

Creating a Gender-inclusive School Culture

Participants' handouts



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BC Teachers' Federation
100-550 West 6th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V5Z 4P2

Non-Trans Privilege or Cisgender Privilege List

This list is based on Peggy McIntosh's *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack*.

1. During the day, I can leave my home without feeling at risk of physical violence or verbal harassment.
2. I am able to tick a box on a form without someone disagreeing and telling you me to lie.
3. Strangers do not ask me what my "real name" (birth name) is and then assume that they have a right to call me by that name.
4. I am not excluded from events which are either explicitly men-born-men or women-born-women only (e.g., gender-based sports teams).
5. My politics are not questioned based on the choices I make with regard to my body.
6. I can use the bathroom designated for the gender to which I identify, without feeling fearful.
7. When being sexually intimate, I do not have to worry that my partner won't be able to deal with my body.
8. I don't have to hear "So have you had surgery?" or "Oh, so you're REALLY a boy/girl," when I come out to someone.
9. I am not expected to constantly defend my medical decisions.
10. Strangers don't assume they can ask me what my genitals look like and how I have sex.
11. People do not disrespect me by using incorrect pronouns even after they've been corrected.
12. I do not have to worry that someone wants to be my friend or have sex with me in order to prove her or his "hipness" or "good" politics.
13. I do not have to worry about whether or not I will be able to find a safe and accessible bathroom or locker room to use.
14. When engaging in political action, I do not have to worry about the gendered repercussions of being arrested (i.e., What will happen to me if the cops find out that my genitals do not match my gendered appearance? Will I end up in a cell with people of my own gender?).
15. I do not have to choose between either invisibility ("passing") or being consistently "othered" and/or tokenized based on my gender.

16. When I go to the gym or a public pool, I can use the showers.
17. If I end up in the emergency room, I do not have to worry that my gender will keep me from receiving appropriate treatment (e.g., “Your nose is running and your throat hurts? Must be due to the hormones.”).
18. My health insurance provider (or public health system) does not specifically exclude me from receiving benefits or treatments available to others because of my gender.
19. When I express my identity in my daily life, I am not considered "mentally ill" by the medical establishment.
20. I am not required to undergo extensive psychological evaluation in order to receive medical care.
21. The medical establishment does not serve as a "gatekeeper" which allows self-determination of what happens to my body (e.g., accessing an abortion, accessing hormones).
22. People do not use me as a scapegoat for their own unresolved gender issues.
23. My validity as a man/woman/human is not based upon how much surgery I've had or how well I "pass" as a non-trans person.
24. When being intimate, I do not have to worry that my partner will question her or his own sexual orientation because of my body.
25. I have the ability to walk through the world and generally blend in, not being constantly stared or gawked at, whispered about, pointed at, or laughed at because of my gender expression.

See the sociometry of oppression:

bctf.ca/uploadedFiles/Social_Justice/Issues/Homophobia/SociometryOfOppressionsLesson.pdf

<http://new.oberlin.edu/dotAsset/2012181.pdf>

<http://itspronouncedmeterosexual.com>

**Trans Terminology
Answer Key**

1. Advocate	A. Someone who is not lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, Two-Spirit, queer or questioning (LGBTQ) but is supportive of and advocates for the rights and equality of LGBTQ people.
2. Transphobia	B. Acts of discrimination directed at trans individuals and/or those who are perceived as such are based on ignorance, prejudice and stereotyping.
3. Two-spirit	C. An Aboriginal term describing the embodiment of both masculine and feminine spirits. This identity is not limited to gender expression or sexuality, but encompasses them both while incorporating a spiritual element.
4. Medical transition	D. A term most commonly used to refer to the medical process that a trans person may go through when shifting from one gender expression to another. This may include steps such as hormone replacement therapy and/or surgeries.
4. Gender expression	E. The ways a person presents her or his sense of gender to others, e.g., through clothes, hairstyle, mannerisms, etc.
5. Gender spectrum	F. The idea that there are many gender identities (woman, man, cisgender, trans, Two-Spirit) and a range of gender expressions (ways people present their gender identity through hairstyle, clothing, behaviours, etc.).
7. Trans	G. An umbrella term that can be used to describe people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from what they were assigned at birth. Some trans people may choose to medically transition by taking hormones, or having surgery. Some trans people may choose to socially transition by changing their name, clothing, hair, etc.
8. Social transition	H. The social process that a trans person may go through when shifting from one gender expression to another. This may include steps such as changes in style of dress and the selection of a new name and pronouns.
9. Pangender	I. A person who identifies and or expresses the many shades of gender. Multi-gender and omni-gender are other terms used.
10. Genderqueer	J. A term which refers to individuals or groups who identify outside of the male/female binary. This is a politicized term or identity often used by people who intentionally challenge dominant gender norms.

11. MTF	K. Generally used to refer to anyone assigned male at birth, but who identifies or expresses their gender as female all or part of the time.
12. Gender non-conforming	L. A term that often refers to people who express gender in ways that defers from social expectations of the sex and gender assigned to them at birth.
13. Cisgender	M. A person whose gender identity and gender expression matches the gender typically associated with their biological sex. For example, a female who identifies as a woman.
14. FTM	N. Generally used to refer to anyone assigned female at birth, but who identifies or expresses their gender as male all or part of the time.
15. Gender fluid	O. A fluctuating mix of the gender identities available.
16. Intersex	P. Refers to people whose reproductive or sexual anatomy is not easily defined as male or female. There are a variety of ways someone could fit in this category, ranging from having ambiguous genitalia to having a mixture of XX and XY chromosomes. The word hermaphrodite was historically used to describe these individuals. However, this word is considered highly offensive.
17. Pronoun	Q. The word one uses to describe themselves, such as he, she, they, ze, hir, etc.
18. Gender identity	R. A person's internal sense of being a man, a woman, genderqueer, etc. This is not the same thing as a person's biological sex.
19. Gender dysphoria	S. A psychological condition marked by significant emotional distress and impairment in life functioning, caused by a lack of congruence between gender identity and biological sex assigned at birth. (dictionary.com)

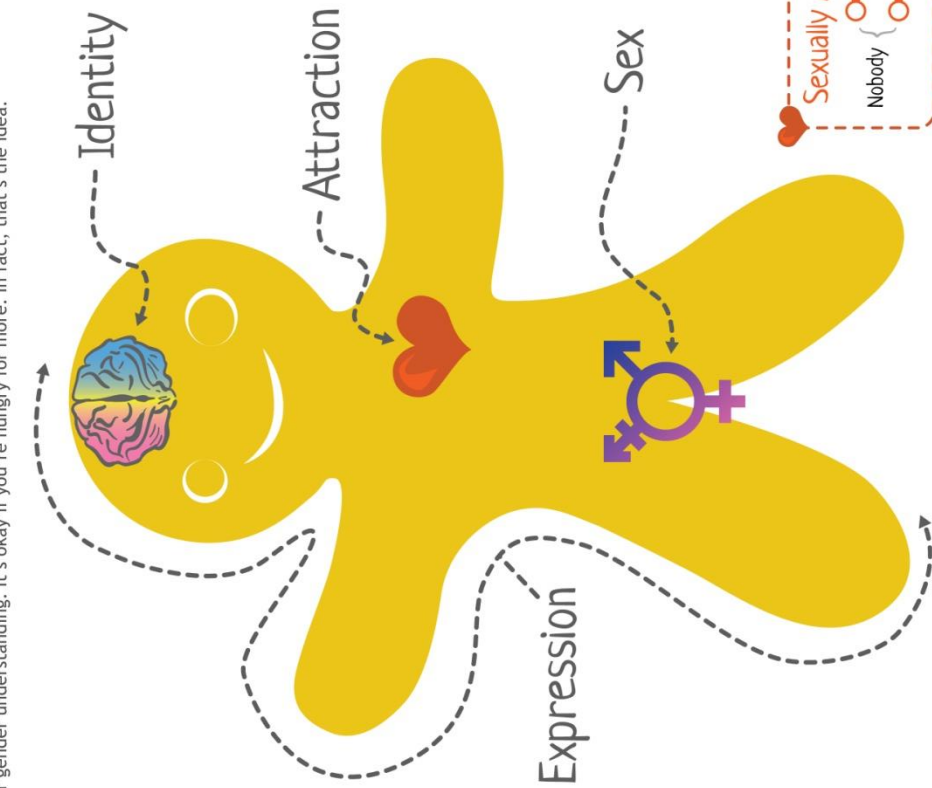


Terminology borrowed from QMUNITY's *Queer Terminology from A to Q* www.qmunity.ca

The Genderbread Person v3.3

Gender is one of those things everyone thinks they understand, but most people don't. Like *Inception*. Gender isn't binary. It's not either/or. In many cases it's both/and. A bit of this, a dash of that. This tasty little guide is meant to be an appetizer for gender understanding. It's okay if you're hungry for more. In fact, that's the idea.

by its pronounced **METROsexual**.com



Gender Identity

What's on the right? Indicates a lack of

Plot a point on both continua in each category to represent your identity, combine all ingredients to form your Genderbread

4 (of infinite) possible plot and label combos

Woman-ness / Man-ness

How you, in your head, define your gender, based on how much you align (or don't align) with what you understand to be the options for gender.

