Subject-Matter Experts

- **Kevin Hodgson**, Manager of Programs, Hockey Education Reaching Out Society (HEROS Hockey). His 15-year career in the Human Services sector has exclusively focused on marginalized children and youth. He is also a Consulting Trainer for the Centre for Suicide Prevention.

- **Linda Scurr, MEd**, counselling program supervisor with Adult Addiction Services Calgary, Addiction and Mental Health (formerly AADAC), Alberta Health Services. As the supervisor of the Calgary AADAC Enhanced Services for Women program Linda was awarded the Premier’s Award of Excellence 2005. She is a Consulting Trainer with Centre for Suicide Prevention and has taught suicide intervention training since 1975.

- **Dave MacLeod, MSc RPsych**, founding clinical psychologist with Western Psychology Services in Calgary, now the overseer of the WPS co-operative. Dave began work in suicide prevention in the late 1970s as a volunteer with the Distress Centre/Drug Centre and has, since then, worked in a variety of adolescent treatment centres around the world. Dave is a Consulting Trainer with the Centre for Suicide Prevention.

Secondary Research

- **Robert Olson, BA, MLIS**, Librarian, Centre for Suicide Prevention, provides secondary research and presents this webinar.
Co-sponsoring Organizations

Alberta Centre for Injury Control & Research (ACICR)
A provincial organization committed to advancing the impact or prevention, emergency response, treatment and rehabilitation of injuries in Alberta. ACICR is part of the School of Public Health, University of Alberta. For more information, visit us at www.acicr.ca

Centre for Suicide Prevention (CSP)
An education centre committed to reducing suicide through education: information services, workshops, presentations and now webinars. CSP is a branch of the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA). For more information, visit us at www.suicideinfo.ca
The 5 Things We Wish ALL Teachers Knew About
LGBT and Suicide
FACT 1: The language of sexuality can be a problem.
FACT 1:
The language of sexuality can be a problem.

Denotations and Connotations

- Terms are increasingly narrow & specialized

- "the string" LGBTTTQQIAA
  - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Transsexual, Two-spirited, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, Ally
FACT 1: The language of sexuality can be a problem.

Denotations and Connotations

- “homosexual”
- “queer”
- “homophobic”
- “assignment”
FACT 2:
Attitudes about sexuality can be a problem.

Dichotomies

• Male / Female
• Sex / Gender
• Normal / Abnormal
• Healthy / Sick (Disordered)
• Right / Wrong
• Sexual Orientation / Sexual Identity

• “Us / Them”
FACT 3:
LGBT individuals have higher rates of suicide.

LGBT youth are at higher risk for suicide than LGBT men and women who are older.

Adults:
• are more accepting of who they are
• develop a greater amount of protective factors
• have broader support networks
FACT 3: LGBT individuals have higher rates of suicide.

LGBT youth have higher instances of suicidality than the general youth population

Risk of attempting suicide:

- LGB youth: 28%
- Transgender youth: 77%
- Heterosexual youth: 4%
FACT 3:
LGBT individuals have higher rates of suicide.

Suicidal ideation: LGBT youth 1.5 to 3 times more

Suicide attempts: LGBT youth 5 to 15 times more

Deaths by suicide:

Attempts by LGBT youth account for nearly 30% of all completed suicides.
FACT 4:
Sexuality does not cause suicide. The EXPERIENCE of sexuality causes suicide.

Homophobic / transphobic comments
Verbal harassment
Physical harassment
Sexual harassment
Unsafe spaces
FACT 4:
Sexuality does not cause suicide. The EXPERIENCE of sexuality causes suicide.

Homophobic / transphobic comments:

70% of students say they hear comments like “That’s so gay” daily at school

48% hear terms like “faggot”, “lezbo”, “dyke”
FACT 4:
Sexuality does not cause suicide. The EXPERIENCE of sexuality causes suicide.

Homophobic / transphobic comments:

10% of students say they hear homophobic comments FROM TEACHERS

23% hear transphobic comments FROM TEACHERS
Sexuality does not cause suicide.
The **EXPERIENCE** of sexuality causes suicide.

Verbal harassment

74% of transexual students report having been harassed about their gender expression

26% of LGBT students report having been harassed daily about their sexual orientation

37% of youth with LGBT parents report being harassed about their parents’ sexuality
FACT 4:
Sexuality does not cause suicide. The EXPERIENCE of sexuality causes suicide.

Physical harassment

21% of LGBT youth report being physically assaulted for their sexual orientation

29% of LGBT youth report being physically harassed or assaulted for their gender expression
FACT 4:
Sexuality does not cause suicide. The EXPERIENCE of sexuality causes suicide.

Sexual harassment

49% of transexual students
45% of students with LGBT parents
42% of bisexual students
40% of gay male students
33% of lesbian students
FACT 4:
Sexuality does not cause suicide. The **EXPERIENCE** of sexuality causes suicide.

Unsafe spaces

64% of LBGT students feel unsafe at school

61% of students with LGBT parents feel unsafe at school

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FACT 4:
Sexuality does not cause suicide. The **EXPERIENCE** of sexuality causes suicide.

Most unsafe places in the school:

Phys. Ed. change rooms
Washrooms

(both are gender-segregated)
FACT 5:
Steps can be taken to support LGBT students.

Policies
Communication
Attitudes
FACT 5:
Steps can be taken to support LGBT students.

Safer-School Policies

Anti-homophobia (etc) measures
Teacher PD re: sexuality issues
LGBT-inclusive curriculum
LGBT-sensitivity in university B.Ed. training
Support/promote gay-straight student alliances
Consult with community organizations
Pay particular attention to vulnerable students
Single-occupant washroom facilities
FACT 5:
Steps can be taken to support LGBT students.

Communication

Respect the person’s privacy
Be sensitive to the person’s comfort level
Be aware of your setting
Be wary of your phrasing
Ask permission to ask questions
Focus on FEELINGS
Talk in a manner that conveys respect and acceptance
Avoid comparisons to other people
FACT 5: 
Steps can be taken to support LGBT students.

Attitudes

Suicide is an INDIVIDUAL decision
Seeing individuals as members of groups is not helpful

Sexuality is not the most urgent issue – SUICIDE is.

