

Building Inclusive Schools and Communities for LGBTQ+ and Gender Diverse Youth

EmpowerMT

With

Heidi Wallace, Spencer Czech, &
Jonathan Dominguez



Introductions & Pronouns

Introducing pronouns helps people know how you'd like to be referred to without using your name. It also opens the way for other people to share theirs.

He, him, and his.

She, her, and hers.

They, them, and theirs.

Ze, zir, and zirs.

- *These are not the only pronouns that people can use, but are the most common examples we encounter.*
- *Please note that some people go by multiple sets of pronouns or by certain sets of pronouns among only certain audiences.*
- *People's genders tend to be private, the sharing of pronouns should not be taken as an invitation to ask for potentially private information about someone's gender.*



WHO IS EMPOWER MONTANA?



EmpowerMT creates a more just and inclusive society by developing youth and adult leaders who work to end mistreatment, correct systemic inequalities and strengthen communities across Montana.

AREAS OF WORK

YOUTH AND SCHOOLS



BUSINESSES & ORGANIZATIONS



COMMUNITIES



OUR VISION & HOW WE'LL GET THERE

Vision: Our goal today is to support you! We will create a long-term collective impact by empowering participants with skills to transform their school & organizational cultures into more safe and inclusive environments for LGBTQ+ and Gender Diverse Youth.

Goals:

- * To learn skills in identifying our own cultural lenses and in understanding the lenses of others.
- * To build a shared language and foundation of understanding around oppression and its impact on LGBTQ+ and Gender Diverse youth.
- * Identify skills and actions necessary to improve multi-tiered systems of support for LGBTQ+ and Gender Diverse Youth.
- * Build tools for effective leadership, collaboration and advocacy in the school and community.

Methodology & Agreements:

- Experience and Participate
- Suspend Judgement/Invite Curiosity
- Confidentiality
- Listen with respect

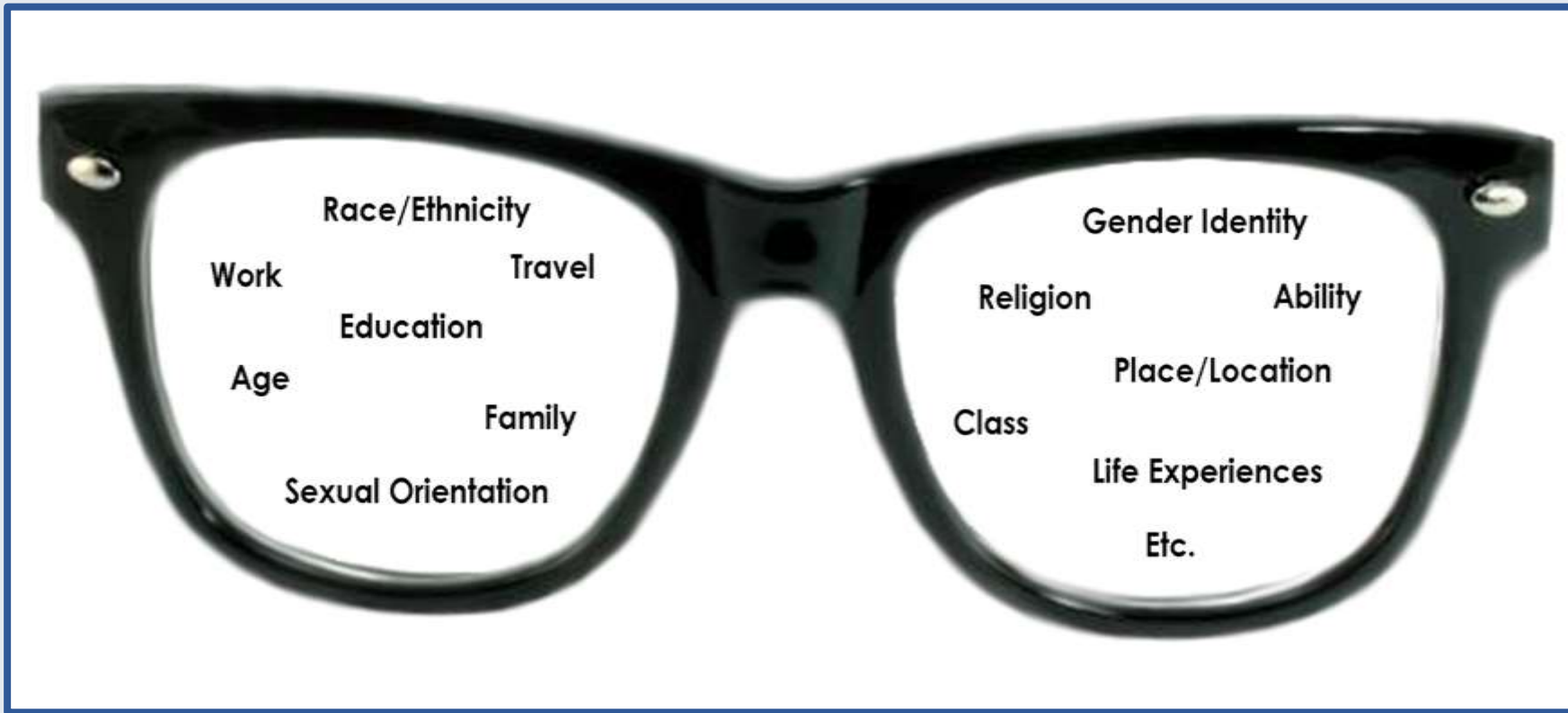
Using a youth's correct name and pronouns predicted a:

- 5.37-unit decrease in depressive symptoms
- 29% decrease in suicidal ideation
- 56% decrease in suicidal behavior

Source: Russell et al. 2018

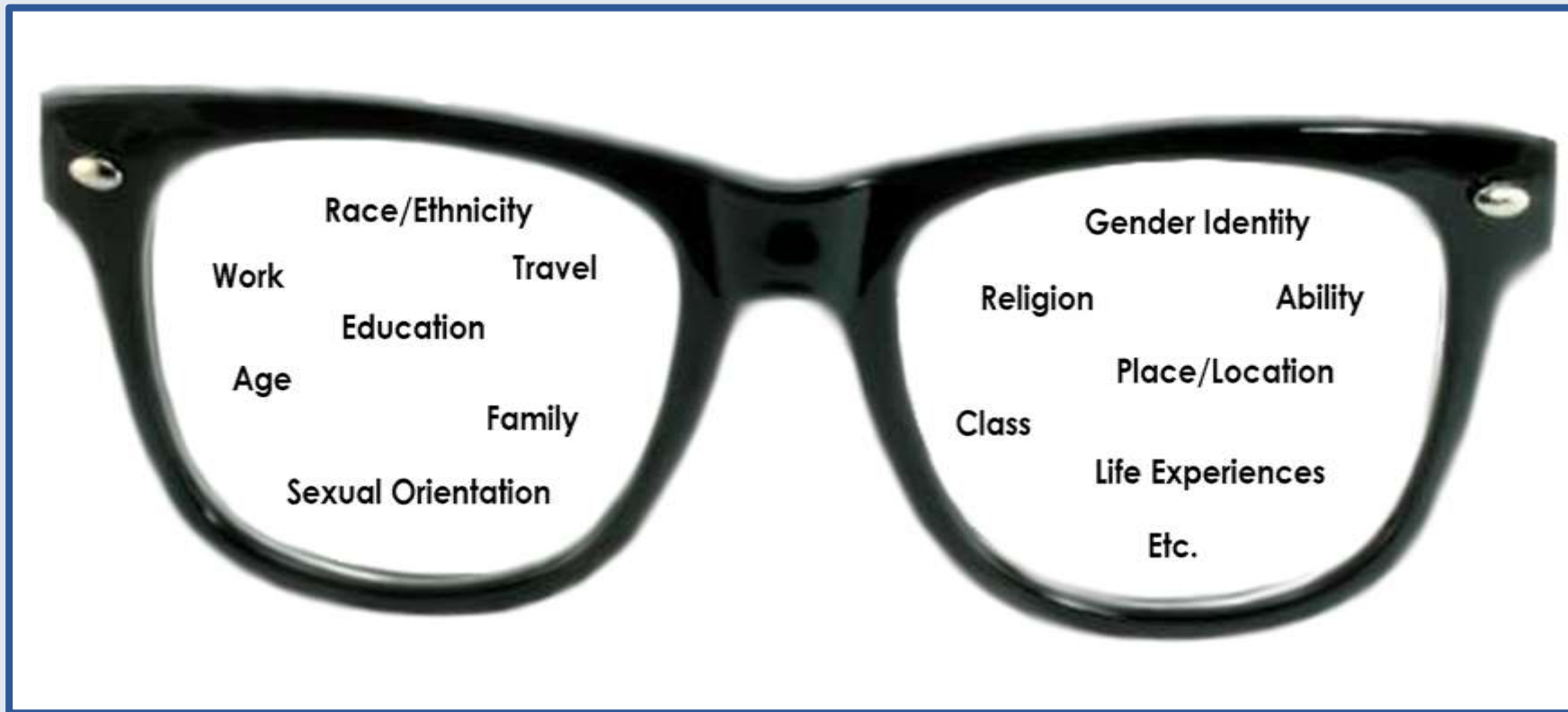


FRAME OF REFERENCE



Assumptions:

- We all have “lenses”, identities that we carry which inform our interactions with our world.
- Awareness of our identities and how they inform us helps to create empathy with others.
- No set of “lenses” are the same.



