

Where do
ANTI-LGBTQ*
attitudes occur most often?



HUMAN
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EQUALITY IN THE STANDS

The excitement of championship sporting events has the ability to unite millions as they come together to cheer on their favorite athletes and teams. However, not all fans are able to equally partake in the game. In many places, the stands and other spectating spaces are still too often plagued by discriminatory attitudes further exacerbated by negative behavior displayed both on and off the field. LGBTQ fans are particularly at risk, as the chants and climate of major sporting events have historically marginalized those who may not conform to cultural and sporting norms for gender, sexuality, physical ability or appearance.

IN THE STANDS AMONGST FANS

41%

PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASS 21%

Professional sporting environments amongst players 9%

Community sporting clubs 8%

Extra-curricular school sports 7%

Other 3%

80%

of spectators and athletes have
WITNESSED
anti-LGBTQ* attitudes in sport

As you tune in for the World Cup this month, here are ways you can help make sporting events more inclusive of LGBTQ athletes, coaches and fans.

*Findings from Out in the Fields (Denison, E., and A. Kitchen. "Out on the Fields Study On Homophobia in Sport." Out on the Fields. N.p., 2015. Web.).

CALL OUT

Non-Inclusive Behaviour

Being in the stands doesn't mean you have to be a bystander. If you hear chants, insults or negative speech at the expense of a certain group of people, call it out. Too often, fans will heckle other teams or opposing fans with racist, sexist, ableist and/or anti-LGBTQ language and jokes. As both sport fans and supporters of equality, you and others around you are the first line of defense for other spectators and can change the culture in the stadium by calling out discriminatory language and behaviors as unacceptable.

ADVOCATE FOR

Inclusive policies for venues

Sporting venues and stadium personnel have the ability to enact — and even more importantly, enforce — inclusive policies and practices that help combat discriminatory behavior by fans. This may include guidelines for ejecting or banning spectators who engage in discriminatory behavior or hate speech. It's important to know where your stadium stands as it relates to these items, so you can cite them or feel supported by them should incidents arise.

POLICIES AND PRACTICES TO RESEARCH

Trans-inclusive accommodations: are facilities inclusive of transgender and non-binary athletes, spectators and personnel, including equal access to restrooms and locker room areas?

LGBTQ-inclusive fan code of conduct: does the facility explicitly welcome and protect LGBTQ fans?

Nondiscrimination statement: does the team and/or venue ban anti-LGBTQ and other types of discrimination in sporting events, but also in its employment, athletic and general business practices?

Vendor policies: does the stadium or event work with vendors and external partners committed to LGBTQ inclusion?

Inclusion training for stadium staff: are staff trained on inclusive practices and guidelines, including how to respond to incidents of discrimination or hate speech?

Bias-related incident reporting protocol: is there a protocol for reporting and tracking bias-related incidents that occur at venues and/or other team-related events?

REPORT HATE SPEECH

If you overhear hate speech or see discriminatory behavior, it is important to address it. In addition to calling it out, it's imperative that the incident is reported to stadium staff. Some stadiums have a protocol for reporting bias-related incidents, but staff should be alerted regardless as they can help manage the situation and engage perpetrators from a position of authority. This approach is especially important if you or others fear potential retaliation.

BE INTENTIONAL

When you're among thousands of cheering fans, it's easy to get caught up in the group's momentum. This is part of what makes supporting your team so rewarding, but it can quickly become dangerous. Be thoughtful and intentional about the actions and chants you're engaging in as a part of a group — are they at the expense of someone else or another group of people? Don't allow your experience as a part of a whole cloud your judgement about inclusive and ethical behavior.

KNOW LOCAL LAWS & CLIMATE

Attending our favorite sporting events often requires us to travel to unfamiliar places, including those where LGBTQ people may not be equally protected or supported. Given the patchwork of LGBTQ protections across cities, states and countries — it's important that you research the policies and environment in the city and surrounding area of your event.

You shouldn't have to risk your safety to cheer on your team. Support LGBTQ athletes, coaches and fans by being a champion for inclusion in the stands.

A HOSTILE CLIMATE FOR LGBTQ FANS

LGBTQ individuals and their allies face extreme challenges in Russia. In 2013, Russia enacted a law prohibiting the “propaganda” of “nontraditional sexual relations”— which could result in fines for anyone who publicly disseminates information on LGBTQ identities. In addition, LGBTQ Russians continue to face discrimination, harassment and even violence because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Addressing these issues is complicated by widespread anti-LGBTQ attitudes: a full 63% of Russians believe that LGBTQ people should not be accepted in Russian society.

In addition, since early 2017, authorities in Chechnya, a federal republic of Russia, have rounded up, detained and tortured men suspected of being gay or bisexual. As many as 20 of those who were detained in secret prisons may have been killed. Government leaders have been actively

encouraging citizens to murder their own LGBTQ family members. Despite these deeply disturbing accounts, an official base camp in Grozny, Chechnya, will be used to host the Egypt national team during this year’s World Cup.

LGBTQ people and allies should exercise extreme caution when in Russia. The UK Football Supporters’ Federation has issued a travel guidance for the 2018 World Cup that may prove helpful.

FIFA Policy & Human Rights

In May 2017, after Russia had already been selected to host the 2018 World Cup, FIFA adopted a comprehensive human rights policy. The policy states that FIFA is “committed to respecting all internationally

recognized human rights and shall strive to promote the protection of these rights.”

This serves as guidance for the ways in which FIFA chooses World Cup hosts and seeks to address a range of human rights issues including discrimination, security and safety. Advocates hope that this policy will ensure host countries are fully inclusive of all athletes and fans before they are awarded the privilege of hosting the World Cup or other major FIFA events.