

## Strengthening Families & Increasing Well-Being & Permanency

Ruth Ellis Center and the Family Acceptance Project® have been collaborating to provide family support services with the Michigan Department of Health & Human Services to strengthen families and to increase support for LGBTQ and gender diverse children and youth who are involved with the child welfare system.



## Family Support Services for LGBTQ Children & Youth in Foster Care to Increase Well-Being & Permanency

Provided with support from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS)

In collaboration with Ruth Ellis Center (REC) & the Family Acceptance Project® (FAP)

**Easy One-Step  
Rapid Referral Process**

Here's what a parent had to say about our services:

*"I knew my child was 'different' but I didn't understand what it meant to be gay or lesbian. I didn't want to think about it. I was afraid that she wouldn't have a good life. You helped me learn how to talk to my daughter, how to respect what she feels comfortable wearing and how to love my child the way she needs me to.*

*Thank you for saving my family."*

Trinity  
Mother of 15-year old youth

Family graduates of the REC-FAP  
LGBTQ Family Preservation /  
Family Group Decision-Making Program

## Building Healthy Futures for LGBTQ & Gender Diverse Children & Youth

Support from families and caregivers is critical for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and gender diverse children and youth, and for those who may be questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity (LGBTQ).

*This project is funded by the National Quality Improvement Center on Tailored Services, Placement Stability and Permanency for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning, and Two-Spirit Children and Youth in Foster Care (QIC-LGBTQ2S) at the University of Maryland Baltimore School of Social Work. The QIC-LGBTQ2S is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau under grant #90CW1145. The contents of this flyer do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the funders, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.*



## Expanding Capacity to Support LGBTQ Children & Youth in Foster Care

MDHHS is participating in a new, federally funded initiative to increase well-being and permanency for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and gender diverse children and youth and those who may be questioning (LGBTQ) their sexual orientation or gender identity who are in foster care.

Services will be provided by practitioners at Ruth Ellis Center (REC) who have extensive child welfare experience with LGBTQ youth, in collaboration with the research-based Family Acceptance Project® (FAP).

We are providing a range of support services to LGBTQ and gender diverse children and youth and their caregivers, adoptive and birth parents and foster parents to increase acceptance and permanency and to decrease rejection and risk.



## Who is Eligible for Services?

- LGBTQ and gender diverse children and youth, ages 5-21, in foster care in Southeastern Michigan

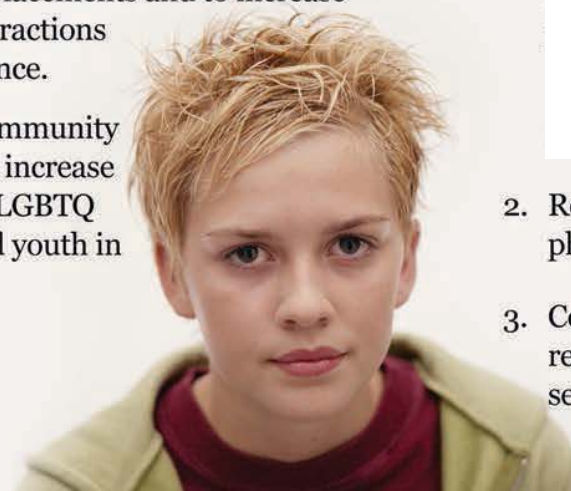
Wayne, Macomb & Oakland Counties

- Foster parents, relative caregivers, birth and adoptive parents of LGBTQ children and youth in foster care

### Services Provided In-Home and at Ruth Ellis Center

Support services include:

- Education to increase caregivers' understanding of their child's sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Guidance to help parents and caregivers to engage in affirmative parenting to decrease risk and increase permanency and well-being.
- Skill building, coaching and counseling to help caregivers address barriers to supportive placements and to increase positive interactions and acceptance.
- Access to community resources to increase support for LGBTQ children and youth in foster care.



## Making a Referral

Anyone can make a referral for services - this includes foster care workers, foster and birth parents, youth and other adults.

1. *Call or email us* at Ruth Ellis Center:

**Brienne Hackett, LLMSW**  
Youth & Family Practitioner  
[brienne.hackett@ruthelliscenter.org](mailto:brienne.hackett@ruthelliscenter.org)  
248-716-5766

2. Referral information will be taken by phone.
3. Collaboration will occur with the referral source to provide family support services.