

Protecting LGBT Older Adults:

Considerations for Safety, Health, Autonomy and Guardianship

Gizelle Jones, LISW-S



J.J. Mesko-Kimmich, M.Ed., LPC



Objectives:

1. Educate participants on factors that put LGBTQ at risk and techniques you can implement to create a safe environment.
2. Participants will examine misconceptions held in our workplace and community and be educated on ideas to improve inclusivity.
3. We will examine the difference between autonomy and the need for guardianship to reduce abuse and exploitation with LGBTQ older adults.
4. Participants will learn Social Work and Counseling ethical guidelines, NGA Standards of Practice and strategies to advocate for LGBTQ mature adults.

Welcome...

we know we are the first presentation of the day and all you want to do is this =



OR, Enjoy Milwaukee like this



Please stand, stretch and move with a little help of course...





How biased are you?

Let's take a quiz and find out.

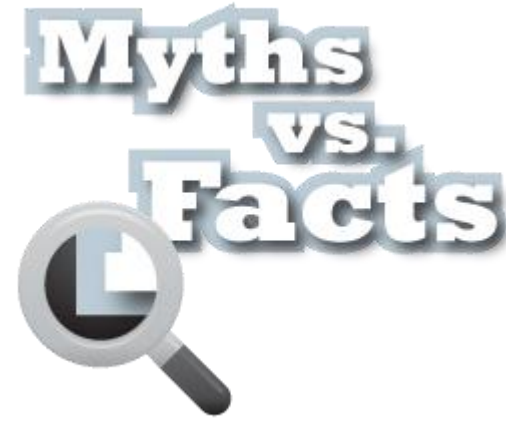
How biased are you? Answers to Quiz

- ▶ **What happens when an opposing perspective exists?**
 - ▶ Your biases (preferences, beliefs and attitudes) influence behaviors and decisions. This creates blocks that might prevent you from seeing opportunities for collaboration and using talent.
- ▶ **How inclusive are you?**
 - ▶ If you selected any of the choices above, especially D, it is time to step back and examine why you respond the way you do, where did you learn your truth?
- ▶ **Are you interested in having a dialogue or a debate?**
 - ▶ There are times for healthy debate and to determine what will be the best solution. However, when every response is a contrary position without acknowledging and exploring someone else's idea, the motivation for the other person to contribute will eventually fall away—or they will walk away.
- ▶ **What does your energy say about you?**
 - ▶ If you chose 3, congratulations! You are inspiring, motivating and open. However, if you show up with a victim or defensive attitude (we know these people), consider it a red flag that needs attention.

Quiz - continued

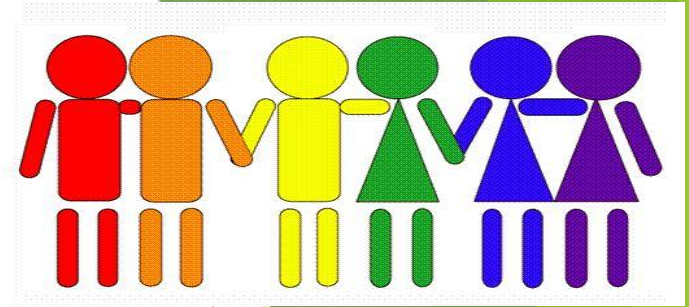
- ▶ **Do you notice when you think someone of a different group is a ‘certain way’ like trustworthy, not trustworthy, too quiet, too aggressive, or any other automatic judgment that drives your behavior?**
 - ▶ Consider if you are stereotyping an entire group and taking shortcuts to make decisions without fully exploring the person’s unique abilities and qualities.
- ▶ **Do you avoid exploring a topic or issue because you think it does not affect you?**
 - ▶ Do you have a team or are part of an organization or group where topics come up that take you out of your comfort zone? Your willingness to build a culture of open communication is one of the best things you can do for yourself and your organization.
- ▶ **Is your language inclusive?**
 - ▶ Important in everyday conversation and print/email/documents.
- ▶ **Do you roll your eyes or tune out at the mention of diversity and inclusion?**
 - ▶ If you selected A or B, consider that it is a result of your privilege and rank that you react in this way vs. looking to see what you can do to be more inclusive. Privilege is not a gender, person of color, disability, LGBT or religious issue. It is our issue.

