

# Family Acceptance Project<sup>®</sup> Resources

Using Family Acceptance Project<sup>®</sup> Resources to Help Decrease Family Rejection & Health Risks and Increase Family Support for LGBTQ Children & Youth



Caitlin Ryan, PhD, ACSW

© 2023 Caitlin Ryan, PhD, Family Acceptance Project<sup>®</sup>

SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIVERSITY • FAMILYPROJECT.SFSU.EDU • FAP@SFSU.EDU

## BACKGROUND



Until the Family Acceptance Project® (FAP) was founded in 2002, no one had studied the families of youth who identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer (LGBTQ).

Families were seen as rejecting and incapable of supporting their LGBTQ children and LGBTQ youth were served alone like adults and in LGBTQ youth groups, without an understanding of the importance of engaging and working with their families to reduce risk and promote well-being. Providers had little guidance on how to engage and work with diverse parents, families and caregivers with LGBTQ children, especially those who were perceived as rejecting, and families had little information about how to support their LGBTQ children.

***Since the 1980s, LGBTQ youth have been self-identifying and sharing their identity with peers at younger ages in response to far greater access to information about LGBTQ lives than earlier generations of LGBTQ adults.***

As a result, services were not available to help diverse parents and caregivers learn about their LGBTQ children's needs and how to support them, including how to advocate for them when others mistreat them in their families, schools and communities. Since the 1980s, LGBTQ youth have been self-identifying and sharing their identity with peers at younger ages in response to far greater access to information about LGBTQ lives

than earlier generations of LGBTQ adults. This has occurred in tandem with the information age, changes in public policy and more positive images of LGBTQ people and families in the media and their daily lives. However, these demographic changes related to child development have occurred without the realization that a comparable change is needed to provide family guidance and support services across systems of care – including in school-related settings – to enable diverse parents and caregivers to understand their LGBTQ children's needs and learn how to nurture and care for them.

## First Research with LGBTQ Youth & Families

The Family Acceptance Project® was established to conduct the first research with LGBTQ youth and families and to develop the first evidence-based family support model to decrease health risks and increase well-being for LGBTQ children and youth. FAP's research showed for the first time that families play a critical role in contributing to serious health risks & promoting well-being for their LGBTQ children.

FAP's research is also participatory. This means that diverse LGBTQ youth, young adults and families have engaged with FAP to study their lives and experiences as part of FAP's research and family support work. From the beginning, when the Family Acceptance Project was founded, diverse LGBTQ young people and families provided guidance to help FAP researchers to understand their experiences and to help develop

FAP's family support model and multilingual educational resources. FAP's research includes individual in-depth interviews in English and Spanish with LGBTQ youth, parents, family members and caregivers who were accepting, ambivalent and rejecting of the youth's LGBTQ



Parents talk about impact of FAP's research and Healthy Futures posters on reducing risk and increasing well-being for LGBTQ youth - American Foundation for Suicide Prevention's video about FAP.

identity, including LGBTQ youth who were forced out and removed from their homes because of conflict related to their identity.

FAP's interviews generated thousands of pages of transcripts that examined many aspects of their lives including how family members and others respond to the youth's sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression (SOGIE), cultural and religious beliefs related to the youth's LGBTQ identity and gender expression, school and peer experiences and sources of support, victimization, hopes and dreams. Among other key content, FAP's interviews identified more than 100 specific behaviors that parents and caregivers use to respond to their children's LGBTQ identity. Half of these behaviors are rejecting and focus

on trying to change, prevent, deny or minimize the youth's identity and half are supportive and accepting and aim to affirm, respect and validate their child's identity. FAP measured these behaviors in a follow up survey to show – for the first time – how specific experiences of family rejection, ambivalence and acceptance during adolescence contribute to health risks and well-being for LGBTQ young people.



**Family Rejecting Behaviors** – Some of the more than 50 family rejecting behaviors that FAP identified and measured include: not letting LGBTQ youth participate in LGBTQ support groups and activities such as participating in a school diversity club; not letting them have an LGBTQ friend; ridiculing them, using slurs and derogatory words to talk about their sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression; using religion to try to change or prevent their LGBTQ identity; and blaming them when others mistreat them because of their LGBTQ identity.

