Community Assessment—Knowing Your Community

Objectives

To provide tools and guidance to help identify and describe:

1. the different groups of young gay/bisexual men in the community, how to reach them, and what activities might appeal to them;
2. what community resources and organizations might be useful to the Project; and
3. who would be good to have on the Core Group and Community Advisory Board.

What you’ll find in the Appendix to this module

Figure 2.1 Community Assessment Results from Albuquerque, NM

What you’ll find in the Appendix to Module 12: Evaluation

Figure 12.3 Community Assessment Interview for Young Gay/Bi Men
Figure 12.4 Community Assessment Data Recording Form
Figure 12.5 Community Assessment Interview for Community Leaders
Once the Project Coordinators have been hired, one of the very first steps in implementing the Mpowerment Project is to gather information that will provide you with a comprehensive understanding of your community and the experiences of young gay/bisexual men who live there. It will also be helpful to know how the community has responded to HIV/AIDS and what HIV prevention approaches have been tried there. All of these things are part of a Community Assessment, a method of learning about your community. In order to conduct an accurate Community Assessment, it is helpful to develop a “map” of what life is like for young gay/bisexual men in the community, and then determine how to create an HIV prevention program that will work best for these men.
The Community Assessment should be conducted at the start of the Project and then yearly or on an as-needed basis, because the young gay/bisexual men’s community continually changes over time. The best way to run a successful Project is to know who makes up the young men’s community in your area. (See the Appendix to Module 12: Evaluation for Figure 12.3 Community Assessment Interview for Young Gay/Bisexual Men, Figure 12.4 Community Assessment Data Recording Form, and Figure 12.5 Community Assessment Interview for Community Leaders.)

When is a good time to complete a Community Assessment?

- When a Project is first started
- Yearly or biannually
- When funding is renewed
- If there is significant staff turnover or new Coordinators are hired
- When a Project needs to be reenergized
- As an exercise to inform the Core Group and volunteers about the goals of the Project
- As a way to promote the Project within the young men’s community
- When a funder requires it

Questions

Before starting to implement the program, the following questions should be answered:

- What are the different groups of young gay/bisexual men in the community?
- What issues are these men grappling with?
- Where do they socialize or congregate?
- What organizations or activities in your community attract young gay/bisexual men?
- What media do young gay/bisexual men pay attention to?
- What community resources might be useful to the Project?
- What young gay/bisexual men might be helpful to have on the Core Group?
- What kinds of activities might appeal to young men in the community?
- What community elders might be helpful to have on the Community Advisory Board?
Who conducts the Community Assessment?

We have found that Community Assessments work best when the Project Coordinators carry out most of the Community Assessment activities. There are two reasons for this. First, once the Project is up and running, the Coordinators will continually need to draw upon the information gained from the assessment. They will be more familiar with the information by being centrally involved in its collection. Second, the first time the assessment is conducted, the process of conducting it begins the program’s diffusion process. This is one of the Project’s Guiding Principles: diffusing awareness about the program throughout the community (as well as diffusing the messages about safer sex and testing).

The Community Assessment that is conducted at the start of the Project occurs at a critical period. Since a lot of the information collected comes from interviews with young gay/bisexual men, these interviews are the first time that they begin to learn that such a program is coming into existence and that their input will have an impact on it. Therefore, it is important that all information given out about the program at this time is clear and consistent, and that the people who represent the program at this early point are the Project Coordinators.

However, there are also some Community Assessment tasks that do not involve meeting with young gay/bisexual men, and these can be conducted by other agency staff.
Important things to know about the young gay/bisexual men’s community

1 The different groups of young gay/bisexual men

The Mpowerment Project strives to reach all of the young gay/bisexual men in the community. In order to do this, it is important to be aware of the many different groups of young men within the community. (See Figure 2.1 in the Appendix to this module for a sample list of the different major groups of young gay/bisexual men that were identified in Albuquerque prior to starting the Mpowerment Project.) In addition to finding out what different groups exist, it is also important to learn what they do in their spare time and where they do it.

