

Transgender and Nonbinary Youth and Families: A Systemic Conversation and Call to Action

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Session Structure

- Welcome
- Brief overview of research and best practices for family therapists
- Advocacy conversation with mother and Transparent USA volunteer
- Q & A
- Develop a Call to Action Draft



Information & Ground Rules

- Transgender and nonbinary identities are real, and we will not debate the legitimacy of gender identities.
- Please adhere to the NCFR Code of Conduct.
 - NCFR is committed to providing: A safe and collegial environment that fosters open dialogue and the free expression of ideas without harassment, discrimination, and hostile conduct in all in-person and virtual events (e.g., conferences, meetings, webinars, conversations, or other gatherings) hosted by NCFR.
- Mute your mic when you are not speaking.
- Use the Q & A box

Current Research

- One of the most important factors in the lives of transgender youth is the presence of an adult who is interested in their well-being and accepts them unconditionally (Ryan, 2009).
- Parents who show their transgender or nonbinary child affirmation of their gender identity, love, and support often take on an advocacy role (Lev, 2004).
- Parents who are heterosexual and/or cisgender, or identify their gender with their assignment as birth, begin to see gender marginalization as a family issue, and thus the responsibility of the family to challenge injustice (Gonzalez, Rostosky, Odom, & Riggle, 2013).
- As families connect with other families for support, they become involved in advocacy, which shapes the family identity (Benson).



Clinical Best Practices

- Education about gender identities
- Exploration of cisgender identity
- Experience with trans and nonbinary clients
- Supervision and consultation
- Awareness of regional resources for trans and nonbinary youth and families
- Relationships with providers
- Community involvement

Therapy + Advocacy = Systemic Family Therapy

- Transactivism as Therapy (Raj, 2007)
 - Link transgender well-being to therapeutic supports, identity development, community identity, advocacy
- The Importance of Policy and Advocacy in Systemic Family Therapy (Hodgson & Lampson, 2020)
 - “systemic family therapists must rise up as advocates, ambassadors, and champions for larger systems change. Their work may include advocating for specific policy change(s) on behalf of the profession, **client population(s)**, licensure entitlements, job opportunities, and/or billing/ reimbursement capacity.” (p. 730)



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Interactive Call to Action

- Based on our discussion today,
 - What do systemic family therapists need to be aware of in order to support families with transgender and nonbinary children?
 - What do we stand for as systemic family therapists in regards to advocacy for and with families with transgender and nonbinary youth?
 - What commitments are we willing to make to create systemic changes?
 - Socially
 - In the field of systemic family therapy
 - What specific advocacy efforts will you engage in?