



Supporting LGBTQ+ Youth in Systems of Care: *Seven Lessons Learned*

Saying It Out Loud Conference

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Spokane, WA

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2

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Listening to Their Voices

Enhancing Successful Outcomes for LGBTQ Youth in Washington State's Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice Systems.

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February 2015

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eQuality Project

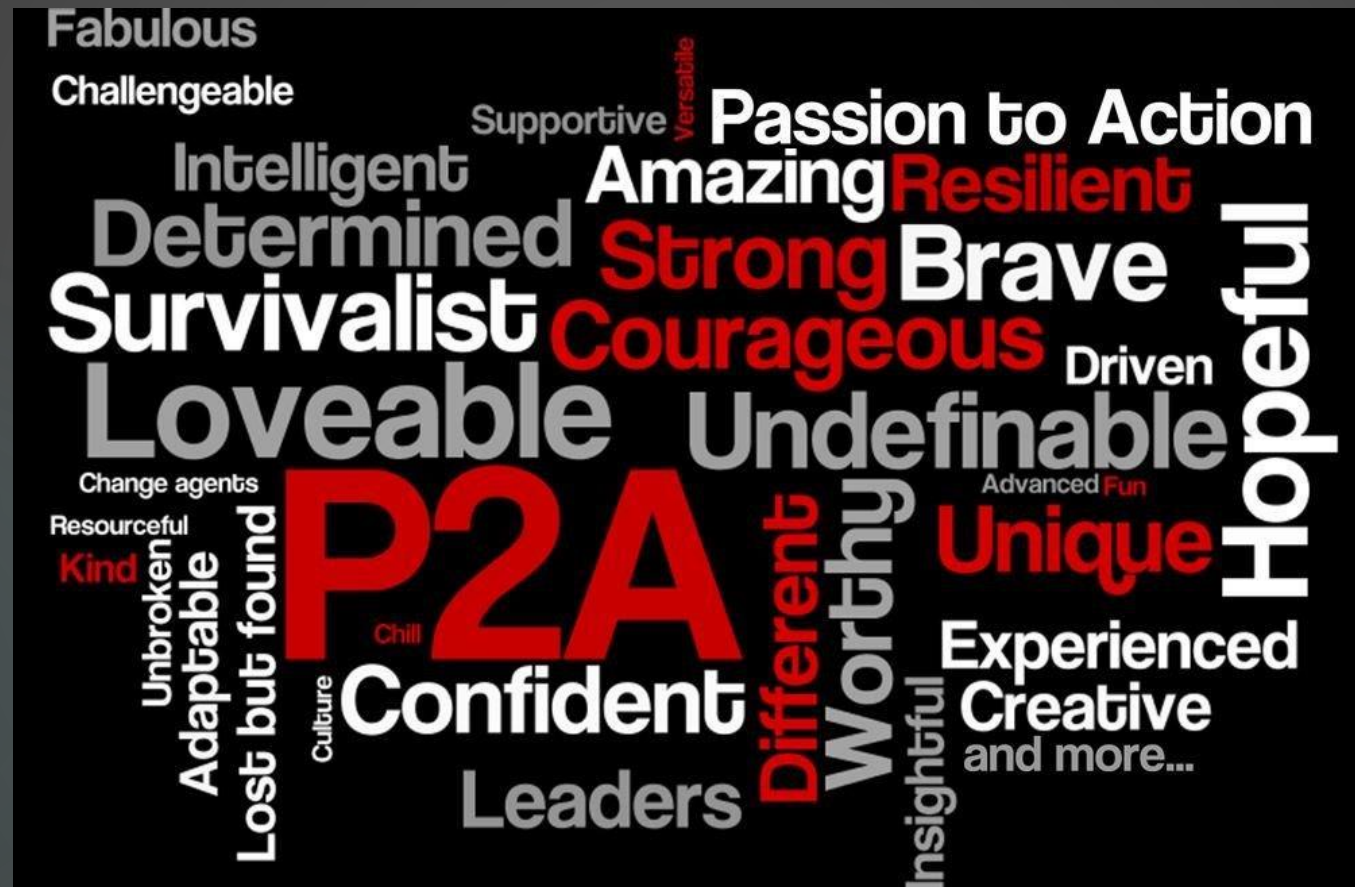
**Protocol for
Safe & Affirming
Care**

Improving the Lives of LGBTQ+ Youth in Washington
State's Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice Systems

1st Edition / January 2017

Nicholas Oakley, JD

Passion to Action (P2A)



Lesson 1: Know Your *Why*

"IF YOU WANT TO BUILD A SHIP, DON'T DRUM UP PEOPLE TO COLLECT WOOD AND DON'T ASSIGN THEM TASKS AND WORK, BUT RATHER TEACH THEM TO LONG FOR THE ENDLESS IMMENSITY OF THE SEA."

--ANTOINE DE SAINT-EXUPERY

With the person sitting next to you please discuss the following:

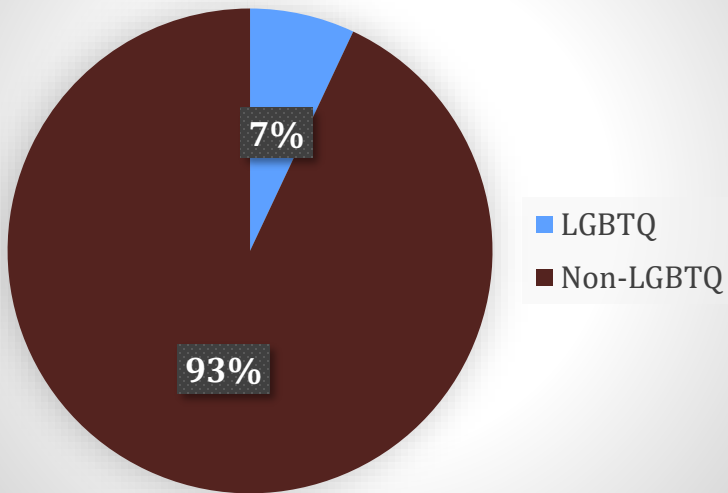
- ▶ Discuss some of the different roles that you play in your life (parent, employee, sibling, etc)
- ▶ Name and discuss a few social identity groups that you belong (activities, cultural, faith, etc)

Purpose: Page 19

- ▶ The purpose of the Protocol is to improve the safety, health, and well-being of all youth in Washington's child welfare and juvenile justice systems. Professionals, volunteers, and caregivers will *not* be able to improve the safety, health, and well-being of all youth unless and until they address the specific needs of LGBTQ+ youth. LGBTQ+ youth are overrepresented in these systems, experience unique forms of trauma, and have specific needs related to their sexual orientation and gender identity. Therefore, ensuring appropriate care for all youth necessitates a focused effort on behalf of LGBTQ+ youth.

