

STATEWIDE CENTER FOR
SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION
Training and Technical Assistance

LGBTQ+ Safer Nightlife Facilitator Toolkit



A Companion Guide for A Companion Guide for Facilitating a Healthy Nightlife Program

Developed by
The New York State Sexual Violence
Prevention Training Center

A Project of  **CAI**
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STATEWIDE CENTER FOR SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION

Training and Technical Assistance

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Introduction



Why a Facilitator Toolkit, & How this Can Help You

The Rape Prevention and Education (RPE) program is a federal program that funds state and territorial health departments and sexual assault coalitions to prevent sexual violence. Prevention involves stopping sexual violence before it starts by addressing the risk and protective factors at different levels.

RPE staff in New York have been working with nightlife establishments for years to implement bar staff bystander interventions, which are strategies that train staff on how to intervene when they see or suspect harm in nightlife settings. The New York State Sexual Violence Prevention Training Center was set up as part of the RPE program to train and assist sexual violence prevention programs across the state. The Training Center also worked with content matter experts in LGBTQ+ nightlife to create this toolkit, which helps facilitators implement bar staff bystander interventions in LGBTQ+ nightlife.

The toolkit is based on listening sessions and feedback from LGBTQ+ patrons, nightlife staff, educators, and curriculum developers. It guides facilitators to use expertise and cultural humility to create effective and affirming learning opportunities that can improve LGBTQ+ safety and well-being in the nightlife scene.

In 2022, CAI prepared: *“Guidance for Bar Bystander Intervention in LGBTQ+ Nightlife: Summary Report from 2020-2021 Group and Individual Listening Sessions With Bar Staff and Patrons Across New York State for the New York State Department of Health.”* The results of this work re-emphasized and expanded upon many of the findings and recommendations contained in the CAI report: *“Adapting Training for Bar Staff to LGBTQ+ Nightlife Spaces.”*

One recommendation in particular rose to the top as central to supporting facilitators in preparing for and delivering their sessions in the most effective manner. The recommendation of requiring training for facilitators on LGBTQ+ essentials was specifically identified as both a necessary and fundamental best practice in both reports. LGBTQ+ essentials, in this context, consists of two separate but related components of knowledge.

1

The first component involves having a basic understanding and command of LGBTQ+ concepts.

2

The second component focuses on social and cultural factors specific to LGBTQ+ people.

1. The first component involves having a basic understanding and command of LGBTQ+ concepts

For instance, intra-group terminology as well as ways LGBTQ+ folks may use language differently than heterosexual cisgender people; and understanding the difference between gender identity and sexual orientation. Equipped with that knowledge, facilitators will be better prepared to build rapport and interact in affirming, knowledgeable and respectful ways with bar staff, session participants, and LGBTQ+ communities in general.

2. The second component focuses on social and cultural factors specific to LGBTQ+ people

This includes gaining adequate historical context for LGBTQ+ nightlife to better understand unique characteristics of LGBTQ+ bars and patrons; and developing skills including practices of empathy and cultural humility. The rationale for this component is rooted in the unique ways bars and nightlife culture are deeply intertwined in the history and culture of LGBTQ+ individuals and communities, in ways that are complicated and sometimes fraught due to societal stigma and discrimination. Some examples include historic anti-LGBTQ+ driven clashes with law enforcement and with venue proprietors, and the unique place of LGBTQ+ nightlife against a backdrop of economic vulnerability, societal hostility, and violence.

In addition, when it comes to LGBTQ+ culture, language itself frequently has meaning and nuance that may differ significantly from common heterosexual cisgender usage. For example, the word “queer” has been reclaimed by some LGBTQ+ people and is sometimes used as a more inclusive umbrella term for people who are not heterosexual or not cisgender; and the word “trans” as a shortened version of the word “transgender.”

Please note that “queer” and “trans” are used throughout this guide to reflect cultural language use (for example, “queer and trans nightlife”). Please see the [Terms and Definitions](#) page for more detailed descriptions of common LGBTQ+ terms.

Based on these findings detailed in this work, CAI developed a resource for those coordinating and facilitating healthy nightlife interventions with LGBTQ+ establishments.

It is essential to approach this work without stigmatizing the LGBTQ+ community or fostering sex-negative perspectives. While sexualization may manifest in LGBTQ+ spaces differently than predominantly cisgender heterosexual spaces, facilitators must understand these differences with humility, curiosity, and a willingness to challenge preconceived notions. By using “parallel language,” facilitators can avoid reinforcing stereotypes or biases. For instance, it’s a common misconception that LGBTQ+ spaces are inherently more sexualized than their cis-hetero counterparts. In reality, both LGBTQ+ and non-LGBTQ+ nightlife establishments may engage in intentional sexualization depending on the context.

Consider, for example, how many non LGBTQ+ bars promote events like Ladies’ Night or employ dress codes that objectify women. When evaluating LGBTQ+ bars, we should use language that recognizes these parallels, avoiding the assumption of heightened sexualization. Ultimately, the key takeaway is to be mindful of the social and cultural dynamics of any space you enter. An effective facilitator must approach this work with a commitment to embracing queer and trans joy, and cultural humility to build trust and foster an environment of understanding and acceptance within LGBTQ+ spaces.



The goal of this resource is to serve as a practical guide for implementers to use at various stages of an intervention and to provide recommended practices for tailoring their approach to meet the needs of LGBTQ+ communities.

Who is this Guide for?

This toolkit is designed to support facilitators in implementing bar staff bystander interventions in LGBTQ+ nightlife. It will help you to prevent sexual violence in nightlife settings by training staff on how to intervene effectively and respectfully when they witness or suspect unsafe or harmful situations. It is geared specifically for facilitating sessions with staff participants (rather than the general population), and provides tips, tools, and background information to help new and seasoned facilitators alike use expertise and cultural humility to create effective and affirming learning opportunities.

The toolkit is based on the input and expertise of LGBTQ+ patrons, nightlife staff, educators, and curriculum developers. It will guide you to gain knowledge and understanding of key information and skills that can enhance LGBTQ+ safety and well-being in the nightlife scene. All this, in the service of creating safer LGBTQ+ nightlife.



TRAINING TIP

To make the most of your learning experience, we recommend hiring LGBTQ+ nightlife training experts, such as the New York State Sexual Violence Prevention Training Center, who can help you apply the key concepts in realistic scenarios and give you constructive feedback: www.bit.ly/NYSVPTC. This way, you can practice your skills and ensure you follow the best practices before you go out to the field.

Foundations



At-A-Glance

- LGBTQ+ bars have served as safe spaces for the community for generations.
- Historic laws and policies that viewed LGBTQ+ people as criminals or as mentally ill fueled stigma and stereotypes. This history highlighted the importance of LGBTQ+ bars as places of refuge.
- In the past, police raids of LGBTQ+ bars were common.
- LGBTQ+ bars served – and still serve today -- as places of safety, community and connection.

Some History About LGBTQ+ Bars & Nightlife

In order to be prepared for and effective in facilitating sessions with staff of LGBTQ+ specific venues, it is helpful to have some historical context about LGBTQ+ nightlife establishments as unique safe spaces for the community, as well as the history of police harassment in these spaces. LGBTQ+ bars have been central to safety, community, identity, and liberation – both personal and as a social movement – for generations. Zanzibar, believed to be the first gay bar in Europe, was established in France in 1885, while the oldest gay bar that still exists, Café ‘t Mandje in the Netherlands, dates back to 1927.

And while versions of what might be termed LGBTQ+ bars and nightlife establishments today have existed for more than a century, they are also places where the history of LGBTQ+ people and communities has been overlooked, ignored, or erased by heterosexual cisgender majority culture within the overarching context of pervasive systematic racism.

Even the Stonewall Inn, widely credited as being the birthplace of the modern U.S. LGBTQ+ rights movement, was not the first site of LGBTQ+ fighting back against discrimination but was instead the first such incident to receive press coverage by a major media outlet, which led to its fame. Stonewall was one of several establishments throughout the U.S. where LGBTQ+ people rose up against police violence and societal discrimination and bias throughout the 1950s and 1960s. Young transgender and gender nonconforming people of color were often at the forefront of the movements.

During this time, police raids of LGBTQ+ nightlife establishments were common, and often led to dire consequences. In addition to the risk of violence, patrons were subject to arrest and subsequently having their names published in the newspaper; this in turn often led to intense stigma and ostracization, such as being fired from jobs, and loss of families, friends and loved ones.

Alongside the practice of police raids, it is of note that “drinking while gay” was illegal in New York bars and restaurants until the late 1960s. It was illegal for establishments to knowingly serve LGBTQ+ people alcohol because in doing so the establishments could lose their liquor license. This was based on the belief that bars and restaurants should not support “disorderly” or immoral behavior; at the time, simply being a gay person was viewed as being disorderly.



**Marsha P. Johnson Hands Out Flyers in Support of Gay Students
at N.Y.U. Photo Courtesy of New York Public Library.**

This practice continued until a New York Court of Appeals ruling in 1967, shortly after Dick Leitsch and two friends organized a “sip-in” to protest this discrimination. Their idea was inspired by the sit-ins during this time that sought to desegregate lunch counters and other public accommodations in the South. A sip-in consisted of the group going to a bar, ordering a drink, and announcing they were gay. If they were refused service, they planned to sue [or sued] because they were being denied the right to be served and to congregate as they chose.

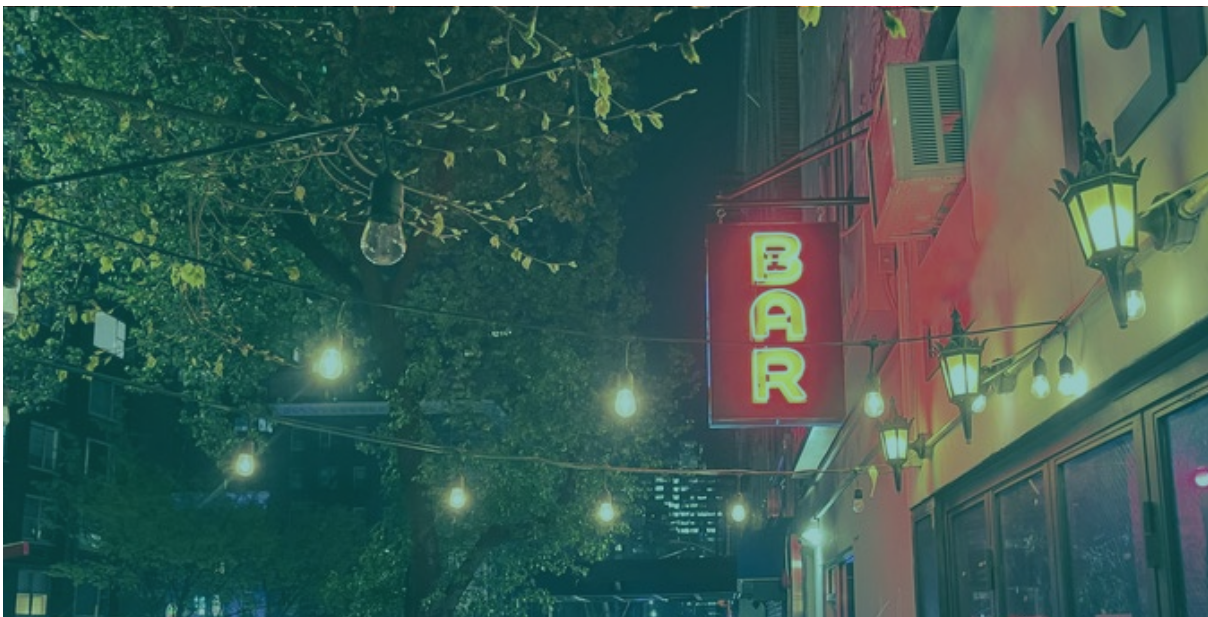
Despite all this, LGBTQ+ bars not only survived but thrived as key places of community, culture, refuge and safe haven. They served (and continue to do so to the present day) as de facto community centers, even achieving church-like status for LGBTQ+ people seeking sanctuary, connection, and community.

Prior to the mid-1970s, LGBTQ+ people were explicitly not welcome in any other spaces due to the criminalization and pathologizing of bodies, behaviors and identities that were perceived as not sufficiently or explicitly cisgender or heterosexual. And from the 1940s until the mid-1970s, there were no other public spaces in which LGBTQ+ people, particularly women, were free to love and exist.

