

Supporting the Health and Well-Being of Gender Diverse Youth: A Workshop

Committee

Leslie R. Walker-Harding

Co-Chair

Leslie R. Walker-Harding, M.D., is the Ford/Morgan Endowed Professor and Chair of the Department of Pediatrics and Associate Dean at the University of Washington and the Chief Academic Officer and Senior Vice President of Seattle Children's Hospital. Prior to returning to Seattle Dr. Walker-Harding was Chair of the Department of Pediatrics and Medical Director of Penn State Children's Hospital. From 2007 to 2016, she was the Division Chief of Adolescent Medicine and Vice Chair of Faculty Development in Pediatrics at the University of Washington. Dr. Walker-Harding serves on a number of national boards and committees including the Council of the American Pediatric Society (APS). She currently is chair of the Committee on Diversity and Inclusion (CODI) in the APS. She serves on the American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on Substance Use and Prevention (COSUP), and she is a past President of the Society of Adolescent Health and Medicine. She has served on a number of committees at the National Academies of Medicine focused on adolescent and young adult health. Her research has been focused on prevention of adolescent risk behaviors spanning adolescent and young adult substance abuse and ADHD to adolescent pregnancy prevention. Diversity and inclusion in the workforce of health providers as a way of creating excellence in academic medicine and eliminating health disparities has also been a national focus of hers. She has publications both in adolescent and young adult health, and improving excellence in health care and research by increasing workforce diversity and inclusion.

David W. Willis

Co-Chair

David W. Willis, M.D. (Co-Chair), is a senior fellow at the Center for the Study of Social Policy. He leads a national initiative to advance early relational health for child health and communities. A board -certified, developmental-behavioral pediatrician, Dr. Willis was a clinician in Oregon for more than 30 years with a practice focused on early childhood development and family therapy. Most recently, he was the first executive director of the Perigee Fund, a Seattle-based philanthropy focused on strengthening of the social and emotional development of all babies and toddlers, and on advancing the workforce to do so. From 2012-2018, he served as director of the Division of Home Visiting and Early Childhood Services at the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Maternal Child Health Bureau, in Washington DC, and continues to be thought leader in home visiting and early childhood systems. During his career, Dr. Willis has also been a Harris Mid-Career Fellow with childhood development nonprofit ZERO TO THREE; the past president of the Oregon Pediatric Society; an executive member of the American Academy of Pediatrics' Section on Early Education and Child Care; and chair of the AAP's Board's Early Brain & Child Development Strategic Initiative. Dr. Willis has been a national lecturer, advisor to early childhood national policy and visionary for the transformation of child health care in coordination with early childhood communities and focused on the advancement of early relational health and young children's social-emotional and developmental well-being. Dr. Willis received his M.D. from Jefferson Medical College of Thomas Jefferson University.

Kabir Amari

Member

Kabir Amari (they/them) is a nonbinary educator, speaker, and curriculum creator. Currently, they serve as the Interim Senior Managing Director of National Prism Alliances for Teach For America and as the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) Consultant for Advocates For Youth. They enjoy building courses that allow participants to examine the experiences of students who have been marginalized by various and intersecting systems of oppression, and helping participants locate their unique role in liberating youth. Kabir Amari has trained pre-K-12 and post-secondary educators across the country about the importance of approaching queer and trans equity through an intersectional lens. They've spent a decade providing guidance, mentorship, and leadership opportunities for queer and trans youth in South Florida and beyond. While serving as the LGBTQ+ Coordinator for Broward County Public Schools, they were selected for South Florida Gay News' "Out 50", a distinguished list recognizing openly LGBTQ+ individuals who make an impact in South Florida. Kabir Amari received the Bishop S.F. Makalani-Mahee award for Trans Equality in 2019 and was a finalist for GLSEN's Educator of the Year award In 2020.

Brenda Blasingame

Member

Ms. Blasingame is the founder and principal of Vav Amani Consulting, LLC. She has over twenty years of experience working on public health issues and education and early childhood development. She has worked at the executive and senior management at the local, state, and national levels in both the public and non-profit sectors. She has served on numerous boards, committees, and commissions. Nationally she has facilitated workshops and been a guest speaker/keynote. Ms. Blasingame received her B.A. in Developmental Psychology from Rollins College in Florida and a Master's Degree in Organizational Psychology from John F. Kennedy University in California. During her professional career Ms. Blasingame has focused her work on systems change efforts that are working on the issues that most impact the lives of children, families and communities marginalized by racial injustices and social inequities.

Sara Kinsman

Member

Dr. Kinsman serves as the Director of the Division of Child, Adolescent and Family Health in the Maternal and Child Health Bureau of the Health Resources and Services Administration in Health and Human Services. The Division aims to advance strength-based health promotion; enhance injury prevention in schools and communities, and expand and improve emergency medical services and emergency preparedness for all our nation's children, adolescents, and young adults.

Prior to joining HRSA, Dr. Kinsman served as the Director of the Division of Maternal, Child and Family Health in the Philadelphia Department of Public Health. During her tenure as director, Dr. Kinsman led collaboratives efforts to improve maternal, child and adolescent health. Before working for the City of Philadelphia, Dr. Kinsman was an Associate Professor of Clinical Pediatrics and Director of Inpatient Adolescent Medicine Services at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

Dr. Kinsman received her medical degree from the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania, and completed her General Pediatric Residency and Adolescent Medicine Fellowship at the Children's Hospital Of Philadelphia. With support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Clinical Scholars program, Dr. Kinsman completed her master's degree in clinical epidemiology and doctoral degree in sociology at the University of Pennsylvania.

Caprice Knapp

Member

Caprice Knapp is a Principal at Health Management Associates.

A health economist and evaluator, Caprice Knapp has more than 20 years' experience working on Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) in the private sector, state and federal policymaking, and academics.

In the private sector she was the federal policy director for Molina Healthcare, Inc. As an academic, she was an associate professor in the Department of Health Outcomes and Policy at the University of Florida (UF) conducting external quality review activities for Texas and Florida Medicaid and CHIP programs and maternal and child health research. In the policymaking arena, she worked in the Governor's Office of State Planning and Budgeting in Colorado as well as the U.S. House of Representatives Energy and Commerce Committee as a Robert Wood Johnson Health Policy fellow. Most recently she was the North Dakota Medicaid Director from 2019 to 2022.

At the University of Florida, Caprice earned a PhD in economics and completed postdoctoral training in health services research

Russell Blake Toomey

Member

Dr. Russ Toomey is University Distinguished Scholar and Professor of Family Studies and Human Development at The University of Arizona. He conducts research on the processes by which sexual and gender minority youth thrive and are resilient despite the barriers and challenges they encounter in society (for example, discrimination). His focus is on physical, mental, and behavioral health outcomes, such as suicidality, among youth who identify or express non-privileged sexual orientation, gender identities and expressions, and ethnicities, and the intersections among these identities. His research identifies the mechanisms and policies that reduce the impacts of discrimination and contribute to optimal health, well-being, and educational outcomes. At The University of Arizona, he teaches undergraduate and graduate courses on adolescent development, human sexuality, professional development, and advanced graduate-level applied statistics. He serves on the Executive Council for the Society for Research on Adolescence and on the Editorial Board for the Journal of Youth and Adolescence. He received his Ph.D. in Family Studies and Human Development at the University of Arizona and completed a two-year postdoctoral fellowship in Psychology and Family and Human Development at Arizona State University.