatt, MSW	(203) 332-0136 (Bridgeport)
Phil Guzman, Ph.D.	(203) 394-6529 (Bridgeport)
Ingrid Rojas (bi-lingual, Spanish)	(203) 449-5922 (Bridgeport)
Southwest Community Health Center	(203) 330-6000 (Bridgeport)
Karen McDaniel, PhD	(860) 798-5975 (Ellington)
Child Guidance Center	(203) 255-2631 (Fairfield)
Diane Ellaborn, LCISW (Gender Specialist)	(508) 788-5405 (Framingham, MA)
Ron Attrell, LCSW	(860) 236-3798 (Hartford)
Bob Belliveau, LCSW	(860) 521-1507 (Hartford)
Jayne Dean	(860) 233-4830 (Hartford)
Derek Franklin, Psy.D.	(800) 975-2198 (Hartford)
Carylyn Glaser M.S.	(860) 523-9563 (Hartford)
Hartford Psychological Services	(860) 296-0094 (Hartford)
Elliott Strick, LMFT	(860) 231-8459 (Hartford)
Regina Wilson, Ph.D.	(860) 296-9944 (Hartford)
Women's Center for Psychotherapy	(860) 523-4450 (Hartford)
Lisa Ciorciari, MA, LPC	(860) 236-3649 (W. Hartford)
Loretta Wrobel	(860) 429-2629 (Mansfield)
Nicolette M. Banbury, MS, LPC	(860) 295-0396 (Marlborough)
Logan Green, PhD, Michael Haymes, PH.D	(860) 635-2393 (Middletown)
John Istvan (Midstate Behavioral Health)	860-346-0300 (Meriden)
Linda Duran, LMTC	(860) 536-8804 (Mystic)
Joseph Fitzgerald	(203) 789-0560 (New Haven)
Luke Gilleran	(203) 520-3465 (New Haven)
Irwin Kreiger, LCSW	(203) 776-1966 (New Haven)
Jodi Rowell, MSW (Clifford Beers Clinic)	(203) 772-1270 (New Haven)
Alicia Peña (bilingual Spanish/English)	(860) 447-0888 (New London)
Lambda Resources	(413) 586-7377 (Northampton, MA)
Lisette Lahana (gender specialist)	(413) 585-9085 (Northampton, MA)
Peter Papallo, LCSW (Wheeler Clinic)	(860) 793-3799 (Plainville)
Dianne Hyatt, MSW	(203) 964-1847 (Stamford)
Loretta Wrobel, LMTC	(860) 429-2629 (Storrs)
Maria Castillo (bilingual Spanish/English)	(203) 445-8966 (Trumbull)
Michael Saad	(203) 459-1666 (Trumbull)
Kitty Bhide, LCSW	(203) 573-1291 (Waterbury)
Alfred Joyell, PhD	(203) 753-8336 (Waterbury)
West Hartford Counseling Center	(860) 233-4830 (West Hartford)
C. Dianne Zweig	(860) 675-7763 (W. Hrtfd, Simsbury)
Connie Cohen, LCSW	(203) 454-6722 (Westport)
Avi Elnekave, MS, LMFT	(860) 524-6715 (Windsor)
Timothy Nance, PhD	(860) 683-2352 (Windsor)
Robert S. McWilliam, MD	(203) 266-0404 (Woodbury)

Statewide and National Resources (LGBT Parents)

For more information regarding programs or resources in your region, or to add your group to our existing resources database, please call us at 1-888-565-5551 or visit us on the web at: www.OurTrueColors.org

List Serves/On-line Support

EMAIL Lists regarding LGBT family events/activities/programs: www.OurTrueColors.org

Monthly e-newsletters for LGBT parents & their children:

www.familieslikemine.com/forms/newsletter.html www.familypride.org www.lesbianlife.about.com/cs/parenting/index.htm

Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere (COLAGE): 415-861-5437

3543 18th Street, #1, San Francisco, CA, 94110 or visit their web site at: www.COLAGE.org, colage@colage.org

On Line Discussion Groups for the children of LGBT parents (closed lists require an LGBT parent to join, moderated by COLAGE members): to sign up for discussions: www.colage.org/online-resources.html .

Love Makes a Family: Coalition working on legislative issues regarding LGBT Family Relationships such as Civil Marriage. (860) 674-8942 www.LMFCT.org

National Adoption Information Clearinghouse: Gay and Lesbian Adoptive Parents: www.calib.com/naic/pubs/f_gay

Summer Camps: (for the children of LGBT parents)

Camp OUT (North Central MA) www.farmschool.org (617) 868-7739

Mountain Meadow (NJ) inquiries@mountainmeadow.org (215) 772-1107

Shire Village Camp (MA) www.shirevillage.com (718) 622-8204

The Camp Lady (advisory service) www.camplady.com (888) 873-6363

Other Resources for Families:

Magazines: **Alternative Family Magazine** www.altfammag.com
And Baby: Redefining Modern Parenting Magazine: info@andbabymag.com
Gay Parent Magazine www.gayparentmag.com (718) 997-0392
Proud Parenting info@proudparenting.com

Books: Two Lives Publishing: Books for LGBT Families www.TwoLives.com 877-543-3899
Family Pride Coalition www.familypride.org

National Resources: **Center for Lesbian Rights:** www.nclrights.org (415) 392-6257
COLAGE (children of LGBT parents) www.COLAGE.org (415) 861-5437
Family Pride Coalition www.familypride.org (202) 331-5015
Gay & Lesbian Advocates (GLAD) www.glad.org (617) 426-1350
Lambda Legal (LAMBDA) www.lambdalegal.org (212) 809-8585
Straight Spouse Network (510) 525-0200
Families like Ours www.familieslikeours.org (425) 793-7911

Social and Support Groups for LGBT parents and/or their children

CT COLAGE: for children 8-12 and their families: (860) 922-3868, colagect@yahoo.com

Families By Choice: Meets approximately monthly in the Eastern part of the state on Saturday or Sundays for potlucks, occasional camping trips and other events. Call Tirza at (860) 456-1110 for more information. Tirza_rodasbcglobal.net

New Haven Area: Monthly get-togethers for LGBT families. Call Robin or Barb at (203) 389-8922 for more information.

Greater New Haven: Monthly Social events for LGB parents & their children (8-14 years old). AAMKathleen@aol.com

LGBT Parent Group: Triangle Community Center, 4th Wednesday, 7 – 8:30 PM, crowetar@optonline.net or (203) 366-3353

WEWOK: (We're Everywhere With Our Kids). Brings together LGBT parents with school aged children for various activities. (New London Area). Email: wewokl@yahoo.com for info.

School Checklist: Harassment Prevention

This is a quick, down and dirty check-list of action steps a school might consider as it seeks to ensure that all students are safe, affirmed and free of harassment. This tool is not meant to substitute for legal advice or considerations, or to mitigate the potential for various liability issues schools could face for failing to protect youth from harassment on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation. The Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund (CWEALF) in Hartford is a good resource for more specific information.

Are all appropriate personnel aware of the serious nature of harassment on the basis of sexual orientation? It isn't just 'bad behavior' – it's illegal!

Connecticut Civil Rights, Student Rights and Hate Crimes Statutes as well as Federal Statutes like Title IX, can be brought to bear on the issue (see page 23 or 24 for more information)

In the event of an alleged incident what are your school's policies? What steps will be taken with the alleged perpetrator? Some issues to consider might be:

- What means will you use to investigate the allegations in a way that preserves the confidentiality of participants as much as possible while still getting the whole picture?
- Will you have an initial meeting with full explanation of the seriousness of his/her/hir actions?
- Will the incident be reported to police? Rationale for reporting or not reporting?
- What disciplinary actions will be taken? Rationale for specific actions taken or not?
- Will there be a meeting with parents/guardians? If a meeting is not arranged, what is the rationale?
- What support (community, therapeutic and/or other resources) are available for the alleged victim and his/her family and the alleged perpetrator and his/her/hir family?
- What follow-up is planned with the each of the involved parties?

What specific steps will you take to protect targeted students?

Think about the school environment globally and consider safety issues in classrooms and hallways; libraries and other resource areas; lunchroom, bathrooms and locker rooms; Buses and parking lot areas
How can you engage other students/faculty and staff in responsibility for the safety of all? How have you informed or engaged students in understanding school policies regarding safety, harassment, bullying, etc.

What steps can be taken to inform, involve, engage faculty in the creation of a safe and affirming school climate?

Faculty meeting, training or workshop? (When was the last time you had a training specifically on LGBT issues at your school? If you haven't – when will you?)
How have you ensured that all faculty and staff are aware of school, state and federal policies regarding the issue?
What follow-up plans do you have to maintain their interest and engagement in the issues?

What steps can be taken to transform an overall school culture which allows/condones bullying in any form?

Anti-bullying policies and enforcement?
Assemblies or other means of student information
Classroom discussions and/or other anti-bullying, diversity or tolerance curricula?
Follow-up plans?
Other?

Note: Ze and Hir are gender neutral pronouns used by individuals who find that binary gender descriptions don't adequately describe their experience of gender. In the 2004 Legislative Session, CT added Gender Identity and Expression to its Hate Crime statutes. In addition, in a ruling by the State of Connecticut Human Resource Commission, sexual harassment statutes were interpreted to include "non-traditional" gender presentation. It is useful to note that most harassment of LGBT youth happens when others make assumptions about a student's sexual orientation based on the extent to which he/she/ze transgresses gender stereotypes.

Summary of LGBT Legal Rights in Schools

On the Federal Level

Title IX:

In March of 1997, a policy paper was issued that indicated that Title IX (a statute which prohibits sexual and gender discrimination) can be interpreted to include a prohibition against sexual harassment on the basis of orientation. That means that if a sexual minority student is sexually harassed (harassment with a sexual nature or overtone), and the school does not make significant efforts to overcome and prevent this harassment, the school has the potential to lose their federal funding!

Constitutional Rights:

The Constitution guarantees the right to equal protection. In the summer of 1997, this constitutional law was used to hold 3 school principals personally liable (in the amount of \$800,000) for their failure to protect Jamie Nabozny from harassment and abuse based upon his sexual orientation while he was a student in a Wisconsin public school.

Equal Access Law:

Congress passed legislation originally designed to allow religious groups to meet in the schools as a “club”. Because legislation must be neutral and can not discriminate, the law broadly covers any “club” which allows anyone to join, has a non-violent purpose and meets the rules of the school, including Gay/Straight Alliances.

On the State Level

“Gay Rights Law” PA 91-58u (CGS 46a-81a / CGS 46a-60)

CT is one of about 14 states that has an anti-discrimination law which makes it illegal to discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation. Although this law is specific to housing and employment, many believe that schools are covered under the public accommodation clause.

Student Bill of Rights PA 97-247 Sec 6 (CGS 10-15c)

In June of 1997, Connecticut became the 5th state to amend their educational statutes to include sexual orientation as a protected category within the existing Student Bill of Rights.

Hate Crimes Law (CGS 53a-181b / CGS 53a-40a)

CT is one of more than 21 states that also has Hate Crimes legislation which includes sexual orientation and provides additional penalties for crimes committed out of “hate” and prejudice. **NOTE:** A coalition of agencies and organizations are currently attempting to add gender identity and expression, as well as people with disabilities to the Hate Crimes Statute.

Tort Laws

Personal Injury Lawsuits allow a remedy for hurt and can be available to address all forms of bigotry in the school. Professional liability insurance does not cover discrimination (since it is illegal).

Licensing Statutes

These statutes always include Ethics clauses that require non-discrimination. Failure to meet these standard can result in a teacher’s, guidance counselor’s or other licensed professional’s loss of license.

Individual School District Policies

Many state school districts (for example, Coventry, Hartford, New Haven, Stratford, Westport and others) followed the example of the National Association of State Boards of Education, the National Association of Local Boards of Education, NEA, and others by adding sexual orientation to their policies.

Steps for Filing a School Discrimination Complaint

Discrimination in schools based on sexual orientation is a violation of federal law - Title IX, and CT State Law - 10-15c. There have been over fifteen cases nationwide that have been brought against school districts for failing to protect students from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. People may file a complaint in a number of ways and can consider any or all of the following:

- 1) **File a complaint with the school system under Title IX**, through the Title IX Coordinator. Each school district is required by federal law to have a person identified as the District Title IX Coordinator. This person oversees compliance. Title IX requires that the District Title IX Coordinator's name, title, address and phone number must be published and posted. The school districts harassment policy, complaint process, grievance procedure must be made available to staff, students and parents. The school's non-discrimination policy must be included in any and all official school publications. To find out who your District Title IX Coordinator is, go to the CT State Department of Education website at http://www.state.ct.us/sde/dtl/cert/tit9/t9coord_main.htm
- 2) **File a complaint with the principal under 10-15c (see legal rights on previous page)**
- 3) **File with the Office for Civil Rights in Boston** by calling 1-617-223-9662 or visiting <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/complaintprocess.html>
- 4) **File with the CT Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities** 800-477-5737/860-541-3400
- 5) **Call DCF (Dept of Children & Families)** if child abuse is suspected - (800) 842-2288
- 6) **Call police if possible criminal matter**
- 7) **Obtain lawyer for legal action.** CWEALF (CT Women's Education & Legal Fund) has attorneys on retainer who will provide a free initial legal consultation. Contact them at 860-247-6090 or go to: <http://www.cwealf.org/>
- 8) **Note that Section 1983 of federal law may be used as a legal tool:** "... gay students who face peer harassment may rely on federal law, namely 28 U.S.C. § 1983 [Section 1983], to sue school officials who turn a blind eye to harassment. When a school official knowingly allows the harassment of a gay student to continue, that school official violates the student's right to equal protection under the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution.²⁸ Furthermore, this note argues that school officials who do not take steps to end known anti-gay harassment of students by peers are not shielded, even under the lowest level of scrutiny, from personal liability by the affirmative defense of qualified immunity. (From ... PERSONAL LIABILITY OF SCHOOL OFFICIALS UNDER § 1983 WHO IGNORE PEER HARASSMENT OF GAY STUDENTS by JEFFREY I. BEDELL* UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS LAW REVIEW [Vol. 2003] 9/9/2003)
- 9) **Remember that anyone can file for the revocation of a teacher's certification** - call Connecticut State Department of Education Legal Dept – Ronald C. Harris at 860-713-6520
- 10) **Some Combination of the above...**

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william.howe@po.state.ct.us

Also see: *Office for Civil Rights, US Dept of Education at:* www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oct/complaintprocess.html

A Short (and very incomplete) LGBT History

1969: Angered by police harassment of patrons of the Stonewall Inn, a New York gay bar, LGBT residents in the area fight back during a raid, initiating several days of violence, called the “Stonewall Riots”. Many consider this event as the “genesis” of the modern LGBT rights movement in America. Also in 1969, CT became only the 2nd state to repeal its sodomy laws.

1973: The American Psychiatric Association votes to remove homosexuality from its list of “illnesses”, calls for the decriminalization of homosexuality and the passage of civil rights protections for gays and lesbians, *supposedly* ending a century of efforts by psychologists to “cure” LGBT people (note current reparative therapy debate nearly 30 years later!).

1974: The National Education Association adds sexual orientation to its non-discrimination policies and calls for all other professional educational associations to do the same.

1975: The American Psychological Association calls upon its members to remove the stigma of mental illness from the treatment of homosexuals.

1982: Wisconsin becomes the first state to ban employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. Today, 15 states (including CT) have similar legislation. The states (and the year the laws were enacted) are **Wisconsin** (1982); **Massachusetts** (1989); **Connecticut** and **Hawaii** (1991); **California, New Jersey, and Vermont** (1992); **Minnesota** (1993); **Rhode Island** (1995); **New Hampshire** (1997); **Nevada** (1999); **Maryland** (2001); **New York** (2002); **New Mexico** (2003); **Illinois** (2005) Note that 35 states still allow an individual to be fired because of their orientation, and that there is no civil rights recourse for such discrimination in those states). Currently, five States protect people on the basis of Gender Identity/Expression: CA, IL, MN, NM, and RI

1983: The American Academy of Pediatrics calls on its constituents to serve all youths struggling with their sexual identity.

1986: In a 5-4 vote, the Supreme Court upholds the sodomy laws of the state of Georgia in the *Bowers v. Hartwick* decision. As a result, government continued to have the right to arrest consenting adults having sex in the privacy of their own homes in 24 states. CT repealed its sodomy laws in 1969. Georgia overturned its sodomy statutes in the 1999 legislative session.

1986: In Fremont, CA, Becky Smith and Annie Afleck became the first openly lesbian couple in the United States to be granted legal, joint adoption of a child.

1988: The National Education Association adopts a resolution calling for every school district to provide counseling for students struggling with their sexual orientation.

1989: Denmark becomes the first nation to legalize gay unions (a step short of same sex marriage); Norway allows Same Sex marriage in 1993. Canada recently passed similar legislation. Currently, none of the 50 states allow same-sex marriage, though VT and CA offer Civil Unions.

1990: The Hate Crimes Statistics Act becomes the 1st federal law to include “sexual orientation” –for counting purposes only.

1991: The American School Health Association passes a resolution that calls for the end of discrimination against gay and lesbian youths and outlines a series of steps to assist these adolescents in schools.

1993: MA becomes the first state to ban discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation against public high school students.

1997: CT adds sexual orientation to the Student Bill of Rights protecting students from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. About Seven States currently include this protection – MA, WI, CT, CA, MN, VT, NJ). Three explicitly include transgender students (CA, MI, NJ). Those laws cover only 11.9 million students, 25 percent of the country’s school children. Rhode Island, while not having a legal mandate from the legislature, does have a statewide regulation from its Department of Education that protects LGBT students from harassment

2000: Vermont makes history by creating a legal same sex relationship called “Civil Unions”, which provide same sex couples in Vermont with legal rights and responsibilities similar to married couples. These rights are not portable from state to state in the way that marriage rights are – and do not include the more than 1,000 federal rights or responsibilities of marriage.

2000: CT passes co-parent legislation allowing both same sex and unmarried opposite sex couples to adopt children. Currently, more than 20 states (including NY, RI, MA, NJ) allow same sex co-parent adoptions, although CT, VT and NJ are the only three to explicitly address it by statute.

2001: Maryland becomes the 12th state to include sexual orientation within its civil rights statutes.

2002: CT Activists continue to lobby for same sex marriage rights. There are 588 Statutes in CT which reference civil marriage-related rights and responsibilities but which are provided only within the confines of legal marriage. The vast majority of these rights and responsibilities can not be provided through contracts or other legal documents. A handful of new rights were passed in 2002 including the right to contract for next-of-kin-like status (allowing hospital and nursing home visitation, for example.)

2003/2004. California passes an inclusive Domestic Partnership Law, similar to Vermont’s Civil Unions; Two Provinces in Canada (Ontario and British Columbia) join the Netherlands and Belgium as countries that allow same sex marriage. New Mexico becomes the first state to pass both hate crimes and nondiscrimination bills with gender identity in both bills. California passes an employment anti-discrimination law that includes Gender Identity and Expression. In CT, Bills regarding same sex marriage and adding gender identity/expression and disability to current hate crime statutes are likely to be introduced. MA courts declare that anything short of civil same sex marriage is unconstitutional.

2004: Massachusetts become the first state in the union to legalize same sex civil marriage for MA residents. 8 couples in CT file a lawsuit claiming that CT’s current exclusion of same sex couples from civil marriage is discriminatory. CT State Department of Children and Families (DCF) passes non-discrimination language that includes both sexual orientation and gender identity and expression. 11 States pass constitutional amendments to prevent same sex marriage

2005: CT organizations take a stand that anything short of marriage (including civil unions) is separate and unequal, and the therefore unacceptable.

Impact of Participation in LGBT Organizations

YOU can make a tremendous difference in the lives of LGBT youth by helping them to connect appropriately with a community of peers, role models and mentors. Find out what resources are available in your community and use them. If no resources are available, find out what you can do to get them started. Tips on creating an effective community organization and a partial list of available resources follows. And remember, True Colors is always a resource for LGBT youth, adults, families and allies.

Sexual minority youth who are able to find and interact with the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) community (especially in venues outside of the bars) fare better emotionally and psychologically than those who remain isolated and in hiding. (Hershberger, 1993 and 1995; Dempsey, 1994).

Initially, adolescents are often looking for a level of support, information, and acknowledgment to deal with the heightened anxiety and “inner anguish” that comes from their recognition (fear) that they might be “LGB or T”. (Dempsey, 1994). As they begin to integrate their identity, however, they begin to look for and need more social kinds of interactions, e.g. — friends, mentors, etc.

Those who are responsible for the health and well-being of adolescents, including those who are LGBT, have an obligation to identify and support age-appropriate resources within the LGBT community. Community Organizations, especially those involved with advocacy and education, offer some unique opportunities to encourage and foster positive adolescent development. Here are just some of the potential benefits of participating in community organizations:

❖ Develop and Enhance Socialization

- ✓ Group Identification (having a sense of “belonging” with others who like and are like them)
- ✓ Social Ties/Social Support/Social Integration (critical elements of adolescent development!)
- ✓ Peer (and adult) affirmation and comparisons

❖ Role modeling

- ✓ Relationships between Sexual Minority adults can model an integration of sexuality with other aspects of one’s life and sense of self
- ✓ Mentoring (helping young people see the full range of who they can be!)
- ✓ Interactions with LGBT adults and youth whose “lifestyles” defy and correct stereotypes

❖ Leadership Development

- ✓ Enhance and capitalize on strengths such as their creative coping skills, their ability to monitor and understand their environments, their self-awareness
- ✓ Organizational Skills (planning events, running meetings, etc.)
- ✓ Media and public speaking skills

❖ Empowerment

- ✓ Shared decision-making
- ✓ Increased feelings of competency, efficacy and confidence
- ✓ Decreased feelings of helplessness

❖ Self-Esteem

- ✓ Identity Consolidation (an improved ability to integrate sexual orientation as a coherent part of a broader social, sexual and psychological identity)

Youth Development Framework *

Integrating a youth development framework into your organizational planning has a number of benefits for the youth, the adults that work with them. And for your agency or organization as a whole! Individuals who are valued, affirmed, and nurtured blossom – regardless of their age! As you plan activities, organizing strategies -- even meetings -- you may find it helpful to review the elements that constitute the development of a healthy identity and ability. Examples of how True Colors has integrated these elements into our work follow:

1. Aspects of Identity: Young people demonstrate a positive identity when they have a sense of personal well-being and a sense of connection and commitment to others in each of the following areas.

- a. **Safety and Structure:** a perception that one is safe and that daily events are somewhat predictable
- b. **Self-worth:** a perception that one is a "good" person who contributes to oneself and others
- c. **Mastery and Future:** a perception that one is "making it" and will succeed in the future
- d. **Belonging and Membership:** a perception that one values, and is valued by, others in the family and community
- e. **Responsibility and Autonomy:** a perception that one has some control over daily events and is accountable for one's own actions and for the consequences on others
- f. **Self-awareness and Spirituality:** a perception that one is unique and is intimately attached to extended families, cultural groups, communities, higher deities, and/or principles

2. Areas of Ability: Young people demonstrate ability when they gain knowledge, skills and attitudes that prepare them for Adulthood.

