

THE PRIDE PLAYBOOK

Prioritizing Growth in Every Step

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INTRODUCTION

The goal of this playbook is to provide you with information to thoughtfully and purposefully plan your Pride event with care and safety. Emphasizing the importance of creating a safe space to boost the mental health and wellbeing of all attendees. From who to engage, when to start planning, where to host, and to maintaining a safe environment. This playbook includes activities which hopefully gives you inspiration for an engaging event, prioritizing mental health in every step.

There is power in numbers.





THE EVOLUTION

A BRIEF HISTORY



FIRST GAY UPRISING

- In LA, Cooper DO-NUTS was a popular LGBTQ&T+ meet up place in the 1950's
- One night, the police tried to arrest people at the donut shop and transgender women threw donuts at the officers. The police retreated and brought back larger numbers, leading to chaos
- For an entire day, Main Street where Cooper DO-NUTS was located, shut down due to the riots.



STONE WALL RIOTS

- Stonewall Inn was a place where the LGBTQ&T community spent there time, one day it was raided by the police.
- The police arrested anyone in unusual clothing
- This riot lasted 5 days and marks a very significant pivot in LGBTQ&T+ History



1ST TRANS REMEMBRANCE DAY

- Gwendolyn Ann Smith created Trans Remembrance Day
- In honor of the trans lives lost to violence and discrimination

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55

DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS

- The first Lesbian gay rights organization
- Founded by Dorothy Louise Taliaferro "Del" Martin and Phyllis Lyon



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COMPTON'S CAFETERIA RIOT

- A popular space for transgender people was raided and this led to a riot in San Francisco
- Drag queens, gay men, and trans women were arrested
- Marks the beginning of transgender activism in San Francisco



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1ST PRIDE WEEK

- In 1970, a year after Stonewall Inn Riots, the first Pride week occurred, creating a gay liberation movement
- In 1978 the rainbow flag was created by Gilbert Baker. Each color carrying a significant meaning:



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70's

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Pink: sexuality
Red: life
Orange: healing
Yellow: sun
Green: nature
Blue: art
Indigo: harmony
Violet: spirit

The Significance of Stonewall

In 1960, homosexuality was illegal in the United States, so queer people found a safe space at the Stonewall Inn, located in Greenwich Village, New York.

On June 28th, 1969, New York Police officers raided the Inn. As police officers made arrests and set up barricades, queer folks set the barricade on fire. Literally. The raid was a breaking point and represented how marginalized LGBTQ&T+ people were. Protests lined the streets, and lasted for six days. Thousands and thousands of LGBTQ&T+ activists and supporters came to the inn to show their support.



Five months later, during the Eastern Regional Conference of Homophile Organizations, activist Craig Rodwell, proposed an annual march to commemorate the Stonewall Riots. As the planning process unfolded, the word “Pride” came to be. A single word, with so much meaning: while people may not have power or rights, they have Pride in their identity. Fast forward to June 28th, 1970, the first Pride march was held with a sizable number of attendees making a 51-block walk. No floats, music, or dancing like we see today. Instead, a statement. Following, a “gay-in” was held where protests and celebrations began. Other marches took place in Chicago, Los Angeles, and San Francisco.

The Stonewall Inn was declared the first LGBTQ+ National Historic Site in the US by President Barack Obama in 2016.

Pride Today



Pride Month is a celebration of LGBTQ&T+ rights, self-acceptance, and visibility. It is also filled with historical significance, representing the fight for equality since the Stonewall Uprising. This month empowers individuals to advocate for equality and raise awareness for the discrimination they have faced.

The parties, festivals, parades, and events are opportunities for LGBTQ&T+ folks to connect with other like-minded individuals. Freedom and happiness linger in the air as people see, feel, and understand queer connections. Rainbows and colors fill the streets, and laughter and music surround you, it is truly a magical time.

“What I liked about the rainbow is that it fits all of us. It’s all the colors. It represents all the genders. It represents all the races. It’s the rainbow of humanity.” — Gilbert Baker



POWER IN NUMBERS

A Mental Health Intervention

MENTAL HEALTH

The effects of mental health challenges are unique to each individual. Identifying as LGBTQ&T+ is a core aspect of someone's identity, not a mental illness. While this identity is beautiful and empowering, it can also make individuals more vulnerable to mental health concerns. LGBTQ&T+ populations are at a higher risk for mental health disparities due to several factors, including fear, shame, discrimination, trauma, stereotypes, and rejection, among others.

For those who belong to multiple marginalized groups—such as a Lesbian BIPOC woman—the risk is even greater. Some LGBTQ&T+ individuals often face limited employment opportunities, avoid seeking both mental and physical healthcare due to fear, and struggle with other social determinants of health. The fear of rejection or harm based on who someone loves is a heavy burden to bear, and this weight has been carried by many since before the age of *The Daughters of Bilitis*, sometimes leading to mental health crises, suicide, substance misuse, and other serious challenges.





National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI):

- LGBTQIA youth are reported to be more than twice as likely to have feelings of hopelessness, loneliness, and sadness than their heterosexual peers. They are also more at risk for suicide than heterosexual youth.

Trevor Project

- Less than 40% of LGBTQ&T+ folks have an affirming home.
- 56% of queer people reported that they were not able to access mental health care when they need it.

Mass.gov

- LGBTQ&T+ youth were 3 to 4 times as likely to report suicidal ideation than heterosexual youth
- 6 in 10 transgender youth reported suicidal ideation.
- Transgender adults reported the highest rates of poor mental health outcomes.
- Queer adults are 6.4 times as likely to report suicidal ideation.



2025 Greater Lowell Community Health Needs Assessment Survey



➤ LGBQ&T+ survey participants ranked mental health as the second most important community priority. They ranked transgender people as the second most important population to focus on, and LGBQ as the third most important population.



Survey participants were asked how their mental health is compared to last year. Of the LGBQ&T+ participants, 26.69% reported that their mental health was a lot or a little worse compared to last year where 18.51% of Heterosexual participants said their mental health was a lot or a little worse than last year.

