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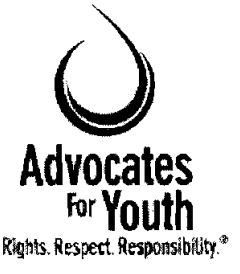
Creating Safe Space for GLBTQ Youth: A Toolkit

Girl's Best Friend Foundation & Advocates for Youth
2005



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Girl's Best Friend Foundation promotes and protects the **human rights** of girls in Illinois by advancing and sustaining policies and programs that ensure girls' **self-determination, power, and well-being**. We support those who **challenge the status quo** by offering alternatives to the societal messages that girls receive.

Advocates for Youth is dedicated to creating programs and advocating for policies that help young people make informed and responsible decisions about their sexual and reproductive health. Advocates provides information, training, and strategic assistance to youth-serving organizations, youth activists, policy makers, and the media in the United States and in developing countries.

Advocates' mission is driven by its vision of *Rights. Respect. Responsibility.*®

- Youth have **rights** to accurate and complete sexual health information, confidential reproductive and sexual health services, and a secure stake in the future.
- Youth deserve **respect**. Today, young people are largely perceived as part of the problem. Valuing young people means they are part of the solution and are included in developing programs and policies that affect their well-being.
- Society has the **responsibility** to provide young people with the tools they need to safeguard their sexual health, and young people have the responsibility to protect themselves from too early childbearing and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV.

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Acknowledgements

When Girl's Best Friend Foundation set out to identify issues confronting girls and young women in Chicago, Illinois, the issue of safe space for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (GLBTQ) youth stood out as critically important. The Foundation began working toward a vision of creating safe space within youth programming for *all* young people and especially for those who self-identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or questioning.

Beginning in May 2004, 10 youth workers (from various organizations receiving grants from Girl's Best Friend Foundation) began meeting regularly to identify, collect, develop, and organize resources for use in youth-serving organizations that are committed to inclusive programming. The participants (of what came to be known as the Safe Space Resource Circle) discussed many issues at length, particularly existing challenges to the creation of safe space. The Circle identified specific, systemic barriers as well as practical ways to address the barriers at the individual, organizational, and funding levels. The Circle's work heavily informed the content of this *Toolkit*.

Then in fall 2004, in order to make the *Toolkit* widely available and more user friendly, Girl's Best Friend Foundation initiated a cooperative venture with Advocates for Youth. As such, staff at Advocates began working with the first draft of the *Toolkit* and guided the writing and production of the final draft. Advocates' staff identified and adapted additional activities and resources, gained permission to reprint the materials of various organizations, wrote additional pieces, and provided editing, desk-top design, and Web-based publishing.

In particular, Girl's Best Friend Foundation and Advocates for Youth wish to thank the following individual participants in the Resource Circle—the group whose work informed and helped to shape this *Toolkit*: **Megan Carney**, About Face Youth Theatre; **Lesley Kennedy**, Chicago Girls' Coalition; **Shannon Kenney**, Coalition for Education on Sexual Orientation; **Tammy Ko Robinson**, Video Machete; **Jorge Valdivia**, Radio Arte; **Cat Quinn**, Latina Girls' Club and Lakeview School-Based Health Center; **Jane Palmer**, formerly with Illinois Center for Violence Prevention; and **Christina Kappaz** and **Yasmin Ahmed** who co-facilitated the Resource Circle on behalf of Girl's Best Friend Foundation. In addition, Girl's Best Friend Foundation and Advocates for Youth thank staff at Advocates for their extensive work on this publication: **Sue Alford**, editor; **Debra Hauser**, supervising editor; **Eric Jost**, **Tamarah Moss**, and **Ben Riskin**, advisors; and **Jennifer Augustine**, **Laura Davis**, **Jesse Gilliam**, **Will Neville**, and **Smita Varia**, expert trainers.

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Part One—Advocating for Safe Space to Affirm the Rights and Dignity of GLBTQ Youth*

Introduction

Some organizations and programs are intentional about serving gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and questioning[µ] (GLBTQ) youth. However, many youth-serving programs in the United States—including educational, health care, youth development, sports, recreational, and employment programs, among others—ignore, overlook, or reject the presence of GLBTQ youth among those they serve.

A recent survey of high school youth found that less than six percent self-identify as gay, lesbian, or bisexual and/or report same-sex sexual contact.[1] This percentage probably does not include transgender and questioning youth or those who are fearful of sharing information about their sexual orientation or gender identity. Consider then, that six to 10 percent of the young people in your program *may* be GLBTQ. Unless your program positively acknowledges their presence and actively affirms their rights and dignity, these young people may feel compelled to keep their sexual identity a secret. Having to keep secret such an essential part of life puts these youth at risk of negative mental and physical health outcomes.[2]

Advocates for Youth and Girl's Best Friend Foundation approach all their work with youth from a firm belief that every young person is of great value, irrespective of race/ethnicity, biological sex, health status, socio-economic background, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Indeed, valuing youth provides an ethical imperative to acknowledge and serve GLBTQ youth equally and positively along with straight youth and those who conform to society's gender role expectations.

GLBTQ youth need and deserve help to survive in the face of family rejection and school harassment, against heightened rates of HIV, STI, suicide, and violence victimization, and against racial, cultural, and socio-economic prejudice. Even more, they should be able to thrive as valued members of their communities. *Anyone* who provides services to young people has an obligation to promote the health and well-being of *all* the youth in the program, including GLBTQ young people. At the same time, providing a safe and supportive space[π] for GLBTQ youth will also help to provide a safe space in which straight youth can thrive.

Who Should Use This Manual and Why?

The *Safe Space Toolkit* is intended for youth-serving professionals, especially direct service professionals in such fields as youth development, education, health care, and social work. Unless these professionals work in a program that is exclusively directed toward GLBTQ youth, they may not realize that their program includes GLBTQ youth or that homophobia has negative consequences for *both* GLBTQ *and* straight youth in the program.

Homophobia affects *everyone*. Homophobia has serious consequences for GLBTQ youth, including high rates of morbidity and mortality as a result of violence, prejudice, and discrimination; violence directed at GLBTQ youth in schools and communities; isolation with consequent depression, lowered self-esteem, and feelings of hopelessness;

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* This article is adapted from *Transitions* 2002; 14 (4); © Advocates for Youth.

µ Questioning youth are those who are unsure of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity or who feel uncomfortable with the labels (such as straight, gay, male, female, etc.) that are available to them.

π Safe space can be defined as a place where any young person can relax and be fully self-expressed, without fear of being made to feel uncomfortable, unwanted, or unsafe on account of biological sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, race/ethnicity, cultural background, age, or physical and mental ability. It is a place where the rules guard each person's self-respect and strongly encourage everyone to respect others.

attempted and completed suicides; substance use; and increased sexual risk-taking behaviors that expose GLBTQ youth to STIs, including HIV, and to unintended pregnancy.[1,2,3,4,5]

Homophobia also affects straight youth because it forces many of them to act 'macho' or 'feminine,' depending on their biological sex, thus limiting their individuality and self-expression. Homophobia also leads many straight youth to become sexually active or increase their sexual activity in order to 'prove' their heterosexuality. Then, too, homophobia encourages straight youth to remain ignorant about HIV and unaware of the steps they can take to prevent STIs, including HIV, as well as to refuse to participate in HIV vaccine trials and other work to end the HIV pandemic.[6,7,8] In other words, affirming the rights and dignity of GLBTQ youth will benefit GLBTQ *and* straight youth.

Therefore, the goal of this *Toolkit* is to enable staff of mainstream youth-serving organizations to create a safe and welcoming environment for GLBTQ youth by directly addressing homophobia and transphobia[π] among staff and youth. To that end, the *Toolkit* guides youth-serving organizations and professionals in: 1) assessing the organization's internal climate and staff's personal attitudes regarding sexual orientation and gender identity; 2) developing pro-social and proactive policies and procedures; 3) taking a stand for the rights and dignity of GLBTQ youth; and 4) developing among staff and youth positive attitudes and behaviors regarding GLBTQ people.

Part One includes background that may be useful in building support for policies and programming to create a safe space for *all* youth, irrespective of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. Materials include: an overview of how the homophobic and gender-rigid climate in the United States affects GLBTQ youth and a newly revised fact sheet, *GLBTQ Youth*. Later in the *Toolkit*, you will find:

- Practical tips and strategies (Part Two) for assessing and, when necessary, changing climate in your organization;
- Lesson plans (Part Three) intended to sensitize program youth, staff, and volunteers to homophobic and transphobic sentiments and actions and to get all program youth into action, either as straight allies* of GLBTQ youth or as activist GLBTQ youth;
- Additional resources on sexual orientation and gender identity (Part Four), including select organizations, Web sites, books, and videos; a glossary, information on abstinence-only-until-marriage education, answers to *Frequently Asked Questions about Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity*, and a Definition Match-Up, which you can use to assess your familiarity with terminology related to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.

How the Homophobic Climate in the United States Affects GLBTQ Youth

Many people in the United States may be unaware of how the nation's homophobic climate affects GLBTQ people, especially young GLBTQ people. Despite horrifying incidents that sporadically make headlines nationwide—events such as the brutal murders of Matthew Shepard, Brandon Teena, and Gwen Araujo and other incidents unfortunately too numerous to mention—many people accept, overlook, or ignore the hatred and violence directed at GLBTQ people.

Every other year, the Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network (GLSEN) performs a survey to assess the situation that GLBTQ youth face in the nation's schools. The *2003 National School Climate Survey* continued tracking the endemic problem of name-calling, harassment, and violence directed at GLBTQ youth. The most recent survey found that

- An overwhelming majority (92 percent) of GLBTQ students reported frequently hearing homophobic slurs, such as 'faggot,' 'dyke,' or 'that's so gay.' Moreover, schools' faculty and staff contributed to the problem by either making such comments themselves or failing to intervene when they overheard such remarks.[4]
- Eighty-four percent of GLBTQ students reported being called names or threatened because of their sexual orientation or gender expression.[4]
- Forty-five percent of GLBTQ youth of color reported being verbally harassed on account of *both* their sexual orientation and their race/ethnicity.[4]

[π] Transphobia is an unreasoning hatred and suspicion or fear of people whose gender identity and/or gender expression does not conform to that expected by society from people of their biological sex.

* An ally is a person or organization that actively helps another with a specific issue—in this case one who actively works to support the rights and dignity of GLBTQ people.

- Thirty-nine percent of gay, lesbian, and bisexual students and 55 percent of transgender students reported having been shoved or pushed. Transgender youth were about one-third more likely to suffer physical harassment on account of their gender expression than were gay, lesbian, and bisexual students on account of their sexual orientation.[4]
- Sixty-four percent of GLBTQ students reported feeling unsafe at school, and 29 percent reported missing one or more days of school in the previous month because they felt unsafe. Among GLBTQ youth of color, 35 percent reported missing one or more days of school because they felt unsafe due to their sexual orientation or gender identity, their race, or both.[4]

In 2004, California Safe Schools Coalition surveyed youth about perceived or actual sexual orientation and its relationship to health and educational outcomes. Compared to students who were not harassed on the basis of perceived or actual sexual orientation, harassed students were:

- More than three times as likely to: miss at least one day of school in the previous 30 days due to feeling unsafe; carry a weapon to school; seriously consider suicide; or make a plan for attempting suicide;[3]
- More than twice as likely to: report depression so severe as to stop normal activities for at least two weeks; use methamphetamines; or use inhalants;[3]
- More likely to: have low grades (Cs or below); suffer violence; smoke cigarettes; drink alcohol; binge drink; and/or use marijuana.[3]

In fact in most states, the public schools—in which young people spend a large majority of their day—are unsafe for GLBTQ youth. In 2004, GLSEN released a study scoring states on their statewide school policies and whether those policies ensured a safe school environment for all students, irrespective of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. Forty-two states* received an F and one state (Rhode Island) received a D—indicating an abysmal lack of policies to protect the human rights and dignity of *all* students in the state. Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Wisconsin each got a C; California, the District of Columbia, and Vermont each received a B. Only Minnesota and New Jersey received an A for their statewide school policies.[9]

GLSEN's conclusion was that:
The vast majority of students do not have legal protection against anti-GLBTQ bullying and harassment. Only eight states and the District of Columbia currently have statewide legal protections for students based on sexual orientation. Only California, Minnesota, and New Jersey include protections based on gender identity and gender expression. More than 75 percent of the approximately 47.7 million K-12 students in the U.S. go to schools that do not include sexual orientation and gender identity/expression [for statewide protection] along with federally mandated protection based on religion, race, and national origin.[9]

Moreover, this is just at school. After coming out to their family or being 'outed,'* many GLBTQ youth are thrown out of their homes or face physical, emotional, and/or sexual abuse at home.[2] Service providers estimate that 25 to 40 percent of homeless youth may be GLBTQ.[10] These percentages may be conservative, since many GLBTQ youth are understandably reluctant to come out to strangers, such as service providers at homeless shelters. GLBTQ youth face harassment every day. They frequently face violence, threats of violence, or the possibility of violence. Yet, GLBTQ youth are people, just like heterosexual and gender-conforming[‡] people. GLBTQ youth have worth; they have abilities, talents, and strengths. They deserve to be treated with the same dignity and respect that others receive. They deserve safe space and respectful treatment in youth-serving agencies, organizations, and programs.

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* Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Washington State, West Virginia, and Wyoming

* Outed means having someone else disclose one's sexual orientation or gender identity. Often, this is someone whom the GLBTQ youth trusted with this sensitive information and who, accidentally or deliberately, betrayed the youth's trust.

‡ In this document, no value attaches either to conforming or to refusing to conform to socially accepted gender roles. Later, this *Toolkit* discusses gender role stereotyping, gender identity, and issues that arise from demands that people conform to societally defined gender roles.

Finally, there are the very real problems that heterosexual or straight youth face because of homophobia. Surveys show that anxiety about being thought to be gay leads many straight youth to take serious risks—such as having unprotected sex and using alcohol and other drugs.[5,6] Ending homophobia in a program can improve the health outcomes of all its young participants—whether they are straight or gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or questioning.

GLBTQ Youth

Gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender* and questioning (GLBTQ) youth face tremendous difficulties in a society where heterosexuality often seems the only acceptable orientation, homosexuality is regarded as deviant, and variation from cultural concepts of "normal gender" often evokes hostility or violence. Research shows that homophobia and heterosexism greatly contribute to GLBTQ youth's high rates of attempted and completed suicide, violence victimization, substance abuse, teenage pregnancy, and HIV-associated risky behaviors. However, some programs offer GLBTQ youth the skills and support they need to develop into healthy adults.

Awareness of Sexual Orientation and Gender Comes Early.

- Research suggests that sexual orientation is likely determined during early childhood.[2] Prospective studies indicate that many gay and lesbian youth self-identify at about age 16, and that their first awareness of homosexual attraction occurred at about age nine for males and 10 for females.[2]
- Awareness of the biological differences between boys and girls occurs by age three. Regarding gender identity—a person's innate sense of maleness or femaleness—transgender people report experiencing conflict over their gender assignment throughout childhood and adolescence.[3]
- Same-sex sexual behavior may be more common among adolescents than among adults, although few teens define themselves as lesbian or gay. These youth may fear rejection and discrimination or they may be uncertain of their sexual orientation. In a representative sample of 1,067 teens, for example, only one youth self-identified as gay although five percent had engaged in same-sex sexual behavior.[2]

Open GLBT Identity Can Mean Family Rejection and Make School Dangerous.

- After coming out to their family or being discovered, many GLBT youth are thrown out of their home, mistreated, or made the focus of their family's dysfunction.[4]
- Service providers estimate that 25 to 40 percent of homeless youth may be GLBT.[2] These rates may be conservative since many GLBT youth fear disclosing their orientation or gender identity.[2,3]
- In one nationwide survey, over 84 percent of GLBT students reported verbal harassment at school. Over 39 percent of all gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth reported being punched, kicked, or injured with a weapon at school because of their sexual orientation while 55 percent of transgender youth reported physical attacks because of their gender identity or gender expression.[5]
- The consequences of physical and verbal abuse directed at GLBT students include truancy, dropping out of school, poor grades, and having to repeat a grade. In one study, 28 percent of gay and bisexual youth dropped out of school due to peer harassment.[4]

GLBT Youth of Color Face Additional Challenges.

- Unlike racial stereotypes that family and ethnic community can positively reframe, many racial/ethnic minority communities reinforce negative cultural perceptions of homosexuality.[2]
- Up to 46 percent of GLBT youth of color report experiencing physical violence related to their sexual orientation.[5] Nearly 45 percent of youth in one survey were verbally harassed in school regarding sexual orientation and race/ethnicity.[5]
- Even though past traditions often affirmed fluid gender expression and/or homosexuality, many GLBT youth in modern Native American communities face humiliation and violence because of their sexual orientation and/or gender expression.[2,6,7]
- In many Latino communities, *machismo* and Catholicism contribute to homophobic attitudes that hamper efforts to reach Latino gay and bisexual youth with HIV prevention information.[8]
- Asian American and Pacific Islander GLBT youth often feel that they have shamed their families when they diverge from cultural expectations to marry and have children.[7]

- African American GLBT youth often face rejection by both white gay communities and homophobic black communities.[9]

GLBT Youth Lack Positive Role Models, Use Substances to Help Cope.

- Positive community support and role models for GLBTQ adolescents are minimal, and many adults fear discrimination, job loss, and abuse if they openly support GLBT youth.[10]
- Many GLBTQ youth report relying on television to learn what it means to be lesbian or gay. In one study, 80 percent of these youth ages 14 to 17 believed media stereotypes that depicted gay men as effeminate and lesbians as masculine. Half believed that all homosexual people were unhappy.[2]
- GLBT youth often internalize negative societal messages regarding sexual orientation and suffer from self-hatred as well as from social and emotional isolation. They may use substances to manage stigma and shame, to deny same-sex sexual feelings, and/or as a defense against ridicule and violence.[2]
- Studies of high school students found that those who suffered harassment because of their real or perceived sexual orientation were more likely than non-harassed peers to use crack cocaine, cocaine, anabolic steroids, and inhalants.[11,12]

GLBTQ Youth May Take Sexual Risks and/or Attempt Suicide.

- Studies establish links between attempting suicide and gender nonconformity, early awareness of sexual orientation, stress, violence, lack of support, school dropout, family problems, homelessness, and substance use.[13]
- In a recent survey, 33 percent of gay, lesbian, and bisexual high school students reported attempting suicide in the previous year, compared to eight percent of their heterosexual peers;[14] in another study, gay and bisexual males were nearly four times more likely to attempt suicide than were their straight peers.[15]
- In one study of 15- to 22-year-old men who have sex with men, 23 percent reported having had at least five male sex partners in the previous six months and 41 percent reported unprotected anal sex. Seventeen percent of men of mixed race/ethnicity and black background were HIV-infected as were 14 percent of African Americans/blacks, 13 percent of men of mixed or other race/ethnicity, and seven percent of Hispanics. HIV prevalence was three percent among whites and Asian Americans.[16]
- In one study, nearly 17 percent of bisexual women reported unprotected vaginal or anal sex with a man during the last two months.[17]

Some Positive Trends Exist.

- In one recent poll, more than half of adults supported protecting the civil rights of GLBT people.[18] In another survey, 95 percent of youth supported expanding current hate crimes laws to cover gender and sexual orientation.[19]
- A recent study of GLBTQ youth who received gay-sensitive HIV prevention education in school showed they engaged in less risky sexual behavior than similar youth who did not receive such instruction.[20]

* An umbrella term for all who challenge the boundaries of biological sex and culturally determined gender expression; those who choose not to conform to their culture's gender norms, including transsexuals, crossdressers, Two-Spirit people, drag performers, etc, and people who do not identify with their biological sex.[1]

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Written by Meg Earls

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Part Two—The Blueprint: Tips and Strategies for Creating Safe Space for GLBTQ Youth in Your Organization

Introduction

Society in the United States is overtly hostile to GLBTQ people, and societal homophobia often leads GLBTQ youth to devalue themselves. Statistics paint a frightening picture of the stresses in the lives of young GLBTQ people. Too often, these youth feel isolated and alone. Violence and hostility at home and school lead many GLBTQ youth to drop out, run away, use drugs, and/or attempt suicide.[1,2,3,10]

At the same time, research shows that homophobia and the fear of being thought gay forces many straight youth to: act 'macho' or 'feminine,' depending on biological sex; limit or minimize their friendships with people of their own sex; become sexually active or increase their sexual activity in order to 'prove' their heterosexuality; and remain ignorant about HIV and steps they can take to prevent STIs, including HIV. Homophobia also encourages straight youth to refuse to participate in HIV vaccine trials and other work to end the HIV pandemic.[2,3,6,7]

Professionals who work with youth usually believe that every young person is of great value. Valuing youth provides an ethical imperative to acknowledge and serve GLBTQ youth equally and positively along with heterosexual youth and those who conform to society's gender norms. GLBTQ youth especially need and deserve help to survive in the face of family rejection and school harassment, against heightened rates of HIV, STI, suicide, and violence victimization, and against racial, cultural, and socio-economic prejudice. They should be able to thrive as valued members of their communities. When agencies provide services to youth, they have an obligation to promote the health and well-being of *all* the youth in the program, including GLBTQ young people. At the same time, providing a safe and supportive environment for GLBTQ youth will help agencies to provide a safe and supportive environment in which straight youth can thrive as well.

