Creating and Supporting a Gay-Straight Alliance

Fifth Edition

Compiled and printed by:

pride education Network
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# Table of contents

An Introduction to Gay-Straight Alliances 3  
Why Have Gay-Straight Alliances in our Schools? 4  
School-based LGBTQ policies may reduce suicide attempts and health-care costs 5  
Steps for Students or Educators Starting a GSA 6  
Preparing to be an Adult Sponsor for a GSA 8  
Great Ideas for GSA meetings 9  
Specific team-building activities you can do at your GSA meetings 10  
Possible GSA Events to Plan 12  
Tips and Strategies for Sustaining GSAs 14  
Book Resources for GSAs 15  
Recommended LGBT2Q+ Video Resources 18  
Some Useful Websites and Contact Info for GSAs 25

This booklet can be downloaded from the Pride Education Network website: [www.pridenet.ca](http://www.pridenet.ca)


Contact Pride Education Network for more resources on addressing homophobia in schools: info@pridenet.ca, [www.pridenet.ca](http://www.pridenet.ca) or write to PEN at Box 93678, Nelson Park PO, Vancouver, BC V6E 4L7

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Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network  
Website: [www.glsen.org](http://www.glsen.org)
An introduction to gay-straight alliances

There are many types of support groups for lesbian, gay and bisexual youth. These are often called Gay-Straight Alliances or Gender Sexuality Alliances (also referred to as GSAs). The term “gay” in the title is meant to be inclusive of all lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, gender fluid or two-spirited students. The acronym *LGBT2Q+ is commonly used where the Q stands for Queer or Questioning. When the term “Queer” is used, it is understood to be a positive and inclusive term and is an example of reclaimed language. Questioning may include LGBT2Q+ or straight students.

Many groups meet in school settings, while others meet in outside community locations. Some are referred to as diversity clubs, human rights clubs, or social justice clubs, as well. All students are invited to attend, but with absolutely no expectation that they must self-identify or reveal their sexual orientation or gender identity.

GSAs provide all students with a safe place for LGBT2Q+ students and their allies to meet, make friends, and talk about their feelings and experiences at school. GSAs can help to improve the school climate for everyone, by promoting discussion about homophobia and transphobia and their effects on everyone, and by encouraging greater understanding among students and staff alike. Gay-Straight Alliances should be student-led, in the main, with one or two staff members to act as facilitators/advisors. Occasionally, guests such as LGBT2Q+ parents, or PFLAG (Parents, Families, Friends of Lesbians & Gays) are invited.

Groups tend to change their agenda for each week, depending on the participants’ needs. Most try to strike a balance between consciousness-raising, targeting homophobia/transphobia at school, and offering personal support. Forming and sustaining such school clubs involves considerable work and diplomacy, by both students and staff. All participants must be mindful of the purposes for creating GSAs. They must not become dating clubs, cliquish chat groups, or places for speculation about the personal lives of other people.

A student in Maple Ridge formed the first GSA in British Columbia, in 1997. For a list of GSAs in BC, see http://pridenet.ca/gaystraight-alliances.

In March 2000, the AGM of the BC Teachers’ Federation debated and passed a motion to support teachers and teacher locals who work toward the formation of GSAs. This action is in keeping with the BCTF’s longstanding concern for the needs of diverse students, and its tradition of activism and action in various areas of social justice.

*LGBT2Q+, refers to lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, 2-spirit, queer or questioning. The plus allows for additional identities. Some acronyms include I for intersex and A for ally. While it seems to some to be the gay alphabet, it is meant to be inclusive.
Why gay-straight alliances are important in our schools

Research by Egale Canada—“Every class in Every School: The First National Climate Survey on Homophobia, Biphobia, Transphobia in Canadian Schools” (2011) www.egale.ca/everyclass shows that in schools which have a GSA, students perceive their school to be a safer, more inclusive place.

Students know they have at least one or two adults who are allies whom they can talk to about gender issues or LGBT2Q+ matters.

Students indicated that they felt their schools were supportive of LGBT2Q+ people and their school climate was less homophobic and/or transphobic.

LGBT2Q+ students also indicated that just knowing of the GSA’s existence (Eg. A poster or bulletin) was enough to let them know that someone cared.

Students revealed that they experienced stronger feelings of belonging and safety, gained new friendships, had higher self-esteem, visibility and acceptance, and better relationships with peers, teachers, and family members.

Students involved in GSAs show increased academic achievement, improved attendance, a sense of empowerment and increased hope for the future.

GSA clubs also:

- provide safe spaces to focus on support and activities
- give official acceptance and a visible school or district wide presence
- provide allies and normalization of LGBT2Q+ issues within the school community
- focus on human rights and understanding of diversity
- build networks with other like-minded groups or other GSAs
- focus on school climate and change through activities (such as Day of Pink, Day of Silence)
- strive to be inclusive across intersections of oppression (gender, race, class, sex, ability, gender identity, and expression).

It is also important to note that LGBT2Q+ students in schools and districts with specific LGBT2Q+ policies reported significantly fewer incidents of harassment due to sexual orientation. However, anti-homophobia policies did not necessarily create safer schools for trans students or those experiencing harassment due to gender identity and expression. Policies must be explicit when dealing with these issues.
School-based LGBTQ policies may reduce suicide attempts and health-care costs


LGBTQ support programs in schools could significantly reduce suicide attempts, binge drinking and other risky behaviours among both straight and sexual minority students, according to a new report by UBC and youth non-profit, the McCreary Centre Society.

The researchers reviewed North American studies of LGBTQ programs and extrapolated the results into a typical B.C. secondary school with 1,000 students. They found that interventions such as gay-straight alliances (GSAs)—student clubs for social justice or social support—could lead to seven fewer suicidal attempts, saving a school as much as $71,540 in health-care costs per year.

“GSAs could also mean 41 fewer students engaging in binge drinking and 16 fewer students with problem drug use,” said lead researcher Elizabeth Saewyc, a nursing professor who heads the Stigma and Resilience Among Vulnerable Youth Centre in UBC’s school of nursing.

Other interventions such as LGBTQ-inclusive programs and policies, which fight homophobia and bullying, were also effective in curbing health-compromising behaviours. The analysis showed that they could contribute to four fewer suicide attempts a year in an average school with 1,000 students, plus 37 fewer students reporting binge drinking, and 21 fewer students with problems from drug use.

“Research already tells us that school interventions can be powerful tools in reducing the health gap between LGBTQ youth and their straight peers, so we wanted to translate the science into a detailed picture of what these programs could contribute for schools, without straining already tight budgets,” said Annie Smith, executive director of McCreary Centre Society, a non-profit committed to improving the health of B.C. youth through research, evaluation and community-based projects.

The report was prepared for Vancouver Coastal Health and funded by the Canadian Institutes for Health Research.

“This new analysis highlights the value of LGBTQ interventions in our schools both for straight and LGBTQ youth,” said Saewyc. “While more research is needed, particularly to establish the effect of inclusive curriculums, the evidence is already pointing the way forward.”

