

Resources to help you create positive spaces:

The Positive Spaces Initiative
 Resources, training, and events to support LGBTQIA+ newcomers in Ontario.
positivespaces.ca

Rainbow Railroad
 An organization that provides support to LGBTQIA+ people outside of Canada seeking asylum.
rainbowrailroad.ca

Settlement.Org
 A collection of resources for immigrants, refugees, and newcomers in Ontario.
settlement.org

The African and Caribbean Council on HIV/AIDS in Ontario (ACCHO)
 Education, advocacy, support, and leadership in response to HIV/AIDS in African, Caribbean, and Black communities.
accho.ca

211 Ontario
 Programs, resources, and services for people who identify as LGBTQIA+
211ontario.ca/211-topics/lgbtq/

LGBT Youth Line
 A youth-led support line for LGBTQIA+ youth (29 and under) across Ontario.
youthline.ca

Trans PULSE
 A community based research project with information and resources to support trans people in Ontario.
transpulsesproject.ca

It's Pronounced Metrossexual
 A free online resource for learning about gender, sexuality, and social justice.
itspronouncedmetrossexual.com/

Rainbow Health Ontario
 A province-wide program that promotes the health of LGBTQIA+ communities
rainbowhealthontario.ca/

What side of the door are you on?



Choose to be a positive space.



What is a positive space?

Positive Spaces are welcoming environments where LGBTQIA+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual, etc.) folks are able to access culturally inclusive services with dignity and respect, and where service providers can work free from discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression. Everyone can work to create Positive Spaces by challenging homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, heterosexism, monosexism, and cissexism.

What do opening doors have to do with positive spaces?

It is important for us to understand the barriers facing LGBTQIA+ immigrants and refugees, and actively take steps to remove those barriers. Positive spaces are not possible unless we collectively practice **intentional empathy** in how we provide service. This means that we have a responsibility to try and understand the people on the otherside of the door, and to welcome and make space for them. A positive space is one that adopts an **open-door approach** to service provision.

How can I practice an open-door approach?

Pay attention to your **body language**. Take responsibility for the environment you create when people come to access your services. Open body language is key to ensuring an experience of comfort and safety. An understanding of open body language might be different from person to person. Be aware of the unique ways in which body language is received, and be willing to adapt.

Use **meaningful signage**. Displaying LGBTQIA+ materials empowers people to access information without having to disclose their sexual orientation or gender identity. However, if your workplace is not equipped to effectively serve LGBTQIA+ people, you could be putting them at risk by misleading them into disclosing information about their identity when the space may not be safe. Signage must be reinforced by education and policy.

Be accountable to the community you serve. Strive to meet your mandate to provide accessible services through **appropriate referrals** and responsible follow-up. Even if your organization is limited in how it can support LGBTQIA+ immigrants and refugees, it is still important to work collaboratively with other service providers who can offer additional supports, rather than closing your doors to them.