



SAFETY NET EXPANSION INITIATIVE - SAN DIEGO

LGBTQIA+ and A Safer Space Need

October 2022

 **Polaris** Freedom
happens
now.



Polaris

Named after the North Star, an historical symbol of freedom, Polaris is leading a social justice movement to fight sex and labor trafficking at the massive scale of the problem - 25 million people worldwide robbed of the freedom to choose how they live and work. For more than a decade, Polaris has assisted thousands of victims and survivors through the U.S. National Human Trafficking Hotline, helped ensure countless traffickers were held accountable, and built the largest known U.S. data set on actual trafficking experiences. With the guidance of survivors, we use that data to improve the way trafficking is identified, how victims and survivors are assisted, and how communities, businesses and governments can prevent human trafficking by transforming the underlying inequities and oppressions that make it possible.

Alafia Diversity Equity LLC

ALAFIA Diversity Equality LLC (ADE LLC) is devoted to the nourishment and support of historically neglected communities through education, training, critical and informed assessment, personal and public actions. Our work is based on sharing knowledge and resources with diverse populations. Our work is targeted for the following five areas: Disparity and Inequality Research; Analysis and Recommendations for Workplace Environment and Contract Compliance; Civic Education, Engagement Training, and Research. This work can enrich and uplift all communities through shared accountability and collective responsibility.



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Executive Summary

Polaris, a US-based anti-trafficking nonprofit, oversees program initiatives designed to change the conditions that make sex and labor trafficking possible in the United States. This work is in addition to its core focus of operating the US National Human Trafficking Hotline. The Strategic Initiative on Sex Trafficking focuses on 25 U.S. cities and has three leverage areas: shifting legal accountability for trafficking, changing norms around sex buying, and expanding social safety nets for vulnerable populations.

The safety net expansion initiative (SNEI) is an upstream intervention program designed to prevent trafficking before it happens. The implementation has a three-phase design for each city. In Phase 1, Polaris identifies and engages survivor leaders and local stakeholders. These include professionals in the anti-trafficking movement, organizations working with vulnerable populations such as immigrants and youths, and those working in intersecting social service areas such as housing and employment. In Phase 2, Polaris convenes collective discussions to identify city specific vulnerable populations, possible solutions to vulnerability factors, tools needed for solutions, existing assets with potential, additional stakeholders to engage, and priority areas for Polaris support. In Phase 3, Polaris works closely with city stakeholders to initiate action plans to reduce the identified vulnerabilities.

The San Diego stakeholders ranked seven potential focus areas for Polaris:

1. LGBTQIA safe spaces,
2. Coordinating support outreach in marginalized communities,
3. Connecting parents of youth in community programs to needed resources,
4. Employment assistance programs for at-risk parents/aging-out youth,
5. Mental health support for trauma experiences,
6. Housing outreach for vulnerable community adults,
7. Connecting organizations across sectors.

Polaris engaged Dr. Darwin Fishman, Alafia Diversity Equity, LLC (ADE), as a consultant to study “how does an LGBTQIA safe space impact vulnerability for community members?” ADE conducted six focus group sessions and individual interviews over four weeks with 25 participants. The discussions were on a) the benefits of safe space; b) the vulnerabilities linked to not having one; c) the safe space needs in San Diego; and d) the roles participants would be willing to play in addressing them. This report incorporates the findings by ADE. The study has five key findings: 1) Government officials may not be considered as allies by those benefiting from LGBTQIA safe spaces; 2) The existing “Center” does not adequately meet the needs of all participants; 3) Non-community members use incorrect terminologies; 4) Law enforcement’s role ranges from “safe” to “dangerous”; and 5) Access to transportation impacts marginalization.

The key recommendation is the need to address the inadequacy of the existing safe spaces for racially marginalized groups within the LGBTQ community. It recommends that multiple centers should be operated in various parts of the county including the 4th District. Those centers should be operated by members of the racial and ethnic community they serve, and their services and resources should reflect alignment with the needs of the intended community.



