Cuyahoga Community College

Safe Zone Ally Resource Manual

Sponsored by: Tri-C Lambda GSA
Founded 2004
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Lambda GSA & Safe Zone History

Submitted by Jim Buccini, MSW, Lambda’s first President and founding member

Lambda got its start in Spring Semester, 2004. I had been attending Tri-C for several semesters, and was aware of other schools who had Safe Zone programs and Gay-Straight Alliances. I had not felt particularly unsafe at the Western Campus, and yet I was still very aware that there was no outward and visible sign of support for LGBT students. Passing by Dr. Nahla Harik-Williams’ office one day, I noticed she had a Safe Zone sign hanging above her desk. Having identified her as an LGBT ally, I approached her and proposed the idea of starting a student organization and a Safe Zone program on the Western Campus. We started to talk with other students, and eventually chartered the Gay-Straight Alliance, naming it Lambda: a Greek letter that symbolized, “the light of knowledge in the darkness of ignorance.” Our Chartering officers were myself, as president, the late Faith Constantine, Vice President, Tamara Lentini, Secretary, and Hector Huertes, Treasurer. One of the top priorities of Lambda was to establish a Safe Zone program to invite faculty and staff to identify as LGBT Allies – safe people to talk with on campus. We modeled the first program after programs at Case Western Reserve University and Baldwin-Wallace College. Students at Case and BW were instrumental in helping us get our program started. Our first Safe Zone Allies were members from the Counseling Office, and faculty advisors to student organizations. We held a subsequent training program at Faculty Convocation and packed the room. Other successful efforts included bringing the AIDS Memorial Quilt to the Western Campus (along with Phi Theta Kappa) being sponsored at the Cleveland HRC banquet, and winning several awards through Student Government and College Life. I am delighted to know that Lambda continues to be a strong student organization, and that Safe Zone has become a College-wide program spearheaded by faculty, staff and administration at Tri-C. Lambda and Safe Zone continue to be two of my proudest accomplishments, and I am truly touched that they live on.

Lambda Gay-Straight Alliance or Gender-Sexuality Alliance at West (GSA):

Lambda GSA is the Tri-C Student organization that welcomes everyone who is supportive of the group’s mission statement. The GSA was instrumental in creating Safe Zone Trainings. For current group activity at your location, check with your campus’ Student Life Office.

Lambda’s Mission: We strive to educate others and ourselves on gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and straight ally issues & to work with other campus groups towards eliminating intolerance & prejudice. Our goal is to create an accepting environment in our school & community and to be a safe place where everyone can feel comfortable and supported. We encourage informal activities to foster healthy social interactions, bonding & understanding within our group & the greater community.

Keep Updated with Lambda GSA and Safe Zone Activities:

1. Lambda’s Website: www.tri-c.edu/safezone → Student Organizations

2. Lambda’s Facebook Page: https://www.facebook.com/groups/ccclambda/

You are encouraged to visit the website and Facebook pages regularly to see Safe Zone materials, meeting updates, upcoming events, current resources, and more.
CUYAHOGA COMMUNITY COLLEGE’S AFFIRMATIVE ACTION, EQUAL OPPORTUNITY, DISCRIMINATION, & HARASSMENT POLICY

At Cuyahoga Community College, we are fortunate to have a true mosaic of people that contribute daily to create a magnificent learning environment. The College’s position is that diversity enriches not only the institution but society as a whole. We are committed to appreciating diverse perspectives and valuing the collective differences and similarities that make us who we are.

Discrimination against any individual based upon the basis of age, ancestry, color, disability, military status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, pregnancy, veteran status and genetic information is prohibited.

Any employee, student or other person who wishes to report discrimination or harassment based on any of the aforementioned protected classes, should contact the College’s Office of Diversity & Inclusion at:

Cuyahoga Community College
700 Carnegie Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio 44115
216-987-0204 or 216-987-4772


SAFE ZONE POSTERS

The Safe Zone sample poster is on the following page. Posters are updated annually and displayed College-wide. The Safe Zone Campus/Location Coordinators are listed on the poster. These folks can assist with basic Safe Zone questions and refer you to others for assistance, if needed.
What is a “Safe Zone”? 

A Safe Zone is a space in which everyone will be respected and heard, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity and/or gender expression.

The Safe Zone logo is a way to designate a “safe space.” People should feel comfortable discussing lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning/queer (LGBTQ+) topics without fear of judgment in this space.

Who is a “Safe Zone Ally”? 

A person displaying the Safe Zone logo has attended training and signed a contract to become a Certified Safe Zone Ally and:

- is aware of the spectrum of sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, and the importance of pronouns;
- listens to students and employees, promoting a respectful environment;
- has current referral and resource information available; and
- helps promote an environment in which everyone is respected.

The Tri-C® Safe Zone program was created by the College’s Lambda Gay Straight Alliance (GSA). To schedule training or a guest speaker for your group or class, become a Safe Zone Ally, find out more about the student or employee LGBTQ+ organization or discuss concerns, contact:

**Brunswick University Center**
Rachel Bryan 216-987-3874 (room 209)

**District Office**
Heidi Athey Nicholas 216-987-3422 (room 234-A)

**Eastern Campus**
Kimberly Hilt 216-987-2396 (ESS 2217)
John T. Rassel 216-987-2321 (ESS 3106)

**Jerry Sue Thornton Center**
Jerry Hourigan 216-987-4706 (room 229)
Standish Stewart 216-987-4196 (room 229)

**Metropolitan Campus and Hospitality Management Center**
Alan Gerdien 216-987-4593 (MLA 118-C)

**Western Campus**
Michael Ratt 216-987-5528 (WLA 235)
Michelle Nicopolis 216-987-5397 (WSS G108)

**Westshore/Corporate College® West**
Bridget Kriner 216-987-5801 (CCW 33)

visit tri-c.edu/safezone
SAFE ZONE (SZ) CAMPUS/LOCATION COORDINATORS:
Role & Responsibilities

1. First and foremost, THANK YOU for what you’re doing! You are making a huge difference!

2. POSTER: You will be listed as your campus/location’s SZ rep on a College-wide poster to contact re: any LGBTQ topic. Please contact Michelle as you’re approached with anything noteworthy or for resources/answers.

