

A DVD AND RESOURCE CD

# Breaking the Silence:

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Foster Youth Tell Their Stories

*A Tool for Training Care Providers on Working Effectively with LGBTQ Youth*



**AN ANNOTATED RESOURCE LIST**

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# AN ANNOTATED RESOURCE LIST

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## BOOKS

### Social Service Delivery

DeCrescenzo, Teresa, and Gerald P. Mallon. *Serving Transgender Youth: The Role of Child Welfare Systems*. Proceedings of a Colloquium, Sept. 2000. Child Welfare League of America: Washington, D.C., 2000.

Reviews the issues facing transgender youth in foster care and makes recommendations for policy, practice, and advocacy to better meet their needs.

Dessetta, Al, ed. *In the System and in the Life: A Guide for Teens and Staff to the Gay Experience in Foster Care*. Youth Communication/New York Center, Inc.: New York, NY, 2003.

A collection of 25 stories by gay teens, straight teens, and staff about the foster care system and the relationships between teens, foster parents, and foster care staff. Also includes myths and stereotypes of being gay and HIV-positive, and suggestions for using stories in staff trainings.

Mallon, Gerald P. *Lesbian and Gay Youth Issues: A Practical Guide for Youth Workers*. Child Welfare League of America: Washington, D.C., 2001.

Designed to help youth care providers increase their knowledge and skills in working with lesbian and gay youth and their families in a variety of settings. Focuses on the following issues: the coming out process, family relations, discrimination and antigay violence, creating healthy social environments for lesbian and gay youth, and relationships and dating.

Mallon, Gerald P. *Let's Get This Straight: A Gay-and-Lesbian-Affirming Approach to Child Welfare*. Columbia University Press: New York, NY, 1999.

Explores issues of sexual orientation as they pertain to children, youth, and families. Critiques the effects of current child welfare practices and policies, documenting the ways lesbian and gay youth have been marginalized and mistreated due to heterocentrism and homophobia. Takes a comprehensive, family-centered approach to addressing the problems in foster homes, adoptions, and residential placements.

Ryan, Caitlin, and Donna Futterman. *Lesbian and Gay Youth: Care and Counseling*. Columbia University Press: New York, NY, 1998.

The first hands-on guide for providing health care and mental health care to lesbian and gay youth and young adults. Provides specific guidelines for care and for addressing sexual behavior, substance abuse, and suicide, among other issues. Provides an extensive discussion of the social and health effects of stigmatized identity in the context of adolescent development.

## Schools

Human Rights Watch. *Hatred in the Hallways: Violence and Discrimination Against Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Students in U.S. Schools*. Human Rights Watch: New York, NY, 2001.

A report that documents the devastating impact of harassment on LGBT youth in U.S. public schools who are offered no protection by school officials, and makes detailed recommendations for legislators at all levels on how to deal with this discrimination. The report shows that persistent harassment of LGBT youth by their peers often leads to depression, low academic achievement, withdrawal from school, and sometimes suicide.

Perrotti, Jeff, and Kim Westheimer. *When the Drama Club is Not Enough: Lessons From the Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Students*. Beacon Press: Boston, 2001.

A description of the Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Students in Massachusetts that details its activities, involvement in schools, and success in creating safe and welcoming schools for gay and lesbian youth. Describes the program's strategies for changing school environments, including recognizing the central role of students, collecting and using data effectively, building on the core values of schools, knowing the laws and policies that support equity, developing a broad base of support, and creating visibility.

## Family

Bernstein, Robert A. *Straight Parents, Gay Children: Keeping Families Together*. Thunder's Mouth Press: New York, NY, 2003.

Written by a father about his own experience with his daughter's coming out process, this book addresses his movement from grief to acceptance to advocacy for his daughter. The book offers insight from political and religious leaders, as well organizations like PFLAG (Parents, Family, Friends of Lesbians and Gays). Foreword by Betty DeGeneres.

Clark, Donald. *Loving Someone Gay*. Celestial Arts Publishing: Berkeley, CA, 2005.

Clark, a respected gay psychologist with extensive clinical experience, offers comfort and advice to parents of lesbian and gay children and teens.

Griffin, Carolyn W., and Marian J. Wirth. *Beyond Acceptance: Parents of Lesbians & Gays Talk About Their Experiences*. St. Martin's Press: New York, NY, 1997.

