

A Core Partner of
THE TA NETWORK

the technical assistance network for children's behavioral health

Delaware System of Care

**Gender & Orientation-based Suicide Prevention
Education & Consultation Work**

Sussex County

**Summary of Findings
September 2016**



Report Compiled by YES Institute – October 2016

Summary Overview

Background & History

In 2012, the State of Delaware experienced a high number of middle and high school student suicide attempts and suicide deaths.

The Delaware Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS), Division of Public Health, invited epidemiologists from the US Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to conduct an in-depth investigation into the factors contributing to the high rate of suicide clusters throughout school districts. The CDC report is available online at:

http://dhss.delaware.gov/admin/files/de_cdc_final_report_21913.pdf

The report revealed **18%** of the students who took their lives during this period were known to have concerns about their sexual orientation as a contributing circumstance (pg. 37).

In September 2015, YES Institute conducted statewide technical assistance trainings to address gender and orientation-based suicide and bullying prevention with schools, mental health professionals, and other system of care stakeholders in New Castle and Kent Counties in Delaware, reaching over 2,800 people. For the full report of the September 2015 Summary of Findings, visit: yesinstitute.org/results

In September 2016, YES Institute conducted technical assistance trainings in Sussex County on gender and orientation-based suicide prevention with professionals, parents, and community members.

Technical Assistance Consultation with TA Network & YES Institute

Robert Dunleavy, LCSW, Program Manager for the Division of Prevention and Behavioral Health Services at the Delaware Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families (DSCYF) reached out to SAMHSA's Technical Assistance (TA) Network and requested consultation from YES Institute to support efforts in addressing suicide prevention with gender and orientation topics with Sussex County schools and communities.

YES Institute is a nonprofit organization that works with TA Network's Cultural & Linguistic Competency Hub to provide TA and consultation with Systems of Care. The mission of YES Institute is to prevent suicide and ensure the healthy development of all youth through powerful communication and education on gender and orientation.

YES Institute began providing TA by conference call from March through September of 2016 with Delaware core stakeholders who included:

- Robert Dunleavy, LCSW, Program Manager, Delaware DPBHS
- Harvey Doppelt, Delaware DPBHS
- Kymberly Alvarado, LCSW, Child Priority Response Program, DE Guidance Services
- Kelly Soliman, LCSW, Therapeutic Support Counselor, Colonial School District
- Janet Ray, Delaware Department of Education
- John Ray, Physical Education Specialist
- Noel Duckworth, Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence
- Linda Gregory, PFLAG Rehoboth Beach, President
- Umut Dursun, MA, YES Institute, Gender Education Specialist
- Jennifer Lopez, BS, YES Institute, Community Dialogue Facilitator
- Lucy Hernandez, LCSW, YES Institute, Executive Director of Administration
- Joseph Zolobczuk, MS Ed., YES Institute, Executive Director of Education

Delaware Gender & Orientation-based Suicide Prevention Work

Accomplished Work

Delaware stakeholders cultivated a plan that included the following efforts and results for **Sussex County**:

- 1) K-12 Health and Physical Education faculty dialogue in Sussex County.
Tues, Sept. 13 59 faculty 1 hour Sussex County
- 2) System of Care professional providers dialogue at the Western Sussex Summit Conference.
Tues, Sept. 13 9 providers 3 hours Sussex County
- 3) Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (P-FLAG) Rehoboth Beach education and consultation presentations for Sussex County.
Tues, Sept. 13 18 parents 0:90 minutes Sussex County

In all, **86 people** were reached in Sussex county.

Unaccomplished Work

Delaware stakeholders cultivated a plan for **Sussex County** that included PTA presentations for schools. However, due to scheduling challenges and school system mandates, stakeholders were unable able to conduct education sessions.

We strongly urge stakeholders to consider PTA school presentations for future gender and orientation-based suicide prevention work in Delaware. The CDC report found a significant number of suicides had occurred in Sussex County.

Program Evaluation & Pre/Post Survey Analysis

Available Data

Pre/Post surveys were collected for the following education sessions below. Analysis of findings for each cohort is detailed on the corresponding pages.

All quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS® Version 22. See methods and limitations section for additional information about program evaluation process.

K-12 Health and Physical Education faculty	Page 5
Western Sussex Summit Conference- System of Care	Page 7
P-FLAG Rehoboth Beach	Page 9

Verbal Feedback

Sussex County participants provided constructive feedback and lessons learned to YES Institute that included the following:

K-12 Health and Physical Education faculty

- Faculty suggested further training on policies on how to handle students using lockerrooms, bathrooms, and teams.
- Faculty suggested forming a resource guide for each county.
- Faculty would like YES Institute to come back to provide further training to their students, administration, and other teachers.

Western Sussex Summit Conference

- System of Care providers would like to know what are the policies on gender marker changes in the state of Delaware and what is the process for schools on addressing students .
- System of Care providers would like further information on Delaware's bathroom policy for youth who use the term transgender to describe their authentic experience of gender.
- System of Care providers suggested building a curriculum for teachers on the topics of gender and orientation.
- System of Care providers suggested forming a resource and gender guide for each county.

PFLAG Rehoboth Beach

- Parents suggested teacher and administration trainings in Sussex County schools on gender and orientation awareness.
- Parents suggested developing a resource guide with doctors, therapists and agencies who are knowledgeable on gender and orientation.
- Parents would like to bring YES Institute back to Delaware to provide trainings for community members in Sussex County to open conversations on the impact gender and orientation has on individuals.

Champions for Health and Physical Education Faculty Pre/Post Analysis

Surveys collected: 55 people
 Duration of educational consultation: 1 hour

Overall Rating

“Worthwhile” or “Extremely worthwhile” overall rating: 79%
 Felt “safe to share my real thoughts / feelings”: 89%

Climate & Culture

Prior continuing education on gender & orientation topics

No prior continuing education (CE) on these topics: 58% “Never”
 At least one prior CE on the topics: 24% “At least one”

Gender & Orientation-based Bullying

Verbal bullying based on “anti-gay” attitudes

“Monthly basis”: 15%
 “Weekly basis”: 22%
 “Daily basis”: 9%

Physical bullying based on “anti-gay” attitudes

“Monthly basis”: 6%
 “Weekly basis”: 2%
 “Daily basis”: 2%

Comfortability Levels

Comparing pre/post GLB comfortability levels: 29% increased comfortability towards GLB persons at post
Comparing pre/post transgender comfortability levels: 49% increased comfortability towards transgender persons at post

Negative Pre-concept

Comparing pre/post negative pre-concept

“My view of people as Transgender are sick/disordered:” 11% Transgender are sick/disordered

Knowledge & Tools

Comparing pre/post gender & orientation knowledge: 55% increased knowledge at post
Comparing pre/post feeling equipped to handle situations: 36% felt more equipped at post

Speaking Up & Reducing Slurs

Comparing pre/post willingness to speak up on bullying: 53% increase in willingness to speak up on bullying at post
Comparing pre/post usage of anti-gay slurs: 4% increase in willingness to decrease self use of slurs at post

Champions for Health and Physical Education Faculty Qualitative Post

Please share what you learned today. What impact did the YES Institute dialogue have for you?

- “If we as teachers are more comfortable in speaking about these topics so will our students”
- “This dialogue really got me thinking about how I can help students in school.”
- “We have 2 transgender student in our school this year and it was helpful to hear their stories and ideas to help us know how to approach /handle these delicate issues.”
- “This dialogue helped with my comfort level especially when dealing with situations that involved transgender students.”
- “I will make sure to be more available to my students who need support.”
- “Awareness and ideas of how to get a discussion group.”
- “The struggle gays lesbians and transgender actually go through.”
- “There is no right answer but communication is key.”
- “Really got me thinking about how I can help students in school.”
- “The dialogue made me think about challenges teens actually face.”

Things I will do differently now:

- “Teach more about it.”
- “Make myself more available to talk with all students.”
- “Advocate.”
- “Try to educate children about these topics.”
- “Use gender neutral pronouns.”
- “Be aware.”
- “Speak up more.”
- “Check into our districts policies.”
- “Help students feel more comfortable.”

