

Archiebaldson

Resource Manual

History of the Safe Space Program

A number of colleges and universities have implemented educational interventions with names such as Safe Zone, Safe Space, Safe Harbor, and Safe On Campus. Although it is unclear who first conceived of the “Safe” idea, the earliest found is the Ball State University program called SAFE On Campus (1992) or Staff, Administration, and Faculty for Equality On Campus, which was implemented during the 1992-1993 academic year by the Lesbian, Bisexual, and Gay Student Association. Since published information has been previously unavailable, these “Safe” programs have been based on little knowledge or experience. The hallmark of these “Safe” programs is the public identification of allies by placing a “Safe” symbol, usually incorporating a pink triangle or rainbow, on office doors or within living spaces.

Student affairs professionals, administrators, and faculty only recently have begun to recognize the potential the development of heterosexual allies has for making the culture of a college or university campus more tolerant towards gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) students. Program interventions designed specifically for allies, such as Safe On Campus and Safe Zone are attempting to address the development of heterosexual allies while providing support to LGBT students. Typical components of these ally programs consist of a resource manual and sticker or sign. Some programs require an orientation or training session of varying lengths. Other components may include a listserv, advisory board/committee, web page resources, assessment, periodic socials, and identifying objects such as key chains, buttons, and pens.

The Creighton Allies Program

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) students, staff, and faculty have historically felt unsafe on college and university campuses. LGBT students, staff, and faculty may have fears around disclosing information about themselves, and need “safe places” on campus to go when they want to talk with someone in confidence about issues, fears, questions, and concerns. LGBT students, faculty, and staff may also feel invisible on campus and can sometimes find the climate uninviting or even hostile. These conditions often foil our attempts at fostering student development and growth. Our community of Allies is a way to reach out to and include LGBT people in all aspects of the campus community. At the heart is a campus-wide network of faculty, staff, and students who serve as the first points of contact for those seeking support, information, and additional resources on LGBT issues. Allies are not professional counselors; they are helpful resources.

Always Our Children

A Statement of the Bishops' Committee on Marriage and Family
September 10, 1997

For the Christian believer, an acceptance of self and of one's homosexual child must take place within the larger context of accepting divinely revealed truth about the dignity and destiny of human persons. It is the Church's responsibility to believe and teach this truth, presenting it as a comprehensive moral vision and applying this vision in particular situations through its pastoral ministries. We present the main points of that moral teaching here.

Every person has an inherent dignity because he or she is created in God's image. A deep respect for the total person leads the Church to hold and teach that sexuality is a gift from God. Being created a male or female person is an essential part of the divine plan, for it is their sexuality—a mysterious blend of spirit and body—that allows human beings to share in God's own creative love and life.

Like all gifts from God, the power and freedom of sexuality can be channeled toward good or evil. Everyone—the homosexual and the heterosexual person—is called to personal maturity and responsibility. With the help of God's grace, everyone is called to practice the virtue of chastity in relationships. Chastity means integrating one's thoughts, feelings, and actions, in the area of human sexuality, in a way that values and respects one's own dignity and that of others. It is "the spiritual power which frees love from selfishness and aggression" (Pontifical Council for the Family, *The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality*, 1996, no. 16).

Christ summons all his followers—whether they are married or living a single celibate life—to a higher standard of loving. This includes not only fidelity, forgiveness, hope, perseverance, and sacrifice, but also chastity, which is expressed in modesty and self-control. The chaste life is possible, though not always easy, for it involves a continual effort to turn toward God and away from sin, especially with the strength of the sacraments of penance and Eucharist. Indeed God expects everyone to strive for the perfection of love, but to achieve it gradually through stages of moral growth (cf. John Paul II, *On the Family*, 1981, no. 34). To keep our feet on the path of conversion, God's grace is available to and sufficient for everyone open to receiving it.

Furthermore, as homosexual persons "dedicate their lives to understanding the nature of God's personal call to them, they will be able to celebrate the sacrament of penance more faithfully and receive the Lord's grace so freely offered there in order to convert their lives more fully to his way" (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Letter on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons*, 1986, no. 12).

To live and love chastely is to understand that "only within marriage does sexual intercourse fully symbolize the Creator's dual design, as an act of covenant love, with the potential of co-creating new human life" (United States Catholic Conference, *Human Sexuality: A Catholic Perspective for Education and Lifelong Learning*, 1991, p. 55).

This is a fundamental teaching of our Church about sexuality, rooted in the biblical account of man and woman created in the image of God and made for union with one another (Gn 2–3).

