



# GLBTQ Safe Space Participant Toolkit

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Sponsored by Health Promotion & The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, & Transgender Center

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## History of the GLBTQ Safe Space Program

The GLBTQ Safe Place Program was established at Montclair State University in 1997. Sponsored by the Gay and Lesbian Faculty and Staff Association of MSU (GLFSA), Health Promotion, and the Division of Student Development and Campus Life Division, it was announced to the campus community on National Coming Out Day in 1997 and its existence has provided a safe and supportive atmosphere for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender students, faculty, & staff ever since. The GLBTQ Safe Space Program provides visible allies on campus and ensures a community of respect and acceptance. In 2006, the “Q” was added to the program to ensure inclusiveness and expand the reach of the program. Finally in 2009, the LGBT Center was established, creating new possibilities for the Safe Space Program to expand.

## What is the GLBTQ Safe Space Program?

The GLBTQ Safe Space Program identifies faculty, staff and students that have attended a Safe Space Program session. Participants in the GLBTQ Safe Space Program work to end homophobia and heterosexism on campus and create a visible network of support for the GLBTQ community. Some of the people who display the sticker or button identify as part of the GLBTQ community, while others are allies to gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or questioning individuals.

## Goals of the GLBTQ Safe Space Program

- Create a visible network of support for the GLBTQ Community.
- Identify and train individuals to be effective allies.
- Provide confidential “Safe Spaces” for students, faculty, and staff to access.
- Provide opportunities for education regarding the GLBTQ community.
- Encourage allies to actively take a stand against homophobia and heterosexism.

## The Symbol on the Safe Space Sticker/Button

During the Holocaust, the pink triangle was used by the Nazis to label gay men and the black triangle was used to label lesbians (and other “anti-socials”). By literally and metaphorically turning these triangles upside down, these symbols have since been adopted as symbols of GLBTQ identity, pride and self-esteem. The area bisecting these triangles represents the diversity of sexual “minorities” which includes bisexuals. The interconnectedness of human sexuality is thereby represented. The green square or circle, the opposite of the familiar red square or circle with a slash, signifies the displayer’s willingness to be supportive to the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. It also represents the inclusion of straight allies of these communities.

## **MSU Statements and Policies**

### ***Human Relations Statement on Campus Climate for Civility and Human Dignity***

Montclair State University is committed to the principle that it is everyone's responsibility to foster an atmosphere of respect, tolerance, understanding and good will among all members of our diverse campus community. As an ever-growing pluralistic society, it is fundamental to our institutional mission to create an unbiased community and to oppose vigorously any form of racism, religious intolerance, sexism, ageism, homophobia, harassment, and discrimination against those with disabling conditions. Furthermore, the university eschews hate of any kind and will not tolerate behavior that violates the civil and statutory rights of an individual or group. Within this framework, each of us can feel free to express ourselves in ways that promote openness within a pluralistic and multicultural society.

### ***MSU Statement on Equal Opportunity for Students***

Montclair State is committed to the principle of equal access to campus benefits and services (including, but not limited to admissions, residence life, financial aid, athletics, course offerings, scholarships, student employment, social and recreational programs) without regard to race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, gender, age, disabilities not interfering with academic performance, marital status, affectional or sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or other non academic-related criteria.

### ***MSU Statement on Equal Opportunity for Employees***

Montclair State is committed to the principle of equal employment opportunity and does not discriminate in its recruitment and employment practices on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, gender, age, disabling condition, marital status, affectional or sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, veterans status, or other non-job related criteria. Equal employment opportunity includes, but is not limited to, recruitment, hiring, retention, tenure, promotion, transfer, compensation, fringe benefits, and other terms and conditions of employment in accordance with state laws and regulations.

## Guidelines for Active Listening

The Safe Space Program (SSP) functions through the volunteer efforts of MSU faculty, staff, and students. These individuals willingly designate themselves as a person who is nonjudgmental, understanding, and trustworthy about gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or questioning concerns.

To be a good listener, rather than a counselor, a SSP participant can employ the following suggested active listening strategies.

- Allow the person to talk. Remember your role is to listen.
- Summarize or rephrase what you hear the individual saying.
- Allow the individual to restate views or concerns.
- Ask for clarification when you are unclear about what the speaker is discussing.
- Pay attention to non-verbal clues.

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A (SSP) participant should take the following steps to avoid putting yourself in the unsolicited role of a counselor or deflecting the conversation from the individual's concerns and questions:

- Avoid giving your own opinions.
- Resist making generalizations such as, "oh that's common for many people"
- Resist the urge to interject your own story such as, "oh me too! I remember when..."
- Withhold judgments even those such as agreeing or disagreeing with what the speaker is saying (e.g. "I agree with you, they should (not)..." or "He never should have...")
- Avoid giving advice such as "You ought to..." or "Have you thought about doing...?"

**By creating a non-judgmental yet supportive environment, the active listener allows the individual to find one's own responses/answers and the direction for action that one may want to pursue.**

## GLBTQ Basic Glossary of Terms

No glossary could encompass the range of identities and terms that are used within GLBTQ communities. If you hear a term you don't recognize, or feel like someone is using a term in a new way, ask the individual what the term means to him or her.

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**Ally:** A person who supports and respects sexual diversity, acts accordingly to challenge homophobic and heterosexist remarks and behaviors, and is willing to explore and understand these forms of bias within themselves. Often describes a heterosexual individual who is nevertheless part of the GLBTQ community.

**Androgyne** – Person appearing and/or identifying as neither man nor woman, presenting a gender either mixed or neutral.

**Asexual:** Someone who does not experience sexual attraction towards other people, and who identifies as asexual. May still have romantic, emotional, affectional, or relational attractions to other people.

**Biphobia:** Fear of, hatred of, or discomfort with people who are bisexual. Biphobia can be seen within the GLBTQ community, as well as in general society.

