

**Fourth Annual  
Creating Welcoming and Safe Schools Youth Conference  
April 1, 2016**

**University of Southern Maine  
Portland Campus**

**Sponsored by**



# Creating Welcoming and Safe Schools Youth Conference

## Schedule

**8:30 - 9:00am      Registration**

Hall outside Talbot Auditorium, Luther Bonney Hall

**9:00 - 9:15            Welcome**

Talbot Auditorium, Luther Bonney Hall

**9:15 - 10:15          Opening Session**

Just Because Poem - Guest Speakers from Gorham High School, Catherine McAuley High School, and Windham Middle School

Talbot Auditorium, Luther Bonney Hall

**10:25 - 11:25        Break Out Session 1**

Classrooms in Luther Bonney Hall

See Presentations and Descriptions and Classroom Assignments Below

**11:35 - 12:30        Lunch**

Two different lunches being served, see below, in classrooms in Luther Bonney. All lunches are nut and peanut free.

*Tacos and Salad Room 208 (Taco Shells are gluten free)*

*Wraps and Salads Room 410*

Feel free to find a classroom or space in Luther Bonney to eat

**12:40 - 1:40          Break Out Session 2**

Classrooms in Luther Bonney Hall

See Presentations and Descriptions and Classroom Assignments Below

**1:50 - 2:50 pm      Closing and Evaluation**

Dan Woodbury, From Furry Ambers

Clearwater Benders

Talbot Auditorium, Luther Bonney Hall

## **Morning Session - 10:25-11:25**

### **Girl Up: A For Girls, By Girls Campaign**

*Gorham Girl Up - Elsa Alexandrin*

Room 510

We will discuss and explain Girl Up's mission, goals, and purpose. As members of the Girl Up club, we will give our insight and knowledge of our experience with Girl Up. We will have an engaging conversation and fun activities.

### **Take a Stand: Talking Back to Violence**

*Family Crisis Services: Young Adult Abuse Prevention Program - Jenna Rodriguez, Dan Kipp*

Room 302

When we hear the word “violence,” often all we think of is the physical stuff. In this workshop, we explore everyday instances of violence – from jokes to catcalling – and empower participants to speak out against this violence in their lives.

### **My Identity, My Community: How Our Actions Shape Our Worlds**

*Maine Youth Action Network - Nicole Manganelli*

Room 303

Our communities are deeply influenced by our awareness of our own identities and the impact our actions have on our friends, neighbors, community members, and families. Participants will have an opportunity to reflect on their own identities, learn about the concept and impact of microaggressions, and share strategies for creating equitable communities. (Geared toward high school students.)

### **For The Sake of Realism: Diverse Literature in Schools**

*Mahoney Middle School (South Portland)*

Room 310

In this workshop, participants will have the opportunity to explore topics related to diverse literature in schools, including the importance of diverse books for all students, intellectual freedom, publication rates and the availability of diverse books, and strategies for promoting diverse books in classes and school libraries. Participants will have the opportunity to share specific needs at their schools and explore opportunities for expanding the representation of diverse perspectives in their literature classes and school libraries. The session will conclude with a series of book talks. Participants will also be provided with a resource list and a book list. (For the purpose of this workshop “diversity” is broadly defined to include, but not limited to, LGBTQ, people of color, gender diversity, people with disabilities, and ethnic, cultural, and religious minorities.)

### **Safer Schools for Trans, Genderqueer and Gender Nonconforming People**

*Portland Outright, the Telling Room and the Sampson Center for Diversity - Brody Wood*

Room 326

This workshop focuses on the experiences of trans, genderqueer and gender nonconforming students in Maine and the ways in which teachers and fellow students can better support this population. The workshop includes a facilitated panel discussion featuring trans, genderqueer and gender nonconforming young people. Followed will be a breakout session for small groups to work directly with a panelist to identify some of the problems this population faces in a school context and to brainstorm solutions for safer and enriching learning environments.

