

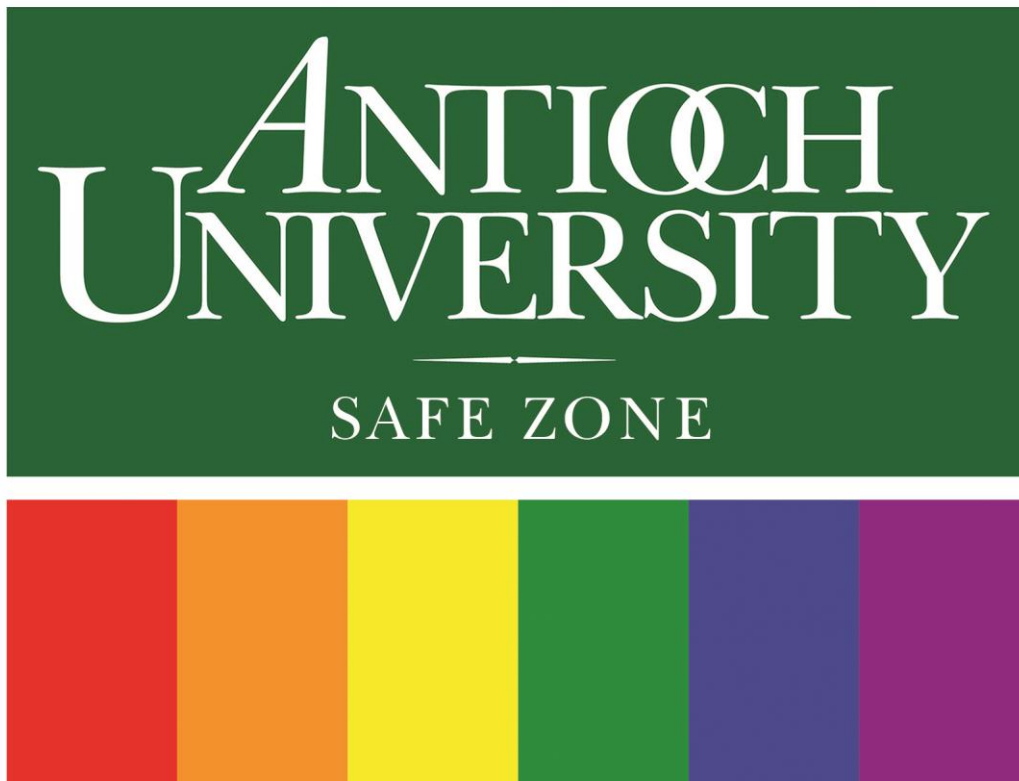
FULLY CITED VERSION

***Safe Zone* Manual**

Antioch University/Seattle

2015-2016

Resources and information guide for people who serve as allies to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning intersex, asexual (LGBTQIA) community



The information contained in this manual is based and adapted from *Safe Zone* and *Safe Space* programs at other colleges and universities throughout the country.

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The Antioch University, Seattle (AUS) LGBTQIA *Safe Zone* Program encourages members of the AUS community to identify themselves as visible supporters of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, asexual, and questioning individuals. Establishing an environment in which LGBTQIA community members feel welcome, affirmed, and safe is a main goal of the AUS *Safe Zone* Program.

Questions? Contact the AUS *Safe Zone* coordinator, Dana Waters, Psy.D., ABPP at: dwaters@antioch.edu

As is commonplace to *Safe Zone* manuals, the information contained in this manual is based upon *Safe Zone* and *Safe Space* programs at other colleges and universities throughout the country. Specifically, much of the material in this manual is adapted from the following sources in the reference list.

Program Introduction

Purpose:

The Antioch University/Seattle LGBTQIA *Safe Zone* is committed to public identification of allies for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, questioning, and other sexual minority individuals. Adapted from SAFE programs throughout the United States, SAFE is defined as: **S**taff, **S**tudents, **A**dministration, and **F**aculty committed to **E**quality on campus (S.A.F.E.).

Mission:

The mission of the AUS LGBTQIA *Safe Zone* is to create a campus environment of tolerance, understanding and awareness of the special needs of LGBTQIA and other sexual minority persons. In doing so, the LGBTQIA *Safe Zone* promotes awareness and provides resources and training in order to create a network of available allies for sexual minorities.

Goals:

Goals include providing ongoing support for LGBTQIA individuals by raising awareness and providing resources/education to faculty, staff, administration, and students. Further, the AUS *Safe Zone* hopes to foster open communication between faculty and students in regard to LGBTQIA issues by creating an open-minded, collegial environment free of oppression, coercion, prejudice, discrimination, and bigotry. By providing environments where persons can discuss LGBTQIA issues in a safe manner (through identified *Safe Zones*), it is hoped the project will promote a more general and active atmosphere of tolerance, acceptance, respect, and safety on campus.

Who can participate in the program?

The *Safe Zone* manual is available to anyone in the AUS community. Please email Dr. Dana Waters at dwaters@Antioch.edu for a copy of the manual.

Should you choose to participate as a *Safe Zone ally*, you will need to become familiar with the information provided in the manual. Because as individuals are *Safe Zones*, not departments or office work areas, you will need to be prepared and comfortable if a member of the LGBTQIA community approaches you to talk about LGBTQIA issues. Allies will be asked to self-identify by placing the provided “Safe” symbol in a visible part of your workspace (i.e.: office door, window, or within your office space). This symbol is to signify your space as a safe place to discuss issues impacting sexual minorities (i.e.: discrimination, harassment, hate/hate crime, and related issues) in a way that is free of homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, heterosexism, and bias. Finally, you will be expected to consult with an identified *Safe Zone* faculty mentor if you are unsure of how to help someone who has sought out information.

What do you need to participate as a *Safe Zone Ally* at Antioch/Seattle?

- Belief that our campus is enriched through all forms of diversity including LGBTQIA individuals.

- Willingness to assist members of the AUS community in accessing support and information resources on campus and in the community.
- Maintenance of confidentiality within the confines of your job.
- Willingness to engage in respectful, collegial dialogue pertaining to issues impacting LGBTQIA peoples' lives in an honest, open, and non-judgmental manner; including the use of inclusive language, avoidance of stereotyping, and do not engage in assumptions of heteronormativity.
- Willingness to study and become familiar with the information in the *Safe Zone* manual. Once you have done so, you will be asked to meet with a faculty mentor to discuss your commitment to becoming a *Safe Zone* ally.
- Willingness to display a LGBTQIA *Safe Zone* sticker in or near your office.

Adapted from: Cal Poly Safe Zone Program:

http://www.csupomona.edu/~pride_center/pridesfz.htm

Responsibilities for becoming a *Safe Zone* ally:

This manual is provided to aid the reader in learning more about lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning, and queer issues. It is meant to provide accurate information regarding terms, definitions, concepts, and the realities of living as a LGBTQIA person. By becoming familiar with its contents, you may learn more accurate information about the reality of being lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer. This manual is not exhaustive, as learning about LGBTQIA issues is a lifelong process. There exists a plethora of literature related to this topic that the reader is urged to explore. As such, this manual is meant to aid you in becoming familiar with basic terminology and concepts, to aid in beginning your journey toward understanding, and to help you align with the LGBTQIA community. If you choose to display the Antioch Seattle LGBTQIA *Safe Zone* decal, please do so responsibly. Become familiar with the information in this manual as well as other sources. Should the need present itself, please become familiar with resources available on campus (i.e.: faculty mentors) and in the community so that you may best be able to assist students, faculty, and staff who may seek you out as a Safe Space Ally.

Adapted from: Brown University Safe Zone Program:

http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf

Getting Oriented Terms and Definitions

Please note: The members of the LGBTQIA community are unique and do not fit into distinct categories. However, sometimes labels are needed/used for political reasons and to increase visibility. These terms and definitions represent a place to start. It is important to note that members of the LGBTQIA community may have different meanings and opinions of these definitions. What is most important is that you respect how a person chooses to self-identify or define.

(Adapted from: Wall, Vernon A. and Nancy J. Evans (Eds.) "Using Psychological development theories to understand and work with gay and lesbian persons" Beyond Tolerance: Gays, Lesbians and Bisexuals on Campus. American College Personal Association. 1991.)

Terms Related to Sexual Orientation:

Sexual Orientation: Sexual orientation is an enduring emotional, romantic, sexual, or affectional attraction (or lack thereof) toward others. It is distinguished from other components of sexuality including biological sex, gender identity (the psychological sense of being male or female), and the social gender role (adherence to cultural norms for feminine and masculine behavior). Sexual orientation exists within a complex, non-linear spectrum and includes asexuality, heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality, and queer-sexuality to name a few. Most scientists today agree that sexual orientation is most likely the result of a complex interaction of environmental, cognitive and biological factors. There is also considerable recent evidence to suggest that biology, including genetic or hormonal factors, play a significant role in a person's sexuality. It's important to recognize that there are likely many reasons for a person's sexual orientation, and the reasons may be different for different people. Human beings cannot choose to be either gay or straight. For most people, sexual orientation emerges in early adolescence without any prior sexual experience. Psychologists do not consider sexual orientation to be a conscious choice that can be voluntarily changed. Sexual orientation is different from sexual behavior because it refers to feelings and self-concept. Individuals may or may not express their sexual orientation in their behaviors. As a result it is important not to make assumptions about people based on their identity or their behavior. For example, someone who identifies as a lesbian may occasionally have sexual relationships with men or may have had them in the past, and a man who identifies as heterosexual may occasionally have same-sex sexual encounters but not identify as gay. While it may be tempting to make judgments about an apparent disparity between someone's identity and behavior, social identity is complex and personal, and it is much more productive to accept a person for whom they are and understand that most people's life experiences do not fit neatly into a label. *(Adapted from the APA Help Center website: <http://www.apahelpcenter.org/articles/article.php?id=31>).*

Affectional Orientation:

A recent term used to refer to variations in emotional and sexual attraction. The term is preferred by some over “sexual orientation” because it indicates that the feelings and commitments involved are not solely (or even primarily) sexual in nature. This term emphasizes the affective emotional component of attractions and relationships, including heterosexual as well as LGBTQIA orientations. (*Adapted from the APA Help Center website: <http://www.apahelpcenter.org/articles/article.php?id=31>*).

Ally (Heterosexual Ally): Someone who is a friend, advocate, and/or activist for LGBTQIA people. A heterosexual ally is someone who is willing to confront heterosexism in themselves and others. The term ally is also generally used for any member of a dominant group who is a friend, advocate or activist for people in an oppressed group. (*Adapted from: Brown University Safe Zone Program: http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf*)

Asexual: A person who is not sexually attracted to either men or women and does not have a desire to engage in sexual activity with a partner. Asexuality is a sexual orientation and differs from celibacy, which is a choice to abstain from sex. Some asexual people have a desire to form intimate but nonsexual romantic relationships, and will date and seek long-term partnerships. (*Adapted from: San Diego State University Safe Zone Program: <http://www.safezones.sdsu.edu/allies.htm>*).

Butch/Femme or Lipstick Lesbian: A lesbian or gay woman who prefers traditionally masculine (butch), or feminine (femme), dress, style, expression, or identity. Use caution with these terms, as they can be taken offensively, mainly because they are still often used offensively. (*Adapted from Worcester Polytechnic Institute Safe Zone Program: <http://users.wpi.edu/~alliance/index.html>*).

Bisexual: A term used to identify someone who has romantic and/or sexual feelings, attractions, and/or relationships with more than one gender. This does not necessarily mean that bisexuals have relationships with both men and women at the same time, as this is a common stereotype. It also does not mean that a person is equally attracted to men and women. Levels of attraction may vary. A bisexual person can also be defined as someone who has romantic and/or sexual feelings, attractions and/or relationships with people of *any* gender (rather than saying both genders). (*Adapted from: Brown University Safe Zone Program: http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf*)

Biphobia: The fear, hatred, or intolerance of bisexual people. (*Adapted from the APA Help Center website: <http://www.apahelpcenter.org/articles/article.php?id=31>*).

Camp or Campy: In LGBT communities, (especially gay men) this term may be used to describe behavior that exaggerates gay mannerisms or stereotypes. Such exaggeration is often powerful in its ability to reveal the absurdity of gender expectations. (*Adapted from*

Worcester Polytechnical Institute Safe Zone Program:

<http://users.wpi.edu/~alliance/index.html>).

