



Supporting America's LGBTQ+ Youth: Approaches, Strategies and Opportunities

Wednesday, September 21, 2022 | 2:00 - 3:30 p.m. ET

Learn More and Register

Join this SAMHSA-supported webinar sponsored by the National Federation of Families (NFF) and the National Family Support Technical Assistance Center (NFSTAC). This event will include a panel discussion with expert youth, caregivers and subject matter experts who will share insights and opportunities about how to support LGBTQ+ youth and their families.

Learning Objectives

- Understand how research and clinical expertise inform approaches with LGBTQ+ youth and how they impact health and well-being
- Learn practical strategies to help LGBTQ+ youth feel supported and valued by their families
- Gain insight on opportunities to strengthen support for LGBTQ+ youth within school settings

Meet the Presenters

Rowan Willis-Powell

Rowan Willis-Powell is a young queer woman who is a passionate and invested advocate for youth with service system involvement, with special interests in young adult peers, the LGBTQ community, and ensuring that everyone receives appropriate and individualized care when they are experiencing suicidal ideation. In her work, Rowan mentors young adults with lived experience in behavioral health service settings and connects them to peer support and leadership opportunities on community, state, and national levels. She strives to create an environment in which young adults are partners in change for policy affecting service systems. Rowan is a member of Maryland's first Commission on LGBTQ Affairs, the facilitator and creator of numerous workshops, and the president of the Youth Move National Board of Directors.



Jan Willis, LCSW-C, LAc

Jan lives on a small farm on the Eastern Shore of Maryland with her husband and a menagerie of animals. She has an amazing 27-year-old daughter, Rowan Willis-Powell, who identifies as queer.

Professionally, Jan is a Clinical Social Worker and Acupuncturist. She has fashioned a fulfilling career doing consulting work with Local Management Boards addressing systems of care issues and running her acupuncture practice, Healing Elements, in Easton, MD.



Jan is a cisgender, heterosexual female that prefers the pronouns she/her. She is an avid birder with a life list of over 1,650 bird species.

Judith Glassgold, PsyD

Judith Glassgold has over 30 years of experience as a clinical psychologist and consultant on LGBTQ+ mental health. She is a lecturer at Rutgers University Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology. She served as a subject matter expert to the federal government and national civil rights organizations and led scientific association and federal reports on appropriate therapeutic efforts with LGBTQ+ children, adolescents, and individuals. Previously, she served as director of Professional Affairs at the New Jersey Psychological Association, research fellow at the Center for Health and Wellbeing at Princeton University, associate director for Public Interest at the American Psychologic Association, and health policy advisor in Congress. Dr. Glassgold has published over 60 articles and chapters and presenter extensively on LGBTQ+ mental health. She holds a doctorate in clinical psychology from Rutgers University and a Bachelor of Arts with honors in government from Harvard-Radcliffe College.



Caitlin Ryan, PhD

Caitlin Ryan is a clinical social worker, educator, and researcher who has worked on LGBTQ+ health and mental health for 45 years, shaping policy and practice for LGBTQ+ and gender diverse children and youth. Dr. Ryan directs the Family Acceptance Project (FAP) at San Francisco State University - a research, education, intervention, and policy project helping ethnically, racially, and religiously diverse families to support their LGBTQ+ children in the context of the family's cultures and faith traditions. Dr. Ryan and her team conducted the first research on LGBTQ+ youth and families. They developed the first evidence-based family support model to help families and caregivers prevent rejection and health risks and increase family acceptance to promote well-being for LGBTQ+ children and youth. She has developed a series of multilingual family education and assessment resources and trains on FAP's family support model across the United States and in other countries. Dr. Ryan works with organizations, faith communities, families, and providers to integrate FAP's family-based support approach to build health futures for LGBTQ+ children, youth, young adults across disciplines, services, and systems of care.



Russ Toomey, PhD

Russ Toomey is the program chair and professor of Family Studies and Human development at the university of Arizona. He conducts research on the processes by which sexual and gender minority youth thrive and are resilient despite the oppressive barriers and challenges they encounter in society. His research identifies both the individual-level mechanics (e.g., coping, activism) and systems-level policies (e.g., inclusive school policies) that reduce the impacts of discrimination and contribute to optimal health, well-being, and educational outcomes. At the University of Arizona, he teaches undergraduate courses on adolescent development, human sexuality, and advanced graduate-level applied statistics. He serves on the Executive Council for the Society for Research on Adolescence and the Editorial Board for the Journal of Youth and Adolescence.



Brian Altman, JD (Moderator)

Brian Altman is an attorney with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). He previously served as deputy director at the Administration for Community Living's Administration of Aging, and prior to that as director of federal and political affairs at the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. His roles at SAMHSA are acting director of the National Mental Health Substance Use Policy Laboratory (NMHSUPL) and senior advisor on LGBTQ+ issues. From 2011-2019, Brian served at various times as SAMHSA's director of the Division of Policy Innovation and director of Legislative and Regulatory Affairs. Before joining SAMHSA, Brian worked on behalf of a broad range of health care entities. He also served as director of Public Policy and Program Development at the Suicide Prevention Action Network USA (SPAN USA). Before joining SPAN USA, he advocated on behalf of licensed professional counselors for the American Counseling Association.



This webinar is free and open to all families who are impacted by mental health and/or substance use challenges and to the workforce, organizations and communities that support them.

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