



# Camping **OUT**

**keshet**  
קשת

For LGBTQ  
equality in  
Jewish life



## **FACILITATOR'S MANUAL**

Building LGBTQ-Affirming Camps  
Summer 2021

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## Welcome and Introduction

Welcome! We are so glad that you are bringing Keshet's Camping OUT curriculum to your camp this summer! We hope that by using these training videos, exercises, and facilitator's guide, you will enable your camp's staff to create a truly LGBTQ-affirming culture that will support and celebrate LGBTQ campers, staff members, and families.

We are grateful to Deborah Newbrun for her invaluable expertise and insight in developing this curriculum.

## Keshet's Vision and Mission

Keshet envisions a world in which all LGBTQ Jews and our families can live with full equality, justice, and dignity.

Our mission is to work for the full equality of all LGBTQ Jews and our families in Jewish life. We strengthen Jewish communities. We equip Jewish organizations with the skills and knowledge to build LGBTQ-affirming communities, create spaces in which all queer Jewish youth feel seen and valued, and advance LGBTQ rights nationwide.

## Keshet's Organizational Values

Keshet's organizational values are rooted in a Jewish ethical framework that mandates the pursuit of justice and the creation of compassionate, caring communities. As Keshet trainers, we invite you to join us in embodying these values in your work.

**Justice.** We are committed to equality and social justice. As Jews, we have a responsibility to fight oppression, effect change, and repair the world. We see LGBTQ justice as part of a broader movement for justice for all people.

**Pride.** We understand pride in identity as key to feeling whole. When LGBTQ Jews are encouraged to live our truths and participate openly and authentically in Jewish life, the entire Jewish community is stronger.

**Human Dignity.** We lead with compassion and empathy. We celebrate—and strive to help others see and celebrate—the inherent humanity, worth, and dignity of all people.

**Partnership.** We meet our community partners wherever they are in their journeys to LGBTQ equality, supporting them with the tools and resources they need to move forward.

**Belonging.** We are committed to creating a sense of belonging for all Jews within Jewish institutions. We embrace the racial, ethnic, and religious diversity in the Jewish community and strive to reflect that diversity in Keshet's own leadership.

**Impact.** We are serious about creating concrete change. Our work must make a measurable difference in the lives of LGBTQ Jews and advance full equality in Jewish life.

## **Keshet's Approach to Change: Individual & Organizational**

Keshet sparks change across every level of Jewish life, from the policies of our organizations to the attitudes of community members. The following are core elements of our approach to making change for LGBTQ equality:

- Keshet meets people where they are in their journeys to LGBTQ equality and inclusion, giving them the tools they need to move forward.
- Only by building relationships with Jewish leaders, LGBTQ Jews of all ages, and allies can we create progress that lasts.
- Keshet partners with leaders of national and local Jewish organizations and synagogues, offering workshops and trainings that give communal leaders the tools, skills, and confidence to put LGBTQ equality into practice.
- Keshet believes in community-led change. When we inspire and equip Jews of all ages to be allies and advocates for equality in their own communities, we see tangible and lasting progress.
- LGBTQ visibility changes hearts and minds. Keshet lifts up the voices of LGBTQ Jews and allies—and encourages them to share their own stories—so their perspectives can make a difference in Jewish life.

## Approach to Training about Identities & Oppression

Keshet's approach to training around issues of privilege and oppression is grounded in the concept of intersectionality. Kimberlé Crenshaw, who coined the term intersectionality in 1989, offers the following definition:

“Intersectionality is a lens through which you can see where power comes and collides, where it interlocks and intersects. It's not simply that there's a race problem here, a gender problem here, and a class or LGBTQ problem there. Many times that framework erases what happens to people who are subject to all of these things.”

Crenshaw notes that the concept of intersectionality “highlights the need to account for multiple grounds of identity when considering how the social world is constructed.” This means that while Keshet's mission is to work for the full equality of LGBTQ Jews and our families in Jewish life, we also acknowledge the ways that LGBTQ identity is experienced differently across members of the Jewish community depending on the other identities that a person may have.

For example, due to the ways that classism and ageism operates, the experience of a poor or working class, gay Jewish elder will not be the same as the experience of a wealthy, young gay Jewish man. A disabled trans Jewish woman of color will not experience transphobia in the same way that an able bodied white trans Jewish woman experiences it, due to the impacts of racism and ableism. In order to understand -- and teach about -- these multidimensional identities, we need Crenshaw's “lens through which you can see where power comes and collides, where it interlocks and intersects.”

In recent years, Keshet has specifically lifted up the importance of addressing race and racism, and its intersections with LGBTQ identity, as part of our mission for equality. The following are excerpts from the Keshet Statement on Racial Equity and Justice:

As an organization that teaches the importance of proactive LGBTQ inclusive messages and actions, Keshet recognizes the similar need for us to make our commitment to racial equity and justice clear and explicit.

Keshet affirms that racial equity and justice – an understanding and acknowledgment of historical and ongoing racial inequities and a commitment to actions challenging those inequities – are core to Keshet's vision of a just society. This commitment

reflects our understanding of the Jewish community as multi-racial and multi-ethnic, as well as our awareness of the racism that remains endemic to Jewish life.

We also recognize that the majority of American Jews benefit from white privilege. We also understand that Jews of Color live at the intersection of racism and anti-Semitism. We commit to pushing white Jews to take critical responsibility for and participate in dismantling this oppressive structure.

Keshet is working to further integrate a proactively antiracist perspective into each of its core training modules and key materials. Trainers are invited to deepen their own understanding of intersectionality by exploring the materials in reading lists such as [this one](#) from blackfeminisms.com and [this one](#) from the International Women's Development Agency.

## Overview of Keshet's Camping OUT Curriculum

Keshet's Camping OUT curriculum is designed to be presented by a team of camp staff and leadership to the full staff of each camp. We believe that by providing staff in all roles the information and tools that they need to create an LGBTQ-affirming camp culture, they can all be a part of making camp a safe, dignified, and celebratory experience.

This curriculum provides roughly 90-minutes of training, which is presented through a series of ten brief training videos with accompanying discussion prompts, activities, and exercises. This training can be offered as a single session, or broken up into shorter segments as best serves the needs of your camp. We find that in most cases, the easiest way to divide this training is into a 30-minute terms-and-concepts training using video modules 1-5 and a second 60-minute session focused on concrete tools for building affirming camps, using video modules 6-10. Other divisions may work better at your camp, please look through the entire curriculum when deciding how to divide the various modules.

You will also notice that some video modules are accompanied by more than one activity or discussion. These are offered as alternate options, and you should select the option that best serves your camp team, taking into account the size of your staff, previous experience with these topics, overall culture, and the most pressing needs in your camp community. Keshet's Education & Training team is happy to talk you through these decision points and support you in identifying the most effective options for your camp.

When preparing for these trainings, keep in mind that Keshet trainings are designed to meet learning objectives that impact the learner on multiple levels:

- Head Level, or cognitive outcomes: changes in the knowledge level for the participant.
- Heart Level, or affective outcomes: changes in the way the participant feels as a result of the session.
- Hands Level, or behavioral outcomes: changes to the ways the participant acts in the future, as a result of the training.

The learning objectives for the Camping OUT curriculum are summarized below:

As a result of receiving training with Keshet's 10 mini videos and a variety of activities our summer camp staff will:

- Learn the basics of LGBTQ terms and concepts for inclusion
- Implement the principles of building LGBTQ- affirming environments at camp
- Feel excited and equipped to welcome and work with campers of all sexualities and gender identities
- Feel capable of and excited to work with colleagues of all sexualities and gender identities
- Begin to develop skills for supporting LGBTQ campers and colleagues facing bullying or harassment at camp

To learn more, you and your camp staff can access additional Keshet resources, such as our [Guide To LGBTQ-Affirming Camps](#) and our online [Resource Library](#). You can also reach out to us for additional training and consulting support this year or in the future.



## Considerations for Facilitators

One of the joys and challenges of this work is that we are teaching and training about identity. This can be powerful and exciting work, and it also can be emotionally or personally loaded for both facilitators and participants. At Keshet, we believe that each person is the one and only expert in their own identity and lived experience. We recognize and honor that individuals may use some of the identity terms that we are teaching in ways that differ slightly from the ways they are presented, and that human identity can never be fully captured by a simple list of terms and definitions. At the same time, we find that it is important for camp staff and leadership to have working definitions of some core terms and concepts. So we present these not as a definitive and authoritative set of definitions, but as a set of working definitions or “handholds” for you to use. To present these materials most effectively, we ask that you take this approach in your training, and emphasize that lived experience is always more complex than can be covered in a single training session.

