Welcoming Schools Back-to-School Kit 2022-2023 School Year

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Program Overview

Early Childhood and Elementary Resources

Middle School and High School Resources

Welcoming Schools is the most comprehensive bias-based bullying prevention program in the nation to provide LGBTQ+ and gender inclusive professional development training, lesson plans, booklists and resources specifically designed for educators and youth-serving professionals.

Cumulative Since 2011

133K
Educators Impacted
by Welcoming Schools trainings and presentations

10.5M
Students Impacted
by Welcoming Schools training

46
States, plus DC, Canada, Taiwan and Mexico
have trained educators and schools

The percentage of educators that feel they have the skills and knowledge to adequately support LGBTQ+ students more than doubles after Welcoming Schools training.

41%
Prior to Welcoming Schools training

86%
After Welcoming Schools training

As a young teacher, I had a student whose school experience was less than they deserved. They identified as a part of the LGBTQ+ community. While I can't go back and change their elementary school experience, I can do everything in my power to prevent it from happening again. For over a decade, and with Welcoming Schools as my traveling partner, I have been working to keep that promise as a teacher, a principal and assistant superintendent."
Assistant Superintendent

Welcoming Schools has shifted the social capital among students toward being an ally and away from bias-based bullying behavior. You see this reflected visually in the hallways and classrooms, in the way staff and students speak, and most importantly in the way our students show up with the confidence to be who they truly are."
Elementary School Principal

Virtual and In-Person Professional Development

Pre-Training Website

+ Participants are given access to a pre-training site that provides foundational information as well as resources and activities to prepare participants for the live training.

+ The self-paced activities take 60 minutes and should be completed prior to the live training session.

Virtual and In-Person Training Sessions

+ Engaging and interactive 90-minute virtual trainings and 2-3 hour in-person trainings that provide strategies and practical skills to support an inclusive school environment.

+ Each session will be conducted by highly skilled Welcoming Schools certified facilitators.

Elementary School Training Modules

Creating LGBTQ+ Inclusive Schools

+ Be able to better answer questions from students and families related to LGBTQ+ topics.

+ Learn how to develop LGBTQ+ inclusive classrooms and become familiar with LGBTO+ terminology.

Embracing All Families

+ Learn the importance of seeing and embracing family diversity.

+ Be able to answer questions from students and families about the importance of welcoming all families in your school community.

Preventing Bias-Based Bullying

+ Be able to foster ally behavior among students, staff and other adults.

+ Understand the critical need to proactively address the biased behavior that can lead to bullying.

Creating Gender Inclusive Schools

+ Develop a framework for creating a gender inclusive school.

+ Be able to respond to challenging questions related to gender.

Supporting Transgender and Non-Binary Students

+ Understand the critical need to create safe and supportive schools for transgender and non-binary students.

+ Be familiar with policies and best practices to support transgender and non-binary students.

Intersectionality: School Practices with an Intersectional Lens

+ Explore the concept of intersectionality and how to use it as a framework that affirms students' intersectional identities such as race, ethnicity, gender, disability, LGBTQ+ etc.

+ Understand the impact of school policies and practices on students' experiences through an intersectional lens.

Virtual and In-Person Professional Development

Pre-Training Website

+ Participants are given access to a pre-training site that provides foundational information as well as resources and activities to prepare participants for the live training.

+ The self-paced activities take 60 minutes and should be completed prior to the live training session.

Virtual and In-Person Training Sessions

+ Engaging and interactive 90 minute virtual trainings and 2-3 hour in-person trainingsthat provide strategies and practical skills to support an inclusive school environment.

+ Each session will be conducted by highly skilled Welcoming Schools certified facilitators.

Secondary Training Modules

Creating LGBTQ+ Inclusive Schools

+ Learn important school practices to create LGBTQ + inclusive schools.
+ Practice how to seek teachable moments and respond to questions about LGBTQ+ topics.

Creating Gender Inclusive Schools

+ Learn important school practices to create gender inclusive schools.
+ Practice how to seek teachable moments and respond to questions about gender topics.

Preventing Bias-Based Bullying

+ Be able to foster ally behavior among students, staff and other adults.
+ Understand the critical need to proactively address the biased behavior that can lead to bullying.

Supporting Transgender and Non-Binary Students

+ Understand the critical need to create safe and supportive schools for transgender and non-binary students.
+ Be familiar with policies and best practices to support transgender and non-binary students.

Intersectionality: School Practices with an Intersectional Lens

+ Explore the concept of intersectionality and how to use it as a framework that affirms students' intersecting identities such as race, ethnicity, gender, disability, LGBTQ+ etc.
+ Understand the impact of school policies and practices on students' experiences through an intersectional lens.

Welcoming Schools Seal of Excellence Benchmarks

Schools that are interested in pursuing the Welcoming Schools Seal of Excellence (SOE) will demonstrate, with documentation, the following benchmarks:

1. **Policies and Procedures**

   Policies/Regulations/Procedures are in place and enumerated to include SOGIE (sexual orientation, gender identity and expression).

   Documentation example: Submit policies and procedures for review.

   Sample policies for consideration: Anti-bullying/harassment, non-discrimination, dress codes, policiesand procedures to support transgender and non-binary students.

2. **Leadership Team**

   Welcoming Schools Leadership Team is established or integrated into an existing committee. The Leadership Team will include a cross-section of the school community including administration, classroom teachers, non-instructional staff and possibly family members. The team will meet monthly throughout the academic year.

   Documentation examples: Submit names of committee members and sample meeting agendas, meeting schedule and/or minutes.

3. **Staff Development**

   School staff must participate in a minimum of 12 hours of staff development training to include, but not limited to, the following Welcoming Schools Modules:

   - Intersectionality
   - LGBTQ+ Inclusive Schools
   - Embracing All Families
   - Gender Inclusive Schools
   - Supporting Transgender and Non-Binary Students
   - Preventing Bias-Based Bullying

   Staff development sessions will take place over a period of 3 or more years and must be delivered by an authorized Welcoming Schools Facilitator.

4. **Planned Lessons and Activities**

   Annually, every student in the school must be provided with a minimum of one Welcoming Schools lesson plan, book or activity each month, as a part of the structured curriculum.

