
LGBTQI and Mental Health

Creating a Safe Zone



Educational Objectives

- Identify personal thoughts and feelings that may help or hinder attempts to be helpful to persons who may be LGBTQ or I.
- Examine the language used to describe persons with differing sexual or gender identities and the purpose(s) of such labels.
- Cite the ways in which stigma towards the LGBT population might impact the likeliness of seeking services.
- Describe and discuss gender role impact on mental health and suicidal ideation
- Identify ways to develop a more welcoming and affirming environment within behavioral health programs.



The Stonewall Inn



- The Stonewall Inn, often shortened to Stonewall, is a gay bar and recreational tavern in the Greenwich Village neighborhood of Lower Manhattan, New York City, and the site of the Stonewall riots of 1969, which is widely considered to be the single most important event leading to the gay liberation movement and the modern fight for gay and lesbian rights in the United States.

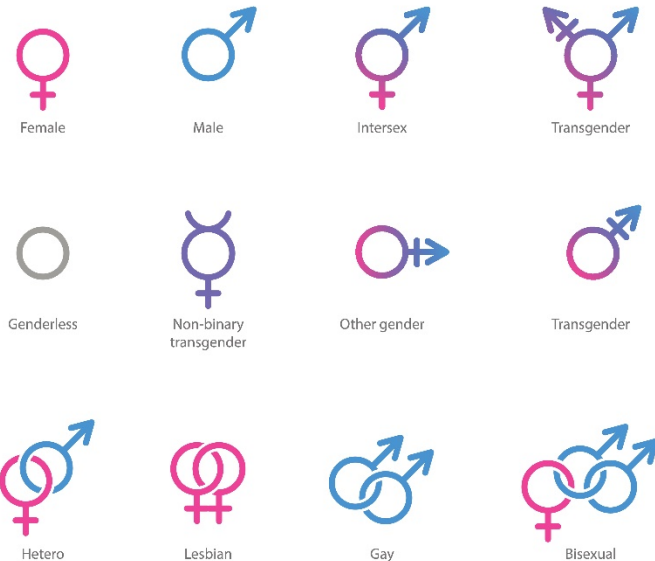
Question You Came In With ...



LGBTQI?

- People who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning, and/or intersex. Individuals may also identify as other minority sexual orientations, gender identities or gender expressions.

- LGBTTIQQ2S - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, Transgendered, Intersexual, Queer, Questioning, 2-Spirited



Common Terms and Terminology

- Gay
- Lesbian
- Bisexual
- Transgender
- Transsexual
- Transvestite
- Queer or Gender Queer
- Heterosexism
- Cisgender
- Intersex
- Gender Variant
- Homophobia
- Coming Out
- Gender Identity
- Ally



Definitions

- **Gay** - a term used to describe individuals who are primarily, emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to members of the same sex and/or gender. More commonly used when referring to men but can be a generalized term.
- **Lesbian** - a term used to describe women who are primarily, emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted women.
- **Bisexual** - a term used to describe individuals who are primarily, emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to members of the same and/or opposite sex and/or gender.
- **Transgender** - individuals who have a gender identity or gender expression that differs from their assigned sex. Transgender people are sometimes called Trans.
- **Transsexual** - if they desire medical assistance to transition from one sex to another. Transgender is also an umbrella term: in addition to including people whose gender identity is the opposite of their assigned sex, it may include people who are not exclusively masculine or feminine.

Definitions

- **Transvestite** - a person who dresses as the binary opposite gender expression for any one of many reasons, including relaxation, fun, and sexual gratification (often called a “cross-dresser,” and should not be confused with transsexual)
- **Gender Queer** - a gender identity label often used by people who do not identify with the binary of man/women. Also used as an umbrella term for many gender non-conforming or non-binary identities.
- **Heterosexism** - behavior that grants preferential treatment to heterosexual people, reinforces the idea that heterosexuality is somehow better or more “right” than other sexualities.
- **Cisgender** - a person whose gender identity and biological sex assigned at birth align. If a person is not trans* they are cisgender.
- **Intersex** - it is a variation in sex characteristics including chromosomes, gonads, or genitals that do not allow an individual to be distinctly identified as male or female.
 - Such variation may involve genital ambiguity, and combinations of chromosomal genotype and sexual phenotype other than XY-male and XX-female.