Understandably, we are all most familiar with people like ourselves. Regardless of who the Project Coordinators are and how long they have lived in the community, it is unlikely that they will know everything there is to know about all of its social groups. Conducting a Community Assessment gives the Project Coordinators the opportunity to gain insights into the various segments of the community beyond the ones they already know. In fact, what we have observed time and time again is that when Coordinators conduct a Community Assessment, they are surprised to learn about new groups that they had not been aware of before.

The information collected about the community’s various social groups will be useful to the Project in several ways. First, it will be invaluable in organizing a Core Group, since the Core Group should be comprised of young men who represent different segments of the community. Second, it will be important to the Project’s ongoing evaluation efforts, which attempt to measure whether Project activities are reaching all parts of the community. For example, it will be helpful to observe which men attend the Social Outreach Events. This will help the Project Coordinators and Core Group determine whether special outreach activities may need to be developed to attract particular groups that did not show up. Likewise, it is helpful to assess whether Outreach Team performances are being conducted at places where all groups of men can be reached, or whether outreach efforts need to be broader to reach more men. This is why having basic information about the various groups of young gay/bisexual men, where they congregate, what they like to do, and so forth can help both in the development of the program and in its ongoing evaluation.

2 Where young gay/bisexual men socialize

It is important to determine where young men congregate and socialize in the community and what these places are like. In some communities there may be many places, while in others very few. To find out where young men socialize in the community, young gay/bisexual men should be asked the following questions about their gathering places:

- What groups go to this place (e.g., other non-gay/bisexual groups)?
- Do young gay/bisexual men frequent this space on particular days or times?
Is it a space where formal outreach could be conducted?
Is it a space where conversations can occur or outreach material can be distributed?
Can posters be hung up there?
Could young men be recruited for program activities there?

Typical places where young gay/bisexual men meet to socialize might include bars, clubs, cafes, parks, college campuses, and gyms. At each of these locations, it will be important to know which groups of young men attend and if there are particular days or times when different groups frequent the site.

An important next task is to determine if publicity and outreach can be conducted at these locations. Determine if posters and other publicity and outreach material can be distributed or posted at these locations, and if outreach activities such as performances or the distribution of safer sex promotional materials can be conducted at the spaces. Before discussing the possibility of conducting outreach at an establishment with its manager or owner, we recommend talking with others in the community. They can describe the history of such attempts, and particularly what approaches have been successful or unsuccessful in the past.

Many communities have a gay bar, and larger communities will often have more than one. Frequently there is a bar that is more popular with young men, and this may change over time. In the experience of the Mpowerment Project, frequently one bar is popular for several months, but then another bar makes some changes (remodels, opens particular nights with a fun theme, etc.) and becomes more inviting. It is important to monitor these changes.

3 How young gay/bisexual men meet each other online

With the popularity of social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter, many young men are now meeting their peers online. A majority of Mpowerment Projects have created their own profiles, groups, and/or fan pages. However, there’s no guarantee that popular sites today will be popular
in the future. Online preferences can change quickly, so it is important to keep current on the usage of online networking sites.

To find out how men in your area are using the Internet, you might want to informally poll guys on the Core Group or at Social Outreach Events. Ask:

- Do you use a social networking site? Which one? (e.g. Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, Friendster, Connexion? Other?)
- Which one do you prefer, or spend the most time on?
- How frequently do you check this site/these sites (e.g., daily, weekly, monthly)?
- How do you use this site/these sites (e.g., check up on other friends, reading status updates, getting news, checking email, blogging, participating in discussions)?
- Do you use a dating or personals site (e.g. Adam4Adam, gay.com, manhunt.net)?
- How frequently do you check these sites (e.g., daily, weekly, monthly)?
- Is there an online site that you check for local gay news and information?

Social networking sites offer a convenient way to reach out and engage members of the community about your Project. Promotional materials can be uploaded to these sites and shared among a wide variety of young men instantaneously. They also allow your Project to become an online magnet for other young men to meet each other and to know what your Project is up to.