Offers myth-busting information to help parents confront their previous misconceptions of homosexuality and then presents ways for them to move beyond acceptance to advocacy for their gay or lesbian child.

Mallon, Gerald P., ed. *Social Services with Transgendered Youth*. Harrington Park Press: Binghamton, NY, 1999.

Provides suggestions, through personal narratives and case studies, to help social workers and families understand the reality of transgender people's lives.

Marcus, Eric. *Is It a Choice? Answers to 300 Most Asked Questions About Gay And Lesbian People*. HarperCollins: New York, NY, 1999.

Provides basic answers to the questions family, friends, and acquaintances ask when someone they know first comes out.

McDougall, Bryce, ed. *My Child Is Gay: How Parents React When They Hear the News*. Allen & Unwin: Australia, 1998.

Compiles parents' own stories of gradually understanding their children's coming out experiences. The stories represent both the difficulties and the joys parents experience in coming to terms with their child's identity.

## Religion

Helminiak, Daniel. *What The Bible Really Says About Homosexuality*. Alamo Square Press: Tajiique, NM, 2000.

Helminiak, a Biblical scholar, examines Bible passages often used to condemn homosexuality, explaining how and why they have been misinterpreted. The foreword by John S. Spong, the Episcopal Bishop of Newark, NJ, endorses Helminiak's analysis.

## ARTICLES & REPORTS

Feinstein, Randi, et al. *Justice For All: A Report on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered Youth in the New York Juvenile Justice System*. Lesbian and Gay Youth Project of the Urban Justice Center, 2001.

A report that chronicles the experiences of LGBT youth in the New York City juvenile justice system, identifies the main problems, and makes recommendations for improvement. It uses a combination of social science research and personal interviews with juvenile justice professionals and LGBT youth to reveal the discrimination and bias against LGBT youth in the system.

Mallon, Gerald P. "Basic Premises, Guiding Principles, and Competent Practices for a Positive Youth Development Approach to Working with Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Youths in Out-of- Home Care." *Child Welfare* 76, 1997, 5.

This article describes a model for supporting the development of LGB youth in out-of-home care. The model is based on the premise that the most effective way to help LGB youth is to provide them with the same services that all adolescents need. The goal is positive youth development, and five key elements to achieving that goal are identified: creation of programs tailored to meet clients' needs; participation of youth in their own care; respect for the dignity and worth of all people; proper placement in a safe environment; and partnerships among youths, family, service providers, and community.

Sullivan, Colleen. "Kids, Courts and Queers: Lesbian and Gay Youth in the Juvenile Justice and Foster Care Systems." *Law and Sexuality: A Review of Lesbian and Gay Legal Issues*, 6, 1996, 31.

This article uses narratives of lesbian and gay youths' experiences after coming out in order to emphasize the societal epidemic of excluding, ignoring, abusing, and out casting the LGBT community from the mainstream. Points out that as a result of ever-increasing violence directed at gays and lesbians in society at large, gay and lesbian youths are likely to be subjected to increased amounts of violence in schools, foster homes, group homes, and detention centers. Makes the case for gay-affirming foster care facilities, similar to the GLASS group homes.

Sullivan, Colleen, Susan Sommer, and Jason Moff. *Youth in the Margins: A Report on the Unmet Needs of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Adolescents in Foster Care*. Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, 2001.

A report that identifies the problems of LGBT youth in the foster care system based on 14 states' policies and urges foster care agencies to take steps to better serve their LGBT clients. The report suggests that child welfare systems nationwide address these problems by creating and implementing non-discrimination policies, conducting sensitivity and support training for foster parents and staff, and providing programs and services to address the needs of LGBT youth, including counseling and sexual health education.

Tschupp, A.J. "Policy and Programming Needs for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Adolescents in Youth Service Agencies." *Social Work Perspectives*, 12, 2001, 1.

Discusses the need for policies and services that are effective in helping queer youth develop a healthy self-identity. Topics include: why LGBT youth often enter the child welfare system; the inability of the system to address their needs; how homophobia impedes the creation of policies and programs that meet their needs; and the need for community based institutions and services, public education, and political mobilization to fully integrate LGBT youth into society.

## FILMS

*Dealing With Difference: Opening Dialogue About Lesbian, Gay and Straight Issues.* Dir. John Young. Human Relations Media & GLSEN, 2002.

