

# Welcome to SAFE ZONE

**Dear Chico Safe Zone Member,**

We would like to welcome you to the Safe Zone program and thank you for your interest in becoming a visible ally and resource for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students, faculty and staff at California State University, Chico. We hope that you are as excited as we are about the Safe Zone program and we look forward to working together today and in the future.

As a Safe Zone member, you are actively contributing to the California State University, Chico community, helping our university achieve its goals of providing an unparalleled educational experience both within the classroom walls and outside of them and educating leaders for a global community. With the information you will learn during your Safe Zone training and this resource guide we know that you will be well equipped and ready to serve both the campus and Chico community with LGBT concerns and issues. To help you in this endeavor we have put together this resource manual to help you become familiar with many topics that are both relevant and timely for our community. It will both inform and complement the Safe Zone training session and will become a resource that you may find helpful for semesters, and hopefully, years to come.

The success of the Safe Zone program depends on your willingness to be public in your support of the LGBT community on this campus. We do appreciate, however, that there are various ways in which individuals may support the LGBT community on this campus and that some people may choose not to become Safe Zone members. In any case, we are excited and enthralled that you have chosen to attend this workshop and to make a difference in the Safe Zone program and the student's lives on the Chico campus. We hope that at the end of the Safe Zone training program you will actively display the Safe Zone placard and truly embody what the Safe Zone program stands for on this campus – a place where students feel safe and comfortable sharing their identities and lives with people who truly care about their development and well-being. As a whole, we can make a difference, closing the gap and reaching our goal of being an inclusive campus for all students!

Sincerely,

Safe Zone Resource Committee

# The Purpose of SAFE ZONE

Chico State University values and promotes a supportive and inclusive environment for all of its students and faculty. We also hope to create an educational and pleasant working and living environment for all those in the Chico State community both inside and outside of the classroom. At that junction, the Safe Zone program has been designed to promote awareness and support of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community on campus.

Below you will find the written and embodied purpose of the Safe Zone Program at Chico State University:

“Safe Zone's purpose is to reduce homophobia and heterosexism on our campus and thereby make our campus a safer and freer environment for all members of our community. The Safe Zone project identifies individuals in the campus faculty, staff and student body to become safe zone allies. These people provide a safe haven, a listening ear, or an open accessibility for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) who are in need of advice or services from that individual. The Safe Zone program will provide the campus Allies with training, information, and community resource identification to those who express interest in becoming a Safe Zone Ally.”

# Working Agreements for This Session\*

- ⊕ **Respect Others.** You will hear ideas today that may be new or different for you, and opinions that may run counter to your own. As you participate and interact, try to take in new information without judgement and keep an open mind. Make sure that your words and body language reflect a respectful attitude toward others. Learn by listening to others and be supportive of the “place” at which they currently are.
  - ⊕ **Speak from the “I”.** Speak from your own personal experiences, and do not judge or moralize the thoughts and experiences of others. Use I-statements such as “I feel...” or “In my experience...” Avoid “You should...” statements and generalizations and globalizations of any kind.
  - ⊕ **Be open to new ideas.** New ideas or techniques may be utilized or suggested today. Be open to considering new information and incorporating new practices.
  - ⊕ **Ask questions.** Please feel free to ask any question that comes up without fear that it is “silly” or “dumb.” Make sure to phrase all questions in respectful and value-neutral ways.
  - ⊕ **Respect confidentiality.** Please make sure any personal information given in this room stays in this room. When sharing personal anecdotes, make sure to avoid using the real names of other people.
  - ⊕ **Respect commitments.** While you are encouraged to take care of your personal needs throughout the training, please honor your commitment to being here by observing time guidelines during breaks, turning off beepers and phones, and limiting unnecessary interruptions.
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# Guidelines for SAFE ZONE Members!

1. Respect each individual's privacy. Please keep contacts confidential unless there is a compelling reason not to.
2. Use language that reflects where the client is in their development. (Example: A student may be exploring hir\* sexuality and/or gender identity may not identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) even though ze\* is engaging in same-sex relationships).
3. You may find yourself being an advocate, advisor, teacher, or mentor to students who seek your support. Feel free to have coffee or lunch with students who seek you out. It is important to keep clear, professional boundaries. The formation of romantic and/or sexual relationships between employees and students they meet as a result of being a Safe Zone member is not advised. If you have any concerns about this please contact the Safe Zone coordinators.
4. Please feel free to consult with the Safe Zone coordinators whenever you have questions or would like feedback on how to support or advise a student.
5. Refer students for counseling when necessary. If a student is experiencing psychological distress and is having difficulty coping, suggest that counseling may be helpful. A good guideline for you to use: If you are feeling overwhelmed or worried about a student, then referring them to the Counseling Center would be appropriate.
6. If your Safe Zone placard is defaced or torn down, contact Safe Zone to report this and to request a new one.
7. Please inform Safe Zone if you are leaving the University, changing offices or address, or want to withdraw from the program.
8. Do not share or provide your Safe Zone sign with friends or colleagues who are not Safe Zone members.

## **Confidentiality Statement:**

When you post a sign letting others know that you are a Safe Zone member, you are sending a message that you are a safe person to talk to. Being a Safe Zone member entails that you do not share information without permission; for both your personal credibility and for the overall ability of the Safe Zone program to be trusted. It is important that all members be committed to respecting the privacy and maintaining the confidentiality of all individuals who contact them in their role as a Safe Zone member. Information provided by individuals utilizing the services of the Safe Zone program should be treated as confidential. There are times when there are limits to confidentiality. When someone tells you that they intend to cause physical harm to themselves or someone else, there are clear exceptions to confidentiality when it may be necessary to take action to prevent harm.

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\*"Ze" and "hir" (pronounced "zee" and "here") are gender-neutral pronouns that are preferred by some as more inclusive pronouns than the gendered pronouns that they replace "she/he" (for ze) and "his/her" (for hir). We use them in this manual as a way of beginning to familiarize ourselves with these newer pronouns, which can be a way of using language to create inclusivity, particularly for transgender individuals.

\* Adapted from the FRIENDS resource manual produced by the University of Florida LGBT Affairs Office which is part of Multicultural and Diversity Affairs in the Dean of Students Office.

# How to Use Your Resources

## **Resource Manual**

This manual is a resource for all Safe Zone members. We hope that each of you will take the time to read this manual completely to familiarize yourself with all the valuable information contained within. We have designed this manual to help you respond and help those colleagues and students who may seek out your assistance with LGBT issues. This manual is considered an on-going project and we welcome your input to the advancement of the information contained herein. Please forward any new and pertinent information to the coordinators at any point. Also, please feel free to photocopy parts of this manual at anytime.

## **Placard**

The Safe Zone placard is designed to be publicly displayed at your office so that students and colleagues may publicly know that you are a “safe” person for them to talk to and discuss LGBT concerns.

## **When to refer a student to a Counseling/Mental Health Professional**

Most students that approach a Safe Zone member are seeking support, advice and/or information. Sometimes students will be experiencing psychological distress and may need further help. This may be evident in the following ways:

1. When a student is having a hard time performing academically or maintaining their grades.
2. When a student can no longer cope with their day to day activities. A student stops attending classes or attending work and may fear a failing grade or being fired.
3. A student displays depression symptoms such as: sleep disturbance, sudden weight changes, crying spells, fatigue, loss of interest in pleasure in previous enjoyable activities, and/or an inability to concentrate.
4. A student expresses severe anxiety symptoms such as: feelings of panic, shortness of breath, headaches, sweaty palms, dry mouth, or racing thoughts.
5. A student expresses suicidal thoughts or feelings
6. A student has no support.
7. If you are feeling overwhelmed by a student’s issues or worried about a student.

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\* Adapted from the FRIENDS resource manual produced by the University of Florida LGBT Affairs Office which is part of Multicultural and Diversity Affairs in the Dean of Students Office.

# Who May Knock on Your Door?\*

Below are some common (not an exhaustive list) questions and/or thoughts those who trust you as a safe zone member may come to you with. Think about how you would respond to these questions/comments now and then think about them again once this training is over. This resource manual will provide numerous resources and ways of handling these situations!

## ✚ The Curious:

- What does that sign mean?
- Are you gay?
- Is your name Ally?
- Why do you feel a need to advertise?

## ✚ The Sharing:

- I saw that ally sign outside your door. I just want to say how cool it is that you have it up.
- I want to explain why I have been so down lately. My family is really upset because they just found out I'm gay.
- My partner and I are celebrating our three year anniversary. Do you have any ideas for a romantic night out?

## ✚ The Questioning:

- Where can I find other gay people?
- I don't want to label myself, but I'm thinking about sexual orientation. Where can I find more information?
- I think one of my friends is trying to "come out" to me. How can I let them know it's okay to talk to me?
- Do you know anything about transsexual people?

## ✚ The Alarmed:

- I'm afraid my roommate is gay. I'm really uncomfortable about having a gay roommate. What should I do?
- I'm thinking about coming out to my family, but I know they will freak out. Do you think I should tell them?
- I am very unhappy with the way my church talks about homosexuality. I feel very defensive, but don't know how to "argue the bible." Where can I learn more about homosexuality and the bible?
- I don't know what to do. I haven't told anyone that I might be gay. I'm feeling really isolated and alone...

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\* Adapted from "Who may Knock on Your Door" from the Cal Ally Program at UC Berkeley

# Clarifying Beliefs

## Rate Your Level of Support\*

Clarifying our attitudes helps us to become more conscious of what we feel. Recognizing your level of support or disagreement concerning LGBT issues and people is the first step towards becoming a better ally. The purpose of the following exercise is not to change your attitudes and values, but to bring to your consciousness what those attitudes and values are. If you identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender, try to focus your answer about the identity you least identify with, or the one you think you still might carry biases about.

Please read each of the following statements and rate your level of agreement based on the scale.

5-----4-----3-----2-----1  
Strongly Agree      Somewhat Agree      Agree      Somewhat Disagree      Strongly Disagree

- I refrain from making homophobic remarks or jokes about LGBT people.
- I always confront homophobic remarks and jokes made by others.
- I believe that homophobic harassment and violence are serious issues and it is important to seriously sanction perpetrators.
- I believe that LGBT people are equally entitled to all of the same rights and privileges as everyone else.
- I believe that LGBT people are capable of the same normal, healthy relationships as everyone else.
- I do not worry about what kind of effect an LGBT individual might have on my children or any other children.
- I use language and examples that are inclusive of LGBT individuals and their experiences.
- I am comfortable publicly expressing my affection for friends of the same gender.
- I am knowledgeable about the histories, cultures, psychosocial development, and needs of LGBT people.
- I value the contributions that “out” students, faculty, and staff make to the University’s culture and climate.
- I do not make judgments about people based on what I perceive their sexual orientation to be.
- I respect the confidentiality of LGBT people by not gossiping about their sexual orientation or gender identity.
- I actively advocate for, financially support, and/or participate in LGBT organizations.
- I have questioned/thought about/seriously considered my own sexuality.
- I have questioned/thought about/seriously considered my gender identity.

I am comfortable with being assumed to be LGBT. (If you identify as LGB, answer whether you would feel comfortable being assumed to be transgender.)

I am comfortable around people who dress, act, or present themselves in ways that are not traditionally associated with their assumed biological sex.

I am comfortable seeing open expressions of affection between people of the same gender.

It does not bother me if I cannot identify the gender of a person just by looking at that person.

I believe that homophobia and transphobia effect all people, regardless of their sexuality or gender.

## **PERSONAL REFLECTION\***

### **What's Your Attitude?**

These statements are designed to help you reflect on your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors regarding homosexuality. Ask yourself these questions to determine where you are in your personal journey.

I feel awkward when I'm around people who are gay.

I believe that gay people deserve the negative they receive.

I believe homosexual people should not work with children.

I openly object to derogatory remarks about gay people.

I can enjoy the company of gay people without feeling uncomfortable.

Marriage between homosexual individuals is okay with me.

It does not matter to me whether my friends are gay or straight.

I am concerned that a homosexual person may "come on" to me.

I laugh at jokes about gay people.

Organizations that promote gay rights are not necessary.

Homosexuals should not have "special protection" under the law.

It bothers me to see homosexual people display affection in public.

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\* "Clarifying Beliefs" Adapted from Themes of Bias and Exemplary Practice of Student Affairs Professionals developed by ACPA Standing Committee of LGB Awareness, Crocteau and Lark, 1995.

\* "Person Reflection" From UAB Safe Zone Program, Birmingham, Alabama



# Talking the Talk

## Terminology Glossary\*

**Ally** - A non-lesbian, gay man or bisexual whose attitudes and behaviors are anti-heterosexist in perspective and who works towards combating homophobia and heterosexism, both on a personal and institutional level.

**Asexual** – Designation or self-designation for people who lack feelings of “self-attraction” and/or “sexual desire.” There is debate as to if it is a “sexual dysfunction” or if it is “sexual orientation.” Sometimes it is used as a “gender identity” by those who believe their lack of sexual attraction places them outside the standard definitions of “gender.”

**Bicurious** - A curiosity about sexual relations with a member of the same gender. A person who contemplates a sexual interest in both sexes.

**Biphobia** – The fear of, discrimination against, or hatred of bisexuals by people of any sexual orientation.

**Bisexual** - Person with emotional and sexual attraction to both men and women, not necessarily at the same time or to the same extent.

**Boydyke** – A lesbian or bisexual woman, who chooses the “dyke” label to identify with that group’s politics and community, and also identifies as boyish or as a boy. It can be transgender identity in which a person stands with one foot in the “boy” world and one foot in the “dyke” world, or simply an adjective for someone who performs “butchness” in a certain way.

**Butch** – Used as an adjective – “I’m Butch” or “I’m a butch woman” as opposed to the noun “I am a butch.” The term is used to describe lesbians, gay men and bisexuals. It can be used to describe straight men and women also, though this is less common. It is most commonly used to describe women who take on or embody culturally defined masculine traits. As with anyone who displays “masculine” traits, a self-identified butch woman may or may not be sexually aggressive.

**Closeted** - Hiding one's sexual orientation.

**Coming Out** - Process of recognizing and acknowledging non-heterosexual orientation to oneself and then disclosing it to others. Generally occurs in stages and is a non-linear process.

**Crossdresser** - Formerly called transvestites. Typically men (mostly heterosexual) who sometimes wear opposite-gender clothing for personal reasons. There are some women who crossdress also.

**Down Low** – A term used to refer to men who maintain a heterosexual identity and lifestyle in their daily lives but engage in same-sex intercourse as a secret part of their lives.

**Drag** – The act of dressing in gendered clothing as part of a performance. Drag may be performed as a political comment on gender, as parody, or simply as entertainment. Drag performance does not indicate sexuality, gender identity, or sex identity.

**Drag Queen** – A performer, generally a gay man or transgender person who performs using exaggerated forms of feminine attire and attitudes, usually for entertainment purposes.

**Drag King** – A performer, generally a lesbian or transgender person who performs using exaggerated masculine attire and attitudes, usually for entertainment purposes.

**Dyke** - Originally used as disparaging term for a lesbian. A disparaging term for a woman, most often for a feminist; most often used as a personal attack. Within recent years some women who openly identifying as lesbians have begun using the word politically in order to remove the negative connotation from it.

**En Femme** – A heterosexual man when ze is wearing women’s clothes

**En drab** – A heterosexual man who likes to wear women’s clothes, when ze is not wearing women’s clothes.

**Family** – Colloquial term used to identify other LGBTQ community members. For example, an LGBTQ person saying “that person is family” often means that the person they are referring to is LGBTQ as well.