**MySpace**

MySpace allows Projects to create a free online profile that acts as a “friend” to other members. This simple act allows Projects to expand the number of people they can interact with online by meeting your friend’s friends, and their friends’ friends. Once a Project joins MySpace and creates a profile, it can invite its friends to join MySpace. A Project can also browse MySpace for other young gay/bisexual men in your area who are already members.

Under the “Friends” tab, choose “Browse People,” then click on the “Advanced” tab. From here a Project can set browse criteria that include zip codes, age ranges, ethnicity, and sexual orientation (Straight, Gay, Bi, Not Sure). A Project can quickly expand their friend network just by searching for other young gay/bisexual men in their area.

**Facebook**

Facebook allows for two networking tools, creating a group or creating a fan page. Although both groups and fan pages are excellent ways to promote your Project, we suggest agencies maintain a fan page rather than a group page for the following reasons.

- Fan pages are not associated with profiles, whereas groups are connected to individuals. If there is a change of Project Coordinators, a fan page allows for a seamless transition to the next Coordinators.
Sharing with fans is easier. With a page you can send messages about events, volunteer reminders, and new Project updates. Fan pages function more like a users profile page and include a wall, feed, photos, videos, and list of fans.

One way to capture quick survey information from online participants is to use a survey Internet site such as Survey Monkey (SurveyMonkey.com). Basic subscribers (free accounts) are limited to 10 questions and 100 respondents per survey. A Project can control the color and look of the survey and upload a Project logo. You can then place a link to the survey on the Project website, and on its page on Facebook and MySpace.

4 Local media that reach young gay/bisexual men

In order to communicate with the broadest cross section of young gay/bisexual men in the community about Project activities, it is advisable to use all available resources, including the local media and the Internet. To do this, it will be important to identify the media and Internet sources that exist in the community, and then determine which ones reach young gay/bisexual men.

Since this information is especially relevant in considering publicity for the Project, these issues are discussed further in Module 10: Publicity.

Here are some questions to help survey local media:

- Are there any newspapers that reach young gay/bisexual men? For example, is there a gay newspaper, an alternative newspaper, or a student newspaper?
- How often are these published?
- Do young gay/bisexual men read them? Do men of the ethnic/racial group(s) the Project is focusing on read them?
- What are the deadlines to place advertisements in these newspapers, and how much do ads cost?
- Are there places in these publications, such as calendars or event listings, where Project activities can be listed for free?
- Is there a radio show that reaches young gay/bisexual men? (Many university radio stations, and some community public radio stations produce programs on gay issues.)
- Are there community bulletin boards where flyers can be placed? Is there a gay neighborhood where flyers can be hung?
- Is there a local gay website?
- What social networking sites do young men in the community prefer or use the most? (i.e., MySpace, Facebook, Twitter?)
Community resources the Project can draw upon

It is also important to know what services and resources are already available for young gay/bisexual men in the community so that appropriate referrals can be made and so that the Project doesn’t duplicate efforts of other agencies.

The first thing to do is to identify local community organizations that provide services to young gay/bisexual men. Some of the agencies to investigate include universities and colleges, public health and medical clinics, and local mental health service providers. Also look for gay community resources such as a gay community center, support groups for coming out issues, and gay social groups.

Get to know your local organizations. Establishing contacts and building alliances with other community organizations that serve young gay/bisexual men can be mutually beneficial for the Project and for these other organizations.

Investigate if there are gay student organizations at the local colleges and universities. If so, find out who their leaders are and who is involved with each organization. You may also want to determine if there are any university professors who teach courses that reach many young gay/bisexual men, such as courses on gay literature, gay history, queer culture, and so forth. Professors who teach these topics may have insight to offer about young gay/bisexual students at the universities and how to reach them.

It will also be important to know where young men in the community can go for medical help, particularly for HIV and STD testing and treatment. So that the Project can make referrals to such places, it is helpful to know which organizations have services specifically geared to young gay/bisexual men, or are particularly sensitive to young gay/bisexual men’s health issues. Projects that focus on one particular ethnic/racial group will want to make extra certain that the men they serve will feel comfortable visiting these testing sites. The best way to find this out is to have Project volunteers visit the facilities and report back on their findings.

