



ED NATIONAL LGBT HEALTH
EDUCATION CENTER
A PROGRAM OF THE FENWAY INSTITUTE

Supporting Homeless LGBTQ Youth Through Better Access To Care

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@PagingDrJama



@FortyToNone



Continuing Medical Education Disclosure

- **Program Faculty:** Jama Shelton, PhD, LMSW
- **Current Position:** Director, Forty-to-None Project, True Colors Fund, NYC
- **Disclosure:** No relevant financial relationships. Presentation does not include discussion of off-label products.

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OBJECTIVES

At the end of this webinar, participants should be able to:

1. Describe the population of LGBTQ youth experiencing homelessness and the associated health risks.
2. List ways to be affirming and welcoming to LGBTQ youth
3. Identify ways to work with community partners including families of LGBTQ youth to prevent homelessness

“I can’t say who I am unless you agree I’m real.”

*Amiri Baraka
from the 1971 poem
Numbers, Letter*

TERMINOLOGY REFRESH

- **Sexual orientation:** To whom we feel attracted.
- **Lesbian/Gay:** people who are attracted to and have intimate relationship with individuals of the same gender.
- **Bisexual:** People who are attracted to and have intimate relationships with individuals of the same or different gender.
- **Questioning:** People who are questioning their sexual orientation.

TERMINOLOGY REFRESH

- **Gender Identity:** A person's innate identification of their gender, regardless of what our bodies look like.
- **Gender Expression:** The outward manifestation of way a person's gender identity.
- **Transgender:** An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from their assigned sex at birth (i.e., the sex listed on their birth certificates).
 - Transgender people may or may not choose to alter their bodies hormonally and/or surgically.

Gender and Sexuality Spectra

BIOLOGICAL SEX

(anatomy, chromosomes, hormones)

←male -----intersex -----female→

GENDER IDENTITY

(sense of self)

←man -----two spirit/third gender-----woman→

GENDER EXPRESSION

(communication of gender)

←masculine-----androgynous-----feminine→

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

(romantic/erotic response)

←attracted to women-----bisexual/asexual-----attracted to men→

FORTY TO NONE PROJECT



SERVING OUR YOUTH

FINDINGS FROM A NATIONAL SURVEY OF SERVICE PROVIDERS WHO WORK WITH LGBT HOMELESS YOUTH



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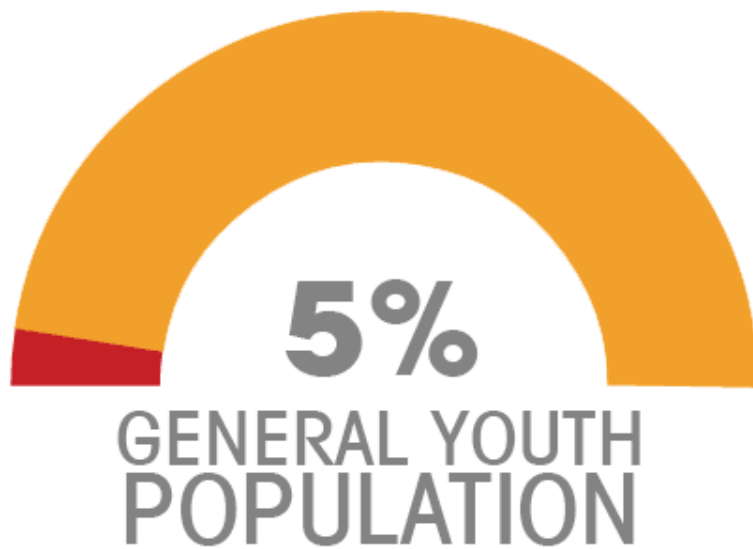


the
Williams
INSTITUTE

Polling Question

What is the most frequently cited reason for LGBTQ youth homelessness?

