

LESSON 2

Dismantling Bias and Fostering Equity

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

The purpose of this lesson is for participants to deepen their understanding of bias and stigma related to sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression (SOGIE); to learn about intersectionality; to learn how to identify their own bias; and to identify how both stigma and bias affect the well-being of youth in the juvenile justice system.

OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Identify and assess their own beliefs, values, and assumptions in relation to SOGIE
- Increase their knowledge of different types of bias, including overt, internal, and unconscious or hidden bias
- Increase their knowledge of different types of biphobia, homophobia, and transphobia, and of how these phobias manifest institutionally, interpersonally, and internally
- Learn about and discuss the stigma experienced by youth with multiple marginalized identities in the juvenile justice system
- Learn how to interact with all youth in a welcoming, respectful, and non-judgmental manner
- Identify the possible impact of stigma on positive and healthy adolescent development
- Increase their ability to respond effectively to incidents of bias
- Develop tools and strategies to create a positive environment for youth
- Explore the difference between reacting to behavior and reacting to status or identity

SUGGESTED AUDIENCE:

All juvenile justice providers, advocates, and personnel (e.g., anyone working in the juvenile delinquency system, such as judges, referees, magistrates, prosecutors, probation officers, defenders, detention and

secure facility staff, court staff or personnel, facility caseworkers, social workers, mental health professionals, corrections personnel, forensic evaluators, policy advocates, etc.)

ESTIMATED LENGTH OF TIME NEEDED

3 hours 30 minutes

TRAINING MATERIALS

- White board or flipchart and markers
- Index cards or note paper and pens
- Video and Internet capability
- Video: Digital Story, “Unwritten,” by Fabian, available on The Equity Project YouTube Channel, accessible via www.equityproject.org
- Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack Handout, available at www.equityproject.org
- Personal Attitude Assessment graphic
- Role-play scenarios
- Agency Attitude Assessment graphic
- 10 Ways to Challenge SOGIE-Based Bias handout

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- OUT OF HOME YOUTH ADVOCACY COUNCIL, *CREATING INCLUSIVE SERVICES FOR LGBT YOUTH IN OUT OF HOME CARE: TRAINING RESOURCES* (2007), http://www.nclrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/Preface_OHYAC_training_FINAL.pdf.
- AM. PSYCHOLOGICAL ASS'N, *DEVELOPING ADOLESCENTS: A REFERENCE FOR PROFESSIONALS* (2002), <http://www.apa.org/pi/families/resources/develop.pdf>.
- Gregory M. Herek, *Sexual Stigma and Sexual Prejudice in the United States: A Conceptual Framework*, in *CONTEMPORARY PERSPECTIVES ON LESBIAN, GAY & BISEXUAL IDENTITIES: THE 54TH NEBRASKA SYMPOSIUM ON MOTIVATION 65* (D.A. Hope ed., 2009), <http://blogs.law.columbia.edu/genderandsexualitylawblog/files/2012/04/Sexual-Stigma-and-Sexual-Prejudice-in-the-United-States-A-Conceptual-Framework.pdf>.
- Howard E. Taylor, *Meeting the Needs of Lesbian and Gay Young Adolescents*, 73 *CLEARING HOUSE: J. EDUC. STRATEGIES, ISSUES & IDEAS* 221 (2000).
- GAY, LESBIAN & STRAIGHT EDU. NETWORK, *THINKB4YOUSPEAK: EDUCATOR'S GUIDE 29* (2008), <http://www.thinkb4youspeak.com/foreducators/glsen-educatorsguide.pdf>.
- Barry S. Anton, Am. Psychological Ass'n, *Appropriate Affirmative Responses to Sexual Orientation Distress and Change Efforts*, in *APA POLICY STATEMENTS ON LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, & TRANSGENDER CONCERNS 29* (2010), <http://www.apa.org/about/policy/booklet.pdf>.

LESSON OVERVIEW

This lesson overview is intended to be a simple road map for trainers to understand what the lesson covers, which sections are interactive, and how long each section is estimated to last. It should serve as a guide for highlighting key points, as well as a resource for trainers to decide whether they are capable of delivering the lesson, and whether the lesson is appropriate for the intended audience. Trainers may also find it a useful tool for keeping track of time and flow of the lesson as they deliver it.

I. Introduction (10 minutes)

The trainer will introduce himself or herself to participants, review the lesson objectives, and set the ground rules for the training. The trainer will conduct a brief review of basic terminology.

II. Negative Effects of Stigma on Healthy Adolescent Development (30 minutes)

The trainer will present information defining stigma and engage participants in a discussion on how lesbian-, gay-, bisexual-, and transgender-related (LGBT) stigma may impact a young person who is still developing a sense of identity. The trainer will then present information on general concepts of adolescent development to tie into that stigmatization. Finally, the trainer will use the Impact of Silence activity to illustrate how it might feel to be a young person who has not “come out” and cannot talk about many of the things that are important to him or her.

- **Activity: Impact of Silence.** This is an activity in which participants are not allowed to discuss people, places, and activities that are meaningful to them, allowing them to empathize with what it might be like for LGBT youth who are not out about their identities.

III. Personal Beliefs, Values, Assumptions, and Bias about SOGIE (1 hour 25 minutes)

The participants will explore their own personal values and attitudes and how they affect the youth with whom they work in the juvenile justice system.

A. Exploring Personal Values and Beliefs (50 minutes)

The trainer will facilitate a discussion using guiding questions about participants' own experiences with SOGIE throughout their lives in order to explore their own attitudes.

