



Webinar Transcript

How to Make It Happen: LGBTQ Inclusivity

Operator: Welcome and thank you for standing by. At this time all participants are in listen-only mode until the question and answer portion. If you would like to ask a question today, please press star followed by the number 1 on your touchtone phone. You will be prompted to record your first and last name.

Today's conference is being recorded. If you have any objection you may disconnect at this time. Now I will turn your call over to OAH staff member, Nicole Bennett. Thank you. You may begin.

Nicole Bennett: Thank you. Hi, I am Nicole Bennett. And I am a project officer here at the Office of Adolescent Health. I'll be introducing the webinar today.

Today's webinar will provide practical guidance for delivering teen pregnancy prevention programs that meet the needs of LGBTQ youth from the perspective of a curriculum developer, a grantee, and also a youth participant.

As you know, LGBTQ inclusivity was emphasized in the funding announcement that was released last year. And several technical assistance products have been shared this past year including a webinar that took place last fall focusing on why LGBTQ inclusivity matters for teen pregnancy prevention and how to get started.

This webinar will build upon that with some specific and practical strategies to promote LGBTQ inclusivity in TPP programs.

So, just a disclaimer that the views expressed in this webinar do not reflect the official policies of OAH or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, nor does the mention of trade names, commercial practices or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

Any statements expressed are those of the presenters and do not necessarily reflect the views of OAH or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

I ought to just quickly note that sometimes it can be technically challenging to get on to these webinars. So if you are on the call right now but you're unable to access the web portion, feel free to email Sam Beckwith. His email is S Beck - B E C K, With - W I T H, at childtrends.org.

He will send you the PowerPoint slides just so that you can at least follow along as you're listening to the call.

So our facilitator for today is Kimberly Turner. Many of you probably know her already. She works in the Reproductive Health and Family Formation Research area at Child Trends and helps with technical assistance for teen pregnancy prevention.

Our first speaker will be Marcia Quackenbush. Marcia is currently a Senior Editor at ETR. And one of Marcia's recent publications is entitled, "Supporting LGBTQ Youth: Creating Inclusiveness in Sexual and Reproductive Health Programs."

ETR has recently adapted Reducing the Risk to be inclusive of LGBTQ youth as well as developing the publication identified above as general guidance for making sex education programs more LGBTQ inclusive.

Our second presenter is Taz Vert. Taz is a youth participant through OAH grantee Planned Parenthood of Greater Northwest and Hawaiian Islands.

Taz is a youth leader at a queer youth group and served as a peer educator on Teen Council for the last two years. Taz speaks eloquently and thoughtfully about queer issues and health, and has experience explaining topics to those who are new to learning about queerness.

Our third presenter is Cassidey Streber. Cassidey is the Adolescent Health PregNOT Program Operator at Youth Services of Tulsa. Cassidey is a trainer of educators in three sex education curricula and in positive youth development.

Cassidey has been instrumental in adapting her programs' curricula to be inclusive, encourages training for her agency and program staff, and continues to be an ally and advocate for LGBTQ youth in Tulsa.

With that, I'm going to hand it over to our facilitator today, Kim, to introduce a little more about the webinar.

Kimberly Turner: Thanks Nicole. I'll leave out the objectives while I talk through some logistics. If you have any questions there's a little Q&A box at the top of your screen. If you click on that you could type in your questions. It will track them and we'll go through them at the end of the session.

Also, another option for looking at the PowerPoint is to go ahead and download it. If you click on file you will be asked to do a file transfer with an on tray popup. And with that you're able to download these slides.

LGBTQ youth face many challenges that affect teen pregnancy and sexual outcomes as well as physical and mental wellbeing. Research demonstrates that LGBTQ youth often experience stressors at school, in their homes, and in their communities.

Service providers, teachers, facilitators, healthcare workers, researchers, program evaluators, and other professionals can help to create safe and supportive environments for all adolescents.

LGBTQ-inclusive strategies for adolescent programs can help build tolerance, understanding and acceptance. The objectives for today are to identify at least two curricular changes that can make PPP programs more LGBTQ inclusive.

Secondly, the goal is to identify at least two organizational policies that can make TPP programs more LGBTQ inclusive. And thirdly, the goal is to identify at least two strategies for incorporating youth perspectives to make TPP programs more LGBTQ inclusive.

The agenda for today is as follows. The presenters will discuss LGBTQ inclusivity across the following domains: language, content, recruitment and retention, professional development, organizational policies and practices, and how best to navigate bumps in the road.

This presentation is organized topically. And all of the presenters will address multiple topics. This discussion will be followed by Q&A with the presenters and some closing remarks.

We also want to remind listeners that this resource and assessment tool is available. OAH expects grantees to complete the assessment tool at least

annually and use the results to identify actions that they can take and incorporate into their work plan.

OAH encourages participants to complete the LGBTQ assessment template and upload to MAX in the material review folder.

Next, Marcia will get us started by talking about her experiences developing general guidance for making sex education programs more LGBTQ inclusive. And then she will transition to talk about the importance of language. And then we'll get some advice from the youth and grantee perspective.

Marcia Quackenbush: Thank you. I'm really excited to be a part of today's webinar and I'm looking forward to the conversation. I was invited to participate because I am one of the authors on these two resources.