FAP's research found that LGBTQ young people who are highly rejected by their family – who experience many family rejecting behaviors – are more than 8 times as likely to attempt suicide, nearly six times as likely to report high levels of clinical depression and more than 3 times as likely to use illegal drugs and to put themselves at high risk for HIV. Family rejection also constricts an LGBTQ youth's ability to care for themselves as a young adult. LGBTQ youth whose families try to change their sexual orientation in the family and by taking them to a therapist

or religious leader to try to change their identity have much lower levels of educational attainment and income as young adults. Transgender individuals who have experienced efforts to change their gender identity also have lower levels of education and income in adulthood.

Family rejecting behaviors can also be traumatic for LGBTQ children and youth. More than 65% of youth experience at least one trauma before adulthood and a third experience multiple traumas. LGBTQ young people are at higher risk for victimization, bullying and rejection not because of who they are but because of how others respond to them, including parents, families and caregivers who attempt to change or prevent their child's LGBTQ identity or gender expression.

***LGBTQ young people who are highly rejected by their family – who experience many family rejecting behaviors – are more than 8 times as likely to attempt suicide, nearly six times as likely to report high levels of clinical depression and more than 3 times as likely to use illegal drugs and to put themselves at high risk for HIV.***

**Family Accepting Behaviors** – FAP also identified and measured more than 50 family supportive and accepting behaviors that parents use to affirm their child's LGBTQ identity. These include such behaviors as: talking with their LGBTQ child to understand how they experience their identity and listening respectfully; self-educating to learn accurate information about their child's LGBTQ identity and ways to support them; welcoming their child's LGBTQ friends to family events and activities; finding a positive role model to help their child learn about becoming an LGBTQ adult and showing them options for the future; using the chosen name and pronouns that match their child's gender identity; and advocating for them when others mistreat them because of their LGBTQ identity and gender expression.

FAP's research found that LGBTQ young people from families that are very accepting of their LGBTQ identity are 3 times less likely to think about or attempt suicide and they are much less likely to experience depression or to have substance abuse problems. They have higher levels of self-esteem, a stronger support system, better overall health and more positive family relationships. Affirming family behaviors increase connectedness, strengthen the parent-child relationship and give the young person hope that their parents and caregivers will be there for them. Being able to see other parents and families that support and accept their LGBTQ children counters the long-standing perception



that diverse families – especially families that are seen as socially, culturally and religiously conservative – are not able to support their LGBTQ children.

FAP’s research has found that, in general, parents and caregivers are more likely to be ambivalent about their child’s LGBTQ identity than rejecting and as a result, can more quickly learn to support their LGBTQ child when they understand that how they respond to their LGBTQ child impacts their child’s health and well-being. Parents and caregivers have said that learning about family rejecting and accepting behaviors from FAP’s research gives them a reason to change behaviors that increase their LGBTQ children’s risk and to engage in supportive behaviors that decrease mental health risks and increase self-esteem and connectedness.

However, widespread misinformation, lack of accurate information about sexual orientation and gender identity in childhood and adolescence and lack of family support services that help parents and caregivers learn to support their LGBTQ children – especially in schools and school-related settings – is a significant barrier to reducing risk and promoting well-being for LGBTQ children and adolescents.

### FAP’S FAMILY SUPPORT MODEL

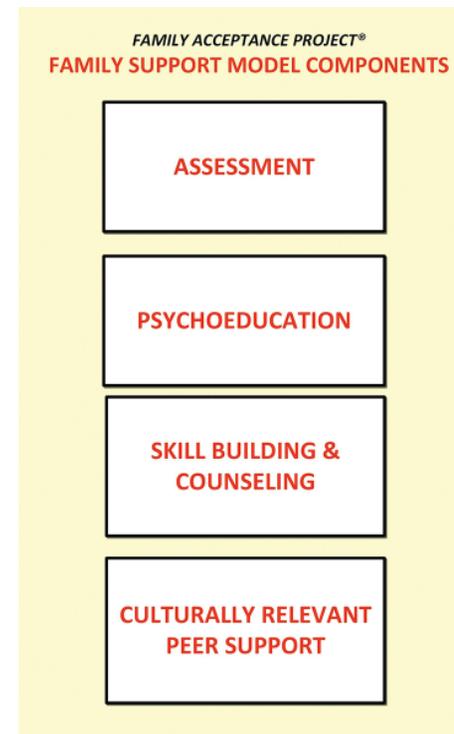
FAP’s research was initiated to develop a new evidence-based family model of wellness, prevention and care that could be implemented across systems of care, including in schools and school-based health centers, primary care, out-of-home care and in all settings where children, youth and families are served.

