

Coram Voice

‘Stable Homes, Built on Love’ Engagement Work - Feedback

Session 3 - ‘Being Me’ (LGBTQ+) Identity

**A
NATIONAL
VOICE**

Stable Homes, Built on Love
Your Identity (LGBTQ+)

Session 3 - 'Being Me' (LGBTQ+) Identity

The online session for children and young people took place on Wednesday 20 September 6.00-7.30pm.

The session focused on how social workers could best children and young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender and queer.

Who we heard from:

A total of 30 young people attended the session. They were aged 15-25+ and were from across England.



WHO

Do you feel happy to talk to about
sexuality and gender?

- Friends
- Personal advisors
- My mum
- My partner
- Some Family
- Friends, co-workers, and social worker
- Medical practitioners



“Training, information for work and information for all”

“Probably my friends...anyone else (“adults” or professionals can be awkward)”

“Leaflets and inform everyone about the truth not what people believe”

“I can open up to my boyfriend because he is transgender himself, but I can't really open up to anyone because I was scared, I eventually was able to open up in supported living. I'm now in a care home.”

“Therapist but first I usually ask if they've supported trans/queer people before”

“I go to an LGBT youth club and I feel really comfortable talking to them”

WHAT

Was your first impression or initial conversations around LGBTQ+ identity with a social worker?

“Some social workers can be more open minded than others”

“I never told my social worker I just ask her to call me the right name and pronouns he/they and not to use she/her”

“They was not informed - they have never asked me”



“I've never spoken to any social worker about it as i'm scared about what they will say”

“I don't think my social worker knows to be fair”

“It wasn't great... when I first told my social worker that I was pansexual they just looked at me blankly. There was a bit of ignorance as it wasn't very well known”

“My social worker told me I might not be trans[generated] and that my dysphoria was because of what happened to me”

“To be fair I didn't really feel ready to open up but now they seem okay so I would probably be able to open up to them”



WHAT

Was your first impression or initial conversations around LGBTQ+ identity with a social worker?

“My social worker was supportive”

“My social worker helped me come out to my carers”

“Not at all tbh I did not know anything about it till one day my mate talked about it”

“Did not give any information or ideas on the subject”

“My first conversation with my my social worker was very negative, she did not believe that it was a real thing and that it was a mental health issue”

“My first conversation with my social worker about my identity was quite difficult”





Hands - What training/ resources/ support do professionals need to support children and young people people who are LGBTQ+?

“Using the right name and pronouns”

“Unconscious bias, reflection, intersectionality”

“Every young person should feel safe when interacting with a professional. Outing someone is never acceptable and I'm sorry to hear if anyone here has had to experience this.”

“LGBTQ+ recourses that have lived LGBTQ+ experience/ workshops where young people talk about what they expect”

“More training in what it all means (my worker)”

“Trained on SAFEGUARDING! LGBTQ+ identities are not risks”

“Letting us get clothes that we feel right in and not make us feel bad about us”

“How to talk about sex and relationships. Brook is a great orgnaisation for this”

“The history of the LGBTQ+ movement - including history with police and health care services”



Hands - What training/ resources/ support do professionals need to support children and young people people who are LGBTQ+?

“School uniform (girl have skirts /boy have trousers) we should be able to wear what we like”

“What different gender identities/sexualities mean”

“Inform all staff about what it mean and the consequences on this and use it right”

“History of trans folk - we have been around for years. Trans identities are not a novelty, trend, fad or new”

“Understanding mental and physical health and the links to LGBTQ+”

“They need to be trained on not OUTING young people without their consent.”

“They need to have compulsory LGBTQ+ training and gender diversity training as part of their CPD [continued professional development]”

“Not dead naming us [using the wrong name]”

“Not giving police our deadname when we go missing”



Hands - What training/ resources/ support do professionals need to support children and young people who are LGBTQ+?

“How current care policies might affect LGBTQ+ - for example can be access to more clothing allowances etc. to feel comfortable in gender expression?”

