Meeting the Needs of Transgender Youth
A YEAR OF RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND INTERACTIVE TRAINING EVENTS ACROSS MINNESOTA

June 2016 – September 2017

SCHOLAR IN RESIDENCE:
Jenifer McGuire, PhD
University of Minnesota Department of Family Social Science

CREATIVE TEAM:
Cari Michaels, MPH
Extension Educator
University of Minnesota

Nathan Hesse
SNAP-Ed Educator

Judy Myers, MS, RN
Extension Educator
University of Minnesota

VISITING PRACTITIONER:
Vanessa Lacey, Transgender Equity Network of Ireland

PANELISTS:
Anita Arenson, School Social Worker, Student Ally;
Mary Clark Hoeschler, Out for Equity - St. Paul Public School; John Reinan, Parent of Gender-fluid Youth

GRA SUPPORT TEAM:
Mina Blyly-Strauss, Laura Janzen, Jessica Koolick,
Derek Mahan

COMMUNITY PARTNERS:
Caritas Mental Health Center, St. Cloud; Eagles Lodge, Grand Rapids; Rochester Public Library

HOST SITE FACILITATORS:
Jennifer Garbow, Bemidji Public Library; Judy Myers, Plymouth Congregational Church, Minneapolis; Sara Croymans, Morris University of Minnesota Extension Regional Office; Ellie McCann, Andover University of Minnesota Extension Regional Office

SPONSORS:
Center for Leadership and Education in Maternal and Child Public Health
University of Minnesota
Eagles Lodge, Grand Rapids, MN
# Table of Contents

1. **PROGRAM BACKGROUND** .................................................................................................................. 2  
   Introduction  
   Lessons from the Field  
   Children’s Mental Health eReview  
   Why Tackle the Topic of Transgender Youth?  

2. **BRIDGING RESEARCH AND PRACTICE** .......................................................................................... 3  
   Benefits for Research Partnership  
   Choosing a Scholar  

3. **PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND OUTCOMES** ............................................................................. 3  
   Planning Process  
   Learning Objectives  

4. **PROGRAM OUTCOMES** .................................................................................................................. 4  
   Regional Workshops  
   Statewide Evaluation Survey Data  
   Children’s Mental Health eReview  

5. **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES** ............................................................................................................. 6  

6. **MOVING FORWARD** ....................................................................................................................... 6  
   Reflections  
   Advantages of Working with a Scholar in Residence  

7. **SITE SPECIFIC SURVEY DATA IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER** .................................................... 7  
   Andover  
   Bemidji  
   Minneapolis  
   Morris  
   St. Cloud  
   Grand Rapids  
   Rochester
PROGRAM BACKGROUND:

Introduction

The University of Minnesota Extension is a major outreach arm of the University of Minnesota, a land grant institution with a mission to serve the public through applied research and education. The mission of the University of Minnesota Extension is: Making a difference by connecting community needs and University resources to address critical issues in Minnesota.

As one of four centers, the Extension Center for Family Development helps families make informed decisions leading to better health, financial security and well-being. Housed in the Center for Family Development and founded in 1992, the University of Minnesota Extension Children, Youth & Family Consortium (CYFC) bridges research and practice to promote mental well-being and health in children, youth, and families.

The Children, Youth, & Family Consortium (CYFC) has historically sought to tackle current issues that relate to children, youth, and families across Minnesota and beyond. When we were offered an opportunity in 2016 to partner with a Scholar in Residence on a relevant research topic, we sought a faculty member whose research aligned with CYFC’s ecological, multidisciplinary and community engaged priorities with potential for the work to include students and other faculty. We outlined three general goals for this partnership: (1) enhance the relevance and application of family development research for Minnesota communities; (2) advance the scholarship agenda of CYFC; and (3) apply the “research-education-value” Extension Education Model by integrating a University of Minnesota faculty member’s current research with CYFC’s successful educational and outreach mechanisms.

Visit our website to learn more about our Scholar in Residence.

CYFC has been successfully bridging research and practice for over twenty-five years. Two of our signature programs include the annual Lessons from the Field workshops and yearly on-line Children’s Mental Health eReview publications.

Lessons from the Field

Lessons from the Field (LFTF) is a theme-based educational series with a twelve-year reputation for bridging research and practice. LFTF provides opportunities for professionals, researchers, clinicians, and community leaders to gather and learn ways research and practice intersect. This successful model helps all participants better understand the pressing challenges facing children and families and how to address them.

