

WEBVTT

00:02:16.275 --> 00:02:23.275

If everyone could sign in, that would be great up there, uh, on the table. There are refreshments.

00:02:26.361 --> 00:02:30.361

So please help yourself. Some say it's hot in here. Uh, there are drinks in the coolers.

00:02:38.250 --> 00:02:40.250

It's hot in here.

00:05:20.890 --> 00:05:22.890

I mean, I'll go...

00:06:03.068 --> 00:06:05.068

I didn't know that was him, and somebody mentioned, like.

00:08:41.512 --> 00:08:50.512

Just wanted to make a little announcement. We are gonna get started here in a few moments, but we do know there's a board member who is a few minutes away, so we're gonna give them.

00:08:50.383 --> 00:08:56.383

Um, a couple more minutes to get here, so feel free to continue your conversation, and we'll get started in a minute.

00:12:25.134 --> 00:12:32.134

All right, everyone, we will now call to order this evening's study session of the Champaign County Mental Health Board.

00:12:32.411 --> 00:12:39.411

Wednesday, August 20th, 545pm, in the Shields Carter Room of the Bennett Administrative Center Urbana, Illinois.

00:12:42.189 --> 00:12:44.189

May I have a roll call? Jane Sprandel. Here.

00:12:46.418 --> 00:12:48.418

Elaine Palencia. Here. Jon Paul Youakim.

00:12:51.022 --> 00:12:53.022

Chris Miner. Here! Emily Rodriguez.

00:12:55.985 --> 00:12:57.985

Tony Nichols? Kyle Patterson.

00:13:05.707 --> 00:13:07.707

Molly McLay. Here. Alright, we do have a quorum this evening, um, so we can move on to approve the agenda.

00:13:07.096 --> 00:13:14.096

Um, would anyone like to have any discussion or motions about our agenda?

00:13:23.086 --> 00:13:26.086

I make a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Second. We have a motion and a second. Any further discussion?

00:13:35.716 --> 00:13:44.716

Oh, okay, we do actually have, um, an amendment that we need to make to, um, change the order of the speakers, so... Um, under the study session portion, our, um, second speaker will go third, and our third speaker will go second.

00:13:49.506 --> 00:13:51.506

Any objections?

00:13:58.592 --> 00:14:01.592

It has been discussed in advance. All right, um, seeing none, all those in favor of approving the agenda as amended say aye. Aye.

00:14:05.152 --> 00:14:07.152

All those opposed, same sign. The ayes have it. The agenda is approved as amended.

00:14:07.881 --> 00:14:18.881

Next, we will move to public participation agency input. Um, so, um, as always, um, members of the community are welcome to come to the Mental Health Board to speak with us about your concerns.

00:14:19.550 --> 00:14:22.550

Um, this is a little bit of a different meeting than usual, because.

00:14:22.171 --> 00:14:29.171

We are having a study session to discuss some specific topics, and there will be, like, an open community discussion as part.

00:14:29.074 --> 00:14:42.074

Of that. So, um, people are welcome to make public comment now, and there will be a portion at the end, but our kind of larger community discussion about resources and concerns of LGBTQIA plus community members.

00:14:50.469 --> 00:14:52.469

Will occur, sort of, in the middle. Um, the bulk of the meeting will be that, so, um, folks who are here, um, please know that that is an opportunity to speak.

00:14:52.807 --> 00:14:59.807

Um, our public participation is something that we have, um, designated components at each of our meetings for.

00:14:59.010 --> 00:15:12.010

Um, so I do just want to mention, during this part of the meeting, if anybody comes up to share with us, we cannot respond directly. Um, we also can't ask questions, but we can use this to inform future decisions.

00:15:12.686 --> 00:15:20.686

Um, and if anybody wants to come up and speak, they can either approach the podium, fill out a little, um, comment card, and we'll call upon you later.

00:15:25.140 --> 00:15:28.140

Or if you're online, you can. Um, put something into the chat or raise your hand, um, and we can call upon you.

00:15:28.695 --> 00:15:38.695

Um, I just want to mention for agency representatives and others providing input, to be aware of the Illinois Lobbyist Registration Act and take steps to be in compliance with the act of speaking with us.

00:15:41.843 --> 00:15:46.843

I may limit individual time to 5 minutes and total time to 20 minutes. So with that... Is there anybody who would like to speak now?

00:15:50.924 --> 00:15:52.924

Um, with the board.

00:15:55.163 --> 00:16:00.163

Alright, um, seeing none, we will move on, but again, this.

00:16:00.873 --> 00:16:05.873

Most of this study session will be an opportunity for the community to discuss things with us.

00:16:05.346 --> 00:16:10.346

And there will be a designated component for other public input later as well.

00:16:10.558 --> 00:16:20.558

So, we will now move on to, uh, Chairpersons' comments. Um, so my name is Molly McClay. I use she, her pronouns, and I'm the chair of the Champaign County Mental Health Board.

00:16:20.940 --> 00:16:25.940

And it's my honor to welcome you all here this evening for a very important conversation.

00:16:36.992 --> 00:16:41.992

Um, just a little bit about the Mental Health Board. Um, we, we have... Five of us here tonight, we actually do have a new member that is... will be... is pending appointment tomorrow at the county board meeting.

00:16:42.952 --> 00:16:45.952

Um, and we will have a little moment to introduce him in a moment.

00:16:51.113 --> 00:16:55.113

Um, we are all... Um, here, um, appointed by the county, um, from the community.

00:17:02.608 --> 00:17:04.608

To... to help, um. With, um, disseminating our mental health resources here, including the funding that we.

00:17:14.041 --> 00:17:19.041

Receive from, um, from, from taxpayer dollars. And we... it's really important to us to understand the needs and the priorities of the community so that we can best determine how to use this, like, very.

00:17:25.125 --> 00:17:28.125

Large pool of money that we are so... grateful to have available in this county, um...

00:17:32.870 --> 00:17:34.870

Six to seven million dollars. Um, to give to mental health and, um, substance use, as well as developmental disabilities.

00:17:35.153 --> 00:17:42.153

Um, we have one of the best, uh, most robust, and I would like to say best, mental health boards in the state.

00:17:42.828 --> 00:17:46.828

And, um, we have these study sessions time and again to.

00:17:46.067 --> 00:17:54.067

Really hear from the community about things that we should address, and I know that right now, more than.

00:18:00.204 --> 00:18:05.204

Over the last 6 months, especially, but, um, from, you know, I'll... many, many years and decades, um.

00:18:12.187 --> 00:18:14.187

We have had... the LGBTQIA plus community has been, um, discriminated against.

00:18:14.183 --> 00:18:21.183

Uh, there's been homophobia and transphobia rampant, and right now, more than ever before, direct policy attacks.

00:18:21.340 --> 00:18:27.340

Um, at the federal level, and we are here as part of our community.

00:18:27.668 --> 00:18:32.668

To do what we can to support the needs of our community members.

00:18:32.599 --> 00:18:40.599

And of all LGBTQIA people. And so that's why we're having this discussion this evening, to really hear from all of you.

00:18:47.251 --> 00:18:49.251

To know what we... could consider for the future to make sure that we are prioritizing and centering.

00:19:01.791 --> 00:19:05.791

The needs of... of this very important community. So, that's a little bit about how the mental... what the mental health board is, and why we're, um, why we called this meeting, or study session, I should call it. It's not an official meeting, that just means we won't be voting on.

00:19:10.190 --> 00:19:13.190

Anything other than the agenda. Um, but we are very excited to hear from everyone who's here this evening.

00:19:13.354 --> 00:19:24.354

Um, I guess this is a good opportunity to introduce our new member who's pending appointment. So, Lynn, would... I will defer the rest of my comments to you.

00:19:31.895 --> 00:19:33.895

To introduce our new member. Well, I was thinking that I might, in turn, differ to the new member who's on the Zoom.

00:19:34.852 --> 00:19:40.852

To introduce himself, Dr. Gomez, do you mind doing that? Um, knowing that you are going to be appointed tomorrow.

00:19:40.192 --> 00:19:47.192

This is to replace Joe Omo Osagie, who has resigned from the board prior to the end of the term.

00:19:49.740 --> 00:20:04.740

Sure, no, no problem. Uh, so hello everyone, uh, my name is Alejandro Gomez, and I have been living here in the Champaign-Urbana area for the last 25 years, and I currently work at the University of Illinois. I've worked at the University for the last.

00:19:51.200 --> 00:19:53.200

Anyway, you ready?

00:20:21.860 --> 00:20:27.860

Uh, 13, 14 years or so, uh, and, um, I have... various, uh, varied background, which I think will lend itself, uh, nicely to, um, my service, uh, in serving on the board. Uh, but first and foremost, I, uh, I would be remiss if I did not mention my, uh, licensed clinical social work background and training.

00:20:28.016 --> 00:20:42.016

Uh, I've worked for about 20 years as a licensed clinical social worker and therapist, historically working many, many years at the counseling center, uh, at the Urbana-Champaign campus there at the university. Uh, in addition to, um.

00:20:42.326 --> 00:20:50.326

Uh, other, uh, establishments and agencies within the Champaign-Urbana area, and so I look very much forward to working with you all.

00:20:52.984 --> 00:20:56.984

Thank you so, so much. We're so excited to have you as part of the board.

00:20:57.965 --> 00:21:06.965

All right, with that, I conclude my comments, and we will next move on to, um, comments from our staff, which today will come from Leon Bryson.

00:21:13.694 --> 00:21:15.694

Thank you, and it's, um... My pleasure, uh, to see all of the familiar faces.

00:21:23.728 --> 00:21:28.728

Uh, that I have hounded via email to get here, so... Thank you from the bottom of my heart. Uh, I am Leon Bryson. I am the Associate Director for the Champaign County Mental Health Board.

00:21:28.285 --> 00:21:36.285

Uh, and I use the pronouns he, him, his. Today's study session is the conclusion of weeks.

00:21:40.244 --> 00:21:45.244

Of planning, conversations, back and forth, emails between CCMHB staff and presenters.

00:21:51.606 --> 00:21:57.606

Technological obstacles as we strive to be inclusive of all. And, uh, most importantly, continued dedication from our guest speakers and program participants.

00:21:58.361 --> 00:22:06.361

During this study session, you will learn about LGBTQIA plus community resources and concerns.

00:22:13.790 --> 00:22:15.790

Including discrimination. Culture, sexual, and gender identity, health, housing.

00:22:20.402 --> 00:22:22.402

And other social issues. I am honored to introduce our first speaker.

00:22:24.231 --> 00:22:33.231

Joshua Gavel is a dedicated advocate and community leader who has served Uniting Pride in multiple roles over.

00:22:37.562 --> 00:22:41.562

The past two and a half years, including operations manager. Associate Director, and now the Interim Executive Director.

00:22:41.319 --> 00:22:47.319

Through collaborative leadership, he has seen the strengthening of the organization's programs.

00:22:49.892 --> 00:22:53.892

Partnerships and advocacy across East Central Illinois. A Champaign County native.

00:23:00.942 --> 00:23:02.942

Josh brings experience and. Non-profit management, development, public education, and grassroots organizing.

00:23:07.045 --> 00:23:11.045

And is committed to building a more just and joyful. Future for the LGBTQ plus communities.

00:23:14.047 --> 00:23:16.047

Without further ado, Josh. The podium is yours.

00:23:49.125 --> 00:23:54.125

Sometimes our mics take a little bit to warm up, so we will give you a warm microphone.

00:24:01.470 --> 00:24:03.470

Thank you, I appreciate it. Um, well, hello everyone. First and foremost, I just want to say thank you for having us here. It is really an honor to be.

00:24:07.839 --> 00:24:10.839

A partner of CCMHB and a funded organization, um. This means a lot to us to be able to be participating in conversations like this.

00:24:11.559 --> 00:24:17.559

Um, like Leon said, I am a Champaign County native. I've seen this organization over the last 15 years.

00:24:17.944 --> 00:24:22.944

Um, and it's really a true honor to get to lead it for even a short period of time.

00:24:26.054 --> 00:24:29.054

Um, so, I just want to kind of start out and give... An overview of Uniting Pride.

00:24:34.976 --> 00:24:36.976

Um, as you can see in the board packet. Um, our little PowerPoint. I know mine did not translate very well to PDF, so I'm sorry.

00:24:47.134 --> 00:24:51.134

Um, but we are your local queer resource center. Um, we are... the 501c3 organization that serves not just Champaign County, but all of East Central Illinois, despite being.

00:24:51.403 --> 00:24:55.403

An incredibly affirming state with a lot of wonderful protections and support.

00:24:55.490 --> 00:25:03.490

Um, when you get into downstate, there are only 4 staffed brick-and-mortar resource centers, so between our little agency of.

00:25:10.772 --> 00:25:13.772

Four staff members, three right now. We serve about a dozen counties directly. Um, in the last year, we saw nearly 500 program participants.

00:25:19.232 --> 00:25:21.232

Um, from dozens of counties. Across the state, um, and have gotten to work with, uh.

00:25:21.424 --> 00:25:27.424

Quite a few people in this community. Um, so Uniting Pride was founded in 2010.

00:25:34.688 --> 00:25:37.688

We're entering our... well, we're mid-15 years now, um. You may have remembered us in Lincoln Square Mall at Pride Fest, and now we shut down Urbana as the largest Pride festival in the state of Illinois.

00:25:44.628 --> 00:25:46.628

Um, outside of Chicago. Um, but we've grown into a well-rounded resource center that provides services.

00:25:51.098 --> 00:25:54.098

For, um, hundreds of clients every year. Um, of all ages, truly, we have programs for 0 to as.

00:25:59.028 --> 00:26:02.028

Um, old and wise as you can be. Um... And we lead in the creation of a community where all who hold historically and actively.

00:26:02.480 --> 00:26:07.480

Um, marginalized gender and sexual identities can live fulfilling, joyful, healthy, and vibrant lives.

00:26:11.421 --> 00:26:15.421

Um, next slide. Our programs and services. Uh, we tend to put our programs and services into.

00:26:15.711 --> 00:26:21.711

These six categories, um, youth and family programs, including support groups and social groups for.

00:26:22.993 --> 00:26:25.993

Um, 0 to 10, 10 to 13, and then 14 to 18.

00:26:26.419 --> 00:26:31.419

Those groups also have, um, the older group has an online social space that is monitored by.

00:26:31.504 --> 00:26:36.504

Trained facilitators and gives youth a safe space to go online and communicate.

00:26:36.359 --> 00:26:43.359

Um, we have a parenting group that is in an interesting flux right now. We were finding that we were getting two very different.

00:26:43.276 --> 00:26:48.276

Groups of parents who are interested in this program, parents who were very much on the team.

00:26:53.722 --> 00:26:55.722

Very much had done the work. Or queer themselves, maybe, and they were looking for a social space. And then we had parents that were like.

00:26:55.218 --> 00:27:00.218

My kid came out, whether it's a young kid or their adult kid.

00:26:59.994 --> 00:27:07.994

I don't know what to do. I've heard every horrible thing that you can hear, every bad stereotype. I just know I want to support my kid.

00:27:08.088 --> 00:27:14.088

But I've got to purge some of this stuff that I've heard and unlearn it. Um, so we're really leaning into that group right now.

00:27:14.566 --> 00:27:19.566

Because we believe, at the end of the day, the best advocacy that we can do as an organization.

00:27:19.372 --> 00:27:24.372

Is around education. So, we're partnering with, uh, Dr. Violetta Rodriguez.

00:27:24.304 --> 00:27:31.304

And her team at the Clinical Psych Department with the university to develop a monthly module-based training program.

00:27:31.343 --> 00:27:36.343

That will address different modules each month, different issues, whether that's.

00:27:39.970 --> 00:27:44.970

Pronoun use, or, you know, dispelling myths around identity. Explaining the difference between sexual orientation and gender identity.

00:27:50.043 --> 00:27:52.043

Um, and we're kind of relaunching that program. Uh, this fall. We have also added a new program.

00:27:56.204 --> 00:27:58.204

In partnership with the Stevens Family YMCA. Our Camp Kaleidoscope was in its second year this year.

00:28:06.880 --> 00:28:10.880

And saw over 25 youth from the area. And we have been able to do this day camp for 2nd to 5th graders, and then 6th to 9th graders, um, in a secure location.

00:28:10.266 --> 00:28:14.266

A private donor has provided a space for us to be able to.

00:28:14.497 --> 00:28:20.497

Take youth out into a safe space where they don't have to worry about, you know, someone.

00:28:19.982 --> 00:28:29.982

Heard the YMCA is doing a queer camp, we're gonna go protest, or we're gonna go make it uncomfortable. Um, which we did encounter this year, the Daily Wire, uh, Ben Shapiro's news network.

00:28:37.129 --> 00:28:44.129

News Network went after us in the YMCA, and we had to take extra precautions. Um, and it was a... it was a... a serious concern that we had, but... The camp went out... went off without a hitch. We had some really incredible.

00:28:47.279 --> 00:28:51.279

Feedback, some great testimonials from our participants and their families. And we're really, really excited to continue this program.

00:28:51.341 --> 00:28:55.341

Our other large youth and family program that we do every year.

00:28:55.840 --> 00:28:59.840

Is the Teen Queer Prom. So this is a prom-like dance.

00:29:05.535 --> 00:29:08.535

That is for community members, 13 to 18. Um, from all over the state. Um, it's the only teen queer prom.

00:29:11.585 --> 00:29:13.585

In this region, that is completely free. That we pay, we get their clothes.

00:29:13.362 --> 00:29:22.362

We bring in food, we will pay for transportation if they need transportation, whatever it takes to get them there and get them into a safe space where they can have an affirming environment.

00:29:22.358 --> 00:29:26.358

To, you know, do what is a normal rite of passage.

00:29:31.755 --> 00:29:33.755

For high schoolers and teenagers. Um, so our other programs, uh, we have our adult support and social groups.

00:29:37.449 --> 00:29:39.449

We have advocacy. Um, programs that we do around education and resource connection.

00:29:39.552 --> 00:29:44.552

Um, various community events, which you, I'm sure, have heard of, Pride Fest, Love Fest.

00:29:44.825 --> 00:29:50.825

Um, and then we have some needs-based services, like our food pantry, our binder program, uh, clothing closet, and queer library.

00:29:50.102 --> 00:29:57.102

And then, of course, everything comes back to education and connecting to community resources. Um, so if we can go to the next slide.

00:30:01.999 --> 00:30:06.999

Or I actually talked about the Youth and Family Program, so we can go down to Queer Prom, um... So, like I said, uh, Queer Prom is unique.

00:30:15.583 --> 00:30:17.583

It's the only completely free. 13 to 18 queer dance in the area, um, and you can talk to any of my incredible team here tonight.

00:30:18.114 --> 00:30:24.114

And any volunteers who have ever been to this event, it is... it's truly one of the most heartwarming.

00:30:24.722 --> 00:30:28.722

And wonderful events we get to do each year. Um, the kids always come away.

00:30:32.451 --> 00:30:37.451

With just joyful smiles and a great experience. But the volunteers and the adults come away.

00:30:42.351 --> 00:30:46.351

And we have heard some of our, like, most heartwarming. And emotional testimonies from adults who have participated and help us support this program.

00:30:46.876 --> 00:30:49.876

Because so many of us did not get to have this opportunity when we were growing up.

00:30:51.798 --> 00:30:54.798

Um, I went to Unity High School. And I certainly did not get to take.

00:30:58.442 --> 00:31:02.442

My queer partner, or my friends, or. Um, you know, people in my social circle and the way that I wanted to.

00:31:02.655 --> 00:31:06.655

If we had had Queer Prom back then, life would have been extremely different.

00:31:12.041 --> 00:31:14.041

Um, so... If you want to jump to the adult social and support groups one...

00:31:16.851 --> 00:31:19.851

Um, we have several groups for adults. Um, including several social groups, we have a crafting group.

00:31:19.485 --> 00:31:27.485

We have a general meetup group that meets, um, the first and... or the second and fourth Sundays of every month.

00:31:26.969 --> 00:31:32.969

And that's just a space where folks can come and gather, grab a coffee, talk, sometimes they'll play board games.

00:31:33.433 --> 00:31:38.433

Um, that's open to any queer community members who want to join it. We have a writing group.

00:31:43.802 --> 00:31:46.802

Um, and some of these groups, it's really interesting. Um, crafted up, and upwards, the writing group, both came from community members saying, like, hey.

00:31:49.269 --> 00:31:51.269

I'm so passionate about doing this. I think it would be great to see this space.

00:31:51.518 --> 00:31:55.518

Like, can I help you create it? The writing group meets every Sunday.

00:31:55.678 --> 00:32:04.678

And whether you're writing a research paper, or you're writing your novel, or your fanfiction, it's a really wonderful, supportive space where you can go and share and get feedback.

00:32:10.565 --> 00:32:12.565

And a judgment-free zone. Um, we have a partnership with the Champagne Forest Preserves outside in Champaign Forests.

00:32:11.954 --> 00:32:19.954

Which is a hiking group, um, every second Saturday of the month. Um, Chelsea Prawl, if you know her over at the Forest Preserve.

00:32:20.152 --> 00:32:28.152

She takes folks out to Homer Lake and Lake in the Woods, and Middle Fork, and all of these wonderful forest preserves and areas.

00:32:28.410 --> 00:32:34.410

Um, to do hiking and engage in the outdoors, which can often feel like spaces that we're not invited into.

00:32:34.287 --> 00:32:39.287

Um, you know, there are often times where we don't feel like we can go and.

00:32:39.788 --> 00:32:45.788

Be outdoorsy, or get to fish, or do, you know, normal outdoor stuff, and they came to us and said.

00:32:50.714 --> 00:32:53.714

Let's start this program and make it a safe space. Um, and it's really, really cool. It's been around for a year now. Our support groups...

00:32:52.406 --> 00:32:58.406

We have Aging Up, which is an elder support group. Um, that is a... every Sunday.

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Meeting, and it's always on Zoom, so it is COVID-safe, it's safe for people who might.

00:33:10.081 --> 00:33:13.081

Chronic illnesses, or may not be able to travel well. Um, and that is a space where self-identified elders can join, and.

00:33:19.072 --> 00:33:21.072

We don't put an age limit on it. Um, if you feel like a queer elder, join the group and make some fabulous friends. Um, and that group has also.

00:33:21.236 --> 00:33:25.236

Turned into a cool program we do at Pride every year, which is Living History.

00:33:28.079 --> 00:33:30.079

So we'll bring together, um. Queer folks in the community who have been doing the work.

00:33:31.054 --> 00:33:36.054

Or who have really interesting stories to tell, and give an intergenerational space for people to engage.

00:33:38.585 --> 00:33:40.585

And hear firsthand about our history. So much of our history was lost.

00:33:44.111 --> 00:33:47.111

Um, over the last few decades. And we're not at a great turning point, I think.

00:33:46.945 --> 00:33:50.945

Where we're seeing queer elders that we would not have seen.

00:33:51.745 --> 00:33:58.745

20, 30 years ago, and there's a lot of history there that younger generations need to learn and understand, so that we can continue to fight.

00:33:57.931 --> 00:34:02.931

And move forward. Um, as you said, Molly, at the beginning.

00:34:06.672 --> 00:34:08.672

We're kind of in a backslide of... policy and social stigma.

00:34:08.542 --> 00:34:12.542

Um, this organization has seen a lot of incredible things over the last 15 years.