*Parents and caregivers have said that learning about FAP’s research gives them a reason to change behaviors that increase their LGBTQ children’s risk and to engage in supportive behaviors that decrease mental health risks and promote self-esteem and well-being.*

FAP worked with racially, religiously, culturally and linguistically diverse families and LGBTQ youth to help the FAP team learn how to share their findings with families and youth from diverse cultural backgrounds and faith traditions. LGBTQ youth and families provided guidance on how to message FAP’s research, the kinds of educational materials that are needed to help diverse families learn to support their LGBTQ children, what these resources should look like and how they should be

disseminated. As part of this work, FAP developed specific messaging and ways to frame their research findings to help parents and caregivers learn to support their LGBTQ children – even when they believe that being gay or transgender is wrong.

Because FAP’s work is grounded in the lived experiences of LGBTQ youth and families, FAP’s approach is familiar and aligns with the family’s values, enabling parents and caregivers to begin a journey of learning to care for a child with different needs that for many parents and caregivers may be destabilizing and distressing and at odds with their underlying beliefs. At the heart of FAP’s family



support approach is a range of accepting and rejecting behaviors – a new behavioral language identified in FAP’s research – that parents and caregivers use to care for their LGBTQ or gender diverse child.

## PURPOSE OF THIS BOOKLET

This booklet is intended to help individuals who work with children, youth and families – including educators and school-based providers who are unsure how to engage and interact with parents and caregivers with LGBTQ children – to: 1) start to apply FAP’s research findings and messaging; and 2) use FAP’s educational resources to help diverse

*This booklet is intended to be used as an adjunct to FAP training, by families themselves and as a resource for educators and providers to help increase family support for LGBTQ children and youth.*

families to decrease family rejecting behaviors and increase family supportive behaviors to strengthen families and promote well-being.

**Companion to FAP Training** – FAP’s work is carried out in the context of the family’s cultural and religious values and starts by assessing the family’s level of knowledge, understanding and response to their child’s sexual orientation and gender

identity. FAP provides training on implementing FAP’s family support model and using the evidence-based family education resources that FAP developed with LGBTQ youth and families to teach parents how to support their LGBTQ children. This includes helping parents, families and caregivers to understand their child’s LGBTQ identity in the context of child development and realizing that how they respond to their LGBTQ and gender diverse children impacts their child’s health and well-being, their sense of self-worth, ability to care for themselves, their perceptions of the future – and even their income and educational levels.

**Individual Use** – In addition to using the booklets as part of FAP training and family support model, these resources are downloaded and used by families themselves and by educators, providers and religious leaders to help increase family support for LGBTQ children and youth.

## FAP’S EVIDENCE-BASED FAMILY SUPPORT RESOURCES



### FAMILY EDUCATION BOOKLETS

Early in their work, FAP identified the need to develop a series of multilingual educational materials to help families understand how their behaviors affect their LGBTQ children and to provide information on ways to nurture and care for LGBTQ and gender diverse children. With guidance from LGBTQ young people and families, FAP developed the first *Best Practice* resources for suicide prevention for LGBTQ youth included in the Best Practices Registry for Suicide Prevention. This family education booklet – *Supportive Families, Healthy Children* – was published in three languages (English, Spanish & Chinese) and includes a growing series of faith-based versions to help diverse families learn to support their LGBTQ children.

<https://familyproject.sfsu.edu/publications>

<https://lgbtqfamilyacceptance.org/evidence-based-resources>

**What the Booklets Include** – The booklets are written at a middle school reading level and include basic information about sexual orientation, gender identity and FAP’s research. They include short family narratives from diverse caregivers who participated in FAP’s research that describe ways they support their LGBTQ children, and a list of some of the family accepting and rejecting behaviors that FAP identified and measured with graphics that show how the presence and frequency of these behaviors contribute to health risks and well-being for LGBTQ young people. Each language version – English, Spanish and Chinese – and the growing faith-based series were developed with guidance from diverse LGBTQ cultural experts and were field tested with LGBTQ young people and families.

**Faith-Based Versions** – Because FAP’s research studied families’ cultural and religious beliefs and recognized the need to provide guidance in ways that are culturally relevant for all families, they began to develop a series of family education booklets for families from major religious denominations. FAP developed the first of these faith-based versions for LGBTQ youth and families who are members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and is developing other versions for families from other denominations.



Since we believe that families are forever, how we care for all family members on earth affects our family for eternity...

