

That's so gay! Institutions and Social Work: How they deal with LGBT-youths.

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In the course of their identity development, approximately 5-10 % of all people regard themselves as being lesbians, gay, bisexuals or transidents, thereby opposing the concept of heteronormativity. Often, LGBT-youths are not or hardly supported by their social environment and are frequently discriminated as others bully them, make fun of them or even lay violent hands on them. Both schools and social work institutions are required to consider the situations of LGBT-youths adequately and look at them without any prejudices. So far, institutions providing social work did hardly make adequate allowance for the needs and living situations of LGBT-youths (Perels 2006; Rommelspacher 2007). In the first step the aim is to reconstruct and analyze everyday microaggressions and prejudices amongst social workers towards LGBT-youths and reveal the paradoxes between normative (ethical) standards typically associated with practical social work and structural discrimination via "Othering" processes and ignored LGBT-identities. In the second step we ask how social workers can be educated for a non-discriminating practice with LGBT-youth.

Background: Qualitative Research in the context of youth welfare, profession and LGBT;

Problem: Othering of LGBT-youths by social workers in youth welfare, attributions and stereotypes of social workers towards LGBT-persons (microaggressions); structural discrimination via "Othering" processes by professional social workers and ignored (invisible) LGBT-identities;

Research question(s): How can we make an adequate allowance for the needs and living situations of LGBT-youths in youth welfare? How can we educate the professionals for reflexive practice, that prevents microaggressions towards LGBT-youths? **Methods:** Group discussions with teams of social workers.

The research has been conducted in a teaching-research seminar. Students who were educated in group discussion conducted group discussions with teams of social workers in several institutions in the youth welfare system;

Results, Conclusions and Implications: The research shows the power of stereotypes and microaggressions of social workers and their impact in dealing with LGBT-youths. Furthermore the research shows how important a reflexive education is, that provides social workers with knowledge and skills to work with LGBT-youths.