

Safe Zone at Auraria

Objectives of Safe Zone

- To make it possible to easily identify individuals who are empathetic and informed about GLBT issues who are willing and able to provide support, information, and confidentiality.
- To show a concrete example that the Auraria Campus supports GLBT people and is working to educate and raise awareness within the community.

Rationale

The Safe Zone Project will address misunderstanding and lack of information. There is a need for more discussion about the homophobia present on the Auraria Campus. A place of higher education should be a place where everyone feels comfortable being themselves (regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity). The campus has a responsibility to provide its students with a comfortable learning environment irrespective of their differences. Through programs like Safe Zone, we can make the Auraria Campus a more supportive and comfortable environment for all people.

Your Role as a Safe Zone member

Your main role as a Safe Zone member is VISIBILITY. You are encouraged to post your Safe Zone sticker in a visible area once you are comfortable. This should also be an area which is under your control. For example, if you share an office, you should not hang the sticker on your office door, but rather on your own desk or personal space, in order to not falsely include non-Safe Zone members who may not feel comfortable in that role.

Once you have identified yourself and your space as a Safe Zone, you are expected to provide support, resources, and referrals to individuals who choose to approach you. You are also expected to maintain the students' confidentiality and requests for privacy.

This manual will only provide answers to the most basic of questions and concerns. Should you need further information, please contact GLBT Student Services and/or one of the area organizations.

Safe Zone is not meant to be a support group, or to substitute for therapeutic sessions with a clinical psychologist. In situations where you feel a student may need to speak to a professional, be sure to refer him or her to the Counseling Center. DO NOT handle emotionally unstable students or situations where you believe the student or someone else may be in danger. Your role is to let the student know where she or he can turn for help if needed. Be sure to maintain appropriate boundaries for your own well-being.

What is NOT expected from you as a Safe Zone member

You are not expected to be an expert on GLBT issues. Know your limits and refer a student who has needs you cannot meet, rather than guessing at answers.

There will most likely be people who will want to debate the value or purpose of the Safe Zone program, or who may challenge you about general GLBT issues. You are not expected to defend the Safe Zone or participate in debates of this nature. You are simply serving as a safe person and a resource. Please refer these individuals to members of the office of GLBT Student Services.

Source: Rainbow Center, UCONN

Assumptions Behind the Safe Zone Presentation

We Assume:

- Everyone is present because they care about ending all forms of discrimination. From time to time, we all may act in ways that are oppressive, though that is not our intent.
- Discussing feelings is important to understanding the issues of difference and diversity. We hope to create a sense of safety so that feelings can be shared.
- There may be a gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender person in this group who will choose not to come out, while others may elect to do so. This may be true as well for others who have family members or loved ones who are GLBT.
- We all learned discriminatory, homophobic beliefs. We did not ask to be taught them. While we now have the opportunity to take responsibility for them, it is not our fault that we learned them. Change hinges on our ability to separate fault from responsibility.
- By educating ourselves and others, we move toward ending homophobia and creating a celebratory and diverse community.
- Because of homophobia, there is usually little opportunity to talk freely and to learn about gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people; this silence perpetuates heterosexism.
- There are multiple paths toward change. Many different groups and individuals taking small steps together build toward a vision of celebrating diversity. Today we are taking another step.

Adapted from: Diversity Works, Amherst, MA

Did You Know...

Lived Oppressive Experiences

- More than one-third (36 percent) of GLBT undergraduate students have experienced harassment within the past year, as have 29 percent of all respondents.
- Those who experienced harassment reported that derogatory remarks were the most common form (89 percent) and that students were most often the source of harassment (79 percent).
- Twenty percent of all respondents feared for their physical safety because of their sexual orientation or gender identity, and 51 percent concealed their sexual orientation or gender identity to avoid intimidation.

Perceptions of Anti-GLBT Oppression on Campus

- Respondents felt that GLBT people were likely to be harassed on campus. 71 percent felt that transgender people were likely to suffer harassment, and 61 percent felt that gay men and lesbians were likely to be harassed.
- Forty-three percent of the respondents rated the overall campus climate as homophobic.
- Ten percent of respondents would avoid areas of campus where GLBT people congregate for fear of being labeled.

-taken from the *Campus Climate for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender People*, 2003

BECAUSE

Gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgender people are discriminated against in housing and employment and because how they act is more important than who they are and if they get harassed it's their problem and if they get attacked they provoked it and if they raise their voices they're flaunting themselves and if they enjoy sex they're perverts and if they get AIDS they deserve it and if they march with pride they're recruiting children and if they stand up for their rights they're overstepping their boundaries and because they're forced to constantly question their worth as a human being and if they don't have a relationship with someone of the opposite sex they haven't given it a chance and if they have a relationship with someone of the same sex it is not recognized and they are told that their love is not "real" and if they come out of the closet they're just going through a phase and because Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender history is virtually absent from literature and because homophobia is sanctioned by the government of the United States and...for lots of other reasons,

**I AM PART OF THE GAY, LESBIAN, BISEXUAL, AND TRANSGENDER
LIBERATION MOVEMENT.**

Adapted by Jodi Berman

Imagine Statements

Try to imagine what it would be like to have the following experiences:

- Imagine sharing a home with your life partner and hiding that from your neighbors and even your family. When people ask about your living arrangement you respond with the term roommate or housemate out of fear of how they might respond.
- Imagine being invited home for a family event knowing that your siblings will be bringing their current romantic partners or spouses. You, however can not bring your partner even though your relationship is as central to your life as theirs for them.
- Imagine not being able to have a picture up at work of you and your partner when many of your co-workers have pictures up of themselves with their opposite sex partners.
- Imagine not being able to tell anyone about your relationship with your partner. In many ways you lead a double life and you and your partner are isolated in most work and social situations.
- Imagine not being able to take time off from your job to take care of your very sick partner without lying about why you need the time off.
- Imagine feeling like the only time you can be affectionate with the person you love is when you are in your own home or the homes of a few close friends.
- Imagine being with people to whom you are not out and having to change pronouns when talking about your activities and your life.
- Imagine worrying that your children will be harassed at school because of your love for your partner.
- Imagine hiding your sexual orientation because you are afraid of losing custody of your children.
- Imagine not having your relationship validated by society—no one thinks of you as a real couple or your family as a real family.
- Imagine not having community resources available to assist you with your needs because institutions assume everyone is heterosexual – and you don't dare let on that you're not.
- Imagine filling out forms that ask you to mark “married” or “single” - when neither of those is true.

Adapted from GLBT Student Services at Colorado State University.

American Psychological Association Statement on Homosexuality

[The following is an excerpt from a published statement, January 26, 1990, written by Bryant Welch, J.D., Ph.D., then Executive Director for Professional Practice within the American Psychological Association.]

The research on homosexuality is very clear. Homosexuality is neither mental illness nor moral depravity. It is simply the way a minority of our population expresses human love and sexuality. Study after study documents the mental health of gay men and lesbians. Studies of judgment, stability, reliability, and social and vocational adaptiveness all show that gay men and lesbians function every bit as well as heterosexuals.

Nor is homosexuality a matter of individual choice. Research suggests that the homosexual orientation is in place very early on in the life cycle, possibly even before birth. It is found in about ten percent of the population, a figure which is surprisingly constant across cultures, irrespective of the different moral values and standards of the particular culture. Contrary to what some imply, the incidence of homosexuality in a population does not appear to change with new moral codes or social mores.

Indeed, these research findings suggest that efforts to “repair” homosexuals are nothing more than social prejudice garbed in psychological accouterments.

All targets of discrimination, be they blacks, women, handicapped, or religious sects, have a uniquely horrible dimension to their suffering. This is true for gay men and lesbians as well. Psychologically, sexuality and sexual orientation represent life forces which form the most sensitive bedrock of our being. They not only shape our attitudes and our passions, but they are so fundamental to our personality structure that they, in large part, determine our sense of personal cohesiveness and our level of comfort in the world. They are the driving force with which we love, work, and create.

For patients (in psychotherapy), the societal assumption that homosexuality [is] sick and/or immoral create[s] an emotional, sensual, and spiritual prison where self-expression, love, and the deepest forms of human connectedness [are] stultified through anguishing guilt and self-loathing. For those of us in psychology who have had this kind of experience working with gay men and lesbians, the impact has been quite profound. For over two decades now, the American Psychological Association has advocated the elimination of discrimination against gay men and lesbians.

Finally, if one thinks about the vast real problems confronting our society and attacking our family structure—problems such as family violence, divorce, drug and alcohol abuse, child abuse, homelessness, and isolation, it becomes clear that individuals who are obsessed with how a minority of our citizens express love and sexuality have, indeed, established a most peculiar set of priorities, both for themselves and for others.

Healthy and secure heterosexuals do not feel threatened by homosexuality. Healthy heterosexuals don't need to change homosexuals. Healthy heterosexuals don't need to oppress homosexuals. Healthy heterosexuals don't need to “repair” homosexuals.

The real issue confronting our society today is not why people seek love and understanding as they do, but why some seem so unable to love and understand at all.

Glossary of Key Terms

prepared by Janis Bohan, PhD.

Note: The acronym "LGBT" is shorthand for lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender. It is used throughout this list for the sake of brevity.

Preferred Terms

GLBT. Stands for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender. You may also see the same acronym with the letters added such as I, Q, TS, and A standing for Intersex, Queer, Questioning, Two-Spirit, and Allies.

Sexual Orientation. One's sexual orientation is defined by who are the objects of one's emotional and sexual attraction. While the term emphasizes the sexual component of interpersonal relationships, in reality any sexual orientation involves a wide range of feelings, behaviors, experiences, and commitments.

Affectional Orientation. A recent term used to refer to variations in object of emotional and sexual attraction. The term is preferred by some over "sexual orientation" because it indicates that the feelings and commitments involved are not solely (or even primarily, for some people) sexual. The term stresses the affective-emotional component of attractions and relationships, including heterosexual as well as GLBT orientation.

