



Equity and Inclusive Education Resource Kit for
Newfoundland and Labrador, Grades 7 -12

RESOURCES FOR GUIDANCE COUNSELLORS



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RESOURCES FOR GUIDANCE COUNSELLORS

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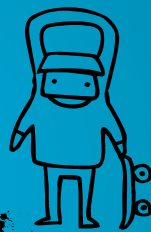


In addition to the resources provided in this section, also see the Executive Summary from Egale Canada's First National School Climate Survey Report *Every Class in Every School*, which is available both in the Information for Administrators section of this kit and on Egale's national LGBTQ safer schools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



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 *MyGSA.ca* is blocked at your school, ask your principal if this site can be permitted





LGBT YOUTH SUICIDE PREVENTION GUIDE

LGBTQ YOUTH AND SUICIDE

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

RISK ASSESSMENT GUIDE

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

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

Keep in mind that:

- Suicidal language can be used to express pain and a need for change.
- Suicide attempters are often ambivalent. Hopelessness and helplessness mark those who are determined to die.
- Many people who are depressed are also suicidal but not all depression leads to a desire for death.
- Some long-term chronically depressed people have periods of time when they are suicidal, including during what appear to be “better” periods.
- Gender and age affect suicide risk. Women make more suicide attempts than men, but have much lower (completed) suicide rates. This is because men are more likely to choose lethal methods.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH LGBTQ SUICIDE

Suicidal Ideation

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

Suicide Attempts

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

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

Factors That Heighten Risk

- Suicidality among friends or peers
- Depression, anxiety and/or substance abuse (maladaptive coping skills)
- Social inequity, sparse social networks, lack of legal protections, hostile school or work environments, verbal or physical harassment, persecution or victimization
 - 64% of LGBTQ students and 61% of students with LGBTQ parents reported that they feel unsafe at school (*Every Class in Every School, 2011*)
- Lack of positive role models
- Family dysfunction or family rejection
- Identity conflict or identity confusion

Protective Factors That Build Resilience

- Strong support to develop self esteem
- Positive, inclusive community or school spaces
- School policies that specifically protect LGBTQ students
- Positive media and community role models
- School, community and web-based resources

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE IN SUICIDE MANAGEMENT

- Know what LGTTTIQQ2SA means and be comfortable saying lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, transgender, intersex, queer or questioning, 2-spirited, or straight ally.
- Be able to use the word “suicide” without negative emotional reaction. Be able to discuss expressions of suicide in order to establish intent.
- The safest and most helpful approach is to encourage the distressed person to discuss suicidal ideas, feelings and plans.

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

- Do not judge a person to be weak or inferior who expresses pain in suicidal terms. You can give permission to a troubled person to have deep feelings by saying “You are having a very difficult time. It's not surprising you feel so bad.”
- Be aware of some LGBTQ-positive referral resources and encourage the distressed person to seek help that is tailored to their needs.
- Do not rush a person through the suicidal crisis without giving ample time to identify and explore feelings.

From the Toronto Police Services' LGBT Community Consultative Committee



SOME POSSIBLE WARNING SIGNS OF SUICIDAL IDEATION

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

Some Possible Warning Signs of Suicidal Ideation

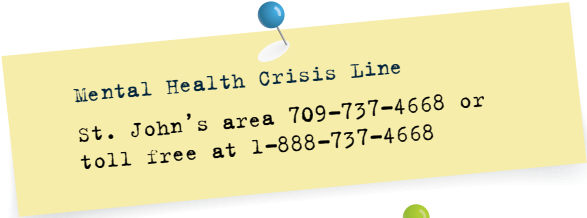
- giving away possessions,
- loss of interest in hobbies,
- feeling desperate,
- feeling lonely,
- feeling sad,
- feeling hopeless,
- saying things such as “I won’t need these things anymore”, or “I just can’t take it anymore”, or “All of my problems will end soon”.

If you think a person is suicidal ASK.

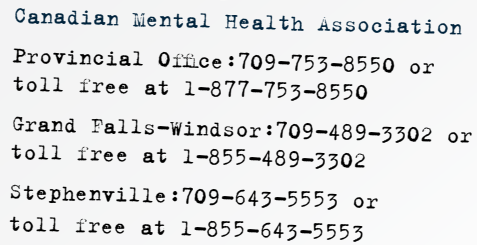
Risk Assessment and Intervention

| Risk Review | Intervention/Safe Action (if answer yes to the question) |
|--|--|
| Are you having thoughts of suicide? | Keep the person safe. Stay with him or her or have another trusted adult stay with the person while you seek help. Connect with local resources immediately. |
| Do you have a suicide plan? If so, how will you do it? How prepared are you? How soon? | Disable the suicide plan |
| Do you have pain that at times feels overwhelming? | Erase 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 |

Local Resources



Mental Health Crisis Line
St. John's area 709-737-4668 or
toll free at 1-888-737-4668



Canadian Mental Health Association
Provincial Office: 709-753-8550 or
toll free at 1-877-753-8550
Grand Falls-Windsor: 709-489-3302 or
toll free at 1-855-489-3302
Stephenville: 709-643-5553 or
toll free at 1-855-643-5553



VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Prepared by the Violence Prevention Initiative, 2008.

