

## inSocialWork Podcast Series

### Episode 89 - Dr. Eugene Walls: School Engagement Among Sexual Minority Students: Allies, Alliances, and Academic Outcomes

[00:00:08] Welcome to LIVING PROOF A podcast series of the University at Buffalo School of Social Work at [www.socialwork.buffalo.edu](http://www.socialwork.buffalo.edu). Were glad you could join us today. The series Living Proof examines social work research and practice that makes a difference in people's lives. I'm your host Adjoa Robinson and I'd like to take a moment to address you our regular listeners. We know you have enjoyed our podcasts as evidenced by the more than 200000 downloads to date thanks to you all. We'd like to know what value you may have found in the podcast. We'd like to hear from all of you practitioners researchers students but especially our listeners who are social work educators. How are you using the podcast in your classrooms. Just go to our Web site at W WW dot social work dot Buffalo dot edu forward slash podcast and click on the contact us tab again. Thanks for listening. And we look forward to hearing from you. Today's podcast features a conversation with Dr. Eugene walls. Dr. Walls is an associate professor at the Graduate School of Social Work University of Denver. His academic and research interests include gender sexuality homelessness and social movements and social stratification. Dr. Walls is a community practice specialist with experience at the United Cerebral Palsy Association. Kids peace national centers for kids in crisis and the Center for homelessness in South Bend Indiana. Dr. Walls has written extensively about sexual minority youth here. Dr. Walls discusses his research on school engagement among sexual minority students for contributing roles of school climate adult allies and gay straight alliances in predicting academic outcomes.

[00:02:23] Dr. Diane Elze associate professor and director of the MSW program at the University at Buffalo School of Social Work spoke with Dr. Walls by telephone. I am Diane Elze. The associate professor and director of the MSW program at the University of Buffalo School of Social Work. I will be talking today with Dr. Eugene Walls associate professor at the Graduate School of Social Work at the University of Denver. We will be talking about his research and how the existence of gay straight alliances may impact the lives of lesbian gay bisexual and transgender Houston young adults. Dr. Walls thank you so much for your willingness to be interviewed. I hear that you're having snow in Denver as we speak. Oh we definitely are it's not unusual for us this time of the year. Well I want to take this opportunity to tell all of our listeners that on this day December 22nd we have no snow in Buffalo New York. Now you've been conducting research and how gay straight alliances may impact the lives of lesbian gay bisexual and transgender used in young adults. How do you become interested in conducting research with LGBT youth. And then more specifically on how their well-being and educational achievement may be associated with the presence of gay straight alliance. My larger research agenda does focus on risk and resilience in the lives of lesbian gay bisexual transgender and queer youth and I'm going to be using LGBTQ and queer probably anonymously throughout the interview. So folks know. And when I arrived at the University of Denver back in 2005 as a new assistant professor I was lucky enough to be connected with the program here in Denver.

[00:04:09] It's called Rainbow Alley. And as we began to look at some data they had collected. It was really interesting to see these different factors emerging and some of the kind of lived experiences that the youth were talking about were the risk factors side of the equation. So those were things like bullying familial abuse onto the set of self injury and then some of the experiences were on the resilience side of the equation and those who are students go engagement and gay straight alliances for example. So that's really how my kind of larger research agenda that was focused on queer youth really kind of zeroed in on gay straight alliances and went back in 2005 when I began to look at the scholarship and GSA. I was dismayed to find that very little work had been done at that point not only in the field of social work but it also didn't exist in the larger body

of research including education psychology sociology. At that point Glisson was had started doing its annual National School Climate Survey and maybe I should say Glisson is the Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network for folks who don't know that acronym and their National School Climate Survey had been very useful it was very useful and is still very useful. And then sociologist Melinda Pacelli out of the University of Hartford had turned to research that she had completed for her dissertation into a book on GSA that also came out in 2005. It was outstanding together with the name of it and so that was also very good.

