

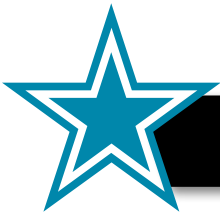


Safe and Caring Schools – A Resource for Equity and
Inclusion in Manitoba Schools

RESOURCES FOR GUIDANCE COUNSELLORS



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possibility




RESOURCES FOR GUIDANCE COUNSELLORS

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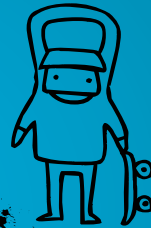
In addition to the resources provided in this section, also see the Executive Summary from Egale Canada's First National School Climate Survey Report *Every Class in Every School*, which is available both in the Information for Administrators section of this kit and on Egale's national LGBTQ safer schools and inclusive education website: MyGSA.ca.

 If you are not familiar with LGBTQ terminology and concepts, see the Terms and Concepts section of this kit.



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, 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 administration to change the settings. If *MyGSA.ca* continues to be blocked at your school, contact the Department of Education and Advanced Learning at mbedu@merlin.mb.ca, or Egale at 1.888.204.7777 (toll free) or mygsa@egale.ca and let us know.





LGBT YOUTH SUICIDE PREVENTION GUIDE

LGBTQ YOUTH AND SUICIDE

Suicide is the second leading cause of death among Canadians aged 15 - 24 according to Statistics Canada—only accidents cause more deaths. In 2007 there were over 500 suicides among Canadians under the age of 25, and many thousands of attempts. Unfortunately, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and two-spirited youth, as well as youth questioning their sexual orientation and/or gender identity are at a much higher risk of suicide than their peers. This brochure will help you understand the problem and assist a young person in distress.

RISK ASSESSMENT GUIDE

1. Has the person made previous attempts?
2. Is there a plan, including available method of death?
3. Has this person little in the way of an identifiable support system? (e.g. family or friends)
4. Is there evidence of mental illness, alcoholism or drug addiction present?

“Among lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth, the risk of attempting suicide was 20% greater in unsupportive environments compared to supportive environments.” *(Hatzenbuehler, 2011)*

Keep in mind that:

- Suicidal language can be used to express pain and a need for change.
- Suicide attempters are often ambivalent. Hopelessness and helplessness mark those who are determined to die.
- Many people who are depressed are also suicidal but not all depression leads to a desire for death.
- Some long-term chronically depressed people have periods of time when they are suicidal, including during what appear to be “better” periods.
- 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.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH LGBTQ SUICIDE

Suicidal Ideation

- Over half of LGB students (47% of gay/bisexual males and 73% of lesbian/bisexual females) have thought about suicide (*Eisenberg & Resnick, 2006*)
- 47% of trans youth have thought about suicide in the past year (Trans Pulse, Ontario, 2010)

Suicide Attempts

- 37.4% of LGB youth reported a previous suicide attempt (*Eisenberg & Resnick, 2006*)
- 20% of lesbian and gay youth, and 22% of bisexual youth attempted suicide at least once in the past year (*Hatzenbuehler, 2011*)
- 43% of trans people reported a previous suicide attempt (Trans Pulse, Ontario, 2010)
- 19% of trans youth attempted suicide in the past year (Trans Pulse, Ontario, 2010)
- LGBTQ youth are 4 times more likely to attempt suicide than their heterosexual peers (Massachusetts 2009 Youth Risk Behavior Survey)

- Adolescent youth who have been rejected by their families for being LGBTQ are 9 times more likely to attempt suicide than their heterosexual peers (2007 San Francisco State University Chavez Center Institute)

Factors That Heighten Risk

- Suicidality among friends or peers
- Depression, anxiety and/or substance abuse (maladaptive coping skills)
- Social inequity, sparse social networks, lack of legal protections, hostile school or work environments, verbal or physical harassment, persecution or victimization
 - ↳ 64% of LGBTQ students and 61% of students with LGBTQ parents reported that they feel unsafe at school (*Every Class in Every School, 2011*)
- 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
- School policies that specifically protect LGBTQ students
- Positive media and community role models
- School, community and web-based resources

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE IN SUICIDE MANAGEMENT

- Know what LGBTTIQQ2SA means and be comfortable saying lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, transgender, intersex, queer or questioning, 2-spirited, or straight ally.
- Be able to use the word “suicide” without negative emotional reaction. Be able to discuss expressions of suicide in order to establish intent.
- The safest and most helpful approach is to encourage the distressed person to discuss suicidal ideas, feelings and plans.

What you say can only be neutral or beneficial as long as you stay away from daring the person or increasing their pain. You cannot inadvertently talk someone into taking their life if they don't want to do so!

- 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.”
- Be aware of some LGBTQ-positive referral resources and encourage the distressed person to seek help that is tailored to their needs.
- Do not rush a person through the suicidal crisis without giving ample time to identify and explore feelings.

From the Toronto Police Services' LGBT Community Consultative Committee



SOME POSSIBLE WARNING SIGNS OF SUICIDAL IDEATION

From Living Works (2008) - Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training ASIST Workbook.
Canada: LivingWorks Education Inc.