For example, if the Project is focusing on young African American gay/bisexual men, visit the clinics to find out where they are located, and whether young African American men would be comfortable using their services. Sometimes going to a clinic located in the heart of the Black community is uncomfortable for gay/bisexual men because family and friends might see them. On the other hand, attending a clinic in an all-white area of a city may also be quite uncomfortable for many Black men. Find out if African Americans are on staff at the clinic, and what is the reputation of the clinic in terms of providing services to African American men who have sex with other men.

Likewise, it is very helpful to identify local psychotherapists who are skilled in working with young gay/bisexual men. These therapists should also be familiar with the Project.
It is also important to be able to provide referrals to organizations that aid young men in finding educational and career opportunities. If possible, have on hand written materials to provide referrals to such agencies. Some Projects have also organized groups or workshops on developing new skills such as “how to interview for a job,” “how to hold a job,” and “how to write a resume.”

Next, identify any organized social activities that may already exist for young gay/bisexual men in the community. For example, there may be a hiking club that attracts younger men, or a gay community center that offers a discussion group specifically for younger gay/bisexual men. Also find out if there used to be other activities for young men that are no longer offered. If so, try to find out what happened, and why they were discontinued.

Potential agency referrals in the community

- University or college LGBT group
- Community college LGBT group
- LGBT community centers
- Other LGBT social groups (men, women, transgender)
- PLFLAG (Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians and Gays)
  - www.pflag.org
- Transgender support groups
- Local pride committee
- LGBT affirming churches/synagogues
- Mental health providers
- Local gay affirming psychotherapists
- Substance use treatment sites
- LGBT substance use groups (i.e., LGBT Alcoholics Anonymous)
- Suicide prevention hotline
- STD clinics
- HIV testing sites
- Local AIDS service organizations that provide HIV/AIDS treatment
- AmeriCorps

It will also be important to determine potential sites within the community for holding Project activities. For example, a particular gay-owned or gay-friendly cafe may be willing to host weekly Social Outreach Events for young gay/bisexual men. There may be an individual who is willing to rent out—or better yet, make available at no charge—a large hall for dances. Perhaps there is an auditorium that would be ideal for community forums. Such resources should be investigated.
Identifying community leaders supportive of the young gay and bisexual men’s community

In every community there are certain individuals whose opinions carry enormous weight and who exert great influence on what happens there. Often these people hold official positions that give them their power, such as a city councilmember, director of a social service agency, or business owner. These can also include a business owner whose business is of relevance to this Project, such as a bar owner/manager, a newspaper owner, or someone who produces gay community events. Most communities also have leaders who hold no formal position and have acquired their influence solely through personal characteristics or their history of involvement in the community.

These individuals’ opinions about the Project are extremely important and can, in many ways, influence the Project’s success. As a first step, Project staff should brainstorm a list of key community leaders, and then discuss how to gain their support for the Project. Next, ask friends, coworkers, and staff at other agencies for names of possible community leaders. It is a good idea to meet with each of these influential persons to inform them about the Project, ask for their advice, and enlist their support.

If it is determined that it would be helpful to have a Community Advisory Board, then it is useful to assess whether these people should be asked to join it. (See Module 11: Community Advisory Board for more information.)
Ways of collecting Community Assessment information

There are a number of different methods that can be used to collect useful information about your community. Certainly the best source of information about young gay/bisexual men is men themselves. Much of what a Project needs to know can be learned by talking directly with young men, as well as through discreet and unobtrusive observation at places frequented by young gay/bisexual men. It is also helpful to interview key people in the community who are knowledgeable about:

- The different groups within the young gay/bisexual male population
- Relevant issues in the larger gay community that may affect the Project
- The history of HIV prevention approaches already tried in the community

Below we discuss five methods of obtaining information about the community: 1) Community Assessment interviews, 2) longer interviews with leaders, 3) focus groups, 4) participant observations, and 5) printed materials. We strongly recommend that you look at the material in Module 12: Evaluation when deciding whether or not to use these methods and how to conduct them.

