

Breathe Free.

OREGON LGBTQ COALITION AGAINST TOBACCO

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May

Welcome to Breathe Free!

- Our statewide program is supported by funding from the Oregon Department of Human Services.
- Breathe Free is a program of SMYRC (the Sexual Minority Youth Resource Center).

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LGBT Health Awareness Week

March marked the fourth annual LGBT Health Awareness Week which was started by the National Coalition for LGBT Health. They write: "National LGBT Health Awareness Week is a very visible way for you and your organization to promote lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender health in your community and across the nation" (www.lgbthealth.net). A number of events around the region honored this week.

County Commissioner Maria Rojo de Steffey introduced a proclamation to have the week of March 12-16, 2006 officially declared LGBT Health Awareness week in Multnomah County.

A group of SMYRC youth, staff and adult volunteers created new workshop materials including a zine, adding training on LGBTQ youth

risk behaviors to our Bridge 13 community education program. (See article on page 3.) A (large) group of us - including 3 youth, an adult volunteer and 4 staff members - presented this workshop and zine for the first time at the Oregon Queer Youth Conference in February. Three youth traveled with me to Oregon State University to host a day of workshops and discussions at their Pride Center in honor of LGBT Health Awareness Week. These included: Risky Business, an introduction to the activism they're doing on campus to support LGBTQ people, and concerns of transgender students. In addition, one of the student leaders and the faculty advisor of the Corvallis High School Gay Straight Alliance met



Cough You went out last night, had a great time hanging out with your friends, maybe met some new hotties, and worked it out on the dance floor. Now, the next

day, you're paying for it. You have the secondhand smoke hangover blues: phlegmy cough, headache, sinus congestion, dehydration... Sound familiar? If only it didn't have to be this way.

Well, pirates and queers of all types (21 & up, that is), Booty says NO MORE! Puppet and

Schedule a check up with your health care provider. Visit www.lgbthealth.net for information to help you own your health.

with us. We also presented this workshop at SMYRC which held all health-related workshops during LGBT Health Awareness week.

Multnomah County Health Department hosted a panel on LGBT health issues.

(continued on next page)

Thar She Blows... Booty Goes SmokeFree!

the other staff of Booty have announced that on April 13, the weekly Thursday event at Porky's Pub will go smoke-free! Arrr. Now that's a breath of (almost) fresh air!

Talk to your favorite bar or event planner and ask them to go smokefree! *Breathe smoke Free! Play harder.*

Oregon Healthy Teen Survey Includes Sexual Orientation in Surveys Statewide

“Asking the question of sexual orientation on the Oregon Healthy Teen survey is extremely important in order for us, the community, to continue to develop ways of combating the higher rates of suicide, drugs and alcohol use, and homelessness among sexual minority youth.”

*Jonathan K. Weedman,
MA/QMHP,
SMYRC Program Manager*

For the first time, the Oregon Healthy Teen survey will collect information about sexual orientation – at least from 11th grade respondents. While questions about sexual orientation have been optional for districts in the past, this will be the first time for inclusion of these among the questions that all districts must ask.

Other states such as Delaware, Maine, Massachusetts and Vermont already ask about sexual orientation in their youth risk behavior surveys. The Oregon Healthy Teen survey is distributed to 8th and 11th graders in selected districts throughout the state. These surveys ask a variety of questions about risk behaviors and attitudes, such as experiences with harassment and violence, substance abuse, sexual behaviors and other issues. Data about youth risk behaviors will inform programming in schools and in the community.

The results from studies conducted in other communities have produced striking results

that show that LGBTQQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning, queer) youth face high risks across indicators.

For example, 2003 survey of 9-12th graders conducted in Boulder Valley, Colorado found lesbian, gay, bisexual and questioning youth to have higher risks than their straight-identified peers across *all* indicators. These included: substance use, drunk driving, harassment, feeling too unsafe to go to school, experiencing violence and threats of violence, pregnancy, early sexual behaviors, multiple sex partners, rape, partner violence, and more.

National data from GLSEN, the Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network, confirms that significant numbers of LGBT youth experience verbal and physical harassment at school, with LGBT youth of color experiencing even higher rates. The 2003 GLSEN study found that 64.3% of LGBT students felt unsafe at their school because of their sexual orientation

and that because of feeling unsafe 28.6% of LGBT students missed at least one day of school that month. Even more striking, GLSEN also discovered that LGBT students who were frequently harassed reported a 10% lower grade point average than those who were not – and they were 2 times less likely to plan to attend college.

To put it most bluntly, this is an issue of life and death. “Asking the question of sexual orientation on the Oregon Healthy Teen survey is extremely important in order for us, the community, to continue to develop ways of combating the higher rates of suicide, drugs and alcohol use, and homelessness among sexual minority youth,” states Jonathan K. Weedman, MA/QMHP, Program Manager at SMYRC, the Sexual Minority Youth Resource Center. “To have solid data about Oregon youth will help develop best practice strategies to support these often isolated youth. Good programming starts with good data.”

LGBT Health Awareness Week (continued)

Organizations represented included: Breathe Free, SMYRC, Trans/Identity Resource Centre, Brother to Brother, Apoyo Latino, Men’s Wellness Center, The Hambleton Project, Q Center, and the Elder Resource Alliance.

Breathe Free worked with several organizations to plan SmokeLESS: an LGBTQ community forum on smoking and secondhand smoke in bars, which included informational tabling by local organizations, refreshments, a facilitated

discussion, and live music. Members of the following organizations participated in the planning process: Breathe Free, Multnomah County HIV & Hep C Programs, Multnomah County Tobacco Prevention Program, Trans/Identity Resource Center, OR DHS TPEP, OR Breast & Cervical Cancer Program, API Health Network. Tabling was provided by these programs and by the Planned Parenthood of the Columbia/Wilamette Valley youth educators.

