

Hello and welcome to our supporting

the LGBTQ plus population training.

My name is Erica Jones and I am one of

the nurse educators here with Aetna Better Health of Kentucky

style program them and present alongside me today is Melissa

Bean, the other nurse educator here with the sky program.

One of the reasons that we've devoted some increased time

and attention to trainings regarding the needs of youth who

identify as LGBTQ plus is because a little over 30%

of youth in foster care identify as LGBTQ plus and

the circumstances that led to the individuals that we serve

being in the system and outcome care is damaging and

traumatizing in and of itself, and we just want to

bring awareness and support so that these individuals that are

put in placements that they're treated with acceptance and respect

and they are not further traumatized by those entrusted with their care.

So these folks need to learn and

deserve to feel safe wherever they are.

So thank you once again for joining us

and we'll go ahead and get started.

So some of the things that we'll be discussing

today, we'll go over some terminology and definitions just

to make sure that you are aware of different

terms that are used often in this community.

We'll also go through some risks

that LGBTQ plus you face.

We'll look at some different educational

concerns and issues that this demographic

reports when they are in school.

We will also look at how this affects youth of color

and youth in foster care a little individually, and then we'll

look at ways that you can serve the LGBTQ plus you,

how to be an ally, how to rebound from mistakes, and

then we'll also provide you with some resources.

At the end, we should be conscious

about the language that we use.

This is something that's very important to this demographic

because language matters, and being mindful and choosing our

words carefully is one of the simplest things that

we can do to create a safe space for

youth for who we interact with.

And to these reasons, it's very important to know

and understand the various terms that individuals may use

to describe their own experiences and identities.

As we go through the LGBTQIA acronym, you'll notice that we have used the various flags that correspond to each identity and you may see these flags in other places that are being used and you may want some of yourself.

So getting started in the afternoon stands for

lesbian and this is a woman who is

emotionally romantically or sexually attracted to other women.

G stands for gay and that is a man who

is emotionally romantically or sexually attracted to other men.

B is for bisexual and this is a person

who is emotionally romantically or sexually attracted to more

than one sex, gender or gender identity.

P is for transgender, and this is an

umbrella term for people whose gender identity or expression is different than the cultural expectations based on that sex they were assigned at birth.

Key to stands for queer, and this is a term that is used to express fluid identities and orientations, and it's often used interchangeably with LGBTQ.

I in the acronym stands for intersex, and that is a person who is born with any variation in sex characteristics, including chromosomes, gonads, sex hormones, or genitals.

And then the A stands for Asexual, which means that is someone who does not experience sexual attraction or desire for other people.

You'll also see the age used interchangeably with ally, and we will go over Ally shift and how to be

an Ally a little bit later on in the presentation.

So a lot of the information and statistics that

you'll hear today, they're both from the Human Rights

Campaign, which is the largest LGBTQ advocacy group and

LGBTQ political lobbying organization in the United States, and

their website will be listed for you at the

end of this presentation in the Resources section.

They offer a wealth of information

that you can find extremely useful.

So every year they conduct an expensive survey of LGBTQ

youth and they provide a report of their findings.

So when compared with their non LGBT peers, LGBTQ

plus youth in this survey report much lower levels

of happiness, higher incidence of alcohol and drug use,

and less connection to adult support during personal problems.

They are also much more likely than they're

non LGBTQ plus your peers to be more

honest about themselves online and in real life.

And when asked to describe their most important problem,

the one thing that they would like to change

LGBTQ plus, you describe the challenges they face as

being directly related to their identity as LGBTQ.

So if you look at the screen here, you'll see

kind of the seesaw where non LGBTQ plus youth state

that their biggest problems and worries are around class or

College, as well as exams and grades.

And so on the other side of the seesaw, you see

the LGBTQ they're also going to have the same worries and

concerns the classes, the College, the exams, the grades.

But on top of that, they state that their actual biggest worries comes from not being accepted by their family, from bullying, and from fear to being out and open.

So they still carry those same concerns as any other youth would.

Only they have these other issues in addition to those as well.

Lgbtq youth and individuals, they have historically faced discrimination and stigma and cultural bias.

And they're at a higher risk for health disparities more than most any other demographic.

And as a result of these and other stressors, LGBTQ youth are at an increased risk for various behavioral health issues.

