When Pink & Blue are not Enough

What Providers Need to Know
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True Colors, Inc.

True Colors’ Programs include:

- Annual LGBTIA Youth Issues Conference: March 21-23, 2013, University of CT, Storrs
- Mentoring
- Professional Consultation and Training
- The Safe Harbor Project
- Youth Leadership Development
Learning Objectives

- Increase understanding, knowledge and cultural competency regarding LGBT patients
- Identify issues of risk, challenge and strengths specific to LGBT youth
- Identify opportunities for intervention that will ensure appropriate care within a safe, affirming environment for LGBT patients, families and staff
Numbers? *

- Depends on what and how you ask:
  - Identity
  - Behavior
  - Attractions

- Gary J. Gates, Williams Institute at the UCLA School of Law
Core Issues

- Sexual Identity Awareness
- Gender Identity and Presentation
- Stigma & Social Isolation
- Family Response
- Access to Culturally competent services
Gender Bread Person*

* From Kate Bornstein, Gender Outlaw
The Basics

- **Sex** (body)
  - XY: Male
  - XYY, XXY, XO: Intersex, DSD
  - XX: Female

- **Gender** (mind)
  - Man, Masculine
  - Woman, Feminine
  - Transsexual bois
  - FtM, MtF
  - Gender bending
  - Cross dresser
  - Gender blending
  - Genderqueer
  - Butch/Fem
  - Aggressives
  - Grrls
  - Androgynous
  - Two-spirit

- **Orientation** (emotional, romantic, erotic attractions)
  - Gay, lesbian, bisexual, straight, straight-ish, metro-sexual, same-gender loving,
  - Hetero/homo-flexible, queer, questioning, pansexual, non-labeling, asexual
Gender Identity

- Inner Psychological **Knowing** about oneself
- May (or May Not) Be in Concert with One’s Sexed Body
- The more gender non-conforming a child or youth is, the greater the level of harassment they receive
So What’s a Practitioner to do?

- Policy Recommendations
- Environment
- Training
- Forms
- Inclusive Language in interviews
- It’s not just about SEX
Transgender Inclusion

- Offer a Gender Neutral Bathroom options
- Use (and ensure that your staff uses) respectful language and pronouns - (if you don’t know, ask)
- Always use the patients’ chosen name & chosen gender pronouns
- Recognize that there are additional stressors (and that there may be significant fear on the part of) transgender patients
- Unique medical concerns of Transgender youth at puberty
Gender and Sexual Minority Youth: Clinical Competence and Practice Considerations

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Boston Children’s Hospital
Harvard Medical School
Staff Psychiatrist, Instructor in Psychiatry
Gender Management Service (GeMS)
AACAP Practice Parameter

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
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PRACTICE PARAMETER ON GAY, LESBIAN OR BISEXUAL SEXUAL ORIENTATION, GENDER-NONCONFORMITY, AND GENDER DISCORDANCE IN CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

• Stewart Adelson, MD: primary author
• >5 year initiative between Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Issues Committee and the Workgroup on Quality Issues
Principle 1

“A comprehensive diagnostic evaluation should include an age-appropriate assessment of psychosexual development for all youths.”

- Gender neutral language
- Questions about sexual feelings, experiences and identity
- Differentiate between gender role behavior and identity
Principle 2

“The need for confidentiality in the clinical alliance is a special consideration in the assessment of sexual and gender minority youth.”

- Prior experiences of rejection and hostility may impact the patient’s ability to disclose
- Maintain a clinical alliance while balancing safety concerns
- Premature disclosure versus need to “come out”
- Electronic medical record concerns
Principle 3

“Family dynamics pertinent to sexual orientation, gender nonconformity, and gender identity should be explored in the context of the cultural values of the youth, family, and community.”

- Family reactions- spectrum from accepting to rejecting
- Clinical aim: alleviate irrational feelings of shame/guilt
- Clinical aim: address misconceptions, stereotypes, or distorted expectations
- Take ethnic, cultural, and religious values into account
Assessment tool

EXTERNAL FACTORS

DEGREE OF INVALIDATION

INTERIOR FACTORS

DEGREE OF SOCIAL SUPPORT

LEIBOWITZ 2011
PARENTS
• Cognitive dissonance
• Grieving process
• Rejecting behaviors

YOUTH
• Isolation and victimization
• Shame and guilt
• Internalized Homo/Transphobia
Principle 4

“Clinicians should inquire about circumstances commonly encountered by youth with sexual and gender minority status that confer increased psychiatric risk.”

- Bullying
- Suicidal ideations, behaviors
- High-risk behaviors
- Substance Abuse
- Sexually Transmitted Illnesses
Principle 5

“Clinicians should aim to foster healthy psychosexual development in sexual and gender minority youth and protect the individual’s full capacity for integrated identity formation and adaptive functioning.”

