

MyGSA.ca



Equity and Inclusive Education Resource Kit for Ontario High Schools



Equity and Inclusive Education Resource Kit for Ontario High Schools

INTRODUCTION



DEDICATION

This Equity and Inclusive Education Resource Kit, which is aimed at making Ontario's high schools safer and more inclusive, respectful, and welcoming learning and working environments for all members of school communities, is dedicated to Shaquille Wisdom.



Shaquille Wisdom was 13 years old when he committed suicide on October 20, 2007. The young boy was attending Ajax High School, where he was being bullied because of his sexual orientation. Shaquille had come out to a friend during the summer before starting Grade 9. Shortly after telling his friend he was gay, Shaquille became a victim of cyber-bullying: his peers sent him hate e-mails and harassed him online. Things escalated in high school, where Shaquille was physically and verbally assaulted by his peers. A few days prior to his suicide, Shaquille had been stuffed into a garbage can by other students. He was afraid to be himself. At this frighteningly young age, Shaquille came to the point where he chose death over life. Even though a friend had told him online "not to do it" just minutes beforehand, Shaquille hung himself from the stairs of his home.



"I am appalled that in this day and age that there is still so much hate for gays and blacks... I will never understand the thinking of people who seem to think they are better then gays or blacks... I have said it many a time on here that we all breath the same... bleed the same think the same and die in the end life is too short to be hatng people... let's get on and maybe the world might just have a chance to heal..."
- Linda Hayward



"I was bullied...I dropped out mainly because of the bullying. I remember vividly wanting to kill myself...I wish I had the chance to help him be strong. His death lessons us all."

-Jason Hather

"in grade 8, just the year before he passed...i was his only friend. i'll never forget when I saw him sitting there in the corner. when the class was assigned a geography project with partners, neither of us had partners, so he asked me if i wanted to partner up. and so we became friends after doing the project together. as shaquille moved on and met other people, i heard something about his sexuality. that made me uncomfortable around him, and i didn't treat him very nicely at times...i always felt bad about it."

i always thought to myself 'when am i going to apologize for this, this is stupid,' but that moment never came. only when i muttered it under my breath at his funeral visitation 'im sorry.' the last thing he ever said to me was 'you know what mike, fuck you.' i'll never forget that either, because i've learned a valuable lesson from it. it crossed my mind a few times, not to go to his funeral, but he would want me there if he knew how sorry i was."

- Mike Sniderman

Shaq: Tonight was the GSA coffeehouse. the whole library was packed. you would have loved it. people sang for you. it was really beautiful. i cried the whole time. the truth is - i really miss you. everyone does. I know what you went through was really hard - and u felt like no one was there for you, but you have turned heads. And now everyone knows and supports. I promise you i will never let your name, your memory, and what you stand for die. You have changed my life in sooo many ways. I know it was after your death that the change started. but i hope you're in heaven watching over us, and seeing what we are doing to make our school, and our lives richer. i love you shaq. I miss you so much"

- Alana Taylor





di  **ersity =**
possibility

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INTRODUCTION

**THANKS FOR READING THIS EQUITY AND
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION RESOURCE KIT
FOR ONTARIO HIGH SCHOOLS!**



Through our Safe Schools Campaign, Egale is committed to supporting LGBTQ youth, youth perceived as LGBTQ, youth with LGBTQ parents, other family members, and friends as well as educators, librarians, guidance counsellors, education support workers, parents, and administrators and to helping make Canadian schools safer and more inclusive, respectful, and welcoming learning and working environments for all members of school communities.

The Safe Schools Campaign features resources for facilitating change in Canadian learning environments. In addition to this Equity and Inclusive Education Resource Kit, we have also launched the national LGBTQ safer schools and inclusive education website, *MyGSA.ca*. Additionally, Egale has an anti-heterosexism, anti-homophobia, anti-biphobia, anti-transphobia, and intersectionality workshop series. If you have questions about any of these initiatives, or if you would like to get involved or to book a workshop for your school or school board, please contact us at mygsa@egale.ca or 1.888.204.7777 (toll-free).

In addition to the brief overview of significant Terms & Concepts you'll find in this Introduction, there is a much lengthier section devoted to definitions further on as well as a section on Role Models & Symbols. All of this information should be helpful when planning events, assemblies, and projects in conjunction with the significant dates on the Queer Calendar. The Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) Guide provides strategies for starting and maintaining student groups pertaining to LGBTQ matters.



Egale Canada is Canada's lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, two-spirited, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ) human rights organization: advancing equality, diversity, education, and justice.



Whether or not your school already has a GSA, you can connect with other LGBTQ youth, educators, and allies throughout the country to share ideas, materials, and resources on the MyGSA website Discussion Forums.

Be sure
MyGSA.ca
isn't blocked at
your school!



If you want to know more about legislation and policy as they relate to real life experiences in school settings in Ontario, see the section on Questions & Answers about LGBTQ Human Rights Legislation and Policy in Ontario. If you have questions about organizations, programmes, and resources available in your area or nationwide, have a look at the sections on LGBTQ and LGBTQ-Friendly Organizations, Programmes, & Resources in Ontario and National LGBTQ and LGBTQ-Friendly Organizations, Programmes, & Resources.

If you are an educator, check out the Information & Resources for Educators. If you are a guidance counsellor, check out the Resources for Guidance



Counsellors. If you are an administrator, check out the Information for Administrators. If you are not a teacher, a guidance counsellor, or an administrator, give these sections to your teachers, your school counsellors, and your principal!



Some schools use filtering software to block access to websites that include keywords pertaining to certain matters, such as sex, and rely on the companies that develop the software to maintain the list of unacceptable sites. Although this might be done in the interests of blocking pornographic content, for example, an unfortunate consequence of such protocols is that many useful websites regarding important matters such as health and sexual orientation are also blocked. Be sure that *MyGSA.ca* isn't blocked at your school. If it is, ask your principal to change the settings. If *MyGSA.ca* continues to be blocked at your school, contact Egale at 1.888.204.7777 (toll-free) or mygsa@egale.ca and let us know.

There is also an Executive Summary of Egale's Final Report on the First National School Climate Survey: *Every Class in Every School*. You can find this in the Information for Administrators or by going to <http://MyGSA.ca/YouthSpeakUp>.



WHAT DOES LGBTQ MEAN?

This acronym can mean different things to different people, but it is generally understood to stand for “lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans (transgender, transsexual, trans-identified), two-spirited, queer, and questioning” or some variation of this. Check out the Terms & Concepts section in this Equity and Inclusive Education Resource Kit or on the MyGSA website for various definitions of each of these words.

Q:

I've seen a number of different combinations of letters and I don't know which ones to use! I don't want to exclude anyone or be disrespectful, but how can I explain the proper usage when I don't know what to say myself? What if someone asks me what the correct thing to say is?

A:

Although it's true that many people opt to use different words to describe themselves, saying either LGBT or LGBTQ is widely accepted (even though it is recognized that these expressions are not necessarily all-encompassing).

For example, it is also common to include both an “I” for intersex and an “A” for ally. Some people also choose to duplicate all of the letters that can represent more than one word because it has the visual/verbal effect of demonstrating how very many different sexual orientations and gender identities there actually are. The ones already mentioned here would look like this: LGBTTTTQQIA or LGBTTT2QQIA (where the “2” stands for 2-spirited). The letters can be ordered differently as well, such as alphabetically.

It is an excellent question though and this is one of the reasons why incorporating LGBTQ matters and inclusive language into curriculum is so vital. Sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression are parts of everyday life and everyone needs to know what language to use in order to discuss them appropriately and respectfully.

lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans (transgender, transsexual, trans-identified), two-spirited, queer, and questioning



In addition to professional development, many educators who are unversed in LGBTQ matters may find it beneficial to do independent research. The MyGSA website has a section for educators, including resources and a discussion forum.



WE HOPE THAT YOU FIND THIS KIT HELPFUL, WHETHER YOUR AIM IS...

to work towards changing your school or school board policy to explicitly address sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression (look under “Activities” in the GSA Guide);

to include LGBTQ material in your school’s curriculum (see Appendix M for suggestions);

to start your school’s first-ever GSA: Good luck & keep us posted by registering on *MyGSA.ca!*

Please feel free to send comments or feedback

to mygsa@egale.ca

Administrators and educators also require adequate training and preparation for handling such discussions. It is unfair for anyone to be expected to manage unfamiliar subject material in a classroom or to deal with homophobia, transphobia, and biphobia in school hallways when one has not been provided with sufficient instruction beforehand.

Q:

Wouldn’t it be easier just to choose one word or one set of letters and be done with it?

A:

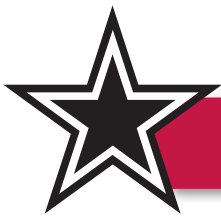
Maybe, but that too would be problematic. For one thing, language is always evolving—just think about all of the acronyms now in common usage as a result of new electronic technologies such as texting. And because the words relating to LGBTQ matters are identity-specific, it is particularly important to be respectful and aware of appropriate and relevant usage.

Many people choose to use the word “queer” for this very reason though. A long list of letters can be quite a mouthful! However, this too has its problems. Although the word “queer” has generally been reclaimed in contemporary usage, historically the word has had negative connotations.



THIS IS A GREAT TOPIC FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION:

after reading through the *Terms & Concepts* section in this kit or on the *MyGSA* website, try opening up this dialogue in your class or at a *GSA* meeting!

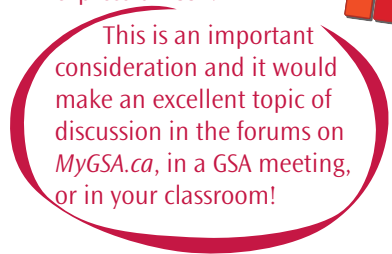


WHAT IS A GSA?

The term GSA stands for Gay-Straight Alliance. Although the exact function of such clubs varies from school to school, GSAs are generally considered to be any student groups concerned with LGBTQ matters and sometimes also serving as support groups for LGBTQ students, allies, and youth with LGBTQ parents or other family members. For more extensive definitions, see the Terms & Concepts section in this kit or on MyGSA.ca.

Take a look at the GSA Directory on MyGSA.ca. You might notice that a number of the groups have alternate names, such as Rainbow Alliance, QSA (Queer-Straight Alliance), or Pride or PRYDE (Please Respect Your Diverse Environment) Club. Many student groups opt to use different names because the word “gay” is not as inclusive

as they would like. It doesn't necessarily refer to lesbians, bisexuals, or two-spirited people and gender identity and gender expression are not explicitly encompassed by the expression GSA.



GAY-STRAIGHT ALLIANCE

See the Terms & Concepts section in this kit or on MyGSA.ca.



WHAT IS INTERSECTIONALITY?

Similarly to the point on a graph where lines cross being called a point of “intersection,” the fact that categories of identification—such as class, ethnic origin, gender expression, gender identity, physical and mental ability, race, religion, sexual orientation, or other factors—are experienced simultaneously and cannot genuinely be separated from one another is referred to as “intersectionality.”

Often, people are discriminated against with regard to multiple categories: for example, a racialized lesbian could be subjected to heterosexism, homophobia, lesbophobia, misogyny, racism, and transphobia or any other form of discrimination, such as ableism, ageism, and classism, depending on both how she identifies and how she is *perceived* to be.

A cisgendered person is someone whose gender identity basically matches up with her or his medically-designated sex. An example of this is a person who identifies as a “man” (gender identity) who is also medically-designated “male” (sex). A cisgendered person can be subjected to transphobia if somebody else perceives that person not to be conforming to stereotypical ideas about gender.

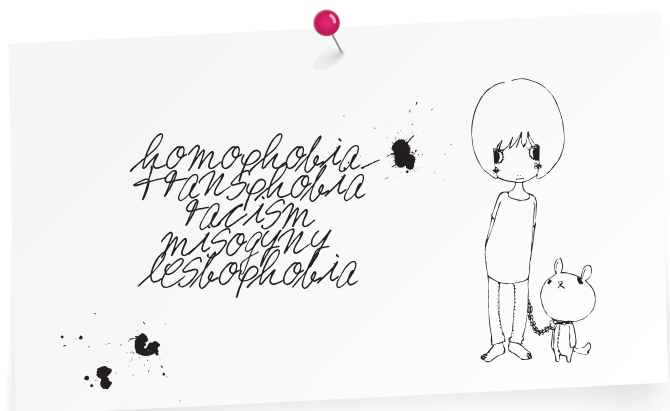
BECAUSE DISCRIMINATION CAN BE BASED ON MULTIPLE FACTORS,

the Ontario Human Rights Commission has begun taking a more contextualized approach, which it calls “an intersectional approach to discrimination.” For more information on this, see http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/resources/discussion_consultation/DissIntersectionalityFtns/view.

Ontario's Ministry of Education also recognizes the importance of approaching categories of identity as intersectional:

“Equity and inclusive education aims to understand, identify, address, and eliminate the biases, barriers, and power dynamics that limit students’ prospects for learning, growing, and fully contributing to society. Barriers may be related to gender, race, ethnic origin, religion, socio-economic background, physical and mental ability, sexual orientation, or other factors. It is now recognized that several factors may *intersect* to create additional barriers for some students. These barriers and biases, whether overt or subtle, intentional or unintentional, need to be identified and addressed.”

Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools:
Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation (2009)





LEGAL CASES

Regarding Homophobia in Canadian Schools

Ross v. New Brunswick School District No. 15, [1996] 1 S.C.R. 825

This was a case that went to the Supreme Court of Canada in 1996. The Supreme Court found that “A school board has a duty to maintain a positive school environment for all persons served by it and it must be ever vigilant of anything that might interfere with this duty” (para. 50) and that the freedom of expression of teachers can be restricted if it interferes with the establishment of a positive educational environment (para. 2).

Kempling v. The British Columbia College of Teachers, 2005 BCCA 327

In this case, a teacher at a public school wrote negative letters against the LGBT community to a newspaper. He was cited for misconduct and was found guilty of conduct unbecoming of a BCCT teacher in front of an administrative tribunal. In 2005, the British Columbia Court of Appeal sided with the administrative tribunal’s decision and upheld Kempling’s suspension. His appeal was dismissed.

School District No. 44 (North Vancouver) v. Jubran, 2005 BCCA 201



This case went in front of the British Columbia Court of Appeal in 2005 and the case was found in favour of Jubran. Jubran was harassed at school because of his perceived sexual orientation. The Court found that a school has a duty to provide an environment that is free from harassment for all students.

Lindsay Jane Willow v. Halifax Regional School Board, Dr. Gordon Young and John Orlando, 2006 Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission

This case went in front of the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission and they cited Jubran in their decision. Willow had been accused of inappropriate sexual behaviour with a female student by two other teachers at the school, who believed she was a lesbian and made the accusation as a result. The Human Rights Tribunal found that the school board did not act properly and owed the teacher a standard of care.

Trans Legal Cases

There seem to be very few legal cases involving trans matters, especially cases that have gone before provincial courts of appeal or the Supreme Court of Canada. There are few explicit legal protections for trans people: unfortunately, freedom from discrimination based on either gender identity or gender expression is not enumerated as a prohibited grounds in the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* or the *Canadian Human Rights Act*, and trans people are also not listed in the *Criminal Code* as either an identifiable group or a group specifically protected from hate crimes.

Recently, there have been some trans cases from provincial and federal Human Rights Tribunals, however, and most provinces and territories read gender identity into the protected grounds of sex or gender. For example, the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal case *Forrester v. Peel (Regional Municipality) Police Services Board (No. 2)*, 2006 HRTO 13 at paras. 404-415 established that transsexuality falls under the ground of sex in the *Ontario Human Rights Code* (the *Code*). Under the *Code*, this includes transsexual, transgender, and intersex persons, as well as cross-dressers and other people whose gender identity



or gender expression is, or is seen to be, different from their birth-identified sex. Because gender identity is not explicitly mentioned as a prohibited ground for discrimination, however, cases involving these matters are dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Consequently, the extent and ways in which they are taken up is at the discretion of those involved in the individual tribunal.



Nixon v. Vancouver Rape Relief (VRR) was the first case involving a human rights complaint by a trans-identified person to go before a provincial court of appeal. Kimberly Nixon, a victim of violence by a male partner, had received support from the Battered Women's Support Services (BWSS). In 1995, she felt that she was ready to make a contribution back to the feminist anti-violence movement and she started volunteer training at VRR. At the second session, a trainer called her aside and asked Nixon about her gender identity. When Nixon revealed that she was a transwoman, the trainer asked her to leave the session. Nixon then filed a human rights complaint against VRR. Although the BC Court of Appeal held that the behaviour of the VRR in excluding transwomen constituted discrimination under the *Human Rights Code*, it nevertheless ruled that s.41 of the *Code* permits a women's service organization to discriminate against a sub-group of women, namely transsexual women in this case.

The BC Court of Appeal is the highest level of court in Canada ever to rule on a case of discrimination against a transperson and this decision is a set-back for trans equality rights. What it does do, however, is reinforce the need for the explicit inclusion of transpeople in human rights legislation in federal law and regionally across the country, as the Northwest Territories did in 2002.



On October 31, 2002, the Northwest Territories adopted Bill 1, adding gender identity to its *Human Rights Act*, becoming the first jurisdiction in Canada explicitly to prohibit discrimination against transpeople:



“5. (1) For the purposes of this Act, the prohibited grounds of discrimination are race, colour, ancestry, nationality, ethnic origin, place of origin, creed, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, family status, family affiliation, political belief, political association, social condition and a conviction for which a pardon has been granted.”

FYI

Egale has been working with a number of organizations in support of MP Bill Siksay’s private member’s bill (C-389). The bill seeks to amend the *Canadian Human Rights Act* and the *Criminal Code* to include “gender identity” and “gender expression” as prohibited grounds of discrimination and relevant factors in hate crimes sentencing. Bill C-389 passed report stage in the House of Commons on December 8, 2010 and it also passed third and final reading in the House of Commons on February 9, 2011. At the time of going to press, the bill was before the Senate for Royal Assent. Egale will continue to work to ensure that trans human rights are fully protected in legislation and law.



LGBTQ

Awards • Scholarships • Bursaries

Here are some financial resources for education worth looking in to. For a more comprehensive listing, and for information about Egale's GSA Bursary, check out *MyGSA.ca*!



ONTARIO



BILL 7 AWARD

The Bill 7 Award is named after the 1986 Ontario legislation which extended protection of the Human Rights Code to gays and lesbians. The Award is open to gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, queer, and 2-spirited students in financial need at any post-secondary institution in Ontario.

<http://www.bill7award.ca>
info@bill7award.ca



Queen's OPIRG Positive Space Award

The OPIRG Positive Space Award is presented to a full-time Queen's University undergraduate or graduate student who has demonstrated leadership in the Queen's and/or Kingston community in promoting the recognition and celebration of sexual and gender diversity.

<http://www.queensu.ca/positivespace/award.htm>
posspace@queensu.ca



NATIONAL

Lambda Foundation Scholarships <http://www.lambdafoundation.com>

The Lambda Foundation raises money to enable universities to grant awards designed to promote national recognition of individuals or groups who, through their achievement, build bridges of understanding of gays and lesbians with other equality seeking groups. Currently, Lambda Foundation scholarships are available at the following institutions:

-  **Carleton University**
Lambda Foundation for Excellence Award
http://gradstudies.carleton.ca/webapps/awards/lcms_award_view.php?award_id=494
awards@carleton.ca
-  **Université de Montréal**
Bourses Fondation Lambda pour l'excellence
fes-bourses@fes.umontreal.ca
-  **University of Guelph**
Lambda Foundation Scholarship in LGBT Studies
<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/pdffiles/gradawards.pdf>
awards@registrar.uoguelph.ca
-  **University of Manitoba**
Lambda Foundation for Excellence-Les McAfee Memorial Award
<http://webapps.cc.umanitoba.ca/gradawards/index.asp>
awards@umanitoba.ca
-  **University of New Brunswick**
Lambda Foundation Christian Landry Memorial Award for Graduate Studies
https://eservices.unb.ca/calendar/graduate_awards
gradschl@unb.ca



University of Ottawa

Lambda Foundation for Excellence Award

<http://www.lambdafoundation.com/docs/awardJW02010.pdf>

grdaward@uottawa.ca



University of Saskatchewan, College of Law

Poster Prize in Human Rights

<http://tinyurl.com/3ymybry>



University of Victoria

Candis Graham Writing Scholarship, Lambda Foundation Fund

<http://registrar.uvic.ca/safa/bursaries/terms-of-awards/writing.html>

finaid@uvic.ca



Mark S. Bonham Scholarship for Queer Studies in Film and Video

The Mark S. Bonham Scholarship is available to Canadian citizens or landed immigrants who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, transgendered or intersex and are pursuing undergraduate studies full-time in the fields of film and/or video that relate to the cultural expression of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender/transsexual and/or intersex individuals and/or educate the mainstream community about LGBTTI lives and/or issues.

<http://www.insideout.on.ca/festival/scholarship.htm>



U OF T

The LGBTQ Student Award

This student award is available to students entering first year programs at any of the University of Toronto campus locations. The Selection Committee shall look primarily for outstanding volunteer contributions to creating change on campus or in the community through LGBTQ community service and/or activism.

<http://www.sgdo.utoronto.ca/Students.htm#LGBTQ%20Student%20Award>

The Emperor I Sergio Apolloni Memorial Scholarship

The Emperor I Sergio Apolloni Memorial Scholarship is awarded annually to a student in an SDS undergraduate program at the University of Toronto on the basis of academic achievement.

The SDS Awards Committee will consider all students enrolled in its programs; no application is necessary.

<http://www.sgdo.utoronto.ca/Students.htm#The%20Emperor%20I%20Sergio%20Apolloni%20Memorial%20Scholarship>

<http://www.sgdo.utoronto.ca/Students.htm#The%20Emperor%20I%20Sergio%20Apolloni%20Memorial%20Scholarship>

The Patricia and Douglas Dadson Scholarship

To be considered for this award, students must be registered in a Sexual Diversity Studies (SDS) undergraduate program at the University of Toronto, and a Canadian citizen residing in Ontario. The SDS Award Committee makes its selection from among applicants on the basis of academic merit and the promise of excellence in leadership in the LGBTQ community.

<http://www.sgdo.utoronto.ca/Students.htm#The%20Dadson%20Scholarship>

<http://www.sgdo.utoronto.ca/Students.htm#The%20Dadson%20Scholarship>

THE RAINBOW TRIANGLE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION AWARD

In 1999 the RTAA and many community supporters established the RTAA award, to be given to a student in a Sexual Diversity Studies core course on the basis of academic merit and promise of excellence in leadership in the LGBTQ community. The SDS Awards Committee will consider all students in those courses; no application is necessary.

<http://www.sgdo.utoronto.ca/Students.htm#The%20Rainbow%20Triangle%20Alumni%20Association%20Award>

The Roberts Fund

Applications for bursaries may be made by lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students enrolled as undergraduates on any campus of the University of Toronto. The primary consideration for making awards will be financial need, though other factors will be considered, such as outstanding volunteer contributions (on or off campus) aimed at increasing acceptance of sexual diversity, and commitment to academic achievement.

<http://www.sgdo.utoronto.ca/Students.htm#The%20Roberts%20Fund>

The Sexual Diversity Studies Scholarship

To be considered for this award, students must be registered in an SDS undergraduate program, and a Canadian citizen residing in Ontario. Candidates must submit an application demonstrating financial need. The SDS Award Committee makes its selection from among applicants on the basis of academic merit and financial need.

<http://www.sgdo.utoronto.ca/Students.htm#The%20Sexual%20Diversity%20Studies%20Scholarship>

CITY OF TORONTO

Toronto Police Service Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) Youth Justice Bursary Award

The Toronto Police Service LGBT Youth Justice Bursary is an opportunity for the Toronto Police Service to recognize achievements made by LGBT youth in the City of Toronto, and support these youth in overcoming the very real challenges they often times face.

<http://tinyurl.com/4626lqf>



INTERNATIONAL

THE POINT FOUNDATION FOR LGBTQ STUDENTS

Point Foundation is an American organization which provides financial support, mentoring, leadership training and hope to meritorious students who are marginalized due to sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. Point Foundation scholarships are available to all students; however, they can only be used at educational facilities in the United States.

<http://www.thepointfoundation.org/index.html>

**This Equity and Inclusive
Education Resource Kit for
Ontario High Schools is part of
Egale's Safe Schools Campaign.
The Safe Schools Campaign is
made possible by the generous
support of people like you. To
make your contribution, please
visit www.egale.ca/donate.**





Equity and Inclusive Education Resource Kit for Ontario High Schools

GSA GUIDE



di  **ersity =**
possibility



GSA GUIDE

STRATEGIES FOR STARTING A GAY-STRAIGHT ALLIANCE (GSA) OR OTHER LGBTQ-INCLUSIVE STUDENT GROUP



Sometimes starting a GSA can be a challenge, but you're not alone! Many GSAs have been successfully running for years and you can learn a great deal from the experiences of their members. **Here are 10 basic steps to help you form your school's club:**

1. Assess Your School's Environment
2. Follow All School and School Board Policies and Guidelines
3. Find a School Staff Advisor/Sponsor
4. Speak to Your School Administration
5. Inform Guidance Counsellors, Social Workers, Librarians, and Other Resource People
6. Find a Meeting Place
7. Establish a Plan and Guidelines
8. Advertise Your Group
9. Provide Incentives
10. Activities



ASSESS YOUR SCHOOL'S ENVIRONMENT

Assess whether or not you feel there will be any obstacles in developing a GSA at your school. If you think there will be opposition, who will oppose?



Check out the “School Climate Questions” and “School Climate Outlines” adapted from the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network’s Jump-Start Guide (*Appendix A*). Where does your school fit in?

Prepare yourself by thinking about possible allies. Which teachers, students, school staff members, including librarians and guidance counsellors, and administrators do you think will be strong supporters of your group?



If you go to a Catholic school, take a look at “10 Reasons Catholic Schools Need to Be Involved in Anti-Homophobia Education” (*Appendix B*).

You are not required to have a reason for starting a GSA, but it never hurts to have some rationale for why you want one. Ask yourself the following questions: Are heterosexism, homophobia, transphobia, and/or biphobia problems at my school? Do lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, two-spirited, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ) students want a supportive and safe space? Are there students who want to know more about the LGBTQ community? Are there students with LGBTQ parents, other family members, or friends?



For responses to parental objections, see “Answering Adults’ Concerns” from *Around the Rainbow* (*Appendix C*).



To find suggestions for potential allies, see Egale’s “Becoming an Ally” (*Appendix D*). This might be useful to share with students or teachers in your school who do not identify as LGBTQ.

Use the statistics and information provided in this kit and on *MyGSA.ca*, Egale’s national LGBTQ safer schools and inclusive education website, to construct your argument.



According to Egale’s First National Climate Survey on Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia in Canadian Schools...

- Two-thirds of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, two-spirited, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ) students feel unsafe at school.
- Over two thirds (70.4%) of all students hear homophobic expressions such as “that’s so gay” every day in school.
- 51% of LGBTQ students have been verbally harassed about their sexual orientation and 21% have been physically harassed or assaulted about their sexual orientation.
- Almost three-quarters (74%) of trans youth have been verbally harassed about their gender expression and more than a third (37%) have been physically harassed or assaulted about their gender.
- 45% of youth with LGBTQ parents have been sexually harassed at school; over a quarter have been physically harassed or assaulted about the sexual orientation of their parents (27%) and their own perceived sexual orientation or gender identity (27%).
- Almost half (48%) of youth of colour, both LGBTQ and heterosexual, reported not knowing of any teachers or other school staff members who are supportive of LGBTQ students; only half (53%) would be very comfortable talking about LGBTQ matters even with a close friend.

FOR A MODEL OF A GSA PROPOSAL,
see what **Joey Wright** wrote to the **Greater Essex County District School Board** regarding the establishment of a **GSA at Walkerville Collegiate Institute in Windsor (Appendix E).**

According to Egale’s School Climate Survey Report “Youth Speak Up about Homophobia and Transphobia,”

- Three-quarters of LGBTQ students and 95% of trans students feel unsafe at school, compared to one-fifth of heterosexual students.
- Over a quarter of LGBTQ students and almost half of trans students had skipped school because they felt unsafe, compared to fewer than a tenth of non-LGBTQ students.
- Many LGBTQ students would not be comfortable talking to their teachers (four in ten), their principal (six in ten), or their coach (seven in ten) about LGBTQ matters.
- Only one in five LGBTQ students could talk to a parent very comfortably about LGBTQ matters.
- Over half of LGBTQ students did not feel accepted at school, and almost half felt they could not be themselves at school, compared to one-fifth of heterosexual students.



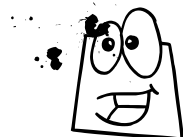
For more information, see <http://MyGSA.ca/YouthSpeakUp>.

The Ontario Ministry of Education’s Policy/ Program Memorandum No. 145, Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour, states the following:

- In order to promote a positive school climate, school boards must provide opportunities for all members of the school community to increase their knowledge and understanding of such issues as homophobia, gender-based violence, sexual harassment, inappropriate sexual behaviour, critical media literacy, and safe Internet use.

- Boards must also help school staff to give support to students who wish to participate in gay-straight alliances and in other student-led activities that promote understanding and development of healthy relationships. Schools must also engage their school councils and student councils to support these student-led activities.

More information about Ontario's Ministry of Education's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy can be found on the Ministry's website in the section for administrators under the heading "Greater Equity Means Greater Student Success":
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/equity.html>



1

Do your school and school board policies protect and affirm the rights of LGBTQ people? Do non-discrimination policies include sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression? Is proactive education regarding LGBTQ policies a priority?

Is anti-LGBTQ language discouraged or encouraged? Is this language and harassment rampant in your school? Do you hear words or phrases like “fag,” “dyke,” or “that’s so gay” often? Or is anti-LGBTQ language rare and is there opposition to it?

2

3

Is there a Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) or other inclusive student group pertaining to LGBTQ matters at your school? If so, was there opposition to this club and do students feel safe attending meetings? If not, does this seem like something that would be encouraged or discouraged at your school?

4

Are LGBTQ themes and people fully integrated into your school’s curriculum and across a variety of subject areas? Do you learn about LGBTQ matters in Health and Sexual Education classes? Are LGBTQ topics and people discussed in other classes, such as English, History, and Media Studies? Is inclusive language used in all subject areas, including Math and Science, to make your school’s classrooms safer spaces and more inclusive, respectful, and welcoming learning and working environments for all members of school communities?

5

Are there books and materials with LGBTQ content and written by LGBTQ authors in your school's library? Are there books and materials with LGBTQ content and written by LGBTQ authors in your school's classrooms?

Is there school staff support for LGBTQ students at your school? Do staff members show compassion and respect? Is there health and guidance support for LGBTQ students? Is there information about available resources?

6

7

Are athletic programmes welcoming spaces for LGBTQ or gender-open students? Do athletic programmes exhibit practices of gender equity? Are anti-LGBTQ attitudes an issue?

Is there organized and vocal opposition to LGBTQ inclusion at your school? For example, have you heard things such as homosexuality being characterized as "sickness and sin"? Is there adult compassion, respect, and advocacy for LGBTQ inclusion? Do adults exhibit a commitment to social justice?

8

9

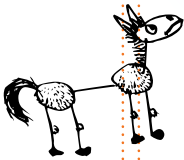
Are LGBTQ people visible or invisible at your school? Are there students or staff members with LGBTQ parents, other family members, or friends? Do they feel safe being open about their sexual orientation and gender identity or about their loved ones? Are LGBTQ students fully integrated into school life? Are LGBTQ students and other members of the school community treated equitably?

APPENDIX A cont'd: SCHOOL CLIMATE OUTLINES

Adapted from the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network's Jump-Start Guide

The **UNWELCOMING** School

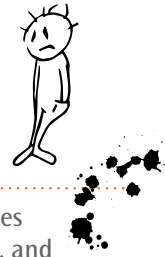
1. School and school board policies do not protect the rights of LGBTQ people.
2. Anti-LGBTQ language and harassment are rampant.
3. A GSA or other inclusive student group pertaining to LGBTQ matters is nonexistent and strongly discouraged.
4. Curricula are devoid of LGBTQ themes, people, and matters and inclusive language is not being used.
5. Books and materials with LGBTQ content or written by LGBTQ authors are nonexistent.
6. School staff support, including health and guidance, for LGBTQ students, families, and allies is nonexistent.
7. Athletic programmes are unwelcoming spaces for LGBTQ or gender-open students.
8. Organized and vocal opposition to any LGBTQ inclusion exists; homosexuality is characterized as "sickness and sin."
9. LGBTQ people are invisible and feel unsafe being open about their sexual orientation and/or gender identity; members of the school community with LGBTQ family members and friends also feel unsafe.



The **RESISTANT** School



1. School and school board non-discrimination policies may include sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.
2. Anti-LGBTQ language is common in hallways and locker rooms and on the school grounds, though not in classrooms.
3. There is resistance to the formation of a GSA or other inclusive student group pertaining to LGBTQ matters and, in the case that there is one, students feel unsafe attending.
4. Curricular inclusion of LGBTQ matters is limited to clinical references in Health or Sexual Education classes and inclusive language is rarely used.
5. Access to books and materials with LGBTQ content or written by LGBTQ authors is limited.
6. School staff show compassion, but not necessarily respect, and information and support regarding LGBTQ matters, including health and guidance, are not generally accessible.
7. Athletic programmes are moving toward gender equity, but anti-LGBTQ attitudes remain an issue.
8. Adults feel discomfort and may believe there is danger in exposure to LGBTQ matters or people.
9. A “don’t ask, don’t tell” atmosphere exists for LGBTQ people.



The **PASSIVE** School

1. School and school board non-discrimination policies are inclusive of sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression and students and school community members are made aware of this.
2. There are few instances of intentional harassment against LGBTQ students, students perceived as LGBTQ, or students with LGBTQ parents, other family members, or friends.
3. The GSA or other inclusive student group pertaining to LGBTQ matters is tolerated and attended by a core group of people.
4. LGBTQ themes, people, and matters are occasionally included in English, History, and Health classes and inclusive language is generally used.
5. A variety of books and materials with LGBTQ content and written by LGBTQ authors are available.
6. School staff members, including Health teachers and guidance counsellors, have had training in LGBTQ matters and offer information and support in a respectful manner.
7. Coaches interrupt anti-LGBTQ behaviour; LGBTQ athletes are relatively safe, though not very visible.
8. The adult community is open to LGBTQ inclusion, but may not be sure how to achieve it.
9. LGBTQ people are moderately visible; they may be seen as “different,” but a relatively safe and respectful atmosphere exists.

The **INCLUSIVE** School



1. School and school board policies protect and affirm LGBTQ people; proactive education about such policies exists.
2. Anti-LGBTQ language and behaviour are rare and dealt with swiftly and decisively; anti-bias education that embraces respectful, inclusive language is common in classrooms.
3. The GSA or other inclusive student group pertaining to LGBTQ matters is visible, regularly attended, and considered as valid as any other club.
4. LGBTQ themes, people, and matters are fully integrated into curricula across all subject areas and grade levels and inclusive language is always used and openly discussed.
5. Books and materials with LGBTQ content and written by LGBTQ authors are visible and available to all students and school staff members.
6. School staff members, including Health teachers and guidance counsellors, work with outside agencies to provide outreach, support, and education to LGBTQ people as well as members of the school community with LGBTQ parents, other family members, and friends.
7. Education around anti-LGBTQ bias is a part of athletic programming; LGBTQ athletes are treated as equals on and off the playing field.
8. The adult community has prioritized LGBTQ inclusion as part of a larger commitment to social justice.
9. LGBTQ people and those with LGBTQ friends and family members are visible and fully integrated into school life; there is a high degree of comfort and acceptance regarding LGBTQ people.

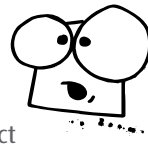
Adapted from the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network's Jump-Start Guide. This document, as well as other resources for GSAs, can be found at <http://www.glsen.org/cgi-bin/iowa/all/library/record/2226.html?state=tools&type=student>.

APPENDIX B: 10 REASONS CATHOLIC SCHOOLS NEED TO BE INVOLVED IN ANTI-HOMOPHOBIA EDUCATION

1. Anti-homophobia education works toward ensuring the physical safety of every student and that each student has a safe environment in which to learn. It is a legal and moral responsibility. Homophobia fosters, condones, and turns a blind eye to violence and hate.
2. Every faith contains a tradition of peace, love, tolerance, and compassion. One need only look to Liberation Theology as an example within Catholicism. The Catholic Church has an incredible history of involvement with social justice and protest movements, activism, martyrdom, and a sense of duty to marginalized peoples that is often overshadowed by its history of brutality, oppression, and intolerance.
3. The Golden Rule is absolute.
4. Homophobia hurts us all, regardless of sexual orientation. Often, anyone who is ever perceived to be LGBTQ is subjected to harassment and victimization. Homophobia enforces rigid gender roles and norms, denies individual expression, and perpetuates stereotypes, myths, and misinformation.
5. Roman Catholicism is not a fundamentalist religion. Interpretation is at the heart of Catholic tradition and belief and can be traced throughout the history of our Church. The appeal and primacy of conscience is a core part of the Catholic faith and has been strongly upheld by our current Pope Benedict.
6. Homophobic harassment can take the forms of verbal, physical, and sexual harassment.

7. Gays and lesbians (like all human beings) are protected by the human rights code, and sexual orientation is a prohibited ground of discrimination under Canadian law.
8. Anti-homophobia education is NOT sex education. It is not about discussing or describing explicitly sexual activities. Support groups that gather in schools are safe places that allow students to meet, discuss issues relevant to their lives and circumstances, and have an outlet where they likely might not otherwise, given the present-day climate.
9. Anti-homophobia education does not teach that someone's religious values are wrong.
10. There are many students and staff who are not heterosexual and who deserve the love, support, and spiritual comfort of their community and faith.

Adults within the larger heterosexual school community may have concerns and fears of their own. It is important to think through how to answer these questions in ways that are respectful of the diversity of opinions and values that adults share, that speak positively about glbtq families and that reflect our role in providing safe, nurturing space for all children.



MY CHILD WILL BE INFLUENCED TO BE GAY OR TRANS.

Your child will become who they are “hard-wired” to be. Recognizing GLBTTQ families and playing with children from glbtq families will not change your child’s sexuality or gender identity in any way.

MY CHILD WILL BE TAUGHT VALUES WITH WHICH I DISAGREE.

Your child will learn the values of care and respect of others, as well as safety and peace for everyone, all values that are compatible with your core values.

MY SON WILL BECOME A “SISSY.”/MY DAUGHTER WILL BECOME A “TOMBOY.”

Your children will become who they are intended to be, regardless of their exposure to friends whose parents may be GLBTTQ. Indeed, the exposure may help them to grow into adulthood as open-minded human beings with a broader, more inclusive view of the world.



THE “TRADITIONAL” FAMILY WILL BE DEVALUED.

The “traditional” family is only one of a variety of family structures. Families are created in loving relationships. Many families are made up of single parents who are alone through divorce, death of a spouse, or by choice; other families are supported by grandparents, aunts and uncles, or foster parents. Still others are blended families created by bringing children from other relationships. There are families with GLBTTQ parents. In essence, all kinds of families can be valued, supported and respected without threatening one particular form of family.

From Around the Rainbow's Toolkit for Educators and Service Providers. Around the Rainbow is a programme of Family Services à la family Ottawa. This document, as well as a Toolkit for GLBTTQ Parents/Guardians, can be found online at <http://www.aroundtherainbow.org>.



Photo credit: Damien D

Brian Burke

b. June 30, 1955

Brian Burke is the President and General Manager of the Toronto Maple Leafs and was publicly supportive when his late son, Brendan—student manager and video assistant of the RedHawks, the National Collegiate Athletic Association’s top-ranked hockey team—came out in 2009. He marched in the Toronto Pride Parade in 2010 with PFLAG in memory of his son.

Burke also presented a moving keynote speech on International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia, May 17, 2010, at the launch of Egale’s national LGBTQ safer schools and inclusive education website, MyGSA.ca.



Joy Kogawa

b. June 6, 1935

Joy Kogawa (born Joy Nakayama) is an award-winning author and poet and a recipient of both the Order of Canada and the Order of British Columbia as well as numerous honorary degrees for her extensive body of writing as well as for her community activism. Kogawa’s most famous work, *Obasan* (1981), explores the horrifying tragedy of Japanese internment in Canada during World War II. As an Honorary Advisory Board Member of the Egale Canada Human Rights Trust, Kogawa is one of the notable Canadians who supports Egale’s work towards helping to make Canadian schools safer and more inclusive, respectful, and welcoming learning and working environments for all members of school communities.



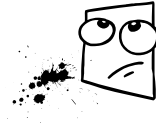
Photo credit: Franco Folini

Cyndi Lauper

b. June 22, 1953

Cyndi Lauper is an internationally renowned artist who has sold over 25 million records worldwide. As a self-described “unwavering advocate” for LGBTQ rights, she created the True Colours Tour which brought together Erasure, the B-52s, the Indigo Girls, Debbie Harry, and Joan Jett & the Blackhearts to raise awareness around issues facing queer communities. Lauper is also the Honorary Chairperson of the True Colours Residence: a permanent, supportive, and secure home for formerly street-involved LGBTQ youth in New York City. More recently, she formed the Give a Damn web campaign to draw attention to the persistence of inequalities based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.

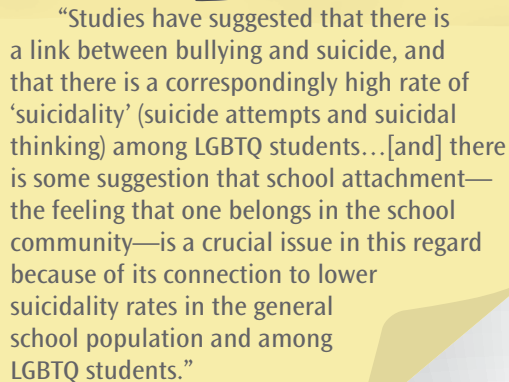
WHY SHOULD I BECOME AN ALLY?



There are many reasons to become an ally! One of them is to help create safer spaces for all people in your school or work environment. According to Egale's First National Climate Survey on Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia in Canadian Schools...

- Two-thirds of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, two-spirited, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ) students feel unsafe at school.
- Over two thirds (70.4%) of all students hear homophobic expressions such as "that's so gay" every day in school.
- 51% of LGBTQ students have been verbally harassed about their sexual orientation and 21% have been physically harassed or assaulted about their sexual orientation.
- Almost three-quarters (74%) of trans youth have been verbally harassed about their gender expression and more than a third (37%) have been physically harassed or assaulted about their gender.
- 45% of youth with LGBTQ parents have been sexually harassed at school; over a quarter have been physically harassed or assaulted about the sexual orientation of their parents (27%) and their own perceived sexual orientation or gender identity (27%).
- Almost half (48%) of youth of colour, both LGBTQ and heterosexual, reported not knowing of any teachers or other school staff members who are supportive of LGBTQ students; only half (53%) would be very comfortable talking about LGBTQ matters even with a close friend.

According to Egale’s School Climate Survey Report “Youth Speak Up about Homophobia and Transphobia,”



“Studies have suggested that there is a link between bullying and suicide, and that there is a correspondingly high rate of ‘suicidality’ (suicide attempts and suicidal thinking) among LGBTQ students...[and] there is some suggestion that school attachment—the feeling that one belongs in the school community—is a crucial issue in this regard because of its connection to lower suicidality rates in the general school population and among LGBTQ students.”

More than half of LGBTQ students, compared to one-fifth of heterosexual students, agree that they do not feel accepted at school.

For more information, see <http://MyGSA.ca/YouthSpeakUp>.



HOW DO I BECOME AN ALLY?

➔ Examine Your Own Biases

- Ask yourself questions: Do I feel uncomfortable around people who are LGBTQ? Is there more I need to learn about heterosexism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, and intersectionality? How can I get the information, help, support, advice, guidance, etc. that I need to overcome any biases I might have?

Do I tend to assume that people I encounter are *not* LGBTQ?



➔ Educate Yourself!

- Read: there is no one all-encompassing LGBTQ manual that explains everything and can apply to all situations and perspectives, but there is a fair amount out there in terms of both fiction and non-fiction, depending on what you like and what interests you.



Good places to start are <http://MyGSA.ca/BookList> and Egale's Equity and Inclusive Education Resource Kits, which can be downloaded from the MyGSA website.

- Ask questions: don't be afraid to admit that you don't know or understand something, but please remember to be considerate. Also remember that one person's opinion or perspective cannot stand in for everyone else's in the LGBTQ community. (Do you think the same way as all other heterosexual people?)

➔ Pay Attention to Discrimination and Harassment and Speak Up!

If you hear someone use derogatory language about sexual orientation or gender identity or gender expression, engage the person in conversation about discrimination and harassment: ask why the person chose to use those words and if the person even knows what the words mean and that they are abusive.

Use gender-neutral and inclusive language, such as folks, people, everybody, crushes, couples, partner, spouse, parents and guardians, chairperson/chair, firefighter, server, and actor, which do not contain assumptions about sexuality or gender.



Don't laugh at offensive "jokes" about sexual orientation or gender identity or gender expression.





WHETHER OR NOT YOU KNOW IT—and they might not even know it yet!—there are very likely **LGBTQ** individuals, or people with **LGBTQ** parents or other family members, in your school or workplace who will appreciate your implicit support.

➔ Accept and Support Actively

Participate in your school's GSA or start one if your school doesn't have one! <http://MyGSA.ca/GSAGuide>



Volunteer at an LGBTQ human rights organization!
<http://MyGSA.ca/Support>

Take part in Ally Week or create one if your school doesn't have one!
<http://MyGSA.ca/Campaigns>

Find out if your school, school board, and/or workplace policies explicitly mention sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression—if not, work towards changing them! <http://MyGSA.ca/SchoolBoardPolicies>

Be sure *MyGSA.ca* isn't blocked at your school!



Some schools use filtering software to block access to websites that include keywords pertaining to certain matters, such as sex, and rely on the companies that develop the software to maintain the list of unacceptable sites. Although this might be done in the interests of blocking pornographic content, for example, an unfortunate consequence of such protocols is that many useful websites regarding important matters such as health and sexual orientation are also blocked. Be sure that *MyGSA.ca* isn't blocked at your school. If it is, ask your principal to change the settings. If *MyGSA.ca* continues to be blocked at your school, contact Egale at 1.888.204.7777 (toll-free) or mygsa@egale.ca and let us know.

➔ Come Out as an Ally!

Mention your friends and family members who are LGBTQ if you have any...but only if they are already out!

Bring up LGBTQ matters, events, and news items in a positive way in class and in conversations.

Check out the News on *MyGSA.ca*!



If coming out as an ally makes you at all uncomfortable, remember that LGBTQ individuals who are open about their sexual orientation/gender identity must come out again whenever they meet new people and imagine how that feels: knowing that one is in a supportive, inclusive environment or at least in the company of an ally really makes a difference!

Do you have more tips about becoming or being an ally? Share them on *MyGSA.ca* or send them to mygsa@egale.ca!

Submitted by: Joey Wright
Submitted to: Greater Essex County District School Board



Mission Statement

A Gay-Straight Alliance is a youth leadership organization that is devoted to education, human rights, and the human dignity of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and questioning youth, the development of positive relationships, and to raise awareness. The goal of this group is to:

1. Positively impact academic performance, school/social/and family relationships, comfort level with sexual orientation, sense of physical safety, student and teacher attitudes, perceived ability to contribute to society, and an enhanced sense of belonging to the school community;
2. Form alliances and positive relationships between gay and straight students to fight homophobia, isolation, marginalization, violence, and exclusion in the community;
3. Promote acceptance, respect, and tolerance of all individuals regardless of racial background, socio-economic status, gender, religion, or sexual orientation;
4. Raise awareness and promote education about homophobia and other forms of oppression; and
5. Offer support and resources for students in need.





What is a Gay-Straight Alliance?

A GSA is a student-run group that provides a safe place for any and all students to meet and learn about all different orientations, to support each other while working together to end homophobia, and to raise awareness and promote equality for all human beings. In addition to being a group dedicated to support, it also strives to educate the surrounding areas and the community on different gender and equality issues.

Why do all schools need to establish GSAs if requested?

I believe that it is vital to establish a GSA for numerous reasons, but most importantly, for education purposes. Additional justifications for the establishment of a GSA are to empower and educate the school community, advocate for just and equal policies that protect youth from harassment and violence, and organize in coalition with other school-based clubs and groups across identity lines to address broader issues of oppression. As young people, we possess the power to lead the fight against homophobia, transform our environment into one of peace and safety, and change the lives of countless individuals. Research indicates that homophobia interferes with the health development of all young people, particularly those who are dealing with issues of sexual orientation. One of the many places gay and lesbian youth feel the effects of homophobia is within their schools.

APPENDIX E cont'd

By Joey Wright



Youth in Canada desperately require more support and resources in their educational institutions in order to make them safe, secure, and inclusive learning environments.

As the results of the First National Survey on Homophobia and Transphobia in Canadian Schools, conducted by Egale Canada, demonstrate, LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, questioning) youth in Canada desperately require more support and resources in their educational institutions in order to make them safe, secure, and inclusive learning environments. There is a clear indication that this is the case: according to almost 1700 participants from every province and territory in the country, of the self-identified LGBTQ students, 60% have been verbally harassed, and over a quarter have been physically harassed, because of their sexual orientation and three-quarters feel unsafe at school. These upsetting results can no longer be ignored and the establishment of a GSA could reverse these alarming statistics.

How will this be an educational group?

Throughout the year we will be collecting resources and researching methods on how to help educate not only the students but also the teachers here at Walkerville. A lot of students are unaware of how gay-bashing affects the lives of the people around them. Terms like “faggot” and “dyke” are used daily in the halls of Walkerville. When this type of discriminatory behaviour is ignored the school consciously or unconsciously encourages this harassment. They need to be informed of ways to prevent this type of radical bullying against gay, lesbian, questioning, bisexual, transgendered, or straight students.

First-hand account

"When I came out to my dad, I was living with him at the time. I told him on a warm summer night, with my cousin who I had already told sitting next to me. At first he seemed confused, then after a moment his confusion turned to anger and he couldn't determine how this happened. He threw his drink and got in his truck and sat there. My cousin gave me a hug and said that he was proud and then went to talk to my dad. They argued for a minute then my dad sped out of the driveway. My cousin walked up to me and I whispered, 'what did he say?' My cousin thought for a moment before telling me, 'He said that he makes fun of people like you.' We walked inside and I packed my bag, knowing full well that I wouldn't be welcome but not knowing for how long, so I packed as much as I could. I ended up staying at various places for three days before having to go back home to get some more clothes. When I got there, my dad refused to look or even speak to me. It took him another week before he finally asked if he could talk to me, and when he did he still wasn't very sensitive about the subject. I know that there are countless more students in Canada who have either dealt with that scenario or will deal with that scenario. The establishment of a GSA here at Walkerville will give hope to those students here who will have to face discrimination not just at school, work or when they are out on the street, but in the most important place of all, at home."

- Student Attending Walkerville



FOLLOW ALL SCHOOL AND SCHOOL BOARD POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

Establish a GSA in the same way that any other group or club in your school would be formed. Follow the guidelines or board policies of your school. Students may need an administrator's or a teacher's permission. Enlisting the help of other students may be beneficial.

The Ontario Ministry of Education's Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119 is called Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools and it was issued in June, 2009. It states, "By the beginning of the 2010-11 school year (September 2010), boards will have in place an equity and inclusive education policy... and an implementation plan." To find out more, see <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/119.html>.

In both the development and implementation of the equity and inclusive education policies, school boards are mandated to be comprehensive, covering all of the prohibited grounds of discrimination set out in the *Ontario Human Rights Code* (the *Code*). The *Code* prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation. According to the Ontario Human Rights Commission, "Gender identity is not an enumerated ground in the Code. However, the existing legal structure in the Code can support a progressive understanding of the ground of 'sex' to include 'gender identity' and protect individuals who are subject to discrimination or harassment because of gender identity. This approach toward the application of the Code has been accepted for some time." To find out more about LGBTQ



human rights under the *Code*, download the Ontario Human Rights Commission’s Policy on Discrimination and Harassment Because of Gender Identity and its Policy on Discrimination and Harassment Because of Sexual Orientation. To find these documents, go to <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en> and click on “Gender Identity” or “Sexual Orientation” under “Issues.”

Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119 also states, “It is expected that boards will post their equity and inclusive education policy on their website.”

Policy on
Discrimination and
Harassment Because
of Gender Identity



Policy on
Discrimination and
Harassment Because
of Sexual
Orientation



<http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en>

IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO FIND YOUR SCHOOL BOARD’S equity and inclusive education policy on its website, ask your principal for a copy of it.



FIND A SCHOOL STAFF ADVISOR / SPONSOR

Most school clubs require one or two faculty advisors or school staff sponsors. Even if this is not the case at your school, it will likely be beneficial to have one. Find a teacher or staff member that you feel will be supportive and a good ally for your group. Try to include both LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ advisors in your group if at all possible.



SPEAK TO YOUR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Encourage your school administration to become an ally, even if it is not required that you involve them in the establishment of your group. They can help validate your GSA as an important part of the school and help with things like planning special events or bringing in speakers

for school assemblies. Administrators can be important liaisons between students, teachers, parents, the outside community, and board or district officials. It can also be beneficial to provide administrators with information about GSAs or details about your group.



IF YOU THINK THAT YOUR SCHOOL'S ADMINISTRATION might not be supportive, review the statistics and policy information in "Assess your School's Environment" (Section 1) beforehand.



5 INFORM GUIDANCE COUNSELLORS, SOCIAL WORKERS, LIBRARIANS, AND OTHER RESOURCE PEOPLE

School staff may know students who would be interested in attending meetings and can help with getting more group participants. Having staff involved can also be beneficial because they may have professional knowledge and valuable resources for your group and may help facilitate discussions and meetings.



6 FIND A MEETING PLACE

Have your meetings in a safe and comfortable location in your school that is somewhat private. Some students may feel a little reluctant or nervous about attending a GSA meeting because they may fear being harassed or having assumptions made about their sexuality or gender identity. Remember that safety and confidentiality should always be primary concerns.



ESTABLISH A PLAN AND GUIDELINES

Select a meeting time that that will be most convenient for the participants. Decide whether or not your GSA should hold meetings on a weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly basis. It is always good to create group rules/norms with all members of the GSA, but it can also help to think of or draft some preliminary guidelines. For example:

See “How to Run a GSA Meeting—Meeting Formats and Ideas” (Appendix F).



- What tools or supplies will be needed (e.g., paper, pens, films, etc.)?
- What ground rules will help reaffirm responsible and respectful behaviours?
- Will the meeting be held in a formal or casual way (i.e., seating, speaking in turn, etc.)?

Establish your meeting space as a safe space, create a mission statement, and brainstorm possible activities and topics of discussion for future meetings.



See the “Sample Safe Space Protocol” from Supporting Our Youth (SOY) (Appendix G) and “Icebreakers” from the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network’s Jump-Start Guide (Appendix H) as well as the “Activities” (Section 10) for help and suggestions!



There are numerous ways to facilitate a meeting. Your GSA meetings can be formal (e.g., similar to a classroom structure) or informal (e.g., sitting in a circle). They can be very structured and planned or they can be spontaneous and open to change, and so forth. It is a good idea to get input from all GSA members regarding how meetings will be structured and what the guidelines or group rules will be. A survey/questionnaire accompanied by an open discussion during the first meeting is a good way of figuring out how your GSA meetings will operate.

Consider the following examples for some help:



If you want a *formal structure*...

- people raise their hands when they want to speak (one person at a time, with no interruptions);
- everyone introduces themselves (e.g., their names and 1 or 2 things about themselves);
- a student acts as a leader/facilitator who does most of the speaking and guides the conversation and questions;
- use a structured and timed schedule (e.g., meetings are 1 hour long, with 15 minutes of introductions and an outline of the agenda, another 15 minutes of discussion on a particular topic, another 15 minutes for games, and so on);
- sign in to monitor participation;
- assign different tasks to various members for the next meeting (e.g., one person will bring in a favourite LGBTQ film and another person will bring snacks); and
- take meeting minutes and document what was discussed/done.

Meeting Minutes

Meeting minutes are a written record of a meeting. Your GSA can appoint a person to record the meeting minutes. This can be one person who does the minutes for all the meetings or you can change the person from meeting to meeting. Your GSA can choose to audio-record the meeting, in which case all participants would have to agree to this, or someone can write or type the meeting minutes. Remember that minutes are just the highlights or a summary and don't need to be lengthy.

Your meeting minutes might include the following:

- The date, time, and location of the meeting
- A list of those present
- The meeting agenda (what your GSA plans to do this meeting)
- A list of the issues your GSA wants to resolve (e.g., a heated debate that occurred at the last meeting; how to battle homophobia/transphobia/biphobia/heterosexism in your school; and so on)
- Any events/discussions that were important to the GSA's members
- Any group decisions that were made (e.g., group rules, future activities, and so on)
- The end time of the meeting



Your GSA can choose to audio-record the meeting, in which case all participants would have to agree to this.

Sample Meeting Minutes

GSA Meeting Minutes for Egale High School
(Feb. 4, 2011)
(3:00 p.m., school library)

MEETING MEMBERS:

Present: Rita Bhattacharia, John White Bear, Douglas Smith, Elizabeth Drucker, Jen Kyumoto, Marc Porter, Jasmine Chan, Geneva Peschka, and Sayid Alizadeh

OTHERS PRESENT:

Librarian: Sheila Jackson

Guidance Counsellor: Mr. Touhy

MEETING AGENDA:

- Small start-up discussion (recent events, how is everyone, etc.)
- Film: *Better than Chocolate*
- Discussion: transphobia, trans-specific matters, gender-neutral washrooms

PROCEEDINGS/EVENTS:

- John and Elizabeth mentioned the idea of having a school bake sale to raise money for more LGBTQ literature for the school library—group thought it was a good idea
- Rita expressed her concern about the GSA's posters being defaced—each member will brainstorm ideas for next meeting to have a discussion about it
- Watched film
- Debriefing after movie—all group members shared that they liked the film; Jen mentioned she wants to learn more about trans people and their various experiences; Sayid recommended checking out YouTube for personal videos made by transmen and transwomen and their experiences
- Group discussed plans for next meeting: Douglas wants to talk about the possibility of a gender-neutral washroom in the school; Sheila said she could compile a list of LGBTQ books for the group members; the group decided to have a poster party at the next meeting to have more posters to put around the school
- Meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.
- Minutes submitted by Bhata Bhattacharia

➔ If you want an *informal structure*...

people sit in a circle or in a way that they all feel as though there is no hierarchy in the meeting;

people speak in turn (e.g., clockwise around the circle) or use a talking stick (anything that is passed around to indicate who has the floor—only someone holding the object should be speaking) or there is open dialogue (and everyone is respectful of other people's right to speak);

try some fun icebreakers as a way to get people to introduce themselves and get to know one another (for examples, see Appendix H);

you don't need to have a group facilitator; the meeting events and activities can be agreed upon by everyone or the majority (e.g., there can be various things planned and the order in which they occur can be decided on by the group; participants may choose to have open dialogue surrounding an issue for an entire meeting or to break up the meeting into various activities and tasks they would like to do); and

everyone can come up with one group rule/norm and see if all members agree.

Other things to consider:

It is important to get input from group members not just during the first meeting, but also throughout all of the meetings. You could use a box for suggestions or hold weekly or monthly "how are we doing" discussions.

It is important to appeal to all group members. This can be difficult because everyone has different interests and likes different activities. It is best not to have a narrow focus, e.g., only talking about gay and lesbian matters and concerns and not talking about trans, questioning, bisexual, or two-spirited communities.

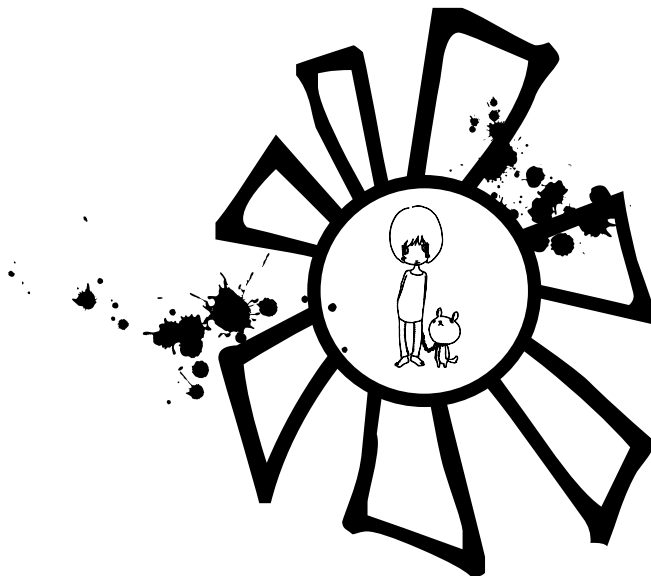
Remember that it may be hard for people to open up and talk about certain subjects immediately. It may help to avoid controversial and sensitive issues/topics at first. Wait until group members get to know one another and express a sense of comfort in the group.

It can really help to review or debrief at the end of meetings. Talking about what has been discussed can be especially important if conflicts arise, sensitive issues are touched upon, or if members have questions about certain things.

APPENDIX G: SAMPLE SAFE SPACE PROTOCOL

What do we mean by a safe space? A safe space is free of any type of discrimination for queer, trans, and questioning youth. Everyone has the right to feel safe and included. A safe space is an environment in which everyone feels comfortable expressing themselves and participating fully, without fear of attack, ridicule, or denial of experience. For the comfort of other group members, it is expected that public displays of affection be brief and respectful. This means no making out in group. Any adults involved are strictly prohibited from engaging in romantic or sexual relationships with youth.


– *From Supporting Our Youth (SOY)*



From the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network's Jump-Start Guide

Common Ground

Source: Kerry Ashworth



Students and faculty advisors stand in a circle. One person begins by saying “I’ve got a younger sister” or some other statement that is true for them. Everyone for whom this is also true steps into the center of the circle. Everyone who doesn’t have a younger sister stays on the outside. You can always choose not to step into the circle. The game often brings up personal and important issues that students may not want to discuss in a more formal setting. This also allows everyone to recognize their differences and similarities.

Gender Stereotypes

Trace a male and a female body type on butcher paper, then have a free-for-all where everyone writes as many gender stereotypes as they can think of on the bodies where they would apply (for example, “boys are good at math” would be placed on the head of the male body). From here, you can talk about how gender stereotypes and traits relate to perceptions about gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people, as well as how these stereotypes limit our possibilities, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. These exercises can also be done using stereotypes of LGBT people, helping us recognize that everyone has different traits that don’t define our sexual orientation or gender.