00:34:12.776 --> 00:34:18.776

But now we're back in the fight that we have to continue to dig deep, and we need to understand our history to do that.

00:34:19.559 --> 00:34:24.559

Transup is a trans and gender nonconforming support group that meets every Tuesday.

00:34:30.898 --> 00:34:33.898

And it alternates Zoom and in-person. Um, so it gives people an opportunity who can't necessarily travel to engage. Also, our two youth groups.

00:34:34.708 --> 00:34:40.708

Um, talk it up, and queries do the same. They alternate Zoom and in person, so even if a youth cannot get to us.

00:34:48.249 --> 00:34:51.249

In person, they can get to us online. Um, we have LiftUp, which is a pause group right now, but we're bringing it back this fall, which is just an open queer support space.

00:34:54.912 --> 00:34:56.912

Um, we're excited to bring that back. After Pride Fest. And then we have our Discord.

00:34:57.776 --> 00:35:01.776

So Discord, if you are not familiar with it, is a social platform.

00:35:04.424 --> 00:35:11.424

That is popular in the gaming community, but it has gotten more popular in just the general community. It's... kind of a hearkening back to the message board days.

00:35:11.804 --> 00:35:16.804

Um, and our Discord has over 800 people who actively engage with it every month.

00:35:22.428 --> 00:35:24.428

It has dozens of channels. Everything from sharing your artwork to sharing mutual aid, to discussing.

00:35:24.654 --> 00:35:29.654

You know, what Up is up to, what other community partners are up to, sharing resources.

00:35:29.676 --> 00:35:34.676

Um, and keeping people, uh, up to date on what is going on in our community.

00:35:34.529 --> 00:35:38.529

Um, we have a lot of people who engage with that program.

00:35:39.894 --> 00:35:43.894

Who are moving here, it's always our first suggestion when someone calls us and says, hey.

00:35:46.870 --> 00:35:48.870

I want to get a good picture of the area. We can tell them that, we can share our resources.

00:35:48.257 --> 00:35:55.257

But if they join our Discord, it gives them an opportunity to hear from community members directly about their experiences.

00:35:55.667 --> 00:35:59.667

And things that we may not know yet. Um, so it's a great space.

00:36:07.478 --> 00:36:10.478

Um, if we can move... yes, that could see, great. Uh, so advocacy. It's a key part of what we do, and I think a lot of people conflate advocacy.

00:36:10.656 --> 00:36:13.656

With lobbying sometimes, where a 501 , we don't do that.

00:36:13.771 --> 00:36:19.771

Um, but we do advocate and we do educate. Um, education is key to our work.

00:36:19.777 --> 00:36:27.777

And key to our advocacy. So, we'll have individualized advocacy, where someone may come to us and say, hey, I'm experiencing this problem with.

00:36:33.826 --> 00:36:36.826

A healthcare provider. My kids experiencing discrimination at school. Um, things like that. Or, hey, I need emergency housing.

00:36:38.870 --> 00:36:41.870

How can we get that? Um, I need legal help. We can provide them, you know.

00:36:48.787 --> 00:36:52.787

Situation-specific information to support what they need. Um, and also educate them on what the rules and policies are out there. Again, Illinois is an incredibly affirming state.

00:36:56.844 --> 00:36:59.844

Champaign-urbana is an incredibly. Affirming community, but that does not mean that everyone in the community is up-to-date.

00:37:04.539 --> 00:37:06.539

On what the laws and regulations are. We can do that for people and educate, um, and we do it quite a bit.

00:37:07.831 --> 00:37:11.831

Uh, and then we do policy and civic advocacy through educating our legislators, you know?

00:37:11.092 --> 00:37:16.092

We want to have a good relationship with the people who are making policies so that they understand.

00:37:20.229 --> 00:37:23.229

Why it is so vital to make inclusive policies. Queer people cut across every intersection of identity.

00:37:23.420 --> 00:37:30.420

And everything that a legislator does is going to affect a queer person at some point. So, whether that's engaging with.

00:37:30.457 --> 00:37:36.457

Legislators and policy makers and leaders in the community who we know are on our side, or engaging with those who.

00:37:40.940 --> 00:37:44.940

Are maybe not so affirming, we make every effort to. Work with them, educate them, and ensure that they understand that.

00:37:45.592 --> 00:37:48.592

Everything that they do is going to affect a queer person's life.

00:37:49.476 --> 00:37:57.476

Um, through our advocacy, we are a proud partner of Equality Illinois, which is the largest and oldest advocacy organization for LGBTQ.

00:38:00.636 --> 00:38:02.636

Community members in Illinois. Um, but we also work with Centerlink, the CoLab.

00:38:02.819 --> 00:38:08.819

Um, the National LGBTQ Plus Task Force, Planned Parenthood Illinois Action, and the Human Rights Campaign to support all of these efforts.

00:38:09.813 --> 00:38:13.813

And ensure that we are educated so that we can go and share that information with the community.

00:38:15.785 --> 00:38:19.785

Um, so the next slide, community events, these are probably what people know us best for.

00:38:19.841 --> 00:38:25.841

Uh, Love Fest is our Valentine's Day event, which started, gosh, in 2022.

00:38:29.698 --> 00:38:31.698

Um, so we're coming up on. 4 plus years of it soon, um, which is crazy.

00:38:34.741 --> 00:38:37.741

Uh, but it's a really, really cool opportunity. Uh, again, we have incredibly affirming.

00:38:40.519 --> 00:38:44.519

Businesses, we have incredibly affirming partners across the community. But there are a lot of queer people who still do not feel safe.

00:38:47.560 --> 00:38:49.560

Going to a restaurant on Valentine's Day. Walking down the street, holding their partner's hand.

00:38:49.060 --> 00:38:54.060

Things like that. So, we created Love Fest as an experience.

00:38:59.437 --> 00:39:01.437

For queer adults who. Want to share their love, whether it's with a partner, whether they're bringing their friends, having a good time.

00:39:05.884 --> 00:39:08.884

And get to have a traditional Valentine's Day experience. You know, a dinner and a show, something special, where they know that they're safe.

00:39:09.596 --> 00:39:14.596

And able to engage as authentically as possible. This last year, we added a new.

00:39:18.652 --> 00:39:21.652

Portion to Love Fest, where we provided free childcare. We're excited to continue that, because there are a lot of queer parents.

00:39:29.588 --> 00:39:32.588

Who don't necessarily get to come to. The drag extravaganza, or all of the Pride events and things, because they have kids to take care of. So we want to take that off their plate and give them one night.

00:39:32.759 --> 00:39:38.759

Where we've got it covered, we've got the kids in a safe space, they get to have a fun time, crafts, things like that.

00:39:40.642 --> 00:39:42.642

And their parents can go have a good time. Um, and celebrate Valentine's Day.

00:39:43.852 --> 00:39:48.852

Um, adult queer prom and adult homecoming are programs similar to Teen Queer Prom.

00:39:48.127 --> 00:39:56.127

Again, so many adults did not get to have the opportunity to have a school dance where they got to be 100% authentically themselves.

00:39:56.409 --> 00:40:01.409

So we want to provide that space. We're hoping to provide it again during Pride Fest in just a couple weeks.

00:40:01.740 --> 00:40:05.740

Um, and give them a space where they can come and have a dance and have a good time.

00:40:06.526 --> 00:40:14.526

Um, June... June, of course, we're doing a ton of Pride programs here in the community, while Pride Fest happens in the fall, so that we can support our student friends.

00:40:14.741 --> 00:40:27.741

You know, we do want to make sure that Pride Month is a good time for everyone of all ages. We've got a ton of programs and events every year. I think last... this past June, we had over 30 different hits, whether it was our.

00:40:30.801 --> 00:40:34.801

Partnership... our events, our partner events. Um, so it just gets bigger and bigger every year, and gives people, you know.

00:40:38.073 --> 00:40:40.073

A reason to celebrate and enjoy. Prime. Uh, so Pride Vest.

00:40:47.685 --> 00:40:49.685

Again, this is probably what we are best known for. Uh, we are the largest Pride Festival in the state of Illinois outside of Chicago. Don't let Springfield tell you any different.

00:40:49.672 --> 00:40:52.672

We are the largest, and we're going to continue to grow.

00:40:52.693 --> 00:40:57.693

Last year, we estimated that over 30,000 attended across, um, 9 days of programs.

00:40:58.794 --> 00:41:01.794

So, uh, come see us October 25th, we're gonna be right outside.

00:41:02.903 --> 00:41:07.903

Um, come have a good time with us, but we have 10 days of programs this year, kicking off on October 16th.

00:41:10.583 --> 00:41:12.583

Um, everything from education. To fund programs like the fair, the parade.

00:41:19.482 --> 00:41:22.482

Drag extravaganza, we have a youth and family party. Um, there's lots of really cool opportunities this year, and we're excited to see it grow. Again, if you were here 15 years ago.

00:41:22.724 --> 00:41:27.724

It was in Lincoln Square Mall. I remember working that first Pride for Planned Parenthood, and it's.

00:41:34.721 --> 00:41:37.721

Crazy to see how massive we have gotten. Um, so then... Our kind of last categories really are around needs-based services.

00:41:37.731 --> 00:41:42.731

Um, we have a food pantry that also has harm reduction supplies, so things like Narcan.

00:41:49.599 --> 00:41:52.599

Fentanyl testing strips, pregnancy tests, Plan B. Um, in addition to food and toiletries, um, we just started a partnership with The Right Soapy, which is a local soapy.

00:41:52.394 --> 00:41:57.394

Um, and we're able to provide free handmade soap to our clients now, which is really, really cool.

00:41:57.383 --> 00:42:03.383

Um, in the last year, we saw the food pantry visited over 320 times.

00:42:06.130 --> 00:42:10.130

Um, we gave around 2,000 pounds of food away. Um, and it continues to grow bigger year after year.

00:42:09.945 --> 00:42:14.945

Um, up and away is our binder and waist cincher program. So, um.

00:42:23.940 --> 00:42:26.940

Folks who may be experiencing gender dysphoria, folks who. May be transitioning, and they need garments that make them feel affirmed in their identity. We can provide those things absolutely free of charge.

00:42:27.790 --> 00:42:30.790

To anyone in the community, up to two binders and two waist cinchers a year.

00:42:30.084 --> 00:42:37.084

Last year, we saw, um, 56 service users, and we gave away around 100 binders and waist cinchers.

00:42:37.887 --> 00:42:44.887

Um, but that program, we've sent it all around the state. We have seen, in the last year, requests from over 20 counties.

00:42:44.444 --> 00:42:51.444

We've seen requests in the past 3 years since that program started from over 20 states and 3 countries.

00:42:51.179 --> 00:42:55.179

This is a huge need in our community. Binders and waist cinchers

00:42:59.996 --> 00:43:01.996

Are massively expensive. Um, and really hard to get, especially if you're a young person in maybe.

00:43:08.935 --> 00:43:09.935

A household that's not affirming. We can ship them anywhere in the state. We do that a lot here in the community for people who can't come to our office.

00:43:10.646 --> 00:43:13.646

For those who can come into our office, we do professional fittings.

00:43:17.165 --> 00:43:20.165

Aiden's our expert on fittings, um. And we can give them an experience that helps them, you know.

00:43:20.656 --> 00:43:24.656

Get safely into garments and understand the risks around wearing those garments.

00:43:24.360 --> 00:43:31.360

Um, and how to do it safely and securely. Um, we just started a new program in February.

00:43:36.243 --> 00:43:38.243

Where we have a queer clothing closet. Um, we've had more than 25 service users come and use it since then.

00:43:47.149 --> 00:43:49.149

It's been a real hit. One client recently just came from a residential treatment program and said, so many people come into this program and don't have clothes, can I pick up clothes and take them to them?

00:43:49.715 --> 00:43:53.715

So now we're starting to funnel close into those programs and help people.

00:43:53.645 --> 00:43:57.645

Um, who really don't have even the clothes on their back.

00:44:03.995 --> 00:44:05.995

Um. The Queer Library is also a relatively new program. I don't have to tell you that there are books being banned left and right.

00:44:06.899 --> 00:44:12.899

Thankfully, um, Illinois is generally on the best side of that, and not allowing that to happen.

00:44:13.318 --> 00:44:16.318

But we wanted to be proactive, and wanted to make sure that.

00:44:16.824 --> 00:44:19.824

If people wanted to read about queer history or queer identity.

00:44:20.760 --> 00:44:23.760

Um, no matter what age, that they have those things available to them.

00:44:23.721 --> 00:44:28.721

Um, we have well over 100 books now, so please come check them out, come read them.

00:44:28.334 --> 00:44:34.334

We get so excited, especially when families bring their kids in, and the kids go ham on the library.

00:44:34.572 --> 00:44:41.572

It's really, really cool. Again, you know, being a young queer kid 15 years ago, trying to find queer books as I was coming out.

00:44:41.764 --> 00:44:46.764

Was really difficult. Now we have a lot of them that are age-appropriate for quite literally any age.

00:44:51.207 --> 00:44:54.207

Um, and lots of great stories to tell. Uh, so this last category, Education, Awareness, and community resources.

00:44:59.809 --> 00:45:03.809

Again, for us, everything comes back to education. No matter what service people are engaging with, we try to make sure that they have all the tools in their toolkit to understand.

00:45:07.911 --> 00:45:11.911

Queer identity, to understand their rights, to understand. Um, the policies that support them in the community.

00:45:15.104 --> 00:45:17.104

And we do that through educational workshops. So, um, many of our partners.

00:45:17.668 --> 00:45:23.668

Who are in this area, whether they're businesses, whether they're nonprofit organizations like us, whether they're healthcare providers.

00:45:23.693 --> 00:45:28.693

Schools, um, have taken our cultural competency lessons, where we talk about.

00:45:28.676 --> 00:45:36.676

Everything from breaking down identity, talking about intersectionality, talking about pronouns, that's always the number one, is like, can you come teach us about pronouns?

00:45:36.392 --> 00:45:41.392

Um, and we're happy to do that. We have grown those workshops into.

00:45:41.877 --> 00:45:46.877

Um, a really robust program that handles cultural competency. We have a homelessness workshop.

00:45:46.261 --> 00:45:51.261

Um, we just did a workshop with the Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault.

00:45:51.124 --> 00:45:55.124

On homelessness and the intersection of sexual violence in the queer community.

00:46:06.638 --> 00:46:09.638

And we're happy to tailor those programs to people. Who, you know, need a specific program, or a specific topic covered. Um, so it can look different in every environment, but we're happy to do this education because it's so important.

00:46:10.619 --> 00:46:16.619

Then our affirming directories, we have 3 affirming directories, including our faith community, so lots of.

00:46:16.689 --> 00:46:22.689

Incredible faith communities here in Champaign-Urbana that are supportive of queer folks who want a faith space.

00:46:22.371 --> 00:46:29.371

Um, they can find that there. We have a healthcare directory, whether that's mental health providers, whether that's, um, physical health providers.

00:46:29.090 --> 00:46:34.090

Um, you know, you can go and get on there, um, share.

00:46:39.472 --> 00:46:41.472

What services you provide, what... insurances you take, we're always updating it, so please, if you know a provider who is safe and affirming.

00:46:41.473 --> 00:46:46.473

Have them reach out to us so we can get them on there, because that is a huge request, especially right now.

00:46:50.921 --> 00:46:52.921

With gender-affirming care under attack. Um, and then, finally, we have our affirming directory for businesses.

00:46:53.679 --> 00:46:55.679

Again, if you know a business owner in the area who is.

00:46:55.709 --> 00:47:00.709

Queer-affirming and supportive, have them reach out to us, because we get so many people who are like.

00:47:05.347 --> 00:47:08.347

I want to spend my dollars consciously and intentionally. Where can I go? And we have some incredible partners. Pride is a great place to see them.

00:47:08.727 --> 00:47:12.727

But we want to make sure that year-round people understand who's supportive in this community.

00:47:12.197 --> 00:47:19.197

Um, and then we have just wider resources on the website that we're always updating, always looking to add new things to.

00:47:19.511 --> 00:47:24.511

Whether it's around coming out, whether it's around, um, you know, again, policy, whether it's.

00:47:33.102 --> 00:47:35.102

Parent resources, things like that. Uh, we're always looking to update it, so... Um, definitely check those out. Um, but yeah, that's kind of the general overview. Do you have questions or anything for me?

00:47:39.572 --> 00:47:42.572

I have a question. Yeah. Um, so... Fabulous job. Um.

00:47:42.882 --> 00:47:51.882

So, talking about the Eat Up program, um, I love that you guys not only offer food, but also personal care items, and then, um.

00:47:52.216 --> 00:47:57.216

I like the harm reduction supplies and what that encompasses. So.

00:47:57.605 --> 00:48:04.605

Where do you get your donations from? Like, does Eastern Illinois Food Bank help you guys at all, or how do you guys usually get your items?

00:48:04.548 --> 00:48:10.548

So, yeah, we are a partner with Eastern Illinois Food Bank. We're able to purchase food through them. That's our primary resource.

00:48:11.056 --> 00:48:16.056

Um, but we do get a lot of community organizations that want to do food drives. Um, we do.

00:48:16.022 --> 00:48:24.022

Gladly welcome that. We do try to caution people, though, when they do food drives, that, um, just make sure you're checking your expiration dates and stuff, so that.

00:48:24.470 --> 00:48:33.470

We don't have to do it on the back end. Um, but the bulk of it does come from the Eastern Ranel Food Bank. Um, harm reduction supplies, they come through partnerships with public health, with the Urbana.

00:48:38.772 --> 00:48:41.772

Champagne Reproductive Justice Project. Um, with Planned Parenthood, we just got sharps containers as well. Um, so... so, yeah.

00:48:42.381 --> 00:48:53.381

I always, um, and you've probably heard me say, because you've been to a few of our meetings, um, sometimes when there's special events in the community, um, I like to use Divine Consign, where you can buy women's clothes.

00:48:53.656 --> 00:48:58.656

Usually, they have been set up, and you can bring in personal feminine hygiene products.

00:48:59.083 --> 00:49:04.083

Products in exchange for having to wait to the next day to shop if you bring in so... and so.

00:49:04.609 --> 00:49:12.609

Maybe, you know, is events come up in the community, maybe something will fit hand-in-hand if you're not already doing that. And like you said, you have businesses.

00:49:12.198 --> 00:49:18.198

Maybe they'll, you know, 10% off today if you bring in, you know.

00:49:18.487 --> 00:49:27.487

Some personal hygiene or something, but, um, again, good job, and thank you for all you do in the community. Thank you, thank you so much. And yeah, we absolutely take every opportunity to do that. I know.

00:49:30.316 --> 00:49:34.316

New Era is about to do a drive for us that's similar around that, so... Um, we definitely are always looking for partnerships in that way as well.

00:49:36.897 --> 00:49:42.897

Yes. I... thank you so much for your presentation. I was just curious about.

00:49:43.850 --> 00:49:47.850

You have an elder support group, and I wonder if their stories are being.

00:49:54.703 --> 00:50:00.703

Captured in any way, or if they would be interested in that, you know, like writing, or oral history, or... Yeah. Yeah, yeah, absolutely. Um, that is something that we want to do going into this living history.

00:50:00.158 --> 00:50:12.158

Is, um, understanding how to capture those stories best, and I know, um, there's been some recent archival work with, like, the University of Illinois Library that, uh, captured some of the stories around, like.

00:50:12.915 --> 00:50:18.915

The queer bars and things like that throughout the history here in the community, but it is definitely something that we are looking.

00:50:26.753 --> 00:50:28.753

To do as we head into this program this year. No quest... no question, just a comment. I want to say you're doing a great job, and you are doing a lot.

00:50:28.156 --> 00:50:35.156

And I really like the, um, that you mentioned a couple times about working in other counties, because Champaign.

00:50:35.693 --> 00:50:41.693

Is a little more open than other places. You said you went to Tolono. I'm from Champaign, but I went to Gibson City.

00:50:41.761 --> 00:50:48.761

Yeah, Paxton, and yeah, and yeah. So, yeah, I really like to focus, I mean.

00:50:48.314 --> 00:51:00.314

You gotta keep it here, but also reaching out and branding, because I think there's a lot more stigma and marginalization going on in these smaller towns. Not saying it's delightful here all the time, but yeah, I just wanted to say I really like that.

00:51:00.602 --> 00:51:08.602

Thank you. Yeah, no, and that's definitely something that we have conscious conversations about. Again, I'm from a rural community, I still live in a rural community, I live in Philo right now.

00:51:08.587 --> 00:51:12.587

Um, and, you know, people are shocked and surprised to hear that.

00:51:15.854 --> 00:51:19.854

In what appears as a very blue, affirming county. There are still these pockets that are less affirming.

00:51:19.506 --> 00:51:26.506

Um, one of the ways that we do that work is we try to engage as many school districts as possible, as many public libraries as possible.

00:51:26.083 --> 00:51:32.083

Um, sometimes to better and, uh, more friendly results than others.

00:51:37.710 --> 00:51:39.710

But, uh, it is definitely something that... you know, we really want to grow and continue to do in this community. But I will say.

00:51:41.698 --> 00:51:53.698

Um, we have some really incredible partners across this region that are not staffed or not incorporated yet, um, that are doing really, really amazing work, and we get to partner with them and kind of advance that. So, um... Thank you.

00:51:54.316 --> 00:52:00.316

Yeah. Um, again, just excellent, uh, presentation. It's great to hear.

00:52:06.874 --> 00:52:08.874

How much you guys do, and... Um, you know, just trying to think of what else is there to be done. I just think about...

00:52:08.512 --> 00:52:11.512

You know, the only two things I can think of are.

00:52:11.663 --> 00:52:16.663

Do you guys have a list of housing resources, um, or landlords that are more.

00:52:16.233 --> 00:52:22.233

Friendly for people that may come in that, you know, have a housing difficulty at that time, and then.

00:52:22.222 --> 00:52:27.222

People that are suffering, like, a mental health crisis, who you guide them to, and then, I guess my third.

00:52:32.492 --> 00:52:34.492

Last question would be, um. Do you guys work with the schools, or meet in the schools in any way for some of our, like, maybe high school kids?

00:52:34.044 --> 00:52:38.044

Yeah, um, so, so I guess I'll start at the schools.

00:52:42.301 --> 00:52:44.301

Um, yes, in Champaign-Urbana. Both school districts, both public school districts, work with us quite a bit.

00:52:47.669 --> 00:52:50.669

We had a partnership, um, with Edison School specifically. Where we were able to do our educational cultural competency.

00:52:50.023 --> 00:53:01.023

Uh, trainings for Edison, uh, over the course of 2 weeks each year, and we trained every student in the school. So, over 800 students got to see those presentations.

00:53:01.381 --> 00:53:07.381

We're excited to continue that. Um, but we go into several schools, whether we're training staff, whether we're training students.

00:53:07.142 --> 00:53:13.142

Um, we already have several lined up for this fall, including uni, campus middle school girls academy.

00:53:18.297 --> 00:53:21.297

Um, Urbana School District. Um, just to name a few. And we do try to offer those to, again, as many schools as possible.

00:53:27.683 --> 00:53:30.683

Every year we send out the, hey. We have this, we'll come do it for free, we will, like... Do whatever it takes to, like, get in and...

00:53:29.921 --> 00:53:32.921

Talk to you, whether we're talking to your board, whether you're talking to staff, students.

