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Queer-Inclusive Programming

An Ally's Guide to Prevention



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New England (HHS Region 1)

PTTC

Prevention Technology Transfer Center Network
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

SAMHSA
Substance Abuse and Mental Health
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The use of affirming language inspires hope.

LANGUAGE MATTERS.

Words have power.

PEOPLE FIRST.

The PTTC Network uses affirming language to promote the application of evidence-based and culturally informed practices.

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Table of Contents

- 1 | Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice**
- 2 | Social Determinants of Health**
- 3 | Sexual Orientations & Gender Identities**
- 4 | Gender and Sexuality Spectrums**
- 5 | Strategic Prevention Framework Overview**
- 7 | Evidence-based Survey Questions**
- 9 | New England State-Specific Infographics**
- 10 | Resources**
- 11 | References**



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Diversity, Inclusion, Equity, Justice

Moving from Acknowledgement to Action

We all hear and use these terms throughout our daily life but do we understand what they mean in the context of our work? Diversity, inclusion, equity, and justice are all interconnected and essential to conducting culturally relevant prevention programming. As you begin to work with and for any marginalized group of people you cannot let diversity be our end-all goal because diversity without inclusion, equity, and justice is harmful to these communities. Below you will find simple statements that explain what diversity, inclusion, equity, and justice look like within prevention work.

Diversity

“There are many different people, identities, experiences, perspectives, approaches in my community”

Inclusion

“I invite non-dominant people, identities, experiences, perspectives, approaches to my coalition”

Equity

“I address biases that leads to dominance or invisible differences between people, identities, experiences, perspectives, approaches in our coalition”

Justice

“I challenge policies that reinforce the dominance or invisibility of different people, identities, experiences, perspectives, approaches in our community”

Social Determinants of Health

Impacts on Health

Social determinants of health (SDOH) are the conditions in the environments where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks.



Social Conditions

Social inequities occur when a person or group is treated unfairly because of race, gender, class, sexual orientation, or immigration status



Economic Conditions

Institutions such as governments, churches, corporations, or schools use their authority to create unequal opportunities among groups of people



Environmental Conditions

Where you live affects your health. Lower-income neighborhoods tend to be in poor social-economic and physical conditions



Health Behaviors

Smoking, poor nutrition, and lack of exercise are all behaviors that may lead to poor health. Health knowledge also influences health behaviors



Disease or Injury

Chronic disease or injury can result from inequities and health behaviors. Genetics also influences health differences.



Morbidity or Mortality

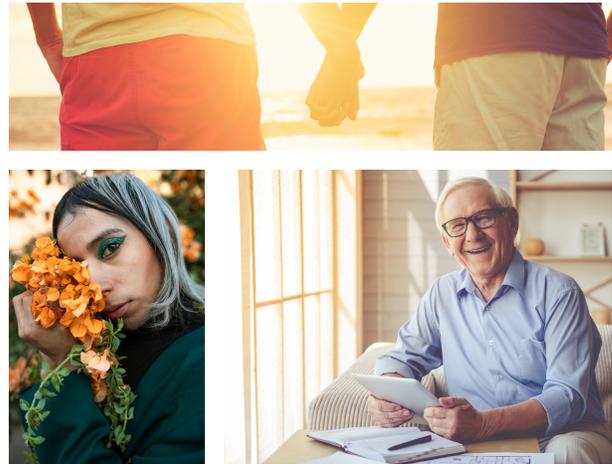
Your social status, education, the zip code you live in, and health behaviors all affect life expectancy

Sexual Orientations & Gender Identities

Why are there so many acronyms?

LGBTQ+ is an umbrella term that represents a range of sexual orientations and gender identities. One of the first questions people usually have when beginning to learn more about the LGBTQ+ community is “why are there always so many acronyms and identities” The quick answer is, **the language used to talk about LGBTQ+ people is constantly evolving.** New terms appear. Terms that were forgotten or unused, even terms that at some point were deemed derogatory, have been reclaimed and have entered into common vocabulary today.

When we say LGBTQ+, **the plus sign is to indicate the infinite number of identities.** To better understand why there are an infinite number of identities, see The Spectrum tool on the next page.