FRAME OF REFERENCE

- What are some of your most significant lenses?
- What is a lense that might bring you confidence as a service provider working with LGBTQ+ youth?
- What is a lense that might be a challenge or barrier when working with LGBTQ+ youth?

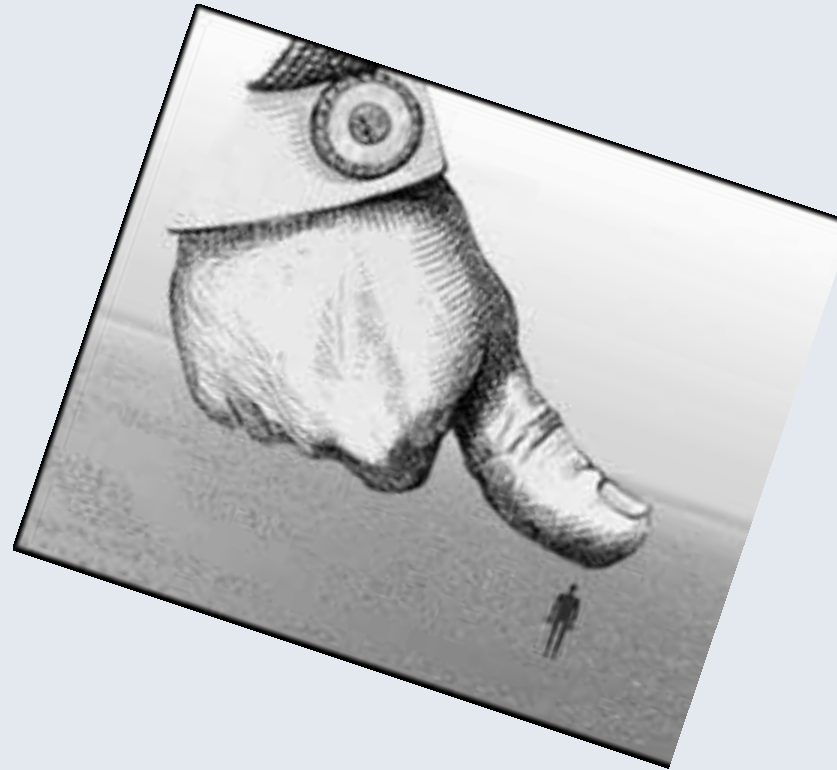
DEFINITIONS

- 1. Prejudice:** Internal perspective based on experience or lack of experience
- 2. Discrimination:** External behavior informed by prejudice
- 3. Systematic:** Ongoing, repetitive, historical, embedded, pervasive.
- 4. Oppression:** Results from the misuse of institutional power and privilege where one person or group benefits at the expense of another.

CYCLE OF OPPRESSION

MISINFORMATION:

Missing information, No
Information,
Stereotypes, Limited
Interactions,
Disinformation



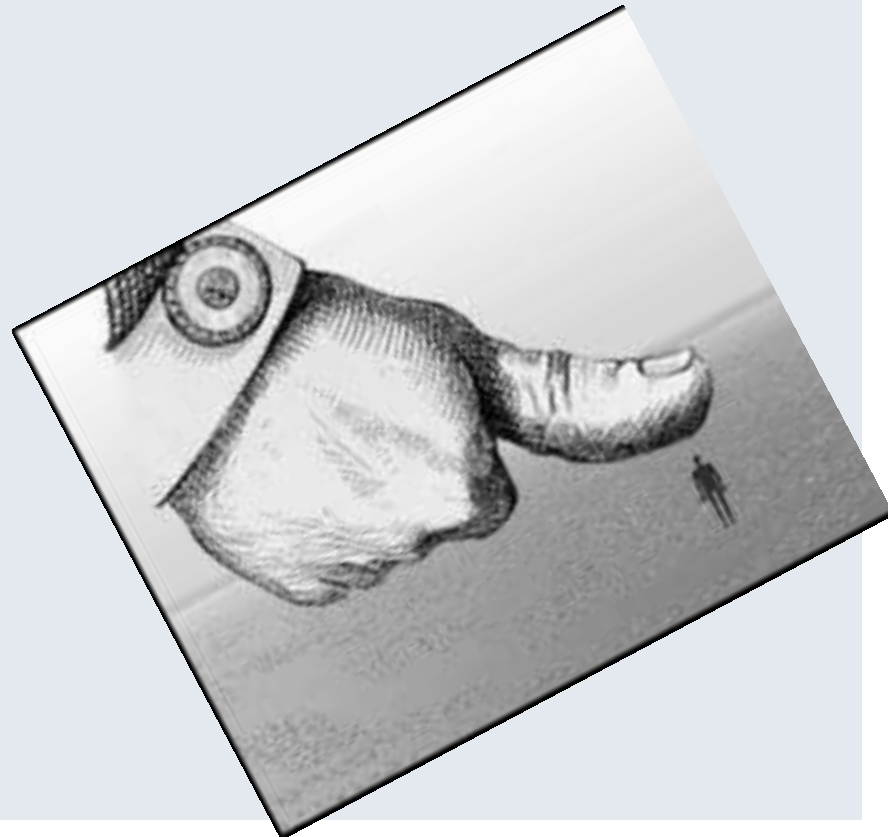
MISTREATMENT:

Segregation, Isolation, Targeting, Devaluing



MISINFORMATION:

No Information, Stereotypes,
Limited Interactions, Records



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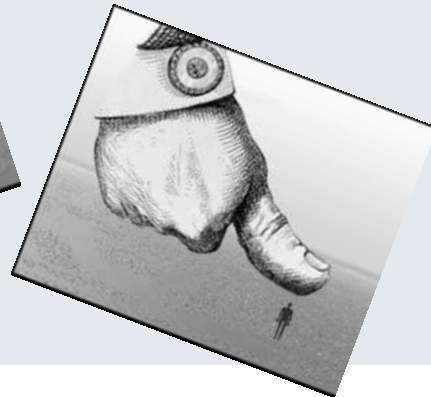


MISINFORMATION:

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Institutionalization:

Laws, rules, policies which
normalize mistreatment



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INTERNALIZATION:

Taking in and acting upon the
stated or implied messages about
our own groups. Applicable to both targeted and
the agent groups.



LEADERSHIP SKILLS TO INTERRUPT THE CYCLE OF OPPRESSION

Transforming Institutions: Utilizing our individual and collective strengths to recognize, challenge, and change inequitable policies and practices.

- Implementing sound policies, procedures and protocols. Examples: Indian Ed for All, Civil Rights Act, Missoula Non-discrimination Ordinance, school policy

Building and Strengthening Authentic Relationships: Commitment to non-judgmentally reach for and develop authentic relationships with people from diverse groups.

LEADERSHIP SKILLS TO INTERRUPT THE CYCLE OF OPPRESSION

Cultivate Resilience: Taking time to evaluate internalized messages from internal and external sources to increase our abilities to think well about ourselves and others.

- Actions to cultivate include: SOCIAL CONNECTION, INTERNAL REFLECTION, EMOTIONAL ACCEPTANCE, HUMOR, self-kindness, shared humanity, inspiration - seeking out roles models for resiliency

Positive Communication Skills Confronting actions that build on oppressive systems by engaging in discussions with people from a place of curiosity instead of judgement

- Confronting actions that build on oppressive systems by engaging in discussions with people from a place of curiosity instead of judgement.
 - Stopping the Behavior
 - Shifting Attitudes

BEST PRACTICES

- ★ Use the name and pronouns the young person asks you to.
 - It's ok to make mistakes, just apologize, move on, and work to do better next time.
- ★ Don't make assumptions about the gender or sexual orientation of the youth (or anyone in general).
- ★ Don't share about a person's gender identity or sexual orientation without explicit permission from the youth.
- ★ Ask open ended questions and listen without showing judgement.
- ★ Confront your own stereotypes, prejudices and bias, even if it is uncomfortable to do so.

BEST PRACTICES

- ★ Don't rely on the young person to educate you about LGBTQ+ identities and issues-- seek out information elsewhere.
- ★ Welcome feedback and guidance.
- ★ Be ok with being out of your comfort zone or knowledge base. It's alright to say you are new to these concepts.
- ★ Demonstrate that you believe all people, regardless of gender identity and sexual orientation, should be treated with dignity and respect.
- ★ Introduce and respect the pronouns people want to use. You can introduce your pronouns verbally, on name tags, and on email signatures!
 - Pronoun Examples:
 - She, her, hers;
 - He, him, his;
 - They, them, theirs

Goals for Building Inclusive Schools & Communities for LGBTQ+ Youth



Thank You!



www.empowermt.org

info@empowermt.org

406-541-6891

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