- a) Aging out of foster care
- b) Lack of affordable housing options
- c) Identity based family rejection



 **GAY, LESBIAN, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER**
 **STRAIGHT**

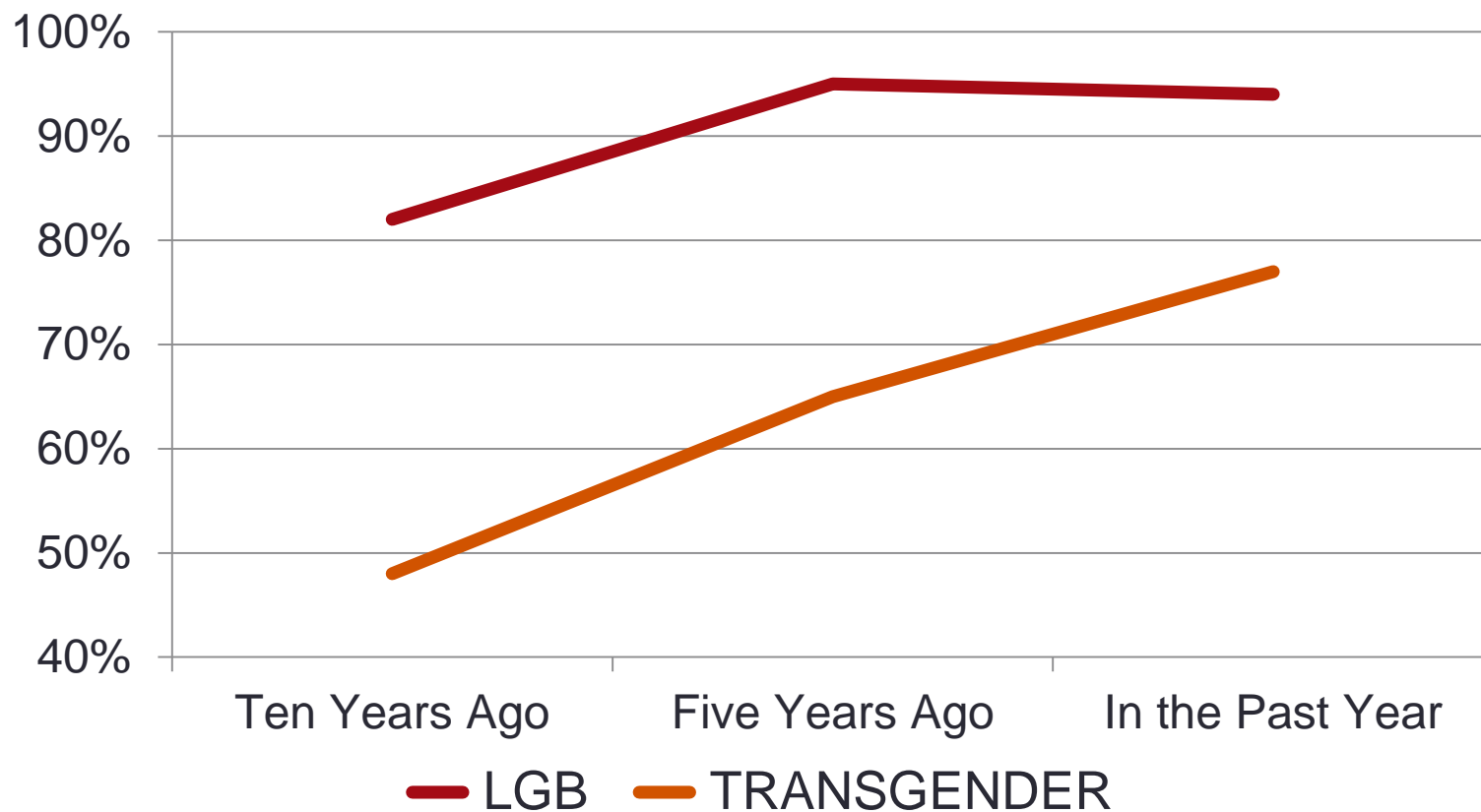


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project
www.FortytoNone.org

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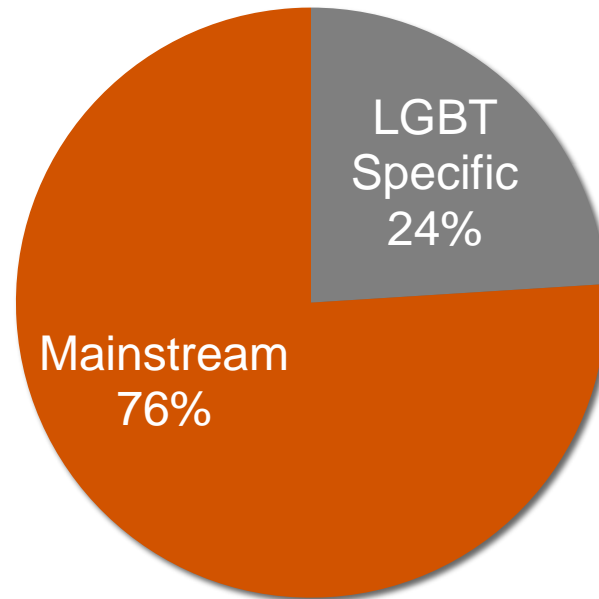
SERVING OUR YOUTH

