

CENTER of EXCELLENCE **LGBTQ+ BEHAVIORAL HEALTH EQUITY**



Southeast (HHS Region 4)

MHTTC

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

LGBTQ+ Affirming School Practices

ANGELA WEEKS, DBA
DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL SOGIE CENTER



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CREATING AFFIRMING ENVIRONMENTS & SUPPORTING DISCLOSURE OF SOGIE

Learning Objectives:

- Learners will hear about the importance of affirming responses to disclosure
- Learners will be given examples of responses they could use when an LGBTQ+ youth tells them their identity
- Learners will be presented a set of strategies for implementing affirming behaviors

Speaker(s): Angela weeks, DBA

Activity Planners: Marlene Matarese, MSW, PhD; Angela Weeks, DBA; Christopher Bellonci, MD, FAACAP; Shelley Craig, PhD, RSW, LCSW; Ashley Austin, PhD, LCSW

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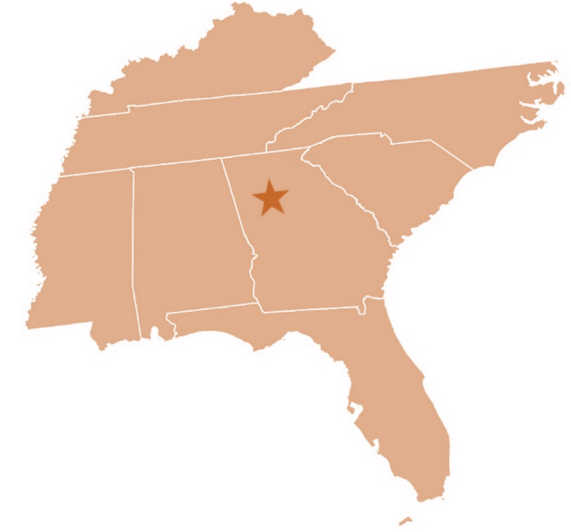
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About the Southeast Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (MHTTC)

The **Southeast MHTTC** is located at the Rollins School of Public Health, Emory University.

Serve states in HHS Region IV: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee.



Our Mission: To promote the implementation and sustainability of evidence-based mental health services in the Southeastern United States.

Our Vision: Widespread access to evidence-based mental health services for those in need.



Southeast Mental Health Technology Transfer Center
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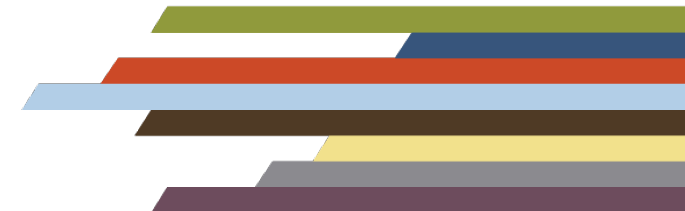
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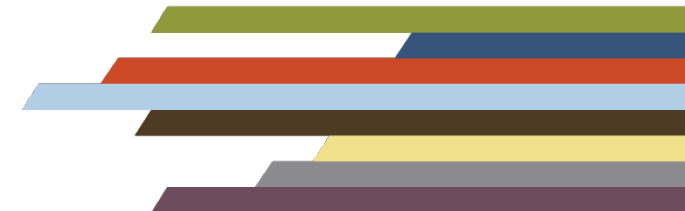
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ANGELA WEEKS, DBA

Angela is the Director of the Center of Excellence on LGBTQ+ Behavioral Health Equity and brings extensive national experience creating, implementing, and evaluating programs and initiatives that improve the lives of LGBTQ+ people and communities.



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1

UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF AFFIRMING RESPONSES TO A YOUNG PERSON'S DISCLOSURE OF THEIR SOGIE

2

PULL FROM A RESERVOIR OF EXAMPLE RESPONSES THAT CAN BE USED WHEN AN LGBTQ+ YOUTH TELLS YOU ABOUT THEIR SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND/OR GENDER IDENTITY

3

USE APPROPRIATE STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTING AFFIRMING BEHAVIORS AND FOSTERING AFFIRMING ENVIRONMENTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

DISPARITIES IN SCHOOLS

32.7% of LGBTQ+ students missed at least one entire day of school in the past month because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable, and 8.6% missed four or more days in the past month.