3. SZ ROLE: Most often, you’ll be approached about scheduling a group session for an office, department, or class. Contact Michelle for assistance. Sometimes, a colleague will ask you for resources to learn more about SZ-related topics. Perhaps a student will come in and feel welcomed after seeing a sign. Others may ask what the SZ sign means. If the issue is a discrimination or legal concern, also contact The Office of Diversity & Inclusion at x0204 ASAP.

4. SZ TRAINING FREQUENCY: Select at least one SZ Training date for Fall AND Spring Semester at your location (traditionally, JSTC and District have alternated semesters, BUC has hosted one/year, and WS/CCW has hosted both at CCW)

5. SZ SESSION DETAILS: (*Please have completed by mid-August for publicity)
   a. Plan SZ sessions for 2 hours to allow for Q&A during/after
   b. Vary session days and times College-wide to allow for greater participant availability
   c. Schedule the SZ meeting room. Please contact your College-Wide Campus Scheduler to secure the room for ½ hour before you start & ½ hour after you plan to end for set-up & tear down time (Contacts: East = Donna Wilson x2227; Metro = Eliza Meadows x4151; West = Kathy Moskin x5052; Westshore/CCW = Julie Christman x3069; District/JSTC = none listed)
   d. Send date, time, room assignment to Michelle Nicopolis ASAP so info can be posted online for sign up and emailed out via HR, put into Tri-C News

6. FACILITATORS:
   a. After getting the dates/times/rooms in place, Michelle will send a message to facilitators asking for 1-2 volunteers (both employee & student) to contact you to confirm they will assist (If you want to co-facilitate or have facilitators already lined up, please let Michelle know)
   b. The goal is at least 1 Tri-C employee & 1 Tri-C student facilitator per session

7. SZ Facilitator Training
   a. Those interested in facilitating can indicate it on their SZ Ally Contract. Michelle will contact them and let them know the process, which is: First attend SZ and become a Certified SZ Ally; then attend a SZ training as a facilitator observer/shadow; then co-facilitate with an experienced facilitator...asking questions all along the process
8. Publicity for SZ trainings (*Students AND Employees are welcomed!*)
   a. Once all dates/times/locations from all campuses have been collected for the semester of SZ trainings, Michelle will have posted in TEC, sent out as a college-wide email from Diversity & Inclusion, put into the Tri-C Campus Newsletters.
   b. You might consider putting on Hi-Vis at your Campus/location by contacting Student Life.
   c. You might want to ask Student Life to send to all your student groups/advisors to invite them.
   d. You could share with your Faculty Development Coordinator to promote in their reminders that go out to faculty (Full-time faculty receive 1 Service/Development Credit for attending; 2 credits for solo presenting OR 1 credit for co-facilitating a session)
   e. Share with your Adjunct Faculty Department (adjuncts earn 1 Stipend Eligible Unit (SEU) for attending)

9. SZ Attendance (*for those facilitating a session*)
   a. Michelle will send you a PDF of those signed up the day before the scheduled training that is to be used as a sign-in sheet.
   b. Walk-ins are welcomed to sign the bottom of the attendance sheet and put their S# for easy TEC entry. Students should sign in as well to confirm attendance for class or other verification.
   c. Participants who completed the entire training (or missed no more than what you feel adequate, e.g., no more than 10 minutes) will be considered “attended”
   d. Please email a scanned copy or hardcopy of the signed attendance sheet to Michelle at michelle.nicopolis@tri-c.edu or WSS G-106 for entry into TEC.

10. SZ Session Contracts & Materials (“Bling”)
    a. The Power Point and all supplementary info is found on the www.tri-c.edu/safezone and K-Web Safe Zone team site.
    b. Each site will have a binder of presentation information & presentation materials.
    c. Participants completing the contract will give it to you OR send it to Michelle on their own. Those you receive, please send to Michelle at ASAP via campus Mail (Michelle Nicopolis, West Counselling G-108)
    d. Michelle will send SZ bling to folks who sign contracts (button, window cling, and/or laminated sign).
       Folks may request more than one piece of bling (e.g., 1 button, 1 window cling), but not more than one of each as there’s no budget set aside for these pieces.
    e. Students need not fill out the website approval area as they’re not listed in the public directory of SZ Allies online. Students MAY request SZ bling, but note where to Campus Mail it (e.g., professor whose class was informed about the session, Student Life Office, etc.)
    f. Direct any questions to Michelle

11. SZ Committee Meetings
    a. Attend one or two College-wide meetings as needed, either electronic or face-to-face, per academic year
CORE VALUES & PURPOSE OF A SAFE ZONE ALLY

- Value learning accurate information, ending the system of oppression, and creating a celebratory and diverse community is a process.

- Realize heterosexism is a form of oppression just as are racism, sexism, anti-Semitism, classism, ableism, etc.

- Appreciate that there are LGBTQ people who will choose not to come out, while others will elect to do so. Coming out is a process for the person and family.

- Discuss feelings to understand the issues of difference and diversity. We intend to create a sense of safety so that feelings can be shared.

- Understand that being heterosexual or any orientation is not a choice. View sexuality in terms of a "spectrum" instead of conventional "black and white".

- Acknowledge, because of homophobia, that there is often little opportunity to talk freely and learn about LGBTQ people which serves to perpetuate heterosexism.

- Accept that we may have learned oppressive, homophobic beliefs and did not ask to. We can take responsibility, not fault, for the beliefs to create change.