   Documentation examples: Scope and sequence, samples of student work, reflective statements by classroom teachers, videos of student activities, etc.

5. **Bulletin Boards/Newsletters**

   School will have ongoing public displays (bulletin boards, newsletters, and artwork portraying Welcoming Schools' themes/mission).

   Documentation examples: Pictures of the artwork or display.

6. **Family Nights**

   School will host, minimally, one Family Night, for family members/community sharing the Welcoming Schools approach through panels, movie nights, book readings, and information sessions. This can be combined with an already exisiting family event for the school.

   Documentation examples: Event flyer, session evaluations, pictures, videos, or agendas.

7. **Books and Resources**

   Books from Welcoming Schools booklists are publicly available to all students in the library/media center and classrooms.

   Documentation examples: Photos of books on shelves, students reading books.

8. **School Climate Assessment**

   A Welcoming Schools Climate Assessment will be used to gauge the success of developing a more inclusive school by working with the Welcoming Schools Program.

9. **Additional Artifacts**

   Demonstration of larger community based support for this work.

   Documentation examples:
   - Documentation of Welcoming Schools Training being provided to non-instructional and support staff.
   - Establish a Rainbow Club, Ally Team or Gender and Sexuality Alliance (GSA).
   - School concerts/assemblies promoting Welcoming Schools themes.
   - Integration of the Welcoming Schools approach with other social and emotional learning and/or bullying prevention efforts in the school.

Early Childhood and Elementary School Resources 2022

Checklist for Creating a Gender Inclusive School

School Climate

☐ **Use inclusive, non-gendered language** such as "students" or "scholars" to address all members of the school community in lieu of gendered language such as "guys".

☐ **Use inclusive schoolwide messages** that emphasize "All people can… (dance, cook, have short or long hair, do math, make art, etc.)."

☐ **Group and sort students in ways that do not rely on gender** (clothing color, common interests, etc.) including activities such as choir, physical education and human growth and development education.

☐ **Create displays** that show a wide range of occupations and achievements for all genders.

☐ **Support students in using facilities** (restrooms and locker rooms) aligned with their gender identity.

☐ **Affirm pronouns** by creating a school or classroom climate where pronouns are respected.

☐ **Establish a GSA** (Gender and Sexuality Alliance).

Gender Inclusive Materials

☐ **Ensure all curriculum** includes the perspectives, voices, histories and current events of people with different gender identities and expressions.

☐ **Use lesson plans and classroom examples** designed to expand your students' understanding of the complexity of gender identities and expressions.

☐ **Include books and resources** in your library that feature people with expansive gender identities and expressions.

☐ **Model and provide examples** for students that disrupt gender stereotypes.

☐ **Build student allies** by fostering empathy and compassion through teaching about the spectrum of gender identities and expressions.

School Events

☐ **Review event communication** for language inclusive of all genders and family structures. Use inclusive language such as "families" or "students" in lieu of "Mom and Dad," "Ladies and Gentlemen" or "Girls and Boys".

☐ **Ensure event organizers are educated** about students' First Amendment right to attend events with a date of any gender.

☐ **Identify staff members who ensure** that every student feels welcome at school events.

Policies and Procedures

☐ **Ensure anti-bullying and non-discrimination policies** specifically name groups more frequently targeted for harassment including sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression.

☐ **Provide all-gender restrooms** and private changing areas that are available to all students.

☐ **Review all forms used in your school** (registration, attendance, class lists, etc.) to ensure they affirm the names and pronouns of students and caregivers.

☐ **Review dress code policies** to ensure they are gender neutral, equally enforced for students of all gender identities and expressions and free of racial bias.

☐ **Ensure dress code policies** describe appropriate clothing without assigning clothing options to particular genders (ex: choir concert attire - white tops, dark bottoms).

☐ **Hold events for adults** in your school community to help people understand gender and children. Share ways to talk about gender that are affirming, inclusive and developmentally appropriate.

Why Say Gay? K-3 Lessons & Resources

Developing safe and respectful learning environments is critical to ensuring that all students thrive, academically and emotionally. Students must have all of their intersecting identities affirmed and nurtured in order for this to happen, *including* identities tied to sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression.

Using inclusive language and providing representation of all families are simple ways educators can affirm students' identities. Many students have family members who are LGBTQ+ and all family members and family structures must be welcomed, accepted and included in the school community in order for students to be able to engage in the joy of learning.
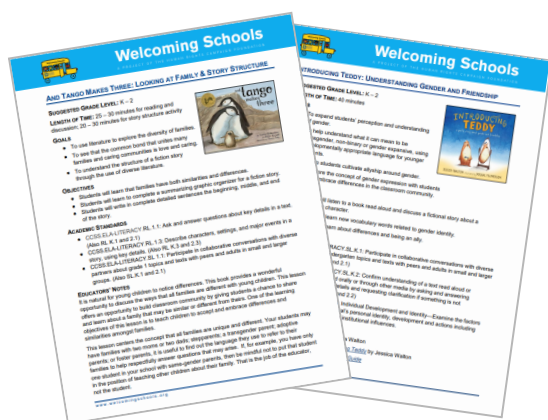
Lesson Plans

Welcoming Schools' lesson plans correspond to our program's areas of emphasis. These lessons are designed to be delivered to students in large and small groups and meet Common Core Standards for subjects in grades K-3, including Language Arts. Student resources are age appropriate and are designed to encourage creativity, critical thinking and decision making.
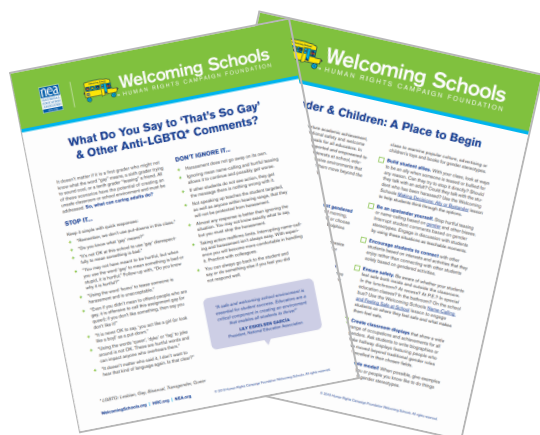
Resources to Empower Educators

Educators sometimes face pushback when implementing lessons that teach students to appreciate diversity and that encourage allyship in early elementary classrooms. These resources give educators the tools and talking points to address reluctance from parents, caregivers and administrators.

