



Best Practices in Meeting the Needs of LGBTQ+ Students
Wednesday • October 16, 2019 • 8:30AM – 11:30AM

The climate of acceptance of LGBTQ+ individuals is slowly improving in the United States, but many schools remain blind, biased, and unreservedly discriminatory toward lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer/questioning (LGBTQ+) individuals. Educators have much work to do to make schools safe and affirming for all youth, including LGBTQ+ youth. In particular, school psychologists are charged with upholding professional ethics and best practices to protect the dignity and rights of LGBTQ+ youth and ensure an equal educational opportunity.

This presentation will give attendees an opportunity to explore their own beliefs around issues which affect LGBTQ+ youth, provide background information (including risk factors for LGBTQ+ youth) about these issues, and will share concrete actions that can be taken by school psychologists to put these recommendations into action. NASP resources related to meeting the needs of LGBTQ youth will be identified and shared with attendees.

Beyond the Rainbow: School-Based Mental Health Supports for LGBT+ Youth
Wednesday • October 16, 2019 • 12:30PM – 3:30PM

LGBTQ youth are often classified as a homogeneous group, but the diversity among and within them is more distinct than many people realize. The need for school-based mental health supports for LGBTQ youth is evident in higher rates of unhappiness, drug use, school dropout, truancy, suicide, harassment, family discord, and reduced self-referral rates. Despite the need and demand, little is available in terms of resources to use in a counseling format.

During this session, strategies to encourage and foster resiliency in these at-risk students will be presented along with a counseling program designed to empower school-based mental health staff to serve as advocates for LGBTQ youth and to provide counseling support for students in grades 6–12. Relevant resources will be identified and shared to assist school psychologists with the implementation of strategies to ensure a safe and supportive school environment for LGBTQ+ youth. Participants will leave with the ability to effectively advocate for sexual minority and gender-diverse youth as well as implement an innovative counseling program within their own schools to support these students.



Tracy Hobbs has been a School Psychologist in Michigan for 37 years and is currently a NASP Strategic Liaison; he previously served as NASP's LGBTQI2-S Committee Co-Chair, Interest Group Development Coordinator, Leadership Development Committee Chair, and the Michigan NASP Delegate. Tracy is a trainer and educational consultant for the Michigan Department of Education's Safe Schools for Sexual Minority Youth Initiative as well as a member of NEA's National Training Program on Safety, Bias, and GLBT Issues. For five years, Tracy was the faculty advisor for his high school's GSA (Gay Straight Alliance).

Amy Cannava is in her 17th year of practice as a school psychologist specializing in marginalized youth. She is Chair of NASP's LGBTQI2-S Committee and a requested speaker at local and national conferences. She consults with school districts, group homes, juvenile justice facilities, universities, and parents on affirmative and inclusive practices for queer and gender diverse youth, facilitates LGBTQ+ peer support and counseling groups, and volunteers for numerous local Boards. Amy is the faculty sponsor for her high school's GSA and is the community sponsor for a cross-county Pride Prom which garnered national attention. A former crisis counselor for The Trevor Project, Amy remains passionate about working with LGBTQ+ youth and considers them to be an amazing inspiration.