So as you can see here on the

screen, some of the risks associated with LGBTQ

plus youth include a higher prevalence of STDs,

including HIV, victimization of human trafficking, homelessness Queen

for drug abuse, mental health issues and suicide.

Lgbtq individuals are at that high risk for HIV due

to not only the IV or intravene use drug use,

but also for their sexual behaviors as well.

Hiv infection is particularly prevalent among

gay and bisexual men and transgender

women who have sex with them.

Lgbtq plus youth are twice as likely as non

LGBTQ plus youth to experiment with alcohol and drugs,

and the Trevor Project States that suicide is the

second leading cause of death among young people.

Overall, ages ten to 24, the LGBTQ plus youth

are 300% more likely to contemplate suicide and 500%

more likely to attempt suicide than heterosexual abuse.

Relentless bullying and family rejection those are

two major factors in this area, and

suicide prevention and enhancing resiliency are definitely

critical aspects that these youths need when

receiving care in this population.

Lgbtq plus youth make up a disproportionately high

percentage of human trafficking victims across the United

States, and it's been found that LGBTQ plus

youth experience various forms of force, fraud, and

coercion on a regular basis, and these individuals

are particularly susceptible as they are uniquely vulnerable

to having possibly suffered persecution and discrimination based

on their sexual orientation or their gender identity,

and because they have a lack of family

and support network and they frequently have had

a history of violence and trauma.

40% or more of homeless youth identifies as LGBTQ

plus, and in addition to being at a greater

risk for houselessness or homelessness, LGBTQ plus youth are

more likely to become houseless at younger ages.

So one in four teens are forced to leave

their homes after coming out, and then twelve to

36% of Emancipated foster care, you will report being

homeless at least once after discharge from care, 78%

of LGBTQ plus youth were removed or ran away

from their foster placements because of their caregivers, hostility

towards their orientation or their gender identity.

So now we'll go ahead and talk about

some of those education concerns that I mentioned

at the beginning of the presentation.

Outside of the home, schools are one of the

primary locations where your child is going to be,

and while schools can be a difficult environment for

any child, they are often very unwelcoming for LGBTQ

plus youth and both the lack of policies and

procedures that support LGBTQ as well as failure to

implement protections that do exist oftentimes.

The combination of both of those results

in bullying, exclusion, discrimination, and all of

these things put them at physical and

psychological risk and limit their education.

So go ahead and look at some of

the issues that have been reported that these

individuals face whenever they are at school.

Lgbtq plus youth are more than two times as likely

as non LGBTQ plus youth to say that they have

been verbally harassed and called back in school.

About 92% say that they hear negative messages about

being LGBTQ plus it's being LGBTQ plus, and then

LGBTQ plus youth are also two times as likely

to be physically assaulted at school and to be

excluded by their peers because that they are different.

So the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network, or

Gleason, is a foundation that works to ensure that

LGBTQ students can learn and grow in a school

environment free from bullying and harassment.

And in their 2019 National School Climate Survey,

they found that schools nationwide continue to be

possible environments for many LGBTQ plus students.

Where the students routinely heard anti LGBTQ

language and where the students experience victimization

and discrimination while they're at school.

Students who feel safe and supported while they're

at school have a better educational outcome and

a hostile school climate can affect students academic

success and their mental health as well.

So having youth voice and hearing whatever they

experience is very important to us here.

And here are some of the various issues that

LGBTQ plus you have reported experiencing in 2019.

Almost 60% said they felt unsafe at

school because of their sexual orientation.

I'm not going to read all of these, but

just some of the ones that jump out at

me, something you might not think about.

Over 45% have avoided bathrooms because they felt

unsafe or comfortable or because it didn't match

the identity that they identified with.

58% were sexually harassed, which includes

unwanted touching or sexual remarks.

45% were they experienced electronic harassment

in the past year or cyberbullying.

11% were physically assaulted, punch, kick, or

had a weapon used against them.

25% were physically harassed, meaning

they were pushed or shoved.

Just lots of different issues that you can see here.

10% were prevented from participating in

school sports because they were LGBTQ.

And then even if you look at the

very last one here on this slide, 3%

were disciplined for simply identifying as LGBTQ.

So LGBTQ plus youth of color not only face, you

know, the discrimination and unacceptants for their sexual identity or

how they identify, but they also can face racism and

issues like that because of their ethnicity.

So one in five LGBTQ plus students report

being bullied due to race, ethnicity, or national

origin, while also being bullied on sexual orientation
and gender identity as well.