Definitions

- **Gender Variant** - someone who either by nature or by choice does not conform to gender-based expectations of society (e.g. transgender, transsexual, intersex, gender-queer, cross-dresser, etc.)
- **Coming Out** - the process by which one accepts and/or comes to identify their own sexuality or gender identity (to “come out” to oneself). Also the process by which one shares their sexuality or gender identity with others.
- **Gender Identity** - The internal perception of one’s gender, and how they label themselves, based on how much they align or don’t align with what they understand their options for gender to be. Common identity labels include male, female, genderqueer, transgender, or others.
- **Ally** - A straight ally or heterosexual ally is a heterosexual and cisgender person who supports equal civil rights, gender equality, LGBT social movements, and challenges homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia.

Heterosexual Privileges

- Publicly holding hands, show of affection
- Dancing with my partner
- Talking freely about my relationships
- Discussing personal issues in job interviews or at my workplace
- Joining membership organizations that examine one's personal connections
- Walking the streets without fear of verbal or physical attack based on perceived sexual or gender identity*



Some Words You May Have Heard...

- Cisgender
- Androgynous
- Peeps
- Cross-dresser
- Drag Queen/King
- Pansexual
- In the life
- On the down low (or DL)
- Twink
- Bear, Cub, Otter
- Queer
- Faggot
- Queen
- Butch
- Femme
- Lipstick lesbian
- **Some words you may not have heard:**
 - Two-spirit (formerly berdache)
 - Mahu



Transgender and Intersex Pronouns

- Gender neutral pronouns are sometimes preferred, some being: “ze” “sie” “hir” “E” or “they” (singular) – as some persons do not identify as totally male or female and prefer another designation – but always ask
- “Genderqueer” is another term *used by intersex or androgynous persons* to define self as beyond the binary definition – also agender, thirdgender, and other terms
- **Ask** how transgender persons identify (many use “him” or “her” in terms of self-identity)



Sex, Sexuality, Gender...

- **SEX:** male, female, intersex, indeterminate – not simply binary
- **SEXUALITY:** sense or expression of one's sex – multiplicity of possibilities
- **GENDER:** internal sense of, and external expression of, one's sexual identification



