



Tips and Resources for Supporting LGBTQ+ Youth in the Child Welfare System from Webinar Planning Committee and Presenters

1. Practice supporting name and pronoun use. For example, tell stories to yourself about a person to create opportunities to practice and correct yourself if needed.
2. Share your name and pronouns when you introduce yourself to young people and other adults: make it the norm/standard.
 - a. The adult (attorney/caseworker/judge) can introduce themselves to the minor, with a statement such as, "I am [Name], and I look forward to working with you and your family as the [judge/attorney/caseworker] in this case. My pronouns are [pronouns]. How do you want to be addressed?" Using a person's correct pronouns signals respect, creates a more welcoming environment, validates identity, and supports autonomy and control for youth who often have little of either. Moreover, using proper pronouns, which are deeply tied to our sense of identity, support a young person's mental health.
 - b. Caveat: Always be aware that youth should be able to "come out" and disclose either sexual orientation or gender identity at their own pace. Disclosure to the wrong individuals and/or at the wrong time can create unnecessary stress and may even place the youth at risk of physical and/or emotional harm.
 - c. Don't make assumptions, young people may be in different stages of their transition social or otherwise. Discuss with them what pronouns they are comfortable using in different settings. Accept changes to their name or pronouns as they might happen. That is also a part of some people's journeys.
3. Don't over apologize as it brings attention and puts pressure on a young person to comfort you and it's about them and how THEY feel. Correct yourself, even if they don't say anything or if you don't think they heard.
4. Once you have discussed with a young person, use their name and pronouns all the time - even when they can't hear you or you are thinking in your head or referring to something from the past.
5. Correct other people (again be aware in what settings and in front of whom a young person is comfortable being out). Tone is important - be pleasant and respectful.

6. Join a parent support group = education, support, understanding.
<https://www.aztypo.com/our-calendar>, <https://oneten.org/for-parents> ,
<https://transfamilies.org/video-support-groups>
7. Attorneys and judges can request youth be appointed a Court Appointed Special Advocate who is knowledgeable/sensitive to issues experienced by LGBTQ+ youth.
8. Ensure your facility has gender inclusive restroom facilities.
9. Create/join a taskforce to support identifying best practices when working with LGBTQ+ youth.
10. Ensure your organization's forms are expansive. E.g. Revise forms to include those in gay and lesbian partnerships; include and expand pronoun/name options, etc.
11. Empathy. Using a person's name and pronouns is a basic way of showing respect. How would you feel if you were misgendered?
12. The data (www.trevorproject.org) is VERY clear: youth who are supported regarding their names and pronouns are more likely to have positive outcomes and lower rates of suicide attempts.

Recommendations From Trans and Nonbinary Youth and Young Adults with Lived Experience*

13. It is vital to let youth have a say in their care, in their lives, and in their existence. Take the time to listen to peoples lived experience and put this into action. Get comfortable asking (respectful) questions.
14. Provide training and education to staff, caregivers, and families so people understand us and can support us well.
 - a. Foster families should accept services that will support their child ie family support of LGBTQ+ youth
15. Uphold stricter guidelines around religious placements and what they can or cannot do.
 - a. Don't scare youth with church/religion
 - b. Instead of taking youth to church as a primary activity option, give them alternative spaces to go that share their representation and culture
16. Create clear policies for staff to follow when supporting LGBTQ+ youth. Step by step.
17. Go out into the LGBTQ+ community – keep youth connected to community for example, resource centers and groups, tables at pride festivals to recruit foster parents and staff.

* With gratitude to our planning committee members and Emilio, Jaxsyn, Paris, Kayden, Gina, Tyler, and Shawn.

18. Ensure more and better access to care and doctors, especially doctors who specialize and have specific training on this population. Helpful to have access to quality knowledge about the process.
 - a. Therapy – in all settings but noting how helpful this could be in the Juvenile legal setting.
19. Provide more support while in systems, especially from staff, and folks who hold others who cause harm accountable. Protect us, ask us what we want and need, stand up for us.
20. Push to ensure we leave systems with supports in place. We would like to be more connected to adults and youth similar to ourselves.
21. Queer specific housing should be an option for folks, maybe a designated unit. Don't assume where TNGD youth will feel best being housed – ask them, have a conversation. Keep asking us and checking in – is this where you want to be/the best fit?
22. Provide more specialized service options for LGBTQ+ youth. Not enough resources have led to inconsistent access to services, we are lucky to stumble upon something that fits or even a person that works well for us.
23. Let us be who we are.

Gender Affirmation Support - Tips to Support Your Name and Pronoun Use

Every trans and nonbinary youth and adult has their own way to navigate using their name and pronouns and navigating respect (or lack of respect) by others for who they are. The suggestions below are approaches that some trans and nonbinary youth have found helpful and may help youth you're working with. There is no right or wrong approach.

1. Explain that using your pronouns and name is a basic way of showing you respect.
2. Some young people have found it helpful to advocate for themselves using the phrases, “the pronouns I use” or “the name I want.”
3. Tell them how you feel when they address you properly, and how you feel when they don't. Most of the times, showing people feelings they can relate to (sadness, frustration, fear, pain) makes it easier for them to understand you.
4. Use your allies: have friends use your name/pronouns in front of your parents/teachers.
5. Many people respond to positive reinforcement. So, if someone corrects themselves and apologizes for not using your pronouns or name, it can be helpful to acknowledge their effort.
6. Find spaces where you can get respect and support (Ex: GSA, one n ten, Eon Youth Lounge) related to your pronouns and name. <https://www.glsenarizona.org>, <https://onenten.org>, Eon Youth Lounge

7. Encourage parents to join a parent support group = education, support, understanding.
<https://www.aztypo.com/our-calendar>, <https://onenten.org/for-parents>,
<https://transfamilies.org/video-support-groups>
8. Have other people correct them for you.
9. Patience and repetition.
10. If it's too much for you, you don't have to correct people all of the time if they aren't listening.