Percent who Served any LGBT Clients, Over Time



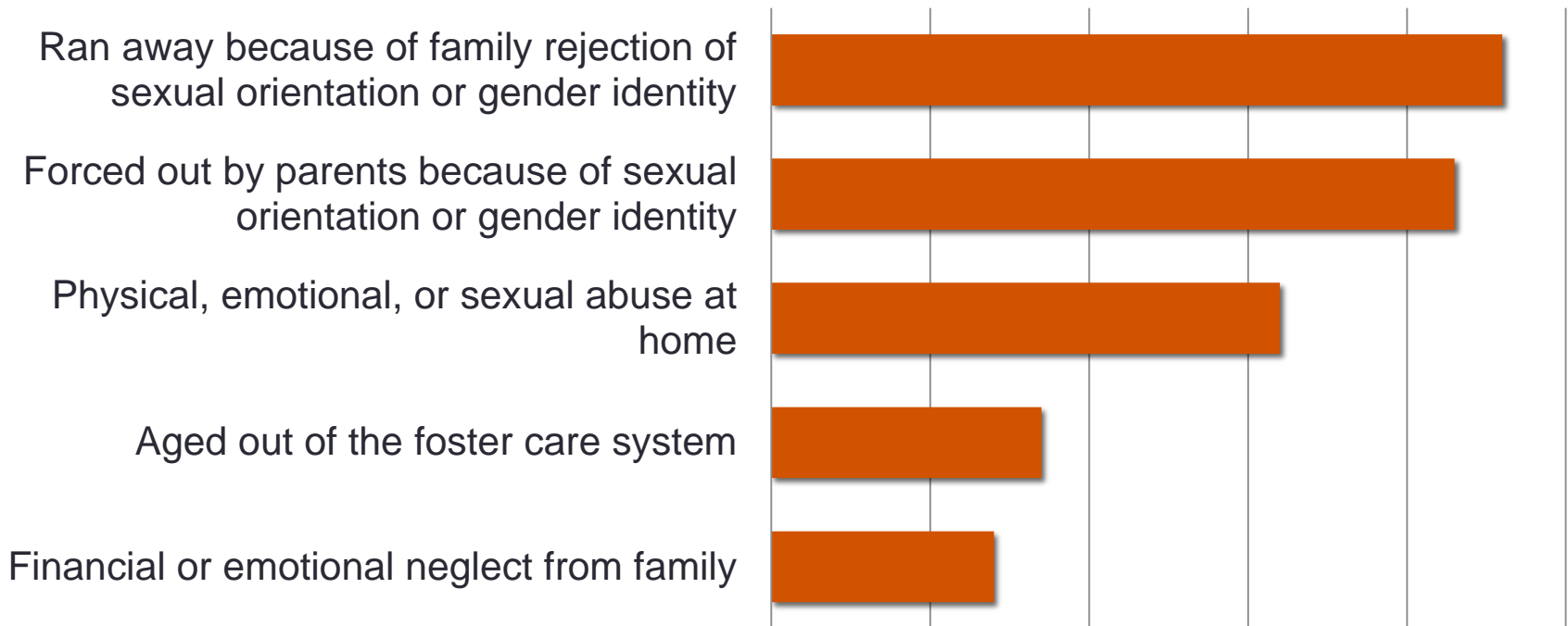
SERVING OUR YOUTH

Majority of LGBT Homeless Youth Get Help from Non-LGBT Specific Providers



SERVING OUR YOUTH

Top Five Reasons why LGBT Youth are Homeless or At-Risk of Becoming Homeless



CONSEQUENCES OF FAMILY REJECTION

SUICIDE
8x More Likely

UNSAFE SEX
3x More Likely



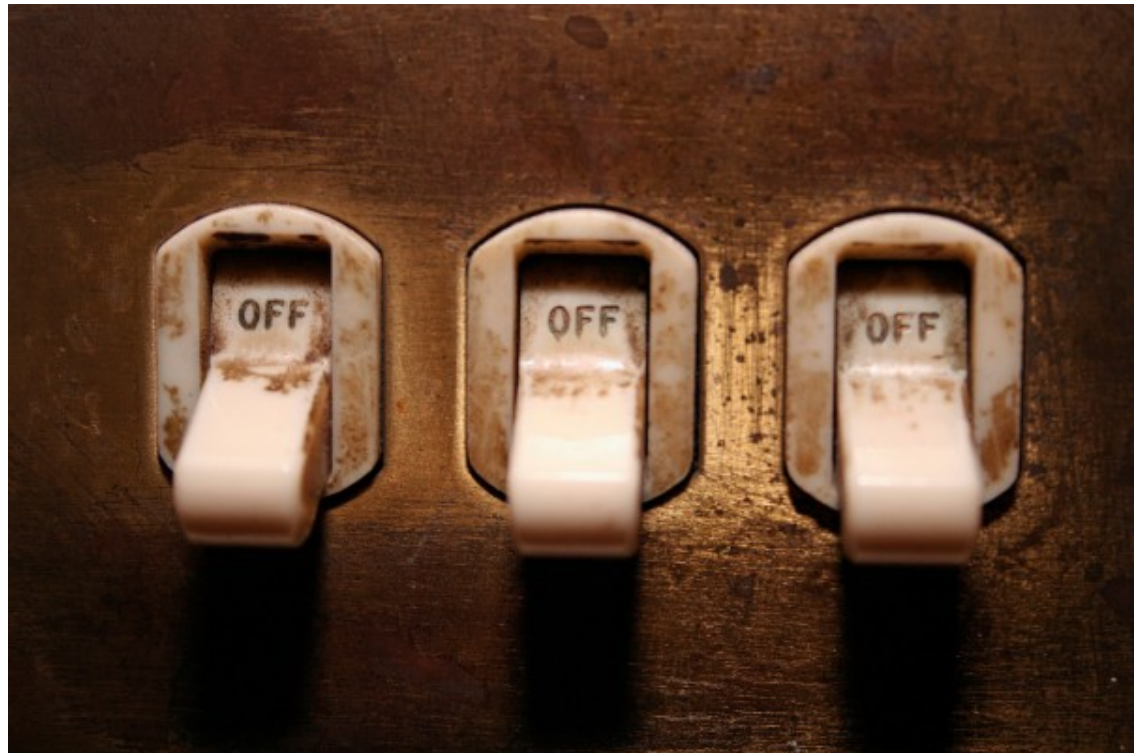
CONSEQUENCES

DRUG USE
3x More Likely

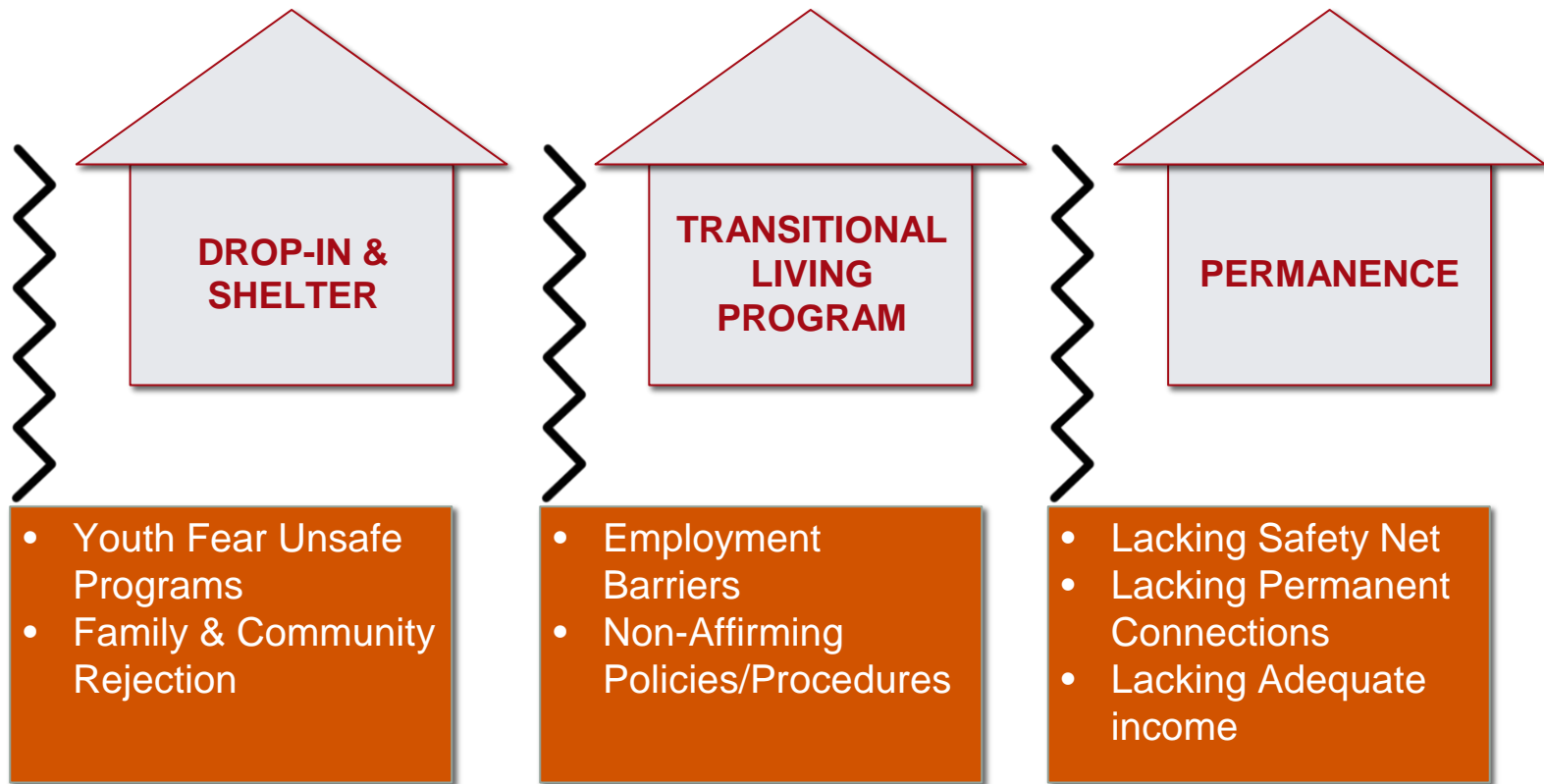
DEPRESSION
6x More Likely

CONSEQUENCES OF FAMILY REJECTION

LACK
OF
ENGAGEMENT



LGBTQ YOUTH: FALLING THROUGH THE CRACKS





FORTY TO NONE APPROACH

Polling Question

True or False?

According to the Riddle Scale, which measures attitudes towards LGBT people, we as providers and allies should be striving for acceptance of LGBT people.

BOTH/AND

- More than beds
 - Systems change and on the ground assistance
 - System improvement and system diversion
 - Innovation and collaboration
 - Proactive and reactive

OUR APPROACH

Our 3 tiered approach to ending gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender youth homelessness is infused into and informs all aspects of our programs and our work.

