

LGBTQ+ Youth
Cultural Competency Training



PRISM

YOUTH COMMUNITY

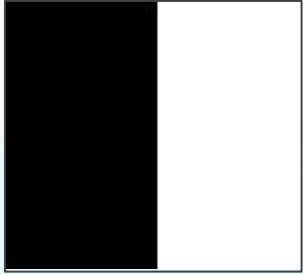
Who are we?

- An inclusive youth group with youth ages 12-20
- Meets twice a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays
- Frequent special events, trainings, discussions, and volunteer outings
- Youth-led with an active leadership group
 - Presenters are from the Education and Training Committee

Agenda

- Presentation
 - Binary vs. Spectrum
 - LGBTQ+ Folks Through History
 - Terms and Definitions
 - Intersectionality
 - Ways to Support LGBTQ+ Youth
- Q&A (as time allows)
- Youth will be far more likely to participate and engage in a space where they feel safe and comfortable. Cultural competency is vital for serving your clients effectively

Binaries vs Spectrums



VS.



Gender is less like this:



And more like this:

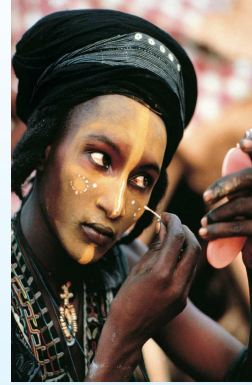


Who Do You Think This Is?



Gender Historically and Globally

- The systemic normalization of cisgender identities may make others seem unusual, “made up” or “less important”
- Keep in mind that historically those who challenged traditional gender roles were often judicially, violently, or socially persecuted, leaving no room for nonbinary/trans identities to be visible



Significant Events in LGBTQ+ History in the U.S.A.

American Psychiatric Association (APA) concludes homosexuality is not a mental illness, removed from DSM (1973)

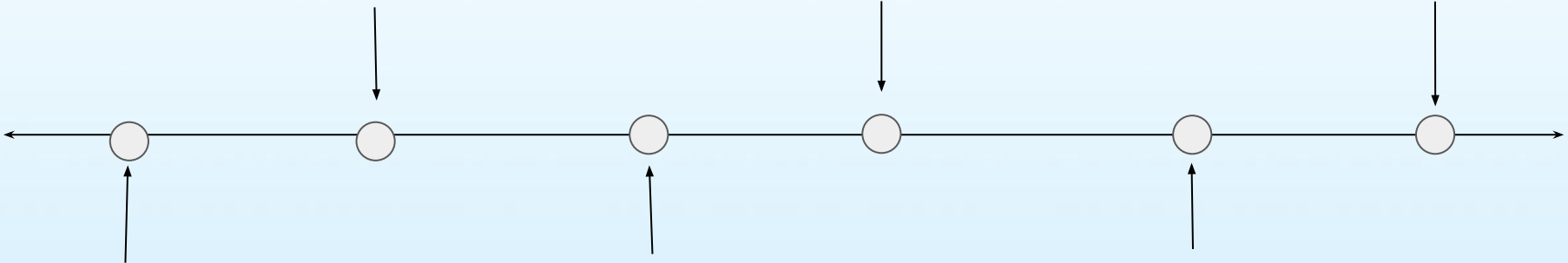
Lawrence v. Texas Decision first decision by Supreme Court to abolish sodomy laws in 12 states (2003)

The APA changed the DSM-V from Gender Identity Disorder to Gender Identity Dysphoria (2013)

Executive Order 10450, allows for firing of government employees on basis of "sexual perversion" (1953) (revoked in 1995)

Ban placed on HIV positive folks immigrating to the US (1987) (revoked in 2009)

Obama issued memorandum on hospital visitation rights for gay couples (2010)



LGBTQ+ Terms and Definitions

Biological Sex

- Biological Sex correlates to your genitalia, hormones, and chromosomal makeup.
- While biological sex may be necessary to talk about in medical conversations, it does not dictate someone's gender identity.
 - Example: A person can have XY chromosomes and not be male in any way.
- “I do feel like there's a preoccupation with [trans bodies and surgeries] and I think that the preoccupation with transition and surgery objectifies trans people and then we don't get to really deal with the real, lived experiences.”
-Laverne Cox

