



From Stress to Success: LGBTQ+ Youth Experiences

An educational game to help LGBTQ+ youth recognize and manage trauma and distress.

Who is this for?

From Stress to Success is designed to be used with LGBTQ+ youth, aged 12-17, especially those who may not have had access to basic mental health education and/or services. This tool can be used by licensed mental health professionals in group therapy settings, or to provide basic mental health information to youth at school or in community-based youth serving programs.

What comes with it?

From Stress to Success is a suite of 4 games:

- Game 1: What is trauma?
- Game 2: Sources of trauma
- Game 3: What are triggers?
- Game 4: Strategies for managing distress

INTERESTED?

Contact Strategies for Youth at 617-714-3789
or by writing to info@strategiesforyouth.org

It also includes:

- A Game Leader Training on adolescent trauma and best practices for supporting youth and playing *From Stress to Success*;
- Game Leader Guides that explain each question and answer and provide discussion points and prompts;
- An evaluation of the game's impacts through analysis of pre- and post-game surveys.

How do I play?

SFY provides training, a license to the game software, and game leader guides and materials to distribute to youth during the game. You need a laptop and a projector or smart board.

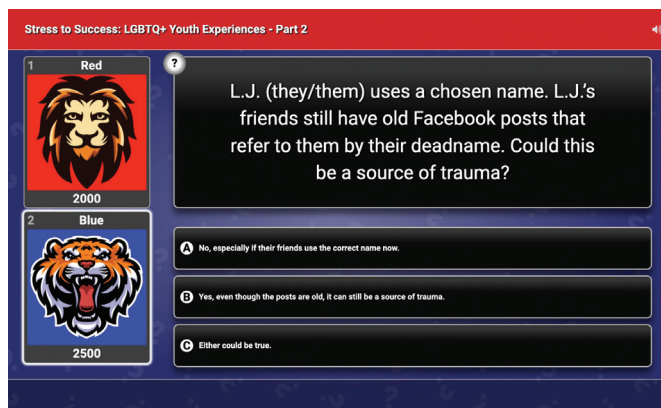
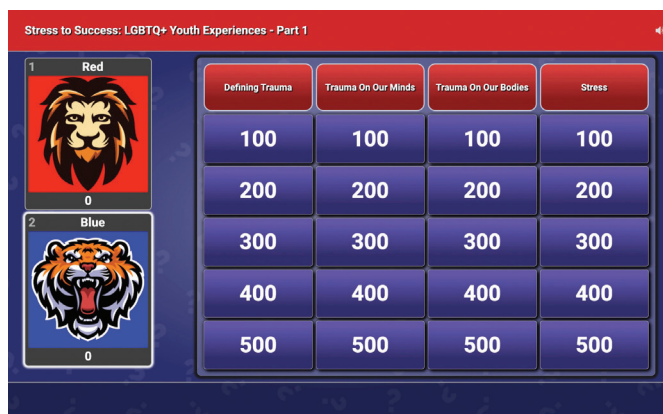


What is *From Stress to Success*?

A psychoeducational tool, developed in consultation with child and adolescent psychologists and designed in a game format, to help LGBTQ+ youth understand what trauma is, how it may be experienced, to recognize when and under what circumstances it can be triggered, and strategies for managing distress.

Building off SFY's trademark educational game, *Juvenile Justice Jeopardy*[™], this program was created in recognition of the clear connection between exposure to trauma and system involvement, the cyclical nature of these two harmful experiences, lack of access to traditional mental health services for those most impacted by system involvement, the particular forms of toxic stress and trauma that LGBTQ+ youth face, and their disproportionately high rate of contact with law enforcement.

The goal is to help LGBTQ+ youth effectively manage trauma and distress, so they do not put themselves at risk of harm or system involvement.



Screen captures from the game.

Exposure to trauma is a predictor of system-involvement

Our growing knowledge about the effects of trauma on young people's behavior and coping skills is transforming the field of juvenile justice. The link between exposure to trauma and subsequent system-involvement is so strong that it has set into motion new interventions for vulnerable young people considered at-risk of arrest. "Trauma-informed" care is now an accepted and widely used term for injecting this knowledge into mental health, rehabilitative, and educational treatments.

Trauma response puts youth in jeopardy when dealing with authority figures

Yet, despite the growing use of this knowledge base by adults, young people themselves are often wholly unaware of what trauma looks and feels like in themselves or in their friends. Many have no idea when or how their fear, confusion, or sense of powerlessness gets activated, or what to do when it does. Rather, their hyper-vigilance and "fight or flight" impulses can put them in extreme jeopardy when dealing with authority figures, particularly police officers, who frequently misinterpret these traumatic responses as belligerence, hostility, and intentional disrespect. This creates a toxic dynamic between law enforcement and young people that can quickly escalate into use of force and arrest.

SFY trains your agency to facilitate the game

Agencies with trauma-informed and trauma-responsive social workers and other mental health providers will be trained to facilitate and play *From Stress to Success* with the youth they serve. Once trained the game can be utilized in whatever way makes the most sense for the agency and young people under its care. The game remains available to be played as frequently and for as long as game leaders desire.