MyGSA.ca

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

Egale
Canada Human Rights Trust

Manitoba

A MESSAGE FROM
HONOURABLE JAMES ALLUM
MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND ADVANCED LEARNING

James Allum, Minister of Education and Advanced Learning

Nancy Allan, Legislative Assistant for Safe Schools

Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning and our school partners throughout Manitoba have worked diligently to make all our schools safer and more inclusive for all students. This new publication, *Safe and Caring Schools: A Resource for Equity and Inclusion in Manitoba Schools*, will serve to enhance the work of our school leaders, administrators, teachers, students, and parents in making our schools safe, respectful, and equitable for all.

We believe that Manitobans want our communities and schools to be welcoming of diversity and places where we can all feel safe, regardless of our origins or who we are. Bullying and other forms of harassment and social exclusion have no place in our communities or schools.

Schools should be places where all our children feel welcomed and safe. Unfortunately, for some students this is often not the reality. No student deserves to be excluded, bullied or harassed because of their gender identity, sexual orientation or any other aspect of who they are. Through social media, school bullying has the potential to extend beyond the school day and site into our homes and our communities. For some children, bullying and social exclusion is experienced 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

In 2004, Manitoba took significant steps towards ensuring that all our schools are safer and caring places to learn with the passage of the *Safe Schools Charter*. The Charter requires all schools to have appropriate and current safety policies that include a code of conduct and an emergency response plan.

However, we recognize that school safety and inclusion requires constant attention and we need to respond to new understandings and forms of bullying. Recent amendments to *The Public Schools Act* build on our past efforts to improve our schools by making them safer and more accepting places for our children. The amendments were designed to address bullying, especially cyber-bullying, promote respect for human diversity, and accommodate the creation of Gay-Straight Alliances in schools.

While this resource provides valuable information and strategies that will help schools become safer and more inclusive from the perspective of diversity of sexual orientation and gender identity, it is ultimately a resource that will help all students feel safer and included.

The information included in this resource builds and extends on the work that Egale Canada Human Rights Trust has undertaken in recent years throughout Canada. We are pleased to have had the opportunity to partner with Egale, Safe Schools Manitoba, and other partners in developing and offering this resource to schools in Manitoba.

We trust that school leaders, administrators, educators, students, and parents will use the information provided in this resource to guide their work and inspire action. Together, we know we can make all of our schools even better places to learn and more caring environments that will allow all children to flourish and grow.

MESSAGE FROM EGALE

THANKS FOR READING THIS SAFE AND CARING SCHOOLS – A RESOURCE FOR EQUITY AND INCLUSION IN MANITOBA 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).

> **Throughout this document, the acronym LGBTQ references all people with diverse sexual orientations and/or gender identities, including those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, two spirit, queer or questioning. In addition, the acronym LGBTQ will commonly be used except when an alternative acronym appears in a direct quote or an excerpt from another resource.**

In addition to the brief overview of significant terms and 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 and 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 interested in addressing LGBTQ matters.

Egale Canada Human Rights Trust is Canada's only national charity promoting lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBTQ) human rights through education, research and community engagement.

Welcome to the Manitoba GSA Kit. In 2013, Amendments to The Public Schools Act concerning Safe and Inclusive Schools included the requirement that schools develop a respect for human diversity policy that must (among other things) "accommodate pupils who want to establish and lead activities and organizations that promote (a-iv) the awareness and understanding of, and respect for, people of all sexual orientations and gender identities, and (b) use the name Gay-Straight Alliance or any name consistent with the promotion of a positive school environment that is inclusive and accepting of all students."
See *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/p250e.php*

This kit, created in collaboration with Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning is a resource to help you – students, staff and parents– understand more about, be able to talk about, and be able to create GSAs in your schools.

It is filled with lots of useful information that will help you:

- Understand more about why a GSA is helpful to raise awareness and increase safety for all students, not just LGBTQ students;

- Understand the acronym LGBTQ and what all the letters mean

- Understand what a GSA is and what types of things you may want to do as a club;

- Get some answers to questions that may come up, all with Manitoba legislation in mind;

- Learn terms and concepts;

- Discover LGBTQ role models; and

- Access resources

There is also a section each specifically for teachers, guidance counsellors, administrators, and parents to assist you in understanding your role, and the importance of GSAs in helping to create a positive school climate.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:
SAFE AND CARING SCHOOLS – A RESOURCE FOR EQUITY AND INCLUSION IN MANITOBA SCHOOLS

We would like to acknowledge the help of the following individuals in the creation of this resource:

Zahra Dhanani, Legal Director, Metropolitan Action Committee on Violence against Women and Children (METRAC)

Susan Diane, PhD Candidate, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), University of Toronto

Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO)

Rachel Epstein, LGBT Parenting Network, Sherbourne Health Centre

Michael Erickson, Teacher

Indigo Esmonde, Assistant Professor in Mathematics Education, Department of Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), University of Toronto

Jennifer Fodden, Former Executive Director, Lesbian Gay Bi Trans Youth Line

Ann Gagne, PhD Candidate, University of Western Ontario

Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN)

Ernie Gibbs, Mental Health Counsellor for GLBTTQ Youth, Centretown Community Health Centre

Loralee Gillis, Research & Policy Coordinator, Rainbow Health Ontario

GLBT History Month

GLSEN/Colorado

Tara Goldstein, Associate Chair of Research and Development and Associate Professor, Department of Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), University of Toronto

Greater Victoria School District (GVSD)

Rebecca Hammond

Daniel Hunter, Training for Change

Angela Kalligeris, Student

El-Farouk Khaki, Immigration Lawyer

Paul Lomic, Ridout & Maybee LLP

Tim McCaskell, Writer, Educator, and Activist

CONTENTS

Introduction

GSA Guide

Questions & Answers about LGBTQ Human Rights Legislation and Policy in Manitoba

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?

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?

My dad gave birth to me before he transitioned from female-to-male (FTM). My teacher insists on calling him my mother, and talks about me as having lesbian parents, which I don't– I have a mom and a dad. What can I do?

Role Models & Symbols

Information and Resources for Educators

Resources for Guidance Counsellors

[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.

RESOURCES

[FOUND IN THE CORRESPONDING COLOUR-CODED SECTION OF THIS KIT]

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

INTRODUCTION

diversity =
possibility

INTRODUCTION

GETTING STARTED

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!**

This resource is intended to support students, teachers, administrators and districts develop and maintain safe, caring and inclusive learning environments. In particular, its goal is to provide information and answer questions for those initiating a Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) in their 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.

Good luck, and remember that extra support is always available. Local, provincial and national resources are mentioned within each section.

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

If you are an educator, check out the Information & Resources for Educators section of this resource. If you are a guidance counsellor, check out the Resources for Guidance Counsellors section. 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!

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-Spirit, queer, and questioning" or some variation of this. Check out the Terms & Concepts section in this 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 Two-Spirit). The letters can be ordered differently as well, such as GLBTTQ (as used in subsection 6 of the Resources for Guidance Counsellors section of this kit as reproduced from Around the Rainbow's Toolkit for Educators and Service Providers).

Throughout this document, the acronym LGBTQ references all people with diverse sexual orientations and/or gender identities, including those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, Two Spirit, queer or questioning. In addition, the acronym LGBTQ will commonly be used except when an alternative acronym appears in a direct quote or an excerpt from another resource.

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.

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.

to include LGBTQ material in your school's curriculum (see the Guide section for suggestions);

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

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

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!

ABORIGINAL PERSPECTIVES ON DIVERSITY OF SEXUALITY AND GENDER IDENTITY

During the period of European colonization of the Americas, the cultural norms and social frameworks of many indigenous peoples were dramatically altered. Today, Aboriginal peoples are in the process of reclaiming knowledge and practices that have been preserved and retained. The process of reclaiming aspects of cultural identity is apparent in how many of First Nations have re-named their communities using words from their own languages. While colonial-era English names may still be used interchangeably today, this re-naming represents the beginning of a new era in First Nations empowerment. Aboriginal gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgender people have also embraced this approach and embarked on a journey of re-discovery by adopting the term, "Two-Spirit". (Albert McLeod)

Traditional Two-Spirited History and Roles

Before European contact and colonization, *most* First Nations groups throughout North America respected and honoured diverse gender roles and identities and believed that all people were part of the sacred web of life and community (Brown). The European concepts of sex and gender roles were not shared by First Nations peoples at this time, as many First Nations cultures allowed for at least six alternative gender styles. Historically, the peoples of Turtle Island (North America) thrived in gender and sexually diverse societies for thousands of years (Alaers). These traditions and understandings were most common among the Lakota, Ojibwa, Blackfoot, Cheyenne, Mojave, Navajo and Cree peoples, but shared by many others. However, it is important to recognize that in spite of contact and many similarities, traditions varied greatly among First Nations peoples in North America and that a few cultures may have not had traditions and understandings related to diverse sexualities and gender identities and roles.

The diversity of sexuality, gender identities, and roles was reflected in First Nations languages. First Nations peoples of North America had their own specific words or terms to refer to people with diverse sexualities, gender identity, and cultural roles. Some examples are the Lakota term *winkte*, the Dinè term *nadleeh*, and the Cree terms *ayekkwe* and *a:yahkwew* (Alaers).

The traditions and understandings of the diversity of sexuality, gender identities and roles continued to survive in North America to as late as 1930 among the Klamath people in the Pacific Northwest. However, colonization and the aggressive assimilation experienced by First Nations peoples after European contact worked to displace First Nations' understandings, practices and teachings around sexuality, gender, and relationships and replaced them with "mainstream", Judeo-Christian or Euro-Canadian perspectives and understandings.

Reclamation and Contemporary Two-Spirit Understandings

The concept and the term "Two Spirit" emerged in 1990 at the third annual Intertribal First Nations/Native American gay and lesbian conference in Winnipeg (Alaers). "Two-Spirit" is an Aboriginal spirit-name shared at that 1990 gathering of Aboriginal people who identified as gay, lesbian, bisexual, and trans at the time. The name came in a vision to one of the gathering participants prior to the event and ceremonies were held during the gathering to acknowledge the arrival and acceptance of this name

One of the local Elders, who is an Ojibwe Language Specialist, informs them that we become "ritual" brothers and sisters through ceremony and that when a person receives a spirit-name it signifies that they have a spirit-guide, a gift, a purpose, and a destiny. "Two-Spirit" is a name now embraced by many LGBTQ indigenous people of Turtle Island. It is unique to North American Aboriginal LGBTQ people because First Nations peoples connections to this land and ecology are cultural, historical, and familial (Albert McLeod).

Thus, "Two-Spirits" reclaims the rich and diverse traditions and understandings of First Nations peoples, including some that may have been lost by the subversion of indigenous cultures through colonization, Christianization and assimilation. It is a pan-historical as well as a "pan-tribal" concept and term. For many LGBTQ Aboriginal people, identifying as a two-spirited person is a form of liberation from the identities that were

imposed by other cultures and movements. Essentially it means that LGBTQ people have the ability to reflect the male and female energies (genders and sexes) and forces that create life (eg. humans, animals and plants) and that diversity within this realm is considered sacred and a component of the natural order (Albert MacLeod).

Today an ever increasing number of First Nations, Métis and other Aboriginal LGBTQ people describe themselves as 'Two-Spirit'. It is an empowered identity that emerged within the context of sustained racism, homophobia and sexism. For many First Nations people, their Two-Spirit identity reclaims their authority to define who they are and it aligns with their worldview, distinct cultures, histories and ways of being (Wilson).

However, it is important to recognize that while the term "Two Spirit" has been embraced by many Fist Nations peoples to separate their interests from Western-imposed concepts of gender and sexual identity, the term is not used universally or consistently across First Nations/Aboriginal communities in North America (NASTAD).

Developed In consultation with Albert McLeod, Two-Spirited People of Manitoba Inc.

REFERENCES

Alaers, Jill. "Two-Spirited People and Social Work Practice: Exploring the History of Aboriginal Gender and Sexual Diversity." Critical Social Work 11.1 (2010): n. pag. <*http://www1.uwindsor.ca/criticalsocialwork/2010-volume-11-no-1-0*> (23 Oct. 2013).

AlbertaTrans.org. "Two-Spirit Tradition." 2008. <*www.albertatrans.org/2s.shtml*> (23 Oct. 2013)

Brown, Lester B., ed. *Two-Spirit People: American Lesbian Women and Gay Men*. New York, NY: Haworth Press, 1997.

Copley, Hamish. "The Disappearance of the Two-Spirit Traditions in Canada." The Drummer's Revenge: LGBT History and Politics in Canada. 2009. <*http://thedrummersrevenge.wordpress.com/2009/08/11/*> (24 Oct. 2013).

Deschamps, Gilbert. *We Are Part of a Tradition: A Guide on Two-Spirited People for First Nations Communities*. Mino-B'maadiziwin Project. Toronto, ON: 2-Spirited People of the First Nations, 1998. Available from *http://www.2spirits.com*

Deschamps, Gilbert, et al. *We Are Part of a Tradition: A Guide on Two-Spirited People for First Nations*. Wendake, PQ: First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Health and Social Services Commission, n.d. Available from <*http://library.catie.ca/PDF/P5/20688.pdf*>.

Elledge, Jim. *Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Myths from the Arapaho to the Zuñi: An Anthology*. New York, NY: Peter Lang, 2002. American Indian Studies 13.

Frazer, M. Somjen, and Harlan Pruden. *Reclaiming Our Voice: Two Spirit Health & Human Service Needs in New York State*. NYS DOH AIDS Institute: Albany, NY, 2010. Available from <*www.health.ny.gov/diseases/aids/reports/native_people/docs/reclaiming_our_voices.pdf*>.

Gilley, Brian Joseph. *Becoming Two-Spirit: Gay Identity and Social Acceptance in Indian Country*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2006.

Genovese, Maddalena, and Davina Rousell. *Safe and Caring Schools for Two Spirit Youth: A Guide for Teachers and Students*. Edmonton, AB: Society for Safe and Caring Schools & Communities, 2011. Available from <*www.teachers.ab.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/ATA/For-Members/Professional%20Development/Diversity,%20Equity%20and%20Human%20Rights/Safe%20and%20Caring%20Schools%20for%20Two-spirited%20youth.pdf*>.

Jacobs, S.; Thomas, W.; Lang, S. (Eds.): *Two-spirit people: Native American gender identity, sexuality, and spirituality*, Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1997.

National Alliance of State and Territorial Aids Directors. "*Issue Brief: Native Gay Men And Two Spirit People, Hiv/Aids and Viral Hepatitis Programs and Services.*" 31 October 2013 <*http://nastad.org/docs/Issue-Brief-Two-Spirit-Final-03-14-13.pdf*> .

O'Brien-Teengs, Doris. *Two Spirit Women*, 2nd Edition. Toronto, ON: 2-Spirited People of the 1st Nations. 2008, (October 30, 2013) <*http://www.2spirits.com/Two%20Spirit%20Women.pdf*>

"*Two-Spirit People of the First Nations.*" Rainbow Resource Centre, 2011. 31October 2013 <*http://www.rainbowresourcecentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/TwoSpirit.pdf*>.

Roscoe, Will. *The Changing Ones, Third and Fourth Genders in Native North America*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000.

Roscoe, Will. *The Zuni Man-Woman*. Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1991.

"*Who are the Two-spirits?: Two Spirit Q & A with Will Roscoe.*" Will Roscoe, 31 October, 2013 <*http://www.willsworld.org/twospiritq-a.html%20*>.

Trexler, Richard C. *Sex and Conquest : Gendered Violence, Political Order and the European Conquest of the Americas*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995.

Two-Spirited People of Manitoba Inc. 31 October 2013 <*www.twospiritmanitoba.ca*>.

2-Spirited People of the First Nations. 3 May 2013 <*http://www.2spirits.com*>.

"*Two-Spirit Voices.*" National Native American AIDS Prevention, 1.April 1997. 3 May 2013 <*http:// www.nnaapc.org/tsv/tsv01.html*>.

Two-Spirit People. Ottawa, ON: Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health, 2000.

"*Two-Spirit Youth Speak Out!*" Urban Native Youth Association. 2004. 31 October 2013 <*http://www.unya.bc.ca/downloads/glbtq-twospirit-final-report.pdf*>.

"*Our Relatives Said: A Wise Practices Guide,* Voices of Aboriginal Trans People." Ottawa, ON: 2-Spirited People of the 1ST Nations, 2008. 31 October 2013 <*http://www.2spirits. com/2Spirits%20Transgender%20Training%20 Manual.pdf*>.

Williams, Walter L. *The Spirit and the Flesh: Sexual Diversity in American Indian Cultures*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1986.

Williams, Walter L. & Johnson, Toby. *Two Spirits: A Story of Life with the Navajo*. Maple Shade, NJ: Lethe Press, 2006.

Wilson, Alex, "*Two-spirit Identity: Active resistance to multiple oppressions.*" Canadian Race Relations Foundation Directions, 5.1. 2008. 31 October 2013 <*http://www.crr.ca/images/ stories/pdf/ directions/directionsVol5No1-Sys_Racism-AboriginalPeoples.pdf*>.
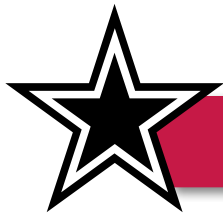
People have many identities that correspond to their race, class, physical and mental ability, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, etc. These different identities don't stand alone; together they impact a person's experiences as well as experiences of discrimination. We call this "intersectionality".

Although the word intersectionality is a more recent term, it should be noted that for centuries, Aboriginal Peoples have been using a holistic approach to health and wellbeing. Indeed '[...] for Indigenous Peoples living in Canada and around the world, the inter-relationships between the physical, mental, spiritual and emotional aspects of being are integral to individual and community health' (National Aboriginal Health Organization). Intersectionality takes a holistic approach because it involves looking at things together, for example, viewing race and gender together, as opposed to viewing them in isolation (Simpson).

Because of our different identities, there are many ways a person might experience discrimination. As the Manitoba Human Rights Code states,

> the intersectionality of various characteristics may give rise to stereotypes not present with one or more different combinations of characteristics. Intersectionality can have a compound effect (i.e. individuals with more than one Code-protected characteristic are more likely to face discrimination) and can even give rise to an entirely new basis for discrimination (Manitoba Human Rights Commission).

A white lesbian's experiences will be different than those of a lesbian who is Aboriginal, or a lesbian who is Aboriginal and who also has a disability. They may all experience homophobia, but the lesbian who is Aboriginal may also experience racism, while the lesbian who is Aboriginal and who has a disability may experience homophobia, racism and ableism.

Intersectionality offers a perspective that takes into account the full range of identities and circumstances facing people (Simpson).

" An Overview of Traditional Knowledge and Medicine and Public Health in Canada. Ottawa, ON: National Aboriginal Health Organization,.2008. , P. 3. 3 May 2013 *<http://www.naho.ca/ publications/ tkOverviewPublicHealth.pdf>*.

Simpson, Joanna. Everyone Belongs. A Toolkit for Applying Intersectionality Ottawa, ON: Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women, 2009. 3 May 2013 *<http:// criaw-icref.ca/sites/criaw/files/Everyone_Belongs_e.pdf>*.

"Definition of Social Disadvantage." Manitoba Human Rights Commission, 3 May 2013 *<http://www.manitobahumanrights.ca/publications/policy/policy_definition-of-social_ disadvantage.html>*.
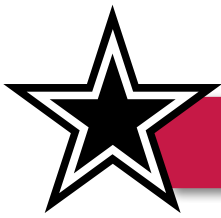
WHAT IS A GSA?
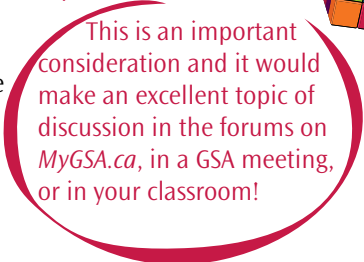
The term GSA stands for Gay-Straight Alliance (also known as LGBTQ positive space groups). Although the exact function of such clubs varies from school to school, GSAs are generally considered to be any student groups concerned with LGBTQ matters and sometimes also serving as support groups for LGBTQ 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 alternative 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-Spirit people and gender identity and gender expression are not explicitly encompassed by the expression GSA.

This is an important consideration and it would make an excellent topic of discussion in the forums on *MyGSA.ca*, in a GSA meeting, or in your classroom!

GSAs are generally considered to be any student groups concerned with LGBTQ matters.

GAY-STRAIGHT ALLIANCE
See the Terms & Concepts section in this kit or on *MyGSA.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:

University of Manitoba
Lambda Foundation for Excellence—Les McAfee Memorial Award

http://webapps.cc.umanitoba.ca/gradawards/index.asp

awards@umanitoba.ca

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 LBGT Studies

http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/pdffiles/gradawards.pdf

awards@registrar.uoguelph.ca

For a more comprehensive listing, and for information about Egale's GSA Bursary, check out *MyGSA.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
Foster Prize in Human Rights

http://tinyurl.com/3ymybry

University of Victoria
Candis Graham Writing Scholarship, Lambda Foundation Fund

http://registrar.uvic.ca/safa/bursaries/termsofawards/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

The LGBTOUT 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#LGBTOUT%20Student%20Award

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

PROVINCIAL

Sybil Shack Human Rights Youth Award

Dr. Sybil Shack received national recognition as an educator, writer, and broadcaster and was active in the promotion of human rights all her life. A remarkable and committed educator, Dr. Shack never confined her interests to the school system. She was a part of numerous boards and committees in Winnipeg including being a board member, a vice-president and co-convener of the Legislative Review Committee for The Manitoba Association for Rights and Liberties. In 2004 that commitment to the organization took the form of a bequest upon her passing.

In order to honour the life of Dr. Sybil Shack and her commitment to educating youth and to human rights, the Board of Directors of the Manitoba Association for Rights and Liberties decided to use her generous gift to recognize the work of young people that has had an impact on the advancement of rights and freedoms in Manitoba by creating the Sybil Shack Human Rights Youth Award.

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

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

GSA GUIDE

diversity = 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:**

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 (*page 8*). Where does your school fit in?

Check out 10 Faith-Based Reasons to Support LGBTQ Inclusive Education (*page 14*).

For responses to parental objections, see "Answering Adults' Concerns" from Around the Rainbow (*page 16*).

To find suggestions for potential allies, see Egale's "Becoming an Ally" (*page 18*). This might be useful to share with students or teachers in your school who do not identify as LGBTQ.

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?

What is your school's demographic? How might you reach out to all students in your school community?

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?

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,"

- 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.

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 (page 24).

- 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.

Amendments made to The Public Schools Act in 2013 concerning Safe and Inclusive Schools, requires school boards to have a respect for human diversity policy and to ensure that the policy is implemented in each school in the school division or school district. This policy is also meant to "address training for teachers and other staff about bullying and prevention and strategies for promoting respect for human diversity and a positive school environment".

The respect for human diversity policy must be prepared with "due regard for the principles of *The Human Rights Code*" and "must accommodate students who want to establish and lead organizations that

a) promote:

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

- gender equity
- antiracism
- the awareness and understanding of, and respect for, people who are disabled by barriers, or
- the awareness and understanding of, and respect for, people of all sexual orientations and gender identities

b) use the name "gay-straight alliance" or any other name that is consistent with the promotion of a positive school environment that is inclusive and accepting of all pupils."

The Public Schools Act can be found at: *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/ laws/statutes/ccsm/p250e.php*

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?

2

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?

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?

The **NON-INCLUSIVE** 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.

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.
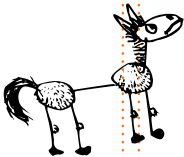
The **RESISTANT** School

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.
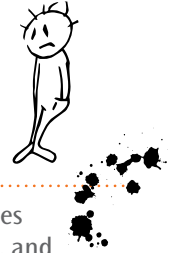
The **PASSIVE** School

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.*

10 FAITH-BASED REASONS TO SUPPORT LGBTQ INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Adapted from a TEACH (Teens Educating And Confronting Homophobia) resource.

1. Human dignity is paramount.

2. The ideals of compassion, acceptance, peace and love are shared by most religions and peoples throughout the world. Many religions have incredible histories of involvement with social justice and peace movements, activism, and a sense of duty to marginalized peoples.

3. Most religions share the belief that one should treat others like one would like others to treat oneself.

4. LGBTQ inclusive education does not teach that someone's religious values are wrong.

5. LGBTQ inclusive education works toward ensuring that each student has a safe environment in which to learn. Homophobia, biphobia and transphobia foster, condone, and wilfully ignore violence and hate.

6. The impact of disapproval and lack of acceptance opens individuals who identify as LGBTQ up to verbal, physical and emotional harassment, which are all forms of violence.

7. Sexual orientation is a prohibited ground of discrimination under the Canadian Charter of Rights as well as provincial/territorial Human Rights Codes. Gender identity is also included as a prohibited ground in some provinces and territories including Manitoba. Please visit www.egale.ca for a current list.

8. Homophobia, biphobia and transphobia hurt us all, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. Often, anyone who is perceived to be LGBTQ is subjected to harassment and victimization. Homophobia, biphobia and transphobia enforce rigid gender roles and norms, deny individual expression, and perpetuate stereotypes, myths, and misinformation.

9. LGBTQ inclusive education is NOT sex education. It is not about discussing or describing explicitly sexual activities. Support groups, such as Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs) that gather in schools serve as safe places that allow students to meet and discuss issues relevant to their lives and circumstances.

10. All human beings are valuable members of their communities regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.

ANSWERING ADULTS' CONCERNS

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 GLBTTQ families and that reflect our role in providing safe, nurturing space for all children.
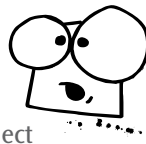
MY CHILD WILL BE INFLUENCED TO BE GAY OR TRANS.

Recognizing GLBTTQ families and playing with children from glbttq 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 famille Ottawa. This document, as well as a Toolkit for GLBBTQ 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 former 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/educators/books* 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.

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

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.

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**

Take part in Ally Week or create one if your school doesn't have one! *http://MyGSA.ca/meeting-event-ideas*

Participate in your school's GSA or start one if your school doesn't have one! *http://MyGSA.ca/setting-gsa*

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/setting-gsa/school-board-policies*

Volunteer at an LGBTQ human rights organization! *http://MyGSA.ca/gsas-canada*

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 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.

➡ **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.

> **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

It's hard to be that person to stand up and change something. It's even harder when you're a teenager. Being the change can be the most terrifying experience ever. But through all the struggles and all the journeys, you somehow find yourself and move forward regardless.

When I was in Grade 10, I tried making a Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) at my high school. My guidance counsellor told me that, according to division policy, the group was not allowed to advertise in the form of posters or announcements. This upset me, but I decided that I would make the group anyway in hopes of making some sort of difference. I tried my hardest to advertise but nothing seemed to be working. I got so discouraged that I just disbanded the group and went on with Grade 10 feeling like I had failed. I felt so uninspired.

In Grade 11, I was inspired by Bill 18, Manitoba's anti-bullying legislation. Bill 18 made it mandatory that all publicly funded schools must accommodate Gay-Straight Alliances. I finally thought that someone was listening to me, and I grasped onto this new hope of making a GSA once again. I went to the administration at my school, and they told me again that it was division policy that a GSA may not advertise itself. This time, I decided that enough was enough; I was not backing down. I brought media attention to the situation in hopes of getting my story out and showing my school division that I was serious.

I eventually had to meet before the board of my school division to convince them to change their policy on GSA advertising. I was given 10 minutes, and, to be honest, it was a frightening experience. I walked into the room full of the 14 people who run my entire school division. It definitely felt intimidating. The following day, I was told by my superintendent

that I had succeeded in changing the board's mind, and that it was now division-wide policy that a GSA may advertise in the same way as any other student group. Prior to meeting with the superintendent, I had major butterflies in my stomach. I was so anxious to see what the answer would be. When I got a "yes", I wasn't sure how to respond or how to feel– I just felt very overwhelmed and overjoyed.

All I remember was leaving the division office and clutching my fist into the air as I walked to my car. I won. It took me a while to process what I had done. I never believed that I could be the person to change something so huge. Especially being 17 at the time. My life has changed so much since then. And I'm so grateful for all the support I've gotten, all the people I've met, and the lessons I've learned. Something I've learned especially is that you CAN change things if you work hard enough. If you let go of your insecurities, pay no attention to negativity, and fight for what you believe in, anything's possible.

– Manitoba Student

First-hand account

In most respects, I live a normal teenage life. I read lots, hang out with friends, play video games, and pine for a significant other. There's nothing particularly remarkable or even all that stylish about me. I forgo tight jeans and bright sneakers for comfier pants and black cross-trainers. I don't own a single band shirt or even a character tee. I'm a pretty normal— even sort of drab— guy.

But what if I told you I was gay?

Would your opinion of me change, would you suddenly see me differently? Would you start analyzing my walk, trying to find some sort of sublimated hip twist, or examine my hand gestures for the trademark limp wrist? Would you ask me if I was certain, or (like my parents) just tell me it wasn't happening at all?

I went through many years of confusion and angst. To be honest, they still aren't over. My parents tried like anything to convince me it was just a phase, all in my mind. My dad told me about his own high-school crisis of sexuality, my mom about the time she'd practiced kissing with her sister. The stories didn't help; neither did the smug "I know where you are, and I know what will happen to you" attitude that seemed implicit in the tellings.

For years afterwards, whenever I was attracted to a pretty girl (and I'm attracted to both sexes. I just like boys more) I would wonder if this wasn't it, if the charade hadn't stopped and I was about to discover my true sexuality— straight. Usually I would agonize about it during the day, but at night, all I ever thought about were guys.

After informing my parents multiple times that males were my preferred partners for romance and otherwise, they seemed to accept it. To this day, it's an uncomfortable subject for them, and they still seem to have trouble wrapping their heads around it— but they haven't kicked me out, they don't hate me, and they would never try to force me to change. In those respects, I know, I'm luckier than a lot of people.

In the years since my coming out, I've had many cool opportunities. I helped found a GSA, spoke at a conference, and attended some others. I've made new friends, fellow LGBTQ people who I thought I'd have to wait 'til university to find. It's been really good, and I've no doubt it will get better.

So now that I've told you my story, you're probably wondering what the moral is. Well, I guess it's that we LGBTQ folks are everywhere. We're every colour, every religion, from every nation. Often we don't look any different than anyone else— so pray modulate your words. You never know if the kid laughing along at your "fag" joke has been inwardly crushed. Lord knows it's happened to me a good few times.

– Manitoba Student

A GSA Makes High School Tolerable

By Sara Kenny, Garden City Collegiate Gay-Straight Alliance

High school sucks. Being raised by a high school teacher, I was aware of this fact for a very long time. High school is where personalities clash and your face turns into a breeding ground for volcanoes while you and every single person around you is going through the awkward transition from childhood to the real world. I knew what I was getting into on my first day of Grade 9.

I never really thought about it much more than that. High school was the place where I'd have to morph into an adult for all to see and there was nothing else to it. All I had to do was keep my head down and get to the other side alive. Trying not to cringe at the mention of "that's so gay" in the halls was another pretty big aspect of my life too.

Three years ago, I heard an announcement for Garden City's first-ever Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA). There would be snacks for all that attended. Free lunch and a safe space? Of course I was down. It took some time to get into the groove of things in the GSA, but through being a part of it, I came to one of those after-school-special realizations: I didn't have to let high school suck as much as it did, I could actually do something to try to make things better. Mind blowing, I know.

So that was what I decided to do. Since then, I've been there on every opportunity I've had. Bake sales? Of course I was there, selling delicious brownies. Rainbow ribbons needed making? I was so there. Bill 18 getting opposed? Guess who was collecting signatures in support of it? Although attendance at the actual weekly meetings has sometimes been pretty low, through all these other experiences I've seen countless allies come out of the woodwork to help us and show their support. Teachers have put up Safe Space stickers in their windows and I haven't even heard "that's so gay" or other homophobic slurs being yelled out as much as I used to. Either I've gotten a less cynical disposition, or the fact that we have a GSA has actually gotten rid of a good chunk of that hate. I'd place my bets on the latter.

So yes, I still firmly believe that high school sucks, I just also believe that it can suck a little less when you want it to.

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.

Amendments made to The Public Schools Act in 2013 concerning Safe and Inclusive Schools, requires each school board to establish a respect for human diversity policy, and to ensure that the policy is implemented in each school in the school division or school district. The policy is to promote the acceptance of and respect for others in a safe, caring and inclusive school environment. In preparing its respect for human diversity policy, a school board must have due regard for the principles of The Human Rights Code." To find out more, see http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/p250e.php

Manitoba's Human Rights Code prohibited grounds for discrimination include both sexual orientation and gender identity. To find out more, see *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/h175e.php*

Some provincial Human Rights Commissions in Canada have specific policies around discrimination and harassment because of sexual orientation or gender identity. For an example see:

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

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

3 FIND A SCHOOL STAFF ADVISOR /SPONSOR

Even if your school doesn't require staff advisors or sponsors for clubs, 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.

4 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"** (*page 36*).

- 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 and create a mission statement. Discuss the nature and purpose of the GSA that is suitable for your school (support, providing safe spaces, raising visibility and awareness, and/or effecting educational and social change). Brainstorm possible activities and topics of discussion for future meetings.

See the **"Sample Safe Space Protocol"** from Supporting Our Youth (SOY) (*page 41*) and **"Icebreakers"** from the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network's Jump-Start Guide (*page 42*) 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 Bhatacharia, 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 Bhatacharia

➲ 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 Page 42);

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.

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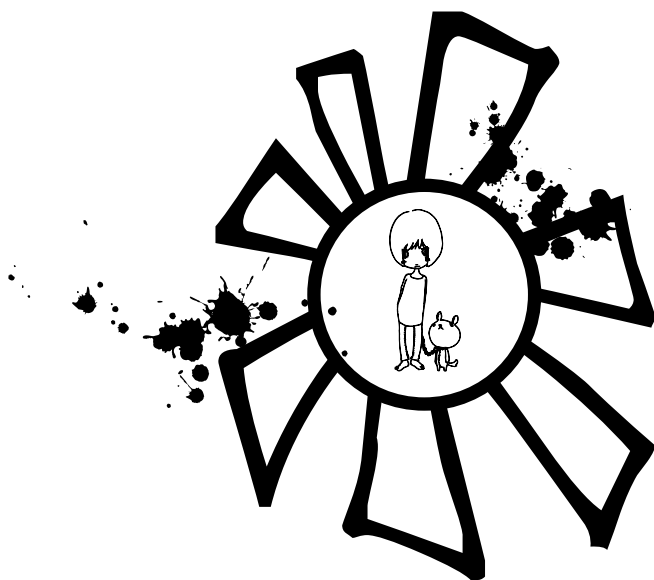
From the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network's Jump-Start Guide

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.

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?

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*!

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.
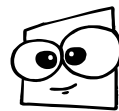
> **Check out the "Activities" (Section 10) for movie suggestions!**

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

Consider taking pictures of your club's activities and posting 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

DIS for DAT: Diversity in Sisler for the Dignity and Acceptance of all Teens, Sisler High School, Winnipeg

DIS for DAT looks to meet the needs of our LGBT community, to provide loving education to members of our community that feel challenged by the LGBT community and to reach out and support needy citizens in Winnipeg.

Maples GSA, Maples Collegiate, Winnipeg

Maples GSA provides a safe space for any student to seek advice, make friendships, and feel acceptance. We focus on information, advocacy for LGBTTQIA issues, and provide a safe atmosphere for all.

➡ HAVE A MOVIE NIGHT

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

!

Films, videos, and other multimedia educational and commercial resources may be very effective tools for exploring issues related to diversity of sexuality, gender identity/expression, and inclusion within a GSA support group or within the classroom. However, it is critical that teachers or other facilitators working with learners in GSA groups or other settings carefully preview, select, and plan for the use of these resources to ensure that they are used effectively and that learners benefit from viewing and discussing the film, video or other multimedia resource.

The listed films that follow have been found by some teachers and LGBTQ facilitators to be potentially useful resources. However, they have not been reviewed through a Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning formal resource review process, nor are they endorsed by the Department, and they do not carry a Manitoba recommended designation. Film and multimedia resources, as with all other literature or educational resource selections should be reviewed by school division staff before they are used by students. In this way, learner sensitivities and the perspectives of the student population, as well as the appropriateness of the resource for the intended learning objectives are taken into account. In addition, the effectiveness of a particular resource will depend greatly on what the teacher or facilitator does in terms of preparing the audience before viewing, as well as the needs and interaction of students during and post viewing.