Children’s Mental Health eReview

The Children’s Mental Health eReview is CYFC’s free and accessible online publication that integrates research and practice expertise to improve services and promote children’s mental health. Each eReview issue focuses on a topic relevant to the needs of children and families, and features research-driven articles from University and community professionals. Authors representing diverse perspectives and fields of practice offer ideas for using the research in specific settings.

Why tackle the topic of transgender youth?

As reflected in the media, there is heightened awareness about gender variability and how this intersects with personal safety and civil rights. Without informed and supportive adults, school environments, and social institutions, transgender youth are at higher than average risks for suicide, sexual abuse, homelessness, food insecurity and mental health crises. As soon as we announced that “Meeting the needs of
transgender youth” would be our Lessons from the Field (LFTF) and eReview focus for 2016-17, we began receiving numerous requests for materials, thus confirming the need to address this important issue.

**BRIDGING RESEARCH AND PRACTICE NEW WAYS:**

**Benefits for research partnership**

In 2016, CYFC accepted an opportunity to partner with a research scholar whose research would resonate with CYFC’s mission to bridge research and practice. CYFC prioritized five benefits for the 2016-2017 Scholar in Residence.

- Creating teaching and learning materials to address the increase in public awareness of and concern for appropriate work with transgender youth;
- Providing opportunities for those working with transgender youth to engage in open and safe conversations about related research and practice issues;
- Engaging through CYFC with a wide audience to reduce stigma associated with this topic and population;
- Making connections with other researchers, clinicians and professionals through the scholar’s contacts;
- Utilizing CYFC’s current and successful programs (e.g. Lessons from the Field and eReview) to provide unique mechanisms that bring together research and practice expertise that meet multiple adult learning needs.

**Choosing a Scholar**

We chose Dr. Jenifer McGuire, Associate Professor in the University of Minnesota Department of Family Social Science as our inaugural faculty Scholar in Residence for FY2016/2017. Dr. McGuire not only possessed the knowledge and research expertise we were seeking, her work also aligned with CYFC’s purpose to bridge community and university relationships that address pressing challenges facing children, youth, and families. She is an internationally known expert for her work in transgender youth research that spans three unique domains: clinic-based research with children and adolescents; school based research with middle and high school aged youth; and family based research with adolescents and young adults. Dr. McGuire’s knowledge of and collaboration with international scholars in this field helped to guide and inform combined projects with CYFC.

Dr. McGuire has collaborated internationally with scholars in Ireland, The Netherlands, and Canada. In February 2017, her Irish colleague, Vanessa Lacey joined us in the Twin Cities for two weeks of training and collaboration. Ms. Lacey works with Transgender Equality Network Ireland (TENI), a non-profit member-driven organization, founded in 2006. She has led workshops in Ireland aimed at helping families support their loved ones through the process of change and improving family relationships. During her Minnesota visit, she talked with local schools and support groups about her work with families, the Irish government and Catholic schools in Ireland. She was also a featured speaker at the Minneapolis Lessons from the Field workshop.

**PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND OUTCOMES:**

**Planning process**

The project team spent the first six months developing a plan for publications, workshops, evaluation and dissemination. Workshops started in January 2017. We intentionally designed the format to encourage interactions
among participants and presenters that included didactic presentations and small group discussions.

**Workshop development**

This year’s Lessons from the Field (LFTF) format differed from recent workshops. Rather than broadcast a full-day workshop from U of MN main campus, the team chose to travel to sites throughout the state to meet directly with professionals and parents. Once CYFC announced the intention to focus on transgender youth, regions across the state requested visits. In total, the team visited six regional sites and hosted one event in Minneapolis.

**LFTF Learning Objectives**

Goal: To build relationships throughout Minnesota toward creating inclusive and safe communities for transgender youth.

Objectives: Participants will be able to:

- Use language that builds understanding about transgender issues
- Examine risk behaviors: body image distortions, eating disorders, homelessness, suicide
- Discuss why inclusion is important: at school, in health care, in the community
- Identify ways to build supportive programs for the mental and physical health of transgender and non-conforming youth
- Contrast mental health and mental illness

