



LGBTQ2S: POLICIES AND PRACTICES FOR  
TRIBAL SHELTERS AND DV PROGRAMS

June 16, 2021

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NW Regional Coordinator Ombudsman  
Program

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## WEBINAR GOALS

- **Provide the history of SWIWC's Native LGBTQ2S Advisory Council**
- **Provide the purpose of the Native LGBTQ2S Advisory Council.**
- **Provide info on how programs can be inclusive and responsive to the LGBTQ+2S community.**
- **Provide information on how the Native LGBTQ2S Advisory Council has helped programs become more accessible and responsive to LGBTQ2S victim/survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking.**



**SWIWC**  
*Sacred We Are*

**VISION: TO HAVE SAFE INDIGENOUS  
COMMUNITIES**

## OUR MISSION AND PURPOSE



### Our Mission

Is to educate, support, and empower Native communities to increase awareness, safety, healing, justice, and resources for the LGBTQ community.

### Our Purpose

To advise and guide the staff and Governing Board on training and technical assistance (T/TA) approaches, data inclusion, resource development and funding opportunities, policy development and tribal and on-site trainings with activities that come directly from the voices and presence of the LGBTQ community.

## OUR MEMBERS



**Lenny Hayes**  
Co-Chair

Sisseton-  
Wahpeton Oyate



**Josie Raphaelito**  
Co-Chair

Diné



**Honor Fisher**

Mojave  
Chemehuevi



**Marlon Fixico**

Cheyenne  
Seminole



**Mattee Jim**

Diné



**Elton Naswood**

Diné



**Moroni Benally**

Diné



**Misty Sandoval**

Diné



## TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

Services are tailored to meet the needs of those requesting training and/or technical assistance. The following are a list of specific topics presented by professionals who identify as members of the LGBTQ community.

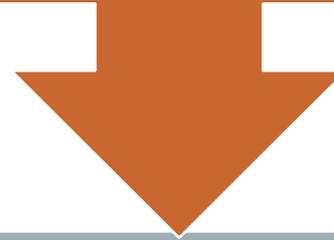
- Sexual Violence Against Men and Boys, the Impact
- The Forgotten Population: The Mental Health Issues of that impacts the Two-Spirit/Native LGBTQ Individuals and Community
- LGBT Community Engagement
- Using Art to Heal: Surviving Rape and Abuse
- HIV, LBGT, and Domestic Violence: A Triple Threat
- Broadening Our Perspective to Include American Indian LGBT Community
- Embracing the Two Spirit Elders Against Violence
- Transgender 101: To Know, Understand, and Advocate
- LGBTQ/Bullying
- Native LGBTQTS Youth Leadership Development
- Native LGBTQTS Resource Sharing
- Native LGBTQTS Resource Development



**BEING A GOOD RELATIVE**



Realized that the LGBTQ2S community was absent from our networks, they were not attending our training, and certainly were not at the table where decisions were being made about services and funding.



We knew as a coalition we had to do better. Needed to change from the inside out.



## THE UNIVERSE ANSWERED

- Jan 2014 at a sex trafficking conference in MN, met Lenny Hayes
  - Summer 2014 bumped into Kurt Begaye
  - Immediately started the planning for SWIWC's first LGBTQ Regional Training in October 2014. Invited Lenny and Kurt to take the lead in developing the agenda and facilitating the training. Also invited Nick Metcalf and Wesley Thomas.
  - Regional training prompted the planning for roundtable discussions. Conducted two roundtables: one with with members of LGBTQ community and the other with tribal DV/SA service providers. Invited Lenny and Kurt to develop questions and facilitate the discussions.
- Invited several of the roundtable participants including facilitators Kurt and Lenny to help SWIWC develop its LGBTQ response – the birth of the LGBTQ2S Advisory Council.

## ROUNDTABLE PURPOSES

**Roundtable One** – participants were members from the LGBTQ2S community and the purpose was to address the domestic and sexual violence occurring in this community and to get a better understanding of the direct service, training, and technical assistance needs of this community.

