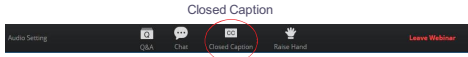


Putting Intersectionality into Practice

Nia Clark & Robin McHaelen
HRC Foundation
January 26, 2022

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All handouts are downloadable from:
<https://bit.ly/Intersectionality-Handout-Folder>

- ACAF Intersectionality Slides PDF
- Intersectionality Worksheet
- Intersectionality Vocabulary Resource
- 2022 ACAF Webinar Series Offerings

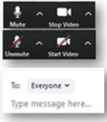


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Communicating with Zoom



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| | | | |
|---|--|--|-----------------|
| SOGIE Considerations in Child Protection Services 3/22 @ 3 PM ET | Navigating Transgender-Affirming Care using Medicaid and/or CHIP 4/27 @ 3 PM ET | Caring for LGBTQ+ Youth 201: A Deeper Dive for Foster & Adoptive Caregivers 5/11 @ 3 PM ET | Focus: |
| Passages of Hope: Finding LGBTQ+ Support Within Doctrines of Faith 6/16 @ 3 PM ET | Post-Placement Support for Professionals & Caregivers of LGBTQ+ Youth 7/14 @ 1 PM ET | SOGIE and Disability in Child Welfare 7/20 @ 1 PM ET | Youth |
| Using a Racial Equity Lens to Review and Update Child Welfare Practices 8/9 @ 3 PM ET | The "+" in LGBTQ+ 8/11 @ 1 PM ET | | Youth & Parents |
| | | | Caregivers |


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Presenters



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Expert Trainer,
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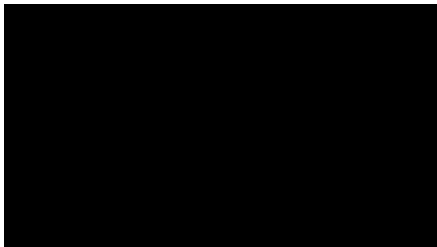
Today's Objectives

Intersectionality Tool:
<http://bit.ly/Intersectionality-Worksheet>
Evaluation:
http://bit.ly/Intersectionality_Eval

- **Build baseline understanding of the levels** at which oppression operates
- **Build baseline understanding of intersectionality** as a theory of oppression and how it informs our efforts toward equity and inclusion
- **Gain insight from LGBTQ+ youth** on how to support them through an intersectional lens
- **Examine a case study** from professionals in the field to apply intersectionality to your practice with youth

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Oppression and the 4 1's



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8

What is YOUR definition?

USE CHAT:
What's your definition of intersectionality?

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9

Intersectionality Defined



Kimberlé Crenshaw coined the term Intersectionality.

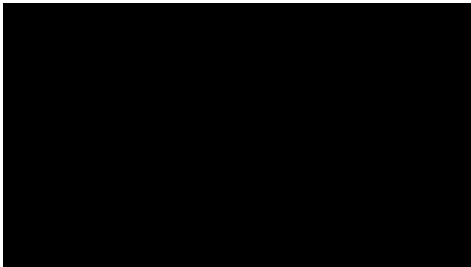
“The interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage; a theoretical approach based on such a premise.”

- Oxford Dictionary

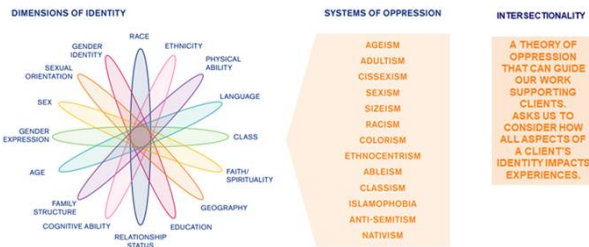
Keys to Understanding:

Lived realities are shaped by different factors and social dynamics operating together.
Oppressions are interlinked and cannot be resolved alone.
We can hold both oppressed AND privileged identities at the same time.

Intersectionality



Intersectionality must inform our efforts toward LGBTQ+ inclusion.



Intersectionality is key to understanding the impact of today's environment on young people.