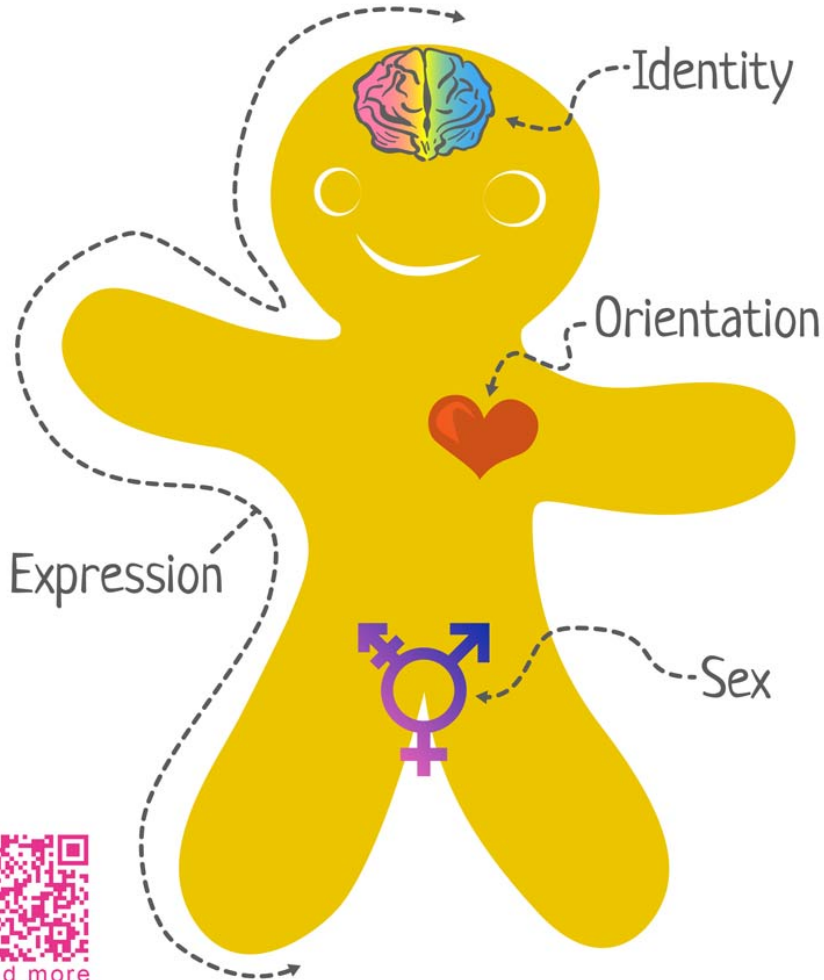
Sex and Gender

- We are all born with some combination of them
- Many of us take these things for granted or are not well informed about the processes that created our gender ID and sexual orientation
- More people in the overall population are clearly male or female & identify with being that gender
- More people in the overall population are predominantly heterosexual in orientation (attracted to/desire to have emotional and sexual connections with the opposite sex)



The Genderbread Person

by www.ItsPronouncedMetrosexual.com



Gender identity is how you, in your head, think about yourself. It's the chemistry that composes you (e.g., hormonal levels) and how you interpret what that means.



Gender expression is how you demonstrate your gender (based on traditional gender roles) through the ways you act, dress, behave, and interact.

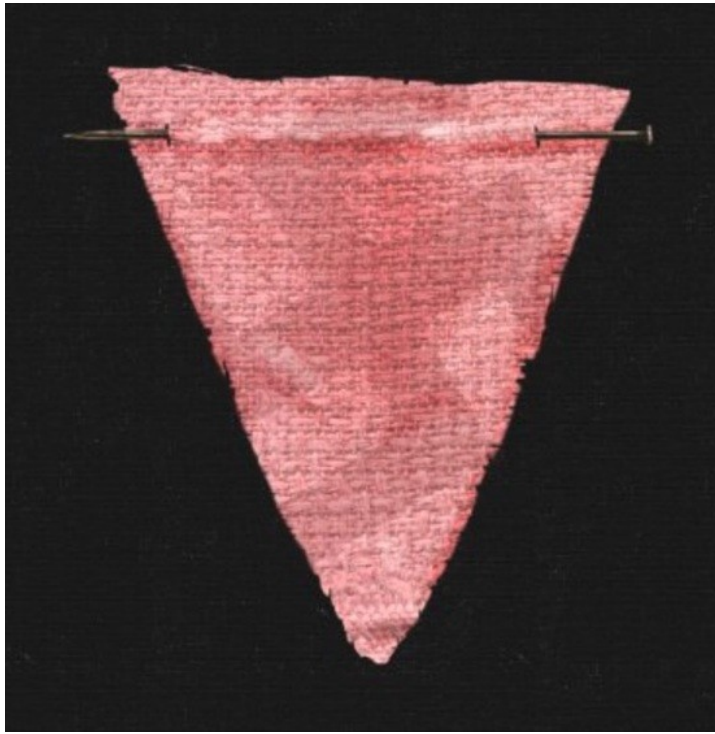


Biological sex refers to the objectively measurable organs, hormones, and chromosomes. Female = vagina, ovaries, XX chromosomes; male = penis, testes, XY chromosomes; intersex = a combination of the two.

