



QUEER INCLUSION IN SPORT: FROM “CHILLY” SPACES TO “FEEL-GOOD” SPACES

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OUR GOAL

- ✓ You can identify **moments** of crisis
 - ✓ You can identify chilly **practices**
 - ✓ You can identify **strategies** for change
 - ✓ You are ready to **get started**
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- ✓ You understand this benefits **everyone**



A NOTE ABOUT LANGUAGE

Why "queer"?

- Shortcomings of acronym
- Reclaiming language
- Implicit beneficiaries

Identity is not obvious

- Consider participants, families, stakeholder
- Exists beyond the data
- Identity \neq experience



WHAT WE KNOW

NUMBER OF QUEER ATHLETES GROWING

7x more "out" Olympians in Tokyo 2021 than in London 2012

- 168 vs 24

DROPOUT RATES ARE HIGH

When a queer athlete encounters negative sport experiences, they:

- Leave organized sport
- View sport and sport leaders as **unsafe**

Note: See sources at end of presentation

SPORT REMAINS UNSAFE, CHILLY

- 38% of queer athletes report personal mistreatment
- 81% have witnessed identity-based harassment

THIS IS GOOD FOR EVERYONE

Positive experiences in sport lead to:

- Higher self-esteem
- Lower levels of depression
- Greater sense of belonging



WHAT WE CAN DO

1. LANGUAGE + IMAGES

Review all documents, policies, communication, and images

2. UNIFORMS + EQUIPMENT

Assume heterogeneity and be open to feedback

3. PROGRAMMING + ON-FIELD PRACTICES

Avoid organizing by gender

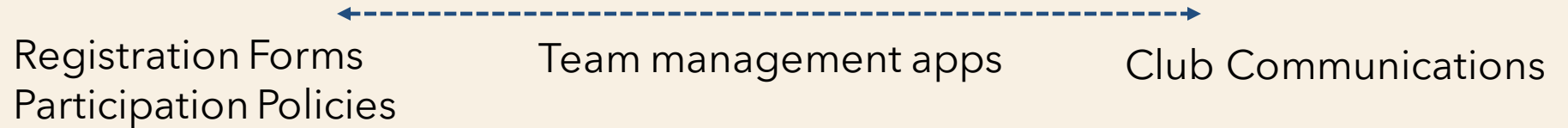
4. SPACES + PLACES

Plan ahead; come prepared

1. LANGUAGE AND IMAGES

Remove language or images that makes assumptions about gender or family structure.

Internal - Third Party - External



The most inclusive practices **will** ask for pronouns; they **will not** ask for legal sex.

The most inclusive practices **will** use self-identification; they **will not** use proof of medical transition.

2. UNIFORMS, EQUIPMENT

Assume heterogeneity and be open to feedback.

Variety – Brand – Budget – Vendors

←----- feedback -----→

Who are our
members?

What is our
identity?

How can
we make
this work?

Who can help
us get there?

The most inclusive practices **will** build in choice; they **will not** mandate conformity.

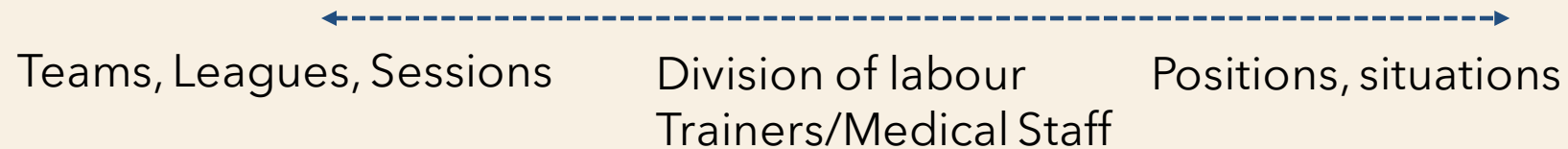
The most inclusive practices **will** budget for inclusion; they **will not** ask individuals to shoulder that responsibility.

The most inclusive practices **will** build in consultation; they **will not** silence.

3. ON-FIELD PRACTICES

Avoid organizing, staffing, and speaking via gender.

Programs – Staff – Technical/Tactical



The most inclusive practices **will** remove gender as an organizing principle; they **will not** segregate or separate by gender.

The most inclusive practices **will** reflect diverse identities; they **will not** rely on gendered traditions.

4. SPACES

Plan ahead and come prepared.

Game Day - Travel - Social

Changerooms
Bathrooms

Rooming
Cultural Safety
Laws

Team Bonding
Activities
Restaurants

The most inclusive practices **will** be proactive; they **will not** be reactive.

The most inclusive practices **will** put the responsibility on the group; they **will not** put the responsibility on the individual.



SUMMARY

Do this for everyone

Don't isolate queer athletes

Do plan for this

Don't react to this

We hope that sport can be a space where **everyone** is granted a right to agency, dignity, and privacy.



THANK YOU

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SELECTED USEFUL RESOURCES

Athlete Ally - An organization working toward ending homophobia and transphobia in sport.

viaSport British Columbia. (2021, May 26). *LGBTQI2S Inclusion in Sport Coaching Guide*.

<https://viasport.ca/resources/lgbtqi2s-coach-guide/>

Travers, A. (2016). Transgender and gender nonconforming kids and the binary requirements of sport participation in North America. In. M. Messner & M. Musto (Eds), *Child's play: sport in kids' worlds*. Rutgers University Press.

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