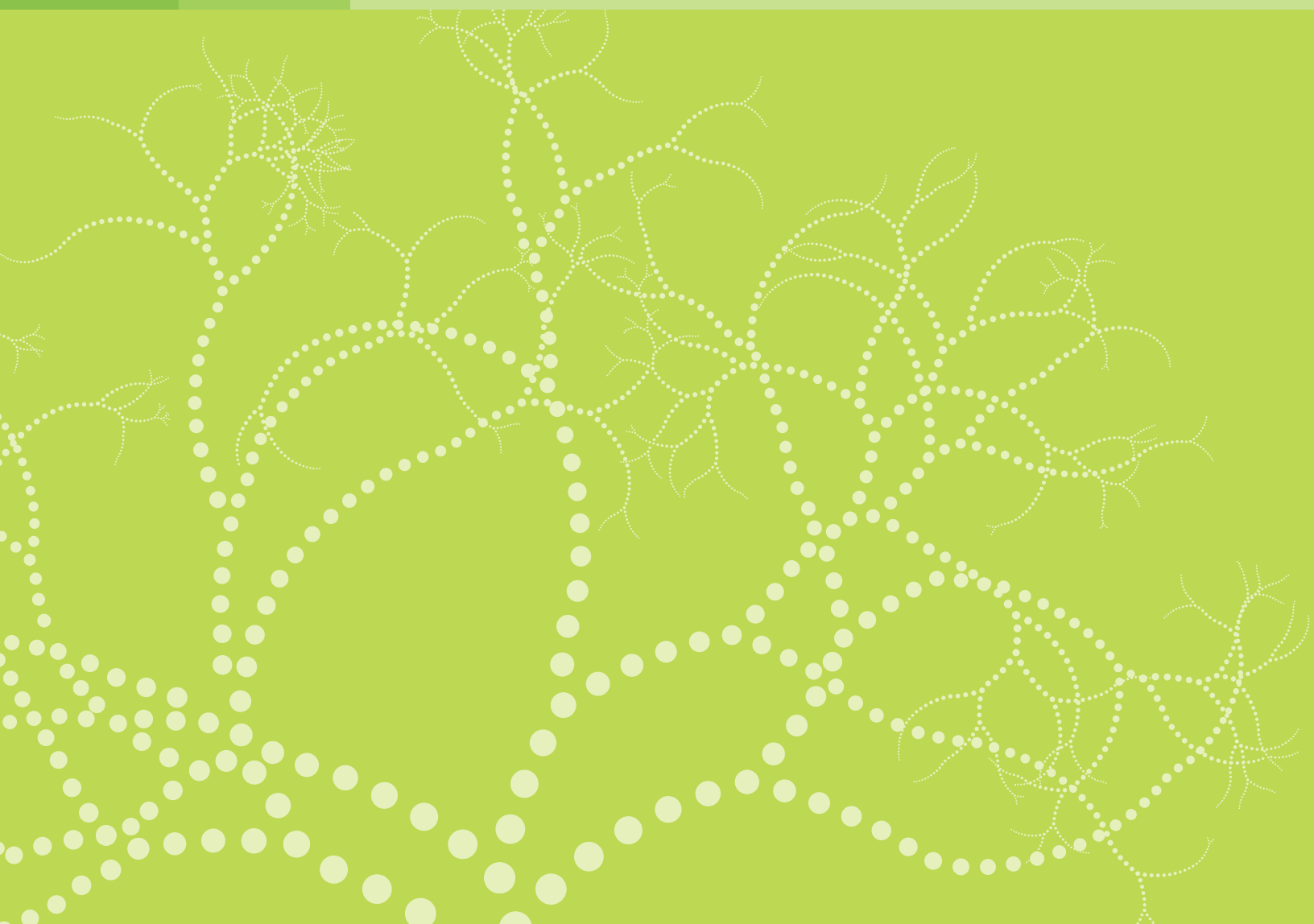


LGBT Programming for Older Adults

A Practical Step-by-Step Guide



National Resource Center ON LGBT AGING



CONTENTS

LGBT Older Adults in Profile	5
LGBT-Specific Programming	6
Planning Your Program	9
LGBT Movie Guide	14
Movie Viewing: Sample Agenda	21
Program Evaluation	24
Next Steps	26
Recommended Resources	29
Glossary	30



ON LGBT AGING

The National Resource Center on LGBT Aging is the country's first and only technical assistance resource center aimed at improving the quality of services and supports offered to lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender older adults. Established in 2010 through a federal grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the National Resource Center on LGBT Aging provides training, technical assistance and educational resources to aging providers, LGBT organizations and LGBT older adults. The center is led by Services & Advocacy for GLBT Elders (SAGE), in collaboration with 18 leading organizations around the country: American Society on Aging (ASA), CenterLink, FORGE Transgender Aging Network, GRIOT Circle, Hunter College, LGBT Aging Project, Meals On Wheels Association of America, National Asian Pacific Center on Aging (NAPCA), National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a), National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs (NANASP), National Caucus & Center on Black Aged (NCBA), National Center on Elder Abuse, National Council on Aging's National Institute of Senior Centers (NISC), National Hispanic Council on Aging (NHCOA), National Indian Council on Aging (NICOA), Openhouse, PHI and Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC).

lgbtagingcenter.org
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SAGE (Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders) is the country's largest and oldest organization dedicated to improving the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) older adults. Founded in 1978 and headquartered in New York City, SAGE is a national organization that offers supportive services and consumer resources to LGBT older adults and their caregivers, advocates for public policy changes that address the needs of LGBT older people, and provides training for aging providers and LGBT organizations through its National Resource Center on LGBT Aging. With offices in New York City, Washington, DC and Chicago, SAGE coordinates a growing network of 27 local SAGE affiliates in 20 states and the District of Columbia.

sageusa.org
facebook.com/sageusa
twitter.com/sageusa
youtube.com/sageusa

DEAR SERVICE PROVIDER:

Thank you for your interest in this guide, the fourth in a series of guides from SAGE's National Resource Center on LGBT Aging for professionals interested in creating the best possible services and supports for all older adults, including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender (LGBT). Since our launch in 2010, we have provided LGBT cultural competency training for thousands of service providers across the country. Through these trainings, and through the technical assistance calls we receive, we often hear from people who are interested in creating an LGBT-inclusive program, but are unsure of where to start.

