Within the LGBTQ+ community, identity is important because it offers a sense of self while making people feel seen and heard. It can also create a welcoming and inclusive environment for all identities within the community.

**Why Identity Matters**

Anti-LGBTQ+ and/or homophobia slurs can cause mental and emotional harm. Using these slurs can perpetuate dangerous stereotypes about the community and increase the need for mental health care.

**Pronouns Hold Power**

Using appropriate preferred pronouns can create a sense of validation. Being mislabeled can have a negative impact on the mental health of the community by taking away their sense of self and can lead to a sense of isolation and depression.

**Anti-LGBTQ+ Slurs Are Harmful**

Anti-LGBTQ+ and/or homophobia slurs can cause mental and emotional harm. Using these slurs can perpetuate dangerous stereotypes about the community and increase the need for mental health care.

**Effective Ways to Address Identity**

and create inclusive and affirming environments:

- Don’t assume a person’s gender identity based on perception, instead ask about preferred pronouns.
- Share your pronouns when making introductions, including on email signatures and social media bios.
- Use gender neutral language when addressing groups of people who haven’t shared their pronouns.

**Resources**

Check out these helpful mental health resources. Learn more about anxiety, depression and the LGBTQ+ community. For more information visit www.adaa.org.