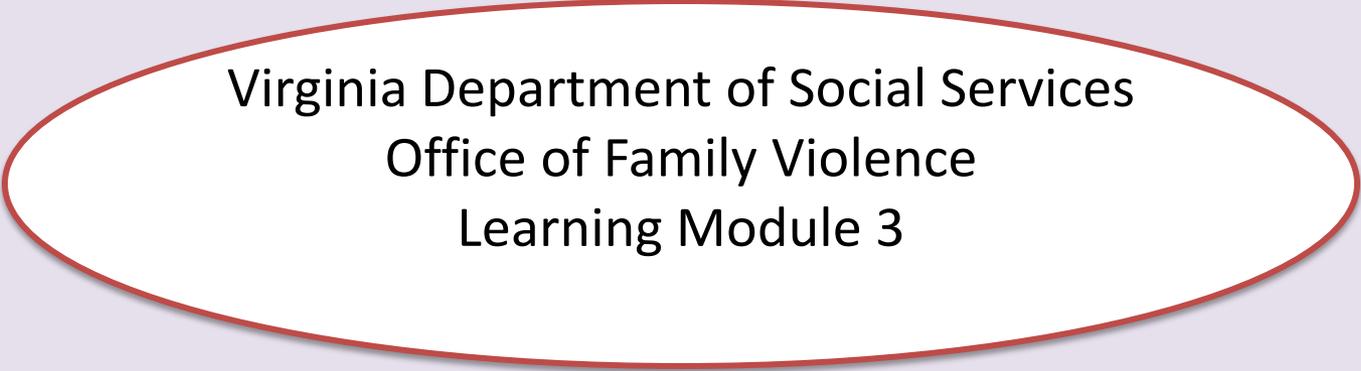




Preventing and Responding to Harassment, Bullying & Discrimination in Domestic Violence Services



Virginia Department of Social Services
Office of Family Violence
Learning Module 3

Prevention and Response

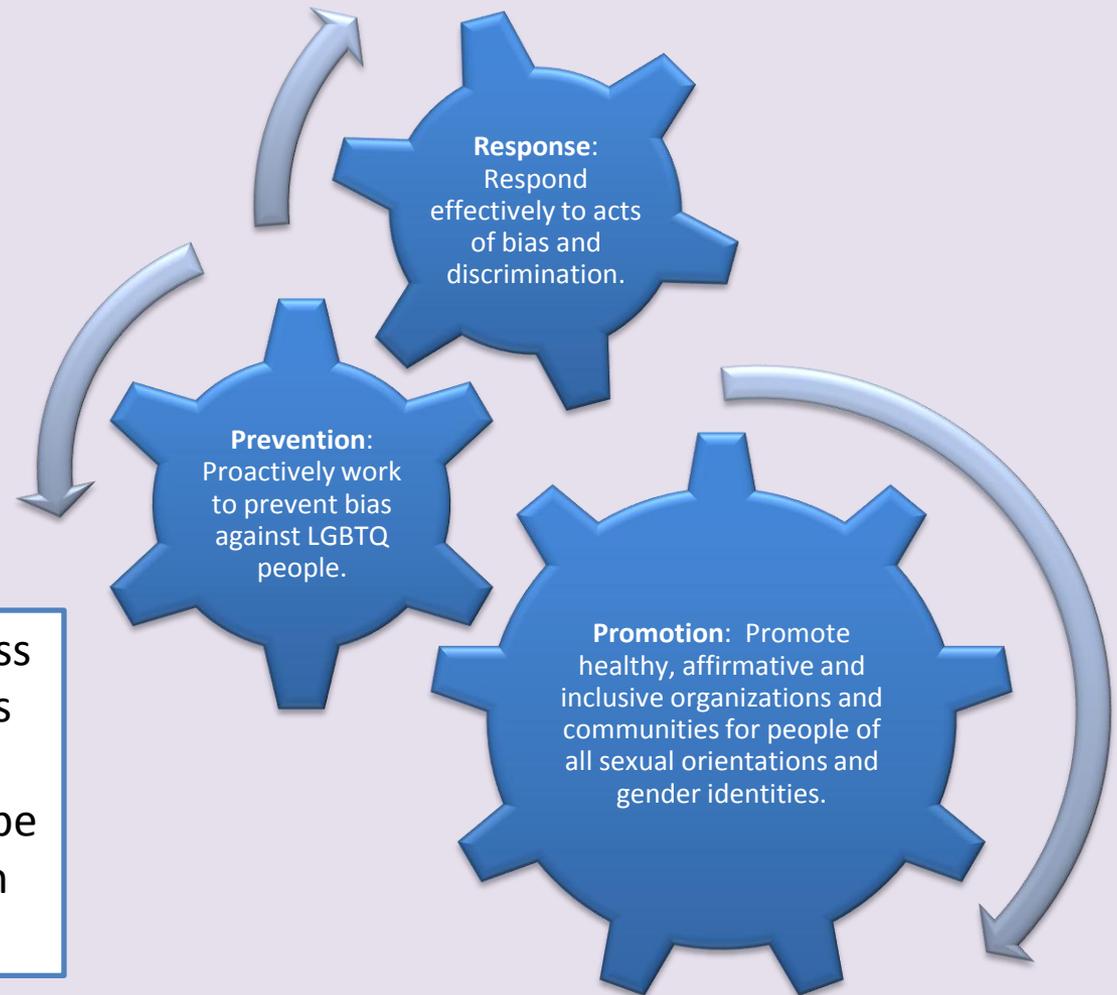
- This is the 3rd and last learning module in the series addressing the training component required through the VAWA inclusion for LGBTQ individuals.
- This module will discuss ways to prevent discrimination, bullying and harassment against LGBTQ persons accessing domestic violence services as well as ways to respond if it does occur.
- At the end of the last module, we asked program staff for ways they already confront discrimination, harassment and bullying, as well as how to prevent it and received some great responses. Throughout this module, we will have some of those responses in blue boxes.

