



**ANTI-HATE
TASK FORCE**

NOVEMBER 9, 2023

20 LGBTQ+ COHORT

Combating Anti-LGBTQ+ Biases, Hate
Crimes, and Promoting Wellness in
Montgomery County

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WELCOME



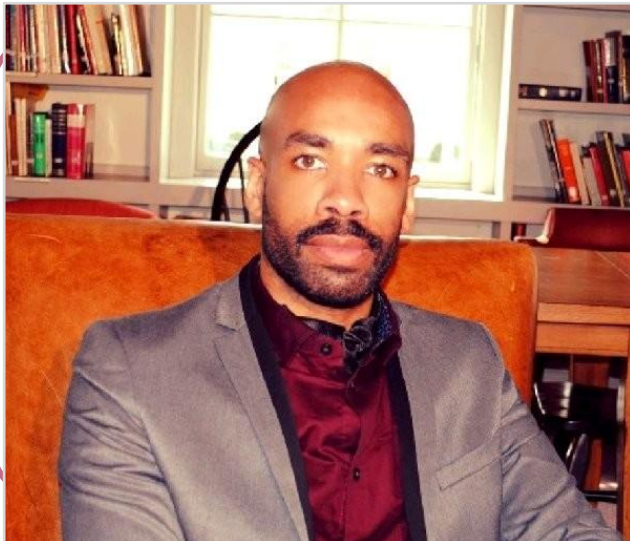
Dear Montgomery County Community,

On behalf of the LGBTQ+ Cohort of the Anti-Hate Task Force, welcome to this crucial presentation dedicated to fostering inclusivity, combating biases, and promoting wellness in our community. Your presence underscores the collective commitment to building a Montgomery County that stands against hate and embraces diversity.

We will explore insightful statistics, survey results, and propose policy recommendations to address biases, combat hate, and promote overall wellness in our amazingly diverse Montgomery County community!

Thank you for joining us on this journey towards a safer and more supportive environment for everyone, regardless of their gender identity or sexual orientation.

ANTI-HATE TASK FORCE: LGBTQ+ COHORT



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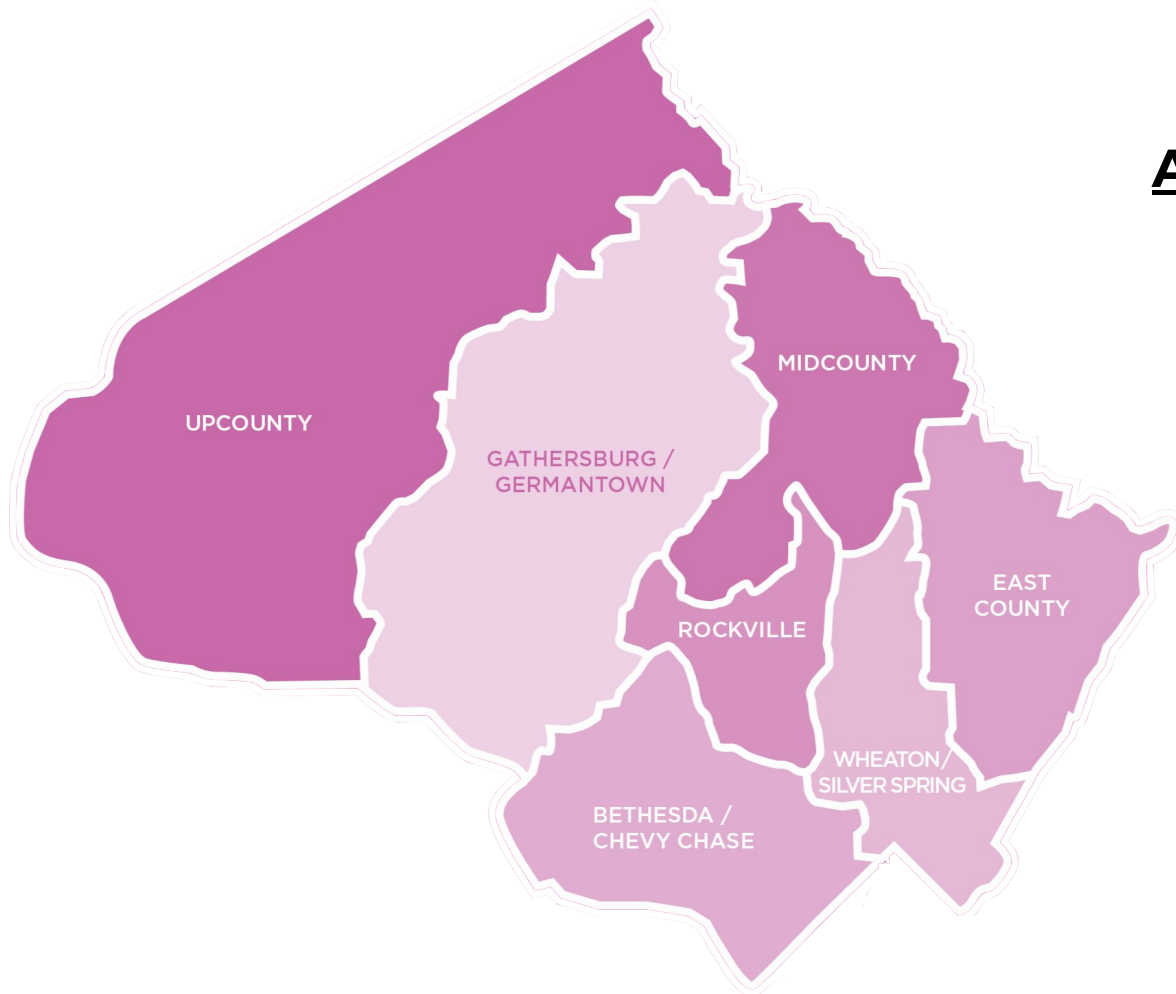
MEMBER-AT-LARGE