A Jihad for Love	PG (Manitoba)
Apples and Oranges	G (Manitoba)
Beautiful Thing	14A (Manitoba)
Big Eden	PG (Manitoba)
Billy Elliot	PG (Manitoba)
Breakfast with Scot	14A (Manitoba)
But I'm a Cheerleader	14A (Manitoba)

C.R.A.Z.Y.	14A (Manitoba)
Chasing Amy	R (Manitoba)
Cure for Love	PG (Manitoba)
D.E.B.S.	14A (Manitoba)
Deb-we-win Ge-kend-am-aan, Our Place in the Circle	NFB
From Criminality to Equality	Canadian Documentary
Georgie Girl	Documentary
Get Real	14A (Manitoba)
Girl Inside	Canadian Documentary
Gray Matters	PG (Manitoba)
Hedwig and the Angry Inch	14A (Manitoba)
I Can't Think Straight	14A (Manitoba)
If These Walls Could Talk 2	14A (Manitoba)
Il était une fois dans l'est (Once Upon a Time in the East)	14A (Manitoba)
Imagine Me and You	14A (Manitoba)
In Other Words	PG (Manitoba)
The Incredibly True Adventure of 2 Girls in Love	14A (Manitoba)
It's Elementary	Documentary
J'ai tué ma mère (I Killed My Mother)	14A (Manitoba)
Johnny Greyeyes	14A (Manitoba)
Just Call Me Kade	Documentary
Kissing Jessica Stein	14A (Manitoba)
Les amours imaginaires (Heartbeats)	14A (Manitoba)
Living with Pride: The Ruth Ellis Story	Documentary
Ma vie en rose (My Life in Pink)	PG (Manitoba)
Mambo Italiano	14A (Manitoba)
Milk	14A (Manitoba)

Naissance des pieuvres (Water Lilies)	14A (Canada)
Nina's Heavenly Delights	PG (Manitoba)
One of Them	18A (Manitoba)
Open Secrets (Secrets de polichinelle)	14A (Manitoba)
Quand l'amour est gai (When Love is Gay)	14A (Manitoba)
Saving Face	14A (Manitoba)
School's Out	G (Manitoba)
Secrets de polichinelle (Open Secrets)	14A (Manitoba)
Serving in Silence: The Margarethe Cammermeyer Story	14A (Manitoba)
Shaking the Tree	14A (Manitoba)
Show Me Love	14A (Manitoba)
Sticks and Stones	G (Manitoba)
Taking Charge	PG (Manitoba)
Talk to Me	14A (Manitoba)
That's a Family!	Documentary
The Business of Fancydancing	PG (Manitoba)
The Truth About Jane	PG, Mature Theme Warning (Manitoba)
TransAmerica	14A (Manitoba)
TransGeneration	14A (Manitoba)
Trevor	14A (Manitoba)
Two Spirits	PG (Manitoba)
When Love is Gay (Quand l'amour est gai)	NFB

Manitoba classifications for movies can be found on the Manitoba Film Classification Board's website: *http://www.gov. mb.ca/chc/mfcb/index.html*.

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 DIVISION 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?

What is your school's policy on LGBTQ matters?

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!

Amendments made to The Public Schools Act in 2013 concerning Safe and Inclusive Schools requires each school board to establish a respect for human diversity policy, and to ensure that the policy is implemented in each school in the school division or school district. The policy is to promote the acceptance of and respect for others in a safe, caring and inclusive school environment. In preparing its respect for human diversity policy, a school board must have due regard for the principles of *The Human Rights Code*. The policy must accommodate student activity that promotes the school environment as being inclusive of all pupils, including student activities and organizations that use the name 'gay-straight alliance'."

For more information see: *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/ statutes/ccsm/p250e.php*.

In addition, several school divisions (to date) have policies that relate to respect for human diversity which are specifically focused on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Winnipeg School Division (WSD) was the first to adopt human rights/anti-homophobia initiatives in 1999. These included mandatory human rights/ anti-homophobia training for teachers (existing and new hires). In 2004 WSD adopted a Human Rights Policy and in 2012 they adopted a new Diversity and Equity Education Policy.

In 2012, two other school divisions adopted similar policies:

- Louis Riel School Division has a Respect for Human Diversity: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity policy
- Seven Oaks School Division has a Safe Learning Environment for LGBTTQ Students policy.

You can read more about three of these policies further on in this section.

Please note that amendments made to The Public Schools Act passed in September of 2013 may require these policies to be revised to align with the new requirements.

Check your school division's website for its respect for human diversity 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 YOU ARE UNABLE TO FIND YOUR SCHOOL DIVISION'S respect for human diversity policy on its website, ask your principal for a copy of it. If your principal doesn't have a copy, phone your school division to find out what its policy is regarding LGBTQ matters.

USING THE RESOURCES AND GUIDANCE PROVIDED HERE,

review and evaluate your own school division´s policy. If your school division´s 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, your principal, or a parent to ask for support in changing it.

FOLLOW UP WITH YOUR PRINCIPAL

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

Several school divisions in Manitoba already have policies that relate to respect for human diversity. Three are included here for your convenience, along with two gender based violence policies from the Toronto and Vancouver school boards.

WSD Diversity and Equity Education Policy

Policy: IGAB
Approved: October 1, 2012

1. GENERAL PHILOSOPHY

1.1 The Winnipeg School Division is committed to an educational philosophy that recognizes the fundamental equality of people of all origins and abilities. It supports and accommodates the acceptance, respect and appreciation for all people, their languages and cultures, for their commonalities as well as their differences.

1.2 Diversity and Equity Education endeavours to prepare students with the knowledge and skills to function socially, emotionally, politically, and economically in Canadian society. Students will be provided with opportunities to:

- develop a positive self-image;
- become contributing members of Canadian society;
- enjoy equal rights in a diverse and inclusive learning environment.

1.3 The Winnipeg School Division is committed to meeting the diverse needs of all learners.

1.4 The Diversity and Equity Education policy supports, and is congruent with, existing Winnipeg School Division policies.

1.5 Diversity and Equity Education is the process of making education reflect a belief of the basic equality of all people irrespective of gender identity, sexual orientation, age, ethnic origin, ancestry, culture, socio-economic status, religion, family status, mental and physical disability. Learning environments present opportunities to transform diversity into benefits and advantages for all.

1.6 Diversity and Equity Education is an integral part of all school programming within the established outcomes of the curricula approved by Manitoba Education.

2. DEFINITION–DIVERSITY AND EQUITY EDUCATION

2.1 Diversity encompasses all the ways in which human beings are both similar and different. It means understanding and accepting the uniqueness of individuals, as well as respecting their differences. Diversity may include, but is not limited to gender identity, sexual orientation; age; ethnic origin; ancestry, culture; socio-economic status; religion; family status; mental and physical disability.

2.2 Equity refers to the provision of equitable opportunity, equitable access to programming, services, and resources critical to the achievement of outcomes for all students and the staff who serve them. Equity and equality are not necessarily synonymous, as equity can be achieved through unequal means.

3. GOALS OF DIVERSITY AND EQUITY EDUCATION

3.1 The general goals of Diversity and Equity Education in The Winnipeg School Division shall include:

(a) The development of positive attitudes toward diversity within our communities;

(b) The development of an understanding of, and respect for the individual's identity, and;

(c) The development of an understanding of, and respect for the identity of others in a diverse society.

4. CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

4.1 The Winnipeg School Division is committed to providing students with the opportunities to acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values necessary to live in and contribute to a complex and diverse world by:

(a) Ensuring that the principles and practices of Diversity and Equity Education permeate teaching and learning in all subject areas;

(b) Ensuring that teaching and learning resources accurately reflect Canada's diverse communities.

5. ASSESSMENT AND PLACEMENT

5.1 The Winnipeg School Division is committed to assessment and programming decisions that are sensitive to students' diverse backgrounds, including personal and/ or family experiences by:

(a) Assuring bias does not limit a student's access to programming and placement and that such decisions be evidence based;

(b) Ensuring that parents/guardians are able to consider and make informed choices about their child's educational program and in cases where students are 18 years or older that they are provided with support and opportunities to make informed choices about their educational programs;

(c) Providing ongoing assessment, programming, and placement decisions that meet individual student needs and offer opportunities for students to reach their potential. This process must take into account: gender identity, sexual orientation, age, ethnic origin, ancestry, culture, socio-economic status, religion, family status, mental and physical disability, previous education and the student's future plans.

6. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

6.1 The Winnipeg School Division is committed to providing learning opportunities and training for all employees to enhance their competencies and sensitivity in working effectively with students, parents, staff and community members of diverse backgrounds.

7. SCHOOL-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

7.1 Effective school-community partnerships involve representation and active participation from the members within the community which allows for the inclusion of perspectives, experiences, and the identification of the needs which will enhance educational opportunities for all learners. The Winnipeg School Division recognizes the need to create an inclusive environment in which all students, parents, staff and community members from diverse backgrounds feel welcome and included.

7.2 The Winnipeg School Division shall continue to support relationships that promote effective participation in the education process by:

(a) Encouraging parent advisory councils, school based parent-teacher committees and parent centres to be reflective of the diverse communities they serve;

(b) Ensuring communication with parents and community partners is respectful of their language and culture;

(c) Providing opportunities for the school community to enhance their mutual understanding of, and respect for diversity;

(d) Ensuring staffing practices in accordance with policy GBA-Employment Equity.

8. RESPONSIBILITIES

8.1 The Chief Superintendent, or designate, shall be responsible for the implementation of this policy.

8.2 The senior administration shall ensure members of their departments implement the general goals of Diversity and Equity Education policy.

8.3 The principal shall be responsible for ensuring that the general goals of the Diversity and Equity Education policy are implemented in the school.

8.4 All employees shall be responsible for ensuring that their practices and conduct are consistent with the general philosophy and goals of Diversity and Equity Education.

8.5 The Professional Support Services Personnel shall be responsible for providing assistance to the instructional staff in the development of an awareness of Diversity and Equity Education, appropriate instructional strategies, assessment and resources.

Legislative Context:
i Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
ii Manitoba Human Rights Code
iii Public Schools Appropriate Education Act

Louis Riel School Division Policies, Guidelines and Procedures

Policy: RESPECT for HUMAN DIVERSITY: SEXUAL ORIENTATION
and GENDER IDENTITY
Adopted: December 20, 2011

I. POLICY

The Louis Riel School Board bases its commitment to promoting respect for human sexual diversity on the following values and beliefs:

• Commitment to equity and respect for human diversity are fundamental values of the public education system

• Honouring and achieving the divisional Vision and Mission depends upon safe, inviting and inclusive learning environments and workplaces that respect human diversity

• Sexual orientation and gender identity form significant and integral aspects of the unique development and personality of every child and young person

• All students and employees have the right to learn and work in environments free of negative conduct or actions based on gender bias, sexual stereotyping, sexual orientation or gender identity

II. GUIDELINES

A. The Louis Riel School Division will strive to promote respect for human sexual diversity within its schools, learning environments and workplaces.

B. The Division's staff has the responsibility to promote respect for human sexual diversity, and to support learning environments and workplaces that are free of negative conduct or actions based on gender bias, sexual stereotyping, sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

C. To support Guidelines A and B, the Division is committed to providing resources and professional learning experiences that support all employees and students to honour the provisions of this policy.

D. The Division expects students to support safe and inclusive learning environments by respecting human diversity and refraining from expressing negative conduct or actions based on gender bias, sexual stereotyping, sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

E. The Division is committed to responding to any students or parents whose need for information about gender identity or sexual orientation leads them to request supports, including but not limited to resource materials, counselling services or other supports available through school or divisional personnel.

F. "Gender Identity" refers to an individual's sense of self as "male", "female", or an identity between or outside those categories (Public Health Agency of Canada).

G. "Sexual orientation" is the term used to describe an individual's sexual, psychological and emotional feelings of attraction towards another person (Public Health Agency of Canada).

III. PROCEDURES

A. The Division shall provide regular opportunities for professional learning that meets staff needs, roles and responsibilities, including but not limited to foundational training and other professional learning opportunities about sexual orientation and gender identity.

B. The Superintendent of Schools & CEO or designate will direct processes that enhance, as needed, divisionally reviewed resources for all schools' libraries, with reference to divisional **Policy IJ – Selection of Instructional Materials**.

C. All schools will implement appropriate provincially approved curricula that supports student learning about human sexual diversity.

D. The Superintendent of Schools & CEO or designate shall direct processes to assess the implementation of this policy and guide the divisional communication plan's support for sexual diversity, as part of the Division's ongoing planning processes per **Policy ILC – Divisional Data Collection Initiatives**.

E. To respond to actions that contravene this policy, the Division and its school Principals shall reference, as necessary, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Manitoba Human Rights Code and divisional policies, including but not limited to:

    ACF/G   Interpersonal Relations and Resolution of Concerns about Harassment/Discrimination

    ADD   Safe Schools

    JFCE   Responsible Use of Technology in the Learning Environment

    JK   Student Behaviour in the Learning Environment

    JICI/JICK Responses to Use of Weapons/Violent Behaviour

    JKD/E   Student Suspension/Expulsion

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

The *Constitution Act [1982]*, which includes the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, is the supreme law of Canada. As such, all other laws and applicable workings of governments, including school boards, must be consistent with its provisions. The Charter and Supreme Court of Canada decisions made under the Charter guarantee everyone equality regardless of race, national or ethnic origin, citizenship, colour, religion, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, age or mental or physical disability. The Charter and Supreme Court decisions also promote the development of programs designed to redress the conditions of disadvantaged individuals or groups.

Manitoba Human Rights Code

The Human Rights Code of Manitoba recognizes the individual worth and dignity of every member of the human family, and this principle underlies the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and other solemn undertakings, international and domestic, that Canadians honour.

Implicit in the above principle is the right of all individuals to treatment that is solely based on their personal merits, and to equality of opportunity with all other individuals, in all matters.

Public Health Agency of Canada

Questions & Answers: Gender Identity in Schools. Ottawa, Ontario. Her Majesty the Queen in right of Canada, 2011.
Catalogue number: HP5-97/2-2011
ISBN: 978-1-100-53020-8

Questions & Answers: Sexual Orientation in Schools. Ottawa, Ontario. Her Majesty the Queen in right of Canada, 2011.
Catalogue number: HP5-97/1-2011
ISBN: 978-1-100-53106-9

Seven Oaks School Division
Safe Learning Environment for LGBTTQ Students

Policy: #JA
Adopted: April 9, 2012

The Seven Oaks School Division is committed to ensuring a save positive and respectful learning environment for all student who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, two-spirit or who are questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity. This respects the letter and spirit of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, The Manitoba Human Rights Code and the Seven Oaks School Division Mission Statement.

Harassment

The Division will provide a safe environment free from harassment and discrimination. Homophobic harassment is demeaning treatment of all student, parents and guardians and employees regardless of sexual orientation.

Any language or behaviour that degrades, denigrates, labels, stereotypes, incites hatreds, prejudice, discrimination, harassment towards students or employees on the basis of their real or perceived sexual orientation or gender indentification will not be tolerated.

Staff will deal with issues or harassment proactively by educating students to value diversity, respect difference and behaviour accordingly. Where necessary progressive discipline will be used to eliminate homophobic harassment.

Student Support

The Seven Oaks School Division is committed to maintaining a safe learning environment which provides counselling and support to students who identify themselves on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. All counsellors employed or contracted by the Division 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 inform their school community to these policies. All staff will be sensitive to lesbian, gay, transgender, transsexual, two-spirit, bisexual and questioning students as well as students from LGBTTQ families.

Schools are encouraged to designate staff persons to be a safe and available contact for students who identify themselves on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. Schools are encouraged in their school 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. Gay/Straight Alliance clubs (GSAs) or other student action groups dealing with discrimination and harassment are encouraged at secondary schools in the Division.

Curriculum and Learning Resources

The Division 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 LGBTTQ communities.

Staff Development

The Division will ensure ongoing staff development in support of this policy.

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

Policy P071
Adopted: April 14, 2010

Here is an example of a school district policy that has included LGBTQ issues within the context of gender-based violence. The result is that issues like homophobia, biphobia and transphobia and harassment related to real or perceived gender identity or sexual orientation are included in an already important discussion. This makes it more likely that school staff will be able to detect these forms of bullying, discrimination and harassment, understand their gravity, and to know how to intervene.

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.

> It is important that policies also include references to *perceived* gender, sexual identity, biological sex or sexual behavior. Straight and cisgender students (and adults) may also be experiencing homophobia, biphobia or transphobia because of society's stereotypes of masculine and feminine behaviour and appearance.

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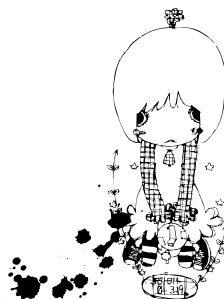
Gender-based violence operates on a societal imbalance of power and control based on social constructions of sexual identity, sexual orientation, gender, perceived gender and sexual behaviour. This imbalance may manifest in multiple forms as aggressive and discriminatory behaviours and expressions of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

> ✳ This policy reaches beyond what might happen in the halls or on school property, which is crucial especially with the advent of cyberbullying.

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.

Training– and ongoing training– are key to creating an environment that is safe. Not all violence is obvious, and sometimes homophobic, biphobic and transphobic comments can be missed because they often play into the stereotypes society has about gender that we are constantly bombarded with in the media.

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.

This gets the whole school community involved and makes this policy a living, breathing document.

(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. *Integrating these issues into the curriculum signal their importance as well as ensuring that all students learn about them.*

(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. *Starting in elementary school is appropriate because we are exposed to stereotypes that perpetuate violence and discrimination in the media from an early age.*

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

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.

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

Gender-based violence, including sexual assault and sexual harassment, is occurring at alarming rates and is largely going unreported[1]. Measures relating to the protection of 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 LGBTTQ Policy

This is another example of a policy that very clearly outlines the desire to create safe spaces for LGBTQ students and staff. Policies are important for recognizing and acknowledging that there is an issue, for raising awareness and getting administrators and staff talking about it – as well as for working for change. The clearer the policy is at including LGBTQ issues – and explaining their impact and importance – the better, since clarity leaves little room for personal interpretation.

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

> **By including LGBTQ explicitly in this policy, there is no question who is included. One way homophobia, biphobia and transphobia manifest is by exclusion and lack of recognition of the lived experiences of (and different barriers that exist for) LGBTQ individuals. "Queer" is missing from this list.**

The Vancouver School Board's LGBTTQ Policy cont'd

Pro-active strategies and guidelines are just as important as those that are reactive – perhaps even more so if they are effective.

questioning students, employees and families are welcomed and included in all aspects of education and school life and treated with respect and dignity. *It is wonderful that this policy is so explicit! "Welcomed and included in all aspects of school life" is broad enough and clear enough at the same time to address homophobia, biphobia and transphobia wherever it appears.* 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. *Greater awareness is a crucial component of creating safer spaces for LGBTQ individuals.* This policy is also drafted to ensure that homophobic complaints are 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. *Being able to identify individual discriminatory attitudes and behaviours as such is key. Homophobic comments like "That's so gay" have become common and accepted parts of youth language and are often not seen for the damaging effect they have on LGBTQ individuals and how they are perceived. Systemic barriers are even harder to notice when they are not impacting you personally. But by clearly outlining both of these as areas of focus, the Vancouver School Board acknowledges that discrimination happens through individuals as well as through policies and systems.*

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. *This is amazing - because who better to tell you what is happening and how they are affected than the people who are experiencing it?* The Board shall consult with the LGBTTQ Advisory Committee to ensure that policy directions, priorities and implementation of programs and services are consistent with this LGBTTQ policy.

An Advisory Committee specifically for LGBTQ issues is a good idea to help bring (and keep) attention to the need for safety and awareness.

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 LGBTTQ issues with students. *Counsellors who are educated on LGBTQ issues are very important because their role is to support and guide people who are struggling. Homophobia, biphobia and transphobia in this environment can be particularly damaging since it flies in the face of what we expect. Furthermore, for some students seeing a counsellor may be their last resort, so timely and appropriate intervention may be even more crucial.* 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. *Homophobia, biphobia and transphobia are experienced by children of LGBTQ parents because of their family structure. These students may fall under the radar because they themselves are straight or cisgender, but the attack on one's family can be just as impactful.*

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.

> ✸ **Students who come from LGBTQ families are not included in this list, and should be (see last two comments above).**

> ✸ **Even heterosexual individuals can be victims to homophobic (or biphobic or transphobic) harassment if they do not conform to society's expectations of masculinity or femininity, and are percieved as LGBTQ.**

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." *Naming these behaviours and including them explicitly in the code of conduct is important in order to raise awareness and visibility as well as to increase the likelihood that action will be taken. This will leave less room for interpretation.*

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.

> Seeing yourself and your life reflected positively in the curriculum is important to self esteem and engagement. Omissions speak just as loudly as negative messages about the value society places on a particular experience or reality.

Beyond individual behaviour, the curriculum is full of messages about what and who has value. By educating staff about systemic homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and heterosexism (and how they manifest) staff can critically examine the curriculum they use including their own language. Awareness can be raised by using offending examples as teaching tools to show how homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, heterosexism and cisnormativity manifest themselves.

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 LGBTTQ 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.

LGBTQ individuals exist in every culture, all over the world. Curriculum materials should reflect the diversity within LGBTQ communities, regardless of the diversity of the students in the district, as part of preparing students to be global citizens.

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.

Training and professional development should extend beyond school staff so that all members of the school community receive these important messages (regardless of how they identify).

Positive messages are important for creating a safe environment because they set the tone in the school and send a message to the school community of who is valued and important. This is proactive.

Reactive support is just as crucial as proactive support. Immediate recognition and intervention are necessary to ensure schools are safe for all members of the school community.

As communities and legislation change, ongoing dialogue is important to keep informed about the needs and realities of LGBTQ individuals and how best to create and sustain safe spaces.

Having LGBTQ parents and parents of LGBTQ students on parent advisory councils helps to create inclusive schools because the needs and realities of LGBTQ parents and LGBTQ students can be represented and considered in decision making .

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 LGBTTQ 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 LGBTT-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 LGBTTQ 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

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

create posters, videos, pamphlets, stickers, etc. to share your message.

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

Want some ideas and tools to explore sexual and gender stereotypes? Check out the following:

• Heterosexual Questionnaire

• Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack II– Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

Adapted from the work of Dr. Martin Rochlin (1972)

LGBTQ persons are often confronted with questions and assumptions about their lives that are stereotypical, incorrect and disrespectful. This questionnaire can help non-LGBTQ people understand what it feels like to be faced with these assumptions. It can be used to raise awareness of heterosexual privilege and bias.

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 leaders

11. With all the societal support for marriage, the divorce rate is spiraling. Why are there so few stable relationships among heterosexuals?

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 extremist co-horts, 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 innate 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?

Now that you have completed the questionnaire, reflect on the experience and share your thoughts with others in your group.

DAILY EFFECTS OF STRAIGHT PRIVILEGE

This list is based on Peggy McIntosh's article on white privilege (Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack) 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.

- 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*.

DAILY EFFECTS OF CISGENDER PRIVILEGE

These statements are also based on Peggy McIntosh's article on white privilege and are taken from a number of cisgender privilege questionnaires (see below for references). These dynamics are but a few examples of the privilege which cisgender people have. Trans-identified, gender queer and gender non-conforming people have a range of different experiences, but cannot count on most of these conditions in their lives.

- I can use public restrooms without fear of verbal abuse, physical intimidation, or arrest

- I can use public facilities such as gym locker rooms and store changing rooms without stares, fear, or anxiety.

- My validity as a man/woman/human is not based on how much surgery I've had or how well I "pass" as non-transgender.

- I have the ability to walk through the world and generally blend-in, not being constantly stared or gawked at, whispered about, pointed at, or laughed at because of my gender expression.

- Strangers call me by the name I provide, and don't ask what my "real name" [birth name] is and then assume that they have a right to call me by that name.

- I can reasonably assume that my ability to acquire a job will not be denied on the basis of my gender identity/expression.

- I can flirt, date and form a relationship and not fear that my biological status may be cause for rejection or attack, nor will it cause my partner to question their sexual orientation.

- If I end up in the emergency room, I do not have to worry that my gender will keep me from receiving appropriate treatment.

- I am not required to undergo an extensive psychological evaluation in order to receive basic medical care.

- I can easily find role models and mentors to emulate who share my identity.

- Hollywood accurately depicts people of my gender in films and television, and does not solely make my identity the focus of a dramatic storyline, or the punchline for a joke.

- I am able to assume that everyone I encounter will understand my identity, and not think I'm confused, misled, or hell-bound when I reveal it to them.

- I can purchase clothes that match my gender identity without being refused service/mocked by staff or questioned.

- I can purchase shoes that fit my gender expression without having to order them in special sizes or ask someone to custom-make them.

- No stranger checking my identification or drivers license will ever insult or glare at me because my name or sex does not match the sex they believed me to be based on my gender expression.

- I can reasonably assume that I will not be denied services at a hospital, bank, or other institution because the staff does not believe the gender marker on my ID card matches my gender identity.

- I am able to tick a box on a form for gender without someone disagreeing, and telling me not to lie.

- I can go to places with friends on a whim knowing there will be bathrooms there I can use.

- I don't have to remind my extended family over and over to use proper gender pronouns (e.g., after transitioning).

- I don't have to deal with old photographs that did not reflect who I truly am.

- I never considered hiding my body parts by binding or tucking.

- It is unlikely that I would consider changing my voice.

http://itspronouncedmetrosexual.com/2011/11/list-of-cisgender-privileges/
http://queersunited.blogspot.ca/2008/08/cisgender-privilege-checklist.html

Literature can be an effective resource for exploring issues related to diversity of sexuality, gender identity/ expression, and inclusion within a GSA support group or within the classroom. However, it is critical that teachers or other facilitators working with learners in GSA groups or other settings carefully preview, select, and plan for the use of these resources to ensure that they are used effectively and that learners benefit from reading and discussing the resource.

The list of books that follow may be useful resources. However, they have not been reviewed through a Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning formal resource review process, nor are they endorsed by the Department, and they do not carry a Manitoba recommended designation.

All literature or other educational resource selections should be reviewed by school division staff before they are used by students. In this way, learner sensitivities and the perspectives of the student population, as well as the appropriateness of the resource for the intended learning objectives are taken into account. In addition, the effectiveness of a particular resource will depend greatly on what the teacher or facilitator does in terms of preparing the audience before reading, as well as the needs and interaction of students during and post reading.

HAVE A BOOK CLUB

Check out this list of Egale 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*!

Absolutely, Positively Not (2005) by David LaRochelle. In a touching, sometimes hilarious coming-out story, Steven DeNarski, 16, tries to deny he is gay. . . . The wry, first-person narrative is wonderful as it goes from personal angst to outright farce (Steven takes a pet golden retriever to the school dance). The characters are drawn with surprising depth, and Steven finds quiet support, as well as betrayal, in unexpected places. Many readers, gay and straight, will recognize Steven's need to talk to someone.

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 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.

Koolaids (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, Koolaids 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."

She Walks for Days Inside a Thousand Eyes: A Two Spirit Story (2008) by Sharron Proulx-Turner. Sharron Proulx-Turner combines poetry and history to delve into the little-known lives of two-spirit women. Regarded with both wonder and fear when first encountered by the West, First Nations women living with masculine and feminine principles in the same body had important roles to play in society, as healers and visionaries, before they were suppressed during the colonial invasion. She walks for days inside a thousand eye (a two-spirit story) creatively juxtaposes first-person narratives and traditional stories with the voices of contemporary two-spirit women, voices taken from nature, and the teachings of Water, Air, Fire and Mother Earth.

So Hard to Say (2004) by Alex Sanchez. Frederick is the shy new boy and Xio is the bubbly chica who lends him a pen on the first day of class. They become fast friends-but when Xio decides she wants to be more than friends, Frederick isn't so sure. He loves hanging out with Xio and her crew, but he doesn't like her that way. Instead, he finds himself thinking more and more about Victor, the captain of the soccer team. Does that mean Frederick's gay?

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.
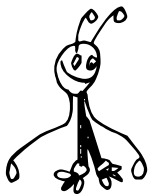
PLAY GAMES

Try the "Icebreakers" (*page 42*) or "A Sociometry of Oppressions" (*page 102*). 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).

A SOCIOMETRY OF OPPRESSIONS

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

Grades: 10-12
Time: 30 to 60 minutes

Objectives:

• 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.)

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* discussion forums!

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 EAL 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.

15 year-old white male who skips school most days and hangs out at the mall. He is starting to do drugs.	17 year-old white lesbian stay-at-home-mom of two small children living on welfare. She is studying by distance education.	19 year-old, vegetarian female rock musician in a relationship with another woman. She identifies as bisexual.
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.	17 year-old Caucasian female who is living on the street. She is addicted to crack.	19 year-old lesbian female, who is a practising Wiccan.
19 year-old white heterosexual female who is in a relationship with an older Jamaican-Canadian man.	16 year-old white male who lives with his mom. She is addicted to heroin. He was recently beaten up by her boyfriend.	16 year-old gay male who is in the closet. He dates girls and plays sports. He recently met a guy he likes.
16 year-old lesbian high school student who uses sign language to communicate.	16 year-old First Nations female student going out with a white male. She practices traditional native spirituality.	16 year-old female who works at the bakery to help her family that has recently immigrated. Her mom speaks very little English.
17 year-old student who identifies as queer and is a practicing Muslim.	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.	Attractive and popular athlete with 2 dads. Nobody knows.

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 Oppressions 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.

Egale Canada Human Rights Trust
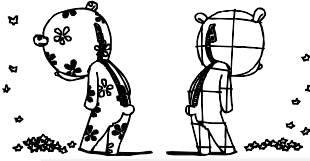
21. I feel comfortable letting others know my religious beliefs.

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

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

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

Q & A

Q & A

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?*

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. See: 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*

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.

1. In 2004 Manitoba made it law that schools must ensure safe and caring environments for all students, that regulations be made about positive and safe school environments, codes of conduct and emergency plans, and that committees be created to advise principals in preparing these codes and plans. The Safe Schools Charter amended The Public Schools Act and The Education Administration Act. Both apply to all public and funded independent schools. See *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/bills/38-2/b030e.php*

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. See *http://MyGSA.ca/setting-gsa/homophobia-transphobia-statistics*. The use of homophobic language detracts from creating safer spaces in learning environments.

3. According to Manitoba's Public Schools Act, "every school board shall ensure that each pupil enrolled in a school within

the jurisdiction of the school board is provided with a safe and caring school environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviours." The Public Schools Act applies to all public and funded independent schools. See *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/p250e.php*

4. Amendments made to The Public Schools Act in 2013 concerning Safe and Inclusive Schools requires school boards to have a respect for human diversity policy and to ensure that the policy is implemented in each school in the school division or school district. The respect for human diversity policy will "promote and enhance:

   • a safe and inclusive learning environment

   • the acceptance and respect for others, and

   • the creation of a positive school environment"

   This policy is also meant to "address training for teachers and other staff about bullying and prevention and strategies for promoting respect for human diversity and a positive school environment"... and must be prepared with "due regard for the principles of The Human Rights Code."

   The Public Schools Act applies to all public and funded independent schools. See *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/p250e.php*

5. Amendments made to The Public Schools Act in 2013 concerning Safe and Inclusive Schools provided a new definition of bullying to be included in The Public Schools Act: "In this Act, "bullying" is behaviour that

   (a) is intended to cause, or should be known to cause, fear, intimidation, humiliation, distress or other forms of harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem, reputation or property; or

   (b) is intended to create, or should be known to create, a negative school environment for another person."

It goes on to state that bullying can be written, verbal, physical or electronic communication (cyberbullying).

"That's so gay" is homophobic and causes harm to an LGBTQ-identified person's feelings and self-esteem. It is also causing a negative school environment for you. Your teachers should intervene.

The Public Schools Act applies to all public and funded independent schools. See *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ ccsm/p250e.php2/b018e.php*

6. The *Manitoba 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 Manitoba. The *Code* makes it against the law to discriminate against someone or to harass anyone because of sexual orientation or gender identity. 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.

Not respecting the protected grounds of non-discrimination in the Code could result in what the Manitoba Human Rights Commission calls a "poisoned environment." See *http://www.manitobahumanrights.ca/sexualharassment.html*

7. The Manitoba Teachers' Society has a policy on Equity Issues that includes the following commitments: that "Society members and employees promote and understanding and active inclusion of 'equity-seeking groups' the applicable characteristics of which are specified in the Manitoba Human Rights Code, Section 9(2); that the Society support all members

in providing safe and inclusive learning environments that respect human diversity and prevent the expression of negative judgments based on gender bias, sexual stereotyping, sexual orientation and/or gender identity; the elimination of all forms of discrimination in the schools and communities of Manitoba, with discrimination being defined by the Manitoba Human Rights Code, Section 9(1); that the Society actively advocate and promote actions that provide plans for prevention of and appropriate responses to discriminatory incidents, develop a climate of respect for diversity, and promote positive interactions among all members of the education community." See: *http://www.mbteach.org/library2/constitution-bylawsa-and-policies-governing-the-manitoba-teachers-society*

8. The Department of Education and Advanced Learning document *A Whole School Approach to Safety and Belonging: Preventing Violence and Bullying* states that "A whole-school approach to safety and belonging requires a conscious effort to meet the needs of all students in all educational environments. This is particularly important in terms of appropriate responses to negative or hurtful behaviours." Your teacher should intervene. See: *http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/guidance/whole_school_approach.html*

9. Manitoba's Public Schools Act requires each school division to "ensure that each pupil enrolled in a school within the jurisdiction of the school board is provided with a safe and caring school environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviours."

    Homophobic remarks (for example "that's so gay", "faggot" or "dyke") that go unchallenged undermine this safe and caring environment – not just for LGBTQ students, but also for students perceived as LGBTQ, as well as staff and family members.

A safe and caring school environment allows students to focus on learning and reach their potential.

The Public Schools Act applies to all public and funded independent schools. See *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/p250e.php*

10. Several school divisions in Manitoba already have respect for human diversity policies that specifically mention sexual orientation and gender identity. You can find some of them in the Guide section of this kit. Check out your division's policy, bring it to your teacher's attention, and speak up!

11. 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). See *http://www.unicef.org/crc/*. 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.

A2: No, it is not. The terms and the song are clearly intended as insults and are causing you distress.

> **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?*

1. According to the Manitoba Public Schools Act, schools must have a code of conduct. The code of conduct must include a statement that abuse of any kind, bullying, and discrimination on the basis of any characteristic listed in the Manitoba Human Rights Code are unacceptable. See *http://web2.gov. mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/p250e.php*.

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.

Furthermore, amendments made to The Public Schools Act in 2013 concerning Safe and Inclusive Schools require school boards to have a respect for human diversity policy and to ensure that the policy is implemented in each school in the school division or school district. The respect for human diversity policy will "promote and enhance:

- a safe and inclusive learning environment
- the acceptance and respect for others, and
- the creation of a positive school environment"

This policy is also meant to "address training for teachers and other staff about bullying and prevention and strategies for promoting respect for human diversity and a positive school environment"... and must be prepared with "due regard for the principles of The Human Rights Code." See *http://web2. gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/p250e.php*

Your teacher should intervene.

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. See *http://MyGSA.ca/setting-gsa/homophobia-transphobia-statistics*. 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. See *http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/charter/1.html*. 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. The Manitoba Teachers Society has a policy on Equity Issues that includes the following commitments: that "Society members and employees promote and understanding and active inclusion of 'equity-seeking groups' the applicable characteristics of which are specified in the Manitoba Human Rights Code, Section 9(2); that the Society support all members in providing safe and inclusive learning environments that respect human diversity and prevent the expression of negative judgments based on gender bias, sexual stereotyping, sexual orientation and/or gender identity; the elimination of all forms of discrimination in the schools and communities of Manitoba, with discrimination being defined by the Manitoba Human Rights Code, Section 9(1); that the Society actively advocate and promote actions that provide plans for prevention of and appropriate responses to discriminatory incidents, develop

a climate of respect for diversity, and promote positive interactions among all members of the education community." See: *http://www.mbteach.org/library2/constitution-bylawsa-and-policies-governing-the-manitoba-teachers-society*

5. Amendments made to The Public Schools Act in 2013 concerning Safe and Inclusive Schools provided a new definition of bullying to be included in The Public Schools Act: "In this Act, "**bullying**" is behaviour that

    (a) is intended to cause, or should be known to cause, fear, intimidation, humiliation, distress or other forms of harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem, reputation or property; or

    (b) is intended to create, or should be known to create, a negative school environment for another person."

    The Act goes on to state that bullying can be written, verbal, physical or electronic communication (cyberbullying).

    Making up songs about you is transphobic and causes harm to a trans-identified or gender-independent person's feelings and self-esteem. It is also causing a negative school environment for you. Your teacher should intervene.