We also recognize that camps employ incredibly diverse staff! Camp staff members come from many cultural and religious backgrounds, speak a variety of languages, bring a wide range of abilities and disabilities, and may be learning about camp culture overall. It is our goal to provide you with tools that can be used in the ways that will best support your staff members. Here are a few recommendations that we suggest:

- Our videos are captioned - please make sure to enable captions when you play these videos for your team.
- When sharing handouts, make them available digitally as well as in hard copy if possible.
- When presenting a visual handout, take a moment to verbally describe what is on it.
- When conducting the breakout activities, keep in mind that we have always presented them as group activities rather than individual.
- Be prepared to modify some of the specifics of the interactive activities to ensure that all participants have access - this might include setting up the room so that activities can be conducted without having move around through the room, ensuring that resources are available for staff for whom English is a second language, or offering multiple avenues of participation.
- Be flexible! Sharing this content is more important than “accomplishing” the specific activities. The activities are tools for learning, and not an end in and of themselves.

## Training Materials

Below are the materials for your training session! Please reach out to Keshet's Education & Training team if you have any questions about how to implement these materials in your community.

### Training Opening and Framing by the Facilitator

*We believe that it is important to name the educational objectives and reason for engaging in this learning at the outset of the session. This allows participants to engage more fully in the learning, feel that they know what to expect, and connect the training to actions that they will take throughout the summer.*

Keshet has developed new educational materials to support Jewish Summer Camps in acquiring the skills and knowledge to create LGBTQ-affirming communities and spaces. We will be using a series of short training videos and then discussing them and doing short activities to practice putting these new tools into practice.

As a result of this training summer camp staff will:

- Learn the basics of LGBTQ terms and concepts for inclusion
- Implement the principles of building LGBTQ- affirming environments at camp
- Feel excited and equipped to welcome and work with campers of all sexualities and gender identities
- Feel capable of and excited to work with colleagues of all sexualities and gender identities
- Begin to develop skills for supporting LGBTQ campers and colleagues facing bullying or harassment at camp

## Setting the Space: Kavvanot and Expectations

*Particularly given that we are teaching about identity, we find that it is important to set clear expectations for how staff are to engage in learning and in the space. Please share these expectations with the team at the beginning of the training, and be prepared to hold all participants to them throughout.*

**Growth and Learning Mindset** – we are here to learn, which means that we do not know everything yet. Be willing to ask questions without worrying about how you will look, and be willing to accept re-framing or pushback without feeling that you are being criticized for not knowing something yet. When you encounter an idea that feels new or uncomfortable, “try it on” and see what it feels like - that is the goal of a learning space!

**Take Space / Make Space** – try to remain aware of how much “airtime” you are taking up, and use that awareness to either speak up more or hold back and allow others to speak.

**Take Lessons, Leave Stories** – while we cannot guarantee complete confidentiality in this space, we ask all participants to respect one another’s privacy, and refrain from sharing any identifiable details about what others may have shared without their explicit permission to share.

**Trust Intent, Tend Impact** – please be aware that the words that we use may have impacts on others in ways that we are not aware of or do not intend. If someone says something that does not sit well with you, please speak up and share. If someone shares with you that your words have negatively impacted them, please do your best to tend to the impact your words had, seek to understand, and think of this as a part of ongoing learning.

**Prepare for non-closure** – we cannot possibly address everything in the time that we have here today. Please treat this as a brief introduction and an invitation to further conversation and learning.

**Stay Present (as much as possible)** – recognizing the various needs and settings we may all be in, please do your best to be fully present in this space and remove what distractions you can.

Have fun!

## Section 1: LGBTQ Terms and Concepts

(Videos 1-5 and Accompanying Activities)

### Video Module 1: Intro and Context

This video covers these topics:

- The work for LGBTQ dignity and belonging is a core part of Jewish values. Each person is created B'zelem Elohim (in the image of the divine)
- Each person carries multiple identities at once
- LGBTQ is a broad umbrella that contains a lot of identities related to **gender identity**, **sex assigned at birth** and **sexual orientation**.
- The three areas above (gender identity, sex assigned at birth, and sexual orientation) are independent of one another.

This video covers these terms:

- B'zelem Elohim (in the image of the divine)
- Kavod - respect and dignity
- LGBTQ - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender, and Queer. In some settings, the Q can also stand for "Questioning."

Activity Following the Video - (20 min - 2 min to explain, 5 min to play, 10 min to debrief)

### Terminology BINGO

Supplies needed:

- Download and print this bingo card for each staff member (available in Appendix)
- A pencil for each staff member
- A timer

Considerations:

- There may be different levels of exposure to these terms and concepts, particularly for staff who are not native English speakers. You may wish to locate vocabulary sheets in other languages on core LGBTQ terms and concepts, and you may find it helpful to pair staff whose first language is not English with partners whose is to enable easier access to this activity.
- While it is useful to offer a prize for the first person to find BINGO, the emphasis should not be on competition!
- This activity offers a chance for participants to share what they already know about these terms, and can give you as the facilitator a sense of how familiar the group is with the terms. Be prepared to adjust some of the definitions that are offered gently and with positivity - you can use the terms-and-concepts handout in Appendix 1 to prepare.

Instructions:

- Give each team of 2 a BINGO card. There are 9 spots to fill, each of which has a word related to LGBTQ equality on it.
- Instruct teams to find a person who knows the definition of each of these words. You must use 9 different people (you may only use each person once). Have them share the meaning of the word and then put their name on your card, under the word.  
Participants do not need to write down the definitions, only the person who knew it!
- The first team to fill up their card with staff members' names should shout BINGO!
- Debrief the activity by having the winning team share the name under each term, and then asking the person named to share their definition with the group.
  - i.e. Come on up to the front of the room Sarah. Terms are important and we will be hearing a bunch more in the coming videos, it's great to have nailed these nine. Sarah, who do you have for Kavod?"
  - Sarah: "I have Aaron" Ok, Aaron, what does Kavod mean...Aaron answers.
  - Who do you have for Binary?
  - Sarah: "I have Silvie" Silvie, tell us what Binary means... and so forth till all nine terms are defined!
- Either affirm or gently adjust the definitions that are presented. Also use this moment as an opportunity to assess the level of understanding in the room!
- You may want to enhance this activity by offering a prize or gift!

## Bingo Card

Instructions: Please fill out this card by finding one person who knows the definition of the word in the box. Have them tell you the definition of the word, write their name below the term. You may only use each person once! When you fill in every name shout BINGO!!!

Kavod Name:	Sexual Orientation Name:	LGBTQ Name:
Gender Identity Name:	Cisgender Name:	Transgender Name:
Heteronormative Name:	Self-Determination Name:	Binary Name:

## Video Module 2: Gender Identity and Sex Assigned at Birth

This video covers these topics:

- Sex Assigned at Birth: The categories that people (usually medical professionals) place us into based on how they perceive or interpret our bodies.
- Gender identity: An internally known sense of self as relates to gender.

This video covers these terms:

- Cisgender: An adjective describing a person whose gender identity is the same as the category they were assigned to at birth.
- Transgender: An adjective describing a person whose gender identity is different than the category they were assigned to at birth.

**Activity Following the Video** - (8 minutes total)

### Talking About Gender Identity

**Considerations:** There are two options you may use, depending on the camp culture and level of comfort talking about gender that already exists.

The first option asks each person to reflect and share with a partner some thoughts about their own gender identities and the ways that we know about our genders. The goal of this conversation is to highlight that everyone, cisgender or transgender, has a gender identity, that we can't take it for granted, and that it can sometimes be hard to put into words "how we know." This can be a vulnerable thing to do for a number of reasons, and will be the right choice in some settings and not others.

The second option asks each person to share where they have encountered messages in their culture about what gender "is" or is "supposed to be," and ways in which they have experienced these messages to be affirming or not affirming. The goal of this conversation is to highlight that gender messages are present in many ways in most cultures, and that people might have complicated relationships with these messages.

Both options also meet the goal of moving gender from the realm of "unspoken expectations" into the realm of "spoken." When we name the big things in life, we are able to more comfortably analyze them, realize that people may have different experiences than we do, and create

**Instructions:**

Turn to a person sitting next to you. Take turns talking. Share: Each person takes 2 minutes to complete the following statement:

**Option A:** Some words that describe my gender identity are \_\_\_\_\_. I know this because\_\_\_\_\_. These are the ways this gender identity serves me, these are the ways it doesn't serve me\_\_\_\_\_

**Option B:** (If the above feels too vulnerable for your staff at this point in your training)  
A couple places where my culture gives me messages about what my gender is supposed to be are \_\_\_\_\_. Some ways that this feels affirming are \_\_\_\_\_. Some ways that this does not feel affirming are \_\_\_\_\_.