LGBTQ+ Youth – Resources and Research

Arizona Resources

The Trevor Project, *2022 National Survey on LGBTQ Youth Mental Health Arizona*,
<https://www.thetrevorproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/The-Trevor-Project-2022-National-Survey-on-LGBTQ-Youth-Mental-Health-by-State-Arizona.pdf>

one•n•ten

one•n•ten is a nonprofit organization dedicated to serving and assisting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) youth ages 14 to 24. From weekly discussion groups to fun, social networking events, we create a safe space, mentally and physically, for youth of all socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. We also offer resources to promote healthy choices and living. Youth with particular needs have the option to speak with peers or volunteers one-on-one, in a supervised setting. We provide youth with a variety of tools and opportunities to improve self-esteem and self-acceptance.

Youth Center:

1101 N Central Avenue, Suite 104

Phoenix, AZ 85004

602-400-2601

office@onenten.org

For Youth Center Program Information: Gina Read – gina@onenten.org

www.onenten.org/

Thornhill Lopez Center on 4th

The Thornhill Lopez Center on 4th is a SAAF (South Arizona AIDS Foundation) place for LGBTQ+ and allied youth ages 13-24 to visit in order to access a variety of services to support their health and well-being. Thornhill Lopez Center on 4th provides critical services and support for youth that need support.

<https://saaf.org/services/thornhill-lopez-center-on-4th/>

526 N 4th Avenue

Tucson, Arizona 85705

(520)628-7223

info@saaf.org

<https://www.facebook.com/TLC4Tucson/>

Eon Youth Lounge (at Thornhill Lopez Center on 4th)

Eon Youth Lounge serves LGBTQ+ and allied youth ages 13-24. Eon Youth Lounge is for youth who are just looking for a place that provides support, positive identity development, opportunity for growth, and the ability to safely connect with other LGBTQ+ and their allied peers. We offer basic needs such as clothing, food, toiletries, and laundry services. We provide structured programming focused on affirming self-development through art, game nights, structured conversations related to health, identity, education, and more.

ekuhn@saaf.org

<https://saaf.org/services/thornhill-lopez-center-on-4th/eon-youth-lounge-at-thornhill-lopez-center-on-4th/>

<https://www.facebook.com/eonyouth/>

Arizona Trans Youth and Parent Organization

AZTYPO is a safe space for families with gender-diverse children. We provide a supportive environment for children, adolescents, and their families to explore issues of gender identity. Our main program is our support groups held twice a month (one in-person and one virtual) and is comprised of peer-to-peer support for the parents and a supervised interactive social/playgroup for the youth and children. As we grow, the youth and children will be broken down further into two or more groups. Siblings are also welcome in the social/playgroup. Parents, Legal Guardians, and Extended Family (Grandparents, Aunts, Uncles, etc.) can discuss challenging issues, raise questions, seek and share resources, and listen to the experiences of others. By talking to each other and sharing experiences, a family can best support their children in their gender identity and gender expression. All are welcome along the spectrum of acceptance and understanding. This is a safe place to express fear and confusion as well as ask questions. You are not alone. Additional programs include: Name Change Grants, Gender Junk Grants, and Parents in Transitions.

1955 Weste Baseline Road, Suite 113-194
Mesa, AZ 85202

contact@aztypo.org

<https://www.aztypo.com/>

GLSEN Arizona

GLSEN champions safe and affirming schools for all students with a mission to ensure that each member of every school community is valued and respected regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2386

Phoenix, AZ 85002

Phone: (602) 705-9780

Email: info@glsenarizona.org

www.glsenarizona.org

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Arizona

As an organization dedicated to inclusiveness, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Arizona values and celebrates the diversity and individuality of every child, volunteer, employee, board member, family and community partner. Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Arizona has a Big/Little LGBTQ+ program.

Site-Based Program – one n ten Youth Center
1101 N. Central Ave.,
Phoenix, AZ 85004
esiler@bbbsaz.org
<https://www.bbbsaz.org/lgbtq>

‘NAZCARE, INC.

NAZCARE is a community based non-profit organization located throughout rural Arizona. In addition to providing behavioral health services for adults and their families, we provide independent housing with wraparound services. Nazcare is a nationally recognized peer support training agency. We welcome you to visit our wellness center located near you.

8128 E State Route 69, Suite 201
Prescott Valley, AZ 86314
928-442-9205
contact@nazcare.org
<http://www.nazcare.org/>

Southern Arizona Gender Alliance (SAGA)

SAGA provides educational, support, outreach, and other programs for transgender, non-binary, and gender-creative people. SAGA provides support, education, resources, advocacy and community by:

Sponsoring support groups each month designed to meet the needs of the community and each individual;

Advocating for equal treatment and equal opportunity for all transgender people through education and training; Being the primary resource for information on transgender issues in the Southwest including Information and Referral database of trans-friendly businesses, service providers, doctors and other resources, ID and Documentation Assistance to help navigate the complicated process of updating documents to reflect new name and gender.

info@sagatuscon.org
www.sagatuscon.org

Nationwide Groups for LGBTQ+ Youth

Each of these organizations' digital programming is available to folks that live in Arizona and the organizations also offer youth programming.