- Clinical aim: Incorporating the psychological acceptability of homosexual feelings into healthy relationships can change with therapeutic intervention
- Focus on the interpersonal relationships
- Protect opportunity for healthy development of identity
# Psychopathology Overview in Sexual and Gender Minority Status

## Higher Rates
- Suicide
- Depression and Anxiety
- High-Risk Behaviors
- HIV and STD’s

## Unique Needs
- “Coming out” vs. “Staying in the Closet”
- Internalized Homophobia
- Internalized Transphobia
- Premature Disclosure

## Risk Factors
- Isolation
- Lack of Family Acceptance
- Rejection
- Victimization and Bullying

## Prevention and Treatment

## Discussion and Awareness

## Adaptive Ego Strengths and Resilience
Principle 6

“Clinicians should be aware that there is no evidence that sexual orientation can be altered through therapy, and that attempts to do so may be harmful.”

- Backing of professional organizations
- “Reparative” or “conversion” therapies are now illegal in certain states
- Significant risk of harm to self-esteem
- No empirical evidence that adult homosexuality can be prevented
Principle 7

“Clinicians should be aware of the current evidence on the natural course of gender discordance and associated psychopathology in children and adolescents in choosing treatment goals and modality.”

- Recognize the difference between gender nonconforming and gender discordant/dysphoric
- No evidence based treatment approaches in children
- Most gender nonconforming children are not gender dysphoric in adolescence
- Know the appropriate protocols for medical interventions according to the WPATH (World Professional Association for Transgender Health) standards of care for gender dysphoric adolescents
Gender Nonconformity as a precursor to Sexual Orientation?

- HOMOSEXUALITY
- HETEROSEXUALITY
- DESISTER (~80%)
- PERSISTER (~20%)

Gender Nonconformity as a precursor to Sexual Orientation?
Principle 8

“Clinicians should be prepared to consult and act as a liaison with schools, community agencies, and other health care providers, advocating for the unique needs of sexual and gender minority youth and their families.”

- Evaluating beliefs, attitudes, and experiences of these social systems
- Differentiate between patient perception and reality
- Raise awareness of specific issues affecting the youth
Principle 9

“Mental health professionals should be aware of community and professional resources relevant to sexual and gender minority youth.”
Adaptive psychosocial functioning

- Family-based
- Schools
- Peer-support
Multidimensional treatment
Malpas, Family Process, Dec 2011

Assessment

- Individual
- Parents
- Family
- Feedback

F/U Session
F/U Session
F/U Session
F/U Session
Suggested Websites

- Lesbian and Gay Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Association (LAGCAPA)  
  http://www.lagcapa.org
- Association of Gay and Lesbian Psychiatrists (AGLP)- curricula for trainees  
  http://www.aglp.org
- Gay and Lesbian Medical Association (GLMA)- advocacy and resources  
  http://www.glma.org
- True Colors, Inc. – LGBT youth Education and Advocacy  
  www.ourtruecolors.org
- Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG)- family resources  
  http://www.pflag.org
- Family Acceptance Project- program designated to address family acceptance  
  http://familyproject.sfsu.edu/
- Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN)- school resources  
  http://www.glsen.org
- Gender Education Spectrum and Training- education and training issues  
  http://www.genderspectrum.org
- Gender Identity Resources and Education Society of UK (GRIRES)- trans education  
  http://www.gires.org.uk
- World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH)- standards of care  
  http://www.wpath.org
- Trans Youth Family Allies (TYFA)- resources and advocacy for families  
  http://www.imatyfa.org
Suggested Websites (continued)

- Children’s Hospital Boston, Division of Adolescent Medicine: Young Men’s and Young Women’s Health Websites- Youth Guides on Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation
  http://www.youngmenshealthsite.org/sexual_orientation_gender_identity.html
  http://www.youngwomenshealth.org/lesbianhealth.html

- The Trevor Project- Suicide Prevention for Sexual and Gender Minority Youth:
  http://www.thetrevorproject.org/

- Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders http://www.GLAD.ORG/
  There is also legal information by state, including GLBT youth issues in Massachusetts

- Gay/ Lesbian Politics and Law  http://www.indiana.edu/~glbtpol/
  There is a schools, youth, and Boy Scouts section of this website. This section includes
  resources and links to other websites related to LGBT youth.

- The Person Project  http://www.youth.org/loco/PERSONProject/
  Information regarding improving the treatment of LGBT persons ages K-12, including a
  bibliography of health education needs of LGBT youth, state specific documents, news
  and action alerts, and other online resources.

- Youth Resource  http://www.youthresource.com/
  Targeted towards GLBTQ youth including news, message board, listserves, a library, and
  lists of youth groups by state.

- Gay and Lesbian National Hotline (http://www.glnh.org and 888.THE.GLNH) – A non-
  profit organization providing toll-free and anonymous peer counseling, information, and
  referrals; at their website is a database of over 18,000 listings for cities and towns across
  the United States, including information on gay-friendly businesses, as well as doctors,
  lawyers, and therapists.