

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS FOR QUEER, TRANS, AND NON-BINARY YOUTH

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HOUSEKEEPING



Content Warning: violence against LGBTQ+ people and dating violence

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Take care of yourself!

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Ask questions!

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The word “queer”

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Goals:

1. Identify and address the challenges LGBTQ+ youth face in forming healthy relationships
2. Discuss the need to contextualize conversations around consent in the experiences of queer, trans, and non-binary youth
3. Compose specific changes you can make to your own work to better support LGBTQ+ youth
4. Examine the ways in which teen dating violence may specifically appear in LGBTQ+ relationships

WHY WE ARE FOCUSING ON QUEER YOUTH

- **3.2% of students identify as transgender or are unsure of their gender**
- **41% of trans youth** reported forced sexual contact (vs 11% cisgender)
- **31% LGB youth** reported forced sexual contact (9% non-LGB)
- **28% of trans youth** have dated someone who physically hurt them on purpose (vs 8% cisgender)
- **16% of LGB youth** have dated someone who physically hurt them on purpose (vs 7% non-LGB)

From 2019 Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey

WHY WE ARE FOCUSING ON QUEER YOUTH

LGBTQ+ Youth report:

- **Lack of trust** in the adults in their lives for support around dating or sexual violence
- **Lack of connection** to the community supports available to them
- **Lack of LGBTQ+ visibility and representation** in school curriculum
 - *Sexual Education and History specifically*
- **Lack of adults prepared to effectively engage LGBTQ youth**

From “Maximizing LGBTQ+ Best Practices for LGBTQ+ Youth in Portland, ME Strengths and Needs Assessment”