### **Apathetic or Active Bystander; Which Will You Be?**

*New Beginnings - Jody Pierce Glover*

Room 324

Being singled out or excluded because someone is judged to be "different" is harmful not only to the individual, but also to the community they live and learn in. Advocating for safety and welcoming environments for LGBT youth in school, and services they utilize is an important aspect of creating a space where all youth can flourish. New Beginnings, an agency that works to provide support to teens in housing, case management and positive youth/adult partnerships, offers training to schools and agencies in creating welcoming, safe environments for teens and young adults. A selection of activities from the trainings will focus on why and how individuals can intervene and create an inclusive atmosphere.

### **Empowerment Self Defense**

*Prevention. Action. Change. - Clara Porter*

Room 402

From street harassment to bullying and assault, young people face safety challenges at home, in school, and in public spaces. This session will be highly interactive incorporating movement, games, and role-plays to explore safety issues for middle and high school students. Come increase your awareness and gain verbal and physical skills to reduce your own risk and that of your peers. Empowerment Self Defense increases confidence and skill in addressing every day safety concerns and avoiding escalation to physical violence. ESD workshops have been well received at Cape Middle School, Casco Bay High School, and at GLSEN meetings. This session is accessible to all.

### **Socioeconomic Bias**

*Gardiner High School Civil Rights Team*

Room 403

An overview of the concept of Socioeconomic Bias and how it impacts school children on a daily basis. We will explore the specifics of Socioeconomic bias, addressing what exactly it is, how it affects people, and how to prevent it from happening.

### **Global Refugee Crisis: How the World is Responding**

*Gorham Girl Up - Olivia Puopolo*

Room 503

We will discuss the current global refugee crisis, who is affected as a refugee, where they are fleeing from, why they are fleeing, and where they are going.

### **Disability Simulations in Educational Environments**

*Gorham High School Civil Rights Team - Willow Selens, Gray St. Amand, Alex Pierce*

Room 502

In this session, participants will do simulations for dyslexia, ADHD, and general communication disorder. These simulations will give you an inside understanding of having one of these disabilities. The simulations can be easily replicate in you school.

### **Preventing Cyber-Harassment: Creating Safer Schools Through Digital Citizenship**

*SARSSM - Cole Leighton & Devon Mulligan*

Room 327

Technology has become a part of everyday educational and social interactions amongst youth. This makes it ever important to empower youth to develop skills to use it in a respectful and responsible way. This workshop will model age-appropriate activities and ways of talking about cyber-harassment with youth as they navigate the technology terrain and aim for digital citizenship. The facilitators will offer participants language and tools to help participants increase their knowledge and understanding of cyber-harassment, and respectful communication through online technology. Participants will leave the presentation knowing how to create safer school environments through bystander intervention and having some tools of what to do or say to be an active bystander when there is harassment happening.

### **Restorative Practices in Schools**

*Restorative Practices Collaborative of Maine - Dr. Cheryl Robertson, Jennifer Cyr,  
Tracey O'Connell, Paula Hughes, & Jake Abbott*

Room 241

Restorative Practices in schools is an approach that emphasizes creating positive, healthy school communities. This global philosophy, based on empathy, trust and respect helps students, teachers, parents and administrators stay engaged and connected to their school. Research finds this relational approach reduces conflict, bullying and aggressive behaviors in schools, as well, restorative practice gives teachers tools to build cohesive community in their classrooms. Restorative, rather than punitive practice, encourages students to be actively involved, make positive behavioral choices, with a raised sense of accountability. Research further finds that when students feel heard and respected they become more invested in their academic outcomes. Dr. Cheryl Robertson, Restorative Practices Collaborative of Maine, will facilitate a conversation with administrators and guidance counselors from four Maine middle and high schools who successfully implemented a Restorative philosophy in their schools. Using the Restorative Circle model, participants then become part of the discussion and have their questions answered by the school panel.

### **What Would You Think? What Would You Do?**

*Falmouth Middle School - T KARTT Group*

Room 523

This is an Interactive Theatre Presentation with middle school students which will consist of a couple of skits/role-plays and then an opportunity for the "audience" to respond to the play with either discussion or taking the part and acting it out.