Closeted or In the Closet: A term commonly used to describe an individual who is hiding their sexual orientation from others. (*Adapted from: Brown University Safe Zone Program:*

http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf)

Coming Out: The term used to describe the process by which LGBTQIA persons recognize, acknowledge, accept, and make known to others their sexual identities.

(*Adapted from the APA Help Center website:*

<http://www.apahelpcenter.org/articles/article.php?id=31>).

Cross-dressing: Wearing clothing not usually associated with one's birth sex. People (gay and straight) may cross dress for a variety of reasons including personal expression, sexual gratification, entertainment, or expressing ones' gender identity. (*Adapted from: San Diego State University Safe Zone Program:*

<http://www.safezones.sdsu.edu/allies.htm>).

Drag queen/Drag king: Used by people who present socially in clothing, name, and/or pronouns that differ from their everyday gender, usually for enjoyment, entertainment, and/or self-expression. Drag queens typically have everyday lives as men. Drag kings typically live as women and/or butches when not performing. Unless they are drag performers themselves, most transgender people would be offended by being confused with drag queens or drag kings. (*Adapted from: Brown University Safe Zone Program:* http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf)

Dyke: Once known as a derogatory term for lesbian, the word dyke was reclaimed by lesbians in the 1970's as a slang, empowering term. Many lesbians now refer to themselves as dykes. The term *baby dyke* is often used for a dyke who is newly out.

(*Adapted from Worcester Polytechnical Institute Safe Zone Program:*

<http://users.wpi.edu/~alliance/index.html>).

Family: Often used by LGBTQIA communities to identify other members of the community.

Effeminate: Used to identify a person (usually male) who expresses and/or presents culturally/stereotypically feminine characteristics. This is often viewed as a culturally negative term. (*Adapted from: San Diego State University Safe Zone Program:*

<http://www.safezones.sdsu.edu/allies.htm>).

Faggot/Fag: A derogatory word frequently used to denote a gay male. The origin of the word in regard to gay men is unknown. (*Adapted from: San Diego State University Safe Zone Program:* <http://www.safezones.sdsu.edu/allies.htm>).

Gay: Usually refers to men who have romantic and/or sexual feelings, attractions, and/or relationships with other men. Some women may also prefer the term gay and thus identify themselves as gay. (Adapted from: *Brown University Safe Zone Program*: http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf)

Heterosexual: A person who has romantic and sexual feelings, attractions, and/or relationships with someone considered to be the opposite gender. (Adapted from the APA Help Center website: <http://www.apahelpcenter.org/articles/article.php?id=31>).

Heterosexism: The societal, cultural, institutional, and individual beliefs and practices that promote privilege to heterosexuals while subordinating and denigrating LGBTQIA people. The main element differentiating heterosexism from prejudice and discrimination is the use of institutional power and authority to support prejudices and enforce discriminatory behaviors in systematic ways with far-reaching outcomes and effects. (Adapted from: *Brown University Safe Zone Program*: http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf)

Heterosexual Privilege: The benefits and advantages that heterosexuals receive in a heterosexist culture. (Adapted from: *Brown University Safe Zone Program*: http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf)

Homophobia: The fear, hatred, or intolerance of people who identify, or are perceived to be, LGBTQIA persons.

Homophobia (Internalized): The fear of being, or being viewed by others, as LGBTQIA due to internalized and accepted societal prejudices, myths and lies about LGBTQIA people Homophobic behavior can range from telling jokes about lesbians and gay men, to acts of physical violence. (Adapted from: *Brown University Safe Zone Program*: http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf)

In the Life: Often used by communities of color to denote inclusion in the SGL (see below) or LGBTQIA communities. (Adapted from: *Brown University Safe Zone Program*: http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf)

Lesbian: A woman who has romantic, affectional, and/or sexual feelings, attractions, and/or relationships with other women.

LGBTQIA: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning and/or Queer, Intersex, Asexual and/or Ally.

Metrosexual: A term popularized in the 1990s referring to a heterosexual male that assumes characteristics traditionally associated with gay male stereotypes. (*Adapted from Worcester Polytechnical Institute Safe Zone Program: <http://users.wpi.edu/~alliance/index.html>*).

Outing: The act of revealing someone else's LGBTQIA identity without permission. (*Adapted from: Brown University Safe Zone Program: http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf*)

Pansexual, omnisexual, and pomosexual: (postmodern sexuality): Sometimes substitute terms for bisexual, rather than referring to *both* or *bi*. *Omni* refers to all gender attraction, and is used mainly by those who wish to express acceptance of all gender possibilities including transgender and intersexed people, not just two. *Pansexuality* sometimes includes an attraction for less mainstream sexual activities, such as BDSM. (*Adapted from: Brown University Safe Zone Program: http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf*)

Pink Triangle: An inverted triangle was first adopted by lesbian and gay culture starting in the 1970's in remembrance of homosexuals who were forced to wear pink triangles in Nazi concentration camps. Lesbians often wore the red and black triangles. (*Adapted from: San Diego State University Safe Zone Program: <http://www.safezones.sdsu.edu/allies.htm>*).

Pride: A healthy safe respect, which, in the context of the LGBTQIA community, promotes empowerment, education, safe living, and the sense that it is "okay to be gay." (*Adapted from: San Diego State University Safe Zone Program: <http://www.safezones.sdsu.edu/allies.htm>*).

Pride March: A public procession or parade of LGBTQIA and their Allies to proclaim pride, solidarity, and unity. (*Adapted from: San Diego State University Safe Zone Program: <http://www.safezones.sdsu.edu/allies.htm>*).

Sexual Minority: A group whose sexual identify, orientation or practices differ from the majority of the surrounding society.

Straight: A term originating in the gay community describing heterosexuals and meaning "to enter the mainstream," or "to go straight." (*Adapted from Worcester Polytechnical Institute Safe Zone Program: <http://users.wpi.edu/~alliance/index.html>*).

Stonewall: The site of several nights of violent protests following a police raid committed on June 28, 1969 in New York City for no other reason than it was a drag bar.

Although not the nation's first gay-rights demonstration, Stonewall is regarded as the birth of the modern LGBTQIA movement. *(Adapted from Worcester Polytechnical Institute Safe Zone Program: <http://users.wpi.edu/~alliance/index.html>).*

Queen: Often used within the LGBTQIA community to identify gay or bi males who take on traditional female characteristics or act in a more feminine way. *(Adapted from the APA Help Center website: <http://www.apahelpcenter.org/articles/article.php?id=31>).*

Queer: A term that some LGBTQIA people have claimed as an inclusive and positive way to describe themselves and their community. Some people use it as an umbrella term or as a term in and of itself. Some people choose not to use the word because of its derogatory and emotionally inflammatory history. *(Adapted from the APA Help Center website: <http://www.apahelpcenter.org/articles/article.php?id=31>).*

Questioning: The process of considering, exploring, or being confused about one's sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

Rainbow Flag: Originally designed in 1978 in San Francisco by artist Gilbert Baker signifying the diversity and unity of the GLBT movement. There were eight colors in the flag; pink for sexuality, red for light, orange for healing, yellow for the sun, green for natural serenity, turquoise for art, indigo for harmony, and violet for spirit. In 1979, the flag was modified to its current six-stripe format (pink was omitted, blue was substituted for turquoise and indigo, and violet became a rich purple). *(Adapted from Worcester Polytechnical Institute Safe Zone Program: <http://users.wpi.edu/~alliance/index.html>).*

Sexual Preference: Used historically to describe sexual orientation, this term can be misleading, as it implies a decision or choice. The term sexual orientation is preferred. *(Adapted from the APA Help Center website: <http://www.apahelpcenter.org/articles/article.php?id=31>).*

Terms related to Gender, Gender Identity, and Gender Expression:

*It is important to note that there are many ways one can describe and/or express gender. **Gender identity** refers to a person's felt sense of being a man, woman, gender-queer, bi-gender, transgender, or other gender identity. At birth we are usually assigned a gender of male or female based upon our outward physical appearance, and most people grow up with a sense of congruency insofar as assigned and felt gender. In addition, most of us grow up in a culture that expects individuals to fit into one of these two dichotomous categories, and our culture does not tend to tolerate exceptions or variations to these constructs. In reality, gender identity is not always that simple. It is not uncommon for some people, who were assigned one gender at birth, to experience incongruency with their "assigned" gender. For example, some people assigned the identity of boy at birth experience themselves as girls/women, and some people assigned the identity of girl at birth experience themselves as boys/men. Because such individuals do not fit into our culture's pre-prescribed dichotomous gender expectations, they may instead identify as gender-queer, bi-gender or another identity that best fits their own internal sense of gender.*

Individuals who feel a sense of incongruence with their assigned gender can follow a multitude of paths. While some seek gender affirmation through hormone treatment and/or gender reassignment surgery, others do not. For those who do, significant barriers including a lack of qualified medical professionals and a lack of social support oftentimes preclude many from securing the medical intervention they seek. In addition, most health insurance policies in the United States do not cover these procedures, furthering financial strain and inaccessibility. It is important to understand the difficulties that some gender-queer and trans-gender people face. There is a tremendous amount of prejudice and discrimination within the health care system and the community at large. This manual includes basic information about how to be an ally to transgender people along with additional resources you can access to learn more.

(Adapted from: Brown University Safe Zone Program:

http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf)

Androgyny: Displaying characteristics of both, or neither, male or female traits.

Binary Gender: In the U.S. culture, gender is typically a binary construct (male/female). The term "opposite sex" also implies a binary construct and can be used to self-identify (i.e.: a male referring to a female as the opposite sex). *(Adapted from the APA Help Center website: <http://www.apahelpcenter.org/articles/article.php?id=31>).*

Binary Gender Recognition: Recognizes only two genders. Promotes the idea that all males should be male-identified and masculine, and all females should be female-identified and feminine. *(Adapted from Worcester Polytechnic Institute Safe Zone Program: <http://users.wpi.edu/~alliance/index.html>).*

Biological Sex: The dichotomous biological assignment of male or female based upon visible genitalia at birth. The biological sexes are commonly seen as mutually exclusive, and it is often believed that a person's sex should dictate their gender identity expression (i.e. those born with male genitalia should identify as men and behave in masculine ways, while those born with female genitalia should identify as women and behave in feminine ways). However, many individuals are born with sexual characteristics that cannot be categorized as wholly male or female (see Intersexed). (*Adapted from: Brown University Safe Zone Program:*

http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf)

Cisgender/Cissexual: Cis is a prefix meaning “on this side of” or “not across.” Cisgender and Cissexual is a description of a non-transgender or non-transsexual man or woman when discussing trans issues. Cisgender/Cissexual individuals therefore have a gender identity and body concept that is culturally/socially congruent with their sex and gender designation at birth. These terms are less biased than the popular terms "biomen," "bioguy," or "biowomen." (*Adapted from: Brown University Safe Zone Program:*

http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf)

Cissexism: Discrimination and invisibility experienced by transgender and/or gender queer people who do not conform to a binary gender, body concept, or anatomy that matches their sex designation at birth. (*Adapted from: Brown University Safe Zone Program:*

http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf)

FTM/F2M: Shortened term for female-to-male trans men. This term is not preferred or used by everyone and should not be used unless a person prefers it. (*Adapted from: Brown University Safe Zone Program:*

http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf)

Gender: Characteristics of masculine and femininity that are learned, promoted, or chosen. A person's biological/assigned sex does not always match their perceived or felt gender. (*Adapted from the APA Help Center website:*

<http://www.apahelpcenter.org/articles/article.php?id=31>).

Gender Affirmation: This term refers to the social, legal, and/or medical process of affirming a gender identity and/or body concept different from a person's birth designation. This term is more clinically accurate than “sex change.” Further, it is often more culturally sensitive than “transitioned.” People seeking gender or body concept affirmation are already who they affirm themselves to be inside. A male, designated female at birth, is not a woman becoming a man, rather, his identity as a man motivates him to seek affirmation. (*Adapted from: Brown University Safe Zone Program:*

http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf)

Gender Bending: The blurring the binary gender roles through behavior, dress, or other forms of expression. (*Adapted from Worcester Polytechnical Institute Safe Zone Program: <http://users.wpi.edu/~alliance/index.html>*).

