



## Core Mission

The Napa Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Questioning (LGBTQ) Project is a community-based initiative working to increase awareness, inclusion, safety and wellness of LGBTQ people of all ages and races in Napa County, especially underserved youth and senior citizens. The Napa LGBTQ Project is coordinated by On The Move/VOICES and Spectrum LGBT Center and focuses on:

- **Engaging our community** to increase awareness and involve community members in identifying needs, prioritizing and implementing action steps.
- **Developing quality programming** for underserved groups by partnering with schools and offering support groups for LGBTQ youth and older adults.
- **Training health and service-providers** through workshops, action planning and technical assistance in best practices.

The Napa LGBTQ Youth and Family Initiative supports the core mission of the Napa LGBTQ Project by engaging young people on school campuses, training educators and parents and building collaborative relationships with schools, families and the greater community. Working with schools to develop student-run clubs that provide a safe place for students to meet and support each other was one of three top priorities set by 200 community members at the Project's Fall 2012 Community Forum.

## Program Expansion & Relationship to Existing Services

Funding from the Master Settlement Agreement grant program will **support and expand** the Napa LGBTQ Project over the next three years in order to increase the safety and well-being of LGBTQ youth and their families on school campuses across Napa County. Core services of the Napa LGBTQ Project are supported with Napa County Mental Health Services Act Prevention and Early Intervention (MHSA PEI) funding and include the coordination of an Advisory Board, community outreach, cultural competency trainings for health and human service providers, creation of an Equality Alliance and policy review and development. The LGBTQ Youth and Family Initiative, a new area of focus of the Napa LGBTQ Project, was granted one-time MHSA PEI funds that partially support the efforts for 2012-13 only. MSA funding will be used primarily to expand the Project Coordinator's position from .25 FTE to .5 FTE.

The LGBTQ Youth and Family Initiative will work to close a large gap in services for young people and their mentors. Currently, there are loosely formed LGBTQ student-led groups on the campuses of four high schools and one middle school across the County. Some of the students who participate in school groups and many who do not have access to school-based services participate in the Q\*Youth Program at VOICES, a youth-led resource center for transitional aged youth, where they receive emotional support and access to resources and information. Q\*Youth gives young people a safe place to discuss their concerns about school and is a stepping stone towards youth feeling confident enough to "come out" to their peers.

While most schools provide some form of anti-bullying training to faculty and staff, no schools specifically focus on creating safe and inclusive schools for LGBTQ young people. The Napa LGBTQ Youth and Family Initiative will supplement existing anti-bullying training with LGBTQ cultural training and intervention skills.

PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) North Bay Chapter, a volunteer-run organization, is the only other organization in Napa County working to support the families of LGBTQ individuals. Currently, three PFLAG members serve on the Napa LGBTQ Project Advisory Board and have committed to help develop program components for families. They also plan to participate in school policy review activities and will offer a phone bank in English and Spanish to support parents.



## Other Funding Sources

The Napa LGBTQ Youth and Family Initiative is partially funded through the Spectrum LGBT Center with Napa County MHSA PEI dollars for 2012-13. On The Move/VOICES has additional funding secured through September 2012 from Andrus Family Fund, and expects to apply to other foundations such as the Queer Youth Fund, Tides Foundation, Johnson Family Foundation and the State Equality Fund. *See MSA Project Budget and the Overall Napa LGBTQ Project Annual Budget for specific details regarding all funding sources.*

## Guideline 1: Evidence Base

The Napa LGBTQ Project and its Family and Youth Initiative are guided by a community advisory board and developed using prevention and intervention evidence-based practices. The 2009 National School Climate Survey conducted by the Gay Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) found that:

- The presence of GSAs may help to make schools safer for LGBT students by sending a message that biased language and harassment will not be tolerated.
- Having a GSA may also make school more accessible to LGBT students by contributing to a more positive school environment.
- The presence of supportive educators can have a significant positive impact on LGBT students' academic achievement, as well as on their psychological well-being and educational aspirations.

The same survey in 2007 provided recommendations specific for middle schools including:

- Implement comprehensive anti-harassment policies that specifically enumerate sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression as protected categories, and with clear and effective systems for reporting and addressing incidents that students experience.
- Support Gay-Straight Alliances and similar student-led clubs that address LGBT students' issues and work to improve school climate.
- Provide training for middle school staff to improve rates of intervention and increase the number of supportive staff available to students.

