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The Ethics of Being an Ally to the LGBTQ+ Community
Training Objectives

Objective 1: Participants will understand the ethical obligation social workers have of advocating for and being an ally to vulnerable populations such as the LGBTQ+ community.

Objective 2: Participants will learn about the LGBTQ+ community and discuss developing safe spaces for clients who identify as LGBTQ+.

Objective 3: Participants will become more informed and effective allies to the LGBTQ+ community through information sharing, reflective exercises, and interactive activities.
# Gender Pronouns

Please note that these are not the only pronouns. There are an infinite number of pronouns as new ones emerge in our language. Always ask someone for their pronouns.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjective</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Possessive</th>
<th>Reflexive</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>She</td>
<td>Her</td>
<td>Hers</td>
<td>Herself</td>
<td>She is speaking. I listened to her. The backpack is hers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He</td>
<td>Him</td>
<td>His</td>
<td>Himself</td>
<td>He is speaking. I listened to him. The backpack is his.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They</td>
<td>Them</td>
<td>Theirs</td>
<td>Themself</td>
<td>They are speaking. I listened to them. The backpack is theirs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ze</td>
<td>Hir/Zir</td>
<td>Hirs/Zirs</td>
<td>Hirself/Zirself</td>
<td>Ze is speaking. I listened to hir. The backpack is zirs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more information, go to transstudent.org/graphics
Things You’re Actually Saying When You Ignore Someone’s Gender Pronouns

I know you better than you know yourself.

I would rather hurt you repeatedly than change the way I speak about you.

Your sense of safety is not important to me.

Your identity isn't real and shouldn’t be acknowledged.

I want to teach everyone around me to disrespect you.

Offending you is fine if it makes me feel more comfortable.

I can hear you talking, but I’m not really listening.

Being who you truly are is an inconvenience to me.

I would prefer it if you stopped being honest with me.

I am not an ally, a friend, or someone you can trust.
LGBTQ is an acronym meant to encompass a whole bunch of diverse sexualities and genders. Folks often refer to the Q (standing for "queer") as an umbrella term, under which live a whole bunch of identities. This is helpful because lesbian, gay, and bisexual aren't the only marginalized sexualities, and transgender isn't the only gender identity. In fact, there are many more of both!

* The 'Q' sometimes stands for "questioning" and "transgender" is often thought of as an umbrella term itself (sometimes abbreviated "trans", or "trans*" in writing). Lots of asterisks, lots of exceptions, because hey — we're talking about lots of different folks with different lived experiences to be inclusive of.
The Gender Unicorn

Gender Identity
- Female / Woman / Girl
- Male / Man / Boy
- Other Gender(s)

Gender Expression
- Feminine
- Masculine
- Other

Sex Assigned at Birth
- Female
- Male
- Other / Intersex
- Rather not say

Physically Attracted to
- Women / Femininity
- Men / Masculinity
- Other Gender(s)

Emotionally Attracted to
- Women / Femininity
- Men / Masculinity
- Other Gender(s)

To learn more, go to: www.transstudent.org/gender

Design by Landyn Pan and Anna Moore
NASW Code of Ethics

1.05 Cultural Awareness and Social Diversity

(a) Social workers should understand culture and its function in human behavior and society, recognizing the strengths that exist in all cultures.

(b) Social workers should have a knowledge base of their clients' cultures and be able to demonstrate competence in the provision of services that are sensitive to clients' cultures and to differences among people and cultural groups.

(c) Social workers should obtain education about and seek to understand the nature of social diversity and oppression with respect to race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, and mental or physical ability.
NASW
National Committee on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Issues

- 1976, the Task Force on Gay Issues was created
- 1979, the Task Force was restructured as an authorized committee of the Association
- 1982, NASW Board of Directors formed the National Committee on Lesbian and Gay Issues
- “Bisexual and “Transgender” were added by the Delegate Assembly in 1996 and 2005 respectively and it became the National Committee on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Issues

The Committee was established to enable NASW to further the cause of social justice by promoting and defending the rights of persons suffering injustices and oppression because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender.
The practice of Counseling, Social Work and Marriage and Family Therapy does not include sexual orientation change efforts (SOCE, also sometimes referred to as “conversion therapy”) or efforts to change gender identity. Attempts to “change” sexual orientation or gender identity can be harmful, particularly when the client is a minor.