Click to download the report “School-based interventions to reduce health disparities among LGBTQ youth: Considering the evidence” and the infographic.

Find other stories about: Elizabeth Saewyc, gay-straight alliances, LGBTQ, Stigma and Resilience Among Vulnerable Youth Centre, UBC School of Nursing
Steps for students or educators starting a gay-straight alliance

1. Find supportive staff members to work with you.

   Spread the word at school that a GSA is starting up. If you are a teacher, bring it up at staff meetings via announcements and social media, or approach colleagues whom you think may be supportive allies. If you’re a student, approach the staff members whom you think would be receptive, and who would be effective facilitators. Explain to them what issues the group might address and why this group would make an important contribution to the school. If possible, it’s recommended that there are both LGBT2Q+ and straight teacher sponsors.

2. Follow established procedures in your school or district.

   Establish a GSA in the same way you would any other group or club in your school. Follow the set guidelines or policies within your school or district.

3. Enlist the support of the school administration.

   Inform the school administrator about your plans to establish a GSA. Having their support can be very useful; they can arrange special events or speakers for school assemblies, staff professional days or other events. They can also work as liaisons to the outside community and district officials. Describe the GSA’s purpose, and emphasize how your GSA will help all students feel safe, valued, and cared for at your school. Once the administrator knows about the GSA, she or he can be a strong and very effective ally at countering negative comments.

4. Inform counselors and other school staff about your group.

   School staff may know students who would be interested in attending meetings, and they can encourage some students to attend (students who are questioning their own sexuality/identity, or know someone who is LGBT2Q+, or are simply supportive allies). It can be useful to invite support staff, counsellors or outside professionals to help with discussions of difficult issues (Eg. talking to parents about sexuality issues, coming out to friends and family or supporting a friend or relative who is LGBT2Q+).

5. Pick a meeting place.

   If possible, find a location in the school that is relatively private and yet easily accessible to give members a sense of security and comfort. At first, students may feel a little nervous about attending a GSA meeting; they may worry that others might harass them or make assumptions about their sexual orientation or gender identity. However, making it clear that all students are welcome at meetings can help to reduce the assumptions made by others.

6. Advertise.

   Advertising the GSA club is a major step that can be taken to disrupt homophobia, biphobia and transphobia in the school. Keep the tone positive. Include the meeting time and location, the group’s purposes, and the fact that all students are welcome to attend, and need not share any personal details. For some students, seeing the words “gay”, “lesbian”,

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“bisexual” or “trans” on a positively worded poster may be their first experience of not feeling totally alone. Others may be questioning their own sexual orientation or gender identity, or wanting more information because a close friend or relative is LGBT2Q+. Even if they never attend a meeting, these students will know and appreciate that some people at their school are addressing these issues. Many allied students who are committed to working for social justice issues might be motivated to participate in the GSA, if they see the posters.

The posters will stimulate school-wide discussion and raise visibility around issues of sexual orientation or gender identity. Breaking the silence is an important first step in addressing the common stereotypes and myths about LGBT2Q+ people. If posters are torn down or defaced, keep putting them up. Have some posters displayed behind glass, so that they cannot be vandalized. Advertise all year.

7. Provide snacks.

Providing food at the meeting is a great idea. It is a good icebreaker, and gives nervous attendees something to do, as well as an excuse to attend. Ask GSA sponsors to seek funding from administration for snacks.

8. Schedule your first meeting.

Now that there are facilitator(s), food, a meeting spot, and publicity, it’s time to hold your first GSA meeting. Some groups begin by discussing the importance of having such a group, and continue with team and/or group building exercises. Try to schedule meeting times that are convenient for the majority of youth. Allow time for students (and staff) to get to know each other before tackling sensitive topics. Talk about the purposes of the club, and some possible activities. Discuss how meeting agendas will be set, who will facilitate them, and the rotation of responsibilities.

9. Establish guidelines or ground rules.

Here are some examples to get you started:

- Members are in no way obligated to declare or define their sexual orientation or gender identity, nor are assumptions to be made about the sexual orientation/gender identity of any other group members.
- Everyone must respect each other; remember we’re all learning about the issues together.
- Meetings and discussions are confidential. Student identities, personal issues, and the comments made at meetings should not be discussed outside the group, unless participants specifically agree.
- Adults participate on an equal basis with students; they may facilitate discussion or participation, but they are not there to lead or teach.
- There is to be no gossiping about anyone, either in the group or elsewhere.
- If homophobic/biphobic/transphobic things are said, don’t attack the person, but challenge the idea. We are all negatively affected by living in a heterosexist culture. People will make mistakes. Allow people to grow and change through constructive dialogue.


Develop an action plan. Brainstorm projects. Set goals for what you want to work on. Talk about succession of the group from one year to another. What advice do you want to pass on?
Preparing to be the adult sponsor for a gay-straight alliance

If you plan to be the GSA sponsor teacher please think about the following questions before the GSA starts. It’s far better to be prepared rather than surprised by the unexpected. Think about these questions and situations and discuss with other sponsors. The barriers will then be less daunting.

- Are you comfortable around LGBT2Q+ people? Discussing sexuality?
- What do you think, or believe, about LGBT2Q+ persons? Where did you learn this?
- Are you knowledgeable about LGBT2Q+ issues, resources, history, politics, and health issues?
- What resources are available to you? Where can you go to learn more?
- How do you respond to jokes about “fags”, “queers”, “dykes,” “trannies,” etc.?
- What assumptions might be made about your participation/leadership as a sponsor? How can you deal with them?
- Is there another GSA (or similar group) in your area that you may visit and learn from?
- Identify the likely barriers to setting up a GSA in your school. What strategies can you use to deal with them? Who are your allies? Where can you go for support?

Learn from others’ experiences. Check out the various websites listed in the back of this resource, for the contact details of student or staff contacts at other GSAs, in BC or elsewhere. Contact them.

- What will be your role within the GSA?
- Who else will support you within the school community?
- Will you be comfortable with your role changing, as some students take over GSA leadership?
- How will you sustain the club, if students are too nervous to attend for a few months?
- How will you react if a GSA student member is harassed at school?
- What supports do you have in place to help students wishing to come out to their family/friends?

You might consider booking a workshop for your staff on LGBT2Q+ issues from the Professional and Social Issues Division of the BC Teachers’ Federation. Call 604-871-2283 (in the Vancouver area) or toll-free 1-800-663-9163 (from other parts of BC) and ask for the staff person who is responsible for booking Social Justice workshops. The workshops currently available are:

**Creating a Gender-Inclusive School Culture**
This workshop will help develop an understanding of the risks facing trans students, as well as the protective factors, gain increased familiarity with terminology used by the trans communities, and increased awareness of gender identity and gender expression. Best practices for supporting a student through gender transition within the school system will be covered. Although the focus is on trans students, gender-inclusive schools help all students to feel safe at school.

**Reach Out, Speak Out on Homophobia and Transphobia**
This workshop focuses on how to be an ally and support LGBT2Q+ youth within schools. Educators will develop an understanding of sexuality and gender as spectrums and will explore essential terminology and pronouns. It will increase understanding of the impact of homophobia and transphobia on youth and look at strategies and best practices to address these. The importance of GSA’s and LGBT2Q+ policies will be discussed. This workshop is highly recommended for educators wanting to create an inclusive school culture so that all students feel safe and included.