Some Possible Warning Signs of Suicidal Ideation

- giving away possessions,
- loss of interest in hobbies,
- feeling desperate,
- feeling lonely,
- feeling sad,
- feeling hopeless,
- saying things such as “I won’t need these things anymore”, or “I just can’t take it anymore”, or “All of my problems will end soon”.

If you think a person is suicidal ASK.

Risk Assessment and Intervention

Risk Review	Intervention/Safe Action (if answer yes to the question)
Are you having thoughts of suicide?	Keep the person safe. Stay with him or her or have another trusted adult stay with the person while you seek help. Connect with local resources immediately.
Do you have a suicide plan? If so, how will you do it? How prepared are you? How soon?	Disable the suicide plan
Do you have pain that at times feels overwhelming?	Ease the pain
Do you feel you have few resources?	Link to resources
Have you attempted suicide in the past?	Protect against the danger and support past survival skills
Are you/have you received mental health care?	Link to mental health worker

➔ Manitoba Crisis Services List

Canadian Mental Health Association - Manitoba Division

2633 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3J 0P7

T: (204) 953-2350

F: (204) 772-4969

E: info@cmhamanitoba.ca

Canadian Mental Health Association - Winnipeg Region

930 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3G 0P8

T: (204)982-6100

F: (204)982-6128

E: office@cmhawpg.mb.ca

➔ Manitoba Crisis Services 24-Hour Crisis Lines Service Phone

Klinik Crisis Line

(204) 786-8686

1-888-322-3019

Manitoba Suicide Line

1-877-435-7170 / (1-877-help170)

Kids Help Phone (national line available to Manitoba Youth)

1-800-668-6868

Klinik Sexual Assault Crisis Line

(204) 786-86311-888-292-7565

 **MB Crisis Services by Region**
Region Service Phone

Brandon & Assiniboine 24 hour Crisis Line / Mobile Crisis Unit

(204) 725-4411
1-888-379-7699

Crisis Stabilization Unit

(204) 727-2555

Child and Adolescent Treatment Centre and Crisis Line

(204) 727-3445
1-866-403-5459

Burntwood Thompson General Hospital

(204) 677-5350

Central Crisis Line (24 hours)

1-866-588-1697

Karen Devine Safe House

(204) 239-5307

Churchill Churchill Hospital

(204) 675-8300

Interlake - also services North Eastman Mental Health Crisis Service

(204) 482-5361 or
1-866-427-8628

Norman On call Crisis – Flin Flon

Daytime: (204) 687-1340

After hours:(4:30 pm – 8:30 am): (204) 687-7591

On call Crisis – The Pas

Daytime: (204) 623-9650

After hours:(4:30 pm – 8:30 am): (204) 623-6431

Parkland

Mental Health Crisis Response Service

1-866-332-3030

Child and Adolescent Treatment Centre and Crisis Line

(204) 727-3445

1-866-403-5459

South Eastman 24 hour Crisis Line and Mobile Crisis Service

(204) 326-9276

1-888-617-7715

Winnipeg Mobile Crisis Service

(204) 940-1781

WRHA Crisis Stabilization Unit

(204) 940-3633

Youth Mobile Crisis Team

(204) 949-4777

1-888-383-2776

Seneca Help Line

(7 pm – 11 pm)

(204) 942-9276



SUICIDE AND TWO-SPIRIT PEOPLE

Excerpts from *Suicide Prevention and Two-Spirited People* written by the National Aboriginal Health Organization (NAHO).

“Suicide rates among two-spirited gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgendered First Nations are not known, but the rates of related risk factors in these groups indicate that the suicide risk is greater than among heterosexual First Nations. Homophobia, isolation and rejection increase the risk of suicide. An individual’s risk can be decreased if he/she is connected to his/her culture and traditions in a way that recognizes the impacts of colonization. First Nations communities can support two-spirited people by providing safe spaces that include and respect them, by standing up for them, and by speaking out about the discrimination they experience. The term two-spirit is used in this resource because it reflects the importance of First Nations culture as well as sex and gender orientation and diversity. However, it is important to respect that individuals may prefer to identify with other terms to reflect their sexual orientation, sex and gender identity, experiences, or preferences.”

“A risk is a quality, characteristic or experience that increases the likelihood that something will occur. Violence, oppression and loss of culture are considered risk factors for suicide. Two-spirited First Nations experience double oppression; racism and heterosexism (Balsam et al., 2004). Two-spirited women who experience sexism in a male-dominated world experience a third type of oppression (Lehavot et al., 2009). In addition, transgendered people experience cissexism, which is the assumption that everyone should look, behave and identify as a stereotypical feminine woman or look, behave and identify as a stereotypically masculine man. Although there is protection in First Nations communities from the racism of the mainstream world, some two-spirited people may be sent away from the reserve or may feel they need to move away to find acceptance for their sexual orientation and gender identity, because of homophobia and transphobia in First Nations communities (Ristock, Zoccole, & Passante, 2010). Unfortunately, this acceptance comes at a cost; loss of family, loss of community connections (culture), and

racism (Brotman, Ryan, Jalbert, & Rowe, 2002; Walters, 1997; Walters, Horwath, & Simoni, 2001; Monette, Albert, & Waalen, 2001). Although they may find support in the GLBT community in the general population, these costs create new problems. Therefore, two-spirited people experience oppression and exclusion from three potential sources: their First Nations community because they are two-spirited, GLBT communities because they are First Nations and mainstream communities for both reasons (Brotman et al., 2002).”

