

GENERAL TIPS ON USING SUPPORTIVE LANGUAGE WITH LGBTQ PEOPLE



DO...	DON'T...	FOR EXAMPLE...
Ask what pronouns to use.	Assume that you know someone's gender identity or pronouns based on their appearance.	"What pronouns do you use?" "What pronouns should I use for you?" "My name is Sam, and I use she/her pronouns. What are your pronouns?"
Try using a gender-inclusive term if you do not know the gender of someone's partner.	Assume that you know someone's sexual orientation and/or the gender of someone's significant other.	"What does your significant other do for work?"
Use a person's correct name and pronouns consistently.	Use the wrong pronouns when talking about a person with your team or colleagues.	Even if that person is not present, maintain use of the individual's pronouns.
Pay close attention to what words a person uses to describe themselves and then use those same words.	Assume you know the language or terms that someone else uses to describe themselves.	"How do you identify in terms of (sexual orientation / gender)?"
Reflect the other person's language and use that language.	Assume details about someone's experience/ life (e.g., whom they date).	Use inclusive language such as "partner" (not "boyfriend/girlfriend").
Ask open ended questions about the information you are trying to collect.	Assume someone's identity is connected to specific experiences or risk factors.	"With whom do you have sexual contact?" "What substances do you use, if any?"
Try more gender-inclusive language.	Use common gendered language to address people (e.g., "boys and girls," "ladies and gentlemen," and titles such as "Mr.," "Mrs.," or "Ms.").	Use words like "y'all," "everyone," or "folks."
Offer comments or compliments about neutral topics.	Make comments or give compliments based on gender stereotypes and/or how a person looks or acts (e.g., "that shirt looks so girly").	"Hey, I really like your shirt/ jacket/ shoes."
Deepen your knowledge about basic LGBTQ terms and concepts on your own.	Wait for a LGBTQ person to teach you about gender and sexuality-related issues.	Use learning materials and tip sheets to expand your knowledge.