Transformative Prevention Programming:

Sexual violence prevention in lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer or questioning (LGBTQ+) communities

nsvrc

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The purpose of the guide is to provide information to state and community-based sexual violence prevention educators and practitioners on preventing sexual violence against individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning (LGBTQ+[1]). The goal is to share some of the best information and resources that are currently available, with the understanding that resources are constantly being created and updated. While this guide cannot fully capture the complexities and diversity within LGBTQ+ communities, it does provide an overview of issues and a context for approaching sexual violence prevention work in LGBTQ+ communities. States and local communities are encouraged to use this information and adapt it to be appropriate for their projects and collaborations.

The primary prevention of sexual violence is based on the belief that violence against all people can be prevented by understanding and taking action to change the factors that influence the acceptance and use of violence by individuals. People are not born with biases against minoritized communities; instead, individuals learn to be prejudiced by accepting social norms. Therefore, we can reduce violence in our communities by changing norms, beliefs and behaviors in our culture. As in the broader society, individuals who identify as LGBTQ+ may also identify by race, class, generation/age, gender, ethnicity, ability, political affiliation, profession, religion, geographical location, parental status, and other identifiers. Like all people who experience violence,

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

it is important to meet people who identify as LGBTQ+ where they are and not make assumptions based on their sexual orientation or any other identifier. It is valuable to work within an empowering model that acknowledges individuals as their own life experts and community members as critical to the prevention of sexual violence.

In 2016 The National Bureau of Justice Statistics (NBJS) began collecting data on sexual orientation and gender identity in its National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), becoming the first of its kind to collect data on national crime victimization rates for LGBTQ+ people. NBJS's report on the rate of violent victimization for persons who identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender during the 4-year aggregate period of 2017 to 2020 found that 30.7 per 1,000 LGB people compared to 1.5 per 1,000 straight-identified people had experienced rape or sexual assault. While the NCVS did not distinguish rape and sexual assault from other violent crimes for transgender people, the survey found that 19 per 1,000 transgender people compared to 7.4 per 1,000 cisgender people experienced violent crime excluding simple assault.[2] The 2015 National Transgender Discrimination Survey, the largest study in the U.S. to look at discrimination against transgender Americans, found that 47% of respondents were sexually assaulted in their lifetime and 10% in the past year. Rates drastically increase when respondents endorse engaging in sex work (72%), experiencing homelessness (65%), or if they identify as a person with a disability (61%)[3].

Harassment and bullying based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or gender expression (SOGE) are a significant problem in US schools - the environments where prevention education programming is most likely to be implemented. The Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network's (GLSEN) 2021 National School Climate Survey found that 76.1% of LGBTQ+ student respondents in US-based K-12 schools experienced in-person verbal harassment, 31.2% experienced physical

[2] Bureau of Justice Statistics. (2022). National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs https://bjs.ojp.gov/data-collection/ncvs#publications-0
[3] U.S. Trans Survey. (2022). National Transgender Survey reports. https://www.ustranssurvey.org/reports

harassment, and 53.7% experienced sexual harassment. Further, The Center for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Youth Risk Behavior Survey found that, nationally, 23% of LGBTQ+ students were bullied at school and 22% were forced by anyone to do "sexual things"[4] compared to 8% of their heterosexual sexual peers.[5]

It is important for service providers to remember that they are most likely serve LGBTQ+ clients, whether they realize it or not. A client's choice to "show up" as the fullest version of themselves to receive services is highly contingent upon the perception and/or real experience of discrimination in the service setting. Additionally, myths and stereotypes about perpetration may impact whether or not victims will come forward for services in the first place. For example, individuals who identify as LGBTQ+ have been falsely accused as pedophiles or child sexual abusers – this myth may impact whether or not survivors will reach out for services. Additionally, challenging and even violent confrontations with law enforcement can impact a person's perception of the help-seeking process. This document will provide an overview of the current climate for LGBTQ+ people in the United States, discuss the landscape of LGBTQ+ inclusive and specific prevention programming, and offer recommendations for organizations seeking to create more affirming programs.