**Family of Choice (Chosen Family)** - Persons forming an individual's close social support network, often fulfilling the function of blood relatives. Many gay persons are rejected when families learn of their sexual orientation, while others may remain closeted to biological relatives. In such cases, it is the families of choice who will be called upon in times of illness or personal crisis.

**Family of Origin** - Biological family or the family in which one was raised. May or may not be a part of a person's support system.

**Femme** – Might be considered the opposite of “butch.” “Femme” is also an adjective- as in “I’m a femme.” People who are femme usually identify as women and express themselves in ways culturally considered feminine.

**FTM** – Female to male transsexual.

**Gay** - Common word for men with emotional and sexual attraction to other men, but often used in reference to both genders.

**Gay/Lesbian Baiting** - Any attempt to control a person by accusing them of being gay or lesbian because their behavior is not acceptable.

**Gender** – A socially constructed collect of traits ,behaviors, and meanings that have been traditionally attributed to biological differences.

**Gender Expression** – Outward behaviors and appearances (e.g. hair, clothing, voice, body language) by which people manifest their gender identity or gender choices.

**Gender Identity** - One's psychological sense of oneself as a male or female.

**Gender-neutral** – Non-discriminatory language usage that can apply to people of any gender identity. “Spouse” and “partner” are gender neutral alternatives to the gender-specific words “husband” and “wife.” The use of the terms “ze” and “hir” are preferred by some as a way to be inclusive of all genders in language use.

**Gender Queer, Gender Benders, Gender Variant, Gender Outlaws, Gender Non-conformist, etc.** – A person who redefines or plays with gender, or who refuses gender altogether. A label for people who bend/break the rules of gender and blur the boundaries.

**Gender re-assignment Surgery (GRS)/ Gender Confirmation Surgery/ Sex Reassignment Surgery (SRS)** - Surgery to make a person’s outward appearance conform more closely with their gender identity. Not all transsexuals feel the need to have surgery; however, the surgery is required in all states in order to change the sex on one’s birth certificate, driver’s license, or passport. Such surgery is also often necessary to “pass” in society and avoid daily harassment.

**Gender Roles** - Socially constructed and culturally specific behaviors and appearance expectations imposed on men and women.

**Gender Variant/ Gender Non-conforming** - Those who can’t or choose not to conform to societal gender norms associated with their physical sex.

**GLBT** - Acronym for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender. Sometimes shown as LGBT.

**Hate Crime** - Any act of intimidation, harassment, physical force or threat of physical force directed against any person, or their property, motivated either in whole or in part by hostility to their real or perceived race, ethnic background, religious belief, sex, age, disability, or sexual orientation, with the intention of causing fear or intimidation, or to deter the free exercise or enjoyment of any rights or privileges secured by the Constitution or the laws of that state.

**Heterosexism** - Institutionalized assumption that everyone is heterosexual and that heterosexuality is inherently superior to and preferable to homosexuality or bisexuality.

**Heterosexual** - Person with emotional and sexual attraction to persons of the opposite gender.

**Heterosexual Privilege** – Benefits derived automatically by being (or being perceived as) heterosexual that are denied to homosexuals, bisexuals, and queers.

**Homophobia** - Irrational fear or hatred of, aversion to, or discrimination against homosexuals or homosexual behavior.

**Homosexual** - Person with emotional and sexual attraction to persons of the same gender.

**Hormone Replacement Therapy** – Taking hormones to enable one’s outward appearance to conform more closely to one’s inner gender identity.

**Inclusive Language** - Use of gender non-specific language to avoid imposing the limiting assumption of heterosexuality and to present an open social climate for non-heterosexuals.

**Internalized Homophobia** - Experience of shame, aversion, or self-hatred in reaction to one’s own feelings of attraction for a person of the same sex.

**Intersexed** - Formerly called hermaphrodites. People born with chromosomal and/or physiological anomalies, and/or ambiguous genitalia. Many are surgically "normalized" by their parents, which can result in the lack of sexual response in adulthood.

**Lesbian** - Woman with emotional and sexual attraction to persons of the same gender.

**LGBTQQIA** – Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Ally.

**MTF and FTM** - People categorized by gender vector male-to-female or female-to-male as they transition.

**Outing** – Exposing someone’s sexual orientation to others, usually without their permission.

**Pansexual** - One who exhibits or suggests a sexuality that has many different forms, objects, and outlets. One who exhibits many forms of sexual expression. Pansexual is a broader term than bisexual because it includes not only loving both men and women but also transgendered people and gender fluid people who do not feel they fit into categories of male or female.

**Partner** - Primary domestic partner or spousal relationship among same gender couples.

**Polyamory** – The practice of having many open, honest love relationships.

**Queens** – People who identify as men, are attracted to other people who identify as men, and adopt mannerisms culturally considered “femme.”

**Queer** - A term that has historically been used as a derogatory term for GLBT persons. More recently some GLBT persons have reclaimed the word to express inclusiveness and pride in the GLBT community.

**Real Life Test (RLT)** – The generally required time during which a transsexual lives in the “target” gender (the gender the transsexual knows himself to be) before undergoing surgery.

**Safe Space** - A place where gay, lesbian and bisexual individuals feel comfortable and secure in being who they are. In this place, they can talk about the people with whom they are involved without fear of being criticized, judged or ridiculed. It is representative of a move for gay, lesbian and bisexual rights; but rather than being geared toward political rights, it is focused toward the right to be comfortable in one’s living space, work environments, etc. It is focused toward the right to use the pronoun of a significant other in conversation, and the right to be as outwardly open about one’s life and activities as anyone else.

**Sex** – refers to a person based on their anatomy (external genitalia, chromosomes, and internal reproductive system). Sex terms are male, female, transsexual, and intersex. Sex can be thought of as biological gender, where social views and experiences of sex are cultural.

**Sexual Behavior** – What a person does in terms of erotic or sexual acts, such as: masturbate, kiss, make out, be sexually inexperienced or same-sex experienced or multiple –sex experienced or other-sex experienced, be monogamous or non-monogamous, be abstinent or sexually active with men, women etc...

**Sexuality** – The complex range of components which make us sexual beings; includes emotional, physical and sexual aspects, as well as self-identification ( including sexual orientation and gender) , behavioral preferences, and practices, fantasies, and feelings of affection and emotional affinity.

**Sexual Orientation** - An enduring emotional, romantic, sexual, or affectional attraction that a person feels toward another person. Sexual orientation falls along a continuum.

**Sex Identity** – The sex that a person sees themselves as. This can include refusing to label oneself with a sex.

**Sexual Preference** – What a person like or prefers to do sexually; a conscious recognition of choice not to be confused with the sexual orientation of identifies with.

**Stonewall & Pride Celebrations** - On June 28, 1969, a routine raid on the Stonewall Bar (shown here with a few of its patrons) on Christopher Street in New York City turned into a riot when patrons resisted. The patrons barricaded themselves in the bar. The riot escalated until reinforcements arrived. The riots continued for several evenings. This rebellion, begun by drag queens and bar patrons, marked the beginning of the modern gay and lesbian movement. Each June, Pride marches, rallies and celebrations are held throughout the nation commemorating Stonewall.

**Straight** – Person who is attracted to a gender other than their own, also called “heterosexual.” Commonly thought as “attraction to the opposite gender,” but since there are not only two genders (see transgender), the definition is not accurate.

**Top Surgery** – surgery to reduce the size of one’s breasts and/or to reconstruct ones chest.

**Transgender** - Broad term used to describe the continuum of individuals whose gender identity and expression, to varying degrees, does not correspond with their genetic sex.

**Transphobia** – fear, hatred, or discomfort with transgender people and with the blurring of gender boundaries manifested through violence, harassment, and various forms of discrimination and invisibility.

**Transsexual** - Individual who presents him/herself, and lives as the gender opposite to his/her genetic gender at birth. Transsexuals may be heterosexual, bisexual, or homosexual in the erotic orientation.

**Transvestite** - Man or woman who enjoys wearing the clothes of and appearing as the other gender. While many transvestites are heterosexual, the use of transvestitism in the gay “drag” culture is well documented.

**Two-spirited** – An umbrella term for third gender people used among Native American and Canadian First Nations tribes. It usually implies a masculine spirit and a feminine spirit in the same body. It is also use more generally by LGBT and intersex Native Americans to describe themselves. Two-spirited people traditionally had distinct gender and social roles in their tribes. Some are counselors while others are medicine persons or spiritual functionaries. They study skills including story telling, theater, magic, hypnotism, healing, herbal medicine, ventriloquism, singing, music and dance.

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\* Adapted from “GLSEN Safe Space: A How-to Guide for Starting an Allies Program.”

\* Adapted from the FRIENDS resource manual produced by the University of Florida LGBT Affairs Office which is part of Multicultural and Diversity Affairs in the Dean of Students Office.

# Symbols of Pride



Females symbol. The two interlinked female symbols represent lesbian pride.



Males Symbol. The two interlinked males symbols represent gay male pride.



Superimposed male and female symbols. The arrow and cross joining on the same ring may be used to symbolize transgender pride.



Pink Triangle. The pink triangle was used by the Nazis to designate gay men and has been reclaimed by the LGBT community as a symbol of unity, and solidarity. Some activists turn the triangle upwards as a symbol of resistance. The inverted pink triangle was first adopted by ACT-UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power) as their symbol for “an active fight back rather than a passive resignation to fate.”



Other Triangles. Nazi Germany used a black triangle to designate prisoners and concentration inmates with “anti-social behavior.” Lesbians fell into this category. Overlapping pink and blue triangles has become a symbol of bisexual pride.



Lambda. The lambda was originally chosen as a gay pride symbol because it is the Greek symbol for L, which stands for “liberation.” In 1974 at the International Gay Rights Congress in Edinburgh, Scotland, representatives voted to adopt the lambda as the international symbols for gay rights.



Labrys. An icon used by some lesbians, this double-edged sword or axe symbolizes the ancient weapon of the Amazons, a community in which warrior women were dominant over men.



Gay Pride Flag. This flag symbolizes diversity and each color stands for characteristics of the LGBT rights movement and the LGBTQ community.



AIDS Awareness Ribbon. While AIDS is certainly not confined to the LGBTQ community, gays and lesbians have historically been among the most supportive and vocal group for the rights of those with HIV virus, in its early years, AIDS struck the gay male community hard. The red AIDS ribbon is a reminder of the seriousness of the disease, and how it affects everyone.



The Lavender Rhinoceros. One obscure pride symbol from the 1970s in the lavender rhinoceros. Supposedly used as an activist symbol, it was chosen because the rhino is generally a peaceful animal, but when provoked it becomes extremely ferocious.



[Human Rights Campaign \(HRC\)](#), America's largest gay and lesbian organization. As a bi-partisan organization, HRC works to advance equality through the lobbying of Congress. The Human Rights Campaign logo has become the new symbol for lesbian and gay equality for many members and friends of our community. The symbol stands for a vision in which American gays and lesbians are ensured their basic “equal” rights.

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\* Adapted from the FRIENDS resource manual produced by the University of Florida LGBT Affairs Office which is part of Multicultural and Diversity Affairs in the Dean of Students Office.

\* Adapted from UAB Safe Zone program materials <http://students.uab.edu>



# CASS Model of Homosexual Identity Development

## Using Theory to Understand Gay and Lesbian Identity Development

There are several theories that describe the sexual orientation development of gay and lesbian individuals. Because people are unique and everyone has his or her own story, no one theory describes all people. Some of the factors that influence development, and which are not yet accounted for by theory, include race, religion, culture, gender, and ability. So please be prepared for differences among students. Theory does however provide one explanation of students' identity development and helps us predict some of the development they have ahead of them.

One of the foundational theories of gay and lesbian identity development was developed in 1979 by Vivian Cass. Cass described a process of six stages of gay and lesbian identity development. (There are not yet theories that describe the identity development of bisexual or transgender students.) The stages help explain students' thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, and therefore help us know how to support students. While these stages are sequential, some people might revisit stages at different points in their life. Following are brief descriptions of the six stages.

1. **Identity Confusion:** "Could I be gay?" This stage begins with the person's first awareness of gay or lesbian thoughts, feelings, and attractions. The person typically feels confused and experiences turmoil.

**Task:** Who am I? – Accept, Deny, Reject.

**Possible Responses:** Will avoid information about lesbians and gays; inhibit behavior; deny homosexuality ("experimenting," "an accident," "just drunk"). Males: May keep emotional involvement separate from sexual contact; Females: May have deep relationships that are non-sexual, though strongly emotional.

**Possible Needs:** May explore internal positive and negative judgments. Will be permitted to be uncertain regarding sexual identity. May find support in knowing that sexual behavior occurs along a spectrum. May receive permission and encouragement to explore sexual identity as a normal experience (like career identity, and social identity).

2. **Identity Comparison:** "Maybe this does apply to me." In this stage, the person accepts the possibility of being gay or lesbian and examines the wider implications of that tentative commitment. Self-alienation becomes isolation.

**Task:** Deal with social alienation.

**Possible Responses:** May begin to grieve for losses and the things she or he will give up by embracing their sexual orientation. May compartmentalize their own sexuality. Accepts lesbian, gay definition of behavior but maintains "heterosexual" identity of self. Tells oneself, "It's only temporary"; "I'm just in love with this particular woman/man," etc.

**Possible Needs:** Will be very important that the person develops own definitions. Will need information about sexual identity, lesbian, gay community resources, encouragement to talk about loss of heterosexual life expectations. May be permitted to keep some "heterosexual" identity (it is not an all or none issue).

3. **Identity Tolerance:** "I'm not the only one." The person acknowledges that he or she is likely gay or lesbian and seeks out other gay and lesbian people to combat feelings of isolation. Increased commitment to being lesbian or gay.

**Task:** Decrease social alienation by seeking out lesbians and gays.

**Possible Responses:** Beginning to have language to talk and think about the issue. Recognition that being lesbian or gay does not preclude other options. Accentuates difference between self and heterosexuals. Seeks out lesbian and gay culture (positive contact leads to more positive sense of self, negative contact leads to devaluation of the culture, stops growth). May try out variety of stereotypical roles.

**Possible Needs:** Be supported in exploring own shame feelings derived from heterosexism, as well as external heterosexism. Receive support in finding positive lesbian, gay community connections. It is particularly important for the person to know community resources.

4. **Identity Acceptance:** "I will be okay." The person attaches a positive connotation to his or her gay or lesbian identity and accepts rather than tolerates it. There is continuing and increased contact with the gay and lesbian culture.

**Task:** Deal with inner tension of no longer subscribing to society's norm, attempt to bring congruence between private and public view of self.

**Possible Responses:** Accepts gay or lesbian self-identification. May compartmentalize "gay life." Maintains less and less contact with heterosexual community. Attempts to "fit in" and "not make waves" within the gay and lesbian community. Begins some selective disclosures of sexual identity. More social coming out; more comfortable being seen with groups of men or women that are identified as "gay." More realistic evaluation of situation.

**Possible Needs:** Continue exploring grief and loss of heterosexual life expectation. Continue exploring internalized "homophobia" (learned shame for heterosexist society.) Find support in making decisions about where, when, and to whom he or she self discloses.

5. **Identity Pride:** "I've got to let people know who I am!" The person divides the world into heterosexuals and homosexuals, and is immersed in gay and lesbian culture while minimizing contact with heterosexuals. Us-them quality to political/social viewpoint.

**Task:** Deal with incongruent views of heterosexuals.

**Possible Responses:** Splits world into "gay" (good) and "straight" (bad). Experiences disclosure crises with heterosexuals as he or she is less willing to "blend in." Identifies gay culture as sole source of support; all gay friends, business connections, social connections.

