



Systemic Resilience Among LGBTQIA+ Youth,  
Families and Communities

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# Agenda



Unique Stress Experienced by LGBTQIA+ Youth

Resilience and Resistance

Family Acceptance and Rejection

# Objectives

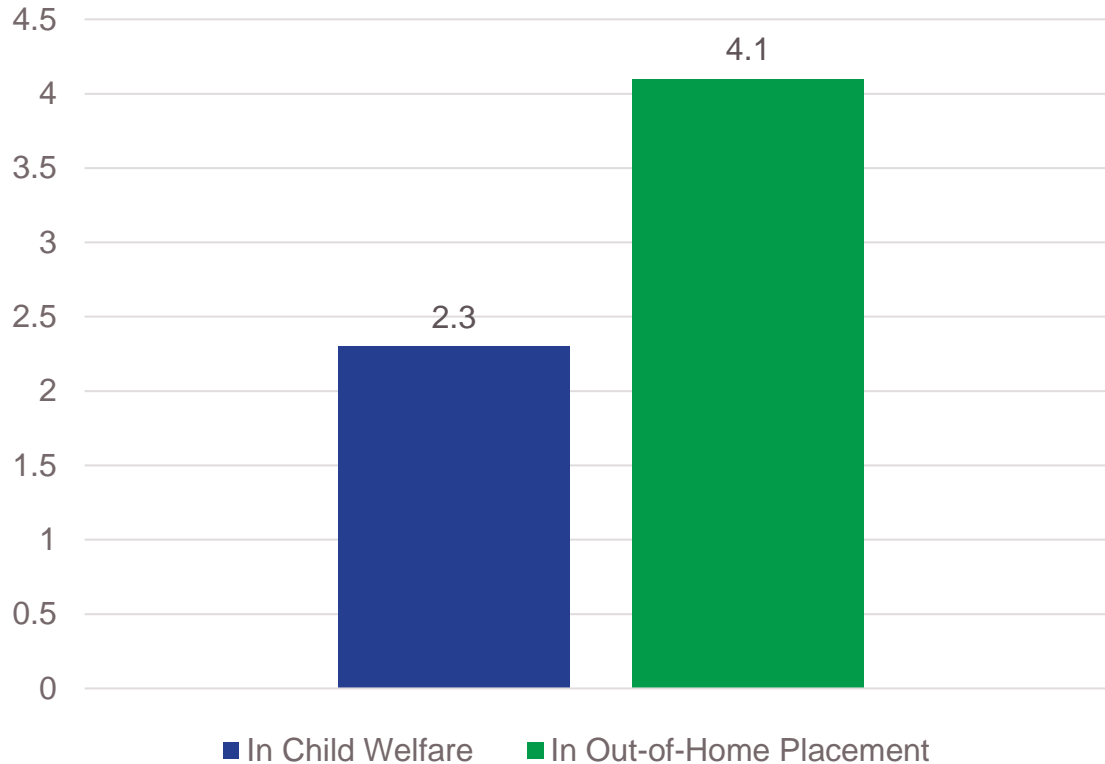


- 1 Identify three everyday adverse realities that are unique to LGBTQIA+ youth.
- 2 Define resilience and resistance as they apply to LGBTQIA+ youth.
- 3 State the impact of family rejection and family acceptance on LGBTQIA+ youth.

Objective 1: Identify three everyday adverse realities that are unique to LGBTQIA+ youth.

# Overrepresentation

Sexual Minority Disproportional  
Representation Index (DRI)



DRI  
1 = no overrepresentation  
Above 1 = overrepresentation

(Fish et.al, 2019)