- a. **Physical Health:** the ability and motivation to act in ways that best ensure current and future physical health for self and others
- b. **Mental Health:** the ability and motivation to respond affirmatively to and cope with positive and adverse situations, to reflect on one's emotions and surroundings, and to engage in leisure and fun
- c. **Intellectual Ability:** the ability and motivation to learn in school and in other settings, to gain the basic knowledge needed to graduate high school, to use critical thinking, to be creative, to use problem-solving and expressive skills and to conduct independent study
- d. **Employability:** the ability and motivation to gain the functional and organizational skills necessary for employment, including an understanding of careers and options, and the steps necessary to reach goals
- e. **Civic and Social Ability:** the ability and motivation to respect and affirmatively respond to differences among groups and individuals of diverse backgrounds, interests, and traditions

* Summarized from the work of Academy for Educational Development/Center for Youth Development

Creating an Effective LGBT Youth/Adult Organization

❖ Outreach (focus on youth who are already LGBT-identified)

- ✓ Word of Mouth/Youth Oriented Events, Existing Youth Groups (Community and GSA's)
- ✓ Use the Internet! Many LGBT youth find community there!
- ✓ Access both Mainstream and LGBT media, newsletters, school newspapers, guidance offices, etc.
- ✓ True Colors can also be a support in helping you outreach to youth via our newsletters and contacts.

❖ Create and Nurture a “Youth and Adults As Partners” Philosophy

- ✓ “Partners” implies that the work is non-hierarchical and that youth and adults are equal peers in the process.
- ✓ Make the meetings accessible for youth in terms of time, space, transportation. Consider the possibility of stipends.
- ✓ Ensure that youth have real decision-making power and are involved in identifying those issues of importance to them, developing plans of action and implementing those plans.
- ✓ Make sure something is accomplished at every meeting and that young people have an opportunity to develop new knowledge and practical skills as a result of their involvement.
- ✓ Make sure that meetings combine interesting activities (like brainstorming or small group sessions) with the more tedious organizational activities to keep youth (and adults!) focused and involved.
- ✓ Be honest (and realistic) about your expectations for both youth and adult participants and hold each accountable. Treat each teen as an individual (don't expect them to represent all other youth); Don't move too fast in a meeting. Some youth are not used to sitting at the table as peers with adults and may need time to adjust. Adults who are accustomed to working with youth only as clients, students or subordinates may need support in adjusting their expectations and attitudes as well.
- ✓ Short and Long Term Goal Planning should be realistic, timely, and reviewed regularly. Encourage members to evaluate their own time commitments (with youth especially, watch out for “burn-out”).

❖ Encourage Internal Communication

- ✓ Begin each session with provided refreshments (and encourage folks to bring in something).
- ✓ Use Opening Exercises to help orient new members and continue the bonding/social interactions of existing members.
- ✓ Allow time for each member to provide activity updates. Make a conscious effort to create a feeling of “synergy” where youth and adults have opportunities to explore the strengths (and challenges) that each bring to the table.
- ✓ Provide monthly Newsletter/Meeting Minutes (to update individuals who couldn't attend, remind people about the tasks they took on, identify and reward member efforts).
- ✓ Encourage/foster the group's ability to discuss and resolve disagreements (codes of conduct/standards of discourse; soliciting diverse opinions; encouraging brainstorming; seeking consensus when possible).

❖ Consciously Foster Morale

- ✓ Regularly and publicly acknowledge the contributions of group members during meetings, and in organizational communications like newsletters and minutes.
- ✓ Promote Shared Responsibility (for example, have the group define the tasks associated with a particular event and decide together who will handle what parts.)
- ✓ Sponsor events with a social purpose (victory dinners/summer picnics, etc.) and include strong social aspects in regular and task oriented meetings (offer food, encourage open conversation during tasks like mailings, etc).

❖ Provide Rewards and Benefits of Membership

- ✓ The first rule of organizing is to remember that **all** volunteers participate for reasons of their own (altruism is self-interest dressed to go out...).
- ✓ Conduct on-going evaluations designed to identify and meet the needs of individual members, remembering that what motivates an individual changes over time.
- ✓ Be successful (develop a reputation as a worthwhile organization, so that membership becomes status-generating).

Riddle Scale

The following scale, adapted from a measure developed by Dr. Dorothy Riddle, a psychologist from Tucson, Arizona, allows people to measure themselves along a continuum of values, attitudes and beliefs about homosexuality. The scale, and the differentiation between the various levels is arbitrary and simply provides a way of thinking about where people might stand in their beliefs and values. Knowing where one stands now allows individuals to determine whether or not a gap exists between personal beliefs and the professional responsibility to provide competent, affirming, and non-discriminatory service to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) youth, adults and families. It allows an individual to decide, "Is this where I want to be? Does this position serve myself and my students/clients/constituents appropriately." If not, one then has the opportunity to develop strategies to better negotiate the personal/professional values conundrum...

- 1) **Condemnation:** Homosexuality is deviant, abnormal and a sin.
- 2) **Pity:** Heterosexuality is morally preferable to homosexuality and bisexuality. Any possibility of becoming "straight" should be reinforced.
- 3) **Tolerance:** May have strong anti-homosexuality feelings, but understands that tolerance of difference is expected within the workplace, school environment and other public arenas.
- 4) **Acceptance:** Implies there is something to accept, characterized by such statements as: "You're not a lesbian to me, you just a person!" or, "Whatever you do in bed is your business, just don't flaunt it."
- 5) **Support:** Works to safeguard the rights of LGBTI people. People at this level may be uncomfortable themselves, but they understand their responsibilities to ensure understanding, equality, civil rights for all people.
- 6) **Appreciation:** Acknowledges that being LGBTI in our society takes strength and resilience. People at this level are willing to truly examine their homophobic attitudes, values and behaviors. Values the diversity of people and sees LGBTI people as a valid part of that diversity. People at this level are willing to combat homophobia in themselves and others.
- 7) **Affirmation:** Assumes that LGBTI people are indispensable in our society. Views LGBTI people with genuine affection and delight, and is willing to take action to become an ally and advocate.

LA ESCALA RIDDLE

(Texto derivado de *ABORDANDO LA TEMÁTICA GAY EN LA ESCUELA*, adaptado por Robin McHaelen y traducido por Nila Marrone):

La escala que sigue fue desarrollada por la Dra. Dorothy Riddle, una psicóloga de Tucson, Arizona. Por medio de ella, se puede ver dónde se encuentra Ud. en este continuo de valores, actitudes y creencias. El saber dónde está Ud. en la escala, le permite decidir si existe o no una discrepancia entre sus creencias personales y sus responsabilidades profesionales de suministrar un servicio competente, positivo y no discriminatorio a niños y adultos LGBT, y a sus familias. Le rogamos leer con cuidado cada definición y encontrar el nivel que le corresponde. Sea lo más honesto/a que pueda. No tendrá que compartir esta información con nadie.

1. **Repulsión** - La homosexualidad es vista como una desviación, una anormalidad y "un crimen contra la naturaleza". Las gente LGBT son enfermos, locos, inmorales, pecaminosos, malvados, etc. Todo se justifica para cambiarlos: la prisión, la hospitalización, terapia de aversión, terapia de electroshock, etc.
2. **Lástima** - La heterosexualidad es más madura y desde luego preferible. Toda posibilidad de "volverse hetero" debería ser reforzada, y sentir lástima por aquellos que parecen haber nacido "así", "probrecitos".
3. **Tolerancia** - Es posible que se tenga fuertes sentimientos anti-homosexuales, pero se comprende que en el trabajo, la escuela y en general en público, se espera que uno demuestre tolerancia a los que son diferentes. Puede que considere que la homosexualidad es simplemente una fase del desarrollo por la que pasa mucha gente en la adolescencia y la mayoría "la supera".
4. **Aceptación** - Aún implica algo que necesita ser aceptado. Se caracteriza por afirmaciones como "¿Para mí no eres lesbiana, eres una persona!" o "¿Lo que hagas en la cama es asunto tuyo" o "No tengo problema con eso, mientras no hagas alarde de ello".
5. **Apoyo** - Trabajar para resguardar los derechos de la gente LGBT. La gente puede sentirse incómoda en este nivel, pero sabe que es imprescindible luchar por la igualdad y los derechos civiles de toda la gente.
6. **Admiración** - Reconocer que se necesita fortaleza y resiliencia para ser LGBT en nuestra sociedad. La gente en este nivel está dispuesta a examinar sus actitudes, valores y comportamientos homofóbicos.
7. **Apreciación** - Valorar la diversidad en la gente y ver a las personas LGBT como una parte válida de esa diversidad. Esta gente está dispuesta a combatir la homofobia en ellos mismos y en otros.
8. **Apreciación y apoyo activo** - Considerar que las personas LGBT son indispensables en nuestra sociedad. Ellos ven a la gente LGBT con afecto y alegría genuinos, y están dispuestos a ser aliados y activistas.

Respuestas a sus preguntas acerca de la orientación sexual y la homosexualidad

American Psychological Association (APA) Interés Público – Versión Revisada - Julio 1998. Traducción hecha en México.

- ¿Qué es la orientación sexual?
- ¿Cuál es la causa para que una persona tenga una orientación sexual en particular?
- ¿Se elige la orientación sexual?
- ¿Puede cambiarse la orientación sexual mediante terapia?
- ¿Y qué hay de las llamadas “Terapias de Conversión”?
- ¿Es la homosexualidad una enfermedad mental o un problema emocional?
- ¿Pueden ser buenos padres los gays, las lesbianas y los bisexuales?
- ¿Por qué los gays, las lesbianas y los bisexuales revelan su orientación sexual?
- ¿Por qué es difícil el proceso de salir del closet para alguna gente gay, lesbiana y bisexual?
- ¿Qué se puede hacer para ayudar a gays y lesbianas en la lucha contra los prejuicios y la discriminación hacia ellos?
- ¿Por qué motivo es importante que la sociedad esté mejor educada acerca de la homosexualidad?
- ¿Están infectados de VIH todos los hombres gays y bisexuales?
- ¿Dónde puedo encontrar más información acerca de la homosexualidad?

¿Qué es la orientación sexual?

La orientación sexual es una duradera atracción emocional, romántica, sexual o afectiva hacia otra persona. Es fácilmente distinguible de otros componentes de la sexualidad, incluyendo el sexo biológico; la identidad de género (la sensación psicológica de ser hombre o mujer) y el rol social de género (la adherencia a las normas culturales del comportamiento masculino y femenino).

La orientación sexual existe en un continuo que abarca desde la homosexualidad exclusiva hasta la heterosexualidad exclusiva, e incluye varias formas de bisexualidad. Las personas bisexuales pueden experimentar atracción sexual, emocional y afectiva tanto hacia gente de su propio sexo como a la del sexo opuesto. A las personas con una orientación homosexual a veces se les refiere como gays (a hombres y también a hombres y mujeres) o como lesbianas (sólo a las mujeres).

La orientación sexual es diferente del comportamiento sexual, porque se refiere a sentimientos y al concepto de sí mismo. Las personas pueden expresar, o no, su orientación sexual en su comportamiento.

¿Cuál es la causa para que una persona tenga una orientación sexual en particular?

Hay numerosas teorías acerca de los orígenes de la orientación sexual de una persona. Hoy en día la mayoría de los científicos está de acuerdo en que lo más probable es que resulta de una compleja interacción de factores ambientales, cognitivos y biológicos. En la mayor parte de la gente la orientación sexual se establece a una edad temprana. También hay considerable evidencia reciente que sugiere que la biología, incluyendo factores genéticos u hormonales innatos, juega un papel significativo en la sexualidad de una persona.

En resumen, es importante reconocer que probablemente existen muchas razones para la orientación sexual de una persona, y que las razones pueden ser diferentes para diferentes personas.

¿Se elige la orientación sexual?

No, los seres humanos no pueden elegir ser gays o héteros. La orientación sexual emerge para la mayor parte de la gente en la adolescencia temprana, sin ninguna experiencia sexual previa. Aunque podemos elegir si actuamos conforme a nuestros sentimientos, los psicólogos no consideran que la orientación sexual sea una elección consciente que pueda ser cambiada voluntariamente.

¿Puede cambiarse la orientación sexual mediante terapia?

No. A pesar de que la mayoría de los homosexuales viven vidas exitosas y felices, alguna gente homosexual o bisexual puede buscar cambiar su orientación sexual mediante terapia, a veces presionados a intentarlo por influencia de miembros de la familia o de grupos religiosos. La realidad es que la homosexualidad no es una enfermedad. No requiere tratamiento y no es cambiable. Sin embargo no toda la gente gay, lesbiana y bisexual que busca asistencia de un profesional de la salud mental quiere cambiar su orientación sexual. La gente gay, lesbiana y bisexual puede buscar ayuda psicológica para el proceso de salir del closet o para lidiar con los prejuicios; pero la mayor parte va a terapia por las mismas razones y circunstancias de la vida que traen a la gente hétero hacia los profesionales de la salud mental.

¿Y qué hay de las llamadas "Terapias de Conversión"?

Algunos terapeutas que realizan las llamadas terapias de conversión informan que han sido capaces de cambiar la orientación sexual de sus clientes, de homosexual a heterosexual. El escrutinio cuidadoso, sin embargo, muestra varios factores que ponen en duda sus afirmaciones. Por ejemplo, muchos de los informes provienen de organizaciones con una perspectiva ideológica que condena la homosexualidad. Además, sus alegatos están pobremente documentados. Por ejemplo, al concluir el tratamiento no hay un seguimiento ni se informa qué sucede durante un periodo largo, como sería lo estándar en cualquier intervención de salud mental. A la Asociación Americana de Psicología le preocupa tales terapias y el daño potencial a los pacientes. En 1997, el Consejo de Representantes de la Asociación aprobó una resolución reafirmando la oposición al tratamiento homofóbico, y expresando el derecho del cliente a un tratamiento imparcial y a la autodeterminación. Cualquier persona que entra a terapia para tratar cuestiones de orientación sexual tiene el derecho de esperar que tal terapia tenga lugar en un ambiente profesional neutral, en ausencia de cualquier prejuicio social.

¿Es la homosexualidad una enfermedad mental o un problema emocional?

No. Los psicólogos, psiquiatras y otros profesionales de la salud mental están de acuerdo con que la homosexualidad no es una enfermedad, un desorden mental, ni un problema emocional. Más de 35 años de investigación científica objetiva, bien diseñada, ha demostrado que la homosexualidad, en sí misma, no está asociada con desórdenes mentales ni con problemas emocionales o sociales. Alguna vez se pensó que la homosexualidad era una enfermedad mental porque la sociedad y los profesionales de la salud mental tenían información prejuiciada.

En el pasado, los estudios sobre gente gay, lesbiana y bisexual incluía a pacientes en terapia, con lo cual se distorsiona el resultado. Cuando los investigadores examinaron los datos de personas que no estaban en terapia, rápidamente se dieron cuenta de que era falsa la idea que la homosexualidad era una enfermedad mental.

En 1973 la Asociación Americana de Psiquiatría confirmó la importancia de nuevas investigaciones mejor diseñadas y eliminó a la homosexualidad del manual que enumera los desórdenes mentales y emocionales. Dos años después, la Asociación Americana de Psicología aprobó una resolución que respaldaba esa remoción.

Por más de 25 años, ambas asociaciones han exhortado a todos los profesionales de la salud mental a que ayuden a disipar el estigma de enfermedad mental que alguna gente todavía asocia con la orientación homosexual.

¿Pueden ser buenos padres los hombres gays, las lesbianas y los bisexuales?

Sí. Los estudios que comparan grupos de niños educados por padres homosexuales y por padres heterosexuales no han hallado diferencia en el desarrollo entre los dos grupos de niños en cuatro áreas críticas: su inteligencia, ajuste psicológico, ajuste social y popularidad con sus amigos. También es importante darse cuenta que la orientación sexual del padre no indica la de sus hijos. Otro mito acerca de la homosexualidad es la creencia equivocada que los hombres gays tienen mayor tendencia a abusar sexualmente a los niños que los hombres heterosexuales. No hay evidencia que sugiera que hay más homosexuales que heterosexuales que abusen a los niños.

¿Por qué los gays, las lesbianas y los bisexuales revelan su orientación sexual?

Porque el compartir con otros ese aspecto de sí mismos es importante para su salud mental. En efecto, se ha descubierto que el proceso del desarrollo de la identidad para las lesbianas, los gays y los bisexuales, llamado "salir del closet", está fuertemente relacionado con el ajuste psicológico mientras más positiva sea la identidad gay, lesbiana o bisexual, mejor será su salud mental y más alta será su autoestima.

¿Por qué es difícil el proceso de “salir del closet” para alguna gente gay, lesbiana y bisexual?

Para alguna gente gay y bisexual el proceso de salir del closet es difícil, para otros no lo es. Frecuentemente la gente lesbiana, gay y bisexual siente temor, se siente diferente y sola cuando por primera vez se da cuenta que su orientación sexual es diferente a la norma de la comunidad. Esto es particularmente cierto para la gente que se da cuenta de su orientación gay, lesbiana o bisexual siendo niño o adolescente, lo cual no es poco común. Dependiendo de sus familias y de dónde vivan, pueden tener que luchar contra prejuicios y desinformación acerca de la homosexualidad.

Niños y adolescentes pueden ser particularmente vulnerables a los efectos nocivos de prejuicios y estereotipos. También pueden temer el ser rechazados por su familia, amigos, compañeros de trabajo e instituciones religiosas. Alguna gente gay tiene que preocuparse de no perder su trabajo, o ser hostigado en la escuela, si se conoce su orientación sexual.

Lamentablemente la gente gay, lesbiana y bisexual tienen un mayor riesgo que los heterosexuales de sufrir asaltos físicos y violencia. Estudios realizados en California a mediados de los años noventa mostraron que casi la quinta parte de las lesbianas que participaron en el estudio, y más de la cuarta parte de los hombres gays que participaron, habían sido víctimas de algún crimen por odio, basado en su orientación sexual. En otro estudio realizado en California con aproximadamente 500 adultos jóvenes, la mitad de todos los hombres jóvenes participantes admitieron haber sido víctimas de alguna forma de agresión anti-gay, desde insultos hasta violencia física.

¿Qué se puede hacer para ayudar a gays y lesbianas en la lucha contra los prejuicios y la discriminación hacia ellos?

La investigación ha encontrado que la gente que tiene las actitudes más positivas hacia los gays, las lesbianas y los bisexuales, es aquella que dice conocer bien a una o más personas gays -- frecuentemente como amigos/as o compañeros/as de trabajo. Por esta razón, los psicólogos creen que las actitudes negativas hacia la gente gay, como grupo, no tienen su fundamento en experiencias reales, sino que se basan en estereotipos y prejuicios. Además, la protección contra la discriminación y la violencia es muy importante, tal como lo es para cualquier otro grupo minoritario. Algunos estados incluyen la violencia contra un individuo por su orientación sexual como un “crimen por odio”, y diez estados de EE.UU. tienen leyes contra la discriminación basada en la orientación sexual.

¿Por qué motivo es importante que la sociedad esté mejor educada acerca de la homosexualidad?

El educar a toda la gente acerca de la orientación sexual y la homosexualidad es probable que disminuya el prejuicio anti-gay. La información precisa acerca de la homosexualidad es especialmente importante para la gente joven que está descubriendo y buscando entender por primera vez su sexualidad -- ya sea ésta homosexual, bisexual o heterosexual. No tienen validez los temores de que tal información hará gay a más gente -- la información acerca de la homosexualidad no hace a nadie gay o hétero.

¿Están infectados de VIH todos los hombres gays y bisexuales?

No. Este es un mito frecuente. En realidad, el riesgo de quedar expuesto al VIH está relacionado con el comportamiento de la persona, no con su orientación sexual. Lo que es importante recordar acerca del VIH/SIDA es que es una enfermedad evitable mediante el uso de prácticas de sexo seguro y no utilizando drogas.

¿Dónde puedo encontrar más información acerca de la homosexualidad?

[El original (ver dirección electrónica más abajo) hace referencia a organizaciones y recursos de Estados Unidos. Aquí ponemos el CENTRO DE RECURSOS en español.] <http://llego.org/recursos.htm>

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Answers to Your Questions About Sexual Orientation and Homosexuality

APA Public Interest - Revised Version - July 1998 Reprinted from the American Psychological Association Home Page: www.apa.org/pubinfo/answers.html

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[Can Lesbians, Gay Men, and Bisexuals Be Good Parents?](#)

[Why Do Some Gay Men, Lesbians and Bisexuals Tell People About Their Sexual Orientation?](#)

[Why Is the "Coming Out" Process Difficult for Some Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual People?](#)

[What Can Be Done to Overcome the Prejudice and Discrimination the Gay Men, Lesbians, and Bisexuals Experience?](#)

[Why is it Important for Society to be Better Educated About Homosexuality?](#)

[Are All Gay and Bisexual Men HIV Infected?](#)

[Where Can I Find More Information About Homosexuality?](#)

What Is Sexual Orientation?

Sexual Orientation is an enduring emotional, romantic, sexual or affectional attraction to another person. It is easily distinguished from other components of sexuality including biological sex, gender identity (the psychological sense of being male or female) and the social gender role (adherence to cultural norms for feminine and masculine behavior).

Sexual orientation exists along a continuum that ranges from exclusive homosexuality to exclusive heterosexuality and includes various forms of bisexuality. Bisexual persons can experience sexual, emotional and affectional attraction to both their own sex and the opposite sex. Persons with a homosexual orientation are sometimes referred to as gay (both men and women) or as lesbian (women only).

Sexual orientation is different from sexual behavior because it refers to feelings and self-concept. Persons may or may not express their sexual orientation in their behaviors.

What Causes a Person To Have a Particular Sexual Orientation?

There are numerous theories about the origins of a person's sexual orientation; most scientists today agree that sexual orientation is most likely the result of a complex interaction of environmental, cognitive and biological factors. In most people, sexual orientation is shaped at an early age. There is also considerable recent evidence to suggest that biology, including genetic or inborn hormonal factors, play a significant role in a person's sexuality.

In summary, it is important to recognize that there are probably many reasons for a person's sexual orientation and the reasons may be different for different people.

Is Sexual Orientation a Choice?

No, human beings can not choose to be either gay or straight. Sexual orientation emerges for most people in early adolescence without any prior sexual experience. Although we can choose whether to act on our feelings, psychologists do not consider sexual orientation to be a conscious choice that can be voluntarily changed.

Can Therapy Change Sexual Orientation?

No. Even though most homosexuals live successful, happy lives, some homosexual or bisexual people may seek to change their sexual orientation through therapy, sometimes pressured by the influence of family members or religious groups to try and do so. The reality is that homosexuality is not an illness. It does not require treatment and is not changeable. However, not all gay, lesbian, and bisexual people who seek assistance from a mental health professional want to change their sexual orientation. Gay, lesbian, and bisexual people may seek psychological help with the coming out process or for strategies to deal with prejudice, but most go into therapy for the same reasons and life issues that bring straight people to mental health professionals.

