



Denver Family Institute's LGBTQIA+ Affirming Statement

Denver Family Institute affirms all identities in the LGBTQIA+ community and engages in practices to ensure our entire community (faculty, students, staff, clients, and interns) experiences DFI as LGBTQIA-informed. These practices include the following:

- Inclusive forms and paperwork
- Using neutral language before understanding a client's chosen terms (parent vs mom or dad, spouse vs husband or wife)
- Understanding how those in the LGBTQIA community understand themselves, rather than our own interpretation and definition of identities within the communities
- Using the name and pronouns identified by each community member in all circumstances

DFI maintains this stance for all those in DFI's community, including faculty, staff, students, alumni, and resource navigators. DFI offers an environment to teach its community how to provide an LGBTQIA+ environment while holding community members accountable for how their words and actions affect those who identify as LGBTQIA+.

When interfacing with those in the community who are using a chosen name and pronouns, DFI asserts it is best practice to use the names and pronouns identified by each community member and will do so in all circumstances. Research shows that using the correct name and pronouns is correlated with positive outcomes in LGBTQIA+ children, youth, and adults, including decreased self-harm, suicide ideation, and suicide attempts.

DFI also acknowledges that parents, caregivers, and loved ones can struggle when an individual comes out as LGBTQIA+. It is often difficult to adjust to using a different name and pronouns and it can be hard to accept the changes their loved one is experiencing. Often, families and partners have to "come out" as having an LGBTQIA family member as well, which presents a new, and often frightening, set of challenges. DFI provides a supportive and empathic environment to help parents, caregivers, and loved ones understand the needs of their LGBTQIA+ family and friends.