These publications are designed to act as supplements to existing sexual and reproductive health programs as a means of creating greater LGBTQ inclusiveness and equity.

Many of the evidence-based programs being used in pregnancy prevention and sexual health education, as those of you in the field know, were developed quite a long time ago. And our understanding of LGBT issues and our national conversation on these issues has expanded impressively since that time.

If you're working with one of these programs, these are resources that can help you build in greater LGBTQ inclusivity.

The one on the left was designed specifically for Reducing the Risk, that's one of the most widely used evidence-based programs.

And the one on the right is designed to be used with any program. And I'll talk more about what's in these supplements in a moment.

But if you're thinking of developing a new curriculum yourself, one of the most important things to remember is it takes a team to build an effective curriculum.

So I want to recognize the leadership, vision, and follow through of the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene Bronx Team Connection, which is a CDC funded program, and the Office of School Wellness Programs in New York City Department of Education, because developing these supplements were originally their idea. And I'm honored that they invited me to be part of their team.

Now we had reviewers and advisers all across the country who helped us with this. And I'm really proud of the product that we came out with... that came out of all that.

I think something that's very important to remember is that teamwork is an essential part of curriculum development. You want members of your team to address research, theory, practice, and policy. And ideally, especially if you're going to be in a school situation, you're going to want people who know what it's like to work in a classroom.

You want somebody that can write competently. It's ideal if you have an opportunity to pilot and test the program. It's great if you can distribute it. If you have a good curriculum, get it out there so more people can use it.

And it's really important to get buy-in from the people with power in your district or in your community, your champions and advocates.

So here's what we did when we worked on this curriculum. We provided an overview that sort of says, this is why we're doing this. We have a fact sheet and some resources for educators. The fact sheet goes through why it's so important to provide LGBTQ-inclusive education.

We include a supplement class. So basically the idea is that you do a class that's one, or ideally two sessions long, before you get into an evidence-based intervention. And - I'll tell you a little more about what's in that class.

There's some resources for students. And there's a discussion guide about how to integrate more inclusive discussions into your existing program. So let's start talking about language next.

This is like one of the most important things for me when I think about all of LGBTQ inclusiveness. Language is powerful, it really matters. I think we've probably all had experiences when we felt left out or not included in a learning event or in a social setting.

And our LGBTQ youths are having these experiences in school and in their communities every day. When we create more inclusive language, it makes a powerful difference. And we're not just talking about inclusivity here.

By creating language that's more responsive to all students, we're providing programs that are more responsive, equitable, and fair. So here's some examples. You can use language to set the tone in a class.

Most of us would start with ground rules or agreements - very important to emphasize no put-downs and respecting other people. And another thing is to consider discussing personal gender pronouns at the start of the program and

we're going to talk a little more about that. Taz is going to discuss that a little later in the Webinar.

We all have many, many opportunities to bring gender-neutral and diversity-affirming language into our programs. For example, we can use gender-neutral names in role-plays and skits.

Instead of boyfriend or girlfriend, we can use partner. Instead of talking about a woman's vagina or a man's penis, we can just say - it's so simple - penis or vagina. We don't have to gender it.

The next slide just gives you some more examples of gender-neutral language. I'm not going to go over it, but if you download the slides, you can come back to those a little later and take a look at them.

Kimberly Turner: Great, thanks Marcia. Let's continue our conversation about language. As Marcia previously mentioned, personal pronouns are indeed important. Some examples of personal pronouns include she, her, he, him, they, them. There are also other gender-neutral pronouns like zie and zir that some might prefer.

Taz, can you share some of your thoughts about personal gender pronouns and the importance of language?

Taz: Of course. Personal gender pronouns or PGPs are one of the common ways I've seen educational spaces become more inclusive for LGBTQ youths. Asking for a person's gender pronoun is simply asking them to state the pronouns which they would like to be referred to in a third person.

So pronouns are traditionally gender words like she and him, she and her, him and his, etcetera. A person may also want to use ungendered pronouns like the

singular they, them, or newer pronouns like, xi, hir and you mentioned zie or zir and zim.

Asking for a person's pronoun allow that person to make explicit to others how they would like to be referred, which is incredibly validating for people who are often misgendered.

The implementation of this is usually fairly simple. The facilitator may explain what a personal gender pronoun is and then include it in their introduction. For example, hi, my name is Taz Vert. I'm a senior at (unintelligible) High School and my personal gender pronouns are she and her.

Ensuring that no one is misgendered is especially meaningful to trans youths. Asking for everyone's pronoun shows respect for all genders and gender identities.

All right. So when using examples such as role-plays and the like, this wasn't mentioned, but try and avoid either the gender of the structured example or ensure that they are widely varied.

For example, we use gender-neutral names, like Sam or Kendall when creating characters for a role-play. And language can be extremely tricky to navigate, especially when it is so new and you're in front of a class. So mistakes are inevitable and okay. Just make sure to acknowledge when you've slipped up with pronouns or gender talk, body parts or the like.

Apologize or laugh if necessary and move on. The class will respect that.

Kimberly Turner: Thanks Taz. Cassidey, can you talk about the issue of language from the grantee perspective?

Cassidey Streber: Yes. So as a facilitator of a curriculum, language is vital in making our program inclusive. Changing the language used in a curriculum is something that any grantee educator can do without changing the fidelity or intent of the program.