Options: "woman", "man", "two-spirit", "genderqueer"

Gender Expression

Feminine / Masculine

The ways you present gender, through your actions, dress, and demeanor, and how those presentations are interpreted based on gender norms.

Options: "femme", "gender neutral", "butch", "androgynous"

Biological Sex

Female-ness / Male-ness

The physical sex characteristics you're born with and develop, including genitalia, body shape, voice pitch, body hair, hormones, chromosomes, etc.

Options: "female", "intersex", "male", "MTF Female"

Sexually Attracted to

Women/Females/Femininity / Men/Males/Masculinity

Nobody

Romantically Attracted to

Women/Females/Femininity / Men/Males/Masculinity

Nobody

In each grouping, circle all that apply to you and plot a point, depicting the aspects of gender toward which you experience attraction.

Two Spirit: Past, Present & Future

By Harlan Pruden, Co-founder and Council Member for the NorthEast Two-Spirit Society

On the land we know as North America, there were approximately 400 distinct indigenous Nations. Of that number, 155 have documented multiple gender traditions. Two-spirit is a contemporary term that refers to those traditions where some individuals' spirits are a blending of male and female spirit.

The existence of two-spirit people challenges the rigid binary worldview of the North American colonizers and missionaries, not just of the binary gender system, but a generalized system where binaries are the norm. The two-spirits' mere existence threatened the colonizers' core beliefs; the backlash was violent. Historical sketches, housed at the New York City public library, depict two-spirit people being attacked by colonizers' dogs. Word of this brutal treatment spread quickly from nation to nation. Many nations decided to take action to protect their honored and valued two-spirit people. Some nations hid them by asking them to replace their dress, a mixture of men and women's clothing, with the attire of their biological sex. After years of colonization, some of those very same nations denied ever having a tradition that celebrated and honored their two-spirit people.

The two-spirit tradition is primarily a question of gender, not sexual orientation. Sexual orientation describes the relationship a person of one gender has with an othergendered person. Gender describes an individual's expected role within a community. Within traditional Native communities, there was an expectation that women farmed/gathered food and cooked while men hunted big game. Although there was division of labour along gender lines, there was no gender-role hierarchy. Within the

Native social construct of gender, a community could not survive without both of the equal halves of a whole. The Native commitment to gender equality opened the door for the possibility of multiple genders, without the idea that a man was taking on a lesser gender by placing himself in a woman's role or vice versa for women assuming men's roles.

Gender Roles of Two-Spirit People

People of two-spirit gender functioned as craftspeople, shamans, medicine-givers, mediators, and/or social workers. In many Native communities, men's and women's styles of speech were distinct; sometimes even different dialects were spoken. The two-spirit people knew how to speak both in the men's and women's ways. They were the only ones allowed to go between the men's and the women's camps. They brokered marriages, divorces, settled arguments, and fostered open lines of communication between the sexes. Their proficiency in mediation often included their work as communicators between the seen (physical) and unseen (spiritual) worlds. Many of the great visionaries, dreamers, shamans, or medicine givers were two-spirit people. In some traditions, a war party could not be dispatched until their two-spirit person consulted the spirits of the unseen world and then gave their blessings.



When a family was not properly raising their children, it has been documented that two-spirit people would intervene and assume responsibility as the primary caretaker. Sometimes, families would ask a two-spirit person for assistance in rearing their children. In this respect, two-spirit people were similar to modern day social workers.

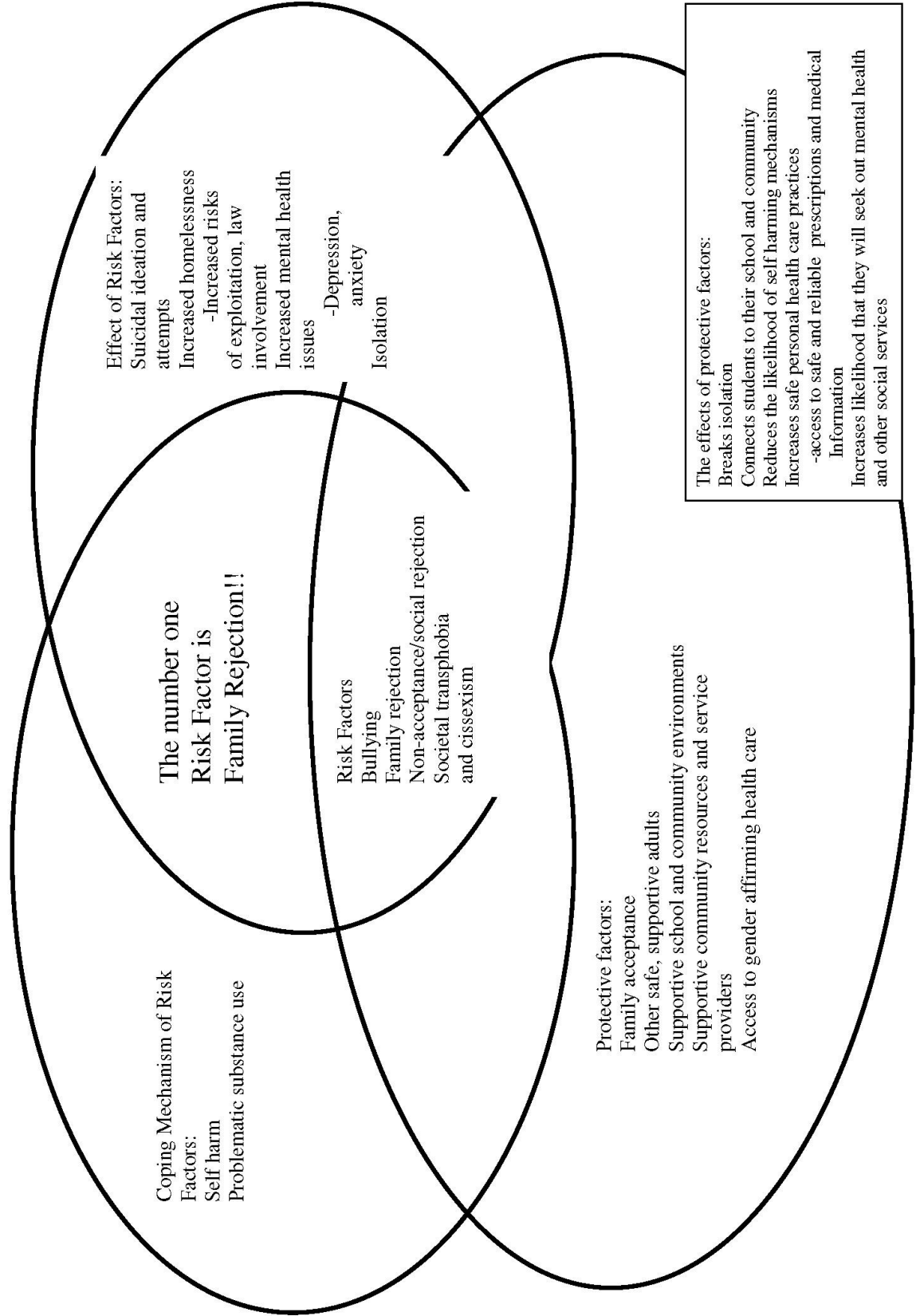
It is traditional to present gifts at gatherings to those who exemplify the “spirit” of the community or who have done the most for the community. Two-spirit people were respected and honoured with gifts when they attended gatherings. They did not keep the gifts, but passed them on to spread the wealth.