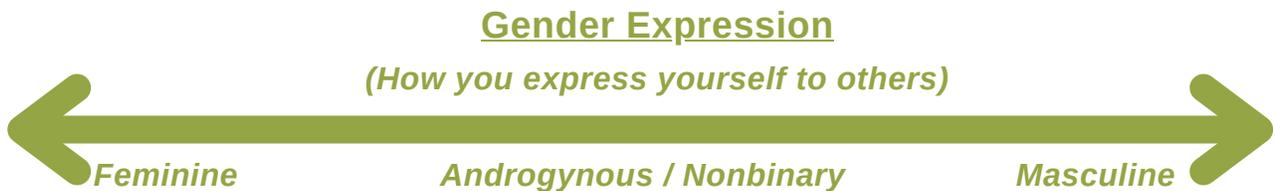
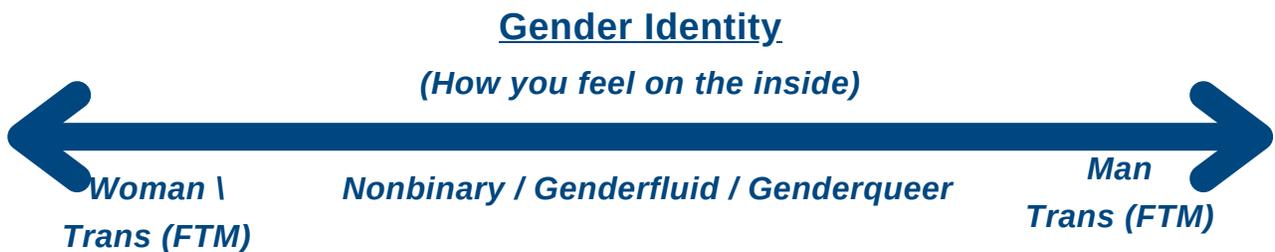
Queer is often used as an umbrella term referring to anyone who is not straight and not cisgender. **Cisgender** people are people whose gender identity and expression match the sex they were assigned at birth. Historically the term queer was used as a slur against LGBTQ+ people, but in recent years it has been reclaimed by the community.

Rather than trying to memorize every term, first, start by learning to understand that each aspect of our gender and sexuality lives on a spectrum. This will help you understand why there is an infinite number of identities within the LGBTQ+ community. Note - Whether you identify as a part of the LGBTQ+ community or if you identify as cisgender and straight - we all fall somewhere on each of the following spectrums.



The Spectrums

Adapted from The Trevor Project



Strategic Prevention Framework

A Quick Recap



The five steps and two guiding principles of the Strategic Prevention Framework were created by SAMHSA to offer prevention planners a comprehensive approach to understanding and addressing the substance misuse and related behavioral health problems facing their states and communities. Let this framework guide your journey to collect queer-inclusive data, train your community, and conduct programming with and for the LGBTQ+ community.



5 Steps

Assess

- Identify local prevention needs based on data

Capacity

- Build local resources and readiness to address prevention needs

Planning

- Find out what works to address prevention needs and how to do it well.

Implementation

- Deliver evidence-based programs and practices as intended

Evaluation

- Examine the process and outcomes of programs and practices

Cultural Competence

The ability of an individual or organization to understand and interact effectively with people who have different values, lifestyles, and traditions based on their distinctive heritage and social relationships.

SAMHSA has identified the following cultural competence principles for prevention planners:

- Include the target population in all aspects of prevention planning
- Use a population-based definition of community (i.e., let the community define itself)
- Stress the importance of relevant, culturally appropriate prevention approaches
- Employ culturally competent evaluators
- Promote cultural competence among program staff, reflecting the communities they serve



Ensure Sustainability

In prevention, sustainability is the capacity of a community to produce and maintain positive prevention outcomes over time. To maintain positive outcomes, communities will want to sustain an effective strategic planning process as well as those programs and practices that produced positive prevention results. Accomplishing these dual tasks requires the participation, resolve, and dedication of diverse community members and a lot of careful planning. There are a number of reasons why it is important to sustain an effective strategic planning process. These are some things to keep in mind:

- Prevention takes time
- Substance misuse problems and priorities change
- Successful implementation of the Strategic Prevention Framework depends on collaboration

Queer-Inclusive Data Collection

Evidence-Informed Survey Questions



Model Questions

What sex were you assigned at birth?

- Female
- Male
- Intersex
- No answer

What is your current gender?

- Woman
- Man
- Transgender
- Nonbinary
- A gender not listed here
- No answer

How would you describe your sexual orientation?