Homosexual. From the Greek homo, meaning same. This is a clinical term for a person whose affectional and sexual orientation is toward members of the same sex. Although technically it includes both lesbians and gay males, the term is most often interpreted as referring to males alone (as in "homosexuals are effeminate," or "homosexuals are at high risk for contracting HIV.")

This term is generally not preferred by LGB people. First, it is the term employed as a diagnostic category when LGB identity was seen as a mental illness; hence, it feels pathologizing. Second, it emphasizes the sexual aspects of LGB identity, reinforcing the common notion that LGB identity is purely sexual in nature and disregarding the complexity of LGB experience.

Heterosexual. A clinical term for someone having emotional, physical, and sexual responses primarily to members of the opposite gender. Slang: "Straight"

Bisexual. A person whose affectional and sexual orientation is to members of both sexes (either serially or simultaneously). Sometimes referred to as "ambisexual."

Gay. The term applied to a person (especially a man; see below) who is emotionally and sexually attracted to members of the same sex. In some cases, the term is applied to people who have same-sex sexual relations even if they do not identify themselves as gay ("He's gay, he just can't admit it"). On the other hand, people may be said to be gay whether or not they have sexual relations with a member of the same sex ("I was always gay, I just never did anything about it"). The most specific definition reserves this term for those who identify themselves as gay and as members of the gay community.

Traditionally, "gay" has been the generic term to refer to both women and men. However, it has also been used to refer to men only (as the word "man" has been used to refer to us all). Because this generic use makes women invisible, the current preference in much of the LGBT community is for the term "gay" to refer to gay men (often "gay men" or "gay males" is used to further clarify the meaning of the term), and "lesbians" to refer to women. This position is shared by the American Psychological Association.

Lesbian. A woman who is emotionally and sexually attracted to other women. The term comes from the isle of Lesbos, where the poet, Sappho, established a community of women in the 7th century BC.

Currently, the term lesbian is popular in many segments of the LGBT community, and is the term deemed appropriate by the APA to designate homosexual women. It is preferred as a term that makes women clearly visible in LGBT issues, acknowledging that lesbian issues are not entirely the same as gay men's issues. However, some members of the LGBT community do not prefer this term. Some believe it is too political and may be divisive (why separate ourselves from gay men?). Others feel that it sounds too clinical or pathological.

Transgender. This term refers to individuals whose gender identity differs in some way from the one they were assigned at birth. They may identify and feel internally as the "opposite" sex or they may feel and identify as another gender altogether. Some of these individuals may choose hormones, surgery, and/or legal name changes to allow them greater ability to express their gender identity externally. Access to hormones and surgery is class-based and rarely covered by health insurance.

Transgender people represent a dimension entirely different from sexual orientation. For example, a male-to-female transgender person may, subsequent to the change, form relationships with men. Such relationships are heterosexual according to the social roles (gender) and the external genitalia of the partners, although both are genetically male. If the same person formed relationships with women, those would be lesbian relationships according to the external genitalia and social roles of the people involved, even though they are genetically of the opposite sex. Other such possibilities illustrate the complexity of defining sex/gender and sexual orientation.

Transexual. Refers to a transgender person who has chosen to live as a gender other than what was assigned to them at birth. They may or may not start dressing differently, seek surgery, take hormones, as well any number of other things to become more masculine/feminine.

Life Partner/Partner. The person with whom one shares a committed relationship. Comparable in some ways to "spouse" or "lover" in heterosexual relationships, such partnerships between LGB people may include shared housing and financial resources, a daily life and social activities that are closely intertwined, emotional and sexual intimacy, a commitment to nurture the relationship, an intention to remain together, agreements regarding sexual activities outside the relationship, and presentation (at least within the LGBT community) as a couple. There may be a formal ceremony of commitment. Variation among such partnerships is vast, and a given relationship may include any number of these (and/or other) elements.

Many of the differences between these and heterosexual pairings arise from social or cultural institutions that treat LGB relationships differently from heterosexual ones. Others derive from the absence of prescribed gender roles within LGB partnerships.

Lover. Traditionally the term has been used among LGBT folks to refer to a primary partner, with or without commitment to a long-term partnership. The term is rejected by many LGBT people because it implies that the relationship is purely sexual, thus neglecting the many other facets of the relationship and reinforcing stereotypes about LGBT relationships.

Ally. Any non-GLBT person whose attitudes, behaviors, and efforts seek to combat homophobia and heterosexism on both personal and institutional levels.

Stonewall. The Stonewall Inn tavern in New York City's Greenwich Village was the site of several nights of violent protests following a police raid committed on June 28, 1969, for no other reason than that it was a gay bar. Although not the nation's first gay-rights demonstration, Stonewall is now regarded as the birth of the modern GLBT movement.

Terms to Avoid

Sexual Preference. Avoid this term. It is misleading as it implies a choice. The majority of GLBQ individuals will tell you that being GLBQ is not a preference and they don't have a choice over the matter. (although some people actually prefer this term)

Terms with Mixed Meanings

Dyke. Slang term for a lesbian, usually having the connotation of traditionally "masculine" appearance, dress, speech, and manner. In this meaning, it is a stronger form of "butch" and is often intended to convey contempt. The most powerful form is "bull dyke" or sometimes "bull dagger."

Increasingly, the term "dyke" is used among lesbians themselves to reclaim the word and deprive it of its negative power (as the use of "nigger" among African Americans). As such, the word becomes a statement expressing pride in lesbians' freedom from traditional gender stereotypes.

Faggot/Fag. Slang term for a gay man. The term faggot means a bundle of sticks, and its use to refer to gay men apparently derives from the time when men accused of homosexual acts were burned along with witches. This origin is reinforced by the term "flaming faggot," a reference to extreme or exaggerated "femininity."

Like dyke, the term has historically had a negative connotation, but is now often used among gay men themselves as an affirmation of gay pride.

Fairy. Another term for a gay man, perhaps deriving from the "feminine" qualities stereotypically attributed to gay men. Like dyke and fag, it is often used within the LGBT community without its historically pejorative connotations.

Queen. A gay man, especially one who is particularly "feminine" in manner and dress. The term is usually used by others derogatorily, but may be used by gays themselves as an affirmation of their comfort with violating norms for "masculine" behavior. Drag/Drag queen. Being "in drag" involves overt violation of gender role prescriptions. Most obviously, it means dressing in clothing usually prescribed for the other sex; beyond this, one also mimics the make-up, hairstyles, and mannerisms of the other sex.

Drag queens are men who appear in public in drag, often performing at gay or LGBT events. Women are less often described as being in drag, since women are allowed to dress and act in "masculine" ways without the same approbation as men receive for such gender bending.

Queer. A slang term traditionally used to refer to lesbians and gay men; increasingly it refers to all alternative sexual orientations and identities (lesbian, gay, and bisexual; often it also includes transgendered). Historically a derogatory term, this term has been assumed by LGB (and transgendered) people as a term of pride used among themselves, reflecting their shared freedom to engage in gender bending.

LGB Identity Issues

Essentialism. In reference to sexual orientation, this approach argues that one's sexual orientation is a core part of her/his being and identity (whether its origins were biological, social, or both). Thus, an individual who experiences same-sex (or other-sex) emotional and sexual attraction will develop an identity centered on that sexual orientation, and that identity will be a fixed, essential component to her/his sense of self. Further, the approach argues that homosexuality (and heterosexuality and bisexuality) thus defined has always existed, across history and across cultures. This view is contrasted with social constructionism.

Social Constructionism. In reference to sexual orientation, this approach argues that the very concept of "homosexuality" (as well as "heterosexuality" and "bisexuality") as we understand them are products of particular historical and cultural forces rather than being universal and immutable categories of human experience. Although sexual activity and emotional attachments among people of the same sex may always have occurred, this approach argues, such behavior has not always been viewed as we view it, nor has one's identity always been based on one's sexual activities. The meaning of the behavior, then, varies across time and across cultures.

Further, one's identity as homosexual (or heterosexual or bisexual) is seen as a product of similar forces. If the culture did not define identity by sexual orientation, neither would we define ourselves in that manner. Thus, sexual orientation is not inherently a core, immutable part of identity, but comes to be experienced in that way because the culture defines it thus. This view is contrasted with essentialism.

Closet/In the Closet/Closeted. The term used to describe a lesbian, gay male, bisexual, or transgender person who hides her/his sexual orientation for fear of the consequences if her/his true identity were known.

Coming Out (of the Closet). The sequence of events through which individuals come to recognize their sexual orientation and/or gender identity and disclose it to others. Technically, both heterosexual and LGBT people would come to this realization and reveal it to others. However, because heterosexuality is taken for granted, and there is generally no conscious process of discovery or disclosure for straight people, the term is only applied to GLBT individuals.

Out, Out of the Closet. The state of being aware of and open about one's sexual orientation and/or gender identity. The term is almost exclusively applied to LGBT people, because straight folks are automatically "out" as a result of heterosexist assumptions (i.e., you are assumed to be heterosexual; only LGBT identity needs to be discovered or revealed). People can be "out" in varying degrees; some are out only to themselves, some are out to their family, some are out in their work, one may be out to some friends and not to others, and so forth.

Outing, To "Out" someone. Revealing the sexual orientation of someone else without their consent. Some activists have argued that it is important for powerful and important LGB people to be visible, and that when such people choose to remain closeted, we all suffer. Using this rationale, they publicly expose the sexual orientation or gender identity of people who themselves had chosen to remain closeted. Less blatant forms of outing also occur, as when a person mentions the name of someone she/he knows to be LGBT, thus inadvertently revealing that person's sexual orientation or gender identity to people who might otherwise not be aware of it, and whom the individual might not have chosen to tell.

Most people in the LGBT community do not advocate outing in the intentional, politically motivated sense mentioned first. However, the other form of outing occurs frequently, as people share stories about their lives, seek to come to know their community, try to make new contacts, and so forth. Straight people, of course, are outed regularly; the sharing of information about sexual orientation is only a risk for LGBT, for whom even inadvertent and apparently innocent outing can be damaging.

