

# ACSSW Spring Newsletter 2022

The mission of ACSSW, an Organizational Affiliate of ACA, is to promote sexuality as a central aspect of being human that includes the intersection of intrapersonal and interpersonal influences on sexual expression and experiences.



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The Spring ACSSW Newsletter focuses on ACSSW past and moving forward as we say goodbye to our 1<sup>st</sup> president, social justice concerns related to anti-LGBTQIA+ legislature in the US, and the importance of C&A counselors developing competencies in addressing sexuality issues.

### Recommended Citation:

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# Letter from ACSSW President...

by Angela Schubert, PhD, LPC, NCC, BC-TMH, ACSSW President

## I Bid You Adieu...

As I near the end of my tenure as president, I am flooded with sheer, unapologetic pride. As a founding member, I have had the wonderful privilege of watching ACSSW flourish from a passion-fueled idea to a fully active formal association. There is so much to be proud of and as such, I wish to take a moment to honor and applaud all who have participated in the collective growth and accomplishments of ACSSW.

Let's start at the beginning.

Incredibly enough, one presentation brought five mental health professionals (Melissa Vandenberg, Drs. Rob Zeglin, Fran McClain, Wynn Dupkoski-Mallicoat, and myself) together with one goal in mind – to promote research and training for all counselors and mental health professionals in the area of sexuality. Prior to ACSSW, there was not a single program or association exclusively dedicated to sexuality training and mental health counseling. As counselor educators and clinicians, we came together out of our professional concern with the current clinical training of mental health counselors. Collectively, we charged forward and identified specific areas to “bridge the gap” related to sexuality competency and mental health – education and training, social justice and advocacy, and research and scholarship. Shortly after meeting, we began grassroots efforts (word of mouth and CESNET) to solicit like-minded mental health professionals. Boy did we hit the jackpot! Dr. Shannon Shoemaker came on as secretary, Dr. Tanisha Sapp joined us as treasurer (replacing retired treasurer, Melissa Vandenberg), and Drs. Mark Pope, Patricia Arredondo, and James Wadley (replacing retired trustee, Dr. Joy Whitman) accepted the trustee position.

Dr. Rob Zeglin, with the most extensive research and scholarship expertise in the group of co-founders, took the charge to enhance research and scholarship by creating the Journal of Counseling Sexology & Sexual Wellness (JCSSW). Aligned with ACSSW's mission, JCSSW is the only journal dedicated exclusively to sexuality research and mental health counseling. As a result of Dr. Zeglin and the editorial board's dedication to the mission, the journal as of 2021, has an Impact Factor of 1.47 and has been downloaded over 24,000 times! Focused on sexuality education and training of mental health counselors, Dr. Fran McClain and I worked on enhancing knowledge and competency with the ACSSW Webinar series and podcast, Let's Get Uncomfortable. While the podcast is currently under construction, the webinar series has continued to provide free monthly trainings on sexuality and mental health, and are available to all ACSSW members thanks to the Chicago School of Professional Psychology.

Determined to grow ACSSW leadership, Drs. Tanisha Sapp and Shannon Shoemaker created the Emerging Leader program! Here, we hope to bring in new leaders interested in the continued growth and promotion of ACSSW. Cheryl Walker, the ACSSW clinical representative has done a tremendous job with the Sexual Wellness in Counseling Interest Network. Because of her hard work, SWIC has an ongoing blog dedicated to sexual wellness and counseling viewable to all ACA members! A longstanding member of ACSSW, Dr. Megan Speciale recently was nominated as governing council representative and has truly taken the position to the next level! I cannot wait to see her shine in ACSSW! And last but not least, we have Tanisha James who has taken over membership and promotion! To say she has been a game changer in the world of marketing would be an understatement.

Respectfully honoring those who founded ACSSW and the leaders who came on board, ACSSW would not be where it is today without their dedicated members! In March 2021, we had over 500 total members and successfully applied for Organizational Affiliate with the American Counseling Association. As it stands, we are over 1000 ACSSW members strong and growing. ACSSW members have much to look forward to. We have a new leadership opportunity for those interested in leading the Education and Training endeavors of ACSSW. We have an incredible webinar series! The Emerging Leader program is well on its way! The Social Justice and Advocacy committee leader, Dr. Christina McGrath-Fair, recently led the charge to create a unified statement in response to the anti-LGBTGEQIAP+ legislation, including, SAIGE, ACES, AMCD, ASGW, IAMFT, CSJ, ACAC, ACCA, AARC, ACC, and IAOC. Needless to say, ACSSW is walking the walk and I am so thankful for each and every member and contribution ever made.

Looking forward to the future, we had our very first elections as an association and in July, Dr. Fran McClain will take over as president and Dr. Robert Zeglin will begin his new position as president-elect. I am very much looking forward to supporting my dear colleagues and co-founders in their new positions. I have no doubt they will take ACSSW upward and onward to fulfill the mission.

Lastly, because I am a sentimental romantic at heart. I created a video montage of appreciation to ACSSW's founders and for this incredible opportunity to serve as president all these years. This was my first leadership opportunity with no previous knowledge of Robert's rule of order or budget insight. And yet, the ACSSW leadership saw something in me. I hope I honored the position in the way ACSSW deserves. It was truly a dream come true to serve ACSSW and the counseling field in this capacity. Hope you enjoy the show: [To ACSSW With Love](#)

With love,  
Dr. Angie Schubert

# Just a bit of ACSSW History...

This is an important time in ACSSW as we are reaching the end of term of the first ACSSW President. As such, we felt it might be interesting and even fun to review ACSSW history while highlighting the critical role Angie has played in the founding of ACSSW. Below we have included early emails that were sent out at the beginning of ACSSW planning. The first is the email Robert Zeglin sent out to everyone who attended the 2017 ACES conference in Chicago and indicated an interest in developing a sexuality division in ACA. The second email is the one Fran McClain sent to Angie Schubert, who was the moderator of SWIC, the Sexual Wellness Interest Network in ACA. As you can see, from the onset, Angie's enthusiasm and excitement was evident. In just a few short months, the Association of Counseling Sexology & Sexual Wellness was born.

Below is the email Dr. Robert Zeglin sent out after the 2017 ACES Conference to get things started...