- Realizes that coming out is a process, for the person & those close to the person

- An effective ally:
  - Is a good/non-judgmental listener (lets the person lead conversation)
  - Understands their boundaries – is not an expert or counselor
  - Doesn’t need to have all the answers
  - Doesn’t try to “fix” problems or change people
  - Realizes the person is out to you...maybe not to others
  - Is comfortable asking questions (e.g., preferred pronoun)
  - Is VISIBLE (e.g., displays a Safe Zone Logo, attends events)
  - Respects CONFIDENTIALITY
  - Knows where to find resources & referrals & when to refer
  - Interacts with and supports LGBTQ family, friends, & coworkers
  - Realizes the person coming out is the same person they knew before
  - Steps in & stops offensive language when possible
  - Uses gender-neutral terms when possible
  - Never assumes sexual orientation/gender identity
  - Acknowledges how homophobia, transphobia, & heterosexism have operated in their own life and in society at-large
  - Educates oneself about issues facing the LGBTQ community
  - Has a sense of humor

Adapted from CWRU Spectrum Safe Zone Manual & GLSEN’s Safe Space Resources
WHAT IS NOT EXPECTED OF YOU AS A SAFE ZONE ALLY

There may be people who will want to debate the value or purpose of the Safe Zone program or who may challenge you about general LBGTQ+ issues. You are not expected to participate in debates of this nature. You are simply serving as a safe person and a resource. Please refer these individuals to Ms. Magda Gomez, Director of Diversity and Inclusion. Her office is in the Jerry Sue Thornton Center, Room 162. Phone: 216 987-0204; email: Magda.Gomez@tri-c.edu

CREATING A SAFE ZONE

RESPONDING TO LGBTQ+ BIAS...

It doesn’t take much to hurt someone, but there’s no reason to let it go on. Stereotypes against LGBTQ+ folks will not go away if you ignore them. Heterosexist jabs against homosexuality will not “toughen you up” or help you prove your worth. Assumed harmless little jeers like “that’s so gay” are commonplace in society, but no one stops to think how words like “queer”, “faggot”, or “dyke” originated, or how they’ve manifested into the verbal abuse they are today.

There are things that everyone (student or employee, regardless of gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation) can do to prevent further spreading of this disparagement of the LGBTQ+ community:

- It’s okay to use humor to break the ice, but using too much could do more harm than good. What you might easily laugh off might have just as easily traumatized someone else. Pick your audience when you try to use humor; the last thing you want someone to think of you is that you think it’s all a big joke, and you won’t really be there when they need you.

- Also, ASSUME NOTHING. Unless they’ve stated outright, you have no right to assume someone’s identity, orientation, or pronoun. Ask if it’s appropriate (e.g., addressing someone and asking “what pronouns do you use?” is OK). When and if they are ready to confide in you, they will. You’re there to aid, not overwhelm. Step off if you think you’re becoming too overbearing, or the person you’re speaking to is acting nervous.

- NEVER encourage someone to “come out” before they are ready. When they have decided it is safe to come out to friends or family, they will. Many may never come out; some might even go so far as to deny themselves the truth of their sexual orientation and try to “reform” themselves for the sake of avoiding persecution from their families.

- Another helpful tip is to keep something LGBTQ+-related in your office; anything like a button or a sticker in support of the community will be noticed, no matter how small. Of course, your Safe Zone sign/window cling/button is awesome!
Keep it where anyone who enters/peers into your office can see it. Having it in your office and in sight during a confidential discussion with an uncertain student or employee will help them to relax.

- If bias or harassment occurs, address the bias, but never lose sight of the individual. They have feelings and emotions. A lot can be said for a small “Are you alright?” or a “You want to talk about it?” If appropriate, remind them that what transpired (someone outing them) was not their fault. “The problem is with them, not you. You have nothing to be ashamed of.” Refer the student to counseling and refer/report the incident to the Office of Diversity and Inclusion.

- If a situation is fast growing out of control (i.e. the verbal abuse continues, the situation becomes violent, etc.) GET HELP. Never compromise your safety. Find someone you know will help you, and get them immediately. Contact Campus Police at 216-987-4911 and debrief with a counselor or psychologist on Campus.

**FACTS AND STATISTICS**

The statistics linked below are from the GLSEN 2015 National School Climate Survey. We reference many of the items in our Safe Zone training. **Topics include:** homophobic remarks/verbal harassment, physical harassment/victimization, sense of safety at school/academic impact According to the report:

The final sample consisted of a total of 10,528 students between the ages of 13 and 21. Students were from all 50 states and the District of Columbia and from 3,095 unique school districts. About two-thirds (68.6%) of the sample was White, a third (34.9%) was cisgender female, and about half (49.2%) identified as gay or lesbian. Students were in grades 6 to 12, with the largest numbers in grades 10 and 11.

**Executive Summary**  (16 pages)

**Full Report**  (174 pages)

**THE NEED FOR LGBTQ RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS IN SCHOOLS**

According to GLSEN’s 2015 National School Climate Survey, The presence of Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs) and Safe Zone Allies can create a more welcoming climate for LGBT students and allies:

Students in schools with a GSA:

- Were less likely to hear “gay” used in a negative way often or frequently (59.3% compared to 77.1% of other students)
• Were less likely to hear homophobic remarks such as “fag” or “dyke” often or frequently (51.0% vs. 68.0%)
• Were less likely to hear negative remarks about gender expression and transgender people often or frequently (gender expression: 59.6% vs. 66.8%; transgender people: 35.9% vs. 46.0%)
• Were more likely to report that school personnel intervened when hearing homophobic remarks—20.6% vs. 12.0% said that staff intervene most of the time or always
• Were less likely to feel unsafe because of their sexual orientation
• Experienced lower levels of victimization related to their sexual orientation and gender expression
• Reported a greater number of supportive school staff and more accepting peers
• Felt more connected to their school community

Knowing there are caring school employees is important! Of those surveyed:

- 97% could identify at least one ally among school staff
- 63.7% could identify six or more allies among school staff
- 41.2% could identify 11 or more supportive school staff
- 29.1% noted seeing at least one Safe Space (Zone) sticker or poster at their school

The Safe Zone logo is the easiest way to find us! Our students have reported attending Tri-C because of seeing a Safe Zone sticker or poster, feeling more welcomed on Campus, and feeling safer because of seeing the logo displayed.