- Asexual
- Bisexual
- Gay
- Lesbian
- Pansexual
- Queer
- Questioning or unsure
- Straight (heterosexual)
- Prefer not to disclose
- Additional category/identity not listed (please specify below)

Model questions based on Center for Disease Control and Prevention's evidence-based survey questions.

Multi-Step SOGI Questions

Intentional Inclusion

According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, many federally funded surveys have only recently started to ask about sexual orientation and gender identification in their data collections.

The 2020 United States Census was the first census to ask questions regarding living situations that included an option to list same-sex spouses. The Census still does not ask meaningful demographic questions related to sexual orientation and gender identity resulting in major data gaps for the LGBTQ+ population.

Many data collection tools force individuals to check a box that may not adequately describe their sexual orientation or allow for important differentiation of sex assigned as birth versus gender identity. Without this information, LGBTQ+ individuals and their specific needs cannot be identified, the health disparities they experience cannot be addressed, and important health care services may not be delivered.

It is important that when asking demographic questions, only ask questions that capture data that will actually be used. When deciding what questions to use, consider asking yourself the following questions:

- What are you trying to ask?
- Why are you trying to ask it?
- How are you going to use the data?
- Is it clear what aspect of their identity is being queried?



State Infographics

CONNECTICUT
SUBSTANCE USE WITHIN THE
LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY

LGBTQ+ Health
In order to effectively address LGBTQ+ health issues, we need to securely and consistently collect sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) information in national surveys and health records.

133,000
People in Connecticut IDENTIFY AS LGBTQ+

Estimated by the Movement Advancement Project - 2020

Potential Discrimination in Treatment
LGBTQ+ individuals may be reluctant to seek treatment or disclose their gender identity or sexual orientation during treatment out of concern of discrimination.

Lack of Culturally Relevant Education
Far too many LGBTQ+ youth are sitting in classrooms where their teachers and textbooks fail to appropriately address their identities, behaviors, and experiences. Representation matters in our education and prevention messaging.

High Levels of Stress
Members of the LGBTQ+ community face chronically high levels of stress. This type of stress can lead to higher levels of anxiety, fear, isolation, depression, anger, and mistrust, which can increase the risk of self-medicating with tobacco, alcohol and other drugs.

Connecticut

[Click Here to Download](#)

MAINE
SUBSTANCE USE WITHIN THE
LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY

LGBTQ+ Health
In order to effectively address LGBTQ+ health issues, we need to securely and consistently collect sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) information in national surveys and health records.

60,000
People in Maine IDENTIFY AS LGBTQ+

Estimated by the Movement Advancement Project - 2020

Potential Discrimination in Treatment
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Lack of Culturally Relevant Education
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Maine

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MASSACHUSETTS
SUBSTANCE USE WITHIN THE
LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY

LGBTQ+ Health
In order to effectively address LGBTQ+ health issues, we need to securely and consistently collect sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) information in national surveys and health records.

335,000
People in Massachusetts IDENTIFY AS LGBTQ+

Estimated by the Movement Advancement Project - 2020

Potential Discrimination in Treatment
LGBTQ+ individuals may be reluctant to seek treatment or disclose their gender identity or sexual orientation during treatment out of concern of discrimination.

Lack of Culturally Relevant Education
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Massachusetts

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NEW HAMPSHIRE
SUBSTANCE USE WITHIN THE
LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY

LGBTQ+ Health
In order to effectively address LGBTQ+ health issues, we need to securely and consistently collect sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) information in national surveys and health records.

59,000
People in New Hampshire IDENTIFY AS LGBTQ+

Estimated by the Movement Advancement Project - 2020

Potential Discrimination in Treatment
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Lack of Culturally Relevant Education
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High Levels of Stress
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New Hampshire

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RHODE ISLAND
SUBSTANCE USE WITHIN THE
LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY

LGBTQ+ Health
In order to effectively address LGBTQ+ health issues, we need to securely and consistently collect sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) information in national surveys and health records.

44,000
Rhode Islanders IDENTIFY AS LGBTQ+

Estimated by the Movement Advancement Project - 2020

Potential Discrimination in Treatment
LGBTQ+ individuals may be reluctant to seek treatment or disclose their gender identity or sexual orientation during treatment out of concern of discrimination.

