

Sexual Violence and Individuals Who Identify as LGBTQ

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GUIDE FOR TRANSFORMATIVE PREVENTION PROGRAMMING

SEXUAL VIOLENCE & INDIVIDUALS WHO IDENTIFY AS LGBTQ

The purpose of the guide is to provide information to state and community-based sexual violence prevention educators and practitioners on preventing sexual violence against individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning (LGBTQ). The goal is to share some of the best information and resources that are currently available, with the understanding that resources are constantly being created and updated.

While this guide cannot fully capture the complexities and diversity within LGBTQ communities, it does provide an overview of issues and a context for approaching sexual violence prevention work in LGBTQ communities. States and local communities are encouraged to use this information and adapt it to be appropriate for their projects and collaborations. The primary prevention of sexual violence is based on the belief that violence against all people can be prevented

by understanding and taking action to change the factors that influence the acceptance and use of violence by individuals. People are not born homophobic, biphobic, racist, sexist, transphobic, or classist; instead, individuals learn to be prejudiced by accepting social norms. Therefore, we can reduce violence in our communities by changing norms, beliefs and behaviors in our culture. As in the broader society, individuals who identify as LGBTQ may also identify by race, class, generation/age,

biological sex, ethnicity, ability, political affiliation, profession, religion, geographical location, parental status, and other identifiers. Like all people who experience violence, it is important to meet people who identify as LGBTQ¹ where they are and not make assumptions based on their sexual orientation or any other identifier. It is valuable to work within an empowering model that acknowledges individuals as their own life experts and community members as critical to the prevention of sexual violence.

Studies estimate lifetime sexual assault victimization ranges from 15.6-55% for women who identify as lesbian or bisexual and 20-30.4% for men who identify as gay or bisexual (Rothman, Exner, & Baughman, 2011). Surveys of the general population have found lifetime prevalence rates of 11-17% for women and 2-3% for men (Basile, Chen, Lynberg, & Saltzman, 2007; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). There are no population-based studies that include questions on gender identity; however, data on sexual violence against transgender people from convenience samples show very high rates of victimization of multiple forms of violence (Stotzer, 2009). Stotzer's (2009) review of data on violence against transgender people found that 10-59% of transgendered persons reported experiencing unwanted sexual activity. There is limited research about perpetration of sexual violence, both within and outside of LGBTQ communities. Myths and stereotypes about perpetration may impact whether or not victims will come forward for

services. For example, individuals who identify as LGBTQ have been falsely accused as pedophiles or child sexual abusers – this myth may impact whether or not survivors will reach out for services. Communities, as well as individuals, may not feel comfortable talking about sexual violence due to the fear of being accused of pedophilia or the sexual abuse of a minor.

Homophobic harassment and bullying are a significant problem in U.S. schools – prevention educators must be aware of and address this larger social context when conducting sexual violence prevention strategies with youth. Recent studies have found strong connections between bullying, sexual orientation and homophobia, all of which are related to negative school environments (Espelage & Swearer, 2008). Peer groups reporting the highest levels of negative attitudes toward youth who identify as LGBTQ and greater use of homophobic language were found more likely to display highly aggressive behavior (Poteat, 2008). A study commissioned by the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Network (GLSEN) surveyed 3,450 public and private/parochial students online and found that 90% of teens who identified as LGBTQ had been verbally or physically harassed or assaulted during the past year because of their perceived or actual appearance, gender, sexual orientation, gender expression, race or ethnicity, disability or religion (Kosciw & Diaz, 2006). According to this same study, 88% of the students reported that homophobic remarks were used at least

¹ In an attempt to honor people as individuals first and not by a particular aspect of who they are, and for the sake of consistency in the guide, we have used terms like "individuals who identify as...". Please keep in mind that some people do not identify with the term LGBTQ or with LGBTQ communities and may use other terms to describe their community and/or personal sexual or gender identity. It is important to reflect the terms used by individual victims/survivors and communities. PCAR and NSVRC use "LGBTQ" as a broad term for people who identify within a spectrum of sexual orientations, gender identities, and expressions, which may or may not be explicitly contained within this acronym, as the range of identities reflected by these communities is diverse and ever-changing. The selection and use of the term "LGBTQ" in this guide is intentional as most of the available research is about people who identify as LGBTQ. It is not meant to exclude people who might identify differently.



some times when teachers were present. Many of these students said that teachers and staff did not intervene.