Sodomy. This term of Judeo Christian decent, refers to any "unnatural" sex act, that is, any sex act that was not directed toward reproduction. Thus oral sex (by anyone), masturbation, and anal sex would all be considered sodomy. The term has taken on a narrower meaning, coming to mean anal sex only. In many situations, sodomy is synonymous with homosexual sex (where "homosexual" means gay male sex). Thus, laws against sodomy are prosecuted as laws against homosexuality (mostly male).

Stigma, Stigma Management. Because LGBT identity is denigrated in this culture, LGBT individuals must deal with the stigma that this denigration creates. They must develop techniques for managing the negative evaluations of society and of other people--as well as their own internalized devaluation of LGBT identity (and thus of themselves). These stigma management techniques may include efforts to deny LGBT identity or to seek a "cure." If LGBT identity comes to be accepted, stigma management often takes the form of passing, attempting to keep the identity a secret from some or all of one's acquaintances. Efforts at passing may range from simply avoiding mentioning same-sex relationships through changing pronouns or inventing other-sex relationships to marriage designed to disguise LGBT identity. Partners cannot be acknowledged, terms of endearment must be avoided, evidence of same-sex attachments must be carefully hidden, and great care must be taken that no one who knows will tell anyone who doesn't. At the other end of the continuum would be managing stigma through involvement in activities designed to reduce the stigma.

Heterosexism. The belief that heterosexual identity and behavior are normal and legitimate, whereas any other sexual orientation is deviant, perverse, abnormal, dangerous. Institutionalized heterosexism occurs where social institutions assume the legitimacy of heterosexuality and support it with public policies, rituals, and resources while ignoring, demeaning, or even punishing other sexual orientations.

Homophobia. Technically, irrational fear of homosexuality (from the Greek, homos, same + phobes, fear). The term has come to refer to an aversion to and prejudice and discrimination against lesbian, gay, and bisexual people, their sexual practices, lifestyles, and communities. In reality, homophobia is far more complex than simply an irrational fear. It may spring from many motives and express a variety of forms of discomfort. Further, the word implies an individual psychopathology (in the form of a phobia) and thereby disguises the systemic nature of anti-LGB attitudes.

Biphobia. Fear or hatred of those assumed to be bisexual. The feeling comes from both those within the gay and lesbian community and those in the heterosexual community who believe that only homosexuality and heterosexuality exist. Anyone who is Bisexual is just "confused".

Transphobia. Fear or hatred against people who break or blur gender roles and sex characteristics. Like Biphobia, it is prevalent in both straight and gay/lesbian communities.

Internalized Homophobia. Because we all grew up in a homophobic and heterosexist society, we all learned to condemn LGB identity. For those individuals who later identify as LGB, these negative attitudes necessarily become self-denigration. This internalized homophobia (IH) can be expressed in many ways, among them overt expressions of self-loathing, substance abuse, depression, suicide, a belief that they are deserving of mistreatment, self-defeating behaviors, or denigration of other LGBs. In a very different vein, IH may be manifested in a belief that one must be excellent in all things in order to atone for or distract from this devalued aspect of oneself. If LGBs are to achieve a positive sense of self, they must neutralize the negative messages they have internalized, a task that is on-going (and perhaps never completed).

Heterosexual Assumption. This society generally views heterosexuality as the only legitimate sexual orientation and reinforces this belief with the assumption that everyone is (or should be) heterosexual. This heterosexual assumption is revealed in our language (where "couple" automatically means heterosexual couple), in the expectation that romantic interests are always of the other sex, in products marketed as "his and hers," and in uncounted daily occurrences where heterosexuality is taken for granted. This assumption contributes to homophobia and heterosexism both by reinforcing the ultimate propriety of heterosexual (and only heterosexual) identities and by making the lives of LGBs invisible.

Heterosexual Privilege. One result of heterosexism is that heterosexual individuals can take for granted certain privileges that are not available to LGBs. Usually, heterosexual people give no thought to these privileges and may even be surprised that they are unavailable to LGBs. Some of the more obvious of these privileges are the right to marry, to serve in the armed forces or as clergy without hiding one's identity, to adopt or foster children, to receive health insurance and retirement benefits in the name of one's partner, to make important legal and medical and bereavement decisions regarding one's loved one, and so forth. More subtle but equally important are the privilege of seeing one's life reflected in the culture; of having one's relationship recognized and honored by others; of discussing openly the joys and hardships of relationships; of being open about one's identity without fear of reprisal; of being free from fear that one's identity may be cause for harassment, verbal or physical attack; of being known for one's profession or other role in life without its being qualified by reference to sexual orientation (as in "a gay teacher" or "a lesbian politician"); of being free to express affection in public; of not having constantly to consider whether or not to be "out" in each situation.

Gender, Gender Identity, and Sexual Orientation

Drag. Wearing the clothing of another gender, often exaggerating stereotypical characteristics of that gender. As in 'Drag Queen', men who dress and act like women for show, and 'Drag King', women who dress and act like men for show.

Gender/Gender Role. "Masculine" and "feminine." The attitudes and behaviors one is expected (and socialized) to exhibit based on one's biological sex. Gender is the socialized consequence of our belief that men and women are and should be different in a wide range of behaviors and experiences. The complex of those expectations constitutes the gender role: the "feminine" role details how women should be, and the "masculine" role defines appropriate behavior for men.

Gender Bending (sometimes "gender blending"). Any form of behavior that challenges traditional, stereotypical expectations for "gender appropriate" behavior. LGB folks engage in gender bending/blending by virtue of their involvement with members of the same sex, because this violates "appropriate" (i.e., heterosexual) pairings. Other forms of gender bending (e.g., cross-dressing, "flaming fairy" or "bull dyke" behavior, exaggerated cross-sex mannerisms, and so forth) may be particularly offensive to some people, but are often seen by the LGBT community as intentional affirmations of the freedom to bend gender rules.

Some argue that LGBT identities pose a threat precisely because they challenge the necessity for traditional roles. In this view, the real fear is that traditional roles may be lost if LGBT people are allowed to exercise gender-role freedom.

Gender and Sexual Orientation. We have a tendency to confuse gender with sexual orientation. The most obvious manifestation of this is seen in stereotypes of gay men as "effeminate" and lesbians as "masculine." It occurs in more subtle forms as well, such as arguments that men become gay (sexual orientation) because of lack of a male model (gender). While we pay lip service to the separation between these two ("there are *even* gay football players"), the confusion pervades theory and research regarding sexual orientation as well as lay discourse on the topic.

Despite this confusion, it is crucial to realize that the two are different dimensions of identity. Consider these examples: a relationship between a very "feminine" woman and a man doing drag would be a same gender but heterosexual relationship. A relationship between a very feminine man and a very butch man would be an opposite gender but homosexual relationship. A relationship between a traditionally feminine woman and a traditionally masculine man would be opposite gender and heterosexual.

Given that gender and sexual orientation are separate dimensions, it is important to differentiate between gender identity and sexual orientation identity. Being transgender is not the same as being gay or lesbian. However, both transgender identity and non-heterosexual orientation face similar oppression, and the source of that oppression is the same: the assumption that sex (male or female) and gender (masculine or feminine) are inextricably linked, and that only opposite-sex/gender attachments are legitimate. Thus, violation of the sex-gender link (as in trans identity) and/or attachments to others of the same sex (whatever their gender) is cause for prejudice and discrimination.

Sexual Orientation and Homosexuality FAQ

Q What is Sexual Orientation?

A Sexual orientation is an emotional, romantic, sexual or affectional attraction to another person. It is different than biological sex, gender identity, and social gender roles. It is also different than sexual behavior because persons may or may not express their sexual orientation in their behavior. Sexual orientation exists along a continuum that ranges from exclusive homosexuality and exclusive heterosexuality.

Q What Causes a Person To Have a Particular Sexual Orientation?

A Most scientists today believe that sexual orientation results from a complex interaction between environmental, cognitive, and biological factors. It is important to realize that there are probably numerous factors that may determine sexual orientation and those factors may also be different from person to person.

Q Is Sexual Orientation a Choice?

A Most people — LGBT or straight — do not experience their sexual orientation as a choice. The more important question is: why would it matter if it were a choice? Assuming that this would be a problem indicates a lingering belief that being LGBT would be a bad thing, a quality one should not choose.

Q Can Therapy Change Sexual Orientation?

A No. Careful research has found that efforts to change sexual orientation are not successful and may be very harmful. Furthermore, there is no reason why we should be trying to change sexual orientation. Being LGBT is not an illness, and does not require treatment. Gay, lesbian, and bisexual people may seek psychological help to deal with the coming out process or to deal with prejudice, but most go into therapy for the same life issues that straight people seek help with.

Q Is Homosexuality a Mental Illness or Emotional Problem?

A No. Over 50 years of scientific research has shown that homosexuality, itself, is not associated with mental disorders or emotional or social problems. For more than 30 years, the American Psychiatric Association, the American Psychological Association, and other professional mental health organizations have urged professionals to help dispel the stigma of mental illness that some people still associate with homosexual orientation.

Q Why Do Homosexuals Feel the Need to Tell People About Their Orientation?

A Sharing this aspect of identity is important to their mental health. In fact, the identity development that occurs when homosexuals “come out” is strongly related to psychological adjustment. The more comfortable one is with her/his sexual orientation identity, the better one’s mental health and self-esteem.

Adapted from “Answers to Your Questions About Sexual Orientation and Homosexuality”, American Psychological Association

Bisexuality FAQ

Q What does it mean to be Bisexual?

A A person who identifies as bisexual is someone who is romantically, and/or sexually attracted to persons of both genders.

Q So, they're equally interested in men and women?

A Not necessarily. Some people who identify as bisexual are, and some aren't. Some say they're attracted to men and women in different ways or to different degrees; others say gender just isn't relevant to who they're attracted to.

