











### **Acknowledgements**

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We extend our gratitude and thanks to the many LGBT older adults, elder advocates, and Pride organizers who are working to make Pride events across the country welcome to all.

**SAGE** is the country's largest and oldest organization dedicated to improving the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) older people. Founded in 1978 and headquartered in New York City, SAGE is a national organization that offers supportive services and consumer resources to LGBT older people and their caregivers. SAGE also advocates for public policy changes that address the needs of LGBT elders, provides education and technical assistance for aging providers and LGBT community organizations through its National Resource Center on LGBT Aging, and cultural competence training through SAGECare. With staff located across the country, SAGE also coordinates SAGENet, a growing network of affiliates in the United States. Learn more at <u>sageusa.org</u>.

For more information about Age-friendly Pride, please visit: sageusa.org/join-the-age-friendly-pride-movement.

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# A Practical Guide to Making Pride Parades, Marches and Festivals Age-Friendly

For the last 50 years, the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community has come together for Pride parades, marches, and festivals where we celebrate, protest, and connect. But for our LGBT elders, it can seem as if the parade has passed them by. The crowds, the heat, the lack of seating, shade, and access to bathrooms are the more obvious barriers to active participation of LGBT older adults, but less obvious barriers also exist.

If LGBT elders are not included in the planning process, if they are not represented in promotional materials, if they are not proudly marching and riding on floats, this lack of inclusion and visibility sends the message that they are not welcome. How do we assure that the pioneers who laid

the groundwork for today's celebrations are welcomed and celebrated? We identify and implement age-friendly practices, systematically eliminating barriers and working to increase the visibility and participation of our LGBT elders.

With generous support from AARP, SAGE has partnered with Centerlink, the Center for Black Equity, Heritage of Pride, and Interpride on the **Welcome to Pride** Initiative. The goals of **Welcome to Pride** are: to learn about effective age-friendly features that Pride organizers and elder advocates currently have in place; to share these best practices; and to secure commitments from Pride organizers to maintain or increase the number of age-friendly features of their events.

#### What are age-friendly practices?

According to the World Health Organization, age-friendly practices recognize there is great diversity in the capacity and circumstances of older adults, anticipate and respond to older adults' needs and preferences in an equitable way, respect older people's decisions and choices, and protect the most vulnerable. Age-friendly planning benefits people of all ages and abilities because while "the experience of growing older with a disability and growing older into a disability may differ—in part because of the different dynamics of ageism and ableism and the differences in economic and social conditions that result—similar accessibility challenges exist."

## Goal One: To learn about effective age-friendly features that Pride organizers and elder advocates currently have in place.

We conducted two nation-wide surveys, one for Pride participants and one for Pride planners, organizers, and sponsors. We also conducted interviews with age-friendly Pride champions from geographically diverse areas of the country.

#### **Goal Two: To share best practices**

We know that the vast majority of Pride events are volunteer-led efforts undertaken with passion and enthusiasm that is rarely matched with commensurate resources. Even so, survey results demonstrated that a meaningful number of Pride organizers and elder advocates are already acting on a commitment to welcome LGBT people of all ages.

## Goal Three: To secure a commitment from Pride organizers to maintain or increase the number of age-friendly features of their events.

Organizations and coalitions wishing to publicly affirm their commitment to the age-friendliness of their events are encouraged to join the Age-friendly Pride Movement by signing a pledge committing to implementing at least three age-friendly practices and to solicit other organizations to sign. While Pride organizers are leading these efforts in many places, in others, it is LGBT older adult organizations, aging service sector providers, advocacy organizations, and sponsors that are paving the way. Any stakeholder group may sign the pledge and advocate for other groups, especially organizers, to join.

#### **Audience**

The audience for this guide is the individuals and organizations responsible for planning and implementing Pride-related activities as well as community members and elder advocates who want to encourage Pride organizers in their community to adopt age-friendly Pride practices.