SMYAL (Sexual Minority Youth Assistance League), <https://smyal.org/youth>

Gender Spectrum, www.GenderSpectrum.org

Trans Families, <https://transfamilies.org>

North Shore Alliance of GLBTQ Youth, <https://www.nagly.org>

LGBTQ Center OC, <https://www.lgbtqcenteroc.org>

Lambert House, <http://www.lamberthouse.org>

Arizona Resources for Adult LGBTQ+ folks

TransSpectrum of Arizona: offers a variety of support groups and events

<https://tsaz.org>

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Arizona is looking for LGBTQ+ Bigs (particularly those that are Trans or non-binary)

<https://www.bbbsaz.org/lgbtq>

Meetup: there are some meet up groups that are for those in the trans and/or non-binary communities

<https://www.meetup.com>

Southwest Center

We provide affirming and inclusive services to promote well-being and advance health equity for diverse communities and all those seeking compassionate care - especially people of color, LGBTQIA2S+ and Queer individuals, and those affected by HIV. Services include Health Clinic, HIV/STI Testing, Prep Navigation, Sexual and Reproductive Health, Gender Affirming Program, Mental Health, Case Management, Nutrition Services, and Community Engagement.

1101 N. Central Avenue, Suite 200

Phoenix, AZ 85004

602-307-5330

602-595-8170

<https://www.swcenter.org/>

The TEA Phoenix

The TEA Phoenix (Teaching, Empowering, and taking Action) is the Southwest Center's Empowerment project serving Queer persons of color 18-29 years old in the Phoenix community.

arascon@swcenter.org, <https://www.swcenter.org/outreach>

<https://www.swcenter.org/tea-phoenix-contact-form>

Ignite Your Pride (The Outreach Initiative for SWC)

The Outreach Initiative for South West Center. Sparking the conversation around safer sex and HIV.

<https://twitter.com/igniteswc?lang=en>

Southwest Center TRANS program: healthcare access navigation, resource navigation (housing, food, name change)

<https://www.swcenter.org/trans-program>

Phoenix Pride

<https://phoenixpride.org>

Trans Queer Pueblo is a LGBTQ+ migrant organization of color, creating cycles of mutual support to generate solutions to our needs

<https://www.tqpueblo.org>

Lambda Phoenix Center

The mission of Lambda Phoenix Center is to provide an inviting, safe, and supportive community space for individuals and families in the metro Phoenix LGBT community recovering from alcoholism and other addictions. We achieve this mission by owning and operating a neighborhood-based support center. This center hosts a diverse offering of 12-step recovery meetings with more than 40 recovery meetings a week, over 3,000 visitors each month and currently offers several distinct 12-step programs, as well as hosting numerous special community events.

Recovery Center:

2622 North 16th Street

Phoenix, AZ 85006

Mailing Address:

PO Box 21211

Phoenix, AZ 85036

webmaster@lambdaphx.org

www.lambdaphx.org

LGBTQ+ Youth Parent/Caregiver Resource List

Parent/Guardian Support Groups

AZTYPO (Arizona Trans Youth and Parent Organization): Support group for parents of trans and non-binary youth, <http://aztypo.org>

one·n·ten Parents' Group, <https://oneten.org/for-parents>

PFLAG, <https://www.pflag.org>

Support Network for Parents of Trans Kids, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/parentsoftrans>

Parents of LGBTQ+ Children, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/ParentsOfLGBTChildren>

Trans Family Alliance, <https://www.genderhealthtraining.com/transfamily-alliance-membership> - 24/7 Support community (not a support group)

@monicatheteacher on TikTok

Educational Websites

Seattle Childrens Gender Clinic – Patient and Family Education,

<https://www.seattlechildrens.org/clinics/gender-clinic/patient-family-resources>

Gender Spectrum, <https://www.genderspectrum.org>

PFLAG, <https://www.pflag.org/transgender>

San Francisco State University – Welcome to the Family Acceptance

Project, <https://familyproject.sfsu.edu>

Trans-Parenting, <https://www.trans-parenting.com>

LA Gender Center, <https://www.lagendercenter.org/>

TransYouth Family Allies, <http://www.imatyfa.org>

Ackerman Institute for the Family – Gender and Family Project, <https://www.ackerman.org/gfp>

Trans Youth Equality Foundation, <http://www.transyouthequality.org>

Minus18, [Trans 101 - The Basics - YouTube](#)

TEDx Talk: The revolutionary truth about kids and gender identity

https://www.ted.com/talks/angela_kade_goepferd_the_revolutionary_truth_about_kids_and_gender_identity

Info about Non-Binary Identity

GenderQueer.me, <https://genderqueer.me>

PFLAG has several good articles/blogs that may be helpful in calling parents/guardians into this journey, <https://pflag.org/resource/nonbinary-resources/>

Angela Cabotaje, *How to Support Your Transgender or Nonbinary Child*, Right as Rain by UW Medicine, <https://rightasrain.uwmedicine.org/life/parenthood/transgender-nonbinary-youth>

Rosen P., *I'm a Nonbinary Teen: Here's What Parents Need to Know*, Parents (2023)

<https://www.parents.com/parenting/better-parenting/teenagers/teen-talk/im-a-teen-who-is-nonbinary-heres-what-i-wish-parents-would-know-about-gender/>

Educating Caregivers of Trans and Non-Binary People Facebook Group,

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/parentsofnonbinarykids>

Enfsy Book, *Your adult child just came out as non-binary. Now what?*, Major Arqueerna (2020)

(Article that includes link for further parent ed in case loved one is an adult),

<https://majorarqueerna.com/your-adult-child-just-came-out-as-nonbinary-now-what>

School Support

A Parent's Quick Guide for In-School Transitions, <https://www.hrc.org/resources/a-parents-quick-guide-for-in-school-transitions-empowering-families-and-schools-to-support-transgender-and-non-binary-students>

GLSEN Arizona, <http://www.glsenarizona.org>

Resources for Teachers/School Staff

The Spahr Center with Marin County Office of Education, Teach Pride, Reach Wide! LGBTQ+ Best Practices for Inclusive Schools,
<https://sites.google.com/marinschools.org/screening/sel/lgbtq>

Hormone Blockers & Gender Dysphoria Articles

Mayo Clinic, Puberty Blockers for Transgender and Gender-Diverse Youth, <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/gender-dysphoria/in-depth/pubertal-blockers/art-20459075>.