**Supporting Gender-Inclusive Communities (Parent workshop)**
Gender-inclusive schools help all students to feel safe at school. This workshop will show you how schools are working trans and other students on the gender spectrum. This workshop will help develop an understanding of the risks facing these students, as well as protective factors, gain familiarity with terminology used by the trans communities, and increased awareness of gender identity and gender expression. Best practices for supporting a student through gender transition within the school system will be covered.
Great ideas for GSA meetings

Bring a Friend Day: Try to bring someone new to the meeting. This step can change some perceptions about the group and challenge some negative stereotypes about gender and sexuality.

Q & A Day: "Things I’ve always wanted to know but was afraid to ask…” Students anonymously write down questions on any subject they want and then spend the rest of the meeting discussing the topics that arise.

What would the world be like if 10% of people were straight and 90% were LGBT2Q+? This activity turns the world around and helps participants understand what it would feel like to live in a homoseist society. View the film The Homophobia Project together (see page 20 under resources on how to access it). What would it be like if all parents wanted their children to grow up to be LGBT2Q+? Discuss as a group: What would it be like if you had to come out as straight? How does it feel to be labeled as a minority?

How can the GSA work with other school groups on social justice issues? Plan a meeting to discuss how you all can work together to the school community.

Coming Out: Some groups have found that coming out discussions are very helpful and important. Plan a meeting where people will talk about how they think people would react, what might happen, how to establish support networks, etc.

Games: Common Ground (Source: Kerry Ashforth, Brooklyn High). Students and staff sponsors stand in a circle. Someone begins by saying, "I’ve got a younger sister," or some other statement that is true for them. Everyone else, for whom this is also true, steps into the centre of the circle. Everyone else stays on the outside. (You can choose not to step into the circle.) The game continues with more personal and important statements, that students may feel safer to discuss in this less formal setting.

The Things You’ll Learn: Some groups plan meetings where a student or a group research a topic related to LGBT2Q+ life, culture, history, or oppression and then reports to the group what she or he has discovered. Topics don’t have to be dry and boring. They could include entertainers coming out, trans rights, the Stonewall Riots, lesbian pulp fiction, etc. Other groups pick current events from the newspaper such as same-sex marriage, LGBT2Q+ refugees, two-spirited people’s realities and discuss how they feel these issues are represented within our communities.

Working for Change: Most groups have spent at least some meeting time working to institute change in their schools or communities. Some have written in their school newspapers describing the work of their group, plans for the future, or what they’d like to see change in their school. This might include how to disrupt homophobia, biphobia or transphobia. If the GSA becomes aware of specific anti-gay/trans incidents such as the defacing of GSA posters and negative slurs or remarks they’ve heard from other students it is important to inform the GSA sponsors immediately. Ask your GSA sponsor and the school administration to take action.

You’re invited! Inviting other GSAs or other clubs to your meetings or functions can be a great way to build support in your school and to network with other schools. Inviting outside speakers to come in could spark more interest in your group.
Specific team-building activities you can do at your GSA meetings

1) Gender Binary Stereotypes (Source: Various)
Trace two body shapes on butcher paper, then have a free-for-all where everyone writes/expresses as many rigid gender stereotypes as they can think of, and place those stereotypes on the bodies where they would traditionally apply (i.e. "stereotypical males are smart at math" would be placed on the head of the male body). From here, you can talk about how gender stereotypes and traits relate to perceptions about gay, lesbian, bisexual, and trans people - as well as how these stereotypes limit our possibilities, regardless of sexual orientation, gender expression or gender identity.

2) Heterosexism in the Media (Source: Various)
Bring in popular magazines or pictures from Instagram or Face book or other forms of social media and cut out images you perceive to be heterosexist. Explain what you think heterosexism is and how it affects people. This can be an eye-opening experience for those who have never looked at how media plays a part in the formation and/or limitations placed upon our identities. With all the images you collect, your GSA can make a collage or exhibit that examines heterosexism. To go a step further, bring in LGBT2Q+ publications, and make posters of images that are not heterosexist. Show lots of different sexual orientations, genders and gender identities exhibiting the spectrum of diversity that is society. You can compare the posters and even display them somewhere in your school, such as in the library or a display case. You might include some statements about what heterosexism is and how it affects all of us, especially LGBT2Q+ youth.

3) Three Chair Listening Fishbowl (Source: Various)
Three Chairs are set up, the outer two turned toward the inner one. The chair on the left holds the position of the "specialist"; the middle chair, the "listener"; and the right chair the "real story". The specialist person and the real story person each have a turn to talk, while the listener tries to listen and respond to both, as best they can. The remainder of the group forms a circle around the triad as silent observers.

The Specialist talks as if they're a doctor or religious leader or professional in some field related to LGBT2Q+ youth and issues in the schools. They may cite statistics, and give medical information, etc. The Real Story person is the one who speaks as if they're someone you met on the street. They can tell a true story from their life or make up a story related to the experiences of LGBT2Q+ youth in the schools.

This is a good exercise for reflecting upon the impact of facts and statistics versus lived experiences. After the game has been played for a while, observers can discuss which role they found themselves listening to more attentively and why that might have been. You can then discuss how the two techniques can be used to portray many LGBT2Q+ people. You can discuss how your own listening style might make you more apt to internalize information presented to you.

4) Concentric Circles, Inner/Outer Circles (Source: Jason Fleetwood-Boldt)
This exercise works great to open dialogue. Need at least 6-8 people, works best with 20 or more (must be an even number). Let people talk in pairs. Have people count off by twos (1, 2, 1, 2...). Tell the ones to make an inner circle and the twos to make an outer circle. The inner circle should face outward and the outer circle should face inward, each person having a partner in the opposite circle. If it is a group that doesn't know one another, you can have them introduce themselves to their partners before they begin answering the question asked.
The facilitator instructs that she will ask a question and the outer circle is to talk for one minute as the inner circle listens. After the minute is up, the inner circle answers the same question. Then the outer circle moves clockwise two people over, so everyone has a new partner. A new question is asked of the outer, then inner, circles. When finished, the participants can talk in the large group about their responses.

Sample questions to ask:

- Growing up, what were all of the names (positive, negative, neutral) that you heard related to gays, lesbians, bisexuals, trans people?
- Growing up, what were some of the stereotypes you heard about lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and trans people?
- What were some of the things you heard about these groups growing up that you have come to find out are not true?
- What resonated with you most from this activity?

5) **Name That Person** (Source: Ann-Bevan Hollis; Adapted.)

Each person playing is instructed to write two names on two separate scraps of paper and put them into the hat. The names can be anyone related to LGBT2Q+ issues - including politicians, sports players, actors/actresses, community leaders, performers, people from history.

**Guidelines for choosing names:** Easy to identify names are not as much fun. IMPORTANT: Don’t tell anyone what names you put in. The names of co-workers, friends, teachers, family, etc. are not allowed.