From: Zeglin, Robert <r.zeglin@unf.edu>  
Sent: Monday, October 9, 2017 1:43 PM  
Cc: Frances McClain - Staff <FMcClain@thechicagoschool.edu>  
Subject: Sexuality and Counseling Group

Hello all-

First, I hope that your travels back home from the ACES conference were safe and without headache. It really was a pleasure meeting you all, even if briefly. The people on this e-mail all spoke of a vision (and a few folks used the word "dream") for what role sexuality could/should have within counselor training and practice. Primarily, I think folks agreed to be part of this e-mail to get to know each other. To share ideas. To collaborate. To learn from each other. And to advocate together.

Additionally, though, Fran McClain was kind enough to do a little preliminary investigation into what it might look like to formalize a group like ours within ACA. It all starts with cultivating and establishing an interest in the topic. To share my own vision: I see no reason why there can't be a sexuality concerns in counseling division and maybe (wait for it) a journal. That would be a long process, but one that undoubtedly starts with a group of passionate likeminded people working together to improve the training and practice of counselors. Like us.

I am reaching out to start the introductions. So...HI! I'll be sending out some LinkedIn invites soon. My primary area of research is related to sexual health, particularly around HIV/AIDS, and the role counselors can play there. I also have been working on (and have an article in press) proposing fundamental minimum sexuality counselor competencies. I'm also reaching out to get people's first gut reactions to the idea of formalizing this somehow. If we get enough people from the group interested, we can maybe set up a virtual meeting to chat more about it (I'll work with my department to get that set up). I can also get a LinkedIn group started for us too. Let me know your thoughts. Also, if you know of any colleagues who might be interested, please pass this along to them and encourage them to e-mail me so I can add them to the list. This is all so very exciting!

Thanks.

Robert J. Zeglin, PhD, NCC, LPC (TX, DC)  
Assistant Professor  
Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program  
Brooks College of Health | Department of Public Health

Below are the initial email exchanges between Frances McClain & Angela Schubert after the ACES Conference...

From: Frances McClain - Staff [mailto:FMcClain@thechicagoschool.edu]  
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2017 12:33 PM  
To: Angela M. Schubert <aschuber@centralmethodist.edu>  
Cc: Zeglin, Robert <r.zeglin@unf.edu>  
Subject: Sexual Wellness Interest Network

Hello Angela –

I am reaching out to you as it appears you are currently the administrator for the Sexual Wellness Interest Network. There was a group of us who attended the ACES conference in Chicago this past weekend and were interested in exploring a sexuality division in ACA. When I started doing more exploring, I found the interest group which I wasn't aware existed. I have included Robert Zeglin in this email as he was taking the lead in gathering emails and reaching out to everyone. We definitely have a (small) group with investment in exploring greater awareness/training/research in this area for counselors. Robert is working on developing sexuality competencies for counselors which he presented on at ACES and has an article in press.

Your last post indicated you were going to be more available after September. I hope all went well with your CACREP site visit! I look forward to hearing from you.

Best regards –

Fran

Frances McClain, MA, LCPC, NCC  
Director of Applied Professional Practice  
Counseling Psychology / Counseling Education  
The Chicago School of Professional Psychology

From: Angela M. Schubert <aschuber@centralmethodist.edu>  
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2017 3:36 PM  
To: Frances McClain - Staff <FMcClain@thechicagoschool.edu>  
Cc: Zeglin, Robert <r.zeglin@unf.edu>  
Subject: RE: Sexual Wellness Interest Network

Hi Frances,

*Yes, CACREP is over and I am still recovering. I inherited the Sexual Wellness in Counseling group without much direction or guidance. In fact, I sent out an email to those who were interested but I think perhaps, people gave up hope. I am so excited to hear about others who are interested. I have big plans for sexuality in counseling as a whole. I am in the bible belt and have done some great work as the AASECT chair for Missouri but quickly realized that maybe we need to have a certification just for ourselves – the counseling community. I would love to assist and receive support! Those of us interested in sexuality need to spread the word 😊*

Angela Schubert

# Tribute to the 1st ACSSW President

**Angie has brought us glitter...**

**President:**

**Angela Schubert, PhD, LPC, CCMHC**

Dr. Angela "Angie" Schubert is a counselor educator and department chair at Central Methodist University.

Dr. Schubert recently retired as Missouri State Chair for the American Association of Sexuality Educators, Counselors, and Therapists (AASECT). She held that position for six years.

Her research interests focuses on intersectionality in relation to gender, age, and sexuality through a relational cultural theoretical lens. She is PI for a qualitative research study looking at how societal messages of gender influence academic self-concept and work life balance.

She is strongly involved in the LGBT+ community in Kansas City and rural areas of Missouri. She has continued to act as expert consultant on sexuality-related topics such as sexual wellness, aging sexuality, sexual consent, sexual assault, and body image.



*a Bit of*  
**BLUE**



**& gifts to make  
us smile in  
tough times...**



Photo Taken at 2018 ACA Conference in Atlanta, GA.  
Pictured from Left to Right: Melissa Vandenberg,  
Frances McClain, Robert Zeglin, Lisa Salvadore, &  
Angela Schubert

When you realize the success of ACSSW in the few short years since its inception it is hard to believe how far we have come. This is due in no small part to having Angela Schubert as the president. If you have met her or have seen her speak at a conference or webinar, you will quickly recognize the qualities she brings that are so valuable to ACSSW. She is a champion for the sex positive approach as well as the education and training of the counseling field on sexuality. She is a master at networking, connecting, and engaging with people. Don't be fooled by her humor and occasional colloquial verbiage, Angie is a knowledgeable academic who can spar with the best academicians around human sexuality. She's the best combination of fun and brilliance.

The early leadership of any association creates the culture which will infuse the group for future generations. Under Angie's leadership a culture in ACSSW has developed which is driven toward a clear goal that welcomes and encourages all voices. The clear emphasis is on doing what is necessary to ensure we continue to move forward with our vision for ACSSW. She has established an environment that embraces inclusion as well as promotes the values so critical for the success of ACSSW. Under her leadership ACSSW has been a voice for social justice, creating educational opportunities through monthly webinars, and becoming an Organizational Affiliate of ACA.

ACSSW will always be indebted to Angela Schubert as the first President. She was exactly what we needed to bring ACSSW to life and move us forward.