The Purpose of Part Two

Because homophobia is a real problem, for GLBTQ *and* straight youth, Part Two aims to help service providers create a climate in their organization that will make *everyone* feel safe, irrespective of sexual orientation or gender identity or expression. It will help agencies to assess and address organizational policies and climate. It includes the following:

1. Tips and Strategies for Assessing Youth Programs and Agencies
2. Tips and Strategies for Creating a Safe Space for GLBTQ Youth: Recommendations from the Safe Space Resource Circle
3. Tips and Strategies for Creating Inclusive Programs
4. Tips and Strategies for Taking Steps to Cultural Fairness
5. Tips and Strategies for Addressing Harassment
6. Tips and Strategies for Meeting the Needs of GLBTQ Youth of Color
7. Tips and Strategies for Meeting the Needs of Transgender Youth
8. Tips and Strategies for Addressing the Challenges that Face Transgender Youth

Part Three provides lesson plans to sensitize program youth and staff to the human rights and dignity of GLBTQ youth and to encourage youth to become activists and allies of GLBTQ youth. For more information about sexual orientation and gender identity, see Part Four.

Tips and Strategies for Assessing Youth Programs and Agencies*

To ensure a safe environment for GLBTQ youth, the first step is to assess the internal climate of your organization. Assessment will show whether the organization offers a safe space for all participants and especially for GLBTQ youth.

Do not evade any of the questions by asserting that there are no GLBTQ youth in your program. Answer all questions and assume that at least five to 10 percent of the youth in your program are GLBTQ.

If you can honestly answer yes to all the questions below, your agency is a welcoming and safe space for GLBTQ and straight youth. Congratulations! *Any* "no" answers indicate areas for improvement. Four or more "no" answers indicate a serious need for your organization to commit to serving *all* the young people in its programs and for staff and board to take steps to ensure that the agency's mission, vision, planning, and operations create and maintain a safe space[π] for GLBTQ youth.

For assistance in taking steps to assure safe space, see the rest of the guidelines in Part Two and/or consult the organizations listed in Part Four.

1. Do the GLBTQ youth, staff, and volunteers in your organization or program know that you care about them—individually and as whole people?
2. Have you created a safe space where *all* youth can openly ask questions about and discuss issues like sexual health, body image, relationships, and gender?
3. Do you know the interests, abilities, hobbies, and skills of each young person in your program?
4. Do you offer any information about local GLBTQ communities and resources? Do you refer youth to these resources?
5. If you offer information about safer sex, HIV prevention, and/or pregnancy prevention, is it also GLBTQ friendly? Is the information appropriate for *all* the program's youth? Is it culturally appropriate? How do you know?
6. Do you ask youth to fill out evaluation forms that measure the quality of your services—qualities such as youth-friendliness, cultural appropriateness, and safety?
7. Do you employ youth as staff? Do any of these youth self-identify as GLBTQ?
8. Is staff of similar background and culture(s) to the youth served by the program? Does any staff self-identify as GLBTQ?
9. Do you involve youth in planning and evaluating the program? Do you involve GLBTQ youth?
10. Have you intentionally created a youth-friendly space? Is it friendly as well to GLBTQ youth? How do you know?
11. Does your program or organization have a broad commitment to social justice[*]? Does this commitment include the human rights of GLBTQ people?
12. Do you initiate questions with youth in the program about racism, sexism, homophobia, and other forms of cultural oppression? Do you ask the youth to generate ways to solve, limit, or minimize the problems caused by cultural oppression?

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* Adapted and reprinted with permission of Health Initiatives for Youth, San Francisco, California.

π Safe space is a place where any young person can relax and be fully self-expressed, without fear of being made to feel uncomfortable, unwanted, or unsafe on account of biological sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, race/ethnicity, cultural background, age, or physical and mental ability. It is a place where the rules guard each person's self-respect and strongly encourage everyone to respect others.

* Social justice means equal treatment and social and economic equal opportunity, irrespective of one's sex, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious affiliation, country of origin, physical health status, or age.

Tips and Strategies for Creating a Safe Space for GLBTQ Youth*: Recommendations from the Safe Space Resource Circle

Under the auspices of Girl's Best Friend Foundation, the Safe Space Resource Circle met regularly during 2004. Out of this ongoing work, participants came up with the following list of important questions and recommended solutions to creating a safe place for the GLBTQ youth in your program.

What are some concrete ways in which an organization or coalition of organizations can work to support safe space for GLBTQ youth?

- Offer staff opportunities to receive training on GLBTQ issues, cultural competency, facilitation skills, working with the media, and conflict resolution.
- Make being a safe space a part of the organization's declared mission. Create a values statement that appears on your Web site and on materials sent to donors, colleague organizations, and coalition agencies.
- If your organization is part of a coalition, encourage the coalition to develop a values statement around safe space. This will also support member organizations in developing their own values statements around safe space. For example, a simple statement might read, "Serving *every* youth who walks through its doors, this organization is committed to valuing each young person, irrespective of sex, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, abilities, or background."

Why is it important to have a written declaration of values related to safe space?

- Having such a statement lets GLBTQ youth know that your organization is a safe space.
- Having such a statement empowers everyone to be authentic.
- Having such a statement lets others know where your organization stands.
- Having such a statement puts everyone on notice that homophobia and transphobia are not acceptable at your organization and in your programs.

Where should a written declaration of values appear?

- You will find it useful to include a clear, unambiguous statement of your values and your mission in everything you publish, online and off.

How can you establish a safe space and foster open discussion when you are making a one-time presentation in a school or another organization?

- Begin with a warm-up exercise that encourages participants to get up, move around, and work with someone new.
- Be clear in your language and clear as to the intent of the workshop. This may set a more relaxed tone.
- Enlist participants in setting the ground rules for the workshop. (See Creating Group Agreement.)
- Try dispelling nervousness by saying, to the whole group, the various words that people get hung up on. However, be cautious, particularly in schools, about using language that might be considered crude or vulgar, as this could backfire.
- Offer definitions at the beginning of the workshop so everyone will know the proper language to use and will understand the concepts you are presenting.
- Stop people in the moment when say something offensive. Often people speak without thinking and stopping them at the time can be very useful.

* Adapted from *Creating a Safe Space for Exploring Sexuality and Gender Identity (Q&A from Dialogue among Youth Workers). Developed during Safe Space Circle, May–September, 2004.* Chicago, IL: Girl's Best Friend Foundation, © 2004.

How can you create a safe space for youth to ask difficult questions?

- Distribute identical blank sheets of paper and identical pencils. Ask everyone to write something, even if it is only "I don't have any questions." That way, everyone can safely ask questions.
- Try raising issues in a general way. "A lot of young people have recently brought up this question in my workshops, so I think we should talk about it here, too."
- Consider offering a general e-mail address, such as questions@ or answers@, so participants can follow up after the workshop. Youth who are also volunteers or peer educators might be able to follow-up with their peers' questions.
- If you believe that the presence of a particular adult, such as a teacher or administrator, will make youth feel less safe, talk with her/him prior to the workshop about his/her being absent during the workshop. Explain that it will help you to create a situation in which young people can more freely ask their questions.

How do you talk with a young person in the program who is hostile toward GLBTQ youth?

- A specific practice from the Safe Schools Project suggests that you handle the situation in four steps: 1) stop the offensive behavior; 2) publicly name the behavior and describe why it is offensive; 3) respond on behalf of the whole organization; and 4) ask for a change in behavior.
- Make your response personal and positive. For example, you might say something like, "You are a leader, and it's important that you act the way you ask others to act. Otherwise, you look like a hypocrite, and your peers will know it."
- Take these occurrences as educational moments. Remind everyone never to make assumptions about other people, their opinions, beliefs, or behaviors. Remind everyone that sexual orientation and/or gender identity and gender expression do not, in any way, define other aspects of anyone's personality, experiences, talents, or beliefs.

How do you address divisions and exclusionary behavior within a group (including a group composed only of GLBTQ youth)?

- This behavior is, in essence, a type of bullying. Conduct some sort of power and privilege exercise to highlight the costs of such behavior.
- Bring in outside speakers that represent a range of outlooks, lifestyles, and/or privilege and lack of privilege. Help youth to see the humanity that connects them to everyone else.
- Use role playing.

How do you deal with prejudice and offensive comments that do not align with your organization's ideals of social justice, especially when these comments are from members of the GLBTQ community or its allies?

- Use the steps for addressing harassment, namely: 1) stop the offensive behavior; 2) publicly name the behavior and describe why it is offensive; 3) respond on behalf of the whole organization; and 4) ask for a change in behavior.
- Go back to basic values. Ask what values the youth are trying to convey with their comments. Talk about the core values (such as equality, fairness, and compassion) that are at stake in this discussion.
- Remind youth that this type of oppression is just as bad as any other form of oppression. There is no hierarchy of worse or better. Say that racism, sexism, ageism, homophobia, and ethnic discrimination are all bad, not just the form that affects you or me.
- Help youth to connect offensive comments towards other groups with similar comments that might be directed toward them. For example, "Isn't saying 'that's so retarded' very much like saying 'that's so gay'?"
- Take these occurrences as educational moments. Remind everyone never to make assumptions about other people, their opinions, beliefs, or behaviors. Remind everyone that sexual orientation and/or gender identity and gender expression do not, in any way, define other aspects of anyone's personality, experiences, talents, or beliefs.

How do you handle fund-raising when you encounter donors who either are not allies or else are openly hostile to GLBTQ issues?

- Educate funders to the importance and value of supporting inclusive programs and policies regarding GLBTQ youth.
- Keep focused on your core goals, so that you can clearly see whether accepting money or donations from a given source will help or harm progress toward your goals.
- Seek out funding sources that support GLBTQ issues. Work with national organizations to build a list of such funding sources. Be sure your list remains private and secure.
- Print your mission, values statement, and vision on materials that you hand to funders, so they know where you stand.
- Be selective in what you present to funders while, at the same time, remaining true to your mission and vision.
- Set criteria for where your organization will draw the line. For example, many organizations will not accept funds, advertising, or in-kind support from abstinence-only-until-marriage groups. (For more information on the effects of abstinence-only on GLBTQ youth, see Appendix 3.)
- Join in national campaigns that educate funders and that bring public pressure to the issue. For example, public pressure strongly encouraged some major chain stores to stop buying goods from sweat shops.

How do you maintain a safe space when youth in the program need external resources from people and/or agencies that may be indifferent or hostile to GLBTQ youth?

- Problem-solve, in advance, so that you are ready to address various situations such as, for example, a young person coming to you because of having been assaulted for being transgender.
- Seek out allies[π] in the agencies and institutions with which you work. A GLBTQ liaison can do advance work to identify allies in each organization.
- Encourage your organization's executive director to have frank discussions with the executives of colleague organizations. These discussions should center on the importance of safe space and on your organization's commitment to working with other organizations that also provide safe space.
- If a colleague organization is openly hostile to the concept of safe space, seek out other organizations that can offer the same services and/or resources in a supportive manner to the GLBTQ youth in your program.

What do you do if you are accused—organizationally or personally—of having a 'gay agenda'?

- Say clearly, "Our agenda is human rights." Tying GLBTQ rights into larger movements for human rights and human dignity can sometimes aid people in seeing the connections that they, too, value.
- Say that you are open to and serve every young person in need of your services. Emphasize that the organization's value with respect to GLBTQ youth underscores its commitment to *all* youth, irrespective of their sex, race/ethnicity, religion, language, OR sexual orientation or gender identity.
- State forthrightly, "Equal rights, protection under the law, and respect for GLBTQ people are priorities for our organization. If that constitutes an agenda, then yes, we do have one."
- If someone raises religion as a reason for discrimination, say that you respect people's religious beliefs *and* that you firmly believe that every youth has value and that *every teen* has a right to be safe and to receive services at your organization.
- If program youth have raised this charge, then encourage youth who are participants or staff, especially the peer educators, to respond. Youth-to-youth dialogue may be far more effective than one that is carried out between youth and adults.
- Be careful about language that may raise people's anxieties or strengthen their belief in myths. For example, don't talk about 'recruiting' youth for a GLBTQ event. Instead, talk about inviting youth to attend the event or sharing information about the event with youth in other places, such as schools, clubs, etc.

[π] An ally is a person or organization that actively helps another with a specific issue—in this case one who actively works to support the rights and dignity of GLBTQ people.

How do you encourage youth to be good allies?

- Use the lesson plans in Part Three. (We most strongly recommend Lesson Plans Five, Seven, and Ten.)
- Praise youth's courage in standing up for their rights and the rights of their peers.
- Provide youth with resources that make taking action as an activist or an ally fun, easy, and non-threatening.

What will help in using activities and other tools regarding GLBTQ issues?

- Be sure that facilitators are well prepared, not only to guide the exercise, but also to facilitate discussions, even when they include resistance and hostile questions.
- Remember to facilitate, not lead, the process. Step back, and let the process happen.
- In small settings where colleagues work together frequently, consider using an outside facilitator.
- When working with large groups, use a variety of activities. Even if a few participants make offensive comments, you can still define the dialogue by engaging the other participants in a constructive way.
- Adapt workshops so that you are not using an activity or exercise that is too challenging for the group. Be flexible and meet the participants where they are. [Sometimes, it may be a good idea to present issues that the group isn't quite ready to deal with; but be prepared for resistance and be prepared to handle resistance constructively.]

How do you establish and maintain appropriate boundaries between youth and the adults who work with them?

- Set clear guidelines about interactions between staff (irrespective of their age) and youth served by the program. Look to other organizations, like social work agencies, for examples and guidelines. Health centers will have guidelines on privacy, confidentiality, and boundaries that may also be applicable to your program.
- Be consistent in language and in handling any incidents that arise. Use explicit, clear language that allows no 'wiggle room' for people to interpret the rules to their liking.
- During training of staff and volunteers, devote a significant amount of time to boundaries and values. Be very clear that it is inappropriate for staff or volunteers to have outside contact with program youth. Be sure to talk in general terms so that individuals attending the training will not feel that you are talking personally about any one of them.
- Ask staff and volunteers to sign a contract that reiterates the boundaries set on interactions between youth and staff.

Tips and Strategies for Creating Inclusive Programs*

Whether or not you know of any GLBTQ youth in your program, it is essential to create a safe space for young people who are, who believe that they might be, or who have friends or family members who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or questioning. The organization's responsibility is to *all* of the youth in the program. Even if some youth-serving professionals feel uncomfortable about sexual orientation and gender identity, you owe it to the young people you serve to educate yourself and to help connect youth to the organizations, role models, and resources they need. Creating programs that are inclusive of and sensitive to GLBTQ youth is not difficult, but it does require conscientious attention. The following suggestions will help.

- **Assess your own values and beliefs regarding sexual orientation and gender identity.** Taking stock will help you to address your own internal biases, recognize your personal limits, identify areas for personal growth, and enable you to serve *all* youth, including GLBTQ youth, in an open, honest, respectful manner.
- **Make it clear that homophobic sentiments and actions have no place in the program.** Develop a 'zero tolerance' policy regarding discriminatory words and behavior directed at GLBTQ youth, just as you would toward racist or sexist remarks. Post the policy in public areas and develop clear guidelines for disciplinary actions. When training students or staff to lead or facilitate workshops, include opportunities to practice responding to unacceptable language and behaviors. At the same time, work proactively to address stereotypes and misperceptions that may exist among the youth in your program.
- **Consider posting a Safe Zone sticker**, available from the National Youth Advocacy Coalition. (See Select Organizations, Web Sites, Videos, and Books, Appendix 1.) The sticker says, "A person displaying this symbol will be understanding, supportive, and trustworthy if gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or questioning youth need help, advice, or just someone with whom they can talk."
- **Use inclusive language.** Discuss 'partners' instead of always assuming a youth's prospective date or partner is of the opposite sex. If you are doing role-plays, use ambiguous names, such as Chris, Taylor, or Lee. This will allow GLBTQ youth to personalize the context to their lives rather than to reject the role-play scenario as being irrelevant.
- **Schedule training sessions to debunk myths and stereotypes.** Explain the differences between sexual orientation, sexual behavior, and gender identity and expression. Include information about sexual orientation and gender identity throughout a training or program. This will help to dispel myths about GLBTQ people.
- **Provide peer support.** Young people benefit by developing their leadership, communication, and other pro-social skills and by seeing role models with whom they can identify. Ensure that peer leaders include youth who identify as GLBTQ. For more information on peer education, see Select Organizations, Web Sites, Videos, and Books, Appendix 1.
- **Ask GLBTQ youth and adults to participate in panel discussions or as speakers** to share some of their experiences. This will create a safe space and opportunity for youth to talk openly about homophobia, racism, sexism, and other forms of oppression.
- **Build youth-adult partnerships into the program.** Make sure that youth leaders include some who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender. Programs are more effective and sustainable when youth are partners in the programs' design, development, operations, and evaluation. For more information on building youth-adult partnerships, see Appendix 1.
- **Consider working with students to begin gay/straight alliances** in area schools, if such alliances do not already exist. For more information, see Gay/Straight Alliances in Appendix 1.
- **Hire adults who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender and who reflect the racial/ethnic make-up of the community being served** to work in the program as full- or part-time staff or volunteers.
- **Include local groups that serve GLBTQ people** in referral and resource lists. Make sure your referral and resource lists are easily available to all program youth.
- **Know when and where to seek help.** Be aware of appropriate referral agencies for crisis intervention, mental and physical health services, etc. Be aware of your personal and organizational limits, and accept that your organization

* Adapted from *Transitions* volume 14, issue 4, Washington, DC: Advocates for Youth, © 2002; http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/publications/freepubs_type.htm#transitions

may not always be the best one to assist a young person in some situations. For assistance, see Select Organizations and Web Sites, etc, Appendix 1.

- **Incorporate comprehensive sex education.** If you offer sex education or address issues such as HIV or teen pregnancy, then your program should include information about *both* contraception *and* abstinence. When discussing abstinence, do not talk about 'abstinence-until-marriage.' Like heterosexual youth, GLBTQ youth search for intimacy and emotional closeness and may long for a committed relationship. In a society where same-gender marriages are often illegal and where same-gender committed relationships are ignored or frowned upon, the concept of 'abstinence-only-until-marriage' completely ignores the needs of GLBTQ youth. For more information, see abstinence-only-until-marriage, Appendix 3.

Tips and Strategies for Taking Steps to Cultural Fairness*

Increasingly today, people come into regular contact with individuals from different cultures and it's important to learn to talk with people who may not share a common language, background, and/or worldview. Each of us participates in at least one culture, and most of us are products of several cultures. For example, youth in one program might be mostly native-born Americans, Westerners, Hispanic, and Roman Catholic and participants in each of those four cultures. In another program, youth might be mostly first-generation Americans as well as the children of immigrant families from various countries in Asia, Latin America, and/or Africa. These youth would share a culture common to first-generation Americans and, at the same time, belong to the cultures and religions of their families' disparate homelands. Young people also share a youth culture. This is only a sample of the cultures to which each person belongs. It is important to understand this because culture and cultural issues matter.

It is also important to understand that each culture has its own language and its own spoken and unspoken rules. These rules define what is and is not acceptable within that culture. The first step to dealing with people of different cultural backgrounds is to be clear about your own cultural background and how it defines and limits your worldview. Being culturally fair or just means that you hold certain beliefs, attitudes, knowledge, and skills:

Beliefs and Attitudes

- You are aware of and sensitive to your own cultural heritage and respect and value different cultural heritages.
- You are aware of your own values and biases and how they may affect your perceptions of other cultures.
- You are comfortable with the fact that there are differences between your culture and other cultures' values and beliefs.
- You are sensitive to your own personal biases, racial/ethnic identity, and other cultural factors that might require you to seek the help of someone from a different culture when you interact with another person of that culture.

Knowledge

- You understand the power structure of society and how less powerful groups are treated.
- You acquire knowledge about the particular group(s) with which you work.
- You are aware of the institutional barriers that prevent members of disadvantaged groups from benefiting from organizational and societal resources.

Skills

- You use a wide variety of verbal and nonverbal responses when dealing with differences, and you give and receive verbal and non-verbal messages appropriately and accurately.
- You intervene promptly and appropriately on behalf of people when they receive negative attention due to their sex, culture, race/ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or gender expression.

So, how does cultural justice apply to working with GLBTQ youth?

Step One: Be Clear about Your Own Attitudes and Biases.

Become educated about sexual orientation and gender identity/gender expression as well as about culture, homophobia, racism, and sexism. Learn what you need to learn in order to deal fairly with all the youth in your program.

* Adapted from *Adolescent Sexual Health and the Dynamics of Oppression: a Call for Cultural Competency* [Issues at a Glance] Washington, DC: Advocates for Youth, © 2003; and from Culture matters in health education for young people, *Transitions* 2000; 11(3):1, 6, 8; © Advocates for Youth.

Ask yourself:

- What sexuality-related issues (here specifically, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual relationships) make me feel uncomfortable?
- What sexuality-related issues are difficult for me to talk about?
- In what sexuality-related issues does my discomfort show up as hostility or as negativity?
- What do I need to do in order to be able to deal comfortably and respectfully with sexuality-related issues?