[00:05:36] But other than that there was really only a smattering of articles in the scholarship and many of those who were more editorial or think pieces and some of those were about the resistance that GSAs were facing in certain school districts. So from that point on the one hand this lack of research was not surprising given that GSA is we're still a fairly recent and emerging social phenomenon. And I think that GLYSEN identifies the first official GSA starting back in about 1988. So still fairly recent phenomenon. But on the other hand just these were proliferating at a very rapid rate. I think the lesson I looked at the GLYSEN Web site it indicates there were about 4000 GSA registered with them in the U.S. and a few other countries. And of course those are only the chapters or the clubs that are officially registered or that identify with the label gay straight alliance. So it is clear at that point that GSA is were an area of research were a lot needed to be done. I think the other thing about GSA is that we're especially attractive for me if my interest in Ally ship how we use social workers engage in behavior that supports the advancement of cultural not into groups to which we don't belong. And it seems to me the GSA have been a particularly successful framework for involving heterosexually identified allies in the struggle for justice for LGBT people. And it is not to say that allies as a concept is new definitely been around and incorporated into other social movements have always been white anti-racist allies in the civil rights movement. Male Feminist involved in equality for women.

[00:07:12] But the just a framework gave this ally a particular structure that I think has been really useful and that people can actually replicate and I think that's been kind of one of the really nice qualities of GSA and has really led to their proliferation. So I want to continue and ask you about various studies that you've conducted with young people. But first because you say something about Rainbow Alley how you established such a close collaboration with them and the kinds of services they provide. Sure sure. So Rainbow Alley like it is the LGBTQ youth program here in Denver and it's a program of the Gay Lesbian Bisexual Transgender Community Center of Colorado. And when I arrived in 2005 Catherine Ultor who is the dean of the Graduate School of Social Work here at the University of Denver connected me with hope with Netsky who is one of our former alums and who was at that time the youth services program director I believe us or Tido. So she was over Rainbow Alley and in our very first meeting I mean it was kind of like a dream come true for a brand new assistant professor who wasn't it was brand new. Denver had no contacts in the Denver community hope and I were talking to you as she said Wow. We've been collecting data for a few years and we just use these data for internal reports writing grants. Our annual report those kinds of things just like we would like to take a look at it and see if there's anything interesting in it. So I was obviously very excited about that that they were actually involved already and collecting data on an annual basis for programming Valland program planning purposes and that she was just so open and trusting with me with their data.

[00:08:53] So that was really an exciting opportunity. So that's how that could be collaboration actually started. And from there it's just kind of blossomed and grown. It's just been a really wonderful partnership for me in terms of what Rainbow Alley does. They're modeled on a youth adult partnership approach. So the youth are involved in all of the programming decisions and the running of their programs. They offer numerous different programs but Lubeck leadership kind of healthy sexuality. They do a lot of support of the gay straight alliances in particular the Denver public schools better have expanded out into the kind of suburban communities around Denver as

well. They have a drop in center that I think at this point is open five nights a week. They do queer prom. They also sponsor at Pride fest here in Denver which is like I think the third largest pride in the U.S. I think we usually have around 350000 people show up for pride. They sponsor. It's called The Alley and it's all of the Youth Services Providers come together in one particular area that is specifically for queer youth and so they coordinate that and they do lots of like speakers bureaus talks and trainings and they just do so much and there are really amazing organization. I think Denver is a community is very lucky to have such a vibrant exciting program here. And then as a researcher I'm very lucky to have such an amazing partner that is really dedicated to doing research. Yeah that's great news.