Like Marcia and Taz mentioned, changing the language to use non-gendered body parts, using the inclusive word of partner, and not shaming sexual behaviors are a few ways of making language successful when we teach. As educators, we also include a statement of inclusion during our group rules or expectation.

This is one of the first things done during each of our curricula. We discuss how we will respect all students regardless of gender, identity, or orientation and we will respect all questions.

One of the issues with language that will happen is homophobic or anti-LGBTQ statements from students. Some common examples that we experience are the phrase, “that's so gay.”

We have role-plays, and when we have same sex volunteers we hear, “I don't want to play a homo, I don't want to pretend to be gay.” During discussions around oral and anal sex, we get a lot of “why would someone want to do that, that's gross.”

And so statements like these need to be addressed immediately. If ignored they can cause problems with youth feeling unsafe or unwilling to participate.

By addressing the homophobic language we remind youths that we're advocates and that our program is safe. We can always refer back to the group expectations about respect and inclusion and remind youth that they agreed to follow those guidelines.

Like we've said inclusive language is something that needs to be practiced it does not always come naturally to every educators, especially if the curriculum was not originally written in an inclusive way.

And so there will be mistakes, but the more that we practice then the more the inclusive language just comes as second nature when we teach.

Kimberly Turner: Thanks Cassidey. Now we'll turn it back to Marcia to discuss program content and delivery.

Marcia Quackenbush: Thank you Kim. There are a lot of different ways we could approach program content. This is what we did - my team did with the supplements that we wrote. And I really like this approach.

We addressed self-identity. And the reason I like that this isn't a special segment of the class that's devoted to LGBT issues. This is stuff that's relevant to all youth – and all adults actually.

We all have self-identity and sexual identity, we all have gender identity, and we all have gender expression. The other thing we did is we provided some guidelines, next slide please, for expanding discussions in a sort of natural and responsive positive way and that's - this is a lot of what Cassidey was just talking about.

First ask questions about gender. If you do role-play, what are the genders of these characters? And could the roles be reversed? Could same-sex couples have the same conversation? And then check in on assumptions about sexual and gender identity.

Could two men have this conversation, or a transgender man and transgender woman, or a couple in which one or both people are bisexual? I like inviting students to use terms that work with them.

We talk a lot about boyfriends and girlfriends, but many youth don't use those terms and they might be engaging in risky behaviors with people who aren't boyfriends or girlfriends.

It's important to encourage all students to think about the consequences of risky behaviors even if they're not currently in a relationship, or if they're in a relationship that does not have a pregnancy risk. That can change.

Something might be different about their life in the future. They may someday have a friend who needs some support or guidance who's in that situation. It's really important for all youth to understand the consequences and remedies of risk.

And finally use the kinds of language adaptations we've already been talking about to create this atmosphere of equity and responsiveness for all students.

I think one of the things I like is just a general guideline, next slide, is that we all need to work to break out of our heteronormative rut. We need to do our best to offer examples and possibilities to youth and to listen to youth, LGBTQ youth and their allies to see what kinds of things they're suggesting.

The language is always changing. And they have a much broader vision sometimes than those of us who've been working in the field. This is an example I really like.

If you think about GSAs. GSA used to stand for Gay Students Alliance. And then somebody said well we want straight students in there too. So then they became Gay Straight Alliance.

And now the national organization has changed that name to Genders and Sexualities Alliance which I just love. It's like it breaks us out of that whole binary model that we've been in and it gives us a whole vision for all kinds of new possibilities much more respectful of that diversity of sexual and gender identity that young people are experiencing.

Kimberly Turner: Great. Thanks Marcia. Taz, can you share some of your thoughts about the kind of information TPP programs should consider covering?

Taz: Sure. In my experience LGBT youth disengage from pregnancy prevention programs because they assume the programs are heteronormative or irrelevant to their experience.

Often when programs are narrowly focused on preventing pregnancies, they're right. Inclusion of queer youth means cutting any and all euphemisms or simplifications from the curriculum.

One way to do this is to make minor swaps in vocabulary used as has been discussed as well as changing the diction used when teaching. The facilitator must also make sure to be precise about the kind of sexual activity being discussed.

Rather than just discussing the risks of sex, outline the different risks that come along with vaginal sex, anal sex, oral sex to a penis or vulva and so on. Pregnancy prevention will go along with teens being fully informed about their options.

I think it's safe to say that almost all teens want to avoid carrying or causing pregnancy. Seeking full disclosure teaching ensures that everyone is included. And while comprehensive education is the goal, it's important to remain aware of what I call the classroom vibes.

Any educator knows what I mean. It's important to read the reactions of the class in order to pace the lesson. Make sure to regularly check in with the class when going over sensitive topics or drastically changing language they might not be used to.

If a student looks extremely uncomfortable make sure any check-ins with them are in private and that they know that they have the option to leave the space.

Kimberly Turner: Thanks Taz. Cassidey, what are some of the strategies that you use to ensure that the content you are delivering is meeting the needs of LGBTQ Youth?

Cassidey Streber: Yes. So the main strategy that we use deals with just creating a safe space for all of our youth. If we're able to create a safe space then content that is delivered can meet their needs.

So we've already discussed the Statement of Inclusion that we used as a strategy to set the foundation of respect. And then we talked about the importance of language to deliver content in an inclusive way.