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.

Debunking Myths cont'd

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 from God.

Sexual orientation is only about sex.

Being lesbian, gay, or bisexual is about a person's life. It is about who one loves, spends time with, chooses to raise children and have a family with, etc.



I don't know anyone who is LGBTQ.

Chances are you do. They just might not be out to you. Egale's First National Climate Survey on Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia in Canadian Schools found that over 14% of students who completed the survey in class self-identified as LGBTQ. Since the "Q" stands for both "queer" and "questioning," this demonstrates that a proportionally large segment of youth in Canada today self-identify as sexual and/or gender minorities.

Queer people don't make good parents.

To date, there is no conclusive research demonstrating how one becomes heterosexual, bisexual, homosexual, or trans and nothing to indicate that it has anything to do with parental influence. The presence of open and out LGBTQ family members may make it easier, and less anxiety-ridden, for younger LGBTQ family members when they are coming out. A 2006 report by the Department of Justice Canada found that "Children raised in families with same-sex parents are at least as socially competent as children raised in families with opposite sex parents," and that lesbians and gay men are generally better at parenting than heterosexual parents. For more information, see http://www.samesexmarriage.ca/docs/Justice_Child_Development.pdf.

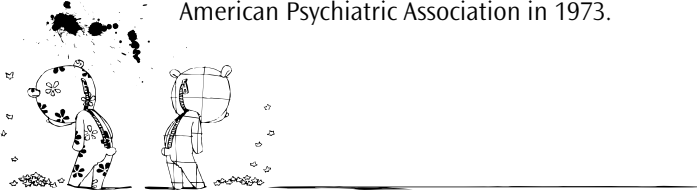
Debunking Myths cont'd

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.



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 GLBTQ FAMILIES

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

GLBTQ 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 GLBTQ-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 GLBTQ community.

Unfortunately, most of the issues facing GLBTQ 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: GLBTQ people do not value family.

Fact: GLBTQ people value family. Within the GLBTQ community there is recognition and nurturing of diverse family structures, from mono-nuclear families to other families of choice.

GLBTQ people recognize friends, lovers and those involved in long-term relationships as family.

GLBTQ people who are fortunate enough to have been accepted by their family of origin may have strong family ties. Those who have been rejected by their family of origin often work to try to re-establish these relationships, and to guard their right to raise their own children or adopt their partner's children.

Rejection often causes deep pain from which many glbttq people spend a good part of their life trying to understand and overcome.

Myth: GLBTTQ people do not make good parents

Fact: Research has shown that, except for the fact that the children of glbttq parents are often concerned about being

stigmatized by their peers, they show no higher incidence of emotional disturbance than do children of heterosexual couples, nor are they confused about their own gender identity or sexual orientation. GLBTTQ people come from all kinds of families, as do heterosexuals, and there is no correlation between the sexual orientation or gender identity of parents and that of their children. The chances of a child being GLBTTQ are the same whether they are raised by glbttq parents or by heterosexual parents.

Myth: GLBTTQ people cannot or do not have children.

Fact: GLBTTQ people have children in many different ways, just like everyone else: through adoption, alternative insemination, sexual intercourse, co-parenting, step parenting, fostering, etc.

Myth: Trans, Two-Spirit and queer parents must resolve all issues of gender identity before coming out to their children. Children cannot deal with gender transition or gender fluidity. They need to be a certain age before they are ready to learn about a trans parent or family member.

Fact: We know families that have successfully dealt with and continue to deal with the issues of gender transition and fluidity with children of every age. Each age has unique needs that must be met, and it is up to the parent to meet those needs. The information we give our children must be age appropriate, and parents must set limits and boundaries. Coming out to children can dispel feelings of secrecy and dishonesty. It can increase feelings of closeness. But the

decision to come out or not is highly personal and must be respected.

Myth: GLBTTQ parents stigmatize their children.