Offers a guide to creating LGBTQ-safe classrooms. It highlights the damage done to all students by harassment and bullying of LGBTQ students. It also offers concrete ideas on how to begin discussing the issue of sexuality, as well addressing the problems faced by LGBTQ people, with dramatizations of anti-LGBTQ harassment in schools and panel discussions amongst teens about their experiences. The video comes with a teacher's guide. Information on ordering this video can be found at: [www.glsen.org/cgi-bin/iowa/all/booklink/record/1566.html](http://www.glsen.org/cgi-bin/iowa/all/booklink/record/1566.html).

*Homecoming Queens.* Paper Tiger Television, 1999.

This is a 28-minute short film that shows residents at Green Chimneys Gramercy Residence, a group home for LGBTQ foster youth, ages 15 to 21. The youth document their lives and the discrimination they face inside the foster care system through interviews, narratives and testimonials. Information on ordering this video can be found at: <http://www.papertiger.org/index.php?name=catalog-request&action=search>.

*It's Elementary: Talking About Gay Issues In School.* Dir. Debra Chasnoff and Helen S. Cohen. Women's Educational Media / New Day Films, 1997.

Highlights the approaches teachers across the country are using to address homosexuality and diversity in their classrooms. Features teachers in elementary classrooms who are challenging the current political climate's attempts to censor such a dialogue. The film focuses on students' points-of-view and their reactions to the discussions. Includes a helpful viewing and discussion guide. Information on ordering this video can be found at: [http://www.newday.com/films/Its\\_Elementary.html](http://www.newday.com/films/Its_Elementary.html).

*Just Call Me Kade.* Dir. Sam Zolten. GLSEN, 2003.

This short documentary film follows the life of Kade Farlow Collins, an FTM (female to male) transgender youth. It highlights the daily issues Kade faces with friends, peers, and family and provides great first-person perspectives on issues facing transgender youth. Information on ordering this video can be found at: <http://www.glsen.org/cgi-bin/iowa/all/booklink/record/1565.html>.

*Our House: A Very Real Documentary about Kids of Gay and Lesbian Parents.* Dir. Meema Spadola. COLAGE (Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere), 2000.

This documentary follows the lives of several children of lesbian and gay parents. It highlights the usual issues faced by youth while growing up, as well as the unique situations children of gays and lesbians may meet. Our House provides insight into this unique experience and provides a positive outlook on families, who come in many diverse ways. Information on ordering this video can be found at: <http://www.colage.org/documentary/>.

*Out of the Past*. Dir. Jeff Dupre, 1998.

This documentary follows the experience of a Utah student battling to form a gay-straight alliance in her public school. Dupre uses her struggle as an example of the continued struggle for human rights. The film moves on to highlight the struggles of activists past and present, with narration by Gwyneth Paltrow and other famous actors. *Out of the Past* won the Audience Award at the Sundance Film Festival the year it was released. The film is widely available from retailers. A teachers' guide and ordering information is available at: <http://www.glsen.org/cgi-bin/iowa/all/library/record/1645.html>.

*Trevor*. Dir. Peggy Rajski, 1994.

Presented by Ellen DeGeneres, this short film uses diary entries to follow 13-year-old Trevor, who struggles to come to terms with his sexuality. Trevor is harassed at school for being gay and ultimately attempts suicide. Luckily, someone comes along to support Trevor, offering him acceptance and self-understanding. Highly acclaimed winner of an Academy Award. Information on ordering this video can be found at: <http://www.thetrevorproject.org/thefilm.aspx>.

*Youth OUTloud!: Addressing Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Youth Issues in Our Schools*. GLSEN/Sun & Moon Vision Productions.

This documentary highlights the inspiring stories of several LGBTQ youth working to create and implement policies to make their schools—and then their school districts—safer places for all. Information on ordering this video can be found at: <http://www.glsen.org/cgi-bin/iowa/all/booklink/record/1513.html>.

## HOTLINES

### **National Youth Advocacy Coalition (NYAC)**

**1-800-541-6922**

NYAC maintains a database of local and national organizations and hotlines which provide support services to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning youth. See [www.nyacyouth.org](http://www.nyacyouth.org).

