

Perspectives from LGBTQ youth on community resources: Methods, findings and action



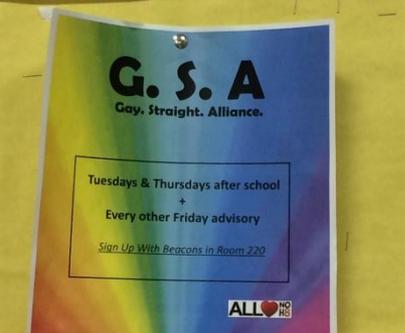
RESPEQT
Research & Education on
Supportive and Protective
Environments for Queer Teens

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February, 2017



Overview

- Brief background & Project RESPEQT
- Go-along interviews
- Resources and Supports for LGBTQ youth
- Zoom in: GSAs
- Zoom in: rainbows
- Our next steps
- Your next steps

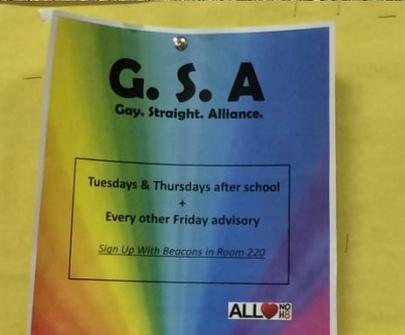




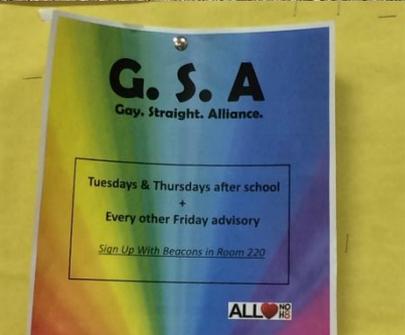
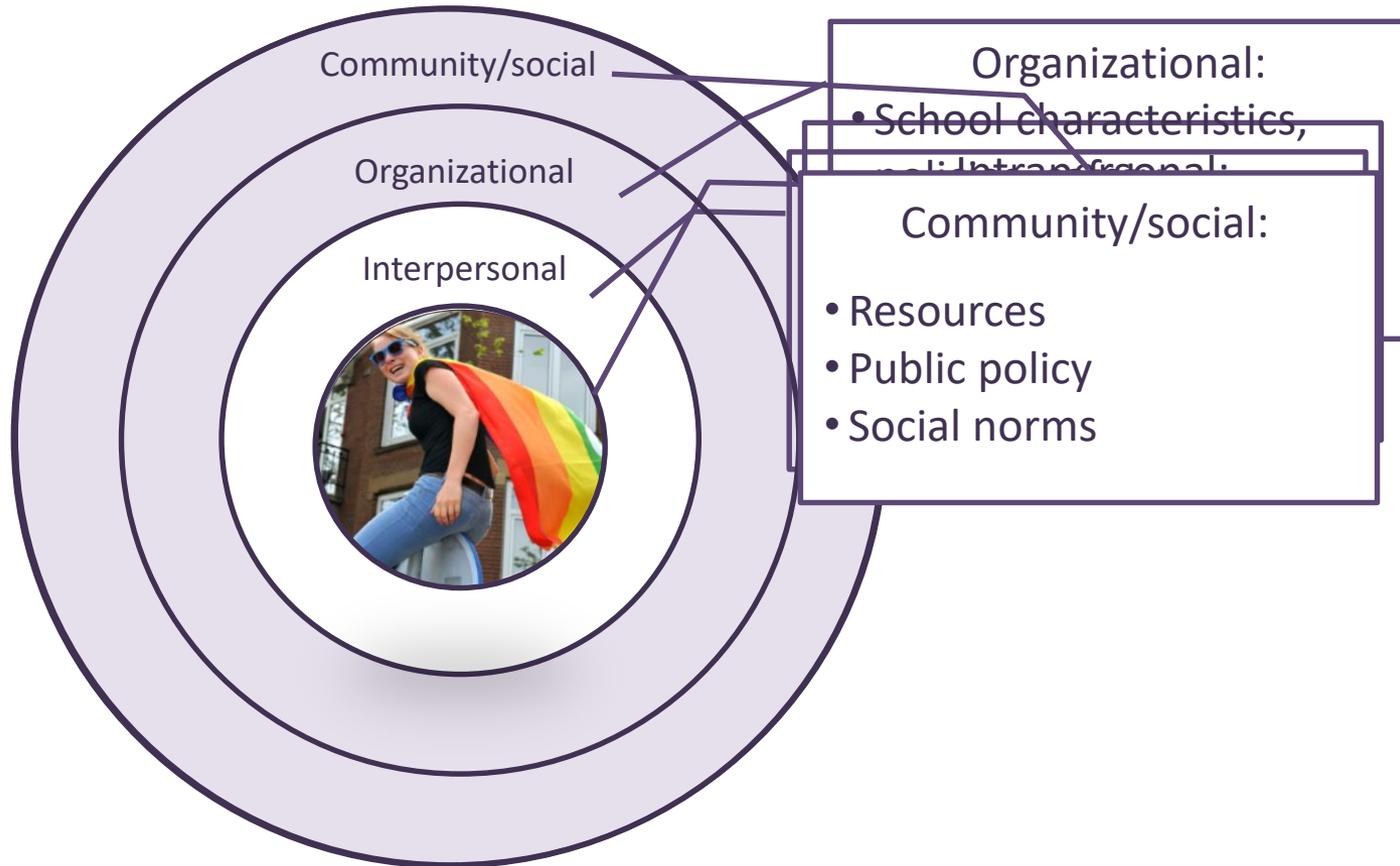
Defining the Problem