GENDER IDENTITY

SEXUALITY

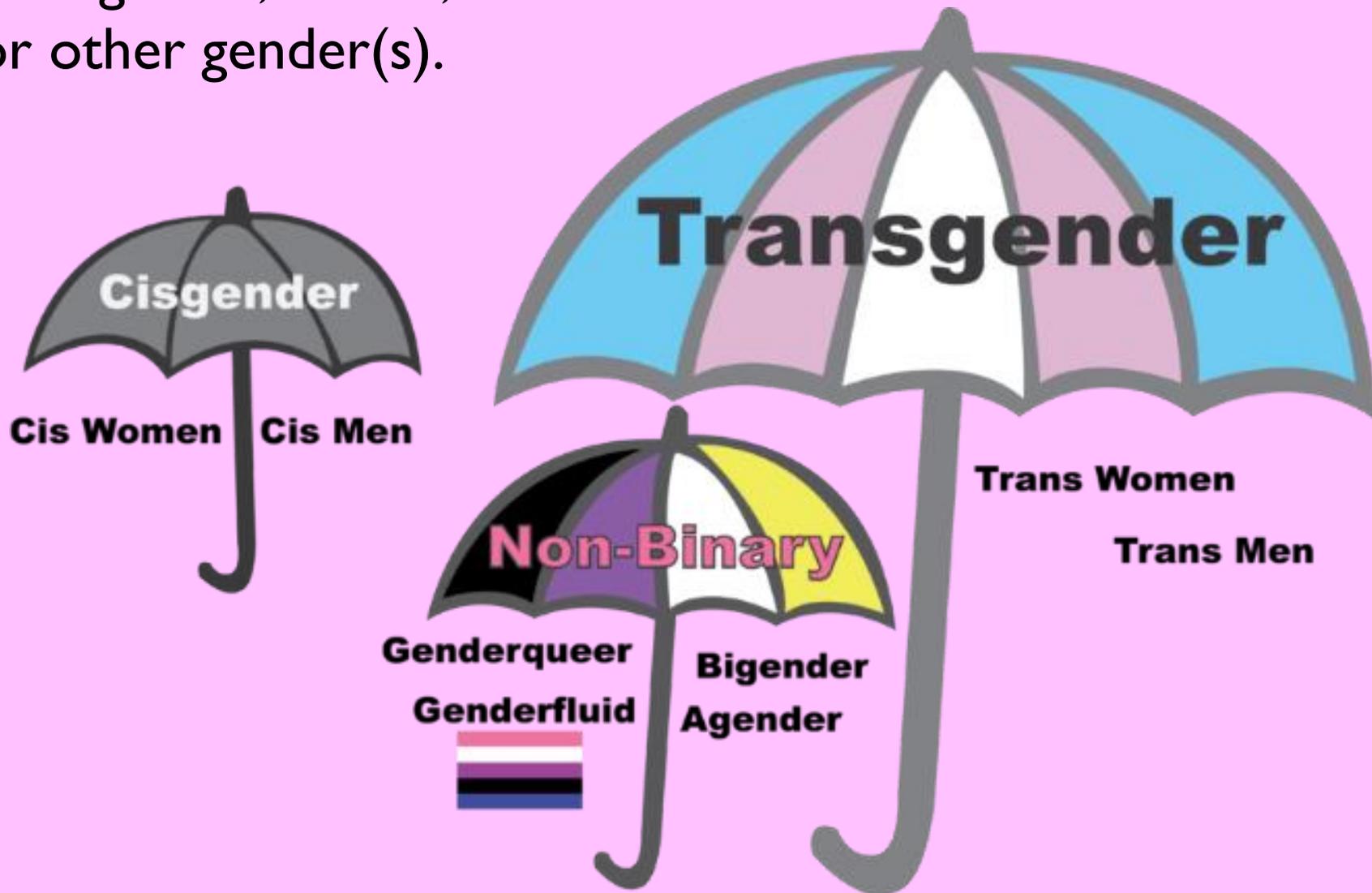
GENDER EXPRESSION

GENDER IDENTITY

One's internal sense of being male, female, neither of these, both, or other gender(s).

Transgender (Trans) –
Wide range of people whose identity differs from the societal norms associated with their assigned sex at birth

Cisgender (Cis) –
when your gender aligns with your assigned sex at birth



GENDER EXPRESSION

The physical manifestation of one's gender identity through clothing, hairstyle, voice, body shape, etc. (typically referred to as masculine or feminine).



<https://genderphotos.vice.com/> 2nd and 4th photos from: The Gender Spectrum Collection: Stock Photos Beyond the Binary

SEXUALITY

WHO WE ARE ATTRACTED TO SEXUALLY & EMOTIONALLY



Gay

attracted to members
of the same gender



Bisexual

attracted to same gender
and other genders/
regardless of gender



Pansexual

attracted to people
regardless of gender



Lesbian

women attracted to
other women

QUEER

Queer

umbrella term for
non-conforming



Asexual

not feeling desire for
sexual activity in their
romantic relationships

- The messages LGBTQ+ youth are receiving:
 - That queer relationships are wrong/unhealthy
- The messages LGBTQ+ youth cannot get enough:
 - That queer relationships come in healthy, unhealthy, and abusive
 - That learning healthy relationships skills is something we all have to do
 - Specific skills that address their specific experiences as queer/trans/non-binary youth
 - That they, like everyone, deserve healthy and empowering relationships



DATING VIOLENCE

TEEN DATING VIOLENCE

Dating abuse is when one person in the relationship intentionally uses abusive tactics to **GAIN POWER AND MAINTAIN CONTROL** over their partner over a period of time.

Emotional ~ Verbal ~ Psychological ~ Sexual ~ Digital ~ Physical

Exists across demographics — gender, race, sexuality, socioeconomic status, religion, ethnicity, dis/ability, or geographic location

“I’m going to out you at work”

“If you were a ‘real’ man…”

“This is how lesbians have sex!”

“No one will believe you because you’re trans.”

“Are you even a real gay man? If you were, you would be
into me!”

“You cannot go to (queer space) without me!”

“We have all of the same friends, if you start something
they’re all going to take my side!”

“Don’t dress like that!”

Experiencing Dating Violence as an LGBTQ+ Youth

Coercion

Threatening to out you

Threatening to tell your parents

“If you were a real man/woman you would...”

