

Implications for Case Management

The social ecological framework provides context for understanding how case managers can support LGBTQIA+ students. Social ecology explores the interdependence of people/ individuals and their environments. Specifically, social ecology understands the world through the lens of how people, environments, and institutions interact in order to increase our understanding of how we affect the world we live in. When conceptualizing how to support and work with LGBTQIA+ students, looking beyond the specific campus environment is critical to understanding what services and care a student may need.

Using a strength-based approach, the case manager can assist in building resilience, creating social structures for support, and allowing individual students to not only recognize but celebrate the strengths they have within. (Asakura, 2016). Key tasks of a case manager should be to advocate for equity and inclusion at the campus level, generate and identify supportive elements and protective factors with the individual, and work toward developing a network of support on and off campus. Case managers have the ability and the resources to foster change in the larger social aspects of the campus environment while also serving the student at the individual/personal level.

Key considerations for case managers when working with this population:

1. Honor the student's sexual orientation, gender expression, and/or gender identity.
It is important to align your terminology and language with that of the student by using their preferred names, pronouns, and other terminology or identifiers.
2. Never assume and when in doubt ask. Humility, empathy, and respect go a long way.
3. Ensure that intake forms, brochures, and other paperwork use inclusive language related to sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.
4. Be familiar with campus resources such as LGBTQIA+ groups, student organizations, etc., and consider keeping a map of gender inclusive or gender neutral bathrooms available on campus.
5. Know your institutional policies regarding changing student names in the student record and housing for gender non-conforming and transgender students. Advocate for systems level change whenever appropriate.