**PROGRAM OUTCOMES**

*CYFC’s Regional Lessons from the Field (LFTF) Workshops*

This year’s Lessons from the Field workshops “Meeting the Needs of Transgender Youth” reached nearly 500 people across Minnesota. Originally planned as just two workshops, one in Minneapolis and another at a regional site, the number of workshops grew to seven. In total we logged over 1,500 miles traveling from Minneapolis to St. Cloud, Rochester, Morris, Andover, Grand Rapids, and Bemidji. The presenters at various sites included: Jenifer McGuire (keynote speaker), Nathan Hesse, SNAP-Ed Educator, Vanessa Lacey, Transgender Equality Network Ireland, Cari Michaels, CYFC Extension Educator, and Mina Blyly-Strauss, CYFC graduate research assistant. CYFC convened a panel for the Minneapolis workshop that included John Reinan, parent of an adolescent who identifies as gender fluid, Anita Arenson, an elementary school social worker who has worked with a transgender student, and Mary Clark Hoelscher, Out for Equity, St. Paul Public Schools.

**Fig. 1: Map of workshop travel and locations.**

Dr. McGuire’s presentations covered language, gender development, ambiguous loss, and family challenges, all backed by current and cutting edge.
research. Cari Michaels highlighted the mental health risks such a high suicide rates for transgender youth and provided hopeful research that tells us that mediating factors such as supportive families and schools increase mental health and well-being for transgender youth. And Nathan Hesse talked about risks for food insecurity and resources to ensure increased food access for transgender youth who are homeless.

Statewide Evaluation Survey Data

Fig. 1: Demographics of participants for the Lessons from the Field series as a whole.

A total of 478 attended workshops across Minnesota and as in previous years, attracted a range of participants; a majority identified as either mental health professionals or school educators. Others said they work in youth support roles, including guardians ad litem, and group counselors.

Fig. 2: Overall responses to the question “How familiar were you with the following topics prior to this event?”

Prior to attending, participants expressed a range of familiarity with the topics being discussed. 57% reported they already knew a fair amount about transgender youth; only 2% knew almost nothing about the topic. 51% said they were fairly familiar with mental health issues related to transgender youth. However, 62% stated they weren’t familiar with nutritional risks or body image concerns associated with transgender people and weren’t aware of available food resources for transgender youth.

Fig. 3: Overall responses to the question “How helpful was today’s presentation in providing information that will be useful in your relationships/work with youth and families?”

Participants varied in the amount they felt the workshop they attended was helpful. 62% said they learned a lot about gender development and transgender vocabulary; 54% reported the mental health content about risks and mediating factors very helpful. And, only 0.01% of participants reported they didn’t learn anything new.

The response from participants was very positive and we continue to receive requests to host more workshops about transgender youth.

“This is a topic that is so important and we all need tools to help us support transgender youth.” (Rochester)

Here are other comments from people around the state:

“I already made a Google doc sharing with all deans and health teachers.” (Andover)
“I will definitely share information about body image when it comes to trans youth. I will mostly share the information my (trans) brother.” (Bemidji)

“The restroom issue is a big concern in western Minnesota school communities. I hope to be an advocate for a safe place [for transgender youth].” (Morris)

Issue of food insecurity for trans youth:

“The food insecurity was good to identify – never thought about it.” (Rochester)

“I loved that food insecurity was included. I’ve seen this in action – it’s not talked about enough. Loved the discussion.” (Minneapolis)

Issue of mental health and trans youth:

“I want my agency colleagues to understand the relation of mental health to mental illness, that using language is advocacy, and to be aware of barriers to resources.” (Minneapolis)

“All (or most) of the information will be news to many colleagues at school and the practical implications will certainly inform my work as a counselor with all students. Most specifically it will help me immensely in my role as the GSA (Gender and Sexuality Alliance) advisor.” (Minneapolis)

Suggestions from Minneapolis:

“Would be helpful to have a school-specific training as this was very broad.”

“Please continue these conversations yearly.”

“Need more information about trans youth who have special needs and youth of color.”

Children’s Mental Health eReview

This year’s eReview was published April 2017, and titled “Mental Health of Transgender Youth: The Role of Family, School, and Community in Promoting Resilience.” This work highlighted current research and practice in the field with the following contributing authors: Dr. Jenifer McGuire, Ph.D., MPH, Derek Mahan, Graduate Research Assistant, U of MN, Vanessa Lacey, B.A., Transgender Equity Network Ireland, and Mary Clark Hoelscher, Ph.D., Out for Equity, Saint Paul Public Schools. To date, over 1500 professionals have received the publication. We are currently compiling survey data from eReview readers.

Additional resources

In addition to the Lessons from the Field seminars around the state and the on-line eReview publication, we compiled a Transgender Toolkit comprised of a growing number of journal publications, bibliographies and other resources that are freely available to professionals and families. These can be found on our website.