Gender Identity: How an individual views him or herself in terms of characteristics of gender. May be purely male, female, or as possessing characteristics of both. (*Adapted from Worcester Polytechnical Institute Safe Zone Program: <http://users.wpi.edu/~alliance/index.html>*).

Gender-neutral/Gender-free Pronouns: Pronouns, which do not associate a gender with the person being discussed. The English language has no truly gender-neutral third person pronoun available, and women especially have criticized this, as many writers use “he” when referring to a generic individual in the third person. In addition, the dichotomy of “he and she” in English does not leave room for other gender identities, a source of frustration to the transgender and gender-queer communities. People who are limited by languages, which do not include gender-neutral pronouns, have attempted to create them, in the interest of greater equality. (*Adapted from Worcester Polytechnical Institute Safe Zone Program: <http://users.wpi.edu/~alliance/index.html>*).

Gender Roles: The socially constructed and culturally specific behavior and appearance expectations imposed on women (femininity) and men (masculinity). (*Adapted from Worcester Polytechnical Institute Safe Zone Program: <http://users.wpi.edu/~alliance/index.html>*).

Gender Variant (GV): This adjective is an umbrella term to describe people whose gender identities, expressions, and/or experiences are not limited to a single binary gender identity (i.e. man/woman). This term is not synonymous with trans, and is often used inaccurately to describe people of trans identity or experience, many of whom have binary identities. (*Adapted from: Brown University Safe Zone Program: http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf*)

Gender queer (GQ): A term preferred by some gender variant individuals whose gender identities do not fit within the man/woman binary. Some GQ people consider themselves neither men nor women, while others consider themselves a combination of both or a third gender. Some GQ people designated female at birth self-identify as FTX, meaning female-to-X, with X representing a non-binary gender ID. Some GQ people prefer third gender pronouns zie (zee) and hir (heer). Third gender pronouns should never be used for trans people who prefer to be identified with male or female pronouns. (*Adapted from: Brown University Safe Zone Program: http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf*)

GRS: Gender reassignment or affirmation surgery.

Intersex: The term intersex(ed) is preferred over hermaphrodite (an outdated/offensive term). This is a general term used for a variety of conditions in which a person is born with reproductive or sexual anatomy that does not appear to, or easily fit the dichotomous definitions of female or male. While an intersex condition may be present at birth, oftentimes the condition is not discovered until puberty or adulthood. In the United States, even children born with “atypical” reproductive or sexual anatomy are always assigned a gender at birth. As adolescents or adults, individuals with intersex conditions may change their gender if the one assigned at birth is not congruent with the gender with which they identify. Disorders of Sex Development is another term used by the medical establishment to identify various intersex conditions. This term is controversial, as some people feel that using the term disorder is offensive and pathologizing. (*Adapted from: Brown University Safe Zone Program: http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf*)

MTF/M2F: Shortened term for male-to-female trans women. This term is not preferred or used by everyone and should not be used unless a person prefers it. (*Adapted from: Brown University Safe Zone Program: http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf*)

Man of Trans Experience/Woman of Trans Experience: Term used by people who have experienced or plan to have a social and/or medical affirmation to change their birth-designated sex and/or gender, but who do not self-identify as trans. For example, a man of trans experience, designated female at birth. (*Adapted from: Brown University Safe Zone Program: http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf*)

Mispronouncing: The act of using incorrect pronouns. Mispronouncing reinforces misinformation about trans people through incorrect pronoun cueing, constitutes legal harassment, and is considered a damaging form of verbal abuse in the trans community. (*Adapted from: Brown University Safe Zone Program: http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf*)

Passing: Term used to describe individuals and situations where people of transgender/transsexual experience are not publicly identifiable as having a birth-designated sex that diverges from their current gender identity and/or body concept. Many trans people are unable to pass. Those unable to pass are often marginalized/discriminated against (i.e.: access to medical affirmation services, use of bathrooms that match their gender identity, or use of preferred name and pronouns). (*Adapted from: Brown University Safe Zone Program:*

http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf)

Pre-Op (also Pre-Operative): Transsexual individuals who have not attained gender affirmation surgery, but who desire to and are seeking that as an option. They may or may not “cross-live” full-time and may or may not take hormone therapy. They may also seek surgery to change secondary sex characteristics.

Post-Op (also Post-Operative): Transsexual individuals who have undergone sex affirmation surgery, and/or other surgeries to change secondary-sex characteristics such as breast, Adam’s apple, or body contours.

Pronoun cueing: The act of modeling the use of a person’s preferred pronoun(s) and establishing a person’s perceived gender in an interpersonal situation. (*Adapted from: Brown University Safe Zone Program:* http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf)

SRS: Sex reassignment or affirmation surgery.

Stealth: Term used to describe people who are not open about their trans history or status in some or all aspects of life. This term is not interchangeable with the concept of being closeted. (*Adapted from: Brown University Safe Zone Program:* http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf)

Deep stealth: Refers to people who choose not to disclose their trans history or status in all major areas of their lives. Many deep stealth people do not tell their medical providers about their trans history or status. (*Adapted from: Brown University Safe Zone Program:* http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf)

TGI: An acronym that can be used as an umbrella term. This adjective refers to people who are transgender, transsexual, Two Spirit, gender queer, gender variant, pangender, and/or intersex. (*Adapted from: Brown University Safe Zone Program:* http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf)

Trans (trans or T): An umbrella adjective that describes individuals with transgender and/or transsexual experience or identity. Trans people of any gender identity may have any sexual orientation (heterosexual, gay, bisexual, etc.). Many people of trans experience do not have a trans identity, rather, they may identify simply as men or women. As such, it is important not to automatically use “trans” terminology unless the individual prefers it. Many people of transsexual experience do not identify as LGB or queer and may be offended if sexual orientation is assumed. It can be awkward if you are not sure how someone identifies, but it is much better to ask rather than assume

incorrectly. Overwhelming people will appreciate it if you take the effort to find out which terms they prefer. (Adapted from: *Brown University Safe Zone Program: http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf*)

Trans man: Used by some people who were designated female at birth, but who identify as men. Trans men often seek or have undergone medical interventions to change their bodies. It is important to understand that trans men are men and should be treated accordingly, whether or not they pass visually as men or have had any medical intervention. (Adapted from: *Brown University Safe Zone Program: http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf*)

Trans woman: Used by people who were designated male at birth, but who identify as women. Trans women often seek or have undergone medical interventions to change their bodies. It is important to understand that trans women are women and should be treated accordingly, whether or not they pass visually as women or have had any medical intervention. (Adapted from: *Brown University Safe Zone Program: http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf*)

Transgender (TG): Historically, transgender was used as an umbrella term to describe a broad range of people whom experience and express gender differently than prevailing cultural norms. Increasingly, this adjective is used specifically to describe people whose gender identities do not match their sex designation at birth. For example, an individual designated male at birth that identifies as a women. Some people no longer consider transgender an inclusive umbrella term. Many trans advocates avoid the adjective transgender, because it encourages usage of transgender as a noun (i.e. a transgender), which many people consider offensive, objectifying and dehumanizing. As mentioned earlier, if you're in doubt of the terminology preferred by an individual you should ask. (Adapted from: *Brown University Safe Zone Program: http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf*)

Transsexual (TS): An adjective that describes people whose **body concept** differs from biological/genetic sex assignment at birth. **Body concept** refers to a person's "felt sex" or "kinesthetic sex." Body concept functions at both a physiological and psychological level and should not be confused with gender role or masculine/feminine behavior. People of transsexual experience may or may not seek medical intervention (sex reassignment surgery and/or hormone therapy) to acquire physical attributes that reflect their body concept. While some individuals choose to self-identify by using transsexual as a noun (i.e. I am a transsexual), many consider this usage offensive. Rather, many want to be referred to simply as male or female, based on their body concept rather than their current embodiment or degree of medical transition. (Adapted from: *Brown University Safe Zone Program:*

http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf)

Transvestite: Generally used as a derogatory term to refer to a person who dresses in clothes traditionally associated with persons of the opposite gender. Often misused to denote an individual of trans experience or a cross dresser. (*Adapted from: San Diego State University Safe Zone Program: <http://www.safezones.sdsu.edu/allies.htm>*).

Two Spirit (2S): This term is popular as both an adjective and a noun among many Native American/First Nations peoples who feel that they have two spirits, a male and female spirit, living within a single body. This term is also used by some contemporary GLB, transgender, and intersexed Native American/First Nation people to describe people with same-gender partners or attractions. There are different terms for Two-Spirit individuals in various Native American/First Nation languages. Many consider it offensive when non-Native American/First Nations identify as Two Spirit, as this concept has culturally specific historical roots and meanings. (*Adapted from: Brown University Safe Zone Program:*

http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf)

What is Homophobia?

Homophobia (*Adapted from Worcester Polytechnical Institute Safe Zone Program: <http://users.wpi.edu/~alliance/index.html>*).

Homophobia takes many different forms. It can take the form of physical acts of hate, violence, verbal assault, vandalism or blatant discrimination, such as firing an employee, evicting someone from his or her housing, or denying access to public accommodations based solely on sexual orientation or perceived/assumed sexual orientation. There are also many other forms of homophobia and heterosexism that are oftentimes overlooked. These “more subtle” actions may seem insignificant by comparison, but include such things as exclusion, slights, remarks, and other forms of covert bias. It is important for supportive allies of the gay and lesbian community to recognize various homophobic levels of attitude so that they may take steps towards changing these attitudes.

- Looking at a lesbian or gay man and automatically thinking of her/his sexuality rather than seeing her/him as a whole, complex person.
- Changing your seat in a meeting because a gay or lesbian person sat in the chair next to yours.
- Thinking you can “spot one.”
- Using the terms “lesbian” or “gay” as accusatory.
- Thinking that a lesbian (if you are female) or gay man (if you are male) is making sexual advances if she/he touches you.
- Feeling repulsed by public displays of affection between lesbians and gay men but accepting the same displays of affection between heterosexuals.
- Not confronting a homophobic remark for fear of being identified with lesbians and gays.
- Not asking about a woman’s female lover or a man’s male lover although you regularly ask “How is your husband/wife?” when you run into a heterosexual friend.
- Feeling gays and lesbians are too outspoken about lesbian and gay civil rights.
- Avoidance of, or feeling discussions about gay or lesbian issues are not necessary since you are “okay” with these issues.
- Assuming that everyone you meet is heterosexual.
- Being outspoken about gay rights, but making sure everyone knows you are straight.
- Feeling that a lesbian is just a woman who could not find a man or that a lesbian is a woman who wants to be a man.
- Feeling a gay man is just a man who could not find a woman or that a gay man is a man who wants to be a woman.
- Worrying about the effect a lesbian or gay volunteer/co-worker will have on your work or your clients.
- Failing to be supportive when your gay friend is sad about a quarrel or breakup.
- Asking lesbian or gay colleagues to speak about lesbian or gay issues, but not about other issues about which they may be knowledgeable.
- Focusing exclusively on someone’s sexual orientation and not on other issues of concern.
- Being afraid to ask questions about lesbian or gay issues when you do not know the answers.

