Educators in Training: An Evaluation of Trainings to Promote Gender-Inclusive Schools

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Abstract

Gender-affirming educational practices are crucial for transgender and gender expansive youth, who are disproportionately at risk for a host of negative academic and health outcomes. Yet few educators receive training on gender inclusive practices. This cross-sectional, descriptive study examines survey data from school administrators, teachers, and support staff \((N=1,530)\) who participated in gender inclusivity professional development sessions. The survey covered three areas: (1) their beliefs regarding the need and relevance of this training, and their capacity to improve learning environments after the training; (2) their intended implementation of proactively inclusive strategies over time; and (3) suggestions for future trainings.

Measures include self-reported ratings to assess beliefs, open-ended questions regarding future steps toward gender inclusion in their practice, and suggestions for future trainings. Qualitative analysis used grounded theory to identify key themes.

School practitioners in our sample found this training was relevant, useful, and well suited to their work. They reported having increased capacity to create a safe educational environment for students and of discussing gender issues with parents, students, and their school community. We found few differences in the belief statements between teachers and administrators, but participants categorized in an “other” category thought the training was slightly less relevant, useful, and had less confidence in their ability to create a more inclusive environment. We found across school variation in educators’ agreement about the usefulness and relevancy of the training for the individual educator, as well as in their ability to discuss related issues with parents and to create an inclusive environment.

Intended implementation themes included an increased awareness of personal behaviors and attitudes, adaptation of pedagogy and language, updating classroom resources, advocating for systemic support such as policies and administrative procedures, as well as curricular inclusion of gender diversity. Educators recommended using more first-person accounts, sample scenarios or lessons plans, and more time for future trainings.

Our results show educators wanted more training on gender inclusivity, such as on how to implement affirming practices, and believed the professional development provided was useful and relevant. The results also suggest that the training should attempt to incorporate the needs of non-teaching and non-administrative staff members. Future research should examine barriers that prevent teachers from receiving gender inclusive training and how this type of training could be expanded and adapted. Future assessments should also include pre-/post-training measures with representative samples as well as using student-level measures to evaluate the effectiveness of the training.

Key Words: Gender identity, Transgender, Educator professional development, Gender diversity training
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Gender-affirming and inclusive schools are crucial to providing equal learning opportunities for transgender and gender-expansive youth, who are disproportionately at risk for a host of negative academic and health outcomes (Institute of Medicine, 2011; Reisner et al., 2016). Transgender is an umbrella term used to describe people with gender identities that do not match the sex assigned at birth; whereas, cisgender refers to individuals whose gender identity matches their sex assigned at birth (Adelson, 2012). Both cisgender and transgender identities are types of gender identities, which typically begin to emerge around age 3 or 4. Gender identities reflect a personal sense of self as male, female, some combination of the two, or something else. Similar to transgender, gender-expansive covers a wide range of identities. It refers to an even broader spectrum of people who do not conform to societal ideals of femininity and masculinity, including transgender youth but not exclusive to transgender populations. The term gender-expansive is often used interchangeably with gender nonconformity, gender variance, gender creative, or gender atypicality. Practices and social interactions that are gender-affirming will recognize and support individuals’ gender identities and the ways in which they express their gender, such as their appearance and behaviors (Sevelius, 2013).

Literature Review

Gender-Expansive Youth in U.S. Schools

Many transgender and gender-expansive people experience high rates of discrimination, victimization, and other forms of violence compared to their cisgender and gender-conforming peers (Institute of Medicine, 2011; Reisner et al., 2016; Reisner, White, Bradford, & Mimiaga, 2014; White Hughto, Reisner, & Pachankis, 2015). In the United States, young people and adults police variation from gender norms to establish their own social status and justify harassment of individuals who are not conforming to gender stereotypes (Heinze & Horn, 2014). These interactions are intensified if they are not interrupted. Rather than alleviate these negative social interactions for transgender and other gender-expansive youth, many school environments contribute to students’ adverse experiences. In a network analysis study, Birkett and Espelage (2014) showed name-calling and bullying behavior related to gender was socialized by peers in
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schools. This type of biased based bullying gets worse over time if an adolescent’s peer group reinforces this type of behavior.

