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# Beyond the Textbooks: A Look at the Needs of LGBTQ+ Students in Schools

THE NEW LOOK AT TODAY'S SOGI YOUTH



# Introductions Who we are and Why we are here



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# OBJECTIVES What we want you to take away

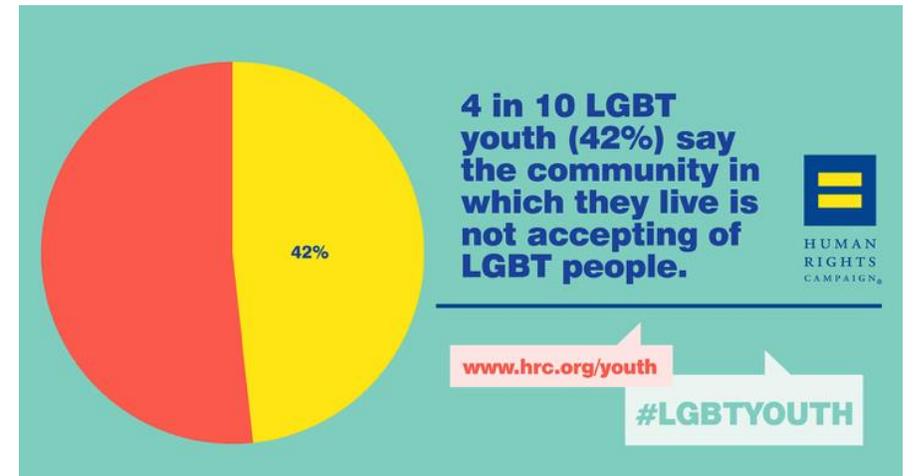
- An open conversation on ways to better help the youth in our schools
- Share some of the issues in the community
- Learn a few new terms

# HRC Youth Survey Report

## Growing up LGBTQ in American

2017 Online Survey, 12,000 respondents age 13-17

- 77% felt depressed or down in last week
- 95% trouble sleeping
- More than 70% worthlessness & hopelessness in last week
- 67% heard family members make negative comments about LGBTQ people



# WHY WE MATTER TO SOGI YOUTH

Among those asked to describe the most important problem facing their lives right now:

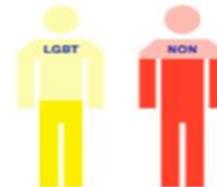
LGBT youth identified

- 1 Non-accepting families (26%)**
- 2 School/bullying problems (21%)**
- 3 Fear of being out or open (18%)**

Non-LGBT youth identified

- 1 Classes/exams/grades (25%)**
- 2 College/career (14%)**
- 3 Financial pressures related to college or job (11%)**

Nearly half of LGBT youth (**47%**) say they do not "fit in" in their community



About half (**49%**) of LGBT youth say they have an adult in their family they could turn to for help if they felt worried or sad. Fully **79%** of non-LGBT youth have an adult in their family they could turn to for help.

# HRC Youth Survey Report Growing up LGBT in American

## Michigan

82% LGBT youth  
verbally bullied  
38% reported being  
physically harassed  
(Kosciw et. al. 2014)

# 2X

**LGBT youth are  
twice as likely as  
their peers to say  
they have been phys-  
ically assaulted,  
kicked or shoved at**



[www.hrc.org/youth](http://www.hrc.org/youth)