Two conclusions follow. First, it is God's plan that sexual intercourse occur only within marriage between a man and a woman. Second, every act of intercourse must be open to the possible creation of human life. Homosexual intercourse cannot fulfill these two conditions. Therefore, the Church teaches that homogenital behavior is objectively immoral, while making the important distinction between this behavior and a homosexual orientation, which is not immoral in itself. It is also important to recognize that neither a homosexual orientation, nor a heterosexual one, leads inevitably to sexual activity. One's total personhood is not reducible to sexual orientation or behavior.

Respect for the God-given dignity of all persons means the recognition of human rights and responsibilities. The teachings of the Church make it clear that the fundamental human rights of homosexual persons must be defended and that all of us must strive to eliminate any forms of injustice, oppression, or violence against them (cf. The Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons, 1986, no. 10).

It is not sufficient only to avoid unjust discrimination. Homosexual persons "must be accepted with respect, compassion and sensitivity" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 2358). They, as is true of every human being, need to be nourished at many different levels simultaneously. This includes friendship, which is a way of loving and is essential to healthy human development. It is one of the richest possible human experiences. Friendship can and does thrive outside of genital sexual involvement.

The Christian community should offer its homosexual sisters and brothers understanding and pastoral care. More than twenty years ago we bishops stated that "Homosexuals . . . should have an active role in the Christian community" (National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *To Live in Christ Jesus: A Pastoral Reflection on the Moral Life*, 1976, p. 19). What does this mean in practice? It means that all homosexual persons have a right to be welcomed into the community, to hear the word of God, and to receive pastoral care. Homosexual persons living chaste lives should have opportunities to lead and serve the community. However, the Church has the right to deny public roles of service and leadership to persons, whether homosexual or heterosexual, whose public behavior openly violates its teachings.

The Church also recognizes the importance and urgency of ministering to persons with HIV/AIDS. Though HIV/AIDS is an epidemic affecting the whole human race, not just homosexual persons, it has had a devastating effect upon them and has brought great sorrow to many parents, families, and friends.

Without condoning self-destructive behavior or denying personal responsibility, we reject the idea that HIV/AIDS is a direct punishment from God.

Persons with AIDS are not distant, unfamiliar people, the objects of our mingled pity and aversion. We must keep them present to our consciousness as

individuals and a community, and embrace them with unconditional love. . . .
Compassion—love—toward persons infected with HIV is the only authentic
Gospel response. (National Conference of Catholic Bishops, Called to
Compassion and Responsibility: A Response to the HIV/AIDS Crisis, 1989)

Nothing in the Bible or in Catholic teaching can be used to justify prejudicial or
discriminatory attitudes and behaviors. We reiterate here what we said in an earlier
statement:

We call on all Christians and citizens of good will to confront their own fears
about homosexuality and to curb the humor and discrimination that offend
homosexual persons. We understand that having a homosexual orientation
brings with it enough anxiety, pain and issues related to self-acceptance without
society bringing additional prejudicial treatment. (Human Sexuality: A Catholic
Perspective for Education and Lifelong Learning, 1991, p. 55)

Section 1: Homosexuality & Homophobia

Homosexual: A person who is emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted or committed to members of the same sex. The terms “gay and lesbian” are often preferred by members of the community.

Homophobia: An irrational fear of homosexuals, homosexuality, or any behavior, belief, or attitude of self or others which does not conform to rigid sex-role stereotypes. It is the fear that encourages sexism and heterosexism. The extreme behavior of homophobia is violence against homosexuals; disapproval of and unreasonable fear towards gays, lesbians, and bisexuals based on myths and cultural heterosexism.

Homophobia takes many different forms, including physical acts of hate, violence, verbal assault, vandalism or blatant discrimination such as firing an employee, evicting someone from their housing or denying them access to public accommodations. Many subtle kinds of homophobia and heterosexism also occur but are overlooked or ignored because they seem insignificant by comparison. *They are not.*

Common Examples/Effects of Homophobia:

- Looking at a lesbian or gay man and automatically thinking of his/her sexuality rather than seeing him/her as a whole person.
- Using the terms “lesbian”, “gay”, or “fag” as accusatory
- Thinking that a lesbian (if you are female) or a gay man (if you are male) is making sexual advances if he or she touches or looks at you
- Assuming all lesbians and gay men are sexually active.
- Using the terms “lesbian”, “gay”, or “fag” as accusatory.
- Thinking that a lesbian (if you are female) or a gay man (if you are male) is making sexual advances if he/she touches you.
- Assuming that a lesbian or gay man would be heterosexual if given the opportunity.
- Thinking that a lesbian is just a woman who couldn’t find a man or that a lesbian is a woman who wants to be a man.
- Feeling that a gay man is just a man who couldn’t find a woman or that a gay man is a man who wants to be a woman.
- Inhibits the ability of heterosexuals to form close, intimate relationships with members of their own sex, for fear of being perceived as LGBT.