“Suicide rates vary by First Nations community (Chandler and Lalonde, 1998), but the national rate is reported to be almost twice as high as that for the general population in Canada. In 2000, suicide was the leading cause of death among First Nations aged 10 to 44 years, and almost one quarter of all deaths among First Nations youth 10 to 19 years old were due to suicide (Health Canada, 2005).”

“In a study in Manitoba and Northeastern Ontario that included 74 transgendered and two-spirited people (20 of whom identified as Aboriginal,), 28 per cent of study participants reported having attempted suicide at least once “because of the way [they were] treated with regards to [their] sex/gender identity” (Taylor, 2006, p.38).”

“In another large American study that included 5,602 American Indian and Alaska Native adolescent men, 65 identified as gay and 23 per cent of these participants reported having attempted suicide (Barney, 2003). The two-spirited adolescent males were twice as likely as their heterosexual counterparts to have thought about or attempted suicide. This finding of an increased risk for suicidality among two-spirited Native youths (compared with heterosexual Native youths) is consistent with the results of studies that show that non-Aboriginal gay, lesbian and bisexual people attempt suicide two to the three times as often as heterosexual non-Aboriginal people (King et al., 2008; Paul et al., 2002).”



VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Prepared by the Violence Prevention Initiative, 2008.
Newfoundland and Labrador

When violence occurs within the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals, attitudes often range from 'who cares' to 'these relationships are generally unstable or unhealthy'.

(Abuse in Same Sex Relationships, 2008)

Prevalence

- ▶ In 2004, gay, lesbian and bisexual individuals reported experiencing higher rates of violent victimization (sexual assault, robbery, and physical assault) than heterosexual individuals.
- ▶ Gay and lesbian individuals experience victimization at a rate 2.5 times higher than heterosexual individuals.
- ▶ The rate of victimization for bisexual individuals is approximately four times higher than the rate of victimization for heterosexual individuals.

Spousal Violence

- ▶ Domestic violence in the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community is a serious issue. The problem, however, remains underreported.
- ▶ 2004 General Social Survey data indicate that gay and lesbian (15%) and bisexual (28%) individuals experience higher levels of spousal violence than heterosexual (7%) individuals.

Long Term Impacts of Sexual Violence

- ▶ Lesbian and bisexual women are often doubly traumatized by the impact of sexual violence due to the fact that they are oppressed both as women and as members of the gay community. Some of the long term social and psychological impacts include:
 - Feelings of fear, guilt, shame, denial, self-blame, anger;
 - Fear of intimacy;
 - Lack of trust;
 - Low self-esteem;
 - Depression;
 - Eating difficulties;
 - Sleep problems;
 - Internal and external injuries.

Discrimination

- ▶ According to the Canadian Human Rights Act, discriminatory behavior includes differential treatment of an individual or group of individuals based on their race, national or ethnic origin, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, mental or physical disability or pardoned conviction.
- ▶ 2004 General Social Survey data indicate that a greater proportion of gays and lesbians (44%) and bisexuals (41%) felt that they had experienced some form of discrimination in the past five years. In comparison, only 14% of heterosexual individuals believed that they had experienced some form of discrimination.
- ▶ Gay, lesbian and bisexual individuals were most likely to report this victimization as occurring in the workplace or when applying for a job or a promotion.

Hate Crimes

- ▶ In 2006, approximately 9% of all hate crimes reported to the police were motivated by sexual orientation.
- ▶ Approximately 98% of these hate crimes were committed against homosexual individuals.
- ▶ Of the hate crimes committed against homosexual individuals, approximately 55% were violent crimes and 35% were property crimes.
- ▶ The most common type of violent crime reported by homosexual individuals was common assault.
- ▶ Hate crimes motivated by sexual orientation were more likely than other types of hate crimes to result in physical injury to victims. The vast majority of injuries were minor in nature - only about one in ten incidents resulted in major physical injury to victims.
- ▶ The majority of hate crimes are committed by young males acting alone or in small groups.

Beauchamp, D. (2008). *Sexual Orientation and Victimization 2004*. Ottawa, ON: Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics.

Dauvergne, M., Scrim, K., Brennan, S. (2008). *Hate Crime in Canada 2006*. Ottawa, ON: Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics.

Kitchener-Waterloo Sexual Assault Support Centre. (2008). *Abuse in Same Sex Relationships*. Kitchener-Waterloo, ON: Sexual Assault Support Centre.

Sexual Assault/Rape Crisis Centre of Peel. (2008). *Sexual Violence Against Lesbian & Bisexual Women*. Peel, ON: METRAC.



DEBUNKING MYTHS

**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. Some religious groups consider it a sin, while others consider it a gift.

Debunking Myths cont'd

Sexual orientation is only about sex.

Being lesbian, gay, or bisexual is about a person's life. It is 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 pedophiles 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.

Transsexualism is unnatural.