    The Public Schools Act applies to all public and funded independent schools. *See http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ ccsm/p250e.php*

6. The Department of Education and Advanced Learning document *A Whole-School Approach to Safety and Belonging: Preventing Violence and Bullying* states that "A whole-school approach to safety and belonging requires a conscious effort to meet the needs of all students in all educational environments. This is particularly important in terms of appropriate responses to negative or hurtful behaviours." Your teacher should intervene. See *http:// www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/guidance/whole_ school_approach.html*

Transphobia, racism, and homophobia are all related.

7. Gender identity is an applicable characteristic that is protected from discrimination under the *Manitoba Human Rights Code*. This means that anyone who is discriminated against or harassed because of gender identity is legally protected. 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.

8. Several school divisions in Manitoba already have respect for human diversity policies that specifically mention sexual orientation and gender identity. You can find some of them in the Guide section of this kit. Check out your division's policy, bring it to your teacher's attention, and speak up!

9. 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). See *http://www.unicef.org/crc*. 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.

10. 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.

A3:

My dad gave birth to me before he transitioned from female-to-male (FTM). My teacher insists on calling him my mother, and talks about me as having lesbian parents, which I don't - I have a mom and a dad. What can I do?

A3:

CONSULT WITH A PARENT or someone you trust to assist you in addressing these concerns with your teacher. You may decide to tell your teacher that you find her or his language offensive and disrespectful because it fails to recognize your family.

1. 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.

   The preamble to Manitoba's Public Schools Act includes the following: "AND WHEREAS public schools should contribute to the development of a fair, compassionate, healthy and prosperous society; AND WHEREAS the public school system must take into account the diverse needs and interests of the people of Manitoba. The Act goes on to state that "every school board shall ensure that each pupil enrolled in a school within the jurisdiction of the school board is provided with a safe and caring school environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviours." See *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/p250e.php*

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). See *http://www.unicef.org/crc*. 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. See *http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml*. This teacher is being disrespectful.

3. The *Manitoba Human Rights Code* (the *Code*) protects familial relationships from discrimination through the characteristic of marital and family status. The *Code* defines family status as

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*.

MY GSA .ca

follows: "Family status will be interpreted to include being a parent or not being a parent, regardless of the manner in which a person becomes a parent; and it may also include any other familial or perceived familial relationship." *See http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/h175e.php*. Some Human Rights Commissions have publications that recognize the impact of intersectionality for LGBTQ families. 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." 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 Manitoba Teachers Society has a policy on Equity Issues that includes the following commitments: that "Society members and employees promote and understanding and active inclusion of 'equity-seeking groups' the applicable characteristics of which are specified in the Manitoba Human Rights Code, Section 9(2); that the Society support all members in providing safe and inclusive learning environments that respect human diversity and prevent the expression of negative judgments based on gender bias, sexual stereotyping, sexual orientation and/or gender identity; that the Society actively advocate and promote actions that develop a climate of respect for diversity and promote positive interactions among all members of the education community." See: *http://www.mbteach.org/library2/constitution-bylawsa-and-policies-governing-the-manitoba-teachers-society*

5. Amendments made to The Public Schools Act in 2013 concerning Safe and Inclusive Schools require school boards to have a respect for human diversity policy and to ensure that the policy is implemented in each school in the school division or school district. The respect for human diversity policy will "promote and enhance:

    •   a safe and inclusive learning environment

    •   the acceptance and respect for others, and

    •   the creation of a positive school environment"

    The respect for human diversity policy must be prepared with "due regard for the principles of The Human Rights Code." See *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/p250e.php*

6. Several school divisions in Manitoba already have respect for human diversity policies that specifically mention sexual orientation and gender identity. You can find some of them in the Guide section of this kit. Check out your division's policy, bring it to your teacher's attention, and speak up!

A4: Yes. The school should have removed all of it immediately to demonstrate that such language (not to mention vandalism) will not be tolerated.

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?*

1. In 2004 Manitoba made it law that schools must ensure safe and caring environments for all students, that regulations be made about positive and safe school environments, codes of conduct and emergency plans, and that committees be created to advise principals in preparing these codes and plans. The Safe Schools Charter amended The Public Schools Act and The Education Administration Act. Both apply to all public and funded independent schools. See *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/bills/38-2/b030e.php*

2. According to the Manitoba Public Schools Act, schools must have a code of conduct. The code of conduct must include a statement that abuse of any kind, bullying, and discrimination on the basis of any characteristic listed in the Manitoba Human Rights Code are unacceptable. It must also state that pupils and staff "must behave in a respectful manner and comply with the code of conduct."

   The Public Schools Act applies to all public and funded independent schools. See *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/p250e.php*

3. Amendments made to The Public Schools Act in 2013 concerning Safe and Inclusive Schools included a new definition of bullying to be included in The Public Schools Act:

   "In this Act, "bullying" is behaviour that

   (a) is intended to cause, or should be known to cause, fear, intimidation, humiliation, distress or other forms of harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem, reputation or property; or

(b) is intended to create, or should be known to create, a negative school environment for another person."

The Act also states that bullying can be written, verbal, physical or electronic communication (cyberbullying).

The Public Schools Act applies to all public and funded independent schools. See *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/p250e.php*.

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.

4. The Department of Education and Advanced Learning document *A Whole School Approach to Safety and Belonging: Preventing Violence and Bullying* states that "a school-wide approach to safety and belonging sends a strong message to all individuals in the school community. An ongoing collaborative process that encourages a safe and caring climate addresses concerns related to harmful behaviours, including bullying, violence, threat, intimidation, and harassment. See: *http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/guidance/whole_school_approach.html*

Department of Education and Advanced Learning documents apply to all public and funded independent schools.

5. According to the The Department of Education and Advanced Learning document *Towards Inclusion From Challenges to Possibilities – Planning for Behaviour*, key factors of a positive school climate include having grafitti removal procedures in place.

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

Discriminatory graffiti 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. Department of Education and Advanced Learning documents apply to all public and funded independent schools. See: *http://www.edu.gov. mb.ca/k12/specedu/beh/index.html*.

6. 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. See *http://www.unicef.org/crc*. 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.

7. The Manitoba Teachers Society has a policy on Equity Issues that includes a commitment to "the elimination of all forms of discrimination in the schools and communities of Manitoba, with discrimination being defined by the Manitoba Human Rights Code, Section 9(1). See: *http://www.mbteach.org/library2/constitution-bylawsa-and-policies-governing-the-manitoba-teachers-society*

8. Amendments made to The Public Schools Act in 2013 concerning Safe and Inclusive Schools requires school boards to have a respect for human diversity policy and to ensure that the policy is implemented in each school in the school division or school district. The respect for human diversity policy will "promote and enhance:

- a safe and inclusive learning environment
- the acceptance and respect for others, and
- the creation of a positive school environment"

This policy must be prepared with "due regard for the principles of The Human Rights Code."

The Public Schools Act applies to all public and funded independent schools. See *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/p250e.php*

9. Amendments made to The Public Schools Act in 2013 concerning Safe and Inclusive Schools requires school boards to have a respect for human diversity policy and to ensure that the policy is implemented in each school in the school division or school district. The respect for human diversity policy will "promote and enhance:

   • a safe and inclusive learning environment

   • the acceptance and respect for others, and

   • the creation of a positive school environment"

   This policy must be prepared with "due regard for the principles of The Human Rights Code." Gender identity and sexual orientation are both applicable characteristics that are protected from discrimination under The Code. See *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/h175e.php*

   The Public Schools Act applies to all public and funded independent schools. See *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/p250e.php*.

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

10. Several school divisions in Manitoba already have respect for human diversity policies that specifically mention sexual orientation and gender identity. You can find some of them in the Guide section of this kit. Check out your division's policy, bring it to your teacher's attention, and speak up!

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

A5:

Q5: *I come from a First Nation community that is not accepting of diversity of sexuality, which made it very hard to come out as a gay person at school. If First Nations and Inuit people were so inclusive of LGBTQ people before Europeans arrived on Turtle Island, why are some Aboriginal communities today so homophobic and intolerant of diversity?*

When indigenous nations are colonized by other nations, sometimes the indigenous people will adapt to the values, beliefs, and cultures of the colonizer because they are forced and they fear reprisal. As a result, the previously successful traditional social system often becomes oppressed and devalued by its own people. Aboriginal people in Manitoba have been interacting with European Canadians for two centuries and a lot of the traditional ways of being have been lost or become dormant. In the 1700 and 1800's, homophobia and racism was imposed upon Aboriginal people by various religious groups and the settler society. However, if we look to our First Nations historical roots, traditions, and values we know that Aboriginal LGBTQ or Two-Spirit people are to be respected and have a rightful place in today's family and community. Lastly, we also need to consider that international and Canadian Human Rights principles and laws ensure that all people (on and off-reserve) are protected from discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

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

Qb: *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?*

In 2004 Manitoba made it law that schools must ensure safe and caring environments for all students, that regulations be made about positive and safe school environments, codes of conduct and emergency plans, and that committees be created to advise principals in preparing these codes and plans. The Safe Schools Charter amended The Public Schools Act and The Education Administration Act. Both apply to all public and funded independent schools. See *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/bills/38-2/b030e.php*

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. See *http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml#a12*. This is also backed up by Article 16 of the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child. See *http://www.unicef.org/crc/*

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. Manitoba's Adoption Act was amended in 2003 to allow same-sex couples to adopt. See *http://www.gov.mb.ca/justice/family/law/englishbooklet/chapter13.html*

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 *Manitoba Human Rights Code* (the *Code*) protects familial relationships from discrimination through the characteristic of marital and family status. The *Code* defines family status as follows: "Family status will be interpreted to include being a parent or not being a parent, regardless of the manner in which a person becomes a parent; and it may also include any other familial or perceived familial relationship." See *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/h175e.php*.

Some Human Rights Commissions have publications that recognize the impact of intersectionality for LGBTQ families. 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." For more information, 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." See *http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/resources/Policies/fampolicy/pdf*.

6. In Manitoba, The Adoption Act also allows two persons who are not spouses or common-law to adopt a child together. See: *http://www.gov.mb.ca/justice/family/law/englishbooklet/chapter13.html*.

7. 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." See *http://www.ctf-fce.ca/documents/Priorities/EN/pd/BGLTT/ BGLTTPolicies%20-English.pdf*. 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*.

8. The preamble to Manitoba's Public Schools Act includes the following: "AND WHEREAS public schools should contribute to the development of a fair, compassionate, healthy and prosperous society; AND WHEREAS the public school system must take into account the diverse needs and interests of the people of Manitoba.

   The Act goes on to state that "every school board shall ensure that each pupil enrolled in a school within the jurisdiction of the school board is provided with a safe and caring school environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviours."

   The Public Schools Act applies to all public and funded independent schools. See *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ ccsm/p250e.php*

9. Amendments made to The Public Schools Act in 2013 concerning Safe and Inclusive Schools require school boards to have a respect for human diversity policy and to ensure that the policy is implemented in each school in the school division or school district. The respect for human diversity policy will "promote and enhance:

   • a safe and inclusive learning environment

   • the acceptance and respect for others, and

   • the creation of a positive school environment"

This policy is also meant to "address training for teachers and other staff about bullying and prevention and strategies for promoting respect for human diversity and a positive school environment...and must be prepared with "due regard for the principles of the Human Rights Code."

The Public Schools Act applies to all public and funded independent schools. See *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/p250e.php*

10. Several school divisions in Manitoba already have respect for human diversity policies that specifically mention sexual orientation and gender identity. You can find some of them in the Guide section of this kit. Check out your division's policy, bring it to your teacher's attention, and speak up!

11. The Manitoba Teachers' Society has a policy on Equity Issues that includes "that the Society actively advocate and promote actions that develop a climate of respect for diversity and promote positive interactions among all members of the education community...and that the Society support all members in providing safe and inclusive learning environments that respect human diversity and prevent the expression of negative judgments based on gender bias, sexual stereotyping, sexual orientation and/or gender identity." See: *http://www.mbteach.org/library2/constitution-bylawsa-and-policies-governing-the-manitoba-teachers-society*

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

A7:

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?

A7:

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 Resource Kit. See *http://MyGSA.ca/content/terms-concepts*

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. In 2004 Manitoba made it law that schools must ensure safe and caring environments for all students, that regulations be made about positive and safe school environments, codes of conduct and emergency plans, and that committees be created to advise principals in preparing these codes and plans. The Safe Schools Charter amended The Public Schools Act and The Education Administration Act. Both apply to all public and funded independent schools. See *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/bills/38-2/b030e.php*

2. Amendments made to The Public Schools Act in 2013 concerning Safe and Inclusive Schools require school boards to have a respect for human diversity policy and to ensure that the policy is implemented in each school in the school division or school district. The respect for human diversity policy will "promote and enhance:

   • a safe and inclusive learning environment

   • the acceptance and respect for others, and

   • the creation of a positive school environment"

This policy is also meant to "address training for teachers and other staff about bullying and prevention and strategies for promoting respect for human diversity and a positive school environment...and must be prepared with "due regard for the principles of the Human Rights Code."

The Public Schools Act applies to all public and funded independent schools. See *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/p250e.php*

3. Manitoba's Public Schools Act requires each school division to "ensure that each pupil enrolled in a school within the jurisdiction of the school board is provided with a safe and caring school environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviours." See *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/p250e.php*

4. The *Manitoba 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 Manitoba. 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. See *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/h175e.php*

5. Amendments made to The Public Schools Act in 2013 concerning Safe and Inclusive Schools require school boards to have a respect for human diversity policy and to ensure that the policy is implemented in each school in the school division or school district. The respect for human diversity policy will "promote and enhance:

   • a safe and inclusive learning environment

   • the acceptance and respect for others, and

   • the creation of a positive school environment"

This policy must be prepared with "due regard for the principles of The Human Rights Code."

The Public Schools Act applies to all public and funded independent schools. See *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ ccsm/p250e.php*.

If you are unable to find your school division's respect for human diversity policy 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.

6. Several school divisions in Manitoba already have respect for human diversity policies that specifically mention sexual orientation and gender identity. You can find some of them in the Guide section of this kit. Check out your division's policy, bring it to your teacher's attention, and speak up!

A8: Your principal should have taken this opportunity to challenge misconceptions about Gay-Straight Alliances (or GSAs) and said "A 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 Resource Kit. See *http://MyGSA.ca/content/terms-concepts*

Q8: *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 would be an appropriate response?*

YOUR PRINCIPAL SHOULD HAVE SAID that the Department of Education and Advanced Learning is supportive of Manitoba's diverse school communities and that in Manitoba's publicly-funded school environments—whether high school, middle school, or elementary school—diversity explicitly includes sexual orientation and gender identity.

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

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." See: *http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/inclusiveguide.pdf*

1. The Department of Education and Advanced Learning document *A Whole-School Approach*

Inclusive curriculum is integral to student success.

to Safety and Belonging: Preventing Violence and Bullying states that "sometimes it becomes necessary for the school staff to take steps to ensure that students are understanding of unique differences among all people and that they accept all other students." See: *http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/guidance/whole_school_approach.html*

2. The preamble to The Public Schools Act includes the following: "WHEREAS public schools should contribute to the development of a fair, compassionate, healthy and prosperous society; AND WHEREAS the public school system must take into account the diverse needs and interests of the people of Manitoba".

GSAs address both of these statements by helping to develop understanding and awareness, and providing a safe space for LGBTQ youth in schools.

The Public Schools Act applies to all public and funded and independent schools. See: *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/p250e.php*

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. See *http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/119.html* and *http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/equity.pdf*

3. Amendments made to The Public Schools Act in 2013 concerning Safe and Inclusive Schools require school boards to have a respect for human diversity policy and to ensure that the policy is implemented in each school in the school division or school district.

    The respect for human diversity policy must be prepared with "due regard for the principles of The Human Rights Code "and "must accommodate students who want to establish and lead organizations that

    a) promote:

    • gender equity

    • antiracism

    • the awareness and understanding of, and respect for, people who are disabled by barriers, or

    • the awareness and understanding of, and respect for, people of all sexual orientations and gender identities

    b) use the name "gay-straight alliance" or any other name that is consistent with the promotion of a positive school environment that is inclusive and accepting of all pupils."

    The Public Schools Act applies to all public and funded independent schools. See: *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/p250e.php*

    Your principal should have explained to the parent that GSAs are an important part of inclusive and diverse school environments.

4. Manitoba's Public Schools Act requires each school division to "ensure that each pupil enrolled in a school within the jurisdiction of the school board is provided with a safe and caring school environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviours".

The principal should have explained that GSAs help create safe and caring school environments.

The Public Schools Act applies to all public and funded independent schools. See: *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/p250e.php*

5. The respect for human diversity policy must be prepared with "due regard for the principles of The Human Rights Code." Gender identity and sexual orientation are both applicable characteristics that are protected from discrimination under The Code.

    See: *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/h175e.php*

6. Several school divisions in Manitoba already have respect for human diversity policies that specifically mention sexual orientation and gender identity. You can find some of them in the Guide section of this kit. Check out your division's policy, bring it to your teacher's attention, and speak up!

7. The Department of Education and Advanced Learning document *A Whole-School Approach to Safety and Belonging: Preventing Violence and Bullying* states that "sometimes it becomes necessary for the school staff to take steps to ensure that students are understanding of unique differences among all people and that they accept all other students."

    A GSA could help in these efforts.

    See: *http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/guidance/whole_school_approach.html*

    Department of Education and Advanced Learning documents apply to all public and funded independent schools.

8. The Department of Education and Advanced Learning document *A Whole-School Approach to Safety and Belonging: Preventing Violence and Bullying* states that "s whole-school approach to safety and belonging requires a conscious effort to meet the needs of all students in all educational environments. This is particularly important in terms of appropriate responses to negative or hurtful behaviours."

   See: *http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/guidance/whole_school_approach.html*

   Department of Education and Advanced Learning documents apply to all public and funded independent schools.

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*.

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 contact the Manitoba Human Rights Commission for information about filing a discrimination application: TOLL FREE: 1-888-884-8681TTY: 1-888-897-2811Email: *hrc@gov.mb.ca*. You can also call the Kids Help Phone: TOLL FREE: 1-800-668-6868 or via their website at *www.kidshelpphone.ca*."

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 Manitoba Human Rights Commission.

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."

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

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

LGBTQ ROLE MODELS & SYMBOLS

LGBTQ ROLE MODELS

Arthur Blankstein
b. January 25, 1945

then moved to Toronto to find his own way.

Arthur practiced Interior Design in Toronto for nearly 10 years. During his time in Toronto he served as President of the Registered Interior Designers of Ontario and began his first affiliation with the World Congress of GLBT Jews (an international LGBTQ organization). Upon his return to Winnipeg at the end of the 1970's he re-established his private practice in Interior Design.

Arthur has served on various community boards – The Winnipeg Jewish Theatre, The Jewish Heritage Centre of Manitoba, The Shaarey Zedek Synagogue, and others. He married his life partner Ken Ure in Vancouver in 2004 in a civil ceremony at a cousin's home and then when the opportunity presented itself they were married in a religious ceremony at the Shaarey Zedek Synagogue in January 2012. He is so very grateful for the opportunity to always be himself, and for the unconditional acceptance of his extended family and friends.

Bio provided by role model

Arthur grew up in a liberal minded home with parents who were very accepting of all lifestyles. He went to Kelvin High School and then attended United College (now University of Winnipeg). After a year or 2 of Arts Arthur applied and was accepted into the Department of Interior Design in the Faculty of Architecture at the University of Manitoba. His choice of profession was a reflection of his abilities and an extension of his family legacy as his Grandfather, Father, Aunt and Uncle all studied and practiced architecture in Winnipeg. After graduation Arthur worked in Winnipeg for his father's architectural firm and

Karen Busby
b. September 17, 1958

the school authorities—who knew about my dad—did not expect much of me, even though I had always been a top student. It was a brutal year as I struggled not to live down to their expectations. I truly loved learning and managed to show my teachers that I should be taken seriously. After that first year, my teachers were terrific. All kids need to find at least one great teacher who will be their mentor and champion.

When everyone is watching you and expecting you to fail—either because you are queer or for some other reason-- you need to figure out how to be fabulous at something. Singing, sports, sewing, spelling…do something. The world is not going to be very forgiving of you—so you have to resolve to stay out of trouble.

To tell the truth, I became a lawyer because it seemed prestigious and I wanted to prove something. I planned to graduate from law school, get the best job in the city and then quit to do something altogether different. To my surprise, I loved the work. If you are angry, like I was,

Carrying a secret is a big burden, especially if you think that you will lose friends and opportunities if others learn about it. I carried not one but two secrets: I was queer and my dad was in jail for bank robbery. So how did I manage to become a lawyer and then a law professor in "everyone-knows-everyone's-business" Winnipeg? I resolved to be the best I could be; I would prove that those who expected nothing from me were wrong. Some would say that I had a big chip on my shoulder.

We moved to Winnipeg from another city when my dad was charged because the bullying was too intense. I was placed in a class for academically challenged kids simply because

channel that anger into something useful—like proving that you can do something that no one thinks is likely.

Going to the University of Manitoba changed my life. The weird social preoccupations of high school disappeared and I was given a buffet of amazing things to study. University may or may not be for you but you need to have a goal and some kind of a plan to achieve it.

Bio provided by role model

El-Farouk Khaki
b. October 26,1963

I call myself the accidental activist because much of my work for justice, human dignity and inclusive communities has arisen from my own need and search for spaces where I can be authentically whole. I identify as a queer African Muslim man of colour, a feminist and an immigrant.

I was born in Tanzania. My families, of mixed South Asian and Middle Eastern descent, are many generations African, and my father was active in the independence movement. Political persecution forced us to flee in 1970. We went first to England and after three years, came to Canada. I grew up always being the 'Other' sometimes because of my skin colour, other times because I am Muslim, or because I was different from the other boys even before I knew I was gay.

I was raised in an open minded religious Muslim home for whom Islam was an inclusive and diverse tradition and spiritual path. However, when in my teens I realized I was attracted to other guys, I thought I was going to go to hell. Many nights, I prayed I would wake up straight. It never happened. I was traumatized until I embraced the belief that God (Allah) had created me intending me to be gay, and that Allah as 'the Tenderly Compassionate, Infinitely Merciful' (al-Rahman and al-Raheem) loved me just the way I was made.

Despite my own inner reconciliation of faith and sexuality, there were no safe, non-judgmental spaces for LGBTI Muslims. My need for such a community led me in 1991 to start Salaam: A Support group for Lesbian and Gay Muslims. In later years, Salaam – now 'Salaam: Queer Muslim Community', became the inspiration for the formation of LGBTI Muslim groups around the world.

Professionally, I am a refugee and immigration lawyer, primarily representing women fleeing gender violence, LGBTQI People fleeing persecution because of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity, as well as people fleeing persecution because of their HIV status.

I have sat on the boards of many organizations including the Toronto Mayor's Committee on Community and Race Relations, the 519 Church Street Community Centre and APAA (Africans in Partnership against AIDS). I am a public speaker on Islam, the Immigration and Refugee system, human rights, racism, politics and HIV/AIDS, and have had regular TV, radio and print appearances. My activism has been recognized through Awards including the 2006 "Excellence in Spirituality" Award from Pride Toronto, the 2007 SOGIC Hero Award from the Canadian Bar Association; as well as the prestigious Steinert & Ferreiro Award in 2007. In 2008, I ran for Canadian Federal Parliament in two elections for the New Democratic Party of Canada.

In May 2009, I co-founded the el-Tawhid Juma Circle, a gender equal, LGBTI affirming Mosque space with my spouse Troy Jackson and friend Dr. Laury Silvers. Functioning in Toronto as the Toronto Unity Mosque, we now have 3 sister communities in Canada, and have resourced and inspired similar mosques in the UK, US and other countries.

In addition, I am one of the owners of the Glad Day Bookshop, the World's oldest surviving LGBT bookshop. I am now enrolled in the Muslim Chaplaincy/ Pastoral Studies Master's program at the University of Toronto as part of my on-going commitment to societal change and social justice through the creation of inclusive spaces that enable spiritual transformation and celebrate human dignity.

Bio provided by role model

Chris Vogel
b. April 23, 1947

Rich North
b. June 28, 1951

Rich attended Silver Heights Collegiate, University of Winnipeg (BA, Economics), and Red River College (Diploma, Computer Analyst/ Programming) and worked as a carpenter. Chris attended Charleswood Collegiate and the University of Manitoba (BA, Arts and Sciences) and became a civil servant in the Manitoba Department of Natural Resources working as a land use planner.

We met in 1972 and have been together since that time. We became involved in the Campus Gay Club at the University of Manitoba in 1973. This club evolved into Manitoba's first gay liberation organization, Gays for Equality.

In 1973, we were the first homosexuals to apply for a marriage licence in Canada. When the Government of Manitoba refused to issue a licence, Reverend Norman Naylor of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Winnipeg married us using the Christian tradition of Proclamation of the Banns. When the Government of Manitoba refused to register our marriage, we took the Province to court.

Chief Judge Alan R. Philp of the county courts of Manitoba ruled in the case of North v Matheson that Mr. Matheson, the Director of Vital Statistics, did not have to register the marriage because no marriage had taken place. His ruling concluded, "I view it as self-evident that the ceremony performed Feb. 11,

1974 was not a ceremony of marriage, it was a nullity." This was the first case in Canadian law to challenge the exclusion of same-sex couples from civil marriage in Canada. .

In 2004, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms provided a legal framework to challenge the exclusion of same-sex couples from civil marriage in Canada, and we were one of three couples in the court case which redefined civil marriage in Manitoba to encompass same-sex couples. On September 16, 2004, the Manitoba Court of Queen's Bench declared in the case of Vogel v. Canada that the current definition of marriage was unconstitutional and Manitoba became the fifth jurisdiction in Canada to legalize same-sex marriage.

We did not remarry in 2004 because we were married 30 years earlier in the Unitarian Church of Winnipeg. On February 24th, 2013 we submitted a formal letter of application for registration of our marriage to the Director of Vital Statistics for the Province of Manitoba.

We were baby boomers. We had the good fortunate to come of age during the 60's. The conspiracy of silence surrounding homosexuality was the greatest barrier to gay liberation, and our first challenge was a struggle for visibility. We put up thousands of posters over the years in Winnipeg. Most were ripped down. In those days, homosexuality was so taboo that the Manitoba Telephone System would not publish a listing for Gays For Equality in the telephone directory.

Education is the key to overcoming prejudice, but when we came out, there was almost no positive information about homosexuality available. We did many mass mailings over the years. Our first mass mailing was the distribution to all libraries in the province of the book Society and the Healthy Homosexual by Dr. George Weinberg which introduced the word "homophobia" into the language.

The gay movement was built around the campaign for legal equality, and we played a central role in the campaigns for human rights protection and spousal benefits for same-sex couples in Manitoba. Gay liberation was also a journey from shame to pride, and we organized gay pride celebrations at U of M and U of W in 1974 and 1975. In 1974 we helped organize the 2nd National Gay Conference which was held in Winnipeg, and which included the first gay march in Winnipeg.

Religious issues are central in gay oppression, and in 1978 we established the Council on Homosexuality and

Religion. The Council published a number of booklets and pamphlets. These included What the Bible says about Homosexuality, and Your Questions Answered about Homosexuality that were used across Canada.

We knew that positive media coverage was the key to success, but the mainstream media was not interested in gay content in those days. We decided to do it ourselves. In 1978 we took to the airwaves with the weekly radio program Gay Christian Forum, later Gaysweek, on CJUM-FM. This radio program ran from 1978 until 1980. Chris then hosted a weekly cable television program "Coming Out," from 1980 until 1994.

It's hard to come out when there's no place to go, and Winnipeg needed places for gay people to meet. Rich came up with the idea of combining a social venue with a community service centre, and in 1980 we were founding members of the Oscar Wilde Memorial Society which operated Gio's for 30 years.

After 40 years of gay activism, it is gratifying to see the change in attitudes toward gay people that has taken place in Winnipeg. In 1969, homosexuality was a criminal offense in Canada. Now we have legal equality. In most of the world, gay people can only dream of the freedom and acceptance we enjoy in Canada.

The persecution of queer people around the world is the challenge that faces the gay liberation movement today, and with the Canadian Museum for Human Rights in Winnipeg, young gay activists in our city will have unique opportunities to contribute to the liberation of queer folk around the world. We look forward to seeing young political activists rise to the challenge of spreading the gay liberation movement around the world.

Bio provided by role models

Jared Kevin Star
b. December 28, 1986

Jared Star grew up in Winnipeg and suffered from discrimination and homophobic bullying throughout his time in junior high and high school. This led to Jared dropping and pursuing a life of substance abuse and crime. Once he connected to care through the support of The Rainbow Resource Centre, he turned his life around and is now actively involved in the fight for LGBTT* rights.

Jared is currently working towards a Bachelor's in Social Work with the aim to continue community development for LGBTT populations and youth. His hobbies and interests include DJ'ing and music, art and volunteering with Multicultural Youth Outreach initiatives with the Province of Manitoba.

Professionally, Jared coordinates the Youth Program for the Rainbow Resource Centre which includes a drop-in program, community consultation, activism and outreach, advocacy and social justice with a focus on community building. He also works to educate youth in the school system and other youth serving settings around issues of LGBTT awareness and anti-homophobia education.

On any given day, Jared receives calls from community workers, parents, youth and schools with questions of how to support LGBTT* youth and the people in their lives. This includes dealing with the risk factors faced by LGBTT* youth, including suicide, substance abuse, homelessness, bullying and discrimination and mental health needs. These issues inspire Jared to continue his work, along with drawing from his own experience as a youth facing similar circumstances.

Jared's goals for the future include a community space and online forum for youth involved in their school GSA's to connect and share information and resources; an LGBTT youth housing initiative that addresses homelessness and exploitation, and the development of the Peer Project 4 Youth program at the Rainbow Resource Centre.

In his downtime, you can find Jared pursuing his wellness goals through yoga, fitness training and the outdoors, or playing music for his friends!

Bio provided by role model

trey anthony

b. 1974

Award winning playwright, executive producer, actor, creator, and stand-up comedian trey anthony, is known for the ground- breaking television and theatrical production *'da Kink in my Hair*. Critics have referred to anthony as The 'Oprah of the Canadian theatre scene'! trey was also the executive producer, co-creator and writer of the hit television show *'da Kink in my Hair* for Global Television. In the series she was the outspoken, wise-cracking, Joy, who has become an audience favourite!

'da Kink in my Hair, theatrical play, was Dora nominated and has received critical acclaim, and 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. It was named as one of the top ten plays in Canada's theatrical history! *'da Kink* has been seen in California, in London, England and made its New York debut at Tisch School for the Arts at New York University in October 2010.

anthony is the first Black Canadian woman to write and produce a television show on a major prime time Canadian network. She is a former television producer for the Women's Television Network (now W) and a writer for the Comedy Network and CTV. She was also the executive producer of the Urban Women's Comedy Festival, *dat girl, sho is funny!* She co-wrote, *I Am Not a Dinner Mint, The Crap Women Swallow to Stay in a Relationship!*, which debuted in 2006 to sold-out audiences. Following in the line of successful theatre plays came, *Secrets of a Black Boy*, (the male response to *'da Kink*

in my Hair) in 2009 at the prestigious Music Hall, written by her brother Darren Anthony and was produced by Trey Anthony Studios.

A mentor and role model, anthony, who went to high school in Brampton, Ontario, regularly visits schools to inspire youth, including her alma mater Notre Dame Secondary School. She volunteers with the Black Queer Youth Group, speaks to students about body image and other issues facing female adolescents, and gives away tickets to her shows to youth and women in shelters.

In 2009, anthony founded, *The Trey Anthony@One Centre* in Toronto, a women-focused, creative wellness facility. The Centre offered workshops and classes on creative writing, well being and spirituality.

"What is my own personal call to action to make a difference in this world, and not only the world but in my own life?" It is this approach that trey anthony applies to all aspects of her life and why she is a much sought after speaker. It was one reason among many why she was selected to give an address at TEDX Toronto 2010, on September 30, which received a standing ovation.

trey is now on tour with the popular touring show *'da Kink in my Hair*, which is scheduled to open in Atlanta September 2013 featuring a star studded cast. She is also busy working on pre production of her new play, *Black Mothers don't say I love you* and a documentary film.

www.treyanthonystudios.com dakinkinmyhair.com

Billy G. Merasty
b. May 16, 1960

As he began to learn the English language upon entering school in grade 1, he fell in love with words and books. This new learning inflamed his imagination, adding further to the inspiration that came from the natural storytellers in his family who were able to remember many great stories and carry an entire oral culture within their living memories. These experiences left him with a deep curiosity to search, listen, learn, and absorb.

Billy Merasty comes from a distinguished line of First Nations artists. His uncles, the late ballet dancer Renee Highway and the writer Tomson Highway provided gay-positive role models for the young Two-Spirited man growing up in a homophobic small town in northern Manitoba.

Billy G. Merasty, of Cree and Metis origins, was was born in Brochet, in North Western Manitoba. His Cree-speaking parents lived in the old nomadic way, where they hunted and trapped in the winter time, and then fished during the summer months. His early years were spent living with his parents, hunting and fishing on the Manitoba side of Reindeer Lake. Billy considers it to be his greatest fortune to have been nurtured in this nomadic world, in a large loving Cree family where strong principles of hard work, and a great sense of courtesy for all people, were honed and established. It is this early experience that makes him truly unique in this world, and what makes him very proud to claim his own history in this country.

Billy left Brochet, when he was 14 to go to School in Cranberry Portage, The Frontier Collegiate Institute. He attended school there from grades 9 to 11, until his life was threatened by the local town boys and he was forced to transfer to another

school. Billy recalls that the last year of high school was very tough and the only thing that kept him going was his instinctual determination to finish school. He began grade 12 at Swan River Regional Secondary School and then, after begging to be transferred out, he ended the year at Crocus Plains Regional Secondary School in Brandon, from which he graduated and received his high school diploma.

A few months after finishing high school Billy began a journey that would lead to a career as an actor. In November he hitch-hiked out of Thompson, and left for Winnipeg in search of his future. Shortly thereafter he left again, this time for Toronto, and eventually ended up in New York City. He wanted to explore the world, strengthen his sense of identity, and rebuild his peace of mind.

In the summer of 1983, he enrolled in the Native Theatre Summer School in Ontario. And upon graduation, he began his professional career

that includes theatre, television, film, and radio. He enrolled in Ryerson University's Theatre Department in the 1986/87 year, but left the program in the second year after being offered a lead role in a feature film.

Merasty began his career on stage. He appeared in his uncle Tomson Highway's popular *Dry Lips Outta Move to Kapaskasing* at Toronto's Theatre Passe Muraille. He has since appeared in numerous stage performances. He won a Theatre Excellence Award from the Detroit Free Press for his performance in Lanford Wilson's *Raindance* at Jeff Daniel's Purple Rose Theatre in Chelsea, Michigan. In addition, Merasty has acted in numerous productions of the Native Earth Theatre, including *Ravens*, and in *The Sage, Dancer and the Fool*, *The Beavers, Diary of a Crazy Boy*, *Fireweed* (which he also wrote), *Lady of Silences*, and, most recently, *Trickster of 3rd Ave. East*.

Merasty has also worked extensively on television. Some notable appearances include playing Donald Marshall Jr. in Paul Cowan's CBC/NFB production, *Justice Denied*. He played Nathan, a series regular, on *Liberty Street*, a role which won him the James Buller Award from the Centre for Indigenous People. His role as 'Zachary John' in *Honey Moccasin* won him the Best Actor prize at the Red Earth Aboriginal Film Festival in 1998.

On the big screen, Merasty has appeared in Atom Egoyan's *Exotica*, in Denis Arcand's *Stardom*, in Robert LePage's *Le Confessional*, and in George Hickenlooper's *Casino Jack*.

Merasty wrote his first play, *Fireweed*, in 1992 and has spent several years, off and on, working on his second, *Godly's Divinia*, which he describes as a kind of native Romeo and Juliet.

In 2010 Billy was inducted into the Order of the Buffalo Hunt from the Manitoba Legislature in recognition for my many years as an Aboriginal role model from Manitoba.

Bio provided by role model

Rick Mercer
b. October 17, 1969

Rick Mercer began his career in comedy performing and writing with a series of one-man stage shows, beginning with *Show Me the Button*, which debuted at the National Arts Centre in 1990 and went on to tour the country. Subsequent stage performances were in *I've Killed Before, I'll Kill Again* (1992) and *Canada: A Good Place to Hide* (1995).

