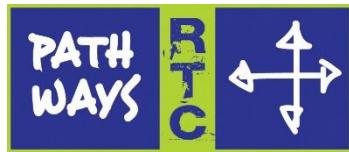




Questions for Applying Information from Working with LGBTQ Youth: Supporting their Identity Exploration and Becoming an Ally to Your Work

We have designed the following questions to help you apply the ideas highlighted in Pathways Transition Training Video Brief 7 to your work with young people of transition age who identify as LGBTQ. In this brief training, Dr. Kris Gowen of Oregon Health & Science University discussed ways in which service providers can create a welcoming environment for these young people, and communicate that they will be allies. Andre Pruitt of OHSU emphasized that identifying as LGBTQ exposes youth to oppressive systems, and produces stressors that can lead to mental health difficulties. In this video brief he urges service providers to educate themselves about what these young people face, use appropriate language, and learn from the young people being served. Ideally, discuss the video and your thoughts about it with a supervisor or co-workers and consider the following questions:

1. How can you convey to young people that you are open to learning about and supporting them in their gender identity and sexual orientation exploration?
 - What have you found to be the best ways to talk with youth about significant relationships in their lives?
 - Are there changes you might make in your work environment that would signal that you are a potential ally of young people who acknowledge that they are LGBTQ?
2. In your work with young people, how have you responded when you have encountered language about LGBTQ identity or issues that were unfamiliar to you?
 - How have you learned about the terms that were new to you?
 - How has your own thinking and use of language changed as a result of this new information?
3. When working with young adults who have complex intersections of identities (for example African American, Gay, working class, and politically active), how do you acknowledge these complexities as you work with them?
 - Have you found local support organizations that work effectively with people having complex identities and who are involved in changing oppressive systems?
 - What other resources have you found helpful to support you in your work with young people exploring their identities?
4. As a service provider what can you do to prepare yourself to work more effectively with young people who identify as LGBTQ?
 - Do you have advisory groups of young people at your agency or in your area that might help you become better prepared to work with youth LGBTQ youth and young adults?
 - Are there local organizations that provide trainings or advocacy experiences?



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