The daily and common use of gender-based insults and bullying in American schools has been well-documented across many institutions and subcultures, especially among male students and by those institutions that emphasize traditional gender roles (Ispa-Landa, 2013; Pasco, 2005; Reigeluth & Addis, 2015). Some educational practitioners contribute to the high rates of victimization and marginalization that transgender and gender-expansive students face by making reinforcing gender stereotypes, making transphobic comments, misgendering transgender students, and overtly harassing gender-expansive students (Grossman & D’augelli, 2006; McGuire, Anderson, Toomey, & Russell, 2010; Pasco, 2011).

Negative school experiences have a significant impact on the academic opportunities and health risks that transgender youth face. When compared to their cisgender peers, transgender people are less likely to attend college (Crissman, Berger, Graham, & Dalton, 2017). Relatedly, several studies have shown positive associations between the discrimination and violence transgender students experience in school and academic outcomes, such as dropping out, less school engagement, and skipping school (Greytak, Kosciw, & Diaz, 2009; Grossman, D’augelli, & Frank, 2011; Sausa, 2005).

One specific likely cause of these disproportionate negative outcomes among transgender youth is the bullying experienced by these young people. In a representative sample of Californian young people, transgender students had almost three times the odds of considering suicide and 2.5 to 4 times the odds of engaging in substance abuse compared to cisgender youth (Day, Fish, Perez-Brumer, Hatzenbuehler, & Russell, in press.; Perez-Brumer, Day, Russell, & Hatzenbuehler, 2017). The authors of these studies found the increased risk behaviors in transgender youth were at least partially explained by greater bullying in schools (Day, Fish, Perez-Brumer, Hatzenbuehler, & Russell, in press.; Perez-Brumer, Day, Russell, & Hatzenbuehler, 2017). Similarly, Dessel, Kulick, Wernick, and Sullivan (2017) found gender-expansive students’ relationships with their teachers influenced student’s grades and confidence. Poor teacher-student relationships disproportionately influenced transgender students grades and self-confidence.
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In contrast, transgender students enrolled in gender-inclusive school with integrated curriculum, comprehensive resources for transgender students, Gay-Straight Alliances, and supportive teachers reported higher levels of safety and engagement in school (Gretyak, Kosciw, & Boesen, 2013; McGuire et al., 2010). These studies suggest improving school climate, and, specifically, relationships with both teachers and peers, has far-reaching effects for gender-expansive and transgender students.

**Educator Knowledge of Gender-Inclusive Practices**

Despite the evidence demonstrating the connection between non-inclusive schools and poor mental, behavioral, and educational outcomes in transgender and gender-expansive youth, most educators are not provided with any training on gender identity. Teachers admit they are woefully unprepared to deal with complex issues revolving around gender, at least in part because they have not received much, if any, training or pre-service education on the topic (Macgillivray & Jennings, 2008; Sherwin & Jennings, 2006; Szalacha, 2004). This means educational practitioners often do not have the confidence or resources needed to develop lessons encouraging students to be more inclusive, or even a common vocabulary to address and correct misconceptions about gender.

Comprehensive gender-inclusivity trainings provide definitions for key terms to allow school staff to discuss gender identity in meaningful ways (Payne & Smith, 2014; Szalacha, 2004). A study of 77 teacher education programs found at least 40% did not even provide this basic vocabulary to its pre-service educators (Sherwin & Jennings, 2006). Similarly, most pre-service texts exclude gender identity and neglect to offer methods to proactively support transgender and gender-expansive students (Macgillivray & Jennings, 2008).

Professional development supporting gender-inclusivity encourages teacher confidence and self-efficacy in navigating conversations around gender. In one interview study of educators with transgender students at their school, elementary school teachers revealed a lack of self-assuredness in addressing questions related to gender and sex in their classes (Payne & Smith, 2014). The educators’ expressed anxiety and fear about facilitating conversations about gender with students and the larger community. These educators reported needing relevant vocabulary, and acknowledged a lack of understanding of school systems that disproportionately affect
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gender-expansive students. They also reported being unaware of the unique experiences and needs of transgender students in comparison to cisgender students. Educators in this interview study requested training, policies, and procedures to help them respond more confidently. In an observational study of teachers after gender-inclusivity trainings, Ryan, Patraw, and Bednar (2013) found training could help teachers confidently develop more gender-inclusive lessons. These gender-inclusive lessons encouraged changes in student behavior, such as using inclusive language and become allies for students who had been bullied based on their gender expression, even for elementary students.