# Minority Stress Theory

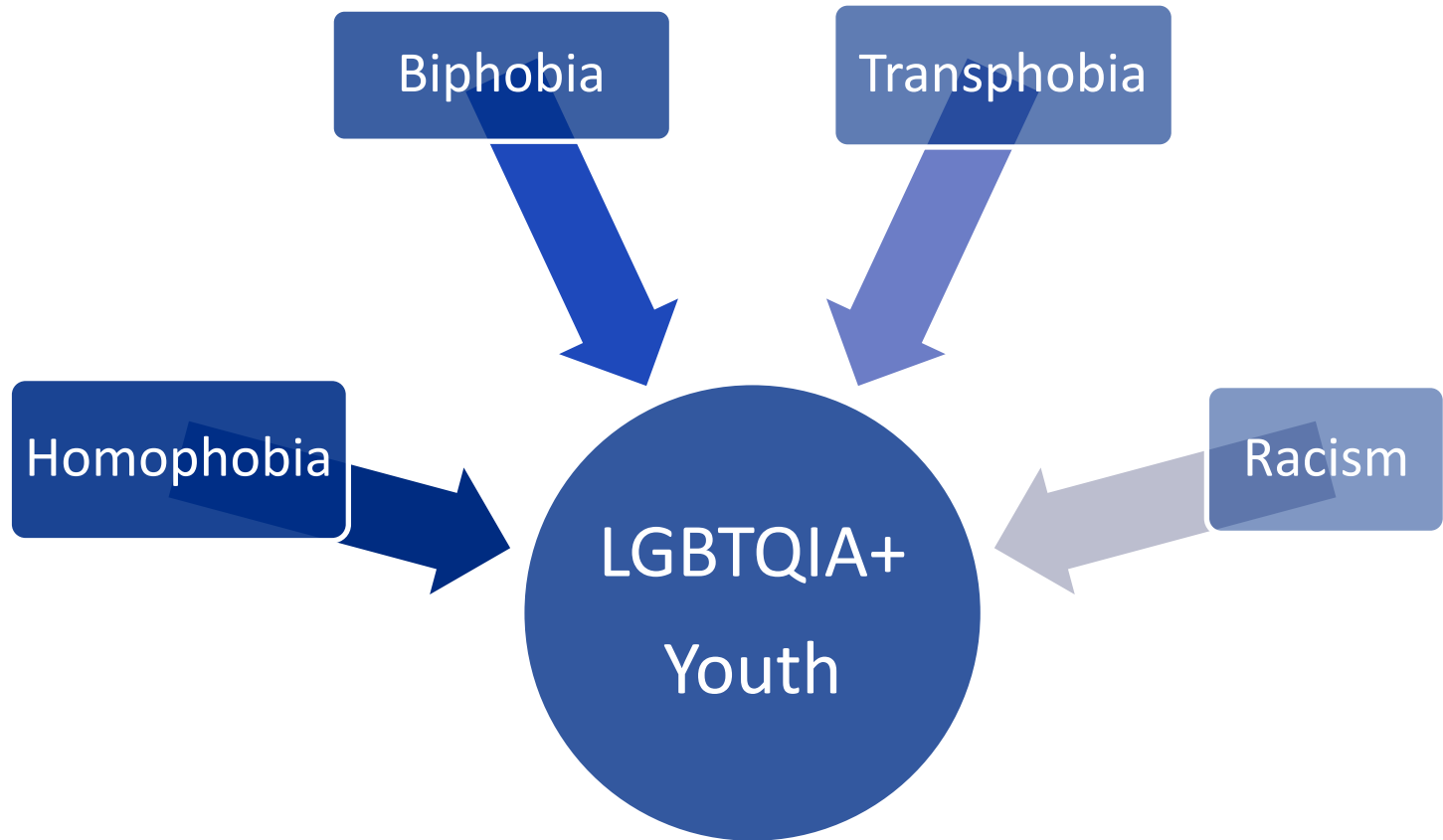


Unique	<b>Additive to general stressors and require adaptations above and beyond those required by the non-stigmatized.</b>
Chronic	Related to relatively stable social structures such as laws and social policies.
Socially-based	Stem from social/structural forces rather than from individual events or conditions.

Health disparities in LGBT populations **do not reflect psychological issues inherent** to LGBT individuals, but rather are the result of persistent stigma directed toward them.

