



LGBTQ+ Inclusion Recommendations

USRowing celebrates the vast diversity within our sport and the individuals who bring their whole selves to the boat. To ensure clubs have the resources they need to make their clubs more inclusive, we put together guidelines.

Getting Started: The Seven Pillars of Inclusion

The Seven Pillars model is a broad framework to give sports clubs and associations a starting point to address inclusion and diversity. It is about giving you an overarching view of the common elements that contribute to creating inclusive environments in our rowing clubs. The seven pillars are:

- **Access** - Physical access is just one part of the equation. Make sure your environment is welcoming physically but also attitudinally.
- **Attitude** - Good intentions don't always translate to positive outcomes; know your WHY.
- **Choice** - Find a way for everyone to participate at the level of their choice.
- **Partnerships** - Create mutually beneficial partnerships in the community.
- **Communication** - Speak and listen so that you hear from all members - that might mean adapting your communication style and/or protocols.
- **Policy** - Make your commitment known and have protections in place for discussions when things go off course.
- **Opportunities** - New opportunities don't happen by chance. Be intentional about the changes you make so all people have a fair opportunity.

For more information about the Seven Pillars - [Play by the Rules](#) (excerpt taken from chapter six of USRowing's Level 2 Coaching Certification by Dr. Jenny Withycombe)

LGBTQ+ Inclusion in Athletics:

- [Policy Tips from the Athlete Ally](#)
- [Gender Spectrum](#) (customized resources based on what role you play in a young person's life and what you're looking for)
- [Game Plan for Administrators and Athletic Directors](#)
- [NCLR's On the Team Resource](#) (best practices start on page 35)
- [NCAA Resource on Trans Inclusion](#)

Operational Best Practices:

- **Athlete Registration:** Club and team registration forms should be included in the form answer options.
 - Gender: *What is your gender?*
 - *Man*
 - *Woman*
 - *Non-Binary*
- **Visual Affirmation:** Signal that you are an organization committed to being a Safe Zone through [resources and guidelines](#) from the Safe Zone Project.
- **Uniforms:** Provide a few universal options for all athletes – non-gender-specific clothing choices.
- **Facilities, Overnights, and Travel:**
 - All-gender restrooms should be available at facilities, and signage should be clear to all athletes.
 - All athletes should be assigned to share accommodations based on their gender identity, with a recognition that privacy may be important to athletes of all genders, including transgender, cisgender, and non-binary athletes. Transgender and non-binary identity should not be the basis to implement privacy accommodations. Rather, access to private changing, bathing, and restroom spaces should be available to all athletes.
 - To ensure gender-diverse athletes feel supported at their home boathouse and on the road, we recommend having a confidential conversation around establishing safety protocols and supports that reflect the athlete’s individual needs, establishing an athlete support plan. It is always important to get the athlete’s prior consent about who should be included in this conversation, including parents/caregivers. [Here is a conversation guide](#) from USA Swim & Dive.
- Go Beyond the Checklist to [Integrate LGBTQ+ Into Your Organization](#)

Language Matters!

Click on the links below to review some helpful resources on the language we use.

- [Glossary of LGBTQ Terms](#)
- In general, be intentional about how you phrase questions and conversations with young people. For example:
 - Do not say: “Are you going with a boy to prom?” to an athlete on your girls’ team. Instead consider: “Are you going solo, in a group, or with a date to prom?” or “What are your plans for prom?”
 - Respect people’s gender identity and pronouns. Consider adding your pronouns to your email, business cards, Zoom account, and more to show that you respect others’ pronouns.

Training: If you're seeking coaching or training as an individual or a club, please check out the following resources.

- Safe Zone Project: [Resources and Guidelines](#)
- Athlete Ally [Champions of Inclusion](#)
- [Self-Guided Foundational Safe Zone Training](#)
- [Coaching Peace](#)
- [Doc Wayne](#)

Resources for Parents and Caregivers of LGBTQ+ Youth:

- [Caregiver Support Guide](#)
- [Being an Ally to a Trans Athlete](#)
- [A Guide for Parents of LGBTQ+ Youth](#)

Resources for LGBTQ+ Athletes:

- Support for Trans Youth and Families <https://www.athleteally.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Support-for-Trans-Youth-Families-shareable.pdf>
- <https://www.glsen.org/>
- <https://www.athleteally.org/>
- [Find Your Community at Trevor Space](#)
- [Self-Esteem Resources for Non-binary Youth](#)

If you have a resource to share that is not represented here that you'd like to share, or you have ideas to help make rowing more inclusive across the country, please reach out to community@usrowing.org