

# MERIBETH ROBINSON

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### Family and Youth Therapy (LGBTQ)

#### Family Therapy: (LGBTQ)

Families in the LGBTQ community come in many forms. And whether it is the family faced with a teenager struggling with his/her sexuality, or gay parents trying to bridge the divides of blended households, or any other circumstance that stresses a family's coping skills, a safe place is developed to work through the issues facing the family. An environment of acceptance, understanding and counseling is created.

#### Youth (LGBTQ):

- Gay teens are four times more likely to attempt suicide than their heterosexual peers. (Massachusetts 2006 Youth Risk Behavior Survey)
- Gay youth in grades seven to twelve are twice as likely to make a plan to commit suicide and four times more likely to make a suicide attempt that requires medical attention. (Seattle School System Study)
- Twenty-eight percent of gay students will drop out of school, more than three times the national average for heterosexual students.
- In a 2007 survey of 626 gay, bisexual and transgender middle-schoolers from across the country by the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN), 81% reported being regularly harassed on campus because of their sexual orientation. Another 39% reported physical assaults. Of the students who told teachers or administrators about the bullying, only 29% said it resulted in effective intervention

LGBTQ youth deserve to have a life where they can be safe and accepted. An environment of acceptance is created in therapy to assist the youth in realizing their own potential. That includes educating families toward acceptance of LGBT and questioning youth as well as intervening to reduce the harmful effects of family rejection on LGBT and questioning youth by providing a safe place for young persons to develop self acceptance and build coping skills.

The family is very important in this process. Rejection from family is devastating to the youth and even those youth who have very accepting families are still fearful of rejection. These youth deserve to be happy, they deserve to be safe and they deserve equality.