

**Inclusive
Programming:
Public Libraries,
Conservative Communities,
And LGBTQ+ Youth**

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Definition of Terms

Lesbian: Girls who are attracted to girls

Gay: Boys who are attracted to boys

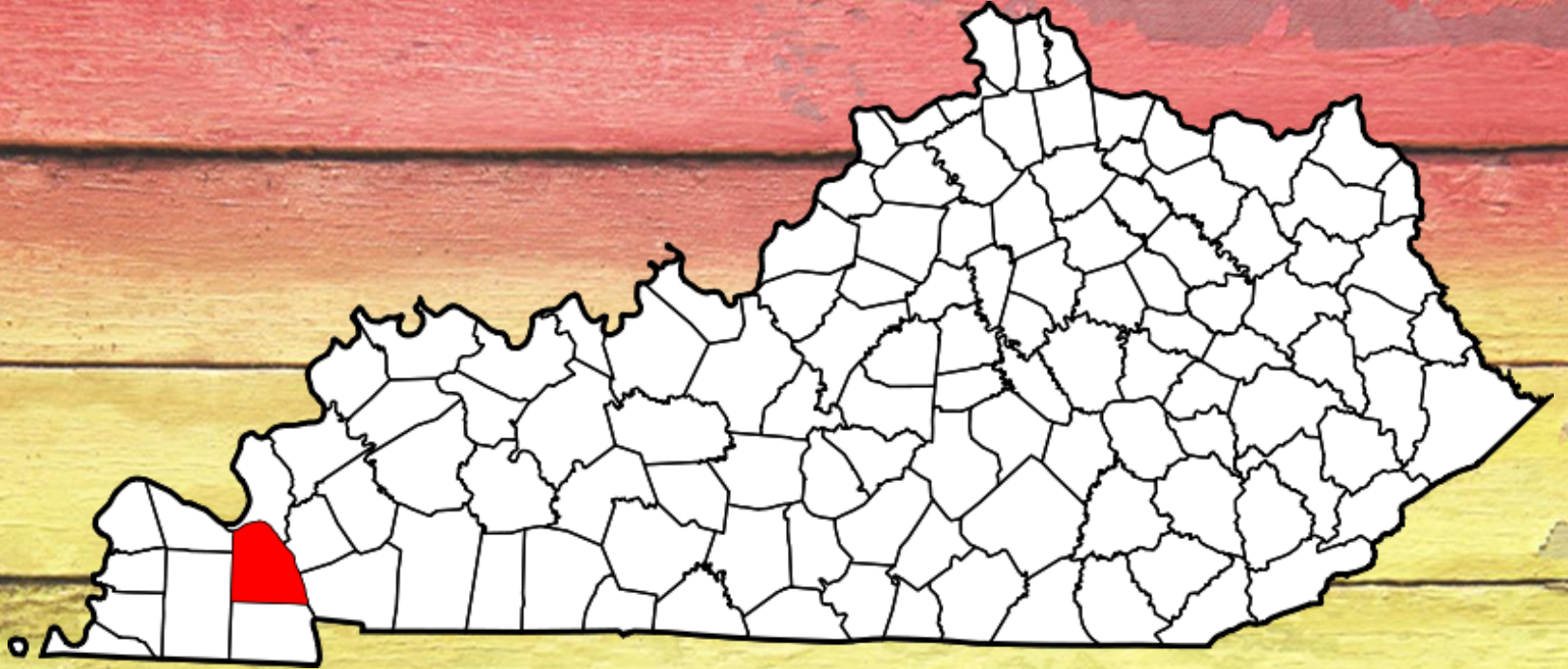
Bisexual: Person who is attracted to both boys and girls

Trans: A person whose biological sex does not match their gender identity

Queer: Person whose sexuality and gender is fluid

Intersex: A person born with biological characteristics of both genders

Asexual: A person not sexually attracted to either gender



Marshall County, Kentucky

Area:	301.25 Sq. Miles*
Population:	30,953*
White Population:	98.1%*
Median Household Income:	\$43,907*
Public Schools:	6 Elementary, 3 Middle, 1 High
Churches:	76

*Information from US Census Bureau



YA Programming at the Marshall County Public Library: A History

Miss Tammy's Tips For Creating LGBTQ+- Inclusive Programming Without Creating A LGBTQ+ Program:

1. Let kids know that everyone is welcome.
2. Don't let bullies stick around.
3. Keep your personal views personal.
4. Educate yourself about LGBTQ+.
5. Talk positively about LGBTQ+ people and characters without focusing on their sexuality or gender identification.