"Children need to see and be seen, hear and be heard, understand and be understood, accept and be accepted."

- Welcoming Schools National Facilitator Toni Smith

BOOKS WITH LESSON PLANS
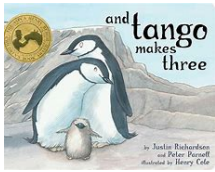
And Tango Makes Three: Looking at Family & Story Structure

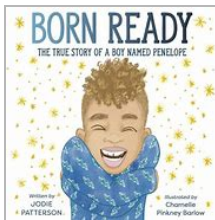Use this cute story of two male penguins and their baby to discuss family diversity and story structure.

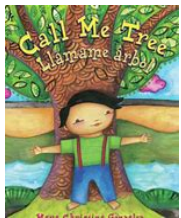*Topic: LGBTQ+ Families*

Born Ready: The True Story of a Boy Named Penelope

Penelope's experiences show children that it always makes you stronger when you are true to yourself and who you really are.
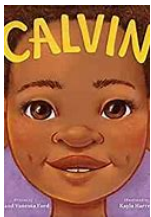
Topic: Gender Identity

Call Me Tree/Llámame árbol: Exploring a Gender Free Book

Call Me Tree/Llámame árbol offers an opportunity to build a classroom community by giving students a chance to learn about gender via a character in a book who does not use pronouns.

Topics: Gender Expression, Pronouns

Calvin: Time to Be Me!

Calvin has always been a boy, even if the world sees him as a girl. He knows who he is in his heart and in his mind, but he hasn't yet told his family. Finally, he can wait no longer.

Topic: Gender Identity

From the Stars in the Sky to the Fish in the Sea

In this beautifully imagined picture book about gender, identity, and the acceptance of the differences between us, Miu Lan faces many questions about who they are and who they may be. One thing's for sure: no matter what, their mother will love them.

Topic: Gender Identity

The Great Big Book of Families: Discussion Guide

The Great Big Book of Families showcases diverse families and their lives together. It's a great resource for reflecting the diversity of your students' families and highlighting diversity for all students. LGBTQ+ inclusive, multi-racial families, economic diversity.
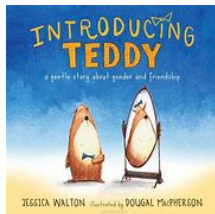
Topic: LGBTQ+ Families

I Am Jazz: Transgender Topics in Elementary School

The picture book, *I Am Jazz,* based on the life of Jazz Jennings, can help start a conversation with students on what it means to be transgender.
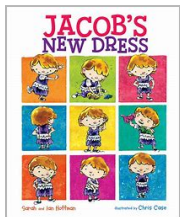
Topics: Gender Identity, Gender Expression

Introducing Teddy: Understanding Gender and Friendship

The book, *Introducing Teddy* and several fun activities help students understand concepts of gender identity and how to be a kind friend.
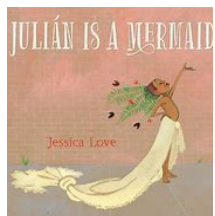
Topics: Gender Identity, Gender Expression

Jacob's New Dress: Understanding Gender Expression

Through the story of Jacob, students discuss gender expression and mean teasing based on gender.

Topic: Gender Expression

Julián Is a Mermaid: Understanding Gender Expression

While in the subway with his abuela, Julián sees three women spectacularly dressed up and wants to dress up just like them. But what will his abuela think? A story about the power of being seen and affirmed.

Topic: Gender Expression
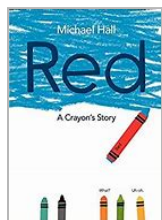
Red: A Crayon's Story –There's More To Me Than You Can See

Red: A Crayon's Story provides a wonderful opportunity to discuss stereotypes based on appearance (gender, race, ability). Each student will create a self crayon that explores their inner identities.

Topics: Gender Identity, Gender Stereotypes
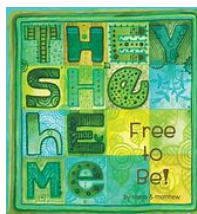
They, She, He, Me, Free to Be! Understanding Pronouns

They, She, He, Me Free To Be! is a short diverse book about pronouns and gender expression. Students can also create an artistic pronoun to display in your classroom.

Topics: Gender Expression, Pronouns
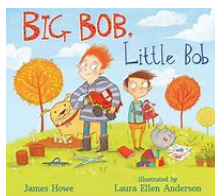
Using Children's Books to Look at Gender Stereotyping

Find a fun way to talk about gender stereotypes and discrimination with activities paired with children's books.

Topic: Gender Stereotypes
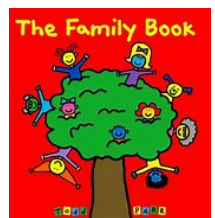
What is a Family?

This introductory lesson uses children's own experiences and questions. You can use the lesson with any number of books featuring diverse families.

Topic: LGBTQ+ Families

Defining LGBTQ+ Words for Elementary Students

+ When children ask questions about LGBTQ+ words, it is sometimes best to offer simple and direct answers.

+ You might choose to answer a student's question with another question to figure out what they are really asking — is it about name calling, a classmate's two dads or something they saw on the internet? Listening first helps you respond.

+ Using examples helps students understand definitions.

+ Questions about LGBTQ+ words can provide teachable moments on topics like understanding difference and treating people with respect.

+ If a student uses an LGBTQ+ term in a derogatory way, ask them if they know what it means. If they don't, give a short definition and explain how that term is hurtful and mean. Let them know they should not use it in that way.

+ This list can serve as a starting place for educators to respond to questions about LGBTQ+ words. These suggested definitions can help to ensure that you feel confident in your own knowledge and ability to communicate these ideas to students.

Gender

Cisgender: When your gender identity (how you feel) is the same as what doctors/midwives assigned to you when you were born (girl/boy or sex assigned at birth).

Gender Binary: A way of seeing gender as two distinct and opposite groups — girl and boy. This idea doesn't include all the ways we can have a gender identity and express our gender.