## **Afternoon Session: 12:40-1:40**

**The Everyday Battle: My Recovery from an Eating Disorder**

*Kara Ellsmore*

Room 503

I want to share my recovery story from Bulimia in order to prove recovery is possible, though very difficult. It'll be an open and safe space to discuss eating disorders and ask about my journey.

**The Backbone Zone: An Innovative Approach to Bystander Intervention**

*Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault - Rachel Epperly & Maye Emlein*

Room 302

The Backbone Zone project is an innovative approach to bystander intervention, about helping people recognize the actions that everyone can take to change the world they live in. Recognizing sexist and homophobic language, realizing that it has an impact, encouraging students to choose different words, and giving them the skills to be active bystanders when they hear sexist and homophobic language: these are steps that each one of us can take to end gender-stereotypes, and to help end sexual violence. The Backbone Zone project is a campaign that speaks directly to students, helping them to find—and use—their backbones. The Backbone Zone is part of the continuum of sexual violence prevention services available from educators across the state. Come find out how you can connect with local sexual violence service providers to bring the Backbone Zone into your schools and communities.

**Exploring Identities**

*Maine Youth Action Network - Chelsea Mancini*

Room 303

Join us in activities that help you and your peers talk about your different identities and how they relate to one another. Take home a set of activities to do in your community that will help others learn about their identities.

**Doing it Well: A Successful Transgender Teen's Journey**

*Sara Needleman & Jeff Gahn, School Counselor*

Room 310

Please join us in celebrating the success of one transgender teen's journey through school. My transgender daughter has been in public school since she was in first grade. Currently a ninth grader, she has not hit any real bumps along the way. In fact, hers has been a hugely successful journey. This interactive presentation explores the positive approach our family and her teachers took to help her thrive as she rose from Kindergarten to high school. We lead participants to consider how the structures, actions and dispositions of the adults in a transgender teen's world shape the outcomes for that person.

**Making your school a safer place for all students**

*GLSEN Southern Maine Youth Leadership Team -*

*Jessy Brewer, Keagan Roberts, & Susanne MacArthur*

Room 326

Schools should be safe places where all students are free from name calling and biased-based language and behavior. Gay-Straight-Trans Alliances (GSTAs) or other-named diversity clubs can make a difference by taking action. Students from some of these clubs will lead a discussion on ways you can make a difference in your own school.

**Breaking Down Social Barriers Through Theater and Dance**

*Maine Alliance for Arts Education - Susan Potters, Jeri Pitcher*

Room 327

Creating theater and dance together generates group awareness and heals social divides among students. Since the shooting at Columbine High School in 1999, the Maine Alliance for Arts Education's program "Building

Community Through the Arts," which engages whole non-arts classrooms in the creation of a short play or movement piece about their social issues, has helped socially diverse students feel comfortable with each other in secondary schools throughout Maine. It has also been a way for marginalized youth groups to express their experiences. Workshop participants will experience firsthand some of the ways the program makes creative theater and dance fun for students with no arts experience and how the collaborative creation process works. They will also learn about MAAE's plans to introduce its community-building arts strategies to student leadership groups around the state to help them foster positive school climate and promote social justice at their schools.

### **The "In Their Shoes" Refugee Experience Training**

*Catholic Charities Maine Refugee and Immigrations Services Staff*

Room 402

The "In Their Shoes" training helps participants understand the path of a refugee, and invites them to walk a moment in their shoes. Why are refugees in Maine? What sort of help do they get? What would you do if you were faced with their same decisions? How can you welcome refugees to their new Maine communities? This interactive exercise engages participants with Catholic Charities Refugee & Immigrant Services staff to actively learn about the refugee process, the populations currently settled in Maine, the services available, and the challenges faced by Maine's newest arrivals.

### **Reducing Sexism and Violence Program (RSVP)**

*Windham High School*

Room 403

RSVP is a train the trainer program focused on empowering students as leaders and "bystanders" to effectively respond to and prevent gender based violence and harassment.

