

BEHIND THE SCENES OF THE NATION'S LONGEST RUNNING LGBTQ YOUTH THEATER



THE YEAR WE THOUGHT ABOUT LOVE

DISCUSSION GUIDE



NEW DAY FILMS

The Year We Thought About Love
Discussion Guide

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GOALS FOR THE FILM

For all viewers ,the film will:

Share stories of LGBTQ youth, primarily of color, in their own voices.

Demonstrate the power of theater in finding one's voice, and in claiming and sharing one's own story.



For LGBTQ youth, the film will:

Reduce isolation by hearing stories from LGBTQ youth who advocate for themselves.

Encourage the seeking of support from other youth and adults.

Model work of LGBTQ artists and activists.

For friends, family, teachers, and the communities that serve LGBTQ youth, the film will:

Increase empathy and understanding for LGBTQ youth.

Empower viewers to provide support to LGBTQ youth.

Acknowledge the power and wisdom of LGBTQ youth to advocate for themselves.



ABOUT THE FILM



The *Year We Thought About Love* is a 68-minute documentary film, which goes behind the scenes of one of the oldest queer youth theater troupes in America, as its members write a play about love.

What happens when a diverse group of LGBTQ* youth dares to be “out” on stage to reveal their lives and their loves?

Boston-based True Colors: OUT Youth Theater transforms daily struggles into performance for social change. With wit, candor, and attitude, the cast of characters captivates audiences surprised to hear such stories in school settings. When Boston Marathon bombs explode outside their building, the troupe becomes even more determined to share their stories of love to help heal their city.

* lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning

TROUPE MEMBERS FEATURED IN FILM



Alyssa, 18, begins the film as Dellandre and soon claims her transgender identity, transitioning as the film progresses. A complex relationship with her mother comes to a head, both on and off stage.



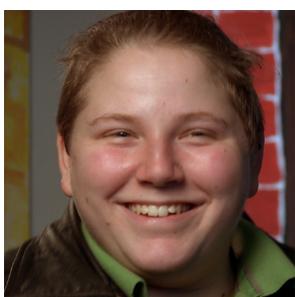
Ayden, 17, searches throughout the film for a comfortable gender expression--having modeled dresses on the runway, she ultimately identifies with a combination of masculine and feminine styles. She shares her process of dealing with sexism and racism.



Because **Chi, 22**, believes his personal relationship with God helps him to survive, he is deeply troubled by his Southern Baptist church's strict condemnation of homosexuality.



Giftson, 19, can make anyone laugh and longs for a life in professional theater, but a personal tragedy and money worries force him to focus on a different life path.



Kriss, 21, is frank and honest--both in describing himself as genderqueer and open to all pronouns, and in looking forward to a carefully planned first date.



Although **Roxas, 17**, faces physical danger in his neighborhood partly due to his visibility as a gay man, his mother supports him and provides a safe home environment.



Trae, 15, has confidence and energy to spare, but her bad luck with love has closed her off to anyone new. An active member of her school's Gay-Straight Alliance, she surprises her classmates with an onstage kiss during a performance.



Nick, 34, is an experienced youth theater director, but the stress of unexpected challenges and his upcoming wedding are affecting him. He allows himself to be vulnerable by sharing his struggles and dreams with the troupe.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This discussion guide is for young people, friends and families of LGBTQ youth, and the adults who serve LGBTQ youth in educational, healthcare, religious, and community-based settings. The guide is designed to support three distinct discussion formats.

FORMAT A

You invite audience members to stay after a screening for a short discussion. We provide a sample 30-minute agenda for this format on p. X of this guide.

FORMAT B

You host a panel discussion after a screening. We provide some planning tips for designing a panel on p. Y of this guide.

FORMAT C

After a screening, you invite back interested viewers for a longer discussion as a way to examine more deeply the issues raised by the film. Most of this guide consists of sample activities and ways to design an agenda for a 1 ½ hour workshop, beginning on p. Q.

The guide provides multiple interactive activities to generate dialogue by specific topics. These topics include:

Sexual Orientation and Gender

Family Support

School-Based Support

Religion and LGBTQ Youth

Intersectionality: Understanding Multiple Aspects of Identity

Theater and Youth Development Work



Preparing for your role as facilitator

An essential part of planning is assessing your own experience, knowledge, and comfort level in leading activities that involve concepts related to issues in the film. How comfortable are you in discussing issues of gender identity, sexual orientation, race, gender expression, and other issues that relate to the identities of characters in the film? You might need to do some homework. One piece of prep work might be to review transgender and queer terminology. Check out the glossary at: <http://www.theyearwethoughtaboutlove.com/resources/#Terms>

Resources for Allies:

Another piece of prep work might be to watch the film with an eye to how people use certain terms to describe themselves, and become familiar with how they are used.

Still another might be to review how the development of the idea of Intersectionality has evolved and how it can help describe the effects of race, gender, and sexual orientation on young people like those in our film. You can start with reading the introductory section in our guide on intersectionality on p. 32.

You could review the exercise on p. 36, regarding how to respond to bias and microaggressions in film discussion.

Another possibility might be to invite a co-leader with expertise in areas where you have less familiarity.

Your job also includes assessing your workshop audience's experience, knowledge, and comfort level around these same issues. For instance, a group of LGBTQ youth who meet regularly will naturally have considerable experience discussing gender and sexual orientation. Nevertheless, we feel that every group can benefit from thoughtful discussion of any of the issues that the film presents. We encourage you to create a workshop atmosphere that supports all participants as active, engaged learners whose lived experiences shape how they react to the film and to the discussions you lead.

Helpful Links

<http://www.umass.edu/stonewall/uploads/listWidget/12992/How to Be an Ally to LGBT People.pdf>

<http://community.pflag.org/document.doc?id=139>



Your Role as Facilitator

As the facilitator of any of the formats for discussion, you will need to plan for your event and design an agenda. Here are the steps:

1. Set goals and choose activities (from this guide or elsewhere) to meet them.

Sample goals you might choose:

- Participants will increase their understanding of LGBTQ youth challenges and opportunities.
- Participants will commit to volunteer, donate, or share information about local LGBTQ youth resources.
- Participants will recognize and keep in mind that there is a larger context of social issues in the U.S. of which queer issues are an important part.

2. Set an agenda for your discussion or workshop with times allotted for activities.

3. Develop outreach to recruit attendees.

4. Target your choices of activities to the audiences you expect (youth, family and friends, LGBTQ youth providers, general public).

5. Tell the filmmakers how it went using the following survey monkey link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DZ99PTM>

Preparing for your training:

1. Make a list of what you need to set up room, gather materials.

2. If your screening is not in a movie theater, **make sure in advance that the equipment works** with your copy of the film.

3. Remember the importance of safe spaces and establishing ground rules, especially for a long format workshop.

For an example see: <https://www.cmu.edu/teaching/solveproblem/strat-dontparticipate/groundrules.pdf>

4. Do you lack direct experience with LGBTQ youth? If so, consider inviting a co-facilitator from a local agency as a resource.

5. Compile or borrow a list of local LGBTQ youth resources (Refer to national list in resources section of the film's [website](#) for ideas).

See pages 10-11 for varying format descriptions



FORMAT A

30-minute post-screening discussion

Sample agenda for ½ hour discussion when no cast members are present

After the film, facilitator distributes large index cards and markers to each participant and invites everyone to:

- Write down a question or comment about the film you would like to be discussed/addressed by the group. (3 min.)
- Turn to the person next to you and in pairs, share one thing that stood out for you in the film. (3 min.)
- During pair work, facilitator collects cards and chooses some to discuss. Encourage the group (not yourself) to explore answers and comments. If few questions get generated, choose from sample questions list (see below). (20 min.)
- Distribute list of local LGBTQ youth resources (2 min.)

You may choose to start the conversation with some of the following questions, especially if you do not have enough questions generated by the group.

- Which character stuck with you the most and why?
- Describe a moment in the film that spoke to you. What made it powerful to you?
- Describe a moment that confused you or left you with more questions.
- How did you feel at the end of the film? Why?
- What is one thing you learned from the film?
- What is the role of storytelling for these young people?
- The film covers multiple kinds of love: self-love, romantic love, familial love, and religious love. How does being LGBTQ both complicate and enrich experiences in these categories of love?
- What are the pros and cons of being out, sharing your authentic self with those you love and with the larger community?
- Who is heard, and who is not heard in the True Colors theatre troupe? What topics are discussed? How is this different or similar from other groups in which youth participate (school, church, etc.)?

FORMAT B

30-minute post-screening panel discussion

The panel could be drawn from the following: young LGBTQ people (at least two), a parent, an educator, a youth worker, or a service provider (eg. health, mental health, social work).

If you have the chance to invite members of the film's cast to your panel, the audience will readily generate questions for them. You can contact us through the [website](#) if you wish to request the participation of cast members.

Sample agenda for ½ hour panel discussion

Facilitator introduces panel members, or each panel member introduces themselves saying either one thing in the film that resonated for them, or one thing about themselves. (3 min.)

Facilitator directs questions, perhaps from sample questions list. (see below) (20 min.)

Distribute list of LGBTQ youth resources. (2 min.)

Ask everyone to turn to the person next to them and share one action they will take as a result of seeing the film, or a strong feeling or insight that they gained. (5 min.)

Sample questions to panelists

- What parts of the film resonated with your own experience?
- Why is it important for LGBTQ youth to tell their stories to peers and adults?
- What challenges and supports do you see in this community for doing theater work with LGBTQ youth?
- How does living with multiple aspects of identity (intersectionality) affect LGBTQ youth differently from their straight counterparts?
- What can a member of the audience do if they want to support LGBTQ youth?
- What local opportunities exist for LGBTQ youth to a) find their voices and express themselves, b) be creative in other ways or, c) be part of a supportive community?

FORMAT C

1 ½ hour workshop

Sample agenda for 1 ½ hour training

1. Icebreaker (5 min.)
2. Safe space guidelines review (see handouts, p. 52) (10 min.)
3. 3-4 topic related activities (15 min. each)
4. Distribute list of local and national LGBTQ youth resources (5 min.)
5. Evaluation and closure (Head, Heart, Feet) (see handouts, p. 38) (10 min.)

ICEBREAKERS

A quick icebreaker can make everyone feel included in your workshop. Use one of your favorites, or choose from the following list:

<http://www.ydnetwork.org/Icebreakers>

Sample Icebreaker Activity:

Counting - 10 min, Goals: ensemble, focus

- Invite everyone in the group to find a place of their own on the floor, and lie down. (can also be done sitting with eyes closed)
- Coach group into breathing as one.
- Goal of activity is to count to 20 (or however many people are in the room) without talking over each other. If two people count at the same time the count goes back to 1.
- Discussion: What makes this activity succeed? What are the different ways of participating? Is stepping back taking part?
- **Note:** This activity can also be repeated at the end of the workshop, so the group can see a noticeable improvement in the way they listen to one another and focus together.

SAFE SPACE AGREEMENTS

Safe Space agreements are basic agreements about how you will work together during shared workshop time.

Their purpose is to make the space comfortable for every single participant. Ask for suggestions for a safe space. Write agreements on chart paper or the board, and as you facilitate discussion, refer to them if necessary.

Have all people in the room vote to agree to honor the list.