Gender Expansive: Some people feel that the traditional ways of being a "boy" or "girl" do not fit for them. They live their lives showing that there are many ways to be a girl, boy, both or neither.

Gender Expression: People express themselves in many ways, such as through clothes or hairstyles. Sometimes people think that these things go with certain genders, but really you cannot guess someone's gender or pronouns from how they look. In our school we respect that every person is unique and different, and we don't tease or bully anyone about their personal expression.

Gender Identity: How you feel. Girl, boy, both or neither. Everyone has a gender identity.

Intersex: An umbrella term that refers to people who are born with bodies that are naturally different from what is traditionally considered female or male. (This occurs in about 2% of babies born, similar to the percentage for redheads.)

Non-Binary: People who do not feel like the words "girl" or "boy" fits. They may feel like both or neither. They sometimes use pronouns such as they, them, theirs.

Sex Assigned At Birth: When a baby is born, a doctor or midwife looks at the baby's body/anatomy and says they are a girl, boy or intersex.

Transgender or Trans: When your gender identity (how you feel) is different than what doctors/midwives assigned to you when you were born (girl/boy or sex assigned at birth).

Who You Love

Bisexual: People who love people of more than one gender. [In grades 3 – 5, you might say people who love or are attracted to people of more than one gender.]

Gay: People who love people of the same gender. [In grades 3 – 5, you might say people who love or are attracted to people of the same gender.]

Heterosexual: People who identify as women who only love [or are attracted to] people who identify as men. Also, people who identify as men who only love [or are attracted to] people who identify as women.

Lesbian: People who love people of the same gender — two women. [In grades 3 – 5, you might say people who love or are attracted to people of the same gender.]

Pansexual: People who love people of any gender. [In grades 3 – 5, you might say people who love or are attracted to people of any gender.]

Sexual Orientation: Who you love. [In grades 3 – 5, you might say who you love or are attracted to.]

Gender and Who You Love

LGBTQ+: Acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer.

Queer: People use this word as a way to identify with and celebrate people of all gender identities and all the ways people love each other. When used in a mean way, it is a word that hurts.

Discussion Guide for the Animated Video:
What is Gender?

SUGGESTED GRADE LEVEL: K-2

LENGTH OF TIME: 30 minutes (plus three additional 40-minute sessions with Activity Lesson)

OVERVIEW OF VIDEO

This two-minute animated video was created in partnership between the Human Rights Campaign Foundations' Welcoming Schools program and Advocates for Youth. *What is Gender?* helps early learners understand the complexities of gender, gender identity, gender expression and gender stereotypes in a developmentally appropriate way. Understanding gender helps children develop healthy identities and supports an environment of respect and belonging for all.

LEARNING CONCEPTS

- Everyone has a gender identity and a gender expression.
- Gender identity is about who you feel you are on the inside- boy, girl, in between, or something altogether different.
- Sometimes, other people have ideas about who you are and what you should like or do based on your gender, but you get to decide.
- It's okay to play with any toys and dress-up clothes that feel good and are fun to you, even if they are different from what other friends like. You get to pick what is right for you.
- It's okay to choose the hairstyle and clothes that make you feel comfortable.This is your gender expression and it may be similar to or different from what other schoolmates like.
- Treat others with kindness and respect, just how you'd like to be treated yourself.
- There are caring adults and friends in your life who will love and accept you for who you are.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- *What is Gender?* Animation Video
- Chart paper or dry erase board with markers

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Before Animation
- Write "What is Gender?" at the top of a piece of chart paper or dry erase board.
- Ask your students, "What is Gender?" and write their responses on the chart paper or dry erase board (it's okay if your students don't know or only answer boy or girl).
- Say to your students, "Now we are going to watch an animation that might give us some more ideas about gender."

After Animation
- Ask your students, "After watching this animation, would you change or add anything to our 'What is Gender' chart? What did you hear or see in the animation?"
- "What community agreements could we make so that everyone in our class feels welcome? How can we take care of each other?" (write responses on chart paper or dry erase board)
  Possible Examples:
  - It's okay for everyone to wear the clothes that make them happy and comfortable.
  - It's okay to play with the toys that you like.
  - Everyone will be called the name and pronouns that feel best for them.
  - Everyone can do jobs that they like when they grow up.
  - Treat others how they want to be treated, with respect.
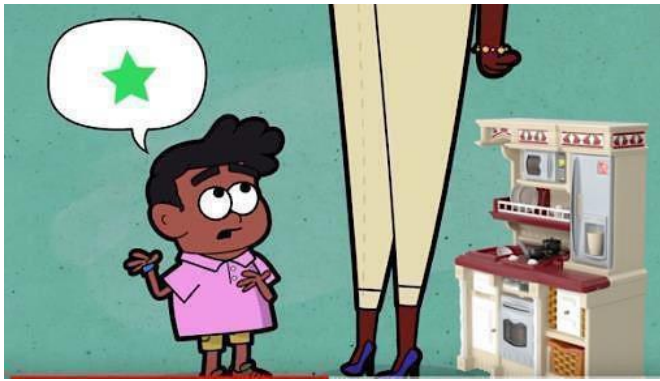
WELCOMING SCHOOLS ACTIVITIES TO PAIR WITH *WHAT IS GENDER?*
- Toy Marketing and Gender: Design a Welcoming Toy Store for Everyone in Your Classroom
- Introducing Teddy: Understanding Gender and Friendship
- They, She, He easy as ABC: Understanding Names, Pronouns and Gender Expression

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FROM WELCOMING SCHOOLS
- Gender Inclusive Schools Checklist
- Children's Books with Transgender, Non-Binary and Gender Expansive Characters
- Defining LGBTQ+ Words for Elementary School Students
- Be Prepared for Questions and Put-Downs Around Gender

EDUCATORS' NOTES
While most children that are 4 to 7 years old identify with the sex they were assigned at birth, some may experience an awakening in their gender identity and/or gender expression that they can articulate, understand and share when they feel safe and affirmed later in their childhood, adolescence or adulthood.Children who assert that they know their gender to be different than the one they were assigned at birth benefit immensely from support, love and acceptance. There is no single or correct way for gender identity and expression to emerge in children. Essential factors for health and wellness as young people grow include being supported in self-identity, natural curiosity and exploration.