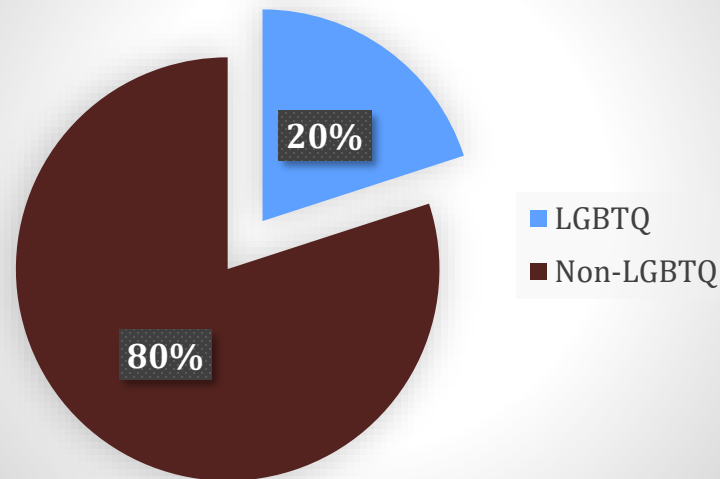
How Many Systems Involved Youth Are LGBTQ+?

WA Population



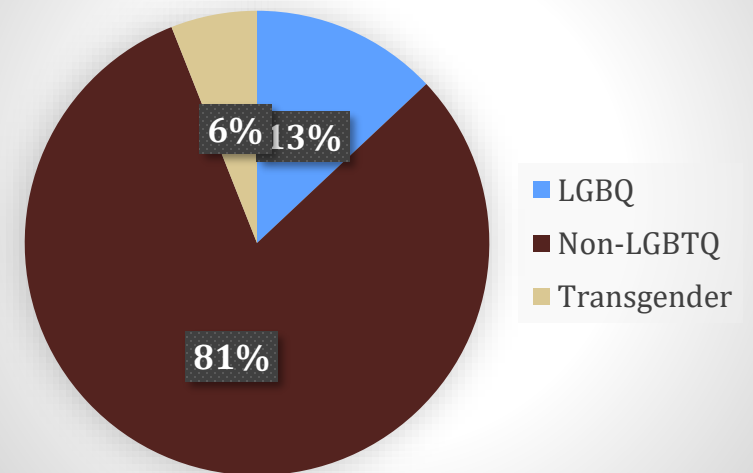
Source: <https://www.lgbtmap.org/file/lgbtq-incarcerated-youth.pdf>

Juvenile Justice



Source: <https://www.lgbtmap.org/file/lgbtq-incarcerated-youth.pdf>

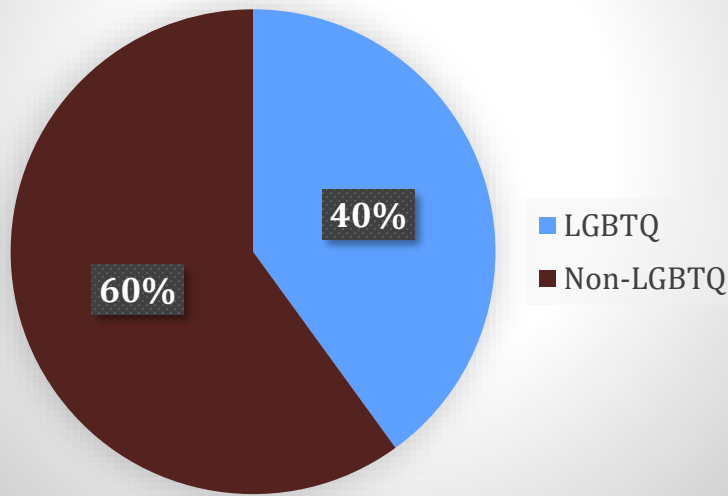
Child Welfare



Source: https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/LAFYS_report_final-aug-2014.pdf

