

LGBTQ+ Communication on Christian Campuses

WHAT'S THE SITUATION?

Many Christian college campuses have policies, whether written or unwritten, that are discriminative toward the LGBTQ+ community. This fosters negative intergroup communication. In large part due to a power imbalance, this can create a lot of pain for LGBTQ+ individuals and may lead to things like long lasting internalized homophobia and shame, poor interpersonal relationships, and a felt need to hide. (Bailey & Strunk, 2018)

WHAT CAN MEMBERS OF THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY DO?

Joining an LGBTQ+ group on campus and engaging in activism related to the LGBTQ+ community has been connected to higher self-esteem for LGBTQ+ students. It also helps bridge the gap between the Christian community and the LGBTQ+ community on campus, though the two groups are not mutually exclusive (Gabriele-Black & Goldberg, 2021). There are many different categories of LGBTQ+ groups, and each these types may approach things differently. (Coley, 2020). However, being a part of any of these groups is beneficial for students and can help create change, as these groups often meet people where they are and inform them about issues. Creating media, writing papers directly to faculty, and participating in things like marches can also be impactful if the student is trying to create change (Gabriele-Black & Goldberg, 2021).

Solidarity

Work to provide support for those in the LGBTQ+ community

Direct Action

Work to affect campus policies, use messages love and supporting the oppressed, appeal to traditional Christian values

Educational

Share information with the larger community and dig deeper when looking at religious texts and sexuality

(Coley, 2020)

WHY MIGHT LGBTQ+ INDIVIDUALS NOT ACT?

LGBTQ+ individuals may not always feel safe or comfortable acting, for which they deserve no judgement, just support. Engaging in activism or joining groups can be risky for some students due to a variety of reasons.

Will my family accept me?

Can I financially afford to do this?

Am I able to connect with members of the LGBTQ+ community?

(Gabriele-Black & Goldberg, 2021)

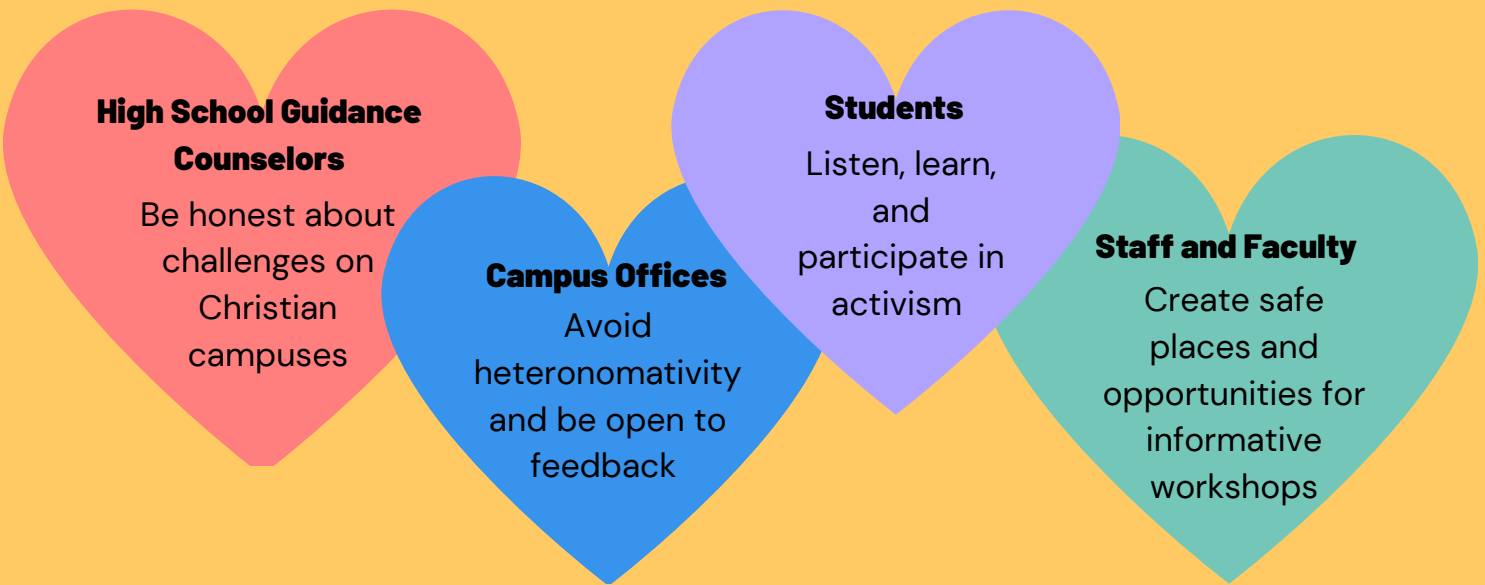
Will I get in trouble with administration?

Will I have issues with other students?