This paper addresses whether educators and school staff who received a gender-inclusivity training from a large hospital in the Midwestern United States believed the training was useful, relevant, provided tools for them to respond effectively to questions and challenges related to gender identity, and whether they would implement the lessons from the training in their classroom. In addition to describing overall differences in teacher belief ratings and implementation, we examined if there were differences in belief ratings between educators’ roles and between schools. The gender-inclusivity training provided aimed to improve attendees understanding of gender inclusivity in school and provide the tools for staff to create affirming environments. This included establishing key terms and concepts related to gender, outlining specific tactics for school staff to use in their classroom or administrative work, and providing examples of model school policies which gender inclusivity. The facilitator also led a discussion with educators on how to talk about gender diversity with students, parents, and the other members of the school community.

Current Study

There were six goals of this study. Using a post-treatment survey, we aimed to describe the effects of gender inclusivity training on (1) educators’ beliefs about the utility, relevance, and time allotment for this training, (2) their beliefs about their capacity to improve learning environments, (3) their role differences in belief statements, (4) the school differences in beliefs about the training, (5), their plans to implement new strategies, and (6) their suggestions for future trainings. We utilized both quantitative and qualitative analyses of an evaluation survey, which included both numerical ratings and open-ended responses, to address these study goals.
Method

This is a cross-sectional, descriptive study examining post-training survey data from administrators, teachers, and staff who the gender-inclusivity training ($N=1,511$). Surveys were distributed and collected at the end of the trainings, which took place between October 2013 to December 2016. The professional development program conducted an average of three trainings a month with audiences ranging from seven to 200 people. Trainings were held in diverse school settings, including private and public institutions, from elementary to four-year colleges. Most participants were from urban and suburban locations, with only 1.5% of the sample from towns or rural areas.

Procedure

The surveys, included in Appendix A, were collected following the training sessions. Participants were given hard copies of the evaluation, which included a multiple-choice question about their role in the school and a self-report scale to assess agreement with statements about the training. The survey also included open-ended questions regarding personal implementation and suggestions for future training. The training itself was composed of a PowerPoint presentation with breaks for discussion. The presentation reviewed important terms, the role of schools in socializing gender roles, the educational and mental health risks gender-expansive/transgender students face, how to meet the needs of all students, specific supports necessary for gender-expansive/transgender students (including best practices to create more inclusive schools), supporting parents in discussions about gender identity, and additional resources for educators.

Measures

The survey used in this study is included in Appendix A. All measures were included in this survey, given after the training session.

Roles. Respondents were asked, “What is your role at your school?” and were provided the following selections: “Teacher,” “Administrator,” or “Other.” The “Other” category included non-faculty school staff, social workers, school psychologists, and parents.
Schools. Participants responded to the open-ended question, “What is your school?” A research assistant then used the written school and coded each school using the school’s state-assigned number provided by the Illinois State Board of Education.

Usefulness, Relevance, and Fit of the Training. Participants self-reported agreement using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree” ratings. Participants assessed the training by rating statements the following statements: “This training will be useful in my work,” “The topics covered were relevant to me,” “The topics covered were relevant to my school,” “The suggestions and examples provided by the facilitator felt practical and fit the needs of my school,” and “The training addressed the questions that I had regarding transgender and gender non-conforming youth.” Cronbach’s alpha was 88% among the usefulness and relevancy items.

Capability. We asked participants to report how much they agreed with the following statements: “I feel more capable of discussing concepts of gender non-conforming and transgender students with parents,” “I feel more capable of discussing concepts of gender non-conforming and transgender students with other faculty and staff,” and “After the training, I now feel more equipped to create a safe school environment for transgender and gender non-conforming students.” Agreement was indicated by responses to a 5-point Likert scale ranging from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree” ratings. There was a high degree of reliability among the capability items ($\alpha = .88$)

Appropriateness of Time for the Training. There was one question about the timing of the training. Participants used the same 5-point Likert scale described above to rate their agreement with the statement: “The time allotted for the training was sufficient.”

Plans to Implement New Strategies. Participants responded to the following open-ended prompt, specifying implementation plans at six months and 12 months: “What changes do
you see yourself and your school implementing in regard to gender nonconforming and transgender students?”

