



**THE KEYS TO BUILDING
RESILIENCY;
THE IMPORTANCE OF EMOTIONAL
SUPPORT FOR LGBTQ
TRANSITIONAL AGE YOUTH**



The RISE Initiative is funded by the Children's Bureau, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Administration for children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, under grant number 90-CT-0154.

BEFORE WE BEGIN...

- **LISTEN ACTIVELY**
 - Respect others when they are talking.
- **SPEAK FROM YOUR OWN EXPERIENCE**
 - Use "I" instead of "they," "we," and "you."
- **DO NOT BE AFRAID TO RESPECTFULLY CHALLENGE ONE ANOTHER**
 - Asking questions, but refrain from personal attacks.
 - Focus on ideas.
- **PARTICIPATE TO THE FULLEST OF YOUR ABILITY**
 - Growth depends on the inclusion of every individual voice.
- **SHARE YOUR OWN STORY AND EXPERIENCE**
 - Be mindful of other's stories and experiences when sharing
- **BE CONSCIOUS OF BODY LANGUAGE AND NONVERBAL RESPONSES**
 - They can be as disrespectful as words.





- In 2010, the Los Angeles Gay & Lesbian Center received federal funding to launch RISE (Recognize Intervene Support Empower) to:
 - LGBTQ foster youth achieve permanency.
 - Increase acceptance and support for LGBTQ youth.

- Facts:
 - LGBTQ youth are disproportionately represented within the foster care system.
 - 40% of homeless LGBTQ transitional age youth spent time in foster care.





- RISE helps LGBTQ youth in Los Angeles:
 - (1) Find durable family connections
 - (2) Achieve emotional permanency
 - (3) Obtain legal permanency in homes where they feel safe, nurtured, and loved into adulthood.



RISE PROJECT GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- LGBTQ children belong at home with their family and in their community.
- Families love their children and want the best for them.
- Family's culture must be acknowledged and honored.
- Strong, accepting communities empower strong, accepting families.





- **Identify** RISE Indicators of Emotional Permanency.
- **Maximize** ability to build a supportive network.
- **Demonstrate** skills to:
 - Rebuild and strengthen severed/strained connections.
 - Help build and maintain natural support network.
 - Understand youth's behavior from a grief and loss perspective.
- **Exhibit** cultural competency of LGBTQ TAY to the safe coming out process.
- **Apply** tools to enhance youth's ability to building self sufficiency.



RISE'S BELIEF FROM WORK WITH THE LA GAY & LESBIAN CENTER'S TRANSITIONAL LIVING PROGRAM

When LGBTQ youth have emotionally supportive and affirming adults in their lives, they gain the courage and confidence to embrace the steps towards independence.