[00:10:22] Tell us about the various studies that you have conducted with young people around the lion's share of the first study that I did with Rainbow Alley which was published and social work was actually a study about suicidality and we were doing this in 2005 2006 really a couple of years before this recent rash of suicides are the public face of suicidality among queer youth and the bullying that's kind of captured the media's attention for the time being. So it was really on suicidality and you know I feel really so fortunate again here at the Graduate School of Social Work. Stacy Freeman is a colleague and Stacey is probably one of the leading social work scholars who studies says that ality. And so obviously it was a really natural collaboration with her to kind of look at these data and take a look at in terms of queer youth who are receiving Social Services. What were what indicated higher risk factors basically for suicidality. And so one of the things that we looked at was the presence or absence of a gay straight alliance in junior high high school or even college that respondent was attending. And what we found in our models where we were controlling for the demographics we found that sure enough youth who were in schools that had GSA were at reduced risk for indicating that they had either considered or attempted suicide in the previous year the previous 12 months. So it is the little one variable in our models that really kind of made us start saying OK well this is really interesting. What else should we be looking at when we're thinking about gay straight alliances. That's kind of a first study and how that kicked off the whole research agenda on GSA.

[00:12:12] Now of course since then number of studies have really demonstrated that same the presence of GSAs is associated with decreased vitality. So that kind of replicated. So that was the very first study that we did with the young folks that had essays in it and you did also a study that looked at school engagements and educational achievement. Could you talk about that. All right. Yeah. And so that was again I'm lucky. Cynthia Heysel is a professor in the Morgridge college of education here at the University of Denver and her whole area is student engagement. And there has been virtually nothing. And then there's a few things that have been done but I mean this is even less done on students with engagement among queer used in the areas around gay straight alliances. And so she and I were beginning to talk. We were like wow we should actually start taking a look at students engagement because it's really clear in the general literature or the literature on general populations that students get engagement is really important in educational outcomes and school achievement. And lots of really positive outcomes for youth. So we took a look at school engagement and what we found was that students engagement gay straight lines has had an interaction effect with students school engagement in terms of predicting GPA. And so let me see if I can kind of break it down a little bit for folks who are not familiar with what an interaction effect is. So what we found first was that students engagement was associated with increased GPA among queer youth.

[00:13:48] So the queer youth who were more engaged in school they had a stronger sense of belonging and valuing of school in terms of their grades. No that's not surprising at all. But what we found was that in schools that had gay straight alliances that the slope of that affect was steeper. So it was stronger. So the impact of school school engagement was stronger in schools that had essays than in schools that didn't have essays which was really exciting because that started thinking about

how my GSA is actually kind of a catalyst for other and really be supportive of other types of interventions in schools that promote more positive educational outcomes that might work by itself as a positive intervention. But it also might have boost the impact of other types of interventions. And so that was really exciting to find that and that study of course was the lead author Christy Suleman who is a Ph.D. brilliant doctoral student here at the Graduate School of Social Work who is actually doing her dissertation on transgender issues and says she's just fascinating and wonderful to work with and really did an amazing job as the lead author on this piece and they are really excited about it. You also found that having an adults ally in school was associated with decreased truancy status fear based. And I thought that was an interesting find right. One of the things that has kind of been a question in the literature on gay straight alliances is how might they be functioning and we can think about kind of a traditional social work language or are they functioning macro level or are they functioning at a micro level or both right.

[00:15:27] So at a macro level you know argi essays are the positive outcomes that we're starting to see emerge for queer youth that are around USAs. Are they happening because of GSA impact on campus climate or are they happening through a process of kind of individual support so the youth being involved actually in the gay straight alliances. And so one of the things that we looked at first we looked at the school related variables like fear based truancy because it's pretty well documented that youth and young adults skipped school when they're really afraid. And so we looked at a number of school related outcomes to see if it was the presence of the gay story lines in the school or the membership of the youth in the gay straight alliance that seemed to have a bigger impact. And what we found when we were looking at educational outcomes was that it seemed to be more on the campus climate level that we were seeing these positive educational outcomes that were associated with the presence of a GSA in a school that were not associated necessarily with membership in the GSA. So in a study we compared schools with and without GSA. And then in schools with GSA we compared youth who were members versus youth who are not members and almost all of the educational outcomes were associated with presents not with membership. So we thought that that was really interesting and I think a recent study just came out last month out of Family Acceptance Project Caitlin Ryan's work that actually replicated many of our findings. And they kind of concluded as well.