In addition to bullying and harassment from peers, teens who identify as LGBTQ may also be at higher risk for sexual coercion or sexual assault. Sites in Delaware, Maine, Rhode Island, Boston, Chicago, New York City, and San Francisco participated in an assessment regarding students' sexual identity and sexual behavior (Kann et al., 2011). The study found higher rates of forced sexual intercourse among gay or lesbian students (median of 23.7%), bisexual students (median of 22.6%), and students who were "unsure" or questioning their sexual orientation (median of 19.8%), in comparison to heterosexual students (median

of 7.2%). The study also found higher rates of forced sexual activity reported among students who only had sexual contact with someone of the same gender (median of 17.3%) and students who had sexual contact with both sexes (median of 27.3%), in contrast to students who only had sexual contact with someone from the opposite gender (median of 10.6%). (Kann et al., 2011)

DISCRIMINATION AGAINST PEOPLE WHO IDENTIFY AS LGBTQ

In the United States, societal beliefs about sexuality and gender have created a system of bias against LGBTQ communities. Race, ethnicity, and physical and/or cognitive ability are additional examples of attributes that have been discriminated against to varying degrees. Stigma and prejudice can show themselves in different ways depending upon the group targeted; when people are stigmatized for their perceived deviation, it leads to oppression that is widely accepted and deeply rooted in a society. This kind of discrimination can lead to some form of violence against the stigmatized group, in this case LGBTQ-identified people. For example, many hospital visitation policies and the *Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA)* are examples of current laws and policies that make heterosexual relationships the only acceptable type of relationship; they discriminate against and devalue LGBTQ relationships. These types of laws and policies send the message that marginalized groups are not equal to others in society and that we as a society are OK with discrimination and inequality in regards to individuals who identify as LGBTQ. When LGBTQ-identified people are legally

stigmatized, it reinforces the social messages that there is something wrong with people who identify as LGBTQ. This, in turn, gives people and communities legal and social license to treat individuals who identify as LGBTQ as “less than,” or second-class citizens. Individual behavior toward stigmatized populations, including individuals who identify as LGBTQ and their communities, is influenced by these kinds of societal messages. Bigotry, name-calling, exclusion, discriminatory practices and increased violence are often the result.

The goals to addressing this, however, should not necessarily center on the changing of one particular law or the prosecution of one person who commits violence; they should instead be to prevent the process of stigmatization from happening in the first place. In order to prevent violence against individuals who identify as LGBTQ, cultural attitudes and messages that stigmatize marginalized groups and make violence an acceptable punishment for not “fitting in” can no longer be allowed. Effective primary prevention has the power to eradicate all forms of violence by teaching people the importance of valuing diversity, respecting each other, and creating healthy relationships.

FUTURE OF LGBTQ SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION

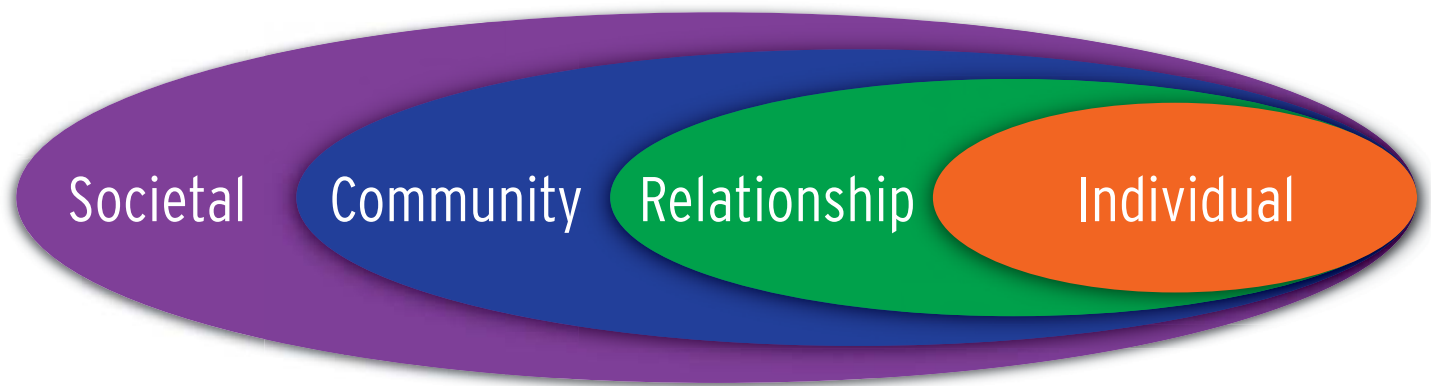
There is a compelling and urgent need for intervention and prevention strategies that are relevant, appropriate and accessible to LGBTQ communities. In a recent survey, most lesbian, gay, bisexual and heterosexual respondents believed that sexual violence is a problem in society as well as in the LGBTQ community in particular, and that sexual violence prevention tailored to LGBTQ communities is needed.