**Rules of play:** Player to start pulls a name out of the hat and proceeds to describe that person or name to her team-mates in the first person. For example, if her clue were Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, she could say, “I was the first Prime Minister of Canada to walk in Pride Parades.” Participants call out any name they think it may be. When someone guesses correctly, choose another name from the hat and give new clues. Play continues until the hat is emptied.

7) **Cultural/Identity Linking** (Source: BiGLTYNY Leadership)

Cultural Experiment: Everyone is instructed to close their eyes and look into the “inner mirror of themselves”. Examine what culture means to you and what you think of as your own cultural identity. Look for the cultural identities you claim and, when you are ready, open your eyes and look around the room. Without talking, find someone who you think shares a cultural identity with you. Approach that person and link hands. If you do not think that person shares a common cultural identity, you may refuse to link hands. If someone offers his or her hand to you, try to find a cultural commonality. Link hands only if you think you have found one. Remember, no talking. Once everyone is linked, stand the group in one large circle, and go around and answer the questions “Why did you offer your hand to someone you linked to, and why did you accept/refuse someone's hand?”

Other questions: How did it feel to assume someone’s cultural identity? Were you always correct? Was it easy to find a cultural connection? How did it feel to not make a link?
NB: The word culture is used to keep this activity open-ended. People often interpret culture as race, ethnicity, religion, colour, queerness, gender, gender identity, clothing, belief systems, multiracial or multiethnic identity, ethnicity, etc.

8) Pretzel, Knots (Source: Various)
This is a team building cooperative game. Everyone stands in a circle. Everyone puts his right hand forward into the middle and grabs the right hand of someone. Then, take your left hand and grab the left hand of someone else in the circle. Thus, with your right hand you are attached to one person's right hand, and your left hand is attached to someone else’s left hand. You are all now in a tangled ring of bodies. Without letting go, untangle yourselves. You may switch positions of your hands, but do not break the ring. Sometimes the group is tangled in one big loop; sometimes it is tangled in several smaller ones.

Possible GSA activities and events you can plan

♦ Promote and celebrate school-wide or community events such as:
  ♦ Day of Pink
  ♦ Day of Silence
  ♦ Trans Day of Remembrance
  ♦ International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia
  ♦ Pride Week

  Refer to: http://pridenet.ca or http://www.bctf.ca/SocialJustice.aspx?id=17998

♦ Participate in multicultural, antiracism, pride or women’s marches in your community.

♦ GSA booth at clubs days.

♦ Advocate for varied resources about LGBT2Q+ persons and issues in your school library.

♦ Meet with teachers and other staff on Professional Days to educate them about LGBT2Q+ issues.

♦ Invite reps from college or university LGBTQ groups, especially any who may have attended your school to speak at an assembly or attend a GSA event.

♦ Invite members of PFLAG, or any local queer groups to speak.

♦ Have a contest to design posters on diversity issues (race, gender, sexuality) within your school.

♦ Invite health professionals, police, lawyers, media reps, municipal leaders, MPs, MLAs, etc. for a community dialogue.

♦ Learn about resources/youth groups in other LGBT2Q+ communities.

♦ Learn about diversity.

♦ Learn more about specific trans issues and persons (via books, videos, and speakers).

♦ Make oral/written representations about LGBT2Q+ student needs to your school board.

♦ Establish an annual GSA award or LGBT2Q+ Scholarship within your school. Decide upon recipient criteria together. Seek a donor for a multi-year commitment.
GSA "inclusions" and resources for schools and communities.

- Give out awards to students, staff, or other persons who make positive contributions.
- Have a Pride Walk within your school and the surrounding neighbourhood.
- Survey the students to assess general levels of awareness/support. Publicize your findings.
- Have a Pride Flag raising ceremony at your school.
- Host "Diversity Panels" with students from various racial, ethnic, religious (etc.) communities.
- Submit a write-up and/or photos about your GSA and its events to the school yearbook.
- Have conversations about healthy dating and inclusive relationships.
- Share and discuss books, videos, and other community resources. Discuss the LGBT2Q+ characters or relationships in TV shows, books, or movies.
- Host a BBQ or Picnic: Involve the other GSAs in your area for a potluck picnic or barbecue. You can have the event in a public park or someone's back yard. If it's fun, consider having them once a semester, or at the end of the school year.
- Plan a Pride Dance or Pride Party: Who needs a good excuse to hold a party? Dances can be a great way to bring GSA members together and reach out to the school community.
- In some districts, you might want to host a district-wide Pride Prom. These events are often one of the highlights of the GSA club's year. Large dances require a lot of planning so it's a good idea to have several GSAs sponsor and co-ordinate it. LGBT2Q+ community organizations can also donate funds to cover some/all of your costs.
- Plan Outdoor Activities: Meet at a park to play Frisbee, softball, flag football or whatever you want. These activities can be combined with a BBQ and are a great way to network and socialize with other GSAs. You may also want to plan a camping or hiking trip.
- Arts and Crafts: Get together after school or during lunch and make your own pride gear, a banner to use in marches, or art to display in the library and display cases.
- Meet up with other GSAs at a local queer or queer-friendly café: It's cool to just hang out in a "safe-space" and chat and it's good to get to know GSA members from other schools.
- Organize local bands/performers to perform either at your school or in a community hall or church. This could help raise funds for the GSA.
- Host a Graduation Party: "Lavender graduations" are a great way to show appreciation for the seniors in your club and give them a meaningful send-off. Consider investing in small gifts to present to them at an end of year event.
**Tips and strategies for sustaining GSAs**

1. Plan for student turnover and accept that as natural. Encourage the GSA to meet the needs of the current students involved.

2. Develop a mentoring program to build leadership capacity. Often Grade 11 or 12 students lead the GSA. A mentoring program ensures that younger members have the skills and confidence to step into a leadership role once these students graduate.

3. Each year brings with it new student interests and needs. The possibilities for the GSA will depend on the experience level and the comfort level of the group. Some years the group may be a social group and other years it may play an activist role. Sometimes the group members may want guest speakers and workshops and another year the group may want to carry out school wide activities. The group needs to determine these each year.

4. Networking with other schools and GSA groups will provide ideas on how to sustain your group. Join forces to create a larger group with more energy.

5. Make sure the GSA is inclusive and invites students from all diverse groups. Include Aboriginal students, students of color, and any other students who may have experienced oppression. Internal diversity strengthens the group.

6. Invite students who are new to the school to be part of the GSA. Many students from a wide variety of backgrounds may have learned to internalize homophobia, biphobia or transphobia. These may be punishable by death or imprisonment in some countries in the world and so they may need support.

7. Change takes time. Celebrate the group’s successes along the way. Share the history of what has been accomplished over time.

8. Make sure the GSA is a safe, and welcoming space where people are respected for their differences and unique contributions.
**Book resources for gay-straight alliances**

This short list is intended as a starting point for students, parents and educators who wish to learn more about LGBT2Q+ issues and persons. Look for these books and others at libraries and bookstores (some have special sections on queer studies). Any bookstore should be able to locate these books for you, if still in print, if you can give them the title, author and ISBN number. Many of these books are in the larger public library systems, and can be accessed throughout BC via inter-library loans.