Step Two: Understand Homophobia's Impact on GLBTQ Youth.

Learn as much as possible about the connections between homophobia and the health of GLBTQ youth. Prejudice and discrimination have a powerful impact on vulnerable youth. Recognize that:

- GLBTQ youth face persistent inequality, violence, and invisibility in American culture.[2,3,10]
- Homophobia seriously damages the health of all young people. Prejudice and discrimination contribute to high morbidity and mortality rates among GLBTQ youth. Institutionalized homophobia results in high rates of violence toward GLBT youth in schools and communities; violence and verbal abuse result in feelings of isolation as well as high rates of suicide and suicide attempts, substance use, and risk for HIV/STI infection among these youth. At the same time, homophobia forces straight youth to take serious risks in order to 'prove' their heterosexuality.[2,3,6,7,10]
- Prejudice and rejection lower the self-esteem of teens and leave them with fewer resources and skills to face normal developmental challenges. For high self-esteem and a strong self-concept, teens need to feel that they belong (peer identification), and they need positive role models. Teens whose self-esteem has been lowered by homophobia may be unwilling to take important steps to protect their health and their future.[11,12,13]
- Widely accepted cultural stereotypes of gay and lesbian people affects the self-concept of GLBTQ youth who often report relying on television to learn what it means to be lesbian or gay. Many believe media stereotypes that depict gay men as effeminate, lesbians as masculine, and all homosexual people as unhappy.[10]

Ask yourself:

- What central values guide the mission, programs, and daily work of this organization?
- Am I (are we) committed to serving all the youth, including the GLBTQ youth, in our programs?
- Where is my (our) commitment easy to see? Where is it not easy to see?

Step Three: Take Action to Ensure a Safe Space for the GLBTQ Youth in Your Program.

Work to ensure the safety of all the youth in your program, irrespective of whether you know that any GLBTQ youth are participating in it. Assess the cultural fairness of your program. Assess the environment in the organization, including its:

- Mission, vision, values, and activities;
- Levels of cultural justice among board members, staff, and volunteers;
- Policies and procedures on discrimination and harassment;
- Staff training;
- Cultural match between the program and the participants; and
- Reading levels and appropriateness of the program's materials.

Ask yourself:

- Is staff representative of the target population in regard to race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, and gender identity?
- Who conducts community outreach and how?
- Has each staff member assessed his/her attitudes towards adolescents and adolescent relationships, particularly with regard to sexual orientation and gender identity/gender expression?
- Where does the climate in this organization ignore or suppress the realities that face GLBTQ youth?
- Does staff have biases or hold stereotypes?
- In what subtle or blatant ways might staff be communicating these biases to young people?

Step Four: Empower Youth and Staff in Your Agency to Be Activists and Allies of GLBTQ Youth.

Encourage youth and adults in your program to take positive and continuing action to ensure that everyone feels safe and supported. Take action to ensure that policies are appropriate; staff receives training and support regarding cultural justice; and youth know what to do if they encounter or witness homophobic, racist, or sexist words and actions.

- Support peer education and leadership by youth. Teens exert a powerful effect when they speak out for themselves, define the issues that matter to them, and craft an agenda to address those issues. By drawing on the lessons of other social movements, GLBTQ youth and their straight allies can create initiatives that address inequities.
- Create opportunities for youth to talk openly and frankly about racism, sexism, homophobia, class discrimination, and other forms of oppression.
- Create a place where teens can feel comfortable talking about their individual identity, experiences, hopes, and fears.
- Offer interactive and experiential exercises, such as case studies and role-playing, to help teens think through the barriers and obstacles created by oppression.

Ask yourself:

- Do gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and questioning youth feel safe in this program? Do straight youth feel safe?
- Do youth in the program receive respect for their talents and abilities? Do they respect others for their talents and abilities?
- Are youth fully and actively involved in creating safe space?
- Are youth fully involved in identifying the issues that affect them and in providing leadership to achieve social justice?

Cultural justice is about recognizing and dealing with the broad social, economic, and political framework within which teens live. Focusing on the right of *all* youth to be treated with dignity and respect can also empower young people, including GLBTQ youth and their allies, to demand respect, to treat others respectfully, and to envision a more hopeful future.

Tips and Strategies for Addressing Harassment*

It is vital to stop harassment immediately! Remember that homophobic words and actions hurt everyone. Homophobic words and actions are bullying. Bullying hurts the person targeted, the witnesses, and the bully. Act right away! Do not let harassment—verbal or physical—go on for even a minute. Make it clear that ***Harassment Is Never Okay!***

1. Stop the Harassment!

- Interrupt the comment. Halt the physical harassment.
- Make sure everyone in the vicinity can hear you. You want everyone—all the youth and adults nearby—to know that *all* young people are safe in this place.
- Do ***NOT*** pull the bully aside for a confidential discussion—stopping the harassment should be as public as the harassment has been.

2. Identify the Harassment.

- "You just put someone down regarding (sex, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, health status, etc.)" Or, "You just shoved someone."
- Put the spotlight on the bully's behavior. Do ***NOT*** say anything to imply that the person being harassed belongs to the group just named. Everyone needs to understand that what was said or done is unacceptable.

3. Publicly Broaden the Response.

- Identify the offense and its consequences: "Name calling is hurtful to everyone who hears it." "Physical attacks on anyone are totally unacceptable and can result in the attacker being put out of the program."
- Make it clear that the entire organization, agency, program, etc., is solidly opposed to such behavior: "In this program, we do not harass other people. Period." "In this organization, any physical attack, for any reason, on someone else is totally unacceptable. Any repetition will have serious consequences for you."

4. Request a Change in Future Behavior.

- Personalize the response for the bully: "Chris, please think about what you say. This language isn't what we would have expected of you." "Jaime, by pushing someone, you are being a bully. I thought you enjoyed participating in this program. But, by your action, you've put yourself on the sidelines for the rest of today. Any repetition and you are out forever."
- Quietly, check in with the person who was harassed: "Are you okay? Do you want to talk with me or someone else? Let's go find a quiet place to chat."
- Quietly reassure the person who was harassed: "Please let me know if this happens again, and I will take further action. Everyone should feel safe and be safe here. What happened was totally unacceptable, and you are very important to all of us."

* Adapted and reprinted with permission of GLSEN Colorado from *How to Address Harassment in the Hallways in 3 Minutes*; http://www.glsenco.org

Tips and Strategies for Meeting the Needs of GLBTQ Youth of Color*

GLBTQ youth of color face stigma related both to race/ethnicity and to sexual orientation and/or gender identity. Surviving racial/ethnic discrimination requires strong connections to family and ethnic community. However, GLBTQ youth of color seldom receive their community's support regarding sexual orientation or transgender identity. Indeed, ethnic communities often perceive gay, lesbian, and bisexual orientation or transgender identity as a rejection of ethnic heritage. Unlike racial stereotypes that family and ethnic community positively reframe, many ethnic minority communities strongly reinforce negative cultural perceptions of homosexual orientation and/or of being transgender.[10] Thus, stigma places these young people at greater risk for substance use, violence, and risky sexual behaviors.

African American/black and Hispanic/Latino young men who have sex with men (YMSM) are more likely than other YMSM to be infected with HIV.[14] Young lesbians of color, particularly African Americans/blacks and Latinas/Hispanics, are at heightened risk for HIV infection and pregnancy due, in part, to the strong value placed on motherhood and childbearing in their ethnic communities, which may force GLBTQ youth to participate in heterosexual intercourse in order to become parents and/or to hide their sexual orientation.[15] Young GLBTQ Native Americans are often at increased risk for substance abuse, mental illness, and HIV infection due both to persistent racial/ethnic discrimination by white culture and to homophobia within native cultures.[16] The needs of Asian and Pacific Islander (API) GLBTQ youth are often overlooked due to the 'model minority'[μ] stereotype, language barriers, underreporting of AIDS cases, and persistent homophobia within many API cultures.[17]

Most models of homosexual identity development are based on the experiences of white, middle- and upper-middle class lesbians and gays.[10] Often, youth of color don't identify as 'gay' or 'queer,' which may mean they will not seek services or hear messages designed for the white GLBTQ community. To effectively meet the needs of GLBTQ youth of color, programs must integrate awareness of racism with an understanding of how culture shapes sexual attitudes, values, and beliefs.

Good programs targeting youth of color already fully integrate the culture of these young people into their activities, language, and materials. They already acknowledge and incorporate culturally specific values, attitudes, beliefs, and knowledge about health, sexuality, and relationships. But these programs may not yet acknowledge the presence and needs of GLBTQ youth among those they serve. Programs are most likely to be effective in also meeting the needs of these youth of color when they:

- Use language that is inclusive and non-pejorative with regard to sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Involve youth, including GLBTQ youth, in planning, running, and evaluating the programs.
- Focus on the assets of each teen participant, irrespective of sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Address the needs of the whole young person.
- Ask young people how they self-identify and use these terms.
- Offer activities and opportunities that are inclusive as to gender and sexual orientation.
- Build skills.
- Acknowledge culturally specific values, attitudes, and beliefs.
- Consider the social and cultural factors that influence behaviors.
- Hold discussions that explore the added impact of racism on GLBTQ youth of color.
- Provide peer support to change peer norms, especially those regarding sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.
- Acknowledge when culture and sexual orientation cause conflicts for GLBTQ youth and recognize and confront cultural biases regarding sexual orientation and gender identity within the program.

* Adapted from *Transitions* volume 14, issue 4, Washington, DC: Advocates for Youth, © 2002.

μ 'Model minority' refers to the commonly held stereotype of Asian Americans as superior students who do not participate in risk-taking behaviors such as unprotected sex, substance use, and violence. The stereotype can include incorrect beliefs that Asian American youth never face issues related to sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

- Know when and where to seek help. Be aware of appropriate referral agencies for crisis intervention, mental and physical health services, emergency assistance, etc. Be aware of your personal and organizational limits, and accept that your organization may not always be the best one to assist a young person in some situations. For assistance, see Select Organizations, Web Sites, Videos, and Books, Appendix 1.

Tips and Strategies for Meeting the Needs of Transgender Youth*

No single group has gone more unnoticed by society, or abused and maltreated by institutional powers, than youth with transgender needs and feelings. With the exception of its attention to child labor and child abuse or neglect law, our society has relegated children to a class virtually without voice or rights in society.
Center for AIDS Prevention Studies[17]

In recent years, many programs for GLBTQ youth have witnessed an increased presence of youth who self-identify as transgender.[π] Youth who do not conform to prevalent gender norms, usually represented as feminine women and masculine men, often experience severe harassment, discrimination, ostracism, and violence. Transgender youth are increasingly claiming their right to define and express themselves in new ways. These new ways include—but are not limited to—hormone treatment, gender reassignment surgery, name change, and cross-living. Professionals who work with GLBTQ youth, in particular, increasingly observe the diverse ways in which these youth choose to identify, including making the choice not to identify.

Youth-serving professionals, parents, families, peers, and community members can play key roles in supporting the healthy development of transgender youth. Respecting transgender youth means taking responsibility for providing them with a safe and supportive environment. The following recommendations will not answer all your questions, but they can assist you.

- **Don't make assumptions!** Do not assume that you know a youth's gender, or that a youth has gender identity issues, just as you would not make assumptions about a young person's sexual orientation. Exploring gender is a healthy expression of personal development. Self-identification or self-acknowledgement is a crucial first step in a youth's identity development and self-expression.
- **Create a safe space for open discussion.** Work towards creating an affirming environment that supports non-stereotypical gender expression and offers safe space for open discussion. Use inclusive, affirming, non-presumptuous, nonjudgmental, and gender-neutral language. Create organizational norms on behavior and language with youth.
- **Be informed and don't be afraid to examine your own beliefs.** Most of us are products of a society that holds to rigid gender roles, and we have been influenced by our cultural background. We're taught what is feminine and masculine, female and male, and we expect that these bipolar categories do not change. Recognize your level of comfort with different types of gender expression and how this can affect your interactions with youth. Don't be afraid to ask questions.
- **Seek to fully understand gender identity.** Each person's gender identity is natural to that person. Gender identity and sexual orientation are a part of each of us and often develop uniquely. Across human experience, gender identity may be experienced as a continuum. That is, some people do not experience gender solely as female or male. It is important for youth-serving professionals to educate themselves on gender identity, sexual identity, adolescent development, and sexual and social stereotypes. Moreover, sexuality and gender expression are only two of the aspects integral to a whole person. It is important to maintain a balanced perspective in addressing the multifaceted issues of youth's development.
- **Respect confidentiality.** When a young person shares personal information about gender identity, you have achieved the trust of that youth. A breach of this confidence can have dire consequences for the young person. If it truly becomes necessary to share the information, first get the young person's permission.
- **Know when and where to seek help.** Be aware of appropriate referral agencies for crisis intervention, mental and physical health services, emergency assistance, etc. Transgender youth are often subject to abuse, homelessness,

* These tips are from a resource manual on gender identity and transgender youth issues, written by Charlene Leach and published by the National Youth Advocacy Coalition. The tips first appeared in *Transitions*, volume 14, issue 4, © Advocates for Youth, 2002.

π Transgender is an umbrella term for all whose self-identity is outside the boundaries of biological sex and/or culturally determined gender expression, including transsexual people, crossdressers, Two-Spirit people, drag performers, and people who do not self-identify with their biological sex.

suicide, harassment, and physical violence. Be aware of your personal and organizational limits and accept that your organization may not always be the best one to assist a young person. For assistance, see Select Organizations, Web Sites, etc, Appendix 1.

- **Provide training for staff, board, volunteers, and youth.** Up-to-date training is necessary to help staff develop sensitivity and skills to interact with youth and to prevent anyone from being derogatory to transgender people. Be sure to provide transgender youth with information that can help ensure their physical safety.
- **Protect from harassment!** Immediately protect transgender youth from harassment in any form, whether perpetrated by other youth, staff, or others. Make it clear that harassing and/or abusive behavior toward anyone will not be tolerated.
- **Provide single occupancy bathrooms, if possible.** Many individuals are uncomfortable about the idea of a man in the women's room and *vice versa*, while transgender youth will feel they are using the appropriate bathroom. Every person has the right to use the bathroom, irrespective of gender identity. Consider providing single occupancy bathrooms, if possible.

My body fits my gender identity perfectly, because I am who I am.
Transgender youth[18]

My body is fine by me... but other people don't seem comfortable with my body as it confuses them.
Transgender youth[18]

Gender is a construct. I can shape ... how I want to be perceived.
Transgender youth[18]

Tips and Strategies for Addressing the Challenges that Face Transgender Youth*

Transgender youth face several unique problems caused by the highly gendered societies in which they live. Overall, society in the United States relies on rigorously maintained concepts of gender and gender expression. This creates specific challenges for transgender youth.

Challenges

- **Deliberately incorrect and disrespectful use of names and pronouns**—When a transgender youth identifies as a particular gender (irrespective of biological sex), it is respectful to the youth's human dignity to use the name chosen and the pronouns appropriate to that particular gender. To persevere intentionally in the use of a prior name and other pronouns is to be deliberately disrespectful. Transgender youth can understand and sympathize with some confusion, so long as there is continuous, good faith progress in using the proper name and pronouns.
- **Lack of access to appropriate restroom facilities**—Transgender people often lack safe access to public restrooms. They may be assaulted if they use the restroom that conforms to their gender identity or forced to use a restroom that does not conform to their gender identity.
- **Lack of access to appropriate locker room facilities**—Transgender people often have no safe access to locker room facilities that conform to their gender identity.
- **Rigid dress codes that differ for males and females**—Wherever dress codes are enforced, they may create problems for transgender youth.
- **Confidentiality**—Transgender youth may have unsupportive families and may even face violence and/or ejection from their home if their gender identity or gender expression is disclosed to the family.
- **Lack of role models; lack of accurate information**—Transgender youth often feel alone in the world. Few programs for youth employ transgender people; few libraries offer information about biological sex and gender, gender identity, or being transgender.

Solutions to the Challenges

- **Names and/or pronouns**—Use the name and/or pronouns appropriate to the young person's chosen gender identity. Remember that it is everyone's essential dignity to be called by our chosen name, and it is everyone's right to be recognized as the person we see ourselves to be. Please apologize if you use the wrong pronoun or the wrong name.
- **Access to restroom facilities**—Educate staff and youth about gender identity. Make sure that everyone understands that transgender youth want to use the restrooms that conform to their gender identity; they have no interest in spying on others using those restrooms. If possible, designate gender-neutral restrooms (toilet facilities that anyone may use, irrespective of gender identity or gender expression).
- **Access to locker room facilities**—Educate staff and youth about gender identity. Make sure that everyone understands that transgender youth want to use the locker room facilities that conform to their gender identity; they have no interest in spying on others using the locker room.
- **Dress code**—Make sure that the dress code, if any, in your program respects youth's rights to dress in conformance with their gender identity.
- **Confidentiality**—Make sure that the program maintains confidentiality with regard to the gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, and sexual behavior of *all* the youth in the program.
- **Role models and accurate information**—Make sure that everyone in the program is aware that there is great human diversity regarding gender, including male and female certainly, but also going beyond these two genders. Search out transgender support groups and GLBTQ youth-serving organizations in your area. Make sure that these groups and organizations are included on your resource lists. Make sure your resource lists are available to all the youth in the program.

* Adapted with permission from the Transgender Law Center, *Transgender and Gender Non-conforming Youth: Recommendations for Schools;* San Francisco, CA: The Center, © 2003; http://www.transgenderlawcenter.org/

Part Three—The Nuts and Bolts: Lesson Plans for Building Allies for GLBTQ Youth among Your Program Participants

Introduction

Homophobia affects *everyone*. Homophobia and transphobia have serious consequences for GLBTQ youth and for straight youth. Research shows that society-wide homophobia encourages a climate of discrimination and violence directed at GLBTQ people. Prejudice and discrimination cause many GLBTQ youth to feel isolated and unvalued. Violence causes many GLBTQ youth to drop out of school, run away from home, and attempt to live on the streets (a dangerous undertaking). Violence and verbal abuse may result in some GLBTQ youth's attempting suicide, using substances, and/or taking other risks that may damage their health and endanger their lives.[1,2,3,10]

Homophobia also affects many straight youth by forcing them to become sexually active before they are ready or to engage in sexual risk behaviors (i.e., have multiple partners, have unprotected sexual intercourse) in order to 'prove' their heterosexuality. Homophobia also encourages straight youth to: 1) remain ignorant about HIV and the steps they should take to prevent STIs, including HIV; and 2) refuse to participate in HIV vaccine trials and other work to end the HIV pandemic.[6,7] So, it is in everyone's interest to end homophobia.

How to Use Part Three

Part Three contains several lesson plans to assist young people in, first, understanding the negative impact of homophobia and transphobia on GLBTQ youth and, second, in taking a stand for social justice. Part Three works to increase youth's understanding of the concepts of fairness, justice, and equality and to move participants from learning to taking action. The lesson plans can also be conducted with staff and volunteers. Some programs may choose to utilize all of the lesson plans in the order in which they appear here. Others may feel comfortable reviewing the lesson plans and then choosing those most relevant for that program's participants. Lesson Plans Five, Seven and Ten are core to the curriculum; programs should conduct these activities even if time is short. Lesson Plans Six, Nine, Eleven, and Twelve are also important and should be conducted if time permits. The remaining lesson plans may be considered optional.

Lesson plans included in Part Three are:

1. Lesson Plan: Creating Group Agreement
2. Lesson Plan: Drawing Conclusions: An Ice Breaker
3. Lesson Plan: Four Corners: A Values Clarification Exercise
4. Lesson Plan: Who Am I?
5. **Lesson Plan: Introduction to Sexual Orientation**
6. Lesson Plan: Introduction to Gender Identity and Gender Expression
7. **Lesson Plan: Q & A on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity**
8. Lesson Plan: Heterosexual Questionnaire
9. Lesson Plan: Make Your Voice Heard!
10. **Lesson Plan: Addressing Discrimination**
11. Lesson Plan: What Can I Do to Create Safe Space
12. Lesson Plan: How to Be a Super Activist and/or Ally

For more information on sexual orientation and gender identity, please see the Glossary (Appendix 2) and Frequently Asked Questions about Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (Appendix 4).

Lesson Plan One

Creating Group Agreement*

Purpose: To establish an agreed-upon code of behavior for the group so that each participant feels safe and able to rely on others in the group

Materials: Newsprint and markers; a box for suggestions and comments

Time: 20 to 30 minutes

Planning Notes: Review the recommended ground rules given below

Procedure:

- Explain to the participants that, because they will be discussing sensitive issues, the group should agree on some ground rules. Ask them to come up with their own ground rules, ones that they will all agree to observe. List those ground rules on newsprint. Ask the participants for clarification, when needed, to be sure that everyone understands all the ideas. Suggest any of the recommended ground rules (below) that the young people didn't offer because they are important for establishing safe space.
- Keep your list of ground rules posted prominently throughout all the activity sessions dealing with safe space. Refer to the ground rules if someone is not adhering to them and remind everyone of their agreement to follow the rules. Eventually, the participants will begin to remind one another of the rules if behavior occurs that is disrespectful or disruptive.