Effects of Homophobia on LGBT Students:

Adapted from the American College Health Association

- Possible Psycho-Social Responses by LGBT Students
 - Depression
 - Suicide
 - LGBT students are twice as likely to report having seriously considered suicide or made a suicide plan.

- LGBT student are three to four times as likely to report having attempted suicide in the past year.
- Students harassed because someone thinks they are gay are 5 times more likely to attempt suicide.
- Chronic Stress/Anxiety
- Fear
- Shame (internalized homophobia)
- Low self respect/self esteem
- Invisibility
- Isolation (psychological homelessness)
- Split or cut off from self and others
- Lack of Hope
- No Sense of Future
- Lack of Self-efficacy (little belief in one's ability to manage or control one's own life)
- Lack of Trust in Authority's (administrators, faculty, health care providers, campus police) willingness or ability to help
- Belief that safety and self interest are best served by silence and nondisclosure
- LGBT Students in Homophobic Environments are LESS Likely to:
 - Be open and honest in relating with others
 - See one's long-term health as a priority
 - Seek out information
 - Seek out and connect with healthy role models
 - Seek health care
- LGBT Students in Homophobic Environments are MORE Likely to:
 - Seek immediate comfort, affirmation (the feel-good of dance, chemicals, sex)
 - Seek connection through secretive, risky means (go outside campus, quick and/or anonymous encounters)
 - Seek sensation, thrill to feel alive (risky, edgy, shocking behavior)
 - Engage in extreme effort to gain immediate sense of control (disordered eating, self harm)

Creating a Non-Homophobic Campus Environment

- Object to and eliminate jokes and humor that put down or portray lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people in stereotypical ways.
- Counter statements about sexual orientation or gender identity that are not relevant to decisions or evaluations being made about faculty, staff, or students.
- Do not force LGBT people to reveal their sexual orientation to you or anyone else.
- Be sensitive to issues of oppression and appreciate the strength and struggle it takes to establish a positive LGBT identity.
- View the creation of this environment as a departmental or agency responsibility, not the responsibility of individual persons who happen to be LGBT.

Section 2: Bisexuality & Biphobia

Bisexual: A person who has the ability to be emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to both men and women.

Some people believe that a person is born heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual (for instance due to prenatal hormonal influences), and that their identity is inherent and unchangeable. Others believe that sexual orientation is due to socialization (for example, either imitating or rejecting parental models) or conscious choice (for example, choosing lesbianism as part of a political feminist identity). The remainder believes that these factors interact. Because biological, social, and cultural factors are different for each person, everyone's sexuality is highly individual, whether they are bisexual, gay or lesbian, heterosexual, or asexual. The "value" placed on a sexual identity should not depend on its origin. The creation and consolidation of a sexual identity is an ongoing process. Since we are generally socialized as heterosexuals, bisexuality is a stage that many people experience as part of the process of acknowledging their homosexuality. Others come to identify as bisexuals after a considerable period of identification as gay men or lesbians.

There is less clarity about the developmental issues for bisexuals and it is assumed that they experience many of the same issues as gay and lesbian persons. However, there are some issues unique to the bisexual experience. The stigma attached to bisexuality in many ways is greater than that attached to homosexuality. Many are open about their identity but many also hide it from both the heterosexual and homosexual world, believing that neither will accept them. Although many bisexuals tend to align themselves with gay and lesbian communities, an individual's self identification as bisexual is frequently met with skepticism in the homosexual community and is seen as an attempt to avoid the stigma of homosexuality. There is an added pressure on bisexuals to identify as homosexual and behave in an exclusively homosexual manner.

Biphobia: Is the fear of, discrimination against or hatred of bisexuals (although in practice it extends to pansexual people too). It need not include homophobia or heterophobia, because there are stereotypes that are specific to bisexuals.

What does Biphobia look like?

- Assuming that everyone is either heterosexual or homosexual.
- Assuming that bisexuals would be willing to "pass" for anything other than bisexual.
- Thinking that bisexual people are confused.
- Thinking that bisexual people are greedy or don't want to commit to one sexual orientation.
- Thinking of bisexual persons only in terms of their sexual orientation.
- Thinking that people identify as bisexual because it's "trendy".

Common Myths about Bisexuality:

Myth: Bisexuals are equally attracted to both sexes.

Truth: Bisexuals tend to favor either the same or the opposite sex, while recognizing their attraction to both genders.

