



# TRANScending the Binary: Increasing Sustainable Social & Community Support for Gender Diverse Adolescents

Authors: Jacob Hofheimer, BA, Yale School of Nursing, Nathan Quinn, MS, RMHCI, Mental Health Counselor of Transcending Adolescence, Christina Guiriba, Founder of Transcending Adolescence  
Faculty: Christine Rodriguez, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC, MDiv, MA, Yale School of Nursing

## BACKGROUND

Transcending Adolescence utilizes the unique framework, SPEAR (Support, Physical recreation, Education, Advocacy, Reflection), to empower gender diverse adolescents, ages 13-17, and foster resilience and mental health in these youth through the setting of a mental health summer camp. Campers participate in a range of activities from traditional summer camp programming such as rock climbing, canoeing, backpacking, and field games, as well as activities designed to promote mental wellbeing including group Campfire Conversations and one-on-one counseling with mental health interns.



## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

- Madeleine Leininger stated it best when she indicated that “nursing as a caring science should focus well-beyond the traditional nurse-patient interactions and dyads to include families, groups, communities, total cultures, and institutions.”
- The emphasis of this approach is of the utmost importance as the ever-evolving needs of our marginalized, diverse communities continue to be impacted by health inequities and disparities.
- Gender Diverse adolescents disproportionately suffer from anxiety, depression, self harm & suicidal tendencies as a result of bullying, harassment, discrimination and a society that frequently uses fear mongering to invalidate transgender identities.

## OBJECTIVES & PURPOSE

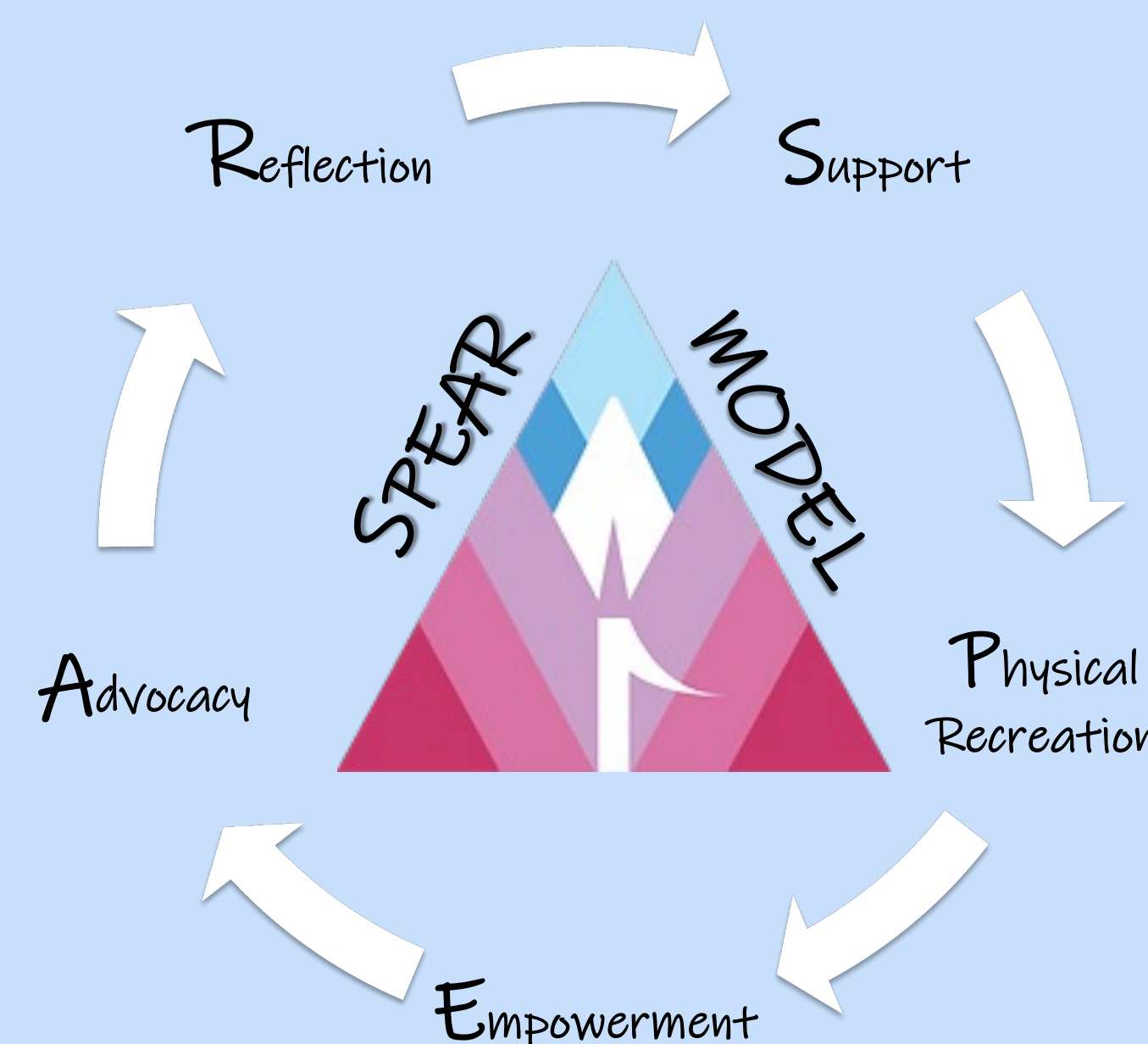
- Describe the major healthcare disparities & inequities adolescents who hold gender diverse backgrounds face daily.
- Define various terminology related to gender diverse individuals.
- Provide the audience with resources & strategies that will ultimately provide a safe, welcoming, & affirming environment for gender diverse individuals.



The purpose of this study is to equip gender diverse adolescents with necessary mental strengths and knowledge needed to progress through their own individual transition. Through SPEAR, TRANScending Adolescence promotes forward movement to help gender diverse adolescents cope with the inevitable challenges they will face within our society and within themselves.

## METHODOLOGY

**Design:** Pretest/Posttest Quasi-Experimental Design  
**Participants:** 15 participants in a group mental health setting in various areas across a central Florida campground with 2-3 Interns working on their Mental Health Licensing certifications.  
**Data Collection:** Google Forms  
**Analytics Approach:** Metrics & Analytics by Board Leadership



## RESULTS

75% of respondents to our post-camp survey stated campfire conversations were helpful.



25% felt less anxious.

50% had less suicidal thoughts.



75% of respondents stated they felt more prepared to handle transphobia.



## CONCLUSIONS & IMPLICATIONS

Through the utilization of the S.P.E.A.R. model one can empower gender diverse adolescents, while fostering resilience and mental health. Pretest/posttest data depicts a reduction in the health inequities and disparities that plagues gender diverse adolescents, such as anxiety, suicidal ideation, and discrimination. Participants felt more prepared to handle transphobia within their daily lives as a result of participating in such program. Programs that foster the well-being of gender diverse adolescents are crucial in light of recent anti-trans legislation and can aid in the mitigation of health inequities and disparities seen within gender diverse adolescents.