In addition, research conducted by SFSU's Family Acceptance Project finds that:

- Family accepting behaviors towards LGBT youth during adolescence protect against suicide, depression and substance abuse.
- Attention to family reactions is critical since increasingly, youth are coming out at younger ages which significantly increases risk for victimization and abuse in family, school and community settings.

The LGBTQ Youth and Family Initiative's program components are based on California GSA Network's best practices model and SFSU Family Acceptance Project's model of prevention and care geared to help ethnically diverse families decrease rejection and promote their LGBT children's health and well-being. Under the mentorship of the California GSA Network, OTM will use MSA funds to increase program staff hours to:

- 1. Form student groups for LGBTQ high school students and their allies that create safe spaces and influence school climate.**

**This program expansion will grow the capacity of the four existing high school Gay Straight Alliances (GSAs) and create new clubs on campuses at Valley Oak, Napa and Calistoga.** A GSA is a student-run club that provides a safe place for students to meet, support each other, talk about issues related to sexual orientation, and work to end homophobia.

The Napa LGBTQ Project Coordinator will work with school administrators to recruit a faculty advisor on each campus, connect advisors to resources and provide monthly coaching and training to increase implementation fidelity to evidence-based practices. The GSAs will meet regularly, according to student's school schedules.

**During the first program year, 100 youth and 10 teachers will be active in GSAs on high school**



**campuses. Participation numbers will increase to 150 youth and 12 teachers in year two and 200 youth and 15 teachers in year three.**

The project will use the California GSA Network's best practices to create collaborations across schools to share ideas and best practices, reduce isolation, and support students in taking on community-wide projects. **Each quarter, GSA participants will meet regionally to plan joint activities and receive training. All GSA participants, their families and the greater community will be invited to attend an annual county-wide conference** held in the fall that will promote the visibility and vibrancy of the GSAs and will include hands-on training that will increase implementation fidelity to evidence-based practices.

## **2. Train educators to support LGBTQ youth and prevent bullying**

Training educators to respond appropriately to name calling, bullying and harassment on the basis or perception of sexual orientation and gender identity/expression contributes to creating safer school environments for LGBTQ students. The Napa LGBTQ Youth and Family Initiative will partner with Our Family Coalition, a Bay Area organization that promotes the equality and well-being of LGBTQ families with children, to provide evidence-based safe and inclusive schools training. **During 2012-13, one to two teachers from each of the seven GSA campuses will attend in-depth training to become resources to teachers and students on their campuses.** In addition, **school staff at three GSA high schools will be trained on how to create safe and inclusive campuses as part of their professional development requirements. Staff at the remaining four campuses will receive training in 2013-14.**

## **3. Work with middle school faculty, parents and students to develop and implement support services for younger students.**

Middle school students are significantly more likely to face hostile school climates than high school students, yet have less access to school resources and support. **During Year 2 of the project, a group of 4 high school GSA students will be trained to work with 15 middle school students, faculty and parents to create student-led activities that address LGBT issues on middle school campuses.** The Napa LGBTQ Project Coordinator will support the high school GSA students to work with three middle school campuses to design and implement school-based services using GLSEN best practices. High school students will lead middle school students in hands-on projects, including reviews of school policies, which promote positive school climate and counter harassment and bullying. **One hundred fifty middle school students will participate in school-based activities in 2013-14, and increase by 100% to 300 participating in 2014-15.**

Middle school faculty on the three target campuses will also participate in targeted and school-wide training led by Our Family Coalition. **During Year 2 of the project, one to two teachers from each of the sites will attend intensive training to become campus resources. In Year 3, teachers and support staff will participate in school-wide, evidence-based safe and inclusive school training as part of their professional development activities.**

## **4. Educate and encourage families to build resiliency in their LGBTQ children.**

Families, parents, foster parents, caregivers and guardians can have a very dramatic impact on their LGBTQ children. Family acceptance promotes well-being and helps protect LGBTQ young people against risk. Family rejection has a serious impact on a gay or transgender young person's risk for health and mental health problems. The Family Acceptance Project is collaborating with Child and Adolescent Services at San Francisco General Hospital/UCSF, and with community providers to develop a new family-related model of prevention and care, based on research. This new family-related approach will help ethnically diverse families decrease rejection and increase support to decrease their LGBT children's risk and promote their well-being. Using the Family Acceptance Program model, the LGBTQ Project Coordinator will establish family support and education programs on four campuses during 2013-14. **Over the course of two years, 450 families will receive information and/or participate in family support programs.**