Miss Tammy, we need to talk...



The Coming Out Conversation: Miss Tammy's Tips –

1. Don't make a big deal about it.
2. Let them know that nothing has changed.
3. Allow them to vent, but be Switzerland.
4. Check back in.



The Importance Of Suicide Prevention Training

- LGB youth are 4 times more likely, and questioning youth are 3 times more likely, to attempt suicide as their straight peers. [1]
- Nearly half of young transgender people have seriously thought about taking their lives, and one quarter report having made a suicide attempt. [2]
- LGB youth who come from highly rejecting families are 8.4 times as likely to have attempted suicide as LGB peers who reported no or low levels of family rejection. [3]

[1] CDC. (2011). *Sexual Identity, Sex of Sexual Contracts, and Health-Risk Behaviors Among Students in Grades 9-12: Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance*. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

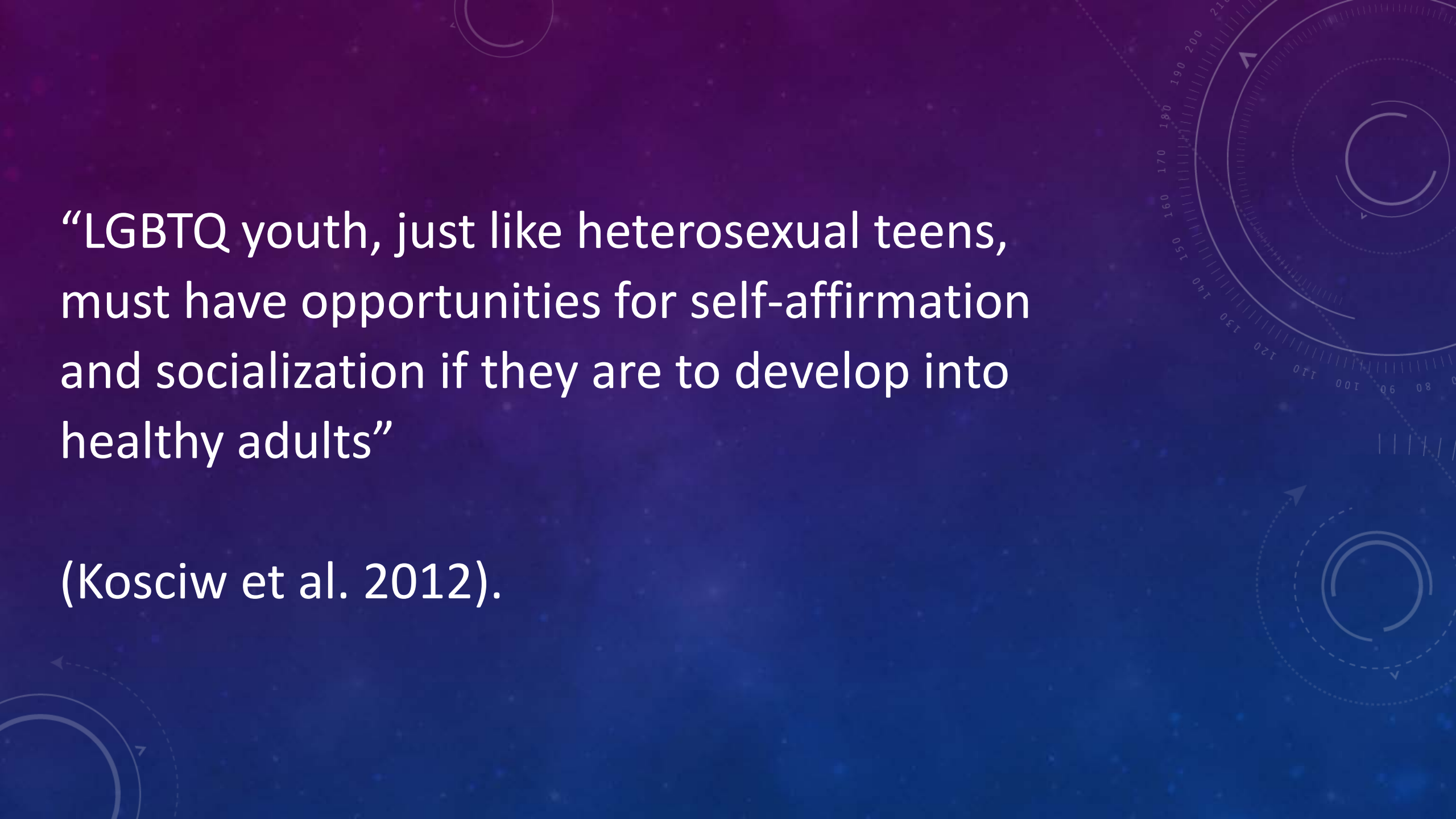
[2] Grossman, A.H. & D'Augelli, A.R. (2007). *Transgender Youth and Life-Threatening Behaviors. Suicide and Life-Threatening Behaviors*. 37(5), 527-37.