How Homophobia Hurts Everyone (*Adapted from work written by Warren Blumenfeld, Editor of Homophobia: How We All Pay the Price*)

You do not have to be lesbian, gay, bisexual, or queer (or know someone who is) to be negatively affected by homophobia. Though homophobia actually oppresses LGBTQIA individuals, it also hurts heterosexuals in the following ways:

- Homophobia can inhibit the ability of heterosexuals to form close, intimate relationships with members of their own gender for fear of being perceived as lesbian, gay, or bisexual.
- Homophobia can lock people into rigid gender-based roles that restrict creativity and self-expression.
- Homophobia can push heterosexual men to constantly prove their masculinity.
- Homophobia can result in lesbian baiting (an accusatory charge of lesbianism) being used to control women's autonomy and to question their femininity.
- Homophobia is often used to stigmatize heterosexuals who are perceived by others as LGBTQIA, and who are a friend or relation of someone who is LGBTQIA.
- Homophobia can compromise human integrity by pressuring people to treat others badly, actions that serve to diminish their basic humanity.
- Homophobia, combined with sexual taboos, can result in the invisibility or erasure of the lives and sexuality of lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals in school-based education discussions, keeping vital information from students. Such erasure can contribute to the spread of AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections.
- Homophobia can deter individuals from taking part in certain social activities. People who are heterosexual are discouraged from participating in lesbian and gay-identified activities for fear of being labeled.
- Homophobia can pressure young people to become heterosexually active to prove to themselves and others that they are normal. This premature sexual involvement can result in emotional distress, as well increases the chance of teen pregnancy and the spread of sexually transmitted diseases.
- Homophobia can prevent some lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals from developing an authentic self-identity and adds to the pressure to marry. This can be traumatic not only for them, but also for their heterosexual spouses and children, should they feel compelled to get married.
- Homophobia can inhibit appreciation of other types of diversity, making it unsafe for everyone, because each person has unique traits not considered mainstream or dominant. We are all diminished when any one of us is demeaned.
- In a clinical sense, homophobia is an intense, irrational fear of same sex relationships that can become overwhelming to the person. In common usage, homophobia is the fear of intimate relationships with person of the same sex.
- By challenging homophobia, people are not only fighting the oppression of lesbians, gays, and bisexuals, but are also striving for a society that accepts and celebrates the differences in all of us.

Homophobic Levels of Attitude: *(Adapted from Worcester Polytechnical Institute Safe Zone Program: <http://users.wpi.edu/~alliance/index.html>).*

- **Repulsion:** Homosexuality is seen as a “crime against nature.” Gays are viewed as sick, crazy, immoral, sinful, wicked, etc. and anything is justified to change them (e.g. prison, hospitalization, negative behavior therapy, including electric shock).
- **Pity:** Heterosexual chauvinism. Heterosexuality is more mature and certainly to be preferred. Any possibility of becoming straight should be reinforced and those who seem to be born “that way” should be pitied, “the poor dears.”
- **Tolerance:** Homosexuality is just a phase of adolescent development that many people go through and most people “grow out of.” Thus, gays are less mature than straights and should be treated with the protectiveness and indulgence one uses with a child. Gays and lesbians should not be given positions of authority (because they are still working through adolescent behaviors).
- **Acceptance:** Still implies there is something to “accept,” characterized by such statements as “you’re not a gay to me, you’re a person,” “What you do in bed is your own business,” “That’s fine as long as you don’t flaunt it.” Denies social and legal realities. Ignores the pain of invisibility and stress of closet behavior. “Flaunt” usually means say or do anything that makes people aware.

Positive Levels of Attitude: *(Adapted from Worcester Polytechnical Institute Safe Zone Program: <http://users.wpi.edu/~alliance/index.html>).*

- **Support:** Basic American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) approach. Work to safeguard the rights of gays and lesbians. Such people may be uncomfortable themselves, but they are aware of the climate and the irrational unfairness.
- **Admiration:** Acknowledges that being gay/lesbian in our society takes strength. Such people are willing to truly look at themselves and work on their own homophobic attitudes.
- **Appreciation:** Value the diversity of people and see gays as a valid part of that diversity. These people are willing to combat homophobia in themselves and in others.
- **Nurturance:** Assume that gay and lesbian people are indispensable in our society. They view gays and lesbians with affection and delight and are willing to be gay advocates and allies.

What is Bisexuality?

Bisexuality: Although there is a definition of bisexuality (as a sexual orientation) given in the terms section of this manual, it is important to note that the use of the word bisexual as a label and identity varies from group to group and from individual to individual. Further, no one definition can fully describe all the different types of bisexuals that exist. Presented below are just a few of the more popular definitions currently in use:

- Someone who is capable of feeling romantic, spiritual, and/or sexual attraction for any gender.
- A person who loves despite gender.
- One who loves individuals first and gender second.
- An individual open to sexual or emotional exploration with someone of any gender.

(Adapted from: Brown University Safe Zone Program:

http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf)

Common Myths about Bisexuality Dispelled:

Myth 1: “Bisexuality doesn’t really exist. People who consider themselves bisexuals are going through a phase, or they are confused, undecided, or fence sitting. They will realize that they are actually homosexual or heterosexual.”

Reality: Bisexuality is a legitimate sexual orientation. While some people go through a transitional period of bisexuality as part of exploring lesbian/gay or heterosexual identity, some bisexuals explore homosexuality as a transitional phase in their coming out as bisexuals. For many others bisexuality remains the primary orientation. Many bisexuals may feel oppressed and confused while living in a society where bisexuality is oftentimes denied by both homosexual and heterosexual individuals. Fence sitting is a misnomer; there is no “fence” between homosexuality and heterosexuality except in the minds of people who rigidly divide the two. Whether an individual is an “experimenting heterosexual” or a bisexual depends upon how s/he defines her/himself, rather than on a rigid standard. While there are people for whom bisexual behavior is trendy, this does not negate the people who come out to a bisexual identity amidst pain and confusion and claim it with pride.

Myth 2: “Bisexuals are equally attracted to both sexes. Bisexual means having concurrent lovers of both sexes.”

Reality: Most bisexuals are primarily attracted to either men or women, but do not deny the lesser attraction, whether or not they act on it. Some bisexuals are never sexual with women, or men, or either. Bisexuality is about dreams, desires, and capacities as much as it is about acts. Bisexuals are people who can have lovers of either sex, not people who must have lovers of both sexes. Some bisexual people may have concurrent lovers, but bisexuals do not need to be with both sexes in order to feel fulfilled.

Myth 3: “Bisexuals are promiscuous hypersexual swingers who are attracted to every woman and man they meet. Bisexuals cannot be monogamous, nor can they or live in traditional committed relationships. They could never be celibate.”

Reality: Bisexual people have a range of sexual behaviors. Like lesbians, gays or heterosexuals, some have multiple partners, some have one partner, and some go through periods without any partners. Promiscuity is no more prevalent in the bisexual population than in other groups of people.

Myth 4: “Politically speaking, bisexuals are traitors to the cause of lesbian/gay liberation. They pass as heterosexual to avoid trouble and maintain heterosexual privilege.

Reality: Obviously there are bisexuals who pass as heterosexual to avoid trouble. There are also many lesbians and gays who do this. To “pass” for heterosexual and deny the part of you that loves people of the same gender is just as painful and damaging for a bisexual as it is for a lesbian or gay person.”

Myth 5: “Bisexuals get the best of both worlds and a doubled chance for a partner.”

Reality: Combine our society’s extreme heterosexism and homophobia with lesbian and gay hesitance to accept bisexuals into their community and it might be more accurate to say that bisexuals get the worst of both worlds. As to the doubled chance for a date theory, that depends more upon the individual’s personality than it does upon her/his bisexuality. Bisexuals don’t radiate raw sex any more than lesbians, gays, or heterosexuals. If a bisexual woman has a hard time meeting people, her bisexuality won’t help much.

(Adapted from: Wall, Vernon A. and Nancy J. Evans (Eds.) “Using Psychological development theories to understand and work with gay and lesbian persons” Beyond Tolerance: Gays, Lesbians and Bisexuals on Campus. American College Personal Association. 1991.)

Straight But Not Narrow

How to Be an Ally to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, & Gender Queer People:

- Use the words gay, lesbian, bisexual, gender queer, or queer instead of homosexual, as the majority of LGBTQIA people do not identify with or use the word homosexual to describe themselves.
- Avoid heterosexual assumptions by using non-gender specific language. For example: “Are you seeing someone?” or “Are you in a committed relationship?” instead of “Do you have a boyfriend/girlfriend?” or “Are you married?” Use the word partner or significant other instead of boyfriend/girlfriend or husband/wife.
- Do not assume the sexual orientation of another person even when that person is married or in a committed relationship. Many bisexuals, and even some gay men and lesbians, are in heterosexual relationships.
- Do not assume someone who is transgender is gay or that the person is seeking to transition to in order to become heterosexual.
- Challenge your own assumptions, expectations, and conceptions about gender-related roles.
- Speak out against statements and jokes that attack LGBTQIA people. Letting others know you find anti-LGBTQIA statements and jokes offensive and unacceptable can markedly reduce homophobia.
- Educate yourself about LGBTQIA history, culture, and concerns. Read LGBTQIA publications, and support the businesses that advertise in them.
- Raise LGBTQIA issues, concerns, and experiences in your family, workplace, school, religious community, and neighborhood.
- Educate children about families that have two moms or two dads.
- Establish an LGBTQIA welcoming committee in your faith community.
- Support and involve yourself in LGBTQIA organizations and causes.
- Write letters to your political representatives asking them to support legislation that positively affects LGBTQIA people.
- March and/or attend annual Pride Parades.

(Adapted from: Brown University Safe Zone Program:

http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf)

Coming Out Issues

Coming Out:

The phrase, coming out (of the closet), is used to describe the process of, and the extent to which one identifies as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer. It includes first coming out to oneself and then deciding how and when to come out to others. It can be a long and difficult struggle for many LGBTQIA individuals, as they have had to live with the many facets of oppression and discrimination related to sexual and/or gender identification. Coming out to others is an experience unique to LGBTQIA persons. The decision to come out to another person involves disclosing one's sexual side, which is for the most part viewed as being a private matter.

Oftentimes, individuals have to challenge their own attitudes and move from negative self-concept to feelings of appreciation and admiration. Not everyone experiences internalized homophobia, but for those who do, it can take years of painful work to develop a positive lesbian, gay or bisexual identity. As a person overcomes internalized homophobia they are faced with decisions of when and to whom they will disclose their sexual identity. Coming out is a never-ending process throughout an individual's lifetime because our cultural standard is to assume heterosexuality. Over time it does tend to get easier to come out to others, but some people remain fearful over long periods of time due to the lack of acceptance that still exists in many places.

Some are afraid of being rejected; while others worry that their sexual identity will be the overriding focus in future interactions with the other person. However, coming out does not always result in negative consequences. It can develop a sense of relief and a sense of closeness. Other issues related to an individual's coming out include: the extent of the revelation (should everyone know or should disclosure be selective?), timing, anticipation, and consequences.

The decision not to come out to others is referred to as passing. Our culture tends to assume heterosexuality and persons who do not correct the heterosexual assumption are considered to be passing as heterosexuals. Some individuals may believe that passing is preferable in an environment built on heterosexual norms. These individuals can experience significant conflict as they make decisions on when to pass and when to be open. Further, some live with fear about their secret being revealed. Those passing or living "in the closet" may also experience hostility from other "out" LGBTQIA individuals who feel that they are not being honest with themselves or others.

(Adapted from: San Diego State University Safe Zone Program: <http://www.safezones.sdsu.edu/allies.htm>) and the Brown University Safe Zone Program: http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf)

LGBTQIA individuals might be afraid of losing friendships and family connections, losing closeness in relationships, being the subject of gossip, being harassed, being physically assaulted, losing financial support from family members, being thrown out of the house, rejection by family/friends, losing their jobs, losing their children.

LGBTQIA persons have a variety of reasons for coming out to others. Some reasons include the desire to end the secrecy; to feel closer and more congruent around friends, family, coworkers, etc.; to stop expending energy by hiding an essential part of themselves; to feel like they have integrity; to make a statement that being LGBTQIA is okay.

What might lesbian, gay men and bisexual people be afraid of?

- Losing friendships and family connections
- Losing closeness in relationships
- Being the subject of gossip
- Being harassed
- Being physically assaulted
- Losing financial support from family members
- Being thrown out of the house
- Losing their jobs
- Losing their children

Why might lesbian, gay men and bisexual people want to come out to others?

- To end the secrecy
- To feel closer to friends, family, coworkers, etc.
- To be able to be whole around friends, family, coworkers, etc.
- To stop wasting energy by hiding an essential part of themselves
- To feel like they have integrity
- To make a statement that being LGB is and okay

How might lesbian, gay men and bisexual people feel about coming out to someone?

- Scared
- Vulnerable
- Relieved
- Concerned about how the person will react
- Proud

How might an individual feel after someone has come out to them?

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

- Honored

What do lesbian, gay men and bisexual people want from the people they come out to?

- Acceptance
- Support
- Understanding
- Comfort
- A closer relationship
- Hearing that disclosure will not negatively affect the relationship
- An acknowledgement of their feelings

What are some situations in which someone might come out to you?

