



iSMSS

INSTITUTE FOR SEXUAL MINORITY STUDIES AND SERVICES

2015/16 ANNUAL REPORT

Housed in the University of Alberta's Faculty of Education, the **Institute for Sexual Minority Studies and Services (iSMSS)** leads groundbreaking research that affects policy development, intervention, education and community outreach for sexual and gender minorities (SGM), nationally and globally.

Bringing together research, teaching, institutional service and community outreach under one umbrella enables us to combine our studies and services functions in ways that create opportunities for innovative intellectual work and sustained educational and community outreach.

Our research not only helps youth at large, but also guides professional development and education for teachers, social workers, family physicians, psychologists, guidance counsellors and other caring professionals, enabling them to be better resources and advocates for SGM youth and their families.

MISSION

The Institute for Sexual Minority Studies and Services (iSMSS) is an interdisciplinary hub for scholarly and community work on sexual and gender minority identities, issues and concerns. Our mission is to advance groundbreaking research, policy and practice focused on education, health and social services, emphasizing children, youth, families and communities.

PROGRAMS & SERVICES

iSMSS offers a variety of innovative programs and services, including:

iSMSS Studies

- Academic Studies & Research
- Undergraduate & Graduate Courses
- Monthly Inside/OUT Speakers' Series
- LGBTQ Student Scholarships

iSMSS Services & Programs

- Camp fYrefly: A summer leadership program for sexual and gender minority youth
- fYrefly in Schools: A free peer-to-peer education program for junior & senior high schools
- Family Resilience Project
- Alberta GSA Network & Provincial Conference
- U of A Safe Spaces Initiative
- Educational Outreach & Professional Development Workshops
- University of Alberta Pride Week
- Edmonton Queer History Project
- Comprehensive Health Education Workers' (CHEW) Project
- NoHomophobes.com
- PrideTape.com

2015/16 PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

Highlights of some major activities from the past year include:

- **Pride Tape:** A new initiative to bring awareness to LGBTQ issues and identities in sports was launched in partnership with Calder Bateman Communications and the You Can Play Project with support from the Edmonton Oilers and Edmonton Oilers Community Foundation.
- **GSA Conference:** Over 300 students and educators from across Alberta attended our 4th annual GSA conference, held at the University of Calgary, focused on developing, supporting and sustaining gay-straight alliances (GSAs) and queer-straight alliances (QSAs) in junior and senior high schools.
- **Inside/OUT Speakers' Series:** Our 13th annual lecture series was held monthly, profiling queer-related research and work at the University of Alberta.
- **U of A Pride Week:** Our 3rd annual campus pride week featured over 40 activities at Campus Saint-Jean, Augustana and North Campus, including our always colourful campus pride parade.
- **iSMSS Scholarships:** Our scholarships continue to grow and we now offer entrance, undergraduate and graduate scholarships for students focused on LGBTQ research, leadership activities and community service.
- **Family Resiliency Project:** We continued to provide free short-term professional counselling to more than 50 youth and families.
- **Camp fYrefly:** More than 100 youth participated in and over 40 adult volunteers supported camp programming in Edmonton and Calgary this past year. We also hosted the annual Mayor's Pride Brunch in Edmonton and the Premier's Pride Brunch in Calgary, which involved over 600 community leaders, supporters and friends of fYrefly.
- **fYrefly in Schools:** In 2015/16, we provided close to 400 free workshops and reached more than 9,000 junior and senior high school students.
- **Comprehensive Health Education Workers' (CHEW) Project:** CHEW continued to provide important outreach services to vulnerable youth and sexual health education to schools and community groups in the Edmonton area.
- **iSMSS Research:** Faculty Directors launched two new books entitled *Growing into Resilience: Sexual and Gender Minority Youth in Canada* (U of T Press) and *Sexual and Gender Minorities in Education and Society, 1969-2013* (Canadian Teachers' Federation).
- **iSMSS Courses:** Two new LGBTQ-focused graduate and undergraduate courses were piloted with the Faculty of Education.
- **Queer Studies in Education and Culture Conference:** Our annual academic conference was held in May at the University of Calgary as part of the Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences.





OUR PEOPLE

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FIND OUT MORE

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 @UofASafeSpaces