CONNECTING THE DOTS

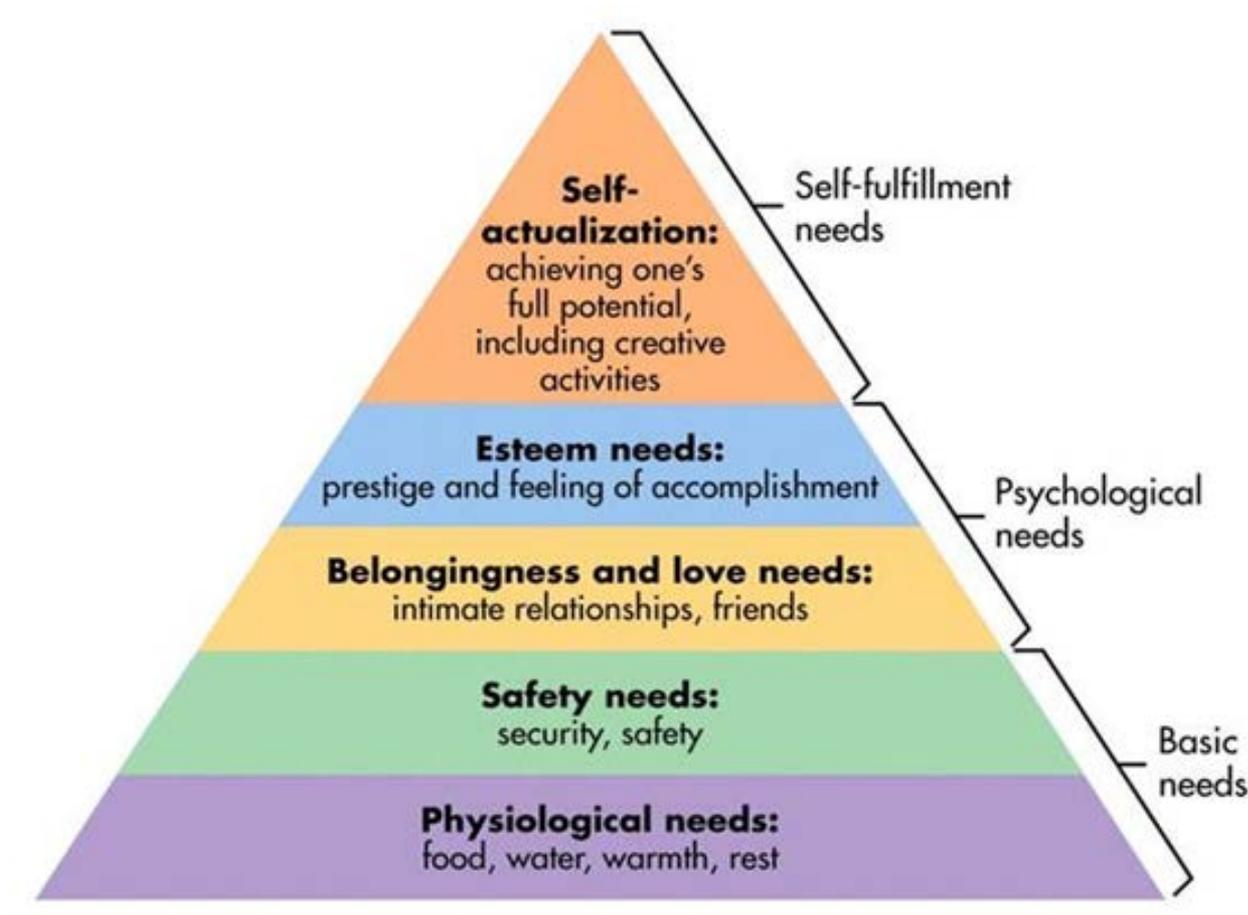


“Social Support is significantly related to resilience.”



Daining, C. & DePanfilis, D. (2007). Resilience of youth in transition from out-of-home care to adulthood. *Children and youth services review*, 29. 1158-1178. doi: 10.1016/j.childyouth.2007.04.006

MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS



INDICATORS OF EMOTIONAL PERMANENCY



- A place to stay in an emergency

- Emotional support of a caring adult



- Family members who regularly check-in



- A place to go for family meals

- Concrete support



WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO ACHIEVE WITH THESE TOOLS?

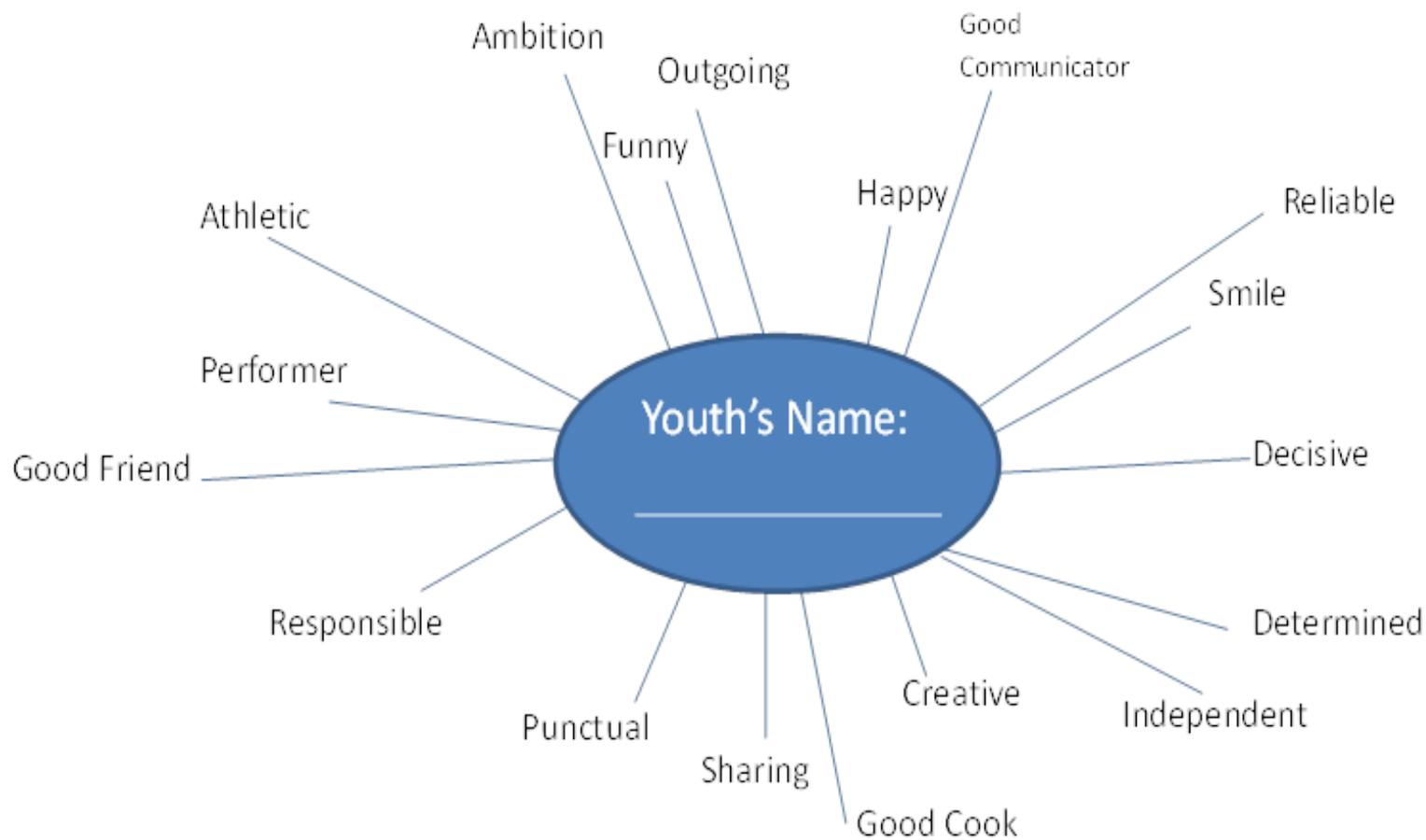
- Identify strengths of LGBTQ
- Identify youth and family driven goals
- Identify and expand community connections
- Identify supportive adults
- Improve family relationships by increasing supportive behaviors and decreasing rejecting behaviors towards LGBTQ youth.