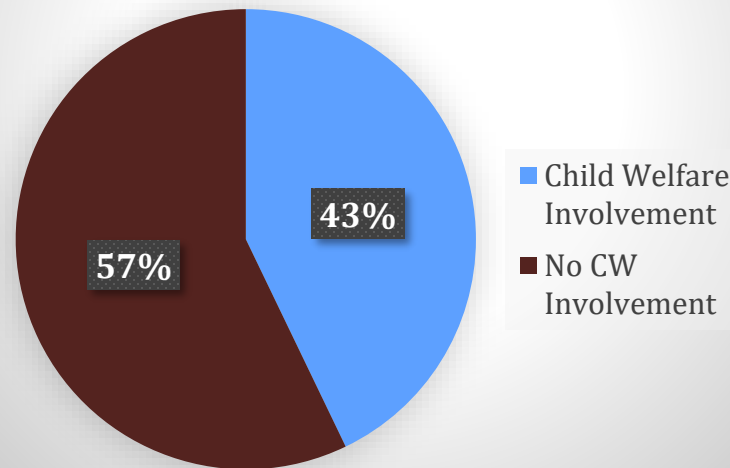
Child Welfare and Disparities

Youth Experiencing Homelessness by SOGIE



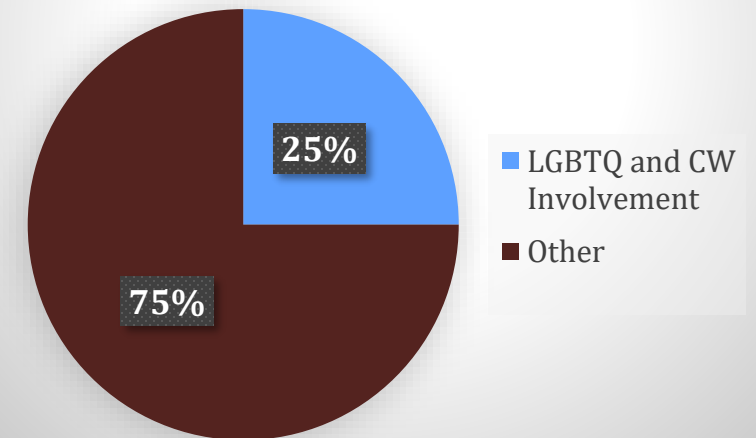
Source: <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/press/american-shame-40-of-homeless-youth-are-lgbt-kids/>

LGBTQ Youth Experiencing Homelessness by CW Involvement



Source: Hunter, *What's Good for Gays is Good for the Gander: Making Homeless Youth Housing Safer for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Youth*, Vol. 46 No. 3 Family Court Review 543, 545 (2008).

All Youth Experiencing Homelessness by SOGIE and CW Involvement



Lesson 2: Know Your Terms

“THE LIMITS OF MY LANGUAGE MEAN THE LIMITS OF MY WORLD”