**#LGBTYOUTH**

# APPLES AND SEXY ORANGES

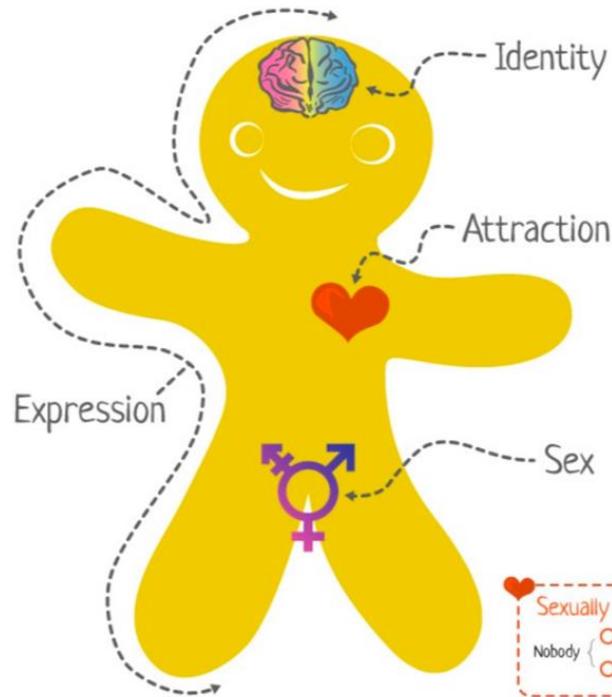
## The Genderbread Person v3.3

by its pronounced **METROsexual**.com

Gender is one of those things everyone thinks they understand, but most people don't. Like *Inception*. Gender isn't binary. It's not either/or. In many cases it's both/and. A bit of this, a dash of that. This tasty little guide is meant to be an appetizer for gender understanding. It's okay if you're hungry for more. In fact, that's the idea.

Plot a point on both continua in each category to represent your identity, combine all ingredients to form your Genderbread

4 (of infinite) possible plot and label combos



**Gender Identity**

How you, in your head, define your gender; based on how much you align (or don't align) with what you understand to be the options for gender.

Woman-ness

Man-ness

Labels: "woman", "man", "she-she", "gender-queer"

**Gender Expression**

The ways you present gender; through your actions, dress, and demeanor; and how those presentations are interpreted based on gender norms.

Feminine

Masculine

Labels: "butch", "femme", "androgynous", "gender neutral"

**Biological Sex**

The physical sex characteristics you're born with and develop, including genitalia, body shape, voice pitch, body hair; hormones, chromosomes, etc.

Female-ness

Male-ness

Labels: "male", "female", "intersex", "MF Female"

**Sexually Attracted to**

Nobody

(Women/Females/Femininity)

(Men/Males/Masculinity)

**Romantically Attracted to**

Nobody

(Women/Females/Femininity)

(Men/Males/Masculinity)



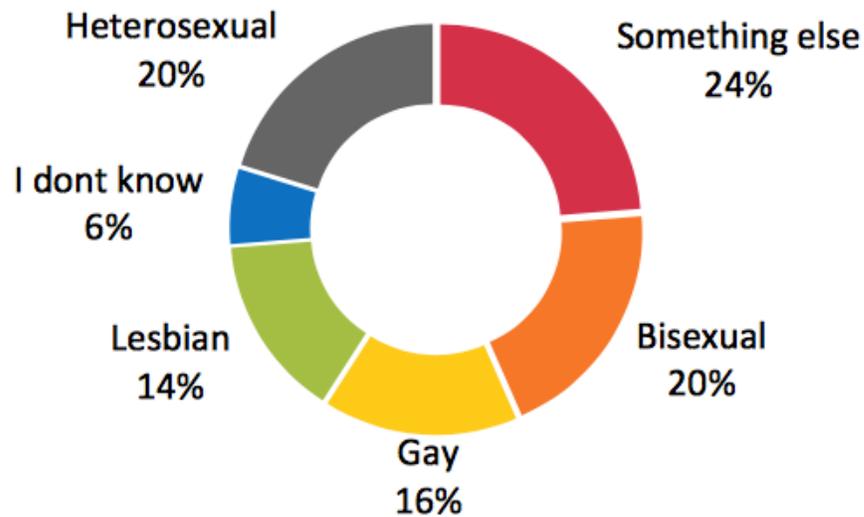
# SOGI YAC

Saginaw County Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Youth Advocacy Council



Mission: Identify risks and explore needs for SOGI youth in our community with a focus on collaboration, education, outreach, and support

## Which best represents how you think of yourself? (n=233)



Something Else	n	Something Else	n
Pansexual	22	human being	1
Transgender	6	intersex/ transgendered	1
Asexual	2	Panromantic	1
demisexual	2	Panromantic/ asexual	1
Queer	2	panromatic/ demisexual	1
Alien	1	polysexual	1
Demi/Pan	1	queer	1
bisexual lesbian	1	Queer/Pansexual	1
Femme	1	Trans F+M	1
homoflexible	1	transbian	1

# Terms and conditions

- Before we talk about students, we should know some terms.
- What are some terms you are unsure about?