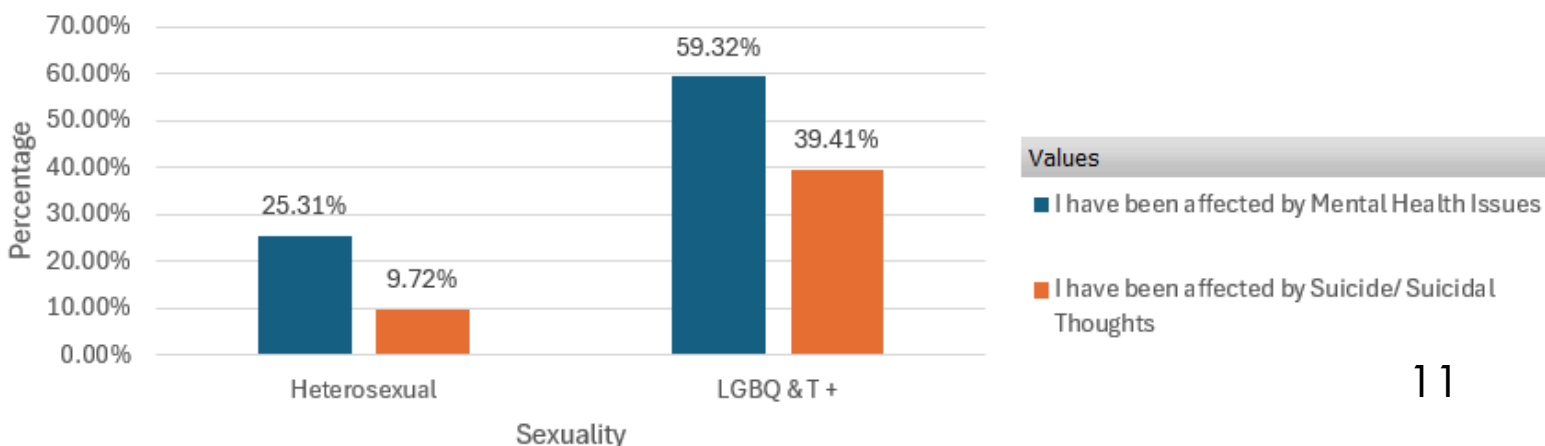


In terms of barriers to accessing mental health care, 35.17% said that they can't access mental health services compared to heterosexual participants, where only 12.24% said they can't access services.



Of the LGBQ&T+ participants, 22.88% reported they have faced discrimination by a doctor, additionally just over 20% are scared to visit a doctor because they feel embarrassed or ashamed.

Prevalence of Mental Health Issues and Suicidality in 2025 CHNA Survey
Participants by Sexuality



COMMUNITY

What defines a community?

A community can be a place, an experience, or an interest. These aspects of a community can overlap and intertwine. Communities can be as specific as a geographical place, like what town you live in. Or it can be as abstract as beliefs, aspirations, attitudes, and self-images. Culture, demographics, history, and infrastructure are all factors that can define a community. Someone can be involved in as many or as little communities as they prefer. For example, a hypothetical transgender woman attends a university, lives in Chelmsford, is part of a book club, advocates for trans rights, and goes to spin classes. Each aspect of her is involved in various communities.



Why is community building important for mental health?

A community brings like-minded individuals together who share similar identities. It creates belonging and security while allowing collaboration. A support system is so important, especially for LGBTQ&T+ people to see and understand that they are not alone in this world. Community enhances an individual's purpose and adds meaning to their lives. Whether that purpose is discussing a favorite book fighting for transgender rights or even turning a city into a home.

Pride serves as an opportunity to find new relationships, friendships, and a social network, creating a sense of belonging. Knowing you have a place in this world where you are seen and valued provides a fulfilling sense of security. In a world where LGBTQ&T+ people have faced discrimination and cruelty, knowing and seeing you have a community with others like you can be a means to positively affect mental health and wellness.

PRIDE

As a Mental Health Intervention

There is a correlation between community and a decrease in depression, anxiety, and loneliness. People who are socially connected to friends, relationships, love, or community are happier individuals. A network of people is a resource, in a world where few LGBTQ&T+ people access mental health services, their support system can influence their mental health positively and potentially empower them to find mental health care. Building a community is a mental health intervention.



Generational Connection

Pride brings together young LGBTQ&T+ people and older LGBTQ&T+ people, giving opportunities for intergenerational connections and mentorships. It gives young queer individuals a chance to find a mentor or role model. Older adults can also learn from young people.



Information Sharing

Pride is a great opportunity for LGBTQ&T individuals to learn more about the resources available to them, connect specific organizations, and share the information they learned. Vendor tables will be discussed in a following chapter.



Support System

Support systems and social networks can be built during Pride, a space where individuals can give and receive support. When you find people who understand and validate your feelings, you know you're not alone. A support system means knowing there are others who can relate to your experiences. Even if an LGBTQ+ person doesn't receive support from their family, they can still find a sense of belonging in a community of peers, a loving partner, or within the LGBTQ+ community as a whole.



Diverse Perspectives

During Pride month, people are given the opportunity to expand their horizons and create personal growth from experiencing diverse perspectives within the LGBTQ&T+ population. Celebrating culture, history, and traditions are also means to expand one's horizon. For example, stories told from transgender people to gay people and vice versa gives both populations a chance to put themselves in someone else's shoes.



SAFETY AND DISCRETION

A PSA FOR SAFETY

Before the planning process occurs, safety should be discussed. In today's world, planning a safe Pride event or a discrete private LGBTQ&T+ event takes creative and thoughtful thinking. As much as we would love to shout from the rooftops and let everyone know how exciting and fun queer gatherings are, sometimes it's not feasible.

LGBTQ&T+ people experience threats, violence, and discrimination daily. According to the 2022 Greater Lowell Community Health Needs Assessment 7.8% of LGBTQ+ people were more likely to be discriminated against. Many LGBTQ&T+ individuals live in a constant state of fight or flight where their stress response is often triggered. If anyone is in a constant state of stress for prolonged periods, it can lead to chronic stress and chronic mental illness which can then lead to even physical illness.