**Fiction (Intermediate grades)**

Gino, Alex; *George*; 2015; ISBN 9780545812573; When people look at George, they think they see a boy, but she knows she's not a boy. She knows she's a girl. This is a children's novel about a young transgender girl coming out.

Hennessey, M.G.; *The Other Boy*; 2016; ISBN 9780062427663; A heartfelt and timely story about a transgender boy's journey toward acceptance and empathy.

Howe, James; *The Misfits*; 2001; ISBN 9780689839566; The four "misfits" are slightly larger than life, wiser than their years, worldlier than the small town setting would suggest, and remarkably well-adjusted, but the story's message is about preadolescent stereotyping and the devastating effects of degrading labels. This book is an upbeat, reassuring novel that encourages preteens and teens to celebrate their individuality.

Howe, James; *Totally Joe*; 2005; ISBN 9780689839580; Sequel to *The Misfits*, Howe's uplifting tale marks the welcome return of the Gang of Four, introduced in *The Misfits*. The novel's innovative format reveals the "alphabiography" of 13-year-old Joe Bunch, the gay member of the seventh-grade misfits. Delivers strong messages about tolerance, and self-knowledge.

Peck, Richard; *The Best Man*; 2016; ISBN 0803738390; Newbery medalist Richard Peck brings us this big hearted novel about gay marriage from a kid’s endearing perspective.

Polonsky, Ami; *Gracefully Grayson*; 2014; 978-1-4231-8792-9; A beautifully-written novel about identity, self-esteem, and friendship shines with the strength of a young person's spirit, an introverted sixth grader who begins to come into her own as a transgender girl and who learns about the enduring power of acceptance.

Ryan, Pam Munoz; *Riding Freedom*; 1999; 978-0439087964; A fictionalized account of adventurous Charlotte Parkhurst, who disguised herself as a boy at the age of 12 and ran away from a grim orphanage for boys. Charlotte had a special way with horses and managed to work her way up to fulfilling her dream of raising horses on a ranch of her own. Still disguised as a man, she became the first woman ever to vote.

Walliams, David; *The Boy in the Dress*; 2015; 978-0007279043; This novel provides a humourous, thoughtful affirmation that, "You can be whoever you want to be."
**Fiction (Teen)**

Benduhn, T.; *Gravel Queen*; 2003; ISBN 0-689-84994-X; Life gets complicated when Aurin and Neila start getting very close. As well as handling her own feelings, Aurin has to maintain her existing friendships, despite her excitement about the uncertain future. The author says she “had to” write a novel that shows the celebratory and fun parts of teen life, and offers a positive outcome, because of the negative messages and stereotypes she grew up with.

Coyote, Ivan; *Tomboy Survival Guide*; 2016 ISBN 978-1-55152-656-0; This is a witty and moving memoir told in stories about how they learned to embrace their tomboy past and carve out a space for all who don’t fit neatly into boxes, identities or labels. It is about self-acceptance and developing personal strength.

De Oliveira, E.; *Lucky*; 2004; ISBN 0-439-54655-9; Sam is attracted to both boys and girls. He meets Toby, who has the same likes and attractions. What will happen to their friendship and relationship? Love comes in many shapes and sizes, sometimes all at once. The author shows there’s more to life than labels, and more to love than a simple definition.

Hartinger, B.; *Geography Club*; 2003: ISBN 0-06-001221-8; This is a fast-paced funny tale about teens who don’t learn anything about geography, but discover plenty about the treacherous social terrain of high school. The book’s themes are friendship, first love, social conformity, peer pressure and alienation by homophobic peers. Find out how their Geography Club eventually becomes a Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) club at their school.

Peters, J.; *Luna*; 2004; ISBN 0-316-73369-5; Liam can’t stand his daytime appearance and identity, but transforms in the evenings into Luna, a female identity. Luna’s sister Regan describes Luna’s progress as s/he prepares to be more open with the world. Regan’s alternate use of “he” and “she” helps us to think about the power of pronouns and our assumptions about gender. This is an excellent novel about a transgender teen’s struggle for identity and acceptance.

**Trans History**

Feinberg, L.; *Transgender Warriors*; 1996; ISBN 0-8070-7941-3; An excellent history of transgender people through history, including pre-industrial societies. In searching for his/her own community and history, Feinberg found a vast body of evidence of people who have long been defying / challenging cultural boundaries of gender. Many historical images illustrate this excursion into the history of so many hero/ines and visionaries, both rebellious and visionary.

Feinberg, L.; *Trans Liberation*; 1998; ISBN 0-8070-7950-2; Feinberg argues passionately for the acceptance of all "Trans" people (cross-dressers, transsexuals, inter-sex people, Two Spirits, drag queens, etc.), and makes analogies with the struggles of LGBs to break down the doors of shame and silence. Interwoven into the essays are portraits of 10 trans persons.

**Non-Fiction: (Intermediate Grades and up)**

Heugel, K.; *GLBTQ: The Survival Guide for Queer and Questioning Teens*; 2003: ISBN 1-57542-126-7. Strategies and advice for teens about coming out, responding to homophobia, dating, staying healthy and safe, exercising your rights, life at school, community building, dealing with religion and culture and planning for the future. It includes first person comments from GLBTQ teens who are happy, well-adjusted, and loved and supported for who they are.
Krakow, Kari; *The Harvey Milk Story*; 2002; ISBN-13: 978-0967446837; A biography of the first-ever gay mayor in the United States, Harvey Milk, a courageous American who stood for freedom for all people, and was committed to changing the world.

Marcus, E.; *Is It a Choice?*; 1999; ISBN 0-06-251623-X; This excellent, clearly written book should be in every elementary and secondary school. The author clearly answers 300 questions about lesbians / gays, touching on areas of religion, family, sex, discrimination, self-discovery, media, dating, aging, AIDS, work, relationships, coming out, and more. Highly recommended.


Rashid, N. & J. Hoy; *Girl 2 Girl*; 2000; ISBN 1-873-74145-6; This enjoyable little British manual for young lesbian and bisexual women is full of poetry, stories, and short essays. Topics include dreams & dilemmas, friends & family, being out in the world, and love / lust / loss.

Silverburg, Cory; *Sex is a Funny Word: A Book About Bodies, Feelings and You*; 2015; ISBN-13: 978-1609806064; A comic book for kids that includes children and families of all makeups, orientations, and gender identities, *Sex Is a Funny Word* is an essential resource about bodies, gender, and sexuality for children ages 8 to 10 as well as their parents and caregivers. Much more than the "facts of life" or "the birds and the bees," *Sex Is a Funny Word* opens up conversations between young people and their caregivers in a way that allows adults to convey their values and beliefs while providing information about boundaries, safety, and joy.