APPENDIX H cont'd

From the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network's Jump-Start Guide

Concentric Circles, Inner/Outer Circles

Source: Jason Fleetwood-Boldt

This exercise works well to open dialogue. It requires an even number of people, with a minimum of six or eight. It works best with 20 or more. Have people count off by twos (1, 2, 1, 2...). Tell the ones to make an inner circle and the twos to form the outer circle. The inner circle should face outward and the outer circle should face inward, so that each person has a partner in that circle. The facilitator instructs that they will ask a question and the outer circle is to talk for one minute as the inner circle listens. If it is a group whose members don't know one another, you can have people introduce themselves to their partners before they begin answering the question asked. After the minute is up, the inner circle answers the same question. Then the outer circle moves clockwise two people over, so everyone has a new partner. A new question is asked of the outer, then inner, circles. When finished, participants should discuss their conversations as a large group.

Sample Questions:

- Growing up, what were all of the names (positive, negative and neutral) that you heard related to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people?
- Growing up, what were some of the stereotypes you heard about lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people? What were some of the things you heard about these groups that you have found to be inaccurate?





ADVERTISE YOUR GROUP

Work with your GSA's advisor/ sponsor and other members to discuss the best ways to advertise your group. Posters are an effective means of getting more participation as they can be displayed around the school for all students to see. They are also an important part of helping students feel safer at school as they are a visible sign of acceptance. Having a poster party can be a fun way to design and make the flyers. You can also consider making a Facebook group or a webpage if you really want to get creative! You want to continuously monitor participation and see what tactics work in terms of finding and keeping members.

Remember, if posters get torn down or defaced,

do not get discouraged! The posters are likely to stimulate school-wide discussion and may lead staff and students to express their personal feelings, opinions, and questions surrounding the GSA. Not all comments will be queer-positive, but breaking the silence is a vital step in addressing and challenging the many stereotypes and myths about LGBTQ individuals. Keep putting posters up if they are destroyed. It is a good idea to put them in busy areas as well as to encourage supportive staff members to place them on their doors and in staff areas. You might want to consider putting your posters behind glass in order to discourage people from destroying them.

Once your group makes posters, take a picture of them and submit it to appear at the top of Egale's national LGBTQ safer schools and inclusive education website, [MyGSA.ca!](http://MyGSA.ca)



Things to consider when advertising:

- Make sure your posters set a positive tone for your group.
- Reinforce the fact that all students are welcome, including allies and all students who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, two-spirited, queer, and questioning and who come from any ethnic, cultural, or religious background.
- Include meeting times, locations, and dates.
- Think about including a short description about what goes on at your meetings and be sure to highlight that supportive allies are welcome to attend.
- Emphasize that student confidentiality and safety are guaranteed.
- If your GSA creates a Facebook group, advertise it.
- Use LGBTQ-affirming symbols on your posters, such as the rainbow flag or pink and black inverted triangles.

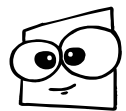


See the section on Symbols in this kit or on MyGSA.ca for more ideas!

Additional tips for finding new members:

- Personally asking people to come to your meetings can really help, especially if they don't know what your club is about and want to know more before going. Try starting a conversation with someone who you think might be interested in attending a meeting.
- Make sure to make use of any of your school's print publications, such as newspapers, magazines, yearbooks, and newsletters.

- Having sign-in sheets can help you stay in contact with members (e.g., ask people to put down their emails or to join your Facebook group). Sign-in sheets are also great ways to keep track of how many people are attending your meetings.
- Working with other school clubs to plan shared events and activities is a great way to network. Think about some other groups at school that deal with related matters. Try asking your advisor if she or he knows of any other clubs that might be interested in collaborating.
- Setting up a table or bulletin board for your group can be a great way to give out information about your club and its events. Consider tabling during school events or finding another time to reach out to the student body.
- Encourage members and visitors to invite their friends. One idea is to schedule a “Bring a Friend Day” when every member brings a friend to the meeting!
- Consider holding special events for members of the GSA. Inviting a guest speaker or watching topical movies can be great conversation starters and are often effective in engaging group members. Think about what topics or questions you might want to explore at these events and then search for speakers and films that could address these areas.



Check out the “Activities” (Section 10) for movie suggestions!



PROVIDE INCENTIVES (E.G., FOOD!)

Food can be a great icebreaker. It can give nervous attendees something to look forward to and for some it can be an excuse to attend. You can foster a sense of community by encouraging group members to bring in snacks to share with everyone or by planning events, activities, or campaigns around food, such as potlucks and bake sales.



potlucks

bake
sales





ACTIVITIES

Remember to take pictures of your club's activities to post them on MyGSA.ca!



HAVE AN OPEN MIC NIGHT

Do you have an untapped talent? Play an instrument? Ever wanted to try stand-up comedy? Want to read your poetry or somebody else's? Can you juggle? Do acrobatics or magic tricks? Sing? Can't sing? (Karaoke is always a good time!)

Find a stage at your school, community centre, or a local theatre organization. Ask someone to host your event and remember to prepare a sign-up sheet ahead of time. Have fun!



CREATE A MISSION STATEMENT

Does your group have a vision for itself, the school community, the world? What is it?

Your GSA's mission statement might focus on your club's goals and values as well as principles related to human rights, diversity, and social justice. It can also be beneficial to enlist the help of all the members since the statement should reflect everyone's perspectives. Mission statements tend to be 2 to 3 sentences and should say who you are, what you do, what you stand for, and why you do it.

Examples of Mission Statements

SATEC @ W.A. Porter C.I. (Scarborough, ON):

Students against Sexual Stereotyping, Yeah! (SASSY) deals with issues surrounding sexual orientation and gender. The club works to tackle homophobia, violence against women, and gender stereotypes in the school community and beyond while providing a safe space for all students.

Thornhill Secondary School (Richmond Hill, ON):

The Gay Straight Alliance group exists to help foster understanding and support for lesbian, gay, transgender, and bisexual youth in our school. We hold regular meetings through the school year and plan a number of special activities to help raise awareness of issues faced by LGBT youth in our community. Our GSA is a safe space for students to meet, socialize, and support one another no matter what their sexual identity. Come join us—all are welcome.



York Memorial Collegiate Institute (Toronto, ON):

What We Represent:

- *Breaking down barriers promoting respect, positive awareness, equality, and fair treatment for people of all sexual orientations*
- *Diversity*

The aim of the club is for young people to support each other in understanding their sexuality, offer friendship and a place where they can gather information or access relevant material to other supporting networks.

As well as providing support and a chance to make friends, we also plan social events and discuss sexual health issues. Remember, there is no need to feel isolated.



HAVE A MOVIE NIGHT

Watch LGBTQ movies and discuss them afterwards. E.g.,

A Jihad for Love	PG (Ontario & BC)/14A (Canada)
Apples and Oranges	NFB (National Film Board)
Beautiful Thing	AA (Ontario)
Billy Elliot	F (Ontario)
Breakfast with Scot	PG (Ontario)
But I'm a Cheerleader	AA (Ontario)
C.R.A.Z.Y.	14A (Ontario)
Chasing Amy	AA (Ontario)
Cure for Love	NFB
D.E.B.S.	PG-13 (USA)
From Criminality to Equality	Canadian Documentary
Georgie Girl	Documentary
Get Real	AA (Ontario)
Girl Inside	Canadian Documentary
Gray Matters	PG (Ontario)
Hedwig and the Angry Inch	AA (Ontario)
I Can't Think Straight	14A (Ontario)
If These Walls Could Talk 2	AA (Ontario)
Il était une fois dans l'est (Once Upon a Time in the East)	13+ (Quebec)
Imagine Me and You	PG (Ontario)
In Other Words	NFB
The Incredibly True Adventure of 2 Girls in Love	14A (Ontario)
It's Elementary	Documentary
J'ai tué ma mère (I Killed My Mother)	PG (Ontario)
Just Call Me Kade	Documentary
Kissing Jessica Stein	AA (Ontario)

Les amours imaginaires (Heartbeats)	PG (Ontario)
Living with Pride: The Ruth Ellis Story	Documentary
Ma vie en rose (My Life in Pink)	AA (Ontario)
Mambo Italiano	14A (Ontario)
Milk	14A (Ontario)
Naissance des pieuvres (Water Lilies)	14A (Canada)
Nina's Heavenly Delights	14A (Ontario)
One of Them	NFB
Open Secrets (Secrets de polichinelle)	NFB
Quand l'amour est gai (When Love is Gay)	NFB
Saving Face	PG (Ontario)
School's Out	NFB
Secrets de polichinelle (Open Secrets)	NFB
Serving in Silence: The Margarethe Cammermeyer Story	AA (Ontario)
Shaking the Tree	AA (Ontario)
Show Me Love	AA (Ontario)
Sticks and Stones	NFB
Taking Charge	NFB
Talk to Me	14A (Ontario)
That's a Family!	Documentary
TransAmerica	14A (Ontario)
Trevor	PG (Ontario)
When Love is Gay (Quand l'amour est gai)	NFB

Ontario classifications for movies can be found on the Ontario Film Board's website: <http://www.ofrb.gov.on.ca>.

Do you want to recommend other great LGBTQ movies to youth and educators throughout Canada? Send them to mygsa@egale.ca!





FIND/CHANGE SCHOOL AND SCHOOL BOARD POLICIES

What is your school's policy on LGBTQ matters? Your school board's policy? Are they inclusive and do they explicitly address sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression?

If not, or if they are not satisfactory, as a group and using the information, policies, and legislative information provided in this kit and on *MyGSA.ca*, work towards changing them!

In June 2009, Ontario's Ministry of Education issued Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119, which is called *Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools*. It states, "By the beginning of the 2010-11 school year (September 2010), boards will have in place an equity and inclusive education policy...and an implementation plan." To find out more, see <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/119.html>.

In both the development and implementation of the equity and inclusive education policies, school boards are mandated to be comprehensive, covering all of the prohibited grounds of discrimination set out in the *Ontario Human Rights Code* (the *Code*). The *Code* prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation. According to the Ontario Human Rights Commission, "Gender identity is not an enumerated ground in the *Code*. However, the existing legal structure in the *Code* can support a progressive understanding of the ground of 'sex' to include 'gender identity' and protect individuals who are subject to discrimination or harassment because of gender identity. This approach toward the application of the *Code* has been accepted for some time." To find out more about LGBTQ human rights under the *Code*, download the Ontario Human Rights Commission's Policy on Discrimination and Harassment Because of Gender Identity and its Policy on Discrimination and Harassment Because of Sexual Orientation.



To find these documents, go to <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en> and click on “Gender Identity” or “Sexual Orientation” under “Issues.”

Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119 also states, “It is expected that boards will post their equity and inclusive education policy on their website.”

Check your school board’s website for its equity and inclusive education policy. If the policy is comprehensive and inclusive regarding sexual orientation and gender identity, submit it to Egale’s national LGBTQ safer schools and inclusive education website, MyGSA.ca, as an example of a good school board policy.



IF YOUR SCHOOL BOARD POLICY DOES NOT ADDRESS LGBTQ MATTERS, or is not comprehensive enough, approach your GSA’s school staff advisor/ sponsor, another staff member at your school, or your principal to ask for support in changing it.

IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO FIND YOUR SCHOOL BOARD’S equity and inclusive education policy on its website, ask your principal for a copy of it. If your principal doesn’t have a copy, phone your school board to find out what its policy is regarding LGBTQ matters.



See the sample school board policies included here (*Appendix I*) for comparison.

WITH THE HELP OF A TEACHER AND THE INFORMATION INCLUDED HERE, such as the statistics from Egale Canada's First National School Climate Survey Reports (<http://MyGSA.ca/YouthSpeakUp>), the information from the Ministry of Education, and the sample school board policies, approach your principal and ask her or him to go to the school board and request that the policy be changed to be inclusive of LGBTQ matters.

FOLLOW UP WITH YOUR PRINCIPAL

and if the school board does not change its policy, contact Egale Canada at mygsa@egale.ca or 1.888.204.7777 (toll-free) for assistance.



The Toronto District School Board's Gender-Based Violence Policy

Policy P071

Adopted: April 14, 2010

1.0 OBJECTIVE

To establish the Board's commitment to eliminating gender-based violence in its school

2.0 DEFINITIONS

Gender-based violence is any aggressive action that threatens safety, causes physical, social or emotional harm and denigrates a person because of his or her gender identity, perceived gender, sexual identity, biological sex or sexual behaviour.

Gender-based violence includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Sexual assault (perpetrator aged 12 years and over)
- Inappropriate, problematic and intrusive sexual behaviour (perpetrator under age 12 years)
- Sexual exploitation (perpetrator an adult employee/victim a student)
- Sexual misconduct
- Sexual harassment
- Sexist discrimination
- Domestic violence
- Emotional abuse
- Psychological abuse
- Forced prostitution
- Homophobia



- Transphobia
- Harmful gender-based social practices, e.g. female genital mutilation

Gender-based violence operates on a societal imbalance of power and control based on social constructions of sexual identity, sexual orientation, gender, perceived gender and sexual behaviour. This imbalance may manifest in multiple forms as aggressive and discriminatory behaviours and expressions of hatred. (See Appendix 1 for information on gender-based violence.)

3.0 RESPONSIBILITY

Executive Superintendent, School Services, East

4.0 POLICY

4.1. Reporting Incidents of Gender-based Violence

- (a) All employees of the Board shall report any concerns about or incidents of gender-based violence in the school community to the school principal.
- (b) All allegations of sexual assault perpetrated by persons 12 years of age and older and/or sexual misconduct by children under 12 years of age shall be reported to the appropriate Board employee.
- (c) Any act or concern of gender-based violence that takes place off school property, including use of electronic media, and has a negative impact on a school's environment shall be reported and responded to.

APPENDIX I: The Toronto District School Board's Gender-Based Violence Policy cont'd

4.2. Notification and Investigation

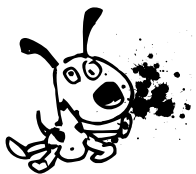
- (a) In situations where a student has been physically or emotionally harmed, the appropriate supervisory and School Services staff shall be notified.
- (b) Employee Services shall be notified of any incidents of gender-based violence involving Board staff. Where staff have a complaint against students or other staff, the Human Rights office shall be notified.
- (c) Principals shall be the first point of contact for investigating incidents.

4.3. Compliance and Accountability

As with all Board policies, all staff are expected to be compliant with this policy and its related procedures. Failure to comply may lead to disciplinary action.

4.4. Prevention Strategy: Staff Development

- (a) Gender-based violence policy and procedure training shall be mandatory for all staff.
- (b) All school-based staff shall receive annual training on responding to incidents of gender-based violence.
- (c) Professional learning opportunities for administrators, superintendents, teachers and support staff shall focus on the causes of gender-based violence, prevention strategies and Board policies and procedures for responding to gender-based violence.



4.5. Prevention Strategy: Professional Supports

- (a) An interdisciplinary team shall be established to deliver both policy implementation training and programs that focus on the development of student, staff and parental involvement related to raising awareness, developing school-based action plans and coordinating system-wide student-led activities.
- (b) Superintendents and principals shall work with the appropriate staff to access professional support staff on a priority basis for incidents of gender-based violence involving students.
- (c) Resources shall be realigned to establish programs at both the high school and junior-intermediate levels for students who have engaged in repeated acts of gender-based violence in order to support the re-integration and re-engagement of these young people into society and prevent future incidents.

4.6. Student Engagement

- (a) Students will have the opportunity to participate in gender-based peer education programs that examine the roots of gender-based violence and its impact on females and males, healthy relationships and equality among marginalized groups.
- (b) Issues related to gender-based violence such as healthy relationships, sexuality, gender stereotyping and homophobia shall be integrated and reinforced in subjects across the curriculum.
- (c) Primary prevention programs for students in elementary and secondary schools shall be designed to be comprehensive, coordinated, sequential, developmental, and that create both an awareness of, and a framework for dealing with, gender-based harassment and violence.

APPENDIX I: The Toronto District School Board's Gender-Based Violence Policy cont'd

4.7. Coordination

- (a) Establish a position where the sole responsibility is the co-ordination and oversight of all initiatives relating to gender-based violence.
- (b) Establish an advisory body consisting of representatives from legal services, human rights, professional support services, caring and safe schools, guidance, health and physical education, equity, health and safety, employee services, the Anti-Bullying Committee, superintendents of education, principals, and students who shall meet regularly to advise the Gender-Based Violence Policy (GBVP) Coordinator on policy implementation and prevention strategy. The advisory body will consult with external partners as required.
- (c) Establish a policy implementation team, both East and West, consisting of one Superintendent of Education and Principal and the North - South Chiefs of Social Work to advise the GBVP Coordinator and help facilitate policy and procedure training in each quadrant.

4.8. Communication

- (a) Policies and resources relating to sexual assault and gender-based violence shall be posted in schools and shall form part of the orientation process for all staff and students at the commencement of each year and be included in all student agendas.
- (b) Relevant information shall be prepared for each of the employee groups, parents and community partners on gender-based violence and harassment.

4.9. Evaluation

Research tools shall be developed that ensure prevention programs are regularly evaluated to determine their effectiveness and to identify areas for improvement. An annual report will be made to the appropriate standing committee.

5.0 SPECIFIC DIRECTIVES

The Director is authorized to issue operational procedures to implement this policy.

6.0 APPENDICES

Appendix A: Information About Gender-based Violence in Schools

7.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Board Documents (available on the Board's Policies and Procedures website)

Policies

P044, Code of Conduct

P064, Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour

P051, Safe Schools

P071, Gender-based Violence



APPENDIX I: The Toronto District School Board's Gender-Based Violence Policy cont'd

Operational Procedures

PR585, School Code of Conduct

PR522, Suspension Appeals and Expulsion Hearings

PR586, Programs for Students on Long-term Suspensions and Expulsions

PR697, Consequences of Inappropriate Student Behaviour

PR698, Police-School Board Protocol

PR540, Safe Schools Student Transfer

Other Documents

Education Act, R.S.O. 1990, CHAPTER E.2

O. Reg. 472/07, Suspension and Expulsion of Pupils

O. Reg. 612/00, School Councils

Ministry of Education's Policy/Program Memoranda

PPM 128: The Provincial Code of Conduct and School Board Codes of Conduct



Information about Gender-based Violence in Schools

Gender-based violence in schools has far-reaching consequences to students, their peers, their families and the community at large. According to the Province's Safe Schools Action Team, it needs to be seen in the context of bullying. One-third of students experience bullying and one-third report having bullied someone else. Bullying has a negative impact on school safety, school climate and student learning. It can be severe, persistent and pervasive to such a degree that it limits a student's ability to participate in or benefit from an education program and creates an educational environment that is hostile and threatening.

The consequences for victims can include depression, loss of appetite, nightmares, disturbed sleep, low self-esteem and feelings of being sad, afraid, scared, or embarrassed. In terms of student learning, victims reported a loss of interest in school activities, increased absenteeism, decreased quality of school work, poor grades, increases in skipping, dropping classes, tardiness and truancy. While female students are disproportionately affected by gender-based violence, research has shown that males more often than females receive and make homophobic comments.

Students are not the only victims of gender-based violence in schools. Significant numbers of teachers and other staff complain that they have been sexually harassed by students and other staff members.

Gender-based violence, including sexual assault and sexual harassment, is occurring at alarming rates and is largely going unreported¹. Measures relating to the protection of

APPENDIX I: The Toronto District School Board's Gender-Based Violence Policy cont'd

youth against sexual assaults, including those aimed at timely reporting of sexual assaults and anti-bullying programs have not succeeded in eliminating gender-based violence. These programs need to be combined with preventative education including gender-based peer education programs that examine the roots of gender-based violence and its impact on females and males, healthy relationships, and equality among marginalized groups, as well as the creation of “safe space” programs that use peer facilitators to lead open discussions amongst vulnerable groups.



¹ Findings of the School Safety Advisory Panel (2008) and the Ministry of Education's Safe Schools Action Team (2009).

The Vancouver School Board's LGBTTTQ Policy

Intent

Vancouver Board of Education of School District No. 39 (Vancouver), Vancouver, B.C. is committed to establishing and maintaining a safe and positive learning environment for all students and employees including those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, two-spirit, or who are questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity. These students and employees, as all students and employees, have the right to learn and work in an environment free of discrimination and harassment. The letter and spirit of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, the *B.C. Human Rights Acts* and the *Collective Agreements* shall be carefully observed, enforced, and supported, so that all members of the school community may work together in an atmosphere of respect and tolerance for individual differences. Specifically, the Board will not tolerate hate crimes, harassment or discrimination, and will vigorously enforce policy and regulations dealing with such matters.

The Board will provide a safe environment, free from harassment and discrimination, while also promoting proactive strategies and guidelines to ensure that lesbian, gay, transgender, transsexual, two-spirit, bisexual and questioning students, employees and families are welcomed and included in all aspects of education and school life and treated with respect and dignity. The purpose of this policy is to define appropriate behaviours and actions in order to prevent discrimination and harassment through greater awareness of and responsiveness to their deleterious effects. This policy is also drafted to ensure that homophobic complaints are

APPENDIX I: The Vancouver School Board's LGBTTTQ Policy cont'd

taken seriously and dealt with expeditiously and effectively through consistently applied policy and procedures. The policy will also raise awareness and improve understanding of the lives of people who identify themselves on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. By valuing diversity and respecting differences, students and staff act in accordance with the Vancouver district's social responsibility initiative.

Leadership

The Vancouver School Board shall ensure that all staff will be able to identify individual discriminatory attitudes and behaviours, as well as work to eliminate the systemic inequities and barriers to learning for students who identify themselves on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity and demonstrate accountability for their removal so that all students are treated with fairness and respect.

All administrators, teachers, counsellors, and staff and student leaders will communicate the board's position to their employees, staff and students. In the course of their leadership roles, they will commit to listen to lesbian, gay, transgender, transsexual, two-spirit, bisexual and questioning youth and their designated support groups and take concrete actions to make schools more welcoming and safer places for these students. The Board shall consult with the LGBTTTQ Advisory Committee to ensure that policy directions, priorities and implementation of programs and services are consistent with this LGBTTTQ policy.



Counselling and Student Support

The Vancouver School Board is committed to maintaining a safe learning and working environment which actively provides counselling and support to students who identify themselves on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. All counsellors provided by the board shall be educated in the knowledge and skills required to deal with LGBTTTQ issues with students. Counsellors will be informed and familiar with all policies with respect to human rights, anti-homophobia, hate literature, discrimination and harassment, and will alert their school community to these policies. Counsellors will be sensitive to lesbian, gay, transgender, transsexual, two-spirit, bisexual and questioning students as well as students from LGBTTT-headed families.

Elementary and Secondary Schools are encouraged to appoint a staff person to be a safe contact for students who identify themselves on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. School administrators should inform students and other staff about the location and availability of this contact person. Schools are encouraged in their goal planning to advocate for students who identify themselves on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity and those who are questioning their gender identity. Where students request and where staff are willing to volunteer their time, Gay/Straight Alliance clubs (GSAs) will be encouraged at Secondary Schools in the District.

APPENDIX I: The Vancouver School Board's LGBTTQ Policy cont'd

Anti-Harassment

Homophobic harassment is demeaning treatment to all students, students' parents or guardians, and employees regardless of their sexual orientation. Harassment based on gender identities is also demeaning to all students and employees. These forms of harassment and discrimination are prohibited under the B.C. Human Rights Code. Any language or behaviour that deliberately degrades, denigrates, labels, stereotypes, incites hatred, prejudice, discrimination, harassment towards students or employees on the basis of their real or perceived sexual orientation or gender identification will not be tolerated. Schools will be encouraged to specifically include the prohibition of such language and behaviour in their student codes of conduct. Please refer to the "General Anti-Harassment VSB Policy."

Curriculum Learning Resources

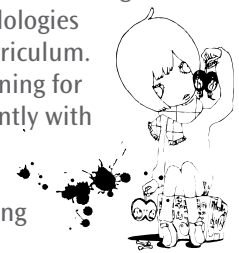
Anti-Homophobia Education strives to identify and change educational practices, policies, and procedures that promote homophobia, as well as the homophobic attitudes and behaviours that underlie and reinforce such policies and practices. Anti-homophobia education provides knowledge, skills, and strategies for educators to examine such discrimination critically in order to understand its origin and to recognize and challenge it.

The Board is committed to enabling all lesbian, gay, transgender, transsexual, two-spirit, bisexual and questioning students to see themselves and their lives positively reflected in the curriculum. Resources should be chosen or updated in

order to promote critical thinking and include materials that accurately reflect the range of Canada’s LGBTTTQ communities. Keeping in mind the multicultural aspect of the district, as many of the above resources as possible should be available in different languages and in formats easily accessible to ESL students.

Staff Development, In Service, and Professional Development

The Vancouver School Board is committed to ongoing staff development in anti-homophobia education and sexual orientation equity for trustees and Board staff, and will assist them to acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours to identify and eliminate homophobic practices. The Board will provide in-service training for teaching and support staff in anti-homophobia methodologies to enable them to deliver an inclusive curriculum. The Board will also provide in-service training for employees to deal effectively and confidently with issues of homophobia, heterosexism and gender identity and support initiatives that foster dialogue to create understanding and respect for diversity.



APPENDIX I: The Vancouver School Board's LGBTTTQ Policy cont'd

School-Community Involvement

The Vancouver School Board is committed to ongoing, constructive and open dialogue with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities and other communities who identify themselves on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity to increase cooperation and collaboration among home, school and the community.

The Board will work to create partnerships that ensure effective participation in the education process by representative and inclusive organizations and LGBTTTQ communities that are committed to the mission of the VSB. (To enable students to reach their intellectual, social, aesthetic and physical potential in challenging and stimulating settings which reflect the worth of each individual and promote mutual respect, cooperation, and social responsibility.)

The Board will encourage parent advisory councils to reflect the diversity of the District. The Vancouver School Board will acknowledge through its communication to students, staff, and the community that some children live in LGBTTT-headed families and need to be positively recognized and included as such. Any information to students and parents on anti-homophobia, anti-discrimination and sexual orientation equity needs to be translated into the languages spoken in the home. Parent Advisory Councils and students will be encouraged to engage in dialogue with openly identified LGBTTTQ youth and their organizations.



Employment Equity

The Board of School Trustees (the “Board”) believes in equitable treatment for all individuals regardless of race, colour, ancestry, ethnic origin, religion, socio-economic status, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical or mental ability, or political beliefs. The letter and spirit of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, the *B.C. Human Rights Acts* and the *VSB/VTF Collective Agreement* shall be carefully observed, enforced, and supported, so that all members of the school community may work together in an atmosphere of respect and tolerance for individual differences.

The Board will ensure that the confidentiality of the sexual orientation and gender identity of staff will be protected. Employees who are out as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or transitioning to another gender will be given the support they require to do their work in a safe and respectful environment.





START A WRITING GROUP

Think about compiling them as a group to share with others or post them on *MyGSA.ca*.

Tell your own stories!



ARRANGE SPEAKERS

Contact some of the local organizations listed in the LGBTQ and LGBTQ-Friendly Organizations, Programmes, & Resources section of this kit or on *MyGSA.ca* and ask to have someone come in to talk about matters related to the LGBTQ community.



DO A CAMPAIGN

As a group, come up with a name for your campaign and create posters, videos, pamphlets, stickers, etc. to share your message.

What matters to you? What do you want to change?



Promote your campaign and connect with LGBTQ youth and allies throughout the country by uploading information about it on *MyGSA.ca*!



Want some ideas? Check out the following:

- Heterosexual Questionnaire (*Appendix J*)
- Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack II– Sexual Orientation (*Appendix K*)

APPENDIX J: HETEROSEXUAL QUESTIONNAIRE

GSA GUIDE

©1972, Martin Rochlin, Ph.D.

This questionnaire is for self-avowed heterosexuals only. If you are not openly heterosexual, pass it on to a friend who is. Please try to answer the questions as candidly as possible. Your responses will be held in strict confidence and your anonymity fully protected.

1. What do you think caused your heterosexuality?
2. When and how did you first decide you were a heterosexual?
3. Is it possible your heterosexuality is just a phase you may grow out of?
4. Could it be that your heterosexuality stems from a neurotic fear of others of the same sex?
5. If you've never slept with a person of the same sex, how can you be sure you wouldn't prefer that?
6. To whom have you disclosed your heterosexual tendencies? How did they react?
7. Why do heterosexuals feel compelled to seduce others into their lifestyle?
8. Why do you insist on flaunting your heterosexuality? Can't you just be what you are and keep it quiet?
9. Would you want your children to be heterosexual, knowing the problems they'd face?
10. A disproportionate majority of child molesters are heterosexual men. Do you consider it safe to expose children to heterosexual male teachers, pediatricians, priests, or scoutmasters?
11. With all the societal support for marriage, the divorce rate is spiraling. Why are there so few stable relationships among heterosexuals?

APPENDIX J cont'd

By Martin Rochlin

12. Why do heterosexuals place so much emphasis on sex?
13. Considering the menace of overpopulation, how could the human race survive if everyone were heterosexual?
14. Could you trust a heterosexual therapist to be objective? Don't you fear s/he might be inclined to influence you in the direction of her/his own leanings?
15. Heterosexuals are notorious for assigning themselves and one another rigid, stereotyped sex roles. Why must you cling to such unhealthy role-playing?
16. With the sexually segregated living conditions of military life, isn't heterosexuality incompatible with military service?
17. How can you enjoy an emotionally fulfilling experience with a person of the other sex when there are such vast differences between you? How can a man know what pleases a woman sexually or vice-versa?
18. Shouldn't you ask your far-out straight cohorts, like skinheads and born-agains, to keep quiet? Wouldn't that improve your image?
19. Why are heterosexuals so promiscuous?
20. Why do you attribute heterosexuality to so many famous lesbian and gay people? Is it to justify your own heterosexuality?
21. How can you hope to actualize your God-given homosexual potential if you limit yourself to exclusive, compulsive heterosexuality?
22. There seem to be very few happy heterosexuals. Techniques have been developed that might enable you to change if you really want to. After all, you never deliberately chose to be a heterosexual, did you? Have you considered aversion therapy or Heterosexuals Anonymous?

DAILY EFFECTS OF STRAIGHT PRIVILEGE

This article is based on Peggy McIntosh’s article on white privilege and was written by a number of straight-identified students at Earlham College who got together to look at some examples of straight privilege. These dynamics are but a few examples of the privilege which straight people have. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer-identified folk have a range of different experiences, but cannot count on most of these conditions in their lives.

On a daily basis as a straight person...

- I can be pretty sure that my roommates, dorm-mates, and classmates will be comfortable with my sexual orientation.
- If I pick up a magazine, watch TV, or play music, I can be certain my sexual orientation will be represented.
- When I talk about my heterosexuality (such as in a joke or talking about my relationships), I will not be accused of pushing my sexual orientation onto others.
- I do not have to fear that if my family or friends find out about my sexual orientation there will be economic, emotional, physical, or psychological consequences.
- I did not grow up with games that attack my sexual orientation (e.g., fag tag or smear the queer).
- I am not accused of being abused, warped, or psychologically confused because of my sexual orientation.
- I can go home from most meetings, classes, and conversations without feeling excluded, fearful, attacked, isolated, outnumbered, unheard, held at a distance, stereotyped, or feared because of my sexual orientation.
- I am never asked to speak for everyone who is heterosexual.
- I can be sure that my classes will require curricular materials that testify to the existence of people with my sexual orientation.

APPENDIX K cont'd

By Daniel Hunter et al.

- People don't ask why I made my choice of sexual orientation.
- People don't ask why I made my choice to be public about my sexual orientation.
- I do not have to fear revealing my sexual orientation to friends or family. It's assumed.
- My sexual orientation was never associated with a closet.
- People of my gender do not try to convince me to change my sexual orientation.
- I don't have to defend my heterosexuality.
- I can easily find a religious community that will not exclude me for being heterosexual.
- I can count on finding a therapist or doctor willing and able to talk about my sexuality.
- I am guaranteed to find sex education literature for couples with my sexual orientation.
- Because of my sexual orientation, I do not need to worry that people will harass me.
- I have no need to qualify my straight identity.
- My masculinity/femininity is not challenged because of my sexual orientation.
- I am not identified by my sexual orientation.
- I can be sure that if I need legal or medical help my sexual orientation will not work against me.
- If my day, week, or year is going badly, I need not ask of each negative episode or situation whether it has sexual orientation overtones.
- Whether I rent or download a movie or go to a theater, I can be sure I will not have trouble finding my sexual orientation represented.
- I am guaranteed to find people of my sexual orientation represented in the curriculum, faculty, and administration.

- I can walk in public with my significant other and not have people double-take or stare.
- I can choose to not think politically about my sexual orientation.
- I do not have to worry about telling my roommate about my sexuality. It is assumed I am a heterosexual.
- I can remain oblivious of the language and culture of LGBTQ folk without feeling in my culture any penalty for such obliviousness.
- I can go for months without being called straight.
- I'm not grouped because of my sexual orientation.
- My individual behavior does not reflect on people who identify as heterosexual.
- In everyday conversation, the language my friends and I use generally assumes my sexual orientation: for example, sex inappropriately referring to only heterosexual sex or family meaning only heterosexual adults who have children.
- People do not assume I am experienced in sex (or that I even have it!) merely because of my sexual orientation.
- I can kiss a person of the opposite gender on the street or in the cafeteria without being watched and stared at.
- Nobody calls me straight with maliciousness.
- People can use terms that describe my sexual orientation and mean positive things (e.g., "straight as an arrow," "standing up straight," or "straightened out") instead of demeaning terms (e.g., "ewww, that's gay" or being "queer").
- I am not asked to think about why I am straight.
- I can be open about my sexual orientation without worrying about my job.

Adapted from http://www.cs.earlham.edu/~hyrax/personal/files/student_res/straightprivilege.htm.

➔ HAVE A BOOK CLUB

Check out this list of recommended books! Ask your friends to read the same book and bring topics, comments, and questions for discussion to your GSA meeting.

What are your favourite books with LGBTQ themes or written by LGBTQ writers?

Individually or as a group, write up a review to post on *MyGSA.ca* and find out what other youth throughout Canada think!

Tell us about your favourite LGBTQ books at mygsa@egale.ca!



Am I Blue? Coming Out from the Silence (1994), edited by Marion Dane Bauer, is a collection of short stories for young adults which addresses issues of homosexuality. Some of the protagonists have gay friends or family members, like Willie in “Holding.” Some of these young adults are discovering that they feel attracted to people of the same sex and are questioning their sexual orientation, as in the title story. Others, like the young people in “Parents’ Night,” have determined that they are homosexual and now must confront society, family, and friends. Awards include ALA Best Books for Young Adults; ALA Recommended Book for Reluctant Young Adult Readers; 1995 ALA Gay-Lesbian-Bisexual Book Award for Literature; 1995 Lambda Literary Award for Children and Young Adults; and 1995 Minnesota Book Award for older children.

Between Mom and Jo (2006) by Julie Anne Peters has been named an Honor Book for the first ever James Cook Teen Book Award given by the Ohio Library Council. The award recognizes books that promote and celebrate cultural, ethnic, and social diversity; demonstrate excellence in writing; and have a wide appeal to a teen audience. It has also been chosen as Rainbow Reads by the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgendered Round Table of the American Library Association.



SHARE THIS LIST with your school staff advisor/sponsor, teachers, your librarian, your guidance counsellor, and your principal.

“Jo promised Nick they’d always be together. So did Mom. When you’re a stupid little kid you believe what your parents tell you. You want to believe that your life will be good and nothing will change and everything—everyone—goes on forever. It’s not until later you find out people are liars, forever is a myth, and a kid with two moms should never be put in the position of having to choose between them.”

From the Notebooks of Melanin Sun (1995) by Jacqueline Woodson: Thirteen-year-old Melanin Sun has always had a close relationship with his mother, a single parent. He is surprised when she tells him that she has fallen in love with a white woman. Worried that this relationship means that she doesn’t love him, an African-American male, Melanin shuts his mother out of his life. After a confrontation, he agrees to spend the day with his mother and her partner, Kristen. It is through meeting Kristen that Melanin learns how important family is, and rejoices in the fact that his mother will always have a place for him in her life.

Funny Boy is Shyam Selvadurai’s first novel; it won the Lambda Literary Award for Best Gay Men’s Novel as well as the Smithbooks/Books in Canada First Novel Award in 1994. In this remarkable debut novel, a boy’s bittersweet passage to maturity and sexual awakening is set against escalating political tensions in Sri Lanka during the seven years leading up to the 1983 riots. Arjie Chelvaratnam is a Tamil boy growing up in an extended family in Colombo. It is through his eyes that the story unfolds and we meet a delightful, sometimes eccentric, cast of characters. Arjie’s journey from the luminous simplicity of childhood days into the more intricately shaded world of adults—with its secrets, its injustices, and its capacity for violence—is a memorable one, as time and time again the true longings of the human heart are held against the way things are.

Hear Me Out: In 2004, Teens Educating and Confronting Homophobia (T.E.A.C.H.) published a book of stories written by peer facilitators about their coming out experiences. These stories are based upon the stories the peer facilitators use to engage participants during T.E.A.C.H. workshops. Critically acclaimed, the book received attention across Canada upon its publication.

*Koolaid*s (1998) by Rabih Alameddine: An extraordinary literary debut, this book is about the AIDS epidemic, the civil war in Beirut, death, sex, and the meaning of life. Daring in form as well as content, *Koolaid*s turns the traditional novel inside out and hangs it on the clothesline to air.

The Little Black Book for Girlz: A Book on Healthy Sexuality (2006) and *The Little Black Book for Guys: Guys Talk about Sex* (2008) by youth for youth: St. Stephen's Community House, a community-based social service agency in Toronto, engaged a diverse group of teens looking for the real deal about sexuality. To find answers, they collected stories, poetry, and artwork from other youth. They also interviewed health experts to get the facts about issues young people face. The result? An honest and powerful mix of real-life examples and life-saving info.

Luna (2004) by Julie Anne Peters has been chosen by the American Library Association for their 2009 Great Stories CLUB. The Great Stories CLUB (Connecting Libraries, Under-served teens, and Books) is a reading and discussion program designed to reach under-served and at-risk youth through books that are relevant to their lives.

“From as early as she can remember, Regan O’Neill has known that her brother Liam was different. That he was, in fact, a girl. Transgender. Having a transgender brother has never been a problem for Regan—until now. Liam (or Luna, as she prefers to be called by her chosen name) is about to transition. What does

it mean, transitioning? Dressing like a girl? In public? Does Liam expect Regan to embrace this decision, to welcome his sex change? She's always kept her brother's secret, always been his confidante, but now Regan's acceptance and love will be put to the test."

Stealing Nasreen (2007) by Farzana Doctor: Nasreen Bastawala is an Indo-Canadian lesbian and burnt-out psychologist who meets and becomes enmeshed in the lives of Shaffiq and Salma Paperwala, new immigrants from Mumbai. Both Shaffiq and Salma develop confusing attractions to Nasreen. For Shaffiq this causes him to bring home and hide things he "finds" in her office. Salma's crush on Nasreen harkens back memories and regrets about a lesbian affair that ended badly years ago.

Zami: A New Spelling of My Name (1982) by Audre Lorde: This biomythography traces Audre Lorde's life from her childhood in Harlem through her discovery and acceptance of her self as a black, lesbian woman in the late 1950s. Masterfully crafted by the profound and artistic Lorde, *Zami* reads like musical poetry. Through her life experiences, Lorde carefully forges a path to locate her position in the world. Ultimately, naming and accepting difference are the tools necessary for Lorde's ability to stay alive and stay human.

Contact local organizations from the LGBTQ and LGBTQ-Friendly Organizations, Programmes, & Resources section of this kit or *MyGSA.ca* for assistance.



➔ PARTICIPATE IN PRIDE EVENTS

Does your community have a Pride? Look it up on the Queer Calendar in this kit or on *MyGSA.ca* if you aren't sure.

If so, take part in marching and/or performing. Do a dance routine or make a float!

If not, why not? (See "Do a Campaign.")

➔ DO WORKSHOPS

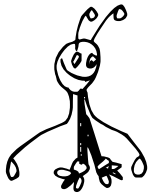
Using your collective knowledge and the information provided in this kit and on *MyGSA.ca*, put together your own anti-heterosexism, anti-homophobia, anti-biphobia, anti-transphobia, and intersectionality workshops.

➔ FUNDRAISER

Do something for your community to raise funds for your group. Need ideas? Start a topic on the *MyGSA.ca* discussion forums and brainstorm with other students from across the country!

➔ HAVE AN EVENT

Choose a date from the Queer Calendar included in this kit and on *MyGSA.ca* and learn more about it. Have an event to celebrate or commemorate it.



PLAY GAMES

Try the “Icebreakers” (*Appendix H*) or “A Sociometry of Oppressions” (*Appendix M*). There are also activities included in the Educators’ Section of the kit. Look there for even more ideas!

GOOD LUCK & HAVE FUN! If you encounter any obstacles along the way, talk to your school staff advisors, teachers, guidance counsellors, and school administration. If you find that you still need help, remember that you have resources and support: contact Egale Canada at mygsa@egale.ca or **1.888.204.7777** (toll-free).



APPENDIX M: A SOCIOLOGY OF OPPRESSIONS

Used with the permission of Susan Diane RN, BA, MA

Grades: 10-12

Time: 30 to 60 minutes

Learning Outcomes:

- to introduce the concepts of privilege and oppression and that all individuals are affected by them;
- to develop a better understanding of the complexity of individuals within our society;
- to increase awareness and understanding of the meanings of power and control;
- to gain a better understanding of how and why our culture maintains the status quo; and
- to develop empathy for others.

Context:

The basic premise for this experiential educational exercise came from Logan et al. (1996) who were educating social work students about heterosexual privilege. Although this educational tool still includes sexual orientation/identity, it has been expanded to include gender, race/ethnicity, age, class, occupation, ability, and religion. It is expanded here to give a sense of the interconnections and complexity of identity within the multiple structures of oppression in a hierarchical, capitalist, patriarchal society. Although the activity is complex, students can gain a sense of these issues through role play and assuming other identities.



Preparation:

- Photocopy and cut identity cards.
- If necessary, photocopy the Sociometry of Oppressions Question Sheets to read out to the group.
- A fairly large open space is needed which often necessitates moving furniture or using a gym or hall instead of a classroom.
- A class of about 15-20 participants seems ideal, but it can be used with smaller or larger numbers.
- About half an hour is needed to complete the exercise, although this will vary depending on the amount of time it takes for debriefing each participant.



Lesson:

Explain that participants will be given an identity card and asked to move forward one step (or its equivalent if there are wheelchair participants) when answering affirmatively to a series of questions. It is helpful to explain that everyone will be taking the same amount of risk in playing the game. If it seems the students may be reluctant, try using a “fish bowl” technique, where some students do the activity and others watch. (All the students report on what they learned from the activity. It does not work as well, but is one way to adapt this for shy students.)

APPENDIX M cont'd

By Susan Diane

Hand out cards to each participant. Instruct them not to show their cards to other participants. You may need to help some participants individually if they have questions about their identity card. If you have a small number of participants, try to pick identities so that you have a mix of sexual orientations, genders, ethnic origins, religious denominations, and abilities.

Have participants line up against a wall. Start with all participants facing towards the wall. Ask those who can be open about their sexual orientation to turn around and face forward—you may choose to broaden this by asking all those who can be open about their own sexual orientation and gender identity as well as the sexual orientations and gender identities of their loved ones to turn around and face forward.

Read out the questions regarding social and economic privileges which are worded so that those who can participate in the activity (e.g., take out a loan) can take a step forward. Those who would not be able to do that in our society must remain where they are. After reading out all the questions, and allowing participants to move forward to various degrees, have participants stay in their resulting positions of privilege when the questions are finished.

Ask each one in turn to read out their identity and discuss what the experience was like for her or him. You are actually debriefing each participant, but others will usually join in the discussion as this process continues. Be sure to have each and every student discuss what the experience was like for her or him in order to ensure they can all make sense of what they experienced. As in any experiential activity, be prepared for the possibility of someone's personal experiences being triggered so that further debriefing may be needed. Participants are asked to take on a pseudo-identity (a type of role-playing) here, which usually does not trigger major personal revelations.

After each student has shared what it was like, discuss how privilege works and how those with it can be successful, while those without it find themselves falling behind in our society. Talk about intersectionality and “double and triple oppressions.” This is when a person has a number of interconnecting factors holding them back (e.g., racism, homophobia, and transphobia). Discuss the reason this happens in our society. Why are groups oppressed? What is the purpose of oppressing a group of people? Whose needs does it serve? Is it acceptable? Legal? Fair? Ethical? What can we do to change this? How can we do it? Who is responsible for what is happening in our society? What did we learn from this discussion?



Related Activities:

- Have the students write a journal about any of the questions above that they are interested in.
- Share with the students some historical examples of oppression, such as Apartheid, the Holocaust, Black slavery in the USA, the Stonewall Riots, and the continuing oppression of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, two-spirited, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ) community. Have them research a group of people (or a specific person) and the oppression they have suffered and present their findings to the class.

Share your thoughts about this exercise on the [MyGSA.ca](https://www.mygsa.ca) discussion forums!



APPENDIX M cont'd

By Susan Diane



Pseudo-Identities:

19 year-old gay male who has a girlfriend and secretly has sex with guys. His girlfriend thinks they should get married.

16 year-old white female who had sex for the first time last year. She has just found out she is HIV+.

17 year-old First Nations female. She is talented at basketball and wants to play, but she's usually late for practice because she has to look after her siblings.

17 year-old white heterosexual female whose father is rich. She skis in Whistler and stays in their cottage during the summer.

16 year-old Cambodian female who is an ESL student. Her family ignores her and she is behind at school by 2 years. She is always by herself and looks lonely.

Indo-Canadian female who is dating a white male. Her family is against the relationship. She is thinking of getting pregnant.

White male Goth student who is in a relationship with a black female. His family lives in poverty.

Grade 8 white male student, skateboarder. He has a close group of friends, both male and female.

Grade 8 student with learning difficulties, thinking of dropping out of school. Parents don't really expect him to graduate.

Grade 12 student who is an out lesbian. Her friends are trying to find a sponsor teacher to start a GSA in their high school.

17 year-old white depressed female who uses a wheelchair and is questioning her sexuality. She has attempted suicide four times.

15 year-old white female student who is in a violent relationship with an older man. She is scared to tell anyone.

16 year-old straight male hippy who smokes pot openly and was home-schooled.

Grade 12 trans M2F (male-to-female) student. Wants to wear dresses and make-up to school and use the female washroom.

Grade 10 female student who cares about the environment and educates others about food choices.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15 year-old white male who skips school most days and hangs out at the mall. He is starting to do drugs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 17 year-old white lesbian stay-at-home-mom of two small children living on welfare. She is studying by distance education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 19 year-old, vegetarian female rock musician in a relationship with another woman. She identifies as bisexual.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 17 year-old female with a one year-old baby, living with her parents. She is trying to finish her last year of high school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 17 year-old Caucasian female who is living on the street. She is addicted to crack. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 19 year-old lesbian female, who is a practising Wiccan.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 19 year-old white heterosexual female who is in a relationship with an older Jamaican-Canadian man. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 16 year-old white male who lives with his mom. She is addicted to heroin. He was recently beaten up by her boyfriend. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 16 year-old gay male who is in the closet. He dates girls and plays sports. He recently met a guy he likes.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 16 year-old lesbian high school student who uses sign language to communicate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 16 year-old First Nations female student going out with a white male. She practices traditional native spirituality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 16 year-old female who works at the bakery to help her family that has recently immigrated. Her mom speaks very little English.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 17 year-old student who identifies as queer and is a practicing Muslim. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grade 9 student going to a Catholic school and who believes strongly in her religion. Her best friend since kindergarten just came out to her as gay. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attractive and popular athlete with 2 dads. Nobody knows.

APPENDIX M cont'd

By Susan Diane

Sociometry of Oppressions Questions:

These questions are asked once individuals have their pseudo-identity cards (which they are instructed not to show to others) and are lined up, facing a wall.

1. If you are comfortable being open about your sexual orientation and gender identity with those close to you (i.e., “out” in most situations), please turn around and face the centre of the room. Optional: If you are not free to be open about the sexual orientation and/or gender identity of each of your friends and family members, please turn around again and face the wall.

2. Can you expect to speak openly and easily about your sexual orientation and/or gender identity at school or at work without fear of harassment or negative consequences?

3. Do you feel safe walking alone on the streets after dark?

4. Do you expect to be treated fairly by the police?

5. Do you expect that you and your body will be treated with respect and dignity at school or work, without fear of harassment?

6. Can you go to the corner store on foot quickly and easily?

7. Can you walk by a group of teenagers without fear of insults or harassment?

8. Do you expect your children to attend school without discrimination or harassment?

9. Can you legally marry?

10. Do you expect to be financially well off and be able to travel during your retirement?

11. You are being considered for a promotion. Are you secure your personal life or identity will not hinder you?

12. You are in a new social situation and you are asked if you are married. Are you comfortable answering truthfully?

13. Are you comfortable bringing your partner to the school dance?

14. Do you expect to be able to get a large loan from the bank easily?

15. Would it be easy for you to introduce your partner to your family?

16. Do you think that your chances are good when you are interviewed by a social worker to adopt a child?

17. Are you comfortable holding hands with your partner in public?

18. If you became sick with AIDS, would some people say you were an innocent victim rather than you deserved it?

19. Can you expect to be a religious leader in your community?

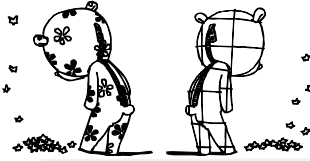
20. Can you discuss your religious practices and holidays openly at work or school without fear of harassment?

21. Can you communicate easily with others you have just met?

22. If your partner died, would you be automatically recognized as the next-of-kin?

Sociometry of Oppression for Teenagers: revised list of questions for lesson plan

1. Going to school every day is something I look forward to.
2. I am confident that I will do well in most of my school subjects.
3. I look forward to seeing my friends at school.
4. I have plans for post-secondary education.
5. I plan to go to the school dance with my favourite friends.
6. I usually meet my friends for lunch.
7. I usually buy my lunch in the cafeteria.
8. I get along well with the teachers at the school.
9. I feel comfortable walking down the hallway at school.
10. I feel comfortable in the change room before and after Phys. Ed.
11. I am well regarded by other students.
12. I am considered to be a leader at school.
13. My parents listen to my plans and support them most of the time.
14. My parents are happy to have my friends visit me in our home.
15. My parents approve of the person (or people) I date.
16. I am able to be open with my friends about my sexuality.
17. I am able to be open with my parents about my sexuality.
18. I feel comfortable visiting my friends at their home and meeting their parents.
19. I am able to speak up in class and know I will be heard.
20. The teachers at my school are good role models for me.



21. I feel comfortable letting others know my religious beliefs.
22. I am able to speak freely with others about what is important to me in life.

Debriefing Questions (for feedback from individual participants)

[Feedback may be verbal—especially for a, b, c, d, and e—or students may write/discuss/reflect.]

- a. What holds people back?
- b. What gives people privilege?
- c. Are there inherent assumptions in our school system?
- d. Are there assumptions in our school system? (about roles, aspirations, abilities, interests of students)
- e. Are there assumptions in homes?
- f. How can we support other people to be themselves and to achieve their potential?
- g. What insights have you gained through this exercise?
- h. What would you like to tell others about identity?
- i. How important is a person's identity in achieving goals or having a happy life?

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS / FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Alberta Teachers' Association

*Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity webpage:
Ten Steps to Creating a GSA in your School*

American Civil Liberties Union Foundation (ACLU) (US)

Tips on Starting a GSA



The Canadian Teachers' Federation

*Gay-Straight Student Alliance Handbook: A Comprehensive
Resource for Canadian K-12 Teachers, Administrators, and
School Counsellors*


Egale Canada

MyGSA.ca



Gay and Lesbian Educators of British Columbia (GALE BC)

Creating & Supporting a Gay-Straight Alliance (2nd edition)



Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) (US)

The Jump-Start Guide Part 1: Building and Activating your GSA or Similar Student Club

GSA Network (US)

How to Start a Gay-Straight Alliance

The Nova Scotia Youth Project



Gay/Straight Alliance Manual

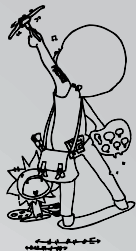
Rainbow Youth Niagara, Niagara Pride Support Services

Safer Schools for Gender and Sexually Diverse Youth: A Guide to Starting a Safer Space Program

Stonewall (UK)

The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans (LGBT) and Allies Guide: Creating Change at Your School

**This Equity and Inclusive
Education Resource Kit for
Ontario High Schools is part of
Egale's Safe Schools Campaign.
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Equity and Inclusive Education Resource Kit for Ontario High Schools

Q & A



di  **ersity =**
possibility



Q & A

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS ABOUT LGBTQ HUMAN RIGHTS LEGISLATION AND POLICY IN ONTARIO



- Q1.** Everyone at my school says “that’s so gay” or “you’re so gay” when they mean they don’t like something. When I asked my teacher why he never intervenes, he said it wasn’t hurting anybody and that I should lighten up. What can I do?
- Q2.** I’m trans and I get called names like “he-she” and “tranny.” Students in my class even have a song going. I asked my teacher to intervene, but she said they’re not saying anything offensive unless they use racist or homophobic terms like “paki” or “faggot.” Is this right?
- Q3.** My [female-to-male or FTM] dad gave birth to me before transitioning. My teacher insists on calling him my mother and I have overheard staff saying that I am part of a same-sex family. I am not. What can I do?
- Q4.** There is graffiti all over the boys’ washrooms. Most of it is stuff like “Akim f**ks arse” and “John is a faggot.” Shouldn’t the school be removing all of this?
- Q5.** I have two moms. My non-biological mom has adopted me. My teacher knows they are both legally responsible for me, but he still keeps asking me which one is my “real” mom. Is this appropriate?
- Q6.** When somebody in my class asked about my sexual orientation, I referred to myself as “queer” and I got punished by my teacher. Surely that’s wrong?
- Q7.** When I was walking by the principal’s office the other day, I heard a parent of one of the other students saying something about not finding it appropriate to have a “dating club” at our school and that certain movies should not be shown in classrooms. I didn’t hear the principal’s response. What should she have said?

WHAT CAN I DO?



ABUSIVE OR OFFENSIVE LANGUAGE

Q:

Everyone at my school says “that’s so gay” or “you’re so gay” when they mean they don’t like something. When I asked my teacher why he never intervenes, he said it wasn’t hurting anybody and that I should lighten up. What can I do?

YOU CAN TELL YOUR TEACHER that homophobic language does hurt people, particularly youth who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, two-spirited, queer, or questioning (LGBTQ), youth who are perceived to be LGBTQ, and youth with LGBTQ parents, other family members, or friends.

A:

These phrases are especially harmful since, unfortunately, this is often the only context in which the word “gay” is used in school settings. All schools have a duty to maintain positive school environments for all persons served by them and they must always be vigilant about anything that might interfere with this duty.¹

1. According to Ontario’s Ministry of Education, “A school should be a place that promotes responsibility, respect, civility, and academic

excellence in a safe learning and teaching environment. A positive school climate exists when all members of the school community feel safe, comfortable, and accepted. All students, parents, teachers, and staff members have the right to be safe, and to feel safe, in their school community.”² The Ministry’s Policy/Program Memorandum No. 144, Bullying Prevention and Intervention, states that all school board employees, including administrators and school staff members, must take any allegations of bullying behaviour seriously, and this specifically includes the use of homophobic comments in school environments.³

2. “Youth Speak Up about Homophobia and Transphobia in Canadian Schools” (March 2009) shows that of the 1,700 participants, three-quarters of Canadian LGBTQ students feel unsafe in at least one place at school.⁴ The use of homophobic language detracts from creating safer spaces in learning environments.

3. The *Ontario Human Rights Code* (the *Code*) is a law that provides for equal rights and opportunities and recognizes the dignity and worth of every person in Ontario.⁵ The *Code* makes it against the law to discriminate against someone or to harass anyone because of sexual orientation. This right to be free from discrimination and harassment applies to your school environment. This means that a person, student or staff member, cannot be treated unequally or subjected to harassment in a school environment because of sexual orientation. Making a harmful comment or action that is known or ought to be known to be unwelcome constitutes harassment: for example, homophobic “jokes,” insults, or hints being made about a person’s sexual orientation. See the Ontario Human Rights Commission’s Policy on Discrimination and Harassment Because of Sexual Orientation (2000) for more information: <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/resources/Policies/SexualOrientationPolicyEN>.

Not respecting the protected grounds of non-discrimination in the Code could result in what the Ontario Human Rights Commission calls a “poisoned environment.” Check out Fact Sheet #4: Poisoned Environment in the Ontario Human Rights Commission’s Educational Package for Ontario Schools (2001), which explains that “it is the responsibility of the teacher and administration as the authority in the school to ensure that a poisoned environment does not exist for students.”⁶

4. The Ministry of Education believes that “a positive school climate, with a safe learning and teaching environment, is essential for students to succeed in school.”⁷ This becomes impossible for LGBTQ students, students who are perceived to be LGBTQ, and students with LGBTQ parents, other family members, or friends when homophobic attitudes and language go unchallenged. For example, a student who identifies as “gay” is unlikely to feel safe about being out when she or he hears the term used in a derogatory manner.

5. Under the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child, education is intended to develop the personalities and talents of all children and young people (Article 29).⁸ Allowing the word "gay" to be used in a negative manner makes it very difficult for any LGBTQ students or students with LGBTQ parents, other family members, or friends to fully be themselves. Your school should be doing whatever it can to provide you with a safe, inclusive learning environment where you feel welcome and respected.
6. Subsection 301 (1) of Part XIII of Ontario's *Education Act* states that "the Minister may establish a code of conduct governing the behaviour of all persons in schools."⁹ Under this authority, Ontario's Ministry of Education developed Policy/Program Memorandum No. 128, The Provincial Code of Conduct and School Board Codes of Conduct, which states, "All members of the school community must respect and treat others fairly, regardless of...sexual orientation."¹⁰
7. The Ministry of Education's Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119, Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools, states, "By the beginning of the 2010-11 school year (September 2010), boards will have in place an equity and inclusive education policy...and an implementation plan."¹¹ In both the development and the implementation of the equity and inclusive education policies, school boards are mandated to be comprehensive, covering all of the prohibited grounds of discrimination set out in the *Ontario Human Rights Code* (the *Code*). The *Code* prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation.¹²

Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119 also states, "It is expected that boards will post their equity and inclusive education policy on their website." If you are unable to find your school board's equity and inclusive education policy on its website after September 2010, ask your principal for a copy of it.

8. According to the Ministry of Education, “Responsible citizenship involves appropriate participation in the civic life of the school community. Active and engaged citizens are aware of their rights, but more importantly, they accept responsibility for protecting their rights and the rights of others.”¹³ Speak up!

¹ Ross v. New Brunswick School District No. 15, [1996] 1 S.C.R. 825 <http://csc.lexum.org/en/1996/1996scr1-825/1996scr1-825.html>

² <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/brochure/conduct/conduct.html?>

³ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/144.html>

⁴ <http://MyGSA.ca/YouthSpeakUp>

⁵ <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/resources/code>

⁶ <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/education/about/thrio-r2001.pdf>

⁷ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/safeschools/KeepKidSafeSchool.pdf>

⁸ <http://www.unicef.org/crc/>

⁹ http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90e02_e.htm#s301s1

¹⁰ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/128.html>

¹¹ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/119.html>

¹² <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/resources/code>

¹³ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/128.html>

Q2:

I'm trans and I get called names like "he-she" and "tranny." Students in my class even have a song going. I asked my teacher to intervene, but she said they're not saying anything offensive unless they use racist or homophobic terms like "paki" or "faggot." Is this right?

A2:

No, it is not. The terms and the song are clearly intended as insults and are causing you distress.

1. Under the Ministry of Education's Policy/Programs Memorandum No. 144, Bullying Prevention and Intervention, "Bullying is typically a form of repeated, persistent, and aggressive behaviour that is directed at an individual or individuals that is intended to cause (or should be known to cause) fear and distress and/or harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem, or reputation."¹⁴

By calling you names and inventing songs about you, your classmates are singling out your gender identity and implying that it is inferior. It is not, and your classmates' behaviour constitutes bullying according to the Ministry's definition.

Further, Policy/Programs Memorandum No. 145, Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour, states, "Board employees who work directly with students—including administrators, teachers, and non-teaching staff (including staff in social work, child and youth work, psychology, and related areas, and educational assistants)—must respond to any student behaviour that is likely to have a negative impact on the school climate. Such behaviour includes all inappropriate and disrespectful behaviour at any time at school and at any school-related event if, in the employee's opinion, it is safe to respond to it, in accordance with subsection 300.4 of Part XIII of the Education Act and Ontario Regulation 472/07."¹⁵

2. "Youth Speak Up about Homophobia and Transphobia in Canadian Schools" (March 2009) shows that of the 1,700 participants, 95% of trans students feel unsafe at school,

compared to one-fifth of heterosexual students.¹⁶ The use of transphobic language detracts from creating safer spaces in learning environments.

3. Explain to your teacher that the phrases “he-she” and “tranny” are discriminatory and abusive. While they may not be racist or homophobic, they are transphobic. No one form of discrimination is any more acceptable than another. Under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (the *Charter*), everyone is entitled to express their views freely; however, using offensive language that is insulting to a particular group is an example of when this right is restricted.¹⁷ Encourage your teacher to apply this argument to dealing with transphobic language. Although the category of gender identity is not explicitly mentioned in the *Charter*, the category of sex is protected and has been interpreted by many courts to include trans persons, thereby making transphobic language unacceptable.
4. According to the Ontario Human Rights Commission, “Gender identity is not an enumerated ground in the Code. However, the existing legal structure in the Code can support a progressive understanding of the ground of ‘sex’ to include ‘gender identity’ and protect individuals who are subject to discrimination or harassment because of gender identity. This approach toward the application of the Code has been accepted for some time.”¹⁸ This means that anyone who is discriminated against or harassed because of gender identity is legally protected under the ground of sex. This includes transsexual, transgender, and intersex persons, as well as cross-dressers and other people whose gender identity or expression is, or is seen to be, different from their birth-identified sex.
5. The Ministry of Education’s Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119, Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools, states, “By the beginning of the 2010-11 school year (September 2010), boards will have in place an equity and inclusive education policy...

and an implementation plan.”¹⁹ In both the development and the implementation of the equity and inclusive education policies, school boards are mandated to be comprehensive, covering all of the prohibited grounds of discrimination set out in the *Ontario Human Rights Code* (the *Code*).²⁰ Although gender identity is not explicitly named in the *Code*, people who are discriminated against or harassed because of gender identity are legally protected under the ground of sex. For more information, see the Ontario Human Rights Commission’s Policy on Discrimination and Harassment Because of Gender Identity: <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/resources/Policies/PolicyGenderIdent>.

Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119 also states, “It is expected that boards will post their equity and inclusive education policy on their website.”²¹ If you are unable to find your school board’s equity and inclusive education policy on its website after September 2010, ask your principal for a copy of it.

6. The United Nations’ Convention on the Rights of the Child says that education should develop all children’s and young people’s personalities and talents to their fullest potential (Article 29).²² Allowing the words “he-she” and “tranny” to be used makes it very difficult for any trans students or students with trans parents, other family members, or friends to fully be themselves. Your school should be doing whatever it can to provide you with a safe, inclusive learning environment where you feel welcome and respected.



7. Transphobia, racism, and homophobia are all related. Similarly to the point on a graph where lines cross being called a point of “intersection,” the fact that categories of identification—such as class, ethnic origin, gender identity, physical and mental ability, race, religion, sexual orientation, or other factors—are experienced simultaneously and cannot genuinely be separated from one another is referred to as “intersectionality.” Often, people are discriminated against with regard to multiple categories.

Because discrimination can be based on multiple factors, the Ontario Human Rights Commission has begun taking a more contextualized approach, which it calls “an intersectional approach to discrimination.” For more information on this, see http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/resources/discussion_consultation/DissIntersectionalityFtns/view.

Ontario’s Ministry of Education also recognizes the importance of approaching categories of identity as intersectional:

“Equity and inclusive education aims to understand, identify, address, and eliminate the biases, barriers, and power dynamics that limit students’ prospects for learning, growing, and fully contributing to society. Barriers may be related to gender, race, ethnic origin, religion, socio-economic background, physical and mental ability, sexual orientation, or other factors. It is now recognized that several factors may intersect to create additional barriers for some students. These barriers and biases, whether overt or subtle, intentional or unintentional, need to be identified and addressed.”²³

8. According to the Ministry of Education, “Responsible citizenship involves appropriate participation in the civic life of the school community. Active and engaged citizens are aware of their rights, but more importantly, they accept responsibility for protecting their rights and the rights of others.”²⁴ **Speak up!**

¹⁴ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/144.html>

¹⁵ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/145.html>

¹⁶ <http://MyGSA.ca/YouthSpeakUp>

¹⁷ <http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/charter/1.html>

¹⁸ <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/resources/Policies/PolicyGenderIdent>

¹⁹ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/119.html>

²⁰ <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/resources/code>

²¹ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/119.html>

²² <http://www.unicef.org/crc>

²³ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/inclusiveguide.pdf>

²⁴ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/128.html>

Q3:

My [female-to-male or FTM] dad gave birth to me before transitioning. My teacher insists on calling him my mother and I have overheard staff saying that I am part of a same-sex family. I am not. What can I do?

A3:

1. In the *Roots of Youth Violence Report*, Volume 1 (2008), the Government of Ontario recommends “ensuring that teachers and administrators better reflect the neighbourhoods they serve,” developing and providing inclusive curriculum, and implementing “services for families of all forms.”²⁵ It is very difficult to enjoy school if you do not feel respected or if you fail to see images of or hear about families that look similar to your own.

2. Under the United Nations’ Convention on the Rights of the Child, you have the right to privacy and protection in relation to attacks against your family (Article 16).²⁶ Also, under Article 12 of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*,

you have the right to have your private life and family life be respected.²⁷ This teacher is being disrespectful.

3. The *Ontario Human Rights Code* (the *Code*) protects familial relationships from discrimination through the grounds of marital and family status.²⁸ The *Code* defines family status as “being in a parent and child relationship.” This can also mean a parent and child type of relationship, embracing a range of circumstances without blood or adoptive ties but with similar relationships of care, responsibility, and commitment. According

TELL YOUR TEACHER that you find her or his language offensive and disrespectful because it fails to recognize your family.

Your school should invest in books for the library that include trans people, display posters depicting trans people, and advertise and allow access to trans-supportive websites, such as Egale’s national LGBTQ safer schools and inclusive education website, MyGSA.ca.



to the Ontario Human Rights Commission, “Often, the families of lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgendered persons are not recognized as valid families, and are therefore invisible to others...Discrimination, homophobia and transphobia may make it difficult for LGBT persons to openly discuss their families and request appropriate services or accommodations. Family members of LGBT persons may find themselves harassed, bullied or ostracized because of their relationship.”²⁹ For more information, consult the Ontario Human Rights Commission’s Policy and Guidelines on Discrimination Because of Family Status. To download a PDF version, go to <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/resources/Policies/fampolicy/pdf>.

4. The Ministry of Education’s Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119, Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools, states, “By the beginning of the 2010-11 school year (September 2010), boards will have in place an equity and inclusive education policy... and an implementation plan.”³⁰ In both the development and the implementation of the equity and inclusive education policies, school boards are mandated to be comprehensive, covering all of the prohibited grounds of discrimination set out in the *Ontario Human Rights Code* (the *Code*).³¹ Although gender identity is not explicitly named in the *Code*, people who are discriminated against or harassed because of gender identity are legally protected under the ground of sex. For more information, see the Ontario Human Rights Commission’s Policy on Discrimination and Harassment Because of Gender Identity: <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/resources/Policies/PolicyGenderIdent>.

Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119 also states, “It is expected that boards will post their equity and inclusive education policy on their website.” If you are unable to find your school board’s equity and inclusive education policy on its website after September 2010, ask your principal for a copy of it.

5. According to the Ministry of Education, “Responsible citizenship involves appropriate participation in the civic life of the school community. Active and engaged citizens are aware of their rights, but more importantly, they accept responsibility for protecting their rights and the rights of others.”³² Speak up!



²⁵ <http://www.rootsofviolence.on.ca/english/reports/volume1.pdf>

²⁶ <http://www.unicef.org/crc>

²⁷ <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml#a12>

²⁸ <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/resources/code>

²⁹ <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/resources/>

[Policies/fampolicy/pdf](#)

³⁰ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/119.html>

³¹ <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/resources/code>

³² <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/128.html>

Q4:

*There is graffiti all over the boys' washrooms. Most of it is stuff like "Akim f**ks arse" and "John is a faggot." Shouldn't the school be removing all of this?*

A4:

Yes. The school should have removed all of it immediately to demonstrate that such language (not to mention vandalism) will not be tolerated.

1. Under the Ministry of Education's Policy/Programs Memorandum No. 144, Bullying Prevention and Intervention, "Bullying is typically a form of repeated, persistent, and aggressive behaviour that is directed at an individual or individuals that is intended to cause (or should be known to cause) fear and distress and/or harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem, or reputation...Bullying is a dynamic of unhealthy interaction that can take many forms."³³ Any type of harassment, including graffiti, has a negative impact on school climate and is a form of bullying. Not only should it be removed immediately from the school environment, it must be reported to the principal, who must consider whether to suspend the person who did it.
2. The Ministry of Education's resource Keeping Our Kids Safe at School: Reporting and Responding to Incidents states the following:

"What behaviour is not allowed?"

We can all help make it clear what behaviour is unacceptable and create an environment in our schools where students feel welcome. Examples of inappropriate and disrespectful behaviour include racist, sexual, sexist or homophobic comments, slurs and jokes or graffiti."

You can find a copy of this document at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/safeschools/KeepKidSafeSchool.pdf>.

3. The Ministry's Policy/Program Memorandum No. 145, *Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour*, states, "Board employees who work directly with students—including administrators, teachers, and non-teaching staff (including staff in social work, child and youth work, psychology, and related areas, and educational assistants)—must respond to any student behaviour that is likely to have a negative impact on the school climate. Such behaviour includes all inappropriate and disrespectful behaviour at any time at school and at any school-related event if, in the employee's opinion, it is safe to respond to it, in accordance with subsection 300.4 of Part XIII of the Education Act and Ontario Regulation 472/07. Such inappropriate behaviour may involve swearing, homophobic or racial slurs, sexist comments or jokes, graffiti, or vandalism, and behaviour identified under sections 306 and 310 of the Education Act."³⁴ Homophobic graffiti, or any other sort of discriminatory graffiti, should never appear in Ontario's schools.
4. According to Ontario's *Education Act*, all students have the right to an education in a safe school setting regardless of sexual orientation. This is because any legislation, such as the *Education Act*, which has been passed by the Ontario Parliament must be in accordance with the *Ontario Human Rights Code* (the *Code*). People who are discriminated against or harassed because of sexual orientation are legally protected by the *Code*.³⁵ Discriminatory graffiti such as this detracts from creating safer spaces in learning environments and when students do not feel safe at school, their education is likely to suffer as a consequence.



When students do not feel safe at school, their education is likely to suffer as a consequence.

5. Article 29 of the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child says that education is intended to develop the personalities and talents of all children and young people.³⁶ By allowing such vandalism to be visible, it is very difficult for LGBTQ students, students perceived to be LGBTQ, and students with LGBTQ parents, other family members, or friends to fully be themselves. Additionally, Article 19 ensures that children and young people are properly cared for and protected from abuse. Your school should be doing whatever it can to provide you with a safe, inclusive learning environment where you feel welcome and respected.
6. The Ministry of Education's Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119, *Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools*, states, "By the beginning of the 2010-11 school year (September 2010), boards will have in place an equity and inclusive education policy...and an implementation plan."³⁷ In both the development and the implementation of the equity and inclusive education policies, school boards are mandated to be comprehensive, covering all of the prohibited grounds of discrimination set out in the *Ontario Human Rights Code* (the *Code*). The *Code* prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation.³⁸

Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119 also states, "It is expected that boards will post their equity and inclusive education policy on their website." If you are unable to find your school board's equity and inclusive education policy on its website after September 2010, ask your principal for a copy of it.

7. According to the Ministry of Education, "A school should be a place that promotes responsibility, respect, civility, and academic excellence in a safe learning and teaching environment. A positive school climate exists when all members of the school community feel safe, comfortable, and accepted. All students, parents, teachers, and staff members

have the right to be safe, and to feel safe, in their school community.”³⁹ Where homophobic or otherwise discriminatory graffiti is left visible, many students—regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity—may feel unsafe.



Where homophobic graffiti is visible, many students—regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity—may feel unsafe.

8. According to the Ministry of Education, “Responsible citizenship involves appropriate participation in the civic life of the school community. Active and engaged citizens are aware of their rights, but more importantly, they accept responsibility for protecting their rights and the rights of others.”⁴⁰ Speak up!

³³ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/144.html>

³⁴ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/145.html>

³⁵ <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/resources/code>

³⁶ <http://www.unicef.org/crc>

³⁷ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/119.html>

³⁸ <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/resources/code>

³⁹ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/brochure/conduct/conduct.html?>

⁴⁰ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/128.html>

Q5: *I have two moms. My non-biological mom has adopted me. My teacher knows they are both legally responsible for me, but he still keeps asking me which one is my “real” mom. Is this appropriate?*

A5:

No. It is inappropriate and may be a breach of your human rights for your teacher to ask you this question.

1. Under Article 12 of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, you have the right to have your private life and family life be respected. Asking in effect which parent gave birth to you violates these rights. This is also backed up by Article 16 of the United Nations’ Convention on the Rights of the Child.
2. If your non-biological parent has adopted you, your school has a legal obligation to treat her exactly as it would treat a biological parent. This includes not asking if she is a “real” parent.
3. If your non-biological parent holds Parental Responsibility for you, your school has a legal obligation to treat her exactly as it would treat a step-parent. This includes not asking if she is a “real” parent.
4. The *Ontario Human Rights Code* (the *Code*) protects familial relationships from discrimination through the grounds of marital and family status. The *Code* defines family status as “being in a parent and child relationship.” This can also mean a parent and child type of relationship, embracing a range of circumstances without blood or adoptive ties but with similar relationships of care, responsibility, and commitment. According to the Ontario Human Rights Commission, “Often, the families of lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgendered persons are not recognized as valid families, and are therefore invisible to others...Discrimination, homophobia and transphobia may make it difficult for LGBT persons to openly discuss their families and request appropriate services or accommodations. Family members of LGBT persons may find themselves

harassed, bullied or ostracized because of their relationship.”⁴⁴ For more information, consult the Ontario Human Rights Commission’s Policy and Guidelines on Discrimination Because of Family Status. To download a PDF version, go to <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/resources/Policies/fampolicy/pdf>.

5. Point out to your teacher that such a belief is based on the stereotype that all families are headed by one man and one woman and that any other family structure is unfortunately often considered to be weird or inferior. This is not true—it is an example of heterosexism. The Vanier Institute of the Family has indicated that “fewer than half of all Canadian families now consist of a married heterosexual couple with one or more children.”⁴⁵ In the *Roots of Youth Violence Report, Volume 1* (2008), the Government of Ontario recommends that schools implement “services for families of all forms.”⁴⁶
6. The Canadian Teachers’ Federation’s Policy on Anti-Homophobia and Anti-Heterosexism includes a comprehensive vision of a curriculum-integrated, total school working and learning environment that is “safe, welcoming, inclusive, and affirming for people of all sexual orientations and gender identities.”⁴⁷ Parents are part of the school community and it is important that parents’ and students’ rights are respected. Let your teacher know he can find a copy online at www.ctf-fce.ca.
7. The Ministry of Education’s Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119, *Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools*, states, “By the beginning of the 2010-11 school year (September 2010), boards will have in place an equity and inclusive education policy...and an implementation plan.”⁴⁸ In both the development and the implementation of the equity and inclusive education policies, school boards are mandated to be comprehensive, covering all of the prohibited grounds of discrimination set out in the *Ontario Human Rights Code* (the *Code*). The *Code* prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation.⁴⁹

Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119 also states, “It is expected that boards will post their equity and inclusive education policy on their website.” If you are unable to find your school board’s equity and inclusive education policy on its website after September 2010, ask your principal for a copy of it. Your school should be doing whatever it can to provide you with a safe, inclusive learning environment where you feel welcome and respected.

8. According to the Ministry of Education, “Responsible citizenship involves appropriate participation in the civic life of the school community. Active and engaged citizens are aware of their rights, but more importantly, they accept responsibility for protecting their rights and the rights of others.”⁵⁰ Speak up!

⁴¹ <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml#a12>

⁴² <http://www.unicef.org/crc/>

⁴³ <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/resources/code>

⁴⁴ <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/resources/Policies/fampolicy/pdf>

⁴⁵ <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/resources/Policies/fampolicy/pdf>

⁴⁶ <http://www.rootsofviolence.on.ca/english/reports/volume1.pdf>

⁴⁷ <http://www.ctf-fce.ca/documents/Priorities/EN/pd/BGLTT/BGLTTPolicies%20-English.pdf>

⁴⁸ <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/resources/code>

⁴⁹ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/128.html>

⁵⁰ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/119.html>

YES, IT IS. You are entitled to identify your sexual orientation any way you like, including not at all.

A6:

Q6:

When somebody in my class asked about my sexual orientation, I referred to myself as “queer” and I got punished by my teacher. Surely that’s wrong?

Your teacher may have felt, mistakenly, that you were being homophobic since the term “queer” has a long homophobic history. Explain that this was not your intention and direct your teacher to the definitions of the term “queer” in the Terms & Concepts section of Egale’s national LGBTQ safer schools and inclusive education website, MyGSA.ca, or this Equity and Inclusive Education Resource Kit.⁵¹

Direct your teacher to the definitions of the term “queer” in the Terms & Concepts section of Egale’s national LGBTQ safer schools and inclusive education website, MyGSA.ca.



1. The *Ontario Human Rights Code* (the *Code*) is a law that provides for equal rights and opportunities and recognizes the dignity and worth of every person in Ontario.⁵² The *Code* makes it against the law to discriminate against someone or to harass anyone because of sexual orientation. This right to be free from discrimination and harassment applies to your school environment. This means that your teacher cannot treat you unequally or subject you to harassment because you are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or heterosexual.
2. The Ministry of Education’s Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119, *Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools*, states, “By the beginning of the 2010-11 school year (September 2010), boards will have in place an equity and inclusive education policy...and an implementation plan.”⁵³ In both the development and the

implementation of the equity and inclusive education policies, school boards are mandated to be comprehensive, covering all of the prohibited grounds of discrimination set out in the *Ontario Human Rights Code* (the *Code*). The *Code* prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation.⁵⁴

Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119 also states, “It is expected that boards will post their equity and inclusive education policy on their website.” If you are unable to find your school board’s equity and inclusive education policy on its website after September 2010, ask your principal for a copy of it. Your school should be doing whatever it can to provide you with a safe, inclusive learning environment where you feel welcome and respected.

3. According to the Ministry of Education, “Responsible citizenship involves appropriate participation in the civic life of the school community. Active and engaged citizens are aware of their rights, but more importantly, they accept responsibility for protecting their rights and the rights of others.”⁵⁵ **Speak up!**

⁵¹ <http://MyGSA.ca/SiteGlossary>

⁵² <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/resources/code>

⁵³ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/119.html>

⁵⁴ <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/resources/code>

⁵⁵ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/128.html>

A7:

When I was walking by the principal's office the other day, I heard a parent of one of the other students saying something about not finding it appropriate to have a "dating club" at our school and that certain movies should not be shown in classrooms. I didn't hear the principal's response. What should she have said?

A7:

Over the course of 2009, Ontario's Ministry of Education released a number of important documents setting forth a vision promoting equity and inclusive education. Three of the most important ones are Realizing the Promise of Diversity: Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy; Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119, Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools; and Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation.⁵⁷

All of these documents can be found under the heading "Greater Equity Means Greater Student Success" in the Administrators' section of the Ministry's website.

YOUR PRINCIPAL SHOULD HAVE SAID that Ontario's Ministry of Education is supportive of Ontario's diverse school communities and that in Ontario's publicly-funded school environments—whether public, Catholic, francophone, high school, middle school, or elementary school—diversity explicitly includes sexual orientation and gender identity.⁵⁶

Your principal should have told the parent that a Gay-Straight Alliance is *not* a "dating club."



Your principal also should have told the parent that a Gay-Straight Alliance or GSA is not a "dating club." A GSA is any inclusive student group concerned with lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, two-spirited, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ) matters and they also serve as support groups for LGBTQ students, allies, and youth with LGBTQ parents or other family members. For more extensive definitions, see the Terms & Concepts section of Egale's national LGBTQ safer schools and inclusive education website, MyGSA.ca, or this Equity and Inclusive Education Resource Kit.⁵⁸

For more extensive definitions, see the Terms & Concepts section of Egale’s national LGBTQ safer schools and inclusive education website, MyGSA.ca.



Inclusive curriculum is integral to student success.

Regarding the film, your principal should have told the parent that inclusive curriculum is integral to student success: “Students need to feel engaged in and empowered by what they are learning, supported by the teachers and staff from whom they are learning, and welcomed in the environment in which they are learning.”⁶⁰

1. The Ministry of Education’s Policy/Program Memorandum No. 128, The Provincial Code of Conduct and School Board Codes of Conduct, sets out roles and responsibilities for all members of school communities, including parents.⁶² According to this document, “Parents play an important role in the education of their children, and can support the efforts of school staff in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students. Parents fulfil their role when they show that they are familiar with the provincial Code of Conduct, the board’s code of conduct, and school rules.” One of the purposes of the Code of Conduct is



Any learning environment that neglects to integrate LGBTQ matters into the curriculum is unwelcoming to LGBTQ students, allies, and youth with LGBTQ parents or other family members, and it also fails to comply with Ministry direction.⁶¹

“To ensure that all members of the school community, especially people in positions of authority, are treated with respect and dignity” and one of the standards of behaviour is that “All members of the school community must respect and treat others fairly, regardless of, for example...gender [or] sexual orientation.” Your principal should have directed the parent to this document.

2. The Ministry of Education’s Policy/Program Memorandum No. 145, Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour, states that “In order to promote a positive school climate, school boards must provide opportunities for all members of the school community to increase their knowledge and understanding of such issues as homophobia [and] gender-based violence” and that “Boards must also help school staff to give support to students who wish to participate in gay-straight alliances and in other student-led activities that promote understanding and development of healthy relationships. Schools must also engage their school councils and student councils to support these student-led activities.”⁶³

Given that “Canadian culture today has become far more open about homosexuality” and that “Catholic teachers have expressed the need for Catholic educational resources that will help them respond to challenging questions that are coming up in class” as well as that “students are receiving conflicting messages and misinformation from the media and from each other” about LGBTQ matters, GSAs are an important component of a student’s learning process.⁶⁴ Your principal should have explained to the parent that GSAs are an important part of inclusive and diverse school environments.

3. Things such as supporting inclusive student groups and integrating inclusive curriculum across all subject areas are vital components of fostering safe learning environments for all members of school communities.

For more information, a copy of the Legislation can be found here: http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/source/statutes/english/2009/elaws_src_s09017_e.htm.

4. The Ministry of Education’s Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119, Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools, states, “By the beginning of the 2010-11 school year (September 2010), boards will have in place an equity and inclusive education policy... and an implementation plan.”⁶⁵ In both the development and the implementation of the equity and inclusive education policies, school boards are mandated to be comprehensive, covering all of the prohibited grounds of discrimination set out in the *Ontario Human Rights Code* (the *Code*). The *Code* prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation and, according to the Ontario Human Rights Commission, “Gender identity is not an enumerated ground in the *Code*. However, the existing legal structure in the *Code* can support a progressive understanding of the ground of ‘sex’ to include ‘gender identity’ and protect individuals who are subject to discrimination or harassment because of gender identity. This approach toward the application of the *Code* has been accepted for some time.”⁶⁶ This means that anyone who is discriminated against or harassed because of gender identity is legally protected under the ground of sex. This includes transsexual, transgender, and intersex persons, as well as cross-dressers and other people whose gender identity or expression is, or is seen to be, different from their birth-

identified sex. Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119 also states, “It is expected that boards will post their equity and inclusive education policy on their website.” Your principal could have directed the parent to the school board’s equity and inclusive education policy on its website.

5. In 2010-11, schools are required to “review classroom strategies and revise them as needed to ensure they are aligned with and reflect school-wide equity and inclusive education policies.”⁶⁷ These reviews should include curriculum: “Schools are expected to give students and staff authentic and relevant opportunities to learn about diverse histories, cultures, and perspectives. Lessons, projects, and related resources should allow students to see themselves reflected in the curriculum” and this involves, for example, “using texts written by gay/lesbian authors” and showing age-appropriate movies incorporating LGBTQ content.⁶⁸ Your principal should have informed the parent of this.
6. According to the Ministry of Education, “Responsible citizenship involves appropriate participation in the civic life of the school community. Active and engaged citizens are aware of their rights, but more importantly, they accept responsibility for protecting their rights and the rights of others.”⁶⁹

Speak up and feel free to talk to your teachers about LGBTQ matters: “School staff who work directly with students will provide those students wishing to discuss such issues as healthy relationships, gender identity and sexuality with contact information about professional supports available in their community.”⁷⁰

For more information, and to participate in discussions with other youth about LGBTQ matters, check out Egale's national LGBTQ safer schools and inclusive education website: MyGSA.ca.



⁵⁶ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/equity.pdf>

⁵⁷ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/equity.html>

⁵⁸ <http://MyGSA.ca/SiteGlossary>

⁶⁰ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/inclusiveguide.pdf>

⁶¹ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/119.html> and <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/equity.pdf>

⁶² <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/128.html>

⁶³ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/145.html>

⁶⁴ <http://www.carfleo.org/Family%20Life/Intermediate/Grade%208%20Same%20Sex%20Attraction.pdf>

⁶⁵ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/119.html>

⁶⁶ <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/resources/Policies/PolicyGenderIdent>

⁶⁷ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/equity.pdf>

⁶⁸ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/inclusiveguide.pdf>

⁶⁹ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/128.html>

⁷⁰ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/safeschools/KeepKidSafeSchool.pdf>



WHAT CAN I DO?

TALK TO OTHERS

If someone is harassing you, or someone you know, other people are probably having the same experience.

KEEP A RECORD

Write down all the details. Include dates, times, and names of witnesses.

SPEAK UP

If you're able to, it's your right to tell the harasser that you do not like the harassment and insist that it stop.

GET ASSISTANCE

Contact an adult you trust in your school or the Ontario Human Rights Commission for information about filing a discrimination application: 1.800.387.9080 (toll-free).

FILE A COMPLAINT

If you feel the situation is too serious to handle on your own, you may make a complaint directly to your principal or to the Ontario Human Rights Commission. Principals have the responsibility to respond quickly to complaints of discrimination and harassment. For more information about human rights in Ontario and legal support, see <http://www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/ohrc>

FOR MORE INFORMATION & SUPPORT...

Use Egale's national LGBTQ safer schools and inclusive education website, MyGSA.ca, or contact Egale at 1.888.204.7777 (toll-free) or mygsa@egale.ca



"What Can I Do?" has been adapted from the Toronto District School Board's "Know Your Rights and Responsibilities."



**This Equity and Inclusive
Education Resource Kit for
Ontario High Schools is part of
Egale's Safe Schools Campaign.
The Safe Schools Campaign is
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LGBTQ ROLE MODELS & SYMBOLS



di  **ersity =**
possibility



LGBTQ ROLE MODELS

Arts & Entertainment

Trey Anthony ✨
Portia DeGeneres
Jane Lynch
Lucas Silveira ✨
Wanda Sykes

Math & Science

Rachel Carson
Magnus Hirschfeld
Alan Turing

Politics

Georgina Beyer
Senator Nancy Ruth ✨
George Smitherman ✨
Kathleen Wynne ✨

Religion

Rev. Dr. Brent Hawkes, C.M. ✨

Sports

John Amaechi
Martina Navratilova
Mark Tewksbury ✨



ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



Trey Anthony

b. 1974

Trey Anthony is the award-winning playwright of *da Kink in my Hair*. Critics have referred to Anthony as “The Oprah of the Canadian theatre scene”! Anthony is also the Executive Producer, co-creator, and writer of Global Television’s hit television show “*da Kink in my Hair*,” which includes the first black lesbian kiss (Episode 108) ever to be broadcast on primetime television.



The theatrical version was nominated for a Dora award in 2004, has received critical acclaim, and has broken box office records wherever it has played. The play is also the recipient of four NAACP theatre awards and was the first Canadian play to be produced at

the Princess of Wales Theatre, Canada’s largest commercial theatre.

Anthony is a former television producer for The Women’s Television Network and a writer for the Comedy Network and CTV. She is also the producer of Canada’s first Urban Womyn’s Comedy Festival—‘dat girl sho is funny!

Anthony is also the co-writer of the hit *I Am Not a Dinner Mint*, *The Crap Women Swallow to Stay in a Relationship*, which debuted to packed houses and critical acclaim in the summer of 2006. She has also been a playwright in residence at the prestigious Canstage theatre and is the president of the Trey Anthony @ One Centre, a creative wellness centre for women dedicated to nurturing “the whole woman.” Anthony hopes that this centre will be a catalyst for change in the way that Canadian women view themselves.

In 2009, Anthony was honoured in Egale’s Queering Black History Campaign.

[www.egale.ca/
QueeringBlackHistory2009](http://www.egale.ca/QueeringBlackHistory2009)



Photo credit: mangostar

Portia DeGeneres
b. Jan. 31, 1973



Portia DeGeneres is an Australian actress, best known for her roles as Nelle Porter on the television series *Ally McBeal*, Lindsay Bluth Fünke on the sitcom *Arrested Development*, and Veronica Palmer on the ABC sitcom *Better off Ted*.

Born Amanda Lee Rogers in Horsham, Victoria, Australia, the daughter of Margaret and Barry Rogers, DeGeneres was raised in Grovedale. As a child, she modeled for print and TV commercials. She adopted the name Portia de Rossi at a young age: “When I was 15, I changed my name legally. In retrospect,

I think it was largely due to my struggle about being gay. Everything just didn’t fit, and I was trying to find things I could identify myself with, and it started with my name. I picked Portia because I was a Shakespeare fan (Portia is the character in *The Merchant of Venice* who comes to the rescue of Antonio and Bassanio in their time of need). De Rossi because I was Australian and I thought that an exotic Italian name would somehow suit me more than Amanda Rogers. When you live in Australia, Europe is so far away and so fascinating, so stylish and cultured and sophisticated.”

She studied at Geelong Grammar School and Melbourne Girls Grammar School, then the University of Melbourne Law School, but left before finishing the course to pursue an acting career.

Her first significant role was in the 1994 Australian film *Sirens*. Soon afterwards she moved to Los Angeles and had guest roles on several TV shows, and a permanent role in *Nick Freno: Licensed Teacher*, before landing a role in the film *Scream 2*.

She attracted international attention when she joined the main cast of the Ally McBeal TV series in 1998 playing lawyer Nelle Porter. She remained with the show until its end in 2002. In 2001, she starred in Who is Cletis Tout? with Christian Slater. From 2003-2006, DeGeneres starred as Lindsay Bluth Fünke on Fox Television's critically acclaimed, Emmy-winning series Arrested Development. She has had a number of other roles, including her appearances in the fifth season of Nip Tuck and her role in Stigmata.

DeGeneres is openly lesbian. In 2005, DeGeneres came out publicly about her sexual orientation in interviews with *Details* and *The Advocate*. She became engaged to Ellen DeGeneres and they were married on August 16, 2008 at their home. On August 6, 2010, she officially filed a petition with the LA County Superior Court to change her name legally to Portia Lee James DeGeneres.

Adapted from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portia_de_Rossi



Jane Lynch

b. July 14, 1960

Jane Lynch is an American writer, actor, comedian, and singer best known for her roles in *Glee*, Christopher Guest comedies such as *Best in Show*, Judd Apatow comedies like *The 40-Year-Old Virgin*, and *Two and a Half Men* as Charlie and Alan Harper's sarcastic psychologist. She has also appeared in the crime drama *Criminal Minds* as Spencer Reid's schizophrenic mother.

Lynch was born and raised in Dolton, Illinois, the daughter of a housewife mother and a banker father. She was raised in an Irish Catholic family and attended Thornridge High School. She received her Bachelor's degree in theatre from Illinois State University and her MFA from Cornell University, also in theatre. Lynch is openly gay and married her partner Dr. Lara Embry on May 31, 2010.

Lynch's extensive theater background involved touring with The Second City comedy troupe and playing Carol Brady in The Real Live Brady Bunch. She also wrote and starred in the award-winning play Oh Sister, My Sister. Originally produced in 1998, the play kicked off the Lesbians in Theater program at the L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center in 2004.

Her breakthrough film role was as Christy Cummings, the butch lesbian personal dog handler to trophy wife Sheri Ann Cabot (Jennifer Coolidge) in director Christopher Guest's mockumentary Best in Show (2000). She also appeared in Guest's A Mighty Wind (2003) as Laurie Bohner and in For Your Consideration (2006).

Lynch is also a television performer. She starred with John Hannah and William Fichtner in 2002's *MDs*, and has made guest appearances in numerous



television series, including The L Word, Judging Amy, The West Wing, 7th Heaven, Felicity, Arrested Development, Two and a Half Men, Weeds, Boston Legal, Criminal Minds, Help Me Help You, Gilmore Girls, The New Adventures of Old Christine, Psych, and Monk as well as others.

In 2005, Lynch was named as one of POWER UP's "10 Amazing Gay Women in Showbiz." She starred in Julie and Julia, playing the role of Dorothy McWilliams, Julia Child's sister. *Entertainment Weekly* dedicated an article on its website to the possibility of her performance receiving an Academy Award nomination.

On December 15, 2009, Lynch received a Golden Globe nomination for Best Supporting Actress in a Series, Miniseries, or Television Film for her role on Glee.

Adapted from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jane_Lynch





Lucas Silveira

b. July 30

Lucas Silveira is the openly trans lead singer of Toronto alternative-rock band The Cliks. Born in Canada to a Portuguese-Canadian family, he lived from the age of four to the age of ten on Pico Island, part of the Azorean archipelago. He has been interviewed by the Associated Press, the Boston Globe, and many radio stations, quickly becoming one of the most visible transpeople in the music industry.

Silveira understands the link the media has made with his trans identity and the band's

music, stating that he knows he is a pioneer and eventually the novelty of his gender identity will wear off. He has said that he wants to be seen first and foremost as a musician rather than an identity spokesperson. Silveira has also gotten much attention from the fact that, in his transition from female to male, he has said that he sacrificed the use of male hormones to maintain his singing voice, creating a distinct vocal sound and range.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Cliks



Photo credit: Elijah Nouvelage

Wanda Sykes

b. March 7, 1964

Wanda Sykes is an American writer, stand-up comedian, and actor. She is known for her blunt comedic observations on current events, the differences between sexes and races, and the human condition. Sykes was born in Portsmouth, Virginia and raised in the Washington, D.C. area.

In 2004, *Entertainment Weekly* named her as one of the 25 funniest people in America. She has won an Emmy for her writing as well as numerous other awards.

In October 2008, Sykes appeared in a television ad for the Think B4 You Speak Campaign, an advertising campaign by GLSEN aimed at curbing homophobic slang in youth communities. In the 30-second spot, she uses humour to scold a teenager for saying “that’s so gay” when he really means “that is so bad.”

The same month, she and her female partner, Alex, whom she met in 2006, got married in California. In November 2008, she publicly came out as lesbian while at a same-sex marriage rally in Las Vegas regarding Proposition 8, which forbid new marriages of same-sex couples in California. Alex gave birth to twins Olivia Lou and Lucas Claude on April 27, 2009.

Sykes expressed her excitement over the presidential election of Barack Obama, and feeling “crushed” after California voters passed state Proposition 8. She has continued to be active in same-sex marriage issues hosting events and emceeing fundraisers.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wanda_Sykes





Photo credit: GLBT History Month

Rachel Carson

b. May 27, 1907 d. April 14, 1964

Rachel Carson was a writer and research biologist credited with establishing the environmental movement. Carson brought public attention to the need to regulate industry and protect the environment.

She was raised in rural Springdale, Pennsylvania, where she and her mother explored woods and springs, and enjoyed bird watching. She claimed her most enduring childhood memory was a desire to become a writer.

In 1929, Carson graduated from the Pennsylvania College for Women (now known as Chatham College) with a degree in zoology. She earned a Master's degree in zoology from Johns Hopkins University in 1932.

Carson is best known for her book *Silent Spring* (1962), a meticulously researched work about the dangers of the indiscriminate use of pesticides. Though the book sparked fierce opposition from the chemical industry, it succeeded at raising public awareness. President Kennedy ordered an investigation. As a result, the pesticide DDT was banned.

While battling cancer, Carson continued her efforts to bring attention to environmental issues. She spoke out on the need for an independent government regulatory agency to monitor environmental degradation and its effects on human health. Her activism led to the creation of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Chatham College established the Rachel Carson Institute to promote "awareness and understanding of significant and current environmental issues." In 1980, she was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honor.

www.glbthistorymonth.com





Photo credit: GLBT History Month

Magnus Hirschfeld

b. May 14, 1868 d. May 14, 1935

Pioneering sexologist Magnus Hirschfeld devoted his life to the scientific validation and political liberation of homosexuals. He helped lay the groundwork for the modern GLBT civil rights movement.

Born in 1868 in Kolberg, Germany (now Kolbrzeg, Poland), to a highly renowned physician, Hirschfeld followed his father into medicine. Practicing in Berlin, he soon turned his efforts to the study of human sexuality.

In 1896, Hirschfeld, under a pseudonym, distributed a pamphlet titled “Sappho and Socrates.” This became the basis for his later research, which includes the 23-volume

Yearbook for the Sexual Intermediates, the first periodical dedicated to homosexual studies.

The next year, Hirschfeld founded the Scientific Humanitarian Committee to enlighten the public about homosexuality and to encourage homosexuals to fight for their liberation. The Scientific Humanitarian Committee aimed to repeal Paragraph 175, the law criminalizing homosexuality.

In his tireless—and lengthy—campaign to raise awareness and repeal Paragraph 175, Hirschfeld became a well-known public figure and earned the moniker “The Einstein of Sex.” With over 5,000 signatures of prominent Germans collected, the bill eventually made progress in the Reichstag.

In 1919, Hirschfeld founded the Institute for Sexual Research, which housed a vast library on sexuality





and the
Museum of
Sex, provided
educational

services and resources, and offered medical consultations. The same year, he produced the film *Different from the Others*, likely the first gay film.

In 1921, Hirschfeld organized the First Congress for Sexual Reform, during which the World League for Sexual Reform (WLSR) was formed. Touring internationally, he promoted the WLSR and its goals. At its peak, the WLSR boasted 130,000 members worldwide.

With the rise of the Nazi Party, Hirschfeld came under attack both politically and personally. On May 6, 1933, while Hirschfeld was abroad, a mob of students and storm troopers raided the Institute for Sexual Research. They burned books, journals, and other materials in a bonfire to cleanse the city of “un-German” materials.

Exiled, Hirschfeld settled in Nice, France, and died two years later. He left a legacy of innovative research and advocacy.

www.glbthistorymonth.com



Photo credit: GLBT History Month

Alan Turing
b. June 23, 1912 d. June 7, 1954

Alan Turing was by nature skeptical and indifferent to conventional values. While often at odds with authority, he made remarkable connections between apparently unrelated areas of inquiry, including treating symbolic logic as a new area of applied mathematics.

As a fellow at King’s College, Cambridge, Turing wrote “On Computable Numbers,” his landmark paper published in 1936, which is considered the founding work of modern computer science. After completing doctoral work at Princeton University, Turing returned to Britain in 1938 shortly before the outbreak of the Second World War.



Turing's potential ability as a code breaker had been identified and he had been introduced to the secret operations at the Government Codes and Ciphers School in London. On September 4, 1939, the day after Britain declared war on Germany, Turing reported to work at Bletchley Park, Britain's code breaking center.

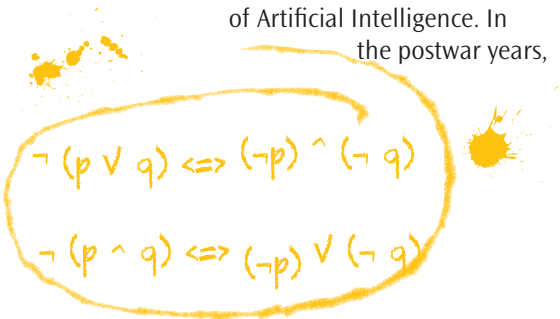
At the conclusion of the war, Turing's ambition was to create a computer, but the classified status of his wartime work prevented him from realizing that dream. His contention that the computer could rival the computing power of the human brain correctly anticipated the field of Artificial Intelligence. In the postwar years,

Turing competed as a distance runner, reaching near-Olympic times in the marathon. Asked why he engaged in such demanding training, Turing replied, "I have such a stressful job that the only way I can get it out of my mind is by running hard."

Alan Turing lived at a time when homosexuality was regarded as a mental illness and homosexual acts were illegal. Despite his critical wartime role, when his relationship with a Manchester man became public, he was charged with "gross indecency" and forced to accept hormone treatment with estrogen. He also lost his security clearance and was no longer able to work as a cryptographer.

Turing died in 1954 shortly before his 42nd birthday after eating a cyanide-laced apple. His death was ruled a suicide.

www.gbtHistoryMonth.com





POLITICS



Photo credit: GLBT History Month

Georgina Beyer
b. Nov. 1957

As an elected Member of Parliament in New Zealand, Georgina Beyer was the first openly trans person in the world to hold a national office. Beyer's transformation from stripper and sex worker to politician is a testament to her remarkable fortitude.

Beyer, born biologically male, spent her early childhood on her grandparents' farm in rural New Zealand before moving to Wellington with her mother and stepfather. From an early age, Beyer recalls feeling like a girl trapped in a boy's body.

In her twenties, Beyer began working in the Wellington gay nightclub scene as a singer and drag queen performer and then as a sex worker. During a trip to Australia, she was attacked and raped by four men. Beyer refers to this experience as her defining moment.

In 1984, she had sexual reassignment surgery and forged a successful career as a film and television actor in Auckland. She was often typecast as a drag queen or streetwalker. From Auckland, Beyer moved to the small conservative town of Carterton, where she took a job as a youth social worker.

In 1993, Beyer was elected to the Carterton District Council. Two years later, she was elected Mayor of Carterton, where she served for five years. In 1999, she won a seat in the New Zealand Parliament. While in Parliament, Beyer helped pass the Prostitution Reform

Act, which decriminalized prostitution and protects sex workers and their clients. She was instrumental in securing same-sex civil union benefits for New Zealanders.



Beyer chronicled her life in *Change for the Better: The Story of Georgina Beyer* (1999). A documentary film about her, *Georgie Girl* (2002), won international awards.

Beyer was a keynote speaker at the International Conference on LGBT Human Rights in Montreal in 2006. She retired from Parliament in 2007, saying, “I can now look for fresh challenges.”

In the fall of 2010, Beyer did a cross-Canada tour sponsored by Egale Canada. As part of this tour, Egale invited her to speak as the Guest of Honour at their Annual Gala and Awards Ceremony held in Toronto, Ontario. She also travelled to Lethbridge, Alberta and Vancouver, British Columbia for screenings of *Georgie Girl* with accompanying panel discussions on trans topics.

Adapted from www.glbthistorymonth.com



Photo credit: GLBT History Month

Senator Nancy Ruth ✨

b. Jan. 6, 1942

Since her twenties, Nancy Ruth has been a feminist “truth teller” and social activist. She ran for the Ontario Provincial Legislature twice and was appointed to the Senate of Canada in 2005, becoming the first openly lesbian senator in Canada.

She has been instrumental in co-founding organizations that work for women’s social change in Canada, such as the Charter of Rights Coalition, the Women’s Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF), and the Canadian Women’s Foundation—a foundation specifically directed to supporting women and girls in micro-enterprise and violence prevention. She was a



visionary in the founding and development of the Women's Future Fund, a national fundraising effort to replace government funding for women's groups, and the Linden School, Toronto's (and perhaps Canada's) first girls' school based on feminist pedagogy. She also co-created section15.ca (formerly coolwomen.ca), Canada's largest website for young women on the history and contribution of women to Canada. In 1994, in recognition of her outstanding work and contribution to her country, Nancy Ruth was named a Member of the Order of Canada.

She has sat on the Board of Directors of the following organizations, among others: the Economic Council of Canada, the Canadian Centre for Arms Control, the Canada-USA Fulbright Foundation, the Doctor's Hospital Foundation, Mount Saint Vincent University, the LEAF Foundation, and the

International Institute of Concern for Public Health.

Nancy Ruth has given a powerful and eloquent voice to women in Ontario and Canada. She has spoken extensively on the Charter, the three-year moratorium on equality rights in the law, the inequities of both the Meech Lake and the Charlottetown Accords, and a myriad of other issues concerning women, poverty, politics, and economics. She has a keen interest in feminist art and culture, music, education, and spiritual expression.

Nancy Ruth is an Honorary Advisory Board Member of the Egale Canada Human Rights Trust, supporting Egale's work in helping to make Canadian schools safer and more inclusive, respectful, and welcoming learning and working environments for all members of school communities.

www.MyGSA.ca



George Smitherman
b. 1964

Long before ever thinking about running for elected office, George was gaining a reputation as a community leader who always backed his words of support for a cause with action. Whether playing a leadership role in the campaign to save the Wellesley Hospital or by adding his voice, and even challenging his party, on the recognition of long-denied basic human rights protections, George's tireless work ethic and personal connection to his community have always earned him respect, even from people on the opposite side of the issue.



As a Member of Provincial Parliament, George represented the riding of Toronto Centre for over ten years. During that time he spearheaded a number of local initiatives, including the establishment of new community skating and reading programmes as well as enhanced services for Toronto's newest citizens and immigrants at Sherbourne Health Centre.

As Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, George restored the independent status of Women's College Hospital, delivered community health centres for all priority neighbourhoods, helped provide over half a million Ontarians with access to a family doctor, and improved wait times for key services while at the same time undertaking a massive capital expansion of Toronto's hospitals.

As Minister of Energy and Infrastructure, George received

the World Wind Energy Award for championing green energy. George was responsible for the passage of Ontario's Green Energy and Green Economy Act, which will clean our air, reduce our carbon footprint, and create opportunity for more than 50,000 new green energy jobs. George is proud of the role he played in making Ontario the recognized North American leader in renewable energy policy, which has already resulted in billions in new investment.

Born and raised in Etobicoke, George has made downtown Toronto his home for more than twenty years. Prior to holding elected office, George owned and operated his own retail business in the City of Toronto for a decade. He is married to Christopher Peloso and they have adopted a child named Michael.

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Kathleen Wynne



Kathleen Wynne is a politician in Ontario, Canada. She is currently a member of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, representing the riding of Don Valley West for the Liberal Party. In 2000, Wynne was elected as a public school trustee in Toronto's eighth ward, despite being targeted by anonymous hate literature describing her as an extremist lesbian. She strongly opposed cuts to public education mandated by the

Conservative government. In 2001, she helped pass a measure encouraging public schools to purchase teaching materials reflecting the presence of gay and lesbian parents in modern society.

Wynne was elected to the Ontario legislature in the 2003 provincial election, defeating Progressive Conservative cabinet minister David Turnbull by over 5000 votes.

The Liberals won the election, and Wynne was appointed parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, Mary Anne Chambers, in October 2003. In October 2004, she was appointed parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Education, Gerard Kennedy.

On September 18, 2006, she was promoted to Ontario Minister of Education in a cabinet shuffle occasioned by the resignation of Joe Cordiano from the Legislature.

She is the province's first openly lesbian cabinet minister, and only the second openly LGBTQ cabinet minister after cabinet colleague George Smitherman.

In the 2007 provincial election, Wynne ran for re-election against PC leader John Tory. Tory, who was elected to Dufferin-Peel-Wellington-Grey (former PC leader Ernie Eves' riding) in a by-election, was seeking a seat in a Toronto-area riding. Though projected to be a close race, Wynne was re-elected with 50.4 percent of the popular vote, defeating Tory by just under 5000 votes.

Wynne served as Minister of Education for more than three years, leading the government's efforts to bring smaller classes to the early grades, improve test scores, and create more opportunities for high school students to reach their fullest potential. In early 2010, as the result of another cabinet shuffle, Wynne was appointed the Minister of Transportation.

She is the mother of three young adults. She and her partner Jane have been residents of Toronto for over 25 years.

Adapted from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kathleen_Wynne and <http://www.premier.gov.on.ca/team/biography.asp?MPPID=39&Lang=EN>





RELIGION



Rev. Dr. Brent Hawkes, C.M.
b. June 2, 1950

The Rev. Dr. Brent Hawkes, C.M. has been the Senior Pastor at the Metropolitan Community Church (MCC) of Toronto for 30 years. Rev. Hawkes is a native of Bath, New Brunswick and a graduate of Mount Allison University (B.Sc. & B.Ed.). As the pastor of the Toronto MCC, Rev. Hawkes has been at the forefront of the city's ministry to the LGBTQ community. He serves as spiritual leader to a faith community of some 575 congregants at regular Sunday worship. As well, he has served the community at large

with distinction, championing several human rights initiatives.

In 2007, Rev. Hawkes was appointed as a Member of the Order of Canada. Rev. Hawkes is the first LGBTQ activist to be received into the order.

Rev. Hawkes has tirelessly serviced the cause of justice for gays and lesbians. He has helped thousands of LGBTQ individuals and their families come back into spiritual relationship with God. This is demonstrated through the popularity of the MCC of Toronto's Christmas Eve Service held at Roy Thompson Hall, Toronto's premier cultural venue. It is one of the largest Christmas Eve services in Canada with an average of 2500 people in attendance.

He has constantly challenged the church to examine important issues, such as prejudice against LGBTQ individuals and communities and inclusive

language as well as the ordination of women. He has played a significant role in promoting the inclusion of sexual orientation in the *Ontario Human Rights Code* and the *Canadian Human Rights Act*. He was a past co-chair for the Campaign for Equal Families. Rev. Hawkes has continually championed for equal rights for LGBTQ individuals and has continually challenged the status quo with regards to racism, poverty, and housing.



In 2006, Rev. Hawkes was appointed to the Ontario Citizens Panel for Increasing Organ Donation.

Adapted from http://www.mcctoronto.com/WhoWeAre/brent_hawkes.htm



SPORTS



Photo credit: greginhollywood

John Amaechi

b. Nov. 26, 1970

John Amaechi is the first NBA player to speak publicly about being gay. In 2007, three years after retiring from pro basketball, he became one of only six male professional athletes in the four major U.S. sports to come out. Esera Tuaolo, an NFL player who came out in 2002, said of Amaechi, "What John did is amazing. He does not know how many lives he's saved by speaking the truth." Amaechi, the son of a Nigerian father and a white British mother, grew up in England. When he started playing basketball at 16, his right hand was nearly

severed in an accident. As a result, Amaechi became

ambidextrous, which helped him become a better basketball player. Amaechi played basketball at Penn State University, where he was twice selected a First Team Academic All-American. "It was absolutely my ultimate goal to play in the NBA," says Amaechi. In 1995, Amaechi's dream became reality. He played for the Cleveland Cavaliers, followed by the Orlando Magic and the Utah Jazz. In 2000, Amaechi made headlines when he turned down a \$17 million offer from the Los Angeles Lakers. Opting to stay in Orlando earning \$600,000 a year, Amaechi remained loyal to the Magic, who hired him when no other team would. Amaechi's memoir *Man in the Middle*



(2007) explores the challenges he faced as a closeted professional athlete. After the NBA, Amaechi returned to Britain, where he turned to television sportscasting and covered the 2008 Beijing Olympics for the BBC. In Beijing, Amaechi also served as a human rights ambassador for Amnesty International. He appeared on several episodes of *Shirts & Skins*, a Logo reality series, where he mentored a gay basketball team and shared his experiences as an out athlete. Amaechi owns Animus Communications, a company that provides motivational speakers. He established the ABC Foundation, which builds sports centers in Britain and encourages children's involvement in sports and their communities.

<http://www.gbtHistoryMonth.com>



Photo credit: GLBT History Month

Martina Navratilova

b. Oct. 18, 1956

Navratilova knew from an early age that she wanted to be a tennis player. At 16, she turned pro and two years later, she defected from her native Czechoslovakia to the United States. In 1981, she became an American citizen.

Navratilova played a powerful serve-and-volley style of tennis the women's game had not seen before. She pioneered attention to diet and cross-training for physical conditioning. Navratilova's friend and former on-court rival Chris Evert said, "Martina revolutionized the game by her superb athleticism and aggressiveness, not to mention her outspokenness and her candor. She brought athleticism to a whole new level with her training techniques . . . She had everything



down to a science, including her diet, and that was an inspiration to me.”

In 1981, Navratilova became the first athletic superstar to announce her sexual orientation. While her candor cost her millions in endorsement opportunities, her tournament winnings alone in 1982 made her the first female athlete to earn more than one million dollars in a year.

Navratilova retired from women’s singles tennis in 1994, but continued as a mixed doubles player until 2006, winning a total of 175 doubles titles in her career. She has earned a reputation as an advocate of gay rights, the environment, animal welfare, and women’s issues. She spoke at the

1993 March on Washington and filed a lawsuit against the enactment Colorado’s Amendment 2, which banned legal protection for lesbians and gays in housing and employment.

TV analyst Bud Collins said, “Martina is probably the most daring player in the history of the game. She dared to play a style antithetical to her heritage without worrying about making a fool of herself. She dared to remake herself physically, setting new horizons for women in sports. And she dared to live her life as she chose, without worrying what other people thought of her.”

www.glbthistorymonth.com



Mark Tewksbury 
b. Feb. 7, 1968

In 1992, Mark Tewksbury burst onto the international scene following a thrilling come-from-behind victory in the 100-metre backstroke at the 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games. This gold medal performance capped a remarkable 16-year athletic career which included three Olympic medals, seven world records, a cover appearance on TIME Magazine, and inductions into three major Halls of Fame.

Today Mark is recognized as a leader of social change. Author of three books, including *Inside Out: Straight Talk from a Gay Jock*, Tewksbury is one of the few openly gay Olympic champions in the world. With other leading Canadian advocates and athletes, Mark took a difficult but necessary step in holding the International Olympic Committee accountable to its own ideals by co-founding OATH (Olympic



Advocates Together Honourably). In 2006, he was the President of the 1st World Outgames held in Montreal and recognized as one of *OUT* magazine's Top 100 People. He was named Person of the Year for his fight against homophobia by Foundation Emergence in 2007.

In 2008, Mark was asked by the Government of France to speak on LGBT issues at the United Nations in NYC and he was an ambassador for the historic Pride House at the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympic Games, ensuring the LGBT community had a presence for the first time at the Olympic and Paralympic Games. For his ethical leadership and active humanitarianism, Mark has received Honorary Doctorate of Laws degrees from the University of Western Ontario and the University of Calgary.

Mark is the Chef de Mission of the Canadian Olympic team competing in London, England in 2012 as well as an Honorary Advisory Board Member of the Egale Canada Human Rights Trust, supporting Egale's work in helping to make Canadian schools safer and more inclusive, respectful, and welcoming learning and working environments for all members of school communities.

www.MyGSA.ca



LGBTQ SYMBOLS



Bisexual Pride Flag

Gender

Rainbow Pride Flag

Transgender/Intersex

Triangles



BISEXUAL PRIDE FLAG

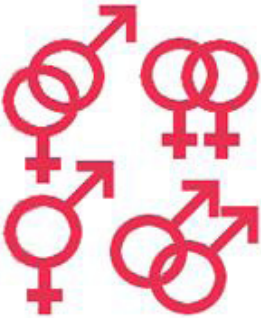


The first Bi Pride Flag was unveiled on Dec 5, 1998. The intent and purpose of the flag is to maximize bisexual pride and visibility. The pink color represents sexual attraction to the same sex only (gay and lesbian), the blue represents sexual attraction to the opposite sex only (straight), and the resultant overlap color purple represents sexual attraction to both sexes (bi). The key to understanding the symbolism in the Bi Pride Flag is to know that the purple pixels of color blend unnoticeably into both the pink and blue, just as in the 'real world' where most bi people blend unnoticeably into both the gay/lesbian and straight communities.

<http://www.rainbowresourcecentre.org/symbols.htm>



GENDER



Gender Symbols are common astrological signs handed down from ancient Roman times. The pointed Mars symbol represents the male and the Venus symbol with the cross represents the female. Since the 1970s, gays have used double interlocking male symbols to represent gay men. Double interlocking female symbols have often been used to symbolize lesbianism, but some feminists have instead used the double female symbols to represent sisterhood among women and three interlocking female symbols to denote lesbianism. In the 1970's, some lesbian feminists used three interlocking female symbols to represent their rejection of male standards of monogamy.

<http://www.rainbowresourcecentre.org/symbols.htm>

RAINBOW PRIDE FLAG



The Rainbow Flag as we know it today was developed by San Francisco artist Gilbert Baker in 1978. At the time, there was a need for a gay symbol which could be used year after year for the San Francisco Gay and Lesbian Pride Parade. Baker took inspiration from many sources, from the hippies movement to the black civil rights movement, and came up with a flag with eight stripes. Colour has always played an important part in the gay right movement—Victorian England symbolized homosexuality with the colour green, lavender became popular in the 1960s, and pink from the pink triangle has caught on as well—and the colours of the gay flag were no different. Baker explained that his colours each stood for a different aspect of gay and lesbian life:

Hot pink for sexuality,

Red for life,

Orange for healing,

Yellow for the sun,

Green for nature,

Blue for art,

Indigo for harmony,

Violet for spirit.

Black—A San Francisco group suggested a modification to the traditional rainbow flag by adding a black stripe to the bottom of it to commemorate everyone who we've lost to the AIDS virus over the years.

<http://www.lambda.org/symbols.htm>



TRANSGENER/INTERSEX



The Transgender Pride flag was designed by Monica Helms, and was first shown at a pride parade in Phoenix, Arizona, United States in 2000. The flag represents the transgender community and consists of five horizontal stripes, two light blue, two pink, with a white stripe in the center. Monica describes the meaning of the flag as follows:

"The light blue is the traditional colour for baby boys, pink is for girls, and the white in the middle is for those who are transitioning, those who feel they have a neutral gender or no gender, and those who are intersexed. The pattern is such that no matter which way you fly it, it will always be correct. This symbolizes us trying to find correctness in our own lives."

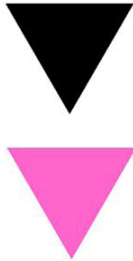
Other transgender symbols include the butterfly (symbolizing transformation or metamorphosis), and a pink/light blue yin and yang symbol.

Popular transgender symbols, used to identify transvestites, transsexuals, and other transgender people, frequently consist of modified gender symbols combining elements from both the male and female symbols. The most popular version, originating from a drawing by Holly Boswell, depicts a circle with an arrow projecting from the top-right, as per the male symbol, a cross projecting from the bottom, as per the female symbol, and with an additional striked arrow (combining the female cross and male arrow) projecting from the top-left.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transgender_symbol#Transgender_symbols



TRIANGLES



The pink triangle was one of the Nazi concentration camp badges, used by the Nazis to identify male prisoners in concentration camps who were sent there because of their homosexuality. Every prisoner had to wear a triangle on his or her jacket, the colour of which was to categorize him or her according "to his kind." Jews had to wear the yellow badge (in addition to any other badge representing other reasons for incarceration), and "anti-social individuals" (which included vagrants and "work shy" individuals) the black triangle. The inverted pink triangle, originally intended as a badge of shame, has become an international symbol of gay pride and the gay rights movement, and its second in popularity only to the rainbow flag.

The black triangle was a badge used in Nazi concentration camps to mark prisoners as "asocial" or "arbeits-scheu" (work-shy). It was later adopted as a lesbian or feminist symbol of pride and solidarity, on the assumption that the Nazis included lesbians in the "asocial" category.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pink_triangle

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_triangle_%E2%83%BDbadge%E2%99

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Equity and Inclusive Education Resource Kit for Ontario High Schools

INFORMATION & RESOURCES FOR EDUCATORS



di  **ersity =**
possibility



INFORMATION & RESOURCES FOR EDUCATORS



1. Did You Know...?

Egale Canada
<http://www.MyGSA.ca/Educators>

2. What Can You Do to Help Make Ontario's Schools Safer and More Inclusive Spaces?

Egale Canada
<http://www.MyGSA.ca/Educators>



3. ★ An Educator's Guide to Surviving Anti-LGBTQ Harassment



Adapted from the Safe Schools Coalition
http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org/guide_educator_surviveharass2005.pdf

4. Suggested Curricular Activities for Classes and School

From the Toronto District School Board (TDSB)
http://www.tdsb.on.ca/_site/ViewItem.asp?siteid=15&menuid=5400&pageid=4716

5. How to Handle Harassment in the Hallway in 3 Minutes or Less!

From GLSEN/Colorado
<http://www.coloradosafeschools.org/harassment/Harassment%20Staff.PDF>

6. 10 Reasons Catholic Schools Need to Be Involved in Anti-Homophobia Education

Egale Canada
<http://www.MyGSA.ca/Educators>

7. Sections from the Ontario Human Rights Commission's Teaching Human Rights in Ontario: An Educational Package for Ontario Schools

Entire package is available for download:
<http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/education/about/thrio-r2001.pdf>

8. Ma vie en rose Lesson Plan

Gerald Walton
<http://www.MyGSA.ca/MavieenroseLesson>

9. Pyramid of Hate Lesson Plan

The Anti-Defamation League
http://www.adl.org/education/courttrv/pyramid_of_hate.pdf
<http://www.MyGSA.ca/Educators/LessonPlans>





Also see the GSA Guide in this kit for additional ideas and supports, such as “School Climate Questions”/“School Climate Outlines,” “Answering Adults’ Concerns,” “Becoming an Ally,” “Sample School Board Policies relating to LGBTQ matters (TDSB and Vancouver),” “Heterosexual Questionnaire,” “Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack II: Sexual Orientation and the Daily Effects of Straight Privilege,” and “A Sociometry of Oppressions.”



For even more ideas and supports, get connected on *MyGSA.ca*! In the Educators’ Section of Egale’s national LGBTQ safer schools and inclusive education website, you can find classroom resources and school board policies. You can also share materials and brainstorm about inclusive curriculum and GSA activities in the discussion forums and collaborate with other teachers around the country to help make Canadian schools safer and more welcoming, respectful, and inclusive learning and working environments!



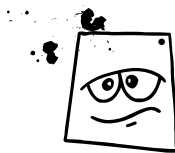
DID YOU KNOW...?

- $\frac{3}{4}$ of Canadian lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, two-spirited, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ) students feel unsafe at school, as reported in “Youth Speak Up about Homophobia and Transphobia” (Egale Canada, 2009).

To access the Final Report on the First National School Climate Survey on Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia, check out Egale’s national LGBTQ safer schools and inclusive education website: *MyGSA.ca*.

- The Ontario Ministry of Education’s Policy/Program Memorandum No. 145, Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour, states, “In order to promote a positive school climate, school boards must provide opportunities for all members of the school community to increase their knowledge and understanding of such issues as homophobia, gender-based violence, sexual harassment, inappropriate sexual behaviour, critical media literacy, and safe Internet use” and “Boards must also help school staff to give support to students who wish to participate in gay-straight alliances and in other student-led activities that promote understanding and development of healthy relationships. Schools must also engage their school councils and student councils to support these student-led activities.”

For more information, see <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/145.html>.



Homophobia and transphobia are linked with alcohol and drug misuse, truancy to escape persecution, giving up on academic achievement, and suffering from mental and/or physical health conditions (Stonewall’s The School Report, 2007).

To download a copy of The School Report, go to http://www.stonewall.org.uk/education_for_all/research/1790.asp.

Did You Know...? cont'd

- The Guidelines for Ontario's Ministry of Education's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy include Curriculum Policy: "Schools are expected to give students and staff authentic and relevant opportunities to learn about diverse histories, cultures, and perspectives. Lessons, projects, and related resources should allow students to see themselves reflected in the curriculum (e.g.,...using texts written by gay/lesbian authors). Students need to feel engaged in and empowered by what they are learning, supported by the teachers and staff from whom they are learning, and welcomed in the environment in which they are learning."

For more information, see <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/equity.html>.

- In order to "remove the barriers and disincentives to education that exist for many children and youth," the Government of Ontario recommends "ensuring that teachers and administrators better reflect the neighbourhoods they serve," developing and providing inclusive curriculum, and implementing "services for families of all forms" (The Roots of Youth Violence Report, Volume 1, 2008).

