

PRISM

Toolkit for Safe and Caring
Discussions About Sexual
and Gender Minorities

ELEMENTARY EDITION



The creation of the PRISM toolkit was made possible by the financial support from the ATA Educational Trust.



Authorized by Alberta Education for:

- *Grades 1–6 Health and Life Skills*
- *Grades 1–6 Safe and Caring Schools*

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Overview

The PRISM toolkit was created to help teachers promote safe and supportive classroom discussions about sexual minorities and gender variance. PRISM is an acronym for “**P**rofessionals **R**especting and supporting **I**ndividual **S**exual **M**inorities.” Like the brilliant and varying colours of the rainbow refracted through a prism, Alberta’s students are a vibrant kaleidoscope of diversity. A diverse classroom environment is rich in possibility for teaching and learning for both students and teachers. An inclusive school environment allows all students to feel safe and to thrive.

Teachers are sometimes at a loss without ready materials to answer questions when the need arises. The benefit of the PRISM toolkit to individual students, small groups, classes and whole schools, is that resources are available to de-stigmatize some of the sensitive aspects related to sexual orientation and gender identity. In the 1990s the age of young people “coming out” (stating they are lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans-identified) was approximately 18–20 years; however, in this decade there are more students coming out in their early teens. Due to the gradual societal shift towards acceptance and equity, educators are recognizing their responsibilities to engage appropriately with these topics in their classrooms. Elementary educators are often the first to understand the gender issues of young children and often deal with them as bullying issues. Opening young minds to these topics at an early age will promote a lifelong understanding and respect for diversity.

The PRISM toolkits provide opportunities for teachers to explore the following content related to sexual orientation and gender variance:

Background information, terminology and relevant statistics

Legal frameworks appropriate to Alberta teachers

Possible questions arising from parents, administrators and students

Lesson plans for Grades 1–3 and Grades 4–6

Recommended literature for elementary aged children

Various additional support resources available through the Alberta Teachers’ Association and other organizations

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Background Information for Professionals

RED—The need to address topics of sexual orientation and gender variance in schools is critical to the safety and health of students and teachers. Through research articles and striking statistics, the **RED** section provides a rationale to inform school communities of the need to address sexual orientation and gender variance in classrooms. Additionally, a glossary is included to provide the common and appropriate language for discussing these topics. **The RED section was created for teacher information. It should not be shared with students.**

Why teach or talk about sexual identity in elementary schools?

Research into sexual identity confirms what many LGBT adults have been saying for years: they may not have come out until adulthood, but they knew they were attracted to the same sex as early as elementary or middle school.

On average, LGBT youth first report an awareness of same-sex attraction at age 10. Boys tend to be aware about a year earlier than girls. Most LGBT youth don't self-identify until they are 14 to 16 years of age. Of course, not all children with same-sex attractions go on to self-identify as LGBT.

Perceptions of LGBT people are learned early in childhood. As educators and citizens, we want to teach our students early how to stand up for their rights and the rights of others, and to be aware of all types of oppression.

Did you know?

LGBT students say that knowing there is a "gay-positive" adult or "out" teacher in their school can contribute to their sense of safety and well-being.

Children and families that are not heterosexual are hurt by such negative acts as

- teaching children who are questioning their gender, sexual identity, or sexual orientation at an early age that their identity is not valued and that they are inferior to others
- restricting the development of positive self-image
- forcing children to leave school, families, or communities as a result of homophobia.

LGBT children and youth are more likely to experience substance abuse, sexual exploitation, and suicide.

It is generally accepted that one person in 10 is LGBT. Many individuals, including teachers and students, do not disclose their sexual identity because of the threat of verbal abuse, physical violence, harassment, and other discriminatory practices. Creating a safe, accepting environment – a "positive space/positive place" – in our schools is vital. Schools must put in place policies and practices that support all learners, including LGBT students.

Statistics about the LGBTQ Community in Canada

How Many People in Canada are LGBTQ?

We don't know. The answers seem to vary wildly.

2003 was the first year that Statistics Canada did a survey on the number of LGB Canadians.

1 per cent answered that they were lesbian or gay. **0.7 per cent** answered that they were bisexual.¹

Note: Participants were selected by Statistics Canada and were contacted in person at their homes or over the phone—this methodology of data collection might have skewed results.

A 2007 study of Canadian students by the McCreary Centre Society, based on 30,000 students from Grades 7 to 12 in randomly selected schools in BC, found that **11 per cent of male participants and 18 per cent of female participants identified as LGBTQ.**²

Hate Crimes against LGBTQ People in Canada

In 2006 and 2007, Canadian police reported that **10 per cent** of all hate crimes were motivated by the victim's perceived orientation. That does not mean that people were actually part of the LGBTQ community. Rather, they were attacked because someone thought they might be.³

Of these hate crimes against people perceived to be LGBTQ, **56 per cent** were violent⁴

How Canadian Students Feel

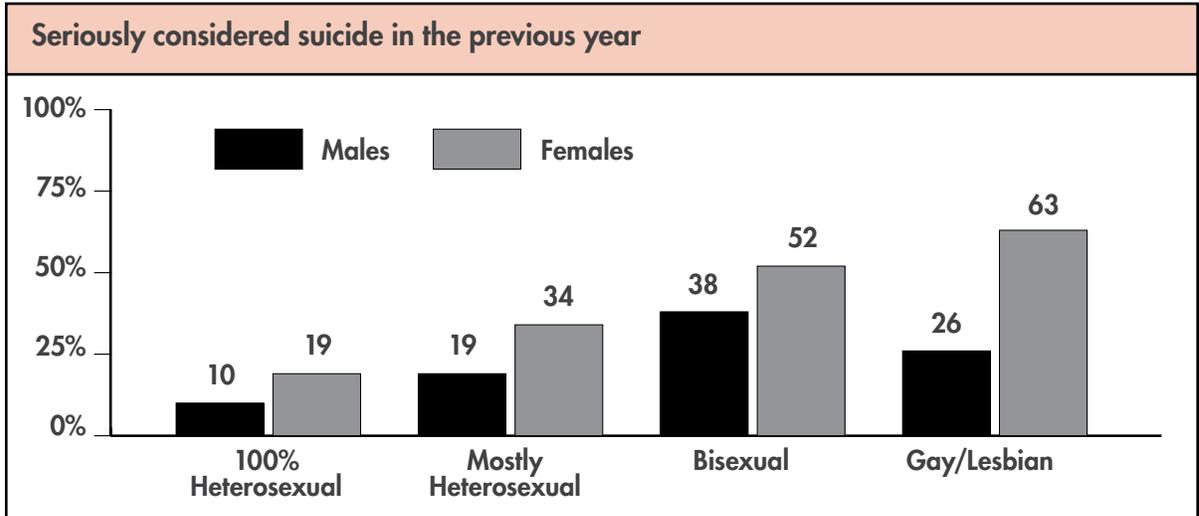
The McCreary Centre Society study of 30,000 students in BC found that:

- **73 per cent of LGBTQ students feel unsafe** in at least one place **at school**, such as changerooms, washrooms and hallways.
- **49 per cent of straight students agree** that at least one part of their school is unsafe for LGBTQ students.
- **28.5 per cent of LGBTQ students reported skipping because they felt unsafe at school** (compared to **8.4 per cent** of non-LGBTQ students).
- Three-quarters (**76.7 per cent**) of all students reported hearing expressions such as “That’s so gay” **every day** in school.
- **50 per cent** heard derogatory remarks like “faggot,” “queer,” “lezbo” and “dyke” **every day**.
- **59.2 per cent** of students indicated that they heard homophobic comments frequently from other students, while **1.8 per cent of students reported hearing such remarks frequently from teachers and other staff**.
- **62.7 per cent** of LGBTQ students found homophobic comments to be either extremely or very upsetting, and it is **important to note that 50.3 per cent of non-LGBTQ felt the same way**.
- Almost half (**47.4 per cent**) of transgender students reported that a **teacher or staff member failed to intervene** when a homophobic comment was made, compared to **34.1 per cent** of LGB respondents.
- **60 per cent** of LGBTQ students reported being verbally harassed about their sexual orientation.
- **90 per cent of transgender students and 30 per cent of straight students** reported being verbally harassed because of their expression of gender.

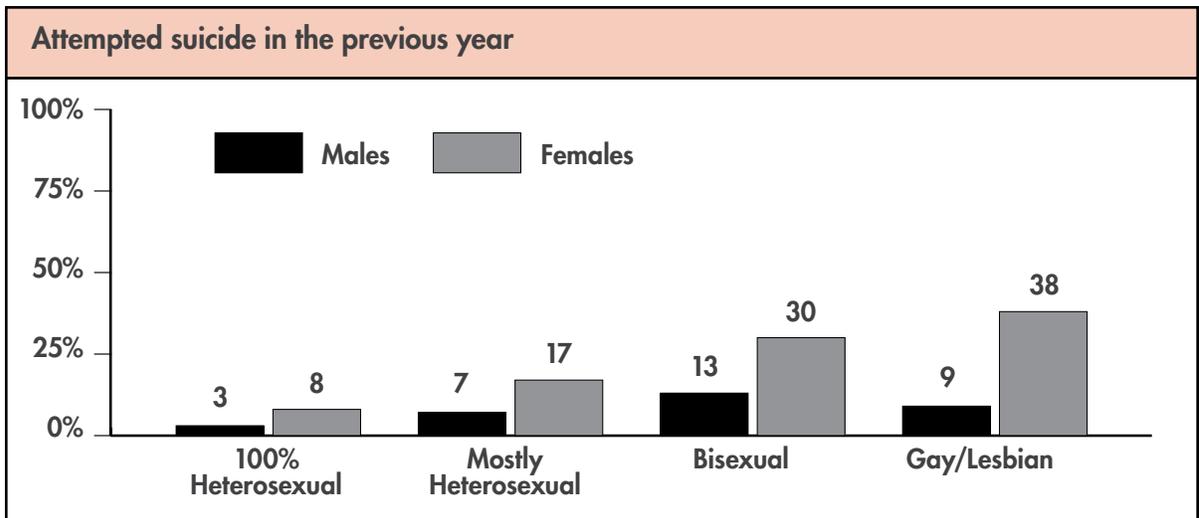
Suicide Risk for LGBTQ Youth

Harassment and the feeling of not being safe lead to higher rates of suicide and suicidal thoughts among LGBT youth.

According to the McCreary study,⁵ LGBTQ students are far more likely to have thought seriously of killing themselves in the previous year.



LGBTQ students are also far more likely to have attempted suicide in the previous year.



This confirms older research from 2001, which found that LGBTQ students are 3.4 times more likely to have attempted suicide than their straight counterparts.⁶

There are no statistics available for the rates of suicide for transgender students in Canada.



Notes

- 1 Statistics Canada. Canadian Community Health Survey. 2003.
<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/040615/dq040615b-eng.htm> Accessed May 5, 2011
- 2 McCreary Centre Society. Not Yet Equal: The Health of Lesbian, Gay, & Bisexual Youth in BC. 2007.
http://www.mcs.bc.ca/pdf/not_yet_equal_web.pdf Accessed May 5, 2011.
- 3 Statistics Canada. Study: Hate Motivated Crime. 2006.
<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/080609/dq080609a-eng.htm> Accessed May 5, 2011.
 Statistics Canada. Police-Reported Hate Crime. 2007.
<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/090513/dq090513c-eng.htm> Accessed May 5, 2011
- 4 Statistics Canada. Gay Pride... By the Numbers. 2009.
http://www42.statcan.ca/smr08/smr08_118-eng.htm Accessed May 5, 2011
- 5 McCreary.
- 6 Centre for Suicide Prevention. Suicide Among Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual or Transgendered Youth. 2003.
<http://www.suicideinfo.ca/csp/assets/alert53.pdf> Accessed May 5, 2011

Generation Queer

Sexual and Gender Minority Youth in Canadian Schools

Kristopher Wells

The following article was first published by the Canadian Education Association (www.cea-ace.ca) in Education Canada, Winter 2008, Volume 48, number 1. Updated by Kristopher Wells in the spring of 2012 for the ATA Magazine.

Marc Hall just wanted to be “treated like a normal human being.”¹ In 2002, he launched a lawsuit against his Roman Catholic school board in a fight to win the right to take his boyfriend to his grade twelve prom. When asked why he took the school board to court, he answered, “Don’t you see that I’m not fighting for this just because it’s my prom? It’s my whole life and the lives of other gay people. I’m fighting for what so many people don’t understand. I’m trying to speed up the process of equality because I am sick of being treated like someone absent of feeling and emotion.”²

On May 10, 2002—the day of Marc’s Prom—Justice MacKinnon ruled in Marc’s favour, upholding the equality provisions in Section 15 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and granted Hall an interlocutory injunction allowing him to attend the prom with his boyfriend.

Some ten years later, Hall and the politicization surrounding his case brought a newfound voice and visibility to sexual and gender minority youth issues in Canadian schools. Hall’s courageous stand has served to galvanize an entire generation of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) youth who will no longer be forced to remain silent and invisible in their schools. Hall’s prom fight represents a significant “tipping point” in Canadian education. Buoyed by Hall’s courage and determination to say no to the forces of oppression, other LGBTQ youth have begun to file human rights complaints against their schools for failing to protect and respect them. Often with the full support of their families, these youth are challenging the pedagogy of negation they experience in their formal educational environments. Silent no more, these students represent a new generation of queer youth who have the knowledge, support, and confidence to speak out against homophobia and transphobia and demand that their human and civil rights are not only protected, but also respected. No longer will they remain hidden away in the classroom

closet. Unlike previous generations of LGBTQ youth, this generation of queer youth is challenging and changing their schools from the inside out.

In order to understand this trend towards resilience and the emergence of “Generation Queer” in Canadian schools, we need to become aware and examine the research that has shaped our understandings of the health, safety, and educational needs and experiences of these vulnerable youth. Correspondingly, we should also examine the opinions and experiences of Canadian sexual and gender minority youth, themselves. These understandings are necessary if we are to fulfill our ethical and professional responsibilities as public educators and help sexual and gender minority youth move from feeling at risk to becoming resilient leaders for positive social change in their schools, families, and communities.





Research Trends

In his typology of the emergence of LGBTQ youth-related research, Ritch Savin-Williams³ identifies four stages in the evolution of our understanding of the needs and experiences of sexual and gender minority youth.

- **First stage response: 1970s and 80s**—During this stage, the experiences of LGBTQ youth were positioned as “a distinct category from ‘normal’ adolescence.”⁴ LGBTQ youth were constructed as deviant, pathological, and in need of specialized medical intervention. For example, before 1973 homosexuality was considered a mental illness. After the American Psychological Association declassified homosexuality as a pathology, research and clinical interventions began to move beyond attempts to “cure,” “fix,” or “repair” adolescents of homosexuality to a new focus on helping these youth to learn how to cope with stigmatization. Homosexuality was no longer seen as the problem; rather it was the discriminatory environments, policies, and educational practices that needed to be reformed. In Canada, we witnessed homosexuality become decriminalized when then Justice Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau famously stated, “The State has no business in the bedrooms of the nation.” For the first time in our history, a whole new generation of LGBTQ youth were no longer born as criminals, but as free persons who deserved the same rights and protections as other members of Canadian society.
- **Second stage response: 1980s and 90s**—In this period, distinctive LGBTQ youth realities were recognized, although primarily through a clinical lens, as being at risk for increased school-related problems, drug and alcohol abuse, homelessness, violence, bullying, and suicide. The research literature from this time period is dense with narratives of victimization, or what Rofes identifies as the “martyr-target-victim” paradigm.⁵ The key outcomes of this early research led to the widespread recognition of formal schooling as an exclusionary heteronormative site with tremendous consequences for the health, safety, and wellbeing of sexual and gender minority and questioning youth. Quantitative research studies on the risk factors associated with being or being perceived as a sexual or gender minority youth became critical catalysts in advocating for educational interventions and political responses to the health and safety needs of LGBTQ students. Anti-LGBTQ violence and abuse in symbolic and physical forms became a serious source of concern. Hatred in the hallways was rife and students and parents started to demand that teachers take action.

- **Third stage response: Late 1990s and early 2000's**—This progressive stage is characterized by education for social change to ameliorate the social, cultural, and political marginalization of LGBTQ youth. Educational interventions focus on the creation of safe spaces, LGBTQ-inclusive curriculum, and anti-harassment policy development. Advocacy is primarily based in identity politics and liberal human-rights discourses that call for tolerance, compassion, and societal understanding. Rapid and significant gains are made in law and legislation at the federal and provincial levels. For example, in 1998, the Supreme Court of Canada read sexual orientation into the Alberta human-rights statute and in 2005 same-sex marriage was legalized in Canada. However, these gains are largely assimilationist in nature and the (hetero) normalizing structures of schooling have been left largely intact. During this time period, research on LGBTQ youth has begun to shift its emphasis and concentrate on a resiliency or developmental assets-based approach. The protective factors that enable LGBTQ youth to overcome discrimination and thrive as leading change agents in their schools are becoming an increasingly key focus for educational interventions and research investigations. Key questions include: What can we learn from those youth who seem to thrive in hostile environments to help support those who slide towards risk and erasure?
- **Fourth stage: Future response**—With increasing gains in the legal recognition and protection of LGBTQ individuals, Savin-Williams argues that “banality” may be the next wave of the future. He posits that youth are increasingly adopting a “post-gay” identity where sexuality is no longer considered the defining characteristic of their personhood. Savin-Williams maintains that the everyday ordinariness of same-sex attractions, as increasingly witnessed on television, film, and other media, may well become the defining feature for the future of LGBTQ youth. Because of these controversial claims, this fourth stage, banality, is currently one of the most contested issues in the field of LGBTQ educational studies. Many researchers argue that our society will reach a post-gay world at the same time we emerge into a post-racist world, neither of which appears to be on the horizon anytime soon. Yes, conditions are getting better, but positive social change does not happen on its own. How can we work to make it better now for sexual and gender minority youth in our schools?