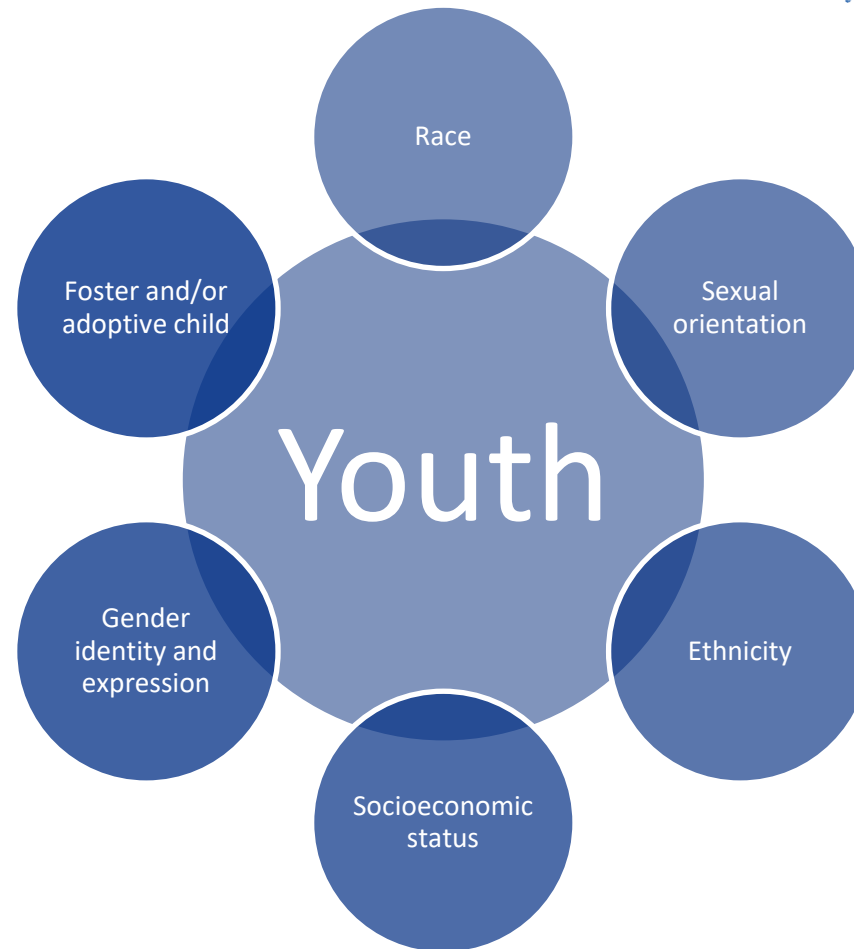
(Meyer, 2003; Hatzenbuehler & Pachankis, 2016)

# Environmental Impact of Stigma





# Intersectionality



# Adverse Realities

Early Childhood Experiences	When perceived as LGBTQ or acknowledged their emerging LGBTQ identities.
Family Acceptance and Rejection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stay or leave or be kicked out</li><li>• Silencing of the topic</li><li>• Verbal, physical and sexual assault</li></ul>
Social Marginalization in Schools and Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Homophobia and transphobia</li><li>• Public bathrooms, as a source of fear</li><li>• Trans youth – discrimination in healthcare, housing and employment</li></ul>

(Asakura, 2016)

# No Home No Acceptance & Incarceration



Youth are coming to terms with their sexual orientation and gender identity and expression at earlier ages.

LGBTQIA+ youth and BIPOC youth are over-represented in the homeless population.

LGBTQIA+ youth – 120% heightened risk

Black youth – 83% heightened risk

LGBTQIA+ people are three times more likely to experience incarceration than the general population.

One in six transgender people have experienced incarceration at some point.

Almost half of Black transgender persons experience incarceration at some point.

(Grooms, 2020; Robinson, 2020)

# IM+CANS Cultural Stress



9b. Cultural Considerations										
CULTURAL FACTORS		0	1	2	3		0	1	2	3
Language		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cultural Stress	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Traditions and Rituals		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Supporting Information:** Provide additional information regarding the cultural factors (items rated 2 and 3) that may influence presenting problems (e.g., ethnicity, race, religion, spiritual practice, sexual orientation, transgender, socioeconomic status, living environment, etc.).

## CULTURAL STRESS

This item identifies circumstances in which the individual's cultural identity is met with hostility or other problems within their environment due to differences in attitudes, behavior, or beliefs of others (this includes cultural differences that are causing stress between the individual and their family). Racism, negativity toward SOGIE and other forms of discrimination would be rated here.

Tae is a biracial 16-year-old male who identifies as gay. He is currently dating a transman he met at the local LGBTQ Community Center. Tae has not told his foster parent that he is gay. Jai, Tae's foster mom is a professor, and his foster father is a deacon at church. While doing laundry, Tae's father, Jack, found a flyer from the community center about a gay support group. Jack started a conversation with Tae and inquired about his sexual orientation. Tae told him he is gay and begged him to refrain from telling Jai. When asked if Tae was dating, he said, "no." Jack told him that their religion teaches that homosexuality is a sin, but assured Tae of his love. Jack insisted they have a conversation with jai. Tae said he would if both of his foster parent agreed to attend a PFLAG meeting.

(Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services, 2018)

# Other Measures



Daily Heterosexist Experiences Questionnaire

LGBT People of Color Microaggressions Scale

Gender Minority Stress and Resilience Scale

Resilience Items:

Pride

“My gender identity or expression makes me feel special and unique.”

“It is a gift that my gender identity is different from my sex assigned at birth.”

Community Connectedness

“I feel a part of a community of people who share my gender identity.”

“When interacting with members of the community that share my gender identity, I feel like I belong.”

(Palo Alto University, n.d.)

# Intersectional Conversations



BIPOC = Black, Indigenous, People of Color

Black and LGBTQ: Approaching Intersectional Conversations key elements

Before: Prepare yourself for the conversation

During: Focus on your experience

After: Reflect on the outcome

If you're not Black and are interested in having these conversations,

Do your research

Get uncomfortable

Hold yourself accountable

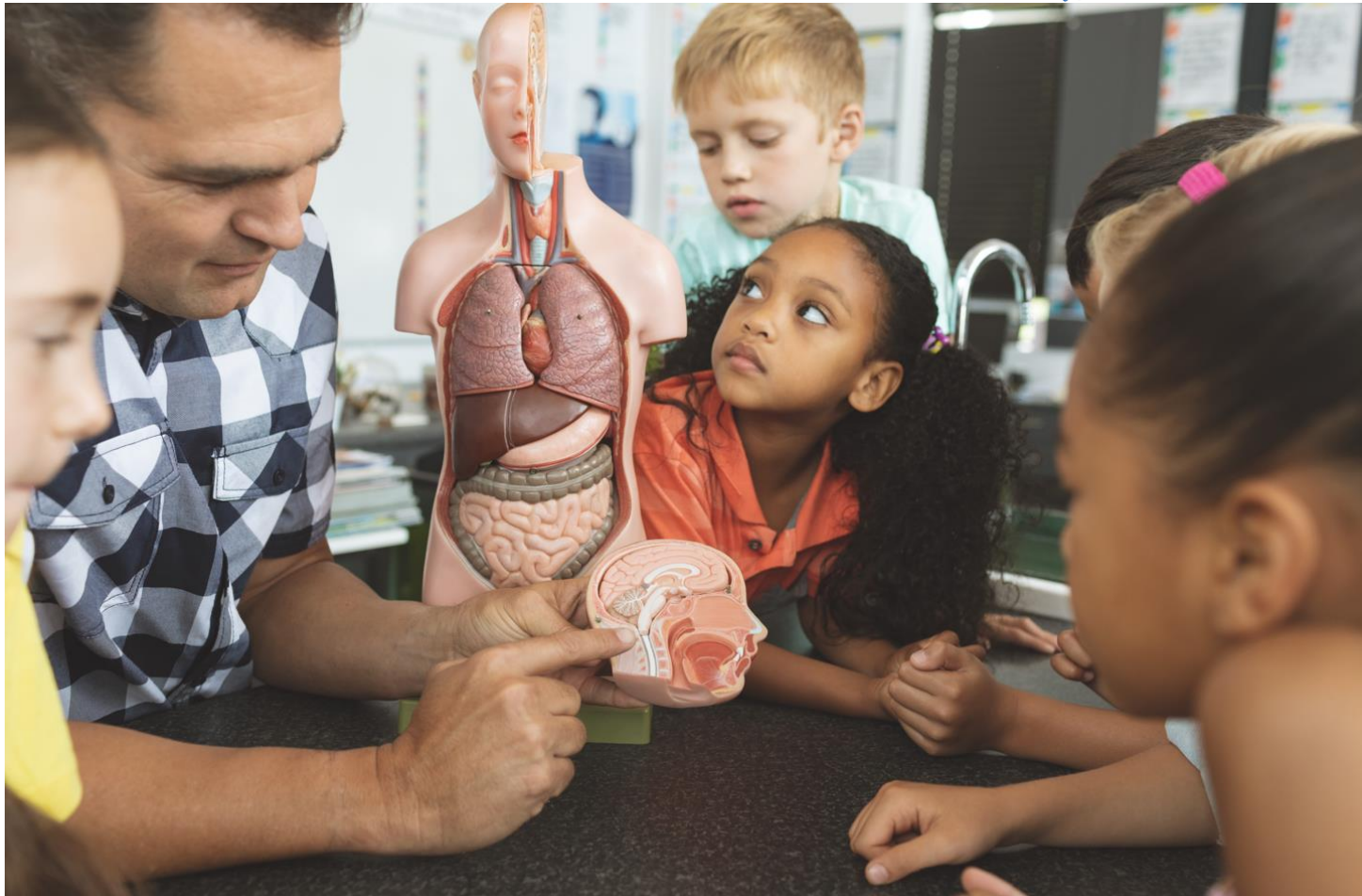
Listen

Take action

(The Trevor Project, 2021)