These service providers know that as the U.S. population gets older, they must be prepared to meet the needs of a growing and diverse group of elders, including LGBT people. Recent estimates suggest that there are 3 million lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people over age 55 in U.S., and this number will continue to grow exponentially. In a recent national health study it was found that LGBT older people widely fear accessing services, with transgender elders especially concerned because of high rates of being denied services or receiving inferior services. A 2011 Institute of Medicine report on LGBT health* identified transgender aging as a major research gap, citing a number of concerns facing transgender elders. All in all, LGBT older people face a number of unique issues that are not always widely understood or even acknowledged.

This guide, created in consultation with organizations around the U.S. that serve LGBT elders, will walk you through the steps to launch a movie viewing and discussion centered on LGBT aging themes. This program is simple to organize, and can be an important step toward a number of goals, including welcoming LGBT older adults to your organization or agency; creating a safe space for the LGBT older adults you already serve to identify themselves and/or more fully integrate into your agency; and fostering an agency-wide culture of openness and acceptance. Whether this movie viewing is your first LGBT program, or the latest in a broad selection of options that include LGBT elders, we hope you will find it to be enlightening, thought-provoking and, most of all, fun! Thank you for your efforts to create safe, affirming and supportive services for LGBT older adults.



Hilary Meyer

Director

**National Resource Center on LGBT Aging
SAGE (Services & Advocacy for GLBT Elders)**

*Institute of Medicine of the National Academies. *The Health of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender People: Building a Foundation for Better Understanding*. (2011). The National Academies Press: Washington, DC.



“LGBT older people are a large, underserved community that won’t reach out themselves, or will go back in the closet to get services. So we [service providers] need to reach out. Get educated about what it means to be an LGBT elder. If possible, put together a group of people with different skills and knowledge to help you.”

Cathy Perry

Programs Director, Awareness & Empowerment Projects of Servant Hearts and SAGE’s National Resource Center on LGBT Aging Volunteer Education Ambassador
West Sacramento, California

LGBT OLDER ADULTS IN PROFILE

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) older adults are, generally speaking, a resilient population that faces many unique challenges. It is no surprise that today's LGBT elders have faced discrimination, yet many of them have responded to such adversity by building movements to advocate for equal rights, developing their own support systems and communities, and creating "families of choice" (usually comprising life partners and close friends who are not biologically related or legally recognized, but who provide crucial social and caregiving support). According to *The Aging and Health Report**, the most comprehensive health study of LGBT people age 50+ to date, most LGBT older people feel good about the communities they belong to and have at least some social support. Many of them also engage in activities that bolster their health and wellness, such as moderate physical activity, or attending religious services.

However, the effects of a lifetime of social stigma, and prejudice both past and present, cannot be underestimated. Many LGBT elders came of age during a time when they were labeled as criminals, sinners, and mentally ill. While these societal labels have mostly changed, for some older adults, this fear and social stigma has disrupted their lives, their connections with their families of origin, their lifetime earnings and their opportunities to save for retirement. In addition, the added stress of dealing with decades of discrimination means that LGBT older people are at a greater risk of physical and mental illnesses, and other issues, such as depression, disability, chronic illnesses, poverty, social isolation, poor nutrition and premature mortality.

While LGBT older adults may be at risk for poorer health outcomes, research suggests that they are **less likely than heterosexual and non-transgender elders to access aging network service and providers, senior centers, meal programs, and other entitlement programs because they fear discrimination or harassment if their sexual orientations or gender identities become known**. Some LGBT older adults may access aging service agencies but still choose to remain closeted or private about their sexual orientations and gender identities. That said, while self-disclosing one's sexual orientation and gender identity can be a risk, it has also been shown to lead to positive mental and physical health outcomes.

Offering programs that address the needs and interests of LGBT older people is one concrete step that service providers can take to create welcoming, safe and LGBT-affirming spaces, where all LGBT older adults can be their authentic selves, just like their peers.

*Frederiksen-Goldsen, K. I., Kim, H.-J., Emlert, C. A., Muraco, A., Eroshova, E. A., Hoy-Ellis, C. P., Goldsen, J., Petry, H. (2011). *The Aging and Health Report: Disparities and Resilience among Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Older Adults*. Seattle: Institute for Multigenerational Health.

LGBT-SPECIFIC PROGRAMMING

As aging services agencies strive to serve all segments of their communities, the work of many agencies is moving toward a person-centered approach that addresses the needs, values and expressed preferences of individual clients. In this approach, the clients and their families (whether families of origin or families of choice) are considered partners in care. Person-centered care has been shown to improve clients' health and the quality of their care. As stated previously, sexual orientation and gender identity are crucial elements in clients' lives, shaping how they view themselves and their place in the world, and impacting the kinds of services they need as they age. Engaging LGBT older people in their own care is an important part of figuring out how your agency can meet their needs.

One of the easiest ways to demonstrate that your agency is open to working with LGBT elders is to offer programs that are for and/or about LGBT older people and the issues they care about. It provides LGBT clients a physical gathering space where they can share common experiences and build community. It can also help to educate staff and other clients on LGBT issues, helping to build understanding and create a more welcoming environment for all clients. LGBT-specific programming also demonstrates to other service agencies in your community that your agency is open to broader diversity principles.

LGBT-specific programming does not need to be complicated, but if you are not accustomed to offering programs for LGBT older adults, you may not know where to start. That's where this resource comes in. This guide, aimed at program staff in aging services agencies and organizations, will walk you through the steps of planning a simple program: a movie viewing and discussion.

You may already offer a movie program, in which case many of the steps here will be familiar to you. The focus here is on choosing movies that illustrate issues that many LGBT older people face, or that illuminate the historical events that have shaped LGBT elders' lives. The second part of the program is a discussion based on the themes introduced by the movie, which will be an opportunity for LGBT participants to share their own experiences, and for non-LGBT participants to ask questions and deepen their understanding of LGBT issues.

The guide offers ideas and tips on planning, choosing a movie, discussion questions and evaluation. These guidelines are easy to customize to meet your clients' needs.



Quick Facts: Movies for Education & Entertainment

- Movies are widely seen by educators as a valuable teaching tool, enabling both young and adult learners to learn important lessons about history, social movements and empathy for marginalized groups.
- Movie viewings paired with discussion promote active learning.
- Movies are a prime source of media, with North Americans spending \$10.9 billion to see movies in 2013.
- In 2013, people age 60+ were 20% of the North American (U.S. and Canada) population, and represented 13% of moviegoers.
- Watching movies at home is more and more common: 180 million people per month watch some kind of video (including TV and movies) online in the U.S.

Sources

Hobbs, R. (2006). *Non-optimal uses of video in the classroom*. Learning, Media and Technology 31(1), 45-50.

Motion Picture Association of America, Inc. (2014). *Theatrical Market Statistics, 2013*.

