Expanding Cultural Competence: Supporting the Psychosocial Needs of LGBTQ Youth

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Learning Objectives

- To expand awareness and knowledge of issues relevant to LGBTQ youth
- To learn strategies for promoting the psychosocial well-being of LGBTQ youth and improving school climate

Cultural Competence

- "the integration and transformation of knowledge about individuals and groups of people into specific standards, policies, practices, and attitudes used in appropriate cultural settings to increase the quality of services; thereby producing better outcomes."

(Davis, 1997)

True or False?

1. I can be pretty sure that my peers will be comfortable with my sexual orientation.

2. When I talk about my heterosexuality (such as in a joke or talking about my relationships), I will not be accused of pushing my sexual orientation onto others.

3. I do not have to fear that if my family or friends find out about my sexual orientation there will be economic, emotional, physical or psychological consequences.

4. I am never asked to speak for everyone who is heterosexual.

5. I can be sure that my classes will require curricular materials that testify to the existence of people with my sexual orientation.

6. I do not have to fear revealing my sexual orientation to friends or family.

7. I can count on finding a therapist willing and able to talk about my sexuality.

8. I am guaranteed to find sex education literature for couples with my sexual orientation.

9. I am guaranteed to find people of my sexual orientation represented within my school's curriculum, faculty, and administration.

10. Nobody calls me straight with maliciousness.

Unpacking the Invisible Backpack II: Sexual Orientation
http://www.cs.earlham.edu/~hyrax/personal/files/student_res/straightprivilege.htm

Understanding the Language

- Sexual Minority Youth
- LGBTQI-2SA
  - Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning, intersex, two-spirited, ally
- Coming Out
- Heterosexism
- Homophobia
- Glossary of terms: http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org/glossary.pdf

Favored Terms	Offensive Terms
Sexual Orientation	Sexual Preference
Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual	Homosexual/Alternative Lifestyle
Relationship, Couple	Homosexual Relationship, Homosexual Couple
Transgender	Transvestite, Tranny

Relevant Standards of Practice

Position Statement

GAY, LESBIAN, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER, AND QUESTIONING YOUTH

The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) supports equal access to education and mental health services for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning (GLBTQ) youth within public and private schools. Violence and intimidation violate the right of GLBTQ students to receive equal educational opportunities, regardless of whether the violence takes the form of direct harassment of individual students or is directed at the entire group through hostile statements or biases. Failure to address harassment and intimidation in the school setting perpetuates an environment that is unsafe and not supportive of academic or social achievement. NASP believes that school psychologists are ethically obligated to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity for the development and expression of their personal identity in an environment free from discrimination, harassment, violence, and abuse. To achieve this goal, education and advocacy must be used to reduce discrimination and harassment against GLBTQ youth by students and staff.

Youth who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender; those who question their sexual orientation or

NASP Ethical Standards

- Principle I.3. Fairness and Justice
  - School psychologists use their expertise to cultivate school climates that are safe and welcoming to all persons regardless of actual or perceived characteristics, including race, ethnicity, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, immigration status, socioeconomic status, primary language, gender, ***sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression,*** disability, or any other distinguishing characteristics

NASP Ethical Standards

- Standard I.2.6.
  - School psychologists *respect the right of privacy* of students, parents, and colleagues with regard to sexual orientation, gender identity, or transgender status. They *do not share information* about the sexual orientation, gender identity, or transgender status of a student (including minors), parent, or school employee with anyone *without that individual's permission*

NASP Ethical Standards

- Standard I.3.1
  - School psychologists *do not engage in or condone actions or policies that discriminate* against persons, including students and their families, other recipients of service, supervisees, and colleagues based on actual or perceived characteristics including race; ethnicity; color; religion; ancestry; national origin; immigration status; socioeconomic status; primary language; gender; sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression; mental, physical, or sensory disability; or any other distinguishing characteristics.