As a result of this history, some LGBTQ+ nightlife spaces may be described or experienced as more sexualized than straight bars; this observation was noted by participants in the reports from which this facilitator resource was first envisioned. This observation is not a criticism and directly reflects the history and experiences of LGBTQ+ patrons. And today, new areas of possibility and tension for LGBTQ+ bars have emerged.

One area includes the emphasis of autonomy and self-determination within LGBTQ+ communities and the freedom to be oneself, and how that squares with contemporary ideas of what safety can realistically encompass.

Another area with varying perspectives is for whom contemporary LGBTQ+ bars and nightlife are for, or should be for—are they still spaces of sanctuary for LGBTQ+ people, or are they now for everyone? A third recurring theme has to do with the historic and current economic pressures facing these venues, and ways to nuance marketing effectively to center and attract LGBTQ+ communities while being sensitive to avoid strategies LGBTQ+ patrons may perceive as overly commercialized, or that exploit or misappropriate LGBTQ+ cultural themes to try to attract mixed orientation audiences.



Community, Belonging, & COVID



At-A-Glance

- LGBTQ+ bars often meet many community needs.
- Many LGBTQ+ bars and other LGBTQ+ friendly spaces have closed in recent years.
- LGBTQ+ communities and businesses felt the impacts of COVID in some ways that were more pronounced than non-LGBTQ+ ones. This caused even more LGBTQ+ nightlife spaces to close.
- Mass shootings in LGBTQ+ bars in recent years have made finding safety and community even more challenging for queer and trans people.
- Trust and cultural humility are keys to building relationships with LGBTQ+ bar and nightlife patrons and staff.

The summary reports, on which this toolkit is based, detail the ways queer and trans people described the role of LGBTQ+ bars in their lives. Understanding the impact COVID-19 in LGBTQ+ nightlife is essential. It emphasizes the pandemic's profound impact on LGBTQ+ spaces and communities. Often, LGBTQ+ bars were not simply a place to get a drink, but key places that functioned as specific LGBTQ+ safe havens, meeting a variety of individual and community needs. Throughout this process, many listening session participants (as well as potential participants throughout the recruitment process) commented on the limited options available to LGBTQ+ people seeking community.

The existence of fewer options has in part been caused by geographic and transportation barriers, as well as shifting economic and social patterns that have resulted in the closure of many LGBTQ+ bars, bookstores, and other gathering spaces throughout the country. These closures have accelerated particularly during the last 10 to 15 years.

For instance, one person put it this way during the remarks from the 2021 report:

Our queer bar closed years ago.
It was our community center, really. That's how it functioned. Guess it helps it was LGBTQ+ owned and operated. We're grateful for (name of local non-LGBTQ+ bar) that hosts our drag night once a month but that's not the same as having our own.

Others also noted the closure or absence of LGBTQ+ safer spaces in their regions, including
“Is there even any LGBTQ+ night life anywhere between New York City and Albany?”

COVID-19 played a significant role in making LGBTQ+ spaces even more needed as places of queer and trans community refuge and connection, while also posing unique challenges to those spaces, as well. Remarks from the listening sessions participants included a text message

“With all the bars closed, the Walmart I work at definitely counted as a “nightlife” spot last year 😊😊😊”

Another said,

“I get more action in the local strip mall parking lot because COVID closed the bar.”

The significant number of people who participated in the listening sessions, or who responded to the call to participate, with comments that fell into these categories underscored both the need for more LGBTQ+ spaces and the desire for connection. This is especially critical due to the relationship between health outcomes and having a sense of belonging and connectedness, which is tied to reducing risk and increasing health enhancing behaviors.

In addition, COVID has also had a disparate and in some cases deeper or more long-lasting impacts on LGBTQ+ individuals, communities, and business establishments. These impacts sprung from a variety of factors.

Research finds LGBTQ+ people were more likely than heterosexual cisgender people to have had their work hours cut during the height of COVID across all employment sectors, as well as more likely to work in sectors most impacted by COVID, including restaurant and related service jobs, health care, education, and retail. These characteristics increased the economic vulnerability of LGBTQ+ people, and heightened risk of on-the-job COVID exposure.

Other already existing health disparities among LGBTQ+ people (e.g., higher rates of cigarette smoking and chronic illness, lower likelihood of having health insurance, and more likelihood to avoid or delay seeking healthcare) further exacerbated COVID impacts on LGBTQ+ individuals, families, and communities.

These in turn changed patterns of attendance at in-person venues and events, and the willingness or hesitance to go out depending on risk tolerance. They also caused multiple unexpected and unpredictable temporary nightlife business and event closures due to staffing and supply shortages. There were also permanent closures of businesses as a result of COVID's impact on the financial bottom lines.

An example of a specific way some of these dynamics (in combination with societally inflicted historical trauma) can play out for LGBTQ+ nightlife establishments differently than straight bars was described by a participant in one of the listening sessions. They shared that a COVID-19 outbreak had recently taken place among attendees and staff at an LGBTQ+ event at a bar.

Throughout the ensuing illnesses, contact tracing, and isolation and quarantine periods, LGBTQ+ individuals and community members indicated their complicated feelings of being risk averse to patronizing/working in LGBTQ+ nightlife despite its importance in their personal and professional lives, as well as concerns that the non-LGBTQ+ local community at large would “blame the gays for spreading COVID here [in our local community]”, as one person put it.



Continuing Impacts of Historical Trauma



At-A-Glance

- Ways LGBTQ+ people experienced discrimination and stigma in the past have continuing effects.
- As a result, some LGBTQ+ people may be wary of facilitators, and of programs aimed at LGBTQ+ bars and communities.

The history of LGBTQ+ people in the U.S., particularly ways LGBTQ+ people have routinely been stigmatized, scrutinized, medicalized, and criminalized in the past, may also contribute to the challenges facilitators may encounter. Due to these past injustices and abuses, some people may question the motives or goals of facilitators and an LGBTQ+ safer bars and nightlife initiative as a whole.

Some examples of this dynamic surfaced during the listening session recruitment process, with participants expressing hesitancy to participate until they established trust in the initiative through deeper conversations with the recruiter. Typically, these conversations reflected themes of past historical trauma and pathologizing experienced by LGBTQ+ communities, for example “will this be used against us somehow [the LGBTQ+ community]?” and “who exactly is doing this, I don’t want to participate in my own oppression.”

In these situations, individuals reasonably wished to establish the goals and motivations of the work and recognize/minimize any possibility of community harm. These extended conversations opened real opportunities for open and honest dialogue about how projects such as this can serve to strengthen LGBTQ+ communities and create safer spaces for everyone.

The exchanges also serve as a reminder of the importance of establishing genuine trust in the facilitator, confidence in the project, and ensuring cultural humility (working respectfully and effectively with people different from oneself through the process of self reflection upon one’s own positionality; understanding histories of power, privilege and oppression; and acting in ways that address these imbalances and power differentials) is practiced at all levels, particularly when working with minoritized and marginalized communities.



In addition, any discussion of on-going effects of historical trauma and LGBTQ+ nightlife would unfortunately be incomplete without referencing the much more recent incidents of mass shootings that have taken place at LGBTQ+ specific bars and venues including the Pulse nightclub in Orlando Florida and Club Q in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Because they took place within LGBTQ+ spaces that exist as places of unique refuge within an otherwise implicitly or overtly hostile overall society, these shootings threaten not only LGBTQ+ people but threaten the possibility of affirming places for LGBTQ+ community existing anywhere. Increasing threats, harassment and violence targeted specifically at LGBTQ+ establishments and events in recent years makes this formerly vital locus of safety and community even more problematic for queer and trans people to navigate.

Considerations for Relationship Building & Partnering with the Bars/nightlife



At-A-Glance

- To be successful, project leaders need to build authentic relationships and participate in and with the LGBTQ+ community in ongoing meaningful ways.

During the listening session recruitment process, a number of potential participants expressed initial hesitancy to participate, citing distrust or cynicism of the motivations of institutions and organizations which have historically operated in ways (whether intentional or unintentional) that inflict anti-LGBTQ+ harm and trauma. This points to a significant opportunity for facilitators to continue creating opportunities for frank and direct dialogue about how projects such as this can serve to strengthen LGBTQ+ communities and create safer spaces for everyone. As a facilitator, you'll need to work proactively in establishing transparency and confidence and ensuring practices of cultural humility.

A related issue is establishing genuine rapport with the individuals and establishments the sessions are designed to reach. Many communities that experience marginalization are familiar with outside groups and initiatives that seem to come and go, along with facilitators and project leaders who do the same. Real community engagement and relationship building is necessary for a project to be successful and have lasting impact.

Because of that history, you as a facilitator will need to actively participate in LGBTQ+ communities and events before, during, and after offering training. This includes building trusted relationships with LGBTQ+ businesses and community leaders and being present not only to promote participation in this specific initiative but also in everyday ways like at community observances, events, and meetings. Doing so demonstrates you value and care about LGBTQ+ communities and want to work in collaboration with LGBTQ+ communities rather than from outside them.

Facilitator Skills



At-A-Glance

- Understanding the curriculum, building facilitation skills, and self assessment are each needed for effective facilitation.
- Facilitation involves planning and preparation.
- Use the names and pronouns individuals determine for themselves.
- LGBTQ+ people experience differing and often compounded amounts of power, privilege and oppression depending on race, gender, ability, age, etc.
- Anti-LGBTQ+ bias, structural racism and white supremacy put LGBTQ+ BIPOC people at greater risk of harassment and violence.
- Be aware of unconscious/implicit bias.
- There are many strategies to mitigate implicit bias.
- Setting the tone and expectations help create and maintain brave space.
- Listen nonjudgmentally and practice cultural humility.
- Queer bars frequently have environments which can heighten risk, for instance crowded spaces, dim lighting, loud music, and secluded corners.
- Understanding how adults learn will increase facilitator effectiveness.
- Facilitate using a trauma-informed approach.
- The best curriculum adaptations depend on the needs of each particular group.

Having a good command of the curriculum is only one part of good facilitation. Even seasoned facilitators aren't automatically prepared to facilitate every topic in every situation. Being an ongoing learner is key in facilitation skill building and ensuring a supportive learning experience for participants.

There are many skills and approaches that can help beginning facilitators be confident and effective, and help seasoned facilitators be more effective. [The Facilitation Tips](#) section of this toolkit provides a good start for new facilitators, and a handy review guide for seasoned facilitators. Along with understanding the curriculum and honing facilitation skills, every facilitator should also take time to assess their strengths and areas for growth, especially when facilitating groups who have identities, lived experiences and cultures different from their own. Having a solid awareness of what you know as well as areas for additional development is the best preparation. Use the Facilitator Self Reflection activity on [page 46](#) to aid in identifying your strengths and growth edges when it comes to LGBTQ+ people and themes.

Components of an Effective Session

A good facilitator wears many hats: guide, listener and communicator, timekeeper, manager and prioritizer, advance preparation whiz, and more. Facilitators also establish trust -- in their facilitation, in the process, in the space and with the participants. Good facilitators also know that what goes into preparing to facilitate a group ahead of time is as important as what happens during the session itself. Taking the time to use this guide already shows your commitment to being the best facilitator you can be. This section outlines some of the additional components that contribute to creating an effective session for participants. Before facilitating, familiarize yourself with a few key pieces of information. These include understanding the main goal or purpose of the session, understanding the context, and outreach/communication to participants. Each of these will help inform the planning stage.

To understand the goal or purpose of the session may require communicating with the sponsoring organization, with your supervisor and colleagues, and/or with additional stakeholders.

Examples of questions you may ask during planning include:

Is this one part of a larger education or outreach effort?

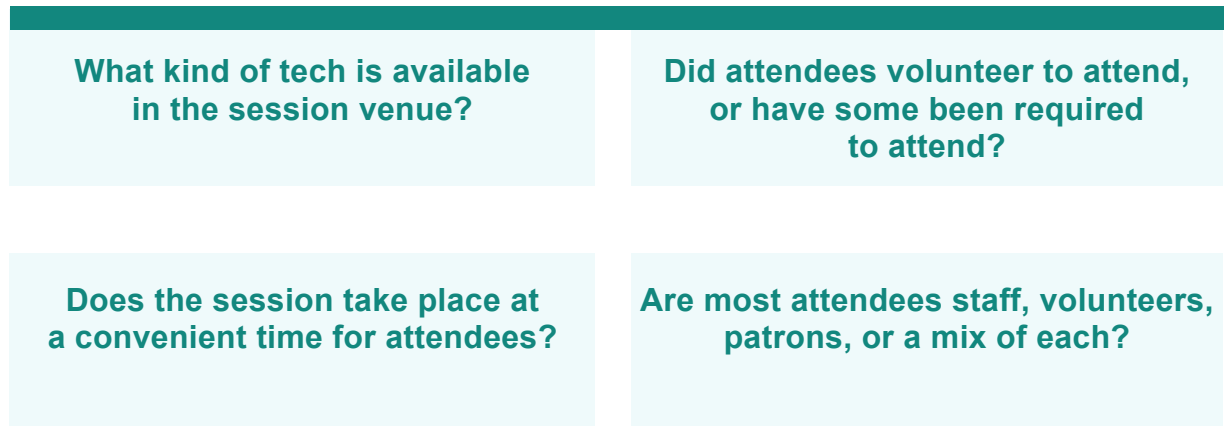
Is it a standalone session?