Q Aren't people really either heterosexual or homosexual?

A No. It is well recognized that bisexuality is a very real and genuine sexuality. In fact, many people have occasional attractions to members of both sexes, and many people have occasional emotional and/or sexual relations with members of both sexes.

Q Isn't it just a phase?

A No more than being heterosexual or homosexual is a phase.

Q Isn't it just a transition to being lesbian or gay?

A Maybe for some people. Some lesbians or gay men "come out" as bisexual first for different reasons, but most people who identify as bisexual retain that identity for the rest of their lives.

Q But surely they're just confused; they haven't made up their minds yet?

A Don't make the mistake of assuming there are only 2 options to choose from. Bisexuality is an option in its own right. A lack of information about bisexuality is probably the cause of most confusion a bisexual person might feel.

Q I have had feelings for both sexes before. Does that make me bi?

A Maybe. But what you call yourself is up to you. Some may feel the attraction they feel for one sex isn't enough to call themselves Bisexual.

Q What are some other reasons for not identifying as Bisexual?

A Some people may want to feel "normal" and think of themselves as heterosexual. Others, for political or social reasons, wish to identify with the Gay and Lesbian communities.

Q Doesn't the term "Gay and Lesbian" include Bisexuals as well?

A Some people think so, but there are plenty who disagree. Lesbians fought for the right to be explicitly named because they felt invisible. That battle is still going on for bisexual people.

Q Why aren't Bisexuals more visible?

A Well, no one walks around with "bisexual" stamped on their foreheads and it's very easy to miss them. If we see two people of the same gender kissing, most will automatically assume they're homosexual. The opposite is true for two people of different genders; most will assume they're straight. It is important to not assume anyone's sexual orientation. This is the very reason why some bisexual people feel invisible.

Adapted from Joe Woodhouse and Karina Roberts

Intersex FAQ

Q What is Intersex?

A Intersex” is a general term used for a variety of conditions in which a person is born with a reproductive or sexual anatomy that doesn’t seem to fit the typical definitions of female or male. For example, a person might be born appearing to be female on the outside, but having mostly male-typical anatomy on the inside. Or a person may be born with genitals that seem to be in-between the usual male and female types. Or a person may be born with mosaic genetics, so that some of her cells have XX chromosomes and some of them have XY. Though we speak of intersex as an inborn condition, intersex anatomy doesn’t always show up at birth.

Q Why haven’t more people heard of Intersex?

A For decades, doctors have thought it necessary to treat intersex with a concealment-centered approach, one that features downplaying intersex as much as possible, even to the point of lying to patients about their conditions. A lot of people in our culture also had no interest in hearing that sex doesn’t come in two simple flavors.

Q Is a person who is Intersex a hermaphrodite?

A No. The mythological term “hermaphrodite” implies that a person is both fully male and fully female. This is a physiologic impossibility. The words “hermaphrodite” and “pseudo-hermaphrodite” are stigmatizing and misleading words and should be avoided.

Q What evidence is there that you can grow up psychologically healthy with intersex genitals (without "normalizing" surgeries)?

A A lot of people think that doctors do “normalizing” surgeries on infants and children with intersex because, if they didn’t, those children would grow up to be very damaged psychologically. In fact, there’s virtually no documented evidence for that.

Q What do intersex and the same-sex marriage debate have to do with each other?

A A lot, as it turns out.

People who are proponents of prohibitions against “same sex” marriage think it is easy to figure out who is “same sex” and who is “opposite sex.” Not so. Where should the category of “male” end and “intersex” begin, or “intersex” end and “female” begin?

Lots of people who are intersex are legally married. What will happen to them if we end up with simplistic notions of sex? And lots of people who are intersex can’t get legally married, because some doctor decided for them which sex they would count as forever more. Why should a doctor get to decide who you can grow up to marry?

Source: The Intersex Society of North America

Transgender FAQ

Q What Does Transgender Mean?

A A Transgender person is someone whose gender identity (man or woman) does not match their biological sex (male or female). For most people, there is no incongruity between their biological sex and their internal gender identification. For transgender people, their gender identity is in conflict with their biological sex.

Q Are there different types of Transgender individuals?

A Yes. The term Transgender is an umbrella term used for many kinds of people with differing gender expression:

- **Transgender**– This term refers to individuals whose gender identity differs in some way from the one they were assigned at birth. They may identify and feel internally as the “opposite” sex or they may feel and identify as another gender altogether. Some of these individuals may choose hormones, surgery, and/or legal name changes to allow them greater ability to express their gender identity externally. Access to hormones and surgery is class-based and rarely covered by health insurance.
- **Transsexual**- Seeks to change body or appearance to match their personal gender definition through gender reassignment surgery or other non-surgical modifications like hormones.
- **Crossdresser**- Wears clothing of a gender opposite their birth sex for emotional or sexual purposes.
- **Two Spirited**- Having both female and male spirits (Native American/American Indian cultures). Often viewed with respect because they were able to hold both gender spirits in their bodies.

Q Can people stop being Transgender?

A No. People cannot change their gender identity. You could ask, could you change your sense of yourself as a woman or as a man? The more important question is why should they ?

Q Is Transgender the same as Homosexuality?

A No. **Gender identity** refers to how a person identifies as a man or a woman. **Sexual orientation** is an identity based on the sex of one’s partner—i.e., is one attracted romantically, sexually, and/or affectionally to members of one’s own sex, members of the other sex, or both.

Q Why should the GLB community care about Transgender issues?

A Someone who is viewed as being gender different, regardless whether they identify as transgender or not, is often subject to the exact same oppression and violence as those who identify as being transgender. **Being perceived as gender different** is the leading reason given for "gay-bashing". The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) has long included transgender rights in its mission and the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) recently expanded their mission statement to include the transgender community.

Statement of Purpose: Queers of Color, Columbia University

As Queers of Color, we are forced to straddle a history of division. Historically speaking, the struggle for racial equality has been heterosexist in its vision, and the queer liberation movement has been predominantly Euro-centric in its scope. As people who struggle with our own questions of identity, we are also burdened by the need to find a tenuous balance between groups that have traditionally displayed open hostility towards each other, framing their struggles as entirely separate, completely independent missions.

We reject such a view. A historical perspective shows that the highly complex processes that constructed the identities of people of color as the villified Other also resulted in an often unspoken consequence: heterosexism. Men of color have been constructed as maniacal sexual perverts, women of color as exotic sexual objects, white women as passive sexual victims, and white men as virile sexual protectors.

While the creation of racialized gender stereotypes are obvious, what is not so obvious is the normalization of sexuality along lines of race and gender. From this normalization results compulsory heterosexuality, and its flip-side, homophobia. During the period of European imperialism that heralded the beginning of modern racism, the considerable number of institutions and cultural practices of same-sex sexual behavior in colonized societies were destroyed by an imposed compulsory heterosexuality.

Clearly the roots of racism and heterosexism are not independent, but rather intimately connected. Any recognition of racism must necessarily recognize sexism and homophobia at the same time. Any liberation movement that does not do so denies the complexity of its oppression, and is doomed to failure in its struggle against the oppression as a result.

But current conventional wisdom insists that the struggles against various oppressions must not be combined. As a result, Queers of Color are often marginalized within groups that are already marginalized. We are forced to fight racism and homophobia in society at large, as well as racism within the queer community, and homophobia within communities of color. We must face a constant onslaught of multiple oppressions, coming from all directions at once. What is lacking, and blatantly so, is a safe space in the University community where Queers of Color are marginalized no further, and are free to discuss and address issues and concerns that are unique to our situation.

But at the same time, we also recognize the importance of linking oppressions. From our perspective, we see, on a day to day basis, the intersections of racism and homophobia, as well as their connections with sexism, classism, and other forms of discrimination. We also recognize the importance of collective action and struggle, and are committed to such strategies in combating and destroying institutionalized racism and heterosexism, as well as other forms of oppression.

As a result, Queers of Color is committed to an organization that does not discriminate on any basis, especially race and sexual preference. We welcome anyone and everyone who is committed to addressing issues and concerns that affect many people, but Queers of Color in particular. We claim unity with all organizations that are committed to fighting racism and homophobia. And we look forward to the day when society is truly and totally egalitarian.

In the tradition of the Combahee River Collective, and in the footsteps of Queers of Color like James Baldwin and Audre Lorde, Cherrie Moraga and Jewel Gomez, Lee Ang and Nick Deocampo, we rightfully claim our place.

Homophobia

In the clinical sense, homophobia is defined as an intense, irrational fear of same sex relationships that become overwhelming to the person. In common usage, homophobia is the fear of intimate relationships with persons of the same sex.

Below are listed four homophobic and four positive levels of attitudes toward GLBT people. They were developed by Dr. Dorothy Riddle, a psychologist from Tuscon, Arizona.

Homophobic Levels of Attitudes

Repulsion: Homosexuality is seen as a “crime against nature”. Gays are sick, crazy, immoral, sinful, wicked, etc. and anything is justified to change them (e.g., prison, hospitalization, negative behavior therapy including electric shock).

Pity: Heterosexual chauvinism. Heterosexuality is more mature and certainly to be preferred. Any possibility of becoming straight should be reinforced and those who seem to be born “that way” should be pitied, “the poor dears”.

Tolerance: Homosexuality is just a phase of development that many people go through and most people “grow out of”. Thus, gays are less mature than straights and should be treated with protectiveness and indulgence one uses with a child. GLBT people should not be given positions of authority (because they haven’t yet fully matured).

Acceptance: Still implies there is something to accept, characterized by such statements as “you’re not a gay to me, you’re a person”. “What you do in bed is your own business”, “That’s fine as long as you don’t flaunt it”.

- Denies social and legal realities. 84% of people believe being gay is obscene and vulgar and 70% still believe it is wrong even between consenting adults.
- Ignores the pain of invisibility and stress of closet behavior. “Flaunt” usually means say or do anything that makes other people aware—it also usually refers to behaviors that heterosexual people do without facing criticism.

