

## Sexual Health Education for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Trans-gendered and Questioning (GLBTQ) Youth

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**Background.** After traveling in the developing world, I realized that sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are a rampant problem within the population. Unfortunately, these countries are limited in the resources necessary to educate and treat people affected by STIs. When I returned to Canada, I became extremely interested in sexual health education, particularly with GLBTQ youth. Canada has the knowledge and education to make a difference, so I decided to do more research on the topic. Statistics show that GLBTQ youth in Canada are at an increased risk of contracting sexually transmitted infections (STIs) because of the social stigma often attached with GLBTQ youth sexuality. As a result, GLBTQ youth are less likely to seek medical attention. Increased education around sexual health education for GLBTQ youth and for healthcare professionals can be an important step in helping to reduce the stigma associated with GLBTQ youth and STIs.

**Purpose.** This presentation explores current evidence-based recommendations and nursing practices that can help reduce the stigma attached to GLBTQ youth and aid in the education process necessary for the reduction of STIs.

**Methods.** Through an extensive review of literature and critical inquiry techniques, I discuss current practices of sexual health education and how these practices can be improved to promote positive change for GLBTQ youth.

**Findings.** I have developed methods to implement change, which include advocating sexual health programs and funding, and getting nurses more involved in the education process to help reduce the stigma and risk of STIs surrounding GLBTQ youth.