Examples of common agreements:

- Be respectful
- Step up, step back
- "One mic, one diva" - one person speaks at a time
- What's said here stays here
- It's OK to take risks; we've got your back
- "Don't yuck my yum" - be respectful of other people's tastes



Sexual Orientation and Gender

OBJECTIVES

to increase comfort in discussing topics related to LGBTQ concerns



Activity I

Learning Key Terminology (15min)

For an extensive list, please visit this website:

<http://transwellness.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Trans-and-Queer-Terms-HTWG.pdf>

Review definitions:

GENDER IDENTITY

One's internal, personal sense of his or her own gender--a person's inner sense of "being" male, female, neither, or both. Many people have a gender identity of "man" or "woman" that is also consistent with their assigned sex at birth or gender attribution, while others do not. Many people believe in a more fluid gender identity than simply "male" and "female."

GENDER EXPRESSION

How a person expresses their gender identity or the cues people use to identify another person's gender. The external manifestation of one's gender identity, usually expressed through behavior, clothing, haircut, voice or body characteristics.

TRANSGENDER (ADJ.)

An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from what is typically associated with the sex they were assigned at birth. People under the transgender umbrella may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms - including transgender. Many transgender people are prescribed hormones by their doctors to change their bodies. Some undergo surgery as well. But not all transgender people can or will take those steps, and a transgender identity is not dependent upon medical procedures.

TRANSGENDER MAN

People who were assigned female at birth but identify and live as a man may use this term to describe themselves. They may shorten it to trans man. (Note: trans man, not "transman.") Some may also use FTM, an abbreviation for female-to-male. Some may prefer to simply be called man, without any modifier. It is best to ask which term an individual prefers.

TRANSGENDER WOMAN

People who were assigned male at birth but identify and live as a woman may use this term to describe themselves. They may shorten to trans woman. (Note: trans woman, not "transwoman.") Some may also use MTF, an abbreviation for male-to-female. Some may prefer to simply be called woman, without any modifier. It is best to ask which term an individual prefers.

GENDERQUEER

People who do not necessarily identify with the sex they were assigned at birth, and who do not identify as exclusively masculine or feminine. Some genderqueer people reject the concept that there are only two genders (the gender binary). Genderqueer people may identify as one or more of the following:

- having an overlap of, or indefinite lines between, gender identity;
- having two or more genders (being bigender, trigender, or pangender);
- having no gender (being agender, nongendered, genderless, genderfree or neutrois);
- moving between genders or having a fluctuating gender identity (genderfluid); or
- being third-gender or other-gendered, a category which includes those who do not place a name to their gender.[4]

QUEER

Sometimes used as an umbrella term to refer to any non-heterosexual (non-straight) people. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people may use "queer" to describe themselves. People may identify as queer if their sexual attraction is not confined to the gender binary--for example, they may be attracted to genderqueer or gender non-conforming individuals, or feel that their attraction is unrelated to gender altogether. "Queer" is a word that has been reclaimed by the community and was initially used as an insult, and thus is most commonly used by those within the community.

PANSEXUAL

Attracted to people of all biological sexes and gender identities.

ASEXUAL

Not interested in sexual activity, not experiencing sexual attraction. Some people identify as asexual, but experience romantic attraction, while others do not. Those who do not would identify as asexual and aromantic.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

The nature of an individual's physical, romantic, emotional and/or spiritual attraction to another person. Everyone has sexual orientation--some examples include gay, lesbian, bisexual, heterosexual (straight), pansexual, asexual, queer, etc. Gender identity and sexual orientation are not the same. Transgender and gender-variant people may identify with any sexual orientation, and their sexual orientation may or may not change before, during or after gender transition.

GENDER ATTRIBUTION

is the process by which a society assigns or ascribes a gender and/or sex onto a person usually without knowing concretely the person's sex or the gender with which they identify.

Activity I

Learning Key Terminology (15min)

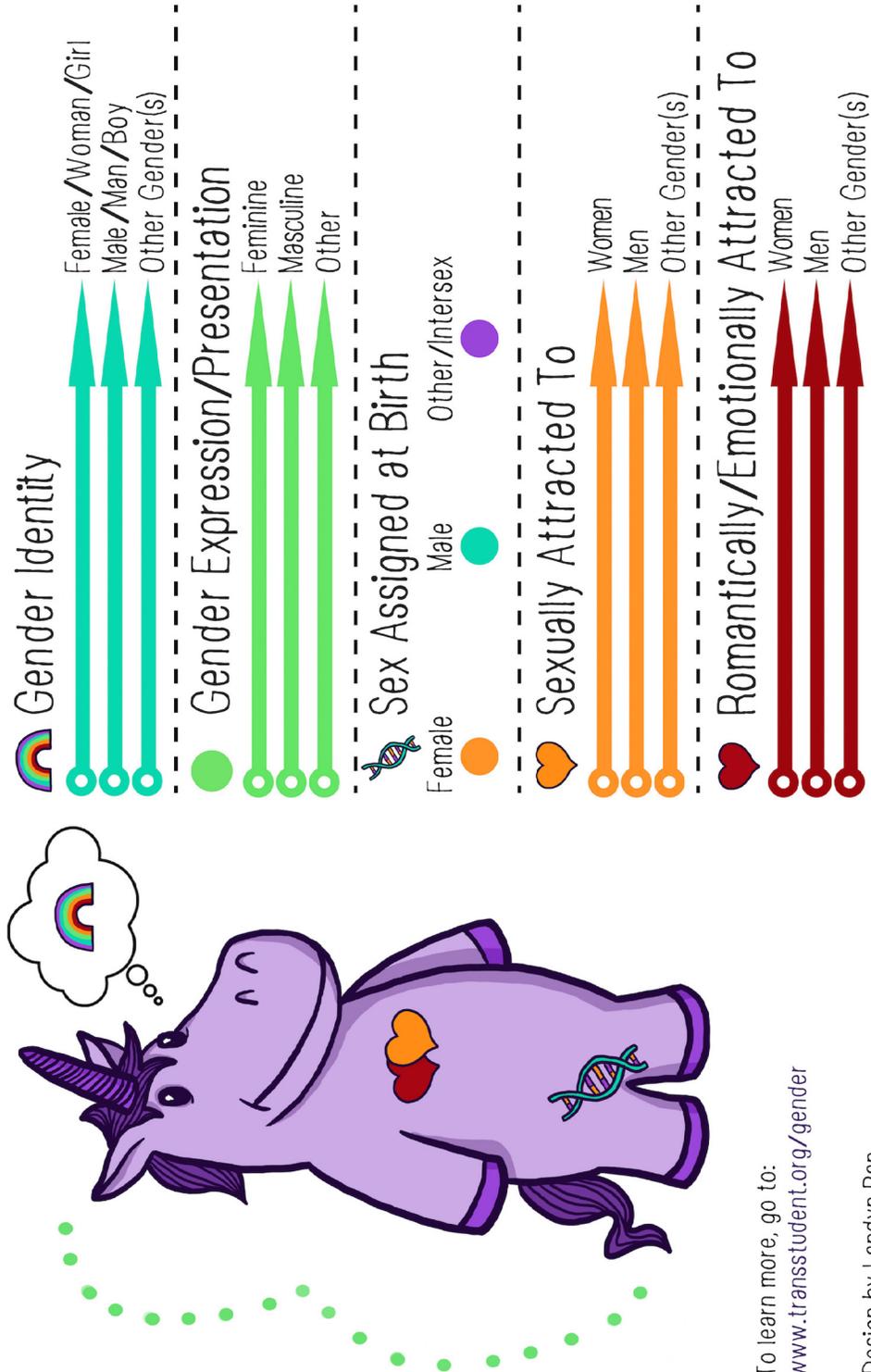
For an extensive list, please visit this website:

<http://transwellness.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Trans-and-Queer-Terms-HTWG.pdf>

Review "Gender Unicorn" Diagram

The Gender Unicorn

Graphic by:
TSER
Trans Student Educational Resources



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

Design by Landyn Pan

ASK

Decide for each of the following quotes which category(ies) it illustrates.

STATEMENTS	GENDER IDENTITY	GENDER EXPRESSION	GENDER ATTRIBUTION	SEXUAL ORIENTATION	ROMANTIC ATTRACTION	NONE OF THESE
"I wear what I want, when I want. Sometimes it's a dress; sometimes it's sweats."	<input type="checkbox"/>					
"I use he, him, and his."	<input type="checkbox"/>					
"Just call me pansexual."*	<input type="checkbox"/>					
"I'm an 18 year old boy who wears blue nail polish."	<input type="checkbox"/>					
"She was born female, but I hear she identifies as a transman."	<input type="checkbox"/>					
"I'm genderqueer"	<input type="checkbox"/>					
"I'm Marie, and recently I started dressing as a boy."	<input type="checkbox"/>					
"I'm a bisexual man involved with another man."	<input type="checkbox"/>					
"I am a trans woman involved with a trans man."	<input type="checkbox"/>					

Activity II

Where Do I Stand? (30 min)

(adapted from *GLSEN's Educators' Guide for the ThinkB4YouSpeak Campaign*)

DESCRIBE

Participants stand along a human continuum in response to statements assessing their attitudes and experiences regarding the use of "that's so gay" and anti-LGBT slurs. Their reflections are used to build awareness about the impact of anti-LGBT epithets.

OBJECTIVE

- To raise awareness about the nature and extent of anti-LGBT slurs
- To increase understanding about the impact of slurs on others
- To motivate youth to reduce their use of hurtful expressions and slurs

MATERIALS

chart paper, tape markers, taking a stand statements

DIRECTIONS

1. Prior to the activity, post signs at opposite ends of the room that say **STRONGLY AGREE** and **STRONGLY DISAGREE**.
2. Begin the activity by telling participants that you are going to read a series of statements aloud that relate to some commonly used expressions and put-downs. Explain that they will respond to each statement by standing along an invisible continuum that ranges from **STRONGLY AGREE** to **STRONGLY DISAGREE** (point out the corresponding signs posted earlier). Tell participants that they can stand by either sign or anywhere in-between that reflect their opinion or experience. Emphasize that they should be silent while choosing a place to stand and refrain from cross-talk during this part of the activity.
3. Read the first **TAKING A STAND STATEMENT** aloud and allow ample time for participants to "take a stand" at the appropriate place in the room. Once they have positioned themselves, ask them to silently look around and observe how their peers responded to the statement. Repeat this process with several **TAKING A STAND STATEMENTS** (OPTION: Rather than having participants remain silent throughout the

activity, briefly process each statement before moving on to the next one using some of the discussion questions in step #4 below).

4. Reconvene the group and lead a discussion with participants using some of the following questions:
 - Which statements were the easiest for you to respond to? The most difficult? Why?
 - Did the group's overall response to any of the statements surprise you? If so, which ones, and why?
 - Were you alone in the minority in how you responded to any of the statements? If so, how did this make you feel?
 - Did you change your mind about any of the issues raised in this exercise as a result of your peers' responses? If so, how did your opinion change?
 - After participating in this activity, what impact do you think expressions like "that's so gay" and "no homo," and terms like "faggot" and "dyke" have on others?
 - Do you think that what you have learned today will change your attitude or behavior in any way?
 - What do you think it would take to limit or curb the use of expressions like "that's so gay" among your peers?



TAKING A STAND STATEMENTS:

- I often hear the phrase “that’s so gay,” “you’re so gay,” “no homo” or the word “gay” in general used in a negative way among my peers.
- I often hear terms like “faggot” and “dyke” used among my peers.
- When I hear “that’s so gay,” it is usually aimed at an object rather than a person.
- When people say “that’s so gay” or “no homo,” they do not mean it as an insult against actual LGBT people.
- Regardless of how it is meant, expressions like “that’s so gay” and “no homo” are probably insulting or upsetting to LGBT people and those who care about them.
- I have never thought about how expressions like “that’s so gay” or “no homo” might make others feel.
- I have personally used expressions like “that’s so gay,” “you’re so gay” or “no homo” with my peers.
- I have personally used terms like “faggot” and “dyke” with my peers.
- When expressions like “that’s so gay” or “no homo” are aimed directly at me, it bothers me.
- Expressions like “that’s so gay” and “no homo” are okay as long as they are not used to directly attack an LGBT person.
- Expressions like “that’s so gay” and “no homo” are never okay to use.
- It would be impossible to get kids at my school to reduce or stop using terms like “that’s so gay” and “no homo.”
- I would personally be willing to limit or curb my use of expressions like “that’s so gay” and “no homo.”