Lack of Culturally Relevant Education
Far too many LGBTQ+ youth are sitting in classrooms where their teachers and textbooks fail to appropriately address their identities, behaviors, and experiences. Representation matters in our education and prevention messaging.

High Levels of Stress
Members of the LGBTQ+ community face chronically high levels of stress. This type of stress can lead to higher levels of anxiety, fear, isolation, depression, anger, and mistrust, which can increase the risk of self-medicating with tobacco, alcohol and other drugs.

Rhode Island

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VERMONT
SUBSTANCE USE WITHIN THE
LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY

LGBTQ+ Health
In order to effectively address LGBTQ+ health issues, we need to securely and consistently collect sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) information in national surveys and health records.

30,000
People in Vermont IDENTIFY AS LGBTQ+

Estimated by the Movement Advancement Project - 2020

Potential Discrimination in Treatment
LGBTQ+ individuals may be reluctant to seek treatment or disclose their gender identity or sexual orientation during treatment out of concern of discrimination.

Lack of Culturally Relevant Education
Far too many LGBTQ+ youth are sitting in classrooms where their teachers and textbooks fail to appropriately address their identities, behaviors, and experiences. Representation matters in our education and prevention messaging.

High Levels of Stress
Members of the LGBTQ+ community face chronically high levels of stress. This type of stress can lead to higher levels of anxiety, fear, isolation, depression, anger, and mistrust, which can increase the risk of self-medicating with tobacco, alcohol and other drugs.

Vermont

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Resources

- **The Trevor Project**
 - The Trevor Project is the world's largest suicide prevention and crisis intervention organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ) young people.
- **The Fenway Institute / LGBTQIA+ Health Education Center**
 - The National LGBTQIA+ Health Education Center provides educational programs, resources, and consultation to health care organizations with the goal of optimizing quality, cost-effective health care for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, and all sexual and gender minority (LGBTQIA+) people.
- **Human Rights Campaign**
 - The Human Rights Campaign envisions a world where every member of the LGBTQ+ family has the freedom to live their truth without fear, and with equality under the law.
- **SAGE (Advocacy and Services for LGBT Elders)**
 - SAGE leads in addressing issues related to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) aging. In partnership with its constituents and allies, SAGE works to achieve a high quality of life for LGBT older people, supports and advocates for their rights, fosters a greater understanding of aging in all communities and promotes positive images of LGBT life in later years.
- **LGBT Health Link**
 - LGBT HealthLink, a program of CenterLink, is a community-driven national network of experts and professionals enhancing LGBT health by reducing health disparities within our communities.
- **National LGBT Cancer Center**
 - The National LGBT Cancer Network works to improve the lives of LGBT cancer survivors and those at risk through education, training, and advocacy.

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About the Author



Dan Fitzgerald, MPH, ICPS
Rhode Island Fellow

Daniel Fitzgerald, MPH, ICPS is the Executive Director of the Chariho Youth Task Force and a National Senior Manager of Advocacy for the American Lung Association. Dan's educational background is in prevention science, social marketing, nonprofit management, and public health. Dan has worked at the state, local, and national levels with nonprofits and state and federal agencies working at the intersection of public health and social justice. Prior to his current roles, Dan worked as a Prevention Fellow with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA) and was stationed at the RI Department of Behavioral Healthcare working with all the states funded prevention coalitions. Under his direction over the last 14 years, the Chariho Youth Task Force has become a 501(c)3 nonprofit working to create a society driven toward physical and mental well-being created through collaboration, education, and activism working primarily in Charlestown, Hopkinton, and Richmond, RI. In this role, Dan was recognized as the Washington County Champion for Children by the RI General Assembly and as the RI Advocate of Year by the Rhode Island Department of Health. In his role with the American Lung Association, Dan leads a national public policy campaign and serves as the advocacy lead for the State of Rhode Island on topics related to tobacco, lung cancer, access to care, and climate change. Recently, Dan was recognized for his impact in the world of tobacco control and received the 2019 C. Everett Koop Unsung Hero Award in honor of the late United States Surgeon General. In recent years, Dan has worked as a staff trainer for the Human Right Campaign and has lead state and local training and technical assistance around LGBTQ+ programming and inclusion for prevention providers, educators, and health systems. Dan is an Internationally Certified Prevention Specialist and sits on the Rhode Island Certification Board.



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