Objective 2: Define resilience and resistance as they apply to LGBTQIA+ youth.

# Brain Plasticity



(Smarter Every Day, 2015)



# Individual-Focused Definitions



Illinois Medicaid Comprehensive Assessment of Needs and Strengths Resiliency (IM+ CANS) definition:

“This rating is based on the **individual’s** ability to identify and use internal strengths in managing their lives and in times of need or to support their development. This item assesses an **individual’s** ability to “bounce back” from or overcome adversity in their life.”

Brief Resilience Scale:

- I tend to bounce back quickly after hard times.
- I have a hard time making it through stressful events.
- It does not take **me** long to recover from a stressful event.
- It is hard for **me** to snap back when something bad happens.
- I usually come through difficult times with little trouble.
- I tend to take a long time to get over setbacks in my life.

(Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services, 2018; Smith, 2008)

# Individual Capabilities



Positive View

Self-Efficacy

Self-Regulation

(Anda & Porter, 2015)

# The Social Ecology of Resilience



(Rb) = behaviors associated with positive development

(P) = Person

(S) = Strengths

(C) = Challenges

(E) = Environment

(O) = Opportunity structures

(Av) + (Ac) = availability and accessibility of health sustaining resources

(M) = meaning

$$R_{B(1,2,3\dots)} = \frac{f(P_{SC}, E)}{(O_{Av}, O_{Ac})(M)}.$$

(Ungar, 2011)

