



Southeast (HHS Region 4)

MHTTC

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

Two-Part Webinar Series

Supporting LGBTQ+ Youth in Schools

With speakers from
the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight
Education Network (GLSEN)

GLSEN[®]

**Thursday
March 11
12:00 - 1:30pm ET**

**Part 1: Understanding
the school experiences
of LGBTQ+ students**

Register at this [link](#)

**Thursday
March 18
12:00 - 1:30 pm ET**

**Part 2: Improving the
school experiences of
LGBTQ+ students**

Register at this [link](#)

Thursday, March 11

12:00 - 1:30pm ET

Part 1: Understanding the school experiences of LGBTQ+ students

Register at this [link](#)

Speakers from **GLSEN**[®]



Nhan Truong
(he/him/his)



Sophia
Arredondo
(she/her/hers)



Freddie
Taharka
(he/him/his)



Eric Samelo
(he/they)

Learning Objectives

1. Describe LGBTQ+ youth landscapes in the United States and in the Southeast region
2. Recognize misconceptions that are harmful to LGBTQ+ youth
3. Understand mental health risks and resiliencies among LGBTQ+ youth
4. Summarize the potential of school mental health initiatives to enhance the lives of students who are LGBTQ+

Thursday, March 18

12:00 - 1:30pm ET

Part 2: Improving the school experiences of LGBTQ+ students

Register at this [link](#)

Speakers from

GLSEN[®]



Aaron Ridings
(he/they)



Sophia
Arredondo
(she/her/hers)



Freddie
Taharka
(he/him/his)

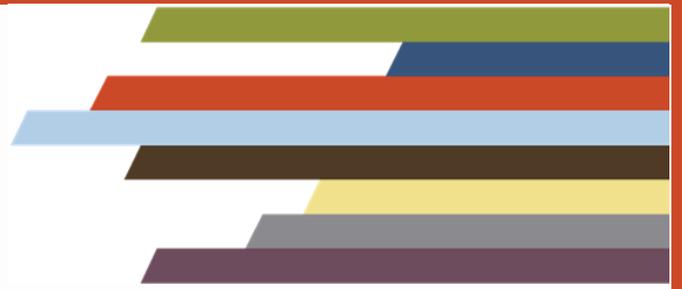


Eric Samelo
(he/they)

Learning Objectives

1. Recall the different types of support LGBTQ+ youth utilize
2. Connect with resources to support LGBTQ+ youth in achieving/sustaining wellness
3. Assist LGBTQ+ youth in accessing appropriate mental health resources

Speakers



Nhan Truong
(he/him/his)

Dr. Nhan Truong is a Senior Research Associate at the GLSEN Research Institute. He completed his Ph.D. in Social-Personality Psychology at the Graduate Center, City University of New York. His research interests include the school experiences of LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer) youth at the intersection of race, gender, sexual orientation, and social-psychological factors associated with mental health among gay and bisexual ethnic minority populations. Dr. Truong has published his research in several peer-reviewed academic journals. He is a co-author of GLSEN's National School Climate Survey reports and in a series of reports on the school experiences of LGBTQ students of color. Currently, Dr. Truong is co-leading a study on the experiences of LGBTQ students and their allies as well as advisors, with GSAs (Gay-Straight Alliances or Gender and Sexual Alliances) at their schools.



Sophia
Arredondo
(she/her/hers)

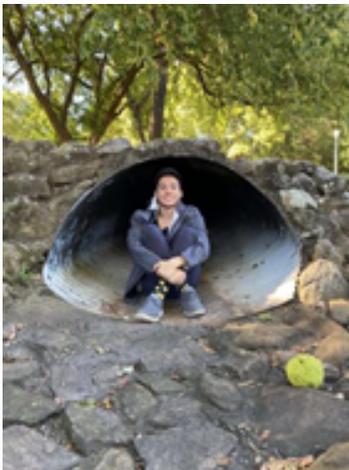
Sophia Arredondo serves as the Director of Education and Youth Programs for GLSEN, a national organization whose mission is to create safe and affirming schools for all, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. She leads the content engine of GLSEN's core function: resource development, capacity building, and school stakeholder outreach to support LGBTQ+ -affirming school practice. Sophia mobilizes and supports student leaders, educators, and other school professionals and serves as a GLSEN ambassador for partner audiences, institutions, and organizations.

Previously the Program Manager of San Diego Unified School District's LGBTQIA+ Education & Advocacy Program, a founding member of the LGBTQIA+ San Diego County Office of Education Collaborative, and member of various community coalitions in support of LGBTQ+ youth throughout San Diego County, Sophia has made it her life's work to transform the school experience of LGBTQ+ students.



Aaron Ridings
(he/they)

Aaron Ridings serves as the director of public policy after joining GLSEN as policy manager in 2019. He has over 15 years of public policy and political experience. He has helped author and pass legislation and administrative policy in federal, state, city, county, school district, and tribal governments throughout his career. He recently had stints working for U.S. Representative Sharice Davids (KS-3) and Washington, D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser. He was a longstanding primary aide to Multnomah County OR Chair (Executive) Deborah Kafoury. Aaron is a former Co-Chair of the Oregon Safe Schools and Communities Coalition and member of the steering committee for the Schools Uniting Neighborhoods program that serves hundreds of schools in the Portland OR metro region, former member of the National Safe Schools Round table, and was on. He relocated to Washington, DC in 2015 to manage federal, state, and local public policy advocacy for LGBTQ Progress at Center for American Progress. Aaron has a master of Public Administration with an Award of Excellence for Community Engagement from Portland State University.



Eric Samelo
(he/they)

Eric Samelo is a gay, biracial Filipino/white senior who lives in Alabama and cares deeply about making the world a better place. As a sophomore, he co-founded his school's GSA (Gay-Straight Alliance or Gender and Sexuality Alliance), which received GLSEN's 2019 GSA of the Year Award, and he has served as its president ever since. He wants to work towards a world where every LGBTQ+ person feels safe and loved. However, his ultimate passion lies in climate activism; his goal in life is to graduate from MIT as an environmental chemical engineer and dedicate his life to fighting climate change.



Freddie
Taharka
(he/him/his)

Freddie Taharka is a rising senior in high school who lives in Florida. As a long-term career, he wants to be a teacher in disciplines such as social studies. In his years, he has learned that knowledge slays ignorance and makes empathy easier to embrace, so he will forever keep learning and educate others. Growing up in rural Georgia, he recognized that his family's needs were not always at the forefront of the legislative body, especially being a biracial child and a member of the LGBTQ+ community. That lit a fire in him to speak out for change, to make a difference marginalized communities, and to raise awareness of issues that impact working-class people all across the country—the majority of his work centers around climate justice and workers' liberation.