



# colorado school of public health

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2025**

**8:00 – 8:30 AM**      **Check-In and Breakfast**

**8:45 – 9:30 AM**      **Breakfast Panel – Actionable Steps in STI Education and Prevention**

Brandon Abell, Student and MD Candidate, CU School of Medicine  
Miriam Moreno, Prevention Services Manager, HeyDenver

Description: This session will explore practical approaches to advancing public health in clinical settings, focusing on HIV prevention and STI education. Although PrEP can reduce the risk of HIV transmission by over 99%, fewer than one-third of eligible individuals have been prescribed it, often due to provider discomfort with identifying candidates and initiating treatment. To address this, the session will advocate for implementing a clinical PrEP algorithm to streamline patient screening, enhance provider confidence, and increase PrEP prescriptions, ultimately reducing the burdens of HIV treatment. Additionally, the session will emphasize the need for inclusive and accurate STI education, addressing systemic barriers, stigma, and the politicization of sex education, which contribute to preventable outbreaks. Attendees will gain tools to implement low-cost clinical interventions, promote prevention, and provide impactful, stigma-free health education that empowers individuals to make informed health decisions.

**9:30 – 10:15 AM**      **Breakout Sessions – Safe Communities**

**Option 1: Human Trafficking in Colorado: Marginalization Identities as a Root Cause of Exploitation**

Kara Napolitano, Education and Partnerships Director, Laboratory to Combat Human Trafficking

Description: This presentation will examine the root causes of human trafficking, focusing on the intersecting identities, vulnerabilities, and systemic inequalities that contribute to this crime. Attendees will gain insights into the behavioral cues of individuals who have experienced the complex trauma often associated with trafficking. By understanding these root causes and the impact of trauma, participants will be better equipped to recognize and respond effectively to human trafficking in its various forms.

**Option 2: Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) in the LGBTQ+ Community**

Chelsie Holmes, Program Director, Queer Futures Colorado

Description: This presentation highlights how LGBTQ+ survivors often fall through the gaps in support from domestic violence advocates, healthcare providers, and LGBTQ+ organizations due to a lack of targeted resources and training. This is especially true among bisexual survivors, where CDC data show that 61% of bisexual women and 37% of bisexual men experience IPV compared to lower rates among other sexual orientations. The session will explore the root causes of this violence and provide strategies to better identify and address the needs of IPV survivors.

**10:30 – 11:15 PM**      **Breakout Sessions – Mental Health and Wellbeing**

**Option 1: Mental Health and Wellbeing for Rural LGBTQ Adolescents**

Haley Wintsch, Community Health Graduate Student, Western Colorado University

Description: This presentation explores the mental health outcomes and community belonging of rural LGBTQ+ adolescents, who face unique challenges such as minority stress and increased vulnerability during identity exploration. It summarizes findings from a literature review examining the characteristics of this population, protective and risk factors affecting their mental health, and common research methods used to study rural LGBTQ+ youth. These findings serve as the foundation for a thesis research project to be conducted in Gunnison County next year. The session will include a slideshow, a handout highlighting key data on protective factors and research methodologies, and a Q&A session for attendee engagement.

### **Option 2: Mindfulness-Based Intervention Adapted for LGBTQ+ Adolescents**

Rose Grace Grose, PhD – Associate Professor, Community Health Education, ColoradoSPH

Description: This session highlights a pilot study of Learning to Breathe-Q, a mindfulness-based intervention adapted to address the unique needs of LGBTQ+ adolescents. The study found that participants experienced reduced depression and anxiety, alongside improved intuitive eating and physical activity, from baseline to post-intervention. These findings underscore the value of tailored, evidence-based interventions in addressing the mental and physical health disparities faced by LGBTQ+ youth. Attendees will gain insight into the feasibility and benefits of implementing such interventions.

### **Option 3: Therapist Experiences Treating People Impacted by the Club Q Shooting**

Lillian Brown, Student and MSW Candidate, University of Colorado at Colorado Springs

Stephanie Gangemi, PhD, LCSW, Assistant Professor, Department of Social Work, University of Colorado at Colorado Springs

Description: This presentation will review a phenomenological qualitative study that examined the experiences of clinicians who treated individuals affected by the Club Q mass shooting in Colorado Springs, focusing on trauma, organizational and community responses, and clinician identity. This research sheds light on the challenges faced by clinicians and the systems needed to support them in such crises. And, the findings emphasize the critical need for pre-event planning, coordinated organizational and community responses, and an increase in trained and well-supported responders for mass traumatic events.

