

Addressing and Overcoming Health Disparities in the LGBT+ Community

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Learning Objectives

1

Identify 3 reasons
LGBT persons
report an overall
lower level of
well-being

2

Identify 3
common
mistakes made
when working
with LGBT
persons

3

Discuss actions
you can take to
make your office/
agency more
welcoming to the
LGBT community

Define our terms:

L = Lesbian

G = Gay

B = Bisexual

T = Transgender

**Q = Questioning
or Queer**

+ = New Terms

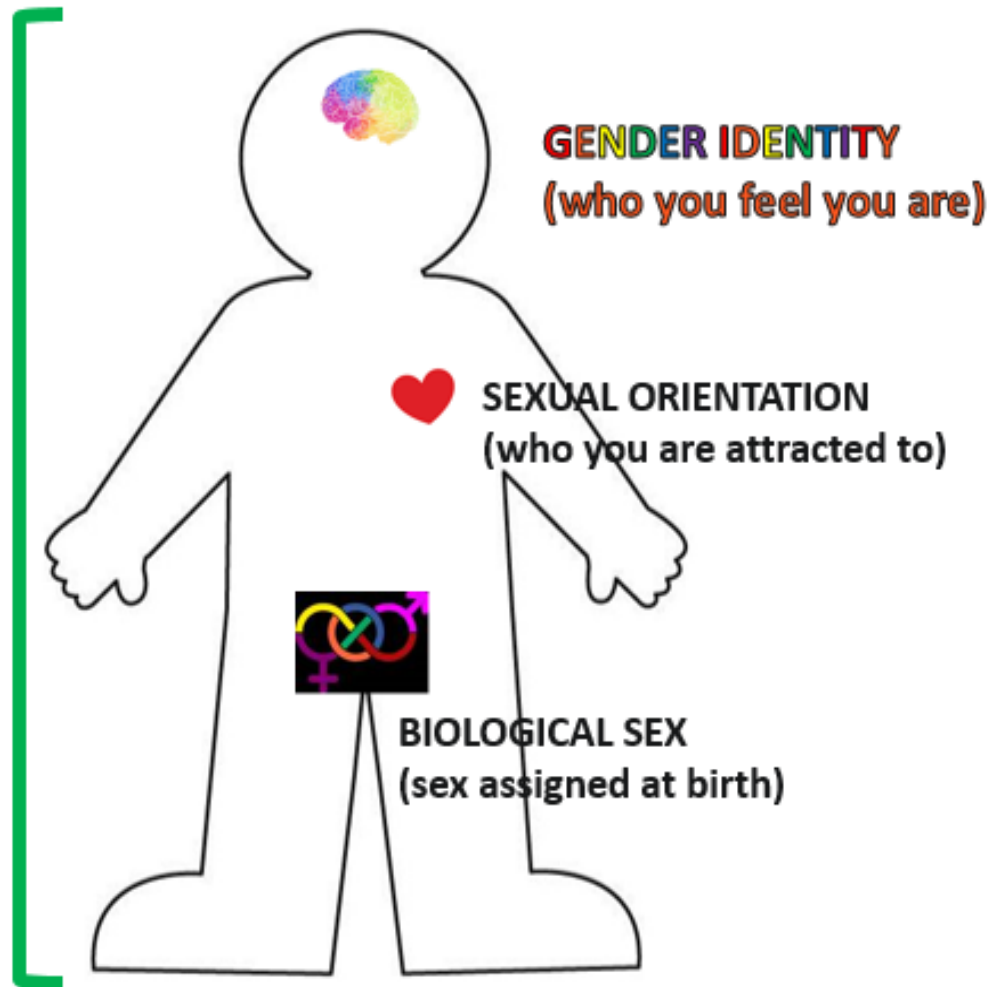


A few more terms

- **Gender:** assigned/cis/trans
- **Binary** is choosing between one of two things. For example, male or female
- **Non-binary** describes someone who does not identify as exclusively male or female
- **Gender Expansive (Gender Non-Conforming)** describes people who do not follow stereotypes about how they should look or act based on the sex they were assigned at birth

HUMAN BEING

GENDER EXPRESSION
(how you show others
who you are)





Well being of LGBT persons

Report lower levels of:

- Physical health
- Financial security
- Sense of purpose
- Social life
- Community attachment



Physical health

- Negative past experiences=> avoid seeking services unless absolutely necessary
- Less likely to have health insurance or to afford OOP costs
- May not be honest due to fear of how will be treated



Additional barriers faced by LGBT people

- Major lack of education and training for health care workers
- A lack of data/research on LGBT health-related issues
- Fear due to stigma, discrimination, and institutional bias in the health care system (as well as other human service systems)



What goes wrong?