Information about this Report can be found at <http://www.rootsofyouthviolence.on.ca>.

- The Ontario Human Rights Commission states that a "poisoned environment is created by comments or conduct that ridicule or insult a person or group protected under the *Code*... It is also produced when such actions or comments are not directed specifically at individuals. For example, insulting jokes, slurs or cartoons about gays and lesbians or racial groups...all contribute to a poisoned environment for members of those groups...[I]t is the responsibility of the teacher and administration as the authority in the school to ensure that a poisoned environment does not exist for students" (Teaching Human Rights in Ontario: An Educational Package for Ontario Schools, 2001).

Part of this package is included at the end of this section of the kit. The entire package can be downloaded at <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/education/about/thrio-r2001.pdf>. The Ontario Human Rights Commission also has policies on discrimination and harassment because of sexual orientation and gender identity in the Policies section under Resources on their website: <http://www.ohrc.on.ca>.

- “It is the policy of OSSTF [Ontario Secondary School Teachers’ Federation] that there should be no discrimination in salary, promotion, tenure, or fringe benefits on the basis of age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, physical handicap, race, religion, or place of national origin” and the Elementary Teachers’ Federation of Ontario (ETFO) has a Policy on Discrimination that states “[t]hat provisions against discrimination on the basis of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, gender, record of offences, marital status, family status or disability be negotiated into every collective agreement” and “[t]hat language which guarantees equal compensation and benefit protection for same-sex partnerships and their families be negotiated into every collective agreement.” The Ontario English Catholic Teachers Association’s Human Rights Policy as stated in the Ontario English Catholic Teachers Association (OECTA) Handbook 2010/2011, 4.15.11 (p. 61) is “[t]hat the Association recognizes that all people, regardless of age, race, creed, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and mental or physical ability, are created in the image of God and should be treated with respect, dignity and fairness.” Among the Terms of Reference of OECTA’s Human Rights Committee, it is the duty of the committee “to inform members of trends and issues pertaining to equal opportunities for members based on age, race, creed, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and mental or physical ability by providing workshops and assisting local committees” and “to assist our students to recognize and appreciate the contributions of people of different races, creeds, ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, and mental or physical abilities.”

Did You Know...? cont'd

To find OSSTF's Policy Statement 4.12.1 on Discrimination, look under Constitution, Bylaws, Policies in the About Us section of their website: <http://www.osstf.on.ca>. OSSTF also has a booklet called Shout Out against Homophobia, Biphobia, Transphobia, and Heterosexism that can be downloaded for free from the Resource Centre on their website. To find ETFO's Policy Statements 21.1 and 21.2 on Discrimination, look under Governance in the About ETFO section of their website: <http://www.etfo.ca>. ETFO also has a resource guide for educators called Challenging Homophobia and Heterosexism that can be accessed via their website under Social Justice and Equity in the Advocacy & Action section. To find the Terms of Reference for OECTA's Human Rights Committee, look under Provincial Committees in the About section of their website: <http://www.oecta.on.ca>.

- Under the Ontario Ministry of Education's Policy/Programs Memorandum No. 144, Bullying Prevention and Intervention, "All employees of the board must take seriously all allegations of bullying behaviour and act in a timely, sensitive, and supportive manner when responding to students who disclose or report bullying incidents. Board employees who work directly with students—including administrators, teachers, and non-teaching staff (including staff in social work, child and youth work, psychology, and related areas, and educational assistants)—must respond to any student behaviour that is likely to have a negative impact on the school climate. Such behaviour includes all inappropriate and disrespectful behaviour at any time at school and at any school-related event if, in the employee's opinion, it is safe to respond to it, in accordance with subsection 300.4 of Part XIII of the Education Act and Ontario Regulation 472/07" and this document specifically includes "homophobic comments" in its explanation of "bullying."

For more information, see <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/144.html>.



WHAT CAN YOU DO

TO HELP MAKE ONTARIO'S SCHOOLS SAFER AND MORE INCLUSIVE SPACES?

“If we are to succeed, we must draw on our experience and on research that tells us that student achievement will improve when barriers to inclusion are identified and removed and when all students are respected and see themselves reflected in their learning and their environment.”

Kathleen Wynne, Ontario's Minister of Transportation and former Minister of Education, in *Realizing the Promise of Diversity: Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy* (2009)



The entire school community should be involved in confronting heterosexism, homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia.

In order for schools to become safer and more welcoming spaces, the entire school community should be involved with making the necessary changes. Confronting heterosexism,

homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia is not only the responsibility of Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs), especially since not all schools have inclusive student groups pertaining to LGBTQ matters. Change takes time and it can be difficult to know where to begin when so much work needs to be done.

Here are some initial steps that you can take in order to help make your school a safer and more inclusive and welcoming space for the entire school community:

1. Set up your classroom as a safe space on day one: have a discussion about what this means and hang up reminders, such as Rainbow Pride Flags and posters illustrating a variety of types of individuals and families.
2. Reflect on your own biases and remember that these affect how you teach and what you are teaching.
3. Use gender-neutral and inclusive language as much as possible.
4. Check curriculum/assignments/activities/forms for inclusivity and any assumptions that are being made.
5. Incorporate books with lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, two-spirited, queer, and/or questioning (LGBTQ) characters and books written by LGBTQ authors and have them available on bookshelves in your classroom.
6. Show respect for students as critical thinkers and agents of social change by using lesson plans that deal with human rights and social justice.
7. Contact local organizations for help or to bring in speakers.
8. Find out what your school's policy is regarding LGBTQ matters. If this is missing, work with students to change it.
9. Help your school set up gender-neutral washrooms.
10. Remember that heterosexism, homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia affect everyone in your school community, and affect everyone differently, including LGBTQ students and staff members (whether or not they are out), youth and staff members with LGBTQ parents or other family members or friends, youth and staff members perceived as LGBTQ, allies, parents, and administrators. When working towards making your school a safer and more welcoming space, all parts of it should be taken into consideration, including hallways, classrooms, washrooms, change rooms, school grounds, and the staff room.



2.1. SET UP YOUR CLASSROOM AS A SAFE SPACE ON DAY ONE: HAVE A DISCUSSION ABOUT WHAT THIS MEANS AND HANG UP REMINDERS, SUCH AS RAINBOW PRIDE FLAGS AND POSTERS ILLUSTRATING A VARIETY OF TYPES OF INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES.

Use the sample Safe Space Protocol provided here as a guide and ask yourself what “safe space” means to you: What do you want your classroom environment to be like?



Sample Safe Space Protocol:

What do we mean by a safe space? A safe space is free of any type of discrimination for queer, trans, and questioning youth. Everyone has the right to feel safe and included. A safe space is an environment in which everyone feels comfortable expressing themselves and participating fully, without fear of attack, ridicule, or denial of experience.

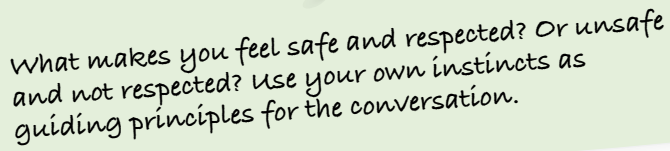
From Supporting Our Youth (SOY)

Some things to consider...

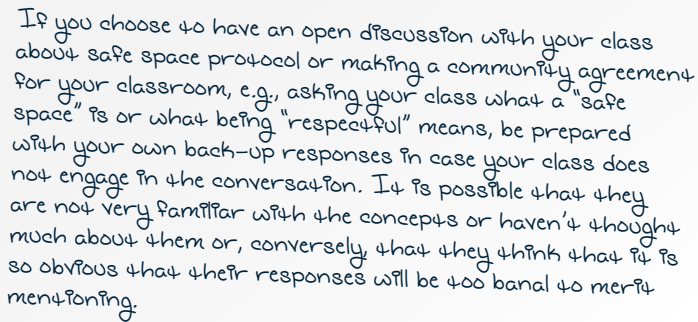
On their website, Ontario’s Ministry of Education states that “Our goal is to reach every student, regardless of his or her personal circumstances. We are promoting a publicly funded education system that respects diversity and brings all students together to learn.”

What does “respect” look like? What actions, behaviours, and language are appropriate and inappropriate in a safe space?

What Can You Do...? cont'd



What makes you feel safe and respected? Or unsafe and not respected? Use your own instincts as guiding principles for the conversation.



If you choose to have an open discussion with your class about safe space protocol or making a community agreement for your classroom, e.g., asking your class what a "safe space" is or what being "respectful" means, be prepared with your own back-up responses in case your class does not engage in the conversation. It is possible that they are not very familiar with the concepts or haven't thought much about them or, conversely, that they think that it is so obvious that their responses will be too banal to merit mentioning.

Use the materials provided in this kit (poster, stickers, etc.) or on MyGSA.ca, the national LGBTQ safer schools and inclusive education website, to reinforce the safe space/community agreement discussion.



Try incorporating an art project as an accompanying activity. You could ask your class to develop images in response to the question "What does a safe space look like?" and submit their pictures to appear on MyGSA.ca.





2.2. REFLECT ON YOUR OWN BIASES AND REMEMBER THAT THESE AFFECT HOW YOU TEACH AND WHAT YOU ARE TEACHING.

Consider trying the following exercises and answering the following questions:

EXERCISE 1

- Make a list of values that you consider important in your life. These may include family, friends, teaching, diversity, certain freedoms, religious values, social justice, and many others. They do not have to be ranked in a particular order.
- Make a list of different types of diversity. Examples may include race, socio-economic status, culture(s), etc. You can be specific. Next to each type, state whether you feel comfortable, somewhat comfortable, or uncomfortable working with others who fit into this category. Write next to each briefly why you think you would feel this way.
- Do you feel comfortable, somewhat comfortable, or uncomfortable working with people who are...

	Comfortable	Somewhat Comfortable	Uncomfortable	Why?
Lesbian	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Gay	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Bisexual	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Trans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Two-Spirited	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Queer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Questioning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

If any of these words are unfamiliar to you, check out the Terms & Concepts section in this kit or on MyGSA.ca.

What Can You Do...? cont'd

EXERCISE 2

Does it appear to you that all of your students are not LGBTQ?

What concerns might you have about anti-heterosexism, anti-homophobia, anti-biphobia, and anti-transphobia education at your school? (Examples may include parental or principal disapproval and religious affiliation(s) of the student body.)

What do you need to learn about anti-heterosexism, anti-homophobia, anti-biphobia, and anti-transphobia education? What do you want to learn to prevent and address heterosexism, homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia at your school?



Does it appear to you that all of your students are *not* LGBTQ?



EXERCISE 3

Read the following statistics and gauge your response. What is your reaction?

From Egale’s Report on the First National School Climate Survey—
“Youth Speak Up about Homophobia and Transphobia” (March 2009):

Unsafe Spaces & Homophobic Comments

- Three-quarters of students hear homophobic expressions such as “that’s so gay” every day in school and half hear remarks like “lezbo,” “faggot,” and “dyke” daily.
- Current students are more likely than past students to hear homophobic comments every day in school.
- Three-quarters of LGBTQ students feel unsafe in at least one place at school. Half of heterosexual students agree that at least one school space is unsafe for LGBTQ students. Trans students are especially likely to see at least one place at school as unsafe (87%).

Your reaction to these statistics:

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What Can You Do...? cont'd

Victimization

➡ Physical Harassment

- One in four sexual minority students has been physically harassed about their sexual orientation.
- Almost two in five trans students, and one in five sexual minority students, have been physically harassed due to their gender expression.

➡ Verbal Harassment

- Six out of ten LGBTQ students have been verbally harassed about their sexual orientation.
- Nine out of ten trans youth have been verbally harassed about their gender expression.

➡ Bullying

- Over half of LGBTQ students have had rumours or lies spread about their sexual orientation at school.
- One-third of LGBTQ participants have been harassed through text messaging or on the internet.
- Two-thirds of LGBTQ students have seen homophobic graffiti at school. One in seven of them has been named in the graffiti.

Your reaction to these statistics:

.....

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.....

Policies

LGBTQ students who believe their schools have anti-homophobia policies are much less likely than other LGBTQ students...

- to have had lies and rumours spread about them at school or on the internet,
- to have had property stolen or damaged,
- to feel unsafe at school, and
- to have been verbally or physically harassed.

LGBTQ students who believe their schools have anti-homophobia policies are much more likely than other LGBTQ students...

- to feel their school community was supportive (one half compared to fewer than one-fifth),
- to feel comfortable talking to a counsellor (one half compared to fewer than one-third) and to feel comfortable talking to classmates (over a third compared to one-fifth),
- to believe their school is becoming less homophobic (85% compared to 59%),
- to hear fewer homophobic comments and to say staff intervene more often,
- to report homophobic incidents to staff and to their parents, and
- to feel attached to their school.

What Can You Do...? cont'd

“Studies have suggested that there is a link between bullying and suicide, and that there is a correspondingly high rate of ‘suicidality’ (suicide attempts and suicidal thinking) among LGBTQ students...[and] there is some suggestion that school attachment—the feeling that one belongs in the school community—is a crucial issue in this regard because of its connection to lower suicidality rates in the general school population and among LGBTQ students.” (55)

Your reaction to these statistics and this information:

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Changes over Time—Better and Worse

- Current students are significantly less likely than past students to report that school staff members never intervene in issues of homophobic harassment (29.5% versus 40.7%).
- Current students are even more likely than past students to hear homophobic expressions like “that’s so gay” in school (80.5% versus 68.5%).

Your reaction to these statistics:

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Homophobia and transphobia are linked with...

- alcohol & drug misuse,
- truancy to escape persecution,
- giving up on academic achievement,
and
- suffering from mental and/or physical health conditions.

(Stonewall's The School Report, 2007)

Your reaction to this information:

.....

.....

To access the
Final Report on the First National School
Climate Survey on Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia,
go to the Stats & Maps section under Resources on Egale's national
LGBTQ safer schools and inclusive education website: MyGSA.ca.



★ **2.3. USE GENDER-NEUTRAL AND INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE.**

Some common words contain assumptions about gender or sexuality that detract from the creation of safer school spaces.

Here are some examples of language that excludes people:



- Man
- Mankind
- Ladies & Gentlemen
- Guys
- Girlfriend & Boyfriend
- Husband & Wife
- Mom & Dad
- Girls & Boys
- Chairman
- Fireman
- Waiter/Waitress
- Actress

Here are some examples of inclusive expressions:



- Folks
- People
- Everybody
- Crushes
- Couples
- Partner
- Spouse
- Parents and Guardians
- Chairperson or Chair
- Firefighter
- Server
- Actor

★ **2.4. CHECK CURRICULUM/ASSIGNMENTS/ACTIVITIES/FORMS FOR INCLUSIVITY AND ASSUMPTIONS THAT ARE BEING MADE.**

What kind of language is being used?

Provide alternative ways of doing assignments:

Try giving students the option of approaching assignments from LGBTQ perspectives. Even if there are no out LGBTQ students in your classroom, perhaps they simply haven't come out yet or there are students who are questioning or have LGBTQ family members or friends and these students might appreciate the opportunity to do research on these matters.



Check out the lists of words and expressions that exclude or include people in Point 2.3 for examples.



Even if there are no out LGBTQ students in your classroom, perhaps they simply haven't come out yet.

CHECK OUT THE RAINBOW CURRICULUM provided here (Appendix M) and go to the Educators' Section on MyGSA.ca for additional ideas and supports.

Adapted from the former Equity Department of the legacy Toronto Board of Education

DRAMA

- Explore sexual orientation and gender identity stereotyping through role play.
- Do vignettes on coming out.
- Try doing Theatre of the Oppressed.
- Go to see BASH'd: A Gay Rap Opera.
- Do a production of The Laramie Project.

ENGLISH

- Include books written from LGBTQ perspectives, with LGBTQ characters and matters, and written by LGBTQ authors.



For a list of suggested LGBTQ books for young adults, check out Point 2.5 in this section of the kit.

The national LGBTQ safer schools and inclusive education website, MyGSA.ca, has an extensive booklist.



FAMILY STUDIES

- Address sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Have discussions about healthy relationships of all kinds; e.g., parent/child dynamics regarding coming out, LGBTQ dating and intimacy, and peer bullying.
- Broaden the definition of “family” to include LGBTQ parents.
- Consider various means of conception and fertilization.

HISTORY/CURRENT EVENTS

- Include the Reference re Same-Sex Marriage as part of Canadian political history.
- Review the seizure of books from Little Sister’s Book & Art Emporium in British Columbia as part of the discussion of censorship.
- Review the dishonourable discharge of LGBTQ individuals from the military.
- Include the persecution of LGBTQ individuals in concentration camps as part of the WWII retrospective.
- Discuss Montreal’s “Sex Garage” Raid, Toronto’s Bathhouse Raids, and Stonewall in New York as part of 20th century civil rights movements.

MATH & SCIENCE

- Mention LGBTQ scientists and mathematicians, such as Rachel Carson, Magnus Hirschfeld, and Alan Turing.



See the Role Models section of this kit for more information.

- Use social justice as a means of presenting questions: e.g., incorporate the matters listed under History/Current Events.
- Explore genetics and sexual orientation.
- Provide a balanced look at the nature vs. nurture theory of sexual orientation.
- Talk about Central Park Zoo’s famous gay penguin couple, Roy and Silo (and the accompanying children’s book based on their lives, *And Tango Makes Three* by Peter Parnell and Justin Richardson and illustrated by Henry Cole), and lesbian albatross couples rearing chicks in both New Zealand and Hawaii.
- Discuss the fact that clownfish in Papua New Guinea reefs can change their sex at will for social reasons.

MEDIA ARTS

- Consider media articles that promote heterosexism, homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia.
- Explore gender role stereotyping in the lyrics of popular music.
- Explore homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic lyrics and images in music videos.
- Evaluate advertisements that target LGBTQ consumers and discuss “the pink dollar.”
- Ask students to create their own ads—by either acting them out or drawing them—that express values such as respect, diversity, citizenship, ethicalness, inclusivity, equity, and/or fairness.
- View and have critical discussions about ads that enforce heterosexism and/or cisnormativity. (Cisnormativity is the assumption that everyone is cisgendered: a cisgendered person is someone whose gender identity basically matches up with her or his medically-designated sex. An example of this is a person who identifies as a “man” (gender identity) who is also medically-designated “male” (sex). Cisnormativity further assumes that trans identities or bodies are less authentic or “normal.”)

For terms and concepts pertaining to LGBTQ matters that are useful across all subject areas, check out [MyGSA.ca/SiteGlossary](https://www.mygsa.ca/SiteGlossary).



- Watch and discuss some of the following films:

A Jihad for Love	PG (Ontario & BC)/14A (Canada)
Apples and Oranges	NFB (National Film Board)
Beautiful Thing	AA (Ontario)
Billy Elliot	F (Ontario)
Breakfast with Scot	PG (Ontario)
But I'm a Cheerleader	AA (Ontario)
C.R.A.Z.Y.	14A (Ontario)
Chasing Amy	AA (Ontario)
Cure for Love	NFB
D.E.B.S.	PG-13 (USA)
From Criminality to Equality	Canadian Documentary
Georgie Girl	Documentary
Get Real	AA (Ontario)
Girl Inside	Canadian Documentary
Gray Matters	PG (Ontario)
Hedwig and the Angry Inch	AA (Ontario)
I Can't Think Straight	14A (Ontario)
If These Walls Could Talk 2	AA (Ontario)
Il était une fois dans l'est (Once Upon a Time in the East)	13+ (Quebec)
Imagine Me and You	PG (Ontario)
In Other Words	NFB
The Incredibly True Adventure of 2 Girls in Love	14A (Ontario)
It's Elementary	Documentary
J'ai tué ma mère (I Killed My Mother)	PG (Ontario)
Just Call Me Kade	Documentary
Kissing Jessica Stein	AA (Ontario)

APPENDIX N cont'd

Les amours imaginaires (Heartbeats)	PG (Ontario)
Living with Pride: The Ruth Ellis Story	Documentary
Ma vie en rose (My Life in Pink)	AA (Ontario)
Mambo Italiano	14A (Ontario)
Milk	14A (Ontario)
Naissance des pieuvres (Water Lilies)	14A (Canada)
Nina's Heavenly Delights	14A (Ontario)
One of Them	NFB
Open Secrets (Secrets de polichinelle)	NFB
Quand l'amour est gai (When Love is Gay)	NFB
Saving Face	PG (Ontario)
School's Out	NFB
Secrets de polichinelle (Open Secrets)	NFB
Serving in Silence: The Margarethe Cammermeyer Story	AA (Ontario)
Shaking the Tree	AA (Ontario)
Show Me Love	AA (Ontario)
Sticks and Stones	NFB
Taking Charge	NFB
Talk to Me	14A (Ontario)
That's a Family!	Documentary
TransAmerica	14A (Ontario)
Trevor	PG (Ontario)
When Love is Gay (Quand l'amour est gai)	NFB

Ontario classifications for movies can be found on the Ontario Film Board's website: <http://www.ofrb.gov.on.ca>.

For more information about and resources for integrating LGBTQ themes, role models, and subject matter across the curriculum, consult the Educators' Section of *MyGSA.ca*. If you're having difficulty finding what you're looking for—or if you've got more ideas that you'd like to share—either post a thread on the Educators' Discussion Forum on the website or contact Egale Canada at mygsa@egale.ca or 1.888.204.7777 (toll-free).





2.5. INCORPORATE BOOKS WITH LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANS, TWO-SPIRITED, QUEER, AND/OR QUESTIONING (LGBTQ) CHARACTERS AND BOOKS WRITTEN BY LGBTQ AUTHORS AND HAVE THEM AVAILABLE ON BOOKSHELVES IN YOUR CLASSROOM.

Here are ten recommended LGBTQ books for young adults:

Am I Blue? Coming Out from the Silence (1994), edited by Marion Dane Bauer, is a collection of short stories for young adults which addresses issues of homosexuality. Some of the protagonists have gay friends or family members, like Willie in “Holding.” Some of these young adults are discovering that they feel attracted to people of the same sex and are questioning their sexual orientation, as in the title story. Others, like the young people in “Parents’ Night,” have determined that they are homosexual and now must confront society, family, and friends. Awards include ALA Best Books for Young Adults; ALA Recommended Book for Reluctant Young Adult Readers; 1995 ALA Gay-Lesbian-Bisexual Book Award for Literature; 1995 Lambda Literary Award for Children and Young Adults; and 1995 Minnesota Book Award for older children.

Between Mom and Jo (2006) by Julie Anne Peters has been named an Honor Book for the first ever James Cook Teen Book Award given by the Ohio Library Council. The award recognizes books that promote and celebrate cultural, ethnic, and social diversity; demonstrate excellence in writing; and have a wide appeal to a teen audience. It has also been chosen as Rainbow Reads by the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgendered Round Table of the American Library Association.

“Jo promised Nick they’d always be together. So did Mom. When you’re a stupid little kid you believe what your parents tell you. You want to believe that your life will be good and nothing will change and everything—everyone—goes on forever. It’s not until later you find out people are liars, forever is a myth, and a kid with two moms should never be put in the position of having to choose between them.”

From the Notebooks of Melanin Sun (1995) by Jacqueline Woodson: Thirteen-year-old Melanin Sun has always had a close relationship with his mother, a single parent. He is surprised when she tells him that she has fallen in love with a white woman. Worried that this relationship means that she doesn’t love him, an African-American male, Melanin shuts his mother out of his life. After a

What Can You Do...? cont'd

confrontation, he agrees to spend the day with his mother and her partner, Kristen. It is through meeting Kristen that Melanin learns how important family is, and rejoices in the fact that his mother will always have a place for him in her life.

Funny Boy is Shyam Selvadurai's first novel; it won the Lambda Literary Award for Best Gay Men's Novel as well as the Smithbooks/Books in Canada First Novel Award in 1994. In this remarkable debut novel, a boy's bittersweet passage to maturity and sexual awakening is set against escalating political tensions in Sri Lanka during the seven years leading up to the 1983 riots. Arjie Chelvaratnam is a Tamil boy growing up in an extended family in Colombo. It is through his eyes that the story unfolds and we meet a delightful, sometimes eccentric, cast of characters. Arjie's journey from the luminous simplicity of childhood days into the more intricately shaded world of adults—with its secrets, its injustices, and its capacity for violence—is a memorable one, as time and time again the true longings of the human heart are held against the way things are.

Hear Me Out: In 2004, Teens Educating and Confronting Homophobia (T.E.A.C.H.) published a book of stories written by peer facilitators about their coming out experiences. These stories are based upon the stories the peer facilitators use to engage participants during T.E.A.C.H. workshops. Critically acclaimed, the book received attention across Canada upon its publication.

Kooloids (1998) by Rabih Alameddine: An extraordinary literary debut, this book is about the AIDS epidemic, the civil war in Beirut, death, sex, and the meaning of life. Daring in form as well as content, *Kooloids* turns the traditional novel inside out and hangs it on the clothesline to air.

The Little Black Book for Girlz: A Book on Healthy Sexuality (2006) and ***The Little Black Book for Guys: Guys Talk about Sex*** (2008) by youth for youth: St. Stephen's Community House, a community-based social service agency in Toronto, engaged a diverse group of teens looking for the real deal about sexuality. To find answers, they collected stories, poetry, and artwork from other youth. They also interviewed health experts to get the facts about issues young people face. The result? An honest and powerful mix of real-life examples and life-saving info.

Luna (2004) by Julie Anne Peters has been chosen by the American Library Association for their 2009 Great Stories CLUB. The Great Stories CLUB (Connecting Libraries, Under-served teens, and Books) is a reading and discussion program designed to reach under-served and at-risk youth through books that are relevant to their lives.

“From as early as she can remember, Regan O’Neill has known that her brother Liam was different. That he was, in fact, a girl. Transgender. Having a transgender brother has never been a problem for Regan—until now. Liam (or Luna, as she prefers to be called by her chosen name) is about to transition. What does it mean, transitioning? Dressing like a girl? In public? Does Liam expect Regan to embrace this decision, to welcome his sex change? She’s always kept her brother’s secret, always been his confidante, but now Regan’s acceptance and love will be put to the test.”

Stealing Nasreen (2007) by Farzana Doctor: Nasreen Bastawala is an Indo-Canadian lesbian and burnt-out psychologist who meets and becomes enmeshed in the lives of Shaffiq and Salma Paperwala, new immigrants from Mumbai. Both Shaffiq and Salma develop confusing attractions to Nasreen. For Shaffiq this causes him to bring home and hide things he “finds” in her office. Salma’s crush on Nasreen harkens back memories and regrets about a lesbian affair that ended badly years ago.

Zami: A New Spelling of My Name (1982) by Audre Lorde: This biomythography traces Audre Lorde’s life from her childhood in Harlem through her discovery and acceptance of her self as a black, lesbian woman in the late 1950s. Masterfully crafted by the profound and artistic Lorde, **Zami** reads like musical poetry. Through her life experiences, Lorde carefully forges a path to locate her position in the world. Ultimately, naming and accepting difference are the tools necessary for Lorde’s ability to stay alive and stay human.

For additional suggestions, see MyGSA.ca/Educators/Books.



★ **2.6. SHOW RESPECT FOR STUDENTS AS CRITICAL THINKERS AND AGENTS OF SOCIAL CHANGE BY USING LESSON PLANS THAT DEAL WITH HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE.**

Try using the lesson plans provided in this kit, such as *Ma vie en rose (My Life in Pink)* or *Pyramid of Hate*, or consulting David Stocker's book *Math that Matters: A Teacher Resource Linking Math and Social Justice* (2006), winner of the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario's Anti-Bias Curriculum Development Award in 2008, or *World History of Racism In Minutes* (1986) by Tim McCaskell, published by the Toronto Board of Education.

Also, the Ontario Human Rights Commission has produced an Educational Package for schools entitled "Teaching Human Rights in Ontario" (2001), some of which is included at the end of this section of the kit. It is also available for download in entirety at http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/education/education_request/teaching-overview-en.

If you have concerns about teaching matters that incorporate social justice, try reading "How to Teach Controversial Content and Not Get Fired" by Kelley Dawson Salas in *The New Teacher Book: Finding Purpose, Balance, and Hope During Your First Years in the Classroom* (2004), which is available online, or the "Handling Sensitive and Controversial Issues" section in Greta Hofmann Nemiroff and Gillda Leitenberg's *Gender Issues Teacher's Guide* (1994). The TDSB website also has a downloadable version of its *A Teaching Resource for Dealing with Controversial and Sensitive Issues in Toronto District School Board Classrooms* (2003).

★ 2.7. CONTACT LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR HELP OR TO BRING IN SPEAKERS.

Consult the Organizations, Programmes, & Resources section in this kit to find local LGBTQ or LGBTQ-friendly organizations or check out the Resource Directory on *MyGSA.ca*.

If you can't find what you're looking for in your area, either contact mygsa@egale.ca for help locating someone to speak to your class or school or try posting a topic on the Educators' Discussion Forum on the MyGSA website!



★ **2.8. FIND OUT WHAT YOUR SCHOOL'S POLICY IS REGARDING LGBTQ MATTERS. IF THIS IS MISSING, WORK WITH STUDENTS TO CHANGE IT.**

In June, 2009, Ontario's Ministry of Education issued Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119, Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools. It states, "By the beginning of the 2010-11 school year (September 2010), boards will have in place an equity and inclusive education policy...and an implementation plan." To find out more about this document, see <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/119.html>.

In both the development and implementation of equity and inclusive education policies, school boards are mandated to be comprehensive, covering all of the prohibited grounds of discrimination set out in the *Ontario Human Rights Code* (the *Code*). The *Code* prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation. According to the Ontario Human Rights Commission, "Gender identity is not an enumerated ground in the *Code*. However, the existing legal structure in the *Code* can support a progressive understanding of the ground of 'sex' to include 'gender identity' and protect individuals who are subject to discrimination or harassment because of gender identity. This approach toward the application of the *Code* has been accepted for some time." Both the Ontario Human Rights Commission's Policy on Discrimination and Harassment Because of Gender Identity and its Policy on Discrimination and Harassment Because of Sexual Orientation are available for download online. Go to <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/> and click on "Gender Identity" or "Sexual Orientation" under "Issues."

Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119 also states, "It is expected that boards will post their equity and inclusive education policy on their website." If your school board's equity and inclusive education policy is not available on its website, ask your school's principal for a copy of it or phone your school board.

Does your school have a Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) or other inclusive student-led group pertaining to LGBTQ matters? Working towards changing your school's policy regarding LGBTQ

Does your school have a Gay-Straight Alliance? Check out the GSA Guide in this kit.



matters is an excellent activity for such a group. If your school does not have this type of group yet, why not? Check out the GSA Guide section of this kit or on *MyGSA.ca* for more information.

Egale Canada, the national LGBTQ human rights organization, recommends that “schools strongly support the efforts of students to start Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs)” and that “in schools where students have not come forward, administration should ask teachers to offer to work with students to start a GSA. It is not safe to assume that LGBTQ students would prefer to go through high school isolated from their peers and teachers” (7-8) in its report on the First National School Climate Survey, “Youth Speak Up about Homophobia and Transphobia” (2009).

Under Policy/Program Memorandum No. 145, Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour, the Ministry now requires that schools and school boards support students and staff involved in creating and maintaining inclusive student-led school groups pertaining to LGBTQ matters. Policy/Program Memorandum No. 145 states, “Boards must...help school staff to give support to students who wish to participate in gay-straight alliances and in other student-led activities that promote understanding and development of healthy relationships. Schools must also engage their school councils and student councils to support these student-led activities” (6).

What Can You Do...? cont'd

“Youth Speak Up about Homophobia and Transphobia” explains GSAs in the following way:

“Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs) are official student clubs with LGBTQ and heterosexual student membership and typically two teachers who serve as faculty advisors. Students in a school with a GSA know that they have at least one or two adults they can talk to about LGBTQ issues. The purpose of GSAs is to provide a much-needed safe space in which LGBTQ students and allies can work together on making their schools more

welcoming of sexual and gender minority students. Some GSAs go by other names such as Human Rights Clubs or Social Justice Clubs in order to signal an openness to non-LGBTQ membership (though of course, some of these are not GSAs and might not address homophobia). Very often it is LGBTQ students themselves who initiate the GSA, although sometimes a teacher will come forward” (80). Such groups also function as safe havens and supports for students with LGBTQ parents, other family members, and friends.

Be sure *MyGSA.ca* isn't blocked at your school!



Some schools use filtering software to block access to websites that include keywords pertaining to certain matters, such as sex, and rely on the companies that develop the software to maintain the list of unacceptable sites. Although this might be done in the interests of blocking pornographic content, for example, an unfortunate consequence of such protocols is that many useful websites regarding important matters such as health and sexual orientation are also blocked. Be sure that *MyGSA.ca* isn't blocked at your school. If it is, ask your school's administration to change the settings. If *MyGSA.ca* continues to be blocked at your school, contact Egale at 1.888.204.7777 (toll-free) or mygsa@egale.ca and let us know.

IF A STUDENT HAS NOT YET COME FORWARD, talk to your school's administration about becoming a GSA school staff advisor!



2.9. HELP YOUR SCHOOL SET UP GENDER-NEUTRAL WASHROOMS.


Single-stall washrooms that are gender-neutral and wheelchair accessible are now designated UTRs (Universal Toilet Rooms) by the Ontario Building Code and it is recommended that there is at least one per building.

There are a number of benefits of having UTRs, such as providing a safe, private, and accessible environment and accommodating a variety of needs for those who are trans, androgynous, or queer,

who use alternative hygiene products, who are shy or require privacy, who have medical conditions, or who are parents, for example.

It is not recommended that students who are being harassed or bullied because of gender non-conformity be expected to use staff washrooms as this can exacerbate the situation.

It is recommended that UTRs be located in well-lit and in/near medium traffic areas (not immediately next to gender-specific washrooms) for safety and visibility.



Gender-neutral washrooms provide safe, private, and accessible environments and accommodate a variety of needs.

★ **2.10. REMEMBER THAT HETEROSEXISM, HOMOPHOBIA, BIPHOBIA, AND TRANSPHOBIA AFFECT EVERYONE IN YOUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY, AND AFFECT EVERYONE DIFFERENTLY, INCLUDING LGBTQ STUDENTS AND STAFF MEMBERS (WHETHER OR NOT THEY ARE OUT), YOUTH AND STAFF MEMBERS WITH LGBTQ PARENTS OR OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS OR FRIENDS, YOUTH AND STAFF MEMBERS PERCEIVED AS LGBTQ, ALLIES, PARENTS, AND ADMINISTRATORS. WHEN WORKING TOWARDS MAKING YOUR SCHOOL A SAFER AND MORE WELCOMING SPACE, ALL PARTS OF IT SHOULD BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION, INCLUDING HALLWAYS, CLASSROOMS, WASHROOMS, CHANGE ROOMS, SCHOOL GROUNDS, AND THE STAFF ROOM.**

Because everyone is different and we all identify ourselves with respect to a number of categories, such as class, ethnicity,

gender, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation, we all experience forms of discrimination differently. The Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) refers to these multiple identifications as “intersectionality,” which is based on “the lived realities of individuals and the social context of discrimination.”



Look at the accompanying activities from the former Equity Department of the legacy Toronto Board of Education—

Similarities and Differences: Racism, Sexism, and Homophobia (Appendix N) and Power Triangle Activity & Circles of Ourselves (Appendix O)—and use them in a GSA meeting or in your classroom! Try incorporating additional differences as well, such as gender identity. For an elaboration on these activities, see “Triangles and Icebergs” (pages 245-248) and “Similarities, Differences, and Identity Politics” (pages 248-250) in Tim McCaskell’s book *Race to Equity: Disrupting Educational Inequality or “Examining the Commonalities of Racism, Sexism, and Homophobia”* (pages 62-71) in *Rainbows and Triangles*, produced by the Toronto District School Board and the Elementary Teachers of Toronto.



If you’ve tried anti-oppression activities, how did it go? Consider posting your experience on the MyGSA.ca Educators’ Discussion Forum.

* For example:

“ Not only is it difficult to be LGBT in high school, but especially as a LGBT youth who is also a visible minority. The positive images and information out there for such a youth is very hard to come by. ”

“ I think there’s a lot of work to be done in recognizing that lgbtq people come from various cultures and communities and breaking those myths and beliefs to allow all people identifying within those communities to be free of prejudice and oppression. ”

Responses to Egale’s First National School Climate Survey on Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia: for more information, see <http://MyGSA.ca/YouthSpeakUp>.

* For example:

Perspectives editorial board member Sheila Thomas spoke to Kimberle Crenshaw, a professor of law at the UCLA School of Law and Columbia Law School, who earned a J.D. at Harvard Law School and an LL.M. at the University of Wisconsin Law School, in March 2004 about the intersectionality of race and gender:

Perspectives: Tell me about the origins of your concept of intersectionality.

Crenshaw: It grew out of trying to conceptualize the way the law responded to issues where both race and gender discrimination were involved. What happened was like an accident, a collision. Intersectionality simply came from the idea that if you’re standing in the path of multiple forms of exclusion, you are likely to get hit by both. These women are injured, but when the race ambulance and the gender ambulance arrive at the scene, they see these women of color lying in the intersection and they say, “Well, we can’t figure out if this was just race or just sex discrimination. And unless they can show us which one it was, we can’t help them.”

What Can You Do...? cont'd

Perspectives: Have there been times when you were personally discriminated against?

Crenshaw: I have a story I tell a lot. A member of our study group at Harvard was the first African-American member of a previously exclusive white club. He invited the rest of the group—me and another African-American man—to visit him at this club. When we knocked on the door, he opened it, stepped outside, and shut it quickly. He said that he was embarrassed because he had forgotten to tell us something about entering the building. My male friend immediately bristled, saying that if black people couldn't go through the front door, we weren't coming in at all. But our friend said, "No, no, no, that's not it—but women have to go through the back door." And my friend was totally okay with that.

<http://www.abanet.org/women/perspectives/Spring2004CrenshawPSP.pdf>

* For example:

"Discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation may be experienced differently by gay men and lesbians as a result of stereotypes around sexuality and relationships. Furthermore, the Commission's Policy on HIV/AIDS-related Discrimination recognizes that the erroneous perception of AIDS as a 'gay disease' may have a disproportionate effect on gay men and may result in discrimination on the basis of both sexual orientation and perceived disability" (Ontario Human Rights Commission).

http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/resources/discussion_consultation/DissIntersectionalityFtnts/pdf

*** For example:**

Although all LGBTQ people experience homophobia and heterosexism, they do not share one common identity. A person's or group's identity and his/her/their relative privilege or disadvantage vary depending upon the intersection or combination of a complex set of factors, such as race, sex, economic class, place/country of residence, physical/mental ability, family status, ethnicity, religion, etc. Even within groups that share a common identity marker (such as race) the experiences of LGBTQ people vary. Here is some of what research participants had to say about their complex and varied lives:

I found it hard to embrace my gayness because so much of my energy was spent trying, in turn, to deny, erase, accept and defend my ethnic identity, which, after all, was the visible one, whereas gayness could be hidden. The double stress of having to deal with external and internalized racism, as well as external and internalized heterosexism, was a major factor in my development as a self-accepting, openly gay man.

Your friend is beaten up on the street—you don't know if it's because the attacker didn't like Indians or fags.

Regarding same-sex marriage and spousal rights—a large segment of the gay black population are not there yet. They cannot access these benefits. There is a need to deal with systemic issues first.

People go through hell trying to find reflections of themselves in the gay community.

What Can You Do...? cont'd


[My father] experienced a tremendous amount of racism when he came to Canada in the late 1960's and I remember him saying that "you have one strike against you, you don't need two."

Being a person of colour makes me an outsider in mainstream queer communities. I haven't been able to find a queer community that is understanding of my experience as a person of colour. I can feel as much alienated at a gay club as at a straight club.

I also believe that my ethnic background makes me less attractive to others of all races in a culture that prizes Whiteness. I sometimes believe it myself.

Self-esteem is definitely the biggest hurdle. I have had a sense of not fitting in my entire life, which, compounded by family rejection on racial and sexual orientation levels, does not provide a great basis for a healthy self-esteem.

At a lesbian bar, a woman leered at me and called me "shiva" years ago.



People of colour in Canada often have to make a choice between participating in their ethnic/racial community or the gay White community. This is a painful choice.

There is no safe place.

From Egale Canada's "The Intersection of Sexual Orientation & Race: Considering the Experiences of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered People of Colour & Two-Spirited People": For more information, see <http://www.egale.ca/index.asp?lang=E&menu=40&item=296>.



Educators in Ontario have a unique opportunity to take a leadership role with regard to LGBTQ human rights.

The Ministry of Education has demonstrated its commitment to promoting respect and equality in Ontario's diverse learning environments through initiating the Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy. Educators in Ontario have a unique opportunity to take a leadership role with regard to LGBTQ human rights, inclusive education, and safer and more respectful schools. As Ontario's former Minister of Education Kathleen Wynne states in the Ministry's Strategy document, "Everyone in the school community benefits from a school environment that is safe, accepting, and respectful."

From the former Equity Department of the legacy Toronto Board of Education

Sometimes a discussion about different forms of oppression can get lost in a debate about which one is “worse.” This is a very unproductive argument which will pit different oppressed groups against each other and block the unity needed for change.

Objective: To allow students to examine the similarities between racism, sexism, and homophobia without ranking them from “best” to “worst.”

Format: Start by getting students to brainstorm all the similarities between these three forms of oppression. For example, each involves stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination; each involves a targeted group with less social power; each involves feelings of anger, pain, and frustration; and they may all lead to feelings of self-hatred by oppressed groups.

Next, tell students they need to look at some of the differences. Draw a line down the centre of the flipchart or board. Label one side “Visible” and the other “Invisible.” Locate Women, African-Canadians, Jews, and Lesbians and Gay Men on this line as shown below.



Ask how this difference has affected the way each group has historically dealt with oppression. For example, members of some groups can individually hide, while others cannot; some have attempted to assimilate while others have felt it more productive to isolate themselves; and some groups have mixed experiences and strategies. Ask how this difference affects the stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination each group experiences.

Ask students to think about how oppression may accumulate over generations for some groups and not for others. For example, women, including lesbians, and gay men are born into all families of all classes. Therefore, they may not start out with the disadvantages that other groups have acquired because of the discrimination faced by their ancestors. For example, much of the African-American population was enslaved and faced generations of discrimination in employment so that many African-Americans today experience less economic privilege than white individuals do.

How does the position of young people in these groups differ in terms of learning how to deal with oppression? For example, young women might have mothers or sisters to help them with regard to handling sexism and most racialized youth can easily identify peers with similar experiences to theirs or can talk to family members about their experiences. They can share strategies or anger. Young lesbians, bisexuals, and gay males as well as trans, queer, and questioning youth, however, often feel completely isolated and are more likely to become depressed or even suicidal.



Where do bisexual, trans, queer, and questioning individuals fit in your diagram? What about intersectionality? For a discussion of this term, see the Introduction in this kit.

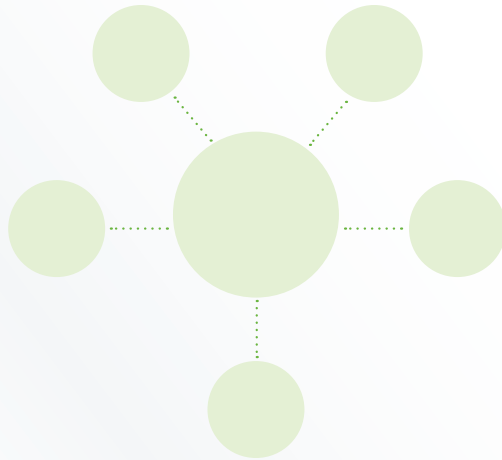
From the former Equity Department of the legacy Toronto Board of Education

POWER TRIANGLE ACTIVITY

When I see it, when I hear it, when I feel it, I know that it's discrimination: e.g., racism, sexism, homophobia, classism, and/or discrimination against people with disabilities. What does discrimination look like, sound like, feel like in school? Think about your classroom, the hallways, the smoke pit, the bathrooms, the office. Think about the curriculum. Think about it all, both big and small. Talk about it with a classmate/friend and come up with a list.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

CIRCLES OF OURSELVES



- a. Write your name in the central circle.
- b. In the smaller circles, write the names of social identities or groups you identify with.
- c. Please feel free to add circles if you wish. You do not need to fill in all the circles.
- d. Think about a time when you felt “included” as a member of a certain group/social identity.
- e. Think about a time when you felt “excluded” as a member of a certain group/social identity.
- f. Think about the feelings associated with your experiences of inclusion and exclusion.
- g. During our group discussion, on the back of this handout, jot down the list of categories and feelings that come up for the group as a whole.



AN EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

TO SURVIVING ANTI-LGBTQ HARASSMENT

Adapted from the Safe Schools Coalition

If the offender(s) are students:

- Try to get the class back on task. (K-5: “We have a rule about ‘no put downs.’ So cut it out and let’s get back to language arts.” 6-12: “I’ve been hearing murmured comments from the back of the room and I don’t appreciate them. Can we please focus on the parallelogram?”)
- If that doesn’t quell the comments, get specific. (K-5: “That is a really mean thing to say. I don’t let you call each other names and I won’t let you call me names either. Whether or not I am gay, I don’t deserve that.” 6-12: “My sexual orientation is not up for discussion. Besides, that’s a really derogatory term. Repeating it when I’ve already asked you to cut it out is called harassment. It’s against school policy and it’s against the law.”)
- Under no circumstances should you resort to using other slurs as analogies, especially those that apply to your students. For example, never try to force empathy on a group of African-American youth by asserting that the use of faggot is like the use of the N-word. For more about why, see “If These Were Racial Slurs, Teachers Would Be Stopping Them... Three Activists Object” at www.safeschoolscoalition.org.
- If necessary, use the same disciplinary procedures you would use if a student directed a religious or racial slur or a gender-based comment at another student.



If the offender(s) are adults:



- Tell them in no uncertain terms that you are offended and you expect the behavior to stop.
- If that doesn't work, write them a letter specifying what they have done that you consider harassing and that you want it to stop. Keep a copy.

If the problem is offensive graffiti or other damage to property:

- Do not clean it until others have witnessed it and (ideally) photographed it, as difficult as that may be.

Ask for protection:

- The earlier you get help, the better. Talk with your supervisor or with a school security person about:
 - » what happened and what you have already done, if anything, to get the offender(s) to stop harassing you.
 - » how you would most like the investigation handled, if one is needed.
 - » what might be done to counsel or educate the offender(s) about harassment and why it isn't tolerated at school.
 - » what sorts of reprimand or discipline would be employed if it were another form of harassment (based on race, religion, or gender, for instance) and that you would like this problem handled equitably.
 - » how possible retaliation (for your having sought help) will be handled.
- If that doesn't work, ask their supervisors for help. Use the appropriate channels in your building and your board.
- If you belong to a union, keep them informed, even if you have no need for their help at this time.



An Educator's Guide to Surviving Anti-LGBTQ Harassment cont'd

Adapted from the Safe Schools Coalition

Talk with supportive colleagues:

- If you know sexual or gender minority or LGBTQ-supportive employees in your district, ask if they are experiencing similar harassment. Find out how they have handled it and who has been helpful at the board level.
- Check with your professional association or union.
- Consult with Egale Canada, the national LGBTQ human rights organization: 1.888.204.7777 (toll-free) or egale.canada@egale.ca

Keep a written record:

- Write down everything that led up to the harassing incident(s) as well as what was said and done during the incidents. Note the time, location, and who was involved (including witnesses).
- Write down names of those in whom you have confided or from whom you have sought help since the incident. Note the time, location, and what was said during those conversations.

The law may be able to help:

You have the right to report the attack to the police. If you decide to call them:

- Call as soon as possible after the incident. (You can make a report months or even years afterward, but it might be harder for the police to act on your case the longer you wait.)
- If anti-LGBTQ slurs were used in the course of the incident, tell the police officer so. Stress that the crime was motivated by hate based on perceived sexual orientation or gender identity. You don't have to say whether you are actually LGBTQ and you shouldn't be asked.

- Describe in detail the hate or prejudice that was expressed and what caused you to fear harm.

For example, “They called me ‘faggot’ and said they would ‘kick my butt.’” Or, “They asked me why ‘dykes’ liked other girls and said they would ‘teach me to like boys.’” If the assault was physical and you have any physical pain, make sure it is written down in the police report. Get the incident number from the officer and ask how to get a copy of the police report. Get the officer’s name and badge number.

The bottom line is...

If the school environment is hostile for you, it must be even more so for LGBTQ students, students perceived as LGBTQ, and students with LGBTQ parents, other family members, or friends. Probably every child is feeling scared or anxious as long as the behavior is allowed to continue. Fear is not conducive to education. Nobody can teach in an unsafe place. And nobody can learn in an unsafe place.





TDSB

SUGGESTED CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES FOR CLASSES AND SCHOOLS

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Suggested Curricular Activities for Classes and Schools

The following activities can be incorporated into the development of a school's implementation of a *Banks Model* of equity transformative education that uses anti-homophobia education as the content vehicle.

- ➔ **Anti-Homophobia Education Display:** In a prominent place in the school, such as a hallway or library, prepare a table or bulletin board to acknowledge the contributions of LGBTQ individuals. Arrange pictures, posters, photographs, magazines, newsletters, books, videos, artifacts, or students' projects to highlight their lives, history, culture, and achievements. Encourage teachers to decorate the walls outside their classrooms with students' work reflecting their learning about anti-homophobia education.
- ➔ **An Anti-Homophobia Education Moment:** Every morning, on the announcements throughout the school year, ask students to organize and provide information related to past and present contributions of LGBTQ individuals. The information could take the form of a short biography of a significant LGBTQ person (see the Canadian Gay and Lesbian Archives at <www.clga.ca>); a poem or an excerpt from a novel; or a brief description of an important moment in history that reflects the struggles and victories of LGBTQ people in Canada.
- ➔ **Community Visitors:** Invite people from LGBTQ communities to talk to students about their experiences. You may find suitable speakers through parents/guardians/caregivers, local businesses, or community organizations. The TDSB Equity Department can also provide assistance.

- ➔ **LGBTQ Images in the Media:** How are LGBTQ people portrayed in the media, particularly in movies and on television? Are stereotypes being perpetuated about LGBTQ people? How are some individuals who are LGBTQ misrepresented in the media? How have these stereotypes, omissions, or misrepresentations affected the way LGBTQ youth and adults think about their community? Discuss issues of stereotyping and homophobia in the media with staff and students.
- ➔ **Researching Significant LGBTQ Individuals:** Have students research significant LGBTQ individuals. Encourage them to consider people from all walks of life (education, entertainment, history, politics, professions, science, or sports) in choosing a subject. Ask students to share their information through written reports, dramatic role-playing, or portraits.
- ➔ **Storytellers and Artists:** Arrange for LGBTQ storytellers or artists to visit the school and make presentations about their experiences. For storytelling, encourage staff and students to share their own stories with others.
- ➔ **Where in the World?** Organize students to research a specific LGBTQ individual or event from another country. Encourage them to learn and discuss the impact that this particular individual or event had in society.
- ➔ **Work and Careers:** Organize students to conduct research on homophobic barriers in Canadian history, and on how and when these barriers were finally overcome. For example: Who was the first LGBTQ actor/actress, artist, athlete, doctor, judge, politician, or union organizer in Canada to disclose his or her sexual orientation? What struggles did he or she face? When were same-sex rights established in the workplace? Which companies or organizations provide same-sex rights? What barriers do LGBTQ people still face in Canada today?



HOW TO HANDLE HARASSMENT

IN THE HALLWAYS IN 3 MINUTES OR LESS!

From GLSEN/Colorado

1. Stop the Harassment

- Interrupt the comment or halt the physical harassment.
- Do not pull student aside for confidentiality unless absolutely necessary.
- Make sure all the students in the area hear your comments.

2. Identify the Harassment

- Label the form of harassment: “You just made a harassing comment based upon race” (ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, size, age, etc.).
- Do not imply the victim is a member of that identifiable group.

3. Broaden the Response

- Do not personalize your response at this stage: “We, at this school, do not harass people.” “Our community does not appreciate hateful/thoughtless behavior.”
- Re-identify the offensive behavior: “This name calling can also be hurtful to others who overhear it.”

4. Ask for Change in Future Behavior

- Personalize the response: “Chris, please pause and think before you act.”
- Check in with the victim at this time: “Please tell me if this continues. We can take future action to work out this problem. We want everyone to be safe at this school.”



10 REASONS

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS NEED TO BE INVOLVED IN ANTI-HOMOPHOBIA EDUCATION

1. Anti-homophobia education works toward ensuring the physical safety of every student and that each student has a safe environment in which to learn. It is a legal and moral responsibility. Homophobia fosters, condones, and turns a blind eye to violence and hate.
2. Every faith contains a tradition of peace, love, tolerance, and compassion. One need only look to Liberation Theology as an example within Catholicism. The Catholic Church has an incredible history of involvement with social justice and protest movements, activism, martyrdom, and a sense of duty to marginalized peoples that is often overshadowed by its history of brutality, oppression, and intolerance.
3. The Golden Rule is absolute.
4. Homophobia hurts us all, regardless of sexual orientation. Often, anyone who is ever perceived to be LGBTQ is subjected to harassment and victimization. Homophobia enforces rigid gender roles and norms, denies individual expression, and perpetuates stereotypes, myths, and misinformation.
5. Roman Catholicism is not a fundamentalist religion. Interpretation is at the heart of Catholic tradition and belief and can be traced throughout the history of our Church. The appeal and primacy of conscience is a core part of the Catholic faith and has been strongly upheld by our current Pope Benedict.
6. Homophobic harassment can take the forms of verbal, physical, and sexual harassment.

10 Reasons Catholic Schools Need Anti-Homophobia Education cont'd

7. Gays and lesbians (like all human beings) are protected by the human rights code, and sexual orientation is a prohibited ground of discrimination under Canadian law.
8. Anti-homophobia education is NOT sex education. It is not about discussing or describing explicitly sexual activities. Support groups that gather in schools are safe places that allow students to meet, discuss issues relevant to their lives and circumstances, and have an outlet where they likely might not otherwise, given the present-day climate.
9. Anti-homophobia education does not teach that someone's religious values are wrong.
10. There are many students and staff who are not heterosexual and who deserve the love, support, and spiritual comfort of their community and faith.



HUMAN RIGHTS IN ONTARIO

SECTIONS FROM THE ONTARIO HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION'S TEACHING HUMAN RIGHTS IN ONTARIO: AN EDUCATIONAL PACKAGE FOR ONTARIO SCHOOLS

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Human Rights Quiz Question: Maureen and Sean



Maureen and Sean, who have organized a school fundraiser for AIDS research, are facing verbal and written harassment from students, both on and off school property. The school is aware of this harassment but has done nothing to prevent it.

Last week, Maureen and her friend Sean organized a school group to raise funds for AIDS research. Yesterday, they both found crudely-drawn cartoons making fun of gays and lesbians on their desks. Last night, several students shouting anti-gay comments verbally attacked them on the street opposite the school yard. Their teacher saw the cartoons and has heard rumours of the verbal attack, but feels that nothing can be done because the attack took place off the school premises. Neither student has complained to school officials. Have the students violated Maureen and Sean's human rights?

Yes, the students have violated Maureen and Sean's human rights. And so has the teacher and the school.

Do we know whether Maureen is a lesbian and Sean is a gay man? No, we don't.

If they are not, is there a prohibited ground? Yes, there is. Regardless of their sexual orientation, the other students are discriminating against them because of their "perceived" sexual orientation and/or association with a group protected under the *Code* (sexual orientation).

Is there an obligation for the teacher to act? Yes, under the *Code* the teacher is contributing to the discrimination if he or she knows about it and doesn't do something.


The students have discriminated against Maureen and Sean because of their participation in a school activity associated with AIDS, a condition wrongly identified by some

From the OHRC's Teaching Human Rights in Ontario cont'd

people as a “gay disease.” In addition, the derogatory cartoons in the classroom create a poisoned environment for Maureen and Sean. As a service provider, a school is required to ensure that everyone is treated equally, without discrimination and harassment.

If Maureen is lesbian and Sean is gay, why might they hesitate to complain to school officials or lodge a complaint with the Ontario Human Rights Commission? By taking such action, they might think they would have to publicly disclose their sexual orientation. They would not have to, however, because the Commission would still take the complaint based on their association with gays or lesbians, or that they were “perceived” to be lesbian or gay.

Sexual orientation was added to the *Code* as a prohibited ground in 1986. Yet, of all the grounds, the Commission consistently receives the fewest number of complaints in this category. Because of homophobia, many gay men, lesbians and bisexuals feel they must conceal their sexual identity to avoid rejection, ostracism and possibly violence from friends, family, work colleagues and others around them.



As a service provider, a school is required to ensure that everyone is treated equally, without discrimination and harassment.



Case Study: Ray

Ray was the President of an organization called the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives (CLGA). The Archives is a corporation whose mandate is to acquire, preserve, organize and give public access to information, records and artifacts by and about lesbians and gay men in Canada. The purpose of CLGA is to celebrate the lives of lesbians and gay men and to ensure that their records and histories are not lost or willfully erased. CLGA helps lesbians and gay men live “free, proud and positive lives”.

As the President of CLGA, Ray approached Scott, who was the President and chief salesperson of a printing company, to obtain a quote for printing business cards, letterhead and envelopes for CLGA.

At first, Scott was willing to provide the quote and carry out the service until he learned that Ray was requesting it on behalf of a lesbian and gay organization. Scott then refused. He told Ray that he was a religious person and that he had the deeply held conviction that homosexuality is wrong and he would not work with an organization that promoted the issues of gays and lesbians. He gave Ray the names and numbers of several other printers in the same town that he could try to get the work done. As a result of this refusal to do this job, CLGA was required to spend extra time trying to find another printer and it took a lot longer to complete the work.

Ray made a complaint against Scott and his printing company to the Ontario Human Rights Commission on behalf of himself and CLGA. His complaint was based on his belief that he had been denied service on the ground of sexual orientation. The complaint was investigated by the Commission and referred to the Board of Inquiry.

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What rights are involved in this case? Whose rights, if any, do you think should take precedence?
2. If you pick one, how do you think that the rights of the other should be protected?
3. What will happen to the purpose of the *Code* if rights claimed by certain groups result in violations of the rights of others?

This complaint was in the area of services and on the ground of sexual orientation. The case is based on one known as *Brillinger v. Brockie*.

This situation illustrates a particularly difficult problem that can come up when dealing with human rights. In cases like this, the rights of one person appear to be in conflict with the rights of another. The *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* guarantees all Canadians the right to freedom of religion and freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression. But, in Section 1, it places a limit on the exercise of such freedoms making it “subject only to such reasonable limits prescribed by law as can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society.” The Ontario *Human Rights Code* guarantees all of us freedom from discrimination based on our religion (creed) and our sexual orientation.

It is important to analyze situations like this very carefully. At first glance, it would seem that Scott's rights to his *Charter* freedoms are being overridden and he is being denied the right to practice his religion as he sees fit. In its consideration of the complaint, the Board of Inquiry chose to look separately at whether Scott had actually discriminated against Ray and CLGA and at what the remedy should be, if any. In its first decision, the Board said that Scott had discriminated against Ray and


CLGA as the service was denied because of the ground of sexual orientation.

The Board then turned its attention to the issue of what the remedy should be. Keep in mind that the object of the *Code* is to provide a remedy in order to compensate for the discrimination, not to punish the discriminator. The respondents argued that imposing a remedy under the *Human Rights Code* would breach Scott's constitutional right to freedom of conscience and religion. At the hearing, Scott testified that he tried to live his life according to his religious principles, one of which was against homosexuality. Providing printing services to a lesbian and gay organization would, therefore, be in direct opposition to his beliefs.


The Ontario Human Rights Commission and the complainants agreed that imposing a remedial order requiring Scott to do business with CLGA would infringe Scott's right to freedom of religion. But the Commission said that this infringement was justifiable as a reasonable limit on that right under Section 1 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. It then became necessary to balance the competing rights of Ray and the Archives to be free from discrimination based on sexual orientation, with Scott's freedom of conscience and religion as guaranteed by the *Charter*.

The printing company, operating as a business in Ontario, has a responsibility to abide by the *Code*. It therefore carries a public responsibility to protect its customers and potential customers against discrimination based on sexual orientation and all the other grounds when it offers its services. Writing about the apparent conflict of rights in the case, the Board Chair made the following conclusions:

From the OHRC's Teaching Human Rights in Ontario cont'd



While it may be difficult to see any “balance” in an imposition of a penalty against [Scott] and [the printing company], in fact nothing... will prevent [Scott] from continuing to hold, and practise, his religious beliefs. [Scott] remains free to hold his religious beliefs and to practise them in his home, and in his [religious] community. He is free to espouse those beliefs and to educate others as to them. He remains free to try to persuade elected representatives, through his involvement in the democratic process, that the Code protections currently granted to the lesbian and gay community, are wrong.



What he is not free to do, when he enters the public marketplace and offers services to the public in Ontario, is to practise those beliefs in a manner that discriminates against lesbians and gays by denying them a service available to everyone else. He must respect the publicly arrived-at community standards embodied in the Code. My order does not restrict [Scott's] right to believe as he does, just the manner in which he may practise those beliefs.

The Board of Inquiry ordered Scott and the printing company to provide the printing services that they offer to the general public to lesbians, gay men and their organizations. The Board of Inquiry also ordered the respondents to pay \$5,000 to the complainants for the damage to dignity and self-respect caused by the discrimination.

The purpose of the *Code* prohibition against discrimination in the delivery of services is to eradicate discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. In her conclusion, the Board Chair made the following observation: “while great achievements have been made, invisibility of, and discrimination against the lesbian and gay community continues to impact on the ability of lesbians and gays to function fully and openly in contemporary society.”



Preamble to the Ontario *Human Rights Code*

WHEREAS recognition of the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world and is in accord with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as proclaimed by the United Nations; AND WHEREAS it is public policy in Ontario to recognize the dignity and worth of every person and to provide for equal rights and opportunities without discrimination that is contrary to law, and having as its aim the creation of a climate of understanding and mutual respect for the dignity and worth of each person so that each person feels a part of the community and able to contribute fully to the development and well-being of the community and the Province



What is Equality?

The notion of a legal right to equality and how we create a society in which all have equal rights requires that we challenge our ways of thinking about “equality.” It is important, first of all, to realize that “equality” is not a static concept but an evolving one which the courts continue to define and reinterpret.