What are the learning outcomes organizers hope are realized through the session?

What resources are available to support the facilitator and the attendees in achieving these outcomes?

Understanding the context means getting the logistic information needed to plan the session – the who, what, when, how -- as well as obtaining as much detail as possible about the setting and attendees expected to participate.

For instance:



Next, outreach and communication to participants takes place. This includes providing information about the session and may also include additional elements if the facilitator will be managing the registration/sign up process.

Taking these steps before preparing to facilitate will provide the key pieces needed to plan the most effective experience for the attendees and planning the session can begin.

Grounding in an Anti-racist, Intersectional Lens

Power, Privilege & Oppression

⇒ ⇒ ⇒

Everyone's experiences of sexual orientation, gender, race, ethnicity, class, religion, ability, and age are different. And they intersect in unique ways depending on the privileged and less privileged social identities each individual holds. When facilitating, pay particular attention to how power, privilege, and oppression affect the lives of LGBTQ+ people not only when it comes to sexual orientation and gender identity, but across all dimensions of diversity and lived experience.

Just as each cisgender heterosexual person has a unique set of experiences with differing degrees of societal privilege, each LGBTQ+ person navigates society through the lenses of not only sexual orientation and gender identity but also race, class, faith, and others. Using an anti-racist, intersectional approach means to acknowledge and incorporate this throughout the facilitation experience.

For instance, Black LGBTQ+ women experience discrimination in different ways than Black LGBTQ+ men, different from Black heterosexual cisgender women, and different than white heterosexual cisgender women too. And Black transgender women experience multiple forms of discrimination that a cisgender women would not encounter. This is because of the compounding nature of racial, sexual, and gender biases.

When facilitating, it is important to be equipped with an understanding of what oppression is and how it operates, and how multiple oppressions may be at play in LGBTQ+ people's experiences. Before facilitating, make time to think through how these intersections can be consistently centered during sessions, rather than raised as an afterthought or separate topic.

For example, facilitators can include statements like:

“Based on what we know about the impact of intersecting oppressions, we know that LGBTQ+ BIPOC people are at greater risk because of the compounding negative impacts of anti-LGBTQ+ bias, structural racism and white supremacy.”

Unconscious or implicit bias can also derail facilitation at any stage, from session planning to delivery to program evaluation. Implicit bias takes place when a person forms social stereotypes about groups of people, outside their conscious awareness.

Implicit bias is believed to spring from the brain's tendency to try to organize things by categorizing them. Because it is unconscious, though, individuals are both unaware of this operating, and are likely to hold unconscious, implicit biases at odds with their conscious knowledge and values.

Unconscious/implicit bias in facilitation can look like:

- Facilitator failing to realize they have acted or said something due to unconscious/implicit bias
- Not recognizing or challenging bias (explicit or implicit) embedded in the comments or questions of a participant
- Unintentionally calling on participants more often if they happen to share personal characteristics with the facilitator, or if the facilitator perceives them as less “different” from them than other participants
- Hearing a colleague say something inappropriate and chalking that up to a misunderstanding, because it doesn't match your favorable opinion of them
- Selecting learning activities or videos without taking time to assess and explore whether the materials unintentionally exacerbate or instill bias



Fortunately, unconscious/implicit biases can be changed. We can each take steps to understand and address them and reduce their impact. Facilitators can address unconscious/implicit bias by first taking the Implicit Association Tests to gain greater self-awareness.

Read on for more information about this process, below. A link to the [Implicit Association Test](#) can be found in the [Additional Resources](#) section.

Following this, facilitators can explore what bias is, engage in dialogue about implicit bias with others in a trusted space, and ideally when resources allow, participate in an unconscious bias training specifically tailored for those in facilitation roles.

Strategies to Mitigate Bias

■ Introspection

Explore and identify your own implicit biases and assess where they may show up within your facilitation practices and interactions with participants and colleagues. Practice mindfulness about how the identities you hold and their relationship to power and privilege can influence how you see the world and compound the impact of your implicit and explicit biases. Undoing bias is a lifelong practice that requires regular self-work. You can start by completing one or more of the Implicit Association Tests, or Tests or recognizing and reflecting when you catch yourself feeling judgment, worry discomfort, or guilt. You can also practice recognizing bias in your daily life by thinking critically about

- the media you consume,
- the way you and the people around you speak to and about others, and
- the policies and practices you use in your work.

■ Mindfulness

Bring increased awareness of your feelings, thoughts, and experiences without judgment. For example, you can practice this by tuning in to

- what you're feeling and thinking and
- what the other person is communicating through words or body language during an encounter.

Growing evidence suggests that mindfulness reduces the activation of bias in the brain or increases our ability to control a bias if it is activated. Common mindful practices include meditation and mindful breathing.

■ Active Listening

Actively seeking to understand a person's message and context. The process of listening can be interrupted by quick conclusions, judgments, or distractions that can make a participant feel unheard. Listening is more than hearing. Skills to support understanding include

- affirmations (e.g., celebrating patient strengths rather than their decisions),
- asking open-ended questions (e.g., "How are you feeling about that?" or "What do you think?"),
- using reflections to summarize and repeat back what you've heard (e.g., "What I'm hearing is..."),
- and listening while suspending judgment or jumping to conclusions.

■ Individuation

See people as individuals instead of as a representative or stereotypes of a group. Practice pausing before you make judgments or slowing down when you catch a judgment. Strategies of individuation include

- asking questions instead of assuming characteristics or intentions,
- imagining the person in a way that counters the stereotype(s) you may be attributed to the person,
- evaluating people based on their personal characteristics rather than those that may be affiliated with their group, and
- acknowledging shared interests, backgrounds, or experiences with the person.

■ Checking Messaging

To start, ensure you're using warm and non-judgmental language. Be sure to check your tone and body language to avoid judgment. Ensure that the perspective you're sharing with others doesn't invalidate someone else's truth and understand that accepting someone's experience is not the same as endorsing or agreeing with it. Evidence supports that unconditional acceptance and honoring multiculturalism (acknowledging and valuing

cultural differences as opposed to racial “color-blindness”) results in more positive and supportive experiences. Approaches that use this strategy include

- responding to questions using fact-based answers and definitions,
- referring back to group or community agreements (e.g., acknowledging multiple truths),
- addressing stigmatizing comments,
- acknowledging systemic or structural factors that may impact behaviors.

■ **Time for Slow Thinking**

It can be advantageous for individuals to “think fast”, which is usually quick, effortless, and unconscious. “Slow thinking”, by contrast, is deliberate, effortful, and requires conscious attention. Fast thinking is more dominant but is also more likely to result in behavior based on bias. Consider ways to integrate slow thinking into your practice, including in the moment. By practicing slow thinking outside of a fast-paced environment and building habits (e.g., taking 10 minutes each day for reflective practice), those learnings are more likely to be integrated into the everyday fast thinking individuals make.

■ **Perspective-Taking & Empathy**

Center another person’s thoughts, viewpoints, and feelings. Practice seeking out experiences that are different from your own and alternative points of view, including putting yourself in the participant’s shoes: “How would I feel if I were in their shoes in that situation?” This can be done

- directly through creating intentional opportunities for interactions with others,
- or indirectly (e.g., by consuming media that features experiences or depictions you are less familiar with).

The [Additional Resources](#) section provides more information on these core facilitator knowledge and skills areas.

Cultural Humility

The term cultural humility was first used more than twenty years ago in the context of healthcare, to describe more respectful and effective approaches in working with racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse patients.

Today, cultural humility refers more broadly to working with people different from oneself, across a variety of fields and contexts.

Unlike cultural competence that focuses only on learning about cultures other than one’s own (and has frequently been critiqued as centering whiteness), cultural humility combines this with self-evaluation of one’s own positionality; understanding histories of power, privilege and oppression that have impacted minoritized and marginalized groups of people throughout history; and acting to address these imbalances and power differentials.

Cultural humility is process that requires intentional, ongoing work. Characteristics and actions of a culturally humble facilitator include:

- ✓ Self-awareness
- ✓ Reflects and critiques one’s own cultures
- ✓ Collaborates and works with people, after asking if and how one can be of help
- ✓ Empathy, openness, authenticity
- ✓ Knowledge of cultures other than one’s own
- ✓ Acts at organizational or institutional levels to move systems toward increased equity and justice
- ✓ Acts to unpack and disrupt systems that perpetuate inequity
- ✓ Holds systems and institutions accountable
- ✓ Understands and addresses power imbalances

Creating Safer/brave Learning Space

Part of the role of the facilitator includes setting the tone and expectations of how everyone agrees to interact within the learning space. Facilitators sometimes refer to creating a safer/brave learning space. That is, one that is respectful and inclusive, that supports each person to courageously show up as who they are, that honors lived experience, and that encourages learning, sharing, and constructively challenging each other. You may be familiar with another term “safe space” but because “safe space” has been used and at times misappropriated within freedom of speech debates without an understanding of its context or history (be that movement building, activism, academics or other settings) we have moved away from that in favor of the more clear and active safer/brave learning space term.

A safer/brave space is an environment in which each person feels welcome to participate. Some of the behaviors and qualities that help create safer/brave spaces among facilitators and participants alike include vulnerability, willingness to sit with uncertainty or discomfort, critical thinking, awareness of intention versus impact, being present, and listening to hear and understand rather than to respond.



FACILITATOR NOTE

As facilitators engaging with bars, it's essential to recognize the potential risks of sexual harassment or violence, especially for queer or trans staff. To foster a safer, more supportive environment for LGBTQ+ staff, consider these strategies:

1. Training and Staff Engagement

Encourage frequent check-ins among staff for continuous improvement related to safety and inclusivity. Promote skill-building in conflict resolution, sexual harassment prevention, and active bystander training.

2. Policy Visibility, Messaging, and Reporting

Advocate for the clear display and communication of anti-harassment policies. Support bars in building a culture free from harassment and discrimination. Highlight the importance of an accessible, confidential reporting system to encourage a supportive response to incidents.

3. Emphasis on Self-Care

Encourage staff to prioritize self-care practices, recognizing the emotional demands of their roles in LGBTQ+ bars and nightlife.

4. Safety Protocols

Collaborate with bars to develop and update safety protocols, focusing on practical measures against harassment, with input from staff to ensure relevance and effectiveness.

5. LGBTQ+ Organization Partnerships

Facilitate partnerships with local LGBTQ+ organizations for additional resources and support, enhancing the inclusivity and safety of the establishment.

By addressing these considerations, facilitators can help bar staff create a safer and more inclusive environment for all patrons and colleagues within LGBTQ+ bars and nightlife establishments.

Rolling with Resistance

At times, participants may challenge or resist your efforts as a facilitator. Resistance may show up related to the topic, or the relationship between the participant and facilitator. Participants' backgrounds, experiences, and openness to learn will each affect their willingness to engage. Be intentional and take time to get a "read" on the group and check in or "take the temperature" regularly, so you can adjust facilitation accordingly.

If a participant expresses resistance, listen non-judgmentally and reflect back what they've said in a non-confrontational way. If the participants share lived experiences, cultures, or identities that the facilitator does not hold – for instance, if the participants are BIPOC people and the facilitator is white, or the participants are LGBTQ+ people and the facilitator is not – reflect back to the group using principles of cultural humility. Initial distrust or hesitance to engage may be a perfectly reasonable response, given past injustices. Respect the resistance and roll with it, knowing that you may have to shift the conversation. Other times you may realize you need to offer a sincere apology.

Teachable moments can also serve as good tools to open communication and dialogue. For example, if a participant expresses hesitance or worry that taking on sexual harassment could cause further harm to the community, genuinely reflect back their concern – "What I hear you saying is that taking steps to reduce sexual harassment in queer and trans nightlife could have the unwanted effect of further reinforcing negative stereotypes and stigma in people who are ignorant about LGBTQ+ people."