00:53:36.156 --> 00:53:39.156

Your GSAs, your drama clubs, whatever. Um, we... we want to be there because we know that kids are left out.

00:53:42.214 --> 00:53:44.214

Um, so, so yeah, definitely starting there. Um, for housing resources.

00:53:44.690 --> 00:53:51.690

We do have some housing resources on the website. It is something that we want to continue to improve, especially around understanding which landlords are.

00:53:57.013 --> 00:53:59.013

Maybe more friendly than others. Um, we do have a wonderful partnership with, uh, Cunningham Township.

00:54:05.337 --> 00:54:07.337

And, uh, we're part of the... LGBTQ plus continuum, um, task force. So, Cunningham Township, GCAP.

00:54:07.640 --> 00:54:11.640

Um, us, we get to do some, like, emergency housing services.

00:54:12.254 --> 00:54:15.254

Um, to give people temporary shelter for up to 14 days.

00:54:17.997 --> 00:54:19.997

Um, that's a program that has been. Mostly, uh, funded by private donors.

00:54:20.901 --> 00:54:27.901

So we're able to do some, like, emergency housing work there. Um, but it really is a question that we get asked quite a bit, especially in this day and age.

00:54:28.835 --> 00:54:31.835

People are really, really shocked when we talk about the fact that.

00:54:33.040 --> 00:54:38.040

When people are wanting to move out of less affirming states or less affirming areas.

00:54:38.473 --> 00:54:41.473

People assume that they want to go to Chicago, or they want to go to the suburbs.

00:54:46.838 --> 00:54:49.838

They can't afford those places. They can't... easily get into housing there, or into school districts there in the same way that they can here.

00:54:55.387 --> 00:54:59.387

So they're coming to this area. Um, we are taking. Several calls, several emails every week around, hey, I'm moving, we need emergency housing service.

00:55:04.180 --> 00:55:06.180

Um, you know, we... we need... help, uh, paying for a moving truck. We need these kind of services.

00:55:09.466 --> 00:55:11.466

Um, so we do try to keep as, uh. Up-to-date as we can on understanding which services.

00:55:14.721 --> 00:55:18.721

Are the safest to recommend people to. Um, it is something that we... desperately wish we could have a fund that we could say.

00:55:27.317 --> 00:55:29.317

Here's \$500 for a moving truck. You know, if any of you know a millionaire who wants to give us a little money, we would love that. And could you repeat the other question you had? I'm so sorry.

00:55:30.667 --> 00:55:35.667

The last question was just meant, if someone's going through a mental health crisis, what do you do recommend?

00:55:35.211 --> 00:55:42.211

Yeah, um, so if... if people are experiencing an emergency, of course, we recommend that they go.

00:55:45.828 --> 00:55:47.828

To, um, you know, an emergency service. But if they're someone who's, you know.

00:55:52.543 --> 00:55:55.543

Going through a downturn or, you know, a... the beginnings of a crisis, we do always refer back to.

00:56:00.999 --> 00:56:02.999

Our healthcare directory. I will say, we do get a lot of requests about the healthcare directory, and specifically.

00:56:05.760 --> 00:56:07.760

Not just around who's affirming. But what the alternatives are.

00:56:07.573 --> 00:56:13.573

For insurance, that is the biggest hiccup for our community when they're seeking healthcare services, in our experience.

00:56:13.522 --> 00:56:17.522

There are so many community members who are on Medicaid right now.

00:56:17.501 --> 00:56:22.501

Um, I was on Medicaid before this, and finding a mental health care provider who is affirming.

00:56:22.885 --> 00:56:27.885

And also would take my insurance was next to impossible, even here. Um, there are a lot of.

00:56:27.170 --> 00:56:32.170

Providers with sliding scale, which is really wonderful, but even some of those rates.

00:56:32.238 --> 00:56:39.238

Are inaccessible to our community, and scheduling is also difficult. So, um, it's hard. We try to work with.

00:56:39.081 --> 00:56:45.081

Those providers as much as possible. We'll reach out if we have, like, a client concern and see if they can direct us to.

00:56:45.849 --> 00:56:50.849

To better resources, um, but a lot of times they do get directed towards, like, OSF.

00:56:53.061 --> 00:57:01.061

Thank you so much, I really appreciate everything. Like, you guys are doing an amazing job literally covering everything that you possibly can in the community.

00:57:03.617 --> 00:57:05.617

So, you know, thank you, and, you know... Keep up what you're doing. Thank you so much.

00:57:06.632 --> 00:57:14.632

Um, so I... we, um, will need to move on to our next speaker, but I wanted to make sure, um, that everybody knows, like.

00:57:14.934 --> 00:57:25.934

Um, we will have an open portion at the end where all, like, all of our speakers can continue to share, and we can... the board can continue to ask questions, and then anyone else who's in attendance can.

00:57:26.788 --> 00:57:37.788

Share questions or comments as well. Um, but thank you so, so much for your presentation, and, um, I will defer to Leon Bryson for... to introduce our next speaker.

00:57:42.858 --> 00:57:45.858

Thank you. Thank you so much. Thank you. I heard the term earlier, uh, said that there's a lot of work going on.

00:57:45.542 --> 00:57:50.542

And I want you to just sit still and listen to this next bio, okay?

00:57:50.267 --> 00:57:57.267

Um, this person is an educator, advocate, creative, and community engineer.

00:57:57.258 --> 00:58:03.258

Justin Michael Hendrix is a native son of Champaign-Urbana, Illinois.

00:58:03.362 --> 00:58:09.362

He is the creator and founder of HitNHomeboy, a grassroots organization

00:58:13.093 --> 00:58:17.093

Whose mission is to provide inclusive, equitable education, and resources to marginalized communities.

00:58:17.385 --> 00:58:23.385

HitNHomeboy, uh, established in 2019, addresses issues of food insecurity,

00:58:30.559 --> 00:58:37.559

Mental health, gun violence, LGBTQ plus challenges, and poverty. As a community leader, Justin Michael Hendrix' effort in equitable access earned him the 2021.

00:58:46.471 --> 00:58:50.471

Buy Black Champaign Community Impact Award. He is an, uh... He is an advisory group member of the legislation group Equality Illinois.

00:58:55.651 --> 00:58:58.651

The GLAAD Media Institute, and. Ballroom, legendary house of... Landvin, did I get that right?

00:59:04.207 --> 00:59:06.207

Landvin. Alright. Justin has been featured in GLAAD's I'm Voting No Matter What

00:59:13.480 --> 00:59:16.480

In St. Louis, efforts for AIDS campaign. For his advocacy, civic engagement, and policy knowledge while living in St. Louis, Missouri.

00:59:23.991 --> 00:59:25.991

I'm not done. He earned his Bachelor's of Science in Early Childhood Education.

00:59:25.439 --> 00:59:32.439

With a special education endorsement from the College of Education at the University of Illinois

00:59:37.796 --> 00:59:41.796

Urbana-Champaign in May 2025. Recently, Justin Michael Hendrix became a two-term elected official

00:59:41.397 --> 00:59:51.397

As a member of City of Champaign Unit 4 School Board after an election victory on April 1st, 2025.

00:59:51.427 --> 00:59:58.427

In addition, he is launching HitNHomeboy with partnerships throughout the city of Champaign

00:59:58.131 --> 01:00:05.131

For black and brown LGBTQ+ teens and young adults later this year.

01:00:08.034 --> 01:00:11.034

Without further ado... Mr. Justin Michael Hendrix,

01:00:15.156 --> 01:00:17.156

Please.

01:00:17.046 --> 01:00:25.046

Thank you all for the invitation and being here, and also, um, thank you all in solidarity for our community, for your services, for your work.

01:00:25.137 --> 01:00:30.137

And, um, happy Pride, as every day, as we say. Um, personally.

01:00:35.683 --> 01:00:37.683

I wanted to express, um... a focus that I'm always proud to be a part of, which is the Black community.

01:00:37.277 --> 01:00:41.277

Also, being a part of the queer and trans community as well.

01:00:41.281 --> 01:00:47.281

And I wanted to ensure that with my mission and my purpose for today, that we are conveying a message.

01:00:47.073 --> 01:00:53.073

To ensure that we provide services to Black communities, especially when it comes to LGBTQ rights and services.

01:01:00.315 --> 01:01:03.315

So I want to start, um, with the mission statement. And it is in an infographic type of look, so I'll be just doing some points.

01:01:03.733 --> 01:01:07.733

And then I'll actually then go to the next, uh, info slide, if possible.

01:01:07.394 --> 01:01:10.394

Uh, so first I'm going to start with our mission statement.

01:01:15.805 --> 01:01:20.805

HitNHomeboys' mission statement is to provide inclusive, equitable education. And resources to marginalized communities. Hidden Homeboy addresses food insecurity, mental health.

01:01:26.545 --> 01:01:30.545

Gun violence, LGBTQIA plus challenges, and poverty. So, for example, looking at the infographic... infographic, I'm sorry, if you scroll down to number 3.

01:01:39.254 --> 01:01:40.254

We have addressing the issue. So, we have been actively providing, since the summer of 2019 and 2020.

01:01:40.567 --> 01:01:45.567

Uh, finding that food insecurity is a big issue in Champaign-Urbana, especially in Champaign's downtown area.

01:01:45.851 --> 01:01:55.851

With that being said, we came together in a sense of protest and demonstration to then provide food insecurity, uh, forms of combat, in which we were creating a food pantry.

01:01:56.206 --> 01:02:08.206

And with that food pantry downtown, we were able to ensure that our downtown areas are unhoused populations can receive services and safe spaces to grab things that they need. One of the common quotes that we used was, uh.

01:02:08.833 --> 01:02:14.833

Take what you can... take what you need, leave what you can. And, um, with that being said, we push advocacy, community culture, and education.

01:02:15.575 --> 01:02:29.575

Furthermore, we know that with the food pantry concept, we also were able to have a collaboration with the First Followers for a temporary pantry, and also with Bethel AME Church, because we realized in certain populations in the Black community, there are food deserts that do exist.

01:02:29.179 --> 01:02:32.179

But there are also food deserts that we do not know about.

01:02:32.090 --> 01:02:42.090

Um, furthermore, in the Black community, sometimes when it comes to food insecurity, we may not know if we're experiencing food insecurity, even though we're hungry, it may be deeper than what we're thinking.

01:02:50.934 --> 01:02:53.934

Next, I'll go then to number 4. So, with understanding our metrics, we realized that with our population of food insecurity and individuals that are utilizing our pantry.

01:02:54.648 --> 01:03:10.648

70... I mean, I'm sorry, 86... I do apologize. 87% of people that utilize our pantries identified as LGBTQIA+. So we knew automatically, with that being said, there's a huge, huge concern with food insecurity, but furthermore, accessible resources to.

01:03:10.977 --> 01:03:15.977

Lgbtq people. Furthermore, in the Black community, we understand that queer and trans folks.

01:03:16.850 --> 01:03:23.850

Furthermore, further along with disparities compared to our white counterparts, our non-Black counterparts in LGBTQ spaces as well.

01:03:43.487 --> 01:03:45.487

Uh, number 5. Uh, in the sense of monitoring our campaign, between 2020 and 2024, we have raised over \$10,000 through grassroots initiatives, uh, community food pantry organizing and in-kind hours. We learned that a lot of times, we take the mission of humanity over charity.

01:03:45.932 --> 01:03:56.932

Because sometimes when you think of charity, you're trying to think of consciously, how much should I give? We believe in humanity because it comes from the heart. It's something genuinely that we believe in doing, so we're always promoting humanity over charity.

01:04:02.771 --> 01:04:05.771

You may go to the next infomercial for performance. And next, we'll then go to number 7.

01:04:24.032 --> 01:04:28.032

We understand that when it comes to LGBTQ people. Um, they are having a higher experience of food insecurity in comparison to non-LGTBQ Americans. And this was taken from a census in 2021 for data collection that we then used to promote when we were gaining services for our food pantry.

01:04:35.294 --> 01:04:39.294

You may now go to the next one for commitments. The next infomercial for commitments, please?

01:04:43.331 --> 01:04:57.331

So for commitments, as we said, education, advocacy, and community culture. When it comes to education, we believe in providing educational stability, we educate on historical insurance and influence of black and brown people in our spaces and history.

01:04:57.409 --> 01:05:04.409

When it comes to advocacy, we ensure that we have civic engagement. We also do policy understanding and advocate for those in marginalized communities as well.

01:05:15.360 --> 01:05:29.360

When it comes to community culture, we ensure we produce the city something that is of wraparound approach of all things Black, queer, and trans. Uh, whether it's in our missions of advocacy and education, uh, when it comes to providing services such as... Our book drives when it comes to our ballroom events, when it comes to voter registration. We are ensuring that Hidden Homeboy is a vehicle for the Black community, especially when it comes to queer and trans folks.

01:05:37.005 --> 01:05:40.005

When it comes to number 9. Some of our outcomes that we have had, because I'll just give you a gist of 6 and through 8 after this.

01:05:40.139 --> 01:05:44.139

For number 9, what we have learned is that we were able to inspire, uh.

01:05:44.691 --> 01:05:58.691

The youth. So, for example, in our spotlights, we understand that when it comes to advocacy, we're able to help with HIV curriculum build... I'm sorry, with the decriminalization of HIV bill, also with the inclusive bill, the... also the Keep Health and Safe in Schools Act.

01:05:58.535 --> 01:06:04.535

And also protect black girls and women act and other forms of policy that's protecting our communities.

01:06:05.468 --> 01:06:18.468

We've had two members of our programs come through and become success stories. We have Ayn Ar-Raheem Harris, who is a founding member of Paint of Peace. She is a Hampton University student and graduate now. She's also been a Spotify Next Gen Scholarship recipient.

01:06:18.026 --> 01:06:25.026

And then, also, we have Kobe Clark, who is a current mentee away at Michigan University currently right now.

01:06:29.501 --> 01:06:36.501

So, in all, I'll just give my, uh, my spiel without looking on the screen anymore. Uh, we have 3 asks, basically.

01:06:44.593 --> 01:06:46.593

The first ask is equity. We understand that monetary support for HitNHomeboys' efforts in education, advocacy, and community culture can support all things Black, queer, and trans.

01:06:53.928 --> 01:06:55.928

Two, we are requesting access. Resources available to allow Black LGBTQIA plus individuals for awareness and inclusivity.

01:06:56.060 --> 01:07:04.060

Three, opportunities that invite engagement to ensure Black LGBTQ folks can be involved for representation.

01:07:11.834 --> 01:07:13.834

Programming and services. We are seeking support as a grassroots organization to continue our food pantry, our Black Queer, and trans safe spaces when available in the Black community.

01:07:13.068 --> 01:07:19.068

And our young, gifted Black and Queer Book Drive that supplies literacy to Black and Brown

01:07:18.948 --> 01:07:25.948

Queer and trans families. Our goal is to ensure that we're providing literacy materials to raise awareness and academia, not an agenda.

01:07:26.380 --> 01:07:33.380

In addition, securing sponsorship and event spaces to produce ballroom-curated programming to showcase Vogue culture

01:07:33.698 --> 01:07:41.698

And history through ballroom culture. We understand that Vogue is very popular, but people do not understand the beginning of Vogue and where it came from.

01:07:41.671 --> 01:07:46.671

It did not come from Madonna, it came from black and brown queer and trans women seeking space.

01:07:47.472 --> 01:07:58.472

Last year, HitNHomeboy hosted a ballroom event, but furthermore, before that, we hosted clinics to showcase various categories like Vogue and Runway, with participants nationally known from the ballroom scene.

01:08:04.292 --> 01:08:08.292

Furthermore, after that, we then hosted a ballroom vogue event. Called the Be Yourself Ball at the Illini Union, with sponsorships from the City of Champaign.

01:08:08.658 --> 01:08:13.658

Gcap and many others to ensure that we're able to have ballroom participation during Pride events.

01:08:16.069 --> 01:08:25.069

We are currently seeking locations and sponsorships for our Pride Fest that we're talking about, because we want to ensure that Black Pride is also promoted, because that's something that's lacking in Champaign County.

01:08:25.467 --> 01:08:31.467

We were planning for October to have our Black LGBTQ Fest, but unfortunately unable to.

01:08:31.711 --> 01:08:45.711

But acknowledgement... we were acknowledging because it was Black History Month for Black and Brown Queer, and trans folks. However, with the difficulties due to culture incompetence and the lack of inclusion for Black LGBTQIA people populations, we are now here locally expressing our concerns for.

01:08:50.204 --> 01:08:52.204

Having space for us to do more. Could you imagine a Black Pride at Douglas Park, or in the North End in general?

01:08:52.250 --> 01:08:59.250

And Audre Lorde Lit Academy for Writing Poetry, and more, or even the Bayard Brigade for Black Queer Boys in honor of Bayard Rustin.

01:08:59.070 --> 01:09:10.070

I can. We strive to change the narrative culturally in the Black community. Hidden Homeboy prides itself on grassroots efforts and mutual aid for the belief in humanity over charity.

01:09:10.233 --> 01:09:17.233

Furthermore, we understand the impacts in Homeboy can provide to a demographic constantly overlooked or unwanted for engagement.

01:09:24.697 --> 01:09:28.697

HitNHomeboy strives for education, advocacy, and community culture. If you all would like to donate, you may utilize our cash apps or Venmo at HitNHomeboy88, which is H-I-T-N.

01:09:32.666 --> 01:09:36.666

H-o-m-e-b-o-y-8-8. Again, thank you all.

01:09:37.623 --> 01:09:41.623

Thank you very much. So we can take, um, some board questions now.

01:09:52.492 --> 01:10:03.492

I know you're cutting for time, so I'll make it short. I have a question, I just want to say, um, you probably don't know who I am, but I know who you are. I've been watching you since 2020 with Drake and... And all them and the haircut place downtown, and the pantry, and you are an amazing leader, and a lot of us know who you are, and you keep doing what you're doing. I mean, everyone here is doing a great job.

01:10:03.562 --> 01:10:08.562

I... I can't cuss. I admire you. We'll just put it that way. I accept it humbly. Thank you.

01:10:08.039 --> 01:10:14.039

Um, but I just want to say it's not just one person, it's not just me, it's a community of people. Um, for example.

01:10:14.560 --> 01:10:26.560

Megan McDonald's, one of the people that have been with me since 2019, 2020. Also, Rita Connerly, Drake Mateer is not just myself, it's a team, and the one thing I always believe in ensuring that I speak in we in these situations, not I. So I do thank you.

01:10:26.098 --> 01:10:30.098

That's why I'm pretty sure that it's extended to other people as well.

01:10:42.276 --> 01:10:53.276

Well, I will admit, this is the first time when I read my packet that I heard about you, and I am highly impressed what I see. Um, I have already liked your Facebook page, and so I... want to see if there's anything I can do to get involved, and things like that. But, um, good job!

01:10:53.924 --> 01:10:55.924

Thank you very much. I look forward to communicating with you.

01:11:02.971 --> 01:11:06.971

Um, I just was curious if you... didn't have any limitation with, like, funding or anything like that.

01:11:06.510 --> 01:11:11.510

What would be the next obstacle to creating, like, uh, you know, a Black Pride.

01:11:11.096 --> 01:11:27.096

Uh, Fest. So when it comes to Black Pride Fest, it's something that I would like to mirror as in Chicago or St. Louis, where I have lived and participated in. We're ensuring that we're providing ballroom culture, history, a safe space, also ensuring that we have services and resources.

01:11:27.287 --> 01:11:32.287

But also the influx of culture when it comes to being Black, but also Black and queer, Black and trans.

01:11:33.031 --> 01:11:39.031

We also want to ensure we're having a safe space, so that's, like, entertainment. We're also providing resources from educational resources to health.

01:11:39.822 --> 01:11:46.822

So when it comes to Black Pride, it's no different than a Champaign Urbana Day, or a typical Pride Fest, but it's geared towards, culturally, to Black and Brown queer and trans folks.

01:11:49.087 --> 01:11:53.087

Do you feel like you have people that you would be able to put together to make that happen?

01:11:53.474 --> 01:11:59.474

The funding was there. If the funding was there, I believe that I can accept as many helping hands as possible. It's not just one person.

01:12:05.713 --> 01:12:07.713

Thanks. Thank you.

01:12:18.012 --> 01:12:20.012

Any other questions? I have a question percolating, but it's not ready yet. So if any other board members have questions or comments, please feel free.

01:12:25.167 --> 01:12:34.167

I do want to make one thing clear, though. Also, when it comes to LGBTQ people, especially in the Black community, when it comes to healthcare, it does not discriminate.

01:12:34.159 --> 01:12:40.159

Um, within the community, for example, when it comes to HIV and AIDS, we understand that Black women are at the highest rate.

01:12:40.984 --> 01:12:45.984

So that's also a huge factor that we also extend outside of LGBTQ spaces.

01:12:46.498 --> 01:12:52.498

We want to ensure that we are providing a safe space to connect to others, and also acknowledging them as well, to know that when it comes to healthcare.

01:12:52.174 --> 01:12:59.174

Resources needed, education, equity, and spaces that we're including all black people as well, and not being discriminatory.

01:13:08.033 --> 01:13:13.033

I think, um, for my question, I guess I'm still formulating it, um.

01:13:12.969 --> 01:13:21.969

Because I think, like, we'll have opportunity to discuss later on, but I also want to make sure we get to hear from you while you're here.

01:13:22.429 --> 01:13:33.429

Um, what, I guess, in terms of, like, interconnectedness between resources, um, like, what are ways that, um, you think, like, the

01:13:33.570 --> 01:13:38.570

That other mental health resources that may or may not be present in the room could

01:13:47.444 --> 01:13:49.444

Um, make... to... could better center Black and Brown LGBTQIA plus folks and or, um, collaborate with your organization.

01:13:56.014 --> 01:13:59.014

One thing that's very important to me is civic engagement. When it comes to civic engagement, that means you're going out into spaces that are not your typical spaces.

01:13:59.894 --> 01:14:04.894

Um, for example, I'm very big on acknowledging the North End. Bradley McKinley, Garden Hills.

01:14:04.119 --> 01:14:14.119

Because those are areas where Black LGBTQ people do exist, but they are not able to have the resources in comparison to their white counterparts and their white counterparts' neighborhoods.

01:14:14.118 --> 01:14:21.118

Um, so I want to ensure that when it comes to civic engagement, that it's something that's very important to me, to ensuring that we're able to have the connectedness that's needed.

01:14:21.884 --> 01:14:27.884

In the city, but also Champaign County, to know that when it comes to LGBTQ issues, that we do have Black representation at the table.

01:14:27.629 --> 01:14:32.629

Involved in programming and other things that happens around the city and county at large.

01:14:45.940 --> 01:14:50.940

That's definitely, um, understandable, and I... I'm also thinking about ways that, like, you know, our... affirming directories could, you know, ensure that they are also affirming to Black and Brown folks, and as well as, um.

01:15:00.383 --> 01:15:02.383

Uh, disability affirming. Um, so that's kind of something I'm thinking about in terms of, like, um, making sure that our inclusive resources are inclusive, like.

01:15:08.658 --> 01:15:11.658

In a variety of different dimensions. Yes, I totally understand. Uh, for example, when it comes to our Black and, um, our young, gifted black and queer book drive.

01:15:11.851 --> 01:15:23.851

When we're supplying literacy materials to some families, some of our families are a part of the special education disability community culture, and so it will also ensure that when it comes to some of our books, we are making sure they're inclusive and geared towards those families specifically.