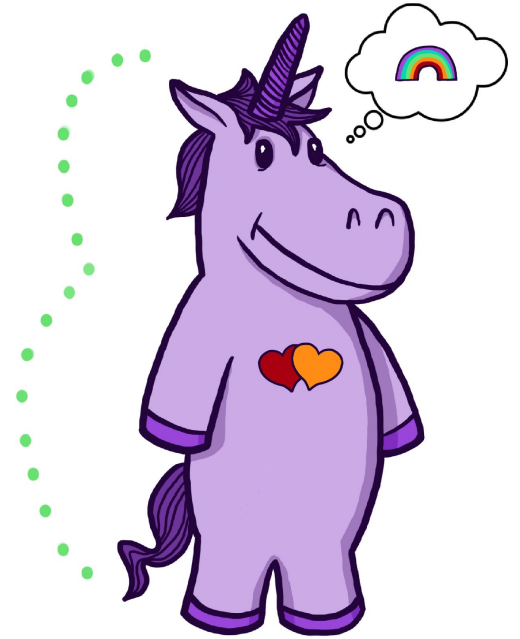
Biological Sex

- Intersex is a term used for people who are born with naturally occurring variations in chromosomes, hormones, genitalia, and other sex characteristics.
- Intersex people are about as common as redheads at about 2% of the population.
- Intersex babies are often subjected to non-consensual surgeries that can lead to problems later on.

**If only
XX = female
and only
XY = male
then how do
you account for
XO, XXY, XYY,
XXYY, XXXY, XY/
XO, XX/XO,
XX/XY,...**

General Overview of Gender and Sexuality

- Gender Identity
 - Cisgender, Transgender, Non-binary
- Gender Expression
 - Masculine, Feminine, Androgynous
- Sexual Orientation
 - Gay, Straight, Bisexual, Pansexual, Asexual
- Romantic Orientation
 - Gay, Straight, Biromantic, Panromantic, Aromantic



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

Design by Landyn Pan and Anna Moore

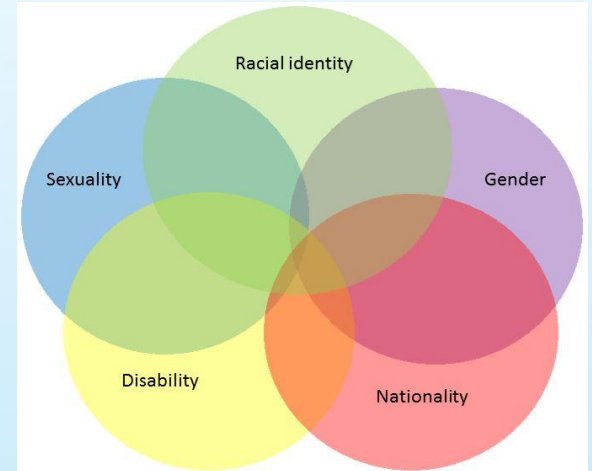
Pronouns

- Pronouns replace a person's name in a sentence, and in English, the pronouns we use are he/him/his, she/her/hers, they/them/theirs, etc.
- It is important to normalize asking for pronouns in various settings to make trans and non-binary youth feel more comfortable in the spaces you are in with them
- They/Them are generally accepted gender neutral pronouns
- If you don't know someone's pronouns default to they until you have asked them

Looking at Intersectionality

Intersectionality

- The term intersectionality is used to describe the compounding effects of multiple oppressed identities that combine to create experiences different than each individual component
 - This term was coined by Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, a critical race theorist at UCLA
 - Example of Intersectionality
- Diversity vs. Intersectionality
- People with multiple marginalized identities often experience more discrimination



LGBTQ+ Youth Climate and Intersectionality

- LGBTQ+ youth are at higher risk for harm than their cisgender and heterosexual peers, but LGBTQ+ youth with multiple marginalized identities are at even higher risk for harm
 - LGBTQ+ youth represented disproportionately in homeless youth populations (~40%)
 - LGBTQ+ homeless youth disproportionately tend to be youth of color
 - High murder rate of trans women of color, especially young trans women of color
- If we create a safe space for the “most marginalized” person, the space should be safe for everyone

Ways to Support LGBTQ+ Youth

Create Safe Environments

- Be a visible ally (either environmentally or verbally) to show that you are supportive
- Gender inclusive bathrooms will make LGBTQ+ folks feel more comfortable in your office
- Solicit feedback and learn from mistakes
- It is vital for youth to know that their feedback is important and heard, so make changes based on it