- They may have chosen to come out to you because you are a close friend or family member, and they want to have an honest and genuine relationship with you.
- They may feel that you are a person who will be understanding and accepting, and so they trust you with this very personal information.
- They may not be sure how you will react, but they prefer to be honest and are tired of putting time and energy into hiding their identity.
- They may decide to come out to you before they really know you, in order to establish an honest relationship from the beginning.
- They may come out to you because some aspect of your professional relationship makes it difficult to continue to hide their sexual orientation.
- They may come out to you because you are in a position to assist them with a concern, determine their access to certain resources, or address policies that affect their life.

Ways that you can help when someone comes out to you:

- Remember that the person has not changed. They are still the same person you know; you just have more information about them now than you did before. If you are shocked, don't let the shock lead you to view the person as suddenly different.
- Don't ask questions that would have been considered inappropriate before their disclosure.
- Don't assume that you know what it means for the person to be lesbian, gay or bisexual. Every person's experience is different.
- They may not want you to do anything necessarily. They may just need someone to listen.
- Consider it an honor that they have trusted you with this very personal information. Thank them for trusting you.
- Clarify with them what level of confidentiality they expect from you. They may not want you to tell anyone else, or they may be out to others and not be concerned with who finds out.

- If you don't understand something or have questions, remember that people who are lesbian, gay or bisexual are often willing to help you understand their life experiences.
- If you would like more information, ask in an honest and considerate way. If you show a genuine and respectful interest in their life, they will most likely appreciate it. Some good questions to ask are:
 - How long have you known that you are lesbian/gay/bisexual?
 - Are you seeing anyone?
 - Has it been hard for you having to hide your sexual orientation?
 - Is there some way that I can help you?
 - Have I ever offended you unknowingly?

What is Heterosexual Privilege?

Heterosexual Privilege: The benefits and advantages an individual receives as a result of identifying as heterosexual in a heterosexist culture.

Progress continues to be made in many areas regarding civil rights for LGBTQI people, however, the progress is not consistent or widespread across the United States. As of June 2015, due to a legal case considered by the United States Supreme Court (*Windsor vs. US*), all 50 states allow same-sex marriage. Some states are beginning to provide equal rights for trans individuals while other states continue to pass laws further restricting and denying rights. Privilege can be used as a tool or a weapon. As a weapon it can deny and restrict. As a tool it can be used to remove barriers to equal rights.

Recognizing how heterosexism, homophobia and heterosexual privilege manifest in our culture can be overwhelming. It is normal for those with privilege to feel guilty about having privilege. It is important for individuals to acknowledge feelings of guilt in order to move beyond it and to use their power and privilege to make positive changes. Anyone can use their privilege to be a powerful ally to LGBTQI people. Please see the “How to be an ally” sections for ideas about using heterosexual privilege to afford change.

(Adapted from: Brown University Safe Zone Program:

http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf)

Advantages of heterosexual privilege: If you are heterosexual (or, in some cases, simply perceived as heterosexual, i.e.: closeted):

- You can go wherever you want knowing you will not be harassed, beaten or killed because of your sexuality.
- You do not have to worry about being mistreated by the police or victimized by the criminal justice system based upon your sexuality.
- You can express affection toward another (i.e.: kissing, hugging, holding hands) in most social situations and not expect hostile, demeaning, or violent reactions from others.
- You are more likely to see sexually laden 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 having a picture of your partner on your desk) without fearing that people may disapprove or think that you are being blatant.
- If your partner is a citizen of another country, he or she can apply for residency based on your relationship.
- You can be assured that your basic civil rights will not be denied or outlawed because some people disapprove of your sexuality.
- You can expect that your children will be given texts in schools 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 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 promotion based on your sexuality.
- You can expect to see people of your sexuality presented positively 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, job, or social situation.
- You can act, dress, and talk as you choose without it being considered a reflection on people 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.

(Adapted from: Brown University Safe Zone Program:

http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf)

Examples of Heterosexism:

- Someone's life partner was excluded from intensive care on the basis they are "friends" not family.
- Some gays and lesbians found that living in rural areas generally means being isolated "in the closet."
- When they find their posters for support meetings or dances defaced or removed, gays and lesbians feel discounted and physically threatened. This is not good for their health and sense of safety.
- Gay and lesbian young people found that heterosexism and homophobia in their schools encouraged them to drop out. If they stayed in school, they found themselves more vulnerable to mental health difficulties including suicide attempts.
- A bank would not let a same sex couple open a joint bank account unless they identified themselves as "friends." The bank insisted they were not "spouses" and assumed "partner" meant business partner. These women felt angry and discounted.
- A same sex couple could not get each other covered by health benefits at work and had to pay more for coverage as two single individuals.
- Anti-gay jokes and humor on campuses and in work places created a hostile environment in which students and workers were afraid to disclose their minority sexual orientation. Being closeted is not good for your mental health.
- The word "faggot" was spray-painted on a house and a mailbox in a gay man's

neighborhood.

*(Adapted from: Heterosexism Enquirer. Memorial University of Newfoundland:
<http://www.mun.ca/the/>).*

Trans/Transgender Issues

This section was adapted from the *Resources* section of “Lifelines Rhode Island’s” website (www.lifelinesri.org). This section provides a broad overview, and is not meant to provide a comprehensive understanding of trans issues. Please visit the website for additional information.

What does trans/transgender mean?

Historically, “transgender” was a term used to describe individuals who wanted to live some or all of the time in a gender other than the one they were assigned at birth, but who did not want hormones or surgery. This is no longer the case as many individuals who identify as transgender desire hormones and/or surgery to affirm their internal sense of gender rather than the gender assigned at birth. “Trans” has also been an umbrella term used to describe individuals from transgender, transsexual, cross dresser, two-spirit, gender variant, gender queer, and intersex groups. While many of these groups share similar political issues, many find the blanket term “trans” inaccurate and offensive. As such, many prefer not to be labeled with the term “transgender.” In addition, some gender queer, androgynous, bi-gender, and/or multi-gender people do not consider themselves transgender because trans is still often associated with a binary gender construct (i.e.: transition from male to female). Despite popular usage of the terms "LGBT community" and "trans community," most trans people are not actually part of either, particularly straight and/or stealth (not openly acknowledged) trans people.

*Adapted from materials written by Y. Gavriel Ansara, Founder of **Lifelines Rhode Island**, a grassroots advocacy, education, and support initiative to meet the needs of transgender, transsexual, Two Spirit, genderqueer, androgyne, bi-gender, multigender and intersex (TGI/gender-spectrum) people across the Ocean State: www.lifelinesri.org*

What is a transsexual?

Transsexual is a term used to describe an individual who has a gender identity that does not correspond with the sex/gender assigned at birth. Instead, these individuals identify with the opposite sex or a sex other than the one they were assigned at birth (also known as a *transgender* individual). The term *transsexual* was first used by physicians and usually carried a stigma of mental illness, unlike *transgender*, which is used as a self-identifying term. Transsexual usually refers to those who desire and/or currently receive hormone therapy and/or sex reassignment surgery to the opposite sex. Using the term transgender or transsexual interchangeably can obscure the diverse needs among trans people and can contribute inadequate care. Transsexuals do not define themselves based on their degree of medical transition, but instead as male, female, or another gender.

*Adapted from materials written by Y. Gavriel Ansara, Founder of **Lifelines Rhode Island**, a grassroots advocacy, education, and support initiative to meet the needs of transgender, transsexual, Two Spirit, genderqueer, androgyne, bi-gender, multigender and intersex (TGI/gender-spectrum) people across the Ocean State: www.lifelinesri.org*

What is the gender identity of a transgender person?

There is no “template” for how transgender individuals identify, as the issues surrounding gender and gender identity are complex. While some identify as transgender, man/woman of trans experience, or affirmed man/woman, others identify simply as a boy/man or a girl/woman. Further, some may identify as a Trans boy/man or a Trans girl/woman. It is important to note that some transgender individuals may have a more ambiguous gender identity such as androgyne, genderqueer, bi-gender, two-spirit, multi-gender, or other self-identified gender.

(Adapted from: Brown University Safe Zone Program:

http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf).

What are transgender rights?

In December of 2014, the United States Department of Justice has officially expanded its legal definition of sex discrimination, prohibited by Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, to include discrimination based on gender identity. Enforcement of such anti-discrimination policies and laws vary significantly from state to state, however.

Transgender people deserve to have the same rights as other individuals which should include: a life without discrimination and violence based on gender identity and expression; access to social services such as homeless shelters, rape crisis shelters, and medical clinics; access to education and employment; equal treatment by law enforcement; equal housing rights; access to public accommodations such as shops, restaurants, public transportation, and bathrooms; and the right to get married.

(Adapted from: Brown University Safe Zone Program:

http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf).

How can I help support Transgender Rights?

You can help by learning more about transgender rights, by supporting relevant organizations, and by talking to family and friends about these important issues. *The National Center for Transgender Equality*, the *National Transgender Advocacy Coalition*, and the *Sylvia Rivera Law Project* work to secure transgender rights on a national level. In addition, become familiar with local, state and federal laws protecting (or not protecting) transgender rights, including the “Matthew Shepard & James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act.”

(Adapted from: Brown University Safe Zone Program:

http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf).

Transgender Emergence – a developmental model:

The process of developing a gender identity is a normative process that everyone experiences, but for gender variant people the process is complicated by cultural expectations that are at dissonance with their core sense of self. The emergence process describes an adaptive stage model for transgender men and women who are coming to terms with their own gender variance and moving from an experience of denial and self-hatred to one of self-respect and gender congruence. These stages are fluid, not necessarily linear, and are impacted by many other identity issues. These stages are not meant to “label” people or define transgender maturity.

Awareness: In this stage a person begins to be aware that the source of feeling different from others may be related to gender. People in this stage are often in great distress. An ally can help by listening and normalizing the experiences the person is having.

Seeking Information/Reaching Out: In the second stage, a person may seek to gain education and support about gender variation. An ally can help by facilitating access to accurate information and encouraging outreach.

Disclosure to Significant Others: The third stage involves the disclosure of gender difference to significant others, spouses, partners, family members and friends. An ally can help by encouraging the person to prepare for these disclosures suggesting professional support if it seems appropriate.

Exploration/Identity and Self-Labeling: The fourth stage involves the exploration of various (transgender) identities. An ally can help by remaining open to various possible gender identities and expressions, supporting the person’s articulation and comfort with a unique gendered identity.

Exploration: Transition Issues/Possible Body Modification. The fifth stage involves exploring options for transition regarding identity, presentation, and body modification. An ally can help by remaining open to this process, and advocating toward their manifestation.

Integration: Acceptance and Post-Transition Issues. In the sixth stage the person is able to integrate and synthesize (transgender) identity. An ally can help by supporting transition-related issues, such as on-campus safety, resources, and education.

(Adapted from Transgender Emergence: Therapeutic Guidelines for Working With Gender-Variant People and Their Families by Arlene Istar Lev C.S.W.-R, C.A.S.A.C)

Working with Trans People: Some Things to Keep in Mind:

Do not be afraid to ask a trans person by which pronoun they preferred to be addressed. While it may be uncomfortable to ask, it is better to ask than to use the wrong pronoun. If you have a question, make sure you ask yourself whether or not the question is relevant to the situation at hand. It is important that you are respectful of an individual's private information and not to ask personal questions simply to satiate your own curiosity. Also, never ask if someone has had hormones and/or surgery yet. This is typically experienced as an overstepping of boundaries, and thus can be experienced as offensive. Further, there is no one surgery that trans people access.

Do not assume that all trans people are comfortable being lumped together with the LGBTQIA community. While many trans people do identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or queer, many do not.

Do not assume that someone who has revealed a trans experience to identify as a trans person. Many trans people do not consider being trans an identity and do not want to be part of a trans community. In LGBTQIA development models the highest level of identity development and identity integration is to be openly LGBTQIA. For many transgender people, openly identifying as transgender would be regressive and unhealthy. Many transgender people are healthiest and achieve the most positive developmental gains when they are able to affirm an identity simply as a man or a woman.

Respect trans peoples right to privacy and their right to control disclosure of their trans experience.