Misconceptions vs. Truth/Myth



- ▶ All LGBTQ people are pedophiles
- ▶ HIV/AIDS is an LGBTQ disease
- ▶ LGBTQ people are the only people who raise LGBTQ children
- ▶ LGBTQ people are unhealthy or unfit parents
- ▶ You can spot all LGBTQ person by the way they dress or act
- ▶ LGBTQ people are trying to brainwash children into being LGBTQ
- ▶ LGBTQ people need the “right man” or the “right woman” to set them “straight”
- ▶ All LGBTQ people are promiscuous all of their lives

Overview

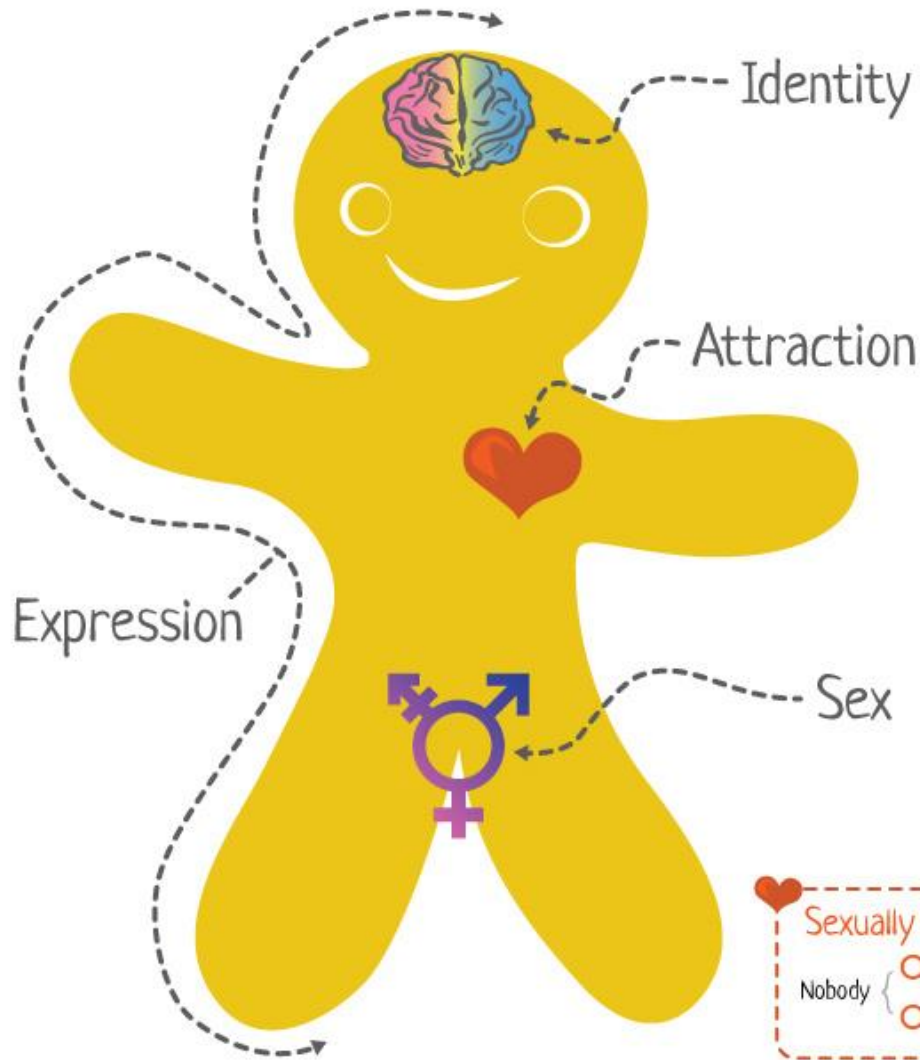


- ▶ LGBTQ= lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) individuals.
- ▶ LGBTQ individuals encompass all races and ethnicities, religions, and social classes.
 - ▶ **Gay:** A male-identified person who is attracted romantically, physically, or emotionally to another male-identified person.
 - ▶ **Bisexual:** Individuals who are attracted to both men and women romantically, physically, or emotionally.
 - ▶ **Transgender:** Individuals whose biological sex is different than the gender with which they identify. Sometimes the term “born in the wrong body” is used, however this depends on the individual’s preference.
 - ▶ **Transsexual:** Transsexual individuals have physically altered their body in order to better match their gender identity. It is a term that refers to biology, not to identity necessarily, and it is indicative of a change in one’s physiology.
 - ▶ **Queer:** queer is an all-inclusive term referencing lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, trans people, and intersex persons.