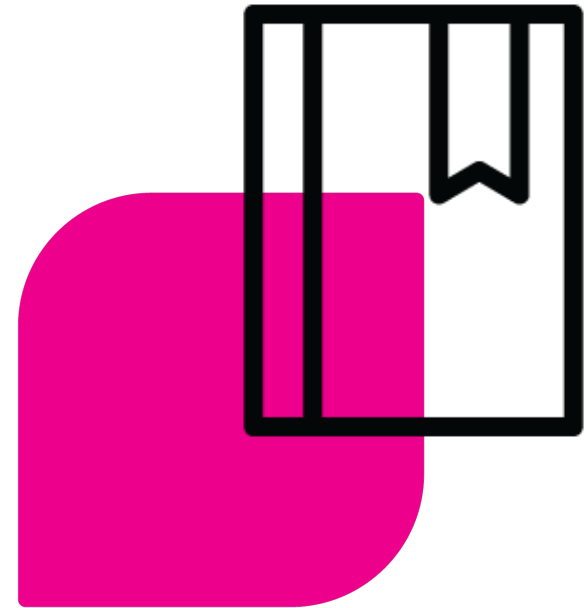
- Misgender or do not offer options
- Call by wrong name and/or pronouns
- Use terms of “endearment” that offend
- Won’t learn new/modify behavior
- Humiliate, laugh, show discomfort, minimize

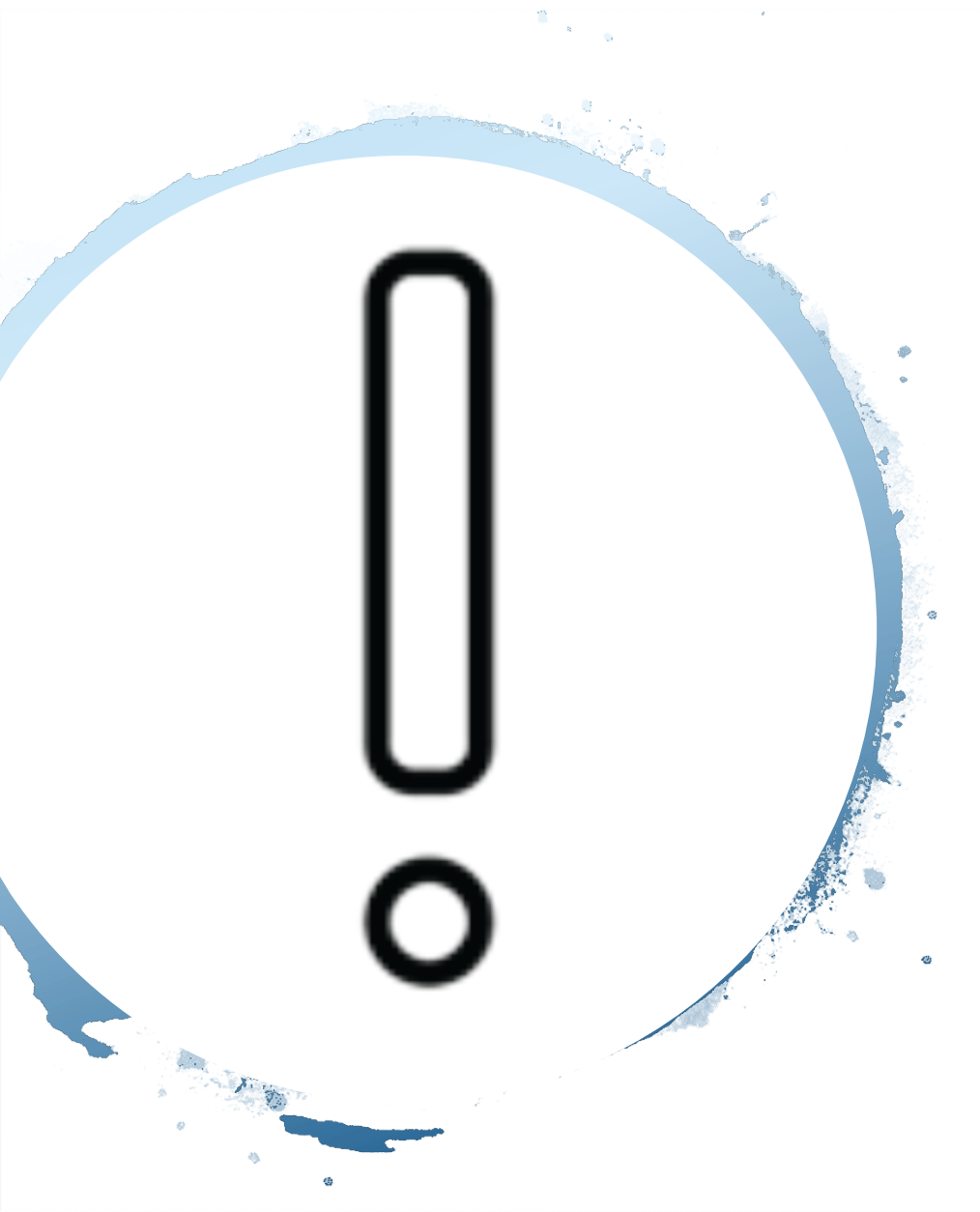
Mental health impact

- Rejection, abuse and stress take a toll on all people
- LGB youth: almost 5x more likely to have attempted suicide
- 40% of transgender adults report having attempted suicide
- Legalizing same sex marriage is linked to reduced need for mental health care and a decrease in adolescent suicide attempts