#### The Welcome to Pride Guide Includes:

- Checklist of Essential Features of an Age-Friendly
   Pride—both an instructive tool with a clear framework
   and lots of practical ideas, and a measurement, to help
   organizations and coalitions to chart their progress
   as they increase the numbers of features they have in
   place.
- The Age-Friendly Pride Pledge—for organizations wishing to publicly commit to implementing or maintaining at least three age-friendly practices.
- Results of Two Nationwide Surveys—the collective wisdom from these surveys are the basis of the Checklist of Essential Features.
- Links to LGBT Aging and Age-friendly Resources for organizations and individuals wanting to take a deeper dive.
- Advocacy Templates—customizable letter templates for organizers and individuals.

"We realize planning takes a ton of time and dedication, and you'll never make everyone happy, but making pride more inclusive to people of color, older adults, and people with disabilities, you'll make it better and more welcoming for EVERYONE and that's worth the time and dedication."

STANLEY PADRIAC, CHICAGO, IL

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Nalder EJ, Putnam M, Salvador-Carulla L, et al. Bridging knowledge, policies and practices across the ageing and disability fields: a protocol for a scoping review to inform the development of a taxonomy. <a href="mailto:bmjopen.bmj.com/content/7/10/e016741.abstract">bmjopen.bmj.com/content/7/10/e016741.abstract</a>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Bickenbach, Jermone. "Bridging Aging and Disability: An Introduction," Bridging Aging and Disability International Network, 1 Nov. 2017, <a href="https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/submit-afp/">https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/submit-afp/</a>

# **Checklist of Essential Features** of an Age-Friendly Pride

"We want to be involved and acknowledged for our past activism, not put in the shade under a tree." These categories, descriptions, and definitions used are based on the World Health Organization's (WHO) Age-Friendly Cities checklist. The WHO identified Eight Domains of Livability that are critical to Age-Friendly Communities: respect and social inclusion, communication, civic participation and employment, social participation, built environment, transport, housing, and community support and health services.

For this guide, we have narrowed the eight domains to the following six age-friendly aspects which are most relevant to supporting the participation of older adults in Pride events. The six domains are:

- Respect and Social Inclusion
- Communication and Information
- Civic Participation
- Social Participation
- Outdoor Spaces and Structures
- Transportation



#### RESPECT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

The extent to which older people participate is closely linked to their experience of inclusion.

- ✓ LGBT older adult contingents are placed at the start of the Parade (both to honor their contributions and to assure that LGBT older adults don't have to queue for a long time)
- Older adult inclusion strategies and outreach tactics are specifically inclusive of transgender older adults and older adults of color
- Bisexual activists and their history of contributions to our community are honored with special recognition
- The lives, challenges overcome, and historical accomplishments of the older LGBT community are acknowledged and celebrated
- There is an application of, resources devoted to and visible action on issues that resonate most with African American, Latinx, Asian Pacific Islander, and Native American LGBT older adults
- ✓ LGBT older adults are consulted on ways to better include them in Pride events
- Partnerships and collaborations with organizations that serve transgender elders and elders of color are established
- For those older adults wishing to be in the parade, alternatives to walking and riding on floats—such as golf carts, busses, and trolleys—are provided
- LGBT older adults are featured in promotional materials, banners, and booth displays

We are working closely with elder-serving organizations to have a better understanding of what they would like to see at pride events.

**JAMEISON KING, LGBT DETROIT** 

To improve collaborations between Pride organizers and elder-serving organizations, show both parties the positive impact collaboration can yield.

LISA KRINSKY, THE LGBT AGING PROJECT AT FENWAY HEALTH "I suggest partnering with elder serving organizations on events targeted to LGBT older adults. For example, for the past three years AARP has sponsored a Senior Pride Mixer in Philadelphia which has become a popular event with both LGBT older adults and community leaders alike."

**ED MILLER, SAGE PHILADELPHIA** 

#### Participants said...

- We as elders want to be out and visible, but we need help—we want to feel valid, loved, and cared for, too. We haven't figured everything out, we aren't all partnered/married, and we have lots to contribute to the community."
- Our elders represent our past, and they will not be here forever. Their stories and activism need to be honored and preserved."
- Include seniors, consider their needs, honor them, but do not keep them separate from everyone else. Work to forge more interactions across our diverse identities. People don't necessarily fit neatly into your schemes of classifying them, and often want to participate in the activities of several groups."
- Recognize that many older LGBTQ people have done Pride events for many years, and do not consider marching in a parade a personal priority. However, they are interested in preserving and memorializing our LOCAL LGBTQ history."
- community but for me it seems segmented. I mean there is not much cross over between young and old, white and those of color etc. If we had more events before Pride to get to know each other and what is important to all of our lives...we are always stronger together."
- Some of us are especially concerned that younger folks aren't aware of how hard it was to secure the rights we have and how easy it would be to lose them."

#### COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION

Regardless of the variety of communication choices and the volume of information available, the central concern is to have relevant information readily accessible to older people with varying capacities and resources.

- Information about the Pride events are disseminated to LGBT older adult audiences where they conduct their usual activities such as where they live, senior centers, and faith communities not just LGBT settings
- Age-friendly printed materials describing Pride activities are provided (large type, clear headings)
- Outreach specifically to older LGBT individuals is conducted through the postal service, email, and social media
- When communicating with LGBT older adults, information about the event, its accessibility, and transportation options is included
- Organizers understand the impact of lifetime of stigma on a person's willingness to disclose, sign forms, or be photographed at events

#### Participants said...

- More advertising and welcoming messages geared toward elders. We may be older, but we're active, social, and looking for new friendships and connections."
- Would be nice to have an outreach group, largely composed on older LGBT people, to reach out to older attendees—particularly those alone."
- Reach out beyond the normal range of media. The bars and the universities are not where older adults usually are these days. We are more isolated and in serious need of communication."
- Diversify your advertising to reach folks that don't use social media."

"Posting flyers in elder Community Centers has been successful."

- JUSTIN OWEN, PHOENIX PRIDE



#### CIVIC PARTICIPATION

An Age-Friendly Community provides options for older people to contribute and to be engaged.

- Pride advisory councils, planning committees, boards, and staff include LGBT older adults, with representation from transgender communities and communities of color
- Organizers partner with Racial Justice organizations, assuring that issues important to LGBT elders of color are addressed
- The skills and interests of LGBT older adult volunteers are matched to positions that take advantage of their skills and appeal to their interests
- Volunteers are supported in their work, for example, being offered rides to and from meetings, or having the cost of transportation reimbursed for low-income elders

"We specifically recruit LGBT older adult community members to participate in planning/implementing Pride events."

- JEFF RINDLER, HUDSON VALLEY LGBTQ COMMUNITY CENTER

#### Participants said...

- Understand that many senior LGBTQs are isolated. So, pull them into event planning, preparation and execution."
- Don't waste time trying to get older LGBTQ people to march in the parade (including riding on a float). Instead, get them involved in planning and executing activities that memorialize our local history. Let older LGBTQ people help younger people understand our history, learn from it and honor past leaders/accomplishments. Ensure experienced (not token) older LGBTQ people are on the Board. Recognize past as well as current contributions when selecting 'heroes."
- There should be ways for elders in all aspects LGBT community to interact with younger members and learn from each other—this would include people of color, and transgender, bisexual, and intersex members."

#### **SOCIAL PARTICIPATION**

The capacity to participate in formal and informal social life depends not only on the offer of activities, but also on having adequate access to transportation and facilities.

- Support exists to enable LGBT older adults to participate, such as reserved seating, aids for the hard of hearing, and transportation
- LGBT older adults have the option to participate with a friend or caregiver
- Elder-oriented activities are offered and the times are convenient for LGBT older people
- Committees are charged with finding ways to encourage more LGBT elder participation
- Partnerships with elder-serving organizations are formed to encourage more participation through crosspostings, co-hosting, and development of activities

"We do a boat cruise for our senior LGBT folks every June. It's a great way to celebrate Pride."

– MARTHA HARVEY,
PRIDE CENTER OF THE CAPITOL REGION

#### Participants said...

- Having a marathon of events back to back doesn't match the physical endurance of older people. Plan activities for elders with time between them."
- I also think income is an issue. Many of the elders that attend do so because they can afford to. There should be free tickets for elders who are below certain income thresholds. Also, our elders should be honored in some way at every Pride event."
- As my years advance, I find it physically demanding to participate in activities that are spaced out with time between events. Rest is important for elders. And most Pride festivities occur in the heat of summer, which zaps energy quickly."
- There are a lot of us who are alone and not very social but would like to come out once in awhile, especially during pride but everything is geared with youth, couples, groups in mind. Singles and specifically senior singles, would appreciate events designed with them in mind as well."