Discrimination against people who identify as LGBTQ+

In the United States, societal beliefs about sexuality and gender have created a system of bias against LGBTQ+ communities. Race, ethnicity, and physical and/or cognitive ability are additional examples of attributes that have been discriminated against to varying degrees. Stigma and prejudice can show themselves in different ways depending upon the group targeted; when people are stigmatized for their perceived deviation, it leads to oppression that is widely accepted and deeply rooted in society. This kind of discrimination can lead to some form of physical violence against the stigmatized group, in this case, LGBTQ+-identified people. The manner in which LGBTQ+ people have been stigmatized and thus discriminated against in the United States has been expressed differently and had different impacts over time. Recent examples of this include state and local bans on transgender access to restroom facilities, forced outings of LGBTQ+ school students, and bans on gender-affirming healthcare. Discriminatory laws increase stigma against LGBTQ+ persons and reinforce the social messages

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[4] The Youth Risk Behavior Survey defines "sexual things" as "kissing, touching, or being forced to have sexual intercourse."

[5] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022). Youth Risk Behavior Survey data summary & trends report: 2011-2021. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/yrbs_data_summary_and_trends.htm

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

This guide is being written at a time of increased violence against LGBTQ+ people. Using the age-old trope of "children under threat," attacks have been waged on everything from who gets to play in children's sports leagues to public library programming.[6] These campaigns have succeeded in creating a moral panic that has galvanized people across the country who wrongly believe that increasing social acceptance of LGBTQ+ people threatens the safety of children. In 2023 for the first time ever the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) issued a national State of Emergency for LGBTQ+ Americans, inclusive of a safety guidebook for people traveling within the continental United States. HRC's decision to issue this first-ever State of Emergency came on the heels of over 525 anti-LGBTQ+ bills being introduced in states across the country in 2023 alone. Of these, 70 have become law.[7] The FBI released supplemental Hate Crimes statistics for 2021 and found a 54% increase in Hate Crimes against LGBTQ+ Americans compared to the year prior.[8] The relationship between language and violence has come to be known

[6] Shilad, J. (2023, September 1). Anti-LGBTQ+ campaigns lead to broad crackdown on free expression. Pen America. https://pen.org/anti-lgbtq-campaigns-lead-to-broad-crackdown-on-free-expression/

[7] Human Rights Campaign. (2023, June 6). For the first time ever, Human Rights Campaign officially declares 'state of emergency' for LGBTQ+ Americans; Issues national warning and guidebook to ensure safety for LGBTQ+ residents and travelers [Press release]. https://www.hrc.org/press-releases/for-the-first-time-ever-human-rights-campaign-officially-declares-state-of-emergency-for-lgbtq-americans-issues-national-warning-and-guidebook-to-ensure-safety-for-lgbtq-residents-and-travelers

[8] Federal Bureau of Investigation. (2023, March 13). FBI releases supplemental 2021 hate crime statistics [Press release]. U.S. Department of Justice. https://www.fbi.gov/news/press-releases/fbi-releases-supplemental-2021-hate-crime-statistics

as stochastic violence. *Scholars and law enforcement alike have described stochastic violence as hate speech increasing the likelihood that violence will be committed against the target of the speech.*[9] There is, of course, a long and storied relationship between hate speech and physical violence, which often begins by dehumanizing and/or demonizing the target. The usage of phrases such as "Don't Say Gay" creates a climate that is both a threat to the lives of LGBTQ+ people AND a threat to evidence-based primary prevention programming.

The strategies to prevent and end violence against LGBTQ+ people should not just center on the changing of one particular law or the prosecution of one person who commits violence; they should also be to prevent the process of stigmatization from happening in the first place. Decades of research have helped us understand many of the risk and protective factors associated with perpetration and victimization. We know that climates harmful to minoritized people create systems of oppression, or discrimination against certain groups of people deeply embedded into the systems used to govern political and social life. Systemic oppression increases the likelihood that demonized communities will be targeted with violence, sexual or otherwise. So, if we are to prevent sexual violence, we need to work to dismantle systems of oppression by strategically scrutinizing the machinations of these systems, including harmful policies and rhetoric. This is because policies, cultural attitudes, and messages that stigmatize marginalized groups make violence an acceptable form of punishment for not "fitting in."

