Ways to Ensure That "It Gets Better"

Improving the Health of LGBTQ Youth in Oregon

Oregon School-Based Health Care Network
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Learning Objectives

1. Identify at least three health disparities experienced by sexual minority youth in Oregon.
2. Understand how to tailor programming and policies to be inclusive of sexual and gender minority youth.
3. Learn to identify and employ best practices for working with LGBTQ youth in a clinical setting.

EQUALITY

EQUITY

Overview of Session

- Review terminology
- Present data relevant to sexual minority youth
  - Lack of data on gender minority youth
- Review best practices to use with LGBTQ youth
  - Educational or service setting
  - Clinical setting
- Break into roundtables to discuss case studies
  - Focus on practice and policy solutions

Terminology

Terminology Activity

- Everyone gets *either* a term (color) or a definition (white)
- Circulate around the room to find your "match"
- Once you find your match, take a seat together
- Discuss briefly your experience (if any) with this term / group / population in your work

Sex, Gender & Sexuality: Terms

- Sex (Biological / Assigned)
  - This is typically determined by our chromosomes, our hormones and our internal and external genitalia. Usually, we are assigned the sex of male or female at birth.

Sex, Gender & Sexuality: Terms

- Sex (Biological / Assigned)
- Gender Identity
  - How we identify ourselves in terms of our gender.
  - Identities may include: male, female, transgender, genderqueer, androgynous, and others

Sex, Gender & Sexuality: Terms

- Sex (Biological / Assigned)
- Gender Identity
- Gender Expression
  - An individual's physical characteristics, behaviors and presentation that are culturally linked to either masculinity or femininity, such as: appearance, dress, mannerisms, speech patterns and social interactions

Sex, Gender & Sexuality: Terms

- Sex (Biological / Assigned)
- Gender Identity
- Gender Expression
- Sexual Identity / Orientation
  - What we call ourselves in terms of our sexuality and/or the inner feelings of who we are attracted or oriented to romantically and sexually

Sex, Gender & Sexuality: Terms

- Gay
  - A sexual orientation and/or identity of a person who is emotionally and sexually attracted to some members of the same sex/gender
  - Often considered a gender-neutral term

Sex, Gender & Sexuality: Terms

- Gay
- Lesbian
  - A sexual orientation and/or identity of a person who is female-identified and who is emotionally and sexually attracted to some other females

Sex, Gender & Sexuality: Terms

- Gay
- Lesbian
- Bisexual
  - A sexual orientation and/or identity of a person who is emotionally and sexually attracted to some males and some females

Sex, Gender & Sexuality: Terms

- Gay
- Lesbian
- Bisexual
- Transgender
  - Term for someone whose gender identity is not aligned with their sex assigned at birth
  - Sometimes used as a broad "umbrella" term to also include people whose gender expression is nonconforming
  - Some transgender people do not identify as transgender, but as simply "Male" or "Female"

Sex, Gender & Sexuality: Terms

- Queer
  - An “umbrella” term used to describe a sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression that does not conform to dominant societal norms

Sex, Gender & Sexuality: Terms

- Queer
- Questioning
  - An identity or description of a person who is uncertain of their sexual orientation/identity and/or their gender identity

Sex, Gender & Sexuality: Terms

- Queer
- Questioning
- Pansexual
  - A sexual orientation and/or identity of a person who is emotionally and sexually attracted to people regardless of gender identity

Sex, Gender & Sexuality: Terms

- Queer
- Questioning
- Pansexual
- Cisgender
  - Term for someone whose gender identity is aligned with their sex assigned at birth

