

# EMOLEMO QUEER TIMES

Free State Queer Newsletter

ISSUE 4.

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Dr Zamasomi Luvuno Beyond Zero UNMUTE ME Conference 16 April 2021. Bon Hotel, Bloemfontein Free state.

## UNMUTE ME Conference for Transgender Community.

Written by Nosana Sondiyazi

Beyond Zero was awarded a Global Fund grant to oversee prevention programmes for transgender (TG) people that aim to reduce the number of new HIV infections and further spread of HIV through provision of recommended comprehensive package of services. TG are part of the broader key populations that have been shown to be at high risk for HIV infection. Various studies have shown that key populations are disproportionately affected by HIV compared to the general population. HIV prevalence among adults aged 15 to 49 years in South Africa is 19 percent, (STATSSA 2018). Beyond Zero hosted the UNMUTE ME conference at Bon Hotel, Bloemfontein 16 and 17 April 2021. Beyond Zero funds LGBTQIA+ NGO Tholwana e Molemo.

Event coordinator Qhawekazi Thengwa from Beyond Zero found it necessary to bring experts to present to the Free State TG community. Guest presenters included:

- Dr Pholo Ramothwala - Human Rights.
- Dr Zamasomi - Primary Healthcare.
- Dr Nomsa Buso - Gender Affirming Healthcare.
- Dr Sakhile Msweli - Mental Health.

Attendees of the conference had a first hand experience in receiving up-to-date information on transgender health care. Difficult matters concerning stigma and discrimination of the queer community were shared. Degrading language is often occurring in multiple sectors in society, this causes internalized stigma within the LGBTQIA+ community. Legal rights and freedoms as well as the National Health Insurance Bill were also touched on during the two day conference.

Intolerance and queer phobia continues to be a struggle suffered by LGBTQIA+ members. Which is why there was a candlelight ceremony in memory of those which have lost their lives due to violence, COVID19 and suicide, for their souls to rest in peace. Participants were provided with different colour candles with significant meanings.



- WHITE**  
Protection, new beginnings, purity, truth, peace, harmony, calming the mind.
- BLUE**  
Emotional healing, communication, creativity, focus, justice, inspiration, harmony, peace
- BLACK**  
Protection, repelling/absorbing or banishing negative energy. Putting an end to an unhealthy situation.
- GREEN**  
Money, good luck, prosperity, success, health.
- RED**  
Love, potency, attract new sexual partner or improve sex life, strength, courage, determination.
- ORANGE**  
Intellect, good luck with career, networking, legal affairs, joy, stimulating energy.
- PINK**  
Unconditional love, romance, affection, warmth, joy, friendship, self-love, happiness, forgiveness, reconciliation, intimacy.
- YELLOW**  
Intelligence, focus, learning, mental blocks, wisdom, clarity, confidence, new ideas, logic.
- PURPLE**



 **Sign the petition** 

<http://chnng.it/cWTscSrZMD>

**Policy regulation of 5% daily positive LGBTQIA specific content on national SA media.**

A government regulation of 5% daily positive LGBTQIA specific content on national broadcasting channels by 31 December 2021 is necessary. All radio stations, TV channels and print media need to cover LGBTQIA+ content, prioritizing LGBTQIA+ lives and stories.

LGBTQIA+ individuals in South Africa continue to suffer prejudice, discrimination and stigma at home, school, places of work, and while accessing public health, social and justice services. LGBTQIA+ human rights violations continue to remain unreported as they occur in rural areas and are committed by supposedly ignorant perpetrators who claim to not understand, diverse gender identities and homosexual sexual orientations.

We call for national media coverage for and by the LGBTQIA+ community.

# Starting PrEP



## PrEP DOES:

Reduce your risk of HIV infection, by 90% if taken daily and correctly

## PrEP DOES NOT:

Prevent other STI's  
Prevent pregnancy  
Protect you from HIV after exposure, PrEP reduces your risk before exposure

## OUR SERVICES

- HIV Testing
- STI Screening
- TB Screening
- HRT referral
- Referral for PEP
- Referral for PrEP
- Psychosocial Support
- Wellness Clinic
- Health Advocacy
- Linkage and Adherence to requested support
- Condom and Lubricant Distribution
- Community Dialogues
- Support Group
- Distribution of I.E.C. Material
- Documenting Human Rights Violations



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# Avoid the Three Cs

Be aware of different levels of risk in different settings.

There are certain places where COVID-19 spreads more easily:



**1**  
**Crowded places**  
with many people nearby



**2**  
**Close-contact setting**  
especially where people have close-range conversations



**3**  
**Confined and enclosed spaces**  
with poor ventilation



The risk is higher in places where these factors overlap. Even as restrictions are lifted, consider where you are going and #StaySafe by avoiding the Three Cs.

## WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?



Avoid crowded places and limit time in enclosed spaces



Maintain at least 2m distance from others



When possible open windows and doors for ventilation



Keep hands clean and cover coughs and sneezes



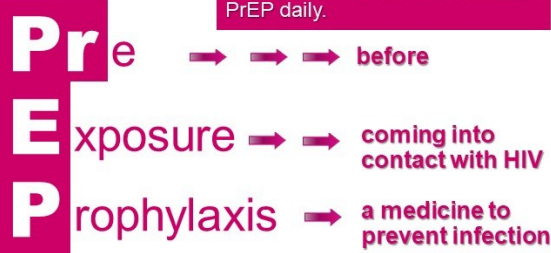
Wear a mask at all times



PrEP is an extra prevention method for HIV negative persons who are at high risk of getting infected with HIV.

PrEP works best when taken daily and used with a condom. In the first 7 days of taking PrEP, you are not yet fully protected and need to use a condom too. After 7 days, you need to continue taking PrEP daily.

**PrEP** is only for people who are HIV-negative. PrEP is recommended for people at high risk for HIV infection.



## What is the difference between PrEP, PEP and ART?

All three contain antiretroviral medicines in different combination for different purposes:

- **PrEP** is a pill that has 2 anti-HIV medicines taken daily to prevent HIV for HIV-negative people.
- **PEP** is taken within 72 hours after exposure to HIV (e.g. after rape) for 28 days to prevent HIV.
- **ART** is a 3-medicine treatment for HIV-positive people to reduce the levels of HIV in a person's body.