Creating safe grouping is also a way that we create a safe space. In our curricula we have games that are designed to have youth split into teams. And part of being inclusive is to not split by boys/girls, which is very common. In fact, teachers or students may even encourage it.

But instead we number youth off, we split by birth month, or the letter of their name. This allows for safety and does not put youth in an environment that they feel they have to choose which side based on assigned sex or perceived gender.

Another way that we make sure content is meeting the needs of our youth is educators having an understanding of different types of relationships and identities. Youth will use terminology that may be unfamiliar to educators to describe their sexual and romantic orientation.

Being able to discuss and answer youth's questions can make youth feel validated and understood. As educators we need to be able to discuss sexual and romantic relationships without shame, bias, or our own values.

Terminology and identity and orientation are constantly changing. It doesn't mean we're all experts. But when you teach with an open mind and a willingness to learn that's probably the best strategy.

Kimberly Turner: Thanks Cassidey. Now let's talk a bit about recruitment and retention. To get things started we've asked Taz to talk to us about TP Programming -TPP Programming from that youth's perspective.

Taz: All right. I touched on this during the content section, but I just want to stress when the teen pregnancy prevention programs is presented only as such,

LGBTQ teens, especially the cisnormative L and G teens, often feel immediately alienated.

They assume they will never be at risk of either becoming unintentionally pregnant or causing a pregnancy, and they may be right. Be sure to stress the other important aspects of your program, things like STD prevention, or just knowledge of their own bodies.

And the next point is more of a note for facilitators, rather than the content of their lesson. Keep in mind that by transitioning to more inclusive language and methods, this not only helps to make LGBTQ youth more comfortable, but also forces everyone's mode of thinking about gender and sex into a more inclusive light.

By using ungendered language when talking about body parts, the link between a gender and a body part may begin to break down in the student's mind. This sort of subconscious inclusivity breaks down homophobia and transphobia before a person even knows it's there.

A great way to retain teens is to make sure - make them feel good about themselves. A great way to do this is by positively affirming them: A really happy, positive facilitator who affirms that all contributions are valuable makes teams want to contribute and be in that space more, even if - even if the positivity is acting.

However being positive alone isn't going to work on its own when teaching on such a sensitive topic. Make sure that all youth have the ability to opt in and out of conversations about sex. Sometimes these can be too uncomfortable to participate in especially for LGBTQ Youth.

Ultimately the goal is to bring these uncomfortable teens into the conversation, which is why it's important to build trust. Build trust as a group. Build trust as a facilitator. Take as much time as is reasonable to just play a silly game and to get to know each other.

It's a lot easier to talk about sex with friends or even acquaintances than strangers. Finally, another note to adults in general, from another teen who often talks to you all: you have to be actively trying to not be condescending.

I am extremely fortunate that I am able to have friendly rather than authoritative relationships with almost all of the adults in my life, teachers, facilitators, parents, and the like. Most teens aren't that fortunate so when talking about sensitive topic such as pregnancy and sex you must make an over-effort to make teens feel comfortable.

Kimberly Turner: Thanks Taz. Cassidey can you speak to the issue or recruitment and retention from the grantee perspective?

Cassidey Streber: Yes. So overall how we recruit and retain youth is similar across the board, basically because we need to meet youth where they are. We can't expect young people to always come to us, so we need to find ways to meet them in groups, you know, or programs that they already belong to.

Specifically for our LGBTQ Youth we recruit through the GSAs in our public schools, support groups, the equality center, and through our specific LGBTQ Program at our organization.

We have found that when we teach inclusively by not gendering parts, using safe grouping, asking pronouns, our LGBTQ Youth are more likely to stay

engaged, feel heard, ask questions, and therefore stay for the duration of our program.

Really, our core belief is that all youth want to feel heard and validated, and we're going to retain our youth by answering their questions, listening to their needs, and making sure that everyone feels respected in our program.

Kimberly Turner: Thanks Cassidey. Now that we've talked about language and content it's important to consider how to support staff who will ultimately be implementing these strategies. Marcia can you get us started on those topics?

Marcia Quackenbush: Sure Kim, thank you. I think we pretty much recognize that anytime people are implementing prevention programs of any topic they're going to need support to do it well.

We've got some research that supports that as well. It tells us people do better staying with the program and presenting them with fidelity once they get some training. This is going to be true with new programs, new material, and even when there are substantial revisions to an existing program.

But when we're talking about LGBTQ inclusivity this becomes even more important. Because we're asking people to make a lot of changes in the way they think, speak, interact, the way they use day-to-day language in the classroom.

This is important work for all of us, and I think this is true whether we've been part of working with the LGBTQ community for many years or we've just started out in this work.

Because negative messaging about LGBTQ people has been such a deep part of our cultural experience, we all have the potential to feel and express bias we're not even aware of.

This is called implicit or unconscious bias and there's a link in the Resource Slide at the end of the webinar that gives you more of an overview about implicit bias and you can even take some tests to measure your levels of unconscious bias. I highly recommend it, you will discover all kinds of interesting things you didn't know about yourself.

I also think it's very important to understand that when we address LGBTQ inclusivity we are helping - through a professional development event - we are helping providers bring attention to that sort of implicit bias.

