



PROMOTING SEXUAL AND GENDER DIVERSITY IN BASKETBALL

Basketball Victoria is committed to increasing the awareness of sexual and gender diversity and the provision of safe and inclusive basketball environments.

This booklet is designed to provide an overview for the basketball community of how to create a safe environment for all to enjoy.



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Basketball Victoria acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the Country throughout Victoria and pays respect to their Elders past and present. We are respectful of the ongoing living cultures of Aboriginal Peoples from all of the Victorian Aboriginal Nations.

WHY IS LGBTIQ+ INCLUSION IMPORTANT

The LGBTIQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer/Questioning) community make up an estimated [11% of Australia's population](#)¹ but research shows LGBTIQ+ people have some of the lowest rates of participation in sport, recreation and physical activity out of any community in society. Avoidance of participation is often linked to poor experiences in sport due to discrimination or harassment. Australian research shows that:

- [Over 80% of people have either witnessed or experienced homophobia in sport.](#)²
- [87% of gay males and 75% of lesbians are completely or partially in the closet while playing youth sports.](#)
- [Sport is considered hostile and unwelcoming to young people with diverse sexualities and genders.](#)
- [37% of LGBTIQ+ people aged 16 and over reported being diagnosed or treated for a mental health disorder in the past three years.](#)
- [Transgender people aged 18 and over are nearly eleven times more likely to attempt suicide in their lifetime.](#)

As a result of poor inclusion efforts, many LGBTIQ+ people miss out on the physical, mental and social benefits that participating in sport and physical activity can bring. Sport has an amazing opportunity to not only increase membership opportunities, but also improve these people's lives.³

¹ <https://humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/FTFLGBTI.pdf>

² <https://outonthe-fields.com/>

³ <https://vicsport.com.au/lgbtiq>

WHAT IS HOMOPHOBIA & TRANSPHOBIA?

Homophobia is a term used to describe the irrational fear, hatred, aversion to or discrimination against people who are homosexual or same sex attracted, or perceived to be homosexual or same sex attracted.

Transphobia has no single, simple manifestation. It is complex and can include a range of behaviours and arguments. The consequence of transphobia is that trans people struggle to live openly and comfortably in society.⁴ The core value underlying all transphobia is a rejection of trans identity and a refusal to acknowledge that it could possibly be real or valid.

Homophobia and Transphobia happens in many different ways. One of the most commonly experienced is discriminatory language. This verbal abuse sometimes includes teasing, name calling, suggestive remarks or "jokes", and starting rumors. Homophobic and transphobic language is also used to insult heterosexual people.

This bullying, like any form of discrimination may also include physical violence, sexual harassment, threats, social exclusion and cyber bullying. Homophobic and Transphobic harassment is never acceptable, and directly contravenes Basketball Victoria's Codes of Conduct and Member Protection By-Laws.

HOMOPHOBIA & TRANSPHOBIA IN SPORT

Research shows that sport is a significant site for homophobic and transphobic harassment, discrimination and exclusion. Improper treatment based on someone's sexuality or gender identity – or the assumption about their sexuality or gender – is discrimination and has absolutely no place in any sporting environment.

Many people are still uncomfortable talking about transphobia and homophobia in sport because of their background, values, beliefs and fears.

While most athletes will have never considered their own gender identity, there are a growing number of young people taking steps to express gender identity in ways that may differ from the sex they were assigned at birth, or traditional gender categories.

These people, who may be known as gender diverse and/or transgender, often find sport a difficult place to be themselves.

Homophobia in sport exists at all levels. When homophobia and transphobia is allowed to exist as a standard practice in something as mainstream as sport, it marginalises gay and gender diverse people and tells them "you don't belong here".

Basketball Victoria is committed to ensuring that all participants have a safe and enjoyable experience when they are involved in any basketball activity. Basketball Victoria has developed Codes of Conduct for participants to follow. There are also Tribunal By-Laws and a Tribunal to deal with most instances of misbehavior in the basketball environment.

Basketball Victoria has a specialist Member Protection Tribunal and By-Laws specifically to deal with any discrimination, vilification or harassment on the grounds of race, gender, religion, nationality, sexual orientation and other similar grounds.