**Suggestions for Future Trainings.** Researchers used an open-ended question requesting participants’ suggestions for future trainings to assess future needs and possible areas for improvement in the training, “what suggestions would you make for this training in the future?”

**Analysis**

First, we described the percent of participants in each educational role category for the sample. Next, we provided frequencies for the entire sample to describe the level of overall agreement there was for each statement.

Following these general descriptions, we used ordinary least squares (OLS) regressions to assess the relationship between different educational roles and belief statements. We created dichotomous variables for school roles, and used teacher as the indicator variable for the roles models. We used mean imputation for the level of agreements to each item, in order to account for missing data (n≤ 5%), and used the scaled items as continuous variables.

Then, we examined school differences by using the same OLS models with fixed effects for the 80 school groups. We used a fixed-effects model because it accounted for the fact that multiple responses from educators in the same school are more similar than responses from educators in other schools.

We used grounded theory and content analysis to analyze the data from open-ended responses to prompts about implementation plans and training suggestions (Charmaz, 2014; Corbin & Strauss, 2008). First, we open-coded the responses for important ideas and themes. Second, we used axial coding, re-coding the responses with the concepts that emerged during axial coding in mind and examining relationships between these themes. Third, we used selective coding to define the main themes present in the responses. Using the main themes that emerged during selective coding, we developed a coding scheme for the content analysis. Using this coding theme, we categorized all responses and were able to provide descriptive statistics in the form of frequencies.
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Results

Quantitative Results

Descriptive Results

Roles. The largest percentage of participants, 50%, self-reported themselves as teachers ($n=711$). The “other” option was the second most frequent selection with 39% of participants ($n=558$). Respondents who selected this category included food service workers, legal counsel, parents, athletic coaches, social workers, school psychologists, and other non-teachers or non-administrators connected with the schools. The remaining 11% of participants identified as administrators ($n=159$).

Beliefs about Usefulness, Relevance, Capability, and Time. There was a high agreement with the usefulness of the training, with 95% of participants reporting they agreed or strongly agreed that the training was useful, and 94% and 96% responding that they strongly agreed or agreed that the training was relevant to the participant and to the participant’s school, respectively (see Chart 1). Ninety-three percent of participants reported similar strong agreement/agreement with the statement that the trainer’s suggestions were practical and fit the needs of the school. Finally, 89% of respondents marked that they agreed that the facilitator addressed questions they had about gender-expansive and transgender youth.

Educators also responded favorably to feeling capable of discussing concepts related to gender-expansive students with other faculty and staff, with 92% agreeing or strongly agreeing. Fewer participants indicated had similar confidence about their ability to discuss these issues with parents (86%), but 92% of educators responded positively indicating that they felt equipped to deal with issues related to gender in their school after the training.

As shown in Chart 1, the item with the least amount of agreement was regarding the appropriateness of the allotted time, with 79% of participants indicating they strongly agreed and agreed with the sufficiency of time allotted ($M_{time}=1.88$, $SD=1.02$).

[INSERT CHART 1]
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**OLS Regression Results**

*Roles and Ratings.* We found several differences in how educators in roles rated the training, although most of the significant differences were isolated between teachers and participants who selected “other.” As shown in Table 2, the only significantly different responses between teachers and administrator was in the relevance of the training to themselves ($\beta = -0.111$, $p = 0.055$). Compared to teachers, administrators ($\beta = -0.111, p = 0.058$) and “others” ($\beta = -0.112, p = 0.003$) did not rate the training as relevant to themselves. This marginally significant difference between teachers and administrators was the only one we found in our analyses. Participants who selected “Other” found the training slightly less useful compared to teachers ($\beta = -0.099, p = 0.004$). They reported that the suggestions of the facilitator were less practical and not in line with the needs of the school as well ($\beta = -0.118, p = 0.002$ and they reported less strongly supporting the statement that their questions were addressed ($\beta = -0.120, p = 0.004$).

When it came to capability, the participants who said they were not teachers or administrators reported they felt less capable of talking about transgender and gender-expansive issues ($\beta = -0.202, p = 0.000$). They also reported not feeling fully equipped to create a safe school environment for gender-expansive and transgender students ($\beta = -0.110, p = 0.006$). It should be noted that all the effect sizes were small.