01:15:23.831 --> 01:15:28.831

So we also want to ensure that when it comes to our programming, though right now is a small.

01:15:28.029 --> 01:15:37.029

Time frame to extend a conversation, but I'm always open to have the conversation at the table to be more in-depth with Hidden Homeboy and what we can do and provide for services.

01:15:44.017 --> 01:15:47.017

Any other questions or comments from the board?

01:15:51.047 --> 01:15:54.047

We may have a question online.

01:16:09.734 --> 01:16:14.734

Um, we have a few comments online. It's, um... Rita says, let's go HitNHomeboy JMH.

01:16:15.527 --> 01:16:23.527

Um, so proud of all the work Justin is doing in the community with our Black and Brown LGBTQ people.

01:16:24.470 --> 01:16:31.470

And it's important to be comfortable being uncomfortable. Great presentation and great responses.

01:16:36.976 --> 01:16:38.976

Thank you all.

01:16:37.879 --> 01:16:44.879

Thank you so much. With that, I will, uh, defer to Leon to introduce our next speaker.

01:16:53.132 --> 01:16:56.132

We have another heavy hitter. Um, sit tight, Darya Shahgheibi is passionate, is a passionate advocate for health equity.

01:17:01.909 --> 01:17:05.909

Housing equality, social change, and LGBTQ. Rights, as a skilled nonprofit leader, her work is rooted in harm reduction.

01:17:06.013 --> 01:17:11.013

And the belief that housing and healthcare are basic human rights.

01:17:11.267 --> 01:17:17.267

In her role as Executive Director of the Greater Community AIDS Project, she oversees housing.

01:17:20.465 --> 01:17:23.465

And supportive services for individuals living with. Or affected by HIV-AIDS.

01:17:23.683 --> 01:17:30.683

Darya brings broad experience from her prior roles, which includes HIV, case manager, counselor.

01:17:35.489 --> 01:17:40.489

Programming Director, Research Coordinator, and Family Advocate. Please extend a warm welcome to...

01:17:43.990 --> 01:17:44.990

Darya.

01:17:59.161 --> 01:18:02.161

Okay. Oh, it's okay, I'm gonna sit down. Um.

01:18:04.445 --> 01:18:06.445

Do you want it? That's okay.

01:18:06.111 --> 01:18:14.111

Uh, thank you for the introduction. Yeah, I'm Darya. I work at the Greater Community AIDS Project, um, and I'm here with Mei, who was mentioned.

01:18:14.217 --> 01:18:20.217

Um, and I first, before I get started, I want to, uh, mention the work that Justin does with us.

01:18:20.752 --> 01:18:24.752

Um, this year he was a speaker for National Black HIV and AIDS Awareness Day.

01:18:24.050 --> 01:18:29.050

So, I just want to thank him for doing that, and the continued partnership we have with him.

01:18:29.652 --> 01:18:32.652

Um, so a little bit about GCAP. Uh, we were founded.

01:18:35.881 --> 01:18:38.881

40 years ago. This is actually our 40th anniversary. Um, we've been here serving folks in the community.

01:18:44.175 --> 01:18:46.175

Since the beginning of the AIDS crisis. Um, initially, our name was the Gay Community AIDS Project.

01:18:50.740 --> 01:18:54.740

But this changed over time, uh, just given the large... community that we serve, we no longer just serve LGBTQ or gay folks.

01:18:54.183 --> 01:19:02.183

Um, we serve people of all races, ethnicities, uh, ages, everything, because HIV and AIDS do not discriminate.

01:19:02.581 --> 01:19:08.581

Um, and we've actually started, uh, serving not only folks who are living with HIV and AIDS.

01:19:08.813 --> 01:19:13.813

But are at risk, because this is a huge population, um, and it is also prevention.

01:19:14.224 --> 01:19:19.224

Um, and to reflect this, we updated our mission statement. It was 40 years overdue.

01:19:22.911 --> 01:19:27.911

Um, to specifically include individuals at risk, and also families. This is our mission statement, I'd like to read it.

01:19:31.508 --> 01:19:33.508

Oh, are you putting up the slides? Thank you. Yeah.

01:19:33.549 --> 01:19:40.549

Um, so our mission statement is GCAP empowers individuals and families living with and affected by HIV and AIDS.

01:19:44.481 --> 01:19:48.481

In East Central Illinois, by providing housing and supportive services. And actively works within the community to reduce virus transmission.

01:19:55.985 --> 01:19:59.985

Recently, we've seen a huge spike in requests from families. And also, given the... Increase of folks living or moving to HIV, sorry, moving to.

01:20:00.616 --> 01:20:04.616

Um, Illinois because of HIV discrimination laws, or because of LGBTQ.

01:20:04.863 --> 01:20:10.863

Uh, discrimination, uh, we needed to include this, so I'm very happy that our mission has been updated to reflect what we do.

01:20:12.443 --> 01:20:16.443

Um, and the... these are some challenges that are faced by the LGBTQ.

01:20:16.701 --> 01:20:25.701

Folks that we serve, um, either living with or at risk of HIV. Um, and because we are a small organization, and we work pretty closely with our clients.

01:20:32.041 --> 01:20:35.041

Um, we get to hear a lot of concerns. So, um, this first one is housing. As a housing provider, obviously we see that housing is.

01:20:35.885 --> 01:20:41.885

A struggle. Um, I think Josh mentioned earlier that folks have a hard time finding safe and welcoming housing.

01:20:42.960 --> 01:20:47.960

Um, sometimes there are places in town that offer roommate matching. They can work to find.

01:20:48.605 --> 01:20:51.605

A pair so that it can cost, uh, cut down on rent costs.

01:20:55.534 --> 01:21:00.534

Um, but this can be unsafe. We've had folks who have reported, I just can't do that. This is not... someone I can live with, um, because of homophobia.

01:21:01.218 --> 01:21:10.218

And there's just not enough affordable housing options in general. This isn't specific to identity, but this is something that has been incredibly challenging for us.

01:21:10.523 --> 01:21:17.523

The fair market rent for a one-bedroom is \$900, and every single one-bedroom around here is.

01:21:18.947 --> 01:21:23.947

About a thousand. So, trying to get folks into permanent housing is... Impossible, but we do it.

01:21:30.747 --> 01:21:32.747

Well, Meg doesn't. Um, also with housing, we have seen a huge increase of people relocating to the area.

01:21:32.432 --> 01:21:37.432

We serve all of East Central Illinois, um, and that includes Effingham.

01:21:37.960 --> 01:21:42.960

Um, so folks actually are moving from Effingham, not only just, uh, Indiana.

01:21:47.765 --> 01:21:49.765

Ohio... The red states around us. Um, it's actually also just in Illinois, too.

01:21:49.154 --> 01:21:55.154

Um, and shelters. We have heard this multiple times. Shelters... the shelter here.

01:21:55.683 --> 01:21:58.683

I'm not gonna say shelters, because we have one, let's remind ourselves that.

01:21:58.081 --> 01:22:03.081

The shelter here can be unsafe. Um, we've had folks who.

01:22:09.152 --> 01:22:11.152

Will willingly sleep on the streets. Because they do not feel safe in the shelter, or folks who have had their status revealed in the shelter.

01:22:11.511 --> 01:22:17.511

And don't feel safe, because now people know and they don't want to be near them, and they are going to physically hurt them.

01:22:20.726 --> 01:22:23.726

Um, it's really sad, uh... We now offer increased.

01:22:23.420 --> 01:22:28.420

Emergency housing, this was typically something that we were only able to do.

01:22:28.230 --> 01:22:33.230

When we had donations, but it is now something that is funded, and I will speak about that later.

01:22:33.348 --> 01:22:37.348

Um, and for financial struggles, this is just something that we see.

01:22:39.385 --> 01:22:42.385

Statistically, folks who are, um. Gender and sexuality minorities.

01:22:42.757 --> 01:22:49.757

Get paid less, they typically, if you look at the dollar for heterosexual and gender and, uh, sexual minorities.

01:22:58.392 --> 01:23:00.392

There is a difference, um... So, what we do, uh, we help them with financial assistance, um, and we try to lessen that burden, um.

01:23:05.552 --> 01:23:07.552
I'm gonna go to the next one.

01:23:14.529 --> 01:23:16.529
I think I had a client quote. It got out of order. I don't know how that happened.

01:23:21.178 --> 01:23:23.178
Got all discombobulated. Well, I'll read it.

01:23:30.395 --> 01:23:33.395
Yeah, so this is a long quote, um... And... I had to edit it, and I'm not going to read Expletive, I'm just going to read the edited version.

01:23:33.708 --> 01:23:35.708
But this is, um, a quote that I think is important.

01:23:36.401 --> 01:23:42.401
I came here because where I was before wasn't safe. It wasn't safe, like, I was afraid I was actually going to get hurt.

01:23:44.699 --> 01:23:47.699
People in Southern Illinois are very terrible, and my family is part of those people, by the way.

01:23:47.702 --> 01:23:52.702
I got diagnosed not too long ago, and when I did, I thought, great, not only am I

01:23:54.284 --> 01:23:57.284
A gay. I am a gay with AIDS. These people are gonna kill me.

01:23:57.309 --> 01:24:01.309
When my cousin found my meds, he told my brother, and I got kicked out.

01:24:06.648 --> 01:24:08.648
He had some stuff about the Bible. He said some stuff about the Bible and about me being dirty or whatever, and then said I had to leave

01:24:08.428 --> 01:24:11.428
Or he would call his friends, and they would make me leave.

01:24:11.408 --> 01:24:14.408
I left and came here because I heard it was less terrible.

01:24:14.789 --> 01:24:17.789
I didn't have anywhere to go, but you guys got me a motel room.

01:24:20.577 --> 01:24:23.577
That was literally a lifesaver, not to be dramatic. But it's true. I feel better here, and I've found my new family.

01:24:23.428 --> 01:24:28.428

Things are still kind of bad, like the people at my job aren't the coolest, but that's trade services, I guess.

01:24:34.784 --> 01:24:37.784

It's better than living in that hellhole. Thanks, guys. So, we were really appreciative to get that, uh...

01:24:42.097 --> 01:24:45.097

Comments, it was very honest and... He really, um, shared from his heart, and we are really happy to have folks come here and.

01:24:54.832 --> 01:24:56.832

Uh, feel safe. That is our goal. And our response to that... Okay, thank you. Um, is to provide transitional housing. First and foremost, we are funded to provide for additional housing. It is.

01:24:59.432 --> 01:25:02.432

The bulk of our income, and it is... What we've done for many years, um.

01:25:02.066 --> 01:25:07.066

The activists that I talked about earlier that fund... that founded GCAP also built our house.

01:25:09.193 --> 01:25:12.193

Which has been around since 1990. Older than I am.

01:25:12.867 --> 01:25:18.867

Um, and so in this transitional house, we provide affirming and safe environment. A lot of our clients are LGBTQ.

01:25:18.545 --> 01:25:22.545

And we give them a space where they can be themselves without fear of discrimination.

01:25:24.942 --> 01:25:27.942

Um, and I mentioned emergency housing earlier. Uh, this is something that.

01:25:27.674 --> 01:25:34.674

We are new to providing, as in, now it is fully funded, we have a process for folks applying for this.

01:25:37.206 --> 01:25:41.206

And we also provide case management, and uh... additional supportive services while they are in this.

01:25:49.501 --> 01:25:51.501

We have provided. An absurd amount of emergency housing, and when I say that, I mean I would never expect that there would be this many calls from folks who say, I am literally homeless.

01:25:53.257 --> 01:25:56.257

And I need some help. Um... This is... we provide up to 2 weeks.

01:25:56.211 --> 01:26:00.211

And this is funded by United Way, and also by, um.

01:26:04.016 --> 01:26:06.016

Charitable Trust Grant through the... Illinois State Attorney Office.

01:26:08.048 --> 01:26:13.048

And we also, as Josh said earlier, we work with the LGBTQ subcommittee, um.

01:26:13.265 --> 01:26:18.265

And collaborate with other local folks to, uh, increase housing options and to just.

01:26:23.619 --> 01:26:25.619

Uh, try to increase. Housing. Try to reduce housing discrimination in our county.

01:26:30.988 --> 01:26:34.988

Um, and as I mentioned earlier, for... we are funded by United Way and... the Charitable Trust Grant, not only to provide emergency housing, but to provide financial assistance.

01:26:42.713 --> 01:26:44.713

And this is a lot of what we do. Folks. Contact Us needing various things, um, help with rent, help with utilities, uh, transportation, food, clothing.

01:26:47.963 --> 01:26:50.963

Uh, strollers, uh, anything like that. These... ease the financial burdens, and they help prevent homelessness.

01:26:51.160 --> 01:26:54.160

I've had folks ask me, why are you buying someone a couch?

01:26:54.804 --> 01:26:59.804

Because if they don't have a couch, or if they use their money for a couch, how are they going to pay their utilities?

01:27:06.108 --> 01:27:08.108

Where do you want them to sit? So these essential household items are something that we will pay for, and...

01:27:13.669 --> 01:27:15.669

Questions like that always make me laugh. The next one... this is...

01:27:19.020 --> 01:27:21.020

That's the first page.

01:27:30.136 --> 01:27:32.136

What did you guys do to these?

01:27:47.884 --> 01:27:49.884

Sorry, I have what you'll print it out, I'm trying to... Okay, I started at the end. It's actually healthcare and accessibility is first.

01:28:23.362 --> 01:28:25.362

This is Leah. Thank you.

01:28:23.969 --> 01:28:26.969

It's this one, yeah. Thank you. Um, so yes, inequities in healthcare. Uh, this is something that...

01:28:28.851 --> 01:28:33.851

We get talked about, or we, uh, speak to folks about a lot, um... First, just, how do I get connected to infectious disease?

01:28:34.434 --> 01:28:44.434

And it's harder than you would think. You have to get a referral from public health, or from your primary care doctor, and given that there are 4 infectious disease doctors, you can get put on a waitlist for a while.

01:28:44.716 --> 01:28:49.716

And then you have to cross your fingers and hope that you get put with the infectious disease doctor that is not.

01:28:54.997 --> 01:28:56.997

Transphobic? And if you do, oh, that sucks, because that person has to allow you.

01:29:00.576 --> 01:29:02.576

To switch providers. And this is very hard, um, and this is something that's.

01:29:06.815 --> 01:29:09.815

We have tried to remediate and... Uh, typically what we are told is.

01:29:11.804 --> 01:29:14.804

There's an infectious disease program at. In Chicago, there's one in Peoria.

01:29:18.247 --> 01:29:21.247

Maybe they can try looking for a different provider. Which is great, you know, you can really do that when you're homeless.

01:29:26.429 --> 01:29:30.429

So, that's a huge inaccessibility for our clients. Um, also, there's incredibly long wait lists for affirming primary care physicians.

01:29:32.388 --> 01:29:35.388

When we go down this list of affirming providers. And I give this list to clients.

01:29:35.481 --> 01:29:40.481

They say I called them, I called them, I called them, I called them, and none of them are taking new clients.

01:29:44.253 --> 01:29:47.253

So we have to settle. And again. Cross our fingers and hope that they're not homophobic or transphobic.

01:29:51.702 --> 01:29:56.702

Um, lack of insurance-covered transportation to specialty care. So the folks that do want to go to Chicago, Peoria, all of those places.

01:29:56.608 --> 01:30:03.608

How are they gonna get there? A lot of insurance, private insurance, covers up to 50 miles, sometimes 100 if you're lucky.

01:30:04.056 --> 01:30:07.056

But, you have to make sure that you're there on time.

01:30:11.534 --> 01:30:13.534

Sometimes 15 minutes before, or they will leave you. Most places, uh, or most transportation that does.

01:30:16.485 --> 01:30:18.485

Uh... cover. Sorry, most insurance that does cover transportation also.

01:30:21.196 --> 01:30:23.196

Gives you a three-strike rule, so... You don't cancel on time, you get there too late.

01:30:23.433 --> 01:30:26.433

Three times, and that sucks, you can't go to your doctor's appointments anymore.

01:30:27.382 --> 01:30:30.382

So these are the things that we try to, at least.

01:30:33.533 --> 01:30:35.533

Help a little bit, because we can't fix the system. It's just two of us.

01:30:42.037 --> 01:30:44.037

And this next one is something that I... talk about with every healthcare provider that I get in contact with is, do you know what PrEP is?

01:30:44.863 --> 01:30:49.863

Because some doctors don't, and if they do, why aren't they talking about it with their patients?

01:30:50.817 --> 01:30:53.817

There's a prep-to-need ratio that does not match the actual need.

01:30:53.845 --> 01:30:56.845

If we were looking at who was walking into their doctor's office.

01:31:03.450 --> 01:31:07.450

94% of at-risk white Americans receive PrEP. Compared to the only... compared to only 24% of Latin and 13% of Black communities.

01:31:07.567 --> 01:31:12.567

And this happens here, too. When I asked my doctor for PrEP, she said why.

01:31:18.921 --> 01:31:20.921

Um, do you know what that is? Why? Um, and this shouldn't be something that is asked when we ask for PrEP, and...

01:31:20.306 --> 01:31:23.306

This would be something that is asked when we're going through a routine screening.

01:31:23.380 --> 01:31:26.380

How many partners do you have? What kind of protection do you use?

01:31:31.542 --> 01:31:33.542

Are you interested in PrEP? So... I am sorry to the providers that I have.

01:31:34.182 --> 01:31:37.182

Uh, given many pamphlets, too, about PrEP, but I think it's important.

01:31:38.367 --> 01:31:45.367

We're also seeing a huge increase in diagnoses amongst, uh, the, like, uh, Justin said, the young, um.

01:31:51.342 --> 01:31:53.342

18 to 35. African American Black, uh... Women. And, um...

01:31:52.451 --> 01:31:56.451

We're trying to do outreach, we're working with public health to do outreach and education.

01:32:02.266 --> 01:32:04.266

In that demographic. I do have...

01:32:06.159 --> 01:32:09.159

A client testimonial that I would like to read.

01:32:14.298 --> 01:32:17.298

Okay. Thank you. Um, I'm on Medicaid and have been trying for months to find a therapist.

01:32:17.107 --> 01:32:21.107

Preferably a gay therapist, or at least a therapist that is okay with me getting AIDS.

01:32:21.389 --> 01:32:27.389

Sorry, being gay. I want to be able to comfortably say I'm gay, I have AIDS, and I'm depressed as hell.

01:32:31.423 --> 01:32:34.423

I went on to Psychology Today and type in Champaign, then click LGBTQ, In Person, Medicaid.

01:32:34.426 --> 01:32:39.426

I call one person, and they don't accept Medicaid. I call another, they... they don't either.

01:32:39.443 --> 01:32:44.443

I call another, and they do accept Medicaid, but there's a waitlist, and I'm 20th on the list.

01:32:44.800 --> 01:32:47.800

I finally find someone who accepts Medicaid and is taking new clients.

01:32:47.602 --> 01:32:52.602

And then I get an email asking me to agree to participate in telehealth services.

01:32:54.987 --> 01:32:57.987

Because apparently she doesn't do in-person sessions. I'm ready to rip my hair out, why is it so hard to get help?

01:33:05.322 --> 01:33:07.322

And comments like these are what... prompted me to apply for every single grant that comes my way in my email inbox.

01:33:12.334 --> 01:33:14.334

Specifically, the Charitable Trust Grant. Because this grant, um, \$20,000 is specifically to help folks who are at risk.

01:33:14.224 --> 01:33:18.224

Of HIV, and this can be used for mental health services.

01:33:21.195 --> 01:33:24.195

Um, transportation to different places. Oh, sorry, can you go to the Our Response slide?

01:33:35.123 --> 01:33:37.123

Yes. Um... So yeah, we'll provide funding for, um, mental health appointments.

01:33:37.586 --> 01:33:43.586

Uh, we'll also work to find them a mental health provider that is affirming. We are currently capping that at 8 weeks.

01:33:43.025 --> 01:33:48.025

But if they use those 8 weeks and they continue to need assistance, they can also.

01:33:50.850 --> 01:33:52.850

Apply for our financial assistance program. We want to make sure folks are getting what they need.

01:33:57.871 --> 01:34:03.871

Transportation support, so we will buy folks train tickets, we'll get them an Uber or a Lyft, we'll also... drive them. Um... Because sometimes they're more, uh, comfortable with that.

01:34:04.488 --> 01:34:07.488

We've had folks say, I just don't want to be in the car with that Uber driver.

01:34:07.443 --> 01:34:14.443

Last time, like, this happened, or last time this happened, specifically around Pride Fest, seems like when people.

01:34:21.111 --> 01:34:23.111

Get discriminated against in the Uber. Um, I don't know why everybody comes out during Pride Fest saying, I'm just gonna do this to harass people, but it's what happens.

01:34:27.268 --> 01:34:29.268

Um, and seeing that is... why we decided to start helping folks.

01:34:34.514 --> 01:34:37.514

With transportation, not just for health, or... social service-related appointments, but just for being able to travel places safely.

01:34:38.896 --> 01:34:44.896

Also, we offer health assistance, um, we'll actually go and we'll pay for their prescriptions and take it to them.

01:34:45.394 --> 01:34:48.394

Because we want to make sure people are getting their medication, whether it be.

01:34:52.949 --> 01:34:54.949

Antiretrovirals or PrEP. It's important we will do what we can to help folks with that.

01:34:55.546 --> 01:35:00.546

Um, and I talked a little bit about this, about the advocacy. I'm not always annoying about the advocacy. Sometimes I do.

01:35:05.444 --> 01:35:08.444

Advocacy by just talking to folks about. Um, what they can do for prevention, how they can keep themselves and others safe and healthy.

01:35:16.252 --> 01:35:18.252

And other things like that. And the next one...

01:35:25.146 --> 01:35:27.146

Can you go to the next slide?

01:35:36.763 --> 01:35:38.763

Yes. Sorry, things got all discombobulated.

01:35:39.195 --> 01:35:45.195

Um, so social stigma and stigma in general within the HIV and AIDS population.

01:35:51.041 --> 01:35:55.041

Is huge. And it is a huge barrier to care. Um, and this was something, actually, that somebody spoke up about recently at a Getting to Zero.

01:36:00.249 --> 01:36:02.249

Uh, tour. Where they come around and try to talk about and ask folks from the community what they think their priority should be.

01:36:02.221 --> 01:36:10.221

But it wasn't just spoken about once, it was spoken about multiple times. Folks living with HIV and AIDS are saying, we are still being discriminated and destigmatized.

01:36:16.144 --> 01:36:18.144

And dealing with this stigma here. Um, which is why we really, really try to teach folks that U equals U.

01:36:22.311 --> 01:36:25.311

How many people here know what U equals U means? Nobody knows what U equals U means?

01:36:31.713 --> 01:36:33.713

Undetectable equals untransmittable. Which means if you have an undetectable viral load, you cannot transmit the virus to others.

01:36:34.320 --> 01:36:38.320

So, folks take antiretrovirals, I'm gonna educate you all for a second.

01:36:38.269 --> 01:36:42.269

Folks take their antiviral, uh, medication if they take it consistently.

01:36:41.977 --> 01:36:46.977

Um, they will reduce the viral load in their body to below 20. They can.

01:36:47.786 --> 01:36:50.786

We wanted to see that below 20 number because it virtually means that they're undetectable.

01:36:51.890 --> 01:36:54.890

And when they're on deductible, they cannot transmit the virus to others.