Western Sussex Summit Conference Pre/Post Analysis

Surveys collected: 7 people
Duration of educational consultation: 1 hour

Overall Rating

“Worthwhile” or “Extremely worthwhile” overall rating: 100%
Felt “safe to share my real thoughts / feelings”: 100%

Climate & Culture

Prior continuing education on gender & orientation topics

No prior continuing education (CE) on these topics: 29% “Never”
At least one prior CE on the topics: 29% “At least one”

Gender & Orientation-based Bullying

Verbal bullying based on “anti-gay” attitudes

“Monthly basis”: 43%
“Weekly basis”: 14%
“Daily basis”: 0%

Physical bullying based on “anti-gay” attitudes

“Monthly basis”: 33%
“Weekly basis”: 0%
“Daily basis”: 0%

Comfortability Levels

Comparing pre/post GLB comfortability levels: 43% increased comfortability towards GLB persons at post
Comparing pre/post transgender comfortability levels: 43% increased comfortability towards transgender persons at post

Negative Pre-concept

Comparing pre/post negative pre-concept

“My view of people as GLB are sick/disordered.” 0% GLB are sick/disordered
“My view of people as Transgender are sick/disordered:” 0% Transgender are sick/disordered

Knowledge & Tools

Comparing pre/post gender & orientation knowledge: 33% increased knowledge at post
Comparing pre/post feeling equipped to handle situations: 29% felt more equipped at post

Speaking Up & Reducing Slurs

Comparing pre/post willingness to speak up on bullying: 72% increase in willingness to speak up on bullying at post
Comparing pre/post usage of anti-gay slurs: 14% increase in willingness to decrease self use of slurs at post

Western Sussex Summit Conference Qualitative Post

Please share what you learned today. What impact did the YES Institute dialogue have for you?

- “This is a resource to help ensure the safety of all students.”
- “I have gain a lot of knowledge and how to access resources.”

Things I will do differently now:

- “I will get support.”

PFLAG Rehoboth Beach Pre/Post Analysis

Surveys collected: 14 people
Duration of educational consultation: 1 hour

Overall Rating

“Worthwhile” or “Extremely worthwhile” overall rating: 100%
Felt “safe to share my real thoughts / feelings”: 100%

Climate & Culture

Prior continuing education on gender & orientation topics

No prior continuing education (CE) on these topics: 14% “Never”
At least one prior CE on the topics: 14% “At least one”

Gender & Orientation-based Bullying

Verbal bullying based on “anti-gay” attitudes

“Monthly basis”: 31%
“Weekly basis”: 23%
“Daily basis”: 31%

Physical bullying based on “anti-gay” attitudes

“Monthly basis”: 25%
“Weekly basis”: 17%
“Daily basis”: 17%

Comfortability Levels

Comparing pre/post GLB comfortability levels: 14% increased comfortability towards GLB persons at post
Comparing pre/post transgender comfortability levels: 21% increased comfortability towards transgender persons at post

Negative Pre-concept

Comparing pre/post negative pre-concept

“My view of people as GLB are sick/disordered.” 0% GLB are sick/disordered
“My view of people as Transgender are sick/disordered.” 0% Transgender are sick/disordered

Knowledge & Tools

Comparing pre/post gender & orientation knowledge: 7% increased knowledge at post
Comparing pre/post feeling equipped to handle situations: 21% felt more equipped at post

Speaking Up & Reducing Slurs

Comparing pre/post willingness to speak up on bullying: 36% increase in willingness to speak up on bullying at post
Comparing pre/post usage of anti-gay slurs: 8% increase in willingness to decrease self use of slurs at post

PFLAG Rehoboth Beach Qualitative Post

Please share what you learned today. What impact did the YES Institute dialogue have for you?

- “Very energized with your mission and how to work to fulfill it”
- “This dialogue opened conversations.”
- “More info is good. There was a lot to learn. I was very impressed with work being done.”
- “It is so hard to get into school system, teachers need to be more open.”
- “It is so important it is to keep conversations going about gender and orientation.”
- “Great new resource. Terrific work!”
- “YES Institute is helping provide education and outreach.”