Community Assessment interviews with young gay/bisexual men

The quickest and simplest way of collecting information about the young gay/bisexual men’s community is to conduct a number of Community Assessment interviews. These are brief interviews lasting about 15 minutes that are conducted wherever you find young gay/bisexual men, such as at gay bars, cafes, gay student unions, gay organizations, local chatrooms, and so forth. The Community Assessment interviews are not particularly personal,
and do not ask the individual about his sexual risk behavior, but instead focus on group experiences. Men do not need to be paid for these interviews because they are quite brief. (See the Appendix to Module 12: Evaluation for Figure 12.3 Community Assessment Interview for Young Gay/Bisexual Men, Figure 12.4 Community Assessment Data Recording Form, and Figure 12.5 Community Assessment Interview for Community Leaders.)

Using Community Assessment interviews as a part of conducting the Community Assessment is particularly useful when beginning the Mpowerment Project. These interviews can identify the various groups of young gay/bisexual men in the community and provide a deeper understanding of each group. They can also highlight needs that are being met by various community resources, as well as those that remain unmet. This new knowledge can then be used to create more effective programs.

In general, Community Assessment interviews are an effective method that can be used throughout the Project, at any time, to get quick input from young gay/bisexual men in the community. Project staff and volunteers can then use this input to make more informed decisions about the program. For example, Community Assessment interviews can provide reactions to potential names for the Project, suggestions for Project events and locations, or information about where to publicize Project activities. Community Assessment interviews can provide a “snapshot” of what young men think about a particular topic.

**Conduct interviews privately**

It is important to conduct all interviews (whether for the Community Assessment or when you are trying to determine other information) in a relatively private place, such as at a corner of a bar or at a table that is a distance away from other tables in a cafe. This way, young men will feel free to say whatever they want to the interviewer without feeling embarrassed that others might overhear them. If the topic is of an extremely personal nature, however, such as about one’s sexual behavior, then it is preferable to arrange to conduct these interviews in a more private place.

**Interview diverse groups of young gay/bisexual men**

It is critical that diverse groups of young gay/bisexual men be interviewed in order to get a comprehensive view of the community. Interview men of
different races/ethnicities, social crowds, ages, vocations, students, and non-students. Plan on interviewing at least 20 to 35 young men. As long as the interviews reveal new information or opinions, continue interviewing additional men. However, the interviewing process can be stopped once you notice you are getting much of the same information over and over (as long as you aren’t only interviewing guys from the same social groups).

**Record the information**

When conducting interviews, have a pen and paper ready so you can take notes. You can also arrange to bring a laptop to record responses. Writing down what the person says demonstrates a respect for someone’s opinions. This also ensures that when the interview is over, you have an accurate, detailed record of what was said. Since the Community Assessment interviews are short, there is no need to tape record responses. (See Figure 12.4 in the Appendix to Module 12: Evaluation for a sample Community Assessment Data Recording Form.)

In keeping with the Guiding Principle that the social aspects of the program should be emphasized rather than describing the Project as an HIV prevention program, it is important not to refer to the program as “a new HIV prevention program” during the interviews or when recruiting men to be interviewed. The Project should always be marketed as a program to build a strong, empowered community of young gay/bisexual men that focuses on a lot of different issues, and the HIV prevention aspects of the program are only one of many topics addressed.

Once the Community Assessment interviews have been conducted and recorded, the information needs to be sorted and compiled. (See the Appendix to Module 12: Evaluation for Figure 12.4 Community Assessment Data Recording Form). Organize the information by the various groups of young gay/bisexual men. For example, keep together all the information you’ve recorded about students, or “artsy” men, or Ball kids (e.g., where they hang out, how many men are part of the group, age range, etc.) until you have covered every group. When you’re done, you should have a fairly comprehensive overview concerning the local young gay/bisexual men’s community. (See Figure 2.1 in the Appendix to this module for a sample Community Assessment Data Recording Form from Albuquerque, NM.)

