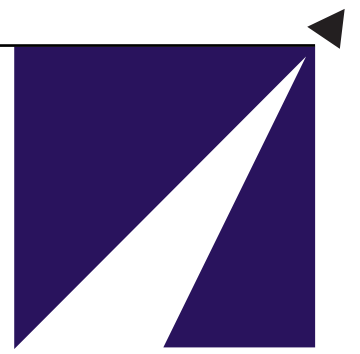


ReVision



P R O J E C T

YES

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

Making our world safe for ALL youth



Accredited workshops on gender, orientation, and communication now available.

Dade Students Tackle Harassment in Schools

On January 30 and March 26, over 150 Miami-Dade County Public School students from Region I participated in educational workshops on harassment in schools. Students from American, Carol City, Miami Jackson, Hialeah, and Hialeah-Miami Lakes High Schools gathered at Project YES to explore harassment based particularly on perceived orientation or gender differences.

Some comments from students:

“I really learned a lot. I was especially intrigued with the portion on gender and gender identity. It was a real eye-opener.”

“This workshop is especially good for kids our age because we are all going through hard times. This is a way we can all understand one another better.”



Region I students during break.

Project YES extends a special thanks and acknowledgement to Ellen Fike, TRUST Counselor at American High School, who coordinated the efforts for the entire region. Her dedication to students is phenomenal and inspiring. We also thank the other TRUST counselors who provided this opportunity for their students to increase awareness and safety in schools: Patricia Manson from Miami Jackson, Ericka Jimenez from Carol City, Marlen Negron from Hialeah, and Odalys Acosta from Hialeah-Miami Lakes.

Outstanding Project YES volunteers Cathy Cline, Tim Dugan, Glenn Minton, and Tim Wagoner provided logistical support for both days.

These educational workshops were funded by the North Dade Medical Foundation and collaboratively coordinated with Miami-Dade County Public Schools TRUST Counselors.

MDCC Professional Development



A speaker addressing faculty at the opening plenary.

Over 2,000 employees of Miami-Dade Community College (MDCC) attended “Professional Development Day.”

Through the diversity track, Project YES was invited to conduct a seminar on “coming out” issues related to faculty members and students, making this the first ever Professional Development Day to include the topic of orientation and gender. Our participation proved to be auspicious in many respects. Over 70 people attended one of the two workshops, and we received the following email after the event:

“Thank you for your presentation. I found it comfortable and very open. I attended your session because occasionally I have a student ask for advice. I plan to research the possibility of including the equal opportunity statement from our student handbook in my course introduction letter so students will begin to know that our classrooms welcome all people.”

- MDCC Faculty Member



Region I students.

Visit www.projectyes.org to access upcoming speaking engagements, educational workshops, and online donations.

Project YES Community Meeting
Thursday, June 12, at 3:30 PM
Everyone invited!

Archbishop Curley Notre Dame

Archbishop Curley Notre Dame High School invited Project YES to speak with two classes of peer counseling students. Project YES speakers Chris Prado and Joseph Zolobczuk facilitated a dialogue with 70 students, focusing discussion on creating safe school environments and reducing the usage of slurs and inappropriate vocabulary.

One student shared the following:

“People are often labeled and teased in our school. I see now that it is triggered by gender expressions, and this harassment should definitely stop.”

- Senior Student



Chris Prado talking with students.

Healing Dialogue with Parents

Elsa and Ramon Donnell generously opened their home to Project YES as part of our Hispanic Initiative. They invited their friends to participate in a conversation that many had viewed as negative and fearful. The evening provided education on gender and orientation, and participants eagerly asked questions and expressed their concerns.

Afterward Elsa received many calls asking for more information on gay and lesbian youth issues. Participants at the event have also begun referring parents and youth to Project YES for resources.

We congratulate Elsa for her courage and commitment to making this evening possible. If you are interested in hosting a conversation with Project YES in your home, please contact Eva Leivas-Andino at 305-663-7195.



Parents came from Dade and Broward County to participate in the third Project YES "Dialogue with Parents" at our office. We are now coordinating individual events at family homes.

Telemundo Films Interview



Marie Ortiz, interviewed by Dora Gloettman with Telemundo.

Youth speaker Marie Ortiz was interviewed by Dora Gloettman, a reporter with Telemundo Television, for a segment that

will likely air next month. Marie shared her story about discovering she was a lesbian while growing up in a Cuban-American household. Parent speaker Eva Leivas-Andino also contributed to the interview.