Children's Hospital St. Louis, Puberty Blockers, <https://www.stlouischildrens.org/conditions-treatments/transgender-center/puberty-blockers>

Trans Families, Understanding Transitions, The basics, <https://transfamilies.org/understanding-transitions/#1605463688522-01e0527c-75db>.

Employment

Trans workers employment site. Topics such as finding Trans friendly workplaces, pronouns on your resume, and legal rights are sadly neglected. This resource can help job seekers find a positive work environment and decrease job hunting anxiety: <https://www.zippia.com/job-search/lgbtq-jobs/trans-job-seeker-guide>

Books

PFLAG, Recommended Reading: Coming Out, <https://pflag.org/comingoutbooks>

The Gender Creative Child by *Diane Ehrensaft, PhD (2016)*

The Conscious Parent's Guide to Gender Identity by *Darlene Tando, LCSW (2016)*

The Transgender Child by *Stephanie Brill and Rachel Pepper (2008)*

The Transgender Teen: A Handbook for Parents and Professionals Supporting Transgender and Non-Binary Teen By *Stephanie Brill and Lisa Kenney (2016)*

Raising Ryland: Our Story of Parenting a Transgender Child with No Strings Attached by *Hillary Whittington (2016)*

Becoming Nicole: The Transformation of an American Family by *Amis Ellis Nutt (2016)*

Transitions of the Heart: Stories of Love, Struggle and Acceptance by Mothers of Transgender and Gender Variant Children by *Rachel Pepper (2012)*

Inclusive sex-ed websites for LGBTQ+ youth

Scarleteen, <https://www.scarleteen.com>

UN|HUSHED, <https://unhushed.org/>

Amaze, <https://amaze.org/>

LGBTQ+ Youth HeLP, <https://www.youthhelp.net>

Sex, etc., <https://sexetc.org>

Resource List of Direct Service Providers for LGBTQ+ Youth by State:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1YC-iPkJAwFTexQ-huUNHep5WCQyTj12tldQj3_fd8Mg/edit

Lambda Legal Help Desk: <https://www.lambdalegal.org/helpdesk>

ACLU of Arizona: <https://www.acluaz.org/en/about/ask-help> - <https://intake.acluaz.org/>

DCS Policy and Practice Guidance

DCS 01-04 Non-Discrimination Policy

The Department of Child Safety does not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, pregnancy, childbirth or medical conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth, political or religious affiliation or ideas, culture, creed, social origin or condition, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, ancestry, age, disability, military services or veteran status, marital status, or any other characteristic protected by law in any of its activities or operations.

<https://extranet.azdcs.gov/DCSPolicy/Content/Adminstrative%20Policy/DCS%2001/DCS%2001-04%20Non-Discrimination%20Policy.pdf>

DCS 15-39 LGBTQIA+ Policy

- Allows a caregiver licensed by OLR (foster homes and congregate care) to not amend their license when a transgender child is placed in their care.
- Permits caregivers to place children of the same gender in a bedroom together when safe and appropriate given the needs of both children.

<https://extranet.azdcs.gov/DCSPolicy/Content/Adminstrative%20Policy/DCS%2015/DCS%2015-39%20LGBTIA%20Policy.pdf>

DCS 19-03 Caregiver Selection Protocols

- The Placement Administration will make diligent efforts to assign transgender and gender diverse individuals in a living arrangement that conforms with their gender identity.

<https://extranet.azdcs.gov/DCSPolicy/Content/Adminstrative%20Policy/DCS%2019/DCS%2019-03%20Caregiver%20Selection%20Protocols.pdf>

Initial Contact and Conducting Interviews (Ch. 2, Sec 3)

https://extranet.azdcs.gov/DCSPolicy/Content/Program%20Policy/02%20Investigation_Assessment_Case%20Planning/CH2_S03%20Initial%20Contact%20and%20Conducting%20Interviews.htm

Family Functioning Assessment – Ongoing (Ch. 3, Sec 2.1)

https://extranet.azdcs.gov/DCSPolicy/Content/Program%20Policy/03%20Case%20Planning%20and%20Services/02%20Family%20Functioning%20Assessment%20-%20Ongoing/CH_S02_1%20FFA_O.htm

Planning for Services and Supports to Achieve Permanency (Ch. 3, Sec 3.3)

https://extranet.azdcs.gov/DCSPolicy/Content/Program%20Policy/03%20Case%20Planning%20and%20Services/03%20Developing%20and%20Reassessing%20the%20Family-Centered%20Case%20Plan/CH3_S03_3%20Services%20and%20Supports.htm

Selecting an Out-of-Home Caregiver (Ch. 4, Sec 5)

https://extranet.azdcs.gov/DCSPolicy/Content/Program%20Policy/04_Out_of_Home_Care/CH4_S05%20Selecting%20OOHC%20Provider.htm

Placing Children in Out-of-Home Care (Ch. 4, Sec 6)

https://extranet.azdcs.gov/DCSPolicy/Content/Program%20Policy/04_Out_of_Home_Care/CH4_S06%20Placing%20Children%20in%20OOHC.htm

Reasonable Prudent Parent Standard (Ch. 4, Sec 11)

https://extranet.azdcs.gov/DCSPolicy/Content/Program%20Policy/04_Out_of_Home_Care/CH4_S11%20Reasonable%20Prudent%20Parent%20Standard.htm