Activity III

Transgender Etiquette (30 min)

DIRECTIONS

1. Hand out copies of Think Again Training’s “Transgender Etiquette” sheet (see handouts, p. 49).
2. As a group, read this sheet aloud. It may be effective to go around in a circle and have each participant read a portion of the handout.
3. Divide participants into pairs or groups of three. Have each pair/group create a skit. The goal of these skits is to demonstrate use of transgender etiquette they have learned from the handout. Here are some examples of appropriate skit prompts:
 - Scene Partner A is talking to Scene Partner B about a transgender person they both know, and Partner A misgenders them (uses the wrong gender pronoun). Partner B must find an appropriate way and moment to correct Partner A.
 - Scene Partner A is talking to Scene Partner B about a transgender person they both know, and expresses confusion over their friend’s pronouns. Partner B must offer a suggestion such as just using their name or finding a time when asking about pronouns is appropriate.
 - For groups of three, Participants A and B are in a bathroom at school. Participant A is a transgender girl, and is using the women’s bathroom. Participant C feels uncomfortable with this and asks Participant A if they are “a boy or a girl.” Participant B must find an appropriate way to support Participant A, and make the space safe for them.

Activity IV

How Gender Savvy Are You? (15 min)

DIRECTIONS

Take Kate Bornstein’s gender savvy quiz (15 items) and discuss. This activity is best done with adults or older teens, who understand that the tone is tongue-in-cheek. (see handouts, p. 56-57)

Activity V

The Pronoun Game (15 min)

(Adapted from [GLSEN’s Jump Start Guide](#), section 7)

DESCRIBE

Discussions about gender pronouns can be time-consuming and can easily derail an agenda, meeting or conversation, so quick and polite is generally the best approach. If people don’t know the pronoun of someone and arbitrarily pick a pronoun, they could unknowingly make the person feel disrespected or uncomfortable. Correcting mistakes immediately is quick, respectful to all, and treats transgender people like everyone else. Establishing this as the polite thing to do generally helps not only make sure that people are respectful, but also that people are not offended when others publicly correct them on a pronoun.

Ideally, this will also make everyone more comfortable in correcting people if they mess up, rather than leaving it only to the person being referenced or to that person’s friends to correct any mistakes.

Finally, stress the importance of asking people respectfully what pronouns they prefer—or if they reject pronouns and wish to be referred to by name only. Make sure everyone tries to overcome the tendency to make assumptions about pronouns for transgender people, and also remember that using different pronouns is new to most people and that mistakes will

happen. However, practice makes perfect, so keep up the amazing work!

DIRECTIONS

- Divide the group into pairs. This is a good get-to-know-each-other activity, so pair each person with someone they do not know well. Before the activity begins, the facilitator should write several questions on the flip-chart paper. These should be guiding questions—about family, pets, interests or jobs—that will encourage participants to talk about themselves.
- Before people start talking to each other, review gender-neutral pronouns and make sure that everyone understands how they should be used. Remember, “zie” (pronounced “z”) is subjective and is used instead of “she” or “he,” while “hir” (pronounced “here”) is both objective and possessive and is used instead of “her,” “him” or “his.” Using “it” to refer to people can be offensive and dehumanizing. Using “they,” “them,” and “theirs” is becoming more and more popular and accepted. There are many other pronouns not listed here, and it is up to an individual to decide which are most comfortable for them. Writing the pronouns down (or having everyone write them down in their own notebooks or on scrap paper) can be a helpful visual cue.

- Note: While some people might recognize “PGPs” or “Preferred Gender Pronouns” as correct language for this topic, many people feel that using the word “preferred” is unnecessary and disrespectful--as the gender someone identifies with is their gender, not the gender they prefer.

- Start the activity by having one person in each pair spend about three minutes talking about herself/himself/hirself/themself, addressing whatever topics or questions were written on the flip-chart. Then the second person in the pair does the same. Throughout this conversation, all people should try to use gender-nonspecific terms and pronouns.
- After everyone has shared, bring the group back together. Read through the following guideline as a group:
 - “Once people are clear on proper pronoun usage, establish that if people mess up on someone else’s pronoun and don’t correct themselves, the most efficient way to deal with it is for anyone else who notices to speak up immediately—and politely—with the correct pronoun and then be quiet. In turn, people who mess up should acknowledge their mistake with a simple ‘sorry’ or nod and save any discussion for later.”
- Next, each person will introduce her/his/hir/their partner to the group (as often happens in getting-to-know-you activities) and tell a little about her/him/hir/their using only gender-neutral terms or gender-nonspecific terminology. If group members mess up, people should politely respond according to the guideline provided above. When all participants have made their presentations, take a few minutes to discuss the rationale on the next page, which can be a useful explanation for pronoun etiquette.

Activity VI

Supporting Transgender Youth (20 min)

DIRECTIONS

Part I (10min)

Find 2 or more people in the room who share one of these characteristics with you: being a youth, a family member, or a youth provider. Discuss in your small group the question targeted to your group:

- **For providers:** Imagine you are working with a transgender youth, like Alyssa from the film. What potential risks would you want to address? How would you identify resilient aspects of this person?
- **For family members:** If you had a sibling or a child who told you they identified as transgender, how would you react? Where would you turn for support?
- **For youth:** What would you do if a classmate told you they were considering transitioning to another gender?
- **For everyone:** Where does Alyssa get her support? What are factors that help her be resilient?

Part II (10 min)

Report Back

ASK

ask group “What did you learn or notice?”

SHARE

List of online resources about transgender issues on chart paper or board (see Handouts p. 47-48)

Activity VII

Gender Expression, Pride, and Bias (20 min)

EXPLAIN

When Roxas is being interviewed with his mother, he expresses that he acts differently as a gay man than he once did, adding offhandedly that he hates “girlie men.”

WATCH

“Always #LikeAGirl” (Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XjQBJWYDTs>)

ASK

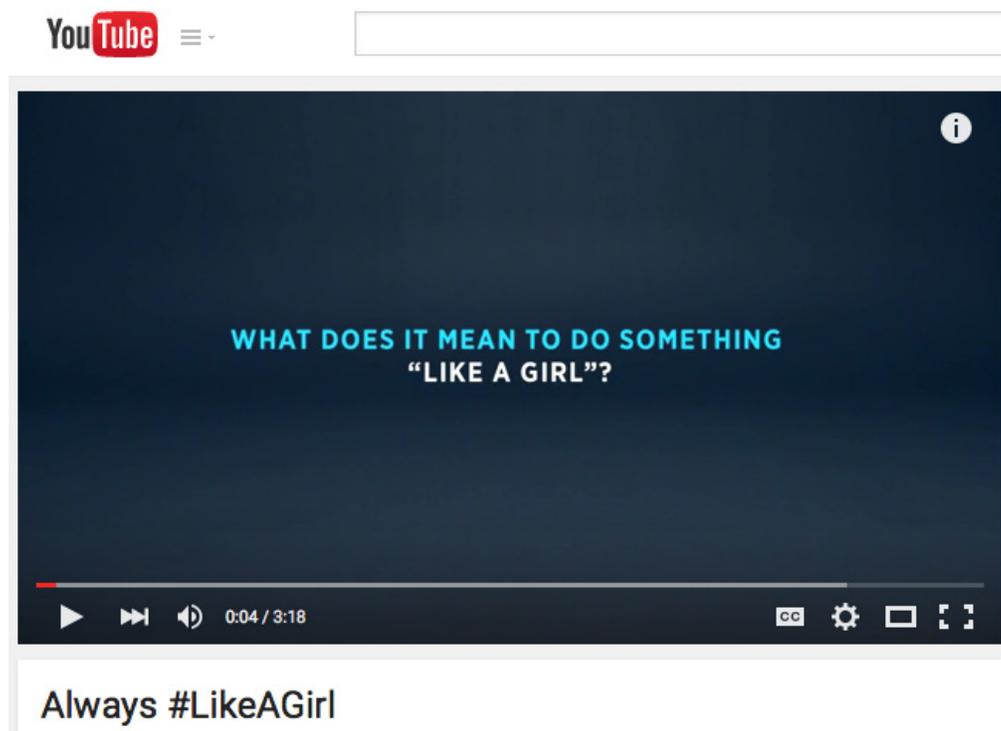
Where do we see connections between systems of homophobia (hateful bias against gay and lesbian people), misogyny (hateful bias against women), and femmephobia (hateful bias against feminine people, regardless of sex)?

For audiences in the LGBTQ community, where do we see similar femmephobic sentiments in popular culture, media, or spoken by other queer men?

For audiences with a variety of sexual orientations (or primarily straight), how do we see femininity in general treated by popular culture or media? After watching “Always #LikeAGirl,” do we notice experiences or ideas being discussed that we have experienced in our own lives? Why might these negative sentiments still be present in the queer community?

SYNTHESIZE

At the end of “Always #LikeAGirl,” participants are asked to consider how they will find empowerment for themselves as girls or as people with feminine characteristics. What are steps we might take (or changes we can envision occurring in the media, etc.) in order to move away from gender bias, and toward gender pride?





Family Support

OBJECTIVES

To recognize the importance of family reactions to LGBTQ youth coming out.
To learn about how to increase family support for LGBTQ youth.

Activity I

Building Machines in a Circle (10 min)

DESCRIBE

Families are among the most important sources of support for LGBTQ youth. This next exercise gives participants a visceral, non-verbal experience of the strengths and challenges of family support.

DIRECTIONS

1. Participants form a circle.
2. One person begins with creating a beginning sound and motion for the “machine.”
3. Participants then sequentially add on to the machine, working off the previous part.
4. Facilitator should emphasize through various directions the need for the machine to work together, and to give directions to the “machine” to change the dynamic, whether it is slow down or speed up and even to take a piece out of the “machine” and note the reaction the rest of the group has.

ASK

What worked or didn’t work? How did it feel? What does it take to work together? What in this exercise reminded you of how your family works or doesn’t work together?

Activity II

What Families Do (20 min)

DIRECTIONS

1. (5 minutes) Ask small groups to brainstorm as many examples of the following as possible and to keep notes:
 - What behaviors of family members help LGBTQ youth?
 - What behaviors of family members hurt LGBTQ youth?
2. Draw a line down the board or chart paper. Write HELP on top left side- HURT on top right. Ask for examples from the groups. Some possible answers might include those on the chart on page 23¹

- she had kicked him out of the house when he was 18?
- What did you think about Roxas’ and Ayden’s mothers reactions to their children?
- Trae’s mother thought Trae was a lesbian since she was four. If you think your child is LGBTQ, what are the pros and cons to letting them know before they come out to you?

OFFER

Share your resource list of local LGBTQ youth organizations. Include local chapters of [GLSEN](#) and [PFLAG](#) as well as school-based and community-based support.

ASK (10 min.)