01:36:54.589 --> 01:37:00.589

And a lot of folks don't know this. They think that if you have HIV or AIDS, you're gonna give it to the next person that you see.

01:37:01.666 --> 01:37:04.666

And that maybe you'll give it to them by kissing them, which is not true.

01:37:04.627 --> 01:37:09.627

Maybe you'll give it to them by hugging them or sneezing on them, or whatever, which is also not true.

01:37:17.880 --> 01:37:20.880

We teach folks how HIV actually spreads. How you can prevent it, and... Also, how folks maybe just can't give it to you because they're taking their medication appropriately.

01:37:27.071 --> 01:37:29.071

Thank you all for learning about U equals U. Um, and there's also still a lot of misinformation within the LGBTQ community.

01:37:29.154 --> 01:37:36.154

Again, related to U equals U. Also, there's this... still this stigma in this question that gets asked, are you clean or dirty?

01:37:42.510 --> 01:37:44.510

Which... I feel so bad, uh, for the folks that have told me that. It has...

01:37:43.295 --> 01:37:46.295

Ben, a huge problem with them, not only on... for them.

01:37:50.405 --> 01:37:52.405

Uh, specifically on Grindr. And, uh, places like that, like, this is a question, a litmus test.

01:37:52.482 --> 01:37:56.482

Are you clean or dirty? Um, and so seeing that stigma within the community.

01:38:01.607 --> 01:38:04.607

It's heartbreaking, and I hope that advocacy and education. Helps. I'm not gonna say prevent that, because that's not gonna happen, but at least decrease it.

01:38:07.986 --> 01:38:10.986

Um, and now gaps in social support. This is... Also, an area that we see.

01:38:15.477 --> 01:38:16.477

A lot of need, um... Folks don't know where to go. How do I make friends as an adult?

01:38:18.239 --> 01:38:23.239

This is something that our case manager works with folks to do every week, every day, really.

01:38:23.058 --> 01:38:28.058

Um, people need help building support, and they also need help building support safely.

01:38:28.227 --> 01:38:33.227

At the Public Health Department does run a support group for folks living with HIV and AIDS.

01:38:35.901 --> 01:38:38.901

Um, it's not well promoted. I wish that more people know about it.

01:38:45.945 --> 01:38:49.945

There's also no third space, that's the comment that I've gotten. Um... And folks have told me that they... Don't feel comfortable in young spaces, um...

01:38:51.953 --> 01:38:53.953

And feel that groups are too formal. And this is, um, where I'll go into the client testimonial.

01:39:02.116 --> 01:39:05.116

Yes, thank you. Oh, sorry, no. It says client testimonial dash social support.

01:39:12.031 --> 01:39:14.031

Yeah, thank you. I think if I had to say one thing that we really need here, it would just be a space to go to.

01:39:14.300 --> 01:39:18.300

The groups here are mostly for young people, and if they're not for young people, then they're online.

01:39:18.023 --> 01:39:22.023

I want to actually go somewhere. I need to leave my house and be around people.

01:39:25.360 --> 01:39:27.360

But where is a dyke in her mid-40s go? I could go to the bar, but I don't want to drink. That's bad news.

01:39:27.524 --> 01:39:33.524

But apparently that's where all the dikes go. It's disappointing, it really is. It makes me... it makes me sad if I think about it for too long.

01:39:33.882 --> 01:39:38.882

I just want somewhere I can go and be around other queers, and I don't want to have to introduce myself when I'm there.

01:39:39.682 --> 01:39:41.682

Like I said, I just want a space to go to.

01:39:42.782 --> 01:39:47.782

Um, and this is a client of ours that did give her initials and her age, TH, and she is 43 years old.

01:39:48.190 --> 01:39:55.190

This is actually something that I agree with. I would love to go somewhere and just be a fly on the wall without saying, hi, my name is Darya Shigevi, my pronouns are she, her.

01:40:02.499 --> 01:40:06.499

Because I don't like doing that, and I'm socially awkward. So I really agreed with this client. I think this is something that we really need here. Um, we don't have any...

01:40:10.412 --> 01:40:12.412

Like, gay, uh... Coffee shops, coffee bars, anything like that, uh, anything that's not...

01:40:14.145 --> 01:40:17.145

Centered around alcohol or the internet, I... Also would love to see this, and to see clients.

01:40:23.021 --> 01:40:26.021

Talking about this makes me want to do something about it, and I don't... know how to right now, but I can direct her to places, direct her to folks in the community.

01:40:26.855 --> 01:40:30.855

And... try to do the best that we can, and I'm glad that we're here trying to come up with solutions.

01:40:35.321 --> 01:40:37.321

The next page.

01:40:41.680 --> 01:40:46.680

It's, um, our response for... I don't know how this happened, um, for social support.

01:41:01.707 --> 01:41:03.707

Oh, yeah. There we go, yeah. Um, so like I said, one of our responses is to provide case management, uh, before.

01:41:09.206 --> 01:41:12.206

Fiscal year 25, we did not have a case manager. Because we were not funded by CCMHB, this is actually our first year being funded by CCMHB.

01:41:12.336 --> 01:41:17.336

Which, thank you all, I'm also very surprised, given that we have been around for 40 years.

01:41:17.119 --> 01:41:21.119

But I am very grateful for this, because now we have a case manager.

01:41:21.930 --> 01:41:27.930

And she works very hard to provide resources and opportunities for folks to go and build their social networks.

01:41:33.082 --> 01:41:35.082

And sometimes this looks like taking everybody bowling. Because maybe they want to join a bowling league, and we have had some folks get really into bowling.

01:41:38.270 --> 01:41:41.270

Um, and they go bowling with each other, and it is very... fun, sometimes it's giving folks, um.

01:41:40.985 --> 01:41:46.985

Paperwork, or not paperwork, uh, handouts, and also just talking with them about how to build confidence.

01:41:51.161 --> 01:41:53.161

Because if you build confidence, when you build confidence. You're more likely to reach out to others and build support networks.

01:41:58.826 --> 01:42:01.826

Like I said, we also do education advocacy, um, we also do...

01:42:01.440 --> 01:42:08.440

I also provide support during partner notification. This can be really scary for people to sit down and tell their partner, um.

01:42:16.152 --> 01:42:20.152

I'm living with HIV, especially if you've already been intimate. Because folks, like I said, are... Ignorant to what U equals U is, um...

01:42:19.523 --> 01:42:22.523

And also, some folks still think that it is a felony.

01:42:29.089 --> 01:42:32.089

In the state of Illinois, HIV is decriminalized. In other states, it is... not. And you can get a felony for not telling folks your status.

01:42:32.924 --> 01:42:34.924

So people are really scared because they still think that, um.

01:42:37.951 --> 01:42:40.951

One, that that's the law still, and two, that that. Something that their partner may think, or that their partner might get.

01:42:45.215 --> 01:42:48.215

Angry, because we have had folks who said, my partner. Did not react well, and they became violent, and this is why I need housing support.

01:42:48.559 --> 01:42:52.559

So, we provide that support, we want to be there. If anything, just as a mediator.

01:42:53.859 --> 01:42:56.859

And this is something I said earlier, and I just want to re-emphasize this.

01:42:57.369 --> 01:43:02.369

The social support and community building is an ongoing concern, and it needs to be addressed.

01:43:05.099 --> 01:43:08.099

We get input from our clients to understand their needs. And to collaborate with partners.

01:43:08.113 --> 01:43:13.113

Um, define and implement these solutions, or to find and implement solutions to fill these gaps in care.

01:43:17.546 --> 01:43:20.546

We can't do it all, and we're not doing it all right now, and... I am, again, happy to be here working towards a solution.

01:43:34.567 --> 01:43:36.567

I think? Sorry, all of these.

01:43:35.589 --> 01:43:39.589

Um, there is one final... there's one final page before the last page.

01:43:46.825 --> 01:43:48.825

There we go. Um, this is... The one before that.

01:43:55.378 --> 01:43:57.378

Yeah, this is just, um... just a little way to say how we are trying to fill the gap and meet the need.

01:44:01.222 --> 01:44:05.222

Um, we talk about proactive advocacy. And trying to work with folks, um, to identify.

01:44:05.945 --> 01:44:10.945

And just tell them about the laws. Um, we recently went to HIV Advocacy Day at Springfield.

01:44:16.055 --> 01:44:18.055

Again, not lobbying, just advocacy. Um, to advocate for policies that will directly affect our clients.

01:44:18.544 --> 01:44:23.544

And to educate folks, one of the things that I thought was very important, and I want to share about this.

01:44:26.171 --> 01:44:29.171

Um, when I was talking to a legislator in Chicago. About funding. I was sitting with other folks.

01:44:29.097 --> 01:44:36.097

Um, they said, why do we need to fund this? Why HIV? Why AIDS? We were so oversaturated here in Chicago.

01:44:36.156 --> 01:44:42.156

With homeless shelters, why does this matter? And I spoke up when I said this funding does not only support Chicago.

01:44:45.719 --> 01:44:47.719

This supports all of Illinois. And it's decisions like that that hurt our clients.

01:44:48.009 --> 01:44:53.009

That make it so that we can't support their fund... that we can't support them, because we have inadequate funding.

01:44:53.761 --> 01:44:57.761

Um, so, like you said earlier, this is \$6 million that you're able to.

01:44:57.304 --> 01:45:01.304

Distribute to people, and so our county funds that we're able to work with.

01:45:07.451 --> 01:45:11.451

I'm always grateful for, because while our federal and state. Funding and budgets are... messy, um, our county funds seem to be more stable.

01:45:15.319 --> 01:45:17.319

I'm appreciative for that. And now I'm done.

01:45:22.055 --> 01:45:24.055

Thank you so much. We will open it up to board questions and comments.

01:45:30.876 --> 01:45:33.876

Good question. Thank you for your presentation. Um, are there...

01:45:40.945 --> 01:45:45.945

Legal solutions to the discrimination. Is being experienced that can be pursued, still be pursued, or is the problem the... more the enforcement of.

01:45:56.582 --> 01:45:58.582

Existing laws, do you think? Um, I think that... I mean, both... there are legal protections. We... there's the HI... sorry, there's the AIDS Confidentiality Act that we see.

01:46:04.488 --> 01:46:07.488

Um, violated, uh... Which... We have tried to get folks help for, but I think that...

01:46:13.502 --> 01:46:16.502

And we direct them to the AIDS, uh... Foundation Chicago. There's a specific legal network in Chicago that we direct folks to, because they work with this.

01:46:16.470 --> 01:46:24.470

They work with violations of the AIDS Confidentiality Act. We once had someone post on Facebook, publicly, that so-and-so has AIDS, like.

01:46:28.691 --> 01:46:30.691

In some expletives. Um... Which is illegal, you can't do that. You can get a felony for that.

01:46:36.158 --> 01:46:41.158

Um, reckless, negligent disclosure of someone's status. And... we can tell someone. We can tell...

01:46:42.410 --> 01:46:46.410

Local law enforcement, we can do all of that. We have done, we have encouraged folks, and nothing happens.

01:46:46.791 --> 01:46:52.791

It is something that we're going to have to change socially, and we can't do it using the legal system, unfortunately.

01:46:52.760 --> 01:46:56.760

Um, and I think part of that is also stigma within the system.

01:47:09.497 --> 01:47:12.497

Um, so I just have a few questions, um... Do you know if anyone's reported the... infectious disease doctor that is, uh, transphobic, because.

01:47:15.660 --> 01:47:18.660

You're supposed to be non-judgmental as a healthcare provider. Yeah, more than once.

01:47:18.442 --> 01:47:21.442

And so the hospital hasn't done anything to remedy that situation.

01:47:23.370 --> 01:47:27.370

Obviously, it continues to happen, so obviously it's... it hasn't been remedied then, correct?

01:47:33.556 --> 01:47:38.556

I cannot speak on Carl. Uh, and then, I guess one of my other questions is what... as, like, healthcare providers, uh, could... could healthcare providers do to help.

01:47:38.198 --> 01:47:45.198

Um, in decreasing HIV rates in, um, Black women in this area.

01:47:45.008 --> 01:47:51.008

Yeah, um, so like I said, I think that every PCP, general practitioner, family doctor.

01:47:55.335 --> 01:47:57.335

Should talk about PrEP. When you do your intake. And you're talking about sexual partners, sexual orientation.

01:47:59.771 --> 01:48:04.771

If they discuss more than one partner, if they display any of... or they... Discuss any of the at-risk.

01:48:06.812 --> 01:48:08.812

Categories, they should... Get a pamphlet at least about PrEP.

01:48:08.225 --> 01:48:14.225

They should, uh, ask the question, would you be interested in this preventative medication?

01:48:19.413 --> 01:48:23.413

Or shot that you only have to take a few times, um... We've seen, because of the huge increase in diagnoses, I think this is so important.

01:48:28.216 --> 01:48:32.216

Also, we've had a big increase in diagnoses amongst youth. So, um, seeing folks under the age of 18 either coming to the area.

01:48:35.274 --> 01:48:38.274

Or, living in the area and getting diagnosed, um... I think pediatricians also need to have this conversation.

01:48:38.583 --> 01:48:47.583

Uh, youth do have sex, and they do, uh, participate or partake in at-risk behavior, so we have to make sure that we're also having those conversations with them.

01:48:50.000 --> 01:48:52.000

Maybe when parents step outside? Um, but I think that's very important.

01:48:55.453 --> 01:49:01.453

Thank you. Um, so I am gonna start by saying my mom always taught me to, um.

01:49:01.520 --> 01:49:05.520

No... no question is a dumb question, unless you don't ask it. So.

01:49:05.407 --> 01:49:11.407

Thank you so much for explaining U equals U. I thought I knew, but I was so glad when you.

01:49:11.886 --> 01:49:15.886

Explain it, because I was like, I'd actually start it, like, I need someone to explain that.

01:49:16.013 --> 01:49:20.013

Um, and then as far as PrEP, can you give us just a quick.

01:49:32.574 --> 01:49:35.574

Understanding of that. I'm under the impression that, um. You know, I actually have a... um, a friend who is a gay man, and he talked about going on PrEP, and it was very cost prohibitive, so I don't know...

01:49:34.478 --> 01:49:39.478

Like, what kind of cost? Is that something where insurances don't want to cover it?

01:49:39.101 --> 01:49:48.101

Um, I'll let you speak on that, and then probably my final, um, thing is a couple of you have seen me on this board for, I don't know, 5 plus years.

01:49:54.013 --> 01:49:57.013

Um, and my... support to this community has grown so much, and part of that.

01:50:00.133 --> 01:50:02.133

Was because I've been educated. I grew up in a very rural Christian.

01:50:05.606 --> 01:50:07.606

Town that... that's bad. You know, man and woman, you know, da-da-da.

01:50:07.273 --> 01:50:12.273

Um, and it took my daughters pretty much being like, Mom, wake up.

01:50:12.779 --> 01:50:18.779

There's still, you know, my friend that I am. We've had conversations in my own home about.

01:50:18.821 --> 01:50:25.821

Pronouns. Um, I was able to do it a little bit better with our daughter than my husband.

01:50:28.855 --> 01:50:31.855

And then she kind of shortened her name, not legally, but... Instead of Reagan, she goes by Wright.

01:50:34.263 --> 01:50:36.263

And we respect that. Um... So, again.

01:50:41.748 --> 01:50:43.748

I always say I probably... A talk too much, and I probably, like, fumble over myself, but, um...

01:50:42.965 --> 01:50:46.965

I do feel like I have, um, done some changing, and I think.

01:50:55.871 --> 01:50:57.871

Part of that's because I've been on this board. And I've learned there's a lot of things that maybe the media doesn't always tell us. There's a lot of things we don't know. We think, oh, well, they're getting the help.

01:50:58.934 --> 01:51:07.934

No, they're not, you know? Because they are this type of, you know, group. So, um, so thank you. If you'll... like I said, just a quick talk about, um, the prep.

01:51:11.843 --> 01:51:13.843

And I'll be quiet. Um, thank you. I'm also somebody who talks a lot and fumbles over my words.

01:51:18.008 --> 01:51:23.008

Um, so I... when I was talking about PrEP, I realized I didn't explain even what the... Abbreviation was for. It's a pre-exposure prophylaxis.

01:51:23.150 --> 01:51:27.150

So it's a prophylactic medication, so you take it to prevent something.

01:51:36.122 --> 01:51:38.122

Um, and there are different kinds of PrEP. Depending on your body, depending... there's actually some that are recommended more for folks who assign female at birth, uh, also depends on your kidney functioning.

01:51:38.052 --> 01:51:42.052

So, I'm not a doctor, but I will say that, um.

01:51:42.149 --> 01:51:50.149

Just simply, PrEP is a medication that prevents HIV and AIDS, and it is very effective if you take it regularly and as prescribed.

01:51:54.153 --> 01:51:56.153

There's also something called PEP. Um, post-exposure prophylax... post-exposure prophylaxis?

01:52:01.611 --> 01:52:04.611

Um, which is for folks who have had a contact. Um, with somebody who was positive, or have had, like, an accidental needle stick, something like that.

01:52:04.909 --> 01:52:10.909

For folks that have... that go into the hospital after sexual assault, rape, something like that, they are also offered PEP.

01:52:14.804 --> 01:52:16.804

Because we never know the status of someone. Um, so this is a medication also that we, uh.

01:52:19.698 --> 01:52:21.698

Work with Focus Tog. And then your second question.

01:52:30.241 --> 01:52:34.241

Yes. I guess to add on to that... Oh, sorry. It was a very important question, and I think I should answer it. You talked about the financial burden of PrEP.

01:52:36.878 --> 01:52:39.878

Um, so there's actually something called Prep4ALL. And I think that this, again, has to do with education.

01:52:39.532 --> 01:52:43.532

Um, and how we need to educate the community, Prep4ALL helps folks.

01:52:43.591 --> 01:52:49.591

Get access to PrEP, and PrEP is also a medication that should be prevented, or sorry, should be, um.

01:52:54.586 --> 01:52:57.586

Covered by insurance, uh, just like birth control. It is a medication that is preventative, and.

01:53:02.480 --> 01:53:04.480

Either... yeah, I... Working with folks at the Public Health Department, they...

01:53:07.007 --> 01:53:11.007

I've worked with almost, I think, everyone, Medicaid, private insurance. I think TRICARE is the only one that is challenging.

01:53:16.540 --> 01:53:19.540

Because it's... government, uh, military, I think. But, um, you should not have any expenses related to PrEP, and if you do.

01:53:19.322 --> 01:53:24.322

We can help people ask, what do you do? And a lot of times we say, what do you need us to do?

01:53:24.887 --> 01:53:27.887

Um, and if that means covering costs for prep, we're gonna cover cost for PrEP.

01:53:34.950 --> 01:53:37.950

Um, which kind of leads me to a question that maybe even... Dr. Joakim can answer. Is this something that can be given to, like, youth?

01:53:44.552 --> 01:53:46.552

I am going to defer that to John. So, we can give it to youth. Um, I prescribed it just only a handful of times, just because.

01:53:51.070 --> 01:53:54.070

It's not something that comes up as often, um... And then, if it does happen, or it does come up, sometimes we'll...

01:53:53.357 --> 01:53:58.357

Talked to some of our family medicine doctors who are usually more, um, well-versed in that.

01:54:05.808 --> 01:54:08.808

Uh, we do talk to him about the importance of. Following the regimen, um, because if you do get HIV while you... if you're not taking it consistently... consistently or as prescribed.

01:54:14.059 --> 01:54:16.059

Then it can become more resistant to treatment. So, you know, uh, for the younger... for the youth.

01:54:16.129 --> 01:54:19.129

You know, just making sure that they understand the importance of.

01:54:22.232 --> 01:54:24.232

Following the directions. And would that be something you would have to have.

01:54:28.070 --> 01:54:30.070

Parental consent. No, so sexual health, um, reproductive health, you can come in.

01:54:35.251 --> 01:54:37.251

Uh, without, uh, a parent. So, um, they don't need to know anything.
It's...

01:54:40.588 --> 01:54:43.588

It's something that anyone can come in for. Um, so yeah, good question.
Over the age of 12?

01:54:52.327 --> 01:54:55.327

Yes, you can also go to the Public Health Department. Um, alone, and
because they offer... Uh, free services to folks on Medicaid, folks 12 and
up can.

01:54:55.293 --> 01:55:00.293

Ask questions about PrEP, get, uh, birth control, get HIV testing, or any
testing.

01:55:00.570 --> 01:55:04.570

Um, so I think that's important for folks to know, 12 and up, your
parents don't have to know.

01:55:14.787 --> 01:55:17.787

Well, I, um... my kids are all above 18. But I've always been kind of,
like, the cool mom that you can come to, and she'll quietly help you with
stuff. I'm... so I've...

01:55:20.769 --> 01:55:24.769

Went with young individuals to Planned Parenthood, and I'm like. I'll be
there if you want to talk to your parents, but I'm...

01:55:28.305 --> 01:55:30.305

I just want you to be safe and smart. So, um... Another person we had to do
some STD testing, and I'm like.

01:55:30.650 --> 01:55:33.650

Mouth is sealed, unless you want me to sit down with your parent.

01:55:37.094 --> 01:55:42.094

And I think some parents, or some patients, uh, you know, youth don't
know that.

01:55:44.913 --> 01:55:46.913

Uh, you know, they think, okay, if the... parent has access to my chart.

01:55:52.307 --> 01:55:54.307

Um, are they gonna see this? And you can actually hide notes, the doctor
can, the provider can.

01:55:56.512 --> 01:55:59.512

So that the parent won't see that. I mean... they'll get the bill, or the
visit.

01:56:03.035 --> 01:56:06.035

But they won't know what you went for.

01:56:06.792 --> 01:56:09.792

Um, I kind of wanted to ask a related question, um.

01:56:14.337 --> 01:56:16.337

Um, related to PrEP, but... I think just kind of overall, um.

01:56:22.177 --> 01:56:25.177

Because I've definitely seen, um... concerns about, at the federal level, that, like, um...

01:56:23.314 --> 01:56:28.314

Both in terms of, like, what insurances are required to do.

01:56:33.193 --> 01:56:38.193

Um, and coverage, and then, like, but also research, um. What your concerns are about what...

01:56:36.441 --> 01:56:41.441

Maybe coming in... what may be changing, um, and what things, um.

01:56:46.697 --> 01:56:49.697

What current resources might be at risk in the future. Yeah, so for prep and for antiretrovirals and...

01:56:54.389 --> 01:56:57.389

Everything that has to do with HIV and AIDS, whether it be preventative or... Uh, for folks living with HIV and AIDS, it...

01:56:56.467 --> 01:57:04.467

Prep is... one, if you go to the CDC website and you try to look at PrEP... well, that website was taken down for a while because, ah, gay people.

01:57:10.176 --> 01:57:13.176

And now, if you go on there, the average populations, um... They don't mention LGBTQ folks, it mentions folks who partake in high-risk sexual behavior, but.

01:57:22.767 --> 01:57:25.767

They had to remove everything for DEI reasons. And so, not having that there, uh... hinders folks' ability to know if they are at risk for something hinders, uh, other folks in the community.

01:57:26.174 --> 01:57:30.174

Who are studying PrEP, who are wanting to learn about PrEP, to know how to help other people.

01:57:32.546 --> 01:57:34.546

Um, so there's that one, that one's big. Uh, there are also pushes to get PrEP.

