

## Fact Sheet:

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# NDTAC Fact Sheet: Improving Services for Youth Who Are LGBT in Juvenile Justice Systems

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To promote the safe, inclusive treatment of youth who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT)<sup>1</sup> in juvenile justice systems, this fact sheet serves as a resource to enhance the capacity of State and local administrators and practitioners to improve policies and practices. This document explores the experiences of youth who are LGBT generally, their entry into juvenile justice systems and their experiences in these systems, and recommendations for policy and practice. Additional resources to improve juvenile justice services are presented at the end of the document. Even in juvenile justice settings without youth who are openly LGBT, the practices recommended and described in this fact sheet can foster more inclusive environments for all youth.

### *Experiences of Youth Who Are LGBT*

Young people are coming out as lesbian, gay, or bisexual (LGB) at earlier ages. Over the last 30 years, the average age for coming out as LGB has decreased from between 19 and 23 in the 1980s (Trolden, 1988) to between 16 and 17 in the last decade (D'Augelli, 2006; Shilo & Savaya, 2011). Research also has found that first awareness of sexual attraction to others occurs around age 10 (IOM, 2011). Although the prevalence of youth who are LGB has been studied in recent years, data on the prevalence of youth with transgender identities are limited (IOM, 2011). However, these youth share similar negative experiences based on comparable circumstances as youth who identify as LGB.

When youth who are LGBT come out, they may experience unwelcoming, hostile reactions from peers, parents, and those in positions of authority and power. These negative experiences can include verbal, emotional, and physical abuse and other victimization. Following are some examples of the negative experiences youth who are LGBT face in school and at home.

#### **In school:**

- According to the 2010 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), high school students who are gay or lesbian are three to six times more likely than heterosexual students to report not going to school because they feel unsafe at school or on their way to or from school (Kann et al., 2011).
- In a 2012 survey of student experiences, the Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network found that 80 percent of youth who are LGBT reported being verbally harassed and 40 percent reported being physically harassed (Kociv, Greytak, Bartkiewicz, Boesen, & Palmer, 2012).

<sup>1</sup> This fact sheet uses "LGBT" as an umbrella acronym to refer to youth who are not heterosexual and/or who express their gender in diverse ways. It is not intended to exclude other identities along the spectrum of sexual orientation (e.g., pansexual) and gender identity (e.g., genderqueer) that youth may use to describe themselves.

### Key Concepts

To develop culturally competent systems of care for youth who are LGBT, an awareness of key concepts and terminology is essential. The following terms offer an important first step in understanding and preparing to serve this diverse group of youth.

**Sex:** Genetic and anatomical characteristics with which people are born, typically labeled "male" or "female." Some individuals are born with a reproductive/sexual anatomy that does not fit typical definitions of male or female, which may be referred to as "intersex."

**Sexual Orientation:** A person's emotional, sexual, and/or romantic attraction to others. This can include attraction to people of the opposite sex/gender (heterosexual), the same sex/ gender (gay/lesbian), or multiple sexes/ genders (bisexual).

**Gender Identity:** A person's internal sense of being male, female, or something else. Because gender identity is internal, it is not necessarily visible to others. Exploring gender identity and roles is a part of normal development (IOM, 2011).

**Gender Expression:** How individuals externally represent their gender to others, such as mannerisms, clothing, and personal interests.

**Transgender:** When a person's gender identity/expression is different from that typically associated with the gender assigned at birth. Transgender people "transition" to express their authentic gender through various changes (e.g., clothing and physical appearance).

**Coming Out:** The process through which people acknowledge, express, and share with others information about their sexual orientation and gender identity. This experience can be affirming and healthy, resulting in a sense of belonging—but it can also create stress in the lives of youth and put them at risk for negative outcomes caused by LGBT-related stigma and the responses and behavior of others. This process may include coming out to oneself, to friends and other peers, at school, to family, at work, and in one's community over time.