# TERMS Sexuality

- Ally** (noun) – A person who supports and stands up for the rights of LGBT people.
- Aromantic** (adj.) – An orientation that describes a person who experiences little or no romantic attraction to others and/or a lack of interest in forming romantic relationships.
- Asexual** (adj.) – Describes a person who experiences little or no sexual attraction to others. Asexuality is not the same as celibacy.
- Biphobia** (noun) – The fear of, discrimination against, or hatred of bisexual people or those who are perceived as such.
- Bisexual** (adj.) – A sexual orientation that describes a person who is emotionally and sexually attracted to people of their own gender and people of other genders.
- Gay** (adj.) – A sexual orientation that describes a person who is emotionally and sexually attracted to people of their own gender. It can be used regardless of gender identity, but is more commonly used to describe men.
- Heterosexual** (straight) (adj.) – A sexual orientation that describes women who are emotionally and sexually attracted to men, and men who are emotionally and sexually attracted to women.
- Homophobia** (noun) – The fear of, discrimination against, or hatred of lesbian or gay people or those who are perceived as such.

# TERMS Sexuality

- Intersectionality** (noun) – The idea that identities are influenced and shaped by race, class, ethnicity, sexuality/sexual orientation, gender/gender identity, physical disability, national origin, etc., as well as by the interconnection of all of those characteristics.
- Lesbian** (adj., noun) – A sexual orientation that describes a woman who is emotionally and sexually attracted to other women. Page 4 of 7
- Minority stress** (noun) – Chronic stress faced by members of stigmatized minority groups. Minority stress is caused by external, objective events and conditions, expectations of such events, the internalization of societal attitudes, and/or concealment of one's sexual orientation.
- Pansexual** (adj.) – A sexual orientation that describes a person who is emotionally and sexually attracted to people regardless of gender.
- Polyamorous** (adj.) – Describes a person who has or is open to having more than one romantic or sexual relationship at a time, with the knowledge and consent of all their partners. Sometimes abbreviated as poly.
- QPOC** (noun) – An acronym that stands for Queer Person of Color or Queer People of Color.
- Queer** (adj.) – An umbrella term used by some to describe people who think of their sexual orientation or gender identity as outside of societal norms. Some people view the term queer as more fluid and inclusive than traditional categories for sexual orientation and gender identity. Due to its history as a derogatory term, the term queer is not embraced or used by all members of the LGBT community.
- Questioning** (adj.) – Describes an individual who is unsure about or is exploring their own sexual orientation and/or gender identity.
  
- Sexual orientation** (noun) – How a person characterizes their emotional and sexual attraction to others.
- Two-Spirit** (adj.) – A contemporary term that connects today's experiences of LGBT Native American and American Indian people with the traditions from their cultures.

# TERMS Gender

- Agender** (adj.) – Describes a person who identifies as having no gender.
- Assigned sex at birth** (noun) – The sex (male or female) assigned to a child at birth, most often based on the child's external anatomy. Also referred to as birth sex, natal sex, biological sex, or sex.
- Bigender** (adj.) – Describes a person whose gender identity is a combination of two genders.
- Binding** (verb) – The process of tightly wrapping one's chest in order to minimize the appearance of having breasts. This is achieved through use of constrictive materials such as cloth strips, elastic or non-elastic bandages, or specially designed undergarments.
- Cisgender** (adj.) – A person whose gender identity and assigned sex at birth correspond (i.e., a person who is not transgender).
- Cross-sex hormone therapy** (noun) – The administration of hormones for those who wish to match their physical secondary sex characteristics to their gender identity.
- Gender affirming surgery** (GAS) (noun) – Surgeries used to modify one's body to be more congruent with one's gender identity. Also referred to as sex reassignment surgery (SRS) or gender confirming surgery (GCS).
- Gender binary** (noun) – The idea that there are only two genders, male and female, and that a person must strictly fit into one category or the other.
- Gender dysphoria** (noun) – Distress experienced by some individuals whose gender identity does not correspond with their assigned sex at birth. Manifests itself as clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) includes gender dysphoria as a diagnosis.
- Gender expression** (noun) – The way a person acts, dresses, speaks, and behaves (i.e., feminine, masculine, androgynous). Gender expression does not necessarily correspond to assigned sex at birth or gender identity.
- Gender fluid** (adj.) – Describes a person whose gender identity is not fixed. A person who is gender fluid may always feel like a mix of the two traditional genders, but may feel more one gender some days, and another gender other days.
- Gender identity** (noun) – A person's internal sense of being a man/male, woman/female, both, neither, or another gender.
- Gender non-conforming** (adj.) – Describes a gender expression that differs from a given society's norms for males and females.