Recommended Ground Rules:

- **Respect**—Give undivided attention to the person who has the floor (permission to speak).
- **Confidentiality**—What we share in this group will remain in this group.
- **Openness**—We will be as open and honest as possible without disclosing others' (family, neighbors, or friends) personal or private issues. It is okay to discuss situations, but we won't use names or other ID. For example, we won't say, "My older brother ..." Instead we will say, "I know someone who ..."
- **Right to Pass**—It is always okay to pass (meaning "I'd rather not" or "I don't want to answer").
- **Nonjudgmental Approach**—We can disagree with another person's point of view without putting that person down.
- **Taking care to claim our opinions**—We will speak our opinions using the first person and avoid using 'you'. For example, "I think that kindness is important." Not, "You are just mean."
- **Sensitivity to Diversity**—We will remember that people in the group may differ in cultural background, sexual orientation, and/or gender identity or gender expression and will be careful about making insensitive or careless remarks.
- **Anonymity**—It is okay to ask any question by using the suggestion box.
- **Acceptance**—It is okay to feel uncomfortable; adults feel uncomfortable, too, when they talk about sensitive and personal topics, such as sexuality.
- **Have a Good Time**—It is okay to have a good time. Creating a safe space is about coming together as a community, being mutually supportive, and enjoying each other's qualities.

* Adapted from *Guide to Implementing TAP (Teens for AIDS Prevention): A Peer Education Program to Prevent HIV and STI* (2nd edition), © 2002, Advocates for Youth, Washington, DC; http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/publications/tap.htm

Lesson Plan Two

Drawing Conclusions: An Ice-Breaker*

Purpose: To give participants the opportunity to interact with each other and to expose underlying preconceived notions about GLBTQ people

Time: 45 minutes

Materials: Newsprint and markers; five index cards

Planning Notes: Before the session, write one of the following phrases on each of five index cards: GAY, LESBIAN, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER, and STRAIGHT

Procedure:

- Begin by randomly dividing the group into five smaller groups (preferably of at least three people). Give a sheet of newsprint and a marker to each group; at the same time, hand the group one of the five index cards that you prepared in advance.
- Explain to the participants that each group has been given an identity and that the group will now draw a person who looks like or represents that identity. Participants can offer their own ideas or suggest ideas they have heard from others. Be sure to remind everyone that this is a safe space and that no one needs to be afraid or worried about suggesting a trait or idea to include in the group's picture. However, encourage the groups to work together in coming up with the final product. Tell them that they will have 15 minutes to complete their drawing.
- After 15 minutes has passed, ask all the groups to stop working even if they haven't finished. Then ask each group to stand up and explain their drawing in detail. After all the groups have explained their drawings, lead a group discussion using the questions below.

Discussion Questions:

1. How did the groups decide what each person would look like? Was it difficult to come up with a picture?
2. Where did your ideas come from about what each of these people looked like? People you know? The media?
3. Do your pictures convey positive or negative images of the identities?
4. Which of the identities do you think was easiest to draw? Hardest? Why?
5. What conclusions if any can you draw from this exercise?

* Adapted and printed with permission of Eric Jost, activist, trainer, and intern at Advocates for Youth; ©2005, Eric Jost.

Lesson Plan Three

Four Corners: A Values Clarification Exercise*

Purpose: To encourage teens to clarify and explore their personal attitudes and values and to become comfortable with listening to and understanding opinions different from their own

Materials: A copy of the leader's resources, *Training Tips* and *Value Statements*; newsprint and markers

Time: 40 minutes

Planning Notes:

- Values education consists of four important steps that help youth to: identify their values; feel able to talk about their values; behave in ways that are consistent with their values; and respect others' values. Values education can be a sensitive area for working with anyone of any age. As young people express their values and learn about those of others, they may feel some anxiety or discomfort, and they will look to the facilitator for support. See the Leader's Resource, *Training Tips*, for guidance on leading this activity.
- The activities in this session provide opportunities for young people to identify their values and to share them with their peers. This is a very important activity so allow plenty of time for participants to process what they have learned.
- If you completed Lesson Plan One, then remind the youth about the ground rules they agreed to follow. If no ground rules have been agreed upon, it might be useful to spend a few minutes getting youth to set some ground rules at the beginning of this activity.
- Create three signs. One will say AGREE; the second will say UNSURE; and the third will say DISAGREE. Put up the signs in separate parts of the room.

Procedure: This activity will give the participants a chance, not only to discuss their individual values, but also to discuss the merits of different values.

- Explain to the group that in this activity they will be asked to express their feelings about particular values. Show the youth where you have posted the signs—AGREE, DISAGREE, and UNSURE. Explain to the group that you are going to read several value statements. As you read each one, you want them to think very carefully about how they feel about it. Each person will then move to the section of the room where the sign agrees with how they feel about that value statement.
- Say that you will ask for volunteers to describe how they feel about each statement, since one characteristic of a value is that a person can tell others about it. Emphasize that there are no right or wrong answers, only ***opinions***. Everyone has a right to express an opinion, and no one will be put down for having a different value than others have. Be sure to mention that participants have the right to pass if they would rather not take a stand on a particular value statement. Also, point out that passing is not the same as being unsure. Finally, let everyone know that they can change their stand on any particular value at any time. For example, some participants might feel that they disagree with a particular value but change their minds if someone else makes a good case for agreeing with that value.
- Ask everyone to return to their original seats. Conclude with the Discussion Questions below.

Discussion Questions:

1. What did you learn about yourself? About others?
2. Was it hard to express disagreement with another person's values? Why or why not?
3. Were there times when you felt uncomfortable or unsafe? What helped you stand by your values at that time?
4. Were there any times when you felt unable to stand for your values? Why do you think that was so?
5. What would support people at times when they feel unable to stand up for a value they believe in?

* Adapted from *Guide to Implementing TAP (Teens for AIDS Prevention): A Peer Education Program to Prevent HIV and STI* (2nd edition), © 2002, Advocates for Youth, Washington, DC; http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/publications/tap.htm

Training Tips

Pay special attention when youth express an unpopular or minority position. Support the young person's willingness to stand up for those values by moving to stand beside the teen and praising the teen(s) for taking a stand with which others disagree. Do this without saying anything to indicate that this stand also expresses or contradicts your own position.

Clarify universal core values that are summed up in the ground rules. For example:

- Everyone has value.
- Discrimination is always wrong.
- No one should ever be forced to do or say something against his/her own will.
- Honesty is important.

Support a position that embodies a core value if none of the participants supports that position. For example, if the entire group disagrees with a values statement that "Everyone should have the same rights, irrespective of race/ethnicity, biological sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity," you might point out some basic human rights, like the right to be safe and fed and the right to speak one's beliefs.

As facilitator, remain neutral. When appropriate, you might express your personal value, but stress to the group that this is your *own personal* value and is not the only one or perhaps even the commonly held one. Remind participants that values are individual and that no particular value is the *only* one. Be sure to share your values *sparingly*; you want the participants to explore and clarify *their* values and how to act in accord with their values, not to agree with your values, however laudable you think they are.

If the session gets out of hand, remind participants of the purpose of the exercise. The purpose is to explore their own values and to become comfortable listening to and understanding values and opinions that differ from their own. The purpose is ***not*** to divide the group or to convince others of the rightness of particular values.

Lesson Plan Three
Leader's Resource

Value Statements

Here is the list of value statements. If you only have one hour, pick six or seven statements that you think will be the most important for the group to discuss.

- Deliberately hurting other people is never okay.
- Using 'put downs' like 'faggot' or 'that's so gay' is okay because everyone does it.
- Treating people differently because of whom they love is wrong.
- Bisexuality is a myth. No one is *really* bisexual; they're just confused.
- A gay, lesbian, or bisexual teenager should be able to take a date of the same sex to the prom.
- If transgender people or lesbians or gays are in the "wrong place" at the "wrong time", they deserve the harassment they might get.
- Everyone should have the same rights, irrespective of sex, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, or gender identity.
- It's okay for religious and political leaders to say things against GLBTQ people because it's just their own opinion.
- Same-sex couples should be able to get married before a judge or justice of the peace (civil marriage).
- Transgender people should be treated like the gender they really are, not the gender they *say* are.
- If I see or hear someone harassing one of my GLBTQ peers, it is my responsibility to step in and stop it.

Lesson Plan Four

Who Am I?*

Purpose: To get participants thinking about their own identities and how discrimination and privilege affect their life

Time: 40 minutes

Materials: Handouts, *I Am* and *Social Group Membership Profile*

Procedure:

- Begin by saying, "Everyone is a member of different social groups—groups of people who have something in common. Sometimes that can be something like the school you go to or the kind of TV shows you like. We all belong to larger social groups as well—groups that involve our gender identity, race/ethnicity, socio-economic status, abilities, religion, age, sexual orientation, etc. It's important when we are thinking about how to treat others that we think about where we belong in terms of social groups."
- Say that you will now pass out a sheet of paper that will help participants think about their social groups. Distribute the *I Am* handout. Briefly describe the different groups to which each person belongs. Ask participants to take a few minutes to write down, or if they don't feel comfortable, to think about where they are in terms of their social groups.
- With the entire group, spend a few minutes sharing how it felt to identify in these groups. Ask if participants spend much time thinking about the groups they are a part of. Say that one thing about social groups is that, sometimes, we don't realize what benefits or barriers go with our membership in some of these groups, especially membership in a group that is dominant in society. Distribute the *Social Group Membership Profile* handout. Go over the instructions at the top of the sheet. Ask participants to spend five minutes individually answering the questions on the handout.
- Ask participants to break up into groups of three to discuss their own sheets. Remember that some people may not feel comfortable revealing certain aspects of their social groups. Explain that each person can be as general or as specific as they would like in the discussion and also that everyone has the right to pass on discussing any point. Conclude with the Discussion Questions in the entire group.

Discussion Questions:

1. What surprised you about this exercise? Why?
2. What benefits did you see that you enjoy just because you belong to some groups? What problems or barriers did you see that you face just because you belong to some groups?
3. What benefits did you see that others enjoy and you do not because of the groups that they belong to? What barriers did you see that others face and you do not because of the groups that they belong to?
4. How do you feel about that? Should things be more equal and fair? What can you do to make things more equal and fair for everyone?

* Adapted and reprinted with permission of Jonathan Stacks, staff member at Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health and former staff at Advocates for Youth; © 2005, Jonathan Stacks.

Lesson Plan Four
Handout

I Am!

My Gender Is

_____

My Race/Ethnicity Is

_____

My Economic Background Is

_____

My Religion Is

_____

My Talents Include

_____

My Interests Include

_____

My Age Is

_____

My Sexual Orientation Is

_____

Other Social Groups to Which I Belong Include

_____

These are the social groups to which I belong!

Lesson Plan Four
Handout

Social Group Membership Profile

Use your answers on the *I Am* handout to respond to the questions below.

Of all of the social groups to which you belong:

1. Which ones are you most comfortable with? _____

_____

2. Which are you least comfortable with? _____

_____

3. Which do you think most about? _____

_____

4. Which do you think least about? _____

_____

5. Which groups give you the most privileges? _____

_____

6. Which groups limit your access, options, and/or rewards in society? _____

_____

7. Which have the greatest effect, positively or negatively, on how others see you? _____

_____

Core Lesson Plan: Lesson Plan Five

Introduction to Sexual Orientation*

Purpose: To learn about issues faced by gay, lesbian, bisexual, and questioning people and to promote acceptance and respect for all people irrespective of their sexual orientation

Materials: Leader's Resource, *Guided Imagery*

Time: 45 minutes

Planning Notes: Sexual orientation is a controversial topic. This activity is designed to promote understanding, acceptance, and respect. While being sensitive to the community's attitudes, remember that young people need accurate information and an opportunity to discuss an issue that may be difficult for them. As you lead this activity, remember that there are probably gay, lesbian, bisexual, and questioning teens in your group. You will not *know* the sexual orientation of every participant, so be very sure to use inclusive and affirming language. For example, say 'we,' 'all people,' and 'some people,' not 'they' or 'people like them.'

Procedure:

- Without revealing the topic of the activity, begin reading the *Guided Imagery* (Leader's Resource for this lesson plan).
- After you have finished the *Guided Imagery*, ask the participants to sit up, open their eyes if they were closed, and reconnect with the group. Ask each participant to turn to the person next to her/him and take a few minutes to talk about how it would feel to live in such a world and what it would feel like if they had to keep so many secrets about themselves. Then, ask the pairs to discuss what those feelings might lead them to do if this were a real situation.
- Call the group back together and ask for volunteers who are willing to share their thoughts and feelings with the whole group. Write their responses on newsprint. Add checkmarks when other participants offer the same or similar responses. Expect to hear answers like: feeling angry, sad, and isolated; dropping out of school; staying home from school; using alcohol and other drugs; breaking the rules; and feeling depressed. If youth do not suggest these feelings and responses, suggest them yourself.
- Explain that while the situation is, of course, fictional, it mirrors the real world faced by most lesbian, gay, bisexual, and questioning people. Say that, because they are often understandably afraid to 'come out' (reveal their sexual orientation) to others, gay, lesbian, and bisexual teens are forced to keep many parts of their lives secret. Sometimes keeping so many secrets leads to their dropping out of school, staying home from school, using alcohol and other drugs, running away, breaking the rules, etc. Say that, eventually, most gay, lesbian and bisexual people, including teens, find ways to tell the people who are important to them and find friends who are supportive of them. The struggle to decide who is safe to tell lasts all of one's life, because there is so much ignorance and fear about homosexuality in our society.
- End with the Discussion Questions below.

Discussion Questions:

1. How would it feel to have to hide something as important and as basic as your sexual orientation, (the sex of the people to whom you are romantically, emotionally, and physically attracted)?
2. What were the first things you remember learning about homosexuality? Do you remember learning anything from your family? Friends? Community of faith? Was what you learned positive or negative?
3. Have you ever learned about or discussed issues of sexual orientation in class? What did you learn?
4. What movie or television character have you recently seen that is GLBTQ? How has that affected your thinking?
5. How would it feel to need to hide from other people your gender or the sex of those to whom you are attracted? How would that affect your life?

* Adapted from *Life Planning Education*, © 1995, Advocates for Youth, Washington, DC; http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/publications/lpe/

Lesson Plan Five
Leader's Resource

How It Feels to Be Different: Exercise in Guided Imagery*

Slowly read the following to the participants.

Please get comfortable. If you feel comfortable to do so, close your eyes as you sit or lay back. Concentrate as I take you to a world very different from the one in which we live—a world in which you are straight, but everyone else is not. In this world, almost all of the teachers and students in your school are gay. All of your friends and family members are gay; most of the doctors, judges, politicians and world leaders are gay. Celebrities are all gay, as are all of the priests, rabbis, Sufis, and imams. In this world, all of the books and television programs are about gay characters, and marriage is legal only for gay couples.

Of course, there are some straight people, but they are ridiculed and whispered about. Clearly, there is something really bad about being straight. You have heard things like: straight people are sick; they are obsessed with sex. Programs on television sometimes explore the curious 'straight lifestyle,' describing how straight people are always getting pregnant or infected with HIV. In these programs, straights are like the characters out of an old circus sideshow—exposed for their oddities. Your friends have told you that straight people are often child abusers and you have overheard your neighbor saying that straights are emotionally disturbed and have no morals.

Last year there was a big problem in your town because someone accused one of the teachers of being straight—parents don't want straight people to teach their children—so, the teacher was fired even though she insisted that she was gay. There are few, if any, protections for straight people. You have heard that straights can't lead scout troops, and that straights can be fired from their jobs or kicked out of the military if people find out about them. There's even a story you heard last week about a kid who was kicked out of his own home because he told his dad he might be straight.

This is all very scary for you because you are beginning to think that you, too, might be straight. More than anything in the world, you want your parents to love you, to accept you as you are. What will they say if you tell them that you might be straight?! The thought of telling them—of telling anyone—makes you sick to your stomach. Who can you turn to? Your brothers talk nonstop about how cute the quarterback on the local football team is. Your sister has a crush on the latest supermodel. You wish you had a crush on someone of your own sex, but you don't! It's people of the opposite sex that attract you. No one in your family has these feelings—in fact, no one you know has them, so you continue to hide this scariest of secrets. Somewhere deep inside you understand that, if people found out who you really are, they would ridicule you. Worse yet—they might not love you anymore!

Sometimes you think that you have to tell someone about this secret. You spend hours thinking about whom to approach. You remember when you were a kid hearing your dad tell nasty jokes about straights at the dinner table and everyone laughed. So, you can't tell your family. You remember your family's religious leader telling the congregation that being straight is unnatural and immoral and the whole congregation nodded in agreement. So telling the religious leader is definitely out. In health class you learned that it is normal to feel physically and emotionally attracted to people of your same sex. No one talked about being attracted to someone of the opposite sex. You are sure that what you are feeling cannot be normal and that no one can help you. Last week in math class, two of the popular athletes started taunting this shy kid and calling him 'straight.' The teacher just ignored it. You heard her laugh the week before, however, when the kid in the second row called out in disgust that the poem the class was supposed to read for English was 'so straight.'

All of this makes you feel really isolated and afraid. You are unsure what to do. Where can you turn? Who can you talk to? You can't talk about your feelings at home; your school feels unsafe; you don't trust your friends to support you. Having this secret is a little like having a piranha inside—it keeps eating away at your self-esteem, so that after a while you hate how you feel and you hate yourself, too!

* Written by Faughn Adams, Psy D; adapted and reprinted with permission of Links, North Shore Youth Health Services, Northfield, IL.

Lesson Plan Six

Introduction to Gender Identity and Gender Expression*

Purpose: To increase awareness of and empathy with people who are transgender

Time: 40 minutes

Materials: Leader's Resource, *The Girl-with-No-Name*; newsprint and markers

Planning Notes: On a large sheet of newsprint, write the following questions.
- What was this story about?
- What is being transgender?
- What obstacles faced Dallas?
- Why did it take Dallas a long time to become the person she wanted to be?

Procedure:
- Ask the participants to get comfortable. Tell them that you are going to read them a story about someone whose feelings and experiences are often invisible to most people. Then, read the story, *The Girl-with-No-Name*, to the participants.
- Ask the participants to count off, so that they wind up in small groups of about four individuals each. Each group will discuss the story, using the questions that you wrote up on the newsprint beforehand.
- Ask everyone to reassemble. Discuss the story as a group, going briefly over the four questions with the entire group. Make the point that everyone's life has a story, and that knowing that story can help us understand and care about people—both those whose lives are similar and those whose lives are very different from our own. End with the Discussion Questions.

Discussion Questions:
1. Have you ever felt sure that you wanted to be someone other than who you are (such as to be rich instead of poor, or to have a different skin color or different gender, or to be from a different family)?
2. Were you able to tell anyone else how you felt? If so, how did they react? If you couldn't talk about how you felt, why not?
3. Have you ever known anyone who wanted to be the opposite gender? Were you supportive? Why or why not?
4. What are some things you can do to be supportive of people who are transgender?

* A new activity, designed by Advocates for Youth, © 2005.

Lesson Plan Six
Leader's Resource

The Girl-with-No-Name*

I was perhaps 15 years old. The rest of the family had gone on a ride, and I had begged off; the excuse is long forgotten. I was sitting on the floor of the living room, wearing a purple dress (I had my own by that time), experimenting with my face. And for the first time, I got it right. Looking in the mirror, with my mandatory haircut, I would ordinarily see a boy, and only a boy. In that dress, with Cover Girl skin and Maybelline eyes, my hair blended into a wig, I saw a very pretty, an almost beautiful girl. I didn't—and this is important—see a boy dressed as a girl. I saw a girl!

I remember thinking, "This is who I want to be. This is who I probably should have been." But I also remember thinking that it couldn't be. I was looking at a fiction, a fabrication, a creature created out of cosmetics and cloth. The girl in the mirror was a fantasy, and I could see no way to make her a reality. The girl had no name. In the end, she wound up in a paper sack which I hid under a loose board in the summer-hot attic.

My parents took me to a psychiatrist... In my shame and denial, I led him to think that the crossdressing was not very important, had just been an experiment. And he went for it, telling my parents that I was "just going through a phase." It's a phase that's still going on, now, at age 46. I entered adulthood as a man instead of as a woman... Married a woman; grew a beard; went to college. Got weak in the knees every time I saw a pretty girl, because I wanted to be her so much. Got divorced (for unrelated reasons).

I started by acknowledging that I was at the very least a crossdresser. I quit worrying that my pumps or wig would be seen, or that I would be spotted wearing them. One by one, I told my friends and acquaintances. Step one ...

Step two was to ask myself whether I wanted to be a woman. I already knew the answer to that one.

Step three was to take an honest look at myself, to determine if it would be possible, via surgery, electrolysis, and better living through chemistry, to ever pass convincingly as a woman. I refused to be a man-in-dress. I took careful stock of my body. I didn't at all like what I saw. My body had moved in undesirable directions since the day I found that single hair growing on my face. I was too hairy, too big, too this, not enough of that. I made a list and then scratched off things that could be changed via hard work, hormones, electrolysis, surgery. I looked at what was left and thought, "Just maybe..."