The traditional approach to understanding equality is based on the idea that it can be achieved by providing identical treatment to all individuals, regardless of their actual circumstances. If people are similar and you treat them the same, you cannot be said to have discriminated even though the result may in fact add to the disadvantage experienced by members of particular groups.

This notion of equality has many shortcomings. By failing to recognize that people have different needs as a result of their physical or mental abilities, race, ethnicity, creed, gender, sexual orientation, etc., it ignores the unequal effects that identical treatment can sometimes produce. Treating all people the same without regard to their histories of exclusion or restricted access to resources and opportunities perpetuates

From the OHRC's Teaching Human Rights in Ontario cont'd

group-based inequalities and compounds the experience of disadvantage.

Current approaches to the idea of equality stress the necessity of looking beyond the forms of treatment to the context of people's circumstances, including their historical experiences. Important aspects of this context are the social, economic, political and legal realities affecting the individual or group—realities which have both historical and contemporary components. Differences in the context could mean that, in some cases, same treatment will lead to unequal results while different treatment will sometimes be required to accomplish an equality of results. Achieving a more substantive or meaningful equality of results requires that the “different-ness” of their realities be acknowledged, as well as accommodated, in our laws and in the policies and practices of our social and business institutions.

It is recognized in the *Code* that in order to achieve equality of results for disadvantaged groups it is sometimes necessary to adopt special programs to assist historically disadvantaged individuals and groups to overcome discriminatory practices that have become ingrained in our institutions and organizations. Section 14 of the *Code* allows for the implementation of special programs designed to relieve hardship and economic disadvantage or to achieve equality of results in society as envisioned by the Preamble to the *Code*.



Poisoned Environment

A poisoned environment is created by comments or conduct that ridicule or insult a person or group protected under the *Code*. It violates their right to equal treatment with respect to services, goods and facilities, accommodation and employment. It is also produced when such actions or comments are not directed specifically at individuals. For example, insulting jokes, slurs or cartoons about gays and lesbians or racial groups, or pin-up photos that demean women, all contribute to a poisoned environment for members of those groups.

A poisoned environment can also be created for individuals at whom the insults are not necessarily directed. For example, a heterosexual male may be offended by homophobic jokes because some of his friends may be lesbian, gay or bisexual. Or a person belonging to a racial minority may believe because of insults that he or she will not be treated fairly.

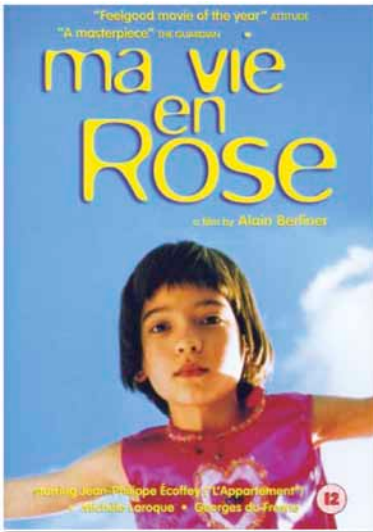
It must be clearly evident that such behaviour is making people feel uncomfortable in a school or work situation. A single incident may or may not be enough to create a poisoned environment. Other factors, such as the seriousness of the behaviour, the relative positions of the persons involved (employer to employee, landlord to tenant, etc.), and/or the impact upon the individual's access (perceived or real) to equal treatment without discrimination would need to be considered.

The *Code* asserts that it is the responsibility of the employer to ensure that a poisoned environment does not exist in the workplace. Similarly, it is the responsibility of the teacher and administration as the authority in the school to ensure that a poisoned environment does not exist for students.



MA VIE EN ROSE LESSON PLAN

By Gerald Walton, Assistant Professor
Faculty of Education, Lakehead University, Thunder Bay, Ontario



Target population:

Junior high and high school students who are fluent in French.

Film synopsis:

Ludovic Fabre is a young boy who believes that God made a genetic mistake in assigning him as a male. He thinks of himself as a girl and takes every opportunity to dress as a girl and explore typical girls' interests. He and his family have just moved to a new suburban neighborhood where boys are expected to look and act like boys and girls are expected to look and act like girls. Ludovic does not act like a typical boy. He doesn't fit in.

Learning outcomes:

- ➔ To explore and understand gender;
- ➔ To examine the assumptions about sexuality based on gender; and
- ➔ To recognize gender as a spectrum rather than either boy or girl; man or woman.

Instructions:

The film can either be watched in its entirety (88 minutes) or in two small sections of 20 minutes each.

Part 1

- ➔ Before watching the film, break students up into small groups of 5 – 6 students each.
- ➔ Ask them to discuss among themselves the question, What is gender? Ask each student to record ideas, assumptions, and perceptions.

- ➡ Watch the first 20 minutes of *Ma Vie en Rose*.
- ➡ Again in small groups, ask students to brainstorm about how the character of Ludovic reflects their ideas about gender. Ask them to brainstorm about how Ludovic challenges their ideas.
- ➡ Ask each group to share their ideas in large group discussion.

Part 2

Watch the last 20 minutes of the film.

Ask students to provide a written response to the film, perhaps by providing the following as guiding questions:

- ➡ How do Ludovic and Chris, as portrayed in the final scenes from the film, challenge usual ideas about gender?
- ➡ What do you think should be done about the problems that Ludovic and Chris each encounter?
- ➡ Is Ludovic gay? Explain your answer.
- ➡ How are the assumptions about sexuality (especially gay / straight) conveyed in the film in light of how it portrays gender?

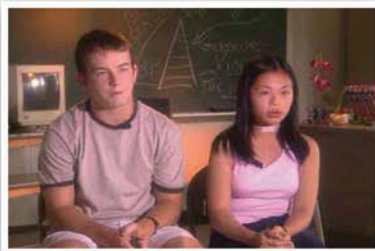


PYRAMID OF HATE LESSON PLAN

THE PYRAMID OF HATE

The Anti-Defamation League and
Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation

High School



The Anti-Defamation League and Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation are partnering to provide resources to educators and students for anti-bias education. To commemorate the United Nation's International Day for Tolerance, they have combined one of ADL's anti-bias learning tools, its Pyramid of Hate®, with visual history from the Shoah Foundation's unmatched archive of Holocaust survivor and witness testimonies, to create an innovative classroom lesson for contemporary educators. This multimedia activity draws on video, a medium with which today's students are particularly comfortable, and which has the power to bring them face to face with people whose life experience is both different from — and relevant to — their own.

RATIONALE:

History provides examples of the way in which stereotyping, scapegoating, dehumanization and discrimination can escalate to mass murders that have, in some instances, resulted in genocide.

This activity provides participants with the opportunity to understand the pain caused by bias and the ways in which prejudice can escalate. It is designed to promote recognition of the value of interrupting that progression.

OBJECTIVES:

Students will be able to:

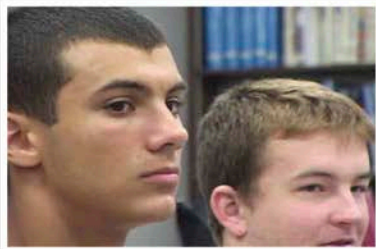
1. Examine how discrimination based on bias can escalate into acts of violence.
2. Discuss the impact of prejudice on individuals and on society.
3. Recognize the role of individuals in interrupting the escalation of hate.

REQUIREMENTS:

Materials:

- *Have You Ever...?* Student Handout (one copy for each participant)
- *Genocide Transparency*
- Shoah Foundation Testimony Reel
- Photographs of survivors with quotes
- *Pyramid of Hate* Student Handout
- Chart paper, markers and push pins or velcro
- (Optional: easels)

View the photographs of survivors with quotes and the Shoah Foundation Testimony Reel online at www.vhf.org/courtvtv, free of charge. A VHS version of the video is available for \$2.60 per unit (plus shipping and handling) from Reso Direct at 1.877.871.6469.

**Space:**

Room for students to work in small groups

Time:

45 – 60 minutes

Participants:

High school students/maximum: 40

PROCEDURES:

1. Distribute *Have You Ever...?* Student Handout to each student and tell them they are to answer yes or no to each of the questions in the handout. Assure the students that the handouts are for their eyes only. (3 minutes)
2. When students have completed their questionnaires, lead a discussion using some or all of the questions listed below. List students' responses on chart paper or on the chalkboard. (10 minutes)
 - Why do you think people tell ethnic jokes about other groups, insult others, or exclude them socially? (A possible response might be "Because 'others' are different.")
 - Why would these differences cause a person to "put down" someone else? (Possible responses might be: it makes them feel superior or more important or they are afraid of the "other," failure to understand another's culture.)
 - Where do people learn to disrespect people who seem different? (Responses may include home, school, friends, or the media — newspapers, television, movies, music.)
 - Can you give examples of a prejudice you have learned through the media?
3. Read the following case study.

In one school, a group of four boys began whispering and laughing about another boy in their school that they thought was gay. They began making comments when they walked by him in the hall. Soon, they started calling the boy insulting anti-gay slurs. By the end of the month, they had taken their harassment to another level, tripping him when he walked by and pushing him into a locker while they yelled slurs. Some time during the next month, they increased the seriousness of their conduct — they surrounded him and two boys held his arms while the others hit and kicked him. Eventually, one of the boys threatened to bring his father's gun into school the next day to kill the boy. At this point another student overheard the threat and the police were notified.¹

4. Ask the students if something similar to this could happen at their school? How do they think a situation like this could affect the entire school? What could have been done to stop the situation from escalating? Who should have stopped it? (7-8 minutes for case study and discussion)
5. Tell the students that they have been discussing a situation that started out as "whispering and laughing" and became more intense, escalating to violence. One visual representation of this type of progression is called the Pyramid of Hate.
 - Distribute the *Pyramid of Hate* Student Handout or draw a Pyramid on chart paper or the chalkboard. Briefly review each level of the Pyramid starting with Level I. Ask students to provide one or two examples to exemplify each level. (5 minutes)Based on the case study, ask students the following questions:
 - Where would you place "whispering and laughing" on the Pyramid (Level I)?
 - Why do you think that something which, at first, seemed harmless, progressed into violence? (Answers might include: nobody stopped it, the perpetrators gained confidence

¹ Description of school incident adapted from "Sticks and Stones" by Stephen L. Wessler. *Educational Leadership*, December 2000/January 2001 (p.28). Used with permission.

Pyramid of Hate Lesson Plan cont'd

The Anti-Defamation League and Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation

that they could continue without interference or consequences, the victim did not seek help, etc.)

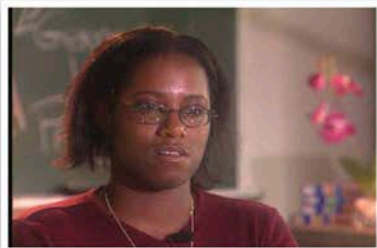
- Even if it seemed harmless to the perpetrators and bystanders, do you think it felt harmless to the victim? How do you think he felt?
 - At what level of the pyramid do you think it would be easiest for someone to intervene? What would be some possible ways to intervene? (5 minutes)
6. Ask the students if they can think of examples of genocide that occurred due to race, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, etc. (e.g., Native Americans, Aborigines of Australia, enslaved Africans, Rwandans, Armenians, Muslim Bosnians, and Jews in Nazi-occupied Europe.) Chart their responses. (2 minutes)
 8. Present the United Nations definition of "genocide" by using the *Genocide Transparency*. (3 minutes)
 9. Ask the students what they have heard about the Holocaust and list their responses on chart paper or the chalkboard. (Make sure that the students are aware that this was the deliberate and systematic murder of 6 million Jews based upon their religious or cultural identity, as well as the death of thousands of political dissidents, Roma, Polish intellectuals, people with disabilities, homosexuals and other targeted groups.) (3 minutes)
 10. Divide the students into groups of four or five. Explain that they are about to see some brief video clips of survivors of the Holocaust talking about their personal experiences during this period. Tell them that when the video is over, each group will be assigned the story of one survivor. The task of the small groups will be



to decide where on the Pyramid of Hate that person's experience belongs. (2 minutes)

11. Show the video. (4 minutes)
12. Distribute to each group a photo of a different survivor. Have each group select a reporter and, when the group members have reached consensus, instruct the reporter to bring the photo of the survivor to the large Pyramid and affix it to the appropriate level. Explain to the students that there is no one, correct placement. When all the photos have been placed on the Pyramid, ask the reporters to explain why their group selected the level they did for the survivor they have been assigned. (3 minutes)

(Alternative procedure: Divide the students into groups of four or five and give each a Pyramid of Hate and individual photos of each survivor accompanied by a quote from his or her testimony. Have each group decide where on the Pyramid they should place each survivor's testimony. Remind the students that there is no one correct placement. After 10 minutes, have the groups bring their Pyramids to the front of the room and place them on easels.)
13. After all the photos have been put in place, ask if there is agreement with the placement of the photos. If students don't agree, have them explain their thinking. (4-8 minutes)
14. Ask students what they learned during this activity.
15. Ask students to recall the different clips of testimony that they viewed. Ask the students the following questions:



to research and present in the form of a case study using the *Case Study Activity Sheet*.

WEB SITES RESOURCES:

To view the survivors' testimonies, visit www.vhf.org/courtvtv. To download this lesson, visit www.ADL.org/education/courtvtv.

- In each testimony, there were other people who were present, and who didn't act on behalf of the survivor or his/her family. Why do you think others did not act?
- What might have happened in, for example, Milton Belfer's testimony, if someone had acted on his behalf? What could have been done? By individuals? By groups? How would this have changed the situation he recounted?
- Can one person make a difference in such a situation? How?
- Have you ever been in a situation where you had the opportunity to act as an ally for someone who was being victimized?

16. Conclude the activity by showing the testimony of Mollie Stauber from *One Human Spirit*.

To purchase a copy of the Shoah Foundation classroom video, *One Human Spirit*, call United Learning at 800.323.9084 or visit their website at www.unitedlearning.com

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY:

Variation:

Distribute the *Pyramid of Hate*. Divide the whole group into small groups of 5 to 6 participants. Assign one level of the *Pyramid* to each small group and have the students brainstorm examples from history, current events, or their personal experience that demonstrate the word.

FOLLOW UP ACTIVITY:

Have students work in groups to research other genocides that have occurred in the 20th Century, such as in Cambodia, Rwanda, and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Assign each group a genocide

Pyramid of Hate Lesson Plan cont'd

Student Handout

HAVE YOU EVER...?

Answer yes or no to the following questions.

Answer truthfully. This is for your eyes only!

Overheard a joke that made fun of a person of a different ethnic background, race, religion, gender or sexual orientation?

Been the target of name calling because of your ethnic group, race, religion, gender or sexual orientation?

Made fun of someone different from you?

Left someone out of an activity because they are different from you?

Were not invited to attend an activity or social function because many of the people there are different from you?

Engaged in stereotyping (lumping together all people of a particular race, religion, or sexual orientation? Ex: White men can't jump!)

Were threatened by someone who is different from you because of your difference?

Committed an act of violence against someone because that person is different from you?

GENOCIDE

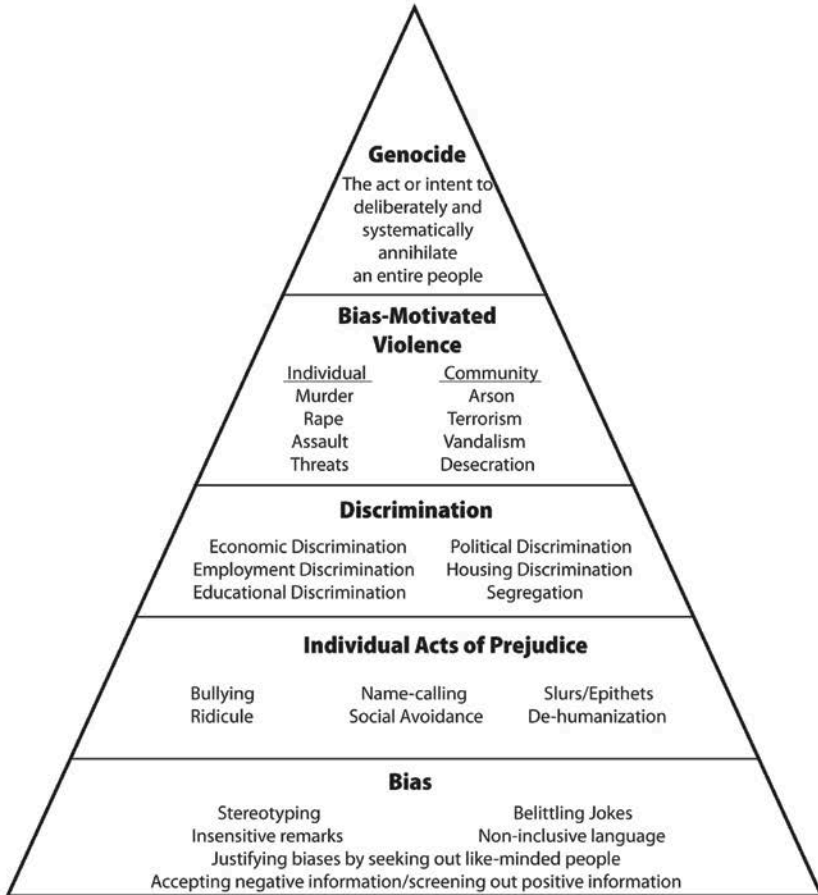
Genocide as defined by the United Nations in 1948 means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group, including:

- Killing members of the group
- Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group
- Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part
- Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group
- Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group

Pyramid of Hate Lesson Plan cont'd

Student Handout

PYRAMID OF HATE



CASE STUDY: GENOCIDE IN _____

Summary of the Event:

Present the basic facts: what happened, by whom, when, and where.

The Background:

Prepare a summary of the political, economic, social, and geographic factors that contributed to the problem.

Organizers:

What group or groups of people were responsible for the mass killings?

Motives?

Victims:

What group(s) of people were victimized?

What survival tactics were used?

What was the ultimate death toll?

World Response:

What was the response of the other countries to the mass killing?

Could this genocide have been prevented?

Aftermath:

How has this genocide affected both perpetrators and victims and their families?

What is the general situation in this country at the present time?

This Equity and Inclusive Education Resource Kit for Ontario High Schools is part of Egale's Safe Schools Campaign. The Safe Schools Campaign is made possible by the generous support of people like you. To make your contribution, please visit www.egale.ca/donate.



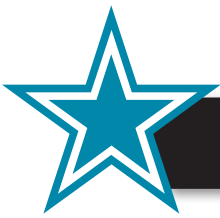


Equity and Inclusive Education Resource Kit for Ontario High Schools

RESOURCES FOR GUIDANCE COUNSELLORS



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possibility



RESOURCES FOR GUIDANCE COUNSELLORS

- 1. LGBT Youth Suicide Prevention Guide**
Report Homophobic Violence, Period (RHVP)
From the Toronto Police Services' LGBT Community Consultative Committee
- 2. Debunking Myths**
Adapted from the original developed by Vanessa Russell for the Toronto Board of Education
- 3. Issues Faced by GLBTTQ Families**
From Around the Rainbow's Toolkit for Educators and Service Providers
- 4. Mentoring Program**
From Supporting Our Youth (SOY)
- 5. Section 3.7 "Guidance"**
From the Toronto District School Board's Equity Foundation Statement on Anti-Homophobia, Sexual Orientation, and Equity
- 6. The Vancouver School Board's Policy Regarding Counselling and Student Support for LGBTQ Students**
- 7. Taking Action to Create Trans-Positive Schools**
Developed by Central Toronto Youth Services and Rebecca Hammond
- 8. Recommendations for Professionals Working with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Two-Spirited, Queer, and Questioning (LGBTQ) Youth**
Adapted from the Toronto District School Board
- 9. Summary of Suggestions from "Queer Spawn" about What Helps at School**
Developed by the LGBTQ Parenting Network





In addition to the resources provided in this section, also see the Executive Summary from Egale Canada's First National School Climate Survey Report *Every Class in Every School*, which is available both in the Information for Administrators section of this kit and on Egale's national LGBTQ safer schools and inclusive education website: *MyGSA.ca*.



Be sure *MyGSA.ca* isn't blocked at your school!

Some schools use filtering software to block access to websites that include keywords pertaining to certain matters, such as sex, and rely on the companies that develop the software to maintain the list of unacceptable sites. Although this might be done in the interests of blocking pornographic content, for example, an unfortunate consequence of such protocols is that many useful websites regarding important matters such as health and sexual orientation are also blocked. Be sure that *MyGSA.ca* isn't blocked at your school. If it is, ask your school's administration to change the settings. If *MyGSA.ca* continues to be blocked at your school, contact Egale at 1.888.204.7777 (toll-free) or mygsa@egale.ca and let us know.





LGBT YOUTH SUICIDE PREVENTION GUIDE

From the Toronto Police Services' LGBT Community Consultative Committee

Seven stitches and a concussion, all cuz I had a rainbow button on my knapsack.

He said all I needed was a real man.

RHVP

REPORT HOMOPHOBIC VIOLENCE, PERIOD.

He said all I needed was a real man.

LGBT YOUTH SUICIDE PREVENTION GUIDE

An initiative of the Toronto Police Service's LGBT Community Consultative Committee

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH LGBT SUICIDE

Suicidal Ideation

(D'Augelli et al 2001)

- ▶ 25% reported thoughts of suicide in the past year
- ▶ 42% of LGBT youth reported thoughts of suicide at some time
- ▶ 48% directly or indirectly related to sexual orientation.

Suicide Attempts

LGBTTTIQ2S youth are 3.4 times higher to have had a suicide attempt in the past year.

(Garofalo et al, 1999)

Limitations exist for many reasons with data collected for sexual orientation. There is no current data collection of suicidal transgendered youth. This has led to underestimating the reality.

Factors That Heighten Risk:

- ▶ Suicidality among friends or peers,
- ▶ Depression, anxiety and/ or substance abuse (maladaptive coping skills),
- ▶ Social inequity, sparse social networks or legal protection, hostile school or work environments, verbal or physical harassment, persecution or victimization,

- ▶ Lack of positive role models,
- ▶ Family dysfunction or family rejection,
- ▶ Identity conflict or identity confusion.

Protective Factors That Build Resilience

- ▶ Strong support to develop self esteem,
- ▶ Positive inclusive community or school spaces,
- ▶ Positive media and community role models,
- ▶ School, community and web-based resources.

ASSESSMENT

- A. Has the person made previous attempts?
- B. Is there a plan, including available method of death?
- C. Has this person little in the way of an identifiable support system? (e.g. family or friends)
- D. Is there evidence of mental illness, alcoholism or drug addiction present?

Keep in mind that:

- A. Suicidal language can be used to express pain and a need for change.

- B. Suicide attempters are often ambivalent. Hopelessness and helplessness mark those who are determined to die.
- C. Many people who are depressed are also suicidal but not all depression leads to a desire for death.
- D. Some long-term chronically depressed people have periods of time when they are suicidal, including during what appear to be “better” periods.
- E. Gender and age affect suicide risk. Women make more suicide attempts than men, but have much lower (completed) suicide rates. This is because men are more likely to choose lethal methods. Of Canadian men, men under 20 are at relatively lower risk than men over 20.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE IN SUICIDE MANAGEMENT

1. Know what LGBTTIQQ2S means and be comfortable saying Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer or Questioning, 2-Spirited, or straight ally.
2. Be able to use the word “suicide” without negative emotional reaction. Be able to discuss expressions of suicide in order to establish intent.
3. The safest and most helpful approach is to encourage the

distressed person to discuss suicidal ideas or feelings and plans.

4. Do not judge a person to be weak or inferior who expresses pain in suicidal terms. You can give permission to a troubled person to have deep feelings by saying “You are having a very difficult time. It’s not surprising you feel so bad.”
5. Be aware of some LGBT referral resources tailored to that person’s needs – e.g., CAMH Rainbow Addiction Services (age 18 and older) and The Substance Abuse Program for African Canadian and Caribbean Youth (age 13-24) offered by CAMH, CTYS, Sherbourne Health Centre, LGBT Youthline, nonjudgmental family physician or LGBT positive counselor– to do a thorough assessment.
Community resources: 519, MCCT, Pride Toronto, Proud FM - 103.9, Xtra, FAB, Inside Out Festival, and many more.
6. Do not rush a person through the suicidal crisis without giving ample time to identify and explore feelings.

For a detailed list of local LGBTQ-friendly youth resources, as well as information and materials regarding safer schools and inclusive education, check out www.MyGSA.ca.



DEBUNKING MYTHS

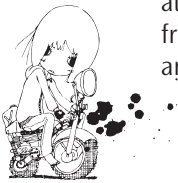
Adapted from the original developed by Vanessa Russell for the Toronto Board of Education

**All gay men are like women. /
All lesbians are like men.**

Some gay men are effeminate and some lesbians are masculine, but many are not. A lot of lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals are assumed to be heterosexual whether or not they are trying to do so. However, some lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, two-spirited, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ) individuals choose to resist homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia by challenging normative rules about how women and men are supposed to look and behave, in which case they may adopt various gender expressions that disrupt gender norms. Other people do not necessarily do so for political purposes: some people just do and wear what makes them the most comfortable, with little regard for masculinity or femininity.

All lesbians are man-haters.

Being a lesbian has little to do with how one feels about men. It has much more to do with how one feels about women. Although lesbians are generally not sexually attracted to men, it is not uncommon to maintain many male friendships. Lesbians are women who predominantly love and are sexually attracted to women.



People become gay or lesbian because they are unattractive and have no success with the “opposite” sex.

You just have to look at the Role Models section on *MyGSA.ca*, the national LGBTQ safer schools and inclusive education website, to be reminded that many lesbians and gay men are considered attractive by normative standards and would have no trouble at all catching anyone’s eye, regardless of gender.

All LGBTQ people have been abused in childhood or had some kind of negative experience to “make them that way.”

There is no evidence whatsoever linking child abuse with sexual orientation or gender identity in adult life.



All gay men have AIDS and it is a curse from God.

While the gay community in North America and elsewhere has been hit hard by AIDS, the vast majority of gay men are not infected by HIV. Around the world, most people with AIDS are heterosexual. In Canada, women are infected with approximately 30% of all new cases of HIV and lesbians are the demographic with the lowest risk of contracting HIV.

LGBTQ individuals are predominantly white.

LGBTQ individuals come from all races, ethnicities, religions, and countries of origin. However, how one identifies or defines oneself is culturally shaped. Also, different cultural norms allow for different degrees of being out publicly. If it seems that more white people frequent public LGBTQ areas, this could simply mean that more white people are comfortable being out in these spaces.

All religious groups oppose homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, and trans identities.

There are a variety of religious opinions about being LGBTQ from groups that consider it a sin to others that consider this to be a gift from God.

Debunking Myths cont'd

Adapted from the original developed by Vanessa Russell for the Toronto Board of Education

Sexual orientation is only about sex.

Being lesbian, gay, or bisexual is about a person's life and not just about what one does in bed. It is also about who one loves, spends time with, chooses to raise children and have a family with, etc.



I don't know anyone who is LGBTQ.

Chances are you do. They just might not be out to you. Egale's First National Climate Survey on Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia in Canadian Schools found that over 14% of students who completed the survey in class self-identified as LGBTQ. Since the "Q" stands for both "queer" and "questioning," this demonstrates that a proportionally large segment of youth in Canada today self-identify as sexual and/or gender minorities.

Queer people don't make good parents.

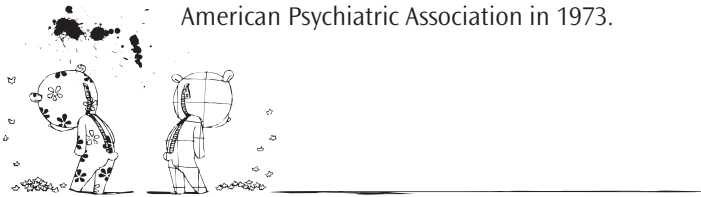
To date, there is no conclusive research demonstrating how one becomes heterosexual, bisexual, homosexual, or trans and nothing to indicate that it has anything to do with parental influence. The presence of open and out LGBTQ family members may make it easier, and less anxiety-ridden, for younger LGBTQ family members when they are coming out. A 2006 report by the Department of Justice Canada found that "Children raised in families with same-sex parents are at least as socially competent as children raised in families with opposite sex parents," and that lesbians and gay men are generally better at parenting than heterosexual parents. For more information, see http://www.samesexmarriage.ca/docs/Justice_Child_Development.pdf.

All gay men are pedophiles.

In fact, statistics show that most child molesters are heterosexual men who abuse children within the nuclear family and are related to the children they abuse.

Homosexuality is a disease.

Because of prejudice, homosexuality was once listed as a disease but it was removed from the lists of mental illnesses by the American Psychiatric Association in 1973.



Check out MyGSA.ca
for more information as well as resources and materials
for debunking LGBTQ myths!





ISSUES FACED BY GLBTTQ FAMILIES

From Around the Rainbow's Toolkit for Educators and Service Providers

QUESTIONING FROM THE MAINSTREAM

GLBTTQ parents with young children face all the challenging questions and situations that every new family faces. There are a number of additional barriers and challenges that must be confronted, however. Some of these issues include:

- ▶ the lack of legal recognition as a family and therefore greater vulnerability in family life situations such as separation, child custody, illness or death of a spouse.
- ▶ the challenges finding GLBTTQ-friendly support and services for reproductive alternatives, prenatal and birthing needs, childrearing, playgroups, etc.
- ▶ the increased questioning and scrutiny of decision-making, parenting styles and practices based on homophobic and heterosexist views on what constitutes a family.
- ▶ the isolation from both the mainstream and the GLBTTQ community.

Unfortunately, most of the issues facing GLBTTQ families, parents and their children result from discrimination in the community because of widely held societal myths and stereotypes. Some myths that are commonly heard include:

Myth: GLBTTQ people do not value family.

Fact: GLBTTQ people value family. Within the GLBTTQ community there is recognition and nurturing of diverse family structures, from mono-nuclear families to other families of choice.

GLBTTQ people recognize friends, lovers and those involved in long-term relationships as family.

GLBTTQ people who are fortunate enough to have been accepted by their family of origin may have strong family ties. Those who have been rejected by their family of origin often work to try to re-establish these relationships, and to guard their right to raise their own children or adopt their partner's children.

Rejection often causes deep pain from which many glbttq people spend a good part of their life trying to understand and overcome.

Myth: GLBTTQ people do not make good parents

Fact: Research has shown that, except for the fact that the children of glbttq parents are often concerned about being

stigmatized by their peers, they show no higher incidence of emotional disturbance than do children of heterosexual couples, nor are they confused about their own gender identity or sexual orientation. GLBTTQ people come from all kinds of families, as do heterosexuals, and there is no correlation between the sexual orientation or gender identity of parents and that of their children. The chances of a child being GLBTTQ are the same whether they are raised by glbttq parents or by heterosexual parents.

Myth: GLBTTQ people cannot or do not have children.

Fact: GLBTTQ people have children in many different ways, just like everyone else: through adoption, alternative insemination, sexual intercourse, co-parenting, step parenting, fostering, etc.

Myth: Trans, two spirit and queer parents must resolve all issues of gender identity before coming out to their children. Children cannot deal with gender transition or gender fluidity. They need to be a certain age before they are ready to learn about a trans parent or family member.

Fact: We know families that have successfully dealt with and continue to deal with the issues of gender transition and fluidity with children of every age. Each age has unique needs that must be met, and it is up to the parent to meet those needs. The information we give our children must be age appropriate, and parents must set limits and boundaries. Coming out to children can dispel feelings of secrecy and dishonesty. It can increase feelings of closeness. But the decision to come out or not is highly personal and must be respected.

Myth: GLBTTQ parents stigmatize their children.

Fact: Homophobia and transphobia stigmatize children. Being proud and honest about one's identity and orientation in a homophobic/transphobic society, while certainly not easy, makes children strong and more accepting of diversity. It is society's homophobia and transphobia that need to change; GLBTTQ people need not remain closeted about who they really are.

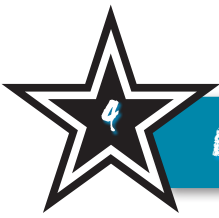
Myth: Any gender experimentation by children of GLBTTQ parents is a direct result of having GLBTTQ parents

Fact: Experimentation with gender is natural and children should be allowed to do so. We know children of GLBTTQ parents who are questioning gender and others who express no such feelings. Many children have grown up to be trans, two spirit or queer in spite of their

heterosexual parents' strong discouragement of any gender experimentation, and despite the presence of more rigid gender role-models. Children with GLBTTQ parents can grow up with the freedom to explore, to question roles and to choose their own identities and to get support for whatever they choose.



From Around the Rainbow's Toolkit for Educators and Service Providers. Around the Rainbow is a programme of Family Services à la famille Ottawa. This document, as well as a Toolkit for GLBTTQ Parents/Guardians, can be found online at <http://www.aroundtherainbow.org>.



MENTORING PROGRAMME

AT SUPPORTING OUR YOUTH (SOY), TORONTO

The Mentoring program is about connecting LGBTTQ youth to safe, out, adult ‘mentors’ from the community. Mentors are queer ‘big brothers and sisters’ who can help you explore questions about identity, sexuality, and community. Mentors provide support, encouragement, and a non-judgmental listening ear to talk about anything and everything going on in your life—family, school, friends, relationships, etc.

Community Mentoring involves matching a youth with a safe, screened adult in a one-to-one relationship. Matches are based on the needs of the youth and shared interests and values. Mentors and youth spend time together on a regular basis (once a week or so) to:

- meet at a coffee shop/juice bar to hang out and talk
- go to a movie or a play in the community
- explore the city together
- cook and share a meal
- celebrate birthdays and holidays, etc.

“Having that mentor in your back pocket, saying keep going, keep going, you can do it...if nobody else will believe in your dreams or what you hope to accomplish in your life, your mentor will.”

-matched youth



Mentors are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, or transgender (or gay-positive and trans-positive) adults, 26 years of age or older. Mentors come from a diversity of backgrounds and have varied life experiences, interests, and skills. All mentors undergo a thorough orientation and screening process before they are accepted into the program. Mentors must agree to abide by program policies that clearly outline their role and responsibilities. Ongoing support and training are provided.

Supporting Our Youth (SOY, Toronto) welcomes all youth who are 14-29 years of age, and identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual or transgender or questioning. Youth may be living with their families, or be on their own. Some youth may be employed or in school, while others won't be. Youth who are HIV+ can also be matched with supportive, knowledgeable mentors.

For more information, visit <http://www.soytoronto.org/mentoring.html>.



SECTION 3.7 “GUIDANCE”

FROM THE TORONTO DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD’S EQUITY FOUNDATION STATEMENT ON ANTI- HOMOPHOBIA, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, AND EQUITY



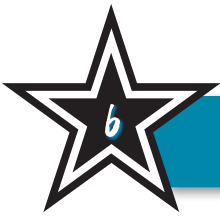
3.7. Guidance

The Toronto District School Board recognizes that informed counsellors, teachers, and staff in counseling roles can help remove discriminatory barriers for students in the school system and in work-related experiences. The Board shall respond effectively to the needs of lesbian and gay and other students who identify themselves on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity by:

- 3.7.1. providing counselling services that are culturally-sensitive, supportive, and free of bias on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity;
- 3.7.2. providing proactive strategies to ensure that lesbian and gay students, students from same sex families, and other students who identify themselves on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity are not underestimated on the basis of stereotypical assumptions, and to assure all students experience personal growth and reach their full potential in academic and life paths;
- 3.7.3. eliminating discriminatory biases related to sexual orientation or gender identity in educational and life planning programs;
- 3.7.4. encouraging and supporting lesbian and gay students, other students who identify themselves on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity, and their families in the identification of non-traditional career options and appropriate academic paths;

- 3.7.4.1. working with lesbian and gay students, other students who identify themselves on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity, and their families to identify career options that historically have excluded them and help them to choose academic paths that will allow them to reach their full potential and succeed in a traditionally heterosexist society;
- 3.7.5. ensuring that communication strategies are in place to keep all parents/guardians informed about their children's current educational achievement, progress, and their plans for the future, in a language they understand, and including the provision of translations where necessary;
- 3.7.6. recognizing the importance and ensuring the maintenance of confidentiality around matters of sexual orientation and gender identity for youth.

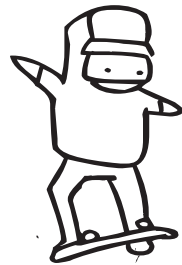




THE VANCOUVER SCHOOL BOARD'S POLICY

REGARDING COUNSELLING AND STUDENT SUPPORT FOR LGBTQ STUDENTS

The Vancouver School Board is committed to maintaining a safe learning and working environment which actively provides counselling and support to students who identify themselves on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. All counsellors provided by the board shall be educated in the knowledge and skills required to deal with LGBTQ issues with students. Counsellors will be informed and familiar with all policies with respect to human rights, anti-homophobia, hate literature, discrimination, and harassment, and will alert their school community to these policies. Counsellors will be sensitive to lesbian, gay, transgender, transsexual, two-spirit, bisexual, and questioning students as well as students from LGBTT-headed families.





TAKING ACTION

TO CREATE TRANS-POSITIVE SCHOOLS

Developed by Central Toronto Youth Services and Rebecca Hammond

1. Research your school's equity statements and anti-violence policies. If there is nothing specific to trans students in existing material, propose that "gender identity" become an articulated ground for protection.
2. Develop a school protocol for consistent use of *preferred* name and pronouns that is easy for students to access. For example, under the Ontario Trillium school identification system, a student's "preferred or chosen name" can be used on class lists, timetables, etc.
3. Develop a school policy that ensures the right to use a washroom that best corresponds to the student's gender identity. If trans students do not feel safe using this washroom, ensure that they have access to a private washroom (e.g., staff washroom) if they choose.
4. Create a flexible or gender-neutral dress code to enable a student's right to dress in accordance with their gender identity.
5. Ensure that a student has the right to participate in gender-segregated sports and gym class activities in accordance with the student's gender identity.
6. Integrate trans-sensitivity and advocacy training into staff professional development curricula.
7. Train staff to identify and confront transphobia in the school.
8. Designate a staff person within the school, or school district, who can act in an extended advocacy role for trans students.
9. Accommodate locker room accessibility, which may include use of a private area (washroom, or Phys. Ed instructor's office), or a separate changing schedule (just before or after the other students have changed).
10. Have trans-related fiction and non-fiction books in the school library.
11. Integrate trans content into the school curriculum and into student sexual health education.
12. Support the development of a trans-inclusive GSA (Gay-Straight Alliance) in the school.
13. Encourage and support scholarships and awards that recognize the unique strength and resilience that trans youth possess.

This resource is excerpted from *Trans Youth at School: Y-GAP Community Bulletin*, which is available at www.ctys.org. Some of these recommendations have been adapted from www.delisleyouth.org/service/wmbjmanuscript.




RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROFESSIONALS

WORKING WITH LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANS, TWO- SPIRITED, QUEER, AND QUESTIONING (LGBTQ) YOUTH

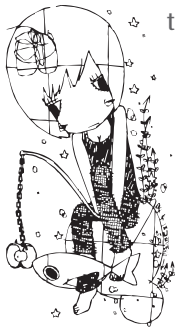
Adapted from the Toronto District School Board

1. Examine your own feelings and attitudes toward lesbianism, homosexuality, bisexuality, trans identity, two-spiritedness, queerness, and the state or process of questioning. Develop insights into possible fears and misconceptions. Books and lectures as well as consultations with LGBTQ agencies and professionals may assist you with this process.
2. Begin the never-ending process of questioning the assumptions associated with ableism, ageism, biphobia, classism, heterosexism, homophobia, lesbophobia, misogyny, racism, sexism, transphobia, and other oppressions. These are all related to one another and intersect in various ways.
3. Become aware of the oppression that LGBTQ individuals face constantly. For instance, imagine how you would feel if your romantic, sexual, and love feelings were the cause of derision, disgust, hatred, and/or violence from the people around you, very frequently from your own friends and family.
4. Do not presume that someone is heterosexual unless it is so stated.



Oppressions are all related to one another and intersect in various ways.

5. Increase your awareness of LGBTQ resources in your community. LGBTQ communities are frequently the greatest source of support for LGBTQ individuals. Regional directories are available on MyGSA.ca.
6. There are unique, positive aspects about being LGBTQ. Become aware of them and develop the capacity to help others to discover them. For example, it takes great strength and mental health for LGBTQ people to function in a heterosexist, homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic society.
7. Do not base your notion of mental health on sex and gender role stereotypes.
8. You should not solely focus on working with LGBTQ adolescents; heterosexist, homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic environments should be addressed also.



9. Encourage your school to display pamphlets and other materials listing resources for LGBTQ individuals.
10. Do not simply try to help LGBTQ people cope with harassment and prejudice. Be their advocate and help them to obtain their rights.



SUMMARY OF SUGGESTIONS

FROM “QUEER SPAWN” ABOUT WHAT HELPS AT SCHOOL

Developed by the LGBTQ Parenting Network

- Facilitate ways of queer spawn connecting with other queer spawn to share experiences and strategies.
- Discourage shame in queer spawn.
- Develop strategies for community anti-homophobia education that recognizes that homophobic attitudes are often learned in heterosexual families and communities.
- Establish anti-homophobia education for students from JK to high school, with special emphasis on elementary grades.
- Implement compulsory pre- and in-service teacher education on anti-homophobia and other equity issues, with explicit inclusion of queer spawn experience.
- Include LGBTQ-led families and recognition of the particular experiences of queer spawn in school curriculum, beginning in elementary school.
- Solicit commitment from school staff to intervene in the everyday use of homophobic language and insults in school environments.
- Consult and empower students who are the targets of homophobic harassment when intervening in youth peer-to-peer conflicts.
- Encourage the formation and work of gay-straight alliances and equity committees.
- Display LGBTQ positive symbols in classrooms and schools.
- Create or modify school forms to recognize diverse family configurations.
- Promote a school environment which encourages teachers, administrators, and students to be “out.”
- Create a school environment of openness, respect, and support.



**This Equity and Inclusive
Education Resource Kit for
Ontario High Schools is part of
Egale's Safe Schools Campaign.
The Safe Schools Campaign is
made possible by the generous
support of people like you. To
make your contribution, please
visit www.egale.ca/donate.**





Equity and Inclusive Education Resource Kit for Ontario High Schools

INFORMATION FOR ADMINISTRATORS



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possibility



INFORMATION FOR ADMINISTRATORS



Making Ontario's Schools Safer and More Inclusive Spaces

Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs) and Other Inclusive School Groups Pertaining to LGBTQ Matters

Curriculum

Character Development

Shared and Committed Leadership

Training

Implementation

Did You Know...?

From Questions & Answers about LGBTQ Human Rights Legislation and Policy in Ontario

Responses to Egale Canada's First National School Climate Survey

Safe Schools Quiz

Executive Summary of *Every Class in Every School*: Egale's Final Report on Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia in Canadian Schools



MAKING ONTARIO'S SCHOOLS

SAFER AND MORE INCLUSIVE SPACES

In 2009, Ontario's Ministry of Education launched its Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy and released three important documents outlining the approach and its implementation: Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119, Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools; Realizing the Promise of Diversity: Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy; and Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation.¹ Many of the Action Items for making Ontario's schools safer and more inclusive spaces are supported by statistics from Egale Canada's First National School Climate Survey Report "Youth Speak Up about Homophobia and Transphobia."²

Egale Canada is Canada's lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, two-spirited, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ) human rights organization: advancing equality, diversity, education, and justice. Through our Safe Schools Campaign, we are committed to supporting LGBTQ youth, youth perceived as LGBTQ, youth with LGBTQ parents, other family members, and friends as well as educators, librarians, guidance counsellors, education support workers, parents, and administrators and to helping make Canadian schools safer and more inclusive, respectful, and welcoming learning and working environments for all members of school communities. The Safe Schools Campaign features resources for facilitating change in Canadian learning environments: the national LGBTQ safer schools and inclusive education website, *MyGSA.ca*;³ Equity and Inclusive Education Resource Kits; and an anti-heterosexism, anti-homophobia, anti-biphobia, anti-transphobia, and intersectionality workshop series.

The fact that these resources are vitally needed in schools is demonstrated by the survey results in “Youth Speak Up about Homophobia and Transphobia”:

- Three-quarters of LGBTQ students and 95% of trans students feel unsafe at school.
- Over a quarter of LGBTQ students and almost half of trans students have skipped school because of feeling unsafe.
- Many LGBTQ students would not be comfortable talking to their teachers (four in ten), their principal (six in ten), or their coach (seven in ten) about LGBTQ matters.
- Only one in five LGBTQ students can talk to a parent very comfortably about LGBTQ matters.
- Over half of LGBTQ students do not feel accepted at school, and almost half feel they cannot be themselves at school. School attachment—the feeling that one belongs in the school community—is a crucial issue because of its connection to lower suicidality rates (suicide attempts and suicidal thinking) in the general school population and among LGBTQ students.⁴

This is a unique opportunity for Ontario’s schools to take a leadership role.



By initiating the Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy, the Ministry of Education is demonstrating its commitment to upholding the values of genuine acceptance and comprehensive respect in Ontario’s diverse learning environments. The following recommended initiatives regarding Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs), Curriculum, and Character Development present a unique opportunity for Ontario’s schools to take a leadership role with regard to LGBTQ human rights, inclusive education, and safer and more welcoming schools. Through realizing the Ministry’s principles of Shared and Committed Leadership, Implementation, and Training, administrators can enact the Ministry’s Vision of an Inclusive Education System:

“We envision an inclusive education system in Ontario in which:

- all students, parents, and other members of the school community are welcomed and respected;
- every student is supported and inspired to succeed in a culture of high expectations for learning.

To achieve an equitable and inclusive school climate, school boards and schools will strive to ensure that all members of the school community feel safe, comfortable, and accepted. We want all staff and students to value diversity and to demonstrate respect for others and a commitment to establishing a just, caring society” (10).⁵



¹ All of these documents can be found under the heading “Greater Equity Means Greater Student Success” in the Administrators’ Section of the Ministry’s website, <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca>, or by going to <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/equity.html>.

<http://MyGSA.ca/YouthSpeakUp> or check “Stats & Maps” under “Resources” on MyGSA.ca.

³ <http://MyGSA.ca>

⁴ <http://MyGSA.ca/YouthSpeakUp>

⁵ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/equity.pdf>

² To read the full report, go to



GAY-STRAIGHT ALLIANCES

(GSAs) AND OTHER INCLUSIVE SCHOOL GROUPS PERTAINING TO LGBTQ MATTERS

Under the Ministry's Policy/Program Memorandum No. 145, Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour, which was issued on October 19, 2009, "Boards must also help school staff to give support to students who wish to participate in gay-straight alliances and in other student-led activities that promote understanding and development of healthy relationships. Schools must also engage their school councils and student councils to support these student-led activities" (6).⁶

"Boards must also help school staff to give support to students who wish to participate in gay-straight alliances..."



In "Youth Speak Up about Homophobia and Transphobia," GSAs are defined in the following way:

"Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs) are official student clubs with LGBTQ and heterosexual student membership and typically two teachers who serve as faculty advisors. Students in a school with a GSA know that they have at least one or two adults they can talk to about LGBTQ issues. The purpose of GSAs is to provide a much-needed safe space in which LGBTQ students and allies can work together on making their schools more welcoming of sexual and gender minority students. Some GSAs go by other names such as Human Rights Clubs or Social Justice Clubs in order to signal an openness to non-LGBTQ membership (though of course, some of these are not GSAs and might not address homophobia). Very often it is LGBTQ students themselves who initiate the GSA, although sometimes a teacher will come forward" (80). It is particularly important to note that such groups function as safe havens and supports for heterosexual students who have LGBTQ parents, other family

members, and friends as well, given some of the findings in the Final Report on Egale’s School Climate Survey:

- 45% of youth with LGBTQ parents have been sexually harassed at school; over a quarter have been physically harassed or assaulted about the sexual orientation of their parents (27%) and their own perceived sexual orientation or gender identity (27%).
- Almost half (48%) of youth of colour, both LGBTQ and heterosexual, reported not knowing of any teachers or other school staff members who are supportive of LGBTQ students; only half (53%) would be very comfortable talking about LGBTQ matters even with a close friend.
- Over two thirds (70.4%) of all students heard homophobic expressions such as “that’s so gay” every day in school.⁷

A significant finding in “Youth Speak Up about Homophobia and Transphobia” is that “students from schools with GSAs were much more likely to agree that their school community was supportive of LGBTQ people, compared to participants from schools without GSAs (47.6% versus 19.8%)” (81).⁸

Both this Equity and Inclusive Education Resource Kit and *MyGSA.ca* have GSA Guides to assist with developing and maintaining inclusive student groups pertaining to LGBTQ matters. See <http://MyGSA.ca/GSAGuide>.





Be sure *MyGSA.ca* isn't blocked at your school!

Some schools use filtering software to block access to websites that include keywords pertaining to certain matters, such as sex, and rely on the companies that develop the software to maintain the list of unacceptable sites. Although this might be done in the interests of blocking pornographic content, for example, an unfortunate consequence of such protocols is that many useful websites regarding important matters such as health and sexual orientation are also blocked. Be sure that *MyGSA.ca* isn't blocked at your school. If it is, check your settings by contacting your system administrator or software provider. If *MyGSA.ca* continues to be blocked at your school, contact Egale at 1.888.204.7777 (toll-free) or mygsa@egale.ca and let us know.



⁶ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/145.pdf>

⁸ <http://MyGSA.ca/YouthSpeakUp>

⁷ This report will also be available at <http://MyGSA.ca/YouthSpeakUp>.



CURRICULUM

The Ministry's document Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation states the following regarding inclusive curriculum:

“The ministry's curriculum policy supports respect for and acceptance of diversity in Ontario's schools. Through the curriculum review process, curriculum is continually revised to maintain and increase its relevance to the changing needs and lives of students...Schools are expected to give students and staff authentic and relevant opportunities to learn about diverse histories, cultures, and perspectives. Lessons, projects, and related resources should allow students to see themselves reflected in the curriculum (e.g.,...using texts written by gay/lesbian authors). Students need to feel engaged in and empowered by what they are learning, supported by the teachers and staff from whom they are learning, and welcomed in the environment in which they are learning” (20-21).⁹



“Lessons, projects, and related resources should allow students to see themselves reflected in the curriculum...”

Accordingly, the Ministry's Strategy document outlines the following Action Items for 2010-2011:



“Schools will:

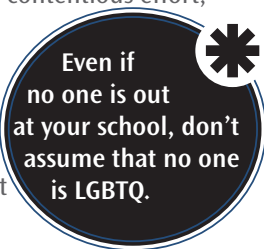
- review classroom strategies and revise them as needed to ensure they are aligned with and reflect school-wide equity and inclusive education policies.

School boards will:

- support the schools' review of classroom strategies that promote school-wide equity and inclusive education policies and practices” (22).¹⁰

Inclusive Curriculum and Assessment Practices are also addressed in the Ministry's Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119, Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools. In addition to reaffirming the above points made in the Guidelines, Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119 further states, "Students should be able to see themselves represented in the curriculum, programs, and culture of the school. Also, since schools have a pivotal role in developing the work force of tomorrow, students should be able to see themselves represented in the teaching, administrative, and support staff employed at the school."¹¹

According to "Youth Speak Up about Homophobia and Transphobia," "Because it is generally understood that students enjoy a healthier, more respectful learning environment when they are included in the curriculum, most Canadian schools have taken measures to diversify many of their courses to include the ethnic and religious diversity of the students in their classrooms. Making the curriculum reflect the existence of LGBTQ students has been a much more contentious effort, and in the absence of mandate or even permission from principals and school districts to do so, most teachers hesitate to integrate LGBTQ content into their classes. Sadly, the message to many LGBTQ students, explicit or implicit, is that other forms of diversity are respectable, but they and their issues are not fit for classroom discussion" (71).¹²



BE PROACTIVE IN TAKING A LEADERSHIP ROLE

by making your entire school community a safer space and, consequently, a better learning and working environment.



Even if LGBTQ students or staff members are not out at your school, or not out to you, please do not assume that they are not there. It is possible that they simply are not comfortable being out there, and it is also possible that LGBTQ matters are important and relevant to students and staff members at your school because they have LGBTQ parents or other family members or friends.

To find resources, materials, information, and supports for teachers and other school staff members, consult the Educators' Section of *MyGSA.ca* as well as this Equity and Inclusive Education Resource Kit. To arrange for anti-heterosexism, anti-homophobia, anti-biphobia, anti-transphobia, and intersectionality workshops to be delivered at your school or to your school board, contact mygsa@egale.ca or 1.888.204.7777 (toll-free).



⁹ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/inclusiveguide.pdf>

¹⁰ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/equity.pdf>

¹¹ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/119.html>

¹² <http://MyGSA.ca/YouthSpeakUp>



CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

As stated in both the Ministry’s Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy and its Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation, Character Development is an initiative that is directly related to the Ministry’s Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy (Strategy, 25; Guidelines, 33).

As stated in Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119, Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools, which was issued on June 24, 2009, one of the core goals of the strategy is to develop and implement “equity and inclusive education policies and practices to support positive learning environments that are respectful and welcoming to all” (4).¹³

In order to achieve its goals for the education system in Ontario, the Ministry has highlighted a number of supporting conditions such as Character Development, Student Engagement, Safe and Healthy Schools, and Leadership.

As stated on the Ministry’s website, “The goal of the Character Development initiative is to develop school environments in which all people—students, teachers, administrators and support staff—treat each other with care and respect.”

Under the Ministry’s Policy/Program Memorandum No. 145, Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour, “The ministry acknowledges the importance of actively promoting and supporting appropriate and positive student behaviours that contribute to and sustain a safe learning and teaching environment in which every student can reach his or her full potential. Ontario’s curriculum is integral to supporting students in developing positive behaviours. In addition, linkages to ministry initiatives such as character development,

the Student Success strategy, and the equity and inclusive education strategy are key in promoting and supporting appropriate and positive student behaviours. A comprehensive approach, aimed at all members of the school community, fosters efforts to ensure that schools are safe and welcoming environments for everyone and are effective in leading to systemic changes that will benefit all students and the broader community. This approach is valuable in addressing such issues as racism, intolerance based on religion or disability, homophobia, and gender-based violence.”¹⁴

Bullying prevention and awareness-raising is one of the key characteristics of a positive school climate and under Policy/ Program Memorandum No. 144, Bullying Prevention and Intervention, which was issued on October 19, 2009, “Boards must outline in their policies the procedures that are in place to support students—as well as their parents—regarding bullying issues, including bullying based on gender and on sexual orientation” (5).¹⁵

According to “Youth Speak Up about Homophobia and Transphobia,” “LGBTQ students were more likely than non-LGBTQ to report that staff never intervened if [homophobic] comments were made (35.2% versus 25.9%)” and “nearly half (47.4%) of transgender students reported that a teacher or staff member never intervened when a homophobic comment was made” (34-35).¹⁶

According to the Ministry’s website, “School principals and school boards are the ones who make decisions that are critical to student success.” Administrators can do a lot through their leadership to foster and sustain safer and more respectful learning environments. This includes promoting

student engagement by supporting inclusive student-led groups such as GSAs as well as safe and healthy schools by working towards reducing bullying and supporting at-risk students, such as marginalized LGBTQ youth, youth perceived as LGBTQ, and youth with LGBTQ parents, other family members, and friends.

“School principals and school boards are the ones who make decisions that are critical to student success.”



As stated in Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119, “Regular school and board monitoring of school climate is essential. Monitoring through school climate surveys...can help identify inappropriate behaviours, barriers, or issues that should be addressed. Boards are therefore expected to incorporate questions on equity and inclusive education in their school climate surveys” (7).¹⁷ See the Ministry’s Sample School Climate Surveys at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/safeschools/climate.html>.

¹³ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/119.html>

¹⁴ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/145.html>

¹⁵ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/144.html>

¹⁶ <http://MyGSA.ca/YouthSpeakUp>

¹⁷ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/119.html>



SHARED AND COMMITTED LEADERSHIP

Shared and Committed Leadership is both the first goal and a focus of Ontario's Ministry of Education's Equity and Inclusive Education Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation (2009):

"The principle of shared and committed leadership recognizes that all partners in education—including community partners, parents, and students—are responsible for preparing students to live in a diverse society. However, bringing change to instructional practices and the learning culture requires strong, focused leadership from, in particular, school board trustees, directors of education, superintendents, principals, and teachers. Boards and schools are expected to provide leadership that is responsive to the diverse nature of Ontario's communities and committed to identifying and removing discriminatory biases and systemic barriers to learning" (17).¹⁸

According to "Youth Speak Up about Homophobia and Transphobia,"

"LGBTQ students who believed their schools have anti-homophobia policies were much more likely than other LGBTQ students...

- to feel their school community was supportive (one half compared to fewer than one-fifth),
- to feel comfortable talking to a counsellor (one half compared to fewer than one-third), and to feel comfortable talking to classmates (over a third compared to one-fifth),
- to believe their school was becoming less homophobic,
- to hear fewer homophobic comments and to say staff intervene more often,
- to report homophobic incidents to staff and their parents, and
- to feel attached to their school.



LGBTQ students who believed their schools have anti-homophobia policies were much less likely than other LGBTQ students...

- to have had lies and rumours spread about them at school or on the Internet,
- to have had property stolen or damaged,
- to feel unsafe at school, and
- to have been verbally or physically harassed.

The results were similar for students who believed that their school districts had such policies” (5-6).¹⁹

The Ministry of Education outlines the following Action Item in Ontario’s Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy:

“School boards will develop or revise policies on equity and inclusive education for implementation by September 2010” (21).²⁰



The national safer schools and inclusive education website, *MyGSA.ca*, has a space for sharing and reviewing school and school board policies pertaining to LGBTQ matters and anti-heterosexism, anti-homophobia, anti-biphobia, and anti-transphobia. If your school or school board has a policy that explicitly addresses sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression, please submit it as a model for other schools and boards across the country: <http://MyGSA.ca/SchoolBoardPolicies>.



¹⁸ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/inclusiveguide.pdf>

²⁰ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/equity.pdf>

¹⁹ <http://MyGSA.ca/YouthSpeakUp>



TRAINING

One of the Ministry's Action Items in the Strategy under the focus area Professional Learning is "School boards will provide opportunities for students, administrators, teachers, support staff, and trustees to participate in equity and inclusive education training and leadership initiatives" (23).²¹ The Guidelines state,

"Professional learning activities must be ongoing and based on evidence of positive results. A board is expected to provide opportunities for teachers, including guidance counsellors, and support staff, administrators, and trustees to participate in training on topics such as antiracism, antidiscrimination, and gender-based violence, and to provide information for students and parents to increase their knowledge and understanding of equity and inclusive education. A board is also expected to provide sensitivity training in the areas of gender and sexual orientation, as well as training in effective early intervention and prevention strategies and practices to deal with incidents related to racism, gender-based violence, homophobia, sexual harassment, and inappropriate sexual behaviour" (29).²²



Boards are expected to provide training in prevention of and intervention in homophobic incidents.

Egale’s workshop series is in two parts and is designed to help participants do the following:

- a) explore the realities LGBTQ students, staff, and other members of school communities face;
- b) understand the need for LGBTQ-inclusive schools;
- c) examine how to create LGBTQ-inclusive schools and where/why we get stuck; and
- d) become familiar with the legislation that requires and supports LGBTQ-inclusive schools.

Participants will work in small and large groups, review curriculum and legislation, participate in activities, and practice their skills in creating and supporting LGBTQ-inclusive schools.

Contact Egale at mygsa@egale.ca or 1.888.204.7777 (toll-free) to arrange for a workshop for your school or school board!



²¹ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/equity.pdf>

²² <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/inclusiveguide.pdf>



IMPLEMENTATION

One of the Guiding Principles to which boards must adhere in revising or developing their policies is “Equity and inclusive education is demonstrated throughout the system. The ministry, school boards, and schools will incorporate principles of equity and inclusive education throughout their policies, programs, and practices” (13).²³

In “Youth Speak Up about Homophobia and Transphobia,” Egale recommends “[t]hat provincial Ministries of Education advocate the inclusion of anti-homophobia and anti-transphobia measures in safe schools policies and programs, including those of Catholic schools, along with steps for the implementation of these policies, in order to provide institutional support and motivation to divisional and school staff” (88).²⁴

As such, Egale applauds Ontario’s Ministry of Education for making the following statements in its Guidelines:

“In the course of its policy review cycle, a board is expected to embed the principles of equity and inclusive education in all its policies and practices and to integrate an equity and inclusive education focus into its way of doing business and all operations of its schools, including instructional practices...All the board’s policies, guidelines, programs, practices, and services should reflect the diverse viewpoints, needs, and aspirations of the broader community. Discriminatory biases and systemic barriers to equity and inclusive education should be identified and addressed so that students can see themselves represented in the curriculum, programs, culture, and teaching, administrative, and support staff of the school” (16).²⁵

“...a board is expected to embed the principles of equity and inclusive education in all its policies and practices...”



DURING THIS PROCESS, please do not hesitate to contact Egale with regard to the implementation of LGBTQ matters and intersectionality. We look forward to working with you!

E-mail: mygsa@egale.ca

Telephone (toll-free): 1.888.204.7777



²³ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/inclusiveguide.pdf>

²⁵ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/inclusiveguide.pdf>

²⁴ <http://MyGSA.ca/YouthSpeakUp>



DID YOU KNOW... ?

- $\frac{3}{4}$ of Canadian lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, two-spirited, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ) students feel unsafe at school, as reported in “Youth Speak Up about Homophobia and Transphobia” (Egale Canada, 2009).



To access the Final Report on the First National School Climate Survey on Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia, check out Egale’s national LGBTQ safer schools and inclusive education website: MyGSA.ca.

- The Ontario Ministry of Education’s Policy/Program Memorandum No. 145, Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour, states, “In order to promote a positive school climate, school boards must provide opportunities for all members of the school community to increase their knowledge and understanding of such issues as homophobia, gender-based violence, sexual harassment, inappropriate sexual behaviour, critical media literacy, and safe Internet use” and “Boards must also help school staff to give support to students who wish to participate in gay-straight alliances and in other student-led activities that promote understanding and development of healthy relationships. Schools must also engage their school councils and student councils to support these student-led activities.”

For more information, see <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/145.html>.

- Homophobia and transphobia are linked with alcohol and drug misuse, truancy to escape persecution, giving up on academic achievement, and suffering from mental and/or physical health conditions (Stonewall’s The School Report, 2007).

To download a copy of The School Report, go to http://www.stonewall.org.uk/education_for_all/research/1790.asp.