Then link that concern to the goal of the session or initiative – "Since our time today is about building more strategies to support people in queer and trans nightlife spaces to look after each other and stay safe, it's one way we can push back against that misinformation out there in larger society."

Then ask if the participant is willing to buy in based on that link. Sometimes a participant may be unlikely to change their perspective during a session, although change may occur later. With such participants, it may be most effective to focus on providing opportunities for those who are participating in productive ways. Part of the facilitator role is to highlight productive dialogue and create and maintain a group dynamic that empowers everyone to participate in constructive ways.

Considerations for the Environment



Some of the environmental challenges present in queer nightlife are similar to those found in all nightlife spaces. However, there are additional challenges unique to queer bars, many of which were repeatedly mentioned by participants in the listening sessions. These include distractions like loud music, dim lighting, crowded spaces, and the prevalence of more private or secluded spaces (dimly lit corners, for instance) used for hooking up. Bathrooms in queer bars were emphasized as a space for hooking up and for drug use.

As a facilitator, you should be prepared to support staff in strategizing how to monitor these spaces to prevent sexual aggression and assault.

In addition, financial disadvantages LGBTQ+ bars may face by serving a smaller audience may present as economic challenges in having adequate staffing and security measures, such as cameras and bathroom locks. Queer bars are also differently sexualized environments than non-queer bars.

For facilitators new to these spaces and communities, at first glance queer bars may appear as sexualized spaces in general, as compared to straight bars. This perception may be caused by the experience of majority folks not being centered in these spaces or could be partially rooted in sex negativity or broader misunderstanding. At the same time though, in many non-queer spaces, certain people and groups tend to be more sexualized by individuals in the same space who hold dominant identities (for instance white, heterosexual, male, middle class).

Namely women and femmes, people of color, LGBTQ+ people and everyone at the intersections may experience non-queer bars as sexualized because the predominantly white heterosexual male gaze sexualizes them. The queer bar itself isn't more sexualized than straight bars. Instead, patrons with more power and privilege in straight spaces may sexualize or tokenize women, BIPOC and LGBTQ patrons as a result of the dynamics of power, privilege and bias. In queer bars, some of that still operates too, while at the same time being a queer space alters other dynamics as well.

To maintain cultural humility, facilitators with majority backgrounds (individuals who happen to be members of groups that have more power and privilege in society, for example someone who is white, heterosexual, cisgender, middle class and does not have a disability) may need to engage in preparation and reflection to more fully understand the context of queer bars and LGBTQ+ life in general.

For instance, coming out and navigating being LGBTQ+ in a heterosexual cisgender world is a life-long process. Most LGBTQ+ people have to make decisions about how, whether, and when to share they are a LGBTQ+ person throughout their lives.

While some LGBTQ+ people are often/always perceived as LGBTQ+ by others and may not have the opportunity to decide to share their orientation or gender identity before they are already assumed to be LGBTQ+. There is no single “coming out” conversation -- instead, there are many. These may include coming out to oneself, family, friends, coworkers, neighbors, medical providers, and others. Sometimes LGBTQ+ people can plan for these conversations in advance, for instance when deciding to come out to a friend or family member. However, many situations may force the topic, for instance when same sex parents are enrolling their children in school, or when a transgender person must explain name discrepancies on school or identity documents. In some cases, an emergency prompts the disclosure that someone is LGBTQ+.

Queer bars and nightlife spaces occupy a unique space in LGBTQ+ life, as one of the few places where people are welcomed into the space and accepted for who they are. Queer bars are spaces understood to temporarily free LGBTQ+ people from the everyday calculations, adjustments, and risk assessments they must make in everyday life in order to navigate in a heterosexual cisgender world. There is also a general expectation that everyone in the space will interact not only respectfully with one another, but from a place of centering queerness and LGBTQ+ culture; leaving behind all the social baggage that comes with that in the world outside.



TIP FOR FACILITATORS

Coming out as LGBTQ+ is not a one-time thing. Living in a world where everyone is assumed to be heterosexual and cisgender creates an inequitable and sometimes dangerous landscape for LGBTQ+ people. The issues are different but no less complicated for LGBTQ+ who are constantly presumed to be LGBTQ+ without being afforded the chance to come out on their own terms.

For non-LGBTQ+ facilitators, think about all the ways a LGBTQ+ person might have to come out over their lifetime, or even during a single day. If someone is generally “out” to most people in their lives, what might they still have to think about or plan for as an LGBTQ+ person that non-LGBTQ+ people have the privilege of not having to do? How do these themes interplay with the role of facilitation in this work?

Learning Modalities and Adult Learning Theory

Learning Modalities and employing them to support your effectiveness as facilitator

Learning modalities and adult learning theory are entire fields of their own, consisting of decades of literature, research, and critique. As such, a complete review of these are outside the scope of this resource. Budding facilitators are encouraged to learn more about these if they are new topics to you. Refer to the [Additional Resources](#) for more information.

However, a few main elements of both subjects are helpful to every facilitator’s toolbox. They are highlighted below, so you can employ them to support your effectiveness as facilitator. Adult learning theory focuses on ways adults learn, as compared, and contrasted to ways children learn. Adult learning theory proposes that the most effective learning situations for adults incorporate three elements -- that the facilitator or teacher explains why they are teaching what they are teaching, that learning not rely on rote memorization but on things the learner can apply or do, and that real-world problem solving is the best way for adults to put learning into practice and retain the information.



For facilitators new to working with adults, these ideas may be different than their past experiences. Planning facilitation with these themes in mind may assist in keeping your goals in sight while supporting participants' understanding. Note that there are also a variety of robust critiques of this approach, most notably those that take into account cultural differences, and expectations and power differentials between learners and teachers.

Learning modalities theories describe the different ways individuals learn, for instance through visual, auditory, reading/writing, and kinesthetic methods. Note that taking this into account does not mean that each individual has only one way they can learn or will learn or remember. Instead, in most facilitation situations it means being mindful of using a wide range of learning mode techniques.

Using a mix of styles reinforces the material in different ways, and helps learners apply the information across varying situations and incorporate it into their repertoire. Brief descriptions of some learning modalities are:



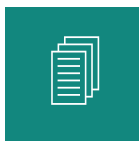
Visual

Processing information through sight or images. Using videos, handouts, outlines, slides and photos, images, drawing, or making a concept map are all strategies that use visual learning.



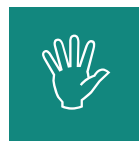
Auditory

Processing information through hearing or talking. Using questions, discussions, think/pair/share activities, music, sounds or podcasts, and re-stating concepts in participants' own words, are all strategies that use auditory learning.



Reading/writing

Processing through written words. Using reading, writing, journaling, and internet word searches, and doing research are all strategies that use reading/writing learning.



Kinesthetic

Processing while doing something physical. Using role play, hands-on activities, learning by doing, and incorporating movement, as participants are able, while learning are all strategies that use kinesthetic learning.

Again, these concepts are provided as a brief introduction. Consult the [Additional Resources](#) to explore more in depth, as well as to familiarize yourself with the facilitation opportunities they may spark as well as their limits and critiques.

Acknowledging and Holding Space for Lived Experiences of Participants, Some Notes on Trauma Informed Facilitation, and Care

Acknowledging and holding space, trauma informed facilitation, and caring for participants and oneself as a facilitator

Acknowledging and holding space for the lived experiences of participants is an integral part of the facilitation process. As facilitator, this involves cultivating an ever-present awareness of decentering yourself as facilitator and focusing on and centering the stories and experiences of participants. It means being open to ideas and feelings that come up and resisting the urge to shift into problem-solving or to minimize the situations or impacts that are shared. Instead, turn your attention to open, affirming, and nonjudgmental listening. It takes focused energy to be genuinely present for participants, and to support them in feeling secure in sharing their viewpoints and feelings. Participants are the authority on their own experiences; take the time to honor this and facilitate from participants' perspectives.

Because of the topics covered in this type of program, be prepared to facilitate through a trauma-informed lens. Trauma is “an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being” (SAMHSA, 2014).

An unexpected or sudden one-time event (like an illness, accident or assault) can cause trauma. But trauma can also result from ongoing events (like family or community violence, or war), as well as from experiencing continual individual or structural discrimination (like racism, transphobia, and homophobia).

A trauma-informed approach “realizes the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery; recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff, and others involved with the system; and responds by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices, and seeks to actively resist re-traumatization” (SAMHSA, 2014). Incorporating this type of approach centers participants' safety and equity.

Cardea Services (2016) suggests six principles of trauma-informed approaches (See more on this in [Additional Resources Section](#)):



Safety



Trustworthiness and transparency



Mutual collaboration



Peer support



Empowerment, voice, and choice



Cultural, historic, and gender issues



Safety

Includes creating a nonjudgmental space. As facilitator, this means you'll be working to create a bias-free session, despite a larger society that still harbors implicit and explicit stigma and discrimination against LGBTQ+ people. Creating group agreements together (including one that supports a participant to leave the room if something during the session re-activates trauma for them), using inclusive language, and structuring periodic check ins with participants are all strategies that help create safety. Being mindful that all LGBTQ+ people are not the same, and that each is multidimensional, is another component of establishing safety. Facilitators who create brave/safer spaces should also expect that participants may self-disclose elements of their identities and experiences during the session as a result of the sense of safety that has been established. For instance, participants who feel supported and affirmed may share that they have experienced sexual harassment or assault, or instances of anti-LGBTQ+ bias or violence. As a facilitator, prepare in advance for this by having a few strategies and resources ready to support participants who do so.



Trustworthiness and transparency

Include facilitator practices such as sharing the most up to date, credible information, and resources, letting participants know if you don't know the answer rather than trying to bluff a response, and providing a clear idea of the agenda and topics that will be covered so participants know what to expect. Each of these will also help establish and maintain a safe learning space as well. In addition, find out about and share local support resources, as well as those listed in the Additional Resources section.



Mutual collaboration

Acknowledges and attempts to flatten power differentials between facilitator and participants, as well as between participants that have different access to privilege and power. Collaboration also establishes a partnership between facilitator and participants, in which the session is not a lecture, but a facilitated dialogue and participants can provide active input into the learning experience and how the session unfolds. For instance, making concepts and skills building interactive rather than in lecture format, providing time for questions and answers, and, to the extent possible, inviting participants to set the agenda or suggest topics that are of particular interest to them within the goals of the session overall.





Peer support

Encompasses supporting participants in taking the lead, supporting each other, and having agency. Strategies might include first asking participants to answer each other's questions with the facilitator then offering gentle correcting or complimentary information, inviting participants to take on elements of the session like note taking or leading periodic check ins, and having participants suggest discussion questions.



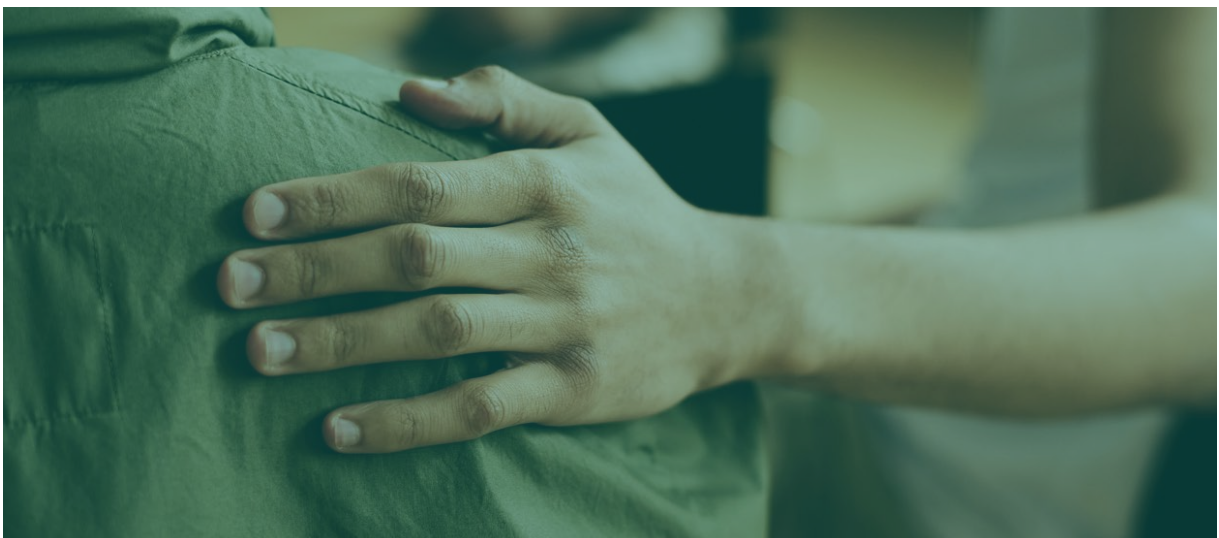
Empowerment, voice, and choice

Since trauma can act to take away power, voice, and choice, as a facilitator be aware of strategies and approaches that can help restore these crucial elements of empowerment. One strategy is investing time in learning about LGBTQ+ people and cultures if you are not already familiar. Alternately, if you feel well prepared on this general topic, spend time learning about often overlooked LGBTQ+ lived experiences and histories, such as people who experience multiple marginalization across intersections of several dimensions of identity. Another strategy is to continually acknowledge and reinforce that LGBTQ+ people are the experts in their own lives because too often, this expertise has been discounted or rejected by individuals in positions of authority and society at large. Some facilitation methods, such as using role play to build skills, confidence, and self-efficacy, and inviting participants to ask questions and share what they know about a topic before the facilitator presents, can be particularly useful. For instance, ask "Tell me what you know about bystander strategies?" rather than "Here is a slide of bystander strategies."