**Roundtable Two** – participants were tribal DV/SA direct service providers and the purpose was to get a better understanding of the services they were providing to the LGBTQ2S community, the challenges they were having, and to identify their training and technical assistance needs to increase their capacity to respond to the LGBTQ/2S community.



“On a tribal level it’s important to integrate policy before you can introduce any type of services/activities. Need this before you can share information to tribe. Need to create and share policy with the powers that be. People need to feel safe, welcome especially when seeking services. We come in as a label – we are still people. I’m still a Tohono O’odham. I want to be accepted, as I am – who I am.”

“Violence comes with personal attitude and beliefs without understanding and respect for differences.”

“Our communities need education to have impact on suicides and to create safer communities. Friends who were gay, lesbian are no longer here due to suicide.”

“The history of LGBTQ people needs to be shown. It needs to be shown that they existed before colonization.”

## ROUNDTABLE ONE – LGBTQ2S COMMUNITY



## ROUNDTABLE ONE - CHALLENGES...

“No services for LGBTQ community on reservation.”

”No stats or data is available for LGBTQ community.”

”Tokenization of LGBTQ in the workplace, on committees, in communities, etc.”

“In healthcare setting – providers are not sensitive to LGBTQ needs. They are not treated and cared for properly.” Policies at all levels within agencies in tribal communities do not include the LGBTQ community.”

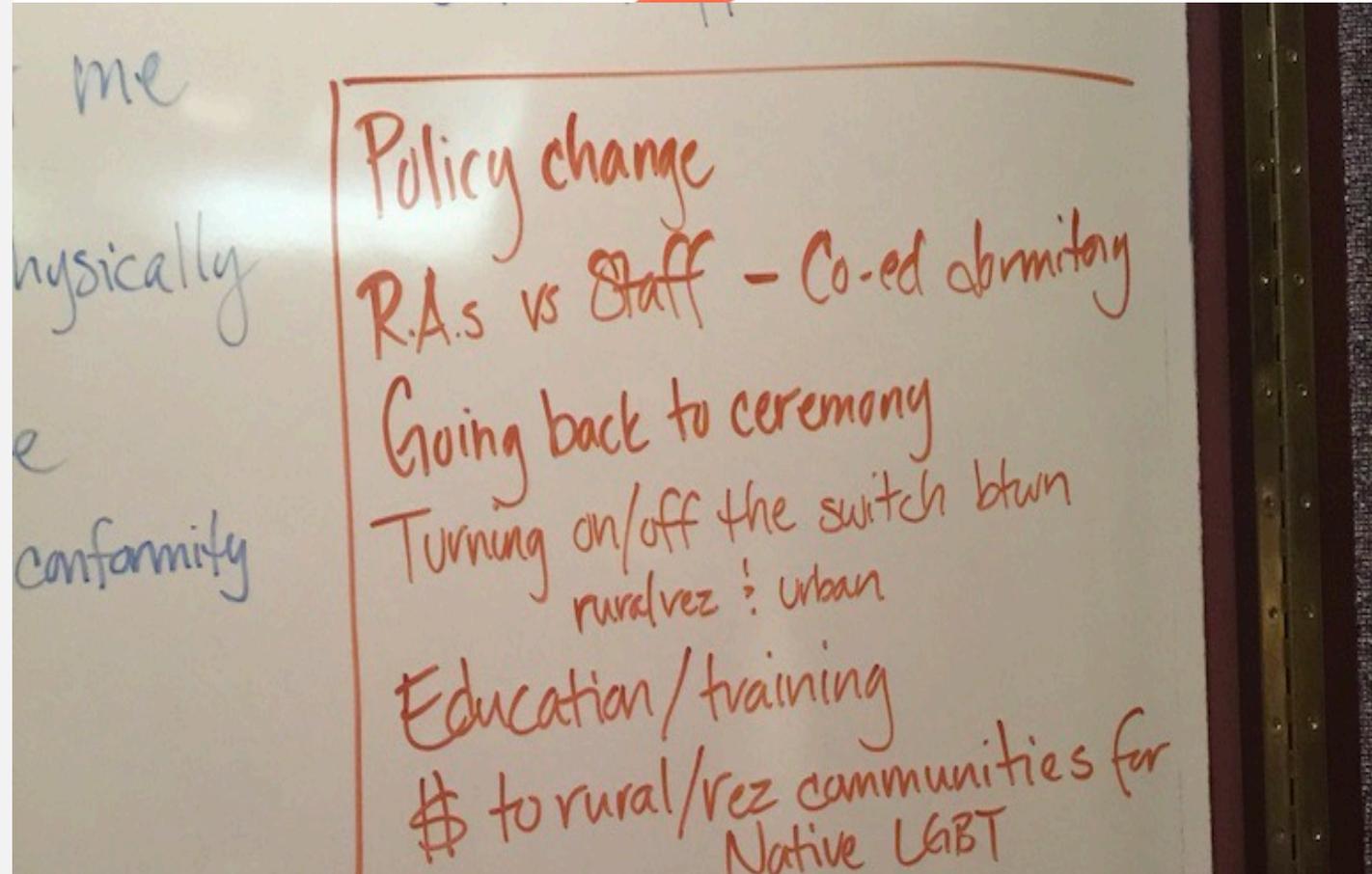
“Communities, providers, schools, healthcare, law enforcement, etc. are not properly trained with regard to the LGBTQ community.”