Positive Levels of Attitude

Support: Basic ACLU approach. Work to safeguard the rights of GLBT people. Such people may be uncomfortable themselves, but they are aware of the climate and the irrational unfairness.

Admiration: Acknowledges that being GLBT in our society takes strength. Such people are willing to truly look at themselves and work on their own homophobic attitudes.

Appreciation: Value the diversity of people and see GLBT people as a valid part of that diversity. These people are willing to combat homophobia in themselves and in others.

Nurturance: Assume that GLBT people, like other groups, are indispensable in our society. View GLBT people with genuine affection and delight and are willing to be allies and advocates.

What is Homophobia?

Homophobia takes many different forms. Sometimes it takes the form of physical acts of hate violence, verbal assault or vandalism or blatant discrimination such as firing an employee, evicting someone from their housing or denying them access to public accommodations. There are many other kinds of homophobia and heterosexism that happen every day. We often overlook these more subtle actions and exclusions because they seem so insignificant by comparison. They are not.

- Look at a lesbian or gay man and automatically thinking of their sexuality rather than seeing a whole, complex person.
- Failing to be supportive when your glbt friend is upset about a quarrel or breakup.
- Changing your seat in a meeting because a lesbian sat in the chair next to yours.
- Thinking you can “spot one”.
- Using the terms ‘lesbian’ or ‘gay’ as accusatory.
- Not asking about “partners” or “lovers” although you regularly ask “How is your Husband/ Wife?” when you run into a heterosexual friend.
- Hugging an old friend but being afraid to do the same with a GLBT person.
- Thinking that a lesbian (if you are female) or gay man (if you are male) is making sexual advances if they touch you.
- Feeling repulsed by public displays of affection between lesbians or gay men but accepting the same affectional displays between heterosexuals.
- Feeling that GLBT people are too outspoken about their civil rights.
- Feeling that discussions about homophobia are not necessary, because you are ‘ok’ on these issues.
- Assuming that everyone you meet is heterosexual.
- Being outspoken about GLBT rights but making sure everyone knows that you are straight.
- Feeling that a lesbian is just a woman who couldn’t find a man or that a lesbian is a woman who wants to be a man.
- Feeling that a gay man is just a man who couldn’t find a woman or that a gay man is a man who wants to be a woman.
- Feeling that bisexual and transgender people are just confused.
- Not confronting a homophobic remark for fear of being identified with lesbians and gays.
- Worrying about the effect a GLBT co-worker will have on your work or your clients.
- Asking your GLBT colleagues to speak only about GLBT issues but not about other issues about which they may be knowledgeable.
- Focusing exclusively on someone’s sexual orientation and not on other issues of concern.
- Being afraid to ask questions about GLBT issues when you don’t know the answers.

Homophobia: How We All Pay The Price

by Warren J. Blumenfeld

Within numerous forms of oppression, members of the target group (sometimes called "minority") are oppressed, while on some level members of the dominant group are hurt. Although the effects of oppression differ qualitatively for specific target and dominant groups, in the end everyone loses.

Homophobia locks all people into rigid gender based roles that inhibit creativity and self-expression. Homophobic conditioning compromises the integrity of heterosexual people by pressuring them to treat others badly, actions contrary to their basic humanity.

Homophobia inhibits one's ability to form close, intimate relationships with members of one's own sex.

Homophobia generally restricts communication with a significant portion of the population and, more specifically, limits family relationships.

Societal homophobia prevents some lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people from developing an authentic self identity, and adds to the pressure to marry, which in turn places undue stress and often times trauma on themselves as well as their heterosexual spouses and their children.

Homophobia is one cause of premature sexual involvement, which increases the chances of teen pregnancy and the spread of sexually transmitted disease (STDs). Young people, of all sexual identities, are often pressured to become heterosexually active to prove to themselves and others that they are "normal".

Homophobia combined with sexphobia (fear and repulsion of sex) results in the elimination of any discussion of the life-styles and sexuality of sexual minorities as part of school-based sex education, keeping vital information from all students. Such a lack of information can kill people in the age of AIDS.

Homophobia can be used to stigmatize, silence, and, on occasion, target people who are perceived or defined by others as gay, lesbian, or bisexual, but who are in actuality heterosexual.

Homophobia prevents heterosexuals from accepting the benefits and gifts offered by sexual minorities: theoretical insights, social and spiritual visions and options, contributions in the arts and culture, to religion, to family life, indeed to all facets of society.

Homophobia (along with racism, sexism, classism, sexphobia, etc.) inhibits a unified and effective governmental and societal response to AIDS.

Homophobia diverts energy from more constructive endeavors.

Homophobia inhibits appreciation of other types of diversity, making it unsafe for everyone because each person has unique traits not considered mainstream or dominant. Therefore, we are all diminished when any one of us is demeaned.

Heterosexual Privilege Is...

...living without ever having to think twice, about, face, confront, engage, or cope with anything on this page.

- Marriage, which includes over 1000 federal and hundreds of state granted rights, responsibilities, and privileges which include:
 - Public recognition and support for an intimate relationship
 - Paid leave from employment and condolences when grieving the death of your partner/lover
 - Inheriting from your partner/lover/companion automatically under law
 - Sharing health, auto, and homeowners' insurance policies at reduced rates
 - Immediate access to your loved ones in cases of accident or emergency
 - Family-of-origin support for a life partner/lover/companion
 - Increased possibilities for getting a job, receiving on the job training and promotion
- Kissing, hugging, or being affectionate in public without threat of punishment.
- Talking about your relationship or what projects, vacations, family planning you and your partner/lover are creating.
- Not questioning your normalcy, either sexually or culturally.
- Expressing pain when a relationship ends and having other people notice and attend to your pain.
- Raising your own, adopting, or foster-parenting children without fear of losing them.
- Being employed as a teacher at any level and in any community without fear of being fired because you are assumed to corrupt children.
- Raising children without threats of state intervention or having to be worried which of their friends might reject them because of their parents' sexuality.
- Dating the person of your desire in your teen years.
- Living openly with your partner.
- Receiving validation from your religious community.
- Receiving social acceptance from neighbors, colleagues, new friends.
- Not having to hide and lie about same-sex only social activities.
- Living your life without being identified by your sexual orientation.
- Not constantly wondering if this is a safe place to be out.

Heterosexual Questionnaire

- 1) What do you think caused your heterosexuality?
- 2) When and how did you first decide you were a heterosexual?
- 3) Is it possible your heterosexuality is just a phase you may grow out of?
- 4) Is it possible your heterosexuality stems from a neurotic fear of others of the same sex?
- 5) Isn't it possible that all you need is a good Gay lover?
- 6) Heterosexuals have histories of failures in Gay relationships. Do you think you may have turned to heterosexuality out of fear of rejection?
- 7) If you've never slept with a person of the same sex, how do you know you wouldn't prefer that?
- 8) If heterosexuality is normal, why are a disproportionate number of mental patients heterosexual?
- 9) To whom have you disclosed your heterosexual tendencies? How did they react?
- 10) Your heterosexuality doesn't offend me as long as you don't try to force it on me. Why do you people feel compelled to seduce others into your sexual orientation?
- 11) If you choose to nurture children, would you want them to be heterosexual, knowing the problems they would face?
- 12) The great majority of child molesters are heterosexual. Do you really consider it safe to expose your children to heterosexual teachers?
- 13) Why do you insist on being so obvious, and making a public spectacle of your heterosexuality? Can't you just be what you are and keep it quiet?
- 14) How can you ever hope to become a whole person if you limit yourself to a compulsive, exclusive heterosexual object choice and remain unwilling to explore and develop your normal, natural, healthy, God-given homosexual potential?
- 15) Heterosexuals are noted for assigning themselves and each other to narrowly restricted stereotyped sex-roles. Why do you cling to such unhealthy role-playing?
- 16) Why do heterosexuals place so much emphasis on sex?
- 17) With all the societal support marriage receives, the divorce rate is spiraling. Why are there so few stable relationships among heterosexuals?
- 18) How could the human race survive if everyone were heterosexual, considering the menace of overpopulation?
- 19) There seem to be very few happy heterosexuals. Techniques have been developed with which you might be able to change if you really want to. Have you considered aversion therapy?
- 20) Do heterosexuals hate and/or distrust others of their own sex? Is that what makes them heterosexual?

Coming Out

The term “coming out” (of the closet) refers to the life-long process of the development of a positive GLBT identity. It is a very long and difficult struggle for many because GLBT people often have to confront many homophobic/transphobic attitudes and discriminatory practices along the way. Many need to struggle with their own negative stereotypes and feeling of homophobia/transphobia which they learned when they were growing up. Before a person can develop a positive GLBT identity, they will need to challenge their own attitudes and take them from the lower end of that homophobic/transphobic continuum (repulsion, pity, tolerance) to feelings of appreciation and admiration. But it often takes years of painful work to develop a positive GLBT identity. Then, many GLBT people begin to make decisions about whom to tell that they are GLB or T.

What is the fear?

- Rejection – loss of relationships
- Gossip
- Harassment/abuse
- Being thrown out of family
- Being thrown out of house
- Having their lover arrested
- Loss of financial support
- Losing their job
- Physical violence
- Being vulnerable
- Another’s reaction

Why might GLBT people want to come out to friends/relatives?

- End of the “hiding game”
- Feel close to those people
- Be able to be “whole” around them
- Stop wasting energy by hiding all the time
- Feel like they have integrity
- To make a statement that “gay is OK”

How might someone feel after someone comes out to them?

- Scared
- Shocked
- Disbelieving
- Uncomfortable
- Not sure what to say
- Not sure what to do next
- Wondering why the person came out

What do people expect or hope for?

- Acceptance
- Support
- Understanding
- Comfort
- Closer friendship
- That knowing won’t negatively affect their friendship
- A hug and a smile
- An acknowledgment of their feelings

Ways to Prepare for Coming Out

(Adapted from a handout by Stephen M. Lanton.)