-- LUDWIG WITTGENSTEIN

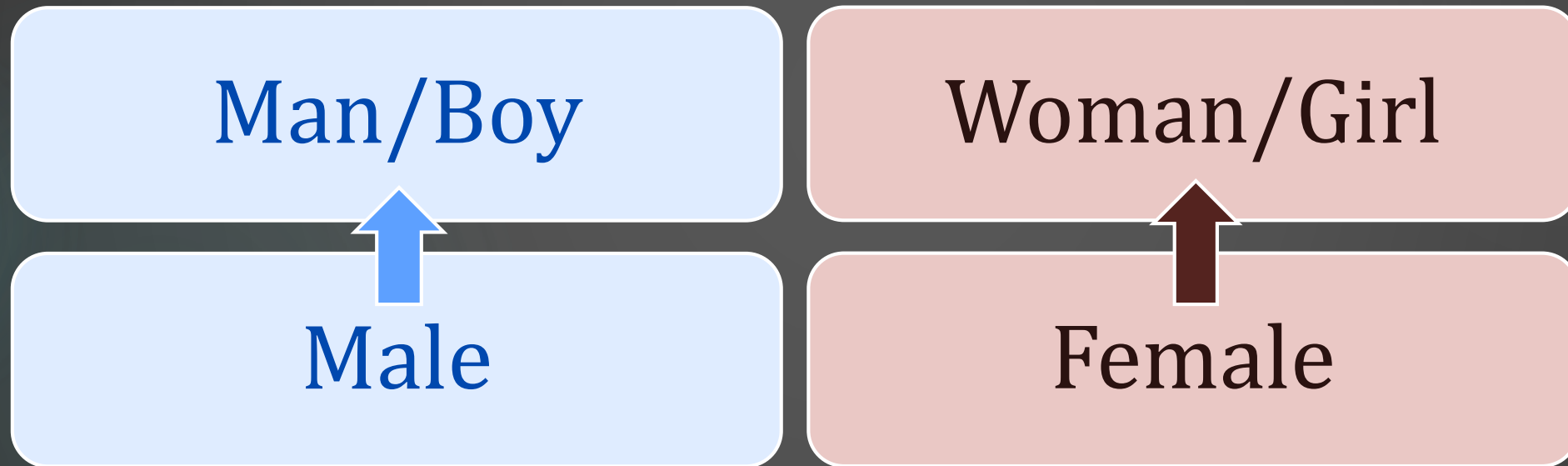
Biological Sex

10

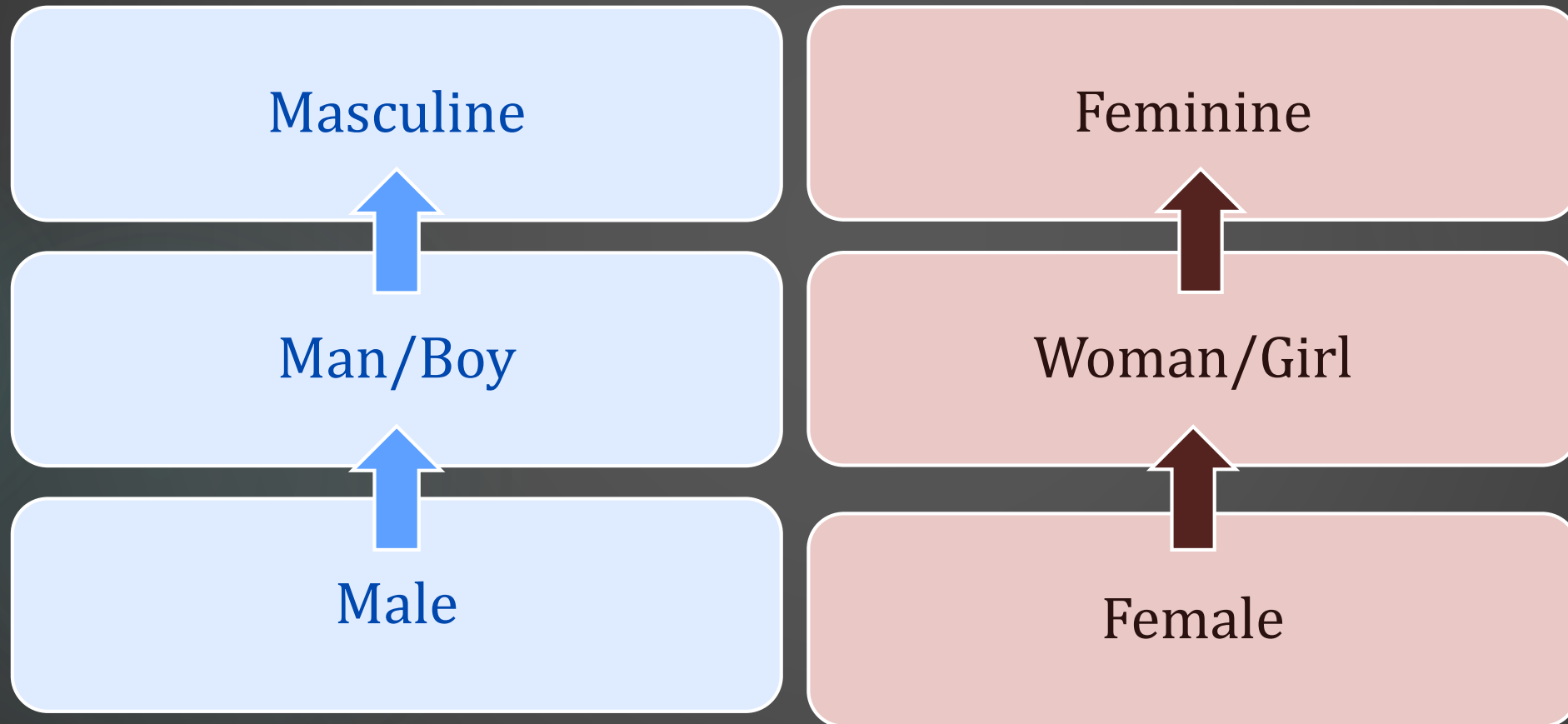
Male

Female

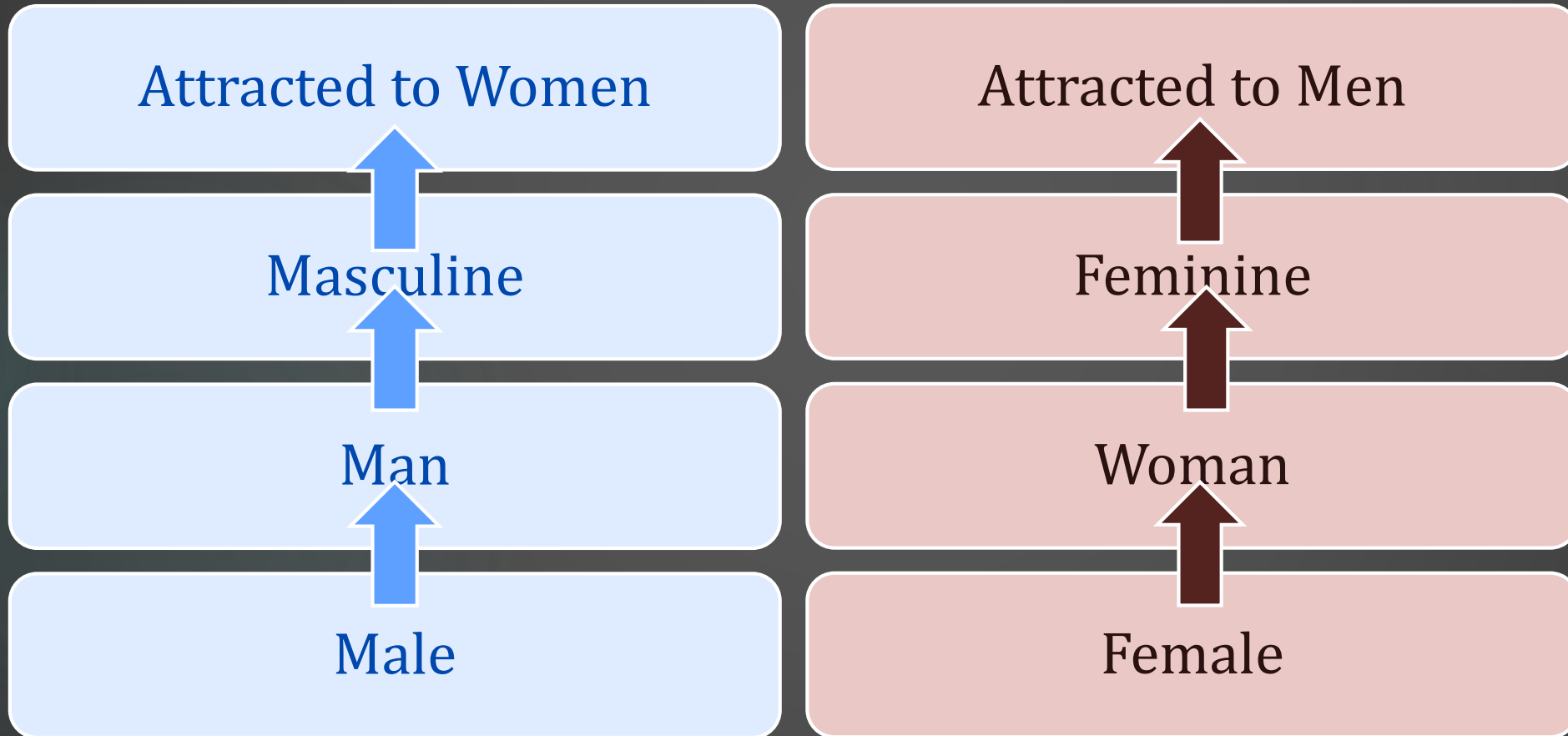
Gender Identity



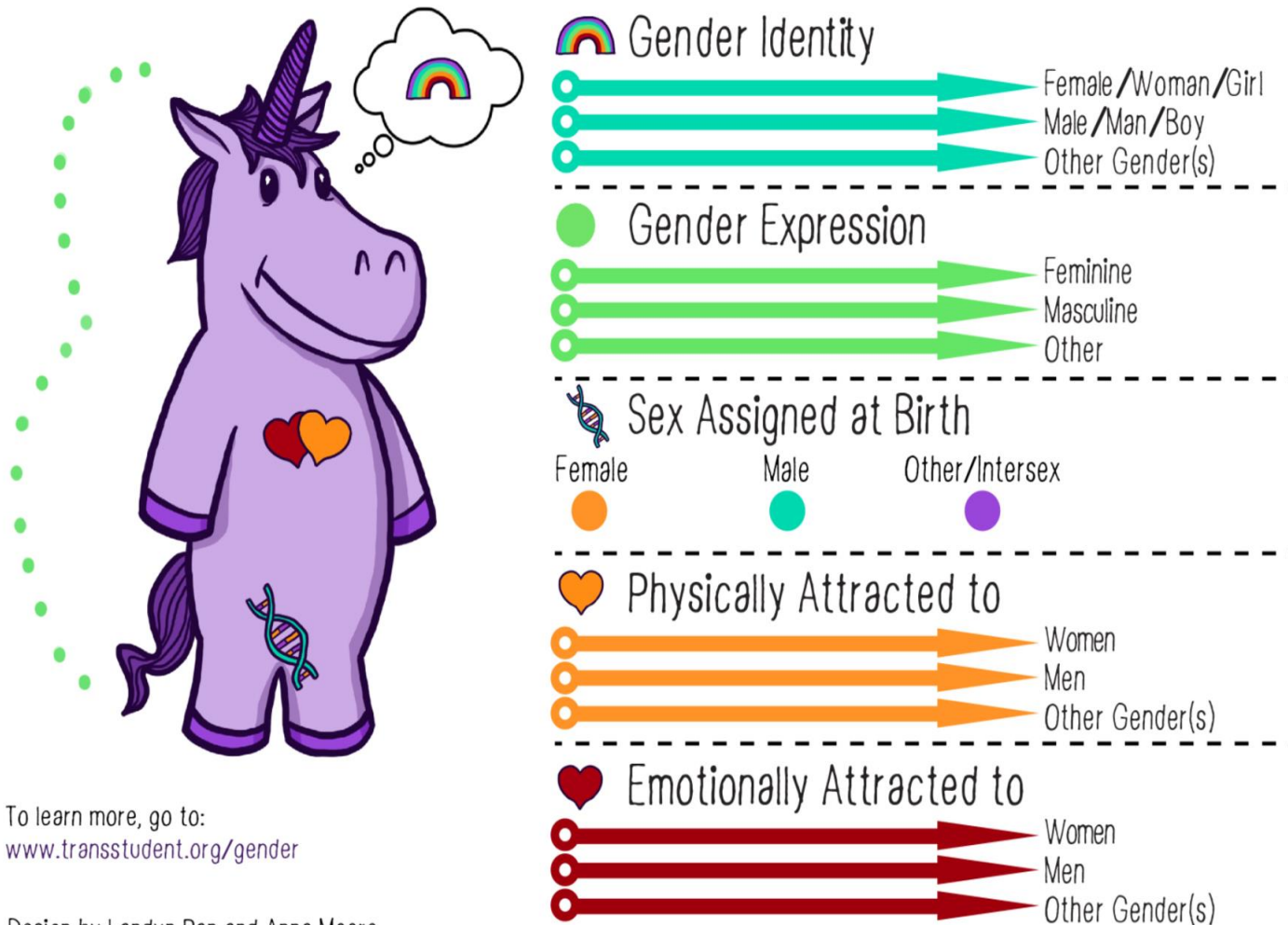
Gender Expression



Sexual Orientation



The SOGIE Spectrum



To learn more, go to:
www.transstudent.org/gender

