

Helping Transgender and Gender Diverse Students Succeed At School And At Home

Todd A. Savage, Ph.D., NCSP
President, National Association of School Psychologists
Oklahoma School Psychological Association Annual Conference
March 11, 2016

NASP
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

NASP
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life

NASP's Position Statements

[Safe Schools for Transgender and Gender Diverse Students \(2014\)](#)
"NASP supports efforts to ensure that schools are safe and inclusive learning environments for all students, family members, and school staff, including those who are transgender or gender diverse. NASP respects a person's right to express gender identity, and the right to modify gender expression when necessary for individual well-being. In addition, NASP supports all students' right to explore and question their gender identity....NASP acknowledges that having a transgender identity or being perceived as gender diverse are not disorders, and that efforts to change a person's gender identity are ineffective, harmful, and discriminatory. NASP works to ensure that settings in which school psychologists work are safe and welcoming and provide equal opportunity to all persons regardless of actual or perceived characteristics, including gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, and any other personal identity or distinguishing characteristics."

[Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning Youth \(2011\)](#)
"NASP believes that school psychologists are ethically obligated to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity for the development and expression of their personal identity in a school climate that is safe, accepting, and respectful of all persons and free from discrimination, harassment, violence, and abuse. To achieve this goal, education and advocacy must be used to reduce discrimination and harassment against LGBTQ youth by students and staff and promote positive social-emotional and educational development."

NASP
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life

Session Objectives

- To heighten the participants' awareness of definitional and other issues related to transgender gender identity as they pertain to school and to home milieus;
- To aid participants to begin to construct a knowledge base about the various experiences and challenges faced by transgender students at home and school, as well as how participants can address these matters;
- To provide an opportunity for participants to apply their new-found awareness and knowledge.

NASP
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life

Joint Resolution

- APA and NASP Joint Resolution on Gender and Sexual Orientation Diversity in Children and Adolescents in Schools (2014)
- K-12 schools should be places of safety and support for all students through the...
 - Promotion of safe and supportive school policies and legislation
 - Development of anti-bullying efforts that promote academic success and resiliency
 - Development of programs to increase school engagement
 - Promotion of cross-agency collaboration
 - Protection of the right to privacy surrounding identity
 - Collection of inclusive data ensuring student anonymity
 - Funding of research in these areas
 - Increases access to facilities and programs based on gender identity, not assigned gender

NASP
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life

NASP Practice Model

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS
Model for Services by School Psychologists

<p>PRACTICES THAT PERMEATE ALL ASPECTS OF SERVICE DELIVERY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data-Based Decision Making and Accountability Consultation and Collaboration 	<p>DIRECT AND INDIRECT SERVICES FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES, AND SCHOOLS</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;"> <p>Student-Level Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interventions and Instructional Support to Develop Academic Skills Interventions and Mental Health Services to Develop Social and Life Skills </td> <td style="width: 50%;"> <p>Systems-Level Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School-Wide Practices to Promote Learning Preventive and Responsive Services Family-School Collaboration Services </td> </tr> </table>	<p>Student-Level Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interventions and Instructional Support to Develop Academic Skills Interventions and Mental Health Services to Develop Social and Life Skills 	<p>Systems-Level Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School-Wide Practices to Promote Learning Preventive and Responsive Services Family-School Collaboration Services 		
<p>Student-Level Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interventions and Instructional Support to Develop Academic Skills Interventions and Mental Health Services to Develop Social and Life Skills 	<p>Systems-Level Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School-Wide Practices to Promote Learning Preventive and Responsive Services Family-School Collaboration Services 				
<p>FOUNDATIONS OF SERVICE DELIVERY</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%;">Diversity in Development and Learning</td> <td style="width: 33%;">Research and Program Evaluation</td> <td style="width: 33%;">Legal, Ethical, and Professional Practice</td> </tr> </table>			Diversity in Development and Learning	Research and Program Evaluation	Legal, Ethical, and Professional Practice
Diversity in Development and Learning	Research and Program Evaluation	Legal, Ethical, and Professional Practice			