Introduction

Safety Net Expansion Initiative - San Diego

In 2020, as part of a data-driven social justice work to end human trafficking, Polaris launched program initiatives designed to change the conditions that make sex and labor trafficking possible in the United States. The focus of these initiatives is labor trafficking, sex trafficking, and the financial services that allow traffickers to profit. The Strategic Initiative on Sex Trafficking focuses in 25 U.S. cities has three program leverage areas: shifting legal accountability for trafficking, changing norms around sex buying, and expanding social safety nets for vulnerable populations.

The safety net expansion initiative (SNEI) is an upstream prevention program designed to prevent trafficking before it happens. Studies have shown that some populations are disproportionately represented among sex trafficking victims - people of color, immigrants, youth and LGBTQIA community members for example¹. Often these are people experiencing racism and ethnic discrimination², and their risk for targeting by traffickers was impacted by several factors such as childhood experiences, family cohesion and mental health³.

From 2020 to 2021, Polaris engaged local stakeholders in San Diego (see Appendix 1). The engagement began with familiarization interviews. Subsequently, stakeholders participated in two focus group sessions, with all participants attending at least one of the sessions. The focus group discussions were on city-specific vulnerabilities, possible solutions, existing assets with potential, stakeholders to engage, tools for implementing solutions, and promising opportunities for Polaris support. The group discussion identified and ranked seven potential focus area for Polaris using participant votes - LGBTQIA safe space (6), Coordinating support access/outreach in marginalized communities (6), Connecting parents of youth in community programs to needed resources (5), employment assistant programs for at-risk parents/aging-out youth (4), mental health support for trauma experiences (3), housing/basic needs outreach for vulnerable community adults (3), and connecting organizations across sectors (2). Consequently, Polaris focused on addressing the LGBTQIA safe space challenge to reduce vulnerability to trafficking in the city for LGBTQIA individuals. The findings of this work were shared with staff of The Center in order to receive input and additional recommendations.

Direct Beneficiary Input

Polaris engaged Alafia Diversity Equity LLC (ADE) to gain insight from the LGBTQIA population, who will be the direct beneficiary of the proposed intervention. ADE was contracted to conduct a study to assist in the understanding of what constitutes safe spaces within the LGBTQIA community and what are some of the most productive and effective ways to create these safe spaces with the following research objectives:

1 Dank, M., Yahner, J., Madden, K., Banuelos, I., Yu, L., Ritchie, A., Mora, M., & Conner, B. (2015). Surviving the Streets of New York. Urban Institute. Retrieved from <https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/42186/2000119-Surviving-the-Streets-of-New-York.pdf>

2 Vednita, N. (1993). Prostitution: Where Racism & Sexism Intersect. Michigan Journal of Gender & Law, 81, 81-89 Retrieved from <https://repository.law.umich.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1196&context=mjgl>

3 Franchino-Oslen, H. (2019). Vulnerabilities Relevant for Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children/Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking: A System Review of Risk Factors. Trauma, Violence & Abuse, 1-13. Retrieved from https://sph.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/112/2019/02/Vulnerabilities-for-CSEC-DMST_Franchino-Oslen-002.pdf



Research Question	“How does an LGBTQIA safe space impact vulnerability for community members?”
Research Purpose	“... [gain insight from] the LGBTQIA community in San Diego about how safe spaces impact vulnerability. This can include how the availability or lack thereof of a safe space and what it can offer including connection to other community members and access to services impact their vulnerability.” “...The benefits of safe space; the vulnerabilities linked to not having one; the safe space needs in San Diego; and what roles you are willing to play in addressing them.”
Definition of Safe Space	“This would mean a welcoming, non-judgmental place, specifically designated for members of the LGBTQIA community.”

Methods

ADE conducted six Focus Group/individual sessions between October 20th and November 18th, 2021 with a rich diversity of self-identified members of the LGBTQIA community in the San Diego area. Each of these sessions was devoted to exploring what constitutes a safe space for the LGBTQIA community and what personal experiences did everyone have with different types of safe spaces. The study specifically addressed what type of safe space or spaces need to be intentionally created in the SD area and what would be most important for these spaces to have.