Thank you, Angie!

Fran

ACSSW President-Elect  
ACSSW Co-Founder  
Editor, ACSSW Newsletter



Pictured above at the 2022 ACA Conference in Atlanta, GA. Seated  
Left to Right: Angela Schubert, Frances McClain, Lisa Salvadore

ACSSW has, without question, achieved many great things in its short lifespan. Over just a few years, we watched as ACSSW grow in membership, reputation, and legitimacy. Then, last year, we watched ACSSW become an Organizational Affiliate of the American Counseling Association, the goal we had set for ourselves at our first membership meeting. All of this happened under the tireless and inspiring presidency of Dr. Angela Schubert. She was our first choice for president, and she was the right choice for president. As her term comes to an end, we note the start of ACSSW's journey for Division status. We are able to envision this possibility and aspire to it because of Angie's steadfastness over the last four years. She has modeled collaboration, passion, creativity, and commitment for the rest of us on ACSSW's Executive Committee; I am honored to have learned from her and to have worked with her. Thank you for your leadership, Angie.

- Robert Zeglin  
Honorary Past President  
Research & Scholarship Committee Chair  
JCSSW Editor

Picture Below from presentation, "Let's Talk About Sex: Why Sexuality Belongs in Counselor Education" at the 2019 ACES Conference in Seattle, WA. Speakers pictured from Left to Right: Robert Zeglin, Frances McClain, Angela Schubert



Picture Below from ACA 2022 Conference Atlanta, GA. Left to Right: Robert Zeglin, Shannon Shoemaker &, Angela Schubert



Angie has been such a pivotal leader in so many ways! She has made me feel warm and welcome since she selected me to be part of the group with the original board, and has led the group from a start-up organization to Organizational Affiliate with the ACA! Her enthusiasm carried us all, as well as her humility. I am so proud to have worked with her and honored to now call her friend!

- Shannon Shoemaker  
ACSSW Treasurer



Angie & Cheryl at the  
2022 ACA Conference in Atlanta, GA

Angie was one of my first contacts with ACSSW. Her infectious and inviting energy pulled me in, but her personality and genuineness convinced me to stay. Her ability to multi-task allowed me to experience the vastness of her intellect and undying spirit to pay it forward. You can always depend on Angie to make you smile, even as she is turning her own lemons into lemonade. Our paths were crossed many years ago, and although those paths are leading us in different directions now, I am honored to have shared the road with her.

- Cheryl Walker  
SWIC Representative

I've only know Angie for a short while but I've always been impressed with her calmness and clarity when talking about sexuality. For me, she has been a model for helping others in "getting out the giggles" when broaching sexuality with teens, adults, and students within the classroom. Thank you, Angie, for your leadership and vision, and truly wishing you the best in your next sexuality chapter!

-Tanisha James  
ACSSW Promotion & Membership Committee Chair

*What can I say about Angie that has not already been said? I can think of a few things, but none of them are PG-13 or internet appropriate. I remember meeting Angie at the ACA conference when ACSSW was just a dream and Angie has been going strong since. She first drafted me to work on the Education & Training Committee, a small team with a loud voice. Angie is the leader that will text you out of the blue with a random idea and run with it. Angie the warrior woman who will not settle for "no" in the profession. It is with her leadership and determination that ACSSW is where we are today. Well done, Angie, well done! It has truly been an honor to serve with you. Now, you may rest knowing your legacy will continue strong.*

-Tanisha Sapp  
ACSSW Treasurer

# *Welcome New Social Justice & Advocacy Committee Chair!*

In March 2022, Dr. Christina McGrath Fair was appointed to the position of chair of the Social Justice & Advocacy Committee. She was a member of the committee from the beginning and one of the first members of ACSSW. Dr. Christina McGrath–Fair has already been busy in her new role and led the charge in creating a unified statement in response to the recent anti-LGBTGEQIAP+ legislation.

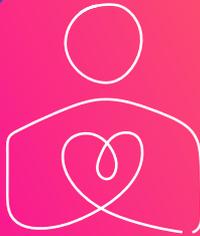


***Dr. Christina McGrath Fair, PhD (she/her)***  
***ACSSW Social Justice & Advocacy Committee Chair***

**Christina McGrath Fair, PhD (she/her) is a Visiting Clinical Assistant Professor in Counselor Education at Florida International University. She is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor, Qualified Supervisor, and Continuing Education provider in Florida. She has a wide range of clinical experience in various settings including residential, community, school-based, college, and private practice. Specialty areas include LGBTQ+ issues, sexual wellness, and women's issues. Christina is active in leadership roles in the Florida Counseling Association and Counselors for Social Justice, as well as ACSSW.**

**Dr. McGrath Fair's Vision  
for the  
Social Justice & Advocacy Committee:**

The Social Justice & Advocacy committee began to work on increasing awareness of the need for sexuality to be included in counseling education curriculum with Frances McClain as chair (Human Sexuality is not an elective!). As the committee chair, I would like to move things forward with the development of a code of ethics for counselors and mental health professionals working with sexually related issues. Additionally, the committee will begin working on advocating at the state level with licensure boards to promote inclusion of human sexuality courses for licensure. Finally, the committee will provide leadership national advocacy with CACREP for future versions of their accreditation standards to include language around inclusion of education and training related to human sexuality.



If you are interested in joining the Social Justice & Advocacy Committee, please contact Dr. McGrath Fair at [drchristina@gentlewaveccc.com](mailto:drchristina@gentlewaveccc.com).

# ACSSW Unified Statement on Anti-LGBTGEQIAP+ Legislation

Dear ACSSW Members,

Our very own Dr. Christina McGrath – Fair led the charge to create a unified statement in response to the anti-LGBTGEQIAP+ legislation. Because of her efforts, several divisions have come together in support.