The girl-with-no-name now has a name. It is, in fact, the name she had all along, one of those names which turns out to work perfectly well as a woman's name, thank you. She is finally a creature of flesh-and-blood rather than a fantasy. She is not a notion of a woman, not an imitation of a woman, not a man's idea of what a woman should be, but a woman, with all the virtues and warts, the rights and privileges thereto—a woman who can be raped, who can be strong, who can bake a cake and change the spark plugs in her car. It is she who I see in the mirror every morning instead of the burr-headed boy I once was. Finally, at long last, thank God, it's over.

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To those of you who are transgender and have not found your way through the glass, know that you can, if it is your earnest and heart's desire. You can reach out. (See the Select Organizations, Web Sites, Videos, and Books in Appendix 1.)

* Excerpted with permission from The Girl-With-No-Name, by Dallas Denny © 1992, *Empathy* 1992/93.

Core Lesson Plan: Lesson Plan Seven

Q & A on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity*

Purpose: To allow participants to ask questions, hear from, and empathize with GLBTQ people; to address and assist participants to move beyond stereotypes

Materials: Panel composed of youth and young adults who are openly gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender

Time: 60 minutes

Planning Notes: When you hold a panel discussion that permits program youth to interact with openly gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people, you make real the issues faced by GLBTQ people and give youth the chance to relate to the humanity of the speakers.

- Well before this session, contact one or more of the organizations listed in Appendix 1, at the end of this *Toolkit*. Ask for assistance in assembling a small panel of two or more gay, lesbian, bisexual, and/or transgender people. Be ready to explain the purpose of the workshop, to share this activity outline with the experts, and to brief the experts on the status of your organization and your participants in regard to creating safe space for GLBTQ youth.
- Engage an expert facilitator to moderate the discussion. The moderator will control the room, the audience's questions, the panelists' interactions, length of discussions on any one point, etc.
- Acquire biographical sketches for the panel members and the moderator, and complete the logistics (room reservation, microphones and other audio-visual equipment needed by panelists, invitations, name tags, refreshments, etc.) for the panel presentation. If you have engaged a facilitator to moderate the panel discussion, forward copies of the biographical sketches to the moderator, who will introduce the panelists.
- Be sure you are up to speed on sexual orientation and gender identity. Review the Glossary and *Frequently Asked Questions about Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity*. Prepare your own questions for the expert panel, just in case your participants have few or no questions.
- Be prepared for one or more participants to 'come out' (disclose their sexual orientation or gender identity) to you or the group because offering this activity may signal that you are a safe person to talk with or that this is a safe space. You can be very helpful by saying that you are glad the young person chose to talk with you and by giving her/him a list of community resources, such as agencies, support groups, and Web sites for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and questioning youth. (See Appendix 1.) Be sure that you do *not* say that you are too busy to listen, brush the youth off with a quick referral, or say that "this is a phase" or that the "teens aren't old enough to know."

Procedure:

- At the beginning of this session, hand out index cards and identical pencils or pens to all the participants. Say that each panelist will share his/her story with them. As they listen, participants can write on the cards any questions they have about sexual orientation, gender identity, homophobia, transphobia, or other issues that confront GLBTQ people. Tell participants that if they don't have any questions, they should write something on the card anyway. Tell them to write: "I have no questions." That way everyone will fill out a card and all who do have questions can remain anonymous.
- Introduce the expert panel by first talking a few minutes about the purpose of the panel. Introduce the moderator and explain that he/she will indicate who is to speak next, that time is up for discussion of a particular point, when a member of the audience may ask a question, when someone is out of order (speaking without permission), etc.
- Turn the session over to the moderator who will begin by introducing the panelists and then giving each panelist about five minutes to tell his/her story.
- After the panelists have spoken, collect the participants' index cards and hand them to the moderator. The moderator will read the question(s) aloud, one at a time (ignoring any question that repeats a previous question), and ask one of the panelists to respond.

* A new activity, designed by Advocates for Youth, © 2005.

- If there is time, ask the participants if they have any additional questions. At the end of the panel discussion, thank the panelists and the moderator; ask the youth to express their thanks. If time permits, conclude with the following Discussion Questions.

Discussion Questions:

1. Did you learn anything new today that changed your views on GLBTQ people?
2. What affected you most about the panelists' stories?

Lesson Plan Eight

Heterosexual Questionnaire*

Purpose: To give straight people an opportunity to experience the types of questions that are often asked of gay, lesbian, and/or bisexual people

Time: 40 minutes

Materials: Handout *Heterosexual Questionnaire*

Procedure:

- Explain to the group that, when gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth are beginning to 'come out,' they are often asked questions that are nearly impossible to answer. In order to help participants understand the heterosexist bias[π] in our culture, you will ask them to grapple with these same questions in regard to *heterosexuality.*
- Say that you will give them each a handout. They will break up into groups of four or five and try to come up with answers. Say that you want them to try to answer each question as well as to react to the questions ***as a whole.*** Irrespective of each participant's sexual orientation, everyone should attempt to answer as though he/she is heterosexual.
- After about 10 minutes, ask everyone to reassemble in the large group. Ask the participants the Discussion Questions below.

Discussion Questions:

1. Did you find the questions hard to answer? Were some harder than others? Which? What, specifically, was so difficult?
2. How did the questions make you feel?
3. What does it say about our society that gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth are asked similar questions?
4. What can you do in the future if you hear someone asking such questions?

* A new activity, designed by Advocates for Youth, to use with the heterosexual questionnaire by Martin Rochlin.

π Heterosexist bias, or heterosexism, is the assumption that everyone is, or ought to be, heterosexual and that heterosexuality is the only 'normal,' right, and moral way to be and that, therefore, anyone with a different sexual orientation is 'abnormal,' wrong, and immoral.

Lesson Plan Eight
Handout

Heterosexual Questionnaire*

Please answer the following questions as honestly as possible.

1. What do you think caused your heterosexuality?
2. When and how did you first decide you were heterosexual?
3. Is it possible that your heterosexuality is just a phase you may grow out of?
4. Is it possible that your heterosexuality stems from a fear of others of the same sex?
5. If you have never slept with a member of your own sex, is it possible that you might be gay if you tried it?
6. If heterosexuality is normal, why are so many mental patients heterosexual?
7. Why do you heterosexual people try to seduce others into your lifestyle?
8. Why do you flaunt your heterosexuality? Can't you just be who you are and keep it quiet?
9. The great majority of child molesters are heterosexual. Do you consider it safe to expose your children to heterosexual teachers?
10. With all the societal support that marriage receives, the divorce rate is spiraling. Why are there so few stable relationships among heterosexual people?
11. Why are heterosexual people so promiscuous?
12. Would you want your children to be heterosexual, knowing the problems they would face, such as heartbreak, disease, and divorce?

* Created by Martin Rochlin, Ph.D., January 1977, and adapted for use here.

Lesson Plan Nine

Make Your Voice Heard!*

Purpose: To learn the differences between assertive, aggressive, and passive communication. To learn to choose the most appropriate communication style when confronting homophobia and transphobia

Materials: Newsprint and markers; paper, pens, and pencils

Time: 45 minutes

Planning notes:

- In teaching youth to be assertive, facilitators also need to teach them to assess situations and to consider their personal safety. In some situations, being assertive can be dangerous. For example, if someone has a weapon, has been drinking or taking drugs, or is extremely angry, being assertive with that person may be neither wise nor safe.
- When you introduce the topic, remember that some cultures do not consider it appropriate for women to communicate assertively. Attitudes about assertiveness may vary widely among participants, depending on their cultural background. In particular, some young people come from families that have taught them that it is inappropriate for them to speak up assertively and/or that refusing a request, especially from an adult, is unacceptable. While you do not want to encourage teens to communicate regularly in ways that could have unpleasant consequences for them in their cultural and family circles, all young people need to understand that situations may arise in which assertive behavior will protect them and others. For example, youth benefit when they learn to resist pressure from romantic partners or peers to do something that they do not want to do, such as have sex, use alcohol, join a gang, or cause harm to another. In such circumstances, young people can stand up for themselves, assert their own dignity and rights, and also resist pressure to do something that they do not want to do or that is bad for them or for others.
- Assertive, aggressive, and passive forms of communication are sometimes defined culturally and regionally. Before the session begins write the general definitions of assertive, aggressive and passive communication on newsprint or on the board:
  - Passive Communication: not expressing your own feelings or saying nothing.
  - Aggressive communication: asking for what you want or saying how you feel in a threatening, sarcastic, or humiliating way.
  - Assertive Communication: asking for what you want or saying how you feel in an honest and respectful way that does not infringe on another person's safety, dignity, or well-being.
- Also write the following five questions on newsprint for use in small groups (Step 5):
  - How will Kai feel after responding as you said?
  - How will the other youth feel if Kai responds as you said?
  - What is the worst possible outcome?
  - What is the best possible outcome?
  - What else could Kai have done?

Procedure:

1. Tell the group that today's activity is about communication and action, that when people witness discrimination or harassment, they often react in one three ways—passively, assertively, or aggressively. Ask the students to define each category of communication, but do not show them the definitions yet.
2. Tell them that you are going to read them a situation and you want them to think about how they would react if the situation happened to them.
3. Read the following scenario aloud:

* Adapted from *Guide to Implementing TAP (Teens for AIDS Prevention): A Peer Education Program to Prevent HIV and STI* (2nd edition), © 2002, Advocates for Youth, Washington, DC; http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/publications/tap.htm

Kai is a fairly new student, having only attended this high school for a few months. However, in that time, Kai has made some friends, particularly a girl named Tamara. Today, Tamara was "outed" by her own sister. Tamara's sister is in the grade above Tamara and Kai, and she told everyone that Tamara is lesbian. Tamara is very upset. People are acting very hostile to her in the hallways. She turns to her good friend, Kai, for support. She tells Kai that she needs to know that Kai still likes her and will be her friend. Other youth stop, surrounding Kai and Tamara; they tell Kai to drop Tamara. They call her a dyke and taunt her. Kai does not know what to do because Kai is Asian and from a culture that teaches that homosexuality is unnatural. What should Kai do?

4. Ask each participant to quietly write a few sentences describing what Kai should do. Allow about three minutes. Then ask participants to form three groups, based on the following criteria:

   Group 1: All who wrote something that reflects a belief that Kai should be passive (for example, just stand there and say nothing) please move to this end of the room.

   Group 2: All who wrote something that reflects a belief that Kai should react aggressively (for example, start shouting angrily at the other youth) stand over here.

   Group 3: All who wrote something that reflects a belief that Kai should react assertively (for example, speak up calmly, expressing support for Tamara and talking about homophobia and how it hurts everyone) form a group in the middle.

5. Once the three groups have formed, display the questions you have prepared and go over instructions for the remainder of the activity. Ask each group to discuss the answers you wrote up on newsprint. ***Note:*** If there is only one person standing in one of the three groups, join that person to form a group and discuss the questions together.
6. Allow five to ten minutes for discussion in the three groups. Now ask everyone to return to the large group. Ask one participant from each group to share the group's response to the questions. Record the major points on the board or newsprint under the relevant label: passive, aggressive, assertive.

   Note: If the group has not made the following points, assist them by adding from the following:
   - **Passive response:** Communicating passively means not expressing your own feelings, or expressing them so weakly that they are not heard. If Kai behaves passively (such as by standing there and saying nothing), Kai will probably feel very angry with everyone. A passive response is usually not in your best interest because it allows other people to violate your rights and others' rights. Yet there are times when being passive may be the most appropriate response (such as when the other person has a weapon or is high on drugs). It is important to assess whether a situation is dangerous and, if it might be, to choose the response most likely to keep you and others safe.
   - **Aggressive response:** Communicating aggressively means asking offensively for what you want and saying how you feel in a threatening, sarcastic, or humiliating way. If Kai calls the other API youth names or threatens them, it probably won't end in the desired outcome (more understanding and support for Tamara) and it could make the situation escalate into violence. An aggressive response is not usually in your best interest because it often causes hostility and can lead to increased conflict.
   - **Assertive response:** Communicating assertively means asking for what you want or saying how you feel in an honest and respectful way that does not infringe on another person's safety, dignity, or well-being and does not make the other person feel disrespected. If Kai simply says, "Tamara is my friend. She is exactly the same person she was before we knew that she is lesbian. She deserves our friendship and support because she is a great friend and a fine person. Hating people because of their sexual orientation doesn't make any sense; it's not a choice, just like our eye color or family heritage is not a choice. Please don't ask me to turn my back on a friend." This is not a disrespectful statement. It is an assertion of the facts. Kai can be proud of standing up for a friend and for what is right. Other youth may also begin to express support for Tamara and for fair treatment for everyone. But even if they don't, Kai has stated what is fair, has made a direct request, and can feel confident and safe.

7. Conclude with the Discussion Questions below.

Discussion Questions:

1. What are some ways that someone might express him/herself without being directly aggressive or assertive? (Possible answers include, but are not limited to: talking sarcastically under one's breath; using body language that communicates one's disgust and frustration; telling people nearby about how one feels, but loudly enough that the people who made one angry can overhear. Behaviors like these are called passive-aggressive behaviors. This means showing an aggressive response but in a way that lowers the *immediate* risk of conflict. A passive aggressive response is not in your best interests. It will fail to achieve what you want, because you haven't spoken directly to the other individual(s) involved, and it can heighten resentment and may cause conflict or retaliation, when the others hear your comments (or hear about your comments), as they probably will.
2. Can you think of circumstances where passive communication may be in your best interest or the best interest of a friend, even though your needs may not be met?
3. Have you behaved aggressively in some situation? How did it work out? How would things have been different if you had chosen an assertive response?
4. Have you behaved assertively in a situation? How did it work out? How would a passive response have worked out? An aggressive response?
5. How have you felt when you stood up for yourself or a friend? How have you felt when you failed to stand up for yourself or a friend?
6. Are you facing a situation currently where you need to act assertively and have not yet done so? What will you do?

Addressing Discrimination*

Purpose: To learn how discrimination feels and to identify strategies for combating it

Materials: Newsprint and markers; masking tape; handout, *Stopping Harassment in its Tracks*

Time: 65 minutes (Session can be broken into two 40-minute sessions)

Planning Notes: Prior to the session, write the following questions (for use in Step 2) on newsprint or chalkboard:
- Have you, or someone you care about, ever been discriminated against? If so, what happened?
- Did anyone help? If so, how?
- If not, what would you have wanted someone to do?

Procedure:
1. Remind everyone that discrimination takes many forms. Ask participants to brainstorm examples of discrimination. List their answers on newsprint or a chalkboard. Include any of the following that participants neglect to mention:
   - Teasing, name calling, or using derogatory terms for race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, or gender
   - Excluding someone from activities, or ignoring or denying requests based on the requester's race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation or gender identity
   - Physically or verbally attacking someone (especially with the 'authorities' ignoring, condoning, or even encouraging this behavior)
   - Treating someone unfairly in the workplace, public spaces, or educational institutions (for example, denying someone a job or a raise on the basis of race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or age)

2. Ask participants to think of a time when they or someone they care about was treated unfairly or unequally because they were members of some specific group. Ask for volunteers to share these experiences; use the questions that you wrote up prior to the session.
3. Record the main idea of each experience on a single sheet of newsprint. (You will use these ideas later.) If participants hesitate to volunteer, begin the discussion by describing an incident that you witnessed or that occurred to you or to someone you care about. Ask participants to identify what would have helped in the situation. Then encourage others to share their stories.
4. Ask what strategies and techniques the students might use to confront and combat similar discrimination, if they saw it happening now. Help them identify effective techniques. List their ideas on the board or newsprint. Some ideas include: assertively asking the harasser to stop; standing up for the person who is being discriminated against; distracting everyone with humor; calling someone in authority, etc.
5. Hand out *Stopping Harassment in its Tracks* and ask participants to review it. Ask if they think the five steps to stopping harassment will work.
6. Explain that you are going to give the group a few minutes to practice the new technique using the five steps. Divide participants into groups of four or five and assign each group one of the posted discriminatory situations that were listed earlier in the session. If necessary, add more situations to the list.
7. Tell the participants that they will have 15 minutes for this next part. Go over the following instructions:
   - Decide as a group if the five steps to stopping harassment would work in the situation presented to the group. If so, create a role play to demonstrate how to use the technique. If the group doesn't think the steps will work, create a role play for another technique that your group believes might work.
   - Practice role playing the situation.
   - Be prepared to perform your role play for the other groups.

* Adapted with permission from Teen Outreach, *Changing Scenes* Curriculum, Cornerstone Consulting Group, Houston, TX.

- When the groups have finished, have them present their role plays. Invite other participants to make additional suggestions for confronting and combating discrimination.

8. Conclude the activity with the Discussion Questions below.

Discussion Questions:

1. Is it easy or difficult to speak up when your friends are discriminating against someone and you are present? Why?
2. What would support you in standing up against discrimination?

Lesson Plan Ten
Handout

Stopping Harassment in Its Tracks*

There are times when you have the power to stop harassment and discrimination in its tracks. Remember that homophobic and transphobic words and actions are hurtful. They hurt the person targeted, the witnesses, and the bully. There are five steps you can use to stop harassment when you see it.

1. **Assess if You are Physically Safe**
   - Sometimes it isn't safe to intervene when you witness discrimination or harassment. If you are afraid for your own physical safety, quickly go and find an adult who can help.
   - If you feel you are not physically in danger, then proceed to step 2.

2. **Address the Harassment**
   - Interrupt the interaction.
   - Say something like, "Hey, John is my friend, stop harassing him!" or "Leave John alone." Bullies often back down when someone calls them on their behavior.

3. **Put the Focus on the Bully**
   - Say something like, "You just put John down. That is really disrespectful."
   - Put the spotlight on the bully's behavior. Do ***NOT*** say anything to imply that the person being harassed belongs to the group just named.

4. **Name the Harassment and its Consequences**
   - Identify the offense and its consequences: "Calling someone names is rude and hurtful." "Pushing others around in not okay."

5. **Refuse to Join In**
   - Say something like, "By pushing John around you are being a bully. Don't ask me to go along; I think it's mean and uncalled for." Or "I won't be quiet when you act like that."
   - Quietly, check in with the person who was harassed: "Are you okay?" "Do you want to talk?"

* Adapted and reprinted with permission of GLSEN Colorado from *How to Address Harassment in the Hallways in 3 Minutes*; http://www.glsenco.org

Lesson Plan Eleven

What Can I Do to Create Safe Space*

Purpose: To get participants thinking about why they should care about homophobia and the concrete things that they can do to stop it

Time: 60 minutes

Materials: Newsprint and markers; Leader's Resource, *Role Plays*

Procedure:

1. Begin by posing the question, "Why is it important to take action when we see something happening that is discriminatory, either to us or to others?"
2. Say that we all need allies because we all have to confront distressing situations, times when we feel disrespected, unwanted, and/or rejected. Today, we are going to talk specifically about the disrespect and rejection experienced by the GLBTQ community. We are going to talk about being activists in regard to the rights and dignity of GLBTQ people.
3. Ask participants to brainstorm things that anyone might say if homophobic comments were being made in their presence. Write responses on newsprint or chalkboard, encouraging participants to keep their ideas both general and realistic.
4. Divide the participants into five small groups. Give the groups basic instructions:
   - "Each group will have 20 minutes to work out a skit for a role play that I will give you. The role play will show someone being treated with disrespect because of sexual orientation or gender identity/gender expression. You won't have a lot of time, so you must work quickly. We'll come back together after 20 minutes to perform the skits for one another."
   - Assign parts for the skit. Remind participants that: 1) more than one person can take action to stop disrespect; 2) each skit should take no more than five minutes to perform; 3) each skit should end on a positive (respectful) note. While the groups are working, circulate and offer help, as needed.

5. Call everyone together and ask for volunteers to go first. After each skit, ask the entire group:
   - What just happened in that skit?
   - How did you feel as you saw the disrespect and then saw the activist stepping up? How do you think the person who had been disrespected felt? How do you think the activist felt?
   - If this happened in a real-life situation, would it work out as well? Why or why not?
   - What else do you think someone could have done?

6. Conclude with the Discussion Questions below.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why is it important for people to take a stand when they see injustices?
2. What did you see today that might not work as well as you would like when you are standing up for yourself and your peers?
3. What did you learn today that you could use in similar situations to stand up for yourself and your peers?

* Adapted and reprinted with permission of Gay-Straight Alliance Network of San Francisco, California; http://www.gsanetwork.org

Lesson Plan Eleven
Leader's Resource

Role Plays

Dwayne—Dwayne is 16 years old. He has been out for about a year now. When Dwayne is in history class, another student calls him a "fag." He raises his hand and complains to the teacher. The history teacher responds that Dwayne interrupted her lecture and should not do so again. You are classmates and friends of Dwayne's, and you witnessed the entire incident. What do you do to rectify the situation?

Marisa—Marisa is a 16-year-old lesbian. She and her friend, Rosa, are at a party talking to a group of friends about the upcoming school dance. Most of the girls are not going to the dance; but they single Marisa out for comments. They say, "You couldn't get a date if you tried, because you're a dyke and all the guys know it." What should Marisa say? What could others do to stop the harassment?