# TERMS Gender

- Gender role** (noun) – A set of societal norms dictating what types of behaviors are generally considered acceptable, appropriate or desirable for a person based on their actual or perceived sex.
- Genderqueer** (adj.) – Describes a person whose gender identity falls outside the traditional gender binary. Other terms for people whose gender identity falls outside the traditional gender binary include gender variant, gender expansive, etc. Sometimes written as two words (gender queer).
- Intersex** (noun) – Group of rare conditions where the reproductive organs and genitals do not develop as expected. Some prefer to use the term disorders (or differences) of sex development. Intersex is also used as an identity term by some community members and advocacy groups.
- Pangender** (adj.) – Describes a person whose gender identity is comprised of many genders.
- Top surgery** (noun) – Colloquial way of describing gender affirming surgery on the chest.
- Trans man/transgender man/female-to-male (FTM)** (noun) – A transgender person whose gender identity is male may use these terms to describe themselves. Some will just use the term man.
- Trans woman/transgender woman/male-to-female (MTF)** (noun) – A transgender person whose gender identity is female may use these terms to describe themselves. Some will just use the term woman.
- Transfeminine** (adj.) – Describes people who were assigned male at birth, but identify with femininity to a greater extent than with masculinity.
- Transgender** (adj.) – Describes a person whose gender identity and assigned sex at birth do not correspond. Also used as an umbrella term to include gender identities outside of male and female. Sometimes abbreviated as trans.
- Transition** (noun) – For transgender people, this refers to the process of coming to recognize, accept, and express one's gender identity. Most often, this refers to the period when a person makes social, legal, and/or medical changes, such as changing their clothing, name, sex designation, and using medical interventions. Sometimes referred to as gender affirmation process.
- Transmasculine** (adj.) – Describes people who were assigned female at birth, but identify with masculinity to a greater extent than with femininity.
- Transphobia** (noun) – The fear of, discrimination against, or hatred of transgender or gender non-conforming people or those who are perceived as such.
- Transsexual** (adj.) – Sometimes used in medical literature or by some transgender people to describe those who have transitioned through medical interventions.

# SAMHSA

## Top Health Issues for LGBT Populations (2012)

Multiple studies have shown that LGBTQ+ youth are at higher risk for substance abuse, smoking, mental health issues including self-harm, STD's, violence, homelessness, and suicide.

SAMHSA  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration  
Top Health Issues for LGBT Populations (2012)

Factors such as verbal and physical harassment, negative experiences related to “coming out” (including level of family acceptance), substance use, and isolation all contribute to higher rates of suicidal attempts and completions among LGBT adults and youth than among other populations.

\*Bisexual adults have the lowest level of emotional well-being among people of other sexual orientations.

## What about you?

- What are you seeing with students?
- Break off into groups



# SOGI YAC

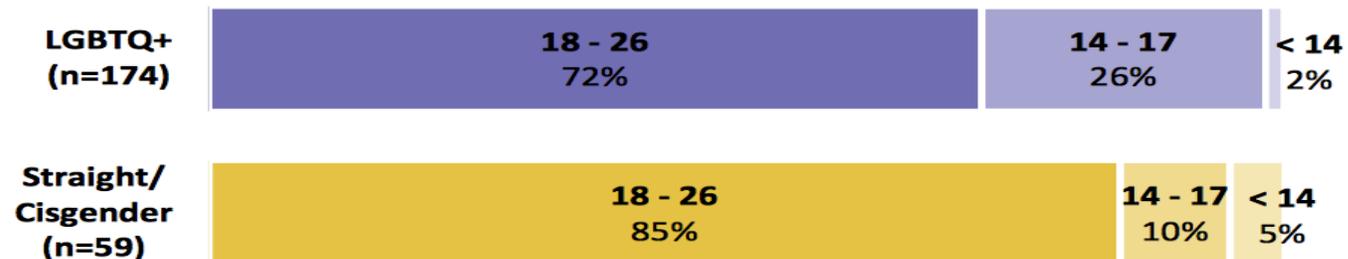
Saginaw County Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Youth Advocacy Council



