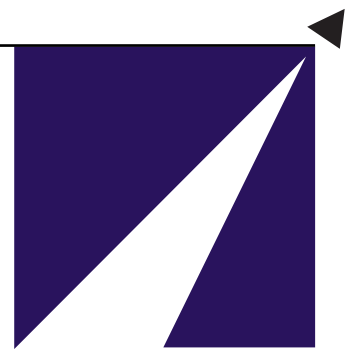


# ReVision



P R O J E C T

# YES

re (ri) *n.* 1. anew, again vision (vizh 'a) *n.* 1. the manner in which one sees or conceives of something.

*Making our world safe for ALL youth*



Visit our website for upcoming events, workshop registration, and secure online donations.

## Award from Dade Association for Marriage and Family Therapy

The Dade Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (DAMFT) recently honored Project YES with the Professional Community Service Award for our educational work on gender and orientation.

DAMFT is a regional chapter of the Florida Association of Marriage and Family Therapy, an organization of more than 1,300 clinical professionals dedicated to leadership in education and research in marriage and family therapy across the state.

DAMFT members actively participate in our Communication Courses and Educational Workshops. We thank them for their recognition of our work and for their partnership. Our ongoing collaboration is another building block in the community for healthy youth and families.



Nina Topp and Sloane Veshinski, President of DAMFT.

# Unraveling Gender Complexities

Stop a moment and consider: What exactly is gender? Is it our biology? Is it the degree to which we demonstrate masculinity and femininity? Is it how we feel inside, or how we present ourselves to others? How do others actually perceive our gender signals?

Our newest workshop looks at the phenomenal puzzle of gender—the limitations we accept, the logic we abandon, and the confusion we invite—as we begin to observe the mastery gender has in our lives. Taking a multidisciplinary approach, we look at historical, biological, sociological, and legal components to begin unveiling the impact of gender in our world.

Some questions we address include:

- What does transgender mean?
- How are intersex births challenging common notions about the link between biology and gender?
- Are there measurable differences between the sexes?
- How do gender stereotypes fuel bullying and harassment of gay and lesbian youth?

All of our workshops are available for CEU credit for LCSW, LMFT, LMHC, and other licensed professionals as accredited by the Florida Department of Health (BAP #697).

By thoughtfully examining each facet of gender in our culture, we can begin to discover the powerful influence gender has on how we relate to ourselves and each other.

Visit our website at [projectyes.org/register](http://projectyes.org/register) for upcoming course dates and online registration.



The Gender Continuum.



Participants at a gender workshop.

Go online to [www.projectyes.org/calendar](http://www.projectyes.org/calendar) for events and speaking opportunities.

**Project YES Community Meeting**  
Thursday, April 10, at 3:30 PM  
Everyone invited!

# Workshop at Key Biscayne Police Department

Project YES recently led two educational workshops for Key Biscayne Police Department at the invitation of Police Chief Mike Flaherty. Martha Fugate and Joseph Zolobczuk discussed common myths and stereotypes about gender and orientation and shared the impact that silence on this topic has on youth and families.

Demonstrating their commitment to serving all Key Biscayne residents, officers inquired about ways to effectively present themselves as safe resources for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender community members.



Key Biscayne police officers and administrative staff.

“Informative – a lot of ‘I didn’t know’ stuff. The transgender material was very enlightening.”

- Police Officer

“Very educational...after 30 years in law enforcement, I had not attended a seminar such as this.”

- Police Officer

We thank the Key Biscayne Police Department for the opportunity to participate with them as they seek to serve the needs of all the youth in Key Biscayne.

## Project YES Board



Doug DeBoer, new Chair of the Project YES board.

As we begin the new year, we proudly announce Doug DeBoer as new Chair of the Project YES board. Doug is a Realtor-Associate with Coldwell

Banker Residential Real Estate and has served on the Project YES board for the last two years. Beyond maintaining a strong financial base, Doug is committed to expanding Project YES to make our programs available to more people.