Vision for the future of LGBTQ sexual violence prevention

There is a compelling and urgent need for intervention and prevention strategies that are relevant, appropriate and accessible to and inclusive of LGBTQ+ communities. Sexual violence prevention efforts must work to prevent people from perpetrating violence against LGBTQ+ people and also support LGBTQ+ people in healthy relationship development. In addition, the anti-sexual violence movement must begin focusing on creating positive change by working to advance LGBTQ+ equality by supporting LGBTQ+ inclusive and affirming programming and policies at all levels of society. Whatever programs or strategies may be chosen for sexual violence prevention in LGBTQ+ communities, culturally- affirming LGBTQ+ survivor services should be available for referrals prior to implementation. Below are some examples of a world in which LGBTQ+ sexual violence prevention efforts have already succeeded. This is not a complete list; it is meant to help spark ideas about potential long-term outcomes of successful LGBTQ+ violence prevention efforts.

[9] Nelson, B. (2022, November 5). How stochastic terrorism uses disgust to incite violence. Scientific American. https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/how-stochastic-terrorism-uses-disgust-to-incite-violence/

Individual:

— Language and terminology to describe violence are inclusive of LGBTQ+ people. For example, use of "gendered violence" or "domestic and sexual violence"; where "violence against women" is used, be clear that the language is inclusive of ALL women.

— Prevention educators are knowledgeable about, and comfortable with, discussing the complexities of sexuality and gender, including trans identities, and implications for violence prevention.

— Youth are supported and affirmed when they come out as LGBTQ+.

— LGBTQ+ people can travel anywhere without threat of violence in any form.

Relationship:

— People immediately interrupt homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and heterosexist comments. For example, "that's so gay" is no longer an acceptable phrase.

— Parents in relationship with their children and healthcare providers can make decisions about gender-affirming care without government intervention.

— Many institutions and workplaces have Queer/Straight Alliances and other LGBTQ+-affirming spaces.

— Many schools have peer support and positive LGBTQ+ role models and mentors.

— Parental and extended family support of LGBTQ+ youth and same-gender and queer relationships is the norm.

— Support systems for parents of LGBTQ+ youth are widely available.

Community:

— Comprehensive sexuality education programs are widely available in all schools and communities, and these programs include accurate, age-appropriate, and inclusive information about sexual orientation and gender identity, same-gender relationships, and LGBTQ+ sexual health.

— Schools have anti-bullying and anti-harassment policies that protect LGBTQ+ students, and that materially include all-gender bathroom options, the ability for school-aged children to use their names and pronouns of choice, and curricula across the board that includes and affirms LGBTQ+ identities.

— Transgender individuals are allowed to play sports for all teams and leagues at every level.

— Violence prevention programs incorporate examples of LGBTQ+ sexual violence in all exercises.

— Violence prevention organizations partner with LGBTQ+ advocacy organizations to promote healthy relationships and sexuality in racially and ethnically diverse LGBTQ+ communities.

— Same-gender couples are allowed to attend the prom in all states.

— National organizations and state and local health departments gather population-based surveillance data (with statistically significant sample sizes) on LGBTQ+ communities and health issues, including sexual health and violence.

Societal:

— LGBTQ+ identities and relationships are valued and represented positively in mainstream media.

— LGBTQ+ individuals have equal rights and protection (related to housing, employment, health care, freedom to worship, etc.) under the law in every community.

— Stochastic violence is immediately rejected and discredited.

— Organizational and societal policies allow individuals to select their gender on program, work, or legal IDs.

Focusing efforts

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

1. The development and support of healthy relationships and the skills necessary to engage in healthy relationships among individuals who identify as LGBTQ+ in order to promote healthy interpersonal relationships, as well as value positive intra-community relationships and structural supports.