Laticia—Laticia is 15 years old. She dates Leroy, one of the starting linemen on the football team. Laticia thought she loved Leroy; but recently, notices a growing attraction to Vonnie, a cheerleader. She feels about Vonnie the way she once felt about Leroy. Because she is so confused, Laticia tells her best friend, who promises to keep it a secret, but instead, tells everyone in the entire school. Vonnie won't even talk to Laticia anymore. Leroy breaks up with her and calls her a "dyke." She hears insults from the other students as they pass her in the halls. Now, Laticia feels totally alone and doesn't know where to turn. You are a group of people that don't know Laticia that well, but overhear the commotion in the hall. What could you do or say to stop the harassment?

Ben—Ben runs the 800-meter race for the track team at his local high school. Joel, his best friend since elementary school, is also on the team. About a year earlier, Joel had told a couple of his friends that he was gay. Ben didn't care; he had pretty much figured it out by the time Joel came out anyway. But one of their other friends thought this was crazy, and, after trying to talk Joel out of 'being gay,' had told another guy, who in turn told someone else, and pretty soon the whole school knew. It wasn't easy, but Joel pretty much took it in stride and was moving on. Today, however, Ben has come over to stretch before his race with a couple of other guys on the team. They start asking him questions like "Does he watch us while we're in the shower?" And, "dude, you know he totally wants you." How can Ben respond to stop the harassment?

Chrissie—Chris is home for the summer after his first year at college, during which he became active in the school's GLBTQ student group. Chris was a vocal, happy member of the GLBTQ community and, at the same time, struggled with a lot of personal issues. For a long time, Chris had felt out of place, identifying more with his girlfriends than with his male friends. After doing a lot of research and giving careful consideration to his personal issues, Chris feels like he's finally found his identity—transgender. Once at home for the summer, Chris talks with her parents and tells them that she's changing her name to Chrissie and using female pronouns. Chrissie's parents react harshly. When they calm down a bit, they tell her, "It's just a phase." Chrissie feels betrayed and stunned by her parents' reaction and gets out of the house as soon as possible so she can think about what to do now. You're Chrissie's lifelong friend. She approaches you for support, telling you that she's come out as transgender and changed her name. What do you say to accept Chrissie and help her through this situation with her parents?

Lesson Plan Twelve

How to Be a Super Activist and/or Ally*

Purpose: To identify ways to be a great activist and/or ally to GLBTQ people; to get into action

Materials: Newsprint and markers; handouts, *14 Ways Homophobia and Transphobia Affect Everyone* and *Ways to Be a GLBTQ Ally or Activist*; Leader's Resource, *Ways to Fight Homophobia and Transphobia*

Time: 45 minutes

Planning Notes: Go over the handout, *14 Ways Homophobia and Transphobia Affect Everyone.* Be prepared to lead a discussion on it. Be ready with brief examples that you can use if necessary.

Procedure:

- Ask the group how they think homophobia and transphobia affect GLBTQ youth—write the participants' responses on newsprint on the board. (Help them to think of answers such as: they hurt them; they can cause depression; they make GLBTQ youth think that they aren't as good as other people; they can lead to drug and alcohol use, etc.)
- Next have participants count off so they can form into groups of four or five. Say that they will have about 10 minutes to discuss whether or not homophobia and transphobia affect straight youth. If they think that the answer is yes, ask them to come up with five or six examples.
- Bring the groups back together and ask them to share some of the things they came up with. Record their answers on the newsprint.
- Distribute and discuss the handout *14 Ways Homophobia and Transphobia Affect Everyone.*
- Ask participants to get back into their groups. Tell them that they are now going to spend about ten minutes discussing ways that GLBTQ youth and their straight allies can fight homophobia and transphobia. Distribute the handout *Ways to Be a GLBTQ Ally or Activist.* Ask participants to first spend about five minutes filling in the handout individually. Tell them you will let them know when the five minutes are up.
- Once the five minutes are up, ask the participants to talk in their groups about ways they identified to fight homophobia and transphobia. Tell participants that they can add to their original list if someone in their group has a good idea they hadn't already thought of.
- Ask everyone to reassemble. Ask for volunteers to share ways in which they think they can act as an ally of GLBTQ youth. Write the ideas on a sheet of newsprint. Add checkmarks beside similar or second suggestions that have already been made. Ask participants to add to their own handout any suggestions that they hear for the first time that seem especially good to them. Include the suggestions from the Leader's Resource, *Ways to Fight Homophobia and Transphobia*, if no one suggests them. Ask participants to add asterisks (stars) on their handouts by any action(s) they are willing to take in the future. Ask them to commit to taking those actions consistently (whenever the need arises) and to add their signatures to their handouts if they haven't already done so.
- Finish up with the Discussion Questions below.

Discussion Questions:

1. Did you learn anything today that surprised you?
2. Were you surprised about ways in which homophobia affects your life? The lives of your friends and family?
3. In view of what you know now, will you take action to oppose homophobia and transphobia when you witness them?

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Lesson Plan Twelve
Leader's Resource

Ways to Fight Homophobia and Transphobia

Here are just a few of the many ways that young people can fight homophobia and transphobia. If participants have a hard time coming up with actions they can take, suggest some of these.

1. Be a friend to GLBTQ youth or to other GLBTQ youth.
2. When you hear homophobic or transphobic comments, calmly assert your belief in everyone's right to be treated with dignity and respect.
3. Join the gay/straight alliance in your school.
4. Start a gay/straight alliance, if one doesn't already exist in your school.
5. Ask to speak with adults in charge (of the school, agency, community of faith, etc.) about the importance of a 'zero tolerance' policy for homophobic and transphobic comments and actions.
6. Write a letter to the editor of your hometown and/or school newspaper.
7. Ask for a panel discussion on GLBTQ issues. Ask that GLBTQ youth participate on the panel.
8. Ask for a relaxed dress code that honors each person's individuality and unique gender expression.
9. Ask that all teens be able to bring a date of their own choosing (same-sex or opposite sex) to the prom, dances, parties, etc.
10. Create and distribute a list of community resources for GLBTQ youth.

Lesson Plan Twelve
Handout

14 Ways Homophobia and Transphobia Affect *Everyone**

Homophobia and transphobia affect everyone; they have serious consequences for both GLBTQ and straight youth.

Ways that Homophobia and Transphobia Affect GLBTQ Youth

1. Homophobia and transphobia make many GLBTQ youth feel isolated, lonely, and ashamed.
2. Homophobia and transphobia create an environment in which GLBTQ youth may have to face harassment and even violence in their schools, communities and/or homes.
3. Homophobia and transphobia make some GLBTQ youth 'act straight' to hide their sexual orientation or gender identity.
4. Homophobia forces many gay, lesbian, bisexual, and questioning youth to become sexually active before they really want to, choosing partners of the opposite sex just to hide their sexual orientation or their questions. Transphobia forces many transgender youth to become sexually active before they really want to just so they can hide their gender identity.
5. Homophobia and transphobia contribute to the self-doubt that makes many GLBTQ youth turn to drugs and/or alcohol to numb their feelings.
6. Homophobia and transphobia cause many GLBTQ youth to drop out of school and/or run away.
7. Homophobia and transphobia cause many GLBTQ youth to think about and/or even attempt suicide. Many of the youth who kill themselves are GLBTQ.

How Homophobia and Transphobia Affect Straight Youth

8. Homophobia and transphobia pressure straight people to act unkindly or even cruelly towards GLBTQ people and encourage bullying and cruelty toward anyone whose appearance or behavior isn't sufficiently 'macho' or 'feminine' (from the viewpoint of the bully).
9. Homophobia and transphobia force straight people to act 'straight,' limiting their individuality and self-expression. Straight youth often choose their clothes, hair color/style, friends, and even behavior to 'prove' that they are not GLBTQ.
10. Homophobia and transphobia can destroy family relationships. Some parents, sisters, brothers, and even grandparents break off their relationships with GLBTQ family members.
11. Homophobia and transphobia lead many straight youth to become sexually active before they really want to just to 'prove' they are straight.
12. Homophobia, along with racism, sexism, and poverty, makes it hard to end the HIV epidemic.
13. Homophobia and transphobia make it very hard for straight people and GLBTQ people to be friends.
14. Homophobia and transphobia make it nearly impossible for people to appreciate diversity and the wonderful variety that exists among all people.

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Lesson Plan Twelve
Handout

Ways to Be a GLBTQ Ally or Activist

Working in groups, see how many ideas you can come up with. Then, put a star by the ones that you, personally, are willing to take on to fight homophobia and transphobia and to show your respect for everyone, irrespective of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

1. I can _____

2. I can _____

3. I can _____

4. I can _____

5. I can _____

I Will Take on the Starred Actions.
I Can Be a GLBTQ Ally or Activist and Make My Voice Count!

_____
(Your signature)

Part Four—Additional Resources on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

Appendix 1, Select Organizations, Web Sites, Videos, and Books
Appendix 2, Glossary
Appendix 3, Abstinence-only-until-Marriage Education: Abandoning Responsibility to GLBTQ Youth
Appendix 4, Frequently Asked Questions about Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity
Appendix 5, Test Yourself: Definition Match-Up
References

Appendix 1

Select Organizations, Web Sites, Videos, and Books

Select Organizations

- Advocates for Youth—
  - http://www.advocatesforyouth.org
  - http://www.ambientejoven.org
  - http://www.mysistahs.org
  - http://www.youthresource.com
- American Friends Service Committee—http://www.afsc.org/lgbt/default.htm
- Audre Lourde Project—http://www.alp.org
- Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere—http://www.colage.org
- Deaf Queer Resource Center—http://www.deafqueer.org
- Gay Health—http://www.gayhealth.com
- Gender Education and Advocacy—http://www.gender.org
- Gender PAC—http://www.gpac.org
- Girl's Best Friend Foundation—http://www.girlsbestfriend.org
- GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network)—http://www.glsen.org
- Hetrick-Martin Institute—http://www.hmi.org
- Human Rights Campaign—http://www.hrc.org
- International Foundation for Gender Education—http://www.ifge.org
- International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission—http://www.iglhrc.org
- Intersex Society of North America—http://www.isna.org
- Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund—http://www.lambdalegal.org
- National Black Lesbian and Gay Leadership Forum—http://www.nblglf.org
- National Center for Transgender Equality—http://www.ncte.org
- National Coalition for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Youth—http://www.outproud.org
- National Gay and Lesbian Task Force—http://www.thetaskforce.org
- National Latina/o Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Organization—http://www.llego.org
- National Youth Advocacy Coalition—http://www.nyacyouth.org
- PFLAG (Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays)—http://www.pflag.org
- Safe Schools Coalition—http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org
- Sex, Etc.—http://www.sxetc.org
- SIECUS (Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States)—http://www.siecus.org
- Southwest Asian, North African Queers—http://www.swanaqueers.com
- Transgender Law Center—http://www.transgenderlawcenter.org

Topical Web Sites and Online Resources

Gay/Straight Alliances

- *Beyond the Binary: A Tool Kit for Gender Identity Activism in Schools*—http://www.gsanetwork.org/BeyondtheBinary/toolkit.html
- Gay/Straight Alliance Network—http://www.gsanetwork.org
- *Gay/Straight Alliances: A Student Guide* (Massachusetts Dept. of Education)—http://www.doe.mass.edu/hssss/GSA/Intro.html
- *ACLU: Get Busy, Get Equal*—http://www.aclu.org/getequal/scho/alliance.html

- *With Eyes to See: Peace and Justice Concept: Community in the Classroom*—http://www.concernamerica.org/ednews-Peacel.pdf

Gender Identity and Gender Expression

- *Bending the Mold: An Action Kit for Transgender Youth*—http://www.lambdalegal.org/binary-data/LAMBDA_PDF/pdf/305.pdf
- *I Think I Might Be Transgender, Now What Do I Do?*—http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/youth/health/pamphlets/transgender.htm
- *Our Trans Children*—http://www.youth-guard.org/pflag-tnet/booklet.html
- YouthResource's Trans*Topia—http://www.youthresource.com/community/transtopia/index.htm

Sexual Orientation

- YouthResource (a Web site of Advocates for Youth)—http://www.youthresource.com
- *I Think I Might Be Bisexual, Now What Do I Do?*—http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/youth/health/pamphlets/bisexual.htm
- *I Think I Might be Gay, Now What Do I Do?*—http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/youth/health/pamphlets/gay.htm
- *I Think I Might Be Lesbian, Now What Do I Do?*—http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/youth/health/pamphlets/lesbian.htm
- *Lesbian Health: A Guide for Teens*—http://www.youngwomenshealth.org/lesbianhealth.html

Youth-Adult Partnerships

- Advocates for Youth—http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/peereducation.htm
- *Barriers to Building Effective Youth-Adult Partnerships*—http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/publications/transitions/transitions1401_8.htm
- *Building Effective Youth-Adult Partnerships*—http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/publications/transitions/transitions1401_7.htm
- *Youth Participation Guide: Assessment, Planning, and Implementation*—http://www.fhi.org/en/Youth/YouthNet/rhtrainmat/vpguide.htm

Hotlines for People in Need of Help on Specific Issues

For GLBTQ Youth

1.800.850.8078
Trevor Helpline Crisis Intervention for LGBT Youth
24 hours a day, seven days a week

1.888.843.4564 (THE GLNH)
GLNH: Gay & Lesbian National Hotline
Monday - Friday, 6:00 PM-11:00 PM Eastern Time

For HIV and AIDS Information

1.800.342.2437
National AIDS Information Line
24 hours a day, seven days a week

For Homeless and Runaway Youth

1.800.999.9999
The Nine Line
24 hours a day, seven days a week

1.800.231.6946
National Runaway Switchboard
24 hours a day, seven days a week

For STI Information

1.800.227.8922
STD Info Line
Monday - Friday, 8:00 AM - 11:00 PM Eastern Time

For Substance Abuse Information

1.800.252.6465
Alcohol Hotline
24 hours a day, seven days a week

For Survivors of Domestic Violence

1.800.799.SAFE (7233)
National Domestic Violence Hotline
24 hours a day, seven days a week

In Print

All the books listed below can be ordered from your local bookstore or via Advocates' Web site at http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/youth/health/pamphlets/glbresources.htm

Alyson, Sasha, editor. ***Young Gay and Proud!*** 3rd Edition, Boston: Alyson Publications, 1991. ISBN: 15558030013
Geared toward high school students, this book answers questions such as: Am I the only one? What would my friends think if I told them? Should I tell my parents? and How can I avoid HIV?

Bass, Ellen and Kaufman, Kate. ***Free Your Mind: The Book for Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Youth and Their Allies.*** New York: HarperCollins, 1996. ISBN: 0060951044
This book covers self-discovery, friends and lovers, family, school, spirituality, and community, with advice on: how to come out; dealing with the problems coming out can entail; and making the world safer for gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth.

Bauer, Marion Dane, editor. ***Am I Blue? Coming out from the Silence.*** New York: Trophy Press, 1995. ISBN: 0064405877
This award-winning anthology of funny, sad, and memorable short stories for teens about coming out as gay or lesbian includes contributions by C.S. Adler, Bruce Coville, Nancy Garden, Cristina Salat, William Sleator, and Jacqueline Woodson.

Blumenfield, Warren J, editor. ***Homophobia: How We All Pay the Price.*** Boston: Beacon Press, 1992. ISBN: 0807079197

Activists and academics offer concrete suggestions for transforming homophobic attitudes, behaviors, and institutions.

Bornstein, Kate. ***My Gender Workbook: How to Become a Real Man, a Real Woman, the Real You, or Something Else Entirely.*** New York: Routledge, 1998. ISBN: 0415916739
Bornstein offers a series of humorous and poignant exercises around issues of gender identity.

Chandler, Kurt and Ivers, Mitchell, editors. ***Passages of Pride: Lesbian and Gay Youth Come of Age.*** New York: Crown Publishing, 1995. ISBN: 0812923804
In this landmark study, six teenagers speak eloquently of the challenges of realizing at an early age that they are different, learning how to hide, facing depression and suicidal tendencies, and finally coming out and making peace at home, at school, and on their own.

Due, Linnea. ***Joining the Tribe: Growing up Gay and Lesbian in the '90s.*** New York: Anchor Books, 1995. ISBN: 0385475004
This informative and compassionate book realistically and vividly portrays the challenges faced by gay, lesbian, and bisexual teenagers.

Ferrante, Tony, and Jacobson, Paulette. ***Letters from the Closet.*** Tzedakah Publications, 1994. ISBN: 0929999037
In this fictional portrayal, two youth communicate the experience of coming out through postcards, journal entries, and letters.

Futcher, Jane. ***Crush.*** 3rd ed. Boston: Alyson Publications, 1995. ISBN: 155583602X
In this story of manipulation, betrayal, and sexual awakening, Jinx, a senior at the posh Hamilton Hill girl's school, develops a huge crush on Lexie.

Garden, Nancy. ***Annie on My Mind.*** New York: Farrar Strauss & Giroux, 1992. ISBN: 0374404143
Liza's friendship with Annie turns into passionate love. After their relationship is discovered, they must find the strength to stay together.

Harbeck, Karen M. ***Coming Out of the Classroom Closet: Gay and Lesbian Students, Teachers and Curricula.*** Binghamton, NY: Harrington Park Press, 1992. ISBN: 1560242167
This volume discusses school-based interventions and the needs of gay and lesbian youth, the treatment of gay and lesbian educators and their current legal rights, and many other issues concerning gay men and lesbians and the educational setting.

Heron, Ann, editor. ***Two Teenagers in Twenty: Writings by Gay and Lesbian Youth.*** Boston: Alyson Publications, 1994. ISBN: 1555832822
A new teenage generation talks about being gay or lesbian in stories that can ease the way for teenagers just coming out and help the adults who seek to support them.

Huegel, Kelly. ***GLBTQ: The Survival Guide for Queer and Questioning Teens.*** New York: Free Spirit Publishing, 2003. ISBN: 1575421267
This book covers the basics that every GLBTQ teen needs to know, then moves through the primary issues and questions such as coming out, dating and sexuality, religion, and life at school, work, and home.

Jennings, Kevin, editor. ***Becoming Visible: a Reader in Gay and Lesbian History for High School and College Students.*** Boston: Alyson Publications, 1994. ISBN: 1555832547
Suggestions for classroom activities and questions follow selected readings that span 2,000 years of history and a diverse range of cultures; suitable for ninth grade and up.

Remafedi, Gary. ***Death by Denial: Studies of Suicide in Gay and Lesbian Teenagers.*** Boston: Alyson Publications, 1994. ISBN: 1555832601

This review identifies suicide risk factors and important research on homosexuality, sex education in schools, anti-gay violence, and family pressures to be heterosexual.

Sanchez, Alex. ***Rainbow Boys.*** New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001. ISBN: 0689857705
The author follows three very different high school seniors, coming of age and out of the closet, in a struggle with sexuality and intolerance that draws them into a triangle of love, betrayal, and friendship.

Savin-Williams, Ritch C. ***The New Gay Teenager.*** Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005. ISBN: 0674016734
This is a refreshing and frequently controversial introduction to confident, competent, upbeat teenagers with same-sex desires, who worry more about the chemistry test or their curfew than they do about their sexuality.

Singer, Bennett L., editor. ***Growing up Gay/Growing up Lesbian: A Literary Anthology.*** New York: New Press, 1994. ISBN: 1565841034
More than 50 stories by prominent lesbian and gay writers and scholars address coming of age and coming out; contributors include James Baldwin, Gloria Anzaldua, Quentin Crisp, Audre Lorde, Walt Whitman, and Rita Mae Brown.

Stevenson, Michael R and Cogan, Jeanine C., editors. ***Everyday Activism.*** New York: Routledge, 2003. ISBN: 0415926688
The comprehensive new reference collects in one volume the strategies, hard data, and legal arguments that are central to GLBT people's fight for equality.

Summer, Jane, editor. ***Not the Only One: Lesbian and Gay Fiction for Teens.*** New York: Alyson Publications, 2004. ISBN: 1555838340
This collection offers 21 stories in which lesbian and gay teens tell about coming out, falling in love, sexuality, and courage.

Unks, Gerald, editor. ***The Gay Teen: Educational Practice and Theory for Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Adolescents.*** New York: Routledge, 1995. ISBN: 0415910951
Written for educators, this book focuses on the problems gay teens face in school and guides educators to develop gay-friendly curricula and intervention techniques for reducing homophobia.

Videos

Ballot Measure 9. (72 min.) Wolfe Video, P.O. Box 64, New Almaden CA 95402; 1.800.438.9653
This video looks at the battle in Oregon over a 1992 anti-gay initiative.

Both of My Moms' Names Are Judy. (running time unknown) Lesbian and Gay Parents Association (LGPA), 260 Tingley Street, San Francisco CA 94112; 1.415.522.8773
This video offers a powerful and moving series of interviews with children ages 6 to 11 who have gay or lesbian parents.

The Brandon Teena Story, (running time unknown) directed by Susan Musska. Zeitgeist Films, NY; 1.212.274.1989
This documentary covers the life and murder of Brandon Teena, a female-to-male transgender youth from Lincoln, Nebraska.

The Celluloid Closet. (102 min.) Wolfe Video, P.O. Box 64, New Almaden CA 95402; 1.800.438.9653
This documentary chronicles gay and lesbian images in Hollywood over the last 40 years. Narrated by Lily Tomlin, it features interviews with a number of Hollywood's elite and includes numerous film clips.