Prioritizing safety means you are prioritizing mental health.

Events centered around Pride month like festivals and parades, should be advertised, marketed, and open to all. There are ways to create a welcoming Pride and build community during June safely.

There may come a time when you feel your safety is at risk by planning your own private queer party, gathering, or event. If this ever becomes the case, throughout history LGBTQ&T+ people have thought of unique methods to prioritize safety, privacy, and discretion.

Throughout this section you will find suggestions on planning a safe Pride Festival. You can even use these strategies when planning a private gathering. Take what resonates and leave what doesn't.



Historical Techniques

For a Safe LGBTQ&T+ Environment



“Underground” Networks

Your queer-friendly space could be offered as a private area for LGBTQ&T+ gatherings to occur. Literal underground networks and tunnels became safe spaces for the LGBTQ&T+ community throughout history. Examples could be bookstores, community centers, restaurants, bars, or even a home. Speakeasies and hidden bars were also gems throughout history like the Stonewall Inn.



Discrete Marketing

While social media is great for advertising, digital footprints can be a threat to safety. Instead create flyers to place around town and hand directly to people. DIY creations like Zines are methods you can use. See examples in Appendix: C



Coded Language

Polari is a “queer code” or a “secret language” used throughout history to have conversations in public spaces about queer happenings. This is just one example of using a coded language to maintain discretion. At the Stonewall Inn, people even used coded names when signing into a guest book.



Trusted Networks

Create a meaningful definition of what you want your trusted network to look like, for example, many organizations use working agreements or mottos that define the behaviors of the group. In terms of safety, keep advertising and networking within your trusted network who know your expectations of behavior. When building this definition prioritize discretion and how you will maintain discretion. In simpler terms, a trusted network is a group of people that you know you can trust.



Online Safety

Social media and online chatting is a great way to stay connected if done so with safety in mind. You can use coded language to create social media profiles, Facebook groups, and online messaging chats. Your online circle should follow closely with your trusted network and your agreement.



Silent Nods

Silent nods and discrete symbols that you share in your trusted network are a great way to advertise your queer-friendly space. The Daughters of Bilitis in 1955 created a pin and a symbol that members wore to identify themselves to others. You can create stickers with your symbol or include symbols in your flyers.



STOP



Before you consider planning Pride, safety needs to be a priority with the 3 P's:

Event Safety Questions: Do we have enough budget to cover our safety plan? Do we have protocols for handling threats? Do we have an evacuation plan? Have you identified a direct contact person to answer any safety concerns? Do we have community allies?

Safety Plan: Make a list of contacts in case an emergency happens and consider making a safety planning committee. The committee can have police force, key stakeholders, and people familiar with the venue. People on the committee should have experience with security, safety, and understand the layout of the venue to create the safety plan.

Communication: Those in attendance should be aware of the safety plan. Refrain from using social media to spread the word. Instead, hang flyers with safety information at different areas throughout the venue. Each vendor table should be informed prior to the event and also help spread the safety information.

LGBQ&T+ Culture Competence: Understand that LGBQ&T+ people could have fear or mistrust in the police force. Consider ways to build trust and include LGBQ&T+ police officers in the process.



THE PLAYBOOK

UNFOLDS

Pride planning:

The Who & The Where

KEY CONCEPTS

First and foremost, there is not one right way to plan Pride. Provided in the following pages of this playbook are suggestions and concepts you can take into consideration. Take what you want and leave what you don't want. The following concepts will cover: who, when, where, what, and you already know why. The planning process for any event takes a balance of urgency and patience. The key to this balance is giving yourself enough time to allow room for patience while staying urgent and working promptly.

Planning Pride takes a village, so it's important to identify your allies and key partners early on. This way, you can rely on them for support throughout the entire process. Collaborate with your partners by reflecting on past Pride events: What aspects stood out to you—both the positive and the negative? If you could change anything from your previous experiences, what would it be? What obstacles did you face before, and are there any challenges you anticipate this time?

Each Pride festival should be unique to the community you serve, consider the diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds that attend and how you can make it inclusive for all. Think language and cultural competence, think access for those with disabilities, and always think safety. A great way to understand the demographics of your community is to coordinate with partners who already serve and understand the LGBTQ&T+ community in your area. Interview them, get to know them, then ask them to be a part of your journey. Ask LGBTQ&T+ residents in your community to be a part of the planning process, of course, offer them incentives for their time. It is a special feeling to be given the chance to give back to your community, and they can give you a “boots on the ground perspective” of what their friends or networks want Pride to look like. A win-win situation.

The work you put into Pride can be challenging, but extremely meaningful to all who attend. Your planning process has the potential for a lasting impact on people after June. In every aspect of the planning process, prioritize boosting the mental health and community-building skills of LGBTQ&T+ people. Think of Pride as a mental health intervention or as an overarching theme. Let the concepts of empowerment, expression, identity, relationships, friendship, mental health, and so on be the fuel to your fire.



Engaging Local Businesses

Importance

Imagine a queer individual walking down the street, looking into the windows of each local business. They could be window shopping, deciding where they would like to eat for lunch, or simply existing. Now imagine, it is June and the majority of local businesses have a Pride flag in their window, or the restaurant they decide to eat at has a Pride inspired sandwich or drink. It is a small ask: engage your local businesses. Signal where the LGBTQ&T+ friendly spaces are and contribute to queer community building.

Mental Health

By acknowledging and creating space for the community to know that you are an ally, you are creating a sense of visibility and awareness. You are also doing your part to advocate for this community. In the long run you can boost queer mental health from fostering spaces for connection, to simply putting a smile on someone's face.



Who to engage?

- Restaurants, Bars & Cafes
- Book Stores & Libraries
- Clothing Stores
- Supermarkets
- Gyms
- Affirming Churches
- Anyone!