“The LGBTQ who have been murdered and/or missing don’t fully receive the urgent attention required for investigation. Cases go unheard and get dismissed.”

“The LGBTQ do not report sexual assaults due to being ridiculed and being mistreated.”

## ROUNDTABLE ONE - WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE?

- “Education and outreach to tribal communities.”
- “Policies need to change.”
- “Forms need to change. How do we not be treated as ‘other’? Should be asking what’s your sex assigned at birth, what’s your current gender?”
- “Need national data to reflect the needs of LGBT.”
- “National Organizations need to include LGBT. Recommendations should be made to tribes from these national organizations.
- “Services for the LGBT community need to be implemented.”



trans ppl on council  
no homo/transphobia  
hate crimes policy

## IDEAL COMMUNITY...

“Trans people on tribal council.”

“No homo/transphobia.”

“Policies for hate crimes.”

“Funded programming for the LGBT community.”

Compre  
access  
inclusi  
Programs in tribal communities for  
LGBT youth

“Equal employment.  
Equal  
treatment/rights.”

Transgender Health Services  
carcerated  
/TS

“Financial, housing,  
health, legal, and  
shelter services for  
LGBT victims of  
violence/crime.”

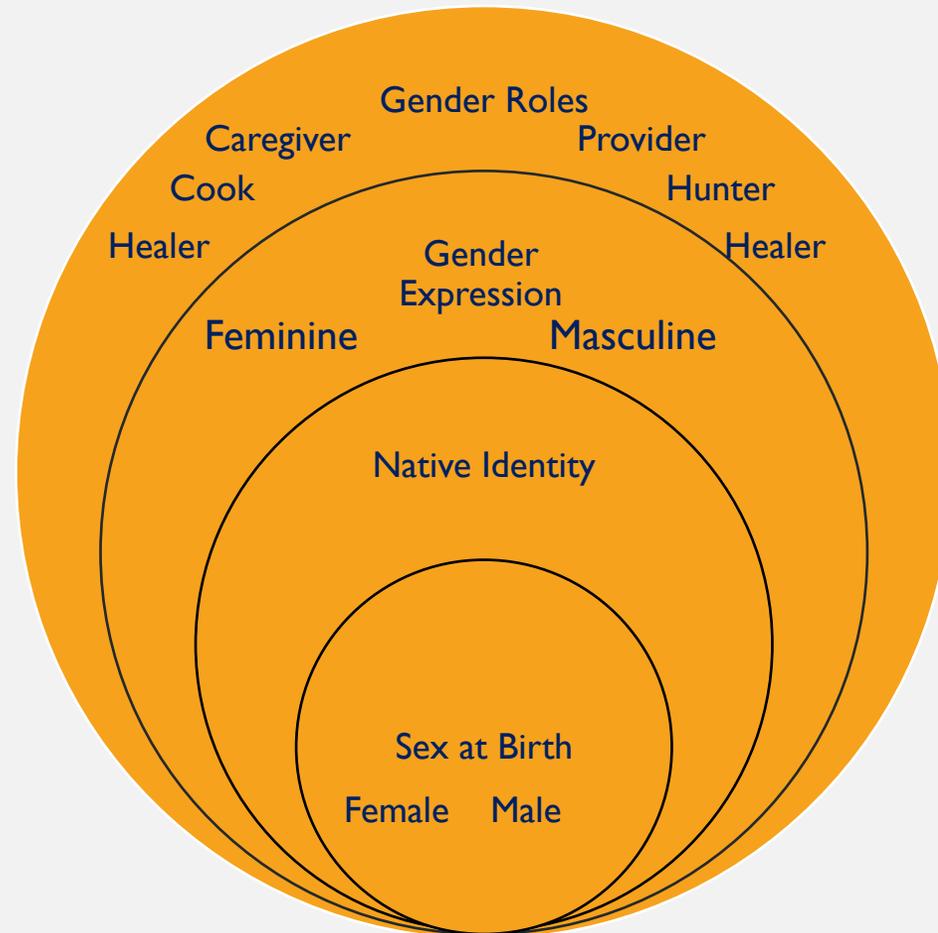
“Research/data  
collection that  
includes the LGBT  
community.”

