

PROMOTING LGBTQ INCLUSION IN SPORTS

THE BIG DEFINITIONS

LGBTQ is an umbrella term that stands for “lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (or questioning).” LGBTQ is an acronym that is continuously evolving to identify and include other members of the LGBTQ community, including LGBTQI2S (intersex, two-spirit), LGB and other monikers.

An Ally is an active partner, friend, and visible supporter. In athletics, an ally is someone who works specifically to include LGBTQ players, coaches, and/or fans in a sport.

Casual Homophobia (such as “that’s so gay”) is language used to put down others by equating being LGBTQ with something negative. This type of language contributes to a locker room or sport venue feeling unsafe or unwelcoming.

KEY STATISTICS

From Out on the Fields (outonthefields.com, 2016), the largest study of homophobia in sports:

- 81% of Canadians witnessed or experienced homophobia in sports (both straight and LGB people)
- 70% of Canadians believe youth team sports are not welcoming or safe for LGB people
- 66% of Canadian participants believe an openly LGB person would not be very safe as a spectator at a sporting event

LGB teens are about half as likely to participate in sports as their straight peers. (University of British Columbia, 2017)

In the past year, nearly two-thirds of Canadian transgender youth reported self-harm and serious thoughts of suicide. More than one in three had attempted suicide. (The Canadian Trans Youth Health Survey, 2015)

TAKING ACTION FOR INCLUSION & RESPECT

1. This topic applies to all of us. We all know someone who is LGBTQ - they just might not be out yet.
2. Educate yourself on current LGBTQ terminology and get comfortable saying the words lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and LGBTQ.
3. You don’t know what you don’t know. It’s okay to not know all the answers. As you start the conversation, research and reach out to find out answers to questions you still have.
4. Change the language to change the culture. Inclusive language creates inclusive, respectful spaces.
5. Engage the people around you. Ask people on your team: “How can we create safer spaces for LGBTQ athletes, coaches, and fans?”
6. Review policies and protocols from an inclusion-based perspective.

viaSport engages and unifies British Columbians through the power of sport because it believes that the values and life skills developed via sport allow people to thrive for life. To increase sport participation opportunities, viaSport unites leaders across sectors to champion change and continuously enhance our world class sport system.

You Can Play works to ensure safety and inclusion for all who participate in sports, including LGBTQ athletes, coaches, and fans. You Can Play believes sports teams should focus on an athlete’s skills, work ethic, and competitive spirit, not their sexual orientation and/or gender identity.