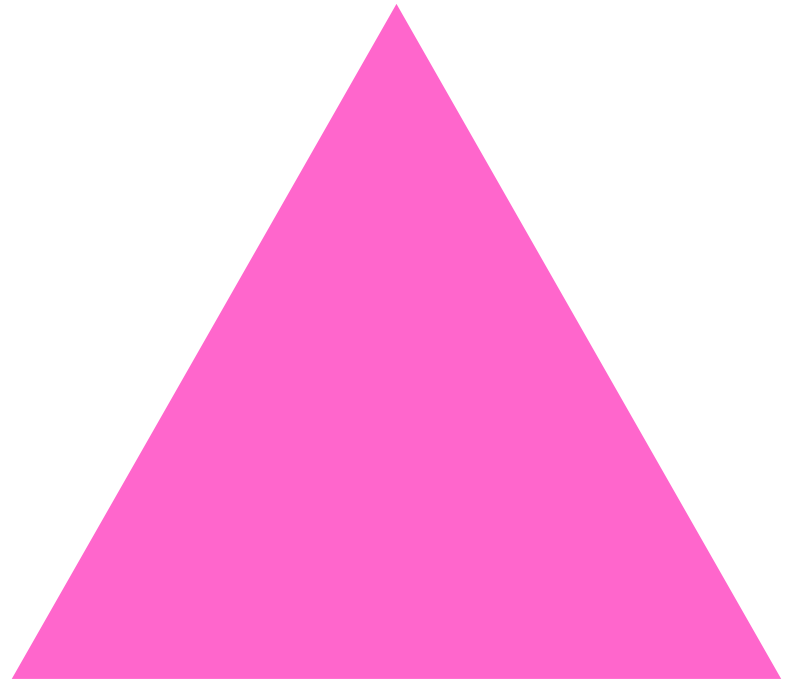


Sexual orientation is who you are physically, spiritually, and emotionally attracted to, based on their sex/gender in relation to your own.





The pink triangle (German: Rosa Winkel) was one of the Nazi concentration camp badges, used to identify male prisoners who were sent there because of their homosexuality. Every prisoner had to wear a downward-pointing triangle on their jacket, the color of which was to categorize them by "kind."



Originally intended as a badge of shame, the pink triangle (often inverted from its Nazi usage) has been reclaimed as an international symbol of gay pride and the gay rights movement, and is second in popularity only to the rainbow flag.

Mental Health Conditions and LGBTQ

- The lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ) community faces mental health conditions just like the rest of the population. However, they may experience more negative mental health outcomes due to prejudice and other biases. Knowing what challenges they may face as a member of the LGBTQ community and how to find and work with LGBTQ-inclusive providers can help ensure more positive outcomes.
 - <https://www.nami.org/Find-Support/LGBTQ.aspx#sthash.ZHfhOTnJ.dpuf>



LGBT Youth Challenges

- **LGBT youth may experience various challenges (bias, discrimination) because of how others respond to or perceive their sexual orientation or gender identity/expression:**
 - Family rejection and ridicule
 - Lack of communication and misunderstanding between parents and their LGBT children increases family conflict
 - Experience physical abuse
 - Experience verbal harassment
 - Homelessness (LGBTQ youth make up 20-40% of homeless youth in urban areas. These youth are 3.5x more likely than heterosexual youth to attempt suicide)
 - Sexual victimization or exploitation
 - Bullying
 - Lack of readily available resources in the community
 - Feelings of isolation or alienation
 - Substance abuse
 - Suicidal ideations or attempts



LGBT Identity and Mental Well-Being

- LGBT people often go through 5-10 years of hiding their identity from others. What effect does this have on mental well-being?
 - Higher levels of anxiety
 - Fear of being found out
 - Feelings of isolation
 - Not able to share feeling with friends and family
 - Inability to create meaningful relationships
 - More difficult coming out process



