

Supporting Employment needs for LGBTQ+ Individuals

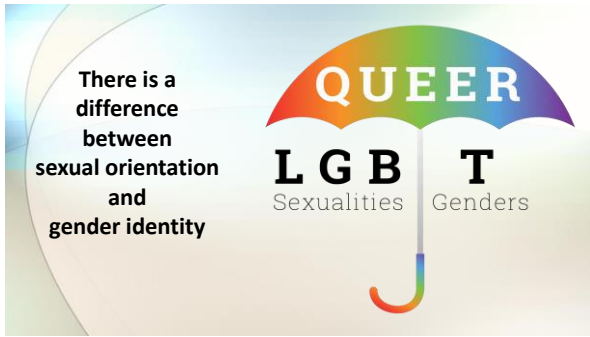
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"Fearfully Asked" Questions

1. What bathroom should a transgender person use?
2. Are transgendered people gay or lesbian?
3. Why is there a LGBTQ+ community, but not a straight community?
4. What do I do if I cannot tell what someone's gender is?
5. I know Mark likes to wear nail polish and makeup, but he struggles getting interviews, should I tell him to stop?
6. I am not gay/lesbian/bi or trans, why do I need to know this?

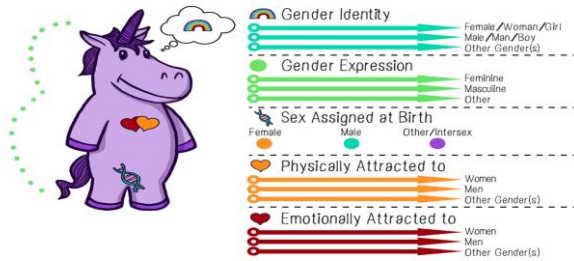
Who is "in" the LGBTQ+ Community?

- **L = Lesbian**
• Often referring to females
- **G = Gay**
• often referring to males, but sometimes used toward all orientations
- **B = Bi-sexual**
- **T = Trans**
- **Q = Queer**
- **+** = inclusion of (Pansexual, Asexual, Skoliosexual, Two-Spirit, Intersex, A-gender, Bi-gender, Gender Fluid, Non-Binary, etc.)



The Gender Unicorn

Graphic by: **TSER**



The Gender Unicorn is used to avoid using a male or female body as default. (Photo: Londyn Pen and Anna Moore/Trans Student Educational Resources)

"COMING OUT"...*"of the closet."* is the process by which someone...

1. Accepts and identifies with their gender identity and/or sexual orientation; and
2. Shares their identity willingly with others.

Sometimes We talk about coming out as if it were a one time thing. But for most folks coming out is a **series of decisions** – sometimes daily – that LGBTQ people navigate in every new setting they enter. (Most people aren't like Ellen, where they come out once and then the whole world knows.)

People may be "out" (→) in some spaces, and "in" (←) in others.

→/← to Family →/← to Friends →/← to Classmates/Coworkers →/← to Religious Community

A decision to come out to a person or group is one of safety, comfort, trust, & readiness.

It's dangerous, unhealthy, and unhelpful to force someone to come out, or to "out" someone else (i.e., disclosing someone's gender identity or sexual orientation to others without the person's consent), regardless of your intentions (sometimes people think they're being helpful, or acting on the person's behalf to conquer their fears), but...

IF SOMEONE COMES OUT TO YOU...

DON'T:

1. Say "I always knew" or downplay the significance of their sharing with you.
2. Go tell everyone, bragging about your "new trans friend."
3. Forget that they are still the person you know, befriended, or loved before.
4. Ask probing questions, or cross personal barriers you wouldn't have crossed earlier.
5. Assume you know why they came out to you.

DO:

1. Know this is a sign of huge trust! (SAY)
2. Check-in on how confidential this is (Do other people know? Is this a secret?)
3. Remember that their gender/sexuality is just one dimension (of many) of who they are.
4. Show interest and curiosity about this part of them that they are sharing with you.
5. Ask them how you can best support them.

The Effects on Health

Research suggests that LGBT people face health disparities linked to: **societal stigma, discrimination, and denial of civil and human rights.**



Facts about effects of Discrimination

- As compared to people that identify as straight, LGBTQ+ individuals are 3 times more likely to experience a mental health condition.
- LGBTQ+ youth are 4 times more likely to attempt suicide, experience suicidal thoughts, and engage in self-harm, as compared to youths that are straight.
- 38-65% of transgender individuals experience suicidal ideation.
- An estimated 20-30% of LGBTQ+ individuals abuse substances, compared to about 9% of the general population.
- 15 percent of African American LGBT adults are unemployed, as are 14 percent of Latinx LGBT adults and 11 percent of A/PI LGBT adults—compared to 8 percent unemployment for the general population.

National Alliance on Mental Illness. (2016). LGBTQ+ health and access to care and coverage for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals in the U.S.

Employment Discrimination based on Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation

Research conducted by The Bureau of National Affairs in 2014

- Decades of documentation shows high levels of discrimination against LGBTQ+ people at work
- Only 25% of LGBTQ+ people are out at work
- Nearly 3/4 of LGBTQ+ people hide their sexual orientation and/or gender identity at work to avoid discrimination

2018 HRC FMLA Survey Highlights

- Only 45% of all survey respondents say that their employer has LGBTQ-inclusive FMLA leave policies.
- 50% cited fear of losing their job.
- 51% were concerned about being sidelined at work (e.g., removed from projects, denied promotion, etc.)

How Can I Provide Employment Support for an LGBTQ+ Individual?

- Remember that sexual and/or gender identities are an important part of everyday life.
 - These identities WILL be expressed in a workplace, so do some research on the workplace before referral!
- NEVER coach an LGBTQ+ person to “act more feminine or masculine” or to dress in a certain way based on anatomical sex in order to “help” them get a job.
- Be mindful that LGBTQ+ people may experience an employment situation or workplace very differently from the way that a straight or cis-gendered person will.



Sample Cases

Jasmine is a 42 year old transgendered female. She has transitioned in the last 18 months. Her previous work experience includes auto repair, and holds Advanced ASCE certification. She has not been able to find work in her field, but really wants to continue in the field of auto repair.

How can you support her?

Ryne is a 22 year old gender-fluid individual who prefers they/them/their pronouns. Ryne holds a high school diploma, and has attended college. Their favorite courses involve working with kids and they have expressed a desire to provide childcare in their home.

How can you support them?

Thank you for your participation

- For more information
 - Human Rights Campaign – www.hrc.org
 - Movement Advancement Project - www.lgbtmap.org/
 - Trevor Project - www.thetrevorproject.org
- Google resources in your community – many areas have LGBTQ centers and/or organizations that can help