1. Have a serious talk with yourself. Clarify specifically what you hope will happen as a result of disclosure, what you expect will really happen. Without a clear purpose, your presentation of self may be a scary and risky experience without an attainable objective.
2. Select the particular person(s) to whom you wish to disclose. Tell the person(s) that you want to share something important, that you want to have a serious personal conversation. Although you cannot make someone ready to hear what you have to say, you can create a situation in which the other person feels ready for a serious personal conversation.
3. Select a time and a place. Avoid situations which may result in a lack of time or privacy. Neither you nor the other person can interact honestly and fully if he/she does not feel there is enough situational privacy. Coming-out is a continuing process, not a hit and run bombing mission or something done well in a crowded public place.
4. Keep your disclosure clean. That is, don't clutter it up with attempts to punish, cause guilt or gain sympathy. Talk about yourself, your feelings, and your experiences. Stay with "I" statements. Being gay is no one's fault. What you as a person decide to do with your sexuality is your responsibility.
5. Allow time for surprise reactions. It is doubtful that you came into self-acceptance overnight. Asking that another accept and appreciate you faster than you have learned to appreciate yourself is self-defeating.
6. Be ready to clearly identify learning resources which are available to the person. For example: books, films, magazine articles, journals, counselors, etc. As your learning has taken time and energy, the person you have come out to will need time to digest your disclosure and ingest a new understanding.
7. An important step, certainly not the last in priority, is the setting up of a gay support system. Participating in a gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender support group can help prepare you for disclosure to significant others in your life. It can also provide you with support and understanding during and after the disclosure. If this type of group is not available to you, having supportive friends, teachers, relatives, etc. is also a good source of support for the coming out process.

Coming out in our society is an endless process and being proud to be gay requires constant affirmation of self.

When Someone Comes Out to You

Helping GLBT People Out of the Closet

When someone comes out to you, they share the information about their sexual orientation or gender identity with a keen awareness of the risks involved: the risk of losing their friendship with you, the risk of being rejected, the risk of being misunderstood and many other risks.

When someone comes out to you, the news may come as a total surprise, you may have already considered the possibility that this person might be GLBT, however it should not be important to you one way or the other. After someone comes out to you they may feel scared, be wondering why they came out, feel shocked, in disbelief, uncomfortable, angry, not sure what to do next, etc.

What NOT to say to someone who has just come out to you:

- You're just going through a phase
- It's just because you've never had a relationship with someone of the opposite gender
- You can't be gay—you've had relationships with people of the opposite gender
- You can't be a lesbian—you're too pretty
- You're just confused
- Maybe you can find a therapist who can help you get over this

Remember that the person who has just come out to you has not changed. They are still the same person you knew before, you just have more information about them than you did before. Don't assume in advance you know what it means for them to be GLBT. Every person's experience is different. They may not want you to necessarily do anything. They may just need someone to listen. Consider it an honor that they have trusted you with this very personal information. Thank them for trusting you. If you would like more information, ask in an honest and respectful way. If you show genuine and respectful interest in their life, they will most likely appreciate it.

Some good questions:

- How long have you known you are GLBT?
- Are you seeing anyone special?
- Has it been hard for you carrying this secret?
- Is there some way I can help you?
- Have I ever offended you unknowingly?

How you react to someone's disclosure of their sexual orientation or gender identity can help them out of the closet—or keep them in.

What About Being an Ally?

An Ally:

- Works to develop an understanding of homosexuality and the needs of GLBT persons.
- Chooses to align with GLBT persons and responds to their needs.
- Believes that it is in her/his self-interest to be an ally.
- Is committed to the personal growth required (in spite of the probability of discomfort and possible pain).
- Is quick to take pride and appreciate successes in responding to homophobia and overcoming fears.
- Expects support from other allies.
- Is able to acknowledge and articulate how patterns of fear or oppression have operated in their lives.
- Expects to make some mistakes but does not use it as an excuse for non-action.
- Knows that both sides of an ally relationship have a clear responsibility for their own
- Responds to the oppression whether or not persons on the other side choose to respond.
- Knows that in the most empowered ally relationships, the person in the non-oppressed role initiates the change towards justice and equality at personal, institutional, and societal levels.
- Knows that he/she is responsible for humanizing or empowering their role in society, particularly as their role relates to responding to homophobia.
- Promotes a sense of community with GLBT persons and teaches others about the importance of outreach.
- Has a good sense of humor.

Some Realities about Being an Ally:

- People may assume that you are GLBT.
- Some people may harass you .
- You may lose some friendships and gain others.
- You may be perceived as politically dangerous.
- Some people may make unfair, biased assumptions about you.
- You may experience some emotional drain from the effort or time you expel in these issues.
- GLBT folks may question your sexuality, motives, and sincerity.
- People, even close friends, may ask about your sexual orientation.
- You may experience a new culture and new ideas, rituals, and practices different than your own.
- People that you knew before and thought were heterosexual may come out to you.
- Your awareness about human relation issues may become more inclusive.
- You may experience feelings about yourself and your own homophobia on a personal level.
- You may begin to understand the interconnectedness of all oppressions.

Benefits of Being an Ally

- Become less locked into gender roles and stereotypes.
- Can help the lives of members of the GLBT community
- Able to make a difference in the campus environment
- You actively take a role in relieving oppression that impacts us all
- Safe Zones help GLBT people develop a stronger self-esteem

Being an Ally: What to Say

Here are some suggestions on how to deal honestly and openly with GLBT people in the classroom or in private conversation if someone confides in you. The primary purpose of these suggestions is to give you ways to help GLBT people develop feel recognized and respected.

- Use appropriate terms, including gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and heterosexual. Ask how the person identifies or what they prefer to be called.
- Discourage jokes about GLBT people by saying something like:
I know you mean to have fun, but that sort of joke is offensive to me.
Do you really believe that?
I am not okay with that word/phrase/joke.
What do you mean by that?
- Include GLBT topics in the classroom or office discussions and conversations when appropriate. When you give examples, include examples involving same-sex couples, trans people, and so forth.
- Be open to listening without judgment if someone confides. Use open-ended, nondirective questions to give them space to share their thoughts and feelings if they choose to do so:

Tell me more...

What concerns do you have?

How are you feeling about this? Are you OK?

Do you have other people you can talk to as well?

(You can also use this question to assess the person's support system and possibly make an appropriate referral.)

Guidelines for Being an Ally to GLBT People

There are some guidelines for people wanting to be allies for GLBT people. In today's world, GLBT issues are being discussed more than ever before. The discussions taking place in the media, in classrooms, in churches, in offices, on the street and in people's homes are often highly charged and emotional. This can be a scary topic but it can be challenging as well as exciting. This list is by no means exhaustive, but provides a starting point. Add your own ideas and suggestions.

- Don't assume heterosexuality. In our society, we generally assume that everyone we meet is heterosexual. Often people hide who they really are until they know they are safe to come out. Use gender neutral language when referring to someone's partner if you don't know the person well. In general, be aware of the gender language you use and the implications this language might have.
- Educate yourself about GLBT issues. There are many resources available, reading lists, and places to go for information. Don't be afraid to ask questions.
- Challenge stereotypes that people may have about GLBT people in our society. Challenge derogatory remarks and jokes made about any group of people. Avoid making those remarks yourself. Avoid reinforcing stereotypes and prejudices.
- Examine the effect sexual orientation has on people's lives and development. Identify how race, religion, class, ability, and gender intersect with sexual orientation and how multiple identities shape our lives.
- Avoid the use of heterosexist language, such as making remarks implying that all people of the same gender date or marry members of the other gender. Respect how people choose to name themselves. Most people with a same sex or bisexual orientation prefer to be called gay, lesbian, or bisexual rather than homosexual. "Queer" is increasingly used by some gay, lesbian, and bisexual people but don't use it unless you are clear that it is okay with that person. If you don't know how to identify a particular group, ask.
- Don't expect members of any population that is the target of bias to always be the 'experts' on issues pertaining to their particular identity group. Avoid tokenizing or patronizing individuals from different groups.
- Encourage and allow disagreement on topics of sexual identity and related civil rights. These issues are very highly charged and confusing. If there isn't some disagreement, it probably means that people are tuned out or hiding their real feelings. Keep disagreement and discussion focused on principles and issues rather than personalities and keep disagreement respectful.
- Remember that you are human. Allow yourself to not know everything, to make mistakes, and to occasionally be insensitive. Avoid setting yourself up as an 'expert' unless you are one. Give yourself time to learn the issues and ask questions and to explore your own personal feelings.

Tips for Working with GLBT Individuals

1. **Don't be surprised when someone "comes out" to you.** They have probably tested you with a series of "trial balloons" over a period of time. Based on your previous responses they've decided you can be trusted and helpful.
2. **Respect confidentiality.** If a gay, lesbian, or transgender individual shares with you information about his or her sexual orientation or gender identity, you have a trust that must be respected. A breach of this confidence is both unethical and unkind.
3. **Be informed & examine your own biases.** All of us are the products of a homophobic society influenced by misinformation and fear. You can't be free of it just by deciding to. Read reliable sources and talk to qualified persons.
4. **Know when and where to seek help.** Know the referral agencies and counselors on campus and in the area.
5. **Maintain a balanced perspective.** Sexual thoughts and feelings are a small (but important) part of every person's personality.
6. **Understand the meaning of sexual orientation.** Each person's sexual orientation is what is natural to that person. Each person's experience of what that means is unique – including yours.
7. **Deal with feelings first.** Many GLBT people may feel alone, afraid, and guilty. You can assist just by listening, thus allowing them express those feelings without judging them.
8. **Be supportive.** Explain that many people struggle with these issues and most people resolve them in time. Admit that dealing with one's sexuality is difficult, it defies easy and fast answers, whether heterosexual, bisexual, gay, lesbian or transgender. Keep the door open for more conversations and assistance.
9. **Anticipate some confusion.** Many people are sure of their sexual orientation by college, but some people will be confused and unsure. For some, clarity doesn't develop until later in adulthood. People have to work through their own feeling and insights. Neither you nor they simply can talk them into, or out of any sexual orientation or gender identity.
10. **Be available to help, but do not force.** It may be difficult for you to understand what it means to be different in this way. Clues for how you can help will come from the LGBT person. Don't force them into your frame of reference to make it easier for you to understand.
11. **Don't try to guess who's gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender.** It is not helpful for you or for the people you serve. We live in a world of stereotypes that do people an injustice; do not be tempted to perpetuate old myths.
12. **Challenge homophobic remarks and jokes.** Would you be silent if someone told a sexist joke, made a disparaging remark about someone's disability, or mumbled a racial slur? You shouldn't ... and you shouldn't be silent in the face of homophobia, either. Don't perpetuate injustice through silence.