- What reactions do you have after looking at these lists?
- Where does Alyssa get her support? [e.g. sister, True Colors, fellow students]
- How did you feel when you saw the photo of Nick dancing with his mother at his wedding, knowing

BEHAVIORS THAT HELP

- Require respect in the family for your LGBTQ child
- Let your child determine the timing and content of coming out to various friends and family
- Support your child's LGBTQ identity even when you feel uncomfortable
- Learn about LGBTQ youth issues
- Connect your child with LGBTQ resources
- Talk with your child or foster child about their LGBTQ identity.
- Express affection when your child tells you or when you learn that your child is LGBTQ.
- Advocate for your child when he or she is mistreated because of their LGBTQ identity.
- Require that other family members respect your LGBTQ child.
- Bring your child to LGBTQ organizations or events.
- Connect your child with an LGBTQ adult role model to show them options for the future.
- Work to make your congregation supportive of LGBTQ members, or find a supportive faith community that welcomes your family and LGBTQ child.
- Welcome your child's LGBTQ friends & partner to your home and to family events and activities.
- Support your child's gender expression.
- Believe your child can have a happy future as an LGBTQ adult.

BEHAVIORS THAT HURT

- Hitting, slapping or physically hurting your child because of their LGBTQ identity
- Verbal harassment or name-calling because of your child's LGBTQ identity
- Excluding LGBT youth from family events and family activities
- Blocking access to LGBTQ friends, events, and resources
- Blaming your child when they are discriminated against because of their LGBTQ identity
- Pressuring your child to be more (or less) masculine or feminine
- Telling your child that God will punish them because they are gay
- Telling your child that you are ashamed of them or that how they look or act will shame the family
- Making your child keep their LGBTQ identity a secret in the family and not letting them talk about their identity with others
- Taking a child to a conversion therapist or religious figure to try and change their orientation/identity

1 adapted from "Helping Families Support Their Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Children," by Caitlyn Ryan, Ph.D., A.C.S.W. Director, Family Acceptance Project™ – San Francisco State University http://nccc.georgetown.edu/documents/LGBT_Brief.pdf



Activity III

Hidden Love (40 min)

DIRECTIONS

Describe a time when you have hidden a love or passion from someone in your family.

1. Writing Exercise - 5 minutes
 - Hand out paper & pens.
 - Ask everyone to find a comfortable place to write.
 - Remind the group to be sure to continue writing the entire time. Tell them to use a Beginning, Middle, and End and to use all of their senses in the writing. Can write in any style they like – prose, poetry, song, etc.
2. Sharing Writing in Small Groups – 10 minutes
 - Count off in 2s or 4s
 - Recount their stories to their group. Some people might feel their stories are too personal to share. Say, "If you are comfortable, recount your stories. If you do not wish to share your stories, recount your emotions. If you are not comfortable with either of these options, say 'pass' and listen attentively to your group members."
 - "When you're done sharing, raise your hand for further instructions"
3. Frozen Pictures – 10 minutes (not a scene but one image made by the group)
 - Choose ONE story or blend multiple stories to be represented in THREE frozen pictures
 - Everyone must be included, SHOW US THE STORY. Even a member who 'passed' can participate in someone else's story.
 - The three pictures will represent: background, turning point, results/consequences of story
 - TITLE EACH PICTURE

Presentation – 15 minutes

ASK

What did you learn from this activity?

Takeaway point: hiding a significant part of who you are has negative consequences on individuals and their relationships.

Activity IV

Helping a Conflicted Parent/Caregiver (15 min)

FISHBOWL Directions

1. Make a circle and ask for two volunteers to start the exercise and sit inside the circle and be in a role-play. Assign Player One the role of an accepting parent with an LGBTQ youth who initiates a conversation with Player Two, another parent who is conflicted about their LGBTQ youth who has just come out to them.
 - "So, I hear you are having trouble with your child thinking they are LGBTQ. Tell me about that."
 - Or: "I am so upset that Jose said he is gay. I don't know what to do."
2. Ask group: "May I have a volunteer for either role?"
 - Continue the role-play. Encourage the confused parent to state their fears and the accepting parent to speak from their heart.
 - Switch roles again after 1 minute.
3. Convene large group:
 - What did you learn from this exercise? Be sure to note that there may be a number of reasons a parent is conflicted, including genuine concern for the well-being of the child. How do we acknowledge and address such fears, while supporting the child?



SCHOOL-BASED SUPPORT

OBJECTIVE

To appreciate the value of school-based supports for LGBTQ youth

Activity I

The Big Spender (15 min)

PROMPT

We see Trae in her school. What aspects of that school support her as an LGBTQ youth? Can you imagine your school doing any of these?

- Possible answers:
 - Presence of a Gay Straight Alliance
 - Other Out students
 - Out gay teacher
 - School hosted a performance by True Colors

ASK

In pairs, if you had \$1 million to spend on improving the climate of schools concerning LGBTQ youth, how would you spend it? What are some results you would like to see from this investment?

- share results in large group

SHARE

Results of Safe Schools evaluation (see handout LGBTQ Youth Support Activities Improve School Climate on p.53)

Activity II

How well do you know your high school? (15 min)

DIRECTIONS

- Individual: Compare the procedures at your local high school to the list from LGBT-Inclusive School Checklist in the handouts on page 52
- What conclusions can you draw from this activity?
 - Get in small groups.
 - Discuss possible actions you could take to make your local high school more supportive of LGBTQ youth. If one of your actions is to form a GSA, brainstorm some actions that the GSA might take. Report back.
 - Distribute resource list (see handout p. 47-48)



Activity III

I Declare (An activity for youth workers)
(20 min)

SHOW

- Show film clip of Nick talking about his role (3 min) (Link to video: <https://vimeo.com/138356192>)

ASK

- How is Nick's position within True Colors much like youth work?
 - Possible answers
 - He selects age-appropriate activities.
 - He creates a space that supports both vulnerability and safety.
 - He helps youth develop their best selves and provides them with opportunities to grow.
 - He sets positive expectations for youth.
 - He offers multiple opportunities for stretching outside comfort zone.
 - He offers socialization, group skills, leadership, ways to deal with challenges, fun with peers.
 - He believes in youth-directed action and prioritizing of youth voices.
- How can we be supportive of youth voices? Create a declaration, a list of rules for your space with the youth and put it up in your safe space.
 - Possible answers
 - Young people are partners in our work, not resources. Our aim is to work along with youth.
 - Expect youth to challenge us and we hope to challenge them. It's the only method of growth.
 - One young person does not equal all young people.
 - Each of us is better than the worst thing we have ever done.
 - Everyone brings different perspectives and we can't expect one voice to speak for all.



Nick discussing his role as a theater director and youth worker



RELIGION & LGBT YOUTH

OBJECTIVE

To explore the influence of religion on LGBTQ youth

Activity I

Exploring an individual's relationship with their house of worship (10 min)

SHOW

- Show clip of Chi talking about his church (5 min) (Link to video: <https://vimeo.com/138354594>)

DISCUSS

- List the steps Chi took to internally negotiate being gay and continuing to attend a church that was not friendly to him.
- How does Chi demonstrate that he is able to reconcile his religious faith and his identity?
- Do you need to change an institution in order to continue to be a part of it?
- What can someone do to create support in an unwelcoming religious situation?

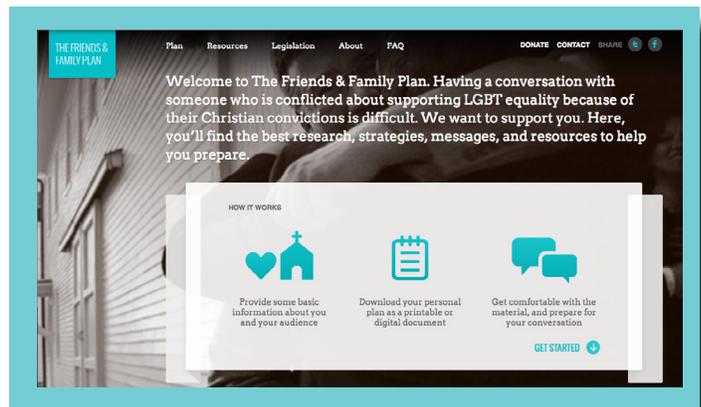


Activity II

Using the Friends and Family Plan Website (15 min)
friendsandfamilyplan.org

DISCUSS

- Introduce the website, an interactive tool to assist conversations with people who are conflicted about supporting LGBTQ equality because of their Christian convictions.
- Break into small groups, Every group should have a smart phone or computer.
- Log-on to the Friends and Family Plan website to explore how you would engage with a family member or friend.
- Reconvene big group and discuss how people reacted to the website.



Activity III

Circle Dialogue (15 min)

adapted from exercise by Sheryl A. Kujawa-Holbrook,
Claremont School of Theology

DIRECTIONS

- Form a large double circle by asking participants to count off by twos. "1"s move with their chair into the center, form an inner circle and face their chairs outward. "2"s form an outer circle and sit facing a partner from the inner circle.
- Partners self-introduce briefly with context-relevant information.
- Facilitator engages partners in a series of questions about their own personal religious or spiritual tradition and experiences. Only one partner may talk at a time, and responses should be framed as "I" statements rather than intended to speak on behalf of a group.
- After each question, participants in the outside circle rotates (by one or two chairs).

Continued on page 30

- Questions should become progressively deeper or more intimate. Questions might include:
 - Do you have a religious/spiritual tradition? If not, what did you learn about religion as a child? If so, what are you most proud of from that heritage?
 - When you hear the phrase “religion and LGBTQ issues,” what is the first thing that comes to your mind?
 - Growing up, what did the adults in your life teach you about how religion understands LGBTQ people?
 - Have you, or someone you know, experienced anti-LGBTQ prejudice in a religious setting? If you feel comfortable, describe.
 - How has religious prejudice/oppression kept you separate from others?
- Consider a full-group debriefing to invite reflection on the exercise.
 - Did you learn anything new?
 - What was the most difficult question?
 - Are there any insights/learning that you would like to share with the group?

Activity IV

Strategic Storytelling with Religion (30 min)

Adapted from an exercise by Jennifer Peace, Andover Newton Theological School

DIRECTIONS

1. Divide the group into pairs.
2. Each pair select an initial storyteller and story receiver.
3. Storytellers are given 2 minutes to share a true story of an encounter in a religious setting around LGBTQ issues - receiver may not interrupt. If you have never had a personal experience in a religious setting, share something you have heard about religion and LGBTQ issues in popular media or culture.
4. Story receivers take 2 minutes to repeat back the story as they heard it without interruption.
5. Story tellers have 2 minutes to respond (to clarify, correct, explain or elaborate).
6. Partners switch roles and repeat steps 1-5.
7. To finish the exercise, debrief in a full group for 10 minutes - discuss the universality of these stories, how it felt to have someone really listen to your story.





INTERSECTIONALITY: UNDERSTANDING MULTIPLE ASPECTS OF IDENTITY

OBJECTIVE

To allow a space for people in the participant group to discuss different aspects of their identities and to understand, on a more interpersonal level, the experiences of others

To demonstrate that even people who identify in the same way can experience different levels of (self) consciousness around a particular identity

Introduction to Intersectionality



DEFINITION

We each have several identities based on our gender, race, sexual orientation, etc.

Intersectionality is the idea that systems of oppression are inherently interlocking--we can't view/describe/understand these oppressions individually, out of the context of the system.

"An Intersectional Analysis allows for the premise that people live multiple, layered identities, and their experiences are derived from social relations, history and the operation of structures of power. People are members of more than one community at the same time, and can simultaneously experience oppression and privilege in any community and as any social identity."

(Intersectionality: A Tool for Gender and Economic Justice. (2004, August 1). Retrieved June 6, 2015, from https://lgbtq.unc.edu/sites/lgbtq.unc.edu/files/documents/intersectionality_en.pdf)

Background information for facilitator

Ignoring the different, intersectional experiences of people who appear to be in an identity category has been a historical source of ongoing oppression.