STRENGTH'S CHAT

- **The purpose:**
 - Get to know a youth well enough so that the identified strengths inform the treatment plan and direct the youth's goals.
 - Assist the youth in identifying and building their strengths.
 - Remind the youth of the positive qualities they possess.
- **GOAL:** As the youth works to achieve their goals, the youth will be able to see their strengths grow and feel empowered to independently utilize their strengths to build upon improving their life.





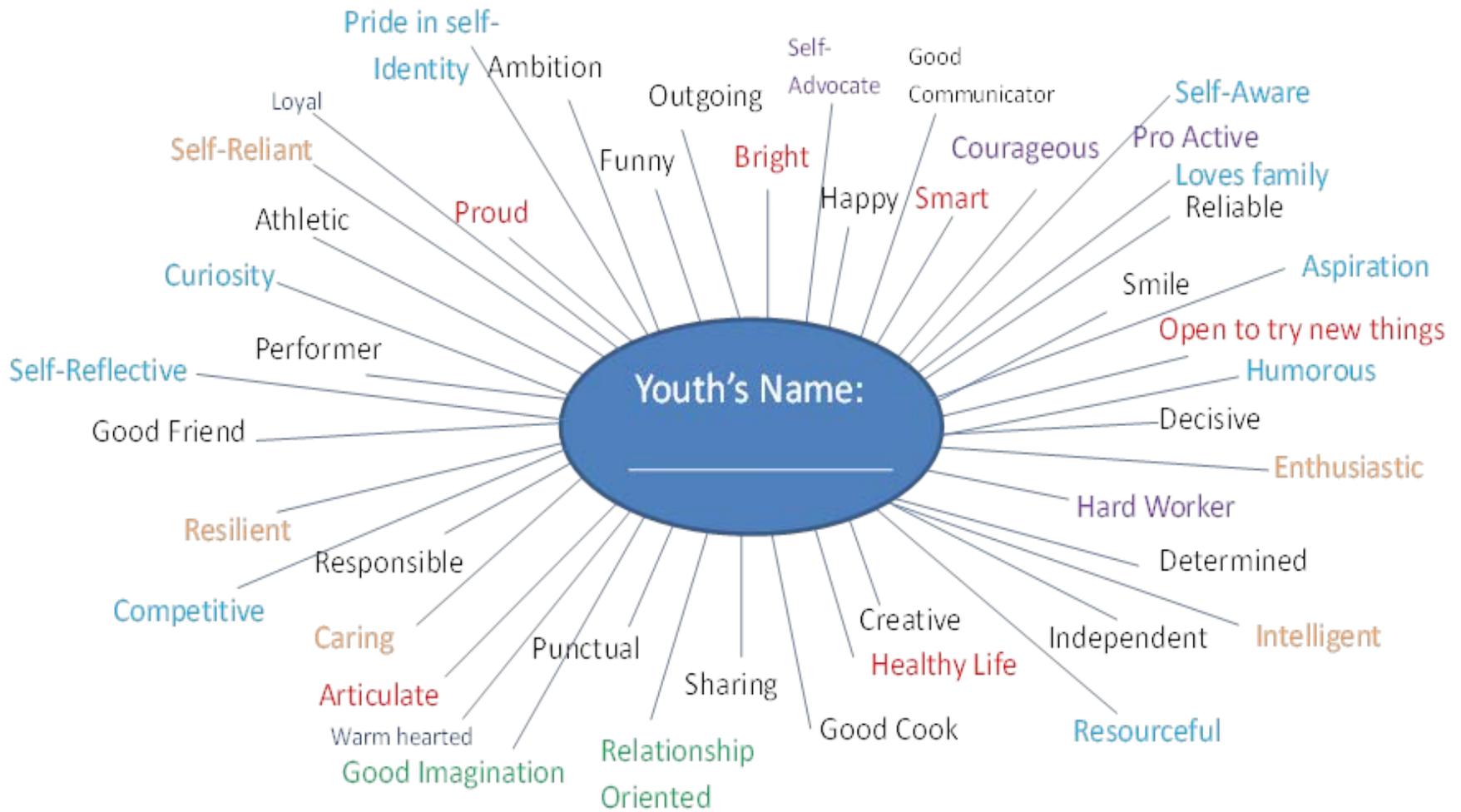
Strength's Chat

Youth's Name:

Month: July 2012

Number of strengths: 18





Strength's Chat

Youth's Name:

Month: May 2013

Number of strengths: 46



VISION STATEMENT

- **The purpose:**
 - Assist youth in identifying and establishing realistic short-term goals.
- **Ask 3 questions:**
 - Where does the young person want to be in life?
 - Who does the youth want to be connected to?
 - Who does the young person want to receive more LGBTQ support from?
- **Example:** *Find a full-time job while working towards becoming a Corrections Officer; reconnect with my aunt and build my support as a lesbian with my aunt and cousin.*
- **GOAL:** The youth's voice is acknowledged and the process becomes youth driven. The young person and service providers are provided clarity and direction in obtaining successful outcomes.



VISION STATEMENT CONTINUED

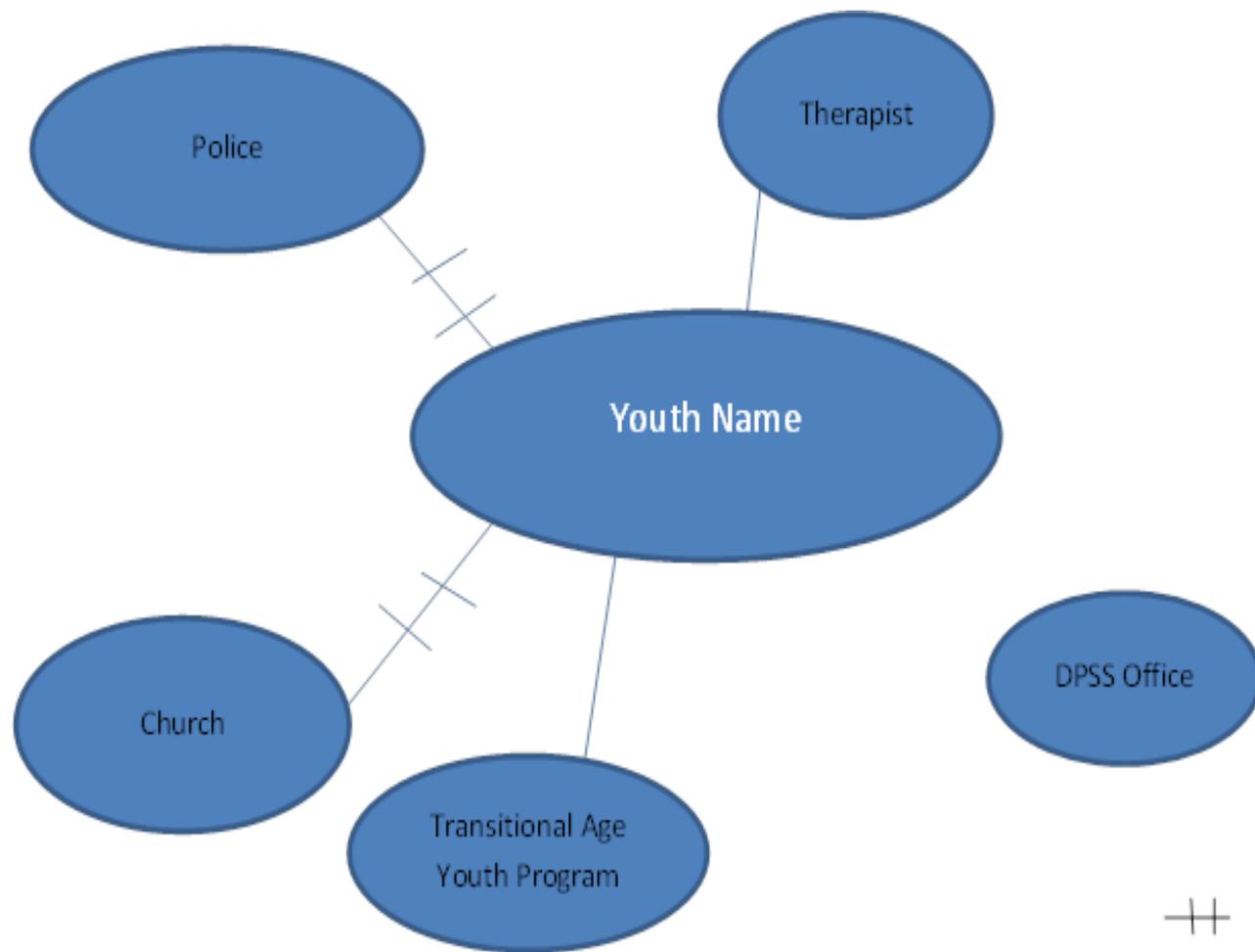
- Provides direction
- Focuses the youth and team on the goal
- Decision-making tool
- “Do your actions fit your vision statement?”
- Assists in identifying when youth is ready for graduation



ECO MAP

- **Purpose:**
 - Assist the youth in identifying and building their community connections.
- **GOAL:** Over a period of time the youth will be able to see their growth and feel empowered to appropriately use community connections on their road to success.