Only Certified Allies may display the logo. Trainings are conducted multiple times every semester, College-wide. All employees and students are welcomed to attend! Sessions can be found at: www.tri-c.edu/safezone
STRATEGIES FOR FACULTY, STAFF, AND ADMINISTRATORS

IN GENERAL...

• Support your LGBTQ+ colleagues
• Include LGBTQ+ concerns in training of peer leaders, student government, etc.
• Educate yourself on the needs and experiences of LGBTQ+ people and families
• Support official college LGBTQ+ employee and student organizations and events

IN THE CLASSROOM...

• The University of Southern California’s Activities Page includes some great educational activities, terminology, presentations, and more!:
  http://lgbtrc.usc.edu/education/activities/

• LGBTQ+ issues should be brought into the classroom in the same way as any other issue of diversity and multiculturalism – heterosexism is intertwined with other forms of oppression (Swartz, 2003).

• You don’t need to be an expert on issues of sexual orientation to bring LGBTQ+ issues into the classroom (Fletcher & Russell, 2001). Start small – don’t expect to overhaul your class. Make a few (or even one) change a semester.

• Identify LGBTQ+ contributions throughout the curriculum. (history, art, science, literature, religion, etc.).

• Provide history of oppression of many groups including LGBTQ+ people. (Holocaust, American civil rights movement, origin of the word “faggot…”).

• Discuss the power of words, labels and names; they shape the way we view ourselves and our worldviews.

• Use the word heterosexual (or straight) to describe female-male relationships (English, 2003). This way, heterosexual behavior is seen less as the assumed standard.

• If discussing LGBTQ+ topics with a class, provide a list of definitions a class period ahead of the discussion. This informs students about the vocabulary you will be using and makes it more likely that students will use words related to sexual orientation in a more appropriate way (Fletcher & Russell, 2001).
• In classes reading novels, include one written by a LGBTQ+ author (Gertrude Stein, Willa Cather…) or one with an LGBTQ character (English, 2003).

• Make the issue of sexual orientation relevant to your students. For example ask for a show of hands from students who know someone close to them who is LGBTQ+ (Fletcher & Russell, 2001).

• Submit request to improve library holdings (both fiction and non-fiction) related to sexual diversity. Make an effort to keep such materials up-to-date.

• Bring openly LGBTQ+ folks as resources in classes or programs. You could contact any of the Safe Zone or GSA contacts on the poster or at www.tri-c.edu/safezone for references or PFLAG Cleveland (http://www.pflagcleveland.org/contact-us) or the LGBT Center of Cleveland (http://lgbtcleveland.org/)

Possible topics to include in your curriculum:
  • The “cause” of sexual orientation
  • Models of sexual identity development
  • Coming out
  • Same sex couples and parenting
  • Effects of having an LGBTQ family member
  • Sexual orientation development & adolescence (Fletcher & Russell, 2001)

Dealing with resistance from students: (Fletcher & Russell, 2001)

College education requires learning information that may not be consistent with students’ own beliefs and values. However, learning these facts (supported by research and theory) is part of the educational process. Information about sexual orientation is not an attack on anyone’s faith or background. No homophobic or transphobic behaviors should be tolerated in the classroom. This is an academic environment, and the material, instructor and classmates need to be treated with respect. Sensitivity and mutual respect are the responsibility of the entire class.

It is important to study issues related to sexual orientation because for so long LGBTQ+ people and their experiences have been marginalized. So, just as we recognize the importance of disciplines like women’s studies and African-American studies, it is appropriate to study the experiences of LGBTQ+ people.

Begin class by discussing a set of “guidelines for thinking about sexual orientation” (Fletcher & Russell, 2001, p. 37). These include the idea that sexual orientation occurs along a continuum, all sexual orientations are normal, sexual orientation is not a choice and cannot be changed.
MODELS OF SEXUAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

There are several different models that attempt to explain the process individuals go through in developing a LGBTQ+ identity.

The D’Augelli Model (1994), shown here, is an approach to non-heterosexual identities based on a social constructionist view of sexual orientation. The model uses steps instead of stages, recognizing the potential for both forward and backward movement between the steps throughout the life span. This flexibility allows for diverse contexts, culture and history. **Remember that models are generalizations, and may not completely describe any one individual’s experience.**

**Step One: Exiting Heterosexual Identity**
There is recognition that a person’s sexual orientation is not heterosexual.

**Step Two: Developing a Personal Lesbian-Gay-Bisexual Identity Status**
A person develops a personal lesbian-gay-bisexual identity status that is their own.

**Step Three: Developing a Lesbian-Gay-Bisexual Social Identity**
The individual develops and finds more community support and friendships.

**Step Four: Becoming a Lesbian-Gay-Bisexual Offspring**
The individual focuses on coming out with his or her biological family and dealing with the variety of issues and responses that result.

**Step Five: Developing a Lesbian-Gay-Bisexual Intimacy Status**
In this step, while developing lesbian-gay-bisexual intimacy status, many gay and lesbian couples are invisible, thus making it difficult for gays and lesbians to publicly acknowledge gay and lesbian relationships.

**Step Six: Entering a Lesbian-Gay-Bisexual Community**
A person enters the lesbian-gay-bisexual community and becomes active in political and social settings.

Key factors in the formation of identity are personal subjectivities and actions (perceptions and feelings about sexual identity, sexual behaviors, and the meanings attached to them), interactive intimacies (influences of family, peers, intimate partnerships, and the meanings attached to them), and socio-historical connections (social norms, policies, and laws).

Fassinger’s Model of Sexual Identity Development

In her stage based model, Fassinger postulates that individuals go through both individual sexual identity development and group membership identity development. These stages do not need to be passed co-currently.

**Individual Sexual Identity Development**

**Phase 1: Awareness.**
This phase describes an awareness of sexual feelings and desires that are different than heterosexual norms. Non-conscious beliefs about sexuality may be questioned. An individual in this phase may experience confusion, fear, and bewilderment.

