

Transcript Details

This is a transcript of an educational program. Details about the program and additional media formats for the program are accessible by visiting: <https://reachmd.com/programs/clinicians-roundtable/how-to-create-synergy-between-lgbtq-youth-parents-and-clinicians/16140/>

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How to Create Synergy Between LGBTQ+ Youth, Parents, and Clinicians

Announcer:

You're listening to *Clinician's Roundtable* on ReachMD. On this episode, we'll discuss inclusive sexual health care between LGBTQ+ youth, parents, and nurses with Dr. Dalmacio Dennis Flores. Dr. Flores is an Assistant Professor at the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing, and he presented a session on this topic at the 2023 Association of Nurses in AIDS Care Conference. Let's hear from him now.

Dr. Flores:

My session at the recent Association of Nurses in AIDS Care conference was all about the different ways that we can foster synergistic relationships with LGBTQ youth, their parents, and with us as healthcare providers.

According to the Gallup poll, this year about 19.7 percent of Gen Z youth actually identify as LGBT, and compared to previous generations such as my generation, this is actually a marked increase in the number of folks identifying as such. And this is actually because being LGBT is not as stigmatized as it once was. And so given the trajectory of the ease or comfort with coming out as LGBT that's occurring, I think parents really need to be fully aware of the different nuanced ways that they can support young people in general as they go through the normative process during puberty of figuring themselves out.

So there could be more synergy between healthcare providers, parents, and LGBTQ youth in several meaningful ways. First off, when parents are talking with other parents and caregivers, I think it's highly important that we're able to provide both generalized and tailored information about LGBTQ issues. Reminding parents who are typically cisgender and heterosexual that there are distinct sexual orientation milestones that their youth go through, which is different from the experiences of their parents, is always helpful because then it provides some understanding or knowledge for these parents about the unique experiences or events that their youth can anticipate in the future. So have these dedicated conversations between healthcare professionals and the parents to really go into detail about how they can convey acceptance and support for their LGBTQ youth and how they can figure out what are the potential barriers or facilitators to helping these youth access care that is affirming for them or is the right kind of care for them.

Now in terms of the healthcare provider talking with the LGBTQ youth, they can also foster these synergies by first being that trusted adult that the LGBTQ person can turn to should they have any questions about their emergent attractions, behaviors, or the identifications or identities that they would have. Providers are then able to routinely use and affirm them in the names that they would like to use themselves or the pronouns that they prefer. Providers can cultivate safe and affirming clinical environments so that a young person who happens to be LGBTQ knows what kind of an affirming relationship is like. They can also foster and ensure confidentiality and judgment, and several other interventions that definitely convey to the young person that their health is important and that they can trust healthcare providers with the concerns that they may have.

So I think some of the major takeaways from my talk during this conference is that we need parents to be constant sources of support for LGBTQ youth as they go through their sexual orientation milestones. This includes when they're figuring out their initial attractions, when they self-identify, when they self-disclose to other people, or when they're going through the normative process of sexual exploration or debut. These are processes that are just slightly different from the experiences of their parents who are heterosexual or cisgender for the most part. And being cognizant of those milestones and making sure to tap into the resources that families have, such as their healthcare providers, will ensure that best outcomes for the young person, for their parents, and for the entire family unit could be guaranteed.

Announcer:

That was Dr. Dalmacio Dennis Flores giving us an update on his presentation at the 2023 Association of Nurses in AIDS Care Conference that focused on inclusive sexual health care between LGBTQ+ youth, parents, and nurses. To access this and other episodes in this series, visit *Clinician's Roundtable* on ReachMD.com, where you can Be Part of the Knowledge. Thanks for listening!