However, those same respondents also believed or strongly believed that open dialog about sexual violence in LGBTQ communities is not occurring and an even higher percentage of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that the local community is well equipped to handle incidents of sexual violence in LGBTQ communities (Todahl, Linville, Bustin, Wheeler, & Gau, 2009).

Sexual violence prevention efforts within and among the LGBTQ communities must work to promote healthy relationships and provide models for practice. In addition, the anti-sexual violence movement must begin focusing on creating positive change by working to advance LGBTQ equality, sexual health and healthy relationships. Below are some examples of a world in which LGBTQ sexual violence prevention efforts have already succeeded. This is not a complete list; it is meant to help spark ideas about potential long-term outcomes of successful LGBTQ violence prevention efforts.

Individual:

- Language and terminology to describe violence are inclusive of LGBTQ people. For example, use of “gendered violence” or “domestic and sexual violence”; where “violence against women” is used, violence against gay men, transgender individuals, and women who identify as lesbian or bisexual is also routinely mentioned.
- Prevention educators are knowledgeable about, and comfortable with, discussing the complexities of sexuality and gender, including trans identities, and implications for violence prevention.
- Youth are supported when they choose to come out as lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer.



Relationship:

- People immediately interrupt homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and heterosexist comments. For example, “that’s so gay” is no longer an acceptable phrase.
- Many institutions and workplaces have Gay/Straight Alliances and other LGBTQ-positive or friendly spaces.
- Many schools have peer support and positive LGBTQ role models and mentors.
- Parental and extended family support of LGBTQ youth and same-sex relationships is the norm.
- Support systems for parents of LGBTQ youth are widely available.
- Violence prevention organizations partner with LGBTQ advocacy organizations to promote healthy relationships and sexuality in racially and ethnically diverse LGBTQ communities.
- Same-sex couples are allowed to attend the prom in all states.
- National organizations and state and local health departments gather population-based surveillance data (with statistically significant sample sizes) on LGBTQ communities and health issues, including sexual health and violence.

Community:

- Comprehensive sexuality education programs are widely available in all schools and communities, and these programs include accurate, age-appropriate, and inclusive information about sexual orientation and gender identity, same-sex relationships, and LGBTQ sexual health.
- Violence prevention programs incorporate examples of LGBTQ sexual violence in all exercises.

Societal:

- LGBTQ identities and relationships are valued and represented positively in mainstream media.
- LGBTQ individuals have equal rights and protection (related to housing, employment, health care, freedom to worship, etc.) under the law in every community.
- Schools have anti-bullying and anti-harassment policies that protect LGBTQ students.
- Society recognizes same-sex relationships as equal to heterosexual relationships. Same-sex marriage is legal in the U.S.

FOCUSING EFFORTS

When deciding on primary prevention approaches for LGBTQ communities, there are three broad areas of focus to consider:

1. The development and support of healthy relationships and the skills necessary to engage in healthy relationships among individuals who identify as LGBTQ in order to promote healthy interpersonal relationships, as well as value positive intra-community relationships and structural supports.
2. The cultural relevance and competency of organizations and institutions in communities to serve and support individuals who identify as LGBTQ to address risks of revictimization,

lack of access to support services and care, and health disparities.

3. The development of community norms and supports that contribute to the ability of individuals who identify as LGBTQ and their communities to thrive while addressing risks associated with hate crimes and violence originating outside of LGBTQ communities.

Building assets, capitalizing on existing strengths and addressing risk in these areas are central to preventing violence within and against LGBTQ communities. It is important for professionals in the field to understand LGBTQ communities as well as the causes and consequences of violence within and against



LGBTQ communities in order to provide the most accurate prevention programming and services.

The following are some recommended strategies and promising practices when planning sexual violence prevention programming within and among LGBTQ communities.

