

## Building the Capacity of Educators to Support LGBTQ Youth

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### Overview

- LGBTQ youth are at higher risk than their non-LGBTQ peers of being verbally and/or physically harassed or assaulted.
- The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of an online training simulation designed to build the capacity of high and middle school educators to support students, especially those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer/questioning (LGBTQ).
- Subjects: 43 high school or middle school educators from five schools, and from a variety of backgrounds, grades taught and roles.
- Twenty-one percent had a background in mental health; about half had previously received some form of training in anti-harassment or anti-bullying.
- This 30-minute online training simulation features several practice role-play opportunities with virtual students and real-time user feedback.



### Methods

Participants completed a Likert scale questionnaire measuring preparedness, likelihood and self-efficacy to intervene when they observe incidents of bullying or harassment. After completing the survey, participants took the 30-minute training, and then immediately completed a post survey that included measures of skill, behavioral intent, self-efficacy and means efficacy, as well as level one assessment items measuring satisfaction about the training itself. Three months later, participants took a follow-up survey that repeated the measures from the pre-training survey and added questions about behavior change that occurred since the training. Results were calculated using a repeated samples t-test at  $p < .05$ .

**Results: see reverse**

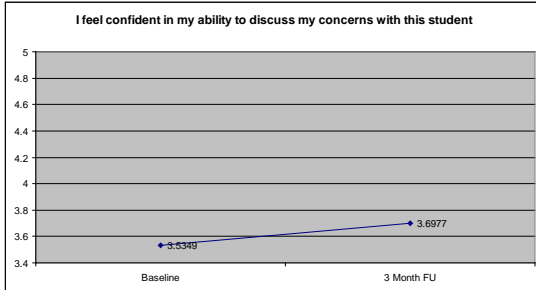
### Discussion and Implications for Future Direction

- Cost effective and scalable tool for changing educator behavior.
- Supports promoting respect within the campus community, improvement social cohesion, academic success and retention while reducing the risk of violence and self-harm.
- High potential of online training to impact safety and school climate.
- Among many other research directions, future research should measure school climate at baseline and follow up.

## Results at 3-Month Follow Up

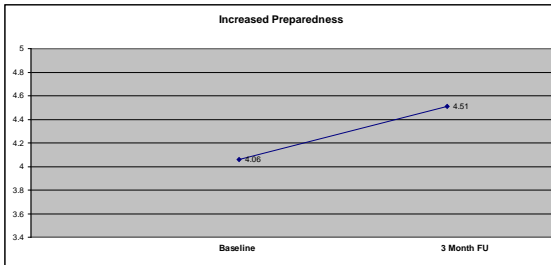
**Increased Self Efficacy** (fig. 1) represents a significant ( $p < .05$ ) increase in user's self-confidence in their ability to discuss their concerns with an LGBTQ student.

**Fig. 1 – Increased Self-Efficacy ( $p < .05$ )**



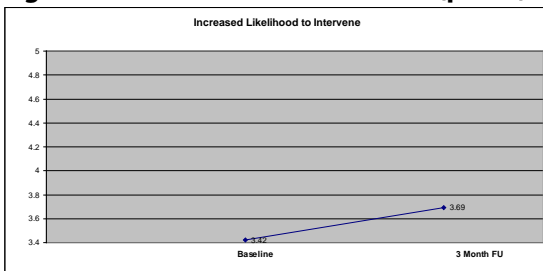
**Increased Preparedness** (fig. 2) shows a significant ( $p < .05$ ) increase in educators' skills in managing a student in class who has used discriminatory language, discussing concerns with LGBTQ students, and connecting a student who has been teased, harassed or bullied to support services.

**Fig. 2- Increased Preparedness ( $p < .05$ )**



**Increased Behavioral Intent** (fig. 3) represents a significant ( $p < .05$ ) increase in the likelihood that educators will stop a class every time a student uses discriminatory language, discuss a concern with an LGBTQ student who has been teased, harassed or bullied, and connect a student who is being teased, harassed or bullied to support services.

**Fig. 3 - Increased Behavioral Intent ( $p < .05$ )**



### Behavior Change

Three months post-training, a majority of subjects either agreed or strongly agreed that as a result of taking the course, there was a change in their behavior with respect to their interaction with both students and other adult educators on campus.

#### Intervening with Students

As a result of taking this course, there has been **an increase** in the number of students I have:

- Been concerned about being teased, harassed or bullied - 60%
- Connected to support services - 65%
- Talked with to see if a student was ok - 64%
- Talked with because he/she used discriminatory language - 60%

#### Discussions with Adults

As a result of taking this course, there has been **an increase** in the number of conversations I have had with other adults in my school community regarding:

- How to better support our LGBTQ students – 74%
- Students I'm concerned about – 62%
- The use of discriminatory language – 59%

### User Feedback

- *"What I liked best about [the training] was the ability to elicit my true approach to given social situations, and immediate suggestive alternatives."*
- *"I liked that it was student-centered... students telling the stories; talking about what's important."*
- *"I like the interactive conversations between the students and teacher, and the ability to choose, then change discriminatory remarks."*
- *I enjoyed the ... ability to interact and think/view from all perspectives."*