

AFFIRM Adult: Affirmative Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender & Questioning (LGBTQ+) Populations

Program Description: **AFFIRM Adult** is an evidence-based eight module, manualized coping skills training intervention focused on reducing mental health issues and behavioral risks experienced by LGBTQ+ populations. Initially developed for LGBTQ+ youth, AFFIRM has been found to be efficacious with adult populations across a range of settings (e.g., schools, health care centers, behavioral health clinics, online).

AFFIRM

- ✓ Is manualized
- ✓ Provides training to new practitioners
- ✓ Requires fidelity adherence
- ✓ Requires data collection
- ✓ Provides expert coaching to new implementers

Program Delivery: As a manualized intervention, AFFIRM is typically delivered by trained and certified counselors, social workers and other mental health professionals in a group-based format. In addition to the effectiveness with youth and adults with a myriad of identities, AFFIRM has been successfully tailored to the needs of transgender and non-conforming youth and adults as well as racialized, newcomer and refugee groups and been translated into Chinese, Dutch, Spanish and Urdu. The eight modules are designed to for flexible implementation with all LGBTQ+ populations, making them easy to integrate into existing school and other settings (e.g., into existing counseling groups).

Who is the program for?

AFFIRM Adult is designed for any LGBTQ+ person. However it is recommended that all cohorts be age appropriate.

Program Evidence: AFFIRM Adult is based on extensive research demonstrating that Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is among the most effective interventions for child, adolescent and adult depression, anxiety and suicidality while simultaneously attending to the unique needs, experiences and challenges of LGBTQ+ people through a trauma- informed and affirmative approach.



AFFIRM has significant empirical evidence indicating that it reduces depression and promotes increases in healthy decision making and coping for LGBTQ+ populations (e.g. Craig et. al, 2021, Craig, Austin & Alessi, 2019; Craig et. al, 2019; Craig & Austin, 2016*). AFFIRM addresses the stressors that LGBTQ+ people encounter in work, family, and community settings (e.g., bullying, discrimination) and helps them develop effective coping skills that support healthy behaviors and foster well-being.

How do I get AFFIRM Adult to my organization?

To implement AFFIRM Adult in your practice or within your organization, please email the National Quality Improvement Center on Tailored Services, Placement Stability, and Permanency for LGBTQ2S Children and Youth in Foster Care at SOGIECENTER@ssw.umaryland.edu or contact the AFFIRM co-creators directly at mail@affirmativeresearch.net.

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