For example, Black feminism was developed because Black women's experiences were specifically shaped by being Black AND because they were brushed aside by mainstream feminism.

For many people, owning multiple aspects of identity may not mean that they have multiple welcoming communities, but rather that they may have none.

Gloria Anzaldúa writes about the idea of "border dwellers," or people who are not completely welcome or comfortable in either of two realms.

Activity I

Who Am I? (10 min)

WATCH

[Ayden's youtube video clip](#). (3 min.) Note to facilitators: Ayden uses they/them/theirs as personal pronouns. (Link to video: <https://vimeo.com/138352785>)

ASK

- In the clip Ayden describes how they are changing. What aspects of their identity have they been exploring?

Possible answers:

- Racial identity
 - Gender identity
 - Gender expression
 - Sexual orientation
- For you or someone you know, how do certain aspects of your identity impact other aspects of your identity? For instance, how does your racial identity impact your experience with your sexual orientation, or vice versa? How does gender influence what kind of privilege you have access to?

DESCRIBE (3 min)

Imagine (silently to yourself) that you are Ayden's relative (for example, mother, sibling, uncle, grandparent...). After watching Ayden's video, what encouragement/advice can you give to Ayden to help deal with different aspects of identity?

ASK (10 min)

In groups of 3-4, share your advice. Comment on your own multiple aspects of identity and how your own experiences influence the advice you offered.



Activity II

Scene Writing Part I (60 min)

GOALS

- To recognize the commonality of living with multiple aspects of one's identity
- To experience how those aspects can be difficult to resolve

WRITING PROMPT (5 min)

- Write about a time when you felt in the middle of two identities, or two of your identities were in conflict with one another, for example, being the only person of color at a PRIDE march organizing meeting, being the only woman at a union meeting, being the only lesbian at a "Vagina Monologues" rehearsal.
 1. Hand out paper & pens.
 2. Ask everyone to find a comfortable place to write.
 3. Remind the group to be sure to continue writing the entire time.
 4. Use a Beginning, Middle, End. Call on all of your senses in the writing. You can write in any style you like – prose, poetry, song, etc.

SHARE WRITING IN SMALL GROUPS (10 min)

1. Count off in 2s or 4s.
2. Read or recount your stories to your group. Say, "If you are comfortable, recount your stories. If you do not wish to share your stories, recount your emotions. If you are not comfortable with either of these options, say 'pass' and listen attentively to your group members."
3. When you're done sharing, raise your hand for further instructions.

SCENE BUILDING (15 min)

1. Pick one of the stories or a blending of several stories and stage it.
2. Create a 2-minute **scene** (not frozen pictures) to share the story.
3. Everyone **MUST** be in the scene from your group.
4. Remind participants that a strong scene has a beginning, middle, and end to the story.

PRESENTATION (30 min)

1. Each group takes turns presenting scenes.
2. Ask the audience:
 - What did you connect to in the scene?
 - What would have made the scene stronger or clearer?



Activity III

Privilege Stand Up, Sit Down (30 min)

NOTE: This activity can be triggering for some participants. It is essential that work has been done to create a safe space, and optimally, the facilitator will have been trained in these issues and has led this activity previously.

GOALS

- To help recognize the different ways in which we may or may not hold privilege.
- To understand that systems that lead to privilege/marginalization are interlocking and related to one another.
- To recognize that we should not assume an individual's level of privilege without understanding all aspects of their identity.

DIRECTIONS

1. Participants are seated.
2. The facilitator calls out statements related to privilege in various areas. If you can agree with the statement, stand up. Examples:
 - When I have to go to the bathroom, it is easy for me to identify which bathroom I should enter.
 - When I walk down the street at night, I am not concerned about being sexually harassed.
 - When I apply for a job, I am not concerned that the name on my resume could get in the way of getting hired.
 - I have never been the victim of physical violence based on my gender, ethnicity, age, or sexual orientation.
 - There has never been a time in my life when I skipped a meal because there was no food in the house.
 - I have never felt passed over for an employment position based on my gender, ethnicity, age or sexual orientation.
 - I have never been stopped or questioned by the police because they felt I was suspicious.
 - I am always referred to by the pronouns with which I identify.

Debrief/Synthesis

- Start the question/answer session by going around the room, and have each participant share one word that captures how they are feeling right now. If they do not want to share, invite them to say, "pass".
- Would anyone like to share more about their feelings?
- How did it feel to be seated for most of the time?
- How did it feel to stand up frequently?
- Were you surprised by how frequently you stood up or didn't?
- Were you surprised in moments when many people stood up, or when many people remained seated?
- Any conclusions about this activity?



Activity IV

Reacting to Bias and Microaggressions in Film Discussions (20 min)

GOALS

To “unpack” biased statements and microaggressions that come up in discussion of the film, and to better understand where these statements and assumptions come from.

NOTE: It is essential for this exercise that the facilitator not lead participants to a certain answer based on the framing of their questions, or the tone of their voice. This exercise should not shame participants, or make them feel that the way they viewed the film was “wrong.” Rather, the questions included in this activity should prompt participants to unpack and consider the implications and sources of their reactions.

EXPLAIN

Columbia University Professor Derald Wing Sue defines **microaggressions** as “everyday insults, indignities and demeaning messages sent to people of color by well-intentioned white people who are unaware of the hidden messages being sent to them.” Though Sue originally composed this definition with race in mind, we can also apply the concept of **microaggressions** to any marginalized group--based on class, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or ability as well as race.

Here are some examples of viewer comments made after screenings of *The Year We Thought About Love*:

1

“Wow. They are so articulate.”

ASK

- Who are “they,” in the first statement?
- How does race play into this statement? (Next, ask the same of class, age, and LGBTQ identification)
- What connections/disconnections do we see between these identity markers and speaking “articulately?”
- What experiences or examples might have led an audience member to react in this way (for example: personal experience, lack of personal experience, something they’ve seen in the media)?

2

“Since Black churches aren’t welcoming, I know a nice UU church in the suburbs that you should try!”

ASK

- What are the assumptions this person makes about all Black churches?
- What are the sources of information we have about Black churches (for example, the media, personal experience, etc.)
- What do we know about Unitarian Universalist churches? (for example, welcoming and predominantly white)
- What might a Black church provide that a UU church does not provide?
- In what way might this comment come off as a microaggression?

3

“Whoa...Courtney doesn’t look trans!”

ASK

- What might it mean for someone to “look transgender”?
- Where might this person have gathered information about what it means to “look trans?” (for example, personal experience, lack of personal experience, or the media)
- Why might Courtney not fit this individual’s preconceived notion of what “looking trans” means?
- In what way might this comment come off as a microaggression?

SYNTHESIZE

- When we hear comments that contain bias or microaggressions, what are some potential responses? (for example: “Say more,” “Can you give some examples of where you saw that in the film?” “Ouch”)

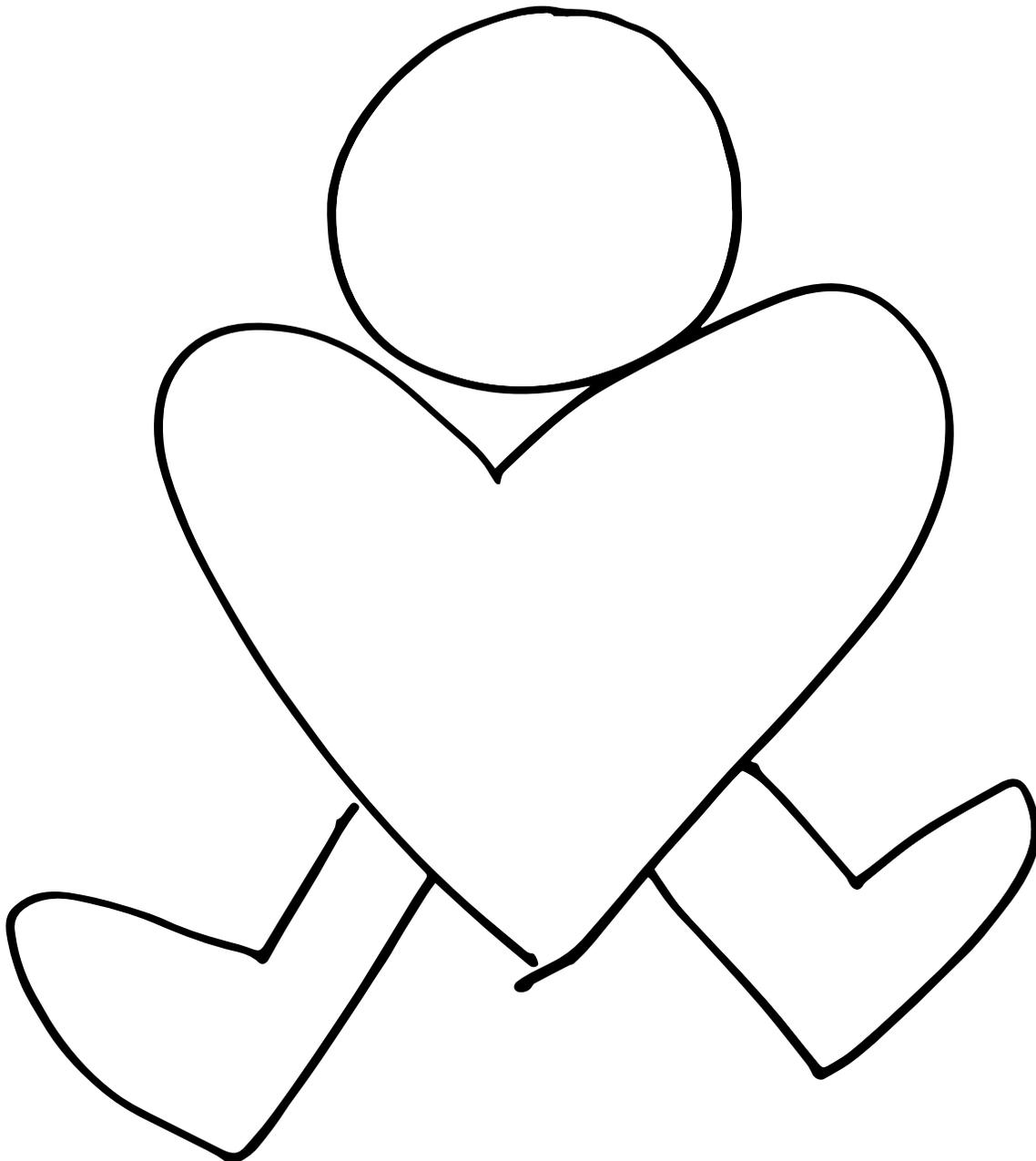


Closing Activity

Head, Heart, Feet
(5 min)

DIRECTIONS

- On the board or on chart paper, draw a very large picture of an outline of a person with a large head, a heart for a torso, and two big legs. It should look something like image below.
- Label accordingly:
 - The **head** represents what participants **learned**.
 - The **heart** represents what participants **felt**.
 - The **feet** represent what participants plan **to do** after being in this workshop.
- Hand each participant three stickies, and invite them to fill one out for each part of the person, based on their own experience. Have them stick them to the picture.
- Read some of these aloud.
- Thank the group, and make an art display with the group's ideas!





HANDOUTS

GLAAD MEDIA REFERENCE GUIDE

TRANSGENDER ISSUES

Sex

The classification of people as male or female. At birth infants are assigned a sex, usually based on the appearance of their external anatomy. (This is what is written on the birth certificate.) However, a person's sex is actually a combination of bodily characteristics including: chromosomes, hormones, internal and external reproductive organs, and secondary sex characteristics.

