

# PRE-CONFERENCE F

WED, DEC 4 | 12:30PM-3:30PM | TUNDRA ABC

## CREATING AFFIRMING CLASSROOMS FOR EVERY CHILD

### PRESENTERS:

**Dr. Abra Vigna** is a private consultant with Inner Counseling and Consulting, LLC, an Action Researcher and Evaluator with the UW-Madison Population Health Institute, a member of the queer community, and a parent to a gender-expansive 10-year-old. Dr Vigna has 15 years of experience working to advance health equity via direct service, coalition building, and community-engaged action research. After a decade providing crisis counseling and support for LGBTQ and runaway and homeless youth, Dr. Vigna was trained in Human Development and Family Studies, receiving her Ph.D. from the UW-Madison School of Human Ecology and has expertise in adolescent health, gender and sexuality, health equity, contemplative science, and child development. She was voted Educator of the Year by GSAFE in 2011 for her work with LGBTQ youth in after-school programming. She has continued to publish and consult with school districts and organizations working to support gender-expansive and LGBTQIA youth.

### DESCRIPTION:

In this session, we will explore evidence-based strategies for creating classrooms and climates that welcome all the ways in which youth grow. Language choices, classroom materials selected, and teaching strategies are powerful opportunities to communicate understanding and appreciation of the diverse ways we come to understand and express our gender and sexuality. Come ready to be challenged and to grow. Participants can expect opportunities to practice setting new norms, getting curious about the resistance, and receiving compassion for how hard it is to support young people and their adults in a climate hostile to difference and deviation from tradition.

### OBJECTIVES:

Participants in this session will:

- Feel increasingly comfortable finding teachable moments outside of the curriculum to normalize all the diverse ways people understand their gender and sexuality.
- Leave with tools for transforming their classrooms and school climates into affirming environments for all youth.
- Have increased comfort in directly addressing harassing or close-minded statements.



**APPLIES TO ALL GRADE LEVELS**  
**ADVANCED / IN-DEPTH LEARNING**

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