Isolation

Controlling your ability to use LGBTQ+ spaces

Telling you that know one will believe you

because you are LGBTQ

Emotional Abuse

Questioning if you are a “real” lesbian/gay

man/woman/man/butch

Attacking your gender identity/attempting to invalidate it

Reinforcing insecurities about family or

community acceptance about your gender or sexuality

Denying/Minimizing/Blaming

Women can't abuse women/men can't abuse men

Abuse does not exist in LGBTQ relationships

“If you weren't confused about your _____
identity”

Sexual Abuse

Telling you this is the way _____ have sex if you do
not want to do something

*Not following boundaries set out due to gender
dysphoria

Using Privilege

Using ability to “pass”

Making the decisions about the roles within the
relationship

Prevent Intervene & Respond

- DO the work to have inclusive prevention education
- DO intervene when you see or hear anti-LGBTQ+ rhetoric or dating violence
- DO respond to a student reaching out for help with validation, resources, and support

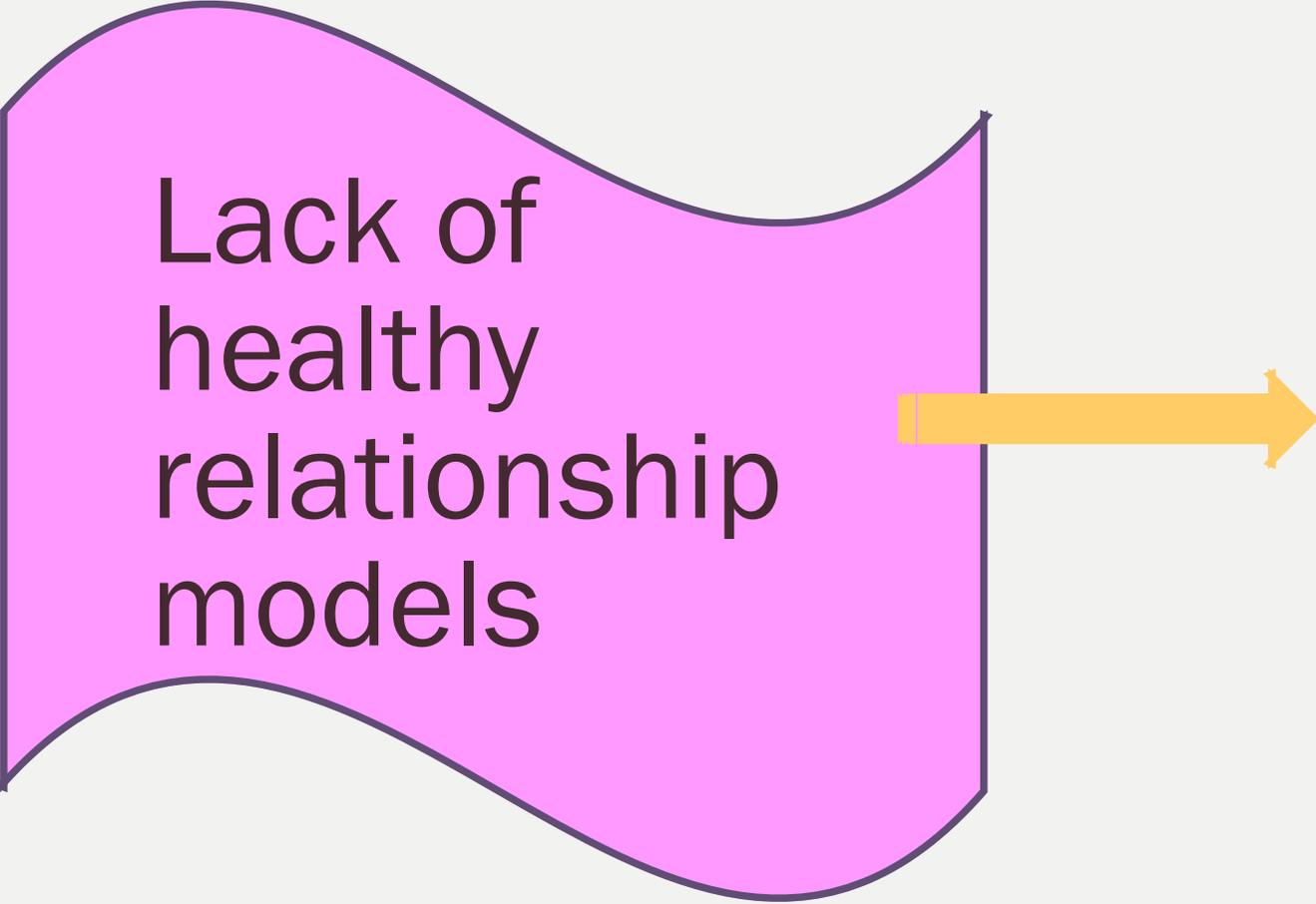
REMEMBER: HUMANS ARE COMPLEX AND SO ARE RELATIONSHIPS!