Learning Module 3

- The overall climate of a program can facilitate an inclusive environment in which LGBTQ individuals feel safe and respected.
- As discussed in the previous module, there are a number of ways programs can create this type of environment including adoption of a non-discrimination policy, using inclusive language, having LGBTQ specific written materials, visual cues and LGBTQ-specific services.
- Promoting an affirmative, inclusive environment often has the positive effect of preventing bullying, harassment and discrimination within domestic violence programs.

“I have the "All Are Welcome" poster in my office and it really does strike up conversations. We have implemented a non-discrimination/anti-harassment policy as well. We also have a host of videos in our collection to use to educate the community.”

Promotion, prevention and response within domestic violence programs



A comprehensive way to address prevention and response efforts is to view them as a three-pronged approach that should be implemented simultaneously, in an ongoing basis.

Responding to discrimination, bullying and harassment

- Organizational culture is largely determined by what is and isn't allowed to occur.
- Responding to discrimination, bullying and harassment is critical to creating an inclusive environment.
- If these behaviors are not addressed when witnessed, whether from other staff, volunteers or clients, then homophobia and bias will prevail.
- *Everyone has a role to play in responding to discrimination and bias.*

“All staff try to address any and all perceived bullying at the moment it occurs. If needed, we will have an honest and confidential conversation with the client about voice, tone, words, etc and how other survivors may feel re-traumatized.”

The Seven Steps to Responding to Everyday Bias

The following model is based on “*Six Steps for Speaking Up Against Everyday Bigotry*” from the Southern Poverty Law Center’s “Teaching Tolerance” project (with a bonus step) and can be used for bias against LGBTQ individuals but also bias against people of color, different religions, or nationalities. The steps include:

1. Be ready

2. Identify behavior

3. Offer support to anyone harmed.

4. Set limits

5. Appeal to shared values.

6. Find an ally, be an ally.

7. Follow through.

1. Be Ready

- Have something in mind to say before an incident happens.
- Open-ended questions are often a good response: *“Why did you say that?” “How did you develop that belief?”*
- Anticipate and rehearse. Practice possible responses in front of a mirror.
- Figure out what works for you, what feels most comfortable.
- Become confident in your responses.



Step 2: Identify the behavior

- Sometimes, pointing out the behavior candidly helps someone to hear what they're really saying. The person may not realize the effect of their words or behavior.
- People need to understand specifically what behavior is of concern and know that you are not judging them or their beliefs.
- Think about the impact of not saying anything in the moment. *How will others interpret this?*
- Ask clarifying questions: *"Why do you feel that way?" Be curious and open to what they are trying to say.*
- Articulate your view and your organization's stance.
- Replace misinformation with accurate, more complete information.