Pride Friendly Business Checklist

Good Recommendations



- ☐ Silent Nods- Hang a Pride flag or sticker in your window
- ☐ Social Media Campaigns- Create a Pride Month social media post
- ☐ Advertise your local Pride Events- Pride flyers look great on bulletin boards!
- ☐ Wear and hand out Pride pins
- ☐ Attend a Pride Festival repping your business merchandise

Better Recommendations



- ☐ Offer discounts for customers wearing Pride apparel\
- ☐ Donate a percentage of revenue during Pride to your local Pride festival
- ☐ Create a Pride themed item to sell and donate earnings to Pride Festival
- ☐ Be a vendor at your local Pride festival
- ☐ Keep a Pride Flag in your window after Pride Month ends

Better Recommendations



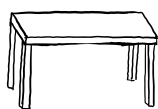
- ☐ Host an inclusivity workshop
- ☐ Create a Pride Table at your location
- ☐ Sponsor your local Pride Festival
- ☐ Host a fundraising event
- ☐ Host a Pride event
- ☐ Keep your Pride flags up year around, advertise your business as Queer Friendly

“Best” & “Better” Inspiration



Inclusivity Workshops

This can be as simple as creating a safe environment for presentations and opportunities to hear from your employees that come from marginalized populations, invite community members. Bonus points for LGBTQ&T+ representation. Extra bonus points from LGBTQ&T+ individuals with diverse races and ethnicities.



Tabling

A Pride table at your location can include: Small Pride items to hand out, educational materials, your plan to be a Queer Friendly Business, posters, flyers, ads of local Pride events, any discounts you are offering for Pride month and so much more. Get creative!



Discounts and sold goods (see page 35)

Restaurants & Cafe's: Pride themed drink, food item or menu,
Bookstores: Discounts on all LGBTQ&T+ books
Clothing Stores: Sell Pride Clothes
All businesses: offer 10%,20%, or go crazy and offer 50% off sold goods if someone comes in with Pride wear



Host a Pride Event(see page 29)

Gyms: Host a drag queen or Pride fitness class
Restaurants & Cafes: Host a Queer Singles Night with stickers expressing what people identify as.
Bookstores: Host an LGBTQ&T+ book club night, create a table with all LGBTQ&T+ books.



Donate & Fundraise

Host a fundraising event or offer a certain percentage of your profit during Pride month to an your local Pride Festival or a LGBTQ&T+ organization. See table of contents for places to donate.



Engaging Local Resources

Importance

It is crucial for LGBTQ&T+ community members to know what resources are available to them. Anyone can look at a community directory, but face to face connection is more meaningful and provides long lasting relationships between an individual and your agency. Engaging is a win win, for the community and your organization. Sometimes it takes people more than one time to hear about a resource before they take action.

Mental Health

Barriers to receiving mental health care that can be solved by engaging in Pride are access to services, intimidation of receiving services, and a lack of knowledge around available resources. You have the power to educate, connect, and maintain a relationship with the community which can lead to more LGBTIQ+ individuals accessing the mental health care they need.



Who to engage?

- Health Departments
- Health Centers
- Mental Health Agencies
- Substance Use Agencies
- Nonprofits
- LGBTQ&T+ Providers
- Existing Support Groups
- Universities and Schools
- Advocacy Agencies
- Police
- Any local health & human service who works to support LGBTQ&T+ individuals

Pride Friendly Resource Checklist

Good Recommendations



- ☐ Silent Nods- Hang a Pride flag or sticker in your window
- ☐ Social Media Campaigns- Create a Pride Month social media post
- ☐ Come out as an ally
- ☐ Advertise your local Pride Festival to those you serve
- ☐ Attend a Pride Festival repping your business merchandise

Better Recommendations



- ☐ Donate or sponsor your local PRIDE Festival
- ☐ Network with other organizations to advocate for your LGBTQ&T+ community
- ☐ Market and advertise Pride month by inviting your hetero and LGBTQ&T+ clients to events
- ☐ Promote community building and mental health during Pride month
- ☐ Table at your organization with educational materials
- ☐ Educate the community on safety measures during Pride

Better Recommendations



- ☐ Host a fundraising event for Pride and donate to your local Pride festival
- ☐ Actively participate in Pride (parade, vendors, planning)
- ☐ Host a Pride event (see appendix)
- ☐ Participate in Pride Scavenger Hunt

*see pg 39

Vendors

Importance

Vendors play a vital role in Pride festivals by providing essential services like food and water. They also have the opportunity to create memorable experiences and promote their organization. Being a vendor at your local Pride festival is a great way to engage with the community, attract new customers, and demonstrate that your business is a queer-friendly space.



Recommendations

Businesses:

- Take the chance to educate the community on your mission and values
- Network with other vendor tables
- Hand out free merchandise to attract more visitors
- Advertise your Pride events or Pride items that you are including during Pride month
- Enhance the attendee experience
- Include an engaging activity or interactive piece that will start conversation
- Offer discounted items for sale
- Let the community know to visit you at the Pride festival.

Health and Human Services

- Educate the community about mental health, public health, and the services you provide
- Bring a contact list for attendees to reach your organization at
- Bring interactive material to kickstart conversation
- Participate in Pride Scavenger Hunt, see appendix a
- Let the community know how you support them and what other services are available that you know of
- Take the opportunity to speak with potential clients and figure out their needs.

WHEN TO START PLANNING?

March

- Establish partners and a team
- SWOT Analysis of past Pride
- Discuss the current state and culture of LGBTQ&T+ people and their mental health
- Discuss obstacles
- Think safety
- Talk to community
- Book location & time
- Build Website

April

- Set goals
- Launch Website
- Seek sponsors and vendors
- Engage local businesses
- Engage local resources
- Plan fundraisers
- Book food vendors
- Discuss Pride events, parades, and ceremonies
- Consult police about safety plan

May

- Plan Pride activities
- Market Pride safely
- Follow up with sponsors, vendors, businesses, and resources
- Purchase needed materials
- Map out land, parade, and activities
- Revisit safety plan
- Consult residents

June

- Follow through with plans, activities & safety
- Shout about mental health from rooftops
- Lead by example and build community
- Speak with LGBTQ&T+ community members about their needs and experiences
- Keep safety plan in the back of your head
- Celebrate and watch the magic unfold





WHERE?



