The Family Acceptance Project® (FAP) has published new research-based posters to educate family members, providers, religious leaders, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer-identified (LGBTQ) youth and others about the critical role of family support for LGBTQ children and youth to prevent suicide and other serious health outcomes and to build healthy futures. This overview provides information about the posters and gives suggestions for how to use them.

The posters are designed to be used in all settings:
- To educate the public, families, caregivers, providers, religious leaders and LGBTQ youth people – about the critical link between specific family rejecting and accepting behaviors with risk and well-being for LGBTQ children and youth, especially suicide.
- To serve as an education and intervention resource to help families to decrease rejection to prevent risk and to increase acceptance and support to promote well-being for LGBTQ children & youth.

Research-Based Education Resource – The posters share information from FAP’s peer-reviewed studies and family support work with ethnically, racially and religiously diverse families and their LGBTQ children. FAP’s research has identified more than 100 specific accepting and rejecting behaviors that parents, families and caregivers use to respond to LGBTQ and gender diverse youth. FAP researchers measured these behaviors to show how family rejecting behaviors contribute to serious health risks like suicidal behavior, depression, substance use, and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV. FAP’s research also shows how family accepting behaviors help protect against risk and promote well-being. These new posters build on FAP’s other evidence-based prevention and intervention resources including multilingual family education booklets and videos designated as Best Practice resources for suicide prevention for LGBTQ young people.

Different Versions – FAP has published 3 versions of the posters in English and Spanish. These include: 1) a general family acceptance version; 2) a family rejection version; and 3) a family acceptance version for use in conservative settings that does not include family behaviors related to dating that might prevent the posters from being used in some settings.

A key finding from FAP’s research is that a little change makes a difference. So, parents and caregivers that are struggling can start by decreasing some of the rejecting behaviors they use to try to change, deny or minimize their child’s sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression to reduce their child’s risk for suicide and other serious health concerns and to increase their child’s self-esteem and hope for the future. Parents that are struggling can start to adopt some of the family accepting behaviors that FAP has identified and measured to show their LGBTQ children that they love them, they want to support them and to help decrease their health risks.

Evaluation – FAP is evaluating how the posters are used and their impact on youth, families and others who use them. When someone downloads the posters, FAP asks for an email address to send them a short online survey with a request to participate in an optional phone interview to share feedback and stories about how the posters impact children, youth and families.

Where to Get the Posters – Anyone can download camera-ready versions of the posters from FAP’s website with printing information to print the posters locally, including this guidance that describes the posters and gives suggestions for using them.
Languages – The posters are currently available in English & Spanish. Other languages will be added as additional funds are raised.

Poster Sizes – FAP’s basic poster size is 24” x 36” to be easily seen in a waiting room, hallway, clinical exam room, library or training space. Other print sizes include: 18” x 24”, 11” x 17”, and 8.5” x 11” to use as a handout, for families to hang on a refrigerator, for home use and at activities and events.

Using the Posters – The posters are meant to be used everywhere. This includes: Clinics; schools; family service agencies; primary care & behavioral health services; prevention programs; child abuse programs; suicide prevention services; early childhood programs; child welfare, juvenile justice, homeless, residential and other out-of-home programs; college counseling centers; community centers; recreation centers; libraries and congregations.

- **Schools** – school provider services (counselors, parent advocates, psychologists, nurses, social workers); school health clinics; back to school nights and health fairs on a parent table with LGBTQ resources; for use in hallways, locker rooms; to share in diversity clubs and GSAs

- **Clinical Services** – exam and treatment rooms; waiting rooms; for use in assessment, counseling and psychoeducation with LGBTQ young people and families; home visits; family therapy; to teach children and youth about what acceptance and rejection look and feel like; for use in assessment to identify family reactions and the impact these behaviors have on LGBTQ and gender diverse children and youth; in school-based services and college counseling centers

- **Personal & Home Use** – give them to youth and families to use at home; hang in family spaces to review and routinely assess family growth and change and talk about how these behaviors affect communication, connectedness and relationships; give to extended family members and cultural leaders

