



ReVision

re (ri) *n.* I. anew, again **vision** (vizh9 n) *n.* I. the manner in which one sees or conceives of something

Taking YES Models Across the Nation

How will “gender identity” and “sexual orientation” figure into public policies and social debates? During YES Institute’s annual Winter Education Week, over 65 people came from as far away as New York, Arizona, California, and Georgia to discuss these questions, and to learn our communication and education models.



Participants in the YES Communication Solutions™ course.

ignores me, and told me I can’t use my family name anymore because he doesn’t want people to know we’re related.”

Breakdowns like this were addressed in our Communication Solutions™ course, where participants learned ways to produce win-win results without succumbing to resignation or conflict. Jamison Green, the nationally respected advocate, educator, and author, recognized the value of our trademark communication model this way: “Learning to focus on ‘purpose,’ and on being authentically present and generous with the audience was

“The communication and leadership skills I learned will be integral to moving our organization forward.”

- Kim Pearson, Executive Director, TransYouth Family Allies

fantastic. I can use this tool to continue shifting society’s paradigm of sex, gender, and orientation. I am so grateful that YES is doing and sharing this work. Empowering others in this way will change the world for the better.”



From left: Jodie-Helen Martin, Patricia Ireland, Ricardo Frias, and T. Pardo.

Participants in the intensive five-day training program included educators, executives, television producers, students, parents, grandparents, and healthcare professionals. At the beginning of the week, a teen participant clearly underscored YES’ mission: “My father disowned me when I told him I’m gay. He



Jamison Green talking with Liebe Gadinsky.

Rebecca Stapel-Wax, Director of The Rainbow Center at Jewish Family & Career Services in Atlanta, commented on the value of relating authentically when people have different viewpoints: “It is an amazing relief to not be afraid of saying or doing things perfectly. This model is practical, effective, and completely freeing.”

In the Gender Continuum™ course, people began to envision new frameworks for interpreting people’s identities, behaviors, and bodies. Ricardo Frias, television producer, stated, “This is a total earthquake to my old values, language, thoughts, and perceptions. The ‘reality’ I had before is

Equity Centers Need Only One Word



Luke Jude facilitating discussion on gender for equity leaders from 8 Southern states.

The Region IV Southeastern Equity Center (SEC) encompasses 1,200 school districts, 14,000 schools, and 9 million students across 8 Southern states. Federally funded under the provisions of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, equity centers have worked tirelessly for the past 40 years to achieve safe, bias-free education in public schools. The topic that most equity professionals have dealt with is race. Now they are scrambling for education on gender.

At the invitation of Director Jerry Graniero, YES Institute provided training on gender for the equity leaders from all 8 states in the Southeastern Region. One participant stated, “I’ve worked in the area of equity and diversity for over 16 years, and I have no idea how to respond to the issues now facing our students. We need education on gender more than ever.”



Brandon Santa Rosa, high school student, speaking in the YES Gender Continuum™ course.

See **Equity**, page 2

See **Impact**, page 2

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YES is going green! If you receive two newsletters, or if you want *ReVision* delivered online, please contact: tim@yesinstitute.org



Elizabeth Scott and Dr. Luis Ottley from Ethical Culture Fieldston School in New York.

completely upended. I will never look at the world the same way ever again.” A student, revealing the transformative impact of YES education, shared, “It was such a relief to realize that I’m not alone. This is the first time I have not felt judged for who I am or who I want to become. Finally I feel happy, and can express my feelings with people I love. I will remember this weekend for the rest of my life.”



Kim Pearson, Executive Director, TransYouth Family Allies.

A team from Ethical Culture Fieldston School in New York participated together in the Leadership in Action™ course. This course wove together fundamental principles for powerful leadership, preparing participants to take the work of YES back to their

communities. “This will have a great impact on my life—both personally and professionally,” stated Adam Watstein, a Fieldston teacher.

“Very powerful and provocative—a life changing experience. It turned all of my thoughts about gender upside down.” - Dindy Pawliger, Parent

“Enrolling people instead of convincing or forcing them to participate will free me from blocking myself from what I really want to achieve.” YES has already scheduled another series of trainings for Fieldston to reach parents,

“The education at YES has transformed my thinking, and has impacted my life in a profound way. Now I tell anyone who will listen how transformative it is. I plan to be part of YES for a long time to come.”