## **11:30 – 12:45 PM      Lunch Panel – Data in LGBTQ+ Public Health Education, Research, and Practice**

Collecting Accurate and Inclusive SOGI Data: Why and How

Skylar Patron, RN, Health Equity Manager One Colorado

How are LGBTQ+ Young Adults Really Doing?

Bianca Gonzalez-De La Rosa, MSW, Researcher, OMNI Institute

The 2023 Healthy Kids Survey

Ashley Brooks-Russell, PhD, MPH, Associate Professor, ColoradoSPH

Director, Injury and Violence Prevention Center

Description: This session will explore the critical importance of collecting sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) data to understand the experiences of LGBTQIA+ individuals, the historical harms of data collection in marginalized communities, and how to avoid repeating these harms. Participants will gain practical tools, evidence-based SOGI data questions, and strategies for designing inclusive behavioral health programs while considering data privacy. Additionally, researchers will present findings from two statewide surveys examining the behavioral and mental health of Colorado's young adults and youth. The first survey provides insights into substance use, gaming, gambling, and mental health disparities among young adults. The second, the 2023 Healthy Kids Colorado Survey, includes responses from over 120,000 young Coloradans, highlighting mental health and substance use

improvements alongside persistent disparities for LGBTQIA+ youth and concerning trends like increased alcohol use among middle schoolers.

**1:00 – 1:45 PM**

### **Breakout Sessions – Public Health in Public Education**

#### **Option 1: Building Capacity for Gender-Affirming Care in School-Based Roles**

Shayna Seitchik, LGBTQIA+ Coordinator, Poudre School District of Northern Colorado

Description: This session will present a district-level structure designed to enhance capacity within school-based mental health roles, ensuring gender-affirming care for transgender and gender-diverse (TGD) students. The primary goal is to improve educational experiences and address health disparities among TGD students. A key component of this initiative is increasing access to mental health services by equipping staff with the skills to meet the unique needs of TGD students. Attendees will explore how role-specific professional learning for mental health providers supports these objectives.

#### **Option 2: Promoting LGBTQIA+ Inclusiveness in Schools: Guidelines and Supportive Resources**

Susan Goldenstein, Director of Community Impact, Children’s Hospital Colorado

Amy Dillon, M.Ed., Co-Founder, Advancing Dynamic Solutions

Amy Dyett, M.Ed., Co-Founder, Advancing Dynamic Solutions

Description: This interactive session will introduce attendees to Inclusiveness Guidelines designed to support LGBTQIA+ students by fostering inclusive and supportive school environments. Developed with guidance from the Colorado Alliance for School Health, the Guidelines offer best practices, example policies, and practical strategies for implementation. Participants will discuss potential challenges, explore opportunities to promote these tools, and consider actionable steps for schools. By the end of the session, attendees will have a clear understanding of the Guidelines and insights on creating affirming educational spaces.

**2:45 – 3:30 PM**

### **Breakout Sessions – Belonging at Home and in the Workplace**

#### **Option 1: Preventing Youth Homelessness through Belonging and Connection**

Kimberly Chambers, Executive Director, SPLASH LGBTQIA+ Youth of Northern Colorado

Rocky Clements, Host Home Provider, SPLASH LGBTQIA+ Youth of Northern Colorado

Description: This session showcases Juniper’s Place, a project designed to empower young adults at risk of or experiencing homelessness through skill-building and personalized support to foster independent living and prevent ongoing homelessness. Participants will explore how the program combines temporary housing, peer support, hands-on learning, and mentorship through a curriculum-centered approach. The project emphasizes community-building by creating networks of peers and mentors that provide mutual support and connection. By fostering a sense of belonging and resilience, Juniper’s Place equips participants to work toward sustainable, independent futures.