Remembering Our Traditions

Since the time of colonization many Natives have forgotten the “old” way. Many converted to non-Native religions, which did not accept traditional spirituality and community structures. However, there are groups of elders and activists that have quietly kept the two-spirit tradition alive. In some nations that have revived this tradition, or brought it once again into the light, two-spirit people are again fulfilling some of the roles and regaining the honour and respect of their communities.

The two-spirit tradition is a very rich one that deserves a closer examination. The LGBT activists engaged in achieving equality for all should remember that there was a time when people with a blend of male and female spirits were accepted and honored for their special qualities. Two-spirit people are a part of the fabric of this land and stand here today as a testament of their collective strength and fortitude.

Article reprinted from *The Gender Spectrum: What Educators Need to Know*, Pride Education Network,



Best practices

- Confidentiality and privacy
- Names and pronouns
- Official records and student information
- Dress
- Sex-segregated activities
- Access to physical education and sports
- Washrooms and change rooms accessibility
- Student transfers
- Resolving conflict
- Access to information
- Harassment and bullying
- Student self-identification

Best Practices scenarios

Answers

Confidentiality and Privacy

You are in the staff room and overhear one teacher talking about another colleague. They are speculating that your colleague must be trans by the way they walk. You know your colleague to be a very private person.

- a) **A student's trans status, legal name, or gender assigned at birth may constitute confidential personal information that will be kept confidential unless its disclosure is legally required or unless the independent student or the student's parent(s)/guardian have given authorization.**
- b) **In situations where school staff or administrators are required by law to use or to report a trans student's legal name or sex, such as for purposes of data collection, school staff and administrators will adopt practices to avoid the inadvertent disclosure of such information.**
- c) **Students' rights to discuss and express their gender identity and/or gender expression openly and to decide when, with whom, and how much private information to share, will recognized and protected.**

Names and pronouns

A grade 8 student you have known to be a girl approaches you after class to tell you in confidence that they prefer to be called a new name "Alex" and want to have the "they" pronoun used.

Trans students will be addressed by the name and pronoun that corresponds to their gender identity.

Official Records and Student Information

A student is asked to fill out a form, and you note that one of your female students has ticked male. You approach the student and ask them to tell you about this, they tell you that they are really a boy, but ask you to not tell their mom!

Whenever possible and permitted by law, requests made by an independent student, or the parent/guardian, to change the student's official record to reflect their preferred name and/or gender identity will be accommodated.

Whenever possible, a student's preferred name and/or gender identity will be included on class lists, timetables, student files, identification cards, etc.

To protect student safety, communications between school and home shall use a student's legal name and the pronoun corresponding to the student's gender assigned at birth unless the independent student or the parent/guardian has specified otherwise.

Dress

Jeremy walks into his English class wearing makeup and long dangling earrings. A bunch of students in the corner point and start laughing.

Students have the right to dress in a manner consistent with their gender identity or gender expression. This includes students who may dress in a manner that is not consistent with societal expectations of masculinity/femininity.

Sex-segregated activities

“Friends for Life” —an afterschool mentoring program with trained facilitators for grade 7 student articulating to high school- wants to run out of your classroom. They deal with issues around peer pressure, puberty, and other others. They offer both a boys' mentoring group and a girls' group.

Schools will reduce or eliminate the practice of segregating students by sex. In situations where students are segregated by sex, such as for health education classes, trans students will have the option to be included in the group that corresponds to their gender identity.

Access to physical education and sports:

You are volunteering to coach the boys' basketball team. A girl student asks you if she can try out.

Where possible, students will be permitted to participate in any sex-segregated recreational and competitive athletic activities, in accordance with their gender identity. Due to issues of disclosure and safety, some students may wish to participate in a sex-segregated activity that is not aligned with their gender identity.

Trans students shall be provided the same opportunities to participate in physical education as all other students, shall not be asked or required to have physical education outside of the assigned class time, and shall be permitted to participate in any sex-segregated activities in accordance with their gender identity if they so choose.

Washroom and change room accessibility

An F to M trans student tells you he doesn't feel comfortable using the boys' bathroom and that two other male students had threatened him the last time he went to the bathroom.

The use of washrooms and change rooms by trans students shall be assessed on a case-by-case basis with the goals of maximizing the student's social integration, ensuring the student's safety and comfort, minimizing stigmatization and providing equal opportunity to participate in physical education classes and sports.

Trans students shall have access to the washroom and change room that corresponds to their gender identity. Students who desire increased privacy will be provided with a reasonable alternative washroom and/or changing area. Any alternative arrangement will be provided in a way that protects the student's ability to keep their trans status confidential.

The decision with regard to washroom and change room use shall be made in consultation with the trans student.

The Board will strive to make available an all-gender/gender neutral washroom at all school locations and worksites.

Student transfers

A student of yours has a trans dad. Some of the other students have learned of this and have begun teasing your student. This has continued for weeks despite your efforts. You know a nearby school has a very inclusive environment because there has been a trans teacher there for years. Do you recommend the student transfer?

Schools will aim to keep trans students at their original school site. Schools will take significant measures to address transphobia. However, should the student wish to transfer, this decision would be made in consultation with the student, guardians(s)/parent(s) and school counselors. It is not necessary to disclose the student's gender identity and/or gender expression as the reason for transfer.

Resolving conflict

Two students in your class were best friends until one of them transitioned. Since then, they have been fighting in the hallways on almost a weekly basis. The school staff is frustrated with both students. The principal has called the guardians for both student into a meeting to try to resolve this issue.

Disputes will be resolved in a manner that involves the trans student and an adult advocate (teacher, service provider, parent/guardian) in the decision-making process to maximize inclusiveness.

What to do if a child comes out to you?

Guidelines for Counselling LGBTQ and Questioning Students

bctf.ca/SocialJustice.aspx?id=18426

LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer) students want what all students want: to be listened to and cared about. Here are some suggestions for counsellors, when LGBTQ students need to talk. “Queer” is sometimes used to refer to LGBT and Questioning persons. This term has been reclaimed by some LGBTQs as a positive one to describe themselves, but be cautious in using it.

- Be calm. Be honest with yourself about your level of awareness of “queer” issues, your own comfort level, your own stereotypes, and your limitations. If you feel uncomfortable with the situation, discuss this with the student and suggest asking someone else to take over. Whatever your feelings, avoid any judgements about sexuality generally or about homosexuality specifically. Do some research about the issues, and about available resources.
- Be relaxed. Set a positive tone for the meeting so that the student knows that he/she has permission to talk freely with you about any concern. Acknowledge the student’s trust in you.
- Respect confidentiality. Within legal limits, assure the student that what is said will not be shared with colleagues or anyone else, including parents, unless the student has given his/her permission. You should explain the limits of confidentiality and your legal obligations around child protection and safety.
- Follow the lead of the student, by using the vocabulary he/she uses: *homosexual, lesbian, FTM, bi*, etc. “*Queer*” is being used more commonly (and is quite acceptable in certain populations), but be careful in using this term. Words like *queer* and *dyke* are now being reclaimed as positive terms, but wait to see if the student uses these words, before you do.
- Students may appear confused about their sexual orientation and/or gender identity, when in fact, they are only confused about correct terminology. If you conclude that the issue involves same-sex feelings (“*So, what you are concerned about is that you have feelings for other girls.*”), then you can help by offering and explaining terms; the students will probably let you know which words apply to them.
- Listen carefully to feelings expressed by the student; help to clarify feelings. Use gentle questions or reflect what you have heard. Use increasingly focused questions when appropriate.
- Remember that the student may be experiencing grief reactions because of negative stereotypes. This student may have lost (or may legitimately fear losing) the connection with family and/or friends.
- Highlight the diversity in beliefs, behaviour and ways of living within the LGBTQ communities (and the important difference between sexual orientation and gender identity). Students need to know that gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and trans youth definitely do not all share the same experiences or feelings.
- Share with the student what community resources and support systems are available (have information pamphlets readily available). Assist the student in deciding when/how to reach out for that support. Make sure that your information is timely, not rushed because of your need to “do something.”

