Building LGBTQ Awareness and Acceptance: A Foster, Adoptive and Kinship Family Sensitivity Training

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Formed Families Forward
Part 1: February 22, 2021
Part 2: March 1, 2021
Formed Families Forward - who we are...

- A family-led resource center in Northern Virginia supporting foster, adoptive and kinship families who are raising children, youth & young adults with special needs, and professionals who work with our families.

- We offer free training, consultations to families, events, resources, and systems navigation. Also - peer support groups; webinars; virtual trainings; child care program; videos and other resources.

- Participant in four No Va Trauma Informed Community Networks (TICNs)
- Family partner to Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports (VTSS; a VDOE project)

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Tonight’s Plan

• Define the meaning of LGBTQ for the purposes of tonight’s discussion

• Explain why families formed through adoption, kinship and foster care need to be aware of the challenges LGBTQ youth encounter

• Part 1 of Safe Zone Training

• Q&A
Poll

Which categories best describe you:
• Adoptive parent
• Kinship caregiver
• Foster parent
• Birth parent
• Professional
• Other
National Survey of LGBTQ Youth Mental Health

- 40% seriously considered attempting suicide in the last month
- 68% reported symptoms of generalized anxiety disorder
- 55% reported symptoms of major depressive
- 48% reported engaging in self-harm
- 29% experienced homelessness, been kicked out, or run away
- 46% report they wanted to see a mental health professional but were unable to do so in the past 12 months
- 1 in 3 reported they had been physically harmed or threatened in their lifetime due to their LGBTQ identity

Source: The Trevor Project, 2020
Fairfax County Youth Survey Behavioral Health Data

• LGBQ youth have twice the rate of depressive symptoms, more than 3 times the rate of suicidal ideation, and 3 times the rate of suicide attempts
• LGBQ youth are more than 20% likely to be bullied
• LGBQ youth are more likely to be victims of dating aggression
• LGBQ youth feel less safe than others in their schools and in their communities

Source: Fairfax County, 2020
LGB Students Disproportionately Exposed to Violence

- Forced to have sexual intercourse ***
- Sexual dating violence **
- Physical dating violence **
- Bullied electronically **
- Bullied on school property **
- Threatened or injured with a weapon on school property *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Heterosexual</th>
<th>LGB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forced to have sexual intercourse ***</td>
<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual dating violence **</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical dating violence **</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullied electronically **</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullied on school property **</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threatened or injured with a weapon on school property *</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Past 30 days
** Past 12 months
*** Lifetime

• Source: Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2019
Educational Impact Exposure to Violence has on LGBTQ Youth

• According to a 2015 survey, LGB students were 140% more likely to not go to school in a 30 days period because of safety concerns compared to heterosexual students

• Absenteeism has been linked to low graduation rates, which can have lifelong consequences

• Additionally, those who do graduate have lower postsecondary education aspirations

• LGBTQ youth are at a higher risk of being put in school-to-prison pipeline

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Youth.gov and GLSEN
LGBTQ Youth in Foster Care

• 30.4% of youth in foster care identify as LGBTQ compared to 11.2% of youth not in foster care
• 5% of youth in foster care identify as transgender compared to 1.17% of youth not in foster care
• More disrupted placements and trauma than non-LGBTQ peers
• In New York, a study found 78% of LGBTQ youth were removed or ran away from foster homes due to the hostilities they faced
• 56% of the youth in the NY study chose to live on the street rather than in a foster care placement because they felt safer

Sources: Children’s Rights and Human Rights Campaign
LGBTQ Youth in Kinship and Adoption

• Data for these groups are not comprehensive
• However, per the previous slide, 11.2% of youth in the general population identify as LGBTQ
• 1.17% of youth in the general population identify specifically as transgender
• The means that kinship and adoptive families will raise LGBTQ children

Sources: Children’s Rights
How to Improve Outcomes for LGTBQ Youth?

• LGBTQ adolescents who are supported by their families grow up to be happier and healthier adults

• Be an ally, a straight person who supports and advocates for LGBTQ people - show support for LGBTQ friends, co-workers, classmates, neighbors, co-congregants, family members in a variety of ways

• Schools can implement evidence-based policies, procedures, and activities designed to promote a healthy environment for LGBTQ youth. Research shows support groups, such as gay-straight alliance (GSA) makes schools safer and boost academic performance, and mental health outcomes among LGBTQ students
Resources

• https://www.pbslearningmedia.org/collection/lgbtq-identity

• https://maec.org/welcoming-schools-creating-lgbtq-awareness-for-educators

• https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/teen/dating-sex/Pages/Four-Stages-of-Coming-Out.aspx

• https://smile.amazon.com/Safe-Not-Enough-Development-Education/dp/1612509428

Resources, Continued

• https://pflag.org/chapter/pflag-washington-dc-metropolitan-area

• https://www.thetrevorproject.org

• https://www.cdc.gov/lgbthealth/youth.htm

• https://familyproject.sfsu.edu/family-videos

• https://youth.gov/youth-topics/lgbtq-youth/families

• https://www.glsen.org/professional-development
Formed Families Forward – Stay in Touch!

Please complete the evaluation!!!

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