Step 2: Identify the behavior

- Name the bias: *“That was a stereotype” “That is a put-down.” “You may not have meant to hurt anyone, but that was a derogatory gesture.”*
- Sometimes it’s more appropriate to educate on the spot; other times it’s better to educate in private.
- Avoid labeling, name-calling, or the use of loaded terms (e.g., calling someone a homophobe or a bigot is not helpful).
- Name and acknowledge areas of disagreement.
- Acknowledge the person. Let them know you hear and respect them, their opinions and feelings. You can acknowledge and respect them without agreeing.
- *Notice how you are feeling. Be honest and authentic.*



3. Offer Support to Anyone Who May Have Been Harmed

- Assess who may have been harmed by the behavior.
- Check in with them to determine what impact the incident had and offer support.
- Reiterate the organization's policies and agreements and assure the person that the organization is committed to preventing further bias incidents from occurring.



4. Appeal to Shared Values and Policies

- Call upon existing policies and group agreements (or establish new ones) to address bias language and behavior.
- If the person is someone you have a relationship with, appeal to shared values and call on their higher principles (e.g., fairness, inclusion, compassion, respect, tolerance, etc.)



5. Set Limits

- You cannot control another person and you can not change a person's belief's or attitudes. But you can set limits on their behavior (e.g., "*That behavior is not allowed in this support group.*")
- Be clear about the consequences and follow through.
- Even if attitudes don't change, by limiting expressions of bias, you are limiting its harmful influence.
- Fewer people will hear it or experience it.

6. Find an Ally, Be an Ally

- Seek out like-minded people and ask them to support you.
- Lead by example and inspire others to do the same.

“Be the change that you wish to see in the world.”

- Gandhi

7. Follow Through

- If there were other people present during an incident and you didn't respond in the moment, it may be important to go back to the other people who were present, check in with them, offer any support if needed, and reaffirm policies and agreements.
- *Change happens slowly. People make small steps, typically, not large ones.*
- Stay prepared, and keep speaking up!!



Prevention

- Prevention and education efforts should be focused on improving understanding and encouraging respectful behavior rather than trying to change any particular belief system.
- One key to prevention is to have an understanding of the role power, privilege and oppression play in marginalization of LGBTQ individuals.
- The next few slides will discuss power, privilege and oppression as well as the impact on LGBTQ individuals experiencing intimate partner violence.



“The best way to prevent bullying and harassment is to stress the importance of safety for our clients and explain the importance of treating everyone with respect and dignity.”

Power, Privilege and Oppression

- **Power:** The ability to exercise control. Having access to systems and resources as legitimated by individuals and societal institutions.
- **Privilege:** An unearned advantage that works to systemically grants power to certain groups over others. Privilege assigns dominance along lines of identity. The marginalized group is usually aware of privilege while the dominant group remains oblivious.
- **Oppression:** A systematic social phenomenon that involves domination, institutional control, and imposing one group's ideology and culture on the marginalized or oppressed group.

“Attempting to work on domestic violence without working on other oppressions is like attempting to move a rug one is standing on.” *Mary Allen, National Resource Center on Domestic Violence, 2007*

Addressing Oppression

- Heterosexism, the belief that heterosexuality and heterosexual relationships are the norm, is an example of oppression against LGBTQ individuals that can occur within domestic violence organizations. For instance, assuming a woman who enters shelter is straight or assuming a woman who is lesbian will not qualify for a protective order.
- Invisibility is another way LGBTQ individuals are marginalized and can occur within domestic violence programs that do not have imagery and materials that are LGBTQ-specific. It also occurs on a daily basis in society at large because mainstream media rarely include LGBTQ stories.
- Homophobia, biphobia and transphobia refer to fears of love/attraction to someone of the same sex, for both sexes or of people who transgress social expectations for gender. Homophobia, biphobia and transphobia are a few of the many ways that people are oppressed on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity and expression.

Violence and Oppression

- *Homophobia, biphobia and transphobia have an enormous impact on LGBTQ individuals.*
- In A Report from the National Coalition of Anti-violence Programs (2012):
 - Gay men were 3.04 times more likely to report incidents of hate violence to the police as compared to survivors and victims who were not gay men.
 - Transgender women were 4.4 times more likely to face police violence as compared to survivors and victims who were not transgender women.
 - 3.7% of LGBTQ survivors sought access to domestic violence shelters. Of those who sought shelter, 14.3% were denied access.
- According to the National Transgender Discrimination Survey (2011):
 - Trans people have also experienced violence at the hands of health care professionals with 19% refused medical care.
 - A staggering 41% of respondents reported attempting suicide compared to 1.6% of the general population, with rates rising for those who lost a job due to bias (55%), were harassed/bullied in school (51%), had low household income, or were the victim of physical assault (61%) or sexual assault (64%).
- One expert, Kay Brown from the Harvey Milk Institute, conducted a study that estimates transgender individuals living in the US have one in 12 chance of being murdered. In contrast, the national average is 1 in 18,000 chance of being murdered. (*Uniform Crime Reports, 2000*).