Solomon, Steven; *Homophobia: Deal with it and Turn Prejudice into Pride*; 2013; ISBN-13: 978-1459404440; *That’s so gay!* It’s a phrase commonly heard in school halls and playgrounds. But when used as a put-down, it’s also homophobic. With plenty of quizzes, Q+As, comics, and scenarios, this interactive and highly visual new book in the Deal With It series helps kids determine what is -- and what isn’t -- homophobia, and what they can do to make their schools, homes, and communities more safe and inclusive for everyone.

Skelton, Wallace; *Transphobia: Deal with it and be a Gender Trancender*; 2017; ISBN-13: 978-1459407664; Who do you think you are? Part of identity is how people experience their gender. Transphobia is intolerance of any part of the range of gender identity. This accessible, illustrated book offers information, quizzes, comics and true-to-life scenarios to help kids better understand gender identity and determine what they can do to identify and counter transphobia in their schools, homes and communities. Considered from the viewpoint of gender challengers, gender enforcers and witnesses, transphobic behavior is identified, examined and put into a context that kids can use to understand and accept themselves and others for whatever gender they are — even if that's no gender at all!

Stevenson, Robin; *Pride: Celebrating Diversity and Community*; 2016; ISBN-13: 978-1459809932; For LGBTQ people and their supporters, Pride events are an opportunity to honor the past, protest injustice, and celebrate a diverse and vibrant community. The high point of Pride, the Pride Parade, is spectacular and colorful. But there is a whole lot more to Pride than rainbow flags and amazing outfits. How did Pride come to be? And what does Pride mean to the people who celebrate it?
Stuckey, Rachel; *Straight Talk about Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity*; 2015; ISBN-13: 978-0778722076; This timely title gives young people a better understanding of sexual orientation, gender identity, and the LGBTQ community. Personal testimonials shed light on the difficulties individuals face coming out and dispel myths of gender stereotypes. Also included is advice on how to support family members, friends, or classmates who identify as a member of the LGBTQ community.

**Professional Resources**


A comprehensive resource for teachers, administrators, and school counselors, full of practical ideas for educators. It promotes an inclusive, safe, and caring school environment.

**Recommended LGBT2Q+ video resources**

The following resources are available to borrow from the BC Teachers’ Federation Video Library. To order a video, please e-mail video@bctf.ca and provide the details of your request.

**Dangerous Living: Coming Out in the Developing World** (60 min) c2003. First Run Features

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.

**From Criminality to Equality**

40 years of lesbian and gay movement history in Canada from 1969 to 2009. A collection of four films (listed below) directed by Nancy Nicol.

- **Stand Together** (124 min.) c2002
  The film is a documentary on the lesbian and gay liberation movement in Canada between 1967 and 1987 focusing on the human rights amendment campaign in Ontario.

- **The Queer Nineties** (91 min.) c2009
  This film focuses on Charter Challenges for the recognition of same-sex relationships in law and how lesbians and gays won relationship recognition and adoption rights in most jurisdictions in Canada. It also chronicles the Surrey School Board ban of three children’s books which depicted same-sex parents in B.C. (1997); the role of ethno-diverse communities and labour within the LGBT movement; and the litigants and lawyers at the forefront of key Charter rights cases. This film takes a look at an amazing decade in the struggle for lesbian and gay equality in Canada.

- **Politics of the Heart** (68 min.) c2005
  Politics of the Heart / La politique du coeur (available in French and English versions) is a moving portrait of lesbian and gay families who re-shaped the cultural and political landscape of Quebec by fighting for recognition of their relationships, families and homoparental rights.
• **The End of Second Class** (91 min.) c2009
  The End of Second Class is a powerful documentary that traces the debate on same sex marriage in Canada up to the passage of equal marriage legislation on July 20, 2005.

**God Loves Uganda: Have You Heard the Good News?** (83 min) c2013 Roger Ross Williams explores the role of the American Evangelical movement in fueling Uganda's terrifying turn towards biblical law and the proposed death penalty for homosexuality. Thanks to charismatic religious leaders and a well-financed campaign, these draconian new laws and the politicians that peddle them are winning over the Ugandan public. But these dangerous policies and the money that fuels them are coming from America's largest megachurches.

**The Homophobia Project** (56 min) c2008. Peer Productions
The Homophobia Project tells the story of Janet and John, two heterosexuals growing up in a world turned upside down and back to front. The film explores their experiences in childhood and the school system as they navigate a world where same-sex relationships are the norm and heterosexuality is not. The film is adapted from the highly acclaimed play which toured UK schools in summer 2007. Powerful and provocative, it has proven to be an extremely effective way to confront both homophobia and homophobic bullying. Suitable for Grade 8 and up. A full Teacher's Pack with follow up work is included as e-connect. Highly recommended.

**In Other Words** (27 min) c2001. National Film Board
Language and the power of words are the theme here. We see the impact of homophobic name-calling on the growth and development of youth, aged 14 to 22. They share details of their lives and their struggles with their identity and their place in society. Important definitions are given, with historical animations about the derivation of some terms. Very positive messages for LGBTQ youth and their friends. Information for teachers provides background, discussion points, and activities. Highly recommended.

**It's Still Elementary** (51 or 38 min) c2007. [www.womedia.org](http://www.womedia.org)
Described as funny, touching and fascinating, this groundbreaking, award-winning production presents a powerful case for making anti-gay prejudice an educational issue. Featuring work by elementary/middle school (up to Grade 9) students and interviews with teachers of varied sexual orientations, it demonstrates how elementary schools can successfully address this sensitive area of teaching respect for all. It models excellent teaching about family diversity, name-calling, stereotypes, community-building, and more. A 24-page viewing guide is included. Two versions are available. Highly recommended.

**Laramie Inside Out** (56 min), c2004. New Day Films.
In October 1998, Wyoming college student Matthew Shepard was brutally beaten and left to die. His shocking murder pushed Laramie into the media spotlight and sparked a nationwide debate about homophobia, gay-bashing and hate crimes. Filmmaker Beverly Seckinger, a Laramie native, returns home to the site of her own closeted adolescence to investigate the impact of Shepard’s murder.

**The Laramie Project** (96 min) c2003.
Although much shorter than the play of the same name, the harrowing nature of the subject matter - Matthew Shepard’s brutal murder and the clarity of the voices of the inhabitants of Laramie, Wyoming, give this film a remarkable emotional power. The Laramie Project was created from over 200 interviews conducted with Laramie residents before, during, and after the trials of the 2 boys who killed Shepard. The interviews create an amazing cross-section of American views on class, homosexuality, religion, privacy, and more. A winner at the 2002 Sundance Festival.
Let’s Get Real (35 min) c2003. www.womedia.org or 10 minute YouTube version
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.

Straightlaced: How Gender’s Got Us All Tied Up (67 min) c2009. Groundspark
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.

Ugly Ducklings (56 min) c2006. www.amazon.com
This documentary explores the realities of harassment, bullying and homophobia and its devastating effects on today's lesbian and gay youth. It promotes awareness, understanding and advocacy and supports a call for change in behaviors and policies regarding LGBTQ youth.