01:57:38.900 --> 01:57:41.900

Not be able to prescribe for children. Uh, for children, for youth. Um, this is also going hand-in-hand with, uh.

01:57:47.940 --> 01:57:49.940

Gender-affirming medication. Hrt, everything like that. We don't want this to be prescribed to our children, and PrEP is one of those things as well.

01:57:53.874 --> 01:57:55.874

Reminds me of the HPV vaccine. Um, so we see that, and...

01:57:55.241 --> 01:58:01.241

For HIV and AIDS, right now, folks can get their medication covered through ADAP, the AIDS Drug Assistance Program.

01:58:05.946 --> 01:58:10.946

This program is a lifeline for folks who are undocumented. Um, if you are undocumented and you cannot get insurance, Medicaid, anything like that.

01:58:11.393 --> 01:58:16.393

The AIDS Drug Assistance Program will pay for your medication. Your \$3,000 per month medication.

01:58:17.074 --> 01:58:21.074

And we are wanting to remove folks who are undocumented off of that.

01:58:24.306 --> 01:58:27.306

Um, so it's very challenging, it's hard. Um, to work within these, I get all these updates.

01:58:30.768 --> 01:58:33.768

Every single day, at least 3. From AIDS Foundation of Chicago, from a...

01:58:32.992 --> 01:58:37.992

Oh my gosh, our supportive housing network that is specifically working with folks living with HIV and AIDS.

01:58:38.617 --> 01:58:41.617

There is so much that I don't even think I can mention a tenth of it.

01:58:47.162 --> 01:58:50.162

Thank you. I know there is... so much, and I'm really appreciative that you did mention it, and I know.

01:58:58.934 --> 01:59:00.934

It's very depressing. Um, any other questions from the board? Um, of course, we'll have more opportunity to speak later, but any other questions right now?

01:59:04.033 --> 01:59:09.033

All right, well, thank you very, very much, and we hope to hear from you more throughout the evening.

01:59:13.710 --> 01:59:16.710

Thank you for coming up with the thing. Yes. Leanne, uh, we'll have you present our last speaker.

01:59:17.114 --> 01:59:23.114

I think we'll need another microphone for the next two trailblazers.

01:59:37.297 --> 01:59:39.297

Okay, um... Victory and success and beauty, I think those are the terms to describe the names of the next two presenters, I think, if I was doing research correctly.

01:59:45.185 --> 01:59:47.185

Uh, Jay calls... I'm sorry, Jaya Kolisetty has an MA, an MBA.

01:59:53.724 --> 01:59:59.724

Is an award-winning administrator, educator, and anti-violence advocate. Who has presented nationally on the topics related to sexual violence and social justice.

02:00:05.778 --> 02:00:08.778

She serves as the Executive Director. Of races and is an active member of the Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assaults.

02:00:13.634 --> 02:00:16.634

Uh, peoples of... people of... color committee. Her previous experience includes serving as a chair of.

02:00:25.746 --> 02:00:27.746

Is it ICASA? Did I... okay. Uh, ICASA Social Justice and Training Committee, holding an appointed position on the Illinois Governor's Task Force.

02:00:27.688 --> 02:00:35.688

On-campus sexual misconduct, climate surveys, and working as a practitioner reviewer for the Center.

02:00:45.945 --> 02:00:47.945

For victims of crime. Our next presenter, uh, is Cally Hines. Uh, Cally is an open, non-binary, and autistic professional.

02:00:51.451 --> 02:00:55.451

With ADHD, who has 5 plus years of experience working. In social services settings.

02:00:59.378 --> 02:01:01.378

Currently, they are. The office manager at races, making them.

02:01:07.716 --> 02:01:10.716

A first appointed contact for... first appoint... first point of contact... I'm tired, it's... it's...

02:01:09.694 --> 02:01:15.694

It's a long night. First point of contact for clients and members of the community. In addition.

02:01:15.428 --> 02:01:21.428

She is a student studying for her MS in Forensic Psychology at Walden University.

02:01:25.553 --> 02:01:28.553

They have previously provided training at local. And statewide levels on neurodiversity.

02:01:28.123 --> 02:01:35.123

And sexual violence, and are passionate about advocacy for those who are neurodivergent.

02:01:40.078 --> 02:01:45.078

And the LGBTQ plus community. Without further ado... Jaya and Cally.

02:01:48.550 --> 02:01:59.550

Thank you all so much for having us tonight. Um, we don't have our presentation, partially because we want to try to avoid being too repetitive, um, from previous speakers, so we might kind of touch back on some of the points that have already come up.

02:01:59.707 --> 02:02:10.707

Um, I and some of our other colleagues have had the opportunity to speak to this body in the past, so I'm not going to spend a lot of time going back over race's services, but just to briefly remind folks that we are.

02:02:10.389 --> 02:02:19.389

The sexual violence and stalking Prevention and Response Service Provider, um, for not only Champaign County, but also for Ford, Douglas, and Pyatt counties.

02:02:19.776 --> 02:02:26.776

And that all of our services are free and come with absolute confidentiality. We have absolute privilege under state law.

02:02:27.023 --> 02:02:35.023

Um, and again, my name is Jaya, my pronouns are she, her, and hers, and I'll let Kelly introduce themselves, um, and then we'll just kind of talk about some of the gaps that we have.

02:02:35.654 --> 02:02:42.654

Um, identified in services that are available here in Champaign County, um, and this is based off of feedback from.

02:02:42.652 --> 02:02:52.652

Friends, family members, colleagues, um, in our office, and clients, but we will not be sharing any client testimonial or anything that would be confidential communication because of our, um.

02:02:59.859 --> 02:03:01.859

Confidentiality. Thank you. Um, my name is Callie Hines. My pronouns are she, they.

02:03:07.409 --> 02:03:12.409

Um, I'm really excited to be here with you all today. Thank you so much for giving us the opportunity to... Talk to you all and kind of inform you about some of the different...

02:03:20.332 --> 02:03:22.332

Challenges that the community faces. So I think to piggyback off of some of what has already been shared, I want to stress the issue around housing.

02:03:22.277 --> 02:03:29.277

So, we are not a housing service provider. There are occasions where we have had to step in and help folks get connected to other.

02:03:29.115 --> 02:03:34.115

Frequently, we're stepping in to help connect people to other resources, but occasionally we have had to.

02:03:45.919 --> 02:03:48.919

Help get safe housing for an individual night. Currently in our community, if someone is a survivor of sexual violence or stalking, um, or if they're a survivor of domestic violence and are not... they don't meet the definition of actively fleeing.

02:03:59.645 --> 02:04:00.645

We don't have a good option. Period. Right? So I think it is important that we talk about this, especially in a conversation related to gaps in services for LGBTQ plus folks.

02:04:03.351 --> 02:04:06.351

Because our LGBTQ plus community members. Experienced disproportionately high rates of both.

02:04:12.776 --> 02:04:17.776

Homelessness, housing discrimination, and sexual violence. And that can be prior to becoming unhoused. That can also be an issue if someone is.

02:04:17.187 --> 02:04:26.187

Um, currently unhoused. Um, as we were preparing for this, was looking back at some statistics, the National Sexual Assault Coalition.

02:04:26.502 --> 02:04:31.502

Um, had a study in which they found that 22% of transgender individuals living in homeless.

02:04:36.073 --> 02:04:40.073

Shelters were sexually assaulted by residents or staff. So, as was previously mentioned, we have very limited.

02:04:43.144 --> 02:04:48.144

Resources for folks who are unhoused. Often it's congregate shelter. Often those spaces do not feel safe.

02:04:48.304 --> 02:04:55.304

Especially for our LGBTQ plus community members. So, as was previously mentioned, that may result in people.

02:04:55.925 --> 02:05:01.925

Being on the streets, where they are again at higher risk of experiencing sexual violence, um, the likeliness for.

02:05:07.814 --> 02:05:12.814

Multiple experiences of sexual violence throughout this process are significant. Interactions with systems, um, may result in further discrimination.

02:05:19.391 --> 02:05:23.391

Ranging from using the wrong name and pronouns. Um, to actively being hostile, um, or dismissive to folks when they're trying to seek support and services.

02:05:27.690 --> 02:05:29.690

Um, did you want to speak on the housing piece?

02:05:37.635 --> 02:05:39.635

It's fine if you don't. So there definitely needs to also be some enforcement on...

02:05:41.650 --> 02:05:43.650

Um, discrimination against. Those in the LGBT community who are trying to seek housing.

02:05:48.363 --> 02:05:51.363

Um, there are housing... Complexes? Apartment complexes in the area.

02:05:58.387 --> 02:06:03.387

That can... they may even ask, you know. People in the community to disclose if they are in a relationship with a person who is...

02:06:09.093 --> 02:06:13.093

The same gender as them. Um... and have kind of implied that they do not...

02:06:17.628 --> 02:06:19.628

Like, they wouldn't provide housing for them. Um, I definitely think that it...

02:06:24.839 --> 02:06:27.839

Kind of breeds a distrust in the LGBT community. When they go to these apartment complexes, and they're like, I don't know if this is safe for me.

02:06:32.502 --> 02:06:34.502

Um...

02:06:33.153 --> 02:06:43.153

I think the other thing that we wanted to make sure that people remember is we've already lost at least one member of our community who was homeless and LGBTQ member of our community.

02:06:46.444 --> 02:06:51.444

Um, who should have had access to safe housing, right? So, I think it's very easy to look at this as a... This is a problem somewhere else. This is a problem here.

02:06:51.590 --> 02:06:56.590

We are losing members of our community because we do not have enough housing resources.

02:06:55.987 --> 02:07:03.987

Obviously, we have people who are doing incredible work around that particular part of the need, but the need is still significant.

02:07:10.872 --> 02:07:13.872

Um, there just really are not enough options for people. Also, where we can... we often see this related to our work relates to medical care.

02:07:13.508 --> 02:07:19.508

Um, so things like simple things, you know, our advocates may be the folks who are advocating.

02:07:19.429 --> 02:07:26.429

Um, to make sure, again, proper names and pronouns are used, um, when people are seeking care in the emergency department.

02:07:26.611 --> 02:07:32.611

That, um, providers are thinking about what parts of kits are appropriate, not assuming.

02:07:32.312 --> 02:07:41.312

That they know just by the way someone is presenting to them, or how their gender and sex is read by that individual on a surface level.

02:07:41.587 --> 02:07:47.587

Um, gendered language can be very exclusionary in the work of sexual and domestic violence.

02:07:47.171 --> 02:07:58.171

Um, I'm seeing Molly nod, I know we both have this common experience of previously working on campus, where the only confidential advisors are housed out of the Women's Resources Center.

02:08:02.461 --> 02:08:04.461

They serve folks of all genders. But a lot of people, there is often that barrier of.

02:08:04.075 --> 02:08:09.075

Well, you know, when we say women, does that mean all women? Yes, it does.

02:08:09.346 --> 02:08:16.346

But that's not always necessarily obvious when people are in a moment of crisis and trying to figure out, where do I go?

02:08:16.230 --> 02:08:23.230

Um, and if folks do not identify as women, again, is this a space that is safe for me? Is this a place that I can go to access support?

02:08:31.577 --> 02:08:33.577

So those are some, like, very simple... things that can make it so it's very difficult for people to even get through the door and access services in the first place.

02:08:42.130 --> 02:08:46.130

Also, some of the resources that we have. Are provided by organizations with a religious affiliation, and while some of those organizations can still be affirming and welcoming.

02:08:46.387 --> 02:08:56.387

Some of them may not be, and also trying to do that calculus of, I know this organization has a religious affiliation, I don't know if this is a safe place for me to go.

02:08:56.275 --> 02:09:11.275

And because we do have limited options in terms of behavioral health, for example, um, in terms of, again, homeless services, some of those other crisis services, if there is that religious affiliation and people don't have the information to know whether or not that may feel safe.

02:09:11.761 --> 02:09:16.761

It may be just by de facto people are gonna say, I'm not going to try to even try that resource.

02:09:16.305 --> 02:09:24.305

So also kind of thinking about that piece. Um, I think elevating what has already been shared about the cost related to both physical.

02:09:24.674 --> 02:09:33.674

And mental health services, and of course, for housing as well, is really important. You know, we're... we, again, are fortunate to be able to be a free service provider.

02:09:33.372 --> 02:09:43.372

Ask for any... excuse me, insurance information, um, but we can only help people if they're working on things related to sexual violence or stalking.

02:09:47.660 --> 02:09:49.660

Right, so for our clients. When they're at a place where they're like, I'm doing okay in terms of this piece.

02:09:49.340 --> 02:09:53.340

Having folks that we can then refer them to for support.

02:10:04.034 --> 02:10:07.034

After they don't need us, right? Having a list of affirming providers, and you know, we're very privileged to be on the list for Uniting Pride,

um, and certainly, you know, can make reference to that list and have folks that we trust in the community as well.

02:10:07.128 --> 02:10:14.128

But again, there are limits. If people don't have insurance, don't have adequate insurance, maybe undocumented.

02:10:17.084 --> 02:10:19.084

Where do they go when they leave us? Right? Because we don't ask for that information.

02:10:19.464 --> 02:10:25.464

Um, we, you know, it's kind of obvious from Callie's bio, but also want to recognize kind of the overlap.

02:10:25.874 --> 02:10:32.874

Between needs for LGBTQ plus folks and our neurodiverse and neurodivergent communities, so I don't... Callie, if you want to speak to that.

02:10:39.077 --> 02:10:43.077

Um, to kind of add to the... conversation around the neurodiverse community and the LGBTQ community.

02:10:46.796 --> 02:10:51.796

Um, there is a distinct lack of education within our community on... LGBTQ plus issues and identities, even with.

02:10:55.800 --> 02:11:01.800

Like, within providers or healthcare-related spaces, mental health spaces. Um...

02:11:05.585 --> 02:11:08.585

There's also a sense of... A lack of trust, we could say.

02:11:13.272 --> 02:11:17.272

With providers, um, there's not much... of a... rapport built with some providers?

02:11:19.228 --> 02:11:22.228

That we've seen when we have... clients in the emergency room?

02:11:32.058 --> 02:11:35.058

Um, there could also be language that's, like. Very gender-specific or gender-oriented, that can be alienating, but in addition to that, there is...

02:11:40.160 --> 02:11:45.160

Sometimes language is more like leading, or, like, kind of... I don't want to say coercive, because it's not quite the word, but it kind of pushes them in a certain direction, or maybe pushes them to make a certain decision.

02:11:45.843 --> 02:11:48.843

And that's part of why we're there, is to make sure that they don't.

02:11:53.421 --> 02:11:56.421

Continue to push them in that direction, or continue to. Um, even blame shift or, like...

02:12:02.873 --> 02:12:04.873

Make our clients uncomfortable. Um, but there's definitely also a lack of, like, trauma-informed care or trauma-informed.

02:12:08.263 --> 02:12:11.263

Care is specifically geared towards... the LGBTQ or neurodiverse communities.

02:12:14.539 --> 02:12:17.539

Um, and... kind of diving into mental health as well.

02:12:22.690 --> 02:12:25.690

There is a distinct... gap, um...

02:12:34.150 --> 02:12:39.150

With mental health providers, psychiatrists, um, therapists. Who will refuse outright to treat certain, like, certain neurodiverse groups, and if you look at the statistics with the LGBT community and neurodiversity.

02:12:45.373 --> 02:12:48.373

A large portion of the LGBT community. Either is autistic or neurodiverse in some form, or identifies.

02:12:50.390 --> 02:12:54.390

Or, like, self-identify as autistic, whether it's diagnosed or... self-diagnosed or self-identifying.

02:12:54.062 --> 02:13:01.062

Um, and again, there are providers who, in this area, will outright say.

02:13:04.196 --> 02:13:08.196

I don't work with people who are autistic, or I don't work with people who... have this neurodiversity, or this neurodiversity.

02:13:08.877 --> 02:13:14.877

And when you look at the overlap with the LGBT community and neurodiversity, that can be really alienating as well.

02:13:17.622 --> 02:13:25.622

So some of that, again, goes back to that training piece. Um, another piece that we wanted to bring to the board's attention, though, as a funding body.

02:13:25.786 --> 02:13:33.786

Is to think about the implications of what is happening at the federal level. And I know I've had great questions about, like, you know, what do we think is going to happen in terms of.

02:13:40.606 --> 02:13:42.606

Survivor services. The new language that is being incorporated into existing funding opportunities.

02:13:50.450 --> 02:13:53.450

Is specifically trans exclusionary. Right? And so there was a funding opportunity, um, that another provider locally in our office looked at.

02:14:01.460 --> 02:14:04.460

And included in the out-of-scope. Definitions were... Um, quote, inculcating or promoting gender ideology as defined in Executive Order.

02:14:04.040 --> 02:14:12.040

14168, defending women from gender ideology extremism and Restoring Biological Truth to the federal government.

02:14:14.813 --> 02:14:17.813

End quote, if you have not looked. At that executive order.

02:14:18.436 --> 02:14:22.436

When you're in a good place to do so, I encourage you to think about reading that.

02:14:30.001 --> 02:14:33.001

Because when we talk about the impact on our community. Interpretations of what that means for funding recipients.

02:14:37.924 --> 02:14:39.924

I'm not an attorney. Some funder... or some...

02:14:38.541 --> 02:14:42.541

Organizations at this point are taking that as, we can't use that money.

02:14:47.717 --> 02:14:49.717

To serve these clients? Other organizations are taking it as we can't serve these clients.

02:14:53.972 --> 02:14:57.972

Others are taking it as we can't accept this money. Right? So...

02:14:57.100 --> 02:15:04.100

That's a... you know, we're talking about hundreds of thousands just related to sexual violence and stalking and domestic violence that.

02:15:11.100 --> 02:15:13.100

Is not approachable. I think that also thinking about the impact, even if that calculus is being made.

02:15:17.683 --> 02:15:19.683

Okay, it just means we have to use. Ccmhb money to make sure that we're serving populations that are excluded from this.

02:15:21.066 --> 02:15:27.066

Making sure that we're also thinking about what does that messaging look like to our community members, so it's clear that we are not accepting.

02:15:27.759 --> 02:15:32.759

Those out-of-scope restrictions in terms of who we serve and who we care for.

02:15:40.549 --> 02:15:45.549

Another out-of-scope section specifically relates to DEI. So more broadly, in terms of serving, um, so that one is promoting or facilitating discriminatory.

02:15:45.785 --> 02:15:52.785

Programs or ideology, including illegal DEI and diversity, equity, and inclusion and accessibility programs.

02:15:52.930 --> 02:15:58.930

That do not advance the policy of equal dignity and respect as described in another executive order.

02:16:01.023 --> 02:16:05.023

So, you know, we can see that there were already gaps.

02:16:11.526 --> 02:16:14.526

And services for LGBTQ plus folks in our community. This board is often a lifeline to make sure that we are working to fill existing gaps.

02:16:15.449 --> 02:16:20.449

And I feel like I'm always the bearer of bad news in terms of the federal government, but I think it's likely to get worse, right?

02:16:20.513 --> 02:16:26.513

Um, because I think a lot of service providers are going to be in a position to say, we cannot accept these terms.

02:16:26.763 --> 02:16:33.763

Or we cannot pursue that funding because it means that we'd have to say yes to helping these clients and no to helping these.

02:16:41.308 --> 02:16:45.308

So, just another piece, right? I don't want to re... like... Repeat what has already been shared by other providers, but just to kind of show how this does intersect.

02:16:45.188 --> 02:16:56.188

Specifically, with our work around sexual violence and stalking, um, and to think about, like, what are the funding implications for the new out-of-scope restrictions for many federal grants.

02:17:00.487 --> 02:17:02.487

Kelly, did you have any closing?

02:17:01.181 --> 02:17:06.181

Good? Okay, so I think we'll leave it there, and then if there are questions that we can answer, we're happy to do so.

02:17:11.216 --> 02:17:15.216

Thank you very much. Questions or comments from the board?

02:17:21.981 --> 02:17:24.981

Well, I couldn't go. Um... I am...

02:17:31.911 --> 02:17:34.911

Having an emotional reaction, I'm not gonna lie, because. When I, um... for those who don't know, I, you know, my career has predominantly been working with gender-based violence, and.

02:17:35.041 --> 02:17:40.041

When I first started my job at the university, one of the things I was tasked with was.

02:17:43.801 --> 02:17:47.801

To take the highly gendered language in our prevention programs. And find a solution, and change it.

02:17:53.770 --> 02:17:55.770

And it took. A lot, and years to get everybody on board.

02:17:58.401 --> 02:18:01.401

Um, but it... it worked. And it made a positive difference.

02:18:01.272 --> 02:18:07.272

My students and I took it to conferences across the country and talked about what we did.

02:18:11.174 --> 02:18:15.174

And it breaks my heart that, like. I knew that... what the implications of that executive order would be.

02:18:20.606 --> 02:18:24.606

But I hadn't heard that this is now directly affecting. Funding mechanisms, um, in this, like, very...

02:18:23.570 --> 02:18:29.570

It just is as many people have said tonight, like, this backslide, this, like, we're going backwards.

02:18:29.305 --> 02:18:33.305

Of things that we had to work so hard to change.

02:18:39.444 --> 02:18:45.444

And, um, I do recognize where, um, especially already knowing. That, um... you know, our board has been...

02:18:44.676 --> 02:18:50.676

Um, approach, you know, asked for funds for things that the federal government has already.

02:18:50.139 --> 02:18:56.139

Cut, and now this may be happening even more, but recognizing the importance.

02:19:04.617 --> 02:19:07.617

Of our board having, um... this... the position that we can be in to... to step in and help and not have those restrictions.

02:19:07.781 --> 02:19:12.781

Um, but also recognizing how, like, very complex that is around, like.

02:19:16.342 --> 02:19:22.342

How the interpretation of that is happening. So, I really appreciate you bringing that to us, and... It's very upsetting.

02:19:28.509 --> 02:19:30.509

Any other questions or comments? I think Kelly may have had a response. Yes, please, please do.

02:19:32.026 --> 02:19:42.026

I... kind of piggybacking on some of the recent executive orders, I'm sure that you all have heard about the big, beautiful bill as well, and how that will be affecting.

02:19:44.633 --> 02:19:46.633

People who are on, um... Medicare or Medicaid.

02:19:53.586 --> 02:19:56.586

In receiving gender-affirming care? Um, so that's... Just another consideration, as there are...

02:19:55.313 --> 02:20:04.313

A large number of people in the Champaign-Urbana community who rely on those for their own gender-affirming care, who don't have access to it at this moment.

02:20:12.607 --> 02:20:14.607

Also incredibly... upsetting, and...

02:20:15.985 --> 02:20:17.985

Terrifying. Thank you for bringing that up.

02:20:23.489 --> 02:20:27.489

Um, other questions or comments from board members?

02:20:32.894 --> 02:20:36.894

I know we will have more opportunity to talk throughout, um.

02:20:44.339 --> 02:20:46.339

But thank you so, so much, both for sharing. Um, so we will now move to some... we have some other materials that have been prepared.

02:20:46.326 --> 02:20:51.326

Um, and then open it up more to, kind of, board and community comments.

02:20:51.900 --> 02:21:01.900

Um, so our next item is, um, we have responses to an anonymous survey that was done on pages 45 to 56 of the packet.

02:21:02.899 --> 02:21:05.899

And I believe Chandra Somerville will be presenting that to us.