CONTENTS: Combating Anti-LGBTQ+ Biases, Hate Crimes, and Promoting Wellness in Montgomery County

WELCOME	1
ANTI-HATE TASK FORCE LGBTQ+ COHORT MEMBERS	2
BACKGROUND	4
METHODOLOGY & REPORTS	5
PERSISTING CHALLENGES	7
RECENT ANTI-LGBTQ+ BIASES & HATE INCIDENTS	8
POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS	
COUNTY SERVICES – MCPS – MONTGOMERY COUNTY POLICE	11
CONCLUSION	16

BACKGROUND: Understanding Our Community



Montgomery County, Maryland: **A diverse, progressive community.**

- Estimated LGBTQ+ population: 88,000 residents (8% of households).
- Legal protections since 1984.
 - A history of LGBTQ+ acknowledgment and support.

METHODOLOGY & REPORTS

We utilized the Montgomery County LGBTQ+ 2023 Community Survey Report, the CDC's LGBTQ+ Youth Report: Addressing Health Disparities with a School-Based Approach, MCPS's Office of School Support and Wellbeing for anecdotal evidence, and The Montgomery County Police Department's Annual Report on Bias Incidents.

Montgomery County has a LGBTQIA+ population that is shaped just like our national and world community. LGBTQIA+ people fit into every demographic in our country. We are your family members, friends, faith leaders, business leaders, doctors, unhoused populations, incarcerated populations, and people seeking justice in each of the cohorts of the Anti-Hate Task force listed here today.

Despite some of the positive findings in the Montgomery County LGBTQ+ survey report, we understand that only 1% of the estimated LGBTQ+ population of Montgomery county were reported on. The youngest respondent was 11 years old and the oldest was 84 years old.

We see and acknowledge the disparities and lack of reporting from BIPOC queer, trans, and gender expansive communities, who make up a significant part of our most vulnerable and underserved Montgomery County populous.

PERSISTING CHALLENGES

Continued Discrimination Despite Progress

• **Statistics from the Montgomery County LGBTQ+ Community Survey:**

- **Discrimination Rate:** 44.9% of respondents reported experiencing discrimination in at least one place over the past year.
- **Public Space Discrimination:** 23.8% experienced discrimination in a public space.

• **Sources: LGBTQ+ Community Survey, 2023**

Despite the advancements in legal protections and social acceptance, discrimination remains prevalent. Nearly half of the LGBTQ+ respondents in Montgomery County reported facing discrimination in various aspects of their lives over the past year, underscoring the persistent challenges faced by the community.

National Impact on Mental Health

• **CDC Statistics:**

- **Mental Health Disparities:** LGBQ+ youth were reported to be 4 times more likely to attempt suicide than their heterosexual peers during the pandemic.
- **Persistent Sadness:** In 2021, 69% of LGBQ+ youth reported feeling persistently sad and hopeless, compared to 35% of heterosexual youth.

• **Sources: CDC LGBQ+ Youth Report, 2021**

PERSISTING CHALLENGES CONTINUED

The **CDC's LGBTQ+ Youth Report** shows youth consistently report higher rates of bullying, being threatened or injured with a weapon, and dating violence compared to their heterosexual peers.