Things I will do differently now:

- “I will listen to people more.”
- “I will be more sensitive.”
- “I will collaborate and listen to others.”

Delaware TA Consultation Objectives

- 1) System of Care participants are invited to engage in authentic conversations that include all viewpoints to address fears, silence, and open an inquiry on gender and orientation and suicide prevention.
- 2) System of Care participants can begin to distinguish common myths and stereotypes about gender and orientation, and about youth who identify or are labeled as gay or transgender, through the lens of current research and reflection of personal experiences.
- 3) System of Care participants will have an opportunity to hear and interact with youth, parents and professionals who have been impacted by the social stigma of gender and/or orientation topics, bullying, and suicide.
- 4) System of Care participants will inquire how certain cultural expectations and/or institutional practices can lead to negative consequences for youth who do not fit certain social expectations, and begin a public health conversation about including and respecting youth who identify as gay, bisexual, transgender, or gender non-conforming.
- 5) System of Care participants will explore the actions for those who are inspired to make a difference – be they micro, macro, or systemic ideas for improvement in quality care and client outcomes, and address and remove barriers to care and fill in critical gaps in the system.
- 6) System of Care participants will begin to establish a core group of contacts who are committed to addressing the topics of gender and orientation-based suicide prevention and intervention efforts across the State.
- 7) System of Care participants will continue to collaborate with the TA Network and YES Institute to look at next steps and missing needs for Delaware on gender and orientation-based suicide prevention and intervention efforts across the State.



Program Evaluation & Pre/Post Analysis Procedures

Survey Instrument

A copy of the pre/post instrument is attached on the next two pages. This survey has no published data regarding its reliability and validity. It was initially created as an evaluation tool in 2009 for YES Institute. Focus groups, stakeholder participation, and feedback from program evaluation scholars with University of Miami, School of Education & Human Development all contributed technical assistance in the creation of this instrument and its subsequent versions.

This instrument has been utilized by YES Institute for generating reports to clients for the past seven years, which include the SAMHSA TA Network, VA Healthcare System, 11th Judicial Circuit Court of Florida, Florida Department of Health, Our Kids (Miami-Dade foster care system) and various public and private entities. The survey has face validity and over 17,000 respondents have completed it. All paper and electronic records are maintained by YES Institute. Original documents and copies of data files are fully available by request.

Analysis Information

Using IBM® SPSS® Version 22, pre/post self-reported shifts are calculated by subtracting the Likert scale post-score from pre-score for each matched item, and tallying the percentage increase/decrease from valid surveys responses. Positive scores indicate a shift toward intended outcome goals; negative scores indicate a shift away from intended outcome goals; scores of "0" indicate no reported change for an item.

All other percentage totals (overall ratings, frequency of verbal/physical slurs, demographic info, etc.) are obtained through tallying up descriptive statistics tables.

Limitations of Findings

The pre/post survey instrument used to collect this data is a consultation evaluation tool. This evaluation is not a full experimental design that can suggest causality (i.e., there is no control group, no randomized participants, no double-blind researchers, etc.). All known limitations with self-report data apply to these findings, including and not limited to social desirability, demand characteristics, incomplete surveys. Other limitations can include misinterpretation of illegible handwriting and data entry transcription errors.

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Pre/Post Survey Instrument (SAMPLE)

Name of Community Dialogue

Date: MM/DD/YYYY

FRONT SIDE - Your honest responses help ensure quality presentations.

