



Mid-America (HHS Region 7)

ATTC

Addiction Technology Transfer Center Network
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

Treatment Considerations for LGBTQ+ People Who Use Substances

Presented by: Darla Belflower, LCSW



SAMHSA

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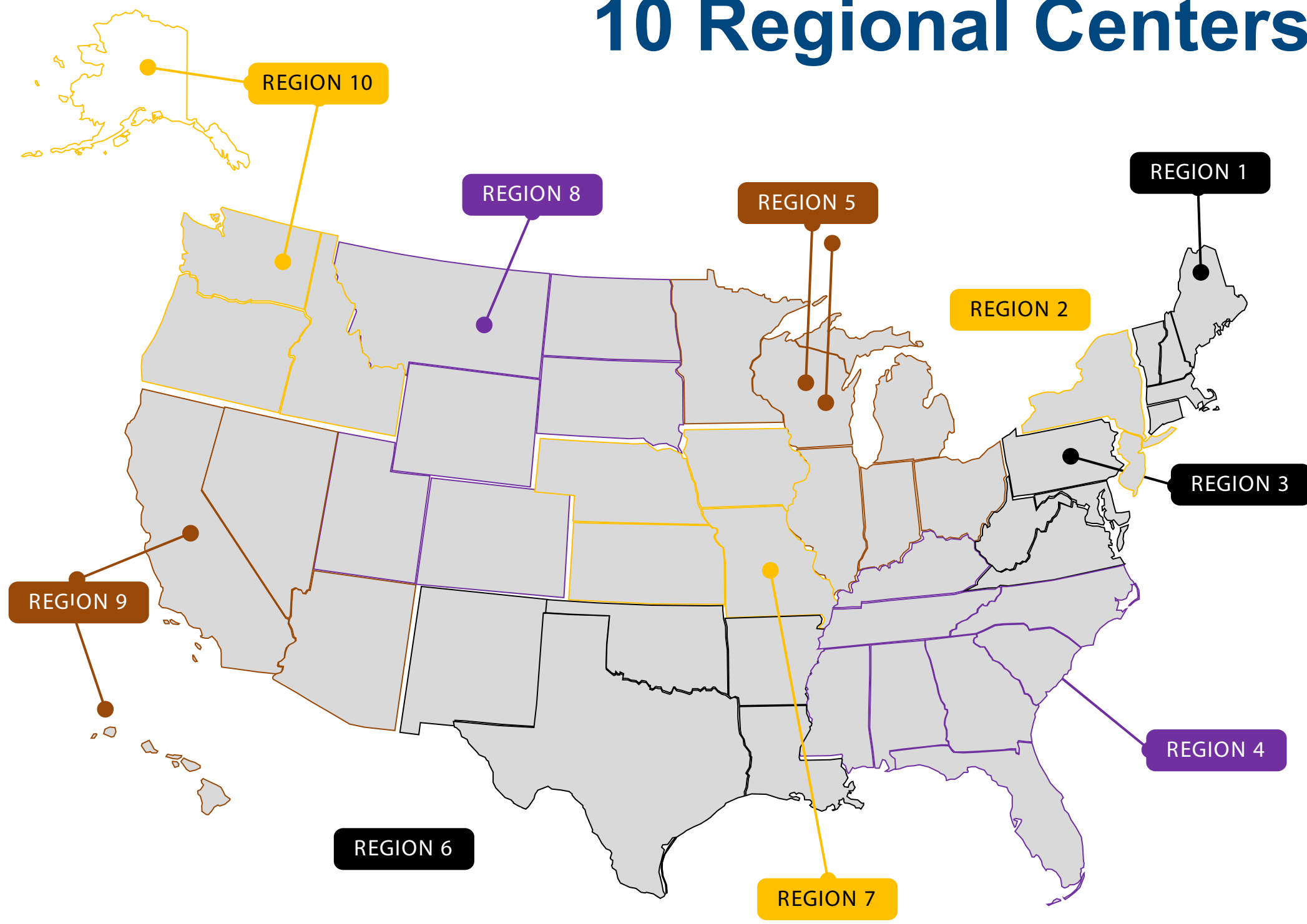
Addiction Technology Transfer Center Network



