Creating Welcoming and Affirming Spaces for LGBTQ+ Populations

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Transforming Together Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Care Conference

Southern Counties Regional Partnership (SCRP)

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he/his/him

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Agenda and Outline

- Setting the Tone
- SOGIE
- Beyond the Binary
- Move Towards Action

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Objectives

- Recognize 3 reasons on the importance of understanding an individual's identity along the LGBTQ+ continuum

- Identify 5 concrete welcoming and affirming organizational practices especially to the LGBTQ+ populations

- Explore 3 types of non-familial social support when helping LGBTQ+ individuals

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Presenter Information

- Clinical and Consulting Psychologist (with certification in Substance Use Treatment and Trauma)
- Executive Coach (BECI - UC Berkeley, Haas Business School)
- Faculty (USC Sol Price School and UCSF Department of Family and Community Medicine)
- (Former) Director, Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (Marin County)
- Assistant Director, Human Services Agency (San Mateo County)

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Facts

- 2021: Estimated 20 million (8%) adults in the US identify as LGBT; about 2 million (1%) identify as transgender and majority of LGBT Americans identify as bisexual

- 2.3m Latinx LGBT adults live in the US

- 2.4m LGBT are over 65

- 2017: average of 1.8% highschool students identify as transgender

- 21% of Gen Z self-identify as LGBTQ+ (vs. 2.6% of Boomer)

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- Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death for LGBTQ+ youth 10-24

- Transgender women of color have the highest rates of disproportionality across multiple sectors

- 32% of Latinx LGBT adults experience food insecuriy

- Estimated 20% of youth in the juvenile justice system identify as LGBTQ+

Disparities

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For more
www.drjeiafrica.com
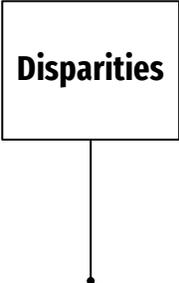
Gender and Sexual Minorities (GSM) vs. LGGBBTTQQIAAPP

- GSM – blanket statement; does not specify any gender or sexual identity; critics argue too broad

- lesbian, gay, genderqueer, bisexual, bigender, transgender, trans, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual, agender, pansexual and polyamorous

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Basics: SOGIE

Sexual Orientation (SO), Gender Identity (GI), and Gender Expression (E) are characteristics common to all human beings. Everyone has them, not just LGBTQ+ people.

Assigned sex at birth/Sex

Based on biology like chromosomes, hormones, and anatomy

Gender Identity

A personal sense of one's own gender, or a lack thereof. An internal perception/ knowledge based on how much a person aligns or doesn't align with their understood gender options

Sexual Orientation

Romantic and/or sexual attractions a person feels for others, generally labeled based on the gender relationship between the person and the people they are attracted to

Gender Expression

Gender performance or presentation is how one chooses to express their gender and/or be perceived as masculine, feminine, androgynous, or none of the above; may or may not be connected to one's gender identity, and may be shown through clothing, makeup, hairstyle, body art, jewelry, accessories, speech, inflection, and attitude

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The Complexity of Biological Sex

- Sex isn't binary
- "Even the biological categories of male and female are blurred; we know today that not just the X and Y chromosomes but at least twelve other chromosomes across the human genome govern sex differentiation, and at least 30 genes are involved in sex development."

Dr. Simona Giordano, Manchester University Medical School

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Gender identity is not the same as sexual orientation

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Gender Identity

- **Cisgender** – refers to someone who is not transgender. Someone whose gender identity aligns with their sex assigned at birth.

- **Transgender** – umbrella term referring to people whose gender identity is different from their sex assigned at birth.

- Individuals may use different terms to self-identify their gender identity to you.

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Understanding Gender Identity

- Herman, Rankin, Kiesling, Mottet and Anafi (2016)
  - Over 30% of respondents: 5 years old and under
  - About 25% of respondents: between 6 to 10 years old
  - About 21% of respondents: between 11 to 15 years old
  - About 13% of respondents: between 16 to 20 years old
  - Less than 5% of respondents: between 21 to 25 years old
  - 3% of respondents: 26 year old and older

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Gender and Sexuality Diverse Cultures

Hundreds of cultures around the world have celebrated more than two identities for gender and sexuality for centuries.