# Resilience is NOT

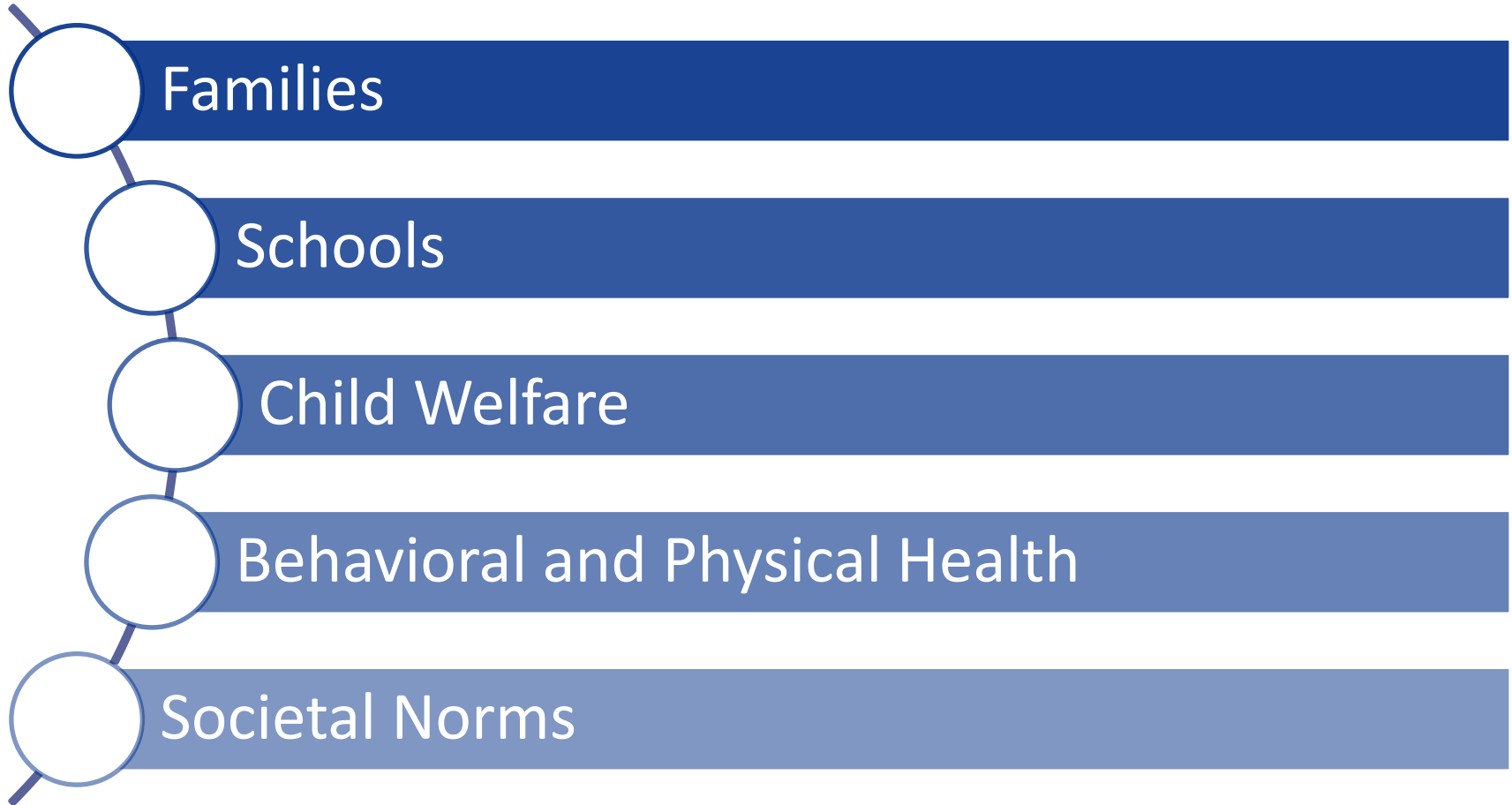


Dichotomous or division, but is:

- A single strength, characteristic, or attribute
- An outcome
- Fixed or static across the lifespan
- “Bouncing back” after a traumatic experience or event

(Walsh, et al., 2020)

# External Focus



(The Trevor Project, 2022)

# Beyond Resilience: Resistance



Past understanding – LGBTQ youth successfully contributing to a heteronormative society.

LGBTQ youth assimilating into the dominant societal relations.

Newer understanding – focus on LGBTQ youth's resistance

Confront, challenge heteronormativity, oppressive structures and the gender binary.

Building resilience through resisting discrimination and in offsetting adverse health effects of prejudice and discrimination.



(Robinson & Schmitz, 2021)

Objective 3: State the impact of family rejection and family acceptance on LGBTQIA+ youth.

# Authenticity and Attachment



When a child is born it has two huge survival needs:

- **Attachment**, which is comprised of contact, connection and love.
- **Authenticity**, the capacity to know what we feel, to be in touch with our bodies, to be able to express who we are and manifest who we are in our activities and relationships.

Gabor Mate' – Authenticity vs. Attachment

(CrazyWise, 2019)



# The Family

- Leaving the home can be resistance of heterosexism for some LGBTQ youth.
- Family homes who are accepting of LGBTQ youth are a site of resistance of heteronormative views of the family.
  - Family attends PFLAG meetings.
  - Displays photos of same gender partner.
  - Participating in activities that support LGBTQ youth.



(Robinson & Schmitz, 2021)