**Bisexual:** A person who is emotionally, romantically, sexually, affectionately, or relationally attracted to both men and women, or someone who identifies as a member of the bisexual community.

**Cisgender:** A person who feels as if their biological sex matches their gender identity.

**Closet:** Used as slang for the state of not publicizing one's sexual orientation or gender identity, keeping it private, living an outwardly heterosexual life while identifying as GLBTQ, or not being forthcoming about one's identity. At times, being in the closet also means not wanting to admit one's sexual identity to oneself.

**Coming Out:** The process of recognizing, accepting, and sharing with others one's sexual orientation or gender identity. "Coming Out" can also refer to the time when a person comes out to themselves.

**Crossdresser:** Individual who dresses in the "opposite" gender clothing for a variety of reasons, sometimes for sexual pleasure. Crossdressing is not indicative of sexual orientation. This term replaces the sometimes pejorative term transvestite.

**Down-low:** Men who identify as straight, but have sex with men on the side without disclosing this to their female partner(s) (if any). The down-low community is traditionally associated with African American and Latino men. Sometimes referred to as "on the DL."

**Dyke** – Derogatory term referring to a masculine lesbian. Sometimes adopted affirmatively by lesbians (not necessarily masculine ones) to refer to themselves.

**Fag** – Derogatory term referring to someone perceived as non-heteronormative. Sometimes adopted affirmatively by gay men to refer to themselves.

**FTM:** An abbreviation for a female-to-male transgender individual. This person most likely uses masculine pronouns.

**Gay:** At times, “gay” is used to refer to all people, regardless of sex, who have their primary sexual and/or romantic attractions to people of the same sex. The term can also exclusively refer to men who are emotionally, romantically, sexually, affectionately, or relationally attracted to other men, or who identify as members of the gay community. Lesbians, bisexuals, and transgender individuals may feel excluded by the term “gay.”

**Gender Expression:** An individual’s physical characteristics, behaviors and presentation that are linked, traditionally, to either masculinity or femininity, such as: appearance, dress, mannerisms, speech patterns and social interactions.

**Gender Identity:** How one perceives oneself – as a man, a woman, or otherwise.

**Gender Role:** Norms of expected behavior for men and women assigned primarily on the basis of biological sex; a sociological construct which varies from culture to culture.

**Genderqueer:** A gender variant person whose gender identity is neither male nor female, is between or beyond genders, or is some combination of genders. Individuals that identify as genderqueer often challenge gender stereotypes and the gender binary system.

**Hermaphrodite:** An out-of-date and offensive term for an intersex person. (See ‘Intersex’)

**Heteronormativity:** The assumption, in individuals or in institutions, that everyone is heterosexual, and that heterosexuality is superior to homosexuality and bisexuality.

**Heterosexism:** Norms and behaviors that result from the assumption that all people are or should be heterosexual. This system of oppression assumes that heterosexuality is inherently normal and superior and negates GLBTQ peoples’ lives and relationships.

**Heterosexual:** A person who is emotionally, romantically, sexually, affectionately, or relationally attracted to members of the opposite sex. Often called a straight person.

**Homophobia:** Fear of, hatred of, or discomfort with people who love and sexually desire members of the same sex. Homophobic reactions often lead to intolerance, bigotry, and violence against anyone not acting within socio-cultural norms of heterosexuality. Because most GLBTQ people are raised in the same society as heterosexuals, they learn the same beliefs and stereotypes prevalent in the dominant society, leading to a phenomenon known as internalized homophobia, whereas GLBTQ-identified individuals feel shame, guilt, or hatred towards the part of themselves identified as GLBTQ.

**Homosexual:** The clinical term, coined in the field of psychology, for people with a same-sex sexual attraction. The word is often associated with the idea that same-sex attractions are a mental disorder, and is therefore potentially offensive to some people.

**Intersex:** Term used for a variety of medical conditions in which a person is born with chromosomes, genitalia, and/or secondary sexual characteristics that are inconsistent with the typical definition of a male or female body. Intersex individuals are not always aware that they have this condition. Replaces the inaccurate term “hermaphrodite.”

**Lesbian:** A woman who is emotionally, romantically, sexually, affectionately, or relationally attracted to other women, or someone who identifies as a member of the lesbian community. Bisexual women may or may not feel included by this term.

**Lifestyle:** A word often used outside the GLBTQ community to describe life as an GLBTQ person, e.g. “the homosexual lifestyle.” Many people find this word inappropriate because it trivializes identity, implies that sexual orientation is a choice, and ignores the variety of lifestyles that GLBTQ people live.

**MSM:** An abbreviation for men who have sex with men. This term emphasizes the behavior, rather than the identities of the individuals involved.

**MTF:** An abbreviation for a male-to-female transgender individual. This person most likely uses feminine pronouns.

**Pansexual:** A person who is emotionally, romantically, sexually, affectionately, or relationally attracted to people regardless of their gender identity or biological sex. Use of the term usually signals a repudiation of the concept of binary (two) sexes (a concept sometimes implied by “bisexual”).

**Polyamorous:** A person who finds themselves romantically, physically, and/or sexually attracted to multiple individuals, and finds that pursuing multiple relationships is the most satisfying course of action in their lives.

**Queer:** Term describing people who have a non-normative gender identity, sexual orientation, or sexual anatomy—includes lesbians, gay men, bisexual people, and transgender people and allies. Since the term is sometimes used as a slur, it has a negative connotation for some GLBTQ people; however, others have reclaimed it and are comfortable using it to describe themselves.

**Questioning:** The process of examining one’s sexual orientation and/or gender identity. Can be used as an adjective.

**Same-Gender Loving (SGL):** A term used by some African-American individuals to describe their sexual orientation, as a result of the perception that “gay” and “lesbian” are primarily white terms. “Same-sex loving” is also in use.