# CREATING UNDERSTANDING

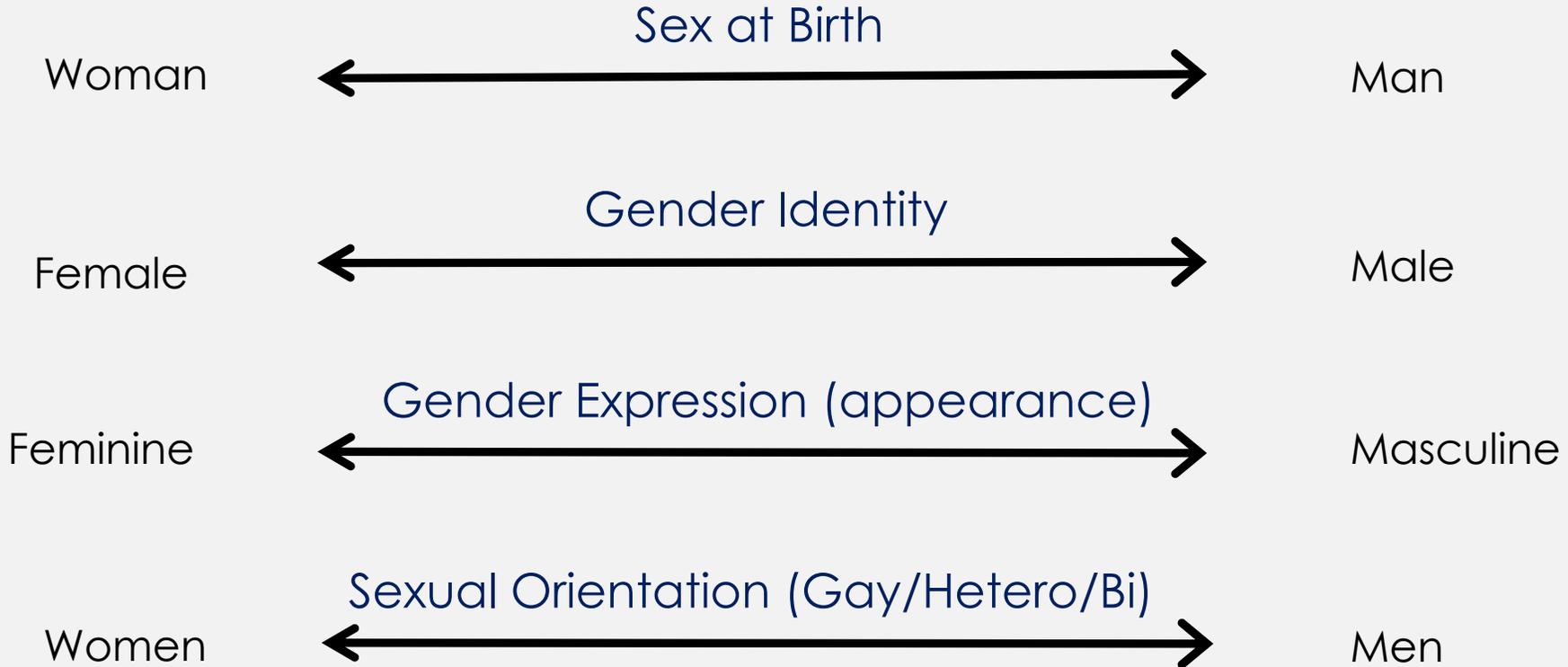
## LGBTQ2S DEFINITIONS

- Transgender – a term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from the sex they were assigned at birth
- Two Spirit – a contemporary term used to identify Native American lesbian, gay, bisexual, and some transgender individuals with traditional and cultural understandings of gender roles and identity

# NATIVE COMMUNITY



# WESTERN/AMERICAN



# LGBTQ2S VICTIMIZATION MYTHS

- **MYTH #1:** Abusers are usually bigger, stronger or more “butch” than their partners
- **MYTH #2:** LGBTQ2S victims can easily leave abusive partners because they have no legal ties to them
- **MYTH #3:** Transgender people wouldn’t get hurt if they didn’t dress or try to act like something they’re not (ex: *If “he” didn’t dress and act like a woman, “he” wouldn’t get hurt*)

## ABUSIVE BEHAVIORS PARTICULAR TO LGBTQ2S VIOLENT RELATIONSHIPS

- “Outing” or threatening to out a partner to friends, family, employers, police or others
- Reinforcing fears that no one will help a partner because s/he is LGBTQ2S, or that for this reason, the partner “deserves” the abuse
- A “power differential” cannot be expressed because, in theory, people who share the same gender have the same amount of power