More information – PBS – A Map of Gender Diverse Cultures

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Binary and Non-Binary Identities

- Gender binary was created as a tool of colonialism, genocide, settlement and empire
- Forced categorization:

  ○ Male/man/masculine or Female/woman/feminine

- Erasure of indigenous and BIPOC gender expression – justified violence and erasure of culture
- False narrative that young white people in the Western world "created" nonbinary identities

Adapted from Dr. Sand Chang

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Pedro Fages

"I have substantial evidence that those Indians (Coast Miwok) men who, both here and farther inland, are observed in the dress, clothing, and character of women… They are called joyas (two-spirits), and are held in great esteem (by the…). But we place our trust in God and expect that these accursed people will disappear with the growth of the missions. The abominable vice will be eliminated to the extend that the Catholic faith and all the other virtues are firmly implanted there, for the glory of God and the benefit of those poor ignorants."

(1775): A Historical, Political, and Natural Description of California

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Imperfect Language

- Trans and nonbinary individuals: people whose genders/lives are illegible, denied, or marginalized by binary/colonialist systems

    ○ Some trans people are nonbinary, some nonbinary are trans and there are no rule/categorization that apply to all

- Cisgender: in a Western binary framework, people whose gender "align" with expectations based on sex assigned at birth

Adapted from Dr. Sand Chang

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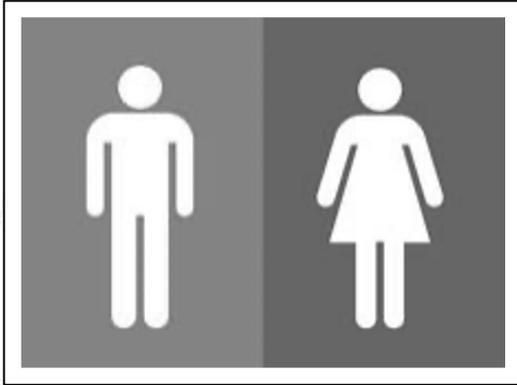
Binary

- What happens when people don't fit into the gender binary?
  - Mental health impacts
- What pressures do people face to fit into a binary? What is the impact of this?

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The Binary Impacts Everyone

- Punishes anyone who doesn't live within its confines.
- Pressures people to "prove" their masculinity or feminity.
- Creates a climate of fear and violence.
- Restricts what we can do and how we can grow.
- Damages self-esteem

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Colonialism and Gender Fluidity

https://youtu.be/AqEgsHGiK-s

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2021: Record Breaking Year for Anti-LGBTQ+ Laws

- Bills to prevent transgender youth from receiving age-appropriate health care that affirms their gender identity

- Bills that prevent transgender youth from participating in school sports consistent with their gender identity

- Bills that would forbid discussion of LGBTQ+ people, or sexuality or gender, in the classroom – in classes ranging from sex education to literature

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Florida's Parental Rights in Education Bill

- HB 1557 dubbed as "Don't Say Gay" Bill; signed by Governor Ron DeSantis
- Classroom instruction by school personnel or third parties on sexual orientation or gender identity may not occur in kindergarten through grade 3 or in a manner that is not age-appropriate or developmentally appropriate for students in accordance with state standards.
- The law requires parents to be the first to be notified of any health or support services offered to their kids in school and allows them the chance to deny those services on behalf of their children.

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The Risk of Being Yourself: Trans People

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Peer Victimization & Bullying	Parental Rejection	Institutional & Social Exclusion	Physical & Emotional Maltreatment/Violence
Lack of Access to Affirming Care	Lack of Access to Affirming Peer Group	Exclusion from Athletics	Lack of Access to Gender Neutral Bathrooms

Delozier et al, 2020

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LGBTQ+ Intersectionality

- Kimberlé Crenshaw coined the term intersectionality in 1989
  - "… a lens, a prism, for seeing the way in which various forms of inequality often operate together and exacerbate each other. We tends to talk about race inequality as separate from inequality based on gender, class, sexuality or immigrant status. What's often missing is how some people are subject to all of these, and the experience is not just the sum of its parts."
- Impact of racism: minority stress

- Black transgender women most impacted

https://time.com/5786710/kimberle-crenshaw-intersectionality/

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Gender Congruence

- Balance or harmony across the 3 dimensions for a particular person

Pronouns
Identity documents
"I identify as…"