**Sex:** 1. A biological term dividing a species into male or female, usually on the basis of sex chromosomes (XX = female, XY = male); hormone levels, secondary sex characteristics, and internal and external genitalia may also be considered criteria. 2. Another term for sexual behavior or gratification. Sex is a biological fact or a physical act.

**Sexuality:** The complex range of components which make us sexual beings; includes emotional, physical, and sexual aspects, as well as self-identification (including sexual orientation and gender), behavioral preferences and practices, fantasies, and feelings of affection and emotional affinity.

**Sexual Orientation:** A person’s emotional, physical, and sexual attraction to other people and the expression of that attraction.

**Stud:** An African-American and/or Latina masculine lesbian. Also known as ‘butch’, ‘aggressive’, or ‘ag’.

**Third Gender:** A term for those who belong to a category other than masculine or feminine. For example, Native American two-spirit people, hijira in India, kathoeyes in Thailand, and travestis in Brazil.

**Transgender:** An umbrella term for those individuals whose gender identity does not match with that assigned for their physical sex. Includes, among others, transmen, transwomen, genderqueer people, crossdressers, and drag queens/kings. In its general sense, it refers to anyone whose behavior or identity falls outside of stereotypical expectations for their gender. Transgender people may identify as straight, gay, bisexual, or some other sexual orientation. Sometimes shortened as trans.

**Transman:** A person who was assigned female at birth, but who identifies as male. Some transmen may intend to undergo physical changes to align their body with their gender identity.

**Transphobia:** Fear of, hatred of, or discomfort with people who are transgender or otherwise gender non-normative.

**Transsexual:** A term sometimes perceived to be outdated or offensive referring to a person whose gender identity consistently differs from what is culturally associated with his/her biological sex at birth. The terms “transman” and “transwoman” are more commonly used.

**Transwoman:** A person who was assigned male at birth, but who identifies as female. Some transwomen may intend to undergo physical changes to align their body with their gender identity.

**Two-Spirit:** Contemporary term chosen to describe Native American and Canadian First Nation people who identify with a third gender, implying a masculine and a feminine spirit in one body. Replaces the offensive term berdache.

**WSW:** An abbreviation for women who have sex with women. This term emphasizes the behavior, rather than the identities of the individuals involved.

**Ze:** A gender neutral pronoun used by some transgender individuals (Pronounced Zee) in lieu of he or she. The possessive adjective “hir” (pronounced here) usually follows in place of his or her. Some individuals may use other gender neutral pronouns.

\*\*Adapted from the Washington State University Gender and Sexual Orientation Resource Center

## The Coming Out Process

Coming out is the process of recognizing, accepting, and sharing with others one's sexual orientation or gender identity. The term "coming out" is a shortened version of the phrase "coming out of the closet," which is a metaphor for revealing one's identity. **Coming out is not a single event, but a life-long process.**

In our society, people generally assume that everyone is heterosexual, so persons who are lesbian, gay, or bisexual must continually decide in what situations and with whom they want to correct that assumption by disclosing their sexual orientation. In every new situation, with every new person they meet, they must decide whether or not to come out.

There are many stages in the coming out process, and the process is not exactly the same for every person. Generally, the coming out process begins with coming out to oneself: the internal process a lesbian, gay, or bisexual person goes through in recognizing and accepting their sexual orientation. This can be frightening and depressing at first for many people, because they, like almost everyone in our society, have learned negative stereotypes and many myths about homosexuality as they were growing up.

Later stages of coming out involve choosing to disclose one's sexual orientation to others. Coming out can be a very long and difficult struggle because it involves not only confronting the constant assumption that one is heterosexual, but also confronting homophobic attitudes and discriminatory practices along the way.

Ultimately, however coming out can be a very freeing experience for persons who are GLBTQ, because it allows them to live a more honest life and develop more genuine relationships with others. Coming out does not solve all of an individual's problems; indeed, it may create new ones. Weighing the advantages and disadvantages of coming out is part of the process.

There are different levels of being out, ranging from completely closeted (not revealing one's sexual orientation to anyone) to being publicly out (willing to reveal one's sexual orientation publicly). An individual may be out to some people and not to others, or out in some situations, but closeted in others. For example, a person might be out to friends, but not to their family. A person might be out at school, but not in their hometown. Someone might be out in his or her church, but not in his or her professional life.

### *Benefits and Risks of Coming Out*

Many times, coming out allows a person to develop as a whole individual, allows for greater empowerment, and makes it easier for an individual to develop a positive self-image. By coming out, the person is able to share with others who they are and what is important to them, rather than having to hide or lie about their identity. Coming out frees the person of the fear of being "found out" and helps them avoid living a double life, which can be extremely stressful and demoralizing. Finally, coming out makes it easier to connect with people who are lesbian, gay, or bisexual, giving a sense of community. Outlining some of the benefits and risks of coming out is not meant to convince anyone to choose to come out or not come out in any given situation. Rather, thinking about some of the possible outcomes of such a choice can clarify an individual's decision by helping them determine the appropriate time for coming out and preparing them for possible reactions.

**Some Benefits of Coming Out**

- Ability to live one's life honestly.
- Building self-esteem by being honest about oneself.
- Developing closer, more genuine relationships with friends and family.
- Alleviating the stress of hiding one's identity.
- Connecting with other people who are GLBTQ.
- Being part of a community with others with whom you have something in common.
- Helping to dispel myths and stereotypes by speaking about one's own experience and educating others.
- Being a role model for others.

**Some Risks of Coming Out**

- Not everyone will be understanding or accepting.
- Family, friends, or coworkers may be shocked or confused, or even hostile.
- Some relationships may be permanently changed.
- An individual may experience harassment or discrimination or even abuse.
- People still dependent on their parents may be thrown out of their homes or lose financial support.

When an individual comes out, family, friends, coworkers, etc may take a variety of stances when it comes to acceptance. It is important to recognize that the reaction of those around an individual impacts his/her physical, emotional, and mental health. As a Safe Space participant, make sure to meet an individual where they are at in the coming out process and recognize the challenges and barriers they may be facing. If an individual is not experiencing "full acceptance," coming out may be scary, harmful, and even unsafe.

