



Kicked Out for Coming Out: Project Homeless Connect Event Focuses on LGBTQ Community



LGBTQ Connect – Social Hall SF, 1270 Sutter Street, Wednesday, August 17, 11am - 4pm.

- The biannual San Francisco homeless census found that almost 30% of people experiencing homelessness in this city identify as LGBTQ.
- The event will feature performances from local artists, to make this a fun, joyful day.
- LGBTQ Connect is cohosted by the Grass Roots Gay Rights Foundation and sponsored by Blue Shield of California.

San Francisco, CA – The horrific events at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, Florida in June highlighted once again the hatred and bigotry that many in the LGBTQ community face every day. In San Francisco, more than one in four of the City’s homeless population identify as LGBTQ. We tell kids that “it gets better,” but for almost one in three people living on the street who identify as LGBTQ, it just hasn’t.

On Wednesday, August 17th Project Homeless Connect (PHC) is hosting LGBTQ Connect to offer life-changing services and support to those experiencing homelessness.

“Life on the street is tough enough for anyone, but if you are LGBTQ you often face even greater hardships,” says Kara Zordel, Executive Director of PHC. “People in the LGBTQ community can have trouble finding a shelter where they are welcomed, and when they do find a bed they are often the targets of verbal, physical and sexual abuse. At LGBTQ Connect we create a safe space where anyone can come and be accepted and get the life-changing services they need.”

“At LGBTQ Connect we create a safe space where anyone can come and be accepted and get the life-changing services they need.” - Kara Zordel

Services Will Be Responsive to the Needs of the LGBTQ Community

All providers at the event are chosen based on their responsiveness to the needs of the LGBTQ community. In addition, volunteers will be given a cultural competency training prior to the event.

As with all PHC events, a wide array of services will be available from mental and physical health checks to help in applying for housing. In addition, because LGBTQ individuals experiencing homelessness are at much higher risk of unsafe sexual practices and suicide, providers will be on hand to offer:

- Harm reduction counseling
- Safer sex education and supplies
- HIV/STI testing
- Hepatitis C testing
- Needle exchange

The biannual San Francisco homeless census found that almost 30% of people experiencing homelessness in this city identify as LGBTQ. For LGBTQ youth experiencing homelessness, the most-cited reasons for becoming homeless are family rejection and being forced out after coming out. Project Homeless Connect hopes to ease some of the pain and trauma in this community by creating a day full of positivity and healing services.

A Celebration of the LGBTQ Community

“While our focus is to provide essential services to people in need, we also want this to be a celebration of the LGBTQ community,” says Zordel. “That’s why the event will feature performances from local artists, to make this a fun, joyful day. We hope this is going to be the day that changes the lives of many of those who attend so we want to make it as memorable as possible.”

LGBTQ Connect is cohosted by the Grass Roots Gay Rights Foundation and sponsored by Blue Shield of California.

Among those providing services at the event are the San Francisco AIDS Foundation, L.Y.R.I.C., Planned Parenthood, and Glide Memorial.

For information on how you can donate go to www.projecthomelessconnect.org/donate.

For more information contact
Jessica Bendit 415-503-2193 or
Jessica.bendit@sfdph.org

About Project Homeless Connect

The mission of Project Homeless Connect™ (PHC) is to provide a single location where non-profit medical and social service providers collaborate to serve the homeless of San Francisco with comprehensive, holistic services. The federal government’s Interagency Council on Homelessness has declared Project Homeless Connect a national best practice model. PHC has been replicated in over 260 cities across the United States, as well as in Canada and Australia.