Van Camp, Jeffrey. *180 Million Americans Watch Movies and TV Online Each Month*. Digital Trends. Accessed Oct. 10, 2014 at www.digitaltrends.com.



“Try to make your LGBT programs as fun as possible. End of life and legal issues are important for LGBT older people to know about, but offer some programs that are about building community or living life better. A movie night is great way to do that.”

Mary Jones

Program Coordinator

SAGE Tulsa

Tulsa, Oklahoma

PLANNING YOUR PROGRAM

Choose Your Program Lead

This program, like any other, will be most successful if at least one person is explicitly in charge of planning it. If LGBT issues are new to your agency, then it is even more important to have a dedicated advocate who will ensure the program moves forward. Most likely, if you are reading this guide, you are that advocate in your agency, or you are responsible for assigning a program lead. To lead the program, consider:

- **A staff member.** Whether a program coordinator or manager, or another interested staff member, be sure to assign someone who supports the goal of being inclusive of LGBT older adults.
- **A volunteer.** Like many agencies that provide services and programs, your staff is likely already working at full capacity. If you have a volunteer pool, draw from it to find a program lead. If not, perhaps this program will attract some new volunteers. Or, consider asking one of the older adults you serve to coordinate the program. If any of them are openly LGBT, or show a particular interest in LGBT issues, this could be a good opportunity to engage them further with your agency.
- **A community partner.** Consider reaching out to an LGBT organization in your area. Having a partner who is knowledgeable about LGBT issues can be useful in the planning and outreach stages. In addition, if you do not feel you are knowledgeable enough about these issues, you may want a partner to co-lead the post-movie discussion.

Set Goals

When planning a program, it is important to think about what you hope to achieve. Setting some goals now will help you evaluate whether your program is successful, and what kinds of changes you may want to consider before offering it again. When planning an LGBT program, some of your goals might include:

- Attracting more LGBT older adults to your agency's services.
- Providing your clients with information and education on LGBT issues.
- Creating a safe and welcoming space for any LGBT clients you already have.
- Fulfilling the request of people you serve to offer more inclusive and diverse programs.
- Improving the attitudes of staff and/or clients over time to ensure that your agency becomes more welcoming to LGBT older people.

What other goals do you have? Make a note of them and keep them in mind as you plan your program.

Think About Your Audience

The intended audience for this program may vary, depending on your goals, your community and the people you currently serve. For example, you may not know of any LGBT clients in your agency (although you should always work from the premise that you do have LGBT clients, even if no one has openly identified as LGBT). In this case, offering an LGBT-themed movie viewing can serve as an opportunity for your clients to learn more about LGBT older people, and signal to any current and potential LGBT clients that your agency is welcoming. You can also choose to limit it to LGBT clients only, or to have a mixed audience.

Answer Questions

If LGBT programming is new to your agency, you might hear questions from your colleagues about your plans. It is likely that if you handle such questions in a clear and consistent manner, stating your overall goals and why this program meets them each time you are asked, most people will be satisfied. When asked “why,” here are a few talking points; use one or more depending on the kinds of questions you hear:

- It is highly likely that we already have LGBT clients, and this will help them feel more welcome in our agency, and may even encourage them to be more open with us.
- LGBT older people have unique needs that we should be addressing, such as poorer health and fewer support networks. But they are also used to solving their own problems, and less likely to trust and seek out our help, even when they really need it. Offering LGBT programs is one clear way we can demonstrate to LGBT older people that we will help them.
- The more we know about our clients, including if they are LGBT, the better we will be able to provide the kind of support and care they require.
- Offering programs like this shows that we are welcoming to a wide diversity of clients and that we are prepared to meet their needs, now and in the future.

People who have more questions can be directed to further resources available at lgbtagingcenter.org. Or, you can invite them to participate in the program to see firsthand what it is all about. You might choose to get staff buy-in on a one-to-one basis, or through a presentation if your agency has a regular staff meeting.

It will help to have your colleagues and other seniors who use your services on your side when getting the word out about the program, and it will involve them in creating a more open and welcoming agency. In addition, if you or other staff members hear questions from clients about the program, you will all be ready to address them. If you anticipate more negative, or even hostile, reactions to the program, ensure that the leadership of your agency is supportive of your plans and will handle the more negative feedback. If you have a designated staff person, such as a Human Resources manager or Program Director, to handle complaints, give them a heads-up about your program so that she or he will also be prepared to address any potential backlash.

Tip: Consider LGBT cultural competency training for your agency. Getting staff trained on how to identify and address the needs of LGBT older adults is key to making an agency inclusive. SAGE's National Resource Center on LGBT Aging offers several staff training options to address anti-LGBT bias in aging services and many other topics. Visit lgbtagingcenter.org/training for more information.



Logistics

Here is a checklist of the steps leading up to your movie viewing. These steps will be familiar to people who already do programming, but are listed here to create a complete checklist for your convenience, and to offer some ideas.

Obtain a movie license. According to U.S. copyright law, DVDs or videos of movies available for rental or purchase are intended for private home use only. Movies shown in common spaces in senior centers, residential facilities or other public facilities are not considered private. This applies to both nonprofit and for-profit agencies.

To comply with federal copyright law for your movie program, you will need an Umbrella License, available through the Motion Picture Licensing Corporation (MPLC). If you currently offer a movie program, you may already have this license. If not, visit the MPLC website at mplc.org. Annual costs for the license vary, but are generally reasonable.

Find a space. If you do not already have a space in your agency to watch a movie, scout out other possible locations. If you have a community partner, do they have space? Are there local businesses, or other community organizations that could loan you space? Other local organizations may welcome an opportunity to partner with an aging agency to help expand their outreach too.

Schedule a date and time. Consider your audience when scheduling the movie viewing and discussion. Movie viewings are often scheduled at night by default, but there is no need to stick to this expectation. Perhaps your intended audience is more likely to gather for a Sunday afternoon movie. Or perhaps attendance at your agency is highest around lunch, so it would be best to show a movie late morning and discuss it over a meal.

Pick a spot for a post-viewing discussion. The space where you hold your discussion should be comfortable, and allow for participants to easily see and hear each other. If you plan to hold your discussion in the same space where you show the movie, make sure that you can turn the seats in a close circle or another configuration where participants can talk. Alternately, you may wish to hold the discussion in a different space, such as a lounge area, or a local coffee shop. You could also reserve a table in your dining area for the movie group, and hold your discussion over lunch or dinner.

Choose a movie. There are many LGBT-themed movies to choose from, from full-length feature films to documentaries. See the **Movie Guide** section for help choosing a movie.

