



**The ANCHOR Project: Striving for whole health and wellness through a trauma-informed system of care for LGBTQSA transitional age youth and young adults**  
16<sup>th</sup> Annual Summer Institute | Tuesday, July 14, 2015 | Sedona, AZ

**Objective #1:** Describe the inspiration, goals, and process of developing the ANCHOR Project

- The ANCHOR (Accessible Network for Coordinated Housing, Opportunities, and Resilience) Project is a three-year (2014-2017) SAMHSA-funded project serving 180 unstably housed LGBTQ&A young adults.
- The ANCHOR Project goals are framed by stabilization, self-sufficiency, and empowerment.
  - Primary goals are to decrease substance abuse and risk behaviors, and increase mental health status and linkages to community services.
  - A secondary goal is improving the System of Care for LGBTQ young adults.
- The ANCHOR Projects offers flexibility in programming with all services focused on LGBTQ affirmation and empowerment.
- The ANCHOR Project evolved from SIROW's former Prism and iTEAM projects. For the ANCHOR Project the focus has narrowed (18+, young adults, not minors), but the practice has broadened (a greater variety of trauma-informed services to support participants.)

**Objective #2:** Identify steps for developing an LGBTQ-affirming integrated system of care via multi-agency collaboration.

- Three-agency collaboration: University of Arizona Southwest Institute for Research on Women (SIROW) – responsible for project administration, evaluation, space, and groups; Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation (SAAF) – responsible for outreach, education, and employment; Living Out Loud Health and Wellness Center (LOL) – responsible for housing, mental health services, and peer support.
- Collaboration strengths – Expertise in distinct areas; combined resources; access to broader networks; opportunity to strengthen infrastructure; ability to meet participant needs on a “whole person” level.
- Collaboration challenges – Communication; ownership and buy-in; organizational policies; too many hands in the pot (or too few).
- Collaborative strategies – transparency and consistent communication; regular meetings; shared space; coordinated outreach; subcontracting with collaborators; emphasizing FTEs; individual and group training; ongoing reporting.
- Collaborating with participants – The ANCHOR Action Alliance is a participant advisory board that solicits input from program participants and offers further empowerment for its members. This is just one of many ways in which the ANCHOR Project invites and implements feedback from participants. This format is mutually beneficial; the project benefits from hearing directly from participants about their needs/wants and participants become more empowered and gain experience.
- The ANCHOR Project Supplemental Questionnaire is a strong example of an LGBTQ-affirming tool that validates and honors participants' experiences.

**Objective #3:** Apply LGBTQ-affirming approaches to one activity from the Seeking Safety curriculum and one Motivational Interviewing technique.

- Seeking Safety – used in the BUOY (Building Understanding of Yourself) weekly trauma support group.
  - Recognizes trauma and substance abuse disparity among LGBTQ participants.
  - Focuses on establishing safety above all else.
  - Highly adaptable with freestanding sessions.
  - Each session begins with participants sharing their preferred name and pronouns. This practice was adopted in response to a participant's suggestion.
- Motivational Interviewing
  - A form of empowerment for LGBTQ participants.
  - Elicits inherent motivations for behavior change.
  - Can be embedded into numerous aspects of the program.