1. Conduct an assessment of organizational capacity and readiness to engage in LGBTQ sexual violence prevention work.
2. Build relationships with, and support the leadership of, staff who identify as LGBTQ.
3. Work with LGBTQ community members to conduct an assessment of community capacity and readiness. The assessment could identify: overall community climate for individuals who identify as LGBTQ, size and demographics of the community, strengths and resources available, gaps in services, etc.
4. Based on the assessment results, consider whether to address inter-community violence (e.g., hate crimes perpetrated by heterosexual people against individuals who identify as LGBTQ), intra-community violence (e.g., intimate partner violence among same-sex couples), and/or structural violence (e.g., heterosexist policies and practices). Examine the underlying causes of each.
5. Consider which population(s) to address in prevention efforts. For example, if an organization decided to address hate crimes, then the focus audience would be people who identify as heterosexual. In contrast, if an organization decided to address same-sex intimate partner violence, then the focus audience would be members who identify with the LGBTQ community.
6. Consider which strategies best fit the population(s) selected. For example, to address same-sex intimate partner violence, an organization could implement a program designed to prevent violence in LGBTQ relationships and/or adapt a mainstream sexual violence prevention program for LGBTQ populations.
7. Consider how the strategies and activities fit into multiple levels of the social ecology and how the LGBTQ prevention efforts relate to the organization's prevention efforts in heterosexual and other culturally-specific communities.
8. Before implementing prevention programs, ensure the availability of options in the community for survivors who identify as LGBTQ to seek culturally-effective services.





programs for use specifically with communities that identify as LGBTQ.

Possible strategies include:

- A. Prevention programs from other public health areas adapted for sexual violence;
- B. Sexual violence prevention programs adapted for LGBTQ populations;
- C. Sexual violence prevention programs that include LGBTQ-specific components that are applied to an LGBTQ population.
- D. Programs that seek to prevent sexual violence specifically by addressing issues that include homophobia and heterosexism.
- E. Programs that were designed specifically to address sexual violence prevention in LGBTQ populations.

The following are examples of specific programs that may be useful resources in planning a sexual violence prevention program for use with LGBTQ populations.

- 9. Consider the diversity and complex intersections of oppressions among LGBTQ communities, including sexual orientation, gender identity, race, ethnicity, ability, class, education, citizenship, and so on.
- 10. Be clear and intentional about the prevention goals, outcomes and populations that the organization is trying to reach.

PREVENTION EFFORTS THAT ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF LGBTQ COMMUNITIES

While there are altogether too few evidence-based sexual violence prevention programs for use with any community, there are even fewer

A. Adaptations to existing prevention strategies that address other public health issues:

- Popular Opinion Leaders (POL), an HIV prevention strategy originally developed to increase condom usage among men who identify as gay. POL was implemented in gay bars and other settings and could be adapted for other health initiatives, such as sexual violence. Ethnographic techniques are used to identify segments of the target population and to identify those persons who are popular, well-liked and trusted in each population segment. Those opinion leaders are recruited and trained and then endorse the preferred behavior in informal conversations with their peers (e.g., condom

usage). At a minimum, adapting this strategy requires skills and experience in: conducting ethnographic assessments, a social network of at least 100 individuals who identify as LGBTQ, working with the target population, and message development. For more information on POL, visit http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/prev_prog/rep/packages/pol.htm. There is currently an initiative attempting to adapt POL for domestic violence prevention with gay men in Massachusetts.

- Community United Against Violence, a program that works to build community capacity to address all forms of violence (and intimate partner violence, including sexual violence). Community United Against Violence (CUAV) is a multicultural, anti-oppression organization working to end violence against and within diverse lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ) communities. They believe that in order to end homophobia and heterosexism, we must confront all forms of oppression, including racism, sexism, ageism, classism, and ableism. They seek to accomplish this through peer-based counseling, direct assistance, education and outreach, grassroots organizing, and policy advocacy. For more information on CUAV, visit <http://www.cuav.org>

B. Sexual violence prevention strategies designed for universal populations that could be adapted specifically for LGBTQ populations include:

- Safe Dates, which includes examples and language that can be adapted for same-sex relationships. “Safe Dates is a program designed to stop or prevent the initiation of emotional, physical, and sexual abuse on

dates or between individuals involved in a dating relationship. Intended for male and female 8th- and 9th-grade students, the goals of the program include:

- Changing adolescent dating violence and gender-role norms
- Improving peer help-giving and dating conflict-resolution skills
- Promoting victim and perpetrator beliefs in the need for help and seeking help through the community resources that provide it
- Decreasing dating abuse victimization and perpetration (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration [SAMHSA], 2006, para. 1). For more information on Safe Dates, visit <http://www.hazelden.org/web/public/safedates.page>, or <http://nrepp.samhsa.gov/ViewIntervention.aspx?id=141>