KOSCIW, J. G., CLARK, C. M., TRUONG, N. L., & ZONGRONE, A. D. (2020). *THE 2019 NATIONAL SCHOOL CLIMATE SURVEY: THE EXPERIENCES OF LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER, AND QUEER YOUTH IN OUR NATION'S SCHOOLS*. NEW YORK: GLSEN.
[HTTPS://WWW.GLSEN.ORG/SITES/DEFAULT/FILES/2021-04/NSCS19-FULLREPORT-032421-WEB_0.PDF](https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/2021-04/nscs19-fullreport-032421-web_0.pdf)

DISPARITIES IN SCHOOLS

60.4% of LGBTQ+ students who reported a bullying incident said that school staff did nothing in response or told the student to ignore it.



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DISPARITIES IN SCHOOLS



1 in 10 LGBTQ+ students were physically assaulted due to sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

KOSCIW, J. G., CLARK, C. M., TRUONG, N. L., & ZONGRONE, A. D. (2020). *THE 2019 NATIONAL SCHOOL CLIMATE SURVEY: THE EXPERIENCES OF LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER, AND QUEER YOUTH IN OUR NATION'S SCHOOLS*. NEW YORK: GLSEN.
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DISPARITIES IN SCHOOLS

95.2 % of LGBTQ+ students heard homophobic remarks, and 87.4% of LGBTQ+ students heard negative remarks specifically about transgender people at school.



KOSCIW, J. G., CLARK, C. M., TRUONG, N. L., & ZONGRONE, A. D. (2020). *THE 2019 NATIONAL SCHOOL CLIMATE SURVEY: THE EXPERIENCES OF LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER, AND QUEER YOUTH IN OUR NATION'S SCHOOLS*. NEW YORK: GLSEN.
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IMPORTANT AREAS TO CONSIDER

Nondiscrimination Policies

Guidance on gender segregated areas and activities

- Bathrooms
- Locker rooms
- Sports
- School groups

Privacy and Disclosure

How to Report Bullying

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GENDER AND SEXUALITY ALLIANCES

- The right to express identity through clothing, style, and speech
- The right to form peer-groups on campus
- GSAs need club sponsor



[HTTPS://GSANETWORK.ORG/WHAT-IS-A-GSA/](https://gsanetwork.org/what-is-a-gsa/)

GSA GUIDANCE FROM LAMBDA LEGAL

CONTACT LAMBDA LEGAL (866-542-8336 OR VISIT WWW.LAMBDALEGAL.ORG/HELP) IF YOU OR YOUR CHILDREN OR STUDENTS:

- Have questions about their [legal rights to form a GSA](#) or otherwise have questions about their rights as a LGBTQ person
- Encounter any resistance to forming a GSA
- Experience frustration because the administration is not responding to their request to start a GSA
- Are told that the school will not provide [access](#) to the school website, public address system, bulletin boards or poster space when other noncurricular clubs have access
- Are told that the school forbids the use of the school name in association with the GSA, or the use of words or expressions like “gay” or “LGBTQ” in their GSA’s name.
- Discover that the school bans or blocks websites with lgbtq information.
- Are told their faculty advisor may not participate in their meetings, even though faculty advisors participate in other clubs
- Are told that they cannot have outside speakers
- Have their GSA meetings monitored by administrators or staff
- Are told they need parental permission to participate.



Behaviors that Show Support



BEING AN AFFIRMING ADULT

Use affirming language (including pronouns and correct name)

Equitable treatment for all students

Normalize diverse sexual orientations, genders, and expressions

Intervene when you witness harassment



ONE PERSON CAN MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

A new report from the Trevor Project shows that just one accepting adult can reduce the risk of a suicide attempt by 40 percent.

<https://www.thetrevorproject.org/research-briefs/accepting-adults-reduce-suicide-attempts-among-lgbtq-youth/>