- **Activity: Messages about SOGIE/Small Group Discussions.** The trainer will break participants into groups to discuss their own personal experiences, using facilitated questions.
- **Activity: Personal Attitude Assessment.** The trainer will ask participants to silently reflect on whether they agree or disagree with six different statements about LGBT people. The trainer will facilitate a debrief of the activity, encouraging participants to share their thoughts if they are comfortable doing so.

B. Exploring Different Types of Bias (35 Minutes)

The trainer will explain the difference between bias, prejudice, and stereotypes, and define overt, internal, and unconscious bias.

- **Optional Activity: Harvard Implicit Bias Test.** This is a computer-based word association test on sexuality that allows participants to learn about their own implicit biases. Every individual needs a computer and internet access for this activity, which can take up to 15 minutes and requires participants to register their email addresses.

Once participants understand different types of bias, the trainer will facilitate an exploration of possible outcomes of SOGIE-based bias.

- **Activity: Video – Digital Story, “Unwritten,” by Fabian.** The trainer will show a video from an LGBT youth formerly involved in the juvenile justice system and facilitate a discussion about how bias affected him.

IV. Intersectionality Theory (15 minutes)

Participants will discuss intersectionality (the study of the intersection of different forms of discrimination or oppression) and identify examples of how LGBT youth in the juvenile justice system experience bias based on intersecting parts of their identities.

V. Distinguishing Between Reacting to Behavior and Reacting to Identity (45 minutes)

The trainer will facilitate role-playing scenarios to explore how to react to and support LGBT youth who are in the juvenile justice system. This will provide participants with “hands-on” learning to engage in situations they may face every day, using what they have learned about bias and stigma in order to reframe how they might respond.

- **Activity: Hypothetical Scenarios.** The trainer will pass out three different scenarios for participants to role-play. Each role-play has questions about how participants would have handled the situation. After all of the role-plays are completed, the trainer will facilitate a debrief discussion.
- **Activity: Agency Attitude Assessment.** The trainer will share a scale with the following terms: Intolerance, Indifference, Tolerance, Acceptance, Affirmation, and Advocacy, and ask participants to reflect on where they believe their own workplace organizational culture falls on the spectrum.

VI. Responding to Bias (15 minutes)

The trainer will guide participants through some strategies and tools to respond to bias.

A. Checking Internal Biases

Participants will explore ways to notice and respond to their own biases.

B. Responding to Bias by Others, Including Peers and Adults

Participants will discuss practice tips for addressing bias when they observe it. The trainer will then provide a handout with some tips on responding to bias.

VII. Wrap-Up (10 minutes)

The trainer will end the lesson with time for questions and an activity.

- **Activity: Head Heart Step.** Participants have the opportunity to reflect on one fact they learned, one value or guiding principle they heard that feels important when it comes to LGBT youth, and one manageable and concrete action step they will take in their own work after the training.

FACILITATION NOTES

I. Introduction (10 minutes)



Provide a general introduction of the lesson (and of the trainers, if not already done). Before beginning the lesson, review the purpose and objectives of the lesson with participants.



Participants may have been exposed to *Toward Equity: Lesson One – Understanding Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, and Gender Expression*, or other introductory training prior to attending this session. Even so, it is still useful to conduct a brief review of SOGIE terminology. In particular, it is important to remind participants that “sex” is not the same as “gender,” that “gender identity” is not the same as “sexual orientation,” and that none of these is the same as “gender expression.” **You may do a more intensive review or consider facilitating *Lesson One – Understanding Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, and Gender Expression* if a greater level of review is necessary.** This is something trainers should work with the hosting organization to understand in advance of the session.

Sex: Assigned at birth, a biological construct based primarily on physical attributes such as chromosomes, external and internal genital and reproductive anatomy, and hormones.

Gender: A social construct used to classify a person as a man, woman, or some other identity. Fundamentally different from the sex assigned at birth, it is often closely related to the role that a person plays or is expected to play in society.

Gender Expression: Describes how individuals communicate their gender to others. People express and interpret gender through hairstyles, clothing, physical expression and mannerisms, physical alterations of their body, or by choosing a name that reflects their own idea of gender identity.

Gender Identity: A person’s internal identification or self-image as male, female, something in between, or outside of the male/female binary. Everyone has a gender identity. One’s gender identity may or may not be consistent with one’s sex assigned at birth.

Sexual Orientation: An attraction to others that is shaped at an early age (usually by about the age of ten). Sexual orientation falls on a spectrum that ranges from attraction to only men or only women, to varying degrees of attraction to both men and women, to attraction to neither men nor women.

II. Negative Effects of Stigma on Healthy Adolescent Development (30 minutes)

Define stigma and ask the group to brainstorm how stigma may affect young people when their brains and identities are still developing. Use the teaching notes that follow to help facilitate the discussion.

- Stigma: a mark of humiliation or shame associated with a particular circumstance, quality, or group of people.
 - For the purposes of this lesson, the discussion focuses on stigma based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression; however, LGBT youth may also face stigma based on other factors, such as race. For youth in the juvenile justice system, stigma could be related to their behavior and/or service needs.

- The stigma, rejection, and harassment that many LGBT youth face may negatively impact their psychosocial development and behavior.
- During adolescence, all youth undergo complex physical, psychosocial, sexual, and cognitive changes. Some LGBT youth have the added burden of dealing with all these changes while at the same time navigating one or more stigmatized identities.¹
- SOGIE-related stigma may have social, behavioral, and health-related consequences that can increase risk behaviors in youth.²
- Understanding the context of SOGIE-related stigma may help juvenile justice professionals better understand the root causes of how many LGBT youth enter the juvenile justice system, and better equip them to meet the needs of these youth.