“Understanding of legislation and policies and how to put them into practice”

“Teaching how to let a young person know there options in transitioning like buying new clothes or going on testosterone or estrogen”

“Letting under 18s go on T[testosterone] OR E [estrogen]”

“Older social workers need to be taught about the new generation and progress with them”

“I feel like that they should be placed in some training ran by LGBTQ+ persons/ young people :)”

“Sex education on same sex relationships”

“How to support LGBTQ+ CEP to maintain and build relationships”



Heart - What qualities or skills do professionals need to have to support children and young people who are LGBTQ+?

“Compassion”

“Empathy, understanding, curiosity, keenness to educate themselves, non-judgmental attitude”

“I expect kindness and compassion, as well as fair treatment”

“Advocacy skills”

“Listening and supporting and being understanding skills”

“Fair and equitable treatment”

“Separating their personal and professional values if they don't align”

“Open and loving - attentively listening and putting ally ship first”

“Being able to question their own biases”

“The right emotion for the right person and pronoun's”

“Knowing that I am who I am and not changing”



Heart - What qualities or skills do professionals need to have to support children and young people who are LGBTQ+?

“We are really focussing on emphasising the skills and behaviours that social workers should have, to be able to treat people with dignity, empathy and kindness.”

“They should be caring and be understanding towards that young person/people, they should respect that person's identity”



Head - what do professionals need to think about when talking or supporting children and young people who are LGBTQ+?

“Their non verbal reactions e.g. facial expressions”

“The person they are with and how to address the situation right with the right information and pronouns”

“They need to think about how the young person is feeling and how best to support them”

“Their own personal and professionals values”

“British values-mutual respect, rule of law, democracy, tolerance and individual liberty”

“How the young person is actually feeling”

“Histories of trauma”

“Confidentiality and allowing individuals to have autonomy over who knows about their gender/ sexuality”



Head - what do professionals need to think about when talking or supporting children and young people who are LGBTQ+?

“Young people delivering training and expressing their views as members of the community”

“Don't deadname us for the fun of it”

“Recognise that their identity may be fluid and may change over time”

“They need to think: ‘How can I respond in a respectful way’, ‘How can I better reflect on my experiences and be more compassionate’”

“EACH INDIVIDUAL IS DIFFERENT”

“That their response or behavior can be triggering. They are there to protect, not cause harm”

“Definitely training on ALL types of genders and sexualities so that awareness of all is recognisable and you don't get looked at blankly when you say you are x/y; resources could be LGBTQ+ young people delivering training and expressing their views as members of the community”



**If you were the Director for Children's Social Care -
What would you do to create an inclusive, LGBTQ+
friendly environment?**

“Everyone in care and working within care will have training”

“LGBTQ+ posters”

“All young people asked their sexual and gender identity when entering care”

“Stricter recruitment to weed out the homophobic, bi-phobic and transphobic workers”

“Giving all kids/teen in care the money for hormones”

“All workers have pronoun badges”

“If I was the director of Children’s Social Care I would make sure that it would be inclusive for ALL looked after children from CIC to Care Leaver to (and I hate this phrase but I don’t know what else to use) Care Champion”

“Extra money and resources to support gender expression”

“Everyone wears pronouns or introduces and asks pronouns”

“Make sure the information is right and worded for the age it is given too”



**If you were the Director for Children's Social Care -
What would you do to create an inclusive, LGBTQ+
friendly environment?**

“Create an LGBTQ+ club that anyone can join”

“Members of staff to be encouraged to join pride”

“Have a chat with the LGBTQ+ people to help update it every four time
a year”

“Talk to young people”

“Listen to LGBTQ+ young voices”

“LGBTQ+ lanyards. Rainbow accreditation scheme”

“Name pins”

“Like a children in care council, a strand of this to be LGBTQ+ specific
people”

“Relationships and sex education in schools to include LGBTQ+
content”

“Every local authority should have an LGBTQ+ young people in care
YOUTH GROUP.”



**If you were the Director for Children's Social Care -
What would you do to create an inclusive, LGBTQ+
friendly environment?**

“Health care and educational services to deliver inclusive sex education”

“More open conversation on LGBTQ+ where people can share their experiences”

“Make sure schools make it mandatory for staff to go through training on the LGBTQ+ community and that students in year 6 and secondary school”

“Foster carer recruitment to be more thorough. Racism is not allowed in the social work realm or foster carers, why is HBT [homophobia, bi-phobia and transphobia] allowed?”