Region 7: IA, KS, MO, NE

Addiction
Technology
Transfer Center
Network

10 Regional Centers





Mid-America (HHS Region 7)

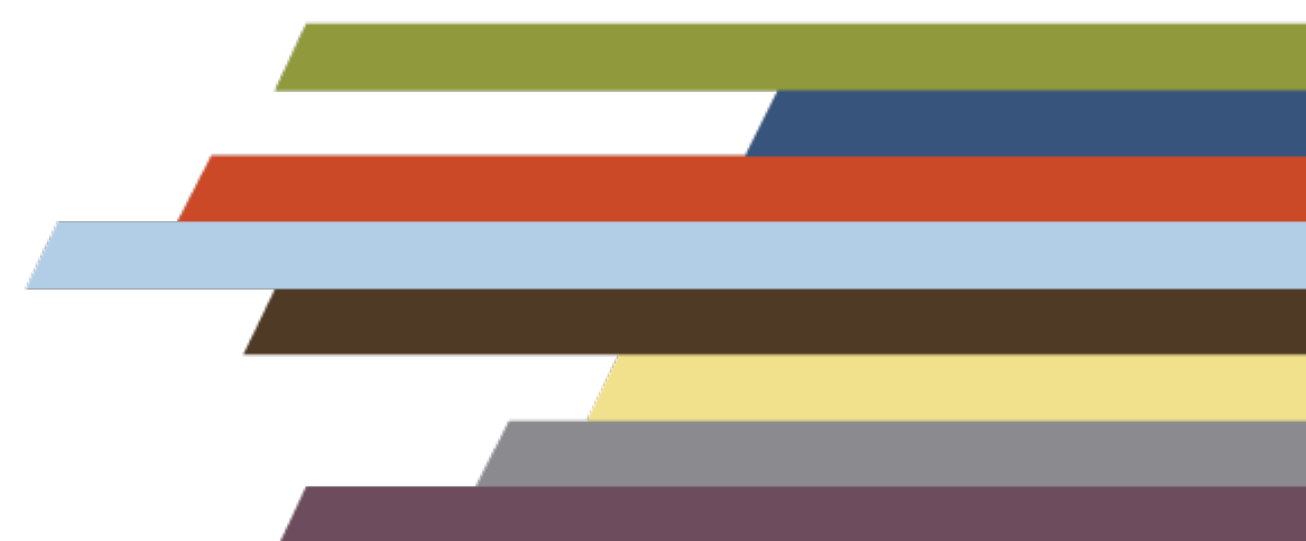
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ATTC Funding Acknowledgment

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Treatment Considerations for LGBTQ+ People with Substance Use Disorder

Darla Belflower LCSW



A target with three darts hitting the bullseye. The target has concentric circles in shades of gray and green. Three darts are positioned in the center, with their tips pointing towards the bullseye. The background is dark, making the target and darts stand out.

Objectives

Educate SUD providers on the needs of LGBTQ+ individuals with substance use disorder.

Interventions to use with this population and how to best build rapport.

To provide guidance on how to provide effective and culturally competent treatment for this population.

HE / HIS

SHE / HER

THEY / THEM



ALPHABET

LGBTQ+

Sexual and Gender Minorities are a group whose sexual identity, orientation or practices differ from most of the surrounding society

