Context to group

• 2 phase project by MBH MHS:
  • Mapping understanding & comfort in providing inclusive services to LGBTQI community
  • Provide opportunities to increase capacity to provide inclusive practice
    • Training
    • Network
WHY LGBTQI??
% of Identified Total by New Young Person

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identity Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heterosexual/straight</td>
<td>78.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bisexual</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choose not to answer</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questioning</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other sexuality</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gay</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesbian</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Is Not LGBTQI

84.4%

Is LGBTQI

15.6%
Robust research indicates LGBTQI/SSASGD young people are more at risk of mental health concerns that impact upon their daily functioning and can lead to suicide and self-harm (Hillier et al, 2010).

WHY LGBTQI??
Youth Reference Group as well as Young People accessing headspace Mildura services have informed us that local young people identifying as LGBTQI are living with the burden of a ‘secret’ as they don’t see the region accepting and open to the reality of who they are and what they feel. Those who are more open and/or expressive about their sexuality and/or gender identity have experienced various forms of physical and verbal abuse and discrimination. This is supported by research such as that conducted by Hillier et al (2010) who indicated “Homophobic abuse was associated with feeling unsafe, excessive drug use, self-harm and suicide in young people; and for more than half of the participants, homophobic abuse impacted on a range of aspects of Schooling.”
The LBGTQ Youth Suicide Prevention Summit (2012) recommendations reported those within indigenous communities can suffer cultural discrimination in addition to discrimination within their cultural communities for the sexual and/or gender identity, thus compounding the impact upon their sense of isolation. The local region of Sunraysia has nearly 4% of the population identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, the second highest percentage in the state. In 2011, approximately 26.3% of local indigenous people were aged between 12 and 24 years, with a further 15% being aged between 5 and 9 years. Therefore it essential that this current project is culturally sensitive and appropriate to provide opportunities for inclusion of SSASGD young people in these communities.
The six weeks of the group run as follows:

**Week one: Introduction**

It is about getting to know your facilitators and fellow participants. We know that we are also doing that tonight, but this is more in line with the program and also provides an opportunity to introduce any extra members to the group. It is also where we inform you what the group is about, kind of like what this letter’s doing but in more detail. Week one is in short, an introduction to the workshop.

**Week Two: Coming Out**

Week two is about who you have told (or may tell) about your sexuality. You may have told everyone you know or no one at all. You may not want to tell anyone. Whatever the case, it is fine by us. Coming out night is really about the issues involved in telling other people about your sexuality and or gender diversity; hearing other people’s stories and getting a chance to talk about your own experiences of coming out.

**Week Three: Self-esteem**

Self-esteem is a very popular week. We talk about our experiences of high and low of self-esteem and about what self-esteem is. You will also be asked to bring along some photos of yourself as you were growing up and perhaps a special song or possession that means something to you. Self-esteem night is generally a fun night where you leave feeling very good about yourself and that’s what we all want isn’t it?
Week Four: Sexual Health

This where we talk about all the fun stuff you can do that is safe and also about the reasons we have safe sex, or why we sometimes might not have safe sex. We talk a lot about STI’s, which can be mind boggling so, again, if you have any questions, please ask! If we don’t know the answer on the spot we will try to find it out by next week. It is important to know what to do when it comes to safe sex.

Week Five: Relationships

This week we talk about relationships in their many forms. We share experiences of our relationships and talk about what we think a relationship should be. If you have never had a relationship don’t worry you are not alone. We want to hear from you about what you think a relationship should be like for you. There will be plenty of opportunities to ask questions.

Week Six: Social Inclusion

This is the final week of the group and by this time, hopefully, you will be sad to be finishing up. This week we talk about what the social inclusion and the gay community is – or isn’t and about what is out there in terms of health care, counselling, pubs, clubs, community groups and whatever else you can think of. It is also where we discuss where to from here...do we want to keep meeting up and what would you like this to look like?? Also your facilitators should have organized a group dinner somewhere in the weeks following the group where you will all get another chance to catch up.
Where to now...

- On going open support group

- Community based project
  - This current project aims to increase opportunity for SSASGD young people experiencing acceptance and inclusion within their local region through a visual based campaign as well as building an inclusive and supporting community environment for SSASGD young people by being a community wide event, demonstrating community support and celebration of diversity.