1. Creating an Inclusive Environment for LGBTQ Youth

2. Self-reported sexual orientation & gender identity
   Maine high school students, 2017
   - 15 percent of Maine high school students identified as either gay/lesbian, bisexual or not sure.
   - 3 percent of Maine high school students identified as either transgender or not sure of gender identity.

3. Suicide ideation among Maine high school students

4. Suicide attempts among Maine high school students

*Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey 2017
Risk Factors

- Isolation (especially due to lack of public transportation)
- Homelessness
- Unsupportive families & communities
- Feeling unsafe in schools, homes, communities
- Depression, anxiety, suicide ideation, substance use

LGBTQ Youth Protective Factors

- Unconditional support of child’s identity, whatever it is.
- “Family” support is the number one protective factor (broad definition)
- Families, schools, providers are informed about LGBT issues, trained to support and model appreciation for all youth
- Access to safe and supportive community groups like OUT, Gay/Straight/Trans/Alliances (GSTA’s), health care services and community services
- Inclusive forms and curriculum
- Appropriate response to bullying and harassment

Creating Supportive Spaces

- LGBTQ people are everywhere.
- Examine your own beliefs and attitudes that might affect your professional responsibilities to LGBTQ youth.
- Treat LGBTQ individuals with the same dignity and expectations as others.
- Be aware of your language – use gender neutral language with all people.
- Don’t stereotype LGBTQ people – avoid assumptions that all LGBTQ are the same
- Create a welcoming and affirming environment in your office, forms, posters, literature, etc.

OUT Maine’s initiatives for supporting our youth

- Welcoming and inclusive schools – GSTAs (Gay, Straight, Trans Alliances) & trainings
- Safe spaces in our communities – Rockland, Kieve-Wavus retreats, overnights, Rainbow Weekend, Haystack Weekend
- Strong network of informed educators health care, mental health, faith and community services providers (like you)
- Additional resources & training schedule on OUT’s website
  - www.outmaine.org
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Safe and affirming schools
Safe and welcoming communities
Informed and supported parents and families

A strong, educated provider safety net

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