

Current Status of the Intervention



Care Coordination Team (CCT)

- Completed data collection in March 2016
- 58 youth have been served by CCT since enrollment opened in 2013
- LA LGBT Center will fund one team of practitioners to continue services for LGBTQ+ youth in LA County through September 2017

Outreach and Relationship Building (ORB)

- Completed data collection in June 2015
- Trained over 3,000 professionals in LA County
- Secured LA County contracts with DCFS and Probation for training, coaching, and consultation for next 12 months
- Continues to provide coaching support and technical assistance to 15 child welfare agencies



Overarching Evaluation Results

Pre- and Post-Test Design

CCT

- Baseline and end-point interview surveys of enrolled youth and caregivers on wellbeing, permanent connections, and support or rejection of sexual orientation and gender identity
- Early enrollment & service completion qualitative interviews with youth focusing on services to date and environment of support and acceptance

Results

CCT

- 89% of adults (n=9) providing complete data, maintained or increased their generally high level of support
- 100% of youth (n=12) that named a foster parent at baseline & follow-up experienced either increased or continued support for their LGBTQ+ identity



Youth reported several aspects of RISE that they felt helped them:

- o feeling comfortable and open with RISE staff,
- o emotional support of RISE staff,
- o having someone that understood them and could relate to their experiences,
- o being able to be open about their identity,
- o help with connecting to family members and improved family relationships.

ORB

- On average increase in training participants' scores on 13 of 19 LGBTQ+ knowledge areas (n=455)
- 79% of respondents (n=108) reported using the knowledge they acquired in training during their day to day work.
- 100% of those who reported not using the information since being trained stated that it was not applicable for their clients.

Lessons Learned

- Lack of understanding in child welfare about the needs of LGBTQ+ and gender-expansive children and youth
- System-wide heterosexism, anti-gay bias, and anti-transgender bias is the biggest barrier to implementation
- Lack of safe, affirming homes and placements for LGBTQ+ youth
- Best practices are not widely known or being used to address the safety, well-being, and permanency needs of LGBTQ+ youth in the child welfare system
- Training exists but is not routine or mandatory and often times presents inaccurate information



The RISE Project

Target Population:
LGBTQ+ (questioning) and gender-expansive children & youth, ages 5 years and older involved in the Los Angeles County child welfare system and their families (biological, relatives, NREFM, durable connections, potential permanency options)

Goals:

- Reduce the amount of time LGBTQ+ children and youth spend in foster care and increase the number of LGBTQ+ foster youth living in safe and stable homes with emotional and legal permanency.
- Facilitate change at the system level of child welfare by decreasing anti-gay bias and anti-transgender bias through training and coaching of LA County child welfare staff

Intervention Components:

CCT

A team of practitioners who team with the child or youth, their family, natural supports and other professionals to increase support for the child or youth's LGBTQ+ identity and to identify, strengthen and expand connections with adults who are willing to commit to a permanent relationship with the child or youth.

ORB

A system level intervention designed to deliver LGBTQ+ training, coaching and consultation to the Los Angeles County DCFS and other child welfare agencies to improve their LGBTQ+ competency, increase usage of LGBTQ+ environmental cues and to build upon and sustain change in practice and policy.

Other Project Findings



Experiences in Care	LGBTQ Youth	Non-LGBTQ Youth
Total # of Placements (mean)	2.9	2.4
Hospitalized for Emotional Reasons	13.5%	4.2%
Ever been homeless	21.1%	13.9%
Currently living in a group home	25.7%	10.1%
Reported poor treatment based on SOGIE	37.7%	14.4%

Foster Care Statistics Taken from:
Wilson, B. D., Cooper, K., Kastanis, A., & Nezhad, S. (2014). Sexual and Gender Minority Youth in Foster Care: Assessing Disproportionality and Disparities in Los Angeles. The Williams Institute.

"Trainers were exposed to resistance to the curriculum, extreme bias, rejection, and some hostility. These incidents included participants attempting to bully the trainers or other trainees, using offensive and unprofessional language when discussing LGBTQ+ people and LGBTQ+ rights, and in some cases making inappropriate comments that directly targeted the trainers. As a result, trainers were especially vulnerable to triggering of related trauma and potential internalized bias."