## GLBTQ People of Color

People of color in the GLBTQ community face unique struggles that are exemplified by their racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds. It is important to understand how a person's experience differs based on personal characteristics and identities.

According to the Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network (GLSEN) 2009 School Climate Survey:

- Across all groups, sexual orientation and gender expression were the most common reasons LGBT students of color reported feeling unsafe in school. More than four out of five students, within each racial/ethnic group, reported verbal harassment in school because of sexual orientation and about two-thirds because of gender expression. At least a third of each group reported physical violence in school because of sexual orientation.
- Less than half of students of color who had been harassed or assaulted in school in the past year said that they ever reported the incident to staff. Furthermore, for those students who did report to staff, less than half believed that the staff's resulting response was effective.

According to the 2010 State of Higher Education for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, & Transgender People National College Climate Survey:

- LGBQ Respondents of Color were significantly less likely than LGBQ White Respondents to feel very comfortable or comfortable in their classes.
- A significantly larger percentage of transgender people of color reported experiencing harassment because of their gender identity/expression than did trans white individuals.

*Many GLBTQ people of color describe their experience as “living between two borders.” Not only do they face challenges related to their sexual and/or gender identity, but they also face challenges that come with being a person of color.*

### **Multiple oppression affects one's life because:**

- A person may feel they do not know who they are.
- A person may not know which part of them is more important to embrace.
- A person may not know how to deal with one part of their identity oppressing another part of their identity.
- A person may not have anyone to talk to about what they're going through.
- A person may feel misunderstood by each separate group.

### **Living In-Between Cultures & Invisibility**

Many LGBTQ people of color live their lives in-between the margins of their cultures. It is difficult to integrate the different cultures when one culture might shun or dismiss another culture. For instance, a Latin man could find it difficult to integrate being Latin and gay when the two might not go hand in hand because of the discrimination LGBTQ people face. Not only that, but being a person of color and part of the LGBTQ community means that you face discrimination not only because of your sexual orientation, but also because of your racial, ethnic, and/or cultural identity. A person might find it difficult to accept both their “gay” culture and their racial/ethnic culture as being equally essential to who they are. Further, LGBTQ people of color may find that they are invisible in both their cultural community and LGBTQ community. It is hard to find visibility in communities where you do not see yourself represented. In the LGBTQ community, there has been a lack of representation of people of color in film, music, advertisements, and advocacy work. This issue can make it difficult for a person of color to come to terms with their identity and “place” in the community.

## Language

For people that identify as genderqueer or transgender, finding proper pronouns or terms in languages other than English can be difficult. For example, languages with Latin origin tend to be very “gendered” – meaning simple words are said in a specific manner if it is being used for a female or male. The English language has gender-neutral words, while Spanish languages for example are very gender oriented. This can be very difficult for a person who does not identify as either “female” or “male” and does want to be referred to as “he” or “she”. Further, it forces individuals to make a “gendered” choice in order to communicate with another.

### Additional Terminology & Labels

These terms are prominent in African American & Latino GLBTQ communities in the tri state area and come from the ballroom scene of NYC. While some may seem offensive or demeaning, their correct usage is dependent on not only the context but also the setting in which it is being used. Keep in mind that these terms and labels are constantly evolving in regards to definition and newer ones are constantly replacing the older ones.

**The T:** The truth of the matter or details on a situation. Can be used as a greeting. (Ex. “What’s the T?” or “Girl, spill the T!”).

**Kiki:** To talk amongst a group or to be social with a touch of humor or sass (also used as a noun).

**To carry:** To exaggerate or when someone becomes unbearable or excessive.

**Fem Queen:** A transgender woman who may or may not be taking hormones and possibly planning to have transitional surgery.

**Butch Queen:** A gay male that is neither extremely feminine, nor extremely masculine and can easily portray both mannerisms.

**Trade:** A masculine male whose sexual identity may or may not be gay but who has sex with men.

**Cunt:** used to describe something or someone being extremely original, impressive, or fantastic in regard to style, charisma, and nerve.

**Pussy:** used to describe something or someone being extremely feminine, soft, and sensual.

**Aggressive or AG:** An extremely masculine lesbian identified person.

**Stud:** A masculine lesbian identified person.

**Fem:** A feminine lesbian identified person.

**Fem-Aggressive:** A lesbian who is neither completely masculine nor completely feminine.

## The Transgender Experience

The old understanding of the word transgender meant a person whose gender identity differs from what is culturally associated with their biological sex at birth. However, as information has evolved, it is now an umbrella term that includes a wide range of identities and includes pre-operative, post-operative, and non-operative transsexual people. In its general sense, it refers to anyone whose behavior or identity falls outside of stereotypical expectations for their gender.

**Transgender:** An umbrella term for those individuals whose gender identity does not match with that assigned for their physical sex. Sometimes shortened as trans.

**Cisgender:** A person who feels as if their biological sex matches their gender identity.

**Crossdresser:** Individual who dresses in the “opposite” gender clothing for a variety of reasons, sometimes for sexual pleasure. Crossdressing is not indicative of sexual orientation. This term replaces the sometimes pejorative term transvestite.

**Genderqueer:** A gender variant person whose gender identity is neither male nor female, is between or beyond genders, or is some combination of genders. Individuals that identify as genderqueer often challenge gender stereotypes and the gender binary system.

**Transman:** A person who was assigned female at birth, but who identifies as male. Some transmen may intend to undergo physical changes to align their body with their gender identity. Sometimes referred to as “FTM.” This person most likely uses masculine pronouns.

**Transwoman:** A person who was assigned male at birth, but who identifies as female. Some transwomen may intend to undergo physical changes to align their body with their gender identity. Sometimes referred to as “MTF.” This person most likely uses feminine pronouns.

