

Abstract

Zine-Making Workshop: A Grassroots Approach to Educating Queer Youth about their Right to Mental Health in Berlin.

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Despite the recognition of mental health as a fundamental human right, resource constraints mean that states including Berlin face significant challenges in providing accessible mental health services to all. Research shows that LGBTIQ+ youth often experience mental health difficulties - exacerbated by societal pressures of conforming to heteronormative norms. This project therefore engaged with LGBTIQ+ youth in Berlin through a knowledge-sharing initiative, focused on the human right to mental health and how to access this in Berlin. Through the popular medium of “zine” making, the project aimed to provide unfiltered information and experiences created both by and for queer youth, in a creative format. The project took the form of a workshop, fostering in-depth discussions about mental health, queer experiences, and advice on how to access services in Berlin. Additionally, participants explored alternative approaches to mental wellbeing - outside of medical systems. In the workshop’s second phase, participants synthesised this discussion into a creative format by working collectively to produce an informative zine on the topic of mental health. The final product was distributed in two queer spaces in Berlin, in the hope of expanding the scope of knowledge sharing amongst more queer youth across Berlin. The project’s success highlights the importance of grassroots initiatives in helping marginalised groups exercise their human rights. It also underscores the transformative potential of creativity and community in strengthening mental health support systems.