Canadian Queer Youth Trends

Evidence from several large-scale Canadian surveys has re-affirmed earlier research, finding that sexual and gender minority youth are still reporting more emotional and behavioral difficulties; higher symptoms of depression and externalizing behaviors; more hostile peer environments and victimization; greater rates of bullying and sexual harassment; and, less social support in both their family and peer group contexts than their heterosexual peers. On the other hand, they also point to a slow, yet growing sense of LGBTQ acceptance amongst Canadian youth.

In 2011 Egale Canada published results from the first national climate survey on homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia in Canadian schools.⁶ The survey, which involved more than 3,700 youth from all provinces (with the exception of Quebec) and territories, revealed that:

- 70 per cent of youth surveyed reported hearing comments like “that’s so gay” every day at school.
- 10 per cent of youth reported hearing these comments coming from teachers.
- 1 in 5 of the LGBTQ youth surveyed reported being physically harassed or assaulted.
- 40 per cent of gay males, 33 per cent of lesbians and 49 per cent of transgender students reported being sexually harassed within the past year.
- 50 per cent of LGBTQ youth reported feeling unsafe at school, compared with only 3.4 per cent of the heterosexual youth surveyed.
- 60 per cent of LGBTQ youth reported that their teachers were largely ineffective in addressing homophobic harassment.

To date this survey represents the largest and most comprehensive national quantitative baseline data on the experiences of LGBTQ youth in Canada. Its results show that schools are still dangerous and risky spaces for youth who are or are perceived to be non-heterosexual. Survey results also found that the more different you are the more dangerous your schooling experience may become.

Increasingly, young people are becoming more comfortable with LGBTQ issues than their parents and teachers, and they view sexuality as much more fluid, situational, and relational than previous

generations. Perhaps, this is why so many youth prefer “queer” as an identity marker rather than lesbian, gay, bisexual, or homosexual.

The word queer comes from the Latin *torquere*, which means to twist or traverse. Today’s youth are not only challenging, but also twisting and re-deploying traditional understandings of sex, sexuality, and gender. Members of “Generation Queer” are increasingly reluctant to have their identities categorized into neat boxes or traditional sex roles. Many youth are actively embracing post-modern identities, which address the messiness and complexity of an increasingly diverse, multicultural, and pluralistic world.

Contemporary research also points to an emerging trend: LGBTQ youth are coming out at younger and younger ages. Whereas the “coming out” age used to be in the early to mid-twenties, research now indicates that LGBTQ youth are now coming out at age 15 or 16, which squarely places sexual and gender minority issues in today’s classrooms.⁷ However, many LGBTQ youth perilously find themselves caught in a double bind; they often need to come out to access inclusive supports and services (particularly in rural communities), yet by coming out they also become more likely targets of violence and victimization.

Violence and safety are ever-present concerns in the lives of all sexual and gender minority individuals, perhaps especially for youth. The Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics indicates that sexual minorities are continually among the most frequently targeted groups for hate and bias crimes in our country. In 2005, criminologist Douglas Janoff released a ground breaking study on homophobic violence in Canada.⁸ His book begins with a necrology detailing the more than 100 homicides of LGBTQ persons in Canada from 1990-2004. More than 40% of the perpetrators of these hate crimes were homophobic teenagers. Correspondingly, the Public Health Agency of Canada identifies the most common *perpetrators* of youth violence as young, heterosexual males. The most common *victims* of youth violence are: “peers, including girlfriends, boyfriends and other young people; family members, including siblings and parents; and members of ethnocultural groups or sexual minorities.”⁹

Moving from Risk to Resilience

Given what we know about the educational experiences, health, and safety needs of sexual and gender minorities, how can we, as inclusive educators, help these youth move from risk to resilience in their schools? Perhaps more pointedly, what conditions enable some youth to overcome tremendous obstacles and still thrive in hostile school environments? How can we, as educators and researchers, learn from these examples to help other youth develop what Goldstein and Brooks identify as a “resilient mindset”?¹⁰

Contemporary researchers have identified the following protective factors as critical ingredients in helping to build the resiliency of sexual and gender minority youth.

- **Positive representations:** Affirming representations that move beyond stereotypical portrayals of LGBTQ persons in the classroom curriculum and larger social media can serve to help build the self- and social-esteem of sexual and gender minority youth. Visibility is often critical in helping students come to voice.

Ask yourself: Are the images on the walls of my classroom and in the books in my school library inclusive and affirming of LGBTQ individuals?¹¹

- **Family acceptance:** Welcoming and supportive familial relationships are arguably the most important resiliency factors in the lives of all youth, especially sexual and gender minority youth who may need support in buffering the adverse effects of discrimination and prejudice. Helping these youth to develop a positive sense of self and reducing the stresses associated with coming out and coming to terms with a non-heterosexual identity are critical aspects of fostering the development of a resilient mindset.

Ask yourself: Is my school a welcoming, inclusive, and supportive place for same-gender parented families? Are the realities of these families included in our school communications and welcoming messages?

- **School and peer support:** Teacher training on LGBTQ issues is strongly associated with the development of positive school outcomes, such as successful high school completion and increased academic achievement, and can also help to buffer or decrease the stress associated with homophobic and transphobic bullying and harassment. Gay–straight student alliances (GSAs) are one powerful example of school-based supports that can help to build school connectedness and foster a sense of acceptance and belonging to a community. For example, research indicates that schools with GSAs have a “significantly less hostile, more supportive psychosocial climate for LGB [lesbian, gay, bisexual] students” than those without.¹²

Ask yourself: Does my school have a GSA or similar support groups for LGBTQ and allied students? If not, will you be the teacher ally who helps to create one?

- **School-based policies:** Schools with policies that explicitly prohibit discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity are also considered a significant resiliency factor in the lives of LGBTQ and questioning youth. Goodenow, Szalacha, and Westheimer found that schools with support groups for sexual minority students were more likely than other schools to have written policies on sexual orientation and were more likely to have provided staff training to support those policies.



Clearly, the school environment is a major influence in suicidal tendencies and other risk factors that sexual and gender minority youth experience. As Goodenow, Szalacha, and Westheimer state:

Threats, harassment, and intimidation at school may be especially critical for sexual minority youth. ... Anti-gay victimization has been found to occur often in the presence of others, and is sometimes even encouraged and applauded by peers. ... [As a result,] LGB adolescents may be reluctant to report even the most severe victimization if they perceive school authorities as unsympathetic, unapproachable, and unwilling to intervene on their behalf.¹³

Ask yourself: *Does my school have comprehensive LGBTQ policies in place? Are these policies clearly articulated to staff, students, and parents at the beginning of the school year/term? What are the consequences for students and staff who violate these policies?* (In 2011, Edmonton Public Schools became the first school board in the prairies to pass a standalone sexual orientation and gender identity policy to support and protect LGBTQ students, staff, and families. Ask your school board to consider creating a similar policy.)

- **Support networks:** Sexual and gender minority youth are often the most important sources of support for one another. The shared experience of coming out in a heteronormative world can help to foster a sense of connection, which, in turn, reduces feelings of isolation, alienation, and despair. For example, community-based support groups offer a critical source of resilience by providing a place where LGBTQ youth can openly discuss their feelings without fear of stigmatization or violence. These groups provide an opportunity for peer-to-peer and intergenerational mentoring; where everyday role models can help youth develop real-life strategies for overcoming adversity within their local communities.

Ask yourself: *Do I know where to refer LGBTQ youth for support in my community? Consider becoming that “trusted adult” who can make the difference between a youth who slides towards risk or is supported to grow into resilience.*

- **Sexual health education:** Fears and inaccurate information related to sexually transmitted infections and HIV/AIDS can lead to increased risk-taking behaviours and suicidal thoughts for many sexual and gender minority youth. It is important for educators to challenge stereotypes and misinformation that conflate sexual practices with specific sexual identities. HIV/AIDS does not discriminate based on sexual or gender identity. Correspondingly, age-appropriate, evidence-informed, and comprehensive sexual health education, provided in a non-judgmental manner, is strongly correlated with a reduction in sexual risk-taking and other health compromising behaviors. Unfortunately, many LGBTQ and questioning youth continue to be denied access to non-judgmental sexual health information in their schools, placing them at increased risk for physical, emotional, and mental health problems.

Ask yourself: *Are the units taught on sexual health and healthy relationships in my school inclusive of the mental and sexual health needs of LGBTQ and questioning youth? Does our school understand how sexual rights are also fundamental human rights?*

Collectively, these protective factors can help sexual and gender minority and questioning youth to develop a resilient mindset. However, we should be mindful “that resilience is not absolute. Virtually every youth has a breaking point.”¹⁴ With a variety of supports in place, youth can be encouraged to develop a “resiliency toolbox” from which they can select the right tool or strategy to help them address a particular problem or challenge in their lives. By having the right tool for the right challenge, youth are better able to cope with adversity and the complex challenges of personal growth and development in a heteronormalizing world. Ultimately, we need to ask ourselves if our classrooms and schools will be humanizing or dehumanizing spaces for all the sexual and gender minority youth and their families who enter our schoolhouse doors.

Notes

¹ A. Grace and K. Wells. 2005. "The Marc Hall Prom Predicament: Queer Individual Rights v. Institutional Church Rights in Canadian Public Education." *Canadian Journal of Education* 28, no. 3, pp. 237–270.

² Ibid. 246.

³ R.C. Savin-Williams. 2005. *The New Gay Teenager*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard, University Press.

⁴ Ibid. 49.

⁵ E. Rofes. 2004. "Martyr-Target-Victim: Interrogating Narratives of Persecution and Suffering among Queer Youth." *Youth and Sexualities: Pleasure, Subversion, and Insubordination In and Out of Schools*. Eds. M.L. Rasmussen, E. Rofes and S. Talburt. New York: Palgrave MacMillan. pp. 41–62.

⁶ Taylor, C., and T. Peter, with T. L. McMinn, K. Schachter, S. Beldom, A. Ferry, Z. Gross and S. Paquin. 2011. *Every class in every school: The first national climate survey on homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia in Canadian schools*. Final report. Toronto, Ont.: Egale Canada Human Rights Trust.

⁷ C. Ryan and D. Futterman. 1998. *Lesbian and Gay Youth: Care and Counseling*. New York: Columbia University Press.

⁸ D.V. Janoff. 2005. *Pink Blood: Homophobic Violence in Canada*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

⁹ Public Health Agency of Canada. 2006. *Youth and Violence*. Retrieved October 17, 2006. www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ncfv-cnivf/family_violence/html/nfntsyjviolence_e.html#8

¹⁰ S. Goldstein and R.B. Brooks. 2005. "Why We Study Resilience?" *Handbook of Resilience in Children*. Eds. S. Goldstein and R.B. Brooks. New York: Kluwer. pp. 3–15.

¹¹ See my co-authored book for suggestions on how to build an inclusive library collection. A. M. Schrader and K. Wells. 2007. *Challenging Silence, Challenging Censorship: Inclusive Resources, Strategies and Policy Directives for Addressing BGLTT Realities in School and Public Libraries*. Ottawa, ON: Canadian Teachers' Federation. Also available in French.

¹² C. Goodenow, L. Szalacha and K. Westheimer. 2006. "School Support Groups, Other Factors, and the Safety of Sexual Minority Adolescents." *Psychology in Schools* 43, no. 5, p. 576.

¹³ Ibid. 585.

¹⁴ J. Gabarino. 2005. "Foreword." *Handbook for Working with Children and Youth: Pathway to Resilience across Cultures and Contexts*. Ed. M. Ungar. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. pp. xi–xiii.



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As expressed in the testimonial below, teachers are in a critical position to make a positive and significant impact on the well-being of students of sexual minority.

Israel's Story

As an elementary school student, I was not a particularly masculine boy. Many of my classmates perceived me as being gay. While most of the neighbourhood boys participated in football, basketball and other physical contact sports, I participated in the performing arts. I excelled in acting, speaking and reading, and I won first place in many competitions. The other boys in school, including my only neighbourhood friend, frowned upon my interest in the arts and academics and made fun of me for what they believed was not normal for a boy, especially a Latino.

On day in 4th grade, as the bell rang for dismissal and all the students ran to retrieve their belongings, I accidentally stepped on another student's backpack strap, causing his bag to drop. "Get off my backpack, faggot!" he yelled. His remark stung and left me in tears. Boys in my school often used this term casually, but I knew his use of the word toward me was purposeful. Although I was not attracted to boys (or girls) at the time, I certainly knew I was different because I talked, walked and acted in ways that were dissimilar to the other boys in my class. In this one moment, I learned my differences were not acceptable and experienced rejection.

My teacher, Ms Moreno, saw me crying and asked what was wrong. After I told her about what happened, she gave me a hug and suggested that I should not let what others think of me hurt my feelings. The next day, Ms Moreno asked the class to read a story about a young orphaned girl who no longer wanted to go to school because students viewed her lack of parents as too different and refused to speak to her. Ms Moreno used this story to engage the class in a lesson about accepting other who are different and as a springboard for a class project. Students were asked to bring pictures, letters, stories or other artifacts that could help us tell about ourselves to better understand each other.

For several days, I looked around the house for something to show my classmates. I gathered pictures and newspaper clippings of me at competitions and cleaned my trophies. I also interviewed some of my uncles and grandparents, which provided me with information on some popular Latino traditions and values my family observed. During the week, I shared my artifacts and thoughts with Ms Moreno. She supported me and had constant contact with my mother about the project. Working through this process with Ms Moreno made me feel proud of the artifacts I was going to share, especially because I felt she understood the innate differences inherent in each of us in the classroom.

From the information other students and I presented, it was clear that differences existed among us. For example, since I didn't play sports, I didn't have any trophies or ribbons that showed my interest in athletics. Instead, I had a picture of me with two girls who received second and third place in a school acting competition. Before this presentation, the fact that I was a small boy with a squeaky voice who did not play sports automatically categorized me as a gay boy. After it, the number of uncomfortable questions or comments that students asked me decreased significantly. It seemed that my classmates accepted my differences, and, as a result, my self-esteem increased.

Ms Moreno's efforts were a major source of my success in 4th grade. As a result of her instruction, I no longer felt ashamed of how I acted or what I thought. My differences in her class were always present, sometimes unclear and confusing to others, yet always safe in her class.

This story is excerpted from "Cultural Proficiency," by Patricia L Guerra and Sarah W Nelson, JSD volume 32, number 2, April 2011. It is reprinted with permission of Learning Forward, www.learningforward.org. All rights reserved. Minor changes have been made to spelling and punctuation in accordance with ATA style.

Basic Terms

Ally, gay positive, queer positive, straight supporter—terms that identify a person who supports and honours sexual diversity, acts to challenge homophobic remarks and behaviours, and explores and understands his or her own biases.

Being Out—a gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender person who has come out about his/her orientation or gender identity and is open about this aspect of his/her life.

Bisexual—a person who is physically and emotionally attracted to people of both genders.

Closeted—a person who is not open with other people about his/her sexual orientation or gender identity.

Coming Out—the process of recognizing one's own sexual orientation or gender identity, and the process of disclosing information to others about one's own sexual orientation or gender identity.

Gay—a male who is physically and emotionally attracted to people of the same gender. In Canada, the term may refer to both males and females, although it is often used to refer to just males.

Gay families—a family where one or both of the parents is/are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.

Gender—a range of behaviours that express femininity or masculinity according to cultural norms, which are traditionally thought to be related to sex. These behaviours are not genetically based.

Gender identity—one's internal sense of being male, female or a combination of genders.

Gender roles—the behaviours and attitudes expected of male and female members of a society by that society. A person's gender role is composed of several elements and can be expressed through clothing, behaviour, choice of work, personal relationships and other factors. These elements are not static and have evolved through time (for example, years ago, women did not wear trousers to work).

Heterosexual—a person who is physically and emotionally attracted to people of the opposite sex.

Homophobia—irrational fear of, aversion to or discrimination against gays, lesbians, bisexuals and pansexuals or those perceived to belong to these sexual minorities. Homophobia is often expressed in acts of prejudice, bullying or violence.

Inclusive language—language that avoids the use of certain expressions or words that might be considered to exclude particular groups of people. For example, the gender-specific word *mankind* might be considered to exclude women. Another example is assuming that a married woman must have a husband rather than a wife; that is, assuming that a married woman is straight and not gay. The gender-neutral *spouse* is preferable.

Intersex—a person whose biological gender is indeterminate. An intersex person may be born with ambiguous genitalia or with more or less than the usual two sex (X/Y) chromosomes. This term replaces the offensive *hermaphrodite*, which was used to sensationalize intersex people.

Lesbian—a female who is physically and emotionally attracted to other females.

GLBT/LGBT—acronyms for “gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender.” LGBT and/or GLBT are often used because they are more inclusive of the diversity of the queer community than the older term gay community.

Outing—the disclosure of others' sexual orientation or gender identity without their permission. Outing is disrespectful and may be dangerous to the person who is outed.

Pansexual—a person who is physically and emotionally attracted to people of any gender identity. The term *omnisexual* is an equivalent term.