*These descriptions are adapted from Poirier, Fisher, Hunt and Bearse (2014), except where otherwise noted.*



### At home:

- A 2012 Human Rights Campaign youth survey found that 26 percent of 13-to-17-year olds reported disapproval from family members because of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity (Human Rights Campaign, 2012).
- A study on victimization found that 30 percent of gay youth were afraid of being verbally abused by their parents (D'Augelli, 2006).
- Compared to youth who are LGBT and reported no or low levels of family rejection, youth who are LGBT who experience high levels of family rejection during adolescence are 8.4 times more likely to have attempted suicide, 5.9 times more likely to report high levels of depression, and 3.4 times more likely to use illegal drugs (SAMHSA, 2014).

Although not all youth who are LGBT experience these challenges, these examples demonstrate important considerations as children and youth come out as LGBT. Many of these young people experience victimization at a time when they are still legally dependent on parents and authority figures for care. In cases of family rejection or school victimization, age-based restrictions for youth under 18 can complicate how they can access appropriate care and support. Further, when they are placed in supervised systems—including juvenile justice systems—youth who are LGBT must rely on others to secure responsive and competent services. Unfortunately, many of today's systems are ill-equipped to offer protection and focused support, leaving many of these youth exposed to additional harm.

### Entry of Youth Who Are LGBT Into Juvenile Justice Systems

Adolescence is a time of heightened risk-taking behavior and several unique factors put youth who are LGBTQ at greater risk for contact with juvenile justice systems (OJJDP, 2014). Factors contributing to this, such as stress and risk-taking behaviors, disproportionate punishment and arrests, and homelessness, may be influenced by the aforementioned challenges they experience. These factors—and the cycles of victimization that contribute to them—underscore the need to create more targeted, responsive, and safer rehabilitative services in juvenile justice systems (and more broadly in communities).

**Stress and Risk-Taking Behaviors.** Victimization has been linked to increased levels of stress and mental health problems in youth who are LGBT (Burton, Marshal, Chisholm, Sucato, & Friedman, 2013). For example, these youth have higher rates of hopelessness than their heterosexual peers (Kann et al., 2011) and are more likely to attempt suicide than their heterosexual counterparts (Hatzenbueler, 2011). Furthermore, youth who are LGBT may also struggle to access available mental and behavioral health supports because of fear of being judged by others (Safren & Pantalone, 2006).

Youth who are LGBT also appear to engage in disproportionate levels of risk-taking behaviors:

- According to the YRBS, youth who are LGB are more likely to binge drink, use marijuana, try cocaine, and try methamphetamines than straight peers (Kann et al., 2011).
- Youth who are LGBT reported fighting more often and skipping school more frequently than peers who are not LGBT (Russell, Everett, Rosario, & Birkett, 2014).

Youth who are LGBT and engage in risk-taking and delinquent behaviors demonstrate an important need for care and support. Unfortunately, instead of gaining access to targeted services, these youth are far too often met with punitive responses that appear to play a contributing role in entry into the juvenile justice system.

**Punishment and Arrests.** Punishment for rule-breaking behavior may be more extreme for youth who are LGBT than for youth who do not identify as LGBT. When youth who are LGBT are disciplined, research indicates that they often receive harsher responses from authority figures:

### Juvenile Justice Involvement Among Youth Who Are LGBT: A Snapshot

- 300,000 gay and transgender youth are arrested and detained each year (Hunt & Moodie-Mills, 2012)
- Youth who are LGBT are:
  - More likely to be arrested for status offenses than heterosexual peers (Irvine, 2010)
  - Estimated to comprise 7 percent of the U.S. population under 18 years of age, but 13-to-15 percent of all youth in juvenile justice systems (Irvine, 2010)
  - Vulnerable to biased treatment (e.g., verbal harassment) and unsafe conditions in juvenile justice systems, including pretrial detention, segregation and isolation, and reparative therapy (Majd, Marksamer, & Reyes, 2009)
- More inclusive policies and services in juvenile justice settings are essential to prevent additional harm and decrease the likelihood of longer-term system involvement for youth who are LGBT (Pilnik, Marel, & Gilbert, 2014)



- Nonheterosexual youth experience disproportionately higher levels of punishment than heterosexual peers for the same negative behaviors in school settings (Himmelstein & Bruckner, 2011).
- These youth are also more likely to be arrested for status offenses than youth who are not LGB (Irvine, 2010).