L- Lesbian

G- Gay

B- Bisexual

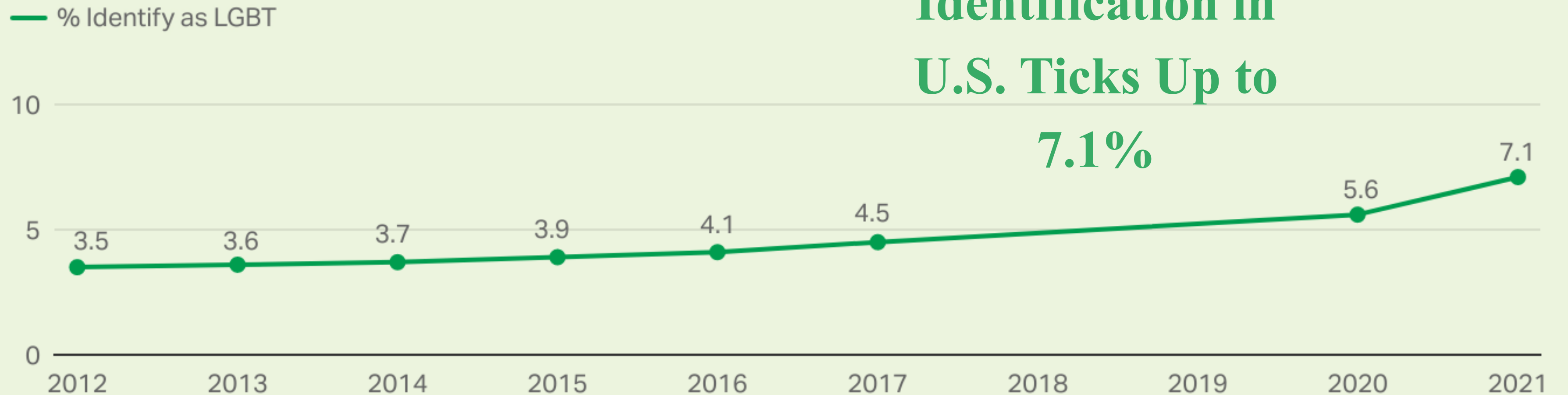
T- Transgender

Q- Queer

LGBTQ people are very diverse and live in communities across the United States

Americans' Self-Identification as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender or Something Other Than Heterosexual

Which of the following do you consider yourself to be? You can select as many as apply. Straight or heterosexual; Lesbian; Gay; Bisexual; Transgender



--Respondents who volunteer another identity (e.g., queer, same-gender-loving; pansexual) are recorded as "Other LGBT" by interviewers. These responses are included in the LGBT estimate.

--Data not collected in 2018 and 2019.

--2012-2013 wording: Do you, personally, identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender?

SUBSTANCE USE in The LGBTQ Community



SUD & LGBTQ+

It is estimated that 30% of LGBTQ+ individuals have some form of substance use disorder, compared to 9% in the general population. Factors like discrimination and stigma contribute to this issue.



Special Considerations

Chemsex means using drugs as part of your sex life, and it's most common among gay and bi men. There are typically three specific 'chems' (drugs) involved: Methamphetamine (Crystal Meth), Mephedrone (Meth), (GHB) and GBL (G).