1 minute total to ask each other questions about what was shared  
1 minute each to answer the questions



## Video Module 3: Sexual Orientation

This video covers these topics:

- Sexual Orientation: A pattern of whether, how, and to whom a person experiences romantic and/or physical attraction

This video covers these terms:

- Sexual orientation
- Asexual
- Bisexual
- Gay
- Lesbian
- Pansexual
- Straight/Heterosexual

### Activity Following the Video

#### Reflections on Affirming Communities (8 min)

**Instructions:** Please think quietly about your answers to the following two questions. Your answers are only for yourself and you will not be asked to share. (1 min)

- What words do you use to think/talk about your sexual orientation?
- How did you come to use those words?
- Do you see that identity reflected in the communities you are in? Do you see them erased?

Quiet minute of quiet, eyes closed thinking time about your own answer to these questions

**Pre-select three staff who are willing to share with the whole staff something about their sexual orientation and one way that camps, schools, youth groups, or other settings could have been more affirming when they were kids.**

- Each pre-selected staff member will share their answers to the questions about how camps could have been more affirming when they were kids.
- These pre-selected staff members will have the opportunity to share what they have prepared, and will not be asked questions.
- As a facilitator, wrap up the conversation by emphasizing that people of all identities need to be able to feel dignified and affirmed at camp, and that these examples show that there are lots of small and large ways in which assumptions about sexual orientation can be built into the culture of camp.

When thinking about staff to pre-assign for these roles, think about who might be a good fit for this request. These should be staff members who generally have been comfortable and

outspoken about these topics, and ideally should be staffers who have been at your camp previously and are aware of the culture. No one should feel put on the spot or like power dynamics require them to say yes to the request. Make sure that your pre-selected staff include a variety of sexual orientations, possibly including

- Straight
- Gay
- Bisexual
- Queer
- Asexual
- etc.

If your staff members would like support thinking through the kinds of examples that are useful to share, you might offer some of these prompts or examples as they are preparing:

- I am queer and it would have been great when I was a camper if counselors would not organized or condoned games that were about “crushes” or “couples”
- I would have appreciated fewer jokes about X / having adults step in when they heard jokes that were offensive
- I’m a gay man and I was told I ran like a girl
- I’m a trans man and I was told I threw like a boy
- I’m asexual, and there was so much emphasis on “hooking up” that I often felt really confused and alienated.
- When I was that age, I didn’t really know what my orientation was, but there was all of this pressure to either “act straight” or “come out as gay,” and that didn’t really leave room for me.

### Some additional considerations

Sometimes people become uncomfortable talking about sexual orientation because they conflate it with talking about sex. It’s important to make a distinction between talking about identity and talking about sex or relationships. Think about how often casual conversations or the ways that things are set up assume that people are straight, and talk about straight identities in ways that are not particularly sexual: a person might refer to their “boyfriend” or their “mom and dad,” talk about “being shy around girls,” or otherwise make straightness part of public conversation. When we talk about using affirming language, we are talking about shifting the language and culture away from these defaults.

With LGBTQ identities - as with straight identities - there should certainly be power-sensitive and age-appropriate boundaries on what sorts of conversations counselors should have with campers, the ways that conversations about sexuality show up at camp, etc. When setting these boundaries, it is important to emphasize that LGBTQ identities should not be treated as inherently “taboo” or “inappropriate.” They should be discussed - or not - in the same ways that straight sexuality or relationships are discussed.

One concern that counselors sometimes have is about what to do if a camper comes out at camp. We believe that camp counselors as trusted adults can be a tremendous source

of support in campers' lives, and that offering a positive, congratulatory, and non-anxious response is the most supportive way counselors can respond. While each counselor should only engage in those conversations they feel comfortable having, they should make sure not to unintentionally send the message that coming out is "a big deal" or a "challenge."

## **Module 4: More About Gender**

This video covers these topics:

- Gender expression
- Gender attribution
- Binaries as a cognitive shortcut
- The implications of binary gender for day-to-day life

This video covers these terms:

- Binary Gender

### **Activity Following the Video - Low Hanging Fruit (8 min)**

Leader Notes: Have a large flip chart and marking pens ready to go

Invite participants to brainstorm a list of where camp defaults to gender binaries, write this list on the flip chart.

*Some examples may include:*

- Boy's Side of Camp/Girl's Side of Camp
- Boy's Cabins/Girl's Cabins
- Boy's Bathrooms/Girl's Cabins
- Boy and Girl Campfire opening programs
- Expectations around kippot, tallitot, and other ritual items or roles.
- "Camp Moms"
- Informal roles at major events / dances / etc.
- Addressing groups as "boys and girls," "hey guys," "ladies and gentlemen," etc.

Invite participants to brainstorm ways to address these default assumptions and create gender-affirming spaces using one of the following prompts:

Option 1:

Invite participants to reflect on changes to everyday language that can have an impact on the experience of LGBTQ campers and staff.

*Some possible prompts include:*

- Greeting groups as "y'all," "friends," "campers," etc. instead of "boys and girls."

- Programs open to people of all genders
- Revisit assumptions about ritual items and roles
- Examining assumptions when planning programs, roles, etc.

#### Option 2:

If you want to go deeper with this work, you can create a staff JEDI (Justice, equity, diversity and inclusion) committee who might meet 2 or 3 times with a Director to brainstorm ideas of creating deeper LGBTQ belonging for this summer and/or for future summers.

*Here are some ideas they can discuss:*

- Bathroom signs on some bathrooms “All Gender”
- Renaming Sides of Camps and Villages by something other than gender (good place to add Jewish education)
- Gender electives can now include “all-gender gender elective” eg: girl’s campfire, boy’s campfire, an all-gender campfire (3 choices instead of two)
- How about when you break singing into genders? What else might be done?
- Is there a places-by-gender names audit you can do around camp?  
(Tawonga has changed Boy’s and Girl’s side of camp (which we have used for 50 years) to River and Ridge Side of camp)

#### Ideas for All-Gender Inclusion

- In new groups of campers eg: a swim group or dance elective ask campers to share **their name and pronoun and teach them why you are doing it** “to create a sense of belonging for all campers”
- **Change a few bathrooms at camp to be all gender bathrooms** (make attractive signs or order them) and tell staff you have done this for this summer and where they are located
- **Having LGBTQ and nonbinary role models can be incredibly powerful and affirming for some youth.** Some (but not all!) LGBTQ adults welcome the opportunity to serve as role models and mentors, others do not. If a staff member indicates to you that they are open to connecting with and supporting LGBTQ campers, help them find the right context to do that!

## Module 5: Putting it Together, Putting it Into Practice

This video covers these topics:

- Review of what the four preceding videos covered
- No Follow-Up Activity Necessary
- For some camps, this may be a good time to take a break or divide the program into two shorter programs

## Module 6: Welcome and Why it Matters

This video covers these topics:

- Assumptions about “proper” gender behavior
- Showing up as one’s authentic self
- Tokenism/Not representing a whole group
- LGBTQ-affirming culture at camp
- Kavod/Respect

This video covers these terms:

- Dignity
- Safety
- Belonging

### Activity Following the Video - Reflecting On Belonging (4 min)

#### Leader notes:

A sense of belonging and authenticity is important for everyone at camp. By talking about when and how each of us experiences belonging, we can relate the work that we are doing for LGBTQ belonging to the many other experiences that campers and staff may have. It may be helpful to offer an analogy to other ways that people might be encountering a sense of belonging - or of marginalization - at camp. You can use the following script, or write your own:

*“Here at camp we all know we are working for a Jewish organization, even if not all of us identify as Jews. We are creating Jewish community, building positive Jewish identity and teaching Jewish content. Yet, knowing that all of us staff and our campers don’t identify as Jewish, there is language we can use to make each human being here at camp feel welcome. Instead of saying “we” when speaking about Jewish tradition for example, we can say: “Jewish tradition dictates that a blessing is said before and after a meal” not “We say the motzi and birkat ha’mazon before and after meals.”*

*“In the same way that we seek to raise awareness and sensitivity and give everyone a sense of belonging as we build our welcoming community, we want to be sure to include LGBTQ folks in giving that sense of belonging.”*

Share the following sentence on the flip-board, and ask all participants to reflect on this question and then turn to their neighbor and complete the sentence out loud.

- Turn to a partner and complete the following sentence: “I feel included and a sense of belonging when \_\_\_\_\_” Fill in the blank by sharing the language that makes you feel included.

## Module 7: Cisnormativity and Heteronormativity

This video covers these topics:

- Assumptions
- Cisnormativity
- Heteronormativity
- Normative/Default
- Microbehaviors or Microaggressions

This video covers these terms:

- Cisnormativity
- Heteronormativity
- Microbehaviors or Microaggressions

**Activity Following the Video** - (15-30 min)

**Role Play Scenarios** to illustrate cis and hetero normativity:

We will unpack this video by role-playing a few scenarios in groups. The goal of this activity is to give counselors practice identifying assumptions and microaggressions in action, and reflecting on ways to shift camp culture to avoid them.