**Interviews with community leaders**

In addition to speaking with young gay/bisexual men, it is also helpful to learn community leaders’ experiences and perspectives on a variety of issues concerning young gay/bisexual men in the community. (See Figure 12.5 in the Appendix to Module 12: Evaluation for a sample Community Assessment Interview for Community Leaders). This may include their perceptions about young gay/bisexual men in terms of their risk-taking behavior, the history of attempts to work with them on HIV prevention, what community resources are available for these men, and the extent to which these resources are being used. For example, some of the leaders might be able to tell you that a particular bar manager has been quite amenable to HIV prevention efforts when they are conducted in a certain way, or that a cafe owner has been willing to host particular social events for the gay community.
Since interviews with community leaders generally take an hour or longer, it is important to make this clear when setting up the interview. During the interview it may also be helpful to describe the function of the Community Advisory Board and ask if the community leader might be interested in participating in it. However, don’t promise that he/she will be asked to join, since later it might be determined that he or she is not the best person for that role.

During the interview, take notes as those interviewed answer each question. Shortly after the interview, write out these responses in greater detail. As a safeguard, you may wish to ask for permission to call back if you need to clarify something. Before concluding each interview, remember to ask for referrals to others who are knowledgeable about these issues, and then interview them as well.

**Consider conducting focus groups of young gay/bisexual men**

Another way of gathering information for the Community Assessment is through the use of focus groups with young men. A focus group is a discussion among a carefully selected group of people, guided by a trained moderator, that explores a specific topic.

Focus groups are most suitable for issues that are likely to become clearer through group discussion and the reflection it generates. They often work well when trying to get individuals to explain widely held beliefs or practices. For example, to understand why previous attempts to attract young gay/bisexual men haven’t been very successful, a couple of different focus groups of young gay/bisexual men could be conducted to get impressions about what has and has not been effective in reaching them. The themes that emerge from the focus group could then be tested later through interviews or focus groups with a different population (e.g., service providers). Thus, group discussion that occurs in the focus groups would help to direct subsequent information gathering.

Focus groups are good at generating preliminary information quickly, and therefore can be helpful when conducting a Community Assessment. Four two-hour focus groups of ten members each can be conducted in two days. In comparison, it would be difficult to hold 40 two-hour interviews in the same time. On the other hand, it takes substantial effort to locate and schedule 40 individuals willing to participate in focus groups, and it may be necessary to pay people to participate in two-hour groups (versus not paying them for shorter individual interviews). Module 12: Evaluation discusses in greater detail the pros and cons and how to conduct focus groups. Also keep in mind that it is possible to explore the same topics using both focus groups and individual interviews. Sometimes you will get a more complete picture this way. (See Figure 12.2 in the Appendix to Module 12: Evaluation for a Sample Focus Group Guide.)
Conduct participant observations

Participant observation is just what it sounds like: you go out and watch what is happening in your community. Sometimes it is helpful to supplement information gained from Community Assessment interviews or focus groups with observational data. For example, you may want to directly observe some of the social groups that were described in the Community Assessment interviews. Sometimes interviews or focus groups yield conflicting information, and direct observation can help to resolve such conflicting information. For instance, you might wish to go to the locations that were identified as popular meeting places to observe if and when young men do, indeed, congregate there. If these locales do turn out to be meeting places, characteristics of the group can be observed, such as how members dress, their ages, what they do, and with whom they socialize. By observing and discreetly taking notes, you can begin to understand young gay/bisexual men’s lives in a way that will help you plan Mpowerment Project activities, recruit participants, and forge useful alliances.

When another organization is conducting outreach with gay/bisexual men, it can be extremely informative to notice how young gay/bisexual men respond to these outreach efforts. For instance, we have observed that when a lesbian and gay student union set up a booth at a university-wide function, many students went out of their way to avoid the booth so as not to be seen expressing interest in it by fellow students. This type of observational research will help you make decisions about what events and approaches might or might not be used to promote safer sex or the Project. For instance, if young gay/bisexual men are observed avoiding gay-related booths in mainstream environments, you may logically conclude that this will not be a very productive way to promote the Project.