Mercer launched his television career in 1994 as one of the creators, performers, and writers on the hit topical weekly show **This Hour Has 22 Minutes**. In 1998 he joined Gerald Lunz and Michael Donovan to create the satirical dramatic series **Made In Canada**, where he again starred and contributed as

a writer. In 2001 his CBC Television special **Talking To Americans** became the highest rated Canadian comedy special of all time with 2.7 million viewers. *The New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Le Monde*, and the *Los Angeles Times* all ran articles about the impact of **Talking to Americans** and Mercer went on to discuss it on ABC's **Nightline** and NBC's **The Today Show**.

A recipient of well over 25 Gemini Awards for television writing and performance, Mercer was given the Sir Peter Ustinov Award at the Banff Television Festival, named Journalist of the Year at the Atlantic Journalism Awards, Artists of the Year from the Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council, and has received a number of Canadian Comedy Awards. He is the sole civilian recipient of the Canadian Armed Forces Commander Land Forces, Command Commendation in recognition of his support of Canadian peacekeepers, and in 2004 he received the National Arts Centre Award at the Governor General's Performing Arts Awards.

Mercer went to Afghanistan in the fall of 2003 to entertain the troops and tape **Rick Mercer's Christmas in Kabul** a special for CBC Television. He has returned twice to Afghanistan to visit the Canadian Forces.

As a solo performer he has hosted the East Coast Music Awards, The Gemini Awards, Juno Awards, the history series It Seems Like Yesterday, the annual Canada Day show from Parliament Hill, and in 2008 he hosted the CBC Television special The Next Great Prime Minister for the second time.

Mercer has written for *Time*, *Maclean's*, *The Globe and Mail*, and the *National Post*. His first book, *Streeters*, hit the top of the *Globe and Mail's* best-seller list, and his second book, *Rick Mercer Report: The Book*, published in the fall of 2007, also went to the top of the national best-seller list. Rick latest book is *A Country Worth Ranting About* that was published in September, 2012 and became another best-seller.

He has appeared in the movies **The Vacant Lot**, **Understanding Bliss**, **Secret Nation**, and **Bon Cop, Bad Cop** and is in the upcoming **The Young and Prodigious Spivet** with Helena Bonham Carter and Judy Davis.

In 2006 Rick and Belinda Stronach founded the charity Spread the Net, which raises funds to stop the spread of malaria by providing mosquito nets for African children. Each season the finale of **The Rick Mercer Report** is the Spread the Net Student Challenge which has raised now over one million dollars. Other charities he has been active in include Hope

Air, PFLAG, and Toronto's Casey House, a hospital for people living with HIV/AIDS.

He is on the board of The Historica-Dominion Institute, an organization dedicated to promoting the study of Canadian history, identity and citizenship.

Rick holds Honorary Doctorates from Memorial University, Laurentian University, University of British Columbia, McMaster University, Bishop's University, Brock University and in 2012 received an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Guelph.

Rick Mercer is a native of St. John's, Nfld.

Bio provided by CBC

Tegan & Sara Quin
b. 1980

Tegan and Sara's 13-year career has seen them build an avid global following of fans and fellow musicians alike. Their unique ability to bridge the pop and indie worlds has allowed their music to cross all traditional boundaries of genre, from being covered by The White Stripes to collaborating with superstar DJs such as Tiesto and David Guetta. They are internationally-celebrated songwriters, performers, and artists.

Tegan Quin and Sara Quin were born in Calgary, Alberta in 1980 and began playing guitar and writing songs at age 15. Following the release of their first independent full-length album in 1999, *Under Feet Like Ours*, they caught the attention of Neil Young's iconic manager, Elliot Roberts, who quickly signed

them to his Los Angeles-based label, Vapor Records. Tegan and Sara's first international release on Vapor, *This Business Of Art*, was followed by extensive worldwide touring, including opening slots with Neil Young himself and a first appearance on The Late Show with David Letterman.

In 2002, the band released *If It Was You*, a foundational moment in Tegan and Sara's creative path and musical identity. Its fresh sonic template and critical success in the US set up their fourth studio album, *So Jealous*, which ultimately provided their global breakthrough. On the heels of 6 separate song placements on Grey's Anatomy, a US radio hit in "Walking With A Ghost", and a North American tour opening for The Killers, *So Jealous* cemented Tegan and Sara's status as one of Canada's pre-eminent songwriting forces and musical exports.

In 2007, the release of *The Con* brought even more critical and commercial acclaim to Tegan and Sara. Their sixth studio album, *Sainthood*, was released in

2009 and was accompanied by a self-published three-volume book set titled *ON, IN, AT*, which chronicled a year in the life of Tegan and Sara, in both words and pictures. *Sainthood* was ultimately nominated for a Juno Award and the Polaris Prize. One of the album's singles, "Alligator," was remixed by a wide cross-section of artists including Four Tet, Passion Pit, Ra Ra Riot, and VHS or Beta.

In 2011, Tegan and Sara released *Get Along*, a CD/DVD set that included a live record and a collection of 3 films giving a rare and intimate look into their lives and music.

Tegan and Sara have played countless festivals around the world. Their music has been featured in major network television programs including 90210, Parenthood, Grey's Anatomy, Veronica Mars, The Vampire Diaries, and One Tree Hill. They have performed multiple times on Letterman, Leno and Conan. They have collaborated with artists in all genres.

Though their music is not overtly political, Tegan and Sara are very politically and socially engaged. They are outspoken advocates for LGBT equality, and have done countless fundraisers for youth organizations, music education, literacy, cancer research and LGBT advocacy. The sisters enjoy reading, hair, ships, vampires, hot dogs, talking and relating to elderly people, self-soothing, rearranging furniture, and giving excellent advice. Tegan lives in LA and Vancouver, Sara lives in NYC and Montreal.

Bio provided by role models

Lucas Silveira
b. July 30, 1979

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.

Lucas Silveira's revolution began with a fearless attitude that embraced radical change. Lucas founded The Cliks in 2004 when his musical and self identity transitioned from being a solitary folk singer/songwriter lesbian, to an 'over the top' rock n' roll front man. This shift reflected a vision he had carried his entire life. He found the courage to make significant life changes and create a vehicle for the music in his head.

The Cliks have two internationally successful record label releases (Snakehouse 2006/Dirty King 2009), and have participated in two major tours (True Colors 2007/2008, The Cult 2007/2008). Lucas has received the New Now Next: Artist On The Brink award and Chart Attack's Sexiest Man In Canada in 2010 (the first transman to win this award).

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.

Adapted from *http://en.wikipedia. org/wiki/The_Cliks*

Michel Tremblay
b. June 25, 1942

Michel Tremblay was born in Montreal, Quebec, where he grew up in the Plateau Mont-Royal neighbourhood of the city. His working class roots and his homosexuality would determine much of his future work.

Few writers have marked the literary and theatrical landscape as Michel Tremblay has done for forty years. Since *The Sisters-in-Law* (*Les Belles-Sœurs*) and until the very last novel at *Au hasard la chance*, this author, playwright, translator, and adapter has composed with brilliance and accuracy a corpus of work that is imposing, decisive, and unavoidable. This abundant and relevant work is composed of more than 30 plays, 3 musicals, 25 novels, 1 collection of short stories, 4 books of short stories, 7 screenplays, 40 translations or adaptations of foreign authors, 1 libretto for opera, and song lyrics. Of his published works, many have been acclaimed in Canada, the United States and around the world, in addition to being translated into more than 30 languages. Moreover, there are many institutions that have honoured the artistic contributions of the author: a six time recipient of a Canada Arts Council grant, he has received more than 50 awards during his career, including the Governor General's Award for the Performing Arts, in 1999, for his work as a whole. In 2008, he was named chevalier of the Legion of honour of France.

Michel's early plays, including *Hosanna* and *La Duchesse de Langeais*, had a profound and lasting effect on Quebec. Prior to the Quiet Revolution of the early 1960s, in Michel's eyes, Quebec was a poor, working-class province dominated by an English-speaking elite and the Roman Catholic Church. Michel's work was part of a vanguard of liberal and nationalist thought and expression that helped topple social barriers and transform Quebec into a new, vibrant, and modern society.

Many of Michel's most famous plays and works centre on Gay and Lesbian characters. Women in his works are strong characters, who are possessed with demons that they must vanquish.

Bio provided by role model

Dany Turcotte
b. 1965

Dany was born in Saguenay, Quebec.

Dany Turcotte first appeared on stage at 19 years of age. As a student of Arts and Media Technology at the General and Vocational College of Jonquière, he met Dominique Lévesque, who was to become his most loyal sidekick. He is one of the five founding members of the Sanguin Group, a comedy group that performed extensively throughout Quebec between 1986 and 1990. After the breakup of the group in 1991, Dany Turcotte, with his loyal accomplice, created the tandem Lévesque and Turcotte. The duo would enjoy immense success with 4 original shows, more

than 2000 performances, and with an audience in excess of 1 million! Twenty years of touring garnered the duo many nominations for the ADISQ Gala (Awards of the Quebec Association of Music, Performing, and Video Industry) and the Olivier's Gala (Awards of the Association of Professionals of the Comedy Industry). In 1999, Dany Turcotte won the Olivier Award for best comedic character for his legendary *Dany Verveine*.

In addition to his projects, Dany Turcotte has always found time to lend a hand to many community and social organizations. He was spokesperson for 12 years for the Dystro-walk in Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean. In 2006, he ascended Mont Kilimanjaro in support of CARE. He has been one of the spokespeople for Gai écoute (Quebec LGBTQ service organization). For his efforts, in 2009 he received the Fight Against Homophobia Award, which has been awarded to many active celebrities such as Janette Bertrand and Pierre Elliott Trudeau.

Dany has participated in numerous Juste Pour Rire (Just for Laughs) galas and television shows. In the summer of 2006, he became host of his own CBC television show, *La petite séduction* (*The Small Seduction*), a resounding success.

Bio provided by role model

Barbara Bruce

Barbara Bruce is a Two Spirit Michif-speaking Metis entrepreneur born in St. Laurent, Manitoba. She is the middle child of eleven children. Barbara attributes her personal and professional success to the strong identity as a Metis of Ojibway/Cree ancestry, despite the fact that she attended school in a Roman Catholic mission school that did not acknowledge or value Metis culture and traditions.

Barbara attended the University of Winnipeg and Red River College. She has extensive experience working in Metis and First Nations communities and organizations, including the Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF), where she held several positions, including Executive Director. Through her work, she has travelled across Manitoba and Canada visiting many Metis, First Nations and Inuit communities. This inspired her to co-found first a retail store, Northern Traditions, and later the Northwinds Art Wholesale Company, both dedicated to promoting Indigenous art and handmade crafts. Her marketing experience and excellent planning skills led her, in 1997-98, to organize "Spirits in the Sun," the first Canadian Indigenous Arts Festival, held in Scottsdale, Arizona.

Barbara's entrepreneurial spirit led her to establish other business ventures, including Blue Sky Planners and Consultants (Co-Founder & Director) and Winds of Change Consulting (President).

Today, Barbara is a founding and managing partner of AMR Planning & Consulting Inc., founder and president of All My Relations Inc. and co-owner of Bruce & Boivin Consulting Group Inc. Additionally, as an integral member of the Aboriginal business community, Barbara has served on the boards and in executive positions of many Aboriginal and non-

Aboriginal organizations and corporations.

Barbara has combined creative business sense with a strong commitment to the traditional values and teachings of her ancestors. She was given the name "Flies High Thunderbird Woman," which reflects her dedication to incorporating spirit and ceremony into her personal and professional life.

In recognition of her achievements, she was honoured as one of the Kookum (grandmother) at Keeping the Fires Burning, Ka Ni Kanichihk's annual event. Barbara received the Manitoba Human Rights Achievement Award for her work in employment and cross-cultural training. Sagkeeng First Nation presented Barbara with an eagle feather and beaded jacket for her work in economic development for Aboriginal people at a special honoring ceremony.

Her commitment to social justice was acknowledged internationally when she was asked to be part of a team of peace monitors and election observers during the South Africa elections.   Her work in cultural capacity building brought her to work in such locations as Fiji and Australia, speaking and providing workshops.

In her leisure hours, she earned a second-degree black belt in Tae Kwon Do and was one of the first Aboriginal women to instruct that discipline.

Barbara has been married to her partner, Mallory, for seven years, and is co-parent to Mallory's two daughters and proud Kookum to 5 grandchildren.

Bio provided by role model

Jan Lederman *
b. May 20, 1953

Jan was born in Assiniboia, Saskatchewan and moved to Regina at age 10. Upon graduation from Marian High, Regina's catholic private girls' school, Jan moved to Winnipeg in 1971 to study English literature at the University of Manitoba. Although she had long planned a career in journalism, she end up in law school at the U of M and graduated with a JD in 1977. The history of Jan's career since then demonstrates the relentless pursuit of her passion for learning and a knowledge and understanding of effective business practices developed and refined over thirty years of work in law, business and the voluntary sector.

Jan began her legal career doing civil and

criminal litigation, but she soon focussed exclusively on business law, with an emphasis on mergers and acquisitions, trade, finance, securities and governance matters. She was named to the 2013 Edition of Best Lawyers© in Canada in Mergers and Acquisitions Law and Leveraged Buyouts and Private Equity Law. Jan also acts for co-operatives, non-profits and charities and teaches Charity Law at the University of Manitoba's Faculty of Law.

Jan has been a director of a number of public and private companies and charitable organizations. Jan served on the board of Assiniboine Credit Union for a number of years, including as President from 1993 to 1996. She also was on the board of United Way of Winnipeg and became board Chair in 1998, a position she held for two years. Her work helped redefine the business model, not just for United Way of Winnipeg, but for United Ways across North America. In recognition of her contributions, Jan was presented with the Andre Maillot Award, United Way of Canada's most prestigious

volunteer award, at the organization's national conference in 2001.

Jan currently is Chair of the Board of Governors of the University of Manitoba, Chair of Innovate Manitoba Inc., and Regional Vice-Chair (North America) of the Lex Mundi Corporate Organizations and Securities Group, and a director of Economic Development Winnipeg. She has been the recipient of the Queen Elizabeth Golden Jubilee Award, in 2002, and the Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Award, in 2012.

Jan is married to Karen Busby, Professor of Law at the University of Manitoba.

Bio provided by role model

Dr. James Makokis, M.D.
b. March 19,1982

James is a proud Cree who was born and raised on the Saddle Lake First Nation in Northern Alberta. James obtained a Doctorate in Medicine (M.D) from the University of Ottawa in 2010, and became certified under the Aboriginal Family Medicine Training Program, University of British Columbia in 2012. Currently, he practices Family Medicine on the Saddle Lake First Nation in Northern Alberta.

Although James recognized at age four or five that he was 'different', it wasn't until his first year at university that he 'came out' to his mother. "It was hard because it's a big burden to share, one that not everyone has to do in their life. Yet, right from the beginning there was so much support and love and I was really fortunate in that way."

James is a gifted, articulate, and talented presenter, who at the age of 24 was the recipient of the 2007 National Aboriginal Achievement Special Youth Award. He is dedicated to working with youth in First Nations communities and beyond. He encourages all LGBTQ youth to dream big and to be proud of who they are. "Once they can accept themselves, others will follow. Once they take this first step, they can talk to other two-spirited people and Elders for support."

In his role as National Spokesperson for the National Aboriginal Health Organization's Lead Your Way youth role model program (2007-2009), he made a huge impact on all present at the 2007 Dreamcatcher Youth Conference. There he appeared in front of hundreds of Aboriginal youth wearing his sister's ceremonial dress. He then explained how each person has many layers to their identity. Then he proceeded to shed his 'layers', first peeling off the dress to reveal his doctor's lab coat and stethoscope, and then shedding that 'layer' to reveal a traditional shirt. James believes that First Nations traditional culture and teachings have much to offer in overcoming homophobia and discrimination as two-spirited people always had a place within First Nations society.

James is a committed volunteer who has been involved in a number of community programs, working with street people in Edmonton, and supporting gay, lesbians and two-spirited Aboriginal youth. James serves on several boards including, the inaugural Aboriginal Wisdom Committee of Alberta Health Services, Indspire (formerly the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation), the Two Spirit Circle of Edmonton Society, and the Indigenous Physicians Association of Canada.

In recognition of his work with two-spirited youth, James and his partner, Robert, will be featured in a same-sex partner, educational installment at the new Museum of Human Rights in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Bio provided by role model

Kristine K. Barun

b. July 20, 1972

When Kristine was elected as a school trustee with the Winnipeg School Division in 1998, she was recognized as the first openly lesbian school trustee in Manitoba. She was re-elected subsequently in 2002, 2006, and 2010. She has served as the Chair of the Board and has chaired most standing committees, including the Policy/Program and Finance/Personnel Committees. She put forward a motion to create the Student Advisory Committee to ensure that students had the opportunity to liaise with the Board of Trustees and that their voices were valued and respected as key stakeholders in the Winnipeg School Division.

In 1999, soon after her election, Kristine spearheaded a campaign to make schools safer for LGBT youth, including the implementation of mandatory human rights and anti-homophobia workshops for all school division staff. This was very controversial at the time and she faced criticism and death threats from those who did not believe that sexual orientation and gender identity should be discussed in schools.

Kristine graduated from Maples Collegiate in 1990 and completed her Law degree at the University of Manitoba in 2005 receiving her call to the bar in 2006. Kristine currently practices labour law with the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) in the Manitoba regional office. She also holds a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Winnipeg, with a major in Women's Studies and Administrative Studies.

Kristine is currently serving as a member of the Manitoba Health Appeal Board, and prior to this provincial appointment, Kristine chaired the Social Services Appeal Board from 2005-2012.

Kristine is committed to social justice, equality and human rights issues and has served as the Provincial and National Chair of SOGIC, the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Conference of the Canadian Bar Association. She has volunteered at free community legal clinics at the Rainbow Resource Centre and the Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre. Kristine was a founder of the Teen Talk program at Klinic Community Health Centre where she previously worked as a Program Coordinator and coordinated the provincial teen pregnancy campaign "If you think it can't happen to you, think again".

Kristine married her life partner, Kael, in May 2006 and supported him through his transition from female to male. Together they are leaders in both the LGBT and legal communities. Kristine resides with Kael and her two step-sons, Leo and Sean, their dog Mac and their cat Ginger. As a family, they enjoy spending time out at the cottage, travelling, and hanging out with family and friends.

Kristine is a games enthusiast and plays Scrabble competitively in tournaments, and enjoys friendly games of Canasta, Cribbage and board games.

Bio provided by role model

Emanuel (Manny) Calisto *
b. December 14, 1965

Manny was been raised on the prairies, but his life began on a small island in the centre of the Atlantic Ocean. Manny was born in Soa Miguel, in the Azores. When he was seven his family emigrated from Portugal to Canada, and fate brought them to Winnipeg. They settled in the core area before moving to the West End. Manny attended Principal Sparling School where, in Grade Five he decided he wanted to do what Mrs. Hendrickson did; be a teacher. He then attended Sargent Park Junior High. When he was in Grade Nine his family moved yet again to the Maples where he graduated from Maples Collegiate.

Manny received his Bachelors of Education from the University of Manitoba. He was a classroom teacher in the Seven Oaks School Division for more than 20 years and then became a Vice Principal. In 1998, Manny made the decision to come out at work. At that time he was the only teacher he knew in his school division who was out in the classroom. His decision to come out was based on his belief that his students needed to know that it was possible to be gay; happy; respected and successful. Manny would say that he didn't so much 'come out' as he 'came in' to a community of family, friends and colleagues who have been a source of inspiration and support over the years.

Manny has dedicated much of his professional life to helping other educators understand their role and responsibility in creating safe, caring and inclusive learning environments for all students, especially those who identify as LGBTTQ. As an advocate for diversity he has promoted the inclusion of LGBTTQ perspectives in school curriculum and facilitated numerous

workshops for educators on how to make schools more welcoming for LGBTTQ youth and families.

Manny has been a member of the Winnipeg Pride Committee, Board Member of the Manitoba Association For Rights and Liberties, facilitator with the Manitoba Teachers' Society Teacher Action Team and the co-creator of his school division's Safer Schools Network. He and his husband were one of the co-chair couples of Canadians for Equal Marriage (Manitoba Chapter).

Manny shares his love of travel, activism and dancing with his husband, Bradley and their daughter Mickenzie who is studying to be a teacher.

Bio provided by role model

Albert McLeod
b. December, 1955

Albert McLeod was born into a Cree-Scottish half-breed family who lived in Cormorant, a small village forty miles northeast of The Pas, Manitoba. The previous three generations of his family worked extensively in the Hudson's Bay Company fur trade as trappers, fisherman, and company employees. The Cree women of his extended family contributed greatly to the success of the half-breed and European trademen they had married.

At the age of 16, Albert "came out of the closet" and soon quit high school after experiencing homophobia, shunning and racism. He went through a period of isolation, substance use, and depression which led him to relocate to Brandon and then to Winnipeg to complete his education and to find work. In 1979, Albert moved to Vancouver and soon met

other Aboriginal gays and lesbians who had also left their reserves and home Provinces to find acceptance and opportunity. While there, Albert joined the Greater Vancouver Native Cultural Society (a social support group for GLBT Aboriginals); today, he is a member of the society's College of Elders.

Upon returning to Winnipeg in 1983, Albert co-founded the Nichiwakan Native Gay Society, a volunteer group which held dry socials and cultural events for the Aboriginal GLBT community. The group's founding was in response to the suicide deaths of two gay First Nation youth. Society members proudly marched in Winnipeg's first Annual Lesbian and Gay Pride Day in 1987 and later sent eleven delegates to the inaugural Annual International Two Spirit Gathering which was held in Minneapolis, Minnesota in the summer of 1988.

When an increasing number of Aboriginal people were being diagnosed with HIV/AIDS in the early 1990's, Albert became a co-founder of the Manitoba Aboriginal AIDS Task Force and the Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network (a national network of Aboriginal AIDS service organizations). He travelled extensively to Aboriginal communities promoting awareness and participated in many regional and national HIV/AIDS committees. In 2006, he co-founded the Two-Spirited People of Manitoba, a non-profit organization which advocates for appropriate services for Two-Spirit people. Albert continues to champion Two-Spirit rights and lectures on a variety of topics including Aboriginal culture and identity, suicide prevention, traditional healing, HIV/AIDS, and human rights.

To acknowledge his grandmother's legacy, Albert attained Status Indian membership with the Nisichawaysihk Cree Nation (Nelson House) in 2011. He attributes his success to his 27 years of sobriety; his parents (whose traditional values nurtured his identity); and to the Ojibwe people who welcomed him into their culture, providing him with the tools to survive and flourish in his homeland. Albert believes that the Two-Spirit rights movement is inherently interwoven with that of the First Nation, Inuit and Metis peoples. "Our Veterans fought for the freedoms and rights that we enjoy today; no individual, group or political party can take them away".

Bio provided by role model

Paul Sherwood
b. 1960

Paul Sherwood was born in Manitoba to Franco-Manitoban parents and is the eldest of five children. Early in his life, Paul had the opportunity to live in Quebec, Ontario and New Brunswick before returning to Winnipeg at the age of 10. These early experiences help to shape his character and his identity. He is fiercely proud of his Manitoba origins and is close to his extended family, but at the same time he always had a sense of belonging elsewhere, not afraid of being different, and of seeing things with a different eye.

Paul was an academically inclined high school student, but his adolescence was difficult and conflicted because he was hiding a huge secret. Paul knew he was gay, but he did not want to give up other important aspects of his life. The suicide of one of his school friends (who was believed to be gay) hit him hard and left him depressed for a few years. Paul was afraid to come out and he feared his only choice was to live life as a pseudo-straight, someone who was not quite right, with nobody understanding why.

He completed high school studies in French at Collège de Saint-Boniface, and then enrolled in science at the University of Manitoba. By his early thirties, Paul had embarked on a career in education, teaching in French Immersion and Franco-Manitoban schools. He also pursued other interests. He now played hockey and several other sports (so unlike his teen years!). He managed a farm and a retail store. He began to travel across Canada. He joined the Les blés au vent choral group and he became involved in a political party. He met a perfect girlfriend (who remains a good friend today) and even thought of marrying her and starting a

family. Everything seemed to be falling into place, but he knew deep down that all this rested on quicksand.

The coming out of the closet of a close family member was a catalyst for Paul Sherwood to do the same. Less than two years later, in the summer of 1993, Paul came out at 33 years of age, and his life began anew. For Paul, that summer was likely the most important transformative moment of his life.

Following his coming out, Paul became involved in several gay organizations. In 1996-1997 he helped establish a Manitoba LGBTQ sports group (Out There Sports) and he joined the Rainbow Harmony Project (an LGBTQ choir) from its start in 1999. He also joined Rainbow Educators of Manitoba. Paul continues to be involved in LGBTQ causes because he believes that every young person deserves to have a happy and full life in which his or her sexual identity is integral.

He has remained active in the Franco-Manitoban community, organizing numerous cultural events in Franco-Manitoban schools, conducting workshops on Francophone identity across Canada. He has served several years on various community boards such as Francofonds, and he continues to be active in the *Les blés au vent and Rainbow Harmony Project* choral groups. In 1985 he was a co-recipient of the Prix Riel.

For almost fifteen years, Paul Sherwood has shared his life with his partner Rafael. He looks forward to growing old with his "best buddy" as they embark on new adventures with family and friends!

Bio provided by role model

Catherine Taylor
b. May 23, 1954

Catherine Taylor was born on May 23, 1954 in Ottawa, Ontario. Catherine is an Associate Professor in the Professor, Faculty of Education and Dept of Rhetoric at The University of Winnipeg. She specializes in critical education as an approach to community-building and empowering students who are marginalized within the school system. She completed her PhD in Critical Pedagogy and Cultural Studies at the University of Toronto's Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

Catherine sees education above all as an opportunity to contribute to social change. This outlook is reflected in her teaching and research and it has allowed her make enormous contributions with respect to addressing needs of LGBTQ students and challenging homophobia in Canada's schools. The "Every Class in Every School" research she conducted with Dr Tracey Peter for Egale Canada investigating school climate and how to improve it for LGBTQ students and parents surveyed over 3700 Canadian students on this topic. The result of the study and the report that followed has been dramatic and powerful. It has served as a call to action for addressing homophobia in schools throughout Canada and is the inspiration for this Kit.

She started the "Every Teacher Project" in 2011. It seeks to identify and collect the expertise of Canadian teachers on LGBTQ-inclusive education. The research team is working in close partnership with Manitoba Teachers' Society and every provincial, territorial, and

national teacher organization in Canada has signed on to the project. Catherine is also leading a project that is part of a $2 million study designed to determine what kinds of interventions promote resilience and improve climate for LGBTQ students in different school contexts.

Catherine's passion and deep commitment to equity, social justice, and creating safer schools for all students is in part fueled by her own experiences as a member the LGBTQ community. She knows how important it is for LGBTQ students to know that they are accepted and valued. She recalls her own experience in high school in Brockville:

'It meant the world to me when I was a shy kid whose family moved around a lot, and I had just gone back to school after dropping out of grade 12, and my English teacher dared to tell her class that the poet who wrote: "Lay your sleeping head, my love, / Human on my faithless arm…." was gay. W.H. Auden was gay.

I remember even now every detail of that classroom scene, and my enormous excitement

to find that the respectable adult world of teachers and poets was not uniformly opposed to my existence. The world in that moment turned from black and white to colour, from impossible to possible, and I began to see a future…I went to university because of that teacher. I only wish she'd dared to say "W.H. Auden was gay" back when she taught me in grade 9…'

Bio provided by role model

Photo credit: GLBT History Month

Georgina Beyer
b. November, 1957

As an elected a 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*

Jennifer Howard
b. March 12, 1971

Jennifer Howard is a life-long Manitoban, who was born and raised in Brandon. She graduated from Brandon University and moved to Winnipeg in 1998.

Jennifer Howard is a well-known and strong advocate who has worked actively within the community and in government on social justice issues such as poverty reduction, health care, neighbourhood safety, and equality for women.

Jennifer came out at age 19 at time where there were very few openly gay people in Brandon. She helped organize a group called GLOBE (Gays and Lesbians of Brandon and Elsewhere) which provided a weekly help phone line staffed by

peer counselors who talked to people who were coming out or who were new to the area.

Jennifer got involved in student politics, and ran for the first time for political office in the 1997 federal election. Even though she lost, she discovered that politics was the best place for her to use her skills to work for equality and social justice.

Outside of politics she has worked in the not-for-profit field working for women's equality and with health care organizations. Previously, she was the Executive Director of the Women's Health Clinic - a non-profit community health centre dedicated to improving the health and well-being of girls and women. Jennifer has held positions with the Prairie Women's Health Centre of Excellence and the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women. She was also a policy advisor to Premier Gary Doer on health care issues in 1999.

Jennifer has served on the Boards of numerous organizations, including the College of Registered Nurses of Manitoba, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (Manitoba), the Rainbow Resource Centre and the University of Winnipeg. Jennifer was named a Woman of Distinction in 1999 by the Brandon YWCA. She has also received a Community Builder Award from LAMBDA, the gay and lesbian business and professional organization.

In 2007, Jennifer was elected the MLA for Fort Rouge and in 2009, she was appointed as Minister of Labour and Immigration. In 2011 she was appointed the Government House Leader - the first woman in Manitoba to hold this position. In 2012, she became Minister of Family Services and Labour, and then Minister of Finance in 2013.

Jennifer lives with her partner, Tara, and their son, Harry. They were married in the fall of 2013.

Bio provided by role model

Glen R Murray
b. October 26, 1957

Glen Murray's political life began in 1989 as a city councilor in Winnipeg and in 1998 he was elected the 41st mayor of Winnipeg and became the first openly gay mayor of a large North American city. During his tenure, Glen was the Chair of the Big City Mayors Caucus where he led the successful campaign to transfer the equivalent of 5 cents a litre of the federal tax on gas to municipalities for infrastructure projects.

Glen Murray resigned as mayor in 2004 to run federally in the riding of Charleswood – St James–Assiniboia and lost by a narrow margin. He described the experience as "the best campaign he ever ran".

Later in 2004, Glen moved to Toronto to become a visiting fellow at Massey College. In 2005 Glen was appointed by Prime Minister Paul Martin as chair of a National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy where he helped respond to climate change in Canada. In 2007 Glen became President of the Canadian Urban Institute.

Raised in Montreal by an Irish father and Ukrainian mother, Glen attended John Abbott College and Concordia University where he served as President of the student Union. Upon graduating, Glen moved to Winnipeg and led a successful campaign to include sexual orientation in the Manitoba Human Rights Code. Motivated by the deaths of several of his close friends to HIV/AIDS, Glen helped establish Winnipeg's Village Clinic, an integrated, community-based prevention and treatment centre. Glen helped found the Canadian AIDS Society and worked with the World Health Organization to develop an international strategy for the delivery of community HIV prevention initiatives.

In 2010, Glen Murray was elected as Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP) for Toronto Centre. Glen served as Minister of Research and Innovation, Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities and currently serves as the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure.

Glen's dedication to public service has led to several awards including the Queen's Jubilee Medal, the 2003 "Fight for LGBT Justice and Equality" award from Egale Canada and for his work with the aboriginal community he was given the highest honour of an Eagle Feather.

Glen lives in Toronto Centre with his partner Rick. A 1992 NFB documentary, *A Kind of Family*, describes the relationship of Murray with his foster son, a 17-year-old street youth in Winnipeg.

Bio provided by role model

Jim Rondeau
b. April 6, 1959

Jim was born in Winnipeg. As the son of a member of the air force he had the opportunity to live in Ontario and Europe, as well as live and work throughout Manitoba. After university he worked as a teacher at schools in Norway House and Cranberry Portage, and was an instructor at the University of Winnipeg. He later became the Adult/Work Education Coordinator for the Frontier School Division, helping establish 18 adult learning centres and libraries throughout the province and developing an award-winning school-to-work transition program for young people from northern Manitoba.

Although he knew he was gay for many years he hid it from himself, his friends, and

family until he was in his late 20s. He then got involved in his community by volunteering at Klinic, and coming out to his circle of friends. Finally in his early 30's he came out at work which was still a risky prospect at the time.

He was first elected to the Manitoba Provincial Legislature in 1999 and received his first Cabinet appointment in 2003 as the Minister of Healthy Living within the Department of Health. In his 10 years as a Cabinet Minister he held several portfolios including: Industry, Economic Development and Mines; Science, Technology, Energy and Mines; Healthy Living, Youth and Senior; and Healthy Living, Seniors and Consumer Affairs.

Since becoming involved in politics he has been able to champion the expansion of rights for same sex couples in the areas of marriage and adoption including chairing the public hearings concerning the laws. He has also been able to support the Rainbow Resource Center by ensuring appropriate funding to support schools and other organizations across the province.

It was a proud moment for him when he was able to marry his partner of 22 years in front of his family and friends in 2008. Along with their Jack Russell, they continue to enjoy a great life in their province.

He is proud to have had the opportunity to be a mentor, break down barriers and misconceptions, and continue to working to improve life in Manitoba for ALL to enjoy.

Bio provided by role model

Photo credit: Bitpicture

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 served 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, inclusive language , and 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 is a champion for equal rights for LGBTQ individuals and continually challenges 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*

Angela James
b. December 22, 1964

Angela James is a Canadian former ice hockey player who played at the highest levels of senior hockey between 1980 and 2000. She was a member of numerous teams in the Central Ontario Women's Hockey League (COWHL) from its founding in 1980 until 1998 and finished her career in the National Women's Hockey League (NWHL).

Angela was born in Toronto and grew up in the Flemingdon Park area. One of only a few Black kids in the neighbourhood, she lived with her mom and two half-sisters. Angela quickly developed an interest in sports. Her godfather gave her a baseball bat and glove to celebrate her first holy communion. She excelled at hockey, baseball and synchronized swimming as a young child. Her mother wanted her to focus on swimming due to the lack of opportunities for girls in hockey in the 1970s. Her passion was for hockey, however, and she was constantly playing ball hockey with the neighbourhood boys from the time she was in kindergarten. Angela first played organized hockey in a Flemingdon Park boys house league at the age of eight, and then only after her mother threatened legal action as officials opposed her inclusion. She excelled in the league, so much so that part way through her second year, the league changed the rules and girls were no longer allowed to play. Angela then played for a Catholic girl's team, made up of girls from all over the city.

Angela attended Valley Park Middle School and graduated from Overlea High School. She then went on to Seneca College where she played baseball and hockey. After earning a diploma in Recreation Facilities Management from Seneca College, Angela was hired by the school as a sports programmer in 1985.

Internationally, Angela played in the first women's world championship, a 1987 tournament that was unsanctioned. She played with Team Canada in the first IIHF World Women's Championship in 1990, setting a scoring record of 11 goals and leading Canada to the gold medal. She played in three additional world championships, winning gold medals in 1992, 1994 and 1997. Controversially, she was left off the team for the first women's Olympic hockey tournament in 1998. She played her final international tournament in 1999.

Angela has been called "the first superstar of modern women's hockey", and has been hailed as a pioneer who brought the women's game into the mainstream. Longtime women's hockey administrator Fran Rider stated that Angela brought credibility, without which the women's game would never have gained recognition as an Olympic sport.

An eight-time scoring champion and six-time most valuable player during her senior career, Angela has been honoured by several organizations. She was named Toronto's Youth of the Year in 1985 and was presented the city's Women in Sport Enhancement Award in 1992. Hockey Canada named her the 2005 recipient of its Female Hockey Breakthrough Award. The Flemingdon Park arena was renamed the Angela James Arena in 2009, and the Canadian Women's Hockey League presents the Angela James Bowl to its leading scorer each season. Angela has been honoured by numerous halls of fame. She has been inducted into several Halls of Fame, including the Ontario Colleges Athletic Association Hall of Fame in 2005, and the Black Hockey and Sports Hall of Fame in

2006. She was one of the first three women inducted into the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) Hockey Hall of Fame in 2008 and one of the first two inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame in 2010. She was inducted into Canada's Sports Hall of Fame in 2009.

Angela always knew who she was. She had a girlfriend in grade 10, but kept it quiet until they ran into a classmate and her girlfriend in the park. Then she knew she wasn't alone and she stopped hiding who she was – although there weren't any clubs or support groups back then. Angela has been 'out' since she was 15. She met her partner, Ange, in 1994, and the couple formalized their relationship in a commitment ceremony two years later. They have three children. Ange carried their first child in 1999, Christian, while Angela gave birth to fraternal twins, son Michael and daughter Toni, in 2005.

Angela continues to work for Seneca and is now a Senior Sports Coordinator at its King campus. She is also a certified referee in Canada, and a coach.