“It would be an incredible world if people were just allowed to be who they are... I am continually impressed by the level of creativity and professionalism displayed by the staff, and I know that this work can change the world.”

- Doug DeBoer, Chair

Doug is determined to ensure that youth today who are harassed have access to resources that were not available for him when he was growing up. His partner of 15 years, Howard Kurzweil, shares his vision and is also involved in our work.

New board officers are Paula Black as Vice Chair, Bob Oldakowski as Treasurer, and Nancy Allen as Secretary. We congratulate Bob Oldakowski as new Mayor of Key Biscayne and thank him for his continued commitment to our work.

## Dialogue for Parents

Parents who once stepped timidly inside the doors of Project YES returned enthusiastically for a meeting on December 11. Many new parents and youth joined returning guests, all seeking a way to get back in relationship with their families.

Our Dialogue for Parents offers mutual support and educational components that answer questions parents are often afraid to ask.

“I love my daughter, but I feel as if I am missing a big part of her life. I don’t know how to talk to her about this.”

- Parent

Project YES board member Elsie Miranda led a discussion about the emotions that parents often experience when their child "comes out" as gay or lesbian, which resonated among participants.

Chris Prado provided translation for Spanish-speaking participants, ensuring everyone’s participation in the dialogue. Participants asked for more education and brainstormed about future workshops.

The next Dialogue for Parents meetings are scheduled for:

- Thursday, February 20, 6:30-8:00 PM
- Thursday, April 24, 6:30-8:00 PM

Please call Eva Leivas-Andino at 305-663-7195 to RSVP.



Elsie Miranda, Project YES board member.

## David Leddick Performance

David Leddick and his fellow performers put on a dazzling Christmas production at the historic Lyric Theatre to benefit Project YES. Hundreds of guests came from all sectors of the city for a fun-filled night of vaudeville entertainment. We thank David for generously sharing his talents and raising funds for our work to benefit gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender youth.



David Leddick and company at the Lyric Theatre.

# SAFE-T Courses

The average Miami-Dade high school population consists of 4,000 students who must all share one TRUST counselor. This makes training student leaders a necessary and important part of our work. Students then become actively involved and effective in creating safer school environments.

Joseph Zolobczuk and Nina Topp led two Student Alliance for Empowerment Training (SAFE-T) Courses at Hialeah-Miami Lakes High School and Felix Varela High School, connecting students with the power of their own voices.



Students participating at a SAFE-T Course.

Accustomed to defending themselves from anti-gay comments in school each day, students practiced a new communication model that frees them from relying on debates about their lives.

“ I learned that arguing with people really gets nowhere. This will help me deal with conflicts not only at home, but also in school and at work.”

- Felix Varela Student

Participants requested more information about gender and sexual orientation to share with others, and we are coordinating dates to return to both schools with educational workshops.

# Nina Topp



I have been honored to serve as Director's Assistant for the past year and a half, and I am now pursuing another challenging opportunity.

Recently I accepted a teaching assistantship at Florida International University to pursue my dream of teaching at the collegiate level.

The gifts I have received from everyone at Project YES are immeasurable—I found my voice, my smile, and my passion for life. With these gifts I am equipped to transform life into a future of possibilities. Thank you so much.

While I will not be in the office full-time, my role at Project YES has only shifted. I will still be volunteering and assisting with the newsletter, so I look forward to seeing you at future Project YES events!

# Kiaora Society Donor Update

Project YES thanks **Jon & Tina Kislak** for their extraordinary commitment to our work. In addition to opening their home and hosting a fantastic holiday event for Kiaora members and guests, they generously renewed their membership as Kiaora **Mentors**. We are grateful to **Tim Dugan & Meredith Birrittella** for our special holiday party and for the countless gifts they bring as **Visionaries**.