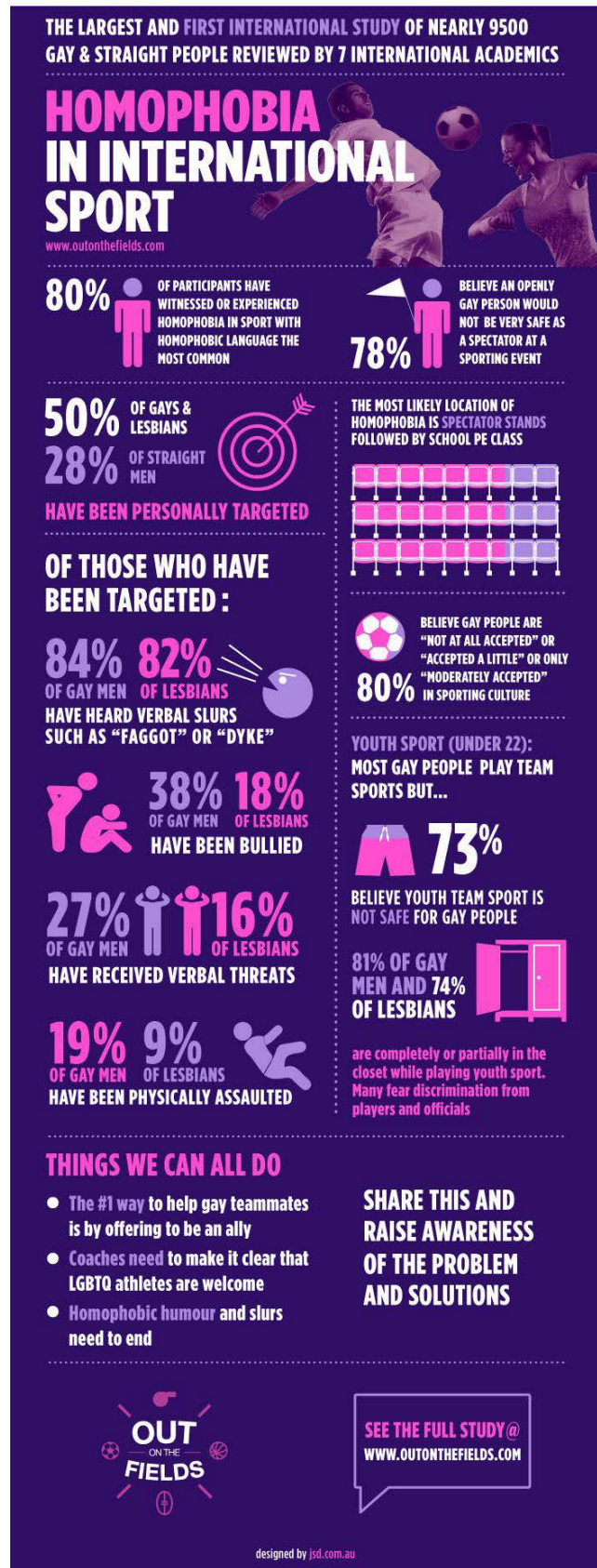
⁴ <https://www.transactual.org.uk/transphobia/#4>

STATISTICS ON HOMOPHOBIA AND TRANSPHOBIA IN SPORT

This graphic shares the results from Out on the Fields (2015) and OutSport (2019), the first and second international research on homophobia and transphobia in sport.

You will find statistics on gay athletes and trans athletes.

The data comes from 12,000+ lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender participants from all EU countries, the United States of America, Canada, Australia, and NZ.⁵



⁵ <https://outonthefields.com/media/>

BASKETBALL VICTORIA GUIDELINES FOR THE INCLUSION OF TRANSGENDER AND GENDER DIVERSE PEOPLE IN BASKETBALL

Basketball Victoria has collaborated with Basketball Australia to deliver 'Guidelines for the Inclusion of Transgender and Gender Diverse People in Basketball'. These guidelines support participation opportunities for transgender athletes while balancing fairness, inclusion, and safety, particularly for Victorian Senior Representative Leagues such as NBL1 South, Big V and CBL.

Below is an excerpt from the guidelines regarding participation in Community Basketball.