Financial Security

- May not have finished school- limits income potential
- Employers may refuse to hire or promote, fire due to LGBT status
- Laws can be easy to get around





Other factors

- Unemployment
- Limited transportation
- Food insecurity
- Homelessness

Sense of Purpose, Community Attachment and Social Life



Level of acceptance

- Family and larger community
- School
- Employer
- Community of LGBTQ persons

Since COVID

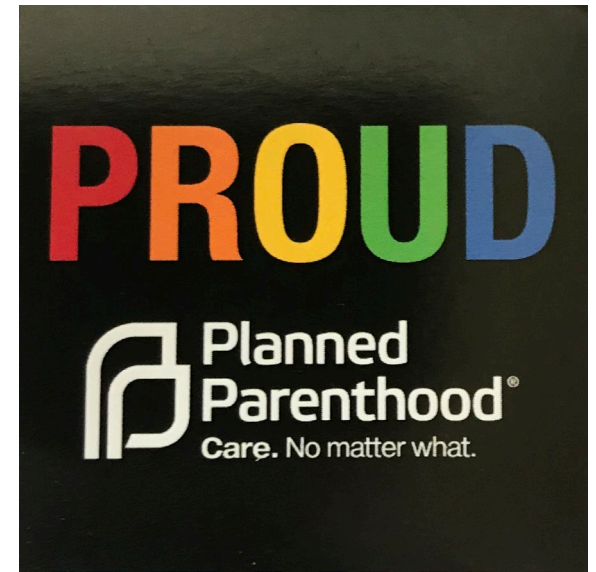
All these concerns- unemployment, homelessness, food insecurity- are on the rise for everyone

What was bad for LGBTQ people before is now even worse

What can I do?

Small Actions

- Be a supportive person- ally
- Does not have to be big- just visible
- This tells people they are welcome and safe



BEST PRACTICE	INSTEAD OF THIS...	SAY/DO THIS...
Avoid specific gender markers	“Do you have an appointment sir/ madam?”	“How can I help you today? Do you have an appointment?”
Politely ask for the person’s preferred name and pronouns	“What’s your real name?”	“What name and pronouns would you like me to use?”
Make a mistake? Apologize!	“You’re a girl? Oh, I just thought with how you are dressed...”	“I’m so sorry I used the wrong name (pronoun)”
Only ask information that is necessary to do your job	Asking a person questions just because you are curious (e.g. asking about surgeries or use of hormones)	Ask yourself what do you need to know to give the best services to this person? How can you ask in a sensitive way?

Larger Actions - Signs and Forms



- Forms – offer choices for gender/identity and relationships. Give option to write in or not answer. Ask for preferred name and pronouns.
- Magazines and posters in your space- who do they appeal to?
- Signs –special attention to bathrooms

Why Bathrooms?

- 61% of transgender or non-binary youth have been discouraged from using the bathroom that they felt most related to their identity



Staff Training

If you say you see all people, you must do it right



Training and learning is ongoing



Don't expect everyone knows or understands



What about the staff person who won't change?

Common Mistakes



Making assumptions



Using wrong names or pronouns



Showing discomfort or lack of respect



Stating personal opinions or beliefs

Oops! 3 Steps to Fix

We all make mistakes occasionally



Acknowledge
it- “I called you
by the wrong
name”

Genuinely
apologize
“I’m so sorry”

Move on and
learn from your
mistake. Don’t
do it again!

Best Practices



It is **never** appropriate to assume a person's gender or use gender pronouns based on their:

- name
- appearance
- sound of voice
- relationship to other household members

When referring to an individual, please use their name or politely ask which gender pronouns they use.

Gender pronouns include "he," "she," "they," or any other pronoun requested by the individual.



Everyone can change practices!

Resources

- <https://ahihealth.org/resources-for-supporting-lgbtq/>
- <https://www.plannedparenthood.org/get-care/our-services/lgbt-services/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/outforhealth/>

A vibrant watercolor splash in shades of pink, magenta, blue, and green serves as a background for the text.

Keep helping
others---You are
changing lives!

Sarah Failla

Speakers

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Thank you