- Statistically, LGBTQ youth are at greater risk than straight, cisgender peers
 - Mental health
 - Physical health
 - “Risk Behaviors”

How can communities and schools support LGBTQ youth to thrive?



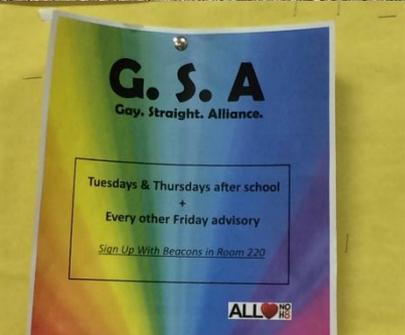
Social ecological model





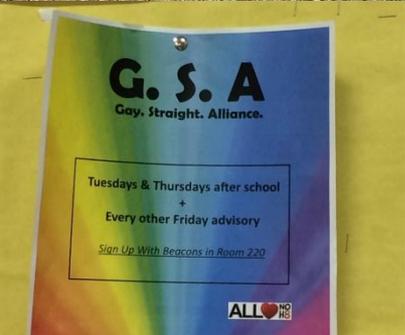
Project RESPEQT: Overview

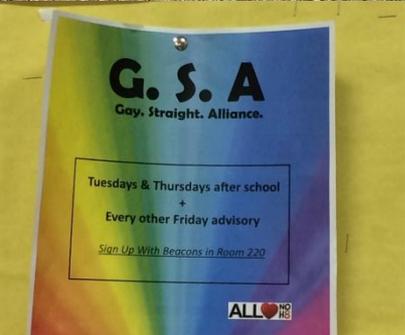
- R01, funded by NICHD, 2014-2018
- Mixed methods study of protective factors in the lives of LGBTQ youth
- 3 sites: MN, MA, BC
- 3 phases
 - ✓ – Qualitative Interviews
 - ✓ – Community assessment
 - Multilevel analysis



Go-along Interviews

- Go-along interview method
 - Move through environment
 - Walking, driving, public transport