Culture, history, and gender

Be aware of past personal and historical trauma, and how these could impact the participants and the overall dynamics of the learning experience. Be aware, too, of your own experiences and trauma triggers. Consider what content could potentially be re-traumatizing to participants, and what you can put in place so participants feel supported. Take care to contextualize how LGBTQ+ people evaluate options and act based on their own lived experiences and realities, rather than yours, if you are not an LGBTQ+ person. Decisions, choices, and determining acceptable risk are heavily influenced by the level of power, privilege, and oppression a person experiences in everyday life. Keep a running list of resources and organizations that are proficient in serving LGBTQ+ people well and that practice cultural humility and anti-racist practices. Take time to review and consider local services specifically with regard to proven success in supporting the needs of LGBTQ+ people. A wide variety of participant behaviors – including resistance and disruption – can be trauma responses. Be mindful that regularly scheduled breaks, as well as a spontaneous break if needed, can allow everyone to breathe, re-group, and proceed at a comfortable pace if some topics prove emotionally challenging.



Adaptation and Fidelity

Adapting an existing curriculum requires a careful, intentional balance between not straying too far from the curriculum as it stands, and making sure learners and facilitators alike understand the main points and achieve the intended learning objectives and outcomes of the session. When making adaptations please remember to check in with the curriculum developers or training and technical assistance specialists in advance for questions or concerns about fidelity to the curriculum, and to help determine the best curriculum to meet the needs of a particular group.

There are a number of specific concepts, themes, and teaching strategies that may require adaptation when using with LGBTQ+ specific venues to best maximize trust in the facilitator and cultural humility and responsiveness. Planning ahead with these adaptations – strategizing for the way the facilitator delivers a session or activity rather than the session or activity itself – will yield the best possibility for a successful learning experience.

Please also note that the most effective and appropriate adaptations will be dependent on the needs of each specific group with which a facilitator works. An appropriate adaptation might be to provide more local statistics, or to use relevant community-specific examples as part of a session.

Each individual and each group will have a constellation of unique needs and challenges. Some of these may be more internally focused, for instance

- time constraints
- venue financial stability and
- adequate budgeting to compensate staff who participate.

While others may be external, for instance

- local or national incidents rooted in anti-LGBTQ+ and/or white supremacist harassment or violence against individuals and venues, and
- major LGBTQ+ observances (e.g. Pride celebrations, Trans Day of Remembrance vigils) that may significantly impact participants' sense of physical and emotional safety or their professional workload or personal bandwidth, and thus their availability to be cognitively present for learning.



FACILITATOR NOTE

Finding out as much as possible ahead of time and planning which ideas and adaptations might work best for each specific group, is highly recommended.

Key “Healthy Nightlife” Curriculum Content



At-A-Glance

- A community-level approach to sexual violence prevention includes training nightlife staff to intervene in potentially unsafe situations.
- LGBTQ+ people are at high risk of experiencing sexual assault.
- Internalized homophobia, biphobia and transphobia can fuel relationship violence.
- Racism, misogyny and anti-LGBTQ bias also contribute to risk for LGBTQ+ people.
- Some groups of people within the LGBTQ+ community are at higher risk for sexual assault, including people of color, transgender and cisgender women, and bisexual people. Many peoples within these groups are also at higher risk in situations involving the police.
- LGBTQ+ communities also have several built-in factors that can be utilized as prevention strategies.
- Overconsumption of alcohol and drug use are often prominent features of queer nightlife.
- Body language can sometimes offer clues to whether behavior is consensual.
- Facilitators may need to adapt curriculum materials so they are culturally relevant to LGBTQ+ bars and communities.
- Bystander intervention in queer bars brings challenges and opportunities.
- Some behaviors may be harder to assess in LGBTQ+ bars and nightlife than non-LGBTQ+ bars.

Training nightlife staff to intervene in potentially unsafe situations is a central strategy to a community-level approach to sexual violence prevention. Input by staff and patrons around intervention suggest the need for staff to have additional context-specific training on intervention in LGBTQ+ spaces. During listening sessions, staff reported that ambiguity on whether a situation is consensual is a barrier to intervention, in addition to concerns like physical space, staff safety, and losing money or tips. Patrons report that they rarely see staff intervene in potentially unsafe situations. Further, patrons report that staff are less likely to intervene if the patrons are perceived to be the same gender or queer. A common patron concern is that staff intervening would escalate a situation, and they generally prefer that staff not intervene. These findings support the development of curriculum guidance on interventions for bar staff working in LGBTQ+ nightlife that uses realistic examples from these spaces, promotes questioning of stereotypes and their impact on staffs' decisions, and provides staff with examples of intervention that are nuanced and consider the power dynamics of a situation.

This section provides facilitator background and guidance specific to common curriculum components and ideas to consider when facilitating each component of the sessions, as well as facilitator notes, processing questions/prompts.



FACILITATOR NOTE

When possible, consider the benefits and costs of adapting existing interventions and curriculum materials, as compared to creating materials that center the population that is to be prioritized, e.g. LGBTQ+ nightlife patrons and staff. Efforts built from the start framed by the needs and experiences of LGBTQ+ people, with a foundation rooted in cultural humility and excellence in understanding LGBTQ+ communities and cultures, could have the potential to result in increased effectiveness and efficiencies, with lessened need to screen for cultural relevance and appropriateness than that needed to adapt existing ones.

Welcome and Introductions



FACILITATOR NOTE

Due to a variety of reasons, facilitators may have been provided a RSVP list or roster of participants that uses legal names rather than the names people use for themselves. Do not read the roster as it appears aloud to take attendance, because this could inadvertently embarrass a participant or disclose their confidential personal information to others. Facilitators will want to establish trust and respect by calling each person what they want to be called.

Welcome participants and ask them to write the name they go by on nametags or table tents. During introductions, share your name and the pronouns you use. Invite participants to share the name they go by (this is sometimes called lived name or chosen name), and the pronouns they use.

See the [Additional Resources](#) section for more information about pronouns, how to use them, and why they are important.



FACILITATOR NOTE

Inviting participants to share their pronouns has become a bit routinized in a way that could use some refreshing and updating. Try briefly and clearly narrating the ‘why’ of pronouns before you ask participants to consider sharing theirs. Try something like “Welcome everyone, I’m so glad you’re here. As we get ready to introduce ourselves, I’ll share that my pronouns are ___/___ and I’ll ask those of you that feel comfortable to share your pronouns when you introduce yourselves. We do this because we know that some LGBTQ+ people don’t feel routinely seen or respected at work, in their communities, and in many spaces they move through each day. One way we can do better is by making sure to use the correct pronouns for each person. By asking people to share their pronouns, it is my expectation that we’ll all use the correct pronouns to show dignity and respect to each other.”

Bystander Effect – Cultural and Historic Notes

Most training on this topic includes an exploration of the Bystander Effect, in which the more people are present, the less likely an individual person may be able to take action in an emergency. One of the most famous and often cited cases used to illustrate this effect was the 1964 murder of Kitty Genovese in Queens, NY. While the case is famous, today few are aware that the sensationalized story that grew up around that incident varies quite a bit from what actually took place.

Even fewer people know that at the time, Kitty Genovese was a lesbian who lived with her partner Mary Ann Zielonko. Both worked as bartenders, and they first met at a lesbian bar and later moved in together. As Kitty arrived home from work late one night in March 1964, she was fatally stabbed by an attacker outside her apartment building. Police arrived to investigate, but showed unusual interest in Mary Ann and Kitty’s sexual relationship, at one point considering Kitty a suspect. Their questioning of neighbors also included inappropriate remarks about the couple’s sexual orientation. The actual assailant was apprehended later that week. During an interview with a journalist, the police commissioner claimed that many neighbors heard Kitty’s screams for help and did nothing, and from this reporting spawned what came to be known as the bystander effect or “Genovese syndrome”.

After the murder, Mary Ann was summoned to identify Kitty’s body. It is ironic that the story of Genovese’s death, used as an example of public apathy and unwillingness to get involved, nearly always eclipses the details of how she and her partner built a life for themselves during a time when being an LGBTQ+ person was still against the law in New York state. While the diffusion of responsibility and the effect of social cues from those around us can impact human behavior, the story on which these tenets of social psychology were built has largely overlooked or ignored the details of Genovese’s life. To learn more about Genovese’s life and death, see the [Additional Resources section](#).

While the bystander effect and social cues play a role, it’s vital to understand that LGBTQ+ staff in nightlife establishments may genuinely fear for their safety when considering intervention due to real hate and discrimination risks. This underscores the importance of training most staff members and implementing holistic efforts such as policy changes and environmental enhancements. By distributing the responsibility to the establishment, no one individual bears the burden alone.





Facts and Statistics

Bar intervention training programs must include information about the prevalence of sexual violence in LGBTQ+ communities and expand upon key trends and themes.

For example, note that sexual violence research has focused primarily on cisgender heterosexual interactions and incidences of sexual violence. But research has found LGBTQ+ communities, and particularly bisexual people and transgender women, transgender men, and nonbinary individuals, are also at disproportionate risk.

As facilitator, you can say something like “Unfortunately most of the research about sexual violence focuses on non-LGBTQ+ people. Some of it was done without considering that LGBTQ+ people might experience sexual violence, or that LGBTQ+ people exist at all. Even more unsettling, research that does include LGBTQ+ people has found some disturbing trends:

LGBTQ+ people are at high risk of experiencing sexual assault, and some groups of people within the LGBTQ+ community, like transgender women and bisexual people, are at higher risk.”

When preparing to facilitate, consider the different ways data can be shared to include people who may be excluded from traditional sources of statistics and information.

Be sure to share information about the magnitude of experiences of sexual violence within and across LGBTQ+ communities such as

- statistics,
- anecdotal evidence,
- case examples,
- historical examples and
- societal conditions that drive these disparities.

For instance, in addition to overall statistics on rates of sexual assault and LGBTQ+ people, note that trans people of color, trans people who have done sex work, trans people who have experienced homelessness, and trans people who have a disability have even higher rates of sexual violence due to a collection of additional societal factors. And, if you are using an existing curriculum that doesn't have statistics or include the experiences of LGBTQ+ folks, take steps before the session to gather that info and plan how to incorporate it. You could also use a LGBTQ+ specific case study or anecdote to lead into the information. Consult the Additional Resources section for additional information about LGBTQ+ people and sexual assault.

In this section and throughout the session, be clear to emphasize that being an LGBTQ+ person does not put one at greater risk, the effects of societal stigma and discrimination do. As a facilitator, you can say something like “LGBTQ+ people have to deal with barriers to get healthcare, legal and criminal justice help, and social services than non-LGBTQ+ people.

Internalized homophobia, biphobia and transphobia can fuel relationship violence. Outside of intimate partner relationships, sexual assault is often motivated by anti-LGBTQ+ bias. And the marginalization that LGBTQ+ people experience can lead to economic vulnerability and lack of support and social connections. Each of these is a risk factor for sexual assault. Being LGBTQ+ isn't the problem; stigma and discrimination are.”

As discussed earlier, queer bars have been central to LGBTQ+ communities for decades. And yet despite their status as revered and necessary spaces of refuge, sexual harassment in queer bars persists, is pervasive, and frequently goes unreported.