Queer—historically, a negative term for LGBT people that has been reclaimed by the community as an umbrella term for any and all members of the community rather than using abbreviations that are becoming increasingly long (eg, LGBTPTQIA – lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, pansexual, two-spirit, questioning, intersex, allies)



Questioning—people who are unsure about their gender, sexual identity or sexual orientation.

Sex—a biological distinction referring to whether a person is genitally (not necessarily genetically) female, male or intersex.

Sexual orientation—a person’s physical and emotional attraction to another person. Gender identity and sexual orientation are not the same thing (for example, a straight transgender man who becomes a woman and is attracted to other women would be identified as a lesbian).

Transgender—a person whose physical body does not match the gender that they feel they truly are.

Transphobia—irrational fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against transgender people or those perceived to be transgender. Transphobia is often expressed in acts of prejudice, bullying or violence.

Transsexual—a transgender person who has had surgery to alter the gender of his or her body. Transsexuals may be gay, lesbian, bisexual or straight. A person’s gender identity is not the same thing as a person’s sexual orientation.

Two-spirit—a term used by some First Nations people rather than terms such as *bisexual*, *gay*, *lesbian* or *transgender*. It indicates a person whose body simultaneously houses a masculine spirit and a feminine spirit. Prior to the colonization of North America, two-spirited persons were respected leaders and medicine people in many First Nations cultures.

Alberta Perspective

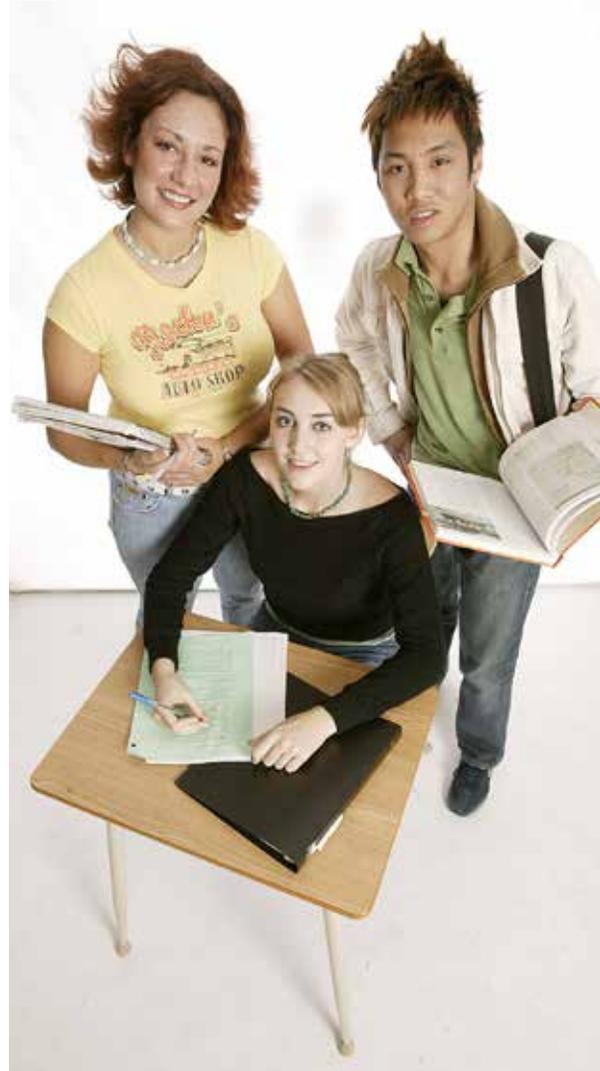
ORANGE—The frameworks within which Alberta teachers practise provide the expectations and protection to address topics of sexual orientation and gender variance in the classroom. The **ORANGE** section provides a sampling of Association policies, government legislation and district regulations related to sexual orientation and gender identity.

Alberta Teachers' Association Code of Professional Conduct

In Relation to Pupils

- 1 The teacher teaches in a manner that respects the dignity and rights of all persons without prejudice as to race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical characteristics, disability, marital status, family status, age, ancestry, place of origin, place of residence, socioeconomic background or linguistic background.
- 2 (1) The teacher is responsible for diagnosing educational needs, prescribing and implementing instructional programs and evaluating progress of pupils.

(2) The teacher may not delegate these responsibilities to any person who is not a teacher.
- 3 The teacher may delegate specific and limited aspects of instructional activity to noncertificated personnel, provided that the teacher supervises and directs such activity.
- 4 The teacher treats pupils with dignity and respect and is considerate of their circumstances.
- 5 The teacher may not divulge information about a pupil received in confidence or in the course of professional duties except as required by law or where, in the judgment of the teacher, to do so is in the best interest of the pupil.
- 6 The teacher may not accept pay for tutoring a pupil in any subjects in which the teacher is responsible for giving classroom instruction to that pupil.
- 7 The teacher may not take advantage of a professional position to profit from the sale of goods or services to or for pupils in the teacher's charge.



Amendments to Alberta's human rights legislation



INFORMATION SHEET

Introduction

The Government of Alberta has amended the province's human rights legislation.¹ The amended legislation is called the *Alberta Human Rights Act*. The amendments took effect on October 1, 2009, with one exception, which takes effect September 1, 2010. This information sheet describes the amendments in a general way.

The Alberta Human Rights Commission is in the process of updating its publications and website to reflect the amendments. In the meantime, if you are reading a Commission publication dated before October 1, 2009, please note that the amendments have not yet been incorporated into the publication. If you are visiting the Commission website, you will see a "date created" or "date revised" notation at the bottom of any pages created or revised on or after October 1, 2009. If a page does not have a notation, it has not been updated to reflect the amendments.

¹ The amending legislation is named the *Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Amendment Act*.

Amendments effective October 1, 2009

1. **Name of legislation:** Alberta's human rights legislation is now named *Alberta Human Rights Act*. It was previously named *Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Act*.
2. **Name of Commission:** Alberta Human Rights Commission is the new name of the commission. The commission was previously named Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission.
3. **Sexual orientation as a protected ground:** Since April 2, 1998, sexual orientation had been "read in" as a protected ground under Alberta's human rights legislation. Effective October 1, 2009, sexual orientation is written in as a protected ground under the *Alberta Human Rights Act*.
4. **Definition of marital status:** The definition of marital status is now "the state of being married, single, widowed, divorced, separated or living with a person in a conjugal relationship outside marriage." Previously, the word "state" was "status," and the word "person" was followed by "of the opposite sex."

5. Chief Commissioner title change:

The Chief Commissioner is now called the Chief of the Commission and Tribunals.

6. Panels renamed: Human rights panels (the tribunals that the Chief of the Commission and Tribunals appoints to hear certain human rights complaints) are now called human rights tribunals.

7. Chief of the Commission and Tribunals may delegate specific functions, powers and duties: Section 26 of the *Alberta Human Rights Act* now allows the Chief of the Commission and Tribunals to delegate specific functions, powers and duties, which are set out in Section 26(3), to another member of the Commission. The functions, powers and duties that may be delegated are:

- (a) reviewing the record of the director's decision and deciding whether
 - (i) the complaint should have been dismissed, or
 - (ii) the proposed settlement was fair and reasonable, as the case may be, and
- (b) forthwith serving notice of the decision of the Chief of the Commission and Tribunals on the complainant and the person against whom the complaint was made.

8. Appointment of Commission staff:

The *Alberta Human Rights Act* now states that the Lieutenant Governor in Council may appoint a director of the Commission and that the Minister may appoint any employees that the Minister considers necessary to administer the *Act*. Previously, the legislation did not specify who could make these appointments.

9. Director requires written approval from the Chief of the Commission and Tribunals to participate in proceedings before a court:

For example, the director cannot appeal a human rights tribunal decision to the Court of Queen's Bench without this written approval. Previously, the director did not require such approval.

10. Director may refuse to accept a complaint or may accept a complaint pending the outcome in another forum or under another act:

The director may handle complaints in this way if it appears to the director at any time that a complaint:

- is one that could or should more appropriately be dealt with in another forum or under another act,
- has already been dealt with in another forum or under another act, or
- is scheduled to be heard in another forum or under another act.

11. Name of Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Education Fund:

The name of this fund is now the Human Rights Education and Multiculturalism Fund.

Amendment effective September 1, 2010

One amendment will take effect on September 1, 2010. It says:

Notice to parent or guardian

11.1(1) A board as defined in the *School Act* shall provide notice to a parent or guardian of a student where courses of study, educational programs or instructional materials, or instruction or exercises, prescribed under that Act include subject-matter that deals primarily and explicitly with religion, human sexuality or sexual orientation.

(2) Where a teacher or other person providing instruction, teaching a course of study or educational program or using the instructional materials referred to in subsection (1) receives a written request signed by a parent or guardian of a student that the student be excluded from the instruction, course of study, educational program or use of instructional materials, the teacher or other person shall in accordance with the request of the parent or guardian and without academic penalty permit the student

(a) to leave the classroom or place where the instruction, course of study or educational program is taking place or the instructional materials are being used for the duration of the part of the instruction, course of study or educational program, or the use of the instructional materials, that includes the subject-matter referred to in subsection (1), or

(b) to remain in the classroom or place without taking part in the instruction, course of study or educational program or using the instructional materials.

(3) This section does not apply to incidental or indirect references to religion, religious themes, human sexuality or sexual orientation in a course of study, educational program, instruction or exercises or in the use of instructional materials. 

Contact us

The Alberta Human Rights Commission is an independent commission of the Government of Alberta. Our mandate is to foster equality and reduce discrimination. We provide public information and education programs, and help Albertans resolve human rights complaints.

Northern Regional Office

800 Standard Life Centre
10405 Jasper Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 4R7
780-427-7661 Confidential Inquiry Line
780-427-6013 Fax

Southern Regional Office

Suite 310, 525 - 11 Avenue SW
Calgary, Alberta T2R 0C9
403-297-6571 Confidential Inquiry Line
403-297-6567 Fax

To call toll-free within Alberta, dial 310-0000 and then enter the area code and phone number.

For province-wide free access from a cellular phone, enter *310 (for Rogers Wireless) or #310 (for Telus and Bell), followed by the area code and phone number. Public and government callers can phone without paying long distance or airtime charges.

TTY service for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing

780-427-1597 Edmonton
403-297-5639 Calgary
1-800-232-7215 Toll-free within Alberta

E-mail humanrights@gov.ab.ca

Website www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca

Please note: A complaint must be made to the Alberta Human Rights Commission within one year after the alleged incident of discrimination. The one-year period starts the day after the date on which the incident occurred. For help calculating the one-year period, contact the Commission.

The Human Rights Education and Multiculturalism Fund has provided funding for this publication.

Upon request, the Commission will make this publication available in accessible multiple formats. Multiple formats provide access for people with disabilities who do not read conventional print.

It's OK to Talk About It!

Questions and Answers about section 11.1 of the *Alberta Human Rights Act*

What is section 11.1 of the *Alberta Human Rights Act*?

Section 11.1 of the *Alberta Human Rights Act* requires boards (including those of charter schools) to provide parents with notice where “courses of study, educational programs or instructional materials, or instruction or exercises ... include subject matter that deals primarily and explicitly with religion, human sexuality or sexual orientation.” When a parent makes a written request, teachers shall exempt the student, without academic penalty, from such instruction, course of study, educational program or use of instructional material.

Is the intent of section 11.1 of the *Alberta Human Rights Act* to discourage teachers from engaging in discussions concerning controversial issues in the classroom?

The intention of section 11.1 of the *Alberta Human Rights Act* is not to disrupt instruction or impede the discussion of controversial issues in the classroom. In fact, in the Guide to Education, studying controversial issues is recognized as being

... important in preparing students to participate responsibly in a democratic and pluralistic society. Such study provides opportunities to develop the ability to think clearly, to reason logically, to open-mindedly and respectfully examine different points of view and to make sound judgements. ... Controversial issues that have been anticipated by the teacher, and those that may arise incidentally during instruction, should be used by the teacher to promote critical inquiry and/or to teach thinking skills.

Schools play an important role in “... support[ing] parents in the areas of values and moral development.” Schools and their teachers have always respectfully handled the decisions and perspectives of parents with respect and sensitivity when providing instruction and choosing instructional materials.

When should parents be notified about courses of study, educational programs or instructional materials, or instruction or exercises dealing with human sexuality or sexual orientation?

When determining whether notification is required, teachers or boards may wish to consider the following:

1. Notification is required where the instructional material, exercise, outcome or course contains subject matter that deals *primarily and explicitly* with human sexuality or sexual orientation.
 - For the instructional material, exercise, outcome or course to be considered to deal explicitly with human sexuality or sexual orientation, *there must be no question that the subject matter is intended to be about human sexuality or sexual orientation.*

For example, in order to be considered explicitly about human sexuality, an outcome, course, exercise or instructional material must also address human sexual behaviours. Therefore, outcomes in the science programs of study that deal only with the anatomy and physiology of human reproduction are not explicitly about human sexuality; however, outcomes in CALM that examine aspects of healthy sexuality and responsible sexual behaviour are explicitly about human sexuality.

- Even if the subject matter deals *explicitly* with human sexuality or sexual orientation, the outcome, course, exercise or instructional material must also *primarily* deal with human sexuality or sexual orientation. Notification is not required when an instructional material contains subject matter that explicitly deals with human sexuality or sexual orientation, unless that instructional material is also primarily about one of these subjects.

What if reference is made to human sexuality or sexual orientation in classroom discussions?

Section 11.1 is clear that notification to parents is not required for indirect or incidental references to human sexuality or sexual orientation in an outcome, course, exercise or instructional material.

- When a reference to human sexuality or sexual orientation occurs indirectly or in connection to another subject matter in classroom discussions, notification is not required. Therefore, teachers should not avoid topics where these subject matters may arise nor should they feel the need to stop classroom discussion.
- Similarly, when a course of study or education program does not already deal primarily and explicitly with human sexuality or sexual orientation, references to these subject matters in student projects or presentations would be considered incidental and notification would not be required.

What if reference is made to human sexuality or sexual orientation during interactions with students?

Section 11.1 does not apply to student behaviour or interactions that are not related to courses of study, education programs, instruction, exercises or instructional materials. Therefore, it does not affect the ability of boards and teachers to address bullying or disciplinary issues, including those related to human sexuality or sexual orientation.

How and when should notice be sent to parents?

Notification to parents under section 11.1 should be in writing and allow the parents enough time to request that their child be exempted from the instruction or exercise at issue. Section 11.1 does not require teachers or boards to obtain parental consent before providing the instruction or exercise. Notification procedures must include the following:

1. A notice provided to the parent indicating that a particular outcome or component of a course contains subject matter that deals primarily and explicitly with human sexuality or sexual orientation. A sample notice form can be found in Appendix 4 of the *Guide to Education* (<http://education.alberta.ca/media/6719891/guidetoed2012.pdf>).
2. In the circumstance where a student is registered for a specific course that deals primarily and explicitly with sexual orientation or human sexuality, notice may be given by providing a clear notice to the parent on the registration form for said course identifying that the course or a portion thereof is primarily and explicitly about sexual orientation or human sexuality. A parent so notified is encouraged to give notice of their request for exemption at the time of registration.

What should parents do if they wish to request that their child be exempted from the instruction or exercise at issue?

Parents should indicate in their written request whether they want the student to leave the classroom or place where the instruction or exercise is taking place or whether they want the student to remain in the classroom without taking part. A sample exemption form can be found in Appendix 4 of the *Guide to Education* (<http://education.alberta.ca/media/6719891/guidetoed2012.pdf>).

Establishing inclusive policies at the district level provides a framework within which schools can work to program for diversity. The Society for Safe and Caring Schools and Communities has produced a tool kit to assist in the development of inclusive policies.

Diversity Education Policy Development Tool Kit



In 2006, The Society for Safe and Caring Schools (SACSC), with the financial support of Canadian Heritage Multiculturalism Program and the Alberta Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Education Fund, undertook a project that would support our country's democratic ideals in public schools by creating a research-based Diversity Education Policy Development Tool Kit. The purpose

was to develop a toolkit which would outline strategies for educational leaders to use when developing educational policies that help schools sensitively and effectively address diversity issues, and act as a guideline for creating safe, caring and inclusive school environments.

Through this research the Society uncovered that a significant barrier encountered by schools when responding to ethnic, racial, cultural and religious diversity is this—many teachers and administrators in Alberta schools do not feel comfortable addressing many types of diversity issues for fear of disapproval from parents and community. Since some schools/school boards do not have policies that empower the administration and staff to implement this kind of programming, little headway is made, and the issues escalate or, at best, remain the same. With this resource, we hope to assist schools and school boards in revising or developing new education policies and/or administration regulations that encourage them to implement programs (curricular and extracurricular) and practices that increase appreciation for cultural diversity. This toolkit will also encourage community involvement when developing education policies on diversity.

Even schools that have not yet experienced incidents relating to diversity can prepare themselves by establishing policy for diversity before problems arise.

For more information or to order the complete toolkit, contact SACSC at 780-822-1800 or www.safeandcaring.ca.

District Policy Exemplar

Edmonton Public School Board Policies and Regulations Regarding Safe, Caring and Respectful Learning Environments

Edmonton Public School Board is committed to creating welcoming learning environments which promote understanding and respect among all members of the school community.

The Board believes that a responsive, safe, caring and inclusive school environment is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. It believes that equity of opportunity and equity of access to programs, services, and resources are critical to supporting all students in realizing their full potential. The Board expects these beliefs to be reflected in District programs, operations and practices.