**Possible Needs:** Receive support for exploring anger issues. Find support for exploring issues of heterosexism. Develop skills for coping with reactions and responses to disclosure to sexual identity. Resist being defensive!

6. **Identity Synthesis:** The person integrates his or her sexual identity with all other aspects of self, and sexual orientation becomes only one aspect of self rather than the entire identity.

**Task:** Integrate gay and lesbian identity so that instead of being the identity, it is an aspect of self.

**Possible Responses:** Continues to be angry at heterosexism, but with decreased intensity. Allows trust of others to increase and build. Gay and lesbian identity is integrated with all aspects of "self." Feels all right to move out into the community and not simply define space according to sexual orientation.

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\*Cass, V. C. (1979). Homosexual identity formation: A theoretical model. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 4, 219-235.

\*Adopted by UNC Safe Zone, Spring 2001

\* Adapted from The University of San Francisco <http://www.ctr.usf.edu/safezone/blue/sexualidentity.htm>

# Fassinger Sexual Identity Model

Ruth Fassinger (1998) developed an inclusive model of lesbian/gay identity formation. It, too, is stage based, but it is multi-faceted. In Fassinger's model, an individual progresses simultaneously in dual aspects of sexual identity: individual and group membership identity.

Fassinger's model has four phases of individual sexual identity development, and four parallel phases of group membership identity development. However, individuals do not necessarily pass through the individual and group phases concurrently; one may be both at individual phase three, and at group membership phase one.

Individual Sexual Identity Development	Group Membership Identity Development
<p><b>Phase 1: Awareness.</b></p> <p>This phase describes an awareness of sexual feelings and desires that are different than heterosexual norms. Non-conscious beliefs about sexuality may be questioned. An individual in this phase may experience confusion, fear, and bewilderment.</p>	<p><b>Phase 1: Awareness.</b></p> <p>In this phase there is awareness that heterosexuality is not a universal norm. The realization that different sexual orientations exist may result in feelings of confusion and bewilderment. The individual is likely to understand that alternative sexual orientations exist, but not be aware of the oppression of those groups.</p>
<p><b>Phase 2: Exploration.</b></p> <p>The second phase involves exploration of sexual feelings toward people of the same sex or one particular individual of the same sex. Sexual behaviors are not necessarily explored. Affective states are likely to include longing, excitement, and wonder.</p>	<p><b>Phase 2: Exploration.</b></p> <p>The individual in the exploration phase searches to define his or her position in the lesbian/gay community and may experience a wide range of attitudes depending on the extent of internalized homophobia and the accessibility of information about the community. An increasing awareness of heterosexism may produce anger, anxiety, and guilt, but exploring the existence of other lesbians/gays may also allow for excitement, curiosity, and joy.</p>

**Phase 3: Deepening/Commitment.**

An individual in this phase may experience a deepening of sexual and emotional knowledge of self as well as a stronger commitment to self-fulfillment. This commitment is likely to affect the group identity process and may require addressing some group membership tasks.

Crystallization of some choices about sexuality may occur in this phase. One is likely to feel some combination of anger, sadness, acceptance, and self-assurance.

**Phase 3: Deepening/Commitment.**

This phase affords a deeper understanding of the values and oppression of the lesbian/gay community. There is an increased awareness of the possible consequences of commitment to involvement in the lesbian/gay community. Feelings of excitement, pride, and rage may emerge.

**Phase 4: Internalization/Synthesis.**

In the final phase, the individual has more fully integrated same-sex desire/love into his or her total self-concept. This is likely the result of years of emotional and sexual exploration. One's role identity is synthesized into ego identity, creating a sense of consistency, certainty, and unwillingness to change.

**Phase 4: Internalization/Synthesis.**

The individual in this phase has internalized his or her identity as a member of the lesbian/gay community and may experience feelings of consistency, fulfillment, and security. An awareness of oneself as a member of an oppressed group does not mean one has become politically active. There is movement toward individualized evaluation of gays and non-gays and toward an integrated worldview.

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\* Adapted from: McCarn & Fassinger, 1996; Fassinger & Miller, 1996

\* Fassinger, R. E. (1998). Lesbian, gay, and bisexual identity and student development theory. In R. L. Sanlo (Ed.), Working with lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender college students: A handbook for faculty and administrators (pp. 13-22). Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

**Transgender:**

Is often used as an umbrella term and refers to those who transgress traditional gender norms. Generally, people who identify as transgender exhibit some behavior(s) or trait(s) that fall outside of traditional gender expectations.

**Transsexual:**

A term referring to a person whose gender identity differs from what is culturally associated with their biological sex at birth. Some, but not all, transsexuals wish to change their bodies to be congruent with their gender identity through sex reassignment surgery. This term is considered outdated. Most transsexual people refer to themselves as transgender.

**Androgyny:**

The mixing of feminine and masculine characteristics; or something that is neither masculine or feminine.

**Cross-dresser:**

A person who enjoys dressing in clothes typically associated with another gender. Preferred over the term “transvestite.” Cross-dressers may be of any sexual Orientation

**Drag**

The act of dressing in gendered clothing as part of a performance. Drag may be performed as a political comment on gender, as parody or as entertainment. Drag performance does not indicate sexuality, gender identity, or sex identity.

**Intersex:**

Intersexuality is a naturally occurring condition that affects the reproductive and sexual system. Intersex people are born with sex chromosomes, external genitalia, or internal reproductive systems that are not considered “standard” for either male or female. The existence of intersexuals shows that there are not just two sexes and that our ways of thinking about sex (trying to force everyone to fit either male or female) is socially constructed.

**Gender Bender/ Gender Queer:**

A person who redefines or plays with gender, or refuses gender altogether. People who bend/break the “rules” of gender and blur the boundaries.

**Two-Spirited:**

An umbrella term for third gender people used among Native American and Canadian First Nations tribes. It usually implies a masculine spirit and a feminine spirit in the same body. It is also used more generally by LGBT and intersex Native Americans to describe themselves. Two-spirited people traditionally had distinct gender and social roles in their tribes. Some are counselors while others are medicine persons or spiritual functionaries.

They study skills including story telling, theater, magic, hypnotism, healing, herbal medicine, ventriloquism, singing, music and dance.

\* Adapted from Design by Kerry John Poynter (TGNNet Arizona, Goodrum, A.J., n o date)

\* Adapted from online encyclopedia Wikipedia at <http://wikipedia.com>

# Transgender Identity Development

Based on D'Augelli's Model of LGB Identity Development (1994). The steps in the model below do not necessarily progress in a forward only method. Also, not all transgender individuals go through every step below. It's important to note that "transgender" covers a wide variety of identities. Each person may experience stages differently and to different degrees depending on how they individually identify and the specific social environmental constraints the individual is faced with.

## **1. Exiting a Traditional Gendered Identity**

- Involves a realization that one is gender variant, attaching a label to this identity, and affirming oneself as gender variant through coming out to others.

## **2. Developing a Personal Transgender Identity**

- Entails achieving the stability that comes from knowing oneself in relation to other transgender people and challenging internalized transphobia.

## **3. Developing a Transgender Social Identity.**

- Focuses on creating a support network of people who know and accept that one is gender variant.

## **4. Becoming a Transgender Offspring**

- Consists of coming out as transgender to family members and reevaluating relationships that may be disrupted by disclosure.

## **5. Developing a Transgender Intimacy Status**

- Involves the creation of intimate physical and emotional relationships.

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## **6. Entering a Transgender Community**

- Making a commitment to political and social action and understanding identity through challenging transphobia.

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\* Bilodeau, B. (2005). Beyond the Gender Binary: New Perspectives on Transgender Student Identity Development. *Journal of Gay and Lesbian Issues in Education*, 3(2)

\* Adapted from the FRIENDS resource manual produced by the University of Florida LGBT Affairs Office which is part of Multicultural and Diversity Affairs in the Dean of Students Office.

# Coming Out

## **What is Coming out?\***

The term “coming out” (of the closet) makes reference to the life-long process of developing a positive LGBT identity. For many, coming out is a very arduous task as they must confront homophobic attitudes, harassment, and discriminatory through this process. A large number of LGBT individuals must first confront their own internalized negativity, stereotypes, and homophobia that they learned and internalized since childhood. Before they can have a truly positive self-identity they must confront these personal constraints and gain appreciation for themselves as LGBT individuals. Coming out is a gradual and on-going process that begins when one acknowledges to themselves that they are LGBT and may or may not eventually let others know that they are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.

### **Why come out?**

- To develop a healthy LGBT identity
- It is honest and real
- To end the stress of living a double life
- To reduce isolation and alienation
- To get increased support from other LGBT people.
- To live a fuller life

### **What do LGBT people want from the people they come out to?**

- Support and acceptance
- Understanding
- Comfort
- To be treated as the same person they were before coming out
- Closer friendship(s)
- That knowing they are LGBT won't affect their friendship
- A hug and a smile
- An acknowledgement of their feeling

### **What are LGBT people are afraid of?**

- Rejection and loss of relationships
- Gossip
- Harassment and abuse
- Being ostracized by family
- Being thrown out of the house
- Loss of financial support
- Losing their job
- Physical Violence
- Being treated differently

### **How might LGBT people feel when coming out to someone?**

- Scared
- Vulnerable
- Relieved
- Wondering how the person will react
- Proud

### **How might someone feel when another person comes out to them?**

- Scared
- Shocked
- Disbelieving
- Uncomfortable
- Not sure what to say or do next
- Wondering why the person “came out”
- Supportive
- Flattered
- Honored
- Angry
- Disgusted

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# Preparing Yourself to Come Out!

- Have a serious talk with yourself and clarify what you hope will happen as a result of coming out to someone else. Also, think about what you expect their reaction to be and how you may prepare yourself for this reaction. It is easier and less scary if you have a distinct purpose and plan when coming out.
- Determine the particular individual or people that you want/plan to come out to. Make sure to let the person know that you want to share something very personal with them, so that they understand this will be serious meaningful conversation. Remember, that you may not be able to prepare them exactly for what you are about to say, but you can create an atmosphere for a serious conversation.
- Select a time and place. Avoid situations that lack privacy because you nor the other person can speak and act openly and honestly if ze doesn't feel there is enough situational privacy. Remember, it is a gradual process.
- Keep your disclosure uncluttered by remembering not to attempt to punish, cause guilt, or gain sympathy to/from the person you are telling. Talk about yourself and your experiences and make sure to use "I" statements. Being LGBT is not anyone's fault.
- Allow time for surprise reactions. It is not likely that you came into self-acceptance overnight and asking someone else to accept and appreciate this new part of your life overnight may be self-defeating. Give it time.
- Know and be ready to identify learning resources for the person you are disclosing to. They may not completely understand what it is like to be LGBT and may need some extra information to gain a more educated and insightful perspective. Utilize journals, websites, magazines, books, movies, other people, etc...
- Set up a support system for yourself. A gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender community that you feel comfortable in and supported by may aide in the coming out process. These are people that may share a similar story or past and may be able to connect with you more closely. This may be a community LGBT group, family, friends, teachers etc... depending on your specific circumstances.

Coming out in today's society is a long and endless process and being proud of being LGBT requires continual confirmation of self.

# Coming out to Parents, Family, and Close Friends

## Be Clear in Your Own Mind

- ***Are you sure about your sexual orientation?***

Don't raise the issue unless you're able to respond with confidence to the question "Are you sure?" Confusion on your part will increase your parents' confusion and decrease their confidence in your judgment.

- ***Are you comfortable with your gay sexuality?***

If you're wrestling with guilt and periods of depression, you'll be better off waiting to tell your parents. Coming out to them may require tremendous energy on your part; it will require a reserve of positive self-image.

- ***Do you have support?***

In the event your parents' reaction devastates you, there should be someone or a group that you can confidently turn to for emotional support and strength. Maintaining your sense of self-worth is critical.

- ***Are you knowledgeable about homosexuality?***

Your parents will probably respond based on a lifetime of information from a homophobic society. If you've done some serious reading on the subject, you'll be able to assist them by sharing reliable information and research.

- ***What's the emotional climate at home?***

If you have the choice of when to tell, consider the timing. Choose a time when they're not dealing with such matters as the death of a close friend, pending surgery or the loss of a job.

- ***Can you be patient?***

Your parents will require time to deal with this information if they haven't considered it prior to your sharing. The process may last from six months to two years.

- ***What's your motive for coming out now?***

Hopefully, it is because you love them and are uncomfortable with the distance you feel. Never come out in anger or during an argument, using your sexuality as a weapon.

- ***Do you have available resources?***

Homosexuality is a subject most non-gay people know little about. Have available at least one of the following: a book addressed to parents, a contact for the local or national Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, the name of a non-gay counselor who can deal fairly with the issue.

- ***Are you financially dependent on your parents?***

If you suspect they are capable of withdrawing college finances or forcing you out of the house, you may choose to wait until they do not have this weapon to hold over you.

- ***What is your general relationship with your parents?***

If you've gotten along well and have always known their love -- and shared your love for them in return -- chances are they'll be able to deal with the issue in a positive way.

- ***What is their moral societal view?***

If they tend to see social issues in clear terms of good/bad or holy/sinful, you may anticipate that they will have serious problems dealing with your sexuality. If, however, they've evidenced a degree of flexibility when dealing with other changing societal matters, you may be able to anticipate a willingness to work this through with you.

- ***Is this your decision?***

Not everyone should come out to their parents. Don't be pressured into it if you're not sure you'll be better off by doing so -- no matter what their response.

### **Stages of Parent/Family/Close Friend Understanding When You Come Out to Them**

These stages are not always followed in the progression shown below and many times people regress and progress and different points in the process of learning about a close person that has just come out to them. This is not a lock-step model.

**Stage 1: Shock** – especially if they do not already know about your sexual orientation.

**Stage 2: Denial** – to help shield themselves from what they may perceive as a painful message.

**Stage 3: Guilt** – They may feel like they have done something wrong and could have “prevented” you from your sexual orientation.

**Stage 4: Feelings Expressed** - At this juncture they may truly begin to express their feelings and emotions regarding your sexual orientation.

**Stage 5: Making Decisions** - they decide how they will view your sexual orientation and the actions they may take. They may be open and supportive; they may take on a “no further discussion is needed” attitude and/or anything in between these extremes.

**Stage 6: True Acceptance** – they decide to truly embrace and support you 100%. Not all parents get to this stage.

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\* Adapted from the FRIENDS resource manual produced by the University of Florida LGBT Affairs Office which is part of Multicultural and Diversity Affairs in the Dean of Students Office.