We also are helping to shape more positive attitudes for building skills for more effective practice and I think this is the most important thing, we are building this community of confident and skillful colleagues who can be allies to one another and lean on one another and support each other in moving the work forward.

It is so important for funders, developers, and program coordinators, to understand this and build professional development into your program.

Kimberly Turner: Thanks Marcia. Cassidey, can you share some things that you all focus on as you think of supporting your staff and meeting the needs of LGBTQ Youth?

Cassidey Streber: Yes. So first and foremost supporting staff starts with proper training. We cannot expect our staff or educators to automatically know terminology, be comfortable with inclusive language, or know how to answer every question.

And so training in core principles like positive youth development, trauma informed care, and inclusivity, should be completed prior to teaching an intervention. If these principles are not included in curriculum training then supervisors have to look for outside sources, like this webinar, or other trainings that are provided.

Allowing staff to practice is key. We've already talked about how mistakes will be made. And encouragement and support is really vital in helping our staff feel prepared. If staff are equipped with the knowledge and terminology, types of relationships, youth culture, then hopefully they will feel confident in the content that they deliver.

Providing resources to staff, like continuous training, and terminology cheat sheets has helped my staff feel confident in being inclusive educators. We use things like what you see on your screen, the Gender Unicorn, as a recourse and training and in the classrooms to help everyone understand the difference between things like assigned sex, gender identity, expression, attraction.

And so these resources can be really valuable.

Kimberly Turner: Thanks Cassidey. We've talked a lot about what program facilitators might need to consider but it's also important to think about how organizational policies and practices can support this work.

Cassidey can you share some of the things that your organization has done?

Cassidey Streber: Yes. So diversity and inclusion are core values for my organization. We aspire to involve every segment of our community and demonstrate a commitment and accountability for an inclusive environment.

We have been intentional in the language of our nondiscrimination statement to not only include sexual orientation and gender but to also gender identity.

This nondiscrimination statement also supports the use of inclusive paperwork. My program collects demographic information from students where we ask for name, preferred name, age, birthday, race, ethnicity and gender.

The gender options list male, female, transgender, unknown and other where, you can write in your gender identity. Preferred name also gives you the opportunity to list their name whether it be a nickname or a name that supports their identity and who they are.

We are also inclusive in the ways that we define sexual behavior, in our preimposed test survey taken by our youths. For example, when we define vaginal sex we say a person's penis in a person's vagina, instead of language that will be gendered.

Another policy is required training on inclusive practices and specific inclusive training for our PPP staff. Then, finally we just need to remember that being inclusive in programming is considered the best practice for youth servicing organizations.

Our curricula specifically note that being inclusive is a best practice and using a positivity development framework trains us to provide services to all youths. As we know that every young person has the right to medically accurate sex education.

Kimberly Turner: Thanks for those tips Cassidey. It seems that this is a bigger topic than what happens during the program sessions. How do you make sure that everybody is onboard to make this work effective?

Cassidey Streber: Sure. So gaining buy-in from stakeholders is maybe one of our more challenging tasks and actually creating this presentation, I realized this is an area that we can improve upon.

What we do know is that data can be powerful to stakeholders: spelling out that LGBTQ youth have similar rates of STD's, HIV infection and pregnancy as non-LGBTQ youth. This can also help with gaining buy-in from stakeholders.

Like we said, many times LGBTQ youth may not feel that pregnancy prevention applies to them. When talking with administrators at schools or people in the community, it is important to discuss your organization's nondiscrimination policy.

Just reminding them that inclusivity is part of the mission and part of what you do. Being in Oklahoma means that inclusivity is not necessarily common in all programming.

My organization has worked extremely hard to have the reputation of reaching and including all youth and being open and affirming in practice.

As of now, when we meet with a school or community to schedule programming, we do not specifically say that we teach inclusively. If they look through the curriculum they would not see the intentional changes that we have made in our language or our practice.

This is definitely an area of improvement as we continue to move forward, making it known that inclusivity is a part of implementation.

As far as staff buy-in, we started the interviewing process to make sure to discuss how inclusivity is a part of our mission and asking questions about teaching inclusively. Once an educator is hired we begin training.

We discuss why inclusivity is important in TPP programming and provide them with tools and support. Buy-in continues for staff and stakeholders when we realize the effect of teaching inclusively.

Many of our youths have told us “thank you.” They noticed how intentional we are with our language or tell us that they learn something new.

And data in our pre- and post- tests show and support the way that we teach inclusively. This proves that we are doing something that is working for all youths.

Kimberly Turner: We have heard a lot of great information and strategies but there are always bumps in the road when working towards change.

I'm going to ask Cassidey to discuss how things have unfolded in her organization. Cassidey, can you talk about your organization's experiences?

Cassidey Streber: Yes. So one of the, I guess, biggest challenges that we have experienced in implementation of TPP programming has been the constraints of all three of our evidence-based curricula.

Throughout the curriculum we have body parts being gendered, videos showing only heterosexual couples, and our puberty videos focuses exclusively on cisgendered youth.

So, although there are these issues within these curriculum, our greatest success is changing the language to be inclusive and not changing the fidelity of our program.

We have changed the language without changing the medical accuracy or the intent of the program. All we have done is make it reachable and inviting to all the youths that we serve.

