

Accepting and supporting LGBTQ+ people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities

Show acceptance

- ★ **Send positive messages:** Show people that you accept the LGBTQ+ community by sending positive messages about LGBTQ+ people.
- ★ **Educate yourself:** There are websites, articles, books, and videos about LGBTQ+ people and people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities.
- ★ **Believe us:** People with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities can be LGBTQ+ just like anyone else can and you should believe what we say.
- ★ **Listen to us:** People express their gender and sexuality in many different ways. You should listen to what we say about who we are.
- ★ **Tell us that you accept us:** If someone says they are LGBTQ+, you can tell them that you support them and love them for who they are.
- ★ **Use our names and pronouns**
It is important to call someone by the correct name and pronouns to show that you accept them.

Follow our lead

- ★ **Ask us how you can support us:** The best way to support someone is to listen to what they say and follow their cues.
- ★ **Let us decide what information to share:** It is our choice if we want to talk to people about our gender, sexuality, or being LGBTQ+.
- ★ **Let us decide how to express ourselves:** It is our choice how we express ourselves. For example, it is our choice what clothes we wear, and if and when to date or have sex.
- ★ **Assist us with the steps to express ourselves:** There are some things that LGBTQ+ people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities might need assistance with, such as looking up information about the LGBTQ+ community or meeting with providers about gender transition.
- ★ **Teach LGBTQ+ inclusive sexuality education:** We should be able to learn about gender, sexuality, and LGBTQ+ relationships.

Facilitate community connections

- ★ **Support groups:** We can see that we are not alone, figure out who we are, make friends, and get advice.
- ★ **LGBTQ+ places and events:** We are part of the LGBTQ+ community and we should be supported to go to LGBTQ+ places and events if we want to.
- ★ **Mentors:** Some people want someone LGBTQ+ who can relate to their experience and talk to them or give them advice.

Advocate alongside LGBTQ+ people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities

We can all work together to help make the world a better place for LGBTQ+ people with and without intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. It is not easy changing the world, so we need our friends, families, staff, and service providers to advocate alongside us.

- ★ **Change attitudes:** There are still negative beliefs about LGBTQ+ people, about people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities, and about other groups of people. You can help spread visibility and positive messages so that people can see us for who we are and treat us fairly.
- ★ **Our stories:** People will better understand us and support us when they learn about our experiences and perspectives. You can support people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities to tell their own stories and to teach professionals about our own lives.
- ★ **Anti-racism:** Many LGBTQ+ people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities are also people of color, and racism harms our community. We believe in racial justice to change beliefs, behaviors, and policies that harm Black, Indigenous, and people of color so that our world can be a safer and more equitable place.
- ★ **Ending discrimination**
No one should be discriminated against for their disability, their gender, their sexuality or any of their other identities. Discrimination for any reason harms LGBTQ+ people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities too.
- ★ **Improving laws and policies for our quality of life**
The participants talked about many laws and policies that need to be improved to promote higher quality of life for LGBTQ+ people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. This includes getting the supports and services we need, promoting alternatives to guardianship so we can make our own decisions, accessing competitive integrated employment, and improving access to housing and healthcare. We recommend following self-advocacy groups and organizations run by and for people with disabilities so that you can learn how to get involved in ongoing advocacy efforts.