The Toolkit currently includes:

- Glossary of terms
- Annotated bibliographies
- Videos
- Web resources for trans youth
- Resources for educators and families
- Minnesota organizations

MOVING FORWARD

Reflections

Our experience this year has yielded unexpected responses from across Minnesota. Despite recent media coverage of discriminatory actions toward GLBT+ communities, rural and urban Minnesotans showed an overwhelming interest in learning more about how to support transgender youth. Many sites reached capacity numbers within days of open registration.

From the Rochester librarian and host site facilitator: “We continue to get calls and emails
from community members interested in this training. Is there a possibility of adding a second session in Rochester? If there would be a cost to do so, we can find funding. It is such an important issue I want to get as many in as we can.”

After completing seven regional workshops, we had exhausted both our budget and access to graduate research assistant support. Consequently, we were unable to schedule additional workshops during fiscal year 2017. However, CYFC has extended our scholar’s residency through December 2017, during which time we will explore additional workshops for new and established audiences.

We are also seeking to broaden our outreach and expand our resources to include: video packages with workshop content clips; more trainings, and written materials with accessible language and research content.

“This is the second training I have attended on youth – it is so critical...Is there any chance you can increase offerings? I am also interested in advocacy – ideas – especially with our current administration. Where should we focus our efforts?” (Minneapolis participant)

“This was a very informative training. There is need for this training for all school personnel and our legislators. I appreciated the research.” (Grand Rapids participant)

Advantages of Working with A Visiting Scholar

Working with a visiting scholar who has been both collaborative and accessible provided CYFC and Dr. McGuire a generative and valuable partnership. CYFC is grateful for this inaugural opportunity to work with someone whose scholarship is significantly relevant for Minnesota families, professionals, and CYFC’s ongoing goals to disseminate research-based education resources.

Benefits for Jenifer McGuire will continue beyond the CYFC partnership. She made connections with professionals and parents throughout Minnesota that will provide ongoing research and educational opportunities to work with other organizations that seek to meet the needs of transgender youth.

SITE SPECIFIC SURVEY DATA IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER

Andover – January 24, 2017

Attendees – 51 (55% survey completion)

Presenters: Jenifer McGuire, Nathan Hesse, and Cari Michaels

The Andover Lessons from the Field workshop was the first in a series of seven workshops in regions across Minnesota and was held at the Bunker Hills Activities Center. The site is home to a regional University of Minnesota Extension office.

Demographics

Fig. 1: Demographics participants for the Lessons from the Field event in Andover.

A majority of participants (58%) indicated they were mental health professionals; others identified as Extension educators, public school teachers, and librarian (see Fig.1).
Participants indicated a range of familiarity with the workshop topics (see Fig. 2). This is likely related to the high percentage of participants who work in schools and clinical settings where they see youth who identify as transgender.

However, the majority (68%) felt minimally or not at all familiar with nutritional risks.

Overall participants rated the information as helpful. The high number of participants who reported the mental health information as minimally or not at all helpful may relate to the high number of attendees in mental health related work.

Sixty-eight percent (68%) also said Dr. McGuire’s explanation of vocabulary and gender development and nutritional risks was very helpful (see Fig. 3).

Despite expressing some disappointment with elements of the workshop (see comments below), many participants said they would recommend the workshop to others; 88% were either very or fairly likely to recommend (see Fig. 4).

Comments from participants varied:

“Great workshop! Very informative! Really appreciated the open atmosphere. All educators need this information. Thank you!”

“Information was descriptive but did not feel like the information was directly related to work I do or things that are within our context to change.”

“It would have been helpful to have a transgender teen/teens in the training group - maybe a panel or a young adult sharing their experience as a youth - would like more to help with school cultures and their support or lack of for trans kids.”

**Fig. 2:** Andover responses to the question “How familiar were you with the following topics prior to this event?”

**Fig. 3:** Andover responses to the question “How helpful was today’s presentation in providing information that will be useful in your relationships/work with youth and families?”

**Fig. 4:** Andover responses to the question “How likely are you to recommend this workshop to family, friends, or colleagues?”
“Where is the conversation [or] the experience from those working with trans youth? Maybe some youth voices - or panel.”

Since this was the first event in the series, feedback helped strengthen content delivery at subsequent locations. Some participants appreciated the introduction to vocabulary. However, many participants who were either educators or mental health professionals wished for more applied information and interventions for schools. Contrary to previous years, when we included clinical presenters, this year was more research-focused.