As of March 11, 2022, more than 150 pieces of legislation targeting queer and trans people have been introduced in state legislatures across the country (ACLU, 2022). Just four months in, this has already been a watershed year for anti-LGBTGEQIAP+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, gender expansive, queer, intersex, asexual, pansexual+) legislation. These bills currently exist in 31 states, and this threatens the future for individuals in the community nationwide. While anti-LGBTGEQIAP+ legislation is not a new phenomenon, the state level attack against equality follows a number of improvements at the federal level. These attacks place transgender, non-binary, and other gender non-conforming youth amongst the most targeted groups at this time. While not all issues for all members of the LGBTGEQIAP+ community are the same, they all share oppression and are targeted by this legislation

We know that 94% of LGBTQ+ youth have reported that recent political attacks have negatively impacted their mental health (Trevor Project, 2021). LGBTGEQIAP+ youth are already at a heightened risk of experiencing depression, anxiety and other mental health disorders (NAMI, 2022). Research also shows that LGBTGEQIAP+ youth are significantly more likely than their heterosexual, cisgender peers to experience suicidal ideation and attempts at suicide (NAMI, 2022). Half of all LGBTQ+ youth of color reported discrimination based on their race/ethnicity in the past year, including 67% of Black LGBTQ youth and 60% of Asian/Pacific Islander LGBTQ youth (Trevor Project, 2021). As professional counselors, we are committed to the well-being of these communities. These bills, and those like them, threaten these communities and stand in opposition to our core professional values:

1. enhancing human development throughout the lifespan;
2. honoring diversity and embracing a multicultural approach in support of the worth, dignity, potential, and uniqueness of people within their social and cultural contexts;
3. promoting social justice;
4. safeguarding the integrity of the counselor–client relationship; and
5. practicing in a competent and ethical manner (ACA, 2014, p. 3).

The following divisions and affiliate organizations of the American Counseling Association (ACA), Association of Counseling Sexology and Sexual Wellness (ACSSW), the Society for Sexual, Affectional, Intersex, and Gender Expansive Identities in Counseling (SAIGE), the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES), the Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD), the Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW),

the International Association of Marriage and Family Therapists (IAMFT), the Association for Child and Adolescent Counseling (ACAC), the Association for Creativity in Counseling (ACC), the American College Counseling Association (ACCA), the Association for Humanistic Counseling (AHC), the Association for Assessment and Research in Counseling (AARC), Counselors for Social Justice (CSJ), and The International Association of Addictions and Offender Counselors (IAAOC) stand in solidarity with ACA's nondiscrimination statement:

The American Counseling Association is committed to nondiscrimination and to the prevention of harassment in all forms—verbal, physical, sexual, emotional, and psychological—including protections for transgender, gender non-conforming, and LGBTQ+ individuals. Every human being on earth is unique and uniquely important. Each person embarks on the adventure of life guided by their own spirit, outlook, and traits of character. These facets help to shape and guide the course of every human journey. Everyone is equal on this path.

The ACA Governing Affairs Resources:

<https://www.counseling.org/government-affairs/public-policy>

The ACA Code of Ethics:

<https://www.counseling.org/resources/aca-code-of-ethics.pdf>

The CSJ Code of Ethics:

Ibrahim, F.A., Dinsmore, J.A., Estrada, D., & D'andrea, M. (2011). The Counselors for Social Justice (CSJ) Code of Ethics.

LGBQQIA Competencies:

[Counseling Competencies for LGBQQIA People in pdf](#)

Transgender Competencies:

[Counseling Competencies for Transgender Clients in pdf](#)

Multicultural Social Justice Counseling Competencies (MSJCC):

<https://www.multiculturalcounselingdevelopment.org/competencies>

Resources for Further Support:

[Human Rights Campaign](#)

[How To Teach LGBTQ History](#)

[www.glsen.org](http://www.glsen.org)

Crisis Help: The Trevor Project | 24 Hour Telephone (866) 488-7386 | [We're here for you Now – The Trevor Project](#) | Trans Lifeline (877) 565-8860 Peer support phone service run by and for transgender people.

TransSOCIAL (Transgender-led organization): [TransSOCIAL, Inc.](#) Services and resources include: Name and gender marker change assistance, case management, peer support and social groups, and affirming medical and mental health referrals.

National Queer & Trans Therapists of Color Network (Healing justice organization):

[National Queer and Trans Therapists of Color Network](#) | Services and resources include: Mental Health Practitioner Directory and an online assistance to help connect queer and trans people of color to queer and trans practitioners of color and supplemental financial assistance for psychotherapy (Mental Health Fund).

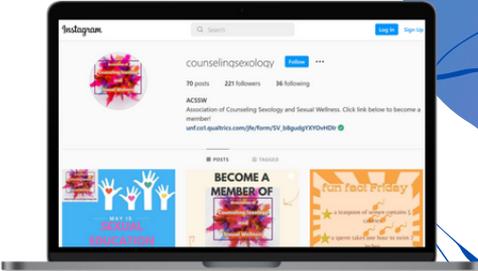
Glimmer: [Glimmer](#) | Platform for helping LGBQQIA+ people connect with affirming wellness professionals.

Statement crafted by Christina McGrath Fair, chair of ACSSW Social Justice & Advocacy committee. Special thanks to Tamekia Bell (SAIGE), Devika Dibya Choudhuri (ASGW), Angela Cocker (AMCD), Delilah Owens (CSJ), Deborah Rubel (ACES), Angela Schubert (ACSSW), Carol Smith (IARTC), and Shon Smith (CSJ) for feedback and contributions to this statement.

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## Children Counselors Competent in Sexuality Too

*Juquatta D. Brewer, PhD, LPC, ACS  
College of William & Mary*

Sexuality and sexual development are a universal experience that is an integral part of our biological, psychological, and social identities (Cacciatore et al., 2019; Christensen et al., 2016; Dupkoski, 2012). Sexuality is present in children as well, with at least 50 percent of children engaging in different sexual behaviors before the age of 13, suggesting that sexual behaviors are a common occurrence at this point of the lifespan (Kann et al., 2016; Kellogg, 2010; Lindberg et al., 2019). Developing a healthy, safe, and positive view of sex and sexuality benefits children and is a crucial developmental milestone (Breuner & Mattison, 2016; Swartzendruber & Zenilman, 2010). Education around sexual wellness and health should provide information while exploring healthy sexual feelings, values, and attitudes. Additionally, education should focus on developing healthy communication, decision-making, and behavioral skills (Breuner & Mattison, 2016). Counselors competent in sexuality can play an invaluable role in enhancing sexual wellness and health for children to mitigate the risks of childhood sexual abuse and problematic sexual behaviors.