The Genderbread Person v3.3

by its pronounced **METROsexual**.com

Gender is one of those things everyone thinks they understand, but most people don't. Like *Inception*. Gender isn't binary. It's not either/or. In many cases it's both/and. A bit of this, a dash of that. This tasty little guide is meant to be an appetizer for gender understanding. It's okay if you're hungry for more. In fact, that's the idea.



Plot a point on both continua in each category to represent your identity; combine all ingredients to form your Genderbread. 4 (of infinite) possible plot and label combos

Gender Identity

Indicates a lack of what's on the right.

Woman-ness

Man-ness

How you, in your head, define your gender; based on how much you align (or don't align) with what you understand to be the options for gender.

Labels: "woman", "man", "two-spirit", "genderqueer"

Gender Expression

Feminine

Masculine

The ways you present gender; through your actions, dress, and demeanor; and how those presentations are interpreted based on gender norms.

Labels: "butch", "femme", "androgynous", "gender neutral"

Biological Sex

Female-ness

Male-ness

The physical sex characteristics you're born with and develop, including genitalia, body shape, voice pitch, body hair; hormones, chromosomes, etc.

Labels: "male", "female", "intersex", "MtF Female"

Sexually Attracted to

Nobody

(Women/Females/Femininity)

(Men/Males/Masculinity)

Romantically Attracted to

Nobody

(Women/Females/Femininity)

(Men/Males/Masculinity)

In each grouping, circle all that apply to you and plot a point, depicting the aspects of gender toward which you experience attraction.

For a bigger bite, read more at <http://bit.ly/genderbread>



Risk Factors?

- ▶ Personal, family, and social acceptance of sexual orientation and gender identity affects the mental health and personal safety of LGBTQ individuals
- ▶ Research suggests that LGBTQ individuals face health disparities linked to
 - ▶ societal stigma
 - ▶ discrimination
 - ▶ denial of their civil and human rights
- ▶ Experiences of violence and victimization are frequent for LGBTQ individuals, and have long-lasting effects on the individual and the community
- ▶ Discrimination against LGBTQ persons has been associated with high rates of
 - ▶ Psychiatric disorders
 - ▶ Substance abuse
 - ▶ Suicide
 - ▶ Social isolation



Risk Factors?

- ▶ Fear of discrimination based on LGBTQ status
 - ▶ Many go back into the “closet” because as they age they fear discrimination and are vulnerable due to their elderly and LGBTQ status
- ▶ Avoid seeking medical services
 - ▶ Many avoid seeking out the services they need because of the mistrust of specialists, medical professionals, etc.
- ▶ Mistrust of Medical Professionals
 - ▶ Many mistrust due to fear that the medical professionals won't see them anymore or treat them differently because of their LGBTQ status

LGBTQ Challenges

▶ Financial Challenges

- ▶ Because same-sex couples have not been afforded the automatic protections of legal marriage, several documents must be in place to protect a spouse in the event of illness or death. These include wills, medical power of attorney, right of survivorship, and co-ownership of property. The survey reveals that 33% of those 50 and over do not have a will, and 23% have no legal documents at all.

▶ Reliance on “Families of Choice”

- ▶ Reliance on informal “families of choice” for social connections, care, and support.

▶ Stigma and Prejudice

- ▶ Mental health community historically viewed them as having something wrong with them and having a mental health diagnosis. This was listed in previous versions of the DSM - Diagnostic and Statistical Manual
- ▶ Prejudice in the religious aspect viewed homosexuality as immoral and a sin.

▶ Inequality in laws, programs, and services

- ▶ With the National Legality of Marriage, the laws and effects of the laws may change in time, it will take some time for the law to “trickle down” in practical ways to the population.

GenSilent

Educational Film by Stu Maddux - Great Way to Start the Conversation





Thoughts and Reactions?

