



## Creating Safe Environments for LGBTQ Students

Mark Busch  
He / Him / His  
Director of Education

## LGBTQ 101

- ▶ Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning
- ▶ There are many other identities under the LGBTQ umbrella
- ▶ According to the APA and AMA, sexual orientation and gender identity are:
  - ▶ Not a choice
  - ▶ Not an illness
  - ▶ Can not be fixed/repared with therapy



## Advocating for Our Youth

- ▶ More than **70 percent** report feelings of worthlessness and hopelessness in the past week<sup>1</sup>
- ▶ **Sixty-seven percent** report that they've heard family members make negative comments about LGBTQ people<sup>1</sup>
- ▶ LGB youth seriously contemplate suicide at almost **three times** the rate of heterosexual youth.<sup>2</sup>
- ▶ **40%** of transgender adults reported having made a suicide attempt. **92%** of these individuals reported having attempted suicide before the age of 25.<sup>3</sup>
- ▶ Each episode of LGBT victimization, such as physical or verbal harassment or abuse, increases the likelihood of self-harming behavior by 2.5 times on average.<sup>4</sup>

1. <https://www.prc.org/resources/2018-lgbtq-youth-report>
2. CDC. (2016). Sexual Identity, Sex of Sexual Contacts, and Health-Risk Behaviors Among Students in Grades 9-12: Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
3. James, S. E., Herman, J. L., Rankin, S., Keeling, M., Mottet, L., & Anafi, M. (2016). The Report of the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey. Washington, DC: National Center for Transgender Equality.
4. IMPACT. (2010). Mental health disorders, psychological distress, and suicidality in a diverse sample of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youths. *American Journal of Public Health*, 100(12), 2422-32.

## School Environments

- ▶ 57.6% of LGBTQ students felt unsafe at school<sup>1</sup>
- ▶ Over a third avoided bathrooms and locker rooms due to safety concerns<sup>1</sup>
- ▶ 85.2% were verbally harassed, and 27.0% were physically harassed<sup>1</sup>
- ▶ 50.9% of transgender students reported being prevented from using their name or pronouns<sup>2</sup>

### Electronically Bullied

Region	Heterosexual	Queer-Spectrum
NE	13.8	34.1
WI	14.4	30.8
National	14.0	30.2
IA	10.8	28.5
ND	12.1	24.4

### Bullied on School Property

Region	Heterosexual	Queer-Spectrum
ND	22.4	39.7
IA	20.8	32.8
National	21.4	34.5
WI	18.2	33.1
WI	23.1	31.3

### Did not go to school because felt unsafe at or on the way to school

Region	Heterosexual	Queer-Spectrum
NE	4.8	15.1
IA	4.8	14.9
National	4.5	14.9
WI	5.5	9.8

1. National School Climate Survey, GLSEN (2015)
2. 2015 US Transgender Survey, National Center for Transgender Equality (updated 2017)
3. Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, Centers for Disease and Control and Prevention (2017)

## About Iowa Safe Schools Midwest's Leading LGBTQ Youth Organization

- ▶ Policy and Advocacy
- ▶ Educator Professional Development
- ▶ Youth Engagement and Advocacy



## Iowa Safe Schools Law

- ▶ Iowa Code 280.28: Anti-Bullying & Anti-Harassment Act of 2007
- ▶ By Sept. 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007, all accredited schools in Iowa must have a comprehensive anti-bullying and anti-harassment policy. This policy must include:
  - ▶ Definition of bullying and harassment (including cyber-bullying, verbal, written, or physical)
  - ▶ A statement that no one on campus will participate in bullying or harassing behavior of students, in or out of school, on or off property
  - ▶ A reporting procedure & an investigation procedure
  - ▶ The policy must be publicized
  - ▶ Schools must report incidents annually

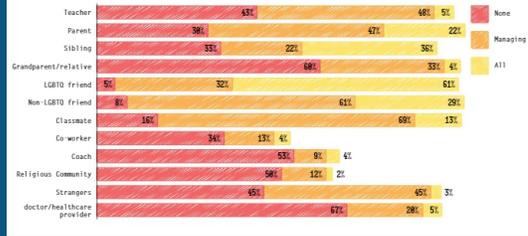
## Safe Schools Law Protected Classes

"Trait or characteristic of the student" includes but is not limited to:

- Gender Identity
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Age
- Color
- Creed
- National Origin
- Race
- Religion
- Marital Status
- Physical Attributes
- Physical Ability
- Disability
- Ancestry
- Political Party Preference
- Political Belief
- Socioeconomic Status
- Familial Status

## Health Care and LGBTQ Youth

### Sexual Orientation Outness<sup>45</sup>



2018 LGBTQ Youth Report, Human Rights Campaign

## Discussion:

1. How did you feel when you visited a health provider as an adolescent or when you went alone for the first time?
2. What did the provider do that helped make you more comfortable? That made you uncomfortable?
3. Imagine you are an adolescent who has had some same-sex attractions or sexual activity. What effect does this have on your anxiety level about the visit, ahead of time and during the visit?
4. Or imagine you have concerns about your gender identity, or are transgender. How do you feel about the visit?

Adapted from <http://www.lgbthealtheducation.org>

## National Association of School Nurses

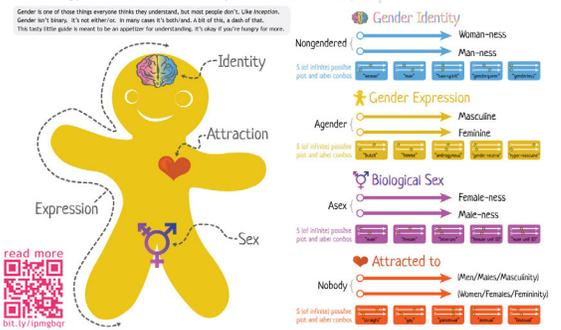
*"School nurses have an ethical responsibility to provide care to all students, families, school staff and community equally regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression; to maintain confidentiality and to respect the individual's right to be treated with dignity."*

National Association of School Nurses (2019). LGBTQ Students: The Role of the School Nurse. Available at: <https://www.nasn.org/advocacy/professional-practice-documents/position-statements/pr-lgbtq/> [Accessed 13 Mar. 2019].

## Important Terminology

- ▶ **Gender Expression**– External appearance of one's gender identity, usually expressed through behavior, clothing, haircut, or voice
- ▶ **Gender Identity**– One's innermost concept of self as male, female, a blend of both or neither- how individuals perceive themselves and what they call themselves.

## The Genderbread Person v2.0 by its pronounced METROsexual



## Important Terminology

- ▶ **Transgender**– People whose gender identity and/or expression is different from cultural expectations of the sex they were assigned at birth
- ▶ **Gender Dysphoria** – Clinically significant distress experienced by a person whose gender does not align with their birth gender.
- ▶ **Gender Transition**– The process by people align their gender identity with outward appearance.
  - ▶ Using different name and/or pronouns
  - ▶ Allowing the public to recognize affirmed gender identity and expression.
  - ▶ Physical transitions

## Preparing for New Students

- ▶ Revise forms with gender-neutral language, and allow youth to identify gender as "other" if they wish.
- ▶ Have safe, non-gendered bathrooms accessible to students
- ▶ Provide LGBTQ-friendly health resources [1]
- ▶ Revise databases to include preferred name and preferred gender pronouns

[1] Providing Services and Supports for Youth who are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning, Intersex or Two-Spirit (2008).