- Ask if there are good friends that he/she can trust and depend on. Discuss how the student's parents might react. Be aware of cultural differences that may affect the student, their peers and their family.
- If trust and openness exist, sexual behaviour may need to be addressed. Students are often in need of clear guidance regarding safer sex practices, relationships, peer dynamics and violence prevention.

When students disclose their sexual orientation

bctf.ca/SocialJustice.aspx?id=6102

As a teacher/counsellor, what are helpful responses?

It's okay if you are lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgendered.

I can appreciate how difficult it must have been to tell me this.

If you are lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgendered, what are the kinds of things that worry you the most?

What kind of support do you think you need from me?

I may not have a great deal of knowledge in this area, but I assure you that I will find some resources for you.

As a teacher/counsellor, what responses are not helpful?

How do you know?

You're too young to make a decision about something like that.

How can you know that if you've never had sex with someone of the opposite sex?

It's just a phase you are going through.

Don't worry; a lot of young people experiment with or fantasize about the same sex. It doesn't necessarily mean that you're lesbian or gay.

It's fine that you've told me, but you must not tell _____.

I think you've got a lot of other issues to work on right now, so I don't think you should focus on this.

Maybe you just haven't met the right person yet.

Adapted from Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Youth Program, Central Toronto Youth Services Rainbow Resource Centre, Winnipeg, Canada 2002

Some ways to be a good trans advocate

- Don't ever out a trans person. This is dangerous to their safety & can invalidate their identity. Likewise, be aware of your surroundings when discussing trans issues with a trans person. For their safety & comfort, they may prefer not to discuss these topics in public places or among strangers.
- Always use the pronouns & name the person wants you to use. If you're unsure, ASK! If you make a mistake, correct yourself, & politely (& subtly, if possible) correct others if they use the wrong pronoun.
- Ask when & where it's safe to use their chosen name & pronouns (e.g., if a trans person is not out at home, ask them how you should refer to them around their family, etc). Don't ask trans people what their "real" name is (i.e., the one they were born with). If you know their birth name, do not divulge it to others.
- Instead of using prefixes like bio- or real- to designate that someone is not trans, use the prefix "cis-". Two reasons for this: one, using "real" or "bio" sets up a dichotomy in which trans people are not considered "real" or "biological." Two, using the term cis- alters the framework so that cisgender people are not the default. This shift in language can help make transphobia & gender privilege more obvious.
- Instead of saying someone was born a boy (or a girl), try saying they were assigned male at birth (or were female-assigned). These terms recognize the difference between sex & gender, and emphasize the ways in which sex & gender are assigned to individuals at birth, rather than being innate, binary or immutable qualities.
- Don't confuse gender with sexual preference. Trans people, like non-trans people, are straight, gay, bisexual, pansexual, asexual, etc. Gender is not tied to sexual preference, & there are a million ways to express desire.
- Don't ask trans people about their bodies, how they have sex, what their genitals are like, etc. It's rude & none of your business. It can help to think about whether you would ask these questions of a non-trans person. Trans people's bodies are not a public forum.
- Don't ask about surgery or hormone status; don't ask "when are you going to have the surgery?" or "are you on hormones?" Like non-trans people, our medical histories & bodies can be intensely personal & private. If trans people want to share these details with you, allow them to do so on their own terms.
- Don't assume the only way to transition is through hormones/surgery, & understand that medical transition is very often based on economic status. Recognize the classism inherent in associating medical transition with "authentic" trans identities.
- Don't assume all trans people want hormones and/or surgery, or to transition at all.

- Don't assume all trans people feel "trapped in the wrong body." This is an oversimplification and not the way (all) trans people feel.
- Don't assume all trans people identify as "men" or "women." Many trans people and genderqueer people identify as both, neither, or something altogether different.
- Don't tell trans people what is appropriate to their gender (e.g., trans women should grow their hair out & wear dresses). Like non-trans people, we have varying forms of gender expression.
- Recognize the diversity of trans & genderqueer lives. Remember that these identities are part of other identities, and intersect with race, class, sexual preference, age, etc.
- Do listen if a trans person chooses to talk to you about their gender identity. Be honest about things you don't understand—don't try to fake it!
- Be aware of places trans people may not be able to go (pun intended). Be understanding if a trans person doesn't feel safe using a gendered bathroom or locker room. If your organization is holding an event, designate a gender-neutral bathroom in the building.
- Recognize that not all trans people or genderqueer folks are out there trying to smash the gender binary. Recognize that it's not their responsibility. If you want to smash the gender binary, then you do it
- Don't ask trans people to educate you. Do your own homework & research. Understand that there is a difference between talking to individuals about their preferences/perspectives and forcing someone to be your educator. Try not to view individuals as spokespeople; the trans communities are diverse, not one monolithic voice or viewpoint.
- Don't assume trans men are exempt from male privilege, misogyny, sexism, etc, just because of a so-called "girl past."
- Recognize that trans women deal with sexism in a very real way (on top of transphobia).
- Recognize that trans women deserve access to "women-only" spaces/programs/shelters/etc.
- Recognize your privilege & prejudices as a normatively gendered person.
- Think about what makes you uncomfortable & why.
- Don't let transphobia slide. Confront it as you would confront all other forms of oppression. Trans issues are rarely discussed & when they are it is often in a negative light. Transphobia is equally oppressive as (& works in conjunction with) sexism, homophobia, racism, classism, etc.
- Talk about trans issues/rights. Engage people in discussions & share your knowledge. The majority of "information" people have about trans issues is based on stereotypes & assumptions.

- Be aware of the vital role you play as a non-trans person. Remember that the way you talk about trans people (e.g., using the right pronouns) influences how others perceive us & can make a difference in whether we pass, & whether we feel safe/comfortable. Always remember that people may be more likely to listen to & take cues from non-trans people than from trans people. What you say & do matters!
- Don't just mourn or take action when trans people are murdered. Celebrate trans lives & work at making trans & genderqueer issues more visible on a day-to-day basis.
- Don't tokenize. Simply adding the "T" to LGB doesn't make you or your organization hip, progressive, or an advocate. Make sure you have the resources, information & understanding to deserve that.
- Above all respect and support trans people in their lives & choices.
<http://lgbcenter.ucdavis.edu/lgbt-education/trans-ally-tip>

Making your class welcoming for trans students

(Adapted from <http://cruciferous.livejournal.com/15984.html>)

- Do not call the roll or otherwise read names aloud until you have given them a chance to state what they prefer to be called, in case the class list shows a former name.
- Allow students to self-identify the name they go by, whether they prefer “Ms.” or “Mr.” and what pronouns they prefer. Don’t make assumptions based on what is on the class list or the student’s appearance. A great way to accomplish this is to pass around a seating chart or sign-in sheet and ask them to indicate these three items in writing, and then use it when you call on them or refer to them in class.
- If a student has an old name they do not use that you are aware of because you knew them before they changed it, or because it is on the class list, do not use it or reveal it to others. Well-meaning comments like “I knew Gina when she was Bill,” even if meant supportively, reveal what might feel like personal information to the student, and unnecessarily draw attention to their trans identity.
- Set a tone of respect in the classroom. At the beginning of each semester when establishing the guidelines for class (don’t surf the internet while in class, do the reading, etc.), include something like: “It is important that this classroom be a respectful environment where everyone can participate comfortably. One part of respectful behaviour is that everyone should be referred to by what they go by. This means it is important to pronounce people’s names correctly, to refer to them by the pronouns they prefer, etc.” Add in whatever guidelines respect you see as important, but include pronoun usage since people are often unaware of the issue. You can hand out the attached pronoun etiquette sheet to students if you want to give them more information on the issue.
- If you make a mistake about someone’s pronoun, correct yourself. Going on as if it did not happen is actually less respectful than making the correction. This also saves the person who was misidentified from having to correct an incorrect pronoun assumption that has now been planted in the minds of classmates or anyone else who heard the mistake. As teachers, especially, it is essential that we model respectful behavior.
- Whether in school or after-school hours, when speaking with students in groups, or when speaking with staff, when someone else makes a pronoun mistake, correct them. It is polite to provide a correction, whether or not the person whose pronoun was misused is present, in order to avoid future mistakes and in order to correct the mistaken assumption that might now have been planted in the minds of any other participants in the conversation who heard the mistake. Allowing the mistake to go uncorrected ensures future uncomfortable interactions for the person who is being misidentified.
- Never ask personal questions of trans people that you would not ask of others. Because of the sensationalist media coverage of trans people’s lives, there is often an assumption that

personal questions are appropriate. Never ask about a trans person's body or medical care, their old name, why or how they know they are trans, their sexual orientation or practices, their family's reaction to their gender identity, or any other questions that are irrelevant to your relationship with them unless they invite you to do so or voluntarily share the information.