## **Guideline 2: Organizational Capacity**

With a strong network of internal staff and community advisors, as well as a demonstrated effectiveness to engage participants, the Napa LGBTQ Project has the experience and capacity to effectively implement the LGBTQ Youth and Family Initiative with high levels of fidelity to its evidence-base. The Project is housed at and modeled after the best practices developed by VOICES, which has been highlighted repeatedly in professional publications that indicate the program is “viewed by many youth advocates as a national model of collaboration and youth empowerment.”<sup>1</sup> VOICES’ inter-generational leadership model has been identified as a promising practice: “The youth leaders of VOICES [have] demonstrated that youth could sometimes be more effective than adults in bringing together community resources and creating a center where youth’s real needs are met.”<sup>2</sup>

In May 2010, OTM applied for and received technical assistance training provided by LGBT Tri-Star, an organization focusing on improving access to substance abuse prevention and treatment services for the LGBTQ community. Eight OTM staff members and thirteen members of partner agencies learned about issues of concern to the LGBTQ community in accessing services, outcomes for this population versus other populations and best practices in programming.

Perhaps the most important evidence of the efficacy of the Napa LGBTQ Project is its ability to implement the evidence-based strategies identified by Napa County MHS staff. Since 2010, the Napa LGBTQ Project has held a first of its kind town hall meeting attended by 200 community members, coordinated 9 trainings for 170 service providers and facilitated Q\*Youth, a group that supports over 70 LGBTQ youth. Currently the Project is implementing an Equality Alliance that will promote organizations that wish to be visibly committed to LGBTQ inclusion and awareness and to help them to improve their cultural competency. The LGBTQ Youth and Family Initiative has garnered the support of six principals (Letters of Commitment attached). The Project Coordinator has met twice with each of the existing GSAs, supported faculty advisors, given presentations at GSA meetings and worked with 6 families seeking resources. He was recently invited to join Napa Valley Unified School District’s Equity Leadership Committee, a group that oversees educational equity (race, gender, language, and LGBTQ).

Much of the Project’s success can be attributed to the strong team of staff and community advisors. The LGBTQ Program Coordinator is a certified teacher with 10 years of experience and is skilled in working with faculty and students alike to develop programs. The Community Advisory Board is composed of LGBTQ individuals of a variety of ages from across Napa County and serves to speak from a personal (consumer) level of where LGBTQ people are struggling, finding support and where work can be done to improve the safety and wellness of LGBTQ people. There are currently 15 Advisory Board members, including representation from youth, students, local LGBT social and community groups, faith community, PFLAG, teachers from Napa and American Canyon, Napa Valley College, Napa and American Canyon non-profits, and the business community.

Final evaluation of program outcomes is led by an evaluation consultant who ensures that staff understand the importance of fidelity to evidence-based practices and the impact on participant outcomes.

## **Guideline 3: Evaluation**

To assess program success, the LGBTQ Youth and Family Initiative will begin by creating baseline data through a school climate survey of GSA participants. This data will be used comparatively in Years 2 and 3 to measure overall perceptions of safety and well-being. Student participation in GSAs and other school-based and county-wide activities, school staff participation in training, and parent participation in family activities will

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<sup>1</sup> Krutsinger, C. “V.O.I.C.E.S.: A Model of Support for and by Youth Aging Out of Foster Care.” *Journal of the National Center of Youth Law*, July – September 2007.

<sup>2</sup> Youth Transition Action Team Initiative. “Promising Foster Youth Transition Practice: Napa V.O.I.C.E.S.” [www.newwaystowork.org/initiatives/ytat.html](http://www.newwaystowork.org/initiatives/ytat.html)



be tracked using sign in sheets and a program-specific data system. Young people participating in GSAs will be surveyed annually to gauge their feelings of isolation and connection using evidence-informed tools. School staff participating in targeted and global trainings will also be surveyed annually to determine the effects of the program on their own skills and willingness to support LGBTQ youth.