**Homelessness.** Although national data are limited, research suggests that as many as 40 percent of unaccompanied youth who are homeless are LGBT (Ray, 2006). One recent study of six cities suggests a range based on location, with youth who are LGB representing between 10 percent and 43 percent of all unaccompanied homeless youth (Cunningham, Pergamit, Astone, & Luna, 2014). Although the causes of this significant proportion are complex, family conflict is a primary concern. For example, many youth who are LGBT report being forced out of their homes because of family rejection of their sexual orientation or gender identity (Durso & Gates, 2012). Additionally, many youth who are LGBT leave home situations where they have been exposed to physical, emotional, or sexual abuse (Durso & Gates, 2012).

- Once they are on the streets, homeless youth may engage in survival sex in exchange for shelter, food, or money (National Alliance to End Homelessness, 2009).
- Some youth may use highly addictive substances to cope with the challenges they are facing (Cochran, Stewart, Ginzler, & Cauce, 2002).
- In addition, being a runaway is considered a status offense in 39 states (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2012).

All of these behaviors place homeless youth who are LGBT at increased odds of juvenile justice system involvement.

### ***Juvenile Justice System Experiences of Youth Who Are LGBT***

After youth who are LGBT enter the juvenile justice system, many will face systemic shortfalls and additional hardships and victimization. When they are most in need of responsive care, treatment, and rehabilitation, many youth who are LGBT end up encountering a series of biased, inappropriate, and ill-prepared policies and practices within the systems meant to serve and rehabilitate them. These encounters can prevent these youth from accessing the supports they need and may actually increase their likelihood of long-term system involvement (Pilnik et al., 2014). Some specific experiences of youth who are LGBT in the juvenile justice system include:

**Biased and inappropriate treatment.** Many juvenile justice professionals lack awareness of basic concepts and definitions related to sexual orientation and gender identity, placing youth who are LGBT at risk for additional exclusion and stigma because staff cannot respond to the specific needs of these young people (e.g., trauma, depression). Some juvenile justice system professionals equate nonheterosexual orientations or gender nonconformity with deviance and even mental illness. Further, some staff may also attempt to convert or punish youth who are LGBT, even subjecting them to reparative or conversion therapy in the belief that they can be changed (Majd et al., 2009).

**Services and placements ill-prepared for youth who are LGBT.** Many juvenile justice settings lack connections to mental and behavioral health services that can specifically address the unique needs and risks of youth who are LGBT. For example, juvenile justice facilities may not have adequately trained counselors who can specifically support youth who have experienced trauma and victimization because of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity (Majd et al., 2009).

**Disproportionate levels of detention.** Youth who are LGBT experience pretrial detention at higher levels than their non-LGBT peers (Majd et al., 2009). This occurs for a number of reasons. These youth might be inappropriately viewed as displaying sexually predatory behaviors or as being incapable of protection in community settings. In such situations, detention is meant to “protect” the youth or other community members. Second, detention may occur in situations when parents or guardians have refused custody. This may be due to rejection of a youth because of his or her sexual orientation and/or gender identity. In both cases, detention becomes a default option and is often unnecessary (Majd et al., 2009).

**Segregation and isolation.** Youth who are LGBT are also at risk of being inappropriately classified and housed. For example, youth who are transgender might be placed according to birth sex rather than gender identity, leaving them vulnerable to potential abuse or forcing them to hide or be ridiculed for their true gender identity. Facilities may also choose to segregate youth who are LGBT, placing them in solitary confinement to protect them (Hunt & Moodie-Mills, 2012). The use of solitary confinement, especially long periods of isolation, greatly increases a youth’s risk of suicide and self-harm (American Civil Liberties Union, n.d.).



**Abuse while in placement.** Safety issues in detention and correctional facilities caused by the lack of clear policies and training place youth who are LGBT at risk for physical, sexual, and emotional abuse (Hunt & Moodie-Mills, 2012). For example, an Equity Project survey described a culture of abuse in detention settings and cited concerns about the failure of detention staff to keep these youth safe (Majd et al., 2009).