### **Childhood Sexual Abuse**

Counselors are likely to encounter young clients who have experienced childhood sexual abuse (CSA) and serve as advocates for their ongoing welfare and well-being. CSA has been estimated to impact at least one in four girls and one in 13 boys, and CSA victims account for more than half of mental health clients (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2022; Foster & Hagedorn, 2014; Cohen & Miller, 1998). According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (2022), CSA is when a child under the age of 18 is involved "in sexual activity that violates the laws or social taboos of society and that he/she does not fully comprehend, does not consent to or is unable to give informed consent to, or is not developmentally prepared for and cannot give consent to." There are social, cognitive, academic, physical, spiritual, and emotional impacts of this abuse that warrant counseling to prevent long-term effects (Green, 2008). In addition to providing trauma-informed counseling to survivors of CSA to mitigate the impact(s) of this experience, incorporating sex-positive interventions to enhance the child's sexual wellness and health could be beneficial. Providing the education and language needed to acknowledge abuse when it occurs may reduce the child's risk for further victimization.

## **Childhood Problematic Sexual Behaviors**

Another concern that may present in counseling children is a display of problematic sexual behaviors (PSB). Research has shown that children with PSB have at least one mental health diagnosis and have high general mental health needs (Gray et al., 1997; Szanto et al., 2012; Sarver et al., 2014). PSB are developmentally inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviors exhibited by or between children (Lévesque et al., 2012; McLinnes & Ey, 2020). These behaviors can range from sexually reactive to sexually aggressive behaviors that, if left unaddressed, could continue, or escalate over time (Lévesque et al., 2012; Szanto et al., 2012). PSB is different from developmentally appropriate sexual play and curious behaviors that are usually spontaneous, mutual, non-coercive, and do not cause emotional distress (McLinnes & Ey, 2020). In their study, Szanto et al. (2012) found that children with sexually reactive behaviors were more likely to display trauma stress symptoms and mental health needs, while sexually aggressive children showed higher functioning challenges. Children exhibiting PSB may present to counseling for other mental health concerns, so counselors must be prepared to address PSB if it arises.

### **Strategies for counselors**

Working with children around sexuality-related topics and concerns is not a difficult task. All counselors should be equipped to work with individuals regarding their sexual wellness and health (Dupkoski et al., 2021). Sexual wellness may be vital when working with children with sexual abuse or problematic sexual behavior histories. A few suggested strategies and focus areas include providing psychoeducation, working on boundaries and consent, and reviewing and challenging cognitive distortions. Discussing healthy sexuality and maintaining appropriate boundaries with children are essential components to provide them the language, the opportunity, and comfort to disclose any inappropriate acts towards them, from them, and any sexual abuse (Foster & Hagedorn, 2014).

### **Psychoeducation**

Psychoeducation is the foundation for teaching children new skills or helping them come to new understandings. Education and counseling around sexuality can help promote independence and decrease the possibility of sexual victimization (Stein et al., 2017). Concerning sexual wellness, children are often not receiving information about how to be healthy sexual beings or engage in healthy behaviors. Counselors have the skills to engage children in age-appropriate discussions around sex with the parents' permission. Children should be aware of the appropriate names of their genitalia, understand puberty, and what is healthy peer relationships. The child's age, observations of sexual behaviors, and cultural and religious beliefs about sexuality that are taught to the child influence their healthy sexual identity, development, and behaviors (Hagan et al., 2008). Additionally, psychoeducation can be valuable to assist caretakers in having conversations about how sexual feelings are normal and how to regulate any emotions and urges based on their values, again in age-appropriate ways. Depending on the child's age, they may have started exploring their bodies, so including caretakers in this conversation can help develop healthy processes for exploration and discuss healthy hygiene practices. Lastly, psychoeducation also includes examining the ways boundary violations can occur and how to get help.

## **Boundaries**

With psychoeducation comes teaching children about boundaries and consent, including sexual ones. Understanding boundaries helps children demonstrate respect and understand their own and others' needs (Jacobson, 2021). Practical approaches to addressing boundaries include conversations about self-respect and respect, educating how boundaries promote safety, 'safe touch and unsafe touch,' and teaching about 'safe and unsafe secrets' (Morris et al., 2017). Learning about consent goes along with learning about boundaries as it teaches children that they are in charge of their bodies and what happens to them, which also helps them understand that it is the same for others (Bell, 2020). The child's understanding that they have the permission and ability to control how others physically engage with them is important. This psychoeducation is valuable in helping children understand that when they or someone else say 'no' but does not listen, it is wrong, a violation, and they should seek help. Counselors can involve the child's caretakers in this conversation to help them know that their caretaker is a source of support and help if their boundaries are violated.

## **Cognitive Distortions**

Examining and challenging cognitive distortions is another useful strategy, particularly with children exhibiting concerning sexual behaviors. Cognitive distortions are errors in thinking that help individuals avoid taking responsibility for their actions and encourage emotional repression, inappropriate emotional expression, or problematic behaviors (Finne & Svartdal, 2017; Kahn, 2011; Scott et al., 2018). A few cognitive distortions to look for and address when working with children who engage in inappropriate sexual behaviors include blaming, minimizing, justifying, denying, lying, and avoiding behaviors or consequences. Helping the child identify these thinking errors and understanding how they think contributes to their behaviors can help them commit to challenging and changing their thinking (Kahn, 2011). As counselors, we can work with the child to learn how to notice the cognitive distortion, reframe them, and take accountability to decrease any PSB.

## **Conclusion**

Remaining empathetic, encouraging questions or vocalization of concerns from the child, providing psychoeducation, normalizing their experiences, and understanding the child's perspectives are interventions that counselors already do that are appropriate during sexuality conversations (Foster & Hagedorn, 2014). These same strategies counselors use to work with children with trauma, and sexual abuse histories are the same ones that can be used to initiate conversations around sexuality and sexual wellness. Whether a child has experienced sexual abuse or is engaging in inappropriate or curious sexual play, counseling should be a place where they can explore their sexual wellness and development. Children need counselors who are competent in sexuality to develop into healthy, functional, and sexual adults.