Monitoring the Health of LGBTQ Youth in Oregon

Statewide Data Sources

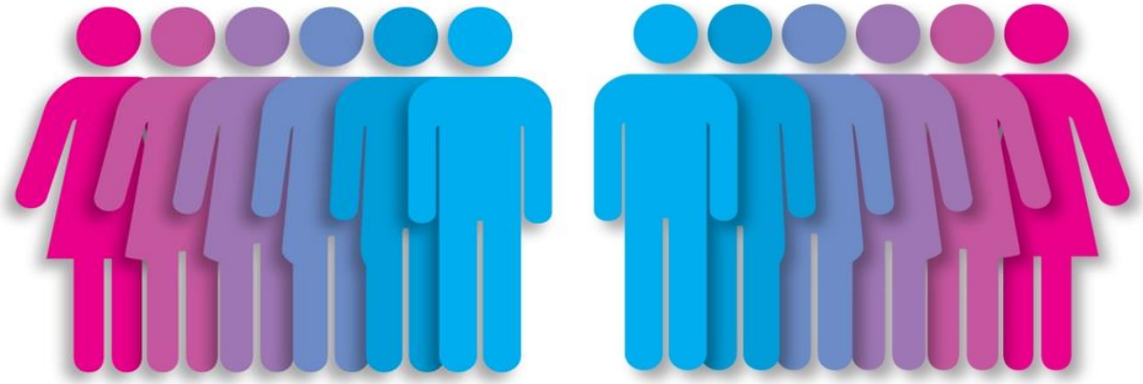
- YOUTH: Oregon Health Teen (OHT) Survey
  - Captures 8th & 11th grade students
  - Administered every 2 years
  - All data presented today from OHT Survey
- ADULT: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)
  - Representative of state population
  - Phone-based, random-digit dial adult health survey
  - Now includes cell-only households so more young adults participating

Identifying Sexual Minority Youth

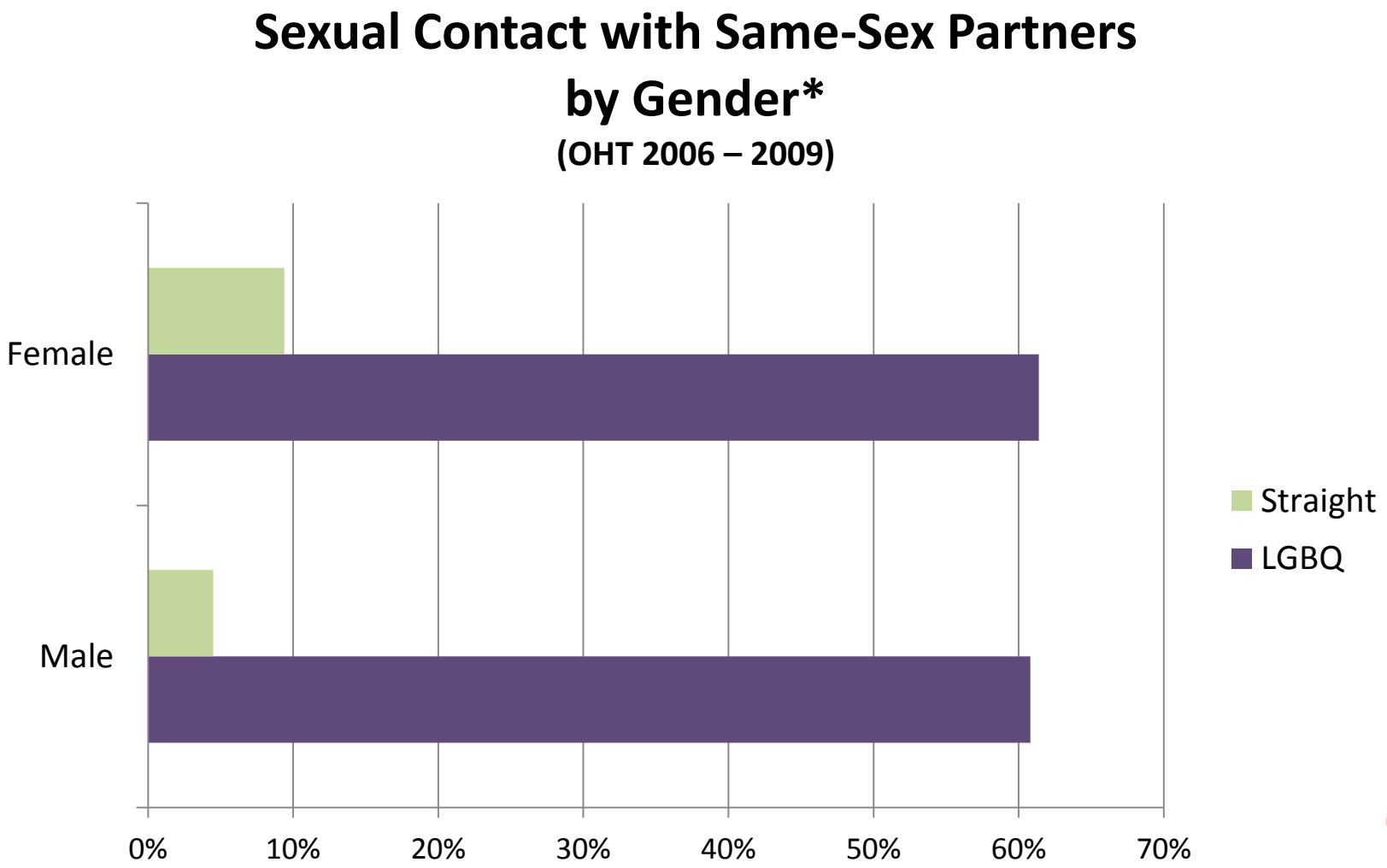
- Sexual identity item in the "Sexual behavior" section of the OHT
  - Only included in the 11th grade questionnaire
  - Asks students "Which of the following best describes you?"
    1. Heterosexual (straight)
    2. Gay or lesbian
    3. Bisexual
    4. Not sure
- Created "LGBQ" group to compare to "Straight" youth
  - Data for "Not sure" group aligned with LGB group