Mission: Identify risks and explore needs for SOGI youth in our community with a focus on collaboration, education, outreach, and support

- 2016 & 2017 Survey Results
- Great Lakes Bay Pride Festival & LGBT Resource Fair at SVSU
- 2016 - 233 youth/174 LGBTQ+ mostly from Saginaw County
- 2017 – 115 youth mostly from Bay County

How old are you?



# 2016 Survey Results

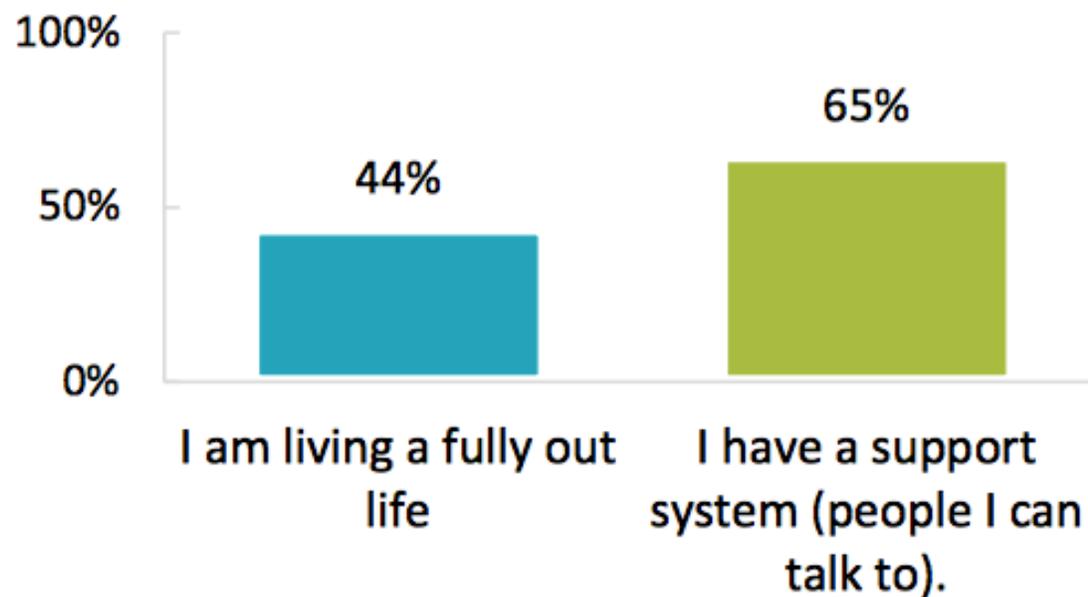
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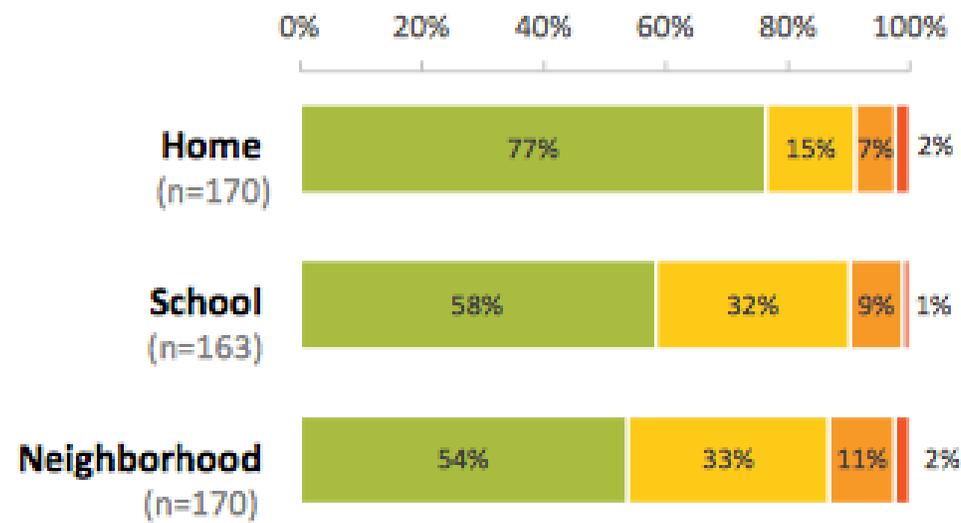
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## Among LGBTQ+ Youth (n=174)