“Commission more research and projects into LGBTQ+ CEP”

“Foster carers to have their knowledge checked before fostering - if they don't know enough about LGBTQ+ issues then they cant foster till they do”

“No discriminatory language in the workplace- discrimination and jokes to be dealt with”

“Allow a space for social work professionals and carers to reflect about their values and views.”



What things would you like to see put in place: Now (In the next 2 years)

“More training”

“More understanding”

“More acceptance and less ignorance”

“Training for social workers in how to support young people”

“An LGBTQ+ care leaver's society”

“Some more support and compassion”

“Better training for social workers around understanding and giving helpful resources”

“Rainbow lanyards”

“All members of staff to be assessed and investigated on their knowledge of LGBTQ+ - if they don't know enough- formal training till they do”

“Pronoun badges”

“More support/compassion and also some more training”



What things would you like to see put in place: Now (In the next 2 years)

“Young people to share best practice examples with social carers who have done well in supporting young people”

“Training for everyone, social workers, foster carers, adoptions, schools”

“Everyone to be treated fairly and not have to worry about offending anyone because of who they are.”

“All information given to use titles as bullet points if we want to know about it, all information given as much as we want”

"Ask young people”

“Respect people’s pronouns”

“Information is given if we show signs”

“Fundraising for LGBTQ+ charities”

“Young person steering groups and policy groups. Representatives of YP on fostering panels”

“Proper support not judgement”



What things would you like to see put in place: Now (In the next 2 years)

“Training for social workers and someone who is LGBTQ+ person!!!!”

“The right name on college badges”

“Recruit social workers for their compassion and understanding as well as for their skills”

“A policy or resource that tells professionals and carers to not out their young people without their consent. A legal document to protect LGBTQ+ identities”

“Raising awareness that off issues we still have going on”

“Transition is as smooth as we feel it needs to be”

“All young people to be asked about their gender and sexual identity and how they can be supported - maybe be implemented in review meetings”

“LGBTQ+ CEP youth groups in every local authority”

“All staff fully trained on trauma formed”

“Have an LGBTQ+ Club for everyone who wants to join and get educated and meet people they can talk to”



What things would you like to see put in place: Now (In the next 2 years)

“Have social workers be able to keep an open mind”

“I'd like to see a better understanding on transitioning and the stages that there is to them and that people may transition fully or my stop at certain points”



What things would you like to see put in place: In the future (In the next 10 years)

“More LGBTQ+ groups”

“To have free trans healthcare”

“An update to the Equality Act - the last one was 13 years ago so could do with amendment”

“All staff trauma informed and trained in how to inform others about this and the if not some properly consequences”

“Certain amount of money for new clothes for lgbtq people”

“Clear legal plan for social workers and carers to follow to support LGBTQ+ young people and trans young people”

“To make operations less expensive and more accessible”

“I would like to see a higher acceptance in LGBTQ+ people living in care and that there is plenty of resources”

“Trans specific course on social work courses”

“To have LGBTQ+ sex education in all schools - not just learning about communities but how to have safe sex and gain support”



What things would you like to see put in place: In the future (In the next 10 years)

“More support for LGBTQ+ young people and more representation by LGBTQ+ people”

“Inform all about it and make it not as a bad thing as it seems”

“No HBT!!”

“Training on allyship”

“If we want to be let use be”

“For all genders and sexualities to be as known as each other... the + to be known rather than just LGBT (if that makes sense?)”

“All homophobic members of staff in gov and care system to be held accountable”

Key messages for policy teams:



Children and young people believe that it's important that social workers have formal training about LGBTQ+ children and young people in order to support them.



Social workers should have empathy, understanding, curiosity, keenness to educate themselves and a non-judgmental attitude.



There needs to be more specific training, education and understanding of transgender children and young people.



Children and young people believe that supporting LGBTQ+ children and young people should be covered in the recruitment and selection process for social workers.



Foster carers, teachers and other professionals are important in support LGBTQ+ children and young people.



Children and young people should have opportunities to join LGBTQ+ groups and organisations (they can also support professionals in their understanding as well).