**Phase 2: Exploration.**
The second phase involves exploration of sexual feelings toward people of the same sex or one particular individual of the same sex. Sexual behaviors are not necessarily explored. Affective states are likely to include longing, excitement, and wonder.

**Phase 3: Deepening/Commitment.**
An individual in this phase may experience a deepening of sexual and emotional knowledge of self as well as a stronger commitment to self-fulfillment. This commitment is likely to affect the group identity process and may require addressing some group membership.

**Group Membership Identity Development**

**Phase 1: Awareness.**
In this phase there is awareness that heterosexuality is not a universal norm. The realization that different sexual orientations exist may result in feelings of confusion and bewilderment. The individual is likely to understand that alternative sexual orientations exist, but not be aware of the oppression of those groups.

**Phase 2: Exploration.**
The individual in the exploration phase searches to define his or her position in the lesbian/gay community and may experience a wide range of attitudes depending on the extent of internalized homophobia and the accessibility of information about the community. An increasing awareness of heterosexism may produce anger, anxiety, and guilt, but exploring the existence of other lesbians/gays may also allow for excitement, curiosity, and joy.

**Phase 3: Deepening/Commitment.**
This phase affords a deeper understanding of the values and oppression of the lesbian/gay community. There is an increased awareness of the possible consequences of commitment to involvement in the lesbian/gay community. Feelings of
MODELS OF GENDER IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

Gender identity is defined as a personal conception of oneself on the gender continuum (male, female, agender). This concept is intimately related to the concept of gender role, which is defined as the outward manifestations of personality that reflect the gender identity. Gender identity, in nearly all instances, is self-identified, as a result of a combination of inherent and extrinsic or environmental factors; gender role, on the other hand, is manifested within society by observable factors such as behavior and appearance. For example, if a person considers oneself a male and is most comfortable referring to their personal gender in masculine terms, then his gender identity is male. This is referred to as cisgender.

Thus, gender role is often an outward expression of gender identity, but not necessarily so. In most individuals, gender identity and gender role are congruous. Assessing the acquisition of this congruity, or recognizing incongruity (resulting in gender-variant behavior). It is important also to note that cultural differences abound in the expression of one's gender role, and, in certain societies, such nuances in accepted gender norms can also play some part in the definition of gender identity.

We should remember that all individuals possess a gender identity and that the process of becoming aware of it is an important part of the psychosocial development of a child. In the realm of pediatrics, recognition of gender identity is a process rather than a particular milestone, and variance from societal norms can cause distress to both the child and the child’s family. It is necessary to understand the varied pathways that lead to a mature and congruent gender role in order to fully assess a person's behavioral health.

Questions for Reflection/Discussion:

- How does our society set gender norms? How are children socialized into society?
- How does gender manifest itself in American culture?

Author: Shuvo Ghosh, MD, Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrician, Child Development Program, Division of General Pediatrics, McGill University Health Centre, Montreal Children's Hospital
Cass’ Identity Model

There are stage development theories that attempt to describe the development of a lesbian or gay identity. Cass' (1979) Homosexuality Identity Development Model is the most widely known and used. Her model includes six stages that are not necessarily mutually exclusive. The following stages are broadened to include bisexual and/or transgender people:

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<tr>
<td>Identity Confusion</td>
<td>Begin to question whether one might be lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender.</td>
<td>Could I be lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity Comparison</td>
<td>Alienation from what has been familiar.</td>
<td>Maybe I am lesbian, gay, bisexual, and/or transgender. I'm alone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity Tolerance</td>
<td>Actively seek out other LGBT people and encounter positive support.</td>
<td>Where are other LGBT people?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity Acceptance</td>
<td>Prefer LGBT people over heterosexuals. Selective coming out.</td>
<td>I am lesbian, gay, bisexual, and/or transgender. I can come out to some people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity Pride</td>
<td>Pride in new identity and rejection of attempts to devalue LGBT people.</td>
<td>I am proud to be lesbian, gay, bisexual, and/or transgender. I don't (and won't) pass for straight.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity Synthesis</td>
<td>Acceptance and integration of new identity along with acceptance and rejection of aspects of heterosexual culture. Typically out to most people.</td>
<td>I am an okay person who happens to be lesbian, gay, bisexual, and/or transgender.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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.


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**INTERSEX OVERVIEW**

**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.

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 undescended testicles which are secreting testosterone.

**Do not use the term 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).

**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?**

As always, identity is up to the individual. 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.

(Above 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 clitorectomy, 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.’


**COMING OUT: PROCESS & CONSIDERATIONS**

The term “coming out” (of the closet) refers to the life-long process of the development of a positive LGBTQ+ identity. The coming out process begins when a LGBTQ+ person recognizing their own thoughts/feelings and then choosing when and with whom to share these thoughts/feelings. Since people in this world tend to assume a person is heterosexual, LGBTQ+ persons are put in the position of deciding who they would like to share this with. **Please note that coming out is a very individual process.**

It is a very long and difficult struggle for many because LGBTQ+ people often have to confront bi/homo/transphobic (*phobic/*phobia) attitudes and discriminatory practices along the way. Many need to struggle with their own negative stereotypes and feeling *phobic attitudes they learned when they were growing up. Before a person can identify themselves as good about who they are, they will need to challenge their own attitudes and take them from the lower end of that *phobic continuum (repulsion, pity, tolerance) to feelings of appreciation and admiration. But it often takes years of painful work to develop a positive LGBTQ+ identity. Then, many folks begin to make decisions about who to come out to. Many folks are afraid to come out to their friends and family.

Imagine, for a moment, that you are back in high school. Remember your first big crush or your first kiss. Now imagine that you were in that same memory with a same sex
crush. How would your experiences have been different? Now, we’ll jump all the way back to elementary school. Because love in America is assumed to be straight, the discovery that one does not fit the mold can be frightening. From the time we are little, we are bombarded with images and sounds of the heterosexual experience in TV, music, movies, books, and fairy tales. We are encouraged to dream about living out the normal straight existence; marriage, kids, white picket fence, etc. by our families, friends, teachers, and religious mentors. Even the big puberty talk with the school nurse in fifth or sixth grade mentions only the “straight and narrow path.”