Myth: Bisexuals are ignoring their gayness or lesbianism.

Truth: Bisexuality is a legitimate sexual orientation, which incorporates gayness. Many bisexuals consider themselves part of the generic group “gay” and are quite active in the gay community, both socially and politically. Some bisexuals use terms such as “bisexual lesbian” or “bisexual gay man” to more accurately describe their identities

Myth: Bisexuals are “transitioning” to becoming gay or lesbian.

Truth: Some people go through a transitional period of bisexuality on their way to adopting a lesbian/gay or heterosexual identity. For many others, bisexuality remains a long-term orientation.

Myth: Bisexuals can hide in the heterosexual community when the going gets tough.

Truth: To “pass” for straight and deny your bisexuality is just as painful and damaging for a bisexual individual as it is for a gay individual. Bisexual people are not heterosexual and they do not identify as heterosexual.

Section 3: Transgender & Transphobia

Sex: The classification of people as male or female. At birth, infants are assigned a sex based on a combination of bodily characteristics including: chromosomes, hormones, internal reproductive organs, and genitals.

Gender: A person's gender includes Identity or Awareness (psychological sense of self) and Expression (the way one expresses oneself; how society views oneself).

Sexual Orientation: Describes an individual's enduring physical, romantic, emotional and/or spiritual attraction to another person. If you think of sexual orientation on a spectrum, you would find attraction to men on one end and attraction to women on the other.

Transgender: An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from the sex they were assigned at birth. The term may include but is not limited to: transsexuals, cross-dressers, and other gender-variant people. As always, it is best to ask which gender terms an individual prefers.

Transphobia: A reaction of fear, loathing, and discriminatory treatment of people whose gender identity or psychological awareness does not match the sex they were assigned at birth, in the socially accepted way. Transgender people, lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals are typically the targets of transphobia.

Transsexual: An older term which originated in the medical and psychological communities. Some transsexual people still prefer to use the term to describe themselves. However, unlike *transgender*, *transsexual* is not an umbrella term, and many transgender people do not identify as transsexual. It is best to ask which term an individual prefers.

Sex & Gender

In order to understand the difference between someone who is gay, lesbian, or bisexual, and someone who is transgender, you need to know the difference between sex and gender. Simply put, sex is polarity of anatomy; gender is polarity of appearance and behavior. As one gains familiarity with transgenderism, these definitions quickly break down, but they serve as a good starting point.

Most people think there are just two sexes, male and female. Such is not the case. People who are intersex and people who are transsexual constitute sexes which are neither exactly male nor exactly female.

Likewise, gender is not a simple case of "either/or." Gender is exhibited by countless signals, from articles of clothing to cosmetics, hairstyles, conversational styles, body language, and much more.

Notice, however, that our gender "norms" are not symmetric. Women have won for themselves the right to a wide range of gender expression. Men have not made a corresponding effort. Most men live within a much narrower range of "acceptable" gender.

In general, it works best to think of all effects - sexual orientation, gender identity, sexual identity, and any others - as varying along a continuous spectrum of self-expression, rather than in just one of two or three ways.

Sexual Orientation vs. Gender vs. Sex

Sexual orientation, gender, and sex are independent of each other. A person may express any variation of each of these in any combination. To discourage the free expression of identity and orientation by an individual is to impose a damaging burden of conformity.

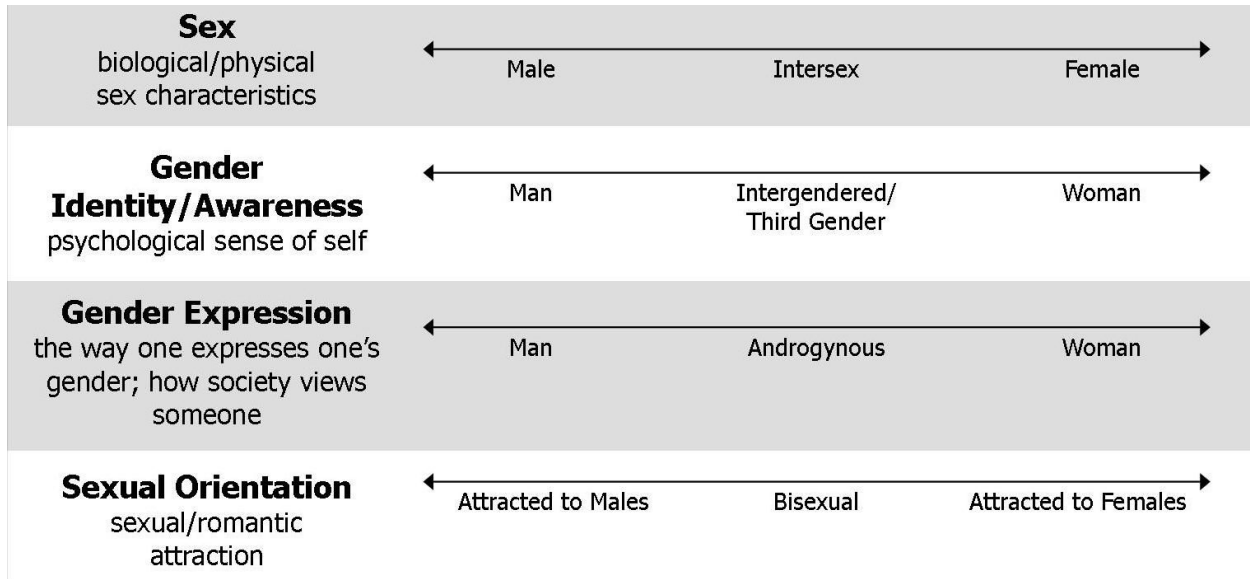
Sexual Orientation is which sex you find sexually attractive: opposite (hetero), same (homo), or both (bi).