The one-hour focus group/individual interview sessions used a set rubric to address the following four areas of research:

- 1 the benefits of safe space;
- 2 the vulnerabilities linked to not having one;
- 3 the safe space needs in San Diego;
- 4 what roles you (participants) are willing to play in addressing them

(See Appendix II for the focus group discussion guide.)

Through the set questions, study researchers were able to generate a lively and insightful discussion about each of these areas and how they contribute to our understanding of LGBTQIA safe spaces in the San Diego area.

Due to COVID safety protocols, the discussion sessions were set in a Zoom virtual format. Attendees were recruited by various means, which included personal contacts from ADE, public announcements in social media, and a snowball method that solicited referrals from participants. This method allowed for names and contact information to be shared immediately. As names were being gathered, they were contacted by email by Dr. Darwin Fishman. They were sent a consent form and given interview times for the group sessions. Flyers were also distributed into the community.

Of the 25 attendees, all were advised of the individual confidentiality of the information that was shared and the protection of the recorded videos. All of the participants self-identified as being members of the LGBTQIA community in the San Diego area.



History of LGBTQIA Spaces in San Diego

Prior to 1980, the LGBTQIA community in San Diego did not have formally designated Safe Spaces. To the extent that there were Safe Spaces, they were based on places that had a reputation for being a gathering spot for community members. Certain bars served this purpose and most well-known locations were in the Hillcrest area of San Diego.

The Lesbian and Gay Men's Center (the Center) formally started in 1980 and it served as a provider of services for the LGBTQIA community. Its name was changed in 2020 to the LGBTQ Community Center, and the change in name has reflected the evolution of this center and who is served by it.

Analysis of Results from Focus Group Sessions

There were a myriad of expected and unexpected discoveries that came from these Focus Group sessions. Some of the key points gleaned from these focus groups can be understood in terms of a schematic based on four research areas highlighted in the methods section above. Participant direct comments are highlighted using chosen initials.

The Benefits of a Safe Space

There was widespread agreement about what the benefits of a safe space and safer spaces, in general, could and do mean for members of the LGBTQIA community. The idea of personal identity development and shared community was the most common reference. Many of the participants shared personal stories about how "difficult" and "risky" it was to be open about their gender and sexual identities in the communities they were raised in. Most of the participants who had experience with some type of a LGBTQIA safe space talked about how being able to meet with and connect with people that had the same or similar gender and sexual orientation as them provided them with a level of security. This could be seen in DE's⁴ comment about how "walking in (to a safe space) and seeing someone that looks like me makes me feel safe." This especially true for them "as a trans Latina." This security translated into what they believed was not just a physical security and freedom from physical and verbal violence, but also this security extended into a shared community that could provide support, social bonds, and serve even as extended family.

There were also stories about safe spaces created in particular communities, such as educational institutions. As members of these communities there was also general agreement about how critical these safe spaces were for them. These were the places that they felt most at home and comfortable. **For students, it played a vital role in their ability to succeed to excel and finish their particular educational programs.**

These dynamics also held true for discussion of social gatherings that served as safe spaces. MO made references to house parties for members of the LGBTQIA community in San Diego and Tijuana, Mexico and how these were organized by a specific group that was respected and trusted. In these settings MO felt safe knowing that there would be primarily members of the LGBTQIA community in attendance and this shared identity helped to create an enjoyable and supportive environment for them to be able to participate in these gatherings. Many of the desired qualities of a safe space that were articulated by participants could be found in their stories about formal and informal safe spaces that were intentionally created.

4 For the purpose of confidentiality, focus group participants initials will be used for identification.



The Vulnerabilities Linked to Lack of a Safe Space

There was widespread agreement about the vulnerabilities that can result from a lack of a safe space or spaces. This was especially true about the way in which the safe space was designed, operated, and was perceived by a particular community. If a safe space ultimately serves a particular segment of the LGBTQIA community, then those who are excluded by intent or accident end up not receiving the benefits associated with a space.