Avoid using sensational, offensive or inaccurate catch phrases such as “a man trapped in a woman's body,” “sex change,” “hermaphrodite,” “transvestite,” “trannie,” etc. If you are working with someone medically, ask for their preferred body terms. For example, a man who was designated female at birth might prefer you to use the term chest rather than breasts. What is important to keep in mind is that there is no one size fits all approach to quality care for transgender people.

(Adapted from: Brown University Safe Zone Program:

http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf)

How to be an ally to Transgender People:

- Validate people's gender expression. It is important to refer to transgender people by the pronoun appropriate to their gender identity. In other words, if someone identifies as female, then refer to the person as she; if someone identifies as male, refer to the person as he. If you are not sure, ask. Never use the word "it" when referring to someone who is transgender. To do so is demeaning, insulting, and disrespectful. Some transgender people prefer to use gender-neutral pronouns such as hir instead of her, and sie or ze instead of she and he, or they and them.
- Use non-gendered language to avoid making gender assumptions. Refer to people by name, instead of calling them sir, ma'am, or Mr./Ms.
- Examine and challenge your own conceptions about gender related expectations, roles, and behaviors. Do not expect people to conform to society's beliefs about women and men.
- Do not assume that someone who is transgender is lesbian, gay, or bisexual, or that a person will seek to transition to become heterosexual.
- Use the word cross dresser instead of transvestite, as the latter term is often considered pejorative due to word's clinical and pathological history.
- Never ask transgender people about how they have sex or what their genitals look like. This is inappropriate in every situation.
- Do not share the gender identity of individuals without their permission. Do not assume that everyone knows. The decision to tell others about one's gender should be left to the individual.
- When you learn about someone's transgender identity, do not assume that it is a fad or trend.
- While public discussions about transgenderism and transsexuality are a relatively recent phenomenon, most transgender people have felt themselves to be gender different from early childhood and have often struggled to be accepted by others. It is important to trust that someone's decision to present themselves as differently gendered is not made lightly or without due consideration.
- Educate yourself and others about the experiences of transgender people. Introduce trainings, readings, and other resources to your colleagues to continue educational efforts to deconstruct social norms around gender, sex, and sexual orientation.
- Work to change campus policies in areas such as housing, employment, student records and forms, and health care that discriminate against transgender people

and seek to include gender identity/expression in your school's non-discrimination policy.

- Be aware of gendered spaces. Be sensitive to the fact that bathrooms, locker rooms, and gender specific events can create potential embarrassments or violence for trans people. Advocate to change campus policies regarding gendered spaces (i.e.: unisex bathroom).

Adapted from materials from The Stonewall Center, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, the Southern Arizona Gender Alliance: <http://www.tgnetarizona.org>.

Examples of “Gender-Normative” Privilege:

- Use public restrooms without fear of verbal abuse, physical intimidation, or arrest.
- Use public facilities such as gym locker rooms and store changing rooms without stares, fear, or anxiety.
- Strangers don't assume they can ask you what your genitals look like and how you have sex.
- Your validity as a man/woman/human is not based on how much surgery you've had or how well you “pass” as non-transgender.
- You have the ability to walk through the world and generally blend-in, not being constantly stared or gawked at, whispered about, pointed at, or laughed at because of your gender expression.
- You can access gender exclusive spaces such as the Michigan Womyn's [*sic*] Music Festival, Greek Life, or Take Back the Night and not be excluded due to your trans status.
- Strangers call you by the name you provide, and don't ask what your “real name” [birth name] is and then assume that they have a right to call you by that name.
- You can reasonably assume that your ability to acquire a job, rent an apartment, or secure a loan will not be denied on the basis of your gender identity/expression.
- You have the ability to flirt, engage in courtship, or form a relationship and not fear that your biological status may be cause for rejection or attack, nor will it cause your partner to question their sexual orientation.
- If you end up in the emergency room, you do not have to worry that your gender will keep you from receiving appropriate treatment, or that all of your medical issues will be seen as a result of your gender.
- Your identity is not considered a mental pathology by the psychological and medical establishments.
- You have the ability to not worry about being placed in a sex-segregated detention center, holding facility, jail or prison that is incongruent with your identity.
- You have the ability to not be profiled on the street as a sex worker because of your gender expression.
- You are not required to undergo an extensive psychological evaluation in order to receive basic medical care.

- You do not have to defend your right to be a part of “Queer,” and gays and lesbians will not try to exclude you from “their” equal rights movement because of your gender identity (or any equality movement, including feminist rights).
- If you are murdered (or have any crime committed against you), your gender expression will not be used as a justification for your murder.
- You can easily find role models and mentors to emulate who share your identity.
- Hollywood accurately depicts people of your gender in films and television, and does not solely make your identity the focus of a dramatic storyline, or the punchline [*sic*] for a joke.
- Be able to assume that everyone you encounter will understand your identity, and not think you’re confused, misled, or hell-bound when you reveal it to them.
- Being able to purchase clothes that match your gender identity without being refused service/mockered by staff or questioned on your genitals.
- Being able to purchase shoes that fit your gender expression without having to order them in special sizes or asking someone to custom-make them.
- No stranger checking your identification or driver’s license will ever insult or glare at you because your name or sex does not match the sex they believed you to be based on your gender expression.
- You can reasonably assume that you will not be denied services at a hospital, bank, or other institution because the staff does not believe the gender marker on your ID card to match your gender identity.
- Having your gender as an option on a form.
- Being able to tick a box on a form without someone disagreeing, and telling you not to lie. Yes, this happens.
- Not fearing interactions with police officers due to your gender identity.
- Being able to go to places with friends on a whim knowing there will be bathrooms there you can use.
- You don’t have to convince your parents of your true gender and/or have to earn your parents’ and siblings’ love and respect all over again.
- You don’t have to remind your extended family over and over to use proper gender pronouns (e.g., after transitioning).
- You don’t have to deal with old photographs that did not reflect who you truly are.
- Knowing that if you’re dating someone they aren’t just looking to satisfy a curiosity or kink pertaining to your gender identity (e.g., the “novelty” of having sex with a trans- person).
- Being able to pretend that anatomy and gender are irrevocably entwined when having the “boy parts and girl parts” talk with children, instead of explaining the actual complexity of the issue. (Killermann, 2011)

Intersex Issues

What does intersex mean?

An intersex individual is defined as one who is born with variation or ambiguity of external genitalia, internal genitalia, gonads, and/or sex chromosomes. While some variances do not manifest until adolescence, some are apparent at birth and can make it difficult for doctors to identify a baby as male or female. Despite the fact that these variances usually do not present with any medical or functional impairment, families are usually counseled to conform to the binary construct of gender by “assigning” a sex for the baby through surgical intervention. It is common for individuals who have had surgery as infants to experience significant compromises in sexual function and well-being as adults. Intersex people are sometimes referred to as “hermaphrodites,” which is a term that is considered archaic and demeaning. It is also important to note that many cultures do not view intersex individuals as “defective.” Rather, because these cultures are not tied to dichotomous constructs of gender, they conceptualize intersex individuals as simply another form of gender variation.

(Adapted from: Brown University Safe Zone Program:

http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf)

The number of intersex individuals is difficult to determine. The Intersex Society of North America reports that 1 in 100 babies have some sort of variation of the external genitalia, but are not labeled as intersex. Also about 1 in 1,000 babies are born with ambiguous external genitalia and labeled as intersex. Many intersex individuals do not have ambiguous external genitalia, but have ambiguous or differing internal genitalia, sex chromosomes, gonadal sex or hormonal sex. Some of these individuals may not realize they are intersex until puberty when typical adolescent changes do not follow a predictable course (i.e.: the individual never reaches menarche, testes descend in a girl, or other unexpected physiological phenomenon). It is also possible for some people to never know they are intersex, or to find out in unexpected ways. For example, a woman track athlete testing positive for testosterone, not because she was taking testosterone, but because she has a undescended testicles which are secreting testosterone.

(Adapted from: Brown University Safe Zone Program:

http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf)

What is a hermaphrodite?

The term hermaphrodite literally refers to a “creature that has both male and female reproductive organs” which, for humans, only exists in myth. It is an out dated, improper term when used to refer to intersex individuals, and is often experienced as derogatory. While the term has been historically used as medical terminology, most intersex individuals feel prefer to use the self-identified term, *intersex* or *variations of sexual development* (VSD).

(Adapted from: Brown University Safe Zone Program:

http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf)

What are Disorders of Sex Development (DSD)?

This diagnosis, and its guidelines, are used by medical doctors to describe atypical sexual development and intersexed individuals. Many intersex individuals oppose its usage, as it serves to further pathologize their bodies rather than viewing intersexed as a natural variance to the norm of male/female. For more information about this diagnosis, you can visit *Organization Intersex International* (OII): <http://oiiinternational.com>

How do intersex individuals define their gender identity?

Some intersexed individuals identify as a boy/man or a girl/woman. Some intersexed people have a more ambiguous gender identity, such as androgyne, genderqueer, bi-gender, multigender, two-spirit, or another self-identified gender. Although many of these individuals are categorized with medical diagnoses, these are not gender identities. The term intersexed can be a self-identified label, like transgender, but may not be a gender identity by itself. Many intersexed people do not identify as intersexed. They may prefer to be viewed as a person with a Variation of Sex Development (VSD) or another term. Learn about the specific variation. There are many intersex conditions, all of which have unique attributes. Respect the emotional impact of having biology that is non normative and being forced to choose from two categories of biology that do not necessarily fit felt-sense. Respect that many intersexed people have a single, binary gender identity. Most intersexed people are not gender variant.

(Adapted from: *Brown University Safe Zone Program*:

http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf)

Living Intersexed, a personal story:

Cheryl Chase, activist: “Until the age of 18 months, Cheryl Chase was known as Brian. She was born in the late 1950s and diagnosed as a ‘hermaphrodite’, which meant that her genitals were ‘ambiguous’. Such ambiguity was not acceptable to her doctors, so they decided that she would be ‘assigned’ a female. They performed a clitorrectomy, and her parents began raising her as a girl. *Chase explains*: ‘There was no concern about sexual function, and no male doctor could fathom a man with such a small penis.’ Chase didn’t learn about her past until she was a young adult, because her parents were instructed to get rid of anything that suggested her male potential, like boyish clothing, photographs, and toys. The family even relocated. They were also told to never, ever discuss it with their new daughter. As a child, all Chase knew was that she wasn’t happy. She ran away from kindergarten and hated wearing dresses. ‘I knew I wasn’t like other girls, and I wasn’t going to marry a boy’, she recalls. ‘I was romantically attracted to women.’ Her pubescent revelation of her penchant for women was accompanied by recurring violent nightmares in which she was chased by killers. When trying to choose an escape route in those dreams, she didn’t know whether to slip into the public men’s or women’s room. All the while, her abdominal organs were falling out between her legs. Chase suffered in painful silence for years until she finally began gathering her medical records to

determine how her past had shaped her future. Over the years Chase read histories of the gay and lesbian civil rights movement and in 1992 mustered the courage to come out as intersexed. She realized she had to start advocating for other intersexed individuals to raise awareness and create camaraderie. ‘I always thought there was no one like me in the world’, she explains. She created the Intersex Society of North America (ISNA) to not only develop an intersex community but, more importantly, because, ‘the sorts of things that my parents and doctors did to me were horrific. And they’re still doing these mutilating surgeries on people and they still tell parents it’s necessary, safe and the child will never have a normal life without it.’ ”

From Organization Intersex International (OII): <http://oiiinternational.com>

Being A *Safe Zone* Ally

Four Levels in Ally Development:

1. Awareness: By gaining awareness and paying attention to how you are different from, and similar to, LGBTQIA people you will be more prepared to be an ally. The following are strategies to aid in this process:

- Have open, non-judgmental conversations with LGBTQIA individuals.
- Attend workshops such as the *Safe Zone* training to aid in awareness-building.
- Read and continue to educate yourself about LGBTQIA issues.
- Engage in self-examination, including becoming aware of and challenging your own assumptions and beliefs about LGBTQIA persons.

2. Knowledge/Education: It is important that you acquire basic knowledge regarding LGBTQIA issues and continue to do so. Prioritize efforts to be aware of what the LGBTQIA experience is like in our society and campus community. The following are strategies to aid in this process:

- Learn about local, state, and federal laws, policies, and practices, and how they affect LGBTQIA persons.
- Educate yourself about LGBTQIA cultures and norms within your community.
- Contact local, state and national LGBTQIA organizations for information.
- Utilize the educational materials and resources in the AU/Seattle *Safe Zone* manual, the Antioch/Seattle LGBTQIA-Straight Alliance Facebook page, and other websites supporting LGBTQIA organizations.
- Read LGBTQIA publications and watch LGBTQIA movies.
- Attend LGBTQIA events on campus and in the community.