The Board recognizes that individual and systemic biases related to race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religious beliefs, gender, gender identity, physical or mental disability, marital status, family status, source of income, socioeconomic status and sexual orientation exist in society. Therefore, the Board acknowledges that such biases may exist within our schools. The Board believes that such biases are intolerable. Biases result in behaviours that damage the physical, mental and emotional well-being of students and negatively impact their educational, social and career outcomes. Further, they damage relationships with peers, families and community partners. The Board believes staff play a central role in creating environments which acknowledge and promote understanding, respect and recognition of the diversity of students and families within the school community. As students learn by example, all members of the school community are expected to model respectful conduct, inclusive behaviour and an understanding and appreciation of diversity.

The Board is committed to acknowledging, addressing, and eradicating discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying. The Board believes schools have the responsibility to ensure that students and their families feel safe to share these issues and concerns. Within a safe and caring environment, students and their families have the right and responsibility to bring these concerns to the attention of the school staff. The Board expects that school and District staff will be respectful of the concerns of students and their families and will work with them to provide appropriate supports and resolve their issues in a timely manner.

This policy is reprinted from board policies and regulations of Edmonton Public Schools, and is available at <http://policy.epsb.ca/if.bp.shtml>.

Questions

YELLOW—Teachers may be cautious to approach topics of sexual orientation and gender identity in the classroom because they are apprehensive of questions they may be asked by colleagues, administrators, parents or students. The **YELLOW** section provides teachers with possible questions and answers they may receive and invites teachers to reflect on their own feelings about the topics.

Working with Sexual Minorities in School: What Teachers Need to Know

“We are the community of tomorrow. How we are treated now, our experiences now, who we are able to become, will affect the world of tomorrow. Even though we’re young and gay, we’re people just like you.”

—Chris, age 17, in Ryan and Futterman 1998, xi

Addressing Common Questions and Concerns

What do I do if administrators, colleagues or parents feel strongly that we should not be discussing this information?

Remind them about the professional, ethical and legal responsibilities of Alberta teachers to ensure that *all* classrooms and schools are safe, caring and inclusive environments for *all* students regardless of differences. All school administrators and teachers have a professional obligation to become knowledgeable and informed about sexual minority educational issues.

What if teachers tell me that there are no sexual minority students in the school?

It has been commonly accepted that 1 in 10 people is nonheterosexual (Jennings 1994; Lipkin 1999; Ryan and Futterman 1998). This means that in a classroom of 30 students, three might be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. In a staff of 40 teachers, four teachers might be nonheterosexual. Many of these sexual minority students and teachers will feel free to make public their sexual orientation to the degree that they perceive their school environment to be safe and inclusive.

As a sexual minority or gender variant teacher should I be afraid of losing my job?

All teachers who are (or are perceived as) sexual minority persons are protected by the ATA’s Declaration of Rights and Responsibilities for Alberta Teachers, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the *Canadian Human Rights Act* and the *Alberta Human Rights Act*.

Teachers with questions or concerns are advised to call Member Services at the Alberta Teachers’ Association for a confidential consultation (1-800-232-7208 or 780-447-9400).

Can teachers discuss sexual minority issues with their students?

Since the change to Alberta human rights legislation in 2009 that includes sexual orientation as a protected ground against discrimination, section 11.1 was added in 2010 to give individual parents a choice as to whether they want their child to learn about sexuality, sexual orientation and religion. Section 11.1 of the *Alberta Human Rights Act* (formerly Bill 44) requires teachers to contact parents if they are primarily and explicitly discussing these topics. Teachers can still address these topics without parental permission as incidental issues arise.

Will people think I am a lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender person if I teach on this topic?

Some people might think that only sexual minority persons will promote equal rights for people of



sexual minority. This is a common fallacy. Were African-Americans and African-Canadians the only persons involved in the civil rights movement? Did women work for equality without the support of men? Sexual minority issues and concerns are first and foremost a civil and human rights issue and, as such, need to be addressed and supported by *all* teachers and school administrators.

What if people say that I am advocating a homosexual agenda by discussing these issues?

Administrators and teachers who address sexual minority educational issues are not advocating or promoting a homosexual agenda. They are creating a safe, caring and inclusive environment in which all students and their families can expect to be treated with dignity and respect.

I teach in a religious-based school. Can we discuss this information in our school?

These topics are *not* about religious or moral beliefs. They are about the safety issues and health concerns of sexual minority students in schools. They are also about Human Rights. These are important issues that the whole school community ought to address.

If you are considering implementing the ATA workshops in your school, remember that many religious-based teachers, administrators and counselling staff support this work. For example, Catholic teachers may wish to consult *A Resource for an Inclusive Community: A Teacher's Guide for and About Persons with Same Sex Attractions*, written by F B Henry, Bishop of Calgary and liaison to the Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association. Click on the ATA's website, www.teachers.ab.ca; under For Members, select Professional Development/Diversity and Human Rights/Sexual Orientation.

What if other teachers think that these issues are too controversial?

In some communities these topics may indeed be viewed as controversial. Helping students deal with controversial issues is a critical aspect of education. When teachers model a willingness to address controversy in a thoughtful manner, they are demonstrating the importance of being open

and willing to become knowledgeable prior to making judgments or taking action. It is important that controversies be handled in ways that reduce polarization of opinion and focus on critique. An educational environment that is free from prejudice, discrimination, homophobia and heterosexism can only be achieved when students and teachers are given an opportunity to engage in reflection and dialogue.

What do I do if parents complain about the inclusion of sexual minority educational issues in our school?

School administrators should consider holding an information session for parents to explain the nature and purpose of these sexual minority educational initiatives. This information is designed as a part of ongoing teacher professional development initiatives that emphasize the importance of creating safe, caring and inclusive learning environments for all students. As professionals, teachers have an obligation to meet the needs of their students. These needs include the concerns of sexual minority students and their families.

I am an elementary school teacher. I don't think that we need to address issues related to sexual orientation or gender identity in elementary schools.

Research shows that sexual identity is established in early childhood (Ryan and Futterman 1998). Many students have a sense of their sexual orientation and gender identity as early as Grade 1. As a result, it is important that elementary teachers become aware of this developmental factor and provide the necessary resources and support to ensure that sexual minority students develop a positive self-identity. Furthermore, many students come from sexual minority families or have sexual minority siblings. It is important for these students to feel that their families and identities are a valued and visible part of the school and classroom community.

I want to be a supportive ally. How can I help to build safe, caring and inclusive schools for sexual minority students, teachers and families?

As a school teacher you can help students and teachers establish gay/straight student alliances. Resources are available on the ATA website at

[www.teachers.ab.ca/For Members/Professional Development/Diversity and Human Rights/Sexual Orientation/Gay-Straight Student Alliances](http://www.teachers.ab.ca/For_Members/Professional_Development/Diversity_and_Human_Rights/Sexual_Orientation/Gay-Straight_Student_Alliances).

Carefully select teacher and student resources that positively highlight topics related to sexual minorities.

Consider requesting an ATA workshop to help all staff understand the issues and plan actions. Building safe, caring and inclusive schools that actively include sexual minority students, teachers and families takes courage. As the poet Audre

Lorde (1997, 13) reminds us, “When I dare to be powerful/to use my strength in the service of my vision/then it becomes less and less important whether I am afraid.” All human rights movements have needed allies to achieve equality. Next to the family, educators play perhaps the most critical role in the lives of students. Ask yourself, how can I be there for *every* student in my school?

What do I do if a student discloses to me that he or she is gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender?

Listen respectfully with no judgment.

Questions that might arise from elementary students

Begin considering how you might respond to the following questions that might arise from elementary students:

- Will my friends like me if I am gay?
- Can animals be gay?
- Why was I born like this? Why are people born that way?
- What do I do if an adult uses the word *gay*?
- What do I do if another student uses the word *gay*?
- Is it okay to tease someone about being gay if they are gay?
- Will a gay person always be gay?
- If my parents are gay, will I be gay?
- How do I know if I am gay?
- Will you hurt your parents’ feelings if they are gay and you are straight?
- Are only white people gay?
- Does God love me anyway and every way?
- Sometimes I feel like a girl, but I am a guy—what’s going on?
- Is it wrong to feel/act like a boy if I am a girl?
- Does one person act like a man and one like a woman in a same-sex relationship?

What would you do?

Use these questions to promote conversations among colleagues

1	Your Grade 1 class is talking about their families; one of the students is talking about her two moms and the kids start to giggle. How do you respond?
2	The day after talking about a variety of families including same-sex parents in your Grade 2 class, one of the parents approaches you and announces that “homosexuality is a choice; I don’t want my child learning anything about it.” How do you respond?
3	A Grade 3 student runs into your room after recess to say that another boy called him “gay” and asks you what it means. How do you respond?

4	A Grade 11 student approaches you to sponsor the school’s gay–straight alliance. How do you feel and how would you respond?
5	After asking to be a sponsor teacher, you approach your administrator about starting a GSA in your small-town school. He replies, “There are no gay students in this school so I think you are wasting your time.” How do you respond?
6	During a soccer game in your Grade 8 boys’ PE class, one student gets hit with the ball and starts to cry and another student calls him a “fag.” How do you respond?
7	You announce a pop quiz to your Grade 9 Science class and you hear someone say, “That’s so gay!” How do you respond? Would you respond differently if you heard the same statement in the hall from a student you were unfamiliar with?
8	While having lunch in the staff room, you hear a colleague make a gay joke. How would you react?
9	There is a new student in your school named Jamie. You really cannot tell whether this student is male or female because Jamie is soft spoken and has clothing, hair and mannerisms that are not definitely male or female. Students are starting to make jokes. How do you respond?
10	You are teaching about sexually transmitted diseases in your Planning 10 class and when you start to talk about HIV and AIDS a student blurts out, “Isn’t that a gay disease?” How do you respond?
11	You are the new home economics teacher. How important is it to know if one of your cooking students is HIV positive?
12	A Grade 11 student of your gender is very attentive and finds excuses to help you or to linger after class. You suspect that the student may be gay or lesbian. How do you respond to the attention?

Reproduced with permission from the Pride Education Network.

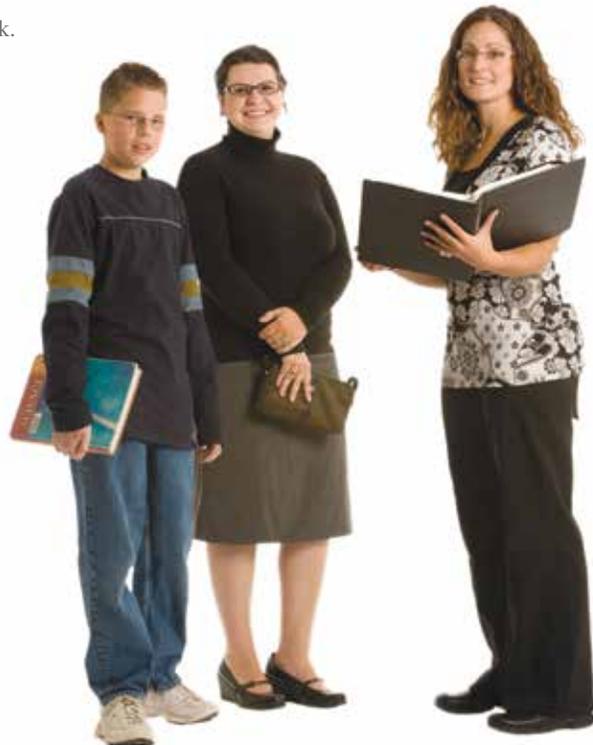
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Lesson Plans

GREEN—Introducing the topics of sexual orientation and gender identity to students requires thoughtful and proactive lesson design that is responsive to the context of the individual classroom. The **GREEN** section provides suggestions for lessons for Grades 1–3 and Grades 4–6. These are not meant to be prescriptive, but instead a starting point for encouraging safe and inclusive classroom conversations. Each series of lessons also includes enrichment activities for those teachers interested in delving deeper into the topics with the students. Literature to support the lessons is found in the **BLUE** section.

Setting the Stage: Creating the Safe Space

The topic of gender identity and sexual orientation can be a sensitive issue in schools. It is important that teachers understand and pay attention to the policies of their school boards, while at the same time ensuring that the school is a safe and caring space for all students and teachers.

Many teachers already have safe-space stickers or posters in their rooms. Typically, notices that a class is a safe space are used to indicate that a teacher maintains that everyone is welcome, and students can expect rules that support everyone's self-respect and dignity, especially with regard to sexual orientation and gender identity. Safe space stickers are included in the violet section of this toolkit.

Understanding issues of sexual orientation and gender identity lends itself to subjects such as health, career and life management, and the humanities—English, social studies and the fine arts, such as drama and art. School programs that develop the social skills and values of students also offer opportunity for discussing these topics.

Creating a safe space for discussions of sensitive topics demands a routine and established ground rules that students trust. If you have not done so, consider working through the suggestions below. If you have already created ground rules, it is always recommended that you review them before approaching a new topic. Feel free to create your own version appropriate for the grade level with which you are working. Students first have to be secure in low-risk situations or activities before approaching deeper discussions.

Teachers are also advised to do a personal inventory of their values on sensitive topics in order to be nonjudgmental or nondirective about sensitive issues. You might want to check your own stereotypes and language about diversity. Educate yourself further through the material provided in this kit. It is also important to let the students know that if you are unsure of an answer, you, too, can pass, or find an answer at a later date. Although the topic is serious, a desire to help students feel safe will go a long way in creating safe spaces for your school.

Procedure for Creating Ground Rules for Discussions

Explain to the students that, because they will be discussing sensitive issues, the group should agree on some ground rules. Ask them to come up with their own ground rules that they will all agree to observe. List those ground rules on chart paper. Ask the students for clarification, when needed, to be sure that everyone understands all the ideas. Suggest any of the recommended ground rules (below) that the young people didn't offer, because they are important for establishing a safe space.

Keep your list of ground rules posted prominently throughout all the activity sessions dealing with safe space. Refer to the ground rules if someone is not adhering to them and remind everyone of their agreement to follow the rules. Eventually, the students will begin to remind one another of the rules if behaviour occurs that is disrespectful or disruptive.



Recommended Ground Rules

Respect—Give undivided attention to the person who has the floor (permission to speak).

Confidentiality—What we share in this group will remain in this group.

Openness—We will be open and honest as possible without disclosing others' (family, neighbours or friends) personal or private issues. It is okay to discuss situations, but we won't use names or other identifiers. For example, we won't say, "My older brother ...". Instead, we will say, "I know someone who ...".

Right to pass—It is always okay to pass (meaning "I'd rather not" or "I don't want to answer").

Nonjudgmental approach—We can disagree with another person's point of view without putting that person down.

Taking care to claim our opinions—We will speak our opinions using the first person and avoid using "you." For example, "I think that kindness is important." Not, "You are just mean."

Sensitivity to diversity—We will remember that people in the group may differ in cultural background, sexual orientation, and/or gender identity or gender expression and will be careful about making insensitive or careless remarks.

Anonymity—It is okay to ask any question by using the suggestion box.

Acceptance—It is okay to feel uncomfortable; adults feel uncomfortable, too, when they talk about sensitive and personal topics, such as sexuality.

Have a good time—It is okay to have a good time. Creating a safe space is about coming together as a community, being mutually supportive and enjoying each other's qualities.

Adapted from *Guide to Implementing TAP: A Peer Education Program to Prevent HIV and STI* (2nd edition), 2002, Advocates for Youth, Washington, DC.



LESSON ONE, Grades 1–3

We Are All the Same in Different Ways!

Lesson Time: 45 minutes to one hour

Goal

- Introduce students to the concept of diversity (being different)
- Identify similarities with others even when there are apparent differences

Vocabulary: similarities, differences, unique

Outcome Links

Wellness Choices: Personal Health

W–1.4 Identify physical characteristics that make themselves both similar to and different from others.

W–3.4 Recognize factors that influence unique body characteristics; eg, genetics, body type, environment

Relationship Choices: Interactions

R–1.6 Examine how personal behaviour and attitudes can influence the feelings and actions of others; eg, inviting others to join

R–2.6 Develop strategies to show respect for others; eg, show interest when others express feelings, offer support

R–3.6 Demonstrate inclusive behaviours regardless of individual differences or circumstances; eg, physical, emotional, cultural, economic

Relationship Choices: Group Roles/Processes

R–1.9 Recognize and accept individual differences within groups; eg, one’s own family

Life Learning Choices: Life Roles/ Career Development

L–2.5 Recognize, acknowledge and respect that individuals have similar and different interests, strengths and skills

Materials

- Bowl of various fruits
- “We are all the same in different ways!” PowerPoint slides
- Venn diagram template



Lesson Plan

Introduction

1. Show the class a bowl of different kinds of fruit (apple, banana, grapes and an orange.) Ask the students what is different and what is similar about the fruits. Put their responses on the board to show the categories that are different (size, shape, colour) and the same (taste, type of food) about the fruits.
 - *Similarities* are things that are the same.
 - *Differences* are things that are different.

The teacher may wish to pose the following questions to encourage discussion:

- Discuss how we can be similar/different: physically, interests, strengths, skills. (L2.5)
- Discuss the benefits of being similar/different. (L2.5)
- Brainstorm ideas how bodies come in all different shapes and sizes, and can do similar/different things. (W2.4)
- Words to describe body (tall, healthy), things your body can do (running, jumping) and feelings about your body (happy, confident). (W2.4)

Learning Activities

1. Show the PowerPoint “We Are the Same in Different Ways!” to the class. Discuss how each slide shows similarities and differences.
 - The world is full of people everywhere you go and the world is an exciting place to live in because all of the people: you, me, everyone has something about them that is special, that is different.
 - Some of these things we can see in one another, but some of our differences can’t be seen.
 - Some of our differences may affect the way we do things.
 - It is important to remember that your differences are just as important to who you are as your similarities.
 - Your differences are a special part of you.
2. Discuss how we all have things about us that are unique. Group the students in pairs. Explain a Venn diagram and what the parts of the diagram represent—that is, the circle on one side will be information about one student and the circle on the other side will be information about his or her classmate. The parts of the circle that overlap will be information that both students have in common.

