

**Supporting and nurturing
LGBTQ+ student resilience:
Allyship and action**

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Academic Resilience Consortium Presentation

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Intros and Wonderings:

Who are we? What do we want to know?

Plan for today:

- Susan and Katy will discuss:
 - How individual LGBTQ+ students navigate college., and what challenges face them
 - What we know from research about structural/institutional barriers to resilience, and
 - How LGBTQ+ programs and services aim to address them
 - Katy will also share details about the program she is launching at BU this year
- We'll address the questions you raised along the way...
- And, we'll engage you in sharing intentional practices you've observed and helped with in your institutions

Disclaimers & Definitions

- *Being queer is not a monolithic identity
- *Considering intersections of identity illuminates how students experience the world
- *Resilience as self-acceptance, daring to dream, and liberation
- *Questions to consider:
 - *What existing conditions require the need for folks to be resilient?
 - *How do we eliminate those conditions?
 - *What conditions do we want to create?

Psychological

- The Trevor Project: National Survey on LGBTQ Youth Mental Health 2021
 - 34,759 LGBTQ youth between the ages of 13–24 residing in the US
 - Associated with lower rates of attempting suicide:
 - Respecting pronouns
 - Ability to change legal documents
 - Access to affirming spaces
 - More than half reported that they had experienced discrimination based on their sexual orientation or gender identity in the past year.
 - Half of LGBTQ youth of color reported discrimination based on their race/ethnicity in the past year.
 - Only 1 in 3 LGBTQ youth found their home to be LGBTQ-affirming.

Physical

- Cost of & accessibility to:
 - Gender-affirming healthcare (physical and mental)
 - Gender-affirming clothing
- Lack of:
 - Financial support- - food and/or housing insecurity
 - Queer sexual health & pleasure education
 - Sexual Health Includes Pleasure

Institutional barriers to resilience for LGBTQ+ students

- *Genderism*(Bilodeau, 2007; Wilchins, 2011) pervades higher education
 - Overreliance on the gender/sex binary in practices and programs
- Lack of familiarity, knowledge and comfort with gender and sexual orientation diversity among decision -makers (Gen Xers)
- Mental and physical health impacts of COVID and Trump - era policies are significant (Hawke et al., 2021; Mosley & Hagan, 2020) and not yet attended to
- The fallacy of the idea that “the LGBTQ+ Center will do it” (only [120 institutions](#) have LGBTQ+ centers; fewer than 50 more have designated LGBTQ+ program staff)

Institutional assets for building resilience

- Supportive environments include multiple, visible allies/accomplices (Singh et al, 2013)
- Access to fully inclusive health care (Reeves et al, 2021)
- Access to fully inclusive/gender expansive housing (Nicolazzo et al, 2018)
- Genderism-free (or genderism-reduced) environments (Nicolazzo, 2015;)
- Intersectionality-informed and designed programs and personnel (Garvey, et al, 2019)
- Engagement of queer students in shaping policies and programs (Stewart et al, 2015)

Examples of model programs: academic resilience and LGBTQ+ students

- The power of naming: the [Center for LGBTQIA+ student success](#)
- UC Davis's [study abroad resource site](#)
- University of New Mexico's [queer course guide](#)
- University of Denver's [trans on campus](#) guide
- Wash U's [Destination Q](#) retreat
- [Teaching beyond the binary](#) at Vanderbilt
- [LGBTQ+ mentor program](#) at Penn State
- [LGBTQ+ specific scholarships](#) at Penn State

Identity-Conscious Affinity Spaces at BU

- Protective factors to support queer youths' resilience
 - Social support
 - Connect with other students who share social identities
 - Role models
 - Connect with faculty & staff as mentors
 - Supportive environment
 - Social programming within and across affinity groups
 - Coping strategies
 - Educational programming around leadership skills, resources, and identity development

Identity-Conscious Affinity Spaces at BU

- Points of interest:
 - No physical centers
 - Student input for creation of groups & also implementation of programming
- Centers of queer interest:
 - APIDA (Asian, Pacific Islander & Desi American) & LGBTQIA+
 - Black & LGBTQIA+
 - Children of LGBTQIA+ parents
 - LGBTQIA+ with disabilities
 - Trans/non-binary/genderfluid



**Group dialogue:
Intentional practices at your
institutions**

What is our responsibility? Next action steps

1. Talk with, and really listen to, LGBTQ+ students about their experiences on your campus. Make sure you offer a variety of methods for folks to share their opinion. Be cognizant of how your identity may impact whether or not someone feels comfortable sharing with you.
2. Compose a committee to conduct a formalized audit of LGBTQ+ student life
- 3.
- 4.

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