Any interest in this film can directed to

<http://gensilent.com/contact-us-2/o>

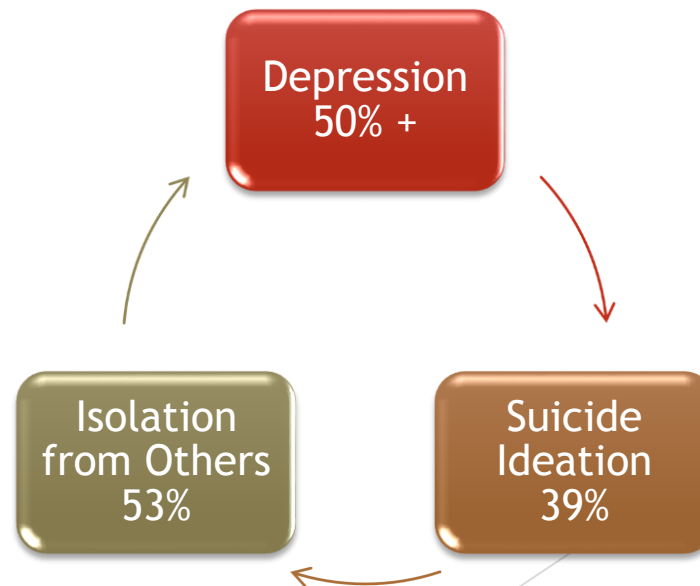
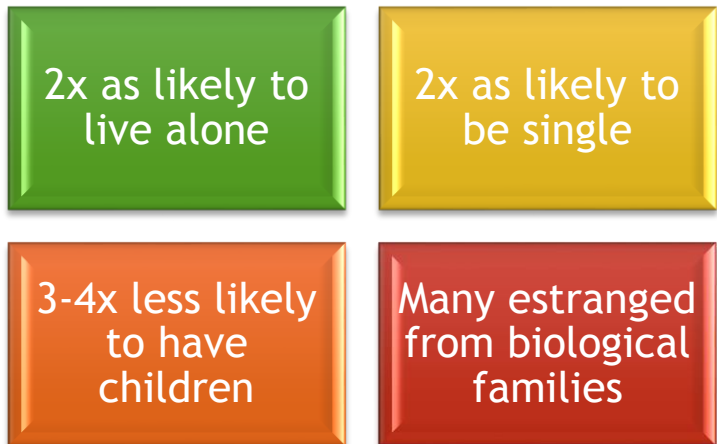
SAGE: Statistics on LGBT Elders



- ▶ Recent estimates suggest that there are at least 1.5 million lesbian, gay and bisexual people 65 and older in the US, and this population will double by the year 2030. These figures are based on an estimate from UCLA's Williams Institute on Sexual Orientation and the Law that 3.8 percent of Americans identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual.
 - ▶ However, measuring the number of LGBT people is difficult, given the undercounting caused by factors such as stigma, underreporting and methodological barriers, such as inconsistent question formats.
- ▶ Many LGBT older adults deal with poverty and with reduced economic security. For LGBT older adults, a lifetime of employment discrimination and other factors contributes to disproportionately high poverty rates.
 - ▶ One study found that same-sex elder couples face higher poverty rates than their heterosexual peers; 9.1% and 4.9% among elder lesbian and gay couples, respectively, in contrast to 4.6% among elder heterosexual couples

