

## ***Promoting Family Support to Prevent Risk and Build Healthy Futures for LGBT Children & Youth***

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Foundational research on LGBT youth and families from Dr. Caitlin Ryan and her team at the Family Acceptance Project at SF State University shows that families have a compelling influence on their LGBT children's health, mental health and well-being. This research shows that family acceptance helps protect against risk and helps promote well-being, while family rejection is related to serious health and mental health concerns in young adulthood, including depression, suicidal behavior, substance abuse and STDs. In this full-day training, Dr. Ryan will discuss key findings, resources and evidence-based family intervention strategies that she has developed with her team to help diverse families learn to support their LGBT children, to reduce risk and promote well-being – in the context of their families, cultures and faith communities. Participants will have an opportunity to discuss ways to engage families with LGBT children, to increase parent and family involvement in supporting and advocating for their LGBTQ children and to apply this work in multiple settings. Called revolutionary and paradigm-changing, this work is changing how LGBT children and youth are served across multiple domains and systems of care.

At the completion of this training, participants will be able to:

- Discuss the role of family acceptance and rejection of LGBT adolescents on their health and well-being.
- Describe specific family behaviors that are related to increased health risks for LGBT adolescents, including suicidality, substance abuse and HIV, and family behaviors that protect against risk and promote well-being.
- Discuss Family Acceptance Project strategies to engage families and to help decrease risk and promote well-being for their LGBT children.
- Identify one to three specific change(s) to implement this information in practice and related work with LGBT young people and families.

**Caitlin Ryan, PhD, ACSW** is a clinical social worker who has worked on LGBT health and mental health for more than 40 years. Dr. Ryan founded and directs the Family Acceptance Project (FAP) at San Francisco State University – a research, intervention, education and policy initiative to help diverse families learn to support their LGBT children. Dr. Ryan and her team conducted the first comprehensive research on LGBT youth and families and developed the first research-based family support model to strengthen and help families to support their LGBT children, to decrease family rejection and related health risks, including suicide, substance abuse, homelessness and HIV, and to promote family support and positive outcomes. Dr. Ryan has been integrating FAP's family support model with institutions and agencies, including behavioral health and mental health services, schools, child abuse prevention, services for out-of-home children and youth and congregations. With her team, she has established the field of family acceptance for LGBT children and youth. This includes developing the first "Best Practice" resources for suicide prevention for LGBT youth included in the Best Practices Registry for Suicide Prevention. Since 2004, she has provided education and training for more than 92,000 families, providers and religious leaders on FAP's family support framework across the U.S. and in other countries. This includes working with public, private and religious schools and agencies across the U.S. Dr. Ryan's work has been recognized with more than 50 awards from many national professional groups in the fields of counseling, medicine, nursing, psychiatry, psychology and social work, and from civic, LGBT, advocacy, arts and faith-based groups. This includes recognition for her work by the American Psychological Association's Division 44 that gave her the Distinguished Scientific Contribution Award for groundbreaking research on LGBT youth and families, by the American Psychiatric Association, the National Association of Social Workers, the American Counseling Association's Counselors for Social Justice, by Affirmation and the Human Rights Campaign. Her work is changing how families nurture their LGBT children and how services are provided across systems of care.