The students will fill in a Venn diagram while discussing their similarities and differences. When the diagrams are complete, students will pair-share with another pair in the class to relate what they have learned about their classmates.

Wrapping It Up

1. All of the things that are the same and all of the things that are different in each of us are what make us who we are.
 - This would be a very boring world if we were all exactly the same!
 - Our differences are what make us exciting and interesting.
 - Respect your friends for their differences.
 - Be proud of who *you* are.
 - Learn about the differences in your friends and teach your friends about the differences in you and look after each other. Treat and care for your friends the way that you would like your friends to treat and care for you.

Student name: _____

Date: _____

Venn Diagram Rubric

Objects being compared in the Venn diagram:

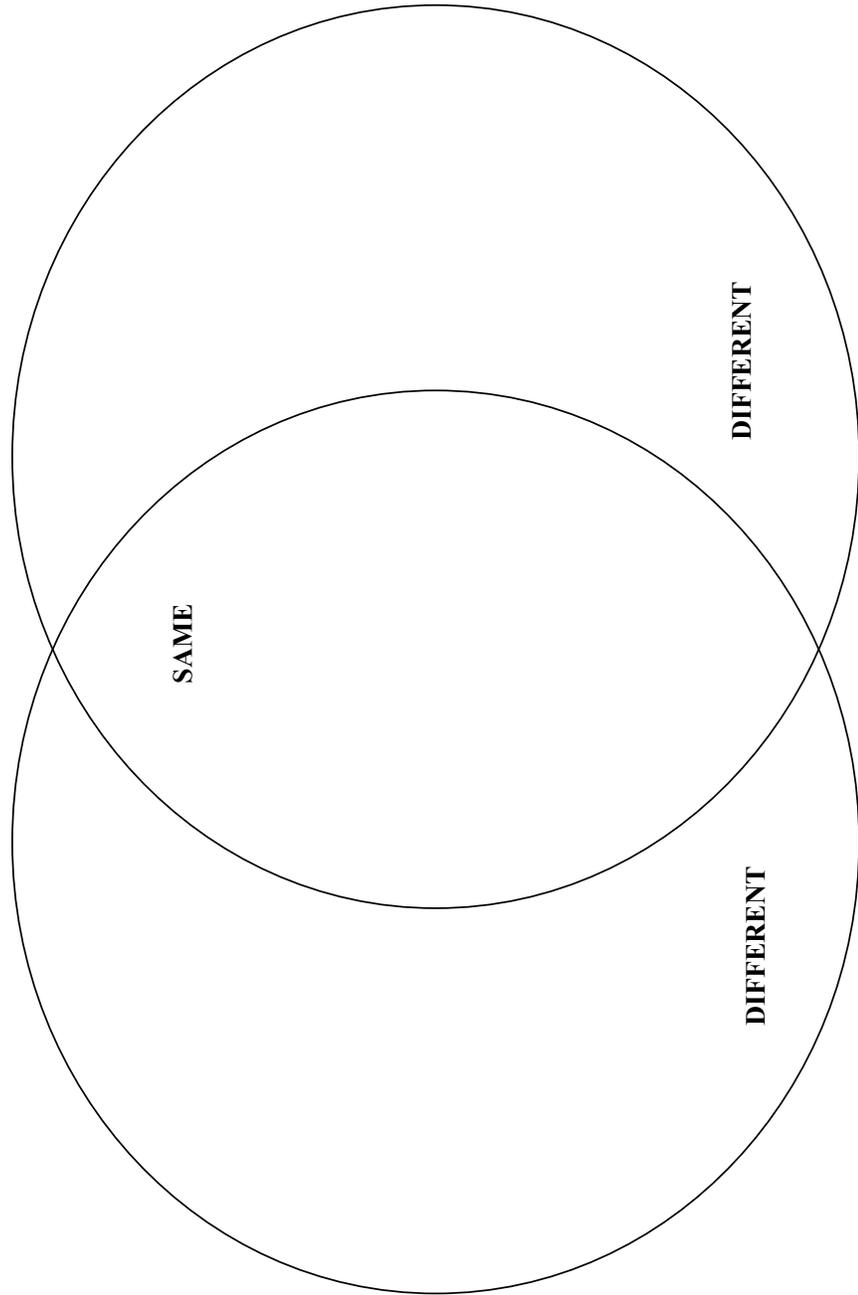
_____ and _____

	Strong Grasp	Progressing	Not in Evidence
Placement of statements within the Venn diagram	All statements noting similarities are placed in the centre circle and all statements that note differences are placed in the correct outer circle.	Most statements are placed in the correct circle, but student mixed up a few statements.	Few statements are placed in the correct circle.
Number of quality statements	Student is able to make five or more comparison statements in each circle.	Student is able to make three or four comparison statements in each circle.	Student makes two or fewer comparison statements in each circle.

We Are The Same in Many Different Ways!

My name _____

My friend's name _____



Student name: _____ Date: _____

.....

Venn Diagram Rubric

.....

Objects being compared in the Venn diagram:

_____ and _____

	Strong Grasp	Progressing	Not in Evidence
Text support of comparison statements	All statements are supported by the text.	Most statements are supported by the text.	Few or none of the statements are supported by the text.
Placement of statements within the Venn diagram	All statements noting similarities are placed in the centre circle and all statements that note differences are placed in the correct outer circle.	Most statements are placed in the correct circle, but student mixed up a few statements.	Few statements are placed in the correct circle.
Number of quality statements	Student is able to make five or more comparison statements in each circle.	Student is able to make three or four comparison statements in each circle.	Student makes two or fewer comparison statements in each circle.

Comments:

LESSON TWO, Grades 1–3

What Makes a Family?

Lesson Time: 45 minutes to 1 hour

Goal

- Students will be able to identify what makes a family
- All families have similarities and differences
- All families have strengths

Vocabulary: family, caregiver

Outcome Links

Relationship Choices: Group Roles/Processes

R–1.9 Recognize and accept individual differences within groups; eg, one’s own family

Life Learning Choices: Life Roles/Career Development

L–2.6 Recognize that each individual has many roles in life; eg, friend, sister

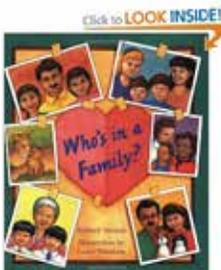
L–3.6 Examine the responsibilities associated with a variety of age-appropriate roles; eg, family member, friend

Life Learning Choices: Volunteerism

L–3.7 Assess how individual contributions can have a positive influence upon the family, school and community

Materials

- “We Are All the Same in Different Ways!” PowerPoint slides.
- Chart paper and markers
- *Who’s in a Family?*, by Robert Skutsch



- Fabulous Family Member award

Lesson Plan

Introduction

1. Using the last slide from the previous lesson's PowerPoint, lead a discussion using the following questions:
 - What do we know about families?
 - Who makes a family?
 - What types of families are there?
 - What kind of responsibilities do family members have?
Discuss roles within the family or your role in the family and responsibilities (create a web). (L 2.6, 3.6)
List ways you can make a positive contribution to your family.
 - What kinds of things do family members share or give one another?
 - Do families always live together or can they live apart?
 - Add your own!
2. Record the students' key ideas on the chart paper.

Learning Activities

1. Read the story *Who's in a Family?* aloud to the class. **Teacher note**—be sensitive to student family situations.
2. After listening to the story, encourage the students to revisit their initial ideas on the chart paper.
3. Review the chart.

Wrapping It Up

Affirm that

- (a) there are many different family types and makeups (no one better than another);
- (b) the basic ingredient in each family is love and caring for each member;
- (c) families may consist of one caregiver, two parents, close friends, children and/or grandparents, etc; and
- (d) sometimes when parents don't live together, a child can even have two families.



We Are All the Same in Different Ways!



FOOD





HOUSING



Games

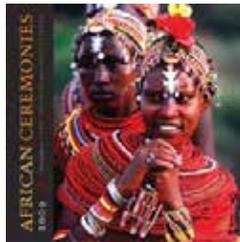


Recreation





Clothing





To:

For:

LESSON THREE, Grades 1–3

My Own Circle of Support

Lesson Time: 45 minutes to one hour

Goal

- Help students identify their respective circles of support to understand who can help them and support them
- Encourage students to think about the different kinds of relationships they have

Vocabulary: support networks, circle of support



Outcome Links

Wellness Choices: Safety/Responsibilities

W–1.10 Recognize community helpers, and identify how to seek their help; eg, appropriate use of 911

W–2.10 Identify members of personal safety support networks and how to access assistance; eg, family members, teachers, Block Parents, police, clergy, neighbours

Relationship Choices: Understanding and Expressing Feeling

R–2.4 Develop communication strategies to express needs and seek support; eg, if touched in a way that makes one feel uncomfortable, who and how to tell

R–2.6 Develop strategies to show respect for others; eg, show interest when others express feelings, offer support

Materials

- T-shirt PowerPoint
- Paper doll outlines
- Large construction paper and various colouring tools (markers, crayons, etc)

Lesson Plan

Introduction

1. Give students some time to brainstorm on their own and write down the names of people they know.
2. Put up the T-shirt scenarios on the interactive whiteboard. Have the students say who they would go to for support or to help them with each scenario. Explain to students the power and advantages of having good support networks in life (eg, people to call on in times of need, people to share celebrations with, people who know more than you do in various areas, people who can connect you with others, etc).

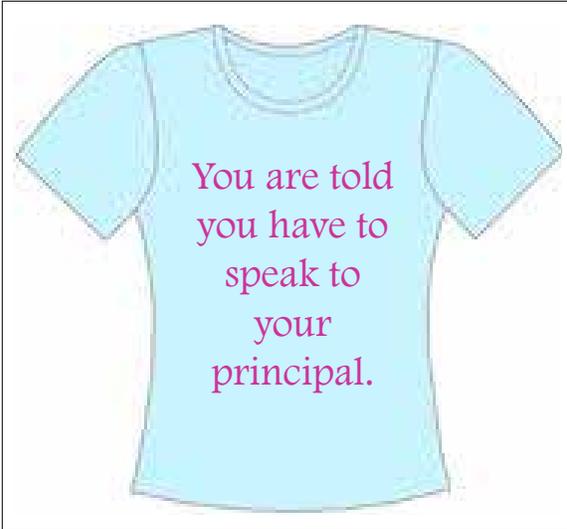
Learning Activities

1. Give each student a large piece of construction paper and a cut-out that they will colour to represent themselves.
2. Once it is coloured, glue the paper cut-out to the middle of the large piece of construction paper.
3. Students will now use other cut-outs of various shapes and sizes to print names of people in their circle of support.
4. As they complete the cut-out for each person, students glue them around their own cut-out with the hands overlapping.

Wrapping It Up

1. Using the mix–freeze technique, have the students mix and walk around the classroom carrying their circle of support. The teacher calls “Freeze!” and the students freeze. Teacher asks a question to which the answer is a number. (Examples: How many planets are there in our solar system? How many wheels are on a car?) Students form group sizes according to the number, and students not in a group go to the Lost and Found (the teacher) to make a group.

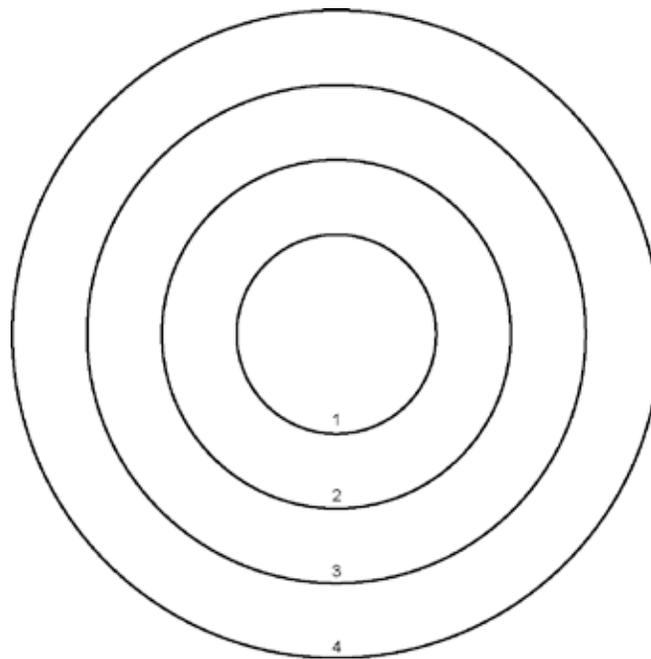




Circle of Support

A circle of support is a group of people who provide friendship and support for a person. Frequently these groups agree to meet on a regular basis to help a person accomplish certain personal visions and goals. The members of a circle are usually friends, family members, teachers, neighbours and service providers. People involved in the circle of support are involved because they care about the focus person.

This exercise is a social scan. It will give you a quick picture of who is in your life. This exercise is very useful in clarifying who you can rely upon to provide support and advice when you need it.

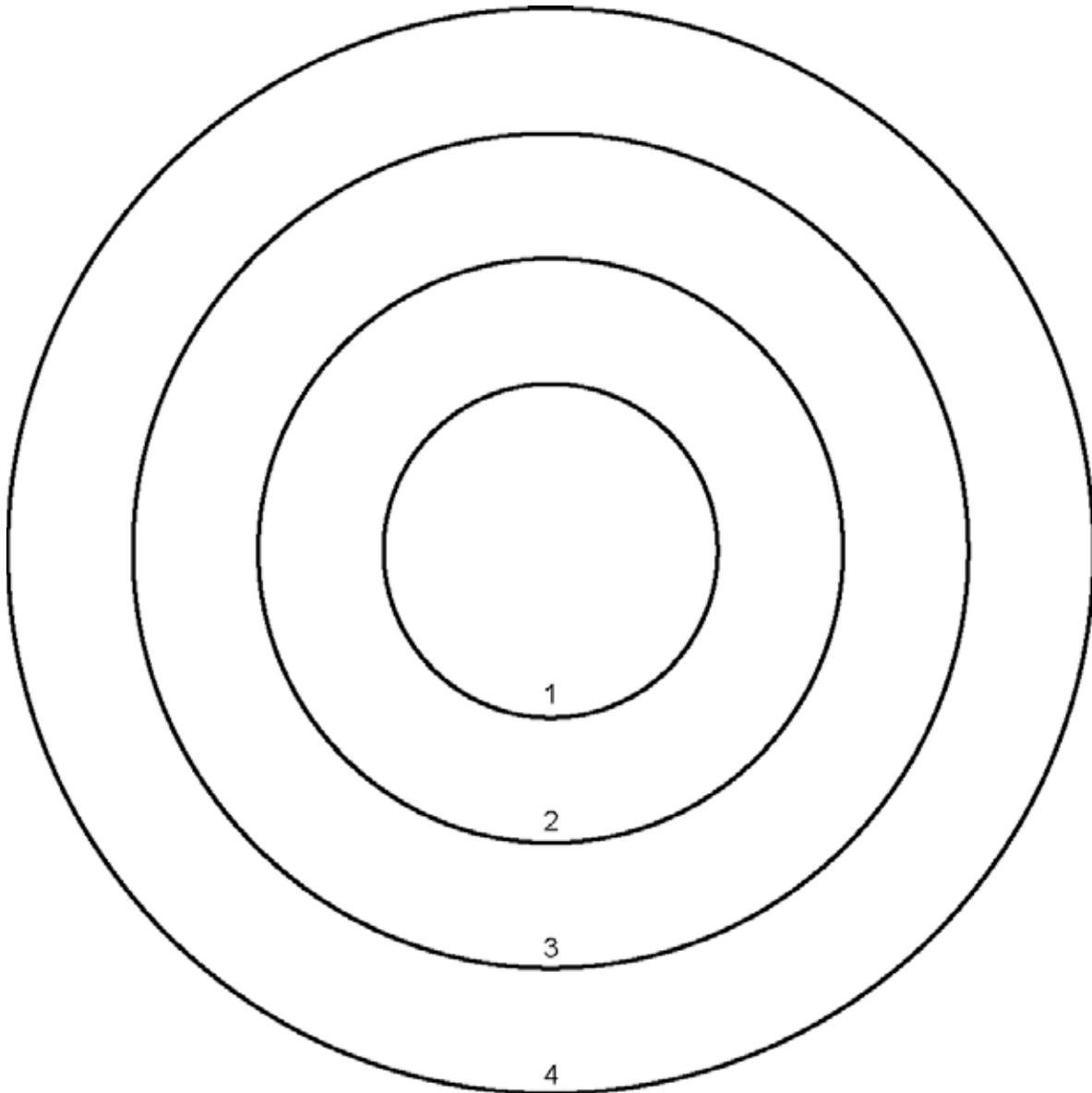


Instructions: Write your name in the centre; fill in the circles according to the guidelines below.

- o 1st Circle: List the people most intimate in your life—those you cannot imagine living without.
- o 2nd Circle: List good friends—those who almost made the first circle.
- o 3rd Circle: List people, organizations, and networks you are involved with—people and groups you participate with and in.
- o 4th Circle: List people you pay to provide services in your life.

Note: People can be in more than one circle. For example, your doctor or your teacher could also be a very close friend, etc.