Get the Word Out

Once you've set up all the details, make sure your clients know about the program! Highlight it on your agency's website or calendar, or make a special flyer and post it prominently in public spaces in your agency. Publicize it in your local LGBT community newspaper, or through LGBT organizations in your area. If you are working with a partner, ask them to let their clients know about the movie viewing as well.

Discussion and Evaluation

This guide contains discussion questions for each recommended movie, as well as a suggested agenda and scripts for the facilitator leading the discussion. See the **Movie Guide** section for the discussion questions, and the **Sample Agenda** on p. 21. In addition, we recommend evaluating your program; you will find a **sample evaluation** on p. 25.



Tip: The Motion Picture Licensing Corporation offers discounts to members of the National Institute of Senior Centers (both accredited and non-accredited members) and LeadingAge.

Visit ncoa.org or leadingage.org for more information.

Besides a Movie: Making Your Program LGBT-Inclusive

In addition to offering an LGBT-specific program, there are other simple steps you can take to make the program more welcoming to LGBT older adults. Here are a few guidelines to get you started—these are good practices to keep in mind not only when planning and facilitating the movie viewing, but also when planning other programs. This list is excerpted from the guide *Inclusive Services for LGBT Older Adults: A Practical Guide to Creating Welcoming Agencies*. Download the full guide at lgbtagingcenter.org.

- Do not assume that everyone is straight and non-transgender. Aging service providers should always work from the premise that they have LGBT clients, even if no one has openly identified as LGBT.
- Do not assume you can identify LGBT individuals by appearance, experiences or external characteristics.
- Do realize that your LGBT clients may be hiding their sexual orientation or gender identity while accessing services. Providing them a safe space to identify as LGBT will help their overall health and well-being and help you provide them with the services they need.
- Do remember that a client's sexual orientation and gender identity are only two aspects of a person's overall identity and life experience.
- Do not assume that treating everyone the same, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, will make LGBT older adults feel safe or welcomed. More often than not, treating everyone the same translates to treating everyone as heterosexual and non-transgender, and ignoring the particular challenges LGBT elders face.
- Do use inclusive terms, phrases and language that do not presume a sexual orientation, gender identity or relationship status. For instance, terms such as "husband or wife," and/or "spouse" do not always reflect the scope of LGBT older adults' relationships, even though more and more states are legalizing marriage for same-sex couples. Use terms such as partner, life partner, significant other or domestic partner.
- Do keep in mind that some of your clients may have LGBT family members. If they sense that an agency is not affirming, they may not disclose that they are related to someone who is LGBT, even if that family member is a major source of support. If an agency is perceived to be LGBT-affirming, LGBT family members will feel more welcome and better able to participate in their loved ones' care.

LGBT MOVIE GUIDE

This section presents several LGBT-themed movies for you to choose from, all available at reasonable prices through major retailers such as Amazon. Each movie includes a synopsis, rating, and sample discussion questions. The movies are presented roughly in order from beginner (for agencies/audiences with little to no familiarity with LGBT issues) through advanced (for agencies/audiences with more knowledge and a higher comfort level with LGBT issues). The movies listed here represent only a small sample of the films available that address LGBT and/or aging issues. They were chosen to cover a wide range of issues that can shed light on LGBT older people, the history that shaped them, and the challenges they face. This list is not intended to be comprehensive, but rather a guide of possibilities to get you started. Read through the description of each movie to decide which one would be best for your agency.

The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2011)

Synopsis: Seven British retirees decide to move to a retirement home in Jaipur, India, each for various reasons, from health to finances to finding a lost love.

Rating: PG-13 for sexual content and language. Includes talk and depiction of sex between older adults, mild profanity. See the full content advisory for this film at imdb.com.

Recommended for: Groups that are fairly new to discussing LGBT issues; groups seeking light drama with comedic moments or feel-good movies.

Suggested Discussion Questions:

- Were you surprised when you found out that Graham was gay? Why or why not? (*Note to moderator: This question can be an opportunity to air and discuss stereotypes about what LGBT people "look like" or "act like."*)
- This movie is unusual in that it has several older characters (age 60+) starting a new phase in their lives or seeking to correct past regrets. Do you think aging had an effect on Graham's decision to seek out Manoj? Why do you think he waited so long to return to India and find him?
- How did you feel when Graham told Evelyn about how he and Manoj were separated?
- Many LGBT older people have felt compelled to keep their orientation a secret throughout their lives, as Graham did, or marry someone of the opposite sex, as Manoj did. What kind of effect do you think this might have had on their lives? What kind of effect did it have on Graham?

Before Stonewall (1985)

Synopsis: The 1969 riots at the Stonewall Inn in New York City are widely seen as the starting point of the modern LGBT civil rights movement. Through archival footage and interviews with LGBT people who came of age from the 1920s-1950s, this documentary explores what life was like for LGBT people before 1969.

Rating: N/A. The documentary contains some mentions of sex and sexuality, some mild profanity.

Recommended for: Groups that have an interest in American history. Groups that might have some knowledge about LGBT issues or history, and are interested in exploring these issues further. Groups interested in firsthand accounts of historical events, and/or personal stories.

Suggested Discussion Questions:

- This documentary, which first aired on PBS in 1985, uses the term “homosexual” throughout to refer to people who are gay or lesbian. Today, this term is viewed as outdated and negative because of its previous use to denote a mental illness. Do you think that the terms used to label people (whether gay or lesbian, white or black, old or older, etc.) affect how they think about themselves? (*Note to moderator: This is an opportunity to introduce terms such as gay, lesbian, ally, gender identity, or sexual orientation to the group. See the glossary at the end of this guide for terms and definitions.*)
- A pervasive theme throughout the documentary is isolation or feeling alone. Several of the people featured in the film state that “I thought I was the only one.” Others recount their joy and excitement when meeting other LGBT people. Have you ever felt a sense of isolation or loneliness like this? How did it affect your outlook on life?
- Another theme in the documentary is shame, or feeling the need to hide one’s true self, for fear of being fired from a job, being ostracized by society or being committed to a mental institution. How do you think such shame and fear shaped LGBT people’s lives and sense of themselves? How might a lifetime of such feelings affect them as older people? Do you think that young LGBT people today feel the same need to hide? How might today’s LGBT youth look or act when they are 65+?
- Many of the people interviewed speak about moving to larger cities and finding other LGBT people, citing them as a source of support, especially since many LGBT people were estranged from their families. These circles are sometimes referred to as “families of choice.” Do you have your own experiences creating “families of choice” or a circle of friends? If you are estranged from family, what is the advantage of developing a community of friends like this? What are some of the drawbacks or challenges of this?
- Were you struck by the differences in how LGBT people were treated or how they fit into society from decade to decade, as presented in the film? How does the way LGBT people lived then contrast to now?