# BARRIERS TO ADDRESSING LGBTQ2S DV

- Poor or inconsistent law enforcement response
- No access to family courts
- Lack of accessible and sensitive services
- Victims' hopelessness or fear of reprisals

## BARRIERS TO ADDRESSING LGBTQ2S DV

- Victims' fear of being "outed" (publicly declaring or revealing another person's sexual identity without her/his consent)
- Victims may not be aware that services dedicated to LGBTQ2S victims
- Victims feel that they are treated differently when seeking services
- Discrimination within victim services programs

## AS A COALITION WE ASKED, HOW CAN SWIWC HELP?

- “Create services/training options across state or tribal communities.”
- “Include LGBTQ in grant writing/funding.”
- “Include LGBTQ in conferences/trainings.”
- “Advocating for policy changes.”
- “Present data/stats to tribal council.”
- “Developing a training curriculum on LGBTQ.”
- “Taking round table discussion to community/providers.”

HOW CAN WE “MEND THE  
RAINBOW”?

## HOW WE "MEND THE RAINBOW"

- Create supportive systems
- Build trust
- Honor tradition and culture
- Eliminate Homophobia/Transphobia
- Educate services and law enforcement of social issues (i.e., same partner domestic violence)
- Identify appropriate resources
- Reassess protective protocols (i.e., shelters, jails, hospitals, etc.)