Gender Identity

One's internal, deeply held sense of one's gender. For transgender people, their own internal gender identity does not match the sex they were assigned at birth. Most people have a gender identity of man or woman (or boy or girl). For some people, their gender identity does not fit neatly into one of those two choices. Unlike gender expression (see below) gender identity is not visible to others.

Gender Expression

External manifestations of gender, expressed through one's name, pronouns, clothing, haircut, behavior, voice, or body characteristics. Society identifies these cues as masculine and feminine, although what is considered masculine and feminine changes over time and varies by culture. Typically, transgender people seek to make their gender expression align with their gender identity, rather than the sex they were assigned at birth.

Sexual Orientation

Describes an individual's enduring physical, romantic and/or emotional attraction to another person. Gender identity and sexual orientation are not the same. Transgender people may be straight, lesbian, gay, or bisexual. For example, a person who transitions from male to female and is attracted solely to men would identify as a straight woman.

TRANSGENDER-SPECIFIC TERMINOLOGY

Transgender (adj.)

An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from what is typically associated with the sex they were assigned at birth.

People under the transgender umbrella may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms - including transgender. Some of those terms are defined below. Use the descriptive term preferred by the individual. Many transgender people are prescribed hormones by their doctors to change their bodies. Some undergo surgery as well. But not all transgender people can or will take those steps, and a transgender identity is not dependent upon medical procedures.

Trans

Used as shorthand to mean transgender or transsexual - or sometimes to be inclusive of a wide variety of identities under the transgender umbrella. Because its meaning is not precise or widely understood, be careful when using it with audiences who may not understand what it means. Avoid unless used in a direct quote or in cases where you can clearly explain the term's meaning in the context of your story.

Transgender man

People who were assigned female at birth but identify and live as a man may use this term to describe themselves. They may shorten it to trans man. (Note: trans man, not “transman.”) Some may also use FTM,

an abbreviation for female-to-male. Some may prefer to simply be called men, without any modifier. It is best to ask which term an individual prefers.

Transgender woman

People who were assigned male at birth but identify and live as a woman may use this term to describe themselves. They may shorten to trans woman. (Note: trans woman, not “transwoman.”) Some may also use MTF, an abbreviation for male-to-female. Some may prefer to simply be called women, without any modifier. It is best to ask which term an individual prefers.

Cross-dresser

While anyone may wear clothes associated with a different sex, the term cross-dresser is typically used to refer to heterosexual men who occasionally wear clothes, makeup, and accessories culturally associated with women. This activity is a form of gender expression, and not done for entertainment purposes. Cross-dressers do not wish to permanently change their sex or live full-time as women. Replaces the term “transvestite.”

PLEASE NOTE: *Transgender women are not cross-dressers or drag queens. Drag queens are men, typically gay men, who dress like women for the purpose of entertainment. Be aware of the differences between transgender women, cross-dressers, and drag queens. Use the term preferred by the individual. Do not use the word “transvestite” at all, unless someone specifically self-identifies that way.*

TRANSGENDER-SPECIFIC TERMINOLOGY

Transition

Altering one's birth sex is not a one-step procedure; it is a complex process that occurs over a long period of time. Transition includes some or all of the following personal, medical, and legal steps: telling one's family, friends, and co-workers; using a different name and new pronouns; dressing differently; changing one's name and/or sex on legal documents; hormone therapy; and possibly (though not always) one or more types of surgery. The exact steps involved in transition vary from person to person. Avoid the phrase "sex change."

Sex Reassignment Surgery

(SRS) **Note from filmmakers: This is also known as Gender Confirmation Surgery.*

Refers to doctor-supervised surgical interventions, and is only one small part of transition (see transition above). Avoid the phrase "sex change operation." Do not refer to someone as being "pre-op" or "post-op." Not all transgender people choose to, or can afford to, undergo medical surgeries. Journalists should avoid overemphasizing the role of surgeries in the transition process.

Gender Identity Disorder

(GID) *outdated, see Gender Dysphoria*

Gender Dysphoria

In 2013, the American Psychiatric Association released the fifth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-V) which replaced the outdated entry "Gender Identity Disorder" with Gender Dysphoria, and changed the criteria for diagnosis. The necessity of a psychiatric diagnosis remains controversial, as both psychiatric and medical authorities recommend individualized medical treatment through hormones and/or surgeries to treat gender dysphoria. Some transgender advocates believe the inclusion of Gender Dysphoria in the DSM is necessary in order to advocate for health insurance that covers the medically necessary treatment recommended for transgender people.

OTHER TERMS YOU MAY HEAR

You may hear the following terms when doing research on transgender issues or speaking to an interview subject. As they are not commonly known outside the LGBT community, they will require context and definition if used in mainstream media. Their inclusion here is for informational purposes.

Cisgender

A term used by some to describe people who are not transgender. “Cis-” is a Latin prefix meaning “on the same side as,” and is therefore an antonym of “trans-.”

A more widely understood way to describe people who are not transgender is simply to say non-transgender people.

Gender Non-Conforming

A term used to describe some people whose gender expression is different from conventional expectations of masculinity and femininity. Please note that not all gender non-conforming people identify as transgender; nor are all transgender people gender non-conforming. Many people have gender expressions that are not entirely conventional -- that fact alone does not make them transgender. Many transgender men and women have gender expressions that are conventionally masculine or feminine. Simply being transgender does not make someone gender non-conforming. The term is not a synonym for transgender or transsexual and should only be used if someone self-identifies as gender non-conforming.

Note from filmmakers: Other terms include “gender expansive,” “gender variant,” or “gender creative.”

Genderqueer

A term used by some people who experience their gender identity and/or gender expression as falling outside the categories of man and woman. They may define their gender as falling somewhere in between man and woman, or they may define it as wholly different from these terms. The term is not a synonym for transgender or transsexual and should only be used if someone self-identifies as genderqueer.

HELLO

my name is

Transgender Names, Pronoun Usage & Descriptions

Always use a transgender person's chosen name.

Many transgender people are able to obtain a legal name change from a court. However, some 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).

Whenever possible, ask transgender people which pronoun they would like you to use. If it is not appropriate in a certain moment to ask which pronouns the person identifies with, use their name.

A person who identifies as a certain gender, whether or not that person has taken hormones or had some form of surgery, should be referred to using the pronouns appropriate for that gender.

It is never appropriate to put quotation marks around either a transgender person's chosen name or the pronoun that reflects that person's gender identity. When describing transgender people, please use the correct term or terms to describe their gender identity.

For example, a person who was assigned male at birth and transitions to living as a woman is a transgender woman, whereas a person who was assigned female at birth and transitions to living as a man is a transgender man. If someone prefers a different term, use it along with an explanation of what that term means to them.

Avoid pronoun confusion when examining the stories and backgrounds of transgender people prior to their transition.

Ideally a story will not use pronouns associated with a person's birth sex when referring to the person's life prior to transition. Try to write transgender people's stories from the present day, instead of narrating them from some point in the past, thus avoiding confusion and potentially disrespectful use of incorrect pronouns.

TERMS TO AVOID

PROBLEMATIC TERMS

PROBLEMATIC: “transgenders,” “a transgender”

PREFERRED: transgender people, a transgender person

Transgender should be used as an adjective, not as a noun. Do not say, “Tony is a transgender,” or “The parade included many transgenders.” Instead say, “Tony is a transgender man,” or “The parade included many transgender people.”

PROBLEMATIC: “transgendered”

PREFERRED: transgender

The adjective *transgender* should never have an extraneous “-ed” tacked onto the end. An “-ed” suffix adds unnecessary length to the word and can cause tense confusion and grammatical errors. It also brings transgender into alignment with lesbian, gay, and bisexual. You would not say that Elton John is “gayed” or Ellen DeGeneres is “lesbianed,” therefore you would not say Chaz Bono is “transgendered.”

PROBLEMATIC: “transgenderism”

PREFERRED: none

This is not a term commonly used by transgender people. This is a term used by anti-transgender activists to dehumanize transgender people and reduce who they are to “a condition.” Refer to being *transgender* instead, or refer to the transgender *community*. You can also refer to the *movement* for transgender equality.

PROBLEMATIC: “sex change,” “pre-operative,” “post-operative”

PREFERRED: transition

Referring to a “sex-change operation,” or using terms such as “pre-operative” or “post-operative,” inaccurately suggests that one must have surgery in order to transition. Avoid overemphasizing surgery when discussing transgender people or the process of transition.

PROBLEMATIC: “biologically male,” “biologically female,” “genetically male,” “genetically female,” “born a man,” “born a woman”

PREFERRED: assigned male at birth, assigned female at birth or designated male at birth, designated female at birth

Problematic phrases like those above are reductive and overly-simplify a very complex subject. As mentioned above, a person’s sex is determined by a number of factors - not simply genetics - and one’s biology does not “trump” one’s gender identity. Finally, people are born babies - they are not “born a man” or “born a woman.”

DEFAMATORY: “deceptive,” “fooling,” “pretending,” “posing,” “trap,” or “masquerading”

Gender identity is an integral part of a person’s identity. Do not characterize transgender people as “deceptive,” as “fooling” or “trapping” others, or as “pretending” to be, “posing” or “masquerading” as a man or a woman. Such descriptions are defamatory and insulting.

DEFAMATORY: “tranny,” “she-male,” “he/she,” “it,” “shim”

These words dehumanize transgender people and should not be used in mainstream media. (*Note from filmmakers: We don’t think these terms should be used at all!*) The criteria for using these derogatory terms should be the same as those applied to vulgar epithets used to target other groups: they should not be used except in a direct quote that reveals the bias of the person quoted. So that such words are not given credibility in the media, it is preferred that reporters say, “The person used a derogatory word for a transgender person.” Please note that while some transgender people may use “tranny” to describe themselves, others find it profoundly offensive.

DEFAMATORY: “bathroom bill”

A term created and used by far-right extremists to oppose non-discrimination laws that protect transgender people. The term is geared to incite fear and panic at the thought of encountering transgender people in public restrooms. Simply refer to the *non-discrimination law/ordinance* instead.