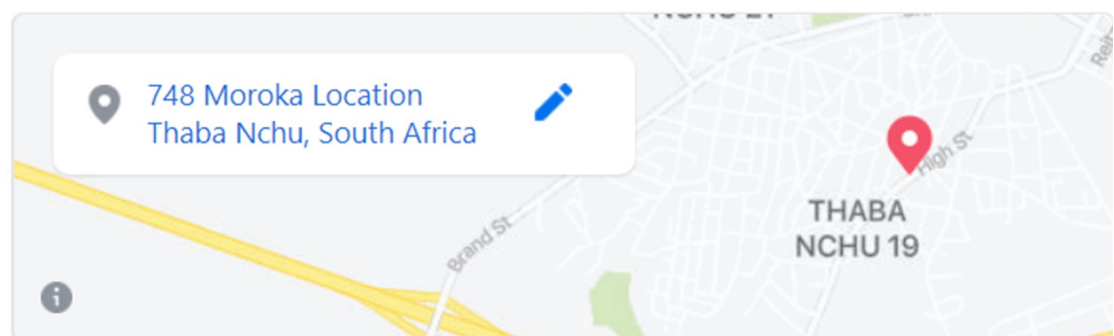
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**PrEP** is another option for prevention. Prevention options include:

- Condoms
- PrEP
- Counselling
- PEP
- Healthy lifestyles
- Treatment for STIs
- Male medical circumcision
- ART for partners living with HIV.



## VICTIM EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM

**WHAT IS GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV)?**  
VIOLENCE THAT IS DIRECTED AT AN INDIVIDUAL BASED ON HIS OR HER BIOLOGICAL SEX OR GENDER IDENTITY. THREATS, RAPE, SEXUAL ASSAULT, PHYSICAL ASSAULT, PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EMOTIONAL ABUSE. DENIAL OF RESOURCES, OPPORTUNITIES AND SERVICES. ECONOMIC OR EDUCATION DEPRIVATION, WHETHER OCCURRING IN PUBLIC OR PRIVATE LIFE

**WHAT IS INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE (IPV)?**  
IPV IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (VIOLENT OR AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR WITHIN THE HOME, TYPICALLY INVOLVING THE VIOLENT) ABUSE BY A CURRENT OR FORMER SPOUSE OR PARTNER. IPV CAN BE PHYSICAL, VERBAL, EMOTIONAL, ECONOMIC OR SEXUAL ABUSE.

**WHAT IS HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATION (HRV)?**  
HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS ARE THE VIOLATIONS OF THE BASIC RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS THAT BELONG TO EVERY PERSON IN THE WORLD, FROM BIRTH UNTIL DEATH. THESE BASIC RIGHTS ARE BASED ON SHARED VALUES LIKE DIGNITY, FAIRNESS, EQUALITY, RESPECT AND INDEPENDENCE. THESE VALUES ARE DEFINED AND PROTECTED BY LAW.

**WHAT IS HATE CRIME?**  
A CRIME, TYPICALLY ONE INVOLVING VIOLENCE, THAT IS MOTIVATED BY PREJUDICE ON THE BASIS OF RACE, RELIGION, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, OR OTHER GROUNDS.

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## VICTIM EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM

**ACTIVITIES**

1. FOCUS GROUPS & DIALOGUES
2. FAMILY SENSITIZATIONS
3. SUPPORT GROUPS
4. SOCIAL BEHAVIOR CHANGE :
  - COMMUNITY REFLECTIVE DIALOGUES WITH MEN AND BOYS
5. SOCIAL CRIME PREVENTION :
  - AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS ON GBV, IPV, HRV & HATE CRIME
6. PSYCHOSOCIAL COUNSELLING & SUPPORT BY THE SOCIAL WORKER
7. LIFE SKILLS CLUBS
8. CAREERS EXPO
9. REFERRALS TO EXTERNAL RESOURCES/ORGANIZATIONS
10. JOB/TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

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# SEX, GENDER A

## SEX, GENDER IDENTITY & SEXUAL ORIENTATION

**Sex** organ that is involved in sexual reproduction. The reproductive organs together constitute the reproductive system. The testis in the male, and the ovary in the female, are called the primary sex organs.

**Intersex** is a general term used for a variety of situations in which a person is born with reproductive or sexual anatomy that doesn't fit the boxes of "female" or "male." Sometimes doctors do surgeries on **intersex** babies and children to make their bodies fit binary ideas of "male" or "female".

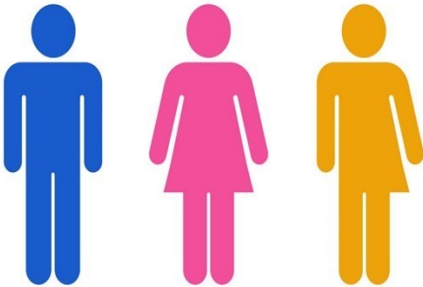
**Gender identity** is your internal and psychological sense of yourself as a woman, a man, both, in between or neither. e.g. binary, non-binary, gender non-conforming, transgender, cisgender, gender fluid. Only you can determine your gender identity.

**Sexual orientation** is a term used to describe your pattern of emotional, romantic or **sexual** attraction. e.g. Heterosexual, bisexual, homosexual, pansexual, queer, sexually fluid.



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GENDER EXPRESSION

**Gender expression** is how a person publicly expresses or presents their **gender or male or female energy of the gender they wish to express**. This can include behaviour and outward appearance such as dress, hair, make-up, body language and voice. A person's chosen name and pronoun are also common ways of expressing **gender**. You can also prefer to non-gender express. And be androgynous or on the unisex line as your gender expression. This is when you prefer your gender expression to be neutral, where you can pass for both male and female. As well as crossdress or do DRAG.



## TRANSGENDER (TG)

ASSIGNED MALE AT BIRTH	ASSIGNED FEMALE AT BIRTH
BUTCH	FEMME
TRANS	GENDERBENDER
PRE/POST/NON-SURGERY	GENDERBLENDER
TRANSMAN/WOMAN	GENDER OUTLAW
GENDER QUEER	ANDROGYNOUS
BI-GENDERED	DRAG QUEEN/KING
THIRD GENDER	CROSSDRESSER
INTERSEX NEUTRAL FLUX	
ASEXUAL UNSURE UNDETERMINED QUESTIONING	
QUEER NON-BINARY AGENDER	



# ND SEXUALITY



MALE



MALE



FEMALE



FEMALE



UNISEX



UNISEX

**Cisgender** is a term for people whose gender identity matches their sex assigned at birth. For example, someone who identifies as a woman and was assigned female at birth is a cisgender woman. The term cisgender is the opposite of the word transgender.

**Gender Fluid** Denoting or relating to a person who does not identify themselves as having a fixed gender.

**Pansexual** Not limited in sexual choice with regard to biological sex, gender, or gender identity.

**Fluid Sexuality:** A person might identify as having a **fluid sexuality** their romantic and/or **sexual** attraction changes over time.