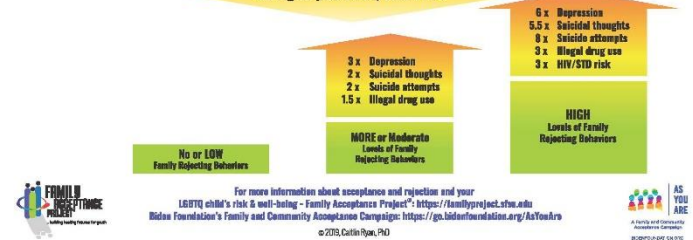
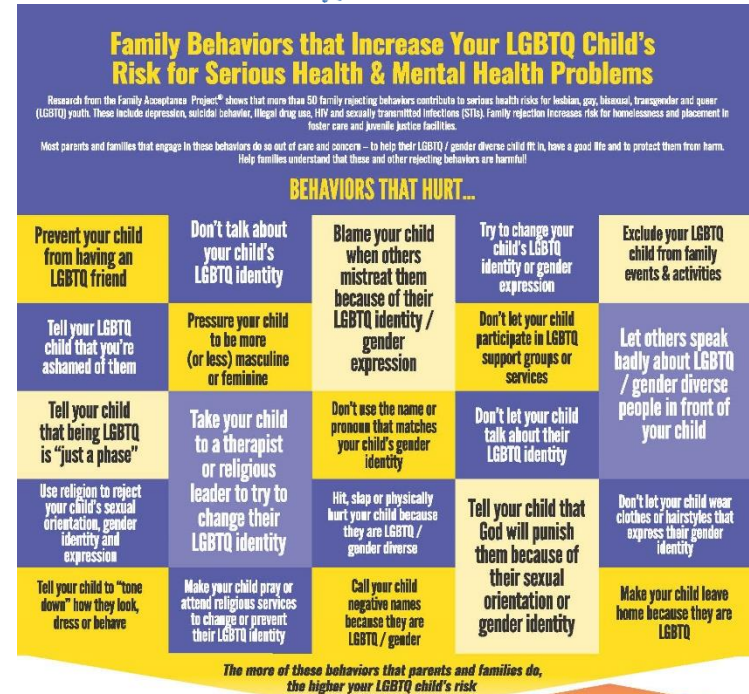
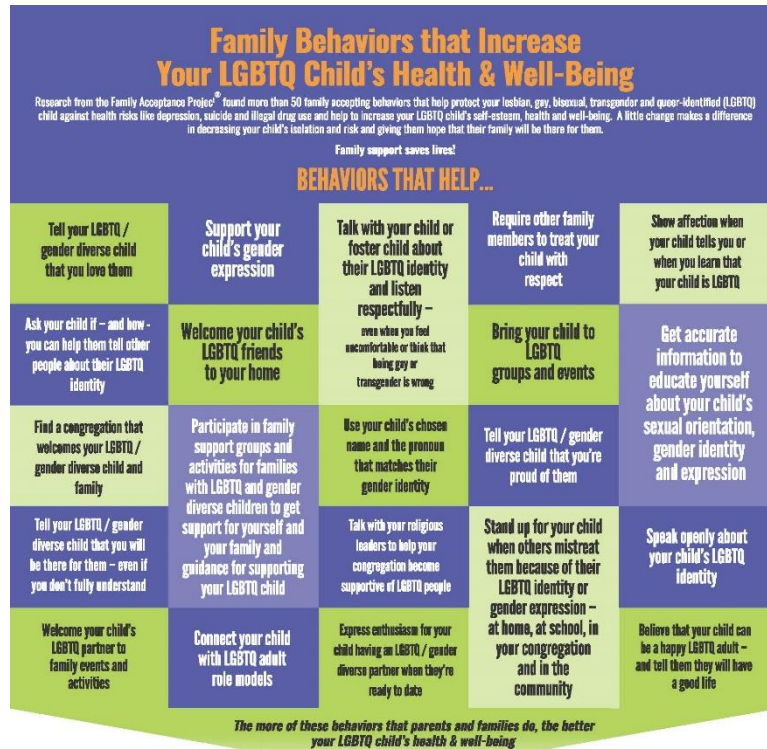
# Family Acceptance Project, San Francisco State University



## Family Acceptance Project Publications

(Family Acceptance Project, n.d.)

# Family Acceptance and Rejection Posters



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# Family Rejection



NO/LOW LEVELS

## MODERATE LEVELS

- 3x depression
- 2x suicidal thoughts
- 2x suicidal attempts
- 1.5 illegal drug use

## HIGH LEVELS

- 6x depression
- 5.5 x suicidal thoughts
- 8x suicide attempts
- 3x illegal drug use
- 3x HIV/STD risk

(Family Acceptance Project, n.d.)