### Policy and Practice Recommendations

Various resources and recommended practices can inform juvenile justice system professionals about approaches that create safer, more inclusive environments for youth who are LGBT. This section provides a practice framework using 10 standards that are essential to providing more culturally competent services and outcomes for youth who are LGBT (Helfgott & Gonsoulin, 2012). These standards are grounded in four guiding principles: (1) fostering shared responsibility and a common commitment across service systems for the well-being of youth who are LGBT and their families; (2) creating inclusive organizational cultures; (3) implementing family-centered approaches; and (4) promoting positive youth development by enhancing their strengths and providing opportunities for them to foster positive relationships with others and becoming healthy, productive adults.

The following table summarizes the 10 standards and includes related tips. These recommendations are generally relevant to intake, diversion, secure confinement, and aftercare, but they should be adapted appropriately. Also, these standards align with other recommended practices, such as the Coalition for Juvenile Justice’s (CJJ) and SOS Project’s National Standards for the Care of Youth Charged with Status Offenses (2013) and The Model Standards Project (Wilber, Reyes, Marksamer, & 2006). For example, CJJ’s Standard 1.10 calls for youth who are LGBT to receive “fair treatment, equal access to services, and respect and sensitivity from all professionals and other youth” (p. 42). Importantly, these standards and tips can help to promote the health and well-being of LGBTQ youth. Following the table are resources that provide additional guidance to support the implementation of these standards in juvenile justice settings.

Standard	Tips
1. Conduct regular needs assessments to guide and monitor continuous quality improvement efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Use individual and organizational assessments to determine whether policies and practices, including the knowledge and skills of juvenile justice professionals, are appropriate for providing culturally and linguistically competent services to youth with diverse sexual orientations and gender identity/expression</li> <li>■ Talk with youth and conduct youth and family surveys to assess their experiences and organizational climate generally</li> <li>■ Use anonymous surveys and confidential processes to collect data on the number of LGBT youth in juvenile justice facilities</li> <li>■ Use assessment findings to identify action steps to improve policies, services, and supports during intake, diversion, secure confinement, and probation</li> <li>■ Ensure ongoing continuous quality improvement efforts that assess and build on progress toward improved juvenile justice practice and outcomes for youth</li> </ul>
2. Establish and consistently enforce inclusive nondiscrimination policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Establish policies that address discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression and clearly define practices for addressing any concerns</li> <li>■ Prohibit all forms of harassment and bias, including jokes, slurs, and name calling</li> <li>■ Ensure that service providers also have inclusive nondiscrimination policies</li> <li>■ Promptly address concerns that youth who are LGBT report</li> <li>■ Track complaints of mistreatment based on sexual orientation and gender identity of youth (both those submitting the grievance and the alleged perpetrator)</li> <li>■ Ensure that policies are clearly posted and new and current staff are trained on the policies annually</li> <li>■ Hold staff accountable: provide intensive supports to staff who violate nondiscrimination policies</li> </ul>