The Risks of Chemsex



LGBTQ+ Stress

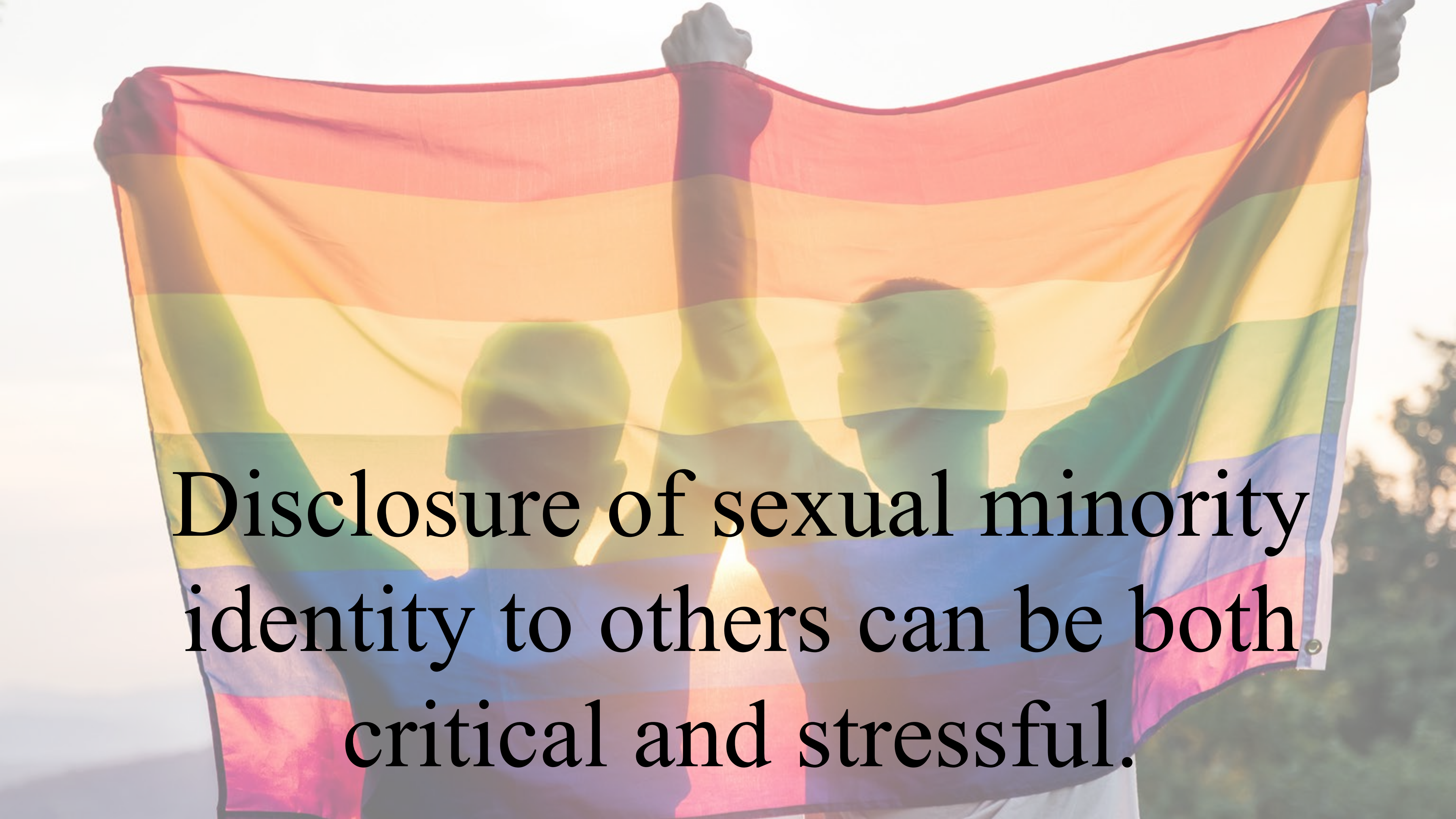


COMING OUT



*Gay Pride Picnic
June 27, 1993*





Disclosure of sexual minority
identity to others can be both
critical and stressful.

Minority Stress



Minority stress—the negative effects associated with the adverse social conditions experienced by individuals in any of the marginalized groups. When someone is a member of more than one of these groups, that becomes compounded.

LGBTQ+ Youth

- Youth who identify as LGBTQ+ have a 120% higher risk of experiencing some form of homelessness.
- LGBTQ+ youth disproportionately experience homelessness compared to their straight and cisgender peers.
- They are also more likely to experience assault, trauma, depression, and suicide.
- These statistics are even higher for BIPOC LGBTQ+ populations who suffer from racial inequities and discrimination.



Policy

Bills targeting our LGBTQ+ community are moving fast. Anti-LGBTQ+ bills by state as of May of 2024.