- In order to “remove the barriers and disincentives to education that exist for many children and youth,” the Government of Ontario recommends “ensuring that teachers and administrators better reflect the neighbourhoods they serve,” developing and providing inclusive curriculum, and implementing “services for families of all forms” (The Roots of Youth Violence Report, Volume 1, 2008).

Information about this Report can be found at <http://www.rootsofyouthviolence.on.ca>.

- The Guidelines for Ontario’s Ministry of Education’s Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy include Curriculum Policy: “Schools are expected to give students and staff authentic and relevant opportunities to learn about diverse histories, cultures, and perspectives. Lessons, projects, and related resources should allow students to see themselves reflected in the curriculum (e.g.,...using texts written by gay/lesbian authors). Students need to feel engaged in and empowered by what they are learning, supported by the teachers and staff from whom they are learning, and welcomed in the environment in which they are learning.”

For more information, see <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/equity.html>

- The Ontario Human Rights Commission states that “A poisoned environment is created by comments or conduct that ridicule or insult a person or group protected under the *Code*...It is also produced when such actions or comments are not directed specifically at individuals. For example, insulting jokes, slurs or cartoons about gays and lesbians or racial groups...all contribute to a poisoned environment for members of those groups...[I]t is the responsibility of the teacher and administration as the authority in the school to ensure that a poisoned environment does not

exist for students” (Teaching Human Rights in Ontario: An Educational Package for Ontario Schools, 2001).

This Educational Package can be downloaded at <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/education/about/thrio-r2001.pdf>. The Ontario Human Rights Commission also has downloadable policies on discrimination and harassment because of sexual orientation and gender identity in the Policies section under Resources on their website.

- Under the Ontario Ministry of Education’s Policy/ Programs Memorandum No. 144, Bullying Prevention and Intervention, “All employees of the board must take seriously all allegations of bullying behaviour and act in a timely, sensitive, and supportive manner when responding to students who disclose or report bullying incidents. Board employees who work directly with students—including administrators, teachers, and non-teaching staff (including staff in social work, child and youth work, psychology, and related areas, and educational assistants)—must respond to any student behaviour that is likely to have a negative impact on the school climate. Such behaviour includes all inappropriate and disrespectful behaviour at any time at school and at any school-related event if, in the employee’s opinion, it is safe to respond to it, in accordance with subsection 300.4 of Part XIII of the Education Act and Ontario Regulation 472/07” and this document specifically includes “homophobic comments” in its explanation of “bullying.”

For more information, see <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/144.html>.



FROM QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

ABOUT LGBTQ HUMAN RIGHTS LEGISLATION AND POLICY IN ONTARIO

Q:

When I was walking by the principal's office the other day, I heard a parent of one of the other students saying something about not finding it appropriate to have a "dating club" at our school and that certain movies should not be shown in classrooms. I didn't hear the principal's response. What should she have said?



Over the course of 2009, Ontario's Ministry of Education released a number of important documents setting forth a vision promoting equity and inclusive education.

Three of the most important ones are Realizing the Promise of Diversity: Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy; Policy/ Program Memorandum No. 119, Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools; and Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation.²⁷ All of these documents can be found under the heading "Greater Equity Means Greater Student Success" in the Administrators' section of the Ministry's website.

YOUR PRINCIPAL SHOULD HAVE SAID that Ontario's Ministry of Education is supportive of Ontario's diverse school communities and that in Ontario's publicly-funded school environments—whether public, Catholic, francophone, high school, middle school, or elementary school—diversity explicitly includes sexual orientation and gender identity.²⁶

Your principal also should have told the parent that a Gay-Straight Alliance or GSA is not a "dating club." A GSA is any inclusive student group concerned with lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, two-spirited, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ) matters. These clubs support LGBTQ students, allies, and youth with LGBTQ parents or other family members. For more extensive definitions, see the Terms & Concepts section on Egale's national LGBTQ safer schools and inclusive education website, MyGSA.ca, or in this Equity and Inclusive Education Resource Kit.



Your principal should have told the parent that a Gay-Straight Alliance is *not* a "dating club."

For more extensive definitions, see the Terms & Concepts section of Egale’s national LGBTQ safer schools and inclusive education website, MyGSA.ca.



Inclusive curriculum is integral to student success.

Regarding the film, your principal should have told the parent that inclusive curriculum is integral to student success: “Students need to feel engaged in and empowered by what they are learning, supported by the teachers and staff from whom they are learning, and welcomed in the environment in which they are learning.”²⁸

1. The Ministry of Education’s Policy/Program Memorandum No. 128, The Provincial Code of Conduct and School Board Codes of Conduct, sets out roles and responsibilities for all members of school communities, including parents.³⁰ According to this document, “Parents play an important role in the education of their children, and can support the efforts of school staff in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students. Parents fulfil their role when they show that they are familiar with the provincial Code of Conduct, the board’s code of conduct, and school rules.” One of the purposes of the Code of Conduct is “To ensure that all members of the school community, especially people in positions of authority, are treated with respect and dignity” and one of the standards of behaviour is that “All members of the school community must respect and treat others fairly, regardless of, for example...



Any learning environment that neglects to integrate LGBTQ matters into the curriculum is unwelcoming to LGBTQ students, allies, and youth with LGBTQ parents or other family members, and it also fails to comply with Ministry direction.²⁹

gender [or] sexual orientation.” Your principal should have directed the parent to this document.

2. The Ministry of Education’s Policy/Program Memorandum No. 145, *Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour*, states that “In order to promote a positive school climate, school boards must provide opportunities for all members of the school community to increase their knowledge and understanding of such issues as homophobia [and] gender-based violence” and that “Boards must also help school staff to give support to students who wish to participate in gay-straight alliances and in other student-led activities that promote understanding and development of healthy relationships. Schools must also engage their school councils and student councils to support these student-led activities.”³¹

Given that “Canadian culture today has become far more open about homosexuality” and that “Catholic teachers have expressed the need for Catholic educational resources that will help them respond to challenging questions that are coming up in class” as well as that “students are receiving conflicting messages and misinformation from the media and from each other” about LGBTQ matters, GSAs are an important component of a student’s learning process.³² Your principal should have explained to the parent that GSAs are an important part of inclusive and diverse school environments.

3. Things such as supporting inclusive student groups and integrating inclusive curriculum across all subject areas are vital components of fostering safe learning environments for all members of school communities.

For more information, a copy of the Legislation can be found here: http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/source/statutes/english/2009/elaws_src_s09017_e.htm.

4. The Ministry of Education’s Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119, *Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools*, states, “By the beginning of the 2010-11 school year (September 2010), boards will have in place an equity and inclusive education policy...and an

implementation plan.”³³ In both the development and the implementation of the equity and inclusive education policies, school boards are mandated to be comprehensive, covering all of the prohibited grounds of discrimination set out in the *Ontario Human Rights Code* (the *Code*). The *Code* prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation and, according to the Ontario Human Rights Commission, “Gender identity is not an enumerated ground in the *Code*. However, the existing legal structure in the *Code* can support a progressive understanding of the ground of ‘sex’ to include ‘gender identity’ and protect individuals who are subject to discrimination or harassment because of gender identity. This approach toward the application of the *Code* has been accepted for some time.”³⁴ This means that anyone who is discriminated against or harassed because of gender identity is legally protected under the ground of sex. This includes transsexual, transgender, and intersex persons, as well as cross-dressers and other people whose gender identity or expression is, or is seen to be, different from their birth-identified sex. Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119 also states, “It is expected that boards will post their equity and inclusive education policy on their website.” Your principal could have directed the parent to the school board’s equity and inclusive education policy on its website.

5. In 2010-11, schools are required to “review classroom strategies and revise them as needed to ensure they are aligned with and reflect school-wide equity and inclusive education policies.”³⁵ These reviews should include curriculum: “Schools are expected to give students and staff authentic and relevant opportunities to learn about diverse histories, cultures, and perspectives. Lessons, projects, and related resources should allow students to see themselves reflected in the curriculum” and this involves, for example, “using texts written by gay/lesbian authors” and showing age-appropriate movies incorporating LGBTQ content.³⁶ Your principal should have informed the parent of this.

6. According to the Ministry of Education, “Responsible citizenship involves appropriate participation in the civic life of the school community. Active and engaged citizens are aware of their rights, but more importantly, they accept responsibility for protecting their rights and the rights of others.”³⁷

Speak up and feel free to talk to your teachers about LGBTQ matters: “School staff who work directly with students will provide those students wishing to discuss such issues as healthy relationships, gender identity and sexuality with contact information about professional supports available in their community.”³⁸

To find more questions and answers as well as the Final Report on Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia in Canadian Schools, check out Egale’s national LGBTQ safer schools and inclusive education website: MyGSA.ca.



²⁶ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/equity.pdf>

²⁷ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/equity.html>

²⁸ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/inclusiveguide.pdf>

²⁹ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/119.html> and <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/equity.pdf>

³⁰ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/128.html>

³¹ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/145.html>

³² <http://www.carfleo.org/Family%20Life/>

[Intermediate/Grade%208%20Same%20Sex%20Attraction.pdf](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/119.html)

³³ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/119.html>

³⁴ <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/resources/Policies/PolicyGenderIdent>

³⁵ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/equity.pdf>

³⁶ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/inclusiveguide.pdf>

³⁷ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/128.html>

³⁸ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/safeschools/KeepKidSafeSchool.pdf>



RESPONSES TO EGALE CANADA'S

FIRST NATIONAL SCHOOL CLIMATE SURVEY:



"I know I type a lot, sorry, I just have never had anyone ask me before. There is the really obvious stuff and then there is less obvious stuff, that hurts just as much. Like when teachers walk in and say 'I need 3 strong boys to help me move some tables.' One time I put up my hand because I am perfectly able to move tables, probably even better than the boys. Ppl in my class started laughing, and the teacher took 4 boys anyways."

"I was in drama class last year and people kept on making fun of gay men when they went up to perform for the class. It started to hurt me because at that time I wasn't out. When I ask them to stop they would laugh or stop for a few days then start again. I told the teacher and they jokingly ask the kids to stop. It got so bad for me that I was sick before going into class, puke before or after class, the kids in the class would bring me to tears, or I got so mad I started to punch the walls to keep from hitting someone. Once the class started to make fun of lesbians I had to quit the class. My VP didn't want me to go so I had to tell him how bad the class made me feel before he let me. I really didn't want to quit drama because I love it so much but I couldn't take the homophobic jokes they told."



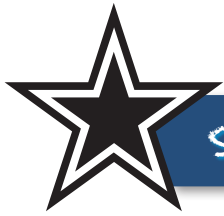
"Kam got a binder kicked down the hall into her back by a guy shouting, 'Fucking dykes!' as the two of us passed. I have heard remarks from girls saying 'if I were a lesbian, I'd kill myself.' When watching a video on the holocaust where they mentioned the killings of LGBT people, boys cheered at the idea. I have been forced into my own section of our gymnasium locker rooms by my classmates because I like girls. I was sexually harassed (verbally and physically) by a male classmate who said that he'd make me like boys again. Kam and I both have been told 'Go die, dyke!' Myself and almost all of my GLBT friends have recieved emails, facebook and/or nexopia messages from other students with homophobic remarks."

"I went to a Catholic high school a few years ago and homosexuality was rarely discussed. It came up once in a health class more or less accompanied by the message that God wouldn't approve but that we have to love all sinners regardless. Another time an English teacher made us read a Walt Whitman poem and discuss how we felt about the poem, and then he asked us if our opinion of the author would change if he were gay, and some students said their opinions would change. The teacher wouldn't disclose whether the poet was gay or not. I also experienced some bullying, intimidation and physical violence in high school. I was whacked in the head with textbooks a few times, and I've had objects such as eggs and water bottles thrown out of car windows at me. I've also had all kinds of slurs shouted at me and rumours spread about me. Since starting college, I haven't experienced any violence. No one has been rude to me here, either. It's a real breath of fresh air and I'm finally starting to enjoy school. Now that I enjoy being here, my grades have gone up overall."



For more information, see
<http://MyGSA.ca/YouthSpeakUp>.





SAFE SCHOOLS QUIZ

Based on Egale's First National School Climate Survey Report "Youth Speak Up about Homophobia and Transphobia": <http://MyGSA.ca/YouthSpeakUp>



1. What percentage of trans students feel reasonably safe at school?
 - a) 5%
 - b) 15%
 - c) 65%
 - d) 80%
2. LGBTQ students reported feeling unsafe in...
 - a) change rooms.
 - b) washrooms.
 - c) hallways.
 - d) all of the above.
3. What percentage of all participating students (LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ) reported hearing homophobic expressions every day in school?
 - a) 10%
 - b) 25%
 - c) 50%
 - d) 75%

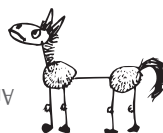
4. True or False? Current students are more likely than past students to hear homophobic comments from other students every day in school.

- a) True.
- b) False.

5. Of every 10 LGBTQ students, how many would not be comfortable talking about LGBTQ matters to their principals?

- a) 1
- b) 3
- c) 6
- d) 10

Answers: 1. a. 2. d. 3. d. 4. a. 5. c





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OF EVERY CLASS IN EVERY SCHOOL: EGALE'S FINAL REPORT ON HOMOPHOBIA, BIPHOBIA, AND TRANSPHOBIA IN CANADIAN SCHOOLS

Key Findings: School Climates in Canada Today

- Homophobic and Transphobic Comments
- Verbal Harassment
- Physical Harassment
- Sexual Harassment
- Unsafe Spaces
- Safer Schools Policies
- Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs) and Other LGBTQ-Inclusive Student Groups

Key Findings: Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia Affect Everyone

- Intersectionality
- Youth of Colour
- Aboriginal Youth
- Youth with LGBTQ Parents
- LGBTQ Youth
- Trans Youth
- Bisexual Youth
- Heterosexual Youth

Conclusions and Recommendations

- Policy Development
- Curriculum Development
- Teacher Preparation
- Gay-Straight Alliances
- Vulnerable Groups
- Appropriate Consultation

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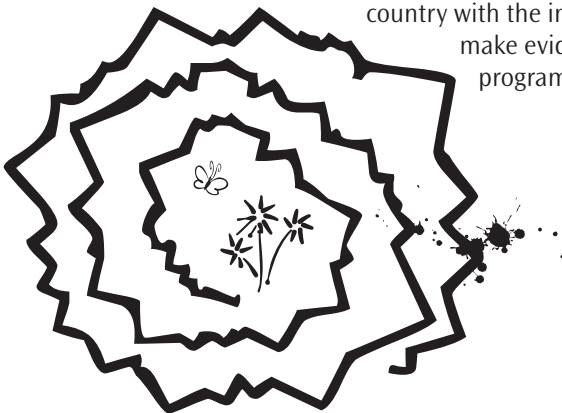
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report discusses the results of a national survey of Canadian high school students undertaken in order to investigate what life at school is like for students with sexual or gender minority status.¹ Our study sought to identify the forms and extent of students' experiences of homophobic and transphobic incidents at school, the impact of those experiences, and the efficacy of measures being taken by schools to combat these common forms of bullying. The study involved surveying over 3700 students from across Canada between December 2007 and June 2009 through two methods. The first method was designed to reach as many sexual and gender minority youth as possible: students who self-identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, Two Spirit, queer, or questioning (LGBTQ). To this end, we implemented an open-access online survey and advertised it widely through news releases and website and Facebook notices and by systematically contacting every organization across the country that we identified as having LGBTQ youth membership. The second method was implemented in controlled conditions using a login system through in-school sessions conducted in twenty randomly selected school districts in all regions of the country (with the exception of Québec where a parallel survey was conducted by Québec researchers). Fifteen school districts participated in sufficient numbers to permit statistically significant analysis. In-school findings were used to validate open-access findings. This report analyzes the aggregate data from both individual online participation and in-school sessions. In addition, we have submitted confidential reports to all participating boards that held in-class sessions comparing their own results to the results from all in-school sessions.

The study was commissioned by the Egale Canada Human Rights Trust (ECHRT) and funded by the ECHRT with additional support from the University of Winnipeg Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Grant Competition, and Sexual and Gender Diversity: Vulnerability and Resilience (SVR), a research team funded by Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and Fonds de Recherche sur la Société et la Culture (FRSC) du Province de Québec.

The survey itself was a fifty-four item questionnaire made available online and in print, which consisted mostly of multiple-choice questions of three kinds: demographic (e.g., age, province, gender identity, sexual orientation), experiences (e.g., hearing “gay” used as an insult, being assaulted, feeling very depressed about school), and institutional responses (e.g., staff intervention, inclusive safer schools policies). Quantitative data were tested for statistical significance through bivariate analyses that compared the responses of various groups of students, e.g., LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ, sexual minority (lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, questioning) and gender minority (transgender, transsexual, Two Spirit), and current and past. Cross-tabulations with chi-square (χ^2) estimations, independent samples t-tests, and analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were conducted, depending on the classification or “level of measurement” of the variables/questions (i.e., whether they are dichotomous, ordered, or continuous). Effect sizes were calculated for all chi-square (used Cramer’s V), t-test (used Cohen’s d), and ANOVA (used Cohen’s d) significant tests. Future analysis will involve qualitative analysis of responses to open-ended questions in which students responded to questions about their perceptions and experiences.

The lack of a solid Canadian evidence base has been a major impediment faced by educators and administrators who need to understand the situation of LGBTQ students in order to respond appropriately and to assure their school communities that homophobic and transphobic bullying are neither rare nor harmless, but are major problems that schools need to address. We wish to express our deepest respect for the thousands of students, LGBTQ and heterosexual, who came forward to help with this important project. We thank you and hope that you will recognize your contributions and your voices in this report. While most of the information in this report will come as no surprise to members of the LGBTQ community, the study provides a systematically produced knowledge base that will provide educators and administrators across the country with the information they need to make evidence-based policy and programming decisions.



¹ For the purposes of this report, the term “sexual minority” refers to youth who did not identify as exclusively heterosexual and the term “gender minority” refers to youth who did not identify as either “female” or “male.”



KEY FINDINGS

SCHOOL CLIMATES IN CANADA TODAY



HOMOPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC COMMENTS

- 70% of all participating students, LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ, reported hearing expressions such as “that’s so gay” every day in school and almost half (48%) reported hearing remarks such as “faggot,” “lezbo,” and “dyke” every day in school.
- Almost 10% of LGBTQ students reported having heard homophobic comments from teachers daily or weekly (17% of trans students; 10% of female sexual minority students; and 8% of male sexual minority students). Even more LGBTQ students reported that they had heard teachers use negative gender-related or transphobic comments daily or weekly: 23% of trans students; 15% of male sexual minority students; and 12% of female sexual minority students.
- Hardly any LGBTQ students reported that they never heard homophobic comments from other students (1% of trans students; 2% of female sexual minority students; 4% of male sexual minority students). This suggests that if you are a sexual minority student in a Canadian school, it is highly likely that you will hear insulting things about your sexual orientation.

VERBAL HARASSMENT

- 74% of trans students, 55% of sexual minority students, and 26% of non-LGBTQ students reported having been verbally harassed about their gender expression.
- 37% of trans students, 32% of female sexual minority students, and 20% of male sexual minority students reported being verbally harassed daily or weekly about their sexual orientation.
- 68% of trans students, 55% of female sexual minority students, and 42% of male sexual minority students reported being verbally harassed about their perceived gender or sexual orientation. Trans youth may report experiencing particularly high levels of harassment on the basis of perceived sexual orientation because often trans individuals are perceived as lesbian, gay, or bisexual when they are not.
- More than a third (37%) of youth with LGBTQ parents reported being verbally harassed about the sexual orientation of their parents. They are also more likely to be verbally harassed about their own gender expression (58% versus 34% of other students), perceived sexual orientation or gender identity (46% versus 20%), gender (45% versus 22%), and sexual orientation (44% versus 20%).

PHYSICAL HARASSMENT

- More than one in five (21%) LGBTQ students reported being physically harassed or assaulted due to their sexual orientation.
- 20% of LGBTQ students and almost 10% of non-LGBTQ students reported being physically harassed or assaulted about their perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.

- 37% of trans students, 21% of sexual minority students, and 10% of non-LGBTQ students reported being physically harassed or assaulted because of their gender expression.
- Over a quarter (27%) of youth with LGBTQ parents reported being physically harassed about the sexual orientation of their parents. They are also more likely than their peers to be physically harassed or assaulted in connection with their own gender expression (30% versus 13% of other students), perceived sexual orientation or gender identity (27% versus 12%), gender (25% versus 10%), and sexual orientation (25% versus 11%).



SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Levels of sexual harassment are high across the board for LGBTQ students. The following groups of students reported having experienced sexual harassment in school in the last year:

- 49% of trans students
- 45% of students with LGBTQ parents
- 43% of female bisexual students
- 42% of male bisexual students
- 40% of gay male students
- 33% of lesbian students



The higher levels of sexual harassment for gay male than for lesbian students may be attributable to greater exposure to sexual humiliation as a distinct form of unwanted sexual attention. Also, lesbian students may be less likely than gay male or trans students to perceive their experiences of harassment as sexual. Further analysis will explore the experiences included in this finding.



UNSAFE SPACES

- Almost two thirds (64%) of LGBTQ students and 61% of students with LGBTQ parents reported that they feel unsafe at school.
- The two school spaces most commonly experienced as unsafe by LGBTQ youth and youth with LGBTQ parents are places that are almost invariably gender-segregated: Phys. Ed. change rooms and washrooms. Almost half (49%) of LGBTQ youth and more than two fifths (42%) of youth with LGBTQ parents identified their Phys. Ed. change rooms as being unsafe; almost a third (30%) of non-LGBTQ youth agreed. More than two-fifths (43%) of LGBTQ students and almost two-fifths (41%) of youth with LGBTQ parents identified their school washrooms as being unsafe; more than a quarter (28%) of non-LGBTQ students agreed.
- Female sexual minority students were most likely to report feeling unsafe in their school change rooms (59%). High numbers (52%) of trans youth reported feeling unsafe in both change rooms and washrooms. It is notable that these places where female sexual minority and trans students often feel unsafe are gender-segregated areas. Not only does this contradict assumptions that most homophobic and transphobic incidents take place in males-only spaces, but it also points to a correlation between the policing of gender and youth not feeling safe.



SAFER SCHOOLS POLICIES

Generic safe school policies that do not include specific measures on homophobia are not effective in improving the school climate for LGBTQ students. LGBTQ students from schools with anti-homophobia policies reported significantly fewer incidents of physical and verbal harassment due to their sexual orientation:

80% of LGBTQ students from schools with anti-homophobia policies reported never having been physically harassed versus only 67% of LGBTQ students from schools without anti-homophobia policies;

46% of LGBTQ students from schools with anti-homophobia policies reported never having been verbally harassed due to their sexual orientation versus 40% of LGBTQ students from schools without anti-homophobia policies.

LGBTQ students in schools with anti-homophobia policies did not report significantly higher levels of feeling safe at school with regard to gender identity and gender expression: this indicates a need to explicitly address gender identity, gender expression, and anti-transphobia in school and school board safer schools and equity and inclusive education policies.



GAY-STRAIGHT ALLIANCES (GSAs) AND OTHER LGBTQ-INCLUSIVE STUDENT GROUPS

GSAs are official student clubs with LGBTQ and heterosexual student membership and typically one or two teachers who serve as faculty advisors. Students in a school with a GSA know that they have at least one or two adults they can talk to about LGBTQ matters. The purpose of GSAs is to provide a much-

needed safe space in which LGBTQ students and allies can work together on making their schools more welcoming for sexual and gender minority students. Some GSAs go by other names such as Rainbow Clubs, Human Rights Clubs, or Social Justice Clubs. This is sometimes done to signal openness to non-LGBTQ membership (though, of course, some of these are not GSAs and might not address homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia), and sometimes because “Gay-Straight Alliance” seems problematic in that “gay” does not necessarily refer to lesbians or bisexuals and trans identities are not explicitly encompassed by the expression. However, using the acronym “GSA” to represent any student group concerned with LGBTQ matters has become commonplace. Very often it is LGBTQ students themselves who initiate the GSA, although sometimes a teacher will come forward. Such groups also function as safe havens and supports for youth with LGBTQ parents. Currently, more than 100 LGBTQ-inclusive student groups across the country have registered on Egale Canada’s safer schools and inclusive education website, *MyGSA.ca*.

- Students from schools with GSAs are much more likely to agree that their school communities are supportive of LGBTQ people, are much more likely to be open with some or all of their peers about their sexual orientation and/or gender identity, and are more likely to see their school climate as becoming less homophobic.
- Students from schools with anti-homophobia policies are significantly more likely to agree that their school administration is supportive of the GSA.
- Students in BC and Ontario reported much more frequently than students in the Prairies, the Atlantic provinces, and the North that their schools have GSAs.





KEY FINDINGS

HOMOPHOBIA, BIPHOBIA, AND TRANSPHOBIA AFFECT EVERYONE

➔ INTERSECTIONALITY

“ I think there’s a lot of work to be done in recognizing that lgbttq people come from various cultures and communities and breaking those myths and beliefs to allow all people identifying within those communities to be free of prejudice and oppression. ”

Similarly to the point on a graph where lines cross being called a point of “intersection,” the fact that categories of identification—such as age, class, education, ethnic background, gender expression, gender identity, geographic origin, physical and mental ability, race, religion, sexual orientation, and other factors—are experienced simultaneously and cannot genuinely be separated from one another is referred to as “intersectionality.” Often, people are discriminated against with regard to multiple categories: for example, a racialized lesbian could be subjected to heterosexism, homophobia, lesbophobia, misogyny, racism, and transphobia or any other form of discrimination, such as ableism, ageism, and classism, depending on both how she identifies and how she is perceived to be. Further, each aspect of one’s identity can have an impact on other aspects. For example, a racialized lesbian may be exposed to different forms of sexism and homophobia from those experienced by a non-racialized lesbian.

The survey found that there was little regional or ethnic variation in levels of physical harassment for reasons related to gender or sexual orientation, but that Caucasian youth, both LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ, were far less likely to report having been physically harassed or assaulted because of their ethnicity: 8% compared to 13% of Aboriginal youth and 15% of youth of

colour. Consequently, it is important to note the aggregate effects or “double whammy” here for both Aboriginal youth and youth of colour; these youth are not only being physically harassed or assaulted because of reasons related to gender and/or sexual orientation, but they are also much more likely to be physically harassed or assaulted because of their ethnicity.

YOUTH OF COLOUR

“ *Not only is it difficult to be LGBT in high school, but especially as a LGBT youth who is also a visible minority. The positive images and information out there for such a youth is very hard to come by.* ”

- Youth of colour, both LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ, are far less likely to know of any out LGBTQ students (67% compared to 81% of Caucasian and 87% of Aboriginal youth, LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ combined) or to know of any teachers or staff members who are supportive of LGBTQ students (48% knew of none, compared to 38% of Aboriginal and 31% of Caucasian youth, LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ combined).
- Almost one fifth (18%) of those students of colour who had experienced LGBTQ-inclusive curriculum reported that class discussions of LGBTQ people’s relationships had been negative (compared to 14% of Caucasian and 11% of Aboriginal youth). They were also less likely to see class representations of LGBTQ matters as having been very positive (17% compared to 26% of Caucasian and 31% of Aboriginal youth).

- Youth of colour, both LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ, reported the lowest rates of being comfortable discussing LGBTQ matters with anyone at all, including their coaches, their teachers, their classmates, their parents, and even with a close friend.

This high degree of isolation for youth of colour with regard to LGBTQ matters suggests that serious attention needs to be paid to finding means of reaching out to youth in ways that are appropriate and informed about cultural issues and taboos surrounding LGBTQ matters.



ABORIGINAL YOUTH

Very few statistically significant findings surfaced about the experiences of LGBTQ Aboriginal youth in Canadian schools in this report. In some instances, Aboriginal youth reported experiences similar to Caucasian youth, such as comfort levels in talking to school community members about LGBTQ matters. In other instances, Aboriginal youth reported experiences similar to youth of colour—for example, in reported rates of physical harassment based on race or ethnicity. Further work needs to be done in order to better understand and account for the needs of LGBTQ Aboriginal youth in Canada.



YOUTH WITH LGBTQ PARENTS

Not only do youth not want to have to hear their loved ones spoken about in cruel ways, but youth with LGBTQ family members also avoid disclosure to protect themselves from harassment. As one student wrote, “I am not out about my family members because people are so stupid that they think that if you know someone who is LGBTQ then that means you are too.”

- Youth with LGBTQ parents are more than three times more likely than other students to have skipped school because of feeling unsafe either at school (40% versus 13%) or on the way to school (32% versus 10%). These results are extremely important not only because of what they reveal about the degree of fear being experienced by youth with LGBTQ parents, but also because of the potential impact of missing classes on the academic performance of these students.
- Youth with LGBTQ parents are more likely to be aware of teachers making homophobic and transphobic comments: one-fifth of youth with LGBTQ parents said teachers sometimes or frequently make homophobic comments, compared to only 7% of other students, and a quarter of youth with LGBTQ parents said teachers sometimes or frequently make transphobic comments, compared to one tenth of other students.
- Students with LGBTQ parents are more likely to find homophobic comments extremely upsetting (23% versus 11% of other students) or very upsetting (29% versus 19%).

LGBTQ YOUTH

One in seven students who completed the survey during in-class sessions self-identified as LGBTQ (14%), which is consistent with the percentages of students identifying as not exclusively heterosexual in large-scale survey research of youth conducted in British Columbia (Saewyc & the McCreary Society, 2007). Further, youth who experience same-sex attraction often identify as heterosexual in research, even if they have had sexual contact with a same-sex partner, and research participants often under-report information such as being members of sexual minority groups out of concerns about confidentiality, even in anonymous surveys. This suggests that claims sometimes made that sexual minority individuals comprise only 2-3% of the population seriously underestimate the numbers. Our research would suggest that there are several sexual minority students in every class in every school in Canada, not to mention students with LGBTQ parents. Many of these students, of course, do not disclose their own or their family members' sexual orientation and/or gender identity until they are safely out of school.





TRANS YOUTH

While youth who actually identify as trans are comparatively small in number, they are highly visible targets of harassment. Trans students may report experiencing particularly high levels of harassment on the basis of perceived sexual orientation because often trans individuals are perceived as lesbian, gay, or bisexual when they are not. The heightened sense of lack of safety at school experienced by trans youth is likely due to the rigid policing of gender conventions (male masculinity and female femininity), which can make trans youth highly visible targets for discrimination and harassment.

- 90% of trans youth hear transphobic comments daily or weekly from other students and almost a quarter (23%) of trans students reported hearing teachers use transphobic language daily or weekly. Almost three quarters (74%) of trans students reported being verbally harassed about their gender expression.
- One quarter of trans students reported having been physically harassed (25%) or having had property stolen or damaged (24%) because of being LGBTQ. Trans students were much more likely than sexual minority or non-LGBTQ students to have been physically harassed or assaulted because of their gender expression (37% compared with 21% for sexual minority students and 10% for non-LGBTQ students).
- When all identity-related grounds for feeling unsafe are taken into account, including ethnicity and religion, more than three quarters (78%) of trans students indicated feeling unsafe in some way at school. 44% of trans students reported being likely to miss school because of feeling unsafe and 15% reported having skipped more than 10 days because of feeling unsafe at school.

BISEXUAL YOUTH

A comparison of the responses of female and male bisexual youth with lesbian and gay male youth shows that often gender seems to be more of an influencing factor than sexual orientation in the experiences of female sexual minority youth; however, this is generally not the case for male sexual minority youth:

Physical Harassment about Being LGBTQ

- 26% of female bisexual youth 25% of lesbian youth
- 12% of male bisexual youth 23% of gay male youth

Mean Rumours or Lies about Being LGBTQ

- 56% of female bisexual youth 52% of lesbian youth
- 37% of male bisexual youth 47% of gay male youth

Skipping School Due To Feeling Unsafe

- 29% of female bisexual youth 25% of lesbian youth
- 19% of male bisexual youth 28% of gay male youth

At Least One Unsafe Location at School

- 71% of female bisexual youth 72% of lesbian youth
- 64% of male bisexual youth 74% of gay male youth

Feel Unsafe at School because of Actual or Perceived Sexual Orientation


- 63% of female bisexual youth 67% of lesbian youth
- 39% of male bisexual youth 51% of gay male youth

Feel Unsafe at School

- 75% of female bisexual youth 73% of lesbian youth
- 51% of male bisexual youth 62% of gay male youth

These findings are interesting in a few ways. First, popular understandings of bullying in school culture might lead one to expect that heterosexual males would be most likely to commit homophobic harassment and that their targets would be gay males, whom they would have the opportunity to bully in unsupervised gender-segregated spaces such as change rooms and washrooms. Second, it is sometimes said that lesbians have it easier than gay males, that society in general tolerates lesbians more than gay males, and that being a lesbian or a bisexual female is even trendy. These findings would refute both of these popular conceptions of life for sexual minority girls and women.

What male sexual minority youth, both bisexual and gay, seem to have in common, however, is a higher degree of social connectedness. Both of these groups are more likely to know of out LGBTQ youth and supportive staff members at their schools:



Don't Know Anyone Out as LGBTQ at School

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| • 21% of female bisexual youth | 31% of lesbian youth |
| • 13% of male bisexual youth | 15% of gay male youth |

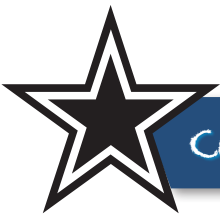
Don't Know of School Staff Members Supportive of LGBTQ Matters

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| • 36% of female bisexual youth | 28% of lesbian youth |
| • 22% of male bisexual youth | 26% of gay male youth |



HETEROSEXUAL YOUTH

- One of the most striking findings of our study is that 58% of non-LGBTQ youth find homophobic comments upsetting. This finding suggests that there is a great deal of potential solidarity for LGBTQ-inclusive education among heterosexual students.
- One in twelve heterosexual students reported being verbally harassed about their perceived sexual orientation and one in four about their gender expression.
- Almost 10% of non-LGBTQ youth reported being physically harassed or assaulted about their perceived sexual orientation or gender identity and more than 10% reported being physically harassed or assaulted because of their gender expression.
- Any given school is likely to have as many heterosexual students as LGBTQ students who are harassed about their sexual orientation or gender expression.



CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This survey has provided statistically-tested confirmation of what LGBTQ youth, youth perceived as LGBTQ, youth with LGBTQ parents, and their allies as well as teachers and administrators working on anti-homophobia, anti-biphobia, and anti-transphobia and intersectionality education have known for some time about the realities of life at school in Canada. Consider the situation in many schools:

- LGBTQ students are exposed to language that insults their dignity as part of everyday school experience and youth with LGBTQ family members are constantly hearing their loved ones being denigrated.
- LGBTQ students and students with LGBTQ parents experience much higher levels of verbal, physical, sexual, and other forms of discrimination, harassment, and abuse than other students.
- Most LGBTQ students and students with LGBTQ parents do not feel safe at school.
- The situation is worse on all counts for female sexual minority students and youth with LGBTQ parents and even worse for trans students.
- Many students, especially youth of colour, do not have even one person they can talk to about LGBTQ matters.
- Many schools have a well-developed human rights curriculum that espouses respect and dignity for every identity group protected in the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* except for LGBTQ people.
- Teachers often look the other way when they hear homophobic and transphobic comments and some of them even make these kinds of comments themselves.

Although the original title of our study named only homophobia, our findings demonstrate that school climates for bisexual and trans students are equally—and in some ways even more—hostile. The study has also demonstrated that the less directly students are affected by homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia, the less aware they are of it. This finding has implications for the adult world as well: how many educators and administrators are underestimating the extent of homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia in their school cultures and the damage being done to the youth in their care? This study found that the more marginalized our participants were, the worse their experience of school climate was. Given the findings of this study, educators may need to work particularly hard at ensuring that lesbian youth, bisexual girls, trans students, students with sexual and/or gender minority parents, and sexual and gender minority youth of colour are included in these efforts. To this end, policy, programme, and curriculum development needs to reflect an understanding of how school climate for sexual and gender minority youth is affected by intersecting systems of social power such as racialization and poverty that are at work in all schools.

LGBTQ-inclusive safer schools policies and curriculum are not the entire solution; we did not find that 100% of students anywhere reported never hearing homophobic or transphobic comments or that they could all talk to all of their teachers, for example. However, the findings of this study indicate that while the problem of hostile school climates for sexual and gender minority students is very widespread, it is perhaps not as deep as we might think. In schools that have made efforts to introduce LGBTQ-inclusive policies, GSAs, and even some LGBTQ-inclusive curriculum, the climate is significantly more positive for sexual and gender minority students.

Based on the analysis presented in this report, we strongly recommend the following:



POLICY DEVELOPMENT

1. That provincial Ministries of Education require the inclusion of anti-homophobia, anti-biphobia, and anti-transphobia and intersectionality measures in safer schools policies and programmes, along with steps for the effective implementation of these policies, in order to provide support and motivation to district and school staff as well as a requirement that school divisions provide auditable evidence of meaningful implementation.
2. That school divisions develop anti-homophobia, anti-biphobia, and anti-transphobia and intersectionality policies to provide institutional authority and leadership for schools.
3. That schools implement anti-homophobia, anti-biphobia, and anti-transphobia and intersectionality policies and make these well known to students, parents, administration, and all school staff members as a part of their commitment to making schools safer and more respectful and welcoming for all members of their school communities.
4. That efforts begin with professional development workshops for all school division employees on intersectionality and the impact of homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic language and how to address it in classrooms, hallways, and all other parts of the school as well as at all other school-related events, such as during bus transportation.



CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

5. That Ministries of Education and school divisions require the inclusion of respectful representations of LGBTQ people in courses and provide curriculum guidelines and resources for mainstreaming LGBTQ-inclusive teaching, including intersectionality, across the curriculum and auditable evidence of meaningful implementation.
6. That school divisions provide professional development opportunities to assist schools in the implementation of LGBTQ-inclusive and intersectionality curriculum.
7. That schools implement LGBTQ-inclusive curriculum in designated courses such as Family Life and Social Studies and provide teachers with resources for mainstreaming LGBTQ and intersectionality education in their own subject areas.



TEACHER PREPARATION

8. That Faculties of Education integrate LGBTQ-inclusive teaching and intersectionality into compulsory courses in their Bachelor of Education programmes so that teachers have adequate opportunities to develop competence before entering the field.



GAY-STRAIGHT ALLIANCES

9. That schools strongly support the efforts of students to start GSAs, or similar LGBTQ-inclusive student-led clubs, and that in schools where students have not come forward, administration should ask teachers to offer to work with students to start such clubs. It is not safe to assume that LGBTQ students and students with LGBTQ parents would prefer to go through school isolated from their peers and teachers.



VULNERABLE GROUPS

10. That particular attention be paid to supporting the safety and well-being of lesbian and bisexual female youth and trans youth in all of the above recommendations along with the needs of youth with LGBTQ parents and sexual and gender minority youth of colour.



APPROPRIATE CONSULTATION

11. That individuals and organizations with established expertise in intersectionality and LGBTQ-inclusive education be consulted in all of the above. Such expertise exists among educators in every region of Canada.



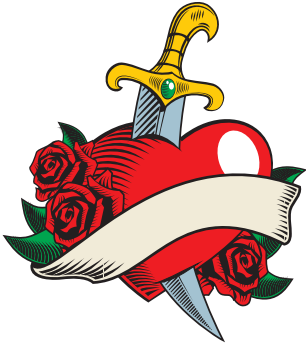
It is extremely unlikely that there is any class in any high school anywhere in Canada, public or private, religious or secular, that does not have students who are LGBTQ. Being harassed, insulted, and told that their identities belong in the guidance office, not in the classroom, will not succeed in making LGBTQ students heterosexual and gender-conforming; it will only make them unhappy. What students have told us in the First National Climate Survey on Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia in Canadian Schools is that speaking up works and that they want the adults in their lives to do their parts. Many participants in our survey, LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ, commented on their extreme disappointment with school staff who look the other way when disrespectful language is being used. The findings of our study provide ample reasons for educators and administrators across the country to take up the challenge of welcoming their LGBTQ students and students with LGBTQ parents into inclusive twenty-first century schools that explicitly and meaningfully oppose discrimination on the basis of gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation and genuinely embrace safer and more respectful school environments for all members of their school communities.

**This Equity and Inclusive
Education Resource Kit for
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TERMS & CONCEPTS



di  **ersity =**
possibility



TERMS & CONCEPTS



To access and add to an online glossary, go to MyGSA.ca/SiteGlossary



Terms & Concepts

Ableism	Chi Chi Gal
Aboriginal Peoples	Chi Chi Man
Acceptance	Cisgender/Cisgendered
Accommodation	Cisnormativity
Ally	Closet/Closeted
Androgyny	Coming Out
Anti-Black Racism	Creed
Anti-Discrimination Education	Crossdressers (also Cross-Dressers)
Anti-Racist	Cyber-Bullying
Anti-Racist Education	Disability
Anti-Semitism	Discrimination
Barrier	Diversity
Batty Fucker	Dominant Group
Batty Man/Batty Bwoy	Drag Queen/Drag King
BGLTT	Duty to Accommodate
Bi	Dyke
Bias	Equality
Binary Gender System	Equity
Biological Sex	Ethnicity
Biphobia	Faggot
Bisexual/Bisexuality	Fairness
Boogaman	Fassy Hole/Fassie
Boom Bye Bye inna Batty Bwoy Head	Female-to-Male (FTM)
Bugger Man	Feminine
Bullying	Femme
Butch	First Nation
Camp	Freaky Man

Gay
Gay-Bashing (sometimes Bashing or Queer-Bashing)
Gay-Straight Alliance (or GSA, sometimes Queer-Straight Alliance or QSA or Human Rights or Diversity Club)
Gender
Gender Conformity
Gender Dysphoria
Gender Expression
Gender Fluidity
Gender Identity
Gender-Neutral
Gender Presentation
Gender Role
Gender Stereotype
Genderism
Genderqueer (also Gender Queer or Gender-Queer)
Genetic Sex
GLBTQ
Gonads
GSA
Harassment
Hate Crime
Hate Propaganda
Hatred
Heterophobia
Heterosexism
Heterosexism and Homophobia
Heterosexual/Heterosexuality
Hijra
Homophobia
Homosexual/Homosexuality
Human Rights
Identity
In the Closet
Inclusive Education
Intersectionality
Intersex/Intersexual
Intervention
Inuit
Invisible Minority
Islamophobia
Isolation
Justice
Kathoey
Kothi/Koti
Lesbian
LGBT
LGBT/GLBT
LGBTQ
LGBTTIQ
Lifestyle
Mahu
Male-to-Female (MTF)
Masculine
Men who Have Sex with Men (MSM)
Métis
Minority Group
Misogyny
MSM

Multicultural Education	Secondary Sex Characteristics
Ontario Human Rights Code (“the Code”)	Sex
Oppression	Sex & Gender
Out	Sexism
Outed	Sexual Dysphoria
Outing	Sexual Minority
Pansexual	Sexual Orientation
Panthei/Girya	Sexual Prejudice
Passing	Sexual Reassignment Surgery (or SRS)
Power	Social Justice
Power Dynamics	Sodemite
Prejudice	Stealth
Pride	Stereotype
Primary Sex Characteristics	Stonewall
Privilege	Straight
Queer	Systemic Discrimination
Questioning	Third Gender
Race	Tranny (or Trannie)
Racialization	Trans
Racialized Group	Transgender
Racism	Transition
Racist	Transman
Rainbow Flag	Transperson
Reclaimed Language	Transphobia
Religion	Transsexual (or TS)
Religious Accommodation	Transvestite
Respect	Transwoman
Safe Space	Two-Spirit/Two-Spirited
Safety	Uzeze (Kitesha)
Same Gender Loving	Visible Minority

See the Sources section at the end for references.



ABLEISM Prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination directed against people who have developmental, emotional, physical, sensory, or health-related disabilities. Ableism may be evident in organizational and institutional structures, policies, procedures, and programs, as well as in the attitudes and behaviours of individuals. (OME)

ABORIGINAL PEOPLES The descendants of the original inhabitants of North America. Section 35(2) of the Constitution Act, 1982, states: “In this Act, ‘Aboriginal peoples of Canada’ includes the Indian, Inuit, and Métis peoples of Canada.” These separate groups have unique heritages, languages, cultural practices, and spiritual beliefs. Their common link is their indigenous ancestry. (OME)

ACCEPTANCE An affirmation and recognition of people whose race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status, abilities, or other, similar characteristics or attributes are different from one’s own. Acceptance goes beyond tolerance, in that it implies a positive and welcoming attitude. (OME)

ACCOMMODATION An adjustment made to policies, programs, guidelines, or practices, including adjustments to physical settings and various types of criteria, that enables individuals to benefit from and take part in the provision of services equally and to participate equally

and perform to the best of their ability in the workplace or an educational setting. Accommodations are provided so that individuals are not disadvantaged or discriminated against on the basis of the prohibited grounds of discrimination identified in the Ontario Human Rights Code or other, similar grounds. (Refer to the Ontario Human Rights Commission’s Guidelines on Accessible Education and Policy and Guidelines on Disability and the Duty to Accommodate at www.ohrc.on.ca.) (OME)

ALLY A person, regardless of his or her sexual orientation or gender identity, who supports and stands up for the human and civil rights of LGBT people. (ATA)

A person (usually a heterosexual individual) or organization that actively helps another with a specific issue; here, one who openly supports and affirms the rights and dignity of GLBTQ people. (AY)

An individual who is supportive of the GLBTQ community. They believe in the dignity and respect of all people, and are willing to stand up in that role. (VSB)

ANDROGYN Exhibiting the identity and/or appearance of both male and female, as neither male nor female, or as between male and female; exhibiting behaviors of either or both traditional genders; a descriptive term that many in the GLBTQ community find offensive; see also “Third Gender” and “Two-Spirit.” (AY)



ANTI-BLACK RACISM

Prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination directed against Black people, including people of African descent. Anti-Black racism may be evident in organizational and institutional structures, policies, procedures, and programs, as well as in the attitudes and behaviours of individuals. (OME)

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION EDUCATION

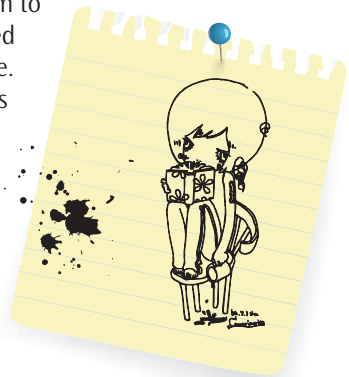
An approach that seeks to eliminate from an educational system and its practices all forms of discrimination based on the prohibited grounds identified in the Ontario Human Rights Code and other, similar grounds. Anti-discrimination education seeks to identify and change educational policies, procedures, and practices that may unintentionally condone or foster discrimination, as well as the attitudes and behaviours that underlie and reinforce such policies and practices. It provides teachers and students with the knowledge and skills that will enable them to critically examine issues related to discrimination, power, and privilege. Anti-discrimination education promotes the removal of discriminatory biases and systemic barriers. (OME)

ANTI-RACIST

Seeking the elimination of racism in all its forms, including systemic racism. (OME)

ANTI-RACIST EDUCATION

An approach that integrates the perspectives of Aboriginal and racialized communities into an educational system and its practices. Anti-racist education seeks to identify and change educational policies, procedures, and practices that may foster racism, as well as the racist attitudes and behaviours that underlie and reinforce such policies and practices. It provides teachers and students with the knowledge and skills that will enable them to critically examine issues related to racism, power, and privilege. Anti-racist education promotes the removal of discriminatory biases and systemic barriers. (OME)



ANTI-SEMITISM

Prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination directed against individual Jews or the Jewish people on the basis of their culture and religion. Anti-Semitism may be evident in organizational and institutional structures, policies, procedures, and programs, as well as in the attitudes and behaviours of individuals. (OME)



BARRIER An obstacle to equity that may be overt or subtle, intended or unintended, and systemic or specific to an individual or group, and that prevents or limits access to opportunities, benefits, or advantages that are available to other members of society. (OME)

BATTY FUCKER Slang for “queer man” that became popularized through homophobic dancehall music and generally only has negative connotations. (Egale Canada)

BATTY MAN/BATTY BWOY Slang for “queer man” that became popularized through homophobic dancehall music and generally only has negative connotations. (Egale Canada)

BGLTT Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian, Transgender and Two-Spirited. (CTF)

BI Slang term for people with a bisexual orientation and who self-identify as bisexual. (AY)

BIAS A system that forces all people into only two categories—either man or woman, boy or girl. In this system men and women are expected to look and behave in a particular ways that are different from one another. (SO)

BINARY GENDER SYSTEM

An opinion, preference, prejudice, or inclination that limits an individual's or a group's ability to make fair, objective, or accurate judgements. (OME)

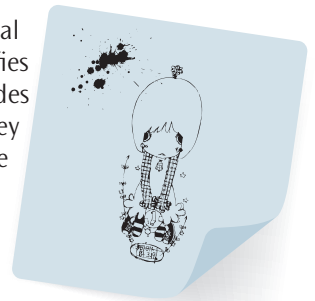
BIOLOGICAL SEX

The biological state of having: 1) female or male genitalia (vulva, labia, clitoris, and vagina for females; penis and testicles for males); 2) female or male chromosomes (XX for females; XY for males); and 3) female or male hormones (estrogen and progesterone for females; testosterone for males); perhaps one in 2,000 babies is born with the biological characteristics of both sexes or of neither sex entirely (see "Intersex"); see also "Gender" and "Gender Identity," which are different than biological sex. (AY)

BIPHOBIA

Fear or intolerance toward bisexuality, either from straight people or institutions or from within the gay and lesbian community. (AY)

Treating a person who identifies as bisexual less favourably than someone who identifies as heterosexual, lesbian or gay. This includes saying that a person is only bisexual as they are too "cowardly" to "admit" that they are actually gay or lesbian, or that bisexuality is just a phase. (SO)





BISEXUAL/BISEXUALITY

A person who is attracted physically and emotionally to

both males and females. (ATA)

Feeling romantic, emotional, and sexual attraction to both males and females; a normal sexual orientation of no known cause; see also “Heterosexuality” and “Homosexuality.” (AY)

An individual who is emotionally/romantically and physically attracted to persons of either sex. (CTF)

An individual (male or female) who is attracted to, and may form sexual and affectionate relationships with both males and females. A bisexual may not be equally attracted to both genders and the degree of attraction may vary over time. (GVSD)

A person who is attracted to both men and women within a binary gender system. (SO)

Generally used to describe people who are romantically and/or sexually attracted to people of more than one sex or gender. (VSB)

BOOGAMAN

Slang for “queer man” that generally only has negative connotations. (Egale Canada)

BOOM BYE BYE INNA BATTY BWOY HEAD

Slang for “gunshot to a queer man’s head” that became popularized

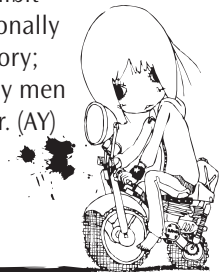
through homophobic dancehall music. (Egale Canada)

BUGGER MAN Slang for “queer man” that became popularized through homophobic dancehall music and generally only has negative connotations. (Egale Canada)

BULLYING Physically, mentally, and/or emotionally intimidating and/or harming an individual or members of a group; here, intimidating or harming individuals whose sexual orientation or gender identity is somehow threatening to the bully. (AY)

Typically a form of repeated, persistent, and aggressive behaviour directed at an individual or individuals that is intended to cause (or should be known to cause) fear and distress and/or harm to another person’s body, feelings, self-esteem, or reputation. Bullying occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance. (OME)

BUTCH Slang term for individuals who exhibit characteristics or behaviors traditionally considered as masculine; sometimes derogatory; also sometimes used by lesbian women or gay men to self-identify with varying notions of gender. (AY)





CAMP Deliberately affected or exaggerated style, sometimes for humorous effect. (AY)

CHI CHI GAL Slang for “queer woman” that generally only has negative connotations. (Egale Canada)

CHI CHI MAN Slang for “queer man” that generally only has negative connotations. (Egale Canada)

CISGENDER/CISGENDERED A cisgendered person is someone whose gender identity basically matches up with her or his medically-designated sex. An example of this is a person who identifies as a “man” (gender identity) who is also medically-designated “male” (sex). A cisgendered person can be subjected to transphobia if somebody else perceives that person not to be conforming to stereotypical ideas about gender. (See “Gender Identity” and “Sex” for further clarification.) (Egale Canada)

Not transgender, that is, having a gender identity or gender role that society considers appropriate for the sex one was assigned at birth. The prefix cis- is pronounced like “sis.” The opposite of transgendered, someone who is cisgendered has a gender identity that agrees with their societally recognized sex. Many transgender people prefer “cisgender” to “biological,” “genetic,” or “real” male or female because of the implications of those words. Using the term “biological female” or “genetic female” to describe cisgendered individuals excludes transgendered men, who also fit that description. To call a cisgendered woman a “real woman” is exclusive of transwomen, who are considered within their communities to be “real” women also. (UD)

CISNORMATIVITY

“normal.” (TP)

The belief that trans identities or bodies are less authentic or

CLOSET/CLOSETED

Hiding one’s sexual orientation or gender identity from others in the workplace, at school, at home and/or with friends. (ATA)

The intentional concealment of an individual’s own sexual orientation or gender identity, often due to fear of discrimination and/or violence; see also “In the Closet.” (AY)

COMING OUT



[1] The process through which LGBT people recognize and acknowledge their non-heterosexual orientation and integrate this understanding into their personal and social lives.

[2] The act of disclosing this orientation or identity to others. (ATA)

From “coming out of the closet,” the process of becoming aware of and open about one’s sexual orientation or gender identity. (AY)





CREED One of the prohibited grounds of discrimination in the Ontario Human Rights Code, interpreted by the Ontario Human Rights Commission to mean “religious creed” or “religion.” Creed is “a professed system and confession of faith, including both beliefs and observances or worship” that is “sincerely held” and includes non-deistic belief systems. Creed does not include “secular, moral, or ethical beliefs or political convictions” or “religions that promote violence or hate towards others or that violate criminal law.” Individuals who do not belong to a religion or practise any specific faith are also protected by the Code. (Refer to the Ontario Human Rights Commission’s Policy on Creed and the Accommodation of Religious Observances at www.ohrc.on.ca.) (OME)

CROSSDRESSERS Preferred term for people who usually self-identify with their biological sex and gender but who sometimes wear the clothing, jewelry, etc., of the opposite gender to fulfill emotional needs. (AY)

CYBER-BULLYING Bullying that occurs through the use of information and communication technologies (e.g., spreading rumours or hurtful images or comments by means of e-mail or text messaging, or on social media sites or personal websites). (OME)

DISABILITY A term that covers a broad range and degree of conditions, some visible and others not (e.g., physical, mental, and learning disabilities, hearing or vision disabilities, epilepsy, environmental sensitivities). A disability may be present from birth, may be caused by an accident, or may develop over time. (Refer to www.ohrc.on.ca/en/issues/disability.) (OME)

DISCRIMINATION The unjust or prejudicial treatment of an individual or groups of people; here unfair treatment on the grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity. (AY)

Unfair or prejudicial treatment of individuals or groups on the basis of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status, or disability, as set out in the Ontario Human Rights Code, or on the basis of other, similar factors. Discrimination, whether intentional or unintentional, has the effect of preventing or limiting access to opportunities, benefits, or advantages that are available to other members of society. Discrimination may be evident in organizational and institutional structures, policies, procedures, and programs, as well as in the attitudes and behaviours of individuals. (OME)

When you are treated less favourably than someone else either because of your real or perceived sexual orientation, your gender, your ethnicity or religion, etc. (SO)



DIVERSITY The presence of a wide range of human qualities and attributes within a group, organization, or society. The dimensions of diversity include, but are not limited to, ancestry, culture, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, language, physical and intellectual ability, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, and socio-economic status. (OME)

DOMINANT GROUP A group that is considered the most powerful and privileged of groups in a particular society and that exercises power and influence over others through social and political means. (OME)

DRAG QUEEN/DRAG KING Someone who dresses and acts like the opposite gender for entertainment purposes; usually does not self-identify as transgender. (AY)

DUTY TO ACCOMMODATE The legal obligation that school boards, employers, unions, and service providers have under the Ontario Human Rights Code to take measures that enable people to benefit from and take part in the provision of services equally and to participate equally and perform to the best of their ability in the workplace or an educational setting. (Refer to www.ohrc.on.ca.) (OME)

DYKE A derogatory word for a lesbian and/or for any woman who projects the role, appearance, attitudes, and/or behaviors that a culture traditionally assigns to males; also reclaimed by some to identify with varying notions of gender. (AY)

EQUALITY The state of being equal in regard to status, rights, opportunities, and treatment. (AY)

EQUITY The state of being fair and impartial; here, fairness in opportunities and treatment under the law. (AY)

A condition or state of fair, inclusive, and respectful treatment of all people. Equity does not mean treating people the same without regard for individual differences. (OME)

ETHNICITY The shared national, ethno-cultural, racial, linguistic, and/or religious heritage of a group of people, whether or not they live in their country of origin. (OME)





FAGGOT A derogatory word for a gay male and/or for any man who projects the role, appearance, attitudes, and/or behaviors that a culture traditionally assigns to females; also reclaimed by some men to identify with varying notions of gender. (AY)

FAIRNESS Quality of being fair-minded, impartial, and just. (AY)

FASSY HOLE / FASSIE Slang for “queer man” or “queer woman” that became popularized through homophobic dancehall music and generally only has negative connotations. (Egale Canada)

FEMALE-TO-MALE (FTM) A person born or assigned at birth as biologically female, who identifies as a male and who takes the sex, gender, and identity of a male through dress, mannerisms, behavior, hormone therapy, and/or surgery. (AY)

FEMININE A term used to describe the socially constructed and culturally specific gender behaviors expected of females; see also “Masculine.” (AY)

FEMME A slang term for an individual who projects a traditionally feminine gender role; sometimes, but not always, derogatory; also used by some to self-identify regarding gender. (AY)

FIRST NATION A term that came into common usage in the 1970s to replace the word “Indian,” which many found offensive. The term First Nation has been adopted to replace the word “band” in the names of communities. (OME)

FREAKY MAN Slang for “queer man” that became popularized through homophobic dancehall music and generally only has negative connotations. (Egale Canada)





GAY

A person who is physically and emotionally attracted to someone of the same sex. The word “gay” is used to refer to both males and females or to males only. (ATA)

Men who feel romantic, emotional, and sexual attraction to other men; a term used to proclaim self-acceptance and self-affirmation. (AY)

A person who is emotionally/romantically and physically attracted to persons of the same sex. Gay usually refers to males, but it is also used to include females. Gay can be used interchangeably with homosexual. Gay is most often the term preferred by the gay and lesbian community when referring to homosexual males. (CTF)

A person who forms sexual and affectionate relationships with those of the same gender; often used to refer to men only. (GVSD)

A man who is romantically and sexually attracted to other men. It is sometimes used to refer to the general GLBTQ community, but most often refers to just gay men. (VSB)

GAY-BASHING

(sometimes Bashing or Queer-Bashing)

A physical or verbal attack directed at GLBTQ people, motivated by hatred for their sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or sexual behavior. (AY)



GAY-STRAIGHT ALLIANCE

(or GSA, sometimes Queer-Straight Alliance or QSA or Human Rights or Diversity Club)

Formal organization of GLBTQ and straight people in support of the dignity and rights of GLBTQ

people, usually in the context of and to create change within educational institutions and environments. (AY)

The term GSA stands for Gay-Straight Alliance. Although the exact function of such clubs varies from school to school, GSAs are generally considered to be any student groups concerned with LGBTQ matters and sometimes also serving as support groups for LGBTQ students, allies, and youth with LGBTQ parents or other family members. Many student groups opt not to use this name, however, because the word “gay” is not as inclusive as they would like. It doesn’t necessarily refer to lesbians, bisexuals, or two-spirited people and gender identity and gender expression are not explicitly encompassed by the expression. The term “GSA” is used throughout Egale Canada’s Equity and Inclusive Education Resource Kits, however, and Egale’s national LGBTQ safer schools and inclusive education website is called *MyGSA.ca* because this term is generally understood to refer to any inclusive school group that pertains to LGBTQ matters. However, this is an important consideration and would make an excellent topic of discussion in the discussion forums on *MyGSA.ca*, at any GSA meeting, or in your classroom! (From Egale Canada’s Equity and Inclusive Education Resource Kits)



Gay Straight Alliances (GSAs) are official student clubs with LGBTQ and heterosexual student membership and typically two teachers who serve as faculty advisors. Students in a school with a GSA know that they have at least one or two adults they can talk to about LGBTQ issues. The purpose of GSAs is to provide a much-needed safe space in which LGBTQ students and allies can work together on making their schools more welcoming of sexual and gender minority students. Some GSAs go by other names such as Human Rights Clubs or Social Justice Clubs in order to signal an openness to non-LGBTQ membership (though of course, some of these are not GSAs and might not address homophobia). (From Egale’s Phase One Report on the First National School Climate Survey—see *MyGSA.ca* for the full report.)



