



University of Pittsburgh **SCHOOL OF Social Work** *Empower People  
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PA Child Welfare Resource Center

**202: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning Youth in the Child Welfare System**

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**Agenda**

- Welcome and Introductions
- Myths vs. Facts
- Four Areas of Support
- Definitions
- Homophobia and Heterosexism
- Assessing Needs
- Strategies
- Closing and Evaluations

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**Learning Objectives**

- Recognize the prevalence of LGBTQ youth and knowledge of the issues and health disparities facing these youth
- Describe the differences between gender identity, gender role, sexual orientation and sexual behavior, and will be able to correctly use these and other sexual minority terms
- Define and cite examples of homophobia and heterosexism and understand the impact that these issues have on LGBTQ youth

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**Learning Objectives (cont'd)**

- Describe the needs of sexual minority youth and how to address these needs
- Develop intervention strategies for responding to the issues that arise in child welfare placement settings with LGBTQ youth

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**Find Someone Who...**

1. Will and Grace, Spin City, Grey's Anatomy, Six Feet Under, Ellen, Noah's Ark, Scandal, Modern Family, Glee, True Blood, Orange is the New Black, I am Jazz
2. Massachusetts
3. Vermont 1.091%, Massachusetts 1.023%, (DC 1.929%)
4. Elton John, Indigo Girls, Melissa Etheridge, K.D, Lang
- 5.
- 6.
7. 4.1% (2016 Gallup poll)
- 8.

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**Find Someone Who... (cont'd)**

9. Sex usually refers to the biological aspects of maleness or femaleness; gender implies the psychological, behavioral, social, and cultural aspects of being male or female (APA)
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.
13. June
14. Rainbow, Triangle
15. Neil Patrick Harris, Rosie O'Donnell, Ellen DeGeneres, Nathan Lane, Rupert Everett, Ian McKellan, George Takei, Robin Roberts, Anderson Cooper

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**Myths vs. Facts**

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**Four Areas of Support**

**I. FAMILY**

- \* Many LGBTQ youth are rejected by their families
- \* Many are forced to leave home
- \* Many are subjected to violence
- \* Cannot rely on family for support in tough times



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**Four Areas of Support (cont'd)**

**II. SCHOOL**

- \* Hostile school environment
- \* Verbal and Physical Assaults
- \* Many drop out of school
- \* Creates difficulty in authentic peer interactions



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**Four Areas of Support (cont'd)**

**III. COMMUNITY**

- \* Very few programs exist for LGBTQ youth
- \* Many community organizations have strong anti-gay views
- \* Many activities in LGBTQ community are adult-oriented



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**Four Areas of Support (cont'd)**

**RELIGIOUS PARTICIPATION**

- \* Majority of churches and other groups reject homosexuality
- \* Many youths feel compelled to choose between religion and self
- \* Many organizations believe that it is something to be "cured"



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**Definitions**

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### Homophobia

A Feeling Behavior that is characterized by fear, prejudice, and even hatred against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning persons. Homophobia can often be what is at the root of violence, harassment, and hate crimes committed against LGBTQ persons.

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### Heterosexism

The Total Behavior characterized by a chauvinistic attitude which maintains that normal persons are heterosexual and any persons other than heterosexual are thought to be sick, flawed, diseased, dysfunctional, perverted. In this scenario, being heterosexual is the only acceptable way to be, and society at large sends that message in many arenas.

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### Homophobic Levels of Attitude: Negative

- REPULSION:** Being a gay person is seen as sick, immoral, perverted, and against nature. Anything at all that may change them or fix them is seen as justified, including prison, hospital, even electric shock therapy.

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**Homophobic Levels of Attitude: Negative (cont'd)**

- **PITY:** This level of attitude is heterosexist in nature. It stems from the belief that being heterosexual is the best way to be. If they cannot be converted to a heterosexual, then they must be born that way and should be pitied.



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**Homophobic Levels of Attitude: Negative (cont'd)**

- **TOLERANCE:** This is just a phase as a teen, and most teens will just grow out of it. Therefore, gay persons will probably be less mature than heterosexual persons will be. Gay persons should not hold important positions, because they still need to grow up.



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**Homophobic Levels of Attitude: Negative (cont'd)**

- **ACCEPTANCE:** The implication is that there is something still to accept, and heterosexual persons do not want to talk or think about the fact that you are gay; you are just a person to them. I am okay with you being a gay person as long as you do not flaunt it all the time.

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**Homophobic Levels of Attitude: Positive**

- **SUPPORT:** Persons are working to help preserve the rights of gay and lesbian persons. Even though persons in this group may be uncomfortable about the issue, they do agree that as a group, gay persons are treated unfairly.

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**Homophobic Levels of Attitude: Positive (cont'd)**

- **ADMIRATION:** Persons believe that it takes a great deal of strength to be a gay person in society. Persons at this level are willing to look at their own homophobic attitudes and work on them.

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**Homophobic Levels of Attitude: Positive (cont'd)**

- **APPRECIATION:** These persons value the diversity of others, and see gay persons as part of that diversity. These persons are willing to challenge their own homophobic attitudes and those of others.

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**Homophobic Levels of Attitude: Positive (cont'd)**

- **NURTURANCE:** Persons at this level of attitude believe that gay persons are a necessary aspect of our society. They have positive feelings toward gay persons, and advocate on behalf of gay persons when it is needed.

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**Developmental Models: Troiden's Model**

- **Sensitization**
- **Identity Confusion**
- **Identity Assumption**
- **Commitment**

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**Developmental Models: Cass' Model**

- **Identity Confusion**
- **Identity Comparison**
- **Identity Tolerance**
- **Identity Acceptance**
- **Identity Pride**
- **Identity Synthesis**

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**Risk Factors**

Some of the many risk factors for LGBTQ youth include:

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**Strategies**

Identify strategies to support LGBTQ youth:

- Personally
- Individually
- Professionally
- As a group or agency

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**Standup Quote**

“In Germany they first came for the Communists and I didn’t speak up because I wasn’t a Communist. Then they came for the Jews, and I didn’t speak up because I wasn’t a Jew. Then they came for the trade Unionists, and I didn’t speak up because I wasn’t a trade unionist. Then they came for the Catholics, and I didn’t speak up because I was a Protestant. Then they came for me-and by that time no one was left to speak up.”

--Pastor Martin Niemoller

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**Conclusions and Evaluations**



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