02:21:09.908 --> 02:21:15.908

Hello, um, just letting you all know, when I went back in to... look at the survey again.

02:21:19.247 --> 02:21:22.247

Um, when you all received this in... let's say a few days ago.

02:21:25.145 --> 02:21:28.145

Um, there were 95 responses. There are now 104.

02:21:32.590 --> 02:21:35.590

Responses. Um... You should close it, but you know, I kind of don't want to close it.

02:21:39.355 --> 02:21:41.355

I want to kind of keep it open. Because after this, um, presentation.

02:21:41.538 --> 02:21:46.538

We might get more people to disclose, um, exactly what is happening.

02:21:51.178 --> 02:21:53.178

And so, um... I was also surprised, you can go to the next one, Lynn.

02:22:00.132 --> 02:22:03.132

Um... you can keep going. That the largest response of things that people were concerned about.

02:22:08.739 --> 02:22:10.739

Was social stigma. And so that was one of the things that, um, probably surprised me.

02:22:18.129 --> 02:22:23.129

Just... culturally knowing how far we've come. But also realizing, um, this community still...

02:22:26.654 --> 02:22:29.654

Um, is plagued with... the social stigma, and that they do not feel comfortable.

02:22:34.327 --> 02:22:38.327

Representing and expressing their identity in daily life. I think that was, um, probably one of the most...

02:22:41.890 --> 02:22:44.890

Surprising things, and then... Um, other than that...

02:22:45.724 --> 02:22:50.724

Um, resources in our community that are... LGBT friendly.

02:22:50.407 --> 02:22:59.407

Um, there was actually a pretty positive response on a scale of 4 to a 1 to 5.

02:23:02.084 --> 02:23:08.084

Um, 48% of the respondents, which was 46 respondents. Actually said that there is support.

02:23:11.621 --> 02:23:13.621

That are LGBTQ friendly. And so, if we keep going.

02:23:20.784 --> 02:23:22.784

We may learn that... That number may balance out if they're not, or even if we went down to and talked about medical providers.

02:23:33.523 --> 02:23:36.523

That, um, that also might change. And then, um, the biggest things that people talked about regarding what would be beneficial...

02:23:39.752 --> 02:23:44.752

Um, social, social events, mental health access. Um, healthcare resources, and we definitely heard about that.

02:23:45.109 --> 02:23:51.109

And, um, the actual medical care at our main medical clinic.

02:23:56.462 --> 02:24:01.462

Um, several people disclosed that it's not necessarily friendly. For people from this, uh, from the LGBT community.

02:24:06.860 --> 02:24:09.860

And then also, um... resources and training for children and families.

02:24:18.609 --> 02:24:22.609

Um, also, and gender-neutral bathrooms. And then also places that are intersectional, so where you can...

02:24:21.736 --> 02:24:28.736

Just to not be with one aspect of who you are, but thinking about your whole self.

02:24:37.121 --> 02:24:41.121

And then also, um, updating a list of providers. Because they think that a lot of the resources are out of date. And so...

02:24:40.543 --> 02:24:46.543

This is, uh, something that's constant, um, that I think that happens even with 2-1-1.

02:24:46.691 --> 02:24:53.691

When the organization does closes, or maybe the provider has changed or moved.

02:25:02.261 --> 02:25:04.261

Um, that's something to think about. And then, also, um...

02:25:07.328 --> 02:25:09.328

Actually gay-owned businesses. Um, I'm not sure if you all have heard about the new coffee shop.

02:25:16.208 --> 02:25:19.208

Good duties. Okay, so... Okay. And so, the thing is, is like someone said, like, there wasn't coffee shops.

02:25:27.507 --> 02:25:32.507

But Good Judy's also closes, like, at 4pm, so... maybe just some advocacy or support on what does that look like to increase those hours, um...

02:25:31.965 --> 02:25:35.965

So that it could be safer spaces, but more inclusive spaces.

02:25:41.489 --> 02:25:46.489

And then, um, also, 91% of the... survey respondents stated that, um, they are aware.

02:25:48.931 --> 02:25:52.931

Of community organization and events. And two people said no.

02:25:59.542 --> 02:26:03.542

And so, I'm wondering who those people are. Um, are they new to the community, or do they just...

02:26:02.952 --> 02:26:05.952

Kind of, you know, are just at home, or not connected.

02:26:10.460 --> 02:26:12.460

To the community. And, um...

02:26:10.968 --> 02:26:17.968

What we also learned was the support is really connected more to friends.

02:26:25.447 --> 02:26:30.447

Versus a family, so kind of a new friend is happening, and... There are some people who would be willing to be contacted for additional presentations.

02:26:34.860 --> 02:26:37.860

But then there's some people that say, no thank you. And that's okay, too. And so...

02:26:37.086 --> 02:26:43.086

This was our first start, but I think one of the things that I have seen.

02:26:47.895 --> 02:26:50.895

In my field is... You can raise flags, put flags on.

02:26:56.979 --> 02:26:59.979

But that still does not necessarily make you welcoming, or a... safe space, and so... Safe space is connected to people.

02:27:04.860 --> 02:27:07.860

Not necessarily places, always, and so... When we get people in there that are actually safe, people.

02:27:15.527 --> 02:27:18.527

That are actually inclusive, and people. Then you do have safe and inclusive spaces. It's connected to the culture and...

02:27:22.460 --> 02:27:25.460

The attitudes and values of people. And so, um, just being nice is no longer good enough.

02:27:32.661 --> 02:27:35.661

You have to actually... think of people as humans and humanity, and thinking about it a bit more.

02:27:35.244 --> 02:27:39.244

And so that's a lot of deeper work that I've done over the years.

02:27:39.528 --> 02:27:44.528

Um, just challenging people not just to be nice and just to display things.

02:27:44.204 --> 02:27:49.204

But actually began really thinking about how do they begin to shift.

02:27:51.643 --> 02:27:56.643

Their values, and go on a journey to cultural competence. Any questions?

02:27:57.908 --> 02:28:04.908

Um, I have a quick question. So, um, I think you said you had 105 responses thus far. Okay, 104.

02:28:04.888 --> 02:28:09.888

Responses. Um, how did you get your survey into people's hands?

02:28:10.139 --> 02:28:21.139

How did I? Um, that's a good question. What we did was we, um, sent them to organizational leaders, and then we also used our own personal.

02:28:26.798 --> 02:28:28.798

Uh, connections. Um, and we... I did not, like... I did inbox on Facebook.

02:28:33.374 --> 02:28:34.374

You know. Because, um, my page isn't public.

02:28:34.744 --> 02:28:39.744

But I wanted to make sure that, um, those, um, I protected.

02:28:42.599 --> 02:28:46.599

The identity of some people so that they can... Make sure that they feel a level of sense of safety.

02:28:47.911 --> 02:28:50.911

Knowing that I work for... county government.

02:28:55.689 --> 02:28:59.689

That's a very good question, Jane. It was also my question.

02:29:00.759 --> 02:29:08.759

I... I guess just a comment from my conversations with Lynn, my understanding is, like, this is, like, by far, like, the most.

02:29:08.481 --> 02:29:13.481

Like, responses we've ever gotten to a survey like this. Ever.

02:29:16.244 --> 02:29:18.244

Ever. Like, how much?

02:29:20.168 --> 02:29:27.168

So, yeah, like, I won't... I don't know. So I think about, like, we've done a couple of surveys before, we've gotten... Maybe 30?

02:29:33.497 --> 02:29:36.497

Responses back when we've done anonymous surveys before. But... this was an overwhelming... like, I think we expected, like, 50.

02:29:42.552 --> 02:29:46.552

But to get, like, 104, and it's still going... I'mma leave it alone. I'mma keep it open probably another month.

02:29:49.931 --> 02:29:53.931

But I think we're also in a community... response for public health.

02:29:59.009 --> 02:30:01.009

To think about, like, public health issues. This data that is being provided, I think we can share it.

02:30:05.869 --> 02:30:07.869

Um... systematically. So that we can begin to think about some things differently.

02:30:15.685 --> 02:30:17.685

Because every... Everyone is with us. We... we all... we all here together, even though people are trying to erase.

02:30:21.302 --> 02:30:23.302

Us. We're not gonna... we're not going anywhere.

02:30:26.298 --> 02:30:30.298

Well, I think one of the things that has really come.

02:30:35.578 --> 02:30:37.578

To me, this evening. Is, and I'm sure... Again, I'm gonna pick on Dr. John again.

02:30:36.967 --> 02:30:42.967

Um, how we have a community that doesn't feel supported in our medical system.

02:30:46.505 --> 02:30:48.505

Here in Champaign-Urbana. And I don't know how we fix that.

02:30:54.377 --> 02:30:59.377

Um, I think, obviously, our agencies are trying to empower. You know, their clients are trying to support their clients, whether it be in the ER or whatever.

02:31:04.023 --> 02:31:07.023

Um, and maybe it just goes back to. Um, we all building a culture of, that's not acceptable.

02:31:14.894 --> 02:31:21.894

Um, but it's just very disheartening to me. You know, and again, as far as, like, mental health care and stuff like that, that... That's of every gender, every race, you know, we don't have enough mental health care in this community.

02:31:30.551 --> 02:31:31.551

But it is... really hard if you're saying, hey, I want someone who is affirming, or maybe someone who does look like me, or whatever.

02:31:37.635 --> 02:31:40.635

And it shouldn't be that hard. So, Jane, I'm going to, um... agree that there are not enough.

02:31:46.161 --> 02:31:50.161

Mental health providers that are culturally responsive. Because if you look, like, in psychology today, and just do a listing.

02:31:50.721 --> 02:31:55.721

Of the mental health professionals that actually reside here. We have an abundance.

02:32:05.082 --> 02:32:07.082

Like, way more than I thought. However, they don't all take... Medicaid, they do not all take, um, certain, like, different insurance.

02:32:07.082 --> 02:32:14.082

And they're also not always culturally responsive to Black and brown people.

02:32:14.075 --> 02:32:19.075

They don't have the language access services for people that do not speak English.

02:32:24.482 --> 02:32:29.482

Nor do they, um... are they gender-affirming? And, um... allyship to the LGBT community. And so...

02:32:27.926 --> 02:32:33.926

I don't think that we are... we do not have enough culturally responsive.

02:32:41.094 --> 02:32:43.094

Mental health providers here. I want to be very clear about that, because Champaign-Urbana is very resource-riched.

02:32:46.059 --> 02:32:51.059

There is a very explicit. Of who should be served.

02:32:54.044 --> 02:32:56.044

And that is very clear. In our community.

02:32:58.795 --> 02:33:02.795

I'm sorry to say none of this surprises me, because I've... It's been 44 years.

02:33:03.733 --> 02:33:11.733

Fighting for a son with disability, and finally a doctor friend said to me, but doctors have the same prejudices.

02:33:14.612 --> 02:33:17.612

That the rest of the community does, and then... That got much clearer to me, what my butt.

02:33:22.298 --> 02:33:24.298

How to fight my battles. Mm-hmm. But the... and I'm... many wonderful...

02:33:29.131 --> 02:33:34.131

Providers. Many wonderful members, many wonderful people, but you had to... realize that, and not imagine that a profession brings with it.

02:33:37.364 --> 02:33:39.364

Biased. A set of... moral principles.

02:33:47.963 --> 02:33:57.963

Especially when you add the... the, like, lack of taking Medicaid issue. I mean, I'm still, like, I've heard that reflected in, like, almost everything... every different... Um, presentation tonight, and it's something I've been, like, very keenly aware of, and...

02:34:04.320 --> 02:34:06.320

Um, just, I mean... I recognize there are barriers to getting in with Medicaid, there are barriers that Medicaid.

02:34:13.172 --> 02:34:15.172

Um, has. For providers, but... Um, like, for social workers, like, it is our, um, ethical imperative.

02:34:18.870 --> 02:34:20.870

It shouldn't be a question. But I'm still trying to figure out.

02:34:21.081 --> 02:34:27.081

What... how... what the mental health... what can we do to potentially help with that?

02:34:33.290 --> 02:34:37.290

Um, so that's just an observation. Um, I know we have a little... a few more resources, and then I kind of want to open it up to everyone.

02:34:37.725 --> 02:34:42.725

Um, Lynn, would you be willing to share the other information that you provided?

02:34:51.640 --> 02:34:56.640

So, sorry, I'm sitting over here so that I can kind of ride the cameras, but... It's the cameras, they're...

02:35:01.758 --> 02:35:05.758

No, the... it's a really long and boring story, so... But trust me, I am not the AV tech I thought I was at 5.30.

02:35:10.513 --> 02:35:12.513

So, alright. This is... there are just a few more items in the packet. This is...

02:35:11.223 --> 02:35:16.223

Um, Chandra's right, we sent out the survey to our personal networks.

02:35:19.043 --> 02:35:21.043

And that was a real journey for me, because, um. I'm 63 years old.

02:35:21.941 --> 02:35:24.941

So, as I went through my network, I realized how many.

02:35:29.318 --> 02:35:31.318

People have passed, so I have... very few gay men friends who lived.

02:35:37.869 --> 02:35:40.869

As long as I have, and a lot of them... It was during the height of AIDS that I lost those people. It was really a journey, just trying to find people.

02:35:48.813 --> 02:35:50.813

To say, you know? So, anyway, like... Sorry for oversharing, but I got some feedback from some of the people that I sent the survey to that I thought you should see.

02:35:50.346 --> 02:35:54.346

They gave me permission to share it anonymously. It touches on two things.

02:35:54.803 --> 02:35:59.803

The one is from a couple of allies and an accomplice who said.

02:36:00.118 --> 02:36:07.118

We have no business filling out the survey, even though we were invited to. And there's a nice explanation of why.

02:36:07.833 --> 02:36:10.833

The person declined to fill it out. I thought that was really cool to see.

02:36:23.683 --> 02:36:29.683

The second is, we've just been touching on it, the intersectionality with disability, like, this is... Um, a big part of what we're doing is disability access as well, so I wasn't surprised to see these comments, but I thought they were quite rich and worth sharing as much as the person was willing.

02:36:35.020 --> 02:36:38.020

To allow, which ended up being quite a bit. And then finally, they were really appreciative that anyone would ask them, and.

02:36:41.253 --> 02:36:43.253

I thought, we need to know that, too. We need to see that people don't ask.

02:36:43.676 --> 02:36:51.676

Very often, and how important it is to ask and allow the answer, even if the answer is uncomfortable. So that's the first item.

02:36:55.699 --> 02:36:58.699

Do you have any questions about that one? Before I go to the next...

02:37:01.466 --> 02:37:04.466

I can be really quick with the other two. I don't have any questions, but I think it's very important.

02:37:08.954 --> 02:37:12.954

So thank you for, um, for sharing that additional information. Ready for the next? Yes.

02:37:13.935 --> 02:37:17.935

Alright, the next thing is people... people heard about this, it happened really quick.

02:37:22.346 --> 02:37:27.346

The federal government chose to discontinue funding for the. The LGBTQIA plus specific helpline.

02:37:27.045 --> 02:37:35.045

Among the 988 crisis lines, which we've spent the last 6 years talking about that and standing up these services that.

02:37:41.793 --> 02:37:45.793

Really are not... haven't even fully implemented or really. Sunk in, so federal government chose to stop funding that one, and then the state of Illinois rushed in, and I'm just.

02:37:54.483 --> 02:37:57.483

I'm here to say I don't... Acknowledge very often great things that the state of Illinois is doing, but they jumped in fast to say, we will continue to fund it in Illinois. And I thought.

02:37:57.838 --> 02:38:01.838

So I thought that was important to include both. So there's the state.

02:38:08.303 --> 02:38:12.303

Jumping in to say, okay, we'll do it. It's youth-specific, so... it's... still... really great, really important. The other bit...

02:38:15.045 --> 02:38:18.045

I mean, I just wanted everybody to know that. I learned something else from the director of the state's.

02:38:22.437 --> 02:38:25.437

New behavioral health and recovery department, which was. That they... just two days before we had this conversation.

02:38:25.701 --> 02:38:31.701

He announced that the state is suing the federal government over the executive order which.

02:38:33.652 --> 02:38:36.652

Um, prohibits. Fund... public funding.

02:38:36.980 --> 02:38:43.980

That could be used by undocumented immigrants, and so I don't know what's happened with that lawsuit, but I would like to hear about other.

02:38:47.474 --> 02:38:50.474

Similar lawsuits by the state of Illinois, maybe they'll come. Um, and thank you for the information about.

02:38:52.858 --> 02:38:55.858

That you shared earlier. So... The final thing is, like.

02:39:00.598 --> 02:39:03.598

Just, if we can have any good news. Um, this index is... I think the website is listed.

02:39:03.602 --> 02:39:09.602

In the agenda of this packet, if you get the electronic version, you can link into this.

02:39:13.101 --> 02:39:16.101

This whole map project. Um, is pretty interesting. It goes pretty deep into these indices.

02:39:18.783 --> 02:39:22.783

But Illinois is one of the most... the most high-rated. Um, for equality.

02:39:27.402 --> 02:39:33.402

For LGBTQIA plus people, and some of the measures have to do with policy, so... That's kind of... that seemed like a nice way to end the packet, even though.

02:39:35.410 --> 02:39:39.410

It doesn't change the seriousness of the other issues that we've... Discussed tonight. Okay.

02:39:44.462 --> 02:39:48.462

My mic didn't come on. Thank you very much, Lynn, for sharing that with us.

02:39:53.696 --> 02:40:00.696

Um, so... I guess the next item on the agenda is public participation agency input, which I'll still do at the end, but this... The study session part isn't over. Um, so I...

02:40:15.666 --> 02:40:22.666

I was trying to figure out, like, questions I can kind of ask everyone, and I'm... I'll come up with some if I need to, but... I wanted to give... you know, we have a lot of, uh, a lot of community members here with us tonight, and other agency representatives, and I just wanted to give anybody who is in the audience an opportunity to come up and share anything else.

02:40:23.280 --> 02:40:30.280

Anything you want to share. So, um, concern, you know, things you've experienced, concerns you have.

02:40:30.425 --> 02:40:37.425

Um, ideas you have, anything is fair game. I kind of just see it as, like, an open opportunity to.

02:40:42.253 --> 02:40:46.253

Talk, and us have... all have a conversation. Um, and then, um, you know, board also will, you know.

02:40:57.878 --> 02:41:00.878

Has an opportunity to make additional comments and... share their thoughts. So, um, the podium with multiple microphones, hopefully, that are all still working, is open for anybody who wants to come forward and say anything.

02:41:19.051 --> 02:41:21.051

Mm-hmm. Hi, I'm Nathan Alexander, and I'm the chair of the LGBTQ Homeless Workgroup for the Continuum of Care locally.

02:41:21.167 --> 02:41:26.167

Um, I just wanted to mention, at first, I'm very appreciative of how much housing.

02:41:32.785 --> 02:41:35.785

Was a discussion into access to resources. Um, within the past year, we had about a 27% increase in those that were HUD-defined houseless.

02:41:40.033 --> 02:41:42.033

And the year prior to that, it was around 30%. So the point-in-time count is the annual count.

02:41:42.465 --> 02:41:47.465

Where we assess that, and so we're seeing these numbers increase, we're seeing people come to this area.

02:41:47.746 --> 02:41:51.746

And then I also serve as Vice Chair to the University YMCA.

02:41:51.599 --> 02:41:58.599

And I do want to emphasize the interactions between immigrant communities and LGBTQ inclusion.

02:42:03.113 --> 02:42:07.113

And the issues that undocumented. And immigrants are having with this current situation.

02:42:11.755 --> 02:42:18.755

Thank you so much, um, and I also want to make a mention that in October, we will be having.

02:42:18.460 --> 02:42:23.460

A study session, um, focused on immigrant and refugee mental health.

02:42:25.776 --> 02:42:29.776

Um, that I believe is the 29th? 29th of October.

02:42:36.928 --> 02:42:38.928

Anyone else would like to share?

02:42:57.488 --> 02:42:59.488

And that can be board members, too. I would just say a few things from.

02:43:01.874 --> 02:43:03.874

This experience, uh. I'm listening to everybody, you know, obviously.

02:43:04.544 --> 02:43:08.544

As the mental health board, I always think about what we can do, and, you know.

02:43:08.615 --> 02:43:13.615

Obviously, everyone acknowledges we have an abundance of resources in this county.

02:43:13.981 --> 02:43:18.981

Uh, for mental health, and yet we still struggle to provide services.

02:43:22.285 --> 02:43:24.285

Um, that are... you know, quality care that is gender-affirming.

02:43:27.258 --> 02:43:29.258

Um, for our community, and... We fund agencies.

02:43:32.570 --> 02:43:34.570

That provide mental health care. So, they should be on the list.

02:43:36.960 --> 02:43:41.960

Of providers that are providing gender-affirming care. There is absolutely no excuse.

02:43:42.278 --> 02:43:46.278

So, you know, that might be something they are not thinking about.

02:43:49.626 --> 02:43:51.626

Um, and... We need to make sure we make them think about it.

02:43:54.391 --> 02:43:58.391

Like, Rosecranz and Promise Healthcare. I mean, Promise Healthcare is doing a great job with access now.

02:43:58.082 --> 02:44:03.082

But this is something that they should... all their providers should be on this list.

02:44:03.326 --> 02:44:08.326

Um, obviously it's something that I take to heart of something I want to work on with.

02:44:11.343 --> 02:44:13.343

My providers and in my. Practice and other, you know.

02:44:13.897 --> 02:44:17.897

Maybe family medicine, obviously I'm pediatrics, so maybe working with family medicine, trying to expand that.

02:44:18.344 --> 02:44:21.344

At Carl, making sure that they're on the list, so that's something on my to-do list.

02:44:23.575 --> 02:44:25.575

Uh, that I'm thinking about. Today, and also, I know.

02:44:29.123 --> 02:44:31.123

For, um... For pediatrics, there was a long time we didn't understand why.

02:44:31.377 --> 02:44:36.377

Uh, patients, um, that were part of this community didn't feel welcome.

02:44:39.043 --> 02:44:42.043

Coming to pediatrics, because we're pediatricians, and, like, we're... hopefully super nice, and like you said, it's not enough just to be nice.

02:44:44.775 --> 02:44:46.775

But, uh... We have a lot of nursing staff that.

02:44:53.237 --> 02:44:59.237

It wasn't trained on gender-affirming care, and being LGB... TQ-friendly, and saying things that... Or just very offensive, and...

02:44:59.926 --> 02:45:02.926

Parents and patients didn't tell us. Um, and so we didn't know until.

02:45:03.346 --> 02:45:06.346

Someone told me, and then we try to make sure that.

02:45:06.968 --> 02:45:12.968

That we are actively training our staff, and we do have turnover in nursing assistants who are room patients, and.

02:45:19.043 --> 02:45:20.043

Do vaccines and everything, and those... probably the ones that interact with the patients the most, and if that's your...

02:45:23.310 --> 02:45:31.310

Front line, and that's your first experience coming into the office, and that is already setting the tone for the rest of the visit, that's... very negative. Um, and obviously then you wouldn't want to come back, even if the doctor or provider is.

02:45:35.642 --> 02:45:37.642

Providing quality care. Um... So, you know, that's something that I will...

02:45:46.790 --> 02:45:52.790

Take to heart and try to make sure we work on as, uh, in our field, but I think something that we can do as a... And the health board is making sure that, um, bigger agencies that are providing mental health care resources that we are funding are also doing the same thing, and making sure they're actively.