**Sapiosexuality** means that a person is sexually attracted to highly intelligent people, so much so that they consider it to be the most important trait in a partner. It is a relatively new word that has become more popular in recent years. Both LGBTQ+ people and heterosexual people may identify as **sapiosexual**.

**Demisexual** people only feel sexually attracted to someone when they have an emotional bond with the person. They can be gay, straight, bisexual, or pansexual, and may have any gender identity.



~~I AM GAY~~  
~~I AM STRAIGHT~~  
~~I AM LESBIAN~~  
~~I AM BISEXUAL~~  
~~I AM TRANSGENDER~~  
~~I AM MSM~~  
I AM HUMAN





# Is South Africa a free and diverse country for the queer community?

**Written by: Patrick Sizane**

April is Freedom Month in South Africa and on the 27<sup>th</sup> of April 2021 as the country we celebrated 27 years of democracy, that is cool right? Nope!! Not for the queer community. For the queers democracy is a myth because we are still being killed, raped, harassed and discriminated on a daily basis. Who would have thought that 27 years later we would still hear of a queer person being killed or raped? Hate crimes are alarmingly on the rise. 2021 has proven that we still have a long way to go in achieving equality and freedom of self expression as sexual minorities. One would have thought that 27 years later we would be living freely and we would be enjoying the benefits of our freedom as the rainbow nation.

South Africa is the most liberal country in Africa but still has a rampant culture of homophobia that leads to physical harm to queer community including assault, brutal murders and corrective rape. South Africa is the only country that has legalized same sex marriages in Africa and we applaud the government and our constitution for that, but as for safety of the queer people, nothing has been done. We are still being treated like we do not belong.

Safety feels like a rumour in our community. As queer people we constantly have to be extra careful about what we do, where we go and how we dress.

We are not safe in the streets, in public spaces, at schools and in our own homes. We are called all sorts of names on social media daily. When a gay couple posts their love, they are either being called twin plugs, chocolate factory or they are being asked who is the man and who is the woman.

In April we know of four cases of queer people who were brutally murdered and raped reported. These are cases we know of, there's a possibility of more cases that were not reported in the media or to LGBTI+ organizations. It was shocking to hear about those gruesome incidents. Social media was buzzing with conversations that proved that we are not safe as the queer community in South Africa.

The hashtags like #QueerLivesMatter are there to create a platform for the community to tell their stories and to fight for the LGBTI+ rights. We need to come together as the community and have one solid voice.

Twenty seven years of democracy and we are still fighting for our basic human rights. We are fighting for our voice to be heard. We are fighting for our safety and we won't stop. We are going to be heard. We will win this fight. The fight continues because we need to win this battle for the safety of the next generation.



On 10 April, police found the mutilated and burned body of Andile Ntutela, 41, also known as Lulu, in a shallow grave at the house of the man arrested for his murder in KwaNobuhle, outside of Uitenhage, Eastern Cape. Lulu had last been seen by their family on 31 March.



Lonwabo Jack's lifeless body was discovered in a pool of blood with stab wounds in Mau-mau, Nyanga East. The incident occurred on the 22-year-old's birthday, according to the Lesbian Alliance Of South Africa (GLASA).



Nathaniel Mbele, known as Spokgoane, was found stabbed in the chest on the 2nd of April in Tshirela, near Vanderbijlpark.



Sphamandla Khoza's body was found in a ditch near his home in Ntuzuma, Kwazulu Natal. His throat had been slit and he was stabbed multiple times.

**GAY MEN AND OTHER MEN WHO HAVE SEX WITH MEN**

**I am gay.  
I face these issues.**





**Name: Bongani Mabena**  
**Age: 33 years**  
**Pronoun: He**  
**Gender Identity: Male**  
**Sexual Orientation: Gay**

**Q: Please give us a background on your**

**Life: I am a great person in my view.**

**Childhood: Grew up in the dusty streets of Mamelodi in Pretoria. I had a fabulous childhood. I guess I grew up in a township that well sensitized.**

**Coming out: I did not need to come out because I was never closeted.**

**Q: What does LGBTQIA+ Pride mean to you?**

**A: Pride means a lot to me, it means acknowledging our own existence in society, raising awareness and sensitizing our communities with the existence of the LGBTQIA+ community; and educating each other on our different identities. Finally to show appreciation to the South African founders of the initiative.**

**Q: Who is your favourite South African queer person and why?**

**A: Shaun Makwiya who works at Access Chapter 2, I love his dedication to the well being of the gay society.**

**Q: What is the difference between a MSM (men who has sex with men) and gay men?**

**A: Gay men come in different genres and are very particular in their own way, but MSM's are individuals that are in my view curious and like to experiment, often referred to as "after nines " because they don't want to be known to be associated with "gayism" and they regard themselves as straight men because they don't date gays.**

**Q: What is the typical gay/MSM lifestyle you are aware of in the LGBTQIA+ community?**

**A: MSM's are discreet with their lifestyle, hence they prefer to hook up online or in bars, and they can be homophobic at times. Whilst gay men are impressionists, like to prove a point but on the constructive side they are leaenered, gays are academics and they strive to improve and better themselves at all times.**

**Q: What are your views on online dating?**

**A: You can never tell where love would come from. so my views is "if it works why not "but I am a primitive kind of person I prefer to meet in person.**



**Q: What is your wish for the LGBTQIA+ community?**

**A: For all communities of South Africa to be sensitized so we can do away with HOMOPHOBIA to conquer the fight against hate killings and corrective rape.**



Interview by: Bookholane Sekhonyane



**Name: Mojalefa Motlogelo**  
**Age: 23**  
**Pronoun: He**  
**Gender Identity: Male**  
**Sexual Orientation: Gay**

**Life:** I pride myself with a high outmost integrity I display to everyone I come across. I communicate with people so that I don't become insecure around them. I love God because he's always there for me in good and difficulties times.

**Q: Please give us a background on your Childhood:** It was tough for me in my childhood when I hear people calling me names like "stabana" especially at school. It was so painful for me that period. I am bubbly person, I have no worries, being transgender, gay, tall, short, white, black, male or female is another part of being human. The condition that makes each individual unique. And something over which we have no control. We are who we are in the deepest recesses of our minds, hearts and identities

**Q: What does LGBTQIA+ Pride mean to you?**  
**A:** It is the positive stance against discrimination and violence towards lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgenders. People who promote their self affirmation, dignity, equality rights, increase their visibility as a social group, build community and celebrate sexual diversity and gender variance.

**Q : Who is your favourite south African queer person and why?**  
**A:** Nakhane because he has openly addressed his sexuality, he is a singer.



