

**Kinnect**

Achieving Permanency for LGBTQ+ Youth in Foster Care: Strategies For Child Welfare Professionals

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**Kinnect**  
Presenters



Shannon Deinhart (She/Her)  
Co-Founder & Executive Director  
Kinnect



Heather Jamison (She/Her)  
Trainer  
Kinnect to Family

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## Kinnect & Affirm Me

Kinnect Mission: To transform beliefs, values and actions to ensure permanent families for all children in the shortest time possible.

Affirm Me Vision: All Ohio public child serving agencies have the resources to effectively serve and effectively maintain, establish and support permanency and well-being for all LGBTQ+ youth and their families.

We transform system practices, policy and culture by building a diverse community of champions and allies to advance this vision.



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## Learning Objectives & Outline of Day

- 🍃 Understand data regarding outcomes for young people in foster care with diverse SOGIE HJ0
- 🍃 Understand terms related to diverse SOGIE HJ1
- 🍃 Learn about working with LGBTQ+ youth in developing and reestablishing relationships with accepting and affirming people HJ2
- 🍃 Implement tools developed to identify, locate and engage family including chosen family HJ3
- 🍃 Utilize tools in youth centered facilitated permanency planning meetings HJ4
- 🍃 Identify alignment strategies needed for child welfare staff and partners for successful permanency planning HJ5

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## Slide 4

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**HJ0** Overview of outcomes from Study, refer (or share) Cuyahoga Youth County Report) -- Stress importance of support and affirmation to overcome data

Heather Jamison, 2023-04-18T14:11:52.539

**HJ1** This will have to be a quick overview in order to get to the others -- I'm thinking just a good description of SO/GI/GE and recognizing labels are self-identifying so it's okay to not know them all and to ask

Heather Jamison, 2023-04-18T14:13:08.575

**HJ2** I like the 2 minute video from the youth interviewed during Affirm Me/Youth Count -- they talk about this so well.

Heather Jamison, 2023-04-18T14:14:08.449

**HJ3** Asking youth, naturally connected supports - how do they talk to their supports, actively search and reach out. When talking to youth asking them how they want to be referenced when reaching out to SPECIFIC people

Heather Jamison, 2023-04-18T14:15:30.699

**HJ4** Youth Prep Tools -- ask YCPRT

Heather Jamison, 2023-04-18T14:15:59.268

**HJ4 0** Circles of Support, Naturally Connected Questions, Quick Guide

Heather Jamison, 2023-04-18T14:22:48.735

**HJ5** Safe Identification Policy; Record keeping

Heather Jamison, 2023-04-18T14:18:49.310

**HJ5 0** What policy does your org have

Heather Jamison, 2023-04-18T14:26:15.933

**HJ5 1** Behaviors around team members to help get everyone on board

Heather Jamison, 2023-04-18T15:38:11.779

**HJ5 2** May depend on your role, recognize relationships and power dynamics

Heather Jamison, 2023-04-18T15:38:39.013





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## Slide 5

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**HJ0** Could do this has a menti to display and let folks know who else is in the room

Heather Jamison, 2023-04-18T21:55:01.892

**HJ0 0** Bumped it for after objectives -- hopefully that might information the "hopes"

Heather Jamison, 2023-04-18T21:55:35.029

**HJ0 1** Also prompt for if in LGBTQ

Heather Jamison, 2023-04-19T15:03:20.647

**HJ0 2** For pronouns

Heather Jamison, 2023-04-19T15:03:32.353

**HJ0 3** Lived experience in the room: Do you have your own lived experience in community, or being part of chosen family

Heather Jamison, 2023-04-19T15:04:37.296

**HJ0 4** I am in community - loved one in the community

Heather Jamison, 2023-04-19T15:05:08.720

## What We Know About LGBTQ+ Youth



-  Affirmation
-  Support

Ryan, C. 2009; Trevor Project, 2020

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## What We Know About LGBTQ+ Youth



- Victimization** 
- Rejection** 
- Runaway and Homeless** 
- Physical and Mental Health Disparities** 
- Isolation** 

Ryan, C. 2009

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## What We Know About LGBTQ+ Youth in Child Welfare

Children and youth with diverse SOGIE are disproportionately more likely than their heterosexual and cisgender peers to experience:

- Greater health challenges
- Enter into the child welfare system
- Have more placements in both foster homes and group homes
- Do not have the advice or guidance of at least one supportive adult
- Experience homelessness
- Have lower rates of reunification with their families of origin

Irvine and Canfield, 2016



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## What We Know About LGBTQ+ Youth in Juvenile Justice

Children and youth with diverse SOGIE are disproportionately more likely than their heterosexual and cisgender peers to experience:


- Criminalization of Identity
- School to Prison Pipeline
- Unfair Criminalization

Irvine, A. 2010; Mallory et al 2014; Himmelstein, K. and Brückner, 2011




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HJO





## More Data



### The Cuyahoga Youth Count:

A Report on LGBTQ+ Youth Experience in Foster Care.

2021



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## What is SOGIE?