Gender is how you see yourself socially: man, woman, or a combination of both. One may have the genitalia of one sex but prefer to relate socially as another. One might prefer to be fluid, relating sometimes as a man and sometimes as a woman. Or one might not identify as either one, relating androgynously.

Sex is medically designated by a certain combination of gonads, chromosomes, external gender organs, secondary sex characteristics and hormonal balances.

Sex/Gender/Sexuality Continuums

The continuums presented below are a visual explanation of some of the terms discussed above. Remember that one person can exist/identify at different points on all of the spectrums listed below.



Section 4: Heterosexism & Heterosexual Privilege

Heterosexism: The individual or institutionalized assumption that heterosexuality is the normal sexual orientation and which, therefore, systematically denies, invalidates and fails to recognize the complete humanness of LGBT persons. Heterosexism can take the form of institutionalized or individual discrimination, mistreatment, or even violence.

Combating Heterosexism:

- Wherever you are, assume there are LGBT individuals wondering how safe the environment is for them.
- Do not assume that everyone you meet is heterosexual.
- Provide safety by making clear your support of the LGBT community.
- Challenge heterosexism whether or not LGBT individuals are present.
- Confront your own fear, memories, and bad feelings about LGBT individuals. Recall and release those feelings, thereby diminishing their hold on you.
- Don't assume that a LGBT individual of the same gender is automatically romantically attracted to you.
- Remember that silence is complicity; challenge and confront statements that target gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender individuals and the assumptions behind them.

Heterosexual Privilege: The basic civil rights and social privileges that a heterosexual individual automatically receives, which are systematically denied to gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender persons on the sole basis of their sexual orientation.

What Does it Mean to Have Heterosexual Privilege?

- Not having to question your normalcy
 - Having role models of your gender and sexual orientation.
 - Having positive media images of people with whom you can identify.
- Validation from the culture in which you live
 - Receiving social acceptance from neighbors, colleagues, and new friends.
 - Living comfortably in a residence hall without enduring the fear of rejection from floor or roommates.
 - Dressing without worrying what it represents.
 - Working without being identified by our sexuality/culture.
 - The right to job security and freedom from sanctioned discrimination
 - Serving in the armed forces without having to keep your sexual orientation a secret

Section 5: Ally Development

What is an ally?

Allies support the gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and straight communities. They pledge to help end discrimination and provide a safe space to each and every person in need of an ally.

Being an ally means one can say the following “I” statements...

- I am for and with gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people.
- I know that I will make a difference in the lives LGBT members of the campus community.
- I am designated as a “safe person” for someone who is LGBT to talk to. This means I am committed to providing support and maintaining confidentiality.
- I am committed to people with a LGBT roommate, friend, or family member who may wish to speak with someone.
- I will work to confront homophobia and heterosexism by demonstrating my support of people in various ways. Though I am an ally, my actions mean little if I simultaneously put down other groups on the basis of their race, culture, gender, social status, or physical and mental abilities.

Guidelines for Being an Ally

- Don't assume heterosexuality.
- Be aware of the gender language you use and the implications this language might have.
- Educate yourself about LGBT issues and don't be afraid to ask questions.
- Educate yourself on transgender issues. Remember that sex and gender aren't dichotomies.
- Challenge stereotypes that people may have about LGBT individuals.
- Examine the effect sexual orientation has on people's lives and development and how multiple identities shape our lives.
- Avoid tokenizing or patronizing individuals from different groups.
- Encourage discourse and allow disagreement on topics of sexual identity and related civil rights. Keep disagreement and discussion focused on principles and issues rather than personalities and keep disagreement respectful.
- Remember that you are human. Allow yourself not to know everything, to make mistakes, and to occasionally be insensitive.
- Ask for support if you are being harassed or problems are surfacing related to your raising issues around sexual orientation and gender identity.