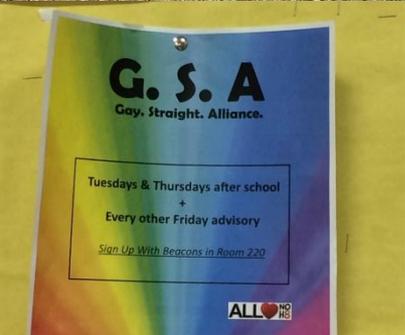


Go-along Interviews

- Go-along interview method
 - Move through environment
 - Walking, driving, public transport
- Recruitment
 - Community partners
 - In-person invitation
 - LGBTQ youth events

Participants

- 66 youth
- Ages 14-19
- Good representation across:
 - Racial/ethnic group
 - Urban/suburban/smaller city/rural
 - Gender identity
 - Sexual orientation



Participants



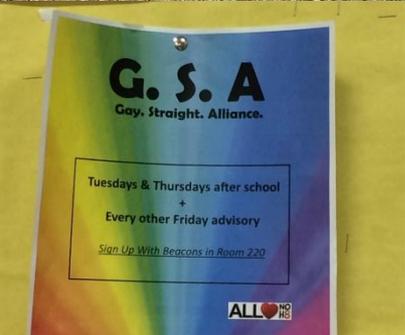
	Female	Male	Trans ^	TOTAL
Gay or Lesbian`	8	13	3	24
Bisexual`	8	10	3	21
Queer and other labels~	5	1	13	19
Straight and other labels*	-	-	2	2
TOTAL	21	24	21	66

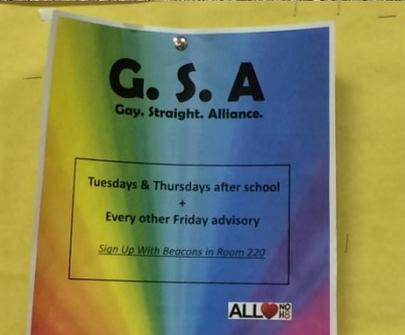
`"gay or lesbian" includes n=2 "same-sex attraction;" "bisexual" includes n=1 "bicurious"

^"trans" included n=11 whose self-descriptor included "trans" (e.g. "trans-female"); additional descriptors included n=10 who provided various labels, e.g. "genderqueer," "fluid," "non-binary" or "neutral"

~n=9 "queer;" additional descriptors included n=7 "pansexual," n=1 "asexual," n=1 "panromantic asexual" and n=1 "rainbow sexual"

* n=1 "straight" and n=1 "other"



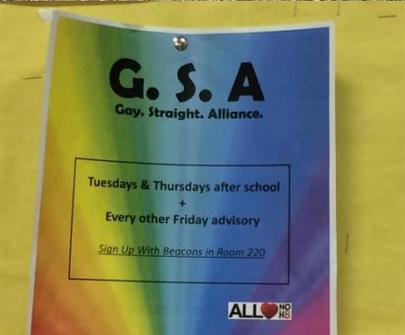


Interview guide

- Where do you go for fun or to hang out?
- Where do you go to get support or help?
- What places in your community make you feel safe?
- Why those places? What makes them safe, friendly, etc?
- How did you find out about those places?

Lessons Learned

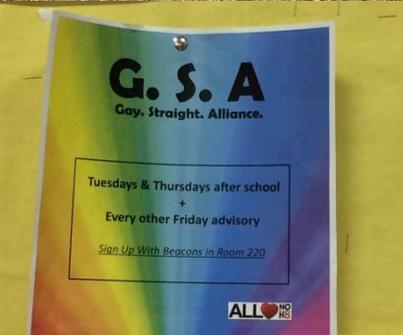
- Recruitment with community partners
 - Successful strategies
 - Challenges
- Go-along (or not)
- Technical difficulties
- Benefits of being in the community

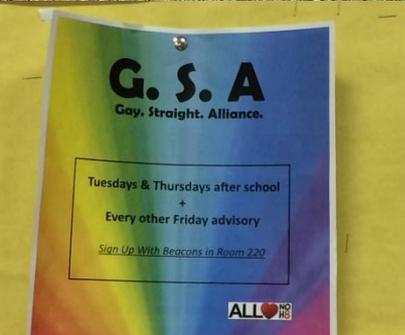


Data analysis

- Transcribed interviews
- Atlas.ti facilitated coding organization
- Thematic organization of codes
- Group review, discussion