What About So-Called "Conversion Therapies"?

Some therapists who undertake so-called conversion therapy report that they have been able to change their clients' sexual orientation from homosexual to heterosexual. Close scrutiny of these reports however show several factors that cast doubt on their claims. For example, many of the claims come from organizations with an ideological perspective which condemns homosexuality. Furthermore, their claims are poorly documented. For example, treatment outcome is not followed and reported overtime as would be the standard to test the validity of any mental health intervention.

The American Psychological Association is concerned about such therapies and their potential harm to patients. In 1997, the Association's Council of Representatives passed a resolution reaffirming psychology's opposition to homophobia in treatment and spelling out a client's right to unbiased treatment and self-determination. Any person who enters into therapy to deal with issues of sexual orientation has a right to expect that such therapy would take place in a professionally neutral environment absent of any social bias.

Is Homosexuality a Mental Illness or Emotional Problem?

No. Psychologists, psychiatrists and other mental health professionals agree that homosexuality is not an illness, mental disorder or an emotional problem. Over 35 years of objective, well-designed scientific research has shown that homosexuality, in and itself, is not associated with mental disorders or emotional or social problems. Homosexuality was once thought to be a mental illness because mental health professionals and society had biased information.

In the past the studies of gay, lesbian and bisexual people involved only those in therapy, thus biasing the resulting conclusions. When researchers examined data about these people who were not in therapy, the idea that homosexuality was a mental illness was quickly found to be untrue.

In 1973 the American Psychiatric Association confirmed the importance of the new, better designed research and removed homosexuality from the official manual that lists mental and emotional disorders. Two years later, the American Psychological Association passed a resolution supporting the removal.

For more than 25 years, both associations have urged all mental health professionals to help dispel the stigma of mental illness that some people still associate with homosexual orientation.

Can Lesbians, Gay Men, and Bisexuals Be Good Parents?

Yes. Studies comparing groups of children raised by homosexual and by heterosexual parents find no developmental differences between the two groups of children in four critical areas: their intelligence, psychological adjustment, social adjustment, and popularity with friends. It is also important to realize that a parent's sexual orientation does not indicate their children's.

Another myth about homosexuality is the mistaken belief that gay men have more of a tendency than heterosexual men to sexually molest children. There is no evidence to suggest that homosexuals molest children more often than heterosexuals.

Why Do Some Gay Men, Lesbians and Bisexuals Tell People About Their Sexual Orientation?

Because sharing that aspect of themselves with others is important to their mental health. In fact, the process of identity development for lesbians, gay men and bisexuals called "coming out", has been found to be strongly related to psychological adjustment—the more positive the gay, lesbian, or bisexual identity, the better one's mental health and the higher one's self-esteem.

Why Is the "Coming Out" Process Difficult for Some Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual People?

For some gay and bisexual people the coming out process is difficult, for others it is not. Often lesbian, gay and bisexual people feel afraid, different, and alone when they first realize that their sexual orientation is different from the community norm. This is particularly true for people becoming aware of their gay, lesbian, or bisexual orientation as a child or adolescent, which is not uncommon. And, depending on their families and where they live, they may have to struggle against prejudice and misinformation about homosexuality.

Children and adolescents may be particularly vulnerable to the deleterious effects of bias and stereotypes. They may also fear being rejected by family, friends, co-workers, and religious institutions. Some gay people have to worry about losing their jobs or being harassed at school if their sexual orientation became well known.

Unfortunately, gay, lesbian and bisexual people are at a higher risk for physical assault and violence than are heterosexuals. Studies done in California in the mid 1990s showed that nearly one-fifth of all lesbians who took part in the study and more than one-fourth of all gay men who participated had been the victim of a hate crime based on their sexual orientation. In another California study of approximately 500 young adults, half of all the young men participating in the study admitted to some form of anti-gay aggression from name-calling to physical violence.

What Can Be Done to Overcome the Prejudice and Discrimination that Gay Men, Lesbians, and Bisexuals Experience?

Research has found that the people who have the most positive attitudes toward gay men, lesbians and bisexuals are those who say they know one or more gay, lesbian or bisexual person well—often as a friend or co-worker. For this reason, psychologists believe negative attitudes toward gay people as a group are prejudices that are not grounded in actual experiences but are based on stereotypes and prejudice. Furthermore, protection against violence and discrimination are very important, just as they are for any other minority groups. Some states include violence against an individual on the basis of his or her sexual orientation as a "hate crime" and twelve U.S. states have laws against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

Why is it Important for Society to be Better Educated About Homosexuality?

Educating all people about sexual orientation and homosexuality is likely to diminish anti-gay prejudice. Accurate information about homosexuality is especially important to young people who are first discovering and seeking to understand their sexuality—whether homosexual, bisexual, or heterosexual. Fears that access to such information will make more people gay have no validity—information about homosexuality does not make someone gay or straight.

Are All Gay and Bisexual Men HIV Infected?

No. This is a commonly held myth. In reality, the risk of exposure to HIV is related to a person's behavior, not their sexual orientation. What's important to remember about HIV/AIDS is it is a preventable disease through the use of safe sex practices and by not using drugs.

Where Can I Find More Information About Homosexuality?

True Colors Inc. Sexual Minority Youth and Family Services

19 Autumn Street, PO Box 1855, Manchester, CT 06045-1855 (860)-649-7386 www.OurTrueColors.org

APA Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Concerns Program

750 First Street, NE. Washington, DC 20002

Email: publicinterest@apa.org

Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States

130 W 42nd St., Ste. 350 New York, NY 10036 (212)-819-9770

Email: Siecuse@siecus.org

Creating a Safe Social and Health Service Environment

These guidelines were summarized from a report by the **Gay & Lesbian Medical Association** (www.glma.org), and a **Safe Harbors, Task Force Meeting regarding LGBTI youth in out-of-home care.**

- 1) Create a Welcoming Environment:** LGBTI clients often ‘scan’ an office for clues to help them determine to what extent the office, staff or agency is affirming of their sexual orientation or gender identity. You may want to implement some of the following suggestions as appropriate to your setting:
 - a. Posters showing racially and ethnically diverse same sex couples or families (a list of possible posters is available in this resource guide on page 14)
 - b. LGBTI friendly stickers, symbols posted in offices or doors (e.g. safe zone stickers; rainbow flag, etc.)
 - c. Visible non-discrimination statement that explicitly includes orientation and gender identity/expression
 - d. Provide at least one universal, gender inclusive ‘restroom’ so that people are not faced with the issue of choosing the ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ bathroom.
 - e. Providing LGBTI specific media such as this resource guide, local or national magazines or newsletters. Post appropriate resource information and activities.

- 2) Intake forms and inclusive language:** Filling out intake forms gives clients their first, and most important, impressions of the extent to which their identity and families systems are recognized and affirmed. Review your forms for inclusive language on sex, gender, relationship status, and family structures. In addition, if your practice is likely to include transgender and intersex people, additional training about their unique health, mental health and other concerns is critical to effective, competent service delivery.
 - a. When discussion sexual history, it is very important to reflect client language and terminology about their partners and their behavior. Many people do not define themselves through a sexual identity label, yet may have sex with persons of their same sex or gender, or with more than one sex. If you identify an individual as ‘gay’ when they don’t self-identify in that way, you can damage rapport and trust. Respect transgender patients by using appropriate pronouns for their gender expression. If you are unsure, ask in a gentle, respectful way.
 - b. When talking about sexual or relationship partners, use gender-neutral language such as “partner(s)” or significant other(s). Ask open-ended questions and don’t assume the gender of a client’s partner(s) or sexual behaviors. Don’t assume that current and past behaviors are the same. Look for ways in which stereotypes can impact the questions you ask and don’t ask (for example, not asking a gay man about children; or not asking a woman who identifies as lesbian about STI risks).
 - c. Within DCF, many forms (such as potential foster parent interview forms) have been updated to include gender-neutral language. Practice using that language until you are comfortable with it. If the forms is not neutral, practice asking the question in a way that is.
 - d. Ask violence screening questions in a gender neutral way: have you been physically or sexually hurt (are you currently being hurt, have you ever experienced being hurt) by someone you love or by a stranger? Have you ever been sexually assaulted or raped?

- 3) Some important “Do’s” (from the True Colors/DCF Safe Harbors Task Force Meeting):**
 - a. Consistently challenge biased remarks regardless of the source.
 - b. Understand that questioning, exploration, and fluidity is normal for adolescents
 - c. Challenge your pre-conceived ideas of what is good for youth and children in terms of placements, family structure and relationships. Educate yourself about sexuality and gender.
 - d. Consider carefully what you place into youth’s records since those records are going to follow them throughout the system.
 - e. Use supervision if you are struggling to balance your personal views with your professional responsibilities or if you want to ‘check out’ your assessment or recommendations for hidden biases.
 - f. Assess and educate existing and potential foster homes and other residential settings for their openness, comfort level, attitudes and policies regarding sexual orientation and gender identity of youth in their care.

More Action Steps for a Supporting Environment

Here are some ideas you can put into practice immediately upon return to your school or office!

Goals: Reduce violence and harassment and reduce the negative consequences of oppression; Increase self-esteem and a sense of belonging; Assist youth in clarifying their self-identity in positive ways.

Assess the school or agency climate by reviewing (and strengthening where necessary):

- ❖ Your own individual attitudes and beliefs; agency policies; access to positive services. (There is a sample agency assessment form that follows.)

Some things you can do as an individual:

- ❖ Explore your own assumptions, recognizing the source of some of your thoughts and beliefs and the impact of these beliefs on your works with LGBT youth and families.
- ❖ Learn about the connections between anti-LGBT bias and racism, sexism, classism, etc.
- ❖ Understand issues that may be unique to LGBT youth such as the fear of discovery; rejection and social isolation; pressure to conform to heterosexuality; potential harassment and violence; alcohol and drug abuse; suicide risks, etc.
- ❖ Look for a support network of advocates. Listen and learn from LGBT people. Attend LGBT events, films, workshops, pride marches, PGLAG meetings, etc.
- ❖ Examine your use of language: Do your questions and conversations assume heterosexuality of the individual and his/her parents or family?
- ❖ Learn about laws, policies and political issues affecting the rights of LGBT people (e.g. Boy Scouts policies, domestic partnerships, second parent adoption, etc.)
- ❖ Collect pamphlets, information, community resources to use, share and display.
- ❖ Speak up, speak out (understanding and respecting the courage that takes). Educate others by sponsoring events, panels or workshops, offering accurate information upon hearing slurs or myths. Interrupt anti-LGBT jokes, assumptions; write letters to the editor; etc.

Some actions you can take in your school/classroom/agency/program or office:

- ❖ Wear a button/sticker that promotes awareness (or use magnets or other posted symbols)
- ❖ Assess current posters and add awareness posters that include LGBT examples
- ❖ Identify and use opportunities to contradict negative messages. Take advantage of “Teachable moments”. Stop heterosexist jokes or remarks. Speak up in defense and support of LGBT clients, students and staff.
- ❖ Identify and use opportunities to integrate LGBT examples in curriculum, lesson plans, intake and other forms, interviews and other client interactions.
- ❖ Set and consistently enforce clear rules of behavior that respect and protect diversity; Encourage respectful discussion and debate. (contact Connecticut Women’s Education And Legal Fund or CT chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union or other agencies for pamphlets on the difference between ‘free speech’ and ‘hate language’.

Some things your school or agency can do:

- ❖ Create and enforce clear policies. For sample policies, contact The American Academy of Pediatrics; The American Medical Association; The American Psychiatric Association; the National Association of Social Workers; Child Welfare League of America; the National Education Association; The American Federation of Teachers; The American Bar Association; The American School Counselor Association; the American School Health Association; and others with inclusive policies (or see Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network (GLSEN/CT’s) “Tackling Gay Issues in School” for samples of some of the above.)
- ❖ Provide in-service learning opportunities for workers, supervisors and other staff; Invite positive LGBT role models to in-service or classroom presentations
- ❖ Support access to confidential support services with skilled and aware staff

Special thanks to participants in True Colors Workshops, the Rainbow Center at UCONN and PFLAG Hartford for many of the above ideas!

Agency/School/Organization Assessment Tool/Survey

Assessment is a critical first step in ensuring that your school, your agency or your organization is safe, inclusive and affirming of all your constituents, including those that are LGBT. The following survey, developed by True Colors, Inc. may be used as an assessment tool in staff meetings, agency trainings, Quality of work life committees, or other programming. True Colors is available for consultation in areas of assessment, in-service training, and policy development/implementation.

- 1) Are Policies Inclusive of Sexual Orientation and Gender Expression/Identity?
 - a) Non-Discrimination Policies
 - b) Sexual Harassment Policies
 - c) Personnel
 - i) Hiring
 - ii) Contractual Agreements with employees and vendors
 - iii) Domestic Partnership and other Employee Benefits
- 2) Do policies include written, escalating mechanisms for staff, clients and/or their families to address a perceived breach?
 - a) Are staff, clients and/or families aware that these mechanisms exist?
 - b) Are the forms or mechanisms readily accessible?
 - c) Do staff, clients or families experience an actual or perceived risk in taking action?
- 3) Is the physical environment safe, inclusive and affirming? (Scanning the areas, could you tell that this is a welcoming environment?)
 - a) Public areas
 - b) Clients and family areas (including waiting rooms, offices, corridors, etc)
 - c) Staff areas
 - d) Are restrooms and bathroom facilities gender neutral or are private facilities available and easily accessible?
 - e) Do your off-site facilities meet same or similar standards?
- 4) Are Client/Staff and/or Family Forms inclusive of sexual minority populations incorporating options that recognize relationship status, support networks and family make-up?
 - a) Employment Applications
 - b) School Registration, Intake, Interview and other initial contact forms
 - c) Psycho-sexual history and other treatment planning forms
 - d) Other forms specific to your environment?
- 5) Have all Management Staff (including Board of Directors, Advisory Boards, etc) participated in values clarification and/or non-discrimination in-service, workshops or training?
- 6) Have all support staff with casual client and/or family contact participated in values clarification and/or non-discrimination in-service, workshops or training?

Agency/School/Organization Assessment, cont.

- 7) Have all staff with direct student/client contact or responsibilities participated in values clarification in-service, workshops or training that includes an analysis of the impact of personal values on professional performance?
- 8) Have all staff with direct service participated in skill development and cultural competency-based curriculum or training that includes an exploration of issues specific to this population in your environment? Some examples might include:
 - a) A skill-building “safe schools or classrooms” workshop that focuses on ways that educators can create safe, affirming learning environments and cultures
 - b) An exploration of different models regarding the coming out process, its developmental impact and appropriate interventions through each stage of development and coming out for both LGBT individuals and the children of LGBT parents.
 - c) An exploration of differences and distinctions regarding sexual behavior, sexual reactivity, sexual acting out, sexual abuse or assault and sexual orientation.
 - d) An exploration of gender, gender identity, gender variance, genderqueerness, and gender dysphoria.
 - e) An exploration/discussion of evolving language regarding orientation and gender: gay, LGBT; LGBTQQTS; queer; genderqueer; MSM, YMSM; etc. and the ways in which self-labeling intersect with identity.
 - f) A multi-cultural exploration of the impact of orientation on family and other client support systems
- 9) Do support services and programs address issues of orientation in peer support groups, social integration and socialization programs through education or other means?
- 10) Are research initiatives inclusive of issues of sexual orientation in determining target populations; program or treatment developments, outcomes and evaluations; prevention, and risk factor research?
- 11) Does on-going skill development training (such as teacher education days, morning lectures; grand rounds, etc.) include topics related to sexual orientation?
- 12) Other?

Tips and Tidbits: Getting a GSA started

- 1) Find (or be) an interested LGBT or ally student
- 2) Contact True Colors (888-565-5551) or GLSEN National for a GSA starting package (or come to a True Colors/GLSEN-CT sponsored GSA Summit)
- 3) Gather like-minded friends
- 4) Read school guidelines for starting a group
- 5) Find a faculty advisor who supports your goals as well as teachers who will let themselves be known for availability/support
- 6) “Clue in” administrators (so they understand where you are coming from and can offer support – offer them information, other GSA and community resources if they have concerns and remind them about the equal access and other relevant statutes as necessary). Assume they will be supportive – but clue them in if they are not.
- 7) Touch base with school guidance counselors and social workers (they may know students who would be interested in attending the group that you might not know.) In addition, they might be helpful in facilitating meetings about more difficult topics like “coming out”; being with a friend or relative who is LGBT, etc.)
- 8) Have an initial meeting with interested students, advisor or administrator. Be sure you can present reasons that the group is needed.
- 9) Assess School Atmosphere (identify and reach out to allies; identify potential obstacles/issues and how you will overcome them) You can use the assessment tool on page 39 or make up one of your own.
- 10) Develop a mission/statement of purpose
- 11) Contact other local LGBT groups for ideas and/or support (There are lots of contacts throughout this guide!)
- 12) Establish ground rules for the meetings (even though this will should be created through a discussion at the first meeting, it is helpful for the organizers to have an idea of the kinds of things they want to be sure are included in case the group misses one or two of them.)
- 13) Establish goals and objectives: What do you want the first session to accomplish?
- 14) Establish a time and place
- 15) Advertise meetings (signs, use PA and announcements if possible). Be aware that this will stimulate discussion (both pro and con) and that signs may be torn down or defaced (a hate crime, by the way...) If this happens, inform advisor and administrators and see page 43 for ideas for dealing with backlash.)
- 16) Develop content /ideas for meetings (the group will help do this once formed, but you will need to have ideas for the first session or two or three) See page 42 for lots of great ideas!
- 17) Hold initial meeting
- 18) Provide food and snacks
- 19) Develop talking points
- 20) Contact the press (if community input and support is in line with the groups goals and objectives)

Tips and Tidbits: Cool Stuff To Do At Meetings

- 1) Set up ground rules as a group so that everybody knows and understands the guidelines (like “no assumptions”; respect for other’s opinions and ideas; body language, etc.)
- 2) Come up with cool topics for discussion. Here are some examples:
Dealing with homophobia; Ways to make your school safer; Girls in sports/stereotypes; The prom; Dealing with sexual feelings; Coming out to parents (see page 47 for a list of questions to consider); Communicating with authority; Coming out at work; Coming out in the dorm/to roommates; Talking about Pride; LGBT history (famous LGBT people); How the media portrays LGBT people; Balance between myth and reality; Planning and raising families; Safer sex; Sexual Relationships in Literature; Naming the Group; Q+A’s (where everybody writes down a question and puts it in a hat, people draw one out and everybody discusses it)
- 3) Use group building skills such as doing an opening exercise and a closing “check-in”; leave time at the beginning for people to vent; make sure everybody gets a chance to talk; come up with a list of ground rules about listening, making assumptions about people, interrupting or dominating the conversation
- 4) Watch and talk about LGBT movies like Brian McNaught (“Gay Issues in the Workplace”; “Growing Up Gay and Lesbian” and others); Watermelon Woman; “Out of the Past” etc. (See page 14 or www.queerfilm.com for more film ideas)
- 5) Bring in outside speakers like: Alumni who did or didn’t come out; Clergy people; Stonewall Speakers; Politicians; Parents of LGBT folks; Teachers (straight and gay); Celebrities; etc.
- 6) Plan and have dances, theme dances (like gender bending or the 70’s); parties; music; etc.
- 7) Make and distribute safe zone stickers or make and put up posters (about LGBT people, prejudice, diversity, etc.)
- 8) Do a LGBT article swap or discuss previously brought in or assigned articles
- 9) Plan and participate in LGBT Pride or LGBT History Month or other awareness activities like the National Day of Silence; the Names Quilt
- 10) Plan networking activities with other LGBT youth groups
- 11) Participate in Children from the Shadows as a field trip, or in the planning process
- 12) Come up with sensitizing activities that you can use in your meetings or present to other clubs or the faculty
- 13) Figure out how to reach out to students who might be afraid
- 14) Set up anonymous questions and answer sessions on e-mail and answer them as a group
- 15) Do a Bring a Friend day
- 16) HAVE FOOD!
- 17) Do a “Fish Bowl” discussion with an interesting topic (set up two circles. The inner circle discusses a topic while the outer circle observes)
- 18) Make a movie during the meeting (or plan it to create outside the meeting)
- 19) Be visible and get faculty support
- 20) Find, read (or listen to) and share good books, music & movies with LGBT subjects, issues or performers

Tips and Tidbits: Developing Support/Allies

- 1) Identify and enlist straight allies for support including: Teachers; Open and Affirming Clergy; Parents/PTAs; Administrators; Community Leaders; Other Diversity Groups; Student Government, etc.
- 2) Educate others through role modeling, workshops, exercises like a “cross-over” exercise that lets people experience what it’s like to feel both the same and different
- 3) Establish a Student Bill of Rights using existing Federal and CT statutes that protect your right to establish a group in school
- 4) Hold a Rally or do a training at an assembly; write and act out short skits about discrimination or homophobia and present them at an assembly or at a faculty meeting and leave time for discussion
- 5) Network with other like-minded groups and hold regular state-wide GSA meetings
- 6) Hold on-going group leader meetings for support and to exchange ideas
- 7) Do a school wide survey and report on the results
- 8) Create a Social Justice, Non-Discrimination or Equal Rights Petition and get signatures
- 9) Write letters to the school, community, and local newspapers
- 10) Join a support group and/or talk with someone you trust
- 11) Mobilize parents (yours, your friends’ and PFLAG)
- 12) Use e-mail, set up a web page or an on-line newsletter to communicate with others for ideas, support, networking
- 13) Change school policy to match the current statutes and to include sexual minority youth, staff and faculty
- 14) Do workshops for students and faculty (and see if you can make them mandatory)
- 15) Work on educating younger students (elementary and middle school) since prejudice starts early
- 16) Put up flyers and posters
- 17) Get the voice out (and be nice or non-violently assertive)
- 18) Bring in speakers or hold open forums
- 19) Create a “Homo-History” lesson
- 20) Use visual aids like buttons, patches, posters
- 21) Hold a “bring a straight ally to the GSA” day
- 22) Have a party with food, music

Tips and Tidbits: Things to Remember as a GSA Leader

- 1) Ask questions. Let the GROUP decide and be responsible for its own success.
- 2) Set up (or have the group set up) ground rules in your opening statement that includes things like respect, parking lot issues or stuff that will get 'tabled'
- 3) Use icebreakers (at EVERY session!) to make new members feel welcome and to help existing members get to know each other better. Make sure that the icebreaker gives everyone a chance to talk.
- 4) Take risks
- 5) Give people space to talk at every meeting (and don't talk too much yourself)
- 6) Have a format and an agenda
- 7) Try to draw out the shy (and make sure that everybody gets a chance to talk and do exercises that get everyone in the room to participate)
- 8) Ask the group to figure out a signal as a group to let members know when they are drifting off topic or monopolizing the conversation
- 9) Read up on and look at group roles (who is a 'task leader'; who is the 'maintenance leader'; who is the group 'scapegoat', etc.)
- 10) Use humor
- 11) Break up cliques (do group stuff that puts people in new groups) and always bring in 'new blood'
- 12) Incorporate social plans (make sure people have time to socialize)
- 13) Hold on-going training for group leaders
- 14) Have the group figure out how to deal with personality conflicts before they happen and then use those suggestions (remind the group) when an issue arises
- 15) Use 'good and welfares' at the end of each session: Go around and ask each person to "check out" of the session saying something (even if they say, "pass".) You could ask a question like "Say one thing you liked and didn't like about the meeting", "Say one thing you learned or are going to use when you leave," etc.