[3] Family Acceptance Project. (2009). *Family rejection as a predictor of negative health outcomes in white and Latino lesbian, gay, and bisexual young adults. Pediatrics*. 123(1), 246-52.

The background is a gradient from dark purple at the top to dark blue at the bottom, speckled with small white stars. Overlaid on this are several white circular and semi-circular patterns. Some are solid lines, some are dashed, and some have arrows indicating a clockwise or counter-clockwise direction. A large circular scale with numerical markings from 140 to 260 is visible on the left side.

LGBTQA+ TEENS

OR HOW THE LIBRARY CAN MAKE THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE FOR ALL
(NO PRESSURE)



“LGBTQ youth, just like heterosexual teens,
must have opportunities for self-affirmation
and socialization if they are to develop into
healthy adults”

(Kosciw et al. 2012).

The Main Priority is Safety

“LGBTQ students in rural areas and small towns were less safe in school than students in urban and suburban areas”

(Kosciw et al. 2012).

“So where can young people who identify as LGBTQ turn for support, safe space, confidential access to information, and materials that speak to their lives?.....”

“School and public libraries”

“Research by Linda B. Alexander and Sarah D. Miselis shows that the library is ‘the most important information source’ for LGBTQ people” (2007, 45).

Basic Things To Do

Be accessible

Be friendly

Smile

Make Eye Contact

Engage in Conversation

Recommend Books/Movies/Magazines/Music/Programs

Encourage appropriate behavior

Have clear behavior expectations for words and deeds in the library

No Bullying

No Derogatory Language

In short, treat them just like any other teen patron...

Two Basic Things **Not** To Do

Do not **OUT** them to anyone
-peers, staff, parents, *anyone*

Remember the number one priority is their safety

Do *not* turn them away if they come to you and **Out** themselves.

You don't have to like it or agree with it but you **DO** have to be a responsible adult for them--which means listening and providing them with information that can help them. Whether that is directing them to one of the resources listed in this presentation or a crisis center or just providing them with materials they can read onsite or take home--the library is neutral territory. **You** are their librarian---a trusted information resource. And if they didn't trust you, they wouldn't be talking to you. Cherish that trust.

BEST PRACTICES:

Create an environment where all tweens and teens feel welcome and appreciated.

Create an environment where tween/teens can give back to their library and their community. This fosters positive self esteem and provides an opportunity for them to feel like valued members of the community. And kids who feel like they belong to something and are accountable to something are less likely to fall through the cracks.

Create an environment of opportunities for tweens and teens to build rapport and explore new experiences together. These activities will build a network of friends and help them realize there is a whole world out there, beyond their rural community and geographic location, just waiting to be discovered.

Final Thoughts

It's easy to believe with all the social media out there that teens are more globally aware than they actually are –but that is not the case.

On closer examination, you will see that their world still very much centers around school, peers, family and the community they live in-making it hard for some, straight or not, to believe there is a way out or that things won't always *be this way*.

This is why the experiences and activities and INFORMATION the library provides are so important.

And why the Library is the perfect place for ALL youth to learn and grow and BE.

All you need to do is **CREATE THE ENVIRONMENT IN YOUR LIBRARY TO MAKE THIS POSSIBLE.**

No pressure.



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Resources:

All quotes in this presentation are taken directly from the following article:

**Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning (LGBTQ)-Themed Literature for Teens:
Are School Libraries Providing Adequate Collections?**

http://www.ala.org/aasl/sites/ala.org.aasl/files/content/aaslpubsandjournals/slr/vol16/SLR_LGBTQThemedLiteratureforTeens_V16.pdf

**A very interesting read about collection development for LGBTQ and why it is vital
and necessary for these materials to be in your library.**