In other words, some amount of sexual harassment or inappropriate behavior is often considered socially acceptable or expected. Focused attention is needed for this to be effectively addressed. Gendered expectations of men, toxic masculinity, and stereotypes of LGBTQ+ sexuality, combined with ways misogyny and anti-LGBTQ+ bias interact are all factors that can drive the normalizing of sexual harassment in queer bars.



Body Language

What might look similar in straight bars?

What might look different in predominantly LGBTQ+ spaces?

Facilitators should be aware of examples of problem behaviors unique to queer bars that contribute or lead to sexual aggression and include discussion about these during the session. For instance, acknowledge specific problem behaviors in queer bars like grabbing someone's genitals without consent. There has been some recent attention in LGBTQ+ media outlets focusing on ways gay men may normalize or be desensitized to sexual assault, and what it will take to change that.

Flirting behaviors are also often more assertive or sexually explicit than behaviors individuals may expect in a non-LGBTQ+ bar. And it should be noted that unfortunately, LGBTQ+ patrons report that queers bars still often feature sexual aggression involving cisgender men perpetrating against cisgender women. As a facilitator, be sure to focus on how body language can show what consensual behavior might look like. Whether you use video clips, written scenarios, or another method, choose materials and facilitate discussion with the goal of helping participants recognize body language cues that may indicate intervention is needed.

You can ask questions like “what does flirting look like?”, “what body language communicates the person or interested or uninterested?”, and “what cues signal unsafe or unwanted sexual behaviors are happening?” There are also a variety of signals that can be observed when someone is hitting on someone subtly vs. more overtly, as well as a range of ambiguous interactions that can occur on the dance floor. If you happen to be a non-LGBTQ+ facilitator, your knowledge of LGBTQ+ communities, cultural humility, and strategies to check and interrupt unconscious bias will be instrumental in being able to effectively interpret body language in LGBTQ+ venues, and in turn best support participants in building their skills. See the Additional Resources section for information and tools to understand and address implicit bias.



Characteristics of Intoxication in Queer Bars

There are several unique characteristics of intoxication in queer nightlife, which should be included in any curriculum. For example, overconsumption of alcohol and drug use are often prominent features of queer nightlife.

Research finds increased alcohol use in queer women. Higher rates of alcohol use have been also found in gay and bisexual men, and those same communities are more likely to go to bars in order to meet new sexual partners and to socialize as compared to other groups. When combined with other research findings including more frequently visiting bars and higher alcohol intake throughout life, this may serve to increase some of the conditions that raise the danger of sexual assault both of perpetration risk and victimization risk (Trocki & Drabble, 2008; Kalichman, 2010; Lin, et al, 2019; CAI, 2022).

It is important to note that disparate rates of alcohol use are not caused by being LGBTQ+, but instead may be fueled by societal stigma and discrimination. This emphasizes that cultural humility is critical in understanding the role minority stress plays in the prominence of substances in queer nightlife and in LGBTQ+ life overall.

Bartenders, friends, and potential sexual partners have also been found to cause higher alcohol consumption among gay men in queer bars. For instance, cultivating relationships with bartenders can result in receiving free or stronger pours, as can flirting with bartenders. It is also common for gay men to report drinking more at queer bars to linger longer to get the attention of a potential partner, and in response to peer pressure from friends.

Listening sessions with patrons also yielded several additional dynamics of some queer bars' atmospheres that can be especially challenging to address. These included situations where bar staff may be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, when an overly intoxicated person may happen to be a high profile or well-known personality, and when bar owners who encourage consumption/overconsumption of alcohol.

For example, one listening session participant shared “well, my manager says to keep an eye out and not overserve but doesn’t actually follow it himself.” Facilitators should also understand relevant examples of sexualized promotional events common in queer bars, for example, “sexy underwear night” and similar promotions. All these factors emphasize the importance of facilitator familiarity with queer bars and factors that underly different patterns of alcohol use and level of intoxication, as ways these intersect with the effects of alcohol on social cues such as reducing inhibition, interacting with internalized homophobia, and delaying the recognition of cues that can lead to sexually aggressive situations.

Drug facilitated sexual assault, with drugs used either recreationally by an individual or covertly administered without knowledge or consent of the recipient, is also an element of both queer and straight bars. Recent high-profile incidents of drugging with subsequent robberies, and even deaths, of LGBTQ+ bar patrons in New York City has shined a spotlight on this additional, ongoing safety concern. Facilitators should include this in discussions, being particularly sensitive and aware that this has been of recent heightened concern among LGBTQ+ communities. During facilitation, take care to stress that survivors, whether knowingly or unknowingly under the influence of drugs, are not to blame for having experienced victimization.



Scenarios and Videos

Many existing curricula on this topic will require the facilitator to make adaptations to the material to be more applicable and culturally relevant when working with LGBTQ+ bars and nightlife. This might include modifying scenarios and case examples to use non-gendered names and interactions between characters across various sexes and genders and providing a preface to videos to better reflect queer nightlife experiences and settings.

LGBTQ+ bars and nightlife spaces can look very different. In New York City, a lot of spaces are geared towards one identity, such as gay men, but that is not the case across the state or country. In some cases, using scenarios or videos with people of all one sex and a diversity of gender expressions in the space would them more relatable and realistic.

Additionally, the curriculum should include processing questions that support staff in analyzing how varying ethnic and racial dynamics, and different gender dynamics and behaviors, can play a role in possible and most effective responses. When asked for suggestions on curriculum activities, LGBTQ+ people have emphasized the importance of more direct and explicit scenarios. For example, listening session participants suggested incorporating scenarios that included groping, grabbing someone’s genitals without their consent, or trying to touch everyone in the bar, as problem behaviors to be addressed. Other examples shared were scenarios about how to respond to a person who is not very drunk interacting with another person who is very drunk, how to respond when someone buys another person a lot of drinks or offers them drugs in the hopes of later hooking up with them, and responding to flirting that uses racial or ethnic stereotypes.



Bystander Intervention Strategies

There are a variety of opportunities and challenges of bystander intervention in queer bars.

Some techniques may have to be modified or may not work in queer nightlife situations depending on the number of staff available. Understaffing due to economic and other challenges is a more common issue in queer nightlife establishments, which could make some intervention strategies less realistic, such as strategies where one person directly intervenes with the aggressor and a second person provides back up if necessary (sometimes called “contact and cover”).

Separation as a bystander strategy can be particularly useful in ensuring situations don’t escalate or become confrontational in LGBTQ+ bars. Integrate discussion about LGBTQ+ specific barriers to bystander intervention in facilitation.

For instance, some behaviors are more ambiguous or harder to assess in LGBTQ+ bars and nightlife than non-LGBTQ+ bars, which could make it more difficult for staff to notice situations when they might intervene. Consider ways as a facilitator to process how gender dynamics (e.g., interactions between same-gender individuals) and expression (e.g., being visibly queer or trans) may play a role in a staff person’s ability to determine the need for help.



FACILITATOR NOTE

Scenarios from some curricula include examples where the behavior displayed is a bit ambiguous and the staff should get to the point “we may need to keep an eye on this situation.” Create some processing questions ahead of time to help participants get to and focus on this hoped for take away. That way you don’t need to mention it explicitly, but instead help participants build their observational and critical thinking skills. In processing scenarios or videos, you may ask “how would you think or feel about the scenario if both people presented as masculine?”, “how about if both people presented as feminine?”. In a similar fashion, “how would you think and feel about the scenario if both people presented as visibly queer?”, “if one presented as visibly trans?”

An additional barrier to intervening is the idea that people should not interfere in relationship conflicts among couples or family members. There is always also the potential of staff misunderstanding interactions, which could unintentionally create a more uncomfortable or potentially unsafe environment.

There may be other unexpected facilitation challenges due to the overlapping roles and the proportionally smaller circles of LGBTQ+ communities, and of subsets within those communities. For instance, a facilitator may find themselves in a session in which a participant is both a decision maker and a bar patron.

One recommendation in these kinds of situations, is for the facilitator to suggest the strategy of staff naming when they are wearing their “work hat” to differentiate in what role they’re acting.

For example, when discussing a work policy, the staff person could say “I know we know each other in other ways (from the PTA/volunteering at the LGBTQ+ Center together/because of our mutual beloved ex-/etc.), but right now I’m wearing my work hat to remind you of the bar policy that we don’t tolerate racist/sexist/transphobic remarks here.”

This allows for depersonalization and shifts the focus to clarify the staff person is acting in their professional role to meet their work expectations.



Racial, Ethnic and Gender Dynamics

There are important racial and gender dynamics at play in all nightlife settings. In LGBTQ+ nightlife settings, people of color, women and femme-presenting people, and transgender individuals may be uniquely vulnerable to aggression and violence.

For example, various aspects of nightlife encounters may look different depending on the racial and/or gender dynamics at play among the people involved. This may include unwanted advances and whether or not -- or how -- intervention occurs. Racially-charged advances or transphobic comments often signal that an unsafe situation is occurring, including terms rooted in ethnic or racial stereotypes, or anti-transgender references or slurs being used.

Facilitators should aim to build awareness by inviting discussion from participants about examples they’ve observed where they perceived race or gender was a factor that caused staff or patrons to intervene more quickly (or less quickly), and acknowledge these differences as appropriate. Facilitators can also ask participants to share instances where a racial or gender-based comment took place, proceeded to escalate or not to escalate, and then discuss ways staff or patron intervention played a part.



FACILITATOR NOTE

You may also invite participants to brainstorm language they could use that incorporates the venue’s non-discrimination policy to use in these types of situations. For instance, “Here at XYZ Bar our nondiscrimination policy is not only the law but also our promise/commitment to our guests and staff: that everyone is welcome, and that means racist, sexist or anti-LGBTQ+ remarks are not tolerated.”



Community as a Strength

LGBTQ+ communities also offer a variety of built-in factors that can be utilized as prevention strategies. For instance, one factor includes leveraging community dynamics and collectivism among LGBTQ+ patrons. Facilitators should understand that many LGBTQ+ individuals view nightlife as a space for community, and that such spaces are few and can dwindle further due to economic and societal factors. The tendency for LGBTQ+ patrons to look out for one another in ways that are different than dynamics in straight bars suggests staff may first rely on indirect bystander strategies to determine whether help is needed.

This also indicates the potential for leveraging LGBTQ+ staff collectivism to promote safety in queer nightlife as well. This is something an effective facilitator may acknowledge by saying something like “LGBTQ+ bars are gathering places for the community, and very special spaces of support and refuge. And of course, LGBTQ+ people are used to looking out for each other. Helping create safer LGBTQ+ bars will help these spaces stay in business long into the future and keep on serving as spaces of community connection and belonging, and you all play an important role in that.”



FACILITATOR NOTE

As a facilitator, consider how your own lived experiences, background and identities may unintentionally help or hinder dialogue about in-community experiences. For example, how will this land for a primarily LGBTQ+ BIPOC audience when the facilitator is a white heterosexual cisgender woman? When the facilitator is a BIPOC heterosexual cisgender man? Will it be received as authentic? Will it seem strained or disingenuous? Opportunities to co-facilitate with someone who shares identity(ies) with participants are always valuable for facilitators and participants alike, but these are not always possible depending on scheduling and program constraints. Take time to intentionally develop your facilitation style and approach, while taking these important ideas into consideration. Being open and transparent, and avoiding defensiveness – while taking care to avoid co-opting and cultural appropriation – will help build rapport and trust with participants.

Emerging research also supports engaging LGBTQ+ people themselves in designing interventions, as a supplement to, or rather, than programs created outside LGBTQ+ communities. Working toward centering LGBTQ+ patrons in generating ideas for interventions would also further reinforce the importance of cultural humility and recognizing the importance of lived experience.

In addition, since LGBTQ+ bars and nightlife often function as a proxy for finding and making meaningful LGBTQ+ community connections, exploring and resourcing other supports for LGBTQ+ connection in general could help address this gap while in of itself being another sexual violence prevention strategy.



Tools & Resources



At-A-Glance

- A bar's policies may or may not include guidance for staff about safe serving practices, refusing service, responding to sexual aggression, and reporting processes and expectations.

Policy Considerations

As previously noted, LGBTQ+ specific spaces may be at an economic disadvantage because they cater to a smaller patron base. Patrons may worry that owners might be more concerned about making enough money to stay open than responding to problematic behavior by patrons (which could ultimately result in patron(s) being asked to leave the establishment and have the potential for additional guest base and financial losses).

When it comes to interventions, consider and discuss how one's level of involvement may depend not only on their own determination of safety and risk, but also at some point rely on the establishment's policy as well. Safe alcohol serving practices, how to refuse service to aggressive or disorderly patrons, responding to sexual aggression by patrons, and procedures for reporting issues in-house or to law enforcement are all elements that may or may not be covered by an establishment's existing policy.