### **Identity Formation**

*Haley Carter, USM Graduate Student in School Counseling*

Room 523

This workshop is for youth to explore identity formation. We will talk about how everyone has an idea of who they want to be. Usually, this idea of one's own identity is not exactly how others think you should be, like your parents, peers, and society. This makes it really hard to figure out who you really are. In addition, we will discuss the way we view others, and how that affects our own identity and theirs.

### **Body Image Issues Across the Gender Spectrum**

*Gorham High School Civil Rights Team - Brandon Pierson, Chris Hayward and Julia Plante*

Room 502

Students will take a meta perspective dealing with the social stratification of women and men in the media. This session will examine the stereotypes, and sexist ideals perpetuated by TV, ads, and movies. These portrayals in the media leave a consequential impact on our society.

### **Community Circles and Restorative Justice at Lincoln Academy**

*LA Leadership Corps*

Room 241

An introduction of Lincoln Academy and restorative justice in school. What community and restorative circles are and why they can help a school build a community along with student involvement.

## **Muslims of America**

*Humza Khan*

Room 510

American Muslims today face tremendous challenges in regards to the practice of their religion due to misconceptions about even the basic tenets of Islam. In this discussion, we will talk about what those challenges are and what can be done to resolve those issues.



## Bios of Presenters and/or Groups

**Jake Abbott**, is the Director of Alternative Education and Work Based Learning Programs at Lincoln Academy, in Newcastle, Maine. Jake is also the school's Restorative Practices Coordinator, a position that he created as he has worked to develop a "restorative culture" with students, teachers and administrators at the school. Jake lives on campus at Lincoln Academy as a Resident Faculty and shares in the responsibility of 28 boys in his dorm. In his downtime he enjoys traveling, cooking, being a father and husband and doing just about anything outdoors. Jake is an active member of the Newcastle Volunteer Fire Department and serves as a Community Justice Partner with the Restorative Justice Project of the Mid Coast.

**Jessy Brewer** is a senior at Deering High School and has been on GLSEN Southern Maine's Students for Safe Schools Leadership Team for 3 years and is currently the president of the team and part of her school's robotics team and president of the Deering Key Cub.

**The Clearwater Benders** are a rock band based out of Westbrook, Maine. The band was founded in early 2011 and the core group of members live together at a supported living program run by Casa, Inc. We're a group of musicians from all walks of life. If you come to one of our performances, you will immediately be taken over by the undeniable spirit and passion of The Clearwater Benders. <http://casamaine.org/benders/benders.html>

**Jennifer Cyr, M.Ed**, Principal at Leonard Middle School in Old Town. This is her eighth year at LMS (2 years as principal and 6 years as assistant principal). Jen implemented restorative practices in 2009. Jen was a middle school language arts teacher for ten years before earning her Master's in educational leadership and instructional technology from the University of Maine at Orono, she

**Rachel Epperly** - Program Assistant for the Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault, joined MECASA in 2014, following work for campus-based anti-violence efforts and the Trevor Project, a suicide prevention program for LGBTQ youth. She supports MECASA's prevention programming, is active in several community-based social change efforts, and is a baker extraordinaire. [rachel@mecasa.org](mailto:rachel@mecasa.org)

**Falmouth Middle School T KARTT Group** - Our group consists of students from Falmouth Middle School who enjoy helping their community. We believe in doing all we can to improve our school climate and promote acceptance and understanding. T KARTT stands for Teaching Kindness And Respect Through Theatre. [kzema@falmouthschools.org](mailto:kzema@falmouthschools.org)

**Family Crisis Services** is the domestic violence resource center for Cumberland County. We provide safe and accessible services to all people affected by domestic violence regardless of race, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, gender, age, primary language spoken, or immigration status. The Young Adult Abuse Prevention Program (YAAPP) is the prevention team at Family Crisis Services. YAAPP delivers education, services, and advocacy that enable youth to make choices within their dating relationships that are safe, healthy, and informed. [jenna\\_r@familycrisis.org](mailto:jenna_r@familycrisis.org)

**Furry Ambers** - A local band connected with Listen Up! Music in Portland, ME. Songs lovingly written by the band. From timeless train songs to heartbroken ballads, apocalyptic rock, ambient pieces, humorous looks at relationships which represents a unique blend of the four distinct and talented songwriters working together as one unit. Contact Eric Schwan at [eschwan@supportsolutions.org](mailto:eschwan@supportsolutions.org).