Interview by: Tebogo Thabana

**Q: Who is your favourite international queer person and why?**

**A:** Dua Saleh a non-binary poet who started writing poetry from a young age and is making waves as a queer musician.

**Q: How were you introduced to Tholwana e Molemo?**  
**By my peer educator Tebogo Thabana she came where I stayed and told me what Tholwana e Molemo services offered to the LGBTQIA+ and the community as well.**

**Q: What have you gained most from being introduced to Tholwana e Molemo?**

**A:** I gained a lot from Tholwana e Molemo by knowing more about the types of gay people; especially knowing more about transgenders and how to communicate them without offending anyone of them.

**Q:What is the difference between a MSM (men who have sex with men)**

**and gay men?**

**A:** Gay men are attracted to same sex emotionally and physically. MSM are men who have sex with other men just for fun, no strings attached at all.

**Q: What is the typical gay/MSM lifestyle you are aware of in the LGBTQIA+ community?**

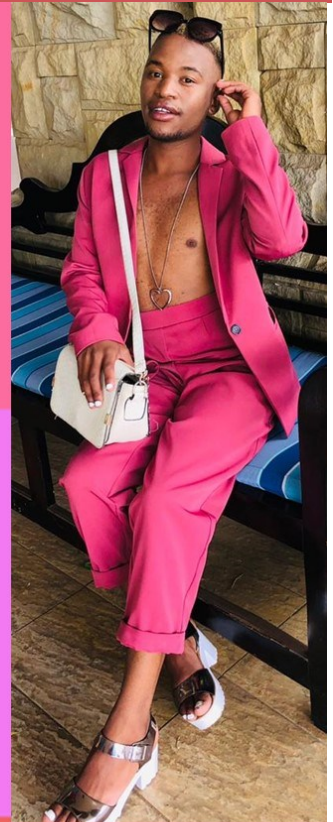
**A:** MSM when they approach a person for sex, they hide themselves, they don't want to be seen in other words. We call them 'after nines'.

**Q: What is the typical transgender lifestyle you are aware of in your community?**

**A:** People have discrimination towards them because they think they are too sensitive and too much sometimes.

**Q: How does COVID19 affect your life?**

**A:** I wish I have never come across this question because Wow! My life has changed, I'm no longer going places like before.



**Q: What are your views on online dating?**

**A:** It's very dangerous according to my view because are people are being killed.

**Q: What is your wish for the LGBTQIA+ community?**

**A:** Decrease of discrimination towards us.





**Name: Tumelo Lesenyeho**  
**Age: 21**  
**Pronoun: He**  
**Gender Identity: Male**  
**Sexual Orientation: Homosexual**

**Q: Please give us a background on your Life:**

I was born and raised in Bloemfontein and had to relocate to small town called Thaba Nchu. For as long as I can remember I have always believed in myself and that one of the good days I will reach my destiny regardless of everything. I have always liked being in charge of things; well you can say I was born a leader. I have always been vocal about matters that have anything to do with my sexuality or matters

concerning the LGBTQIA community. When you constantly have to fight for your survival day in and out, that automatically turns you into a fighter of some kind and I'm glad to see that nothing has changed.

**Childhood:**

I really can't say my childhood was like that of other kids. I was always discriminated against because of my sexuality and that took one piece of my life that I don't think I will get back. I always knew that I was different, I didn't fit the societal expectations of boys my age back then.

Believe me I wished everyday that some one will look at me and take the person I am as the person I will always be. And start accepting me and loving me unconditionally.

**Coming Out:**

I never had to come out, my parents obviously picked it up that I'm queer I mean I was always out there you know LOL



Interview by: Tebogo Thabana

**Q: What does LGBTQIA+ Pride mean to you?**

A: It means promotion of the self affirmation and increased visibility of queer people as a social group.

**Q: Who is your favourite South African queer person and why?**

Q: Innocent Matijane and Lethabo Woods. They are proof that hard work pays off and you don't need to shrink yourself or sell yourself short to fit the narrative of this messed up society. They are a true inspiration to queer people. They stand firm in what they believe in.

**Q: Who is your favourite international queer person and why?**

A: NONE

**Q: What have you gained most from being introduced to Tholwana e Molemo?**

A: I have gained a lot, my ability to share with others my problems and also improved my interactions. Made me cautious of the problems that we face daily; and how I can react to anything that doesn't sit well with me.

**Q: What is the difference between MSM (men who has sex with men) and gay men?**

A: MSM engage in sexual intercourse with other men for whatever reason.

**Q: What is the typical gay/MSM lifestyle you are aware of in the LGBTQIA+ community?**

A: Cheating.

**Q: What is the typical transgender lifestyle you are aware of in your community?**

A: They love fashion and its one of then things they are definitely good at.

**Q: How has COVID19 affected your life?**

A: I struggled with my academics and I had problems adjusting to how life in general is now.



**Q: What are your views on online dating?**

A: I find it quite risky especially for queer people but we have people who have tried it and succeeded so I will just say it will always work out differently for different people.

**Q: What is your wish for the LGBTQIA+ community?**

A: For us to be considered as human before our sexualities. Because our sexualities don't define us.



Interview by: Tebogo Thabana



**Name: Nkosinathi Mdingi**  
**Age: 31**  
**Pronoun: He**  
**Gender Identity: Male**  
**Sexual Orientation: Gay**

**Q: Please give us a background on your Life:** I was born and bred in Bloemfontein to a single young mother who did her best in making sure that I have everything any child could dream of and that meant that I had to adjust to changes without any male role models.

**Childhood:** I have always known that I am different from other boys because our preferences differed a lot and that made me question my identity, my childhood was wonderful. I really never had any concerns with regard to community behavior so things were quite simple. I lived a simple life, played with my own group of friends that consisted of boys and girls although I like to think I was the only gay one in the group. We played with both girl and boys toys and played games to accommodate the different genders. So in general it made things a bit easier for me.

**Coming Out:** It was only when I studied at the Central University of Technology doing my BEd: Computer Science that I really understood my identity and learned more about it. My CUT community made things easier for me, so coming out was not a big issue because a lot of the people from my community at large already knew that I was different. The only concern I had was always having to explain to older people the kind of sexuality I fall under and what it means. Moreover they were concerned about what happens when two men are in bed making love.

**Q: What does LGBTQIA+ Pride mean to you?**

A: Gay pride is the promotion of self-affirmation, dignity, equality, and increasing visibility of the LGBTQI community as a social group. Pride, as opposed to shame and social stigma.