- WholeSomeBodies (from Vermont – formerly known as Joyful Sexuality) which is gender neutral and thus easily adapted specifically for LGBTQ populations. “The mission of WholeSomeBodies: Broadening the Conversation About Sexuality and Sexual Violence Prevention: to shift the cultural norm toward joyful and healthy sexuality by creating opportunities for individuals and communities to explore, reclaim, and discover a deeper and more expansive understanding of how sexuality informs our humanity Toward this mission, we will promote a sense of joyful and healthy sexuality as a critical step toward ending sexual violence” (Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence, 2009). For more information on WholeSomeBodies, visit http://www.vtnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/WholeSomeBodies_Sexual-Violence-Prevention-Manual.pdf

C. Sexual violence prevention programs that were not designed specifically for LGBTQ communities but have a LGBTQ-specific component include:

- SAFE-T (Sexual Abuse Free Environment for Teens Program) “is a health education program for middle school students that promotes victim/victimizer prevention by helping students to identify factors that put them at risk for being hurt and hurting others, while fostering the development of protective factors and resilience. By taking a comprehensive approach, the program aims to provide early adolescents with the skills necessary to make healthy choices and form healthy relationships with peers and adults” (Prevent Child Abuse Vermont, n.d., para. 3). Unit 5 addresses sex roles, sexual orientation,

discrimination, stereotypes, and prejudice and has specific definitions, exercises, student/adult dialogue, and journal activities related to these topics.

For more information on SAFE-T, visit <http://www.pcavt.org/index.asp?pageid=319>

- Fourth R works with schools to promote the neglected R (for relationships) and help build this “fourth R” in school climates. “The Fourth R consists of a comprehensive school-based program designed to include students, teachers, parents, and the community in reducing violence and risk behaviors. It is important that young people be given information that will help them make good decisions, and are shown positive



relationship models that will demonstrate alternatives to the negative examples they frequently see in the world around them” (CAMH Centre for Prevention Science, 2008, para. 1). Fourth R initiatives target multiple forms of violence, including violence/bullying, and dating violence, as well as unsafe sexual behavior, and substance abuse. For more information on the Fourth R, visit http://www.youthrelationships.org/about_fourth_r.html

D. Prevention programs that address heterosexism, homophobia, biphobia or transphobia include:

- Gay-Straight Alliances create safe environments in schools for students to support each other and learn about homophobia and other oppressions, educate the school community about homophobia, gender identity, and sexual orientation issues, and fight discrimination, harassment, and violence in schools. For information, visit <http://gsanetwork.org>
- Welcoming Schools program is an LGBT-inclusive approach to addressing family diversity, gender stereotyping and name-calling in K-5 learning environments. “Initiated by a group of parents and educators to meet the needs of students whose family structures are not well represented or included in school environments, Welcoming Schools is also a response to educators who have asked for help in addressing anti-gay name-calling and bullying. It offers a wide range of resources for school administrators and educators on supporting students who are on a unique gender path. Welcoming Schools is not only for students who have parents or caregivers who identify as LGBT, nor is it only for



students who, as they grow older, may identify as LGBT. Rather, it is for all students growing up in our increasingly diverse world” (Human Rights Campaign Foundation, 2012, para. 8). For more information, visit <http://www.welcomingschools.org>

- Stand and Serve Clubs are part of a program of Peer Solutions in Arizona that addresses homophobia, sexism, sexual violence, teen dating violence, and other forms of violence and could be adapted to an LGBTQ population. “Stand and Serve works to prevent child abuse, sexual, relationship, family, gang, gun and school violence, suicide, depression, oppression, substance abuse, poor school performance, homelessness and