When leading activities such as establishment risk assessments and creating action plans, strong facilitation skills may also come into play, particularly if a participant is a bar patron and a decision maker, and various other combinations of roles and responsibilities situated within the same individual. In these situations – as with all facilitation – taking the time and care to lay an intentional foundation, set community agreements, and create a safer/brave space for sharing will be instrumental to achieving the goals of the activities. When working with participants who fulfill dual roles or relationships, facilitators may also ask participant which “hat” they are wearing when they provide input during various activities. This can help the participant discern, become more aware of these dynamics, and provide clarify for other participants from what perspective they are sharing.



FACILITATOR NOTE

When possible, you can manage this in advance. For instance, ask about participants' roles when doing pre-session coordinating, use break time during a session to have a quick side conversation with a participant,, etc.

Policy and Law Enforcement Considerations

Transgender people in general and queer people of color could be particularly vulnerable if an establishment tries to involve the police in an incident of sexual violence, which can create complications when thinking about intervention. For example, these individuals may experience greater harm in a situation if police become involved. Said one participant, “We tend to almost never call the police because, you know, historical issues in queer spaces with the police. And also, we don't want to make the space unsafe for, you know, black and brown folks in the audience, or generally queer and trans folks. You know, the police are not the easiest to work with. And they also do not listen to de-escalation that well. So yeah, like we almost never call them and if we do, it's like, a situation that is so large that like, we cannot handle it ourselves. And even then, I think we would try to mitigate the actual, like exposure of the police to the space.”

When facilitating, integrate concerns about reporting disorderly conduct, especially when involving law enforcement. Like existing feedback from non-LGBTQ+ bar intervention programs, queer nightlife staff shared that policies related to sexual misconduct were lacking or non-existent. Acknowledge concern about the role of police involvement in reporting by highlighting how transgender people and queer people of color may feel vulnerable or unsafe by police presence, while assisting staff in strategizing alternatives to police involvement whenever possible. If possible, bring resources and referrals that provide direct, or in some cases, emergency, or crisis care (e.g., shelters) that may be alternatives to police involvement.

Marketing and Social Media

Marketing, including social media, can serve to fuel risk factors for sexual assault, or contribute to reducing them. Practices like drink specials and promotions that may facilitate patrons drinking more are common across both LGBTQ+ and non-LGBTQ+ establishments. However, this can look different in each context, especially when it comes to the images and text used to promote them by queer bars and non-LGBTQ+ bars, and how these may or may not offer clues into the relative safety guests may find if they patronize an establishment or event.

Feedback from LGBTQ+ patrons indicate some use physical (print flyers, advertisements, billboards) and digital environment (social media posts) indicators to evaluate whether to attend specific events. Some words and images were described as problematic in terms of red flags that conditions might be riskier. By the same token, though, patrons also noticed and appreciated when explicit expectations about consent were included in social media and other marketing for LGBTQ+ night-life events and spaces. LGBTQ+ people highlighted that expectations about consent should be communicated these directly and often, in advance through social media and other marketing, as well as during events and in LGBTQ+ bars.



FACILITATOR NOTE

Discuss the approaches the bars you work with take with promotions and marketing. Does the bar offer specials and promotions that encourage overconsumption? Does it use highly sexualized advertising? If it does, it could further accelerate conditions that could contribute to potential assault as compared to a bar that doesn't. This might be an opportunity to dive deeper, for instance discussing what the goal of highly sexualized advertising is, if it meets that goal, and if this is worth the potential increased risk. Does the bar specifically note consent or safety expectations in marketing materials? If it does, it could contribute positively toward reducing factors that can contribute to potential assault as compared to a bar that does not incorporate this sort of messaging.

Facilitation Tips

Thank you for making time to share your skills and presence as a facilitator. Each of the core skills for effective facilitation will have various applications depending on your participants' energy and engagement. There are some general facilitation considerations that can take on added importance when working with LGBTQ+ audiences.

Just as with the variety and diversity across the lived experiences of cisgender heterosexual people, LGBTQ+ people are not a monolith. Facilitation should be built upon a strong intersectional framework, acknowledging the ways dynamics of power, privilege and oppression operate to place some LGBTQ+ folks in greater, compounded jeopardy due to actions of patrons, staff, law enforcement, and outside bystanders. Facilitation will also need to be dynamic and flexible to take into consideration regional differences, rural/suburban/urban contrasts, socioeconomic status variabilities, and the needs and issues impacting smaller populations, such as X, within LGBTQ+ communities.

Facilitators may be tempted to reduce LGBTQ+ people to their sexual orientation or gender identity alone and focus on that instead of seeing the whole person. But being LGBTQ+ is only one part of a person's experience. LGBTQ+ people, like heterosexual cisgender people, are multidimensional. Facilitators who are not LGBTQ+ themselves might put this into perspective by thinking about how it might feel if others thought of them only in terms of their sexual orientation or gender identity, rather than everything that makes them who they are.

There can also be individual or group disconnects and fissures within LGBTQ+ communities. For instance, all LGBQ people are not always supportive of transgender and nonbinary people. Similar to some heterosexual cisgender people, some LGBQ people may take in the same misinformation and myths about transgender people that are unfortunately still common in media, and harbor ignorance or anti-transgender prejudice.

Don't assume that all LGBQ cisgender people embrace transgender people, or that all transgender people feel comfortable in LGBTQ+ spaces.

Facilitators can help participants think about how the effects of exposure to anti-transgender prejudice, myth, and misinformation might affect everyone -- transgender people, cisgender LGBTQ people, and cisgender heterosexual people – and how they can create dynamics within the learning environment that are affirming and equitable for all participants.

If you need help to learn and ask questions and process your own thoughts and beliefs about LGBTQ+ people, do that with other professionals (such as a supervisor, mentor, counselor, or faith leader) not with LGBTQ+ participants.

Enhancing Evaluation Methods

While evaluation is an essential component in understanding the impact of our programs, it's important to acknowledge that certain methods may not always be feasible or desirable in certain contexts. We encourage the exploration of a variety of evaluation methods beyond traditional approaches (e.g., pre-post tests). These methods can provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of bystander trainings in queer bars:

Observations

Facilitators can observe participant interactions and behaviors during and after training sessions, providing valuable qualitative data on the practical application of training concepts.

Feedback Collection

Encourage participants to share their thoughts, experiences, and suggestions through anonymous feedback mechanisms, such as suggestion boxes or digital surveys.

Bar Staff Conversations

Informal discussions with bar staff during breaks or before/after training sessions can offer insights into their perspectives on the training's impact on the establishment.

Interviews with Coordinators

Conduct interviews with managers or bar staff responsible for coordinating the training sessions to gather in-depth insights into the program's effects.

Community Engagement

As part of ongoing relationship building efforts (rather than a separate stand alone assessment tool), regularly seek input from the broader LGBTQ+ community to gauge their perceptions of the bar's environment and safety, as well as any noticeable changes. This will assist in repositioning assessment as being more grounded on the community's terms. And, as an ongoing component of relationship building, community members may feel more free to offer their candid observations and evaluations of their bar experiences.

Long-term Assessment

Consider conducting follow-up assessments weeks or months after the training to assess the sustained impact on patrons and staff.

Components of Affirming, Effective Facilitation

Welcome participants as they arrive

Introduce yourself using your name and pronouns. Ask participants to introduce themselves using the name they go by, and their pronouns if they wish to share them. Use the name the person asks you to use, regardless of whether the participation list has a different name, and regardless of whether the list name seems to be a name associated with another gender. If this is the case, please do not point this out or mention it to other participants. If facilitating a virtual session, Zoom and many other platforms provide the ability for participants to share the name they go by along with their pronouns.

Facilitator note

Inviting participants to share their pronouns has become a bit routinized in a way that could use some refreshing and updating. Try briefly and clearly narrating the ‘why’ of pronouns before you ask participants to consider sharing theirs. Try something like “Welcome everyone, I’m so glad you’re here. As we get ready to introduce ourselves, I’ll share that my pronouns are ____/____ and I’ll ask those of you that feel comfortable to share their pronouns when you introduce yourselves. We do this because we know that some LGBTQ+ people don’t feel routinely seen or respected at work, in their communities, and in many spaces they move through each day. One way we can do better is by making sure to use the correct pronouns for each person. By asking people to share their pronouns, it is my expectation that we’ll all use them correctly to show dignity and respect to each other.”

If you make a mistake with someone’s name or pronouns, apologize. To do so, apologize immediately, briefly, and sincerely, then move on. Avoid over-explaining or centering your own reaction and feelings rather than the participant impacted by the mistake. Simply stating “I’m sorry, I used the wrong pronouns” is usually sufficient. Then, be sure to use the correct pronouns going forward. See the [Additional Resources](#) section for more information about names and pronouns.

- ✓ **Introduce the topic**, tell your participants what to expect during the time you’ll spend together. Share the agenda, as well as your hopes or expectations. Ask participants if there are things you can do to make it easier for them to participate.
- ✓ **Create a welcoming learning environment for participants**. Include everyone in the group. Encourage participation and dialogue.
- ✓ **Build rapport by developing genuine connection with participants**. Active listening, authenticity, respect, and empathy all help in establishing and maintaining rapport. Use open-ended questions and affirming verbal and body language. Let participants know what to expect throughout the session (such as what will be covered, will there be breaks, and how will we agree to interact with each other), and then manage the group process so these expectations are honored and met.

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- ✓ **Establish and model respectful use of the time**, use inclusive language, and be present. Stay focused on participants. If needed, practice ways to address individuals and groups using inclusive, non-gendered language. For instance, say “Good afternoon, folks!” instead of “Good afternoon, guys!”, or “Welcome, everyone!” instead of “Welcome, ladies and gentlemen!” Call on participants using a description rather than a gender, for instance instead of saying “the gentleman in back,” or “the woman in the front,” say things like “the person in the purple sweater in the back row,” “the person with their hand raised,” and “the person wearing a NY Mets jersey.”
 - ✓ **Establish a calm, positive, non-judgmental tone for the group.** If conflict arises, address it directly and answer questions thoroughly and respectfully. Welcome a range of opinions and feelings to be expressed and for participants to be themselves and share their experiences and reflections.
 - ✓ **Be aware of your own knowledge, skills, and growth edges.** If participants use words or refer to things that are unfamiliar to you, model respect and humility, and request more information. Work to understand what participants are saying, ask questions for clarification.

If there are participants who may be speaking more than others, and others that have yet to share, gently invite more voices. Consider asking something like: “I noticed you haven’t shared yet; would you like to?”

- ✓ **Use reflective listening.** Reflect back the thoughts and feelings participants share in your own words and ask if you’ve accurately captured their input.
- ✓ **Asks open-ended questions** like “What do others think?” or “Did others have different reflections?” Check in to ask, “How are you doing?”, “What are you learning?”, “What are you struggling with?”
- ✓ **Use teachable moments.** As a facilitator, you’re likely well aware of the magic of “teachable moments” -- those unexpected, unplanned opportunities that can come up during a session due to interactions of participants with you and with each other. When this happens, resist the urge to “stick to the outline” and instead, encourage discussion. Listen, and ask more to find out more about participants’ questions and thoughts. Then take time to tie these back to the concept or skill you’ve been covering. The results can be much more powerful than you expect.
- ✓ **Address harmful language.** Language is always changing, and it can take time to be up to date on all the newest ways everyone uses words. However, there are times as a facilitator when you may be able to pick up from tone or context that the intent was negative or harmful. And there are likely a few words that you and your participants agree are generally offensive and can cause harm. When this happens, interrupt the behavior right away and say why. If it appears the intent of the person speaking was not the same as the impact (e.g., they used language they know, without being aware it might cause harm), intervene to note what happened, provide a correction, and move on. For instance, “that’s an older word that many people find offensive. Today we use the word _____, instead.” If the person persists in using the word, or appears to be using harmful language on purpose, or other facilitation strategies may be needed. In this case you might say something like “nope, that language won’t be tolerated here,” and “let’s refer back to our group agreements about intentionally working to making this a safer space for everyone.”
- ✓ **Stick to the topic and keep the group on track.** If off-topic things come up, redirect the group to the topic. For times when it appears a lengthy discussion might ensue that is related but not essential to the session goals, place the topic in the “bike rack” and follow up with resources and/or with individual participants. A “bike rack,” sometimes called a parking lot, is where a facilitator will record questions or topics to address at a later time.