Limitations of the State Data

- No national comparison group for OHT
  - Optional sexual orientation item added by states
- No data collected on gender minority or gender non-conforming youth
  - Current gender item asks students "What is your sex?"
    - Only response options: Male and Female
  - Transgender, genderqueer not identified

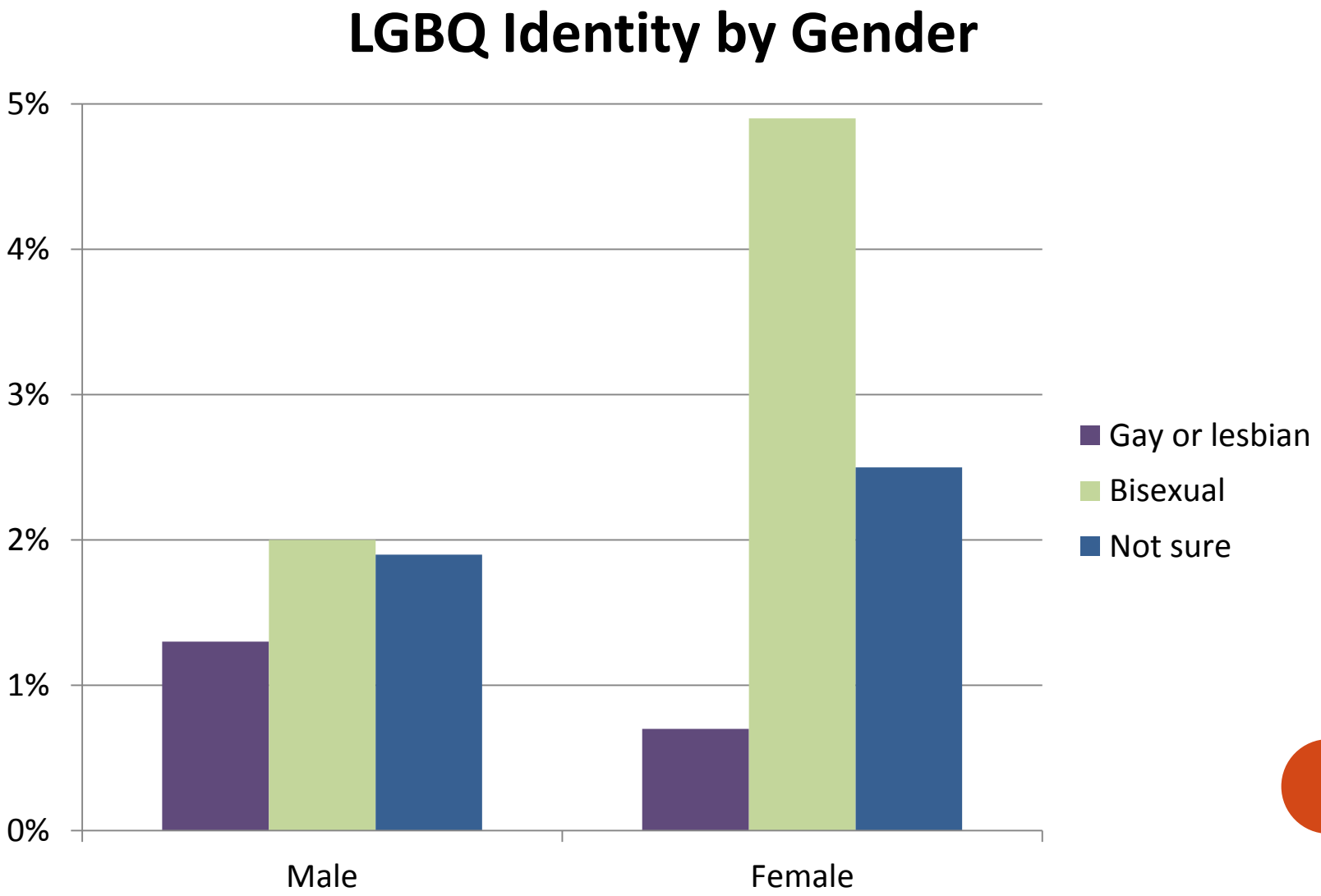


Sexual Identity ≠ Behavior



*Only includes respondents who have ever had sex

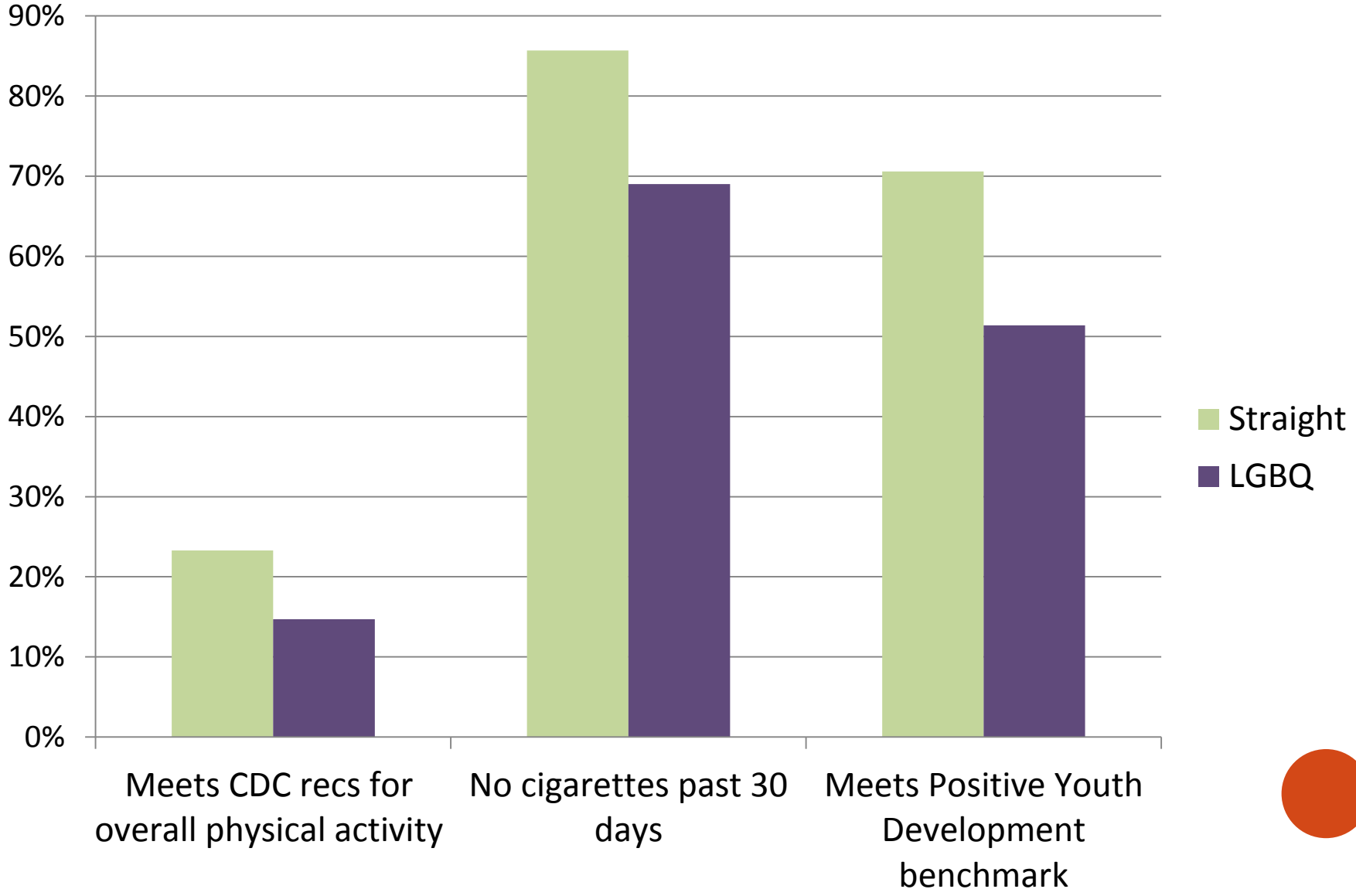