For each scenario, ask for volunteer actors. Instruct them to act out the scene you describe to them (or give it to them in writing). Give them a minute to privately discuss the scene before acting it out. Tell the audience we will be debriefing each scene and to note what they liked or any suggestions they have for ways the scene could be handled differently.

After the selected scene, debrief by asking the actors first what they liked or didn't like about their portrayal of the situation.

- What felt like it went well?
- What do they wish they did differently?
- Ask the community what they LIKED about what they saw (take two to three answers) then
- Ask the community suggestions for how to IMPROVE what they saw. (2-3 answers)

**Possible scenes:**

*Each scene includes an outline of the content, some facilitator notes, and some key points to make sure are covered in the debrief. You will not get to all possible scenes, please choose the ones that feel most relevant to your camp community.*

*It can be helpful to offer a content warning before these scenes that many of them do portray microaggressions or language that might be hurtful. The scenes include these in order to enable staff to intervene more effectively throughout the summer.*

Scene 1

- (2 ACTORS 2 Male Staff) Two young men who do not know each other are assigned to be co-counselors together in a boys bunk. One of them is cisgender and one of them is transgender. The transgender counselor mentions that he is trans, which is information that he chooses to share because he has made some adjustments to changing and showering procedures to allow for more privacy. The cisgender counselor respond with: "Cool, hey you look so much like a real man, I didn't even know you were trans."

#### Debrief Notes:

- The statement by the cisgender counselor is a microaggression. Even though this counselor is trying to convey that he is affirming of his co-counselor, his words make the assumption that only cisgender men are "real men," and that "looking good" means looking cisgender. These assumptions reflect and contribute to prejudice against transgender people.
- This statement also reflects surprise on the part of the cisgender counselor, who may not be speaking in this moment in ways that reflect his best values. Many microaggressions or moments of unconscious bias are unintentional and reflect messages that we have internalized over years of exposure to cultures that do not respect transgender individuals. This does not make them less hurtful, but does offer context for how they happen.
- Offer suggestions both for what the counselor could have said instead and for what he might say now that the comment about "looking like a real man" has been made. Think about how he might respond if the co-counselor expresses hurt, or if he himself realized that his words might have been hurtful.

#### Scene 2

**Facilitator notes:** In this scene, one counselor makes an assumption about someone's sexual orientation based on her looks. It will be well played if the queer woman opens by asking about the butch-looking woman's sexual orientation.

- (2 ACTORS- 2 Staff) A Lesbian/queer woman shares her feelings for a another staff member who is a woman with short hair and a stereotypically "butch" appearing style. But the "butch appearing" woman only dates men, and lets her know.

#### Debrief notes:

- Make sure to address the fact that sometimes stereotypes around gender expression get conflated with sexual orientation, and that we can't make assumptions about someone's sexual orientation.
- Also make sure to note that while we cannot make assumptions about anyone's sexual orientation, it is also important not to assume that it is a bad thing to be assumed to be LGB or Q.
- When debriefing this scene, make sure to offer suggestions that bring the focus of the conversation onto how to respectfully navigate feelings that are not reciprocated, and move the focus away from tension around the assumed sexual orientations of the participants.



### Scene 3

- (4 ACTORS 3 Campers/1 Staff) Campers are playing truth or dare and questions become “what boy do you have a crush on, or I dare you to go to so and so and tell him you like him.”

#### Debrief Notes:

- Help staff identify the heteronormativity that is at play in this scene - the assumption that all campers have crushes and are straight is key to playing the game.
- This is layered on top of all of the other ways in which truth or dare can be a game that is fraught, high-pressure, and potentially embarrassing for many participants.
- Think about ways of intervening that redirect the situation or offer alternative activities without putting any particular camper in the spotlight.

### Scene 4

**Facilitator notes:** It's just before Shabbat and everyone is excited to get dressed up and see the other kids dressed up. They love the dancing that happens in the dining hall with the little bit of looseness where kids from a variety of bunks can dance together.

- (4 ACTORS 3 Campers and 1 lifeguard in the background listening) Two bunkmates run up to a girl in their cabin while they are at freeswim and say “We found out from my sister that Aaron likes you and wants to dance with you tonight, do you like him?” “No, I don't like boys” is the reply.

#### Debrief Notes:

- Note how the other campers respond to the information that the camper does not like boys. What do they assume that means? What do they communicate both verbally and nonverbally?
- If there are inappropriate or unkind responses, how does the lifeguard respond? Is intervention needed?
- You may want to prompt the actors or the participants to think of other ways that this interaction could have gone, and brainstorm their responses to that as well.

## Module 8: Pronouns

This video covers these topics:

- Pronoun use
- Singular gender-neutral pronouns
- Being a pronoun ally

This video covers these terms:

- Gender-neutral they/them/theirs and ze/hir/hirs.

### Activity Following the Video

Singular Gender-Neutral Boggle (5 min)

The goal of this activity is to identify that the use of “they” as a singular gender-neutral pronoun is well-established and common in English, and that many English speakers already have considerable practice using it in this way.

Considerations: see above for information on why conducting activities in pairs rather than individually can support those whose first language is not English or those who face other barriers to participation in language-based activities.

Play a version of Boggle - In Chevruta pairs, ask staff to make a list of all the ways they know of in English when we use the pronoun they in the singular...eg:

- They are driving too fast!
- Someone left their water bottle by the lake, I want to return it to them.
- My sibling graduated this year and they're really excited.
- My counselor's name is Charlie, they are taking pre-med courses.

Have folks pairs read off their lists, others cross out the ones they have that are mentioned.

Next pair reads ones on their list not already mentioned until all new ideas are heard.

## **Module 9: Bullying and Harassment**

This video covers these topics:

- Bullying
- Depression and anxiety
- Helpful tools to use with bullying
- The message of silence
- Anti-harassment/anti-bullying policies

This video covers these terms:

- Bullying/Harassment

### **Activity Following the Video - Do the Right Thing (9 min)**

#### **Leader's Notes**

- Offer a brief content warning or indication that this activity will involve sharing and discussing concrete examples of bullying against LGBTQ youth. Set the norm that this is for the purpose of learning to respond effectively. It is also helpful to set the norm that while specific slur words may be part of anti-LGBTQ bullying, in this space we will

not use those slurs when narrating or describing the bullying, instead refer to them as “a homophobic slur,” “the homophobic slur that begins with f,” etc.

- Clarify: Bullying often happens when there is a power differential between individuals who feel marginalized or feel disempowered. These campers are more susceptible to bullying. Keep in mind:
  - Bullying is not a “one-off” mean name-calling situation said in anger
  - Bullying is repeated and ongoing
  - Bullying is pervasive and disrupts someone’s ability to participate safely at camp
  - Bullying often reflects a power differential between the bully and bullied where the bully feels empowered to repeat the deleterious behavior
- Let’s be mindful of LGBTQ bullying that has become so prevalent in our culture we almost don’t see it. Take examples from the crowd:
  - You run like a girl
  - That’s so gay
  - Why do you dress like that?

### **Review Some Common Tools for Responding to Bullying:**

When you hear someone saying a hurtful joke or comment

- What do you mean by that? I am not sure I understand the joke?
- We don’t use language like that at camp. We don’t use identities as insults.
- We only use respectful language at camp.

When someone is sharing an experience of being bullied

- Can you tell me what happened?
- What would you like for me to do next? I would feel comfortable doing X, Y, or Z (Such as ... speaking with the person who has made bullying comments, being present to support the recipient of bullying as they speak to the person who has bullied them, no longer grouping someone in groups with the person who has bullied them, contacting a senior staff member or considering contacting parents about this behavior, etc. Make sure these are things that you can actually do before offering, or be transparent that you will try X and do not know how it will go)

Considerations

- Ensure the recipient of bullying has agency to determine what comes next if they have a specific idea. There may be some limitations on what you can offer, and there are usually still some choices available within those limitations. Because bullying is so disempowering, and asking for help can be so vulnerable, it is important to offer as much choice as is possible.

- When ascertaining what happened, be careful to avoid language that directly or indirectly blames the recipient of bullying.
- Keep in mind that bullying is a very specific behavior that is distinct from routine disagreements or fights between two parties who are equally empowered. Interventions that treat bullying as conflict (e.g. mediation, forcing the two parties to interact more) often actually cause more harm than good, and do not address the causes or impacts of the bullying behavior.
- Address the bully not the victim by saying “it’s okay to be gay” rather “we never use put-downs at camp.”
- There has to be consequences to hurtful behavior - consider that consequences should follow the 4 R’s:
  - Related to the the incident
  - Remedial
  - Respectful
  - Right away

#### Divide participants into groups of 3.

- 1 min: Each person shares a story of bullying they have experienced, perpetrated or witnessed.
- 1 min: At the end of each share, a different person will address the bully in the story as if they were present and practice language they would use in that circumstance (ideally drawn from the tools presented above).
- 1 min: The last person will listen and give the second person praise as well as suggestions for improvement in the way they handled the bully.