- If you meet a student outside the classroom in a setting where they did not already get to self-identify, and you are not sure of the proper pronoun for them, ask. One way to do this is by sharing your own. "I use masculine pronouns. I want to make sure to address you correctly. How do you like to be addressed?" This may seem like a strange thing to do but a person who often experiences being addressed incorrectly may see it as a sign of respect that you are interested in getting it right rather than making assumptions. If you are not sure and do not want to ask, you can also avoid using pronouns—but making a pronoun assumption is the worst option.

Taking it further

If you want to take your awareness of these issues further, here are some additional ideas to consider.

Educate yourself about trans history, trans law, and trans resistance. There are wonderful resources on the internet, in addition to many law review articles and books of all kinds. Some great resources for translaw information include the Transgender Law and Policy Institute (www.transgenderlaw.org), The Transgender Law Center (www.transgenderlawcenter.org), the Sylvia Rivera Law Project (www.srlp.org), and the TGI Justice Project (www.tgijp.org).

- Help your students learn how to talk about trans issues respectfully and understand their importance. Important trans legal struggles can be found in tax, trusts and estates, family law, employment, civil rights, criminal law and criminal procedure, administrative law, poverty law, housing, public benefits, torts, etc. These cases might be a chance for students to familiarize themselves with the obstacles facing a community that is severely underserved by the legal profession.
- Think about how gender norms, or ideas about what men and women should be like, might be being enforced in your classroom or in other parts of your life. What does it mean to stand up against the rules of gender, both in the law and in other areas of our lives? How might we be enforcing gender norms on our selves or our loved ones with well-meaning advice or guidance? Exploring these questions can deepen our commitment to gender self-determination for all people and to eliminating coercive systems that punish gender variance.

Pronoun etiquette

People often wonder how to be polite when it comes to problems of misidentifying another person's pronoun. Here are some general tips:

- If you make a mistake, correct yourself. Going on as if it did not happen is actually less respectful than making the correction. This also saves the person who was misidentified from having to correct an incorrect pronoun assumption that has now been planted in the minds of any other participants in the conversation who heard the mistake.
- If someone else makes a mistake, correct them. It is polite to provide a correction, whether or not the person whose pronoun was misused is present, in order to avoid future mistakes and in order to correct the mistaken assumption that might now have been planted in the minds of any other participants in the conversation who heard the mistake.
- If you aren't sure of a person's pronoun, ask. One way to do this is by sharing your own. "I use masculine pronouns. I want to make sure to address you correctly, how do you like to be addressed?" This may seem like a strange thing to do but a person who often experiences being addressed incorrectly may see it as a sign of respect that you are interested in getting it right.
- When facilitating a group discussion, ask people to identify their pronouns when they go around and do introductions. This will allow everyone in the room the chance to self-identify and to get each others' pronouns right the first time. It will also reduce the burden on anyone whose pronoun is often misidentified and may help them access the discussion more easily because they do not have to fear an embarrassing mistake.

Safety plan

Student's name: XXXXXXXX

School: XXXXXXXXXXXX Montessori Elementary

Teacher: XXXXXXXXXXXXXX EA: XXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Updated October 2, 2014; Draft created, September 30, 2014

Background: XXXX is a new student to our school. She is currently in grade two. She is a student with Gender Identity Disorder. This is a medical condition. XXXX's parents are very supportive and well educated about XXXX's medical condition. She has a younger brother in grade one, XXXX, who attends our school as well.

Present Performance: Currently, XXXX has adapted well to the new school setting. Her parents feel she is enjoying her new classmates and adults in her space and feels at ease. XXXX created a wish list for school: *"I want people to treat me like all other girls. I want to use the girls' bathroom. I only want the people who need to know, know."*

Student's strengths	Student's needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • great awareness of her own needs • outgoing with peers • self-advocacy • aware of the medical implications of being transgender 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • designated "go to" persons for support • staff awareness to use the affirmed gender • resources/supports at all levels (staff, school, family, and community)

Goal 1: XXXX will be able to explore and change, if she desires, her gender identity without any negative implications at the school level.

Goal 2: To normalize discussions at the school level to include gender when speaking/learning about diversity.

Actions:

Student

1. XXXX will use either of the private washrooms within in her classroom.
2. If outside her classroom, XXXX will use the girls' washroom observing the school wide expectation of privacy (closing and locking the stall door for example).
3. XXXX can tell her story if she chooses. We understand that it is not XXXX's job to educate others in regards to her Gender Identity Disorder.
4. XXXX will have designated support persons from whom she gets support or to whom she reports a problem to in a private way. The persons will be (teacher), (education assistant) and/or (Principal); although this is XXXX's choice. XXXX may report to any adult with whom she feels comfortable.
5. XXXX's brother will have a designated support person to get support or to whom he can report in a private way. We recommend the classroom teacher; although, this is (brother's) choice he may report to any adult with whom he feels comfortable.

Parents

1. The parents will keep the school informed of any updated information in regards to XXXX's medical condition and well-being.
2. The parents will be available to address other parent's concerns, if they arise, in the form of open communication and a personal letter.
3. The parents will reinforce that XXXX asks for support from her adult advocates should issues arise.
4. The parents will present to the staff on date to be determined.
5. The parents will communicate issues that are beyond the scope of the classroom to the school principal, to ensure timely solutions.

Classroom

1. The teacher and EA will ensure that washrooms are private and are available to all students.
2. The teacher and the EA will use the *affirmed* gender of all students, but will use gender-neutral language when relevant.
3. The teacher and EA will not use gender as criteria for splitting groups.
4. The classroom teacher and EA will be designated support persons.
5. Support will be given privately.
6. When whole class diversity lessons occur, the students will be coached to use appropriate language and be coached that curious questions with no intention to hurt are okay to be asked.

7. The teacher and EA will engage in communication with the family through phone, email, and/or school visits.

School Community/ School District

1. All staff members will receive ongoing training about gender diversity.
2. All staff members will be aware of affirmed pronoun use and gender-neutral language where appropriate.
3. The staff will support co-ed teams. If same gender teams are decided by an outside agency, XXXX will have the choice to join the team of the gender with whom she identifies.
4. The learning commons teacher (librarian), will purchase ERAC approved literature around the topic of gender diversity for the school library, and support a private collection.
5. Assemblies will include diversity training.
6. The school-based team will support ongoing communication with the family as well as a follow up as needed.
7. The staff at the Central Administration Office has, and will be, consulted around the student information system, BCeSIS to ensure that gender identifiers remain private.
8. If XXXX reports a problem to an adult it will be dealt with in a private way by the school staff. If the whole class is aware, specific lessons will occur at a classroom level to support correct language and respectful way to ask questions. If information spreads through the school, diversity training will be given to school as a whole.
If other parents have concerns or questions, the principal will:
Provide them with a letter written by the parents and an email containing the power point, "Transgender Children: Beyond the Myths."
Notify the parents that the letter has been handed out.
9. If a TTOC (aka-substitute teacher) is in for the classroom teacher, the TTOC will be notified by an email attachment that XXXXX Montessori is aware of gender diversity and specific student names will not be mentioned.
10. The staff's TTOC binders will include a summary of key understandings around gender diversity and acceptable practices and use of language.
11. Student Support Services will support on a consultation basis.

