Safe Zone Training

Increasing LGBTQ awareness and promoting comprehensive allyship

FAIRFAX COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF **FAMILY**SERVICES

Fairfax County
Department of Family Services
Domestic & Sexual
Violence Services

Fairfax County
Health & Human Services
HHS

MISSION

DFS promotes the well-being of the County's diverse community by protecting and improving the lives of children, adults and families through supportive services, education and advocacy.

About Safe Zone

An Ally Is

- a listener
- open-minded
- able to have their own opinions
- responsible for empowering their role in a community, particularly as it relates to responding to homophobia or transphobia
- believes that all persons regardless of age, sex, race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression should be treated with dignity and respect
- confronts their own prejudices
- engages in the process of developing a culture free of homophobia, transphobia and heterosexism
- commits themselves to personal growth in spite of the discomfort it may sometimes cause
- recognizes the legal powers and privileges that cisgender straight people have and which LGBTQ people are denied

An Ally Isn't

- someone with ready-made answers
- making assumptions about an entire community based on individual situations
- done learning. We all have something to learn!

Safe Zone trainings are safe places for people to gain a deeper familiarity and comfort with vocabulary, inclusive practices, and privilege to identify ways that their organizations can continue to be a more safe and inclusive space for LGBTQ clients, coworkers, and community members.

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Introductions

Name

Pronouns

Share:

One thing you hope to gain from the conversation today

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Group Norms
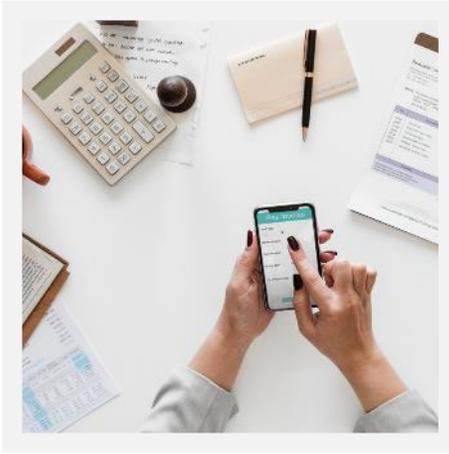
Resist Multi-tasking

Be smarter than your phone

Questions, Questions,

Ask the questions you need answers to. Questions may be placed in the "bike rack" or "parking lot" and addressed later

Self/Community Care

Check in with your emotions – laugh, cry, be angry if you need to – take breaks, be kind to yourself, take care of each other

Oops, Ouch

We assume everyone has positive intent, but we name when the impact is hurtful. Thinking about the way we use language, humor, and jokes.

Share the Airtime

Consider talking less if you have been sharing a lot during the discussion; consider speaking up if you haven't shared much in the conversation

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F(earfully) Asked Questions

This activity is designed confront those questions that remain unasked for fear of sounding "basic", prejudiced, or even offensive, and to provide an opportunity for participants to get accurate, healthy answers.

Sample Questions

- Can I ask someone how they identify?
- Don't all these labels make it worse, not better?
- What bathroom does a transgender person use? What bathroom should I refer a transgender client to use at our office?
- Can I use the word "queer" if I am not LGBTQ-identified?

DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS?

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First Impressions

Take a moment to remember:

- The first time you remember receiving a message about LGBTQ communities
- What was that message?
- How old were you?
- Was the message positive, negative or neutral?
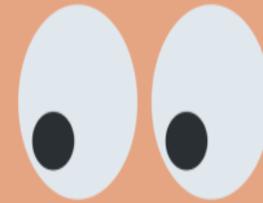
FIRST IMPRESSION

Finding a Common Language

Match the vocabulary cards with the definitions

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TRANSLATING TO INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

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"Hermaphrodite"

- We don't use this word because "hermaphrodite" is a stigmatizing, inaccurate word with a negative medical history.

Instead →

"Homosexual"

- We don't use this word because "homosexual" often connotes a medical diagnosis, or a discomfort with gay/lesbian people.

Instead →

"A gay" or "a transgender"

- We don't describe people as a gay or a transgender because gay and transgender are adjectives that describe a person/group

Instead →

"Born female/born male" or "Female-bodied/male-bodied"

- We don't use these phrases because "Assigned" language accurately depicts the situation of what happens at birth. "-bodied" language is often interpreted as as pressure to medically transition, or invalidation of one's gender identity

Instead →

"Transgender people and normal people"

- We don't use this phrase because saying "normal" implies "abnormal," which is a stigmatizing way to refer to a person.

Instead →

"Both genders" or "Opposite sexes"

- "Both" implies there are only two; "Opposite" reinforces antagonism amongst gender identities

Instead →

"Ladies and gentlemen"

- Moving away from binary language is more inclusive of people of all genders

Instead →

"Mailman," "fireman," "policeman," etc.

- People of all genders do these jobs so we do not need to enforce "man" as the expected or pseudo-neutral gender

Instead →

"It" when referring to someone (e.g., when pronouns are unknown)

- We don't describe people as it because "it" is for referring to things, not people.

Instead →

The LGBTQ Umbrella

LGBTQ is an acronym meant to encompass diverse sexualities and genders.

➢ **The "Q" often refers to queer and represents an umbrella term for many other identities**

➢ **The umbrella is helpful because lesbian, gay, and bisexual are not the only marginalized sexualities and transgender is not the only marginalized gender identity**

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