Benefits of Being an Ally

- You open yourself up to the possibility of close relationships with a significant portion of the population.
- You have an opportunity to be a part of the LGBT movement for equality.
- You may become less likely to stereotype according to sex roles.
- You may increase your ability to have close and loving relationships with same-sex friends.
- You have opportunities to learn from, teach, and have an impact on a population with whom you might otherwise not interact.
- You may be the reason an individual finally decides that his or her life is worth something.

What Should I Do If...?

A student walks into your office or room and notices your Creighton Allies Sign, and asks, "What makes your space safe?"

- *Creighton Allies is a part of Creighton's commitment to providing a safe and welcoming educational environment for all students.*
- *This is a voluntary program that any member of the university community is welcome to join. All Ally program participants must attend a training session and sign a pledge promising to affirm and support LGBT students.*
- *Creighton Allies members are not trained counselors, but are available to listen, give information about resources, and make referrals.*

A new student, Michael, comes into your office. He says he specifically sought you out because of your sign. He explains that he has been having some problems on campus, specifically with his roommate who has been making offensive comments related to his sexual identity. He has been having a hard time meeting new friends as well.

- *If the student lives on campus, he should make an appointment with his Resident Advisor (RA) or Resident Director (RD) to discuss his roommate problems.*
- *If the student is looking particularly to meet other LGBT students, recommend that he attend a GSA meeting.*
- *If you feel that the student may benefit from counseling, advise them to contact Counseling and Psychological Services (280-2733).*

Before class, two students are talking about a reading assignment. One says it is "so gay" and the other concurs.

- *What does one mean when one describes a reading as "so gay"?*
- *Do you realize that describing something as "gay" might be offensive to others?*

After a good workout, your exercise partner tells you that she won't go into the shower room when Anne is there because Anne is a lesbian and she doesn't want get undressed in front of her. What do you do?

- *Why do you assume that Anne will be looking at you?*
- *Lesbians and gay people are not attracted to every person of the same sex, just as heterosexuals are not attracted by every member of the opposite sex.*

When to Refer a LGBT Person to a Mental Health Professional

Most of the LGBT people you will encounter are seeking support, advice, or information. Occasionally, you may see a student who is experiencing psychological distress. This may be evident in the following contexts:

1. When a person states or demonstrates they are no longer able to function in their normal capacity with their class or work; when they have experienced a drop in grades, academic performance, or work.
2. When a person can no longer cope with their day-to-day activities and responsibilities. A person may state they are no longer going to classes or they have been late for their job and may be fired soon if this continues.
3. A person expresses depressive symptoms such as: sleep disturbance, sudden weight loss or weight gain, crying spells, fatigue, loss of interest or pleasure in previous enjoyable activities, and/or inability to concentrate or complete tasks.
4. A person expresses severe anxiety symptoms such as: feelings of panic, shortness of breath, headaches, sweaty palms, dry mouth, or racing thoughts.
5. A person expresses suicidal thoughts or feelings.
6. A person has no support. They have no family or friends with whom they can talk about their sexual orientation.
7. ***A good guideline to use if all else fails: If you are feeling overwhelmed or worried about a person, refer them to a mental health professional!***

Counseling and Psychological Services provides counseling services free of charge to full time Creighton students. To make an appointment contact the Center at 280-2733. The office is located on the 2nd floor of Brandies, Room 203.

If I display a Creighton Allies symbol, What may I expect?

Posting an Allies symbol may bring a variety of possible reactions from those around you who notice it. The Creighton Allies symbol might make some people uncomfortable. There may be times when someone seeks you out to dispute the purpose of the Allies Program, or to confront you on general issues related to LGBT people. You do not need to engage in discussion with people who seek to challenge you, the Allies Program, or LGBT people. You are there to provide support and resource information, not to defend issues. While it's helpful to be aware of these possibilities ahead of time, the following consequences are even more likely. You may expect to:

- find that LGBT people censor their speech less and are more open with you so that there is more genuine communication between you.
- find that students and colleagues are more at ease, anticipating a non-judgmental atmosphere in your workspace.
- find people turning to you for support or information about LGBT issues and concerns.
- perhaps not notice any difference in the interactions you have with others, but to know you are making a difference.
- know you are making a personal contribution to improving the campus environment.