Safety Over Discomfort

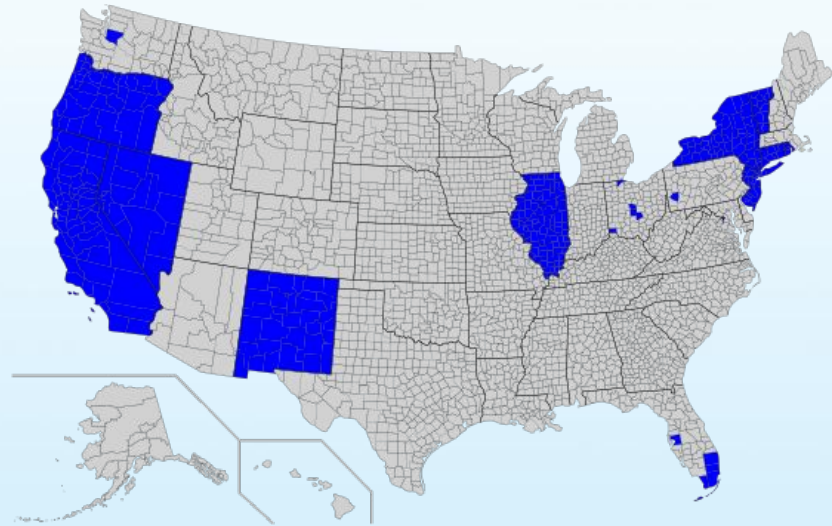
- A youth's personal safety should always be top priority. Everyone should be safe before everyone is comfortable
- This comes over the discomfort of other youth, parents, and yourself
- Discomfort is a feeling of unease, but does not put someone in the direct line of harm, whereas a lack of safety does

LGBTQ+ Identities Are Not the Root of Mental Health Problems

- Varying gender identities & sexual orientations are not the cause of mental health problems
- Instead, societal and environmental discrimination can cause mental health concerns
- Assuming someone's mental health problem is a symptom of their LGBTQ+ identity is quick way to alienate a client and make them feel uncomfortable or unsafe in your space

Conversion Therapy

- Conversion therapy never succeeds in anything but causing major psychological damage
 - Increases in negative outcomes (such as suicidality and self harm)
- Almost every major psychological institution has condemned conversion therapy
- Instead, research, advocate for, and practice therapy strategies that affirm and validate gender identities and sexual orientations



Practicing Outside of Your Competency

- Understanding the experience of the client is important, however not having the basic knowledge of the language the client is using will cause issues
- If you encounter a client with an identity you are unfamiliar with, seek supervision or refer your client to another provider with expertise
- If you are unaware of how to, or uncomfortable with providing referrals or other basic care for LGBTQ+ clients then you should not be seeing them
 - Example: letters for medical transition

Ally Pitfalls

For a lot of LGBTQ+ youth, especially in rural and isolated communities, an adult ally can be the only source of support in their lives

- Oversimplifying and erasing the struggles they face and not validating their experiences
- Conditional Allyship
- Being an open minded person does not ensure culturally competent, or are an appropriate service provider for LGBTQ+ folks
- Discounting youth identities because they are young

Being an Ally vs. Being an Advocate

- An ally is more of a passive supporter, whereas an advocate is an active participant
- LGBTQ+ youth aren't always able or allowed to advocate for themselves
- While it's important to be an advocate, it's also essential that you ground your advocacy in the experiences of the LGBTQ+ youth you are advocating for
- When possible, elevate voices of LGBTQ+ youth over your own voice

Learn on Your Own

- Learning is a lifelong opportunity, it is important to keep yourself open to new content and criticism from LGBTQ+ folks
- Gathering multiple sources on any given topic leads to a more comprehensive understanding
- Learning on your own ensures the focus is on the youth's needs and not on educating you
 - Seek continuing education on how to support LGBTQ+ clients

Things Youth Want You To Take Away

- Youth will be far more likely to participate and engage in a space where they feel safe and comfortable
- Cultural competency is vital for serving your clients effectively
- Following these suggestions can help empower and encourage youth to thrive

Contact Information and Panel

Facebook: Prism Youth Community

Instagram: PrismYouthCommunity

Laura Ingram, Youth Program Director

laura.ingram@bloomingtonpride.org