Prevalence of Sexual Minority Youth



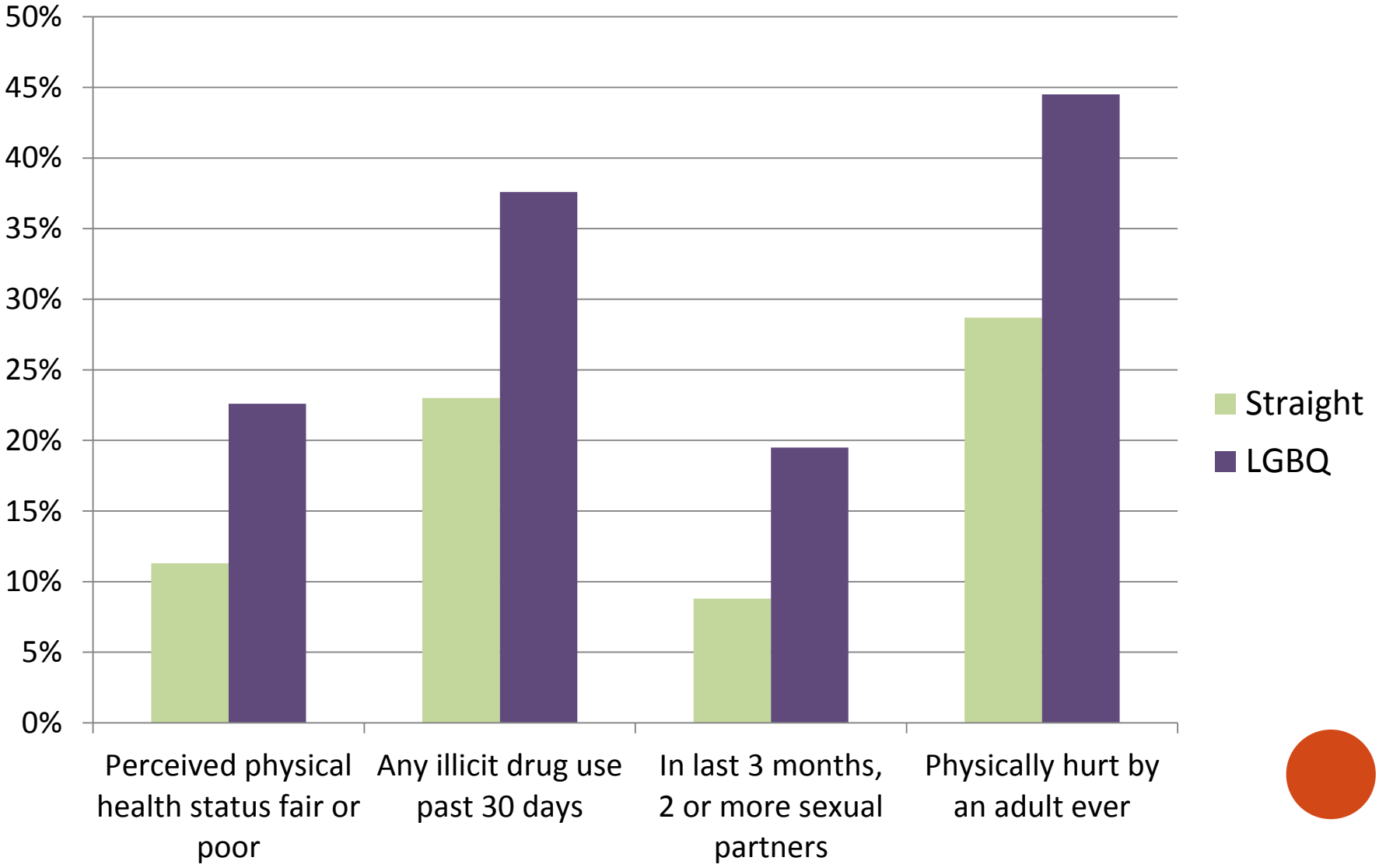
Health Disparities for LGBQ Youth

Highlights from the Oregon Healthy Teens Survey

Protective Factors by Sexual Identity
(OHT 2006 – 2009)



Risk Factors by Sexual Identity
(OHT 2006 – 2009)