#### **OUTDOOR SPACES AND STRUCTURES**

There is a broad range of characteristics of the urban landscape and the built environment that contribute to age-friendliness.

- Events are held in venues that can accommodate individuals with limited mobility
- Activities and services for LGBT older people are clustered together to minimize travel distance
- Pathways are well-maintained, level, non-slip, with low curbs that taper, and wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs
- Reserved seating is provided
- A shaded cooling center and hydration station is provided
- Convenient restroom access is a priority
- Opors are opened prior to event to accommodate early arrivals
- There is ample transition time between events
- Seating is provided if people must queue
- Seating is a comfortable height (16"-24") and has firm but supportive arms
- Egress is clutter and barrier-free and easily navigable
- Meetings are held in the quietest available space and organizers enforce one person speaking at a time
- In larger spaces, presenters use a microphone
- Event and meeting spaces are well lit
- Coat racks and storage for personal belongings are provided
- Signage and meeting materials are available in largeprint

"We have had a Pride viewing party for SAGE guests for years but it was only recently that we added 44 spaces to our parking lot for our VIP SAGE guests. We worked to find the shortest route and then we eliminated the trip hazards along the way. It's one thing to say your space is friendly space for older adults but then you start thinking of the complications and you realize that must address all aspects of the space."

- TOBY JENKINS, OKLAHOMANS FOR EQUALITY AT THE DENNIS R. NEILL EQUALITY CENTER -HOME OF SAGE TULSA

#### Participants said...

- At one pride I worked in the tent for older people. It was in far corner away from everything else. It should be in the center of the festival."
- Reserve a "VIP" section in the reviewing stand for elders. Some older LGBTQ people do not want to ride a float or walk in the parade—it's too hot and humid."
- It can be difficult for elders to navigate the crowds to participate."

"We set up shaded seating for SAGE members and others requiring ADA access at our parade."

– LIZ PITTS, UTAH PRIDE CENTER



#### **TRANSPORTATION**

## Being able to move freely determines social and civic participation.

- When a parade terminates at an inaccessible location, alternate arrangements for older adult contingents are made such as allowing them to exit the parade before the end of the route, or providing shuttles back to the parade route, parking lots, or public transportation
- Access to reserved parking is provided
- The walking route from parking lot to venue is free of trip hazards
- Shuttles to and from parking lots are provided
- Assistance for individuals with sight or mobility issues is provided
- Shuttles to and from senior buildings and residential communities are provided

#### Participants said...

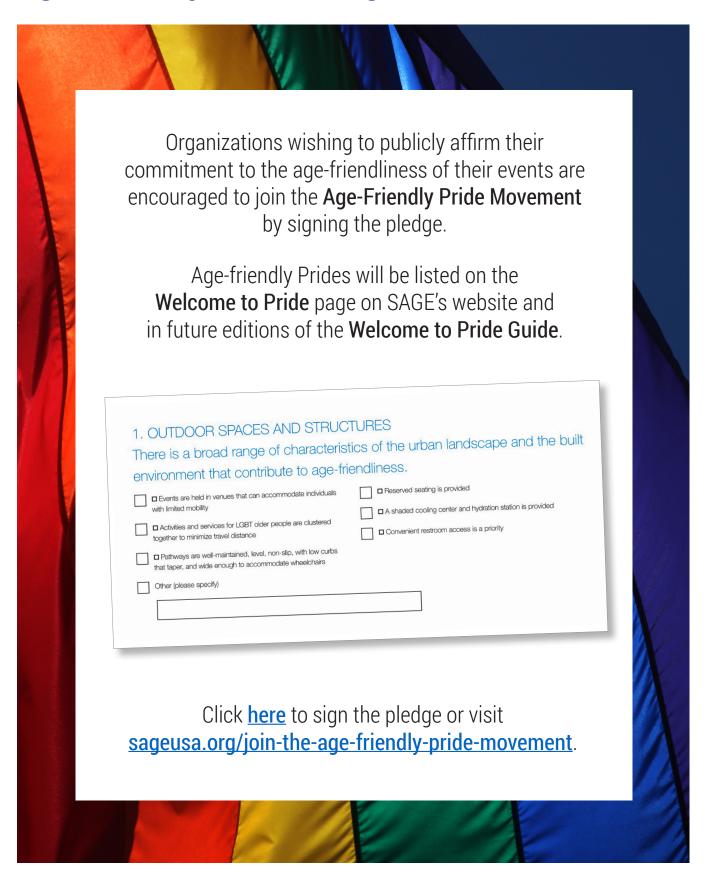
- Have low float platforms that could have ramps or lifts for wheeled seats, wheelchairs, and scooters that has shade but is fairly open i.e. not a bus."
- If you provide a bus, let us get off at end of parade instead of driving back to org office which is 1 1/2 miles from the parade end."
- Think about and include older people and LGBT people with full spectrum of mobility issues."
- Please make more opportunities for the mobility impaired to participate in parades."