- Empowering students with skills and then asking them what they want is building resiliency
- Holding space
 - Gender, sexuality, race, class, religion, ethnicity, country of origin, language spoken, dis/ability, age, family structure
- Offering complex examples is reminding youth the **power of their choices**
- Prevention education disrupts “this is the way things are”

UNIQUE CHALLENGES

Adapted from University of North Carolina LGBTQ Center's
"Healthy Relationships Online Workshop" by Dr. Terri Phoenix, Ph.D.

Lack of
healthy
relationship
models



ACTION STEPS

- Including examples of all types of relationships
- Using she, he, and they pronouns
 - *Imbedded within, not a token*
- Using inclusive media examples
 - Foster's
 - Good Trouble
 - Dear White People
 - Sex Education
 - Pose
- Source the room!
- Ask them!

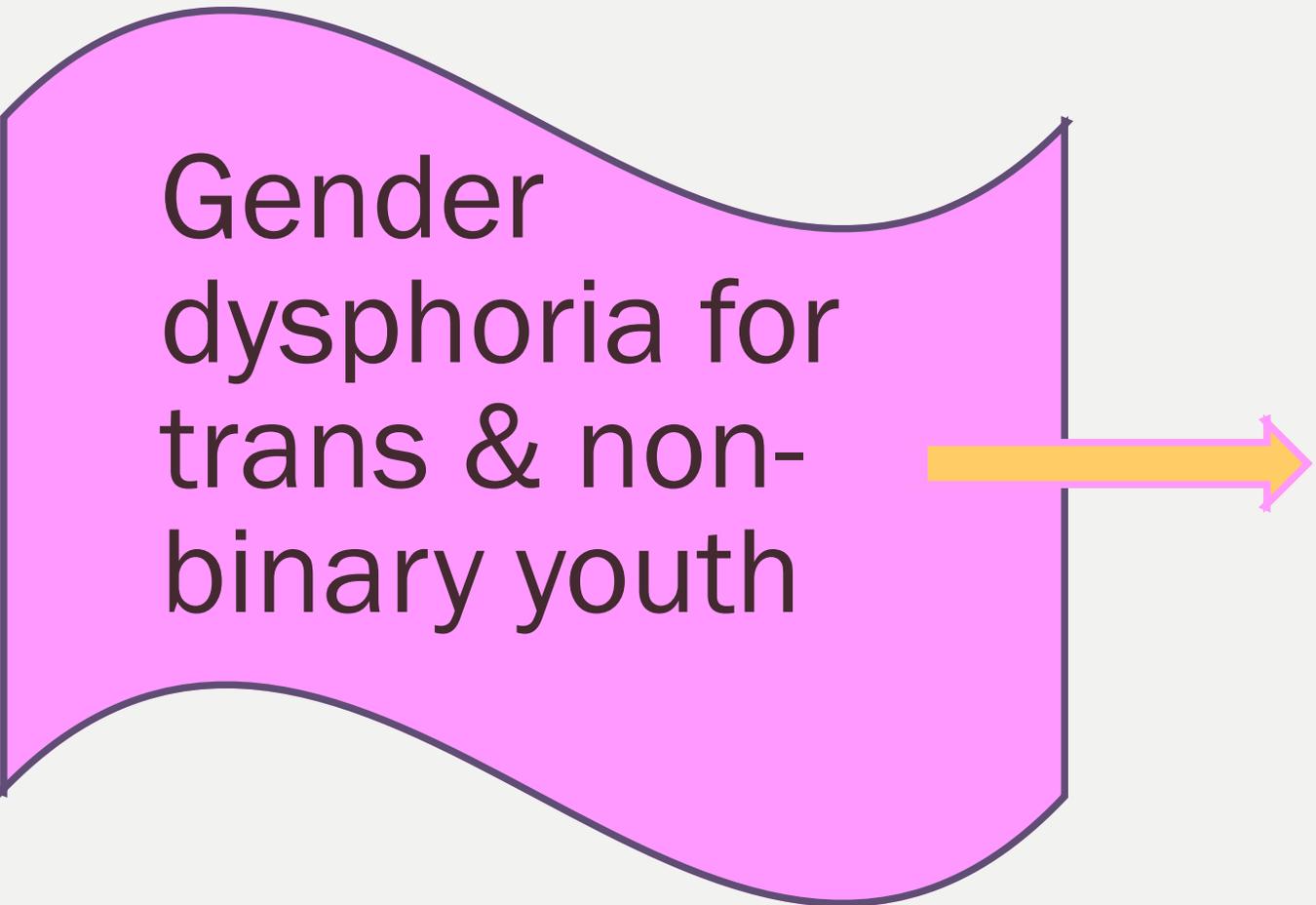
Lack of social support and (sometimes) family support