TIER 1: PROMOTING ACCEPTANCE

Goal: To reach families, youth, and communities before young people come out and to provide them with resources about the negative outcomes associated with identity based rejection and homelessness.

TIER 2: FAMILY & COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

Goal: To provide support to families so that young people may stay in or return to the home. If staying in the home is not an option, assess potential for relationship building. Assess family and community networks for additional support.

TIER 3: AFFIRMING & COMPETENT CARE

Goal: To ensure gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender youth experiencing homelessness have access to ongoing safe and affirming services so they can make it through the transition to independent adulthood.

THE RIDDLE SCALE

- Repulsion
- Pity
- Tolerance
- Acceptance



Homophobic
attitudes

- Support
- Admiration
- Appreciation
- Nurturance



Positive
attitudes

WHAT PEOPLE ARE DOING

Innovative Program Models

FAMILY PRESERVATION INITIATIVE

- Partnership between Ruth Ellis Center and Wayne County, MI CPS
 - Specialized training to increase worker ability to identify and consider the sexual orientation and gender identity/expression of system-involved children & youth
 - Referral to Ruth Ellis Center for short- & long-term support and residential services with the goal of supporting permanent connections with families
 - Advocacy and system change efforts ongoing with child welfare and juvenile justice



GLBT HOST HOME PROGRAM

- Program of Avenues for Youth in Minneapolis
- “Community Response to a Community Problem”
- Partners those who have resources with those who need resources
- Low-cost
- Relies on community engagement

LA LGBT CENTER EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

- Based on individual placement and support
- Reliant upon community connections and collaborations
- Specifically designed to meet the needs of LGBTQ youth



Where do you see yourself fitting into your community's efforts to prevent and end LGBTQ youth homelessness?

It's like a digital potluck.

What can you bring to the table?



Introducing the first national network that connects individuals who are working to address lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) youth homelessness, or whose work has the potential to impact the issue.