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# ACSSW at ACA 2022 Conference Atlanta, GA



Photo to the Left from left to Right:  
Robert Zeglin, Angela Schubert, Frances McClain, &  
Shannon Shoemaker

Photo Below Back Row from the Left: Angela  
Schubert, Frances McClain, Robert Zeglin, Shannon  
Shoemaker, & Cheryl Walker  
Front Row: Mark Pope, Trustee



This year at the 2022 ACA Conference in Atlanta, GA, was an exciting time for ACSSW. On Thursday, April 7<sup>th</sup> ACSSW held the annual meeting. The agenda included Frances McClain, President-Elect, presenting the slate of candidates to the ACSSW board which was approved for the first ever ACSSW election. Christina McGrath Fair was introduced as the new chair for the Social Justice & Advocacy Committee. Goals for the upcoming year were reviewed which included submitting the application for ACSSW becoming a division of ACA. On Saturday, April 9<sup>th</sup>, the ACSSW Executive Council presented on “Human Sexuality Is Not An Elective, It’s an Ethical Imperative!” Important definitions and information related to sexuality counseling were reviewed as well as barriers to sexual wellness specific to the BIPOC and sexual minority communities as well as the next steps for ACSSW.



## Key Areas of Focus for ACCSW

1. Promote research & scholarship in the counseling profession focused on sexuality and sexual wellness from a sex positive approach
2. Advocate for and provide education & training related to the acquisition of competencies and skills for working with clients around sexually related issues.
3. Increase awareness of sexually related oppressive practices and policies both within the mental health profession and society that impacts BIPOC and sexual minoritized communities.



- ▶ The mission of ACCSW is to promote sexuality as a central aspect of being human that includes the intersection of intrapersonal and interpersonal influences on sexual expression and experiences
- ▶ Improve standards and delivery of sexuality counseling services provided to clients and communities with a goal of enhancing overall wellness.
- ▶ Produce scientific, educational, and professional materials with the purpose of raising the standards of practice for all who address sexuality in the counseling process.
- ▶ Develop, implement, and foster interest in counseling-related charitable, scientific, and educational programs designed to contribute to awareness and advocacy for all persons' rights to sexual wellness.



## What we know...

- ▶ There are only 2 states that required a Human Sexuality course for licensure.
- ▶ If offered, most human sexuality courses are only offered as an elective.
- ▶ CACREP does not specifically require counseling education programs to include human sexuality coursework among its eight specified common core areas (CACREP 2009).
- ▶ Discomfort with sexuality-related topics has been identified as a common experience for clinicians (Hanzlik and Gaubatz 2012; Harris and Hays 2008).



## Barriers to Sexual Health for BIPOC and Sexual Minority Communities

Little or inadequate sexual education

Sexuality is structured and influenced by race and gender inequality

Inability to access sexual health medical resources for both BIPOC and sexual minority populations

Laws, policies & practices are outdated and/or influences are not representative of the majority of the people

Stigma & social cultural taboos associated with BIPOC and sexual minority communities are oppressive

Lack of healthy models for people from marginalized groups

Research consistently serves to reproduce and maintain structures of status & power!



- ▶ Applying for ACA division status!
- ▶ Development of sexually related competencies for counselors.
- ▶ Development of education/training competencies for counseling programs.
- ▶ Continue to provide annual webinars for education & training of students and mental health professionals.
- ▶ Implementation of the Emerging Leaders Program.
- ▶ Expand advocacy and social justice initiatives.

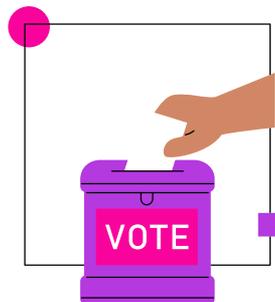
# Vote in ACSSW Elections!

This is your reminder to vote for the open positions. As an ACSSW member, you have the right to vote one time for one candidate for each open position. Each candidate's position statement is available to review prior to your casting your vote. **All votes must be cast by not later than Tuesday, May 31st, 2022.** All ACSSW members previously received a personalized ballot link for voting. Be sure to check you emails for your individualized voting link.

Below are the two open positions available for nominations:

**President- Elect:** The President-Elect shall perform the duties of the President in the absence or incapacity of the President as determined by the Board. The President-Elect shall assume the Presidency of ACSSW upon the death or resignation of the President. The President-Elect shall coordinate the nominations process for all elections except those expressly excluded by the Bylaws. The President-Elect, subject to confirmation by the Board, shall appoint members of committees and the Treasurer, in accordance with and except as otherwise specified in ACSSW Bylaws, policies and procedures. The term of office for the President-Elect is July 1st through June 30th. After which time the President-Elect will become President and serve a one-year term of July 1st through June 30th.

**Graduate Student Representative:** The Graduate Student Representative is a voting member of the ACSSW Board of Directors. The Board meets a minimum of once per year, usually during the ACA Annual Conference. The Graduate Student Representative must be a graduate student in a counseling-related field as of July 1, 2022. The Graduate Student Representative may graduate during their term without losing their title, role, rights. There term of office for the Graduate Student Representative is a one-year term of July 1st through June 30th.



# Emerging Leaders Needed!

## 2022-2023 ACSSW Emerging Leaders Program Call for Submissions

The mission of The Association of Counseling Sexology & Sexual Wellness (ACSSW) is to promote sexuality as a central aspect of being human that includes the intersection of interpersonal and intrapersonal influences on sexual expression and identities inclusive of age, race, ethnicity, religion, sex, gender and gender expression, physical and mental health and abilities, and socioeconomic status. To help foster this mission, ACSSW is excited to offer its inaugural Emerging Leaders Program. Our emerging leaders are provided mentorship, leadership through the ACSSW Executive Council, and various professional opportunities. After their year as Emerging Leaders, our hope is that emerging leaders will continue to embody the mission of ACSSW within the organization, at various institutions, and within their communities.

An ACSSW Emerging Leader recipient must be (1) a member of ACA and ACSSW at the time of application and (2) either a Master's or Doctoral level student currently enrolled at an institution. Recipients must maintain their student status during the year of service.

Emerging Leaders will be selected to:

- a) Serve for the 2022-2023 fiscal year (July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023);
- b) Choose an area of interest within the division and receive mentoring related to that area;
- c) Provide a minimum of 25 hours of service to ACSSW;
- d) Learn the responsibilities associated with serving in elected leadership positions within the organization; and
- e) Emerging Leaders will be featured on our website and newsletter.

