



Build Connections, Be An Ally: Supporting LGBT Older Adults

Marsha Berry, MA, CAEd

Objectives

- Describe LGBT history and how it impacts older adults seeking services
- State the impact of HIV and AIDS on older LGBT adults
- Learn strategies, resources and tools to serve the LGBT aging population in your program services



Quick Look at Language

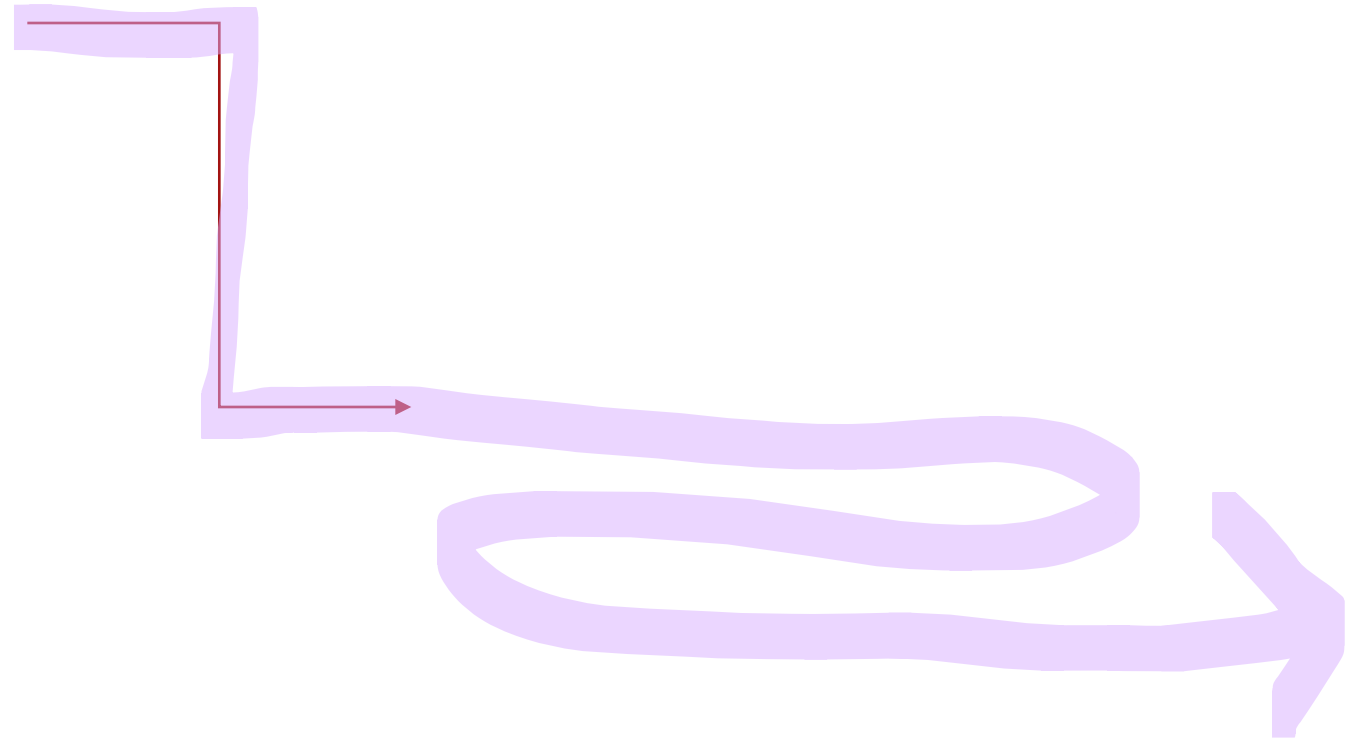
LGB Sexual Orientation

T Gender Identity



History

...but first a detour...



2022

- Since January 2022 more than 300 anti-LGBTQ bills introduced in state legislatures
- Most target transgender and nonbinary youth.
 - Transgender girls in school sports
 - “Bathroom bills” in schools
 - Banning medically appropriate care for transgender teens
 - Book bans in school libraries
 - “Don’t say Gay”



2022

"I have worked hard for many years to be authentic, to be truly the person I know myself to be. And now I feel like I need to hide part of myself." 67 year old transgender man

"I'm going to be driving through rural Wisconsin to visit friends next week. I'm not sure how I feel about having a dancing women rainbow sticker on my bumper. I think I'll take it off" 62 year old Lesbian



History

What was the first “successful” treatment for homosexuality?

What did the APA include in its first list of psychological disorders?

When did the AMA remove sexual orientation from its official list of disorders?



History: Impact on the Present

The federal government banned lesbians and gays from employment (T/F)

The Reagan Administration approved federal funding for research about and treatment of AIDS (T/F)

What's Dr. Fauci got to do with the history of HIV and AIDS?



History: Moving Toward Equality

- **When did the gay rights movement begin? Where?**
- **There was an option for gender other than male/female on the 2020 census. (T/F)**
- **Why did New York rename East River State Park in Brooklyn in honor of Marsha P. Johnson?**



HIV and Aging

- More than half of all people living with HIV are 50 or older
- Older adults living with HIV show signs of aging on average 10 years earlier than the general population
- 35% of older adults are diagnosed later in the disease process
- Early detection can prevent many complications related to long-term untreated HIV



The Aging of the HIV Epidemic in the US

CDC Surveillance Data



HIV Stigma and Discrimination

- HIV stigma is a factor for anyone living with HIV, but is more likely to impact older adults
- This can lead to greater risk of loneliness and isolation
- Stigma and discrimination impact self image, quality of life and care seeking behavior
- Professionals may need to proactively link older adults with HIV to supportive services and care



Older Lesbians

Increased

Poverty

Cancer

Caregiving

Decreased

Access to health care



Older Gay Men

Increased

Numbers living alone
Caregiver skills

Decreased

Health

The myth of the wealthy gay man



Bisexual Older Adults

Increased

Decreased

Number

Recognition

Closeted

Friends



Transgender Older Adults

- Come out at an older age
 - Fearful of direct care
 - Worry about long term care admissions process and policies
 - Concern about community services



Strengths

- Coping skills
- Constructed families
- Provider resource



Supporting LGBT Older Adults

Policies

Language



Supporting LGBT Older Adults

Marketing

Staff Training



How to Celebrate

- ✓ **Fly a rainbow flag**
- ✓ **Host a party**
- ✓ **Include LGBTQ clients/residents in planning**