Fundraising Ideas:

Art Exhibition and Sale
Concert
Super Rummage Sale
Bake Sale
Drag show

Party/Dance
Dog Walking
Gift Wrapping
Walkathons (skate-athons),
Be creative and have fun!!!

Car Wash
Movie Premieres
Flower Sale
polar bear water sprints

One Model of Coming Out *

- ❖ Coming out is an interactive, life-long process that is highly influenced by the norms and values of individual families, cultures and societies. It can be defined as an emergent, continuous, developmental process by which Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual people come to know and establish a positive identity in a society which questions both their very existence and their value.
 - ❖ Some limitations to most of the various “stages” models are that they imply a linear progression from one stage to the next; they ignore the wide variations among individual experiences; they may or may be relevant to bisexual or transgender experience; and they are generally based on research with white, adult, middle class and male populations whose experiences may not generalize or reflect those of others.
 - ❖ Lesbians appear to perceive affectional orientation and relationship dynamics as central to their self-definition as a sexual minority, while gay men appear to view sexual behavior and sexual fantasy as central to their identity.
 - ❖ Coming out varies widely from individual to individual. An individual’s gender, ethnicity, race, religion, and resources may have a profound impact on how he or she experiences his or her own identity, orientation, and self-definitions.
 - ❖ Most identity development models assume single social identities (e.g. race, gender, orientation) which overlooks two important dynamics for LGB People Of Color: The visibility or invisibility of sexual identity and the salience of identity. Most models inappropriately co-mingle personal and group identification, implying that individuals can’t be fully integrated in their LGB identity unless they are completely open about their orientation with others. This perspective may underestimate the impact of coming out for LGB people of color who may be battling multiple oppressions – without multiple support systems.
 - ❖ Few coherent models of bisexual or transgender identity development exist.
- 1) **Identity Confusion** (feeling “different” though the difference may or may not be experienced as sexual in nature; some experience this stage as feeling ‘not heterosexual, rather than gay, lesbian or bisexual; same-sex attraction, dreams, etc.). For many, this occurs at or around puberty.
 - 2) **Identity Comparison** (stronger sense of difference, social isolation, alienation, shame). Individuals often define their referent group in terms of the dominant culture (e.g. heterosexual, white, male) and internalize negative self-images as a result. Grossman (1997) describes this as internalizing a ‘spoiled’ identity which can lead to extreme stress as the young person is either ‘discredited’ by being known and identified as LGB or is ‘discreditable’ in that he/she/hir can be discovered at any time.
 - 3) **Identity Tolerance** (Actively seeking out bi/homosexual peers, living a “double life”, denial or compartmentalization of sexuality).
 - 4) **Identity Acceptance** (Increased contact with LGBT peers with severe loneliness/alienation if peers not available; Looking to the LGBT community as a means of providing an alternative, non-stigmatizing definitions of status, as well as social and sexual opportunities)
 - 5) **Pride** (Us/them attitude about heterosexuality, belief in superiority of being LGBT; aggressively “out” stance, sexually active to bolster identity, anger at prejudice and discrimination. This stage may be experienced quite differently by people of color. The internal and external pressure to come out publicly can create conflicting needs within different social identities. In addition, some may resist labeling by sexual orientation in part because the “gay movement” has been associated with the white middle class. Coming out “aggressively” can be seen as “joining with a white oppressor and denying one’s family ties.”
 - 6) **Synthesis** (Rejoining supportive heterosexuals, increased empathy, renewed emphasis on work, family roles)

* Summarized and adapted from: Perez, Ruperto M., DeBord, Kurt A., and Bieschke, Kathleen J. (eds.) Handbook of Counseling and Psychotherapy with Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Clients. American Psychological Association, Washington, DC 2000

Questions to Consider Before Coming Out

- 1) Are you **sure** about your sexual orientation or gender identity? If you feel confused or uncertain (which is normal, especially in the beginning of your exploration about who you are), reach out to people that you know will be supportive and affirming – people who won't push you to label yourself, people who will give you room to think, question, wonder and explore – people who will give you time to figure it out... Then, when you are ready, begin planning to come out to families and friends whose reaction feels less certain to you. Don't raise the issues unless you are sure you are able to respond with confidence to the question "Are You Sure?!" Confusion on your part will increase your family or friends confusion and decrease their confidence in your judgment.
- 2) Are you **comfortable** with your sexuality and/or gender identity? If you are wrestling with guilt and periods of depression, you'll be better off waiting to tell your family or friends. Coming out to them may require tremendous energy on your part; it will require a reserve of positive self image – and supportive allies and friends.
- 3) Do you have **support**? In the event your parent's, family member or friend's reaction devastates you, there should be someone or a group that you can confidentially turn to for emotional support and strength. Maintaining your sense of self-worth is critical. Here are some places that are open in case you need support or help at any time: In Connecticut, call InfoLine at 211 – they have 24/7 emergency, hotline and crisis support and are open and affirming to LGBT issues. For crisis intervention, you can also call the Trevor Project Hotline at 1-800-850-8078 (24 hour LGBT youth suicide prevention hotline) Most of all, be safe, and remember that the moment — whatever it is — passes. You just gotta hang on...
- 4) Are you **knowledgeable** about sexual orientation and gender identity? Your family or friends may respond based on a lifetime of information from a homophobic, bi-phobic, gender-phobic, queer-phobic society. Part of your job in coming out to yourself was to educate yourself – now part of your job may be to educate them... Are you prepared to do that? If not, reach out to organizations like Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG). They have brochures made just for parents and family members that could really help!

More Tips, tidbits and considerations before you come out

- 5) Don't assume you will know how somebody will respond – you may be pleasantly surprised by their affirming response.
- 6) Timing counts! Realize that your family's response during holidays may be different than they would be under other less hectic, stressful conditions. Are the holidays the best time or not? Think about your own family or friends and decide.
- 7) Remember that coming out is a continuous process – you may have to come out many times and in a variety of ways
- 8) Recognize that family or friends need time to acknowledge and accept that they have an LGBT child. It took you time to come to terms with who you are, now it is your family's turn.
- 9) Let your family's judgment be theirs to work on, not yours to take on, as long as they are kind to you
- 10) Have alternate plans if the situation becomes difficult at home. A school social worker or other helping professional may be able to help you develop a safety net. Also remember that if the situation turns violent, get out and get help from friends, police or DCF. The DCF Number to report abuse is: **800-842-2288**.

If you are coming home for a visit or a holiday and plan to come out then:

- 11) See # 6 and # 10 above
- 12) If you are bringing a partner home with you, don't wait until the holiday evening to raise the issue of sleeping arrangements – make plans in advance. Also consider: "Would your parents let you share a room with an opposite sex partner?" If not, don't expect the rules to be different just because your partner is ...
- 13) Also, discuss in advance with your partner how you will talk about your relationship, how you will or won't show affection with each other, etc
- 14) Focus on common interests, remind and reassure family members that you are the same person you always were — they just know more about you.
- 15) Be wary about the possible desire to shock your family.
- 16) Remember to affirm, love and respect yourself and who you are. Remember that who you are is a gift to the world. Remember that the world would be a lesser place without the contribution that you bring to it! Remember, most fundamentally, that you are loved, loving, and lovable.

SALIENDO DEL CLOSET

(traducción de True Colors's "Coming Out Advice" por David Sarshalom e Ivanka Garáfulic)

A pesar que la edad promedio en que la juventud gay sale del closet, ante ellos mismos y ante los demás sigue disminuyendo, un porcentaje significativo de jóvenes sale del closet durante su primer o segundo año de universidad. Muchos están pensando salir de él ante sus familias durante las vacaciones de invierno. Inclusive jóvenes que ya salieron del closet en la secundaria descubren que ahora han salido del mismo de una manera "diferente" – tal vez de una manera más abierta o con una pareja nueva. En cualquier caso, esto puede ser realmente estresante. Así que, de ahora en adelante, nuestra nueva tradición para el invierno será enviar nuestros "tips para salir del closet" como algo sobre lo cual deberían meditar.

Preguntas que debes Considerar Antes de Salir del Closet

1. ¿Te sientes seguro de tu orientación sexual o identidad de género? Si te sientes confundido o inseguro (lo cual es completamente normal, sobre todo al comienzo de la exploración de tu identidad), busca primero personas que sabes que te apoyarán y te reforzarán la confianza en ti mismo y habla con ellas – gente que no te presionará para que te etiquetes, gente que te dará el espacio para pensar, cuestionar, preguntar y explorar – gente que te dará el tiempo para entenderlo. Después, cuando estés listo, empieza a planear salir del closet ante tus familiares y amigos cuyas reacciones te sean menos predecibles. Nunca saques a relucir el tema a menos que estés seguro que vas a poder responder con toda confianza la pregunta "¿estás seguro?" La confusión de parte tuya únicamente aumentará la confusión de tus familiares y amigos y disminuirá su confianza en tu juicio.
2. ¿Te sientes cómodo con tu sexualidad y/o identidad de género? Si estás lidiando con culpa y períodos de depresión, es mejor que retardes la decisión de salir del closet ante tu familia o amigos. Salir del closet requiere de mucha energía por parte tuya; va a requerir de una reserva de sentimientos positivos hacia uno mismo – y de aliados y amigos comprensivos.
3. ¿Cuentas con apoyo? En dado caso que la reacción de tus padres, familiares o amigos te deje desconsolado, deberías tener una persona o un grupo de confianza donde puedas acudir en busca de apoyo emocional y de seguridad. Es sumamente importante mantener tu autoestima. A continuación te damos los teléfonos de algunos sitios a los que puedes acudir en caso que llegues a necesitar ayuda: en Connecticut llama a InfoLine al 211 – ellos atienden emergencias 24/7 y la línea de ayuda y de apoyo en caso de crisis recibe llamadas sobre temas LGBT. Otro lugar que también puedes llamar en caso de crisis es al Trevor Project Hotline al 1-800-850-8078 (línea de ayuda telefónica para la prevención del suicidio de jóvenes LGBT). Sin embargo, lo más importante que debes recordar, es que el momento – cualquiera que sea la reacción – pasa. Solamente tienes que conseguir sobrellevar ese momento.
4. ¿Posees conocimientos sobre orientación sexual e identidad de género? Tus familiares o amigos pudieran reaccionar en base a una larga información obtenida de una sociedad homofóbica, bi-fóbica y género-fóbica. Parte de tu trabajo al salir del closet ante ti debería ser educarte – ahora parte de tu trabajo será educarlos. ¿Estás preparado para hacer eso? Si la respuesta es no, ponte en contacto con organizaciones como Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG). ¡Ellos cuentan con folletos especialmente diseñados para padres y familiares que realmente pueden ser de gran ayuda!

Más tips, secretitos y consideraciones para antes de salir del closet:

5. Nunca asumas que sabes o puedes predecir la reacción de una persona – puede que te lleses una sorpresa agradable por su reacción de apoyo.
6. ¡El momento sí cuenta! Considera que la respuesta de tus familiares si se los dices durante las fiestas de fin de año, podría ser diferente que si se los dices en otra época no tan llena de diferentes quehaceres y menos llenos de stress ¿Pudiera ser diferente si tocaras el tema en otras circunstancias menos importantes? ¿Esta es la época más apropiada para hacerlo? Piensa sobre ello tomando en cuenta a tu familia y amigos y toma una decisión.
7. Recuerda que salir del closet es un proceso constante – es probable que tengas que salir del closet muchas veces y de diferentes maneras.
8. Reconoce que tus familiares y amigos necesitan tiempo para admitir y aceptar que tienen un hijo LGBT. Tú necesitaste tiempo para aceptarte como eres. Ahora le toca el turno a tu familia.

9. Deja que la opinión de tus familiares sea algo que ellos resuelvan, no es algo que tu tienes que asumir, mientras que sean amables contigo.
10. Ten planes alternativos en caso que las cosas se pongan difíciles en tu casa. Un trabajador social del colegio o algún otro profesional pudieran ayudarte a establecer un muro de seguridad. También recuerda que si la situación se pone violenta, debes salir inmediatamente de la casa y conseguir ayuda de amigos, la policía o la DCF. El número de la DCF para reportar abusos es 1-800-842-2288.

Si estás yendo a casa de visita o de vacaciones y planeas salir del closet durante tu estadía:

11. Lee nuevamente #6 y #10 arriba.
12. Si estás llevando tu pareja a tu casa, no esperes hasta la noche de fiesta para hacer los arreglos de alojamiento – planea por adelantado. También considera esto: “¿Tus padres te permitirían compartir un cuarto con una persona del sexo opuesto?” Si la respuesta es no, no esperes que las reglas sean diferentes simplemente porque tu compañero sea un...
13. De igual manera discute con tu compañero la manera en que van a hablar de su relación, si se van a hacer demostraciones de afecto en público, etc.
14. Enfócate en intereses comunes, recuérdale y confírmale a tu familia que eres la misma persona de siempre – solamente que ahora saben algo más de ti.
15. Se prudente acerca del deseo de querer escandalizar a tu familia. Ten mucho cuidado – No lo hagas.
16. Recuerda ser firme en cuanto a quererte y respetarte como persona y por quien eres. Recuerda que eres un regalo para el mundo. ¡Recuerda que el mundo sería un lugar menos especial sin la contribución que tú le aportas! Lo más fundamental, recuerda que eres muy querido, que eres cariñoso y que eres digno de ser amado.

Coming Out to Children

Although this section was originally written for LGBT parents, much of the information is quite applicable to Social Workers and LGBT foster parents as they consider what and when to talk with foster children about the foster parent's sexual orientation.

Suggestions for Parents: (from Barbara F. Meltz's weekly column in the Boston Globe: Child Caring.)

Clue in all the adults in your child's life from baby sitters to parents of peers, on the story of your family

Explaining orientation need not include a discussion of sex until the child is developmentally ready. When younger children ask how babies are made, tell them honestly, but also include the story of how they were made "Mama and I could not make a baby by ourselves so we adopted you!" Or whatever is true for your family.

All children benefit from relationships and role models of each gender. Enlist friends, relatives, teachers and coaches.

Some studies reveal that children of same sex parents typically wish their parents were less affectionate with each other in public (yeah, like the children of straight kids don't?) and had fewer lesbian/gay posters or books around the house.

Be sure to tell you children that they don't need to protect you: "Don't be afraid to tell me if something happens or you have bad thoughts. It won't make me feel bad. I can' handle it!"

Especially if you are not out in all areas of your life, talk to children about the language of choice: "People don't tell everyone everything that happens in a family. You pick and choose whom you feel safe talking to."

Stages of Development issues for children of LGBT Parents: (B. Meltz , Boston Globe, 3/2/2000)

Infants and toddlers: What their family looks like to the rest of the world matters not at all to them as long as they are well loved

Preschoolers: children begin to notice all kinds of differences but don't know that cultural messages are attached to these differences. Keep your responses simple and matter of fact. "Yes you are right – your friend has a mom and a dad and you have two dads..." Expand on it if you have other examples to point to.

Early Elementary Age: Child begins to see recognition of cultural values from 'why am I the only one who...' to "I don't like being the only one who..." There is a dawning sense that being different has consequences. This is your cue to talk about how the world works and how "sometimes the people who are in the majority make rules that say that others ways of being aren't as good – which is why families like ours are working to change those rules..." Follow through by being a visible advocate in your child's school.

Late Elementary and middle school age: This is the trickiest time for parents because it is the time that children most long to be most like their peers. Even the most loving kids can say the most hurtful things sometimes about their families: "I hate this family! Why can't we be like everyone else?" Experts urge parents not to take it personally – it's about the need to fit in, not about your family per se. Some children are sad or withdrawn during these years, but parents should try to keep the lines of communication open. Let your kids know that you are available to talk and initiate conversations if they don't: "Has there been teasing lately?"

Mid to late adolescence: A developmental task of these years is coming to grips with your sexual identity. Once this is resolved, family differences are less of an issue. Studies show that the children of LGBT parents are no more likely to be LGBT than the population at large, though they often feel more free to experiment as they grow into their own sexual identity.

ISSUES ACROSS THE LIFE SPAN

Studies suggest that when, compared to the population as a whole, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) individuals experience higher levels of social isolation, substance abuse, depression, and suicidality across the life cycle, particularly at adolescence, and again, in their senior years. This increased level of distress can often be directly attributed to the emotional effects of stigma; the perpetual risk of peer, family and societal discovery and/or rejection; harassment, increased risk and incidence of violence and discrimination. In spite of the increased risks this population faces, few services exist to meet their needs. Some recommendations across the life cycle include:

- 1) Increase Respect for and Tolerance of Difference Within the School Setting. Mandate cultural competency standards for Faculty and Staff designed to ensure a safe and equitable education for all students. In addition, incorporate LGBT issues into existing student curriculum. Some examples:**
 - a) K-3rd : Discussions regarding the many ways in which people create families (such as single parent, grandparent, foster parent, LGBT parent families) designed to teach children to be respectful of each other/the families they grow up in
 - b) 4th – 6th: Exercises and activities which focus on respect for each other and tolerance for difference
 - c) 7th – 8th: Increased focus on tolerance for difference, anti-bullying strategies that include peer mediation and conflict resolution; impact of hate language in the classroom and in the school yard
 - d) 9th – 12th: Exercises and activities which challenge prevailing LGBT myths and stereotypes, expand student awareness of the impact of discrimination and look at the intersection of racism, sexism and homophobia
- 2) Expand Professional Standards/Training in all of the helping professions to include competency in sexual minority issues. Some examples:**
 - a) Regarding LGBT Youth: An understanding of the impact of social isolation; developmental impact of coming out without accurate information, role models and resources; Potential family and/or peer violence or harassment; Safety issues; Family system issues when youth are “out” to some but not all members of a family (e.g. confusion, secret-keeping, etc.)
 - b) Regarding LGBT adults: An understanding of the impact of chosen family systems which may be both non-traditional and complex; Estranged or conflictual relationships with families of origin; Relationship issues that are unique to same sex partners (for example: partners who are at different stages in the ‘coming out’ process or situations where primary relationships are not acknowledged within the family, work or other social settings). In addition, many LGBT individuals experience significant distress as they live with the impact of chronic and multiple losses as a result of the AIDS pandemic.
 - c) Regarding LGBT Parents and their children: An understanding of the impact of: Social isolation; The relative degree to which parents are “out” or open regarding their sexual orientation; The way in which the family was created (i.e. after a divorce, blended families, children born into an established LGBT parent unit; etc.); The developmental stage of the child; Discriminatory school, health care or other policies that denigrate or marginalize the family and the non-biological parent.
 - d) Regarding LGBT elderly: An understanding of the impact of: Loss of a life partner within an environment that may not have recognized them as a couple; Social, health care and inheritance policies that do not recognize partners as “next of kin”; Convalescent or other long-term care facilities which are homophobic or subject them to hostile environments.
- 3) Expand programs and training within existing facilities to meet the needs of LGBT individuals with psychiatric or developmental disabilities.**
 - a) Existing DCF, DMHaS and DMR programs (and their affiliates) must recognize that some of their clients are LGBT and must ensure that their environments, their programs, and their staff are LGBT affirming. This requires values clarification and bias reduction training for all staff with additional skill-building training for clinical staff.
 - b) New programs which specifically target both in and out patient LGBT youth and adults need to be developed. There are currently NO LGBT specific, in-patient programs in CT. There is one outpatient group for LGBT adults with mental illness (at CT Mental Health Center, Yale); and one community based group (at the New Haven Gay and Lesbian Community Center) for LGBT adults with developmental disabilities. LGBT-specific support groups (like 12-step programs), therapy groups and socialization groups that allow LGBT individuals come together to provide mutual support and understanding have been shown to significantly improve the overall outcomes with in-patient, out-patient and community-based groups.

Substance Abuse Treatment Issues

For CT LGBT 12-Step meetings, call InfoLine at 211, call the AA Hotline at (800) 252-6465 or see www.ct-aa.org.

Issues:

A number of studies have suggested that LGBT youth have significantly higher rates of substance use, including tobacco, alcohol and illicit drugs than their heterosexual peers.

In general, gay men appear to exhibit little elevated risk for alcohol abuse or heavy drinking relative to heterosexual men. The rates of drinking for gay men tend to remain constant over the life cycle, however, while the rates for heterosexual men tend to decrease as they age. Recent studies examining trends in drinking have reported decreases in drinking and alcohol related problems with gay men.

Lesbians appear to be at higher risk for heavier drinking and for drinking related problems than heterosexual women in all age categories. The highest rates were reported by lesbians aged 55 or older, who were least open about their sexual orientation and least connected to the lesbian community.

Lesbians are more likely to currently use marijuana than any other illicit drug. Gay men are more likely to use club drugs, inhalants, stimulants and sedatives.

Risk Factors:

The role of the “gay bar” as a primary social vehicle; Fewer peer, family and societal supports; Internalized homophobia

Socioeconomic and psychosocial conditions associated with minority status; for youth, higher risk of factors which are associated with drug use: truancy; school drop out; smoking, depression, etc.

Stresses related to identity formation and coming out

Cigarette smoking (often considered a gateway drug) is significantly higher among sexual minority youth and lesbian women than in heterosexuals.

Assessment and Treatment Issues:

Clients usually present with global reports of anxiety or depression or with specific problems in one or more life areas that are the result of drug or alcohol abuse. Few specific instruments exist to assess the impact of orientation, or even to include orientation in the process. Therefore all assessments must include a thorough (current and past) psychosexual history.

Clinicians must be able to identify and assess which stage of the coming out process their clients are in. This is significant because it directly impacts the therapeutic process and can help identify appropriate interventions.

Culturally competent treatment might include assisting the client in increased self-awareness and acceptance as a sexual minority as well as an exploration of coping strategies to assist with discrimination and rejection from society, peers, family of origin and others, along with the stresses of recovery. For example, if alcohol or drugs were used to conceal inner conflict related to orientation, then it will be essential to address those issues in order to alleviate guilt, shame, self-hatred, etc.

Does the treatment environment include and affirm the client’s (often) non-traditional family networks and support systems? Identification and recognition of a ‘chosen’ family support system are highly beneficial for the continuance of recovery. What resources exist within the LGBT community to support sobriety?

Does the treatment environment affirm LGBT clients? Are intake, assessment and other forms, inclusive of LGBT lives and identities? To what extent is the client able to be “out” in in-patient, day treatment and other groups?