**Dissemination** – The booklets are available to download online from FAP’s websites and in print copies. To date, FAP has disseminated more than 600,000 copies of all of the versions of these booklets across the U.S. and in 70 countries. FAP provided a survey for readers who downloaded the booklets and found that more than 80% of readers were motivated to change family behaviors to decrease risk and increase support for LGBTQ youth as a result of reading the booklets. FAP is currently seeking funds to update the booklets which remain an extremely useful background resource for explaining the importance of family support for LGBTQ children and youth.

**Using the Booklets** – Parents and caregivers can read the booklets on their own and are encouraged to share copies with extended family members, cultural and religious leaders and other providers to help them understand the importance of supporting LGBTQ children and youth. Often, parents who try to affirm their LGBTQ child are criticized and may even be ostracized by other family members or cultural leaders who

perceive the parent’s behaviors as disrespecting and denying their beliefs.

Scores of parents have used the booklets to help other family members understand how rejecting and accepting behaviors impact their LGBTQ children and motivate them to change rejecting behaviors that increase health risks and to become more supportive.

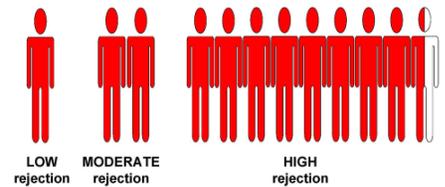
Educators and providers who work with parents, families and caregivers can introduce the booklets when meeting in person and online. They can give caregivers an overview of what the booklet includes and can ask the parent to read it at home so they can discuss the contents together in a follow up session. When parents have more limited literacy skills, they can go over the booklet together and discuss each section to talk about how some of the behaviors described in the booklet might happen in their family and how this affects their child’s self-esteem, health risks and sense of the future.

**Simple Graphics** – The booklet includes simple graphics that show how increases in rejecting and accepting behaviors contribute to risk and well-being for LGBTQ young people. These graphics are helpful for all families, especially for caregivers with more limited reading ability. FAP has also used these graphics with caregivers who are unable to read by discussing how family rejecting and accepting behaviors contribute to risk and well-being and showing the graphics to explain how increases and decreases in these behaviors affect their LGBTQ child.

The booklets open the door to identifying and explaining family rejecting and accepting behaviors. They can be used

**FAP found that more than 80% of readers were motivated to change family behaviors to decrease risk and increase support for LGBTQ youth as a result of reading FAP’s family education booklets**

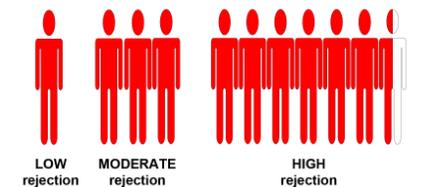
**Lifetime Suicide Attempts for Highly Rejected LGBTQ Young People**  
(One or more times)



Ryan, Family Acceptance Project, 2009

Level of Family Rejection

**Depression Among Highly Rejected LGBTQ Young People**



Ryan, Family Acceptance Project, 2009

Level of Family Rejection

effectively together with FAP's *Healthy Futures* posters to deepen caregivers understanding of the impact of behavior on how they and others respond to their LGBTQ child.

Ways to use the booklets in multiple settings:

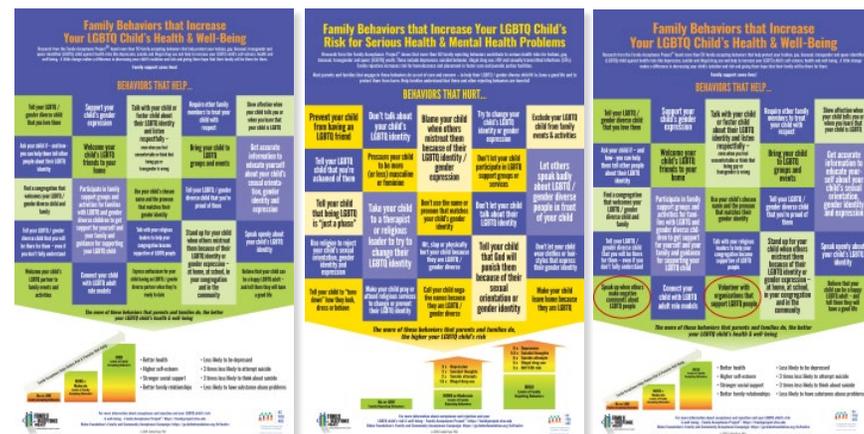
- Agencies and clinics – including school wellness centers and school-based health centers – can place them on literature racks and tables.
- Counselors and providers in schools and other settings can make them available in their office or therapy rooms to share with parents, caregivers and youth.
- Organizations can include information about FAP resources in agency publications, fact sheets and handouts and by sharing links to FAP materials on their program websites.
- Educational programs can include them in education and training for families, providers, students and pastoral care providers.