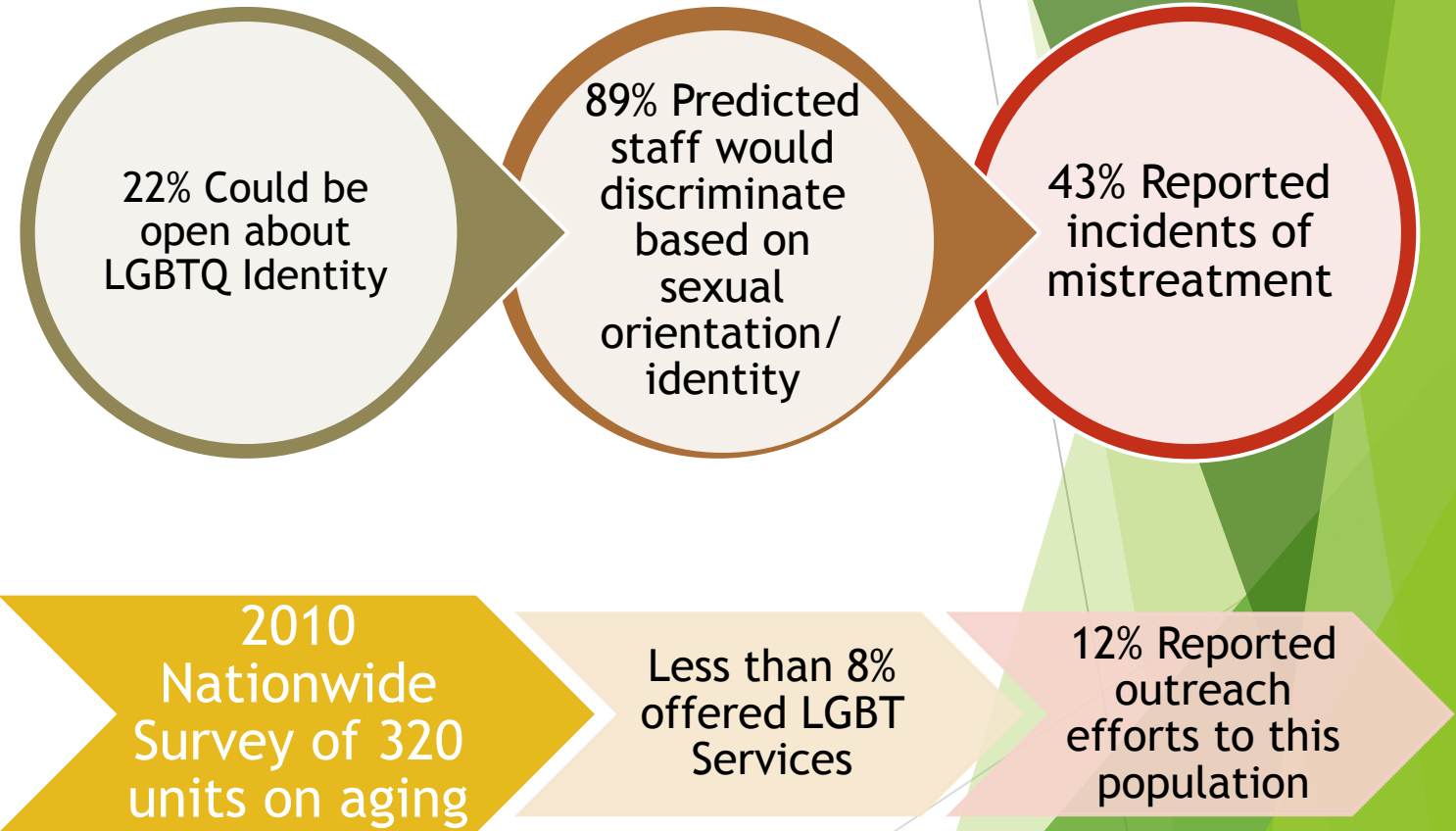
SAGE: Statistics on LGBT Elders

- ▶ Social isolation affects many LGBT older people around the country as they deal with stigma and discrimination in their daily lives and in our country's aging system.
- ▶ The primary risk factors for social isolation affect LGBT older adults in unique and disproportionate ways.
- ▶ LGBT older people deal with significant health disparities across areas related to physical and mental health, including high blood pressure, cholesterol, diabetes, heart disease, HIV/AIDS and more—as well as with serious mental health concerns.



SAGE: Statistics on LGBT Elders

- ▶ Many mainstream aging providers do not account for the unique realities and needs of LGBT older adults, leaving them at risk for isolation, neglect and discrimination. A recent survey from long term care facilities found...
- ▶ LGBT-inclusive aging services help offset these problems by providing spaces for LGBT elders to find community and support—but they are sparse and underfunded.



Inclusivity:
How do we improve inclusivity
& encourage workplace safety?



What do you think?

Ways to Improve Inclusivity & Work Place Safety

Create an LGBTQ Friendly Workplace

1. Nondiscrimination Policies
2. LGBTQ Employee resource groups
3. Safe Space Programs
4. Workplace Education
5. Creating a Trans-friendly workplace



Questions to Ask your Company?