Bio provided by role model

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 Doctor 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.

Bio provided by role model

Sarah Vaillancourt

b. May 8, 1985

Sarah Vaillancourt was born in Sherbrooke, Quebec. Sarah has been a member of the Women's National Hockey Team since 2003, since she was 18 years of age. In April 2013, she announced her retirement from the national team. As a member of the team, she is a double Olympic gold medal winner in 2006 and 2010. In 107 international matches, she has amassed 45 goals and 53 assists for a total of 98 points.

Sarah has never hidden her sexual orientation. She has spoken publically about being a lesbian. Sarah Vaillancourt the Olympic medalist wishes to help young people that wish to come out of the closet and free themselves from their great secret. She has been frequently invited to schools speak to young people about LGBTQ issues. She has also granted interviews in the United States on the subject.

Sarah Vaillancourt hopes to become an English teacher and continue to play hockey for the Montreal Stars in the Canadian Women's Hockey League.

Bio provided by role model

LGBTQ SYMBOLS

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 1970s, 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 rights 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 lost to the AIDS virus over the years.

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

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, the male symbol; a cross projecting from the bottom, the female symbol; and with an additional crossed arrow, combining the female cross and male arrow, projecting from the top-left.

Adapted from 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 star (in addition to any other badge representing other reasons for incarceration), and "anti-social individuals" (which included vagrants and "work shy" individuals) had to wear 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 is second in popularity only to the rainbow flag.

The black triangle 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.

Adapted from *http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pink_triangle*

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_triangle_%28badge%29

TWO-SPIRITED SYMBOLS

Icon used by 2-Spirited People of the First Nations

Icon used by Two-Spirited People of Manitoba

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

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

INFORMATION & RESOURCES FOR EDUCATORS

diversity = possibility

INFORMATION & RESOURCES FOR EDUCATORS

If LGBTQ terminology and concepts are new to you, check out Terms and Concepts section of this kit. 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 Gender Identity" 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 division 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!

➲ In 2004 Manitoba made it law that schools must ensure safe and caring environments for all students, that regulations be made about positive and safe school environments, codes of conduct and emergency plans, and that committees be created to advise principals in preparing these codes and plans. The Safe Schools Charter amended The Public Schools Act and The Education Administration Act. See *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/bills/38-2/b030e.php*

Amendments were made to The Public Schools Act in 2013 concerning Safe and Inclusive Schools in the areas of bullying and respect for human diversity.

The amendments define bullying. The definition recognizes that bullying can take a variety of forms, including... written, verbal, physical and electronic...(cyberbullying).

The amendments also require each school board to establish a respect for human diversity policy. The policy is to promote the acceptance of and respect for others in a safe, caring and inclusive school environment. The policy must be developed with The Human Rights Code in mind, and accommodate student activity that promotes the school environment as being inclusive of all pupils, including student activities and organizations that use the name "gay-straight alliance".

The Public Schools Act applies to all public and funded independent schools. See: *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ ccsm/p250e.php*

➲ The Public Schools Act preamble states: AND WHEREAS public schools should contribute to the development of a fair, compassionate, healthy and prosperous society;

AND WHEREAS the public school system must take into account the diverse needs and interests of the people of Manitoba.

The Act goes on to include: 41 (1.b.1) Every school board shall ensure that each pupil enrolled in a school within the

jurisdiction of the school board is provided with a safe and caring school environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviours.

The Public Schools Act applies to all public and funded and independent schools. See: *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/p250e.php*

➲ Amendments made to The Public Schools Act in 2013 concerning Safe and Inclusive Schools require school boards to have a respect for human diversity policy and to ensure that the policy is implemented in each school in the school division or school district. The respect for human diversity policy will "promote and enhance:

- a safe and inclusive learning environment

- the acceptance and respect for others, and

- the creation of a positive school environment

This policy is also meant to "address training for teachers and other staff about bullying, prevention and strategies for promoting respect for human diversity and a positive school environment…" and must be prepared with "due regard for the principles of The Human Rights Code."

The respect for human diversity policy "must accommodate students who want to establish and lead activities and organizations that

a) promote:

- gender equity

- antiracism

- the awareness and understanding of, and respect for, people who are disabled by barriers, or

- the awareness and understanding of, and respect for, people of all sexual orientations and gender identities

The Public Schools Act applies to all public and funded independent schools. See: *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/p250e.php*

➲ ¾ 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 *Every Class in Every School: Final Report on the First National Climate Survey on Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia in Canadian Schools*, check out Egale's national LGBTQ safer schools and inclusive education website: *MyGSA.ca*.

➲ According to the Department of Education and Advanced Learning document *Towards Inclusion From Challenges to Possibilities – Planning for Behaviour*, a positive school climate is crucial. This document states that:

A positive school climate exists when all students feel comfortable, wanted, valued, accepted, and secure in an environment where they can interact with caring people they trust. A positive school climate affects everyone associated with the school: students, staff, parents, and the community. It is the belief system or culture that underlies the day-to-day operation of a school.

Key factors of a positive school climate include the following:

- all students are (and feel) welcomed and accepted
- positive behaviour modeled by staff
- all students and staff treated with respect and dignity
- the school has introduced measures to ensure it is safe and caring
- staff has developed programs and initiatives to ensure all students feel they belong

Department of Education and Advanced Learning documents apply to all public and funded independent schools. See: *http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/beh/index.html*

➲ According to the Department of Education and Advanced Learning document *Towards Inclusion From Challenges to Possibilities – Planning for Behaviour*, a positive schools climate is crucial. This document states that:

Collectively and individually, a positive school climate can have a major impact on the success of all students in the school. Research has consistently shown a link between positive school climate and other important measurements of school success, including:

- Academic achievement

- High morale

- Staff productivity

- Effective management

Department of Education and Advanced Learning documents apply to all public and funded independent schools. See: *http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/beh/index.html*

➲ According to the Department of Education and Advanced Learning document *Towards Inclusion From Challenges to Possibilities – Planning for Behaviour*, research has also identified general and specific factors that contribute to creating a positive school climate:

General Factors

- Program curriculum

- Activities

- Policies

Specific Factors

- Continuous academic and social growth.

- Respect: students and staff have high self-esteem and are considerate of others.

- Trust: a sense that people can be counted on.

- High morale: students and staff feel good about being there.

- Cohesiveness: a sense of belonging.

- Opportunities for input: being able to contribute ideas and participate.

- Renewal: an openness to change and improvement.

- Caring: students and staff feel that others are concerned about them.

Department of Education and Advanced Learning documents apply to all public and funded independent schools. See: *http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/beh/index.html*

➲ Department of Education and Advanced Learning document entitled *Towards Inclusion: Supporting Positive Behaviour in Manitoba Classrooms* states that schools need to develop caring relationships not only between the educator and student but also among students, among educators, between educators and parents, and between administrators and staff. This will create a safe and inclusive classroom climate that invites and supports positive behaviour and skilled problem solving.

The teacher–student relationship is extremely important and takes time and trust to build. Both parties must believe they are being treated with dignity and respect, and there must be a balance between the teacher's role as classroom leader and his or her expression of interest in each student.

Department of Education and Advanced Learning documents apply to all public and funded independent schools. See: *http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/behaviour/index.html*

⊃ The Manitoba Teachers' Society has a policy on Equity Issues. Some of the commitments are:

1. Commitment to the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and all federal and provincial legislation related to human rights, which accept that "all human beings are born free and equal is dignity and human rights"

2. The elimination of all forms of discrimination in the schools and communities of Manitoba, with discrimination being defined by the Manitoba Human Rights Code, Section 9(1).

3. that all curricula and programs by Manitoba Education be reviewed and monitored for any type of bias, stereotypes and/or generalizations that could promote or induce discriminatory behavior and attitudes.

4. that "Society members and employees promote and understanding and active inclusion of 'equity-seeking groups' the applicable characteristics of which are specified in the Manitoba Human Rights Code, Section 9(2)

5. That the Society actively advocate and promote actions that:

   a. provide plans for prevention of and appropriate responses to discriminatory incidents

   b. develop a climate of respect for diversity, and

   c. promote positive interactions among all members of the education community."

6. That the Society support all members in providing safe and inclusive learning environments that respect human diversity and prevent the expression of negative judgments based on gender bias, sexual stereotyping, sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

   The full policy can be found at the end of this section and at: *http://www.mbteach.org/library2/constitution-bylawsa-and-policies-governing-the-manitoba-teachers-society*

2

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP MAKE MANITOBA'S SCHOOLS SAFER AND MORE INCLUSIVE SPACES?

As individuals, we must recognize that our own attitudes and conduct either threaten or promote the dignity and rights of others. It is therefore necessary to make a conscious effort to examine our behaviour. We can begin with a willingness to look within ourselves and our families, organizations, institutions and other groups and consider our behaviour in relationship to the principles of human rights...By emphasizing the need for an ongoing examination of our attitudes and conduct, resources such as this guidebook may reduce the incidence of human rights violations.

Human rights curriculum material is currently being developed and implemented in Manitoba and across the country. Its effectiveness will be severely limited if the climate in which it is taught does not exemplify the fundamental principles of justice and human rights. Our schools must reflect a belief of the basic equality of all people, irrespective of race, sex, cultural background, physical or mental ability, sexual orientation, family status, age, economic status or other characteristics. Schools and classrooms present opportunities to model just social systems which respect the rights and freedoms of all participants.

– Strini Reddy
  Chief Superintendent Frontier School Division 1985-91
  Foreword, *Human Rights In The School Resource*

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.

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. (page 13)

2. Reflect on your own biases and remember that these affect how you teach and what you are teaching. (page 15)

3. Use gender-neutral and inclusive language as much as possible. (page 22)

4. Check curriculum/assignments/activities/forms for inclusivity and any assumptions that are being made. (page 23)

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. (page 30)

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. (page 34)

7. Contact local organizations for help or to bring in speakers. (page 35)

8. Find out what your school's policy is regarding LGBTQ matters. If this is missing, work with students to change it. (page 36)

9. Help your school set up gender-neutral washrooms. (page 39)

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. (page 40)

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?

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…
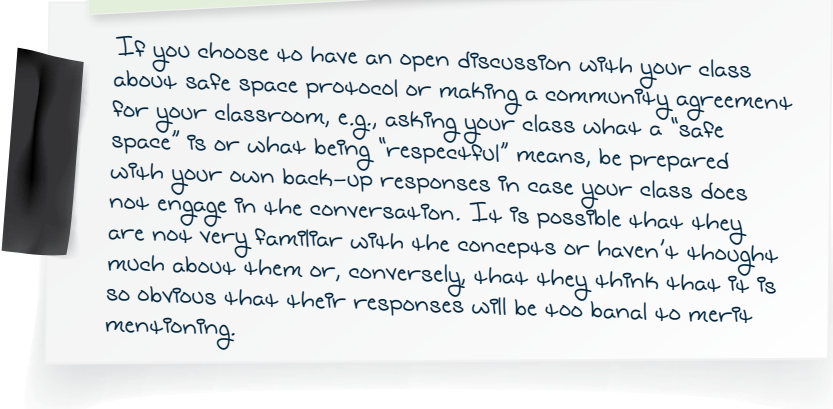
The Public Schools Act requires that "every school board shall ensure that each pupil enrolled in a school within the jurisdiction of the school board is provided with a safe and caring school environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviours." See: *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/p250e.php*

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

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	☐	☐	☐	
Gay	☐	☐	☐	
Bisexual	☐	☐	☐	
Trans	☐	☐	☐	
Two-Spirited	☐	☐	☐	
Queer	☐	☐	☐	
Questioning	☐	☐	☐	

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

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?
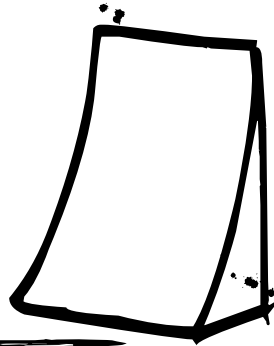
EXERCISE 3

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:

....

....

....

....

....

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:

....

....

....

....

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.

"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:

....

....

....

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:

....

....

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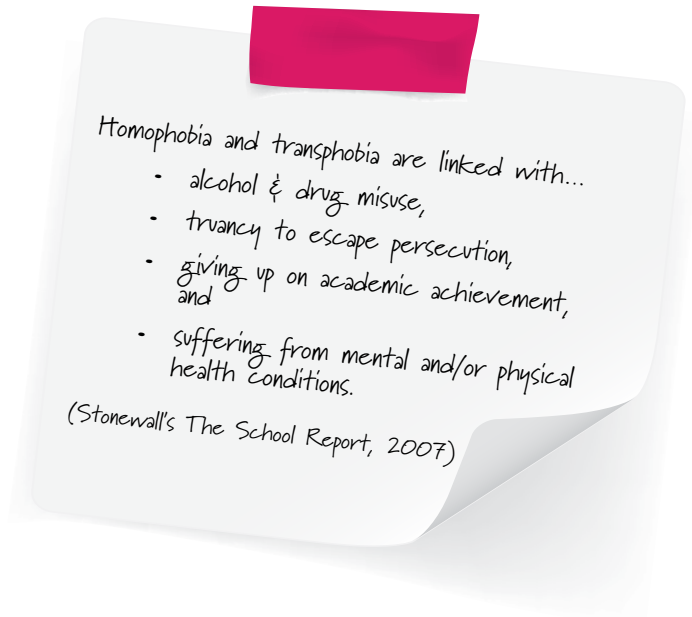
Homophobia and transphobia are linked with...
- alcohol & drug misuse,
- truancy to escape persecution,
- giving up on academic achievement, and
- suffering from mental and/or physical health conditions.

(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

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

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.

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

CHECK OUT THE RAINBOW CLASSROOM provided here 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.

- 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/content/terms-concepts*

• Watch and discuss some of the following films:

!

Films, videos, and other multimedia educational and commercial resources may be very effective tools for exploring issues related to diversity of sexuality, gender identity/expression, and inclusion within a GSA support group or within the classroom. However, it is critical that teachers or other facilitators working with learners in GSA groups or other settings carefully preview, select, and plan for the use of these resources to ensure that they are used effectively and that learners benefit from viewing and discussing the film, video or other multimedia resource.

The listed films that follow have been found by some teachers and LGBTQ facilitators to be potentially useful resources. However, they have not been reviewed through a Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning formal resource review process, nor are they endorsed by the Department, and they do not carry a Manitoba recommended designation. Film and multimedia resources, as with all other literature or educational resource selections should be reviewed by school division staff before they are used by students. In this way, learner sensitivities and the perspectives of the student population, as well as the appropriateness of the resource for the intended learning objectives are taken into account. In addition, the effectiveness of a particular resource will depend greatly on what the teacher or facilitator does in terms of preparing the audience before viewing, as well as the needs and interaction of students during and post viewing.

A Jihad for Love	PG (Manitoba)
Apples and Oranges	G (Manitoba)
Beautiful Thing	14A (Manitoba)
Big Eden	PG (Manitoba)
Billy Elliot	PG (Manitoba)
Breakfast with Scot	14A (Manitoba)
But I'm a Cheerleader	14A (Manitoba)

C.R.A.Z.Y.	14A (Manitoba)
Chasing Amy	R (Manitoba)
Cure for Love	PG (Manitoba)
D.E.B.S.	14A (Manitoba)
Deb-we-win Ge-kend-am-aan, Our Place in the Circle	NFB
From Criminality to Equality	Canadian Documentary
Georgie Girl	Documentary
Get Real	14A (Manitoba)
Girl Inside	Canadian Documentary
Gray Matters	PG (Manitoba)
Hedwig and the Angry Inch	14A (Manitoba)
I Can't Think Straight	14A (Manitoba)
If These Walls Could Talk 2	14A (Manitoba)
Il était une fois dans l'est (Once Upon a Time in the East)	14A (Manitoba)
Imagine Me and You	14A (Manitoba)
In Other Words	PG (Manitoba)
The Incredibly True Adventure of 2 Girls in Love	14A (Manitoba)
It's Elementary	Documentary
J'ai tué ma mère (I Killed My Mother)	14A (Manitoba)
Johnny Greyeyes	14A (Manitoba)
Just Call Me Kade	Documentary
Kissing Jessica Stein	14A (Manitoba)
Les amours imaginaires (Heartbeats)	14A (Manitoba)
Living with Pride: The Ruth Ellis Story	Documentary
Ma vie en rose (My Life in Pink)	PG (Manitoba)
Mambo Italiano	14A (Manitoba)
Milk	14A (Manitoba)
Naissance des pieuvres (Water Lilies)	14A (Canada)
Nina's Heavenly Delights	PG (Manitoba)

One of Them	18A (Manitoba)
Open Secrets (Secrets de polichinelle)	14A (Manitoba)
Quand l'amour est gai (When Love is Gay)	14A (Manitoba)
Saving Face	14A (Manitoba)
School's Out	G (Manitoba)
Secrets de polichinelle (Open Secrets)	14A (Manitoba)
Serving in Silence: The Margarethe Cammermeyer Story	14A (Manitoba)
Shaking the Tree	14A (Manitoba)
Show Me Love	14A (Manitoba)
Sticks and Stones	G (Manitoba)
Taking Charge	PG (Manitoba)
Talk to Me	14A (Manitoba)
That's a Family!	Documentary
The Business of Fancydancing	PG (Manitoba)
The Truth About Jane	PG, Mature Theme Warning (Manitoba)
TransAmerica	14A (Manitoba)
TransGeneration	14A (Manitoba)
Trevor	14A (Manitoba)
Two Spirits	PG (Manitoba)
When Love is Gay (Quand l'amour est gai)	NFB

Manitoba classifications for movies can be found on the Manitoba Film Classification Board's website: *http://www.gov. mb.ca/chc/mfcb/index.html*.

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 13 Egale-recommended LGBTQ books for young adults:

Literature can be effective resources for exploring issues related to diversity of sexuality, gender identity/expression, and inclusion, within a GSA support group or within the classroom. However, it is critical that teachers or other facilitators working with learners in GSA groups or other settings carefully preview, select, and plan for the use of these resources to ensure that they are used effectively and that learners benefit from reading and discussing the resource.

The list of books that follow may be useful resources. However, they have not been reviewed through a Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning formal resource review process, nor are they endorsed by the Department, and they do not carry a Manitoba recommended designation.

All literature or other educational resource selections should be reviewed by school division staff before they are used by students. In this way, learner sensitivities and the perspectives of the student population, as well as the appropriateness of the resource for the intended learning objectives are taken into account. In addition, the effectiveness of a particular resource will depend greatly on what the teacher or facilitator does in terms of preparing the audience before reading, as well as the needs and interaction of students during and post reading.

Absolutely, Positively Not (2005) by David LaRochelle. In a touching, sometimes hilarious coming-out story, Steven DeNarski, 16, tries to deny he is gay. . . . The wry, first-person narrative is wonderful as it goes from personal angst to outright farce (Steven takes a pet golden retriever to the school dance). The characters are drawn with surprising depth, and Steven finds quiet support, as well as betrayal, in unexpected places. Many readers, gay and straight, will recognize Steven's need to talk to someone.

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 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.

Koolaids (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, Koolaids 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."

She Walks for Days Inside a Thousand Eyes: A Two Spirit Story (2008) by Sharron Proulx-Turner. Sharron Proulx-Turner combines poetry and history to delve into the little-known lives of two-spirit women. Regarded with both wonder and fear when first encountered by the West, First Nations women living with masculine and feminine principles in the same body had important roles to play in society, as healers and visionaries, before they were suppressed during the colonial invasion. She walks for days inside a thousand eye (a two-spirit story) creatively juxtaposes first-person narratives and traditional stories with the voices of contemporary two-spirit women, voices taken from nature, and the teachings of Water, Air, Fire and Mother Earth.

So Hard to Say (2004) by Alex Sanchez. Frederick is the shy new boy and Xio is the bubbly chica who lends him a pen on the first day of class. They become fast friends-but when Xio decides she wants to be more than friends, Frederick isn't so sure. He loves hanging out with Xio and her crew, but he doesn't like her that way. Instead, he finds himself thinking more and more about Victor, the captain of the soccer team. Does that mean Frederick's gay?

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 lessons 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, and more recently, "Teaching human rights in Ontario: A guide for Ontario schools" (2013). Both are available for download in their entirety at http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/teaching-human-rights-ontario-guide-ontario-schools.

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 LGBTQ 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.

The Manitoba Public Schools Act preamble states: AND WHEREAS public schools should contribute to the development of a fair, compassionate, healthy and prosperous society;

AND WHEREAS the public school system must take into account the diverse needs and interests of the people of Manitoba. Furthermore, the Act specifies that "every school board shall ensure that each pupil enrolled in a school within the jurisdiction of the school board is provided with a safe and caring school environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviours. See: *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/p250e.php*

Amendments to The Public Schools Act in 2013 require school divisions to have a respect for human diversity policy and to ensure that the policy is implemented in each school in the school division or school district. The respect for human diversity policy will "promote and enhance:

- a safe and inclusive learning environment
- the acceptance and respect for others, and
- the creation of a positive school environment"

This policy is also meant to "address training for teachers and other staff about bullying and prevention and strategies for promoting respect for human diversity and a positive school environment".

The respect for human diversity policy "must accommodate students who want to establish and lead activities and organizations that

a) promote:

- gender equity
- antiracism
- the awareness and understanding of, and respect for, people who are disabled by barriers, or
- the awareness and understanding of, and respect for, people of all sexual orientations and gender identities"

The Public Schools Act applies to all public and funded and independent schools. See: *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/ statutes/ccsm/p250e.php*

The respect for human diversity policies must be prepared with "due regard for the principles of the *Human Rights Code*." Gender identity and sexual orientation are both applicable characteristics that are protected from discrimination under *The Code*. See *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/h175e.php*

In addition, the Manitoba Teachers Society has an equity policy that speaks to human rights, elimination of discrimination, reviewing and monitoring curriculum for bias and stereotypes as well as developing a climate of respect for diversity - as well as LGBTQ-specific support and safety.

The full policy can be found at the end of this section and at: *http://www.mbteach.org/library2/constitution-bylawsa-and-policies-governing-the-manitoba-teachers-society*

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 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).

In addition to The Public Schools Act and the MTS Equity Policy, the Department of Education and Advanced Learning has 3 documents that support positive school climates and make cases for the link between these and student achievement and self esteem, as well as the importance of intervention and the creation of positive relationships within the school community.

Towards Inclusion From Challenges to Possibilities – Planning for Behaviour : *http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/beh/index.html*

Towards Inclusion: Supporting Positive Behaviour in Manitoba Classrooms: *http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/behaviour/index.html*

A Whole-School Approach to Safety and Belonging Preventing Violence and Bullying: http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/guidance/whole_school_approach.html.

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 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.

"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

IF A STUDENT HAS NOT YET COME FORWARD, talk to your school's administration about becoming a GSA school staff advisor!

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.

⭐ 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 Manitoba's Building Code (2011), which states the following: "If one or more washrooms are required to be provided

on a *storey* of an *assembly, care, treatment, mercantile* or *business* and *personal services occupancies*, one of them shall have a universal toilet room." See: *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/ laws/regs/pdf/b093-031.11.pdf*

> **Gender-neutral washrooms provide safe, private, and accessible environments and accommodate a variety of needs.**

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.

⭐ **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. These multiple identifications are referred to 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 and Power Triangle Activity & Circles of Ourselves—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.

❝ *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 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.* ❞

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."

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.

[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://www21.safesecureweb.com/egale/index. asp?lang=E&menu=40&item=296.*

"Manitoba has been at the forefront in Canada in taking action to prevent bullying. Today we want to give students more power and the right tools they need to create a more caring and inclusive school for all students," said Nancy Allan, former Minister of Education. "This new resource will support the amended Public Schools Act which will require all schools to accommodate students who want to form GSAs... We must ensure all students feel safe and respected in the schools they attend." See: *http://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index. html?archive=2013-5-01&item=17380*

SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES: RACISM, SEXISM, AND HOMOPHOBIA

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.

Ask about differences in the way each group has historically faced 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 members of some groups have mixed experiences and strategies. Ask how these differences affect the stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination members of each group might experience.

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 discussion? 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
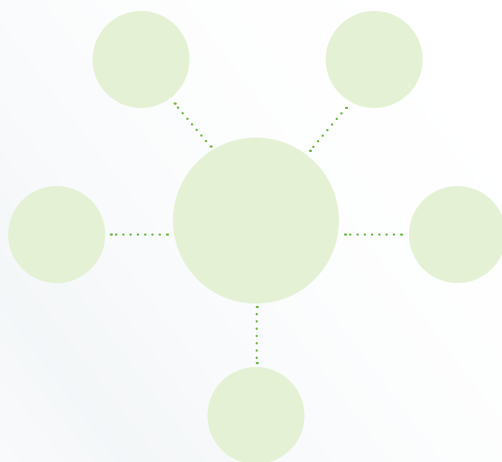
a. Write your name in the central circle.

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.

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.

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.

From the Toronto District School Board (TDSB)

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!

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 Faith-Based Reasons to Support LGBTQ Inclusive Education

Adapted from document by Nadia Bello for T.E.A.C.H.

1. Human dignity is paramount.

2. The ideals of compassion, acceptance, peace and love are shared by most religions and peoples throughout the world. Many religions have incredible histories of involvement with social justice and peace movements, activism, and a sense of duty to marginalized peoples.

3. Most religions share the belief that one should treat others like one would like others to treat oneself.

4. LGBTQ inclusive education does not teach that someone's religious values are wrong.

5. LGBTQ inclusive education works toward ensuring that each student has a safe environment in which to learn. Homophobia, biphobia and transphobia foster, condone, and wilfully ignore violence and hate.

6. The impact of disapproval and lack of acceptance opens individuals who identify as LGBTQ up to verbal, physical and emotional harassment, which are all forms of violence.

7. Sexual orientation is a prohibited ground of discrimination under the Canadian Charter of Rights as well as provincial/territorial Human Rights Codes. Gender identity is also included as a prohibited ground in some provinces and territories including Manitoba. Please visit *www.egale.ca* for a current list.

8. Homophobia, biphobia and transphobia hurt us all, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. Often, anyone who is perceived to be LGBTQ is subjected to harassment and victimization. Homophobia, biphobia and transphobia enforce rigid gender roles and norms, deny individual expression, and perpetuate stereotypes, myths, and misinformation.

9. LGBTQ inclusive education is NOT sex education. It is not about discussing or describing explicitly sexual activities. Support groups, such as Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs) that gather in schools serve as safe places that allow students to meet and discuss issues relevant to their lives and circumstances.

10. All human beings are valuable members of their communities regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.

HUMAN RIGHTS

SECTIONS FROM THE ONTARIO HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION'S TEACHING HUMAN RIGHTS IN ONTARIO: AN EDUCATIONAL PACKAGE FOR ONTARIO SCHOOLS

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 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 CGLA, 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:

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

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.

The following are examples of lessons that can be used to explore some of the issues pertaining to LGBTQ safe spaces. The first is about gender identity and expression and uses the film Ma Vie En Rose – a French film with English subtitles.

The second example is about prejudice and bias by examining the Holocaust and genocide. It can be used as a broader examination of the issues underlying homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and heterosexism.

Ma Vie En Rose

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.

Objectives:

- ⮑ 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?

The Pyramid of Hate

THE PYRAMID OF HATE

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 at the Shoah Foundation Testimony Reel online at http://sfi.usc.edu/

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.

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 occured due to race, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, etc. (e.g., Native Americans, Aboriginals 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 http://www.vhf.org/collections. To download this lesson, visit http://www.adl.org/assets/pdf/education-outreach/Pyramid-of-Hate.pdf

- 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

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?

© 2003 Anti-Defamation League and Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation

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

©2003 Anti-Defamation League and Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation

PYRAMID OF HATE

Genocide
The act or intent to
deliberately and
systematically
annihilate
an entire people

**Bias-Motivated
Violence**

Individual
Murder
Rape
Assault
Threats

Community
Arson
Terrorism
Vandalism
Desecration

Discrimination

Economic Discrimination
Employment Discrimination
Educational Discrimination

Political Discrimination
Housing Discrimination
Segregation

Individual Acts of Prejudice

Bullying
Ridicule

Name-calling
Social Avoidance

Slurs/Epithets
De-humanization

Bias

Stereotyping
Insensitive remarks

Belittling Jokes
Non-inclusive language

Justifying biases by seeking out like-minded people
Accepting negative information/screening out positive information

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?

The Manitoba Teachers' Society has a policy on Equity Issues that states:

A. GENERAL

1. Commitment to the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and all federal and provincial legislation related to human rights, which accept that "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and human rights."

2. The elimination of all forms of discrimination in the schools and communities of Manitoba, with discrimination being defined by the Manitoba Human Rights Code, Section 9(1).

3. The cooperation of organizations promoting behaviours, attitudes and materials that are based on the belief that all human beings are equal in dignity and rights.

4. That all curricula and programs produced by Manitoba Education be reviewed and monitored for any type of bias, stereotypes and/or generalizations that could promote or induce discriminatory behaviour and attitudes.

5. That Society members and employees promote and understanding and active inclusion of "equity-seeking groups,: the applicable characteristics of which are specified in the Manitoba Human Rights Code, Section 9(2).

6. That The Society actively advocate and promote actions that:

   a. Encourage participation of all individuals as active contributors,

   b. Provide plans for prevention of and appropriate responses to discriminatory incidents,

   c. Ensure services for newly arrived students and families,

   d. Ensure access and opportunity to attend programs related to equity issues,

   e. Develop a climate of respect for diversity, and

     f.   Promote positive interactions among all members of the education community

7. That the Society oppose the advertising, distribution and promotion of materials and programs which undermine an equitable and just society.

8. That the rights of parents to have their children educated in the official language of their choice be recognized in the educational systems in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms

B. DISCRIMINATION AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PROGRAMS

1. That the Society provide appropriate and/or necessary support for members who identify themselves as members of the GLBTQ (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning) community and, further, that the Society support all members in providing safe and inclusive learning environments that respect human diversity and prevent the expression of negative judgments based on gender bias, sexual stereotyping, sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

The full policy can be found at: *http://www.mbteach.org/library2/constitution-bylawsa-and-policies-governing-the-manitoba-teachers-society*

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

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

RESOURCES FOR GUIDANCE COUNSELLORS

RESOURCES FOR GUIDANCE COUNSELLORS

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.

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

- 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

Klinic 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

Klinic 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

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)."

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.
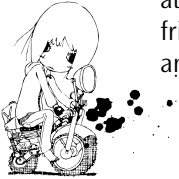
People become gay or lesbian because they are unattractive and have no success with the "opposite" sex.

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.

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.

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

I don't know anyone who is LGBTQ.

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.

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

Queer people don't make good parents.

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*)

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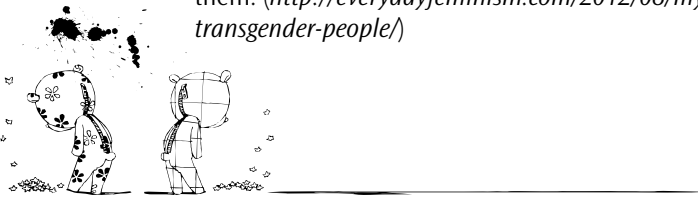
Check out *MyGSA.ca*
for more information as well as resources and materials
for debunking LGBTQ myths!

Adapted from the original developed by Vanessa Russell for the Toronto Board of Education
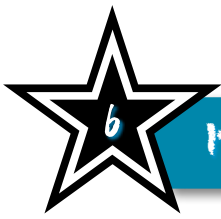
ISSUES FACED BY GLBTTQ¹ FAMILIES

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.

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.

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

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 Resoures 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.

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.

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 LGBTTQIA* youth a safe, fun place to learn new skills, create projects and celebrate our identities! PPY seeks to build the capacity of LGBTTQIA* youth to support and encourage their peers to learn more about sexual orientation, gender identity and anti-homophobic education. PPY focuses on providing LGBTTQIA* youth with the opportunity to be positively supported and affirmed as LGBTTQIA* 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

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 LGBTTQQ 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 LGBTTQQ 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 LGBTTQQ 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 LGBTTQ 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 Klinic Community Health Centre
870 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg
(204) 784-4090

www.klinic.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.

   Oppressions 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.

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 LGTQ 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.

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

INFORMATION FOR ADMINISTRATORS

INFORMATION FOR ADMINISTRATORS

In 2004 Manitoba made it law that schools must ensure safe and caring environments for all students, that regulations be made about positive and safe school environments, codes of conduct and emergency plans, and that committees be created to advise principals in preparing these codes and plans. The Safe Schools Charter amended The Public Schools Act and The Education Administration Act. Both apply to all public and funded independent schools. See *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/bills/38-2/b030e.php*

In 2013, The Public Schools Act was again amended regarding bullying and respect for human diversity.

The Act defines bullying, recognizing that bullying can take a variety of forms, including... written, verbal, physical and electronic...(cyberbullying).

The Act also requires each school board to establish a respect for human diversity policy. The policy is to promote the acceptance of and respect for others in a safe, caring and inclusive school environment. The policy must accommodate student activity that promotes the school environment as being inclusive of all pupils, including student activities and organizations that use the name "gay-straight alliance"." See: *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/bills/40-2/b018e.php*. Many of the Action Items for making Manitoba's schools safer and more inclusive spaces are supported by statistics from Egale Canada's *Every Class in Every School : Final Report on the First National Climate Survey on Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia in Canadian Schools*.

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*; 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 *Every Class in Every School : Final Report on the First National Climate Survey on Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia in Canadian Schools*:

- 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.

The preamble to The Public Schools Act includes the following: "WHEREAS public schools should contribute to the development of a fair, compassionate, healthy and prosperous society; AND WHEREAS the public school system must take into account the diverse needs and interests of the people of Manitoba". Within the Act, one of the sections speaks to safe and caring schools: "Every school board shall ensure that each pupil enrolled in a school within the jurisdiction of the school board is provided with a safe and caring school environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviours". See *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/ p250e.php*

These commitments along with the amendments made to The Public Schools Act in 2013 underscore the Department of Education and Advanced Learning's commitment to upholding the values of genuine acceptance and respect in learning environments.

In addition to the amendments made to The Public Schools Act in 2013 concerning Safe and Inclusive Schools, the Department of Education and Advanced Learning has publications that support the commitment to safer schools.

Towards Inclusion From Challenges to Possibilities – Planning for Behaviour states that a positive schools climate is crucial:

"A positive school climate exists when all students feel comfortable, wanted, valued, accepted, and secure in an environment where they can interact with caring people they trust. A positive school climate affects everyone associated with the school: students, staff, parents, and the community. It is the belief system or culture that underlies the day-to-day operation of a school.

Collectively and individually, a positive school climate can have a major impact on the success of all students in the school. Research has consistently shown a link between positive school climate and other important measurements of school success, including:

- Academic achievement
- High morale
- Staff productivity
- Effective management"

See: *http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/beh/index.html*

A Whole School Approach to Safety and Belonging: Preventing Violence and Bullying states that "a school-wide approach to safety and belonging sends a strong message to all individuals in the school community. An ongoing collaborative process that encourages a safe and caring climate addresses concerns related to harmful behaviours, including bullying, violence, threat, intimidation, and harassment… A whole-school approach requires a conscious effort to meet the needs of all students in all educational environments. This is particularly important in terms of appropriate responses to negative or hurtful behaviours."

See: *http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/guidance/whole_school_approach.html*

Department of Education and Advanced Learning documents apply to all public and funded independent schools.

Amendments made to The Public Schools Act in 2013 concerning Safe and Inclusive Schools require school boards to have a respect for human diversity policy and to ensure that the policy is implemented in each school in the school division or school district.

The respect for human diversity policy must be prepared with "due regard for the principles of The Human Rights Code" and "must accommodate students who want to establish and lead activities and organizations that

a) promote:

- gender equity

- antiracism

- the awareness and understanding of, and respect for, people who are disabled by barriers, or

- the awareness and understanding of, and respect for, people of all sexual orientations and gender identities

b) use the name "gay-straight alliance" or any other name that is consistent with the promotion of a positive school environment that is inclusive and accepting of all pupils."

See *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/p250e.php*

"We want to give students more power and the right tools they need to create a more caring and inclusive school for all students."

In *Every Class in Every School : Final Report on the First National Climate Survey on Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia in Canadian Schools*, 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". 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 *Every Class in Every School : Final Report on the First National Climate Survey on Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia in Canadian Schools* 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%)"

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/ setting-gsa*.

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 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.ca@egale.ca and let us know.

Inclusive curriculum is important so that students see themselves, their lives, and their experiences reflected in what they are learning, and so that they can learn about people, their lives and experiences that they are not familiar with.