Bemidji – January 26, 2017

Attendees – 42 (62% survey completion

Presenters: Jenifer McGuire, Nathan Hesse, and Cari Michaels

A higher than expected number of participants crowded into the Bemidji Library’s community room. Some participants drove long distances for the all-day workshop, coming from northern Minnesota near the Canadian border and from Grand Rapids. A high school teacher who facilitates the student Gender Sexuality Alliance at a Grand Rapids high school brought six students with her.

A Bemidji High School English teacher in attendance shared her experiences transitioning as an adult and her father’s rejection when she announced she wanted to be addressed as female. She also talked about the lack of trained medical personnel in rural communities who can provide appropriate services for transgender people.

During our visit, we visited a transitional shelter for transgender youth. The new youth services staff member attended the full-day workshop and reported that she appreciated the range of information from the three presenters.

Fig. 1: Demographics participants for the Lessons from the Field event in Bemidji.

Forty-six percent (46%) of the participants stated their role as “other” category. Roles included a youth center drop-in coordinator, social worker, truancy prevention specialist, advocate, and student. Other participants included teachers (20%), educators (18%) and mental health professionals (19%). A small percentage (3%) of participants reported being a health care provider, parent, or family member (see Fig. 1).

Fig. 2: Bemidji responses to the question “How familiar were you with the following topics prior to this event?”

Those in attendance represented a diverse range of knowledge and skills.

Prior to the workshop, most participants (92%) reported being fairly or very familiar with mental health information. 65% said they were fairly or
very familiar with the content prior to the workshop. Thirty-five percent (35%) reported knowing either minimal information or very little about transgender youth or gender fluidity. Participants were least familiar with nutritional risks for transgender youth; only 19% said they were fairly or very familiar with the topic (see Fig. 2).

![Helpfulness of Information](image)

**Fig. 3: Bemidji responses to the question “How helpful was today’s presentation in providing information that will be useful in your relationships/work with youth and families?”**

Bemidji participants varied in the amount they thought the event was helpful (see Fig. 3). Overall, they said the information was helpful. Eighty-one percent (81%) reported that the mental health information was fairly to very helpful. Eighty-six percent (86%) ranked the content about vocabulary and binaries very helpful. Seventy-five percent of participants ranked the information about nutritional risks and food scarcity as fairly to very helpful. This site had the highest proportion of participants rating the topic as minimally helpful (16%).

Eighty-nine percent of participants at the Bemidji event reported that they’d recommend the workshop to others (see Fig. 4). They indicated that the mental health information was fairly or mostly helpful (96%).

Participants verbally shared the impact of hearing from authentic voices - a young high school student from Grand Rapids tearfully shared “their” (gender fluid youth) family experience and losing their rejecting family and sense of safety; as well as the high school teacher who talked about her suicidal thoughts when she thought there was no accessible health care as she transitioned.

Participant comments:

“I really enjoyed Jenifer McGuire’s knowledge and teaching. Very informative, especially her involvement in research studies.”

“In my work as a social worker I will be using the new language that I learned.”

“This information will be very helpful to share with my clients who are questioning or identify as LGBTQ”
“I will definitely share information about body image when it comes to trans youth. I will mostly share the information with my (trans) brother.”

Some participants at the Bemidji event also had suggestions for improving the program. Some responses included:

“Less research, more practical application”

“I think starting with questioning audience [about] knowledge base and initial questions”

"I'd like to see information compiled specifically for teachers"

Participants expressed an interest in learning about available services for transgender youth in their region of the state. In response, participants circulated a list of clinics, drop-in shelters, and available educators who can provide more information about working with transgender youth, and clinical professionals who are able to provide support for transgender youth and families. Several participants also announced upcoming regional workshops related to transgender youth.

Minneapolis – February 28, 2017

Attendees – 196 (66% survey completion)

Presenters: Jenifer McGuire, Nathan Hesse, Vanessa Lacey, and Cari Michaels

Panel members: John Reinan, parent of an adolescent who identifies as gender fluid, Anita Arenson, an elementary school social worker who has worked with a transgender student, and Mary Clark Hoelscher, Out for Equity, St. Paul Public Schools.

The third workshop in the series about supporting transgender youth met at Plymouth Congregational Church in downtown Minneapolis. Our original intention was to host the event at the U of MN Urban and Research Outreach Center (UROC) in north Minneapolis. However, as registration numbers exceeded the capacity at UROC we had to find a larger venue. We wondered if this would negatively impact attendance given the negative messages from some faith communities. However, several participants indicated they immediately felt welcomed by the “All are Welcome” banner at the church entrance. See this blog about the event written by Judy Meyers.