Values thermometer questions

1. Gender is binary: each person is either male or female.

Agree Disagree
A D
_____ I _____

2. Trans people can become cisgender again through therapy.

Agree Disagree
A D
_____ I _____

3. Gender is determined by one's anatomy.

Agree Disagree
A D
_____ I _____

4. People should use the washroom that corresponds with their genitalia.

Agree Disagree
A D
_____ I _____

5. Transgender people will eventually take hormones and get sex reassignment surgery.

Agree Disagree
A D
_____ I _____

Trans resources for students

Resources for Kindergarten–Grade 5 students

Books

10,000 Dresses, Ewert, Marcus, 2000 (Grades K–2)

Bailey dreams every night of beautiful dresses but her parents are not supportive. People tell Bailey that she shouldn't dream of dresses because Bailey was designated male at birth. But Bailey keeps on dreaming and one day she meets a girl who helps make all of her dreams come true!

Are You a Boy or a Girl? Jiménez, Karleen P., 2000 (Grades K–2)

A book to open the conversation about what it means to be a boy or a girl and the many possibilities of expressing oneself.

Be Who You Are, Carr, Jennifer, Authorhouse, USA, 2010 (Grades 3–6)

Nick was born a boy but knows that she is really a girl. This story tells of Nick sharing this information with her family and ultimately transitioning with their support.

Girl Named Dan, A, Mackall, Dandi Daley, Chelsea, MI : Sleeping Bear Press, 2008

Dandi enjoys nothing more than baseball, and so after the boys at school tell her their lunchtime game is now boys only, she enters an essay contest hoping to become a bat boy for the Kansas City A's, not realizing the contest is for boys only.

It's a George thing! Bedford, David, London : Egmont, 2008

George spends most of his time with his friends Peachy (a gorilla) and Moon (a lion). Peachy and Moon are very boisy boys given to body-building and weight-lifting. Neither of these are George's thing - but what is? One day, walking home, he hears some music coming from Priscilla the giraffe's river-boat. George's reaction is instinctive. George was born to dance!

It's Okay to be Different, Parr, Todd, 2001 (Grades K–2)

This book describes all kinds of differences and allows the question to be asked, "What's different about you?"

Melinda and the Class Photograph, Van der Beek, Deborah, Carolrhoda Books, 1992

Unwilling to wear a dress for the class photograph, tomboyish Melinda tries her hardest to get it dirty.

My Princess Boy, Kilodavis, Cheryl, Aladdin, New York, 2010 (Grades K–2)

Based on the author's son, this picture book tells of a princess boy, who loves running, wearing dresses, climbing trees, and being a princess, and his family loves him for exactly who he is.

Oliver Button is a Sissy, DePaola, Tomie, Harcourt Inc., 1999 (Grades K–3)

His classmates' taunts don't stop Oliver from doing what he likes best. DePaola identifies this story as being his own. It's a subtle, moving book about a child who is seen as being different.

Pink! Rickards, Lynne, New York: Chicken House, 2009

Teased in school for being pink, Patrick the penguin leaves the South Pole to live with the flamingos in Africa.

Pinky and Rex and the Bully, Howe, James, 1996

Pinky is called a sissy for liking and wearing pink, and also for having a girl for a best friend. He eventually decides that he is fine just the way he is and lets the bully know this.

Princess Knight, The, Funke, Cornelia, 2011

Princess Violet doesn't want to marry a knight, she wants to *be* a knight, so she trains in secret so she can win her own hand!

Princess Max, Stiller, Laurie, Random House Australia, 2001 (Grades K–4)

Max loves to wear dresses.

Pugdog, U'Ren, Andrea, New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2001 (Grades K–2)

When Mike discovers that his rough-and-tumble new puppy is a female, he tries to make her into a dainty dog.

Sissy Duckling, The, Fierstein, Harvey, Simon and Shuster, 2002 (Grades K–3)

Elmer tries to do typical boy duck activities but just doesn't fit in. His dad calls him a sissy and his mom calls him special. Elmer runs away to avoid the other ducks, but an ingenious act of bravery and loyalty for his father changes everyone a bit, and he remains very "special."

We Belong Together, Parr, Todd, 2007 (Grades K–3)

A book about adoption and families. Encourages varying pronouns to reflect different situations

When Kathy is Keith, Wong, Wallace, Bloomington, IN: Xlibris, 2011

A book about gender identity and transgender people.

William's Doll, Zolotow, Charlotte, 1972

William wants a doll but is told that would make him a creep and a sissy. His dad buys him a basketball and a train set, but he still longs for the doll. Finally, his grandmother buys him a doll that he can feed, care for, and love.

Video resources

Apples and Oranges (16 min), 2003 (Grades 3–5)

During class discussions, children's paintings magically dissolve into two short animated stories. In one, a girl finds out that creativity, not revenge, is the best way to deal with a school bully. In the second, two friends skateboard together, until one finds out the other is gay. Stereotyping, name-calling, intolerance, and bullying are all included.

No Name-Calling: Creating Safe Environments (24 min), BC Learning Network, 2004 (Grades 3–8)

Words can hurt and they have the power to make students feel unsafe and very uncomfortable. Those who are targeted because they do not fit in—due to body size, ethnicity, physical or mental challenges, sexual orientation, gender identity, or some other attribute—are often the victims. The video gives well-portrayed examples, offers students time to reflect, and demonstrates good coping strategies.

Resources for Grades 6–8 students

Books

Boy in a Dress, The, Walliams, David, 2010

Dennis deals with his parents' divorce by reading Vogue magazine. When he meets Lisa, he falls in love with her, but also with her style, and realizes he wants to dress in women's clothing.

Giver, The, Lowry, Lois, 1999 (Grades 6–9)

When a member of a utopian society is chosen to be the “receiver of memories”, he realizes how important choice and individuality are.

It's Our Prom (So Deal With It), Peters, Julie Ann. 2012. 342p. Hatchette Book Group (Grades 6 and up)

Azure has gone public with her objections to her school's senior prom: too expensive, too exclusive, too heterosexual. When the principal challenges Azure and her friends to take charge of the planning committee, they jump into the task—and the accompanying headaches—of planning an inclusive prom.

Misfits, The, Howe, James, 2001 (Grades 6–8)

An empowering story about four best friend “misfits”, one of whom is called a “fairy,” who try to change life at their school by starting a campaign against name-calling.

Parrotfish, Wittlinger, Ellen, 2011 (Grades 7–10)

This fast read follows Grady through the days between Thanksgiving and Christmas as he comes out as transgendered, facing issues of acceptance and rejection at school and at home. Grady turns out to be a very normal boy who, like every teen, must deal with vexing issues of self-identity. To his credit, he does this with courage and grace. The book is an excellent resource for building awareness of transgendered teens.

Video Resources

In Other Words (27 min), 2001 (Grades 6–9)

Language and the power of words are the specific topic here. We see the impact of homophobic name-calling on the growth and development of youth, ages 14 to 22. They share details of their lives and their struggles with their identity and their place in society. Important word definitions are given, with historical animations about the derivation of some terms. Very positive messages for LGBTQ youth and their friends. Information for teachers on the video liner provides background, discussion points, and activities.

Let's Get Real (35 min), Women's Educational Media, 2003 (Grades 6–9)

Told entirely from a youth perspective, this video gives young people the chance to tell their own stories. It examines many issues that lead to taunting and bullying, including race, perceived sexual orientation, religion, learning disabilities, sexual harassment, and others. The film not only gives a voice to targeted kids, but also to those who bully, to find out why they lash out and how it makes them feel. The most heartening stories are those of kids who have mustered the courage to stand up for themselves or a friend.