After the discussion on stigma, review some of the developmental considerations in the teaching notes that follow, being sure to note those identified by the participants and bring them into the discussion at the appropriate time. This lesson is not intended to be a full or detailed examination of the breadth of adolescent development research. It is intended to provide some basic concepts for the participants to better understand how bias may affect healthy adolescent development.³

Provide some general information on adolescent development:⁴

- Emotional development during adolescence centers on establishing a realistic and coherent sense of identity in the context of relating to others, learning to cope with stress, and managing emotions.
 - Youth, who are poor, African American, LGBT, overweight, or disabled, for example, may experience many challenges to building positive identities in a culture where the predominant media image of an adolescent is middle-class, white, heterosexual, thin, and able-bodied.
- Identity refers to more than just how adolescents see themselves right now; it also includes what has been termed the “possible self”—what individuals might become and who they would like to become. Low self-esteem develops if there is a gap between one’s self-concept and what one believes one “should” be like.
 - Again, if youth identify as LGBT in an environment that holds heterosexuality and cisgenderism out as the expected norm, then youth may develop low self-esteem, which could result in depression or substance abuse.
- Adolescence is characterized by a socio-emotional system that is easily aroused and highly sensitive to social feedback.
 - Therefore, negative feedback or feedback that stigmatizes an adolescent’s SOGIE may take a larger emotional toll on a young person than it would on an adult.

¹ See KATAYOON MAJD ET AL., HIDDEN INJUSTICE: LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, AND TRANSGENDER YOUTH IN JUVENILE COURTS 69 (2009), http://www.equityproject.org/pdfs/hidden_injustice.pdf.

² *Id.*

³ Those wishing to provide more detailed adolescent development training should contact the National Juvenile Defender Center at <http://www.njdc.info/macarthur2.php> to request a free copy of the MacArthur Foundation’s *Toward Developmentally Appropriate Practice: A Juvenile Court Training Curriculum*.

⁴ AM. PSYCHOLOGICAL ASS’N, DEVELOPING ADOLESCENTS: A REFERENCE FOR PROFESSIONALS (2002), <http://www.apa.org/pi/families/resources/develop.pdf>.

- An adolescent's cognitive skills and cognitive control system is still developing through early adulthood. Consequently, adolescents are less able to control impulses, less able to resist pressure from peers, less likely to think ahead, and more driven by the thrill of immediate rewards. This combination of cognitive limitations can be aggravated by the stress associated with stigma, and may lead LGBT youth who are experiencing stigma to act out, have greater difficulty controlling their anger, or fail to recognize—and therefore consider—the consequences of their behaviors.

ACTIVITY: IMPACT OF SILENCE⁵

- Ask everyone to pair up with someone they do not necessarily know very well. (If there is an odd number of participants, a trainer should participate.)
- Ask each person to write responses to the following on a sheet of paper:
 - Name the three most important people or relationships in your life
 - Name three places that have special meaning to you
 - List three topics of conversation that you and your friends usually discuss
 - List three of your favorite leisure activities
- One participant in each pair should now begin by introducing herself or himself to her or his partner without mentioning anything written on the cards. Make a big deal about this. Say things like: "You can talk about whatever you want, but everything on your card is taboo. Do not mess up and talk about something on your card, because if you do, the person you are talking to might despise you, reject you, or no longer respect you."
- The first person should introduce himself or herself to his or her partner for 90 seconds. At the end of 90 seconds, the trainer should instruct the pairs to stop and switch. The second person of the pair should introduce himself or herself, again not mentioning anything written on the cards. This person will also have 90 seconds.
- Ask the following (or similar) questions to stimulate discussion about the Impact of Silence activity:
 - Tell us about the experience: What was it like to not be able to talk about what was on your card?
 - What made it hard (to those who found it hard), and what made it easy (for those who found it easy)?
 - Did anyone forget and say something on their list or talk around something on their list?
 - Did anyone find that they would start talking, and then run into something they could not talk about and have to suddenly stop or switch topics?
 - What did you talk about?

TRAINER NOTE



Usually people will notice that they talked about superficial things, about their pasts or that they found a particular topic and stayed on it for the whole time.

- Ask participants what it would be like to have to do this exercise for two hours, two days or a lifetime, instead of only 90 seconds.

⁵ Developed by Robin McHaelen, True Colors, Inc.



At this point, most participants begin to realize that it would be very hard not to talk about the people, places, and experiences that are important to most of them. Participants begin to see how limiting it would be, that they would not be able to relate authentically with other people, and how silenced they would feel.

Use the following notes and questions to facilitate a discussion:

- What was the point of the exercise? How does it relate to homophobia, transphobia, and heterosexism in our society?
- Notice that people who are not out cannot talk about their relationships, where they go and with whom, what they do, or other important things that happen in their lives.
- Imagine what it might be like to be 14 years old and have to keep so many secrets.
- Ask participants to generate a list of the potential impacts of this level of social isolation (e.g., depression, anxiety, frustration, anger, substance abuse, etc.).
- It is important to note that while fear of bias and stigma are often reasons that young people do not come out, coming out is a complex process and there are many other reasons why young people may not come out. For example, a young person may still be questioning his or her own identity, may still be struggling with internal aspects of his or her own culture or religion that conflicts with his or her SOGIE, or he or she may just not be ready to share such personal information at this time.



