

# Creating Safer LGBTQ2S+ Spaces

## “A long journey into light”

Summary Notes from an  
Intergenerational Dialogue, July 5, 2017

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### Insights and Implications

The experience of the July 2017 intergenerational dialogue among LGBTQ2S+ youth and older adults points to an emerging set of insights implications. The ideas are not exhaustive; rather, the intent is to stimulate further reflection on the possibilities.

### Insights

Drawing from the dialogue, the following insights are introduced as assumptions for the implications that follow:

- Attitudes toward people who identify as LGBTQ2S+ have shifted in a positive direction over the decades but experiences of discrimination and lack of understanding extend across the generations. Exclusion and invalid assumptions affect people in family situations and in the places individuals work, study, socialize, and generally move about in their day to day lives.
- The people who responded to the invitation to be part of a dialogue across generations were sufficiently confident and comfortable self-identifying as LGBTQ2S+ and engaging in an unknown process with a sizable number of people they had not met before. They were also largely individuals who already have informal networks of support in place. It appeared that youth with GSA experience, initially indicating a desire to participate, have been tapped out for participation in multiple gatherings.
- The curiosity and learning was mutual. For this group of participants, a desire to form new communities of support within the generations, e.g., a variation on a ‘seniors’ GSA’, did not emerge as a strong theme.
- A significant portion of the participating LGBTQ2S+ youth and older adult participants



expressed interest in being kept informed and many indicated they want to be involved in further and deeper dialogue. More time in one another’s company would increase the likelihood of informal small groups or one-to-one mentoring relationships taking hold.

- Structured gatherings of the kind that occurred in July would require additional resources to design, reach out to the July 2017 participants and/or new people, cover event costs (e.g., transportation, food), and address logistics. More informal gatherings to socialize and engage in deeper dialogue would likely require some informal leadership to be self-sustaining.
- Reaching older LGBTQ2S+ adults who are relatively more vulnerable because they are not out, in combination with being socially isolated, is unlikely to be successful through the model that was used for the July 2017 intergenerational dialogue. Concurrently, attracting more LGBTQ2S+ youth to participate, particularly those with GSA experience, may require a different approach.

### Implications

To extend the concept of intergenerational dialogue, taking into account the insights stated above, the following implications emerge for follow-up action. They are shaped by four main questions:

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| <b>1. Who are the intended participants?</b>                                 | <b>2. What would be the purpose for each cluster?</b>                     |
| <b>3. What format(s) would be most effective, tailored for each cluster?</b> | <b>4. What resources are required to support the suggested processes?</b> |

The questions have been applied to three possible clusters of people though some of the ideas could be combined for one or more of the clusters.

- For people who expressed interest in the first intergenerational dialogue on July 5.
- For new people who would be invited to an intergenerational dialogue.
- For older adults in seniors' facilities.



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| <b>For people who expressed interest in the first intergenerational dialogue on July 5</b>                 |
| <b>1. Who are the intended participants?</b>   |
| Include individuals who participated on July 5 and those who expressed interest but were unable to attend. |
| <b>2. What would be the purpose?</b>   |

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| Create and/or support opportunities for people to socialize and deepen the dialogue that began on July 5.   |
| <b>3. What format(s) would be most effective?</b>   |
| Contact individuals who expressed interest in follow-up to confirm if they would be interested in another intergenerational experience and to ask for input on format preferences. Offer an opportunity to view video clips/photos from July 5 as a drawing card. |
| Influenced by the input, plan a follow-up dialogue, structured to allow for deeper dialogue, building on the set of 'challenging' situations that people identified during the first session.   |
| <i>and/or</i><br>Support plans for an informal gathering of interested participants from the two groups and make space for a spontaneous dialogue to unfold. Could hold in a more informal setting in the community, e.g., a café, someone's home.                |
| Invite older adult participants from July 5 to come to a GSA Round Table to engage in a dialogue about generational experiences. Could be done more than once.  |
| <b>4. What resources are required to support the process?</b>   |
| Identify individuals willing to participate in developing a plan (structured or informal), reach out to potential participants, identify a venue, and arrange logistics. Arrange for session facilitator.   |
| Arrange funding to cover out-of-pocket expenses.  |