Tholwana e Molemo

Interview by: Bookholane Sekhonyane

**Q: Who is your favourite South African queer person and why?**

A: Somizi Mhlongo. I admire how he inspires the youth to be transparent about their sexuality. Not only does he inspire the youth but he motivates human rights, equality in all sexual groups.

**Q: Who is your favourite international queer person and why?**

A: Ellen Degeneres. Just like Somizi, she is multi-talented and though she had a rough upbringing she made sure that she discovers and enjoys the fruits that life has to offer. She made things possible for herself and that motivates people whether gay or straight, that your upbringing doesn't determine your future and only you as a human being have the power to overcome the challenges that life has to offer.

**Q: How does COVID19 affect your life?**

A: COVID-19 has restricted my way of living. I had to endure unemployment for the first time in my life. My finances have been sky up in debt and at some point in 2020 I literally had suicidal thoughts because I felt like I couldn't handle this way of living.

**Q: Do you know your HIV status? Would you like to test for HIV?**

A: Yes, I know my HIV status. I tested for HIV in February 2021.

**Q: How were you introduced to Tholwana e Molemo?**

A: A friend of mine introduced me to the whole platform via social media whereby there were daily discussions of how we are affected by gay issues within the society.

**Q: What have you gained most from being introduced to Tholwana e Molemo?**

A: Confidence, as a homosexual man I have gained the confidence to be myself and not be ashamed of who I am and what I am regardless of how society treats the LGBTQIA+ community.

**Q: What are your views on online dating?**

A: Personally I feel it's good when you know what you really want on a particular site. But society has made it a bit dangerous for us, especially the LGBTQIA community because you

never understand a person's true intentions especially when they are on the other end of the line. So I personally feel that people need to be careful about online dating because it really has many social and health hazards.

**Q: What is the difference between a MSM (men who have sex with men) and gay men?**

A: Society needs to understand that a man doesn't have to be homosexual to engage in a homosexual act. Many people assume that men who have sex with men (MSM) are all gay men, but this isn't true. It's a broad term to describe a very diverse group of men. MSM can be gay, bisexual and pansexual, but they can also be heterosexual men who engage in sexual acts with other men for one reason or another. What all MSM have in common is a certain behavior, and not necessarily a sexual orientation.

**Q: What is the typical gay/MSM lifestyle you are aware of in the LGBTQIA+ community?**

A: Gay people themselves discriminate against each other based on their physical appearance, being feminine and masculine; that should not be an issue as we are faced with a dilemma of the society and community to accept us, this makes it difficult for us to be ourselves.



**Q: What is the typical transgender lifestyle you are aware of in your community?**

A: It is very difficult for transgender to be understood by the community because in all honesty society is not entirely aware what a transgender person is. Lots of awareness and advocacy around transgender community is needed to make sure society and community have an understanding of who they are. This sometimes results in the LGBTQI community to be misunderstood completely.

**Q: What is your wish for the LGBTQIA+ community?**

A: My wish is that they reach their full potential; they must always remember that their sexuality is not the issue. The issue is being in a society that doesn't accept anything other than heterosexuality. So they need to understand that there is nothing wrong with them, each and every one of us are good enough and are perfect the way we are, so NEVER change for anyone. Be true to yourself and ALWAYS follow your heart.



**Name:** Onica Rorisang Kabi  
**Age:** 22  
**Pronoun:** She  
**Gender Identity:** Transwoman  
**Orientation:** I date straight men



**Q:** Please give us a background on your life: I have been unemployed since 2019 after I completed my matric. I tried applying at different institutions but not luck even today. 29<sup>th</sup> November 2019 I went to Home Affairs to do an ID even today I'm still struggling, everything seems to be mess.  
**Childhood:** It was good but my family was trying to hide the fact that I'm gay. Boys would bully me to go with them to herd the cattle and ride horses. Being told not to do girls chores but boys hurt me so much. My family took a long time to accept who I am. So why should the community accept me, whereas my family can't do that.

**Coming Out:** I don't even know where to start because this drifted my family into two parts. There was stigma and discrimination in the community. 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2019 it happened that I suffered attempted rape in the school hostel and it was because I was gay. The boys were arrested for two weeks but no case was run. I felt alone, full of questions that I didn't have answered. I was full of regrets. *If I wasn't gay none of this would have happened.* The support I eventually received from my family became so big it actually made me grow and have more confidence in my self now .



Interview by: Tebogo Thabana

**Q:** What does LGBTQIA+ Pride mean to you?  
**A:** It means a voice to the voiceless, a family to the homeless and a pillar of strength to thousands of the homeless and a pillar of strength to thousands of the LGBTQIA+

**Q:** Who is your favourite South African queer person and why?  
**A:** Somizi Mhlongo he doesn't care what people say about his lifestyle and how he lives. He inspires me a lot because of his success he is such an inspiration.

**Q:** How were you introduced to Tholwana e Molemo?  
**A:** I met one of the Tholwana staff and was introduced to HRT, and they referred me.

**Q:** What have you gained most from being introduced to Tholwana e Molemo?  
**A:** Mostly it's confidence and respect.  
**Q:**What is the difference between a MSM (men who has sex with men) and gay men?  
**A:** MSM - they just do hit and go, in a secret way. Gay men - date same sex and practice sexual intercourse at the same time.

**Q:** How does COVID19 affect your life?  
**A:** So badly because I am now jobless and I can't apply at colleges or university.



**Q:** What are your views on online dating?  
**A:** Its not great at all, 95% social networks take their life styles and lie to fall in love.  
**Q:** What is your wish for the LGBTQIA+ community?  
**A:** To keep on doing what they are doing. Reaching those who are afraid of coming out. Making the community to accept them for who they are; and make them feel special and unique. Community support and love adds a lot.



Interview by: Tebogo Thabana





**Name:** Thabiso Jwaxa  
**Proffered name:** Lola Doll  
**Age:**32  
**Pronoun:** She  
**Gender Identity:** Transwoman  
**Sexual Orientation:** I date men



**Q: Please give us a background on your Life**

I'm a very open transwoman. I've faced challenges in my community and the outside world without love and support from my mom and my friends. I was bullied and threatened in high school but it didn't change how I feel and how I identify myself. Eventually I was accepted by my community when they took the time to understand who I am.

**Childhood**

I was different to other males because I was always hanging out with females. And I identified myself as female, that's when I got my trans name 'Lola Doll.' I faced lots of rejection and hatred in many parts of my hometown, they thought being trans was a demonic spirit.



**Coming out**

I came out early in high school. It wasn't easy, then one of my teachers told me to be me, and never apologize for being who I am. That's when I started being open and comfortable. I became honest that I'm a transgender woman; and started wearing wigs, put on make up and started dating straight guys.