And while harassing and bullying of any
kind negatively affects students' ability to thrive in
school, students who experience multiple forms of
bullying and harassment face even greater challenges.

So supportive parents, school administrators, teachers, counselors, healthcare
providers, and other professionals who play a role
in the lives of the LGBTQ youth.

They have to support the LGBTQ plus
youth in their pursuit of a collective
equality, inclusion, and racial justice.

And with that, I'm actually going to turn things over to
Melissa, and she's going to talk to you a little bit
further about our LGBTQ plus youth and foster care.

Thank you, Erica.

So research has shown that LGBTQ youth are over represented in the foster care system.

This means that the percentage of youth in foster care who are LGBTQ is larger than the percentage of LGBTQ youth in the general youth population.

Lgbtq youth enter the foster care system for many of the same reasons as non LGBTQ youth in care, such as abuse, neglect, and parental abuse.

Many of these youth have had the added layer of trauma that comes with being rejected or mistreated because of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

One in four LGBTQ plus youth, 20 or

26%, are forced to leave their families of

origin because of conflicts with their parents regarding

their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Three out of four youth, or 78% were removed or

ran away from their foster placements as a result of

hostility toward their sexual orientation or gender identity.

This quote by Brian Samuels, who is the former

Commissioner of the US Administration on Children, Youth and

Families, says, Every child in youth who is unable

to live with his or her parents is entitled

to a safe, loving, and affirming foster care placement

irrespective of the young person's sexual orientation, gender identity,

or gender expression, which basically sums up the entire

focus of this presentation.

Today, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning or

LGBTQ young people are overrepresented in foster care

where they are more likely to experience discrimination,

abuse, neglect, and the risk of harm.

In a 2019 study, 30.4% of youth in foster care identify

as LGBTQ and 5% as transgender, compared to eleven 2% and

one 7%, respectively, of youth not in foster care.

Lgbtq youth are more likely to suffer

from consistent harassment and abuse in foster

care, juvenile justice settings, and homeless shelters.

Without safe foster care placement, and without the vital

support of case workers and other child welfare professionals,

LGBTQ youth often flee abuse in foster care only

to face homelessness and sexual exploitation.

The Williams Institute also found that around 40% of

homeless youth identify as LGBTQ and the US National

Alliance to End Homelessness reports that LGBTQ homeless youth

are roughly 7.4 times more likely to suffer acts

of sexual violence than heterosexual homeless youth.

Lgbtq youth face bias and

discrimination in Foster care.

The unacceptable reality is that LGBTQ youth, after facing

trauma and maltreatment from their families or caregivers, too

often enter a foster care system that is ill

equipped to competently meet their needs and subjects them

to further bias and discrimination.

Many experience multiple forms of discrimination

based on race, class, disability, sexual

orientation, and gender identity.

Lgbtq plus homeless youth are roughly seven

four times more likely to suffer acts

of sexual violence than their heterosexual counterparts.

As we just mentioned, the US National Alliance to End

Homelessness research shows that these youth are twice as likely

as their non LGBTQ peers to report being treated poorly

by the foster care system, and a survey of LGBTQ

youth and out of home care in New York found

that 78% of these youth were removed or ran away

from their foster care placements because of hostility towards their

sexual orientation or gender identity.

While 100% of LGBTQ youth in group homes report

verbal Harassment 70% report Physical Violence in Group homes.

The Human Rights Campaign States that due to

these types of experiences, LGBTQ youth and foster

care are at risk for being exploited and oftentimes exchanging sexual acts and services rather than subjecting themselves to abuse.

Within the foster care system, these activities often lead to involvement with the juvenile justice system, another system in which LGBTQ youth are also overrepresented and often face further abuse.

Only 13 States and the District of Columbia have explicit laws or policies in place to protect foster youth from discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Even with most LGBTQ inclusive agencies, there can still be a struggle to find qualified foster parents who are ready and willing to welcome LGBTQ youth into their homes.

Recognizing that LGBTQ adults are one potential group that could provide affirming foster care, foster homes for these youth agencies have begun to engage LGBTQ adults who may be interested in becoming foster parents.

These adults also frequently face discrimination when interacting with foster care agencies, while only

14 States plus the District Columbia provide explicit nondiscrimination protections for LGBTQ adults who are willing to provide foster care homes.

