

# Taking Pride

A new look at reducing  
substance use disorders  
within the LGBTQ+  
community

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# Acknowledgment



I would like to acknowledge that IPS is headquartered on the land of the Ipai-Tipai, also known as the Kumeyaay Nation. I wish to pay respect to the many elders, and to the tribe of this land; past, present, and future.

I especially would like to honor and pay respect and tribute to the two-spirit community.

# **PLEASE NOTE**

**I MAY USE LANGUAGE THAT IS OFFENSIVE AND  
TRIGGERING. I AM SPEAKING FROM MY LIVED  
EXPERIENCE.**



# WHO AM I?

- White, Cis-Male, Gay
- Bachelor of Arts, Government  
California State University, Sacramento
- Certificate in Non-profit Management  
University of San Diego
- Involved with GLBTQ+ organizations for many years focused on HIV/STD prevention and community development.



Me with former Secretary of the Army Eric Fanning, first openly gay head of any branch of the U.S. military.

# WHO AM I NOT?

- An expert on all things LGBTQ+



# THE LGBTQ+ “COMMUNITY”?

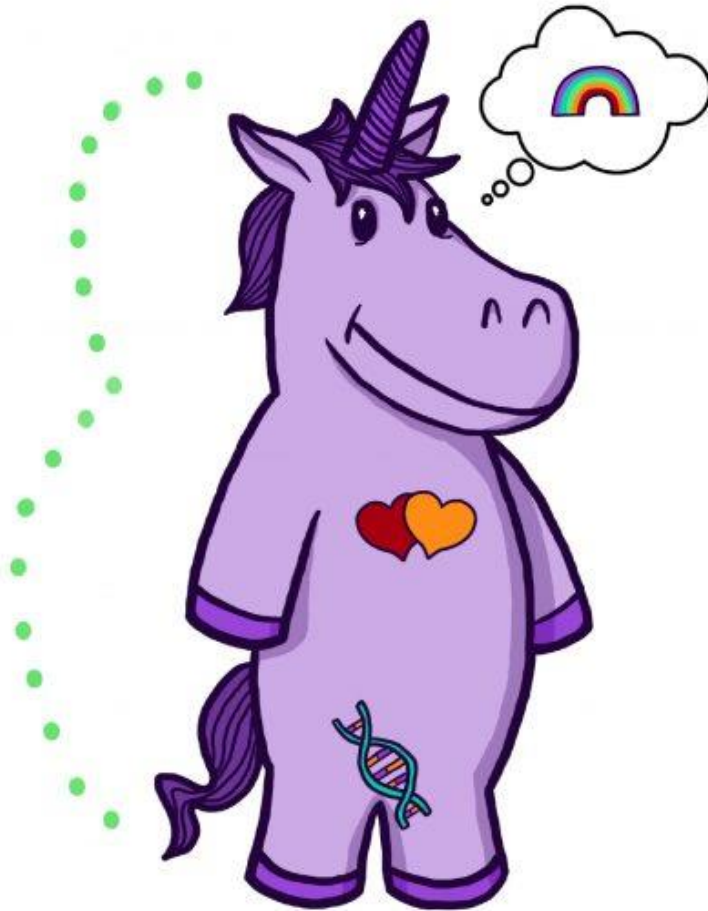
“...the main commonality across these diverse groups is their members' historically marginalized social status relative to society's cultural norm of the exclusively heterosexual individual who conforms to traditional gender roles and expectations. Put another way, these groups share the common status of “other” because of their members' departures from heterosexuality and gender norms. Their “otherness” is the basis for stigma and its attendant prejudice, discrimination, and violence, which underlie society's general lack of attention to their health needs and many of the health disparities...”

“...this “otherness” may be complicated by additional dimensions of inequality such as race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status, resulting in stigma at multiple levels.”

The Health of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender People: Building a Foundation for Better Understanding.

# The Gender Unicorn

Graphic by:  
**TSER**  
Trans Student Educational Resources



## Gender Identity



Female / Woman / Girl

Male / Man / Boy

Other Gender(s)



## Gender Expression



Feminine

Masculine

Other



## Sex Assigned at Birth

Female



Male



Other/Intersex



## Physically Attracted to



Women

Men

Other Gender(s)



## Emotionally Attracted to



Women

Men

Other Gender(s)

To learn more, go to:  
[www.transstudent.org/gender](http://www.transstudent.org/gender)

Design by Landyn Pan and Anna Moore



# BARS PROVIDED REFUGE

“Across the country, LGBTQ Americans turned to bars and nightlife to provide an escape from pervasive prejudice, and to carve out spaces of their own.”

....but prejudice existed within.

<https://archive.curbed.com/2016/6/17/11963066/gay-bar-history-stonewall-pulse-lgbtq>



# LGBTQ+ SUBSTANCE MISUSE STATISTICS

- Alcohol is often the drug of choice because of its prevalence in social settings.
- LGBTQ are 90% more likely to use alcohol and drugs than their heterosexual counterparts. (2017)
- Approximately 44.6% of LGB individuals between the ages of 18 and 28 reported binge drinking (consuming 5 or more drinks in one day) at least once in the past month. (2016)
- Reported alcohol use disorder among LGBTQ+ (ages 18-25), with 12.4% reporting a disorder, compared to 10.1% in the overall population. (2015 study)



# LGBTQ+ SUBSTANCE MISUSE STATISTICS

- More than a third (37.6 percent) of LGBTQ+ 18 and older reported past year marijuana use, compared to 16.2% reported by the overall adult population. (2018 study)
- Opioid use (including misuse of prescription opioids or heroin use) was also higher with 9% of LGBTQ+ aged 18 or older reporting use compared to 3.8% among the overall adult population. (2018 study)
- In 2015, past-year meth use prevalence was more than four times higher among gay men compared to straight men
- West Hollywood: Nearly seven of ten residents reported meth use at community events (74%) Nearly seven of ten residents reported meth use at bars and clubs (68%)



# WHY?

According to a 2020 study by the Center for American Progress:

More than 1 in 3 LGBTQ Americans faced discrimination of some kind in the past year, including more than 3 in 5 transgender Americans.

