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Children & Family Services Division Office of Child Abuse Prevention

FAMILY ACCEPTANCE PROJECT

A community research, intervention, and education initiative to study the impact of family acceptance and rejection on the physical health, mental health, and well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth

The Family Acceptance Project was funded through the [State Children's Trust Fund](#) (SCTF) in fiscal years 2010-2011 and 2011-2012. The Family Acceptance Project (FAP) is a program of the Marian Wright Edelman Institute, San Francisco State University. It is funded through the support of several entities, including the California Department of Social Services. The project provides services to help ethnically diverse families decrease rejection and increase support for their LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, and Transgender) children and young people who are questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity. The FAP is an evidence-based program designed to strengthen families, to improve youths' health and well-being, to help maintain youth in their homes, to decrease the risk of child abuse and neglect, and to inform public policy.

Research results identified more than 100 behaviors that families and caregivers use to respond to their child's gay or transgender identity (telling the child he or she cannot come to a family event because of their sexual identity, not welcoming the child's gay or transgender friends into the family home, etc.); the way in which these behaviors affect the child's physical or mental health (increased risk for depression, suicide, substance abuse, HIV and STDs, etc); and the manner in which these behaviors affect the child's self-esteem, sense of the future, life satisfaction, and social support.

Armed with research results, the FAP provides services to families to give them the basic information needed to strengthen family life, support their gay or transgender child, decrease the child's risk for health problems, and promote their child's well-being. The FAP continues to develop specific interventions for working with families of LGBT children and adolescents that can be used in a wide range of settings. The Family Acceptance Project practice approach significantly contributes to changing the existing paradigm of services, prevention and care in which LGBT youth are served alone or through peer support across disciplines and systems of care, and not in the context of their families.

Among the professional journals publishing articles on the FAP study are: *Developmental Psychology*, the *Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Nursing* and the *Journal of School Health*. The FAP website provides additional information at: <http://familyproject.sfsu.edu>.