

## June Tool Kit: LGBTQIA+ Health Awareness



**JUNE 2020**  
**COMMUNITY HEALTH**

# LGBTQIA+ HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

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# OVERVIEW

**LGBTQIA+ IS AN UMBRELLA TERM USED TO REFER TO THE LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER, QUEER, INTERSEX, AND ASEXUAL COMMUNITIES. THE "+" IS USED TO INCLUDE MINORITIES NOT CAPTURED WITH THE ACRONYM (ANA, 2018).**

**LESBIAN:** "usually, a woman whose primary sexual and affectional orientation is toward people of the same gender" (UC Davis, 2020).

**GAY:** a person whose "sexual and affectional orientation" is "toward people of the same gender" (UC Davis, 2020).

**BISEXUAL:** "a person whose primary sexual and affectional orientation is toward people of the same and other genders, or towards people regardless of their gender (UC Davis, 2020).

**TRANSGENDER OR TRANS:** "one's internal knowledge of gender" differs "from conventional or cultural expectations based on the sex" they were "assigned at birth," OR a person "who identifies as a gender other than woman or man"(UC Davis, 2020).

**QUEER OR QUESTIONING:** some identify as queer as "a celebration of not fitting into social norms" (UC Davis, 2020). Often used "to express fluid identities and orientations (The Human Rights Campaign, 2020). However, the term queer can be "considered hateful when used by those who do not identify as LGBTQIA" (UC Davis, 2020).

**INTERSEX:** "an umbrella term to describe a wide range of natural body variations that do not fit neatly into conventional definitions of male or female" (UC Davis, 2020).

**ASEXUAL:** "a broad spectrum of sexual orientations generally characterized by feeling varying degrees of sexual attraction or a desire for partnered sexuality" (UC Davis, 2020).



**DEFINITIONS ARE NOT UNIVERSAL. EACH INDIVIDUAL DEFINES A TERM FOR THEMSELVES (UC Davis, 2020).**

# HISTORY OF PRIDE MONTH

**June is LGBTQIA+ Pride Month in honor of the Stonewall Uprising of 1969 - "a tipping point for the Gay Liberation Movement in the United States" (Library of Congress, 2020).**

**In June 1969, police arrived at the Stonewall Inn, a gay bar to "disperse the bar's patrons," (Gold & Norman, 2019). Officials were physically and verbally abusive, and conducted "anatomical inspections" (Gold & Norman, 2019). Coming together, members of the LGBTQIA+ community protested, resulting in a shift of "social attitudes and norms" towards the LGBTQIA+ community (Gold & Norman, 2019).**

## **Marsha P. Johnson**

- ▶ A black transgender woman who played a key role in the "gay liberation movement energized by the 1969 police raid on the Stonewall Inn" (Chan, 2018).**
- ▶ Throughout her life, Marsha advocated for "social and economic justice," for homeless LGBT youth, and for AIDS patients (Chan, 2018).**
- ▶ In a time when "same-sex dancing in public was prohibited;" bars were banned from serving alcohol to gay people; and police enforced fines for cross-dressing, Marsha dreamed "to see gay people liberated... and to have equal rights as other people" (Chan, 2018).**

# IMPORTANCE OF LGBTQIA+ HEALTH AWARENESS

Due to "sexual orientation-related health discrimination and disadvantages," members of the LGBTQIA+ community are victim to health disparities (ANA, 2018. This is evident in higher incidences of:

- ▶ **PSYCHIATRIC DISORDERS** ◀
- ▶ **SUBSTANCE ABUSE** ◀
  - ▶ **SUICIDE** ◀
- ▶ **HOMELESSNESS** ◀
- ▶ **HIV & STDS** ◀
- ▶ **OBESITY** ◀
- ▶ **VIOLENCE AND BULLYING** ◀

In addition to a LACK OF:

- ▶ **HEALTH INSURANCE** ◀
- ▶ **CULTURALLY-AFFIRMING AND INFORMED HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS** ◀
- ▶ **SOCIAL PROGRAMS APPROPRIATE FOR LGBTQIA MEMBERS OF ALL AGES** ◀
- ▶ **COMFORT SEEKING PREVENTATIVE CARE** ◀

(Healthy People 2020)

# A CLOSER LOOK AT HOMELESSNESS

LGBTQIA+ youth represent **"40% of the homeless youth population,"** of which **"60% are likely to attempt suicide"** related to family rejection and discrimination (The Trevor Project, 2020).