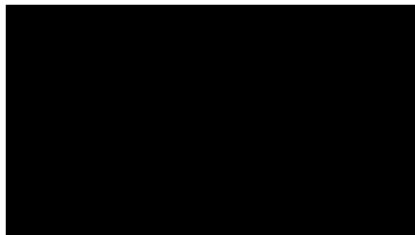
Resource:
<https://rwio.org/resources/brick-by-brick-the-LGBTQ+-advocacy-curriculum/>



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Rivera-Calle/IN, 2020

Youth Voices from HRC'S Project THRIVE



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Video Debrief

USE CHAT:

- What do these young people mean when they describe not being able to bring their whole selves into a space?
- What advice did the young people in the video have for adults?

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Dimensions of Youth Vulnerability

- Developmental**
 - Occur when children don't meet age-appropriate milestones. Includes cognitive, language, emotional, motor skills, social development.
- Emotional**
 - Inability to adapt to environment or control emotional responses
 - Hyper-vigilance, easy to anger, difficulty in forming relationships
- Mental**
 - Impact on psychological functioning & intellectual ability, processing & integrating new information
 - Brain development, genetics, exposure to drugs, alcohol, lead.
- Physical**
 - Increase youth's susceptibility to bodily injuries, illnesses, and diseases
 - Caused by exposure to environmental hazards, lack of access to health care, inadequate nutrition, victimization.
- Social**
 - Susceptibility to experiencing social exclusion due to gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, geography
 - Lack of access to quality supports & services including health care, educational, vocational.

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Experiences of Black LGBTQ+ Youth

Common Feelings for Black LGBTQ+ Youth

- Numbness
- Hopelessness
- Disconnecting from white allies
- Rage
- Desire to Escape
- Fear
- Grief

“My counselor is gay, so since he’s part of the LGBTQ community it makes me feel a lot better. But what makes me uncomfortable is the fact that I’m Black and he’s white, and he’s subtly pointed that out several times. Whether it was conscious or not, I’m not sure, but it’s uncomfortable.”

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Supporting BIPOC LGBTQ+ Youth

- Check-In "Hold Space"
- Use Your Platform
- Center Black experiences & voices
- Educate Yourself
- Take a break from news & social media
- Learn the difference between sympathy & empathy

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Putting Intersectionality into Practice

1. **Build your understanding** of intersectionality, systems of oppression, power and privilege.
2. **Examine your own biases**, intersecting identities, power, privilege, and experiences of marginalization.
3. **Assess your current practice** and how you are learning about and acknowledging young people's multiple intersecting identities.
4. **Introduce the concept** of intersectionality into your classroom, programs, services.

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Resources for Learning More

Handouts:
<https://bit.ly/Intersectionality-Handout-Folder>

Intersectionality Tool:
<http://bit.ly/Intersectionality-Worksheet>

Growing Number of Online Resources:

Creating space for intersectional practice interventions in counseling.
Using Creativity to Explore Intersectionality in Counseling
Shawana A. B. Courtenay, PhD
Pages 110-118 | Published online 20 Jun 2019



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In the words of Kimberlé Crenshaw:

“Self-interrogation is a good place to start. If you see inequality as a “them” problem or “unfortunate other” problem, that is a problem. Being able to attend to not just unfair exclusion but also, frankly, unearned inclusion is part of the equality gambit. We’ve got to be open to looking at all of the ways our systems reproduce these inequalities, and that includes the privileges as well as the harms.”

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Slavin et al., 2020 21

3. Assess Your Current Practice

“When a person's not able to go into a space being their authentic and whole self it genuinely takes away aspects of their character and who they are.”

Ashton

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Ask Yourself these Questions

- ❑ How am I learning about the different dimensions of identity of the young people I serve?
- ❑ How am I addressing challenges caused by the systems of oppression based on young people's marginalized identities?
- ❑ Are my current equity and inclusion efforts intersectional?

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How do I know if my current efforts are intersectional?

Supporting Multicultural Membership Growth
Overview: How to Engage Underrepresented Groups

Key Strategies for Specific Groups

- African American Children and Families
- Hispanic Children and Families
- American Indian/Alaska Native Children and Families
- Asian American Children and Families
- Pacific Islander American Children and Families
- Youth Engagement
- Children in Military Families
- Children in Foster Care and Their Families
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ) Children and Families
- Children With Special Needs and Their Families
- Location Matters: Urban, Suburban, and Rural Children and Families

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How are you applying the resources available to you?

