



Zariyan Syed

(he/they)



Zari is a dedicated and compassionate LGBTQ+ youth support worker, research assistant, speaker and trainer. With a strong commitment to creating safe and inclusive spaces, he strives to empower and uplift young LGBTQ+ individuals, as well as train professionals and carers who support LGBTQ+ young people in care. As an LGBTQ+ care experienced speaker, Zari's goal is to raise awareness, challenge stereotypes, and promote understanding about the experiences faced by people who have been in the care system. With authenticity and vulnerability, Zari shares their struggles and triumphs; offering a first-hand account that resonates with diverse audiences. Having personally navigated the complexities of the care system, Zari brings a captivating insight of the intersecting issues faced by those who identify as both care experienced and part of the LGBTQ+ community.

With expertise in LGBTQ+ issues and a strong belief in education as a catalyst for change, Zari delivers dynamic and engaging training sessions on the inclusion of LGBTQ+ young people in care and gender diversity in care. The personalised training programmes are designed to equip participants with the knowledge, skills, and tools necessary to practice inclusively with LGBTQ+ young people. His approach to training is interactive, participant-centred and non-judgemental; encouraging open dialogue, active learning, and the sharing of diverse perspectives. By fostering respectful discussions, Zari aims to challenge biases, build strong allyship and cultivate curiosity among attendees.

Zari holds a First-Class Honours in BA social work. This training saw him address a wide range of social issues and support young people, adults and families to access healthcare, housing, education and employment amidst the Covid pandemic. With experience in conducting assessments, case management and crisis intervention, Zari has gained valuable experience in community development, safeguarding issues and evidence based practices.

As a research assistant and Youth Engagement Lead, Zari actively engages in studies and conducts commissioned research that aims to enhance our knowledge of the experiences, needs, and barriers faced by LGBTQ+ people. By collaborating with professionals, schools, community organisations, and local authorities, Zari works to generate insights that inform policy, programs, and services to better support the LGBTQ+ population.

Zari has worked with England's largest social work charity Frontline to create training resources. He is a member of Frontline's Strategic Steering Group Committee and has been a guest speaker at a variety of events such as their networking coaching day, the Frontline ex-Change panel and opening ceremony. He has coproduced research with Teesside University and Social Finance and has presented research findings at events such as Berlins 5th World Social Science conference. Links to studies can be found below:

https://www.socialfinance.org.uk/assets/documents/inclusive_care.pdf

<https://www.lgbtyouthincare.com/leaving-care-with-pride>

<https://free2b.lgbt/lambeth/>