No Dumb Questions (24 min), Epiphany Productions, 2001 (Grades 7–12)

A poignant and award-winning documentary, which profiles three sisters, ages 6, 9 and 11, struggling to understand why and how their Uncle Bill is becoming a woman. A unique and powerful tool for opening minds and sparking dialog in schools, colleges, workplaces, faith communities, and families. Also includes a discussion guide and best practice examples.

No Name-Calling: Creating Safe Environments (24 min), BC Learning Network, 2004 (Grades 3–8)

Words can hurt and they have the power to make students feel unsafe and very uncomfortable. Those who are targeted because they do not fit in – due to body size, ethnicity, physical or mental challenges, sexual orientation, gender identity, or some other attribute – are often the victims. The video gives well-portrayed examples, offers students time to reflect, and demonstrates good coping strategies.

Resources for Grades 9–12 students

Books

Almost Perfect, Katcher, Brian (2010) (Grades 8–12)

The story of a boy who falls for a girl who is actually a boy.

Annabel, Winter, Kathleen (2011) (Grades 10–12)

In a small Labrador community in 1968, an unusual baby is born at home with a very small penis, a testicle on one side and a vagina on the other—a hermaphrodite. This is the story of his life (his, because his father decides that he will have a son called Wayne). Thomasina, a friend who was there to assist at his birth, calls him Annabel, after her dead daughter. Wayne's mother always regrets that surgery was imposed upon her child, wishing it were possible to raise the child as neither male nor female, or as both.

Another Kind of Cowboy, Juby, Susan, HarperTeen, 2007

For Alex Ford, dressage is an oasis. In the stable, he can slip into his riding pants, shed the macho cowboy image, and feel like himself for a change. For Cleo O'Shea, dressage is a fresh start. She's got a new boarding school, absentee parents, and, best of all, no one to remember her past...They're an unlikely pair. Cleo's looking for love, but Alex has a secret he's not ready to give up, and a flirtation with Cleo is the last thing on his mind. But you can't find romance before you know real friendship, and sometimes the last person you'd ever think of as a friend ends up being the one you need the most. Susan Juby's trademark humor brings life and laughter to this remarkable story of relationships, mixed signals, and the soul-searching that sometimes takes two.

Becoming Two-Spirit: Gay Identity and Social Acceptance in Indian Country, Gilley, Brian Joseph, Nebraska Paperback, 2006.

The Two-Spirit man occupies a singular place in Native American culture, balancing the male and the female spirit even as he tries to blend gay and native identity. The accompanying ambiguities of gender and culture come into vivid relief in the powerful and poignant

Becoming Two-Spirit, the first book to take an in-depth look at contemporary American Indian gender diversity.

Beyond Magenta, Kuklin, Susan, 2014 (Grades 9–12)

Author and photographer Susan Kuklin met and interviewed six transgender or gender-neutral young adults and used her considerable skills to represent them thoughtfully and respectfully before, during, and after their personal acknowledgment of gender preference. Portraits, family photographs, and candid images grace the pages, augmenting the emotional and physical journey each youth has taken. Each honest discussion and disclosure, whether joyful or heartbreaking, is completely different from the other because of family dynamics, living situations, and gender.

Close to Spiderman, Coyote, Ivan E., 2000

Short stories by Ivan who has a clear feminist voice that powerfully details what it means to experience life as a girl when your imagination is hungry enough to identify and crave the different sorts of freedoms that boys have.

Confessions of an Empty Purse, McDonald, S., 2010 (Grades 10–12)

Autobiography in verse format of a Toronto teenager aching for role models and giddy with the excitement of spotting real, live transsexuals on Parliament Street. The inherent tragedy of being fat, pimply, and male while longing to be glamorous, willowy and female is balanced with campy humour. Suicide is considered and averted, with the courage it takes to accept that some dreams will never come true.

Drag King Dreams, Feinberg, Leslie, 2006

The story of Max, a butch lesbian bartender at an East Village club where drag kings perform. A veteran of the women's and gay rights movements of the past 30 years, Max's mid-life crisis hits in the aftermath of 9-11.

Feeling Wrong in Your Own Body, Seba, Jamie H.,
Understanding what it means to be transgender.

Flip Side, The, Matthews, Andrew

Do you know who you are? Well, think again! Robert is one teenager who knows that there are a whole lot of people inside you, like a collection of masks. Just remember that whoever you choose to be, there is always a flipside.

Freak Show, James, James. 2008 (Grades 9–12)

Inspired by his own experience, adult author and media personality James St. James makes his YA debut with this novel about a young drag queen who makes a grand entrance into a conservative high school.

Full Spectrum: A New Generation of Writing About Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning, and Other Identities, The, Merrell, Billy, and Levithan, David, 2006, Random House Children's Books

A collection of original poems, essays, and stories by young adults in their teens and early 20s.

The Full Spectrum includes a variety of writers-gay, lesbian, bisexual, straight, transitioning, and questioning-on a variety of subjects: coming out, family, friendship, religion/faith, first kisses, break-ups, and many others.

Gender Outlaws: The Next Generation, Bornstein, Kate & S. Bear Bergman, editors. 2010 (Grades 10–12)

This collection of stories and dialogues provides a new way of thinking about gender, politics, and transgender identities.

GLBTQ: The Survival Guide For Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, And Questioning Teens, Huegel, Kelly, 2011, Free Spirit Publishing

Issues-based information and advice address coming out, prejudice, getting support, staying safe, making healthy choices, and thriving in school. This frank, sensitive book is written for young people who are beginning to question their sexual or gender identity, those who are ready to work for GLBTQ rights, and those who may need advice, guidance, or reassurance that they are not alone.

God Loves Hair, Shraya, Vivek. 2010 (Grades 7–12)

A delightful collection of brief, autobiographical stories by a gender-confused boy growing up in a South Asian Hindu family in Edmonton.

Hello Cruel World: 101 Alternatives to Suicide for Teens, Freaks and Other Outlaws, Bornstein, Kate. 2006 (Grades 7-12)

A self-help book that remains fiercely positive and supportive while acknowledging the difficulties marginalized youth face.

How Beautiful the Ordinary, Cart, Michael (editor), 2004

A collection of twelve LGBT-themed short stories with three focused on transgender characters

I Am J, Beam, Cris, 2011 (Grades 9–12)

J has always known that he was a boy who happened to be born into a girl's body by mistake. Now he just has to convince everyone else.

It Gets Better, edited by Dan Savage, Plume, 2012

Growing up isn't easy. Many young people face daily tormenting and bullying, and this is especially true for LGBT kids and teens. In response to a number of tragic suicides by LGBT students, syndicated columnist and author Dan Savage uploaded a video to YouTube with his partner, Terry Miller. Speaking openly about the bullying they suffered, and how they both went on to lead rewarding adult lives, their video launched the It Gets Better Project YouTube channel and initiated a worldwide phenomenon. *It Gets Better* is a collection of original essays and expanded testimonials written to teens from celebrities, political leaders, and everyday people, because while many LGBT teens can't see a positive future for themselves, we can.

Luna, Peters, Julie Anne, 2006 (Grades 8–12)

Regan is an average sixteen-year-old who is keeping secret the fact that her brother Liam is really a transgender girl named Luna.

My Gender Workbook, Bornstein, Kate, 2013

This is Bornstein's playful guide to exploring gender. The topics include living without gender, thwarting the "gender police", and examining one's own beliefs, values, and feelings about gender identity.

One in Every Crowd: Stories, Coyote, Ivan E. 2012. 238p. Arsenal Pulp Press (Grades 8–10)

Autobiographical stories about growing up as a tomboy and queer kid in Yukon, showing the fear and struggle along with acceptance kindness, and that everyone has insecurities.

One Man's Trash, Coyote, Ivan E., 2002

Short stories about queer life in western Canada:

Outside Rules, Robson, Claire, 2007

A collection of 14 stories that “stick up for the young people who are singled out because they don’t behave, look, worship, or love the way they ‘should’”. Each story has well-developed characters and situation that many teens will be able to relate to. Some of the stories are by well-known authors, such as Sandra Cisneros and Wally Lamb.