So, with all these startling statistics that you've heard from Erica and myself, how do we begin to support these youth?

Well, one way is to be supportive.

Parents may have mixed feelings about finding

out that they have an LGBTQ child.

This can be for many reasons, from being worried

about how they'll fare in the community, about bullying,

school discrimination, or because of religious reasons.

But whatever your feelings are, we want to

be empathetic and supportive with children, especially adolescents.

It's crucial to keep communication open.

Communication in which parents listen without

judgment is validation for that child.

Next, we want to keep them safe.

Of course, we want to understand school policies.

We know that we're worried about how

they'll be treated at school and in

settings where they might not be welcomed.

If you get the sense that these environments won't be

supportive of your child, you can make a stand and

advocate for support or consider changing their school to some

place where they will be safe or protected.

Providing a supportive home life, again, is critical.

Being comfortable enough to share their concerns

with you can certainly make a difference.

By being an advocate for your child and speaking

with Pride about your child, you're working to make

the world a better place for other young people.

Coming out can be a huge relief for teens

or young adults who are LGBTQ, but the process

is often Rocky and sometimes it's painful.

Your child may have opened two friends or

coworkers who didn't respond well, and they may

be worried about how family members or other

important people in their lives will react.

So once your child seems ready to talk,

check in with them about how they're feeling

and how you might can be supported.

Start by asking questions and

listening to their answers calmly.

Your goal is to let them know that you're

hearing what they need to share with you.

The Trevor's Project LGBTQ Mental Health Study found that

most respondents disclose their sexual orientation and gender identity

to friends first, then trusted adults who may not

always be their parents and less than half were

out to an adult at school.

And when it comes to telling others in the

family that a child is LGBTQ, it's recommended that

you let your child take the lead.

Telling the rest of the family is up

to the person who is coming out.

Just have an open conversation with them.

Be honest, be clear, and be supportive to

help them plan how to move forward.

Being respectful of their wishes is

an important element to this conversation.

So, as we've mentioned several times in this

training, today system involved youth have experienced trauma.

It's unacceptable that these children are at

risk for them being further traumatized by

those entrusted with their care because of

their sexual orientation or gender identity.

By recognizing the signs and symptoms of trauma in

our adolescents and youth, and then responding by fully

integrating knowledge about trauma with support and acceptance, we

can seek to actively resist retraumatization.

So how can we be an ally?

Well, one of the biggest ways you can offer support

to the LGBTQ community is to be an ally.

An ally is a person who has a genuine,

strong concern for the wellbeing of these people, a

person who supports and accepts LGBTQ people and advocates

for equal rights and fair treatment.

How can we be an ally and a friend?

We'll be a listener.

Be openminded, be willing to talk, be

inclusive, and invite LGBTQ friends to hang

out with your friends and family.

Don't assume that all your

friends and coworkers are straight.

Someone close to you could be looking

for support in their coming out process.

Not making assumptions will give

them the space they need.

Anti LGBTQ comments and jokes are harmful.

Let your friends, family and co workers

know that you find them offensive.

Confront your own prejudices and bias, even

if it's uncomfortable to do so.

Defend your friends against discrimination.

Believe that all people, regardless of gender identity and sexual orientation, should be treated with dignity and respect.

So, as Erica mentioned earlier, one of the basic ways to show respect is to correctly use someone's pronouns.

When someone is referred to with the wrong pronoun, it makes them feel disrespected and invalidated.

Here are some examples of some speech you can incorporate to use everyone folks y'all they them theirs parents Children Child Sibling Partner Partner Spouse so President

Obama, from the National Foster Care Month in 2015 presidential proclamation summed up our mission in providing support to the LGBTQ population when he said, all young people, regardless of what they look like, which religion they follow, who they love, or the gender they

identify with, deserve the chance to dream and grow

in a loving permanent home.

So even well intentioned providers are uncomfortable

at the thought of discussing gender identity

with their patients because they fear they

will make a mistake and accept them.

In addition, most people are uncomfortable

asking for a person's pronouns.

Here's a simple rule.

If you do make a mistake, simply acknowledge

it, apologize and keep the conversation moving on.

Doing this shows respect and consideration for the individual and

by not making a big deal out of your mistake,

you don't draw a lot of attention to it.

Just fixes it and moves on.

On the next several slides are some

resources for your further research and education.

Please feel free to contact us should you have any

further questions and thank you for joining us today.