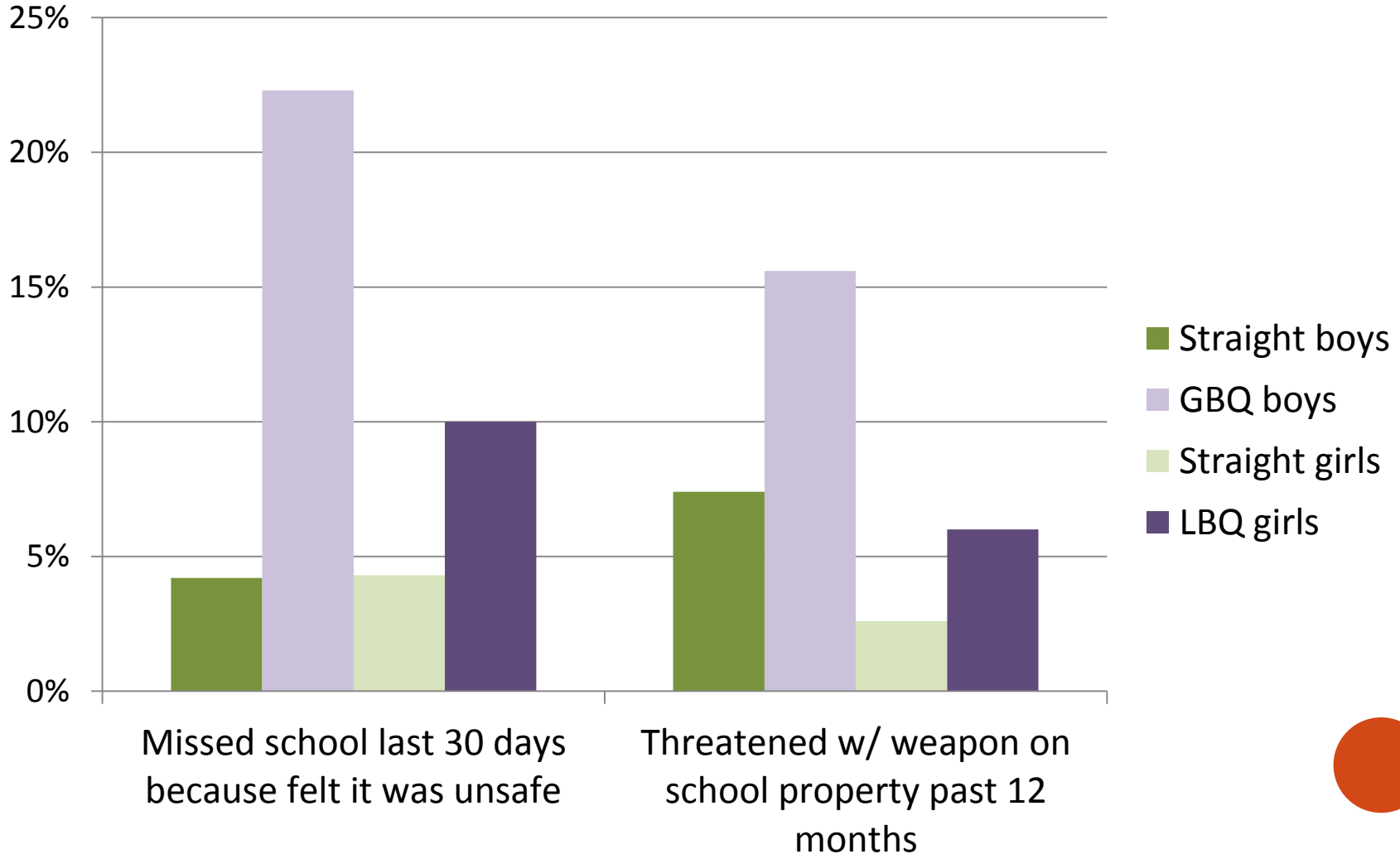


Harassment & Bullying at School

- Oregon has passed anti-bullying legislation that specifically protects students on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity
  - 1 of 16 states (GLSEN 2012)
  - Includes cyber-bullying
  - Requires all school employees to report bullying
- Oregon also passed non-discrimination law which applies to schools and protects students on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity

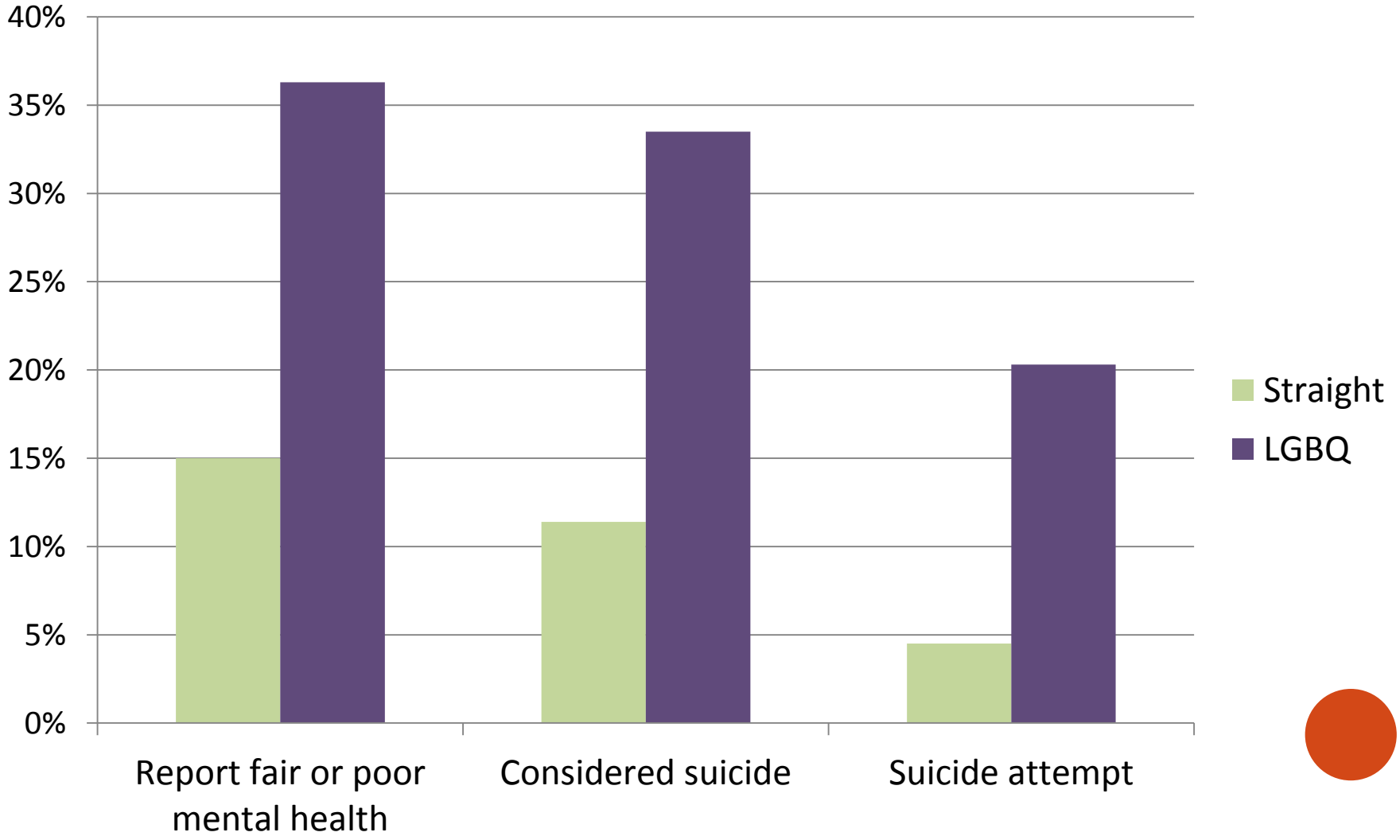
Harassment & Bullying at School by Sexual Identity & Gender

(OHT 2006 – 2009)