[00:17:02] Wow it seems like it in terms of a lot of these positive impacts it's happening at the campus climate level not necessarily at the whether or not the youth is a member which is not surprising particularly if we go back to Melinda Marcellas work where she found that gay straight alliances are mostly heterosexual identified students. Right. So these are kids even though they're there. They might steer clear of a gay straight alliance for safety reasons for lots of different reasons. So I want to ask you about what you found around victimization of Square used in school. We know that multiple studies over many years have consistently shown that queer youths experience a lot of victimization in their schools. And you had an interesting finding in your study you found that young people attending schools with essays did not report lower rates of victimization yet they reported that they felt safer in schools compared to use that attended schools with honest yet say. I wonder if this is because the measure of victimization did not assess frequency or severity of victimization but only asks youth if they had experienced any harassment in the last 12 months. Or it could mean that's really is no difference in rates of victimization. So I'm wondering what your thoughts are about that finding that. Yeah I think that in terms of this kind of body of work that we've done I think this for me this is one of the most interesting and intriguing questions that you're bringing up. So just to kind of reiterate what you're saying because I think it's really important it's really easy to miss is that kids say we feel safer in schools where there are essays. But when we look at rates of victimization and bullying they're being bullied just as much regardless of whether there's a GSA in that school or not.

[00:18:57] And so it seems odd that they would feel safer when they're being bullied just as much

or at least that's what the findings seem to suggest is what we have to kind of ideas in one about what might be going on and one is completely exactly what you're talking about. So what we have how we have measured victimization in our studies thus far has been this kind of blunt measure kind of a dichotomous yes. Now have they been bullied or not. That's actually in line with a lot of the bullying literature where we categorize young people as either bullies or victims or bully victims or neither. Right. So it's a kind of a yes no kind of idea about bullying and victimization. So we have used a rather blunt kind of measure. And I think that what may be happening is are these issues that you're talking about severity frequency or type of victimization. So one of the things as we kind of talked about these findings with the Rainbow Alley research group that I'm working with is could it be that we see differences if we're looking at name calling. You know the thing that's so gay or calling people fag or Diker or some other anti gay slur. Could we find that those rates are not different in schools with or without essays. But the more severe and I hate even using that term Subedar think about victimization but the more physical manifestations of bullying and victimization we do see differences in. Right. So it definitely could be an issue of the type of victimization or the frequency.

[00:20:29] And so the latest data set the Rainbow Alley just released to us. They did ask many more questions about victimization and type and frequency and so we're going to start looking at that. So I think that may be a part of the answer or it may be the answer I don't know. But the other possibility which I think is also really intriguing is thinking about the context of gay straight alliances. And by that I mean things like the size of the GSA the visibility of the GSA how much administrative support it's perceived to receive those types of things. So like with the victimization and bullying verbal or just talked about we really only measured presence and absence of GSA as kind of another yes no dichotomous if they had one or they didn't have one right. And so what that essentially does in the statistical models is it treats the highly visible 30 person you say with tons of administrative support exactly the same as a three person virtually invisible GSA that exists in a school where the administration is hostile to its existence. And it seems logical that those two different types of GSA for example would have very different impacts on school climate and thus on the various outcomes whether we're talking about education or health or mental health outcomes. So it could be that this whole issue of context of what the GSA looked like actually might explain that counterintuitive finding between victimization and feeling safe. I would also think going back to severity for a moment that name calling that is frequent could be severe. Absolutely.