Throughout the six years in this program, we have continued to make updates to our paperwork, our data system, PowerPoint, and practices to fit the needs of LGBTQ youths.

As a coordinator of this program, really the most important and valuable aspect has been the support of our agency, our community partners and my staff.

We have been on the same page as far as the importance of inclusivity and we continue to challenge each other to try and become better educators.

Really the biggest piece of advice for a program or agency moving forward is to ask questions and utilize training. Inclusivity is a process and a skill that will continue to evolve as terminology and language continue to adapt and our curriculum is moving toward more inclusive practice.

And finally, in our experience, intentionality and delivering inclusive content is noticed by youths. When we teach inclusively, there are youth who look to it and when notice us doing it they truly appreciate it.

For those youths who aren't looking for it, they never know the difference. They are still learning the same information. So, inclusivity is a practice that only make programming stronger and reachable to all of the youths.

Kimberly Turner: Thank you. Thank you Marcia, thank you Taz, and thank you Cassidey for sharing your thoughts and experiences. I'd to take some time to see if there are any questions for our participants.

Feel free to type a question into the chat box or phone to ask a question. If you want to ask via the phone you will need to dial star one and the operator will put you through.

We have received some questions throughout the webinar, so we will go ahead and get started with those as others send their questions along.

So the first question is this, and it's for each of our presenters, so I hope each has a response. From your perspective... and let me take that back a little bit further. Making programming LGBTQ inclusive is indeed a process. From your perspective. what is the first step/the first move that an organization should make to make its programming more inclusive for LGBTQ youth?

And why don't we start with Marcia.

Marcia Quackenbush: I guess my thinking on this one is that you go with your existing strength and build on that. You can come up with a really good argument for starting with your advocates and leaders.

You can come up with something that says no you should start with your service providers or something that says let's work with the youths. I think I would go with where are your strengths right now.

Where do you have the most support for expanding inclusivity and responsiveness? Start working with that group and then begin to reach out to your other stakeholders to bring them into the conversations.

So you already have some strength and some advocacy supporting you as you move forward.

Kimberly Turner: Taz, do you have any advice for those working with youths in regards to their first steps and making their classroom experience more inclusive to LGBTQ youth?

Taz: I do. In my experience I think the most impactful thing is the language. Really go through your curriculum, really make sure that all your facilitators have the right training so that their language isn't gendered or excludes LGBTQ youth.

Really, you do notice when inclusive language is used when printouts are asked for and it makes a huge difference. Doing that can make your curriculum so much more inclusive.

Kimberly Turner: Cassidey, can you talk a little bit about...

Marcia Quackenbush: This is Marcia, this is Marcia again. I guess I want to also say if you want any proof that this is a process you can listen to the way all of us has stumbled in this webinar sometimes over the language that we use a lot and that we are familiar with.

And sometimes we're still struggling a bit with it. I guess I also want to add that it's not because it creates greater comforts for LGBTQ youth's, but it creates better comforts for all students for all you to have this kind of inclusive language.

So it's important for everybody that we do this.

Kimberly Turner: Thanks Marcia. Cassidey, can you talk about just a little bit from the organization's perspective? What do you think the first step should be for programs trying to make their program more LGBTQ inclusive?

Cassidey Streber: Yes. So I was going to say kind of what Taz mentioned, really if you're already using a program and everyone is on board and supportive of making it inclusive, sit down and go through the curricula.

Change those minor things like the words boyfriend and girlfriend to partner. Change names make them gender neutral. Take out gendered body parts, you know, don't say male penis, just say penis.

Start to make those intentional changes. Also something that we realize is we were making those intentional changes while teaching but our paperwork that we were passing out to our students was still kind of behind.

We had almost upped it a little bit. So, make sure if you are passing out a pre- or post-test survey that the inclusive language is in that as well.

Making sure that we are defining sexual behaviors in an inclusive way, that you're asking identity and not just listing male or female.

Really go through everything that a youth is going to see during the program and make sure that you have kind of changed the language.

Kimberly Turner: We had a question here. Regarding learning new pronoun usage. Is it possible that a person who is older, let's say in their 60s or 70s may have difficulty learning a new language or the new pronoun as common usage?

Does the brain allow new language learning at this age?

Marcia Quackenbush: This is Marcia. I don't know any science about that but, you know, I've got a 62 year old brain, and it seems I struggle, but I think my struggles are comparable to that of people who are in their 20s or 30s.

This is kind of a new idea for all of us. I'm struggling, and I'm an editor, so a lot of what I'm struggling with is using they and them for a singular pronoun. It just drives me crazy.

And I understand in a whole new way over this past couple of years of doing this work how important it is to be able to do that in some cases when I'm editing a piece.

Taz: This is Taz. I have really experienced this use trying to explain as a youth with other friends who are trans and my parents could not get for the life of them my friends' pronouns right.

They were trying and trying and trying and they are not even that old, they are in their 50s. It's a struggle for older people to be able to learn this whole new world of pronouns and gender, like fluid gender.

But it doesn't mean you shouldn't try and even if it's not possible keep trying. And it is possible, my parents got it eventually. Like that's my example.

Cassidey Streber: Yes. This is Cassidey. One of the things that we train our educators to do and even staff within our organization, instead of getting so hung-up on they, them, he, her, his using someone's name is almost more simple.