Fig. 1: Demographics participants for the Lessons from the Field event in Minneapolis.

There was a diverse set of professionals in the room, with about one-third serving as mental health professionals and about one-third as teachers or educators. Many participants reported their role in the “other” category. These roles included social worker, advocate, youth worker, trainer, civil rights coordinator, researcher, and librarian. A small percentage of participants reported being a health care provider (1%) or a parent or family member (4%) (see Fig. 1).
Prior to attending, participants at the Minneapolis event expressed a range of familiarity with the topics being discussed. Participants were most familiar with the topic of mental health; 79% reported being either fairly or very familiar. Participants were also familiar with transgender related information, with 74% reporting being fairly or very familiar. Participants were less familiar with the topic of nutritional risks, with only 29% reporting being either fairly or very familiar (see Fig. 2).

Fig. 2: Minneapolis responses to the question “How familiar were you with the following topics prior to this event?”

After attending, participants at the Minneapolis event overall felt that the information presented was helpful, with the majority of participants reporting the information was either fairly or very helpful. Participants rated the topic of transgender information most helpful, with 92% reporting the information either fairly or very helpful. The topic with the highest proportion of participants who reported minimal helpful information was the nutritional risks (15%) (See Fig. 3).

Fig. 3: Minneapolis responses to the question “How helpful was today’s presentation in providing information that will be useful in your relationships/work with youth and families?”

Many participants at the Minneapolis event reported that they’d recommend the workshop to others (64% reported being very likely to recommend and 31% reported being fairly likely to recommend). Participants also shared responses about the information they wanted to share and with whom they would share it. These responses were more varied than at the two previous events, with participants reporting they would share this information with a wider range of people: parents, colleagues, academics, researchers, and supervisors. Other responses included:

“I learned only a few things today – minor things because I already work with this community. That said, it was actually the BEST presentation I’ve seen on this topic! Your language and politics were fantastic! I loved that Jenifer qualified that it was not opinion, it was based on research.”
“My husband/grandchildren and President Trump.”

“I’ll share the information (all) with my colleagues, family and friends. The research will be particularly useful to share with my colleagues and families that I work with!”

“Resources and links to websites to share with parents of transgender/questioning students”

“All (or most) of the info will be news to many colleagues of school and the practical implications will certainly inform my work as a counselor with all students, specifically in my role as the GSA (Gender and Sexuality Alliance) advisor.”

Some participants at the Minneapolis event also suggested ways to strengthen the program. Some responses included:

“Would love more clinical mental health involved in presentation and maybe discussion of risks specific to law enforcement/policing.”

“I worry there was a bit of perpetuating stereotype of communities of color not being supportive to LGBTQ youth in their communities. There are many PoC adults who are very LGBTQ supportive, and many white adults who are NOT. Also, many LGBTQ PoC (people of color) do not feel embraced/supported by white LGBTQ community”

“I wish language was more LGBTQIA inclusive, especially since there was a focus on language. “Mom and dad” - heteronormtive. “Tribes” should not be used. More appropriate – “nations” or “communities”. Mental health video showed examples of two youth – cisgender male and cisgender female and two sets of heterosexual parents…”

“Would be helpful to have a school-specific training as this was very broad. Thank you!”

“I wish we had spent more time on brass tacks about the ambiguous loss work with clients and families. It felt really powerful to be here all day, with fellow allies and LGBTQ+ folks, given the political climate.”

“I think replacing Q&A with breakout sessions or just hearing participants talk with other participants around a set of discussion questions would have been more effective and meaningful. I would allow for time to talk about next/action steps.”

Morris – April 25, 2017

Attendees – 53 (70% survey completion)

Presenters: Jenifer McGuire, Nathan Hesse, and Mina Blyly-Strauss.

The Morris Lessons from the Field event was held at the Morris Regional Office of the West Central Research and Outreach Building. The site is home to a regional University of Minnesota Extension office.

![Demographics](image)

**Fig. 1: Demographics participants for the Lessons from the Field event in Morris.**

There was a diverse set of professionals in the room, with almost half serving as children’s mental health care workers in schools or in
community organizations (see Fig. 1). Almost a third of participants endorsed having an “other” main role relating to the workshop, which included roles such as: guardian ad litem, college admissions, university faculty, and a victim advocacy worker.