\* Adapted from “OutProud – Be Yourself : Coming out to your Parents” online at [http://www.outproud.org/brochure\\_coming\\_out.html](http://www.outproud.org/brochure_coming_out.html)

# When Someone Comes Out to You

- ◆ **Don't judge.** Even though you may have different moral or personal beliefs about LGBT people, remember that this person trusts you and has made themselves vulnerable to you. Truly listen to this person.
- ◆ **Acknowledge them.** Let them know that you heard what they said and ask open-ended questions to let them know you are interested and to learn more information yourself.
- ◆ **Recognize the trust.** If someone comes out to you voluntarily, they are showing a huge level of trust to you and they have a tremendous amount of courage. It is helpful to really acknowledge their trust in you and let them know you realize how much courage this took.
- ◆ **Match their words.** This is about their self-identity. They most likely feel comfortable with the words they use to identify themselves. If the person identifies herself as “gay” then use gay; if ze uses the word “queer,” use the word queer.
- ◆ **Mirror emotions.** Be mindful of their emotions about coming out. If they are talking about how easy it was don't talk to them about how difficult it must be. This is counter-productive.
- ◆ **Don't let sex be your guide.** Don't assume that just because someone has had a same-sex sexual encounter that they identify as gay. Also, don't assume that just because someone identifies as gay, that they have had a same-sex sexual encounter.
- ◆ **Maintain contact.** Make sure the person knows they are still important to you. You don't need to alter the amount of interaction you have with this person in the future just because they came out to you.
- ◆ **Keep confidentiality.** LGBT people face many forms of harassment and discrimination in our society. It is important to make sure you never share a person's identity unless it is with someone that ze has shared it with. If you're not sure, don't share.
- ◆ **Give resources.** When someone comes out to you ze may already know about LGBT resources, but ze may not so make sure that you understand local resources and are willing to share those with hir so that they may benefit from these resources. Make an effort to learn about these resources on your own.
- ◆ **Just listen.** The most important thing you can do is just listen. Being LGBT is not a “problem” that needs a solution or something that becomes easy to “deal” with because someone has the right resource. When you really listen to someone tell you about their identity, you are learning more about who that person is.

# Coming Out as LGBT and Black

“For many African Americans, coming out involves additional cultural factors that make the process more challenging but no less rewarding. Some of those challenges include associations with often homophobic churches, strong family foundations that emphasize heterosexuality, homophobia in the black community and racism in the broader gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community. Thanks, however, to brave GLBT African-American activists and their allies effecting change in the church and the community, there is more support and acceptance than ever before.

~ Human Rights Campaign Website

## **Religion:**

- ◆ The church has traditionally played a central role in guiding the day-to-day lives and beliefs of many black Americans.
- ◆ Some churches and individual parishioners have been unwelcoming to people with a different sexual orientation.
- ◆ The stance of the many in the black community on homosexuality is either you don't talk about it or you condemn it; which has historically been dictated by the church.
- ◆ Over the past few decades, new churches have been established specifically to welcome and affirm LGBT people of color.
- ◆ Some long-established black churches also have made the progress toward being more welcoming.

## **Family:**

- ◆ The black family unit often functions as a haven and stronghold of support in a society where racism is still prevalent.
- ◆ Often, there is no place in this fortress of strength for a “weakness”, as homosexuality is often viewed.
- ◆ LGBTQ children are sometimes viewed as being detrimental and damaging to the black family and give a negative impression of the whole black community.

## **Society and Media:**

- ◆ Within the LGBTQ community, many of the same prejudices that we see in the rest of society based on race, class, and ethnicity still exist; which create unique challenges to black LGBTQ Americans trying to fit into the LGBTQ community.
- ◆ Many LGBTQ communities and organizations have been viewed as historically white and can be uncomfortable or unwelcoming for some black Americans.
- ◆ Black LGBTQ Americans have been virtually invisible in history and when they are depicted, their sexual orientation is rarely mentioned.
- ◆ The media and entertainment would rarely show LGBTQ people as anything but white.

+ Adapted from Coming Out for African Americans, printed by the Human Rights Campaign.

+ Adapted from the FRIENDS resource manual produced by the University of Florida LGBT Affairs Office which is part of Multicultural and Diversity Affairs in the Dean of Students Office.

# Coming out as LGBT and Latino/Hispanic

“Although Latina/o Americans come from various cultural backgrounds, many who come out as gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender share similar experiences and challenges. Some, who were raised Roman Catholic, must reconcile themselves with the church's teachings that to act on one's homosexuality is sinful. Language differences often make finding resources and support difficult, and a lack of GLBT Latinas/os in media and entertainment perpetuates invisibility.”

~Human Rights Campaign

## **Religion:**

- ◆ A large proportion of the Latino/a community affiliate religiously with the catholic, protestant, Jewish, Islamic religious communities. In all of these communities, the bible or their holy book is frequently quoted as the source by people who condemn homosexuality. The people who condemn homosexuality using the bible support their view with a literal reading of the texts and statements that may be taken out of context, ignoring their historical and cultural origins, to use them against people they may fear or dislike/hate.
- ◆ Many supportive religions do exist. Some lists of these can be found out <http://christiangays.com> , <http://spiritualfruits.com> , and <http://gaylife.about.com/od/religion/a/gaychurch.htm>

## **Family:**

- ◆ Many Latino families in the U.S. are first-generation and second-generation families that have a very strong support network. Coming out as LGBT could potentially break this support network.
- ◆ The family, in many Latino families, is an institution that defines gender and sexual relations between men and women. Any behavior derivating from this must often be kept secret.
- ◆ Responsibility and honor to and for one's family is very important.
- ◆ While many Latinos/as may come out to one family member, the close familial connections make it hard to keep being LGBT private if they tell one member of the family.
- ◆ Since Latino families deal with and solve most of their own problems, as they have been raised to do, there is little incentive or tradition to form or join support groups.

## **Machismo:**

- ◆ Many cultures have double standards by which male and female sexual and gender behavior is judged. In Hispanic and Latino cultures, these values and beliefs are often referred to as machismo and are highly valued. Machismo doesn't have to lead to homophobia but it can if it leads to the “repudiation” of all “feminine virtues” in men and any suspicion of masculinity in women.

### **Media:**

- ◆ Spanish television in the U.S. often portrays gay men in very stereotypical, effeminate and negative ways and women in very masculine and negative ways as well. Often times these characters are shown as ridiculous and humorous characters on Spanish soap operas. The sexual orientation of successful gay persons is avoided, depriving LGBT youth of important Spanish role models. Some soap operas and other shows have very recently begun showing gay and lesbian characters in a positive light.

### **Tradition:**

- ◆ Tradition is very important and highly valued in Latino/a communities.

### **Economic Circumstances:**

- ◆ Hispanic/Latino same-sex families in California are disadvantaged compared to white non-Hispanic/Latino same-sex families in terms of income, homeownership, and disability.
- ◆ Female same-sex households in California in which both partners are Hispanic/Latina earn less in the median annual household income than white non-Hispanic/Latina female same-sex households.
- ◆ Some Hispanic and Latino LGBT individuals, parents and allies are highly motivated to form or join support or civil groups, but they are limited by their financial circumstances and/or overwhelming work schedules.

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\* Adapted from Coming Out for African Americans, printed by the Human Rights Campaign.

\* Adapted from the FRIENDS resource manual produced by the University of Florida LGBT Affairs Office which is part of Multicultural and Diversity Affairs in the Dean of Students Office.



# Coming Out as LGBT and Asian Pacific American\*

“Asian Pacific Americans (APA) come from dozens of different countries, making that population one of the most diverse communities in America. The diversity of language and ethnicity among Asian Pacific Americans is as varied as the continents and islands from which they come. While this may mean that cultural backgrounds vary from one person to the next; gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) Asian Pacific Americans still share similar challenges and experiences during the coming out process.”

~Human Rights Campaign

## **Family:**

- ◆ Coming out to family is a tremendous challenge.
- ◆ Many fear rejection, disappointing their parents or being seen as dishonoring the family name.
- ◆ The subject of LGBT issues is often treated with silence, which can feel like rejection.
- ◆ Discussion of LGBT issues with a family breaks a rule of the culture, which is to never talk about “problems.”
- ◆ Not unusual for an LGBT APA to be out in every aspect in life, except to family.
- ◆ When parents are aware of a child’s sexual orientation or gender identity, that information is often hidden from family friends.

## **Religion:**

- ◆ There are traditional connections among family, culture, and religion within the community.
- ◆ The interconnectedness of culture and religion means that any homophobia related to faith can have a devastating effect.
- ◆ Experiences with religion vary greatly depending on the religion practiced by a particular family, individual, or region. Some religions such as Hinduism are fairly accepting, while others such as Catholicism and Islam tend to be less accepting.

## **Society:**

- ◆ Coming out experiences are often intensified by a lack of visibility, racism and language barriers.
- ◆ There is still a lack of visibility of APAs within LGBT groups, publications, and media sources.
- ◆ There is a lack of positive images of LGBT APAs in popular entertainment and media.
- ◆ APAs can face racism within the LGBT community, sometimes as overt discrimination and other times as the lack of representation.

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# Let's Be Real: The Facts\*

## **Homophobic Remarks :**

- ⊕ 84.3 % of LGBT students report hearing “faggot” or “dyke” frequently or often.
- ⊕ 90.8% report hearing the expression “that’s so gay” or “you’re so gay” frequently or often.
- ⊕ 23.6% reported hearing homophobic remarks from faculty and staff at least some of the time.
- ⊕ 81.8% reported that faculty or staff never intervened or intervened only some of the time when present while homophobic remarks were made.

## **Harassment and Assault :**

- ⊕ 83.2% of LGBT students reported being verbally harassed because of their sexual orientation.
- ⊕ 48.3 % of LGBT students of color reported being verbally harassed because of both their sexual orientation and their race/ethnicity.
- ⊕ 11% of LGBT students have received hate mail.
- ⊕ 65.4% of LGBT students report being sexually harassed (sexual comments, inappropriate touching, etc...)
- ⊕ 74.2% of lesbian and bisexual women reported being sexually harassed.
- ⊕ 73.7% of transgender students reported being sexually harassed.
- ⊕ 41.9% of LGBT students reported being physically harassed (shoved, pushed, etc...) because of their sexual orientation.
- ⊕ 21.1% of LGBT students reported being physically assaulted (punched, kicked, injured with a weapon, etc...) because of their sexual orientation.
- ⊕ 13.7% reported experiencing physical assault based on their gender expression.
- ⊕ 20% of LGBT students fear for their personal safety.

## **Feeling Safe on Campus :**

- ⊕ 68.6% of LGBT students reported feeling unsafe on campus because of their sexual orientation.
- ⊕ 89.5% of transgender students reported feeling unsafe based on their gender expression.
- ⊕ 31.8% of LGBT students had skipped a class at least once in the past month because they felt unsafe based on their sexual orientation.
- ⊕ 30.9% had missed at least one entire day of class in the past month because they felt safe based on sexual orientation.
- ⊕ 18% of LGBT students have had their personal property defaced or vandalized.
- ⊕ 50% of LGBT Students concealed their identity to avoid intimidation.

## **LGBT Resources and support in school:**

- ⊕ 80.6% of students reported there were no positive portrayals of LGBT people, history, or events in any of their classes.
- ⊕ 39.7% of students reported that there were no teachers or school personnel who were supportive of LGBT students at their school.

## **Suicide:**

- ⊕ Nearly all LGBT suicides are between the ages of 16 and 21
- ⊕ 1 in 3 LGBT teens will attempt suicide.
- ⊕ 30% of all teen suicides are by LGBT teens.
- ⊕ Suicide is the leading cause of death for LGBT Teens

\* Adapted from the FRIENDS resource manual produced by the University of Florida LGBT Affairs Office which is part of Multicultural and Diversity Affairs in the Dean of Students Office.

\* Adapted from GLSEN 2001 National School Climate Survey, taken by 904 students in 48 states. <http://www.glsen.org>

\* Tremblay, P. (2000) Suicide Research Attempt Data: Thirty G(L)B samples. In agreement with US Department of Health and Human Services.

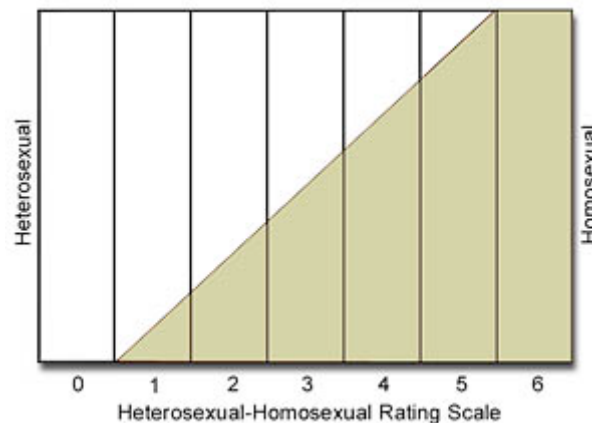
# Kinsey Scale and Current Research\*

## The Kinsey Scale

Males do not represent two discrete populations, heterosexual and homosexual. The world is not to be divided into sheep and goats. It is a fundamental of taxonomy that nature rarely deals with discrete categories... The living world is a continuum in each and every one of its aspects, (p 639).

While emphasizing the continuity of the gradations between exclusively heterosexual and exclusively homosexual histories, it has seemed desirable to develop some sort of classification which could be based on the relative amounts of heterosexual and homosexual experience or response in each history... An individual may be assigned a position on this scale, for each period in his life.... A seven-point scale comes nearer to showing the many gradations that actually exist, (pp. 639, 656)

Kinsey, et al. (1948). *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*.



- 0- Exclusively heterosexual with no homosexual
- 1- Predominantly heterosexual, only incidentally homosexual
- 2- Predominantly heterosexual, but more than incidentally homosexual
- 3- Equally heterosexual and homosexual
- 4- Predominantly homosexual, but more than incidentally heterosexual
- 5- Predominantly homosexual, only incidentally heterosexual
- 6- Exclusively homosexual

### **Kinsey's Findings:**

- ⊕ 4-6% of men were rated as (6) Exclusively Homosexual
- ⊕ 10% of men were rated as (4) predominately homosexual, but more than incidentally heterosexual, (5) predominately homosexual, only incidentally heterosexual or (6) exclusively homosexual.
- ⊕ 18% of men were rated (3) Equally heterosexual and homosexual (4) predominately homosexual, but more than incidentally heterosexual, (5) predominately homosexual, only incidentally heterosexual or (6) exclusively homosexual.
- ⊕ 37% of all men experienced orgasm in a sexual activity with another man at some point in their life.
- ⊕ 60% of all men had some type of homosexual relationship before the age of 16.
- ⊕ 30% of all men had some type of homosexual relationship between ages 20-24.

Percentages for women were about half that of men. Remember, this research was done during a time period that was perceived as a time of “lower sexual activity” for women than recent research has indicated. Kinsey’s research was conducted primarily on college educated, volunteer subjects and prisoners (not a random nor representative sample). It did not clearly separate out behaviors which did not persist from adolescence into adult life.

In a more recent survey ( 2002 by National Survey for Family Growth consisting of 12,571 men and women ages 15-44):

- ⊕ 4% of men and women described themselves as homosexual or bisexual.
- ⊕ 14% of women (age 18-29) reported at least one homosexual experience.
- ⊕ Among adults aged 15-44, almost 3% of men and 4% of women reported having sexual experience(s) with a member of the same sex within the past year.
- ⊕ Over their lifetime, 6% of men and 11% of women had same sex sexual experiences at least once.
- ⊕ ~1% of men and ~3% of women had both male and female sexual partners in the previous 12 months.
- ⊕ Nearly 6% of all men (aged 15-44) reported having oral sex with another man at some time in their lives.
- ⊕ Nearly 4% of all men (aged 15-44) reported having anal sex with another man.

# Klein Sexual Orientation Grid\*

The Klein Sexual Orientation Grid attempts to further measure sexual orientation by expanding upon the earlier Kinsey scale which categorizes from 1 (exclusively heterosexual), 2 (heterosexual mostly), 3 (somewhat heterosexual), 4 (both sexes equally), 5 (somewhat homosexual), 6 (homosexual mostly), to 7 (homosexual only). As you travel the scale, you could be determined to be 'Predominantly heterosexual, more than incidentally homosexual' at interval 3, 'Predominantly homosexual, only incidentally heterosexual' at interval 6 and anywhere in between. At the centre, Interval 4 is 'Equally Heterosexual and Homosexual.' Klein explores sexuality on 6 different factors.

