

# Healthy Sexuality for Youth in Foster Care:

## An Online Training for Parents and Caregivers of Youth in Foster Care

January 2023



# Agenda

1. **Background**
2. **Training overview**
3. **Feedback from a small-scale pilot**
4. **Training tips**



# Opening Remarks



**LeBretia White (she/her)**

**Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB)  
Administration for Children and Families (ACF)**



# Background

- / PREP: PYP project**
- / Adapted from an in-person curriculum**
- / Feedback from foster parents and youth formerly in foster care**
- / Mathematica partnered with dfusion, Inc.**



**P**romising  
**Y**outh  
**P**rograms

---

Personal Responsibility Education Program



# Training overview





# Training features

## Adolescent Development

Continue to strengthen their ability to think abstractly (solve problems, empathize with others, and think about concepts they can't necessarily see)

Drag and drop the card into the correct square, and then the card will flip.

	Physical Development	Cognitive Development	Social-Emotional Development
Early Adolescence (11-13 years)			
Middle Adolescence (14-18 years)			
Late Adolescence (19-21 years)			



## SPIN

- Open and honest communication
- Unconditional, unbiased acceptance
- Support and guidance
- Positive nurturing relationships
- Adults to listen and value their experience

Click to hear from a youth



# Training overview

- / **Module 1: Introduction**
- / **Module 2: Exploring attitudes, beliefs, and values related to adolescent sexuality**
- / **Module 3: Adolescence: A critical period for growth**



# Training overview

- / **Module 4: Communicating about sexuality: Part I**
- / **Module 5: Healthy sexuality and sexual behavior**
- / **Module 6: Helping youth navigate sexual feelings and behaviors**



# Training overview

- / **Module 7: Partnering with youth to promote their health and safety**
- / **Module 8: Sex trafficking**
- / **Module 9: Communicating about sexuality: Part II**
- / **Module 10: Training review**



# Clips from the training



# Clips from the training

Click to hear from a youth

Adults to listen and value their experience

Support and guidance

Appropriate resources

Unconditional, unbiased acceptance

SPIN

66%

# Clips from the training

Puberty is complete; physical growth slows for girls, continues for boys

## Adolescent Development

Drag and drop the card into the correct square, and then the card will flip.

	Physical Development	Cognitive Development	Social-Emotional Development
Early Adolescence (11-13 years)			
Middle Adolescence (14-18 years)			
Late Adolescence (19-21 years)			

57%





# Feedback from parents and caregivers

**“[The training] made me realize I need to have the conversations with my sons. I didn’t think about this for kids in care.”**

- Foster parent

**“I found [the training] to be very informative for how to approach all aspects of sexuality to a teen.”**

- Foster parent

**“It felt like you were in a support group.”**

- Foster parent



# Training tips

## / **For parents and caregivers:**

- Easy log-in with self-managed password (no approval required)
- Don't have to complete the training in one sitting
- Must complete all modules and score 8/10 on quiz to receive certificate
- Best viewed on a computer

## / **For administrators:**

- Recommend or require training for licensing or personal growth
- Certificate can be downloaded and sent as proof of completion



# Additional resources

## / Tip sheets

- Communication Strategies
- Contraceptive Options
- Safety
- Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

## / Report on how we developed and tested the training

**Promising Youth Programs**  
Personal Responsibility Education Program

TIP SHEET | Jan 2023

### Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

As youth grow and transition to adulthood, they face important decisions about relationships and sex that can impact their health and well-being for the rest of their lives.<sup>1</sup> Youth in foster care are no different than any other youth. They need access to information, support, and services to make healthy decisions. Parents and caregivers of youth in foster care can guide them on sexual health topics, support them, and help them access information and services.

About 30 percent of youth in foster care identify as LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer or questioning) or gender nonconforming.<sup>2</sup> LGBTQ+ youth enter foster care for many of the same reasons as non-LGBTQ+ youth in care, but many have also experienced the trauma of rejection or mistreatment because of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. A parent or caregiver who supports an LGBTQ+ or gender-nonconforming adolescent can help them cope and thrive.

**For more information** on sexual orientation and gender identity, see module 5 in Healthy Sexuality for Youth in Foster Care: An Online Training for Parents and Caregivers of Youth in Foster Care <http://www.fosterparenttalk.org/home>.

#### Learn about sexual orientation and gender identity

To support LGBTQ+ and gender-nonconforming adolescents, it is important to understand how they might identify. This can help you feel more prepared and comfortable to talk with them about sex and relationships. Keep in mind that our understanding of sexuality, attraction, and gender identity continues to evolve, so terms could shift over time.

**Sexuality** is a broad term that refers to sexual behavior and feelings, including how people feel about themselves and being with others, how they see their gender and sexual identity, and how they interact with other people. A person's sexual orientation is determined by who they are attracted to physically or romantically.

A person might be attracted to people of a different gender, people of the same gender, or people of more than one gender. Some people do not experience sexual attraction. There are a variety of terms to describe how youth may identify the way they are attracted to others. Youth may identify as asexual, bisexual, gay, lesbian, pansexual, queer, questioning, or straight.



# Accessing the training and resources

**/ Direct link to the training and resources:**  
**[www.fosterparenttalk.org/home](http://www.fosterparenttalk.org/home)**

**/ Links to the training and resources will be available on:**

- The Exchange: [www.teenpregnancy.acf.hhs.gov](http://www.teenpregnancy.acf.hhs.gov)
- Child Welfare Information Gateway: [www.childwelfare.gov](http://www.childwelfare.gov)



Questions?



**Thank you!**

**Additional questions or comments?**

Contact us at [jcrowley@mathematica-mpr.com](mailto:jcrowley@mathematica-mpr.com)