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## Slide 11

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### HJO Cuyahoga Youth Count Details

Heather Jamison, 2023-04-18T16:13:58.257



**Sexual Orientation**

- Who Am I Attracted to
- Ages 12-16

**Gender Identity**

- Who I Am
- Ages 2-4

**Gender Expression**

- How I Express Myself
- Any Age

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**EVERYONE HAS A SOGIE**

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**Girl/Woman**

**Bo**  
**Man**

**Girl**

**Agender/  
Genderless**

**Non-Binary**

- Multi-gendered
- Gender Expansive
- Gender Queer
- Gender Fluid
- Non-binary
- Agender

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**Beyond the Binary**

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## Slide 13

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**HJO** Edit to describe SO, GI, GE

Heather Jamison, 2023-04-18T15:20:20.840

**HJO 0** Then to Umbrella Slide

Heather Jamison, 2023-04-18T15:37:54.708



Two Spirit (Navaho, Zuni and Lakota Tribes)

Muxe or Muxhe (Mexico)

South America

North America

Europe

Africa

Australia

Hirja (India)

Chukchi (Siberian tribe)

Bakla (Philippines)

<https://adventuresintimeandgender.org/wormholes/world-genders/>

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**Gender Diversity**

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**LGBTQ+**

**L**  
LESBIAN

**G**  
GAY

**B**  
BISEXUAL

**T**  
TRANS\*  
TRANSGENDER

**Q**  
QUEER  
Or  
QUESTIONING

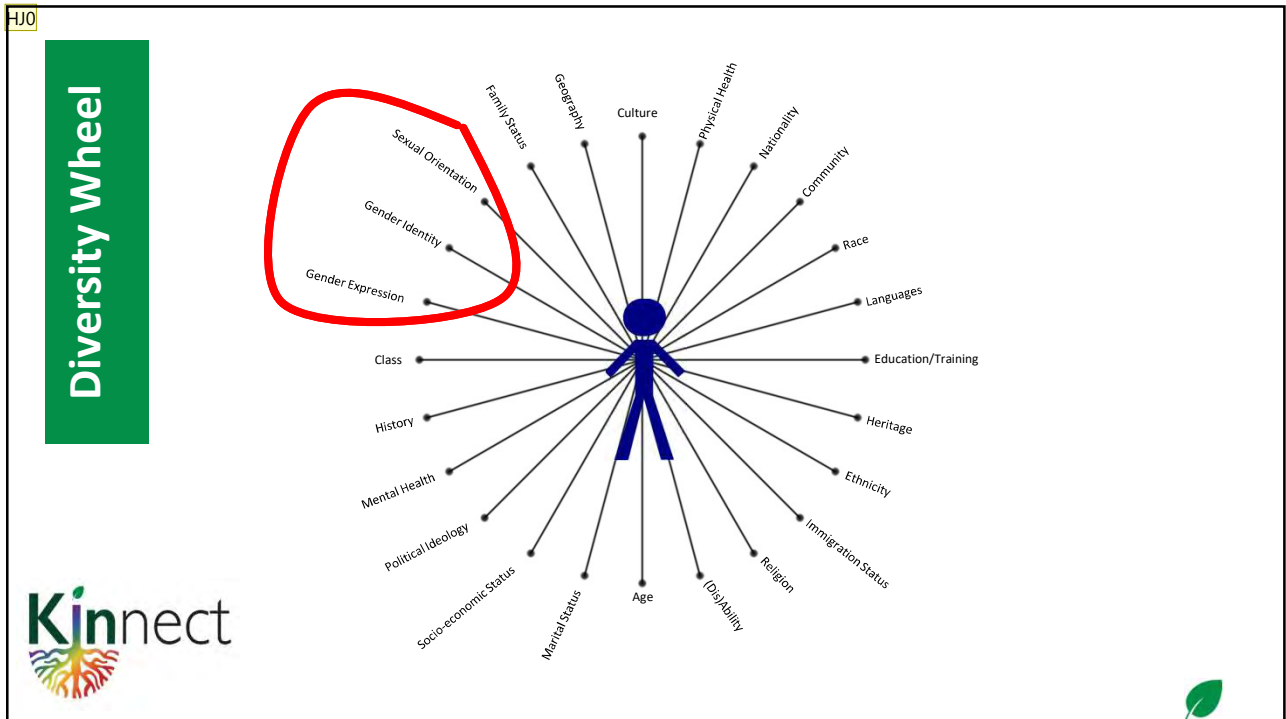
**+**  
Inclusive of  
other  
identities

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## Slide 18

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**HJO** Reading straight through these slides out loud (no questions/pausing) was 11 minutes and 47 seconds.  
Heather Jamison, 2023-04-21T00:54:49.037

**HJO 0** Starting at slide 12  
Heather Jamison, 2023-04-21T00:55:04.184





## Let's Discuss

How do you ask youth about who around them is accepting and affirming?

How do you ask youth about important parts of their identity?

How have you learned about a youth you're working with having diverse SOGIE?

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## Working with LGBTQ+ youth

Developing and reestablishing relationships with accepting and affirming people



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Your Relationship

Advocacy

Language


Connections

## Affirming Young People through




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## Language In Practice



This initiative is part of the Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services Affirm Me program.



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## What I need from you is...

“To let me know that what I’m doing is valid and my gender is valid and who I am as a person is valid”  
Luka

“To see me clearly as I’ve told you I am, not for what you perceive me to be. This is my reality and what I need from you is to hear me.” Sonia

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## Responsibilities of Child Welfare Workers in Disclosure

- Maintain Confidentiality
- Documenting SOGIE disclosure
- Sharing SOGIE information with coworkers
- Communicating with clients

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**Chosen,  
Affirming  
Family**



**Identify**

**Locate**

**Engage**

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**Tools for Youth Centered Practice**

Naturally Connected Networks

Circles of Support

Youth Prep Guide

**PRACTICE TIME!**



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**Family Finding Strategies**



- Identify professional supports
- Engage professional supports
- Family finding with youth
- Youth-Centered Permanency Planning



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## Let's Discuss

**Alignment Strategies:**

- Who do you know you need to go to?
- How Might you find alignment?
- Do you have any concern for alignment?

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CWLA 2023 Feedback & Resources



<https://forms.office.com/r/tTkzdnYdes>