Past (entire life up until a year ago)	Present (last 12 months)	Ideal (what would you like?)
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Sexual Attraction: To whom are you sexually attracted?

Sexual Behaviour: With whom have you actually had sex?

Sexual Fantasies: About whom are your sexual fantasies?

Emotional preference: Who do you feel more drawn to or close to emotionally?

Lifestyle preference: In which community do you like to spend your time? In which do you feel most comfortable?

Self-identification: how do you label or identify yourself?

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\* Tamar Lewin, "Nationwide Survey Includes Data on Teenage Sexual Habits," *New York Times*, Sept. 16, 2005

\* Klein, F., M.D. (1993). *The Bisexual Option*. Harrington Park Press

\* Adapted from "Kinsey Studies" by the Kinsey Institute at : <http://www.indiana.edu/~kinsey/research/ak-data.html>

\* Adapted from the FRIENDS resource manual produced by the University of Florida LGBT Affairs Office which is part of Multicultural and Diversity Affairs in the Dean of Students Office.

# Myths and Reality: Bisexuality\*

**Myth:** There's no such thing as bisexuality.

**Reality:** Bisexuality is a genuine sexual orientation, just like homosexuality and heterosexuality. Bisexual people have existed throughout history.

**Myth:** Bisexuality is just a phase. "Bisexual" people will eventually wind up being either gay or straight.

**Reality:** Many people identify as bisexual for their entire lifetimes.

**Myth:** People who consider themselves bisexual are actually lesbian/gay, but haven't fully accepted themselves and finished coming out of the closet.

**Reality:** Bisexuality is a legitimate sexual orientation. Many bisexuals are completely out of the closet as bisexuals, while others continue to hide their identity.

**Myth:** Bisexuals are shallow and narcissistic and are promiscuous swingers who are attracted to every man and/or woman they meet.

**Reality:** The "sex" in bisexuality gets overemphasized. Bisexual people have a range of sexual behaviors like all other sexualities. Our culture projects onto bisexuals its fascination with and condemnation of sex and pleasure. In reality, bisexuals are just like everyone else.

**Myth:** Bisexual people just can't make up their minds.

**Reality:** Bisexual people are often very comfortable and settled with themselves and their sexuality.

**Myth:** Bisexual people have multiple partners and/or can't have monogamous relationships.

**Reality:** Although some stereotypes assert that bisexual people can't commit to relationships with one person because they're always attracted to people of the other gender, bisexual people are no more or less likely to have multiple sexual partners than gay, lesbian and straight people.

**Myth:** Bisexual people spread sexually transmitted diseases.

**Reality:** Bisexual people are no more likely to carry HIV/AIDS or other STDs than gay or straight people.

**Myth:** Bisexual people face less discrimination than gay, lesbian and transgender people.

**Reality:** The entire gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community faces discrimination. In 33 states, for example, it's still legal to fire bisexual people based solely on their sexual orientation, just as it is for gays and lesbians. And bisexual people face unique problems in society due to the common myths and stereotypes about bisexuality.

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\* Adapted from the Human Rights Campaign

\* Adapted from the FRIENDS resource manual produced by the University of Florida LGBT Affairs Office which is part of Multicultural and Diversity Affairs in the Dean of Students Office.

# Legal Limits for Transgender People\*

## **PROTECTIONS FOR TRANSGENDER PEOPLE UNDER CALIFORNIA STATE DISABILITY LAW**

**By Shannon Minter, Esq., Legal Director, National Center for Lesbian Rights and  
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The Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA) prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities. See Cal. Gov't Code § 12900 *et seq.* Assembly Bill No. 2222 was enacted in 2000. It is codified at Cal. Gov't Code § 1296 *et seq.* and is referred to as the Poppink Act. The Poppink Act expanded the protections afforded to people with disabilities under FEHA in a number of ways. This memorandum provides a brief overview of how the Poppink Act altered FEHA with regard to transgender people.

- I. **The Poppink Act Changed the FEHA To Include Transgender People.**
  - A. **The Old Law Followed the Americans with Disabilities Act in Excluding Transsexualism and Gender Identity Disorders.**

Prior to the Poppink Act, FEHA defined "disability" to include the same list of exclusions found in the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).<sup>1</sup> The ADA provides that the term "disability" shall not include: transvestism, transsexualism, pedophilia, exhibitionism, voyeurism, gender identity disorders not resulting from physical impairments, compulsive gambling, kleptomania, pyromania, and psychoactive substance use disorders resulting from current illegal use of drugs. See 42 U.S.C. § 12211.<sup>2</sup>

- B. **The Poppink Act Removed the Exclusions for Transsexualism and Gender Identity Disorders.**

The Poppink Act amended FEHA by deleting any reference to the exclusions in the ADA. Instead, FEHA now includes an independent list of excluded conditions. The new list does not exclude transsexualism and gender identity disorders. See Cal. Gov't Code § 1296(i)(5) & (k)(6). Accordingly, since the Poppink Act became effective on January 1, 2001, transsexual people and others who suffer from gender identity disorder are entitled to the same legal protection as persons with other qualifying conditions.

**II. Transsexualism/Gender Identity Disorder Meet the Criteria for a Protected Condition Under the Poppink Act.**

**A. Protected Disabilities under FEHA.**

Under FEHA, any physical or mental condition that limits a major life activity is a protected disability. Cal. Gov't Code § 12926(i) & (k). Major life activities include physical, mental, and social activities and working. Cal. Gov't Code § 12926(i)(1)(C). An impairment limits a major life activity if it makes achievement of the activity difficult. Cal. Gov't Code § 12926(i)(1)(B).

FEHA also protects people who are regarded or treated as having a disability, even if they do not. And it also protects people who have a record or history of having a disability. Cal. Gov't Code § 12926(i)(3) & (4) and 12962(k)(3) & (4).

Under FEHA, mitigating measures may not be considered in determining whether a person is disabled. Cal. Gov't Code § 12926(i)(1)(A). This means that people who are currently stable and healthy due to medications, assistive devices, other medical treatments, or reasonable accommodations are still protected. *Id.*

**B. Transsexualism and Gender Identity Disorder May Be Protected Disabilities under the FEHA.**

Transsexualism and gender identity disorder are mental and physiological conditions characterized by a strong and persistent desire to be a member of the other sex, coupled with a continued discomfort with one's biological sex. *See* DSM-IV at 532-538. Treatment may include psychotherapy, hormone therapy, and sex-reassignment surgeries to conform an individual's physical sex to his or her gender identity. *Id.*

Transsexualism has long been recognized as serious medical condition by the medical community and by many courts, including those in California. *See, e.g., Smith v. Rasmussen*, 57 F. Supp. 2d 736, 740-743 (N.D. Iowa 1999) (providing a detailed summary of the current medical perspective on transsexualism); *Pinneke v. Preisser*, 623 F.2d 546 (8th Cir. 1980) (describing sex reassignment as the only recognized and effective treatment for transsexualism); *Doe v. State*, 257 N.W.2d 816 (Minn. 1977) (describing transsexualism as "a very complex medical and psychological problem which is generally developed by individuals early in life"); *G.B. v. Lackner*, 80 Cal. App. 3d 64 (Cal. Ct. App. 1978) (describing the seriousness of transsexualism as a medical condition); *J.D. v. Lackner*, 80 Cal. App. 3d 90 (Cal. Ct. App. 1978) (same). *See also Doe v. United States Postal Service*, 37 Fair Empl. Prac. Cas. (BNA) 1867 (D.D.C. 1985) (holding that a male-to-female transsexual, who was denied employment with the U.S. Postal Service on account of her transsexuality, was eligible to pursue a discrimination claim under the federal Rehabilitation Act<sup>3</sup>); *Conway v. City of Hartford*, No. CV 950553003, 1997 WL 78585 (Conn. Super. Ct. Feb. 4, 1997) (holding that transsexualism is a covered mental disorder under the Connecticut statute prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability).



Without treatment, most transsexual people are severely limited in their ability to function in everyday life. Even with treatment, some transsexual people continue to be limited with regard to some major life activities. As a result, many transsexual individuals qualify for protection under FEHA because they have a mental or physical condition that limits a major life activity. *See* Cal. Gov't. Code § 12926(i)(1) & (k)(1). Transsexual and transgender people are often perceived by others as having a mental or physical condition that limits their ability to perform major life activities. Where this is the case, they are protected under the "regarded as" prong of the definition of disability. Cal. Gov't. Code § 12926(i)(4), (k)(4). Finally, individuals who have a past record of transsexualism or gender identity disorder are also protected. Cal Gov't Code § (i)(3) & (k)(3).

### III. **How Does Reasonable Accommodation Apply to Transgender People?**

The FEHA disability provisions protect transgender individuals from discriminatory adverse employment actions on the basis of disability. The provisions also require employers to provide reasonable accommodations that enable transgender employees to live according to their gender identity, in keeping with the standards of care for the treatment of gender identity disorders.<sup>4</sup>

Typical examples of reasonable accommodation would include allowing a transgender person to dress according to their gender identity and arranging for safe and appropriate bathroom use. In general, reasonable accommodation for a transsexual employee means permitting the person to undergo sex-reassignment, if he or she is transitioning on the job, or respecting the person's post-reassignment sex, if he or she has already completed sex-reassignment.

#### **Hate Crimes and Hate Crime Legislation:**

- ⊕ Since 1989, approximately one person is killed in the U.S. per month because of their perceived Gender Identity. It is thought that this number is under-reported.
- ⊕ In 2003, there were 17 known anti-transgender murders in the U.S. In 2004, there were 9.
- ⊕ While 46 states have hate crime legislation, only eight (California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Minnesota, Missouri, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, and Vermont) and Washington D.C. include the category of gender identity or expression as protected.
- ⊕ Only Minnesota, California, and New Jersey have laws that ban harassment against students in public schools based on their gender identity or expression.

#### **Anti-discrimination Laws:**

- ⊕ California, Minnesota, Illinois, New Mexico, and Rhode Island are the only states that ban discrimination based on gender identity and expression in housing, public accommodations, and employment.

- ⊕ Close to 70 municipalities, from New York City to New Hope, PA, do protect the rights of gender-variant people.
- ⊕ Ohio, Idaho, and Tennessee deny transsexuals the right to change the sex designation on their birth certificates, while courts in Texas and Kansas have refused to recognize the new birth certificates of transsexuals.

### **Anti-discrimination Policies:**

- ⊕ Since 1996, more than 20 colleges and college systems have added gender identity and expression to their non-discrimination policies.
- ⊕ 50 Fortune 500 companies have added gender identity and expression to their non-discrimination policies.

### **Medical Care:**

- ⊕ Most medical private plans and insurers, many state Medicaid statutes, and federal Medicare explicitly exclude coverage for sex reassignment surgeries and related treatments such as hormone injections.

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\* Adapted from the FRIENDS resource manual produced by the University of Florida LGBT Affairs Office which is part of Multicultural and Diversity Affairs in the Dean of Students Office.

\* Adapted from The National Center for Lesbian's Rights

\* Beemyn, B. (2004). *The Legal and Political Rights of Transgender People*. Retrieved June 11, 2007 from Ohio State University, Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Student Services Web Site: <http://multiculturalcenter.osu.edu/glbts/>

# How Might Needs of "T" be Different from "LGB" ?

- ✦ They may identify as heterosexual, so may not be dealing with sexual identity issues (they will likely be seen by society as lesbian or gay, though, because of the common stereotype or because of appearances. Take, for example, someone who identifies as female but who looks male and who is dating a biological man. She will see this as a heterosexual relationship or maybe a transsexual relationship, but most people will see two men together and perceive it as a relationship).
- ✦ They may experience more verbal and physical attacks than most LGB people if they are cross-dressed or otherwise visibly gender variant. After all, most LGB harassment stems from the perceived violation of gender norms.
- ✦ They are generally less accepted in society than LGB people, in large part because of ignorance. There is little understanding of transgender lives; they are not visible in popular culture (beyond the stereotypical images of drag queens) and almost no research has been done on their experiences.
- ✦ They also often experience a lack of acceptance from the LGB community, which uses trans people as entertainers, but frequently doesn't want to see them otherwise.
- ✦ As a result of the lack of acceptance in the dominant culture and LGB society, they often lack a community and don't have role models or many positive images. Consequently, trans people, especially trans youth, may feel more isolated and more marginalized than non-trans LGB people.
- ✦ Trans students may want to remain closeted because of the legitimate fear of how they will be treated by their professors, employers, and in their field.
- ✦ If transitioning, they will need access to medical care and mental health care. But the medical profession often fails to support them because of ignorance and a traditional, psychoanalytical understanding of transsexuality.
- ✦ If transitioning, they will need to change their identification and all records and documents.
- ✦ While butch lesbians and other masculine-appearing women are harassed in women's restrooms, transsexual women are especially vulnerable to attack and embarrassment when they try to use the public bathroom appropriate for their gender.

# Obstacles for Transgender Youth\*

Transgender youth often face enormous hardships when they acknowledge and express their gender identity.

- ⊕ They may be thrown out of the house when their family discovers that they are transgender, often forcing them to live on the streets.
- ⊕ They typically face harassment and abuse in school to such an extent that they quit, which makes it hard for them to get a decent paying job (for example, a survey of more than 250 transgender people in Washington, D.C. found that forty percent had not finished high school and another 40 percent were unemployed).
- ⊕ Even if they are able to get an education, they have difficulty finding and keeping almost any kind of job because of discrimination, forcing many to become sex workers.
- ⊕ If they live on the streets or are a sex worker, they are at a greater risk for abusing drugs, becoming infected with HIV, and being subjected to anti-transgender violence.
- ⊕ In the last decade, an average of one person per month is known to have been killed because of their gender identity or expression.
- ⊕ Many lack access to health care, including proper counseling and medical supervision for those who are in the process of transitioning. And when they do get medical treatment, they frequently face discrimination and hostility from health-care workers. Consequently, some transsexuals decide to treat themselves by buying underground hormones, which can contain dangerous if not deadly chemicals.
- ⊕ Because gender reassignment surgery can cost more than \$50,000 and is not covered by most health insurance policies, even most middle-class transsexuals cannot afford the procedures.
- ⊕ The ultimate result is often high rates of depression, drug and alcohol abuse, and thoughts of suicide among transgender people (thirty-five percent of the respondents to the D.C. survey reported that they had seriously considered suicide).
- ⊕ Transgender people who can "pass," usually middle-class whites, often seek to remain closeted, so trans youth often do not have visible role models and mentors.

\* Beemyn, B. (2004). *The Legal and Political Rights of Transgender People*. Retrieved June 11, 2007 from Ohio State University, Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Student Services Website: <http://multiculturalcenter.osu.edu/glbts>

# Health Care, Social Service, and Transgender People: Helpful Hints

**Outing:** Remember that revealing someone's transgender status without hir expressed permission has the same potential for harm as outing a gay, lesbian, or bisexual person, if not more. Outing is a complete invasion of privacy.

**Appearance:** Do not appear someone who appears to be cross-dressed is a "transvestite." The person may not be presenting that gender full-time, or they may intend to in the future; just not now.

*Usage Tip:* Instead of stigmatizing "transvestite", use *Male Cross-dresser* or *Female Cross-dresser* if it's clear that they are not living full-time nor intend to do so.

**Living Status:** If a person is living full-time in a gender not associated with their birth sex, that person should always be referred to with terms appropriate to their presenting gender, regardless of the surgical state of their body; unless they request you use other terms.

*Usage Tips:* Transgender Woman is appropriate for Male-to-Female persons.  
Transgender Man is appropriate for Female-to-Male persons.  
Transgender Person is appropriate for either of the above two.  
Transgender People is appropriate for mixed groups.