Court Reports (Ch. 7, Sec 7)

https://extranet.azdcs.gov/DCSPolicy/Content/Program%20Policy/07_Records_Legal_QA_Supervision/Legal/CH7_S07%20Court%20Reports.htm

Engagement with LGBTQ+ Youth Practice Guide

<https://extranet.azdcs.gov/DCSPolicy/Content/Practice%20Guides%20&%20Additional%20Info/Links/Guides/Practice%20Guidelines%20-%20LGTBQ.pdf>

Inclusive and Affirming Language Practice Guide

<https://extranet.azdcs.gov/DCSPolicy/Content/Practice%20Guides%20&%20Additional%20Info/Links/Guides/Practice%20Guidelines%20-%20Inclusive%20Language.pdf>

LGBTQ+ Youth in the Child Welfare System

CWLA and national experts, *Recommended Practices to Promote the Safety and Well-Being of LGBTQ Youth and Youth at Risk of or Living with HIV in Child Welfare Settings* (2012):

<http://www.lambdalegal.org/sites/default/files/publications/downloads/recommended-practices-youth.pdf>

HRC, All Children – All Families Project: <http://www.hrc.org/resources/all-children-all-families-about-the-initiative>

Movement Advancement Project, *License to Discriminate: How Religious Exemption Legislation for Social Service Agencies Harms Children* (2017):
<https://www.lgbtmap.org/file/policy-brief-adoption-discrimination.pdf>

Theo G. M. Sandfort, *Experiences and Well-Being of Sexual and Gender Diverse Youth in Foster Care in New York City: Disproportionality and Disparities*. (2020):
<https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/acs/pdf/about/2020/WellBeingStudyLGBTQ.pdf>

University of Maryland School of Social Work, QIC LGBTQ2S, Children's Bureau, & County of Cuyahoga, Ohio. *The Cuyahoga Youth Count: A Report on LGBTQ+ Youth Experience in Foster Care*. (2021): <https://theinstitute.umaryland.edu/media/ssw/institute/Cuyahoga-Youth-Count.6.8.1.pdf>

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Child Welfare Information Gateway, *Working With Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning (LGBTQ) Families in Foster Care and Adoption* (2016): <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/f-profbulletin/>

getR.E.A.L California, Family Builders, Center for the Study of Social Policy & NCLR, *Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Children in California Foster Care* (2016):
<https://cssp.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/TGNC-Children-in-CA-Foster-Care-Feb-2016.pdf>

The Williams Institute: *Surveying LGBTQ Youth in Foster Care: Lessons from Los Angeles* (2016): <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Surveying-LGBTQ-Youth-Foster-Care-Nov-2016.pdf>

M.Martin et al., Center for the Study of Social Policy, *Out of the Shadows: Supporting LGBTQ Youth in Child Welfare Through Cross-System Collaboration* (2016): <https://cssp.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Out-of-the-Shadows-Supporting-LGBTQ-youth-in-child-welfare-through-cross-system-collaboration-web.pdf>

Williams Institute & Los Angeles LGBT Center, *Sexual and Gender Minority Youth in Foster Care* (2014): <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/sgm-youth-la-foster-care/>

Child Welfare Information Gateway, *Supporting Your LGBTQ Youth: A Guide for Foster Parents* (2013): <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/LGBTQyouth.pdf>

HRC, *Caring for LGBTQ Children and Youth: A Guide for Child Welfare Providers* (2013):
<http://www.centerforchildwelfare.org/kb/cultcomp/CaringForLGBTQYouth2013.pdf>

Family Builders, Legal Services for Children, NCLR & Center for the Study of Social Policy: *Guidelines for Managing Information Related to the Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity and Expression of Children in Child Welfare Systems* (2013):
<http://cssr.berkeley.edu/cwscmsreports/documents/Information%20Guidelines%20P4.pdf>

Kerith J. Conron and Bianca D.M. Wilson, *LGBTQ Youth of Color Impacted by the Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice Systems* (2019):
<https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/lgbtq-yoc-social-services/>

J.R. Perry & E.R. Green, *Safe & Respected: Policy, Best Practices & Guidance for Serving Transgender, Gender Expansive, & Nonbinary Children and Youth Involved in the Child Welfare, Detention, and Juvenile Justice Systems*, NYC Administration for Children's Services, (2017): <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/acs/pdf/lgbtq/SAFEAndRespectedUpdate061417.pdf>

Administration for Children and Families Policy Memoranda

HHS, ACF, Children's Bureau, *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning Youth in Foster Care* (2011): <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/cb/im1103.pdf>

HHS, ACF, Children's Bureau, *Guidance for Title IV-B and IV-E Agencies When Serving LGBTQI+ Children and Youth* (2022): <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/cb/im2201.pdf>

LGBTQ+ Youth in the Juvenile Justice System

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ALLY AS A VERB NOT A NOUN:

HOW TO SUPPORT LGBTQIA+
YOUTH IN ARIZONA'S CHILD
WELFARE SYSTEM

January 2024

1

**Thank You to our Sponsors,
Committee Members, and Presenters**



Molly Dunn, Currey Cook, Jennie Hedges, Carolyn Fuller, David Lieb, Jennifer Redmond, Judge Lisa Bibbens, Brooke Silverthorn, Bethany Munson, TJ Fowler, Melissa Compian, and Maia Zelkind

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Agenda

1. Opening – Molly Dunn, Children’s Action Alliance
2. Welcome – AZ Dep’t of Child Safety CEO David Lujan
3. Who, What, Why? – Currey Cook, Lambda Legal
4. DCS Policy and Practice – Melissa Compian, AZ DCS
5. Panel Presentation –