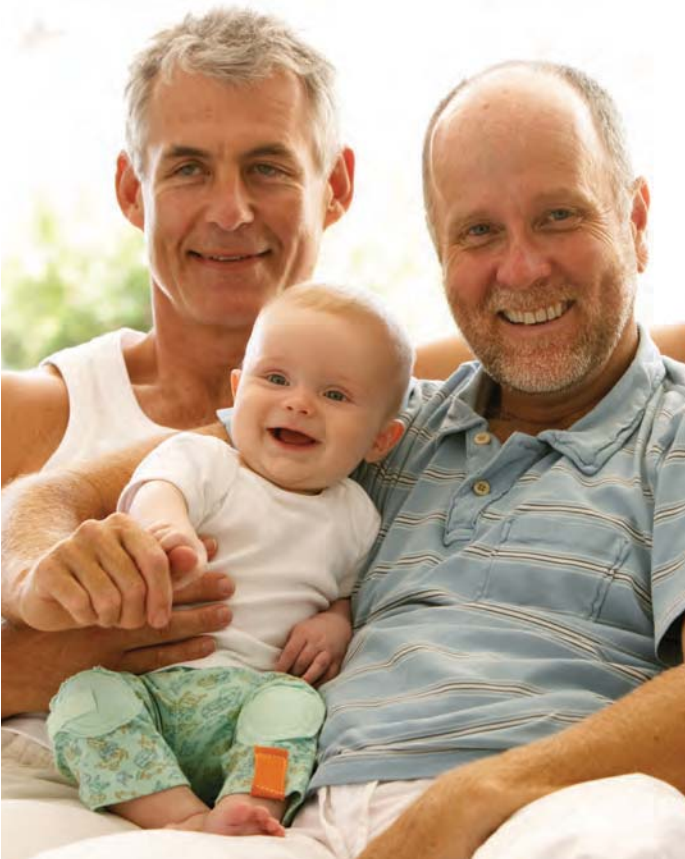
more. To prevent one is to prevent them all, as the underlying conditions that lead to their existence, including violence perceived as normal, silence/denial and oppression, are similar, if not the same” (Peer Solutions, n.d., para. 4). For more information, visit <http://www.peersolutions.org/about/index.html>

E. Programs designed to prevent violence in LGBTQ relationships include:

- LYRIC is a San Francisco-based LGBTQ youth program. “LYRIC’s mission is to build community and inspire positive social change through education enhancement, career trainings, health promotion, and leadership development with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning youth, their families, and allies of all races, classes,

genders, and abilities” (LYRIC, 2006, para. 1). For more information about LYRIC, visit <http://lyric.org/home.html>

- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ) Youth Partner Abuse Prevention Program: The Boston Alliance of GLBT Youth (BAGLEY) and the Network/La Red as a peer-led model of prevention to promote healthy relationships and sexuality among GLBTQ youth. For more information, visit <http://www.bagly.org>
- GroundSpark’s Respect For All project facilitates the development of inclusive, bias-free schools and communities by providing media resources, support and training to youth, educators and service providers. Their goals are: “to challenge stereotypes and to help children, youth and adults make the linkages between a variety of prejudice and bias issues; to promote respect and equity at the earliest age possible and on an ongoing basis, before negative attitudes and prejudices become entrenched and harmful; to reduce the number of acts of bullying and violence among youth; and to help create inclusive, welcoming school and community environments where young people and families of all backgrounds and experiences can thrive” (GroundSpark, n.d., para. 2). For more information, visit <http://groundspark.org/respect-for-all>
- Engaging Change is an Oregon project of Sexual Assault Support Services dedicated to preventing sexual violence and promoting safe, healthy, consensual sex in the LGBTIQ community. They work to assess the needs of the local LGBTIQ community and facilitate programming. Engaging Change is a project hosted by Sexual Assault Support Services (SASS). For more information, visit





<http://www.sass-lane.org/engaging-chage>

- Wingspan is Southern Arizona's lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community center. Wingspan's mission is to promote the freedom, equality, safety and well-being of individuals who identify as LGBT. Their Anti-Violence Project offers crisis intervention and support services to victims of violence and education to the community about these issues. For more information, visit <http://wingspan.org>
- BRAVO - Ohio-based anti-violence organization, Bravo works to eliminate violence perpetrated on the basis of sexual orientation and/or gender identification, domestic violence, and sexual assault through prevention, education, advocacy, violence documentation, and survivor

services, both within and on behalf of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender communities. For more information, visit <http://www.bravo-ohio.org>

There is no one program or strategy that will work to prevent sexual violence in all populations or communities or in any given community without being tailored to that particular community. Unfortunately, most strategies do not specifically address sexual violence prevention in LGBTQ communities. Comprehensive strategies addressing multiple levels of influence have a greater effect than any one strategy that only addresses one level. Likewise, some strategies may only be relevant in particular settings such as schools, after-school or out-of-school programs for youth

versus other settings for adults. It is important to consider factors such as what population the strategy was designed for (e.g., youth or adult), what setting it was intended to function in (e.g., school, employment, community, agency) and other pertinent information when choosing a strategy to implement. Additionally, as with any population, it is important to get community buy-in for the prevention strategy.