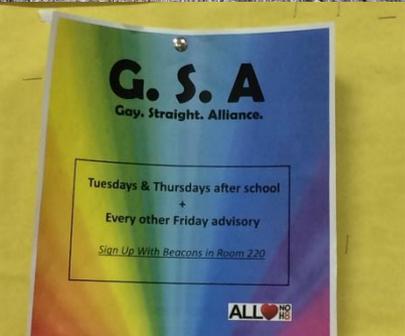
>2000 codes
>15,000 sections of text





Resources and supports

- Social ecological levels
 - Interpersonal, organizational, community/social
 - LGBTQ focused/general
 - Problem focused/healthy development

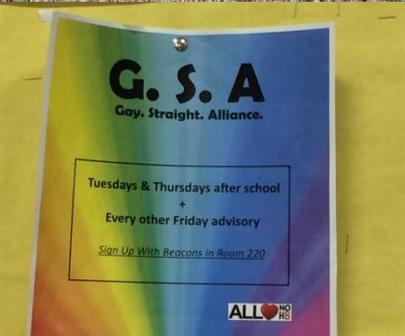


Resources and supports

- Social ecological levels
 - Interpersonal
 - Organizational
 - Community/social

So my parents, my family, my friends. If they accept me, I don't care about strangers. I don't care about my workplace. I don't care about the school. If the people close to me accept me, I can make it through life.

(Bisexual, female, rural)

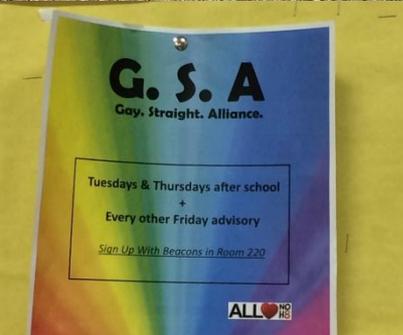


Resources and supports

- Social ecological levels
 - Interpersonal
 - **Organizational**
 - Community/social

I guess teaching people about different sexual orientations or romantic orientations and the difference between them, and ... saying why it's totally natural and normal to be these things and it's just something that we are.

(Asexual, male/trans, suburban, white, 17)

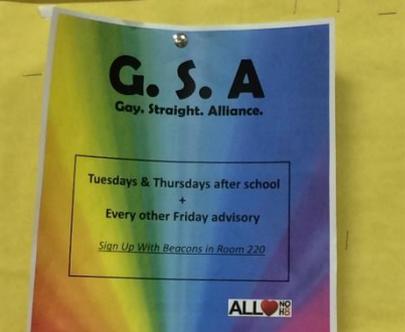


Resources and supports

- Social ecological levels
 - Interpersonal
 - Organizational
 - **Community/social**

It's so cool to just have different options presented. It's important to have someone exemplify a way to live your life and that it's okay to be gay, or you can be a dancer, or you can own a restaurant.... You can be a man and be a good cook; you can be whatever. You need someone to show you how to do it somehow.

(Queer, fluid, urban, white, 18)

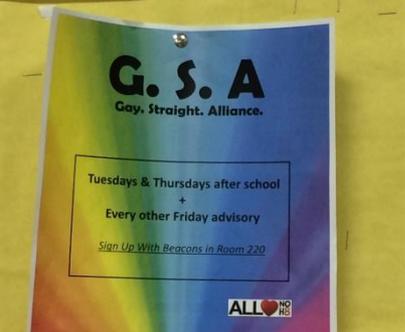


Resources and supports

- LGBTQ focused/general
 - Events (LGBTQ)

Especially the Pride parade. That's a really empowering event. A lot of people come. Even non-LGBT people are on the sidelines and supportive, like, 'You go!' It's definitely empowering. I feel like that's one day when everyone in the LGBT community can come together and be themselves.