Be ready to pivot

The “where” takes early strategic planning. Be adaptable and ready for change at any time.

Questions to ask that might be obvious, but are important:

Who Owns The Location?

If there is back lash from a federal stand point on where you can host Pride, look to state or privately owned land. For example, Lowell Pride 2025 was supposed to be held at Boarding House Park, a government owned land. To avoid backlash, we pivoted to Sampas Pavilion, owned by the State of Massachusetts. A prime example of how pivoting and planning ahead can help overcome obstacles. If you are reading this in a state other than MA, look to privately owned locations.

Does Your Safety Plan Align?

The safety of the attendees may rely on the layout of the land you choose. Make sure there are multiple exit points and your team is aware of them. The location should be spacious enough to fit more than your expected amount of attendees, overcrowding of a venue could be a threat to safety. The location should be in an area that is affirming and accepting of LGBTQ&T+ people, reducing any outside threat of violence. Once again, your location must accommodate your safety plan.

Is The Location Accessible?

An accessible location can be anything from parking and traffic to ramps and wheelchair accessibility. Accessibility also means that the location is in a well known area of town that local residents are familiar with. The more accessible your location is, the more people will get to enjoy it. Lastly, The location should be easily accessible for fire, police, and EMS.

Other aspects to consider:

- Location can be based off of what activities will occur: space for a parade, stages for performance, room for vendor tables, etc.
- Are there any rules or regulations of the land that will limit the potential of an exciting Pride?
- If your location is not centered in town, can you offer modes of transportation like public transport so those without transportation can go?
- Are there gender- affirming restrooms?
- Does the venue allow for crowd control?



BEYOND THE BASICS

**Activities to Empower:
The What**



STOP



Before you host a city wide Pride festival or a private Pride event consider these safety measures:

Marketing: Use flyers and zines to market if you feel worried about discretion and privacy for private events. If marketing your towns Pride festival using social media be cautious that anyone and everyone can access what you post and find out where and when your event is.

Codes and Silent Nodes: For private events you can use coded language like Polari if you use social media or publicly available means to advertise and plan events. Incorporate symbols and silent nods to let the public know where your event is.

Security: For city wide Pride festivals coordinate with your local police force to determine the best means for security. If hosting a private event, consider hiring security from within your existing group or organization.

Trusted Networks: For private events, keep an anonymous guest book to keep track of your trusted network, especially if guests can leave discrete forms of communication like old email accounts.

PRIDE ACTIVITIES

Finally: The What.

In this section you will find activities that you can use during Pride Festivals and activities you can host throughout June. The opportunity to use Pride as a mental health intervention lies not only in the events and activities during the Pride festival itself but also throughout the entire month of June.



By utilizing Pride Month as a platform for community-building, we can enhance the mental well-being of everyone involved. There are countless opportunities to create a sense of community for the LGBTQ&T+ population—whether through family events, singles nights, or friendship-building activities. The possibilities are endless. One of the key factors in building community for LGBTQ&T+ individuals is the creation of safe spaces. These spaces allow people to approach others, whether for friendship or potential relationships, without fear of judgment or discrimination. Each event can be planned with discretion, ensuring individuals who wish to remain anonymous can participate in a safe and supportive environment. You can also incorporate activities as a means to fundraise for your Pride Festival.

Each aspect of activity suggestions are able to be mixed, matched and intertwined with one another. Add your own personal twist on it and get creative!

PRIDE EVE

Why?

Think of the feelings of excitement and anticipation that Christmas Eve brings, but Pride edition. The day or night before your festival is a great time to bring people together to celebrate Pride month or host a Pride Teaser.

Pride Teaser can take many forms:

- Themed family friendly party
- 21+ Dance
- Potluck or catered dinner
- Fundraiser for donations to local Pride festivals and LGBTQ&T+ resources
- Pride outfit designing
- Art creations
- Last minute Pride preparation, but make it fun

Who?

- Organization level
- City Wide
- Vendor gathering
- Sponsorship gathering
- Neighborhood Block
- Private and intimate setting between friends



QUEER SINGLES NIGHT

Why?

Finding a relationship as a queer person can be challenging for many reasons: fear of rejection, discrimination, and the uncertainty of navigating the dating world. While "gaydar" exists, for most queer individuals, it can still be intimidating to approach a stranger romantically without knowing whether they're queer or not. A queer singles night eliminates this uncertainty, creating an environment where everyone in the room knows which way you swing. This reduces the fear of rejection or misunderstanding when approaching someone with romantic interest.

Relationships and mental health are deeply connected. Research shows that people in happy relationships tend to experience lower levels of depression and stress. A queer singles night also provides opportunities for making new friendships, which are vital for fighting feelings of loneliness and isolation.

A queer singles night is perfect for a Pride night event, or any night for that matter.

An affirming and fun space:

- Have guests wear colored stickers to represent their sexuality
- Mix up the menu with themed drinks
- Get rid of dress codes, clothes are a way to express identity
- Use décor, sound and elements to set the mood of an exciting and welcoming night



Who?

- 21+ if offering alcoholic beverages
- Sober Friendly
- 18+ or college students
- Private groups, bars, restaurants

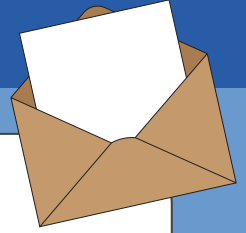
LGBQ&T+ BOOK CLUB

Why?

Going from a queer singles night to a book club is definitely a shift, but it's a powerful one! Knowledge is power, and books are filled with it—especially historical ones about LGBTIQ+ movements. Make history come alive with an engaging book club hosted throughout Pride month. After all, a shared interest creates community. Not only will your book club be a space for knowledge-sharing, but it will also facilitate memory-making, friendship-building, and a trusted network.



PEN PALS



Why?

Young LGBTQ&T+ groups can connect with older adult LGBTQ&T+ groups through pen pal letters. Older generations can find it difficult to make new connections, the intergenerational connection is so important for both young and older adults! A mentor or role model can be established via pen pals. Both pals can serve as a mentor and role model in their own ways.

How to as a young adult?