- 1) I've attended public educational talks on gender and orientation topics before:
 Never At least once Between 2 and 4 Between 5 and 9 10 or more

At my "workplace/school/agency", I've heard or seen the following based on "anti-gay" attitudes:

- 2) Verbal slurs ("*Faggot*", "*Dyke*", "*That's so gay!*")
 Never Few times a year Once or twice a month Weekly Daily
- 3) Physical harassment or physical bullying based on "anti-gay" attitudes:
 Never Few times a year Once or twice a month Weekly Daily

- 4) My comfort level with people perceived as gay, lesbian or bisexual is:
 Very Uncomfortable Somewhat Uncomfortable Unsure Fairly Comfortable Very Comfortable

- 5) My comfort level with people perceived as transgender is:
 Very Uncomfortable Somewhat Uncomfortable Unsure Fairly Comfortable Very Comfortable

- 6) When possible, I've spoken up when someone is bullied with gender-based or "anti-gay" slurs:
 Never Very rarely Sometimes Often Always

- 7) My view of people who identify as gay, lesbian or bisexual is they are sick and disordered:
 Yes Unsure No
- 8) My view of people who identify as transgender is they are sick and disordered:
 Yes Unsure No

- 9) I am knowledgeable of the specific challenges facing youth & families regarding gender & orientation:
 Strongly disagree Disagree Unsure Agree Strongly agree

- 10) In the past 3 months, I've used "anti-gay" words or jokes to tease others:
 Never Once or twice A few times a month Weekly Daily

- 11) I feel equipped to handle a situation that could arise regarding gender or orientation:
 Strongly disagree Disagree Unsure Agree Strongly agree

Demographic data is anonymous and confidential. Check all that may apply.

- 12) My home zip code: _____ 13) My age: _____
- 14) My gender pronoun(s): He She They _____
- 15) Are you a parent? Yes No 16) If yes, are your children under the age of 21? Yes No
- 17) Ethnicity: African descent Asian Caribbean European descent *non-Hispanic*
 Hispanic/Latino Indian Middle Eastern Native American Pacific Islander None of these
- 18) My Grade level (if student): Elementary Middle High School Undergraduate Graduate
- 19) My Profession: Business Government Finance/Banking Education Mental health/Psychology
 Medical/Healthcare Legal Law Enforcement/EMT Religion/Laity Non-profit/Social services
 Military Technology Other _____

YES Pre/Post Survey • Version CD_5.0 | SMS evalID=25

Pre/Post Survey Instrument (SAMPLE)

Name of Community Dialogue

Date: MM/DD/YYYY

BACK SIDE - Fill out only at END of presentation.

20) Please share what you learned today. What impact did the YES dialogue have for you?

21) How would you rate the overall course today?

- Waste of time Not so valuable Average Worthwhile Extremely worthwhile

22) The YES facilitator(s) made it safe for me to share my real feelings and views today:

- Completely Unsafe to Share Somewhat Unsafe to Share Neutral Fairly Safe to Share Completely Safe to Share

23) My comfort level now with those perceived as gay, lesbian, or bisexual is:

- Very Uncomfortable Somewhat Uncomfortable Unsure Fairly Comfortable Very Comfortable

24) My comfort level now with those perceived as transgender is:

- Very Uncomfortable Somewhat Uncomfortable Unsure Fairly Comfortable Very Comfortable

25) My view now of people who identify as gay, lesbian or bisexual is they are sick and disordered:

- Yes Unsure No

26) My view now of people who identify as transgender is they are sick and disordered:

- Yes Unsure No

27) I now feel knowledgeable of the specific challenges facing youth & families regarding gender & orientation:

- Strongly Disagree Disagree Unsure Agree Strongly Agree

28) Something I now understand or see differently is: _____

29) I will now speak up when possible when someone is bullied with “anti-gay” or gender-based slurs:

- Never Very rarely Sometimes Often Always

30) I now feel equipped to handle a situation that could arise regarding gender or orientation:

- Strongly disagree Disagree Unsure Agree Strongly agree

31) Something I'm now going to do differently is: _____

32) In the next 3 months, I will probably use “anti-gay” slurs to tease or taunt others:

- Never Once or twice
 A few times a month
 Weekly Daily

<p>Get engaged with YES Institute! (Optional)</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Call me – I want to take an educational course. <input type="radio"/> Call me – I want to volunteer or schedule a dialogue. <input type="radio"/> Subscribe me to YES newsletter.</p> <p>First/Last Name (required): _____</p> <p>Phone: _____</p> <p>Email (required): _____</p>
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YES Pre/Post Survey • Version CD_5.0 | SMS evalID=25