Inclusive curriculum would include positive images and examples of LGBTQ lives and realities. When students, regardless of background or identity, see themselves reflected in the curriculum, it increases engagement and self esteem, and provides role models. Non-LGBTQ students are given the opportunity to expand their awareness and understanding, and to challenge stereotypes.

Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning recognizes that curriculum should reflect the diversity of all of Manitoba's peoples and challenge prejudice and discrimination. This is reflected in the Department's curriculum development policies.

"Lessons, projects, and related resources should allow students to see themselves reflected in the curriculum…"

As well, teachers have the opportunity to further integrate LGBTQ issues into their classrooms by examining their own bias, and the choices of examples, resources, literature, projects and discussion (among others).

It is important to consider what appears in the curriculum, as well as what is left out. The opportunity to examine and think critically about diversity and inequality, and the way they manifest in society, the media, and in the curriculum provides students with valuable tools for recognizing and addressing discrimination. An inclusive curriculum that includes LGBTQ issues is necessary for the creation of safe and inclusive schools for all members of the school community.

According to the Department of Education and Advanced Learning document *Towards Inclusion From Challenges to Possibilities – Planning for Behaviour*, a positive school climate is crucial, and program curriculum, activities, and policies are contributing factors to its creation.

See *http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/beh/index.html*

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.pdf*

According to *Every Class in Every School: Final Report on the First National Climate Survey on Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia in Canadian Schools* "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". See *http://MyGSA.ca/YouthSpeakUp*

Even if no one is out at your school, don't assume that no one is LGBTQ.
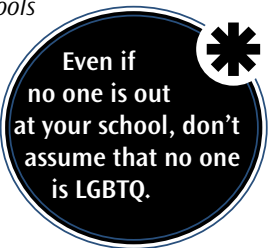
BE PROACTIVE IN TAKING A LEADERSHIP ROLE

by making your entire school community a safer space and, consequently, a better learning and working environment.

The Manitoba Teachers' Society policy on Equity Issues addresses inclusive curriculum as follows:

"That all curricula and programs produced by Manitoba Education be reviewed and monitored for any type of bias, stereotypes and/or generalizations that could promote or induce discriminatory behaviour and attitudes."

In addition, the policy also requires "that the Society provide appropriate and/or necessary support for members who identify themselves as members of the GLBTQ (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning) community and, further, that the Society support all members in providing safe and inclusive learning environments that respect human diversity and prevent the expression of negative judgments based on gender bias, sexual stereotyping, sexual orientation and/or gender identity."

For more information, and the complete policy, go to: *http://www.mbteach.org/library2/constitution-bylawsa-and-policies-governing-the-manitoba-teachers-society*

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 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).

Fulfilling the vision of safe and caring schools where all members of the school community work together and respect each other requires shared and committed leadership. Some provincial Departments of Education have outlined this powerfully. Here is an example:

"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". See *http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/inclusiveguide.pdf*

Leadership with regard to LGBTQ issues requires the acknowledgment of the presence of LGBTQ individuals (and the barriers they face due to discrimination, harassment and systemic discrimination) in our schools. It also requires that policies go further to outline that homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, heterosexism and cis-sexism in our schools are unacceptable, and will be addressed. Not only is this the right thing to do within the context of creating safe and caring schools, but it upholds the Manitoba Human Rights Code.

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". See *http://MyGSA.ca/ YouthSpeakUp*

In 2004 Manitoba made it law that schools must ensure safe and caring environments for all students, that regulations be made about positive and safe school environments, codes of conduct and emergency plans created, and that committees be established to advise principals in preparing these codes and plans.

See *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/bills/38-2/b030e.php*

The Public Schools Act states that codes of conduct must include "a statement that pupils and staff must behave in a respectful manner and comply with the code of conduct. Abuse (in various forms) and bullying must be included as unacceptable in these statements.

See *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/p250e.php*

In addition, the Department of Education and Advanced Learning document *A Whole School Approach to Safety and Belonging: Preventing Violence and Bullying* further supports committed leadership: "a school-wide approach to safety and belonging sends a strong message to all individuals in the school community."

See: *http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/guidance/whole_school_approach.html*

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 division has a policy that explicitly addresses sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression, please submit it as a model for other schools and divisions across the country: *http://MyGSA.ca/setting-gsa/school-board-policies.*

Amendments made to The Public Schools Act in 2013 concerning Safe and Inclusive Schools also addresses professional development and training of school personnel:

"A respect for human diversity policy is to (b) address training for teachers and other staff about (i) bullying prevention, and (ii) strategies for promoting respect for human diversity and a positive school environment."

See: *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/p250e.php*

Training about LGBTQ issues helps to increase understanding and awareness of homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, heterosexism, ans cissexism as well as teachers' responsibilities. Because homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, heterosexism and cissexism are common, they are often not easy to detect if one is not affected by them. Teachers and all school staff need to learn about homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, heterosexism and cissexism how to recognize them, the impact they have as well as how to intervene in order to help create safe and inclusive schools by helping to maintain a positive school climate.

A positive school climate is supported by Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning publications as crucial for academic achievement, but also for staff productivity. *A Whole-School Approach to Safety and Belonging: Preventing Violence and Bullying* describes "a school-wide approach to safety and belonging as an ongoing collaborative process that encourages

> Boards are expected to provide training in "bullying prevention and strategies for promoting respect for human diversity and a positive school environment." See *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/bills/40-2/b018e.php*

a safe and caring climate and addresses concerns related to harmful behaviours, including bullying, violence, threat, intimidation, and harassment…A whole-school approach requires a conscious effort to meet the needs of all students in all educational environments. This is particularly important in terms of appropriate responses to negative or hurtful behaviours…Sometimes it becomes necessary for the school staff to take steps to ensure that students are understanding of unique differences among all people and that they accept all other students." See: *http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/ support/guidance/whole_school_approach.html*

While GSAs provide education for staff and students, staff are role models and shape the curriculum within their classrooms. The codes of conduct required of schools by The Public Schools Act include expectations for staff as well as students. School staff that are aware and prepared to be proactive (as well as reactive) help to set expectations for positive behaviour and influence the school climate.

Contact Egale at mygsa@egale.ca or 1.888.204.7777 (toll-free) to arrange for a workshop for your school or school board!

Amendments made to The Public Schools Act in 2013 concerning Safe and Inclusive Schools address bullying and respect for human diversity.

The amendments includes a definition of bullying. The definition recognizes that bullying can take a variety of forms, including... written, verbal, physical and electronic...(cyberbullying).

The amendments also require each school board to establish a respect for human diversity policy. The policy is to promote the acceptance of and respect for others in a safe, caring and inclusive school environment. It includes training for teachers and staff with regard to bullying prevention as well as strategies for promoting respect for human diversity and a positive school environment. The policy must accommodate student activity that promotes the school environment as being inclusive of all pupils, including student activities and organizations that use the name "gay-straight alliance"." See: *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/p250e.php*

In *Every Class in Every School*, 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". See *http://MyGSA.ca/YouthSpeakUp*

Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning has begun this process with amendments to The Public Schools Act made in 2013. The requirement for school boards to develop respect for human diversity policy is important, as is the requirement that it include accommodation for "students who want to establish and lead organizations that (among other things) promote gender equity, the awareness and understanding of, and respect for, people of all sexual orientations and gender identities and that use the name "gay-straight alliance" or any other name that is consistent with the promotion of a positive school environment that is inclusive and accepting of all pupils."

While this is an important step, the success of this initiative will be dependent on the efforts of school divisions and funded independent

schools to support and implement the changes required locally.

It is important that all schools and partners in education recognize the challenge that is presented by LGBTQ bullying, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, heterosexism/heteronormativity and cissexism/cis-normativity– for students and for the whole school community. Strong policies and action plans that delineate the steps divisions and schools will take to address these issues will further support positive school climates and create safer and more inclusive schools.

In addition, while respect for human diversity policies will be helpful, embedding anti-homophobia and anti-transphobia requirements and language into all policies and practices as part of a broader commitment to equity and inclusion will further people's awareness and create even safer and more inclusive schools.

Some provincial Departments of Education have begun to recognize the importance of embedding equity and inclusion into policies and practices, and to demand this of their school districts and schools. Here is an example:

"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".

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

- ¾ 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*.

- Amendments made to The Public Schools Act in 2013 concerning Safe and Inclusive Schools require school boards to have a respect for human diversity policy and to ensure that the policy is implemented in each school in the school division or school district. This policy is also meant to "address training for teachers and other staff about bullying and prevention and strategies for promoting respect for human diversity and a positive school environment".

See *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/p250e.php*
Respect for human diversity policies must be prepared with "due regard for the principles of The Human Rights Code" and "must accommodate students who want to establish and lead activities and organizations that

a) promote:

- gender equity

- antiracism

- the awareness and understanding of, and respect for, people who are disabled by barriers, or

- the awareness and understanding of, and respect for, people of all sexual orientations and gender identities

b) use the name "gay-straight alliance" or any other name that is consistent with the promotion of a positive school environment that is inclusive and accepting of all pupils."

See *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/p250e.php*

- 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*.

- To remove the barriers and disincentives to education that exist for many children and youth, the Ontario government recommended 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 Department of Education and Advanced Learning document *A Whole-School Approach to Safety and Belonging: Preventing Violence and Bullying* states that "sometimes it becomes necessary for the school staff to take steps to ensure that students are understanding of unique differences among all people and that they accept all other students." See: *http:// www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/guidance/whole_school_ approach.html*

- The *Manitoba Human Rights Code* makes it against the law to discriminate against someone or to harass anyone because of sexual orientation or gender identity. The Code makes it against the law to discriminate against someone or to harass anyone because of sexual orientation or gender identity. 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 or gender identity. If harassment or discrimination have been reported to administration and have not been addressed, a human rights complaint can be filed with the Manitoba Human Rights Commission. See *http://www. manitobahumanrights.ca/*

- The Manitoba Teachers' Society has a policy on Equity Issues that includes: a "commitment to the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and all federal and provincial legislation related to human rights, which accept that 'all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and human rights.'; The elimination of all forms of discrimination in the schools and communities of Manitoba, with discrimination being defined by the Manitoba Human Rights Code, Section 9(1); That Society members and employees promote and understanding and active inclusion of 'equity-seeking groups,' the applicable characteristics of which are specified in the Manitoba Human Rights Code, Section 9(2); and that the Society actively advocate and promote actions that provide plans for prevention of and appropriate responses to discriminatory incidents, develop a climate of respect for diversity, and promote positive interactions among all members of the education community." Furthermore, the policy states that "the Society provide appropriate and/or necessary support for members who identify themselves as members of the GLBTQ (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning) community and, further, that the Society support all members in providing safe and inclusive learning environments that respect human diversity and prevent the expression of negative judgments based on gender bias, sexual stereotyping, sexual orientation and/or gender identity."

    See: *http://www.mbteach.org/library2/constitution-bylawsa-and-policies-governing-the-manitoba-teachers-society*

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 would be an appropriate response?*

A: Your principal should have taken this comment as an opportunity to challenge common misconceptions about the role and nature of GSAs and clarified that a 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 Resource Kit. See *http://MyGSA.ca/ content/terms-concepts*

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." See: *http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/ inclusiveguide.pdf*

YOUR PRINCIPAL SHOULD HAVE SAID that the Department of Education and Advanced Learning is supportive of Manitoba's diverse school communities and that in Manitoba's publicly-funded school environments—whether public, independent, high school, middle school, or elementary school— diversity explicitly includes sexual orientation and gender identity.[26]

✳ 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.

1. The Department of Education and Advanced Learning document *A Whole-School Approach to Safety and Belonging: Preventing Violence and Bullying* states that "sometimes it becomes necessary for the school staff to take steps to ensure that students are understanding of unique differences among all people and that they accept all other students."

See: *http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/guidance/whole_school_approach.html*

The preamble to The Public Schools Act includes the following: "WHEREAS public schools should contribute to the development of a fair, compassionate, healthy and prosperous society; AND WHEREAS the public school system must take into account the diverse needs and interests of the people of Manitoba". *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/p250e.php*

GSAs address both of these statements by helping to develop understanding and awareness, and providing a safe space for LGBTQ youth in schools.

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

2. Amendments made to The Public Schools Act in 2013 concerning Safe and Inclusive Schools require school boards to have a respect for human diversity policy and to ensure that the policy is implemented in each school in the school division or school district.

The respect for human diversity policy must be prepared with "due regard for the principles of The Human Rights Code" and "must accommodate students who want to establish and lead organizations that

a) promote:

- gender equity

- antiracism

- the awareness and understanding of, and respect for, people who are disabled by barriers, or

- the awareness and understanding of, and respect for, people of all sexual orientations and gender identities

b) use the name "gay-straight alliance" or any other name that is consistent with the promotion of a positive school environment that is inclusive and accepting of all pupils."

The Public Schools Act applies to all public and funded independent schools. See *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ ccsm/p250e.php*

Your principal should have explained to the parent that GSAs are an important part of inclusive and diverse school environments.

3. Manitoba's Public Schools Act requires each school division to "ensure that each pupil enrolled in a school within the jurisdiction of the school board is provided with a safe and caring school environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviours". See *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/p250e.php*. The principal should have explained that GSAs help create safe and caring school environments.

    The Public Schools Act applies to all public and funded independent schools.

4. The respect for human diversity policy must be prepared with "due regard for the principles of *The Human Rights Code*." Gender identity and sexual orientation are both applicable characteristics that are protected from discrimination under *The Code. http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/h175e.php*

5. Several school divisions in Manitoba already have respect for human diversity policies that specifically mention sexual orientation and gender identity. You can find some of them in the Guide section of this kit. Check out your division's policy, bring it to your teacher's attention, and speak up!

6. The Department of Education and Advanced Learning document *A Whole-School Approach to Safety and Belonging: Preventing Violence and Bullying* states that "sometimes it becomes necessary for the school staff to take steps to ensure that students are understanding of unique differences among all people and that they accept all other students." A GSA could help in these efforts. See: *http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/guidance/whole_school_approach.html*

    Department of Education and Advanced Learning documents apply to all public and funded independent schools.

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*.

"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 then 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 the start again. I told to the teacher and they jokily 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 they 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*
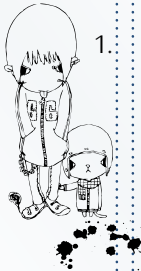
1. What percentage of trans students feel reasonably safe at school?
   a) 5%
   b) 15%
   c) 65%
   d) 80%

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
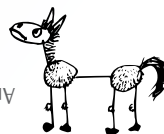
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

Taylor, C. & Peter, T., with McMinn, T.L., Elliott, T., Beldom, S., Ferry, A., Gross, Z., Paquin, S., & Schachter, K. (2011). *Every class in every school: The first national climate survey on homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia in Canadian schools. Final report*. Toronto, ON: Egale Canada Human Rights Trust.

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 (X^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.
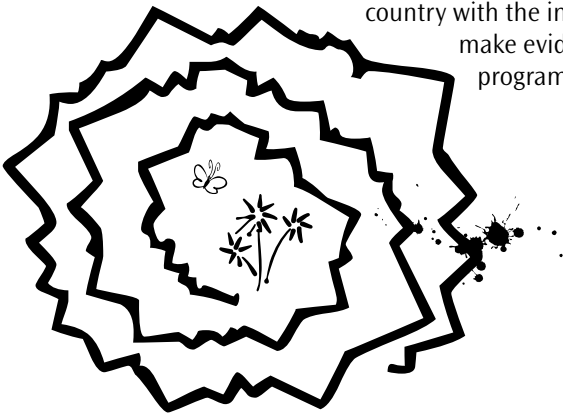
[1] For the purposes of this report, the term "sexual minority" refers to youth who did not identify as exclusively heterosexual and the term "gender minority" refers to youth who did not identify as either "female" or "male."

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.

→ 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.

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.

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

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

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

diversity = possibility

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

All children and youth have a right to a safe and respectful school environment, and inclusive education. Parents and guardians have a right to expect school officials to ensure that their schools are safe and respectful for LGBTQ students and families.

Parents and guardians are key partners in ensuring that schools are safe and inclusive regardless of one's sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or any other aspect of a person's identity.

Many schools have diversity policies, safe school programs, and codes of conduct in place. Unfortunately, bullying can still occur. Despite changing social attitudes, new legislation, and new efforts to reduce bullying and exclusion in schools, some students may still face intolerance and exclusionary behaviours by peers and others. Research, indicates that LGBTQ children and youth are particularly vulnerable to bullying.

Parents/guardians and allies of LGBTQ children can play a very important role in helping LGBTQ youth navigate through their lives and deal with the challenges that may present themselves. By listening, being supportive, and being prepared, parents and allies are in a position to advocate on behalf of LGBTQ youth. Equally important is that ally children and youth receive support and encouragement from their parents or guardians. Ally children and youth are essential in an inclusive and caring school environment

Many schools have LGBTQ support groups or GSAs to help create safe and positive learning environments, and have developed and implemented other supports. If you are a parent or guardian of a LGBTQ student who is struggling and lacking support at school it is important to address the situation by working closely with the school's administration and staff. There are many excellent online resources and support groups for LGBTQ youth as well as their families. You can find many of them in the Resources section of *Safe and Caring Schools – A Resource for Equity and Inclusion in Manitoba Schools*.

While the school has the primary responsibility to ensure the emotional and physical safety of all students, parents and guardians are key partners in helping their children and educators create and maintain school spaces where all can feel safe. This section provides information for parents and guardians in general and parents or guardians of LGBTQ children and youth specifically that may be helpful in working with their local school divisions and schools to create safe and caring school environments for all. As well it provides information and resources that address the specific issues and needs of LGBTQ students and their families.

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

SAFE AND CARING SCHOOLS INITIATIVES

Protecting students from bullying and discrimination in school and on the Internet is an important priority for Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning. Former Education Minister Nancy Allan announced a comprehensive anti-bullying initiative designed to further protect students and create safer and more inclusive environments in the Fall of 2012.

The broad anti-bullying strategy included:

- help for teachers including expanded training supports, workshops and other professional learning opportunities, and ongoing support for *Respect in School and Safe Schools Manitoba*;

- help for parents and guardians including new online information and resources on how to recognize, deal with and report bullying; and

- help for students including strengthened anti-bullying legislation and the Tell Them From Me Survey to allow schools to hear directly from students about bullying;

- amendments to the Public Schools Act made in 2013 broadened the requirements for the reporting of bullying and require school divisions to develop and implement respect for human diversity policies, which:

   (a) promote and enhance

      (i) a safe and inclusive learning environment,

      (ii) the acceptance of and respect for others, and

      (iii) the creation of a positive school environment; and

   (b) address training for teachers and other staff about

      (i) bullying prevention, and

      (ii) strategies for promoting respect for human diversity and a positive school environment.

In preparing their respect for human diversity policies, school boards must have due regard for the principles of The *Human Rights Code*. In addition, respect for human diversity policies must accommodate pupils who want to establish and lead activities and organizations that

a) promote:

(i) gender equity

(ii) antiracism

(iii) the awareness and understanding of, and respect for, people who are disabled by barriers, or

(iv) the awareness and understanding of, and respect for, people of all sexual orientations and gender identities; and

b) use the name "gay-straight alliance" or any other name that is consistent with the promotion of a positive school environment that is inclusive and accepting of all pupils.

For Further information on Manitoba's Safe and Caring Schools initiatives see *http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/safe_schools/index. html*

All Youth Deserve To Feel Safe.

Questioning or accepting one's sexual orientation or gender identity can be a difficult process for teens, especially when coupled with the other stresses of adolescence. At any given time, approximately 4% of teens identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, or questioning (LGBTQ), and many more are becoming aware of their same-sex attractions or their gender identity. They are more likely to be victims of bullying, sexual harassment and physical abuse and face a greater risk of social isolation.

The types of bullying experienced by LGBTQ youth (or youth perceived to be LGBT or Q) are often very similar to other types of bullying in adolescence, but students are not as supported due to the heteronormative, cisnormative, and homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic aspects of society. The result of these realities is that LGBTQ youth (and youth perceived to be LGBTQ) are often marginalized and excluded by their peers (as well as adults) and therefore often do not have the supportive networks to help them deal with bullying that other students have. It may also not be clear to whom students can go for support. In addition, homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying are often not noticed, not taken seriously, not addressed, or not addressed in the same way as other types of bullying. It is important to note that students who are perceived to be LGBT or Q are also on the receiving end of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying.

Types of Bullying Experienced By LGBTQ Youth Youth (or those perceived to be LGBTQ)

- **Physical Bullying**: Hitting, kicking, shoving, spitting, stealing or damaging property.
- **Sexual harassment and humiliation**: aggressive or

insulting language, sexual assault, humiliating comments and actions.

- **Verbal Bullying**: Name-calling ("fag", "dyke", "lezzie", "queer", "freak", "tranny"etc.), mocking or hurtful teasing, humiliating or threatening someone.

- **Social Bullying**: Excluding others from the group, gossiping or spreading rumours, setting others up to look foolish, and damaged friendships.

- **Cyberbullying**: Using email, cell phones, text messages and internet sites to threaten, harass, embarrass, socially exclude, or damage reputations and friendships.

Signs of Victimization Among LGBTQ Youth

Because of homophobia, biphobia, transphobia as well as heteronormativity and cisnormativity, LGBTQ youth often suffer from anxiety and depression or problem behaviours. They live with the threat of discrimination and violence, and the fear that friends and family will not accept them and/or support their decision to come out. LGBTQ youth may suddenly withdraw from family and friends to avoid discussing their sexual orientation or gender identity. They may act out against parents or peers to distract from questions about their sexual orientation or gender identity, or in defense against real (or feared) rejection and harassment.

Signs of LGBTQ Youth Victimization

Bruises and scrapes are easy to see. But there are other signs that your child may be being bullied. These may include:

- Change in behaviour, especially in social situations

- Symptoms of depression, anxiety, loneliness, sleeplessness

- Low self-esteem

- Reluctance to go to school

- Drop in grades

- Avoidance or fear of specific locations such as a neighbourhood store, playground, or school
- Crying before and/or after school or a group sport/recreational event
- Exhibiting symptoms associated with illness without being sick (nausea, weakness, headaches…)
- Suicidal thoughts/comments
- References to running away or quitting school or a team
- Loss of interest in social events that he/she might have enjoyed in the past
- Unexplained broken personal possessions, loss of money or personal items
- Sudden disinterest in using their computer or cellphone

Signs that your child may be bullying others

It's hard to admit, but sometimes our children bully others. Some signs may include:

- Change in usual behaviour, especially in social situations
- No lasting friendships; difficulty in maintaining friendships
- Symptoms of anger, depression, anxiety, loneliness
- Sense of entitlement; difficulty forgiving others' errors/hurtful actions
- Need for power; need for control over others
- Intolerance of differences
- Inappropriate, hurtful sense of humour
- Constantly hangs out at specific locations such as a neighbourhood store, playground or school for no reason

- Secretive; judgmental of others; blames others
- Thinks about suicide, running away or quitting school
- Loss of interest in social events that he/she might have enjoyed in the past
- Unexplained personal possessions, money, food
- Sudden, secretive behaviour when using a cellphone or computer
- Communication from the school with concerns about your child's behaviour

For additional information on bullying and bullying prevention. See *http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/safe_schools/bullying.html*.

Strategies for Parents to Help Youth Deal with LGBTQ Bullying

These strategies are with respect to preventing or reducing bullying as a result of a person's perceived or actual sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.

- **Take time to listen**

  Listen to your child and provide comfort and support. Let your child know that you will help them through difficult times. Whether your child has been bullied, has bullied others, or has witnessed bullying, feelings of being misunderstood, alone, and helpless are common. Your understanding and attention lets them know that they aren't alone, that you care and that help is available.

- **Lead By Example**

  Demonstrate respect and acceptance of all sexual orientations, gender identities and gender expressions as well as other diversities such as ethnicity and body size. Do not tolerate homophobic, biphobic or transphobic slang for LGBTQ (e.g., fag, lezzie, dyke, trannie). Do not brush off homophobic, biphobic or transphobic comments made by others. Point out and challenge heteronormativity and cisnormativity when you see it.

- **Challenge Your Own Assumptions**

  Don't automatically assume your child or his or her friends are heterosexual ("straight") or cisgender as it could inhibit your child from seeking your support. Identify your own misconceptions and stereotypes about LGBQT issues.

- **Encourage Youth to Report**

  It is the parents' job to deal with bullying. LGBTQ youth are often afraid to come forward for fear of victimization or because they are not "out". Let your child know that you want to hear about every incident of bullying and harassment.

- **Listen Closely; Respond Quickly**

  Parental support can be a powerful buffer against the negative effects of victimization. LGBTQ youth may deny bullying because of shame or fear. Parents must be aware of the signs of bullying. Treat every incident as important and intervene on your child's behalf.

- **Be Inclusive of All Youth**

  Children are influenced by how their parents act. Create positive connections among all youth by encouraging and reinforcing respectful and cooperative behaviour whenever you see it. Treat LGBTQ youth as members of your family that you would expect to be respected and nurtured

- **Reduce the Chances for Bullying**

  Peer support is very important for your child; seek to surround your adolescent with youth who will stand up for him/her. Enroll in school, community groups, and organized activities that support creating LGBTQ inclusive and safer spaces. Work with the school to promote an inclusive, respectful and accepting learning environment.

- **Seek outside support**

  LGBTQ youth who are bullied often have difficulties with depression and self-esteem. Counsellors can provide support through individual counselling or support groups for LGBTQ adolescents who are having difficulty fitting in, and who may be marginalized or targeted by peers. The Resources section of this kit has a list of local resources, including counselling.

- **Publically Support LGBTQ Issues**

  Speak up for LGBTQ youth by contacting the people responsible for policy development in school boards and provincial and federal governments. Increase policy makers' sensitivity to the issues faced by these youth. Support policies that recognize the existence of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying. Attend a Pride parade if there is one in your area.

- **Educate yourself and get support**

  If your child is LGBT or Q, educate yourself about the issues, and find a support group where you can ask questions, get information, meet other parents of LGBTQ children and youth, and talk about your successes, fears and worries. PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) have chapters in Brandon and Winnipeg, and there is a PFFOTI group (Parents, Friends and Family of Transgender Individuals) in Winnipeg. You can find the information for these groups in the Resources section of this kit.

According to Statistics Canada, suicide is the second leading cause of death among Canadians aged 15-24—only accidents cause more deaths. Every year, an average of 500 Canadian youth die by suicide (Statistics Canada, 2008). However, there is a lack of knowledge about how many of these youth identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, Two Spirit or queer, or are struggling with questions about their sexual orientation or gender identity (LGBTQ). What is apparent is that LGBTQ youth experience a high degree of vulnerability to suicidal ideation and behaviour, both in Canada and the United States, particularly in comparison to their non-LGBTQ peers.

Increasingly, studies confirm that suicidal ideation and behaviour are disproportionately prevalent among LGBTQ youth in comparison to their non-LGBTQ peers. There is substantial data to demonstrate this trend among LGB youth; however, few research studies have focused on the minorities within this minority group, such as Trans, Two Spirit, questioning or racialized youth who identify as LGBT or Q (Haas et al., 2010). Some examples follow:

- Bullying can have a long-lasting effect on suicide risk and mental health. The relationship between bullying and suicide is stronger for lesbian, gay and bisexual youth than for their heterosexual peers (Kim & Leventhal, 2008).

- A study in Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario revealed that 28% of transgender and Two Spirit people had attempted suicide at least once (Taylor, 2006).

- Over half of LGB students (47% of GB males and 73% of LB females) have thought about suicide (Eisenberg & Resnick, 2006).

- In 2010, 47% of trans youth in Ontario had thought about suicide and 19% had attempted suicide in the preceding year (Scanlon, Travers, Coleman, Bauer, & Boyce, 2010).

- LGBTQ youth are 4 times more likely to attempt suicide than their heterosexual peers (Massachusetts Department of Education, 2009).

- Adolescent youth who have been rejected by their families for being LGB are 8.4 times more likely to attempt suicide than their heterosexual peers (Ryan, Huebner, Diaz, & Sanchez, 2009).

- Both victims and perpetrators of bullying are at a higher risk for suicide than their peers. Children who are both victims and perpetrators of bullying are at the highest risk (Kim & Leventhal, 2008; "Suicide and bullying: Issue brief," 2011).

Schools are a critical source of both risk and protection for LGBTQ youth (Nichols, 1999; Taylor et al., 2011). According to *Every Class in Every School: Final Report on the First National Climate Survey on Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia in Canadian Schools* (Taylor et al., 2011), LGBTQ youth face greater prejudice and victimization in their schools and a correspondingly lower level of school connectedness than their non-LGBTQ peers:

- 68% of trans students, 55% of LB students and 42% of GB students reported being verbally harassed about their perceived gender identity or sexual orientation.

- 20% of LGBTQ students reported being physically harassed or assaulted about their perceived gender identity or sexual orientation.

- 49% of trans students, 33% of lesbian students and 40% of gay male students have experienced sexual harassment in school in the last year.

- 64% of LGBTQ students feel unsafe in their schools

(compared to 15% of non-LGBTQ students).

- 30% of trans students and 20% of LGB students strongly agreed that they sometimes "feel very depressed" about their school (compared to 6% of non-LGBTQ students).

Safe and caring school strategies that create save and inclusive schools for LGBTQ students and all other students **are** an essential aspect of suicide prevention. **These include**:

- LGBTQ specific training for educators **and guidance counsellors** on cultural competency and suicide prevention.

- Legislation and **thoroughly implemented** policies regarding safety and inclusivity in schools that address sexual orientation and gender identity.

- Establishment of gay-straight alliances (GSAs), or similar LGBTQ-specific safe space and support groups

- **Respectful inclusion of LGBTQ issues, realities and role models in school life, including in the curriculum**

- Peer education initiatives that include LGBTQ suicide prevention

FACTS AND MYTHS ABOUT ANTI-HOMOPHOBIA AND ANTI-TRANSPHOBIA EDUCATION

Adapted from Facts and Myths about Anti-Homophobia Education from PFLAG Canada (*http://pflagcanada.ca/pdfs/homophobia-myths_english.pdf*)

Inaccurate information can lead to misconceptions that hamper the school's efforts to create safe learning environments for all children and youth. The following facts will help to dispel common myths about LGBTQ people and anti-homophobia and anti-transphobia education.

Many people mistakenly assume that anti-homophobia and anti-transphobia education means "teaching about homosexuality". This is not the case. Anti-homophobia, anti-biphobia and anti-transphobia education (also know as LGBTQ inclusive education) is education that seeks to create safer schools and societies. It does so by promoting respect for all people, and addressing homophobia, biphobia, transphobia as well as heternormativity and cisnormativity. Including LGBTQ people, issues and realities into the curriculum helps schools to become safer and more inclusive spaces. Intervening in bullying, speaking out about safer space, and supporting students in their creation of these spaces are also important components.

Myth # 1: Anti-homophobia, anti-biphobia and anti-transphobia education is about teaching homosexuality in schools and condones the lifestyle.

Fact #1: Firstly, LGBTQ inclusion is not about teaching about homosexuality, it is about the meaningful and relevant inclusion of LGBTQ people, issues and realities into the curriculum. Teachers often teach about unfamiliar topics to help students develop respect for other people and to acknowledge their contributions to society. A teacher's job is to present accurate, age-appropriate information to students. Secondly, lesbian, gay, bisexual, Two-Spirit, transgender, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ) persons have lives like everyone else. There is no distinct LGBTQ "lifestyle."

Myth #2: Anti-homophobia, anti-biphobia and anti-transphobia education involves talking about gay sex.

Fact #2: Anti-homophobia, anti-biphobia and anti-transphobia education can be done in a variety of ways. Most involve no discussion of sex or sexual practices whatsoever. The only exception may be in the human sexuality learning outcomes *Physical Education/Health Education curriculum* identified for Kindergarten and Grades 2, 5, 7, 9, 10 and 12 students. As with any discussions about sex in these contexts, it is important that it be done in age-appropriate ways. Otherwise, teachers may talk about LGBTQ role models in history, or read a story about same gender families. They may also discuss the oppression of LGBTQ people and focus on stopping homophobic name-calling in schools. These are just a few examples of age-appropriate anti-homophobia and anti-transphobia education.

Myth #3: LGBTQ teachers have a "gay agenda" for public schools by introducing LGBTQ topics.

Fact #3: All teachers, principals and support staff have a legal obligation to respond to all forms of harassment and discrimination in schools. All students (and staff) have the right to attend school in a safe environment. They also expect to see their lives positively reflected in curriculum and classroom activities. Just as anti-racism and multicultural education have been embraced by educators,, there is also a growing awareness that anti-homophobia and anti-transphobia education need to be integrated within the curriculum You do not have to be a person of colour to care about racism. Similarly, you do not have to be LGBTQ to counter homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, heteronormativity or cisnormativity in schools or society at large. Including LGBTQ issues into the curriculum helps to create a safer and respectful environment for everyone – students, staff and parents.

Myth #4: Gay-Straight Alliance Clubs (GSAs) in high schools are a way to recruit students and encourage them to experiment with being gay, lesbian or transgender.

Fact #4: No one suddenly chooses to become LGBTQ simply because they heard about the topic in school, from friends, or via their social circles. A person's sexual orientation or gender identity is part of their make-up, whether that person identifies as homosexual, heterosexual, bisexual or transgender. There is consensus in the medical and psychiatric world that we do not choose our sexual orientations or gender identity. Sexual orientation and gender identity are complex traits, and have been understood differently by different cultures and at different times in history. GSAs help all students to come together in a safer space to talk about issues that are important to them. GSAs help students to learn from one another and empower them to create a positive learning environment for all. Anyone can be the target of hateful slurs, irrespective of their sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.

Myth #5: Students will become more sexually active and/or promiscuous if they hear about LGBTQ issues at school.

Fact #5: Hearing about LGBTQ issues does not increase sexual activity or promiscuity. The fact is some teenagers are sexually active. The decisions they make whether to be sexually active or not have little to do with LGBTQ issues or anti-homophobia education. However, lack of information about safe sex can have dramatic and sometimes tragic consequences for youth. Promiscuity and unsafe sexual behaviours often occur when students do not have access to age-appropriate, accurate information or feel they need to prove their sexuality.

Myth #6: LGBTQ issues are not part of the curriculum. Some schools are just making this up.

Fact # 6: Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning establishes the mandatory curriculum. *K-12 (K-S4) Physical Education/Health Education, Manitoba Curriculum Framework of Outcomes for Active Healthy Lifestyles* includes references to sexual orientation, discrimination, and sexual health. The Manitoba *Social Studies curriculum* includes the exploration of the diversity of families, Canadian society, citizenship, and human rights.

Public and funded independent schools have an obligation to be inclusive of the diverse communities they serve including LGBTQ students and families. They have as much right as anyone else to see themselves reflected in the curriculum.

ANTI-HOMOPHOBIA, ANTI-BIPHOBIA and ANTI-TRANSPHOBIA EDUCATION IS . . .

- inclusive of all members of our school communities
- respectful of differences and inclusive of diversity
- respectful of the Human Rights Code of Manitoba and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
- mindful that harassment and discrimination may be present in any school
- mindful that silence around certain topicscan encourage harassment and can be a form of discrimination
- optimistic that a better school environment is possible for everyone

ANTI-HOMOPHOBIA, ANTI-BIPHOBIA and ANTI TRANSPHOBIA EDUCATION LOOKS LIKE . . .

- schools where students and educators speak out against injustice and inequity

- schools that promote the awareness and understanding of, and respect for human diversity, including those with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities

- schools where all members of the school community can be accepted and open about their lives without fear or shame

- classrooms which acknowledge and respect diverse family models

- classrooms which acknowledge and positively represent the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people across the curriculum

- schools where youth can take the lead on concerns that are important to them, school divisions where there is knowledge and expertise available to support schools in this work

Age-appropriate discussions on issues such as homophobia, biphobia and transphobia with children and youth can provide them with important tools for understanding and resisting the strong influence these phobias have within school culture and society at large. Children encounter and learn homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia very early in their elementary education, which means it's important for parents and guardians to address these topics (in age-appropriate ways) from an early age through adolescence. Here are some tips for getting started.

1) **Use language your child understands**

Concepts like homophobia, transphobia and biphobia refer to complex social phenomena which can be challenging for anyone to fully grasp. This means it's important to consider age-appropriate ways of addressing these topics in conversation. That said, the basic elements are fairly easily explained. Depending on the age of the child, consider framing these phobias in terms they can relate to, from "meanness" through to "bullying," from "dislike" through to "phobia", etc.