Circle of Support for: _____



LESSON ONE, Grade 4–6

Exploring Gender Stereotypes

Lesson Time: 1 hour

Goal

- Identify how we develop our conceptions about gender
- Explore and address stereotypes related to gender

Vocabulary: gender, male, female, sexism, boy culture, girl culture, stereotype

Outcome Links

Relationship Choices: Interactions

R-5.6 Investigate the benefits of fostering a variety of relationships

R-6.6 Develop strategies to maintain and enhance cross-age relationships

Materials: names of different jobs on pieces of paper in a bag, blank paper (one sheet per student) stickies, chart paper, one of the books chosen from the list provided on pages 22 and 23, pictures of the female construction worker and male dancer on pages 25 and 26.

Lesson Plan

Introduction

- Tell the students that they will be picking a paper out of a bag; each paper identifies a job/sport or activity. Tell them that when they receive the paper, they have 10 minutes to draw the person who does that job/sport or activity. Ask them to work by themselves and not share their drawing with anyone else until they are asked to.

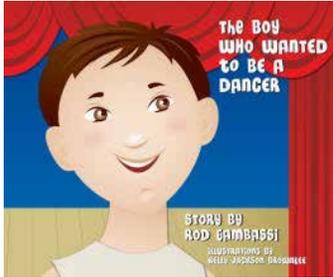
NOTE: Organize the choices so that at least five students will pick each job/sport or activity. Some possibilities are hockey player, ballet dancer, mechanic, nurse, taxi driver, figure skater, construction worker.

- Tell the students that once they are done, they can post the drawings in a designated spot in the classroom. Define a section where like drawings can be posted together.
- Once everyone is done, ask students to go from section to section to look at the drawings. When they have returned to their seats, ask them the following question: What did you notice about the drawings?
 - Next, go to one section (for example, hockey player) and ask the question again. This time, guide the students to determine if most of the drawings were of males or females. Ask students why this is so.
- Go from section to section to examine if a particular gender dominated the drawings that correspond to each job/sport/activity. If there is one section where there is not a clear dominant gender associated with it, ask students why they think this is so.
- Ask students what they understand when they hear the term *gender stereotype*. Ask them why they think gender stereotypes exist. Remind students that gender roles are expectations that are put onto us by others. It is OK to like or do things that are different than what other people expect from us. You can be whoever you want to be and can choose to be involved in whatever interests you wish to be involved in.

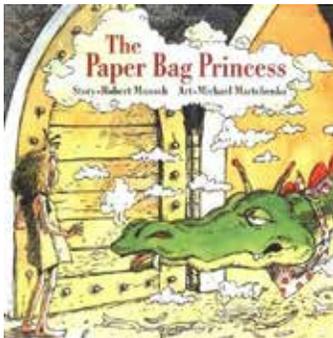
Learning Activities

Choose one of the books listed on pages 22 and 23 to read aloud about children who have challenged traditional gender roles:

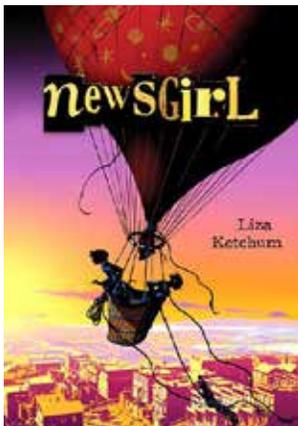
- Ask students to talk about their experiences when they do activities that others perceive as “girl activities” or “boy activities.” How are they similar to the main character in the story?
- Ask students to work in small groups to make a list of the kinds of hobbies or extracurricular activities they participate in. Write each on a different sticky. Give each group a large piece of poster paper and have them draw a T-chart and begin to divide the activities into categories that would fall under the headings of “Girl Culture” or “Boy Culture.” Encourage discussion and respectful debate.
- Ask students if it was difficult to categorize some of the activities. Are all activities either unique to boy culture or girl culture? Introduce the concept of sexism to students. For example, girls are sometimes excluded from activities that are seen as “boy culture” (eg, hockey, wrestling). Also, boys are sometimes teased and targeted with sexist language if they are participating in activities traditionally associated with girls.



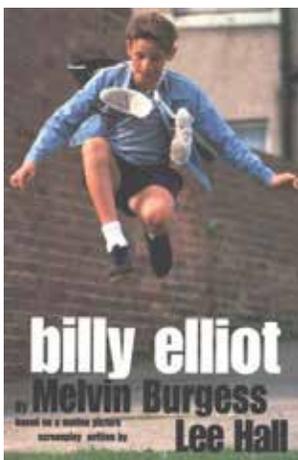
1. The Boy who Wanted to be a Dancer, Rod Gambassi



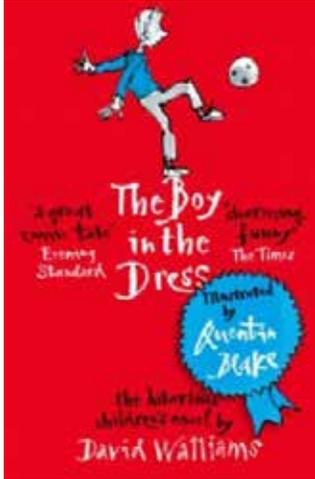
2. The Paper Bag Princess, Robert Munsch



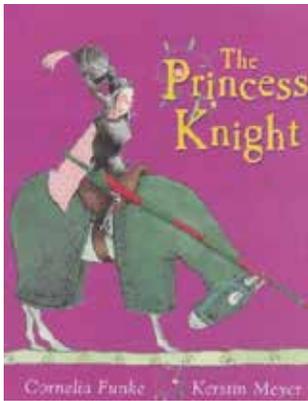
3. Newsgirl, Liz Ketchum



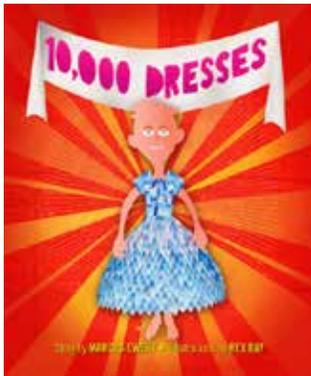
4. Billy Elliott, Melvin Burgess



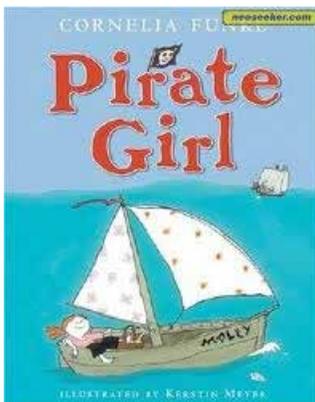
5. The Boy in the Dress, David Walliams



6. The Princess Knight, Cornelia Funke



7. 10 000 Dresses, Marcus Ewert



8. The Pirate Girl, Cornelia Funke

Wrapping It Up

- Introduce the idea of equality. Have your students discuss how girls and boys should be treated fairly, irrespective of their gender and the activities they enjoy.
- Show the photos of the male dancer and the female construction worker and remind students that males and females can choose any career they want.
- Students can complete these sentence starters in their journals:
 - If I could be anything I wanted when I grow up, I would be a _____. (List five ideas.)
 - Everyone can enjoy all kinds of activities. For example, I do _____, which some might say is a “boy culture” activity and I do _____, which some might say is a “girl culture” activity.
 - Today I have learned that _____.

Extension Activity

- Ask students to write a letter to the main character of the story that was read. Tell the character what they think about her/his choices and if they would have made the same choices.





LESSON TWO, Grades 4–6

It's All in the Message!

Lesson Time: 1 hour

Goal

- Reflect on the use of language with regard to sexuality and gender
- Understand the impact of name-calling

Vocabulary: homophobia, gay, lesbian, ally, straight, positive, negative

Outcome Links

Relationship Choices: Group Roles/Processes

R–5.9 Explore respectful communication strategies that foster group/team development; eg, encourage participation of all group members

Relationship Choices: Understanding and Expressing Feeling

R–4.1 Recognize that individuals can have a positive and negative influence on the feelings of others

R–5.1 Recognize that presenting feelings may mask underlying feelings; eg, anger can mask frustration, hurt

R–6.1 Recognize that individuals can choose their own emotional reactions to events and thoughts

Materials: PFLAG poster “That’s So Gay Is SO Yesterday” (included in support resources in folder), markers, chart paper, stickies, rocks, backpack, balloons, ribbons.

Note: Place the poster at the front of the class.

Lesson Plan

Introduction

Prompts that the teacher might ask:

- Think back to our first lesson on this topic, when we drew pictures of people who do different jobs, sports and activities. Why did we draw certain of these as males and others as females?
- If most people drew the same gender for a job, sport or activity, does that mean it is stereotypical?



- Why do we have the teams or options we have at our school?
- Are there computer games, novels, cartoons or sport shows that have stereotypical men or women? Can you give an example?
- Imagine you are a hockey player and someone from the opposite sex really wants to join your team. Would you want that person to be on your team? What accommodations would the team have to make? (Refer to the Internet for information on Manon Rhéaume, the first and only woman to play in the National Hockey League.)

Learning Activities

Individual Placemats

- Divide students into groups of four to five. Give each group one word or phrase, chosen from the following: girl, boy, adult, teenager, heterosexual, senior citizen, only child.

Ask students to think by themselves for one minute about ideas that come to mind when they think about their word. Then, pass out sticky notes to each student and one placemat with two concentric circles on it to each group. On each sticky note, students are asked to write one idea and place the sticky notes on the centre of the circle on the placemat. **Teacher note**—students may generate ideas that are positive in nature and others that are not.

- The teacher will review some of the stickies out loud ask students why they think people associate some of these ideas with these words.
- The teacher draws two concentric circles on the board and inserts the word *gay* in the centre of the inside circle.
- Each student is given a copy of the circle on a placemat. Ask the students to think by themselves for one minute. They are to think about the ideas that come to their mind when they think about the word *gay*. Then pass out sticky notes to each student. On each sticky note students are asked to write one idea and place the sticky notes on the placemat. One idea per sticky!

PAIR UP (Teacher discretion advised)

- If the students are comfortable, they can pair up with a partner and group their ideas in two piles. They should find what ideas they have that are similar and different.

SHARE

- The teacher will review some of the stickies out loud and discuss some of the emotions one might feel when these ideas are expressed.

REFLECTION

- Everyone knows it is unacceptable to call people names, so why do people still do it?
- Have you ever watched a TV show about two dads or two moms raising a child? What do you think about that?
- Do you also know that one of the most famous talk show hosts, Ellen DeGeneres (who is almost as famous as Oprah) is a lesbian, and that her mother loves her very much and is usually in the audience and on her show? Do you think the fact that she is a lesbian influences whether or not people watch her TV show? Why or why not?

- Have you heard about the students from Nova Scotia who wore pink shirts to protest bullying and homophobia? See the story at <http://tinyurl.com/66ejmt4>.

gay
modern
family

Thought-Provoking Questions

Refer to the poster “That’s So Gay Is SO Yesterday.” This poster was created by Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG).

- Why did PFLAG feel it was necessary to make this poster?
 - What are the messages on this poster?
- Who is the audience for this poster?
 - What feelings does the picture evoke?
 - What does it feel like when people call you names?
 - What else could have been put on the poster?



CAROUSEL ACTIVITY

The teacher will post thought-provoking questions on large sheets of paper around the room. Each large sheet will have only one question, and each will be numbered.

Divide the class into small groups (four or six). Assign each group a question on which the team has to write down three ideas.

After a few minutes, each group will move to the next question (group one moves to question two, and so on). Each team will fill in/add three new ideas in response to the new question.

The class will do this until the exercise is complete or the sheets are filled up.

1. What would it mean if the poster read “That’s So Straight Is SO Yesterday”?
 - What kind of picture would you put on this poster?
 - What would the poster mean?
 - What would be the purpose of the poster?
 - What do you think people might feel when they read this poster?
 - Why is it important to teach this?
2. What would it mean if the poster read “That’s So Lesbian Is SO Yesterday”?
 - What kind of picture would you put on this poster?
 - What would the poster mean?
 - What would be the purpose of the poster?
 - What do you think people might feel when they read this poster?
 - Why is it important to teach this?
3. What would it mean if the poster read “That’s So Homophobic Is SO Yesterday”?
 - What kind of picture would you put on this poster?
 - What would the poster mean?
 - What would be the purpose of the poster?
 - What do you think people might feel when they read this poster?
 - Why is it important to teach this?

4. What would it mean if the poster read “That’s an Ally, Let’s Give It a Try”?
- What kind of picture would you put on this poster?
 - What would the poster mean?
 - What would be the purpose of the poster?
 - What do you think people might feel when they read this poster?
 - Why is it important to teach this?

Wrapping It Up

Have the students complete statements such as: “It’s important to avoid name calling because...” or “When expressing feelings, it’s important to consider...”

The students could write in a journal their response to the exercise by using the following sentence leads:

- I wish ...
- I should ...
- I wonder ...
- I will ...

Extension Activities

Rocks

The teacher will bring enough rocks to the class for each student to have one. Inform the students that each rock represents the weight and pain a person may feel when being called names. On stickies, students write the name of an emotion that they might feel when being called a name and place the sticky on a rock.

A volunteer will have a backpack on his or her back and will walk around the classroom. Each student will insert a rock into the backpack. The volunteer will find that the backpack gets very heavy with the burden of the negative feelings experienced due to name-calling.

Let each student feel weight of the backpack. Ask them to think about name-calling and how it wears people down. How would students feel if they had to wear their backpack every day, all day long? What can they do to make the back pack lighter? What can they change about their own behaviour?

And Balloons

The teacher will provide enough different coloured balloons for everyone in the class. Each student will need to blow up and tie a balloon. Very carefully, the students will write positive word descriptions on their balloons. The balloons will then be tied to a very long ribbon. The teacher will stuff the balloons into a huge plastic (clear) garbage bag. The students will then feel the weight of the positive words. The teacher could then hang the balloons in the classroom.



LESSON THREE, Grades 4–6

Media and Stereotypes

Lesson Time: 1 hour

NOTE: For background information about the book *My Princess Boy*, teachers may want to view

- www.youtube.com/watch?v=MBBffc0Rtc8
- www.youtube.com/watch?v=8DnbjtXDlv0&feature=related

These are for teacher information *only* and should not be viewed by students.

Goal

Students will learn that

- generational thinking can change value systems over time;
- there is more than one way to be a boy and there is more than one way to be a girl;
- people create some of their values from the media, **groups, cliques and alliances** and
- appreciating and accepting the differences and uniqueness of individuals creates a richer society.

Vocabulary: media, generation, stereotypes, transgender

Outcome Links

Life Learning Choices: Learning Strategies

L–6.3 Analyze influences on decision making; eg, family, peers, values, cultural beliefs, quality of information gathered

Relationship Choices: Group Roles/Processes

R–6.8 Analyze the influence of groups, cliques and alliances on self and others; eg, at home, in school, in the community

Materials: poster paper; markers; book *My Princess Boy*, by Cheryl Kilodavis

Lesson Plan

Introduction

It is important for students to understand how generations have advanced in their thinking. A generation is considered to be a 20-year span of time. Earlier generations had trouble accepting people for who they were as individuals. Slavery, wars, discrimination, immigrants, racism, sexism and homophobia are examples of non-acceptance, and we are doing our best to change these situations in our world today.

- An example that could be referenced is that 60 years ago (three generations ago), TV became popular. It was in black and white and there was only one channel with no remotes, computers or cable.
- It was *only* in the 1960s that women teachers and women professionals were allowed to wear “trousers” to work. Also, when girls first started to wear jeans as fashion in the 1960s, many of them were told they were gay because they dressed like boys.

- In the 1970s, teachers could smoke in school; now we cannot advertise cigarettes on television. Cigarette smoking is restricted in most places in Alberta.

Suggestions:

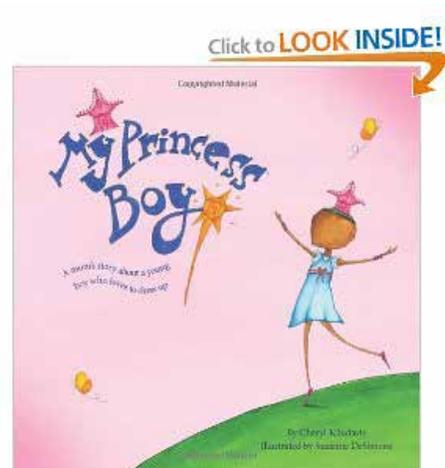
- Use a Venn diagram to compare/contrast changes to generational thinking or stereotypes.
- Watch a movie or commercial or read a book from the past and compare thinking then and now.

Learning Activity

1. **Setting the Scene:** Lead a class discussion about how media can portray stereotypes. Discuss how media can also help us celebrate our uniqueness and challenge stereotypes. Remember that there is more than one way to express being a girl or a boy. Read the book *My Princess Boy*, by Cheryl Kilodavis.

Teacher note—in this book, the author asks the question, “If you see a Princess Boy, will you laugh at him? Will you call him a name?” These questions have a potential to suggest to a few students that such undesirable behaviours are to be expected. Teachers should be prepared to address negative responses should they arise.

2. **Class Discussion:** Using teacher discretion, select questions from the list to discuss or ponder.
 - Who were all the people who support the boy in the story?
 - In the story, what actions do people take to support the boy?
 - What could you learn from having this boy as your friend?
 - Why is his mom hurt when people laugh at her son?
 - How would this boy be supported at our school and in our classroom?
 - Why do you think that it is important to accept people for who they are?
 - In the beginning of the story it says: “As a community, we can accept and support our children for whoever they are and however they wish to look.” How can we protect each other at our school?