National Substance Abuse Resources

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Specific Treatment Facilities:

Alternatives (Los Angeles, Colorado, Philadelphia) www.alternativesinc.com (800) 342-5429

Pride Institute (NY, NJ, FL, Chicago, Minneapolis, Dallas) www.pride-institute.com (800) 54-PRIDE

The Lambda Center (Washington, DC) www.thelambdacenter.com (202) 885-5784

Montrose Counseling Center: (Houston) www.montrosecounselingcenter.org (713) 529-0037

Nat. Assoc. of Lesbian & Gay Addiction Professionals (NALGAP) WWW.NALGAP.ORG (703) 465-0539

Gay and Lesbian Medical Association <http://www.glma.org> (415)-255-4547

A Provider’s Guide to Substance Abuse Treatment for LGBT Individuals: www.health.org/govpubs/BKD392/index

True Colors XII Presenters

This section is designed to acknowledge and affirm the contributions of individuals and organizations who make a difference in the lives of LGBT youth every day. In addition, our goal is to provide a resource list of people who are experts in their field. We hope you will call on them often, as you bring the lessons of hope and healing home to your families, schools, agencies and communities.

Maryann Abbott**860-278-2044**

Maryann is Project Director of Project Protect: Sustained Female Condom Use Among High Risk Women at the Institute for Community Research. Prior to her work on Project Protect, Maryann worked as an ethnographer on Project COPE, a Longitudinal Study of AIDS Risk Among Injection Drug Users. She has been at ICR for five years working in the field of HIV prevention and women's reproductive health. Maryann is a member of ICR's Institutional Review Board, and also an active member of the CT chapter of Microbicides NOW.

Marc Adams**206-621-9129****heartstrong@heartstrong.org**

Marc Adams is the executive director of HeartStrong, a non profit with a mission to providing support to GLBT students from religious educational institutions. Adams is also the author of eight books including his award winning autobiography, *The Preacher's Son*. It is his journey to survive in religious schools (including Jerry Falwell's Liberty University), and ex-gay therapy.

Sharon Adams**203-387-0469****saadams40@aol.com**

A survivor of same sex DV who has presented the topic of same sex DV for several years. Two time presenter at True Colors conference

Jean Alicandro**860-832-1999****alicandro@ccsu.edu**

Jean Alicandro is the Associate Director of Student Activities Leadership Development at CCSU. She works with student leaders doing training and as an advisor. She also teaches a graduate class on Student Development.

John Allen**203-488-7570**

John Allen is the Program Director of Employment Services at Marrakech, Inc., a human service agency in Woodbridge, CT. He received an MS in Urban Studies and a BS in Economics, both from Southern Connecticut State University. He is the founder of the New Haven Gay and Lesbian Community Center and the unprecedented Rainbow Support Group. His path-breaking book, *Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender People with Developmental Disabilities and mental Retardation: Stories of the Rainbow Support Group* was released in September, 2003 by Haworth Press, Binghamton, NY.

Sarahi Almonte**860-525-8888****sarahi@lmfct.org**

Sarahi Almonte is a native of Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic and was raised in Spanish Harlem New York City. Sarahi considers herself a poet, a comedian and "commander-in-chief of her one woman army!" This monologue, titled "*Always Present Necessity*" is a work in progress about her coming of age, coming out and coming free! "*Through my sexual and personal experiences I discovered so much more of myself than I thought possible. I want to acknowledge and honor that young girl who sought answers and helped me become the woman I am today.*" She currently works for Love Makes a Family, a political organization working for equal marriage rights for same-sex couples in Connecticut. She would like to dedicate this performance to Ms. Ann Gabrielle and Ms. Jackie Grady of West Haven High School (1996), who saw a student that needed support and gave her nothing but unconditional love and defined the true meaning of Teacher. I also dedicate this to the conference formerly known as Children from the Shadows, where I found my voice in all its True Colors.

Mary Amato**203-725-2914****mary.amato@ppct.org**

Mary Amato is a Community Educator and Trainer at Planned Parenthood of Connecticut. She earned a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology from Central Connecticut State University, and has experience working with many diverse populations, including g the LGBTQ community.

Megan Andelloux**860-423-7011****megan.andelloux@ppct.org**

Megan Andelloux works as a Community Educator at Planned Parenthood where she spends her time discussing sexuality issues. She has worked and presented at True Colors for Planned Parenthood Of CT for the past 3 years where she put on Temptation Island. Before PPC she worked at Planned Parenthood of Greater Northern New Jersey as a Sexual Health Educator. She is state certified as HIV educator.

Diego Angarita**203-605-5448****dha04@hampshire.edu**

Diego Angarita is a Jewish Colombian adoptee. He grew up in Hamden and now attends Hampshire College. In high school he was the prime minister of the Hamden High School GSA and the Cultural Advisor for the Black and Latino Student Union. He is focusing on Latin American Studies and Reproductive Rights. He has been doing activism work in Connecticut for the past few years with Southern Connecticut Conference.

Kristal Barnes**860-573-6917****u2kristal@yahoo.com**

Kristal is a Lesbian partnered with a transsexual; involved in GLBT groups and organizations such as True Colors, Love Makes a Family, CTAC, and the Rainbow Support Group. Facilitates a support group for significant others of people who are transgendered.

Rob Bauer, MSW, LCSW**518-584-7014****www.robbaauer.net**

Bob Bauer, LCSW, has been working with the gay community for over eighteen years as a body-centered psychotherapist. His workshop, including *Touching the Body: Healing the Spirit*, the Rubinfeld Synergy Method for Gay Men and Gay and Single - what Keeps Us Out of Relationships have been presented across North America, including Omega and Esalen Institutes and Rowe Conference Center. He has a practice in Saratoga Springs NY.

Colby Berger, Ed. M**617-264-5319****cberger@thehome.org**

Colby Berger has been working with youth living in group homes for many years. As program manager of Waltham house, an LGBTQ group home in Massachusetts, she was instrumental in addressing the needs of LGBTQ youth both in and out of foster care placement. She is interested in sharing the successes of Waltham house with other group home workers. Colby had an instrumental role in the training of Massachusetts social workers on working with LGBTQ youth.

Warren Blumenfeld, PhD E.**515-232-8230****wblumen@iastate.edu**

Dr. Warren J. Blumenfeld is an Assistant Professor in Multicultural and International Curriculum Studies in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, College of Education, Iowa State University, Ames, IA. He is coauthor of *Looking at Gay and Lesbian Life*, editor of *Homophobia: How We All Pay the Price*, and coeditor of *Readings for Diversity and Social Justice*, and *Butler Matters: Judith Butler's Impact on Feminist and Queer Studies*.

Paul Bosko**(347) 268-4117****paulbosko@onebox.com**

Paul Bosko is a NYC-based Producer/Singer/Songwriter. He produced the award winning website for Crave (craveconference.com), a multi-media design conference in San Francisco. He writes and produces pop rock and dance music with Joey D'Alessandro at idance records (idancerecords.com). He has performed as both an actor and musical performer throughout the Northeast, and continues to work with Pride Festivals and benefits for the LGBT Community. As an actor, he has appeared in numerous films, television (*As The World Turns*), and off-Broadway productions. He appears as himself in the documentary "Talk is Queer", from little-stripe-productions. His debut CD, "Dressed to Play" was released to rave reviews in late 2001. This is his 7th year producing the entertainment for True Colors.

Bob Brex**860-974-1208****bob1117@snet.net**

Bob is currently the Executive Director of Northeast Communities Against Substance Abuse, a 21 town regional anti-substance abuse coalition in Northeastern CT and is the President of the Board of Directors of True Colors, Inc. Sexual Minority Youth and Family Services of Connecticut.

Jan Brookes**203-426-7674****jbrookes@yahoo.com**

Jan Brookes has taught high school studies for 24 years, the last 20 at Newtown High School. Since 1988 she has been involved in creating curricula that requires students to focus on issues of social justice both in the United States and globally. In addition to the topics of inequalities produced by global capitalism, she is also asks students to examine the issues of racism and heterosexism. She has advised Newtown High School's Gay-Straight Alliance since 1995. In 2003, Newtown's Gay-Straight alliance won a \$1000 grant from Channel 13 to create a unit of study on the right to safety in schools for gay youth. It is that unit that is the focus of the workshop.

Geraldine Burke**860-523-9799****stonewallspeakers@biz.ctol.net**

Geraldine Burke is the state coordinator of the Stonewall Speakers Association. She is a past board member of GLSEN CT and is a former officer on the board of True Colors. After teaching for 35 years in Connecticut schools she retired in 1999 and through her work and associations actively seeks to reduce prejudice for all LGBT people.

John Callas, MSW**(860) 550-6431**

John Callas, MSW is a Program Supervisor for DCF's Bureau of Juvenile Justice and has spent his fourteen year career working to make a difference for children and youth as a DCF Social Worker, a clinician for the Village for Families and Children, a community youth advocate and mentor, an adolescent substance abuse trainer and consultant and the founder and director of the Charter Oak Amateur Boxing Academy and Youth Development Program Inc.

Marilyn Cardone, LCSW**860-570-9157****marilyn.cardone@uconn.edu**

Marilyn Cardone is a licensed clinical social worker whose 18 years of practice has included work with LGBTQ youth and families. In her current position as Field Education Coordinator at UCONN School of Social Work, Marilyn takes every opportunity to educate students and their Field Instructors on LGBTQ issues. Her experience includes adjunct teaching at the School of Social Work and area community colleges on GLBTQ issues and counseling/social work. Marilyn is the parent of almost-four-year-old Olivia, and is looking forward to those teen years!

Marcy A. Carlone**860-463-9606****mcarl65@aol.com**

Marcy A. Carlone, BA, has been actively involved in sexual assault crisis counseling for the past 5 years. As a survivor of a female-to-female rape, Marcy has dedicated countless hours of time to educating people on this topic. In addition to working full-time, Marcy is currently pursuing her Masters in Counseling.

Charmagne**Charmagne@Charmagne.net**

Charmagne has dazzled audiences with her rendition of "The National Anthem" performed at professional competitions throughout the country. She performed at Sean "P Diddy" Combs' 3rd Annual All-Star Festival in Cancun, Mexico. She has also featured with live Jazz and R&B bands at Foxwoods Casino & various Music festivals. She has opened for recording artists Brian McKnight, Deborah Cox & Roy Ayers. Both a lyricist and vocalist, at 19 Charmagne left college to pursue a career in music. Influenced by Vanessa Williams, Whitney Houston, and Anita Baker. She has developed an adult contemporary rhythm and blues style all her own.

Reverend George Chien**860-724-4605****revgchien@sbcglobal.net**

Reverend George Chen and Reverend Julio Flores are partners and co-pastors of MCC Hartford. Under their spiritual guidance, MCC Hartford is doing well and growing.

Classic City Kings**richardson_911@yahoo.com**

The Classic City Kings, a drag king troupe out of Athens, Georgia, are proud to be the first and only drag king troupe in town. What started as a small time bar room act has become a full blown socio-political performance troupe on a mission to make a difference. Anything but quiet, we raise cash, awareness, and eyebrows faster than you can say "spirit gum." We break the gender binary and rock the political boat that keeps the queer community in constant search for revolution. We love what we do and it shows on stage, bringing together diverse backgrounds, schools of thought, gender identity, and musical interests sure to open the eyes, ears, and hearts of our audience members.

Kenneth M. Cohen, Ph. D**607-255-5208****kmcl17@cornell.edu**

Ken is a licensed Clinical Psychologist at Cornell University's Counseling and Psychological Services where he provides individual and group therapy to sexual minority clients. He also teaches the course "Gender and Sexual Minorities." Ken writes about LGB development and mental health issues and co-edited with Ritch Savin-Williams, "The Lives of Lesbians, Gays, and Bisexuals: Children to Adults" (Harcourt Brace College Publishers). He currently researches the biological origins of sexual orientation.

- Patrick Connolly** 978-835-9389 scorpioandros@hotmail.com
Patrick Connolly, theater major, has been out for 3 years and a member of Salem State College's GSA for four years. He is the President of the GSA for his second year and focuses primarily on developing student leaders and working towards member community involvement. He has worked in the past doing benefit shows as his alter ego, Scandalous A. Fair
- Di Constantinides** 607-216-0021 ext. 157 di.c@ppfa.org
Di Constantinides is a transgender and sex-positive Educator from Planned Parenthood of the Southern Finger Lakes in Ithaca, New York. He presents programs to local middle school, high school, college, and adult audiences. Some of the topics she presents include sexual health, safer sex, contraception, relationships, body image, Namibia and HIV/AIDS, and Working with LGBT clients. He is also one of the advisors for the Gay/Straight Alliance at Ithaca High School.
- Kelly Costello** 802-365-7684 trannyroadshow@yahoo.com
Kelly Costello has extensive experience in queer organizing, including work for the GLBTA Resource Center at American University and a term as President of the Board of Directors for Youth Pride Alliance in Washington, DC. Along with Jamez Terry, he founded the Denver Zine Library last year, and he currently resides in Chicago, where he is co-organizing the Tranny Roadshow.
- Maggie Crowley** 857-204-5816 maggie@equalmarriage.org
Maggie Crowley is the Youth and College Coordinator at the Freedom to Marry Coalition of Massachusetts. She is in her last semester at Emerson College. An activist since the age of 15, Maggie founded the award-winning Love Makes a Family Youth Network, a statewide lobbying group for Connecticut high school students. This is her 5th year attending True Colors. She served as president for both her college and high school GLBT student groups.
- Lyndon Cudlitz** 207-828-6560 lyndon@outright.org
Lyndon Cudlitz is a 21-year-old, white, Jewish, polyamorous, pansexual, genderqueer, multi-issue anti-oppression activist. Lyndon is the Education & Outreach Coordinator for Outright in Portland, Maine. Outright's mission is to create safe, positive, and affirming environments for LGBTQ youth ages 22 and under. Outright aspires to a youth-driven philosophy in which youth needs and beliefs form decisions, and a collaboration of youth and adults provides support, education, advocacy, and social activities.
- Phyllis F. Cudmore** 603-566-4484 phyllis@cudmorecounseling.com
Paraprofessional Counselor to Transgendered individuals. Currently completing her Degree in Psychology. Talks and lectures to Health care professionals, Employers and the General public on Transgender Issues. Did a TV presentation with Dr. Alicen McGowan PhD on transgender issues. Had her Confirmation Surgery in 2000 in Montreal with Dr. Yevon Menard.
- Barbara Curry** barbcurry@mindspring.com
Barbara Curry is a 40-something heterosexual married cross-dresser who has actively lived "outside of her closet" for the past 10 years. She is a member of Connecticut Outreach Society and an active participant in a number of transgender events and programs nationally. Along with her spouse, she has worked with groups talking about what it is like growing up as a heterosexual cross-dresser.
- John K. Currie, AB, LLB** 860-233-9760 johnkcurrie@aol.com
John is an active PFLAG dad. He serves on the Steering Committee of Loves Makes a Family. He is a frequent speaker for the Stonewall Speakers Association. He was recently the pulpit guest of the Unitarian Society of Hartford. His sermon was titled: "Equality Knocks: It's Time to Stretch!" He is a trombonist for the Westminster Brass and Emerson Brass Quintets.
- Becky Davies** 860-643-5699
Becky Davies is a seventeen year old activist from a very small town in CT. She is currently working with Advocates for Youth on the My Voice Counts campaign for comprehensive sex-ed in Ct. This campaign is run for and by youth. Her other accomplishments regarding social change include being a founding member and current leader of her school's GSA, and going down to Washington DC in last April to the March for Women's Lives.
- Kenneth C. Decker** 860-538-1738 kdecker@project100.org
Kenneth C. Decker is a writer, historian, activist and an advocate on behalf of sexual and gender minority youth as well as for historic preservation. A devout Episcopalian and an openly gay man (having come out at age 13). Ken is employed as Office Manager and Director of Youth Programming for Project 100/Hartford GLBTI Community Center. He also serves on the boards of True Colors, Inc. and GLSEN Connecticut and occasionally models for art classes.
- Danella Demarry** 413-329-4905 skinned_iris@hotmail.com
Danella is a significant other and friend of many trans identifying people who feels it is important for SOFFAs to have a place, community, and support system for themselves as they live with, love and support their trans loved ones.
- Taylor Devens** 203-240-3788 taylor.devens@uconn.edu
Taylor Devens is a 4th semester pharmacy major with an art history minor at the University of Connecticut in Storrs. On campus he is the co-chair of AQUA (The Allies and Queers Undergraduate Association), coordinator for the magic card club, and an active member of QUAD (the Queers United Against Discrimination). He has been an activist for social justice in the women's movement and queer community for the last five years.
- Betsy Driver** 908-212-4662 info@bodieslikeours.org
Betsy Driver is the Executive Director and co-founder of Bodies Like Ours. She is an advocate for change in the treatment of intersex children and the elimination of early genital surgery on children without a voice of their own. As a survivor of genital mutilation, she is a frequent speaker about her experiences and activism. She can also be reached via her website: www.bodieslikeours.org
- Regina Dyton** 860-688-2039 regina_dyton@yahoo.com
Regina S. Dyton, Director of True Colors Mentoring Program, brings over 25 years of community activism and anti-oppression work. Regina has worked with diverse communities including Latino, African American, Native American, GLBTQ, Asian American, low-income women and youth. Regina received her MSW from the University of CT School of Social Work in 1997, with a concentration in Community Organizing. Recent work

includes Administrative and program work for the Project 100 GLBT Community Center, The West End Community Center and Asian Family Services and the Women of Color Fundraising Institute in Boston MA. She is presently a part time faculty member of the University of CT School of Social Work.

Meredith Elgart

860-509-0909 x 19

melgart@ctforum.org

Meredith Elgart, MSW, is a queer mother of three kids, one in high school, one who just graduated from college and one who is out on his own. She is a social worker who does program development and management. For 18 years she worked in aging services, since 1998 she's volunteered and worked at The Connecticut Forum, helping to run the YOUTH Forum. The YOUTH Forum brings kids together from diverse high schools, city, suburban and urban, public and private, to get to know each other and to talk about topics of importance to teenagers. You can reach her at 860-509-0909, ext. 19 or melgart@ctforum.org. The YOUTH Forum is on the web at www.ctforum.org

Harriet Elish

860-236-1927

helish@jfs Hartford.org

Harriet Elish received her MSW 25 years ago and currently works at Jewish Family Services Greater Hartford. She works within the child guidance clinic and is the coordinator of the adoption program at the agency. As a lesbian and a parent, she has an inside view of the difficulties that gay youth face in their daily lives and with their families.

Claudia Espinoza

860-490-5841

crazycurls788@sbcglobal.net

Claudia Espinoza is a Junior in Bulkeley High School and has been involved with Bulkeley's GS A since it was first established three years ago. In October, she participated in the "Take the Lead" program, a young women's leadership seminar at Mount Holyoke College. With the knowledge she gained from "Take the Lead", Claudia decided to focus on developing this workshop, with the help of her GSA, to fight the discrimination against LGBTQ youth.

Luis Feliciano

860-296-6400

luis.feliciano@latinoscontrasida.org

Luis D. Feliciano is the Prevention Case Manager for Latino Men who have Sex with Men and Coordinator of ORGULLO at Latinos/as Contra SIDA, Inc. He also conducts HIV prevention counseling and testing, homophobia trainings, and HIV/STD prevention trainings. Luis has been working in the HIV/AIDS social service field for more than three years. Currently Luis is obtaining a higher education degree in Social Work and Spanish.

Michael Fiorello

203-332-1480

GLSENCT@aol.com

Michael Fiorello has taught public school students in Connecticut for 15 years. He came out while teaching in a Bridgeport middle school, and remains out as a teacher of English and creative writing and gay-straight alliance advisor at Stratford High School. For ten years he has served on the board of the Connecticut chapter of the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN). He is also a teacher consultant for the Connecticut Writing Project

Jeremy Flagg

781-913-6799

excalbre@comcast.net

Jeremy Flagg has been involved with Salem State College Alliance for four years and works as the Public Relations Officer for three. He has been working specifically with High School GSA's, developing them from the ground up and teaching them how to retain members and NE network with other local GSA's.

Reverend Julio Flores

860-724-4606

Reverend Flores is a co-pastor at the Hartford Metropolitan Community Church, 1841 Broad Street, Hartford. MCC is an interfaith denomination ministering to the LGBT and ally community.

Ruth Fontilla

203-752-2830

ruth.fontilla@ppct.org

Ruth Fontilla, M.Ed. is a Staff Training Coordinator at Planned Parenthood of CT. She works with those who want information on talking with others about sexuality. She has recently graduated with a degree in Human Sexuality Education from Widener University in Philadelphia, PA.

Al Forbes

Al Forbes is an independent consultant and has been a presenter at True Color Conferences for the past five years. He has been working in the HIV/AIDS field for the past 12 years and has focused a great deal of attention on youth issues. Mr. Forbes is currently enrolled in a Masters program for a degree in Organization Management. He brings over 25 years of experience working in the not-for profit and for profit sectors.

Brittney Fosbrook

bcfosbro@mtholyoke.edu

Brittney is a junior at Mount Holyoke majoring in Neuroscience and Women's Studies. She comes to the east coast from Alaska and has just returned from studying Gender, Sexuality, and Identity in the Netherlands.

Kathey Fowler

860-465-7307

katheyf@hglhc.org

Kathey Fowler is the Women's Services Coordinator with the Hartford Gay & Lesbian Health Collective. She oversees all of the women's health programs at the Health Collective including HIV testing and gyn appointments. Kathey has 10 years of HIV outreach experience and has worked extensively with women at high risk for HIV & STI infection. She has many more years of experience as a lesbian and sexually active woman.

Teresa Frankhauser

413-746-5608

teresa_frankhauser@yahoo.com

Teresa Frankhauser is on the Board of Directors of True Colors Inc. and True Colors Inc. Conference Organizing Committee. She is currently residing in Springfield, MA and is working toward an associate's degree in Human Services and Youth Development. Teresa is an avid Social Justice and Human Rights activist that hopes to inspire change on an individual basis as well as within each community she encounters.

Nefta Freeman

202-234-9382

nefta@hotsalsa.org

Netfa, director of SALSA, has been a political organizer for over 17 years. He coordinated the Political Education Committee at the Pan-African Resource Center and worked for the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador. He has been involved with many movements, such as the 1986 International Peace Gathering against the U.S. bombing of Libya and the Advocates Plus Save UDC movement. Netfa is an organizer with No War On Cuba Movement; www.nowaroncuba.org.

Gary Gianini**860-233-0316****modesto4@aol.com**

Gary is an active PFLAG Dad and GLBTI civil rights activist. He and his wife Donna are co-chairs of the Welcoming Congregation Committee at The Universalist Church of West Hartford.

Luke Gilleran, MA, NCC**203-520-3465****lgille1645@aol.com**

Luke J. Gilleran, MA, NCC is a nationally certified counselor and psychotherapist who works with LGBT clients and their families. He is author of "Addiction Counseling with Gay Men," a chapter in the book, *Critical Incidents in Counseling*, published by the American Counseling Association. His work with LGBT adolescents was the subject of an article appearing in the national magazine, *Counseling Today*. He has been the subject of, and consulted to numerous newspaper articles dealing with LGBT issues.