Standard	Tips
<p>3. Regularly build staff awareness, knowledge, and skills for effectively serving youth who are LGBT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Screen potential, current, and new employees using tools to assess their perceptions of youth who are LGBT, as well as their likelihood of intervening appropriately when disrespectful behavior is displayed toward these youth or their families</li> <li>■ Require ongoing training and coaching about LGBT topics for juvenile justice professionals working in intake, diversion, secure confinement, and probation services</li> <li>■ Importantly, all staff should receive training in appropriate data collection, sharing, reporting, and confidentiality</li> <li>■ Promote knowledge and professional growth by understanding current staff needs and addressing these using training curricula that cover, for example, terms and definitions relevant to youth who are LGBT, myths and stereotypes, support for youth sexual/gender identity development and the coming out process; research on how negative experiences contribute to negative outcomes for youth who are LGBT; approaches to working with families of children who are LGBT; and information about how to access agency and community resources</li> <li>■ Ensure that juvenile justice professionals have easy access to written resources to enhance their cultural competence for working with youth who are LGBT and their families</li> <li>■ Encourage and support staff in being visible allies to youth who are LGBT by showing genuine concern about the youth's well-being and actively addressing bias they experience, whether from peers or juvenile justice professionals</li> </ul>
<p>4. Incorporate inclusive intake and data collection processes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ On forms, include places for youth to indicate their preferred gender pronoun and preferred name (for transgender youth, these may differ from legal name and sex)</li> <li>■ Ask for information on "parents" or "caregivers," rather than "mother" and "father"</li> <li>■ Respect confidentiality when youth disclose an LGBT identity or share that they are questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity. Agency policies should specifically describe when and when not to disclose a youth's identified LGB identity or gender identity/expression to outside parties, organizations, family members, or other individuals</li> <li>■ Health screening conducted during the intake process can help identify the needs and concerns of youth who are LGBT</li> </ul>
<p>5. Promote safe, supportive, culturally competent juvenile justice settings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Foster emotionally safe juvenile justice settings so that youth who are LGBT feel cared about and respected by staff</li> <li>■ Display symbols that represent the LGBT community positively (e.g., safe space signs, rainbows)</li> <li>■ Provide youth with access to LGBT-affirming written materials (e.g., coming out resource guides written for youth)</li> <li>■ Be attentive to the trauma-related needs of youth who are LGBT to avoid causing additional harm through re-traumatizing behaviors</li> <li>■ Engage youth, including those who are LGBT, in advisory groups to help identify culturally competent policies, procedures, and practices for adoption</li> <li>■ Follow Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) requirements for screening, classifying, and housing youth who are LGBT (e.g., decisions about where a youth who is transgender is housed must be made on an individualized basis and cannot be made solely based on their anatomy or the gender assigned at birth)</li> <li>■ Never place youth who are LGBT in sex offender units solely because of their sexual orientation or gender identity/expression</li> </ul>



Standard	Tips
<p>6. Implement practices that affirm LGBT identity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Create a culture of respect by holding all juvenile justice professionals and youth accountable for respecting the dignity of all youth, including those who are or are perceived to be LGBT</li> <li>■ Proactively and supportively (not punitively) address youth behavior that is biased based on sexual orientation (e.g., “that’s so gay”) and gender identity/expression (e.g., “act like a man”)</li> <li>■ Support the coming out process of youth by:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Listening attentively when a youth comes out as LGBT</li> <li>– Expressing appreciation that youth trust you with this personal information</li> <li>– Asking what you can do to support youth right now</li> <li>– Checking in with these youth over time</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ Allow youth to openly express their gender identity (e.g., clothing, personal appearance) and respect the name and gender pronoun that transgender (and gender-nonconforming) youth use</li> <li>■ Provide affirming counseling services that address issues important to youth who are LGBT (e.g., handling conflict, coming out, self-acceptance, healthy relationships with peers and families)</li> <li>■ Continue treatments and any specialized medications, including hormone therapy, that would be appropriate for any other youth</li> <li>■ <i>Never</i> engage in or allow conversion or reparative therapy (i.e., psychological interventions to “change” a youth’s sexual orientation or gender identity). As noted by the American Psychological Association (2009), these efforts can be harmful and there is no evidence they are effective</li> </ul>
<p>7. Promote healthy, supportive peer connections</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Provide opportunities for youth who are LGBT and supportive non-LGBT youth (“allies”) to meet and support one another, access facility and community support together, and engage in recreational activities together (e.g., through a peer discussion group)</li> <li>■ Allow youth to engage in activities with peers based on their gender identity (rather than based on their sex)</li> </ul>
<p>8. Strengthen family connections</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Connect families with information about LGBT identity and increase their awareness about the needs, interests, and perspectives of youth who are LGBT and the importance of family connections</li> <li>■ Promote nonjudgmental family attitudes and behaviors that demonstrate respect and concern</li> <li>■ Facilitate affirming services for families (e.g., counseling, family groups such as a local PFLAG chapter) as needed</li> </ul>
<p>9. Promote access to affirming external services and supports</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Create collaborative relationships with partners and LGBT-affirming organizations to access and increase the array of services that can meet the needs of youth who are LGBT, including when they transition from juvenile justice settings back into the community (e.g., job training and placement, mental health counseling, housing)</li> <li>■ Collaborate with service providers in the community who specialize in supporting LGBT and questioning youth</li> <li>■ Where community resources are lacking, be part of a local change process to create these supports and look to other communities in your State or region</li> <li>■ Work with youth-serving agencies and organizations to expand the presence of “safe spaces” for youth who are LGBT in the community (e.g., in schools and after-school programs)</li> </ul>
<p>10. Facilitate community outreach and engagement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Identify and distribute resource lists and community contacts for LGBT services and information so that juvenile justice professionals are aware of these supports</li> <li>■ Collaborate with community partners including faith-based organizations and, importantly, youth, to promote awareness of issues that youth who are LGBT experience, such as family rejection, bias, and violence; use these opportunities to build understanding about how addressing these issues can prevent juvenile justice involvement and other negative outcomes (e.g., convene community forums)</li> </ul>