2. The cultural relevance and humility of organizations and institutions in communities to serve and support individuals who identify as LGBTQ+ to address risks of re-victimization, lack of access to support services and care, and health disparities.

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

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

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

1. Assess organizational capacity and readiness to engage in LGBTQ+ sexual violence prevention work.

2. Build relationships with, and support the leadership of, staff who identify as LGBTQ+.

3. Work with LGBTQ+ community members to assess community capacity and readiness. The assessment could identify: Overall community climate for individuals who identify as LGBTQ+; size and demographics of the community; strengths and resources available; gaps in services, etc.

4. Based on the assessment results, consider whether to address inter-community violence (e.g. hate crimes perpetrated by heterosexual and cisgender people against individuals who identify as LGBTQ+), intra-community violence (e.g. intimate partner violence among same-gender couples), and/or structural violence (e.g. heterosexist/cissexist policies and practices). Examine the underlying causes of each.

5. If this work is already happening in your community, work to support it instead of reinventing wheels. Similarly, seek to build partnerships with LGBTQ+ stakeholders and organizations, including an equitable distribution of any resources associated with this work.

6. Consider which strategies best fit the population(s) selected. For example, to address same-gender intimate partner violence, an organization could implement a program designed to prevent violence in LGBTQ+ relationships and/or adapt a mainstream IPV prevention program for LGBTQ+ populations. When possible, this should also include work to dismantle structural barriers that cause violence to happen in the first place.

7. When planning and implementing prevention programs, ensure the availability of options in the community for survivors who identify as LGBTQ+ to seek culturally affirming services.

8. Consider the diversity and complex intersections of identities among LGBTQ+ communities, including sexual orientation, gender identity, race, ethnicity, ability, class, education, citizenship, and so on. LGBTQ+ communities are not a monolith and some issues faced by LGBTQ+ people may be more urgent than sexual orientation or gender identity/expression. For instance, LGBTQ+ folks who are also undocumented face barriers that require attention to the discrimination faced due to being BOTH LGBTQ+ and undocumented.

9. Be clear and intentional about the prevention goals, outcomes and

populations that the organization is trying to reach. Let your work be driven by the best available evidence and be guided over time by data-driven decisions. Far too often, organizations create programming based on what they think needs to happen instead of what the communities most impacted say needs to happen.

Examples of sexual violence prevention efforts that address the needs of LGBTQ+ communities

While there are few evidence-based sexual violence prevention programs for use with any community, there are even fewer programs for use specifically with LGBTQ+ communities. The following are examples of specific programs that may be useful resources in planning a sexual violence prevention program for use with LGBTQ+ populations. Note that this is not an exhaustive list:

Existing prevention strategies and resources that are LGBTQ+-Specific

- **The Gay Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN)** was founded by a group of teachers in 1990 who knew that educators play key roles in creating affirming learning environments for LGBTQ youth. GLSEN conducts extensive and original research to inform evidence-based solutions for K-12 education. They author developmentally appropriate resources for educators to use throughout their school community, and advise on, advocate for, and research comprehensive policies designed to protect LGBTQ students as well as students of marginalized identities. GLSEN coordinates a network of 43 chapters in 30 states across the nation. For more information and to access resources for K-12 schools https://www.glsen.org/