Jonathan Gillman**lookingin@mindspring.com**

Jonathan Gillman is the Director of Looking In Theatre and also the Head of the Theater Department at the Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts, a public magnet high school in Hartford. He is a past recipient of grants in playwriting and fiction writing from the Connecticut Commission on the Arts, and is the author of *Grasslands* and *The Magic Ring*, two interconnected collections of short stories. Jonathan has a B.A. and an M.A. from Harvard University, and an M.F.A in Theater (playwriting) from the University of Minnesota.

Jennifer Glick**860-570-9262****IAPSWP@uconnvm.uconn.edu**

Jennifer Glick graduated from Russell Sage College with a Bachelor's degree in nursing and has worked for the past 35 years in a variety of health care organizations. Currently, she is employed with the CT Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services. She represents the Department on the CT Long-Term Care Planning Committee and the Nursing Facility Transition Grant Project. Her second year field placement is with Representative Peggy Sayers and the Institute.

GLSEN Leadership Team**(212) 727-0135****legyes@glsen.org**

The Leadership team is a group of young activists working with GLSEN National committed to ending anti-LGBT harassment in America's K-12 schools. Lynly Eyles is Student Club and Leadership Coordinator at GLSEN National.

Sarah Goff**551-486-2355**

Sara Goff is a junior at Yale University who studies ethics, politics, and economics. She's glad to be working with Advocates for Youth on the topic of comprehensive sex education, since she remembers her own school's program as fear-based, white washed and even boring!

Mimi Gonzales**Eric Goodman****513-534-3117****goodmaek@muohio.edu**

Eric Goodman was born in Brooklyn and attended Yale and Stanford Universities. His fourth novel, *Child of My Right Hand*, was published in October, 2004 by Sourcebooks. Previous novels include *High on the Energy Bridge*, *The First Time I Saw Jenny Hall*, and *In Days of Awe*. *Child of My Right Hand* was inspired by Goodman's experiences raising his own gay son. The novel has been endorsed by PFLAG.

Ron Gould**860-951-3557****rongould@att.net**

For over 20 years Ron Gould MS, MSW has been active in developing media programs, educational events, and Hartford area organizations in support of inclusive community.

Michele Grethel**212-255-5990****grethel33@yahoo.com**

Michele Grethel has been working in the LGBT youth community for the 15 years. Currently, she is a psychotherapist, in private practice in New York City and Greenwich, Connecticut. Over the last 10 years, she was the director of the Callen-Lorde Community Health Centers adolescent program, a program that offers medical and mental health care to LGBT individuals. Her practice spans a wide range of mental health issues, with an expertise in working with individuals who have eating disorders, substance use issues, sexuality and gender issues and adolescent development. Michele Grethel is currently writing her dissertation focusing on female-to-male young adults.

Bethany Hamilton**860-247-6090****bhamilton@cwealf.org**

For the last several years, bethany hamilton has worked within the LGBTIQ/queer community encompassing multi-issue and anti-racist work. She is an experienced advocate, presenter, and trainer on multiple topics in an effort to achieve a multifaceted and engaged community. She currently works as CWEALF's LGBT Community Organizer and coordinates the Connecticut Hate Crimes Network, educates on topics related to LGBTIQ civil rights, and facilitates the LGBT Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Taskforce.

David Harpin**203-772-4108****dharpin@hopkins.edu**

David Harpin has taught middle and high school students at Hopkins School in New Haven for 10 years. He took over the faculty role of adviser to Hopkins' well established Gay/Straight Alliance (GSA) in 2000. During his tenure at Hopkins he has served on the board of the Connecticut chapter of the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN). David is currently serving as chair of Hopkins' Classics Department.

Thom Harrigan**<http://www.nextstepcounseling.org>**

Thom Harrigan, MSW, LICSW, ACSW is a psychotherapist in private practice. Trained as an educator and clinical social worker, the primary focus of his work for over two decades has been the dysfunctional family in its myriad forms. During this time, Mr. Harrigan has worked with thousands of families and individuals in settings ranging from prisons to community based agencies, from the public sector to private practice. He has lectured extensively on child abuse and victimization as human rights issues. Before joining The Next Step Counseling and Training Center in 1987, Mr. Harrigan was deeply involved in community based programming for social service systems, helping to develop curricula and training packages for public service social workers in Massachusetts. As a supervisor in the Massachusetts Department of Social Services, he was responsible for clinical decision making on hundreds of foster care and adoption cases arising from serious abuse and neglect. Since joining The Next Step his focus has become the complex challenges facing survivors of dysfunctional families, and he now works closely with Mike Lew on the development of effective strategies for recovery. He teaches at Brandeis University and is faculty at Simmons College Graduate School of Social Work. Thom Harrigan has consulted to various agencies, organizations and groups nationally and abroad, and is currently working to broaden understanding of child abuse and recovery in an international and cross-cultural perspective.

- Derek Hartley** 212-584-5271 dhartley@sirius.com
 Derek Hartley has been a syndicated columnist for nearly a decade. His columns have appeared in print across the U.S. and around the world, as well as online at HSX.com, PlanetOut.com, Entertainment Asylum and America Online. Derek has been featured in numerous articles in newspapers and magazines including: The New York Times, The Advocate, Genre, Instinct, Out And About Travel, and HERO Magazine. His relationship column, FantasyMan Island, has appeared weekly on PlanetOut.com since March 1997.
- Erin Havens, BA** 860-423-1946 slantyd@hotmail.com
 Erin Havens is on the Board of Directors and coordinates the Activist Institute for True Colors, Inc. She is a member of the National Organization for Women and is actively involved in the Northeast CT chapter. Erin has a BA in political science from the University of Connecticut and works at Parish Hill School as a teaching assistant and co-advisor for the diversity club
- Sarah EE Hayes** 203-214-4483 sehayes@mtholyoke.edu
 Sarah is a senior at Mount Holyoke College majoring in Women's Studies. She grew up outside of New Haven. In high school, she ran the Hopkins' GSA and did sexuality workshops in other high schools around Connecticut. Her post grad plans involve revolutionizing sex education in the US.
- Robin Hoberg, Ph.D.** (860) 418-6724
 Robin Hoberg is a licensed psychologist committed to deconstructing binary notions of sexuality and gender. She has presented both locally and nationally on bisexuality and constructions of sexual identity, and was recently published in the Journal of Bisexuality. Robin currently conducts service research for Connecticut's Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, where she is involved in improving services for LGBTQI persons.
- Mark T. Housley** 860-225-4681 ywca_mvp@yahoo.com
 Marc Housley is the Community Education Coordinator for the YWCA of New Britain Sexual Assault Crisis Service. Currently he is conducting the gender violence prevention programs Tough Guise and Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP), designed by Jackson Katz and Sut Jhally. He is also the founder of Empower, a company that offers programs in violence prevention, de-escalation, negotiation, and self-empowerment. Housley is a graduate of Gordon College and received his Masters Certificate in Victims Advocacy and Services Management from the University of New Haven. He is a black belt in Shorin-Ryu Karate.
- Marisa Howard** 508-583-2250 mhoward@hcsm.org
 Marisa Howard is the Project Coordinator for the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgendered Y youth Support Project (GLYS) of Health Care of Southeastern Massachusetts, Inc. She provides intensive, capacity-building training and ongoing technical and networking support to health and human service providers and educators working to provide culturally competent services and to create safety for GLBT youth and their families. Her background is in community organizing and community health education
- Interactive Theater/Mobile Stop Aids Theatre** (203) 333 - 8009 www.interactiveedtheatre.org.
Magda Skomal received her BAS in education and theater from Salve Regina University and furthered her theatrical studies at the Stella Adler Conservatory in NYC. She is a certified HIV/AIDS Instructor and the proud recipient of the State of CT Commissioner's AIDS Leadership Award. She is the project director for the Stop AIDS Mobile Theatre, and theater director for several student performing groups across Connecticut. Magda has authored and directed "Out Of The Closet", a cabaret celebrating diversity and supporting GLBTQ communities. **Dan Kelly** is Associate Director and has been performing with and developing content for IET since it began in 1993. He has performed at the Long Wharf Theatre, New Haven; the Westport Country Playhouse; the Pulse Theatre, NYC; the Miranda Theatre, NYC; and Shakespeare on the Sound, Rowayton. He has directed productions at the Curtain Call Theatre, Stamford, CT where he also teaches acting and Shakespeare.
- Arlene Istar Lev CSW-R, CASAC** 518-463-9152 istarlev@aol.com
Arlene Istar Lev, is a social worker and family therapist whose work addresses the unique therapeutic needs of LGBT people. She is the founder of *Choices Counseling and Consulting* (www.choicesconsulting.com) in Albany, NY and on the adjunct faculties of S.U.N.Y. Albany, School of Social Welfare, and Vermont College of the Union Institute and University. She is the author of *The Complete Lesbian and Gay Parenting Guide* (Penguin Press, 2004) and *Transgender Emergence: Therapeutic Guidelines or Working with Gender-Variant People and their Families* (Haworth Press, 2004). She is also a Board Member of the Family Pride Coalition and has an advice column Dear Ari on www.proudparenting.com
- Taylor Johnson** 203-522-2839 vtjohnson@cedarcrest.edu
 Taylor Johnson is a Sophomore at Cedar Crest College. In his free time, he likes to play guitar. He is originally from Stratford, CT and is a very active member of OutThere - Cedar Crest's GSA.
- Andrew Jones** 207-828-6560 andrewebrat@hotmail.com
 Andrew Jones has been attending the True Colors conference since 2002. Out at age 17, and now 21, Andrew identifies as a gay male. Andrew has been a youth leader with Outright in Portland, Maine for over 3 years and has been involved with other organizations and agencies on both a local and national level, such as the Innovation Center, the National Conference for Community and Justice, and You think.
- Elizabeth Kaminiski Ph.D** 860-832-3136 kaminskie@ccsu.edu
 Elizabeth Kaminiski is an Assistant Professor of Sociology at Central Connecticut State University. She has conducted research and written about gay and lesbian communities and aspects of queer culture, such as drag shows. She enjoys teaching on these topics, as well as teaching about social movements, gender, sexuality, and the sociology of music.
- Peter Karys** 212-809-8585 pkarys@lambdalegal.org
 Peter Karys works in New York City as a legal assistant at Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, the nation's oldest and largest legal organization dedicated to lesbians, bisexuals, gay men, transgender people and those with HIV/AIDS.
- Rich Kiamco** 917-498-1810 richkiamco@aol.com
 Rich Kiamco received a standing ovation at last year's True Colors and went on to receive the Overall Excellence Award in Solo Performance at the New York International Fringe Festival for his one-man show UNACCESSORIZED. Rich was featured on QUEER EYE FOR THE STRAIGHT GUY, and his writing appears in TAKE OUT: QUEER WRITING FROM ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICA and QUEER STORIES FOR BOYS.

- David Knapp** 203-453-1395 davidwinthropknapp@yahoo.com
David Knapp is the outreach coordinator of the Stonewall Speakers Association. He is a 78 year old grandfather who, after being married for 27 years, realized at the age of 50 that he was gay. David was a textbook salesman for 23 years and spent 10 years as a professional Boy Scout executive. He gained notoriety for being forced out of a Methodist church and expelled from his voluntary position with the boy scouts.
- Yesod Knowles** 860-859-7421 yesod973@yahoo.com
Yesod is a Poet/ Life Skills Educator;Community Educator for the Women's Center of SECT where I taught healthy/unhealthy relationships, violence preventable techniques, domestic violence, sexual harassment and sexual assault workshops to students elem. through college. Life Skills educator at Eastern Connecticut State University CONNCAP program for middle and high school students. Creative writing instructor for social service programs and magnet school. Inspirational speaker for incarcerated male adolescents and adults.
- Aidan Kotler** 415-865-5625 aidan@youthgenderproject.org
Aidan Kotler is a 21-year-old activist living in San Francisco, CA. He works in youth, transgender, intersex, leather and recovery communities. Aidan is the Executive Director of Youth Gender Project, and a board member for the SF LGBT Pride Committee. He is a LGBT Advisory Committee member for the SF Human Rights Commission and serves on the Committee's Intersex Task Force. Aidan sings in the SF Gay Men's Chorus. He has developed and presented youth, intersex and transgender workshops at LGBT conferences around the US.
- Margaret La Rose** 860-546-6034 artsbymarg@cs.com
Margaret M. La Rose designs and produces original handmade polymer and precious metal clay beads, unique jewelry, and rubber stamp art. She has been a production weaver for over 25 years creating museum quality colonial reproduction handwovens. Ms. La Rose shares her unique creativity with others through workshops in Rubber Stamp arts, Beginning Polymer Clay techniques, and Band Weaving workshops in her studio. Her work has been featured in boutiques, galleries and shows throughout New England.
- Shannon Lane** 860-570-9262 IAPSWP@uconnvm.uconn.edu
Shannon Lane is a graduate assistant at the Institute this year. Shannon earned her BA in Psychology from the George Washington University in Washington, DC and her MSW from the University of Michigan with a major in Management and a minor in Social Policy and Evaluation. Shannon's political experience includes working for Senate Democratic Leader Tom Daschle (D-SD), Senator Mark Pryor (D-AR), and Senator Ben Nelson (D-NE). Shannon will be developing grant proposals for Institute funding.
- Alice Leibowitz** 860-956-9299 alicepalace@juno.com
Alice Leibowitz has a bisexual activist since 1987. She is currently active in Conn-Bi-Nation, Connecticut's political bisexual organization, and Transcending Boundaries, a yearly conference for bisexual, transgendered, and intersexed people. Alice believes in striving for equality through building our communities, forming coalitions, and advocating for inclusion. She has presented workshops around the country on bisexuality and activism.
- Mary Leslie** 860-922-8579 merryjovial@aol.com
Mary J. Leslie is a self identified evolving white, Christian (non-practicing but recognizing the influence and benefits of being raised Christian), able bodied, working class, heterosexual, female, adult, citizen of the United States. She is dedicated to involving her life with youth through advocacy, support and play. She has worked with youth and adults through Big Brothers/Big Sisters, NCCJ-ANYTOWN and other programs. Presently she is employed as Event Coordinator/Assistant to the Executive Director at the NCCJ.
- Paul Levatino** 203-777-2233 paul@paullevatino.com
Even as a little tyke, Paul knew he wanted to make a difference in the world and bring people together. A Connecticut licensed massage therapist with a successful practice in New Haven, Paul brings ten years experience working with a predominantly gay clientele to the issue of boundaries and the application of boundaries within the therapeutic realm and the area of personal relationships.
- Madeleine Leveille** 203-397-4833 leveille@reg5.k12.ct.us
Madeleine is a school psychologist at Amity High School, Woodbridge, CT. Also, a counseling psychologist, she has been active in state, regional, and national counseling and psychology associations.
- Deborah S. Levine, MSW, MAT** 203-752-2839 deborahlevine@mail.com
Deborah Levine is currently working as a Trainer/Community Educator at Planned Parenthood of CT where she provides education to teens, parents, and professionals on topics related to sexuality and sexual health. Previously she was a high school social studies teacher in the Boston area. Deborah has a Master's Degree in Social Work from the University of Pennsylvania and a Master of Arts in Teaching from Simmons College.
- Nathan Levitt** 617-304-2002 genderqueer24@hotmail.com
Nathan Levitt is a 26 year old, white, pansexual, Jewish, trans, genderqueer activist who lives in Boston. He is the Program Coordinator for Keshet, Boston's GLBT Jewish organization and also works as an social justice organizer with the Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition (MTPC). Taryn leads workshops and trainings on Jewish queer/trans activism, anti-racism, transgender/genderqueer identities and organizing, transfeminism, and working towards social change.
- Mike Lew** mike.lew8@verizon.net
Mike Lew, M.Ed., a psychotherapist and group therapy leader in the Boston, MA area, is co-director of The Next Step Counseling and Training Center. Mike is a leading expert on recovery from sexual child abuse, particularly issues of male survivors. His publications include Victims No Longer: The Classic Guide for Men Recovering from Sexual Child Abuse (Second Edition, Revised and Updated Quill, 2004). Mike's second book is Leaping Upon the Mountains (Small Wonder Books and North Atlantic Books, 1999). Mike Lew has consulted to the National Institute of Mental Health, National Resource Center on Child Sexual Abuse, Childhelp USA/National Child Abuse Hotline, People Against Sexual Abuse and many other organizations in the United States and abroad. He has been on the editorial board of the Journal of Child Sexual Abuse and the review board of the Journal of Interpersonal Violence. Mike has appeared on The Oprah Winfrey Show, Sally Jessy Raphael, People Are Talking and many other television and radio programs.

Jody Marksamer, JD**415-392-6257****marksamer@nclrights.org**

Jody Marksamer is an attorney and the coordinator of the Safe Homes Project at the National Center for Lesbian Rights where he advocates for LGBTQ youth in state custody. He is one of the coordinators of the Bay Area Out of Home Youth Advocacy Council and, in collaboration with Legal Services for Children, he is assisting in the writing of a Best Practices Guide for working with LGBTQ youth and families involved with the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

Sean Marshall**860-874-5626****v0ice0reas0n@yahoo.com**

Sean Marshall is a female to male transsexual who began his transition in 2003. Sean volunteers with True Colors and the Stonewall Speaker's Bureau. Sean is a Senior psychology student.

Jason Mastrogiovanni**mastrogiovaj@mail.ccsu.edu**

Jason Mastrogiovanni works at Central Connecticut State University in Residence Life as a Residence Hall Director. He received a Bachelor of Music in Music Education at the University of Florida where he also worked in Residence Life. His undergrad was an empowering experience for him and he looks forward to sharing his enthusiasm and knowledge with students.

Francisco Matea**401-421-5626**

Francisco Mateo began his start at Youth Pride Inc (YPI), Rhode Island's only organization dedicated to meeting the needs of LGBTQ youth, advanced to volunteer, and is not the Director of Outspoken Playaz. In his first year as Director, Francisco trained youth in public speaking, assisted youth in creating original works and directed over 25 performances. In his spare time Francisco performs for Brown University Rites and Reason Theater.

Carole McKenzie, MSW**860-233-7373****profmackenzie@aol.com**

Carole MacKenzie, LCSW is a licensed clinical social worker and AASECT certified sex therapist in private practice in Hartford. Carole teaches the psychology of Human Sexual Behavior at the University of Hartford and taught at the Antioch New England Graduate School. As a member of PFLAG Hartford, she has learned more about gender orientation and expression than she ever thought possible.

Minister Chris Rasheem Mcmillan**413-559-4824****chris.rdm03@hampshire.edu**

Min. Chris Mcmillan was born in Norfolk VA to Rev. Dr. Clinton McMillan and Linda cooper. He attended Norview High School. He received his minister license in 2001 from Agape Hands Cathedral United. Min McMillan is currently working on his B.A in GLBTQQA psychology with an emphasis in liberation Theology. " I am dedicated to using theology as a tool of liberation for all people."

JD Melendez**413-559-6657****Imm04@hampshire.edu**

J.D. was born and raised in The Bronx, NY and is currently a student at Hampshire College in Amherst MA. She loves to work with queer youth, homeless youth and youth of color around social justice issues, issues of housing and around the non-profit scene. J.D. has been involved with F.I.E.R.C.E.! in NYC, and is presently involved with the Hampshire Queer Students of Color.

Edgardo J. Menvielle, MD**202-884-3862****emenviel@cnmc.org**

Edgardo Menvielle is a child and adolescent psychiatrist at Children's National Medical Center in Washington, DC. In 1999 Dr. Menvielle together with Catherine Tuerk started a monthly support group for parents of children with gender variance behavior. In 2002 Dr. Menvielle and Mrs. Tuerk formalized the Outreach Program for Gender-variant Children and their Families which also provides training workshops to parents and professionals. A playgroup for children and an online parent list-serve were later added.

Maddox Michaud**207-749-8487****wrestler65@hotmail.com**

Maddox is a 17 yr old trans identified male from Maine. I have been doing speaking engagements for 3 years now. Being only 17 i have first hand experience going to and being in school as a trans youth.

Alice Miele**781-249-2727****alice@quit-for-good.com**

Alice Miele, LICSW, CTTS-M is a tobacco treatment specialist with a range of experience in the field of tobacco control. She has her own consulting business, Quit-for-Good. Ms. Miele also works at the Try-To-STOP TOBACCO O Resource Center at JSI and at the Fenway Institute (on a GLBT smoking cessation research study). She has expertise working with LGBT smoking cessation groups. Ms. Miele is a volunteer member of the American Cancer Society's New England Division's GLBT Advisory Board.

Doug Moffat**860-917-0924****winddancer97@msn.com**

Doug Moffat is an AIDS activist, educator and trainer, and also a college student as well as a student for life.

Sincere Morgan**860-278-2044**

Damion Sincere Morgan has been a Prevention research Educator for the Institute for Community Research for the past three years. He earned a B.S. in Business Administration from New York University in 1996. His background is in Corporate Finance and Insurance. He is an artist in music, vocals and spoken word poetry and has presented on using PAR and the arts as an effective means of social change when working with urban youth.

Stephanie Morin**860-649-3170**

In CT and across the country, youths are organizing at the local and federal levels to ensure honest sex education for all youth. One of the presenters will even teach you the sex education our government does not want you to know. This workshop will discuss the federal and CT legislation on sex education and how young people can make a difference. this workshop is lead for youths and by youths.

Adam Nicholson**860-525-7777****adam@lmfct.org**

Adam is a Program Coordinator for Love Makes a Family. Organizing Team Equality and LMFs voter identification program throughout the state of Connecticut. Before joining LMF, Adam worked on several political campaigns in Connecticut, Tennessee, Oklahoma, and New Hampshire.

Robin Ochs, Ed.M**(617) 983-0338****www.robynochs.com**

Robyn Ochs is the editor of Getting Bi: Voices of Bisexuals Around the World, a brand new international anthology of writings about bisexuality. She travels around the United States speaking about bisexual identity, labels, homophobia, GLBTQ rights activism, and her vision for the future.

Juliana Oliveira**860-490-5841**

Juliana Oliveira is a Junior at the Great Path Academy, a high school magnet program at Manchester Community College. She has been a participant of Bulkeley's Gay Straight Alliance since it was first developed 3 years ago and is currently the president of Bulkeley's GSA.

Beth Olsen**401-421-5626**

Beth Olsen is the OUTspoken Coordinator at Youth Pride, Inc, Rhode Islands only organization dedicated to meeting the needs of LGBTQQ youth. Beth is the co-author of the Outspoken Training Curriculum and Rhode Islands LBGTQQ Resource List for Medical, Menal and Direct Care Providers. As OUTspoken Coordinator, Beth provides anti-homophobia workshops to direct care providers of Rhode Island. Beth is currently in her third year at Youth Pride, Inc.