Panelists: TJ Fowler, Jennie Hedges,
Jennifer Redmond, & Judge Lisa Bibbens

Moderator: Brooke Silverthorn
Casey Family Programs



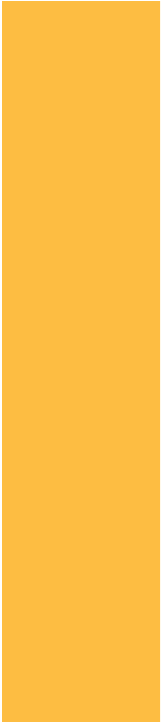
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Opening



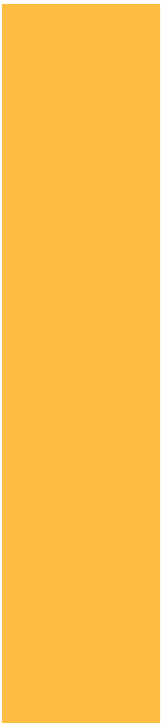
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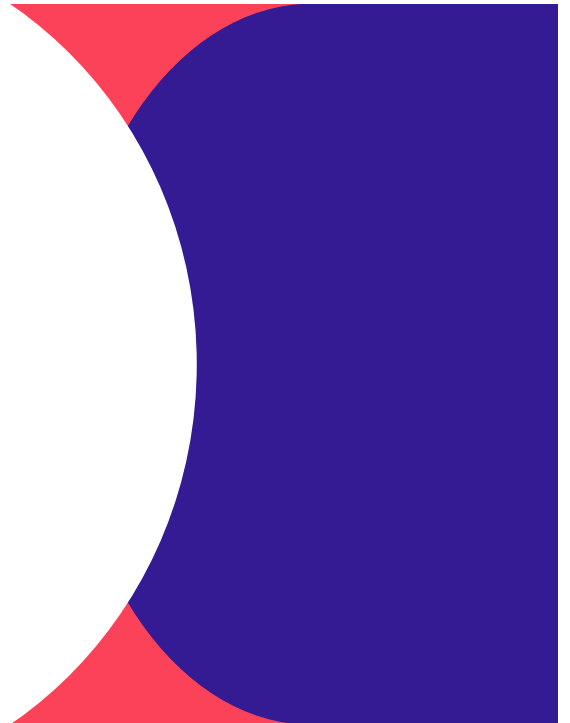
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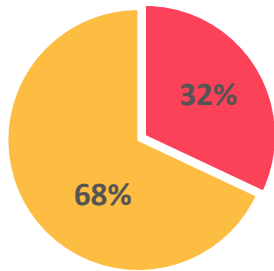
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What,
Why**



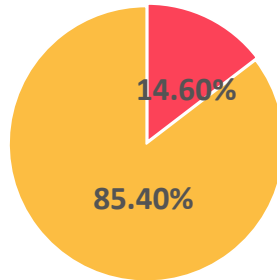
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Overrepresentation of LGBTQ+ Youth in Foster Care