- **Congregations & Faith-Based Groups** – use in educational spaces and events; share with religious leaders, pastoral care providers and congregation members

- **Community Events** – use as handouts at events and conferences and share in public spaces

- **Training** – use in trainings for agency staff, families, caregivers and providers in all settings, including professional training and student trainees, in continuing education and with parent and youth advocates

**Information & Follow Up** – If you have received the poster from someone else, and want to participate in our evaluation to help us learn how the posters are used and the impact they have with LGBTQ and gender diverse children, youth and families – or for more information – please contact us at fap@sfsu.edu

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**FAMILY ACCEPTANCE PROJECT®**

The Family Acceptance Project® is a research, education, intervention and policy project at San Francisco State University that helps diverse families learn to support their LGBTQ and gender diverse children in the context of their families, cultures and faith communities. FAP was launched nearly 20 years ago to conduct the first comprehensive research on LGBTQ youth and families and to develop the first evidence-based family support model to be integrated into systems of care and across practice domains. This includes behavioral health, primary care, school-based services, out-of-home and residential care, youth and family services and pastoral care to reduce risk and to support positive development for LGBTQ children and youth.

FAP’s family support model is being integrated into behavioral health, family preservation and foster care, faith-based mental health and other services. FAP’s intervention framework is also being applied in Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT).

FAP provides training on family-based care for LGBTQ children, youth and young adults and helps agencies to integrate FAP’s intervention framework into their programs.

Caitlin Ryan, PhD, ACSW
Director, Family Acceptance Project®
fap@sfsu.edu

https://familyproject.sfsu.edu/
**Family Behaviors that Increase Your LGBTQ Child’s Health & Well-Being**

Research from the Family Acceptance Project® found more than 50 family accepting behaviors that help protect your lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer-identified (LGBTQ) child against health risks like depression, suicide and illegal drug use and help to increase your LGBTQ child’s self-esteem, health and well-being. A little change makes a difference in decreasing your child’s isolation and risk and giving them hope that their family will be there for them.

**Family support saves lives!**

**BEHAVIORS THAT HELP...**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Benefit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tell your LGBTQ / gender diverse child that you love them</td>
<td>• Better health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support your child’s gender expression</td>
<td>• Higher self-esteem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk with your child or foster child about their LGBTQ identity and listen respectfully – even when you feel uncomfortable or think that being gay or transgender is wrong</td>
<td>• Stronger social support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Require other family members to treat your child with respect</td>
<td>• Better family relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show affection when your child tells you or when you learn that your child is LGBTQ</td>
<td>• Less likely to be depressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask your child if – and how - you can help them tell other people about their LGBTQ identity</td>
<td>• 3 times less likely to attempt suicide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welcome your child’s LGBTQ friends to your home</td>
<td>• 3 times less likely to think about suicide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participate in family support groups and activities for families with LGBTQ and gender diverse children to get support for yourself and your family and guidance for supporting your LGBTQ child</td>
<td>• Less likely to have substance abuse problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use your child’s chosen name and the pronoun that matches their gender identity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell your LGBTQ / gender diverse child that you’re proud of them</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get accurate information to educate yourself about your child’s sexual orientation, gender identity and expression</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stand up for your child when others mistreat them because of their LGBTQ identity or gender expression – at home, at school, in your congregation and in the community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak openly about your child’s LGBTQ identity</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Welcome your child’s LGBTQ partner to family events and activities</td>
<td>Believe that your child can be a happy LGBTQ adult – and tell them they will have a good life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connect your child with LGBTQ adult role models</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Express enthusiasm for your child having an LGBTQ / gender diverse partner when they’re ready to date</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The more of these behaviors that parents and families do, the better your LGBTQ child’s health & well-being.

