

## About the Equity Project

### *Ensuring dignity, fairness & respect*

An initiative to ensure that lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) youth in the justice system are treated with dignity, respect, and fairness.

Core activities of the Equity Project:

- Develop non-discrimination policies, rules, and regulations
- Provide training and resources for juvenile justice stakeholders
- Gather information from stakeholders about LGBT youth in juvenile delinquency courts
- Craft recommendations for juvenile justice professionals with the help of local stakeholders

## Contact Us

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## Partner Organizations

**Legal Services for Children**  
[www.lsc-sf.org](http://www.lsc-sf.org)  
 1254 Market Street, 3rd Floor  
 San Francisco, CA 94102  
 tel. 415.863.3762

**National Center for Lesbian Rights**  
[www.nclrights.org](http://www.nclrights.org)  
 870 Market Street, Suite 370  
 San Francisco, CA 94102  
 tel. 415.392.6257

**National Juvenile Defender Center**  
[www.njdc.info](http://www.njdc.info)  
 1350 Connecticut Avenue NW, Suite 304  
 Washington, DC 20036  
 tel. 202.452.0010

Photographs Courtesy of Richard Ross [juvenile-in-justice.com](http://juvenile-in-justice.com)

THE  
**EQUITY**  
 PROJECT

Ensuring fairness & respect for  
 LGBT youth in juvenile  
 delinquency courts



[www.equityproject.org](http://www.equityproject.org)

## Core Recommendations

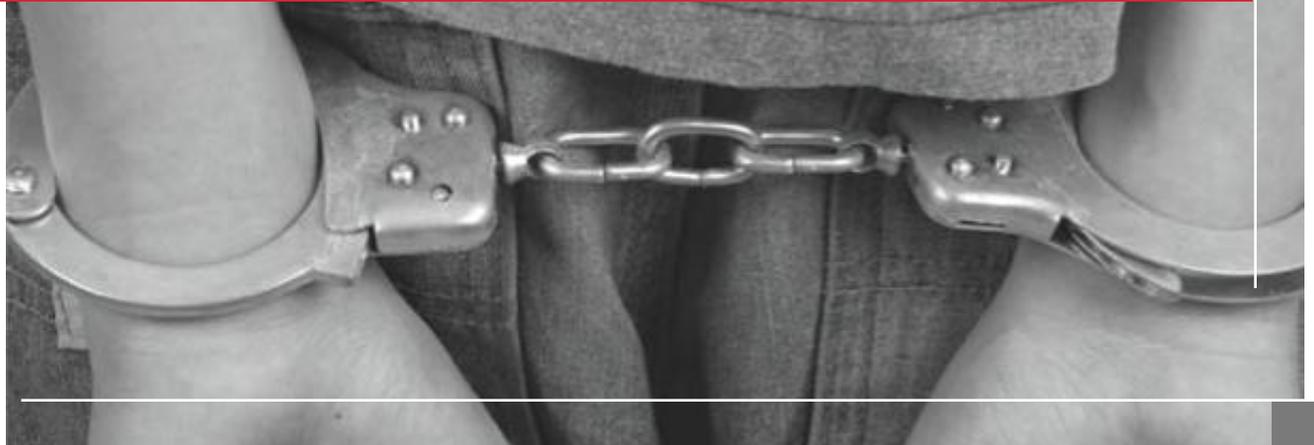
Juvenile justice professionals and courts must:

- Prohibit any attempts to ridicule or change a youth's sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression
- Allow youth to express their gender identity
- Seek training regarding challenges confronting LGBT youth
- Adhere to all confidentiality and privacy protections
- Develop individualized, developmentally appropriate responses to the behavior of each LGBT youth

Read more at:

<http://www.equityproject.org/>

*"We have a way harder life when we're incarcerated. Straight people have a hard time here, but homosexuals are raped, get food thrown at them, are jumped, humiliated, God knows what will happen to them."* - Dale, a 15-year-old white gay male youth



*"People [working in the juvenile justice system] need to have a better understanding of what LGBT youth are going through, not just what they did."* - Jason, a 22-year-old white and Latino gay male youth

### Why is this an important issue?

Sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression do not cause delinquent behavior, but there is a clear pipeline for LGBT youth that enter the juvenile justice system.

5-7% of the general youth population identify as LGBT

40% of homeless youth identify as LGBT

13-15% of incarcerated youth identify as LGBT

### Five things we can all do today

- Learn the terminology and be comfortable using it correctly. Speak in gender-inclusive terms.
- Review the non-discrimination policies of your agency to determine whether they are inclusive of sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression
- Learn about local law enforcement and juvenile justice system history and training on LGBT issues
- Listen to youth perspectives and rely on facts and data
- Challenge your own assumptions and beliefs and encourage others to challenge themselves