### FAP'S HEALTHY FUTURES POSTERS

<https://familyproject.sfsu.edu/posters>

Guidance for families on how to support their LGBTQ children is not widely available, especially for caregivers from diverse cultural backgrounds and who have specific literacy and language needs. To address this need, FAP has focused on finding effective ways to communicate the critical role of family support to the public and diverse groups in simple ways. This includes developing resources that show the impact of family support on a single page and in ways that do not require an educator, counselor or medical provider to explain. FAP's research that shows how specific family rejecting and accepting behaviors contribute to risk and well-being enables caregivers to more readily move from struggle to support to reduce their LGBTQ child's health risks and increase connectedness once they understand how their words, actions and behaviors affect their LGBTQ child.



3 Kinds of Posters - English Versions - Acceptance, Rejection & Conservative Acceptance

With the aim of making every space a public education space to show the importance of family support, FAP developed a series of *Healthy Futures* posters that could be used in all settings where children, youth and families are served, including clinics, schools, libraries, congregations and public housing, on outside building walls and in community venues and by families themselves.

To develop the posters, FAP identified a range of family rejecting and accepting behaviors that were documented and measured in FAP's research and are common across cultures. They depicted the behaviors in graphics that show how the frequency of family rejecting and accepting behaviors contribute to an increase or decrease in health risks and well-being for LGBTQ young people.

The posters include a range of family reactions from simple behaviors that all parents and caregivers can engage in, such as talking with their LGBTQ child and listening respectfully when learning about their child's experiences to behaviors that require more support for their LGBTQ identity such as welcoming their child's LGBTQ friends to family events and activities or believing their child will be a happy LGBTQ adult.

FAP developed 3 kinds of posters to show how family reactions contribute to their LGBTQ children's health and mental health. These include:

- 1) A **General Acceptance** poster that shows a range of common family accepting behaviors that help protect against risk and promote well-being;

2) A **Rejection** poster that shows common family rejecting behaviors that contribute to health risks; and

3) A **Conservative Acceptance** poster that includes the same common supportive and accepting behaviors as the General Acceptance poster but does not mention dating or parental support for the youth having an LGBTQ romantic partner which conflicts with cultural and religious beliefs for some families.

FAP's approach helps parents and caregivers to decrease risk and promote well-being for their LGBTQ and gender diverse children by meeting them where they are in ways that are culturally relevant for them. Learning to support an LGBTQ child is different for every family and FAP has been developing a range of resources to help **all** families learn to support their LGBTQ and gender diverse children as part of FAP's Family Support Model.

**Poster Guidance** – The posters also come with a **Poster Guidance** that explains what the posters are, provides background information on FAP's research and family support approach and provides suggestions for using the posters. FAP's posters and Poster Guidance are available to download for free in 4 sizes in 11 language and cultural versions, including a version for Indigenous families and communities. FAP worked with more than 60 LGBTQ cultural and language experts from diverse backgrounds to develop multicultural and multilingual versions. Camera-ready artwork for all versions is posted on FAP's main website (<https://familyproject.sfsu.edu/posters>) and on FAP's LGBTQ youth and family resource website (<https://lgbtqfamilyacceptance.org/>).



**AFSP Video** – The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) developed a short 3-minute video to provide information about the posters that can be posted online and used in trainings and family support work. It includes comments from parents and AFSP's medical director. <https://vimeo.com/792059433>

**Using the Posters** – Parents and caregivers can download the smallest-sized (8.5 x 11) posters to use on their own, however, the posters are most effective when they are professionally printed. Providers can give them to families who can share them with grandparents and other relatives and with cultural and religious leaders to help them understand the importance of family support for LGBTQ children and youth.



Larger sizes (11 x 17; 18 x 24; and 24 x 36) are available to download the artwork to send to a commercial printer so they can be posted on bulletin boards and resource areas in schools, in agency waiting rooms and clinics, in counseling and community centers and in libraries and educational spaces in congregations.