Creighton Allies Program Membership Pledge

I, _____, acknowledge that I am an Ally for and with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) members of the Creighton University community and am committed to providing a safe, confidential support network for LGBT students, staff and faculty.

My participation in the Creighton Allies Program means I am committed to being a safe person to whom individuals who have concerns about LGBT issues can speak. I will continue to educate myself on LGBT issues by reading the materials distributed to me by Allies Program coordinators and take advantage of future opportunities to learn more.

I will strive to educate myself and others at Creighton about LGBT issues and confront discrimination and mistreatment of people based on their sexual orientation or gender identity. Furthermore, I realize that my actions as an LGBT ally have little meaning if I participate in other forms of oppression.

I acknowledge that I may make mistakes and that it's okay if I don't have all the answers. If I believe it would be beneficial to someone, I will refer them to other resources, including the Counseling Center.

I realize I have a network of fellow Allies, and I will rely on them for support and assistance just as they can rely on me for support and assistance.

Finally, I am committed to treating everyone with the dignity and respect to which they are entitled as human beings.

Section 6: Glossary

Basic Terms

Ally—Someone who supports LGBT people, acts accordingly to challenge homophobic, heterosexist, biphobic, and transphobic remarks and behaviors, and is willing to explore and understand these forms of bias within him or herself.

Asexual—A person who has no significant interest in sexual or romantic activity.

Biphobia—The fear of, discrimination against or hatred of bisexuals.

Bisexual—One who has significant sexual or romantic attractions to members of both the same gender and another gender or sex.

Gay—1. Term used in some cultural settings to represent males who are attracted to males in a romantic, erotic and/or emotional sense. Not all men who engage in “homosexual behavior” identify as gay, and as such this label should be used with caution. 2. Term used to refer to the LGBT community as a whole, or as an individual identity label for anyone who does not identify as heterosexual.

Heterosexism—Heterosexism is the systematic, pervasive, routine, institutionalized mistreatment of individuals on the basis of their membership in various groups (lesbian, gay, transgender, or bisexual) which are disadvantaged by imbalances of power in society.

Heterosexual—An individual who has sexual and romantic attraction to members of the opposite sex.

Homophobia—An irrational fear of homosexuals, homosexuality, or any behavior, belief, or attitude of self or others which does not conform to rigid sex-role stereotypes.

Homosexual—A person who is emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted or committed to members of the same sex. The terms “gay and lesbian” are often preferred by members of the community.

Institutional Oppression—Arrangements of a society used to benefit one group at the expense of another through the use of language, media, education, religion, economics, etc.

Internalized Oppression—The process by which a member of an oppressed group comes to accept and live out the inaccurate stereotypes applied to the oppressed group.

Lesbian—A girl or woman who has significant sexual or romantic attractions primarily to members of the same gender or sex.

Oppression—Systematic (supported by society, institution, or group) mistreatment of people who are or are perceived to be members of a particular group. Mistreatment can include erroneous information, economic and social marginalization, which ranges from not including members of the group in one's circle of friends and media reports on and representations of society; the cold shoulder; not consulting with or accepting input from them on decisions which concern them; snide comments, verbal harassment, assault, rape, and murder, all based on the perception that the target person is a member of that group.

Sex—The classification of people as male or female. At birth, infants are assigned a sex based on a combination of bodily characteristics including: chromosomes, hormones, internal reproductive organs, and genitals.

Sexual Orientation—Describes an individual's enduring physical, romantic, emotional and/or spiritual attraction to another person. If you think of sexual orientation on a spectrum, you would find attraction to men on one end and attraction to women on the other.

Transgender—An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from the sex they were assigned at birth. The term may include but is not limited to: transsexuals, cross-dressers, and other gender-variant people. As always, it is best to ask which gender terms an individual prefers.

Transphobia—A reaction of fear, loathing, and discriminatory treatment of people whose gender identity or psychological awareness does not match the sex they were assigned at birth, in the socially accepted way. Transgender people, lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals are typically the targets of transphobia.

Gender Identity Terms

Androgynous/androgyny—Simultaneously exhibiting approximately equal proportions of masculine and feminine characteristics.

Butch—Masculine or macho dress and behavior, regardless of sex or gender identity.

Dyke—Reclaimed derogatory slang for lesbians and bisexual women.

Gender Dysphoria—A medical term used to describe the unhappiness or discomfort experienced by one whose primary sex characteristics do not match their gender identity.

Gender Role—Rules assigned by society that define (what clothing, behaviors, thoughts, feelings, relationships, etc.) what is considered appropriate and inappropriate for members of a given gender (which things are considered masculine, feminine, or unisex varies according to location, class, occasion, and numerous other factors).