**Intersex:** Term used for a variety of medical conditions in which a person is born with chromosomes, genitalia, and/or secondary sexual characteristics that are inconsistent with the typical definition of a male or female body. Intersex individuals are not always aware that they have this condition. Replaces the inaccurate term “hermaphrodite.”

**Gender Expression:** An individual’s physical characteristics, behaviors and presentation that are linked, traditionally, to either masculinity or femininity, such as: appearance, dress, mannerisms, speech patterns and social interactions.

**Gender Identity:** How one perceives oneself – as a man, a woman, or otherwise.

**Gender Role:** Norms of expected behavior for men and women assigned primarily on the basis of biological sex; a sociological construct, which varies from culture to culture.

**Ze:** A gender-neutral pronoun used by some transgender individuals (Pronounced Zee) in lieu of he or she. The possessive adjective “hir” (pronounced here) usually follows in place of his or her. Some individuals may use other gender-neutral pronouns.

## ***Transitioning***

Gender transition is the period during which a person who identifies as transsexual begins changing their appearance and body to match their internal gender identity. Because gender is so visible, transsexuals in transition **MUST** "out" themselves to their employers, their families, and their friends - literally everyone in their lives. While in transition, they are very vulnerable to discrimination and in dire need of support from family and friends. Hormonal therapy can take several months to many years to effect the physical changes in secondary sexual characteristics that will produce a passable appearance, and some may never pass completely.

## ***Sex reassignment surgery (SRS) (aka ‘Gender Confirming Surgery’)***

SRS is the permanent surgical refashioning of sexual anatomy to resemble that of the appropriate sex. For MTF transsexuals, SRS involves the conversion of penile and scrotal tissue into female genitalia. For FTM transsexuals, it may be limited to just top surgery (breast removal) and sometimes hysterectomy. While many transgender males become satisfied with their new male anatomy, most opt out of genital surgeries for a variety of reasons, including the expense and dissatisfaction with the results. Many MTF trans people also undergo additional cosmetic procedures, including electrolysis to remove facial and body hair, breast augmentation, Adams Apple reduction, hair transplantation, liposuction and many types of facial surgeries. **It is important to note that not all individuals that identify as transgender choose to have SRS.**

## ***The "Real Life Test"***

For transsexual persons seeking Sex Reassignment Surgery (SRS), the Real Life Test (also called the Real-Life Experience) is a one-year minimum period during which they must be able to demonstrate to their psychotherapists their ability to live and work full-time successfully in their congruent gender. The Real Life Test is a prerequisite for sex reassignment surgery under the Standards of Care.

## ***Gender identity vs. Sexual orientation***

Gender identity is a person's internal sense of being a man or a woman, a boy or a girl. Sexual orientation is someone's sexual attraction to others who may be of the opposite sex, the same sex, or either sex. Like other people, transgender people can be straight, gay, lesbian or bisexual. Generally speaking, their gender identity - not their physical sex status influences which sexual orientation they identify with.

## ***Pronoun Use***

When it comes to pronoun use, don't be afraid to ask the individual which pronouns they prefer. If you let the person know that you are only trying to be respectful, your question will usually be appreciated.

For instance, you can ask:

- “How would you like to be addressed?”
- “What name would you like to be called?”
- “Which pronouns do you prefer?”

Some younger transgender persons prefer gender neutral pronouns (i.e. zee/hir) in lieu of gender specific pronouns (i.e. his/her)

## Tips to be an Effective Ally

There are many ways of being a safe and supportive ally for all GLBTQ people. Being an ally not only serves the GLBTQ people you may know, but also straight people who may be allies themselves, or who may have an GLBTQ relative or friend. Here are a few suggestions on ways to be an ally.

- Don't assume everyone is heterosexual. Try to use gender-neutral language. Ask "Are you seeing anyone?" instead of "Do you have a boyfriend?"
- Use the language others ask you to use. Calling people by their chosen names, using the pronoun they ask you to use, or knowing their identities will go a long way towards creating a safe and inclusive environment.
- Avoid anti-gay, homophobic, transphobic, or heterosexist remarks, jokes or comments. When you hear such language being used, if you feel comfortable, speak up against it.
- Continue to educate yourself about current issues that GLBTQ people face. Read a book or a website about GLBTQ history.
- Respect the individual experiences of GLBTQ people by not seeing them as a uniform group. For example, lesbians may or may not feel an affinity with gay men, gay men of color may or may not feel connected with white gay men, and transgender people may or may not feel linked to the gay rights movement, and vice versa.
- Come out as an ally by making your support visible. Display a book, a poster, or the Safe Space symbol in a prominent place.
- Know when your knowledge and skills have reached the limit. Refer people to another resource if you feel you cannot answer all of their questions.
- Remain aware of your own remaining biases.
- Be aware of heterosexual privilege and how it affects you. For example, when a flyer for a dance features a heterosexual couple, consider who may not feel welcome at the event.
- Attend an event hosted by a GLBTQ group. If you are straight, consider what it feels like to be a sexual minority at this event.

\*Adapted from Virginia Tech's Safe Zone Manual, Duke University's Safe Space Manual, and Washington State University Gender and Sexual Orientation Resource Center

## University Referral Guide

Coming out as GLBTQ can sometimes be a difficult process for some and may distress an individual to the point where professional help would be beneficial. As a Safe Space participant, you are not a counselor (unless you are a Safe Space participant that happens to have a professional license to provide counseling or therapy). As a result, it is important to be able to recognize when a referral to Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) may be necessary. It is essential to remember however that identifying as GLBTQ is not a psychological disorder, so be sure not to pathologize the identity and make a referral simply based on the fact that an individual is coming out or struggling with his/her sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

Some recognizable indicators that a student may need to seek services are:

- Frequent Unexcused Absences from class or failure to turn in assignments.
- Listlessness, lack of energy, or falling asleep frequently.
- Prolonged depression marked by a sad expression, apathy, weight loss, or tearfulness
- Nervousness, agitation, excessive worry, irritability, aggressiveness, or non-stop talk
- Impaired speech or disjointed, confused thoughts
- Abuse of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs
- Marked decline in personal hygiene or dress?
- Talk of suicide either directly or indirectly such as “I wont be around to take my exam anyway,” “I’m not worried about a job, I wont need one,” or “I wish I could just go to sleep and never wake up.”