This theme of exclusion and lack of comfort from within the LGBTQIA community for the safe spaces that have been created and currently operate could be seen in the responses given from racial minorities, transgender, gender nonconforming, and nonbinary members that participated in the focus group. In particular, TE's comment was emblematic of the feedback received from LGBTQIA BIPOC participants: "No safe space for Black LGBTQIA in San Diego" and "We are shunned from the (LGBTQIA) Center." RI reinforced this point with his comment about how San Diego was a "Mecca for gay people" but only for "a certain color." And this could also be seen in AD's comments about "Hillcrest is not a safe space" for "brown" and "transgender" presence.

There was also agreement that the most vulnerable members of the LGBTQIA community are the youth and young adults. It was also pointed out that there is a generational split that makes the process of coming out even more skewed towards youth. HE comments about how he "... came out when I was 24-25 years old. People come out earlier now." HE added that a young LGBTQIA person operates as if "you're the only person on Earth."

Even if a particular family is supportive of their child coming out and their gender identity and sexual orientation, there will still be a strong desire and need for someone to want to connect with others with the same identity and to find a supportive community to thrive in.

Given these dynamics, the theme of youth as the most vulnerable segment of the LGBTQIA community was apparent in responses to questions about what was important to have included safe spaces for the LGBTQIA community and also what was also inadequate in the current design and operation of safe spaces now. **Within four areas (mental health; employment; education; and access to support services) of vulnerabilities identified due to the lack of a safe space, there was mostly an emphasis on mental health and overall health for members of the LGBTQIA community.**

AL described the need for an Advising and Counseling center and PA described a free clinic from Northern California as a safe space for the LGBTQIA community. MO made reference to drug and alcohol rehabilitation services and these concerns were echoed by other participants.

Besides these four areas, many participants discussed housing and how critical housing issues are in San Diego for the LGBTQIA community. MA, JA, BE and KI all added that housing presents a key vulnerability for the LGBTQIA community. This could be seen in KI's comments about the homeless population in San Diego, and adding how much of this population are also racial minorities. This coupled with BE's comment about how "a third of the youth on the street are LGBTQIA," put a fine point on the significance of housing for the LGBTQIA community.



The Safe Space Needs in San Diego and Member Participation in Addressing Them

There was also substantial unanimity in responses for the safe space needs in San Diego. Key points of the agreement included locating a safe space outside of Hillcrest (where the largest LGBTQIA Center is located), and that there are members of the LGBTQIA community that would be better served by a new safe space created in their neighborhoods. This included references for a space in the South Bay, a predominantly Latinx community next to the US and Mexican border. There were also general references to South of the 8 (freeway) needing a space. This is a reference to the divide between the wealthier and predominantly White communities north of the 8 and the more Black and Brown populations South of the 8.

Within the framework of potential factors to consider for the greatest safe space needs in San Diego (new locations, expand services in existing locations- and what services, community members engagement, service provider engagement, elected officials, funding and advocacy for supporting safe space expansion) **most of the participants directly or indirectly commented on new locations as the most important area to address for safe space needs in San Diego.**

This emphasis on location was inextricably linked to the questions about services and community engagement. It was very clear from the participants responses that if a new safe space was to be created and properly maintained for the LGBTQIA community in San Diego, it would not only need to be located outside of Hillcrest area, but that it would have be designed and operated with an eye towards those that are not currently being properly served. In particular, transgender, gender nonconforming, nonbinary, racial minority and youth voices would need to be critical components of a new safe space and they would require different types of services and service providers. These puzzle pieces coming together would ensure the best potential for community member engagement from a more diverse population with the LGBTQIA community.

The lack of discussion about elected officials, funding, and advocacy for supporting safe space expansion was also noticeable. There was no direct mention of the elected officials who are in the LGBTQIA community or officials not a part of this community.