{INSERT TABLE 2}

**OLS Regression with Fixed Effects Results**

*Differences Between Schools.* Next, we tested the influence of school differences on our model by including school fixed-effects, as shown in Table 2. Between school differences accounted for 30% of the variation in the usefulness rating ($R^2 = .006$, $R^2 = .38$, $F(2, 1343) = 2.96$, $p < .05$), 18% in the rating about relevance of the training to the participant ($R^2 = .100$, $F(2, 1343) = 5.53$, $p < .030$), and 31% of the differences in feeling capable of discussing gender-expansive issues with parents ($R^2 = .062$, $F(2, 1343) = 3.38$, $p < .034$). While none of the models could account for a large change in the overall $R^2$, school differences significantly contributed to the variation in three of the ratings.
Qualitative Results

Plans for Implementing New Strategies. The inductive coding revealed a number of themes that emerged when analyzing respondents open-ended responses about their planned implementation of the training at 6-months and 12-months. We grouped these themes according to the three realms of responsibility referenced in the responses revolving around: the teacher (62%), the school (24%), and shared responsibility for change between the teacher and school (14%). The themes that emerged after examining educators’ intended implementation plans included being more self-aware, seeking new classroom resources, pursing policy changes, and adjusting specific teaching practices and language. One of the most common responses was changing classroom, with almost 30% of educators identifying ways to amend their practices. These classroom changes included asking about preferred names and pronouns and not lining students up by gender. Another 5% of educators noted they would expand their curriculum, either by including specific lessons or by incorporating materials that address gender-expansive identities in their class. Other implementation plans were more general. For example, 22% of educators noted they would be “more aware” or “more sensitive,” while 6% of responded they would increase their own communication in some way. We included references to improving communicating with other educators, parents, students, and general statements about communication in this category.

We found the most common implementation plan at the school-wide level was increasing access to school facilities, such as locker rooms and bathrooms (10%). In addition, educators expressed a desire to change other specific school-wide practices (e.g. changes to forms and name records process) and changing overarching school policies (8%).

Educators discussed general implementation plans that could be shared by individual teachers and by making school-level changes. These included engaging more stakeholders in the school’s implementation of the training (4%) and general comments about improving the overall school climate (6%). Only 4% of educators stated they believed the school was doing enough already or they wouldn’t do anything to implement what they learned at the training.
Suggestions for Future Trainings. When asked about suggestions for future trainings, our analysis revealed that educators wanted to expand the training options related to gender inclusivity and provided presentation feedback to the trainer. Among the most common responses were more time for trainings on gender (19%) or to the delivery of the content (e.g. more interactive, more discussion, etc., 25%). Another 3% of respondents wanted to expand the training to more people and 2% wanted to expand the training specifically to more topics for themselves after they received the training. This included a desire to know the legal implications related to this topic. In addition, 17% of educators wanted more specific resources. Many of these respondents requested specific support related to possible future interactions with parents as well as sample lesson plans and suggested books. About 5% of participants wanted to hear testimonials from students who identified as transgender. About a fifth of respondents said they would not make any changes to the training.

Discussion

Implication for Research and Practice

In the current political climate, there has been increased discussion about gender diversity in schools and the need, or the lack of a need, to provide schools with more support to ensure they are promoting the health and safety of all students. Our research indicated that the vast majority of educators not only want and need this type of training but also expressed a desire to have more of it after their training sessions, both in breadth and depth. Our results also suggest educators wanted more training on how to create gender-inclusive classrooms and schools. There are several sources of evidence to support this claim. First, “appropriateness of time” was the only item to receive less 80% of participants reporting that they strongly agreed or agreed with
the statement. Second, there were no significant differences across different roles or across school in how participants felt about the appropriateness of time statement. Third, we did not see any respondents suggest shortening the training in the qualitative analyses of the open-ended responses; however, 20% of respondents suggested they wanted more time, 17% requested more resources, 2% wanted more training on other topics related to gender-expansiveness not addressed in the training, and 3% recommended more people from the school community to be trained. A total of 42% recommended the program and reported that it provided them and/or others more information about gender inclusion in school.