[00:22:02] And that's why I know that I kind of then use that notion of I mean when we're talking about bullying who's to say that kind of constant chronic name calling is less severe than being punched once. Right. So yes you're right. And I think that that's kind of a part of the struggle when we're thinking about bullying and victimization is that whole notion of severity really I think gets in the way more can get in the way. So I think you're absolutely right. I wanted to ask you now the next steps for your research because I don't want to lose what you were just saying about the context in which gay straight alliances exist and are you interested in investigating that in future study. Yeah I mean just like with the victimization questionnaire the types of victimization and frequency that we were just talking about were fortunate that the most recently released dataset from Rainbow Alley. They asked tons of questions about the GSA what its activities were. How much support it received as the hostile environment to how big it is and we're already seeing in some initial analyses that Cynthia Heysel my colleague in the mortgage college of education that she's doing on student school engagement that size of GSA is a significant factor. So it's. So we're starting to see some initial findings from some of our other work that says Yeah this whole notion of context of GSA might have something important to say. All right. So yes with both of those arenas the types of victimization frequency severity as well as the context of a phase or two strands that we are starting to take a look at for sure. Because I think there's a real need for studies that look at the behavior of adults within school absolutes.

[00:24:00] Many of our studies have focused on the behavior of young people towards other young people but it would be interesting to know what youth perceptions are for example around. Are there adults. To what extent are there adults in the school who interrupts harassment. Right. Right. You know just as an example. Absolutely. I mean Diane it's like you're on our research team. The messages that were your are the ideas that you're bringing up. I mean again I just feel so fortunate to be working with folks like Corey Barrett who's the current director of Rainbow Alley and Carlos Martinez is the lady of the jewel beauty Community Center. Because we're able to engage in these conversations and they really think about. So what does that mean in terms of the questions we need to be asking next year. So they're just amazing folks to work with. What you're bring right now is exactly one of those areas that in the current years planning and programmatic survey that they're asking about actually they're asking about how adults are responding or are they you know how frequently they're looking at not only how frequently are they responding but they're looking also at what types of victimization are they responding to. So for example they're asking how frequently do adults in the school intervene when the whole you're so gay or that's so gay. Kind of comments come up as well as asking So what about physical bullying. What about name calling. What about property destruction. What about. So they're asking how often are the adults intervening in these various types of victimization.

[00:25:32] And I would anticipate that what we will find is that in schools with larger more visible more supported GSA there we're going to see the adults consistently intervening more than in schools that don't have GSA or have smaller and less visible GSA as well as intervening across the types of victimization more frequently. Of course that's a question right that the hypothesis going into this work and I can't wait to get this current year's data set to actually start looking at this because I think you're right. I think there's absolutely something there that is critical in terms of the importance of necessity of adults to take responsibility to be allies to youth and step up and say this is not OK. And I think there's also probably a loop here that that in schools with strong USAC adults are more likely to step up more frequently. And then the adults step up more frequently the more legitimize the GSA is the stronger and the more visible to get. So it's a both probably have a relationship a kind of a causal relationship to one another. Your research has I think important implications for school social workers and also educators and administrators in schools. Could you talk about some of those implications. Sure sure. Well I mean I think the bottom line is that we're starting to accrue enough evidence on the potential benefits of gay straight alliances for LGBTQ youth and young adults and some evidence of benefit for heterosexually identified youth and young adults as well.

[00:27:02] The social workers first that we have an ethical obligation to be involved in supporting students who are interested in starting a group and educating school administrators on the legal issues surrounding any type of prohibition of restrictions on GSA which we still see happening and in advocating for school districts to support GSA financially and with other resources in the same manner that they support other student clubs. So I think that's part of our ethical responsibility as social workers. And then second I think as more research comes out that becomes more nuanced about GSA I think we're going to be able to hone our ability to understand what aspects and what activities of GSA specifically are associated with what benefits. And so I think that we will get to a point where we can actually target how we support different aspects and activities of GSA to influence very specific outcomes. Right so if certain activities are more associated with educational outcomes or certain activities are more associated with mental health outcomes that will actually depending on what we're interested most interested in and impacting hopefully everything right. But we'll be able to actually target our support and our interventions which hearsays in a more nuanced way. So I think that that's the second thing that I think will be happening. And then finally I think heterosexually identified social workers should really give some thought to considering that how much more safe it may be for them to step up to be sponsors and supporters of Geus says than for their LGBT identified social work colleagues or educators. Of course depending on the social and

political climate of the school district right. So I think the other nice benefit of heterosexually identified educators and social workers stepping up is that it models for young people the very philosophy of Ally ship that they are based on.