Human sexuality exists on a spectrum of physiological and psychological characteristics. Research indicates that throughout history there have been people whose gender identity was different from their birth assigned sex. (OHRC)

Transgender people are gay or lesbian.

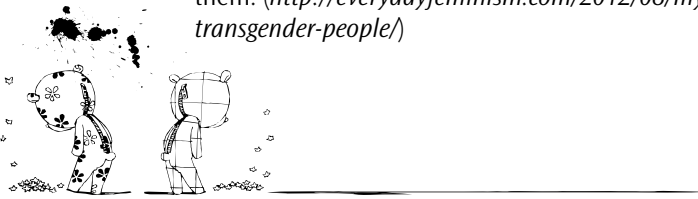
Gender identity and sexual orientation are not the same thing. Transgender people can be straight, gay, lesbian or bisexual. (<http://www.startribune.com/lifestyle/relationship/19234289.html>)

Transgender people hate their bodies.

This is a very common myth. It does make sense that a person who identifies as a woman might be uncomfortable in her male body, and vice versa. And some transgender people are uncomfortable and want to alter their bodies. Others choose to live with their bodies as they are.

Neither choice means that this person hates themselves. On the contrary, a transgender person can love themselves through the whole process of transitioning.

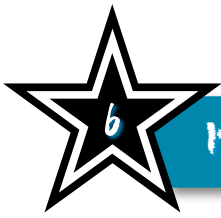
Each person's relationship with their body is unique and a transgender person should receive the support that works for them. (<http://everydayfeminism.com/2012/08/myths-about-transgender-people/>)



Check out MyGSA.ca
for more information as well as resources and materials
for debunking LGBTQ myths!



Adapted from the original developed by Vanessa Russell for the Toronto Board of Education



ISSUES FACED BY GLBTTQ¹ FAMILIES

From Around the Rainbow's Toolkit for Educators and Service Providers

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.

¹ The GLBTTQ acronym is used here as it appears in Around the Rainbow's Toolkit for Educators and Service Providers which has been reproduced with permission from Family Services à la Famille Ottawa.

Issues Faced by GLBTTQ Families cont'd

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>.



LGBTQ YOUTH PROGRAMS

For many LGBTQ youth, the opportunity to connect with other LGBTQ youth or adults provides the chance to talk, and explore questions about sexuality, identity and community that they may not be able to discuss with anyone else. A safe space where youth can come -- as a drop in, or on a regular basis – can be an oasis. Meeting other youth, forming friendships, participating in social activities and events are all important forms of support and ways to build resilience. Connecting with LGBTQ adults or older youth through these groups that may act as informal mentors is another bonus. Being able to talk with someone who has “been there” and who can offer an experienced but understanding perspective is invaluable.

If you have an LGBTQ youth (remember, this includes questioning) in your office, it would be great to have the following resources handy, should they wish to join a group or have an option of places to go for support.

Manitoba offers a few places where LGBTQ youth can connect, socialize and get support, and where there may be informal opportunities to connect with LGBTQ adults.



Identifying as LGBTQ can be lonely, especially if youth don’t know anyone in their friendship or family circle that are LGBTQ. LGBTQ youth groups and programs like the ones listed below are crucial for building community, providing the opportunity for LGBTQ youth to see that there are other people “like them”, talking about issues, and feeling supported.

For communities without such programs or youth groups, a GSA at school may be the only opportunity that LGBTQ youth have for support and a sense of community.

➔ Province-Wide

Kids Help Phone

1 800 668 6868

www.kidshelpphone.ca

Klinic Community Health Centre

870 Portage Avenue

Winnipeg

(204) 784-4090

www.klinic.mb.ca

24-HOUR TELEPHONE SERVICES:

Manitoba Suicide Line: 1-877-435-7170

Crisis Line: (204) 786-8686 / Toll free 1-888-322-3019

Sexual Assault Crisis Line: (204) 786-8631 / Toll free 1-888-292-7565

TTY Deaf Access Counselling - (204) 784-4097

Manitoba Farm & Rural Support Services: 1-866-367-3276

Knowledgeable and comfortable with LGBTQ issues.

➔ Brandon

Brandon Rural Support Phone Line

(204) 571-4183

www.ruralsupport.ca

kim@ruralstress.ca

LGBTQ Youth Programs cont'd

Coffee House

Sexuality Education Resource Centre (SERC)

161 8th Street

Brandon

(204) 727-0417

www.serc.mb.ca

Safe space for LGBTQ individuals.

Meet once a month, except in the summer (usually the 3rd Thursday).

Special events, topics for discussion etc.

7pm-9pm. Drop in.

Counselling for LGBTQ youth and adults

(a Rainbow Resource Centre program run out of the Sexuality Education Resource Centre -SERC)

161 8th Street

Brandon

(204) 727-0417

www.serc.mb.ca

Contact SERC to make an appointment.

PFLAG

(Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays)

Brandon & area Chapter

Meet semi-regularly (about every 6 weeks).

Contact SERC for more information (204 727-0417).

Trans Health Network

Sexuality Education Resource Centre (SERC)

161 8th Street

Brandon

(204) 727-0417

www.serc.mb.ca

Identifying clinicians and practitioners in Brandon/West Manitoba area who are comfortable and knowledgeable with Trans populations. Includes nurses able/willing to help administer hormones, and doctors willing/able to prescribe hormones. The goal of the network is to be able to refer Trans individuals to knowledgeable and Trans-friendly professionals. Contact SERC if you need a referral.