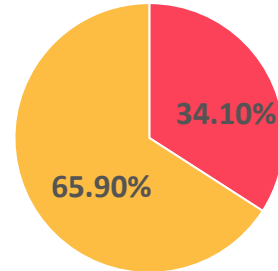
Cuyahoga County (OH) Study



General Population



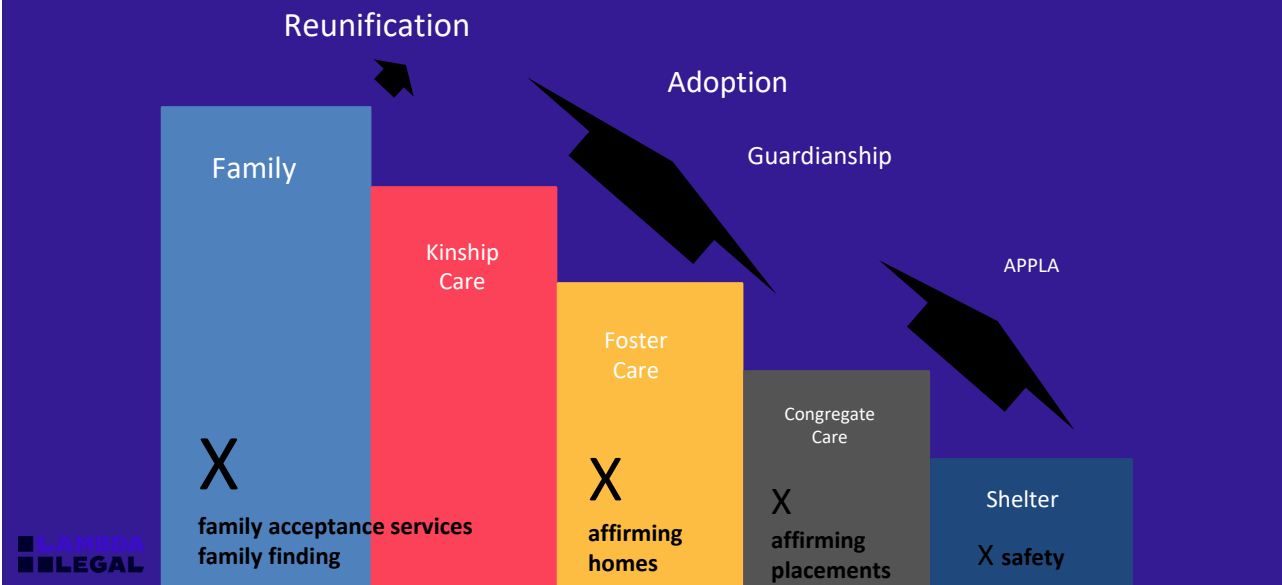
New York City Study



■ LGBTQ+ ■ Non-LGBTQ+

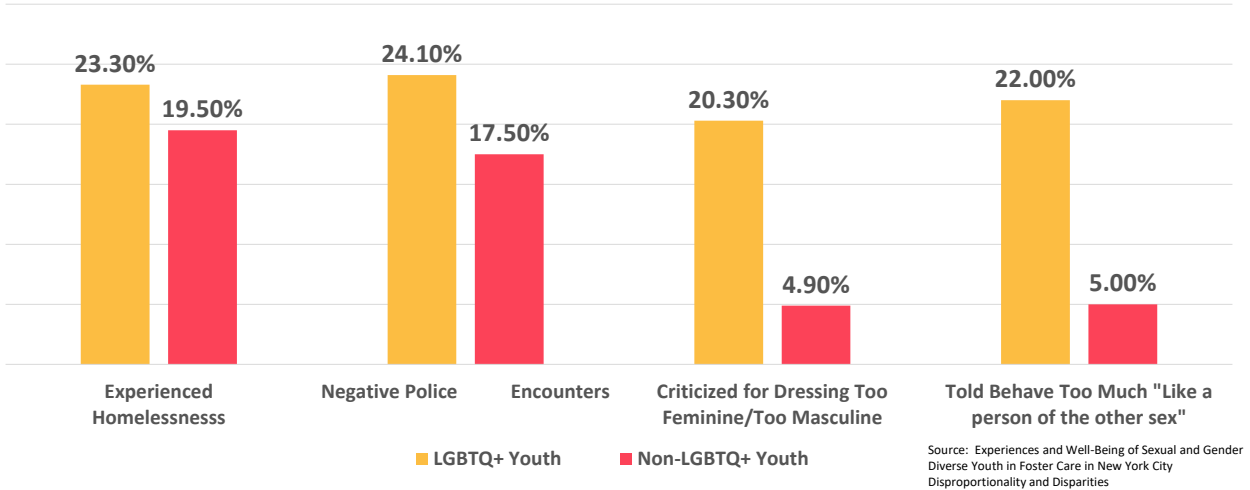
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Child Welfare to Homelessness Pipeline – V. LGBTQ+



8

Well-Being Disparities



9

Too Many Pipelines

SCHOOL

child placement court hear Foster care support home loved safe family happiness court case worker plan heal trauma hope safe

END YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

LAMBDA LEGAL

while . . .

10

LGBTQ+ Youth Well-Being

56% of LGBTQ young people who wanted mental health care in the past year were not able to get it.

56%

A majority of LGBTQ young people reported being verbally harassed at school because people thought they were LGBTQ.

41% of LGBTQ young people seriously considered attempting suicide in the past year—and young people who are transgender, nonbinary, and/or people of color reported higher rates than their peers.

Fewer than 40% of LGBTQ young people found their home to be LGBTQ-affirming.

38%

Source: <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/survey-2023/>

11

Impact of Anti-LGBTQ+ Legislation

“Nearly 1 in 3 LGBTQ young people said their mental health was poor most of the time or always due to anti-LGBTQ policies and legislation.”

“Nearly 2 in 3 LGBTQ young people said that hearing about potential state or local laws banning people from discussing LGBTQ people at school made their mental health a lot worse.”

Source: The Trevor Project, 2023 U.S. National Survey on the Mental Health of LGBTQ Young People

12

LGBTQ+ Youth in Arizona – Trevor Project Survey

Age of LGBTQ youth

- 13 to 17 66%
- 18 to 24 34%



Race/ethnicity of LGBTQ youth

- Asian American/ Pacific Islander 3%
- Black 5%
- Latinx 28%
- Native/Indigenous 1%
- White 45%
- More than one race/ethnicity 18%



Source: <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/The-Trevor-Project-2022-National-Survey-on-LGBTQ-Youth-Mental-Health-by-State-Arizona.pdf>

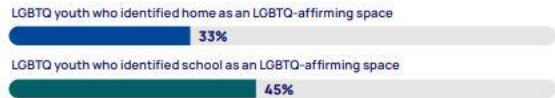
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LGBTQ+ Youth in Arizona – Trevor Project Survey

Rates of LGBTQ youth who have experienced discrimination



Access to affirming spaces among LGBTQ youth



Social support among LGBTQ youth

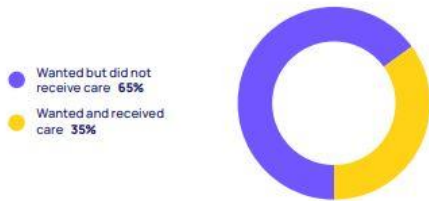


Source: <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/The-Trevor-Project-2022-National-Survey-on-LGBTQ-Youth-Mental-Health-by-State-Arizona.pdf>

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LGBTQ+ Youth in Arizona – Trevor Project Survey

Access to mental health care among LGBTQ youth



Suicide Risk

49% of LGBTQ youth in Arizona seriously considered suicide in the past year.
including 54% of transgender and nonbinary youth.

16% of LGBTQ youth in Arizona attempted suicide in the past year.
including 19% of transgender and nonbinary youth.

Anxiety & Depression

75% of LGBTQ youth in Arizona reported experiencing symptoms of anxiety.
including 78% of transgender and nonbinary youth.

65% of LGBTQ youth in Arizona reported experiencing symptoms of depression.
including 70% of transgender and nonbinary youth.

