

Safer spaces text used until 2010

We hope that everyone at the QueerFEST is made aware of the idea of 'Safer Spaces'. We say 'safer' realizing that no space can be entirely safe for everyone. We can start by listening to one another, being openminded, knowing that we have come together to learn from one another. We aim for an environment where differences are not only tolerated, but respected, celebrated, supported and defended. Let's expect that everyone has something amazing to contribute.

The Queer Fest is a DIY event so its up to all of us make it a Safer Space for all: Safer spaces are welcoming, engaging and supportive. We want the Queer Fest to be a space where people can take care of one another. We want people to feel that they can let their hair down (or cut it all off) and be themselves, knowing that they will be supported. We are asking people to be proactive in creating a safer space at the Queer Fest. Also, take responsibility for your own safety and get help if you need it!

Queers will not tolerate Disrespect for Queers at the Queer Festival!

This is no space for for being racist, ageist, sexist or any other behavior or language that may perpetuate oppression. You are expected to take responsibility for all your isms and phobias (sexism, racism, ageism, ableism, fatphobia, homo/bi/trans/intersez/heterophobia, kinksexphobia, asexphobia, classism and all the other hierarchical shit that's out there).

Violence will not be tolerated at the Queerfestival

Any group or individual engaging in violent behavior such as- fighting, sexual assault, threats, harassment- can be thrown off the site. This space aims to be survivor centric/survivor oriented so don't expect equal rights to participate if you have perpetrated non-consensual violence. If you know or have been told that you become violent or disrespectful under the influence of alcohol or other drugs please do not drink or do drugs while you are here.

Pay attention to boundaries

Different people have different boundaries when it comes to personal space and physical contact. Most of us want different things at different times, or different things from different people, Please do not make assumptions about peoples comfort or desires. Watch peoples body language. If someone is continuously turning away from you, avoiding eye contact, crossing their arms when you speak to them, looking awkward, bored or making excuses as to why they need to be away from you, this is often a good indicator that they are saying back off. And remember always get explicit verbal consent before touching someone- anything but YES means NO!

Subvert prejudice :

We may like to think of the Queer fest as an 'alternative' space where people reject the prejudices and socialization of 'mainstream' societal values. But activist communities often carry the same

prejudices as the so-called mainstream and we all need to address this. We want to encourage the expression of radically different opinions, choices and tactics at the Queer Festival, which means we must work hard not to silence each other. This includes engaging with others outside of a "radical clique" and relating to all sorts of people in honest, radical, and non-discriminatory ways. When we disagree lets do it in a way where we can hear each other. Communicate with care and respect and always consider the context in which you are speaking. Lets try to go beyond tokenism (being shallowly inclusive to create a false impression of a really liberated space, to challenge our own awkwardness around people because of some percieved differences). Let's aim to explore and acknowledge the subtle (and not so subtle) forms of prejudice with in the space and tackle them head on.

Don't assume -ask

All identities are self defined. Don't presume you know someones gender, ethnicity, sexual preference, political positions or anything else to do with their identity. ASK, LISTEN and RESPECT what you hear. Analyze why you ask some people and don't ask others.

The Queer Festival is also a place to challenge our own personal fucked up gender socilaization. Think about this also when you make decisions about what you do at the Queer Festival and challenge yourself!

NEED SOME SUPPORT?

If you experience or witness any behavior that crosses your boundaries or makes you feel uncomfortable or if you feel like you would like to talk to someone, please call (contacts???) . Or approach someone with a grievance badge on. Note different people will wear the badges at different times, but people on grievance duty that day will introduce themselves at the daily meeting.

We are not professionals or trained in this. We will do our best collectively to offer problem solving support at the festival, but it may be worth seeking support outside the festival for trauma. Know that our best may be giving you a support number to call.