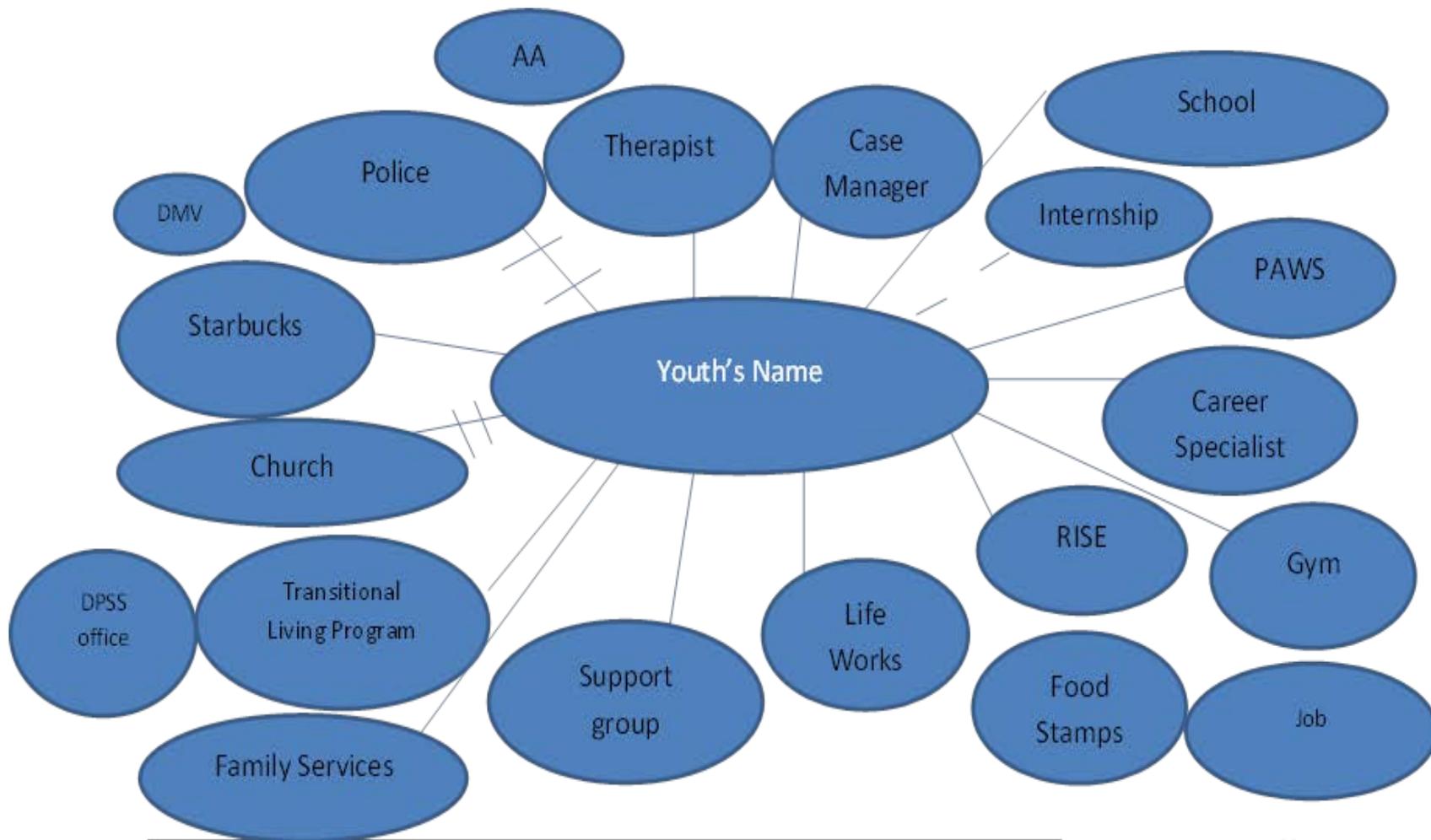
- Key**
- ++ Not Supportive
 - Somewhat Supportive
 - Supportive

Eco Map

Youth: _____ **Month: July 2012**

Number of Community Connections: 5





Eco Map

Youth: _____ **Month: May 2013**

Number of Community Connections: 20

Key

++ Not Supportive

--- Somewhat Supportive

___ Supportive

FAMILY CONNECTIONS MAP

Identify who the youth wants to:

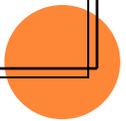
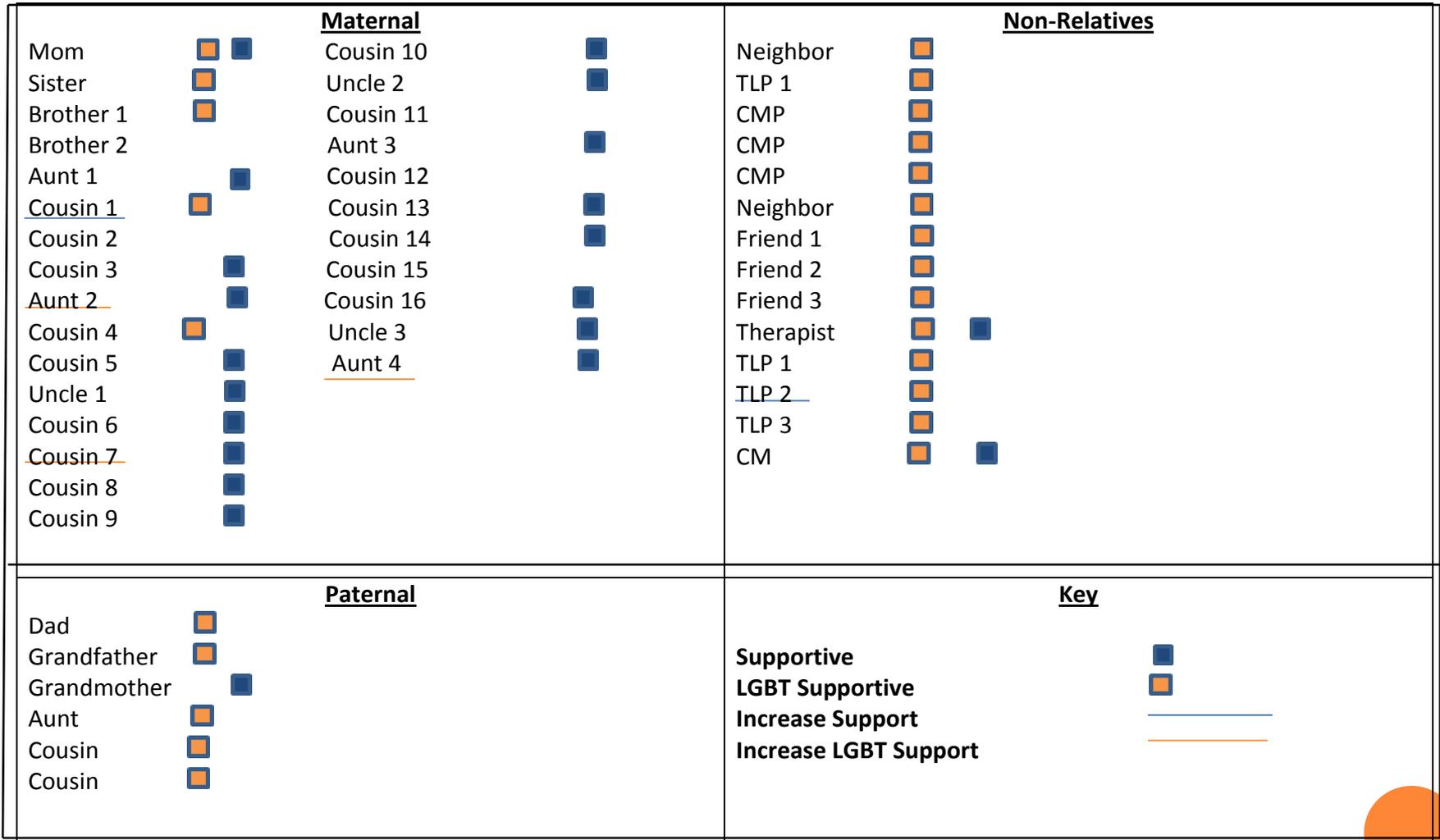
- **Reconnect to**
- **Connect with**
- **Strengthen relationships with.**

- **GOAL: The youth is able to see the people they already have in their lives, begin to conceptualize their “chosen family”, and expand the necessary supports to achieve success.**