Young children rarely seem to learn about other people’s differences unless they are different. By the time we reach high school and college, many of our prejudices are formed and ingrained, but many aspects about our identities are only beginning to develop. At some point during sexual development, the LGBTQ+ teen/young adult realizes there is something different about themselves. This realization is the first step to coming out. The LGBTQ+ youth may feel ashamed, frightened, confused, isolated or may rejoice at this newfound identity.

Eventually, the LGBTQ+ teen comes out a little further. They must decide whom to tell about this new discovery and who will accept them and who will not. This is one of the most difficult parts of the coming out process. At times, one feels as if everything is on the line: home, family, and friendships. A straight teenager rarely feels this sort of risk when admitting their sexual attraction. How might this fear of rejection, labeling, discrimination, and stereotype affect a person’s self image in a negative way? How could they be affected in a positive way? Luckily, more and more schools have stronger LGBTQ+ supports and resources such as Safe Zone programs, clubs, and mentors.

**COMING OUT CONSIDERATIONS:**

What’s the fear?
- Rejection – loss of relationships
- Gossip
- Harassment/abuse
- Being thrown out of the family
- Being thrown out of the house
- Having their lover arrested
- Loss of financial support
- Losing their job
- Physical violence
- Being vulnerable

Why might LGBT people want to come out to friends/relatives?
- End of the “hiding game”
- Feel close to those people
- Be able to be “whole” around them
- Stop wasting energy by hiding all the time
- Feel like they have integrity
- To make a statement that “gay is OK”
How might someone feel after someone comes out to them?
- Scared
- Shocked
- Disbelieving
- Uncomfortable
- Not sure what to say
- Not sure what to do next
- Wondering why the person came out

What do people expect/want?
- Acceptance
- Support
- Understanding
- Comfort
- Closer friendships
- That knowing won’t negatively affect their friendship
- A hug and a smile
- An acknowledgment of their feelings

Why Come Out?
Sharing interpersonal relationships is important. For individuals who identify as heterosexual, publicly sharing these relationships is unquestioned and completely accepted. For individuals who identify as LGBTQ+, bi/homo/transphobia makes publicly sharing these relationships difficult and at times dangerous. The coming out process, although different for all individuals, can serve as a way of affirming our feelings and relationships with those around us.

Outing
Outing refers to revealing someone else’s sexual orientation or gender identity to others without the consent of the person. It is important to remember that even though someone may confide their sexual orientation or gender identity to you, it is their information to share with others.

Questions for Reflection
- What are some barriers to coming out?
- How can Tri-C become an open place for LGBTQ+ people (students and employees) to interact in the campus community without fear of rejection and isolation?
- How can you ensure that your work space or classroom is LGBTQ+ friendly?

Resources:
- “Covering” by Kenji Yoshino (http://kenjiyoshino.com/KY/covering/)
HELPING THOSE WHO ARE COMING OUT

WHEN SOMEONE COMES OUT TO YOU...

1. **Know yourself and your stance**
   Before anyone can help a LGBTQ+ individual, they must examine their own feelings about relationships and activity across the spectrum. Can the individual comfortably encourage another person to act on their feelings while they may be inconsistent with one’s own experience/orientation? How would an individual react if a family member or roommate came out to them? It might be helpful if the individual would discuss these issues with a person who is LGBTQ+ (GLSEN).

2. **Appreciate the person’s trust**
   Understand the LGBTQ+ person has likely spent some time thinking about whether or not to tell you, and is aware of there may be risks involved in coming out.

3. **Recognize that this is the same person**
   Understand that the LGBTQ+ person is the *same person* you knew before.

4. **Listen**
   This is your best gift. Listen and be present without judging. Coming out is a long process. Chances are the person has not had the opportunity to talk to anyone about his/her issues while in the closet. Therefore they might have a lot to say. They may also approach you again to discuss this process and its challenges.

5. **Be mindful of boundaries**
   Do not overstep the boundaries of your relationship with this person. Be aware of what is appropriate and inappropriate in the context of the relationship. Remember, they are the same person as they were before they came out to you. However, you may want to do some “catching up”. Some helpful questions to keep in mind might be "What can I do to help?" and "Have I ever offended you unknowingly?"

6. **Don’t feel you have to be an expert**
   Don’t be afraid to admit you don’t know everything. Displaying a Safe Zone sticker does not make you an expert. Be prepared to give referrals to campus and community resources when necessary.

WHEN SOMEONE IS CONSIDERING COMING OUT TO OTHERS...

1. Never advise the person to come out to others. The choice to come out is their decision alone. Safety is also a consideration (family/friends may not be supportive, the person may lose housing and/or financial support, etc.)
2. Reassure confidentiality – The person may not be ready to come out to others, or would like to do so in their own time and way.

3. Be sure to offer support if and when the person decides to come out to others.

Adapted from CWRU Safe Zone Manual & GLSEN Safe Space Ally Training Handbook

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**NAMES & PRONOUN USAGE**

Use a person’s chosen name and pronouns, regardless of orientation or identity. Often transgender people cannot afford a legal name change or are not yet old enough to change their name legally. They should be afforded the same respect for their chosen name as anyone else who lives by a name other than their birth name (e.g., celebrities, those who use Jack instead of John or Kathy instead of Kathleen).

We also encourage you to ask ALL people “what are your pronouns?” or “what pronouns do you use?” (not “what are your preferred pronouns”, just like you wouldn’t refer to sexual orientation as sexual preference). All people, whether or not they are transgender, have taken hormones, had surgery, or all/none of the above should be referred to using their named pronouns. **If it is not possible to ask the person which pronouns they use, use the pronoun they.**

**NOTE:** It is never appropriate to put quotation marks around either the transgender person’s chosen name or the pronoun that reflects their gender identity.