HELPING STUDENTS AND SCHOOLS ACHIEVE THEIR BEST

NASP
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life

NEA's Position

- Teaching Strategies (<http://www.nea.org/tools/30420.htm>)
 - "NEA believes that a great public school is a fundamental right of every child - free from intimidation and harassment, and safe for all students, including those who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered."
 - "There is only one real issue for educators: We are responsible for our students' safety and education. We must ensure that everyone is given the opportunity to achieve and thrive."

NASP  NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF School Psychologists *Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life*

Think/Pair/Share


- What is your understanding of what it means to identify as 'transgender?'
- How is 'gender identity' distinct from 'sexual orientation?'
- When do individuals become aware of their gender identity?

NASP  NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF School Psychologists *Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life*

Transbasics


- http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=UXI9w0PbBX



NASP  NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF School Psychologists *Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life*


Definitions

- Sex
 - Think biology – Female/Male
- Gender
 - Social construction that is culturally-mediated – Girl/Woman, Boy/Man
- Gender Identity
 - Lived/defined by the individual
- Gender Expression
 - How people communicate their gender identity to others
- Gender Role
 - Culturally-mediated ways people live out gender – Feminine/Masculine
- Sexual Orientation
 - One's primary psychological, social, emotional, and erotic attractions to other people

NASP  NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF School Psychologists *Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life*


Facts

- Estimates vary as to the number of people in the U.S. who identify as transgender
 - 0.3% self-identified in a recent health study (Gates, 2011)
 - 1%-3% of students self-identified in a recent SF HS health survey (Shields, 2009)
 - TIME magazine (June 2014)
 - 0.5% of U.S. population (i.e., 1.5 million people) identifies as transgender
 - 9% of adults report having a family member or close friend who identifies as TG (vs. 65% who report having a family member or close friend who identifies as lesbian or gay)
 - Taken altogether, these numbers make the momentum for change slow
 - These numbers may be underestimates for a variety of reasons
- Cuts across ethnic, racial, and class lines

NASP  NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF School Psychologists *Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life*


Definitions (continued)

- Cisgender
 - Gender identity matches the sex and gender one was assigned at birth
- Transgender
 - Gender identity does not match the sex and gender one was assigned at birth
 - Consistent, persistent, insistent
- Gender Diverse
 - Broader category that captures the range of gender identities
- LGBPTIQA2S (LGBTQ+)
- Confusion regarding sexual orientation and gender identity
- Pan-sexuality versus bi-sexuality

NASP  NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF School Psychologists *Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life*

General Issues


- Not much known about home issues, though experiences may parallel what has been observed in the LGB community
- Transphobia in the general culture and society
- Medical and psychological issues/barriers
 - DSM
 - Transsexualism → Gender Identity Disorder → Gender Dysphoria (current)
 - Stringent rules/guidelines (i.e., Harry Benjamin Standards of Care; WPATH – World Professional Association for Transgender Health)
 - Lack of knowledge, experience, training, sensitivity
 - 41% of TG adults report having attempted suicide [vs. 4.6% of the general population and 10%-20% of the LGB population (National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, 2011)]

NASP  NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF School Psychologists *Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life.*

Transgender Youth

- 80% of TG-identified adults knew they were 'different' before leaving elementary school
- Less than 4% of TG-identified persons realized they were TG after the age of 18
- Average age of trans-spectrum self-realization: 7.9
- Average age of learning the 'words' to communicate feelings: 15.5
- Consistent, persistent, insistent
- Transitions pre-puberty are social in-nature; some persons make seek medical transitions around puberty or later

Hyun, Raff, & Trier (2012)


NASP  NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF School Psychologists *Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life.*