**Compared to their peers, LGBTQIA+ youth are also:**

- ▶ **5.9 times more likely to have depression** (The Trevor Project, 2020).
- ▶ **3.4 times more likely to use illegal drugs** (The Trevor Project, 2020).
- ▶ **More likely to "experience greater physical and sexual exploitation"** (National Coalition for the Homeless, 2019).

**Transgender people are at an even increased risk for physical abuse and are "often turned away from shelters" due to a "lack of acceptance"** (National Coalition for the Homeless, 2019).

**What can we do?**

- ▶ **Advocate for local, state, and federal funding of programs that support homeless youth and are both inclusive and affirming of the LGBTQIA+ community** (The Trevor Project, 2020).
- ▶ **Promote policies that support LGBTQIA+ competent home health care, foster care, and adoption** (The Trevor Project, 2020).
- ▶ **Expand safe housing options with educated staff** (National Coalition for the Homeless, 2019).

# A CLOSER LOOK AT RACIAL DISPARITIES

- ▶ **39% of LGBTQIA+ adults identify as Latinx, Black, Asian Pacific Islander, or Native American** (Funders for LGBTQ Issues, 2019).
- ▶ **"One in five youth in the juvenile justice system identify as LGBTQ" - a population in which 85% are people of color** (Funders for LGBTQ Issues, 2019).
- ▶ **LGBTQIA+ people of color are more likely to be unemployed than their white counterparts** (Funders for LGBTQ Issues, 2019).
- ▶ **"Unemployment rates for transgender people of color have reached as high as four times the national unemployment rate"** (Movement Advancement Project, 2020).
- ▶ **LGBTQIA+ people of color receive "unequal pay, benefits, and taxation"** (Movement Advancement Project, 2020).
- ▶ **What can we do?**
  - ▶ **Advocate for legislation to "reduce discrimination and bullying in schools," thus reducing educational barriers** (Movement Advancement Project, 2020).
  - ▶ **Promote "federal and state protections against wage discrimination based on race, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation and gender identity/expression"** (Movement Advancement Project, 2020).

# IMPLICATIONS FOR NURSING PRACTICE

## ▶ CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT OF INCLUSIVITY

**Routinely ask clients their sexual orientation and gender identity to better care for them as a whole person** (National LGBT Health Education Center, 2016).

**Address a client by their preferred pronouns** (National LGBT Health Education Center, 2016).

## ▶ FOSTER AFFIRMING ENCOUNTERS

**Educate yourself on LGBTQIA+ health topics** (National LGBT Health Education Center, 2016).

**Ask open-ended questions that reflect the client's pronouns** (National LGBT Health Education Center, 2016).

## ▶ PRACTICE CULTURAL HUMILITY

**Commit to lifetime of learning and critical self-reflection** (Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998).

**Recognize and challenge the power imbalances that exist in the healthcare setting** (Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998).

**Push for institutional accountability and the systemic adoption of inclusivity and cultural humility** (Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998).

# IMPLICATIONS FOR NURSING PRACTICE

## ▶ BECOME FAMILIAR WITH LGBTQIA+ HEALTH NEEDS, SUCH AS:

Yearly screenings for HIV, syphilis, gonorrhea, and chlamydia (National LGBT Health Education Center, 2016).

Routine screening for breast, prostate, or cervical cancer (National LGBT Health Education Center, 2016).

## ▶ GET INVOLVED IN HEALTHCARE LEGISLATION

Advocate for public "policies and legislation that support equal access to high-quality, culturally congruent health care for LGBTQ+ populations" (ANA, 2018).

## ▶ NURSING EDUCATION

Push for LGBTQIA+ health topics to be incorporated into nursing school curriculum (ANA, 2018).

## ▶ ADD EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES TO YOUR TOOLKIT, SUCH AS:

The Center of Excellence for Transgender Health  
[www.transhealth.ucsf.edu](http://www.transhealth.ucsf.edu)

The National LGBT Health Education Center  
[www.lgbthealtheducation.org](http://www.lgbthealtheducation.org)

Healthy People 2020  
<https://www.healthypeople.gov/>



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