**Elizabeth Gartley** is a school librarian who has worked in Maine, Massachusetts, the Dominican Republic, and Samoa. She currently lives and works in South Portland, Maine. [gartleel@spsdme.org](mailto:gartleel@spsdme.org)

**GLSEN Southern Maine** The Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network strives to assure that each member of every school community is valued and respected regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression. GLSEN SoMe Supports GSTAs in Middle and High Schools and provides trainings about supporting GLBTQI+ youths. <http://www.glsen.org/chapters/southernme>

**Jody Pierce Glover** is the Prevention Educator for New Beginnings, an agency that provides housing and services to out-of-home youth and families in crisis. She facilitates prevention and risk reduction groups with at-risk youth, as well as training staff and peer educators who co-facilitate groups. Jody has worked in collaboration with the Maine Department of Education as a trainer for the Be Proud! Be Responsible! curriculum training, the High Risk Adolescent AIDS Prevention training, and Creating Safety for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning Youth in your School or Agency. She has worked with community agencies facilitating Parent Nurturing classes and Relationship Traffic for at-risk youth. Jody offers over 20 years of expertise in youth work. [jody@newbeginmaine.org](mailto:jody@newbeginmaine.org)

**Gorham High School Girl Up**, a group that run in conjunction with the United Nations Foundation working to help girls in developing countries get and education and healthcare. [kara.ellsmore@gorhamschools.org](mailto:kara.ellsmore@gorhamschools.org)

**Paula Hughes**, Principal, Ridge View Community School or Karen Gudroe, Social Worker, Ridge View Community School

**Lincoln Academy** - Luke is a Senior at Lincoln Academy from Newcastle and has been working with restorative practices since the 14-15 school year. Poppy is from China and is a Senior at Lincoln Academy, who has been working with restorative justice since the 14-15 school year. Henry is a Senior from Georgetown, who attends Lincoln Academy and has been working with restorative justice since the 14-15 school year. [jabbot@lincolnacademy.org](mailto:jabbot@lincolnacademy.org)

**Susanne MacArthur** has been the adult coordinator of GLSEN Southern Maine's Students for Safe Schools Leadership Team for 5 years and is a former high school teacher and a current adjunct faculty member at USM. [susannem46@gmail.com](mailto:susannem46@gmail.com)

**The Maine Alliance for Arts Education**, a statewide non-profit, incorporated in 1980 and based in Augusta, promotes all of the arts for all Maine students. A member of the national Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network, MAAE collaborates with the Department of Education, the Maine Arts Commission, and all of the professional organizations of arts educators in the state to advocate for arts education and to spread the word about resources and best practices. MAAE is particularly focused on ensuring that students in poor and underserved communities have access to education in the arts, and that in all Maine communities the arts serve the social as well as academic needs of their students. To learn more, visit MAAE's website, [www.maineartsed.org](http://www.maineartsed.org).

**The Maine Youth Action Network (MYAN)** has a mission to partner with youth to create change in their communities. We do this through training, networking, and leadership. [chelsea.mancini@opportunityalliance.org](mailto:chelsea.mancini@opportunityalliance.org) and [nicole.manganelli@opportunityalliance.org](mailto:nicole.manganelli@opportunityalliance.org)

**Tracey S. O'Connell, CAS, M.Ed.**, has a certificate of advanced study from the University of Maine. She has been a School Counselor for 20 years and is currently practicing at Leonard Middle School in Old Town.

**Jeri Pitcher**, theater artist in Building Community Through the Arts since the program's first year, is an award-winning playwright, actor and director. She currently teaches theater at the University of Maine in Augusta.