ACTION STEPS

- Showing YOUR support
- Having resources to offer that support families of LGBTQ+ youth
 - *PFLAG*
 - *Out Maine*
 - *Family Acceptance Project*
 - *Trans Youth Equality Foundation*
 - *Maine Trans Net*
- Getting them extra **affirming** support
 - *School social worker/counselor*
 - *The Trevor Project*
- Having a GSA at your school

Gender dysphoria for trans & non-binary youth



Gender dysphoria – psychological distress that results from an incongruence between one’s sex assigned at birth and one’s gender identity.

- *Not all trans or non-binary people experience this*
- *Those who do, it is specific to them, their body, and their experience*

ACTION STEPS

It all comes down to... CONSENT!

- *Teaching respect*
- *Teaching understanding*
- *Teaching compassion*
- *Teaching “checking-in”*

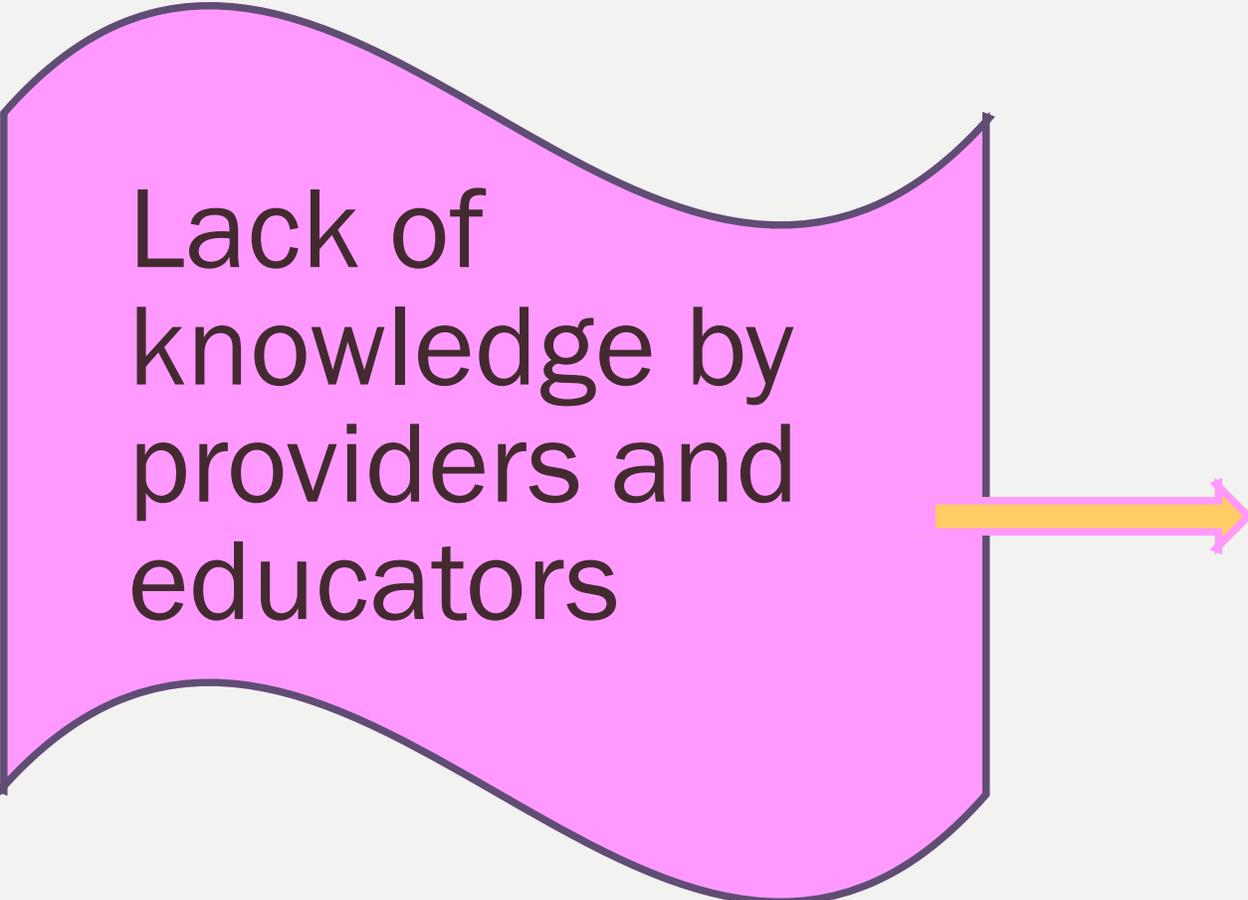
Small LGBTQ
communities &
Lack of venues
for socializing



ACTION STEPS

- Having resources available to offer to LGBTQ+ youth looking for community
 - *Portland or Lewiston- Auburn Outright*
 - *MaineTransNet*
 - *Equality Maine*
 - *Out Maine*
 - *Gender & Sexuality Alliances (GSA)*
- Online Community
 - *Safe and affirming*
 - *Welcome questions!*

Lack of
knowledge by
providers and
educators



ACTION STEPS

- Teaching LGBTQ+ informed sexual education to ALL students