Jason Ostrander, BSW**860-570-9262****IAPSWP@uconnvm.uconn.edu**

Jason Ostrander is an Advanced Standing student in the Policy Practice area. He received his A.S. from Berkshire Community College in Human Services and his B.S. in Social Work from the College of Our Lady of the Elms. He is currently employed as a Congressional Aide. At the Institute, he is developing the political social work web page and coordinating the Annual Campaign School. In the spring, he will coordinate a youth empowerment conference.

Paige Parks**401-421-5626**

Paige Parks, M.Ed is the Safe Zone coordinator at Youth Pride, Inc. Rhode Island's only organization dedicated to meeting the needs to LGBTQQ youth. Paige has been presenting anti-homophobia workshops for Rhode Island students, educators, and administrators since 2002. Paige is the co-author of the OUTspoken Training Curriculum and produced School Crossings, a video guide to creating safe schools for LGBTQQ students. Paige received her masters degree from Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Romaine Patterson**212-584-5271****rpatterson@siriusradio.com**

Sudden fame surrounded Romaine Patterson following the death of her friend Matthew Shepard. Appearing as an angel to counter-protest Fred Phelps, the image of Romaine in silent defiance to hatred landed her on the cover of countless newspapers and magazines. Her experience was central to the theatre production "The Laramie Project". As the founder of Angel Action, she has been featured on national and local TV channels and she is a popular speaker on college campuses across the nation.

Amy Pear**860-638-9550****jlapromeo@aol.com**

I am a fifteen year veteran of the Middletown Police Department currently holding the rank of Lieutenant. I have a B.S. in Law Enforcement Administration and am pursuing a Masters Degree in Social Science from W Wesleyan University. I also hold a certificate to instruct Hate, Bigotry, and Bias training to police officers in the state of Connecticut.

Tan Pham**203-521-6695****tppiii@bluepalmtree.com**

Tan Pham is an activist, educated and young person. He is currently a student at UCONN, a peer educator on <http://www.youthresource.com> and the state organizer for a campaign for comprehensive sexual education. Tan has networked and worked with many different non-profit organizations, such as American Red Cross, Advocates for youth and Family Services Woodfield. He has a passion for the HIV/AIDS field, Sexual Health and GLBTQ field; and he plays a role in each of those fields.

Gary Pines

Gary T. Pines is an African American native of Hartford, CT. During high school, he began to volunteer at AIDS Project Hartford working with various programs under the influence of David E. Waterman, MSW. He has now taken David's place as Head Facilitator of ROOTZ, an HIV intervention program that empowers same gender loving men of color, particularly those of African and Latino descent through a series of methods and educational components. He is also an aspiring writer with some of his work being published by Fall 2005. Rootz is primarily an HIV intervention program of AIDS Project Hartford, that empowers young men of color, particular those of African descent through a series of methods and educational components, including workshops, social events and activities. the group meets biweekly at Da Space, 1841 R Broad Street in Hartford. for more information, call the group's facilitator,

Venessa Pomerico, MSN, APRN**203-234-1891****vpdenino@sbcglobal.net**

Vanessa Pomarico, MSN, APRN is a Family Nurse Practitioner specializing in Women's Health. She is a former professor of Nursing at SCSU and provided GYN care at their Student Health Center. Vanessa is a guest lecture er in their FNP program and at the Yale School of Nursing. She was the recipient of the Air Force Nurses' Award for Leadership in Nursing. She practices at Medical Associates of North Haven.

Kathryn Price**860-570-9262****IAPSWP@uconnvm.uconn.edu**

Kathryn Price is a s second year Policy Practice student at the UConn School of Social Work. She is currently completing an internship with the Institute for the Advancement of Political Social Work Practice. She graduated from UConn with a B.S. in Human Development and Family Studies, minoring in gerontology and criminal justice. She currently works at a youth residential facility. At the Institute, she is managing the voter registration project and developing the new electronic newsletter.

Jana Priestly**203-272-6727**

Jana Priestly is a senior at Central CT State University pursuing a degree in Educational Theatre. Currently she works on the MyVoice Counts campaign, promoting comprehensive sexuality education. Jana is also a member of the Young Women's Leadership Council for the Pro-Choice Education Project, as well as the Spiritual Youth for Reproductive Freedom of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice. Her hobbies include dance, popular culture and history.

Pan Quiana**860-543-8814****quiap001@hartford.gov**

Working in the field since 1993, in 1997 Pan founded ManHealth, a bathhouse and bar outreach, education, and counseling and testing program for gay and bi men and MSM. For the State of Ohio he trained new HIV Prevention Counselors and founded the HIV/AIDS Needs Assessment Team, both with a specific LGBT focus. Currently he manages the City of Hartford Department of Health and Human Services HIV Program and staffs the Mayor's Commission on AIDS.

Holly Rawson**860-429-7945****meta4u@neca.com**

Holly Rawson, LPC is a counselor in private practice with her partner Brian Ahern, LCSW. As a married couple, together for over 30 years, discovering the secrets to marital bliss has been their most inspiring focus. With extensive training and personal experience in a host of psychotherapeutic modalities, they have found tantra to be an extraordinary effective route to deepening the love and intimacy in their own relationships. Visit their website at www.ecstaticmarriage.com.

Ashlee Reed, MSW**617-864-GLBT**

Ashlee Reed has been the Executive Director of Project 10 East since January 2002. Ashlee volunteers for Project 10 for several years and serves as volunteer coordinator for many of our events and conferences. In the Spring of 2001, Ashlee led the Youth Corps, a coalition of nine Project 10 east youth, in pioneering a core group of youth leaders and activists. She was subsequently hired as the part-time Program Coordinator. Since 2002, Ashlee has continued to expand the work of Project 10 east into Boston and throughout the surrounding areas. She has helped establish and sustain GSA's across the state of Massachusetts.

Melissa Regan**650-520-5220****www.Epiphany-Productions.com**

Melissa Regan is an award-winning documentary filmmaker and educational software designer, co-founded an Internet software company, taught math, science and engineering, and has published research on innovative uses of technology for learning. She currently designs interactive courses as Director for E-Learning Product Development at the Stanford University Graduate School of Business. Melissa has a masters degree in Mechanical Engineering from Stanford University.

Tobias Reutter**207-749-8487****getgoingscout@yahoo.com**

I am Tobias Reutter a 22 year old Trans guy from Portland Maine. I have been speaking with a group called OutRight for 3 years, about my life and how it is to be a youth and out in my life and work.

TR Richardson**860-246-2414****tr.richardson@ppct.org**

T.R. Richardson is currently working as Trainer/Community Educator at Planned Parenthood of CT. Previously, she served as Director, Volunteer/Education Services at HGLHC and as the Interim Director, Rainbow Center at UConn. In addition, she served as Coordinator for Student Leadership Development at UConn and as Residence Director and Pride Advisor at Keene State College. T.R. has a Master of Arts in Student Affairs in Higher Education from IUP.

Chelsea Rock**203-245-2335**

Chelsea Rock is currently at Daniel Hand High School in Madison. She is the unofficial student advisor of G.A.S.P. (Gay AND Straight People), a Madison-based support & discussion group. This year, she is working with the Advocates for Youth "My Voice Counts!" campaign to promote comprehensive sex education in schools. She also maintains a community for LGBTQIA youth everywhere at www.livejournal.com, username: Queer_teens_.

Chiedza Rodriguez**860-278-2044****chiedzaicr@hotmail.com**

Chiedza Rodriguez is a graduate of the University of Puerto Rico Rio Piedras Campus. Currently Chiedza coordinates the Youth Action Research for Prevention project at the Institute for Community Research located in Hartford CT. She is the Vice-Chair on the LGBT Issues commission for the city of Hartford and volunteers with other LGBT nonprofit organizations in the state of CT. She has a big commitment to youth work and to LGBT youth issues.

Ricardo Ruiz**860-490-5841****guyo432@yahoo.com**

Ricardo Ruiz is a Junior in Bulkeley High School and a participant in Bulkeley's Gay Straight Alliance since it was first established 3 years ago. He participated in the 2004 True Colors Conference and was a counselor in the National Conference for Community and Justice's Camp Anytown.

Agnes Russell, BS Nursing**860-953-8638****jude@powerlines.com**

Agnes Russell is a mother, a grandmother, a nurse, and a nickel slot machine addict. She lives in Framingham, MA and attends Diane Ellaborn's SOFFA support group to help her understand her transgendered child Jude.

Judith Russell, BSEE**860-953-8638****jude@powerlines.com**

Jude Russell is a 42 year old transsexual woman who transitioned during 2003. A long time friend and presenter at True Colors, she is proud and awed to be bringing her mom to the conference this year.

Sacha Sacket**(818) 222-0805****www.sachasacket.com**

Sexy. Talented. Incurable. Twenty-two year old Sacha Sacket is taking the nation by storm as one of today's most entertaining musicians. A born performer, Sacha seamlessly incorporates rock, pop, and even dance into his original music performances. Sacha is a piano based singer songwriter who according to Frontiers 'whispers straight into your darkest dreams. Once you see this intense, young artist perform, you might not want to wake up'. His second album, Shadowed, was released in 2004 to rave reviews. Out magazine cooed, "His soulful baritone combined with the intimate feel of this album make him the troubadour du jour... You'll want to be wooed and seduced by Sacha Sacket".

Eddie Salinas**860-527-0856****eddies@hispanichealth.com**

Eddie Salinas graduated from UCONN, The School of Social Work; Eddie is an HIV/AIDS Health Educator for the Hispanic Health Council in Hartford CT. Eddie works with the MSM Latino population and has been involved in several planning committees for local and regional conferences such as the Pa'Fuera Pa'Lante, the men's health conference and the Latino AIDS awareness day. He is also a member of the Hartford Commission on GLBT issues.

Gunner Scott**617-695-0877****organizer@thenetworklared.org**

Gunner Scott is the Organizer/Outreach Coordinator for The Network/La Red: Ending abuse in lesbian, bisexual women, and transgender communities, a Massachusetts based social justice/social change organization dedicated to ending partner abuse. He has conducted 300 workshops on LGBT partner abuse, sexual violence, and transgender issues and speaks from the perspective of being a survivor of queer partner abuse as well as an advocate for LGBT survivors of partner abuse. He has over 10 years of experience in mental health and substance abuse counseling and is a queer/transgender activist including being the treasurer of Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition, a member of GLBT Domestic Violence

Coalition, NCAVP, NCTE, NGLTF, and the creator of Butch Dyke Boy Productions and (www.butchdykeboy.com), events and website by and for gender queer/trans/ dyke/bi/gay communities. He has been interviewed for Bay Windows Newspaper, Boston Globe, Boston Herald, Innews Weekly, Gender Talk radio show, profiled in the Weekly Dig newspaper, and in the upcoming documentary on transgender people and work by Celia Fox Entertainment. He has written articles for What's Up magazine, Sojourner Women's Forum, and "Agitate and Activate", the introduction to Pinned Down By Pronouns, a 2003 Lambda Literary nominee anthology published by Conviction Books.

Ally Segal, MS

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Has a master's degree in education from the University of Connecticut and currently works with Connecticut Stonewall Foundation, Connecticut Swimming, and is a practicing wiccan.

Marlow Shami M.S.

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Marlow Shami BFA, MS is a Nature-Based Healer, Teacher, & Writer who conducts workshops, Nature As Healer Meditation Circles, and publishes a quarterly e-mail newsletter, NaturalSense®. In her private healing practice she specializes in the healing connection between humans and the natural world. To learn more about Ms. Shami's workshops, private practice or to subscribe to her free e-newsletter contact her via email Mshami@aol.com, website www.naturalsense.org, or UPS, M. Shami 97 Pie Hill Road, Goshen, CT 06756-2025, tel: (860) 491-206

Lucas Shapiro

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Lucas Shapiro is the National Organizer for the Young Democratic Socialists and a campaigner with the National Youth and Student Peace Coalition. He's been involved in multi-issue organizing and movement building with a focus on student-labor solidarity, criminal justice reform, leftist strategies, gay rights, global justice, alternative media, electoral politics, community planning, anti war mobilizing, and the development of autonomous social centers in Chile, Spain and the United States. He lives in Brooklyn, NY.

Joe Shaskus

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Joe Shaskus came out at 28. He holds a BS in Chemistry and attended the Scientist to Engineer Program at the University of CT. He is in charge of the Environmental, Health and Safety Program at a privately held chemical company and lives in New Britain with his partner. Joe is also the editor of the Northeast Ursamen Newsletter.

Donna Shubrooks

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Donna Shubrooks is a PFLAG mom, a longtime GLBTIQ activist and frequent participant at True Colors. A Registered Nurse, Donna serves as the STD Program Coordinator of the Hartford Gay and Lesbian Health Collective. She has always been the proud mother of her now 30 year old transgendered son Joel, who came out at 14 as a lesbian - happily pushing Donna into Queer activism and later onto her journey of trans community awareness.

Marlowe Simms, Eric Christian

410-356-4655

www.menofrainbow.com

Marlowe and Eric are members of the Men of Rainbow, an organization that travels the country educating thru entertainment while being Entertainers, Models, Workshop Conductors, Fashion Designers, and Emcees.

Pandora Scooter

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Pandora Scooter is a spoken-word performer who prefers the label rhythmic ranter or humanmamadyke. She performs mostly in the NJ/NYC/PA area, most notably at Ladyfest Philly 2003, H.E.R.E., Midtown International Theatre Festival, and New Jersey Performing Arts Center's Planet Hip Hop II. Her work has been heard on WBAI's OUTFM and WRSU's Generation Q. She has a solo-CD she self-produced called CARPE DYKE. Pandora hosts a monthly open-mic at the Pride Center of New Jersey, called OUT OF THE BOX. Find out more about her on-line at www.pandorascooter.com. Power to the Peaceful and Love to All.

Sharon Southwick

207-828-6560

sharonna1999@yahoo.com

Sharon Southwick is a 22 year-old, white, pansexual, trans-ally female from Portland, Maine. She is an active youth leader with Outright and has facilitated multiple HIV/AIDS trainings. With Outright, Sharon is an HIV Peer Educator, an active speaker on the e Speaker's Bureau, a member of the Program Advisory Counsel, and sits on the organization's Board of Directors.

Dean Spade

212-337-8550

dean@srlp.org

Dean Spade is a trans attorney and founder of the Sylvia Rivera Law Project focused on the needs of low-income trans, intersex, and gender variant people. He has presented widely on the topic of low-income transgender people. Dean produced "Toilet Training" and has been presenting this important training tool around the country for the last year. Dean also successfully represented a trans youth in foster care who was not allowed to wear clothing that expressed her gender.

Moonhawk River Stone, M.S., PH.D. Cand. 518-446-1261

hawkRStone@aol.com

Moonhawk River Stone, M.S. is a psychotherapist, consultant, educator and writer in private practice in the Albany, NY area. Stone is, himself, an out, open and proud FTM, and political activist in the transgender community, volunteering his time with many organizations. Currently, he is co-chair of the Board of the New York Association for Gender Rights Advocacy (NYAGRA); and chair of the board of directors of The International Foundation for Gender Education, inc. (IFGE). and also serves on the board for the Empire State Pride Agenda.

Missy Mae Sturtevant

860-716-9531

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Missy Mae is a Junior at Cedar Crest College working towards a major in psychology and a minor in theater. She is very active on campus and is the Fundraising/P publicity Chair of OutThere - the colleges GSA. **Peter Suberf, ME 518-584-7015**
Peter Suberf, ME is a high-school teacher and singer, and assists Rob at workshops across North America. Rob and Peter were married in San Francisco in February, 2004.

Carolyn Taggart

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Carolyn Taggart is wrapping up her bachelors in music. While not in class, she can be found working, working, volunteering for causes near to her heart, spending time with those she loves, and working.

JP Tavares

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project10east@aol.com

Juan Pablo (JP) Tavares is a senior at Charlestown High School in Boston Massachusetts. He lives in Jamaica Plain and is committed to numerous

school and community based organizations working toward equality for young people. Juan Pablo is the president of his Gay/Straight Alliance and will graduate this spring from Charlestown High. He plans on pursuing dentistry and interior design after graduation. JP has been the youth Vice-President on the Board of Directors of Project 10 East since September 2004.

D. Jamez Terry

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trannyroadshow@yahoo.com

D. Jamez Terry has crisscrossed the country numerous times and found his own activist niche in each place that he's lived, including work for the Sexual Minority Youth Assistance League (SMYAL) in Washington, DC, and the Rape Assistance and Awareness Program in Denver, CO. Currently, he resides in Maine and is co-organizing the Tranny Roadshow, which begins its national tour in late March.

Natalie Thoreson

413-575-4185

Natalie.J.T@juno.com

Natalie J. Thoreson holds an M.Ed in Social Justice Education from UMass, Amherst. As biracial, queer-identified woman, and self identified revolutionary, she lives her commitment to social justice and critical consciousness in her work with the NCCJ and the communities to which she belongs. She supports liberatory education for youth in developing effective leaders and community builders of tomorrow and today. She has

Peterson Toscano

860-680-0639

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Peterson Toscano, a theatrical performance artist and educator uses stimulate and provoke thought on queer issues. He travels nationally as a performing presenting such pieces "Doin' Time in the Homo No Mo Halfway House -- How I Survived the Ex-Gay Movement!" "Queer 101" and How the Indians Discovered Columbus." He also lead teacher workshops including "Queer Eye for the Straight Teacher". To find out more about his work and presentation schedule, visit www.homonomo.com

Justin Tranter

JT@JustinTranter.com

After moving his band from Boston to New York, playing every rockclub in NYC, winning an OutMusic Award, hosting his own weekly music event, getting encores demanded of him at CBGB, throwing numerous sold out rock parties, selling thousands of records he released on his own, performing at the Virgin Megastore NYC, being on HBO's Chat Zone as himself, playing sold out shows in Chicago, Boston and LA, winning over the NYC press by being called "an event!", "the DIY Drama Pop Prince", and "NYC's New Rock Darling", we think the world may actually be ready to realize the iconic talent and personality of Justin Tranter.

Carolyn Turett

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Carolyn Turett is an educator at the Advocacy Center, an agency in Ithaca, NY that provides free services to youth and adults who have been impact by domestic violence, child sexual abuse, and sexual assault. She graduated from Cornell University in 2002, and since then has worked on her MSW and taught environmental education at Nature's Classroom. She has worked closely around issues of domestic violence and sexual assault with people of all sexual and gender identities.

Marya Ursin

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mybeasts@aol.com

The Mystic Paper Beasts is a collaboration between two performance artists, Daniel Potter and Marya Ursin, each of whom has been independently involved in theatre since childhood. Daniel, trained at Harvard as an architect, was a founding member of the Company in 1976. Since that time, the Company has performed variously as a family circus, a duet, a solo with audience participation, a quartet, a large group of roving friends. There are approximately 350 masks, most of which were sculpted by Dan. In 1989, Marya (BA Swarthmore) joined the Company. She has been performing in and out of NYC as a dancer and a mime through the 70's and early 80's, ran a dance studio in New London, Conn., and taught (and continues to teach) Yoga and dance at Conn. College's Continuing Education Dept., the O'Neill Theatre Centre (NTI), and at Mohegan College. She writes and directs the plays performed by the Beasts, and designs and paints some of the masks sculpted by Dan. The two engage local dancers and performers to expand their core troupe of two, often performing with four, sometimes with forty. The tales told by the beasts are original and re-told dream myths of transformation and humor which are danced in the witty and whimsical masks for which the troupe has gained international renown. These performances are appropriate for, and have delighted, audiences of all ages.

Carol Vinick, RN

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Carol is an active PFLAG mom. She is a nurse-practitioner at Bulkeley High School. She is a lifelong civil rights activist.

David Waterman

vrunvs500@hotmail.com

David Elliott Waterman MSW is a West Indian African American man with over 12 years of experience in the social service and public health / education field. As a graduate of the Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts and a participant in the Highlander Research and Education Center's Youth Leadership Institute, David began working within his native Hartford community to create change by empowering urban youth through educational, research and artistic methods. In 1994, he began working in the HIV/AIDS prevention education field and since then has created developed and implemented numerous prevention programs and services for urban youth and other underserved populations. Over the course of his 10 years working with AIDS Project Hartford, he has received many awards, and has been awarded grants to continue his work with youth. David holds a Masters in Social Work with a specialty in forensic social-legal practice from the University of Connecticut School of Work. Presently, David is a forensic social worker with the State of Connecticut Judicial Branch where he works in both the criminal and civil courts. Within the criminal court, he assesses domestic violence crimes and makes recommendations for prosecution and/or treatment for domestic violence offenders. He also evaluates disputed issues regarding child custody, visitation, divorce and family finances in the family civil court. David continues to work with AIDS Project Hartford on a part time bases on both ROOTZ and the Rustin Project.

Valerie White

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Lawyer and executive director of the Sexual Freedom Legal Defense and Education Fund, Valerie White has spoken on sex and the law at True Colors, Transcending Boundaries, Boston area Sexuality and Spirituality Network, PolCampCon, and Building Bridges. Her writing on sex and the law has been published in several periodicals. She was president of the Vermont Civil Liberties Union and is a long-time sexual freedom activist.

Karen Williams

216-289-7079

www.hahainstitute.com

Curve Magazine calls Karen Williams "... a laugh riot!" The Sydney Morning Herald proclaims that Karen Williams is "ferociously funny, with perfect pace, timing and structure." Known for her quick repartee, insightful commentary and audience rapport, Williams is a comic craftsman, a gifted actor, a multitalented writer, and an inspirational lecturer. Karen stars in a new widely funny comedy, "Laughing Matters" released in July 2004. In

addition, Karen is the founder of HaHA Institute in Cleveland, Ohio and provides humor related workshops and seminars for colleges, corporations, federal and state agencies, non-profit groups and human rights organizations.

Sheena Williams

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Sheena Williams has worked with high school diversity groups, state-wide organizations such as Love Makes a Family, and also with national organizations like the Anti-Defamation League. As a fourth semester English and history major at UCONN, Sheena Williams was co-chair of the Allies and Queers Undergraduate Association, and founded Queers United Against Discrimination. Among other things, she coordinated a multicultural vigil for the Day of Silence, as well as held a speaker's bureau on World AIDS Day.

Dan Woog

Dan Woog is a journalist, educator, soccer coach and gay activist. His articles and essays have appeared in the New York Times, Sports Illustrated and USA Today and he is contributing writer for the Advocate Magazine. He is the author of 13 books, including two collections of his most popular newspaper columns. His most recent work, Jock 2: Coming Out To Play (Alyson Publications, 2002), explores the lives of gay male athletes across America. It is the sequel to the best-selling Jocks: True Stories of America's Gay Male Athletes (Alyson, 1998), which opened the door to the last closet in this country: the locker room. Some of Dan's other books include: School's Out: The Impact of Gay and lesbian Issues on America's Schools (Alyson Publications, 1999); Gay Men, Straight Jobs (Alyson 2001). Dan is also a founder and co-facilitator for OutSpoken, a countrywide support group for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth.