4. Bring Intersectionality into Your Programs

October 07, 2020 | [MARCUS HAYMON, LYDIA WANG](#)
[Center](#)

Intersectionality in Organizations: Why 'Bringing Your Whole Self to Work' is Not Sufficient

Earlier this year, Delberg's Americas offices brought together several leaders to discuss the LGBTQ+ movement through the lens of intersectionality. The talk covered why the intersecting experiences of oppression must be considered in evaluating both internal diversity and inclusion efforts and external interactions, which is a topic of utmost importance to us as a firm. This article draws from a robust conversation with Cullen-Lorde's Anthony Fortenberry, the National Center for Lesbian Right's Elizabeth Lanyon, and Google Diversity Business Partner Cornell Verdija-Woodson to show why today's context, a historical understanding, and examples from the real world all have a role to play in understanding how to meaningfully prioritize people with multiple identities.

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In your small group

- Read your scenario.
- Identify one tip, next step or intervention you would recommend if this were your case

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Case Study #1: Andre

Andre is 14. He is a first generation American; his bio parents emigrated from Jamaica just before he was born. He came into care two years ago because of his family's attempt to 'beat the gay out of him.' He has been in several placements since coming into care, with the last placement disrupting because the foster parents didn't know how to deal with Andre's desire to date and be more 'out'.

Three months ago, you placed him with two white gay men, Mark, and Joseph. That placement has been seeming to go well. You are meeting with Andre for a regular 'check in' and you ask him how it is going. He says, 'pretty good' but looks away from you. It seems clear to you that something is bothering him.

With further discussion, you learn that while Andre feels supported as a gay young man, his white foster parents don't seem to understand or appreciate his experiences as Black young man. The high school in Mark and Joseph's town is predominately white. The GSA is okay but it's all white kids. They have asked to touch his hair, wonder what kind of food he eats, and one kid said he 'smelled funny'. The few other Black kids in the school don't want to hang out with him because he is gay. When he talked to his foster dads about it, they told him to 'ignore' them all. They said, "The white kids don't mean anything by it. If the Black kids don't like you, forget about them. You don't need them."

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Case Study #2: Yazan

Yazan, a 14-year-old, transgender boy, is currently in residential treatment due to suicidal ideation. Although he has been diagnosed with Gender Dysphoria, his family refuses to accept his identity. He is the adopted, youngest child of a family whose parents immigrated from Pakistan 10 years ago.

All of Yazan's 6 older siblings are cisgender males. Yazan was adopted, in part, because the family wanted a 'girl'. In fact, the family named the child "LiYana", which means a tender and delicate woman. His chosen name, Yazan, means "a determined man".

For a period of time, after each family visit, Yazan reverts back to a feminine presentation but demonstrates significant anxiety and depression. The clinician believes this means that Yazan is "unsure of their transgender identity." Clinical staff are resisting the youth's request for medication to prevent menstruation or to have an evaluation for puberty blockers.

You are Yazan's social worker.

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Org Policy & Practice: First Steps

- **Make the goal explicit and visible.**
 - When drafting work group's purpose or mission statement, include intersectionality and check in on this goal throughout the process. Educate group members on the concept so everyone understands.
- **Get the numbers you need to understand the problem.**
 - Make sure data are disaggregated so you can see trends across different subpopulations of youth.
- **Gather the qualitative information you need from a diverse group of young people.**
 - Make sure you are getting feedback from a diverse group of young people and not inadvertently prioritizing the voices of those less marginalized who may have an easier time participating in feedback gathering activities.
- **Center the most marginalized when developing policy.**
 - Consider the barriers faced by those experiencing multiple forms of oppression when developing a policy to remove those barriers.

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Closing Question: Homework!

- What can YOU do to bring or strengthen LGBTQ+ intersectionality in your organization?
- Think about it from your personal perspective - what you can YOU do; and from an organizational perspective - what does your agency need to do?

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