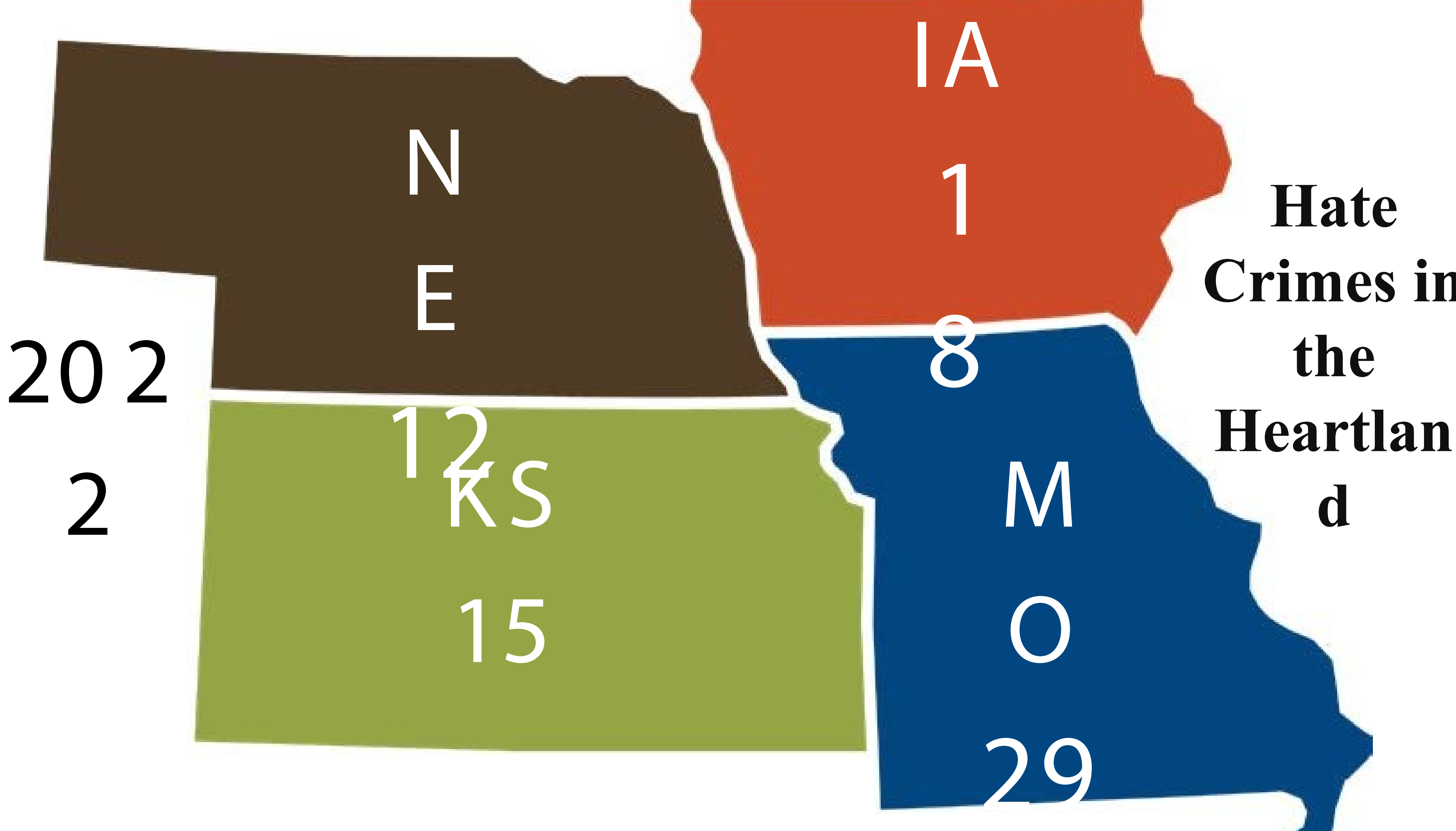
- Missouri has 39
- Iowa has 37
- Kansas has 16
- Nebraska has 4

Hate Crimes





Research shows that people in LGBTQ+ communities experience trauma at higher rates than straight, cisgender people.



A Little History



- 1973 - Homosexuality was removed from DSM II and replaced with Sexual Orientation Disturbance (SOD)
- Mid 1970s - First research into substance use in LGBT individuals
- Late 1970s- SOD removed from DSM III and replaced with Ego-dystonic homosexuality
- **1987** - Ego dystonic homosexuality removed from DSM III-R
- The 2011 Institute Of Medicine report was the first to look at the healthcare challenges of the LGBTQ community.

Overview of compounded stigma and its impact on LGBTQ+ individuals with SUD





Implicit



Implicit bias, also known as implicit prejudice or implicit attitude, is a negative attitude, of which one is not consciously aware, against a specific social group.

Barriers to Treatment



of transgender and gender-nonconforming respondents have experienced **discrimination and barriers to care**.



of respondents living with HIV experienced **discrimination in healthcare**.



