

## Intellectual Merit

Jadin Bell a 15-year-old gay youth, who was severely bullied both in person and on the internet because he was gay went to a local elementary school and hanged himself from the play structure in 2011. Jamey Rodemeyer was a gay teenager, known for his activism against homophobia. His suicide in 2011 was attributed to constant bullying. On September 22, 2010 Tyler Clementi, a freshman at Rutgers University, jumped off the George Washington Bridge, just days after his roommate allegedly took a video of his romantic encounter with a man and posted it on the Internet.

Dealing with the challenges of being a teenager, lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender (LGBT) youth many times also have to deal with harassment, intimidation and bullying on a daily basis. Their school work, mental health and physical well-being are all at risk. A very real and serious consequence of this constant bullying is the phenomenon referred to as “bullycide”. Bullycide is formed from the words bully and suicide. According to Field & Marr (2001) bullycide refers to the suicide of a child due to bullying.

School nursing is a specialty area of professional nursing that focuses on disease prevention, health maintenance and health promotion. School nurses play a major role in identifying, counseling and protecting the victims of bullying. They have the expertise to assist students with problem solving techniques, coping strategies, anger management strategies, conflict resolution skills and self-image issues. The school nurse is often seen by students as a confidant, someone who is outside the academic system and is in a position to help and give guidance.

In order to provide holistic care, school nurses must be culturally competent by being sensitive to health disparities experienced by students in at-risk populations. Despite the growing acceptance towards gender and sexual minorities, LGBT youth disproportionately experience verbal and physical harassment while in school as a result of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. Indeed, this violence adversely affects these students' health and well-being as reflected in the suicide rate among LGBT youth. As such, school nurses must not only to be able to recognize at-risk students, but also provide culturally competent care when working with LGBT youth. Focusing attention on these young people could have the beneficial purpose of drawing awareness to the unique nature of their struggles. It is important that nurses know the signs and symptoms of victims as well as strategies that are effective to help youths, families and school personnel respond to LGBT bullying.

This MUSE project will consist of two parts. Part one will encompass a literature review examining the health disparities and psychological struggles experienced by LGBT youth related to bullying. Part two will create a comprehensive information packet that will inform school nurses of the health challenges and psychological struggles facing LGBT youth that they may refer to when caring for these students. Upon completion of the project, I intend on submitting a manuscript reporting the findings to the Journal of School Nursing. I will also submit for a podium presentation at the National School Nurse conference regarding our findings and information packet. My expertise in studying the antecedents and consequences of bullying makes me well-qualified to complete this project. Since the completion of my dissertation on bullying in 2013, I have published two peer-reviewed journal articles, presented at 2 national

nursing conferences and one state nursing conference. I know the results of this project will be received with great enthusiasm by the school nurse community.

### **Role of Student and Mentor**

Chaya Himelfarb is a second year nursing student with a previous degree in political science from TCNJ. Our timeline is as follows:

Week 1: We will identify keywords and databases for our literature review. We will identify key variables for inclusion in our literature review. Once the articles are retrieved, we will compile these into refworks.

Week 2: Once the articles are retrieved and entered into refworks Chaya will begin the process of organizing the articles by themes. Once organized, together will begin reading the articles and producing a literature table.

Week 3&4: Upon completion of the literature table, Chaya will begin the process of beginning the literature review write up as a rough draft, I will work with her to assist in the literature review scholarly writing process.

Week 5&6: Once the rough draft is complete, together we will complete the literature review for publication.

Week 7&8: Once the literature review is complete we can produce the comprehensive information packet that will inform school nurses of the health challenges and psychological struggles facing LGBT youth.

We will meet three times a week for the first 3 weeks. Once Chaya is comfortable with the literature review process I will meet with her twice a week. During these meetings we will discuss

### **Broader Impact**

As a faculty, participation in MUSE allows me the opportunity for a more in-depth teacher-scholar experience. This opportunity will allow both of us to produce a scholarly publication which for me, will provide me the opportunity to make progress with my research agenda and publication requirements for tenure and promotion and for Chaya, a sample of her writing for possible graduate school admission. I plan on submitting the results of our findings and information packet, for a podium presentation at the national school nurses conference in 2017 which Chaya will be invited to participate with me. This research experience will allow Chaya to better understand the research process while learning to balance collaborative and individual work. My experience with MUSE last year, was a very rewarding experience with opportunities to network with other tenured and pre-tenured faculty as well as providing my students with a rich opportunity to network and collaborate with other TCNJ students and faculty.