Outstanding supporters **Ed McAmis & Gerson Gonzalez** renewed as **Visionaries**, and **Carol & Ed Williamson** renewed as **Champions**. **Greg Baldwin & Jose Castro** and **Peter Pilotti & Joseph Rodano** continue as **Champions**, and **Victor Garcia & Tim Wagoner** have stepped up as **Leaders**. The **Pink Palm Company** has renewed as **Leader** thanks to **Rick Hanley** and **Paul Kahn**.

A special thank you to **Cali Garcia-Velez**, **President of Citibank Florida and Business Manager, Citibank South Division**, for joining our Kiaora Society through United Way. Project YES also welcomes **Barbara Gray**, **Jorge Luis Hernandez**, **Joseph Kraus**, and **Kenneth Rau & Joseph Fitzgerald** as new Kiaora **Mentors**. We are thankful for the continuing support of **Mentors Gary**



Emilio Vazquez, Manager of Citibank Coral Gables, Martha Fugate, Director of Project YES, and Leticia Carrazana, Relationship Manager for Citibank at Work.

**Bremen & Roger Boone, Scott Dansky & John Dawson, Dennis Edwards & Mark Steinberg, James Hanrahan, Jr., Larry Hyer, Kevin Miller & Allan Hunter, Richard Milstein, Gordon Rhodes, Leslie Sadur & Karen von Bergen, Howard Perry Rothberg II & Paul A. Scolieri-Rothberg, Janice & Howard Scholl, Marty Schildhouse, Martin Smith, Robin Wheatley & Jeffrey Newton, and Robin Wolff & Kathy Gregory.** **Edward McIntyre**, a monthly contributor for over three years, also renewed as a Kiaora **Mentor**.

We acknowledge **Citigroup Foundation** for awarding Project YES a community grant for the third consecutive year. We thank **Barbara Romani** and **Lula Folgosa** for their consistent guidance and support.

We were introduced to Citibank by **Leticia Carrazana, Relationship Manager for Citibank at Work**. Thanks to her, Project YES now has many personal banking advantages as well as the outstanding corporate partnership of Citibank. We are also grateful for the champion support of **Emilio Vazquez, Manager of Citibank Coral Gables**, who has become an invaluable community partner for our work.

We also thank **Coral Gables Congregational Church** and **EuroAtlantic, Inc.** for their financial support and commitment to a safer world for all youth.



## Kiaora Society

Kiaora Society members donate \$1,000 or more to Project YES annually.

### Visionary

\$10,000 or more

Tim Dugan & Meredith Birrittella  
Eva Leivas-Andino  
Jonathan Lewis  
Ed McAmis & Gerson Gonzalez

### Champion

\$5,000 or more

Greg Baldwin & Jose Castro  
Stephen E. Herbits  
Peter Pilotti & Joseph Rodano  
Bill Ross  
Jacques Soukup  
Rev. Marta S. Weeks  
Rev. Hugh Westbrook & Carole Shields  
Carol & Ed Williamson

### Leader

\$2,500 or more

Connie Barden & Martha Fugate  
Nellie Barrios  
Lang Baumgarten  
Douglas DeBoer & Howard Kurzweil  
Victor Garcia & Tim Wagoner  
J. Bryan McCullar  
Robert Oldakowski & Luis Mendoza  
Pink Palm Company  
Karen Raben & Andrea Pernick  
Dennis Rodrigues  
Kevin Veilleux

### Mentor

\$1,000 or more

Nancy Allen  
Benjamin Beach  
Paula Black  
Samuel Spencer Blum & Milenko Samardzich  
Gary Bremen & Roger Boone  
Jerry Chasen & Mark Kirby  
Bruce A. Christensen  
City National Bank of Florida & The Abess Family  
Cathy L. Cline  
Scott Dansky & John Dawson  
Cali Garcia-Velez  
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Laura White  
Robin Wolff & Kathy Gregory  
Stephen I. Yaeger, Ph.D.  
Anonymous Donors