At the end of the discussion, pass out the handout “The Invisible Knapsack,”⁶ available in the Training Materials, and tell participants that it provides additional examples of the privileges that heterosexual and cisgender people have that LGBT people may not have the opportunity to experience on a daily basis. Ask participants to review the handout and consider whether they have ever taken any of these privileges for granted.

III. Personal Beliefs, Values, Assumptions, and Bias about SOGIE (1 hour 25 minutes)



While these lessons strive to be as interactive as possible, confronting people with their own internal biases or asking them to share can often be difficult. As such, trainers may choose to use more of a “classroom” approach, *i.e.*, not specifically eliciting participation from the group, but being open to participation if it comes about naturally from participants. Trainers also have to be sensitive so as not to alienate participants. The best facilitation should acknowledge that people have personal views without judging them, while also acknowledging that our professional duties sometimes require us to keep those personal views private. For example, while your political affiliation may be aligned to a particular party (e.g., Democratic or Republican), your personal political ideas about specific fiscal or social policies remain personal. Your personal political views do not excuse you from following work rules or policies. The same holds true of religious views; personal beliefs are different from professional obligations.

⁶ UNPACKING THE INVISIBLE KNAPSACK II (2013), available at www.equityproject.org. (adapted from PEGGY MCINTOSH, WHITE PRIVILEGE AND MALE PRIVILEGE: A PERSONAL ACCOUNT OF COMING TO SEE CORRESPONDENCES THROUGH WORK IN WOMEN'S STUDIES (1988), <http://www.iub.edu/~tchsotl/part2/McIntosh%20White%20Privilege.pdf>).

A. Exploring Personal Values and Beliefs

Tell participants that the group is going to begin by exploring some of their own internal beliefs and attitudes.

- Start by telling participants that everyone has personal values and beliefs. Similarly, all people have implicit biases. None of these things make someone a bad person—rather, they make us human.
 - Implicit biases or implicit associations are activated involuntarily and without our awareness or intentional control—everyone has them. Residing deep in the subconscious, implicit associations cause us to have feelings and attitudes about other people based on characteristics such as race, ethnicity, age, and appearance. These associations develop over the course of a lifetime, beginning at a very early age, through exposure to direct and indirect messages. In addition to early life experiences, the media is an often-cited origin of implicit associations.
 - All people have implicit biases about race, gender, religion, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, etc. Research shows that even people who are part of a certain group or class of people that have historically experienced societal bias or discrimination also have implicit biases, even against their own group.
- Ask participants to think of a time in their lives when they felt different from everyone else around them. Ask them to take a moment to reflect silently on that time, what the feeling of difference was like, and what would have made it better.
 - This reflection is meant to begin developing or instilling a sense of empathy within participants.
- Then, ask participants to think of a time when they had to balance what was required of them at work and their personal beliefs. Ask how they accomplished this. The trainer may want to provide the following examples:
 - For someone who opposes the right to an abortion: what if he or she was working with someone who wanted to exercise, or had already exercised, that legal right?
 - Think about having different parenting styles than the parents' of the youth with whom one works. As long as the parenting styles do not put a young person at risk of harm, they need to be respected. For example, choice of discipline (*e.g.*, one parent believing in “grounding” a child as reasonable punishment and another adult who believes that to be unnecessary or ineffective).
- We all have explicit or implicit biases, values, and/or beliefs about SOGIE.
 - Tell participants that it is important to remember that LGBT youth comprise 5%-7% of the general youth population,⁷ but 20% of youth in juvenile detention.⁸ It is important that professionals constantly reflect on their own internal attitudes, because juvenile justice professionals are most likely working with these youth every day—even if they are not aware of them.

⁷ Andrew Burwick et al., *Identifying and Serving LGBTQ Youth: Case Studies of Runaway and Homeless Youth Program Grantees*, MATHEMATICA POL'Y RESEARCH (2014), http://www.aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/14/lgbt-rhy/rpt_LGBTQ_RHY.pdf (“[T]he National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health found that 7.4 percent of boys and 5.3 percent of girls in grades 7–12 reported same-sex romantic attraction, and results of a recent nationally representative survey of U.S. adults indicate that approximately 3.4 percent identify as LGBT.” (citation omitted)).

⁸ Angela Irvine, *Dispelling Myths: Understanding the Incarceration of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Gender Nonconforming Youth* (Nat'l Council on Crime & Delinquency, Working Paper, 2014).

ACTIVITY: MESSAGES ABOUT SOGIE/SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS⁹

- The trainer should have the participants break up into groups of four or five people per group.
- The trainer should then pose the following questions to the groups, allowing about five to ten minutes for groups to discuss each one before moving on. If the training is short on time, the trainer may choose to pose only one question to each group.

Question #1: When you were growing up, what messages did your family send about LGBT people?

Question #2: What were the rules in your family regarding gender? What gender “transgressions” (*i.e.*, expressing gender in a way that falls outside of the traditional societally constructed gender norms, such as a man wearing a skirt) make you uncomfortable?

Question #3: Have you ever **not** spoken up when you heard an anti-gay remark or joke? Would you have spoken up if it had been another form of prejudice? What made speaking up difficult?

Activity Debrief:

Ask participants to share how this activity felt for them. Then ask the following questions to continue the discussion:

- Why do you think we asked you to do this?
- Were there any surprises or interesting lessons that you learned about yourself?