As young children become more aware of gender expectations or gender stereotypes, they may express that certain toys or clothes are only for girls or boys. If this occurs, adults can offer gentle reassurances that clothes and toys are for children who like them. Simple statements and reminders that all children can play and choose what they like can be very helpful in the development of a supported and authentic sense of self for children.

Some children may express their gender identity very strongly. If a child refuses to wear specific clothes or tells an adult that their pronouns or gender are different than the ones that might be assumed, it is important to listen to the child's experience. This can be the beginning of a period of stress for some young children if they feel a misalignment between who they know themselves to be on the inside with who the people around them think they are. Expectations around clothing and toys can be extremely distressing and confusing for a child who is beginning to understand that their gender identity is different than the sex they were assigned at birth. Adults that discourage their child from sharing or expressing who they are can have a negative impact and lead to the child feeling ashamed and isolated. Children do best when caring adults in their lives show them and tell them they are loved and accepted for who they are. Loving a child as they express different things about themselves shows them that they have reliable support and adults that want to know who they are on the inside.

It is important to create environments that are affirming of gender-expansive children and youth. All children tend to develop a clearer view of themselves and their gender over time. It is important to note that playing in clothes or with toys that may be typically (and stereotypically) associated with a different sex than the one a child was assigned at birth is a normal part of gender development and exploration, regardless of a child's future gender identity. It is also important to gently prepare children for negative reactions from other children and adults, and to prepare children to stand up when they see a friend being bullied. Teaching children and adults ally behaviors to support all the ways that children want to express their genders in the world is critical for thriving. Gender stereotypes limit all children.

Discussion Guide for the Animated Video:
The ABCs of SOGIE

SUGGESTED GRADE LEVEL: 3-5

LENGTH OF TIME: 40 minutes (plus three additional 40-minute sessions with Activity Lesson)

OVERVIEW OF VIDEO

This two-minute animated video was created in partnership between the Human Rights Campaign Foundations' Welcoming Schools program and Advocates for Youth. *The ABCs of SOGIE* helps early learners understand the complexities of SOGIE (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Gender Expression). Understanding SOGIE helps children develop healthy identities and supports an environment of respect and belonging for all.

LEARNING CONCEPTS

- It's important to be kind, respectful and affirming to other people no matter what gender they are, how they express their gender or who they love.
- Gender identity is an inside feeling in your heart and mind about who you are; everyone has a gender identity that is boy, girl, something in between, or altogether different..
- People can feel romantic love or attraction for other people of the same gender or a different gender than their own.This is called sexual orientation.
- Gender expression is your personal style (i.e. hair style, clothing, accessories, etc.)

MATERIALS NEEDED

- *The ABCs of SOGIE* Animated Video
- Chart paper or dry erase board with markers

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Before Animation
- Write, "*What is SOGIE?*" at the top of a piece of chart paper or dry erase board. Write the letters SO-GI-E vertically on the left side of the paper or board.
- Ask your students, "Does anyone know what SOGIE means or what each letter or pair of letters stand for?" If you have students respond, write their responses on the chart paper or dry erase board (it's okay if your students don't know). If none of your students have heard this acronym, write out the words next to each letter grouping. SO Sexual Orientation, GI Gender Identity and E Expression.
- Ask your students if they know what these words mean? Listen to a few responses.
- Say to your students, "Now we are going to watch an animation that might give us some more ideas about SOGIE and what it can mean."

After Animation
- Ask your students, "After watching this animation, would you change or add anything to our 'What is SOGIE' chart?"
- "What community agreements could we make so that everyone in our class feels welcome? How can we take care of each other?" (write responses on chart paper or dry erase board)
  Possible Examples:
  - It's okay for people to wear the clothes that make them happy.
  - Everyone will be called the name and pronouns that feel best for them.
  - Respect that everyone can have crushes or romantic feelings for other people.

WELCOMING SCHOOLS ACTIVITIES TO PAIR WITH *THE ABCs of SOGIE*

- Gender Snowperson: Understanding Gender Identity
- Family Diversity Scavenger Hunt
- Media Literacy: Analyzing Advertising How Are Families Portrayed?
- Persuasive Letters: Examining Gender Marketing by Toy Companies

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FROM WELCOMING SCHOOLS

- Gender Inclusive Schools Checklist
- Children's Books with Transgender, Non-Binary and Gender Expansive Characters
- Defining LGBTQ+ Words for Elementary School Students
- Be Prepared for Questions and Put-Downs about Gender
- Great Books on LGBTQ+ History for Kids
- Great Children's Books That Welcome All Families
- What Do You Say to 'That's So Gay' & Other Anti-LGBTQ+ Comments

EDUCATORS' NOTES

For young children whose gender identity, gender expression or sexual orientation may be different than their parents or caregivers, it is especially important that they receive positive messages of support, love and acceptance as they develop and define their unique identities. Creating learning experiences that build empathy and kindness also builds classrooms and peer relationships that can have a long-term protective impact on mental health, wellness and lowered risk of suicidality.

Although gender identity and sexual orientation are different concepts, for young children, understanding key themes related to both is essential. For young children, it is important to understand that everyone has both a gender identity and a sexual orientation, including cisgender and heterosexual people. Helping young children know about the universality of identities and orientations is a useful foundation for learning and empathy-building.

Fostering self-expression in young children offers two important developmental opportunities. First, it is an opportunity for learning vocabulary, ideas, concepts and feelings related to understanding and expressing self identities. Second, it provides a foundational opportunity for children to learn about expressing appreciation, kindness and empathy to people who are different than they are. When young children are not encouraged to express who they are, or worse, are told who they are is not okay, not "normal" or accepted, it can lead to building shame and isolation and negatively impact healthy development.

Middle School and High School Resources 2022

Secondary LGBTQ+ and Gender Inclusive Schools Checklist

Creating schools that nurture academic achievement, provide physical and emotional safety and welcome all students are common goals for all educators. In order for all students to feel supported and empowered to express their identities and interests at school, it is the job of educators to establish LGBTQ+ and gender inclusive environments where all students are safe, affirmed and can thrive - socially, emotionally, and academically.