Reverend Dr. Sara Worcester

860-844-8663

sbsgw@aol.com

Dr. Sara Gettemy Worcester, a UCC minister for 15 years has worked in Bloomfield, CT as a youth minister, then Pastored an "Open and Affirming" Church in Amherst, MA. Currently, she's pursuing her MSW from UCONN while interning at Granby Middle School. She intends starting a 'Spiritual Direction' practice that's '12-step' based offering counsel to GLBT, clergy, and those in recovery. Also, she hopes to be a School Social Worker. Sara lives with son, Sam and Husband, Bill in E. Granby.

Liz Yorke

860-278-4163

lizy@hglhc.org

Liz has spent some ten years counseling students in higher education in the UK. On arriving here in 1999, she trained as an HIV counselor for HGLHC, a non-profit health organization serving the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community. She also a Clinical Hypnotherapist in practice in Haddam and in Hartford. She initiated the MPower Program -a program at HGLHC which offers one-on-one time with HIV positive and negative persons who want help with HIV issues. Liz welcomes referrals to this program from agencies around the state.

Teo Yother

860-917-7137

topodchiesa@aol.com

Teo Yother was trained as a psychotherapist. As an out HIV+ transguy, he currently devotes much of his time to education and activism around queer and HIV/AIDS issues.

Judy YU

212-620-7310

jyu@gaycenter.org

Judy Yu is the Coordinator of the Education and Training Services at the Youth Enrichment Services (Y.E.S.) of the New York City Lesbians, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Community Center. She has worked as a domestic violence advocate and also participated in HIV/AIDS education media campaigns in the LGBTQ Asian American community. She is currently completing her Master of Public Health degree at Hunter College and also holds an MFA in Creative Writing.

Yunes Yusef

yyawesome@aol.com

Yunes Yusef recently graduated from Fairfield University with a degree in Psychology and Sociology where he helped to found a LGBT student group on the campus of this Catholic Jesuit University. He is a member of the Stonewall Speaker's Bureau, the True Colors organizing committee and board of directors, and a community activist.

Danny Zaccagnino

www.dannyzaccagnino.info

Danny is a professionally trained actor and speaker. His one-man show has been performed at schools across the country. Danny has been featured in The Advocate Magazine. He has worked on many projects with youth, he has interned at the United Nations serving on the planning committee for The Global Youth Summit, and he recently participated and helped organize an art relief program for teens that lost family members on 9/11.

True Colors XII Co-Sponsors

Without the financial, in-kind and volunteer support provided by the co-sponsors, **True Colors XII: Over the Rainbow and Out of the Box** would never have become a reality. We are immensely grateful to the following individuals, organizations and corporations for their support. True Colors is particularly grateful to the **staff and students of CCSU Conference Planning, Student Center Organizations and CCSU Pride** and all of the **private donors**, without whom we would not have been able to provide so many youth scholarships!

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Conn-Bi-Nation

860-956-9299

Conn-Bi-Nation is Connecticut's political, social, and educational organization for bisexuals and our allies. Our mission is to educate the straight, gay, and lesbian communities about bisexuality and bisexual issues. We encourage bi visibility, cultivate bisexual community in Connecticut, and support equal rights for all oppressed groups. Our activities include presenting at conferences, participating in Pride marches, and lobbying LGBT organizations to include bisexual and transgendered people and issues. <http://www.bisexual.org/>

Connecticut Committee for Youth Suicide Prevention (CCYSP)

(860) 571-7528

c/o Mary Drexler, United Way, INFO line, 1344 Silas Deane Highway, Rocky Hill, CT 06067

The Connecticut Committee for Youth Suicide Prevention was founded in 1985. The purpose of this committee is to address the serious, complex and multi-faceted issues of youth suicides and thereby reduce the number of completed and attempted suicides and to begin to change those conditions which lead young people to suicide.

Connecticut Education Association (CEA)

1-800-842-4316

21 Oak Street, Suite 500, Hartford, CT 06106-8001

The Connecticut Education Association is a membership organization that represents nearly 30,000 elementary and secondary public school teachers. Since its founding in 1848, CEA has consistently promoted the value of public education, encouraged public awareness of the resources necessary to provide quality education, and emphasized the importance of the teacher in the education process. CEA also has a strong tradition of advancing racial, economic & gender equity in CT Public Schools.

Connecticut Institute of Hair Design

(860) 528-7178

1000 Main Street, East Hartford, CT 06108

The purpose of The CT Institute of Hair Design is to provide outstanding and innovative training in hair, skin and nails under the guidance and supervision of competent educators, aimed at the student's successful completion of the 1500 hair course and ability to pass the state licensing exam with marketable skills for industry placement.

Connecticut Outreach Society

www.ctoutreach.org

(860) 604-6343

PO Box 163, Farmington, CT 06034

The Connecticut Outreach Society (COS) is a social and educational non-profit organization for cross-dressers, transsexuals, and their supporters. Its goal is to provide social and educational opportunities, as well as peer support, for its members. It seeks to promote a positive self-image for cross-dressers and transsexuals in the business community, the media and the general public. It supports legislation which protects the rights of all minorities. In addition, COS exists to serve its membership by offering safe, semi-public activities for members so that they may meet others with similar interests, build their confidence, perfect their presentation, and help them to become comfortable in their preferred gender role. e-mail: Ctoutreach@aol.com or at their web-site <http://members.aol.com/ctoutreach/index.html>.

Connecticut P.R.I.D.E.

(860) 524-8114

1841 Broad Street, Hartford, CT 06114 www.connecticutpride.com or pride@connecticutpride.com

The Connecticut P.R.I.D.E. committee organizes and hosts a variety of LGBT pride events throughout the year, including New Haven Block Party (in June); Hartford Parade and Festival (in September) and a Norwalk event during the summer. Volunteers, vendors and sponsors can reach the committee through the above phone number and address or by calling Frank DeMayo at (203) 934-6948.

Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund (CWEALF)

(860) 247-6090

135 Broad Street, Hartford, CT 06105 www.cwealf.org or email: cwealf@cwealf.org

CWEALF is a statewide non-profit organization dedicated to empowering women, girls and their families to achieve equal opportunities in their personal and professional lives. CWEALF provides services to women and girls in Connecticut, as well as educators, employers, state agencies, policy makers and service providers. Through our three core programs (Information and Referral, Community Education and Training and Law and Public Policy) CWEALF strives to make Connecticut a better, more equitable place to live. In addition, CWEALF provides support regarding LGBT hate crimes and harassment. Call Beth Hamilton at the above number for more information.

Connecticut Youth Services Association (CYSA)

(860) 525-5063

90 Brainard Road, Hartford, CT 06114 www.ctnonprofits.org

CYSA is dedicated to the development and maintenance of an effective support system for local youth service bureaus. Through CYSA's work, youth services will be enhanced, and the quality of life for Connecticut's children and youth will be improved. CYSA provides members with advocacy with state legislators; central clearinghouse and contact for information; regional support groups; state and regional representation; discounted products and services; training and technical assistance.

Department of Children and Families (DCF)
505 Hudson Street, Hartford, CT 06106

1-800-842-6347

The Department of Children and Families provides information and counseling, family assessment, treatment planning, intensive family preservation, temporary emergency shelter, homemakers, parent aides, aid to single parents, foster care and adoption services.

Department of Education

(860) 713-6578

PO Box 2219, Hartford, CT 06145 Thomas.Murphy@po.state.ct.us or www.state.ct.us/sde

It is the mission of the State Department of Education to provide leadership which promotes and helps create a system of education in Connecticut that enables each student to perform at high levels in educational settings that are vibrant and rich in cultural diversity.

Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services

(860) 418-6724

Preferred Practices Initiative re: Sexual Minorities and Gender Identity

DMHAS Research Division, MS #14RSD, 410 Capital Ave, PO Box 341431, Hartford, CT 06134

The Mission of DMHAS' Preferred Practice Initiative for Sexual Minorities and Gender Identity is to ensure that mental health and addiction services, either funded or state operated, are readily accessible to people who are of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities and/or expressions. Further, these services are provided in affirming, therapeutic environments using state of the art modalities designed to assure effective outcomes and promote engagement in recovery.

Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders (GLAD)

(800) 455-GLAD

Legal Information Hotline and Lawyer Referral

30 Winter Street, Suite 800, Boston, MA 02108 www.glad.org. gladlaw@glad.org

Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders is New England's leading legal rights organization dedicated to ending discrimination based on sexual orientation, HIV status and gender identity and expression.

Gay Men of African Descent

(212) 828-9602

As New York City's premier organization serving Gay Men of African Descent (GMAD), our core mission is to empower gay men of African descent through education, advocacy, health and wellness promotion, and social support.

GLSEN CT

(203) 288-2399

E Mail: GLSENCT@aol.com or on the web: www.glsen.org **Chair: Leif Mitchell**

The Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) is an education organization creating safe schools for all lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students. GLSEN strives to assure that each member of every school community is valued and respected regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression. We recognize that forces such as racism and sexism have similarly adverse impacts on communities and we support schools in seeking to redress all such inequities. GLSEN Connecticut is one of more than 40 chapters of GLSEN throughout the country. We help students start Gay-Straight Alliances, promote www.nonamecallingweek.org and the www.dayorsilence.org, communicate, support and provide referrals to students and faculty on laws pertaining to sexual orientation and gender identity in schools and provide training for students, faculty, and staff on LGBT issues in schools.

International Institute of Humor and Healing Arts (HaHA Institute)

216-289-7079

The mission of HaHA Institute is to encourage the fullest and highest activation of human potential for compassion, wisdom, and life force through the daily use of humor and healing arts. The healing arts component includes but is not limited to the following: optimal health planning, nutrition, exercise, massage and healing touch, aromatherapy, and spiritual practices. <http://www.hahainstitute.com/>

Hartford Gay and Lesbian Health Collective

(860) 278-4163 (voice/TDD)

PO Box 2094, Hartford, CT 06145 www.hglhc.org or email at: info@hglhc.org

Hartford Gay & Lesbian Health Collective empowers individuals of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities to lead healthy lives through the provision of health and support services, education and advocacy. The Health Collective provides a weekly clinic, a monthly women's clinic, massage therapy, acupuncture, dental care, HIV-related services including counseling and testing, support groups for people exploring their sexual orientation and/or gender identity, a youth LGBT support group, as well as information and referral. Many of the services provided by the Health Collective can be utilized by teens and young adults, such as HIV counseling and testing to anyone 13 and above without parental consent. In addition to the Rainbow Room (a weekly social/support group), the Health Collective has also provided numerous other opportunities for LGBTQ youth such as the Queer Prom, a college scholarship program and a variety of volunteer positions. Our current volunteer ranks include more than 80 people providing both direct and support service. Together they contribute over 7,000 + hours and serve over 5,000 people annually.

Hispanic Health Council

www.hispanichealth.com

(860) 527-0856

175 Main Street, Hartford, CT 06106

HHC is a community-based research, service, training and advocacy organization dedicated to improving the health, mental health, nutrition and economic well-being of Puerto Ricans, and other Latino populations and/or low-income groups in the Hartford area. The Council sponsors a Latino Gay/Bisexual Men's Health Project, Orgullo Latino, which provides culturally sensitive AIDS risk reduction programs, outreach, and a support group for Latino men who have sex with men.

Human Rights Campaign

(202) 628-4160

1640 Rhode Island Ave, NW, Washington D.C. 20036

The Human Rights Campaign, the largest national lesbian and gay political organization, envisions an America where lesbian and gay people are ensured of their basic equal rights -- and can be open, honest and safe at home, at work and in the community. With a national staff, volunteers and members throughout the country, HRC: lobbies the federal government on gay, lesbian and AIDS issues; educates the public; participates in election campaigns; organizes volunteers; and provides expertise and training at the state and local level. email: hrc@hrc.org or web site: www.hrc.org

- The International Foundation for Gender Education (IFGE)** **781-894-8340**
14 Felton Street, Waltham MA info@ifge.org **781-899-2212**
 The International Foundation for Gender Education (IFGE) is a leading advocate and educational organization for promoting the self-definition and free expression of individual gender identity. IFGE is an information provider and clearinghouse for referrals about all things which are transgressive of established social gender norms. IFGE maintains the most complete bookstore on the subject of transgenderism available anywhere. It also publishes the leading magazine providing reasoned discussion of issues of gender expression and identity, spanning health, family, medical, legal, workplace issues and more. A bookstore and reading room are open to the public.
- Latinos/as Contra SIDA** **www.latinoscontrasida.org** **(860) 296-6400**
184 Wethersfield Ave, Hartford, CT 06114
 Latinos/as Contra SIDA offers a variety of education, outreach, advocacy and support services which target Puerto Rican and Latino/a individuals, families and communities in the Greater Hartford area who are living with or have been affected by HIV/AIDS.
- Metroline, Inc.** www.metroline-online.com **(860) 231-8845- general info** **(860) 233-8334 editorial**
 Metroline Magazine, now celebrating its 31st year, is a bi-weekly news magazine for the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community of Connecticut and New England. It provides community news, profiles, interviews and a resource of businesses, professionals, organizations and clubs that serve and support the LGBT community.
- National Association of Social Workers, Connecticut Chapter** **(860) 257-8066**
2139 Silas Deane Highway, Suite 205, Rocky Hill, CT 06067
 The NASW, Connecticut Chapter, is the largest organization of professional social workers in the state with approximately 3700 members. NASW is dedicated to the advancement of the practice of professional social work and to improving the conditions of the people served by social workers.
- National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF)** www.nglftf.org **202-393-5177**
1325 Massachusetts Ave, NW, Washington D.C. 20005 **TTY 202-393-2284**
 NGLTF is the national progressive organization working for the civil rights of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people. NGLTF celebrates diversity and builds bridges across race, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, ethnicity, age, disability and income to fortify the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender civil rights movement. The Policy Institute is a think tank dedicated to research, policy analysis and strategic projects to advance equality for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people.
- National Youth Advocacy Coalition (NYAC)** **(202) 319-7596**
1638 R Street, NW, Suite 300 Washington, DC 20009 nyac@nyacyouth.org
 NYAC is the only national membership organization focused solely on advocacy, information, and education addressing the broad range of issues faced by gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) youth. NYAC is a unique collaboration of over 100 national and community-based member organizations working to improve the lives of GLBT youth. These organizations, in partnership with youth, researchers, and other advocates have come together to work to end discrimination against GLBT youth and to ensure their physical and emotional well-being. NYAC's Bridges Project, the national clearinghouse on GLBT youth, provides information, resources, and assistance to GLBT youth and their adult allies nationwide.
- New Haven Gay and Lesbian Community Center (NHGLCC)** **(203) 387-2252**
50 Fitch Street, New Haven, CT 06515 website: <http://www.nhglcc.org>
 NHGLCC supports the community by offering a safe, inexpensive and centrally located place to hold meetings and events for groups up to 100. NHGLCC is looking for people with ideas and the energy to implement them, volunteers, and members. Give generously and welcome to our Community's newest center!
- PFLAG, Hartford (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays)** **(860) 633-7184**
1335 Main Street, Glastonbury, CT 06033 **(860) 633-5111**
HFDPFFLAG@aol.com **Transgender Issues (860) 231-8582**
 Meets the 3rd Wednesday at the Immanuel Congregational Church, 10 Woodland Street in Hartford at 7:30 PM. Members publish a bi-monthly newsletter, provide Helpline services, offer informational pamphlets, books and tapes, maintain a speakers bureau and work within the Greater Hartford Area for affirming families, safe schools, inclusive faith communities and informed lawmakers.
- PFLAG, Danbury** HerbTJ@aol.com **(203) 797-4743**
 Meets the 2nd Monday of every month, (except July & August) 7:00 PM, St. James Episcopal Church, 25 West Street, Danbury
- Latino PFLAG** CTLatinoPflag@e-mayu.org
 Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) support group on cultural issues for Spanish speaking families. Meets on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month at 6:30 at Hispanos Unidos, 116 Sherman Ave, New Haven CT
- PFLAG, Northwestern** **(860) 453-2738**
 Call for times and information
- PFLAG, Norwich** JeanBeanCarter@aol.com **(860) 889-4940**
 First Tuesday of the month at 7:00 PM at Backus Hospital, 326 Washington Street, conference room off main entrance
- PFLAG, Shoreline Chapter** Ebarase@aol.com **(203) 453-1395**
 This group is no longer meeting regularly, but interested people can call the number for references, resources and support.
- PFLAG, Southwestern** **(203) 226-0257**
PO Box 16703, Stamford, CT 06905-8703 Pflagswct@yahoo.com
 One of the oldest PFLAG chapters in the state, the Southwestern meets the 1st Wednesday of every month at the Triangle Community Center, 16 River Street, Norwalk. They have published their newsletter, The Voice, since 1989; have monthly meetings of a spouse group; get publicity, arrange workshops, provide speakers, donate books to public libraries, and sponsor fund-raisers and promote political awareness.

PFLAG, Southeastern jeanbeancarter@aol.com (860) 889-4940

Meets the 1st Tuesday of every month, 7:00 PM, Backus Hospital, Room 2-E, Norwich

PFLAG, Springfield (413) 732-3240

Last Wednesday each month, South Congregational Church, 45 Maple Street, Springfield (413) 783-7709

Planned Parenthood of Connecticut (203) 865-5158

129 Whitney Ave., New Haven, CT 06510 www.ppct.org (800) 230-PLAN for nearest office

Planned Parenthood of Connecticut is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting the fundamental rights of all individuals to manage their own fertility and sexual health and to ensure access to the services, education, and information necessary to realize that right. Planned Parenthood has 17 health centers located throughout the state of Connecticut providing services to both men and women. In addition to health services, the Education and Training Department of Planned Parenthood provides community education and in-service professional training on a broad array of topics ranging from HIV/STI prevention, relationships and reproductive health to human sexuality, sexual orientation and homophobia.

Project 100, Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Community Center (860) 724-5542

1841 Broad Street, Hartford, CT 06114 www.project100htfd.com

The Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Community Center is a tax-exempt, non-profit corporation which is handicap accessible convenient to public transportation. The Center occupies a spacious facility in Hartford's south end with several meeting rooms, a large social hall, and inviting game room, a full kitchen and private offices for the Hartford Gay and Lesbian Health Collective, MCC/Hartford, and Project 100. Activities range from quiet self-help groups, business meetings and seminars, to aerobics classes, dances, square dances, and cabaret entertainment. Tax deductible contributions and support are gratefully accepted for membership in the Community Center.

Stonewall Speakers Association stonewallspeakers@biz.ctol.net (860) 296-4089

The Stonewall Speaker's association provides educational presentations for schools, community groups and service organizations throughout Connecticut. Their presentations help to change attitudes and the atmosphere in a classroom and offer support to the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students in many of Connecticut's high schools. Presentations address the subject of sexual orientation including, but not limited to, youth suicide, social processes, attitudes, homophobia and behavior; substance abuse; religion; parenting and adoption; diversity and discrimination; legal status; and health issues within the LGBT Community. In addition, the Association offers teacher training workshops. Speakers participate in programs at over 85 High Schools and Colleges every year. For more information or to schedule a speakers' panel for your school or event, please call State Coordinator, Geraldine Burke at the number or email address above.

Triangle Community Center www.ctgay.org (203) 853-0600

16 River Street, Norwalk, CT 06855 TCCenter@aol.com.

The Triangle Community Center is a gay and lesbian community center established in 1990 to nurture the Fairfield county gay, lesbian and bisexual community and to provide physical space in which to gather. The Triangle Community Center serves the LGB communities from New Haven county to Westchester county New York as well as all of Fairfield county. The Center fosters a wide variety of meetings and activities, cultural and educational programs, as well as maintaining the areas largest LGB resource room including youth, bi, parenting, and other groups. "News and Views", the monthly newsletter keeps members up to date on the events at the Triangle Community Center and provides a forum for the expression of opinion on a variety of subjects.

The University of Connecticut, School of Social Work (860) 570-9119

1798 Asylum Ave., West Hartford, CT 06117

The UCONN School of Social Work promotes social and economic justice by providing high quality graduate education in social work. The School prepares professional social workers to help people enrich their lives, improve their communities, and contribute to a more just social order. The School of Social Work faculty, staff and students are guided by a strong commitment to the social work values of justice, equity, individual self-worth and self-determination, and human rights. For more information visit us on the web at www.ssw.uconn.edu or contact the Admissions Office at sswadmit1@uconnvm.uconn.edu

The University of Connecticut, Rainbow Center (860) 486-5821

As part of the overall commitment to diversity and civility, the administration at the University of Connecticut has dedicated staff, office space and resources to address the needs of the gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and allied members of the campus community. We are here to serve the entire UConn Community, and to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to learn, work and grow in a supportive atmosphere.. The center can also be reached on the web at: <http://www.rainbowcenter.uconn.edu> or by email at: rnwdir@uconn.edu The Center's Hours of Operation are M-F 9am-8pm. We are located in the Student Union.

The University of Connecticut, Women's Center (860) 486-4738

417 Whitney Road, Storrs, CT 06269

The UCONN Women's Center, founded in 1972, offers educational and support services to University students, staff and faculty, and members of the surrounding communities. The Center's mission is to educate, advocate, and provide support services for the achievement of women's equity at the University and within the community at large. In addition to the broad program base, special attention is focused on, but not limited to, women who face additional challenges due to their race, ethnicity, socio-economic class, sexual identity, religion, age and physical or mental ability.

The XX Club (Gender Support and Education) www.twentyclub.org (860) 646-8651

PO Box 387 Hartford, CT 06141-0387

This group was formed by the Gender Identity Clinic of New England, Inc. to offer peer support and information to transsexual persons throughout the many stages of gender transition. The Club also holds parties, publishes a newsletter and maintains a speakers bureau. Friends and relatives wishing to develop greater understanding and acceptance of a loved one's transsexuality are encouraged to attend. Meetings are held on the second and fourth Saturdays of each month, from 2:00 to 5:00 PM at Project 100, LGBT Community Center, 1841 Broad St, Hartford. Attendance is strictly confidential.

True Colors Individual Donors

In addition to our co-sponsors, these individuals and organizations responded to our call for support and joined our TC Top 100 by donating \$100 or more. We owe them our gratitude & sincere thanks for their willingness to support the work that we do on behalf of LGBTI youth, adults and families

True Colors Family Members

Anonymous (13)
Barbara Beitch
Susan Hyde-Wick
Patrick and Joni Beth Roderick
Bob & Marie Calvin
Bobby Young
Robin & Barbara
Levine-Ritterman

Mary Alice Frankenberger
Frederick Morton, III
Frances Quish
Carol Bozena & Darlene
Dunbar
Katharine Dougherty
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Mara Maislen

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Diane Goldsmith
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True Colors Activist's Circle (donations of \$500 or more)

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John and Becky Glezen
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David Knapp

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Talking to Children About Our Families: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

A Family Pride Publication, By Margie Brickley and Aimee Gelnaw. available on line at: <http://www.familypride.org>

Coming Out to Your Children: A Guide for LGBT Parents

This includes articles on coming out to children, support for straight spouses, where to seek additional resources and support. With special emphasis for the formerly or currently married LGBT parent. This includes articles on coming out to children, support for straight spouses, where to seek additional resources and support. With special emphasis for the formerly or currently married LGBT parent. Free. <http://www.familypride.org>

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