

The 2nd Annual Hybrid Symposium on Action for Sexual and Gender Minority Health

DORNSIFE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

THURSDAY, APRIL 11, 2024

NESBITT 132 & ZOOM

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM EST

PANEL 2

Dr. Eric Layland, Assistant Professor, Department of Human Development and Family Sciences, College of Education & Human Development, University of Delaware

“LGBTQIA+ Socialization as a Communal Developmental Process: Identifying Actions for Positively Influencing LGBTQIA+ Young People”

LGBTQIA+ socialization is proposed as a communal developmental process through which LGBTQIA+ youth are socialized to a shared understanding of their LGBTQIA+ identities and how to navigate the world with these identities. Using data from the US Queer Joy Survey, we demonstrated from whom LGBTQIA+ people heard positive LGBTQIA-related messages while growing up and explored how LGBTQIA+ people were positively socialized to an understanding of their identities. In a diverse sample (n=220) of LGBTQIA+ adolescents and adults from across the US, participants reported how often and from whom they heard positive messages about being LGBTQIA+ while growing up. Participants' brief narratives about a person(s) who positively influenced how they saw themselves as an LGBTQIA+ person were thematically analyzed to reconstruct a schema of LGBTQIA+ positive socialization. Participants most frequently identified chosen family (48%), family of origin (16%), teachers (12%), and media representation (12%), as people who positively influenced how they saw themselves as LGBTQIA+. Six major themes of LGBTQIA+ socialization were identified: (1) providing access to queerness, (2) supporting queer developmental processes, (3) navigating disclosure and stigma, (4) providing support and acceptance, (5) engaging in dialogue, and (6) promoting asset development. Findings of the current study provided evidence of LGBTQIA+ socialization and revealed a gap in positive messages for LGBTQIA+ youth between their family of origin and chosen family. Results highlight the need for improving parent capacity for positive socialization and for increasing LGBTQIA+ youth access to LGBTQIA+ peers and community where connection to LGBTQIA+ community may be found. In addition, results provide guidance for socialization action that may positively impact LGBTQIA+ youth development in and outside the family context.