My best advice is to be open to change. Being flexible is important.

**CURTIS LIPSCOMB, HOTTER THAN JULY** 



## **Age-Friendly Pride Pledge**



## **Advocacy Templates**

#### Letter Template – Participant To Pride Organizer

#### Dear Pride Organizer, The 20-year-old who marched in the nation's first parades in the 1970s is over 65 today. On behalf of LGBT older adults in my community, I ask that \_\_\_\_\_ (insert name of organization here) join the national Welcome to Pride: Age-Friendly Pride Movement. These organizations have adopted age-friendly features such as: Placing LGBT older adult contingents at the start of the Parade Providing opportunities for older adults to volunteer on planning committees · Honoring LGBT older adults as dignitaries and awardees • Providing reserved seating along the Parade route Providing a shaded cooling center at the Pride Festival My specific request is \_\_\_\_\_ (insert your request from the checklist here). OR Lurge \_\_\_\_\_ to sign the Welcome to Pride Pledge, committing to implementing at leave three agefriendly Pride features from the attached checklist. For more information check out the **Welcome To Pride:** A Practical Guide to Making Pride Parades, Marches and Festivals Age-Friendly at <a href="mailto:sageusa.org/">sageusa.org/</a> join-the-age-friendly-pride-movement. Warmly, Your name Your contact information

## Letter Template— Pride Organizer To Potential Pride Sponsor

Dear Potential Sponsor,
I'm writing to you concerning a sponsorship opportunity.
(insert name of your organization here) has joined the national Welcome to Pride: Age-Friendly Pride Initiative, which means we actively work to assure that our Pride events are inclusive and welcoming of LGBT elders. I know that (insert name of potential sponsor) is committed to assuring (insert reference to potential sponsor's mission or track record) and we'd like to invite (insert name of potential sponsor) to participate in our upcoming Pride as a sponsor.
This year we are offering (e.g. reserved seating along the parade route), (e.g. a shaded cooling center with a hydration station) and (a Pride Dance for LGBT older adults and their guests) and we respectfully request your support for these age-friendly features.
Sponsorship Levels  Level 1  Level 2  Level 4  If you would like to participate as a sponsor, please contact me with the amount of our donation. Thank you for our consideration.
Warmly,
Your name Your organization Your contact information

## **Results of Two Nationwide Surveys**

#### **Participants 50+**

#### **Attended First Pride Event**

11%

Younger than 20

5% In my 50s

38%

In my 20s

**9%** In my 60s

25%

In my 30s

2% In my 70s

10%

In my 40s



have volunteered at Pride



felt there should be more opportunities for older LGBT individuals to volunteer and make a meaningful contribution.