As a result of the project, young people and their families will be connected to needed community supports and empowered to work together to change their school environments. Project outcomes for 2012-15 include:

- Vibrant GSAs will be developed with fidelity to evidence-based models at 7 high schools.
- Supportive programs will be offered at 3 middle schools.
- 75% of GSA young people will report a more positive school climate and less bullying and harassment.
- 90% of youth involved in GSAs will report less isolation and more connection to peers and adult allies.
- 90% of teachers will report that the training caused them to do something different in their educational practices.
- 90% of involved families will report more awareness of their role in supporting their child's resiliency.

*Please see the attached Logic Model for specific details regarding evaluation of the LGBTQ Youth and Family Initiative.*

#### **Guideline 4: Increased Capacity to Provide Evidence-Based Services**

**The LGBTQ Youth and Family Initiative will increase the Napa LGBTQ Project's capacity to deliver evidence-based services throughout the three-year grant period and beyond.** The Napa LGBTQ Project is committed to provide training and coaching to each of its staff members to continually develop their capacity. The Project has integrated the Predictive Index (PI)<sup>3</sup>, a scientifically validated management tool, into all phases of its staff development. The tool is designed to improve employee retention, coaching, leadership development, talent management, and team performance. The PI also helps to inform each staff person's Individual Development Plan, which outlines measurable goals for desired growth including timelines and resources needed for success. 360 Degree performance reviews are completed twice per year to ensure staff are achieving personal development goals, reaching program deliverables and contributing to the program team at all levels.

In addition to the internal resources for staff supervision, training and monitoring, all program staff will work in partnership with a variety of consultants and content experts to support the integration of evidence-based practices into program implementation. First, the Project Coordinator and the Project Director will participate in Spectrum LGBT Center of the North Bay's LGBTQ Best Practices Train the Trainer event in order to become the Napa County training experts.

Second, the California GSA Network North Bay Regional Coordinator has agreed to mentor Initiative staff to develop the regional convening structure and train staff and faculty advisors in GSA best practices and how to replicate the model. California GSA Network staff will train GSA youth at quarterly convenings in topics such as raising awareness and increasing LGBTQ visibility in schools, meeting facilitation and outreach.

Lastly, Initiative staff and youth will have the opportunity to participate in a variety of training opportunities including:

- **Evidence-based training presented by Our Family Coalition** for Initiative and school staff that is specifically tailored to meet the developmental needs of each school grade level.
- **GSA Activist Camp:** Summer 2012. Intensive community building, skill-building, political education and leadership training for current and potential GSA members.
- **Models of Pride:** October 2012. California GSA Network conference.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.piworldwide.com/>



- **Rainbow Youth Festival:** Fall 2012. Outreach and resource fair for LGBTQ youth and allies ages 15-24 to learn about community resources and build the safe school movement
- **Youth Empowerment Summit (YES):** December 2012. Workshop topics include queer youth activism and safe schools.
- **Summit San Francisco GSA Meet-Up:** Spring 2013. Topics include: how to run GSA meetings; outreach, membership building, coalitions, and diversity; understanding gender identity/expression and sexual orientation; understanding laws that protect LGBTQ youth in schools; taking action against slurs, harassment, and discrimination in schools; and, launching a campaign at school to create change.
- **GSA Advocacy & Youth Leadership Academy:** Spring 2013. Three-day intensive training in the legislative process, policy and administrative advocacy, media activism, and other important leadership skills. Culminates in Queer Youth Advocacy Day in Sacramento.

Over time, in-house staff will develop expertise in these practices as well as an ability to teach evidence-based practices to new staff members who enter the organization in years to come, thus providing continuity of practice without the reliance on outside consultants.

### **Guideline 5: Unmet Local Needs**

Research has consistently found that LGBTQ youth are significantly more likely than other adolescents to experience depression and abuse alcohol and illegal drugs, and that as many as one-third have attempted suicide. In San Francisco, a 2009 survey found that almost 60% of middle school students who identified themselves as LGBTQ, had seriously considered suicide because of bullying, compared with 21% of heterosexual students.<sup>4</sup>

A recent survey of Latino LGBTQ young adults found that those who had experienced high levels of family rejection associated with their sexual identities during adolescence were more than eight times as likely to have attempted suicide, roughly six times as likely to report high levels of depression, and more than three times as likely to use illegal drugs and engage in unprotected sex than those from families with no or low levels of rejection.<sup>5</sup>

Studies also show that young people – both gay and heterosexual – first become aware of being sexually attracted to another person at around age 10. A study of LGBT adolescents and families found that the average age that youth realized they were gay was a little over age 13. Many of them knew they were gay at even younger ages – such as age 7 or 9.<sup>2</sup>

Currently, there are minimal student support groups on four high school campuses in Napa County, and no educational or support services for families of LGBTQ youth. The expansion of the Napa LGBTQ Project will meet these needs by providing school-based services for young people, coaching for youth leaders and adult allies, and support and education for families.