3. **Poster Activity**

Imagine that PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) has asked you and the members of your class to be role models for students in Grade 1. They are developing a new anti-name-calling poster and need your advice about what words, ideas and pictures should be on the poster. They have asked you to create your poster so they can collect your ideas for consideration. They have asked you to

- design a picture,
 - write a catchy phrase or slogan (for example, “B-Free for Bully-Free Alberta”)
 - add an idea you want to teach about your slogan and
 - describe your audience (for example, Grade 1 students, parents, junior high students, people in the community).
- After posters have been completed let the students know that, with their permission, the teacher will share the posters with other teachers and post them in the school.

Wrapping It Up

The students could write in a journal their response to the exercise by using the following sentence leads:

- I wish ...
- I should ...
- I wonder ...
- I will ...

Extension Activities

1. The upper elementary class could take their posters to the Grade 1 class and have a show-and-tell session.
2. Students could create a code of conduct for their classroom.
3. Anonymous questions: give each student a yellow sticky and tell them to write a comment or a question they would like answered.

Extension Viewings for Teacher Information Only

- www.oprah.com/oprahshow/Lisa-Ling-Talkswith-a-Transgendered-7-Year-Old-Girl-Video (or <http://tinyurl.com/bydwozq>)—a one-minute clip about boy body, girl brain.
- www.oprah.com/oprahshow/Kelly-and-John-Halligan-Share-Their-Son-Ryans-Story-Video (or <http://tinyurl.com/aknvdaz>) (three minutes)—Ryan was an elementary student who was bullied. When he was in Grade 7 someone started a cyber-rumour that he was gay. Ryan wanted to quit school and be home schooled; he committed suicide.
- www.itgetsbetter.org—the It Gets Better Project website provides many video messages to give hope to LGBT youth.



Teacher Observation Rating Scale (level of quality)

Student Name _____ **Date** _____

Task _____

Criteria	WOW!	Well Done	A Good Start	Not Yet	Teacher Comments

Teacher Observation Rating Scale (level of quality)

Student Name _____ **Date** _____

Task _____

Criteria	WOW!	Well Done	A Good Start	Not Yet	Teacher Comments

Student Self-Reflection Rating Scale (frequency)

Student Name _____ Date _____

Task _____

Criteria	All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Not very often	I know this because:

Student Self-Reflection Rating Scale (frequency)

Student Name _____ Date _____

Task _____

Criteria	All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Not very often	I know this because:

Literature

BLUE—Literature is a key to opening safe and supportive conversations in the classroom. The following teacher-reviewed literature list provides age-appropriate and thought provoking choices for elementary school teachers to address topics of sexual orientation and gender variance. Additionally, the **BLUE** section provides samples of the literature that can be integrated into the lessons provided in the **GREEN** section. Teacher resources and classroom videos that can be borrowed from the Alberta Teachers' Association library free of charge to Association members are also provided in the literature list.

Prism Project Recommended Resources

A. Children's Books

Preschool

- *Anna Day and the O-Ring*, by Elaine Wickens. Evan lives with Mama Dee, Mama Gee and their dog, Anna Day. When Evan and his two moms try to assemble a tent Evan has received for his fourth birthday, they can't find the O-ring that is necessary to keep the poles up. After much searching, the boy discovers that Anna Day has been lying on top of it all along.
- *Daddy, Papa, and Me*, by Lesléa Newman. Rhythmic text and illustrations with universal appeal show a toddler spending the day with his two fathers and the loving bonds between same-sex parents and their children.
- *Flying Free*, by Jennifer C Gregg. This is a picture book for children of LGBT and diverse families. The narrator is a five-year-old girl named Violet, who captures a firefly to use as her very own nightlight. Her mommies go along with the idea, but the firefly refuses to live in a glass jar. After several attempts, the

firefly devises an escape plan. What will her fate be?

Ages Four to Eight

- *10,000 Dresses*, by M Ewert and R Ray. Every night, Bailey dreams about magical dresses made of crystals, rainbows and flowers. Unfortunately, when Bailey is awake, no one wants to hear about his beautiful dreams. Quite the contrary. "You're a BOY!" his mother and father tell him. "You shouldn't be thinking about dresses at all."
- *And Tango Makes Three*, by Justin Richardson and Peter Parnell. The book is based on the true story of Roy and Silo, two male chinstrap penguins in New York's Central Park Zoo that formed a couple and were given an egg to raise.
- *Antonio's Card / La Tarjeta*, de Antonio Rigoberto Gonzalez. Antonio loves words, because words have the power to express feelings like love, pride or hurt. Mother's Day is coming soon, and Antonio searches for the words to express his love for his mother and her partner, Leslie.
- *Are You a Boy or a Girl?*, by Karleen Pendleton Jiménez. Children spend a lot of time debating with each other over what makes a boy a boy and a girl a girl; this book enters this conversation and opens it up. It is the story of a child finding out who she is and learning through her mother's love how to be both strong and soft.
- *Asha's Mums*, by Rosamund Elwin and Michele Paulse. When Asha's lesbian mums become a problem for her teacher and an object of curiosity for her classmates, Asha responds that having two mums is not a big deal. They are a family.
- *The Boy in a Dress*, by David Williams. Dennis finds his family, friends and townspeople initially resistant to his desire to



- wear dresses, but eventually they become his biggest fans on and off the soccer field.
- ***Family Book***, by Todd Parr. This book celebrates the many different types of families.
 - ***King and King***, by Linda de Haan and Stern Nijland. Once there lived a lovelorn prince whose mother decreed that he must marry by the end of the summer. So began the search to find the prince's perfect match and lo and behold ... his name was Lee.
 - ***Molly's Family***, by Nancy Garden. Friday is open-school night, so Molly draws a picture of her family to help decorate the classroom. But then Tommy says Molly's family can't be a real one because she has a Mommy and a Mama Lu. What is Molly to think?
 - ***Mom and Mum Are Getting Married!***, by Ken Setterington. When Rosie comes home to find her mom dancing alone in the living room—on a school day—she knows something wonderful is about to happen. So when one of her two mothers announces, “Your Mum and I are getting married!” she can't wait for the big day. At this party, family, friends and fun come together for a joyous celebration of love in a changing world.
 - ***My Uncle's Wedding***, by Eric Ross. There's so much to do now that Uncle Mike and Steve are getting married. Follow Andy on this enjoyable journey as he talks about his uncle's wedding, how it affects him and the things he gets to do in preparation for the ceremony.
 - ***One Dad, Two Dads, Brown Dad, Blue Dads***, by J Valentine. Two children—one with blue dads, one from a more traditional family—compare notes in this lighthearted book about parents who are different. In the end, the children discover that blue dads aren't really that different from other dads.
 - ***People***, by P Spier. A book that talks about how differences make us special.
 - ***The Popularity Papers: Research for the Social Improvement and General Betterment of Lydia Goldblatt and Julie Graham-Chang***, by Amy Ignatow. Lydia Goldblatt and Julie Graham-Chang are best friends with one goal: to crack the code of popularity. So they record their observations in a notebook and carry out experiments to determine what makes the popular girls tick. But somehow, their efforts to become popular girls don't work very well. Secondary characters shine as well, particularly Julie's embarrassing but ultimately charming two dads, along with Lydia's Goth-punk sister, a fount of random quips and junior high wisdom.
 - ***Princess Knight***, by Cornelia Funke. King Wilfred teaches his daughter the same knightly skills he has taught his three sons. With perseverance, the nimble and quick princess becomes an expert jouster. For her birthday, the king announces a tournament to find her a husband. Outraged, she disguises herself in armour, poses as Sir No-Name and defeats all the other contenders, at which point she reveals her identity and chooses her prize—independence.
 - ***Priscilla and the Pink Planet***, by Nathaniel Hobbie. Priscilla lives on a planet where everything is pink. “Pink, pink, pink!” she cries with fright. “Pink to the left and pink to the right!” Priscilla dreams of seeing the world in other colours and ends up teaching the Great Queen of Pink that diversity leads to true beauty.
 - ***Ryan's Mom Is Tall***, by Heather Jopling. Ryan's Mom is tall; his Mummy is short. One has curly hair; one has straight hair. His Mom does crossword puzzles; his Mummy plays hockey. The one thing they have in common, though, is that they both love Ryan very much. This Canadian book would be useful in educating and exposing young children to the variety of family relationships.
 - ***Skull of Truth***, by Bruce Coville. In this story, young Charlie Eggleston becomes the owner of a skull of truth that forces him to tell the truth at all times. A surprise in this novel is the appearance of a gay uncle, a secondary character who comes out of the closet in the course of the story, forcing Charlie to deal with his feelings about his beloved uncle's homosexuality.
 - ***Spacegirl Pukes***, by Katy Watson. As nausea grips the intrepid Spacegirl, she is lucky to have two moms to help her out.

- ***A Tale of Two Daddies***, by Vanita Oelschläger. In an affectionate story of adoption in a gay family, a small girl answers a friend's questions about what it is like to have two fathers. The boy asks: "Which dad would build your home in a tree? And which dad helps when you skin your knee?" And the girl answers: "Poppa's the one who builds in a tree. / Daddy's the one who fixes my knee." To the question "Who is your dad when you're sad and need some love?" the answer is "Both, of course!"
- ***Tiger Flowers***, by Patricia Quinlan. A sensitive look at a young boy coping with the recent loss of his uncle, who died of AIDS. Joel tries to explain Michael's absence to his three-year-old sister, Tara, and remembers all the fun times he had with his uncle.
- ***Who's in a Family?***, by Robert Skutch. Family is important, but who's in a family? The people who love you the most! This equal-opportunity, open-minded picture book has no preconceptions about what makes a family a

family. There's even equal time given to some children's favourite animal families.

Ages Nine to Thirteen

- ***The Accidental Adventures of India McAllister***, by Charlotte Agell. An illustrated diary-like account of things that India McAllister loves, such as her dog, Tofu, and her best friend, Colby, and other things that she's not so sure about—her dad's boyfriend, for example.
- ***After Tupac and D Foster***, by Jacqueline Woodson. Eleven-year-old D Foster and his two friends share a passion for the music of Tupac Shakur as they deal with discrimination against the gay brother of one of the three.
- ***Am I Blue? Coming Out from the Silence***, edited by Marion Dane Bauer. This is a collection of original short stories on gay and lesbian themes by well-known children's writers.
- ***Athletic Shorts***, by Chris Crutcher. If the stereotype of the boneheaded jock is ever to





be defeated, it will be at Crutcher's hands. In these six short stories, he and his athlete protagonists take on such weighty issues as racism, homophobia, sexism and a teenager's coming to terms with his parents.

- ***If the World Were a Village: A Book About the World's People***, by David J Smith. What if we imagine the whole world as a village of just 100 people? What would it look like? In this village 22 people speak a Chinese dialect, 20 earn less than a dollar a day, 32 are of Christian faith, 17 cannot read or write, 39 are under 19 years old and 11 are gay.
- ***No Castles Here***, by A C E Bauer. A book of fairy tales, participation in a school chorus and a gay big brother combine to give 11-year-old Augie the confidence he needs to become an activist.
- ***So Hard to Say***, by A Sanchez. Thirteen-year-old Latina chocoholic chatterbox Xio can't keep her eyes off blond-haired, steel-eyed Frederick, an intriguing transfer student from Wisconsin. At first, the soft-spoken newcomer, unsure of his new Southern California junior high and his own sexuality, doesn't know what to make of her pursuits.
- ***Totally Joe***, by James Howe. In 13-year-old Joe's alphabiography assignment—the story of his life from A to Z—he bares his soul about

his parents, teachers, friends and enemies, and his coming out.

B. Nonfiction Books

Note: all the nonfiction titles listed below are available in the ATA library. To reserve go to www.teachers.ab.ca, click on Publications and ATA Library.

Acting Out: Combating Homophobia Through Teacher Activism. 2010. Blackburn, Mollie V. New York: Teachers College Press.

Apercevoir l'arc-en-ciel: Les enseignantes et enseignants réfléchissent sur les questions relatives à la bisexualité, à la bispiritualité, à l'homosexualité et au transgendrérisme. 2002. Fédération canadienne des enseignantes et des enseignants. Ottawa, Ont: Fédération canadienne des enseignantes et des enseignants.

Beyond Progress and Marginalization: LGBTQ Youth in Educational Contexts. 2010. Bertram, Corrine C. New York: Peter Lang.

Breaking the Silence: Gay and Lesbian Issues in Education. 2001. Saskatoon, Sask: Gay & Lesbian Health Services.

Building Safe and Caring Classrooms, Schools, and Communities for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered Students: Professional

- Development Workshops for Alberta Teachers.* 2002. Wells, Kris. Edmonton, Alta: ATA Educational Trust Project.
- Challenging Homophobia: Teaching About Sexual Diversity.* 2007. van Dijk, Lutz, and Barry van Driel. Oakville, Va: Trentham.
- Coming Out, Coming Home: Helping Families Adjust to a Gay or Lesbian Child.* 2010. LaSala, Michael C. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Contester le silence, contester la censure : Ressources, stratégies et directives d'orientation intégratrices pour aborder les réalités bisexuelles, bispirituelles, gaies, lesbiennes et transidentifiées dans les bibliothèques scolaires et publiques.* 2007. Schrader, Alvin M. Ottawa, Ont : Fédération canadienne des enseignantes et des enseignants.
- Creating and Supporting a Gay/Straight Alliance.* 2004. Gay and Lesbian Educators of BC. Vancouver, BC: Gay and Lesbian Educators of BC.
- Fit to Teach: Same-Sex Desire, Gender, and School Work in the Twentieth Century.* 2005. Blount, Jackie M. Albany, NY: New York Press.
- From Teasing to Torment: School Climate In America: A Survey of Students and Teachers.* 2005. Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN). New York: GLSEN.
- The Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Factor in the Youth Suicide Problem.* 1994. Tremblay, Pierre J. Calgary, Alta: Pierre Tremblay.
- Gay, Lesbian and Transgender Issues in Education Programs, Policies, and Practices.* Sears, James T. 2005. New York: Harrington Park Press.
- Gay–Straight Alliance: A Handbook for Students, Educators, and Parents.* 2007. MacGillivray, Ian K. New York: Routledge.
- Gay–Straight Student Alliance Handbook: A Comprehensive Resource for Canadian K–12 Teachers, Administrators and School Counsellors.* 2006. Ottawa, Ont: Canadian Teachers' Federation.
- Gay–Straight Student Alliances in Alberta Schools: A Guide for Teachers.* 2005. Wells, Kris. Edmonton, Alta: the Alberta Teachers' Association.
- Gender and Sexual Diversity in Schools.* 2010. Meyer, Elizabeth. New York, NY: Springer.
- Get That Freak: Homophobia and Transphobia in High Schools.* 2010. Haskell, Rebecca. Blackpoint, NS: Fernwood.
- Guide des alliances d'élèves gais et hétérosexuels : Une ressource exhaustive pour le personnel enseignant, les gestionnaires et les conseillers et conseillères scolaires du Canada, de la maternelle à la 12e année.* 2006. Wells, Kristopher. Ottawa, Ont: Fédération canadienne des enseignantes et des enseignants.
- Hatred in the Hallways: Violence and Discrimination Against Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Students in U.S. Schools.* 2001. Bochenek, Michael. New York: Human Rights Watch.
- Homophobic Bullying: Research and Theoretical Perspectives.* 2011. Rivers, Ian. New York: Oxford University Press.
- I Could Not Speak My Heart: Education and Social Justice for Gay and Lesbian Youth.* 2004. McNinch, James, and Mary Cronin. Regina, Sask: University of Regina Press.
- Interrogating Heteronormativity in Primary Schools: The Work of the No Outsiders Project.* 2009. DePalma, Renée, and Elizabeth Atkinson. Trent, UK: Trentham.
- Interrupting Heteronormativity: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Pedagogy and Responsible Teaching at Syracuse University.* 2005. Eds Farrell, Kathleen, Nisha Gupta and Mary Queen. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.
- Leçons apprises : Un recueil d'histoires et d'articles sur des questions bisexuelles, gaies, lesbiennes et transgénéristes.* 2005. Fédération canadienne des enseignantes et des enseignants. Ottawa, Ont : Fédération canadienne des enseignantes et des enseignants.
- Lessons Learned: A Collection of Stories and Articles About Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian and*

- Transgender Issues*. 2005. Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF). Ottawa, Ont: CTF.
- Moving Beyond Silence: Addressing Homophobia in Elementary Schools*. 2000. Surrey Teachers' Association. Surrey, BC: Surrey Teachers' Association.
- Not Yet Equal: The Health of Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Youth in B.C.* 2007. McCreary Centre Society. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society. Also available at www.mcs.bc.ca/pdf/not_yet_equal_web.pdf.
- One Teacher in 10: LGBT Educators Share Their Stories*. 2005. Jennings, Kevin. Los Angeles, Calif: Alyson Books.
- Our Worlds in Our Words: Exploring Race, Class, Gender, and Sexual Orientation in Multicultural Classrooms*. 2010. Dilg, Mary. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Prejudice, Acceptance, Triumph: The Experiences of Gay and Lesbian Teachers in Secondary Education*. 2009. Wardle, Michael. London, UK: Athena.
- Queer Kids: The Challenges and Promise for Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Youth*. 1998. Owens, Robert E. New York: Harrington Park.
- Queer Youth in the Province of the "Severely Normal."* 2006. Filax, Gloria. Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.
- Safe Schools: Breaking the Silence on Sexual Difference*. 2001. Erlandson, Cheryl. Saskatoon, Sask: Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation.
- Safely Out: Activities to Challenge Homophobia in Schools*. 1997. Toronto, Ont: Equity Studies Centre.
- Seeing the Rainbow: Teachers Talk About Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian, Transgender and Two-Spirited Realities*. Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF). Ottawa, Ont: CTF.
- Sexual Orientation and School Policy: A Practical Guide for Teachers, Administrators and Community Activists*. 2004. MacGillivray, Ian K. Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Transgender Child*. 2008. Brill, Stephanie A. San Francisco, Calif: Cleis Press.
- Transgender Explained for Those Who Are Not*. 2009. Herman, Joan. Bloomington, Ind: AuthorHouse.
- Understanding Gay and Lesbian Youth: Lessons for Straight School Teachers, Counselors, and Administrators*. 2005. Campos, David. Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Undoing Homophobia in Primary Schools*. 2010. Sterling, Va: Trentham.
- Unfolding Lives: Youth, Gender and Change*. 2009. Thomson, Rachel. Bristol, UK: The Policy Press.
- Unmasking Identities: An Exploration of the Lives of Gay and Lesbian Teachers*. 2007. Jackson, Janna M. Toronto, Ont: Lexington Books.
- We're All Born "In" = Tous les enfants naissent "inclus": Perspectives on Inclusive Education = L'intégration scolaire en perspective*. 2004. Froese-Germain, Bernie. Ottawa, Ont: Canadian Teachers' Federation.
- Youth, Education, and Sexualities: An International Encyclopedia*. 2005. Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press.
- Youth Speak Up About Homophobia and Transphobia: The First National Climate Survey on Homophobia in Canadian Schools: Phase One Report—March 2009*. 2009. Taylor, Catherine. Winnipeg, Man: Egale Canada Human Rights Trust. Also available at www.egale.ca/index.asp?lang=E&menu=3&item=1401.