School Climate

☐ Does your school support students in using facilities (restrooms and locker rooms) aligned with their gender identity?

☐ Does your school have a GSA (Gender and Sexuality Alliance)?

☐ Do LGBTQ+, transgender and non-binary educators and staff members know they are safe to be "out" at work?

☐ Do educators and staff utilize teachable moments to not only stop negative anti-LGBTQ+ behavior, but to educate about LGBTQ+ terminology, history, and current events as well?

☐ Do classroom and hallway images reflect LGBTQ+ people and the full spectrum of gender expression?

☐ Have educators and staff members established processes to ensure that every LGBTQ student has a caring adult in the building who connects with them?

☐ Are educators and staff members encouraged and supported in being allies to LGBTQ+, transgender and non-binary students?

☐ Are educators and staff building LGBTQ allyship amongst all students through intentional activities, modeling and using teachable moments?

☐ Do educators and staff use inclusive, non-gendered language such as "students" or "folks" to address all members of the school community in lieu of gendered language such as "guys"?

☐ Have educators and staff discontinued grouping student activities by gender - including choir, physical education, class rosters, and Homecoming events?

☐ Do educators and staff model and provide examples of eliminating gender stereotypes to students?

☐ Do educators and staff normalize pronoun sharing by sharing their own pronouns?

Policies and Procedures

☐ Does your school's anti-bullying and nondiscrimination policy specifically name groups more frequently targeted for harassment inclusive of sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression?

☐ Is the effectiveness of your school's anti-bullying program evaluated annually using student and staff surveys that specifically ask questions related to LGBTQ+ student experiences?

☐ Does your school's nondiscrimination policy for students and staff specifically include sexual orientation, gender identity/expression?

☐ Have educators and staff reviewed all school forms such as registration, attendance and class lists to ensure students can accurately self-identify with the names and pronouns they use?

☐ Does your school have all-gender restrooms and private changing areas available to all students?

☐ Does your school or school district have an all-gender dress code that is inclusive of all gender expressions and free of racial bias? Are you ensuring that students are welcome and safe to wear the clothes, hairstyles and accessories that reflect their intersecting identities?

School Events

- ☐ Is gender-inclusive language such as "families" and "students" used on all event communications in lieu of "Mom and Dad," "Ladies and Gentlemen" or "Girls and Boys"?

- ☐ Are event organizers educated about students' First Amendment right to attend events with a date of any gender or sexual orientation?

- ☐ Do staff and educators treat all families with respect and avoid stereotyping or judgment when communicating with two-mom and two-dad, single-parent, racially diverse and/or multi-linguistic families

- ☐ Does your school have at least one staff member who is ensuring that every student feels welcome at school events such as prom and homecoming?

LGBTQ+ Inclusive Material and Resources

- ☐ Is your school's sexual health curriculum inclusive of all sexual orientations and gender identities?

- ☐ Does your school's academic curriculum include a full spectrum of gender identity and sexual orientation perspectives, voices, histories and current events?

- ☐ Does your school's library include books and resources about people with a broad spectrum of gender identities and sexual orientations?

- ☐ Do educators and students create classroom and school displays that show a wide range of occupations and achievements for all genders and sexual orientations?

- ☐ Do educators use lesson plans and classroom examples designed to expand your students' understanding of gender and sexuality?

- ☐ Do educators create opportunities for your class to examine social media and books to increase their media literacy around LGBTQ+ topics?

Professional Development

- ☐ Does your school or school district provide ongoing professional development for educators that increase critical skills to address bias-based bullying behaviors regarding gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation?

- ☐ Are educators and staff members specifically trained to prevent and respond to bullying incidents involving gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation?

Confidentiality

- ☐ Are educators and staff aware that under FERPA they must protect the confidentiality of students related to their gender identity and sexual orientation and show great caution not to share students' sexual orientation or gender identities without that student's permission, even to the student's family?

- ☐ Do school privacy policies explicitly assert the confidentiality of information pertaining to students' sexual orientations and gender identities?

Definitions to Help Understand Gender and Sexual Orientation

Asexual/Ace: A term that describes a person who lacks sexual attraction or desire for other people.

Birth Assignment (Sex Assigned at Birth): This is generally determined by external genitalia at birth––female, male or intersex.

Bisexual/Bi+: A term that describes a person who is emotionally, romantically or sexually attracted to people of more than one gender, sex, or gender identity.

Cisgender: A term that describes a person whose gender identity aligns with the sex assigned to them at birth.

Cis-Heteronormative: This term refers to the assumption that heterosexuality and being cisgender are the norm, which plays out in interpersonal interactions and society, and furthers the marginalization of queer and gender diverse people.

Dyadic: Not Intersex.

Gay: A term that describes a person who is emotionally, romantically or sexually attracted to some members of the same gender.

Gender Binary: The idea that there are two distinct and opposite genders—female and male. This model is limiting and doesn't account for the full spectrum of gender identities and gender expressions.

Gender Dysphoria: Clinically significant distress caused when a person's assigned birth gender is not the same as the one in which they identify. According to the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), the term - which replaces Gender Identity Disorder - "is intended to better characterize the experiences of affected children, adolescents, and adults".

Gender Expression: External appearance of one's gender identity, usually expressed through behavior, clothing, haircut or voice, which may or may not conform to socially defined behaviors and characteristics typically associated with being either feminine or masculine.

Gender Identity: An internal, deeply felt sense of being female, male, a blend of both or neither. Refers to how individuals perceive themselves and what they call themselves. Can be the same as or different from their sex assigned at birth.

Gender Non-Conforming: A broad term referring to people who do not behave in a way that conforms to the traditional expectations of their gender, or whose gender expression does not fit neatly into a category.

Genderqueer: People who embrace a fluidity of gender identity and often, though not always, sexual orientation. Other terms you may hear under this umbrella are gender expansive, gender fluid, or gender creative.

Heteronormative: The assumption of heterosexuality as the given or default sexual orientation instead of one of many possibilities, and that the preferred or default relationship is between two people of "opposite" genders.

Intersex: An umbrella term used to describe a wide range of natural bodily variations. In some cases, these traits are visible at birth, and in others, they are not apparent until puberty.