Trans Support Group

Brandon & area

Meet once a month. Youth and adults.

Contact SERC for more information (204 727 0417).

➔ Northern Manitoba

Keeseekodwenin Ojibwa First Nation

(204) 625 2004

2.5 hours north west of Brandon

Not LGBTQ-specific but have had LGBT awareness and allied training; can call re: LGBTQ issues.

Kenora Lesbians Phone Line

(807) 468-5801

Tuesdays: 7 - 9 p.m.

West Region Tribal Council Health Department

(204) 622 9400

Judy Henuset – Tribal Home and Community Care Coordinator

Not LGBTQ-specific but have had LGBT awareness and allied training; can call re: LGBTQ issues.

➔ Winnipeg

Anakhnu (Jewish GLBT Group)

For more information: Assistant Executive Director Tamar Barr at (240) 477-7537 or email tbarr@radyjcc.com

<http://radyjcc.com/template.cfm?tID=213>

Anakhnu is a Rady Jewish Community Centre sponsored group for Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual/Transgendered like minded individuals and their friends. Age is no barrier and only friendship is encouraged. This initiative is an opportunity for Jewish GLBT individuals, family members and friends to socialize, gain information and share ideas in a welcoming and inclusive Jewish environment by encouraging GLBT individuality and Jewish identity. Anakhnu offers year-round social and cultural programming in association with the Rady Jewish Community Centre.

Camp Aurora

(A program of the Rainbow Resource Centre)

For more information: campaurora@rainbowresourcecentre.org

www.campaurora.ca

Camp Aurora is a 4-day summer camp for queer and allied youth.

It is supported by community leaders and the Rainbow Resource Centre, and organized with some extra help from a volunteer committee.

Camp is for youth ages 14 - 19 and is funded by some great people so you don't have to spend much to attend. Check the website for the application deadline and to download application forms. Spots at camp fill up quickly.

Our hope at Camp Aurora is that you will meet new friends, do things you maybe haven't done before, learn about yourself and your community, and have some fun!

You can also apply to be a youth leader. If you are 20-26 years old, have experience in youth leadership, and enjoy the outdoors, you would be a great fit! Check the website for the application deadline and to download the forms.

Dignity Winnipeg

Regular meetings for worship and social activities - 3rd Friday of every month. 6pm.

Augustine United Church,
444 River Ave.

For more information:

Thomas (204) 287-8583 or Sandra (204) 779-6446

email: Winnipeg@dignitycanada.org

www.dignitycanada.org

We work within and without the Catholic Church to promote the full personhood of those who belong to sexual minorities, and we celebrate our sexuality as a gift of God. We believe our loving relationships are intrinsically good, and worthy of recognition as marriage in civil law as well as in the eyes of God.

We claim our rightful place as members of Christ's mystical body, and live the sacramental life of the church, openly and visibly as gay and lesbian people of conscience.

FTM Gender Alliance of Winnipeg

Meet the 1st Tuesday of each month, year-round.

7:00PM-9:00PM.

Group Room at Rainbow Resource Centre.

170 Scott Street, Winnipeg

Peer support group for female to male individuals. Open to the general public.

GDAAY Clinic

Health Sciences Centre – Winnipeg

Pediatric Endocrinology

FE 307- 685 William Ave

Winnipeg

(204) 787-7435 x3 (Coordinating Nurse) FAX: (204) 787-1655

<http://www.gdaay.ca>

Gender dysphoria assessment and action for youth under 18 (self-referral program).

For Manitoba and area (North West Ontario and Saskatchewan)

GSA consultation

Rainbow Resources Centre

170 Scott Street, Winnipeg

(204) 474-0212

www.rainbowresourcecentre.org

Schools with a Gay/Straight Alliance or schools wishing to start a Gay/Straight Alliance can take advantage of the Youth Program at The Rainbow Resource Centre! Staff will gladly join your GSA or any staff/students from any school to discuss ways to plan events, set goals, deal with challenges and promote change. These workshops can be small and informal to long and in depth. Workshops can focus on themes like “Starting a GSA,” “Sustaining a GSA,” and “Planning a successful GSA event/conference;” or they can be simple Question and Answer sessions. For information on booking a GSA consultation, please contact the Rainbow Resource Centre.

Klinik Community Health Centre

870 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg
(204) 784-4090

www.klinik.mb.ca

24-HOUR TELEPHONE SERVICES:

Manitoba Suicide Line: 1-877-435-7170

Crisis Line: (204) 786-8686 / Toll free 1-888-322-3019

Sexual Assault Crisis Line: (204) 786-8631 / Toll free 1-888-292-7565

TTY Deaf Access Counselling - (204) 784-4097

Manitoba Farm & Rural Support Services: 1-866-367-3276

Knowledgeable and comfortable with LGBTQ issues.