### *Crisis Situations*

If a student is in crisis and immediate attention is warranted, call CAPS and tell the receptionist that you have an emergency and an appointment will be arranged for the student as soon as possible. **If CAPS is closed, call University Police at 973-655-5222, and they will contact the on-call psychologist.**

**University Police should also be contacted if a student is on campus and in immediate danger; i.e. they have already taken an overdose, tried to harm themselves in some other way, or are medically ill. If the student is off campus call 911.**

Crisis situations include:

- The student is in significant distress and appears unable to care for him or herself.
- The student expresses thoughts about committing suicide, and/or a plan or intent to harm themselves or someone else.
- The student is displaying psychotic symptoms, such as appearing confused and/or agitated, hearing voices, expressing unintelligible speech, and/or bizarre, paranoid, or clearly false beliefs about something.

CAPS: 973-655-5211

Location: Russ Hall (To the right of main entrance)

Hours: See website for current schedule [www.montclair.edu/caps](http://www.montclair.edu/caps)

## Your responsibilities as a Safe Space Program Participant

- Provide a welcoming non-judgmental environment for students, faculty, and staff.
- Respect an individual's experiences and views.
- Be an active listener.
- Provide resource information if requested by the student, faculty, or staff.
- Assure confidentiality of shared information.
  - [This confidentiality may be severed if you suspect that the individual is in danger of harming themselves or someone else].
- Stay up to date regarding issues facing the GLBTQ community (some examples may be to attend Safe Space follow up conferences, get involved with LGBT Center programming, get involved in national GLBTQ rights organizations, examine recent research published regarding this community).
- Work to end heterosexism and homophobia in the MSU community.
- Provide follow-up evaluation information at the request of SSP coordinators for the well-being and maintenance of the Safe Space Program.

## Responsibilities of the Coordinators of the Safe Space Program

- Provide trainings at various times throughout the year to allow new participants to be trained.
- Respect a participant's views and commitment to the program.
- Arrange follow-up meetings, conferences, and professional development opportunities to support participants and enhance effectiveness of the Safe Space Program.
- Be available to speak with participants on a one-to-one basis if the need arises for consultation related to issues that GLBTQ students face.
- Provide up to date resource and reference materials as requested by participants.
- Sponsor and/or co-sponsor educational programs that foster more understanding of GLBTQ issues as they relate to the MSU community.
- Maintain an active listserv for Safe Space participants to use as a method of communication.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the Safe Space Program

## Frequently Asked Questions about the MSU GLBTQ Community

### Is there a GLBTQ or Gender studies program offered at Montclair?

Yes! Montclair currently has two programs that address GLBTQ as well as gender issues. One of the programs that we have to offer is the GLBTQ Studies Minor. In this minor students explore GLBTQ representations, cultures, and histories and are challenged to think critically about identities, current issues, institutions, and activism.

Another program available to students is the Women and Gender Studies Major and Minor. The Women's and Gender Studies Program at MSU offers students an education in the newest theoretical and methodological approaches to understanding and examining how gender, sexuality, and related factors contribute to the diverse economic, political, and cultural institutions and relationships that shape people's lives. WMGS challenges students to employ a new analytical lens to investigate current issues in business, policy analysis, education, the arts, and other important arenas.

Information about both programs can be found at: [www.montclair.edu/womensstudies](http://www.montclair.edu/womensstudies)

### Which study abroad programs are friendly to GLBTQ students, and are there any study abroad programs that focus on lesbian, gay or queer studies?

The Montclair State University Office of Global Education works with GLBTQ students to ensure that they are aware of GLBTQ specific programs and considerations for studying aboard related to gender and sexuality.

Visit their website at: <http://www.montclair.edu/globaled/studyabroad/info/resources.html>

### How can I get more involved in GLBTQ life at Montclair?

There are many different options, some of which include joining the student Gay Straight Alliance (SPECTRUMS), taking classes in the GLBTQ studies or Women and Gender Studies Program, attending events, joining in on discussion groups, and volunteering at the LGBT Center as part of the "Justice League".

For more information about SPECTRUMS visit:

<http://www.montclair.edu/lgbt/programs/spectrums.html>

Check out our Calendar of Events: <http://www.montclair.edu/lgbt/programs/>

For more information about The Justice League contact the LGBT Center at x7563

## What are my options for housing as a GLBTQ student?

Montclair State offers a Living Community called “Stonewall Suites.” Students residing in the Stonewall Suites Living Community have the opportunity to enjoy a comfortable living and learning experience, where residents are placed without consideration of gender identity/expression, or sexual orientation. This community seeks to connect students interested in supporting and educating themselves and their community about the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender questioning/queer/ally community.

To learn more about Stonewall Suites visit:

<http://www.montclair.edu/resed/learningcommunities/LGBT.html>

For students that identify as transgender, the Office of Residential Education and the LGBT Center work together (on a case to case basis) to determine the healthiest and safest living situation for the student. In many cases, the student may be placed in a single room in one of the residence halls with access to a private bathroom.

Once a student has passed 30 credits, they may apply for Co-Ed or “Gender Blind” housing. This option allows students to live in an apartment (either in the Clove Road Apartments or the Village) in a gender-neutral setting. In order for this option to be available, a few criteria must be met:

(a) Students must have completed all necessary requirement for housing (i.e. housing deposit, no holds on student account, etc). (b) An application for Co-Ed housing must be submitted BEFORE the housing selection process begins. (c) ALL members of the apartment must sign an agreement.

