

FAMILY ACCEPTANCE PROJECT® - ONLINE

PROJECT OVERVIEW



UNIVERSITY OF
Nebraska
Lincoln

Need for the Project

Research shows that sexual and gender minority youth (SGMY) experience high rates of mental health problems and other challenges (e.g., social, academic). A major factor that leads to these challenges is family rejection (family behaviors and reactions that minimize, deny, ridicule and attempt to prevent or change a child's sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression). Racial and ethnic minority youth experience the highest rates of family rejection and related health risks.

Research & Intervention Foundation

The *Family Acceptance Project*® (FAP) is a research, education, and intervention initiative that was founded more than 20 years ago to help diverse families learn to support and affirm their SGMY. FAP conducted the first research on SGMY and their families and developed the first family support model to help racially, ethnically, and religiously diverse parents and caregivers learn to support their SGMY to prevent health risks and promote well-being.

FAP's Family Support Model is grounded in the lived experiences of diverse SGMY and families and uses a culture-based family support framework that enables parents and caregivers to change rejecting behaviors that FAP's research has shown contribute to health risks and increase supportive and accepting behaviors that promote well-being for SGMY. To carry out this work, FAP has developed a series of multilingual family education resources to help families decrease rejection and risk and increase acceptance and well-being in the context of their culture and faith traditions.

Current Project's Goals

The overall goal of this research project is to evaluate an online version of FAP's Family Support Model (FAP-O) with racially diverse parents & caregivers and their LGBTQ children (Asian, Black, Latino, Indigenous & multiracial). We will specifically study how FAP-O:

1. Promotes parent/caregiver acceptance and support of their sexual and gender minority youth.
2. Increases family bonding and communication.
3. Increases SGMYs' feelings of pride in being LGBTQ+ and more hopeful about the future.
4. Leads to reductions in mental health problems reported by SGMY who experience family rejection.

Before they receive FAP-O's family support services, racial and ethnic minority SGMY youth (ages 14 to 18) and their caregivers will complete a pre-test survey and will either be randomly assigned to receive FAP-O services right away or at the completion of the study. In addition to this initial (baseline) survey, youth and caregivers will complete a survey when services end and six months later. This will help us learn if FAP-O impacts the project's goals above. We will also ask SGMY youth and caregivers to share what they liked about the program and their guidance for enhancing it.

The project includes a Youth Advisory Group and Caregiver Advisory Group that will provide input on key aspects of the project to ensure its relevance and impact for diverse SGMY and their caregivers.

We will share the results with diverse audiences that include other researchers, policymakers, families, educators, religious leaders, and youth. We will also work to expand access to the program for SGMY across the U.S.

Funder - This project is funded by the William T. Grant Foundation and is led by Dr. Katie Edwards, a queer professor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. The project is a collaboration with a diverse team of researchers and practitioners who have worked with SGMY and families for many years. The project reflects the Foundation's priorities to develop initiatives to reduce inequalities among multiply minoritized youth and to promote resilience and positive youth development.

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