Approximately 35 people participated in the discussion which was facilitated by Derrick Travers and Doug Moon. We talked about the impact tobacco has had on our lives, what we like and dislike about smoking, where we stand on tobacco policies, and non-smoking alternatives for bars. Many participants had experienced the effects of secondhand smoke and/or had family members who have died from tobacco related illnesses.

“Risky Business:”

Educating Our Communities About LGBTQ Youth Risk Behaviors



SMYRC Youth, Adult Volunteers and Staff Members have created the next step in SMYRC’s Bridge 13 community education program. Bridge 13 provides workshops which help community members and service providers understand the experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) youth. Peer educators ages 23 and younger travel to high school classes, teen residential programs, youth groups, teacher trainings, social service agencies, conferences, and other forums to facilitate fun and interactive workshops.

This winter we’ve taken the next step, named “Bridge 13.5” by the youth working to develop the program! We’re creating new workshop materials related to LGBTQ health issues so that we can look at how homophobia and transphobia impact access to healthcare and the heightened risks we take as a demographic group. Because the statistics about LGBTQ youth risk behaviors are so striking, we have chosen to build upon previous and create new models to use for our workshop presentations to help educate both LGBTQ community members.

The new workshop, called Risky Business, provides a venue for discussing LGBTQ tobacco use and prevention within a range of risk behaviors disproportionately affecting the LGBTQ youth population. Our new material provides and interactive way to look at the statistics about LGBTQ youth risk behaviors. We talk about the importance of inclusion of sexual orientation in the research. We also move toward preven-

tion through a solutions focus—discussing some ways that LGBTQ people have addressed health disparities in history and looking at personal- and community-level ways that LGBTQ youth can reduce their own risks.

Studies have documented increased risks for LGBTQQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning/Queer) youth, including:

- Increased likelihood of experiencing violence at school and in the community.
- Increased smoking, and alcohol & drug use, including binge drinking and injection drug use.
- Increased risk of homelessness due to running away or being kicked out of their guardian’s house.
- Increased risk for early sex, pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections.
- Increased risk of survival sex or prostitution.
- Increased risk of suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts.

Every 8 seconds someone dies from smoking related illness or disease. This equals 1200 people per day.

Marketing to youth insures a replacement. Most adults who smoke begin before the age of 21.

38 – 60% of LGBTQ youth smoke.

P.S. When used as directed cigarettes kill. (I know... you already knew that.)

I didn't survive depression and suicide attempts so I could die from lung cancer. I had to stop smoking. —ARIANA

CIGARETTES ARE MY GREATEST ENEMY
TOBACCO CAUSES MORE DEATHS THAN AIDS, DRUGS, BREAST CANCER AND GAY BASHING COMBINED

Check out www.mygreatestenemy.org to see a series of public health messages that connect LGBTQ risks with tobacco prevention.

YOUTH TOBACCO PREVENTION ROCKS!!

www.madebyyouth.tv/mbynew/contest/?dtoken=5C534A This website features short (30 second) public service announcements made by Canadian youth about tobacco use. They also have a great youth-related tobacco prevention resources page. Kick butt!

www.nyacyouth.org/nyac/FREE_guide_print1.pdf From the folks at the National Youth Advocacy Coalition, “Dedicated to the thousands of LGBTQ young people who are ensnared every year by the eight-billion-dollar tobacco advertising campaign to take their lives.”

www.ehealth4teens.org Brought to you by the folks at the Multnomah County Health Department’s School Based Health Center Program, this website has info and resources on a bunch of topics that impact youth.

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OREGON LGBTQ COALITION AGAINST TOBACCO

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Breathe Free provides education and advocacy around LGBTQ tobacco use with the understanding that we are all (tobacco users and non-users) impacted by tobacco use and by being targeted by the tobacco industry. Our goals are:

- To work in coalition with other groups toward smoke-free bars, clubs and other gathering places for LGBTQ folks;
- To promote safe and smoke free places for LGBTQ people to socialize and connect with each other; and
- To advocate that LGBTQ events and organizations not accept funding from tobacco companies.

Breathe Free is funded by the Oregon Department of Human Services as part of the Multicultural Council of programs that provide tobacco prevention education and advocacy within groups who are disproportionately affected by tobacco use and exposure.

*Written and edited
by R.E. Szego, except where noted.*

A PROGRAM OF SMYRC, THE SEXUAL MINORITY YOUTH RESOURCE CENTER



masQUEERade

(SMYRC prom)

SATURDAY MAY 27th
8pm to Midnight

QCenter
1028 SE Water Street, suite 145
(entrance on SE Taylor St.).

*Free
All Ages
No Drugs, No Alcohol*

*DJ's
Raffles
Free HIV testing
Refreshments*



Come in your best disguise.



For more information please call:
Zan Gibbs, SMYRC Supervisor
503 872-9664, ext 27

Join Us at PRIDE!!

Yes, it's that time of year again... PRIDE festivals are blooming.

Last year we celebrated the beginning of Breathe Free (which didn't even have a name yet!) by conducting a survey at the Pride celebration in Portland. SMYRC youth, adult volunteers and staff convinced 593 people to complete our survey and enter a raffle for some fantastic donated prizes. What's in store this year?? Help us plan!!

We're interested in your ideas and help planning for Breathe Free participation at PRIDE events, both in Portland and

elsewhere in Oregon. Would you like to help out in any of the following areas?

- Pride survey
- SmokeFree LGBTQ events and bars list
- Designing and/or providing educational workshops for healthcare providers or in the community.
- Volunteering during events
- Other assistance

Please contact R.E. ("Ari") Szego at 503.784.5813 to work with us!

www.myspace.com/breathefree
breathefree.livejournal.com