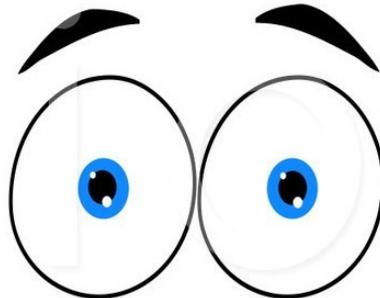




“**Positive Space** is a program that was developed at the University of Toronto in 1996 and has now been adopted at most universities in Canada. Positive Space refers to an agency that is open and welcoming, as well as equitable and accessible to persons of all sexual and gender diversities, both to clients and employees of the agency. The term also refers to an agency in which all staff has been trained to understand the issues around sexual and gender diversity and are familiar with human rights, diversity and resources.” (Ontario Public Health Association: A Positive Space is a Health Space. June 2006).



What does a positive space look like?

- ❖ Written and graphic materials, images, artwork and signage welcome and are inclusive of LGBT people. This could include displays of the rainbow flag, images of same-sex couples, posters and information relevant to the local LGBT community, displays of the organization’s participation at the Pride Parade, etc.
- ❖ LGBT literature and materials, such as newspapers, magazines and brochures are accessible in common areas of the home, i.e., front lobby sitting area, a LGBT section in the library, LGBT themed videos and DVDs, inclusion and announcements of LGBT programs and services being offered in the organization are included in newsletters.
- ❖ Written materials offered to the public clearly reflect non-discrimination policies and practices and reflects a LGBT welcoming environment. This would include information provided to the public during tours of the home.



What does a positive space sound like?

- ❖ Written forms and assessments are inclusive, i.e., the use of partner instead of husband/wife; gender options beyond male or female
- ❖ There is a broad definition of family to include “family of choice;”
- ❖ Staff and volunteers are knowledgeable and comfortable in the use of inclusive language and it is reflected in their language in day-to-day discussions.
- ❖ Inappropriate jokes or language are not tolerated.
- ❖ Residents speak freely of their past and present lives as LGBT people.



What does a positive space feel like?

- ❖ The identities and relationships of LGBT residents and their families and friends are acknowledged, affirmed and respected.
- ❖ Residents feel safe. For example: A same-sex couple would feel comfortable showing appropriate affection without fear. A transgender resident who does not want her transgender status shared with other residents would feel confident that this confidential information would be kept confidential by staff.
- ❖ There are accessible and supportive processes available in the home that allow residents, family, volunteers and staff to raise issues and concerns, to feel that they are heard and that issues will be followed-up on.

*This was adapted from “Diversity: Our Strength”