Beginners (2010)

Synopsis: After Oliver's mother dies, he finds out that his 75-year-old father Hal is gay. Through flashbacks, Oliver tells the story of his parents' marriage, his father's life after coming out of the closet, and his own complicated love life.

Rating: R for language and some sexual content. Includes frank talk of sexuality, some mild profanity. See the full content advisory for this film at imdb.com.

Recommended for: Groups that have some knowledge of LGBT aging issues. Groups that are comfortable with depictions of same-sex relationships.

Suggested Discussion Questions:

- Hal is 75 years old, and is a widower after 45 years of marriage to a woman, when he tells his son he is gay. What challenges do you think older people might face when coming out to their families? Do you think Oliver's reaction to his father's revelation was realistic?
- Hal is interested in dating men and the movie shows him visiting a dance club in his attempts to meet other gay men. In recounting the experience to Oliver, Hal is both pleased and a bit uncomfortable with the youthful atmosphere of the club. What are the challenges that might face older people who are dating or looking for relationships for the first time?
- In Oliver's childhood memories, Hal is emotionally distant and always seen in shadows. This contrasts with the vibrant and expressive man that his father seems to be after he comes out as gay. What do you think accounts for these seeming differences in Hal's personality?
- Oliver's "History of Sadness" art project includes a panel called "the first gay man to be diagnosed as mentally ill." Later Hal states that a therapist told him in 1955 that he was mentally ill and so he married a woman in order to fit into 1950s society. How do social expectations shape people's lives? Is there a time in your life when you hid a part of your personality or took some action not because you wanted to, but because of social expectations? How did it make you feel?
- Near the end of the movie, the viewer hears a quote from *The Velveteen Rabbit* about becoming "real," how it might hurt and you might be the worse for wear, but that these things don't matter "because once you are real you can't be ugly, except to people who don't understand." How does the concept of becoming real relate to Hal and to Oliver?

Milk (2008)

Synopsis: This biopic set in the 1970s tells the story of how LGBT pioneer Harvey Milk became a community activist in San Francisco who helped to shape the city's LGBT civil rights movement, and California's first openly gay elected official.

Rating: R for language, some sexual content and brief violence. See the full content advisory for this film at imdb.com.

Recommended for: Groups with an intermediate level of knowledge of LGBT issues, civil rights movements, and/or LGBT history. Groups that are comfortable with frank depictions of sex and same-sex relationships. Groups that are comfortable with discussions of historical and modern-day politics, civil rights, and activism.

Suggested Discussion Questions:

- Did you know who Harvey Milk was before seeing this movie? How familiar are you with the LGBT civil rights movement in the U.S. in the 1970s?
- When Harvey and Scott first meet, Scott tells Harvey that he doesn't date men over 40. What do you think of his pronouncement? Should there be age limits when dating?
- One of Milk's political opponents states that Milk needs to tell people what he stands for, not just what he stands against. What do you think Milk stood for?
- The film depicts Milk frequently urging LGBT people to "come out," to tell their friends, families and workplaces that they are LGBT. His argument is that as soon as people who are straight realize that they already know someone who is LGBT, they will not be able to deny civil rights to LGBT people. Do you agree with this argument? Why or why not?
- The San Francisco police are depicted in the film as uncaring about crimes committed against LGBT people at best, and actively violent toward LGBT people at worst. Police indifference and aggression are a unifying force for the LGBT community in the movie. Do you see parallels in the relationships police forces have with other disenfranchised communities, either in the past or today? Are there parallels to contemporary attitudes toward police departments?
- The film contrasts two different styles of creating social and political change. One, personified in the movie by David Goodstein (the owner of *The Advocate*), is to work slowly within the established system (the Machine, as Milk calls it) to effect change. The other is Milk's method of demanding full equality as a disenfranchised community's due. What are the pros and cons to each approach? As Milk's career progresses, do you think that he moves more toward Goodstein's approach, or does he stay true to his initial approach?

Transamerica (2005)

Synopsis: A transgender woman, Bree Osbourne, who has received a long-awaited approval for male-to-female sexual reassignment surgery, takes a cross-country trip with a son she did not know she had.

Rating: R for sexual content, nudity, language and drug use. Includes several nude scenes, some sex scenes and profanity. See the full content advisory for this film at imdb.com.

Recommended for: Groups with more advanced knowledge of LGB issues, perhaps some knowledge of transgender and gender identity issues. Groups that are comfortable with nudity and sex scenes.

Suggested Discussion Questions:

- How much do you know about transgender issues? (Note to moderator: This is an opportunity to introduce terms such as gender identity, gender expression, transgender or transsexual to the group. See the glossary at the end of this guide for terms and definitions.)
- What did you think of the portrayal of Bree? Did this character meet your expectations of what a transgender person might be like? Why or why not?
- At a few points in the movie, Bree mentions that she or other transgender individuals are “living stealth,” meaning they are not open about being transgender. What do you think the impact of hiding one’s identity might be on a personal level? On a societal level, if many transgender people are living stealth, do you think this contributes to stereotypes of transgender people?
- About her family, Bree states, “I just wish they’d look at me once and see me.” Why is it so important to Bree that her family accepts her? What does this statement reveal about how Bree views herself?
- There is a noticeable difference in Bree before and after her operation; she is more confident and open to new experiences at the end of the film because presumably she has taken all the steps she thinks are necessary to feeling comfortable with her body. If Bree had not been able to take these steps, as is the case for many transgender people due to the high costs of medical intervention, how do you think this would have affected her life in the long-term?

Other Movies to Consider

This guide includes only a few of the many excellent movies on LGBT and/or aging issues that are available. The following documentaries cover topics relevant to LGBT elders, including long-term care, HIV/AIDS, social isolation, and more. Supporting materials such as discussion guides and resources for further reading for each movie are available at the links listed below.

Gen Silent

This critically acclaimed documentary asks six LGBT older people seeking long-term health care if they will hide their friends and partners—their entire lives—in order to survive in the care system. This moving film puts a face on what experts call an epidemic: LGBT older people so afraid of discrimination by caregivers or bullying by other older people that many simply go back into the closet. DVD and educational guide available at gensilent.com.

Before You Know It

This documentary follows the lives of three older men from different areas of the country, two who have identified as gay for decades, and one who has recently decided to start presenting as female. Born before the civil rights era, these men have witnessed unbelievable change in their lifetimes, from the Stonewall riots, to HIV/AIDS, to marriage equality, becoming part of an unprecedented “out” elder generation. DVD and educational guide available at beforeyouknowitfilm.com.