TRANSGENDER RESOURCES (BY GLAAD)

RESOURCES FOR TRANSGENDER PEOPLE IN CRISIS

Transgender people in crisis should contact the following resources

The Trevor Project's 24/7 Lifeline at 866-4-U-TREVOR (866-488-7386)

thetrevorproject.org

Trevor Chat, the Trevor Project's online messaging service

thetrevorproject.org/chat

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-TALK (8255)

suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Trans Lifeline at 877-565-8860

translifeline.org

Transgender Organizations

National Center for Transgender Equality (NCTE) (*advocacy*)

transequality.org

Transgender Law Center (TLC) (*legal services and advocacy*)

transgenderlawcenter.org

Gender Proud (*advocacy*)

genderproud.com

Sylvia Rivera Law Project (SRLP) (*legal services*)

srlp.org

Transgender Legal Defense and Education Fund (TLDEF) (*legal services*)

transgenderlegal.org

Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition (MTPC) (*advocacy*)

masstpc.org

Trans People of Color Coalition (TPOCC) (*advocacy*)

transpoc.org

Trans Women of Color Collective (TWOCC) (*advocacy*)

twocc.us

Black Trans Advocacy (*advocacy*)

blacktrans.org

Trans Latina Coalition (*advocacy*)

translatinacoalition.org

Trans Youth Family Allies (TYFA) (*support services for families and trans youth*)

imatyfa.org

Gender Spectrum (*support services for families and trans youth*)

genderspectrum.org

TransTech Social Enterprises (*economic empowerment*)

transtechsocial.org

SPART*A (*advocacy for trans military service members*)

spartapride.org

Transgender American Veterans Association (*advocacy for trans veterans*)

tavausa.org

TransLife Center at Chicago House (*support services*)

http://www.chicagohouse.org/?post_causes=translife-center

Transgender Programs at LGBT Organizations

GLAAD's Transgender Media Program (*media advocacy*)

glaad.org/transgender

Transgender Support Network at PFLAG (*support services*)

community.pflag.org/staff/transgender

PFLAG's Transgender Ally campaign (*advocacy*)

straightforequality.org/trans

COLAGE Kids of Trans Community (*support for kids of trans parents*)

colage.org/resources/kids-of-trans-resource-guide

The Task Force's Transgender Civil Rights Project (*advocacy*)

thetaskforce.org/tcrp

TRANSGENDER RESOURCES (BY GLAAD)

RESOURCES FOR TRANSGENDER PEOPLE IN CRISIS

HRC's transgender resources (*advocacy*)

hrc.org/issues/transgender

Gender Identity Project at the NYC LGBT Center (*support services*)

gaycenter.org/gip

Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders (GLAD)

Transgender Rights Project (*legal services*)

glad.org/work/initiatives/c/transgender-rights-project/

National Center for Lesbian Rights - Transgender Law (*legal services*)

nclrights.org/explore-the-issues/transgender-law/

L.A. LGBT Center's Transgender Economic Empowerment Project (*economic empowerment*)

lalgbtcenter.org/teep

SF Transgender Economic Empowerment Initiative (*economic empowerment*)

teeisf.org

TransJustice at the Audre Lorde Project (*advocacy*)

alp.org/TransJustice

General Information and Resources

The full "Injustice at Every Turn" report, with breakdowns by race and ethnicity. "Injustice at Every Turn" is a survey of over 6,400 transgender people detailing the discrimination faced by this community.

thetaskforce.org/reports_and_research/ntds

Transgender Lives: Your Stories is an interactive campaign created by The New York Times to allow transgender people to tell their own stories in their own words.

nytimes.com/interactive/projects/storywall/transgender-today

[I AM: Trans People Speak](http://iamtranspeoplespeak.org) is a campaign

created by the [Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition \(MTPC\)](http://massachusetts.transpeoplespeak.org) and sponsored by [GLAAD](http://glaad.org) to raise awareness about the diversity of transgender communities. It lifts the voices of transgender individuals, as well as their families, friends, and allies.

community.transpeoplespeak.org

We Happy Trans is a website devoted to sharing positive stories from trans people everywhere.

wehappytrans.com

TSER, Trans Student Equality Resources, provides trans*-related information on school issues and supports efforts for creating policy change in school districts.

transstudent.org

Transgender Information

Best suited for young audiences: "Top 10 Things You Need to Know About Transgender People" by Jazz Jennings, Cosmopolitan
youtube.com/watch?v=qr8qsUvOxig

"10 Things You Don't Know About Transgender People" by The Good Men Project
goodmenproject.com/featured-content/10-things-didnt-know-trans-jvinc/

"Learn and Love: 10 Things to Know About Transgender People" by BET
bet.com/celebrities/photos/2015/06/learn-and-love-ten-things-to-know-about-transgender-people.html - !060315-Celebs-Learn-And-Love-Laverne-Cox-Katie-Couric

Transgender Etiquette

Behaviors to avoid:

- 💡 Assumptions. You should try not to assume *anything* about a person who may be trans, for example
 - identity
 - pronoun preference
 - transition status/plans/direction
 - age
 - sexual orientation
- Also, don't assume
 - that all LGB people "get" trans stuff
 - that all trans people "get" each other
- 💡 Interrogating. Not every trans person is an expert on gender or on trans issues. Even if they are, they might not want to be explaining trans stuff 24/7.
- 💡 Coming to a trans person to work out your discomfort around trans issues.
- 💡 Commenting on a trans person's "passing," or not passing, as their gender. For one thing, not all trans people want to pass. For another, commenting on someone's passing can reinforce gender stereotypes, and perpetuate hierarchies that reward trans folks for blending in with the dominant gender culture.

Behaviors that are helpful:

- 💡 Respect. For example you should respect a person's ...
 - pronoun choice. (We all mess up on pronouns. It's okay. Apologize and move on.)
 - self identity. If someone tells you they identify as a woman, they are a woman, whether or not they look/seem like a woman to you.
 - privacy. Don't ask inappropriately personal questions of a trans person you've just met, like, "What do your genitals look like?" or "How do you have sex?"
 - names. Use a person's chosen name, always. That is their "real" name, and the only one you need to worry about.
- 💡 Be honest about your level of understanding, and your preparedness (or not) to be an ally.
- 💡 Educate yourself and others.
- 💡 Interrupt bad gender situations. (When you're ready!) This takes a lot of confidence and discernment. It's great for example, if you know when to pipe up and say "Actually, my friend is a guy, not a lady," or "I'm sure we all know which bathroom we're in, thanks."

And speaking of pronouns . . .

Pronouns are possibly one of the most stressful things for people who are learning to be trans allies. But don't feel bad, they're much more stressful for trans people.

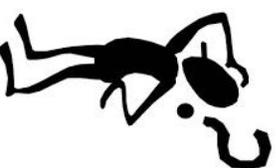
It is almost always okay to ask what pronoun someone prefers. Ask in private, not in front of a large group. Ask respectfully.

For example, "Hi, so-and-so. I'm so happy to be working with you. I want to check in with you because I want to be respectful of your identity, and I wondered what pronouns you prefer to use for yourself."

It is also sometimes okay to ask a mutual acquaintance who would know.

It's a judgment call . . .

- ? Asking questions. Some trans folks are okay with answering all your questions. But it does get tiring, and we are busy people just like everyone else. So it's good to give people an out rather than just swamping them, e.g. "I have some questions about trans stuff, and I was wondering if you'd be willing to talk with me about it some time?"
- ? Outing. Sometimes it is great to have a friend/ally "out" us as trans, so we don't have to do it. Sometimes it's disastrous. It's a good idea to check in with your trans friends so that you know what they'd prefer in various situations. Some things to take into account: Safety - will this put my friend at risk? Motive - why am I outing this person? For their comfort? For my own comfort? For someone else's comfort?



LGBT-INCLUSIVE SCHOOL CHECKLIST

(from GLSEN's [Safe Space Kit](#), p. 30)

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

- Fairly enforced non-discrimination and anti-bullying/harassment policies that explicitly protect LGBT students
- School forms and applications that are inclusive of all identities and family structures
- A gender-neutral dress code, including for yearbook photos
- Gender-neutral and/or private bathrooms and changing areas

SCHOOL EVENTS & CELEBRATIONS

- School dances and proms that are safe for and inclusive of LGBT students
- Proms, homecoming, and athletic events that allow for gender-neutral alternatives to “King” and “Queen”
- Valentine’s Day celebrations inclusive of LGBT and non-coupled students
- Observations of Mother’s Day and Father’s Day that affirm all family structures

COURSE CONTENT

- Health and sexuality education that is inclusive of all sexual orientations and gender identities
- Curriculum that regularly includes information about LGBT people, history and events
- Library resources and displays that are inclusive of LGBT people, history and issues

CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

- Athletic teams and events that are safe for and inclusive of LGBT students
 - GSAs and other student clubs that combat name-calling, bullying and harassment
 - School publications that cover LGBT people and issues
- Once you have assessed your school’s policies and practices, you should decide which areas of your school need the most work. Collaborate with other educators and administrators to implement realistic changes within the school.

Massachusetts High School Students and Sexual Orientation Results of the 2013 Youth Risk Behavior Survey

The Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey (MYRBS) is conducted every two years by the Massachusetts Department of Education with funding from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The survey monitors behaviors of high school students that are related to leading causes of morbidity and mortality among youth and adults in the United States.

The 2013 MYRBS was conducted in 57 randomly selected public high schools. In total, 2718 students in grades 9 - 12 participated in this voluntary and anonymous survey. Because of the high student and school response rates, the results of this survey can be generalized to apply to public high school students across Massachusetts.

Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Students

The MYRBS found that:

- 5.0 percent of students surveyed described themselves as gay, lesbian, or bisexual.
- 7.7 percent of all students described themselves as gay, lesbian, or bisexual *and/or* reported same-sex sexual contact.

Students at Risk

Students who described themselves as gay, lesbian, or bisexual were significantly more likely than their heterosexual peers to report attacks, suicide attempts, and drug and alcohol use. When compared to peers, this group was:

- **over five times more likely to have skipped school in the past month because of feeling unsafe**
- **over eight times more likely to have required medical attention as a result of a suicide attempt**
- **over nine times more likely to have used heroin one or more times during their life**

Reported Behaviors	GLB Students*	Heterosexual Students
Attempted suicide in the past year	24.4%	4.2%
Required medical attention as a result of a suicide attempt	11.2%	1.3%
Skipped school in the past month because of feeling unsafe on route to or at school	15.3%	2.9%
Used heroin one or more times during their life	7.9%	0.8%
Was in a gang in past year	13.6%	6.3%
Was bullied at school in the past year	37.7%	15.5%
Was currently homeless	10.4%	3.0%
Has ever been pregnant or gotten someone pregnant	8.3%	2.3%

* All differences between GLB Students and Heterosexual Students are statistically significant, $p < .05$.

TENT TOP WAYS TO ADVOCATE FOR SAFE SCHOOLS

(from PFLAG National's "[Cultivating Respect and Safe Schools for All](#)")

Here are the top ten ways you can find support, get education, and become an advocate for safe schools:

1

Learn the Facts

Students who are, or are perceived to be, lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender—LGBT—are at a higher risk for depression, self-harm, and dropping out of school.

2

Understand the Language

Using respectful and appropriate language is an important benchmark to set a tone of respect and understanding.

3

Stop Bad Behavior

Don't ignore or excuse discriminatory behaviors or harassment, and don't be immobilized by fear: Not taking action can endanger students and make the classroom unsafe.

4

Set the Policy

A strong and inclusive anti-harassment policy not only protects students; it also protects the school.

5

Plan School-Wide Activities

Showing films, reading books, and planning school wide activities offers opportunities for everyone to learn and participate. These programs help build community, empathy and understanding.

6

Be Public

Adults should go public with their support for diversity, and oppose bullying and harassment. Signs, stickers and other public displays tell youth that their diversity is welcomed, supported, and protected.

7

Address Cyber Bullying

Take cyber-bullying seriously. Add cyber bullying to existing anti-harassment or bullying policies, and help provide training and education for students, teachers and parents.

8

Train and Educate Everyone

It is imperative that every adult—parents, teachers, administrators—is trained to respond to bullying in ways that support every student.

9

Work for Comprehensive Health Education

Youth must have a clear understanding of their bodies, and health, in order to respect themselves and their classmates.

10

Provide Resources

Learn more about our partners and resources.

See more at:

<http://community.pflag.org/safeschools>

LGBTQ YOUTH SUPPORT ACTIVITIES IMPROVE SCHOOL CLIMATE

Jeff Perrotti and Kim Westheimer, When the Drama Club is not Enough: Lessons from the Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Students p. 30

Perrotti and Westheimer describe an [evaluation study](#) about school climate

- The best school climates in Massachusetts schools were reported in schools that had a GSA and had conducted faculty workshops concerning sexual orientation.
 - In schools with GSAs, 35 percent of the students reported that gay, lesbian, and bisexual students could safely choose to be open about their sexual orientation at school, in contrast to only 12 percent in schools without GSAs.
 - In schools that had had faculty training regarding gay, lesbian, and bisexual issues, 54 percent of the students reported that gay and lesbian students felt supported by teachers or counselors, in contrast to only 26% in schools where training had not occurred.
 - In schools that had faculty training regarding gay, lesbian, and bisexual issues, 58 percent of the students who responded reported hearing other students use gay or lesbian terms in slurs, in contrast to 70 percent of the students in schools where training had not occurred.