[00:28:56] Until it's a really I think a great opportunity to demonstrate that Allied shipping to that leadership and that taking risk that is actually identified folks can do when opportunities might be in Colorado for you to conduct research within the schools. Is that a possibility. Well unfortunately I mean I think that varies based on school districts right. Fortunately in Denver with the Denver public schools they have a very strong close working relationship not only with Rainbow Alley but also one Colorado is a newer LGBT organization statewide organization here in Colorado and they have a GSA Network Initiative. And so some of the school districts were much closer with Colorado and with Rainbow Alley than others for example in that Rainbow Alley surveys this year. I know that the Denver Public School System folks were really interested in making sure that the youth in their schools had access to the survey. And so Corey Barrett the director worked really closely with them mostly through GSA and through kind of GSA sponsored events to get students from those schools to participate in the Rainbow Alley survey which is really great. And so there's some natural linkages that have kind of fostered participation in some of the research of youth who are not Rainbo really specific. They don't receive services or go to rainbow social events but they may be involved in gay straight alliances in the schools or friends of people who are. So there have definitely been some moves in that direction. Yes. So now of course like I said really dependent on the school district.

[00:30:38] We know that there are tons of school districts that are not likely at all to want their students participating and the Rainbow Valley survey which is unfortunate we think but lots of different reasons. So I think we're making some inroads in that arena. Chris I think the other thing that would be really amazing and wonderful to do is to be able to move from cross-sectional work to longitudinal work and Rainbow Alley in their annual survey about three years ago actually started putting a unique identifier asking the students to constrict or the participants responded to construct a unique identifier. And so what they're hoping is that they can actually start to see some longitudinal shift. The problem I think that with the way that we barely does that survey is that their population is somewhat transient so you might have queer kids who are really involved for a year maybe two years and then they go on to do other things. Right. And so having kind of a captive audience if you will folks who do the survey across three or four or five years is not very likely. So we really haven't had a chance to kind of sit down and look at what across the years what that looks like in terms of if there's enough there are enough people who are participating to look at that kind of. Some of these issues longitudinally but that would be no ideal. So is there anything that I haven't asked you that we should talk about or if you would also like to perhaps if we're getting close to the end to say more about where you would like your research to go.

[00:32:17] I mean we've talked about kind of what I see as the next steps the victimization types of victimization frequency the context of GSA is that looking at adult responses to bullying and victimisation in the schools I think those are definitely kind of what the very next steps over the next two to three years and then beyond that I think my approach to doing my research is to really see what emerges before I get too far ahead of myself. And I think that's for me that's really been beneficial because it's created opportunities that if I had come into this work with Rainbow Alley and the Risk and Resilience of LGBT youth I think I would have missed for example the whole issue of non suicidal self injury cutting behavior burning behavior was not even on my radar. And one of the staff members at Rainbow Alley was getting kind of offhand comment sticking out or seen a lot of youth who are engaging in some kind of self harming behavior without suicidal intent right there's a cutting or are burning themselves. And Eugene do you know anything about that. I'm like wow now I don't mean it's not an area that I've really kind of given much thought to. And so of course I went back in the literature virtually non-existent on nonsense of self injury among queer

youth and Janice would like to Corneau has done a little bit of work in that area but her area is more just youth nonsense out of self injury not specifically gay and lesbian. And so from that kind of just anecdotal observation from staff were on the ground working with the youth every day Corey and hope added a number of numerous questions about nonces status of injury and that has spawned a whole other research agenda around trying to understand self harming behaviors among LGBT youth.