The Best Films and Videos to Spark Engaging Discussions on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity recommended by SOGI (Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Website):

That’s a Family - 2000 (Trailer 3:21, Film 35min) - Prim/Int While designed especially for young audiences, That’s a Family! stretches the minds and touches the hearts of people of all ages. Children from over 50 diverse families open the door to their homes, and explain things like divorce, mixed race, gay and lesbian, adoption, single parent, and guardian, getting right to the point of what they wish other people would understand about their families. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lnYWClX3Us4

Gender Identity

Holly Siz: The Light - 2014 (3:52) - Upper Int/Sec In this powerful music video we meet a child designated a boy at birth, who enjoys stereotypical girl toys and clothing. The mom is accepting but the father isn’t until a beautiful moment in the video. Truly a wonderful music video! https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cf79KXBCIDg

Kumu Hina: A Place in the Middle - 2015 (Trailer 1:22 , Film 25min) - Int/Sec A PLACE IN THE MIDDLE is the true story of a young Hawaiian girl who dreams of leading her school's all- male hula troupe, and of an inspiring teacher who uses traditional culture to empower her. Download free guides and resources. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e4EaN8yd0qc https://vimeo.com/121840165

Why Pronouns Matter for Trans People - 2015 (2:30) - Upper Int/Sec This short video strings clips of interviews with a wide variety of trans individuals, showing the importance of pronouns and the variety of how they are used. It also provides a few short practical points on discussing pronouns and asking others about the pronouns they prefer. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N_yBGQq7kM

What’s it Like to Be Intersex - 2015 (3:25) - Upper Int/Sec A compassionate and accessible explanation of “intersex” which is about biological characteristics, unlike “transgender” which is about gender identity. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cAUDKEI4QK1
I'm Just Anneke - 2010 (Trailer 1:05, Film 12 min) - Int/Sec *Canadian I'm Just Anneke is a portrait of a 12-year-old Vancouver student who is struggling with gender identity. She loves ice hockey, has a loving, close-knit family and everybody she meets assumes she's a boy. The onset of puberty has created an identity crisis for Anneke.  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=POOXCFs35do

Ivan Coyote’s Ted Tx: We All Need a Safe Place to Pee - 2015 (12 min) - Sec *Canadian In a poetically rhythmic TEDx talk, award winning Vancouver author Ivan Coyote highlights the need for gender neutral washrooms in all public places. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wUKAVcj9NVA&feature=youtu.be

16 x 9 Story of Tru and Harriette - 2013 (20 min) - Int/Sec *Canadian The stories and school struggles of two BC transgender 10-year-olds who were both born boys, but who identify as girls.  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KI_kcwkaNrl

Transforming Gender – 2015 (43 min) - Upper Int/Sec *Canadian CBC Firsthand documentary about the experiences of transformation for trans people and their families. http://www.cbc.ca/firsthand/episodes/transforming-gender

Handsome and Majestic - 2015 (12 min) - Upper Int/Sec *Canadian A powerful portrait of BC transgender teen Milan, who bravely faces bullies in his small town high school. With incredible maturity, Milan articulates his gender identity and offers valuable insights that can help all kids find understanding and acceptance.  https://vimeo.com/186480327

Walk With Me - 2016 (17 min) - Sec/Professional *Canadian This Vancouver Police Department Transgender awareness video addresses subjects that many trans people face, such as discrimination, employment challenges, and mental health issues. It also provides tips on how people can interact in a respectful manner with trans people, such as asking what pronouns they prefer to use.  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qtwBgm8HEpM

Creating Gender Inclusive Schools - 2016 (Trailer 2min, Film 21 min) - Professional This short film shows how elementary schools can talk about gender diversity and stereotypes in an inclusive, fun and age-appropriate way. Ideal for teachers, administrators, staff and parents.  https://www.genderspectrum.org/creating-gender-inclusive-schools/

Story of Jazz Jennings - 2014 (4:25) - Int/Sec Jazz Jennings, an articulate and confident trans teen, tells her story of growing up knowing that she was always a girl on the inside, and deserves to be treated as such.  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jbg-LdVdNk0


Katie Couric interview with Jazz Jennings and Family - 2014 (7:57) - Int/Sec  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1SG1mzEgyKQ

Moms For Transgender Equality Tell Their Story - 2015 (3:56) - Int/Sec  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oysepu0LWEk&feature=em-subsi.digest-g

An Introduction to Transgender People - National Centre for Transgender Equality - 2016 (4:05) – Prim/Int/Sec  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YSuJ70OMo3I
There's No Wrong Way to be a Woman - 2016 (00:30) - Int/Sec  Ad shows a Trans woman conquering her fear of using the washroom with others  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TjlZSk31rw

Diagnosing Difference - 2009 (Trailer 2:12, Film 60 min) - Sec  This award winning, exceptionally engaging and well-made video is an excellent introduction to the medical challenges facing the transgender community.  https://vimeo.com/ondemand/diagnosingdifference

Rural Transcapes - 2011 (Trailer 2:16, Film 30min) - Sec *Canadian  BC film that profiles four transgendered individuals who have chosen to live in the rural area of the Kootenays.  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YmG31jPwL7I

She's A Boy I Knew - 2007 (Trailer 2:46, Film 70min) - Sec *Canadian  Using archival family footage, interviews, and animation, She's a Boy I Knew tells the captivating story of the gender transition of a Vancouver filmmaker as it affects her family and friends. Intelligent, honest, entertaining and humorous.  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oUz1JpIHCsY


Prodigal Sons - 2008 (Trailer 1:47, Film 1hr 26min) - Sec  This award-winning family documentary is both fascinating and heartbreakingly honest, and features former quarterback, Kimberly Reed's stranger-than-fiction story including near-universal truths about family bonds, sibling rivalry and human identity.  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oz2BH4fc

Transgender: You're Part of the Story -2016 (13:20) - Int/Sec Trans Teen TED Talk urging teens to be allies  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bXnTAnsVfN8

Sexual Orientation

One Team - 2015 (1:50) - Int/Sec *Canadian;  Canadian Olympic Committee video featuring LGBT athletes advocating for inclusion in sport.  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vhsYf__KQcE

STAND UP Against Homophobia - 2011 (4:25) - Sec  Irish video calls on everyone, gay and straight, to support each other in taking a stand against homophobic bullying.  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VzFfTiOSz4U&feature=youtu.be

Shh! Silence Helps Homophobia - 2014 (7:00) - Sec  LGBT Youth Scotland asks everyone to stand up and speak out against homophobia.  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XQKGigb5l28&feature=youtu.be

Love is All You Need - 2013 (19min) - Upper Int/Sec  The story of a bullied young teen who lives in a world where heterosexuality is considered immoral.  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XCoFoKvfc6Y

Anyone and Everyone - 2007 (57 min) - Sec/Parents  A moving and beautiful portrayal of the love between parents and children, and the work some parents are willing to do to accept their gay and lesbian children.  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qUSmcopI6w  Trailer (2:58)  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8RBjEDCgE4o
**Laramie Inside Out** – 2005 (Trailer 4:26, Film 56 min) - Sec  Award winning film that accurately portrays how the town of Laramie, Wyoming reacted and transformed after the 1998 murder of gay college student, Matthew Shepard, and the huge media uproar that followed.  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2_QsVpnqBGM