Design by Landyn Pan and Anna Moore

Alphabet Soup

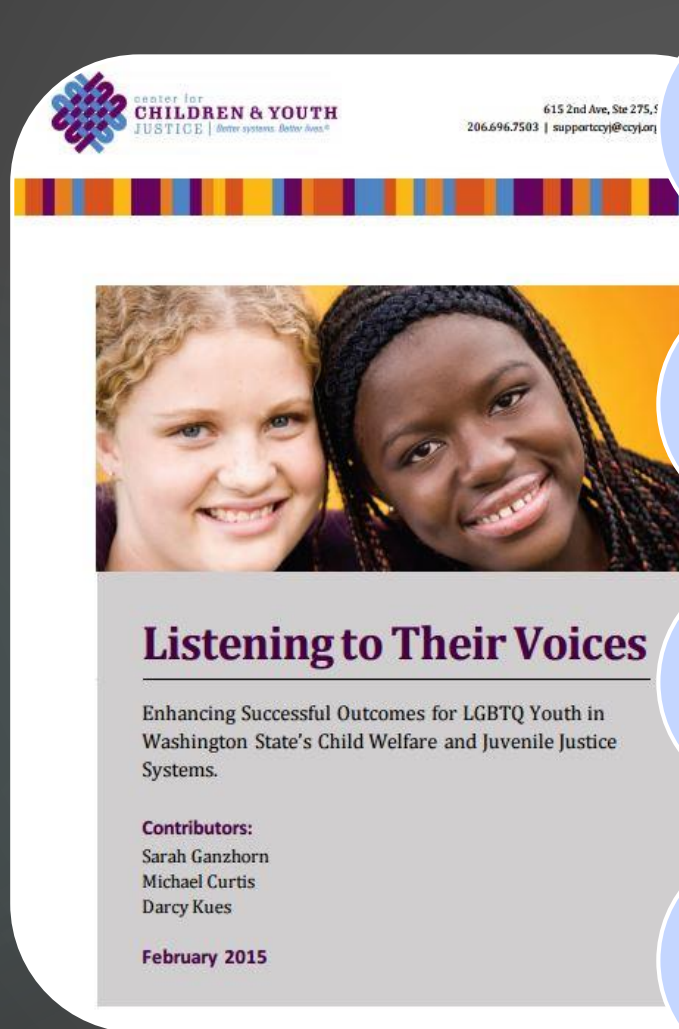
15



Lesson 3: Sweat the “Small” Stuff

*“IT IS THE SMALL THINGS IN LIFE WHICH COUNT; IT IS THE INCONSEQUENTIAL LEAK WHICH
EMPTIES THE BIGGEST RESERVOIR”*

-- NAPOLEON HILL



LGBTQ System Alumni Focus Groups & Surveys

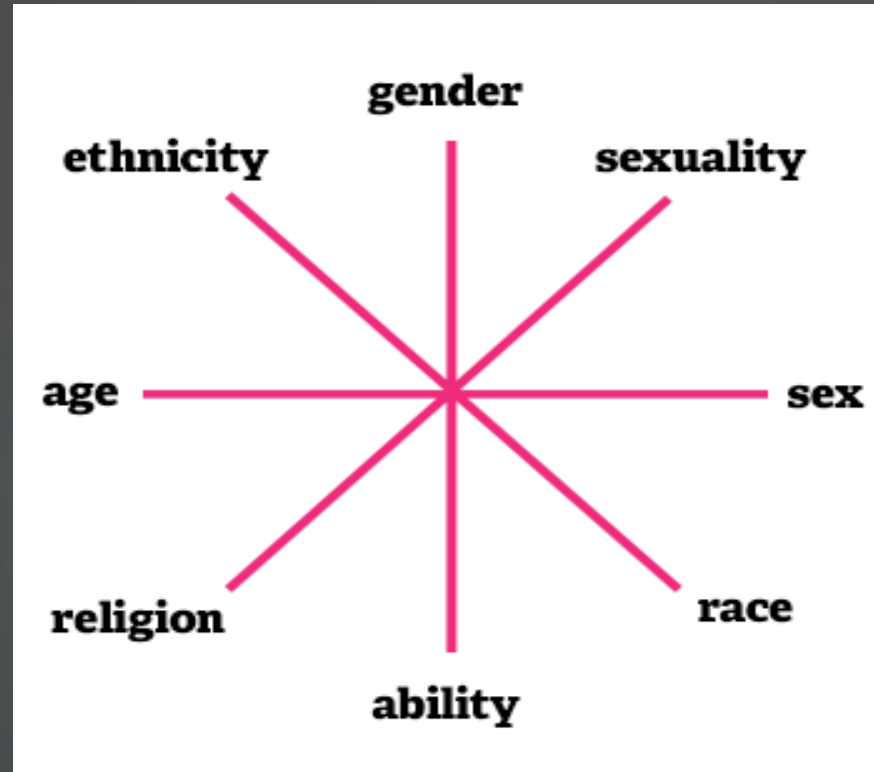