**Q: What does LGBTQIA+ Pride mean to you?**

A: It means colorful, happy confident people. We celebrate who we are. We are our rainbow colours regardless of our sexuality. We have pride and confidence.

**Q: Who is your favourite south African queer person and why?**

Andile Peter. She is vibrant and beautiful soul.



Interview by: Tebogo Thabana

**Q: Who is your favourite international queer person and why?**

A: Transwoman supermodel Lea T. I love her spirit from never being ashamed how media was gonna trash her father former Brazilian soccer star Diago Maradona regarding her sexuality.

**Q: How were you introduced to Tholwana e Molemo?**

A: I was introduced by lovely and bubbly transwomen friend Thabana. I have been following it a lot on Facebook and learn how to deal with certain issues and fear of transphobic attacks to LGBTQIA+.

**Q: What have you gained most from being introduced to Tholwana e Molemo?**

A: Accepting who I am. Appreciating all people since we live in a diversity culture.

**Q: What is the difference between a MSM (men who has sex with men) and gay men?**

A: Gay men are men who are attracted to the same sex. MSM are straight men who aren't gay but have sexual intercourse with other men.

**Q: What is the typical gay/MSM lifestyle you are aware of in the LGBTQIA+ community?**

A: Having multiple partners and living a lie. It's not easy for them to come out of the closet.

**Q: What is the typical transgender lifestyle you are aware of in your community?**

A: Living a normal life on a daily basis as normal women. Not living in constant fear or pain of being killed for who they are.

**Q: Do you know your HIV status? Would you like to test for HIV?**

A: I'm in a hair stylist so most of the time we tend to get HIV testing. Yes I know my status, and I'm free to get tested because it's safer rather than being in a dark.

**Q: How does COVID19 affect your life?**

A: I lost my job and was financially struggling, due to the cosmetic sector being closed. I had to tie up loose ends, so I could provide for my family. I had depression and emotional anxiety. I was always feeling drained.



**Q: What are your views on online dating?**

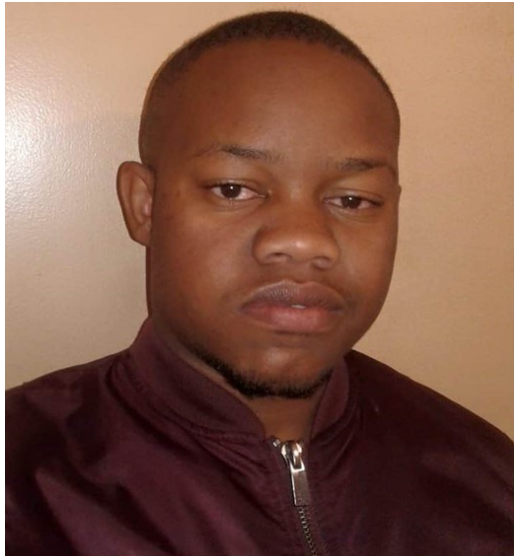
A: It's not safe, I have seen lots of LGBTQIA community being killed due to hook ups. Online dating for me it's a big NO.

**Q: What is your wish for the LGBTQIA+ community?**

A: To be united, live free, fearless and have a happy normal life.



Interview by: Tebogo Thabana



**Name:** Tshidiso Koena  
**Age:** 29 years  
**Pronoun:** He  
**Gender Identity:** Male  
**Sexual Orientation:** Gay

**Q: Please give us a background on your**

**Life:** I have always known from a young age that I'm gay though I had to suppress myself just to fit into society.

**Childhood:** Born and bred in Thabong, Welkom. I have been raised in a Christian family, I'm a catholic. I'm bearing two tertiary education qualifications in Business Management and Community Development Management.

**Coming out:** I did not specifically come out of the closet, everything came into surface on its own. I have received support from my family though not everyone was supportive and they all had something to say, who cares anyway.



Tholwana e Molemo

**Q: What does LGBTQIA+ Pride mean to you?**

**A:** For me, everyone should be happy and benefit from the fruits of our democracy, socially, sexually and economically. Pride must be being ourselves and developing.

**Q: Who is your favourite South African queer person and why?**

**A:** The late Lara Kruger, may her beautiful soul rest in peace. She was a phenomenal woman and activist, her life story touched me and it gave me more reason to continue serving the LGBTIQ community.

**Q: Who is your favourite international queer person and why?**

**A:** Alexis D'Marco in the Bahamas, through her DMARCO Foundation has been positively advocating for LGBTIQ rights in the Bahamas.

**Q: How were you introduced to Tholwana e Molemo?**

**A:** It was through my activism in the province, I have been in their health workshops.

Interview by: Bookholane Sekhonyane

**Q: What have you gained most from being introduced to Tholwana e Molemo?**

**A:** Education, Tholwana E Molemo educated me on various health programs.

**Q: What is the difference between a MSM (men who has sex with men) and gay men**

**A:** MSMs may just be men that do not identify themselves as gays, they simply have sex with men for other reasons than that of being gay or homosexual. Sexual orientation defines gay and influenced by feelings.

**Q: What is the typical gay/MSM lifestyle you are aware of in the LGBTQIA+ community?**

**A:** Been waiting for this question for a long time now, having sex with random guys. The norm of "hooking up" for "fun" as commonly said is a grave lifestyle that is leading to a rise in infections of STIs and HIV. We love sex too much that we forget to love ourselves. It is not only STIs because one can say they practice safe sex, what about different spirits we acquire from multiple sex partners?



Tholwana e Molemo

**Q: What is the typical transgender lifestyle you are aware of in your community?**

**A:** Unemployment and not getting education, it is not always I see a transgender working or studying. Our brothers and sisters needs to be developed and start to take on leading roles.

**Q: How does COVID19 affect your life?**

**A:** Negatively, I hate being trapped or answering to anyone and Covid19 lockdown regulations make me feel trapped and having to answer to everyone.

**Q: What are your views on online dating?**

**A:** Online dating when played safe may be fun, I'm up for it and that's how I found the man in my life.

**What is your wish for the LGBTQIA+ community?**

**A:** Economic freedom, not the political party,



I wish we could all learn and own our economy, we need jobs and we need economy. This is a time where we should take leading roles, imagine a transgender woman farmer, how does it sound?



**Name: Lerato Nyelele**  
**Age: 35 years**  
**Pronoun: He**  
**Gender Identity: Male**  
**Sexual Orientation: Gay**

**Q: Please give us a background on your Life:**

Originally from Kroonstad, born and bred there, then went to school in Pretoria. Now I am working for SAPS where I am also an HIV/AIDS and LGBTQIA Ambassador.