2) **Be Prepared to Listen**

Chances are your child will have already encountered a number of examples of homophobic, biphobic, or transphobic behaviour. If they don't volunteer their experiences, ask them to try and think of an example from their school, community group, or another activity they may be a part of. In either case, be prepared to spend some time listening. Try your best to weave whatever examples they share throughout your discussions, as this may help to ground some of these concepts in lived experience.

3) Use helpful media

There are a number of books, films and websites in existence that present narratives around LGBTQ identities as well as homophobia, and to a lesser extent, transphobia and biphobia. These can serve as excellent tools for conversation as they provide concrete, shared points of reference for exploration through discussion. Egale's MyGSA.ca has information about the kind of materials available. There are also booklists and information on other media provided by various organizations. The Rainbow Books website may also be helpful (*http: //glbtrt. ala.org/rainbowbooks/*).

4) Try not to make things overly simple

While speaking age-appropriately is obviously important, it's also important to frame your discussion realistically. While it can be easy to paint the world in black and white, where people who are homophobic, transphobic or biphobic are 'bad' and others the 'good' or innocent victims, the reality of schoolyard bullying is far more complicated. Keeping this in mind, consider describing homophobia as something that people "do" as opposed to a state of being or personal characteristic. There's potential here to understand these phobias as hurtful behaviour with many victims, including even the aggressor. At the end of the day, almost all of us will at some time be implicated in a homophobic, biphobic, or transphobic statement or activity, meaning that we all have a responsibility to learn to address these issues.

5) Keep it personal

It can be really useful to personalize this conversation by including a LGBTQ-identified loved one. If no one in the immediate family identifies openly as a member of the LGBTQ spectrum, consider bringing in an extended family

member or friend to help bring the conversation to a personal level. This way, children and youth are much more likely to understand the humanity of these arguments, and some of the real-life consequences of homophobia, biphobia and transphobia.

6) Establish a strong network of support

While it's great to provide children and youth with the tools to challenge homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia, it is important not to expect them to stand alone. Firstly, make sure they know that this is not just a one-time talk you're having with them, and that they can come to you, or another designated family member, to discuss these issues in the future. Furthermore, it's worth following up at school to determine where the staff stand on issues of LGBTQ bullying. Look over some of the other sections in *Safe and Caring Schools – A Resource for Equity and Inclusion in Manitoba Schools* to get an idea of how to approach teachers and administration around these issues. Finally, speaking with other parents and/or guardians in the school community, as well as their children, raises the chances that you won't be the only family on the block challenging these phobias, and working to foster a more inclusive and safer education for all.

To study up on the terms and concepts commonly used to talk about homophobia, transphobia and biphobia, as well as the many LGBTQ communities around the world, take a look at the Terms and Concepts section of this kit.

Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs), or other student-led safe space groups, can make a big difference in the culture of a school. They can contribute practically by promoting awareness and addressing issues of homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia as well as heteronormativity and cis-normativity, while also providing students with a safer and more accepting environment on school grounds. Furthermore, they can work indirectly as an acknowledgement of the administration's, board's, and student body's commitment to LGBTQ inclusive spaces.
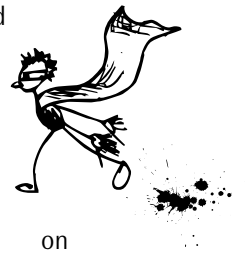
Any student, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, is able to start a GSA to contribute to a safer school environment. As a parent or guardian, there are many ways you can help your child and other students at the school who want to establish a GSA or another student-led safe space group. Here are a few tips:

- **Talk with your child**

  A GSA, or any student-led safer space group, is primarily a club for students, and so it's important that schools empower students to lead in its creation. Talk with your child and other LGBTQ-friendly parents and/or guardians to get a sense of what the climate is like at school. Has there been a GSA or similar group before? Has anyone ever tried to start one? Would students join if there were one? Is there a group of students ready to start one now?

  Your actions don't have to hinge on the answers to these questions, but it's a good idea to establish and maintain a network with supportive students and families from the school. Students can find more information on starting a group in the GSA Guide section of the *Safe*

and Caring Schools: A Resource for Equity and Inclusion in Manitoba Schools document.

- **Encourage your Ally Children**

  If your children are interested in being allies, support their efforts by encouraging them to educate themselves about the issues, talk with friends and family who are LGBTQ, and to think of ways to take action, like starting or supporting a GSA.

- **Talk with school staff**

  Try casual conversation with any of your child's teachers who you think might be supportive. Is there or has there ever been a club that addresses LGBTQ themes? Ask yourself, are there any easily identifiable "champions" among the staff; someone who you think might help students set up a GSA or who would make a good staff advisor? Are students aware of this person? Why not help your child to organize a meeting between interested students and this staff member? See *Parents as Partners: Collaborating and Working with Educators and Schools to Improve Safety and Inclusion* at the end of this section for further information and suggestions.

- **Reach out locally**

  Dozens of Manitoba schools already have GSAs. Help your child reach out locally to find out if there is another school in the area that has a GSA **or student-led group that includes an LGBTQ focus**. Help organize a meeting between interested students from your child's school community and the staff advisor or school administration and students of the school with an active GSA. Encourage students to take the opportunity to share and discuss strategies, struggles and successes with local GSAs. Egale Canada's *MyGSA.ca* website has a GSA section that lists GSAs from across the country. The **Rainbow Resource Centre** in Winnipeg provides support for GSAs and maintains a list of GSAs throughout Manitoba.

- **Inform yourself**

  What do you know about your school's stance on LGBTQ inclusion at school? What about LGBTQ-targeted bullying? Is this information available to students in your school community? Consider helping your child research and provide information to the students at their school interested in starting a GSA or student-led safe space group.

  Sometimes school officials believe there is no need for a GSA. For the most recent Canadian stats on LGBTQ-targeted bullying and harassment, check out Egale Canada's *Every Class in Every School* report. **For GSA-supportive documents** governing your child's own school, consult your school's website and the division's website searching for division policies, codes of conduct and any official documents related to equity, diversity and inclusive education. You can find some examples of inclusive education policies in the Guide section of this kit.

- **Be ready to help**

  It is possible that staff at the school would like to be supportive, but don't know how. To prepare for this, consider providing your child or interested students with resources to share with staff about GSAs and student-led safer space groups in schools. To start, you can find many useful resources in the *Safe and Caring Schools: A Resource for Equity and Inclusion in Manitoba Schools*. This guide includes separate sections for guidance counsellors, administrators and educators, making it easy to customize the information you share. You can also find information on Egale Canada's *MyGSA.ca* website.

- **Privacy, confidentiality, and risks**

  Before beginning this work, talk with your child and family to get a clear sense of your and their boundaries and expectations. It's important that no one be unintentionally "outed" in the process of creating a GSA or student-led safer space group. In addition, take some time to consider the ways in which your actions might affect your family's interactions with others at the school. Could bullying become an issue, and what's your plan if it does? Bullying could happen from a student to another student or from a parent/guardian or family to another parent/guardian or family. Assess your potential outcomes, including risks, and plan accordingly.

- **Seek a support Network**

  It is important to seek out a LGBTQ support network as your child starts to consider establishing a GSA at school. There may be times when such a process has the potential to get stressful, and it's wise to find ways for you and your child to diffuse that stress. Talk about stress with your child, but be conscious of the boundary between helping your child with their stress, and burdening them with your own. Be sure to support yourself by reaching out to friends, allies, other LGBTQ families, and connecting with local LGBTQ organizations. The LGBTQ Resources section of *Safe and Caring Schools: A Resource for Equity and Inclusion in Manitoba Schools* provides a list of local and national organizations which may be helpful.

Coming Out

- **The process through which LGBTQ people recognize and acknowledge their non-heterosexual orientation and integrate this understanding into their personal and social lives.**

- **The act of disclosing this orientation or identity to others.**

From Terms and Concepts section of *Safe and Caring Schools: A Resource for Equity and Inclusion in Manitoba Schools*

Coming out is a challenging process at any age. That said, coming out as a youth can be particularly challenging given the array of social pressures youth face at school, at home, and in broader society. It's also quite common for family members to experience a number of challenges when their child or relation first identifies themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning (LGBQ) or another identity within the spectrum. The following list contains a number of helpful resources to address this issue.

- **Rainbow Resource Centre** in Winnipeg provides counselling and other supports for parents/guardians, family, and friends of LGBTQ community members who need information, education, and support in order to foster supportive relationships with their LGBTQ loved ones.

- **Sexuality Education Resource Centre** in Brandon serves the Brandon and Prairie Mountain regions of Manitoba. It provides support for individuals to access sexuality and LGBTQ information, as well as other sexual health resources. They have a presence at, and participate in, many sexual health-related events and activities in the community - with the aim to inform and educate people about SERC's services and supports.

- **When sons and daughters come out** – PFLAG Canada: This guide provides a basic resource for parents/guardians whose child has just come out as LGBT or Q.(*www.pflag.ca*)

- **Questions & Answers for Parents and Family Members of Gay and Lesbian Youth** – Vancouver School Board: A brief guide exploring some of the basic questions often considered by parents after their child has come out. See *http://pflagcanada.ca/en/foreign-language-e.html*

- **MyGSA.ca Book section:** Here you'll find extensive listings of resources 'tagged' for parents/guardians with a number focusing on the coming out process.

Seeking Support in your school community

Many parents of youth who identify as LGBTQ find themselves concerned for the safety and well-being of their children, given that discrimination and violence against LGBTQ individuals are serious problems in Canada and around the world. Part of this concern involves wanting to ensure a safe and inclusive school environment. Parents can work towards this in several ways:

- **Engage with your child!**

  Perhaps the most important thing you can do to ease your child's coming out process is to stay open to communicating with them. They probably won't want to talk about their identity all the time (and neither may you) but it's important that you let them know that they have your support and love. Most importantly, encourage your child to come to you for support whenever they feel unsafe or disrespected– at school, or anywhere else. Make yourself available for conversation!

- **Engage with the school community**

  Collaborate and work with teachers and administrators at your child's school to ensure a safer and more inclusive school community for everyone. Does your school or school division have an equity officer, or someone in charge of inclusive education? If so, consider also reaching out to this

person for further support and resources. Try to make sure there is at least one adult in the school that your child can talk to.

- **Engage with other parents/guardians**

    Other parents and/or guardians within the school community can be great allies in helping a parent/guardian come to understand the needs of a LGBTQ child, and in working towards a safe and more inclusive school community. Consider reaching out to other parents/guardians whose children may openly identify as LGBTQ. These parents/guardians may be able to offer you perspectives on their emotional processes and will often be great people to speak to about issues you may not want to discuss with your child. Groups like PFLAG can offer great local support from other parents/guardians in the area.

- **Engaging with the local LGBTQ communities**

    Do some research into local LGBTQ organizations and service providers such as community groups, or healthcare organizations. If you can't find anything specific to parents/guardians of LGBTQ youth, you may still find some organizations that can help address some of your questions and concerns. Volunteering with a local organization, such as a LGBTQ Pride group, can be a great way to indicate your support to your child, as well as allowing you to meet and interact with parents and members of the LGBTQ community. The Resources section in *Safe and Caring Schools: A Resource for Equity and Inclusion in Manitoba Schools* provides a list of local resources.

> **Ally: An individual who is supportive of the LGBTQ community. They believe in the dignity and respect of all people, and are willing to stand up in that role.**
>
> **– From Vancouver District School Board's Policy ACB**

"No one in my family is LGBTQ, how can I help?"

Parents and guardians of non-LGBTQ children) may not be subject to the same damaging stereotypes often imposed on LGBTQ parents/guardians, or the parents/guardians of LGBTQ children (e.g. myths of recruitment, pedophilia, the "gay agenda", etc.). This means that they can play a critical role in the creation of safer and more inclusive schools.

While it is important to challenge these stereotypes, it's also important to understand and make the most of the incredible opportunity allies without LGBTQ children or family members have to advance safer and more inclusive schools. Here are some tips about how people who do not identify as LGBTQ can help make a difference.

1) Talk with your child about LGBTQ inclusion

By far the greatest impact you will have on your child's school is through your child and their beliefs, actions and words, much of which are learned from you. With this in mind, consider the way in which LGBTQ themes are brought up in your household. Do you ever discuss LGBTQ people? Do you have LGBTQ family members? Are they playing a full part in the life of your family? Have you talked about the use of homophobic language common in schoolyard conversation (e.g. "That's so gay", "faggot", "dyke", trannie, etc.)? Make an effort to include **positive comments about LGBTQ individuals in your family conversations**. See the Role Models section of the *Safe and Caring Schools: A Resource for Equity and Inclusion in Manitoba Schools* for some examples of local and national LGBTQ Role models. Being an ally starts at home.

2) **Make your home a safe space**

It must be stressed that being an ally starts at home. Consider establishing boundaries in your house so that everyone in the family knows that homophobia, transphobia and biphobia are not acceptable in your home. These rules can apply to everyone. For example, guests and friends should politely be made aware whenever they misstep (we all do!). Safe spaces require maintenance, and so these topics can come up over and over again, challenging your family to address the many varied aspects of homophobia, transphobia and biphobia. At the end of the day it's about being supportive and responding to the behaviours of everyone in the home.

3) **Support inclusion at school**

Check out the MyGSA.ca School Climate Questions to get a sense of how inclusive your school is regarding LGBTQ topics. Ask yourself questions like "if I or my child were LGBTQ, would this make us feel included?" For instance, does your school allow for same-sex parents/guardians to register as "parents" or 'guardians", or must there be a "mother" and "father" on forms? Does the school have gender-neutral washroom facilities available? Are there resources available for transgender youth? Are there LGBTQ-themed books in the library? Are notable LGBTQ figures included in course material? Are LGBTQ identities acknowledged in course material? Is there a gay-straight alliance (GSA) or other student-led safer space group at the school?

4) **Keep it up**

Being an ally isn't always a clear-cut job. Sometimes it involves significant energy and dedication (like when supporting your child to set up a student-led group like a GSA or advocating for LGBTQ-inclusive policy) but it also includes the equally important small stuff, like daily words of support for LGBTQ families and other allies. One of the most common arguments against LGBTQ inclusion is that "there aren't any LGBTQ students, staff or parents/guardians

at our school." This assumes that LGBTQ people are always out, and obviously so, which isn't always the case. It's always possible that LGBTQ people make use of the facilities, teach at, or attend the school, but simply don't feel comfortable publically acknowledging their identity. With this in mind, don't be disheartened if you, a non-LGBTQ parent of non-LGBTQ children, appear to be the only one doing this work. No matter who you are the work of an ally needs to be done!

5) Seek out a support network

Before actively taking on the role of an ally, consider establishing a support network. Perhaps there are other allied or LGBTQ families at your school who are interested in helping to make your school safe and more inclusive. Consider speaking with supportive friends, or parents/guardians and/or GSA advisors from other school communities.

These tips were written with the hope that they will assist you in connecting with a network of supportive LGBTQ families and allies within your local community, offering more opportunities for you and your children, and all students to feel supported both in and out of school. Each of these suggestions involves a variable amount of risk on your part. Navigating those risks is dependent on your unique understanding of local ideas and behaviours related to LGBTQ identities. Be sure to consider and prepare for potential responses to anyone in your family coming out publically, or semi-publically, as LGBTQ or even as an ally. Safety first!

1) **Keep your ear to the ground**

   The first step towards meeting more LGBTQ families and allies is talking to people in your school community. Be aware of both subtle and overt references to LGBTQ family members or partners. For example, your child may come home talking about how a classmate has two dads, or is challenging gender norms and how their family is supportive. You can be amazed at what you find out by engaging in casual conversation.

2) **Connect with school staff**

   If your family is LGBTQ and had decided to come out at school or you identify as allies, let teachers and administrators know that safety and inclusion of LGBTQ students and families is important to you.

3) **Connect with local LGBTQ communities**

   If you're in a larger city or town and are LGBTQ or have LGBTQ children, there may already be an LGBTQ parents' group or support group in place. Otherwise, you may want to try more informal methods, like looking up LGBTQ friendly sports leagues, activity groups or classes. Getting involved in community activities is often a great way to meet and

talk with LGBTQ folks and even their families. If you or your family identify as allies, check out local organizations to learn more about what is offered. PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) have chapters in Brandon and Winnipeg, and there is a PFFOTI group (Parents, Friends and Family of Transgender Individuals) in Winnipeg. You can find the information for these groups in the Resources section of *Safe and Caring Schools: A Resource for Equity and Inclusion in Manitoba Schools*.

4) **Connect on the web**

Check to see if there are any local LGBTQ websites where you might be able to find other local LGBTQ families? The LGBTQ Resources section *Safe and Caring Schools: A Resource for Equity and Inclusion in Manitoba Schools* provides a list of local and national organizations which may be helpful. Facebook and Twitter can also serve as excellent resources for reaching out to unknown allies in your community. As with anything on the internet, be safe!

5) **Consider starting a group outside of school**

Even a handful of organized LGBTQ family members and their allies can make a positive difference at school. Once you've found others interested in working with staff and students to make school safer and more inclusive, why not start a small group? Groups are valuable in that they can better organize efforts to help make school safer, as well as heighten the visibility of LGBTQ inclusivity at school and raise the likelihood of connecting with other LGBTQ families. It can be as casual or as formal as you like.

Collaboration between parents/guardians, school trustees, senior administrators, principals and staff can lead to caring, respectful, inclusive, and, ultimately, safer schools for all children.

Partnering and collaborating with others to strengthen the local and regional schools can be demanding, however the results of these efforts can be significant. The following pages contain information and suggestions for parents/guardians who wish to collaborate with and work with their local education authorities and educators to build safer and more caring and inclusive schools. The information provided relates to both general diversity and safe schools initiatives, as well LGBTQ-inclusive policies and initiatives, and for working at the school division and school level.

Respect for Human Diversity and Safe Schools Policies and Initiatives

Amendments made to the Manitoba Public Schools Act in 2013 require school divisions to develop and implement respect for human diversity policies. As well, schools are required to develop safe school charters and codes of conduct. Parents/guardians can play an important role in developing and supporting the implementation of such policies.

Here are some points to consider in collaborating with school divisions or schools to influence and develop such policies.

- **Inform yourself**

  It's important to know what policies are already in place. Check out the board or division's website for links to policy documents. You could also call and ask directly for policies relating to equity, inclusive education or discrimination,

codes of conduct, and related material. The Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning safe and caring school web pages provide information on policies and resource materials (see *http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/safe_schools/index.html*).

To get a sense of some of the policies developed by school divisions in Manitoba see the GSA Guide section of Safe and Caring Schools: A Resource for Equity and Inclusion in Manitoba Schools. Egale's School Board Policy section of the MyGSA website also provides examples of school policies that are deemed to be comprehensive (see *http://www.mygsa.ca/setting-gsa/school-board-policies*). These policies are particularly comprehensive because they address the safety and acceptance of students based on a number of factors, as well as explicitly including their sexual orientation and gender identity or gender expression. You can compare and contrast your local school division's existing policies with some of these. This comparison may help you determine what`s covered already, and what may need to be improved.

Once you've done your background research, clarify and write down your ideas about what changes may be needed and what you deem most important.

- **Get involved**

  School divisions will often seek and provide opportunities for parents/guardians to participate in policy and decision-making processes through presentation to the board, written submissions, advisory groups, focus groups, and public consultation sessions. Contact the local school division to get information on upcoming consultations and opportunities for involvement.

  The creation or updating or a board/division policy isn't always easy, and so it's important to work with a network of allies and interested parents/guardians from across the division. Try to reach out locally to other supportive parents/guardians and families from your school. At the same time, it

is often worthwhile to connect with regional groups as well as other LGBTQ organizations and service providers as they may have networks of parents and guardians with which you can build connections. Local and regional teachers' associations may also be able to connect you with educators who are supportive of your work. Finally, you will most likely want to reach out to your own school trustee and other trustees to express your thoughts and encourage their support.

Collaborating and Working with School Administrators and Teachers

School administrators and teachers play a vital role in the health and safety of children and youth, in the school, the classrooms, and in the broader community. Their work involves maintaining and improving on the systems in place to make the school community a safe and productive one for students, educators and parents/guardians.

It is important that educators are equipped with the tools and understanding to provide a safer and inclusive environment for all students (including LGBTQ students) that supports their achievement and wellbeing.

The following are some suggestions for discussing and collaborating with your school's administration and your child's teachers in addressing safe and caring schools and LGBTQ inclusion and safety

- **Inform yourself**

  Before your meeting with an administrator or your child's teacher, do some research into existing school policies regarding sexual orientation and gender identity or more generally, inclusive education. Are these identities explicitly protected within the code of conduct? How well is the school doing this? If you can't find anything, ask the administrator or teacher during your meeting what is in place to foster

a safer, more inclusive and welcoming school climate specifically for LGBTQ students, and families. In Manitoba, every school division is required to have a respect for human diversity policy and safe schools charter in place, and it should be reflected in school-level actions.

- **Communicate with Your Child's Teachers**

  Whenever possible, it's a great idea to foster ongoing communication and form a positive relationship with your child's teachers in support of your child's and other students' achievement and well-being. As a LGBTQ parent/guardian or ally, this doesn't always have to involve direct discussion of LGBTQ issues, but could include more subtle references to the composition of diverse families, gender roles and inclusion in general. Casual references to same-sex partners, gender non-conforming activities, or queer happenings about town, can be great ways to remind teachers about the size and scope of LGBTQ communities outside the school walls.

- **Clarify your goals or objectives**

  Before your meeting with the school administrator, consider exactly what you wish to discuss and the outcomes you desire from such a conversation. Do you want improvements to the policy and code of conduct at the school, support for students in forming a GSA or student-led safer space group, more school-wide representation of LGBTQ themes, or something else? Consider sharing your desired outcomes with the teacher at the beginning of your conversation.

  Before initiating a conversation with your child's teacher, consider what you desire to be the outcomes of the conversation. Do you want help with a specific incident, more LGBTQ inclusive resources, a more positive and accepting classroom environment, or guidance around supporting your child who would like to establish a GSA or student-led safer space group?

- **Be prepared to get involved**

  It's always a good idea to be prepared for a meeting with a school administrator, or teacher, so consider bringing resources and examples related to what you're discussing. For example, if you plan to talk to the principal about supporting your child and other students who want to form a GSA or student-led safer space group, consider bringing information on forming such groups and keys to their success. Refer the principal to the Information for Administrators section of *Safe and Caring Schools: A Resource for Equity and Inclusion in Manitoba Schools*.

  Similarly, your child's teachers will welcome suggestions and resources you may wish to share with them. They will appreciate some information on LGBTQ inclusion in the classroom. The Educator's section of *Safe and Caring Schools: A Resource for Equity and Inclusion in Manitoba Schools* has some examples, and they can be encouraged to consider bringing in some examples of age-appropriate LGBTQ-inclusive stories and or films.

- **Take notes**

  It is a great idea to keep dated notes regarding what was said in meetings with administrators and your child's teachers. If you, an administrator, or a teacher, make a commitment, make a note so that you can follow-up later. If you wish to make a formal request to an administrator or teacher, it may even be a good idea to write them an email or a letter detailing your request. It can be helpful to schedule follow-up conversations with the administrator or teacher to assess progress and changes that you have observed. It can also be helpful to know what you've tried, in case things don't improve at any point later on.

- **Protecting confidentiality and privacy**

  It is important that during the meeting with the school administrator or child's teacher that you protect your and other families rights to privacy and confidentiality. If you are a LGBTQ parent or parent of an LGBTQ child, before beginning a conversation with your administrator or teacher, assess the potential impact of that conversation. For instance, is there a risk that this conversation could lead to anyone in your family or another individual being unintentionally "outed" at school or in the community? Could your child or other children face (more) bullying as a result? Will you be asking the administrator and teacher to keep certain information in confidence, or would you rather they work to spread the message throughout the school? Take some time to assess your risks and determine what you're comfortable with. Plan accordingly.

- **Seek a support network**

  It's important to feel supported in all your dealings with your child's school. If you are an ally or an LGBTQ parent, do you know of other LGBTQ families and allies or groups in your community? Consider reaching out to them for discussion and support. Find out if anyone else has approached the administration regarding LGBTQ inclusion, and what the results of that conversation were. Furthermore, consider whether or not you'll be scheduling meetings alone or with a supportive partner or friend.

  The Resource Section of *Safe and Caring Schools: A Resource for Equity and Inclusion in Manitoba Schools* provides a list of potential allies in Manitoba. Egale Canada (*mygsa@egale.ca*) and other organizations may also be of assistance.

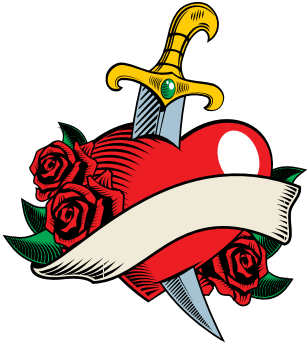> **"Every parent knows the impact that bullying can have on children and their ability to learn."** – *Nancy Allan*

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

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

TERMS & CONCEPTS

TERMS & CONCEPTS

To access and add to an online glossary, go to *MyGSA.ca/content/terms-concepts*

Terms & Concepts

Ableism

Aboriginal Peoples

Acceptance

Accommodation

Ally

Androgyny

Anti-Black Racism

Anti-Discrimination Education

Anti-Racist

Anti-Racist Education

Anti-Semitism

Asexual

Barrier

Batty Fucker

Batty Man/Batty Bwoy

BGLTT

Bi

Bias

Binary Gender System

Biological Sex

Biphobia

Bisexual/Bisexuality

Boogaman

Boom Bye Bye inna Batty Bwoy Head

Bugger Man

Bullying

Butch

Camp

Chi Chi Gal

Chi Chi Man

Cisgender/Cisgendered

Cisnormativity

Cissexism

Closet/Closeted

Colonialism

Colonization

Coming Out

Creed

Crossdressers (also Cross-Dressers)

Cyber-Bullying

Disability

Discrimination

Diversity

Dominant Group

Drag Queen/Drag King

Duty to Accommodate

Dyke

Equality

Equity

Ethnicity

Faggot

Fairness

Fassy Hole/Fassie

Female-to-Male (FTM)

Feminine

Femme

First Nation

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 Diverse

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

Heteronormativity

Heterophobia

Heterosexism

Heterosexism and Homophobia

Heterosexual/Heterosexuality

Hijra

Homophobia

Homosexual/Homosexuality

Human Rights

Identity

In the Closet

Inclusive Education

Indian Act

Intersectionality

Intersex/Intersexual

Intervention

Inuit

Invisible Minority

Islamophobia

Isolation

Justice

Kathoey

Kothi/Koti

Lesbian

LGBT/GLBT

LGBTQ

LGBTTIQQA

LGBTQ Positive Space Group

Lifestyle

Mahu

Male-to-Female (MTF)

Manitoba Human Rights Code

Masculine

Men who Have Sex with Men (MSM)

Métis

Minority Group

Misogyny

MSM

Multicultural Education

Oppression

Out

Outed

Outing

Pansexual

Panthi/Girya

Passing

Perceived Gender Identity

Perceived Sexual Orientation

Power

Prejudice

Pride

Primary Sex Characteristics

Privilege

Protected Characteristics

Queer

Questioning

Race

Racialization

Racialized Group

Racism

Racist

Rainbow Flag

Reclaimed Language

Religion

Religious Accommodation

Respect

Safe Space

Safety

Same Gender Loving

Secondary Sex Characteristics

Sex /Assigned Sex

Sex & Gender

Sex & Gender Binary

Sexism

Sexual Dysphoria

Sexual Minority

Sexual Orientation

Sexual Prejudice

Sexual Reassignment Surgery
(or SRS)

Social Justice

Sodemite

Stealth

Stereotype

Stonewall

Straight

Systemic Discrimination

Third Gender

Tranny (or Trannie)

Trans

Transgender

Transition

Trans Man

Transperson

Transphobia

Transsexual (or TS)

Transvestite

Trans Woman

Two-Spirit/Two-Spirited

Uzeze (Kitesha)

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 indigenous or original inhabitants of a particular nation or territory. In Canada the term is used to collectively describe three cultural groups of Aboriginal people–"Inuit", "Métis People" and "First Nations". These are three separate peoples with unique heritages, languages, cultural practices, and spiritual beliefs, histories and political goals. (AFN)

The 1982 Constitutional Act confers official Aboriginal status on status Indians, non-status Indians, Inuit and Métis. As the indigenous people of Canada, Aboriginal peoples argue that they have collective entitlements which were never extinguished and that they are rightfully entitled to special considerations. (MEAL)

ACCEPTANCE   Affirmation and recognition of those whose race, religion, nationality, values, beliefs, etc. are different from one's own. (MEAL)

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 Manitoba Human Rights Code or other, similar grounds. (adapted from OME)

ALLY An individual (usually straight) who is supportive of the LGBTQ community. They believe in the dignity and respect of all people, and are willing to stand up in that role. Allies do not identify as members of the groups they are fighting for; e.g. a straight person can be an ally for LGBTQ communities; a lesbian can be an ally for trans communities). (Egale Canada)

ANDROGYNY 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. (CRRF)

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION EDUCATION

Educational approaches that seek to eliminate all forms of discrimination based on the prohibited grounds identified in the Manitoba Human Rights Code and the Canadian Charter of Rights and responsibilities and other, similar grounds from an educational system. Other terms such as Anti-Bias and Anti-racism Education may be used to describe such efforts. Anti-discrimination education (see Anti-racism) 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 for a broad range of groups. (Adapted from OME)

ANTI-RACISM

Strategies, theories and actions concerned with identifying, challenging, preventing, eliminating, and changing the values, structures, policies, programs, practices, and behaviours that perpetuate individual, institutional and systemic racism as well as the inequities in outcomes racism causes. (MEAL)

ANTI-RACIST

A general term describing an activity, event, policy or organization combating racism in any form. (MEAL)

ANTI-RACIST EDUCATION

An approach to education designed to eliminate racism in all its forms and challenge social, economic and educational inequalities to which ethnocultural, ethnoracial, and other groups are subject. It permeates all subject areas and school practices. It relies on a systemic approach to change (as opposed to solely the teaching of social issues within curriculum content). One of its primary aims is to promote critical thinking among teachers and students about racism and its origins and issues of power, justice and inequality; challenge racism at all levels – personal, cultural, and institutional. Anti-racist education can also be learned in informal and non-formal educational settings. (MEAL)
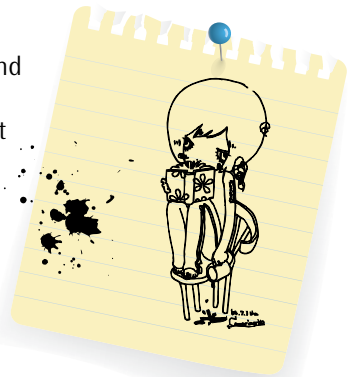
ANTI-SEMITISM

Latent or overt hostility or hatred directed towards individual Jews or the Jewish people (not to all Semitic peoples), leading to social, economic, institutional, religious, cultural or political discrimination. Antisemitism has also been expressed through individual acts of physical violence, vandalism, the organized destruction of entire communities and genocide. (CRRF)

ASEXUAL

A person who does not experience sexual attraction or who has little or no interest in sexual activity. (Egale Canada)

BARRIER An intended or unintended, overt or covert obstacle that may hinder a person's full and effective participation in society on an equal basis. Examples of barriers include:

(a) a physical barrier;

(b) an architectural barrier;

(c) an information or communications barrier;

(d) an attitudinal barrier;

(e) a technological barrier;

(f) a barrier established or perpetuated by an enactment, a policy or a practice. (adapted from 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 subjective opinion, preference, prejudice or inclination, either for or against an individual or group, formed without reasonable justification that influences an individual's or group's ability to evaluate a particular situation objectively or accurately.

Reasonable apprehension of bias exists when there is a reasonable belief that an individual or group will pre-judge a matter and, therefore, cannot assess a matter fairly because of bias. (MEAL)

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 and/or hatred of bisexuality, often exhibited by name-calling, bullying, exclusion, prejudice, discrimination, or acts of violence—anyone who is bisexual (or assumed to be)can be the target of biphobia. (Egale Canada)
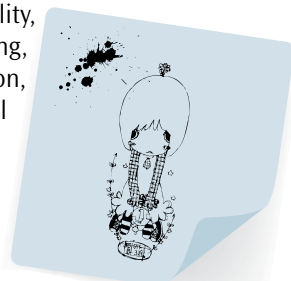
BISEXUAL/BISEXUALITY

(**adj**) A person who is attracted emotionally and sexually to both males and females. (Egale Canada)

A person whose sexual orientation is towards both men and women. (MEAL)

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

Is behaviour that involves belittling or intimidation of an individual and may arise from the misuse of power or managerial status or as a result of certain physical and personality characteristics. Bullying may be based on perceptions of difference of race, gender, religion, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation, or other characteristics. (MEAL)

Section 1.2 of The Public Schools Act of Manitoba defines Bullying as follows:

1.2(1) In this Act, "bullying" is behaviour that

(a) is intended to cause, or should be known to cause, fear, intimidation, humiliation, distress or other

forms of harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem, reputation or property; or

(b) is intended to create, or should be known to create, a negative school environment for another person.

Characteristics and forms

1.2(2) Bullying

(a) characteristically takes place in a context of a real or perceived power imbalance between the people involved and is typically, but need not be, repeated behaviour;

(b) may be direct or indirect; and

(c) may take place

(i) by any form of expression, including written, verbal or physical, or

(ii) by means of any form of electronic communication – also referred to as cyberbullying in section 47.1.2 – including social media, text messaging, instant messaging, websites or e-mail.

When does a person participate in bullying?

1.2(3) A person participates in bullying if he or she directly carries out the bullying behaviour or intentionally assists or encourages the bullying behaviour in any way.

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)
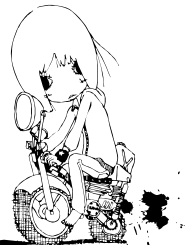
CAMP Deliberately affected or exaggerated style, sometimes for humorous effect. (AY)

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 (**adj**) Refers to someone whose gender identity corresponds with their assigned sex. (Egale Canada)

CISNORMATIVITY A cultural/societal bias, often implicit, that assumes all people are cisgender and so privileges cisgender identities and ignores or underrepresents gender variance. (Egale Canada)

CISSEXISM Cissexism Prejudice and discrimination in favour of cisgender gender identities and expressions. This includes the presumption that being cisgender is the superior and more desirable gender identity. (Egale Canada)

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)

COLONIALISM

Usually refers to the period of European colonization and political domination from the 1400's onwards, in the Americas, Asia, and Africa, and taking on different forms from settler colonies like Canada to non-settler colonies such as India during British rule. Colonialism differs also across colonizing nations and across time. For example, French colonialism had different policies from British, while modern colonialism is often seen as part of "globalization", which includes the exploitation of labour and national resources by transnational corporations and the expansion of free trade agreements and blocs. (MEAL)

COLONIZATION

In essence colonization is the forming of a settlement or colony by a group of people who seek to take control of a specific piece of land, territory, or country. It usually involves immigration of people on a large-scale to a 'new' location and the expansion of their civilization and culture into this area. When the land in question has already been settled, colonization involves displacing and/or dominating the original inhabitants of the area, the indigenous population.

In Canada, colonization resulted in the displacement of First Nations and Inuit peoples and the dispossession of vast amounts of land from the original inhabitants, and later the Métis people. In addition, through treaties, the Indian Act and other means, indigenous peoples were subjugated and dominated by the colonizers. The result of this displacement, dispossession, and domination has been institutionalized inequality and systemic cultural, economic, social, and political oppression of indigenous peoples. (MEAL)

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 Creed or religion or religious belief, religious association or religious activity is one of the prohibited grounds of discrimination under the Manitoba Human Rights Code. Manitoba Human rights commission interpret this "to include the presence or absence of a religion, creed, religious belief, religious association or religious activity." (Policy on REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION OF RELIGIOUS BELIEF, *http://www.manitobahumanrights.ca*) Creed is not defined in the Manitoba Human Rights Code. The Ontario Human Rights Commission interprets Creed 'to mean "religious creed" or "religion." It is defined as a professed system and confession of faith, including both beliefs and observances or worship. A belief in a God or gods, or a single supreme being or deity is not a requisite. Religion is broadly accepted by the OHRC to include, for example, non-deistic bodies of faith, such as the spiritual faiths/practices of aboriginal cultures, as well as bona fide newer religions (assessed on a case by case basis). The existence of religious beliefs and practices are both necessary and sufficient to the meaning of creed, if the beliefs and practices are sincerely held and/or observed."