### Foundations & Corporations

Citigroup Foundation  
Coral Gables Congregational Church  
Dade Community Foundation  
Gay & Lesbian Foundation of South Florida  
EuroAtlantic, Inc.  
Health Foundation of South Florida  
Holland & Knight, LLP  
James G. Pepper Fund of Stonewall  
Community Foundation  
Joseph H. & Florence A. Roblee Foundation  
Matthew Shepard Foundation  
North Dade Medical Foundation  
North Georgia College & State University,  
Dept. of Education  
P.F. Chang's China Bistro  
Rosie O'Donnell For All Kids Foundation  
Ruth Anderson Foundation  
South Florida Center for Theological Studies  
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- Marty Harris**
- Jan Kirchoff**
- Elsie Miranda**, MPM
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- Eva Leivas-Andino**,  
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- Joseph Zolobczuk**,  
Community Liaison  
joseph@projectyes.org

# Community Presentations



Jonathan Kelly, Vibe Connection host on WLRN, with guest speakers Eva Leivas-Andino, Hispanic Coordinator of Project YES, and Rev. Tommie Watkins, Boys-2-Boys Project at The Village.

Project YES volunteers Magda Pantaleon and Cathy Cline visited Miami Edison Sr. High School to talk with students about their lives.

Students at Miami Central High School expressed relief to have their questions answered by Project YES volunteers Chris Prado and Cathy Cline.

*“ I don’t know if I’m gay or not, but I’ve never had anyone to talk to about it...really encouraged me not to be afraid of who I am.”*

- Miami Edison Student

*“ This is the first time an adult has told me there’s nothing wrong with me.”*

- Miami Central Student

Eva Leivas-Andino appeared on Cable-TAP/WLRN with Rev. Tommie Watkins, Project YES Affirming Minister. They discussed common family reactions to youth who “come out” as gay or lesbian and highlighted resources available for youth who are left homeless with no emotional or financial support.

## Our Mission

To prevent suicide and ensure the healthy development of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender youth by initiating dialogue, providing education, and creating support systems.

## Our Work

Our educational programs and workshops open dialogue that safely explores fears or misinformation and gives people tools to respond appropriately in constructive ways. The model of communication at the core of all our programs includes every diverse opinion. Transforming the context of discussion from one of right/wrong to one of purpose and commitment empowers people to create communities that support all youth and families.

**Educational Workshops**

- The Communication Course
- Sexual Orientation and Gender
- Gender Continuum
- The Matrix

**Programs**

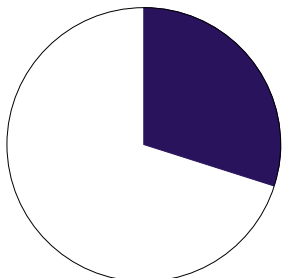
- Student SAFE-T Course
- God As Love
- Dialogue for Parents
- Community Meetings



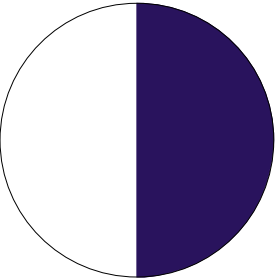
All educational workshops are CEU accredited. To register, visit [projectyes.org/register](http://projectyes.org/register)

For upcoming programs and events, visit [projectyes.org/calendar](http://projectyes.org/calendar)

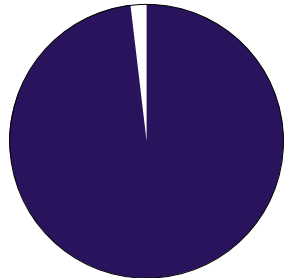
## Did You Know?



**Gay and lesbian youth represent 30% of all teenage suicides.\***



**Half of all gay youth are rejected by their families when they discover their orientation.\***



**97% of all teenagers hear anti-gay comments in school daily.\***

**#1 reason students bring weapons to school is protection against bullies.\***

\*For more statistics and sources visit [projectyes.org/research](http://projectyes.org/research)