**Surgical Status:** Almost all transsexuals- pre-operative, post-operative, or non-operative – and many transgender people are extremely sensitive about their surgical status and/or physical body's state. Questions about this should be avoided or, unless medically necessary, asked very sensitively. Overall, this information should be considered confidential and not shared with others unless medically necessary.

*Usage Tips:* Regardless of their surgical status, the appropriate term for a Male-to-Female transsexual is Transsexual Woman, and for a Female-to-Male transsexual, Transsexual Male.

**Avoid Aspersion by Using Quotation Marks:** Never put pronouns or possessive adjectives of transgender persons in quotes. Never put their sexual orientation(s) or genitalia in quotes.

**Pronouns and Possessive Adjectives:** It is extremely offensive to refer to transgender persons using pronouns and possessive adjectives that refer to their birth sex.

*Usage Tips:* Use pronouns and adjectives appropriate to the transgender person's gender expression. If you are uncertain, ask what they prefer. Some people prefer the pronoun ze (pronounced "zee") in lieu of she/he, and the new possessive pronoun hir (pronounced "here") in lieu of his/her.

**Self-Identification:** Not all transgender people use the same terminology to describe themselves. When in doubt, just ask an individual transgender person how they wish to be identified.

*Usage Tip:* If you're not sure how to address someone, just ask. You can also simply

use their first name or last name. It's sometimes customary for patients or clients in clinical situations to be asked by their last name when it's time to see their providers.

\* Adapted from the FRIENDS resource manual produced by the University of Florida LGBT Affairs Office which is part of Multicultural and Diversity Affairs in the Dean of Students Office.

# Defining Homophobia\*

**Homophobia:** The fear, hatred, disgust, mistreatment, or intolerance of same-sex intimacy, relationships, “atypical” gender behavior, and/or people who identify as or are perceived as LGBT.

**Heterosexism:** The belief in the inherent superiority of heterosexuality and, thereby, its right to dominance. It carries with it the assumption that everyone one meets is heterosexual.

Homophobia is the many ways that people are oppressed, discriminated against, and harassed on the basis of their sexual orientation. Sometimes homophobia is intentional, where there is clear intent to hurt LGBT people. Homophobia can also be unintentional, where there is no desire to hurt anyone, but where people are unaware of the consequences of their actions.

There are four interrelated types of homophobia: personal, interpersonal, institutional, and cultural. Institutional and cultural homophobia are often referred to as heterosexism.

<p><b>Personal homophobia:</b> is prejudice. It is the personal belief that lesbian, gay, and bisexual people are sinful, immoral, sick, inferior to heterosexuals, or incomplete men or women. Prejudice towards any group is learned behavior; people have to be taught to be prejudiced.</p> <p>Personal homophobia is sometimes experienced as the fear of being perceived as lesbian, gay or bisexual. This fear can lead to trying to “prove” one’s heterosexuality. Anyone, regardless of their sexual orientation can experience personal homophobia. When this happens with lesbian, gay, and bisexual people, it is sometimes called “internalized homophobia.”</p>	<p><b>Interpersonal homophobia</b> is the fear, dislike, or hatred of people believed to be lesbian, gay, or bisexual. This hatred or dislike may be expressed by name-calling, verbal and physical harassment, and individual acts of discrimination or by the rejection of friends, co-workers, and/or family members.</p> <p>Lesbian, gay and bisexual people are regularly attacked for no other reason than their assailants’ homophobia. Most people act out their fears of LGB people in non-violent, more commonplace ways. Relatives often shun their lesbian and gay family members; co-workers are distant and cold to lesbian and gay employees; or people simply never ask about acquaintances’ lives.</p>
<p><b>Institutional homophobia</b> refers to the many ways in which government, business, religious institutions, and other institutions and organizations discriminate against people on the basis of their sexual orientation. These organizations and institutions set policies, allocate resources, and maintain both written and unwritten standards for the behavior of their members in ways that discriminate.</p> <p>For example, many religious organizations have started policies against LGB people holding offices; many schools fail or refuse to allocate funds and</p>	<p><b>Cultural homophobia</b> refers to social standards and norms that dictate that being heterosexual is better or more moral than being LGB, and that everyone is heterosexual or should be. While these standards are not written down as such, they are spelled out each day in the television shows and print advertisements where virtually every character is heterosexual and every sexual assumption made by most adults in social situations that all “normal” children will eventually be attracted to and/or marry a person of the opposite sex.</p>

staff for LGB support groups; and many businesses have norms for social events which prevent LGB employees from bringing their same-sex partners while heterosexual employees bring their opposite sex partners.

Often, heterosexuals don't realize that these standards exist, while LGB people are acutely aware of the standards. The feeling that results is one of being an outsider in society.

\* Adapted from the FRIENDS resource manual produced by the University of Florida LGBT Affairs which is part of the UF DSO.

# What's Heterosexual Privilege?\*

**Living without ever having to think twice, face, confront, engage, or cope with anything on these pages. Heterosexuals can address these phenomena, but social/political forces do not require them to do so.**

If you are heterosexual (or, in some cases, simply perceived as heterosexual):

- ⊕ You can go wherever you want and know that you will not be harassed, beaten, or killed because of your sexuality (16 people were known to be murdered in 2000 because of being perceived as gay, 29 were killed in 1999, and 26 in 1998)
- ⊕ You do not have to worry about being mistreated by the police or victimized by the criminal justice system because of your sexuality
- ⊕ You can express affection (kissing, hugging, and holding hands) in most social situations and not expect hostile or violent reactions from others
- ⊕ You are more likely to see sexually-explicit images of people of your sexuality without these images provoking public consternation or censorship
- ⊕ You can discuss your relationships and publicly acknowledge your partner (such as by having a picture of your lover on your desk) without fearing that people will automatically disapprove or think that you are being "blatant"
- ⊕ You can legally marry the person whom you love a you can receive tax breaks, health and insurance coverage, and spousal legal rights through being in a long-tem relationship
- ⊕ You can express yourself sexually without the fear of being prosecuted for breaking the law (sodomy laws were enforceable in 16 states and were used to deny civil rights to lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals until 2003)
- ⊕ You can join the military and be open about your sexuality

- ⊕ You can expect that your children will be given texts in school that implicitly support your kind of family unit and that they will not be taught that your sexuality is a "perversion"
- ⊕ You can approach the legal system, social service organizations, and government agencies without fearing discrimination because of your sexuality
- ⊕ You can raise, adopt, and teach children without people believing that you will molest them or force them into your sexuality. Moreover, people generally will not try to take away your children because of your sexuality
- ⊕ You can belong to the religious denomination of your choice and know that your sexuality will not be denounced by its religious leaders
- ⊕ You can easily find a neighborhood in which residents will accept how you have constituted your household
- ⊕ You know that you will not be fired from a job or denied a promotion because of your sexuality
- ⊕ You can work in traditionally male- or female-dominated occupations without it being considered "unnatural" for someone of your sexuality
- ⊕ You can expect to see people of your sexuality positively presented on nearly every television show and in nearly every movie
- ⊕ You can expect to be around others of your sexuality most of the time. You do not have to worry about being the only one of your sexuality in a class, on a job, or in a social situation
- ⊕ You can act, dress, and talk as you choose without it being considered a reflection on people of your sexuality
- ⊕ If you were to commit a sexual crime (such as rape or incest), it would not be viewed as a direct result of your sexuality
- ⊕ You can teach about lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals without being seen as having a bias because of your sexuality or forcing a "homosexual agenda" on student
- ⊕ Talking about your relationship, and what projects, vacations, and family planning you and your lover/partner are creating.
- ⊕ Expressing pain when a relationship ends and having other people notice and attend to your pain.
- ⊕ Receiving social acceptance from neighbors, colleagues, and new friends.
- ⊕ Not having to hide and lie about gay/lesbian friends and social activities.



- ⊕ Living comfortably in a residence hall without enduring fear of rejection from floor or roommates.
- ⊕ Increased possibilities for getting a job, receiving on the job training and promotion.  
Being employed as a teacher in pre-school through high school without fear of being fired any day because you are assumed to corrupt children.
- ⊕ Public recognition and support for an intimate relationship.
- ⊕ Social expectations of longevity and stability for your committed relationships.
- ⊕ Joint child custody.
- ⊕ Paid leave from employment and condolences when grieving the death or your partner/lover.
- ⊕ Sharing health, auto, and homeowners' insurance policies at reduced rates.
- ⊕ Immediate access to you loved ones in case of accident or emergency.
- ⊕ Family-of-origin support for life partner/lover.
- ⊕ Access to a hospitalized loved one.
- ⊕ When I talk about my heterosexuality (such as in a joke or talking about my relationships), I will not be accused of pushing my sexual orientation onto others.
- ⊕ I can go home from most meetings, classes, and conversations without feeling excluded, fearful, attacked, isolated, outnumbered, unheard, held at a distance, stereotyped or feared because of my sexual orientation.
- ⊕ I do not have to fear revealing my sexual orientation to friends or family. It's assumed.
- ⊕ My sexual orientation was never associated with a closet.
- ⊕ I can remain oblivious of the language and culture of LGBTQ folk without feeling in my culture any penalty for such oblivion.
- ⊕ People do not assume I am experienced in sex (or that I even have it!) merely because of my sexual orientation.
- ⊕ I am not asked to think about why I am straight.
- ⊕ I can go for months without being called straight.

\* Adapted from the FRIENDS resource manual produced by the University of Florida LGBT Affairs Office which is part of Multicultural and Diversity Affairs in the Dean of Students Office.

\* University of Missouri LGBT Support information from [web.missouri.edu/~umcstudentlifelgbt/resources/heterosexualprivilegeintro.pdf](http://web.missouri.edu/~umcstudentlifelgbt/resources/heterosexualprivilegeintro.pdf)

\* Adapted from The Painted Turtle Feminist Blog available at: <http://thepaintedturtle.blogspot.com/2005/03/heterosexual-privilege-checklist.html>

# What is Homo-Bi-Transphobia?\*

Homophobia/biphobia/transphobia takes many different forms, including physical acts of hate, violence, verbal assault, vandalism, and 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/biphobia/transphobia and heterosexism that happen everyday. We often overlook these more subtle actions and exclusions because they seem insignificant by comparison. They are not. The following are examples of homophobia/biphobia/transphobia:

- ⊕ Looking at an LGBT person and automatically thinking of their sexuality or gender rather than seeing them as a whole, complex person.
- ⊕ Failing to be supportive when your LGBT friend is sad about a quarrel or breakup.
- ⊕ Changing your seat in a meeting because an LGBT person sat in the chair next to yours.
- ⊕ Thinking you can spot one.
- ⊕ Using the terms “lesbian” and “gay” as accusatory.
- ⊕ Not asking about a woman’s girlfriend/partner or a man’s boyfriend/partner although you regularly ask “How is your husband/wife?” when you run into a heterosexual friend.
- ⊕ Thinking that a lesbian (if you are female) or a gay man (if you are male) is making sexual advances if they touch you.
- ⊕ Feeling repulsed by public displays of affection between lesbians and gay men but accepting the same affectional displays between heterosexuals.
- ⊕ Feeling that LGBT people are too outspoken about civil rights.
- ⊕ Assuming all LGBT people are sexually active.
- ⊕ Feeling that discussions about homophobia and heterosexism are not necessary since you are “okay” on these issues.
- ⊕ Assuming that everyone you meet is heterosexual.
- ⊕ 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.
- ⊕ Not confronting a homophobic remark for fear of being identified with/as LGBT.
- ⊕ Worrying about the effect an LGBT volunteer/co-worker will have on your work or your clients.
- ⊕ Wondering why lesbians and gay men have to “flaunt” their sexuality, when all around you on TV, billboards, and in film heterosexuals are exhibiting much more blatant behavior.
- ⊕ Avoiding mentioning to your friends that you are involved with a women’s organization or a men’s organization that emphasizes domestic skills, because you are afraid that they will think you are LGBT.
- ⊕ Asking your LGBT colleagues to speak about LGBT issues, but not about other issues about which they may be knowledgeable.
- ⊕ Assuming that a lesbian or gay man would be heterosexual if given the opportunity.
- ⊕ Focusing exclusively on someone’s sexual orientation and not on other issues of concern.

- ⊕ Being outspoken about LGBT rights, but making sure everyone knows that *you* are heterosexual.
- ⊕ Being afraid to ask questions about LGBT issues when you don't know the answers.

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\* Adapted from the FRIENDS resource manual produced by the University of Florida LGBT Affairs Office which is part of Multicultural and Diversity Affairs in the Dean of Students Office.

# Turning the Tables\*

*Heterosexual privilege lets heterosexuals live their lives without ever having to think about some of this issues that affect LGBT individuals on a daily basis. Take a moment to consider what it would be like if the tables were turned.*

## **Discovering Your Heterosexuality**

Being heterosexual means you are sexually attracted to and fall in love with the opposite sex. These feelings are normal and natural and most likely arise during childhood. Research has not shown whether the cause of heterosexuality is genetic, environmental or a combination of the two. We know that about nine in ten people are straight. Thus, in a large group of people, there are usually several heterosexual people present.

## **Family & Friends**

If you choose to come out as heterosexual to your family, be prepared for their reaction. Your family may encourage you to get counseling or attempt to persuade you to change your mind. Deciding whether to tell your family and friends is a big decision. If you have doubts or questions, consult a counselor. Once your family and friends are comfortable with your decision, they can acknowledge knowing and loving a straight person. Parents may decide to “come out” when someone asks them when their son is “finally going to find a nice partner” or by responding to an anti-straight joke at the family reunion. If you are the parent of a straight child, you can find advice on various supportive web sites.

## **Coming Out to Yourself**

Being openly heterosexual can be a challenge, but the most important thing is being honest with oneself. It can be difficult to discover you are straight; you can find valuable information by reading. You don't need to rush to label yourself as straight. For some, heterosexuality may just be something new and exciting to try, but the majority of straight people discover that the heterosexual lifestyle suits them best. They realize that a happy and productive heterosexual lifestyle is possible.

## **Coming Out to Others**

There are many reasons to come out. Some people come out because they are proud to be heterosexual, while others enjoy the opportunity of meeting other straight people. It's most important for you to come out because it's an expression of who you are. You probably want to meet other straight people for friendships or intimate relationships.

Be prepared for a wide range of reactions if you choose to come out. Your confidant may be shocked, angry or not surprised at all. He or she might even come out to you! Get a sense of how the person you wish to come out to might react beforehand. For example, you might watch a TV show or movie that has straight characters and then discuss it. You may want to refer your confidant to a straight-gay alliance for more resources and support.

## **Being Yourself**

Straight people are often accused of flaunting their sexuality. In a world of fixed and rigid gender

identities, coming out may be the only way straight people can make their sexual orientation known. Yet there is a difference between being forthright and flaunting. Most straight people are not out to make a statement. They simply want to be able to incorporate the many aspects of their lives the way homosexuals do – by talking about their partners, wearing a wedding ring or putting a photo of a spouse in the office.

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\* Adapted from Gator Gay-Straight Alliance (2003). *I Think I might be straight: A common-sense guide to the heterosexual lifestyle*. Retrieved June 12, 2007 from <http://grove.ufl.edu/~ggsa/>

# Riddle Attitudes Scale\*

In a clinical sense, homophobia is defined as an intense, irrational fear of same sex relations that becomes overwhelming to the person. In common usage, homophobia is the fear of intimate relationships with persons of the same sex. Below are listed four negative homophobic levels and four positive levels of attitudes towards lesbian and gay relationships/people. They were developed by Dr. Dorothy Riddle, a psychologist from Tucson, Arizona.