Bullying, Harassment, and School Social Contexts for LGBTQ youth

Alarming Data

- Rates of harrassment in schools
  - Harassment in school based on sexual orientation:
    - 86% of LGBT students reported being verbally harassed,
    - 40% reported being physically harassed and
    - 19% reported being physically assaulted at school in the past year because of their sexual orientation.
  - Harassment in school based on gender expression,
    - 64% of LGBT students reported being verbally harassed,
    - 27% reported being physically harassed and
    - 13% reported being physically assaulted.

Kosciw, Greytak, Diaz, & Bartkiewicz, 2010

Alarming Data

- Negative consequence can occur to students who are "out", and those who are "in the closet"
  - Student who present as more gender atypical or who are more open about their sexual orientation identity tend to be victimized the most (Waldo, Hesson, McInnis, & D'Augelli, 1998; D'Augelli, Grossman, Starks, 2006; Friedman, Koeske, Silvestre, Korr, Sites, 2006).
  - Concealing stigma has been purported to lead to
    - increases in cognitive preoccupations, vigilance, and suspiciousness;
    - negative changes in affect including anxiety, depression, hostility, demoralization, guilt and shame;
    - heightened impression management,
    - social avoidance and isolation,
    - increased importance of feedback,
    - impaired close relationship functioning

Pachankis, 2007

Alarming Data

- Negative attitudes regarding LGBTQ youth
  - Sample: 36,000 youth respondents from two school based samples of students from grades 7 through 12,
  - "I could never stay friends with someone who told me he or she was gay or lesbian."
    - 5% (grade 12) to 24% (grade 7) of female students reported to agree or strongly agree
    - 17% (grade 12) to 38% (grade 7) of male students reported to agree or strongly agree
  - "I would rather attend a school where there are no gay or lesbian students.'
    - 10% (Grade 11) to 35% (Grade 7) of female students reported to agree or strongly agree
    - 30% (Grade 12) to 54% (Grade 7) of male students reported to agree or strongly agree

Poteat, Espelage, & Koenig, 2009

Alarming Data

- 61.1% of students reported that they felt unsafe in school because of their sexual orientation,

- 30.0% of LGBT students missed at least one day of school in the past month because they felt unsafe, compared to only 6.7% of students from a national sample of secondary school students

- Increased levels of victimization corresponded to increased levels of depression and anxiety, and decreased levels of self-esteem.

Kosciw, Greytak, Diaz, & Bartkiewicz, 2010

Alarming Data

- 2004 Minnesota Student Survey (Eisenberg & Resnick, 2006)
  - N=21,927 sexually active youth
    - 10% reported having same-gender sexual experiences
  - Suicidal ideasion and suicide attempts significantly higher for sexual minority subgroup
  - Predicted probablity of suicide attempts was 24.4% for sexual minority males and 39.6% for sexual minority females
    - Compared to 13.7% for heterosexual males and 23.1% for heterosexual females

National Attention

This week, we sadly lost two young men who took their own lives for one unacceptable reason: they were being bullied and harassed because they were openly gay or believed to be gay. These unnecessary tragedies come on the heels of at least three other young people taking their own lives because the trauma of being bullied and harassed for their actual or perceived sexual orientation was too much to bear.

This is a moment where every one of us — parents, teachers, students, elected officials, and all people of conscience — needs to stand up and speak out against intolerance in all its forms. Whether it's students harassing other students because of ethnicity, disability or religion; or an adult, public official harassing the President of the University of Michigan student body because he is gay, it is time we as a country said enough. No more. This must stop.