Agencies should also consider existing resources, including LGBTQ organizations, LGBTQ bookstores, etc., to collaborate with and seek input from in-planning prevention strategies with LGBTQ communities. Keep in mind that the best agency to implement prevention strategies with this community may not be a local rape crisis center. If there is a local agency that already has the trust and support from the LGBTQ community, sexual violence prevention may be better received from this agency. A community needs and resources assessment would indicate this. It

cannot be stressed enough that whatever programs or strategies may be chosen for sexual violence prevention in LGBTQ communities, culturally competent and culturally supportive LGBTQ survivor services should be available for referrals prior to implementation.

When putting together a prevention strategy, agencies and communities must value relationships with LGBTQ organizations as a key first step in cultivating stronger and more collaborative partnerships. The time spent in addressing factors brought up from the needs and resources assessment will be important both for future disclosures and safety, as well as for credibility within LGBTQ communities. As such, those planning to implement any sexual violence prevention strategy should do so in collaboration with LGBTQ-supportive groups or agencies. Because building capacity and assessing readiness are large projects, please refer to the *Strategies for assessing readiness*



to provide competent programming to LGBTQ communities for more detailed steps and strategies for organizations looking to create sustainable and competent programming.

Recruitment, training, and retention. One of the most important components to a successful and competent program is to make sure all staff and volunteers receive adequate training and support. One example of this would be to create a workplace that is open and affirming to volunteers as well as potential volunteers who identify as LGBTQ. Some helpful questions to consider: *Would a transgender male to female potential volunteer be welcome at your agency and in the training? Are any staff “out” and involved in developing trainings? Are there clear messages/images/policies within the agency that affirm LGBTQ identities?* It is also important that leadership be recruited in a very intentional and representative way – outreaching to potential board members, staff and volunteers who represent LGBTQ communities should be part of organization policy and practice. A great way to do this is by announcing your agency’s next volunteer training or staff openings in local LGBTQ newspapers or through LGBTQ centers. Encourage staff and volunteers to examine their own comfort level when working with survivors who identify as LGBTQ, and provide opportunities and resources for staff and volunteers to begin to unlearn oppression. One way to start this process is to provide training for existing and new staff and volunteers on LGBTQ sexual assault and on LGBTQ issues in general. Make sure LGBTQ sexual assault (both intimate and non-intimate partner) is more than a “token” topic in your training and is incorporated throughout the training through role plays, examples and by making the

connections between all forms of oppression and sexual violence.

Collaboration. Rape crisis centers and LGBTQ agencies face a shortage of resources, including funding. Working with LGBTQ community organizations or other community-based agencies can help your agency successfully implement appropriate sexual violence prevention strategies. Contact your local or regional LGBTQ agency for more information and as an opportunity to begin a collaborative relationship. Relationships with LGBTQ organizations should be mutually supportive and beneficial.

Organizations should remain open to the possibility that some work may need to be done in becoming a welcoming and supportive agency for LGBTQ communities before beginning outreach. Guiding principles such as “respond to the social context of individuals who identify as LGBTQ lives,” and “conduct anti-bias and anti-oppression education,” can help steer individuals and organizations in a positive direction in their efforts to implement prevention strategies. Principles such as: “affirm the validity of individuals who identify as LGBTQ and their relationship,” and “engage individuals who identify as LGBTQ and communities,” will help rape crisis centers take a proactive and engaged approach to working with individuals who identify as LGBTQ and ensure that prevention strategies are consistent with community norms and responsive to community needs.

Outreach. In the interest of collaboration, work with LGBTQ agencies or community members to ensure that outreach materials are relevant and welcoming to the community (i.e. the language and images used). All materials and public announcements should consistently

address the right audience(s) (i.e., if you state that you serve LGBTQ communities, be sure you really equally serve individuals who identify as lesbians, as gay men, as bisexual, as transgender, or as queer). When looking at current materials, language and images should be gender neutral and/or inclusive. For example, information on drug-facilitated rape, survivors with disabilities, internet safety – all of these materials should include individuals who identify as LGBTQ, too. Collaborate with local LGBTQ centers, hate crime agencies or other agencies to develop a message for LGBTQ communities around sexual violence, as well as identifying where the outreach materials will be most effective (agencies, bars, churches, coffee shops, newspapers). This will vary by region and may look different for each unique subset of LGBTQ communities.