LGBT individuals may avoid substance use treatment due to negative experiences sharing their sexual orientation with healthcare providers.

Case Study Lucee

Lucee is a transgender woman being seen for a MOUD. The nurse has never taken care of a transgender person before and finds himself very curious about Lucee. He repeatedly catches himself staring at her. While taking Lucee's vitals, the nurse asks, "You know, at first I thought you were a real woman. Do

you take hormones? Have you had the surgery yet?"

Lucee angrily responds, "I don't think that has anything to do with my substance use disorder."



Best Practices in Treating Substance Use Disorder in the LBGT Community



Create a welcoming, non-judgmental environment. Provide access to resources that cater to the specific needs of the LBGTQ community. Encourage peer support and individualized treatment plans.



**What Does Cultural Competency
Look Like in the LGBTQ+**

D O N T

A S S U M E

WORDS

HAVE

POWER

Treatment Considerations for LGBTQ



Suggested Skills for LGBTQ

- **Involve Family of Choice (Family)**
- **Explore the choice of language**
- **Pronouns**
- **LGBTQ Staff and or Safe Signals**

HE / HIS

SHE / HER

THEY / THEM

Patient Versus Provider Use of Slang Terms



Challenges To Caring for LGBTQ Community

- Higher rates of anxiety, depression, and stress
- Higher rates of eating disorders
- Higher rates of homelessness
- Higher rates of tobacco and substance abuse
- Individuals may have prior traumatic experiences with providers
- Insensitivity towards individuals who may engage in relationships with multiple partners or individuals of the same sex
- A tendency to make assumptions about behavior based on appearance



How do we
Improve
Outcomes

I N C L U S I O N





Build
Rappor

+

Welcoming Members of the LGBTQ Community

- Advertise as accepting of the LGBTQ community
- Have LGBTQ staff.
- Refer to clients by their names and chosen pronouns.
- On intake forms, there are blanks to fill in rather than checkboxes.
- Post LGBTQ symbols and posters of diverse people, including transgender or same-sex couples
- Provide waiting room magazines about the LGBTQ community
- Support observance of LGBTQ Pride Day, World AIDS Day, and National Transgender Day of Remembrance

Overdose in the Queer Community



Narcan/Naloxone

Get Narcan
Free





Conclusion and Takeaways

Support and acceptance are key in helping LGBTQ+ individuals with substance use disorder. Educate yourself, listen, and provide resources.



Resources for support and treatment

The Trevor Project provides crisis intervention and suicide prevention services to LGBTQ+ youth.