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## Where can I get support if I am coming out at MSU?

**The LGBT Center** is located in Student Center rooms 104 L & K and provides a safe space for students to discuss GLBTQ issues and relax in a non-judgmental atmosphere. The LGBT Center provides programming and workshops for students, faculty, and staff.

**MSU’s Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)** provides confidential assessment and brief counseling/therapy for students. The service is included in every student’s fees and is therefore free of charge. CAPS is located in Russ Hall.

**The GLBTQ Safe Space Program** identifies offices of MSU faculty and staff that are safe places for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people. Such offices are identified with a decal. The decal has a green square with two triangles in the center, one pink and one in black. It reads GLBTQ Safe Place. The GLBTQ decal signifies the displayer’s willingness to be supportive of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people. The intended message of the symbol is that the person displaying this decal is one who will be non-judgmental, understanding and trustworthy should anyone need help, advice or conversation.

### Other Locations to explore are:

Health Promotion Offices (Bohn Hall or Drop In Center)

Health Center (Blanton Hall)

Women’s Center (SC 420)

GLBTQ Studies Minor (DI 120)

## Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer & Questioning Resource Guide

The following pages are a resource guide of local, state, and national locations, services, and programs that are identified as Safe Spaces. Please give referrals when students request them to these locations. If you need additional resources or have a question about a resource, please contact the LGBT Center at (973) 655-7563.

**Key:**

\*On Campus Provider

\*Updated January 2012

## **BOOKSTORES:**

### **Montclair Book Center**

221 Glenridge Ave., Montclair 07042  
973-783-3630  
Gay friendly new and used bookstore

### **Bluestockings**

172 Allen Street between Stanton and Rivington  
New York, NY  
212.777.6028

### **Pandora Book Peddlers**

9 Waverly Pl  
Madison, NJ  
(973) 822-8388

## **ENTERTAINMENT AND SOCIAL EVENTS:**

### **Alternate Thursdays**

First Lutheran Church 153 Park St. Montclair 07042  
973-744-6043  
RIC Parish. Lesbian peer support/social group, meets every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month

### **New Jersey Gay Life**

Website lists organizations, calendar of events, advertisements and many other items of interest.  
[www.njgaylife.com](http://www.njgaylife.com)

## **HELPLINES, HOTLINES AND GLBTQ FRIENDLY ORGS:**

### **Addictions Hotline**

800-225-0196  
Info and referral to drug programs,  
24 hours, 365 days.

### **Domestic Violence Hotline**

800-572-SAFE

### **\*MSU LGBT Center**

Student Center rooms 104 L & K  
M-F: 8:30-4:30  
973-655-7563

### **\*Health Promotion Drop In Center**

M-F 9am-7pm  
973-655-5271

**Gay Activist Alliance in Morris County (GAAMC)**

[www.gaamc.org](http://www.gaamc.org)

Not-for-Profit, Volunteer-run support/ resource network for GLBTQ community

**Gay-Lesbian Hotline of GLCC/NJ**

732-773-1809 (hotline)

Morris County

973-285-1595 (infoline)

Staffed 7:30p.m.-10:30p.m., answering machine other times

**Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC)**

212-807-6655 or (800) 243-7692

M-F: 10-9pm

[www.GMHC.org](http://www.GMHC.org)

**Hetrick-Martin Institute (Harvey Milk High school)**

2 Astor Pl., NYC 10003

Main – 212-674-2400

TTY – 212-674-8695

A variety of GLBTQ youth resources and local services including medical and legal assistance for youths

**Hyacinth AIDS Foundation**

Hotline: 800-433-0254 for NJ only, 732-246-0204 for outside NJ

[www.hyacinth.org](http://www.hyacinth.org)

**National Organization of Women (NOW)**

<http://www.now.org/issues/lgbi/>

**New Jersey Bias Crime Victim Support Services**

1-800-277-BIAS (2427)

**NJ Buddies (AIDS service organization)**

201-489-2900

Helpline: 800-508-7577

[www.njbuddies.org](http://www.njbuddies.org)

**NJ Lesbian & Gay Coalition**

732-828-6772

[www.njlgc.org](http://www.njlgc.org)

**NJ Coalition for Battered Women**

609-584-8107

M-F, 7:30-9p.m., Sat-Sun, 12-2p.m.

[www.njcbw.org](http://www.njcbw.org)

Help line for abused lesbians and bisexual women, and gay and bisexual men.

**Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) of North NJ.**

Meets in South Orange

PO Box 4585

Wayne, NJ 07470

[pflagwaver@aol.com](mailto:pflagwaver@aol.com)

(973) 267-8414

<http://www.pflagnorthjersey.org/>

**PFLAG of Bergen County/Ridgewood**

P.O. Box 1330

Ridgewood, NJ 07450-1330

(201) 287-0318

<http://www.bergenpflag.org/>

**Pride Center of New Jersey of the Personal Liberty Fund of the New Jersey Lesbian and Gay Coalition**

321 Raritan Dr., Highland Park, NJ

(732)846-2232 (Info line)

(732)235-5700 (Emergency Hotline)

[www.pridecenter.org](http://www.pridecenter.org)

**The Trevor Project**

[www.thetrevorproject.org](http://www.thetrevorproject.org)

(866)488-7386

Suicide Prevention for GLBTQ youth; Nationwide, 24-hour emergency/ crisis hotline

**\*The Women's Center at Montclair State University**

973-655-5114

SC 420

**Women Aware Inc.**

PO Box 7565

North Brunswick, NJ 08902

24/7 Helpline (732) 249-4504

**LEGAL:**

**Lamda Legal Defense and Education Fund**

120 Wall St. Suite 1500, NYC 10005

(212) 809-8585

FAX (212) 809-0055

**MENTAL HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS:**

**Center for Identity Development**

**James V. Maho, LCSW, ACSW**

31 Trinity Pl., Montclair 07042

973-744-6386 (May be directed to leave message)