Funding was also not raised as an immediate or significant concern. There was a sense that the collective will and interest were more significant factors for a new safe space, and that there were more than enough resources available for new safe spaces being developed and devoted to marginalized communities within the LGBTQIA umbrella who had been identified by the participants.

There was also a great deal of agreement about the desire and interest in the development and maintenance of new safe spaces in the San Diego area of the LGBTQIA community. This shared acknowledgment of the need for new spaces and spaces that are not being utilized by certain segments of the LGBTQIA was stated simply by PA when he shared that one should "...start with finding folks that say they don't have a save space." This also came with a great deal of apprehension and skepticism about where these spaces would be located, who would run and operate these spaces, and who would be actively included and engaged in these spaces. **Most of the concern about who would be in charge of these spaces and who would also be responsible for operating them on a daily basis was based on explicit or implicit concern about the LGBT Center in Hillcrest.**

There was not only a substantial amount of related experience with establishing a safe space and a great deal of interest in this work, but there was a wide variety of expertise and talents of the



participants that offered their support for this work. This seemed to suggest that there is a large pool of talent and expertise that could be potentially tapped into for the creation and maintenance of additional safe spaces for the LGBTQIA community. There was also a deep appreciation of the need to bring in new and inexperienced members from the LGBTQIA community into these centers. TE and RI referred to this as “training the trainers.” These new folks might need some specific training and support, but they should also be allowed to make their own decisions for the space, and they must also be given the room to forge their own unique path for the new spaces and the communities they serve. *This would be a distinct departure from the current status quo and it would provide an opportunity for historically marginalized members of the LGBTQIA communities to have true ownership of a safe space created for their community.* **Without this level of intervention and intentionality, there could be the risk of continuing the current distribution of resources and involvement of life experiences as the foundation for the creation and maintenance of new safe spaces for the LGBTQIA community. This could risk maintaining the forms of oppression and the imbalance in power that participants felt already exist for marginalized members of the LGBTQIA community.**

Key Findings

Some research findings warrant further explanation. These points were not captured completely within the focus group question boundaries and at times moved into uncharted and unaccounted for spaces that might require a more thorough exploration.

Government Connectedness

There were very few direct references to any elected LGBTQIA officials in the City of San Diego or the County of San Diego. This was especially striking since this last election cycle brought in the first-ever gay Latinx and Indigenous Mayor, Todd Gloria. Even the last City Council President, Georgette Gomez, was not mentioned in any of the sessions and she was the first lesbian, Latinx City Council president. This would seem to suggest that members of the LGBTQIA officials elected at the highest level of government in San Diego do not necessarily translate into allies for the LGBTQIA community on key issues - such as the creation of safe spaces. Nor are these elected officials considered the vanguard of LGBTQIA issues or movement causes.

Existing Center

References to the current LGBTQIA Center in Hillcrest were sparse and typically presented in a negative or critical light. **There were almost no references to using this Center or to the direct benefits this Center has provided to anyone on a personal level or for other members of the LGBTQIA community.** This was especially striking considering how large this Center is and the level of resources it has available to it, as well as the name recognition it has throughout the entire county of San Diego, inside and outside, of the LGBTQIA community.

Focus Group feedback indicated that creating a safe space that is “equal” for every member of the LGBTQ community and satisfies the needs of each group, all in one location, is not a reasonable goal. Instead, it was implied that successfully servicing each subset within the LGBTQ community would require separate centers that specialize in the needs of a specific group.



Incorrect Terminologies

There were also many references to incidents that occurred with both staff and peers within LGBTQIA spaces which had adverse impacts on some of its members. This suggests how a complex and nuanced definition and understanding of a “safe space” is needed for practical purposes and operational success. **In particular, in the Focus Group devoted to transgender, gender nonconforming, and nonbinary community members, multiple stories about microaggressions were discussed as examples of how spaces that could be considered safe for certain members of the lesbian and gay community, might also constitute as problematic spaces for other members of the LGBTQIA community.** This included examples of being mislabeled and incorrect pronouns, as well as general atmosphere and feelings of inclusivity.