Violence and Oppression

- *For LGBTQ individuals who have other marginalized identities, such as being a person of color or also having a disability, the barriers and challenges become even greater:*
- LGBTQ youth, people of color, gay men and transgender women were more likely to suffer injuries, require medical attention, experience harassment or face anti-LGBTQ bias as a result of IPV.
- LGBTQ youth and young adults were more likely to experience bias-related IPV tactics as compared with non-youth.
- Latin@ individuals were twice as likely (as non-Latin@ LGBTQ individuals) to experience threats/intimidation within IPV and three times as likely when identified as Latin@ transgender.
- Transgender people of color were:
 - 2.59 times as likely to experience police violence compared to white cisgender (person whose self-perception of gender matches sex assigned at birth) survivors and victims.
 - 2.37 times as likely to experience discrimination compared to white cisgender survivors and victims.
- LGBTQ people of color were:
 - 1.82 times as likely to experience physical violence than white LGBTQ survivors and victims.
 - 1.70 times as likely to experience discrimination than white LGBTQ survivors and victims

(NCAVP, 2012 Report)

Impact of Oppression

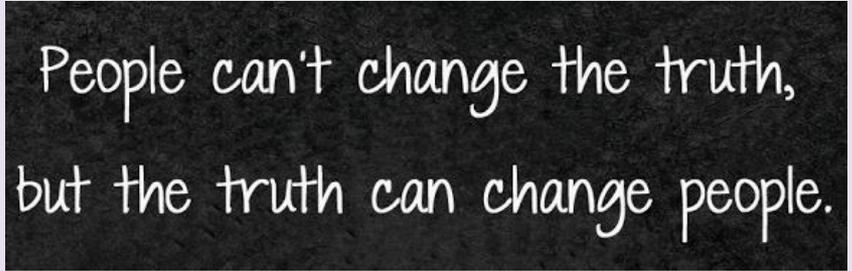
- Coping with social stigma, homophobia and discrimination can cause chronic stress for LGBTQ individuals. Some examples of this stress include:
 - Lack of support and helping resources , for instance dealing with providers that are not familiar with LGBTQ issues or who may be biased.
 - Distress from internalized homophobia which can include self-blame for abuse and shame
 - Stress from self-concealment of sexual orientation
 - Stress from altering behavior for instance pretending as though a relationship is not same-sex
 - Coming out stress that includes not knowing how others will react, including the very real potential for violence.
 - Harmful coping behaviors such as drug and alcohol use/ abuse

“We consciously use terms like partner rather than husband/wife/girlfriend/boyfriend in counseling sessions and support groups.”

Myths and Facts

Efforts to prevent discrimination, bullying, stereotyping and harassment include the need to address or challenge myths and inaccuracies about LGBTQ relationships, LGBTQ partner abuse and services for LGBTQ individuals. If these myths are not challenged, and dispelled, we run the risk of alienating LGBTQ survivors, mistaking an abuser for a survivor, minimizing the impact of intimate partner violence or the difficulties LGBTQ individuals have in accessing services.

The next few slides will discuss some common myths that can contribute to discrimination, harassment and bullying against LGBTQ individuals.



People can't change the truth,
but the truth can change people.

Abuse is never mutual.

- Abuse between LGBTQ individuals is not a matter of a “cat fight” or “boys being boys”. Abuse is one person exerting power and control over another person so, by definition, both partners cannot have power and control over the relationship.
- As with heterosexual couples, it can sometimes be difficult initially to tell who is the abusive partner. However, examining the context, intent and effect of the behaviors can provide the answer. Asking the following questions can help:
 - *What is the context in which the behavior occurred?*
 - *Is the intent of the behavior to control the partner or resist abuse?*
 - *What is the effect of the behavior?*

Abuse is not about who is stronger or more masculine.

- The abuser is not always the person who appears more masculine. Nor are they the person who is “butch” or the “man” in the relationships.
- The abuser is the person who uses tactics to gain power and control over another person in a relationship.
- *Anyone, regardless of gender, sex, size, or appearance can be an abuser.*

This only affects a very small percentage of our population.