### **GLBT National Youth Talkline**

**1-800-246-PRIDE (1-800-246-7743)**

The GLBT National Youth Talkline provides free and confidential telephone and email peer-counseling, as well as factual information and local resources for cities and towns across the United States. This line is for youth ages 25 and under and is open Monday through Saturday, 9:30pm-12am EST. Email: [youth@GLBTNationalHelpCenter.org](mailto:youth@GLBTNationalHelpCenter.org) See: <http://www.glbtnationalhelpcenter.org/talkline/index.html>.

### **The Gay & Lesbian National Hotline**

**1-888-THE-GLNH (1-888-843-4564)**

This hotline offers a toll-free telephone number for totally anonymous information, referrals, and peer counseling. Callers will be able to speak directly to a trained volunteer who can access a national database of referrals specific to the gay and lesbian community. More information can also be found on their website at: [www.glnh.org/home.htm](http://www.glnh.org/home.htm).

### **The Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN)**

**212-727-0135**

Through its network of 85 chapters in 35 states, GLSEN works with school officials and parents to ensure that each member of every school community is valued and respected, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. More information can be found at: [www.glsen.org](http://www.glsen.org).

### **The Trevor Project**

**866-4U-TREVOR**

A 24-hour, toll-free suicide-prevention hotline addressing the specific needs of LGBTQ youth. Created to accompany the award-winning documentary Trevor (see Films). More information can be found at: [www.thetrevorproject.org](http://www.thetrevorproject.org).

## **WEB RESOURCES**

### **Brevity**

<http://www.ncjfcj.org/content/blogcategory/69/440/>

Brevity, a weekly publication of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) often includes information and news about LGBTQ youth that may be of interest to their care providers. NCJFCJ keeps an archive of these newsletters that includes an extensive collection of information about LGBTQ youth in the system.

### **Child Welfare League of America (CWLA)**

<http://www.cwla.org/programs/culture/glbtc.htm>

CWLA's Sexual Orientation/LGBTQ Youth Issues Program, in partnership with the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, works to create a network of resources that address the needs of LGBTQ youth in the child welfare system in a comprehensive way. This site provides information and publications primarily aimed at parents, foster care providers, and policy-makers.



### **National Youth Advocacy Coalition (NYAC)**

<http://www.nyacyouth.org>

NYAC is the only national organization focused solely on improving the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning youth through advocacy, education and information. Their website offers resources for LGBTQ youth, educators, and care providers who want to take action and to create change. The section on Youth Connections offers information on support groups and hotlines, as well as family, school, health and legal resources. This website has an extensive searchable database of LGBTQ youth resources.

### **OutProud**

<http://www.outproud.org>

OutProud is a website of the National Coalition for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Youth that offers a wide range of resources for LGBTQ youth and their educators, care providers, and families. Also links to another website specific to the needs of transgender youth, <http://www.transproud.com>.

### **Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG)**

<http://www.pflag.org>

PFLAG works to promote the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender persons, their families, and friends through: support, to cope with an adverse society; education, to enlighten an ill-informed public; and advocacy, to end discrimination and to secure equal civil rights.

### **SEX, ETC.**

<http://www.sexetc.org/index.php?topic=GLBTQ>

A leader in teen-to-teen sexuality education, SEX, ETC. is an award-winning national newsletter and website that is written by teens, for teens, on teen sexual health issues. SEX, ETC. is the major component of the National Teen-to-Teen Sexuality Education Project developed by the Network for Family Life Education, a nonprofit organization that provides resources, advocacy, training, and technical assistance in support of balanced, comprehensive sexuality education in the United States. The Network is based at the Center for Applied Psychology at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.

### **YouthResource - A Project of Advocates for Youth**

<http://www.youthresource.com/index.html>

YouthResource, a website by and for LGBTQ young people, takes a holistic approach to sexual health, exploring issues of concern to LGBTQ youth. This site provides information on health, advocacy, and queer living—as well as art, short stories, and poems by the youth.

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**THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR LESBIAN RIGHTS—**

**YOUTH PROJECT** has been advocating for LGBTQ youth in schools, foster care, juvenile justice settings, and the mental health system since 1993. The Project provides direct, free legal information to youth, legal advocates, and activists through a toll-free line; advocates for policies that protect and support LGBTQ youth in these different arenas; and litigates cases that are creating new legal protections for youth in schools, foster care, juvenile justice, and other settings.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:**

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