- **Genders & Sexuality Alliances** create safe environments in schools for students to support each other and learn about homophobia and other oppressions, educate the school community about homophobia, gender identity, and sexual orientation issues,
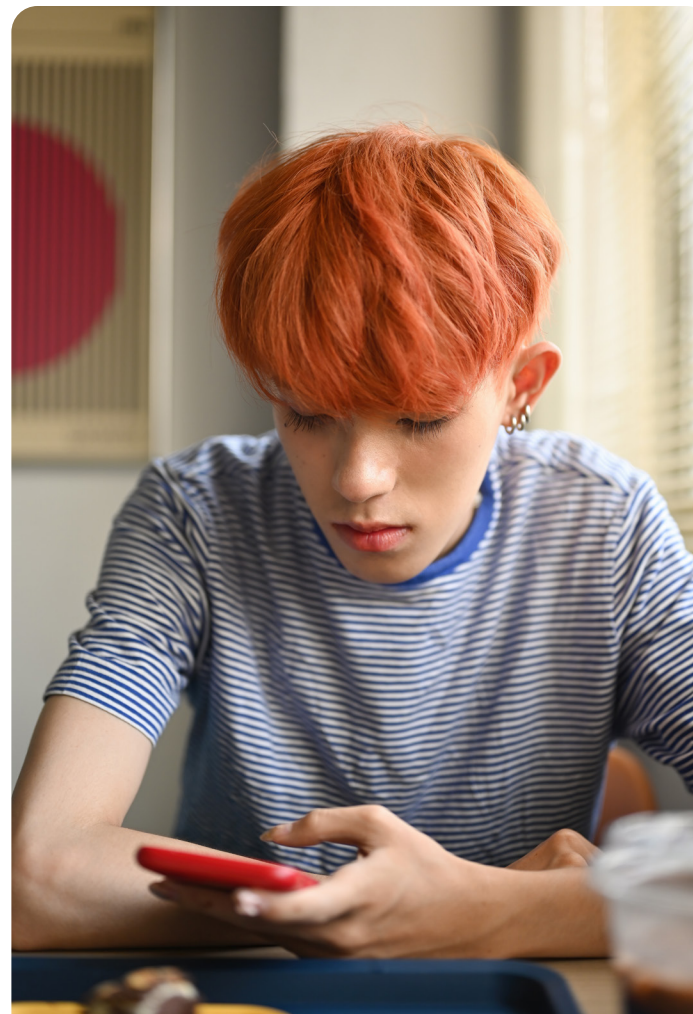
and fight discrimination, harassment, and violence in schools. For information about GSAs http://gsanetwork.org/

- **Welcoming Schools Program (Human Rights Campaign)** is an LGBT-inclusive approach to addressing family diversity, gender stereotyping and name-calling in K-5 learning environments. "Initiated by a group of parents and educators to meet the needs of students whose family structures are not well represented or included in school environments, Welcoming Schools is also a response to educators who have asked for help in addressing anti-gay name-calling and bullying. It offers a wide range of resources for school administrators and educators on supporting students who are on a unique gender path. Welcoming Schools is not only for students who have parents or caregivers who identify as LGBT, nor is it only for students who, as they grow older, may identify as LGBT. Rather, it is for all students growing up in our increasingly diverse world." For more information about Welcoming Schools http://www.welcomingschools.org/

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

- **U.S. Department of Education Toolkit: Creating Inclusive and Nondiscriminatory School Environments for LGBTQI+ Students** is a resource that includes examples of policies and practices that schools and districts can consider developing to support LGBTQI+ students and families. It also highlights Federal resources that schools, students, and parents may find helpful in working to ensure that all students are free to learn in an educational environment without harassment or other discrimination. To access the document- https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/lgbtqi-student-resources-toolkit-062023.pdf

- **The Northwest Network's Relationship Skills Curriculum** provides folks with what they need to start and run a relationship skills class. The versatility of the curriculum allows it to be implemented in a variety of settings with great success. Some of the settings at the national level include universities, support groups, prisons, and community groups. For more information https://www.nwnetwork.org/

- **The Centers for Disease Control's and Veto Violence's Dating Matters: Guide to Healthy, Safe Relationships for LGBTQ+ Youth, Their Parents, and Caregivers** provides young people and their parents with important information and skills for building healthy, safe relationships across a lifetime. This includes learning how to resolve conflicts with respect and how to have open, honest communication with a partner. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ+) youth can experience unique challenges and opportunities in their relationships. Learning more about these needs and experiences can help LGBTQ+ youth have safe and healthy relationships. These guides can be used alone or alongside the Dating Matters youth and parent programs. For more information https://vetoviolence.cdc.gov/apps/dating-matters-toolkit/content/lgbtq-guides

