TOP TIPS: BEING AN INCLUSIVE SPORTS ORGANISATION

Regardless of the set-up of your sport or activity, everyone will benefit if it’s more inclusive of lesbian, gay, bi, and trans including non-binary people.

For a lot of people, sport and sporting environments are ‘safe spaces’, somewhere they feel comfortable and at ease. But for others, the same place might make them feel like they have to hide part of their lives because of how others might react.

Follow these top tips to create a space where everyone feels they can be their authentic self. This way, they can spend all their energy and enthusiasm on their sport.

1. **Celebrate:** Let everyone know you’re inclusive by actively supporting LGBT causes. Wear Rainbow Laces, celebrate different identities on social media, hold Come Out Active sessions or a tournament, and get sponsors involved too. Display rainbow and trans stickers visibly at your venues and online. Make the clear, visible statement that you welcome everyone.

2. **Policies:** Sporting environments should be inclusive of all LGBT people, so make sure every opportunity is as open to all as possible. Check that your organisation has inclusion policies and that they are up to date. Ensure you have a policy on homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic bullying. Check your policies for gendered language as it excludes people. Make sure you have Trans Inclusion guidelines and policies from your governing body and that you’re confident applying these.

3. **Codes of conduct:** Draft and actively enforce codes of conduct so that everyone at the organisation knows what’s acceptable behaviour and what isn’t. Include your organisation’s core values and references to your inclusion and anti-bullying policies. Put the code of conduct on prominent display — in person or online — as a permanent reminder.

4. **Play:** Some people may prefer to play in mixed-gender environments, so set up mixed trainings, sessions, or tournaments. If your organisation is already inclusive of all genders, make this clear by renaming your session to explicitly say ‘mixed’. Mixed activity breaks down barriers of opportunity between traditional ‘men’s’ and ‘women’s’ categories and can provide comfortable and inclusive opportunities for everyone.

5. **Facilities:** Consider what could be done to your facilities to make them more inclusive, such as introducing gender-neutral changing rooms. If you use third-party facilities, work with the managers to ensure gender-neutral spaces are available.

Being inclusive isn’t just the right thing to do — it has real benefits for you, your teammates, and your club.

**Inclusivity:**

- recruits new participants and retains current ones, helping make your organisation sustainable.
- Attracts new talent – participants will know they’ll be accepted for who they are and encouraged to reach their full potential.
- Creates a welcoming environment which makes your organisation a better place to work or volunteer at. This will ensure your sport happens week in, week out.

Tweet @StonewallUK and #RainbowLaces