Interested applicants should complete the application provided here:

<https://forms.gle/Uq3kmYWhD5tHWeR7>

To prepare for the application, applications should combine the following materials in one PDF document to upload to the electronic application:

1. Your Resume (Master's Students) or Your curriculum vitae (Doctoral Students)
2. Two letters of support that describe your leadership skills and experiences, along with your value and interests with sexuality and/or sexual wellness in counseling.

**Submissions will close June 1, 2022 at 11:59pm ET.** The selection committee will notify applicants of the status of their application by June 1, 2022. The position will begin July 1, 2022. If you have any questions, please contact the ACSSW Emerging Leader Coordinator, Shannon Showmaker at [shoemakercounseling@gmail.com](mailto:shoemakercounseling@gmail.com).

**ACSSW** is now an Organizational Affiliate of ACA. As we begin our journey to become an ACA division we need ACSSW members who are also ACA members in good standing.

Please visit <https://www.counselingsexology.com> for more details!

**WE ARE NOW ACCEPTING MANUSCRIPT  
SUBMISSIONS FOR THE ACSSW SUMMER  
NEWSLETTER.**

**THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS IS JULY 15TH**

Submissions must be no more than 1500 words, grounded in peer-reviewed research/content, and may not have been previously published, nor be forthcoming in an archival journal or book (print or electronic). The ACSSW newsletter is not a peer reviewed journal, but we do have editors who review the submissions for grammatical errors and ensure the article is in keeping with ACSSW principles and guidelines. We will publish articles that promote sexual wellness, research studies, and conceptual articles. The ACSSW newsletter editorial team requires that all authors follow the most current ACA Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice. All manuscripts must conform to standards detailed in the most recent edition of the APA Publication Manual. The newsletter supports the use of gender-neutral pronouns, including the singular “they.” Manuscripts should be concise, yet with enough detail to provide clarity.

***Send submissions to Frances McClain at  
[fmclain@thechicagoschool.edu](mailto:fmclain@thechicagoschool.edu)***



# Webinar Series

The **Office of Continuing Education (OCE)** and  
the **Association of Counseling Sexology & Sexual Wellness (ACSSW)**  
presents:

*Sex, Religion, and Spirituality:  
A Primer for Working through Complex  
Intersections of Client Beliefs and Values*

*Presented by Hannah B. Bayne, PhD*

*Friday, June 17, 2022*

*8:00am-10:00am PT/10:00am-12:00pm CT/11:00am-1:00pm ET*

*Event held online via Zoom.*

*Program offers 2.0 CEs for Psychologists, 2.0 CEUs for Illinois State Counselors and Social Workers, 2.0 NBCC Clock Hours for Counselors, and 2.0 BBS California CEUs for LPCCs, LPSW, and LMFTs.*

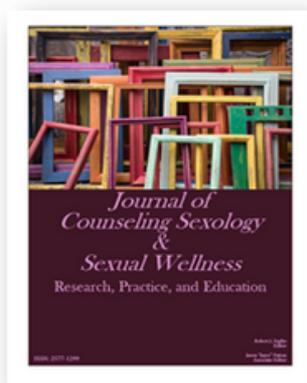
The webinars are **free** for ACSSW members plus CEs!

The 3rd Friday of every month in 2022 from 10a - 12p ACSSW will be partnering with The Chicago School of Professional Psychology again offering 12 new educational webinars for mental health professionals, educators, and students.

## TOPICS INCLUDE...

*Spirituality & Sexuality  
Couples/Relationships, & Sexuality  
Current Counseling Sexology Literature  
Differently Able & Sexuality  
Competent/Ethical Practice w/LGBTQ+  
Ethical Decision Making in Sex Therapy*

# *Journal of Counseling Sexology & Sexual Wellness*



## **Editor:**

Robert J. Zeglin, University of North Florida

## **Associate Editor:**

Megan Speciale, Palo Alto University

The Journal of Counseling Sexology & Sexual Wellness: Research, Practice, and Education is a new peer-reviewed journal focusing on all domains of sexuality and counseling sexology including sexual identity, pleasure, gender issues, sexual health, theories of sexology, and sexual exploitation issues relevant to counselors, counseling educators, and counseling supervisors. The Journal of Counseling Sexology & Sexual Wellness: Research, Practice, and Education will publish two issues per year: Spring and Fall.

Check it out at <https://digitalcommons.unf.edu/jcssw/>

# ACSSW Leadership

## Executive Council

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# Sexuality Resources

<https://www.zurinstitute.com/resources/human-sexuality-resources/>

## Human Sexuality

- American Association of Sex Educators, Counselors, and Therapists – AASECT members common interest is in promoting understanding of human sexuality and healthy sexual behavior.
- American Sexual Health Association – ASHA programs include: the ASHA Research Fund, HPV Cervical Cancer Prevention Resource Center, Cervical Cancer Prevention Project, ISALSA! (STDs, Adolescents and Latinos: Sexual Health Awareness), Herpes Resource Center, ASH-Net (Adolescent Sexual Health and the Internet), Herpes Foundation, and Viral Hepatitis Education and Training.
- American Society of Reproductive Medicine – ASRM is an organization devoted to advancing knowledge and expertise in infertility, reproductive medicine and biology.
- Association of Reproductive Health Professionals – AHRP is a multidisciplinary association of professionals who provide reproductive health services or education, conduct reproductive health research, or influence reproductive health policy.
- Foundation for the Scientific Study of Sexuality – FSSS' mission is to promote funding for conducting scholarly, scientific research related activities to further the understanding of all aspects of sexuality.
- The Alan Guttmacher Institute is focused on sexual and reproductive health research, policy analysis and public education.
- The International Society for the Study of Women's Sexual Health is an academic and scientific organization that provides opportunities for communication among scholars, researchers and practitioners about women's sexual function and experiences, and supports high standards of ethics and professionalism in research, education and clinical practice of women's sexuality.
- Kinsey Institute – The Institute's mission is to promote interdisciplinary research and scholarship in the fields of human sexuality, gender, and reproduction.
- Sexuality Information and Education Council of the US – SIECUS develops, collects, and disseminates information, and promotes comprehensive education about sexuality.
- The Society for the Advancement of Sexual Health provides information about sex addiction for lay persons as well as clinicians.
- The Society for Sex Therapy and Research is composed of a range of professionals who have clinical or research interests in human sexuality. SSTAR aims to facilitate communications among clinicians who treat problems of sexual identity, sexual function, and reproductive life.