Just replacing those pronouns with someone's name is so respectful and inclusive and can sometimes make that conversation easier.

Kimberly Turner: Marcia this question is for you. Can you talk a little bit more about the kind of curriculum adaptations that you've made and guidance you've provided?

Marcia Quackenbush: I think we have really covered a lot of it in this webinar. The language is usually important. Recognizing that students along the sexual identity, gender identity spectra are at risk.

Making sure that you have a responsive education for all of your youth and that you're reaching them as well as possible to make the risk and personalize those risks. And in terms of the sort of editorial changes that ETR have been making, I have not been intimately involved in that process.

I know that we have done a lot of gender-neutral names in role plays, taken away gendered body parts, tried to use more gender-neutral language throughout and we have brought a similar sensibility to issues of sexual trauma, which is also very important.

A lot of the earlier curricula carry a lot of judgment about early sexual experience, which in some cases is not voluntary and that is something which is a greater risk for LGBTQ youth.

They are more likely to have background with sexual trauma experience. So I really think the changes we've addressed are very much the kind of things that you have heard repeatedly as a theme through this webinar.

Kimberly Turner: Taz, can you talk a little about how do you think being in an LGBTQ Youth Program has impacted your experiences? Can you think a little bit of like of what it would have been like if you were in a program that wasn't inclusive and kind of talk a little bit about your thoughts about that?

Taz: Yes of course, I think being in an inclusive pregnancy prevention program, I really learned a lot more about myself and I have become more open minded about others about their own sexual and gender identity.

I have been introduced to this whole new world of people that I would have not been able to. I would have maybe judged or not been able to be friends with them before because I would have been like they're bad, they're wrong and they're not.

I have learned so much more about myself. I've been able to explore my own sexual identity and my own gender identity and be really comfortable with that and to be able to more fully express myself, which is incredibly valuable and it allows me to be more comfortable in my own life...Which is a very sweeping generalization, but it has impacted my life so much.

Teen Counsel, the program I was in, it's an incredible program and it's helped me to really be able to accept my thoughts more fully.

Kimberly Turner: Thank you so much for your response Taz. This next question is going to be for Marcia and Cassidey. Can you talk a little about the best practices for making programs inclusive of the LGBTQ youth while maintaining program fidelity?

Marcia Quackenbush: This is Marcia. You know, Cassidey talked a lot but about best practices a little earlier I think, and she covered that content really strongly. We looked at this a lot when we we're developing our supplements.

Will this be allowable at locations? Is this acceptable? And we went back and talked to developers of several of the major evidence-based development programs.

And couple of the things they talked about, one was to provide your education about sexual and gender identity before you actually start your program. The same way you might do an extra program on sexual and reproductive health, physiology and anatomy, something like that.

The most important thing is changes in language: changing the name of people in role plays, talking about the gender of people in role play did not seem to upset or concern the developers.

The one thing I heard more than once was do not change the intent of the original program. You cannot take a pregnancy prevention program and turn it into a program addressing social justice or LGBTQ rights.

These are very important very important issues; they need to be addressed but, a teen pregnancy prevention program that is evidence based and proven through research is not a place to bring that context.

You need to stay true to the original intent. I think that's why we would consider these minor adaptations or what I would call green light adaptations.

Something to remind people, is that if you're using an adaptation such as the supplement that I worked on, you really need to make sure you check with your program officers to be sure that they considered it acceptable adaptation as well.

Cassidey Streber: Yes. This is Cassidey. What I was really going to say, to support what Marcia has said. What we've done, you know, for best practice is to, you know, support our staff and training. So that they are prepared for questions.

We get a lot of questions during implementation of the TPP program. And those minor changes like I've mentioned really did not change the intent. They did not change what the youth were learning.

As evident on our post survey, if anything it made it stronger. So really it is just the best practice to go ahead and change your language. Don't change the order of activities or anything like that.

But, changing the language is kind of the first step to make it more inclusive without changing or harming your fidelity.

Marcia Quackenbush: This is Marcia. I am also going to add that the supplement that we worked on with the NYC Department of Health, they actually did do some research on that. And they are writing an article about it. Basically they found that it had a positive effect on learning.

All students learned more about LGBTQ youth's issues. The students were engaged in it and they liked learning this stuff.

There was a lot of confusion, and I only think like the NY students are going to know everything because they are in such a fabulous urban environment and there was a tremendous confusion about terms.

There was a lot of a sense that bisexual for example, meant intersex and a lot of use of the pejorative term hermaphrodite because they don't really understand what they are talking about.

So all of the students really enjoyed learning this content. They want to know this stuff and the teachers also found it a good program. The biggest complaint we have heard is it is very difficult to cover this content in a single classroom lesson.

It is better to do it in two classroom lessons. I think there is a lot of interest among students as well in learning this.

Kimberly Turner: I'm referring to a question from a participant. Let's say you have materials that you are unable to change, for example, videos. How do you suggest that folks introduce ideas related to LGBTQ youth inclusivity today?

Cassidey Streber: This is Cassidey. All of our videos are pretty heterosexual. Actually they just are. They only show heterosexual couple interaction. And so what we like to say is just kind of a forewarning, "hey, you know, our videos that we're going to show are going to show this type of a couple interacting. But remember that any of the conversations when we're talking about negotiating, you know, condom use, talking to a partner about boundaries, any of that applies to everyone. And so although this may not look like the relationship or the couple that you are it - the grounds, you know, the important stuff in the videos portray everyone." And we kind of just give that forewarning before we watch the video.

