

Massachusetts Department of Public Health
Suicide Prevention Program Supported LGBTQ Youth Activities

- Transgender Suicide Prevention Working Group: provides education and awareness to communities and providers; Developed two brochures and “Saving Our Lives,” an educational, skill-building video and discussion guide involving scenarios about how to help a friend who might be thinking about suicide. The video and brochures can be viewed for free here: <http://www.masstpc.org/issues/suicide-prevention/>
- In 2012, all Youth Violence Prevention providers were trained in LGBT cultural competency:
 - ***GLBTQ Youth 101: Reducing Risk & Supporting Resiliency***
This training is an introduction to the issues faced by GLBT youth. We start by defining the issue and exploring the role of sexuality and gender identity in the lives of youth. Participants will explore the environmental and interpersonal pressures that correlate to risky behavior and high suicide rates among GLBTQ youth. We will identify strategies for providing one-to-one support to improve the health of these youth. Training provided by the GLBT Youth Support Project: <http://hcsn.org/glys/home>
- Developed LGBT-specific resources on the Suicide Prevention webpage: <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dph/programs/community-health/dvip/injury-prevention/suicide-prevention/resources/special-populations/lesbian-gay-bisexual-and-transgender.html>
- Partner with Greater Boston Parents and Families of Lesbians And Gays to distribute Family Acceptance Project booklets for parents/guardians: <http://familyproject.sfsu.edu/publications>
- The Suicide Prevention Program organized webinars on: anti-gay bullying, transgender suicide prevention, and bereavement among the LGBT community, which can be viewed for free here: <http://www.masspreventssuicide.org/webinar-library/>
- Collaboration with Department of Mental Health: LGBT Youth & Young Adult Support Training for DMH staff and providers:
 - ***Providing Culturally Competent Care to GLBTQ Clients in Health and Social Services*** - This training provided strategies for enhancing culturally competent services to LGBT clients. Participants will explore strategies for putting this into practice in their own agencies or health care setting. Trainers will provide resources and suggest strategies, and will allow ample time for problem-solving, questions, and discussion. Training provided by the GLBT Youth Support Project: <http://hcsn.org/glys/home>
- “It Takes a Village: Promoting Resiliency in LGBTQ Communities” Conference, May 8th, 2014 - Focused on how building and being invested in compassionate, supportive, and inclusive communities, promotes and supports individual and collective resiliency, promotes mental health and well-being, and can prevent suicide.

- The Live Out Loud Youth Project, a community-based social support group for LGBT youth in Berkshire County, MA developed:
 - Photovoice Project - 8 week group meeting with LGBTQ youth where they developed questions that they answered through photography, and then held a community exhibit and dialogue: <http://blog.mass.gov/publichealth/mental-wellness/a-creative-new-way-for-lgbtqa-youth-to-express-themselves/>
 - Created a 20-minute documentary film, "Be Who U R," designed to give positive, hopeful messages to youth about being queer, especially in a rural community. The messages speak to all audiences: youth who are questioning or identifying as LGBTQ, parents, friends, community members, and allies. The video can be viewed for free here: <http://youtu.be/2rco35GdZ5E>
 - Digital Story Project with transgender and gender non-conforming youth.

- **Workshops focused on LGBT populations at annual MA Suicide Prevention Conferences.**
 - **LGBTQ YOUTH SUICIDE PREVENTION: PROJECTS FROM ACROSS THE U.S. AND IN YOUR BACKYARD**
 Research shows that suicide attempts are significantly higher in LGBTQ youth than in the general population. How can you improve LGBTQ suicide prevention efforts? We'll look at sample projects from The Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC)'s recently convened LGBTQ youth suicide prevention Community of Practice (applied peer learning group). This group of suicide prevention practitioners from across the country comes together to learn, plan, and implement LGBTQ youth suicide prevention activities in their states, campuses, and tribes. You'll get information about group members' specific projects, including tailoring gatekeeper trainings to include LGBTQ information, creating referral resource guides, trying to pass school anti-bullying legislation, and more. Then we'll spend some time in small groups discussing and planning what efforts you might undertake in your area.
Julie Ebin, Suicide Prevention Resource Center

 - **TRANSGENDER SUICIDE PREVENTION AND EDUCATION**
 This workshop is a basic training in transgender suicide risks, warning signs, and lay-level interventions. It is intended for participants who are NOT trained in mental health, medical, or other direct care services that involve clinical training and skills in suicide assessment and intervention. This training will review common factors that may lead to suicide attempts in trans populations and ways to ask people about suicidality, get support, and refer suicidal people help. The training will make use of video scenarios to illustrate skills and allow some role playing and discussion on ways to ask people about suicidality and refer them for support.
Ruben Hopwood, M.Div., Coordinator, Trans Health Program, Fenway Health; Thomas Lewis, Program Assistant, Trans Health Program, Fenway Health

 - **STORIES OF RISK AND RESILIENCE — GLBT HOMELESS YOUTH**
 In this 90 minute workshop, Youth on Fire Safe Spaces staff will describe their work with GLBTQ identified homeless youth, and Youth on Fire members will discuss their specific

life experiences, focusing on how providers can best work with the population to provide supports, services, and interventions.

Mandy Lussier, Diamond McMillion, and Youth on Fire Members

- **LGBT AGING 101: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW TO MAXIMIZE MENTAL HEALTH FOR LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER OLDER ADULTS AND CAREGIVERS**
Many mainstream healthcare providers have limited knowledge of the psychosocial, cultural, and economic issues facing LGBT older adults and caregivers. Many LGBT elders are wary of engaging with professionals and would rather go without, even when in greatest need, rather than turn to healthcare services for help. Participants will learn about the unique life experiences and issues facing LGBT older adults and their impact on mental health. Discussion will address models of service delivery and engagement that are inclusive of LGBT older adults and how providers can create welcoming environments to maximize mental health for LGBT older adults and caregivers.

Lisa Krinsky, LICSW, Director, The LGBT Aging Project

- **CREATING A WELCOMING SCHOOL FOR GAY, LESBIAN, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER, QUEER, AND QUESTIONING STUDENTS**
There are GLBTQ youth in every school. Do you know how welcoming your school is? We will use assessment tools and action plans to measure your school's level of welcome of GLBTQ and all youth as well as next steps. Creating safer spaces helps for a better learning environment for all as well as affecting mental health.

Missy Sturtevant, MSW, Program Coordinator, GLBT Youth Support Project, A Program of Health Imperatives

- **A YOUTH PERSPECTIVE ON WHY COMMUNITY BASED YOUTH PROGRAMMING MATTERS**
Community Action Youth Programs' Generation Q and Trans* Rights Education and Empowerment (T.R.E.E.) are educational, social support groups for GLBTQ youth and their allies, ages 14-21 in Franklin and Hampshire County. One of our youth participants will discuss some realities and impacts of GLBTQ youth suicide and the importance of suicide prevention. Together, we will look at some regional statistics and explore areas that need additional, accessible resources and supports. We will highlight the role that hetero/cissexism and internalized oppression play in relation to this topic. We will also discuss the importance and value of community role models, peer support, and other supportive networks in relation to prevention. Participants will walk away with a detailed handout on helpful actions they can do in their everyday work and lives to make spaces safer for GLBTQ youth.

Alex Nally, former Generation Q/T.R.E.E. Peer Leader, undergraduate student at Mass Art

*Katherine Newman, LGBTQ Program Specialist, Community Action Youth Programs
Janice Ventre, Suicide Prevention Program Coordinator*