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This document will address the Q in LGBTQ+ acronym and will explore this Q as meaning both "queer" and "questioning"

Important Facts about Queerness and Identity:

- Identity in this context:
 - identity in this case is referring to both their gender identity and their sexual identity, also known as their sexuality
 - This resource aims to address less clear cut or common identities and ones related to those exploring their identity.
- Identity is not always clear cut:
 - For some, their identity is very clear cut and always has been. However for others their identity is not easy to discern at all and their feelings are not easily figured out.
- Someone's identity may not just be one thing:
 - For some their identity may not be as a gay man or a trans woman but as a gay trans man or a pansexual non-binary person. Their identity is more than just one item, which can make discussing or deciding on a identity difficult.
- There can be personal elements to an identity
 - People do not exist within a bubble and are influenced by social and environmental experiences. this can effect how someone views their identity. There may be confusion about their identity due to internalized homophobia or transphobia, or misconception about what an identity is.

Identity Explanations:

- **Queer:** Generally speaking, queer is now a catch all term for identities that are not heterosexual or cisgender. This is a reclaimed term and has a history of being used as a slur against the LGBTQ+ community. It is also used in academia, such as queer studies.
- **Questioning:** A term that can refer to those who may be struggling with or exploring their sexuality and/or gender identity.

This document serves as supplementary material for the EFCL video series "Identity Education". To access that series please visit:



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Things to Know:

- Reclaiming the word "queer":
 - The word queer is a reclaimed slur and has a long history of being used offensively towards the LGBTQ+ community.
 - While it has become more accepted and widely used some have issue with it and have been targeted with it's use
 - Only refer to someone as queer if you have permission or they call themselves that.
- Do not use other slurs:
 - Though queer is becoming reclaimed, many other LGBTQ+ slurs are not. Do not use these when referring to members of the LGBTQ+ community.
- Difficulties with identity and feelings:
 - Feelings and thoughts are not clear and there is no way to compare how you may feel about a person or your own gender identity to an identity. Thus it can be exceptionally difficult to find an identity that feels suitable or like it fits.
- The importance of fluidity:
 - An important part of the use of queer and questioning is that it allows for fluidity to exist in terms of gender and sexuality. Sexuality and gender identity can and does shift for people and this allows for those shifts or those changes in identity to be easier and smoother.

For more information, please consider viewing the following links:

- <https://www.circlecarecenter.org/news-events/why-the-q-in-lgbtq-matters>
- <https://www.refinery29.com/en-us/what-q-in-lqbtqia-stand-for>

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