- It is difficult to know the percentage of the population identify as LGBTQ.
- Various surveys, such as the *Williams Institute at the UCLA School of Law* or the *2012 Gallup Poll* estimate that about 3.4 to 3.8% of adults identify as LGBT, which is about 9-10 million Americans.
- Additionally, 8.2% of Americans have reported same-sex sexual behaviors and 11% acknowledge at least some same-sex attraction.
- These are significant numbers; however they are most likely a conservative estimate because the surveys do not include other identities such as queer or intersex. Also, many individuals are not forthcoming in their answer the survey or decline to answer.
- They do give us a rough idea that somewhere between **1 in 10 and 1 in 20** people identify as LGBT or are not otherwise strictly heterosexual.
- *Considering the rate of intimate partner violence is approximately the same, if not higher, for LGBTQ individuals and that they face many additional barriers, the need to focus on improving services for this population is great.*

We already serve everyone in our community equally.

- A number of programs have already adopted non-discrimination policy, worked on increasing access and/or developed a grievance process.
- *However, the work to fully serve ALL victims of domestic violence is never done.*
- Outreach to LGBTQ groups and individuals, quality assurance monitoring of services provided, as well as policy review, should all be considered ongoing activities.
- Additionally some have described their program as treating “all clients the same” when the goal should be for equitable treatment, rather than equal treatment, as these clients are individuals with unique circumstances.



Promotion

- Finally, the best way to prevent bullying, discrimination and harassment against anyone receiving domestic violence services is promotion of a health environment.
- Promoting an affirmative, inclusive environment means supporting a culture of respect for *everyone*.
- While embracing diversity is part of a creating an affirmative and inclusive environment, it goes beyond to integrating diverse people and a culture of respect.
- An inclusive environment is characterized by all staff and clients feeling as if they belong and are valued.
- An inclusive environment is created not only by what is said, but also by our actions.
- *Promoting an affirmative environment means recognizing, appreciating people that are different than ourselves but also committing to life-long learning on inclusion so ALL clients can access and benefit from services.*



Promotion

- An affirmative practice for LGBTQ individuals **“affirms a lesbian, gay or bisexual identity as an equally positive human experience and expression as heterosexual identity.”**
(Crisp, 2006. *The gay affirmative practice scale: A new measure for assessing cultural competence with gay and lesbian clients.*)
- The bottom line is that everyone has a role to play in creating an affirmative environment for domestic violence survivors and there are MANY ways this can be done.

**“BE YOURSELF; EVERYONE
ELSE IS ALREADY TAKEN.”**

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101 things you can do.

We are all responsible...

for ending violence, bullying, and discrimination of all kinds. You can start today with these concrete suggestions.