Source: <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/The-Trevor-Project-2022-National-Survey-on-LGBTQ-Youth-Mental-Health-by-State-Arizona.pdf>

Legal and Professional Standards



RECOMMENDED PRACTICES

To Promote the Safety and Well-Being of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning (LGBTQ) Youth and Youth at Risk of or Living with HIV in Child Welfare Settings



- Adopt and Implement Written Policies Prohibiting Discrimination on the Basis of Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Gender Expression and HIV Status
- Treat LGBTQ Youth with Respect and Competence
- Ensure Effective Child Protection Practices that Correctly Identify Abuse and Neglect of LGBTQ Youth
- Ensure Effective Services That Address Family Rejection of LGBTQ Youth and Help Reunification
- Provide Mandatory LGBTQ Competency Training to All Agency Employees and Volunteers
- Ensure Safe and Supportive Foster or Adoptive Placements for LGBTQ Youth and Require Training
- Ensure the Safety and Emotional Development of LGBTQ Youth in Congregate Care
- Support Access to Appropriate Medical and Mental Health Care Services for LGBTQ Youth
- Support Access to Safe Educational Services and LGBTQ Community Programs and Services

Source: <https://legacy.lambdalegal.org/sites/default/files/publications/downloads/recommended-practices-youth.pdf>

*Grimm v.
Gloucester County School Board*



Gavin Grimm

"Exclusionary policies perpetuate such stigma and discrimination, not only by forcing transgender individuals to disclose their status, but by marking transgender individuals as "others" who are unfit to use the restrooms used by everyone else. Indeed, the very existence of exclusionary policies targeting transgender individuals fosters stigma and discrimination."

"For over 30 years, the generally-accepted treatment protocols for gender dysphoria have been aimed at alleviating the distress associated with the incongruence between gender identity and birth-assigned sex, rather than attempting to force individuals to live in conformance with their natal sex."



Brandt v. Rutledge



Dylan Brandt

"The widely accepted view of the professional medical community is that gender-affirming care is the appropriate treatment for gender dysphoria and that, for some adolescents, gender-affirming medical interventions are necessary. This care greatly reduces the negative physical and mental health consequences that result when gender dysphoria is untreated. The accepted guidelines for providing this care to adolescents were developed through a professional and transparent process and are supported by empirical research."



GRIMM

- American Academy of Pediatrics
- GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBT Equality
- Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine
- American Public Health Association
- American Psychoanalytic Association
- Endocrine Society
- American Medical Women's Association
- Pediatric Endocrine Society
- American Academy of Physician Assistants
- American College of Physicians
- American Academy of Nursing
- Mental Health America
- American Academy of Family Physicians
- Society for Physician Assistants in Pediatrics
- Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs
- American Medical Student Association
- American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
- American Nurses Association
- American Psychiatric Association
- National Association of Social Workers

BRANDT

- American Academy of Pediatrics
- Academic Pediatric Association
- American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
- American Association of Physicians for Human Rights, Inc. / GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBTQ Equality
- American College of Osteopathic Pediatricians
- American Medical Association
- American Pediatric Society
- American Psychiatric Association
- Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs
- Endocrine Society
- National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
- Pediatric Endocrine Society
- Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine
- Society for Pediatric Research
- Society of Pediatric Nurses
- Societies for Pediatric Urology
- World Professional Association for Transgender Health

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DCS Policy and Practice

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DCS 01-04 Non-Discrimination Policy

The Department of Child Safety does not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, pregnancy, childbirth or medical conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth, political or religious affiliation or ideas, culture, creed, social origin or condition, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, ancestry, age, disability, military services or veteran status, marital status, or any other characteristic protected by law in any of its activities or operations.



ARIZONA
DEPARTMENT
of CHILD SAFETY

Source: <https://extranet.azdcs.gov/DCSPolicy/Content/Adminstrative%20Policy/DCS%2001/DCS%2001-04%20Non-Discrimination%20Policy.pdf>

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DCS Administrative Policies

- **DCS 15-39 LGBTQIA+ Policy**
 - All children, regardless of gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation, have the right to feel safe and be safe in their living arrangement to achieve positive outcomes.
 - Licensed caregivers shall ensure LGBTQIA+ and gender diverse children are not isolated, secluded, or otherwise separated from other children solely due to their LGBTQIA+ or gender diverse status.
- **DCS 19-03 Caregiver Selection Protocols**
 - The Placement Administration will make diligent efforts to assign transgender and gender diverse individuals in a living arrangement that conforms with their gender identity.

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DCS Program Policies

- Initial Contact and Conducting Interviews (Ch. 2, Sec 3)
- Family Functioning Assessment – Ongoing (Ch. 3, Sec 2.1)
- Planning for Services and Supports to Achieve Permanency (Ch. 3, Sec 3.3)
- Selecting an Out-of-Home Caregiver (Ch. 4, Sec 5)
- Placing Children in Out-of-Home Care (Ch. 4, Sec 6)
- Reasonable Prudent Parent Standard (Ch. 4, Sec 11)
- Court Reports (Ch. 7, Sec 7)

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Compassion & Engagement

- Treat all people with dignity and respect.
- Use inclusive language.
- Ask people what they want to be called and call them that.
- Ask about cultural factors important to the family and child such as race, ethnicity, religion, tribal affiliation, sexual orientation, gender identity, etc.
- ❖ [Inclusive and Affirming Language Guide](#)
- ❖ [Engagement with LGBTQ+ Youth Practice Guide](#)

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Change

- Ensure services are supportive and affirming of the person's sexual orientation and gender identity.
- When determining if interventions are working, be sure to include cultural considerations that may impact a person's participation.
- Caregivers should encourage the child's participation in affirming and supportive activities.

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Safety

- With permission, use the child's stated name in documentation including court report narratives and case notes.
- Do not disclose a child's sexual orientation or gender identity without their permission.
- Make diligent efforts to place all children in living arrangements that are affirming of factors that are important to the child including race, ethnicity, religion or spirituality, tribal affiliation, sexual orientation and gender identity.

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DCS Policy Manual can be found at:
<https://extranet.azdcs.gov/DCSPolicy/Content/Home.htm>

**For questions about DCS policies,
procedures and practice guidelines,
please contact the DCS Policy Unit at:**
PolicyUnit@AZDCS.GOV

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Panel Presentation

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