Social workers should have access to information which can support LGBTQ+ children and young people in their journey.



Local Authorities should consider current care policies and how they might affect LGBTQ+ - for example can be access to more clothing allowances etc. To feel comfortable in gender expression.



Social workers need to be able to explore and reflect on unconscious bias and intersectionality.

Key messages for policy teams:



Children and young people believe that immediate changes should include: wearing LGBTQ+ inclusive badges and/or lanyards, using an email with name and pronouns in, listening to LGBTQ+ voices, ensuring that every working within children's social care will have training and more access to LGBTQ+ care experience youth groups in every local authority.



Children and young people believe that longer term changes should include: Commission more research and projects into LGBTQ+ care experienced people, create LGBTQ+ social work student groups, foster carers to have their knowledge checked before fostering and no discriminatory language in the workplace- discrimination and jokes to be dealt with.



Children and young people believe that the Government could update the Equality Act and create clear legal plans for social workers and carers to follow to support LGBTQ+ young people and transgender young people.

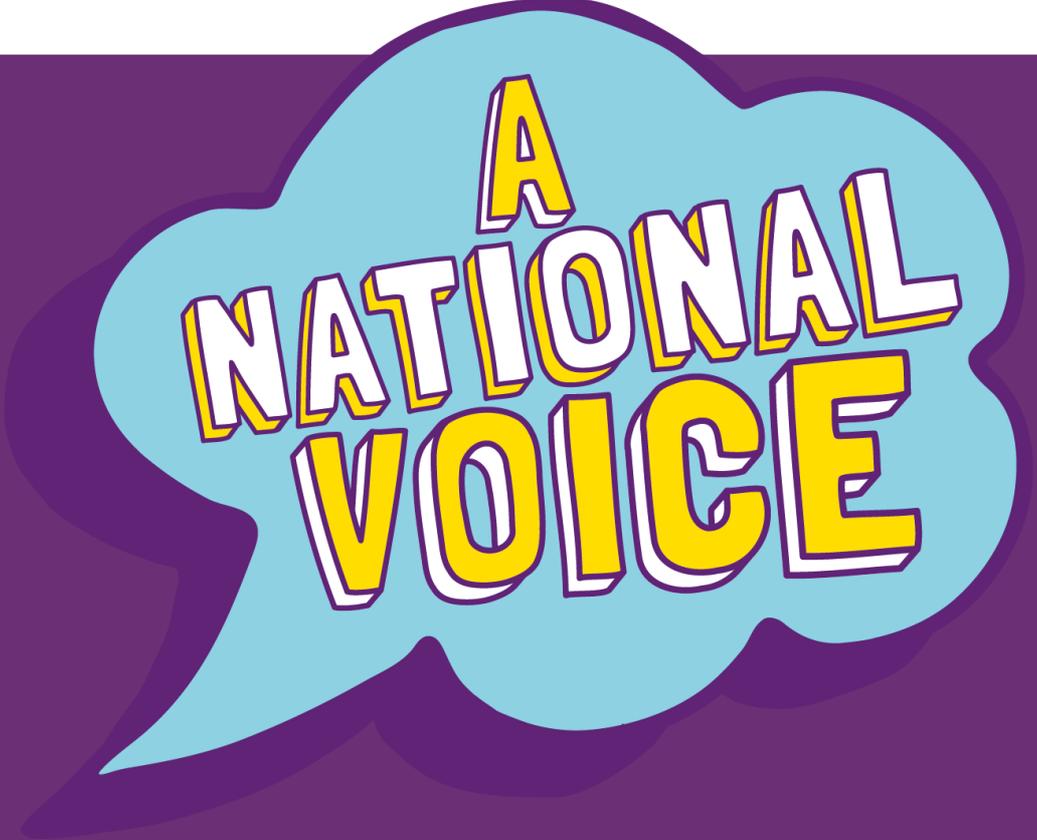


Children and young people believe that more could be done to share best practice examples with social workers who have done well in supporting young people.

Further information

Check out other [online session](#) dates for future sessions

Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to get in touch at: ANV@coramvoice.org.uk



**A
NATIONAL
VOICE**