Fig. 2: Morris responses to the question “How familiar were you with the following topics prior to this event?”

Prior to attending, participants expressed a range of familiarity with the workshop topics. Consistent with the number of mental health professionals in the room, a large number of participants said they were fairly or very familiar with mental health issues. While there seemed to be greater general knowledge about the transgender community (e.g. pronouns, vocabulary, etc.), participants came with relatively little knowledge about nutritional risks for transgender youth (see Fig. 2).

Fig. 3: Morris responses to the question “How helpful was today’s presentation in providing information that will be useful in your relationships/work with youth and families?”

There was a slight variance in the extent to which participants thought the workshop was helpful. Despite some comments that the content was rudimentary, nearly 40%-50% rated the workshop as helpful (see Fig. 3).

Participants reported what aspects of the information they would share and with whom. Most participants said they would share the information with clients, students, families, and coworkers. Others provided more detailed feedback about what information they would share and with whom.

“I plan to take this back to my staff to move forward with our work with prospective students and parents.”

“I want to share the importance of inclusion with our administration and share that mental health is a state of health with our school staff.”

“I plan to share this information with co-workers and administrators. Issues relating to restroom use for transgender individuals are a big concern in Western Minnesota in the school communities. I hope to be an advocate for a safe place.”

Fig. 4: Morris responses to the question “How likely are you to recommend this workshop to family, friends, or colleagues?”
Most participants at the Morris event reported they would recommend the workshop to others (94%).

Some participants at the Morris event had suggestions for improving the program. These included:

“*I am excited to get the PowerPoint sent to me. Maybe having the PowerPoint slides available as handouts so that people can listen more and write less when taking notes*”

“It would have been helpful if there was more material on “training”. So, for example, how can I present myself and act in order to be more inclusive.”

**Saint Cloud – May 2, 2017**

**Attendees – 35 (77% survey completion)**

**Presenters: Jenifer McGuire, Nathan Hesse, and Cari Michaels**

The Saint Cloud Lessons from the Field event was held at the Catholic Charities Caritas Mental Health Center. The room was full, requiring additional chairs in the back of the room and around the sides. Marketing as well as word of mouth within the agency was helpful in recruiting participants.

**Fig. 1:** Demographics participants for the Lessons from the Field event in Saint Cloud.

There was a diverse representation of professionals including: school nurse, Big Brothers Big Sisters, workforce development, probation agent, and graduate student.

**Fig. 2:** Saint Cloud responses to the question “How familiar were you with the following topics prior to this event?”

Participants reported a range of prior knowledge and familiarity with the workshop topics. They seemed to have the most familiarity with basic information about transgender youth (pronouns, vocabulary, etc.) and varying knowledge about nutritional risks and mental health (see Fig. 2).

**Fig. 3:** Saint Cloud responses to the question “How helpful was today’s presentation in providing information that will be useful in your relationships/work with youth and families?”

After attending, most participants reported the information was fairly or very helpful to them (see Fig. 3). Evaluating all four content areas,
only one participant rated the information as minimally or not at all helpful. Qualitative feedback given by participants suggest that, because most plan on telling their colleagues who could not attend what they learned, the information was applicable to the work that they do.

“I want to share this information with high school substance abuse counselors with who I work. These people spend a lot of time with at-risk youth and form trusting relationships with them.”

“I will share this information with my Master’s level School Counseling classmates and share materials I’ve gathered.”

“I will share this information with children and families we work with, as well as potential volunteers.” (Big Brother Big Sister of Central MN participant)

“[I want to] use more gender neutral language when trying to help and educate.”

Some participants at the Saint Cloud event also had suggestions for strengthening the program. While most of the feedback related to the crowded room or providing handouts of the information presented, there were a couple more detailed suggestions, including:

“I would like more information on LGBTQ needs related to medical/healthcare.”

“I would have liked more time discussing terminology.”

Grand Rapids – May 4, 2017

Attendees – 24 (96% survey completion)

Presenters: Jenifer McGuire, Nathan Hesse, and Cari Michaels

The Grand Rapids Lessons from the Field event was held at the Fraternal Order of Eagles.

![Likelihood to Recommend](image)

**Fig. 4:** Saint Cloud responses to the question “How likely are you to recommend this workshop to family, friends, or colleagues?”

Ninety-six percent (96%) participants said they would recommend the workshop to others (see Fig. 4).