1. Disparities are particularly pronounced around sexual violence, with LGBTQ+ students being four times as likely to experience rape.
2. During the pandemic, 20% of LGBTQ+ students reported being physically abused by a parent or other adult in their home, while that figure was 10% for heterosexual students.

Intersectionality Increases Vulnerability

• LGBTQ+ Community Survey Insights:

- **Intersectional Vulnerability:** Trans, gender expansive, and questioning respondents who had interactions with law enforcement were less likely to report positive experiences.

• Sources: LGBTQ+ Community Survey, 2022

The intersectionality of identities compounds the vulnerability of LGBTQ+ individuals. The LGBTQ+ Community Survey reveals that those who belong to multiple marginalized groups, such as trans and gender-expansive BIPOC communities, face increased challenges, particularly in interactions with law enforcement.

Recent MCPS Anecdotal Evidence

- Parent/guardian of a Grade 2 male student (Student A) reported allegations that another Grade 2 male student (Student B) made an inappropriate comment, hate-bias in nature (LGBTQ+), threatening harm, while on bus.
- Grade 7 male student (Student A) and a Grade 8 female student (Student B) who have history of an ongoing verbal altercation for the last two weeks; escalated today while in the hallway. Student B made reference to Student A in a hate-bias (LGBTQ+) nature.
- Grade 7 male student (Student A) reported allegations that another Grade 7 male student (Student B) made inappropriate comments, hate-bias in nature (Racial and LGBTQ+), via a social media platform.
- Staff member witnessed a Grade 12 male (Student A) use hate/bias language, Anti-Semitic and homophobic in nature, toward another Grade 12 male (Student B) in the restroom.
- Two Grade 10 male students (Student A/B) and a Grade 9 male student (Student C) were in the bathroom when Student A and C became involved in an altercation; Student B was taking images on a personal electronic device, then intervened by physically assaulting Student A. Students B and C started making verbal allegations towards Student A in a hate-bias nature (LGBTQ+).
- Grade 6 female student (Student A) and two Grade 6 male students (Students B and C) engaged in a negative verbal exchange in the classroom regarding race and LGBTQ+ Subject matter.
- August 28, 2023, the parent/guardian of a Grade 4 male student (Student A) reported allegations that another Grade 4 male student (Student B) made an inappropriate comment, hate-bias in nature (LGBTQ+), about their student to an unspecified number of students, while in the cafeteria.
- Grade 7 male student (Student A) reported allegations that two Grade 7 male students (Students B and C) and one Grade 8 male student (Student D) have been making inappropriate comments, hate bias in nature, towards them on the bus on multiple unspecified dates.
- Tuesday, September 5, 2023 at approximately 9:30 a.m., a staff member alerted administration, via email, of discovering graffiti on their classroom wall of a hate-bias (gender) nature; perpetrator unknown.

Recent MCPS Anecdotal Evidence

An NBC 4 article titled 'They Think I'm a Sin': Transgender Boy Says He's Being Bullied at Maryland Middle School

“They call me slurs, they ask what my gender is, they ask stuff about my body that I’m not comfortable with, and just all sorts of questions that are not appropriate to ask someone,” he said. “I think they forget that I’m a person.”

<https://www.nbcwashington.com/news/local/they-think-im-a-sin-transgender-boy-says-hes-being-bullied-at-maryland-middle-school/3299020/>

3 Montgomery County families sue MCPS over LGBTQ books

<https://www.fox5dc.com/news/3-montgomery-county-families-sue-mcps-over-lbtq-books>

Judge denies motion for Montgomery Co. families to opt kids out of lessons with LGBTQ+ books

<https://www.nbcwashington.com/news/local/judge-denies-motion-for-montgomery-county-families-to-opt-kids-out-of-curriculum-involving-lgbtq-books/3410565/>

Middle school teacher finds 'Homophobic Club Hub' on student's Chromebook

<https://www.wusa9.com/article/news/local/maryland/middle-school-finds-homophobic-club-hub-students-chromebook/65-f52141d9-1639-4d42-97c8-4e148fa50f29>

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<https://hrc-prod-requests.s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/MEI-2022-Gaithersburg-Maryland.pdf>

<https://www.hrc.org/resources/mei-2022-see-your-cities-scores>

<https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/LGBT-Religiosity-Oct-2020.pdf>

LGBTQ+ COHORT POLICY

RECOMMENDATIONS



Our community is at a pivotal moment, and it requires decisive action to combat hate crimes and biases while promoting wellness. The policy recommendations presented here form a high-level roadmap toward creating a safer and more inclusive Montgomery County for all its residents irrespective of their gender identity, sexual orientation, or cultural background.