We Were Here

This film documents the personal and community issues raised by the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the early 1980s in San Francisco. The viewer sees the epidemic unfold through archival footage and interviews with five people who lived in San Francisco at the time; their stories not only are intensely personal, but also illuminate the much larger themes of the era: the political and sexual complexities, the terrible emotional toll, the role of women—particularly lesbians—in caring and fighting for their gay brothers. The DVD is available from wewereherefilm.com; learning guide available at fenwayhealth.org (search for “We Were Here” on Fenway Health’s site to access the guide).

Stonewall Uprising

A PBS American Experience documentary about the June 28, 1969 confrontation between New York City police officers and patrons of the gay bar, the Stonewall Inn. The film explores the issues, laws, and the prevailing anti-LGBT climate that inspired an uprising that propelled the fight for LGBT equal rights onto the national stage. DVD and discussion guide available pbs.org.



MOVIE VIEWING: SAMPLE AGENDA

This section, for facilitators, suggests one way you can organize your movie viewing. Customize this agenda as needed to suit your audience.

1. Introduction.

Welcome attendees to the screening, and let them know what to expect from the program. If you have partnered with another organization, introduce your co-facilitator.

Suggested script (for general audiences):

Welcome to our movie and discussion group! Thank you for your interest in learning more about LGBT and aging issues. I'm [your name], and this is [co-lead's name and organization, if present]. Today's program is intended to be a safe space to ask questions and talk openly in the hopes of fostering a greater understanding about the issues facing LGBT older people. First, let's watch the movie, and then I [we] will facilitate a discussion about some of the themes presented in the movie.

Suggested script (if the group is for LGBT older adults):

Welcome to our LGBT movie and discussion group. I'm [your name], and this is [co-lead's name and organization, if present]. Today's program is intended to create a safe and open environment for you to discuss issues that you care about, or that impact your lives. First, let's watch the movie, and then I [we] will facilitate a discussion about some of the themes presented in the movie.

2. View movie.

3. Take a break, if necessary, or move to the location where your discussion will be held.

"One issue that might come up in your discussions is religion. Think about seeking out LGBT-friendly religious congregations or organizations to partner with, so that you are prepared to respond to statements or questions of faith and sexual orientation."

Paula Basta

Regional Director, Northeast (Levy) Senior Center,
Chicago Department of Family and Support Services-Senior Services
Chicago, Illinois

4. Discussion.

Whether your group dives right into conversation, or needs a little encouragement, you may find it useful to establish the tone for your discussion. Here are a few tips:

- If possible, have people sit where they can see each other, such as in a circle or around a table.
- If attendees do not know each other, have them introduce themselves or conduct a quick icebreaker activity (such as asking each person to give their name and their favorite movie).
- If necessary, set some ground rules to ensure that the discussion is open and respectful. Have a whiteboard or paper ready to write down the rules for all to see. Have group members suggest some rules. You can also suggest rules such as:
 1. Listen respectfully to each other, even if you disagree.
 2. Do not interrupt the person who is speaking.
 3. If you disagree with someone, disagree with their idea; do not attack the speaker.
 4. Do not be afraid to ask questions, even if this is a topic you are not familiar with. We are all here to learn.
 5. “Step up, step back:” meaning, encourage those who do not talk too much to speak up, and those who talk a lot to listen more.

Suggested script to start off discussion (after introductions and icebreaker):

I hope you all enjoyed the movie and that you're ready to talk about some of the things you learned or experienced while watching it. I know that some of us are new to LGBT issues. I want to encourage everyone to ask questions and to tell us what's on your mind, even if you don't feel like you have the right words to express your ideas. We're here to learn from each other.

We also want our discussion to be respectful of different viewpoints and ideas. Before we begin, let's set a few ground rules our discussion. Does anyone want to suggest a rule for discussion? *(Note to facilitator: Record rules from the group, and/or write some of your own.)*

Great! Let's dive in. Does anyone want to start by telling us what they thought of the movie? *(Note to facilitator: Ask this general question or start with one from the discussion guide.)*

Discussion flow. As facilitator, your role will be to keep the conversation going and to help the group stay on the topic of LGBT issues. You may find that the participants veer off onto other topics during the natural flow of conversation; gently steer them back on topic if this happens. Use the suggested questions found in the **Movie Guide** section to direct the discussion, or introduce your own questions. You may find that your group has several questions of their own. If questions come up that you are not able to answer, have some resources on hand (see the **Resources** section on p. 29) where attendees can go for more information.

Evaluation. At the conclusion of the discussion, hand out the evaluation forms and have attendees fill them out and hand them back in before leaving. See the **Program Evaluation** section (p. 24) for a sample evaluation.



PROGRAM EVALUATION

After your movie viewing and discussion, it will be important to evaluate your program for effectiveness. Evaluation can help you determine if the program met the goals that you set, and what you might need to change if you offer the program again. Evaluation can also help you document your success, and justify continuing plans to offer LGBT-specific programming.

You are most likely familiar with evaluating your agency's programs, and may already have a standard evaluation form. If this is not the case, here are two options for evaluation—a quick group Q&A, or a sample evaluation form; modify it as needed for your agency.

Group Q&A

At the end of the discussion, ask the group some questions to gauge what they thought of the program. Take notes as they answer. This will give you some feedback on participants' thoughts. Here are some questions you might ask the group:

- How satisfied are you with today's program? Did it meet your expectations? Why or why not?
- Did you find the movie and/or the discussion interesting?
- Did you learn anything new about LGBT issues?
- What was your favorite part of today's program?
- What was your least favorite part?
- Would you like to see this become a regular program?
- Is there anything you would change about the program?



Evaluate Us!

SAGE's National Resource Center on LGBT Aging wants to know what you thought of this guide, how you used it, and how your movie night went. Visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SafeSpaces> and let us know.

SAMPLE EVALUATION FORM

Class or Activity: Movie Viewing and Discussion

Group Leader: _____

Date: _____

Name (optional): _____

Please tell us how satisfied you are with today's program. On a scale from 1 to 5 (1 being Strongly Disagree, 5 being Strongly Agree), rate the following:

	1	2	3	4	5
Overall, I am satisfied with today's activity.					
I enjoyed the movie.					
The discussion was interesting and informative.					
The facilitator(s) was knowledgeable and guided the discussion well.					
Our meeting room was comfortable and suited to discussion.					
I would recommend this activity to others.					

Please tell us a little more about your experiences today.

Did you learn anything new about LGBT aging issues? If so, please describe.