**Coming Out:**

All my life I knew that I am gay though it was a bit hard for my family but I took time to make them understand.

**Q: What does LGBTQIA+ Pride mean to you?**

A: Coming out and supporting LGBTQIA+ to show the South Africans that we are only human after all.

Interview by: Bookholane Sekhonyane



**Q: What is the difference between a MSM (men who has sex with men) and gay men?**

A: Gays always have emotions and feelings attached. Men who have sex with other men, its normal now that people are making it a business to benefit from. This is why I normally say men who have sex with gay men are not gay.

Sometimes it is because of the situation that one finds themselves. Or being under the influence of alcohol.

**Q: What is the typical gay/MSM lifestyle you are aware of in the LGBTQIA+ community?**

A: It is always the case that gay people will target guys who claim to be known as straight. And more especially when they are drunk and also know that guy will always avail themselves to gay people for sex, because they want to benefit money or something.

**Q: What is the typical transgender lifestyle you are aware of in your community?**

A: Where most will be feeling very much comfortable in woman's clothing.

**Q: Do you know your HIV status? Would you like to test for HIV?**

A: Yes, I do test all the time.

**Q: How does COVID19 affect your life?**

A: Covid 19 also brought stigma in our community because most people did not have enough information and education regarding Covid. It was more difficult to be positive with Covid while you are also HIV positive, you now suffered double stigma in the community.

**Q: What are your views on online dating?**

A: Personally it is not my thing due to the fact that in South Africa we love you when we don't know you. More especially gay people are being targeted for such things and end up being scammed.

**Q: Who is your favourite South African queer person and why?**

A: Thulasizwe "Lasizwe" Dambuza. One very strong and focused person in life, never affected by what the world says about him.

**Q: Who is your favourite international queer person and why?**

A: None. Proudly South African

**Q: How were you introduced to Tholwana e Molemo?**

A: By Facebook

**Q: What have you gained most from being introduced to Tholwana e Molemo?**

A: Being assertive and positive about your life. And sexual education as to how to take care of yourself and others.



**Q: What is your wish for the LGBTQIA+ community?**

A: It is well known that there is too much hate and jealousy amongst the LGBTQIA community: My wish is that only if we can support each other. We deal with so much unwanted hate, at the end it does not bring any good to us. Instead it puts more hate into the community which we live in. If we don't love and support each other no one will.

Interview by: Bookholane Sekhonyane





**Name: Tebogo Kgati**  
**Age: 29**  
**Pronoun: He**  
**Gender: Male**  
**Sexual Orientation: Gay**



**Q: What does LGBTQIA+ Pride mean to you?**

Being comfortable with yourself and accepting that you are unique and perfect the way you are and standing up for what is right in your heart and being your authentic self.

**Q: How does COVID19 affect your life?**

This pandemic has rapidly left my day to day life distraught and I lost two of my family members due to it.

**Q: What is your wish for the LGBTQIA+ community?**

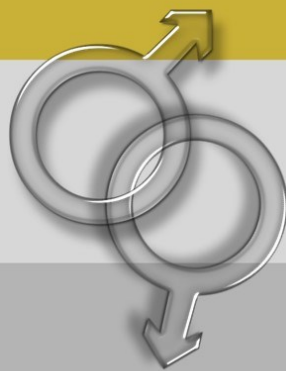
For them to be true to themselves and remember there is nothing wrong with you and this is not changeable or a lifestyle.



Interview by: Tebogo Thabana



**Name: Lerato Nhlapo**  
**Age: 25**  
**Pronoun: He**  
**Gender: Male**  
**Sexual Orientation: Gay**



**Q. What does LGBTQIA+ Pride mean to you?**

*It means a lot of things in my life because I wouldn't know myself if I didn't join other gay guys.*

**Q. How does COVID19 affect your life?**

*Badly, it takes our friends, families and loved ones.*

**Q. What is your wish for the LGBTQIA+ community?**

*I wish to meet other young gay guys to teach them our lifestyle.*



Interview by: Bookholane Sekhonyane



**Name: Tshireletso Kotela**  
**Age: 20**  
**Pronoun: He**  
**Gender: Male**  
**Sexual Orientation: Gay**



**Q: What does LGBTQIA+ Pride mean to you?** For me its self affirmation, equality and dignity as social group. Not being afraid to show off your true colors, being who you have always wanted to be PROUDLY! And most importantly being okay with being different. Difference is good

**Q: How does COVID19 affect your life?** This pandemic has affected millions of people, for me it's the economic and social disruption it caused. It is so devastating that tens of millions of people are at risk of dying or falling into deep poverty. Those tens of millions of people are our parents, brothers, sisters and close friends. Again it led to drastic loss of human life, we had to bury our loved ones in such a painful way.

**Q: What is your wish for the LGBTQIA+ community?** I wish we can have so much support and love from the society so that we can live our lives in harmony. And so that it can be easy for people to come out and be true to themselves. I want them to know its safe to come out and remember they are not alone. WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER.



Interview by: Tebogo Thabana



**Name: Shaun Makweya**  
**Age: 28**  
**Pronoun: He**  
**Gender: Cisgender Male**  
**Sexual Orientation: Homosexual**



**Q: What does LGBTQIA+ Pride mean to you?** Pride, to me means being who you are without fear or favour. Being able to express yourself freely and openly. When people see you take pride in your stance, none of them will get in the way of your greatness. Pride means waving the flag so high that nothing or what anyone says matters.

**Q: How does COVID19 affect your life?** Covid 19 took the world on a whirlwind that none of us were expecting. Economies crashed and burnt, countries were locked down, and we were all shattered. I was personally anxious because jobs were being lost all over the country so the fear of the unknown slowly crept in. I mean, hearing my friends and relative's retrenchment stories everyday terrified me the most, but also the mortality rates were going through the roof and that in itself is also very scary for the most part.

**Q: What is your wish for the LGBTQIA+ community?** Prosperity, health, wealth and success. We have been in the shadow for far too long, it is our time to shine, show the world what we are made of. So shine as bright as you can dear one. The world has been black and white for a very long time



Interview by: Bookholane Sekhonyane



**Name: Mathapelo Mareka**  
**Age: 28**  
**Pronoun: She**  
**Gender: Female**  
**Sexual Orientation: I'm attracted to women**



**Q: What does LGBTQIA+ Pride mean to you?** An integral cultural concept within the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual community representing solidarity. Collectivity and identity as well as resistance to discrimination and violence.