We recommend sharing a copy of the *Poster Guidance* with everyone who gets the posters so they know that the posters are evidence-based and learn about how they were developed and about ways to use them. Because lists are often used to share suggestions, unless otherwise known, people often assume that the posters include ideas rather than research findings that were generated over a period of years through rigorous research. FAP's posters are a powerful tool to help break the silence about the critical role of families in preventing health risks for LGBTQ youth and the capacity of diverse families to grow and change to learn to support their LGBTQ children. Parents and caregivers have often said that learning about family rejecting and accepting behaviors from FAP's research gives them a reason to change behaviors that increase their LGBTQ children's risk and to engage in supportive behaviors that decrease mental health risks and increase self-esteem and connectedness – even when they believe that being gay or transgender is wrong.

**Current poster language versions include:**

- English
- Spanish
- Chinese (Simplified)
- Chinese (Traditional)
- Hindi
- Indigenous (American Indian)
- Japanese
- Korean
- Punjabi
- Tagalog
- Vietnamese

Recent findings from a survey on using FAP's posters bears this out. Of those who used the posters with their own family or with families for whom they provide services, 76% said that families have decreased rejecting behaviors toward their LGBTQ child and 74% said that families have increased accepting behaviors as a result of seeing FAP's posters.

**76% of families have decreased rejecting behaviors and 74% have increased accepting behaviors towards their LGBTQ children as a result of seeing and using FAP's posters**



Version of FAP's posters for Indigenous families and communities

Providers can use these behaviors as prompts to develop an inventory of family rejecting and accepting behaviors to guide psychoeducation and family support services. FAP provides training on implementing FAP's family support model which includes using FAP's educational resources, as well as assessment, psychoeducation, framing family support, and counseling approaches.

**Importance of Educating Youth About Parent Reactions** - Together with the booklets, FAP's posters are a key resource to teach parents, families, caregivers and youth about the impact of family rejecting and accepting behaviors. In a recent study of how LGBTQ youth learn about families and how caregivers respond to their LGBTQ identity, none of the youth who participated in the study had heard about how family reactions to their sexual orientation, gender identity and expression impact their risk and well-being.

Many said they felt validated by learning that families had such a significant impact on how they felt about themselves, their mental health, risk

### Use During Intake and Assessment

FAP uses behaviors included on the posters to ask about these and other family reactions to LGBTQ children and youth during separate intake and assessment interviews with LGBTQ youth and families as examples of ways that parents, caregivers and other family members respond to LGBTQ children and youth.

Providers can use these behaviors as

behaviors, self-esteem and sense of the future. Learning about the impact of these family behaviors helped them make sense of their experiences and their feelings. Youth wanted their parents and families to see FAP's educational materials and to learn about accepting and rejecting behaviors so their families could learn to become more supportive and affirming.

**Where to Use the Posters** - The posters should be used in all settings where services are provided for children, youth and families:

**Family & Home Use** – as handouts for families and youth to hang in family spaces and to share with other family members to practice and reinforce behavioral change.

**Schools** – to post in libraries, counseling rooms, wellness centers, school-based health centers, nurse's offices, on bulletin boards, with diversity clubs, in locker rooms, and to use at health fairs, parent-teacher events and community education activities.

**Clinical Services** – to display in all settings where care is provided: waiting rooms, exam rooms, therapist's offices, hallways and group spaces, and in individual, group and family therapy. During assessment to use behaviors that are listed on the posters as a prompt together with FAP intake questions & screening procedures to develop an inventory of family rejecting and accepting behaviors to guide prevention and intervention services.



**Psychoeducation** – to provide education for parents, families, caregivers and LGBTQ children and youth to talk about the importance of family support and to help guide family growth and behavioral change.

**Public Education & Training** – to post in public spaces (e.g., libraries, community centers, public housing, government agencies) and to include in trainings for providers, educators, families and religious leaders, in professional training, continuing education and with parent and youth advocates.

**Faith-Based Groups** – to use in pastoral care and for educational events with families and congregations and ministries.

## FAP'S FAMILY EDUCATION VIDEOS

<https://familyproject.sfsu.edu/family-videos>

FAP has been producing a series of short [award-winning family education videos](#) that show how racially, culturally and religiously diverse families learn to affirm their LGBTQ children. The videos chronicle the family journey from struggle to support by sharing the backgrounds and perspectives of parents, caregivers and LGBTQ youth as they learn about and respond to their child's gender expression and LGBTQ identity. The videos are intended to:

- Give LGBTQ and gender diverse youth and families hope.
- Show family rejecting and accepting behaviors and how they contribute to health risks and well-being.
- Show how diverse families draw from their cultural and religious values to learn to support and affirm their LGBTQ children.
- Humanize LGBTQ young people & their families.

