



**Department of
Youth & Community
Development**

Bill Chong
Commissioner

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June 1, 2017

Dear Friends:

The Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) is pleased to reissue our guidelines for providing safe, affirming and respectful programs and services for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Questioning (LGBTQ) youth. We encourage you to review this guidance, developed in partnership with Hetrick-Martin Institute (HMI), and identify how you can take steps to continue to improve the quality of service provided in your programs.

Since issuing this guidance last year, DYCD has taken our own steps toward higher quality services for LGBTQ youth. For example, DYCD has:

- Funded HMI through the TA and Capacity Building RFP, to provide technical assistance to DYCD programs to improve the quality of services.
- Funded The Center to provide services to LGBTQ youth through our COMPASS Explore RFP.
- Funded Ali Forney to provide 12 additional beds for Runaway and Homeless Youth that specialize in support for transgender youth.
- Hired a Gender Equity Liaison, to develop an Equity Agenda for DYCD with a focus on the intersection of race, sexual-orientation, gender identity, and class.

We are also pleased to share the attached safe space postcard, for DYCD and CBO staff, to outwardly identify for LGBTQ youth. Please download and share.

It is our goal that you will review our guidance and expectations with your staff, and explore areas for improvement and focused attention.

Happy Pride Month 2017!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Bill Chong'.

Bill Chong
Commissioner



Guidance for Supporting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Questioning (LGBTQ) Youth

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Ensure staff understand that biological sex is assigned at birth based on body parts and chromosomes; gender identity is one's inner most concept of self as male or female, a blend or neither; gender expression is an external appearance of one's gender identity through clothes or behavior, for example; and sexual orientation is who you are attracted to emotionally, sexually or physically.
- Youth benefit from program staff who are skilled to work with all young people, who are supported by training, and who can be recognized for actively promoting an LGBTQ inclusive environment.

PRACTICES

- DYCD expects services to foster positive youth development, promote appreciation for diversity, model and teach respectful attitudes, and ensure welcoming environments, regardless of gender, gender identity and sexual orientation.
- Gender-affirming interactions with youth include using a youth's preferred name and gender pronouns, including for gender non-conforming youth, whose gender expression may differ from traditional stereotypes.
- Creating an LGBTQ-inclusive environment improves experiences for all young people. Any adult can be an ally for youth, and be a role model for others.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- At DYCD-funded programs, bias, discrimination, bullying or harassment will not be tolerated, and policies and procedures should outline how staff will intervene, including ensuring that reactions to reports of harassment do not further stigmatize students who were targeted for real or perceived LGBTQ identities.
- All youth are in varying stages of development, and should be supported to share gender identity and sexual orientation information on their own terms. This personal information should not be shared with anyone without the student's permission—even the student's family.

PROGRAM DESIGN

- As with all young people, LGBTQ youth need an environment that reflects their experiences, and supports their identity – including supportive peers, positive LGBTQ role models, and exposure to LGBTQ culture and history.
- When providing LGBTQ youth with referrals, offer resources that are LGBTQ safe and affirming.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

- Youth need access to restrooms and facilities that are accessible and affirming to their gender identity, and staff will ensure that transgender and gender-non-conforming youth can safely use restrooms/locker rooms of their choosing.



I am

**I AM AN
ALLY FOR
ALL YOUTH**

respectful

and

affirming



I am

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I understand that biological sex is assigned at birth based on body parts and chromosomes; gender identity is one's inner most concept of self as male or female, a blend or neither; gender expression is an external appearance of one's gender identity through clothes or behavior, for example; and sexual orientation is who you are attracted to emotionally, sexually or physically.

I foster positive youth development, promote appreciation for diversity, model and teach respectful attitudes, and ensure welcoming environments, regardless of gender, identity, sexual orientation, gender expression, or sexual orientation.

I support gender-affirming interactions with youth and will use a youth's preferred name and gender pronouns.

I am creating an LGBTQ-inclusive environment to improve experiences for all young people. I am an ally for youth, and a role model for others.

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 1.800.246.4646

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I understand that biological sex is assigned at birth based on body parts and chromosomes; gender identity is one's inner most concept of self as male or female, a blend or neither; gender expression is an external appearance of one's gender identity through clothes or behavior, for example; and sexual orientation is who you are attracted to emotionally, sexually or physically.

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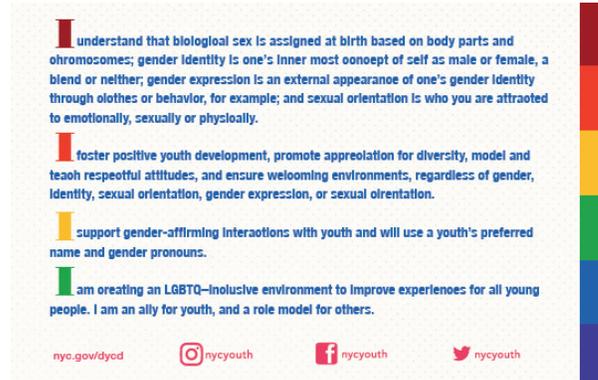
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PRINTING and TRIMMING INSTRUCTIONS

FRONT of POSTCARD



BACK of POSTCARD



1 If you are able to, print the file double sided.

2 If you can only print one side at a time, print the front, then flip the paper and print the other side.



3 Cut the printed page in half.

