

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

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LGBTQ+ TAILORED SERVICES TO YOUTH PROGRAM

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and/or Questioning (LGBTQ+) and other sexual orientations and gender nonconforming youth face unique challenges and barriers that impact their safety and well-being outcomes. Challenges stemming from discrimination, family rejection, harassment and abuse (physical, sexual, emotional) often result from anti-gay and anti-transgender bias they experience in home, institutional and public settings.

Moreover, the majority of LGBTQ+ youth in foster care are youth of color and often face a blend of racism, gender, and sexual discrimination that increases their vulnerability. Not surprisingly, there are also significant disparities in experience between LGBTQ+ youth and their non-LGBTQ+ counterparts, leading to stress that can:

- Impact adolescent and young adult development;
- Increase the risk of negative health and mental health outcomes;
- Result in a higher than average number of placements for foster youth; and
- Increase their risk for poverty, homelessness and juvenile justice involvement.

With nearly one in five Los Angeles foster youth identifying as LGBTQ+, it is critical that policymakers, professionals serving LGBTQ+ children and youth, resource parents, family and communities understand the unique challenges of the youth they serve and support, have the skills and competencies to address disparities and improve outcomes as well as address any personal biases that can negatively affect LGBTQ+ youth in their care.

In addition to policy [1200-500.01, LGBTQ+ Children/Nonminor Dependents](#), DCFS has forged a new pathway to services for children and youth who identify as LGBTQ+. The **LGBTQ+ Tailored Services to Youth Program** provides opportunities for youth to participate in services, while also uplifting and celebrating their sexual orientation and gender identity.

With the goal of ensuring safety, improving well-being, and increasing permanency for LGBTQ+ youth, social workers and those working directly with youth should utilize LA County's Shared Core Practice Model and DCFS policy to determine whether youth should and can be referred to the new LGBTQ+ Tailored Services to Youth Program. As stated on the program's [DCFS 6120-LGBTQ+ Tailored Services to Youth Program referral form](#), and to emphasize the importance, youth **MUST** consent to the program, as Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression (SOGIE) is protected and confidential information.

Note: With increased awareness about SOGIE our vocabulary and linguistics continue to evolve, including "I" for Intersex, "A" for Asexual and "2S" for Two-spirit. For the purposes of this FYI, we use the abbreviated LGBTQ+ with the + acknowledging the multiple identities, orientations, and expressions that are not explicitly recognized by the acronym.

For any questions related to the LGBTQ+ Tailored Services to Youth Program, please contact our LGBTQ+ Program Manager, Jamie Estrada, at estraja@dcsf.lacounty.gov.



If you have any questions regarding this release please e-mail your question to:

Policy@dcsf.lacounty.gov

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