Transitioning and Mental Health


- <http://thinkprogress.org/lgbt/2015/03/10/3631788/letting-transgender-kids-transition-is-for-their-own-good/>


Allowing Transgender Youth To Transition Improves Their Mental Health, Study Finds

BY JACK KENNEDY FOR THINKPROGRESS.COM FEBRUARY 10, 2015 11:22 AM



NASP  NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF School Psychologists *Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life.*




NASP  NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF School Psychologists *Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life.*

School Issues

- Transphobia – Bullying, biased remarks, harassment
 - 38% report feeling unsafe at school because of climate
 - 35% report avoiding gender-specific spaces because of climate
 - >60% report avoiding EC activities and school functions
 - 56% heard negative gender expression remarks
 - 33% heard negative transgender-specific remarks
 - 56% heard negative gender expression remarks from adults
 - 55% verbally harassed in the past year
 - 23% physically harassed in the past year
 - 49% LGBT report cyberbullying secondary to SO or GI/GE in the past year
 - 57% LGBT did not report incidents
 - 62% who did report indicated school staff did nothing in response


[GLSEN 2013 National Climate Survey](#)

NASP  NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF School Psychologists *Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life.*

When Do Kids Know They're Transgender? Younger Than You'd Think.

NPR Radio Spot – May 8, 2015


<http://kuow.org/post/when-do-kids-know-they-re-transgender-younger-you-d-think>

NASP  NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF School Psychologists *Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life.*

School Issues

- Discriminatory School Policies & Practices
 - 56% report experience anti-LGBT policies & practices
 - 28% report being disciplined for PDA
 - 18% prevented from attending a dance or function
 - 18% restricted from promoting GSA
 - 42% prevented from using declared name
 - 59% required to use restrooms and/or locker rooms based on GA
 - 32% prevented from wearing clothes considered inappropriate based on GA

[GLSEN 2013 National Climate Survey](#)

NASP  NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF School Psychologists *Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life.*

Effects of a Hostile Climate


- Three times more likely to have missed school in the past month
- Have lower GPAs than non-harassed peers
- Twice as likely to report not to pursue PSE
- Report higher levels of depression and lower levels of self-esteem
- Report higher rates of substance use/abuse and risk-taking behaviors

[GLSEN 2013 National Climate Survey](#)

NASP  NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF School Psychologists *Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life.*


Legal & Policy Matters (continued)


- Anti-bullying bills
 - [Safe and Supportive Minnesota Schools Act](#)
- High school athletic associations
 - As of September 10, 2015, 35 states have transgender-inclusive policies in place pertaining to participation in high school athletics
 - For more information, see [TRANS*ATHLETE K-12](#)
- Minnesota State High School League (December 2014)
 - http://www.mshsl.org/mshsl/news/transgender_policy.pdf
 - Takes effect for the 2015-2106 academic year
 - Allows participation in high school athletics of all students regardless of gender identity and gender expression
 - Each participating member school must determine the appropriate gender team for participants requesting transgender consideration

NASP  NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF School Psychologists *Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life.*

Legal & Policy Matters

- Title IX (Patsy Mink Equal Opportunity in Education Act, 2002)
 - U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights considers gender identity and gender expression as protected classes under Title IX
 - The DOE-OCR and the U.S. DOJ have filed and won lawsuits in this regard
- Equal Access Act (1984)
 - Equal access to extracurricular activities – religious and secular – in public schools
- California’s AB 1266 (2013)
 - A pupil must be permitted to participate in sex-segregated school programs and activities, including athletic teams and competitions, and use facilities consistent with his or her gender identity, irrespective of the gender listed on the pupil’s records

NASP  NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF School Psychologists *Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life.*



A male wants to shower beside your 14-year-old daughter.

Are YOU ok with that?

On October 1st and 2nd, this week, the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) will consider their 48th proposal regarding that controversial athletic facility shared by participants in high school athletic programs. The proposal, which is more than 100 pages long, has been drafted and filed for consideration under various titles of this year's agenda.