[00:34:04] So and that's something I could not have predicted and something I did not bring to this work. It's something that just emerged. So I try to keep myself in check in some way so that I can be responsive to those emerging issues that are coming from folks on the ground who actually I think are much better informed probably about the emerging issues than as a researcher than I am. So usually I think of my research agenda only unlike the next two or three steps and not much further out because of that. So since you mentioned your work on non suicidal self injury could you briefly perhaps summarize the facts in terms of that behavior amongst clear use. Yeah well I mean first off we're finding that its prevalence is about twice what is found among heterosexual counterparts. So in I'm trying to think the four or five years of data that we've looked at across the different years what we see is anywhere from about 30 to about 40 percent of LGBT youth indicate that they have and we were looking specifically at cutting behavior that they have engaged in cutting behavior in the last year. And those rates are unbelievable almost. So the first piece that we did was we were just kind of like looking at correlates like who is doing this what kind of psychosocial risk are associated with this behavior. And not surprisingly we found the homeless kids were more likely to be engaging the behavior kids who were victimized are more likely to be engaged in the. So exactly what you would suspect. But before the piece that we did had not been actually documented in the literature.

[00:35:46] So then the second piece we did we started looking at what Predix different motivations. Right. And we found that the motivations that queer youth are reporting are very similar to the motivations that drive cutting among other populations. So one of the primary motivations is I'm having intense emotional pain. And by engaging in cutting or burning it helps me kind of release that. So it's a kind of a catharsis for physical catharsis of that emotional pain. And then the flipside of it is we've seeing one of the motivations is folks are feeling really shut down and numb. And sell by engaging in some kind of self harming behavior. They start feeling so they feel alive again. And those are the two primary motivations that we see in existing literature on nonsense of self injury. So that was really kind of where we are with this research now. The most recent data set the rainbow rally released has not only about cutting behavior but it asks about eight or nine different types of self-interest behavior ingesting burning a Brading. I mean all of these things and it also asked about onset recency frequency severity again you know that's a problematic characteristic but it asks a lot more information about not so subtle self injury. Unfortunately I have a doctoral student Sarah Nichols who this is one of her areas of interest. And so we actually just finished doing a qualitative study where we interviewed I think we ended up interviewing 45 46 queer youth to engage in some kind who have engaged or are currently engaging in some kind of self interest behavior.

[00:37:28] So we're really trying to understand from the youth perspective what you're mean to them. How did they understand it. How does it impact their identity. We're also looking at issues of social contagion. We know that from a particular instance ideality or an eating disorders that there's a social contagion effect. So we're interested in where did you first hear about self injury as a coping mechanism. So those are the kinds of things that she is starting to look at and she's doing a mixed method's dissertation and using the Rainbow Alley quantitative data with the qualitative data. We just finished collecting data to really try to grapple with this idea of not so subtle stuff injuring what it means for clear. Well let us know when you all want to do a podcast on that topic but I think we're probably a couple of years too early for that at this point. But you're right. But I think it will

definitely get there and I'm just happy that it has to this work. It is actually surfaced as an issue that exists and that we need to be addressing. Well I want to thank you so much for giving so much of your time this morning. It's been great talking with you about your work. Diane thank you. It's been a pleasure. Oh it's like being able to share kind of what we're finding and I hope that it catches someone's attention out there who's like never considered working with youth and thinking oh I really should step up. This is the work is important and that needs to be done and so yeah. Always happy to talk about it. Great.

[00:38:58] Well I want you to enjoy the snow in Denver. Absolutely. Thank you so much. Thank you. Bye bye. You've been listening to Dr. Eugene walls discuss his research on school engagement among sexual minority youth. Thanks for listening. And join us again next time for more lectures on Congress stations on social work practice and research. Hi I'm Nancy Smith professor and dean at the University at Buffalo School of Social Work. Thanks for listening to our podcast. For more information about who we are our history our programs and what we do we invite you to visit our website at W W W dot social work dot Buffalo dot. Here at UB we are living through that social effects are a difference in people's lives.