

Objective

To develop and support innovative policy, training, program, research, and evaluation solutions to address issues impacting marginalized children and youth

Skills & Abilities

POLICY

My approach to policy is holistic, involving all stakeholders and integrating established best practices with the individual needs of institutions and the people within them. Understanding that policies are only as effective as their implementation, I strive to develop an implementation process that is responsive, actionable, and accountable to those impacted by them. I have:

- Analyzed and re-written existing policies and developed new policies for juvenile justice and child welfare institutions, addressing significant gaps in procedures and practices, ensuring consistency between policies, and aligning policies with established best practices
- Collaborated with line staff and leadership within Illinois's juvenile justice system to develop procedures and practices for implementing policy within individual facilities and practice areas
- Provided Illinois schools and districts support to develop and pass policies, and to create implementation processes that ensure their efficacy
- Developed an evaluation process to measure the efficacy of new policies within Illinois's juvenile justice system over the course of two years

TRAINING & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

I develop customized trainings and professional development that engage participants, capitalize on the expertise of those people in the room, and build relevant knowledge and skills. I have:

- Developed and delivered training for all levels of personnel in a broad range of institutions, including school staff, teacher educators, juvenile justice staff, juvenile court personnel, child welfare staff, young people, parents and guardians, and community members
- Tracked the success of my trainings and professional development through careful evaluation (e.g., evaluations of my trainings for juvenile justice staff on issues related to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex youth demonstrated a positive shift in majority of staff's attitude toward LGBTQI youth from strong negative reactions to respect)

PROGRAM DESIGN

I work with schools, non-profit organizations, and institutions of higher education to develop customized programs that meet the needs of the individuals they serve. My approach hinges on building leadership and buy-in from those most impacted by the programs, assessing complex needs and opportunities, and developing programs and systems that are responsive and flexible. I have:

- Developed youth leadership programs focused on harnessing youth expertise and experience in order for youth to engage meaningfully in policy, advocacy, peer education, community organizing, research, and evaluation
- Worked with institutions of higher education to design teacher preparation programs that integrate issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity

COLLABORATION & LEADERSHIP

I thrive in environments where I can support strong and efficient collaboration among staff and stakeholders. I focus on opening lines of communication, identifying opportunities for connections, and maintaining open, transparent communication between systems and those they serve. I have:

- Developed processes for supporting justice-involved youth across various intersecting systems, including juvenile probation, public physical and mental health care agencies, and community-based services
- Identified opportunities for cross-sector collaboration between and among systems, including identifying methods for sharing information and developing accountability
- Supported organizations and systems to identify strategic goals, develop action plans for goal attainment, and measure impact
- Led hiring processes for management and staff and developed organizational structures

Work Experience

CHIEF CONSULTANT | QUO VADIMUS LLC | MAY 2017-PRESENT

SENIOR POLICY ANALYST, DIRECTOR OF COURT INVOLVED YOUTH PROJECT | HEALTH & MEDICINE POLICY RESEARCH GROUP | OCTOBER 2015-JULY 2017

PROGRAM DIRECTOR | ILLINOIS SAFE SCHOOLS ALLIANCE | FEBRUARY 2007-OCTOBER 2015

YOUTH LEADERSHIP COORDINATOR | YOUTH OUTLOOK | SEPTEMBER 2004-FEBRUARY 2007

Coalitions, Collaborations & Projects

NANCY B. JEFFERSON SCHOOL APPOINTED LOCAL SCHOOL COUNCIL

- Chair, July 2016-Present
- Secretary, July 2015-Present

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO | PROJECT SAFESPACES

- Co-Principal Investigator, November 2013-January 2015

NATIONAL SAFE SCHOOLS ROUNDTABLE

- Steering Committee Chair, November 2010-2014

Education

BA, SUMMA CUM LAUDE, HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING | UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO

Publications

Healthcare, Girls, and the Juvenile-Justice System

Barriers & Opportunities to Accessing Care. Health & Medicine Policy Research Group Report. (July 2017)

Advocacy Efforts to Support Gender Identity Development in Schools in the Face of Organized Backlash, Russel, S. R. & Horn, S. S. (Sept. 2016). Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, and Schooling: The nexus of research, practice and policy.

Supporting LGB/T Youth: Comprehensive School Transformation as Effective Bullying Prevention, Russel, S. R. & Horn, S. S. (Sept. 2016). Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, and Schooling: The nexus of research, practice and policy.

Creating Safe & Supportive Environments for LGB/T Youth: A Best Practice Guide for Cook County Juvenile Probation.

Health & Medicine Policy Research Group Handbook. (March 2016)