



April 1, 2020.

## **ARCH Response to Safe Place Program**

ARCH supports the [community letter](#) opposing the Guelph Police Service's (GPS) recently launched Safe Place program. We do not believe that these new stickers are a meaningful step toward making the City of Guelph a safer space for 2SLGBTQI+ communities.

Our communities have strife historical relationships with police services. With the Concerned LGBTQ+ Citizens and their allies, we call for the redirection of funds from police services to community organizations and services that can better support our communities. We believe that the City of Guelph and the GPS need to reallocate resources to community-based organizations that are advocating against hate and working directly in partnership with our community. We need persistent and timely responses to hate crimes and hate incidents that are community-owned and trauma-informed.

ARCH staff met with the GPS Safe Place program representatives last week to learn more about the intent of this project. This was the first time that the GPS reached out to ARCH in regard to this initiative. The outcomes from the meeting include: pausing the distribution of Safe Place stickers, a readiness to collaborate with ARCH to review the Safe Place program materials and develop a working relationship moving forward such as consulting on policy review and opportunity to provide additional training.

We invite interested businesses and organizations to participate in ARCH's Voices of Value program. The Voices of Value is an LGBTQ+ Cultural Competency Toolkit established in April 2016. The toolkit was designed in collaboration with our communities to strengthen the capacity of service providers, businesses, and organizations to support LGBTQ+ people and people living with HIV/AIDS to provide more inclusive and accessible services and care. This toolkit is educational and action-oriented, meant to be a catalyst for commitment to ongoing learning and preparation for organizational changes by reflecting on current practices and identifying new areas to grow.

More information about the program can be found here: <https://www.archguelph.ca/voicesofvalue>

We thank our community members for advocating for the work we do. Your care and labour are greatly appreciated.