



PITCH BRIEF: The Proud Parent AMA Tour

A Vital Mental Health Resource for Suburban & Rural Families with LGBTQ+ youth

The Need: Supporting Families in "Resource Deserts"

While LGBTQ+ resources are concentrated in cities, families in our community often navigate their child's identity in isolation. In "resource deserts," parents and grandparents of LGBTQ+ youth face a vacuum of information, an abundance of misinformation, and a difficult community to navigate without visible queer spaces and leadership. This isolation is a public health risk; evidence shows that family affirmation is the single most effective intervention in reducing LGBTQ+ youth suicide and depression.

The Library Advantage: Safety, Neutrality, & Access

Public libraries are uniquely positioned to host this work because they provide anonymity and accessibility. For a parent fearful of public stigma, a library is a neutral sanctuary. Unlike urban Pride Centers, the local library offers a "low-barrier" point of entry where families can seek expert guidance without forced public exposure.

The Program: A 90-Minute Foundation

This workshop is a clinical-grade intervention designed for the "kitchen table." It follows a practical, two-part structure:

- **45 Minutes of Education:** Nathaniel establishes the basics of his proprietary framework. Parents learn the foundational principles of affirmation and the neurobiology of acceptance—turning "clinical theory" into "parenting tools."
- **45 Minutes of Ask Me Anything (AMA):** An unscripted dialogue where families get direct answers to the questions they are often afraid to ask:
 - Is my child too young to transition? * How do I talk about sex and identity in an age-appropriate way?
 - How do I handle harmful language from relatives or school board friction?

Takeaway: Every participant will get access to The Proud Parent™ worksheet, which includes exclusive content to continue the work at home.



The Presenter: Vetted, Evidence-Based, & Safe

For boards requiring professional vetting, Nathaniel Gray, MSW, offers the highest level of institutional authority:

- **NYS Contractor:** Currently contracted with the NYS OMH Suicide Prevention Center (SPCNY) as a Subject Matter Expert on LGBTQ+ youth mental health to develop statewide suicide prevention training for youth-serving professionals.
- **Policy Architect:** Former Empire State Fellow; co-authored the LGBTQ+ practice guidance used across New York State child welfare and civil service systems.
- **Regional Leadership:** Served as Executive Director of the Pride Center of the Capital Region, raising over \$1.5M to expand mental health services and free group programming for the queer community of the Capital Region, and supported the expansion of Pride events and programming in rural and suburban counties.
- **Lived Experience:** Raised in rural Ohio in an Evangelical military household, Nathaniel survived active youth suicidality. He speaks with a unique blend of clinical expertise and the "lived truth" of the families he serves.

Program Logistics & Delivery

- **Structure:** 90-Minute Workshop (45-min Foundational Education / 45-min Facilitated AMA).
- **Registration:** Handled entirely by Gray Area Consulting via a dedicated online portal and QR code; zero administrative burden on library staff.
- **Cost:** Free. No family is ever turned away, ensuring universal accessibility. *Suggested donation of \$10.00 to be handled by GAC.*
- **Environment:** A safe and inclusive, community-based location such as a library conference room.
- **Takeaways:** Every attendee gets access to The Proud Parent™ worksheet and Family Acceptance Project™ evidence-based Affirmation and Rejection posters