What began as footage for a two-minute clip turned into an afternoon of dialogue. Telemundo now has enough coverage for a full-length feature on gay and lesbian youth and parenting.

MAST Academy Requests Gender & Orientation Dialogue

For a presentation at the MAST Academy Annual Symposium, we incorporated material from our new gender workshops, giving our discussion of orientation even greater impact. Volunteer speakers Allison Tinney, Cathy Cline, and Joseph Zolobczuk demonstrated how knowledge of gender leads to powerful insight into the source of harassment and discrimination.



Joseph Zolobczuk addressing freshman and sophomore students.

Evaluations from the presentation reveal that participants have easier access to recognizing the impact of harassment on gay youth when looking through a lens of gender awareness. This greater depth of understanding encourages us to continue unraveling the gender knot as we work toward a safer world for all youth

“The workshop was excellent. I am now aware of the differences between being ‘gay’ and being ‘masculine or feminine.’ I also liked the fact that one of the speakers was a student from our school and wasn’t afraid to talk to us.”

- Freshman Student

Burdines Diversity Presentation

Project YES participated in Burdines' Diversity Week in February, making a presentation to over 400 Burdines employees. We addressed challenges facing gay and lesbian youth such as violence and suicide, as we implored each person to take the one action that will make a difference on this topic: talk about it.

Project YES thanks Anne Molder, Vice President of Human Resources, and Lauren Tessaro, Member of the Burdines Diversity Team, for inviting us to open this dialogue.



Director Martha Fugate addressing 400 employees of the Federated Department Stores conglomerate.

Key Biscayne Community Dialogue

Funded by the Southeast Florida Episcopal Foundation, Project YES began its educational outreach in the community of Key Biscayne. Rev. Father Gabe Sinisi of St. Christopher's by the Sea Episcopal Church hosted the first meeting with his customary generosity and gusto. A delicious lunch was served courtesy of Citibank Key Biscayne and its manager, Rosamaria Franchy.

Allison Tinney, a student at MAST Academy, shared her personal experience facing abuse directed at her and most other gay kids in school. There were no dry eyes after listening

to this brave volunteer speaker. We thank Gabe Sinisi for his courage and determination to bring his community together for the protection of all youth.



Youth speaker Allison Tinney spoke courageously.

Your Contribution is Vital

The economic impact of the current stock market has affected not only individual giving, but also has severely cut back the grant awards we receive from charitable foundations. At the same time, the work of Project YES has never been more needed or demanded.

If you regard the results in this newsletter as essential to the kind of world in which you want to live, please consider a financial contribution at the maximum level you can afford. Your financial support is more vital

than ever before. With your help we will get through this time of scarcity without having to cut back our efforts.

Your donations can be charged to your credit card monthly, quarterly, or twice a year. Other ways to contribute include donations of stock, property, or remembering us in your will. For more information on how to individually structure your donation, please call Eva Leivas-Andino at 305-663-7195.

Communication Courses Train 30 New Volunteers



Linda Dixie, LCSW, explores the benefits of responding with generosity.

Due to increased demand from both general participants and professionals seeking CEU credits, Project YES held two Communication Courses in February. Many recent course participants are now part of our growing group of committed volunteers and youth advocates. Results are reflected in the following response:

“This course was very emotional and inspiring for me. I was really upset when I heard the horrible situations that kids and young adults endure because of their sexual orientation. No child should be subject to mental and physical abuse. It was especially troubling to hear that much of this abuse came from their parents. Thanks to Project YES and its communication model, these kids are able to re-establish lines of communication with their families and society. Attending this course reinforces my belief that Project YES is doing God’s work.”

- Emilio Vazquez,
Financial Executive, Citibank

The next Communication Course will be held Saturday & Sunday, July 12 & 13. Please visit www.projectyes.org/register to enroll. If you have already completed the course and would like to review the material at no additional fee, simply call Project YES at 305-663-7195.

Kiaora Society

Kiaora Society members donate \$1,000 or more annually to Project YES. Without private contributions, our programs and the results you read about here would simply disappear.