Open up discussion about how unexamined personal values and beliefs can negatively affect our ability to work effectively with clients, families, and staff. Use these discussion points as a guide:

- People may signal disapproval without even knowing it, through body language.
- If a young person feels hesitant to trust us, we may not be able to work on developing positive and healthy outcomes together.
- If part of the reason young people find themselves in the justice system involves some level of rejection from adults in their lives, it may be very difficult to reach young people who perceive the adults in the system to be disapproving of their identity.

ACTIVITY: PERSONAL ATTITUDE ASSESSMENT¹⁰

- Ask participants to do this exercise privately, not out loud. Participants will not be required to share their answers.
- Tell participants that this is an activity to help us better understand our *current* personal attitudes about LGBT people—to clarify our attitudes and beliefs in order to help us become more conscious of what we feel and how our feelings may come up in our work or daily lives.

⁹ This activity is adapted from *Creating Inclusive Services for LGBT Youth in Out of Home Care*, prepared by the Out of Home Youth Advocacy Council in March 2007. The report is available at http://www.nclrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/Preface_OHYAC_training_FINAL.pdf.

¹⁰ This activity is adapted from *Creating Inclusive Services for LGBT Youth in Out of Home Care*, prepared by the Out of Home Youth Advocacy Council in March 2007. The report is available at http://www.nclrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/Preface_OHYAC_training_FINAL.pdf.

ACTIVITY: PERSONAL ATTITUDE ASSESSMENT (CONT.)

- Tell participants that the purpose of responding to these items is not to try to change anyone's attitudes or values. There are no right or wrong answers. Rather, the important thing is to understand what we *actually* believe and feel, not what we think we *should* believe and feel.

Read the following statements aloud and ask participants to silently reflect on whether they agree or disagree with each statement.

1. I would be comfortable knowing that my child's third grade teacher is gay.
2. If I found out that my daughter or son was lesbian or gay, I would have difficulty telling other people.
3. I would feel comfortable dating a bisexual person.
4. I should be informed if a co-worker is transgender.
5. It would not bother me at all if someone thought I was gay.
6. I would feel uncomfortable if my young son wanted to wear dresses.

Activity Debrief:

Use the following discussion points as a guide to facilitate a discussion about participants' responses to the questions.

- Ask participants if anyone feels comfortable sharing his or her reactions to any of the statements.
- Ask participants to reflect on and brainstorm together about how our personal beliefs may manifest themselves. Possible examples might include:
 - negative body language the youth picks up on
 - saying things the youth interprets as judgmental or a form of rejection, whether or not one intends it to be
 - consciously or unconsciously avoiding spending time with or working as hard with that youth
 - relating differently to youth who are LGBT than to those one perceives to be "straight"

B. Exploring Different Types of Bias

Tell participants that now that they have a good understanding of internal attitudes and how they impact our work, they are going to spend some time focusing on the concept of bias.

Begin by posting (on a white board, the wall, or flipcharts) the words "Bias," "Prejudice," and "Stereotype." Ask participants what they think these words mean. Ask how they are different. Facilitate a discussion to surface the participants' views, but end the discussion with a direct explanation of each using the following definitions:

- **Bias:** a personal, generalized *preference* for or against something that has the tendency to *interfere with the ability to be impartial or objective*. Bias need not necessarily be negative, though it often can be.
- **Prejudice:** A preconceived *negative or hostile opinion or judgment about another social group*.
- **Stereotype:** A preconceived, *generalized, and oversimplified opinion, belief, or judgment applied to an entire group of people*. It is also an assumption that people, groups, or events conform to a general pattern and lack any individuality.

Tell participants that while we can all probably agree that prejudice and stereotypes are bad and interfere with the way we interact with others, bias is much more subtle, so it requires further exploration.

Explain that there are a variety of different types of biases, and ask if any of the participants can give an example of a kind of bias and how it manifests. The trainer can provide examples if participants do not come up with them on their own.

- **Overt bias:** Unconcealed, open preference that can come off as hostile to those who are not included in the preference (e.g., using homophobic or transphobic language openly; bullying; put-downs).
- **Internal bias:** Having private views about someone's identity but not necessarily talking about those views (e.g., internally believing that being gay is morally wrong, but not sharing those feelings with others).
- **Unconscious/Implicit bias:** Lack of awareness of our general preference for or against certain individuals (e.g., a male mentor who would normally have appropriate physical contact, such as high-fives and back pats, with a male mentee but avoids physical contact with boys he perceives to be gay).
 - Implicit biases are pervasive, and we all have some form of them, because they result from our unconscious associations that begin very early in life. Even people with professional commitments to impartiality, such as judges, hold implicit biases.
 - The implicit associations we hold do not necessarily align with our declared beliefs or even reflect stances we would explicitly endorse.
 - The good news is that implicit biases are **malleable**. Our brains are incredibly complex, and the implicit associations that we have formed can be gradually unlearned through a variety of de-biasing techniques.
 - While many of these techniques have thus far primarily been tested in a research lab, the following have been shown to be effective at reducing implicit biases:
 - Education
 - Learning about our implicit biases—just knowing we have them can make us more likely to address them.
 - Taking the Harvard Implicit Association Test to learn about our implicit biases (see optional activity that follows).
 - Exposure
 - Individuation (Building relationships with people in a group against whom we have internal biases)
 - Stereotype Replacement
 - Some de-biasing research focuses on interventions that “counter stereotypes and train individuals to develop new associations.” For example, “By juxtaposing ordinary people in counter-stereotypic associations such as depicting young White and Black males in scenes that included a church and a graffiti-strewn street corner, researchers found that the context condition affected participants’ racial attitudes on a subsequent sequential priming task.”¹¹

¹¹ CHERYL STAATS, OHIO STATE UNIV., STATE OF THE SCIENCE: IMPLICIT BIAS REVIEW 2013, at 54 (2013) (citing Joshua Correll et al., *The Police Officer's Dilemma: Using Ethnicity to Disambiguate Potentially Threatening Individuals*, 83 J. PERSONALITY & SOC. PSYCHOL. 1314 (2002)), http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/docs/SOTS-Implicit_Bias.pdf.