Dispelling long-standing perceptions that diverse families are unable to learn to support their LGBTQ children – especially racially diverse families and those from conservative backgrounds – requires visual resources that show how families learn to reconcile underlying cultural and religious beliefs with supporting and affirming their child's LGBTQ identity.



These short videos document what families and LGBTQ young people experience as the family learns to integrate the child's sexual orientation and gender identity into their cultural world and how parents and caregivers learn to become advocates and allies for their LGBTQ child.

The videos show how diverse parents draw from their family values to learn how to parent and affirm LGBTQ and gender diverse children and strengthen their families.

FAP currently uses these videos as part of its many training options for

families, educators, providers, religious leaders and youth and when providing direct services with LGBTQ youth and families as part of community engagement events and consultation with agencies, clinics, schools and community groups.

FAP is seeking resources to expand and make these videos available for dissemination.

## CULTURALLY AFFIRMING ONLINE RESOURCE FOR LGBTQ YOUTH & FAMILIES

<https://lgbtqfamilyacceptance.org>



Because programs and services have focused on LGBTQ youth – not on parents and families – there are major gaps in resources and services to help diverse families and caregivers learn to support their LGBTQ children. In particular, there has been a dearth of resources that enable racially, culturally and religiously diverse LGBTQ youth and families to find evidence-based guidance, to access services and supports that are culturally relevant for them and that can be used individually and together, as a family. To meet this need, FAP partnered with the [Innovations Institute](#), a university-based institution that develops culturally responsive public-serving systems to support children, youth and families. FAP and the Institute developed the first online resource to help diverse LGBTQ youth and families to find culturally and faith-affirming resources and services across the U.S. to help decrease mental health risks and increase well-being.

The site includes:

- A national searchable map of services for LGBTQ youth and families, including links to LGBTQ community services, gender clinics, and support groups for parents, caregivers and LGBTQ youth across the U.S.
- Crisis response services to help LGBTQ young people and families to access immediate crisis support.
- Multilingual, evidence-based education and family guidance resources on supporting LGBTQ children and youth.
- National LGBTQ resources for schools, families and community support.
- Culturally-affirming and faith-affirming resources to help LGBTQ youth and families to understand and integrate multiple, intersectional identities to increase connectedness, promote positive development and increase family support.

Not only can families and youth use the resource site individually and together to find services, programs and events to increase connectedness and support, but they can also find resources that are not available in their community to use individually and together, as a family.

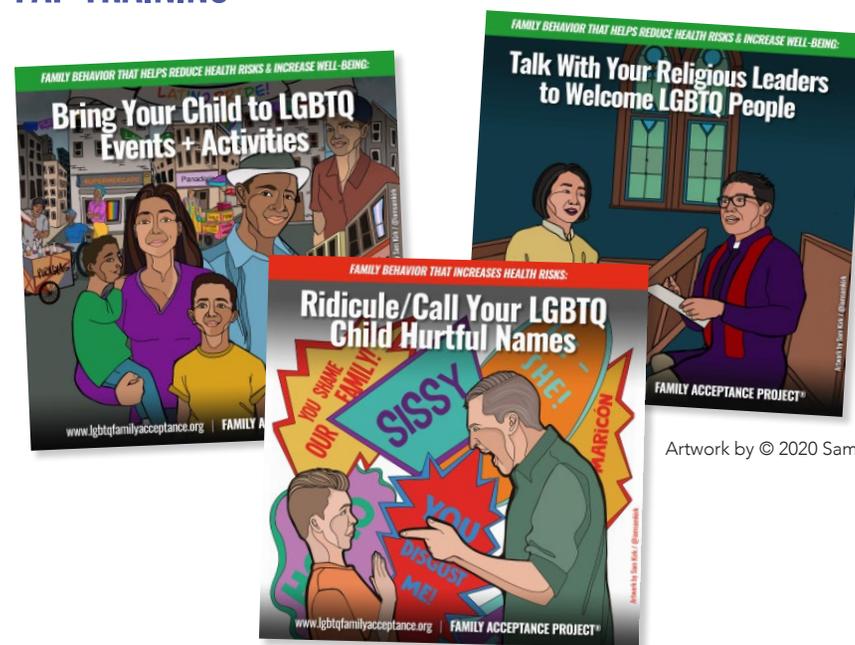
*Using the resource site enables parents and caregivers to engage in family accepting behaviors that FAP's research has found help to protect against risk for their LGBTQ child.*

Using the resource site enables parents and caregivers to engage in family accepting behaviors that FAP's research has found help to protect against risk for their LGBTQ child. This includes behaviors such as parents using the site to self-educate, to download materials and reach out for guidance on how to support their LGBTQ child in culturally affirming ways. Self-education is a core family accepting behavior that helps protect against risk and increase well-being for their LGBTQ children.

