Creating LGBTQ Inclusive Work Environments

Part of what it means to be an Ally means creating a safe environment for GLBTQ clients. Here are some suggestions for how you can go about achieving this goal:

- **Create an LGBTQ Advocacy Team:** – Find LGBTQ and heterosexual staff who are willing to provide proactive LGBTQ related programming & training at your school, university, organization, or agency.

- **Avoid and confront anti-gay jokes and conversations** – Such talk serves only to perpetuate heterosexism. Be willing to confront your co-worker if they make heterosexist comments/jokes. Violence starts with language. It also makes it more difficult for people to come to terms with their true identity.

- **Create an atmosphere of acceptance** – Display gay affirming pictures in your office, in the waiting area, hallways, cafeteria, etc.

- **Confront homophobic remarks, statements, or stereotypical comments** – Using words like “fag” or “dyke” should not be tolerated any more than racist or sexist language. The expression of an anti-gay/lesbian sentiment should not go unchallenged. Support acceptance and denounce homophobia, sexism, racism, and all forms of oppression. Homophobic language and jokes hurt people and can lead to oppression. Speak out…don’t be silent.
• **Safe Space Emblem** – Display a Safe Space emblem in your office, office area, and/or in your classroom if you are teaching a course.

• **National Coming Out Day, October 11** – Publicly assist with creating and celebrating LGBTQ pride at your school or agency!

• **LGBTQ Resources** – Provide age appropriate LGBTQ books, magazines, and videos for clients and staff in your counseling centers or classrooms.

• **Professional Development** – Provide periodic training on general sensitivity and how to incorporate diversity and social justice into the workplace.

• **Provide Inclusive Counseling Services** – Assess to ensure that your counseling center provides LGBTQ counseling services.

• **LGBTQ Support Group** – Create an LGBTQ support group at your agency or school.

• **LGBTQ Staff** – Hire “out” LGBTQ staff (counselors, teachers, administrators, etc.)

• **Be Unpopular** – Be willing to stand up against heterosexist status quo’s. Don't be silent!