- ▶ Do you include inclusive language on invitations and social business events? (Partner instead of husband/wife)
- ▶ Do senior leaders model inclusive behavior?
- ▶ Has your organization participated in LGBTQ sponsored events?
- ▶ Do you provide transgender healthcare benefits?
- ▶ Do you provide organization wide LGBTQ diversity and inclusion training?



Ways to Challenge Yourself

- ▶ What earliest memories do you have about this topic?
 - ▶ From where? school, church, TV, media
- ▶ Were the messages you received positive or negative?
- ▶ Were they from a group or person in your life?
- ▶ Do you hold the messages/beliefs you received as a child/youth today?
- ▶ Have you changed your attitude towards this topic since those earliest memories?

Autonomy vs. Guardianship: What is Autonomy?

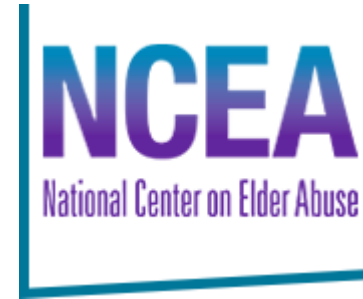
Definition

- ▶ Dictionary.com
 - ▶ independence or freedom, as of the will or one's actions
- ▶ Ability to make your own decisions
- ▶ Exercise your own power and authority
- ▶ Ability to meet your basic needs
 - ▶ Food
 - ▶ Shelter
 - ▶ Clothing

What does this mean for LBGT?

- ▶ The LBGT population is more susceptible to having their autonomy compromised
- ▶ This is due to the inequality they face with access to basic healthcare and their basic needs being met.
- ▶ Therefore, this makes them more vulnerable to the potential of being abused, neglected or exploited!