What was your favorite part of today's activity?

What was your least favorite part?

Is there anything you would change about the program if it were offered again?

NEXT STEPS

Congratulations! You've hosted your first LGBT movie night and discussion. Now what? There are several ways you can keep your movie viewing program going, or expand to offer different activities for LGBT clients. Some ideas include:

Do a mini-LGBT film festival, or film series. This guide contains several movie suggestions, and there are many more LGBT movies you can screen. You can choose to show several of the movies throughout June, LGBT Pride Month, as an LGBT Film Festival. Or, if education is your goal, start with the first movie in the **Movie Guide** and show one per week, to introduce your clients over time to a wide range of LGBT aging issues.

Make it a regular event. Commit to hosting an LGBT movie night and discussion once a month on an ongoing basis.

Apply your experience hosting the movie night to develop other LGBT programs. This guide walks you through planning and offering a specific program, but you can take the tips and lessons you learned and create other programs. Movies are not the only way to introduce LGBT issues to your clients. Consider inviting guest speakers from a local LGBT group for a presentation and Q&A. Host a book club to discuss works by LGBT authors. Because LGBT issues are increasingly drawing national attention, organize a discussion group to talk about LGBT issues in the news. Or, survey your clients and see what kinds of programs they want.

Offering LGBT-specific programming is just one of many ways you can make your agency inclusive and welcoming, so that all older adults can access the services they need. We hope that this guide has inspired you to create new and diverse programs for your LGBT clients. For more information and assistance on programming for LGBT older adults, please call SAGE at 212-741-2247 or visit our websites: lgbtagingcenter.org and sageusa.org.



"You have to give your program time to build and enter the consciousness of people in your community. Don't be afraid to start small. I'd get 1 or 2 people at an event and remind myself that's 1 or 2 more people I had reached. Today our movie outings are among our most popular programs."

Les Geller
SAGE Raleigh
Raleigh, North Carolina



RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Here is a list of resources for further reading, if you, your colleagues or clients are interested in more information on LGBT older adults. These resources can all be found free of charge on lgbtagingcenter.org and sageusa.org.

Fact Sheets and Executive Summaries

The Aging and Health Report: Disparities and Resilience Among Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Older Adults. An executive summary of the findings from Caring and Aging with Pride, a major national study funded by the National Institutes of Health and the National Institute on Aging on LGBT people ages 50+. Full report also available.

I Have a Transgender Client... Now What? A fact sheet from FORGE Transgender Aging Network that provides answers to commonly asked questions regarding transgender clients.

Improving the Lives of Transgender Older Adults: Executive Summary. An overview of the issues facing transgender older adults, such as financial security, health and overall well-being. Full report also available.

LGBT Health, Racial Disparities and Aging by the Numbers. An infographic showing the economic and health disparities faced by LGBT elders of color. Full report, *Health Equity and LGBT Elders of Color*, also available.

Out & Visible: The Experiences and Attitudes of LGBT Older Adults (Poster). Highlights key findings from a national study on the values, needs, wants and lifestyle preferences of LGBT older people. Executive summary and full report also available.

Top 10 Ways to Begin Creating LGBT Safety & Inclusivity for Aging Services. A fact sheet for aging service providers who want to start working with LGBT older adults.

Guides and Reports

Inclusive Services for LGBT Older Adults: A Practical Guide to Creating Welcoming Agencies. This guide provides suggestions, tips and ideas from mainstream aging providers, SAGE and other national aging organizations on how agencies can provide inclusive services to LGBT older adults. This guide is also available in Spanish.

Inclusive Questions for Older Adults: A Practical Guide to Collecting Data on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity. This guide was created to help service providers ask questions about sexual orientation and gender identity in safe and respectful ways.

Advancing Effective Communication, Cultural Competence, and Patient- and Family-Centered Care for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Community: A Field Guide. This guide, published by the Joint Commission, is aimed at healthcare organizations, but offers useful strategies for anyone looking to improve the quality of care and services offered to LGBT elders.

GLOSSARY**

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS)

The last stage of the infection from Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) that attacks a person's white blood cells. This means they can no longer fight off sickness and disease.

Ally

A person who works for social change for a group that faces injustice or disadvantage. The ally is not a member of that oppressed group but supports and fights for equality on behalf of the group, e.g. heterosexuals who support LGBT rights.

Bisexual, Bi*

An individual who is physically, romantically, and/or emotionally attracted to both men and women. "Bisexual" does not suggest having equal sexual experience with both men and women. In fact, some people who identify as "bisexual" have not had any sexual experience at all.

Cisgender

Individuals whose gender identity and/or gender expression do align with their biological or assigned sex. If someone was assigned the sex female at birth and lives comfortably as a woman, she is likely cisgender.

Closeted, In the Closet or Stealth*

Describes a person who does not share with others, or only shares with a few "safe" people, that they are lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender.

Coming Out*

A lifelong process of self-acceptance of one's sexual or gender identity that may include a sharing of that identity with others. How much people are "out" may differ by setting, people they are with, and life stage. The coming out process is unique for each individual, and is the choice of each individual. LGBT older adults often hide their sexual orientation or gender identity from their health care and social service providers (do not "come out") for fear of being treated badly.

Discrimination*

Unfair and unequal treatment in favor of or against an individual or group based on group identity; e.g. African American, female, Arabic, youth, or LGBT. Discrimination is the actual behavior towards the individual(s).

Dyke

Slang for a lesbian. It originated as a negative label for a masculine or butch woman, and this usage still exists. It has been reclaimed by some as a positive word.

Faggot/Fag

An offensive, negative slang sometimes used to describe gay men.

Family of Choice

Diverse family structures usually created by LGBT people, immigrants, and racial or ethnic minorities, that include but are not limited to life partners, close friends, and other loved ones not biologically related or legally recognized but who are the source of social and caregiving support.

Family of Origin

The family in which a person grows up, or the first social group a person belongs to, which is often a person's biological family or an adoptive family.

Gay*

A word used to describe anyone, mainly men, who have primary physical, romantic, and/or emotional attraction to someone of the same sex, e.g., gay man, gay people. Many gay people prefer this term over "homosexual" which retains negative connotations. Lesbian can be a preferred term for a gay woman. While younger men may use the term "queer," this term is generally considered offensive to older people.

Gender

A person's internal sense of being male, female or another gender. A person may choose to express their gender through culturally defined norms associated with male and female, which may or may not align with a person's internal gender identity or with the sex they were assigned at birth.

Gender Expression*

How a person outwardly expresses their gender identity and/or role; how they dress, walk, wear their hair, talk, etc. Typically, transgender people seek to make their gender expression match their gender identity, rather than their sex assigned at birth.