#### What's Important?

**69%** Highlight the historical contributions of older LGBT community members to the fight for LGBT rights

65% Highlight the contributions to community currently being made by older LGBT individuals/organizations

**64%** Use Pride as a way to encourage cross-generational activities

**66%** Educate the LGBT community about issues faced by its older members and how those affect the community as a whole

#### Are there enough activities developed specifically for LGBT elders?



would like to see more



would like to see a lot more

#### **Planners**



said that "a lot more" could be done to improve the inclusion of LGBT older adults while...



felt there was "balanced representation" of LGBT elders.



said that there were no programs aimed at LGBT elders during their most recent pride, and...



said there was "just one." This matches participants. 30% said there were none and 22% said there were just one.



of planners specifically recruit older LGBT community members to participate in planning/ implementing activities.



have advocacy groups or older community members specifically request more elder-oriented activities at Pride.

## **Links to LGBT Aging and Age-Friendly Resources**

## RESOURCES RELATED TO AGING AS AN LGBT PERSON

Providing Competent and Affirming Services for Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Older Adults

LGBT Aging: A Review of Research Findings, Needs, and Policy Implications

Inclusive Questions for Older Adults: A Practical Guide to Collecting Data on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

Health and Psychosocial Needs of LGBT Older Adults

The Aging and Health Report: Disparities and Resilience among Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Older Adults

**Understanding Issues Facing LGBT Older Adults** 





#### **AGE-FRIENDLY RESOURCES**

**Making Your Website Senior Friendly** 

**AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities Tool Kit** 

Public Health and the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities

Age-Friendly Communication: Facts, Tips and Ideas

It's important that people understand why we do this and what it means to respect those who came before us. If it were not for them, who knows where we would be today? Take into consideration age and disability and make the common-sense changes you can to be inclusive and respectful of the contributions our elders have given us.

BRUCE PACHTER, COMMUNITY RELATIONS DIRECTOR, NYC PRIDE HERITAGE OF PRIDE, INC.

### **Welcome to Pride Champions**

We would like to honor the following Pride organizations as our inaugural Welcome to Pride Champions. We hope you will join the Welcome to Pride movement by signing the pledge today.

#### **FOUNDING MEMBERS**

Heritage of Pride, Inc Center for Black Equity Centerlink Interpride

AARP Illinois Action Wellness Affirmations Boston Senior Home Care

Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center—Lehigh Valley Pride in the Park

Center on Halsted

Compass LGBT Community Center-

Palm Beach Pride Emerald City Black Pride Fayetteville Black Pride FORGE, Inc.

Gay Activist Alliance in Morris County GLBT Community Center of

Colorado — Denver PrideFest

Harlem Pride New Orleans Black

Pride Festival Health Equity Alliance

Hudson Valley LGBTQ Community Center—Hudson Valley LGBTQ

Pride: Stand Together
Indiana Pride of Color
Jacksonville Black Pride
Jim Toy Community Center
Kansas City Center for Inclusion
LGBT Aging Project/Fenway Health
LGBT Center of Raleigh—Out! Raleigh
LGBT Community Center of Greater

Cleveland-Pride in the CLE

LGBT Community Center of the Desert

Long Beach Gray Panthers

Mary's House for Older Adults, Inc.

Milwaukee LGBT Community Center

Monroe County RSVP

Oaklahomans for Equality—Tulsa

Pride

Out Alliance-ROC Pride Fest

Port City Pride

Pride Community Servcies
Organization--Lexington Pride

Festival

Rainbow Community Center—

Concord Pride SAGE Alaska

SAGE Albuquerque

SAGE Center on Halsted

SAGE Cleveland

SAGE Hudson Valley

SAGE Maine

SAGE Metro Detroit

SAGE Metro Portland

SAGE Metro Tampa Bay

SAGE of PROMO Fund SAGE of the Desert

SAGE of the Rockies

SAGE Philadelphia at William Way

SAGE Raleigh SAGE Rochester SAGE Tulsa SAGE Utah

SAGE Wilmington of the Cape Fear

Coast

San Gabriel Valley Pride

Savannah Pride Silver Pride

Spencer Pride Inc.—Spencer Pride

Festival

Sunserve—Caribbean Pride

Temple Beth El

The GLO Center--Greater Ozarks

Pridefest

The LOFT LGBT Community Center— LOFT Pride (Westchester County)

Universal Care Services, LLC

William Way LGBT Community Center



#### We refuse to be invisible

#### **SAGE**

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