(Gay, male, white/Hisp, suburban, 17)

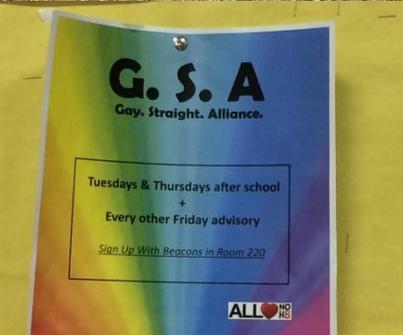


Resources and supports

- LGBTQ focused/general
 - Events (LGBTQ)
 - **LGBTQ youth-serving organizations (LGBTQ)**
 - GSAs/school (bridging LGBTQ and general)
 - Casual spaces (general)

The [group] is an LGBTQ youth group. It is designed for LGBTQ youth to go to to feel safe, to have a place they can hang out and feel like they don't have to worry about everyone judging them.

(Rainbow sexual, suburban)

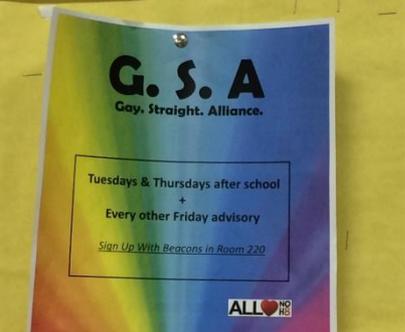


Resources and supports

- LGBTQ focused/general
 - Events (LGBTQ)
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 - **GSAs/school (bridging LGBTQ and general)**
 - Casual spaces (general)

I know for a lot of people it was the only place where they could be out as gay. Imagine just having no place at all where you can be out as gay. It was just a safe space for people who don't have a safe space outside their school.... so that's super-important for schools to have that.

(Lesbian, female, white, urban, 17)

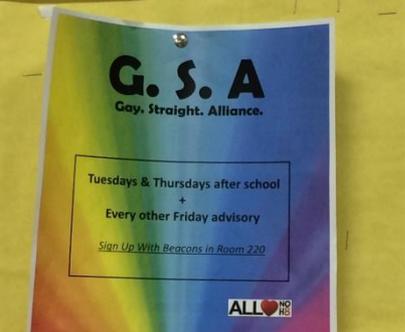


Resources and supports

- LGBTQ focused/general
 - Events (LGBTQ)
 - LGBTQ youth-serving organizations (LGBTQ)
 - GSAs/school (bridging LGBTQ and general)
 - **Casual spaces (general)**

There's also a little burrito place by my house....
And it's really lovely in there and all the people at the counter are really rad and always friendly and chatting to you. And I can tell it's a nice environment 'cause they have the LGBT newspaper and they always stock it. It's just nice.

(Pansexual, female, urban)

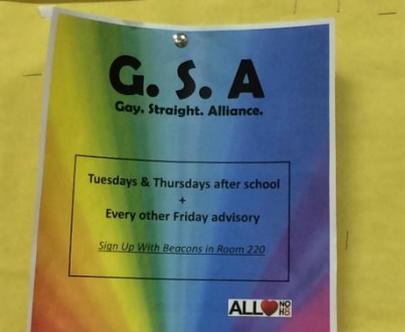


Resources and supports

- Orientation
 - Problem-focused
 - Health development

It's specifically for LGBT youth..... They give you free food, and they have trained people, advisors there, trained to deal with LGBT issues. It's pretty great. There's a sign-in, too. You sign in your name, and there are questions like 'are you homeless?' and 'do you have somewhere to stay?' so I assume they deal with it if you don't have anywhere to stay, which is really good.