And then as we talk about it, you know, sometimes we'll say, "okay how could you say this to a different partner? How would this look different if you're only talking about, you know, this type of contraception or this type of protection?"

And so that's something we do in the classroom to kind of make everyone feel included before they even see the videos.

Marcia Quackenbush: This is Marcia. I might add a lot of times there's no time to do much more in these programs as you are really limited time. But if you have the time to have students write their own scripts.

Say, how are you going to write one of those scripts that is more inclusive for people with different gender and sexual identity?

And I'd also recommend if there is time, to look at some of the videos Scenarios USA has produced, which include some really wonderful and powerful videos.

I don't know that they would be considered minor adaptations. You may have to do them as an extra piece of your program.

But there is a lot of content there that addresses LGBTQ youth and their experiences in the school and community.

Taz: Yes. This is Taz. I think that what Cassidey said is pretty much exactly what I was going to say. Just acknowledge the drawback of the materials you have and students will take it from there.

Kimberly Turner: Why don't we go ahead and get closing thoughts from each of our presenters?

Marcia do you have anything to share here in the final moments?

Marcia Quackenbush: A closing thought, I am very excited by the progress that's being made in this area. You know, I have been in this field for a long time— it was one of the things when I started doing HIV prevention work which was early in the epidemic.

We weren't allowed, and I was working with the (unintelligible) Unified School District and they were very progressive and very advanced in all kinds of ways. But we were not allowed to specifically mention LGBTQ youth at that time in the classroom when we were doing the HIV prevention.

We have come so far it's an exciting journey and I am thrilled to be a part of it and I hope that every listening is too. Thank you.

Kimberly Turner: Taz do you have any final thoughts?

Taz: Sure. I wanted to thank you all for doing what you do because LGBTQ youth inclusive is so incredibly impactful. It's impacted me so much in my life and I am a much better person for it and I will be as I go off into the world. So thank you.

Kimberly Turner: And Cassidey any closing thoughts?

Cassidey Streber: Sure, thank you for allowing me to be in this seminar and everyone for listening and participating. I think it's exciting that we can, you know, learn to be more inclusive and really make this a part of our practice.

And I just encourage people who are still looking for that next step to just really ask questions, reach out to other organizations or programs who are doing this and have made those changes to be more inclusive. Having that support system and encouragement is really important and really has helped our organization a lot.

Kimberly Turner: All right. Thank you all for your wonderful questions as well as thank you to our presenters, again, for your thoughtful responses. We just wanted to let you know that there are several resources available through the office of Adolescent Health on LGBTQ inclusivity.

These three I've mentioned here, a guide for assessing LGBTQ inclusivity, a practical guide for creating a safe and supportive environment as well as a webinar, and the first webinar that was referenced earlier here on why LGBTQ inclusivity matters for teen pregnancy prevention.

I just wanted to also recap the six LGBTQ inclusivity constructs as a reminder as to where we are and where we're going. The six inclusivity constructs include organizational policies and practices, the extent to which programs participants, facilitators and other staff are held responsible for their actions and statements regarding an LGBTQ individual.

Points of entry: the avenues and means by which youth reach your program including recruitment strategies as well as the manner in which youth agreed at upon arrival. Physical space: the characteristics of the rooms and buildings in which your program takes place.

Staff competency: a reflection of the cultural competence of the program facilitators and other staff related to working with LGBTQ youth. Language: the terminology used both in program materials and by the facilitators.

And content: the accuracy and applicability of the programs materials or subject matter to LGBTQ youth. And again, OAH asked that OAH-funded TPP grantees identify at least one action per construct that they can act on each year. OAH encourages participants to complete the assessment template and upload to MAX in the materials review folder.

We also wanted to share some additional resources that are available and that may provide some useful information that may be helpful to you. These include a range of resources. Some refer to personal gender pronouns.

Others talk about bias, there's resources for professional development and a range of topics to create LGBTQ-inclusive programming for use. And then, again, we have another resource on language. And, again, the importance of personal gender pronouns.

Here is an example of a way to introduce this topic with youth in your program and in your session. And with that I just wanted to summarize what we did today. Today we identified curricular changes that can make TPP programs more inclusive for LGBTQ use.

We identified organizational practices that can make TPP programs more LGBTQ inclusive. And we also identified strategies for incorporating youth's perspective and making TPP programs more inclusive.

Please hit your chat box if you can. We have sent a link to you that is a survey that gives you an opportunity to provide feedback on this webinar. We are always interested in your input and we definitely like your kind of help and guidance and how to make these webinars more useful to you in the future.

So, again, please see your chat box. Enclosed is a URL for a survey that allows you to get feedback on this webinar. Please do so. Take the time to fill it out. We very much appreciate it. And with that I'm going to turn things back over to Nicole.

Nicole Bennett: All right, well thank you, everyone, so much for connecting with us and joining today's webinar. Here are a few ways to stay in touch with OAH and we look forward to hearing your feedback and seeing you all soon at the grantee conference. Thank you so much.

Operator: This does conclude today's conference. Thank you for your participation. All parties may disconnect at this time.

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