


Youth's Experiences with the Healthy Relationships Program for LGBT2Q+ Youth

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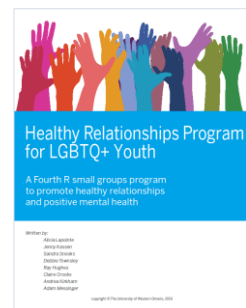
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Overview

- Background and context
- *Healthy Relationships Program (HRP) for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Two-Spirit, and Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ+) Youth*
- School board involvement
- Implementation and evaluation
- Results
- Implications for practice



Background

LGBT2Q+ Youth

- Minority stress (Meyer, 2003)
- Structured GSA programming (Heck, 2015)



HRP for LGBT2Q+ Youth

- Adaptation of Healthy Relationship Plus Program (HRPP)
 - Positive mental health and skills development
- Affirming LGBT2Q+ identities, expressions, and experiences
- Developing strategies to cope with minority stress

HRP for LGBT2Q+ Youth (2nd ed.)

SESSION 1: I HAVE A VOICE: Introduction to the Program

SESSION 2: MINE TO NAME: Identities/Ways of Being

SESSION 3: RECOGNIZE AND RESPECT: Values and Boundaries

SESSION 4: MY JOURNEY: Coming Out

SESSION 5: MY MIND MATTERS: Mental Health and Well-being

SESSION 6: IN THE KNOW: Impacts of Substance Use and Abuse

SESSION 7: I BELONG: Communities and Connections

SESSION 8: MY SUPER-POWER: Coping with Challenges

SESSION 9: WE ALL HAVE A SAY: Rights/ Responsibilities/ Consent

SESSION 10: MY VOICE, YOUR VOICE: Active Listening and Communication

SESSION 11: RIGHT AND TRUE: Communication Styles

SESSION 12: WORDS AND ACTIONS: Communicating Through Conflict

SESSION 13: SHIPS: Healthy and Unhealthy Relationships

SESSION 14: (RE)BUILDING TIES: Addressing Relationship Violence

SESSION 15: MY SAFETY: Exits and Safety Plans

SESSION 16: ALLIES: Being There for Others

SESSION 17: THE CONCLUDING CIRCLE: Share and Celebrate

Session #2

MINE TO NAME:

IDENTITIES/WAYS OF BEING



Affirmation: MY IDENTITY IS REAL, VALID, AND MINE TO NAME

Skill: I am aware of the many identities/ways of being, and expressions in communities

Practice: Reflecting on my ways of being

Session #4

MY JOURNEY:

COMING OUT



Affirmation: MY JOURNEY, MY WAY, MY TIME

Skill: Recognize that coming out is a process that looks and feels different to different people

Practice: Creating your own coming out affirmation

School Board Involvement

Thames Valley District School Board

- Research & Assessment
- Safe Schools
 - GSA Staff Contact



Avon Maitland District School Board

- Individual Schools



HRP for LGBT2Q+ Youth Pilot (2016 - 2017)

Training

- 1 day (mental health and well-being, LGBTQ+ content, program overview)
 - N=11

Implementation

- 8 public high school Gender and Sexuality Alliances (GSA)
- 1 social/support group for LGBT2Q+ Youth

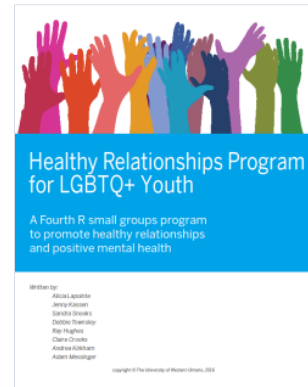
Evaluation

- Focus group (n=6)
 - N=16 youth



Results

- Acceptability of delivering program in GSAs
- Validate and affirm
- Share and learn
- Develop coping strategies



Results



Acceptability of Delivering Program in GSAs

“...I feel like the program helped to, like, prompt some topics and...guide some of the conversations; whereas, like, we might not have brought up the same topics...**the program sort of brought up some topics we wouldn't have considered, like, by ourselves...it did a better job at, like, promoting topics and discussion than, like, we would have by ourselves**” (Sidney, School 2).

“I find the structure is really useful. Especially when we don't have the sessions or don't have a set thing to talk about during the meetings. We just sort of talk about our own lives. Which in some cases is good, but **I find the structure is useful and we sort of learn more things than we would just talking**” (Casey, School 1).

Results



Validate and Affirm

“...I liked session two, the mine to name one, because I like having...a space where **I could describe my own identity, and it would be valid and people wouldn't be like, 'that's not real.'** Cause, like, that happens. But, I felt like having that sort of space to talk about that...I liked that session a lot” (Sidney, School 2).

“**I think I discovered a little more of myself. You know, I started kind of realizing, 'Hey, like, maybe there's more to gender for me, personally...kind of like figuring out who I am...**because, you know, when you talk about...the spectrum and, you know, where you can fit. And, like, I was kind of imagining in my head and I was like, 'hey, this kind of make sense'...just helping me personally with things like that” (Cori, School 2).

Results



Share and Learn

“...[the program] kind of gives us a way to talk to each other and share opinions...” (Jean, School 4).

“...the coming out lesson got us all talking and maybe learning more about each other and our situations at home, which led to better support systems” (Harley, School 5).

Results



Develop Coping Strategies

“Like honestly, it’s all stuff to help you in life...it’s to help you be...a stronger person...it was all, like, really good to see, like different ways of coping and dealing with stuff”(Jesse, School 6).

“I mean some of [the sessions] got heated ‘cause we’d get talking about our family and then the rage would appear...But **we did...get to talk about like, ‘oh, how should I handle my peers doing this’? ‘How should I handle my family doing this’? How should I handle my partner doing this?’**” (Cass, School 5).

Implications for Practice



Integrating Program within GSAs and Beyond

- “I feel like a lot of these lessons need to be taught outside of GSA. Because I didn’t join GSA until last year...So, like, **there was no chance for me to be learning these things**” (Morgan, School 5).
- “**...I feel like when they teach us about LGBTQ+ relationships in school it’s more like...they have to teach us about it so they kind of whiz through it,** like you can be this, that or all over the spectrum and now we’re going to move on to other stuff. So when we’re here...more about the community and...more in depth with that so it’s not like we’re rushing passed it because we have to get it learned” (Rae, School 3).