Peer Project for Youth (PPY) – ages 13-21

(A program of the Rainbow Resource Centre)

170 Scott Street

Winnipeg

(204) 474-0212

www.rainbowresourcecentre.org/youth

Peer Project for Youth is a program that offers LGBTQIA* youth a safe, fun place to learn new skills, create projects and celebrate our identities! PPY seeks to build the capacity of LGBTQIA* youth to support and encourage their peers to learn more about sexual orientation, gender identity and anti-homophobic education. PPY focuses on providing LGBTQIA* youth with the opportunity to be positively supported and affirmed as LGBTQIA* individuals; to create social change while learning valuable skills; and to increase self-esteem and self-confidence while increasing social networks, contacts and support communities for youth.

On Monday and Wednesday evenings PPY offers workshops and events that are decided upon by YOUTH! If there is a workshop you would like to see take place, a skill you want to learn or a discussion you think we should have, give us a call or send us an email! Monday night workshops include a focus on

LGBTQ Youth Programs cont'd

leadership capacity building, developing new skills, engaging in facilitated discussions, creative expression and community building. At each program we offer free tasty snacks and free bus tickets in case you need a way home.

Events are updated monthly on our website and through our Facebook group.

If you would like to receive our monthly calendar of events by email please contact peerproject4youth@rainbowresourcecentre.org.

You are welcome to call ahead of time (204-474-0212, ext. 202, or 210) to confirm times and locations of programming or to schedule a tour or meeting with our Youth Program Coordinator to see if PPY is a good fit for you! But you can also just drop in.

PFFOTI

(Parents, Friends and Family of Trans Individuals)
Meet 2nd Tuesday of each Month – September to June.
7PM-9PM at the Library at the Rainbow Resource Centre.
Group facilitators can be reached at pffoti@gmail.com

Social support group for parents, friends and family members of trans individuals. Open to the general public.

PFLAG

(Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays)
Winnipeg Chapter
170 Scott Street, Winnipeg
(204) 474-0212

PFLAG meets at the Rainbow Resources Centre on an as-needed basis. Call the RCC if you want to contact them.

Rainbow Ministry

1622 B St Mary's Road
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R2M 3W7
(204) 962-1060

rainbow@wpgpres.ca

Rainbow Ministry is an outreach ministry of the United Church of Canada working solely for and with the LBTTQQ community in Winnipeg and surrounding areas. The ministry focuses on issues of faith, sexuality and gender expression, recognizing the hurt that has been done to the LBTTQQ community, historically from faith communities. The minister is available for one on one conversation around sexuality, gender and faith, as well as being available for workshops around bible interpretation and new possibilities that enable the LBTTQQ community to be affirmed - at the Rainbow Resource Centre.

Rainbow Resource Centre

170 Scott Street
Winnipeg
(204) 474-0212

www.rainbowresourcecentre.org

facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/280300125172/?ref=ts&fref=ts>

The Rainbow Resource Centre is the community centre and resource centre for the gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, two-spirit, queer and ally communities within Winnipeg, throughout Manitoba and within north-western Ontario. The Centre provides counselling, anti-homophobia education and training, and youth programming and services. The Centre also provides a meeting space for community groups, peer support groups, and offers community programming at free/low cost (i.e. book club, knitting club, art classes, yoga, tai chi, ballroom dancing, etc.).

The Centre hosts an extensive library that members can access with a library membership, featuring a collection of books, dvds, journals, audio books and magazines all with LGBTTTQ themes.

The Centre works to provide a safe space to support the community, but to also act as a meeting place for community members to learn, gather, and come together. We operate from a place of support, harm reduction and a belief in providing a positive space for healthy learning and growth.

Trans Health Clinic

At Klinik Community Health Centre
870 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg
(204) 784-4090
www.klinik.mb.ca

Two Spirited People of Manitoba Inc. Winnipeg

www.twospiritmanitoba.ca

To improve the quality of life of Two Spirit (Aboriginal gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender) people in Manitoba, which includes raising funds for and assisting in providing appropriate advocacy, education, health services, housing, employment training and cultural development.

Winnipeg Transgender Support Group

3rd Friday of each month, year-round. 7:30PM-10PM.

Group Room at Rainbow Resource Centre.

170 Scott St. Winnipeg

(204) 474-0212

<http://winnipegtransgendergroup.com/>

Our gatherings are informal. There is no dress code and there are no expectations about gender appearance. They are intended to offer an opportunity to meet and chat with others who understand what it means to be transgender, share information and experiences, in hopes to learn from and support one another. The group also is an opportunity for people to present in their preferred gender in a safe and affirming place. Male to female and female to male, all ages welcome. Open to the general public.

Y.E.A.H. (Youth Educating Against Homophobia)

Rainbow Resources Centre

170 Scott Street

Winnipeg

(204) 474-0212

www.rainbowresourcecentre.org

Y.E.A.H. is a youth education program that is designed to offer awareness on the impacts of homophobic bullying based on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and those perceived as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender or two-spirit. These fully interactive workshops identify homophobia, biphobia and transphobia while examining the roots of oppression and discrimination. Y.E.A.H. sessions provide a safe space to name the hurtful myths and stereotypes that face youth. They also provide an opportunity to ask questions anonymously and come together to discover ways to combat homophobia in their school/community.

➔ Two-Spirit Resources in Canada and the USA

Manitoba

Two Spirited People of Manitoba Inc.