- Having your school (or at least yourself) get ongoing education
 - *Maine Trans Net*
 - *Equality Maine*
- Utilizing online resources
 - *Did a LGBTQ+ person write this?*
- Model being okay with not knowing
 - *And doing the follow up*
- Ask more of our community

Through These Doors – DVRC for Cumberland county

Follow @ttdteen on Instagram!

carolinew@throughthesedoors.org

MCEDV – Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence

Equality Maine – working for LGBTQ+ equality

Love Is Respect – teen dating violence

OutMaine – LGBTQ+ youth support organization

Trevor Project – suicide hotline for LGBTQ+ youth

the Network la Red – ending relationship violence
for the LGBTQ+ community

FORGE – national transgender anti-violence
organization



GO!



LGBTQ+ Education

Digital:

Inqueery by Them

<https://www.them.us/video/series/inqueery>

Glossary by UC Davis

<https://lgbtqia.ucdavis.edu/educated/glossary>

Scarleteen – Sex Ed for the Real World

<https://www.scarleteen.com/>

Maine:

OutMaine

<https://www.outmaine.org/>

Equality Maine

<https://www.equalitymaine.org/>

Maine Trans Net

<https://www.mainetrans.net/>

THANK YOU!!!

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The Maine Coalition
to End Domestic Violence

Help is just a call away.

