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THE MOSS GROUP, INC.

Experienced Practitioners Committed to Excellence in Correctional Practice

Effective and Professional Communication with LGBTI Youth

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Welcome & Introduction

- Mykel Selph- The Moss Group
- Participants

Objectives

- Discuss professional communication and its relation to a culture of sexual safety
- Provide guidance about addressing and discussing LGBTI youth
- Discuss strategies for information management

Agency LGBTI youth policies

- Should agencies have a separate LGBTI policy or is it covered under PREA policy?
- Benefits to LGBTI specific policy
 - Develop agency wide plans about housing, grooming and programming
 - Reinforces agency values of the importance of the safety of LGBTI residents

RESPECT

- LGBTI people often encounter biases and negativity when they are honest about their self-identification or status as LGBTI, or when they present themselves in a gender-nonconforming manner.
- The way you treat LGBTI people should:
 - Reflect agency mission and values
 - Can impact the emotional well-being of youth and other staff

RESPECT

- Be aware that not all LGBTI youth **or staff** are “out”
- Your conversations with other youth or staff who you do not perceive as LGBTI will impact
 - The culture of the facility
 - The attitudes and well-being of those participating in the conversation

RESPECT

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- The way you treat LGBTI youth
 - Should reflect agency mission and values
 - Can impact the emotional well-being of youth and other staff

What are some positive and negative ways we communicate with LGBTI youth in custody?

Do those communication strategies enhance safety or increase risk?

Communication

- What is respectful language?
 - Don't make heteronormative assumptions
 - Don't use slang or slurs to refer to LGBTQI people
 - Be aware that LGBTQI youth may be sensitive due to past experiences

What could a staff person say unintentionally that may harm an LGBTI youth or another staff?

Policy

- Consider providing directives around using the language of “choice” when referring to gender identity or sexual orientation
- Consider providing directives around discussing the religious ideology of this issue with youth;
 - if they initiate a conversation, consider directing staff to the facility Chaplain

Policy

- Consider providing directions to staff around managing youth conversations and interactions to minimize youth harassment of other youth
- How can disrespectful or inappropriate conversations among youth risk everyone's sexual safety?

Unintentional Discrimination

- Be aware that you may interpret the actions of LGBTI youth differently than heterosexual youth.
 - e.g. a hug between youth

Try to avoid unintentionally discriminating against LGBTI youth by treating them differently. Be aware that not all sexual activity between same-sex youth is abuse.

Information Management

- Privacy and Confidentiality Rights and Responsibilities
 - An individual's sexual orientation and/or gender identity are extremely intimate pieces of information.
 - Be aware of:
 - Repercussions for the youth if information became widely known
 - The impact on the youth's emotional well-being and their perception of the agency and its staff if they feel there has been a betrayal of trust.

Information Management

- Privacy and Confidentiality Rights and Responsibilities
 - If you are provided information by the agency about a youth's sexual orientation and/or gender identity, familiarize yourself with who else has this information to avoid making accidental disclosures.

What is your agency policy regarding a youth's right to confidentiality?

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DISCUSSION