Winnipeg

www.twospiritmanitoba.ca

To improve the quality of life of Two Spirit (Aboriginal gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender) people in Manitoba, which includes raising funds for and assisting in providing appropriate advocacy, education, health services, housing, employment training and cultural development.

Canada

Native Youth Sexual Health Network

<http://www.nativeyouthsexualhealth.com/index.html>

The Native Youth Sexual Health Network (NYSHN) is an organization by and for Indigenous youth that works across issues of sexual and reproductive health, rights and justice throughout the United

The North American Aboriginal Two Spirit Information Pages

<http://people.ucalgary.ca/~ptrembla/aboriginal/two-spirited-american-indian-resources.htm>

A variety of information including general information and history, academic papers, movies & videos, the arts, Health and HIV/AIDS information, Internet resources, and books.

Two Spirit Circle of Edmonton Society

(780) 474-8092

The Two Spirit Circle of Edmonton Society aims to repatriate and enhance our traditional roles and responsibilities as two spirit people in Indigenous communities while creating supportive environments within all societies for contemporary two spirit peoples.

2-Spirited People of the 1st Nations

www.2spirits.com

2-Spirited People of the 1st Nations is a non-profit social services organization whose membership consists of Aboriginal gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people in Toronto.

The 2-Spirits organization's programs and services includes HIV/AIDS education, outreach, prevention and support/counselling for 2-spirited people and others living and affected by HIV/AIDS.

Our vision is to create a space where Aboriginal 2-Spirited people can grow and come together as a community, fostering a positive image, honoring our past and building a future. Together we can work toward bridging the gap between 2-spirited lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered communities, and our Aboriginal identity.

Wabanaki Two-Spirit Alliance (Atlantic)

<http://w2sa.ca>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bgG1o-JcKdw>

A group of two-spirited people and their supporters named the Wabanaki Two-Spirit Alliance. The alliance is comprised mostly of First Nations people from the Maritimes, Quebec and New-England who identify as two-spirited. First Nations people that embody both traditional male and female roles who also identify as part of the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community are considered to be two-spirited. Organize gatherings where the main goal is to create a safe space, free of drugs and alcohol, where two-spirited people can connect with their peers and feel free of

social constraints regardless of their gender or sexuality. Sweats, smudging, traditional singing and craft workshops are some of the activities that take place.

USA

Bay Area American Indian Two-Spirits

<http://www.baaits.org/>

Bay Area American Indians Two-Spirits (BAAITS) exists to restore and recover the role of Two-Spirit people within the American Indian/First Nations community by creating a forum for the spiritual, cultural and artistic expression of Two-Spirit people. BAAITS is a community-based volunteer organization offering culturally relevant activities for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex Native Americans, their families and friends.

Dancing to Eagle Spirit Society

<http://www.dancingtoeaglespiritsociety.org/about.php>

We are dedicated to the healing and empowerment of aboriginal and non-aboriginal two-spirit individuals their friends and their allies. The society seeks to honor the dignity of the individual, building personal and community self esteem by providing emotional support and spiritual needs using traditional Native American ways and culture.

Montana Two Spirit Society

<http://mttwospirit.org/about.html>

The Montana Two Spirit Society formed in 1996 through a joint effort by Pride Inc. (Montana's LGBT advocacy organization) and the Montana Gay Men's Task Force to conduct an annual two spirit gathering. Over the years, the gathering has grown from a handful of participants to nearly 100 attendees from not only Montana but surrounding states as well. Tribes from all over the west are represented at the gathering.

NativeOUT (USA)

<http://nativeout.com>

NativeOUT was originally founded in 2004 as a local social group named the Phoenix Two Spirit Society, by Corey Taber, Ambrose Nelson, and Victor Bain. Since that time, we've evolved into a national nonprofit volunteer education, multimedia, and news organization actively involved in the Two Spirit Movement. Although we are currently not incorporated, it's a goal we intend to achieve in the future.

We utilize the internet, through our website, multimedia, and social networks, and in-person presentations to educate about the Indigenous LGBTQ/Two Spirit people of North America.

North East Two-Spirit Society (USA)

<http://ne2ss.org/>

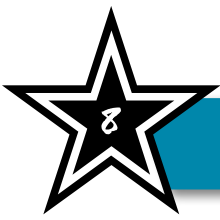
NE2SS.org is devoted to providing information about and for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered and two-spirit American Indians of New York City and the tri-state area (New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut). According to the 2000 US Census, more than any other city in the country New York City is the home to the largest urban Indian population.

NorthEast Two-Spirit Society (NE2SS) works to increase the visibility of the two-spirit community and to provide social, traditional and recreational opportunities that are culturally appropriate to the two-spirit community of NYC and the surrounding tri-state area. At the heart of the efforts by NE2SS is community development for all our peoples.

Tribal Equity Toolkit (USA)

http://graduate.lclark.edu/programs/indigenous_ways_of_knowing/tribal_equity_toolkit/

Developed in the USA, the toolkit includes numerous resources, including a section on Education that features an Education Equality Ordinance. The developers of the resource state that “Colonization taught Tribal communities a great deal about homophobia and transphobia. As we work to consciously reclaim and return to our traditions we must also reexamine how the effects of colonization remain enshrined in Tribal Policy, Law and Structure. For Tribal Nations, LGBT Equality and Decolonization are inextricably linked, one cannot be truly be achieved without the other.’