Lesbian: A woman who is emotionally, romantically, and/or sexually attracted to women. This includes cis, trans and other people who are women.

LGBTQ+: An acronym for "lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer".

Non-Binary: An adjective describing a person who does not identify exclusively as a woman or a man. They may identify as both, somewhere in between, or outside the categories of a woman and a man.

Pansexual/Pan: Describes someone who has the potential for emotional, romantic or sexual attraction to people of any gender though not necessarily simultaneously, in the same way, or to the same degree.

QTPOC: Queer, Trans, People of Color.

Queer: A term people often use to express fluid identities and orientations. Often used interchangeably with "LGBTQ+".

Same-Gender Loving: A term coined and used by communities of color instead of lesbian, gay or bisexual to express attraction to and love of people of the same gender.

Sexual Orientation: An inherent or immutable enduring emotional, romantic or sexual attraction to other people.

SOGIE: Sexual Orientation Gender Identity and Expression.

Transgender/Trans: An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or expression is different from cultural expectations based on the sex they were assigned at birth. Being transgender does not imply any specific sexual orientation.

Two Spirit: An umbrella term and identity within many first nations communities both historically and presently that describes people who live within a spectrum of genders, sexual identities, gender expressions and gender roles.

Note: For younger students see the Welcoming Schools handout: Defining LGBTQ+ Terms for Elementary School Students.

nea
NATIONAL
EDUCATION
ASSOCIATION
nea.org

Welcoming Schools™

Welcoming Schools
HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN FOUNDATION

What Do You Say to 'That's So Gay' & Other Anti-LGBTQ* Comments?

It doesn't matter if it is a first grader who might not know what the word "gay" means, a sixth grader trying to sound cool, or a tenth grader "teasing" a friend. All of these scenarios have the potential of creating an unsafe classroom or school environment and must be addressed. **So, what can caring adults do?**

STOP IT...

Keep it simple with quick responses:

+ "Remember, we don't use put-downs in this class."

+ "Do you know what 'gay' means?"

+ "It's not OK at this school to use 'gay' disrespect-fully to mean something is bad."

+ "You may not have meant to be hurtful, but when you use the word 'gay' to mean something is bad or stupid, it is hurtful." Follow-up with, "Do you know why it is hurtful?"

+ "Using the word 'homo' to tease someone is harassment and is unacceptable."

+ "Even if you didn't mean to offend people who are gay, it is offensive to call this assignment gay (or queer); if you don't like something, then say you don't like it!"

+ "It is never OK to say, 'you act like a girl (or look like a boy)' as a put-down."

+ "Using the words 'queer', 'dyke' or 'fag' to joke around is not OK. These are hurtful words and can impact anyone who overhears them."

+ "It doesn't matter who said it, I don't want to hear that kind of language again. Is that clear?"

DON'T IGNORE IT...

+ Harassment does not go away on its own.

+ Ignoring mean name-calling and hurtful teasing allows it to continue and possibly get worse.

+ If other students do not see action, they get the message there is nothing wrong with it.

+ Not speaking up teaches the student targeted, as well as anyone within hearing range, that they will not be protected from harassment.

+ Almost any response is better than ignoring the situation. You may not know exactly what to say, but you must stop the harassment.

+ Taking action reaffirms limits. Interrupting name-call-ing and harassment isn't always easy. With experi-ence you will become more comfortable in handling it. Practice with colleagues.

+ You can always go back to the student and say or do something else if you feel you did not respond well.

> *"A safe and welcoming school environment is essential for student success. Educators are a critical component in creating an environment that enables all students to thrive!"*
>
> **LILY ESKELSEN GARCÍA**
> President, National Education Association

* LGBTQ: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer

EDUCATE...

+ If you have the time and opportunity to educate on the spot, do it. If you don't, make time later.

+ If you have been hearing the phrase "That's gay" or "no homo," take time during class to make sure that your students know what "gay" means and know why it is hurtful to use as a comment or put-down.

+ Be clear that using the word "gay" in a negative way is disrespectful. Be clear that using the phrase "That's gay" is hurtful to other students who may have family members and friends who are LGBTQ.

+ Be prepared to provide accurate information. For the youngest students, keep it simple—for example, "The word 'gay' describes a man and a man or a woman and a woman who love each other." As students get older, they may want more explanations and discussion.

+ In lessons on respect, prejudice or civil rights, include information about discrimination against LGBTQ people and the LGBTQ civil rights movement.

"I wish more teachers could elaborate on it [LGBTQ topics] and talk about it more, instead of like, two sentences and then dismiss the subject."

ELAINA
in *What Do You Know? Six-to Twelve-Year Olds Talk About LGBTQ Topics* (A Welcoming Schools Film)

BE PROACTIVE...

+ Develop an environment of respect and caring for all students in your school and classroom using inclusive language, books and other materials.

+ Establish clear schoolwide and classroom policies against hurtful teasing and bullying. Ensure that all members of the school community understand what the policies are and why they are important.

+ Be explicit that rules against hurtful name-calling include "That's gay!" "Homo!" "Fag!" "Tranny!" "Sissy!" and other LGBTQ put-downs.

+ Develop the capacity of students and educators to be allies that stand up for students who are harassed.

Why Stop Anti-LGBTQ Comments?

"Middle-school students called antigay names report increased anxiety, depression, personal distress and a lower sense of school belonging regardless of their sexual orientation."

V. PAUL POTEAT, PH.D. AND DOROTHY L. ESPELAGE, PH.D.
The Journal of Early Adolescence

....

"Both students who are targeted and students who exhibit bullying behavior have lower academic achievement in school."

J. JUVONEN, PH.D., Y. WANG, PH.D., AND G. ESPINOZA, PH.D.
The Journal of Early Adolescence

....

"If name-calling or other discrimination happens at school and goes either unnoticed or is not discussed by adults, students infer that the behavior is widely accepted."