#### **Option 2: Project Visibility: Creating Inclusive Communities for Older LGBTQ+ Adults**

Michael Chifalo, Boulder County Area Agency on Aging

Laura MacWaters, Rainbow Elder and Participant

Description: This session highlights Project Visibility: Creating Inclusive Communities for LGBTQ+ Older Adults, developed by the Boulder County Area Agency on Aging to address the fear of Rainbow Elders (LGBTQ+/50+) needing to hide their identities to access senior services. Attendees will view the 27-minute Project Visibility documentary featuring 11 LGBTQ+ older adults sharing stories on topics like coming out, family, discrimination, history, language, and provider advice. Following the screening, Rainbow Elder and project

participant Laura MacWaters will lead an audience discussion to reflect on the stories presented. The session aims to foster understanding and inclusivity for LGBTQ+ older adults in senior services.

### **Option 3: LGBTQ+ Employee Resource Groups in the Workplace**

Brooke Bender, Director of the Center for Addiction Medicine, Denver Health

Julio Martinez Coronado, Marketing Campaigns and Project Manager, Denver Health

Description: This session explores the importance of LGBTQ+ Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) in fostering community, social support, and inclusivity within professional workplaces. Presenters will share examples of successful initiatives, such as pronoun pledges, monthly gatherings, fundraising activities, and events that create a sense of belonging. Attendees will gain insights and lessons learned from these efforts, along with a practical roadmap for establishing and customizing ERGs in their own organizations. This session is ideal for anyone seeking to make their workplace more inclusive and supportive for LGBTQ+ employees.

**3:45 – 4:30 PM**

## **Breakout Sessions – Public Health Practice**

### **Option 1: Tobacco Use Among Colorado's LGBTQIA+ Community**

Sarah DeLong, STEPP Program Manager, Mile High Behavioral Healthcare

Description: This presentation examines the complex relationship between LGBTQ+ identity, mental health, and health risk behaviors, such as smoking, vaping, and alcohol use, with a focus on Colorado's LGBTQ+ community. Poor mental health and high-risk behaviors disproportionately affect this population, driven in part by societal stigma and discrimination, as explained by Minority Stress Theory. Tailored, affirmative healthcare services and LGBTQ+ education in schools are critical strategies for reducing these disparities and improving health outcomes. Attendees will gain insights into these health inequities and explore policy and practice revisions to mitigate them. The session will emphasize the need for a multi-pronged approach to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for Colorado's LGBTQ+ community.

### **Option 2: Creating Inclusive and Affirming Child and Newborn Care for LGBTQIA+ Families**

Emma Sickles, RDN, CLC, Adams County Health Department WIC Program

Cairn Journey Yakey MA, LPC, PMH-C, Cairn Journey Psychotherapy PLLC

Description: Expanding a family can be a joyful yet vulnerable experience, and trans and non-binary individuals often face unique challenges during this time. Medical systems and providers may lack the training and knowledge needed to support these birthing individuals, compounding stress and limiting positive outcomes. Research demonstrates that when birthing people feel safe and supported by their providers and environment, birth outcomes improve with fewer interventions, emergencies, and instances of birth trauma. Similarly, LGBTQIA+ families encounter barriers in lactation care due to discrimination and gendered assumptions, which can impede access to human milk for their infants. By implementing trauma-informed, inclusive practices and addressing the specific needs of trans and non-binary birthers, we can create safer and more affirming care environments for all. This session will provide actionable steps for reducing barriers in childbirth and lactation care, including guidance on inclusive messaging and education, and will highlight case studies such as the induction of lactation in transgender women to empower providers in supporting diverse family structures.

### **Option 3: Transgender People's Experiences of Healthcare within the Carceral System**

Stephanie Gangemi, PhD, LCSW, Assistant Professor, University of Colorado at Colorado Springs

Mikey Sanchez, MSW Candidate, Research Assistant, University of Colorado at Colorado Springs

Lillian Brown, MSW Candidate, Research Assistant, University of Colorado at Colorado Springs

Jacklyn Wallen, BA, Research Assistant, University of Colorado at Colorado Springs

Description: This presentation explores the healthcare experiences of transgender individuals within the carceral system using a qualitative, interpretative phenomenological approach. It examines resources, barriers, and health implications, drawing from in-depth interviews that reveal encounters with inadequate medical care, lack of gender-affirming treatments, violence, and resilience. The discussion emphasizes the importance of trauma-informed, gender-affirming approaches in both the study and the broader carceral context. Findings highlight the urgent need for reforms in correctional healthcare to ensure inclusive and affirming care for incarcerated transgender individuals. The presentation aims to inform policy and practice changes that address these critical healthcare gaps.

**5:00 PM**

**Closing Reception and Networking**

T-Street Kitchen