- This same research also found that using mental imagery to replace stereotypes was effective in targeting gender stereotypes.¹²
- An example of stereotype replacement would be, if someone has an implicit bias against gay people, to conjure up an image of a gay friend whom they respect and care about or a gay celebrity they admire whenever any negative ideas or feelings toward gay people arise.
- Approach
 - Perspective Taking
 - Using the “My Child” Test—in any of your work, ask yourself if this would be ok if it were “my child.”
 - Increased Contact
 - Systemic
 - Using checklists and data to ensure that all decisions are based on the same objective considerations rather than letting unconscious bias sway us.



OPTIONAL
TOOL

Harvard Implicit Bias Test

If participants have time and access to a computer with Internet, consider having them complete the Project Implicit bias test on sexuality, silently and on their own.

- This is a fast-paced word association test that measures the ability of people to distinguish words and symbols representing gay and straight people and whether the brain has an automatic preference for one over the other.
- Trainers may want to encourage people to take this test on their own at home, as it is time consuming and requires a computer; however, it is one of the best ways to learn about our own implicit biases and often has surprising results.
- The test is available at: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/selectatest.html>.
 - If the link does not take participants directly to the tests, they may either register or login as a guest at: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>.
 - They will have to click “I wish to proceed” after reading the disclaimer.
 - They will then be taken to a list of all of the different Implicit Association Tests (IAT), where they should select the “Sexuality IAT.”

After discussing the different types of biases, ask the group:

- What are some possible outcomes of SOGIE-based bias? Write the answers down so they are visible to everyone.

Use these examples if the group does not come up with them on their own:

- teasing
- bullying
- physical and emotional violence
- shaming
- getting kicked out of the house
- being ostracized by family

¹² *Id.*

ACTIVITY: VIDEO – DIGITAL STORY, “UNWRITTEN,” BY FABIAN

The Trainer should show The Equity Project’s Digital Story, “Unwritten,” by Fabian: available on The Equity Project YouTube Channel, accessible via www.equityproject.org.

- Introduce the video by explaining that we always want to include young people’s voices in our trainings, and one way to do that is to include a film made by young people about their experiences.

After watching the video:

- Ask participants to discuss their reactions to Fabian’s story. How did coming out to his foster parents affect his life?
- Ask participants if they think there was a correlation between the rejection of him by his foster family and his interaction with the juvenile justice system.

IV. Intersectionality Theory (15 minutes)



In all trainings, but particularly when discussing this section, trainers must assume a posture of cultural humility when training populations whose race, ethnicity, or culture they do not share. This means that the trainer should recognize and affirm participants’ experiences that may differ from those of the trainer.



Ask participants if anyone knows what the word “intersectionality” means. After a discussion, provide a working definition.

Intersectionality: the study of the intersection of different forms of discrimination or oppression.

Explain some of the key components of intersectionality theory:

- People may be subjected to multiple forms of discrimination on the basis of distinct aspects of their identity.
- Discrete forms of prejudice—such as homophobia, transphobia, sexism, classism, and racism—do not act independently.
- Different forms of bigotry interact and are shaped by one another, creating unique and magnified manifestations of disadvantage.

Ask the participants to suggest different aspects of identity, in addition to SOGIE, that may subject youth to discrimination. Ask a volunteer to record them on a white board or flipchart. Supplement the list with some of the following if they are not raised by the participants:

- race
- socioeconomic status
- physical ability or appearance
- cognitive or learning disabilities
- religion
- nationality
- immigration status
- language

Ask for examples of intersecting bias from participants, and then provide some additional examples, such as:

- African-American boys with disabilities face the highest probability of suspension or expulsion under “zero tolerance” school discipline policies. The interaction of these three aspects of identity—gender, race, and disability—uniquely imperil this specific group of students.¹³
- Low-income women of color who defend themselves against intimate partner violence are less likely to receive protection from law enforcement and more likely to be criminally prosecuted. Again: gender, race, and class interact and uniquely jeopardize women who share these characteristics.
- LGBT youth of color experience police profiling in both similar and different ways as other youth of color. As one young person in New York City described it: “Most of the time, my experiences of ‘stop and frisk’ look like those of countless other Latin@ youth in this city, especially when I am dressed in a way perceived to be ‘hood’ by the police. We know from the statistics that discriminatory policing practices target Brown and Black bodies, and disproportionately affect young people aged 14-21. But other times, when I am dressed in a different way, when an officer perceives me to be gay or gender nonconforming, my experiences look different. The policing of Brown and Black people begins with the color of our skin, our race, our ethnicity, and our youth, but it does not end there.”¹⁴



Remind participants that, while this lesson focuses on anti-LGBT bias, SOGIE is only one aspect of a young person’s identity. The data demonstrate that the vast majority of LGBT youth in the juvenile justice system, like their heterosexual and cisgender peers, are youth of color from low-income communities. Research shows that youth in the juvenile justice system also suffer from high rates of disabilities and behavioral health disparities. Thus, LGBT youth in the system regularly navigate multiple marginalized identities.