**Family Acceptance Helps Reduce Risk & Promote Well-Being**

- **High Levels of Family Accepting Behaviors**
  - Better health
  - Higher self-esteem
  - Stronger social support
  - Better family relationships
- **More or Moderate Levels of Family Accepting Behaviors**
  - Less likely to be depressed
  - 3 times less likely to attempt suicide
  - 3 times less likely to think about suicide
  - Less likely to have substance abuse problems

*For more information about acceptance and rejection and your LGBTQ child’s risk & well-being - Family Acceptance Project*: [https://familyproject.sfsu.edu](https://familyproject.sfsu.edu)

*For more information about the Family and Community Acceptance Campaign*: [https://bidenfoundation.org/pillars/equality/asyouare](https://bidenfoundation.org/pillars/equality/asyouare)

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Family Behaviors that Increase Your LGBTQ Child’s Risk for Serious Health & Mental Health Problems

Research from the Family Acceptance Project® shows that more than 50 family rejecting behaviors contribute to serious health risks for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) youth. These include depression, suicidal behavior, illegal drug use, HIV and sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Family rejection increases risk for homelessness and placement in foster care and juvenile justice facilities.

Most parents and families that engage in these behaviors do so out of care and concern - to help their LGBTQ / gender diverse child fit in, have a good life and to protect them from harm. Help families understand that these and other rejecting behaviors are harmful!

BEHAVIORS THAT HURT...

Prevent your child from having an LGBTQ friend
Don’t talk about your child’s LGBTQ identity
Blame your child when others mistreat them because of their LGBTQ identity or gender expression
Try to change your child’s LGBTQ identity or gender expression
Exclude your LGBTQ child from family events & activities

Tell your LGBTQ child that you’re ashamed of them
Pressure your child to be more (or less) masculine or feminine
Don’t let your child participate in LGBTQ support groups or services
Let others speak badly about LGBTQ / gender diverse people in front of your child

Tell your child that being LGBTQ is “just a phase”
Take your child to a therapist or religious leader to try to change their LGBTQ identity
Don’t use the name or pronoun that matches your child’s gender identity
Don’t let your child talk about their LGBTQ identity

Use religion to reject your child’s sexual orientation, gender identity and expression
Hit, slap or physically hurt your child because they are LGBTQ / gender diverse
Tell your child that God will punish them because of their sexual orientation or gender identity
Don’t let your child wear clothes or hairstyles that express their gender identity

Tell your child to “tone down” how they look, dress or behave
Make your child pray or attend religious services to change or prevent their LGBTQ identity
Call your child negative names because they are LGBTQ / gender diverse
Make your child leave home because they are LGBTQ

The more of these behaviors that parents and families do, the higher your LGBTQ child’s risk

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BEHAVIORS THAT HELP...

Tell your LGBTQ / gender diverse child that you love them

Support your child’s gender expression

Talk with your child or foster child about their LGBTQ identity and listen respectfully – even when you feel uncomfortable or think that being gay or transgender is wrong

Require other family members to treat your child with respect

Show affection when your child tells you or when you learn that your child is LGBTQ

Ask your child if – and how - you can help them tell other people about their LGBTQ identity

Welcome your child’s LGBTQ friends to your home

Bring your child to LGBTQ groups and events

Get accurate information to educate yourself about your child’s sexual orientation, gender identity and expression

Find a congregation that welcomes your LGBTQ / gender diverse child and family

Participate in family support groups and activities for families with LGBTQ and gender diverse children to get support for yourself and your family and guidance for supporting your LGBTQ child

Use your child’s chosen name and the pronoun that matches their gender identity

Tell your LGBTQ / gender diverse child that you’re proud of them

Stand up for your child when others mistreat them because of their LGBTQ identity or gender expression – at home, at school, in your congregation and in the community

Speak openly about your child’s LGBTQ identity

Tell your LGBTQ / gender diverse child that you will be there for them – even if you don’t fully understand

Connect your child with LGBTQ adult role models

Volunteer with organizations that support LGBTQ people

Believe that your child can be a happy LGBTQ adult – and tell them they will have a good life

The more of these behaviors that parents and families do, the better your LGBTQ child’s health & well-being

- Better health
- Higher self-esteem
- Stronger social support
- Better family relationships
- Less likely to be depressed
- 3 times less likely to attempt suicide
- 3 times less likely to think about suicide
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