Individuals Psychotherapy and counseling, public speaking

**\*Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) at Montclair State University**

Russ Hall  
973-655-5211

**Ann Cutillo, MSW, ACSW, LCSW**

51 Upper Mountain Plaza,  
Upper Montclair 07043  
973-509-9440 (May be directed to leave a message)  
Coming Out Groups, Lesbian Support Group, Trained Imago Couples Therapist

**Karen Madura, LCSW, CADC**

1140 Bloomfield Avenue  
West Caldwell, NJ PO Box 985  
973-865-7180  
karenlmadura@msn.com  
Supportive solution focused counseling

**Montclair Center for Psychodrama & Psychotherapy**

**Robert L. Fuhlrodt, LCSW, CADC**

**Harriet Power, RAT, LCSW**

37 North Fullerton Ave., Suite 301  
Montclair 07042  
973-746-6928 (May be directed to leave a message)  
Individual, group, family, couples, sexual identity, chemical abuse and related issues

**D. David Panozzo, LCSW, ACSW**

Bergen County  
201-476-1816 (May be directed to leave a message)  
Psychotherapy, sliding scale, some insurance, Medicare

**Lois E. Phipps, LCSW**

31 Trinity Pl., Montclair 07042 and  
121 Cedar Lane, Teaneck 07666  
201-836-3553 (May be directed to leave a message)  
Individual, couple, family, depression, anxiety, stress

**PHYSICAL HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS:**

**Steven D. Belt, M.D.**

100 Northfield Ave., West Orange 07052  
973-731-1535  
Family medicine and nutritional medicine

**Center for the Treatment of Eating Disorders**

514 Livingston Ave., Livingston 07039  
973-740-0702

Individual, group and family therapy for persons with anorexia nervosa, bulimia and compulsive eating problems

**Cathy Ostroff, DOC**

Florham Park  
973-822-2529

**\* University Health Center at Montclair State University**

Blanton Hall  
973-655-4361

**PLACES OF WORSHIP:**

**Church of the Redeemer**

36 South St., Morristown 07960  
973-539-0703 (May be directed to leave a message)  
A Christian liberation community in the Episcopalian tradition

**Dignity/Metro, St. George's Church**

550 Ridgewood Rd., Maplewood 07040  
973-857-4040 (May be directed to leave a message)

**St. Luke's Episcopal Church**

73 S. Fullerton Ave.  
Montclair, NJ 07042  
973-744-6220

**St. Peter's Episcopal Church**

386 Clifton Ave  
Clifton, NJ 07012  
973.546.5020  
Rector: Rev. Peter DeFranco  
Assoc: Rev. Lorraine Dughi  
Wardens: Nancy Young and George Weston

**First Congregational Church of Montclair, United Church of Christ**

40 South Fullerton Avenue  
Montclair, NJ 07042  
[www.firstchurchmontclair.org](http://www.firstchurchmontclair.org)  
Ann Ralosky, Pastor  
973-744-4856  
An Open and Affirming Congregation

**First Presbyterian & Trinity Church**

S. Orange and Irvington Avenues

South Orange 07979

973-762-7879

New Jersey's only "more light" Presbyterian Church

**First Presbyterian Church of Verona**

10 Fairview Ave., Verona

973-239-3561

**Montclair Unitarian Church**

Montclair 07043

973-744-0463 (May be directed to leave a message)

**Morristown's Unitarian Fellowship**

21 Normandy Heights Rd., Morristown 07690

973-540-1177

**Christ the Liberator MCC (Metropolitan Community Church)**

PO Box 10494, New Brunswick, NJ 08906-0494

732-846-8227

E-mail: [mccliberator@excite.com](mailto:mccliberator@excite.com)

**Christ Episcopal Church**

Bloomfield, Glen Ridge

74 Park Ave.

Glen Ridge, NJ

973-743-5911

**Unity Fellowship Church**

Newark, NJ

Service begins: 3:30p.m. on Sundays

**Beni Keshet – Reconstructionist Synagogue**

99 South Fullerton Ave.

Montclair, NJ 07042

(973) 746 – 4889

<http://www.bnaikeshet.org/>

## **STATEWIDE/NATIONAL RESOURCES:**

**Garden State Equality**

[www.Gardenstateequality.org](http://www.Gardenstateequality.org)

**\*Human Rights Campaign**

<http://www.hrc.org/>

**New Jersey Stonewall Democrats**

[www.njstonewalldemocrats.org](http://www.njstonewalldemocrats.org)

**Team NJ: New Jersey's Gay Sports & Recreation Organization**

<http://www.teamnj.org/TEAMNJ.ASP>

**Transgender Law and Policy Institute (TLPI)**

<http://www.transgenderlaw.org/>

**Gay, Lesbian and Straight Educators Network (GLSEN)**

<http://www.glsen.org/cgi-bin/iowa/all/home/index.html>

**National Gay and Lesbian Task Force**

<http://thetaskforce.org/>

**National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR)**

<http://www.nclrights.org/site/PageServer>

**\*For additional resources visit the LGBT Center Website at [www.montclair.edu/lgbt](http://www.montclair.edu/lgbt)**

## Safe Space Program

Sponsored by the office of Health Promotion, & the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Center

### Agreement Form

- I agree with the premise of the Safe Space Program and want to be a participant in the Program at Montclair State University. I accept the responsibilities of being a participant and agree to work towards making Montclair State University a safe and inclusive environment for all students, faculty and staff. I may decline to continue participating in the program at any point that I deem appropriate and will contact the coordinators with my decision.
- At this time I do not wish to be a participant for the Safe Space Program.

My name \_\_\_\_\_

My signature \_\_\_\_\_

Campus address (faculty & staff only) \_\_\_\_\_

Campus phone (faculty & staff only) \_\_\_\_\_

Campus e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_