We found that educators valued the gender inclusivity training, and believed it was relevant and useful to their work with students. After the gender-inclusivity training, educators demonstrated a high frequency of agreement (above 90%) that the training was useful, relevant-both to the individual and school, provided practical suggestions fitting their school, and had their questions answered. Similarly, educators felt equipped to create a safe school environment for gender-expansive and transgender students, felt capable of discussing issues related to gender-expansiveness with other faculty and staff and to a lesser degree, with parents. Most educators who had implementation plans had specific, small changes to classroom behaviors (30%), such as asking for preferred pronouns. Because high self-efficacy in teachers has been linked to greater implementation of training and changes in behaviors in the literature (Bandura, 1977; Guskey, 1988; Klassen & Tze, 2014), these findings are indicative that there may be changes in teacher behavior because of the training. Relatedly, less confidence about working with parents could influence their ability to be effective. Future training with staff and the parent community could address this need.

One weakness of the training was the failure to tailor it to a broader audience. In particular, we found the training needed to tailor the content and message to participants who did not identify as either teachers or administrators. The “other” category composed 39% of the sample. Our OLS regression analyses demonstrated there was slightly less agreement from participants reporting “other” roles for usefulness, relevance to me, practical suggestions, and questions addressed items. These respondents also had slightly less agreement with statements about feeling capable of discussing these issues related to gender diversity with parents- although between school differences accounted for some of this variation - and believed themselves to be
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less equipped to create a safe school environment for gender-expansive students. The reported less agreement in 6 of the 9 statements of interest when compared to teachers. These effects were small but statistically significant. Librarians, school psychologists, custodial staff, and parents are all examples of respondents marking the “other” category, but who may play an important role in students’ lives. The training should be adapted and tailored to meet the needs of different audiences in schools, beyond teachers and administrators.

Finally, we found differences in the level of agreement for belief statements across schools. We found significant differences across schools with respect to reported usefulness of the training, relevance of the training to the respondent, capability to discuss issues related to transgender and gender-expansive students with parents, and marginal differences, to feeling equipped to creating a safe school environment for gender-expansive students. To some extent, this result was expected as the training varied in the length of time for the trainings and, as a result, the extent of the content delivered. This depended upon the needs of the school, the consultation with the facilitator prior to the training, and the resources of the school.

Limitations

There were a number of important limitations of this study. First, it is not a causal study and we were not able to report on changes in educators’ agreement with statements or behaviors. Second, the selection into the sample was biased. We did not randomize participation of educators in school to receive the training nor did we randomly select schools to receive the training. Knowledge of the training either spread through word-of-mouth among administrators or training was offered to the school because of a needs assessment regarding a patient at the children’s hospital. Third, there was a single facilitator who provided the training. Therefore, it is impossible to disentangle the effects of the facilitator from the actual training curriculum. Fourth, there was not any tracking involved to provide data about variation in the length of time, or content adaptations. Fifth, the survey did not assess content knowledge or attitudes about gender-expansive people, both of which may have influenced agreement with the belief statements.

Future Research

There remain several questions future research should address. First, it should examine barriers to offering or expanding educators’ training on gender inclusivity in their schools. Second, it should investigate how broad the training need is and what other institutional supports
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educators have in place to support both students and teachers (e.g. protective policies). Third, future research should examine the impact of gender-inclusivity training in diverse schools and increase the diversity of the participant sample. This study had very small numbers of educators from towns and rural areas. In addition to these recommendations, the authors of this paper and the Gender Development Program Director are in the process of redesigning the evaluation to include pre- and post-training surveys to capture changes in beliefs/attitudes, behaviors, and content knowledge. In a sample of schools, we plan to collaborate with administrators to randomize teacher participation within schools and collect student-level outcomes to assess the impact of the training. We hope to use teacher-level measures of the training from pre-/post-training surveys as well as student-level measures of perceived school safety, violence, and truancy from the 5Essentials Survey (Klostermann, White, Lichtenberger, & Holt, 2014) and/or the Youth Behavioral Risk Surveillance System (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2017), comparing classrooms of teachers who received the training to those who did not. Finally, we will be tracking variations in the training content, goals, and audience.