Parrotfish, Wittlinger, Ellen, Simon and Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2011 (Grades 7–10)

Angela Katz-McNair has never felt quite right as a girl, but it’s a shock to everyone when she cuts her hair short, buys some men’s clothes, and announces she’d like to be called by a new name, Grady. Although Grady is happy about his decision to finally be true to himself, everybody else is having trouble processing the news. Grady’s parents act hurt; his sister is mortified; and his best friend, Eve, won’t acknowledge his existence. On top of that, there are more practical concerns—for instance, which locker room is he supposed to use for gym class? Grady didn’t expect his family and friends to be happy about his decision, but he also didn’t expect kids at school to be downright nasty about it. But as the victim of some cruel jokes, Grady also finds unexpected allies, including the school geek Sebastian, and Kita Charles, who’s a gorgeous senior. In a voice tinged with humor and sadness, Ellen Wittlinger explores Grady’s struggles—struggles any teen will be able to relate to.

Queers in History, Stern, Keith, Benbella Books, 2009

Comprehensive encyclopedia of LGBT people

Trans/Love, Diamond, Morty, editor, Manic D Press, 2011

Personal accounts that explore sex, love, and relationships beyond the gender binary.

Transgender warriors, Feinberg, L., 1996

An excellent book of transgender people who have defied and/or challenged cultural boundaries throughout history, including pre-industrial societies.

Transparent: Love, Family, and Living the T with Transgender Teenagers, Beam, Cris (2007)
Grade 10-12

A compelling memoir describing how a volunteer stint at an alternative school for queer youth in Los Angeles resulted in the author forming meaningful relationships with several of the transgendered students.

Welcome to My World, Weir, Johnny (2011) (Grades 9–12)

Autobiography of Olympic athlete Johnny Weir, who received his first pair of new skates when he was eleven. After only two hours of lessons, he astonished his instructor by taking off on his own and landing an axel jump. Weir went on to win the US National Championship three years in a row. At the Olympics in Vancouver in 2010, he was at the centre of a media storm after two Quebecois broadcasters said that he needed a gender test because they didn’t know if he was a man or a woman. Proud of his individuality, Weir spoke out confidently in support of all the “weirdos” of the world.

What Happened to Lani Garver? Plum-Ucci, Carol, 2002

Lani is a new kid at school and others are asking questions, mainly, “Is Lani a girl or a boy?” Claire befriends Lani, but soon has to deal with shattered friendships and her own personal demons. The events that follow are tragic, and somewhat ambiguous, but the book does a wonderful job of introducing the concept of androgyny.

Video Resources

Brandon Teena Story, The (1998) New Video Group; 88 min. (Grades 10–12)

An award-winning documentary exploring the life of Brandon Teena, a young woman who wanted to desperately be a man. This riveting and, at times, horrifying narrative, utilizes news footage and interviews with Brandon’s friends, family, and former girlfriends to explore Brandon’s life and tragic death. Academy Award-winning *Boys Don’t Cry* was based on this.

...But Words DO Hurt: Stories from GLBTT Youth (2005). Alberta Civil Liberties Research Centre; 30 min. (Grades 10–12)

GLBTT youth from Alberta talk about their identities, coming out, family, the media, and their experiences in school and their dreams and hopes for the future. Professionals from a wide-variety of backgrounds (police officers, social workers, lawyers, and teachers) also discuss why it is important to address GLBTT issues in schools. Comes with study guide.

Dangerous Living: Coming Out in the Developing World

By sharing the personal stories coming out of developing nations, this film sheds light on an emerging global movement striving to end discrimination and violence against gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people.

Gender Line – Extended (60 min), 2002 Video Out Distribution

An excellent video made in Vancouver by trans activist W.G.Burnham. It features 20 individuals representing the diversity and fluidness within the BC transgender community.

Girl Inside (2007) Women Make Movies (70 min) (Grades 10–12)

A documentary that follows Madison, a 26-year-old trans woman during her three-year transition process. Strong focus on family and relationships.

Is It a Boy or a Girl? (2001) VSB Consultant (53 min) (Grades 10–12)

A Discovery Channel production, this short film explores gender from the perspective of intersex people— individuals whose sex at birth is neither traditionally understood as male nor female, or may have mixed sexual characteristics. Through interviews with parents, intersex people, and medical professionals the film outlines the daily realities and struggles that they experience.

Ma vie en rose (My Life in Pink) (1997) Columbia TriStar Home Video, 88 min. (Grades 10–12)

A fictional, inspirational account of a 7-year-old boy who is convinced she was meant to be a girl.

Red Without Blue (2007) Cinema Libre Studio; 77 min. (Grades 10–12)

Mark and Alex are identical twins who come out in their teens. Alex then comes out as trans. The film follows their relationship with each other and with their parents through Alex's transitioning. Gender, identity, and the bonds of twinship are all re-imagined in this beautiful film about family, love, and self.

Rough Cuts: Class Queers (2003) Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 39 min. (Grades 10–12)

The Triangle Program, Canada's only high school program for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and trans youth, is what connects the three queer students followed in this short film. Their daily lives and struggles are documented, from family life to school and their intersections. Includes a discussion guide.

She's a Boy I Knew (2007) Media Education Foundation, 70 min. (Grades 10–12)

Filmmaker Gwen Haworth documents her own biological transition from male to female. Her family relationships take centre stage as she presents us with her very personal account of coming out. Elements of humour about gender roles punctuate a very raw, emotional narrative.

Some of the Stories: A Documentary about Trans Youth (33 min), 2001 Video Out Distribution

Made by Vancouver's Jacob Simpson, this video features five youth discussing trans issues.

Straightlaced: How Gender's Got Us All Tied Up (67 min), 2009 (Grades 10–12)

Straightlaced reveals the toll that deeply held stereotypes and rigid gender roles have on all our lives. It offers both teens and adults a way out of anxiety, fear, and violence. This documentary highlights fifty diverse students who take viewers on a powerful, intimate journey to see how popular pressures around gender and sexuality are shaping the lives of today's teens.

TransAmerica (2006) Genius Products, 104 min. (Grades 10–12)

A funny and heartbreaking story of Bree, born as Stanley, a genetic male, who embarks on a gender transition process as she reunites with her long-lost 17-year-old son. Their physical and emotional journey together across America gives them both the courage to challenge and change their individual lives and relationship.

Community programs

Trans Youth Drop-In (VCH Transgender Health Information Program): Recreation, workshops, discussions, snacks, and a safe space for trans-identified youth and allies aged 13–24 to be themselves. This group operates every Friday (except for the last Friday of the month) 6:30–8:30 p.m. at Britannia Community Centre in the Seniors' Lounge. For more information call 604-734-1514 or email transyouthdropin@vch.ca.

QMUNITY Gab Youth Program: Weekly drop-ins for lesbian, gay, bi, trans, two-spirit, intersex, queer, questioning(queer) youth 14–25 years old and their allies. Gab also provides resources, advocacy, workshops, leadership training and special events such as youth dances and performance showcases. This group is located at 1170 Bute St, Vancouver and the drop-ins operate Wednesday from 4–6pm and Fridays from 7–10 p.m. Please contact 604-684-5307 or visit www.qmunity.ca/youth.

YouTube and media

A Canadian video in support of two-spirited youth. The day-to-day life of a transgender child outside of home. Here are some video clips about an 11-year-old transgender student's journey. A related story called *Transgender boy returns to school in Edmonton proudly sharing his story* is published in the *Toronto Star*.

I'm Just Anneke is the first film in a four-part series of short films called *The Youth and Gender Media Project* designed to educate school communities about transgender and gender non-conforming youth. With the support of family and friends, a 12-year-old experiences the onset of puberty in the fluid space between genders.

Transgender senior can't be king – A transgender student was voted in as homecoming king by his peers. Later, school administration invalidated the ballots because he was not born male.

[What might it mean to be trans?](#) Check out this digital letter...

[Whittington Family: Ryland's Story \(The\)](#)—A beautiful expression and explanation of transgender

Website

Children's Hospital website (for supporting transgender youth in BC)

<http://www.bccchildrens.ca/Services/SpecializedPediatrics/EndocrinologyDiabetesUnit/forfamilies/transgenderresources.htm>

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