**PRONOUNS**

- If you make a mistake, correct yourself. Going on as if it did not happen is actually less respectful than making the correction. This also saves the person who was misidentified from having to correct an incorrect pronoun assumption that has now been planted in the minds of any other participants in the conversation who heard the mistake.

- If someone else makes a mistake, correct them. It is polite to provide a correction, whether or not the person whose pronoun was misused is present, in order to avoid future mistakes and in order to correct the mistaken assumption that might now have been planted in the minds of any other participants in the conversation who heard the mistake.

- If you aren’t sure of a person’s pronoun, ask. One way to do this is by sharing your own. “I use “he, him, his” pronouns. I want to make sure to address you correctly, how do you like to be addressed?” This may seem like a strange thing to do but a person who often experiences being addressed incorrectly may see it as a sign of respect that you are interested in getting it right.
• When facilitating a group discussion, ask people to identify their pronouns when they go around and do introductions. This will allow everyone in the room the chance to self-identify and to get each other’s’ pronouns right the first time. It will also reduce the burden on anyone whose pronoun is often misidentified and may help them access the discussion more easily because they do not have to fear an embarrassing mistake.


TERMINOLOGY

The following websites and resources will help you to understand and best use LGBTQ+-specific terminology. As terminology is ever-evolving, the weblinks are below so the information can be updated in real time:

1. Cuyahoga Community College Safe Zone Website: http://www.tri-c.edu/safezone ➔ Terminology


SUGGESTED RESOURCES

CUYAHOGA COMMUNITY COLLEGE RESOURCES

- **The Office of Diversity & Inclusion** - Students and Employees can file a Complaint of Discrimination by contacting the College’s Office of Diversity & Inclusion at: 216-987-0204 or 216-987-4772

- **The Dean of Student Affairs** - deals with student issues including conduct

- **Campus Police** – concerns with hate crimes or any other issue that would require a police officer. 216.987.4325 (non-emergencies); 216.987.4911 (emergencies)

- **Safe Zone Allies** – faculty and staff who have completed the Safe Zone Ally Training and display the Safe Zone sign in their office or area. A list of Allies agreeing to have their information published can be found at: [www.tri-c.edu/safezone](http://www.tri-c.edu/safezone) Our website also provides training dates, contacts, poster, terminology, student organization information, manual, local resources, and much more!

- **Tri-C Library (LGBT Life resources)** - [http://libguides.tri-c.edu/womens_studies](http://libguides.tri-c.edu/womens_studies)

NATIONAL HOTLINE/HELPLINES

LGBT National Hotline – 1-888-843-4564 [http://www.glnh.org/](http://www.glnh.org/) (*Not 24/7 – please check online for available hours) for callers of all ages about coming-out issues, gender identity, relationship concerns, bullying, workplace issues, HIV/AIDS anxiety and safer-sex information, and lots more!

- **LGBT National Youth Talkline** - 1-800-246-PRIDE (7743) is a hotline for those up to 25 years old.

- **LGBT Peer Chat** - [http://www.glnh.org/](http://www.glnh.org/) → Peer Chat → Click Here Volunteers offer free, confidential, one-on-one peer support for LGBTQ+ folks. This is volunteer-run for one-on-one peer support. This is not for casual chatting or a substitute for ongoing professional counseling.

- **LGBT National SAGE Hotline** – 1-888-234-SAGE (7243) LGBT elders have a place to call when they need peer counseling, information and local resources. This hotline offers peer-support to callers who are often very isolated sometimes still closeted, and in need of a caring, non-judgmental person to talk with.

Trans Lifeline - (877) 565-8860 (*open 18 hours/day. Check website for hours)*

Trans Lifeline is dedicated to the well-being of transgender people. We run a hotline staffed by transgender people for transgender people. Trans Lifeline volunteers are ready to respond to whatever support needs members of our community might have.
Crisis Textline – Text 741-741 about anything that’s on your mind

Cuyahoga County Crisis Hotline: 216-623-6888

Medina County Crisis Hotline: 330-725-9195

Suicide Hotlines: 1-800-SUICIDE or 1-800-273-TALK; Veteran-Specific press 1

- Hearing/Speech Impaired: 1-800-799-4TTY (4889)
- Spanish-Speaking: 1-888-628-9454
- LGBTQ-Specific: 1-866-4-U-TREVOR (488-7386)

LOCAL CLEVELAND AREA RESOURCES

AIDS Taskforce http://www.aidstaskforce.org/ 216.621.0766

Cuyahoga Community College – Lambda Gay-Straight Alliance www.tri-c.edu/safezone

Domestic Violence Center www.dvcac.org 216.391.4357

Equality Ohio http://equalityohio.org/ 614.224.0400

Free Clinic Cleveland http://www.thefreeclinic.org 216.721.4010

GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network) – Northeast Ohio Chapter http://chapters.glsen.org/cgi-bin/iowa/northeastoh/home.html 216.556.0960

LGBT Center http://lgbtcleveland.org/ 216.651.5428

PFLAG Cleveland Chapter http://www.pflagclevelan.org/ 216.556.1701

Planned Parenthood http://www.plannedparenthood.org/greater-ohio/ 216.851.1880

PLEXUS http://www.thinkplexus.org/ 1.888.753.9879

TransFamily http://www.transfamily.org/
READING/VIEWING

- GLSEN Resources: [http://glsen.org/learn/research/books-journals](http://glsen.org/learn/research/books-journals)
- HRC Resources (*numerous national maps of policies, laws, and more): [http://www.hrc.org/resources](http://www.hrc.org/resources)
- PFLAG Cleveland Resources: [http://www.pflagcleveland.org/links-resources](http://www.pflagcleveland.org/links-resources)


- Borhek, Mary V. *Coming out to Parents*. Pilgrim Press, 1983. *A two-way survival guide for gays, lesbians, and their parents. How to handle the confusion, disappointment, and guilt that is sometimes present*.