(Bisexual, trans/non-binary, white, rural, 18)



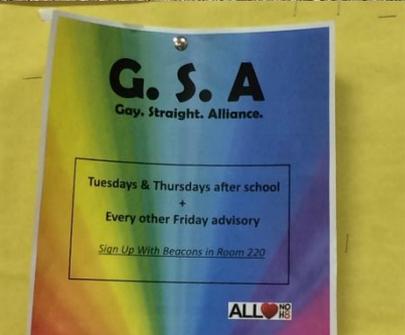
Resources and supports

- Orientation
 - Problem-focused
 - **Healthy development**

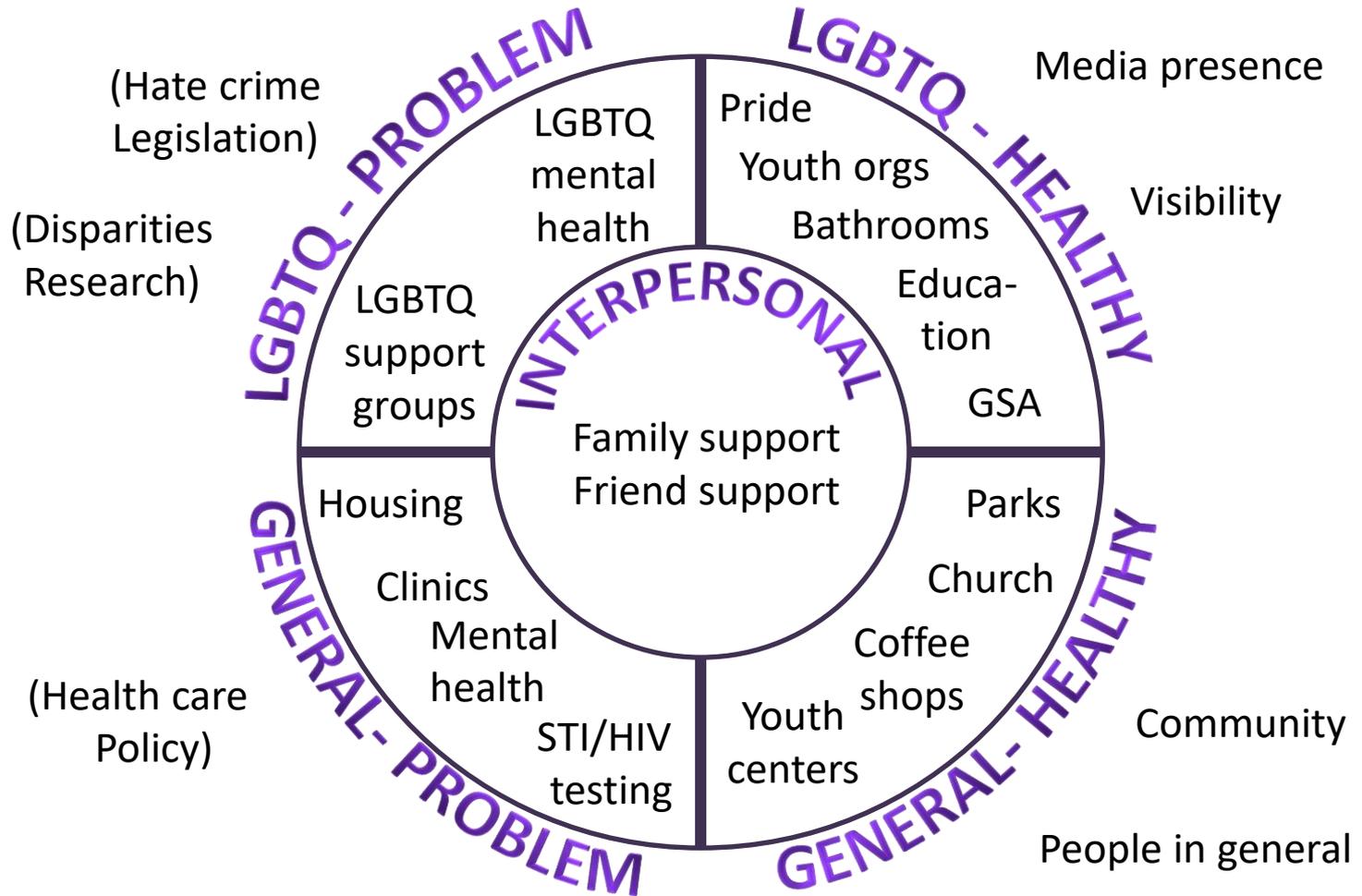
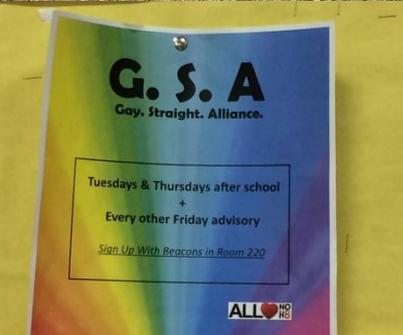
You're just allowed to be there and, like, they like always have, like, cookies or something left over from an event or something. 'You guys are, like, welcome to have whatever you want.' 'Oh, can I use the computer here?' 'Yeah, go for it' or, like, I bring my friends there and we can just, like, play board games, just like sit down, like, say hi to everyone.