Fact: Homophobia and transphobia stigmatize children. Being proud and honest about one's identity and orientation in a homophobic/transphobic society, while

certainly not easy, makes children strong and more accepting of diversity. It is society's homophobia and transphobia that need to change; GLBTTQ people need not remain closeted about who they really are.

Myth: Any gender experimentation by children of GLBTTQ parents is a direct result of having GLBTTQ parents

Fact: Experimentation with gender is natural and children should be allowed to do so.

We know children of GLBTTQ parents who are questioning gender and others who express no such feelings. Many children have grown up to be trans,

Two-Spirit or queer in spite of their heterosexual parents' strong discouragement of any gender experimentation, and despite the presence of more rigid gender role-models. Children with GLBTTQ parents can grow up with the freedom to explore, to question roles and to choose their own identities and to get support for whatever they choose.



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



LGBTQ YOUTH PROGRAMS

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

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

Newfoundland and Labrador 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.

“I am going to be okay no matter what because I have a community, an amazing strong community that I know will always be there for me.”

- youth that attended Camp Eclipse

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.

Provincial Resources:

Making Queerness Visible Workshop

Planned Parenthood & Newfoundland and Labrador
Sexual Health Centre
203 Merrymeeting Rd
St. John's, Newfoundland
(709) 579-1009

www.nlsexualhealthcentre.org (*under services*)

“Making Queerness Visible” is a school-based workshop available to all schools in Newfoundland and Labrador. The workshop takes a human rights approach to the subject of homophobia. It explores how homophobia has its roots in gender stereotypes and discusses how homophobia not only affects LGBTQ students, but also straight and cis-gender students. It then explores ways that students can help create positive changes in their schools, for example through the use of posters, guest speakers, or the creation of Gay Straight Alliances. This workshop will travel outside the St. John's area— call to inquire.

Camp Eclipse

Planned Parenthood & Newfoundland and Labrador
Sexual Health Centre
203 Merrymeeting Rd
St. John's, Newfoundland
(709) 579-1009

<http://www.nlsexualhealthcentre.org/CampEclipse.html>

facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/237148159655986/>

Camp Eclipse: OUT in the Woods is a leadership retreat, open to all youth in Newfoundland and Labrador interested in learning about the issues faced by LGBT people, and how to create positive changes in their schools and communities. Camp Eclipse focuses on building and nurturing youth leadership, developing

personal resiliency, and recognizes the diversity of communities. The camp experience is designed to help youth develop the skills necessary to make significant contributions to their own lives and to their schools, home or group-home environments, and communities. Following camp, many youth have gone back to their communities and started GSAs, have returned to school after dropping out, or have supported other youth who may be experiencing bullying or harassment. Camp Eclipse is having a positive impact on the lives of youth across the province.

“I think that everyone who went to camp not only gained a better understanding of themselves, but also we gained something more magical and unique. We gained a community, a sense of belonging, to sum it up a family and that matters, just, so much”.

- youth who attended Camp Eclipse

Supportive Counseling and Peer Support, St. John's and Provincial

Planned Parenthood & Newfoundland and Labrador
Sexual Health Centre

203 Merrymeeting Rd

St. John's, Newfoundland

(709) 579-1009

TOLL FREE - 1 877 666 9847 (1 877 NO MYTHS)

www.nlsexualhealthcentre.org (*under services*)

Support and counselling offered in person or over the telephone.

Wapanaki Two-Spirit Alliance, Atlantic Region

1 800 565 4255 Toll Free

W2salliance@live.ca

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/groups/wabanaki2spirits/>

An informal support and social network of Two-Spirit folks from Mi'kma'kik, Wulustook, Passaquoddy and Penobscot communities in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, PEI, Newfoundland & Labrador, Gaspé-PQ, Maine, Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver, and Boston ranging in age from 16 to 73.

The objectives of the Wapanaki Two-Spirit Alliance are:

- to strengthen the identity, dignity, integrity and wellness of Two-Spirit people
- to provide opportunities for Two-Spirit people to learn about their cultures, heritage, ceremonies, healing practices and inherent rights
- to educate indigenous people about the traditional roles that Two-Spirit people held
- to bridge the gap between services provided and Two-Spirit people
- to build a supportive network
- to identify research needs to develop a Two-Spirit suicide prevention and intervention module that other organizations, health centres or crisis counsellors can use when working with Two-Spirit people
- to identify other areas of concern for future discussion and gatherings
- to promote awareness of indigenous and contemporary laws which prohibit discrimination based on gender identity, sexual orientation or perceived race
- to explore mentoring opportunities and peer guidance among the participants

Piecing Together a Caring Community: A Resource Book on Dismantling Homophobia (book)

by Ann Shortall

A resource for teachers, guidance counsellors, and social workers designed to raise awareness of gay and lesbian issues in education. Sections of this resource are available in PDF format at www.MyGSA.ca.