Adapted from GLBT Student Services Colorado State University

Ways to Support LGBT Students on Your Campus

(Adapted from "51 Fabulous Ways to Support Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Students on Your Campus" by T G,Stanford)

Career Center

1. Display LGBT specific career resources such as gay-affirmative employers.
2. Train staff regarding the social and political impacts of LGBT issues in the work place.
3. Be willing to discuss LGBT issues regarding career choices, interviews, company policies, and coming out in the work place.
4. Keep an updated list of working LGBT alumni as a resource for students.
5. Be informed regarding non-discrimination and domestic partner policies for employers interviewing on campus. "Employers should be required to affirm in writing that they do not discriminate against any classes protected against discrimination by university policy"

Financial Aid Office

1. Provide adequate training for staff regarding parental financial-abandonment when LGBT students come out.

Health Center

1. Professional and paraprofessional health educators should understand and be comfortable discussing "continual condom usage", "anal intercourse", etc.
2. Care-providers need to recognize that "sexually active" does not necessarily mean heterosexually, particularly regarding issues of birth control.

Counseling Center

1. Discussion forms should include sexual orientation, coming out, and other assorted LGBT issues.
2. Partner status options in paperwork should be LGBT inclusive.
3. Publicity material should include LGBT material.
4. Do not fall victim to heterosexual privilege by assuming student sexual orientation.

Activities Office

1. Provide LGBT student organizations with campus staff support and advisors.
2. Know the organization's proper name.
3. Suggest Greek organizations hold discussions regarding members coming out.

Athletic Department

1. Athletic directors and coaches should discuss the affect of heterosexism and homophobia on athletic performance

All Student Affairs Offices

1. Include LGBT examples in workshops and presentations.
2. Avoid heterosexist language and assumptions in publications.
3. Be willing to discuss with LGBT students areas of potential heterosexism and homophobia.

Make Official Statements Condemning Assault

1. Take LGBT student complaints seriously.
2. Make official statements in a public venue condemning the assault and vandalizing of LGBT students and their property. Where necessary and possible make sure judicial punishment and correction is upheld.

Support LGBT Faculty and Staff

1. Equal benefits and treatment should be allotted to LGBT partners.
2. Suggest and/or support LGBT faculty and staff associations.

Strategies for Educators and Staff Members

Teaching moments present themselves everyday, take advantage of them.

1. Identify lesbian/gay contributions throughout the curriculum. (History, art, science, literature, religion, etc.)
2. Provide a history of oppression. (slavery, the Holocaust, origin of the word “faggot”).
3. Submit requests to improve library holdings (both fiction and non-fiction) related to sexual diversity. Make an effort to keep such materials up-to-date.
4. Develop and/or advertise resources (e.g., support groups) for lesbian/gay students and their families.
5. Bring openly lesbian and gay adults as resources in classes or programs.
6. Include lesbian and gay concerns in all prevention programs (suicide, dropout, pregnancy, etc.) and in training of peer leaders, student government, etc.
7. Support your lesbian and gay colleagues.
8. Policies:
 - A. Schools are encouraged to develop policies protecting GLBT students from harassment, violence, and discrimination.
 - B. Work to Include “Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity and Expression” as protected categories in your anti-discrimination policies.
 - C. Extend “Domestic Partnership” benefits to GLBT employees on par with heterosexual employees.
9. Provide affirming counseling for GLBT youth and their families.
10. Recruit “open” GLBT faculty and staff to serve as supportive adult role models for all youth.
11. Educate yourself to the needs and experiences of GLBT youth and their families.
12. Support official university recognition and funding of GLBT organizations.

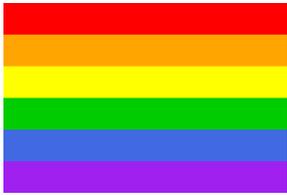
GLBT friendly spaces and services

The following are questions to consider when creating spaces and services that are welcoming to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people:

1. Is the language on your forms inclusive of LGBT people and their experiences?
2. Is it a policy to use inclusive language such as partner/significant other?
3. Do your office and other areas have LGBT materials displayed such as stickers, posters, videos, books, etc?
4. When possible does your agency participate in LGBT picnics, gatherings, and other community events?
5. Is training on LGBT issues, homophobia and sexual violence part of your training with new staff and volunteers
6. What community links do you have to the LGBT organizations?
7. Does your agency receive newsletters, magazines, etc. that are LGBT focus?
8. Are all of the staff and volunteers expected to provide effective services to LGBT people, or are the LGBT people on staff expected to handle those situations?
9. Is posting and distribution of materials done at LGBT locations and events?
10. If your agency produces materials for students, is the inclusion of LGBT issues well thought out? Or are they simply general information materials with only the words LGBT put in at various places?

Adapted from GLBT Student Services, Colorado State University

Symbols



The Rainbow Flag

Originally designed by Gilbert Baker in 1978, this flag had 8 colors; Pink (Sexuality), Red (Life), Orange (Healing), Yellow (Sun), Green (Nature), Blue (Art), Turquoise (Harmony), Violet (Spirit). When the flag was to be made commercially available there was a shortage of hot Pink so the flag was made with only seven colors. Then in 1979 the committee for the pride parade decided that they only were going to use six colors in order for there to be three colors on each street side so they removed the turquoise. Now the six color rainbow flag is recognized by the International Congress of Flag Makers as a valid flag representation of the GLBT community.



The victory over AIDS flag The black stripe added to the pride flag is to commemorate those lost to AIDS.

New Glory or Unity Flag

Popular version of the rainbow flag with the blue star background from the United States flag.



The Pink Triangle / Double Mars



This Triangle was originally used by the Nazis to identify gay men. In the 1980's the triangle was reclaimed by the gay men as a symbol of empowerment symbolizing the phrase "Never Forget, Never Again." Now the pink triangle is commonly used to represent the entire GLBT Community. Another common symbol used to represent gay pride is the double Mars symbol.

Black Triangle / Double Venus

This triangle is also rooted in the Holocaust times, it was used to mark "anti-social" women (couldn't/didn't want to have children, men-haters). Now the black triangle has been reclaimed by lesbians and feminists as a symbol of pride. The lesbian community often uses the double Venus symbol to represent pride.



The Bisexual Triangle and Flag/ Bisexual Signs

Bisexual people, while being active in gay & lesbian movements, have traditionally also organized separately. The bisexual community developed the overlapping blue and pink triangles and flag to represent bisexual pride. Bisexual people are also represented by a mixing of the Mars and Venus astrological signs.



IFGE Logo / Mercury Logo
This was created as a symbol for The International Foundation for Gender Education, an organization concerned with the issues of cross-dressers and transgender people. This triangle represents fusing various genders onto one. Mercury represents the balance of male and female within an individual, symbolizing transgender pride.

AIDS Awareness Ribbon (Red)

Symbolize the united world effort to find a cure for AIDS.





Pride Awareness Ribbon (Rainbow)

Symbolizes that the wearer is supportive of GLBT people and their struggle for equal rights.



The Freedom Rings (Rainbow)

Designed by David Spada as a symbol of independence .

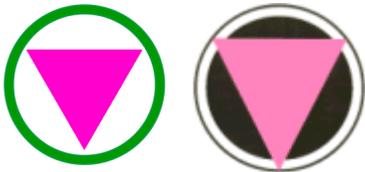


Lambda

This was used as a symbol of GLBT rights in the 1970's. This symbol was often associated with militant forces of the GLBT movement; because of this some GLBT are uncomfortable using it.

Other widely-known Safe Zone Symbols

Every school and/or community is welcome to make their own Safe Zone symbol, but these are also common designs.



Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Symbol

The Human Rights Campaign is America's largest civil rights organization working to achieve gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender equality. HRC strives to end discrimination against GLBT citizens and realize a nation that achieves fundamental fairness and equality for all.



PFLAG (Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays)

PFLAG promotes the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender persons, their families and friends through support, education, and advocacy .



The labrys is a double headed axe originally held as a religious symbol because of its dual use for harvesting and protection. Though no longer as big as it once was, the symbol was popular in the 1970's as a symbol for many lesbian and feminist organizations.



Helpful Web Sites for Working with Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Individuals and GLBT Issues

Local Resources

GLBT Student Services, Auraria – <http://www.glbts.org>; 303-556-6333;
Tivoli 213, email: info@glbts.org.

GLBT Student Services is a tri-institutional office on the Auraria Campus serving the students, faculty and staff of Metropolitan State College of Denver, Community College of Denver and University of Colorado at Denver and Health Sciences Center. We are available to all Auraria students as a resource for exploring issues of sexual orientation and gender identity. This program offers a variety of support, education and advocacy services for the entire campus community.

GLBT Center of Colorado - <http://www.glbtcolorado.org/>; 303-733-7743;
1050 Broadway, Denver. CO 80203; email: info@glbtc Colorado.org

The Center is the only statewide, nonprofit community center dedicated to providing support and advocacy for Colorado's gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) population. We serve as a catalyst for community organizing, support services, social activities, and cultural events.