- Abby Diamond, Fieldston teacher

students, and teachers. Dr. Luis Ottley, Principal of Fieldston’s Middle School, expressed his appreciation: “Thank you for the gift of working with us. This education will change the lives of our students as it has changed mine. Amazing!” Several participants in Education Week declared their commitment to launching education initiatives on gender and orientation in the Latin community. Filmmakers were inspired to create



Luke Jude, Martha Fugate, and Rebecca Stapel-Wax, Director of The Rainbow Center at Jewish Family & Career Services in Atlanta.

works showing the impact of gender in the lives of youth. Also, Rebecca Stapel-Wax envisioned taking YES Institute’s work to Atlanta where she wants to bridge divisiveness around immigration concerns. Her plan is to coordinate YES educational trainings in partnership with a Jewish rabbi, bringing together community members with wide-ranging beliefs. We can’t wait!

Several participants, currently handling cases of students who are undergoing a gender transition, lamented that “transgender” and “gay” are not protected by the civil rights law. We assured them that they need only one word—gender—to unravel the inequities rooted in those labels. “Gender is the key to unlocking all the stereotypes and misconceptions that keep people divided,” said YES Director Martha Fugate. “Education will dissolve those useless labels.”



Leaders of equity centers in the Southeastern Region.

“Great impact! I now feel more prepared to truly champion the diversity and educational achievement of all children!”

- Monica Hayes, Director, Office of Equity & Access, Florida Department of Education

Participants were initially confused by that declaration, and engaged fully, bringing all their expertise to test and challenge the material. At the conclusion, one of them stated, “Now I see how this education applies to issues of race, ethnicity, and other forms of harassment. This discussion needs to take place on a larger scale because the bullying and harassment must stop.”

Stellar Students

New consciousness around gender is changing the cultural landscape of schools. In the midst of these changes, students are asking important questions about their everyday lives. Last month, YES speakers reached 750 students who experienced breakthroughs in how they relate to themselves and each other.

“It confuses me when people call me ‘gay’ or ‘faggot,’ because that’s not who I am. This course cleared up a lot of questions about what I’m going through, and how to respond when people attack me.” - High school student



YES speaker Gerald Conde at Ferguson High School.

“People shouldn’t have to be afraid just to be who they are. I won’t pick on gay people anymore.”

- High school student

Healing Not Harming - “Tell Us How!”

Future doctors and nurses say something is missing



YES speaker Virgin Vandervlugt addressing medical students at the University of Miami.

The knowledge and skills necessary to manage concerns around gender and orientation are rarely taught in medical school or residency. As a result, many patients do not receive the care they need, and do not feel safe disclosing critical information to their healthcare providers. Last month, YES speakers opened a dialogue on these topics with 60 medical students at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine. Participants revealed the pitfalls of labeling in their comments.

One participant, a nurse practitioner, shared her experience with a patient pursuing medical options as part of a gender transition. “I wrote ‘transvestite’ on his chart. I didn’t really know what that word meant, but I thought it would alert the doctor so he wouldn’t be shocked.

It turned out, my colleagues thought I was discriminating against the patient, and I nearly lost my job. I definitely need training in this area so I can respond appropriately in the future.”

Luke Jude, YES Communications Director, told of being refused care by doctors who do not treat “transgender” patients. Many participants, looking to make a difference, asked practical questions: “What should I say/do?” “What is the right term?”

“I love those questions!” Jude stated. “The problem when we don’t understand is that fear drives us to make some people ‘other.’ With effective education, everyone can be included in standard practices.”

Kiaora Society Membership

YES Institute supporters who contribute a minimum of \$1,000 annually (\$84/month) become members of our Kiaora Society. Kiaora contributions make up over 60% of our annual budget, and allow us to continue our work on behalf of all youth.

Many thanks to Hon. Katy Sorenson for generously renewing her contribution at the Visionary level. We are grateful to Greg Baldwin & José Castro, and Tim & Meredith Birrittella for renewing as Kiaora Champions. We thank Paula Black, Douglas DeBoer & Howard Kurzweil, and Larry Luing & Dario Espinosa for continuing their support as Leaders.

Renewing their membership as Mentors are dear friends Dr. John Martin, Jr. & Forrest McSurdy, Robert Oldakowski & Luis Mendoza, Bill Ross, Karen Raben & Andrea Pernick, Janice & Howard Scholl, and Gary B. Stross. We also welcome and thank Bob Smith as new Kiaora Mentor.

We appreciate the additional contribution of Champion Mel Heifetz, whose commitment to innovative education consistently opens up new opportunities to advance our work.

For information about contributing to YES Institute, please contact Adriana Warren at 305-663-7195.