System Professional Surveys

Community-Based Service Provider Interviews

Law & Policy Reviews

What is Intersectionality?

18



The Experiences of LGBTQ+ Systems-Involved Youth

19

Explosions

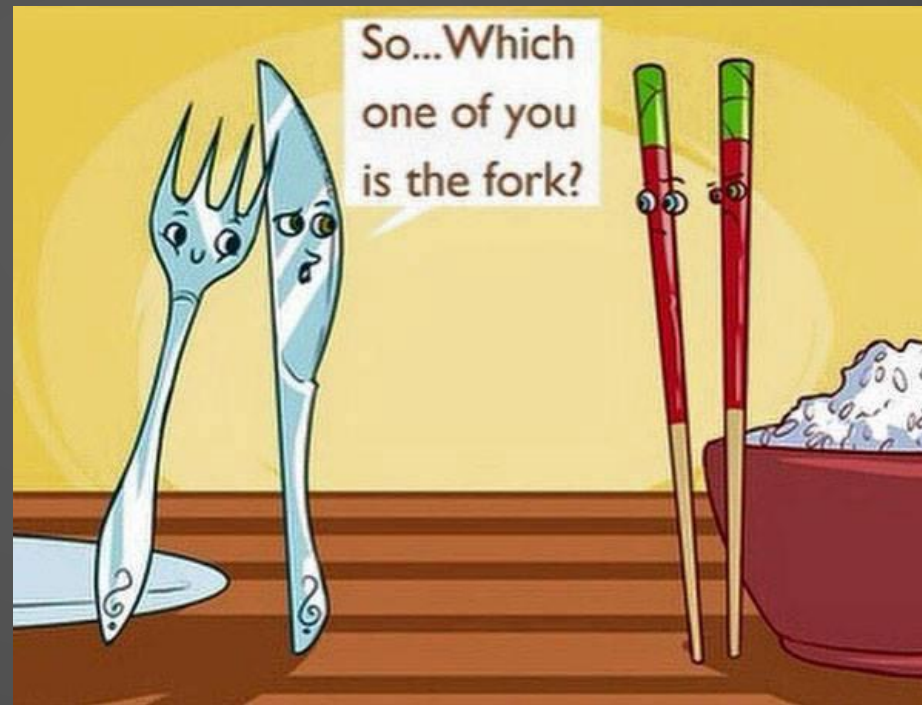


Erosions



Microaggressions

Brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative slights and insults toward target groups.



