

# Employee Assistance Program *Tip Sheet*

## Creating Safe Spaces: Supporting LGBTQ+ Inclusion



Creating a workplace where LGBTQ+ employees feel safe and supported is essential to both well-being and performance. Research highlighted by organizations like *Harvard Business Review* shows that inclusion is driven less by intent and more by everyday behaviors that build trust and psychological safety.

The following are practical ways to support inclusion:

- **Normalize sharing (but don't require it):** Including pronouns in email signatures or introductions can create space for others without putting pressure on anyone to disclose.
- **Respond, don't ignore:** If you hear a dismissive comment or joke, address it calmly. Even a simple "Let's keep this respectful" can shift the tone.
- **Check your assumptions:** Avoid guessing someone's identity, partner, or experiences. Let people define themselves in their own time.
- **Create visible signals of safety:** Inclusive language in meetings, policies, or team norms helps communicate that respect is expected and supported.
- **Listen and validate:** If someone shares a concern or experience, focus on listening rather than fixing. Feeling heard is a key part of psychological safety.
- **Be consistent year-round:** Inclusion isn't a one-time effort. Ongoing, everyday actions matter more than occasional gestures.

Building a safe space is about creating an environment where people don't have to edit who they are to belong. Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) offers confidential guidance and resources to help you build inclusive workplaces, navigate sensitive conversations, and support your well-being.

Reference: Harvard Business Review. Research: To Excel, Diverse Teams Need Psychological Safety. <https://hbr.org/2022/03/research-to-excel-diverse-teams-need-psychological-safety>; Human Rights Campaign: Understanding Best Practices in LGBTQ+ Inclusion. <https://www.hrc.org/resources/understanding-best-practices-in-lgbtq-inclusion>

**Call 24/7: 1.800.765.0770**

**Website: EAPHelplink.com**

**Code: LOYOLA**