Violence Prevention Labrador

P.O. Box 23
Forteau, NL A0K 2P0
Tel: (709) 931-2600
Toll Free: 1-866-446-8080
Fax: (709) 931-2601
E-mail: coordinator@vplabrador.ca

Northern Committee Against Violence

P.O. Box 190
St. Anthony, NL A0K 4S0
Tel: (709) 454-3351
Fax: (709) 454-2334
E-mail: darlenerice@gov.nl.ca

Western Regional Coalition to End Violence

P.O. Box 373
2 Carmen Avenue
Corner Brook, NL A2H 6E3
Tel: (709) 634-6606
Fax: (709) 639-1093
E-mail: wrcoalitiontoendviolence@gmail.com

Southwestern Coalition to End Violence

P.O. Box 621
Stephenville, NL A2N 3B5
Tel: (709) 643-1022
Fax: (709) 643-2293
E-mail: swceviolence@gmail.com

Central West Committee Against Violence Inc.

5 Hardy Ave
Grand Falls-Windsor, NL A2A 2P8
Tel: (709) 489-8828
Fax: (709) 489-8620
E-mail: cav@nfld.net

The Roads to End Violence

142 Bennett Drive, Suite 2
Gander, NL A1V 2E4
Tel: (709) 651-2250
Fax: (709) 651-2295
E-mail: theroadstoendviolence@nf.aibn.com

Eastern Region Committee Against Violence

105 Manitoba Dr, Suite 304
Clareville, NL A5A 1K2
Tel: (709) 466-4676
Fax: (709) 466-4670
E-mail: ercav@gov.nl.ca

Burin Peninsula Voice Against Violence

P.O. Box 87
Marystown, NL A0E 2M0
Tel: (709) 279-4030
Fax: (709) 279-5387
E-mail: paulamallay@nf.aibn.com

Communities Against Violence

P.O. Box 500
Bay Roberts, NL A0A 1G0
Tel: (709) 786-7182 Ext. 225
Fax: (709) 786-7040
E-mail: info@communitiesagainstviolence.org

Coalition Against Violence

Suite 209, 31 Peet Street
St. John's, NL A1B 3W8
Tel: (709) 757-0137
Fax: (709) 754-4949
E-mail: cavae@coalitionagainstviolence.ca

➡ Resources in St. John's:

Aids Committee of Newfoundland and Labrador (ACNL), St. John's

47 Janeway Place St. John's

Phone: 709-579-8656

Toll Free Line: 1-800-563-1575 NL

Shelter: 579-8348

<http://www.acnl.net/>

Through the development and implementation of diverse programs and services, the AIDS Committee of Newfoundland and Labrador aims to:

- Prevent the spread of new infection through education,
- Provide support to those individuals already infected/affected,
- Network with other groups working in AIDS related areas on a regional, provincial, national and international level
- Advocate for social and political change

Frontrunners (Running Group), St. John's

[http://www.frontrunners.org/clubs/index.](http://www.frontrunners.org/clubs/index.php?club=NewfoundlandLabrador)

[php?club=NewfoundlandLabrador](http://www.frontrunners.org/clubs/index.php?club=NewfoundlandLabrador)

(for contact information and run times)

facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/nlfrontrunners/>

International Front Runners is an affiliation of GLBT running/walking clubs that have organized in many of larger cities around the world.

LGBT MUN (Memorial University), St. John's

University Centre 6022

Telephone: 864-7619

Email: lbgtmun@mun.ca

<http://www.mun.ca/lbgt/>

facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Lbgt-Mun/158380947505818>

LGBT-MUN provides a supportive social group for LGBTQ members of the Memorial University community, as well as others living in St. John's and surrounding areas.

LGBT Youth Group, St. John's

Planned Parenthood & Newfoundland and Labrador Sexual Health Centre

203 Merrymeeting Rd

St. John's, Newfoundland

(709) 579-1009

www.nlsexualhealthcentre.org (under services)

lbgtq@nlsexualhealthcentre.org

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/6549440145/>

The Youth Group is for LGBTQ and allied youth aged 16-25. It provides youth with an opportunity to meet and socialize in a safe space, and to connect with adult leaders from the community. While the group's focus is on allowing youth to build important social support networks, it also creates opportunities for youth to discuss and seek help with various issues related to school, their family or community. Adult volunteers are able to support youth in resolving these issues.