- **Gender Identity Center** <http://www.gicofcolo.org/>, (303) 202-6466,
3985 Upham St., Suite 40, Wheat Ridge, Colorado 80033, email: info@gicofcolo.org

The Gender Identity Center of Colorado, Inc., (GIC) is a non-profit corporation providing support to those people who cross dress, are transsexual, or are non-traditional in their gender identity. The Center is also an informational and educational resource to the community at large.

Denver PFLAG: Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays. <http://www.pflagdenver.org/> helpline: 303-333-0286; P.O. Box 18901, Denver, CO 80218-0901; Office: (303)573-5861; email: info@pflagdenver.org

PFLAG Denver supports GLBT persons, their families and allies and educates both families and the public about sexual orientation, gender identity, and other GLBT issues. Regular monthly meetings include support groups and speakers or other programs.

Rainbow Alley - <http://www.coloradoglbtc.org> 1050 Broadway, Denver 303-831-0442 or 303-733-7743

Rainbow Alley is Denver's only drop-in center for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Questioning young people, 21 years of age and younger. There are drop-in hours daily. The Alley also has a confidential 24/7 *crisis pager* for young GLBTQ youth in crisis: 303-461-1650.

Boulder Chapter PFLAG: <http://members.tde.com/pflagbldr/> phone: 303-444-8164; email: pflagbldr@tde.com

PFLAG Boulder is very active in the Boulder community, including working closely with the schools. The chapter also holds regular meetings where parents, friends, and relatives of gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgendered persons can come together to discuss common issues confidentially in a supportive atmosphere.

La Genta Unida - P.O. Box 11714, Denver, Colorado 80211, 303/831-6086 <http://www.geocities.com/WestHollywood/Heights/6404/lagente.html>

Serving the LGBT Latino and Latina community in Denver

National/International Resources: Major Orgs

The Task Force (formerly the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force – (NGLTF)
www.thetaskforce.org ; email: theTaskForce@theTaskForce.org

The Task Force is the major national grass-roots, progressive organization working for the civil rights of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people, with the vision and commitment to building a powerful political movement. Organizes “Creating Change,” an awesome annual national activist conference.

Human Rights Campaign (HRC) – www.hrc.org ; email: hrc@hrc.org

The Human Rights Campaign is America’s largest civil rights organization working to achieve gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender equality. By inspiring and engaging all Americans, HRC strives to end discrimination against GLBT citizens and realize a nation that achieves fundamental fairness and equality for all.

GLSEN: The Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network - www.glsen.org, email: glsen@glsen.org

GLSEN is the Major national organization specifically dedicated to addressing lesbian and gay issues in K-12. Particular involvement in GSAs

PFLAG National - Parents and Friends of Lesbian And Gays www.pflag.org

PFLAG promotes the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered persons, their families and friends through: support, to cope with an adverse society; education, to enlighten an ill-informed public; and advocacy, to end discrimination and to secure equal rights. PFLAG provides opportunity for dialogue about sexual orientation and gender identity, and acts to create a society that is healthy and respectful of human diversity.

Lambda Legal Defense & Education Fund – www.lambdalegal.org

Lambda Legal is a national organization committed to achieving full recognition of the civil rights of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, the transgender, and people with HIV or AIDS through impact litigation, education, and public policy work.

GLAAD – Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation - <http://www.glaad.org>

Focuses on advocacy related to media representations of LGBTs

GLAD – Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders <http://www.GLAD.org>

Focuses on legal issues, represents LGBTs—individually and collectively—in court cases

Service Members’ Legal Defense Network - <http://www.sldn.org>

information, resources, support for LGBTs in the military

NCLR - National Center for Lesbian Rights <http://www.nclrights.org>

Provides legal advice and counsel and advocacy regarding all manner of LGBT issues – not just lesbian issues; broad-based politics and advocacy activities

ACLU Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Transgender Project:

<http://www.aclu.org/lgbt/index.html>

Advocates for LGBT civil rights, often in conjunction with other groups such as Lambda Legal or National Center for Lesbian Rights

ONE Institute International – <http://www.oneinstitute.org>

Gay and Lesbian Archives (resources on LGBT heritage; extensive links)

ILGA - International Gay and Lesbian Association - <http://www.ilga.org>

international advocacy organization

ISNA - Intersex Society of North America - <http://www.isna.org>

advocacy, support, & education regarding intersex issues

Gender PAC - Gender Public Advocacy Coalition - <http://www.gpac.org/>

works to ensure that classrooms, communities, and workplaces are safe for everyone to learn, grow, and succeed - whether or not they meet expectations for masculinity and femininity.

TransWorld Transgendered Resources: www.qworld.org/friends/Tworld/tw3.htm

provides information to aid in the support and transition of FtM's, MtF's, CrossDressers, and TransYouth

National Youth Related Sites:

OutProud - <http://www.outproud.org>

National Coalition for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, & Transgender Youth; Refreshingly positive site; lots of resources for and about LGBT youth

Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere- www.colage.org

COLAGE is a national support and advocacy organization for daughters and sons of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender parents. Lots of information on their site.

National Youth Advocacy Coalition - www.nyacyouth.org

NYAC is a social justice organization that advocates for and with young people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning (LGBTQ) in an effort to end discrimination against these youth and to ensure their physical and emotional well being.

The P.E.R.S.O.N. Project – <http://www.personproject.org/>

Public Education Regarding Sexual Orientation Nationally. An Activist Network Advocating for LGBT Inclusive Curricular Policies.

Project 10 — <http://www.project10.org/>

Project 10 is the nation's first public school program dedicated to providing ON-SITE educational support services to gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth. This web site was developed in order to give teachers, counselors and administrators assistance in providing similar services in their own schools or school districts.

Safe Schools Coalition: <http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org/>

A Public-Private Partnership in Support of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Youth; lots of resources and links

Scouting for All - <http://www.scoutingforall.org>

Organization founded by teen Eagle Scout and ally, Steve Cozza – working to get Boy Scouts to welcome GBT scouts and leaders.

Student Pride USA – <http://www.glsen.org/templates/student/index>

National network of student GSAs (affiliated with GLSEN)

Youth Resource Directory <http://www.youthresource.com>

lots of resources for GLBT youth

Information, Resource Troves, Special Populations

Gay.com News <http://www.gay.com/news/>

Daily and weekly updates on news relevant to LGBT issues (from many sources); extensive if not always exhaustive. Also has a link for weekly updates.

American Psychological Association: <http://www.apa.org> – asst resources

Answers to Questions About Sexual Orientation and Homosexuality:
<http://www.apa.org/pubinfo/answers.html>

Hate Crimes Today: <http://www.apa.org/releases/hate.html>

Policy Statements on Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Issues
<http://www.apa.org/pi/statemen.html>

Publications and Reports from the Gay, Lesbian, & Bisexual Concerns Office:
<http://www.apa.org/pi/lgbcc/publications/pubsreports.html>

Answers to Questions about Individuals with Intersex Conditions:
<http://www.apa.org/topics/intersx.html>

Answers to Questions about Transgender Individuals and Gender Identity
<http://www.apa.org/topics/transgender.html>

APA Division 44: Society for the Psychological Study of Gay, Lesbian, & Bisexual Issues: <http://www.apa.org/divisions/div44>

Sexual Orientation: Science, Education, and Policy website

<http://psychology.ucdavis.edu/rainbow/index.html>

Lots of information, links, and resources; site created by Dr. Greg Herek, a psychologist prominent in GLBT issues

Affirm Network: LGB Resource Bibliographies: (categorized by topic)

<http://naples.cc.sunysb.edu/CAS/affirm.nsf/pages/bib>

Affirm is a national group of professional folks (especially psychologists) who are mostly allies and who provide information and advocacy for pro-LGBT stances on a variety of issues.

QRD - Queer Resource Directory www.qrd.org

Directory of many, many resources

QRD's list of LGBT organizations: <http://www.qrd.org/orgs>

QRD's Radical Religious Right Watch page (monitors activities of RRR):
<http://www.qrd.org/QRD/www/RRR/rrrpage.html>

Rainbow Query – <http://www.rainbowquery.com>

Search the Queer Internet:

Gay and Lesbian National Hotline: <http://www.glnh.org>

Free online and telephone counseling, information, support, etc. 800 numbers – one general, one for youth

Blacklight Online <http://www.blacklightonline.com>

“News for black queers” – includes historical info, excellent archives, old issues of this online mag, speaker information, etc.

Blacklist/Blackstripe <http://www.blackstripe.com/blacklist>

News, information, and culture for LGBTs of African descent

Trikone - <http://www.trikone.org/>

Organization for LGBT people of Southeast Asian descent

Las culturas - <http://www.lasculturas.com/lib/libGay.php>

Latino/a LGBT resources

Deaf Queer Resource Page - <http://www.deafqueer.org>

Site by and for deaf LGBTs

GLARP—Gay and Lesbian Assoc of Retiring Persons

<http://www.gaylesbianretiring.org> -

Information for older LGBTs; primary goal is to establish LGBT retirement communities

Ruralgay.com - <http://www.ruralgay.com>

Site for rural LGBs with links to other rural sites

Hatecrime.org <http://www.hatecrime.org>

Reports on hate crimes, encourages activism:

HIV Positive www.HIVPositive.com

Information, resources about HIV/AIDS

What does it mean if I display the Safe Zone emblem?

- You are supportive of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender persons.
- You are committed to keeping your workplace or residence free from discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity.
- You are willing to avoid the assumption that everyone is heterosexual.
- You understand that “coming out” can be a difficult process for many GLBT people and would be an understanding listener.
- You are committed to using inclusive language such as “significant other” or “partner” in the place of “spouse/husband/wife” when you are unsure of the correct term.
- You are committed to being inclusive in work-related and social activities. For example: inviting partners whenever spouses are invited.
- You are willing to provide basic information and referrals to other organizations.



Source: Keweenaw Pride, Michigan Tech