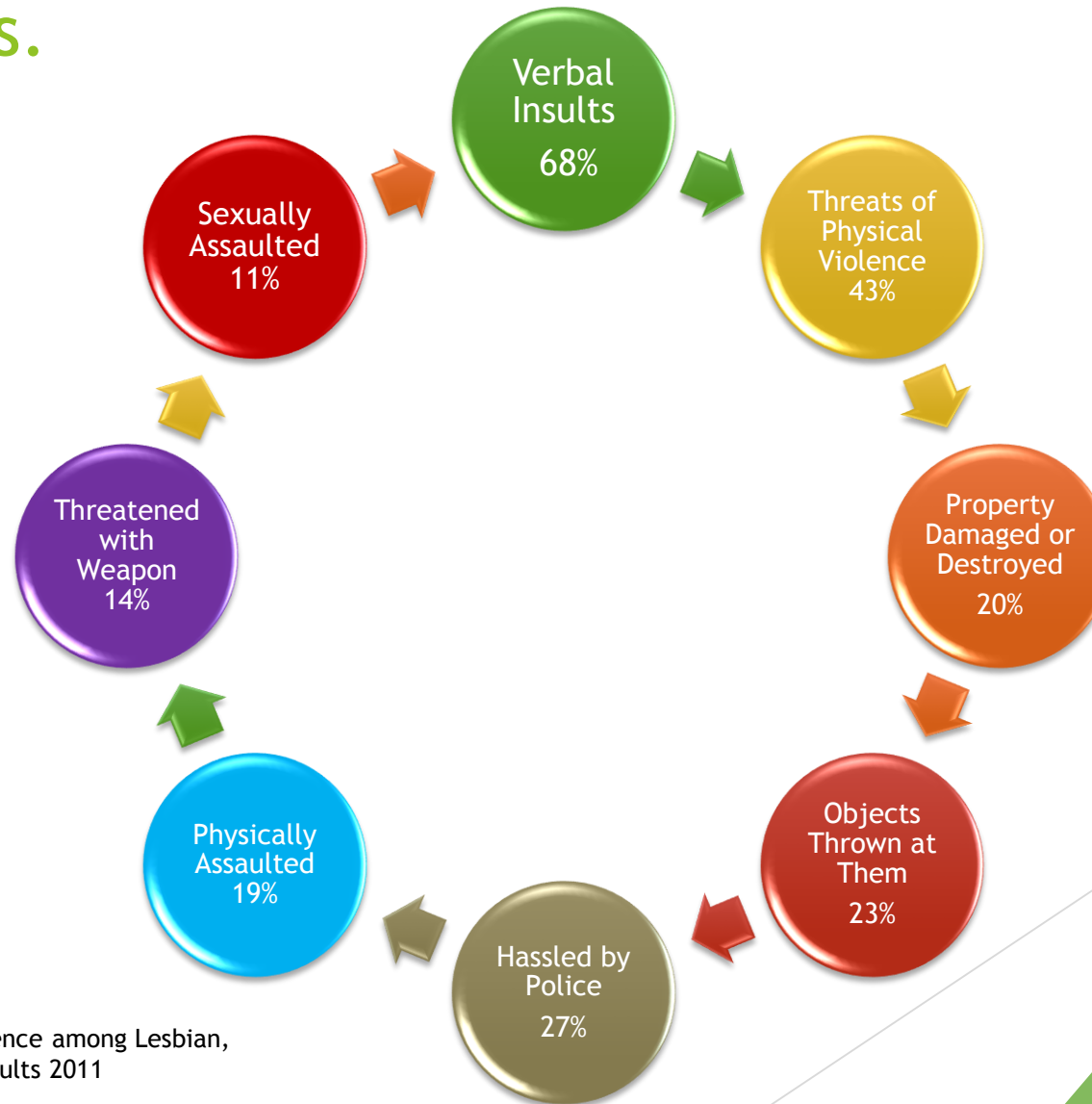
National Center on Elder Abuse



- ▶ While many older people deal with elder abuse, most incidents go unreported. According to the National Center on Elder Abuse, "between 1 and 2 million Americans age 65 or older have been injured, exploited, or otherwise mistreated by someone on whom they depended for care or protection."
- ▶ Further, NCEA reports that only "1 in 14 incidents, excluding incidents of self-neglect, come to the attention of authorities."
- ▶ LGBT older people—who generally have smaller support networks and might fear further discrimination or being "outed" as LGBT by their abusers—might be less likely to report incidents of elder abuse.

A recent national study on LGBT health found high rates of victimization and discrimination among LGBTQ older adults.

The study found that 82% reported having been victimized at least once and 64% reported experiencing victimization at least three times in their lives.



What is guardianship?



NATIONAL GUARDIANSHIP ASSOCIATION

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National Guardianship Association, Inc.

- ▶ Guardianship, also, referred to as conservatorship, is a legal process, utilized when a person can no longer make or communicate safe or sound decisions about his/her person and/or property or has become susceptible to fraud or undue influence.
- ▶ Because establishing a guardianship may remove considerable rights from an individual, it should only be considered after alternatives to guardianship have proven ineffective or are unavailable.

Guidelines/Role for Being a Guardian

Guardianship of the Person

- ▶ When the court appoints a guardian of the person, the guardian may have the following responsibilities:
 - ▶ Determine and monitor residence.
 - ▶ Consent to and monitor medical treatment.
 - ▶ Consent and monitor non-medical services such as education and counseling.
 - ▶ Consent and release of confidential information.
 - ▶ Make end-of-life decisions.
 - ▶ Act as representative payee.
 - ▶ Maximize independence in least restrictive manner.
 - ▶ Report to the court about the guardianship status at least annually.



What else is helpful when considering a guardian for an LGBTQ person?

NGA Standard 10 -

The Guardian's Duties Regarding Diversity and Personal Preferences of the Person

- ▶ I. The guardian shall determine the extent to which the person under guardianship identifies with particular ethnic, religious, and cultural values. To determine these values, the guardian shall also consider the following:
 - ▶ A. The person's attitudes regarding illness, pain, and suffering
 - ▶ B. The person's attitudes regarding death and dying
 - ▶ C. The person's views regarding quality of life issues
 - ▶ D. The person's views regarding societal roles and relationships
 - ▶ E. The person's attitudes regarding funeral and burial customs.