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Executive Director Search Update

www.yesinstitute.org/careers/

YES Institute is looking for an outstanding leader to take our organization to a new level of impact and expansion. With 11 years of proven success in creating dynamic partnerships focused on safety for all youth, our innovative education models on gender and orientation are now sought around the world.

This position provides an opportunity to work with a dedicated team of staff, board, and funders, and a powerful platform for making a difference for youth and families. Please see the above link for more information.

Featured Exemplar Video: ELLEN FIKE

ex-em-plar (noun) ɪg-zəm'plär
1. one that serves as a model or as an example. 2. an ideal.



Ellen Fike is a TRUST Specialist at American High School.

www.yesinstitute.org/video/

Engaging the Hispanic Community



Ana Gloria Rivas-Vázquez (left), Vice President, talking to Diana Campoamor, President, Hispanics in Philanthropy.

YES Institute was recently invited to provide a communication consultation to the senior management team of Hispanics in Philanthropy (HIP), an organization devoted to strengthening Latino communities across the Americas. With much of their work focused on expanding opportunities for Latino leadership, they were eager to learn new tools for powerful and productive dialogue.

“I see how easily I fall into inauthenticity, which prevents me from communicating effectively. Letting go of being ‘right’ is the solution for producing results that benefit everyone.” - Program Director, HIP

Last month, we held our Principios Esenciales de Orientacion course in Spanish for Hispanic youth and families. This was the first time the parents who attended had ever talked about

gender and orientation with anyone. One participant, whose son had just come out as gay, related her fear: “I love him, but I don’t know what to do. In my faith, he is considered a sinner. My husband was too ashamed to come here today.”

“This is the first step in bringing my family together again. Thank you for this incredible gift.”

- Parent in Principios course

The dialogue moved many participants to tears as each parent communicated their concerns. “I felt so alone when I learned about my daughter,” shared one parent. “I was afraid of being rejected by my friends. Seeing that I’m not the only one dealing with this is such a relief.”

Healing had begun, and at the completion of the course, all participants expressed interest in more education. YES thanks Tony Prado for his commitment to bringing this much-needed education to the Spanish-speaking community.



Tony Prado leading a course for Hispanic parents.

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New Frontier for Equity In 8 Southern States



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Vision

A community in which all youth develop as healthy individuals free of suicide, violence and discrimination.

Mission

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

Education Partnerships

Ethical Culture Fieldston School, NY
North Georgia College & State University
Rainbow Center in Atlanta, GA
Episcopal Diocese of Southeast Florida
Teaching Tolerance, Southern Poverty Law Center, AL
TransYouth Family Allies, AZ
The Alliance for GLBT Youth, FL

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Statistics

Boys are first called "faggot" in elementary school, long before orientation is known. Gender is the culprit behind most harassment.

Gay Youth:

- 33% of all teen suicides
- 50% rejected by their parents

Heterosexual Youth:

- 80% of youth harassed "as gay" actually identify as heterosexual

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Call Joseph at 305-663-7195, extension 1112.

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Saturday & Sunday, April 5 & 6
Noon to 6PM both days

GENDER/ORIENTATION SERIES™ – 16 CEU & 12 MPP
Part 1 Gender Continuum Saturday, May 17
Part 2 Deciphering Matrix Saturday, May 24
Part 3 Being & Belonging Saturday, May 24

Miller School of Medicine



Lynne Leverett, and Virgin Vandervlugt with medical students at the University of Miami.

“The discussion cleared up a lot of questions I’ve been afraid to ask. This education isn’t provided anywhere else in our curriculum.”

- UJM medical student

School Counselors Ask for Help

School counselors from Miami-Dade County Public Schools (MDCPS) expressed strong emotions at a recent YES training. All 45 participants have students in their schools who are undergoing a gender transition, and they are desperate for education and resources. “I want my students to be safe,” said one TRUST counselor, “but I don’t even know what words to use when I talk to them.”

“I have felt totally blindsided. My students need support now, and so far everything I know about this topic comes from daytime talk shows.”

- School social worker

Participants were excited to learn that YES Institute is creating a Gender Guide for MDCPS. The guide will provide a framework of best practices and guidelines for students wanting or undergoing a gender transition. Many counselors also declared their commitment to attend the YES Gender Continuum™ course to gain additional tools for supporting their students.

Gender Guide for Miami-Dade Schools

Available now:
www.yesinstitute.org/gender/



YES speakers at Carlos Albizu University.