- A group of friends or an existing support group can establish a relationship with a senior care center or organization that is open to receiving and sending pen pal letters.
- Create your pen pal letters and mail them or hand deliver them to your partner.
- Include inspirational messages, words of encouragement, and what life is like as a young LGBTIQ+ individual.

How to as an older adult?

- A senior care center can also initiate a meaningful relationship with an existing young LGBTQ&T+ group.
- Create your pen pal letters and mail them, or coordinate with your partner to hand pick them up.
- Include words of wisdom, your own personal battles that you overcame, and words you wish your younger self could hear.

PRIDE FITNESS

Why?

Physical activity and mental health go hand in hand. Exercise is proven to reduce depression, anxiety, and other mental illnesses. Exercise causes the brain to release happy chemicals like dopamine. Group fitness is a great way to bring like minded individuals together that share a common interest. A group fitness class with a theme is an even greater incentive to exercise, themes make workouts more exciting!

Examples

- Drag theme spin class led by a drag queen or LGBTQ&T+ instructor with LGBTQ&T+ inspired music
- Color Run or Walk with rainbow colored powder to make running more exciting
- Yoga and Mindfulness Class
- Pride Zumba or Dance Class
- Self Defense Boxing Class



Louisville Pride 5k run/walk



Virtual or In-person Dance Workouts



UML Drag Queen Spin Class

RESTAURANT'S CAFE'S & ICE-CREAM SHOPS



OVER THE RAINBOW

2 oz strawberry puree
4 oz pineapple juice
2 oz malibu rum
½ oz blue curacao
1 oz coconut water



PRIDE

2 oz orange juice
½ oz lemon juice
1 oz tequila
¼ oz blue curacao
¼ oz water



RAINBOW JELL-O SHOOTERS

6 packages of jell-o
24 oz iceberg vodka
12 oz hot water
12 oz cold water



TASTE THE RAINBOW

1 oz grenadine
½ oz peach schnapps
1 ½ oz pineapple juice
1 oz vodka
½ oz blue curacao
orange



RAINBOW PARADISE

4 oz pineapple juice
2 oz malibu coconut rum



FIZZING WITH PRIDE

2 oz gin
1 oz passion fruit syrup

Rainbow Paradise Mocktail Recipe

This vibrant and playful rainbow mocktail tastes like an orange Julius (pineapple juice can also be used) and it creates a deliciously sweet treat!

Prep Time
5 mins

Course: Dessert, Drink, Mocktail Cuisine: Drink, mocktail

Keyword: Drink, Kids Favorite, Mocktail, orange, rainbow, St. Patricks day

Ingredients

- crushed ice
- 1 tablespoon grenadine syrup
- 1/3 cup orange juice or pineapple juice can be use too
- 1/2 tablespoon blue curacao syrup
- 2 tablespoons water

Instructions

1. Fill a glass about 2 inches full of crushed ice.
2. Add the grenadine syrup.
3. Add another 3-4 inches of crushed ice to the cup, it will almost be to the top.
4. Add the orange juice slowly.
5. Add more ice all the way up to the top of the glass.
6. In another cup or bowl, mix together the blue curacao syrup and the water.
7. Slowly add the mixture over the ice until the cup is full or the mixture is gone.
8. Admire your rainbow, stir if desired and enjoy.





WORKSHOPS



Safe Sex Workshop

- STD/ STI Prevention
- Consent 101
- Healthy Relationships
- Setting Boundaries

Mental Health Workshop

- Risk factors for mental health
- Suicide Prevention
- How to Help a Friend
- Self Care 101

Community Workshop

- How to build community
- What is a trusted network?
- Importance of LGBTQ&T+ friendship making

Safety Workshop

- Know your rights 101
- Discretion Advice
- How to create safe spaces
- How to plan and market LGBTQ&T+ events safely

History Workshop

- Historical LGBTQ&T+ movements
- LGBTQ&T+ timeline
- What happens if history repeats itself?

Substance Use Prevention

- Risk factors and effects
- How to use Narcan and Fentanyl Testing Strips
- How to help a friend
- Mocktail recipe's
- Sober curious 101

ACTIVITIES TO INCLUDE DURING PRIDE FESTIVALS:

Mental Health Focus:

- Health Resource Scavenger Hunt: Send attendees on a fun scavenger hunt where they have to find specific mental health resources and check off a list. Once the list is completed return to a destination point for a prize. (see Appendix: A)
- Include an open forum ceremony where LGBTQ&T+ attendees can share and listen to lived experiences of LGBTQ&T+ mental health journeys.

Community Building Focus:

- Community Building Bingo: Attendees get a bingo card, on the bingo card are different ways to build community at Pride. Once they do 5 or more in a row, return for a prize. (See Appendix: B)
- Friendship Bracelet Making
- Community Moral or Message Wall
- Pronoun Button Making

Other Fun Ideas:

- Arts n Crafts
- Karaoke or sing along
- Drag Queen Show
- Dances
- Fireworks
- Parades
- Flag Raising
- Drag Makeup Tutorial



A LETTER TO ATTENDEES

Dear Attendees, Vendors, Sponsors,



You are loved, you are accepted, embrace every unique part of you. The opportunity for Pride to help you build your community and your social network starts with you, go into Pride with an open mind to meeting new people. Connect with elders, listen to their story. Bring your chosen family, let them take in every moment of this queer community building journey with you. Community can take many shapes and sizes, whatever you want that to look like is up to you. Expand your queer horizons.

Speak your mind and say your truth during Pride. There is power in knowledge and power in numbers. The possibilities to use Pride to your advantage are endless.

Take initiative and use this playbook to form your own groups, you don't have to rely on decision makers to have a good time during Pride month, this month is for you. You have the power to create whatever community you want. You have the power to talk about mental health, spread awareness, and be an asset to your community.