Improving School Climate: Promoting Positive Psychosocial Functioning

Supports Identified by Youth

- Concept Mapping study used to identify ways to meet the social and emotional needs of GLBT youth
- Youth brainstormed answers to the question "Something GLBT youth need from their communities to feel supported is ____?"
- 5 domains of support emerged
  - Policies
  - Educating the Public
  - Individual Responsibilities
  - Community Support and Involvement
  - GLBTQ Acceptance and Individuality

Davis, Saltzburg, & Locke, 2010

Brainstormed Statements and Cluster Ratings

- Policies
  - Emotional Importance 5.77 & Social Importance 6.01
  - Examples relevant to schools:
    - More GLBT literature easily accessible
    - For schools to be more open-minded and accepting
    - Repercussions for teachers and administrators who discriminate
    - Teachers and administrators who are willing to stand up for GLBT youth
    - The ability to be honest

Davis, Saltzburg, & Locke, 2010

Brainstormed Statements and Cluster Ratings

- Educating the Public
  - Emotional Importance 4.53 & Social Importance 5.56
  - Examples relevant to schools:
    - Better sex education in the schools
    - Training for teachers and administrators
    - More educational resources
    - To dedicate time to recognizing and publicizing gay history
    - More GLBT scholarships

Davis, Saltzburg, & Locke, 2010

Brainstormed Statements and Cluster Ratings

- Community Support and Involvement
  - Emotional Importance 4.99& Social Importance 5.61
  - Examples relevant to schools:
    - To have someone to talk to who will give us attention
    - Safe environment that promotes acceptance
    - To have support groups for parents
    - Educated community members

Davis, Saltzburg, & Locke, 2010

Brainstormed Statements and Cluster Ratings

- Individual Responsibilities
  - Emotional Importance 5.18 & Social Importance 5.97
  - Examples relevant to schools:
    - Positive adult role models
    - Support from their peers
    - To cultivate more straight youth allies
    - Outreach from other GLBT youth

Davis, Saltzburg, & Locke, 2010

Brainstormed Statements and Cluster Ratings

- GLBTQ Acceptance & Individuality
  - Emotional Importance 5.54 & Social Importance 5.89
  - Examples relevant to schools:
    - To be recognized as a valued member of society
    - To not be demonized
    - Appreciation of diversity with groups
    - For transgendered people to not be viewed as having a disease
    - For transgendered people to be able to choose the restroom they want to use
    - To have relationships validated

Davis, Saltzburg, & Locke, 2010

Ways School Psychologists Can Help

Working with School Staff

- Provide information resources
- Use data
- Use news

http://www.apa.org/pi/lgbt/resources/just-the-facts.pdf

http://www.glsen.org/cgi-bin/iowa/all/news/record/1641.html
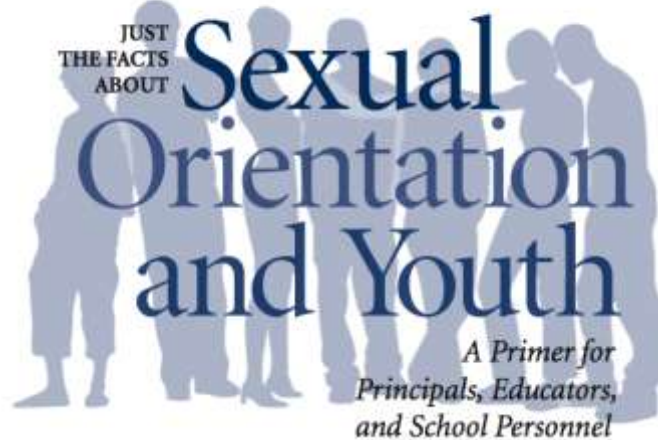
Florida Law

- Jeffrey Johnston Stand Up for All Students Act passed in 2008
- Requires anti-bullying/anti-harassment procedures and trainings take place in all schools in FL
- Lacks enumerated categories to be protected
  - Best practice recommendation is to include enumerated categories (National Safe Schools Partnership, 2007)
  - Ex: bullying is not permitted on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or religion
- School psychologists well positioned to conduct trainings or collaborate with others who are providing trainings in schools

Professional Development

- Suicide-related prevention and intervention training (Suldo et al, 2010)