C. Films

* Titles marked with* are available in the ATA library.

- ***Apples and Oranges.*** 2003. 17 minutes. Designed for Grades 4–8. From the National Film Board of Canada, this film addresses name calling, homophobia and stereotyping. Designed for Grades 4–8, *Apples and Oranges* is an ideal discussion starter to teach children about the negative effects of certain words and of bullying behaviour.
- ****Becoming Me: The Gender Within.*** 2009. 40 minutes. For Grade 9–postsecondary. In this Telly Award–winning program, five transgender people between the ages of 20 and 50 talk about what it means to them to be transgender. They speak of their first experiences of gender confusion, life after coming out, family responses and more.
- ***Being Gay: Coming Out in the 21st Century.*** 2003. 25 Minutes. Not rated. Although gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgenders are no longer forced to hide their sexual orientation, there is still prejudice and discrimination that can make coming out a difficult decision. This program presents the accounts and stories of people who have recently taken the step of coming out.
- ****But Words Do Hurt: Stories from GLBTT Youth.*** 2005. 30 Minutes. Not rated. From the Alberta Civil Liberties Research Centre. Young people share their personal stories with the hope that their experiences will foster a greater understanding of the issues faced by GLBTT youth. Professionals who work with GLBTT youth, including a psychologist, a human rights lawyer, a teacher and a hate-crimes police officer, also talk about some of the issues faced by these youth.
- ****It's Elementary: Talking About Gay Issues in Schools.*** 1996. 78 minutes. Not rated. *It's Elementary* takes cameras into classrooms across the US to look at one of today's most controversial issues—whether and how gay issues should be discussed in schools. It features elementary and middle schools where (mainly heterosexual) teachers are challenging the prevailing political climate that attempts to censor dialogue in schools about gay people.
- ***No Dumb Questions.*** 2001. 24 minutes. Not rated. A poignant documentary profiles three sisters, ages 6, 9 and 11, struggling to understand why and how their Uncle Bill is becoming a woman.
- ***Southern Comfort.*** 2001. 90 minutes. Not Rated. *Southern Comfort* is a 2001 documentary film about the final year in the life of Robert Eads, a female-to-male transsexual. Eads was diagnosed with ovarian cancer but was turned down for treatment by doctors out of fear that treating such a patient would hurt their reputations. By the time Eads received treatment, the cancer was too advanced to save his life.
- ***That's a Family!*** 2000. 35 minutes. K–Grade 8. This film introduces kids to a wide array of family types. The interviewees, who also narrate the film, include children of single-parent homes, gay and lesbian parents, multiracial families, adoptive households, and other diverse home experiences. The film is an excellent and important introduction to family structure diversity and acts as a tool for initiating general dialogue on such issues as race, sexual orientation and identity.
- ***Toilet Training.*** 2003. Run Time: 30 minutes. Undergraduate and graduate. This documentary addresses the persistent discrimination, harassment and violence faced by people who transgress gender norms in gender-segregated bathrooms. Using the stories of people who have been harassed, arrested or beaten for trying to use bathrooms, *Toilet Training* focuses on bathroom access in public space, in schools and at work.
- ***Transamerica.*** 2005. 103 minutes. Rated R (restricted). The film tells the story of Bree, a transsexual woman (played by Felicity Huffman), who goes on a road trip with her long-lost son Toby (played by Kevin Zegers).
- ***TransGeneration.*** 2005. 272 minutes. Not rated. This eight-episode US documentary series depicts the lives of four transgender college students during a school year as they attempt to balance college, their social lives and their struggle to transition.

Support Resources

VIOLET—A sampling of teacher support materials including posters, manuals and tips sheets is provided in the **VIOLET** section. All materials can be ordered or downloaded at low or no cost from their distributors. The Alberta Teachers' Association provides additional online support and resources at www.teachers.ab.ca. Click on Teaching in Alberta, then Diversity, Equity and Human Rights.

List of Famous Gay, Lesbian or Bisexual People

The following list includes people who have confirmed their homosexual or bisexual orientation or whose homosexual or bisexual ‘ is not debated.

A

Edward Albee, American playwright
 Alexander the Great, Macedonian king and conquerer of Eurasia
 Chad Allen, American actor
 Marc Almond, British singer
 Joan Armatrading, singer/songwriter
 Alexis Arquette, American actor
 W H Auden, British poet

B

Francis Bacon, British painter
 Francis Bacon, British philosopher and scientist
 Joan Baez, American singer
 Josephine Baker, singer, actress, French resistance member during WWII
 James Baldwin, American author
 Tallulah Bankhead, actress
 Clive Barker, author, director
 Drew Barrymore, actress
 Amanda Bearse, American actor, director
 Andy Bell, British singer
 Chester Bennington, American songwriter, singer
 Sandra Bernhard, American comedian, singer, author and actor
 Sarah Bettens, lead vocalist of K’s Choice
 Marie-Claire Blais, Quebec novelist
 Ross Bleckner, American artist
 Chaz Bono, American activist
 Sandro Botticelli, Italian painter
 David Bowie, English musician artist and stage/film performer
 Scott Brison, Canadian member of parliament
 Nicole Brossard, Quebec poet and novelist
 Glenn Burke, American baseball player
 William S Burroughs, American Beat author

C

Caligula, Roman emperor
 Truman Capote, American author
 Caravaggio, Italian Renaissance artist

Maggie Cassella, Canadian comedian
 Tracy Chapman, singer/songwriter
 Richard Chamberlain, American actor
 Mary Cheney, daughter of former US vice-president Dick Cheney
 Margaret Cho, American comedian
 Wayson Choy, Canadian novelist
 Montgomery Clift, American actor
 Kate Clinton, American comedian
 James Coco, American actor
 Noel Coward, British writer
 Darby Crash, lead singer of American punk band the Germs
 Gavin Crawford, Canadian television comic
 Wilson Cruz, American actor and activist

D

Leonardo da Vinci, Renaissance architect, musician, inventor, engineer, sculptor and artist
 Libby Davies, Canadian member of parliament
 Ellen DeGeneres, writer, comedian and actor
 Portia de Rossi, actress
 Marlene Dietrich, actress
 Ani DiFranco, American folk singer
 Candace Jane Dorsey, Canadian science fiction author
 Marcel Duchamp, artist, inventor of the found object

E

Brian Epstein, British, manager of the Beatles
 Melissa Etheridge, American singer, musician, composer
 Rupert Everett, British actor

F

Richard Fairbrass, British singer, Right Said Fred
 Ferdinand I of Bulgaria, former tsar of Bulgaria
 Harvey Fierstein, American actor, playwright
 Timothy Findley, Canadian novelist and playwright
 Tom Ford, American fashion designer
 E M Forster, British author

Jen Foster, American singer/songwriter
 Jodie Foster, American actress, director
 Jorja Fox, actress (*CSI*)
 Samantha Fox, British model and one-time pop singer
 Simon Fowler, British vocalist for rock band Ocean Colour Scene

G

Greta Garbo, Swedish actress
 David Geffen, music producer and record executive
 Boy George, British musician
 Sir John Gielgud, theatre and film actor
 Allen Ginsberg, Beat poet
 Sir Alec Guinness, actor

H

Hadrian, Roman military commander and emperor
 Leisha Hailey, American musician and actress
 Rob Halford, British singer (Judas Priest)
 Radclyffe Hall, British author
 George Frideric Handel, German-British composer
 Deborah Harry, American singer
 Sophie B Hawkins, musician
 Nigel Hawthorne, British actor
 Anne Heche, American actress
 Rock Hudson, American actor
 Tanya Huff, Canadian author

I

Janis Ian, American singer/songwriter, author

J

Joan Jett, American musician
 Sir Elton John, British singer, musician, composer
 Jasper Johns, artist
 Angelina Jolie, American actress
 Janis Joplin, American singer

K

John Maynard Keynes, British economist
 Billie Jean King, tennis player
 Andrew Kinloch, member of boy band Phixx
 Elvira Kurt, Canadian comedian

L

Nathan Lane, American actor and singer
 k d lang, Canadian country and blues singer, musician
 Laurier LaPierre, Canadian broadcaster and senator
 Chris Lea, former leader of the Green Party of Canada, first openly gay party leader in Canada
 Mark Leduc, Canadian Olympic medallist, boxing, 1992
 Sook-Yin Lee, Canadian radio host, former MuchMusic VJ
 Annie Leibowitz, American photographer
 Liberace, American musician
 Brian Linehan, Canadian TV personality
 Lindsay Lohan, American actress
 Greg Louganis, US Olympic high-diver

M

Ann-Marie MacDonald, Canadian author and playwright
 Ashley MacIsaac, Canadian fiddler from Cape Breton
 Irshad Manji, Canadian journalist, author, and “Muslim Refusenik”
 Robert Mapplethorpe, American artist, photographer
 Christopher Marlowe, Elizabethan playwright
 Heather Matarazzo, American actress
 Johnny Mathis, singer
 Somerset Maugham, British writer and dramatist
 Amélie Mauresmo, French tennis player
 Roddy McDowall, American actor and photographer
 Sir Ian McKellen, British actor
 Margaret Mead, anthropologist
 Réal Ménard, former Canadian member of parliament
 Rick Mercer, Canadian television comedian
 Freddie Mercury, British musician (Queen)
 Michelangelo, Renaissance painter and sculptor
 George Michael, British singer (Wham)
 Harvey Milk, American politician
 Sal Mineo, American actor
 Jon Moss, British musician (Culture Club)
 Megan Mullally, American actress

**N**

Kathy Najimy, American actress
 Martina Navratilova, tennis champion
 Émile Nelligan, Canadian poet

O

Sinéad O'Connor, Irish singer
 Rosie O'Donnell, American comedian
 Brian Orser, figure skater

P

Camille Paglia, American author and social critic
 David Paisley, British actor
 Anna Paquin, Canadian actress
 Queen Pen, rap singer
 Anthony Perkins, American actor
 Linda Perry, singer
 Philip II of France
 David Hyde Pierce, American actor
 Pink, pop singer
 Danny Pintauro, American actor
 Plato, Greek philosopher
 Carole Pope, Canadian rock singer
 Cole Porter, American composer and lyricist

R

Robert Reed, American actor
 Richard I (Richard the Lion Heart)

Adrienne Rich, American poet and critic
 Svend Robinson, former Canadian member of parliament
 Cesar Romero, actor
 Jane Rule, Canadian author
 RuPaul, personality

S

Emanuel Sandhu, Canadian figure skater
 Dick Sargent, American actor (second "Darrin" on *Bewitched*)
 Shyam Selvadurai, Canadian novelist
 Fred Schneider, lead singer of the B-52s
 Bill Siksay, former Canadian member of parliament
 Mario Silva, former Canadian member of parliament
 Bryan Singer, movie director
 Bessie Smith, American blues singer
 George Smitherman, Canadian politician
 Socrates, Greek philosopher
 Solon, Greek statesman
 Susan Sontag, American essayist and novelist
 Gertrude Stein, American expatriate author
 Michael Stipe, American singer (R.E.M.), film producer



T

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, Russian composer
 Neil Tennant, British musician (Pet Shop Boys)
 Mark Tewksbury, Canadian gold medallist, swimming, 1992 Summer Olympics
 Scott Thompson, Canadian comedian and actor
 Lily Tomlin, American comedian, actress
 Pete Townshend, guitarist of The Who
 Michel Tremblay, Canadian writer

V

Jim Verraros, singer, actor, *American Idol* contestant
 Gianni Versace, Italian fashion designer
 Gore Vidal, American writer

W

Rufus Wainwright, Canadian/American singer
 Andy Warhol, American artist and pop art icon
 Sarah Waters, British author
 Jane Weidlin, guitarist/singer for the Go-Go's
 Mae West, American actress
 Walt Whitman, American poet
 Oscar Wilde, Irish playwright
 Thornton Wilder, playwright
 Tennessee Williams, American playwright
 Paul Winfield, American actor
 Virginia Woolf, British author

Y

Will Young, British pop singer

Note

- 1 This list is a modified version of a list of famous LGB people available at www.wordiq.com/definition/List_of_famous_gay,_lesbian_or_bisexual_people.

Programs and Organizations

- Alberta Children and Youth Services—Family Violence Prevention, Bullying and Youth Strategies
www.b-free.ca
www.bullyfreealberta.ca
- Alberta Teachers' Association Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Subcommittee
[www.teachers.ab.ca/For Members/Professional Development/Diversity and Human Rights/ Sexual Orientation](http://www.teachers.ab.ca/For_Members/Professional_Development/Diversity_and_Human_Rights/Sexual_Orientation)
- AlbertaTrans
www.albertatrans.org
- American Library Association: Rainbow Books
[www.ala.org/ata/mgrps/rts/glbtrt/rainbow/ index.cfm](http://www.ala.org/ata/mgrps/rts/glbtrt/rainbow/index.cfm)
- British Columbia Teachers' Federation Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning (LGBTQ) Issues in Schools
www.bctf.ca/SocialJustice.aspx
- Calgary Health Region (Alberta Health Services)
www.teachingsexualhealth.ca
- Camp fyrefly
www.fyrefly.ualberta.ca
- Canadian Federation for Sexual Health
www.cfsh.ca
- Canadian Rainbow Health Coalition
www.rainbowhealth.ca
- Centre for Suicide Prevention
www.suicideinfo.ca
- Colage: People with a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender or Queer Parent
<http://www.colage.org>
- EGALE Canada
www.egale.ca
- Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario Challenging Homophobia and Heterosexism
www.etfo.ca/AdvocacyandAction
- Gender Identity Research and Education Society
www.gires.org.uk
- It Gets Better Project
[http://www.youtube.com/user/ itgetsbetterproject](http://www.youtube.com/user/itgetsbetterproject)
- President Obama [http://www.youtube.com/ watch?v=geyAFbSDPVk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=geyAFbSDPVk)
- Canada [http://www.youtube.com/ watch?v=5p-AT18d9IU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5p-AT18d9IU)
- Rick Mercer [http://www.youtube.com/ watch?v=t1Y7qpiu2RQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t1Y7qpiu2RQ)
- Pixar [http://www.youtube.com/ watch?v=4a4MR8oI_B8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4a4MR8oI_B8)
- Bishop Gene Robinson (Episcopal Church) [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mPZ5e UrNF24&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mPZ5eUrNF24&feature=related)
- Institute for Sexual Minority Studies and Services
www.ismss.ualberta.ca
- Mental Health America What Does Gay Mean? How to Talk with Kids About Sexual Orientation and Prejudice.
[www.mentalhealthamerica.net/go/ what-does-gay-mean](http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/go/what-does-gay-mean)
- PFLAG Canada
<http://www.pflagcanada.ca>
- Pride Calgary
<http://www.pridecalgary.ca>
- Pride Centre of Edmonton
<http://pridecentreofedmonton.org>
- Public Health Agency of Canada
www.publichealth.gc.ca/sti
- Rainbow Health Ontario
www.rainbowhealthontario.ca
- Rainbow Resource Centre
www.rainbowresourcecentre.org
- Safe Schools Manitoba
www.safeschoolsmanitoba.ca
- Sexuality and U
www.sexualityandu.ca
- Sherbourne Health Centre
www.sherbourne.on.ca
- Supporting Our Youth
www.soytoronto.org
- Vancouver Coastal Health Authority
<http://transhealth.vch.ca>
- World Professional Association for Transgender Health
www.wpath.org

PRISM

Toolkit for Safe and Caring
Discussions About Sexual
and Gender Minorities

ELEMENTARY EDITION

Authorized by Alberta Education for:

- *Grades 1–6 Health and Life Skills*
- *Grades 1–6 Safe and Caring Schools*

*The PRISM toolkit was made possible by the
financial support of the ATA Educational Trust.*

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