- **LYRIC: San Francisco LGBTQQ youth program**. "LYRIC's mission is to build community and inspire positive social change through education enhancement, career trainings, health promotion, and leadership development with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning youth, their families, and allies of all races, classes, genders, and abilities." For more information about LYRIC https://lyric.org/

- **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ) Youth Partner Abuse Prevention Program: The Boston Alliance of GLBT Youth (BAGLEY) and the Network/La Red** is a peer-led model of prevention to promote healthy relationships and sexuality among GLBTQ youth. For more information about BAGLY http://www.bagly.org/

- **BRAVO**- Ohio anti-violence organization, Bravo works to eliminate violence perpetrated on the basis of sexual orientation and/or gender identification, domestic violence, and sexual assault through prevention, education, advocacy, violence documentation, and survivor services, both within and on behalf of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender communities. For more information about BRAVO http://www.bravo-ohio.org/

Existing prevention strategies and resources that are LGBTQ+-Affirming but not specific

- **Prevent Child Abuse Vermont's Healthy Relationships Project** is a multi-component curriculum that spans grades k-12. Also available in Spanish; all programs are developmentally appropriate, trauma-informed and focus on both victim and problematic sexual behavior prevention. For more information https://www.pcavt.org/healthy-relationships-project

- **Fourth R**- Works with schools to promote the neglected R (for relationships) and help build this "fourth R" in school climates. "The Fourth R consists of a comprehensive school-based program designed to include students, teachers, parents, and the community in reducing violence and risk behaviors. It is important that young people be given information that will help them make good decisions, and are shown positive relationship models that will demonstrate alternatives to the negative examples they frequently see in the world around them." Fourth R initiatives target multiple forms of violence, including violence/bullying, and dating violence, as well as unsafe sexual behavior, and substance abuse. For more information on the Fourth R https://youthrelationships.org/

- **WholeSomeBodies (from Vermont- formerly known as Joyful Sexuality)** which is gender neutral and thus easily adapted specifically for LGBTQ populations. "The mission of WholeSomeBodies: Broadening the Conversation About Sexuality and Sexual Violence Prevention: to shift the cultural norm toward joyful and healthy sexuality by creating opportunities for individuals and communities to explore, reclaim, and discover a deeper and more expansive understanding of how sexuality informs our humanity Toward this mission, we will promote a sense of joyful and healthy sexuality as a critical step toward ending sexual violence." For more information on WholeSomeBodies https://www.vtnetwork.org/wholesome-bodies-curriculum/

- **Advocates for Youth's Adolescent Reproductive and Sexual Health Education Project (ARSHEP)** is a comprehensive educational tool for adolescent reproductive and sexual health. Created for clinicians, residency programs, medical educators, and individual learners, the ARSHEP modules provide a curated set of lectures, created as PowerPoint slide decks, that can be freely downloaded, modified, and presented to audiences of clinical providers including physicians, nurse practitioners, physician associates, and others who provide care and

services to adolescent patients. ARSHEP also includes patient-interaction videos, which provide demonstrations for learning and discussion. For more information https://www.advocatesforyouth.org/arshep-presentations-sign-up/

There is no one program or strategy that will work to prevent sexual violence in any given population or community without being tailored to that specific community. Unfortunately, most strategies do not specifically address sexual violence prevention in LGBTQ+ communities. Comprehensive strategies addressing multiple levels of influence have a greater effect than any one strategy that only addresses one level. Likewise, some strategies may only be relevant in particular settings such as schools, after-school, or out-of-school programs for youth versus other settings for adults. It is important to consider factors such as what population(s) the strategy was designed for (e.g., youth or adult), what setting it was intended to function in (e.g., school, employment, community, agency), and other pertinent information when choosing a strategy to implement. Additionally, as with any population, it is important to get community buy in for the prevention strategy.