POLICIES


The two policies below outline some of the ways LGBTQ issues and awareness should be taken into consideration when counselling. Clarity and the use of specific terminology is extremely important in policies like this so that there is less room for personal interpretation.

We include them here as a guideline for some of the things Guidance Counsellors should be thinking about and taking into consideration to help in the creation of LGBTQ safe and inclusive schools. If your district does not have a policy like this, suggest that they take a look at this one as a guide for writing their own. The comments in the boxes, and in coloured italicized font throughout are meant as guides as you read through the policy.



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:



This recognizes that the discrimination felt is not just because of the behaviour of others, but also because of homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and heterosexism that are embedded (unconsciously) the system.

- 3.7.1. providing counselling services that are culturally-sensitive, supportive, and free of bias on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity;



They have listed gay and lesbian, and mentioned gender identity. It would be even better if they had included a few more identifiers like bisexual, transgender, two-spirited, and queer.

Cultural sensitivity is extremely important since culture plays an important role in how (and if) things are spoken about, named, understood and accepted. There are still many countries around the world where sexual orientations other than heterosexual are illegal and some where same-sex relationships are punishable by death. In most jurisdictions around the world transgender people face some form of discrimination, often including state-supported violence, intimidation, and a lack of access to medical care. This can affect how comfortable an individual will feel talking about their gender identity or sexual orientation as well as the language they use.

Bias is ingrained into our language and reactions. It is very important that guidance counsellors be extremely aware of what their biases are in terms of sexual orientation and gender identity, so that they can catch the unconscious responses.



Proactive strategies are just as important as reactive in the creation of safe space, possibly even more important, as the hope is to prevent incidents of discrimination and harassment.


- 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;

Biases about sexual orientation and gender identity are embedded into curriculum (often unconsciously) – sometimes

in covert ways, and often by omission. Both send a strong message about who and what is valued and accepted in our society that can have a negative effect on LGBTQ students.

- 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;



 Given the reality of homophobia, biphobia and transphobia in our communities and families, confidentiality is vital when working with LGBTQ students. When and if to come out is always a personal choice that depends on many factors.

- 3.7.6. recognizing the importance and ensuring the maintenance of confidentiality around matters of sexual orientation and gender identity for youth.

From the Toronto District School Board’s Equity Foundation Statement on Anti-Homophobia, Sexual Orientation, and Equity

REGARDING COUNSELLING AND STUDENT SUPPORT FOR LGBTQ STUDENTS

Vancouver School Board Policy

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 LGBTTQ 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.

Training (initial and on-going) is important as there are many issues and barriers that LGBTQ students face (as with any identity) that counsellors may otherwise not be aware of, think of, or “catch” that will be crucial to the counselling relationship and process.



These two groups of students have similar needs as well as very distinct needs for support in dealing with homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and heterosexism. In many ways, students from LGBTQ-headed families are often under our radar when it comes to the need for LGBTQ safe spaces.





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.
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.




RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROFESSIONALS WORKING WITH LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANS, TWO-SPIRITED, QUEER, AND QUESTIONING (LGBTQ) YOUTH

Adapted from the Toronto District School Board

There are many ways that you can be supportive of LGBTQ youth. Here is a list of ideas to get you started, or keep you going.

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 (like the ones listed in this section). 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.
11. Ensure that you follow counsellor codes of conduct and ensure confidentiality and privacy of LGBTQ students as set out in the Personal Health Information Act (PHIA) and also the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA).



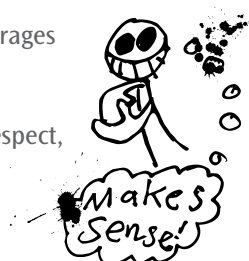
SUMMARY OF SUGGESTIONS FROM KIDS WITH LGBTQ PARENTS, ABOUT WHAT HELPS AT SCHOOL

Developed by the LGBTQ Parenting Network

Often there will be kids in school who are not LGBTQ, but whose parents are. They have a unique experience, and are also affected by homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and heterosexism, because there is an impact on their families. Here are some suggestions from them about what is helpful.

- Facilitate ways of having kids with LGBTQ parents connect with other kids with LGBTQ parents to share experiences and strategies.
- Discourage shame in kids with LGBTQ parents.
- 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 kindergarten 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 the experiences of kids with LGBTQ families.
- Include LGBTQ-led families and recognition of the particular experiences of kids with LGBTQ families 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.



As you can see, most of the items on this list are just as important for the kids of LGBTQ parents as it is for students who are themselves LGBTQ. Creating safe and caring environments where all members of the school community can be all of who they are, without fear of discrimination or harassment, and where they are embraced and respected as part of the school community benefits everyone. Environments that confront homophobia, transphobia, biphobia and heterosexism create a positive school environment that is safe and inclusive, and where members of the school community are accepted and respected.

**Safe and Caring Schools-
A Resource for Equity and
Inclusion in Manitoba Schools
is part of Egale's Safe Schools
Campaign.**