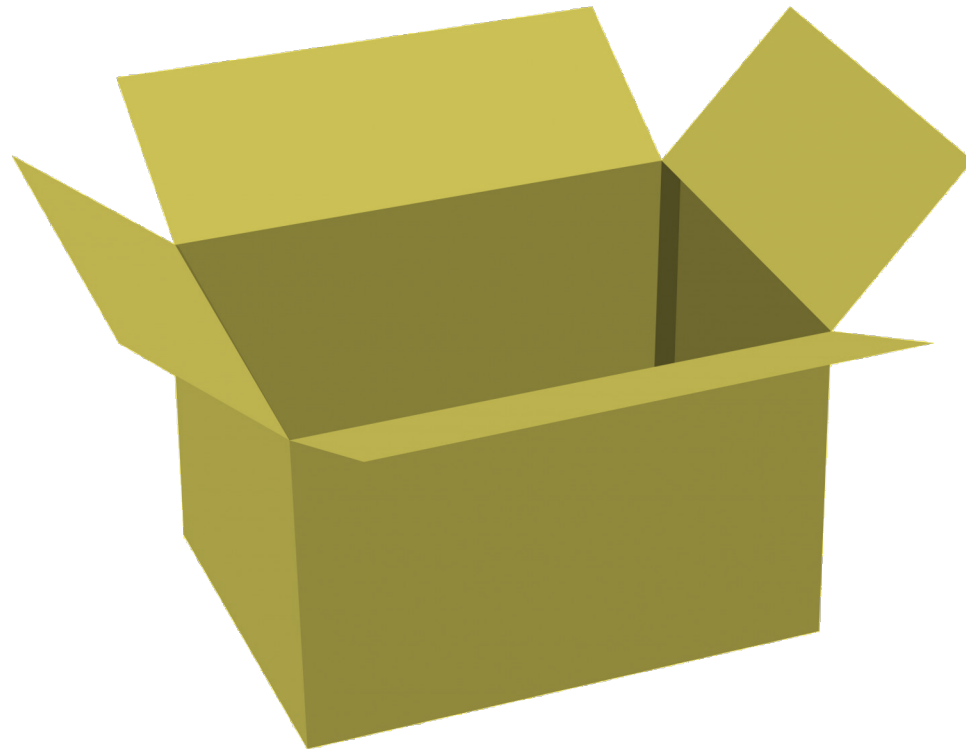


Responding when a young person discloses their SOGIE

What Young People are Facing

FEARS

- FEAR OF LOSING LOVED ONES
- FEAR OF REJECTION & JUDGEMENT
- FEAR OF LOSING VITAL RESOURCES
- FEAR OF VIOLENCE AND BULLYING
- INTERNALIZED BIAS



BENEFITS

- EMPOWERMENT
- INCREASED SELF-ESTEEM
- CREATE WHOLENESS
- STRENGTHEN RELATIONSHIPS
- REDUCE STRESS OF HIDING
- FIND COMMUNITY

REASONS A YOUNG PERSON MIGHT DISCLOSE THEIR SOGIE

- You are a person they trust
- They might be testing the waters
- They might need help
- They want to be their authentic selves



USING SYMBOLS AND MESSAGING TO COMMUNICATE SUPPORT

- Add pronouns to your zoom and email signatures
- Wear affirming symbols
- Post affirming things in your virtual classroom or in-person on your walls
- Who you celebrate in school materials matter



MAKE SURE TO...

- Respond positively
- Ask about level of privacy
- Watch your body language
- Remain strengths based
- Offer positive programs



CREATIVE SCHOOL CAMPAIGNS



GLSEN Safe Space Kit (items in English and Spanish):

- PROGRAM
- Changing the Game
- No Name Calling Week
- Ally Week
- Day of Silence
- GSA
- Professional Development

[HTTPS://WWW.GLSEN.ORG/ACTIVITY/GLSEN-SAFE-SPACE-KIT-SOLIDARITY-LGBTQ-YOUTH](https://www.glsen.org/activity/glsen-safe-space-kit-solidarity-lgbtq-youth)

CREATIVE SCHOOL CAMPAIGNS



OUT FOR SAFE SCHOOLS

**[HTTPS://SCHOOLS.LALGBTCENT
ER.ORG/](https://schools.lalgbtcenter.org/)**

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION

CONTACT INFORMATION

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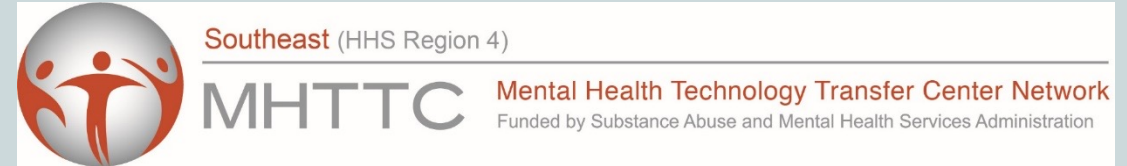
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BHE: WWW.LGBTQEQUNITY.ORG

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