Participation – Community Basketball

Affiliated Associations should permit players to participate in Community Basketball competitions in accordance with their Gender Identity, whether or not this accords with the sex they were assigned at birth, subject to the following:

- For all Community Basketball competitions (i.e. non representative competitions) an individual can participate in the competition which best reflects their Gender Identity. This is in accordance with the Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth), which makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person on the basis of sexual orientation, Gender Identity and intersex status, except as outlined in 5.1.4
- the player should nominate their Gender Identity at the time of registration with the Affiliated Association for the upcoming competition.
- For the purposes of mixed-gender competitions, people can participate in a manner which best reflects their gender identity. Rules for mixed-gender competitions will be applied based on Gender Identity.
- Affiliated Associations must not ask any player to undergo any 'proofing' (e.g. medical examination) for the purposes of gender verification.
- Commonwealth and State discrimination law allows discrimination (except for under 12s) where the strength, stamina, and physique are issues. This needs to be assessed on a case by case basis, erring on the side of inclusion.
- In the event a player is affirming their gender (also known as transitioning) through the course of the Community Basketball competition, the Affiliated Association shall give consideration to that player's gender affirmation and, in discussion with that player, consider the individual needs of any transition or affirmation.
- Clubs and associations should have in place well-established and consistently applied practices of grading and the selection of players to:
 - Address any relevant disparity of players
 - Protect the health and safety of participants; and
 - Provide fair and meaningful competitions.

The guidelines can be found here: [Guidelines for the Inclusion of Transgender and Gender Diverse People in Basketball](#).

LANGUAGE AND TERMINOLOGY

WHAT DOES LGBTIQ+ MEAN?

In Australia, **LGBTIQ+** is used as an inclusive umbrella abbreviation to embrace diverse **sexualities, genders and sex characteristics**.

Even though we may refer to it as a singular term, the LGBTIQ community is a highly diverse group of individuals from many different backgrounds with distinct histories and experiences. In Australia, the LGBTIQ acronym has emerged to recognise the shared experiences of stigma and marginalisation that LGBTIQ people face. Because of the dominant social norms around sex, gender and sexuality, LGBTIQ people face significant stigma and discrimination that negatively affect their social, economic and health outcomes.

[Research shows](#)⁶ that LGBTIQ people experience discrimination, harassment, and hostility in many parts of everyday life; in public, at work, in sport, and when accessing health services.

To understand the LGBTIQ acronym, we need to explore the concepts of sex, gender, and sexuality.⁷

What are the differences between sex, gender, and sexuality?

Sex and gender are similar terms and often used interchangeably, but they mean very different things.

SEX: Sex refers to a person's biological and anatomical characteristics that are commonly categorised based on one's:

- chromosomes
- genitalia
- reproductive organs
- hormones
- secondary sex characteristics

These characteristics are commonly understood and labelled as either **male** or **female** at birth.⁸

Because human bodies do not conform to neat categories, there are some people who are born with variations in these sex traits. People who have an **intersex variation** have innate sex characteristics with different physical presentations that don't fit medical norms.

GENDER: Gender, on the other hand, is a person's internal sense of being a boy/man, a girl/woman, both or neither. For most people, gender is tied to biological sex. But gender is also socially constructed and culturally specific. And for some people, biological sex doesn't equate to a specific gender.

Everyone has a gender identity.

The word **cisgender** is used to refer to people whose gender identity aligns with the sex they were assigned at birth.

The terms **transgender** and **gender diverse** are used to describe people whose gender identity does not align with the social expectations of the sex they were assigned at birth.

SEXUALITY: Sexuality or sexual orientation is defined as the experience of sexual and romantic attraction and behaviour. Heterosexuality refers to the experience of people who have sexual/romantic attraction to people of the opposite sex and/or gender. Homosexuality refers to the experience of people who have sexual/romantic attraction to people of the same sex and/or gender. Women and Girls who identify as homosexual are often referred to as lesbians, men and boys who identify as homosexual are often referred to as gay.

⁶ <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/education/face-facts-lesbian-gay-bisexual-trans-and-intersex-people>

⁷ <https://www.theequalityproject.org.au/blog/what-does-lgbtqi-mean>

⁸ <https://www.theequalityproject.org.au/blog/what-does-lgbtqi-mean>

THE LGBTIQ+ ACRONYM

Each letter in the acronym consists of a diverse range of real people, living real lives. They are as diverse as the rest of the population and can be found in all walks of life and professions and belong to multicultural, multi-faith communities, metropolitan and regional areas. Let's unpack the letters of the acronym.

The first three letters of the acronym, LGB, are sexual orientations.

L stands for LESBIAN.

A lesbian woman is romantically and/or sexually attracted to other women.

G stands for GAY.

A gay person is romantically and/or sexually attracted to people of the same sex and/or gender as themselves. This term is commonly used to describe men who are attracted to other men, but some women and gender diverse people may also use the term gay.

B stands for BISEXUAL.