Parents can attend LGBTQ events together with their child as a family – another key family accepting behavior that helps protect against risk and promote well-being for LGBTQ young people. By using the resource site, parents and youth can find and participate in LGBTQ affirming events and activities such as attending an online Two Spirit powwow for Indigenous LGBTQ people or worshipping together in an online service at an affirming African-American congregation.

Finding and providing culturally relevant support for a child's LGBTQ identity is a cornerstone of helping to increase family support for LGBTQ children and youth. This online resource can be used with families everywhere and is especially helpful in rural and more isolated communities that lack local LGBTQ services.

## FAP TRAINING



Artwork by © 2020 Sam Kirk

FAP provides a range of trauma-informed trainings to increase family support, decrease rejection and promote well-being for LGBTQ children, youth and transitional age youth for families, foster families, providers, educators, religious leaders, LGBTQ youth, and community members.

**Range of Trauma-Informed Trainings** – Since 2005, FAP has provided training for more than 120,000 individuals, agencies, schools and congregations on engaging and helping diverse families to learn to support their LGBTQ children. These range from brief training sessions of 2 hours to full-day and multi-day trainings. FAP provides core trainings that have been developed over a period of years as well as trainings that are tailored to the needs of specific agencies, systems and providers.

Examples include:

- Implementing FAP's Family Support Model in clinical and community settings
- Engaging families to prevent suicide & homelessness for LGBTQ youth
- Helping families, foster families & caregivers to support LGBTQ children & youth
- Implementing the Integrated FAP – TF-CBT Treatment Model for trauma recovery
- Engaging families as allies to promote school safety, support & wellness for LGBTQ students
- Helping clergy & congregations to provide support for LGBTQ youth & families

FAP provides training on FAP's Family Support Model which can be implemented in whole or part. FAP's model can be integrated into other evidence-based treatment models such as Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) that provides clinical care to promote trauma recovery with children and adolescents using a family-centered approach. For example, TF-CBT developers asked the FAP director to collaborate to integrate FAP's family support approach into TF-CBT to develop an integrated treatment model to provide care for LGBTQ children and youth who experience trauma. TF-CBT did a pilot study of this new modified treatment model and found that LGBTQ youth reported a significant decrease in post-traumatic stress symptoms when FAP components and LGBTQ youth support were included. Training on the integrated FAP – TF-CBT treatment model became part of FAP's training options.

***FAP has found that parents and caregivers – even those who believe that being gay or transgender is wrong – can learn to support their LGBTQ children when guidance is provided in ways that are culturally relevant for them.***

**Assessment & Intervention Tools** - To meet the needs of parents, families, caregivers and youth from diverse cultural backgrounds with multiple learning, literacy and educational needs, FAP has developed tools to assess the family's cultural experiences and measures to assess caregivers' growth and change as they learn to support their LGBTQ

children. This enables FAP to tailor family intervention services and psychoeducation to meet the family's needs and to provide family support services and care in ways that are **culturally relevant** for each family. In addition to providing virtual and on-site training to enable schools, agencies, clinics, congregations and systems of care to help diverse families learn to support and affirm their LGBTQ children, FAP provides consultation to help individuals and institutions to apply FAP's Family Support Model, messaging and strategies to help families to decrease rejection and increase support.

During training and consultation, FAP provides guidance on using FAP's educational resources described in this booklet with families and their LGBTQ children. FAP has found that parents and caregivers – even those who believe that being gay or transgender is wrong – can learn to support their LGBTQ children when guidance is provided in ways that are culturally relevant for them.

**Help Support This Work** – The Family Acceptance Project® raises all of the funds to carry out this work. Help us build healthy futures for LGBTQ children and youth by making a contribution:



<https://familyproject.sfsu.edu/donate>

**Additional Information** – For information about training and using FAP's family support materials contact: [fap@sfsu.edu](mailto:fap@sfsu.edu) and [familyacceptanceproject@gmail.com](mailto:familyacceptanceproject@gmail.com)

Family Acceptance Project®:



<https://familyproject.sfsu.edu>

LGBTQ Youth & Family Resources:



<https://lgbtqfamilyacceptance.org>

Funded by the Oregon Department of Education, LGBTQ2SIA+ Student Success Grant Program



© 2023 Caitlin, Ryan, PhD, Family Acceptance Project