#1 Embrace difference #2 Listen to others #3 Confront people who tell discriminatory jokes #4 Offer a shoulder #5 Speak up #6 Laugh together #7 See difference as an asset, not a deficit #8 Interact, even with conflicting views #9 Treat loved ones with respect #10 Treat everyone with respect #11 Give support #12 Commit random acts of kindness #13 Learn new things #14 Share tears #15 Open doors (literally and figuratively) #16 Allow young people to be who they are (not who you want them to be) #17 Learn to tolerate discomfort #18 Do the right thing, not the easy thing #19 Learn emotional regulation skills #20 Offer a hand #21 Read books #22 Accept help #23 Foster creativity #24 Be aware of intersecting "isms" #25 Welcome silence #26 Apologize if you've hurt someone's feelings #27 Attend workshops on anti-violence, bullying, harassment #28 Ask your library to carry LGBT books, DVDs and magazines #29 Reach out to others to join a community group you belong to #30 Learn conflict resolution skills #31 Pick up an LGBT newspaper (and read it!) #32 Write a letter to the editor #33 Volunteer #34 Broaden the inclusion policy of an organization you are part of #35 Attend your workplace's diversity group #36 Donate money to an organization providing direct services for LGB and/or transgender people #37 Chose love over violence #38 Go to a film on LGBT issues #39 Preach or speak at a local synagogue, church or mosque #40 March with PFLAG or another contingent of your LGBT pride parade #41 Vote #42 Believe in your own superpowers - compassion, love, kindness, resilience - and share them with others #43 Say "tell me more" (and then listen) #44 Become a big brother or mentor #45 Blog #46 Pursue restorative justice #47 Know what support services are available in your area - be able to share them with those who might need them #48 Take care of yourself #49 Have coffee with an LGBT friend, co-worker, student, young person #50 Dance together #51 Keep firearms and weapons locked up (or don't have them in your home/office at all) #52 Open your home (for a meal or housing or safe refuge) #53 Befriend a young LGBT person #54 Hug more #55 Get to know an LGBT elder #56 Be vocal about your pro-LGBT opinions/beliefs #57 Send supportive letters to LGBT youth groups - even if you don't know anyone #58 Take it seriously when someone talks about being depressed or suicidal #59 Proactively advocate for LGBT youth who are being bullied at school #60 Offer hope #61 Write your Congressperson to support the Safe Schools Improvement Act #62 Organize vigils and rallies #63 Share your experiences with discrimination to let others know they are not alone #64 Donate to organizations that make a difference #65 Don't give up (on yourself, LGBT individuals, our community) #66 Start a Gay Straight Alliance (or be an adult advocate/sponsor) #67 Stick your nose into other peoples' business (if you see abuse or bullying, take action) #68 Get political #69 Avoid epithets that stigmatize people living with depression or suicidal thoughts #70 Take 10 minutes every day to just listen (to yourself, to nature, to others, to silence) #71 Make love, not hate #72 Help others find what they are passionate about #73 Share your experiences about thriving after experiencing discrimination #74 Get involved -however you can #75 Advocate #76 Contribute a video to the It Gets Better Project (or to Make It Better) #77 Tell someone you appreciate them #78 Tell your Senator to pass ENDA (Employment Nondiscrimination Act) #79 Reach out #80 Reinforce an expanded definition of who makes up a family #81 Validate feelings and experiences #82 Tell people in your life that you love them #83 Welcome your family members, friends and lovers into your home and into your life #84 Develop a plan with a person to help them get to a safer place #85 Remind others that feelings change #86 Share your compassion #87 Talk about issues directly, even when it's tough #88 Stop the victim/perpetrator cycle #89 Accept other peoples' feelings as they are #90 Consider your beliefs about guns and gun laws (take action if necessary) #91 Report violence when you see it #92 Express your concern #93 Remind others that people can change #94 Take a stand #95 Send postcards #96 Create a village #97 Take photos of happy times together - bring them out to remember that life can be good #98 Show up #99 Create art or music together #100 Push for equality for ALL people #101 Believe

What can you do?



PO Box 1272
Milwaukee, WI 53201
www.forge-forward.org
414.559.2123

Conclusion

- This marks the end of the 3rd learning module.
- **Congratulations! You are almost there!**
- The next few slides feature scenarios that are also included in the final survey. They have been included in the module for your convenience if you would like to print them to spend some time writing/ reflecting on them or have a discussion at a staff meeting.
- *We hope these modules have been helpful and look forward to hearing about your efforts to increase access and promote inclusivity for LGBTQ individuals in your program!*

"I've learned that people will forget what you **said**, people will forget what you **did**, but people will never forget how you made them **feel**."

Maya Angelou



Scenario- addressing homophobia and heterosexism

- Beth, a client staying in shelter, did not feel safe being out for a variety of reasons including: overhearing children in shelter use terms such as “faggot” while adults stood by and said nothing; a conversation among clients, in which an advocate was present, discussing an out client who “looked like a man” and was “making passes” at other clients and the comments were not challenged; heterosexism by clients and staff that was left unaddressed; and people making assumptions she was straight.
- *What could have been done to help Beth be more comfortable being out and not feel so alienated from staff and other clients? What could staff have said when clients were complaining about the woman who “looked like a man?”*

Scenario- addressing transphobia

- A client, Janice, comes into the office to talk to her advocate about an out transgender woman named Laura. The advocate mentions that it seems like there is an issue between Janice and Laura. Janice says that she doesn't like "him" and that he looks like a man and it's confusing for her kids. The advocate asks why Janice feels like her kids are confused and she says because they keep calling him a "her" when she is really a man. When the advocate explains that Laura identifies as a woman and should be referred to as "her" rather than "him" Janice interrupts and says it's not normal and she doesn't want her kids exposed to that "freak."
- *What would you say next to Janice to help her better understand that she needs to be respectful of Laura even if she necessary to remain in the program.*

Scenario- co-workers comments

- A co-worker, Haley, talks about a client being gay and says she doesn't believe in that "lifestyle" and further, doesn't understand why she has to "flaunt it." You ask what she means by "flaunting it" and she responds "wearing those boy clothes and acting like a guy." When you say being gay is not a lifestyle, and that you feel like the client is just being herself and that we should respect that, Haley responds saying "It just grosses me out."
- *What are some ways in which you could respond to Haley?*

Thank you!!!

Please take survey here

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SDH3JPX>