You will have time for two rounds of this.

Close the activity by getting folks in the room to raise their hands and share some of the best takeaways from this experience. Things they might use with kids or peers!

#### Debrief Notes:

- Share the camp’s policy on responding to bullying and harassment.
- We promise parents that their children will feel safe at camp - we have to shut down bullying immediately.
- Jewish teaching around this Pirke Avot 2:5: Hillel Omer "B'makom she'ein anashim, Hishtadel l'hiyot ish." In a place where no one is acting like a human being, Hillel said, be human - or In a place where people are not doing the right thing, do the right thing!

- Many bullies have been bullied - it is possible to have compassion for all as human beings while working to ensure that bullying as a behavior is not accepted or tolerated at camp.

## Module 10: Actively Building Welcoming Community

This video covers these topics:

- Build LGBTQ-affirming community
- The Domains: Programming, Policy, and Culture

This video covers these terms:

- No new terms

Activity Following the Video - Program, Policy, Culture (20 min)

### Addressing Programming, Policy, and Culture

- Divide the participants into three groups, one each to discuss each of the domains of programming, policy, and culture.
- One member of the senior staff should accompany each group, and share what the camp is currently doing to be LGBTQ-affirming in the domain that they are assigned.
- [If time and camp needs allow] hold a space to brainstorm new ideas that the camp could use to enhance LGBTQ belonging at each of those levels.
- Each group should Present 2-3 sentences back to the main group.

## Closing and Next Steps

- Close by bringing the group back together and recapping either language from your own camp's mission statement focusing on belonging OR one of Keshet's Seven Jewish Values.
- Closing Activity - turn to a partner sitting near you and share the three takeaways from this entire presentation that helped you feel prepared to be a better ambassador this summer for all campers and staff at camp, including those who are LGBTQ.
- Remind participants that this is a work in progress, and that the entire camp community will be learning as they go. This is OK! Learning is a more important and sustainable goal than perfection.
- Remind participants that more resources and information are available at [www.keshetonline.org](http://www.keshetonline.org)

## Appendix 1: LGBTQ Terms and Concepts

*The following is an overview of the terms and concepts discussed in the first five videos. The following appendix offers facilitators more in-depth explanations of these terms and concepts, as well as some background on related terms that may come up in discussion.*

One thing that is helpful to clarify is that the acronym LGBTQ most commonly stands for “Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer.” In some settings, the “Q” can also stand for “Questioning.” You may also see the acronym shared as “LGBTQ+,” “LGBTQIA,” “LGBTQIA+,” “LGBTQ2S” (this is more common in Canada than the United States), or other variations. In these expanded acronyms, the “I” stands for “Intersex,” the “A” stands for “Asexual,” the “2S” stands for “Two Spirit,” (which is a gender term most commonly used by Indigenous and First Nations people), and the “+” indicates that no acronym can cover every possible sexual orientation or gender identity term. When deciding which version of the acronym to use, please consider what is most commonly used in your local community and which identities are represented and supported by the work, policies, etc. that you are describing.

What all of these acronyms have in common is that they represent a broad coalition of identities. Each of these identities is distinct, and the core concerns voiced by each group is different – and each individual even within an identity group likely brings different experiences and concerns to the table. However, there are enough common themes in the legal, political, cultural, and religious landscape impacting LGBTQ people that it has often been strategic for the LGBTQ community to work together to achieve greater equality, dignity, and safety.

### Axes of Identity

At Keshet, we talk about three axes of identity related to gender and sexuality: Sex Assigned at Birth, Gender Identity, and Sexual Orientation. Most people have at least one identity on each of these three axes, and each of these three axes functions independently of the other two. This means that for any individual, identities related to sex assigned at birth, gender identity, and sexual orientation can exist in any imaginable combination.

The following illustration may be helpful to those who prefer to process information visually:

#### Three Axes of Identity



*[Image description: A large blue triangle labeled “Three Axes of Identity.” The top point of the triangle is labeled “Sex Assigned at Birth,” the bottom left point is labeled “Gender Identity,” and the bottom right point is labeled “sexual orientation.”]*

Keshet recommends the following definitions for each of the three axes of identity:

**SEX ASSIGNED AT BIRTH (n):** *Refers to a person's assignment to a category at birth (or sometimes before birth, if an ultrasound is used), based upon a medical provider's perception of one's bodily characteristics (genitalia, chromosomes, hormones, etc.) as male, female, or intersex.*

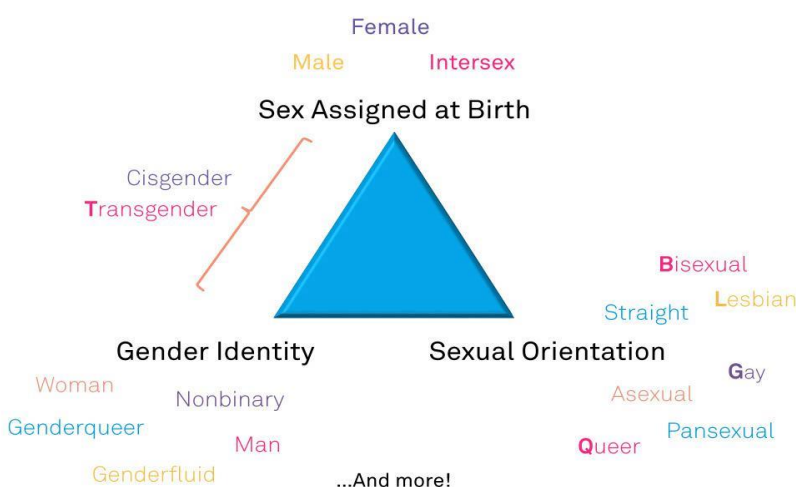
**GENDER IDENTITY (n):** *Refers to a person's inner understanding of the gender(s) with which they identify. This is each person's unique knowing or feeling, and is separate from a person's physical body or appearance (although often related).*

**SEXUAL ORIENTATION (n):** *A pattern of emotional, romantic, and/or sexual attractions. A sense of one's personal and social identity based on attractions. Describes whether and to whom one is attracted sexually, physically, romantically, etc.*

### Some Common Identity Terms

These terms are presented in the three categories described above. We do not represent these as a comprehensive list of all possible identities, or present our definitions as universal or authoritative. These are a selection of common English terms used in the local and national LGBTQ communities. Individuals may use these terms in ways that differ subtly from the definitions presented here, and some of these terms may have different connotations or shades of nuance in different communities. Each individual is the authority on their own lived experience, and will use the terms that are most authentic and affirming to their lived experience. It is always important to respect the particular terms that individuals use to describe themselves.

The following illustration places the terms below in relationship to the three axes of identity, and may be helpful to those who prefer to process information visually:





## SEX ASSIGNED AT BIRTH:

- INTERSEX (adj): A general term used to refer to people whose bodies defy a common understanding of sex as a simple male/female binary. Intersex continues to be widely accepted as an umbrella term referring to biological diversity affecting sexual and reproductive anatomy.
- FEMALE(adj./n): A label conferred by medical professionals at or before birth which is often associated with XX chromosomes and the production of certain hormones and sex characteristics. Not all people who are assigned female at birth display said characteristics.
- MALE (adj./n): A label conferred by medical professionals at or before birth which is often associated with XY chromosomes and the production of certain hormones and sex characteristics. Not all people who are assigned male at birth display said characteristics.

## GENDER IDENTITY:

- TRANSGENDER or TRANS (adj): An umbrella term for anyone who knows themselves to be a gender that is different from the gender they were assigned at birth. Some trans people may have a gender identity that is neither man nor woman, and for some people their gender identity may vary at different points in their lives. Transgender has its origin in the Latin-derived prefix trans, meaning “across” or “beyond.” Transgender is generally preferred over the antiquated “transsexual” to shift focus from body parts to internal sense of self. Some (often older) people self-identify as transsexual.
- CISGENDER (adj): A term describing anyone who knows themselves to be the gender they were assigned at birth. Antonym of transgender. Cisgender has its origin in the Latin-derived prefix cis, meaning “on the same side.”
- GENDER NON-CONFORMING (adj): Used to describe people whose gender expression does not align with societal expectations based on their perceived gender. Gender non-conforming is not the same as trans.
- GENDERQUEER (adj): Describes a gender identity that is queer (see below) or that deliberately rejects societal gender norms. Someone whose gender identity is neither man nor woman, is between or beyond gender, rejects binary gender, is some combination of genders. Can sometimes be used interchangeably with nonbinary.
- NONBINARY (adj): A gender identity that specifically rejects the notion of binary gender. Can sometimes be used interchangeably with genderqueer.
- FLUID(ITY) (adj/n): Describes an identity that changes over time within or between available options. Often combined with another identity, such as “genderfluid” or “sexually fluid.”