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- ✓ **Honor nuance and complexity.** Facilitators must often distill complex ideas into clear and concise material. This is a necessary part of facilitating and learning but can also result in oversimplification.
 - ✓ **Stay up to date with reliable online sources that provide accurate information.** Be aware of which sources are fact-based and act with integrity. Brush up on media literacy skills, including determining the credibility of online resources. Some anti-LGBTQ+ organizations have made it challenging to easily assess if the source is trustworthy or not.
 - ✓ **Learn from each other, and network with, and collaborate with other facilitators doing this work.** Together, you hold a pool of vast knowledge and expertise.
 - ✓ **Be aware of local resources, including the nearest community-based LGBTQ+ Center, and other local LGBTQ+ organizations, businesses, and services.** Consult the resources list for the LGBTQ+ Community Center directory and LGBTQ+ Chamber of Commerce.

Facilitator Self Reflection

Am I ready to facilitate this session? Am I ready to facilitate with this group? In this space? These are questions every facilitator should ask. Even experienced facilitators aren't automatically prepared to facilitate every topic in every situation.

It's important to know your strengths and areas for growth, especially when facilitating groups who have lived experiences and cultures different from your own. While you don't need to have an LGBTQ+ Studies degree to be an excellent facilitator, having a solid knowledge base is the best preparation. This quick self-assessment will help you identify your existing LGBTQ+ strengths and growth edges.

For any item where you are still learning, you can use the [Additional Resources](#) to help build your knowledge and confidence about that topic prior to facilitating.

Rate your knowledge of these main topics, using a scale of 1 (not at all prepared) to 5 (completely prepared)

Your knowledge	Rating				
General Knowledge/LGBTQ+ 101					
Common LGBTQ+ terms and definitions	①	②	③	④	⑤
Difference between sexual orientation and gender identity	①	②	③	④	⑤
Some common slights or microaggressions LGBTQ+ people experience in everyday life	①	②	③	④	⑤
Anti-Racist Facilitation Strategies					
Definitions of common terms including racism, intersectionality, anti-racist	①	②	③	④	⑤
Steps can one take toward becoming anti-racist	①	②	③	④	⑤
Unconscious or implicit bias, and the role it plays in learning and facilitation	①	②	③	④	⑤
Navigating the World While LGBTQ+					
Things LGBTQ+ people, families and communities need to know about and navigate that non-LGBTQ+ people do not	①	②	③	④	⑤
Culture, History, Impacts					
Key moments in LGBTQ+ history and why were they were important	①	②	③	④	⑤
How anti-LGBTQ+ bias impacted LGBTQ+ people throughout history, and today	①	②	③	④	⑤
Being An Affirming Ally and Advocate					
What acting in allyship and solidarity look like	①	②	③	④	⑤
Creating inclusive learning environments	①	②	③	④	⑤
How to advocate within current structures, or support larger change	①	②	③	④	⑤

Process Questions

This section provides several general themes and questions for facilitators to have at the ready. Some groups will be very chatty and engaged. Other groups may be more quiet and require more to get a conversation started. These are some sample questions grouped by topical themes to help.

General session content

- We've had a chance to learn together about a wide range of topics. What stands out for you?
- What was new information to you?
- What reminded you of something important?
- Is there anything you plan to follow up on, or learn more about?
- Do you have friends or colleagues who could not attend? If so, what key takeaways might you want to share with them?

Interpersonal/reflective inquiry

- Is there something you are particularly proud of making happen, doing, or creating at work, that relates to ideas we've covered?
- Was there a time that things worked, came together, or happened in a way you are really proud of?
- What gives you hope and energy around these themes? Was there something specific that was a challenge for you in this work that you'd like to share about or reflect on? Do you have any take-away learnings from the challenges you've experienced?

Looking ahead

- Are there any specific projects or plans you have that you are particularly excited about, that can build on this information?
- Are there any intentions you are holding for how you will care for yourself as you engage in this work? We also recognize that facilitators will have many excellent follow-up questions or brand new questions and prompts to bring their group along.

Terms/definitions

Language changes over time, and can vary across and within communities. There are a variety of terms that are generally considered to be outdated, offensive or derogatory when discussing people who are, or are perceived to be, LGBTQ+. Common and preferred language and terms will vary --sometimes greatly -- across different situations and audiences. A term that is used frequently in Brooklyn may be used rarely, if at all, in Nebraska.

A word that older LGBTQ+ people use every day may be considered outdated by younger LGBTQ+ people. A term that is common within an ethnic or cultural group may be considered offensive by others. Be open to hearing different terms and uses of language and recognize some may be new to you or to other participants. Participants, as well as facilitators' colleagues, may have strong opinions about what language is most affirming, or most offensive. They may ask pointed questions about why you are using specific terms or ask your reasoning behind using a specific phrase. Be prepared to explain your language choices in a non-defensive way. Provide clarifying information and provide an opportunity for participants to explain their perspectives and receive validation.

For the most current terms and definitions, along with words to avoid, consult the [Additional Resources section](#).

Asexual

Someone who experiences little or no sexual attraction to other people. Like other orientations, asexuality exists across a spectrum. Some asexual people experience emotional or romantic attraction to other people.

Bisexual

Someone who is romantically, sexually or emotionally attracted to people of more than one sex or gender.

Cisgender

(pronounced "sis-gender"): An adjective to describe a person whose gender identity is congruent with (or "matches") the sex they were assigned at birth.

Coming Out

The process through which a person acknowledges their sexual orientation or gender identity to themselves and sometimes shares with others.

Gay Man

A man who is romantically, sexually, physically or emotionally attracted to other men. In the past the word gay was also used as an umbrella term to describe people attracted to other people of the same sex/gender. Some people and communities still use the word gay in this way too, while others do not.

Gender Expression

A person's outward gender presentation, usually comprised of personal style, clothing, hairstyle, makeup, jewelry, vocal inflection, and body language. Gender expression is typically categorized as masculine or feminine, less commonly as androgynous. Gender expression can be congruent with a person's gender identity, but it can also be incongruent if a person does not feel safe or supported or does not have the resources needed to engage in gender expression that authentically reflects their gender identity.

Gender Identity

A person's deep-seated, internal sense of who they are as a gendered being.

Gender Marker

The marker (M or F, and in some states including New York, a third option like X or O) that appears on a person's identity documents like their birth certificate, driver's license, passport, travel, or work visas. The gender marker on a transgender person's identity documents will be their sex assigned at birth unless they undergo legal and logistical processes to change it, where possible.

Gender Neutral Language or Gender Inclusive Language

Language that does not assume or confer gender. For example "person" instead of "man" or "woman," and "parent/caregiver" instead of "mother and father."

Gender Non-Conforming

A person whose gender expression is perceived by others as being inconsistent with cultural norms expected for that gender. For instance, men who are not considered masculine enough or are feminine, or women who are not considered feminine enough or are masculine. Not all transgender people are gender non-conforming, and not all gender non-conforming people are transgender. Cisgender people may also be gender non-conforming.

Lesbian Woman

A woman who is romantically, sexually, physically or emotionally attracted to other women.

LGBTQ+

An acronym commonly used to refer to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or questioning individuals and communities.

Lived Name/chosen Name

The name a person goes by, that they have self-chosen. Many people -- cisgender and transgender -- go by a name different from their legal name. For transgender people, though, barriers to obtaining a legal name change along with the role of societal assumptions and stereotypes can result in additional difficulties. These include interpersonal issues like being asked inappropriate intrusive questions and dealing with other people who may outright refuse to call them their lived name; and structural access issues like not having a driver's license or other identity documents that accurately display their lived name. The former can lead to embarrassing, uncomfortable and sometimes threatening or dangerous situations with other people. The latter can affect everyday interactions such as applying for a job, renting an apartment, purchasing age-restricted items like alcohol, voting, traveling by plane, and more.

Nonbinary

A continuum or spectrum of gender identities and expressions, often based on the rejection of the gender binary's assumption that gender is strictly an either/or option of male/men/masculine or female/woman/feminine based on sex assigned at birth. Words that people may use to express their nonbinary gender identity include agender, bigender, genderqueer, and genderfluid, among others.

Outing, or to "Out" Someone

Telling other people that someone is LGBTQ+, without their permission.

Queer

Historically this word was used as a derogatory slur. Today, some LGBTQ+ people have reclaimed the term and use it as a more inclusive or umbrella term for people who are not heterosexual or not cisgender. While some LGBTQ+ people now use it as a positive self-identity label, not all LGBTQ+ people and communities share that view and still find it offensive.

Questioning

A person who is exploring or questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Sex Assigned at Birth

The determination of a person's sex based on the visual appearance of the genitals at birth. The sex someone is labeled at birth. This is more of an administrative process than a medical one, because it is not based on any comprehensive assessment of the newborn's genes, chromosomes, hormones or sexual/reproductive anatomy. Rather, it is a quick observation of the external genitals and therefore may or may not be an adequate or accurate.

Sexual Orientation

A person's feelings of attraction (emotional, psychological, physical, and/or sexual) towards other people. A person may be attracted to people of the same sex or gender, to people of a different sex or gender, to people of each sex or gender, or to people without reference to sex or gender. And some people do not experience primary sexual attraction, and may use the word asexual to describe themselves. Sexual orientation is about attraction to other people (external), while gender identity is a deep-seated sense of self (internal). All people have a sexual orientation that is separate from their sex assigned at birth, gender identity and gender expression

Trans

This is sometimes used as an abbreviation for the word transgender.

Transgender

An adjective used to describe a person whose gender identity does not "match" the sex they were assigned at birth.

Transgender Men or Trans Men

People who are men, who were assigned female at birth.

Transgender Women or Trans Women

People who are women, who were assigned male at birth.



FACILITATOR NOTE

When it comes to sexual orientation and gender identity labels, use the word/words people use to describe themselves, rather than assuming or trying to guess what terms to use. Identity, orientation and behavior are each different dimensions of the human experience. Knowing one of these doesn't predict others.

Additional Resources

For facilitators

- Antiviolence Project <https://avp.org/>
- Cardea Guide to Trauma-Informed Sex Education <https://cardeaservices.org/resource/guide-to-trauma-informed-sex-education/>
- CenterLink <https://www.lgbtcenters.org/>
- Consortium of Higher Ed LGBTQ Resource Professionals <https://www.lgbtcampus.org/>
- FORGE <https://forge-forward.org/>
- GLAAD Media Reference Guide, for most up to date terms and definitions <https://www.glaad.org/reference>
- Harvard Implicit Bias Tests <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>
- Human Rights Campaign glossary resource <https://www.hrc.org/resources/glossary-of-terms>
- Dr. Kimberle Crenshaw on the Urgency of Intersectionality https://www.ted.com/talks/kimberle_crenshaw_the_urgency_of_intersectionality?language=en
- Knowles Theory of Andragogy and Adult Learning Theory <https://worldcat.org/search?q=bn:0875896219>

Learning modalities

- <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1245&context=podimproveacad>

Learn more about the Kitty Genovese's life and death

- <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/kitty-genovese-and-bystander-apathy/id1380008439?i=1000465289945>
- <https://storycorps.org/stories/remembering-kitty-genovese/>

Learn more about LGBTQ people

- <https://www.lgbtmap.org/policy-and-issue-analysis/introductory-series>
- <https://straightforequality.org/faq>

Learn more about transgender and nonbinary people

- <https://transequality.org/about-transgender>
- <https://www.glaad.org/transgender/transfaq>

National LGBTQ Chamber of Commerce <https://nglcc.org/>

National Sexual Violence Resource Center <https://www.nsvrc.org/>

NYCAASA <https://www.svfreeenyc.org/>

NYSCASA <https://www.nyscasa.org/>

Resources on personal pronouns <https://pronouns.org/>

Resources for pronouns practice

- <https://pronouns.minus18.org.au/> - functions like an app when used on a phone or tablet
- <https://www.practicewithpronouns.com/>
- UCLA Williams Institute research center on sexual orientation and gender identity law and policy <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/>
- Unconscious Bias resources <https://diversity.ucsf.edu/programs-resources/training/unconscious-bias-training>

For nightlife staff

- LGBT National Help Center <https://www.lgbthotline.org/>
- New York State Domestic & Sexual Violence Hotline for confidential assistance 1-800-942-6906; New York City 1-800-621-HOPE (4673) or 311.
- Sage Elder Hotline <https://www.sageusa.org/what-we-do/sage-national-lgbt-elder-hotline/>
- The Trevor Project phone and chat, for people under age 25 <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/get-help/>
- Trans Lifeline <https://translifeline.org/>

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