1 in 2 report moderate or significant negative psychological impacts.

TABLE 1

## More than half of LGBTQ Americans hid a personal relationship to avoid discrimination

Measures taken by LGBTQ Americans to avoid discrimination, by demographic group

Measures to avoid discrimination	Total across Survey	Transgender*	People of color**	Respondents who reported discrimination in the previous year
Hid a personal relationship	54%	52%	51%	73%
Made decisions about where to work	35%	58%	37%	55%
Changed the way they dressed/mannerisms	35%	66%	34%	53%
Avoided houses of worship	35%	47%	30%	54%
Avoided public places (e.g., restaurants)	33%	55%	36%	56%
Moved away from family	32%	47%	33%	45%
Avoided law enforcement	30%	50%	34%	48%
Moved from a rural area	22%	37%	21%	32%
Made decisions about where to attend school	21%	35%	25%	33%
Avoided doctors' offices	20%	47%	21%	36%
Avoided getting services for self/family	19%	39%	21%	31%
Avoided travel	18%	31%	21%	28%
Postponed adding children to the family	11%	20%	16%	17%

\* The statistics for transgender individuals include nonbinary, gender-nonconforming, genderqueer, and agender respondents.

\*\* For the purposes of this survey, people of color include Black, Hispanic, Asian, and multiracial individuals, as well as those identifying as "other, non-Hispanic."

Source: Center for American Progress and NORC at the University of Chicago online survey, June 2020, on file with the authors.



# SELF ESTEEM

“...low self-esteem is actually a disposition that can lead to addiction....individuals suffering from low self-esteem may find themselves turning to drugs and alcohol in an attempt to compensate. Here is an easy, effortless way to take your lack of self-esteem or own self-worth and drink it away into blackout or smoke it, snort it, or shoot it into oblivion.”

- substance abuse counselor Carole Bennett, M.A.,



# ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are negative experiences that can occur before age 18 and include physical and emotional abuse, neglect, substance abuse, caregiver mental illness and household violence.

## TOXIC STRESS

Toxic stress response can occur when a child experiences strong, frequent, and/or prolonged adversity—such as physical or emotional abuse, chronic neglect, caregiver substance abuse or mental illness, exposure to violence, and/or the accumulated burdens of family economic hardship—without adequate adult support.



# ACES, TRAUMATIC STRESS, & LGBTQ COMMUNITY

The messages I got were loud and clear. Never ever admit to yourself or anyone who you are. Hide it, kill it, eradicate it, heal it, deliver it, break it, suppress it, deny it, marry it to a woman, heterosexualize it, therapy it, anything and everything, but whatever you do don't stand up one day and say "I am gay" because that will mean the end. I spent most of my life trying to destroy the real me, doing all I could to ensure he never found expression. A suicide of the soul, identity and meaning.

- Anthony Venn-Brown, A Life of Unlearning - a journey to find the truth



# WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

When did you realize you were “gay”: 48% - high school.  
20% junior high school, and 17% knew in grade school.

2018 Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States survey

A 2010 poll of 1,500 people in the UK who were already out found that among the over-60s the average age they had come out was 37. But those in their 30s had come out at an average age of 21, and in the group aged 18 to 24 it was 17.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/nov/15/gay-people-coming-out-younger-age>



# ALCOHOL INTERTWINED WITH EVENTS

In a 2016 study 43 pride events with evidence of alcohol industry sponsorship.

“Liquor companies are capitalizing on the LGBTQ community. Why? Because liquor companies love to make money, and the queer community loves to drink....

....selling a dangerous message that with a bit of vodka, you can be your true self.”

- Bonnie Horgos

<https://www.thetemper.com/liquor-companies-stop-sponsoring-pride/>



# APPROACHING THE COMMUNITY

- Age
- Race/Ethnicity/Culture
- Educational level and socioeconomic status
- Geographic location
- “Sub-Culture”
- Lived Experience

**GET TO KNOW THE PEOPLE YOU ARE WORKING WITH**



# COMMUNITY LEVEL INTERVENTIONS

- Regular assessments to ensure bars, restaurants, nightclubs are operating properly.
- Adoption of policies that address density, operations, and community impacts. DAO/CUP
- ‘Sober Curious” - Queer and sober: New options arise for those seeking booze-free fun NBC NEWS – Feb 3, 2020
- Creating Alcohol free spaces at LGBTQ events.
- Returning Pride to its roots

“When you hear of Gay Pride, remember, it was not born out of a need to celebrate being gay.

It evolved out of our need as human beings to break free of oppression and to exist without being criminalized, pathologized or persecuted.

Depending on a number of factors, particularly religion, freeing ourselves from gay shame and coming to self-love and acceptance, can not only be an agonising journey, it can take years.

Tragically some don't make it.

Instead of wondering why there isn't a straight pride be grateful you have never needed one.

Celebrate with us.”

— Anthony Venn-Brown, A Life of Unlearning - a journey to find the truth



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We needed something to express our joy, our beauty, our power. And the rainbow did that. - Gilbert Baker

# Survey

(Thank you!)



IPS Training and TA:

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[@VibrantHealthySafeCommunities](https://www.facebook.com/VibrantHealthySafeCommunities)