## SEXUAL ORIENTATION:

- LESBIAN (n/adj): Often describes a woman who is emotionally, spiritually, physically, and/or sexually attracted primarily to women. Some nonbinary people also identify as lesbians if they feel connected to womanhood and are primarily attracted to women.
- GAY (adj): Describes a person who is emotionally, spiritually, physically, and/or sexually attracted primarily to members of the same gender. (Often used by people who identify as men, though others in the LGBTQ+ community may also identify as gay.)



- **BISEXUAL (adj):** Describes an individual who is emotionally, spiritually, physically, and/or sexually attracted to more than one gender. Can sometimes be used interchangeably with Pansexual.
- **PANSEXUAL (adj):** Describes a person who is emotionally, spiritually, physically, and/or sexually attracted toward persons of all gender identities. Can sometimes be used interchangeably with Bisexual.
- **QUEER (adj/v):** 1) A term used to describe a sexual orientation that is not straight, without indicating the genders of the queer person or the people they are attracted to. Some people identify as queer because it doesn't reference gender, and some people prefer queer because it can expansively include attraction to people of a range of genders (used similarly to "pansexual" and "bisexual"). 2) An umbrella term used by some to describe lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. 3) Historically and currently used by some as a slur targeting those perceived to transgress "norms" of sexual orientation and/or gender expression, but for others, a word that has been reclaimed as a positive and affirmative part of their identity.
- **STRAIGHT (adj):** A person who is primarily emotionally, spiritually, physically, and/or sexually attracted toward persons of a different gender. This is another term for heterosexual.
- **HOMOSEXUAL (adj/n):** A person who is primarily emotionally, spiritually, physically, and/or sexually attracted toward persons of the same gender. Some LGBTQ elders self-identify with this term. However, based on a pathologizing and oppressive history, it is widely considered outdated and is not widely used.
- **ASEXUAL (adj):** An umbrella category describing those who experiences little or no sexual attraction. Identifying as asexual does not preclude any behavior, including dating and sex. Often abbreviated as Ace, asexual can also refer to the Asexuality Spectrum, which describes the range of experiences related to attraction. Demisexual (describing a person who feels sexual attraction only to someone with whom they have an emotional bond) and aromantic, (someone who experiences little or no romantic attraction to others) fall under the umbrella category of asexual.

### **Some Terms Describing Common Experiences**

These terms do not describe identities, but are important for understanding some common experiences that impact many members of the LGBTQ community.

- **BIPHOBIA (n):** The irrational fear of love, affection, or sexual behavior of people who identify as bisexual. Expressed as negative feelings, erasure, attitudes, actions, and institutional discrimination against those perceived as bi-sexual, or the fear of being perceived as bisexual.
- **CISNORMATIVE (adj):** Describes the social, cultural, institutional, and individual beliefs and practices that intentionally or unintentionally assume that cisgender experiences and identities are normative or universal.
- **DEADNAME (n, v):** The name given to a trans person when they were born which they no longer use. Also known as birth name. Deadnaming is the act of calling a trans person by their deadname.

- **GENDER ATTRIBUTION (n):** The situation in which an observer decides and assigns what they believe a person's gender is based on that person's gender expression. Gender attribution is always a guess, unless someone has explicitly shared their gender identity.
- **GENDER BINARY (n):** A system of thinking in which there are only two genders (man and woman). The gender binary posits these two genders as opposites and mutually exclusive, and forces all people in one of these two options. The gender binary is not universal and is not upheld by many cultures today and historically, including Talmudic Judaism. Western colonists have a history of forcibly imposing the gender binary on Indigenous and racialized people.
- **GENDER EXPRESSION (n):** The manner in which one outwardly expresses, signals, or performs their gender. Can encompass appearance (clothing, haircut, makeup, etc.), behavior, mannerisms, etc.
- **GENDER TRANSITION (n/v):** The process through which a trans person changes aspects of themselves to be more aligned with their gender. There is not one way to transition. Transition includes some or all of the following: cultural, legal, and medical adjustments; telling one's family, friends, and/or co-workers; changing one's name and/or sex on legal documents; electrolysis or laser hair removal; hormone therapy; different forms of surgery-including but not limited to chest and genital surgery. Gender transition is not a linear process, and is often influenced by one's access to information, community, and financial resources.
- **HETERONORMATIVE (adj):** Describes the social, cultural, institutional, and individual beliefs and practices that intentionally or unintentionally assume that heterosexual experiences and identities are normative or universal.
- **HOMOPHOBIA (n):** The irrational fear of love, affection, or sexual behavior between people of the same gender. Expressed as negative feelings, erasure, attitudes, actions, and institutional discrimination against those perceived as non-heterosexuals, or the fear of being perceived as non-heterosexual.
- **MISGENDER (v):** The act of incorrectly classifying another person's gender. Can refer to using the incorrect pronoun for someone, or using other incorrect gendered language (i.e. "sir" or "ma'am.")
- **PRONOUNS (n):** The part of speech used to refer to someone in the third person. Examples include she/her/hers, they/them/theirs, ze/hir/hirs, he/him/his. Pronouns are chosen by each individual and can only be known when shared. Sharing pronouns during introductions, in email signatures, and on nametags is now common practice in order to ensure all people are referred to respectfully. "Pronoun" is more accurate than the outdated phrase "preferred pronoun."
- **TRANSPHOBIA (n):** Irrational fear or hatred of people who break or blur gender roles and sex characteristics, which exists in both the heterosexual and LGBTQ communities. Expressed as negative feelings, erasure, attitudes, actions, and institutional discrimination against those perceived as transgender or gender nonconforming, or the fear of being perceived as transgender or gender nonconforming.

## Appendix 2: Some Facilitation Best Practices When Talking About Identity

One of the biggest blessings and real challenges when educating groups for greater justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion is the fact that, by definition, we will be teaching and training about issues that touch on the real identities and lived experiences of members of our communities. If you are an ally to (rather than a member of) the community you are working with to create greater equality and belonging in your community, this can sometimes feel uncomfortable or challenging. And if you *are* a member of the community you are educating about, there can be a different set of reasons why this might feel challenging as well as energizing and rewarding. All of this is completely normal, and we want to start out by affirming that talking and educating about identity can be different than other types of education work, and that it is a deeply effective tool for creating change!

All of that said, we offer you a few things to keep in mind and tools to help this work go more smoothly.

- Establish and Maintain Clear Boundaries For Learning Together
  - We have already offered you some recommended intentions / expectations to share with participants at the beginning of the program. These help guide the interactions that will take place throughout the session, and can be referred back to when necessary.
  - In particular, we have found that referring back to the “Growth and Learning Mindset” intention, with an invitation to “try on” a new idea is a great way to keep folks engaged.
  - The “Take Space / Make Space” intention can also be helpful when directing or redirecting the conversation.
- Use of Positive, Aspirational Language, Framing in Values
  - For those who are new to learning about LGBTQ identities and how to shift towards using more affirming language, it can often feel like a long list of “things not to do / say.” No one enjoys that feeling, and it is often not the most effective way to move a community towards any change!
  - Instead, focus on the positive core values that you *do* want your camp community to embody! Examples might include:
    - “We are building a camp in which everyone feels respected and safe.”
    - “We are doing this learning together in order to help meet our camp’s mission of \_\_\_\_\_”
    - “We are all here this summer because we believe in the power of camp to \_\_\_\_\_, and we are going to learn how to remove some barriers so that more campers and staff can access the magic of camp!”