LGBTQ Facts

- LGBTQ are almost 3x more likely to be diagnosed with a mental disorder - as it relates to compromised safety, discrimination, retaliation, rejection, isolation, & abandonment
- LGBTQ face discrimination & rejection in addition to stigma of mental health
- LGBTQ teens are 6x more likely to experience depression vs. general population
- Suicide is one of the leading causes of death for LGBTQ people between 10-24
- LGBTQ youth are 3x more likely to attempt suicide or self-harm than rest of population
- Between 38-65% of transgender individuals experience suicidal ideation
- Those rejected by their family are 8x more likely to attempt suicide than those who are accepted
- An estimated 20-30% of LGBTQ abuse substances compared to 9% of general population - In response to fear for safety, discrimination, retaliation, rejection, isolation, & abandonment
- Gay men are 6x more likely than heterosexual males to attempt suicide
- Lesbians are 2x more likely than heterosexual females to attempt suicide



LGBTQ Youth and Suicide

- **42.8% seriously considered suicide**
 - as compared to 14.8% heterosexual youth
- **38.2% make a suicide plan**
 - as compared to 11.9% of heterosexual youth
- **29.4% attempt suicide**
 - as compared to 6.4% heterosexual youth



Well-Being and Parental Rejection

- **LGBT youth with high parental rejection (as compared to LGBT youth with low to moderate parental rejection) are:**
 - **8x more likely to attempt suicide**
 - **6x more likely to report high levels of depression**
 - **3x more likely to use illegal drugs**
 - **3x more likely to be at high risk for HIV and STDs**



What Family Rejection Looks Like

- Physical abuse
- Verbal harassment and name calling
- Excluding youth from family events
- Blocking access to LGBTQ friends, events, and resources
- Blaming the child when they are discriminated against because of their sexual identity
- Pressuring the child to act differently, to be more masculine or feminine
- Telling the child that God will punish them because they are gay
- Telling the child they are ashamed of them
- Making a child keep their LGBTQ identity a secret
- Lower self-esteem and having fewer people they can turn to for help
- Feelings of being more isolated and having less support



Parental/Family Acceptance

- Accepting behaviors of parents and caregivers towards their LGBT children are protective factors against mental health risks.
- Accepting behaviors protect against suicide, depression, and substance abuse.
- Accepting behaviors are related to higher levels of self-esteem, social support, and general health in adulthood.
- Advocating for their children when they are mistreated because of their LGBT identity or supporting their gender expression -- protect against depression, substance abuse, suicidal thoughts, and suicide attempts in early adulthood.



Recovery and Resources

- Early intervention, comprehensive treatment, and family support are the key to helping LGBTQ youth on the road to recovery from a mental health condition.
- There are many resources available to help teens and young adults, including the:
 - [It Gets Better](#) campaign
 - [The Trevor Project](#), which provides a national, 24-hr, toll-free confidential suicide hotline for LGBTQ youth at 866-488-7386
 - The Trevor Project also provides an [online chat and confidential text messaging](#) – text “Trevor” to 202-304-1200



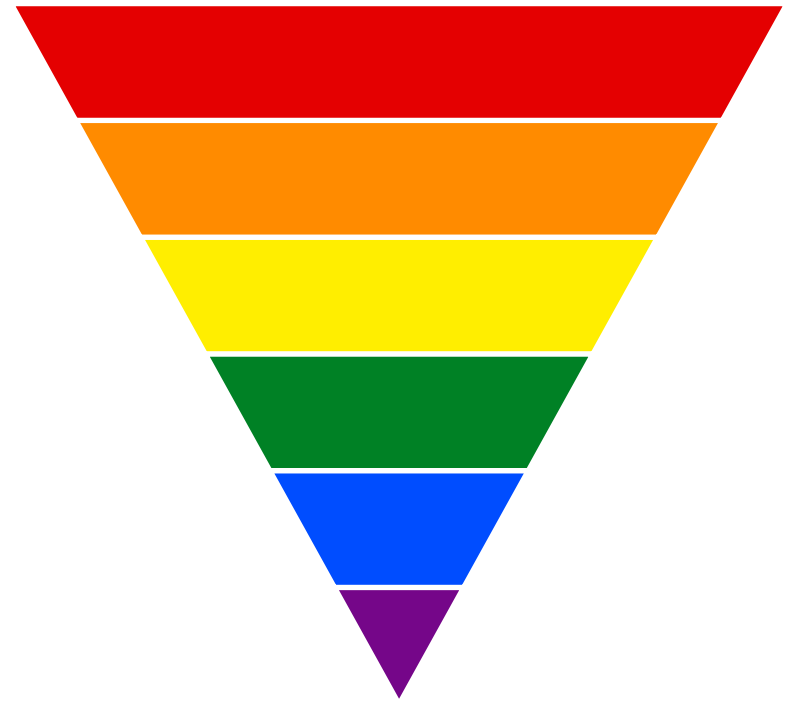
The first Rainbow Flag was designed in 1978 by Gilbert Baker, a San Francisco artist, who created the flag in response to a local activist's call for the need of a community symbol.