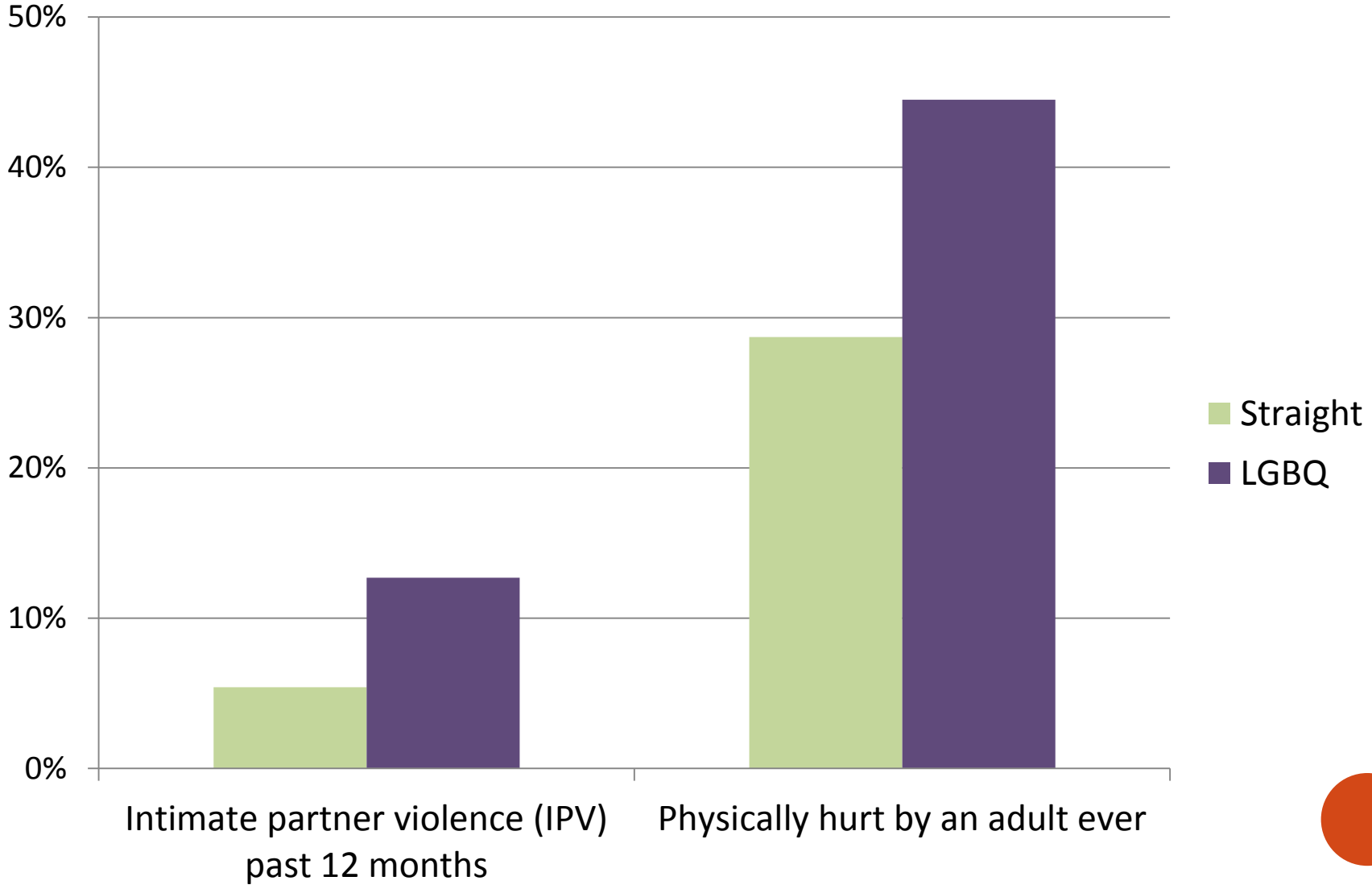
Mental Health & Suicide (past 12 months) by Sexual Identity

(OHT 2006 – 2009)



Physical Violence by Sexual Identity

(OHT 2006 - 2009)



Sexual Violence

1 in 6 LGBQ youth in Oregon have ever been physically forced to have sexual intercourse

compared to 1 in 18 straight youth

Best Practices

"I EXIST!"
SUPPORT
GROUP

Educational Setting

- Biased language used by staff & students
  - Proactive approach
- Gender-neutral language
  - Ask preferred gender pronoun
- LGBT-inclusive curriculum & staff training
- Procedures and policies for transgender students
  - Sports teams
  - Bathroom use
- Comprehensive, inclusive anti-bullying policies
  - Expressly cover gender identity and gender expression
  - Mandatory reporting for all school employees
- Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs) in your school

Clinical Setting

- Assess if your clinic has "the signs"
  - Intake forms with LGBTQ-inclusive items
  - Material (on walls, in waiting rooms, pamphlets)
  - Reactions by administrative & ancillary staff
- Conduct thorough assessments
  - Sexual history
  - Mental health
  - Substance use
  - Violence (school, relationship, home)
- Offer referrals as necessary
  - Identify LGBTQ-competent service providers

Roundtable Discussion

Summary

Learning Objectives - Revisited

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Resources

- GLSEN
  - http://glsen.org
- Oregon Safe Schools & Communities Coalition
  - http://www.oregonsafeschools.org
- GSA Network
  - http://www.gsanetwork.org
- Q Center
  - http://www.pdxqcenter.org
- National Safe Schools Roundtable
  - 2013 Conference in Portland, November 20th – 22nd
  - http://www.safeschoolsroundtable.org

Thank you!

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