• Cohen, Susan and Daniel. *When Someone You Know is Gay.* Celestialarts, 1989. *Addressed to adolescents as informational, this covers a wide range of topics honestly and empathetically.*


• Fairchild, Betty. *Now That You Know.* Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1977. *Personal account of one of the founders of the national organization of Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (P-FLAG). Includes practical advice and many first-person stories from parents and gay youth.*

• Fricke, Aaron. *Reflections of a Rock Lobster.* Alyson Publications, 1981. *Aaron Fricke made national news when he sued his school for the right to take a male date to the prom. Here is his story of growing up gay in America.*

• Garden, Nancy. *Annie on My Mind.* Farrar, Straus, & Giroux, 1982. *A realistic love story of two young women. Includes lots of useful and accurate information about homosexuality and tells what it feels like to be gay.*


*Adapted from CWRU Safe Zone Manual & GLSEN Safe Space Ally Training Handbook*

**ONLINE RESOURCES**

**Advocates for Youth – GLBT publications** [http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/#glbtq](http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/#glbtq)

**The American Civil Liberties Union** - [http://gayteens.about.com/od/rightsandactivism/a/teen_rights.htm](http://gayteens.about.com/od/rightsandactivism/a/teen_rights.htm) provides legal help to LGBTQ+ folks who are being discriminated against.

**The Anti-Violence Project** - [http://www.avp.org/](http://www.avp.org/) empowers LGBTQ+ and HIV-affected communities and allies to end all forms of violence through organizing and education, and supports survivors through counseling and advocacy.

**Campus Pride** – [www.campuspride.org](http://www.campuspride.org) is a national online community and resource network committed to student leaders and campus organizations who work to create a safer campus environment free of homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, heterosexism and genderism at colleges and universities.
Dignity USA - [www.dignityusa.org/](http://www.dignityusa.org/) works for respect and justice for all gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender persons in the Catholic Church and the world through education, advocacy and support.

Equality Ohio – [http://www.equalityohio.org/](http://www.equalityohio.org/) advocates and educates to achieve fair treatment and equal opportunity for all Ohioans regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity or expression.

Fortunate Families - [https://fortunatefamilies.com/](http://www.fortunatefamilies.com/) Fortune Families serves as a resource and networking ministry with Catholic parents LGBT+ daughters and sons.

Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLADD) - [http://www.glaad.org/](http://www.glaad.org/) rewrites the script for LGBTQ acceptance. As a dynamic media force, GLAAD tackles tough issues to shape the narrative and provoke dialogue that leads to cultural change. GLAAD protects all that has been accomplished and creates a world where everyone can live the life they love.

Gay Christian Network (GNC) - [www.gaychristian.net](http://www.gaychristian.net) is a nonprofit ministry serving Christians who happen to be lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender.

Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network (GLSEN) - [https://www.glsen.org/](https://www.glsen.org/) mission is to create safe and affirming K-12 schools for all, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

Gay Men’s Health Crisis - [http://www.gmhc.org](http://www.gmhc.org) is the world’s first and leading provider of HIV/AIDS prevention, care and advocacy. GMHC fights to end the AIDS epidemic and uplift the lives of all affected.

Human Rights Campaign – [www.hrc.org](http://www.hrc.org) is the largest national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender political organization with members throughout the country. It effectively lobbies Congress, provides campaign support and educates the public to ensure that LGBT Americans can be open, honest and safe at home, at work and in the community.

Intersex Society of North America – [www.isna.org](http://www.isna.org) is devoted to systemic change to end shame, secrecy, and unwanted genital surgeries for people born with an anatomy that someone decided is not standard for male or female.

Lambda Legal - [http://lambdalegal.org/](http://lambdalegal.org/) is the oldest national organization pursuing high-impact litigation, public education and advocacy on behalf of equality and civil rights for lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender people and people with HIV.

National Gay and Lesbian Task Force – www.thetaskforce.org Founded in 1973, was the first national LGBT civil rights and advocacy organization and remains the movement's leading voice for freedom, justice, and equality.

Parents and Friends of Lesbian and Gays (PFLAG) - www.pflag.org is a support group for parents and friends of LGBTQ individuals to help promote understanding and acceptance. Cleveland contact 212-463-0629

Point Foundation – www.pointfoundation.org
Point Foundation empowers promising LGBTQ students to achieve their full academic and leadership potential – despite the obstacles often put before them – to make a significant impact on society. Several scholarships are available to students through the Point Foundation, all are listed on their website.

The Safe Schools Coalition - http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org/safe.html is an international public-private partnership in support of GLBT youth, that is working to help schools - at home and all over the world - become safe places where every family can belong, where every educator can teach, and where every child can learn, regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation.

The Trevor Project - www.thetrevorproject.org Hotline: 866-4-U-TREVOR is a nonprofit endeavor created by the makers of the short film TREVOR to promote tolerance for gay and questioning youth. Hotline includes suicide prevention services.

MORE ONLINE RESOURCES
*not meant to be an exhaustive list, but provides a variety of resources:

- AARP Pride: www.aarp.org/relationships/friends-family/aarp-pride
- American Society on Aging (ASA): www.asaging.org/lain
- 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): www.algbtic.org/resources/competencies
  - Division 44: http://www.apadivision44.org
  - LGBT Topics: www.apa.org/topics/lgbt/index.aspx
- BiNet USA: www.binetusa.org
• Bisexual Activist Robyn Ochs: https://robynochs.com/
• 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 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
• 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
• LGBT National Health and Aging Center: http://caringandaging.org/
• Lynn Conway’s comprehensive site on Trans Issues: www.lynnconway.com
• 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.thetaskforce.org
• National Transgender Advocacy: www.genderadvocates.org/links/national.html
• Organization Intersex International: www.intersexualite.org/
• Parents, Families, Friends and Allies United with LGBT people: www.pflag.org
• Services and Advocacy for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Elders (SAGE): http://sageusa.org
• Southern Poverty Law Center: https://www.splcenter.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/

This Safe Zone Manual is a compilation of many online resources and institutional manuals. Every effort was made to provide the most updated information. Feedback is welcomed: Michelle.Nicopolis@tri-c.edu Thank you for being a Safe Zone Ally!