• A transgender athlete's gender identity is not a disability and is not a protected class under Title IX.

• A transgender athlete's gender identity is not a disability and is not a protected class under Title IX.

• A transgender athlete's gender identity is not a disability and is not a protected class under Title IX.


• A transgender athlete's gender identity is not a disability and is not a protected class under Title IX.

• A transgender athlete's gender identity is not a disability and is not a protected class under Title IX.

• A transgender athlete's gender identity is not a disability and is not a protected class under Title IX.


• A transgender athlete's gender identity is not a disability and is not a protected class under Title IX.


• A transgender athlete's gender identity is not a disability and is not a protected class under Title IX.

NASP  NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF School Psychologists *Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life.*

Legal & Policy Matters

- FERPA
 - According to Lamda Legal, students (age 18+) and/or parents or legal guardians have the right to request that a school change the name and gender marker on one’s records if they are incorrect, misleading, or violate one’s privacy (34 C.F.R. section 99.7(a)(2)(ii))
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
 - Gender identity is not a disability in-and-of itself
 - Focus on disability in the 504 plan, not on gender identity
 - If the disability for which you are seeking accommodations centers on mental health sequelae associated with one’s gender identity and that impacts one’s education, it would be appropriate to develop a 504 plan in this situation
 - http://www.naesp.org/sites/default/files/Zirkel_MA15.pdf

NASP  NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF School Psychologists *Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life.*



THE END OF GIRLS' SPORTS?

Her dreams of a scholarship shattered, your 14-year-old daughter just lost her position on an elite team to a... and now she may have to shower with him. Are you willing to let that happen?

• A transgender athlete's gender identity is not a disability and is not a protected class under Title IX.

• A transgender athlete's gender identity is not a disability and is not a protected class under Title IX.

• A transgender athlete's gender identity is not a disability and is not a protected class under Title IX.

• A transgender athlete's gender identity is not a disability and is not a protected class under Title IX.

• A transgender athlete's gender identity is not a disability and is not a protected class under Title IX.

• A transgender athlete's gender identity is not a disability and is not a protected class under Title IX.

• A transgender athlete's gender identity is not a disability and is not a protected class under Title IX.


NASP  NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF School Psychologists *Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life*

Transgender Sports Policy

<http://espn.go.com/video/clip?id=12568947>


Outside The Lines: Transgender athletes and sports policy



NASP  NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF School Psychologists *Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life*

Mom: I'm Not A Girl


- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Si5kAnLyKeg&feature=share>

NASP  NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF School Psychologists *Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life*

School Psychology


- Presence
- Attitudes
- Willingness
- Confidence
- Graduate education and continuing professional development
- Other professions within the field of education

Bowers, Lewandowski, Savage, & Woitaszewski (2015)

NASP  NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF School Psychologists *Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life*


How To Be Supportive


- Personal reflection and professional development
- Policy development
 - Non-discrimination policies
 - Anti-harassment policies
 - Other school policies (e.g., field trips; restroom/locker room use; athletic teams)
- Advocacy
 - Acceptance
 - Gender non-specific spaces and safe zones (e.g., GSAs)

NASP  NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF School Psychologists *Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life*

Raising Ryland

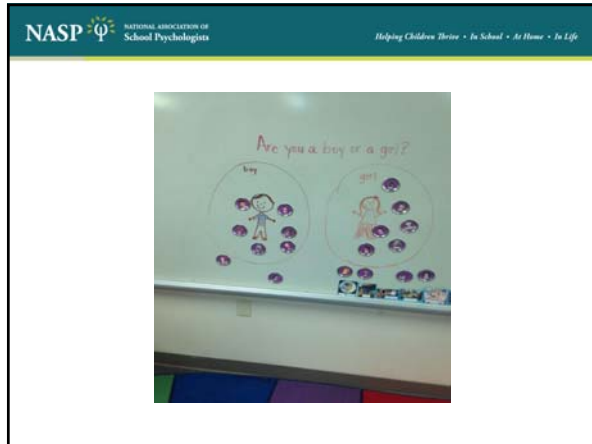
- <http://www.cnn.com/videos/us/2015/03/17/digital-shorts-parenting-transgender-child-orig.cnn?sr=fbdwtransp>