Why is understanding intersectionality important?

- To understand the lived experience of young people who embody multiple oppressed identities
 - It is critical for professionals charged with assessing and guiding young people in the juvenile justice system to understand a youth’s lived experience. Although we may examine different types of prejudice independently, youth do not experience them independently. A transgender, undocumented Latina does not experience these aspects of her life separately. She is all of these things all of the time and her experience may be powerfully shaped by the intersection of different forms and expressions of bias.
- To ensure that services and interventions do not sacrifice one aspect of a young person’s life in service of another
 - It is important to ensure that providers serving youth are both committed and competent to affirm the youth’s SOGIE. The same service provider, however, must also be committed and competent to affirm *ALL* aspects of a young person’s identity. Assume that your jurisdiction needs to find drug treatment for a Native American gay boy. Juvenile justice professionals must be mindful of his race and his SOGIE, as well as any other aspects of his identity, when assessing drug treatment options. Professionals who send this young man to a drug treatment provider with no experience or awareness of tribal culture or customs set this boy up for failure and convey disregard of his culture.

¹³ See, e.g. *Civil Rights Data Collection, Data Snapshot: School Discipline*, U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, Issue Brief No. 1, March 2014, available at: <http://ocrdata.ed.gov/Downloads/CRDC-School-Discipline-Snapshot.pdf>.

¹⁴ CATHERINE HANSENS ET AL., *A ROADMAP FOR CHANGE: FEDERAL POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADDRESSING THE CRIMINALIZATION OF LGBT PEOPLE AND PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV* (2014), https://web.law.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/microsites/gender-sexuality/files/roadmap_for_change_full_report.pdf.



This discussion may elicit frustration from participants, given the dearth of drug treatment resources. The trainer should acknowledge that all stakeholders often work with limited resources; however, it is still important to understand the core identities and needs of each young person, and to make every effort to locate appropriate, holistic services. Even having the conversation with potential providers raises awareness, and may lead to efforts to change the landscape by recruiting new providers or increasing the competency of existing providers.

- To increase self-awareness and systemic equity
 - Because bias often arises on an implicit or unconscious level, it is critical to continually examine our own assumptions and ideas. Intersectional theory provides a framework for this examination, and encourages us to recognize and affirm each of the multiple identities that make up the young people with whom we work. Juvenile justice professionals can also apply this lens to identify bias that exists at a systemic level, toward the goal of leveling the playing field and achieving equity on behalf of all youth in the system.

V. Distinguishing between Reacting to Behavior and Reacting to Identity (45 minutes)

ACTIVITY: HYPOTHETICAL SCENARIOS

Separate participants into groups of three or four. Give each group one scenario. Have the groups answer the questions posed at the end of each scenario and discuss with each other.



Depending on the audience, the trainer may want to revise the scenarios or create his or her own that are more relevant to that audience. Alternatively, it may be instructive to “walk in someone else’s shoes” (e.g., for defense attorneys to have to imagine that they are detention staff in a specific scenario).

Scenarios:

- A. A 16-year-old transgender young woman named Rose enters the girls’ juvenile detention center. Facility staff proceed to repeatedly call this young person by the name on her birth certificate, Robert, and not Rose. They also refer to Rose as “him” when addressing her. She tries to correct them, but they continue to call her Robert and say that they only use whatever name is written on their paperwork. How would you handle this situation if you were the supervisor, and Rose came to you with this complaint? How would you handle this if you were Rose’s defense attorney? How would you react as the judge in Rose’s status hearing?
- B. You are line staff at the detention facility when you see two 15-year-old girls kissing in the corner during your shift. You remind them that there is no physical contact in the hall. What do you think the consequences for this should be?
- C. Billy, a 17-year-old, self-identified gay male in a detention facility has been picked on since he arrived two weeks ago. It started with name-calling, but it has escalated. He was beaten by another youth yesterday, but neither Billy nor any of the other boys will disclose who assaulted him. Detention staff fear that Billy will get hurt if he is not kept away from some of the other boys, and so he is put in isolation. What is wrong with this? How might you respond to this situation? What can different stakeholders do in this situation?

ACTIVITY: HYPOTHETICAL SCENARIOS (CONT.)

After the scenarios, bring participants back together and ask the following questions:

- Have you ever had these scenarios come up in the workplace?
- Are there already specific procedures or policies to address the needs of LGBT youth in your jurisdiction's juvenile justice system? If so, what are they?

ACTIVITY: AGENCY ATTITUDE ASSESSMENT¹⁵

Write the following on a white board or flipchart, or project the words on a screen:

INTOLERANCE

INDIFFERENCE

TOLERANCE

ACCEPTANCE

AFFIRMATION

ADVOCACY

Explain that this scale is to explore our own attitudes and the “attitude” of the agencies or organizations in which we work. Present the range from intolerance to advocacy, and ask participants to provide an example of each. How does any agency communicate its “attitude” on these issues?

Possible examples:

- **Intolerance:** There is no such thing as a gay or transgender youth.
- **Indifference:** We don't have any LGBT youth, or, it's none of our business.
- **Tolerance:** It's OK that we have LGBT youth here, but we don't want to do anything that will encourage them.
- **Acceptance:** We want to support our LGBT youth, but we don't have any appropriate services or placements.
- **Affirmation:** We know that LGBT youth need our support to be healthy and successful, so we provide agency-wide training and recruit LGBT-affirming providers and placement resources.
- **Advocacy:** We support our LGBT youth at all stages of their involvement with our agency and ensure that all staff and peers treat LGBT youth respectfully.