Licensees should be aware that the Board can discipline licensees (up to and including license revocation) when they use a practice or intervention that results in harm to a client.
How You See Me

(3:34)
FIRST IMPRESSIONS!

What were yours?
Core Vocabulary

• Review vocabulary for 2-4 minutes
• Place a star next to:
  • Terms you have never heard
  • Terms you have heard but don’t fully understand
  • Terms you have questions about
  • Terms you think have too limited definitions
# LGBTQ-INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE DOs and DON’Ts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AVOID SAYING...</th>
<th>SAY INSTEAD...</th>
<th>WHY?</th>
<th>EXAMPLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Hermaphrodite&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Intersex&quot;</td>
<td>Hermaphrodite is a stigmatizing, inaccurate word with a negative medical history.</td>
<td>&quot;What are the best practices for the medical care of intersex infants?&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Homosexual&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Gay&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Homosexual&quot; often connotes a medical diagnosis, or a discomfort with gay/lesbian people.</td>
<td>&quot;We want to do a better job of being inclusive of our gay employees.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Born female&quot; or &quot;Born male&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Assigned female/male at birth&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Assigned&quot; language accurately depicts the situation of what happens at birth</td>
<td>&quot;Max was assigned female at birth, then he transitioned in high school.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Female-bodied&quot; or &quot;Male-bodied&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;-bodied&quot; language is often interpreted as as pressure to medically transition, or invalidation of one's gender identity</td>
<td>&quot;We had a transgender athlete in our league this year.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;A gay&quot; or &quot;a transgender&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;A gay/transgender person&quot;</td>
<td>Gay and transgender are adjectives that describe a person/group</td>
<td>&quot;This group is open to both transgender and cisgender people.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Transgender people and normal people&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Transgender people and cisgender people&quot;</td>
<td>Saying &quot;normal&quot; implies &quot;abnormal,&quot; which is a stigmatizing way to refer to a person.</td>
<td>&quot;Video games aren't just a boy thing -- kids of all genders play them.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Both genders&quot; or &quot;Opposite sexes&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;All genders&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Both&quot; implies there are only two; &quot;Opposite&quot; reinforces antagonism amongst genders</td>
<td>&quot;Good morning everyone, next stop Picadilly Station.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Ladies and gentlemen&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Everyone,&quot; &quot;Folks,&quot; &quot;Honored guests,&quot; etc</td>
<td>Moving away from binary language is more inclusive of people of all genders</td>
<td>&quot;I actually saw a firefighter rescue a cat from a tree.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Mailman,&quot; &quot;fireman,&quot; &quot;policeman,&quot; etc.</td>
<td>&quot;Mail clerk,&quot; &quot;Firefighter,&quot; &quot;Police officer,&quot; etc.</td>
<td>People of all genders do these jobs</td>
<td>&quot;You know, I am not sure how they identify.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;It&quot; when referring to someone (e.g., when pronouns are unknown)</td>
<td>&quot;They&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;It&quot; is for referring to things, not people.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
At Risk

According to the Trevor Project survey (2019):

- 39% of LGBTQ youth seriously considered attempting suicide in the past twelve months, with more than half of transgender and non-binary youth having seriously considered.

- 71% of LGBTQ youth reported feeling sad or hopeless for at least two weeks in the past year.

- Less than half of LGBTQ respondents were out to an adult at school, with youth much less likely to disclose their gender identity than sexual orientation.

* survey of 34,000 LGBTQ youth
At Risk

2 in 3 LGBTQ youth reported that someone tried to convince them to change their sexual orientation or gender identity, with youth who have undergone conversion therapy more than twice as likely to attempt suicide as those who did not.

71% of LGBTQ youth in our study reported discrimination due to either their sexual orientation or gender identity.

58% of transgender and non-binary youth reported being discouraged from using a bathroom that corresponds to their gender identity.

76% of LGBTQ youth felt that the recent political climate impacted their mental health or sense of self.
Attempted Suicide (age 11-19)

LGBTQ youth who have **considered** suicide 54% compared to 31% for cisgender youth.

LGBTQ youth who have **attempted** suicide 29% compared to 14% for cisgender youth.

Ages: 13-17; 47% have considered and 26% have attempted.

Ages 18-24; 31% considered, 11% attempted.
Violence

- Hate crimes towards the LGBTQ+ community increased 17% in 2017 (as did hate crimes related to other groups; race, religion)
- In 2018 there were 26 Transgender people killed, the majority were transwomen of color
- 2019 recorded 22 murders, although the number is believed to be higher
What Do LGBTQ+ Persons Need?