See more at: *http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/policy-creed-and-accommodation-religious-observances/creed#sthash.edN1xjo9.dpuf*

CROSSDRESSERS

(also Cross-Dressers)

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

Manitoba's Public Schools Act [S. 47.1(2.1)] interprets cyber-bullying as "using the Internet or other information or communication technologies, such as e-mail messages or text messages sent by cell phone or pager, to support deliberate, repeated and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm someone else." *http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/p250e.php*

DISABILITY

Human beings reflect a diversity of abilities. A disability is congenital or acquired characteristics or condition of an individual that may prevent full participation in educational, social, economic, political, religious, institutional or formal activities of a group, or that may require accommodation to enable full participation. Visible disabilities are readily apparent and consequent discrimination or stigma may be more predictable than with "invisible" disabilities which are not immediately apparent. Persons with disabilities form one of the designated groups in employment equity programs. An important aspect of this definition is voluntary self-identification. (MEAL)

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)

The unequal treatment of groups or individuals with a history of marginalization either by a person or a group or an institution which, through the denial of certain rights, results in inequality, subordination and/or deprivation of political, education, social, economic, and cultural rights.

The Canadian Human Rights Commission defines discrimination as: "treating people differently, negatively, or adversely because of their race, age, religion, sex, etc., that is because of a prohibited ground of discrimination.

As used in human rights laws, discrimination means making a distinction between certain individuals or groups based on a prohibited ground of discrimination." (MEAL)

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 variety of characteristics that all persons possess, that distinguish them as individuals, and that identify them as belonging to a group or groups. It is a term used to encompass all the various differences among people commonly used in Canada and in the United States in reference to programs aimed at reducing discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity and outcome for all groups. 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, socioeconomic status, type of area (urban/rural), age, faith and/ or beliefs. (MEAL)

DOMINANT GROUP A group which is considered the most powerful and privileged of all groups in a particular society or context and that exercises that power through a variety of means (economic, social, political, and etc). (Adapted from 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 *Manitoba 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 Reasonable Accommodation, *http://www.manitobahumanrights.ca/ publications/guidelines/reasonable_accommodation.html*)

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   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. For treatment to be fair, issues of diversity need to be taken into account so that the different needs and requirements of individuals are met. As a concept underlying social and educational perspectives, it takes into consideration the existence of systemic obstacles and social inequalities and proposes policies and practices to counter them, thus, providing all individuals and groups, the possibility of educational success, employment and social mobility. In equitable terms educational achievement should be an inclusive rather than an exclusive goal. (MEAL)

ETHNICITY   Ethnicity is a social and political construct used by individuals and communities to define themselves and others. It can be used to describe how people are defined, differentiated, organized and entitled to group membership based on shared linguistic, historical, geographical, religious and/or racial homogeneity. Ethnicity can also be used in reference to a consciously shared system of beliefs, values, practices and loyalties shared by members of a group who perceive themselves as a group. Essentially, ethnicity can be thought of as an attachment that a person or a group feels towards a common cultural heritage. Ethnicity and ethnic identity are interchangeable terms. (MEAL)

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) (or Trans Man) a person who is assigned female sex at birth but who identifies as a man. Often will simply identify as a man without the prefix 'trans'. (Egale Canada)

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

One of the three distinct cultural groups of Aboriginal Peoples. This is a term that came into common usage in the 1970s to replace the word 'Indian,' which many people found offensive. Although the term First Nation is widely used, no legal definition of it exists. Among its uses, the term First Nations peoples refers to the Indian people in Canada, both Status and Non-Status. Many Indian people have also adopted the term First Nation to replace the word band in the name of their community. There are 633 First Nations Bands, representing 52 nations or cultural groups, and more than 50 languages. Most individuals prefer to be referred to by their specific nation e.g. Cree, Dakota, Dené, Anishanaabé, Ojibwé, Oji-Cree, Black Foot, etc. (AFN) (MEAL)

FREAKY MAN

Slang for "queer man" that became popularized through homophobic dancehall music and generally only has negative connotations. (Egale Canada)

GAY

(**adj**) A person who is emotionally and sexually attracted to someone of the same sex and/or gender—gay can include both males and females, or refer to males only. (Egale Canada)

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.) See also LGBTQ Positive Space Group

GENDER The social classification of people as masculine and/or feminine. Whereas sex is an externally assigned classification, gender is something that becomes evident in a social context. (Egale Canada)

GENDER CONFORMITY Acting within the culturally expected gender role for people of one's biological sex. (AY)

GENDER DIVERSE Gender Diverse (adj) Refers to a person whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from cultural or societal expectations based on assigned sex and gender. (Egale Canada)

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 way a person presents and communicates gender identity to society, through clothing, speech, body language, hairstyle, voice, and/or the emphasis or de-emphasis of bodily characteristics or behaviours and traits used publicly to express one's gender as masculine or feminine or something else. The traits and behaviours associated with masculinity and femininity are culturally specific and change over time. Gender expression is not an indication of sexual orientation. Also called gender presentation. (Egale Canada)

GENDER FLUIDITY The recognition that social constructions of gender identity and gender expressions lie along a spectrum and cannot be limited to two genders; a feeling that one's gender varies from societal notions of two genders. (Egale Canada)

GENDER IDENTITY A person's deeply felt internal and individual experience of gender – their internal sense of being man, woman, or another gendered being entirely. A person's gender may or may not correspond with the sex assigned at birth. Since gender identity is internal, one's gender identity is not necessarily visible to others. (Egale Canada)

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 (**adj**) Refers to a person whose gender identity may not correspond with social and societal gender expectations. Individuals who identify as genderqueer may identify with both male and female genders, move between genders, or may reject the gender binary or gender altogether. Those who identify as genderqueer may or may not also identify as trans. (Egale Canada)

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

Behaviour of an intimidating or hostile nature or persistent, on-going communication (in any form) of negative attitudes, beliefs or actions towards an individual or group, with the intention of placing that person in a disparaging role. It is uninvited, unwelcome behaviour, which causes a degree of distress to the recipient. Harassment is manifested in name calling, jokes or slurs, graffiti, insults, threats, discourteous treatment, and written or physical abuse. Harassment may be subtle or overt.

Harassment is unlawful on the grounds of race, ethnic or national origins, sex, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment status, religion, belief , and age.

Particular actions or behaviour could be seen as harassment even if not aimed directly at the recipient and not intentionally offensive. It should be remembered that the impact of the behaviour determines harassment and not the intent. (MEAL)

HATE CRIME

In Canada, there are four specific offences recognized in the Criminal Code as hate crimes: advocating genocide, public incitement of hatred, wilful promotion of hatred, and mischief in relation to religious property. In addition, other criminal offences (e.g. assault, mischief) may be classified as a hate crime should the incident be motivated by hatred towards a particular group based on race, national or ethnic origin, language, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation or any other similar factor. (Refer to Statistics Canada, *http://www.statcan. gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2012001/article/11635-eng.htm*)

HATE PROPAGANDA Representing some of the most destructive forms of human rights-based discrimination in that they promote hatred against identifiable groups of people. Hate groups generally label and disparage people who may include immigrants, people with disabilities, members of racialized, religious or cultural groups, or people who are gay or lesbian. (CRRF)

HATRED Intense dislike or ill will, sometimes unconscious, often irrational, and occasionally expressed through violence; a self-destructive and corrosive emotion. (AY)

HETERONORMATIVITY A cultural/societal bias, often implicit, that assumes all people are straight and so privileges heterosexuality and ignores or underrepresents same-sex relationships. (Egale Canada)

HETEROPHOBIA A fear or distrust of heterosexual people and of anything associated with heterosexuality, often based on negative life experiences. (AY)

HETEROSEXISM Prejudice and discrimination in favour of heterosexuality. This includes the presumption of heterosexuality as the superior and more desirable sexual orientation. (Egale Canada)

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 emotionally and sexually attracted to someone of the opposite sex and/or gender. Also referred to as "straight". (Egale Canada)

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, often exhibited by name-calling, bullying, exclusion, prejudice, discrimination, or acts of violence—anyone who is LGB (or assumed to be) can be the target of homophobia. (Egale Canada)

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

Human rights affirm and protect the right of every individual to live and work without discrimination and harassment. Human Rights policies and legislation attempt to create a climate in which the dignity, worth and rights of all people are respected, regardless of age, ancestry, citizenship, colour, creed (faith), disability, ethnic origin, family status, gender, marital status, place of origin, race, sexual orientation or socio-economic status.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights extends those rights to all people around the world. Canadian citizens enjoy certain rights based on Canada's tradition of democracy and respect for human dignity and freedom. Those rights are found in Canada's **human rights codes** and in the Canadian *Charter Of Rights And Freedoms*.

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

The term "inclusive", when used in regard to educational institutions or programs, refers to the successful education of all students while acknowledging and respecting diversity. It is an approach to 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. (MEAL)

INDIAN ACT Introduced shortly after confederation, The Indian Act was an amalgamation of pre-confederation colonial legislation that had been updated to meet the needs of the emerging Canadian state to expand and allow European settlement of the west and other regions. This Canadian legislation governs the federal government's legal and political relationship with Aboriginal Peoples across Canada. It has been amended many times. The amendments made in the late 1800s and the first few decades of the 1900s are generally accepted as making the act more repressive, and were intended to further the Canadian state's goals of assimilation. Since 1945, some of its more repressive and detrimental elements have been removed to comply with the international human rights law regarding civil and political rights, including opposition to genocide. (MEAL)

INTERSECTIONALITY A lens of analysis of social relations **and structures within a given society**. **The concept of intersectionality** recognizes how each person simultaneously exists within multiple and overlapping identity categories (including but not limited to: gender, race, ethnicity, class, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ability, body size, citizenship, religion, creed). Social institutions and relations privilege and marginalize these identities differently and create differentiated access to resources. (Egale Canada)

INTERSEX/INTERSEXUAL

(**adj**) Refers to a person whose chromosomal, hormonal or anatomical sex characteristics fall outside the conventional classifications of male or female. Many people experience the designation of "intersex" as stigmatizing given the history of medical practitioners imposing the diagnosis on infants, children and young adults (some people may not be identified as "intersex" until puberty). As with all humans, gender identity for intersex individuals may be complex. (Egale Canada)

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 peoples in Northern Canada who live above the tree line in the Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Northern Quebec and Labrador. The word means "People" in the Inuit language - Inuktitut. The Inuit are one of the cultural groups comprising Aboriginal peoples of Canada.

The term is also used internationally, as in 1977, the Inuit Circumpolar Conference was held in Barrow, Alaska, and officially adopted the name "Inuit", meaning "the people" as a replacement for the name "Eskimo", meaning "eaters of raw meat". (MEAL)

INVISIBLE MINORITY In Canada the Employment Equity Act defines visible minorities as "persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour". The visible minority population consists mainly of the following groups: Chinese, South Asian, Black, Arab, West Asian, Filipino, Southeast Asian, Latin American, Japanese and Korean. (Statistics Canada)

Therefor, invisible minorities are people who may experience social inequities on the basis of non-physical or 'non-visible' factors, such as a disability, language or sexual orientation. The term may refer to a group that is small in number or it may connote inferior social position. (MEAL)

ISLAMOPHOBIA A term recently coined to refer to expressions of negative stereotypes, bias or acts of hostility towards individual Muslims or followers of Islam in general. (CRRF)

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 Kothis 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 (**adj or n**) A female who is attracted emotionally and sexually to other females. (Egale Canada)

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 An acronym for "Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Transsexual, Two-Spirit, Queer and Questioning" people. (Egale Canada)

LGBTTIQQA An acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Two-Spirited, Transgendered (Transsexual), Intersexed, Questioning, Queer, and Allies. This acronym attempts to capture all elements of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities. Other popular acronyms include LGBT, LGBTTIQ etc. LGBTQ is often used as a short version of the term in Canada. (MEAL)
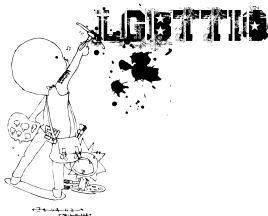
LGBTQ POSITIVE SPACE GROUP

LGBTQ Positive Space Groups (PSGs) are intended to help create a school that is free of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identities;

- allows all students to feel included and welcomed so they may focus their energies on academic objectives as well as partake in school social life and co-curricular activities;

- allows all members of the school community to feel welcomed and included in order to create positive learning and workplace environments;

- decreases fear and disapproval of sexual and gender diversity;

- encourages inclusion of LGBTQ peoples' lives, politics, culture, families, and histories in curricula, course offerings, and research opportunities.[1]

The term Positive Space was coined in 1996 at the University of Toronto in response to a homophobic assault on a professor. A module of training on LGBTQ realities was developed, and all participants – faculty, staff, and students – received a sticker with the newly created Positive Space symbol: a mash-up of the rainbow flag and the inverted triangle that was used to mark LGBTQ people during the Holocaust.

from: *http://www.cea-ace.ca/education-canada/article/gift-positive-space-groups-transformation-lgbtq-students*

See also Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA)

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)
(or Trans Man) A person who is assigned male sex at birth but who identifies as a woman. Often will simply identify as a woman without the prefix 'trans'. (Egale Canada)

MANITOBA 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 *http://web2.gov. mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/h175e.php*)

M

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 Originally referred to persons of mixed Indian and French ancestry. Now refers to a person who self-identifies as Métis, is of historic Métis Nation ancestry, and/or is accepted by the Métis Nation through its acceptance process. (MEAL)

MINORITY GROUP

Sociologically, the concept "minority group" does not refer to demographic numbers, but is used for any group which is disadvantaged, underprivileged, excluded, discriminated against, or exploited. As a collective group, a minority occupies a subordinate status in society.

In Canada, it refers to the diverse ethno-racial identities that are not of the dominant white group. In some areas, they are not always in the minority numerically. Minority rights are protected by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, The Human Rights Acts and Codes, and the UN Convention on the rights of minorities. The term may imply inferior social position. In common use, Racial or Visible Minority describes people who are not White; Ethnic Minority refers to people whose ancestry is not English or Anglo-Saxon; Linguistic Minority refers to people whose first language is not English (or not French in Quebec). (MEAL)

MISOGYNY The hatred of women. (CDO)

MONOSEXISM Monosexism Prejudice and discrimination in favour of people who experience exclusive attraction to only one gender identity, expression or sex. This includes the presumption that being gay or straight is superior and more desirable to being bisexual or pansexual, or that people who experience bisexual or pansexual attractions are merely promiscuous. (Egale Canada)

MSM See "Men who Have Sex with Men."

MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION A broad term which may refer to a set of structured learning activities and curricula designed to create and enhance understanding of and respect for cultural diversity. The term often connotes inclusion of racial, ethnic, religious, linguistic, national, international and political diversity, and is also inclusive of the culture, heritage, history, beliefs and values of the various peoples within a pluralistic society.

This is an educational approach which positively seeks to acknowledge diversity in culture, faith, language and ethnicity in relation to school ethos, curriculum and home-school-community partnerships.

The term intercultural is sometimes used interchangeably. The term 'intercultural' is more frequently used in Quebec and Europe. (MEAL)

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 (**adj**) A person who is emotionally and sexually attracted to individuals of diverse gender expressions or identity or assigned sex. (Egale Canada)

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)

PERCEIVED GENDER IDENTITY The assumption that a person is trans, cisgender or genderqueer without knowing what their gender identity actually is. Perceptions about gender identity are often predicated on stereotypes relating to gender expression (e.g. what a trans man "should" look like). (Egale Canada)

PERCEIVED SEXUAL ORIENTATION The assumption that a person is lesbian, gay, bisexual or straight without knowing what their sexual orientation actually is. Perceptions about sexual orientation are often predicated on stereotypes relating to gender expression (e.g. what a straight man "should" look like). (Egale Canada)

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)

From a sociological perspective, defined as the ability to impose one's will on others, even if those others resist in some way. The imposition need not involve coercion (force or threat of force); "power" used in the sociological sense does not equate to the separate concepts of physical power or political power and in some ways more closely resembles what everyday English calls "influence". (MEAL)

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)

PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

The Manitoba Human Rights Code prohibits unreasonable discrimination based on the following grounds, called "protected characteristics."

- Ancestry
- Nationality or national origin
- Ethnic background or origin
- Religion or creed, or religious belief, religious association or religious activity
- Age
- Sex, including gender-determined characteristics, such as pregnancy
- Gender-identity
- Sexual orientation
- Marital or family status
- Source of income
- Political belief, political association or political activity
- Physical or mental disability
- Social disadvantage

In addition to these listed characteristics, The Manitoba Human Rights Code prohibits discrimination that is based on other group stereotypes, rather than on individual merit. (MHRC)

QUEER (**adj**) Historically, a derogatory term for homosexuality, used to insult LGBT people. Although still used as a slur by some, the term has been reclaimed by some members of LGBT communities, particularly youth. In its reclaimed form it can be used as a symbol of pride and affirmation of difference and diversity, or as a means of challenging rigid identity categories. (Egale Canada)

QUESTIONING (**adj or v**) A person who is unsure of their sexual orientation or gender identity. (Egale Canada)

RACE A socially created category to classify humankind according to common ancestry or descent, and reliant upon differentiation by general physical or cultural characteristics such as colour of skin and eyes, hair type, historical experience, and facial features. 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. (MHRC)
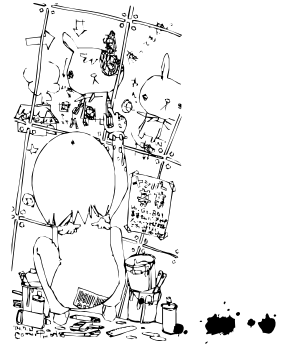
RACIALIZATION The process through which groups come to be designated as different and on that basis subjected to differential and unequal treatment. In the present context, racialized groups include those who may experience differential treatment the basis of perception of race, as well as other factors such as ethnicity, language, socio-economic status, religion, culture, politics, and etc. (MEAL)

RACIALIZED GROUP A term which applies to all groups who are not seen to belong to the the dominant group on the basis of perceived race, colour, and/or ethnicity, and as a result may experience social inequities and be subjected to differential treatment. (Adapted from OME)

RACISM A mix of prejudice and power leading to domination and exploitation of one group (the dominant or majority group) over another (the non-dominant, minority or racialized group). It asserts that the one group is supreme and superior while the other is inferior. Racism is any individual action, or institutional practice backed by institutional power, which subordinates people because of their colour or ethnicity. (CRRF)

RACIST Refers to an individual, institution, or organization whose beliefs and/or actions imply (intentionally or unintentionally) that certain races have distinctive negative or inferior characteristics. Also refers to racial discrimination inherent in the policies, practices and procedures of institutions, corporations, and organizations which, though applied to everyone equally and may seem fair, result in exclusion or act as barriers to the advancement of marginalized groups, thereby, perpetuating racism. (MEAL)

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 There are many definitions of what this term means. However, religion may be conceptualized as any specific system of belief about deity, often involving rituals, a code of ethics, a philosophy of life, and a worldview. It is estimated that there are 19 major world religions, which can be divided into a multitude of sects and sub-groups. (MEAL)

RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION The Manitoba Human Rights Code prohibits unreasonable discrimination on the basis of religion in all of the protected activities under The Code, including employment (s.14) and services (s.13). Therefore school boards have an obligation ... 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.") (MHRC)

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/ASSIGNED SEX The biological classification of a person as male, female or intersex. Most often, sex is assigned by a medical professional at birth and is based on a visual assessment of external anatomy. (Egale Canada)

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)

SEX & GENDER BINARY

The notion that there are only two possible sexes (male/female) and genders (man/woman), that they are opposite, discrete and uniform categories, and that gender is determined by sex. (Egale Canada)

SEXISM

Discrimination and unfairness based on biological sex or gender and usually perpetrated against females. (AY)

A set of implicit or explicit beliefs, erroneous assumptions and actions based upon an ideology of inherent superiority of one gender over another and may be evident within organizational or institutional structures or programs, as well as within individual thought or behaviour patterns.

Sexism is any act or institutional practice, backed by institutional power, which subordinates people because of gender. While, in principle, sexism may be practiced by either gender, most of our societal institutions are still the domain of men and usually the impact of sexism is experienced by women. (MEAL)

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 Sexual Orientation: A person's capacity for profound emotional and sexual attraction to another person based on their sex and/or gender. (Egale Canada)

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 premised upon the belief that each individual and group within society is to be given equal opportunity, fairness, civil liberties and participation in the social, educational, economic, institutional and moral freedoms and responsibilities valued by the society. It includes equitable and fair access to societal institutions, laws, resources, opportunities, without arbitrary limitations based on observed, or interpretations of, differences in age, color, culture, physical or mental disability, education, gender, income, language, national origin, race, religion, or sexual orientation.

Generally, **a socially just society** is one that values human dignity, celebrates diversity, pursues a common purpose, embraces individual, and collective rights and responsibilities, narrows the gaps between the advantaged and disadvantaged, provides equitable access to resources for health and well-being, eliminates systemic discrimination and accommodates different needs. (MEAL)

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 and of the characteristics as described in the Manitoba Human Rights Code or on the basis of other, similar factors. (Adapted from CRRF)

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   The institutionalization of discrimination through policies and practices which may appear neutral on the surface but which have an exclusionary impact on particular groups, such that various minority groups are discriminated against, intentionally or unintentionally. Systemic racism operates directly or indirectly to sustain the power structure and advantages enjoyed by the dominant groups. It results in the unequal distribution of economic, social and political resources and reward among diverse groups. It also denies diverse peoples access to fully participate in society and creates barriers to education, employment, housing, and other services available to the dominant group. Systemic discrimination may also be the result of some government laws and regulations. (MEAL)
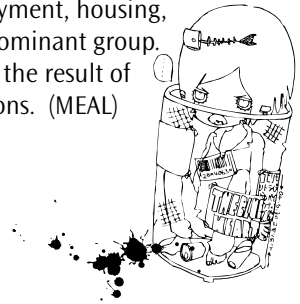
THIRD GENDER A category for those who do not self-identify as either masculine or feminine and who believe that they belong to an alternative gender. (AY)

TRANNY (or Trannie) Slang for transgender people; considered offensive by most. (AY)

TRANS (**adj**): A term commonly used to refer to transgender, transsexual and/or gender variant identities and experiences. While it is often used as an umbrella term, some people identify just as trans. (Egale Canada)

TRANSGENDER (**adj**) A person who does not identify either fully or in part with the gender associated with their birth-assigned sex (the antonym for cisgender) – often used as an umbrella term to represent a wide range of gender identities and expressions. Transgender people (just like cisgender people) may identify as straight, gay, etc. (Egale Canada)

TRANSITION The process whereby people change their appearance or physical body to align with their gender (also called the "gender affirming process"). Transitioning means different things to different people, due in part to issues of access, safety and personal choice. It may involve, if freely chosen, modification of bodily appearance, presentation or function by medical, surgical, or other means. (Egale Canada)

TRANS MAN A person who is assigned female sex at birth but who identifies as a man. Often will simply identify as a man without the prefix 'trans'. (Egale Canada)

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 Fear and/or hatred of any perceived transgression of gender norms, often exhibited by name-calling, bullying, exclusion, prejudice, discrimination, or acts of violence—anyone who is transgender (or assumed to be) can be the target of transphobia. (Egale Canada)

TRANSSEXUAL (**adj**) A person whose sex assigned at birth does not correspond with their gender identity. A transsexual woman needs to live and experience life as a woman and a transsexual man needs to live and experience life as a man. Some transsexual people may physically alter their body (e.g., sex reassignment surgery and/or hormone therapy) and gender expression to correspond with their gender identity. Many identify as transgender, rather than transsexual, because they are uncomfortable with the psychiatric origins of the term 'transsexual'. (Egale Canada)

T

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)

TRANS WOMAN   a person who is assigned male sex at birth but who identifies as a woman. Often will simply identify as a woman without the prefix 'trans'. (Egale Canada)

TWO-SPIRIT (n) / TWO-SPIRITED (adj)   The term "Two Spirit" emerged in 1990 at the third annual Intertribal First Nations/Native American gay and lesbian conference in Winnipeg. "Two-Spirit" is an Aboriginal spirit-name shared at that 1990 gathering of Aboriginal people who identified as gay, lesbian, bisexual, and trans at the time. "Two-Spirit" is a name now embraced by many LGBTQ indigenous people of Turtle Island. It is unique to North American Aboriginal LGBTQ people because First Nations peoples connections to this land and ecology are cultural, historical, and familial. (Albert McLeod)

Some Aboriginal people choose to identify as Two-Spirit rather than, or in addition to, identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans or queer. Prior to European colonization, Two-Spirit people were respected members of their communities and were often accorded special status. In some Nations, this was based upon the belief of their unique abilities to understand both male and female perspectives. Two-Spirit persons were often the visionaries, healers and medicine people in their communities. The term Two-Spirit affirms the interrelatedness of all aspects of identity - including gender, sexuality, community, culture, and spirituality. It is an English term used to stand in for the many Aboriginal language words for Two-Spirit. (Egale Canada)

Thus, "Two-Spirits" reclaims the rich and diverse traditions and understandings of First Nations peoples, including some that may have been lost by the subversion of indigenous cultures through colonization, Christianization and assimilation. It is a pan-historical as well as a "pan-tribal" concept and term. For many LGBTQ Aboriginal people, identifying as a two-spirited person is a form of liberation from the identities that were imposed by other cultures and movements. Essentially it means that LGBTQ people have the ability to reflect the male and female energies (genders and sexes) and forces that create life (eg. humans, animals and plants) and that diversity within this realm is considered sacred and a component of the natural order. (Albert MacLeod)

Today an ever increasing number of First Nations, Métis and other Aboriginal LGBTQ people describe themselves as 'Two-Spirit'. It is an empowered identity that emerged within the context of sustained racism, homophobia and sexism. For many First Nations people, their Two-Spirit identity reclaims their authority to define who they are and it aligns with their worldview, distinct cultures, histories and ways of being.

However, it is important to recognize that while the term "Two Spirit" has been embraced by many Fist Nations peoples to separate their interests from Western-imposed concepts of gender and sexual identity, the term is not used universally or consistently across First Nations/Aboriginal communities in North America.(Albert McLeod)

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 term used in federal legislation to describe persons who are not of the majority race in a given population. Visible minorities are defined under the Employment Equity Act as "persons, other than Aboriginals, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour." The term "visible minorities" is also used as a demographic category by Statistics Canada.

In March 2007, the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racism denounced the term "visible minorities" and Canada's use of it as racist. The use of the term was seen to somehow indicate that 'whiteness' was the standard, all others differing from that being visible. However, the Committee did not suggest an alternative term. Therefore, phrase should be used with caution.

Although there was a time when people of colour were generally a minority compared to the majority of the population, Canada's composition has changed significantly and this is no longer true. Thus the term "visible minority," although remaining in some legislation, is losing its relevance, as it is no longer applicable in our society due to changing demographics.

Currently, the terms racialized minority are often preferred by people categorized by others to be "visible minorities". (MEAL)
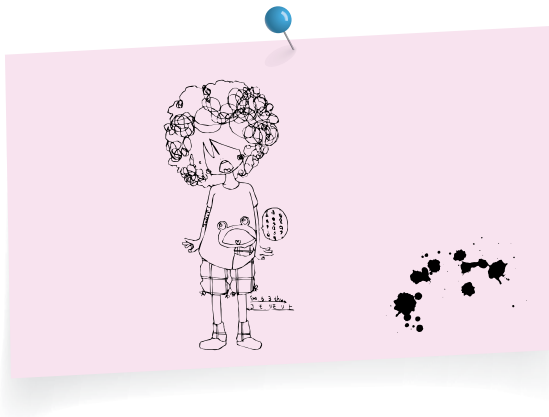
✱ **ALBERT MCLEOD:** (see role model section)

✱ **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%20 Development/Diversity%20and%20Human%20Rights/Sexual%20 Orientation/FAQ/Pages/What%20Does%20the%20Term%20 LGBT%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_conten t&task=view&id=607&Itemid=177

✱ **CDO:** From Cambridge Dictionaries Online

http://dictionary.cambridge.org/

✱ **CRRF:** Canadian Race Relations Foundation, Glossary of Terms, *http://www.crr.ca/divers-files/englossary-feb2005.pdf*

✳ **CTF:** From the Canadian Teachers' Federation's Policy on Anti-Homophobia and Anti-Heterosexism (July 2004 Annual General Meeting)

http://www.ctf-fce.ca/en/Pages/Handbook/Policy/Policy-Section5-1.aspx

✳ **Egale Canada**

To access and add to an online glossary, go to *MyGSA.ca/content/terms-concepts*

✳ **GVSD:** From the Greater Victoria School District's Regulation 4303 (GVSD)

https://documents.sd61.bc.ca/super/polreg/pdf/pol4303.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_DCuPAhq8HbUkfqI#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://guilfordjournals.com/doi/abs/10.1521/aeap.2008.20.6.558

✳ **MEAL:** From Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning's Education for a Diverse, Equitable, Inclusive, & Sustainable Society Glossary (2011)

✳ **MHI:** From Khan, Shivananada. "MSM and HIV/AIDS in India." 2004.

http://www.nfi.net/NFI%20Publications/Essays/2004/MSM,%20 HIV%20and%20India.pdf

✳ **MHRC:** Manitoba Human Rights Commission *http://www. manitobahumanrights.ca*

✳ **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=G30kIcfc8HMC&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/glbtqa/ definitions.htm*
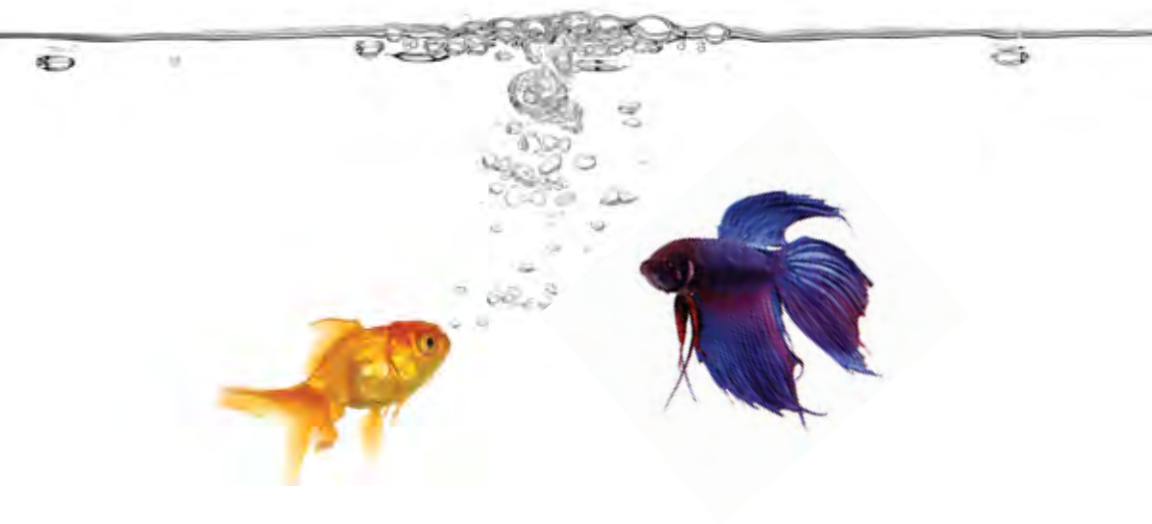
"University of Southern Maine Safe Zone Project."

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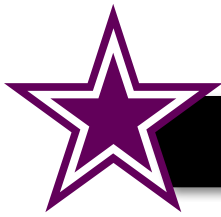Inclusion in Manitoba Schools
is part of Egale's Safe Schools
Campaign.

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

LGBTQ RESOURCES

diversity =
possibility

LGBTQ MANITOBA

For a continually updated web directory of regional and national resources, see *MyGSA.ca/Resources*

LGBTQ and LGBTQ-Friendly Organizations, Programmes, & Resources in Manitoba

TWO-SPIRIT RESOURCE LIST

Two-Spirit Resources in Canada and the USA

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)

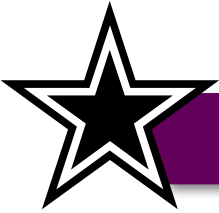Gay Canada

Kids Help Phone 1-800-668-6868

MyGSA.ca

Native Youth Sexual Health Network (NYSHN)

PFLAG Canada

Report Homophobic Violence, Period (RHVP)

Salaam Canada

TransParent Canada

LGBTQ AND LGBTQ-FRIENDLY ORGANIZATIONS, PROGRAMMES, & RESOURCES IN MANITOBA

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

★ **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 Resoures 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)
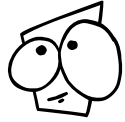For more information: campaurora@rainbowresourcecentre.org

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.

★ **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.

★ **LGBT* Centre**

Bulman Students' Centre, Concourse Level, Room 0R13
University of Winnipeg
(204) 786-9025

*http://theuwsa.ca/services/uwsa-student-groups/student-service-groups/
lgbt-centre/*

Meetings are every Monday at 12:30, September through March.

The centre was founded in 1991 as the Lesbian Gay Bisexual
(LGB) Collective, a recognized group of the University of Winnipeg
Students' Association (UWSA). Since then it has evolved into a
student service group called the LGBT* Centre, which functions as
a positive , social atmosphere open to all students with an open
and inclusive view of sexuality and gender diversity.

While keeping a safe space open to our community is a
primary focus, the centre also provides support and resources,
hosts events, and organizes campaigns, both on and off campus,
which promote positive attitudes towards the LGBT* community.
In addition, they provide safer sex materials and supplies, such as
condoms, lube, and dental dams free of charge.

They always welcome new faces, so feel free to drop in
anytime, or contact them by email or telephone.

★ **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 LGBTTQIA* youth a safe, fun place to learn new skills, create projects and celebrate our identities! PPY seeks to build the capacity of LGBTTQIA* youth to support and encourage their peers to learn more about sexual orientation, gender identity and anti-homophobic education. PPY focuses on providing LGBTTQIA* youth with the opportunity to be positively supported and affirmed as LGBTTQIA* 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 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 LGBTTQQ 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 LGBTTQQ 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 LGBTTQQ community to be affirmed - at the Rainbow Resource Centre.

★ **Rainbow Resource Centre**

170 Scott Street
Winnipeg
(204) 474-0212

www.rainbowresourcecentre.org
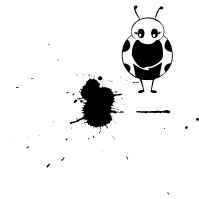*facebook: https://www.facebook.com/groups/280300125172/?ref=ts&fref=ts*

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 LGBTTQ 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 Klinic Community Health Centre
870 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg
(204) 784-4090

www.klinic.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.
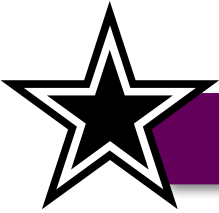
★

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 States and Canada.

★ **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.

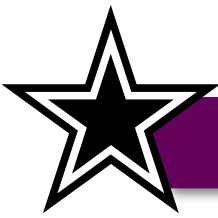### ★ North East Two-Spirit Society (USA)

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.'

NATIONAL LGBTQ AND LGBTQ-FRIENDLY ORGANIZATIONS, PROGRAMMES, & RESOURCES

★ **Amnesty International Gay & Lesbian Human Rights Support Network**

http://www.algi.qc.ca/asso/amnistie.html

f

French-language website of the Gay & Lesbian Human Rights Support Network of Amnesty International's Canadian Section (French-speaking), based in Montrèal. 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

f

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

f

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

f : 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://sexualhealthcentresaskatoon.ca/qyouth/p_crhc.php

f

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

[f]

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

[f] [t]

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

[f]

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

[f] [t]

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

[f]

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.rhvp.ca

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.

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.

Rochlin, M. "The Language of Sex: The Heterosexual
Questionnaire." *Changing Men* (Spring, 1982). Waterloo,
Ontario: University of Waterloo.

Taylor, C. & Peter, T., with McMinn, T.L., Elliott, T., Beldom, S.,
Ferry, A., Gross, Z., Paquin, S., & Schachter, K. (2011).
*Every class in every school: The first national climate survey
on homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia in Canadian
schools. Final report*. Toronto, ON: Egale Canada Human
Rights Trust.

Taylor, C., Peter, T., Schachter, K., Paquin, S., Beldom, S., Gross, Z., & McMinn, TL. (2009). *Youth Speak Up about Homophobia and Transphobia: The First National Climate Survey on Homophobia in Canadian Schools*. Phase One Report. Toronto, ON: Egale Canada Human Rights Trust.

Toronto District School Board (TDSB). *Equity Foundation Statement and Commitments to Equity Policy Implementation.* 2000. Reproduced with permission, 2009.

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.

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