Collect printed materials

There exists a wealth of printed materials that will be helpful in assessing the community. Skim current and past issues of local gay and alternative newspapers and websites, looking for information about social events and topics of interest to young gay/bisexual men, methods of advertising upcoming events, and community resources. It is also useful to collect copies of brochures and other information issued by relevant agencies and organizations in the community. As discussed previously, not only is it valuable to keep informed of what other community agencies are doing, it is also important to know what services they offer so that the Project can refer young men to them.
A sample list of the different major groups of young gay/bisexual men that were identified in Albuquerque prior to starting the Mpowerment Project, and information about the groups.

**Note:** Pulse, Ranch, Foxes and AMC are bars; UNM is the University of New Mexico; TVI is the Technology Vocational Institute

### Bar Crowd
- **Meeting Spot:** Pulse, Ranch, AMC
- **Residence:** All Over
- **Approx Size:** Large
- **Ethnicity:** Mixed
- **How to Join:** 21 or older
- **Likes:** Dancing, socializing, drinking, sex
- **Dislikes:** Expensive, repetitive, no real community
- **Misc Comments:** People go until they get a boyfriend

### Grunge Kids
- **Meeting Spot:** Nob Hill, UNM
- **Residence:** Nob Hill, Heights, Rio Rancho
- **Approx Size:** Small
- **Ethnicity:** White
- **How to Join:** Clothes, attitude
- **Likes:**
- **Dislikes:**
- **Misc Comments:** Hippie types, socially conscious, anti-social

### Closeted
- **Meeting Spot:** Public sex spots, cruise, adult video stores, Internet
- **Residence:** All Over
- **Approx Size:** Unknown
- **Ethnicity:** Mixed
- **How to Join:** Don't come out
- **Likes:** Public acceptance, kids, family support
- **Dislikes:** Sexually dissatisfied, lack of others like self
- **Misc. Comments:**

### Drag Queens
- **Meeting Spot:** Pulse, Ranch, AMC, And Foxes
- **Residence:** All Over
- **Approx Size:** Small
- **Ethnicity:** Mixed
- **How to Join:** Be into drag scene
- **Likes:** Performing, entertaining, creative outlet
- **Dislikes:**
- **Misc. Comments:**

### Homeless/Street Kids
- **Meeting Spot:** The Cruise, Knob Hill, Downtown, Shelters
- **Residence:** All Over
- **Approx Size:** Small
- **Ethnicity:** Mixed
- **How to Join:** Be rejected by family
- **Likes:**
- **Dislikes:** Diseases, insecurity, danger
- **Misc. Comments:** Includes drag queens and prostitutes

### Gay Frat Boys
- **Meeting Spot:** Backrooms, cruise, public parks, restrooms
- **Residence:** UNM
- **Approx Size:** Small
- **Ethnicity:** White
- **How to Join:** Live at fraternities
- **Likes:** Social acceptance
- **Dislikes:** Sexually dissatisfied, no real community
- **Misc. Comments:** Don't consider themselves gay
### Community Assessment Results from Albuquerque, NM (cont’d)