Gender— A person's gender includes Identity or Awareness (psychological sense of self) and Expression (the way one expresses oneself; how society views oneself).

Intersex—One whose external genitalia at birth do not match the standards for male or female (large clitoris, tiny penis) or one whose sex glands do not totally match the sex assigned at birth (male with ovarian tissue or female with testicular tissue) or one whose sexual development does not match the sex assigned at birth (development of penis or extensive facial hair in one assigned as female or the development of breasts in one assigned as male).

Primary sex characteristics—Inclusive term for the male penis, prostate and testicles; and for the female clitoris, vagina, uterus and ovaries.

Secondary sex characteristics—General term including facial and body hair, vocal timbre and range, breast size, weight distribution.

Sexual Reassignment Surgery (SRS)—A surgical procedure which changes one's primary sexual characteristics from those of one sex to those of another sex, to align them with one's gender identity.

Trans—An abbreviation of the word transgender, it allows an individual to state their gender variant identity without having to disclose any hormonal or surgical status/intentions. This term is sometimes used to refer to the gender variant community as a whole.

Transsexual—An older term which originated in the medical and psychological communities. Some transsexual people still prefer to use the term to describe themselves. However, unlike *transgender*, *transsexual* is not an umbrella term, and many transgender people do not identify as transsexual. It is best to ask which term an individual prefers.

Potentially Offensive Terms

Offensive: "homosexual"

Preferred: "gay" or "lesbian"

Some men and women prefer "gay" or "lesbian," respectively, as opposed to "homosexual." This is due, in part, to the clinical history of the word "homosexual." It has been adopted by some to suggest that lesbians and gay men are diseased or psychologically/emotionally disordered— notions discredited by both the American Psychological Association and the American Psychiatric Association in the 1970s.

Offensive: "sexual preference"

Appropriate: "sexual orientation"

The term "sexual preference" is typically used to suggest that being lesbian, gay or bisexual is a choice and therefore can and should be "cured." *Sexual orientation* is the accurate description of an individual's enduring physical, romantic, emotional and/or spiritual attraction to members of the same and/or opposite sex and is inclusive of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and heterosexual or straight men and women.

Offensive: "gay lifestyle" or "homosexual lifestyle"

Appropriate: "lesbian," "gay," "bisexual"

There is no single lesbian, gay or bisexual lifestyle. Lesbians, gay men and bisexuals are diverse in the ways they lead their lives. The phrase "gay lifestyle" is used to denigrate lesbians and gay men, suggesting that their sexual orientation is a choice and therefore can and should be "cured".

Offensive: "gay agenda" or "homosexual agenda"

Preferred: "lesbian and gay civil rights movement" or "lesbian and gay movement"

LGBT people are as diverse as their political beliefs as all other communities. "Lesbian and gay civil rights movement" accurately describes the historical efforts, by LGBT and straight people alike, to achieve understanding and equal treatment for LGBT people.

Offensive: "special rights"

Preferred: "equal rights" or "equal protection"

Some people characterize civil rights and equal protection of the law for LGBT Americans as "special rights" in an attempt to create opposition to anti-discrimination protections and equal opportunity laws.

Section 7: Resources

LGBT Support Sites

Answers to Your Questions about Sexual Orientation and Homosexuality (The American Psychological Association)
www.apa.org/topics/orientation.html

Be an Ally and a Friend (GLAAD)
www.glaad.org/PSA2006/index.php

Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere
www.colage.org

Coming Out as a Straight Ally: A Personal Story
www.youthpride.org/news/straightally.htm

FUAH: Families United Against Hate
www.fuah.org/

GLSEN: Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network
www.glsen.org

Gay and Lesbian National Hotline
www.glnh.org

PFLAG: Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians and Gays
www.pflag.org

The Safe Schools Coalition
www.safeschoolscoalition.org

Educational Sites

Challenging Homophobia
www.challenginghomophobia.net

Bisexual Resource Center
www.biresource.org

FAQs: Catholicism, Homosexuality and Dignity (DignityUSA)
www.dignityusa.org/faq.html

Hate Crime Network: Report a Hate Crime
hate-crime.website-works.com/

Creighton Allies Program 2006
Creighton University

International Foundation for Gender Education
www.ifge.org

Making College and University Campuses Safer for LGBT Students
www.lgbtcampus.org

Sexual Prejudice: Understanding Homosexuality and Heterosexism (UC Davis)
psychology.ucdavis.edu/rainbow/html/sexual_prejudice.html

Transsexual, Transgender, and Intersex History
www.transhistory.org