



# PRIDE and PROGRESS

## DISCUSSION GUIDE

Empowering LGBTQ+ communities to achieve freedom from nicotine addiction

The discussion guide is designed to help facilitate meaningful dialogue that results in powerful action to help your community achieve freedom from lifelong addiction.

**Pride + Progress** is a coalition of community leaders that is focused on providing safe spaces, meaningful conversations, and actionable resources to help LGBTQ+ communities break free from nicotine addiction.

The coalition is powered by Truth Initiative®, the nation's largest nonprofit public health organization dedicated to preventing youth and young adult nicotine addiction and empowering quitting for all. Truth Initiative is committed to creating lasting partnerships that drive culturally responsive, community-led solutions for tobacco cessation.



### Pride in Quitting

EX® Program, Truth Initiative's free digital quit program, has helped millions of people with tools that can increase odds of quitting by up to 40%. Take the first step by texting LIVEPROUD to 88709.

## HOW DOES NICOTINE ADDICTION IMPACT THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY?

Tobacco use remains the country's number one preventable cause of death and disease, resulting in more than 480,000 deaths each year. But it is not an equal opportunity killer.

- » Lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth and adults report higher prevalence of tobacco product use than their heterosexual peers.
- » 43% of transgender and gender nonconforming adults smoke, compared to 19.2% of cisgender adults.

This disproportionate burden is due to a combination of factors, including a history of targeted marketing from the tobacco industry, stigma, social disenfranchisement, and discrimination.

## DISCUSSION TIPS

Recommendations from The Trevor Project's "Black and LGBTQ+: Approaching Intersectional Conversations" guide:

### Set ground rules:

"One person speaks at a time, using 'I' statements to communicate from your own experiences, and not making assumptions about others' experiences."

### Remember your goals:

"If the discussion veers off course...remember your goals and try to turn their attention back to the original topic."

### Everyone is the expert about their experience:

"Two differing experiences can both be true and valid at the same time, even among people who share similar identities."

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND FACTS FOR THE GROUP TO CONSIDER

## A QUESTION ABOUT PRIDE

- » The tobacco industry has spent decades capitalizing on LGBT\* individuals.
- » In 1995, the tobacco company R.J. Reynolds created "Project SCUM" (Sub-Culture Urban Marketing) to boost cigarette sales by targeting gay men and homeless individuals with advertisements and displays placed in communities and stores.
- » More recently, tobacco companies have been leveraging social media to advertise e-cigarette products, and LGBT individuals are reporting significantly higher exposure to tobacco-related content on social media than their non-LGBT counterparts.

“ What do you think about the tobacco industry’s targeting of the LGBTQ+ community? Is your vision of yourself and your peers what you think the tobacco industry sees? ”

## A QUESTION ABOUT PROGRESS

- » Research has shown that harassment and discrimination of LGBT individuals increases stress and leads to higher tobacco use.
- » Research also shows several connections between nicotine addiction and increased symptoms of anxiety and depression, and while many people misinterpret nicotine as a stress reliever, it may be making their symptoms worse.

“ What are some healthy ways to cope with the stress of anti-LGBTQ+ policies? How can we help members of our community who use nicotine adopt a healthier path? ”



*\*The facts included in this resource are based on the studies cited in the Truth Initiative LGBTQ+ fact sheet.*

## KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING

EX Program, Truth Initiative’s free, proven-effective digital quit program, provides 24/7 access to the most established online quit community. Anyone can take the first step toward quitting by scanning this QR code or texting LIVEPROUD to 88709.



*Pride + Progress is part of the Culture + Cessation Collective, dedicated to empowering Black, Latino, and LGBTQ+ communities to achieve freedom from nicotine addiction. Learn more at: [truthinitiative.org/collective](https://truthinitiative.org/collective)*