## **HOMOPHOBIC LEVELS OF ATTITUDE**

1. **Repulsion:** Homosexuality is seen as a "crime against nature". Gay/lesbians are sick, crazy, immoral, sinful, wicked, etc. Anything is justified to change them: prison, hospitalization, negative behavior therapy, electroshock therapy, etc.
2. **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".
3. **Tolerance:** Homosexuality is just a phase of adolescent development that many people go through and most people "grow out of". Thus, lesbians/gays are less mature than "straights" and should be treated with the protectiveness and indulgence one uses with a child. Lesbians/gays should not be given positions of authority because they are still working through their adolescent behavior.
4. **Acceptance:** Still implies there is something to accept. Characterized by such statements as "You're not a lesbian to me, you're a person!" or "What you do in bed is your own business," or "That's fine with me as long as you don't flaunt it!"

## **POSITIVE LEVELS OF ATTITUDES**

1. **Support:** The basic ACLU position. Work to safeguard the rights of lesbians and gays. People at this level may be uncomfortable themselves, but they are aware of the homophobic climate and the irrational unfairness.
2. **Admiration:** Acknowledges that being lesbian/gay in our society takes strength. People at this level are willing to truly examine their homophobic attitudes, values, and behaviors.
3. **Appreciation:** Value the diversity of people and see lesbian/gays as a valid part of that diversity. These people are willing to combat homophobia in themselves and others.

4. **Nurturance:** Assumes that gay/lesbian people are indispensable in our society. They view lesbians/gays with genuine affection and delight, and are willing to be allies and advocates.

\* Adapted from: Riddle, D. (1985) "Homophobia Scale." In *Opening Doors to Understanding and Acceptance*. Ed. K. O'bear and A. Reynolds. Boston. Unpublished Essay.

\* Adapted from University Committee on Sexual Orientation at Western Illinois University. Retrieved June 12, 2007 from <http://www.wiu.edu/UCOSO/riddle.htm>

# Poynter Model: Ally Identity\*

## A Model of Heterosexual Ally Development

### Status 1: Pre-Contact (Non-identification)

Heterosexual individuals in this status will have some awareness of gay men, lesbians, and bisexuals because of popular culture and the media, but they will not have close contact with an openly LGBT person(s). They will believe that heterosexuals and heterosexual relationships are superior to LGBT people and their relationships. They will have very negative attitudes toward LGBT people and not identify as an ally.

*Possible Needs:* May not respond effectively to confrontation. Need respect for their opinion. Encourage exploration of sexual identity/ gender identity information. Provide useful information about LGBT people

### Status 2: Contact and Retreat

**Contact:** Heterosexual individuals in this status have contact with a family member, friend, or coworker who has come out to them. This personal contact leads to a discovery that LGBT people are "normal" human beings. Some heterosexuals may experience a hyper-vigilance or be focused on associations with LGBT people, which leads to a close relationship with members of the LGBT community. Personal contact enables a transition to Status 3, which is characterized by an increase in awareness and knowledge and a reduction in negative attitudes.

*Possible Needs:* Encourage further exploration of LGBT culture through their personal contact. Respond to homophobia/heterosexist feeling with respect. Attempt to provide answers to questions or inaccurate information. Offer to find other positive LGBT connections.

**Retreat:** A heterosexual person can become essentially closed to LGBT people and issues and retreat to Status I for a variety of reasons, including adherence to non-inclusive religious and cultural beliefs and conformity to traditional gender roles.

\*Some heterosexual people may begin to identify as an ally (Statuses 3 and 4) without this personal contact as a result of becoming more liberal, developing less restrictive

religious beliefs, or wanting to help others. They will eventually experience Status 2, enabling them to develop fully as allies.

*Possible Needs:* Understanding of difference of opinion. Ask questions about experiences with LGBT people. Encourage continued discussion about LGBT issues. Try not to be argumentative.

### **Status 3: Internal Identification**

Heterosexual individuals in Status 3 and 4 begin to develop a positive identity as an ally to GLB people. Individuals in Status 3 do not publicly identify as an ally, but do have greater contact with members of the GLB community and with heterosexual people who identify as allies (individuals in Status 4). They will begin to realize the importance of being supportive of GLB people and begin to show this support in a limited way. They will possess less negative attitudes toward GLB people and a higher level of awareness and knowledge.

*Possible Needs:* Support for exploring guilt about past homophobic/heterosexist attitudes. Share experiences. Practice Skills for how to respond to homophobia, heterosexism, or inaccurate information. continue personal education and connection with LGBT people as well as other allies.

### **Status 4: External Identification**

Heterosexual individuals in this status will take pride in being an ally to GLB people, because they realize how much fuller their lives are as a result of knowing openly GLB people. Among the characteristics of individuals at Status 4 are respect and appreciation for people of different sexual orientations, low negative attitudes and a high level of awareness and knowledge, and demonstrated support for LGBT people. They will know other allies among their friends, family, and colleagues, but may feel alienated from non-allies.

*Possible Needs:* Encourage exploration of how homophobia affects them personally. Assess environment and daily surroundings for level of comfort around LGBT issues. Help the ally come to a better understanding of where they can find support and where they may find resistance. Practice skills development in situations that may possess a high level of personal cost.

\* Adapted from the Preliminary Heterosexual Ally Development Model, Poynter 2002

\* Adapted from the FRIENDS resource manual produced by the University of Florida LGBT Affairs Office which is part of Multicultural and Diversity Affairs in the Dean of Students Office.

\* Adapted from University Committee on Sexual Orientation at Western Illinois University. Retrieved June 12, 2007 from <http://www.wiu.edu/UCOSO/>

# Ways to Show Support for Allies\*

## Ways to be Visible as an Ally:

- ⊕ Attend events with LGBT themes (movies, speakers, etc...)
- ⊕ Support and join LGBT groups – promote groups, attend events, encourage involvement.
- ⊕ Lobby for LGBT rights
- ⊕ Confront homophobic/transphobic/biphobic and heterosexist language
- ⊕ Link oppressions and discussions in language
- ⊕ Counter hate crime activity
- ⊕ Speak in encompassing, supportive terms
- ⊕ Acknowledge LGBT family members and partners
- ⊕ Oppose censorship of LGBT messages
- ⊕ Encourage other allies by recognizing and encouraging their efforts
- ⊕ Read and display LGBT positive books
- ⊕ Educate others
- ⊕ Celebrate LGBT positive holidays: National Coming Out Day, Pride Week, etc...
- ⊕ Wear your support in the form of a button or ribbon
- ⊕ Challenge gender normativity and heterosexist assumptions in daily actions and behaviors

## Qualities of an Ally:

- ⊕ Has worked to develop an understanding of LGBT issues and the needs of LGBT people
- ⊕ Chooses to align with LGBT people and respond to their needs
- ⊕ Believes that it is in his self-interest to be an ally
- ⊕ Is committed to the personal growth required
- ⊕ Is quick to take pride and appreciate success
- ⊕ Expects support from other allies
- ⊕ Is able to acknowledge and articulate how patterns of oppression have operated in their own lives.
- ⊕ Expects to make some mistakes, but does not use this as an excuse for non-action
- ⊕ Knows that both sides of an ally relationship have a clear responsibility for their own change, whether or not persons on the other side choose to respond.
- ⊕ Knows that in most empowered ally relationships, the persons in the non-LGBT role help initiate the change towards personal, institutional, and societal justice and equality.
- ⊕ Knows that he is responsible for humanizing or empowering their role in society, particularly as their role relates to responding to LGBT people.

- ⊕ Promotes a sense of community with the LGBT community and teach the importance of outreach
- ⊕ Has a good sense of humor
- ⊕ Does not force hir help on LGBT people
- ⊕ Assesses hir own values about equality and how people should be treated
- ⊕ Is patient
- ⊕ Is willing to challenge heterosexism and homophobia.

\* Adapted from Office of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Student Services. (2003) *Ally Information*. Retrieved June 12, 2007 for Ohio State University at <http://multiculturalcenter.osu.edu/posts/documents/ally.pdf>

\* Adapted from the FRIENDS resource manual produced by the University of Florida LGBT Affairs Office which is part of Multicultural and Diversity Affairs in the Dean of Students Office.

# Do's and Don'ts of Being an Ally\*

## What an Ally Does:

- ⊕ Uses appropriate language
- ⊕ Confronts inappropriate language and behaviors
- ⊕ Supports activities, policies, etc... that addresses LGBT concerns
- ⊕ Supports other allies
- ⊕ Builds relationships with other oppressed groups
- ⊕ Regards LGBT people as whole human beings
- ⊕ Takes responsibility for equalizing power
- ⊕ Asks questions
- ⊕ Appreciates the risk a LGBT person takes in coming out
- ⊕ Appreciates the efforts of LGBT people to point out the mistakes an ally might make
- ⊕ Takes risks
- ⊕ Educates self on LGBT culture, homophobia, and heterosexism
- ⊕ Begins to educate others on LGBT culture, homophobia, and heterosexism
- ⊕ Identify homophobic institutional practices or individual actions and works to change them
- ⊕ Addresses LGBT people, and not their behavior
- ⊕ Continues to work on level of acceptance
- ⊕ Acknowledges the risks facing LGBT people in our society
- ⊕ Supports changes in others
- ⊕ Values same-sex friendships
- ⊕ Become knowledgeable on issues which often concern LGBT people
- ⊕ Acts as a 100% ally- no strings attached
- ⊕ Openly and honestly expresses their feelings

## What an Ally Does Not Do:

- ⊕ Use oppressive language
- ⊕ Assume heterosexuality
- ⊕ Include only women and/or ethnic minorities in talking about diversity
- ⊕ Assume there are no LGBT people on their campus or in their residence hall(s)
- ⊕ Hold stereotypical beliefs about LGBT people, about the concept of family
- ⊕ Makes jokes or slurs
- ⊕ Omit LGBT people from art, TV, books, history, etc...
- ⊕ Patronize or judge what is appropriate behavior
- ⊕ Assume they are more competent than LGBT people
- ⊕ Assume one LGBT person represents the whole community
- ⊕ Trivialize the concerns or issues of LGBT people



- ⊕ Overlook history and trivialize all oppression
- ⊕ Expect LGBT people to educate them about their culture
- ⊕ Expect to be trusted by LGBT people
- ⊕ Think their on view of reality is the only *right* one
- ⊕ Turn to the LGBT culture to enrich humanity while invalidating it by calling it exotic or alternative
- ⊕ Ignore LGBT issues
- ⊕ Get offended when assumed to be Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or Transgender

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\* Adapted from Office of LGBT Programs. (2003). *Ally Information*. Retrieved June 12, 2007 from Ohio University at: <http://www.ohiou.edu/lgbt>

\* Adapted from the FRIENDS resource manual produced by the University of Florida LGBT Affairs Office which is part of Multicultural and Diversity Affairs in the Dean of Students Office.

# Tips for Responding to Homophobia\*

**Inform.** People making homophobic comments are often times working with inaccurate information. Recognize that some people will not want to hear something different than what they have known, but if you educate yourself in the issues you can at least be confident in being able to offer accurate information.

**Acknowledge them.** Do not dismiss what the other person says. If your goal is to have a dialogue, you need to acknowledge what the other person says. You do not have to agree, and can say that you do not, but recognize that ze is speaking from hir own beliefs and experiences.

**Acknowledge others.** Make a point of acknowledging others opinions. Point out that there are multiple beliefs on the issues and speak from personal experience.

**Ask questions.** Make sure you understand where the other person is coming from so you can approach the issue in an appropriate way.

**Be charming.** Getting angry or smug will not help the situation. It is hard to fault someone for being polite and gracious.

**Find common ground.** Look for something you can both agree on. This offers a great starting point for discussion and forms a connection.

**Do not be a fixer.** You just are not going to change some people's minds. Sometimes it is better to make your point and leave it at that. If nothing else, you can give the person something to think about and perhaps hit home for someone else in the group or nearby.

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\* Adapted from the FRIENDS resource manual produced by the University of Florida LGBT Affairs Office which is part of Multicultural and Diversity Affairs in the Dean of Students Office.

# Common Myths about LGBT People\*

⊕ **Homosexuality isn't very prevalent.**

The Kinsey studies (1947, 1953) found that 10-12% of men and women identify as gay or lesbian throughout their lives. More recent studies have found that 6-12% of men and women report engaging in same sex behavior during their lives (National Survey of Family Growth 2002). Same-sex intimate behavior is common, having been found in every known culture and in the animal world as well. LGBT people are found in every social, economic, racial, and religious group. They are our teachers, colleagues, friends, parents, and children. We all know a number of LGBT people, whether we are aware of it or not.

⊕ **We know what "causes" homosexuality.**

The research so far has proven only one thing—we don't know what causes anybody's sexual orientation. This myth has an interesting heterosexist slant. Do people ever wonder and ask what causes heterosexuality?

⊕ **Homosexuality is unnatural.**

There are recorded observations of same sex behavior and gender fluidity throughout the animal kingdom (from seagulls and mares to primates) and from every known culture in the world.

⊕ **Homosexuality is immoral.**

There are several instances in a variety of religious texts that can be and have been used to condemn homosexuality. Some religious leaders and movements choose to use them; others believe they are a reflection of the social customs of the time, are not dealing with LGBT identity and relationships as we know them today, and should not be translated literally into policy for contemporary times.

⊕ **Homosexuality is a mental illness.**

The American Psychiatric Association voted in 1973 to remove homosexuality from their list of mental disorders because there is *no* evidence to substantiate this classification.

⊕ **Gay men and lesbian women have many more sexual partners than heterosexuals.**

Certainly, individuals within the LGBT community have as many sexual partners as do heterosexual individuals. Society does not provide any of the supports for gay and lesbian relationships that it does

for heterosexual couples, yet over 50% of LGBT individuals are in long-term relationships and there are same-sex couples in 99% of counties in the U.S. Heterosexual marriage has a 50% divorce rate.

⊕ **Gay men molest children.**

97% of child molesting is perpetrated by heterosexual adult males on adolescent females. The “average” offender is a white heterosexual male in an adult relationship and is a man that the child knows. The adult who does molest children is often a pedophile—a person who is attracted to children regardless of their sex.

⊕ **You can spot a gay man or lesbian women by the way they act and dress.**

Gender roles do not determine sexual orientation. Many LGBT people are impossible to distinguish from straight and more gender normative individuals. There are some lesbians who dress in a very masculine way, some gay men who act in traditionally feminine ways, and many LGBT people who feel the freedom to explore a range of gender expression. They are also many gender normative LGBT people who “pass” unnoticed every day.

⊕ **Gay people are not good parents as they introduce their children to their “lifestyle;” their children will grow up to be gay.**

According to the American Psychiatric Association, studies comparing groups of children raised by homosexual and by heterosexual parents find no developmental differences between the two groups of children in four critical areas: their intelligence, psychological adjustment, social adjustment, and popularity with friends. It is also important to realize that a parent's sexual orientation does not dictate his or her children's.

⊕ **I’ve never met a person who is gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender.**

Most people know a number of LGBT persons, but are unaware of it because these persons are “in the closet”. Because of intense prejudice and hatred directed toward LGBTs in our society, many are quite reluctant to reveal their sexual orientation. As noted above, most LGBT people look and act just like everyone else. They come from all walks of life, all races, all economic levels, and all political perspectives. So heterosexual people can assume that they probably have homosexual neighbors, friends, relatives, and fellow worshipers—although those persons may be afraid to reveal that they are not straight.