## HOW WE "MEND THE RAINBOW"

- Become knowledgeable in LGBTQ2S State, Federal, and Tribal Laws
- Create tribal ordinances and/or policies to protect Native LGBTQ2S individuals/community
- Address social determinants of health (i.e., homelessness, substance use/abuse, discrimination, hate, HIV/AIDS, STIs, employment, etc.)
- Advocate for change/inclusion for Native LGBTQ2S

# HOW WE "MEND THE RAINBOW"

"Intensive and regular training."

"Identifying current services level to the LGBT community."

"Employ, put on boards, include in planning the LGBTQ comm."

"Address trauma. Provide healing opportunities."

"Tell the stories --- in our stories are the teachings of how the LGBT were once an integral part of tribal history/creation."

"Invite LGBT community to be involved in creating change."

"LGBTQ should be the ones talking about LGBTQ to the community."

"Change legislation to fund programs for the LGBT community."

"Trainings for shelters to be more understanding and inclusive."

# BEST PRACTICES

- ◆ Train all staff to avoid gender-specific language until they have asked a client for their name and pronouns
- ◆ Ask for client names and pronouns routinely
- ◆ Be honest about your mistakes and demonstrate a willingness to learn from clients
- ◆ Open up space for clients to discuss their LGBTQ2S identity, and avoid an approach that assumes a heteronormative, gender binary
- ◆ Take cues from clients around how to interact with their bodies; use language they feel comfortable using

# CREATING A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

- ◆ Single-stall, gender neutral bathrooms; don't police bathrooms



# TWO SPIRIT LOVED & ACCEPTED

#WENEEDYOUHERE



PREVENT SUICIDE.

**TO GIVE HELP OR GET HELP:**

- CALL THE TREVOR LIFELINE FOR LGBTQ YOUTH AT **1.866.488.7386**
- CALL THE SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE AT **1.800.273.8255**
- TEXT "START" TO 741741 TO CHAT VIA TEXT MESSAGE
- VISIT **WWW.WERNATIVE.ORG** TO LEARN ABOUT SUICIDE SIGNS AND PREVENTION RESOURCES
- TALK TO TRUSTED ELDERS, HEALERS, FRIENDS, FAMILY MEMBERS, OR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS



# LGBTQ LOVED & ACCEPTED

#WENEEDYOUHERE



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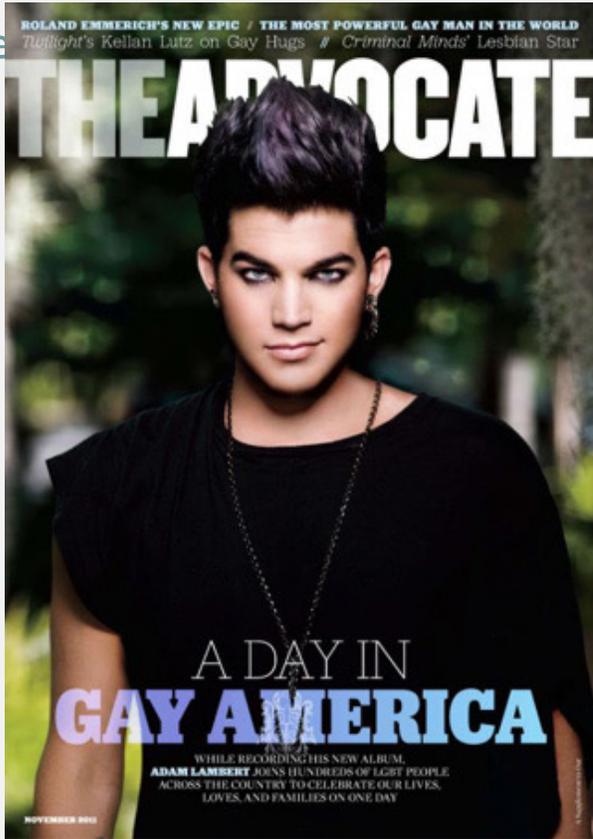
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# CREATING A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

- ◆ Include public



## CREATING A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

Post a rainbow flag or some other equality symbol indicating safe space





QUESTIONS???



THANK YOU!

## SWIWC CONTACT INFORMATION

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