Conclusions

Professional development concerning gender identity and creating gender-inclusive schools is an important step towards educating adults in schools about the needs of gender-expansive and transgender students. Our study contributes to the existing literature by examining local educators’ beliefs about the usefulness and relevance of training specific to gender identity, as well as by examining differences across educational roles and institutions. We found educators believed the professional development provided was useful and relevant. The majority of educational professionals agreed that they had capacity to create a safe educational environment for students and of discussing gender issues with parents, students, and their school community after the training. The results also suggest that the training should attempt to incorporate the needs of non-teaching and non-administrative staff members, as school staff in these roles are also contributing to the school climate. Our results support the existing research literature indicating there is a need for more training related to gender for educational professionals (Macgillivray & Jennings, 2008; Ryan et al., 2013; Szalacha, 2004). In our sample, we found school practitioners wanted more training on gender inclusivity, such as on how to
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implement affirming practices. This study highlights the need for more trainings to address issues related to gender identity and gender-inclusivity in schools, which may, in turn, be an important step towards addressing the health and educational gaps between gender-expansive youth and to their gender conforming peers.

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Chart 1
Bar Graph of Educators’ Responses to Gender Inclusivity Training


title

Chart 1. Bar Graph of Educators’ Responses to Gender Inclusivity Training. This graph represents educators’ agreement with belief statements in a survey following the gender-inclusivity training.
### Table 2.
**OLS Regression and OLS Regression with Fixed Effects Models for Educator Roles and Agreement with Statements**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Useful (FE)</th>
<th>Relevant to Me (FE)</th>
<th>Relevant to Me (FE)</th>
<th>Relevant to My School (FE)</th>
<th>Relevant to My School (FE)</th>
<th>Practical and Fit (FE)</th>
<th>Practical and Fit (FE)</th>
<th>Addressed Questions I Had (FE)</th>
<th>Addressed Questions I Had (FE)</th>
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<th>Capable Discuss w/Parents (FE)</th>
<th>Capable Discuss w/Other Staff (FE)</th>
<th>Capable Discuss w/Other Staff (FE)</th>
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<th>Create Inclusive School (FE)</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Time (l)</th>
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<td>Overall R²</td>
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<td>0.005</td>
<td>0.007</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>0.0005</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.007</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>0.014</td>
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<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>0.006</td>
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*Note: All models use teachers as the indicator variable. Fixed effects OLS regressions labeled with FE in parentheses with standard errors clustered by schools.*
Figure 1.  
*Plans for Implementation Themes*

Prompt: What changes do you see yourself and your school implementing in regards to gender nonconforming and transgender students? (at 6 and 12 months)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher-Level</th>
<th>School-Level</th>
<th>Teacher- and School-Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Change classroom practices (29%)</td>
<td>Change district/school practices (6%)</td>
<td>More student, parent, faculty, staff, or community engagement with GNC/T topics (6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change classroom curriculum (5%)</td>
<td>Change school policy (8%)</td>
<td>General school climate (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase awareness/sensitivity (22%)</td>
<td>Change school facilities (10%)</td>
<td>Nothing/already doing enough (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More communication (6%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX A
Gender 101: Training Evaluation

Thank you for participating in this training with the Gender and Sex Development Program at Lurie Children’s Hospital. Please complete this short survey regarding your experience. Your feedback is highly valuable to us and your answers will remain anonymous. Thank you!

1. What school do you work for?

2. What is your role at your school?
   - [ ] Teacher
   - [ ] Administrator
   - [ ] Other

3. In the next 6 months, what changes do you see yourself and your school implementing in regards to gender non-conforming and transgender students?

   [ ]

4. In the next 12 months, what changes do you see yourself and your school implementing in regards to gender non-conforming and transgender students?

   [ ]
5. What did you enjoy most about the training?

6. What suggestions would you make for this training in the future?

7. Are there any additional comments you would like to share regarding the training?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The objectives of the training were clearly defined.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>The topics covered were relevant to me.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The topics covered were relevant to my school.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The content was organized and easy to follow.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This training will be useful in my work.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The facilitator was knowledgeable about the training topic.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The time allotted for the training was sufficient.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>I feel more capable of discussing concepts of gender non-conforming and transgender students with parents.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>I feel more capable of discussing concepts of gender non-conforming and transgender students with other faculty and staff.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>The suggestions and examples provided by the facilitator felt practical and fit the needs of my school.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The training addressed the questions that I had regarding transgender and gender non-conforming youth.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>The question-and-answer portion was useful.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>I would feel comfortable reaching out to the facilitator with further questions.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>After the training, I now feel more equipped to create a safe school environment for transgender and gender non-conforming students.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>