24 Hour • Toll Free • Confidential

1-866-834-HELP (4357)

Maine Telecommunications Relay Service:
1-800-437-1220



MCEDV MEMBERS:

AROOSTOOK

Hope and Justice Project

PENOBSCOT & PISCATAQUIS

Partners for Peace

KENNEBEC & SOMERSET

Family Violence Project

HANCOCK & WASHINGTON

Next Step Domestic Violence Project

**ANDROSCOGGIN,
FRANKLIN & OXFORD**

Safe Voices

**KNOX, LINCOLN,
SAGadahoc & WALDO**

New Hope for Women

CUMBERLAND

Through These Doors

YORK

Caring Unlimited

CULTURALLY SPECIFIC SERVICES

Immigrant Resource Center of Maine

mcedv.org

MCEDV MEMBERS

Aroostook County
Hope and Justice Project
www.hopeandjusticeproject.org
P.O. Box 148, Presque Isle, ME 04769
Admin: 207-764-2977 Helpline: 1-800-439-2323

Penobscot & Piscataquis Counties
Partners for Peace
www.partnersforpeace.org
P.O. Box 653, Bangor, ME 04402
Admin: 207-945-5102 Helpline: 1-800-863-9909

Kennebec & Somerset Counties
Family Violence Project
www.familyviolenceproject.org
P.O. Box 304, Augusta, ME 04332
Admin: 207-623-8637 Helpline: 1-877-890-7788

Cumberland County
Through These Doors
www.familycrisis.org
P.O. Box 704, Portland, ME 04104
Admin: 207-767-4952 Helpline: 1-800-537-6066

Hancock & Washington Counties
Next Step Domestic Violence Project
www.nextstepdvproject.org
P.O. Box 1466, Ellsworth, ME 04605
Admin: 207-667-0176 Helpline: 1-800-315-5579

Androscoggin, Franklin & Oxford Counties
Safe Voices
www.safevoices.org
P.O. Box 713, Auburn, ME 04212
Admin: 207-795-6744 Helpline: 1-800-559-2927

Knox, Lincoln, Sagadahoc & Waldo Counties
New Hope for Women
www.newhopeforwomen.org
P.O. Box A, Rockland, ME 04841-0733
Admin: 207-594-2128 Helpline: 1-800-522-3304

York County
Caring Unlimited
www.caring-unlimited.org
P.O. Box 590, Sanford, ME 04073
Admin: 207-490-3227 Helpline: 1-800-239-7298

Serving Refugee and Immigrant Communities
Through Culturally and Linguistically Sensitive Services
Immigrant Resource Center of Maine
www.ircofmaine.org
PO Box 397 Lewiston, ME 04243
207-753-0061



Member Programs of the Wabanaki Women's Coalition

Tribal Domestic & Sexual Violence Coalition
www.wabanakiwomenscoalition.org

**Aroostook Band of Micmacs
Domestic & Sexual Violence Advocacy Center**
www.micmac-nsn.gov
7 Northern Rd., Presque Isle, ME 04769
Admin: 207-760-0570 Hotline: 207-551-3639

**Houlton Band of Maliseets
Domestic & Sexual Violence Advocacy Center**
www.maliseets.com
690 Foxcroft Rd., Houlton, ME 04730
Admin: 207-532-3000 Hotline: 207-532-6401

**Pleasant Point Passamaquoddy
Peaceful Relations Domestic & Sexual
Violence Advocacy Center**
www.wabanaki.com
P.O. Box 343, Perry, ME 04467
Admin: 207-853-0092 Hotline: 1-877-853-2613

**Penobscot Indian Nation
Domestic & Sexual Violence Advocacy Center**
www.penobscotnation.org
2 Down St., Indian Island ME, 04468
Admin: 207-817-3164 x2 Hotline: 207-631-4886

**Indian Township Passamaquoddy
Domestic & Sexual Violence Advocacy Center**
P.O. Box 301, Princeton, ME 04668
Admin: 207-796-6106 Hotline: 207-214-1917



The Maine Coalition
to End Domestic Violence

Connecting people,
creating frameworks for change.
mcedv.org