It was in this Focus Group session that the terminology of “safer spaces’ ’ was recommended and a critique of traditional definitions and understanding of “safe space” for the LGBTQIA community was offered. There was also a critique of offered of the term “transgender” and a suggestion that “trans” be used instead. This was based on the problematic definition of transgender being built on a “male” and “female” binary and the notion of everybody making a simple exclusive choice between the two binary options. This article was posted in the chat and there was widespread agreement about the points raised in these critiques and substantiated in this article: “Why the terms ‘transgender’ and ‘identify as’ is transphobic (therapyroute.com)”

On a basic level, it was well established that transgender, gender nonconforming, and nonbinary people have experienced accidental and purposeful slights, attacks, and insults within LGBTQIA spaces and they do not necessarily equate these spaces as “solely” or exclusively” as safe. These spaces might be “safer” than heteronormative and masculine public spaces, but LGBTQIA spaces can present serious obstacles and challenges for some transgender, gender nonconforming and nonbinary members of the LGBTQIA community. These insights have a profound impact on the adequacy and necessity of using a traditional model for how, where and what type of safe space is created for members of the LGBTQIA community.

These insights can help alleviate the pressure of trying to achieve the unreasonable goal of creating a safe space that would be “equal” for every member of the LGBTQIA community. Creating multiple LGBTQIA spaces throughout the County of San Diego would allow for multiple communities to be addressed and follows the more common logic of an intersectional approach that respects and honors the diversity within marginalized communities.

The Role of Law Enforcement

There were a few direct references to law enforcement and the role they play in the spectrum of “safe” to “dangerous” spaces for the LGBTQIA community. In particular, DA’s remarks about how sex workers are criminalized in San Diego and how law enforcement and the District Attorney’s office has historically targeted sex workers was indicative of concerns raised by other participants. DA went on to describe how sex workers have been prosecuted and this only serves to inflict more harm on already marginalized community. This is especially true for members of the LGBTQIA community who are pushed into being sex workers and engaging in risky and dangerous activities. This point was reinforced by a member of the Trans community who was a sex worker and who described in detail how difficult it can be for members of this community to secure and maintain employment.

The poverty levels for this community are well known and yet there has been very little done to break this vicious cycle of lack of employment opportunities and the allure of sex work. This push into underground employment can lead to human and sex trafficking and



disproportionately hit members of the LGBTQIA community- such as transwomen who are most marginalized by these multiple forms of gender, race, and sexuality oppression.

The Role of Transportation

There was also a discussion about transportation that connects to many of the themes previously covered. One of the ways this manifested was how transportation is linked to accessibility. This notion of access for historically marginalized members of the LGBTQIA community needs to include not just considering the physical location of the safe space, but also what the journey to this physical space might entail. In particular, there were explicit comments made about the necessity of having a safe space created that was next to or near public transportation and the security of the neighborhood it's located in. DE also mentioned street lights and the overall lighting of the area in and around the safe space. There were also comments made about parking and ride sharing options. One of the key elements of this discussion was what type of access would youth and young adults would be able to have for this safe space. There was widespread agreement that a substantial amount of intentional planning, resources, and attention would be needed to address these areas. **Put another way, goals for diversity of leadership and for participation in a new LGBTQIA safe space in San Diego would need to properly address transportation and accessibility as part of a strong foundation and maintenance.**

Policy Recommendations

All of the participants in the focus group sessions offered different levels of support for new safe spaces. **There was greatest unanimity around creating and maintaining a safe space for members of the LGBTQIA community that have been historically neglected and marginalized.** This was especially apparent in the responses from the transgender, gender nonconforming, nonbinary, racial minority, and youth members in the Focus Group sessions. These responses also imply that a traditional design, establishment, and maintenance of one large LGBTQIA Center in the city will not sufficiently meet future needs or what is needed now. There was overwhelming support for the creation of multiple spaces that could be operated in various parts of the County of San Diego. These spaces also needed to be staffed by members of the community they were targeted to serve, and the services and the resources they provided also needed to reflect the community they were established in and for. This need and desire was clearly articulated in the Black and Brown Trans voices that participated in these focus groups.