NONE
NETWORK

NONE
forty to
project

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IN THE KNOW

FortyToNone.org/Network



ON THE GROUND

FortyToNone.org/Network



AT THE TABLE

FortyToNone.org/Network

LANGUAGE BARRIERS



GETTING ON THE SAME PAGE



+ masie



www.surveymonkey.com/s/inclusiontool



83.5%

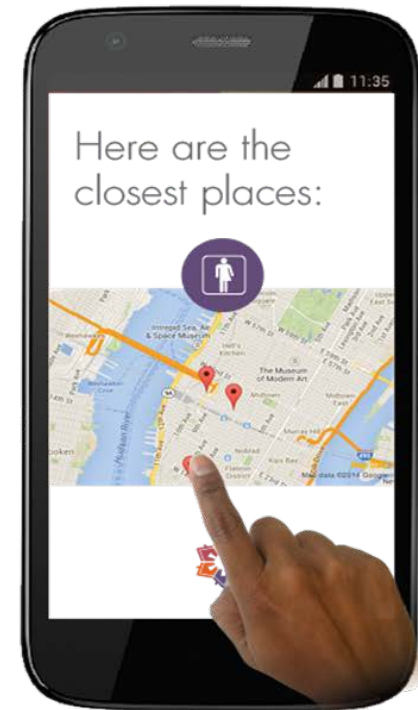
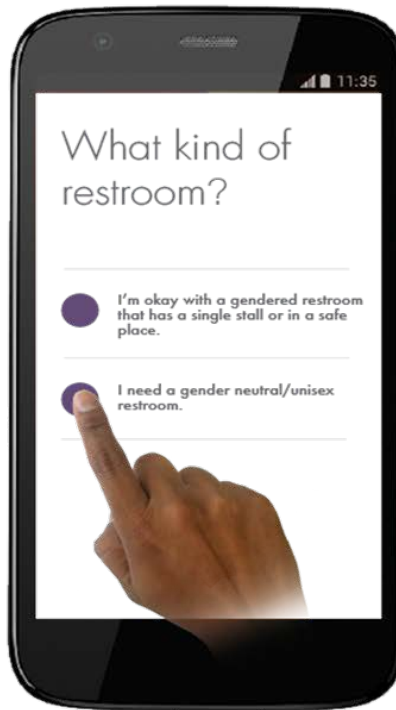
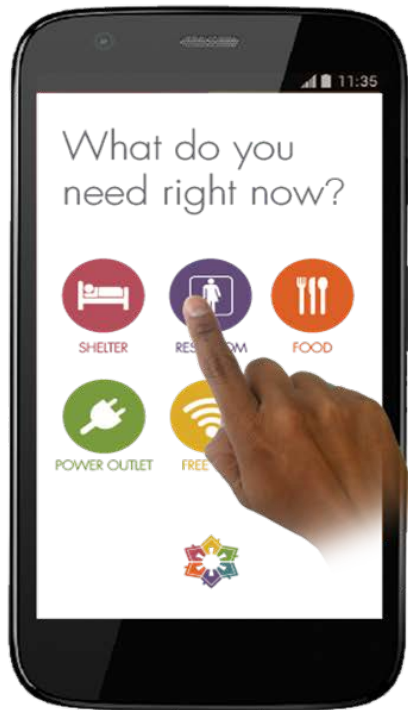
use the internet at least once per week.

62%

own a mobile phone.



WE'RE GOING MOBILE



UNLIKELY COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Prevention/Early Intervention

WHAT YOU CAN DO

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Reduce barriers to access for LGBTQ youth experiencing homelessness
 - Provide clear indication of inclusive, affirming spaces
 - Check your facilities and programs for inclusive, affirming spaces (policies, indication of correct name/pronoun, single unit or all gender bathrooms)
- Take your services out before inviting young people in
- Show up at your community's planning table and participate in planning/implementation
- Be a vocal and visible ally to LGBTQ youth and youth experiencing homelessness

LESSONS LEARNED

- Unique experiences of LGBTQ homeless youth require unique interventions for LGBTQ homeless youth.
- Role and Impact of Family Rejection
 - Family assessment as an intervention strategy
 - Impact of trauma on program engagement
- Everyone has a role in preventing and ending LGBTQ youth homelessness
- Innovation and Collaboration are key!

MOVING FORWARD



- Think outside the box.
- Know the resources in your community.
- Show up at your community's planning table.
- Participate in your community's PIT count.
- Join the Forty to None Network.
- Be visible and vocal.



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Thank You!

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