Q&A TRANSGENDER 101

PAGE 1

Source: <http://www.masstpc.org/media-center/transgender-101/>

Is transgender the same as gay/lesbian?

- No. Transgender is about gender identity and gender expression whereas gay, lesbian, bisexual, and heterosexual/straight is about sexual orientation, which is emotional and physical attraction to others. While transgender people are sometimes assumed to be gay or lesbian based on stereotypes about gay men and lesbians, the terms are not interchangeable. Transgender people also have a sexual orientation, just as everyone else in society, which can be heterosexual (straight), bisexual, or gay or lesbian.

Can I tell if someone is transgender?

- Not always. Many transgender people are seen and accepted as the gender they identify with and live as. There are many transgender people whom no one would know they are transgender or were assigned a different sex at birth, and who choose to keep their personal and medical histories confidential. For some transgender people, they may be visibly different from what society views as traditional stereotypes for men and/or women and may be easily recognizable as being transgender. There are a number of factors of why a transgender person may be visibly different, such as access to transgender specific medical treatment. Sometimes transgender people are discriminated against or harassed because others suspect them to be transgender or gender non-conforming from their assigned sex at birth. In other situations, transgender people are discriminated against or harassed because someone shares a transgender person's history inappropriately with others, turning private medical information into gossip. Often, a transgender person's former gender or name can be made known through their identity documents, work references, credit reports, CORI checks or other background checks as the gender marker or name may not match with their name now or the gender they identify with, live, and present as.

Lastly, a transgender person does not have to disclose that they are transgender, just as others have the right to privacy about their identity, their medical status, or other information that is not pertinent in a given situation.

What is gender transition?

- Gender transition is a personal process in which a transgender/transsexual person goes through when they begin to live and identify as the gender they see themselves as. This process includes a social transition, which can include a person changing their gender expression, such as clothes and hairstyle; pronoun; and possibly their first name, to be reflective of the gender they are transitioning to. This process may also include support from a therapist and a medical transition, which can be hormone replacement therapy and/or sex reassignment/gender confirmation surgery.

For some transgender people, they may not access medical transition due to the prohibitive cost, access to providers, physical health issues, lack of health insurance coverage, and/or personal choice. The reality is that many transgender people live, present, and are accepted as their gender

Q&A TRANSGENDER 101

PAGE 2

without medical transition, hormones, and/or sex re-assignment surgery.

Why do transgender people need legal protections?

- Transgender people around the world face high levels of discrimination and violence because of widespread prejudice and the assumption that transgender people are “outside” of the law’s protections.

The 2009 National Transgender Discrimination Survey found that:

- Double the rate of unemployment: Survey respondents experienced unemployment at twice the rate of the general population at the time of the survey, with rates for people of color up to four times the national unemployment rate.
- Widespread mistreatment at work: Ninety percent (90%) of those surveyed reported experiencing harassment, mistreatment or discrimination on the job or took actions like hiding who they are to avoid it.
- Forty-seven percent (47%) said they had experienced an adverse job outcome, such as being fired, not hired or denied a promotion because of being transgender or gender non-conforming.
- Over one-quarter (26%) reported that they had lost a job due to being transgender or gender non-conforming and 50% were harassed.
- Respondents reported various forms of direct housing discrimination — 19% reported having been refused a home or apartment and 11% reported being evicted because of their gender identity/expression.
- One-fifth (19%) reported experiencing homelessness at some point in their lives because they were transgender or gender nonconforming; the majority of those trying to access a homeless shelter were harassed by shelter staff or residents (55%), 29% were turned away altogether, and 22% were sexually assaulted by residents or staff.
- Fifty-three percent (53%) of respondents reported being verbally harassed or disrespected in a place of public accommodation, including hotels, restaurants, buses, airports and government agencies.
- Refusal of care: 19% of our sample reported being refused medical care due to their transgender or gender non-conforming status, with even higher numbers among people of color in the survey.

The baseline rates of discrimination against transgender people have been consistently high. A review of six studies conducted between 1996 and 2006, in cities and regions on both coasts and the Midwest, showed the following ranges for experiences of discrimination based on gender identity:

- 13%-56% of transgender people had been fired
- 13%-47% had been denied employment
- 22%-31% had been harassed, either verbally or physically, in the workplace

KATE BORNSTEIN'S GENDER SAVVY QUIZ

Transgender activist Kate Bornstein is the author of *My Gender Workbook: How to Become a Real Man, a Real Woman, the Real You, or Something Else Entirely* (Routledge, 1998).

1. Why are you taking this quiz?

- a) I'm not taking this quiz. I'm just looking through the questions.
- b) This kind of thought-provoking discussion is interesting, even though it doesn't apply to me.
- c) I like to question things I've taken for granted. It changes how I think.
- d) This gender question seems like a real Pandora's Box to me. Let's throw open the cover and see what flies out!

2. How many genders do you really think there are?

- a) Two. What a pointless question!
- b) I'm going to guess that there are several genders and two sexes.
- c) Three? Four? Wait . . . five! No . . . six. Ummm . . . 12? I don't know!
- d) An infinite number. What a pointless question!

3. What exactly do you feel the basis of gender to be?

- a) Genitalia, hormones, chromosomes, and brain structure. I mean, duh!
- b) Gender may be a social construct, but it's based on, or influenced by, biology.
- c) Gender is how we act, not what we are: We're all human, after all.
- d) It's a lot of heretofore unnamed social, biological, and psychological factors masquerading as a bipolar system. I mean, duh!

4. Which of the following most nearly expresses your ideas about gender and sexual preference?

- a) Birds do it, bees do it. Face it: Heterosexuality is natural.
- b) I'm straight, but sometimes I lust in my heart for . . . umm . . . other things.
- c) Well, in theory, I imagine I could be attracted to anyone, no matter what gender.
- d) Oh, come on! As long as no one's getting hurt, any pleasurable activity between any two (or more) consenting adults is just dandy.

5. How have you lived your gendered life so far?

- a) I have been living my biological destiny.
- b) I may have been living a biologically destined gender, but I don't want to anymore.
- c) I've been experimenting: using bits of some genders here and bits of other genders there.
- d) Let's just say that in the battle of the sexes, I'm a conscientious objector.

6. Has anything you've read about gender recently made you want to stretch your own gender?

- a) No. I'm happy the way I am. Always have been, always will be.
- b) Not really, but I might be more lenient when it comes to other people.
- c) Yes, I might consider that . . . but it's a little intimidating.
- d) Yup. Now I'm more determined than ever.

7. When you see someone on the street whose gender is unclear, how do you react?

- a) Honestly? With some combination of revulsion, pity, and bewilderment.
- b) I try to figure out if it's a man or a woman.
- c) I mentally do a makeover so the person can pass better as one or the other.
- d) I probably notice the person is staring at me, trying to figure out what I am!

KATE BORNSTEIN'S GENDER SAVVY QUIZ

8. Which of the following most nearly matches your definition of the word transgender?

- a) It's a disorder that results in men cutting off their penises.
- b) Being born in the wrong body, or having the wrong sex for your gender.
- c) Changing from one gender to another, or just looking like you've done that.
- d) Transgressing gender, breaking any rule of gender in any way at all.

9. Who gets to say exactly what gender you are?

- a) It's not up to anyone to say. Gender is a biological fact: man or woman.
- b) Gender may be a biological fact, but biologists are constantly refining their definitions . . . and that makes me nervous.
- c) We're force-fed gender by a conspiracy of science, law, and the media. Oliver Stone should make a movie about this.
- d) I do.

10. OK, what's your gender?

- a) Oh, please. I'm a real man/real woman.
- b) Well, I'm a biological man/woman.
- c) I was afraid I'd be asked this question. I'm just not sure anymore.
- d) Fiddle-de-dee . . . tomorrow is another gender.

There. That wasn't so difficult, was it? Now, let's see how you score. Yes, it's a fairly accurate quiz, but please remember: It's only aptitude we're measuring here, and, like any aptitude, it can be changed with a little work. Give yourself 5 points for every (a) answer, 3 for each (b), 1 for every (c), and 0 for (d). Add it up and check the scale below to find your Instant Gender Aptitude.

Your Instant Gender Aptitude

0-15 Gender Freak

This was child's play for you, wasn't it? But aren't you delighted to see all this stuff appearing in mainstream culture? Maybe it's time for you to break into a mainstream world, as freaky as you are.

16-25 Gender Outlaw

Honey, you're too far gone to make the climb back up to "real" man or "real" woman. Your next step would be to let yourself explore some of the places that really thrill you, no matter the social taboos. Just be kind and compassionate when you're doing it, OK?

26-35 Gender Novice

You're not always taken for "normal," are you? And this gender stuff is probably kinda new to you . . . a little scary and a little thrilling, right? Maybe it's time to explore exactly what scares you. Go on . . . you know how to be gentle with yourself.

36-45 Well-Gendered

Look, I know this gender-as-construct-or-performance stuff might sound weird, but the world is changing. Maybe someone in your own family or circle of friends or co-workers is exploring gender. It would probably pay off to study more of this stuff, if only to help you get along with them, and to keep up with people who are going to be living more and more outside gendered "norms."

46-50 You're Captain James T. Kirk!

Omigod . . . I've always wanted to meet you! Look, when you boldly go where no man has gone before, it's us freaks you're going to meet up with. Honey, we are what makes life worth exploring.

MY GENDER JOURNEY

Gender Spectrum, <https://www.genderspectrum.org/>

As professionals working with families and their children, there is a unique and influential role to be played in helping create the conditions where children can be safe in authentically expressing and identifying their gender. By embracing the richness of the gender spectrum, teachers, counselors, therapists and other adults working with kids can help to broaden their own as well as children's understandings of gender, and in so doing, help every child feel seen and recognized. An important part of that work is to consider one's own experiences, messages, and beliefs about gender, both growing up as well as in your professional role.

Spend a few minutes looking over and answering the following questions. Write your answers down, and hang on to them. You may find it interesting to revisit your reflections at some point in the future, after you have had a chance to learn more about gender through training and your own efforts. Know that there are no "right" answers; each of us comes by our own understandings of gender in a context. Messages and traditions associated with gender are complex reflections of society, family, culture, community and other socializing forces. Use this opportunity to pause, and examine your own gender history.

The exercise is divided into two parts: the first asks you to think about your own personal experiences with gender, while the second looks at your professional experiences.

MY PERSONAL GENDER JOURNEY

1. Growing up, did you think of yourself as a boy, a girl, both, neither or in some other way? How did you come to that recognition? When?
2. What messages did you receive from those around you about gender? Did those messages make sense to you?
3. What's your first memory of gender defining or impacting your life?
4. How were students who did not fit into expectations about gender treated in school by other students? By the adults around them? By you?
5. Have you ever been confused by someone's gender? How did that feel for you? Why do you think you felt the way you did?
6. Has anyone ever been confused by your gender, possibly referring to you in a manner not consistent with your own sense of gender? How did that feel for you? Why do you think you felt the way you did?
7. Is there anyone in your immediate circle (family, close friends, colleagues) who is transgender or otherwise gender diverse? How would you characterize your comfort level about their gender?
8. If you were to describe your gender without talking about how you look or what you do, what would you share?

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