# Family Acceptance



More Acceptance = Better Health and Well-Being

NO/LOW LEVELS

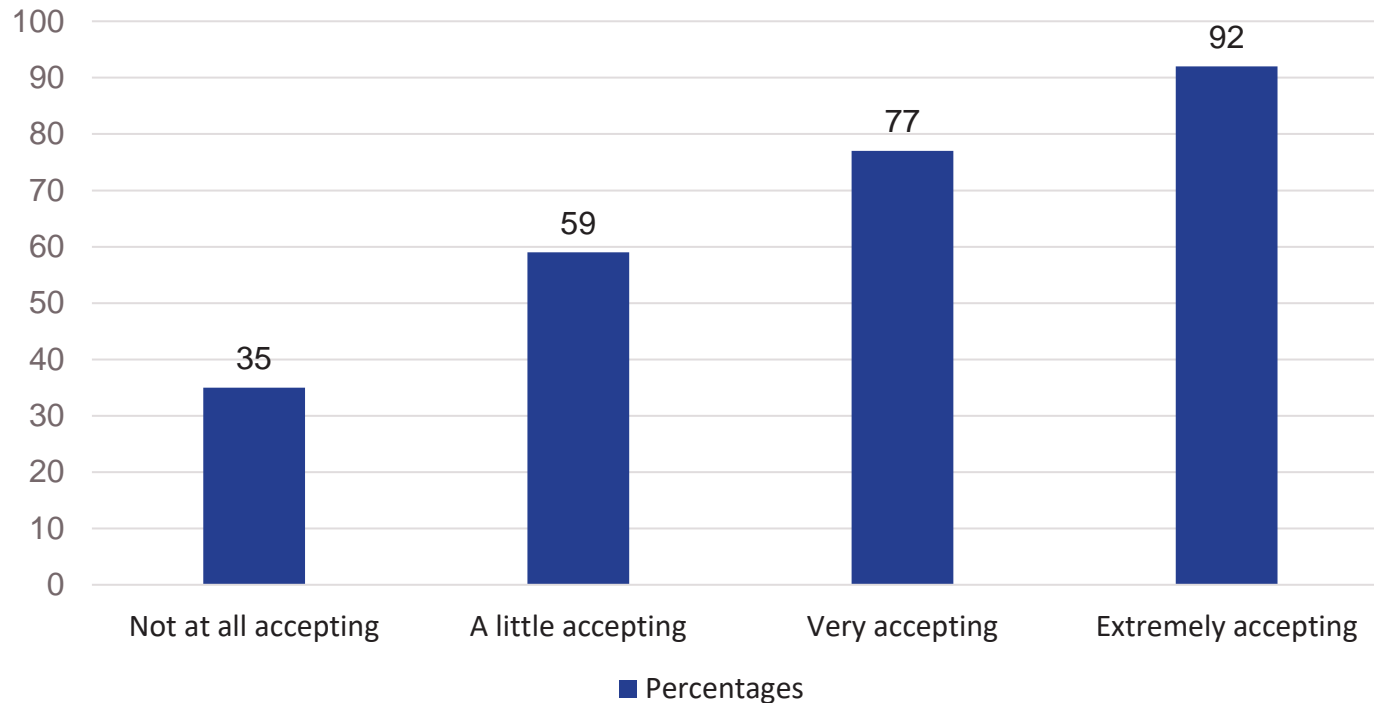
MODERATE  
LEVELS

## HIGH LEVELS

- Better overall health
- Less likely to be depressed
- 3x less likely to think about suicide
- 3x less likely to attempt suicide
- Less likely to have substance abuse problems
- Higher self-esteem
- More social support
- Better family relationships

(Family Acceptance Project, n.d.)

## LGBTQIA+ Youth Who Believe They Can Be A Happy Adult



(Family Acceptance Project, n.d.)

# Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy + Family Acceptance



## Assessment

- Identify family **accepting** and **rejecting** behaviors toward LGBTQ/gender diverse child.
  - Rejecting behaviors can be traumatic.

## Psychoeducation

- Educate parents on the impact of accepting/rejecting behaviors.
- Educate youth to identify rejecting and accepting behaviors.

## Counseling and Skill Building

- Develop advocacy skills and affirmative parenting practices.

## Provide Access to Culturally Relevant Peer Support

- Connect caregivers with others who are learning to support their SGM children.

(Cohen & Ryan, 2021)

# Inviting In



The following video offers a different view of coming out. David Johns is the executive director of the National Black Justice Coalition.

- How is “Inviting In” different than “Coming Out?”
- How might you demonstrate that you have “done the work” to support someone in their “coming out” process?

[Inviting In](#)

(The Root, 2020.)



# The Trevor Project Coming Out Handbook



1. Planning Ahead
2. Testing the Waters
3. Environment
4. Timing
5. Location
6. School
7. Support
8. Safety

(The Trevor Project, 2021)

# Welcoming Schools



Welcoming Schools Back-to-School Kit  
2022-2023 school year.



## Welcoming Schools Back-to-School Kit 2022-2023 School Year



[WelcomingSchools.org](https://WelcomingSchools.org) | [HRC.org](https://HRC.org)

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# Thank You!



# Q&A

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