VISION



These recommendations address critical areas such as cultural competency, education, community centers, and reporting mechanisms. By implementing these policies, we aim not only to counteract the persisting challenges but to build a community where diversity is celebrated, and all individuals thrive. The urgency lies in fostering a culture of acceptance, understanding, and support to create lasting positive change.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

County Government Recommendations:

• **Allocating Annual Resources for a Community Led Physical LGBTQIA+ Resource Center in Montgomery County, Maryland:**

- **Recommendation:**

- **Central Hub:** Establish annual sustainable funding for a physical LGBTQ+ community center to serve as a hub for resources, support, linkage to vital services, and an affirming and safe meeting space.

• **Expanding Satellite Programming:**

- **Recommendation:**

- **Diverse Community Reach:** Allocate community funding to expand satellite LGBTQIA+ programming to reach diverse communities within the vast county.

• **Ensuring Accessibility:**

- **Recommendation:**

- **Resource Accessibility:** Ensure that resources and services are accessible to all residents by partnering with community based LGBTQIA+ service organizations.
- **Strengthen the County LGBTQIA+ Liaison Position:** By adding at least another part-time or making the current position full-time to ensure they can effectively meet the vast needs of our populace.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

County Wide-Community Based Cultural Competency Training:

•**Recommendation:**

- **County-Wide Training:** Implement county-wide community-based cultural competency training for all services.

•**Rationale:**

- Ensuring all service providers are culturally competent creates an inclusive environment for gender and sexuality minorities, as well as racial and cultural minorities.

•**Intersectionality as a Focus:**

- Acknowledge the compounding effects of intersectionality to address the specific needs of individuals who belong to multiple marginalized groups.

MCPS Recommendations:

• **Professional Development for School Staff:**

• **Recommendation:**

- **Expand MCPS Professional Development days by 30%:** Provide culturally competent and community derived professional development for school staff to ensure they have the tools to create inclusive environments. **Safe Spaces and Anti-Harassment Policy Enforcement with continued professional development.**

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Montgomery County Police Recommendations:

- **ERG's or Officer Resource Groups for marginalized communities.**
 - **Rationale:** Police need to feel safe and affirmed to live authentically among their own colleagues. We recommend all peer-to-peer led internal training within the MCPD

- **Comprehensive Tracking and Reporting:**

Rationale: At the end of the MCPD Annual Report on Bias Incidents, in addition to their findings on Gender and sexuality hate incidences, they state, “Anti-homosexual phrases and images are also frequently reported.” Why is this not a part of comprehensive reporting?

- **Recommendation:**
 - **Systematic Approach:** Implement comprehensive tracking and reporting of anti-LGBTQ biases, hate crimes, and anti-BIPOC violence and biases, and reporting on what role intersectionality play.

Conclusion

In closing, our journey through the landscape of combating anti-LGBTQ+ biases, hate crimes, and promoting wellness in Montgomery County has illuminated both the progress we've made and the challenges that persist. As we stand at the intersection of data, lived experiences, and a shared commitment to change, the path forward becomes clear.

Our LGBTQ+ residents, resilient and diverse, are a vital thread in the rich tapestry of the Montgomery County Community.

As we conclude, envision with us a future where inclusivity is not just a goal but a reality. A future where every individual, regardless of their gender identity, sexual orientation, race, culture, religion, ethnicity or intersecting identities, can thrive without fear of discrimination. Our recommendations for policy changes, cultural competency, and inclusive education serve as snapshot for this transformative journey.

Montgomery County, with its proactive protections, has the power to set a precedent for inclusivity. Let us forge ahead, championing the cause of a safer, more welcoming county for LGBTQ+ individuals and all Montgomery County Residents.

Together, let us build a future where every individual is not just accepted but celebrated, ensuring Montgomery County shines as a beacon of inclusion, empowerment, and progress.

Thank you for your attention, your commitment, and your dedication to fostering a Montgomery County where everyone can live authentically, without fear, and with the fullness of their identity embraced!

**THANK
YOU :)**

"We celebrate diversity and strive to simply teach humanity, to shape a future and community where everyone feels loved and affirmed!"

-Phillip Alexander Downie

ANTI-HATE TASK FORCE: LGBTQ+ COHORT · NOVEMBER 9, 2023

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