- “We have always said that ‘kids come here to be their fullest selves,’ and we want to make that possible and safe for people of all genders and sexual orientations.”
- Etc.
- Transparency and Humility
  - Identity is really complex, nuanced, and highly personal for everyone! That means that when we are educating about identity, no one is an “expert” in anyone else’s identity, and everyone is an “expert” in their own identity. By setting this expectation from the beginning of the program and referring back to it consistently, you can create space for a more productive and respectful conversation. You can move yourself out of the role of “expert at the front of the room” and into the more helpful role of “facilitator of some learning that we are doing together.”
  - If you are asked a question that you do not know the answer to, it is totally fine to say “I don’t know!” You can follow that up with an invitation to learn more together about the question later, a suggestion to look in Keshet’s online Resource Library for more information, or let a participant know that you will look up this information and get back to them! Not only is this honest and transparent, it also models the kind of humility that you are teaching your camp staff to embody.
  - If you are feeling a little uncertain about a particular part of the program that you are going to present, it’s OK to name that! You can always share some variant of “I am still learning about this concept myself, but I think that it is really important, and so I want to share with you the information that Keshet provided.”
  - If a participant shares that something that you taught does not resonate with their lived experience, approach that moment with curiosity and humility, and allow them to share information that they feel is more representative of them if they so choose. This is easiest to do when you have already set the expectation that people are the experts in their own identities.
- Allowing for Humor
  - When learning about identities or how to create greater diversity, equity, and inclusion, many people default to seeing the conversation as “serious” or “fraught.” It does not need to be! Learning about LGBTQ identities and imagining ways to create affirming camps can be fun, conversations can be full of laughter, and folks can relax a little.
  - In fact, participants are much more open to new ideas when they have been able to relax and laugh together!
- Preparing for Non-Closure
  - A single staff training can do a tremendous amount to build a common vocabulary and set of expectations for building an LGBTQ affirming camp.

- However, it is not possible to cover every possible topic, equip camp staff with every possible tool, or be prepared for every possible circumstance in a single training.
  - This is OK! Expect that this training is a great opportunity to learn together, and that the work will become real as you try out the different tools referred to in these videos, incorporate this new language into your programming, and are able to work together to put this into action.
- Refer!
    - It is OK not to know everything! There are plenty of questions about identities, policies, real-world situations, etc. that are beyond the scope of an initial training.
    - You can always encourage participants to reach out to Keshet directly if they have specific questions about how to apply these learnings and would like additional support.

While we find consistently that most groups who engage in this kind of training are eager to learn, every once in a while we encounter participants who cross over the line from curiosity to inappropriateness, intentionally or unintentionally share comments that are homophobic, biphobic, or transphobic, or otherwise struggle to engage productively with the material or the trainer. While this is never a pleasant experience, it both speaks to the need for this kind of education, and can provide an opening for learning that is needed. Here are a few tools that we have found helpful when we encounter these moments.

- Pause and Breathe
  - While it is important to respond to these kinds of situations fairly promptly and directly, it is a great idea to take a few moments to breathe, make sure you are grounded, and gather your thoughts before answering.
  - You can be totally transparent about what you are doing! Try saying something like, “That feels really complicated / troubling / potentially hurtful. I am going to take a moment to think it through before I answer you.”
  - If you have already moved on past a moment that you realize may need to be addressed, you can still always say something like “I realize that I did not address your comment / respond enough to something that was said earlier. I actually want to take us back to that because \_\_\_\_\_.”
- Assess and Decide
  - If a challenging question or comment comes up, you can take a moment to get a sense of what might be behind the question or comment, what the impact on the other participants in the room might be, and what the most important things you want to say in response are.
  - Sometimes the most important goal of responding is helping the person who made the comment or asked the question see things in a new way. Other times a participant may be deeply entrenched in a particular viewpoint and not likely

to change, but you still have an opportunity to make expectations about specific behaviors/words clear, help others in the room see things in a new way, and make sure that people in the room who may be negatively affected by the comment or question see that it does not go unaddressed.

- You can also assess and decide how much depth and airtime your response to a particular question or comment needs to be. Sometimes a poorly-worded or invasive question might provide an opportunity for you to address something that many others in the room are wondering about, and you may want to go into more depth. Other times you may choose to meet a question or comment with a very brief, values-based answer and firmly redirect the conversation towards the material that you want to cover instead.
- Maintain Your Personal Boundaries
  - If you are educating about identities that you yourself hold, some questions might push your buttons or run up against your personal boundaries.
  - You always have autonomy to decide how to handle this. You never have to answer questions about your own lived experiences if you do not want to. You can always kindly but firmly decline to answer a question by saying something like, “That is actually a rather personal question, and I don’t generally share that with my colleagues.” If you feel comfortable pushing further, you might want to say something like, “I would invite you to consider whether you would ask that question of a straight / cisgender person, and think about why you feel that you want that information.”
- Refer Back to Core Values
  - It can be very powerful to respond to troubling comments with direct and positive language about what your camp’s values or the expectations of staff are. For example:
  - “At our camp, we refer to everyone with respect / do not use identity terms as jokes or insults.”
  - “We value diversity and equity at camp, and we want to make sure that everyone feels safe and affirmed here.”
  - “We are asking staff to change some of the language that they use to ensure that everyone can feel dignified at camp.”
- Respect and Dignity
  - Everyone learns best when they feel that they are respected as a human being. This includes participants who might not currently be on the same page that you are when discussing LGBTQ identities or LGBTQ-affirming practices.
  - Even when firmly correcting assumptions or harmful language, it is possible - and strategic - to do that without actively shaming or belittling anyone.
  - For example, rather than saying “Why would you say that? That’s so transphobic!” you might make the point more clearly and effectively by saying something like “There is actually a long history of transgender people being



made the target of jokes like X and Y, and your comment plays into that history and could be really hurtful to someone.”

- Acknowledge the Journey
  - When working for LGBTQ equality and belonging, we are often asking people to re-examine deeply held assumptions or comfortable (for them) patterns of interacting. It can be helpful to acknowledge that this is being asked.
  - It can also be helpful to model a piece of learning that you yourself have gone through. You might try saying things like
  - “Many of us are taught X and Y, and I know that it can feel awkward to think about things differently at first.”
  - “I am not always perfect at this - I am working pretty hard to make fewer assumptions when I speak, but I’m trying and I can see that it makes a difference for people.”
  - “I used to really struggle with X, but then I encountered Y [anonymous real world situation], and realized that I should prioritize someone else’s dignity over my own comfort.”
- Ask For Backup
  - Finally, you do not have to handle every situation on your own! We have specifically requested that participating camps send a team of 2-6 facilitators so that you can support one another.
  - You can ask your colleagues “are you willing to take that question?”
  - You can also plan with senior staff who are in the training with you to step in if an interaction becomes difficult or disrespectful.

As a reminder, we have found these situations to be fairly rare. Most program participants come to our trainings expecting to learn about this material, and genuinely wanting to know how to make their communities LGBTQ-affirming.

## Appendix 3: Frequently Asked Questions (And Some Answers!)

While we cannot predict each and every question that might come up, below are a few questions that we encounter fairly regularly. We are glad to share them with you in advance, as well as a few tips and resources for answering them.

- **Why should we be talking about sexual orientation? The campers we serve are so young, it would not be appropriate to talk to them about sexuality at all!**
  - A: There is a big difference between talking about sex (which should happen in age-appropriate ways, with the appropriate adults, and with clearly communicated boundaries) and talking about sexual orientation. We already talk about orientation fairly frequently with children from a very young age, and communicate many messages about sexual orientation through the types of families that we represent in media or conversations, assumptions that we make about who might be in their families, and structures that assume straightness as a norm.
  - Because of anti-LGBTQ bias, many people tend to think of a sentence like “I will ask my husband what time he thinks he’ll be here” as completely unrelated to sexuality when it is said by a straight woman, but view the same sentence as an act of “coming out” when it is shared by a gay or bisexual man or nonbinary person.
- **Why should we be having these conversations specifically about LGBTQ campers and staff – doesn’t this all boil down to “be respectful and kind,” regardless of identity? Why should LGBTQ people be singled out?**
  - Yes! All people of all identities deserve to show up in our camps and communities and be treated with dignity and respect! You will notice that many of the tools, values, and big-picture concepts that we are discussing apply to many other historically-marginalized groups, and some of our exercises seek specifically to build on these connections.
  - However, LGBTQ people are often singled out for very specific types of bias and discrimination, and in order to combat that we need to talk about the specifics of how anti-LGBTQ bias and heteronormative and cisnormative structures impact LGBTQ people.
  - We encourage those using this curriculum to seek to learn more about the universal big-picture principles of respect and dignity, and *also* to learn about the specific ways in which many groups may be experiencing barriers to access or bias in communal spaces.



- **Young people joke about everything! How can we teach them to be respectful of all identities without taking away their sense of fun and humor?**
  - We love humor! We can tell a good joke (or at least we think so)! And no one's identity or lived experience should be the punchline of anyone's joke. There are so many wonderful ways to laugh and joke together that don't come at anyone's expense.
  - Yes, young people are still learning, and will sometimes make mistakes or say things that are hurtful. Rather than shaming them or giving the message that all fun is off-limits, the educators in their lives should compassionately teach them about the importance of kindness and respect, and help them grow into the thoughtful, reflective, and kind people that they can be.
  
- **We serve campers and families from a wide range of religious and political backgrounds. How can we make sure that our more conservative campers and families feel respected?**
  - Everyone deserves to be respected at camp, and that includes campers and staff of all religious and political backgrounds. No one should ever be belittled for their background or their beliefs.
  - Creating an LGBTQ-affirming environment does not take away from the dignity of any non-LGBTQ person.
  