**Diversity, Gender Stereotypes, Bullying and SOGI**

**Love Has No Labels** - 2015 (3:20) - Prim/Int/Sec  Ad Council video uses an X-ray screen to show that love doesn’t depend on gender, race, religion, ability or age.  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PnDgZuGlhHs

**#Like a Girl** - 2014 (3:18) - Prim/Int/Sec  This ad compares our stereotypical ideas about “Like A Girl” to the ideas of young girls themselves.  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XjJQBjJYD Ts

**Inspire Her Mind** - 2014 (1:02) - Int/Sec  This ad demonstratively presents the negative impact of gender stereotypes on girls.  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XP3cyRRAfX0

**If We Used Childhood Gender Stereotypes on Adults** - 2014 (1:47) - Prim/Int/Sec  This comical BuzzFeed video imagines what the workplace would look like if we subjected adults to the same gender messages we regularly send to children.  
https://youtu.be/381beI0ZreA

**I Am NOT Black, You Are NOT White** - 2015 (4:35) - Upper Int/Sec  Spoken word piece creatively addresses how “labels” were created to divide us.  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q0qD2K2RWkc

**It's Still Elementary: Re-examining LGBT Issues in Schools** - 2007 (Trailer 3:28, Film 51 min) - Professional  This moving story and political drama revisits the students and teachers from the original ground-breaking film, It's Elementary, and discovers the profound impact of the film in helping educators understand the importance of starting discussions about sexual orientation and gender in elementary classrooms.  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XV_YYc7G4Iw

**Let's Get Real** - 2004 (10:32) - Int/Sec  Youth speak frankly about issues that lead to taunting and bullying, including racial differences, perceived sexual orientation, learning disabilities, religious differences, sexual harassment and others.  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h4lIx7mNi7o

**Straightlaced: How Gender’s Got Us All Tied Up** - 2009 (Trailer 2:05, Film 67min) - Upper Int/Sec  From girls confronting popular messages about culture and body image to boys who are sexually active just to prove they aren't gay, the students in Straightlaced illustrate the toll that deeply held stereotypes and rigid gender policing have on all of our lives.  
https://vimeo.com/52956698

**Two Spirits** - 2009 (Trailer 2:10, Film 65min) - Sec  Interweaves the tragic story of a mother's loss of her son with a revealing look at a time when the world wasn’t simply divided into male and female, and many Native American cultures held places of honour for people of integrated genders.  

**The Year We Thought About Love** - 2015 (Trailer 2:46, Film 68 min) - Sec  Celebrates the powerful work of a Boston youth theatre troupe as they write a play about love, sexual orientation and gender identity.  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OuElr-Xsrc
**Rise Against Homophobia/Transphobia** films from Out in Schools - Upper Int/Sec *Canadian BC’s Out in Schools program includes award winning short films made by youth to help their peers understand SOGI issues, youth realities and perspectives. [http://outinschools.com/video-contest/](http://outinschools.com/video-contest/)

**How Privileged Are You?** - 2016 (6:00) - Upper Int/Sec This eye-opening, humourous and entertaining BuzzFeed video shows a group of teens discussing a quiz that helps them to understand their various levels of privilege. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0UmowwMivyU&t=23s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0UmowwMivyU&t=23s)

**The Price of Exclusion** - 2015 (3:36) - Sec/Professional United Nations Human Rights video exposes just how much LGBT exclusion really costs. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DvSxLHpynFO](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DvSxLHpynFO)

**LGBTQ History**

**Further Off the Straight and Narrow** - 2006 (Trailer 6:30, Film 62min) - Sec Takes a close look at sitcoms, reality shows, and premium TV programming as it explores how representations of GLBT characters became more complex and varied from 1998 – 2006. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q-kDkJN72-Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q-kDkJN72-Q)

**The Celluloid Closet** - 1995 (Trailer 2:12, Film 107 min) - Sec Documentary surveying the various Hollywood screen depictions of gay and lesbian people and the attitudes behind them throughout the history of North American film. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JL_vrb4-6_0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JL_vrb4-6_0)

**The Times of Harvey Milk** - 1984 (Trailer 3:26, Film 90 min) - Upper Int/Sec Academy award winner for best documentary, this film tells the powerful and tragic history of LGBT civil rights leader and San Francisco’s first elected gay councilor who was assassinated in 1979. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oZgCDsgbwjo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oZgCDsgbwjo)

**Jim Loves Jack: The James Egan Story** - 1995 (Excerpt 8:30) - Int/Sec *Canadian* This documentary tells the remarkable story of James Egan, a pioneer champion of gay rights in Canada who challenged sensationalistic media stereotypes of gay people, and then fought for same-sex marriage with his partner of 50 years. Jim Loves Jack is an inspiring story of political activism and a moving testimony to the dignity of gay and lesbian relationships. [https://vimeo.com/137426305](https://vimeo.com/137426305)
Some useful websites, e-mail addresses, and phone numbers for GSAs

**www.pridenet.ca**—Pride Education Network (PEN)
e-mail: [info@pridenet.ca](mailto:info@pridenet.ca)  Box 93678, Nelson Park PO, Vancouver, BC V6E 4L7

Resources, teaching suggestions and support for educators/alleys working to make schools more safe and welcoming for LGBT2Q+ students, families and staff. Website has many articles and links to other groups.

**Pride GSA link with info about GSAs in BC**  PEN attempts to keep a current listing of all GSAs operating in BC high schools, with names and contact info for students and staff associated with each one. Please send us your updated information each September.


**www.sogieducation.org**; is a collaboration of the Educational institutions, BC Government, Foundations, local school districts and broader community organizations working together to address the immediate need to support marginalized LGBTQ students by effecting rapid and progressive change in attitudes, policies, and practices toward creating safer and more inclusive school environments for all students.

**www.outinschools.com** Out in Schools does workshops in schools using films and social media to spark discussion on LGBT2Q+ issues. They are able to travel across BC (funding dependent).

**www.unya.bc.ca**/ Urban Native Youth Association formed to address Indigenous youth concerns. Young Indigenous people continue to arrive in Metro Vancouver with few job skills, minimal training or education, and little or no knowledge of where to go for help. UNYA is meeting this need by helping Vancouver’s Indigenous youth to explore their personal goals in a fun, safe and healthy environment. Supportive of two spirited youth.

**www.qmunity.ca**—GabYouth Services, 604-684-5307
Support, outreach, education for queer youth in Greater Vancouver area

**www.pflag.ca**—PFLAG (Parents, Families, Friends of Lesbians and Gays–Canadian national website). For local contact info for many PFLAG groups around BC, call 604-626-5667 Support for anyone with LGBTQ family members/friends and links to many resources and groups.

**www.transalliancesociety.org**—Trans Alliance Society (TAS)  BC-wide organization for all trans persons, allies and professionals. TAS is devoted to personal development, promoting understanding of trans culture, building a sense of community, and removing all barriers that negatively impact transgendered persons. The site offers news, events, workshops, and outreach services.

Notes on creating your own GSA