**Q: How does COVID19 affect your life?** It affects me negatively, as I find myself stuck in one place most of the time, because I am scared for my health. I can't socialize with my fellow LGBTQIA+ friends as before. As a graduate, I should be out there hustling for employment but due to the pandemic and restrictions put in place; I can't make it to certain places and job opportunities. It scares me. I also feel like my dream of becoming an event organizer is delaying because of the restrictions.

**Q: What is your wish for the LGBTQIA+ community?** My wish is for the LGBTQIA+ community is to feel free and safe in society; and also be brave to come out of the closet. To live the best life without being abused and discriminated. I also wish for us as fellow members of this community to stop being judgmental towards each other. We should love and support each other and show a united front to the society.



Interview by: Tebogo Thabana



**Name: Tsamaelo Chaotsane**  
**Age: 26**  
**Pronoun: He**  
**Gender: Male**  
**Sexual Orientation: Gay**



**Q: What does LGBTQIA+ Pride mean to you?**  
 Initials that stand for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender.....

**Q: How does COVID19 affect your life?**  
 It affected me in changing the way we do things and it has brought us tears and left us orphans and in poverty as well.

**Q: What is your wish for the LGBTQIA+ community?**  
 My wish for the LGBTQIA community is to love ourselves. Live our lives without any doubt; no matter which circumstances we come across. We must be well prepared.



Interview by: Bookholane Sekhonyane



**Name: Linda Ntetha**  
**Age: 23**  
**Pronoun: She**  
**Gender: Female**  
**Sexual Orientation:**  
**I date women**



**Q: What does LGBTQIA+ Pride mean to you?** To me the words grouped together assist individuals to properly identify themselves. This concept also gives assurance to individuals that they belong; they are fully equal, they are visible and are not deprived from being themselves.

**Q: How does COVID19 affect your life?** Covid 19 is affecting my life by restricting me from thinking beyond because of the regulations that are put before me. It is tough. Our minds are put behind bars. I'm currently a student who is supposed to be out hunting for a job, but the circumstances of everything limit possibilities. And I'm also afraid for my own health.

**Q: What is your wish for the LGBTQIA+ community?** My wish for the LGBTQIA+ community is for everyone to be able to change from one label to another for as long as they feel comfortable. People should be honest with themselves and be what they are, not what the community knows them to be. Let's be able to help each other grow even outside the community. We can belong to one community but we don't live one life.



Interview by: Bookholane Sekhonyane



**Name: Goitsewang Ntoatsabone**  
**Age: 30**  
**Pronoun: He**  
**Gender: Transman**  
**Sexual Orientation:**  
**I love women**



**Q: What does LGBTQIA+ Pride mean to you?** LGBTQIA+ Pride to me means our definition, our identification, our belonging like we take pride there. It helps us as the gay community to know we belong and we exist. That's how I see it.

**Q: How does COVID19 affect your life?** COVID19 has affected me because I can't get around like I used to. I can't even go to the park to unwind because that was the place I used to go when I got a lot on my plate. And I can't even travel because our travels are limited now, and that has affect me a lot. And again it affect me with actually everything I do like going to town there's a lot of people waiting to get in side stores or banks like everywhere you need to wait before being assisted with anything.

**Q: What is your wish for the LGBTQIA+ community?** My wish is acknowledgment from this world to know that we are here as people. To be treated equally. We did not choose to be this way. And for the LGBTQIA+ community to love one another because love conquers all evil.



Interview by: Nosana Sondiyazi

# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

AGAINST THE LGBTQIA COMMUNITY AND FAMILY

7 APRIL 2021

ATHUR PITSO STADIUM  
LADYBRAND

14:00



Tholwana e Molemo  
Responsible services for  
LGBTQIA+



FOR MORE INFO - 071 931 0139

## LGBTQIA ALLY AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

### MEN AND BOYS DIALOGUE

15 APRIL 2021

MULTI FUNCTIONAL CENTRE  
SECTION E: BOTSHABELO

11:00 - 14:00



Responsible services for  
LGBTQIA+



+27 74 259 5004



@Tholwana EMolemo



@Tholwana Advocacy



## UNMUTE ME

16 & 17 APRIL 2021

VENUE: BON HOTEL

Bloem Plaza, East Burger Street BFN

08:00 - 17:00

RSVP - 068 261 0132



@Tholwana EMolemo



@Tholwana Advocacy



068 261 0132

BY INVITATION  
ONLY  
TERMS AND  
CONDITIONS  
APPLY

### Certificate of Appreciation

AWARDED TO

**SAPS SELOSESHA THABA NCHU**

In recognition of your support of LGBTQIA+ Community.  
A pledge to working together to achieve available, accessible,  
acceptable and quality services for the LGBTQIA+ community.  
April 2021



Tholwana e Molemo



V-Chats

Raising Community #VoicesInAction



SOUTH AFRICAN POSITIVE WOMEN AMBASSADORS



Power Of Communities - Responding to HIV, TB and COVID-19



Discussant  
Noluthando Charity Gwedashe  
Professional Nurse,  
Tholwana e Molemo



Discussant  
Lungile Dlamini  
TB Outreach Advocacy Officer,  
THINK - TB/ HIV  
Investigative Network



Discussant  
Gogo Shangele Mtambo  
Founding Director,  
South African Power  
Women Ambassadors



Discussant  
Pholo Ramothwala  
Human Rights  
Facilitator/Consultant,  
PholoRamothwala PTY

Date: 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2021

Time: 10.00 – 11.30hrs

Welcome to register for the Zoom webinar:  
[shorturl.at/knxP3](https://shorturl.at/knxP3)

You may also join via FB:  
<https://www.facebook.com/safids>



Moderator  
Ngoni Chibukire  
Country Representative  
SAFIDS South Africa

FIRST THINGS FIRST ACTIVATION

28 - 30 APRIL 2021

Motheo TVET College  
Bloemfontein Campus

09:00 - 16:00

Activities:

- COVID19 screening
- TB & STI screening
- GBV screening
- HIV Testing
- PrEP referral
- Dialogues



+27 68 261 0132 @Tholwana eMolemo @Tholwana Advocacy



FREEDOM DAY AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

28 APRIL 2021

BERGMAN SQUARE EX-WARD COUNCILLOR'S OFFICE

BLOEMFONTEIN

11:00 - 14:00

Responsible services for  
LGBTQIA+

THEME: PAIN & COLOURS  
FOR MORE INFO 074 259 5004



Certificate of Appreciation

AWARDED TO

UNIT 1 FIRE DEPARTMENT SELOSESHA THABA NCHU

In recognition of your support of LGBTQIA+ Community.  
A pledge to working together to achieve available, accessible,  
acceptable and quality services for the LGBTQIA+ community.  
April 2021