Can I afford to have another publicly marginalized background?

WHAT, THEN, CAN ALLIES DO?

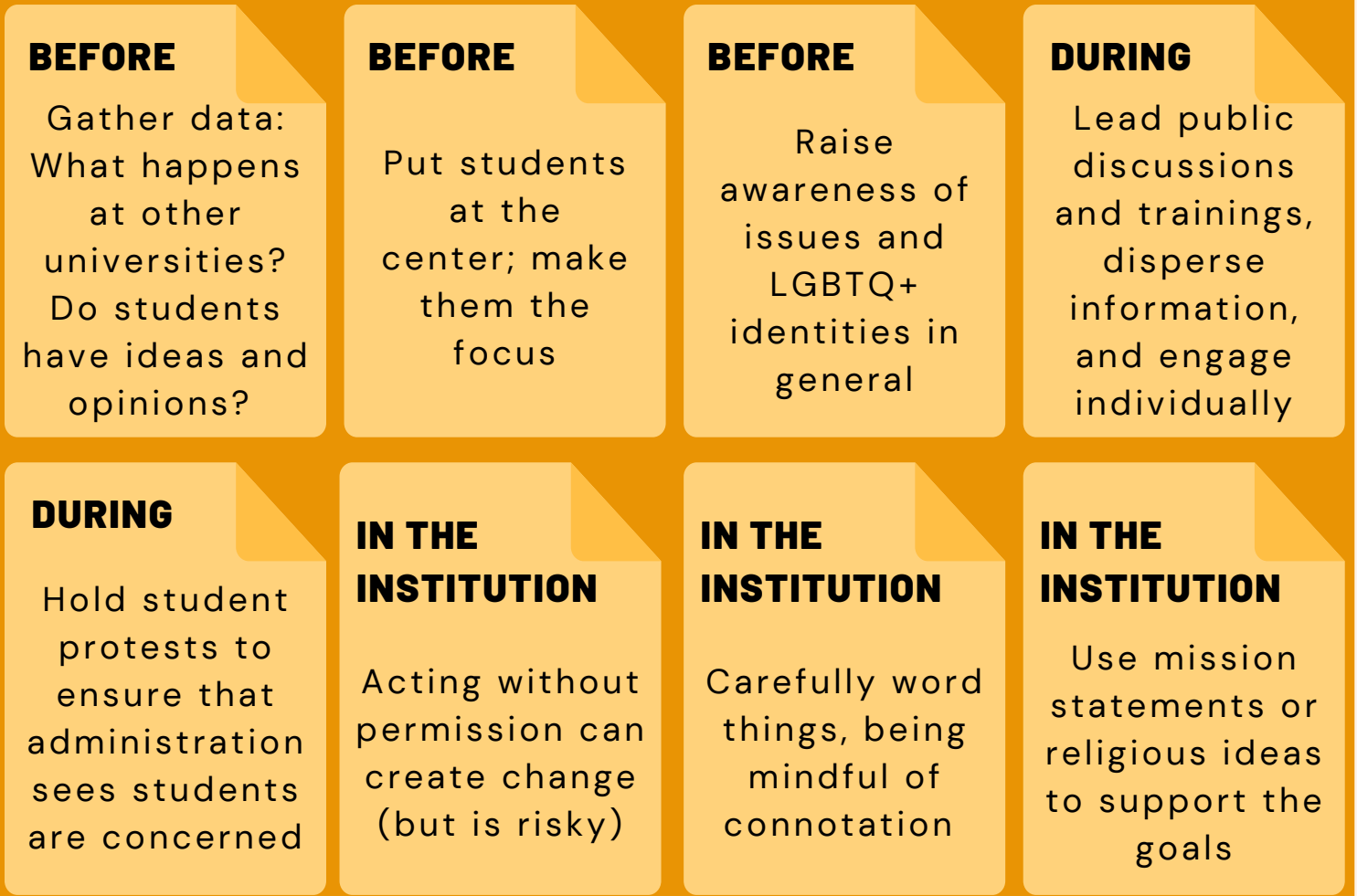
Individuals have expressed that even quiet allyship, which may be necessary on campuses where it is dangerous to speak out, can help LGBTQ+ individuals avoid feeling defeated by policies and hatred (Bailey & Strunk, 2018). In addition, knowing that there is support makes it easier for members of the LGBTQ+ community to face some of the repercussions that might arise from engaging in things like activism (Gabriele-Black & Goldberg, 2021).



(Gabriele-Black & Goldberg, 2021)

HOW MIGHT WE CHANGE POLICIES WHEN THEY NEED TO BE CHANGED?

There are various helpful strategies for enacting policy changes on Christian campuses related to LGBTQ+ issues. In all of these, there will often be resistance, but change is possible (Levand, 2021)!



(Levand, 2021)

REFERENCES

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