- **Aren't we all being too sensitive about this? Minor conflict, misunderstandings, and even mild teasing are just a part of life!**
  - Conflict and misunderstanding are indeed a part of life. We want all campers and staff to be able to navigate conflict and misunderstandings in ways that are healthy and respectful. However, identity-based bullying and harassment, bias, and access to programming and facilities is not the same as minor conflict or misunderstandings, and they can cause real harm if left unaddressed. We want to make sure that camp staff are equipped to deal with these issues as well!
  
- **How can I be an effective advocate for my campers if I am still not totally comfortable with these ideas myself?**
  - We are fond of saying that you do not have to fully understand someone in order to treat them with respect. It is OK that you are still learning about what LGBTQ identities are, or wrestling with how the lived experiences of LGBTQ people might challenge some of the assumptions about the world that many of us are taught. In fact, it's better to be honest about where you are in your learning, because it is the only way to engage in learning!

- **If we make an accommodation for one camper, won't we then have to make that accommodation for everyone?**
  - Sometimes! Occasionally it happens that when we try doing something differently to better serve one person or group, we realize that a different way of doing things actually benefits many people, and it turns out that lots of people want to try things the new way. This can be a very good thing, and can give us an opportunity think differently about why we do things the ways that we do.
- **What should we do about same-gender couples who bunk together?**
  - There have always been same-gender couples at camp. When we make single-gender bunking assignments under the assumption that it will prevent couples from bunking together, we miss the opportunity to set and clearly communicate expectations.
  - Rather than assuming that there will be no couples bunked together and then responding after the fact once there are couples, camps are better served by setting clear expectations about what bunk space is and is not for - for all campers - and being consistent about those expectations throughout the summer.
  - For example, rather than having to single out a given couple, we can teach all campers from the beginning of the summer that bunks are shared public space, and that out of respect for their bunkmates, no one should expect to be able to conduct private activities in the bunk. The same expectations go for all communal spaces at camp.
- **How can transgender and nonbinary people be placed in bunks in ways that will be safe and affirming?**
  - It is incredibly important for the genders of transgender and nonbinary people to be affirmed in all matters, including access to safe and dignified physical facilities at camp.
  - Transgender boys should be able to bunk in boys bunks and transgender girls should be able to bunk in girls bunks, because transgender boys are boys and transgender girls are girls.
  - Some camps also offer all-gender bunking options. We consider this an important best practice to allow a maximal number of campers (and staff!) to access camp. When such an option is available, it should be offered on the same footing to campers of all genders - and transgender campers should not be required or urged to select these bunks.
  - Many camps offer only girls and boys bunks. This can pose a problem for nonbinary campers and staff, who are then faced with a situation in which there is no available bunk that aligns with their gender. Although we consider it a best

practice to also offer an all-gender bunking option, when that is truly not possible a next-best option is to be transparent with nonbinary campers and staff, and defer to them on how they would like to navigate the available options.

- See Keshet's [Guide to LGBTQ-Affirming Camps](#) for more information, guidelines, and sample bunking policies.
- **Who should we tell if we have a transgender camper?**
  - That is entirely up to the camper!
  - Some campers may come to camp differently gendered than they were in a previous summer, and gladly make all members of the camp community aware. This should be respected and celebrated.
  - Some campers may wish to make a few select staff members aware that they are transgender for a variety of reasons, or may wish to have a plan in place to share this information with certain staff members if and only if it becomes relevant to their experience or needs at camp. This approach should also be respected and celebrated.
  - Some campers may not wish for any members of the staff to know that they are transgender. There may be no reason why their being transgender would be relevant at camp, and they may consider this private information. This approach should also be respected and celebrated.
- **What should we do if a camper comes out at camp? What if they do not want us talking about this with their parents?**
  - If a camper comes out at camp, affirm them, and treat them the same way you would treat any other camper sharing details of their life with their camp community.
  - Listen to understand what “coming out” means to that camper and respond accordingly. For some, coming out is not a big deal, and they expect and receive affirmation from most of the people in their lives. For others, coming out is a major event and cause for celebration. For others, coming out can feel stressful or frightening - and camp might be a wonderful opportunity for a “test run” before coming out in other areas of life. For still others, coming out can be truly risky - unfortunately there are still far too many young people who face being kicked out of the family home, violence, or loss of access to important resources or connections as a possible result of coming out.
  - Trust young people to know what they want from you in terms of sharing or not sharing this information, and respect their privacy if asked.
  - If you have concerns about whether a particular situation would come under the category of mandated reporting, please contact your supervisor or unit head to think through the specifics of the situation.

- What if parents are upset that we are being so direct in our language about being an LGBTQ-affirming camp?
  - We use direct and clear language when talking about LGBTQ-affirming camps precisely because LGBTQ youth and families often face situations in which they are not sure whether they will be safe, dignified, or welcome. Unfortunately, many LGBTQ people have experience with communities that use language such as “everyone is welcome” not applying that welcome to LGBTQ people, and are looking for specific indications that their identities will be treated with dignity.
  - It can be helpful for most staff to have a few simple one-line answers about why we value diversity and seek to affirm and support every camper, and defer the more challenging conversations to camp leadership.

## Appendix 4: Handouts And Materials

Training Handouts:

- Bingo Cards
- Pronoun Chart
- Seven Jewish Values

## Terminology Bingo

**Instructions:** Please fill out this card by finding one person who knows the definition of the word in the box. Have them tell you the definition of the word, write their name where it says: Name! You may only use each person once!

When you fill in every name shout BINGO!!!

Who Can Define:

Kavod Name:	Sexual Orientation Name:	LGBTQ Name:
Gender Identity Name:	Cisgender Name:	Transgender Name:
Heteronormative Name:	Self-Determination Name:	Binary Name:

Subjective	Objective	Possessive	Reflexive	Example
She	Her	Hers	Herself	The challah is hers. She created the recipe herself. This loaf is for her.
They	Them	Theirs	Themselves /Themselves	This babka is theirs. They created the recipe themselves. This one is for them.
He	Him	His	Himself	The kibbeh is his. He created the recipe himself. This one is for him.
Ze	Hir	Hirs	Hirself	The hamentaschen are hirs. Ze created the recipe hirself. This one is for hir.
Ze	Zir	Zirs	Zirself	The dafina is zirs. Ze created the recipe zirself. This bowl is zirs.

## Pronouns

# Seven Jewish Values

Guidelines for inclusive Jewish community

## Kavod: Respect

כבוד

Judaism teaches us to treat ourselves and others with respect; even the stranger is to be treated with respect. Kavod is a feeling of regard for the rights, dignity, feelings, wishes, and abilities of others. Teasing and name-calling disrespect and hurt everyone, so learn to respect people's differences.

## Shalom Bayit: Peace in the Home

שלום בית

Our community centers, synagogues, youth groups, and camps are often our second homes. Everyone needs to feel comfortable, safe, and respected at home. Don't ostracize those who seem different. Strive to settle disagreements in peaceful and respectful ways that allow all community members to maintain their dignity.

## B'tzelem Elohim: In God's Image

בצלם אלוהים

The Torah tells us that we are all created "b'tzelem Elohim" (Bereshit 1:26), in the image of God. This is a simple and profound idea that should guide our interactions with all people. If we see each person as created in the image of God, we can see humanity and dignity in all people. True inclusion is built upon this foundation.

## Kol Yisrael Arevim Zeh Bazei: Communal Responsibility

כל ישראל ערבים זה בזה

The Jewish principle that "All Israel is responsible for one another" (Shavuot 39a) means each of us must take action and inspire others to create a community in which we can all take pride.

## Sh'mirat Halashon: Guarding One's Use of Language

שמירת הלשון

The Talmud warns us that we must take care in how we use language. Talking about others behind their backs, even if what we are saying is true, is prohibited. The guidelines for "sh'mirat halashon" remind us that what we say about others affects them in ways we can never predict. Words can hurt or heal depending on how we use them.

## V'ahavta L'reiacha Kamocha: Love your neighbor as yourself

ואהבת לרעך כמוך

Commenting on Leviticus 19:18, "Love your neighbor as yourself," Rabbi Hillel once stated that this is the foundational value of the Torah. It begins with loving ourselves. We must love and accept our whole selves, and in doing so create the capacity for extending that love and acceptance to others.

## Al Tifrosh Min Hatsibur: Solidarity

אל תפרוש מן הציבור

"Don't separate yourself from the community" (Pirke Avot 2:5). When you feel different from others in your community, don't isolate yourself. Find allies and supporters who you can talk to. If you know someone who is feeling isolated, reach out; be an ally and a friend.