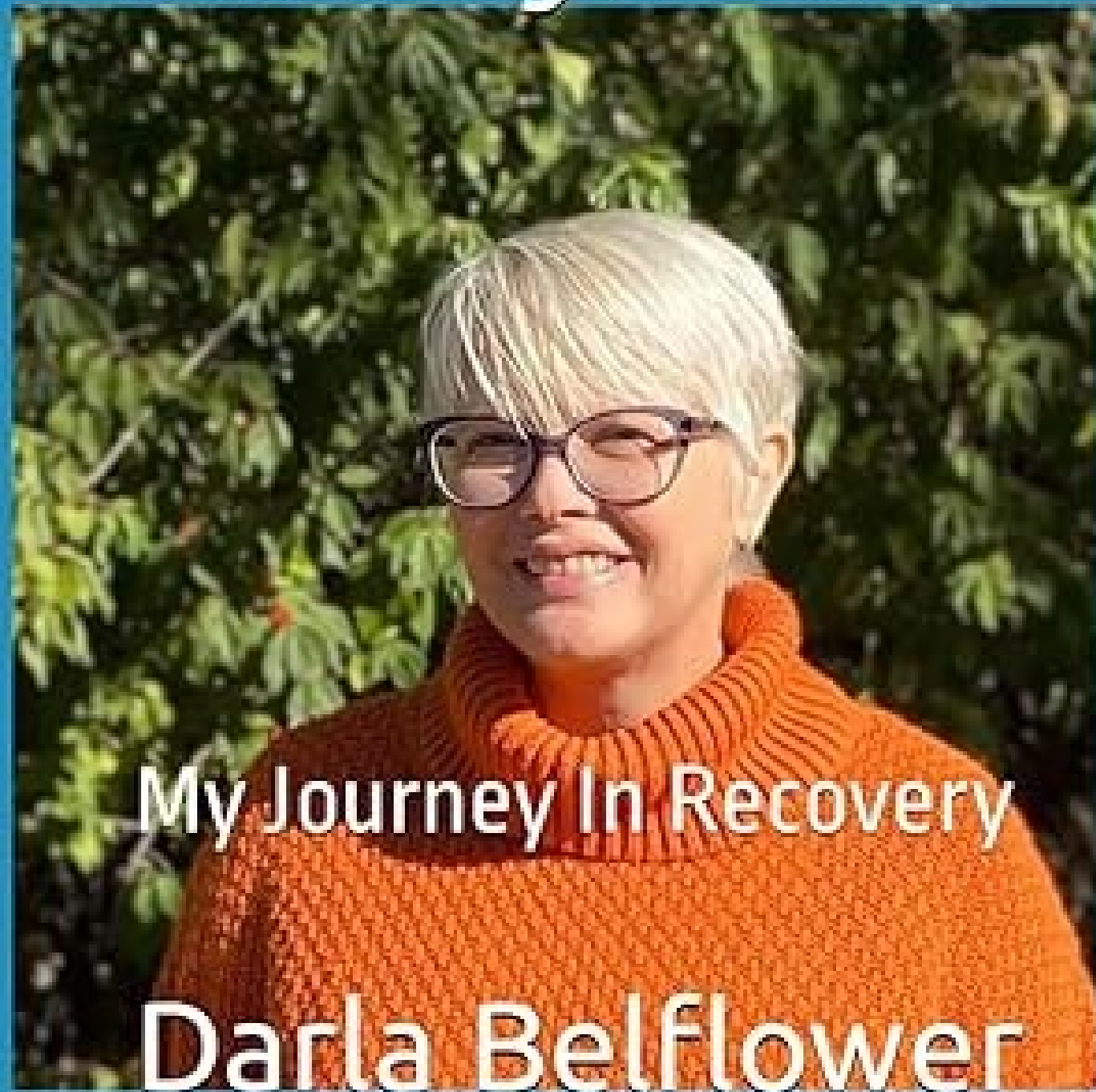
The Pride Institute offers substance abuse and mental health treatment specifically for LGBTQ+ individuals.

The GLMA Health Professionals Advancing LGBTQ Equality has a provider directory to help LGBTQ+ individuals find affirming healthcare providers.

Questions?



I Am Not Anonymous



My Journey In Recovery

Darla Belflower

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Resources

- The National LGBT Health Education Center www.lgbthealtheducation.org
- Health Equality Index from the Human Rights Campaign www.hrc.org/hei
- Center of Excellence for Transgender Health www.transhealth.ucsf.edu
- World Professional Association for Transgender Health www.wpath.org
- The Fenway Guide to LGBT Health, 2nd Edition
<https://store.acponline.org/ebizatpro/Default.aspx?TabID=251&ProductId=21572>
- Project Implicit <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>

Missouri Specific

- LGBTQ Resource Center at the University of Missouri: This center offers resources, programs, events, and a radio show.
- SQSH's Peer Support Helpline: This helpline offers free, confidential, and identity-affirming emotional support and resource referrals.
- CenterPointe: This center provides virtual and in-person intensive outpatient programs for mental health and substance use disorders.
- Thrive Health Connection: This organization offers inclusive, holistic, and integrated health and wellness services for LGBTQ communities.
- PFLAG: This organization supports LGBTQ youth and their families.
- The Center Project: This community center provides a safe space to learn, grow, and access support and resources.
- Kansas City Anti-Violence Project: This project provides advocacy and education for the LGBTQ community on domestic violence, sexual assault, and hate crimes

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LGBTQ+ & Recovery – Recovery Research Institute. <https://www.recoveryanswers.org/resource/lgbtq-in-recovery/>