Project YES thanks **Jonathan Lewis** for renewing his exceptional commitment at the Visionary Level. Project YES Board Members have each renewed their annual commitment to the Kiaora Society. Chair **Doug DeBoer** and his partner **Howard Kurtzweil** have increased their pledge to the Leader Level. We thank **Paula Black, Robert Oldakowski, Nancy Allen, Connie Barden, Tim Dugan, Marty Harris, Jan Kirchoff, Elsie Miranda, Bill Ross, and Karen Raben** for their renewed commitment and service as outstanding board members. We also thank **Stephen I. Yaeger, Ph.D.**, for renewing his contribution as **Mentor**.

Inspiration!

At a memorable Community Meeting in February, our partners throughout the community re-inspired us with the results they have experienced from our work.

Ms. Odalys Acosta, TRUST Counselor at Hialeah-Miami Lakes High School, came with three of her students who participated in a SAFE-T Course earlier this year. The students shared powerfully how the course had impacted them:



Participants of the February Community Meeting.

“Before I became a peer counselor, I used to make fun of homosexual kids, push them out of my way, and on occasion throw their books on the ground. I did this because I never saw any wrong in it. When Project YES came to my school, they totally blew me away. They helped me see that gay kids aren’t much different from me. They showed me the suicide statistics, and I thought to myself that I probably caused one of those. Project YES helped me become a better peer counselor. I now watch over gay kids in school and encourage other kids not to tease them.”

- Carlos Martinez,
HML Senior student



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
Carol & Ed Williamson

Leader

\$2,500 or more

Connie Barden & Martha Fugate
Nellie Barrios
Lang Baumgarten
Douglas DeBoer & Howard Kurtzweil
Victor Garcia & Tim Wagoner
Robert Oldakowski & Luis Mendoza
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Dennis Rodrigues
Kevin Veilleux

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Community Presentations

Project YES visited education students at the Wolfson Campus of Miami Dade Community College in March. We were invited by Professor Rebecca Sanchez to discuss gender and orientation issues as they apply to the school environments these future teachers will soon face.



Miami Dade Community College education students.

We also visited Johnson & Wales University, where youth speaker Maria Ferrer spoke to students. The inspired student leaders have invited Project YES back to address more freshman and sophomore classes. We thank Resident Advisors Alvin Habersham and Shona Mitchel for coordinating this presentation.

“The workshop brought to life a lot of pertinent issues here at Johnson & Wales University. The interaction was great, and I would love to participate in another one.”

- Freshman Student

Project YES offers accredited workshops available to students, parents, and professionals. Visit www.projectyes.org for upcoming course dates and times.

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.



You can become a speaker for Project YES by registering for the next Communication Solutions course in July at 305-663-7195.

Our Work

Speaking Engagements

- Schools and Universities
- Churches and Synagogues
- Parent groups, Police officers, Social workers

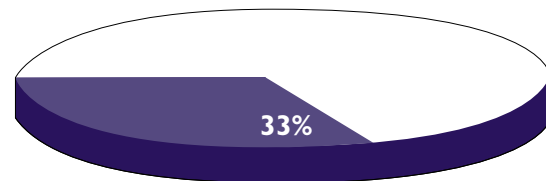
Educational Workshops

- Communication Solutions
- Essential of Sexual Orientation
- The Gender Continuum
- Deciphering the Matrix

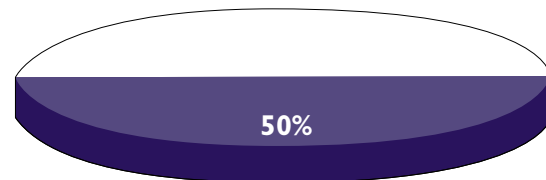
Programs

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

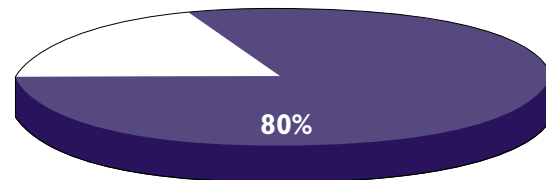
Did You Know?



33% of all teenage suicides are committed by gay and lesbian youth.



50% of gay youth are rejected by their parents when their orientation is discovered.



80% of all youth harassed in school for being perceived as gay in school are heterosexual.

For citations and additional statistics:
www.projectyes.org/research

The Wall Street Journal
Robert Tomsho, Staff Reporter
February 20, 2003:

“A survey conducted by the National Mental Health Association found that gay youth are the most harassed group in schools today. Incidents involving gay youth, and those perceived to be gay, exceed harassment based on weight, disability, race, and ethnic discrimination combined.”