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<th>Group</th>
<th>Meeting Spot</th>
<th>Age</th>
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<td>20’s-40’s</td>
<td>Gay, Bi, And Straight</td>
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<td>Residence:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethnicity:</td>
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<td>How to Join:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Likes:</td>
<td>See and be seen, good bodies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Residence:</td>
<td>Heights, Knob Hill</td>
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<tr>
<td>How to Join:</td>
<td>Join Chamber of Commerce</td>
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<tr>
<td>Likes:</td>
<td>Business networks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dislikes:</td>
<td>Lack of real community, competitive, self-absorbed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Misc. Comments:</td>
<td>Relationships rarely last long</td>
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<tr>
<td>Couples</td>
<td>Double Rainbow Ice Cream Store, Martini Grill, &amp; Gym</td>
<td>21+</td>
<td>Gay</td>
<td>M</td>
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<tr>
<td>Residence:</td>
<td>All Over</td>
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<tr>
<td>Approx Size:</td>
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<tr>
<td>How to Join:</td>
<td>Find a guy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Likes:</td>
<td>Wardrobe, sex, companionship, love</td>
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<td>Dislikes:</td>
<td>Can be reclusive, lack of community, few other couples</td>
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<td>Misc. Comments:</td>
<td>Relationships rarely last long</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gay Men’s Chorus R</td>
<td>rehearsals, performances</td>
<td>20+</td>
<td>Gay</td>
<td>M</td>
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<tr>
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<td>How to Join:</td>
<td>Audition</td>
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<td>Likes:</td>
<td>Shared interests, performing, singing</td>
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<td>Dislikes:</td>
<td>Misc. Comments:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Under 21</td>
<td>Common Bond Gay Community Center Group, Rap</td>
<td>&lt;21</td>
<td>Gay</td>
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<td>Group Residence:</td>
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<tr>
<td>How to Join:</td>
<td>Attend meetings</td>
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<td>Likes:</td>
<td>Misc. Comments:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dislikes:</td>
<td>Awkward, lack of attendance, not welcoming</td>
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<tr>
<td>Misc. Comments:</td>
<td>Not many participants</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gay Rodeo</td>
<td>County fairgrounds, Ranch</td>
<td>Upper 20’s+</td>
<td>Gay</td>
<td>M, F</td>
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<td>Residence:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Approx Size:</td>
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<tr>
<td>How to Join:</td>
<td>Volunteer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Likes:</td>
<td>Fun, meet like people</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dislikes:</td>
<td>Expensive to travel to rodeos all over</td>
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<tr>
<td>Misc. Comments:</td>
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Community Assessment Results from Albuquerque, NM (cont’d)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Meeting Spot</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Orientation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leather Men</td>
<td>Meeting Spot: Ranch</td>
<td>Age: 20’s+</td>
<td>Orientation: Gay</td>
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<td>Residence: All Over</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Approx Size: Small Gender: M</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ethnicity: Mixed</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How to Join: Be into leather scene</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Likes: Shared interests</td>
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<td>Dislikes: Misc. Comments:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>Meeting Spot: UNM, TVI, High Schools</td>
<td>Age: 18+</td>
<td>Orientation: Gay, Bi, And Straight</td>
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<td>Residence: All Over</td>
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<td>Approx Size: Large Gender: M, F</td>
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<td></td>
<td>How to Join: Student</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Likes: Campus Life, atmosphere, classes, peers</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dislikes: Bashing, closet cases, bullies</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Misc. Comments: Albuquerque Academy has Lesbian group</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hair Salons</td>
<td>Meeting Spot: La Run Ni Hate Perms Plus, Artistic Creations</td>
<td>Age: 20’s-30’s</td>
<td>Orientation: Gay</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Residence: All Over</td>
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<td>Approx Size: Small Gender: M</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ethnicity: Mixed</td>
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<tr>
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<td>How to Join: Work at salon</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Likes: Meet lots of people, good money</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dislikes: Impossible customers</td>
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<td>Misc. Comments:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>Meeting Spot: Dignity (Gay Catholics Group), Metropolitan Community Church (MCC)</td>
<td>Age: All</td>
<td>Orientation: Gay, Bi, Straight</td>
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<td>Residence: All Over Gender: M, F</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Approx Size: Small Ethnicity: Mixed</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How to Join: Join congregation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Likes: Community, shared spirituality, belief in God</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dislikes: Older crowd</td>
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<td>Misc. Comments:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Artsy</td>
<td>Meeting Spot: Theaters, galleries, coffee houses</td>
<td>Age: All</td>
<td>Orientation: Gay, Bi, And Straight</td>
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<td>Residence: All Over</td>
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<td>Approx Size: Small Gender: M, F</td>
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<td>Ethnicity: Mixed</td>
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<td>How to Join:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Likes: Art, culture, see and be seen</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dislikes: Snobby, theater can be expensive</td>
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</table>