Community Education. One of the first steps to making sure presentations and education programs are inclusive is to not make assumptions about the sexual orientation or gender identity of members of the audience –

be aware of language that assumes heterosexuality. An excellent way to form a collaborative relationship is to form a review team including members of LGBTQ communities to review existing or new curriculum and training guides for LGBTQ inclusive and affirming language. Work together on developing language around how to address anti-LGBTQ comments made during presentations and trainings to show that you and your agency respect and support all victims. If using scenarios or examples during presentations, include same-sex sexual assault as well as sexual assault against a person who identifies as transgender. Be prepared for LGBTQ specific myths that may arise.

The Spectrum of Violence Prevention (Cohen & Swift, 1999) is a useful tool for identifying a full range of complementary strategies that goes beyond individual education.

The table below shows The Spectrum of Violence Prevention; in italics is one example of what each level might look like:

Level of Spectrum		Definition of level
Level 1	Strengthening Individual Knowledge & Skills	Enhancing an individual's capability of preventing violence and promoting safety. <i>For example, teaching individuals bystander intervention skills and how to interrupt oppressive remarks against individuals who identify as LGBTQ.</i>
Level 2	Promoting Community Education	Reaching groups of people with information and resources to prevent violence and promote safety. <i>For example, developing outreach materials with and for LGBTQ communities on sexual violence prevention and sexual health promotion, alternatives to violence and ways to get involved in the community.</i>

Level of Spectrum		Definition of Level
Level 3	Educating Providers	<p>Informing providers who will transmit skills and knowledge to others and model positive norms.</p> <p><i>For example, cross-training LGBTQ serving agencies, hate crime agencies, substance abuse, mental health, law enforcement, medical professionals, school personnel, and other providers to help them identify and respond to sexual violence in LGBTQ communities within their respective workplaces and organizations.</i></p>
Level 4	Fostering Coalitions & Networks	<p>Bringing together groups and individuals for broader goals and greater impact.</p> <p><i>For example, establishing a community-based task force of multidisciplinary partners to foster systemic changes and violence-free norms around sexual assault in LGBTQ communities.</i></p>
Level 5	Changing Organizational Practices	<p>Adopting regulations and shaping norms to prevent violence and improve safety.</p> <p><i>For example, work with a local school district to implement LGBTQ-inclusive sexuality education and sexual violence prevention programs that are comprehensive in focus, culturally competent, and responsive to the link between sexual violence and various forms of oppression. Review the school policies on responding to sexual violence, bullying and sexual harassment with an eye on students who identify as LGBTQ.</i></p>
Level 6	Influencing Policy & Legislation	<p>Enacting laws and policies that support healthy community norms and a violence-free society.</p> <p><i>For example, building support around legislation that affirms various sexual orientations and gender identities such as legalizing gay marriage, health insurance for same sex partners, hate crime law reforms, etc.</i></p>

A description of *The Spectrum of Violence Prevention* can be found at http://www.nsvrc.org/sites/default/files/file/Projects_RPE_NSVRC-spectrum.pdf



CONCLUSION

Preventing sexual violence is ultimately about creating safe, affirming and respectful environments for all people. Although LGBTQ communities experience rates of sexual harassment and violence similar to or greater than other groups, they also often experience other forms of stigmatization, misunderstanding, and oppression that compound the trauma and isolation and increases vulnerability. This guide provided examples of existing LGBTQ-inclusive sexual violence prevention efforts and recommendations on how to design LGBTQ-specific prevention programming. In general, sexual violence prevention efforts within and among the LGBTQ communities must work to end broader oppression against individuals

who identify as LGBTQ while working to end violence. Primary prevention approaches should consider which populations and types of violence to address. For example, programs could focus on inter-community violence (e.g., hate crimes perpetrated by individuals who identify as heterosexual against individuals who identify as LGBTQ), intra-community violence (e.g. intimate partner violence among same-sex couples), and/or structural violence (e.g., heterosexist policies and practices). This guide has offered some background information, practical tips, and promising strategies for advocates and prevention educators/practitioners working at local and state levels; and it also extends an invitation to join in the planning for creating nurturing opportunities for all people.

Throughout this guide, the terms “victim” and “survivor” are used interchangeably to be inclusive of the various ways people who have experienced sexual violence may identify. The Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape (PCAR) recognizes and supports the use of person-first terminology that honors and respects the whole person, which is also reflected in this guide. Finally, PCAR acknowledges that individuals should ultimately choose the language that is used to describe their experiences and therefore supports advocacy approaches that are person-centered and that use the terminology preferred by individuals they serve.

CONTRIBUTIONS

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