- *Respect for All* training program (Greytak & Kosciw, 2010)
  - Six weeks after the trainings participants had increased:
    - Knowledge of appropriate terms
    - Access to LGBT-related resources
    - Empathy for LGBT students
    - Communication with students and staff about LGBT issues
    - Engagement in activities to create safer schools for LGBT students (i.e., supporting Gay-Straight Alliances, including LGBT content in curriculum)
    - Awareness of how their own practices might have been harmful to LGBT students
    - Belief in the importance of intervening in anti-LGBT remarks

http://www.glsen.org/binary-data/GLSEN_ATTACHMENTS/file/000/001/1633-2.PDF

Working with Families

- Provide guidance and support
  - Provide accurate information regarding LGBT issues
  - Make referrals to family counselors
  - Offer information about community support groups where parents can be in contact with other parents of LGBT youth
  - Help parents in advocating for child

GSAs

- Gay-Straight Alliance
  - Student-run organizations that welcome students of all sexual orientations
  - Typically geared towards supporting LGBTQ students and allied heterosexual students
  - May take on activism roles involved in reducing discrimination in schools and improving school climate
    - Placing posters addressing LGBTQ issues
    - Organizing activities (e.g., Day of Silence, Ally Week)
    - Providing trainings
    - Surveying school climate

Russell, Muraco, Subramaniam, & Laub, 2009

Outcomes related to GSAs

- Walls, Kane & Wisneski (2009) found schools with GSA compared to schools without GSAs had:
  - Lower LGBTQ dropout rates
  - Higher GPA
  - Greater awareness of safe school personnel
  - Greater sense of safety

Establishing GSAs

- GLSEN Jump-Start Guide

    URL: http://www.glsen.org/cgi-bin/iowa/all/news/record/2226.html

1. Follow guidelines

2. Students connect with a Faculty/Teacher Advisor

3. Find other students

4. Inform administration

5. Pick a meeting Place

Establishing GSAs

6. Advertise
7. Plan your meeting
8. Hold your meeting
9. Establish ground rules
10. Plan for the future

School-Based Advocates Share Insight
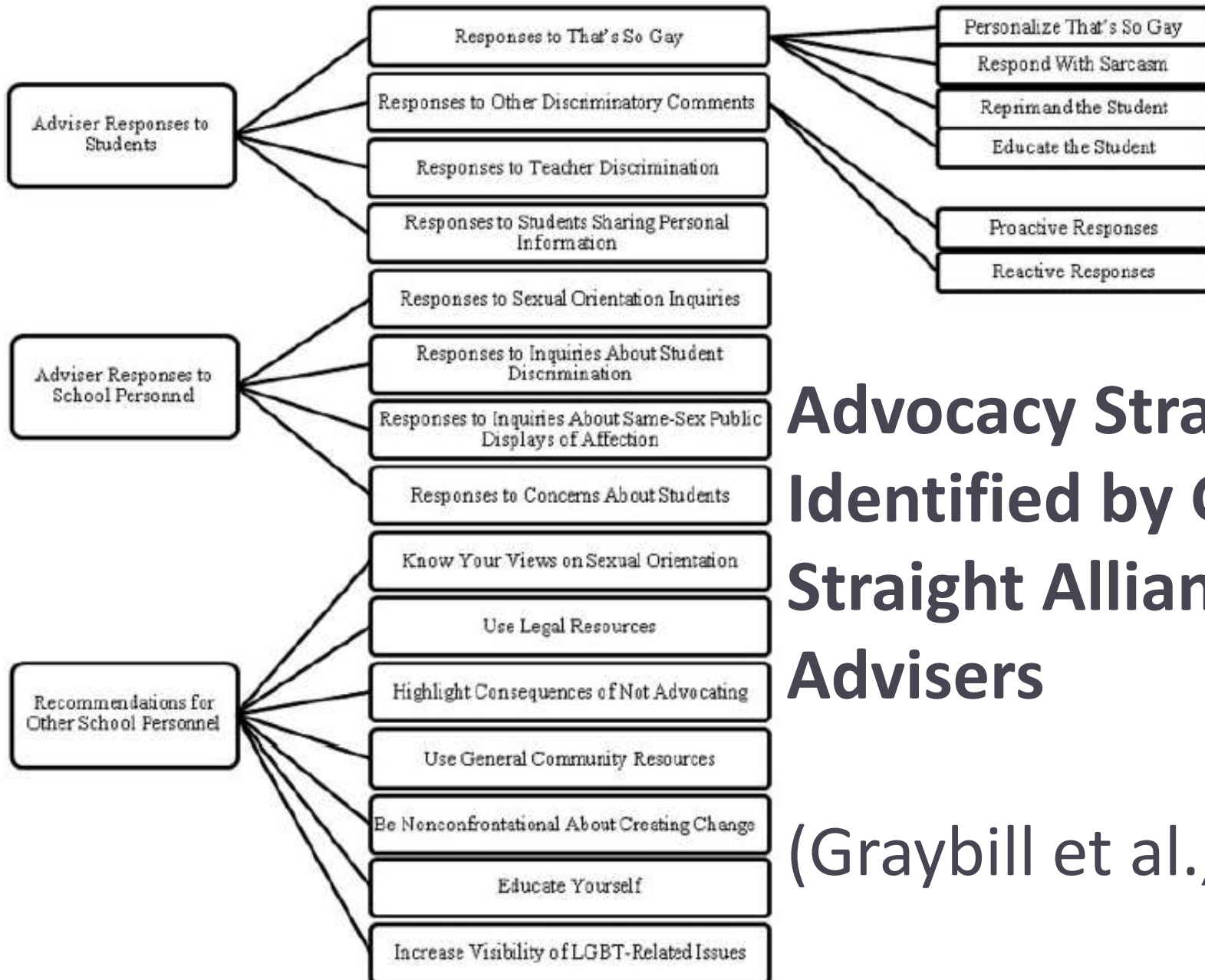
Advocacy Strategies Identified by Gay-Straight Alliance Advisers