A bisexual person is romantically and/or sexually attracted to people of their own gender and other genders. The term 'bi+' is also sometimes used to describe the diversity of bisexual identities.

Pansexual is a term used by some people who are romantically and/or sexually attracted to people of all genders, binary or non-binary. In some circles, you may come across the letter P added to the acronym.

The next letter, T, is a gender identity.

T stands for TRANSGENDER or TRANS.

Transgender or trans is an overarching term that is used to describe people whose gender identity does not align with the sex they were assigned at birth.

Most people of trans experience live and identify simply as men or women. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people often use "**sistergirl**" or "**brotherboy**" to describe transgender people within their communities.

The term "**gender diverse**" is also used to describe the letter T in the acronym to be inclusive of people who don't identify as transgender and may use the term "**non-binary**". The term non-binary is used by people whose gender identity is neither strictly male nor female. For some people it may be both or neither. Some other words used are:

- gender fluid
- gender queer
- gender non-conforming

The next letter, I, is neither a sexual orientation nor gender identity. The letter I is a sex trait.

I stands for INTERSEX.

According to Intersex [Human Rights Australia \(IHRA\)](#):

Intersex people have innate sex characteristics that don't fit medical and social norms for female or male bodies, and that create risks or experiences of stigma, discrimination and harm.

People who are intersex are a very diverse population, with at least 40 different underlying traits known to science. Up to 1.7% of the population may have an intersex variation.

Intersex traits can be determined prenatally, at birth, during puberty and at other times, such as when trying to conceive a child. Each trait has its own characteristics and varying degrees of expression.

The word intersex is best described as an umbrella term. Intersex people may use different words to describe themselves.

Q stands for QUEER.

Queer is an umbrella term that is often used for diverse genders and sexualities. Some people use queer to describe their own gender and/or sexuality if other terms do not fit or if they simply want to identify as being part of the community without being specific about which letter of the acronym they belong to.

Some older people will not use the term queer due to its negative connotations in the past when it was used as a slur.

What is the "+"?

The plus at the end of the acronym represents other sexual identities like pansexual. The Bi+ community may often use the plus sign to be inclusive of the diversity of bisexual identities.

Having a foundational knowledge of what LGBTIQ+ means sets the stage for building an understanding of the social and organisational change required for meaningful LGBTIQ+ inclusion in all areas of life.

The broad concepts of sex, gender, and sexuality outlined above are important in understanding the experiences and needs of LGBTIQ+ people. In order to end discrimination, it's essential that we understand the population.⁹

⁹ <https://www.theequalityproject.org.au/blog/what-does-lgbtqi-mean>

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

Victorian Government research shows using inclusive language makes a real difference to LGBTIQ+ people.

Our top three tips are:

1. If someone discloses to you that they're from one of the LGBTIQ+ communities, respectfully ask what terms they use to describe themselves, then use those terms.
2. Don't question or make assumptions about someone's gender, sexuality or relationship. Accept and respect how people define their gender and sexuality.
3. Use language that acknowledges that we have diverse relationships and families. This can mean using words like "partner" or "parents", particularly when describing groups of people.¹⁰

Basketball Victoria has developed a guide for the use of Inclusive Language in Basketball: *Keys to Communication.. Because words matter – Inclusive Language Guide*.

PRONOUNS

What are pronouns?

Pronouns are words that we use to refer to people when we're not using their name. You probably learned about them in school, but they're more important than you would consider them to be. Using the right pronouns to refer to a person can be one of the easiest ways to show them respect and help them to affirm themselves. It is also one of the best ways to promote an inclusive atmosphere within your organisation.¹¹

If you're unsure what someone's pronoun is, you can ask them respectfully, and preferably privately. Use a question like "Can I ask what pronoun you use?". Do not ask "What pronoun do you prefer?". A person's pronoun and identity are not a preference. Instead, just ask what pronoun they use. Some people's pronouns may be context-specific. For example, someone might not use their pronoun in a particular environment or around particular people because they do not feel safe or comfortable to do so.¹²

Another great way to show support for the LGBTIQ + community is to display your pronouns in some way at your workplace, or in a professional setting. This shows that you take correct pronoun usage seriously and also encourages your members to be more confident in being themselves around you and your organisation. It also helps to normalise pronouns. Here are some great places that you can add your pronouns to:

- Name tags
- Email signature
- Social media profiles e.g Instagram bios
- Video calls
- Business cards
- Introductions¹³

Language should be respectful and inclusive. Members, participants and others involved in our game are encouraged to use correct pronouns (for example, by asking all participants what pronouns they use when they register and using pronouns consistently across verbal and written communications).