F.E. ABOUD, PH.D.
Handbook of Race, Racism and the Developing Child

nea
NATIONAL
EDUCATION
ASSOCIATION
nea.org

Welcoming Schools
™ HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN FOUNDATION

Qué Responder al Comentario: 'Es Tan Gay' y Otros Comentarios Anti-LGBT*

No importa si es un estudiante de primer grado que no sabe lo que significa la palabra "gay," un estudiante de sexto grado que intenta lucir genial o un estudiante de décimo grado "burlándose" de un amigo. Todos estos escenarios tienen el potencial de crear un ambiente escolar inseguro y deben abordarse. **Entonces, ¿qué pueden hacer los adultos?**

FRENAR:

Simplifíquelo con respuestas rápidas como, por ejemplo:

+ "Recuerda que no usamos términos despectivos en esta clase."

+ "¿Sabes el significado de la palabra 'gay'?"

+ "No está bien decir: 'Es tan gay'."

+ "Puede que no haya sido tu intención ser hiriente, pero cuando usas la palabra 'gay' para referirte a algo malo o estúpido, lo es." Seguir con: "¿Sabes por qué es tan hiriente?"

+ "Usar la palabra 'gay' para burlarse de alguien constituye un acoso y es inaceptable."

+ "Incluso si no fue tu entonces ofender a las personas gay, es ofensivo decir que esta tarea es 'gay.' Si no te gusta algo, ¡entonces di que no te gusta!"

+ "Jamás está bien decir: 'te portas como una niña (o te ves como un niño)' como insulto."

+ "No está bien usar la palabra 'maricón' para bromear. Es una palabra hiriente y puede afectar a cualquier persona que la escuche."

+ "No importa quién lo dijo, no quiero volver a escuchar ese tipo de lenguaje. ¿Está claro?"

NO LO IGNORE:

+ El acoso no cesa por sí solo.

+ El ignorar insultos y burlas hirientes permite que ambos continúen y que la situación posiblemente empeore.

+ Si otros estudiantes no notan algún tipo de acción al respecto, asumen que no hay nada de malo en ello.

+ El no decir nada le enseña al estudiante que ha sido acosado, al igual que a cualquier persona que lo escuchó, que no estarán protegidos del acoso.

+ Cualquier respuesta resulta mejor que ignorar la situación. Quizá, no se sepa exactamente qué decir, pero debe frenar el acoso.

+ Actuar demarca los límites. Cesar los insultos no es tarea fácil, con la experiencia podrá sentirse más cómodo cada vez que necesite manejar la situación.

+ Cometer un error es mucho mejor que simplemente no actuar. Usted puede conversar con el estudiante, decir o agregar algo en otro momento si siente que no dio una buena respuesta.

"Un ambiente escolar seguro y acogedor es esencial para el éxito de los estudiantes. ¡Los educadores son un componente crítico en la creación de un ambiente que permita que todos los estudiantes prosperen!"

LILY ESKELSEN GARCÍA
Presidente, National Education Association

* LGBT: Lesbiana, Gay, Bisexual, Transgenéro

EDUCAR:

+ Si tiene la oportunidad de educar en ese preciso momento, hágalo. De lo contrario, tome un momento para hacerlo después.

+ Si ha estado escuchando la frase "Es tan gay" para referirse a algo malo o estúpido, tome un momento durante una reunión de clase o actividad grupal para asegurarse de que sus estudiantes sepan el significado de la palabra "gay" y lo hiriente que puede resultar utilizarla como insulto.

+ Aclare a sus estudiantes que el uso de la palabra "gay" de forma negativa es una falta de respeto. Explíqueles también que decir la frase "Es tan gay" es hiriente para estudiantes que podrían tener padres, hermanos, tías, tíos, vecinos, amigos o cualquier otro familiar LGBT.

+ Esté preparado para dar información correcta. Para los estudiantes más pequeños, utilice explicaciones sencillas: por ejemplo, "la palabra 'gay' describe a un hombre y un hombre o una mujer y una mujer que se aman." Cuando estén mayores, es posible que deseen más explicaciones y discusión.

+ Durante lecciones sobre respeto, estereotipos o prejuicio incluya también información sobre discriminación contra personas LGBT y el movimiento de derechos civiles LGBT.

> *"Me gustaría que más maestros pudieran abordar [temas LGBT] y hablar más sobre eso, en lugar de dos oraciones, y luego abandonar el tema."*
>
> **ELAINA**
> en *What Do You Know? Six-to Twelve-Year Olds Talk About LGBTQ Topics* (una película de Welcoming Schools)

MOTIVAR:

+ Cree un ambiente de respeto y solidaridad para todos los estudiantes de su clase y escuela usando lenguaje, libros y otros materiales inclusivos.

+ Establezca normas en su escuela y clases en contra de insultos y burlas hirientes. Asegúrese de que todos los miembros de la comunidad escolar entiendan cuáles son las políticas y por qué son importantes.

+ Si escucha la frase "Es tan gay" en la escuela, especifique que las reglas en contra de calificativos incluyen el uso de esa frase y otros insultos anti-gay.

+ Desarrollar la capacidad de los estudiantes y educadores de ser aliados que defiendan a los estudiantes que son acosados.

POR QUÉ PARAR COMENTARIOS ANTI-GAIS…

> *"Los estudiantes de la escuela secundaria agredidos verbalmente con insultos anti-gais manifestaron un incremento de ansiedad, depresión, angustia y un menor grado de integración en sus respectivos centros de estudios independientemente de su orientación sexual."*
>
> **V. PAUL POTEAT, PH.D. AND DOROTHY L. ESPELAGE, PH.D.**
> *The Journal of Early Adolescence*
>
> ···
>
> *"Tanto los estudiantes que han sido acosados como los que muestran un comportamiento de acoso tienen un rendimiento académico más bajo en la escuela."*
>
> **J. JUVONEN, PH.D., Y. WANG, PH.D., AND G. ESPINOZA, PH.D.**
> *The Journal of Early Adolescence*
>
> ···
>
> *"Si el poner apodos o la discriminación ocurren en la escuela y pasan desapercibidos o los adultos no los discuten, los estudiantes deducen que ese tipo de comportamiento es ampliamente aceptado."*
>
> **F.E. ABOUD, PH.D.**
> *Handbook of Race, Racism and the Developing Child*

Welcoming Schools
BE WHO YOU ARE
Welcoming Schools
HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN
www.welcomingschools.org

Welcoming Schools
BE WHO YOU ARE
Welcoming Schools
HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN
www.welcomingschools.org