Agencies should also consider existing resources, including LGBTQ+ organizations and community members and key stakeholders, LGBTQ+ bookstores, etc., to collaborate with and seek input from planning prevention strategies with LGBTQ+ communities. Keep in mind that the best agency to implement prevention strategies with these communities may not be a local rape crisis center. If there is a local agency that already has the trust and support from the LGBTQ+ communities, sexual violence prevention may be better received from this agency. A community needs and resources assessment would indicate this. It cannot be stressed enough that whatever programs or strategies may be chosen for sexual violence prevention in LGBTQ+ communities, culturally- affirming LGBTQ+ survivor services should be available for referrals prior to implementation. Here are some things to consider when planning prevention strategies:

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

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

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

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

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

CDC's STOP SV Resource for Action[1] is a useful tool for identifying a full range of complementary strategies that go beyond individual education. The table below shows the CDC's STOP SV matrix and adds example strategies that can be deployed to specifically address LGBTQ+ communities:

	Strategy	**Approach**	**LGBTQ+ Specific Example(s)**
S	Promote Social Norms that Protect Against Violence	Bystander approaches Mobilizing men and boys as allies	*Teach individuals bystander intervention skills and how to interrupt oppressive remarks against individuals who identify as LGBTQ+.*
T	Teach Skills to Prevent Sexual Violence	Social-emotional learning Teaching healthy, safe dating and intimate relationship skills to adolescents Promoting healthy sexuality Empowerment-based training	*Teach LGBTQ+-inclusive and affirming comprehensive healthy sexuality education in K-12 schools.* *Teach healthy relationships skills to LGBTQ+ youth and young adults.*

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[1] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2016). Sexual violence prevention resource for action: A compilation of the best available evidence. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/sv-prevention-resource_508.pdf

	Strategy	Approach	LGBTQ+ Specific Example(s)
O	Provide Opportunities to Empower and Support Girls and Women	Strengthening economic supports for women and families Strengthening leadership and opportunities for girls	*Create/support workplace readiness opportunities for transgender girls and women.* *Provide mentorship opportunities for LGBTQ+ youth.* *Meaningfully support LGBTQ+ people in leadership positions, including working with organizations to ready themselves to support LGBTQ+ employees.*
P	Create Protective Environments	Improving safety and monitoring in schools Establishing and consistently applying workplace policies Addressing community-level risks through environmental approaches	*Review school policies on preventing and responding to sexual violence, bullying and sexual harassment with an eye on students who identify as LGBTQ+. Establish a community-based task force of multidisciplinary partners to foster systemic changes and violence-free norms around sexual assault in LGBTQ+ communities.*

	Strategy	Approach	LGBTQ+ Specific Example(s)
SV	Support Victims/ Survivors to Lessen Harms	Victim-centered services Treatment for victims of SV Treatment for at-risk children and families to prevent problem behavior including sex offending	*Cross-train LGBTQ+ serving agencies, hate crime agencies, substance abuse, mental health, law enforcement, medical professionals, school personnel, and other providers to help them identify and appropriately respond to sexual violence in LGBTQ+ communities within their respective workplaces and organizations.*

Conclusion

Preventing sexual violence is ultimately about creating safe, affirming, and respectful environments for all people. Although LGBTQ+ communities experience rates of sexual harassment and violence similar to or greater than other groups, they also often experience other forms of stigmatization and oppression that compound their trauma and isolation and increase vulnerability. This guide provided examples of existing LGBTQ+-specific and inclusive sexual violence prevention efforts. In general, sexual violence prevention efforts within and among the LGBTQ+ communities must work to end broader oppression against individuals who identify as LGBTQ+ while working to end violence. Primary prevention approaches should consider which populations and types of violence to address. For example, programs could focus on inter-community violence (e.g. hate crimes perpetrated by individuals who identify as heterosexual and cisgender against individuals who identify as LGBTQ+), intra-community violence (e.g. intimate partner violence among same-gender couples), and/or structural violence (e.g. heterosexist and cissexist policies and practices). This guide has offered some background information, practical tips, and promising strategies for advocates and prevention educators/practitioners working at local and state levels; and offers an invitation for organizations and communities to create opportunities for all people to thrive.

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