Gender Identity*

The gender you feel you are inside (man, woman, neither or both). For transgender people, their birth-assigned gender and their personal sense of gender identity do not match. Gender identity and sexual orientation are not the same. Transgender people may be heterosexual, lesbian, gay, or bisexual. For example, a transgender woman who was assigned a male gender at birth and is attracted to other women may self-identify as a lesbian.

Gender Role

Societal or ethnic/cultural expectations about how a person should dress, look, talk, and behave based on whether they are female or male.

Gender Perception

How observers classify a person's gender.

Going Stealth

A person living as a gender different from what was assigned to them at birth without people knowing or being able to tell that the person is transgender.

Heterosexual*

Used to describe people whose primary physical, romantic, and/or emotional attraction is to people of the opposite sex; also known as straight.

Heterosexism*

Belief that heterosexuality is the only "natural" sexuality and that it is inherently healthier or superior to other types of sexuality, including LGBT sexuality. The term refers to the negative attitudes, bias, and discrimination exhibited by people with this belief.

Homophobia/Transphobia/Biphobia*

Homophobia refers to a fear of lesbians and gay men. Biphobia is used to describe a fear of bisexual people. Transphobia is used to describe a fear of transgender people. These phobias reflect prejudice, hatred, antipathy, and avoidance toward lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

Homosexual

An outdated clinical, medical term that is no longer the preferred word used to describe someone who is gay or lesbian. It has taken on negative connotations because of its previous use as to denote a mental illness.

Hormone Therapy

Use of hormone treatments to create characteristics that reflect the sex with which a person identifies.

Identity or Self Identify

What people call themselves that expresses their internal reality. This may be different from external characteristics or how others might view them.

Lesbian*

A woman whose primary physical, romantic, and/or emotional attraction is to other women. Some lesbians may prefer to identify as gay (adj.) or as gay women. Many lesbians view “homosexual” as a derogatory term. While younger women may use the terms “dyke” or “queer,” these terms are generally considered offensive to older people.

LGBT/GLBT*

Acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender. LGBT and/or GLBT can be used interchangeably.

LGBT Older Adults

The preferred term for LGBT people 65, the current standard age of retirement, or older. The term “older adults” may be preferable to “old,” “senior,” “elderly” or “aging” (terms which many don’t identify with personally). Also acceptable are “older LGBT people” or “LGBT older people” depending on context.

Lifestyle*

Term used to refer to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender lives, generally considered offensive to LGBT people. Just as there is no one straight “lifestyle,” there is no one lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender lifestyle.

Minority Stress

The damaging physical and mental health effects of being stigmatized and/or the focus of prejudice and discrimination, which create a hostile and stressful environment.

Openly Gay*

Describes people who self identify as lesbian or gay in their personal, public and/or professional lives. Terms such as openly lesbian, openly bisexual, and openly transgender are also used. Sometimes referred to as being “out,” as in, “She is an out lesbian.” Openly gay people generally continue to scan each new environment for its level of safety before speaking of their LGBT identity.

Outing*

The act of publicly telling (sometimes based on rumor and/or speculation) or revealing another person’s sexual orientation or gender identity without that person’s consent. It is considered inappropriate by a large portion of the LGBT community, and can be very damaging socially, personally, and/ or professionally to the individuals who are “outed.”

Partner

A nondiscriminatory and gender neutral way to describe one of the people in a committed, long-term relationship.

Queer*

Historically a negative term, it is now being used by some LGBT people—mostly younger ones and as a broader term—to describe themselves. However, it is not universally accepted even within the LGBT community and should be avoided unless quoting or describing someone who self-identifies that way.

Questioning*

A person who is unsure about his or her sexual orientation or gender identity.

Same-Gender Loving (SGL)*

A cultural term used most frequently in communities of color that affirms the same-sex attraction of men and women. The term may be favored by some over the labels gay, lesbian, or bisexual.

Sex*

The classification of people as male or female based on their anatomy (genitals or reproductive organs) and/or biology (chromosomes and/or hormones).

Sex Assigned at Birth

At birth, infants are usually given a sex designation of male or female by a doctor based on the child’s genitals.

Sex Reassignment Surgery

Surgery performed to create genitalia that reflect the sex with which a person identifies.

Sexual Orientation*

A person’s primary physical, romantic, and/or emotional attraction to members of the same and/or opposite sex, including lesbian, gay, bisexual and heterosexual (straight) orientations. It is the accurate term and should be used instead of the offensive term “sexual preference,” which conveys the suggestion that being gay or lesbian is a choice and therefore can be “cured” or changed.

Transgender*

An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from the sex they were assigned at birth. The term may include but is not limited to transsexuals and cross-dressers. Transgender people may identify as female-to-male (FTM) or male-to-female (MTF). It is important to use the descriptive term (transgender, transsexual, cross-dresser, FTM or MTF) preferred by the individual. Transgender people may or may not decide to alter their bodies hormonally and/or surgically.

Transition

The process of changing genders in order to match the gender a person identifies as. This can include: Male to Female and Female to Male or Intersex.

Transsexual*

An older term that originated in the medical and psychological communities. While some transsexual people still prefer to use the term to describe themselves, many transgender people prefer the term transgender to transsexual. Unlike transgender, transsexual is not an umbrella term, as many transgender people do not identify as transsexual. It is best to ask which term an individual prefers.

Two-Spirit*

The term refers to LGBT people and reflects traditions among many Native American nations that accept and celebrate the diversity of human gender, spirituality, and sexuality.

*Adapted from the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) Media Reference Guide, www.glaad.org

**This glossary was developed using the following additional sources:

- *From Isolation to Inclusion: Reaching and Serving Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Seniors*, Openhouse LGBT Cultural Humility Curriculum for Senior Service Providers; Openhouse, San Francisco, CA. www.openhouse-sf.org/resources/training.
- LGBT Aging Project, Boston, MA. www.lgbtagingproject.org
- *LGBT Aging Health Issues*, Cook-Daniels, FORGE Transgender Aging Network, Milwaukee, WI. www.forge-forward.org/aging.
- *LGBT Aging: What Makes It Different? A Training Curriculum from the New York State Health & Human Services Network*, compiled and edited by SAGE, New York, NY. www.sageusa.org
- *Improving the Quality of Services and Supports Offered to LGBT Older Adults*, National Resource Center on LGBT Aging, New York, NY. www.lgbtagingcenter.org

**National
Resource
Center** 
ON LGBT AGING

305 Seventh Avenue, 15th Floor
New York, NY 10001
212-741-2247
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