

# LGBTQ TA CENTER

# Equity News

December 2019

*The **Equity Newsflash** is a monthly announcement featuring news and upcoming events related to supporting the health and wellness of diverse LGBTQ Californians.*

## Staying well during the holidays



The holidays can be a time of great joy, but they can also exacerbate stress, anxiety, and depression for many in the LGBTQ community. Spending time with family members who aren't affirming of them can make this a difficult time for LGBTQ folks. Even for those who are no

longer in contact with their families, the holidays can recall painful memories of rejection and conflict.

We put together the tips below to help you, your team, and your service recipients stay healthy and well throughout the holiday season.

### ***Tips for Clients and Community Members:***

- Stay involved with your support network throughout the season. Be ready to reach out to key friends, chosen family, and loved ones if things become difficult or confrontational with family.
- Set boundaries with family. For example, give yourself permission to say "no" to participating in family events or traditions or stay at a hotel instead of at a family member's home.
- Make (and stick to) a self-care plan. Identify things that might be activating for you before you go to family or holiday events, as well as coping strategies, affirmations, and resources that can help you in these moments.
- Choose to participate authentically. If you're feeling anxious about or constrained by expectations that family members had of you in the past, make a deliberate choice to express aspects of your personality, your gender, or your orientation that reflect who you are now.
- Be aware of your own anxiety or stress when it arises. Acknowledging and naming these feelings can help you release them. When the stress is coming from memories of the past or worries about the future, make a conscious choice to stay present.
- Continue your good health habits. Resist the urge to self-medicate -- for example, alcohol is often abundant during the holidays, but it can worsen symptoms of depression as well as conflicts with family. If you regularly enjoy engaging in sports or other physical activities, try to keep it up during the holidays.

#### ***Sources:***

[Self-Care During the Holidays](#) (The Trevor Project)

[Five Tips for LGBTQ People on Surviving Holiday Depression](#) (Out Magazine)

[8 Tips for LGBTQ People to Lower Holiday Stress](#) (Bilerico Project)

### ***Tips for Service Providers:***

- Think about how the holidays impact you. Are you busier or more stressed than usual? Are there events or interactions that you know are likely to be difficult for you? How does this impact the way you come to your work?
- Emotional challenges can take many forms during the holidays. Interacting with or remembering past harms from family members who are rejecting of LGBTQ identity can be very painful. Examples of other stressors include loneliness, grief, financial anxiety, partners' expectations, seasonal depression, and the stress that comes with being extra busy. Helping service recipients name what is difficult for them can help with creating the right wellness plan.
- A trauma-informed approach involves asking what helps and what harms. Not all of your team members may be conscious of the emotionally difficult time that the holidays can be -- for LGBTQ people, for clients who have experienced grief and loss, or for others. When appropriate, help your team become aware of the "holiday blues" and other challenges that their service recipients may be experiencing, as well as how to support them.
- For many people, one of the stresses of the holiday season is the expectation that it is the most "wonderful time of the year," which may not resonate with their experience. Be proactive about asking your team and your service recipients what the holidays bring up for them. Acknowledge that the holidays can be hard and that

there isn't one right way to experience them.

- As you support your service recipients and team members in doing healthy self-care (see above for tips), make sure to prioritize your own wellness, too. Set appropriate boundaries between your work and home life. Be present for the holiday rituals that sustain you.

**Sources:**

[Recognizing Holiday Triggers of Trauma](#) (SAMHSA)

[Mental Health Disorders Differ from Holiday Blues](#) (Discover Mood & Anxiety Program)

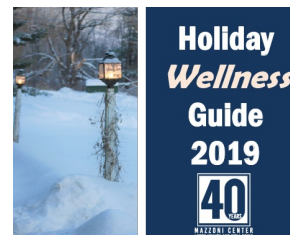
[Holiday Self-Care for Behavioral Health Professionals, Part 1: Take Your Own \(Expert\) Advice](#) (Consilium)



**More Resources:**

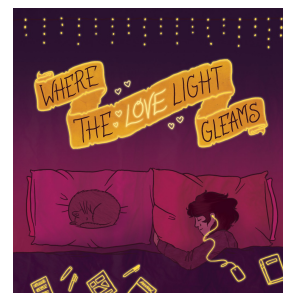
**[Holiday Wellness Guide 2019](#)**

The folks at Mazzone Center's Behavior Health program understand how stressful the holidays can be, especially for the LGBTQ community. That's why they created a Holiday Survival Guide. From navigating stressful conversations and strained relations with your family of origin, to coping with a break-up or loss, to staying sober, to beating the winter blues, this survival guide is packed with tips and advice for LGBTQ folks.



**[Where the Love Light Gleams](#)**

"Where the Love Light Gleams" is a free collection of holiday-specific self-care tools from *Everyone Is Gay* for LGBTQ humans. Tools include a music playlist, a crossword puzzle, a journaling page, a coloring page, and a holiday-themed comic!



**News**

**Doctors call for banning**

# conversion therapy

The American Medical Association (AMA) has voted to advocate for a nationwide ban on conversion therapy. Additional new AMA recommendations include maintaining fully inclusive electronic health records for transgender patients, educating staff on gender and sexual identities, and closing the race-based pay gap within the AMA.

[Learn More](#)

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## "Religious beliefs" exemption struck down

In November, two federal judges in two days struck down a proposed Trump Administration rule that would have allowed health care workers to refuse care on the basis of "religious beliefs or moral convictions." One of the judges described the rule as "discrimination by another name."

[Learn More](#)

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## Most high schools don't have GSAs

In spite of evidence that [Gay Straight Alliances \(GSA\) lower suicide risk for all students](#) only three states have GSAs in more than half of their high schools. In California, approximately 45% of secondary schools report having a GSA or similar club.

[Learn More](#)

### Upcoming Events

## Co-occurring disorders

# conference

**Register: Finding Freedom - LGBTQ Symposium**  
January 24-25 | Palm Springs, CA

[Register](#)

The Finding Freedom Symposium is about bringing forward relevant information for best practices in supporting the LGBTQ community with co-occurring disorders. This year's theme is "**LGBTQ Recovery, Health, Wellness, and Longevity.**" The conference is open to the community, treatment professionals, doctors, therapists, and anyone who is interested in the unique issues of LGBTQ co-occurring disorders treatment.

FINDING  DOM  
JANUARY 24-25, 2020

## Gender-affirming medical care training

**Register: Comprehensive Medical Care for Transgender and Gender-Nonbinary Patients**

February 8 | Los Angeles, CA

[Register](#)

The UCLA Gender Health Program presents an up-to-date, comprehensive and in-depth compendium of gender-affirming medical care. This course will feature sessions on gender-sensitive cultural awareness, behavioral health care, primary care, and medical and surgical gender-affirming interventions. This course is targeted toward anyone interested in in-depth exposure to medical care for this population, including physicians (in practice and in training) and allied health professionals in primary care, endocrinology, plastic surgery, urology, obstetrics/gynecology, as well as mental health professionals, social workers and nurses, and students of all above disciplines.

## Supporting queer trans people of color conference

## Register: 15th Queer Trans People of Color Conference

February 28-29 | Riverside, CA

[Register](#)

QTPOCC is organized to focus on people of color who are part of the LGBTQ+ community. People of all sexualities and gender identities are welcome to attend. The conference is hosted by University of California Riverside, and it is focused towards people on college campuses (students, staff, and faculty).



Contact the LGBTQ TA Center:

<http://lgbtq-ta-center.org/contact-us/>

1-877-568-4227

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