## Meeting A New LGBTQ Students

- ▶ Do not make the assumption that every student is heterosexual and cisgendered
- ▶ Keep remarks open and general; avoid saying dude/son/lady/girl etc.
- ▶ Politely ask gender pronouns
- ▶ Politely inquire about another name if the student's preferred name is not in your database
- ▶ Communication is key

Landy, J. (2017). Delivering Culturally Sensitive Care to LGBTQ Patients. *The Journal for Nurse Practitioners*, 13(5), 342-347. doi:10.1016/j.nurpr.2016.12.015

## Working With LGBTQ Students

- ▶ Students should not have to educate you about their health
- ▶ Maintain confidentiality and privacy of all self-disclosures[1]
- ▶ Make referrals for evidence-based care to healthcare professionals knowledgeable about the healthcare needs of LGBTQ youth [2]
- ▶ Communication is key

[1] Providing Services and Supports for Youth who are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning, Intersex or Two-Spirit (2008).  
 [2] National Association of School Nurses (2019). LGBTQ Students: The Role of the School Nurse. Available at: <https://www.nasn.org/advocacy/professional-practice-documents/position-statements/lgbtq/> (Accessed 13 Mar. 2019).

## Working With LGBTQ Students

[Center for Excellence for Transgender Health, University of San Francisco](#)

- ▶ **Chest Binding** – visibly smoothing chest contour
  - ▶ Sports-bra, tape, ace bandages, or **binder** is used
- ▶ **Genital Tucking** – visibly smoothing crotch contour
  - ▶ Tight-fitting underwear or **gaffe** is used
- ▶ **Gender Affirming Hormone Therapy** – attaining secondary sex characteristics through hormones
- ▶ **Gender Affirming Surgeries** – physical surgery to transition to affirmed gender.

## Title IX and Education

- ▶ Title IX covers sex based discrimination in education, including sexual harassment, gender-based discrimination, and sexual violence
- ▶ Applies to female, male, and gender non-conforming students, faculty and staff
- ▶ Schools must have established protocol for handling reports of sex discrimination, sexual harassment and violence
- ▶ Schools are responsible for ensuring that victims can continue their education

## Title IX, Iowa Code, & Trans Students

"Iowa Code section 216.9 clearly delineates that protection from unfair practices and discriminatory acts in education includes Gender Identity."

- ▶ **Dress** – Allow the student to in accordance with the student's identified gender for school or other extracurricular activities including prom, graduation, yearbook, or other activities.
- ▶ **Restroom and Locker Facilities** – Students should use restrooms and locker rooms with which they identify. Students should be provided private/separate facilities when requested. You cannot force a student to use a different bathroom.
- ▶ **Overnight Accommodations** - Assigned rooms based on gender identity, accommodating any requested privacy.
- ▶ **Sports** – A student must be permitted to participate in athletics and activities that align to a students' gender identity

Iowa Department of Education. (2017). Equality for transgender students. Retrieved from <https://educateiowa.gov/resources/legal-resources/legal-lessons/equality-transgender-students>

## Supporting Our Youth

### Iowa GSA Network

- ▶ Gay-Straight Alliances
- ▶ Safe Spaces, community support, youth activism
- ▶ 120 GSAs across 99 counties
- ▶ **GSA Coordinators**
  - ▶ Becky Smith (Director Youth Engagement)
  - ▶ Dana Van Renterghem
  - ▶ Morgan Dodge



## Supporting Our Youth

### Pride Camp

- ▶ Week-long summer camp for LGBTQ Youth 14 – 18
- ▶ Community Building, Fun Activities, Meaningful Conversations
- ▶ Grandview University
- ▶ Registration open!



## Supporting Our Youth

### Iowa Governor's Conference for LGBTQ Youth

- ▶ **Upcoming Fall Events!**
  - ▶ GSACon – September 28 at Lincoln High School
  - ▶ NW GSACon – November 2 at the Sioux City Public Museum



## Supporting Our Educators

### Impactful Conferences

- ▶ Iowa Sexual Violence Symposium – April 22
- ▶ **Upcoming Fall Events**
  - ▶ Iowa Anti-Bullying Symposium – 10/4/19
  - ▶ Iowa Trans Summit – 11/15/19



## Supporting Our Educators

### Safe Schools Academy

- ▶ 31 Inclusive Professional Development Courses
- ▶ Online and In-Person
- ▶ License Renewal Credit
- ▶ Graduate Credit



*"Over three-quarters (77%) of LGBT youth say they know things will get better."*

*... that leaves 23% who don't.*

Human Rights Campaign, (2019), <https://www.hrc.org/youth-report/view-and-share-statistics>