Use of Chosen Names

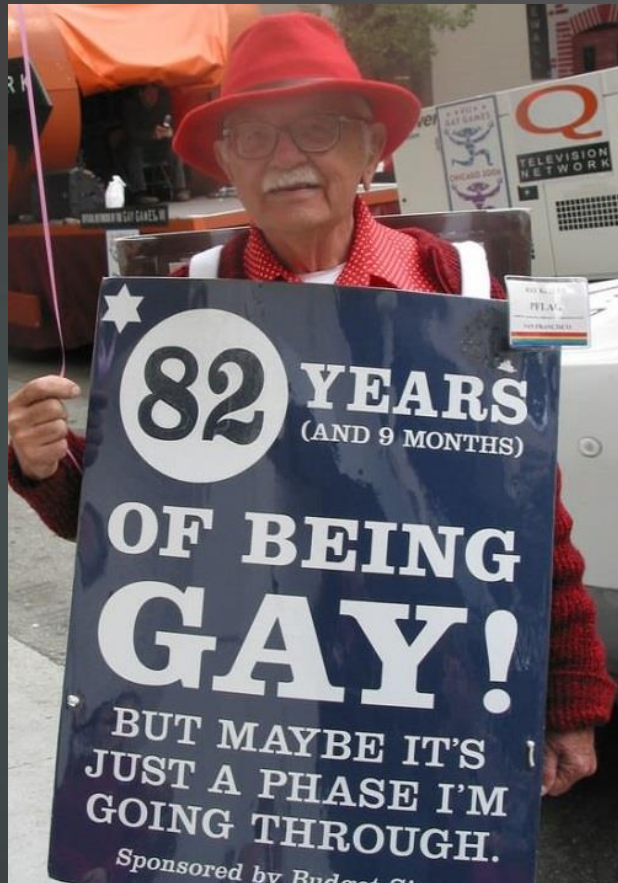
Key Finding:

Transgender youth who were able to use their **chosen names** in multiple contexts (home, school, work, with friends) reported **fewer depressive symptoms** and **less suicidal ideation and behavior**.

Using chosen name in just **one context** resulted in:

- ▶ **29% decrease** in suicidal ideation
- ▶ **56% decrease** in suicidal behavior

Dismissal



“I just don’t understand **how** to help you?”

(repeating what was said to them)

We are seen as an “**extra problem.**”

Stigmatization and Discrimination

23



LGBTQ youth are on a “shorter leash.”

“In detention, I was perceived as a butch lesbian....People just assume that you’re like a predator. Like you can’t be housed with other girls because you’re going to sleep with them.”

Listening to their voices...

Assumptions made



Simultaneously Conspicuous and Unrecognized

It would be too easy to say that I feel invisible. Instead, I feel painfully visible, and entirely ignored.

- David Levithan

Anti-Discrimination Law and Policy

25

Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA)

RCW 49.60.030

WAC 388-145-1710, 388-147-1595 and 388-148-1520(6)

DCYF Policy 6900

RCW 49.60.030

Freedom from discrimination -- Declaration of civil rights.

(1) The right to be free from discrimination because of race, creed, color, national origin, *sex, sexual orientation (including gender identity)*, or the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a disabled person is recognized as and declared to be a civil right. This right shall include, but not be limited to:

(b) The right to the full enjoyment of any of the *accommodations, advantages, facilities*, or privileges of any place of public resort, accommodation, assemblage, or amusement;

Washington Administrative Code

WAC	Applies to:
388-145-1710	Group Care Facilities and Services
388-147-1595	Child Placing Agency and Adoption Services
388-148-1520(6)	Child Foster Homes

You must follow all state and federal laws regarding nondiscrimination while providing services to children in your care. You must treat foster children in your care with dignity and respect regardless of race, ethnicity, culture, [sexual orientation and gender identity](#). You must connect a child with resources that meets a child's needs regarding race, religion, culture, [sexual orientation and gender identity](#).

DCYF Policy 6900

- ▶ To address the specific needs of children and youth under the age of 21 who are developing, discovering, or identifying themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ+) and are receiving CA services. This policy will provide guidance to assist CA staff in identifying and providing appropriate and culturally responsive services to those children and youth.

Activity: Practicing Pronouns

29

- ▶ He/Him/His
- ▶ She/Her/Hers
- ▶ They/Them/Theirs

Hello
my name is

my pronouns are

Lesson 4: We're Guilty Until Proven Innocent

"SKEPTICISM: THE MARK AND EVEN THE POSE OF THE EDUCATED MIND."

-- JOHN DEWEY

Lessons on Creating a Safer Space

31

Visual Indicators

- Posters
- Signs

Affirming Statements

- Initial
- Ongoing reminders

Private Setting

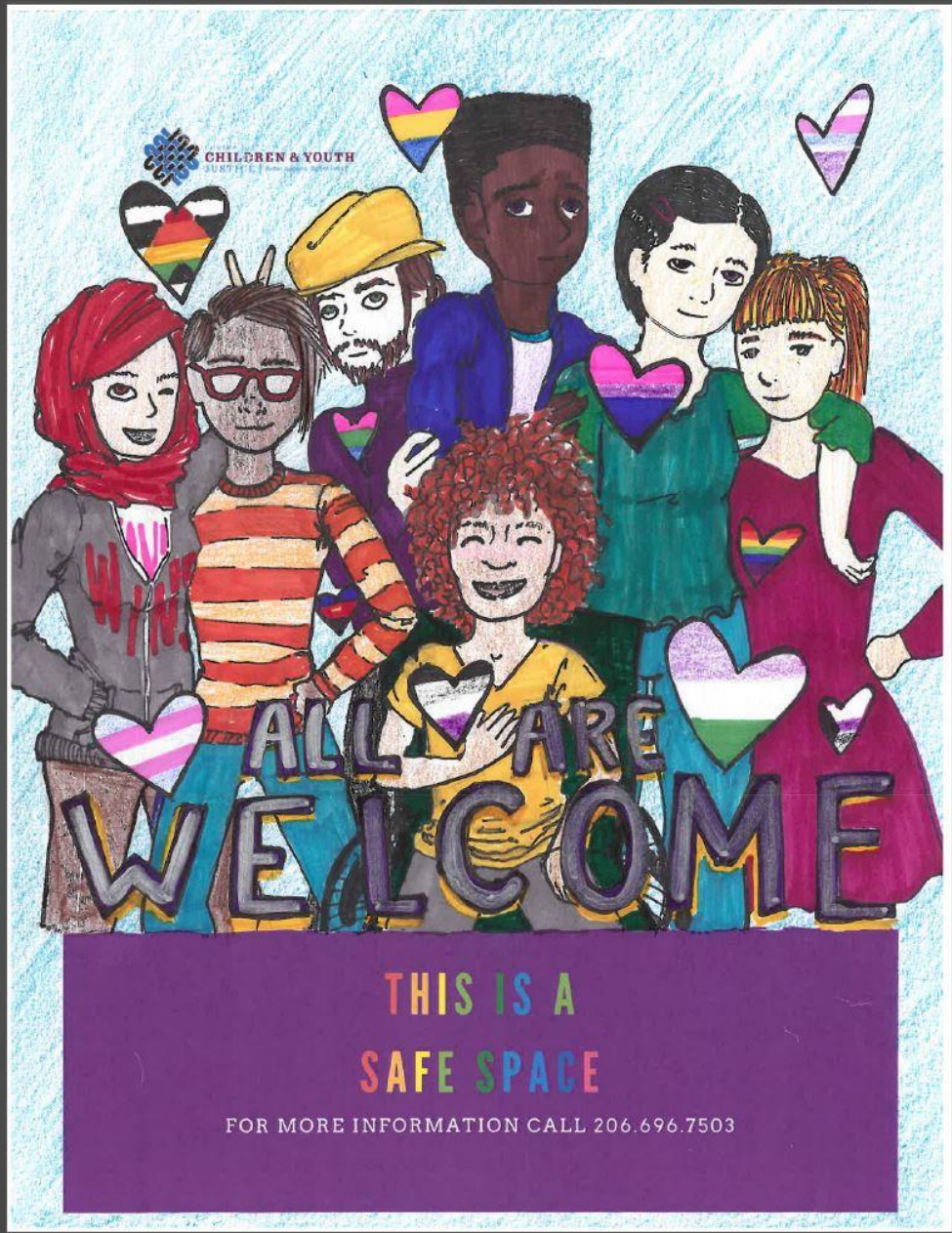
- Location of and participants in discussion about identity-related issues