**Susan Potters**, Executive Director of the Maine Alliance for Arts Education (MAAE) since 2014, developed MAAE's Building Community Through the Arts program in 2000 and has directed it in Maine schools ever since. [spotters@maineartsed.org](mailto:spotters@maineartsed.org)

**Prevention. Action. Change. (PAC)** works to counter harassment, assault, and abuse through safety strategies, verbal and physical skills, increased confidence and awareness, and the promotion of healing and growth. Clara Porter, MSW is the founder of PAC and nationally certified in Empowerment Self Defense and Advanced Trauma First Aide. Assistant trainers are young people with diverse backgrounds and skills. A partner in the Violence Prevention Network, PAC collaborates frequently with YAAPP, SARSSM, Maine Boys to Men and other groups to provide critical information to young people and to support their efforts to create safer and more supportive environments for learning. [info@PACMaine.com](mailto:info@PACMaine.com)

**Keagan Roberts** is a member of their school's GSTA and has been a member of the GLSEN Southern Maine Students for Safe Schools Leadership Team for 2 years and is on the team's planning committee.

**Cheryl Robertson, Ed.D**, Restorative Practices Collaborative of Maine. Cheryl has been an educator for over 20 years, certified K-12 and working as first an Elementary teacher and then a high school English teacher. Her doctorate focused on at-risk youth and drop out prevention. She also worked with the Maine Youth Suicide Prevention Project for 7 years. Cheryl now conducts diversity trainings, helps establish sustainable and community-based Alternative Ed programs, and is a Restorative Practice consultant. [robertsonca0@gmail.com](mailto:robertsonca0@gmail.com)

**Sexual Assault Response Services of Southern Maine (SARSSM)** has been providing free and confidential services to victims of sexual assault since 1973. This 40 year history has provided SARSSM with unique insight into the communities and the people whom we serve. Through this lens, we have developed advocacy, support, education and prevention services to meet the needs of the Southern Maine region. SARSSM's has two main foci: to provide support and advocacy to victims of sexual violence, and to provide prevention education and awareness around the issue of sexual violence and exploitation. SARSSM's education programs in particular teach students and community members how to respond to and prevent sexual violence in their schools and communities. To meet these goals, programs are based on the understanding that sexual assault occurs on a continuum with bullying and teasing at the beginning of the spectrum, sexual harassment towards the middle and sexual assault at the far end. Our programs are age-appropriate and grounded in recent research on the issue of sexual violence in our culture. [maye@sarsonline.org](mailto:maye@sarsonline.org)

**Windham High School RSVP** The group is comprised of 40-50 students. These students are seen as leaders in our school and of their group-sports, theatre, peer, etc. They have received 40 hours of training (2 overnight sessions and 3 full days during school hours) through Boys to Men. They enjoy working with others! [fcherry@windhamraymondschools.org](mailto:fcherry@windhamraymondschools.org)

**Brody Wood** is a writer, educator and activist living in Maine. They work as a teaching artist with Portland's youth writing center, the Telling Room, and as a mentor with Portland Outright. They are also a member of the USM Sampson Center for Diversity's LGBT Special Collections advisory committee. [brodyxwood@gmail.com](mailto:brodyxwood@gmail.com)

Many of the Presenters at the Conference are connected to

**The Violence Prevention Network**

<http://violencepreventionnetwork.org/>

**The Violence Prevention Network believes...**

- that violence takes many forms.
- that violence is a cultural problem, not just a problem of individuals acting violently.
- that lasting prevention requires changing this culture of violence.

**To achieve this change, we believe in the value of...**

- ongoing partnerships with schools.
- collaboration.
- helping to navigate difficult topics and conversations.

**Current Members**

The following organizations currently participate and collaborate in the Violence Prevention Network. For more information on their program offerings, you can explore their individual websites or check out our directory of services for elementary, middle, and high school and college students.

The Civil Rights Team Project

Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network (GLSEN)

Maine Boys to Men

Portland Defending Childhood

Prevention. Action. Change.

Sexual Assault Response Services of Southern Maine (SARSSM)

Speak About It, Inc.

Young Adult Abuse Prevention Program (YAAPP) of Family Crisis Service