Supporting LGBTQ Individuals: The Basics

Adapted from: Mentoring Partnerships of New York <http://de.slideshare.net/MPNY/lgbt-youth-basics-mentoring-partnership-breakfast-126121>

Sexual Orientation Refers to who we are attracted to emotionally, physically, spiritually. Some identities people may use include:

* Lesbian – woman attracted to woman
* Gay – man attracted to man
* Bisexual – attraction to both men & women
* Asexual – no attraction
* Pansexual – attraction to people across the gender spectrum

Assigned Sex Refers to the assignment given at birth, usually by a doctor based on genitalia, organs, and assumptions about our chromosomes.

Sex assignments include

* Male
* Female
* Intersex

Gender Identity Refers to how we self-identify our gender. This doesn’t always match our assigned sex. Some identities people may use include

* Male
* Female
* Transgender – an umbrella term
* Trans-man/Man of transgender experience
* Trans-woman/Woman of transgender
* …Other

Gender Expression Refers to how we present ourselves in terms of dress, posture, roles. Different cultures have their own definitions of what is considered “normative” Examples include

* Masculine
* Feminine
* Androgynous

This is personal. This is not just specific to LGBT people

* We all have a SEX ASSIGNED AT BIRTH.
* We all have a SEXUAL ORIENTATION.
* We all have a GENDER IDENTITY
* We all have a way we EXPRESS OUR GENDER

LGBT risk factors: variables associated with an increased risk or concern

* Multiple oppressions, Poverty, Racism, HIV/AIDS related issues and/or other concerns
* Lack of social spaces
* Violence affirmation The threat and/or experience of
* Disconnection from family and anti-gay or anti-trans violence other institutions
* Family, religious and social discrimination in housing, intolerance of LGBT education, employment, health lifestyles care access

Protective factors with LGBTQ conditions with increased positive outcomes

* High family connectedness
* Caring adults
* High self-esteem
* Family acceptance
* Safe school environment
* Positive peer and adult role models

Using inclusive language

* Reflect back the language a young person uses with you
* Use gender-neutral language when talking about relationships
* Ask about preferred names and pronouns  Revise forms to be inclusive of all genders and sexualities
* Work to avoid assumptions