(Pansexual, female, urban)

Putting it all together.....



LGBTQ “Life Preserver” of resources



ZOOM IN:
Gay Straight
Alliances
(GSAs)



Gay/Straight Alliances (GSAs)

- Community

There's nobody in there that's going to say anything against me or anyone else there. And everybody in there is absolutely for sure accepting of the LGBTQA+ community, like, all those people. So I guess that's kind of [why] I feel at home.

(14-year-old, male, gay)



Gay/Straight Alliances (GSAs)

- Community
- Gateway to Resources

[My GSA advisor] and [co-advisor] both led a health seminar, and we had health people come in, and they had a whole pamphlet on health providers for LGBT people. I actually have that, because I'm uncomfortable with my doctor, so when I'm older I want to choose a different doctor. I'm going to go based off that and people who specialize in that.

(16-year-old, female, pansexual)



Gay/Straight Alliances (GSAs)

Google like what schools in [city] have GSAs,
those places are usually safe.
(18yo, rainbowsexual, “other” gender)

- Representation of Safety



ZOOM IN:
The Rainbow



Caution

At my school, each classroom had PFLAG stickers that said 'this is an LGBTQ safe zone.' I wholeheartedly believed it for some classrooms; others, not so much. I think it was something that they just put up to have up.
(18yo gay, trans)

It's scary, because some places have pride flags and support gay people, but they don't support trans [people], you know?

(16yo straight, trans)

Key Takeaways

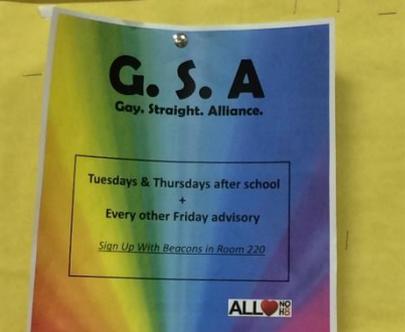
- Yes to signs that indicate friendliness!