• They need supportive families, friends, and communities
• They deserve support at school and at work
• They want basic civil rights
• They need you to be their ally
• What else do they need, deserve or want?
6 Themes in an LGBTQ+ Affirming Practice

Approach:

**Attitudes**

- Same gender sexual desires and behaviors are viewed as a normal variation in human sexuality.
- The adoption of a LGBTQ identity is a positive outcome of any process in which an individual is developing a gender or sexual identity.
6 Themes in an LGBTQ+ Affirming Practice

Approach:

Knowledge

Service providers should not automatically assume a client’s sexual orientation or gender identity (pronouns).

It is important to understand the coming out process and its variations.
6 Themes in an LGBTQ+ Affirming Practice

Approach:

Skills

Practitioners need to be able to deal with their own racism, sexism, biases and queerphobia.

When assessing a client, practitioners should not automatically assume that the client is heterosexual, male or female.
Addressing Religion

- Helping Professionals with religious objections to working with LGBTQ+ people should consult code(s) of ethics.
- Critical self-reflection
- Cultural humility
- Continuing education
- Apply religious principles (social justice, non-judgmental, unconditional love)
Being an Ally

Allies are people who recognize the unearned privilege they receive from society’s patterns of injustice and take responsibility for changing these patterns.

Allies include men who work to end sexism, white people who work to end racism, heterosexual people who work to end heterosexism, able-bodied people who work to end ableism, and so on.

Part of becoming an ally is also recognizing one’s own experience of oppression. For example, a white woman can learn from her experience of sexism and apply it in becoming an ally to people of colour, or a person who grew up in poverty can learn from that experience how to respect others’ feelings of helplessness because of a disability.

(Bishop, 2001).
What Does it Take to Be an Ally?

Being willing to make mistakes—and to keep on trying. Being an ally means that sometimes you don't know what it means to be an ally so you keep asking questions, keep researching on your own—keep educating yourself.

Being willing to be uncomfortable. You may be the odd one out, but it's important to remain committed to uncovering the role you hold even if it means making a role for yourself.

Choosing to keep confronting your own privilege. Understanding that the personal is political—meaning that all of our choices either work to support social justice or detract from it. Being conscious takes effort.
More on being an ally

- Don’t make assumptions or judgments.
- Be willing to listen. Be willing to talk.
- Confront your own prejudices, even if it is uncomfortable to do so.
- Defend the civil rights of LGBT+ persons.
- Challenge homophobia and transphobia.
- Stand up against discrimination.
- Use inclusive and supportive language.
- Be open about your acceptance of others (silence perpetuates the status quo).

- Get political! Attend rallies, join social media groups, organize a movement, vote.
- When criticized or called out...listen, apologize, act accountably, and act differently going forward.
- Be committed to continuously educating yourself about LGBTQ+ issues & experiences.
Intersectionality

Race

Gender

Class

Disability

Intersectionality
Intersectionality

Intersectionality is a framework for conceptualizing a person, group of people, or social problem as affected by a number of discriminations and disadvantages.

It takes into account people’s overlapping identities and experiences in order to understand the complexity of prejudices they face.
The Coming Out Process

6 Stages (Cass):

- Identity Awareness
- Identity Comparison
- Identity Tolerance
- Identity Acceptance
- Identity Pride
- Identity Synthesis
If someone comes out to you:

- **Do:**
  - Know this is a sign of huge trust! (Yay!)
  - Check-in on how confidential this is. (Do other people know? Is this a secret?)
  - Remember that the gender/sexuality is just one dimension (of many) of who they are.
  - Show interest and curiosity about this part of them that they are sharing with you.
  - Ask them how you can best support them.
If someone comes out to you:

- **Don’t:**
  - Say “I always knew,” or downplay the significance of their sharing with you.
  - Go tell everyone, bragging about your “new trans friend.”
  - Forget that they are still the person you knew, befriended or loved before.
  - Ask probing questions, or cross personal barriers you wouldn’t have crossed earlier.
  - Assume you know why they came to you.
Questions?

- Be sure to continue these conversations outside of this space.

- Try to challenge yourself to address negative or hurtful language and assumptions, even when you are nervous.

- Continue to educate yourself and others on these and other social justice issues.
Thank You!

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References