Sincerely,

Us



A DONATION & RESOURCE GUIDE

2025 Pride SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Pride Lead Sponsor- \$10,000

All benefits:

Greater Lowell Pride, presented by: “Corporate Name”

Premier Sponsor- \$5,000

All benefits:

Social media pages tagged in “Sponsor Thank You” on the Chamber of Commerce’s and Greater Lowell Health Alliance social media profiles. Exhibit table under a 10’ x 10’ tent at the Pride Celebration, as available

Rainbow Sponsor- \$2,500

All benefits:

Your Corporate Logo displayed on signage during the Pride Celebration. Verbal acknowledgement during the Pride celebration.

Community Champion - \$1,000

All benefits:

Social media spotlight on the Greater Lowell Pride Facebook and Instagram pages. Full- page ad in the Pride Program*

Ad specs: 5 in W x 7 in H with bleeds (Deadline may 19th, 2025)

Pride Ally Sponsor- \$500

All benefits:

Half-page ad in the Pride Program* Ad specs: 5 in W x 3 ½ in H with bleeds (deadline May 19th, 2025). Your corporate name and website link on the Greater Lowell Health Alliance website and in social media acknowledgements. Your corporate name and a link to your website on the event listing on the Greater Lowell Chamber of Commerce website. Acknowledgement in Pride Program*. Exhibit/Vendor table

Sponsorships and donations may be kept anonymous if that is helpful for you to be able to participate.

Vendor Table / Food Truck Only – \$250
(Non-Profit/Small Business Exhibitor Fee \$200)

OTHER PLACES TO DONATE



The Trevor Project

Donate to the Trevor Project or start a fundraiser. The Trevor Project is a nonprofit suicide prevention organization for LGBQ&T+ Youth.
give.thetrevorproject.org



The LGBT Foundation

Donate to the LGBT foundation to help people get the care they need without fear, discrimination, or hate. All services are free to access because of donations.
lgbt.foundation/donate/



BAGLY

Donate to the Boston Alliance LGBTQ Youth. Your donation will help them ensure that LGBTQ Youth in MA have adequate resources.
badly.org/donate



GLAAD

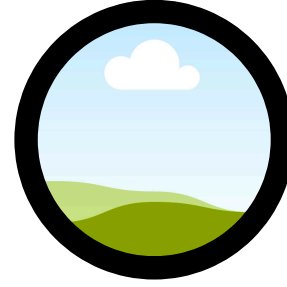
Donate to GLAAD to promote authentic representation of LGBQ&T+ culture. They hope to influence beliefs and capitalize on empathy.
give.glaad.org



Point of Pride

Donations help fund: Binder exchange program, trans femme shapewear, annual trans surgery fund, electrolysis financial support program

<https://www.pointofPride.org/donate>



The LGBT Foundation

Donate to the LGBT foundation to help people get the care they need without fear, discrimination, or hate. All services are free to access because of donations.

lgbt.foundation/donate/



BAGLY

Donate to the Boston Alliance LGBTQ Youth. Your donation will help them ensure that LGBTQ Youth in MA have adequate resources.

badly.org/donate



GLAAD

Donate to GLAAD to promote authentic representation of LGBTQ&T+ culture. They hope to influence beliefs and capitalize on empathy.

give.glaad.org

LGBQ&T+ Local Resources

▶▶ **PathwayTo Better Health**

97 Central St # 303, Lowell, MA 01852

(978) 487-6783

<https://www.apathwaytobetterhealth.com>

“Our mission at Pathway to Better Health is to provide compassionate, stigma-free, sex-positive, and gender-affirming care to our community.”

▶▶ **Wayside Youth and Families**

77 East Merrimack St.

(978) 460-8712

Email: lowell-referrals@waysideyouth.org

<https://www.waysideyouth.org>

▶▶ **Community Teamwork, Inc.**

17 Kirk Street, Lowell 01852

(978) 459-0551

Offers youth programs, specifically for unhoused youth, childcare, housing, energy and utilities, financial education and entrepreneur/business assistance, and food and nutrition support.

<https://www.commteam.org>

▶▶ **LGBQ&T+ Lowell- Facebook Page**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1603532839975971>

▶▶ **BAGLY (The Boston Alliance of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Trans Youth**

28 Court Square, Boston, MA: Drop in (ages 22 and under)

email_testing@bagly.org

Offers: Clinic*, GSA, Discord, Peer Mental Wellness Meetings (Zoom), Narrative Art Therapy, Health Education And Risk Reduction Team (HEARRT) program and monthly workshops, Host Home info sessions, Drop-in therapy sessions and youth leadership and development

<https://www.bagly.org/programs>

►► **OutstandingLife**

(508)414- 5520

Virtual LGBTQ Senior Center in Massachusetts.

OutstandingLife is a safe, diverse, and nurturing online community of LGBTQ&T+ older adults. Similar to a virtual senior center, our social networking platform is a welcoming space that creates meaningful social opportunities through cost-free online programming and peer support. OutstandingLife is committed to uplifting our members impacted by the homophobia, transphobia, systemic racism, and sexism that can lead to isolation. Ever-Growing Interactive Programs Include Peer Support Groups; Advocacy Hour; Book Club; Legal Lunch & Learn; Tech Corner; Mindfulness; Writing Workshops; Virtual Travel; Grief & Grieving Support; Artist Series; and so much more!

►► **The Trevor Project**

1-866-488-7386

A talk/text hotline to talk to a trained person if you're having scary thoughts or feel alone

<https://www.thetrevorproject.org/#sm.0001xycov6li0eoax7n2p25uo44p8>

►► **Trans Lifeline**

(887) 565-8860

Confidential and fully anonymous, trans/nonbinary operators on the line 24/7, no nonconsensual active rescue (ex. 911). Also offers Family and Friends Hotline

<https://translifeline.org/about/>

►► **Transgender Care Listings**

(providers for trans people)

<http://transcaresite.org/>

- ▶▶ **MA Commission on LGBTQ Youth**
Resource Map Website: <https://ma-lgbtq.org/>
Website: <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/massachusetts-commission-on-lgbtq-youth>
Instagram: @masslgbtq youth

- ▶▶ **Free To Be Me: A toolkit to protect LGBTQ&T+ Student's Rights**
https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/lgbt/pages/44/attachments/original/1644292200/LGBTQIA_StudentsRightsToolkit.pdf?1644292200