NASP  NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF School Psychologists *Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life*

How To Be Supportive

- Psychological safety (adapted from Reeves & Brock, 2011)
 - Schools
 - School climate (respect, acceptance, valuing versus tolerance)
 - School connectedness
 - Mental health
 - Individual
 - Honoring the individual
 - Name and pronouns
 - Dress and other forms of gender expression
 - Privacy
 - Resiliency – internal and external
 - Intervention
 - Ongoing support



NASP NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF School Psychologists Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life

Wrap Up

- Transgender persons are a part of school communities at numerous levels;
- Transgender persons are vulnerable to discrimination and harassment at school, at home, and in the community, which may contribute to challenges in the various areas of their lives;
- Transgender persons are also resilient;
- School psychologists, other school-based mental health professionals, administrators, and teachers can and SHOULD support transgender persons in schools in multiple ways;
- Resources exist and are accumulating to assist school psychologists in their efforts to optimize the potential for success of all persons.

NASP NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF School Psychologists Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life

How To Be Supportive

- Education
 - Administration, faculty, and staff
 - Students
 - Families
 - Records
- Curriculum and Instruction
 - Inclusion of gender diverse persons in curriculum
 - Teaching to and through the cultural/identity lenses of students
- Collaboration
 - Home
 - Community agencies

NASP NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF School Psychologists Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life

Resources

- [National Association of School Psychologists \(NASP\)](#)
- [Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network \(GLSEN\)](#)
- [Transparenthood \(Blog\)](#)
- [TransActive Gender Center](#)
- [Welcoming Schools](#)
- [Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Community Center](#)
- [TransYouth Family Allies](#)
- [Philadelphia Trans-Health Conference](#)
- [TNET – PFLAG's Transgender Network](#)

NASP NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF School Psychologists Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life

Schools in Transition

- <https://www.genderspectrum.org/staging/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Schools-in-Transition-2015.pdf>

Gender Spectrum (2015)

NASP NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF School Psychologists Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life

References

Bowers, S., Lewandowski, J., Savage, T. A., & Woitaszewski, S. A. (2015). School psychologists' attitudes toward transgender students. *Journal of LGBT Youth, 12*, 1-18.

Gates, G. (2011, April). *How many people are lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender?* Los Angeles: The Williams Institute, UCLA.

Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network. (2014). *The 2013 National Climate Survey*. New York: Author.

Hyun, J. H., Raff, R., & Trier, B. (2012). *Helping transgender youth*. Presentation made at the annual meeting of the Washington School Counselors Association Meeting.

Rands, K. E. (2009). Considering transgender people in education: A gender-complex approach. *Journal of Teacher Education, 60*, 419-431.

National Association of School Psychologists. (2014). *Position statement: Safe schools for transgender and gender diverse students*. Bethesda, MD: Author

National Association of School Psychologists. (2011). *Position statement: Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning youth*. Bethesda, MD: Author.

Reeves, M. A., & Brock, S. E. (2011). *PREPaRE workshop 1: Crisis prevention & preparedness: Comprehensive school safety planning*. Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.

Shields, J. P. (2009). SFUSD Demographics. *Youth Risk Survey*.

Steinmetz, K. (2014, June 4). America's transition. *TIME Magazine*. New York: TIME, Inc.

Questions?

Todd A. Savage, Ph.D., NCSP
President, National Association of School Psychologists
Associate Professor, University of Wisconsin-River Falls
todd.savage@uwrf.edu