## Additional Resources

### *OJJDP Literature Review*

#### **LGBTQ Youths in the Juvenile Justice System**

<http://www.ojjdp.gov/mpg/litreviews/LGBTQYouthsInTheJuvenileJusticeSystem.pdf>

As part of the Model Programs Guide, this document summarizes literature on LGBTQ youth in juvenile justice systems including risk and protective factors as well as recommendations to reform policies and practices.

### *OJJDP Webinars*

#### **The Critical Role of Families in Reducing Risk and Promoting Well-Being for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning and Intersex (LGBTQI) Youth**

<https://www.nttac.org/index.cfm?event=trainingCenter.traininginfo&eventID=11>

Describes specific family behaviors related to increased health risks for youth who are LGBT and family behaviors that protect against risk and promote youth well-being; presents strategies and approaches to engage and include families of youth who are LGBT and services and activities to increase parent, family, and caregiver knowledge and connectedness; and identifies specific changes in work with youth who are LGBT related to prevention, intervention, and care to decrease risk and promote well-being in the context of their families.

#### **Understanding and Overcoming the Challenges Faced by LGBTQI Youth in Schools and Communities**

<https://www.nttac.org/index.cfm?event=trainingCenter.traininginfo&eventID=10>

Aims to increase understanding of the importance of becoming an ally to youth who are LGBT, the importance of teaching children to be accepting and tolerant at an early age, and efforts to change the culture of schools and communities to be more accepting and safer places for youth who are LGBTQ.

#### **Understanding the Importance of Implementing an Effective Justice System Response for LGBTQI Youth in Custody**

<https://www.nttac.org/index.cfm?event=trainingCenter.traininginfo&eventID=12>

Aims to increase knowledge about the needs of youth who are LGBT in juvenile justice custody, U.S. Department of Justice regulations requiring the protection of youth who are LGBT in custody, and effective programming for these youth.

### *Guides, Manuals, and Reports*

#### **Creating Inclusive Systems for LGBT Youth in Out-of-Home Care (Model Standards Project)**

[http://www.njjn.org/uploads/digital-library/resource\\_232.pdf](http://www.njjn.org/uploads/digital-library/resource_232.pdf)

Provides guidance for creating an inclusive organizational climate, recruiting and supporting competent caregivers and other staff, promoting healthy adolescent development, respecting privacy and confidentiality, providing appropriate placements, and providing sensitive support services.

#### **A Guide for Understanding, Supporting, and Affirming LGBTQI2-S Children, Youth, and Families (American Institutes for Research)**

[http://www.air.org/sites/default/files/downloads/report/A\\_Guide\\_for\\_Understanding\\_Supporting\\_and\\_Affirming\\_LGBTQI2-S\\_Children\\_Youth\\_and\\_Families.pdf](http://www.air.org/sites/default/files/downloads/report/A_Guide_for_Understanding_Supporting_and_Affirming_LGBTQI2-S_Children_Youth_and_Families.pdf)

Provides general information about supporting the health and well-being of children and youth who are LGBT, questioning, intersex, and/or two-spirit and their families. The guide includes key concepts, describes the coming out process and challenges, and provides tips.