02:45:55.904 --> 02:45:58.904

Um, taking a role in including. This as part of their mission.

02:46:09.246 --> 02:46:11.246

Thank you very much, um... I have also been thinking about that, like, how we could, um...

02:46:16.036 --> 02:46:21.036

Help our requirements, um, ensure that. Or work to ensure that, um, anyone we fund is, um.

02:46:22.540 --> 02:46:28.540

Is affirming, and truly so. And then, like, how to do that, um.

02:46:40.121 --> 02:46:44.121

Figuring that out, I think, is challenging. I also... Um, you know, I'm sitting here thinking, like, here are all of these services that... that should happen. Like, this idea of the, like, having the space for someone to... for people...

02:46:50.486 --> 02:46:52.486

Queer and trans people to just come and be. Um, as the board, we can't...

02:46:56.849 --> 02:46:58.849

We can't start that space. But if someone came to us and said, we'd like funding to start that space.

02:47:09.668 --> 02:47:11.668

That's something we could consider. We can, um, think about how we can, um, adjust priorities or our strategic plan to really focus on some of these things.

02:47:12.839 --> 02:47:18.839

Um, but I also hope that this study session provides an opportunity for anybody who's listening to hear, like.

02:47:21.093 --> 02:47:24.093

Hey, this is a board that cares about this. We can come to them.

02:47:26.648 --> 02:47:30.648

With our idea, and maybe they'll give us money. That's what we're here for.

02:47:33.589 --> 02:47:36.589

Um, so I wanted to say that. Um, and then wanted to, you know.

02:47:39.308 --> 02:47:42.308

Pass it back to anybody in the, um... in the community or board who wants to.

02:47:49.759 --> 02:47:51.759

Share more. Mary, may I say something? And our staff as well. Alright, thank you.

02:47:57.543 --> 02:48:03.543

First, thank you to all of the presenters, the speakers today for... sharing the wealth of knowledge that you possess, the ongoing fight.

02:48:06.332 --> 02:48:08.332

And, um... For just equality.

02:48:16.484 --> 02:48:21.484

My question is very, um, basic, and it may... piggyback off of what others have said, but, you know, I have a chance to sit in on many councils and committees, and I often hear.

02:48:26.882 --> 02:48:28.882

A lot of overlapping issues. And I just wonder, is there someone or bodies that.

02:48:36.000 --> 02:48:39.000

Are not here that should be here. To hear what needs to be said, to understand what's really going on.

02:48:40.018 --> 02:48:44.018

In the community. And this is... this question is for anyone.

02:48:47.385 --> 02:48:50.385

Um... in front of me, so...

02:48:49.117 --> 02:48:55.117

Sort of, like, who... who... like, maybe who should have been in the room tonight?

02:49:01.032 --> 02:49:03.032

To listen. So, like, agency, uh, reps from...

02:49:05.789 --> 02:49:08.789

Agencies that, uh, provide mental health care.

02:49:12.210 --> 02:49:14.210

Yes, there are some online, which is good. But there could be more.

02:49:18.801 --> 02:49:20.801

And maybe some of the hospitals and clinics.

02:49:23.782 --> 02:49:26.782

Do we need our local politicians? Do we need... Okay.

02:49:36.332 --> 02:49:38.332

So, thank you, Jim. I just wanted to go back to what y'all were talking about earlier. We are already having trouble.

02:49:45.212 --> 02:49:48.212

With some of the things, the values that. This board explicitly advances. If an agency also receives federal funding.

02:49:51.219 --> 02:49:54.219

Like, there was a really important... plan with clear action steps.

02:49:54.194 --> 02:50:02.194

It was developed over time in this community using mental health board funds. It is not on the agency's website anymore.

02:50:06.156 --> 02:50:09.156

Because its focus was racial equity. And the agency has federal funding, and they had to pull it down.

02:50:09.480 --> 02:50:12.480

I found it because we presented on it, and I shared it with.

02:50:12.568 --> 02:50:19.568

Community partners who need to do some things about this issue really fast, but that's a clue to me that we could have some.

02:50:19.575 --> 02:50:25.575

Challenges with those organizations who have federal funding and are now not allowed to serve people.

02:50:33.581 --> 02:50:36.581

Who say they're undocumented, or... Right? That's already happening, and if... so if... so I think we're gonna run into...

02:50:34.880 --> 02:50:39.880

Barriers around what we're requiring and what the federal government is.

02:50:46.713 --> 02:50:48.713

Not require... is requiring against. So, I appreciated your comments about those values, but I think we're already... uh-oh.

02:50:50.351 --> 02:50:55.351

Can I come back and speak to that? Because I brought some of that up. Yes. Thanks.

02:51:04.584 --> 02:51:08.584

So again, I'm not an attorney, don't play one on TV. Um... the guidance that we have received, especially from our coalition, does support the interpretation that is more in line with, you just can't use.

02:51:12.870 --> 02:51:14.870

That federal money. For those purposes, right? So that shouldn't mean.

02:51:15.942 --> 02:51:17.942

I think what we're seeing is a lot of places pre-complying.

02:51:18.143 --> 02:51:22.143

Right? Um, so I think in terms of what this body can do.

02:51:26.404 --> 02:51:28.404

Can be helping to articulate. Um, you know, if there is an opportunity to have an attorney weigh in.

02:51:34.089 --> 02:51:37.089

Right? Where is that line? Is the interpretation that this just applies to those specific grants? Because those...

02:51:40.837 --> 02:51:43.837

The executive orders are for the federal workforce. And I think often it gets taken as directives for.

02:51:49.123 --> 02:51:52.123

Funding recipients, so having that distinction. Um, and having someone with legal expertise weigh in and help.

02:51:52.117 --> 02:51:57.117

Funded agencies understand, so if we do receive federal funding, what does that mean?

02:52:05.483 --> 02:52:08.483

For our values and for our CCMHP funding, right? I think that's something where... you know, the county could help in terms of clarifying things for agencies.

02:52:12.022 --> 02:52:16.022

And I think also encouraging, you know, assuming that. More restrictive interpretation is correct, if it is.

02:52:19.095 --> 02:52:22.095

Also encouraging agencies to not pre-comply. Right? Because I think that's where.

02:52:22.301 --> 02:52:32.301

We're seeing people, um, out of fear, right? Especially if you're heavily federally funded, it is very scary to think about losing your ability to serve.

02:52:40.114 --> 02:52:42.114

Anybody, but... also thinking about... You know, the organizations in this community are here to serve the most vulnerable members of our community.

02:52:45.874 --> 02:52:47.874

If we're not doing that. How are we prioritizing the use of funds in this community?

02:52:48.872 --> 02:52:51.872

I also do want to kind of echo what was already shared in terms of.

02:53:00.121 --> 02:53:03.121

The... what is unusual about this board is. You know, we are very fortunate that we do receive funding from multiple government offices, multiple local funding.

02:53:03.818 --> 02:53:08.818

Sources. Um, we're always looking for new opportunities, that's why we were looking at that federal grant.

02:53:21.142 --> 02:53:24.142

Um, this is the only body that's had this... is having this kind of study session, right? And, like, I put the date down for the one about serving immigrants in our community, too, so some of it is maybe ensuring that that information is being shared with other.

02:53:24.096 --> 02:53:29.096

Entities that are providing funding to our community, so that they understand, like.

02:53:29.820 --> 02:53:36.820

There were already barriers, and it is harder now, right? There are sources of funding that people do not have access to anymore.

02:53:36.934 --> 02:53:42.934

So, as they are making decisions, too, that they're keeping in mind, you know, where are the actual gaps?

02:53:43.668 --> 02:53:51.668

Versus, um, maybe that's something that somebody could apply for, you know, from another source, um, if they don't have those restrictions.

02:54:01.942 --> 02:54:03.942

Um... So, just to... kind of let you know, um, just from my position.

02:54:04.420 --> 02:54:08.420

Um, many people have asked me directly, is my job in jeopardy?

02:54:15.129 --> 02:54:19.129

Because my job literally looks at... racial... disparities, I look at...

02:54:22.228 --> 02:54:25.228

But I look at it like I've lived it. And so, um...

02:54:30.462 --> 02:54:32.462

And because... of who I am, just living as a Black woman in...

02:54:37.624 --> 02:54:42.624

The world. I've always thought ahead of it. And so, which is why we took a position, really, of looking at cultural competence.

02:54:52.435 --> 02:54:57.435

Instead of switching a lot of our language to DEI. Because the family culture, individual culture, touches the hearts of every single human.

02:54:57.818 --> 02:55:07.818

And, um, even though there are the class standards that we definitely utilize and definitely measure and work with with organizations.

02:55:07.564 --> 02:55:13.564

When you focus on family culture, that's pretty much a universal.

02:55:18.037 --> 02:55:22.037

Peace, and I've had to do a lot of education. Um, with people that were...

02:55:23.515 --> 02:55:27.515

White, to say, you all do have a culture. This a culture that you have.

02:55:32.086 --> 02:55:34.086

And it's not anything that's... uh, better than or less than, or any of that.

02:55:39.992 --> 02:55:42.992

But learning to get people to honor who they are. Not necessarily the jobs they do. And so...

02:55:50.173 --> 02:55:52.173

That was one clear... thing that the mental health board has taken a stance on was cultural competence from the very beginning.

02:55:57.219 --> 02:56:01.219

And I've been doing this work for about 15 years. So, because cultural competency is never gonna go away.

02:56:12.966 --> 02:56:15.966

Because when it's all boiled down to it. All of us want to be served based on our own beliefs, based on our values, and based on who we are. And we all should have quality servicing that is easily understood.

02:56:22.770 --> 02:56:27.770

Like, I don't think we getting ready to uproot that, and getting ready to... So when you begin to look about name changes, or wordsmithing.

02:56:27.791 --> 02:56:32.791

Really begin to think about what is it that you really want, and being very explicit.

02:56:35.919 --> 02:56:40.919

That really is inclusive language, um, that... speaks to the culture of the people you're serving.

02:56:41.496 --> 02:56:47.496

And what I did find is that that's really hard for a lot of people, because you are going.

02:56:52.639 --> 02:56:56.639

A step different, because you're not just... looking at them, saying, okay, because you're this, you're this, this, and this.

02:56:56.971 --> 02:57:04.971

It's trying to really break through and becoming responsive to that person's culture and who they are.

02:57:08.710 --> 02:57:12.710

So, the Mental Health Board has been... Ahead of the game for a very long time.

02:57:22.065 --> 02:57:28.065

And several organizations, as I've said, doing work with people. For all these years, we're on a journey where there are dark sides, there are pits, there are curves, and in some parts that are dangerous.

02:57:33.905 --> 02:57:35.905

We're in a dangerous time right now. And so, their support... I am here...

02:57:35.741 --> 02:57:43.741

To help, I've been paying attention, I've read the executive order connected to changing all of these things.

02:57:43.403 --> 02:57:49.403

Decided to get familiar with it so that I could know exactly how to support.

02:57:55.300 --> 02:57:56.300

Organizations. The thing that is really disheartening.

02:58:02.193 --> 02:58:05.193

Is the care that they're taking away from people. That do not align with...

02:58:07.216 --> 02:58:13.216

The values of the current administration, and that's very disheartening.

02:58:21.141 --> 02:58:23.141

Well said. Um... Another thing I was thinking, you know, it sounds like a few of us have homework, you know, things that we want to do, people we want to reach out to.

02:58:22.919 --> 02:58:33.919

Um, I like the suggestion of maybe we need to invite more agencies to come to the next, um, study session, because a lot of the agencies.

02:58:38.087 --> 02:58:40.087

May not do direct, you know. Immigration things, but they have clients that.

02:58:44.940 --> 02:58:48.940

Overlaps. And so, I don't know if that is something that, you know, maybe... Um, you know, our staff and Lynn can invite some of these agencies.

02:58:49.827 --> 02:58:54.827

But I'd almost go so far to say, hey, Molly, you're a good writer.

02:58:55.647 --> 02:58:58.647

I think whether it come from our staff or from you and I.

02:58:58.219 --> 02:59:03.219

I think we need to send some notes to some of our, you know, politicians, and be like, hey.

02:59:10.777 --> 02:59:18.777

Our eyes were opened. You might want to come spend a couple hours with us and hear what's going on in your district, in your town, whatever, so... Um, I'll be quiet now, but I just... that was something that popped in my head, and if anyone has any thoughts of who we need to invite or whatever.

02:59:22.276 --> 02:59:24.276

Let's send them through Lynn or whatever, and... See who shows up.

02:59:25.252 --> 02:59:28.252

Yeah, I think that's a great point. I've certainly had, you know.

02:59:28.930 --> 02:59:33.930

People who are interested in running for office, or are running for office, reach out and.

02:59:42.596 --> 02:59:46.596

And ask things, but, like, they're not here. Like, have they listened... have they ever watched... seen a mental health board meeting? Have they ever...

02:59:48.551 --> 02:59:51.551

Listen to these conversations, so, um... Hopefully, that will change.

02:59:56.337 --> 02:59:58.337

Yeah. Just to say, the next study session is actually in September.

02:59:58.764 --> 03:00:07.764

And I think, like, I would... I think everybody needs to come to that, because it is focused on people with intellectual and developmental disabilities who actually do.

03:00:17.623 --> 03:00:22.623

Happened to sometimes be queer people, and sometimes trans, and... Sometimes black, and we really... the systems, uh, really do exclude people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and I...

03:00:25.085 --> 03:00:29.085

So appreciated my friend's extensive comments on. On the ways that they are excluded.

03:00:29.916 --> 03:00:34.916

Because of their disabilities, and so I... I think sometimes it's a... not a very well-attended.

03:00:40.176 --> 03:00:41.176

Study session, because... people aren't super worried about IDD, but...

03:00:40.699 --> 03:00:43.699

We should be. So I just wanted to shout out for that one.

03:00:45.811 --> 03:00:48.811

Another thing you said who was missing? I think our faith-based leaders.

03:00:51.444 --> 03:00:53.444

And natural supports. Um, and when I say that.

03:01:00.205 --> 03:01:05.205

There are natural supports that are not 501c3. But they are providing support to our community, so they're not...

03:01:08.135 --> 03:01:11.135

Necessarily a recognized... organization, but they're definitely organized, there are movements.

03:01:15.771 --> 03:01:22.771

They're building coalitions, um, that oftentimes are providing support. To our communities, but they're getting...

03:01:27.454 --> 03:01:29.454

Private dollars from people. Um, but also could utilize this information.

03:01:36.012 --> 03:01:38.012

That we're given. To help them... connect to different supports and different services.

03:01:38.895 --> 03:01:41.895

So those are some people that might be missing as well.

03:01:45.093 --> 03:01:47.093

Natural supports. Like, youth groups.

03:01:49.610 --> 03:01:51.610

Thank you. Daria, would you like to share?

03:01:52.739 --> 03:01:55.739

Thanks, I didn't know how to get involved, so I just came inside up here.

03:02:00.571 --> 03:02:06.571

Um, one of the things we've talked a lot about, and I was gonna mention this because I didn't put it in the slides, but... I remember it now. Uh, we've talked a lot about how to help people live healthy and.

03:02:07.901 --> 03:02:10.901

Happy lives, um, but we haven't talked about how to support people.

03:02:10.030 --> 03:02:17.030

Um, while they're dying. Um, and help them with death with dignity. We have lost two clients this past year.

03:02:17.018 --> 03:02:21.018

Um, and right now we have a client in the hospital who is terminal.

03:02:26.542 --> 03:02:30.542

And we don't think about something until we need to. Um, we never thought in our jobs we'd have to help someone through the dying process, help them make these decisions.

03:02:34.875 --> 03:02:36.875

Because they don't have any other supports. Um, so I just wanted to make this, you know, on your radar, because.

03:02:39.384 --> 03:02:46.384

It's just something we don't think about a lot, um, when people come here and they have no one, or they come here because they left a family that... wasn't supportive, who sits by them?

03:02:48.656 --> 03:02:52.656

Um, and it's us. We will do it. It's, um... We didn't think it was gonna be part of the job, because we didn't.

03:02:52.165 --> 03:02:56.165

Wanted to be 40 years later, and we're still burying folks.

03:02:56.471 --> 03:03:00.471

Um, but it is, and we will continue doing it, but I just also wanted to.

03:03:03.358 --> 03:03:05.358

Make that known, AIDS still kills. And, um, unfortunately, we have seen it.

03:03:12.029 --> 03:03:14.029

Very frequently this past year. Thank you for, um, for making that really, really important.

03:03:19.916 --> 03:03:21.916

Um, reminder. Does anyone else want to come forward and share?

03:03:36.786 --> 03:03:38.786

I just want to echo the... the comment about... people not in the room, you know, our natural supports, our community members that are not.

03:03:45.257 --> 03:03:48.257

Represented organizations. I think it's just really important to kind of drive home this point that queer people exist in every organization, in every faith community.

03:03:53.867 --> 03:03:56.867

Every family in every school. Um, and it's not something that you can dance around, and there are a lot of people.

03:03:57.151 --> 03:04:02.151

Who don't have the access to the education. And that's where we as an organization are.

03:04:08.444 --> 03:04:10.444

Happy to step in, and I think... the conversations we've had around, like, the pre-compliance issue, we've had a lot of those conversations in the last 8 months.

03:04:10.851 --> 03:04:14.851

A lot of really distraught organizations who have come to us and said.

03:04:15.651 --> 03:04:19.651

Well, I had to take my pronouns out of our name, because we're gonna lose funding and shut everything down.

03:04:19.869 --> 03:04:24.869

And that's a terrible position to be in. Um, our hospital systems right now.

03:04:30.888 --> 03:04:33.888

I do not envy them in any way, because... they're losing access to gender-affirming care, and it's not entirely the system's fault, you know?

03:04:34.420 --> 03:04:37.420

Do you have to choose this, or do you have to choose shutting down completely?

03:04:38.019 --> 03:04:45.019

We're never gonna tell you to shut down completely. But I think there are conversations that we as organizations who are very much engaged in this work.

03:04:48.495 --> 03:04:50.495

Can have around, like. You know, we've... I know, like, the homeless.

03:04:57.109 --> 03:04:59.109

Subgroup that we've talked a lot about. Um, I've talked with both shelters around, like, okay, HUD funding, you can't put.

03:05:10.056 --> 03:05:12.056

That someone's trans, right? Like, you can't... you're at risk if you do that, but... And I know nobody wants to do more paperwork, least of all me, but there are ways that you can do the intake process.

03:05:12.751 --> 03:05:17.751

And put things in people's files, or have things recorded so that people are still getting the support.

03:05:21.254 --> 03:05:24.254

And you are still complying. With these ridiculous federal orders. So I think.

03:05:24.125 --> 03:05:29.125

You know, again, the question about who should be in this room, everybody should be in this room.

03:05:29.807 --> 03:05:34.807

Um, and I echo the fact that our legislators and our leaders, both at the local.

03:05:35.111 --> 03:05:39.111

State and federal level should be in these conversations, and they are often not.

03:05:42.811 --> 03:05:45.811

Um, and that's disappointing in a lot of ways. But I think, you know, people really need to understand that.

03:05:45.772 --> 03:05:53.772

You do not have to reinvent the wheel. There are organizations on the ground doing it, and we are happy to provide that consult or provide that education.

03:06:01.717 --> 03:06:04.717

You know, I think the point about. Walking into healthcare systems, and... Doctors, a lot of times, administrators a lot of times, they'll get this education, but nursing staff, admin staff.

03:06:04.208 --> 03:06:08.208

Staff on the ground, the people that you are going to interact with.

03:06:13.392 --> 03:06:17.392

9 times more than anybody else in that system. Are not necessarily getting that education, and so... We exist to do that.

03:06:17.607 --> 03:06:24.607

And, you know, whether it's people in this room now or people who are getting CCMHB funding, or people who are, you know, not 501c3s.

03:06:25.331 --> 03:06:29.331

We really want people to understand that, like, we are here to provide that.

03:06:29.777 --> 03:06:35.777

And cost is never gonna be a barrier, you know? If you have a little bit of money to spend on training, great, please do. We're super small.

03:06:38.610 --> 03:06:41.610

But if you can't, I'll come do it for free. We've told police stations, I'll come in and.

03:06:41.314 --> 03:06:48.314

Do a 2AM training for your night staff, whatever it takes, because education is the key to ending some of this social stigma.

03:06:56.475 --> 03:06:58.475

Thank you so much for that.

03:06:58.946 --> 03:07:04.946

Sorry. Please don't apologize. We are very glad to hear from you.

03:07:05.291 --> 03:07:09.291

Um, the one other addition I might add is think about.

03:07:09.305 --> 03:07:13.305

How data is being collected, and whether or not it's required.

03:07:16.353 --> 03:07:20.353

We're entering an era where data collection could be viewed. Particularly from people needing services.

03:07:24.510 --> 03:07:27.510

As a risk factor. So, whether or not there's. Ways that, as a board, you can...

03:07:31.374 --> 03:07:36.374

Alter how data is collected or reported, or aggregated. There might be ways that you could decrease either realized or perceived risk.

03:07:38.722 --> 03:07:42.722

While still trying to do, um, data-guided. Services.

03:07:48.272 --> 03:07:50.272

Thank you.

03:07:54.048 --> 03:07:57.048

Is there any final comments?

03:08:09.420 --> 03:08:11.420

Well, we have had a very... good and, um, thorough and long discussion, and I thank all of you for being here through it.

03:08:11.348 --> 03:08:19.348

Um, and sharing so much important information and insights and, um, really, really difficult.

03:08:25.725 --> 03:08:27.725

Things. Um... So, the... awkwardly, we will move on to public participation agency input.

03:08:27.266 --> 03:08:33.266

Um, even though this has been, like, a whole public participation piece, if there's anybody else who wants to share.

03:08:33.134 --> 03:08:40.134

Anything, um, with the board, um, you can come forward or raise your hand in the Zoom and do so.

03:08:43.402 --> 03:08:45.402

This is kind of the last chance. For the evening.

03:08:48.941 --> 03:08:54.941

All right, no, no one on Zoom, no one in, um, person, so we will move on.

03:08:58.103 --> 03:09:01.103

To board announcements and input, are there any announcements. For input from the board.

03:09:04.127 --> 03:09:14.127

I will make one announcement that our, um, Dr. John Paul Ewakim was named to the Central Illinois 40 Under 40.

03:09:14.248 --> 03:09:20.248

Uh, recently, um, so he will be awarded that in October, and we're very proud of him.

03:09:34.838 --> 03:09:35.838

Any other announcements? All right, I see no point in belaboring that, so our, um, last item on the agenda is to adjourn, but I will just do a little preview of what's coming next.

03:09:35.158 --> 03:09:45.158

Because we will have, um, in September and October, we will have a meeting and a study session each month, so our next meeting is September 17th.

03:09:50.057 --> 03:09:53.057

And then September 24th is our study session. Um, around, um, intellectual and developmental disability.

03:09:58.007 --> 03:10:01.007

And then in October, our meeting is the 22nd. And our study session on immigrant and refugee mental health is.

03:10:01.560 --> 03:10:05.560

The 29th. And all of them are at 5.45 p.m. On Wednesdays.

03:10:09.323 --> 03:10:12.323

In this room, in the Bennett Admin Administrative Center. So, with that, we will adjourn. Thank you very much for being here.