¹⁵ This activity is adapted from *Creating Inclusive Services for LGBT Youth in Out of Home Care*, prepared by the Out of Home Youth Advocacy Council in March 2007. The report is available at http://www.nclrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/Preface_OHYAC_training_FINAL.pdf.

After participants have provided examples, ask them to reflect silently on where they believe their own agency or organization falls on this continuum. Note that the agency may be at different places on different issues.

- Encourage participants to take an historical perspective.
- Ask participants to reflect on the questions: What is the organization doing that is working? What does it still need to do?
- Ask the question of who sets the agency culture—is it the supervisor? The judge? The legislature? The community?
- Encourage participants to begin thinking about ways that they and their agency can set goals to move up to the next level on the scale.

VI. Responding to Bias (15 minutes)



Facilitate a discussion with the participants about what one can do under each heading. The discussion points that follow may help the trainer guide the conversation and provide points that the trainer should make if they are not suggested by participants.

A. Checking Internal Biases

- Try to assess if and when you feel uncomfortable—if we are not aware that we are avoiding the topic or a situation, we cannot address it.
- Understand that personal views (political, religious, moral, etc.) are just that—personal. When they conflict with providing a safe environment that is responsive to a youth's physical, psychological, and legal needs, personal views must yield to professional obligations.
 - Creating a safe and affirming environment for youth is not a reflection of our personal or religious feelings—it is a professional obligation.
- If we recognize that we need greater sensitivity or assistance dealing with our own feelings regarding SOGIE we should seek out a trusted colleague, superiors, or a SOGIE-competent organization that can assist.
- Ask for more professional training if there is a lack of SOGIE-competence in a workplace.

B. Responding to Bias by Others, Including Peers and Adults

When adults in the system—colleagues or other stakeholders—demonstrate bias or prejudice against LGBT youth, youth will notice how other adults respond. This can affect the adult's relationship with youth, particularly when the adult is charged with protecting the young person (e.g., defender, judge, probation worker, etc.). The following are some tips on responding when others demonstrate bias.

10 Ways to Challenge SOGIE-Based Bias

1. **DON'T LAUGH.** Let others know that jokes and comments based on race, religion, sexual orientation, gender, ethnicity, etc., are not funny.
2. **SPEAK UP.** In a professional and appropriate way, let those who behave disrespectfully know that you don't appreciate it.
3. **CHALLENGE BYSTANDERS.** In a professional and appropriate way, challenge others who are present when someone exhibits bias to respond.
4. **DO NOT 'GET EVEN'.** Challenging bias does not require mean, belittling, or disrespectful behavior toward the person who exhibits the bias. The best way to insist on appropriate behavior in other stakeholders is to model good behavior while challenging the inappropriate behavior.
5. **BE SUPPORTIVE.** Show kindness and support to the targets of negative anti-LGBT behavior. This includes preserving the youth's dignity and desire not to be "outed" (if that is a concern for the youth), and includes circumstances in which the bias was not overtly directed at a particular youth.
6. **INVOLVE THOSE WHO CAN HELP.** When appropriate, contact the supervisor of the person who makes biased comments, or file an official complaint. Consider identifying LGBT-friendly support systems to help the youth, if appropriate.



It may be inappropriate, and even an ethical violation in some professional capacities, to escalate a situation if the youth who was the target of the bias does not want you to. Consider how acting against the youth's wishes in this regard might compound the negative effects of the bias if the youth believes reporting the issue will make it worse. Consider also how youth may not want others to be aware of their sexual orientation or gender identity, so more formal action may actually create greater harm.

7. **BE NONJUDGMENTAL.** Demonstrate to others that you are willing to listen and talk with an open mind, even when you disagree.
8. **BE INCLUSIVE.** Ensure that your language and behavior are respectful to all people.
9. **FORMALLY OBJECT.** If you become aware of decisions or recommendations that unfairly pathologize or criminalize youth based solely on SOGIE, use whatever means are available to you to register a formal, written objection.¹⁶
10. **EDUCATE YOURSELVES AND OTHERS.** Be prepared with facts. When someone's words or deed exhibit bias, refer to research, policies, ethical codes, or other credible sources to support your position and educate others.

VII. Wrap-Up (10 minutes)

The trainer should pass out a copy of the 10 Ways to Challenge SOGIE-based Bias¹⁷ handout for participants to take with them. The trainer should answer any lingering questions and provide any additional relevant resources.

¹⁶ See GAY, LESBIAN & STRAIGHT EDU. NETWORK, THINKB4YOU SPEAK: EDUCATOR'S GUIDE 29 (2008), <http://www.thinkb4youspeak.com/foreducators/glsen-educatorsguide.pdf>.

¹⁷ *Id.*

ACTIVITY: HEAD HEART STEP

On a flipchart or white board, draw a large circle (head), a large heart below the circle, and two legs with feet, below the heart.

- Ask participants to think about one fact they learned. Write responses for people who wish to share their facts in the circle representing a head.
- Ask participants to think about one value or guiding principle they heard that feels important when it comes to LGBT youth. Write responses for people who wish to share their values/principles in the heart.
- Ask participants to share one manageable and concrete action step they will take in their jurisdiction after this training. Write responses for people who wish to share their steps in the legs.