- ▶▶ **FTM Essentials** -Binder program 24yo & under
<https://www.ftm essentials.com/pages/ftme-free-youth-binder-program>
FTM Surgery Support Forums and Swap -
<http://www.ftmsurgery.net/forums/f-swap-meet>
Register an account and use the forum to try asking around for an inexpensive hand-me-down binder!
FTM mailing lists
<https://transguys.com/ref/ mailing-lists>

- ▶▶ **A directory of LGBTQ&T+ therapists can be found here:**
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/therapists/massachusetts?category=gay&sid=627eb35411cf1&page=1> And here:
<https://www.inclusivetherapists.com/united-states/massachusetts>

- ▶▶ **Planned Parenthood Worcester**
470 Pleasant St, Worcester, MA 01609
(800) 258-4448
<https://www.plannedparenthood.org/health-center/massachusetts/worcester/01609/central-massachusetts-health-center-2660-90610>

- ▶▶ **Outstanding Life**
A virtual community of LGBTQ+ Older Adults
<https://outstandinglife.org>



APPENDIX



LGBQ&T+ RESOURCE SCAVENGER HUNT

INSTRUCTIONS

Working in pairs, small groups, or solo you will complete the resource scavenger hunt below. Return to the Greater Lowell Health Alliance table to get your prize!

Try to meet as many resource tables that meet the requirements below. You should try to use a wide range of resources including:


- Mental Health
- Substance Use
- Health Services
- Nonprofits
- LGBQ&T+ Advocacy Groups
- Housing and shelter
- Youth Services
- Community Services
- Senior Services
- Misc. LGBQ&T+ Resources

Remember to stay safe while seeking resources. Learn as much as you can from each interaction and note down any contact information. Even if you might not need it, a friend or stranger may!

THE CHALLENGE

Resource	Resource	Resource	Resource
Resource	Resource	Resource	Resource
Resource	Resource	Resource	Resource
Resource	Resource	Resource	Resource
Resource	Resource	Resource	Resource

Pride Bingo

Exchange stories with a senior citizen	Introduce yourself to a person with different pronouns	Create a trusted network contact list of 5 peopled	Bring a chosen family member to Pride	Visit 5 + Vendor Tables
Introduce a stranger you met to another stranger	Take notes of 3+ tips to share about mental health	Take a selfie with a performer	Join 3+ interactive activités	Compliment 3+ people
Ask 3+ people questions about their LGBTQ&T+ experience	Start a conversation with a stranger		Wear a fun outfit expressing your identity	Wear pronoun pins
Help someone take a group photo	Thank a Pride volunteer	Learn a fun fact about LGBTQ&T+ history	Engage with a business that has a Pride flag in their window	Find someone with the same flag as you
Exchange social media with 3+ people	Participate in a group activity	Support a local LGBTQ&T+ owned business	Offer someone a helppng hand	Share a LGBTQ&T+ resource with a friend/ family member

VICE VERSA

America's Gayest Magazine

August, 1947

Volume I, Number 3

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IN EXPLANATION

Have you ever stopped to enumerate the many different publications to be found on the average news stands? There are publications for a variety of races and creeds. A wide selection of fiction is available for those who like mysteries, westerns, science fiction or romantic stories. For those who prefer fact to fiction, a variety of publications on politics, world affairs, economics and sports are available. And news stands fairly groan with the weight of hobby and miscellaneous publications devoted to subjects ranging from radio, engineering, gardening, home improvements and sailing, to travel, fashions and health.

Yet, there is one kind of publication which would, I am sure, have a great appeal to a definite group. Such a publication has never appeared on the stands. News stands carrying the crudest kind of magazines or pictorial pamphlets appealing to the vulgar would find themselves severely censured were they to display this other type of publication. Why? Because Society decries it thus.

Hence the appearance of VICE VERSA, a magazine dedicated, in all seriousness, to those of us who will never quite be able to adapt ourselves to the iron-bound rules of Convention. The circulation of this publication, under the circumstances, must be very limited, going only to those who, it is felt, will genuinely enjoy such a magazine. This little publication, at present free of charge, will be published whenever there is enough suitable material to warrant the appearance of another edition.

Glance through VICE VERSA. If the contents interest you and please you, that is the purpose of the magazine. If the material included herein seems rather monotonous, please keep in mind that the entire publication was originated and compiled by one person.

This is your magazine. Here is your chance to utilize your creative urge by directing it into literary channels. VICE VERSA is meant to be a medium through which we may express our thoughts, our emotions, our opinions. Do you write poetry? Short stories? Would you like to review a book, a play, or a film? Or perhaps you prefer merely to write a letter expressing your opinion of this little magazine. If enough letters are received, maybe a readers' column might be included in the next issue.

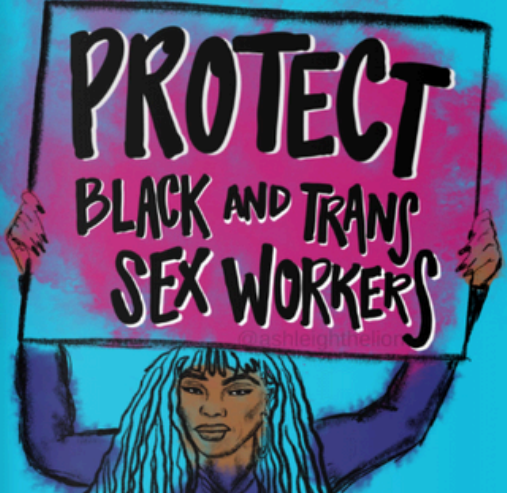
-1-

It all Began with the BANISHMENT ORDINANCE ...



In 2013, the Atlanta City Council considered an ordinance that would banish sex workers from parts of the city at first offense — like Midtown, a historic area for TLGBQ folks — and from Atlanta city limits at second offense.

The ordinance known as SOAP (Stay Out of Areas of Prostitution) or the Banishment Ordinance, was put forth because some residents of Atlanta's Midtown neighborhood felt uncomfortable about sex workers they referred to as a "gang of tranny prostitutes."



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