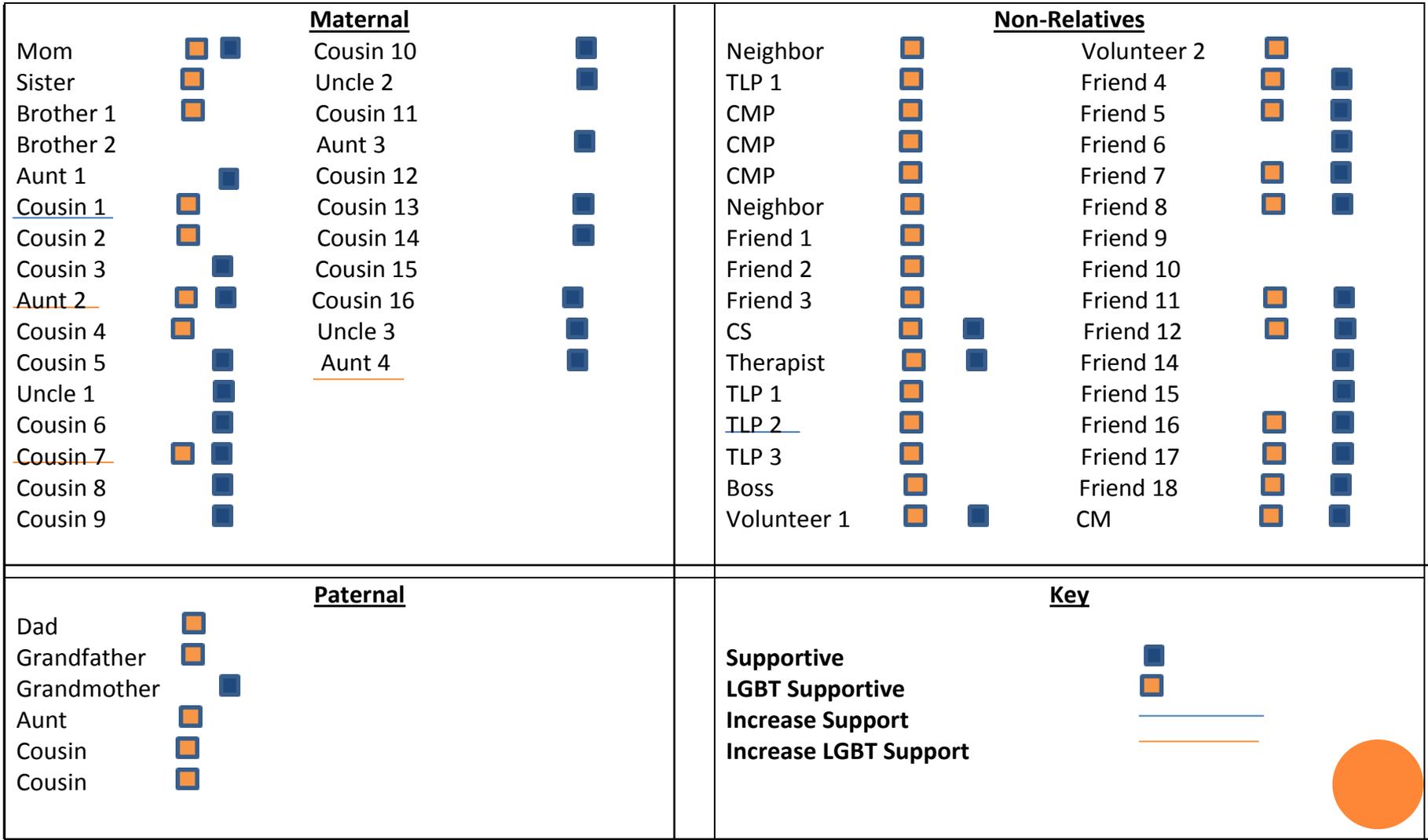
Youth:
 Month: July 2012
 Supportive Connections: 21
 LGBT Supportive Connections: 22

Family Connections Map



Family Connections Map

Youth:
 Month: May 2013
 Supportive Connections: 39
 LGBT Supportive Connections: 40



BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS AND SUPPORT

“Improving youth’s ability to form positive relationships is important for enhancing their development and well-being.”

○ Reconnect

- Use open ended and probing questions to *identify potential people to reconnect to.*

○ Connect

- Use open ended and probing questions to *identify connections that the youth wants to maintain.*

○ Strengthen

- Role play communications.
- Teach youth how to maintain relationships.
- Explore the benefits of maintaining relationships.