To learn more about pronouns and the importance of using correct pronouns, follow the link below for a guide to the different types of pronouns.

www.pridetraining.org.au/pages/pronoun-page

¹⁰ <https://www.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-06/LGBTIQ-Inclusive-Language-Guide.pdf>

¹¹ <https://www.pridetraining.org.au/pages/pronoun-page>

¹² <https://www.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-06/LGBTIQ-Inclusive-Language-Guide.pdf>

¹³ <https://www.pridetraining.org.au/pages/pronoun-page>

What if I make a mistake?

People may worry that they will offend or be embarrassed if they use the wrong word, name or pronoun, particularly for trans and gender diverse people. The important thing is to try to use respectful language and if you make a mistake, promptly apologise and continue the conversation.

No one will get the language right 100 percent of the time for 100 percent of people. The key is to keep trying to get it right.

It's ok to make a mistake. But repeated mistakes show a lack of respect and can be very distressing. If it continues or is deliberate, it could constitute bullying or discrimination which is unlawful.¹⁴

COMMONLY USED TERMS

Basketball Victoria acknowledges that language constantly changes, and while we have done our best to define key terms within these Guidelines, we encourage members to stay informed with other language and terminology relative to this space via Pride in Sport –

www.prideinsport.com.au/terminology

¹⁴ <https://www.theequalityproject.org.au/blog/lgbtiqa-inclusive-language-guide>

WHAT CAN YOUR ASSOCIATION AND/OR CLUB DO?

It's time for us to create change. Sport is one of the last bastions of society where discrimination and slurs are tolerated. **It doesn't have to be this way.** There are many things that you, your team and your Association can do to pave the way for change.

Objective	Actions	
Promote safe and inclusive environments and increase awareness of sexual and gender diversity.	Provide strong, positive leadership. Model fair and respectful behavior at all times.	<p>Share this resource and ensure association/club leadership model the expected behavior.</p> <p>Educate and raise awareness through promoting resources and education programs on inclusive and gender-neutral language in all communications (written and verbal).</p> <p>The following organisations provide education and resources;</p> <p>Proud2Play – Education and resources</p> <p>SportAus – Trans and Gender Diverse Inclusion in Sport.</p> <p>Play By The Rules – Creating an LGBTI+ Inclusive club.</p> <p>Basketball Victoria Keys to Communication.. Because words matter – Inclusive Language Guide.</p> <p>Help to normalise the sharing of pronouns. For example, include your pronouns in your email signature, screen name, business cards, or when introducing yourself to new people.</p>
Celebrate - Letting everyone know you're LGBTIQ+ - inclusive. It doesn't need to be complicated.	Decorate stadiums with Pride flags and participate in Pride Rounds.	<p>Register your Pride Round with Pride Cup.</p> <p>Pride Flags - Guide.</p>

Objective	Actions	
Learn and raise awareness of how to report discrimination.	<p>Just as you would not tolerate racism in your association, do not tolerate ANY form of homophobic/transphobic discrimination.</p> <p>Raise awareness and display anti-homophobia and anti-discrimination material in stadiums. This lets everyone know bad behaviour will not be tolerated.</p> <p>Appoint an MPIO (Member Protection Information Officer). Appoint a CSO (Child Safety Officer)</p> <p>Challenge homophobic language – on and off the court.</p> <p>Act promptly and without bias on any concerns or complaints.</p>	<p>Member Protection Officer Course – Click here.</p> <p>Child Protection and Safeguarding Course – Click here</p>
Consider what could be done to make your facilities more inclusive for all.	Providing the option of gender-neutral facilities where possible.	<p>Basketball Victoria acknowledges that associations and clubs may not have the ability make changes to and/or influence facilities that they operate within. We encourage you to raise awareness and work with facility management to make changes where possible.</p>

GET SUPPORT

There is a range of resources available regarding sexual and gender diversity and sport

WEBSITES

Australian Sports Commission	www.ausport.gov.au
Play by the Rules	www.playbytherules.net.au
Pride Cup	www.pridecup.org.au
Pride in Sport	www.prideinsport.com.au
Proud 2 Play	www.proud2play.org.au
Sport and Recreation Victoria	www.dtpli.vic.gov.au/sport-and-recreation
Transgender Victoria	www.transgendervictoria.com
Vic Sport	www.vicsport.com.au