(Graybill et al., 2009)

Staff-student interactions

- Responding to "That's so gay"
  - Respond with sarcasm
  - ***Educate the student***
  - Personalize "that's so gay"
  - Reprimand the student

Graybill et al., 2009

Staff-student interactions

- Responses to other discriminatory comments
  - Reactive Responses
    - Disciplinary consequences
    - Or *Project 10* Suggestion
      1. Stop the comment/behavior
      2. Identify the comment/behavior
      3. Broaden the response
      4. Ask for change in future behavior and offer support
  - Proactive Responses

Graybill et al., 2009

Staff-student interactions

- Students share concerns about teacher discrimination

- Students sharing personal information
  - Unsure and uncomfortable
  - Referrals made to SBMH providers
  - Process through concerns

Graybill et al., 2009

Staff to Staff Interactions

- Responses to sexual orientation inquiries

- Responses to inquiries about student discrimination

- Responses to inquiries about same-sex PDA

- Responses to concerns about students

Graybill et al., 2009

Recommendations to school personnel

- Know your views on sexual orientation
- Use legal resources
- Highlight consequence of not advocating
- Be non-confrontational about creating change
- Educate yourself
- Use general community resources
- Increase Visibility of LGBT related issues

Graybill et al., 2009

Bringing Visibility to LGBTQ Issues

- Include LGBTQ issues into curriculum:
  - LGBTQ History Month
  - Literature by LGBTQ authors (e.g., Oscar Wilde)
- Include LGBTQ related books in library
  - GLSEN BookLink

Bringing Visibility to LGBTQ Issues

Use Community Resources

- National organizations and resources
  - GLSEN, PFLAG, Safe Schools Coalition, The Trevor Project
- Local Florida community organizations
  - JASMYN, GLSEN Tampa, Lakeland Youth Alliance, Orlando Youth Alliance, Also OUT Youth, Safe Schools South Florida, Pridelines Youth Services, Compass Community Center, PFLAG chapters and contacts

QUESTIONS???

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