The Napa LGBTQ Youth and Family Initiative will provide services for young people and their families on seven high school campuses in Napa County (Napa, Vintage, NewTech, Valley Oak, St. Helena, American Canyon and Calistoga). In 2010-11, 6,602 students were enrolled in public high schools county-wide, 40% of whom are categorized as socioeconomically disadvantaged and 51% as Latino, traditionally underserved populations.<sup>6</sup>

Local MHSA surveys have identified that LGBTQ individuals are an unserved/underserved population in Napa County. Based on regional averages (an estimated 8.3% of the total population are LGBTQ), there are

<sup>4</sup> 2009 SFUSD School Climate Survey.

<sup>5</sup> Ryan, C., "Supportive Families, Healthy Children," SFSU Family Acceptance Project, 2009.

<sup>6</sup> California Department of Education, Dataquest, <http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>. Accessed 1/10/2012.



approximately 547 LGBTQ high school students and 394 LGBTQ middle school students enrolled in Napa Valley schools. The majority of these young people are not open about their sexual orientation and/or gender expression. Those who are “out” often experience bullying and harassment at school, which causes stress, poor academic performance and lower attendance rates as some choose to miss school in order to avoid negative experiences that threaten their safety.

#### **Guideline 6: Diversity**

The LGBTQ community in Napa County reflects the varied diversity dimensions of the general population in race, ethnicity, nationality, immigration status, age, religion, social class and disability status. Within the LGBTQ community, there are a variety of sexual orientations, gender identities and gender expressions that require sensitivity in service delivery and community engagement methods. The Napa LGBTQ Project has demonstrated its ability to support this diverse community to mobilize for action, as seen in the recent Town Hall forum that drew 200 community members from Calistoga to American Canyon. The demographics of the event participants were representative of LGBTQ community, with 21% older adults and 40% youth in attendance. The forum was offered in both English and Spanish and included 37% Latino individuals.

The LGBTQ Advisory Board and staff reflect the diversity within Napa County with 50% female, 7% transgender, and 29% people of color. Both the Board and staff include young people, adults and older adults. Finally, the LGBTQ Youth and Family Initiative will directly address the most common culture, the *culture of youth*. The Initiative will draw upon VOICES’ approach to create an environment that is not “clinical” in its perception, language, and interactions, but instead is healthy, welcoming and lively.

#### **Guideline 7: Linkages to Community and School Programs**

The Napa LGBTQ Youth and Family Initiative is a school-based program that will be coordinated on seven high school and three middle school campuses from American Canyon to Calistoga. The principals of all seven high schools and one middle school are committed to working with the project and will help to recruit GSA faculty advisors, encourage students to participate in activities and include LGBTQ anti-harassment training in faculty professional development plans. Six principals have signed letters of commitment (attached) and have supported the circulation of outreach materials for the Q\*Youth program throughout their school districts.

The LGBTQ Project Coordinator is skilled at working with school staff, having been a teacher at Napa and American Canyon High Schools and the director of the high school leadership academy, LAYLA.

In addition, the Initiative is housed at and closely tied to VOICES and is under the mentorship of Marin County-based Spectrum LGBT Center. Through the MHSAs PEI collaborative, the Initiative will work closely with the network of MHSAs PEI providers.

#### **Guideline 8: Tobacco Cessation Services**

Given its co-location at VOICES Napa, the LGBTQ Youth and Family Initiative will connect youth participants to the CANV Tobacco Cessation Program that is offered on-site. Tobacco use will be discussed at GSA meetings in the context of wellness and youth will be encouraged to participate in cessation activities.

#### **Guideline 9: Basic Safety Net Services**

In addition to the expanding list of LGBTQ friendly providers joining the Equality Alliance, GSA staff advisors and student leaders will provide referrals to other housing, employment, and social service providers throughout the county. Youth will also have access to the wealth of safety net services provided on-site at VOICES. The Project website will include referral information to Equality Alliance providers and all the services at VOICES.