NGA Standard 10 - part II

- ▶ II. The guardian shall acknowledge the person's right to interpersonal relationships and sexual expression. The guardian shall take steps to ensure that a person's sexual expression is consensual, that the person is not victimized, and that an environment conducive to this expression in privacy is provided.
- ▶ A. The guardian shall ensure that the person has information about and access to accommodations necessary to permit sexual expression to the extent the person desires and to the extent the person possesses the capacity to consent to the specific activity.
- ▶ B. The guardian shall take reasonable measures to protect the health and well-being of the person.
- ▶ C. The guardian shall ensure that the person is informed of birth control methods. The guardian shall consider birth control options and choose the option that provides the person the level of protection appropriate to the person's lifestyle and ability, while considering the preferences of the person. The guardian shall encourage the person, where possible and appropriate, to participate in the choice of a birth control method.
- ▶ D. The guardian shall protect the rights of the person with regard to sexual expression and preference. A review of ethnic, religious, and cultural values may be necessary to uphold the person's values and customs.

American Counselor Association



- ▶ A.4.b. **Personal Values** - Counselors are aware of and avoid imposing—their own values, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. Counselors respect the diversity of clients, trainees, and research participants and seek training in areas in which they are at risk of imposing their values onto clients, especially when the counselor’s values are inconsistent with the client’s goals or are discriminatory in nature.
- ▶ C.5. **Nondiscrimination** - Counselors do not condone or engage in discrimination against prospective or current clients, students, employees, supervisees, or research participants based on age, culture, disability, ethnicity, race, religion/spirituality, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital/ partnership status, language preference, socioeconomic status, immigration status, or any basis proscribed by law.

National Association of Social Workers



- ▶ **1.05 Cultural Competence and Social Diversity**
 - ▶ (a) Social workers should understand culture and its function in human behavior and society, recognizing the strengths that exist in all cultures.
 - ▶ (b) Social workers should have a knowledge base of their clients' cultures and be able to demonstrate competence in the provision of services that are sensitive to clients' cultures and to differences among people and cultural groups.
 - ▶ (c) Social workers should obtain education about and seek to understand the nature of social diversity and oppression with respect to race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, and mental or physical disability.



Case Study

Break into groups of 3-4 and let's examine a case together.

Strategies to Advocate for LGBTQ Adults



- ▶ Join a campaign for Human Rights
<http://healthcareguild.com/advocacy.html>
- ▶ Apply for funding to increase LGBTQ programs in your organization
- ▶ Volunteer for Gay Games, Volunteer Guardian Programs and LGBTQ friendly organizations
- ▶ Create an Awareness Committee in your organization to promote inclusivity
- ▶ Sponsor continuing education on topics involving LGBTQ issues
- ▶ Become a SAFEZONE Organization
- ▶ Create a support group and encourage socialization
- ▶ Link your organization with LGBTQ friendly organizations/learn about events
- ▶ As a health professional, include the information on your marketing materials that you are LGBTQ friendly

Love is Love...



References

- ▶ Diversity Journal <http://www.diversityjournal.com/10103-tips-for-creating-an-lgbt-inclusive-workplace-environment/>
- ▶ Biased Quiz <https://www.bulldogreporter.com/is-your-brand-biased-take-this-quiz-on-prejudice-and-image-to-find-out/>
- ▶ National Resource Center on LGBT Aging <http://www.lgbtagingcenter.org/index.cfm>
- ▶ Healthy People <https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/lesbian-gay-bisexual-and-transgender-health>
- ▶ Social Worker - <https://www.socialworkhelper.com/2013/07/25/alphabet-soup-the-story-of-lgbtqia/>
- ▶ LGBTQ Community Center Greater Cleveland <http://lgbtcleveland.org/index.html>
- ▶ The Genderbread Person v3.3 <http://itspronouncedmetrosexual.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Genderbread-Person-3.3-HI-RES.pdf>
- ▶ Gen Silent - A Film by Stu Maddux <http://gensilent.com/>
- ▶ National Guardianship Association <http://www.guardianship.org/>
- ▶ American Counseling Association <https://www.counseling.org/>
- ▶ National Association of Social Workers <http://www.naswdc.org/>



Thank
You

Thank you for your time!

Any questions, or follow-up?

Call Jewish Family Service/

Volunteer Guardian Program of Jewish Family Service

330-867-3388

Or visit www.jfsakron.org