Identity

Binders
Packers
Blockers/Hormones
Surgical congruence measures

Health

Clothes
Hairstyles
Make-Up
Hobbies/Sports

Body   Social

Gender Spectrum
https://genderspectrum.org/
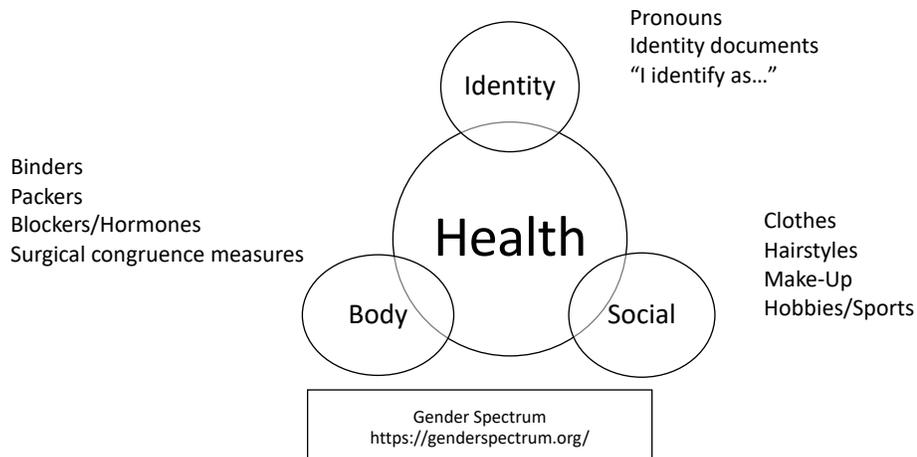
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The Trevor Project (2019) reported that 1 accepting adult can save a LGBTQ+ young person's life and can reduce suicide attempts by 40%.

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LGBTQ+ Adolescents

- Time of rapid brain development; learning about social relationships, rewards and risks
- Awareness of sexuality and gender role expression
- Earlier disclosure = increase in societal acceptance of LGBTQ+ identities

- Commit to sustained plan to decrease inequities: resources for families/caregivers, transformation in systems (CJ, education, CW), address personal bias of adults
- Increase investments and interventions that address the source of disparities through policies/programs/practices: SOGIE as a protected status, professional development for all staff, LGBTQ+ representation in curriculum

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LGBTQ+ Older Adults

- Many have experienced a lifetime of discrimination and lack of legal and social recognition
- Reliance on <u>chosen</u> family (or family of choice)
- Lack of competent inclusive care – 25% experience discrimination by MD
- Higher risk of need for long term care – for some need to go back to the closet
- Expressed less community belonging

https://www.lgbtmap.org/policy-and-issue-analysis/understanding-issues-facing-lgbt-older-adults

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Use Gender-Neutral Language

- Diverse pronoun use (use "they" if you don't know)
- Instead of "do you have a girlfriend/boyfriend" say "are you dating anyone?" or "do you have a partner?"
- Instead of "Is Mr./Ms. Jones here? " say "Is there a client with the last name 'Jones' here?" Or full name or "Mx."
- "Restroom" instead of mens' or ladies' room
- "Parent/guardian" instead of "mom" and "dad"
- "Folks," or "everyone," instead of "ladies and gentlemen"
- Avoid saying "you guys"

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Using Affirming Language

- Always use the correct (self-determined) name, pronouns, and gender descriptions

    - Avoid saying these are preferences – they are not optional

    - Do this even when the client is not present

- Demographic forms should have fill-in blanks (not forced binaries) for gender
- Do not use "quotations" for someone's name

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How to Ask Respectfully

NAME	Pronouns	Gender	Surgery
What name do you go by? How would you like me to refer to you?	What are your pronouns? My pronouns are ___. What are yours?	What terms do you use to describe your gender?	It is not appropriate to ask any person about their genitals if they have had surgery? This is PHI.

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Examples of Where to Place Pronouns

- Email signature
- Zoom (after the name)
- Business cards
- ID labels

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Create a Welcoming and Affirming Space

- <u>Environmental enhancements</u>: welcoming signs, flag, magazines/posters
- <u>Intake Forms</u>: add affirmed/chosen name, legal name, name associated with insurance, gender identity, pronoun, sex assigned at birth (**write in options; ***consider when the patient/participant is a minor)
- <u>On all documents</u>: affirmed/chosen name

- Online presence - easy navigation to LGBTQ+ specific resources
- Create a list of welcoming and affirming facilities – crisis, residential, clinics
- Make restrooms gender neutral
- Develop programs that are gender neutral; hire staff who are LGBQT+

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For more
www.drjeiafrica.com

Love takes off the masks we fear we cannot live without and know we cannot live within.

James Baldwin

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