## If you are an LGBTQ+ person, check how safe you feel in each area:

Safe / Somewhat Safe / Somewhat Unsafe / Unsafe



## BULLIES

"Sexual minority youth, or teens that identify themselves as gay, lesbian or bisexual, are bullied two to three times more than heterosexuals", and "almost all transgender students have been verbally harassed [e.g., called names or threatened in the past year at school because of their sexual orientation (89%) and gender expression (89%)]"

*GLSEN's Harsh Realities, The Experiences of Transgender Youth In Our Nation's Schools.*

# Windover High School's Support of LGBTQ+ Students

- Implemented so far:
  - Staff Trainings
  - Inclusive Culture
  - Name Changes
  - Bathrooms
  - Graduation Robes
  - Prom/Homecoming

## WHAT CAN WE DO?

- For adults and adolescents – ask their preferred name and pronoun choices; honor those choices
- If a student tells you that they are transgender, assume they are until/unless proven otherwise
- Be knowledgeable about resources and peer support
- For younger individuals - be prepared to advocate for them with institutions and to be prepared to educate their family members

## WHAT CAN WE DO?

- Plan a LGBT-inclusive curriculum that includes positive representations of LGBT people. Highlight those in the community, if possible.
- Curriculum that acknowledges the existence of LGBT people and, even better, shows them in a positive light, has a major impact on the wellness of LGBT students. It has the dual benefit of letting LGBT students know that they're not shameful or alone in the world as well as familiarizing other students with LGBT narratives, which can make the overall school environment less likely to be hostile and even encourage straight, cis students to speak up if they see or hear something harmful.
- GLSEN's most recent *National School Climate Survey* found that “students in schools with an inclusive curriculum were half as likely to have experienced higher levels of victimization, compared to students in schools without an inclusive curriculum (12.6% vs. 31.0% for victimization based on sexual orientation; 14.1% vs. 30.5% for victimization based on gender expression).” Students also indicated that they felt safer, and that they were less likely to hear negative remarks on the basis of sexual orientation or gender expression.

## WHAT CAN WE DO?

- Actively intervene when you hear anti-LGBT remarks, both with students and staff.
- Remember that you may not know who in your class is LGBT
- Don't decide for yourself what kind of support LGBT youth need. Ask and listen they will tell you.

## WHAT CAN WE DO

- Be mindful of interactions with parents and guardians of LGBT students
- For some LGBT youth, school is a safer and more welcoming space than their home. They may be more open about their sexual orientation or gender identity at school, or they may be involved in LGBT projects or student groups without their parents' knowledge. If a parent-teacher conference or an academic or behavioral issue means you're going to be in contact with family or guardians, be mindful of sharing any information, potentially including things like a chosen name or correct pronouns, that may put a student in what could be an unsafe home situation. If your relationship with an LGBT student is close, be willing to ask them about their relationship with their family and what information they feel comfortable having shared.

## CANNOT DO IT ALONE

- Know the local resources.
- Family and Children's Services has support groups for Teens and Adults. For SOGI and Allies. Along with trained SOGO therapist.
- PFLAG (Bay City, Saginaw and Midland) [pflag@pflag-mbs.org](mailto:pflag@pflag-mbs.org) (989) 941-1458
- <http://perceptionsmi.org>
- Perceptions is a non-profit community organization that offers educational, social and networking opportunities for residents of the Tri-Cities (Midland, Bay City and Saginaw) and surrounding areas. Perceptions strives to foster a positive image for the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender community and our allies.

# QUESTIONS

Thank you for this opportunity.

If you would like a copy of the slides  
or have questions, please email us  
[amcdonald@fcs-midland.org](mailto:amcdonald@fcs-midland.org)

[gwilson@windover.org](mailto:gwilson@windover.org)

