

Bitesized Belonging: How to attend Pride respectfully

As June draws to a close many of us who haven't already frequented the Pride Parades, festivals, gatherings, and events that mark this month may be considering doing so this week. For some, Pride Month is about recharging; gathering the queer collective energy to continue advocating for self and community. For others, Pride Month is an important signifier of the advancement LGBTQ+ people have made since the 1969 Stonewall Riots. And for others, it'll be the first place they feel seen, understood, and respected.

Whether you're a seasoned Pride goer, new to the experience, or an ally who's been looking forward to the celebration all year, it's important we all remember the ground rules.

Take some time to review the materials below and keep these five (5) rules in mind:

1. Consent, consent, consent.

Whether it's a picture or a hug, remember the necessity of asking for permission first. Drag Queens, folks wearing colorful and fun outfits, and queer folks of all shapes, sizes, and identities gather during Pride. Touching, taking pictures, and pointing without asking for consent can make folks feel like animals in a zoo.

2. Keep your comments to yourself.

If you don't have something nice to say, then it's best to keep it to yourself.

3. Parents, consider who you're bringing with you.

Unless otherwise designated, Pride events should be considered adult spaces. Commenting on the appropriateness of what folks are wearing or how they're behaving because you've brought young children along can be perceived as rude and exclusive. There are many kid-friendly Pride events that can be found should you want to bring the littles along!

4. Be mindful that you're a guest if you're an ally.

A good ally understands which spaces they're welcome in and which they're not and navigates that change with grace. Be cognizant of the spaces you're entering and treat them with the respect of an observer and welcome guest.

5. Have fun!

Pride is a hard fought, hard won celebration of love. It's a celebration of difference, of fluidity, of vibrancy. Be sure to laugh, cheer, and show your love for this community.

Resources:

First time at Pride? Try this:

<https://www.them.us/story/first-timers-guide-to-pride>

Non-Queer ally? Check this out:

<https://mashable.com/article/lgbtq-pride-straight-allies>