Use of Language

- Pronouns
- Reflecting terms

Confidentiality

- Permission



THIS IS A
SAFE SPACE
FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL 206.696.7503

Lesson 6: Resources, Resources, Resources

“EVERY PERSON FELT LIKE THEY DIDN’T BELONG, OR AT SOME POINT FELT LIKE THEY DIDN’T NEED TO CARRY ON, THEY WEREN’T NEEDED. SO I THINK IT’S IMPORTANT TO SHOW EACH OTHER, ‘LOOK, WE’RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER, WE ALL FEEL THIS WAY, LET’S WORK TOGETHER.’”

-- COLE LEDFORD

Never Receiving Appropriate Services

34



- ▶ Systems' failure to discuss sexual orientation and gender identity

Unsafe Services

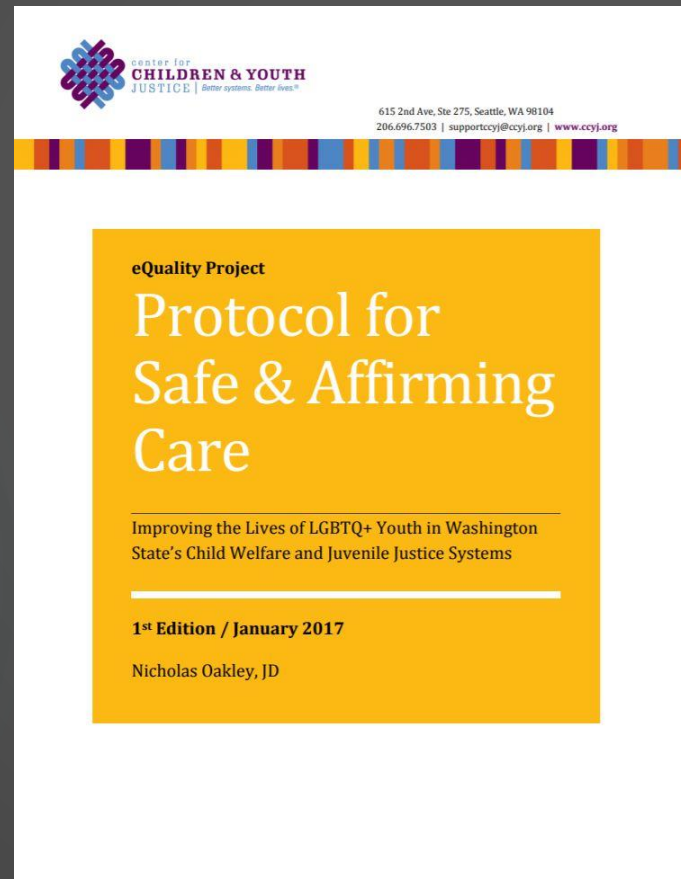
**THIS IS NOT
A SAFE SPACE
TO BE QUEER**

Your gender identity is a
“**symptom of psychological
illness**”

You need to “**pray to God**”
and “**accept Jesus**” (in
response to coming out)

The Protocol for Safe & Affirming Care

36





the best gift you are ever going to give
someone —the permission to feel safe
in their own skin. to feel worthy.
to feel like they are enough.

@M_EYE_ND | IG

Resources Updates

Community Resource Maps / Spreadsheet

- ▶ King County Map - <http://tiny.cc/CCYJKing>
- ▶ Spokane County Map - <http://tiny.cc/CCYJSpokane>
- ▶ Community Resource Spreadsheet - <http://tiny.cc/og3iry>

*When the we
address the
specific needs of
LGBTQ youth...
all youth
benefit*

“Every youth has a gender identity, not just transgender youth. All youth express their gender, whether they transgress or conform to gender norms. Every youth has a sexual orientation, not just gay, lesbian and bisexual youth. **Creating a professional environment that acknowledges and respects youth across the full spectrum of gender and sexuality permits all youth to explore their emerging identities, prevents mistreatment based on anti-LGBT bias, and promotes the health and well-being of all youth.** It also sends the message to all youth that self-determination and affirmation are core values and gives all youth the opportunity to define themselves in a supportive and affirming environment. Learning respect for differences will serve youth in all parts of their lives.”

The Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2015). Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Youth in the Juvenile Justice System. Baltimore., MD: Shannan Wilber. Retrieved from www.aecf.org

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