

Community-Based Development of LGBTQ+ Health Information Resources

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ABSTRACT

In this research project, we investigate the information practices of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) youth to understand how they attempt to meet their health information needs using online resources. LGBTQ+ youth identify the internet as a vital resource for finding relevant health information because, due to fear and stigma, many cannot turn to traditional resources such as healthcare providers or schools for comprehensive health information. This research supports efforts of our community partners to address the unique health needs of LGBTQ+ youth. In addition to understanding the contextual factors impacting the health information search experience for LGBTQ+ youth, this research encourages youth participants to envision the content and capabilities of their ideal health information resources. In online synchronous focus groups, we use participatory design approaches to engage participants in collaborative design of online health resources, based on their past experiences seeking health information. Primary findings include website topic areas, layout, features, and audiences. In addition, through individual interviews, we focus on barriers to health information seeking and prompt participants to think specifically within an online search context. This research will contribute an empirical understanding of LGBTQ+ youths' online health information practices as this population attempts to meet health information needs that often remain unmet due to systemic homophobia, transphobia and other factors limiting access. Results will directly inform our development of an LGBTQ+ inclusive web resource for our community partners and their youth advisory committees. By including LGBTQ+ youth in our community-based resource development process, we are enabling these participants to directly shape the content and functions of this forthcoming website.

ALISE RESEARCH TAXONOMY TOPICS

information needs; information seeking; specific populations

AUTHOR KEYWORDS

LGBTQ+ youth; health information; information practices