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| <b>For new people who would be invited to an intergenerational dialogue</b>  |
| <b>1. Who are the intended participants?</b>   |
| Reach out to individuals who were not contacted for the first intergenerational dialogue.  |
| Ask participants from July 5 if they could identify another person they believe would take an interest in an international dialogue. |
| Ask participants from July 5 to return and invite one new person to come with them.  |
| <b>2. What would be the purpose?</b>   |
| Broaden the pool of people interested in ongoing intergenerational dialogue.   |

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| <b>3. What format(s) would be most effective?</b>   |
| Repeat the process used on July 5, with adjustments to strengthen parts that could be improved.         |
| <b>4. What resources are required to support the process?</b>   |
| Develop a plan (structured), reach out to invite participants, identify a venue, and arrange logistics. |
| Arrange funding to cover out-of-pocket expenses.  |

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| <b>For older adults in seniors' facilities</b>  |
| <b>Who are the intended participants?</b>   |
| Older adults who self-identify as LGBTQ2S+ or not yet out and who are living in seniors' facilities. Recognizing people who are not out or otherwise reluctant to participate with a targeted invitation, could take the discussion to a scheduled program within the facility, attracting people who do and do not identify as LGBTQ2S+ but interested in an intergenerational dialogue. |
| Could start with facilities that have indicated an openness to staff training. Could pilot at the Edmonton General where a group of LGBTQ2S+ older adults formed.   |
| <b>What would be the purpose and content?</b>   |
| Bring the intergenerational dialogue to older adults who are in more vulnerable circumstances to open up mutual learning and explore the concept of a community of support.   |
| <b>What format(s) would be most effective?</b>  |
| Invite youth participants from July 5 to come to identified seniors' facilities to engage in a dialogue about generational experiences. Could also invite older adult participants from July 5. Invite residents to observe or participate.   |
| Could use the 'ice breaker' from July 5 – 'What is one thing you think people in the 'other' generation might be surprised or relieved to find out about people in your generation?' – as the starting point for dialogue.  |
| <b>What resources are required to support the process?</b>  |
| Develop a plan (structured), reach out to seniors' facility contacts, and arrange logistics.  |
| Arrange funding to cover out-of-pocket expenses.  |

## Intergenerational Dialogue: Implications, November 2017

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| <p><b>Who are the intended participants?</b></p>                  | <p>People who expressed interest in further involvement. People who were interested but unable to attend in July.</p>  | <p>New people who would be invited to an intergenerational dialogue.</p> <p>Ask participants to suggest another person.</p> <p>Ask participants to return and invite one new person to come with them.</p> | <p>Older adults in seniors' facilities who self-identify as LGBTQ2S+ or not yet out.</p> <p>Could take to scheduled program to include people who are reluctant to participate in a targeted invitation.</p> <p>Start with facilities open to staff training.<br/>Pilot at Edmonton General.</p> |
| <p><b>What would be the purpose?</b></p>                          | <p>Create/support opportunities to socialize and deepen the dialogue.</p>  | <p>Broad the pool of interested people in ongoing intergenerational dialogue.</p>  | <p>Bring intergenerational dialogue to older adults in more vulnerable circumstances to open up mutual learning and explore concept of community of support.</p>   |
| <p><b>What format would be most effective?</b></p>                | <p>Confirm interest and seek input on preferred format. Build on set of challenging situations and/or support plans for informal gathering(s) of interested individuals.</p> <p>Invite older adults to GSA Roundtable (could be done more than once)</p> | <p>Report process. Strengthen parts that could be improved.</p>  | <p>Invite youth from July 5 to participate.<br/>Could invite older adult participants to observe or participate.</p> <p>Use ice breaker as starting point: What is one thing you think people in the 'other' generation would be surprised or relieved to find out about your generation?</p>    |
| <p><b>What resources are required to support the process?</b></p> | <p>People willing to develop a plan, venue, logistics, facilitator. Funds for out-of-pocket expenses.</p>  | <p>People willing to develop a plan, venue, logistics, facilitator. Funds for out-of-pocket expenses.</p>  | <p>People willing to develop a plan, venue, logistics, facilitator. Funds for out-of-pocket expenses.</p>  |