“I appreciate the information and feedback to better edit our family planning intake forms.”

![Demographics](image)

**Fig. 25:** Demographics participants for the Lessons from the Field event in Grand Rapids.

This was an extremely homogenous group, with 23 of the 24 participants working for North Homes Children and Family Services. The majority were mental health professionals; those who indicated “other” roles, were an
administrator, case manager, safety and security worker program supervisor, and youth counselor. Many of these individuals may also be fairly familiar with mental health.

**Fig. 26:** Grand Rapids responses to the question “How familiar were you with the following topics prior to this event?”

In comparison to other workshops, there seemed to be a relatively similar amount of familiarity across the subjects. Given that 96% participants worked for the same organization, it is understandable they came to the workshop with similar previous knowledge bases.

**Fig. 27:** Grand Rapids responses to the question “How helpful was today’s presentation in providing information that will be useful in your relationships/work with youth and families?”

Participants varied in the amount that they felt the event was helpful to them. Overall, the participants rated the information as fairly or very helpful. Qualitative feedback was also positive.

“This was a very informative training. There is a need for this training for all school personnel and our legislators. I appreciated the research presented- great job!”

“This was very informative and helpful to me.”

“I would love to use some of this information to be provided in new staff orientation trainings.”

**Fig. 28:** Grand Rapids responses to the question “How likely are you to recommend this workshop to family, friends, or colleagues?”

All participants at the Grand Rapids event reported that they would recommend the session they attended to others (100%). Participants reported that they would share the workshop information with coworkers and others they know who work with youth. One comment highlighted the importance of sharing nutritional risks and interventions for transgender youth:

“I will share the information about the SNAP food program, and that being transgender and food insecurity are connected with my coworkers.”

One participant at the Grand Rapids event had a suggestion for improving the program, who said:

- “I would have liked more information about how to apply this information to real life situations. How can we make change, etc.”

*Rochester – May 15, 2017*

*Attendees – 77 (55% survey completion)*
Presenters: Jenifer McGuire, Nathan Hesse, and Cari Michaels

This workshop was the seventh and last one of the 2017 series. Due to high demand for registrations in Rochester, we continually increased the capacity, resulting in very tight seating.

Fig. 1: Demographics of Rochester participants.

Nearby Mayo Clinic has a clinic for transgender patients and may account for the largest number of healthcare providers and parents than attended earlier workshops.

Participants who endorsed “other” held roles including: receptionist, homeless youth worker, librarian, and graduate student (See Fig. 1).

Prior to attending, participants expressed a range of familiarity with the topics being discussed likely based on the heterogeneity of the group (see Fig. 2).

Participant comment: Thank you for expanding the topic to include the family, puberty suppression, and body image that includes big hands, big feet, etc.”

Fig. 3: Rochester responses to the question “How helpful was today’s presentation in providing information that will be useful in your relationships/work with youth and families?”

After attending, Rochester participants varied in the amount they thought the information was helpful. The mental health information was well received; no topics were rated “not at all helpful.” Participants expressed gratitude for expanding their previous knowledge (see Fig.3):

“Great training. Very thought-provoking ideas and several “ah-ha moments.”

“I’d love to share this information with my school staff as they don’t often get exposure to these trainings.”

“This is a topic that is so important and we all need tools to help us support transgender youth.”

Fig. 2: Rochester responses to the question “How familiar were you with the following topics prior to this event?”
Fig. 4: Rochester responses to the question “How likely are you to recommend this workshop to family, friends, or colleagues?”

Seventy-three percent (73%) participants reported they would highly recommend the session to others (see Fig. 4). Broadly, participants said they would share the information with the various colleagues, including teachers, students, transgender youth, parents, librarians, and other hospital/clinic staff.

“The food insecurity information was good to identify. I had never thought about it.”

“I’d love to share this information with my school staff as they don’t often get exposure to these trainings.”

Participants also provided critical feedback that will inform subsequent workshops:

“I would have liked to see more practical application for the educational setting. Maybe shorter, more compact day. Overall good!”

“I would have liked to learn who our audience was so we could make more working connections.”

Recommendation:

“We continue to get calls and emails from community members interested in this training. Is there a possibility of adding a second session in Rochester? If there would be a cost to do so, we can find funding. It is such an important issue I want to get as many in as we can.” (From the Rochester librarian and host site facilitator)

“Follow-up with Mary Ann Hennen, Extension Professional Development Director, to see if there could be a statewide webinar for Extension staff.” (U of MN Extension Educator)