Safe Zone

- Environments and behaviors that welcome and affirm persons who are LGBTQI

SAFE ZONE



Strategies to Combat Discrimination

- Policy
- Visibility
- Inclusive assessment/forms
- Training
- Specific outreach
- Knowledge of resources
- Diverse staff
- Confront discriminatory remarks/jokes



Supporting LGBT Youth in Schools

- Identify or develop more services for LGBT young people before coming out.
- Teach more awareness and consequences for LGBT bullying.
- Develop more education around homophobic slurs.
- Develop education in the schools around supporting LGBT youth.
- Provide information for young people to make them more aware of the importance of supporting their peers.



Supporting LGBT Youth in Schools

- Physical signs (SAFE ZONE)
- Be comfortable with the terminology – do your best to keep up-to-date
- Admit when you don't know – be willing to learn
- Don't wait for “coming out moments” before you share your acceptance
- Updating routine/office forms
- Ask preferred pronouns
- Don't presume orientation (e.g., use words like paramour & partner)
- Gender doesn't belong in a box



Supporting LGBT Youth in Schools

- Let students know they have a safe place or person to confide their sexual orientation, challenges and concerns too
- Avoid assuming all students are heterosexual
- Help students explore the possible consequences (both positive and negative) of coming out
- Support LGBT students and their family members dealing with family issues
- Help parents and students identify community resources
- Become aware of your own bias, or own homophobia
- Address health issues and know appropriate resources to refer the student and/or families to. Know how to address sensitive health topics?



Edith Windsor



- Edith "Edie" Windsor was an American LGBT rights activist and a technology manager at IBM. She was the lead plaintiff in the Supreme Court of the United States case *United States v. Windsor*, which successfully overturned Section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act and was considered a landmark legal victory for the same-sex marriage movement in the United States.

Three Levels of LGBTQI Competence

- Non-discrimination
 - Expected
- Cultural Competence
 - Expected or Refer
- Clinical Competence
 - Specialty



Title IX

- The federal Title IX law, which bans sex discrimination in schools, has been interpreted by courts and the US Justice and Education Departments to prohibit discrimination against transgender and gender non-conforming students.
- You have the right to be treated according to the gender you identify with. Your school cannot require you to provide legal or medical evidence in order to have your gender respected.
- You have the right to be called by the name and pronouns consistent with your gender identity.
- You have the right not to be bullied or harassed because you are transgender or gender non-conforming. If school administrators become aware of bullying or harassment they must take action to end it.
- You have the right to equal educational opportunities regardless of your gender, including your gender identity or expression, or your race, nationality, or disability. This includes not being punished or excluded from school activities or events because you are transgender or gender non-conforming.
- You have the right to dress and present yourself in a way that is consistent with your gender identity, so long as you follow rules for how to dress that apply to all students. This includes how you dress at school every day as well as for dances, graduation, and other school events.
- You have the right to use restrooms, locker rooms, and other facilities that are consistent with your gender identity, and can't be forced to use separate facilities.
- You have the right to privacy concerning your transgender status and gender transition. Any such information kept in school records must be kept private and not shared without your permission unless the school has a legitimate reason that it not based on gender bias.
- You have the right not to be harassed or discriminated against based gender stereotypes, including stereotypes about sexual orientation.
- You have the right to join or start a Gay-Straight Alliance or Pride Alliance, and to have your group treated like other student groups.



Thank You

Questions?

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