#### **LGBTQ Youth and Status Offenses: Improving System Responses and Reducing Disproportionality (Coalition for Juvenile Justice|SOS Project)**

<http://www.juvjustice.org/sites/default/files/resource-files/LGBTQ%20Youth%20Guidance%20FINAL.pdf>

Describes steps that system professionals can take to promote fair treatment of youth who are LGBT, including respecting confidentiality, ensuring that safety and well-being take precedence, reviewing best practices, providing support for intervention and treatment of trauma, and allowing youth to express their identity without fear of judgment.

#### **Policy Review and Development Guide: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex Persons in Custodial Settings (National Institute of Corrections)**

<http://static.nicic.gov/Library/027507.pdf>

Offers support to help correctional administrators, mental health staff, training coordinators, line staff, and policymakers more effectively serve the treatment and other needs of youth who are LGBT and intersex adults and youth in custodial settings. Offers information to help staff to assess and implement more inclusive policies.



**Practice Guidelines for the Delivery of Trauma-Informed and GLBTQ Culturally-Competent Care: A Companion Guide to the Safe and Successful Youth Initiative Best Practices Review (WestEd, American Institutes for Research, Justice Resource Institute)**

<http://www.air.org/sites/default/files/downloads/report/Trauma-Informed%20and%20GLBTQ%20Culturally%20Competent%20Care.pdf>

Contains a series of practice guidelines for delivering trauma-informed and culturally competent care for youth who are LGBT.

**A Practitioner's Resource Guide: Helping Families to Support their LGBT Children (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration)**

<http://store.samhsa.gov/shin/content//PEP14-LGBTKIDS/PEP14-LGBTKIDS.pdf>

Helps practitioners better understand the critical role of family acceptance in the health and well-being of adolescents who are LGBT and describes a research-based family intervention approach.

**Preventing the Sexual Abuse of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex People in Correctional Settings (National Center for Transgender Equality, NCLR, ACLU, Transgender Law Center, Lambda Legal)**

[http://www.prearesourcecenter.org/sites/default/files/library/8-preventingthesexualabuseoflgbtipeopleincorrectionalsettings\\_0.pdf](http://www.prearesourcecenter.org/sites/default/files/library/8-preventingthesexualabuseoflgbtipeopleincorrectionalsettings_0.pdf)

Describes the importance of addressing issues of LGBT sexual abuse in detention, along with key recommendations for justice settings to address this need more responsively.

**Representing Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Questioning Youth in Court (Office of the Juvenile Defender)**

[http://www.ncids.org/JuvenileDefender/Guides/LGBTQ\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.ncids.org/JuvenileDefender/Guides/LGBTQ_Guide.pdf)

Contains basic definitions, an overview of issues facing youth who are LGBT during representation, and best practices and strategies for defense counsel.

**Planning Tool**

**Improving Emotional and Behavioral Outcomes for LGBT Children/Youth: A Strategic Planning Tool (American Institutes for Research)**

[http://www.tapartnership.org/docs/LGBT\\_improved\\_supports\\_tool.pdf](http://www.tapartnership.org/docs/LGBT_improved_supports_tool.pdf)

Organized around the 10 standards of practice, provides a tool for identifying and planning action steps to improve services for youth who are LGBT.

**Sample Policies and Procedures**

**New York State Office of Children and Family Services Policy and Procedures Manual: LGBT and Questioning Youth Policies and Procedures (New York State Office of Children and Family Services)**

[http://srp.org/files/LGBTQ\\_Youth\\_Policy\\_PPM\\_3442\\_00.pdf](http://srp.org/files/LGBTQ_Youth_Policy_PPM_3442_00.pdf)

A policy and procedures manual with guidance for establishing inclusive practices for youth who are LGBT in residential placement and aftercare.

## Conclusion

Every juvenile justice professional can make a positive difference in the lives of youth who are LGBT and in their care. This fact sheet offers important context for understanding the struggles, barriers, and challenges that youth who are LGBT face before and during juvenile justice system involvement with the goal of raising awareness of this important and often neglected issue. In addition, it highlights key resources and reference materials, offering guidelines for making juvenile justice settings safer and offering more equitable treatment to youth who are LGBT.





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