⊕ **LGBT people want to come into our schools and recruit the students to their lifestyle.**

There have been attempts to bring LGBT issues into schools, but certainly not to convert anyone. There is no evidence that people could be “recruited” to a homosexual orientation, even if someone wanted to do this. The intent is to teach adolescents not to mistreat LGBT classmates, who are often subjects of harassment and physical attacks. Talking openly about homosexuality is also crucial to students who are LGBT. Feeling alone, frightened and confused, these young people are much more likely to attempt suicide than their straight peers. A recent study indicates that 30% of gay and lesbian students attempt suicide around the age of 15.

⊕ **To be bisexual implies that a person has multiple partners.**

Bisexual individuals have affection and sexual feelings towards persons of the other sex, as well as the same sex. This does not imply involvement with more than one partner any more than a heterosexual person’s ability to be attracted to more than one person implies multiple partners.

⊕ **Christians are united in their opposition to homosexual people and homosexuality.**

There are a wide variety of opinions about homosexual persons among the various Christian denominations, and among individuals as well. Some religious groups interpret certain Biblical passages as injunctions against homosexuality, while others view these passages in the light of historical context, pointing out other passages Christians no longer take literally, such as those advocating slavery, dietary laws, and ritual purity laws. In addition many Christian denominations have issued statements condemning discrimination and prejudice against homosexual people, as have a number of Jewish and other religious groups. There are numerous congregations who welcome and affirm homosexual Christians as fully participating members of the body of Christ, with unique gifts to offer.

\* Adapted from Association of Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual Issues in Counseling of Alabama. *Myths and Misconceptions*. Retrieved June 12, 2007 from <http://www.aglbical.org/2MYTHS.htm>

# Resources

## Campus Resources:

### Faculty and Staff:

*The following individuals have self-identified themselves as safe individuals and friends of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender community at Chico State University. These are individuals that you can contact and speak openly with about issues regarding sexual orientation within the community and in your life.*

Barbara Brautigam	HNRS	Staff	SSC 460	x 5683
Cindy Bumgarner	FLNG	Faculty	TRNT 205A	x6031
Lana Buris	PSYC	Faculty	SSC 430	x6345
Sara E. Cooper	ENGL	Faculty	TRNT 205A	x5151
Ted Cluver	MTHE	Faculty	HOLT 138	x5345
Chad Disharoon	UHFS	Staff	UVIL 199	x4131
Lyndall Ellingson	HCSV	Faculty	BUTE 637	x6310
Cladaine Franquet	TECH	Staff	MLIB 003A	x5551
Liahana Gordon	SOCI	Faculty	BUTE 631	x6040
Nelson Gomez-Guzman	UHFS	Staff	UNIV	x4474
Gayle Hutchinson	BSS	Faculty	BUTE 701	x4919
Leo Kirchhoff	EDUC	Faculty	THMA 265	x6848
Janja Lulich	SOCI	Faculty	BUTTE 621	x5542
Kelly Lough	UHFS	Staff	UNIV	x4474
Chris Marolla	SHP	Staff	1205 W 7th st	x5361
Mike Mazur	THEA	Faculty	PAC 214	x5571
Molly Knappen	CDES	Staff	THMA 320	558-0558

Dr. John Milbauer	MUSC	Faculty	PAC 118	x6226
Nancy Park	RCE	Staff	CCE 101	x5571
Elizabeth Renfro	MCGS	Faculty	BUTE 611A	x6319
Tray Robinson	DIVR	Staff	KNDL 110	x4764
Joel Rogers	THEA	Faculty	PAC 217A	x6161
Steven Sherlock	POLS	Faculty	BUTE 741	x5301
Lorraine Smith	ADVS	Staff	SSC 120	x5712
Sue Steiner	SWRK	Faculty	BUTE 543B	x3066
Robert Tinkler	HIST	Faculty	TRNT 218	x6054
Bradely Wolf	UHFS	Staff	WHIT 112B	x6108

**Academic:**

Courses Offered relating to men, women, transgender persons and those relating to sexual orientation and related issues:

- 3572 SOCI Sociology of Sexuality
- 3612 SOCI Sociology of Gender
- 3270 PSYC Psychology of Women
- 3391 PSYC Social Psychology
- 3024 POLS Civil Rights/ Civil Liberties
- 6624 HCSV Human Sexuality
- 6634 HCSV Women's Health
- 5641 ENGL Women's Literature
- 2748 ANTH Human Cultural Diversity
- 2748 ANTH Feminist Theory
- 6449 WMST Women and Gender in American History

**Groups:**

The Associated Student's Women's Center

*Located in the BMU, the women's center is open to all students at Chico State. Some of the services that it offers are: Free condoms and lubricants, home of the "We are a Safe Zone" program, a Multicultural and Gender Studies Library, activist training and several other services.*

AS Pride

*A recognized student organization at Chico State, AS Pride meets bi-weekly to discuss issues regarding the LGBT population and the development of Allies within the community. They provide Safe Zone Ally Development workshops to educate the students, faculty, staff and community. They are also a social network for LGBT members of Chico State to feel comfortable in and do activities with.*

LGBT Faculty and Staff Association

*Creates a social network for faculty and staff in the LGBT and Ally community. They provide programming welcoming the LGBT student body and allies of Chico State. They mainly serve as a community resource on campus.*

### **Health:**

Psychological Counseling and Wellness Center - <http://www.csuchico.edu/cnts/> (530) 898-6345  
*Located in Meriam Library, room 141 the counseling and wellness center provides confidential counseling services to all CSU Chico students free of additional charge (other than tuition and fees).*

Student Health Center - <http://www.csuchico.edu/shs/> (530) 898-5241  
*The student health care center provides primary care to the students of Chico State University. They also provides STI/HIV testing for students at Chico. They have a full service pharmacy, x-ray, and laboratory.*

Sexual Assault/ Abuse Recovery - [http://www.csuchico.edu/up/sexual\\_assault/](http://www.csuchico.edu/up/sexual_assault/) (530) 898-5555  
*University Police Department provides vital information and education about sexual, physical, and verbal abuse. The information can be made confidential depending on the case.*

### **Services and Advocacy:**

Human Resources - <http://www.csuchico.edu/hr/> (530) 898-6771  
*Questions about benefits; discrimination and harassment issue.*

## **Chico Community Resources:**

### **Crisis:**

Crisis and Referral Center (800) 334-6622  
*Available 24-hours to consult individuals who are going through a self-defined crisis. The services are anonymous and free. They will also make referrals to other agencies in the community.*

Rape Crisis Intervention (530) 342 – RAPE  
*This is a 24-hour hotline for those who have been raped or know someone else/witnessed someone else being raped. Services are anonymous and confidential. They will make referrals to other agencies in the community.*

Suicide Hotline (800) 334-6622  
*This is a 24-hour hotline to talk to and/or counsel anyone thinking about, attempting, or having known someone that has had suicidal ideation, attempted suicide, or completed suicide. They will also make referrals and interventions within the community as necessary.*

### **Information:**

Stonewall Alliance Center - <http://www.stonewallchico.org/> (530) 893-3336  
*The Stonewall Alliance Center is Chico's only LGBT Resource/Community center. It houses information regarding LGBT issues (e.g. social networking, nightclubs, health, education, etc...). They provide programming and entertainment and education for the community.*

## **Health:**

Alcoholics Anonymous-Chico - <http://www.aabutte-glenn.org/> (530) 342-5756  
*Provide alcohol addiction and dependence resources.*

Narcotics Anonymous, Chico- <http://www.theagapecenter.com/NAinUSA/California.htm>

Butte County Public Health - <http://www.buttecounty.net/publichealth/> (530) 538-7581  
*The Butte Country Public Health department provides many educational and testing services to the community; including STI/STD testing as well as Free Confidential HIV testing.*

The AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) (530) 538-6220  
[http://www.buttecounty.net/publichealth/cder/aids\\_faq.html](http://www.buttecounty.net/publichealth/cder/aids_faq.html)  
*Provides assistance for HIV/AIDS case management and medicine/drug coverage for those who are HIV+ or have AIDS.*

Planned Parenthood, Chico- <http://www.ppsfastadiablo.org> (530) 342-8367  
*Provides information and services related to men and women's reproductive health. It includes services such as gynecological exams, HBV testing, syphilis screenings, Chlamydia screening, herpes testing, HIV testing, parenthood counseling, abortion options, birth control education and options, among other services.*

## **Religious/Spiritual:**

Gay Churches database  
[http://www.gaychurch.org/Find\\_a\\_Church/united\\_states/us\\_california.htm](http://www.gaychurch.org/Find_a_Church/united_states/us_california.htm)  
*A National Database (the above link for California) of LGBT inclusive and friendly religious organizations.*

Congregational Church of Chico- <http://www.chicoucc.org/>  
*Open doors to include all members of the Christian faith. It is LGBT-friendly and welcomes everyone. It is a branch of the United Church of Christ.*

Chico Trinity Methodist Church  
*Open and inclusive of LGBT people and is a member of the United Methodist Church organization.*

## **Chico LGBT and Ally Groups:**

Stonewall Alliance Center - <http://www.stonewallchico.org/> (530) 893-3336  
*The Stonewall Alliance Center is Chico's only LGBT Resource/Community center. It houses information regarding LGBT issues (e.g. social networking, nightclubs, health, education, etc...). They provide programming and entertainment and education for the community.*

## **California State Resources:**

Equality California - <http://www.eqca.org/> (415) 581-0005 Sacramento, CA

*Equality California is a statewide education organization dedicated to eliminating discrimination based on sexual orientation, race, gender, and class. The organization reaches over 60,000 Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Supportive (GLBTS) households in California.*

Pride Guide California - <http://www.prideguide.net/prideguide/indexcal.html>

*This site includes information on bars, clubs, accommodations, resorts, organizations, restaurants, business and services, support groups, annual events and homepages throughout the state of California.*

AIDS Hotline of California - <http://www.aidshotline.org/crm/asp/refer/> (800) 367-AIDS

*The California HIV/AIDS hotline is the statewide resource for HIV/AIDS-related information, community referrals, and supportive telephone counseling. The hours are Monday-Friday 9am-5pm. This hotline supports both English-speaking and Spanish-speaking callers.*

California's Name Change Kit -

<http://www.findlegalforms.com/xcart/customer/product.php?productid=20144>

Available online.

## **National Resources:**

Amnesty International OUTfront – <http://www.amnestyusa.org/outfront/index.do>

*LGBT human rights.*

Bisexual Resource Center – <http://www.biresource.org>

*An international organization providing education about and support for bisexual and progressive issues.*

Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere, COLAGE – <http://www.colage.org>

*COLAGE is dedicated to engaging, connecting, and empowering people to make the world a better place for children of LGBT parents and families.*

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

*GLAAD is dedicated to promoting and ensuring fair, accurate, and inclusive representation of people and events in the media as a means of eliminating homophobia and discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation.*

Gay and Lesbian National Hotline – <http://www.glnh.org> (888) THE-GLNH

*Free and confidential peer-counseling, information, and local resources for cities and towns throughout the United States.*

Gay, Lesbian, & Straight Education Network – <http://www.glsen.org/templates/index.html>

*GLSEN is the largest national organization bringing together gay and straight teachers, parents, students, counselors and other concerned citizens and youth workers for the purpose of taking action to end homophobia in our schools.*

Gay Parents Support Group – [gayparentgroup@bellsouth.net](mailto:gayparentgroup@bellsouth.net)

Human Rights Campaign – <http://www.hrc.org>

*As America's largest gay and lesbian organization, the Human Rights Campaign provides a national voice on gay and lesbian issues. The HRC effectively lobbies congress; mobilizes grass-roots action(s) in*



*diverse communities ; invests strategically to elect a fair-minded congress; and increases public understanding through innovative education and communication strategies.*

Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund – <http://www.lambdalegal.org>

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

Lambda 10 Project – <http://www.lambda10.org>

*National clearinghouse for LGBT Fraternity and Sorority issues works to heighten the visibility of LGBT members of the college fraternity by serving as a clearinghouse for educational resources and educational materials related to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression as it pertains to the fraternity/sorority experience.*

National Consortium of Directors of LGBT Resources in Higher Education – <http://www.lgbtcampus.org>

*Lists websites of LGBT resources in higher education, professionally staffed LGBT college/university offices; information meetings and listserv; jobs available; campus climate reports; and non-discrimination policies.*

National Gay and Lesbian Task Force – <http://www.thetaskforce.org>

*The first national LGBT civil rights and advocacy organization and remains the movement's leading voice for freedom, justice, and equality. Excellent web resource on state laws on a variety of LGBT issues.*

Outproud.org – <http://www.outproud.org>

*The national coalition for LGBT youth, rich with helpful advice for youth questioning their sexuality.*

Parents, Friends, and Families of LGBT (PFLAG) – <http://www.pflag.org>

*PFLAG promotes the health and well-being of LGBT persons, their families and friends through: support to cope with an adverse society; education, to enlighten an ill-formed public; and advocacy, to end discrimination and secure equal civil rights.*

Queer Resources Directory – <http://www.qrd.org/qrd>

*The Queer Resource Directory (QRD) is an electronic library with news dippings, political contact information, newsletters, essays, images, hyperlinks, and every other kind of information resource of interest to the LGBTQA community. Information is stored for the use of casual network users and serious researchers alike.*

Soc. Bi – <http://serf.org/jon/soc.bi/>

*The internet's open forum on bisexuality since 1991.*

Bodies Like Ours – <http://www.bodieslikeours.org/forums>

*Bodies like ours is a forum for the intersex community to meet and discuss issues related to being intersex. It contains educational and social components as well as information and contacts for surgical procedures and community referrals.*

Gender Education and Advocacy – [www.gender.org](http://www.gender.org)

*Gender Education and Advocacy (GEA) is a national organization focused on the needs, issues and concerns of gender variant people in human society. They seek to educate and advocate, not only for*

*ourselves and others like us, but for all human beings who suffer from gender-based oppression in all of its many forms.*

GenderPAC – <http://www.gpac.org>

*The Gender Public Advocacy Coalition 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. As a human rights organization, GenderPAC also promotes an understanding of the connection between discrimination based on gender stereotypes and sex, sexual orientation, age, race, and class*

Intersex Initiative Portland – <http://www.ipdx.org>

*Intersex Initiative (IPDX) is a Portland, Oregon based national activist and advocacy organization for people born with intersex conditions.*

Intersex Society of North America (ISNA) – <http://www.isna.org>

*The Intersex Society of North America (ISNA) is devoted to systemic change to end shame, secrecy, and unwanted genital surgeries for people born with an anatomy that someone decided is not standard for male or female.*

Remembering Our Dead – [www.gender.org/remember/index.html](http://www.gender.org/remember/index.html)

*The idea for this memorial came while posting to a message board in the Transgender Community Forum on America Online, discussing the murder of Rita Hester and the wrongful death/survivor's action for Tyra Hunter. So many had forgotten some of the individuals we had lost in only the recent past and I felt that, by forgetting those individuals, we would be doomed to see their deaths repeated. Indeed, the passing of Rita Hester is similar enough to the death of Chanelle Pickett to leave one wondering*

Survivor Project (intersex and trans survivors of domestic and sexual abuse) –

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

*Survivor Project is a non-profit organization dedicated to addressing the needs of intersex and trans survivors of domestic and sexual violence through caring action, education and expanding access to resources and to opportunities for action. Since 1997, we have provided presentations, workshops, consultation, materials, information and referrals to many anti-violence organizations and universities across the country, as well as gathered information about issues faced by intersex and trans survivors of domestic and sexual violence.*