PFLAG Canada, St. John's

Community Connections, 9 Cathedral Street, St. John's
Contact Rob Sinnot : 699-0509 or stjohnsnl@pflagcanada.ca

<http://www.pflagcanada.ca/chapters/stjohns.php>

facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2384098956/>

Monthly peer support group meetings, open to all.

Spectrum (Queer Choir), St. John's

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/128199913925449/>

Spectrum (formerly known as the St. John's Queer Choir) is a welcoming ensemble where members of the St John's LGBTQ community and their allies can join together in a celebration of identity, friendship, and community through choral music.

Resources in Corner Brook:

Corner Brook Pride

cornerbrookpride@bellaliant.net / info@cornerbrookpride.com

Corner Brook Pride was officially created in 2010. They have initiated many events, including the Day of Purple and the first official Day Against Homophobia Proclamation.

On the last Friday of each month, Corner Brook Pride hosts an LGBT Meet and Greet – a social gathering where people can meet one another, create new friendships, and share in our Pride. Email for more details.

➡ Resources in Grand-Falls Windsor:

LGBTQ Group, Grand Falls-Windsor, NL

glbtq.centralnl@live.ca

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/104666059582277/>

Weekly meetings are held at College of the North Atlantic.

This group meets regularly to support the LGBTQ community of Central Newfoundland and our allies.

➡ Resources in Labrador:

Safe Alliance, Labrador

Safealliance.pride@gmail.com

FAX 709 896 3472

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/Safe-Alliance/141378002603959>

Safe Alliance provides support and resources to individuals regarding LGBTQ issues, while raising awareness throughout Labrador on issues relating to homophobia and heterosexism.

Services provided include public awareness materials and educational workshops for youth and adults focused on the impacts of homophobia and heterosexism, a resource library, and a safe monthly meeting place for all to share ideas and resources.

Please email the Safe Alliance for scheduled meeting times and location.



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 heterosexual 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 LGBTQ issues with students. Counsellors will be informed and familiar with all policies with respect to human rights, anti-homophobia, hate literature, discrimination, and harassment, and will alert their school community to these policies. Counsellors will be sensitive to lesbian, gay, transgender, transsexual, two-spirit, bisexual, and questioning students as well as students from LGBTTT-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.delisle-youth.org/service/wmbjmanuscript.




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

Adapted from the Toronto District School Board

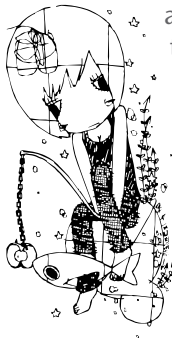
There are many ways that you can be supportive of LGBTQ youth. Here is a list of ideas to get you started, or keep you going.

1. Examine your own feelings and attitudes toward lesbianism, homosexuality, bisexuality, trans identity, Two-Spiritedness, queerness, and the state or process of questioning. Develop insights into possible fears and misconceptions. Books and lectures as well as consultations with LGBTQ agencies and professionals may assist you with this process.
2. Begin the never-ending process of questioning the assumptions associated with ableism, ageism, biphobia, classism, heterosexism, homophobia, lesbophobia, misogyny, racism, sexism, transphobia, and other oppressions. These are all related to one another and intersect in various ways.
3. Become aware of the oppression that LGBTQ individuals face constantly. For instance, imagine how you would feel if your romantic, sexual, and love feelings were the cause of derision, disgust, hatred, and/or violence from the people around you, very frequently from your own friends and family.
4. Do not presume that someone is heterosexual unless it is so stated.



Oppressions
are all related
to one another
and intersect in
various ways.

5. Increase your awareness of LGBTQ resources in your community (like the ones listed in this section). LGBTQ communities are frequently the greatest source of support for LGBTQ individuals. Regional directories are available on *MyGSA.ca*.
6. There are unique, positive aspects about being LGBTQ. Become aware of them and develop the capacity to help others to discover them. For example, it takes great strength and mental health for LGBTQ people to function in a heterosexist, homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic society.
7. Do not base your notion of mental health on sex and gender role stereotypes.
8. You should not solely focus on working with LGBTQ adolescents; heterosexist, homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic environments should be addressed also.
9. Encourage your school to display pamphlets and other materials listing resources for LGBTQ individuals.
10. Do not simply try to help LGBTQ people cope with harassment and prejudice. Be their advocate and help them to obtain their rights.





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 foster a sense of belonging, enhance the joy of learning, and honour diversity while promoting respectful, responsible and caring relationships – all goals for the Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education’s Safe and Caring Schools Policy.

**This Equity and Inclusive
Education Resource Kit for
Newfoundland and Labrador,
Grades 7-12 is part of Egale's
Safe Schools Campaign.**