## Gender Identity

- [The World Professional Association for Transgender Health](#) – The Association is devoted to the understanding and treatment of gender identity disorders, and provides opportunities for scientific interchange among professionals through its biennial conferences and publications.
- [International Foundation for Gender Education](#) – IFGE is an advocate and educational organization for promoting the self-definition and free expression of individual gender identity.
- [Intersex Society of North America](#) – The ISNA's "Medical Treatment of Intersexuality" page includes recommendations for treatment of intersexed children.

## Sexual/Affectional Orientation

- [American Academy of Family Physicians' Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Information](#) – This page contains links to sexual orientation sites for physicians and their patients.
- [Association for Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Issues in Counseling](#) – The mission of the Association for Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Issues in Counseling is to educate mental health service providers about issues confronting gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) individuals.
- [Association of Gay and Lesbian Psychiatrists](#) – The AGLP provides networking and support for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered psychiatrists, and education and advocacy on GLBT mental health issues.
- [Gay and Lesbian Medical Association](#) – GLMA members include lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered physicians, medical students, and other health care professionals, as well as patients throughout North America.
- [National Association of Lesbian and Gay Addiction Professionals](#) – The Association is dedicated to the prevention and treatment of alcoholism, substance abuse, and other addictions in GLBT communities.
- [National Gay and Lesbian Task Force 2000 Census and Same-Sex Households](#) – The Census 2000 reporting statistics released by the US Census Bureau have continued to show an increase in the number of reported same-sex partner households across the United States.
- [Society for the Psychological Study of Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Issues, Division 44, American Psychological Association](#) – Division 44's goals include: advancing the contribution of psychological research in understanding lesbian, gay, and bisexual issues; promoting the education of psychologists in matters of lesbian, gay, and bisexual concerns; and informing psychologists and the general public of relevant research, educational, and service activities. The site includes a newsletter, Guidelines for Psychotherapy with Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Clients, and a list of member's publications.
- [It Gets Better](#) – TAKE THE PLEDGE: Everyone deserves to be respected for who they are. I pledge to spread this message to my friends, family and neighbors. I'll speak up against hate and intolerance whenever I see it, at school and at work.

## Sexual Abuse

- Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers – ATSA was founded to foster research, further professional education and provide for the advancement of professional standards and practices in the field of sex offender evaluation and treatment.
- Child Welfare Information Gateway – Child Sexual Abuse: Intervention and Treatment Issues – This manual is intended to address the needs of professionals who encounter child sexual abuse in the course of their work.

## Sexual and Reproductive Health

- CDC's Reproductive Health Information Source – Resources cover: assisted reproductive technology reports; unintended pregnancy; women's reproductive health; men's reproductive health; surveillance and research; racial and ethnic minorities; scientific and technical assistance.
- Consortium for Improvement in Erectile Function – CIEF is a membership organization comprised of multidisciplinary healthcare practitioners who share an interest in developing and participating in a variety of educational and interactive programs designed to enhance the clinical outcomes of erectile dysfunction therapy.
- The National Vulvodynia Association (NVA) is a nonprofit organization created in 1994 to improve the lives of individuals affected by vulvodynia, a spectrum of chronic vulvar pain .

## Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs)

- AIDSInfo – Links to regional training centers; cultural and gender resources; management of HIV complications; maternal-child transmission; information for exposure to HIV and how to prevent it; and treatment consultation.
- American Foundation for AIDS Research – AmfAR's mission is to prevent HIV infection and the disease and death associated with it and to protect the human rights of all people threatened by the epidemic of HIV/AIDS. amfAR has active programs in basic and clinical research, public and professional education, public policy, prevention science, and global initiatives.
- Center for AIDS Prevention Studies – CAPS conducts interdisciplinary research on methods to prevent HIV infection and its consequences. The site includes a list of current research projects, links to model prevention programs, intervention curricula, and survey instruments.
- HIV/AIDS Bureau – Health Resources and Services Administration – oversees the CARE Act, which funds primary care and support services for individuals living with HIV who lack health insurance and financial resources for their care.
- HIV InSite – Medical Issues includes information on epidemiology, diagnosis, management, transmission and prevention, treatment resources, antiretroviral management, interactions database treatment guidelines, treatment access & advocacy, patient fact sheets, conference abstracts and summaries, and links to medical newsletters for clinicians.

- NIH – Division of Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome – “Research Resources and Programs” cover AIDS-related data sets; a database for anti-HIV compounds; an HIV / OI therapeutics database; an HIV sequence database; an HIV molecular immunology database; the NIAID/NCI inter-institute program for development of AIDS-related therapeutics; the NIH AIDS research and reference reagent program; a resource guide for the development of AIDS therapies; and links to reagent programs and repositories. Click on “Resources for Patients, Physicians, and Investigators”
- STD Prevention – Centers for Disease Control provides national leadership through research, policy development, and support of services to prevent sexually transmitted diseases and their complications. The site contains information on funding, program guidelines, research, surveillance, statistics and treatment guidelines.

### **Journals**

- Archives of Sexual Behavior
- Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality
- Contemporary Sexuality
- Culture, Health & Sexuality
- Gender & History
- Gender and Development
- Gender and Society
- Gender Issues
- Gender, Work, and Organization
- Journal of Black Sexuality and Relationships
- Journal of Counseling Sexology & Sexual Wellness
- Journal of Gay & Lesbian Psychotherapy
- Journal of Gay & Lesbian Social Services
- Journal of Homosexuality
- Journal of Sex and Marital Therapy
- Journal of Sex Education & Therapy
- Journal of Sex Research
- Journal of Women’s Health & Gender-Based Medicine
- Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health
- Psychology, Evolution & Gender
- Sexual Addiction & Compulsivity
- Sexual Science
- Sexuality & Culture
- Sexuality and Disability
- Sexually Transmitted Infections
- Studies in Gender and Sexuality
- Theology & Sexuality

### **Other electronic Journals**

- Electronic Journal of Human Sexuality