Inclusive Schools Build Bridges to College

“The world is a dangerous place, not because of those who do evil, but because of those who look on and do nothing”
- Albert Einstein
1. Welcome & Ground Rules
2. Discussion: What is already happening in your schools?
3. Issues Impacting LGBTQ Students in schools
4. What Schools can do
5. Action Plan
6. Wrap Up & Evaluation
Ground Rules: Be Brave

1. We have permission to ask questions.

2. We have permission to not feel guilty for what we don’t know, but also to take responsibility for what we can do now.

3. Respect Confidentiality

4. Is there anything you want to add for our workshop?
College Environments are Generally Inclusive of LGBTQ Students

Although the University of Arizona may not be as progressive as neighboring campuses in California, it does represent the most LGBT-friendly campus in the state and one of the best choices in the Southwest.

- The Advocate: College Guide for LGBT Students
LGBTQ Resource Center

Home of:
- LGBTQ Affairs
- Pride Alliance
- Safe Zone

Suite 4040

Connect. Engage. Support. Create Change

Resources for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning & Allied Students

The University of Arizona LGBTQ Affairs

Pride Alliance
Safe Zone
Arizona
What are your schools doing to create safe and supportive environments for LGBTQ students?
Student Experiences & What Strategies Schools Can Use
LGBTQ Students’ Experiences

- Unsafe school environments
  - 85% of LGBTQ youth verbally harassed in school
  - 40% physically harassed
- School-victimization is related to:
  - Lower GPA, more missed days of school, and lower self-esteem
- Lack of social support (schools, family, peers)
- Harsher discipline
- Serious mental health concerns
  - Analysis of 20 studies with youth 18 and under
    - LGBTQ youth have higher rates (2-4x) of suicidality and depression than straight youth
- Homelessness
  - Estimate of 15-36% of homeless youth are LGBTQ
    - LGBTQ youth compose 1.3-3.8% of general population

Strategies Schools Can Use

• Ask for training on biased-based bullying
  – Partner with community-based organizations
• Intervene in LGBTQ-based bullying
• Be a visible ally
  – One caring adult can make all the difference
• Know that identity matters
• Sponsor a Gay-Straight Alliance in your school
• School policies
  – Adopt enumerated anti-bullying policy
  – Include LGBTQ-inclusive content in curricula
  – Eliminate zero-tolerance policies and advocate for restorative justice models

Why School Support Matters

• Supportive educators
  – Less victimization
  – Higher GPA, fewer missed days of school
  – Higher self-esteem

• GSA in school is related to
  – School belongingness
  – Higher GPAs
  – Less victimization

• Positive representations of LGBTQ people in curricula and school content is related to:
  – Academic success
  – School connectedness
  – Optimism for the future

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One of my friends wanted to become a politician, and hold government office, but then thought, ‘oh wait, I’m gay, they’re going to bash me for that and nobody’s going to elect me into office,’ … I met a transgender male-to-female at my school, and she kind of started giving up on her dream of becoming herself, because she didn’t think she would be able to get the kind of job she wanted, so I took the time to research for her, and show her how many successful trans women are out there, and that helped her so much. She hugged me and said, ‘I love you.’ It was really cool (male, transgender, panromantic asexual, 12th grade).
Action Plan: What Will you Do?
Wrap Up & Evaluations