Conclusion

It was clear from what was shared in these focus group sessions that there is a sincere and profound lack of trust in the forces that created and established the LGBT Center in Hillcrest. This spills over into the fear and concerns that new spaces would be created and maintained by these same forces. VA presented this as “cis white passing folks” that dominate the San Diego conservative social and political landscape and their ability to influence and harm any potential new safe spaces for the LGBTQIA community. PA specifically called for a “leadership and a board of the (new) center led by local Black Queer Trans” members. **A substantial amount of work will need to be done to gain the trust and respect necessary to adequately serve those parts of the LGBTQIA community that need a safer space.**



Appendices

APPENDIX I

SNEI Stakeholders

Mary- Ellen Barrett
*Chair, San Diego Human Trafficking and
CSEC Advisory Council*

Christina Cesa
Survivor Advocate with CAST/Dignity Health

Diane Doherty
*Interim Executive Director
[San Diego Family Justice Center](#)*

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Melissa Haupt
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Susan Johnson
*Director & Co-Founder
[Alabaster Jar Project](#)*

Kim Berry Jones
*Director
[Center for Justice & Reconciliation](#)
Point Loma Nazarene University*

Dion Sayles McKinney
*Client Liaison/Community Outreach
Coordinator
[Free To Thrive](#)*

Jamie Beck
*President & Managing Attorney
[Free To Thrive](#)*

Dora Mendivil
*Regional Director – IV
[Center for Employment Training \(CET\)](#)*

Marjorie Saylor
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[The Well Path](#)*

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[Just in Time for Foster Youth](#)*

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[Home Start](#)*

Lauren Pollick-Presson, M.S.
*Deputy Director of Housing Services
[Home Start](#)*



APPENDIX II

LGBTQIA Discussion Guide

1. Benefits of a safe space

- a. What are the benefits of a safe space for members of the community?
 - i. What benefits will be at the individual level?
 - ii. What will be at the community level?
- b. What factors will make these benefits?
 - i. Location
 - ii. Services offered
 - iii. Opportunities for members of the community

2. Vulnerabilities due to lack of a safe space

- a. Have you experienced any vulnerabilities due to the lack of a safe space?
 - i. Mental health impact?
 - ii. Employment impact?
 - iii. Education?
 - iv. Access to support services

3. Safe space needs in San Diego

- a. What are the greatest safe space needs in San Diego?
 - i. New locations
 - ii. Expand services in existing locations
 - iii. What services?
 - iv. Community members engagement
 - v. Service provider engagement
 - vi. Elected officials
 - vii. Funding and advocacy

4. Supporting safe space expansion

- a. Do you have any experience with establishing a safe space?
- b. Would you be interested/available to play a role?
- c. Advocacy



APPENDIX III

Attendance

1. Focus Group #1 October 20th, 2021

- a. LGBTQIA Focus Group -English
- b. 5 Participants

2. Focus Group #2 November 3rd, 2021

- a. LGBTQIA Focus Group- Transgender, Gender Nonconforming, and Nonbinary
- b. 7 Participants

3. Individual Interview #3 November 4th, 2021

- a. LGBTQIA Focus Group- Gay Man
- b. 1 Participant

4. Focus Group #4 November 9th, 2021

- a. LGBTQIA Focus Group- Spanish Speaking
- b. 2 Participants

5. Focus Group #5 November 11th, 2021

- a. LGBTQIA Focus Group- Open Session
- b. 5 Participants

6. Focus Group #6 November 18th, 2021

- a. LGBTQIA Focus Group- Open Session
- b. 5 Participants

APPENDIX IV

Alafia Diversity Equity, LLC Study Team

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APPENDIX V

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