Coming out under Fire. (71 min.) Wolfe Video, P.O. Box 64, New Almaden CA 95402; 1.800.438.9653
This documentary profiles the experiences of nine gay and lesbian veterans.

Gay & Lesbian Youth: Making History in Massachusetts. (29 min.) Governor's Commission on Gay & Lesbian Youth, Massachusetts Dept. of Education, State House, Room 111, Boston MA 02133
This documentary profiles the work of the Governor's Commission as Massachusetts became the first state to pass laws to protect gay, lesbian, and bisexual students in schools.

Gay Youth. (40 min.) Wolfe Video, P.O. Box 64, New Almaden CA 95401; 1.800.438.9653
One of the best videos about lesbian and gay teens, this video profiles two teens: one who committed suicide; the other openly gay in high school.

It's Elementary. (78 min.) Women's Educational Media, 2180 Bryant Street, Suite 203, San Francisco CA 94110; 1.415.641.4646
Teachers discuss lesbian & gay issues with their classes and make a compelling case for schools addressing these issues.

Live to Tell: The First Gay & Lesbian Prom in America. (24 min.) Wolfe Video, P.O. Box 64, Almaden CA 95401; 1.800.438.9653
This documentary covers the first lesbian and gay prom, held in Los Angeles in 1994.

Out for a Change: Addressing Homophobia in Women's Sports. (27 min.) Woman Vision Productions, 3145 Geary Blvd., Box 421, San Francisco CA 94118; 1.415.346.2336
This documentary portrays women's sports at the college level and includes a curriculum written by Pat Griffin. Both the video and curriculum are appropriate for high school students.

A Question of Equality. (220 min.; in four parts) Wolfe Video, P.O. Box 64, New Almaden CA 95402; 1.800.438.9653
This series, first shown on PBS, looks at various aspects of the gay civil rights movement.

Setting the Record Straight. (12 min.) GLSEN, 122 W. 26th Street, Suite 1100, New York NY 10001; 1.212.727.0135
This video features interviews with members, teachers, and students who talk about the need to combat homophobia in schools.

Silverlake Life. (99 min.) Wolfe Video, P.O. Box 64, New Almaden CA 95402; 1.800.438.9653
This moving diary covers the last days of two men with AIDS and documents the love and dedication of their longtime companions.

Stonewall 25. (90 min.) Wolfe Video, P.O. Box 64, New Almaden CA 95402; 1.800.438.9653
This segment of the PBS series, *In the Life*, covers a 25th anniversary celebration in New York City.

Straight from the Heart. (24 min.) Woman Vision Productions, 3145 Geary Blvd, Box 421, San Francisco CA 94118
This is a moving account of parents' struggle with homophobia when they learn that a child is lesbian or gay.

Teaching Respect for All. (52 min.) GLSEN, 122 W. 26th Street, Suite 1100, New York NY 10001; 1.212.727.0135
This 'homophobia 101' video can help people understand why they need to care about issues of sexual orientation.

The Times of Harvey Milk. (87 min.) Wolfe Video, P.O. Box 64, New Almaden CA 95402; 1.800.438.9653
This powerful and moving documentary recounts the political success and assassination of the first openly gay supervisor of San Francisco.

Tongues Untied. (55 min.) Wolfe Video, P.O. Box 64, New Almaden CA 95402; 1.800.438.9653
This is an unprecedented exploration of black gay life, by Emmy-award winning director Marlon Rigg.

Trevor. (running time unknown) Intermedia; 1.800.553.8336 (free previews available)

This humorous, touching, short film won an Academy Award in 1994. *Trevor* is a 13-year-old boy who is beginning to come to terms with his emerging gay sexual orientation. The video powerfully addresses topics such as teasing, crushes, feeling outcast, and suicide and is especially appropriate for middle-school children.

Appendix 2

Glossary

The definitions offered here may be useful for navigating the often-confusing world of sexual orientation and gender identity. Please remember, however, not to impose any of these words as labels upon GLBTQ youth. Ask youth how they self-identify and/or about language that makes them feel safe. If they choose to avoid self-identifying terms, honor their decision. This will clearly indicate youth's right to be whatever they perceive themselves to be and to be safe. In other words, while these expressions can be useful in developing an understanding of the diversity of the GLBTQ community, they are for the individual to use in *self-identification* and not for others to use as *labels*.

- **Affirm**: To acknowledge or assert as fact; here, to assert one's own sexual orientation or gender identity strongly and publicly *or* to openly acknowledge and publicly assert the rights and dignity of GLBTQ people
- **Ally**: A person (usually a heterosexual individual) or organization that actively helps another with a specific issue; here, one who openly supports and affirms the rights and dignity of GLBTQ people
- **Androgyny**: Exhibiting the identity and/or appearance of both male and female, as neither male nor female, or as between male and female; exhibiting behaviors of either or both traditional genders; a descriptive term that many in the GLBTQ community find offensive; see also *third gender* and also *Two-Spirit*

- **Bi**: Slang term for people with a bisexual orientation and who self-identify as bisexual
- **Bi-phobia**: Fear or intolerance toward bisexuality, either from straight people or institutions or from within the gay and lesbian community
- **Bias**: Prejudice, usually favoring one group or state over another; here, favoring one sexual orientation and/or the gender identity other any other
- **Biological sex**: The biological state of having: 1) female or male genitalia (vulva, labia, clitoris, and vagina for females; penis and testicles for males); 2) female or male chromosomes (XX for females; XY for males); and 3) female or male hormones (estrogen and progesterone for females; testosterone for males); perhaps one in 2,000 babies is born with the biological characteristics of both sexes or of neither sex entirely (see *intersex*); see also *gender* and gender *identity* which are different than biological sex
- **Bisexuality**: Feeling romantic, emotional, and sexual attraction to both males and females; a normal sexual orientation of no known cause; see also *heterosexuality* and *homosexuality*
- **Bullying**: Physically, mentally, and/or emotionally intimidating and/or harming an individual or members of a group; here, intimidating or harming individuals whose sexual orientation or gender identity is somehow threatening to the bully
- **Butch**: Slang term for individuals who exhibit characteristics or behaviors traditionally considered as masculine; sometimes derogatory; also sometimes used by lesbian women or gay men to self-identify with varying notions of gender

- **Camp**: Deliberately affected or exaggerated style, sometimes for humorous effect
- **Closeted**: The intentional concealment of an individual's own sexual orientation or gender identity, often due to fear of discrimination and/or violence; see also *in the closet*
- **Coming out**: From 'coming out of the closet,' the process of becoming aware of and open about one's sexual orientation or gender identity
- **Crossdressers**: Preferred term for people who usually self-identify with their biological sex and gender but who sometimes wear the clothing, jewelry, etc., of the opposite gender to fulfill emotional needs

- **Discrimination**: The unjust or prejudicial treatment of an individual or groups of people; here unfair treatment on the grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity

- **Drag queen/drag king**: Someone who dresses and acts like the opposite gender for entertainment purposes; usually does not self-identify as transgender
- **Dyke**: A derogatory word for a lesbian and/or for any woman who projects the role, appearance, attitudes, and/or behaviors that a culture traditionally assigns to males; also reclaimed by some to identify with varying notions of gender

- **Equality**: The state of being equal in regard to status, rights, opportunities, and treatment
- **Equity**: The state of being fair and impartial; here, fairness in opportunities and treatment under the law

- **Faggot**: A derogatory word for a gay male and/or for any man who projects the role, appearance, attitudes, and/or behaviors that a culture traditionally assigns to females; also reclaimed by some men to identify with varying notions of gender
- **Fairness**: Quality of being fair-minded, impartial, and just
- **Female-to-male** (FTM): A person born or assigned at birth as biologically female, who identifies as a male and who takes the sex, gender, and identity of a male through dress, mannerisms, behavior, hormone therapy, and/or surgery
- **Feminine**: A term used to describe the socially constructed and culturally specific gender behaviors expected of females; see also *masculine*
- **Femme**: A slang term for an individual who projects a traditionally feminine gender role; sometimes, but not always, derogatory; also used by some to self-identify regarding gender

- **Gay**: Men who feel romantic, emotional, and sexual attraction to other men; a term used to proclaim self-acceptance and self-affirmation
- **Gay-bashing** (sometimes simply 'bashing'): A physical or verbal attack directed at GLBTQ people, motivated by hatred for their sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or sexual behavior
- **Gay-straight alliance** (GSA): Formal organization of GLBTQ and straight people in support of the dignity and rights of GLBTQ people, usually in the context of and to create change within educational institutions and environments
- **Gender**: Social and cultural expression of sex; **not** *biological sex*
- **Gender conformity**: Acting within the culturally expected gender role for people of one's biological sex
- **Gender dysphoria**: A medical term for unhappiness or discomfort with the gender role assigned by one's culture to one's biological sex; a term disliked by many transgender people as implying that there is something wrong with them; may or may not coincide with *sexual dysphoria*
- **Gender expression**: The ways in which an individual communicates gender identity to others through behavior, clothing, hairstyle, voice, and/or the emphasis or de-emphasis of bodily characteristics; *not* an indication of sexual orientation; behaviors and traits used publicly to express gender identity—as masculine or feminine or something else; also called *gender presentation*
- **Gender fluidity**: The belief that social constructions of gender identity and gender roles lie along a spectrum and cannot be limited to two genders; a feeling that one's gender varies from societal notions of two genders
- **Gender identity**: An individual's innermost sense of self as male or female, as lying somewhere between these two genders, or as lying somewhere outside gender lines altogether
- **Gender neutral**: Anything (such as clothing, styles, activities, or spaces) that a society or culture considers appropriate for anyone, irrespective of gender; anything that carries with it no particular gender associations
- **Gender presentation**: The ways in which an individual communicates one's own gender identity to others, through behavior, clothing, hairstyle, voice, and/or the emphasis or de-emphasis of bodily characteristics; not an indication of *sexual orientation*; behaviors and traits used publicly to express one's gender—as masculine or feminine or something else; also called *gender expression*
- **Gender role**: Culturally or socially determined sets of attitudes and behaviors that are expected of an individual based on her/his biological sex

- **Genderqueer** (also gender queer): People who reject the normative societal construct of gender and view their own identity as unrelated to such gender constructs
- **Genetic sex**: Defined by the 23rd chromosomal pair, coded XX for female and XY for male, although other chromosomal code sets also exist
- **GLBTQ**: standard acronym for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and questioning people; variations exist, such as including an I for *intersex* and a second Q for queer
- **Gonads**: Glands (ovaries for females and testes for males) that produce gametes

- **Hatred**: Intense dislike or ill will, sometimes unconscious, often irrational, and occasionally expressed through violence; a self-destructive and corrosive emotion
- **Heterophobia**: A fear or distrust of heterosexual people and of anything associated with heterosexuality, often based on negative life experiences
- **Heterosexism**: The assumption that everyone is heterosexual (or should be) and that heterosexuality is the only 'normal,' right, and moral way to be and that, therefore, anyone of a different sexual orientation is 'abnormal,' wrong, and immoral
- **Heterosexuality**: Feeling romantic, emotional, and sexual attraction to the opposite sex; a normal sexual orientation of no known cause; see also *straight*, *bisexuality* and *homosexuality*
- **Homophobia**: Fear or intolerance of GLBT people, a feeling that is not limited to particular cultures or to straight people
- **Homosexuality**: Feeling romantic, emotional, and sexual attraction to members of the same sex; a normal sexual orientation of no known cause; see also *bisexuality* and *heterosexuality* as well as *gay* and *lesbian*

- **Identity**: What, how and who one perceives oneself to be; a multi-faceted self-concept that evolves throughout life
- **In the closet**: The intentional concealment of an individual's own gender identity or sexual orientation, usually due to fear of discrimination and/or violence; can cause isolation and psychological pain; see also *closeted*
- **Intersex**: Having some degree of ambiguity in regard to primary sex characteristics (genitalia) *or* being born with predominantly male or female genitalia that medical professionals deem to be physiologically 'incorrect,' usually addressed through medically unnecessary surgery during infancy; a condition that may apply to about one in 2,000 infants; sometimes offensively called 'hermaphroditic'
- **Intervention**: Action to change a situation for the better; a deliberate, organized effort to improve the circumstances of one or more individuals by altering the environment, policies, and/or circumstances facing or affecting those individuals
- **Isolation**: The state of being or feeling alone and apart from, or unable to connect with others; a cause of deep emotional distress for any person

- **Justice**: Fair, equal, and reasonable treatment without regard to a person's color, sex, gender, age, health, wealth or poverty, background, race/ethnicity, condition, sexual orientation, or gender identity; fair and equal treatment under the law and in all societal interactions

- **Lesbian**: A woman who feels romantically, emotionally, and sexually attracted to other women; a descriptive and socially acceptable label that homosexual women often prefer because it offers an identity separate from that of homosexual men; a term originating from Lesbos, an Aegean island and the home of the Greek poet Sappho, a woman who loved women
- **Lifestyle**: The way individuals live their lives, such as an urban or a rural lifestyle, an artistic lifestyle, an entrepreneurial lifestyle, a hedonistic lifestyle; **not** appropriately used to denote sexual orientation (just as there is no heterosexual lifestyle, there is no homosexual or gay lifestyle either); the phrase 'homosexual lifestyle' is often used by anti-gay groups to imply that sexual orientation is a matter of choice rather than of identity

- **Male-to-female** (MTF): A person born or assigned at birth as biologically male, who self-identifies as female and who takes the sex, gender, and identity of a female through dress, mannerisms, behaviors, hormone therapy, and/or surgery
- **Masculine**: A term used to describe the socially constructed and culturally specific gender behaviors expected of males; see also *feminine*
- **Men who have sex with men** (MSM): A term used to denote men who engage in sexual behavior with other men; includes men who self-identify as heterosexual as well as those who self-identify as gay and bisexual (please note that in online politics, MSM is an acronym for mainstream media)

- **Oppression**: Prolonged cruel or unjust treatment, sometimes unconscious, sometimes covert; constant state of denying to others fair and equal treatment and fair and equal opportunities
- **Out**: Openly acknowledging one's sexual orientation or gender identity; may be partial (that is, out to some people and in the closet to others)
- **Outed**: When someone else accidentally or deliberately discloses another's sexual orientation or gender identity, usually without permission
- **Out of the closet**: The same as being *out*

- **Pansexual**: A term of choice for people who do not self-identify as bisexual, finding themselves attracted to people across a spectrum of genders
- **Passing**: A term for those who successfully assume a gender role and gender expression different than the one to which they were born or assigned at birth; also may refer to closeted gay, lesbian, or bisexual people passing as straight (please note that in some cultures, passing refers to successfully assuming a different racial/ethnic or cultural identity)
- **Power**: Having the ability to do something or to act in a particular way; here, the freedom and ability to acknowledge openly one's sexual orientation or gender identity without fear of oppression, discrimination, injustice, violence, or abuse
- **Prejudice**: Bias; an attitude that favors one person or group over another; here, favoring: one sexual orientation and/or gender identity over any other; an attitude that usually leads to discrimination
- **Pride**: National, citywide, and neighborhood local events and programs, usually during the month of June (see Stonewall) in celebration of the ongoing fight for equality for GLBTQ people
- **Primary sex characteristics**: Physical characteristics present at birth and that are used by those around an infant to determine its biological sex, including penis and scrotum to identify the infant as male or vulva, vagina, clitoris, and labia to identify the infant as female
- **Privilege**: Special rights, advantages, or immunity granted to, or assumed by, certain groups and considered by them as their right; for example in the United States, privilege accrues mostly to whites, to heterosexual people, and most of all, to white, heterosexual males.

- **Queer**: Formerly an exclusively derogatory term for all GLBT people; now proudly used by some as an umbrella term for the entire GLBTQ community; also used by those who see their own gender identity, sexual identity, and/or sexual orientation as not fitting the widely recognized pattern of straight, gay or lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or questioning
- **Questioning**: Being unsure of one's sexual orientation and/or gender identity; feeling uncomfortable with or unwilling or unable to self-categorize within traditional labels such as gay, straight, male, female, etc.

- **Respect**: A feeling of regard for the rights, dignity, feelings, wishes, and abilities of others

- **Safe space**: A place where anyone can relax and be fully self-expressed, without fear of being made to feel uncomfortable, unwelcome, or unsafe on account of biological sex, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, cultural background, age, or physical or mental ability; a place where the rules guard each person's self-respect and dignity and strongly encourage everyone to respect others
- **Safety**: Freedom from the fear or threat of harm (physical, emotional, or mental) and from danger, risk, or injury
- **Same gender loving**: A term created by the African American GLBTQ community and used by some people of color who see 'gay' and 'lesbian' as terms of the white gay and lesbian community
- **Secondary sex characteristics**: Those physical characteristics that are not present at birth and that develop during puberty as a result of hormones released by the gonads and the adrenal gland, including facial and chest hair (males), breasts (females), and pubic hair (everyone)
- **Sex** (biological sex): A classification based on reproductive physiology and identified in four main ways, including: 1) primary sex characteristics (vulva, labia, clitoris, and vagina for females; penis and scrotum for males); 2) genetic sex or chromosomes (XX for females; XY for males); 3) gonads (ovaries for females; testes for males); and 4) secondary sex characteristics (see above); a continuum with most individuals concentrated near the ends
- **Sexism**: Discrimination and unfairness based on biological sex or gender and usually perpetrated against females
- **Sexual dysphoria**: A medical term for unhappiness or discomfort with the biological sex to which one was born or assigned at birth; describing a disconnect between one's internal sense of gender identity and one's outwardly apparent biologic sex; a term disliked by many transgender people as implying that there is something wrong with them; may or may not coincide with *gender dysphoria*
- **Sexual minority**: An umbrella term for people whose sexuality is expressed in less common ways; may include people who self-identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer, Two-Spirit, third gender, and so on
- **Sexual orientation**: A *feeling* of attraction to others, based on biological sex and gender expression, over which individuals have no choice and different from sexual *behavior*; romantic, sexual, and emotional attraction to others, categorized by the sex of the person to whom one is attracted—such as: heterosexual (attracted to the opposite sex); homosexual (attracted to the same sex); or bisexual (attracted to individuals irrespective of their sex)
- **Sexual prejudice**: Discrimination and unfairness based on biological sex, gender, sexual orientation, or gender identity; see also *sexism*
- **Sexual reassignment surgery**: Surgical procedures that modify one's primary and/or secondary sex characteristics; formerly called a "sex change operation," a phrase now considered by many to be offensive
- **Social justice**: Equal treatment and equality of social and economic opportunity, irrespective of one's sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, race/ethnicity, biological sex, national origin, age, or health status; a concept that, "Each person possesses an inviolability, founded on justice, that even the welfare of society as a whole cannot override. For this reason, justice denies that the loss of freedom for some is made right by a greater good shared by others." (John Rawls)
- **Stonewall**: Referring to riots at the Stonewall Bar in New York City on June 27, 1967; often cited as the birth of the modern GLBT civil rights movement
- **Straight**: Slang term for a person with heterosexual orientation

- **Third gender**: A category for those who do not self-identify as either masculine or feminine and who believe that they belong to an alternative gender
- **Trannie**: Slang for transgender people; considered offensive by most
- **Trans**: Slang for transgender people
- **Transgender**: An umbrella term for all who feel that they are outside the boundaries of biological sex and culturally determined gender expression; may include transsexuals, crossdressers, Two-Spirit people, drag performers, etc, and people who do not identify with their biological sex
- **Transition**: The period when one is intentionally changing from living as one sex or gender to a different conception of sex or gender; a multi-step, complicated process that may or may not include sexual reassignment surgery and/or hormonal supplements to alter one's body

- **Transman**: Slang for a female-to-male transsexual person
- **Transphobia**: Unreasoning hatred and suspicion or fear of anyone whose gender identity and gender expression does not conform to society's expectations for one of her/his biological sex
- **Transsexual**: An individual who does not self-identify with his/her biological sex; one who identifies physically, psychologically, and emotionally as of a different sex from that one was born or assigned at birth; may choose to alter the body to reconcile gender identity and biological sex or physical appearance; may consider one's self as non-operative (meaning does not intend to change the primary sex characteristics); pre-operative (meaning takes hormones to change the body's appearance and may or may not eventually have sexual reassignment surgery); and post-operative (meaning has had sexual reassignment survey)
- **Transvestite**: Former term, now considered offensive by many, for people who usually self-identify with their biological sex and gender but who sometimes wear the clothing, jewelry, etc., of the opposite gender to fulfill emotional needs; the preferred term is *crossdresser*
- **Transwoman**: Slang for a male-to-female transsexual person
- **Two-Spirit**: A term whose definition varies across Native American cultures, but which generally means a person born with one biological sex and fulfilling at least some of the gender roles assigned to both sexes; often considered part male and part female or wholly male and wholly female; often revered as natural peace makers as well as healers and shamans

Appendix 3

Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Education: Abandoning Responsibility to GLBTQ Youth*

When Congress passed the Personal Responsibility Act in 1996, it directed public funding to support abstinence-only-until-marriage education. Ostensibly aimed at preventing teen pregnancy and out-of-wedlock births, abstinence-only education serves to stigmatize homosexuality and GLBTQ people. At least $87 million in public funds have been spent in each year since 1997 on abstinence-only-until-marriage education. Five of the eight requirements of the abstinence-only provision have a particularly negative impact on GLBT people. Abstinence-only education funded through the Personal Responsibility Act:

- *Teaches abstinence from sexual activity outside marriage as the expected standard for all school age children. Teaches that abstinence from sexual activity is the only certain way to avoid out-of-wedlock pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and other associated health problems.*
- *Teaches that a mutually faithful monogamous relationship in the context of marriage is the expected standard of human sexual activity.*
- *Teaches that sexual activity outside of the context of marriage is likely to have harmful psychological and physical effects.*
- *Teaches that bearing children out-of-wedlock is likely to have harmful consequences for the child, the child's parents, and society.*[1]

Dangers to All Youth of Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Education

First, it is important to note the threats that abstinence-only-until-marriage education poses to young people in general. Research has shown that sex education that promotes the delay of first intercourse but simultaneously teaches safer sex practices is more effective than abstinence-only education. A World Health Organization review of sex education programs around the world documented the relative ineffectiveness of abstinence-only education in stemming the spread of sexually transmitted infections.[2] Since then, various reviews of evaluated programs have identified no effective abstinence-only-until-marriage programs; but they have identified many effective comprehensive programs.[3,4,5] A report released by U.S. Surgeon General David Satcher in early 2001 also questioned the effectiveness of abstinence-only education. Satcher noted that there has been little research to demonstrate the effectiveness of this particular type of instruction.[6] A recent review of evaluations of abstinence-only-until-marriage programs in 11 states found that none was effective.[7] Moreover, initial indicators are that the Act's abstinence-only provisions have had a chilling effect on the discussion of homosexuality and on sex education efforts aimed at stopping the spread of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and teen pregnancy.