GENDER Social and cultural expression of sex; not biological sex. (AY)

A term that refers to those characteristics of women and men that are socially constructed. (See also “Sex” and “Gender Identity.”) (OME)

GENDER CONFORMITY Acting within the culturally expected gender role for people of one’s biological sex. (AY)

GENDER DYSPHORIA A medical term for unhappiness or discomfort with the gender role assigned by one’s culture to one’s biological sex; a term disliked by many transgender people as implying that there is something wrong with them; may or may not coincide with sexual dysphoria. (AY)

GENDER EXPRESSION The ways in which an individual communicates gender identity to others through behavior, clothing, hairstyle, voice, and/ or the emphasis or de-emphasis of bodily characteristics; not an indication of sexual orientation; behaviors and traits used publicly to express gender identity—as masculine or feminine or something else; also called gender presentation. (AY)

Characteristics linked to an individual’s intrinsic sense of self as a man or as a woman, which may not be the same identity as one’s biological sex. (CTF)

The appearance, mannerisms and/or behaviour used to signify to others the gender that the individual wishes to be perceived as. (GVSD)

GENDER FLUIDITY The belief that social constructions of gender identity and gender roles lie along a spectrum and cannot be limited to two genders; a feeling that one's gender varies from societal notions of two genders. (AY)

GENDER IDENTITY A person's internal sense or feeling of being male or female. Gender expression relates to how a person presents his or her sense of gender to the larger society. Gender identity and gender expression are often closely linked with the term transgender. "Many transgender people seek support and acceptance from the gay and lesbian community, where gender norms are often more inclusive" (Ryan & Futterman, 1998, p. 48). (ATA)

An individual's innermost sense of self as male or female, as lying somewhere between these two genders, or as lying somewhere outside gender lines altogether. (AY)

One's internal and psychological sense of oneself as male or female, or both or neither (regardless of sexual orientation); people who question their gender identity may feel unsure of their gender or believe they are not of the same gender as their physical body. Third gender is the term sometimes used to describe people who feel other than male or female and bi-gender refers to people who feel they are both male and female. Often bi-gender people will spend some time presenting in one gender and some time in the other. Some people choose to present androgynously in a conscious attempt to question and expand traditional gender roles, even though they do not question their gender identity. (GVSD)

A person's sense of self, with respect to being male or female. Gender identity is different from sexual orientation, and may be different from birth-assigned sex. (Refer to the Ontario



Human Rights Commission's Policy on Discrimination and Harassment because of Gender Identity at www.ohrc.on.ca.) (OME)

How you feel and experience your gender. It is not defined by your biological or anatomical sex. (SO)

GENDER-NEUTRAL Anything (such as clothing, styles, activities, or spaces) that a society or culture considers appropriate for anyone, irrespective of gender; anything that carries with it no particular gender associations. (AY)

GENDER PRESENTATION The ways in which an individual communicates one's own gender identity to others, through behavior, clothing, hairstyle, voice, and/or the emphasis or de-emphasis of bodily characteristics; not an indication of sexual orientation; behaviors and traits used publicly to express one's gender—as masculine or feminine or something else; also called gender expression. (AY)

GENDER ROLE Culturally or socially determined sets of attitudes and behaviors that are expected of an individual based on her/his biological sex. (AY)

GENDER STEREOTYPE The assumption that boys and girls must carry out distinct roles, i.e. all boys play football or all girls are physically weaker than boys. (SO)

GENDERISM Refers to the assumption that one's gender identity or gender expression will conform to traditionally held stereotypes associated with one's biological sex. (VSB)

GENDERQUEER People who reject the normative societal construct of gender and view their own identity as unrelated to such gender constructs. (AY)
(also **Gender Queer** or **Gender-Queer**)

GENETIC SEX Defined by the 23rd chromosomal pair, coded XX for female and XY for male, although other chromosomal code sets also exist. (AY)

GLBTQ Standard acronym for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and questioning people; variations exist, such as including an I for intersex and a second Q for queer. (AY)

GONADS Glands (ovaries for females and testes for males) that produce gametes. (AY)

GSA See "Gay-Straight Alliance (or GSA)."



HARASSMENT A form of discrimination that may include unwelcome attention and remarks, jokes, threats, name-calling, touching, or other behaviour (including the display of pictures) that insults, offends, or demeans someone because of his or her identity. Harassment involves conduct or comments that are known to be, or should reasonably be known to be, offensive, inappropriate, intimidating, and hostile. (OME)

HATE CRIME A criminal offence, perpetrated on a person or property, that is motivated by bias or prejudice based on actual or perceived race, ancestry, national or ethnic origin, language, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, or other, similar factors. Hate crimes can involve intimidation, harassment, physical force, or threats of physical force against a person or an entire group to which the person belongs. (Any act, including an act of omission, that is not a criminal offence but otherwise shares the characteristics of a hate crime is referred to as a hate incident.) (OME)

HATE PROPAGANDA Ideas, beliefs, and ideologies transmitted in written, oral, or electronic form for the purpose of creating, promoting, perpetuating, or exacerbating antagonistic, hateful, and belligerent attitudes or actions against a particular group or groups of people. (OME)

HATRED Intense dislike or ill will, sometimes unconscious, often irrational, and occasionally expressed through violence; a self-destructive and corrosive emotion. (AY)

HETEROPHOBIA A fear or distrust of heterosexual people and of anything associated with homosexuality, often based on negative life experiences. (AY)

HETEROSEXISM The assumption that everyone is heterosexual and that this sexual orientation or gender identity is superior. Heterosexism is often expressed in more subtle forms than homophobia and can be characterized by the “denial, denigration, and stigmatization of non-heterosexual identity, behaviour, relationships or community” (Ryan & Futterman, 1998, p. 12). (ATA)

The assumption that everyone is heterosexual (or should be) and that heterosexuality is the only “normal,” right, and moral way to be and that, therefore, anyone of a different sexual orientation is “abnormal,” wrong, and immoral. (AY)

The assumption that everyone is or should be heterosexual and that heterosexuality is superior. Heterosexism can exist on a personal, interpersonal, institutional or cultural level. (CTF)

The institutionalized assumption that everyone is or should be heterosexual and that heterosexuality is inherently superior to and preferable to homosexuality or bisexuality; also refers to the institutional and organizational discrimination against non-heterosexuals or behaviours not stereotypically heterosexual



(this discrimination is also sometimes referred to as cultural, institutional or societal homophobia). (GVSD)

A system of beliefs and behaviours based on the assumption that heterosexuality is better than homosexuality. Heterosexism is very closely related to homophobia. (SO)

HETEROSEXISM AND HOMOPHOBIA The term heterosexism refers to the assumption that all people are heterosexual and that heterosexuality is superior and more desirable than homosexuality. Homophobia is defined as “the irrational fear and hatred of homosexuals.” Both of these are perpetuated by negative stereotypes and are dangerous to individuals and communities. (VSB)

HETEROSEXUAL/HETEROSEXUALITY A person who is sexually and emotionally attracted to someone of the opposite sex. Also commonly referred to as “straight.” (ATA)

Feeling romantic, emotional, and sexual attraction to the opposite sex; a normal sexual orientation of no known cause; see also “Straight,” “Bisexuality,” and “Homosexuality.” (AY)

A person who is attracted to a person of the “opposite” gender within a binary gender system. “Straight” is often used to mean heterosexual. (SO)

Created around the same time as “homosexual” to describe individuals who are sexually attracted to the opposite sex/gender. (VSB)

HIJRA The hijra, an institutionalized third gender role in India, is “neither male or female,” containing elements of both. The hijra are commonly believed by the larger society to be intersexed, impotent men, who undergo emasculation in which all or part of the genitals are removed. They adopt female dress and some other aspects of female behaviour. Hijras traditionally earn their living by collecting alms and receiving payment for performances at weddings, births and festivals. (HI)

A self-identified term used by males who define themselves as “not men/not women” but as a “third gender.” Hijras cross-dress publicly and privately and are a part of a strong social, religious, and cultural community. Ritual castration may be part of the hijra identity, but not all hijras are castrated. Sex with men is common, and like men who have sex with kothis, such men would see themselves as “real men” (see “Pathis/Giryas”) and not homosexuals. (MHI)

HOMOPHOBIA Fear and/or hatred of homosexuality in others, often exhibited by prejudice, discrimination, bullying or acts of violence. Ryan & Futterman (1998) also define homophobia as “institutionalized fear, hatred, prejudice, or negative attitudes towards [LGBT persons or] homosexuality that results in invisibility, discrimination, neglect or mistreatment” (p. 12). (ATA)

Fear or intolerance of GLBT people, a feeling that is not limited to particular cultures or to straight people. (AY)

The fear, and/or hatred, and/or repulsion of homosexuality in oneself or in others, often exhibited by self-hatred, prejudice, discrimination, bullying or acts of violence. (CTF)



The irrational fear or hatred of, aversion to, and discrimination against homosexuals or homosexual behaviour. There are many levels and forms of homophobia, including cultural/institutional homophobia, personal homophobia, interpersonal homophobia and internalized homophobia. Many of the problems faced by lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people stem from homophobia and heterosexism. Transphobia is the fear, hatred and intolerance of transsexuals or transgender people, including anyone judged to not fully fit into their assigned gender. (GVSD)

A disparaging or hostile attitude or a negative bias, which may be overt or unspoken and which may exist at an individual and/or a systemic level, towards people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgendered (LGBT). (See also “LGBT.”) (OME)

Treating lesbians, gay men and bisexuals (or those who are seen as being LGB) less favourably than heterosexuals because of their sexual orientation. (SO)

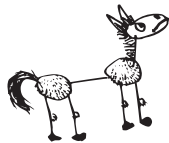
HOMOSEXUAL/HOMOSEXUALITY A person who is sexually and emotionally attracted to someone of the same sex. Because the term is associated historically with a medical model of homosexuality and can have a negative connotation, most people prefer such other terms as lesbian, gay or bisexual. (ATA)

Feeling romantic, emotional, and sexual attraction to members of the same sex; a normal sexual orientation of no known cause; see also “Bisexuality” and “Heterosexuality” as well as “Gay” and “Lesbian.” (AY)

A person who is attracted to a person of the “same” gender within a binary gender system. (SO)

A scientific term invented in the 1800’s to refer to individuals who are sexually attracted to their own sex/gender. (VSB)

HUMAN RIGHTS Rights that recognize the dignity and worth of every person, and provide for equal rights and opportunities without discrimination, regardless of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status, or disability, as set out in the Ontario Human Rights Code, or other similar factors. (OME)





IDENTITY What, how and who one perceives oneself to be; a multi-faceted self-concept that evolves throughout life. (AY)

IN THE CLOSET The intentional concealment of an individual's own gender identity or sexual orientation, usually due to fear of discrimination and/or violence; can cause isolation and psychological pain; see also "Closeted." (AY)

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION Education that is based on the principles of acceptance and inclusion of all students. Students see themselves reflected in their curriculum, their physical surroundings, and the broader environment, in which diversity is honoured and all individuals are respected. (OME)

INTERSECTIONALITY Similarly to the point on a graph where lines cross being called a point of "intersection," the fact that categories of identification—such as class, ethnic origin, gender expression, gender identity, physical and mental ability, race, religion, sexual orientation, or other factors—are experienced simultaneously and cannot genuinely be separated from one another is referred to as "intersectionality." Often, people are discriminated against with regard to multiple categories: for example, a racialized lesbian could be subjected to heterosexism, homophobia, lesbophobia, misogyny, racism, and transphobia or any other

form of discrimination, such as ableism, ageism, and classism, depending on both how she identifies and how she is perceived to be. (Egale Canada)

The overlapping, in the context of an individual or group, of two or more prohibited grounds of discrimination under the Ontario Human Rights Code, or other, similar factors, which may result in additional biases or barriers to equity for that individual or group. (OME)

INTERSEX/INTERSEXUAL

A person who is born with anatomy or physiology that does not conform with cultural or societal expectations of a distinctly male or female gender. Historically, the medical community labeled these individuals as hermaphrodites and performed sex reassignment surgery in early infancy. Contemporary perspectives have sought to question and challenge the arbitrary practice of gender reassignment surgery as a form of compulsory identity and/or genital mutilation. (ATA)

Having some degree of ambiguity in regard to primary sex characteristics (genitalia) or being born with predominantly male or female genitalia that medical professionals deem to be physiologically “incorrect,” usually addressed through medically unnecessary surgery during infancy; a condition that may apply to about one in 2,000 infants; sometimes offensively called “hermaphroditic.” (AY)

People who were born with a combination of male and female anatomy. Used to be called “hermaphrodite”; some still use this term, though intersex is the word now preferred. (GVSD)



INTERVENTION Action to change a situation for the better; a deliberate, organized effort to improve the circumstances of one or more individuals by altering the environment, policies, and/or circumstances facing or affecting those individuals. (AY)

INUIT Aboriginal people in northern Canada, living mainly in Nunavut, the Northwest Territories, northern Quebec, and Labrador. Ontario has a very small Inuit population. The Inuit are not covered by the Indian Act. (OME)

INVISIBLE MINORITY People who may experience social inequities on the basis of factors that may not be visible, such as a disability or sexual orientation. The term may refer to a group that is small in number or it may connote inferior social position. (OME)

ISLAMOPHOBIA Prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination directed against Muslims or Arabs on the basis of their culture and religion. Islamophobia may be evident in organizational and institutional structures, policies, procedures, and programs, as well as in the attitudes and behaviours of individuals. (OME)

ISOLATION The state of being or feeling alone and apart from, or unable to connect with others; a cause of deep emotional distress for any person. (AY)

JUSTICE Fair, equal, and reasonable treatment without regard to a person's color, sex, gender, age, health, wealth or poverty, background, race/ethnicity, condition, sexual orientation, or gender identity; fair and equal treatment under the law and in all societal interactions. (AY)

KATHOEY The category of kathoey is an elusive one...The term kathoey itself is ambiguous, even when used by kathoey themselves. In translation it is often rendered as "transvestite," "transgender" or "transsexual"...With the coming into existence of a masculine gay identity in Thailand, the term is more and more used exclusively for male cross-dressers. However, in this circle it is not a particularly well-liked term that can readily be used in addressing persons. Indeed, kathoey can be a threatening term for persons who are trying to pass as females. People whom others label as kathoey often prefer to call themselves "a second type of woman" (phu-ying praphet song) or "a transformed goddess" (nang-fa jamlaeng). (TT)

KOTHI/KOTI Contemporary research on sexualities and genders have clearly shown that the bipolar categories, such as "man" or "woman" or "heterosexual" or "homosexual," are not useful to describe the range of identities, desires and practices...existing in India...[Kothi/Koti is a] self-identifying label for those males who feminise their behaviours (either to attract "manly" male sexual partners and/or as part of their own gender construction and usually in specific situations and contexts) and who state that they prefer to be sexually penetrated anally and/or orally. Kothi behaviours have a highly performative quality in social spaces. Self-identified Kothi use this term for males who are sexually penetrated, even when



their performative behaviour is not feminised. This is the primary and most visible framework of MSM behaviours. Kothis state that they do not have sex with others like themselves, only “real men.” However, many may also be married to women as a family obligation. (MHI)

LESBIAN

A female who is attracted physically and emotionally to other females. (ATA)

A woman who feels romantically, emotionally, and sexually attracted to other women; a descriptive and socially acceptable label that homosexual women often prefer because it offers an identity separate from that of homosexual men; a term originating from Lesbos, an Aegean island and the home of the Greek poet Sappho, a woman who loved women. (AY)

A female who is emotionally/romantically and physically attracted to other females. Lesbian can be used interchangeably with homosexual and gay when referring to females. Lesbian is usually the term preferred by the gay and lesbian community when referring to gay/homosexual females. (CTF)

A woman who forms sexual and affectionate relationships with other women; the term originates from the Greek island of Lesbos which was home to Sappho, a poet, a teacher and a woman who loved other women. (GVSD)

A woman who is romantically and sexually attracted to other women. This term originates with the female poet Sappho who lived in a community comprised predominantly of women on the Isle of Lesbos in ancient Greece. (VSB)

LGBT The initialism used to refer to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered people. A broader range of identities is also sometimes implied, or may be represented more explicitly by the initialism LGBTTIQ, which stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, transsexual or two-spirited, intersexed, and queer or questioning. (See also “Homophobia.”) (OME)

LGBT/GLBT Commonly used acronyms that are shorthand for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual and two-spirited identities. Sexual minority is a synonymous term. (ATA)

LGBTQ This acronym can mean different things to different people, but it is generally understood to stand for “lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans (transgender, transsexual, trans-identified), two-spirited, queer, and questioning” or some variation of this. Although it’s true that many people opt to use different words to describe themselves, saying either LGBT or LGBTQ is widely accepted (even though it is recognized that these expressions are not necessarily all-encompassing). For example, it is also common to include both an “I” for intersex and an “A” for ally. Some people also choose to duplicate all of the letters that can represent more than one word because it has the visual/verbal effect of demonstrating how very many different sexual orientations and gender identities there actually are. The ones already mentioned here would look like this: LGBTTTTQQIA or LGBTTT2QQIA (where the “2” stands for

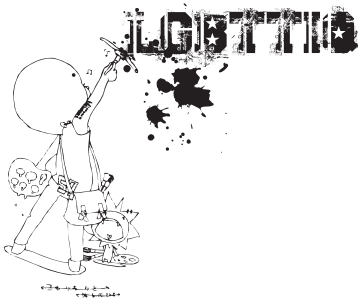


2-spirited). The letters can be ordered differently as well, such as alphabetically. (Egale Canada)

Stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender/transsexual, queer. The Q sometimes stands for questioning. (SO)

LGBTTIQ See “LGBT.” (OME)

LIFESTYLE The way individuals live their lives, such as an urban or a rural lifestyle, an artistic lifestyle, an entrepreneurial lifestyle, a hedonistic lifestyle; not appropriately used to denote sexual orientation (just as there is no heterosexual lifestyle, there is no homosexual or gay lifestyle either); the phrase “homosexual lifestyle” is often used by anti-gay groups to imply that sexual orientation is a matter of choice rather than of identity. (AY)



MAHU Mahu is a cross-Polynesian term originally describing transgender women or female-acting males... Mahuwahine is a newly coined term of empowerment among Hawaii's transgender community signifying male-to-female (MTF) transgender identity in varying, personally chosen forms and coincides with the Hawaiian cultural renaissance... (HRBM)

MALE-TO-FEMALE (MTF) A person born or assigned at birth as biologically male, who self-identifies as female and who takes the sex, gender, and identity of a female through dress, mannerisms, behaviors, hormone therapy, and/or surgery. (AY)

MASCULINE A term used to describe the socially constructed and culturally specific gender behaviors expected of males; see also "Feminine." (AY)

MEN WHO HAVE SEX WITH MEN (MSM) A term used to denote men who engage in sexual behavior with other men; includes men who self-identify as heterosexual as well as those who self-identify as gay and bisexual. (Please note that in online politics, MSM is an acronym for mainstream media). (AY)



MÉTIS People of mixed First Nation and European ancestry. The Métis culture draws on diverse ancestral origins, such as Scottish, Irish, French, Ojibwe, and Cree. (OME)

MINORITY GROUP A group of people within a given society that has little or no access to social, economic, political, cultural, or religious power. The term may refer to a group that is small in number or it may connote inferior social position. (OME)

MISOGYNY The hatred of women. (CDO)

MSM See “Men who Have Sex with Men.”

MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION An approach to education, including administrative policies and procedures, curriculum, and learning activities, that recognizes the experience and contributions of diverse cultural groups. One of the aims of multicultural education is to promote the understanding of and respect for cultural and racial diversity. (OME)

ONTARIO HUMAN RIGHTS CODE (“the Code”) A provincial law that gives everyone equal rights and opportunities, without discrimination, in specific areas such as education, jobs, housing, and services. The goal of the Code is to address and ultimately prevent discrimination and harassment. (Available at www.ohrc.on.ca.) (OME)

OPPRESSION Prolonged cruel or unjust treatment, sometimes unconscious, sometimes covert; constant state of denying to others fair and equal treatment and fair and equal opportunities. (AY)

OUT Openly acknowledging one’s sexual orientation or gender identity; may be partial (that is, out to some people and in the closet to others). (AY)

OUTED When someone else accidentally or deliberately discloses another’s sexual orientation or gender identity, usually without permission. (AY)

OUTING The public disclosure of another person’s sexual orientation or gender identity without that person’s permission or knowledge. Such disclosure is very disrespectful and is potentially dangerous to the outed person. (ATA)



PANSEXUAL A term of choice for people who do not self-identify as bisexual, finding themselves attracted to people across a spectrum of genders. (AY)

PANTHI/GIRYA Contemporary research on sexualities and genders have clearly shown that the bipolar categories, such as “man” or “woman” or “heterosexual” or “homosexual,” are not useful to describe the range of identities, desires and practices...existing in India...[Panthi/Girya is a] kothi label for any “manly male.” A panthi/girya is by definition a man who penetrates, whether it is a woman and/or another male. Panthis/Giryas would most likely also be married to women and/or access other females. Their occupations vary across the social class spectrum from rickshaw drivers to businessmen. (MHI)

PASSING A term for those who successfully assume a gender role and gender expression different than the one to which they were born or assigned at birth; also may refer to closeted gay, lesbian, or bisexual people passing as straight. (Please note that in some cultures, passing refers to successfully assuming a different racial/ethnic or cultural identity). (AY)

POWER Having the ability to do something or to act in a particular way; here, the freedom and ability to acknowledge openly one’s sexual orientation or gender identity without fear of oppression, discrimination, injustice, violence, or abuse. (AY)

POWER DYNAMICS The process by which one group defines and subordinates other groups and subjects them to differential and unequal treatment. (OME)

PREJUDICE Bias; an attitude that favors one person or group over another; here, favoring one sexual orientation and/or gender identity over any other; an attitude that usually leads to discrimination. (AY)

PRIDE National, citywide, and neighborhood local events and programs, usually during the month of June (see “Stonewall”) in celebration of the ongoing fight for equality for GLBTQ people. (AY)

PRIMARY SEX CHARACTERISTICS Physical characteristics present at birth and that are used by those around an infant to determine its biological sex, including penis and scrotum to identify the infant as male or vulva, vagina, clitoris, and labia to identify the infant as female. (AY)

PRIVILEGE Special rights, advantages, or immunity granted to, or assumed by, certain groups and considered by them as their right; for example, in the United States privilege accrues mostly to whites, to heterosexual people, and most of all to white, heterosexual males. (AY)



QUEER

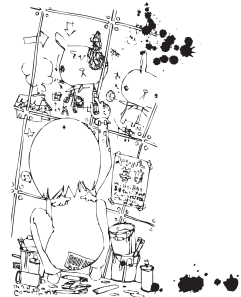
Historically, a negative term for homosexuality. More recently, the LGBT movement has reclaimed the word to refer to itself. Increasingly, the word queer is popularly used by LGBT youth as a positive way to refer to themselves. (ATA)

Formerly an exclusively derogatory term for all GLBT people; now proudly used by some as an umbrella term for the entire GLBTQ community; also used by those who see their own gender identity, sexual identity, and/or sexual orientation as not fitting the widely recognized pattern of straight, gay or lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or questioning. (AY)

A broad term used both as an individual label and also signifying a larger socio-political movement created from a general dissatisfaction with a gay and lesbian politic that is thought to be too assimilationist in nature; “queer” defines a strategy, an attitude, a reference to other identities and a new self-understanding. It is a term also used as shorthand for LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) people. (GVSD)

A term for homosexuality that was once a pejorative but that has more recently been reclaimed by the LGBT movement and is now used for self-identification in a positive way. (OME)

A person who does not want to have their sexual orientation reduced to an either/or term such as heterosexual or homosexual. Lots of different people identify as queer (including people who are heterosexual), and many of them think that a binary gender system is too



limiting. The term “queer” is often used by and about people who are traditionally seen as lesbian or gay. (SO)

The term has a history of being a derogatory name for members of the GLBTQ (and Ally) community and those whose sexual orientation is perceived as such. Many people use this word in a positive way to refer to the community; they have reclaimed the term as their own. Not everyone believes this and sensitivity should be used when using or hearing it as there are still many negative connotations with its use. (VSB)

QUESTIONING A person who is unsure of his or her sexual orientation or gender identity. (ATA)

Being unsure of one’s sexual orientation and/or gender identity; feeling uncomfortable with or unwilling or unable to self-categorize within traditional labels such as gay, straight, male, female, etc. (AY)

An apt term or self-label sometimes used by those exploring personal and political issues of sexual orientation, sexual and gender identity, and choosing not to identify with any other label; “questioning” may create greater potential to create new options as well. (GVSD)

People who are in the process of questioning their sexual orientation are often in need of support and understanding during this stage of their identity. They are seeking information and guidance in their self-discovery. (VSB)



RACE A social construct that groups people on the basis of common ancestry and characteristics such as colour of skin, shape of eyes, hair texture, and/or facial features. The term is used to designate the social categories into which societies divide people according to such characteristics. Race is often confused with ethnicity (a group of people who share a particular cultural heritage or background); there may be several ethnic groups within a racial group. (Refer to the Ontario Human Rights Commission's Policy and Guidelines on Racism and Racial Discrimination at www.ohrc.on.ca.) (OME)

RACIALIZATION The process through which groups come to be seen as different, and may be subjected to differential and unequal treatment. (OME)

RACIALIZED GROUP A group of people who may experience social inequities on the basis of race, colour, and/or ethnicity, and who may be subjected to differential treatment. (OME)

RACISM A set of erroneous assumptions, opinions, and actions stemming from the belief that one race is inherently superior to another. Racism may be evident in organizational and institutional structures, policies, procedures, and programs, as well as in the attitudes and behaviours of individuals. (OME)

RACIST A term referring to the beliefs and/or actions of an individual, institution, or organization that imply (directly or indirectly) that certain groups are inherently superior to others. It may be evident in organizational and institutional structures, policies, procedures, and programs, as well as in the attitudes and behaviours of individuals. (OME)

RAINBOW FLAG A symbol of the LGBT movement designed in 1978. The rainbow flag is recognized by the International Congress of Flag Makers. (ATA)

RECLAIMED LANGUAGE Taking terms or symbols that have had a derogatory connotation and using them in a positive way to name one's self or one's experience. For example, LGBT persons often use the words "dyke" and "queer" in a positive and affirming way to refer to themselves. Pink and black inverted triangles that were once used to identify gay and lesbian prisoners in Nazi concentration camps have been reclaimed to serve as an enduring symbol of gay and lesbian pride and as a reminder to the world to speak up against abuses directed at gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people. (ATA)

RELIGION See "Creed." (OME)

RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION An obligation under the Ontario Human Rights Code to provide reasonable accommodation for students and employees who wish to observe the tenets or practices of their faith, as well as for those who wish not to participate in any form of religious observance. (See also "Accommodation.") (OME)

RESPECT A feeling of regard for the rights, dignity, feelings, wishes, and abilities of others. (AY)



SAFE SPACE A place where anyone can relax and be fully self-expressed, without fear of being made to feel uncomfortable, unwelcome, or unsafe on account of biological sex, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, cultural background, age, or physical or mental ability; a place where the rules guard each person’s self-respect and dignity and strongly encourage everyone to respect others. (AY)

SAFETY Freedom from the fear or threat of harm (physical, emotional, or mental) and from danger, risk, or injury. (AY)

SAME GENDER LOVING A term created by the African American GLBTQ community and used by some people of color who see “gay” and “lesbian” as terms of the white gay and lesbian community. (AY)

SECONDARY SEX CHARACTERISTICS Those physical characteristics that are not present at birth and that develop during puberty as a result of hormones released by the gonads and the adrenal gland, including facial and chest hair (males), breasts (females), and pubic hair (everyone). (AY)

SEX The category of male or female based on characteristics that are biologically determined. (See also “Gender” and “Gender Identity.”) (OME)

SEX & GENDER A classification based on reproductive physiology and identified in four main ways, including: [1] primary sex characteristics (vulva, labia, clitoris, and vagina for females; penis and scrotum for males); [2] genetic sex or chromosomes (XX for females; XY for males); [3] gonads (ovaries for females; testes for males); and [4] secondary sex characteristics (see above; a continuum with most individuals concentrated near the ends). (AY)

It is easy to confuse these two concepts and terms; however, they are different. Sex refers to the biological sex of a person. Gender refers to their societal appearance, mannerisms, and roles. (VSB)

SEXISM Discrimination and unfairness based on biological sex or gender and usually perpetrated against females. (AY)

Prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination directed against people on the basis of their sex or gender. Sexism may be evident in organizational and institutional structures, policies, procedures, and programs, as well as in the attitudes and behaviours of individuals. (OME)

Treating a person less favourably because of their sex or gender. (SO)

SEXUAL DYSPHORIA A medical term for unhappiness or discomfort with the biological sex to which one was born or assigned at birth; describing a disconnect between one's internal sense of gender identity and one's outwardly apparent biologic sex; a term disliked by many transgender people as implying that there is something wrong with them; may or may not coincide with gender dysphoria. (AY)



SEXUAL MINORITY

An umbrella term for people whose sexuality is expressed in less common ways; may include people who self-identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer, Two-Spirit, third gender, and so on. (AY)

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

A feeling of attraction to others, based on biological sex and gender expression, over which individuals have no choice and different from sexual behavior; romantic, sexual, and emotional attraction to others, categorized by the sex of the person to whom one is attracted—such as heterosexual (attracted to the opposite sex), homosexual (attracted to the same sex), or bisexual (attracted to individuals irrespective of their sex). (AY)

The emotional/romantic and physical attraction felt by an individual towards members of the same sex, the other sex or either sex. (CTF)

Refers to a person's deep-seated feelings of sexual attraction. It includes whom we desire sexually, with whom we want to become intimate, and with whom we want to form some of our strongest emotional relationships. The inclination or capacity to develop these intimate sexual and emotional bonds may be with people of the same gender (lesbian, gay), the other gender (heterosexual) or either gender (bisexual). Many people become aware of these feelings during adolescence or even earlier. Some do not realize or acknowledge their attractions (especially same-sex attractions) until much later in life. Orientation is not the same as behaviour since not everyone acts on his or her attractions. It is also important to note that one's gender identity is totally independent of one's sexual orientation; neither facet should be considered predictive of the other. (GVSD)

A person's sense of sexual attraction to people of the same sex, the opposite sex, or both sexes. (See also "LGBT," and refer to the Ontario Human Rights Commission's Policy on Discrimination and Harassment because of Sexual Orientation at www.ohrc.on.ca.) (OME)

Describes who you are physically and sexually attracted to. (SO)

A personal characteristic that covers the range of human sexuality from gay and lesbian to bisexual and heterosexual orientations. (VSB)

SEXUAL PREJUDICE Discrimination and unfairness based on biological sex, gender, sexual orientation, or gender identity; see also "Sexism." (AY)

SEXUAL REASSIGNMENT SURGERY (or SRS) Surgical procedures that modify one's primary and/or secondary sex characteristics; formerly called a "sex change operation," a phrase now considered by many to be offensive. (AY)

SOCIAL JUSTICE Equal treatment and equality of social and economic opportunity, irrespective of one's sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, race/ethnicity, biological sex, national origin, age, or health status; a concept that "Each person possesses an inviolability, founded on justice, that even the welfare of society as a whole cannot override. For this reason, justice denies that the loss of freedom for some is made right by a greater good shared by others." (John Rawls) (AY)



A concept based on the belief that each individual and group within a given society has a right to equal opportunity, civil liberties, and full participation in the social, educational, economic, institutional, and moral freedoms and responsibilities of that society. (OME)

SODEMITE Slang for “queer woman” that generally only has negative connotations. (Egale Canada)

STEALTH When transpeople live as their gender without telling folks they are trans. There are a lot of different levels and sub-types. The most drastic, “deep stealth,” used to be required/recommended by the Standards of Care; this entails cutting off all contact with everyone who knew them by their assigned sex, including families of origin, and moving to new cities and getting new jobs. (Egale Canada)

STEREOTYPE A false or generalized, and usually negative, conception of a group of people that results in the unconscious or conscious categorization of each member of that group, without regard for individual differences. Stereotyping may be based on race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status, or disability, as set out in the Ontario Human Rights Code, or on the basis of other, similar factors. (OME)

A generalization, usually exaggerated or oversimplified and often offensive, that is used to describe or distinguish a group. (SO)

STONEWALL

Referring to riots at the Stonewall Bar in New York City on June 27, 1967; often cited as the birth of the modern GLBT civil rights movement. (AY)

STRAIGHT

Slang term for a person with heterosexual orientation. (AY)

A slang word used to refer to the heterosexual members of our community. (VSB)

SYSTEMIC DISCRIMINATION

A pattern of discrimination that arises out of apparently neutral institutional policies or practices, that is reinforced by institutional structures and power dynamics, and that results in the differential and unequal treatment of members of certain groups. (OME)





THIRD GENDER A category for those who do not self-identify as either masculine or feminine and who believe that they belong to an alternative gender. (AY)

TRANNY
(or Trannie) Slang for transgender people; considered offensive by most. (AY)

TRANS Slang for transgender people. (AY)
A commonly used umbrella term for female-to-male (FTM), male-to-female (MTF), trans-identified, transgender, transsexual, etc. (Egale Canada)

TRANSGENDER A person whose gender identity, outward appearance, expression and/or anatomy do not fit into conventional expectations of male or female. Often used as an umbrella term to represent a wide range of non-conforming gender identities and behaviours. (ATA)

An umbrella term for all who feel that they are outside the boundaries of biological sex and culturally determined gender expression; may include transsexuals, crossdressers, Two-Spirit people, drag performers, etc., and people who do not identify with their biological sex. (AY)

A person whose gender identity (feeling of being either male or female) does not match their physical/anatomical sex. Some describe it as being born into the wrong body. (CTF)

Refers to people who do not identify with the gender roles assigned to them by society based on their biological sex. (GVSD)

An umbrella term used to refer to people who transcend the traditional concept of gender. Many feel as though they are neither a man nor a woman specifically, and many feel as though their biological sex (male, female, etc.) and their socialized gender (man, woman, etc.) don't match up. Some opt to change/reassign their sex through hormones and/or surgery and some change their outward appearance, or gender expression, through clothing, hairstyles, mannerisms, etc. (VSB)

TRANSITION The period when one is intentionally changing from living as one sex or gender to a different conception of sex or gender; a multi-step, complicated process that may or may not include sexual reassignment surgery and/or hormonal supplements to alter one's body. (AY)

TRANSMAN Slang for a female-to-male transsexual person. (AY)

A person who has been brought up by wider society as female, who sees themselves as male. (SO)

TRANSPERSON A trans person is anyone who refuses to conform to, or doesn't fit within, a binary gender system. They may identify as a transman or a transwoman or as something else entirely—such as “genderqueer.” There are many different trans identities, and “trans” does not only refer to people to have had (or want to have) gender reassignment surgery. (SO)



TRANSPHOBIA

Unreasoning hatred and suspicion or fear of anyone whose gender identity and gender expression does not conform to society's expectations for one of her/his biological sex. (AY)

Treating a person who displays their gender in unconventional ways less favourably than those who may be more conventional. (SO)

TRANSEXUAL (or TS)

A transgendered person who has had treatments to alter the sex of his or her body. Many transsexual people report feeling “trapped in the wrong body” such that their internal feelings and emotions do not match their external biological sex. (ATA)

An individual who does not self-identify with his/her biological sex; one who identifies physically, psychologically, and emotionally as of a different sex from that one was born or assigned at birth; may choose to alter the body to reconcile gender identity and biological sex or physical appearance; may consider one's self as non-operative (meaning does not intend to change the primary sex characteristics), pre-operative (meaning takes hormones to change the body's appearance and may or may not eventually have sexual reassignment surgery), or post-operative (meaning has had sexual reassignment surgery). (AY)

An individual who presents himself/herself and lives in the gender “opposite” to his/her genetic/physical gender at birth. A transsexual is someone who feels psychologically like the other sex and has somehow been trapped in the wrong body.

Transsexuals may be heterosexual, bisexual or homosexual in their sexual orientation. Some transsexuals may undergo operations and hormone therapy in order to make their body fit what they feel is their true gender. TS's are also known as female-to-male, FTM, transmen or male-to-female, MTF, transwomen. (GVSD)

Used to describe those individuals who use hormone therapy and/or surgery to alter their sex. (VSB)

TRANSVESTITE Former term, now considered offensive by many, for people who usually self-identify with their biological sex and gender but who sometimes wear the clothing, jewelry, etc., of the opposite gender to fulfill emotional needs; the preferred term is crossdresser. (AY)

More appropriately referred to as “cross-dressing,” the term transvestite most often refers to males who dress in the clothing of women. The term drag usually refers to dressing in the clothing and styles of another gender for entertainment purposes. (VSB)

TRANSWOMAN Slang for a male-to-female transsexual person. (AY)

A person who has been brought up by wider society as male, who sees themselves as female. (SO)



TWO-SPIRIT/TWO-SPIRITED

Some Aboriginal people identify

themselves as two-spirited rather than as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered or transsexual. (ATA)

A term whose definition varies across Native American cultures, but which generally means a person born with one biological sex and fulfilling at least some of the gender roles assigned to both sexes; often considered part male and part female or wholly male and wholly female; often revered as natural peace makers as well as healers and shamans. (AY)

A member of the Aboriginal community who is gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender. (CTF)

Two-Spirit is a term used by some indigenous (First Nations) people to describe themselves in a way that is closer to their cultural construct of sex/gender/sexuality than the dominant Western view. Many of the languages of indigenous nations of North America include specific terms for gender and sexual diversity; some indigenous people may use both the general term Two-Spirit and the culturally specific term from their own language to describe themselves. (GVSD)

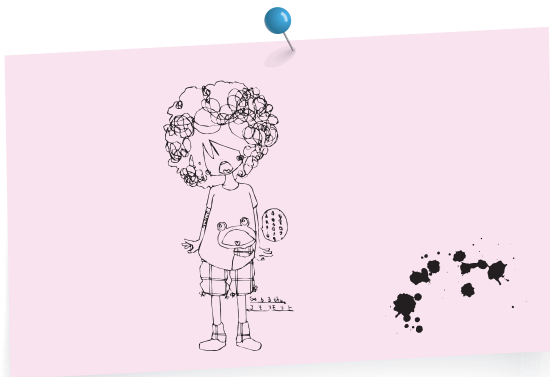
Used by some First Nations to describe people in their culture who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender. (VSB)

UZEZE (Kitesha)

In the language of the Upper Congo, effeminate men are called uzeze while among the Mbala they are known as kitesha. A kitesha lives and dresses differently from the other men—he walks and acts like a woman, wears women’s clothing (although not their kerchiefs) and is considered lucky. There are also kitesha women that are similarly androgynous by nature. (TSW)

VISIBLE MINORITY

A group of people who may experience social inequities on the basis of factors that may be visible, such as race, colour, and ethnicity, and who may be subjected to differential treatment. The term may refer to a group that is small in number or it may connote inferior social position. (See also “Racialized Group.”) (OME)





ATA: From the Alberta Teachers' Association's Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Frequently Asked Questions: What Does the Term LGBT Stand for?

<http://www.teachers.ab.ca/For%20Members/Professional%20Development/Diversity%20and%20Human%20Rights/Sexual%20Orientation/FAQ/Pages/What%20Does%20the%20Term%20LGBT%20Stand%20For.aspx>

Some terms and definitions have been adapted from the booklet *Safe and Caring Schools for Lesbian and Gay Youth: A Teacher's Guide*, published by the Alberta Teachers' Association.



AY: From Advocates for Youth's Creating Safe Space for GLBTQ Youth: A Toolkit

http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=607&Itemid=177



CDO: From Cambridge Dictionaries Online

<http://dictionary.cambridge.org/>



CTF: From the Canadian Teachers' Federation's Policy on Anti-Homophobia and Anti-Heterosexism (July 2004 Annual General Meeting)

<http://www.ctf-fce.ca/documents/Priorities/EN/pd/BGLTT/BGLTTPolicies%20-English.pdf>

* **Egale Canada**

To access and add to an online glossary, go to MyGSA.ca/SiteGlossary



* **GVSD:** From the Greater Victoria School District's Regulation 4303 (GVSD)


<http://www.galebc.org/reg4303.pdf>

* **HI:** From Nanda, Serena. "The Hijras of India: Cultural and Individual Dimensions of an Institutionalized Third Gender Role." *Culture, Society, and Sexuality: A Reader*. Ed. Richard Guy Parker and Peter Aggleton. 1999.


http://books.google.ca/books?hl=en&lr=&id=MlZbFt6421gC&oi=fnd&pg=PA226&dq=hijra+definition&ots=hTkzVXcvRo&sig=I9xywLWQfcx_DCuPAhq8HbUkfql#v=onepage&q=hijra%20definition&f=false

* **HRBM:** From Ellingson, Lyndall, et al. "HIV Risk Behaviors among Mahuwahine (Native Hawaiian Transgender Women)." *AIDS Education and Prevention* (2008): 20.6 558-569.

<http://www.atypon-link.com/GPI/doi/abs/10.1521/aeap.2008.20.6.558>

 **MHI:** From Khan, Shivananada. “MSM and HIV/AIDS in India.” 2004.

<http://www.nfi.net/NFI%20Publications/Essays/2004/MSM,%20HIV%20and%20India.pdf>

 **OME:** Ontario’s Ministry of Education Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/inclusiveguide.pdf>

Realizing the Promise of Diversity: Ontario’s Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/equity.html>

 **SO:** From the Schools OUT Student Tool Kit

<http://www.schools-out.org.uk/STK/Definitions.htm>


 **TP:** From Trans PULSE

<http://www.transpulse.ca>


 **TSW:**


From Amara Das Wilhelm’s *A Third Sex around the World*. The Gay and Lesbian Vaishnava Association, Inc.

<http://www.galva108.org/aroundtheworld.html>

 **TT:** From Brummelhuis, Han Ten. “Transformation of Transgender: The Case of the Thai Kathoey.” *Lady Boys, Tom Boys, Rent Boys: Male and Female Homosexualities in Contemporary Thailand*. Ed. Peter A. Jackson and Gerrard Sullivan. 1999.

<http://books.google.ca/books?hl=en&lr=&id=G30klcfc8HMC&oi=fnd&pg=PA121&dq=kathoey&ots=bsW70EGGql&sig=h1g3goNSM QFmWtWue8Sj2Gyd1to#v=onepage&q=kathoey&f=false>

 **UD:** From Urbandictionary.com

 **VSB:** From the Vancouver School Board’s Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Transsexual, Two-Spirit, Questioning Policy (Feb. 2004)

<http://www.vsb.bc.ca/district-policy/acb-lesbian-gay-bisexual-transgender-transsexual-two-spirit-questioning>

These definitions were assembled by Sarah E. Holmes (GLBTQA Resources Coordinator from 2000-2002) in August 2000, revised by Andrew J. Shepard in November 2000, updated again by Sarah August 2002. <http://www.usm.maine.edu/glbta/definitions.htm>

“University of Southern Maine Safe Zone Project.”

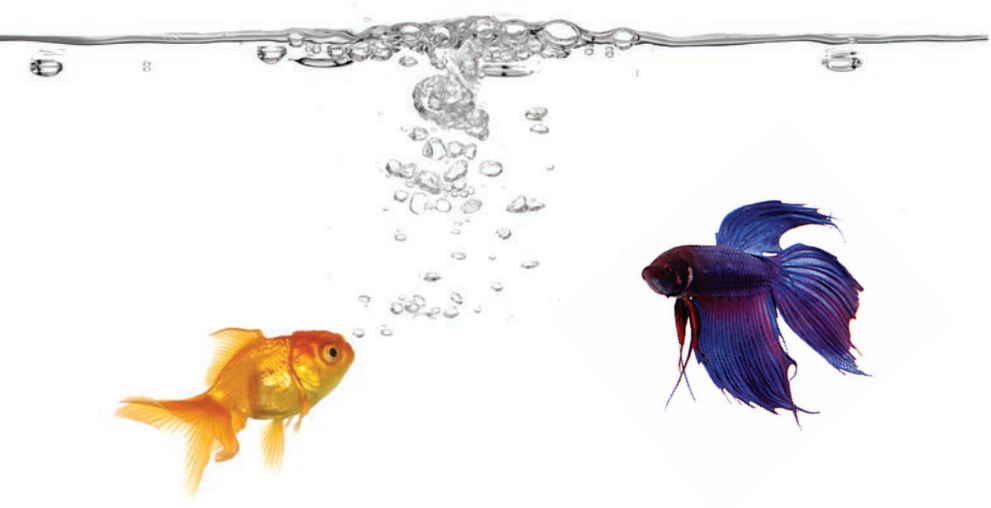
**Egale's Safe Schools Campaign
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make your contribution, please
visit www.egale.ca/donate.**





Equity and Inclusive Education Resource Kit for Ontario High Schools

LGBTQ RESOURCES



di  **ersity =**
possibility



LGBTQ ONTARIO

For a continually updated web directory of regional and national resources, see MyGSA.ca/Resources



LGBTQ and LGBTQ-Friendly Organizations, Programmes, & Resources in Ontario

2-Spirited People of the First Nations (Toronto)
The 519 Bashing Line (Toronto)
The 519 Church Street Community Centre (Toronto)
The 519 Queer Parenting Programmes (Toronto)
African and Caribbean Council on HIV/AIDS in Ontario (ACCHO) (Toronto)
AIDS Niagara (Niagara)
AIDS Thunder Bay (Thunder Bay)
Another Story Bookshop (Toronto)
Around the Rainbow (Ottawa)
Black Coalition for AIDS Prevention (Black CAP) (Toronto)
BOYOBOY an alt arts & culture zine
Brock University Pride (St. Catharines)
Brock University's Office of Human Rights and Equity Services (St. Catharines)
Buddies in Bad Times Theatre's Queer Youth Programme (Toronto)
Capital Pride (Ottawa)
Carleton University's GLBTQ Centre for Sexual and Gender Diversity (Ottawa)
Carleton University's Ontario Public Interest Research Group: Action for Social Change-Carleton (OPIRG-Carlton) (Ottawa)
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GayYorkRegion.com (York Region)
The Griffin Centre (Toronto)
Guelph Pride (Guelph)
Halton Organization for Pride in Education (HOPE) (Halton)
Hamilton Pride (Hamilton)
Hassle Free Clinic (Toronto)
Here and Queer in Kingston (Kingston)
HIV & AIDS Legal Clinic Ontario (HALCO) (Toronto)
Institute for Catholic Education (ICE) (Toronto)
Jer's Vision (Ottawa)
Justice for Children and Youth (Toronto)
Kingston Pride (Kingston)
Lakehead University's Gender Issues Centre (Thunder Bay)
Lakehead University's Pride Central (Thunder Bay)
Lambda Foundation (Ottawa)
Laurentian University's Pride@LU (Sudbury)
The Lesbian Gay Bi Trans Youth Line (Toronto)
LGBTQ Parenting Connection (Toronto)
LGBTQ Parenting Network (Toronto)
McMaster University's Queer Students Community Centre (QSCC) (Hamilton)
Media Awareness Network (Ottawa)
Metropolitan Community Church (MCC) (London, Toronto, and Windsor)
Novel Idea (Kingston)
Octopus Books (Ottawa)

OK2BME (Kitchener)
Ontario College of Art & Design's Student Union (OCADSU) (Toronto)
Ontario Rainbow Alliance of the Deaf (ORAD) (Toronto)
Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF) (Toronto)
Peel Pride (Brampton)
Peer Outreach Support Services & Education (POSSE) Project (Acton)
The People Project (Toronto)
Peterborough Pride (Peterborough)
PFLAG (Check listing for Ontario locations)
The Phoenix Print Shop's Foundations of Print Programme (Toronto)
Pink Triangle Services (PTS) (Ottawa)
Pride Chatham-Kent (Chatham-Kent)
Pride Durham (Whitby)
Pride London Festival (London)
Pride Toronto (Toronto)
Proud Rainbow Voices (Bowmanville)
Queen's University's Positive Space (Kingston)
Queer Ontario (Toronto)
Queer Peace International (QPI) (Ottawa)
Queer Xposure (Mississauga, Brampton, and Caledon)
Rainbow Health Ontario (RHO) (Toronto)
Rainbow Womyn's Group (Kingston)
Rainbow Youth Niagara (Thorold)
Rainbow Youth York Region (RYR) (York Region)
Reach Out Centre for Kids (ROCK) (Burlington)
ReachOUT (Toronto)
Reclaim Counselling and Wellness Centre (St. Catharines)
Rexdale LGBTQ (Rexdale)
Ryerson University's RyePRIDE (Toronto)
Salaam: Queer Muslim Community (Toronto)

Sarnia Lambton Pride (Sarnia Lambton)
SAY (Support Alternative Youth) Outloud! (Kingston)
Sexual Health Centre (Ottawa)
Sexual Health, Education & Pleasure Project (SHEPP) (Toronto)
Sexuality and U (Ottawa)
Sherbourne Health Centre (Toronto)
Spektrum (Toronto)
Spiderbytes.ca (Toronto)
St. Lawrence College's Queer Students on Campus (Kingston)
Sudbury Pride (Sudbury)
Supporting Our Youth (SOY) (Toronto)
Ten Oaks Project (Ottawa)
Think Campaign (Toronto)
Thunder Bay Health Unit (Thunder Bay)
Toronto Women's Bookstore (TWB) (Toronto)
Trans PULSE (Toronto)
Trent University's Queer Collective (TQC) (Peterborough)
Tri-Pride (Cambridge/Kitchener/Waterloo)
University of Guelph's CampOut (Guelph)
University of Guelph's Guelph Queer Equality (GQE) (Guelph)
University of Guelph's Guelph Resource Centre for Gender Empowerment
and Diversity (GRCGED) (Guelph)
University of Guelph's OUTline (Guelph)
University of Guelph's Wellness Centre (Guelph)
University of Ottawa's Pride Centre (Ottawa)
University of Toronto Mississauga's OUT@UTM (Mississauga)
University of Toronto Mississauga's Sexual Education & Peer Counselling
Centre (Mississauga)
University of Toronto Scarborough's LGBTQ@UTSC (Scarborough)
University of Toronto's Centre for Women and Trans People (Toronto)
University of Toronto's Diversity in Medicine (Toronto)

University of Toronto's LGBTOUT (Toronto)

University of Toronto's LGBTOUT Engineering (Toronto)

University of Toronto's Office of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer Resources & Programs (Toronto)

University of Toronto's OUT in Law (Toronto)

University of Toronto's Queer at St. Michael's College (Queer @ SMC or Q@SMC) (Toronto)

University of Toronto's Rainbow Trinity (Toronto)

University of Toronto's Sexual Education and Peer Counselling Centre (SEC) (Toronto)

University of Waterloo's GLOW: The Queer and Questioning Community Centre (Waterloo)

University of Western Ontario's Pride Library (London)

University of Western Ontario's Pride Western (London)

University of Windsor's Out on Campus (Windsor)

University of Windsor's OUTlaws (Windsor)

Victim Services Toronto (Toronto)

West Side Stories Video (Toronto)

Wilfred Laurier University's Diversity and Equity Office (Waterloo)

Wilfred Laurier University's Rainbow Centre (Waterloo)

Windsor Family Health Team (WFHT) (Windsor)

Windsor Pride Community (Windsor)

York Pride Fest (York Region)

York University's Trans Bisexual Lesbian Gays Allies at York (TBLGAY) (Toronto)

YOU CAN (Ottawa and Toronto)

Youth Action Network (YAN) (Toronto)

Youth Advocating for Anti-Homophobia Awareness! (YAAHA!) (Scarborough)

Youth beyond Barriers (Brampton and Mississauga)

YouthLink (Toronto)



LGBTQ NATIONAL

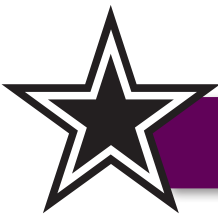


For a continually updated web directory of regional and national resources, see MyGSA.ca/Resources



National LGBTQ and LGBTQ-Friendly Organizations, Programmes, & Resources

- Amnesty International Gay & Lesbian Human Rights Support Network
- Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity (CAAWS)
- Canadian Committee on the History of Sexuality (CCHS)
- Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network
- Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives (CLGA)
- Canadian Professional Association for Transgender Health (CPATH)
- Canadian Rainbow Health Coalition (CRHC)
- The Canadian Safe School Network (CSSN)
- Egale Canada/Egale Canada Human Rights Trust (ECHRT)
- Gay Canada
- Kids Help Phone 1-800-668-6868
- MyGSA.ca
- Native Youth Sexual Health Network (NYSHN)
- PFLAG Canada
- Report Homophobic Violence, Period (RHVP)
- TransParent Canada




LGBTQ ONTARIO

LGBTQ AND LGBTQ-FRIENDLY ORGANIZATIONS, PROGRAMMES, & RESOURCES IN ONTARIO

- ★ **2-Spirited People of the First Nations (Toronto)**
<http://www.2spirits.com>
2-Spirited People of the First Nations is a non-profit social services organization whose membership consists of Aboriginal gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people in Toronto.

- ★ **The 519 Bashing Line (Toronto)**
416-392-6877
Confidential Reporting Line by the 519's Anti-Violence Programme.

- ★ **The 519 Church Street Community Centre (Toronto)**
<http://www.the519.org>

The 519 is a meeting place and focal point for its diverse downtown communities. Within a supportive environment, it responds to the needs of the local neighbourhood and the broader Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) communities by supplying resources and opportunities to foster self-determination, civic engagement, and community participation.



The 519 Queer Parenting Programmes (Toronto)

<http://www.the519.org/programsservices/familyandchildren/queerparentingprograms>



The 519 has a history of providing family support programs and space for LGBTQ-led families since the 1980's. Queer Parenting Programs evolved from our inclusive Children's Programs to further support the specific needs of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Transsexual, and Queer (LGBTQ) parents, their children and families, and those considering parenthood. Our programs celebrate our children; our various sexual orientations, gender identities, cultures, languages, family configurations; the strengths we bring our children as queer parents; the many ways we have brought children into our lives—we are biological parents, non-biological parents, step-parents, adoptive parents, grandparents, and foster parents and we have inseminated, adopted, been or worked with surrogates, and had children through a variety of parenting relationships; our desire to be or become great parents; and our need for connection and community. Our programs include Family Planning and Pre-Natal Courses for prospective parents, Family Resource Programs for families and their children 0-6 years of age, and Special Events. We provide support to and advocacy for families and prospective parents from the Greater Toronto Area and outside the GTA. We also offer information, training, and support for students, community members, and professionals seeking to understand the needs of our families.



African and Caribbean Council on HIV/AIDS in Ontario (ACCHO) (Toronto)

<http://www.accho.ca>



The African and Caribbean Council on HIV/AIDS in Ontario is made up of organizations and individuals committed to HIV prevention, education, advocacy, research, treatment, care, and support for African and Caribbean communities in Ontario.

★ **AIDS Niagara (Niagara)**
<http://www.aidsniagara.com>



Providing support, education, and advocacy in a safe and confidential environment to all who are infected or affected by HIV and AIDS.

★ **AIDS Thunder Bay (Thunder Bay)**

<http://www.aidsthunderbay.org>
807-345-1516

AIDS Thunder Bay works to improve the social, political, and medical environment for individuals and the community.

★ **Another Story Bookshop (Toronto)**

<http://www.anotherstory.ca>



416-462-1104

315 Roncesvalles Ave., Toronto ON, M6R 2M6



Specializing in Social Justice, Equity and Diversity, with a special focus on Children's and Young Adult Literature.

★ **Around the Rainbow (Ottawa)**

<http://www.aroundtherainbow.org>



Around the Rainbow is an Ottawa-based organization working with the lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, two-spirited, and queer community and allies to support diverse families in childcare, preschools, schools, and the community. Check out the resources section for fully downloadable toolkits for educators and parents.

★ **Black Coalition for AIDS Prevention (Black CAP) (Toronto)**

<http://www.black-cap.com>



Black CAP is an organization that works to reduce HIV/AIDS in Toronto's Black, African, and Caribbean communities and to enhance the quality of life of Black people living with or affected by HIV/AIDS. Black CAP promotes healthy sexual practices through education, counseling, and support groups.

BOYBOY an alt arts & culture zine

<http://www.boyboyzine.com>



We're not interested in duplicating what's already out there in mainstream gay publications. We especially hope to break stereotypes and clichés about what it means to be queer. We want to push the envelope of queer-identity and queer youth culture—across Toronto and across the world. That's why we have such a strong focus on world culture and history in addition to up-to-date, real-life stories and features.

★ **Brock University Pride (St. Catharines)**

<http://www.brockpride.com>



brockpride@hotmail.com

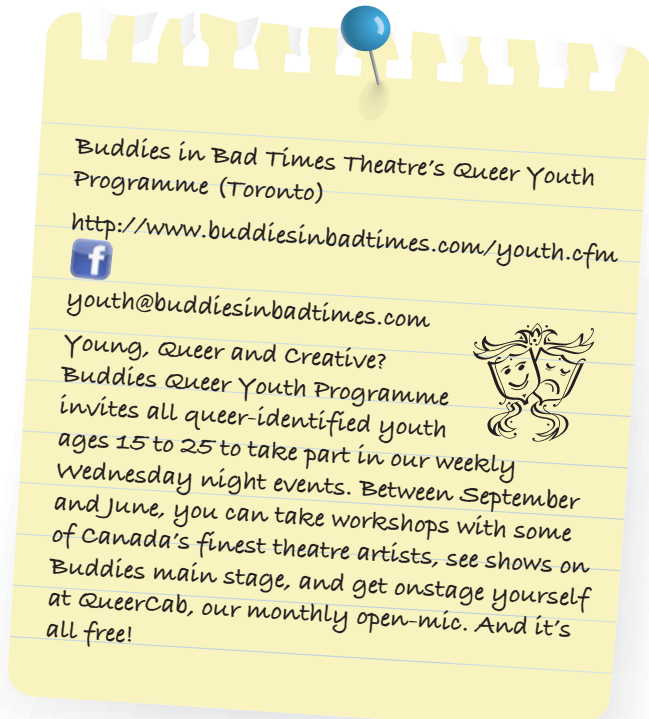
905-688-5550 ext. 3568

Brock Pride is Brock University's sexual and gender diverse club. The group represents Brock's GLBTTIQ (Pride) community. They host fun events and information meeting for our membership such as movie nights, game nights, campfires, and meetings featuring guest speakers.

★ **Brock University's Office of Human Rights and Equity Services (St. Catharines)**

<http://www.brocku.ca/positivespace>
humanrights@brocku.ca
905-688-5550 ext. 5657

The Positive Space Campaign at Brock University is an initiative intended to raise the visibility and number of respectful, supportive, educational, and welcoming spaces for lesbian, gay, bi, trans, two-spirited, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ) students, staff, and faculty through the dissemination of cards, posters, and buttons indicating Positive Space.



★ **Capital Pride (Ottawa)**

<http://www.capitalpride.ca/2010>



Ottawa's most colourful festival celebrating the diversity and unity of the GLBTTQ community and their allies.



★ **Carleton University's GLBTQ Centre for Sexual and Gender Diversity (Ottawa)**

<http://www.cusaonline.com/glb>



glbt@cusaonline.com

613-520-3723

We are a Carleton University Students' Association (CUSA) service centre and we are Local 1 of the Canadian Federation of Students. We are a safe-space, which means every student and staff and faculty member at Carleton University is welcome to use our services in a safe environment. We have a triple mandate of Education, Advocacy, and Support. We provide workshops on various issues in the GLBTTQ community, we are politically active in the promotion of equal rights, and we also have Peer Support and referral services to other organizations throughout the National Capital Region. We also have one of the largest GLBTTQ libraries out of any Canadian university that is open to all students, staff, and faculty of Carleton University to use.

★ **Carleton University's Ontario Public Interest Research Group: Action for Social Change-Carleton (OPIRG-Carlton) (Ottawa)**

<http://www.opirg-carleton.org>



Mobilizes individuals to identify and improve environmental, social, and economic conditions.

★ **Carleton University’s Queer Student Guide to Ottawa (Ottawa)**
http://www.cusaonline.com/Downloads/queer_student_guide.pdf

A resource guide that the Carleton GLBTQ Centre created for new and returning students to Carleton University. The Guide has various Ottawa/Gatineau GLBTTQ-owned and friendly businesses listed within, as well as youth support services in the National Capital Region.

★ **Catholic Association of Religious and Family Life Educators of Ontario (CARFLEO)**

<http://www.carfleo.org>

CARFLEO has free resources online: Supplemental Resources to Support Gr. 7 & 8 Family Life Education and *Homosexuality and the Catholic High School*.

★ **Central Toronto Youth Services (CTYS) (Toronto)**

<http://www.ctys.org>



Central Toronto Youth Services (CTYS) is a community-based, accredited Children’s Mental Health Centre with locations on Wellesley Street and Adelaide Street and in York Region. Since 1973, CTYS has been on the forefront of serving at-risk youth.

**Centre Ontarien de Prevention des Agressions (COPA)
(Toronto)**

<http://infocopa.com>

COPA’s mission is the promotion of equity and inclusive education aimed at child abuse prevention through education and skill-building. We offer numerous school-based programs that share a coherent and unique empowerment-based approach to abuse prevention education. Our whole-school programs are comprehensive and include adult (staff and parent) and student components to facilitate community-wide change.

★ **Centretown Community Health Centre (CCHC) (Ottawa)**

<http://www.centretownchc.org>

CCHC celebrates diversity and is committed to creating an inclusive environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect, regardless of background, ethnicity, language, culture, religion, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, age, disability, or economic status.

★ **Change Our World (Toronto)**

<http://www.changeourworld.ca>



A website part of the Safe @ School campaign designed to provide students with resources and support regarding issues of homophobia, racism, and sexual violence.

★ **Delisle Youth Services (Toronto)**

<http://www.delisleyouth.org>

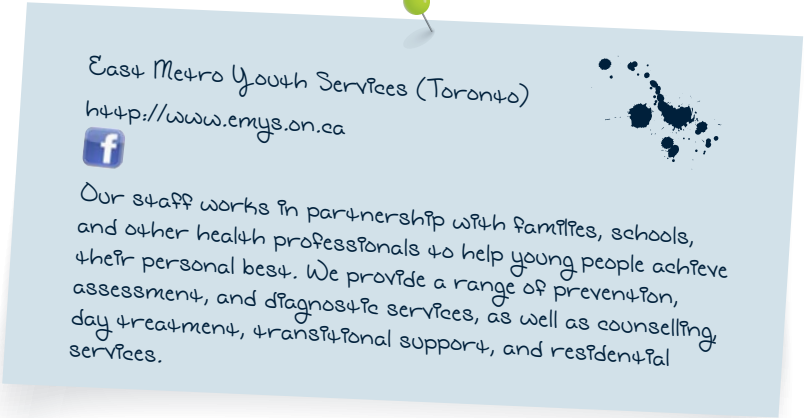


: Delisle Youth Gallery



: The STARS Project

In the capacity of direct service provider, Delisle offers counselling, a long-term group home program, and a day treatment program for troubled youth who are preparing for the challenges of independent living. We also offer lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, two spirited, and questioning youth programs; homeless programs for youth who can no longer live with their families; and ongoing case management and case brokering for children with complex special needs. The Strong and Resilient (STARS) Project is for all sexually diverse and gender diverse youth ages 13 to 21 years-old including youth who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, intersex, two-spirited, queer, or questioning and allies. The STARS Project offers a range activities and workshops including expressive arts workshops, youth leadership, skills development, field trips, discussion groups and non-judgmental, comprehensive drug education. These and other project activities are designed and developed by youth participating in the project's Youth Advisory Committee (YAC).



East Metro Youth Services (Toronto)

<http://www.emys.on.ca>



Our staff works in partnership with families, schools, and other health professionals to help young people achieve their personal best. We provide a range of prevention, assessment, and diagnostic services, as well as counselling, day treatment, transitional support, and residential services.

★ **Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) (Toronto)**

<http://www.etfo.ca>

ETFO has promoted a Positive Space campaign with posters and other educational materials for elementary educators. These materials are available to order through shopETFO. ETFO also has a free resource guide for educators called Challenging Homophobia and Heterosexism that can be accessed via their website under Social Justice and Equity in the Advocacy & Action section.