3. Skills: It is important that you develop skills to communicate and share the knowledge you have. The following are strategies to aid in this process:

- Attend workshops pertaining to LGBTQIA issues, including *Safe Zone* education events.
- Engage in role playing situations with friends.
- Develop support connections.
- Engage in activities that help you to gain awareness/familiarity of LGBTQIA issues (i.e.: stay apprised of current political climate through HRC).

4. Action: Action represents the most powerful way to afford change. Awareness, knowledge, and skills do little to aid others when they are not shared or put into practice. As such, it is essential for allies to engage in action pertaining to LGBTQIA issues. The following are strategies to aid in this process:

- Be supportive of LGBTQIA students and colleagues. Becoming an ally is a great start.
- Actively work to support social justice and equality for all people regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or expression.
- Take an active stance to challenge homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, and heterosexism.

(Adapted from: San Diego State University Safe Zone Program:
<http://www.safezones.sdsu.edu/allies.htm>).

Becoming a *Safe Zone Ally* is a tremendous responsibility and not one to be taken lightly. Should you decide to become an ally, please ensure you can commit to the following.

A *Safe Zone ally*:

- Is an advocate for LGBTQIA people.
- Has worked (or is currently working) to develop an understanding of heterosexism, biphobia, transphobia, and other forms of bias and discrimination pertaining to LGBTQIA persons.
- Chooses to align with LGBTQIA people and to respond to their needs.
- Believes in being a *Safe Zone ally* and believes it is in the communities best interest to do so.
- Expects support from other allies
- Is able to acknowledge and articulate how patterns of oppression have affected his/her life, as well as the lives of LGBTQIA persons.
- Is a “safe person” for someone who is LGBTQIA to speak with. This means that an ally is committed to providing support and maintaining respect and confidentiality.
- Is a “safe person” for people with a LGBTQIA roommate, friend or family member who may wish to speak with someone.
- Can refer someone to another ally if they feel they cannot assist with a particular concern
- Expects to make some mistakes but does not use such as an excuse for non-action.
- Recognizes that an ally has the right and ability to initiate change through personal, institutional, and social justice.
- Tries to remain aware of how homophobia and other oppressions exist in his or her environment.
- Does not demean other groups of people on the basis of their race, religion, culture, gender, social status, physical appearance, physical, or mental abilities/disabilities.
- Speaks up when hearing a homophobic, derogatory, and/or stereotyped remark or joke, and encourages discussion about sensitivity and oppression.
- Looks within him or herself to examine and “unlearn” the myths and misconceptions perpetuated by society.
- Promotes a sense of community and knows that he or she is making a difference in the lives of others.
- Does not assume everyone is heterosexual. An ally is aware transgender and intersexed people exist.
- Never “outs” someone without their permission.
- Works to actively create an atmosphere of acceptance.
- Uses all-inclusive language such as “partner” instead of “boyfriend” or “girlfriend.”
- Actively pursues the process of self-education. Reads, stays up to date, and asks questions.

- Acknowledges, takes responsibility for, and works to change assumptions, prejudice, and privilege.
- Interrupts instances of prejudice and takes action against oppression, even when people from the target group are not present.
- Has a vision of a healthy, multicultural society.

Adapted from: A Safe Zone Ally by Shawn-Eric Brooks (1990). University of North Carolina Safe Zone Manual: <http://www.uncwil.edu/bglad/what.htm>

Guidelines for Allies:

Below are some guidelines for anyone wishing to serve an Antioch/Seattle *Safe Zone* ally. These guidelines are not exhaustive, but are a place to begin. All allies should know that while it is imperative to discuss LGBTQIA issues, discussions can be highly charged, emotional, and confusing on a very personal level. While being an ally is exciting and important, it can also be challenging.

- Do not assume heterosexuality. Keep in mind that others may not come out to you until they feel safe. Make efforts to use gender-neutral language when referring to someone's partner if you do not know the person well. Be aware of how the use of gender-laden language reinforces assumptions and is potentially off-putting for others.
- Educate yourself about LGBTQIA issues. There are many resources available, including reading lists, books, and videos available from the Antioch/Seattle library and LGBTQIA-Straight Alliance. Do not be afraid to ask questions.
- Educate yourself about transgender and intersex issues. Do not assume that everyone falls into one of two categories of male/man and female/woman.
- Explore ways to integrate LGBTQIA issues in your work. Establishing dialogue and educating about LGBTQIA issues in the context of your work can help to raise awareness and afford change for everyone (regardless of sexual orientation/identity).
- Challenge your own (and others') stereotypes about LGBTQIA people as well as other minority groups in our society. Challenge derogatory remarks and jokes made about any group; avoid reinforcing stereotypes and prejudices.
- Pay attention to how sexual orientation impacts people's lives and development. Identify how race, religion, class, ability and gender intersect with sexual orientation and how multiple identities shape our lives. Adopt an open and curious stance to these possibilities.
- Avoid the use of heterosexist language and assumptions. Be sensitive and aware of political and legal issues affecting LGBTQIA persons (i.e.: the vast majority of US states do not allow same-sex marriage).
- Respect how people self-identify. For example, people with a same-sex or bisexual orientation usually prefer to be called gay, lesbian or bisexual rather than homosexual. While "queer" is a term used by some LGBTQIA people, it can also be experienced as offensive. If you do not know how to identify a particular person or group, ask.

- Do not expect members of any marginalized population (i.e.: gays, Jews, people of color, women, and/or people with disabilities) to always be the experts on issues pertaining to their particular identity group. Avoid tokenizing or patronizing individuals from different groups.
- Encourage discussion and allow for disagreement on topics related to sexual identity and civil rights. Because these issues can be highly emotional and confusing, it is not always possible to have discussions without conflict and/or disagreement. Keeping discussion focused on principles and issues rather than personalities can provide a collegial “container” for respectful dialogue.
- *Safe Zone* allies are human and have limits. Realize you cannot know everything and that you make mistakes. Avoid setting yourself up as an expert unless you are one. Give yourself time to learn about LGBTQIA issues, to ask questions, and to explore your own personal feelings.
- Ask for support if you notice problems or negative reactions to raising issues around sexual orientation and gender identity. Do not isolate yourself in these kinds of situations; seek out your faculty/staff mentor or other support.
- Examine your own biases. If you are uncomfortable with an issue and are unable to be open and accepting, refer the person to someone else.
- Know when and where to seek support. Know your resources.
- By becoming a *Safe Zone* ally, you may be labeled as LGBTQIA whether you are or not. If you experience this, use it as an opportunity to deepen your understanding of the power of homophobia and heterosexism. Make sure you are safe.
- Prepare yourself for a journey of change and growth from studying sexual identity issues, heterosexism, transphobia and other issues of difference. While the process of awareness and growth can be painful, it can also be exciting and enlightening. It will undoubtedly help you to know yourself better. By learning and speaking out as an ally, you will be making the world a safer, more affirming place for all; you may change or even save people’s lives.
- Don’t be surprised when someone comes out to you.
- Understand the meaning of “sexual orientation.” Each person’s sexual orientation is natural to that person. Avoid the term “sexual preference” and understand that sexual orientation is not a choice.
- Deal with feelings first. You can be helpful by just listening and allowing an LGBTQIA person the opportunity to express/vent feelings.
- Do not try to guess who’s gay.

(Adapted from: “Being An Ally For Lesbians, Gay Men And Bisexuals.” Metropolitan State College of Denver AND PFLAG “Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays”).

Creating a Non-Homophobic Campus Environment:

- Object to jokes and humor that are demeaning to LGBTQIA people.
- Counter non-relevant statements about sexual orientation or gender identity in making decisions or evaluations about faculty, staff, or students.

- Invite “out” professionals to conduct seminars and provide guest lectures in your classes and offices. Invite them for both LGBTQIA topics and other topics of their expertise.
- Do not force LGBTQIA people of the closet nor come out for them. The process of coming out should be in control of the individual until (and if) they consider it public knowledge.
- Do not include sexual orientation information in letters of reference or answer specific questions for references without first clarifying with the individual. Because your environment may be safe does not mean that all environments are safe.
- Recruit and hire “out” professional staff and faculty. View sexual orientation as a positive form of diversity that is desired in a multicultural setting. Question job applicants about their ability to work with LGBTQIA faculty, staff, and students.
- Do not refer all LGBTQIA issues to LGBTQIA staff/faculty/students. Do not assume their only expertise is LGBTQIA issues. Check with staff about their willingness to consult on LGBTQIA issues with other staff members.
- Be sensitive to issues of oppression and appreciate the strength and struggle it takes to establish a positive LGBTQIA identity. Provide nurturing support to colleagues and students in phases of this process.
- Be prepared. If you truly establish a safe and supportive environment, people share their personal lives and come out in varying degrees.
- Be prepared for administrative, maintenance, former students, professional colleagues, etc., to respond to the new *Safe Zone* atmosphere (whether positively or negatively).
- View the responsibility of making your workplace LGBTQIA safe as a departmental or organizational responsibility, not just responsibility of individual persons who happen to be LGBTQIA; always waiting for them to speak, challenge, or act, adds an extra level of responsibility to those who are already dealing with oppression on many levels.

(Adapted from Buhrke, R. A., & Douce, L. A. (1991). “Training issues for counseling psychologists in working with lesbian women and gay men.” The Counseling Psychologist, 19, 216-234).

“What Should I Do If...?” Answers to Commonly Asked Ally Questions:

How can I tell if someone is lesbian, gay, or bisexual, transgender or questioning?

Ultimately, the only way to tell if a person is LGBTQIA is if that person tells you. Most people do not fit common stereotypes, and many people who fit stereotypes are, in fact, not LGBTQIA. Assumptions on your part can be misguided. The important thing to remember is that it is very likely that someone you interact with on campus is LGBTQIA. Try to be sensitive to that fact.

What should I do if I think someone is gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender or questioning, but I am not sure or they have not told me?

Again, remember that assumptions on your part may be inaccurate. The best approach is to create an atmosphere that promotes acceptance and where an individual can feel comfortable coming out to you. You can promote this by being open and approachable, and by giving indications that you are comfortable with LGBTQIA topics and concerns. Ultimately, there are many reasons LGBTQIA people may or may not come out to you, many not within your control.

How do I make myself more approachable to people who are LGBTQIA?

Demonstrate that you are comfortable/aware of topics related to sexual orientation and LGBTQIA concerns. Be sensitive to the assumptions you make about people; try not to assume that everyone you interact with is heterosexual, that they have an opposite sex partner, etc. Try to use inclusive language, such as by avoiding the use of pronouns that assume the gender. Be a role model by confronting others who make homophobic jokes or remarks. Become knowledgeable about LGBTQIA issues by reading pertinent information and attending meetings and activities sponsored by LGBTQIA organizations.

What kinds of things might an LGBTQIA person go through when coming out?

Because most people in this culture grow up in a largely homophobic society, LGBTQIA people may experience guilt, isolation, depression, suicidal feelings, and/or low self esteem. While coming out can be an extremely liberating experience, as LGBTQIA individuals learn who they are, gain respect for themselves, and find community, it can also be an anxious process due to worries about rejection, ridicule, and the possible loss of family, friends, and employment. The process of grappling with one's sexual identity can be both exhilarating and/or overwhelming. It is important to note that coming out is a highly personal experience, as there is no “typical” pattern of coming out.

If someone wants advice on what to tell their roommate, friends, or family about being lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning, how can I help?

Remember each individual must decide when, where, and who they will reveal their sexual identity. Do not “counsel” someone to take any particular action, as you are not in a position to provide professional counseling. Rather, listen carefully, reflect on the concerns and feelings you hear, and suggest available resources for support (i.e.: PFLAG, support groups, resource centers, or other materials that may help with coming out). Help the person think through possible outcomes of coming out. Support the person's decision even if you do not agree with it.

What do I do if someone who is LGBTQIA wants my help to come out within my work environment, class, or a group I am a part of?