Abstinence-only-until-marriage approaches to sex education are counter-productive, dangerous, and even harmful to youth. The approaches present premarital sex as intrinsically harmful. Relying on shame and fear, these approaches spread inaccurate information about STIs and contraceptives; present rarely occurring, worst-case scenarios as routine and common; stigmatize and evoke hostility toward people with AIDS; and largely ignore homosexuality, except as a context for HIV transmission. Some curricula are explicitly hostile toward lesbians and gay men.[8] Abstinence-only approaches present condoms as a dangerous and ineffective form of birth control, overstating condom failure rates and translating people's failure to use condoms or to use them properly as an intrinsic defect of condoms. Gender stereotypes about males and females are frequent—presenting boys as sex-crazed and girls as less interested in sex than in finding love. The curricula frequently blame feminism for promiscuity and warn girls about the way they dress. Children of single parents and unmarried straight and gay parents are the subjects of such stereotypes as, children of single parents "have lower grades and aspirations" and "are twice as likely to have behavior problems and seek psychiatric help."[8]

* Adapted and reprinted with permission. Cahill S and Jones KT. *Leaving Our Children Behind: Welfare Reform and the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Community.* New York, NY: The Policy Institute of the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force, © 2001.

Particular Threats to GLBTQ Youth

Programs that focus on abstinence-only-until-marriage are detrimental to GLBTQ youth, those questioning their sexual orientation, the children of GLBT parents, and GLBT teachers and administrators in the nation's schools. Although these programs largely ignore homosexuality except as a context for HIV transmission, some programs implicitly and explicitly stigmatize homosexuality. For example:

- *Sex Respect* teaches that, "[R]esearch and common sense tell us the best ways to avoid AIDS are: Remain a virgin until marriage ...Avoid homosexual behavior."[8] When homosexual sexual practices are noted, *Sex Respect* portrays them as "unnatural behavior."[8]
- As mandated by the Personal Responsibility Act, abstinence-only-until-marriage education teaches that marriage is the only appropriate context for sexual relations. *WAIT Training* explicitly seeks to "reframe the act of sexual intercourse as best and most appropriate between two committed married people who love each other."[8]
- *FACTS* presents homosexuality as beyond the realm of common sense: "it only makes sense that marriage is the only place for sexual activity to be enjoyed free from negative consequences."[8]
- *Clue 2000* says: "Sexual love, also called conjugal love, is the love between a man and a woman in marriage."[14] *Clue 2000* engages in the standard, right-wing tactic of conflating homosexuality with pedophilia and incest.[8]
- *Facing Reality* assures teachers and parents that presenting homosexuality as intrinsically dangerous is actually in the best interests of students and is not homophobic. It also repeats the outdated notion of AIDS as a gay disease:

  [M]any homosexual activists are frustrated and desperate over their own situation and those of loved ones. Many are dying, in part, due to ignorance. Educators who struggle to overcome ignorance and instill self-mastery in their students will inevitably lead them to recognize that some people with AIDS are now suffering because of the choices they made. ...Teachers, in order to preserve an atmosphere of intellectual freedom, should feel confident that when examining health issues and moral implications of homosexual behaviors, they are not engaging in an assault on a particular person or group.[8]

The irony of the last sentence is particularly rich. Abstinence-only-until-marriage education is, by definition, an assault on intellectual freedom. It suppresses alternative points of view and supplants a method scientifically proven to be effective in decreasing the spread of STIs with another, unproven method. Yet this approach is constructed as "preserv[ing] an atmosphere of intellectual freedom."[8]

In contrast to abstinence-only programs, studies have shown that lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth who receive gay-sensitive HIV instruction in school tend to engage in risky sexual behavior less frequently than similar youth who do not receive such instruction. In a random sample of high school students in Massachusetts, among sexually active youth, gay youth reported more sexual partners, more frequent use of substances before engaging in sex, and higher rates of pregnancy than other youth. However, those gay youth that received gay-sensitive HIV instruction reported fewer sexual partners and less frequent substance use before sex compared to other gay youth.[9] The authors of this study assert that the increased risky sexual behavior among gay youth "tends to be a shifting of sexual orientation and self-identification, and the pressure of a stigmatized sexual identity forces some gay, lesbian, and bisexual adolescents to go to great lengths to prove to themselves and others that they are not gay."[9] This often involves engaging in heterosexual activity to prove that one is straight to themselves or others. It is clear then that sex education programs that incorporate information on HIV and sexuality in a non-stigmatizing way are beneficial in reducing risky sexual behavior among youth exploring their sexuality.

Efforts to suppress and stigmatize homosexuality can have devastating effects on the health and well-being of GLBTQ youth. A recent study of Latino gay and bisexual men, funded by the National Institutes of Health, found a correlation between experiences of homophobia and increased likelihood to engage in HIV risk behaviors. It also found that family acceptance and the presence of an openly gay role model while growing up correlated with lower incidence of HIV risk behaviors.[10] The promotion of homophobia and ignorance about HIV/AIDS and other STIs hurts all students, but especially those who are gay or from gay families.

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Appendix Four

Frequently Asked Questions about Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity*

What is homosexuality?

Homosexuality is emotional, romantic, and sexual attraction to persons of the same sex. The term homosexual has medical roots from the turn of the last century (early 1900s) and most people now prefer the terms gay and lesbian instead.

Is being gay normal?

Homosexuality is perfectly normal. It is a complete package of feelings and relationships that make up a natural and satisfying identity. Homosexuality has existed throughout humanity's existence. Anthropologists report that lesbians and gay men have been and are a part of every culture. Lesbian, gay, and bisexual people are part of every socioeconomic class, educational level, and race/ethnicity.

What is bisexuality?

Bisexuality is emotional, romantic, and sexual attraction to people whose biological sex is different than and the same as one's own. Bisexuality is perfectly normal and is a complete package of feelings and relationships that make up a natural and satisfying identity. Bisexuality has existed throughout humanity's existence and in every culture. Lesbian, gay, and bisexual people are part of every socioeconomic class, educational level, and race/ethnicity.

Are homosexuality and bisexuality mental illnesses?

Homosexuality and bisexuality are not mental illnesses. In 1973, the American Psychiatric Association removed homosexuality from the official listing of psychiatric disorders. In 1975, the American Psychological Association adopted a similar resolution. Position statements of the American Medical Association and the Society for Adolescent Medicine agree with these affirmations regarding sexual orientation. Studies show that people's sexual orientation has no bearing on their mental health and emotional stability. When forced to remain in the closet about one's homosexuality or bisexuality, a person may experience depression and other psychological problems; however, these problems stem from a homophobic society and not from sexual orientation.

What is homophobia?

Homophobia is the irrational fear, disgust, or hatred of gays, lesbians, and/or bisexual people, or of homosexual feelings in oneself. It refers to the discomfort one feels with any behavior, belief, or attitude (in self or others) that does not conform to traditional sex role stereotypes. Homophobia exhibits itself in the fear of knowing, befriending, or associating with gays, lesbians, or bisexual people; fear of being perceived as gay or lesbian; and/or fear of stepping out of accepted gender role behavior.

What is heterosexism?

Heterosexism is the assumption that every one is heterosexual. It is a form of oppression[µ] that targets gays, lesbians, and bisexual people. Heterosexism confers rights and privileges to heterosexual people that are denied to gay, lesbian, and bisexual people. This is revealed through personal behaviors (telling 'faggot' jokes, putting up graffiti, and/or offering

* Adapted and printed with permission of University of Southern California's GLBT Assembly; http://www.usceglbta.org/resources/faq.asp

µ Like other forms of oppression, including racism, sexism, class systems, and ageism

verbal and physical harassment), and discriminatory policies, such as denial of health, retirement, and housing benefits. In addition, mainstream media provide few characterizations of gay, lesbian, or bisexual people, and these few are usually stereotypes.

Do gay men, lesbians, bisexual people, and transgender people have long-lasting relationships?

Yes, a large portion of the GLBT community has a preference for, or is involved in, a longstanding relationship. However, social rejection of homosexuality and of transgender people frequently causes these relationships to be invisible. For example, same sex marriages are currently not recognized in most states, and many benefits for legal spouses are denied to domestic partners.

How many gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people are there?

The Kinsey Institute suggested that approximately 10 percent of the population may be gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender. This would equal approximately 28 million (per the U.S. 2000 census). However, the basis for the percentage is greatly disputed. Gay men, lesbians, and bisexual people are found in all walks of life, among all racial/ethnic groups, and at all socioeconomic levels. In addition, the number of transgender people is greatly disputed and largely unknown. The number is probably higher than experts estimate because the estimates are usually based on the number of people who undergo sexual reassignment surgery, and many transgender people do not pursue this surgery.

When do gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people first know?

People can realize their sexual orientation and gender identity at any point during their lives. Many simply grow up knowing, while some come to understand their identity and orientation later in life (in their teens or 20s, for example). It is important to note that nothing someone encounters in life can 'make' one gay, bisexual, lesbian, or transgender. Although events in a person's life can be catalysts toward self-discovery, sexual experience is not necessary for anyone to understand their sexual orientation. How does a heterosexual male know he is attracted to women before having sexual experience, or a heterosexual woman know that she is attracted to men? They just know. It is the same with gay, lesbian, and bisexual people. Similarly, a transgender person does not have to have lived as a gender to know that it is his/her correct gender.

Where do gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people belong in the workplace?

Like straight people, GLBT people belong anywhere that they can use their talents and abilities. Sexual orientation and gender identity have nothing to do with abilities, talents, or job performance. If forced to remain in the closet for fear of job discrimination, a person may experience depression and other psychological problems that could impair his/her ability to work effectively; but it is homophobia and transphobia—not sexual orientation or gender identity—that cause the problem.

Why should people be informed about gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender issues?

Heterosexism and homophobia are the result of ignorance about sexual orientation and gender identity issues. Education about GLBTQ issues can help combat fear and discrimination, enabling gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people to be authentic and not to live a lie of false heterosexuality or gender identity in order to be safe. For GLBTQ youth, who are more likely to experience depression and rejection by friends and/or family, acceptance and understanding can even be a matter of life and death, since the risk of suicide in GLBTQ adolescents is two to three times greater than in their straight counterparts.

What causes homosexuality?

Perhaps a better question is "What determines sexual orientation (i.e., heterosexuality, bisexuality, and homosexuality)?" The factors that determine sexual orientation are complex. There is a growing understanding that human beings have a basic sexuality that can be expressed in a variety of relationships: homosexual, bisexual, and heterosexual, categories that are fluid and may overlap. Although the causes are not known, some researchers believe that one's basic sexual orientation is predisposed at birth. While one's orientation may not be recognized or acknowledged for many years, once established, it tends not to change.

Aren't gay and bi men effeminate and lesbian and bi women masculine?

Lesbian, gay, and bisexual people are as varied in their dress, mannerisms, and lifestyles as are heterosexual people. Despite this diversity, stereotypes persist about the effeminate man or masculine woman. Although some gay people reflect these characteristics, the overwhelming majority of lesbians and gay men do not conform to these stereotypes. At the same time, many effeminate men and masculine women are straight.

Aren't gay rights laws an attempt to get special privileges?

Gay rights laws are civil rights laws consistent with the belief that all people are entitled to such necessities as employment, housing, and business services without fear of discrimination. Unfortunately, in many states, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people can be fired from their jobs and denied housing, credit, or insurance solely because of their sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or gender expression. Therefore, GLBT people need safeguards to prevent the discrimination that would limit or deny them opportunities to live equally with the rest of society.

Do lesbians and gay men want to be the opposite sex?

Although some lesbians and gay men do not conform to *expected* gender roles, most do not want to change their sex. Do not confuse transgender people with lesbians and gay men.

What is the difference between sexual preference and sexual orientation?

Sexual orientation is not a choice. Preference implies choice. Being gay, lesbian, or bisexual is sexual orientation. Sexual preference is a term that *might* apply to a bisexual person who prefers people of a particular biological sex. However, it is important to understand that many bisexual people do not have a sexual preference.

Won't gay parents make their kids gay?

Research has shown that children of lesbian or gay parents are no more likely to become gay or lesbian than children of heterosexual parents. This simply supports the fact that nothing 'makes' a person gay, lesbian, or bisexual. Same-sex couples are just as capable of raising a child as are heterosexual couples.

What do transgender, transsexual, and crossdresser mean? And, are they the same?

First of all, they are not at all the same. To understand these terms, we must first understand the difference between biological sex and gender identity. Biological sex is a physical condition, identified at birth by one's primary sex characteristics (penis and scrotum for males and vulva, labia, clitoris, and vagina for females). Gender identity is a combination of one's personal internal recognition of the gender that is one's own, the degree to which that internal recognition conforms or fails to conform to one's biological sex, and how one desires to be recognized by others: as male, female, or genderqueer. Transgender, transsexual, and crossdressing people may have any sexual orientation.

- **Transgender** is an umbrella term referring to people whose gender identity differs from the social expectations for the biological sex identified as theirs at birth (using primary sex characteristics). Since these social expectations include gender roles (feminine women and masculine men), people who do not conform to prescribed gender roles

may be considered part of the transgender community. A transgender person may or may not ever choose to become transsexual.

- **Transsexual** refers to a person who experiences a mismatch of the body and the brain and sometimes undergoes medical treatment, including hormone therapy and sexual reassignment surgery, to change physical sex to match gender identity.
- **Crossdressers** (formerly known as transvestites) are people who like to dress in the clothing of the gender identity opposite to that considered socially appropriate to their biological sex. Most crossdressers are content with their own biological sex and gender identity. Most crossdressers do *not* want to be the other biological sex or to be another gender.

What does it mean to be intersex?

Intersex people (once called hermaphrodites) are people born with ambiguous genitalia or genitalia having characteristics of both sexes. Usually a doctor will immediately perform surgery to assign the infant's sex, usually removing male characteristics and 'creating' a female. Because this surgery is medically unnecessary, advocates today are asking that doctors and parents wait until the child is old enough to self-identify the appropriate biological sex and gender and also old enough to choose whether or not to have the surgery. Some who had surgery as infants later experience conflict with their assigned gender, similar to that experienced by transgender people. They may opt for hormone therapy and surgery to transition to the gender that they should have had. About one in every 2,000 people is intersex.

What does the term 'queer' mean?

This word, once a derogatory term for gay men, bisexuals, lesbians, and transgender people, has recently been reclaimed by the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender community as a term of pride. However, many have not chosen to reclaim the word and still see it as a derogatory, similar to the terms 'dyke' and 'fag.'

There are only two genders, right?

Traditionally, gender has meant either 'male' or 'female.' Gender is the collection of behaviors, dress, attitudes, etc., culturally assigned to people according to their biological sex. However, there is really a range of genders, including male and female, but also including genderqueer or gender ambiguous, butch (man or woman), femme (man or woman), transgender (sometimes considered a gender), and many others.

What is pansexuality? What is genderqueer?

The term 'bisexual' implies a sexual attraction towards people whose biological sex is different than and the same as one's own. Since, however, there are more than two genders, some people do not self-identify as bisexual, finding themselves attracted to people across a spectrum of genders. These people have adopted different terms, including pansexual, a term that can also apply to people whose gender is fluid or who consider themselves genderqueer (or genderless).

Appendix 5

Test Yourself: Definition Match-Up*

Purpose: To self-test your understanding of words related to sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression

Procedure: Match the words with the appropriate definition on the handout. The answer key is below. If you get 20 or more correct answers, you are well-versed in this subject. If you have 15 or fewer correct answers, please review the Glossary, Appendix 2, and visit some of the Web sites listed in Resources, Appendix 1.

Sex (biological sex)	Gender identity
Heterosexuality	Queer
Gender	Isolation
Bisexuality	Lesbian
Sexual orientation	Primary sex characteristics
Transgender	Same-gender loving
Homosexuality	Questioning
Coming out	Two-Spirit
Female-to-male	Crossdressers
Male-to-female	Sexual reassignment surgery
Gender expression	Secondary sex characteristics
Sexual minority	Men who have sex with men
Intersex	

Answer Key: 1) Two-Spirit; 2) sex (biological sex); 3) transgender; 4) lesbian; 5) bisexuality; 6) secondary sex characteristics; 7) coming out; 8) same-gender loving; 9) gender; 10) heterosexuality; 11) primary sex characteristics; 12) gender expression; 13) queer; 14) men who have sex with men; 15) intersex; 16) female-to-male; 17) sexual orientation; 18) crossdressers; 19) questioning; 20) isolation; 21) sexual reassignment surgery; 22) male-to-female; 23) homosexuality; 24) gender identity; 25) sexual minority.

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Appendix 5
Handout

Test Yourself: Definition Match-Up

1. _____ Native American term for a person born with one biological sex and fulfilling at least some of the gender roles assigned to both sexes; considered part male and part female or wholly male and wholly female; often revered as a natural peace maker, healer, and shaman

2. _____ Having the genitalia, chromosomes, and hormones of females or males

3. _____ An umbrella term for all individuals who are outside the boundaries of biological sex and culturally determined gender expression

4. _____ A woman who feels romantic, emotional, and sexual attraction to other women

5. _____ Feeling romantic, emotional, and sexual attraction to both males and females; a normal sexual orientation of no known cause

6. _____ Physical characteristics that appear at puberty, including pubic hair as well as facial and chest hair (males) and breasts (females)

7. _____ Process of becoming aware of one's sexual orientation, accepting it, and sharing it with at least a few others

8. _____ A term from the African American/black GLBTQ community and used by people of color who may see 'gay' and 'lesbian' as terms of the white GLBTQ community

9. _____ Social and cultural expression of biological sex

10. _____ Feeling romantic, emotional, and sexual attraction to those of the opposite sex; a normal sexual orientation of no known cause

11. _____ Characteristics present at birth and used to identify the sex of the infant — specifically, the penis and scrotum of males; the vulva, vagina, clitoris, and labia of females

12. _____ The ways in which an individual communicates gender to others through behavior, clothing, hairstyle, voice, and/or emphasis or de-emphasis of bodily characteristics

13. _____ A once derogatory term that has been reclaimed by some members of the GLBTQ community; an umbrella term for people whose sexual orientation and/or gender identity does not conform to mainstream cultural norms or models

14. _____ A term to describe males who engage in sexual behaviors with other men; includes men who self-identify as heterosexual as well as gay and bisexual men

15. _____ Being born with some degree of ambiguity in regard to genitalia and/or reproductive system

16. _____ A person born biologically female who identifies as a male and takes on the sex, gender, and identity of a male through surgery, medications, mannerisms, dress, and/or behavior

17. _____ Romantic, emotional, and sexual attraction to others, categorized by the sex of the people to whom one is attracted

18. _____ Preferred term for people who usually identify with their own sex and gender but who sometimes wear the clothing, jewelry, etc., of the other gender to fulfill emotional needs

19. _____ Being unsure of one's sexual orientation and/or gender identity or feeling uncomfortable with the available categories (i.e., gay, straight, male, female, etc.)

20. _____ The state of feeling alone and apart from others and a cause of deep psychological distress in humans as in other social animals

21. _____ Surgical procedures to modify one's primary and/or secondary sex characteristics

22. _____ A person born male who self-identifies as female and takes on the sex, gender, and identity of a female through medications, surgery, mannerisms, dress, and/or behaviors

23. _____ Feeling romantic, emotional, and sexual attraction to members of the same sex; a normal sexual orientation of now known cause

24. _____ One's innermost sense of self as male or female, as lying somewhere between these two genders, or as outside gender lines altogether

25. _____ An umbrella term for anyone whose sexuality is expressed in less common ways; may include people who self-identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer, Two-Spirit, third gender, and so on

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