★ **Equality Rules (Ottawa)**

<http://www.equalityrules.ca>

The goal of the website is to educate about the importance of healthy, equal relationships. Each area is full of great stuff including cool interactive activities, quizzes, and important info, all just for you! Sections for kids, teens, parents/guardians, and teachers.

★ **Family Service Toronto (FST) (Toronto)**

<http://www.fsatoronto.com>

 : Family Service Association of Toronto

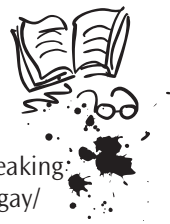
Family Service Toronto (FST) helps people face a wide variety of life challenges. For over 90 years, we have been assisting families and individuals through counselling, community development, advocacy, and public education programs. Our services are available to everyone who lives or works in Toronto. FST is committed to a policy of equity and inclusion. We strive to ensure that there is no discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, language, race, age, ability, gender, sexual orientation, income, or political or religious affiliation in all aspects of our operation and at all levels of the agency. We serve families, individuals, and communities living in the City of Toronto, and especially those who are marginalized and disadvantaged and who lack access to family support services due to barriers such as income or discrimination based on ethnicity, language, race, age, ability, gender, sexual orientation, or political or religious affiliation.

★ **The Fence (zine)**

<http://www.thefence.ca>



Calling bisexuals “fencesitters” has been a way of marginalizing us, of placing us outside gay/lesbian and straight cultures by saying that we haven’t made a decision about our sexuality. “The Fence” is all about bisexual women reclaiming this position and speaking from our unique viewpoints that traverse straight and gay/lesbian cultures, but also allow us to have spaces of our own. “The Fence” can be a positive and powerful place, and this zine is for the women who have decided to stay there!!



★ **Gay Dads Canada (Toronto)**

<http://www.gaydads-canada.com>



Gay Dads Canada is the outcome of a process of national partnership building with local, provincial, and national gay parenting support groups and gay fathers. GDC is a broad-based national Canadian alliance of individuals, support organizations, and discussion groups dedicated to the development, support, and sharing of knowledge focusing on gay father involvement with their children and communities.



★ **GayLesbians of African Descent (GLAD) (Toronto)**

<http://www.gladtoronto.com>



GLAD provides a supportive community for Greater Toronto Area-based African self-identified LGBTQ communities. GLAD documents the existence of gays and lesbians of African descent, challenges homophobia, and informs communities through education, outreach, and advocacy.



★ **GayYorkRegion.com (York Region)**

<http://www.gayyorkregion.com>



GayYorkRegion.com exists to provide a central point of reference for LGBT-friendly regional venues, events, news, services and resources. Recently, York Region launched a toll-free LGBT support line at 1-888-YORKLGBT (1-888-967-5542). This service is currently maintained by Family Services of York Region, and will soon be staffed primarily by trained LGBT counselors.



The Griffin Centre (Toronto)

<http://www.griffin-centre.org>



Griffin Centre promotes positive change for vulnerable youth and adults with mental health challenges and/or developmental disabilities and their families. We are dedicated to delivering innovative services and developing creative partnerships that enhance lives and communities. Within Griffin Centre the ReachOUT program is a creative, inclusive & accessible program for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer youth and adults in the Greater Toronto Area. Activities include drop-in groups, community outreach, art & skills exchange, counselling, training and consultation. We offer safe spaces that reflect the diversity of our queer and trans communities.



Guelph Pride (Guelph)

<http://www.guelphpride.outontheshelf.ca>



Guelph Pride exists to organize an annual event to celebrate and bring together Guelph's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered, Two-Spirited, Intersex, Queer, and Questioning (LGBTTIQQ) community, their friends, families, and allies of all ages in a safe, welcoming environment. Our goals have been to provide visibility to LGBTTSIQQ people and allies and to promote volunteerism within the queer community of Guelph. We provide opportunity for people to learn about and access various local social service groups. Of course we also want to have a great time!



★ **Halton Organization for Pride in Education (HOPE) (Halton)**

<http://www.haltonpride.org>



HOPE's mission is to enrich, educate, and support the Halton community through the celebration and affirmation of the history, culture, and lives of Halton's diverse lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, two-spirited, intersex, queer, questioning, asexual, and ally (LGBT2IQQA) communities. HOPE's purpose is rooted in the understanding that oppression and systematic acts of violence perpetuate homophobia and inequality. HOPE is dedicated to education, support, outreach, raised awareness, and resource development in support of the LGBTTIQQA community. HOPE has worked extensively with the Halton Board of Education to produce resources, programs, and workshops designed to develop safer and more inclusive schools for queer youth. HOPE also provides monthly youth support groups in various areas of Halton.

★ **Hamilton Pride (Hamilton)**

<http://www.hamiltonpride.com>



Hamilton Pride Festival Inc. is a not-for-profit corporation whose function is to plan, organize, and produce the Hamilton Pride Festival in the City of Hamilton celebrating the diversity, history, and achievements of our Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Communities during the month of June of each year.

★ **Hassle Free Clinic (Toronto)**

<http://www.hasslefreeclinic.org>

Hassle Free Clinic is a community-based clinic providing medical and counselling services in all areas of sexual health. It is the largest anonymous HIV test site in Canada, and is one of the country's busiest sexually transmitted disease (STD) clinics. The clinic strives to maintain an informal atmosphere, delivering services in a timely, non-bureaucratic manner. A fundamental principle of service delivery is a non-judgmental, supportive attitude to the treatment of sexual health concerns.

★ **Here and Queer in Kingston (Kingston)**

<http://www.outinkingston.org>

 : Out in Kingston

Here and Queer in Kingston is a comprehensive list of LGBTQ resources in Kingston and the surrounding area. It was developed in 2006-2007 by the Queen's University Positive Space Committee. It is based on Your Queer Community, a booklet developed by Chris Veldhoven in 1997, and Out in Kingston, a website maintained by Tony Piper, <http://www.outinkingston.org>. Print copies of Here and Queer in Kingston are available at LGBTQ-friendly locations throughout Kingston and the surrounding area. An electronic version of the booklet is available at the above website address.



★ **HIV & AIDS Legal Clinic Ontario (HALCO) (Toronto)**

<http://www.halco.org>

talklaw@halco.org

Tel. 416-340-7790 / 1-888-705-8889 ext. 43

TTY 416-922-2352 / 1-866-513-9883

HALCO is a charitable not-for-profit community-based legal clinic which provides free legal assistance to people living with or affected by HIV/AIDS in Ontario, Canada.

★ **Institute for Catholic Education (ICE) (Toronto)**

<http://www.iceont.ca>

The Pastoral Guidelines for Students of Same-Sex Orientation is available through ICE for \$10.

★ **Jer's Vision (Ottawa)**

<http://www.jersvision.org>



Through art, community, education, and youth initiatives, we provide youth with the tools and the resources to promote diversity and end discrimination of all kinds.

Justice for Children and Youth (Toronto)

<http://www.jfcy.org>



Justice for Children and Youth provides select legal representation to low-income children and youth in Toronto and vicinity. We are a non-profit legal aid clinic that specializes in protecting the rights of those facing conflicts with the legal system, education, social service, or mental health systems. We give summary legal advice, information, and assistance to young people, parents (in education matters), professionals, and community groups across Ontario.



Kingston Pride (Kingston)




<http://www.kingstonpride.org>



Kingston, like any other city, has a significant gay population. We work in all sorts of organizations, in businesses, our schools, colleges and universities, our hospitals, our prisons, the police service, the military, and, of course, the city of Kingston. Despite recent legislation, many LGBT people in Kingston live in fear of discrimination and prejudice. Kingston Pride is our opportunity to confront that fear, to gather as a community, and to be out and proud to ourselves and to those around us. We really are everywhere.

Lakehead University's Gender Issues
Centre (Thunder Bay)

<http://gic.lusu.ca>

 Gender Issues Centre

The Gender Issues Centre is a centre for all Lakehead University students. We initiate and support positive action in relation to issues and concerns which surround gender, socio-economic status, ethnicity, religion, culture, family life, sexual orientation, gender identity, and differences in physical or mental ability. Our services are used by students to encourage communication, action, awareness, self-reflection, and compassion.

★ **Lakehead University's Pride Central (Thunder Bay)**

<http://pride.lusu.ca>



pridecentral@lusu.ca

807-343-8813

Pride Central is a service centre for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, two-spirit, and queer students, but our services are available to all students and community members. We work towards ending discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. We encourage you to use Pride Central as a safe and supportive environment where you can engage with your own identity, connect with others, and flourish as a healthy, informed person passionate about social justice. Pride Central offers a variety of social services, including a resource library of books, movies, music, leaflets, magazines, and zines, all of which deal primarily with sexual diversity, gender identity, and queer issues. Our space also features comfy couches, computers for public use, and a TV for watching videos. The centre's staff provides peer support and referral to on and off campus services you might benefit from. We also organize social events, as well as develop and deliver educational workshops on request. Through various strategies, we advocate for the visibility of queer-friendly and queer-identified messages at LU and facilitate access to alternative media and community events with a queer focus.

★ **Lambda Foundation (Ottawa)**

<http://www.lambdafoundation.com>



Lambda Foundation is a registered Canadian charity with the special mission of creating scholarships in gay and lesbian studies to advance research and education in human rights; support and draw attention to merit among GLBTQQ people as fine role models; help create lasting and worthy legacies; and build bridges of understanding among gay and lesbian people and other equality-seeking groups and general society.

★ **Laurentian University's Pride@LU (Sudbury)**



pride@laurentian.ca
705-675-1151 ext. 1088

The room contains resources and movies that students can borrow.

★ **The Lesbian Gay Bi Trans Youth Line (Toronto)**

<http://www.youthline.ca>



LGBT Youth Line
askus@youthline.ca
1-800-268-9688



The Lesbian Gay Bi Trans Youth Line is a service provided for youth, by youth that affirms the experiences and aspirations of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, transgender, 2-spirited, queer, and questioning youth in Ontario. We are queer-positive and non-judgmental, and provide confidential peer support through telephone listening, information and referral services, and through complementary outreach. By reflecting our diverse cultures, abilities, and experiences and celebrating our potentials, we seek to create an empowering community of queer youth across Ontario.

★ **LGBTQ Parenting Connection (Toronto)**

<http://www.lgbtqparentingconnection.ca/home.cfm>

A website aimed at providing comprehensive information related to LGBTQ-led families. The LGBTQ Parenting Connection website will provide information for LGBTQ-led families, as well as service providers, educators, researchers, members of the media, and others concerned with issues related to LGBTQ-led families.

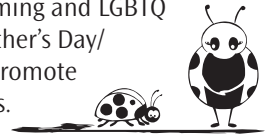
★ **LGBTQ Parenting Network (Toronto)**

parentingnetwork@sherbourne.on.ca



Sherbourne Health Centre, 333 Sherbourne St.,
Toronto ON, M5A 2S5
416-324-4100 ext. 5219

The LGBTQ Parenting Network promotes the rights and well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and queer parents, prospective parents and their families, through education, advocacy, research, social networking and community organizing. We are a network of approximately 1,500 families and individuals in and around Toronto, and we work with local, provincial and federal organizations and communities. The LGBTQ Parenting Network offers educational workshops, trainings and lectures on a wide range of LGBTQ parenting issues and themes, including how to make schools and daycares more welcoming and LGBTQ accessible. We also produce posters, Mother's Day/ Father's Day cards, and brochures that promote visibility and inclusion of LGBTQ families.



★ **McMaster University's Queer Students Community Centre (QSCC) (Hamilton)**

<http://www.msumcmaster.ca/servicesandbusiness/qsc/generalInfo/overview.htm>



qsc@msu.mcmaster.ca
905-525-9140 ext. 27397

QSCC is a service supported by the McMaster Students Union, providing resources, educational programming, social events, and support to queer students at Mac. Our office is conveniently located in the McMaster University Student Centre and is open all year, with volunteers ready to assist visitors.

★ **Media Awareness Network (Ottawa)**

<http://www.media-awareness.ca>



Media Awareness Network focuses its efforts on equipping adults with information and tools to help young people understand how the media work, how the media may affect their lifestyle choices and the extent to which they, as consumers and citizens, are being well informed. For lesson plans dealing specifically with LGBTQ matters, enter “gay” into the search engine. Resources available in both English and French.

★ **Metropolitan Community Church (MCC) (London, Toronto, and Windsor)**

<http://www.mcclondon.com>

<http://www.mcctoronto.com>

<http://www.mccwindsor.ca>



In 1968, before the Stonewall Riots and the Christopher Street Parades, the Reverend Troy Perry founded Metropolitan Community Church of Los Angeles to serve the spiritual needs of gay and lesbian people. Since that time, Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches has stood in the face of adversity serving as a safe haven for those rejected by other religious communities and becoming an essential, life-affirming link in the chain of lesbian and gay identity and affiliation. We are now a denomination of 300+ churches all across the world.

★ **Novel Idea (Kingston)**

<http://www.haltonpride.org>



According to the Queen’s University Positive Space Committee, Kingston’s independent bookstore carries the widest selection of queer and alternative books and magazines and staff will help you search for or order anything you can’t find.

★ **Octopus Books (Ottawa)**

<http://www.octopusbooks.ca>



Aiming to encourage analytical thinking about the social, political, and economic world, Octopus Bookstore specializes in books with a critical, social justice focus. Books on economics, class, gender, race, national politics, and international affairs are well-represented, as well as both Canadian and International fiction.



OK2BME (Kitchener)

<http://www.ok2bme.ca>



OK2BME is a set of support services for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning (LGBTQ) kids and teens in Waterloo Region. These support services include LGBTQ-positive individual and family counselling; social and recreational groups; public education; consultation and collaboration; and help establishing Gay-Straight Alliances and other similar initiatives in local schools. All of the services are free and confidential. For information about the program and LGBTQ people please feel free to browse through our website or contact us at 884-0000 ext. 212.



★ **Ontario College of Art & Design's Student Union (OCADSU)
(Toronto)**

<http://www.ocadsu.org>

twhan@ocad.ca



416-977-6000 ext. 341

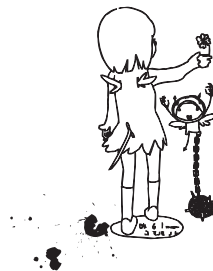
The OCADSU is an accessible and mandated safe space for GLBTQ students. The OCADSU is located in the Student Services building which is also a GLBTQ Safe Space. Some of the services and resources the SU offers are a detailed list of Toronto GLBTQ community organizations, clinics, bookstores, etc. in our Student Handbook; a free in-house legal counsel for all external legal matters and a free in-house Ombudsperson for OCAD matters; the OCADSU annually marches in Pride; the SU invites GLBTQ organizations to participate in our annual Orientation events; and anyone can drop by the SU with a proposal to start an event/group/program for our on-campus GLBTQ community.

★ **Ontario Rainbow Alliance of the Deaf (ORAD) (Toronto)**

<http://www.orad.ca>



ORAD is a not-for-profit organization serving Deaf, deaf, deafened, hard of hearing, and hearing people who are LGBTTIQQ2S* in the province of Ontario.



★ **Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF) (Toronto)**

<http://www.osstf.on.ca>



As our newest OSSTF/FEESO resource, *Creating Spaces: Embedding Equity in Education* has been developed to promote the values of inclusion and cultural proficiency in today's classroom settings. Created by and written for OSSTF/FEESO members, this evidence-based resource has grown out of the firm conviction that every educational worker and every student has something worthwhile to contribute and equally significant to share—something that will make our secondary school system a better place for all our students. *Creating Spaces: Embedding Equity in Education* explores the roots of injustice and discrimination in our society, challenges our belief systems, and offers fresh insights into building learning environments that are more equitable, more tolerant and more caring. <http://www.osstf.on.ca/Default.aspx?DN=9db32731-fe14-4502-b272-671b1ebdd679> The *From PAIN to PRIDE—Gender Based Violence & Homophobia* workshop will provide participants with the definitions, understanding and strategies necessary to address the impact of gender based violence and homophobia. With recent research identifying the alarming rate of these forms of harassment and assault in school settings, it is up to everyone to take ownership of the rights and responsibilities we share. Only then will we understand the seriousness of gender-based violence and homophobia, and work to stop it. *EQUIP (Engaging Quality Understandings of Inclusive Practices)*: During this workshop participants will explore issues of equity and inclusivity. The group will explore how to practise inclusion and will receive practical resources/strategies in how to affect change by creating equitable environments within their educational workplaces. Participants in the *Beyond Bullying: Building Safe Schools* interactive workshop will explore the issues around student bullying: how to identify bullying, the types of bullying, the consequences of bullying and strategies for preventing and dealing with bullying behaviour. A package of resources will be provided to participants. <http://www.osstf.on.ca/growth-opportunity>

★ **Peel Pride (Brampton)**

<http://www.prideeventspeel.com>



Pride is our coming out of the closet, a public expression of our belief that our sexuality and identity are normal, healthy, and right for us as individuals and as a community.

★ **Peer Outreach Support Services & Education (POSSE) Project (Acton)**

<http://www.posseproject.ca>



Peer Outreach Support Services & Education (POSSE) is a FREE service providing training, street level outreach, information, and support to encourage safer decision making in reducing the risks associated with drug use, sex, homelessness, violence, and discrimination. POSSE is a harm reduction and human rights project, run by youth for youth between the ages of 15-24, living in North Halton.

★ **The People Project (Toronto)**

<http://www.thepeopleproject.ca>



info@thepeopleproject.ca

The People Project is an eclectic grassroots organization using the arts to bring together diverse and marginalized groups of people into safe space to dialogue, share stories and experiences, gain skills, and to create and express themselves in meaningful ways.



★ **Peterborough Pride (Peterborough)**

<http://www.peterboroughpride.ca/>



Peterborough Pride exists to celebrate the history, courage, diversity, and future of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Transsexual, Queer, Intersex, and Two-Spirited (LGBTQTQI2-S) communities.

★ **PFLAG**

<http://www.pflagcanada.ca>



PFLAG Canada supports, educates and provides resources to parents, families, friends and colleagues with questions or concerns about sexual orientation or gender identity, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Barrie



barrieon@pflagcanada.ca

**Guelph (Guelph & Kitchener/
Waterloo)**

<http://www.pflagcanada.ca>

Campbellford



baorrett@sympatico.ca

Halton Region (Burlington)

haltonon@pflagcanada.ca

Durham Region (Oshawa)

[http://www.pflagcanada.ca/
durham-oshawa.html](http://www.pflagcanada.ca/durham-oshawa.html)
dur-oshon@pflagcanada.ca

Hamilton

[http://www.angelfire.com/on/
hwpflag](http://www.angelfire.com/on/hwpflag)
hamiltonon@pflagcanada.ca

Fenlon Falls

<http://www.pflagcanada.ca>

Hawkesbury (St. Isidore)

region3@pflagcanada.ca

Kingston



Kitchener/Waterloo (Guelph & Kitchener/Waterloo)

<http://www.pflagcanada.ca>

London

<http://www.pflagcanada.ca>

Muskoka (Bracebridge)



Niagara Falls

region4@pflagcanada.ca

Oakville

Region3@pflagcanada.ca

Ottawa

[http://www.gaycanada.com/
pflag-ottawa](http://www.gaycanada.com/pflag-ottawa)



ottawaon@pflagcanada.ca

Peel Region

peelon@pflagcanada.ca

Pembroke (Chapeau)



ottawaon@pflagcanada.ca

Peterborough



pflagpeterborough@hotmail.com

Quinte-Belleville (Odessa)

<http://www.pflagcanada.ca>

Rockland (St. Isidore)

region3@pflagcanada.ca

Sarnia-Bluewater (Sarnia)

<http://www.pflagcanada.ca>
sarnia-bwon@pflagcanada.ca

Sault Ste Marie

Region3@pflagcanada.ca

St. Catharines

[http://www.pflagcanada.ca/
stcatharines.html](http://www.pflagcanada.ca/stcatharines.html)

Sudbury



sudburyon@pflagcanada.ca

Thunder Bay



thunderbayon@pflagcanada.ca

Timmins



timminson@pflagcanada.ca

Toronto

<http://www.pflagcanada.ca/chapters/Toronto/html/home.htm>



toronto.office@pflag.ca

Windsor

pflagwindsor@yahoo.ca

York Region (Richmond Hill)

pflagyork@yahoo.ca

Toronto—Black Families and Friends

torontoon-bf@pflagcanada.ca

**The Phoenix Print Shop’s Foundations of Print Programme (Toronto)**

<http://www.phoenixprintshop.ca>



“When I came to the Print Shop, everything began to change.”
2009 Graduate

The Foundations of Print programme works with at-risk youth (between the ages of 16 and 30) who are facing barriers to employment to learn skills necessary to gain work in the print industry. Print is all around us from newspapers, books, and magazines to packaging to advertising to posters and much more. Printing is one of the largest manufacturing sectors in Canada. There is an urgent need for trained young people in this industry. This is a programme for youth who are experiencing programme fatigue and want to gain skills to get good work and keep it. In 14 weeks, participants learn the basics needed to secure employment in the print industry. While we do teach basic desktop publishing (introduction to graphic software programmes), we focus on the mechanical side of print. It is the skills operating the equipment that are in demand in the print industry. After programme completion, we work with graduates to obtain good work and keep it. We also offer a scholarship fund for graduates who want to return to school.

★ **Pink Triangle Services (PTS) (Ottawa)**

<http://www.pinktriangle.org>



Pink Triangle Services (PTS) is a community-based not-for-profit organization that fosters the wellness of all gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans, two-spirit, and queer (GLBTQ) persons in the National Capital Region.

★ **Pride Chatham-Kent (Chatham-Kent)**

<http://www.pride-ck.com>



Pride-CK reflects a need we see in the local Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered, Transsexual, Two-Spirited community as well as the larger community. People need to know there is a place they can go to find resources and feel part of a safe community. It's also important for the larger community to know there is a significant LGTB2 presence in Chatham-Kent who are active and important members of the community. Shine bright and show your Pride. Thanks for your support and enjoy the festivities! Happy Pride!

★ **Pride Durham (Whitby)**

<http://www.pridedurham.com>



pflagwindsor@yahoo.ca

Pride Durham is a non-profit organization that hosts Pride and social events in Durham Region including the annual region-wide Pride the second weekend in June celebrating Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgendered (LGBT) and associated peoples throughout our community.

★ **Pride London Festival (London)**

<http://www.pridelondon.ca>



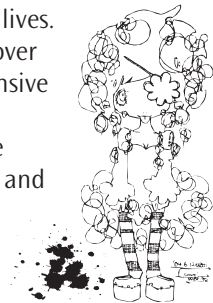
Pride London Festival provides an annual opportunity to generate celebratory, cultural, artistic, and educational events which affirm the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, transgender, and two-spirited people and supporters through activities which promote unity, inclusion, and awareness of sexual and gender diversity.

★ **Pride Toronto (Toronto)**

<http://www.pridetoronto.com>



Pride Toronto is the not-for-profit organization that hosts Pride Week, an annual event in downtown Toronto, which takes place each year during the last week of June. Pride Week celebrates our diverse sexual and gender identities, histories, cultures, creativities, families, friends, and lives. It includes a three-day street festival with over eight stages of live entertainment, an extensive street fair (including community booths, vendors, food stalls), a special Family Pride program, a politically charged Dyke March and the infamous Pride Parade.



★ **Proud Rainbow Voices (Bowmanville)**



laurmeich@rogers.com

Proud Rainbow Voices in an Ontario network for LGBTTTQ educators. This is a safe, supportive, inviting forum to share and discuss triumphs/challenges in addressing LGBTTTQ issues in our workplace. This network is open to all educators that self-identify as LGBTTTQ and work in the Education field (e.g., Elementary, Secondary, Public, Catholic, Private, College, University, Separate, Montessori, and Home School). As professionals, we come across many challenges that allow us to either “stay in the closet” or allow us to shout out proudly “I am who I am.” The question of coming out to our students and colleagues and to parents often goes through our minds. We wonder about our personal safety, fear losing our jobs, and consider the ramifications on our colleagues, friends, and family. Proud Rainbow Voices is a unique network that will bring us together to share our knowledge and expertise. This forum will give us strategies, support, and strength to help us have a “proud” voice in addressing LGBTTTQ issues. The purpose of this forum is to interact and provide support with other professionals who share our common issues; to gain resources and ideas in dealing with homophobia in our workplace; and to educate ourselves and the community in addressing LGBTTTQ issues. If you are interested in Proud Rainbow Voices, please email Lauren Chapple at laurmeich@rogers.com.

★ **Queen’s University’s Positive Space (Kingston)**

<http://www.queensu.ca/positivespace>



posspace@post.queensu.ca

The purpose of the Positive Space Program is to identify and encourage the development of positive spaces within the Queen’s community. Positive spaces are locations in which sexual and gender identity is affirmed and individuals can receive support and information on lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer (LGBTQ) issues.

★ **Queer Ontario (Toronto)**

<http://www.queerontario.org>



Queer Ontario is a provincially-based network of individuals who are members of the gender and sexually diverse populations and their allies committed to liberationist and sex-positive principles that focus on questioning, challenging, and seeking reform to social norms and laws that regulate queer people.

★ **Queer Peace International (QPI) (Ottawa)**

<http://www.queerpeace.org>



Queer Peace International is a consortium of queer (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans-identified, questioning, straight allies) individuals who are concerned with building peace and reconciliation in queer communities around the world. Already representing queers from 40 countries, QPI continues outreach and network itself.



★ **Queer Xposure (Mississauga, Brampton, and Caledon)**

<http://www.qxposure.blogspot.com>



QXposure

QXposure is a partnership between Queer and Trans communities in Mississauga, Brampton, and Caledon and health and social service providers promoting healthy communities.



Rainbow Health Ontario (RHO) (Toronto)

<http://www.rainbowhealthontario.ca>



Rainbow Health Ontario (RHO) is a province-wide program that works to improve the health and well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans people in Ontario through education, research, outreach, and public policy advocacy.

★ **Rainbow Womyn's Group (Kingston)**

http://www.womynkingston.ca/rainbow_womyn_group.htm

A social group for lesbian womyn: movie nights, potlucks, guest speakers, discussion groups, etc.

★ **Rainbow Youth Niagara (Thorold)**

<http://www.niagarapride.ca>



Rainbow Youth Niagara exists to ensure that gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans-identified, and questioning (GLBTQ) youth, aged 14-24 years, feel safe and supported when dealing with sexual identity, gender identity, and relationships within the context of their families, communities, and schools.

★ **Rainbow Youth York Region (RYJR) (York Region)**

<http://rainbowyouthyork.com>

The Rainbow Youth, York Region is a free support group that provides an opportunity for queer or questioning youth, 26 years-old and under to meet others and share their struggles, successes and stories. So why does the Rainbow Youth, York Region (RYJR) exist? Well, often queer youth have said they felt alone and isolated in York Region, so the RYJR was started to help those with feelings of isolation and to create a sense of community and belonging.

★ **Reach Out Centre for Kids (ROCK) (Burlington)**

<http://www.rockonline.ca>



An accredited children's mental health centre offering over 30 programs and services for children and youth ages birth through 17. ROCK is the largest children's mental health service provider in Halton Region, and serves the community through

locations in Burlington, Oakville, and Milton. ROCK also offers a Youth Aiding Youth program to provide preventative services for youths, 6 through 12 years of age, who are not yet experiencing significant problems.

★ **ReachOUT (Toronto)**

<http://www.griffin-centre.org/reachout>



A creative, inclusive, and accessible program that supports lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, two-spirited, intersex, queer, and questioning (LGBT2IQ) youth.

★ **Reclaim Counselling and Wellness Centre (St. Catharines)**

<http://www.reclaimcounselling.com>



A queer friendly holistic wellness centre providing psychotherapists and psychological services for families and groups of all ages. The centre also provides naturopaths, osteopaths, registered massage therapists, and colon hydrotherapists.

★ **Rexdale LGBTQ (Rexdale)**



f : Rexdale Lgbtq

I think it's about time that Rexdale show its support. Rexdale is a great neighbourhood with a diversity and richness in culture, but sorely lacking in acceptance, support, and understanding. So if you identify as LGBTQ (and you're out of the closet) or you are supportive and you live, work, or go to school in Rexdale (or even know someone), please show your support. If you are in need of support and resources, please send me a message (wall or private). I am currently planning to create support programmes for the LGBTQ community in Rexdale starting with the youth.

★ **Ryerson University's RyePRIDE (Toronto)**

<http://www.ryepride.ca/index.php?cmd=Home>



ryepride@rsuonline.ca

416-979-5255 ext. 7527

RyePRIDE is a Community Service Group of the Ryerson Students' Union (RSU). It represents the Queer and Trans voices of Ryerson University, including gay, lesbian, bisexual, two spirited, trans, intersex, queer, and questioning. Our resources and services are intended to build a healthy and queer-positive Ryerson community. RyePRIDE is proud to be building an inclusive campus since 1977!!

★ **Salaam: Queer Muslim Community (Toronto)**

<http://www.salaamcanada.com>



Salaam is working in Muslim communities with members who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transsexual and/or transgender, as well as those questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity and their friends. Salaam is a Muslim-identified organization dedicated to social justice, peace, and human dignity through its work to bring all closer to a world that is free from injustice, including prejudice, discrimination, racism, misogyny, sexism, and homophobia.

★ **Sarnia Lambton Pride (Sarnia Lambton)**



Your Lambton Pride

Sarnia Lambton's source of information for the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community.

★ **SAY (Support Alternative Youth) Outloud! (Kingston)**

<http://sayoutloud.atspace.com>

A group for open-minded youth. It offers a safe place for queer & questioning teens to connect with one another, seek support, develop new friendships, express themselves, learn about the LGBT community, and, most importantly, have fun. We host weekly meetings to discuss life's challenges and benefits. Some of the fun at SAY Outloud! includes movie nights, field trips, dances, games, fund raisers, events, gossip, and a lot of laughter! It also offers youth a resource to find out about other community events.

★ **Sexual Health Centre (Ottawa)**

http://www.ottawa.ca/residents/health/living/sexual/clinic_en.html



A service of Ottawa Public Health. Call the Sexual Health Info Line 613-563-2437 or 1-800- 267-7432. Free, confidential services: walk-in or appointments. We offer sexual health information, testing and free treatment of STI's (sexually transmitted infections), anonymous HIV testing, emergency contraception ("morning-after pill"), affordable contraception (for teens and those who qualify), pregnancy testing and options counseling, hepatitis A and B immunization (for those who qualify), free condoms and resource materials, and sexual health telephone information and counseling. There are also Youth Sexual Health Clinics, Satellite Satellite Clinics, Youth Sexual Health Outreach Clinics, and Men's Sexual Health Outreach Clinics.

Sexual Health, Education & Pleasure Project (SHEPP) (Toronto)

<http://www.shepptoronto.org>

 SHEPP—The Sexual Health Education and Pleasure Project

The Good for Her Sexual Health, Education & Pleasure Project (SHEPP) is a new not-for-profit organization whose mission is to provide free pleasure-based sexual health education workshops to youth and other marginalized communities. These workshops are based around sex-positive, queer-positive, trans-positive, and choice-positive sexual health education.

★ **Sexuality and U (Ottawa)**

http://www.sexualityandu.ca/home_e.asp



www.sexualityandu.ca is committed to providing you credible and up-to-date information and education on sexual health.

★ **Sherbourne Health Centre (Toronto)**

<http://www.sherbourne.on.ca>

Sherbourne Health Centre provides innovative primary health care, counselling, support, outreach, health promotion, and education programs to our clients—the many individuals who reflect the diverse and vibrant communities of southeast Toronto. Since 2003, we have focused on building connections and building health in the local community by developing programs and services to fill gaps in service and address your unique health care needs and requirements. In 2005, we delivered over 47,000 health care visits to new immigrants, children, seniors, the lesbian and gay community, and many more clients who come from the diverse communities we serve.

★ **Spektrum (Toronto)**

spektrum@griffin-centre.org

Spektrum is an exciting social group for queer & trans youth of colour that meets every Tuesday to explore our lives and identities by talking, watching videos, cooking, playing games, making art, and supporting each other. Come meet new people, eat good food, and have fun at Spektrum!

• Spiderbytes.ca (Toronto)

<http://www.spiderbytes.ca>

A new spin on sexual health for teens. Spiderbytes.ca is designed to respond to questions about sexual health issues and to provide current information, links, and referrals on a range of topics pertaining to healthy sexuality.



★ **St. Lawrence College's Queer Students on Campus (Kingston)**

<http://www.womynkingston.ca/slc.htm>
slc_qsoc@yahoo.ca

Come out to hang out and have fun. Organized social events and activities. Open to SLC students. Tuesday 5:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m.

★ **Sudbury Pride (Sudbury)**

<http://www.sudburypride.com>



Sudbury Pride is a non-profit community based organization committed to providing opportunities to generate celebratory, cultural, artistic, and educational events which affirm the lives of Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transgendered, and Two-Spirited People.

★ **Supporting Our Youth (SOY) (Toronto)**

<http://www.soytoronto.org>

Phone: 416-324-5077

Fax: 416-324-4262

Supporting Our Youth (SOY) is an exciting, dynamic community development project designed to improve the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, and transgendered youth in Toronto through the active involvement of youth and adult communities. We work to create healthy arts, culture, and recreational spaces for young people; to provide supportive housing and employment opportunities; and to increase youth access to adult mentoring and support. Programs include Monday Night Drop-In: a weekly drop-in where youth and adult mentors create community together and share a home-cooked meal; Alphabet Soup: an afternoon drop-in for queer and trans youth under age 20; Express: a safe and supportive space where newcomers to Canada and/or immigrant queer youth find a place gather, share ideas, questions, and have fun!; BQY (Black Queer Youth): a safe and social open space for Black, Multiracial, African/Caribbean youth under 29 who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, transsexual and questioning. Come chill, take up space, go on outings, create zines, attend workshops and just socialize with other youth; and TFC (Trans_Fusion Crew): for trans and gender queer youth to meet, hang out, plan events and make community.

★ **Ten Oaks Project (Ottawa)**

<http://www.tenoaksproject.org>



The Ten Oaks Project is a charitable, volunteer-driven organization that engages and connects children and youth from LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, two-spirit, queer) communities. Based in Ottawa, the Ten Oaks Project has been meeting the needs of children from LGBTQ families, LGBTQ youth and their allies since 2004.

★ **Think Campaign (Toronto)**

<http://www.getthelowdown.ca>



The Think Campaign is a resource developed by the Black Coalition for AIDS Prevention (Black CAP) with a focus on the sexual health of young Black Men who have sex with men (BMSM).

★ **Thunder Bay Health Unit (Thunder Bay)**

<http://www.tbdhu.com/SexualHealth/SexualDiversity>



The Sexual Health Program supports people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. The colours of the flag represent and celebrate the diversity of the gay and lesbian community.

Toronto Women's Bookstore (TWB) (Toronto)

<http://www.womensbookstore.com>



We are a non-profit bookstore dedicated to promoting anti-oppression politics and feminist politics. Our mission: To provide books by women writers, especially marginalized women, including women of colour, First Nations women, lesbians, other queer women, working class women, disabled women, Jewish women, and other groups of women.

★ **Trans PULSE (Toronto)**

<http://www.transpulse.ca>



The Trans PULSE Project is an exciting community-based research (CBR) project that responds to problems identified within Ontario trans communities regarding access to health and social services. We are particularly interested in understanding the ways in which social exclusion, cisnormativity (the belief that trans identities or bodies are less authentic or “normal”), and transphobia shape the provision of services for trans people. We also want to know how these in turn may affect health. Some of the things we will be studying are income stability, housing, relationships and family, sexual health, HIV vulnerability, mental health, community connectedness, access to social services, health care services, and hormone use.

★ **Trent University’s Queer Collective (TQC) (Peterborough)**

<http://www.freewebs.com/trentqueer>



705-760-9232

We strive to challenge all types of queerphobia at Trent University and in the Peterborough community through education and political action. We aim to foster a safe and anti-oppressive environment which affirms and celebrates the diversity and intersectionality of all queer identities. The TQC actively opposes all forms of oppression including, but certainly not limited to, homophobia, transphobia, sexism, racism, classism, ableism, and fatphobia. We hold queercentred/ queer positive events like film nights, workshops, dances, and our annual drag show.

★ **Tri-Pride (Cambridge/Kitchener/Waterloo)**

<http://www.tri-pride.ca>



Tri-Pride is the non-profit Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) pridecelebration in Cambridge, Kitchener, Waterloo and area in Ontario, Canada.

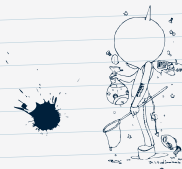
University of Guelph's CampOut (Guelph)

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/~campout>



campout@uoguelph.ca

519-824-4120 ext. 52498



CampOut is a student-driven support/social group that provides a safe space for students who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered, Transsexual, Queer, Not-Straight: those who choose not to identify with a label; and/or those who are questioning their sexual orientation. The group meets on a weekly basis and we encourage those who attend to participate as little or as much as they like.

★ **University of Guelph's Guelph Queer Equality (GQE) (Guelph)**



gqe@uoguelph.ca

519-824-4120 ext. 56702

Guelph Queer Equality provides a safe space and supportive environment for all people in the trans, bisexual, lesbian, and gay community. People of all races, religions, sexual orientations, genders, ages, and abilities are welcome. Guelph Queer Equality events are not restricted to the University Community; they are open to people from the Guelph Community in general. GQE is

largely student-run, and as such our hours are subject to change. We strive to be open Monday through Friday, and our volunteer meetings are at 5:45 on Tuesdays, followed by our community socials at 7pm.

★ **University of Guelph's Guelph Resource Centre for Gender Empowerment and Diversity (GRCGED) (Guelph)**

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/~wrc>



grcged@gmail.com

519-824-4120 ext. 58559

The Centre is a pro-choice, sex-positive environment that operates within an anti-oppressive feminist framework and provides access to information on issues relating to our Vision. The Centre provides a space to meet, discuss, and organize with people on campus and the surrounding community who have made a commitment to the Centre's Vision. First and foremost, the Centre works to create a safer space for students, faculty, staff, and community members of all or no gender(s), diverse abilities and from a wide variety of ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The Guelph Resource Centre for Gender Empowerment and Diversity (GRCGED) functions within a framework of empathy and compassion.

★ **University of Guelph's OUTline (Guelph)**

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/~outline>



OUTline is a resource and support service specializing in information and resources relating to sexual orientation and gender identity. The OUTline website was created to provide you with information about the services we offer and connect you to lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex, queer, two-spirit, and ally resources in Guelph and beyond. Services include OUTline Phone Line, Ask OUTline, Awareness Activities, Workshops & Training, and OUTline Allies.

★ **University of Guelph's Wellness Centre (Guelph)**

<http://www.wellnesscentre.uoguelph.ca>

wellness@uoguelph.ca

519-824-4120 ext. 53327

The Wellness Centre is an educational resource centre on a wide range of topics including physical and mental health, body image, addictions, sexuality, human rights, and self-care. The Centre takes pride in being very inclusive with its information, and has many resources on all topics with specific interest to the LGBTIQQ2 community. The Wellness Centre is a department within Student Health Services. Programming and Services include free condom and lube distribution, resource materials (e.g. pamphlets, brochures), workshops, support materials for residence assistants, awareness campaigns, and special events.

University of Ottawa's Pride Centre (Ottawa)

<http://www.pride.sfu.ca>



[pride.sfu.ca](https://www.facebook.com/pride.sfu.ca)

Services include drop-in centre, library, discussion groups, active listening, ally/mentoring programs and workshops.

★ **University of Toronto Mississauga's OUT@UTM (Mississauga)**

<http://outatutm.com>



outatutm@yahoo.ca

OUT@UTM is the University of Toronto Mississauga's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, and Transgender student group offering informational resources and support to the queer community on the UTM campus.

★ **University of Toronto Mississauga's Sexual Education & Peer Counselling Centre (Mississauga)**

<http://www.utmsec.ca>
info@utmsec.ca
905-569-4750

Provides peer counselling and educational services dealing with any other concerns or problems directly or indirectly related to human sexuality or relationships, recognizing that human sexuality is not isolated from other factors. Office Hours: Monday-Friday 10am-6pm.

★ **University of Toronto Scarborough's LGBTQ@UTSC (Scarborough)**

<http://lgbtq.memethief.com>



416-287-7041

The collective consists of students of all ages, colors, genders, ethnicities, and sexualities, though most identify as things like lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, two-spirited, genderqueer, questioning, or queer. In addition, Allies (friends of LGBTQs who support us) find friends and ways to express their support. LGBTQ@UTSC recognizes that there are many other student events, clubs, and opportunities for involvement on campus, but they are not necessarily welcoming to those who identify as LGBTQ nor may they provide services with a friendly focus on sexuality or gender diversity. To that end we provide a safer space that supports and environment of inclusion, support, and community.

★ **University of Toronto's Centre for Women and Trans People**

<http://womenscentre.sa.utoronto.ca>



The Centre envisions itself as a safe and inclusive community space on the University of Toronto campus that strives to be free of violence in all its forms, including physical, verbal, emotional, sexual, economic, and spiritual. The Centre promotes progressive personal and community growth, accessible support, and alternative information, based on an anti-oppression philosophy and framework that includes but is not limited to addressing issues of patriarchy, colonialism, racism, classism, ableism, homophobia, and transphobia. Through coalition-building and alliances, The Centre strives to be a strong advocacy and support organization that works towards empowering peoples in our own self-determination and to be recognized as such by its peers and community.

★ **University of Toronto's Diversity in Medicine (Toronto)**

http://www.utoronto.ca/diversity_in_medicine

Diversity in Medicine is a student organization in the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Toronto dedicated to addressing issues of gender, race, ethnicity, culture, faith, sexual orientation, disability, socioeconomic status, and any other facet of diversity that interacts with health, medicine, and medical school.

★ **University of Toronto's LGBTOUT (Toronto)**

<http://www.lgbtout.com>



LGBTOUT stands for Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, and Trans People of the University of Toronto. We are an officially recognized group at the U of T for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, transsexual, queer students, and others who are marginalized on the basis of their sexual orientations and/or gender identifications. We have been fighting for queer rights and visibility for 40 years! LGBTOUT offers spaces to explore our diverse identities both socially and politically, where people can develop a wide range of skills and learn more about our communities.

★ **University of Toronto's LGBTOUT Engineering (Toronto)**

<http://lgbtout.skule.ca>

The LGBTOUT Engineering Chapter is a division of the main LGBTOUT group. Established to serve the Faculty of Applied Science & Engineering, we share the same mandate as our mothergroup—to provide the same friendly atmosphere for everyone in the Faculty.

★ **University of Toronto's Office of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer Resources & Programs (Toronto)**

<http://www.lgbtq.utoronto.ca/site4.aspx>



416-946-5624

The office is dedicated to and works towards addressing discrimination based on sexual and gender diversity. Through the provision of resources, education, and consultation, the office is a support and a resource to students, staff, and faculty within the learning and working communities at the University. We offer a wide range of supports, resources, and programs to students, staff, and faculty on all three campuses.

★ **University of Toronto's OUT in Law (Toronto)**

http://www.law.utoronto.ca/students_content.asp?itempath=2/12/2/16/0&contentId=223
uoft_outinlaw@yahoo.ca

Out in Law is a group for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, transsexual, and queer people and their friends at the Faculty of Law. Involvement is very flexible and confidentiality is always respected. Some people limit their involvement to being on our e-mail listserv, while others take a more active role in attending social gatherings and planning events.

★ **University of Toronto's Queer at St. Michael's College (Queer @ SMC or Q@SMC) (Toronto)**

<http://www.queeratsmc.net>

Queer @ SMC is a group of queer people at the University of St. Michael's College in Toronto, Canada, and our supporters. Q@SMC was formed by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, queer, and questioning people at the USMC to support and advocate for each other.

★ **University of Toronto's Rainbow Trinity (Toronto)**

rainbowtrin@gmail.com



Rainbow Trin is a social support group for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, transsexual, queer students and allies at Trinity College. We seek to create more positive spaces for queer members of College and to promote equity within Trinity. We will host events that foster an open and friendly environment throughout the academic year. Rainbow Trin is dedicated to the celebration of diversity and to fighting heterosexism, sexism, transphobia, lesbophobia, biphobia, homophobia, and all other forms of discrimination.

★ **University of Toronto’s Sexual Education and Peer Counselling Centre (SEC) (Toronto)**

<http://sec.sa.utoronto.ca/counselling>



At SEC we’re thinking about, talking about, and informing you about everything to do with sex, sexuality, and sexual health. We offer peer counseling, free safer-sex supplies, educational talks and workshops, in-print and online resources, an engaging, non-judgmental social space, and a series of fun, sex-positive events throughout the year.

★ **University of Waterloo’s GLOW: The Queer and Questioning Community Centre (Waterloo)**

<http://www.glow.uwaterloo.ca>



glow@feds.uwaterloo.ca

519-888-4567 ext. 38569

Peer Support Line: 519-888-GLOW (4569)

We’re located at the University of Waterloo in Waterloo, Ontario, Canada. We offer many services to the LGBTQ community including a peer-support phone line (519-888-GLOW), a weekly discussion group, and social and special events. We offer a positive and welcoming environment to everyone regardless of gender, race, or sexual orientation. Our services are available to students of UW, as well as to the community at large.

★ **University of Western Ontario’s Pride Library (London)**

<http://www.uwo.ca/pridelib>



The Pride Library (located on the main floor of the D. B. Weldon Library on Western’s main campus) houses a large collection

of LGBT related material from past and present. Though the Pride Library is directly affiliated with the University of Western Ontario as a research site, members of the public are welcome to consult the collection.

★ **University of Western Ontario's Pride Western (London)**

<http://www.pridewestern.ca>



usc.pride@uwo.ca



★ **University of Windsor's Out on Campus (Windsor)**

<http://uwindsor.ca/ooc>

<http://cronus.uwindsor.ca/lgbt>

519-253-3000 ext. 4093

Out on Campus provides a positive environment for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning individuals on campus. Secondly, we allow LGBT individuals and their straight allies a forum to openly discuss topics regarding sexuality without judgment or bias.

★ **University of Windsor's OUTlaws (Windsor)**

<http://web4.uwindsor.ca/clubs/ooc/main.nsf/SubCategoryFlyOut/BE12CE0BFFE21699852574640065BF9A>

OUTlaws is a student group under the Students' Law Society at Windsor which works as a medium to bring together law students with an interest in Queer issues. It combines both selfidentified queer individuals and straight allies. Activities will be of various natures, including social, activist, awareness, and educational.

★ **Victim Services Toronto (Toronto)**

<http://www.victimsvicestoronto.com>
(Crisis) Line: 416-808-7066

Our vision is to help victims of crime and sudden tragedies restore and enhance their quality of life while working to prevent further victimization in the diverse communities we serve. Victim Services Toronto provides immediate crisis response and intervention and prevention services which are responsive to the needs of individuals, families, and communities affected by crime and sudden tragedies.

★ **West Side Stories Video (Toronto)**



West Side Stories is Toronto's queer-west DVD rental shop. Our selections include LgbT, Female Directed Films, Docs, International, 80's, New Releases, etc. Located @ 1499 Dundas St. Open 12-10pm Daily. Wheelchair accessible. Everyone welcome!

★ **Wilfred Laurier University's Diversity and Equity Office (Waterloo)**

<http://www.mylaurier.ca/diversity/info/home.htm>



The Office for Student Diversity is committed to fostering diversity by offering a welcoming, safe, and supportive environment for all Laurier students. With the help of students, staff, and faculty, we aim to nurture a learning and student centered environment that respects differences in culture, age, gender, gender expression, race, ethnicity, national origin, physical ability, sexual orientation, and religious affiliation.

★ **Wilfrid Laurier University’s Rainbow Centre (Waterloo)**

<http://www.mylaurier.ca/rainbow/info/home>



519-884-0710 ext. 3010

The WLU Rainbow Centre is dedicated to enhancing the university environment for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Queer individuals in the Laurier Community through awareness promotion, education, advocacy, and support. The WLU Rainbow Centre is a safe, fun, and supportive space where everyone at Laurier and in the broader community is welcome, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. We advocate for and provide awareness about the LGBTQ community, while acting as a social outlet and resource centre.

★ **Windsor Family Health Team (WFHT) (Windsor)**

<http://windsorfht.ca>

The Windsor Family Health team offers high quality primary health care for residents in Windsor and the surrounding area. An interprofessional group of health care practitioners, including family physicians, provide health care in an integrated, respectful, and holistic environment to help keep patients healthy before illness occurs. The focus of the health team is on disease management and prevention, rehabilitation, palliative care, and health promotion. At the Windsor Family Health Team we’ve taken steps to ensure LGBT people in our community receive culturally sensitive health care services. Our team regularly receives training on LGBT health matters and we are proud to declare our clinic an LGBT positive space. If your medical professional at the Windsor FHT is not aware of your gender identity or sexual orientation, please feel free to bring up the topic so that we can provide you with the best possible health care. The Windsor Family Health Team is currently developing support groups and health education focusing on bisexual and trans health. Ask us for more details.

★ **Windsor Pride Community (Windsor)**

<http://www.windsorpride.com>



We promote the acceptance and celebration of LGBTTT identities and lifestyles with public education, special events, and partnerships with other community organizations. We conduct research to identify the needs of the LGBTTT members of our community for the purpose of advocating for social services that are tailored to their needs. We develop and operate social support for members of the LGBTTT communities to support and assist those experiencing challenges. We engage in advocacy activities for the purpose of safeguarding the rights of the LGBTTT members of our community, fighting discrimination against them, and fostering social harmony. We provide the LGBTTT members of our community with educational and recreational opportunities to encourage personal development, enhance general wellness, and improve quality of life.

★ **York Pride Fest (York Region)**

<http://www.yorkpridefest.com>



York Pride Fest is a non-profit community initiative hosting social events in York Region, including the region's annual Pride festival in June celebrating Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered (LGBT) residents throughout our community.

★ **York University's Trans Bisexual Lesbian Gays Allies at York (TBLGAY) (Toronto)**

<http://www.yorku.ca/tblgay>



TBLGAY
tblgay@yorku.ca

Listserv: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/tblgaylistserv>
416-736-2100 ext. 20494

The Safer Space is a room in our office where queer students can come to hang out chat. The Safer Space also has many brochures available for your perusal. If you are looking for information on a queer organization that more specifically matches your own identity (be it race, trans, etc.) come up and find out more! We post flyers, panel discussions, support groups, etc., on our listserv. Our resource library currently houses approximately five hundred books, articles, and magazines.

★ **YOUCAN (Ottawa and Toronto)**

<http://www.youcan.ca>



YOUCAN is driven by youth and community volunteers. Volunteers are key to our success. YOUCAN is run by young people, from our youth board of directors from across Canada, to our volunteer youth teams. Team Ottawa, Team Edmonton, and Team Toronto are our current volunteer youth teams. Meetings are open to any youth between the ages of 12-25 who are devoted to making their schools and communities more peaceful.

★ **Youth Action Network (YAN) (Toronto)**

<http://www.youthactionnetwork.org>



Youth Action Network is dedicated to helping youth become more informed and actively involved in order to move towards a just and sustainable society. We strongly believe in the ability of youth to affect change in the world. We understand the need for a stronger voice and for greater participation in our local and global communities. The main functions of YAN are to provide information and promote action.

*Youth Advocating for Anti-Homophobia Awareness!
(YAHA) (Scarborough)*

<http://www.yaha.org/info.html>

Youth Advocating for Anti-Homophobia Awareness! is a social/educational group that meets biweekly (Tuesdays) in Scarborough for youth (13-25) who identify as intersexed, transsexual, transgender, two-spirited, queer, bisexual, lesbian, gay, or questioning (ITTOBRO). The location of the group is not advertised as YAHA is committed to providing a safe space for all young people in Scarborough. We also provide connection to one another through the use of a listserve that allows us to share information and community events.

★ **Youth beyond Barriers (Brampton and Mississauga)**

<http://www.aysp.ca/newprograms.html>

youth@aysp.ca

1-800-762-8377 ext. 460

A program for Queer and Trans-Identifying youth aged 12-18, offering a support and social group, one-to-one support and community education and referrals.

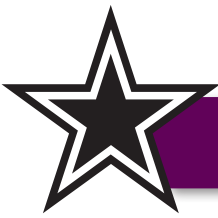
★ **YouthLink (Toronto)**

<http://www.youthlink.ca>



Supporting vulnerable youth to make positive life choices for more than ninety years. We are a community-based, accredited mental health centre for youth with programs in Scarborough and downtown.





LGBTQ NATIONAL

NATIONAL LGBTQ AND LGBTQ-FRIENDLY ORGANIZATIONS, PROGRAMMES, & RESOURCES

- ★ **Amnesty International Gay & Lesbian Human Rights Support Network**
<http://www.algi.qc.ca/asso/amnistie.html>

French-language website of the Gay & Lesbian Human Rights Support Network of Amnesty International's Canadian Section (French-speaking), based in Montréal. Includes information on obtaining French-language texts of LGBT-related AI publications, how to become a member, and information about the Network's regular bulletin Le Dire! with news updates and action alerts.
- ★ **Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity (CAAWS)**
<http://www.caaws.ca>

Part of CAAWS' mandate is to promote participation in sport by girls and women. Homophobia in sport is often an obstacle to participation, presenting barriers and challenges to individuals, both homosexual and heterosexual. In particular, many girls and women shy away from sport out of fear they will be perceived as lesbians. CAAWS has started this work to initiate discussion about addressing homophobia in sport. CAAWS views it as a first step in a longer-term strategy to reduce homophobia in Canadian sport and to make sport an inclusive and safe place for all participants.
- ★ **Canadian Committee on the History of Sexuality (CCHS)**
<http://www.cha-shc.ca/cchs>

The aim of the CCHS is to provide an organizational focus within the Canadian historical profession for all those who are

researching, writing, teaching, and otherwise interested in the historical study of sexuality. The Committee sponsors sessions at CHA annual meetings, compiles news by and about historians of sexuality, awards a prize for best article in the field, and organizes social events. The CCHS connects scholars from all parts of the country and promotes the study of sexuality as an integral aspect of the Canadian past. Our website includes resources for the study of sexuality, including bibliographies and course materials, as well as useful web links to research sites and organizations.

★ **Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network**

<http://www.aidslaw.ca>



The Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network promotes the human rights of people living with and vulnerable to HIV/AIDS, in Canada and internationally, through research, legal and policy analysis, education, and community mobilization. The Legal Network is Canada's leading advocacy organization working on the legal and human rights issues raised by HIV/AIDS.

★ **Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives (CLGA)**

<http://www.clga.ca>



Our primary mandate is to collect and maintain information related to LGBTQ life in Canada—though we have lots from elsewhere as well. We gather material on people, organizations, issues and events. We arrange that material, record it, store it—and secure it for the future. It is also our mandate to make this information available to the public, for education and research. Over the years we have helped hundreds of people—students, artists, journalists, lawyers, filmmakers—working on various projects. We also welcome those who just want to browse. And now you can browse online. The What We've Got page of this site will

lead you to our many different kinds of material. For each one you'll find further pages offering detailed descriptions and—as available—guides, directories, related documents, and ways to search contents.

★ **Canadian Professional Association for Transgender Health (CPATH)**

<http://www.cpath.ca>

 : CPATH Charities

CPATH is the largest national professional organization for transgender health in the world. Our members are diverse, representing and identifying within the trans community—from medical students to social workers to psychologists. CPATH is a professional organization devoted to the health care of individuals with gender variant identities. As an interdisciplinary, professional organization, CPATH will further the understanding and health care of individuals with gender variant identities by professionals in medicine, psychology, law, social work, counselling, psychotherapy, family studies, sociology, anthropology, sexology, speech and voice therapy, and other related fields. Within this definition, we strive to include representation from community support groups and trans identifying persons on committees and the board and as members at large.

★ **Canadian Rainbow Health Coalition (CRHC)**

<http://www.rainbowhealth.ca>



CRHC/CSAC is a national organization whose objective is to address the various health and wellness issues that people who have sexual and emotional relationships with people of the same gender, or a gender identity that does not conform to the identity assigned to them at birth, encounter. Check out the Educational Resources and Specific Populations sections in particular. Resources are available in both English and French.

★ **The Canadian Safe School Network (CSSN)**

<http://www.canadiansafeschools.com>



The Canadian Safe School Network (CSSN) is a national, not-for-profit, registered charitable organization with a mandate to reduce youth violence and make our schools and communities safer.

★ **Egale Canada/Egale Canada Human Rights Trust (ECHRT)**

<http://www.egale.ca>



The Egale Canada Human Rights Trust (ECHRT) is Canada's national LGBT human rights charity; Egale Canada is the national LGBT human rights organization: advancing equality, diversity, education, and justice. Egale Canada is a registered not-for-profit organization that was founded in 1986 and incorporated as a federal not-for-profit organization in 1995. We have intervened before the Supreme Court of Canada in every LGBT rights case that has reached the Court, most notably the Marriage Reference, which legalized same-sex marriage throughout Canada. Egale maintains an active commitment to bringing an intersectional approach to our work, meaning that respect for each individual's full identity requires that the struggle for LGBT equality cannot be carried out in isolation from the struggle for equality of all disadvantaged communities.

In 2007, the ECHRT began the First National School Climate Survey in Canada—up to this point, no large-scale study on the extent and impacts of bullying based on sexual orientation and gender identity had ever been undertaken here. The lack of a solid Canadian evidence base has been a major impediment faced by educators and administrators who need

to understand the situation of LGBTQ students in order to respond appropriately and to assure their school communities that homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic discrimination and harassment are neither rare nor harmless, but are major problems that need to be addressed in Canadian schools today.

Through the Safe Schools Campaign, Egale is committed to supporting LGBTQ youth, youth perceived as LGBTQ, youth with LGBTQ parents, other family members, and friends as well as educators, librarians, guidance counsellors, education support workers, parents, and administrators and to helping make Canadian schools safer and more inclusive, respectful, and welcoming learning and working environments for all members of school communities. The Safe Schools Campaign features resources for facilitating change in Canadian learning environments: the national LGBTQ safer schools and inclusive education website, MyGSA.ca; Equity and Inclusive Education Resource Kits; and an anti-heterosexism, anti-homophobia, anti-biphobia, anti-transphobia, and intersectionality workshop series.



Gay Canada

<http://www.gaycanada.com>



Founded in 1994, the Canadian Gay, Lesbian, & Bisexual Resource Directory is an organization dedicated to the collection, compilation, and distribution of information important or of relevance to the GLB communities across Canada.

★ **Kids Help Phone 1-800-668-6868**

<http://www.kidshelpphone.ca>



Kids Help Phone is Canada's only toll-free, national, and bilingual phone and web counselling, referral, and information service for children and youth. We provide immediate anonymous and confidential support, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

★ **MyGSA.ca**

<http://www.mygsa.ca>



MyGSA.ca is the national LGBTQ safer schools and inclusive education website. It is your link to community, safer spaces, and education and information about LGBTQ matters in Canada. Here, youth can find local Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs), community organizations, and campus groups; discuss queer popular culture and ideas for GSA events; and organize with others around the country to make positive change in schools and communities! Educators can use MyGSA.ca to find LGBTQ classroom resources and school board policies; discuss inclusive curriculum and GSA activities; and collaborate with other teachers around the country to help make Canadian schools safer and more welcoming learning environments.

★ **Native Youth Sexual Health Network (NYSHN)**

<http://www.nativeyouthsexualhealth.com>



The Native Youth Sexual Health Network (NYSHN) is a North-America wide organization working on issues of healthy sexuality, cultural competency, youth empowerment, reproductive justice, and sex positivity by and for Native youth. The reclamation and revitalization of traditional knowledge about people's fundamental human rights over their bodies and spaces,

intersected with present-day realities is fundamental to our work. We work within the full spectrum of reproductive and sexual health for Indigenous peoples.

★ **PFLAG Canada**

<http://www.pflagcanada.ca>



PFLAG Canada is a registered charitable organization that provides support, education, and resources to anyone with questions or concerns about sexual orientation or gender identity. PFLAG Canada has chapters or contacts in more than 70 communities across Canada. If you are gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, two-spirit, intersex, queer, or questioning, or if you care about someone who is, our compassionate volunteers are ready to help.

★ **Report Homophobic Violence, Period (RHVP) (Toronto)**

<http://www.MyGSA.ca/RHVP>



Report Homophobic Violence, Period is a public awareness campaign aimed at young people, aged 13 to 25, to address reasons for homophobic attitudes and spur others to report harassment and violence to adults and police.

★ **TransParent Canada**

<http://www.transparentcanada.ca>



TransParent Canada, an associate organization of PFLAG Canada, offers support to families and friends of trans-identified individuals. You—parent, sibling, co-worker, health-care provider, member of the clergy, or anyone else—may know and wish to support a child, youth or adult on this journey to authenticity. Or you may have questions. TransParent Canada embraces human diversity and is a forum of empowerment and celebration.



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ADDITIONAL CITATIONS

“Intersectionality: The Double Bind of Race and Gender,” an interview with Kimberle Crenshaw by *Perspectives* editorial board member Sheila Thomas, *Perspectives, Spring, 2004*. Copyright 2004 by the American Bar Association. Reprinted with permission. This information or any portion thereof may not be copied or disseminated in any form or by any means or stored in an electronic database or retrieval system without the express written consent of the American Bar Association.

Queer Spawn in Schools. A presentation by Rosa Brooks, Rachel Epstein, Becky Idems, and Adinne Schwartz based on a research project conducted in 2005 by the LGBTQ Parenting Network, with funding from the Wellesley Central Health Corporation, and an article entitled “Reading, Writing, and Resilience: Queer Spawn Speak Out about School” by Epstein, Idems, and Schwartz in *Who’s Your Daddy? and Other Writings on Queer Parenting*. R. Epstein, ed. Sumach Press, 2009.

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Y-GAP. The Y-GAP project is committed to understanding and improving the lives of trans youth living in Toronto and across Ontario. Y-GAP researchers interviewed twenty-one youth about their challenges and triumphs. The research highlighted how particular experiences are integral in shaping, for better or for worse, the emotional and physical health and safety of trans youth. These factors included the level of family support, their ability to access responsive health care, and their success in being able to find safe school environments. “Trans Youth at School” is part of the Y-GAP Community Bulletin Series.

This Equity and Inclusive Education Resource Kit for Ontario High Schools is part of Egale's Safe Schools Campaign. The Safe Schools Campaign is made possible by the generous support of people like you. To make your contribution, please visit www.egale.ca/donate.