Again, help the individual think through the possible outcomes. Discuss how others might react and how the person might respond to those reactions. Mention the option of coming out to a few people at a time as opposed to the entire group. If someone has decided to come out, let him/her know you will be supportive. Suggest additional resources such as PFLAG, support groups, resource centers, or other materials that may help their coming out process.

How should I respond to heterosexual friends or coworkers who feel negatively about a person who is lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender in our office or group I am a part of?

When problems arise, it is most useful to have a discussion with the person involved. Help them to see that they are talking about a person, not just a sexual orientation. Make sure they have accurate information so you may appropriately discuss the myths and stereotypes that often underlie such negative reactions. Note similarities between LGBTQIA people and heterosexual people. Be clear with others that while they have a right to their own beliefs and opinions, you will not tolerate anti-gay comments or discrimination. Remember others may take their cues from you. If you are uncomfortable with, hostile to, or ignore someone who is lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender, others may also do so. Conversely, if you are friendly and respectful, others may follow suit.

How can I support LGBTQIA people without my own sexual orientation becoming an issue?

Be aware that when you sympathize and speak out about issues related to sexual orientation, some people may make assumptions about your own sexual orientation. Be mindful of how you might feel about and/or respond to this. How do you feel about your own sexual identity? Are you comfortable with yourself? Does it bother you that others may question your sexual orientation? Why or why not?

How should I respond to rumors that someone is LGBTQIA?

If you can, address any myths or stereotypes that may be fueling such speculation. Work to dispel rumors by letting others know that sexual orientation of any individual is irrelevant unless that person wishes to disclose that information. If a particular person continues to perpetuate and spread rumors, try talking directly to that person individually about the harmful effects of rumors and gossip.

How can I get others to be more open-minded about LGBTQIA people?

In brief, be a role model for others by being open and visible in your support. Share your beliefs with others when appropriate. Demonstrate that you are comfortable talking about LGBTQIA issues and people. Remember that part of your mission as an ally is to serve as an ambassador to create bridges across differences and to increase understanding. While you may be motivated to do so, be careful lecturing and policing others. Instead, use sound knowledge and take the time to educate yourself so you can share information when it is appropriate to do so.

How can I respond when someone tells a homophobic joke?

Many people believe that jokes are harmless and can become upset when others comment on a joke being inappropriate or not politically correct. Oftentimes, people who tell jokes about an oppressed group have never thought about how the jokes perpetuate stereotypes, or how they teach and reinforce prejudice. In addition, someone who tells a joke about LGBTQIA people is probably assuming everyone present is heterosexual (or shares negative attitudes toward LGBTQIA people). While some people do tell jokes as a form of aggression, many will stop if they realize they are hurting or embarrassing others. Responding assertively in these situations is difficult, but not responding sends a passive message of agreement. It is important to remember that anyone, particularly those questioning their own sexual identity, will watch to see who laughs at such jokes, and may internalize the hurtful message. As such, try to respectfully communicate your concerns about the joke, whether it be in a group or individually.

How can I respond to homophobic attitudes?

If you disagree with a negative statement someone makes about LGBTQIA people, the assertive thing to do is to say so. Again, silence communicates passive agreement. Your goal should be not to start an argument or foster hostility, but to increase understanding. Remember, the person making negative comments is an individual with their own views; you are simply presenting another way of thinking about the same topic. Try to be civil, respectful, and to share your own views in a non-accusatory manner without criticism. While it can be difficult to speak out in support of LGBTQIA people, remind yourself of the personal reasons you are committed to being a *Safe Zone* ally.

How can I respond to people who object to LGBTQIA people for religious reasons?

Keep in mind that views regarding religion and LGBTQIA issues are highly personal and can become quite emotionally charged. Further, it is certainly not your place to change the minds of individuals who base their negative beliefs about LGBTQIA people on religious beliefs; you can, instead, focus on issues related to civil and individual rights. For example, it is important to point out that while individuals are entitled to their religious beliefs and convictions, these views should never be used to oppress, marginalize, or deny rights to LGBTQIA people who should be afforded equal treatment under the law.

(Adapted from the Northern Illinois University Safe Zone Program by Anthony Papini Center For Multicultural and Academic Initiatives, Bowling Green State University: <http://web.missouri.edu/~umcstudentlifeLGBTQIA/resources/allyfaq.pdf>).

What kinds of things might a trans person go through when they begin to acknowledge their true gender identity?

Trans issues are very rarely discussed and as result they are widely misunderstood. Similarly to lesbian, gay and bisexual people, trans people may also experience feelings of guilt, isolation, depression, suicidal feelings, and low self-esteem. There is no pre-set pattern for an individual to question and come to terms with the feelings associated with whether the sex and gender they were assigned at birth is congruent with their internal sense of gender. Once a trans person does understand these feelings they may choose to

align their physical sex with their true gender through medical intervention. Remember, access to these resources is oftentimes difficult, as many trans individuals experience tremendous discrimination, emotional turmoil, and significant financial barriers. This can result in depression, isolation, and suicidal feelings. Remember, while some trans people use the term “coming out” to describe their personal acknowledgment of their true gender identity, many do not. In addition, a trans person may or may not identify as trans or transgender. Because many trans people strongly identify as a man or a woman, the ultimate goal is to simply be recognized as a man or woman. Hence, “coming out” as a trans person often leads to further discrimination, as it can contribute to an individual being perceived as a gender other than the one with which they identify. If you discover that someone has transitioned gender and currently or previously identified as trans it is very important not to disclose this information to others unless given explicit permission to do so. Further, if you are unclear as how they preferred to be addressed, ask.

(Adapted from: Brown University Safe Zone Program:

http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/LGBTQIA/SafeZoneManualFinal09.pdf)

Reporting Gender & Sexuality-Related Bias Incidents

Bias incidents involve threatening or harassing behavior that is motivated by bias based upon gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation OR *perceived* gender, gender identity or sexual orientation. These behaviors can include verbal remarks, written messages, and/or pictures. Non-emergency incidents can be reported to any *Safe Zone* ally, Dr. Dana Waters, the coordinator of the Antioch Seattle *Safe Zone* Program, at dwaters@antioch.edu, or your program chair listed below. **Any incident that involves physical threat or injury or concerns about physical safety should be reported IMMEDIATELY to the Antioch University Security Desk at XXXX.**

Department Chairs:

Online Resources:

This is not meant to be an exhaustive list, but a place to begin.

AARP Pride: www.aarp.org/relationships/friends-family/aarp-pride

American Society on Aging (ASA): www.asaging.org/ain

American Counseling Association (ACA): www.counseling.org

Competencies: www.counseling.org/knowledge-center/competencies

Association for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Issues in

Counseling (ALGBTIC): algbtic.org/resources/competencies

American Psychological Association (APA): www.apa.org

Division 44: <http://www.apadivision44.org>

LGBT Topics: www.apa.org/topics/lgbt/index.aspx

LGBT Concerns: Guidelines for psychological practice with LGB clients:

www.apa.org/pi/lgbt/resources/guidelines.aspx

Report of the APA Task Force on Gender Identity and Gender Variance:

www.apa.org/pi/lgbt/programs/transgender/index.aspx

www.apa.org/pubs/info/reports/gender-identity.aspx

American Psychological Association of Graduate Students/Committee on

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Concerns (APAGS-CLGBTIC):

www.apa.org/apags/issues/lgbt.aspx and

www.apa.org/apags/resources/lgbt-guide.aspx

BiNet USA: www.binetusa.org

Center for Excellence for Transgender Health:

www.transhealth.ucsf.edu/trans?page=lib-00-06

Forge-The Transgender Aging Network (TAN): <http://forge-forward.org/aging/>

Gay City Health Project: www.gaycity.org/

Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network (GLSEN): www.glsen.org

Gender Alliance of the South Sound (GASS): www.southsoundgender.com/about.html

Gender Odyssey Professional conference: www.genderdiversity.org/gopro/

GenderPAC (Political): www.genderpac.org

The Human Rights Campaign: www.hrc.org

Informed Consent for Access to Trans Health (ICATH): www.icath.org

Ingersoll Gender Center: <http://ingersollgendercenter.org>

Intersex organizations:

Organization Intersex International (OII): <http://oiiinternational.com>

OII-USA: <http://oii-usa.org>

Intersex Initiative (IPDX): www.intersexinitiative.org

Advocates for Informed Choice (AIC): <http://aiclegal.org>

Transgender Christians: www.transchristians.org/intersex

Journal of LGBT Issues in Counseling (The official journal of the Association of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Issues in Counseling – ALGBTIC):

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/U3PpEcbHNo>

LGBT National Health and Aging Center: <http://caringandaging.org/>

Lynn Conway's comprehensive site on Trans Issues: www.lynnconway.com

Mayors Office for Senior Citizens: <http://seattle.gov/humanservices/seniordisabled/mosc/>
Parents, Families, Friends and Allies United with LGBT people: www.pflag.org
National Center for Transgender Equality: <http://transequality.org/>
National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (Aging): www.thetaskforce.org/issues/aging
National Resource Center on LGBT Aging: www.lgbtagingcenter.org
National Transgender Advocacy: www.genderadvocates.org/links/national.html
Organization Intersex International: www.intersexualite.org/
Sage Olympia: www.sageolympia.org/
Services and Advocacy for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Elders (SAGE):
<http://sageusa.org>
Sylvia Rivera Law Project: <http://srlp.org/>
The Task Force: www.thetaskforce.org
Therapists and Physicians Consult Group at Ingersoll Gender Center:
<http://ingersollcenter.org/consultgroup>
Trans Advocacy Network: <http://transadvocacynetwork.org/>
Transgender Law and Policy Institute: www.transgenderlaw.org
Transgender Law Center: <http://transgenderlawcenter.org>
Washington Gender Alliance: www.washingtongenderalliance.com/index.html
Williams Institute: <http://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu>
World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH): www.wpath.org/

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SAFE ZONE CONTRACT AND CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT

Antioch University, Seattle

AU Seattle Safe Zone seeks to form a network of students, faculty, and staff committed and trained to provide safe, non-judgmental, and supportive contacts for all AU Seattle community members who may be dealing with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, Intersex, & ally (LGBTQIA) issues.

Responsibilities:

As a Safe Zone Contact Person at AU Seattle, I recognize my responsibilities to:

- promote an atmosphere of confidentiality and inform the person coming into my office/room of the limitations to that confidentiality,
- not attempt to sway the person to a different sexual orientation or viewpoint,
- be a contact person and positive listener to all who request my services as a Safe Zone Contact person,
- provide reference materials and other resources about sexual identity and support services for (LGBTQIA) people in the area,
- provide support to any person who is dealing with the negative effects of homophobia so that person will not feel alone,
- provide support and information to people who are having difficulty understanding or dealing with the sexual orientation of others (e.g., roommate, sibling, friend, etc.),
- offer support and referral to legal assistance for anyone who has been harassed because of her/his sexual orientation, including but not limited to an appropriate campus office or program,
- provide assistance for the community member whenever necessary; to help a person bring that person's case to advocates, legal or otherwise, in a confidential way, if so requested by a student, staff member, or faculty member.

Rights:

I recognize that I have rights as a Safe Zone contact person:

- I can, at any time, refer persons seeking assistance to my faculty mentor _____ and/or a community health center if I do not feel comfortable with a particular situation.
- I can, at any time, call upon other Safe Zone contact persons to answer questions or receive support.
- I can, at any time, call upon any other resources I find helpful that are consistent with the mission and purposes of the AU Seattle Safe Zone Project.
- My relationship with the Safe Zone Project may be re-evaluated at my request or the request of the AU Seattle Safe Zone planning committee. I understand that behavior contrary to the spirit of the Safe Zone project may be handled in one or more of the following ways:
 1. An individual meeting(s) may be held with a member of the planning committee;
 2. Additional training may be required or requested; and/or
 3. Membership as a Safe Zone provider may be revoked.

Signature:

By signing this form I hereby formally declare my office/room to be a Safe Zone at AU Seattle, and that I agree with my rights and responsibilities as a Safe Zone contact person, and that I agree to support each student, staff, or faculty person in her/his perceived sexual orientation and/or need for related support, information, or referral.

Name (please print): _____

Email Address: _____

Signature/Date: _____