BUT

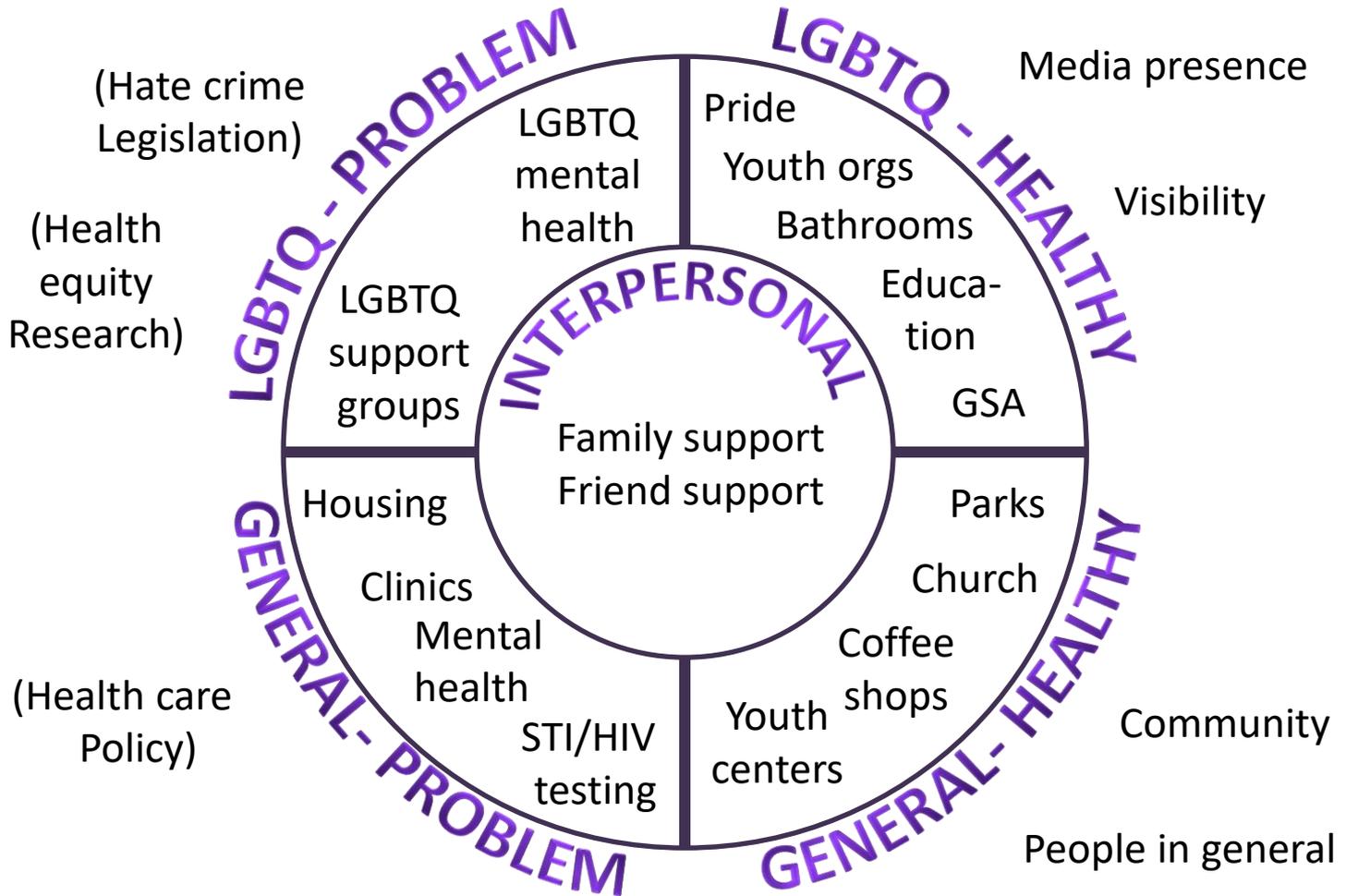
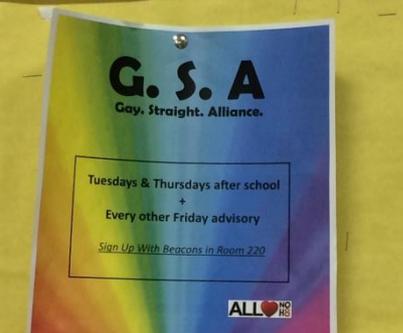
- Make sure that your actions back them up

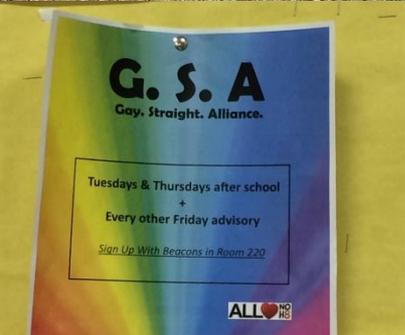


Questions?



LGBTQ “Life Preserver” of resources





Funding acknowledgement

- This research was supported by the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health & Human Development of the National Institutes of Health under Award Number R01HD078470.
- The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of the National Institutes of Health.

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