COMING OUT PROCESS

- Open discussion
- Review of RISE
Coming Out Process





COMING-OUT: CHALLENGES AND BENEFITS

Stigma & discrimination

Fear-informed stress

Concealment

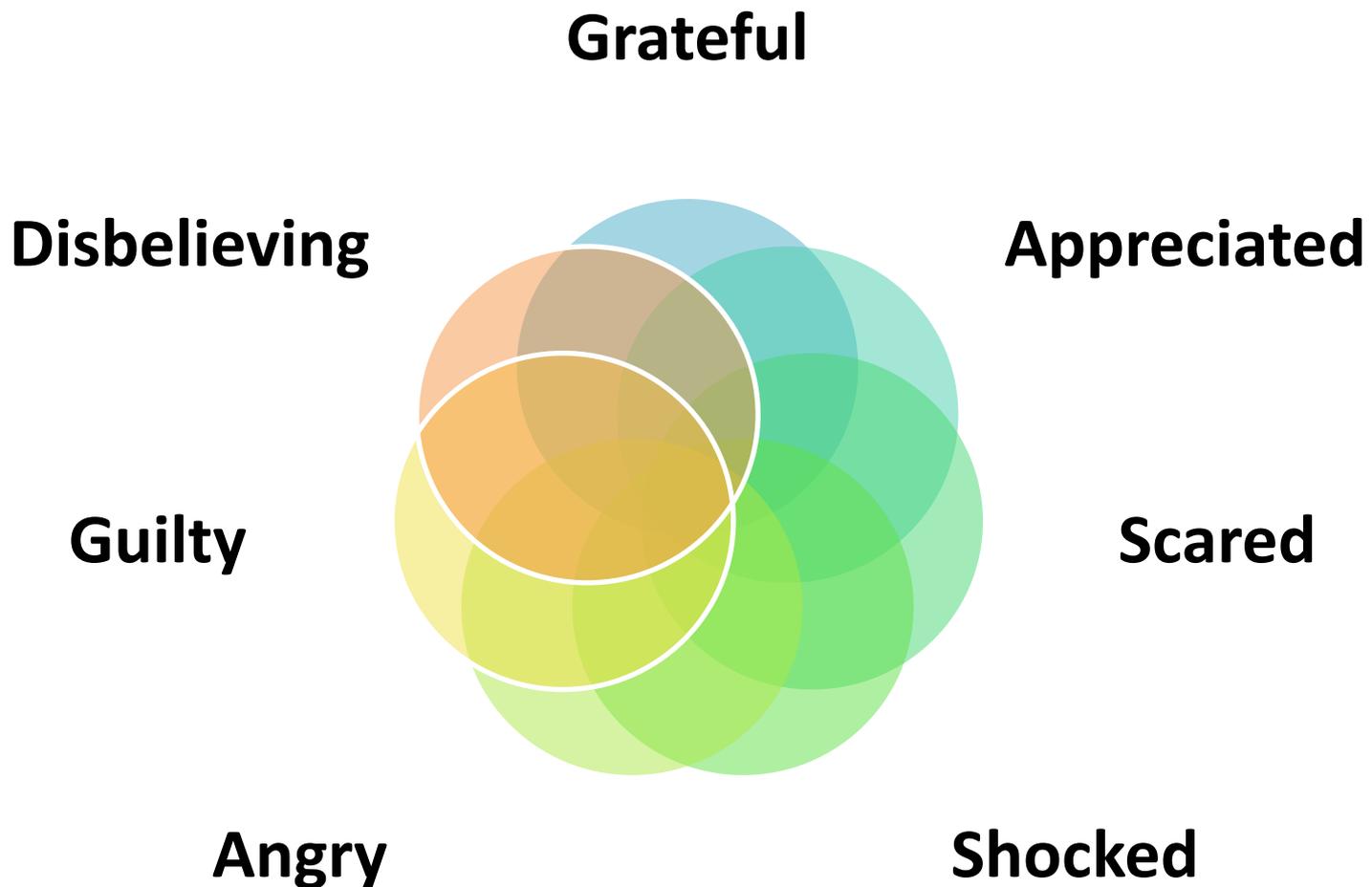
Fear of being found out

- **Empower**
- **Promote self-esteem**
- **Create wholeness**
- **Families come-out too**





HOW MIGHT A PERSON FEEL AFTER SOMEONE COMES OUT TO THEM?





Rejection and Acceptance

Acceptance

- Higher self esteem
- Closer relationship with family
- Believe they can be a health happy adult

Require respect

Support

Advocate

Express Affection

Rejection

Blaming

Shaming

Excluding

Name-Calling

- High risk for HIV and STDs & STIs
- Use illegal drugs
- High levels of depression
- Attempted suicide
- Loss of relationships

Ryan, C. (2009). Supportive families, healthy children: Helping families with lesbian, gay, bisexual & transgender children. San Francisco, CA: Marian Wright Edelman Institute, San Francisco State University. (pp. 9)



GRIEF & LOSS



“Separations from important, intimate caregivers, and being in relationships that are abusive, rejecting, or abandoning, contribute to feelings of hurt and pain and beliefs of being unlovable and unwanted.”

Adapted from Darla Henry’s 3-5-7 Model Workbook. (2012).
Sunburry Press: Pennsylvania.



WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

- *LGBTQ youth encounter more grief and loss than others because of their experience of rejection and discrimination from family, friends, co-workers, employers, teachers and other caregivers.*
- *Addressing the rejection and discrimination encountered provides space for the youth to make changes necessary to reach their goals.*
- *Addressing the fear of future rejection and teaching the youth how to advocate for themselves helps empower the youth.*



ACTIVITY

MY LIFE SOUNDTRACK



Adapted from Darla Henry's 3-5-7 Model Workbook. (2012).
Sunburry Press: Pennsylvania.



SUCCESS STORIES

“I can honestly say I have never felt as supported as I do right now.”

“The RISE team helped me to realize I can build a “chosen family” made up of people who are supportive of me.”

“I learned that I need a support system. I was able to reconnect with my family and “come out.”

“It has been a life-changing experience that will serve me for the rest of my life.”

“Working with the RISE team has been a wonderful experience; it has been difficult at times but the RISE team and case manager were able to help me develop goals which included helping me reconnect with family and finding employment opportunities.”

“If I had not gotten this help, I wouldn't be the proud, independent, successful individual I am!”



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All Young People, regardless of Sexual Orientation or Identity, deserve a Safe and Supportive environment in which to achieve their Full Potential.

-Harvey Milk

