

PROVIDING SOCIAL SUPPORT TO SEXUAL AND GENDER MINORITY YOUTH

A PROGRAM EVALUATION OF HATCH YOUTH

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Why We Did This Study

LGBTQ young people who lack acceptance and support experience more negative health outcomes than LGBTQ young people who feel accepted and supported by primary caregivers and peers.

8
TIMES

More than 8 times as likely to have attempted suicide

6
TIMES

Nearly 6 times as likely to report high levels of depression

3
TIMES

More than 3 times as likely to use illegal drugs

3
TIMES

More than 3 times as likely to be at high risk for HIV and STDs

Why We Did This Study



Mission

- To provide safe, social environments for GLBT youth..
- Offer role models and peer support
- Sponsor educational and community outreach opportunities to empower GLBT youth to become positive contributors to society

The Program

- Weekly meetings on Tuesdays, Fridays and Sundays
- Provide peer support
- Esteem-building activities
- Educational and motivational speakers
- Social and recreational opportunities
- Small group discussions

What We did

Analyzed data from participant surveys *Hatch Youth* collected every October and April, 2003-2013

614 responses

Revised 2014 survey and analyzed collected surveys

108 baseline surveys

Observed programming over 14 weeks in 2014 and interviewed staff, volunteers, and youth to identify commonalities in their perceived impact of Hatch Youth on youth participating in the program

12 staff/volunteers

11 youth

What We Found (2003-2013 Surveys)

Attending *Hatch Youth* 6+ months increases social support

Youth were twice as likely to have a social group outside of school and interact with LGBTQ community

With increased social support from family and peers, youth were twice as likely to report increased self-esteem

Youth with increased self-esteem were more likely to report practicing safer sex and not using street drugs

What We Found (2014 Surveys)

Attending *Hatch Youth* for at least 1 month was associated with increased social support

Increased social support was associated with improved mental health

- Decreased depressive symptoms
- Increased self-esteem
- Improved coping ability

What We Found (2014 Observations and Interview)

Hatch Youth provided a sense of belonging for youth who felt support from family and friends was inconsistent

Confidence and self-esteem increased when in a space that was structured to create a stable environment where it felt safe to be explore sexual and gender identities

Participating in *Hatch Youth* increased confidence to improve relationships with family and peers outside of *Hatch Youth*

What Our Results Mean and Why this Matters

Participating in *Hatch Youth* increases social support

Increased social support is associated with...

- increased comfort with sexual orientation

- better coping

- higher self-esteem

- fewer depressive symptoms

What's next?

A study that follows youth over time and compares *Hatch Youth* to other drop-in centers

Acknowledgments

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Publications

Wilkerson JM, Schick VR, Romijnders KA, Bauldry J, Butame SA, & The Montrose Center (in press). Social Support, Depression, Self-Esteem, and Coping among LGBTQ Adolescents Participating in *Hatch Youth*, a Group-Level Intervention in Houston, Texas. *Health Promotion Practice*. doi: 10.1177/1524839916654461

Romijnders K,* **Wilkerson JM**, Crutzen R, Kok G, Bauldry J, Lawler, SM, & the Montrose Center (in press). Strengthening social ties to increase confidence and self-esteem among sexual and gender minority youth. *Health Promotion Practice*.