

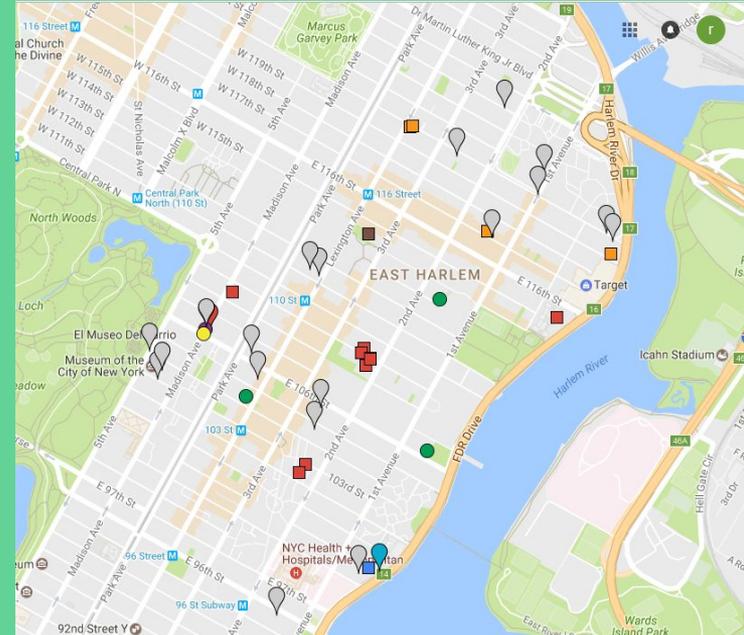
An Examination of the Mental Health Resources Available to East Harlem LGBTQ Youth

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The Background

Our Project's History

1. Began as an examination of mental health services provided by School-Based Health Centers
2. Prior year began focusing on mental health services specific to LGBTQ youth due to a connection with the Tito-Puente Education Complex
3. Our project strives to follow this legacy of working with the LGBTQ community



Credit: Jeremy and Scott, 2013-2014 Dyad

The Problem

Mental Health Issues in the LGBTQ Youth Community

- LGBTQ Individuals are almost 3 times more likely to experience a mental health condition
- LGBTQ youth have higher rates of homelessness
- LGBTQ Youth are 4 times more likely to have suicidal thoughts, to self harm and to commit suicide than their straight counterparts
- An Estimated 20-25% of LGBTQ people have substance use problems vs 9% in the general population

-National Alliance on Mental Illness and
Healthy People 2020

Our Project

Our Project

Original Plan

- Enter into the schools and conduct a survey-based project on barriers mental health care of LGBTQ Youth
- Talk to LGBTQ youth about their experiences trying to access care
- Talk to administrators and faculty about gaps in knowledge and issues properly supporting
- Create a training for administrators and faculty on ways they can better serve this community

Final Outcome

- Conducted semi-structured interviews with community-based organization (CBO) stakeholders
- Performed an exploratory interview with representatives from the New York City Office of School Health
- Analyzed qualitative interview data
- Plan to create recommendations based on data

Our Interviews

Exploratory

- Sharon Edwards- Mount Sinai Pediatrician, runs School-based health centers
- Adam Melaney- director of a group therapy session of LGBTQ youth in East Harlem
- Miguel Torres- Mount Sinai social worker for the Child, Adolescent and Family Services Clinic
- John Steever- Physician at the Adolescent Health Center, works primarily with LGBTQ patients
- Martin Orduna- Program Director Union Settlement
- Ray Cornbill and Ann-Gel Palermo- Project Historians and East Harlem community stakeholders
- Attended meetings of the EHCHC

Structured-Qualitative to be Analyzed

- Charles Solidum- Patient Navigator, Adolescent Health Center
- Roger Platt- Chief Executive Officer, Office of School Health, DOE
- Scott Bloom- Director of School Mental Health Services, DOE
- Ken de Jesus - Director of Outreach and Testing, Iris House
- Zachary Fried - LCSW, Adolescent Health Center

The Barriers to Our Project: How do these relate to the barriers of youth to access services?

- Unable to continue partnership with Tito Puentes Educational Complex LGBTQ youth group because of scheduling conflicts
 - Rigorous IRB requirements to reach school administration, teachers, and students
 - Lack of East Harlem-specific data on LGBTQ youth mental health services
 - Unpredictability of the turnover in CBO administration and leadership
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Themes and Lessons Learned

- **School-Based clinics are not meeting all of the mental health needs of LGBTQ youth in East Harlem**
 - **Lack of resources**
 - **Varied resources at different schools**
- **Community-based organizations often lack staff with knowledge of resources provided by School-Based Health Centers and other CBOs, leading to a lack of coordination between providers of services**
 - **Lack of communication**
 - **Overlaps of services; holes in care**
- **CBOs are understaffed and underfinanced, leading to high turnover and lack of continuity**
 - **Of our interview subjects, most had been employed at their current CBO for less than 1 year**

Themes and Lessons Learned

- **No sole CBO is the expert in the process of youth accessing mental health care**
 - **Most of the CBOs serving LGBTQ youth in the neighborhood focus on HIV**
 - **Mental health services are a secondary service or an afterthought**
- **CBOs are important in addressing the needs of LGBTQ youth unaddressed by SBHCs**
 - **For students who don't feel comfortable or are unable to access services at their schools**
- **There is a lack of child psychiatrists in East Harlem**
 - **We learned that the Adolescent Health Center does not have a child psychiatrist on staff**
 - **Country-wide shortage**
- **Thrive NYC is too new and understudied to be a reliable resource in East Harlem**
 - **No CBO we talked with was implementing THRIVE programs on the ground**

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