



Who are we ?

The Rainbow Resource Centre (RRC) serves Manitoba and North-western Ontario's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Two-Spirit and Queer (LGBTQT*) Communities.



Our Vision . . .

- ▶ A society in which diverse sexual and gender identities, orientations and expressions are included, valued and celebrated as a result of our active commitment to promote and maintain dignity, human freedoms and human rights.

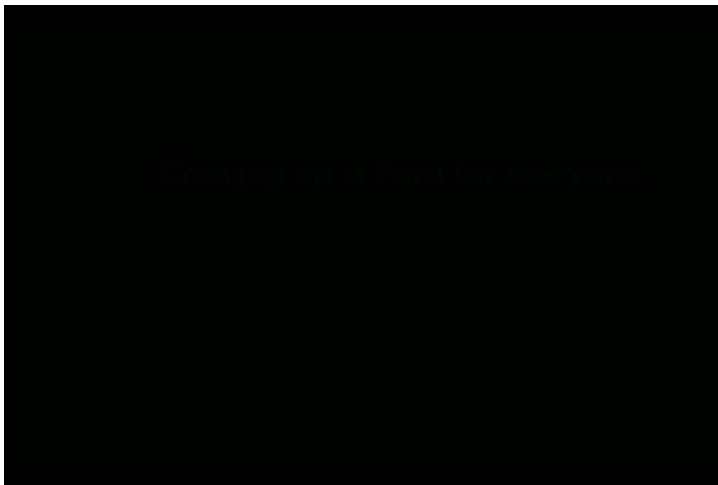


Our Mission Statement . . .


- ▶ **REPRESENT AND SUPPORT** Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Two-Spirit, Intersex, Queer, Questioning and Ally (LGBTBT*) Individuals, Communities and Families by providing comprehensive education and outreach services, accessible counselling and other programs and services.
- ▶ **PROMOTE LGBTT* VISIBILITY** by way of advocacy, community-building and networking on local, provincial, national and global levels.
- ▶ **PROVIDE ACCESS** to our services and resources through networks, and partnerships and allies, throughout Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario.
- ▶ **FOCUS ON SAFETY** and harm reduction to maximize the LGBTT* community's health and well-being by promoting healthy living and obtaining, creating and providing information and educational resources.
- ▶ **BUILD COMMUNITY** with LGBTT* Individuals and other groups by way of mobilization, education and celebration.



A look at who we are,
what we do . . .




Brief review –

- ▶ We've been around since 1973
 - ▶ Incorporated as a non-profit & charitable agency in the 80's
 - ▶ Provide various services:
 - Counselling Program
 - Education Program
 - Peer Project for Youth
 - Peer Support Line
 - Community Lending Library
 - Volunteer Opportunities at/with the Centre
 - Meeting space for community groups/support groups
 - Camp Aurora
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What is Homophobia?

Homophobia:

A fear, dislike, hatred, aversion, intolerance, and ignorance of homosexuality and of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender or Two-Spirit (LGBT) individuals



What Does Homophobia Look Like for Youth in Schools?

- ▶ **Healthy Schools for Healthy Lives: The First National Climate Survey on Homophobia and Transphobia in Canadian Schools (2010)**
- ▶ Dr. Catherine Taylor, U. Winnipeg (Principal Investigator)
- ▶ Tracey Peter, U. Manitoba (Co-Investigator)
- ▶ First comprehensive survey of Canadian LGBTTQ* youth



Key findings

School = Hostile Climate:

- ▶ Negative comments, unsafe spaces
- ▶ 70% of all students reported hearing expressions such as “that’s so gay” every day in school.
- ▶ Almost 50% heard remarks like “faggot”, “queer”, “lezbo”, and “dyke” daily.
- ▶ Most indicators highest for Trans > LGB > Str8
- ▶ Exception: finding homophobic comments upsetting: LGB 86%, Trans 80%, Str8 58%.



Key findings

School = Unsafe Spaces:

- ▶ 79% of Trans students,
- ▶ 70% of LGB students, and
- ▶ 47% of Str8 students saw at least one place at school as unsafe for LGBTQ students, such as change rooms, washrooms, and hallways.



Key findings

School = Direct Victimization:


- ▶ Rumours or lies spread about their sexual orientation at school: 60% Trans, 46% LGB, 8% Str8 students
- ▶ Verbally harassed about their sexual orientation: 64% of Trans and 49% of LGB students
- ▶ Verbally harassed because of gender expression: 74% Trans, 55% LGB, and 25% Str8 students
- ▶ Physically harassed/assaulted due to gender expression: 37% Trans, 21% LGB, and 10% Str8 students.
- ▶ Again, Trans often > LGB > Str8



Key findings

School = Direct Victimization:


Female LGBTQ students even more likely than male to be verbally harassed - e.g.,

- ▶ 32.3% female harassed daily or weekly, compared to 20.4% male.
 - ▶ Female also more likely to be physically harassed - 25.4% female vs. 17% male.
 - ▶ **Male LGBTQ** more likely to be sexually harassed – 35.7% female vs. 41.4% male.
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Key findings


School = Direct Victimization:

Students with an LGBTQ parent more likely than students with no LGBTQ parent . . .

- . . . **to be verbally harassed** – e.g.,
 - About their perceived sexual orientation (45.6% *versus* 19.7%)
 - About their gender expression (58.3% *versus* 34.3%).
 - . . . **also to be physically harassed** – e.g.,
 - About their own perceived sexual orientation or gender identity (26.5% *versus* 11.5%)
 - About their gender expression (30.4% *versus* 13.3%).
- 


Key findings

Impacts:

- ▶ 78% of Trans, 63% of LGB, 15% of Str8 students felt **unsafe at school**.
 - ▶ 45% of Trans, 43% of LGB and 16% of Str8 students felt they **could not be themselves** at school.
 - ▶ 57% of Trans, 55% of LGB and 28% of Str8 students felt very **depressed** about school.
 - ▶ **Students with an LGBTQ parent** felt much less safe and less attached to school than students with no LGBTQ parent.
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Key findings

Institutional Responses:

- ▶ Only 31% of participants knew whether their school had a policy for reporting homophobic incidents.
 - ▶ Of those who did know, only half believed there was such a policy in practice.
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Key findings

Institutional Responses:

- ▶ LGBTQ students who believed their schools have anti- homophobia policies were much more likely . . .
 - to feel their school community was supportive
 - to feel comfortable talking to school staff, their parents, and classmates about LGBTQ matters,
 - to believe their school was becoming less homophobic,
 - to hear fewer homophobic comments,
 - to report homophobic incidents to staff and their parents,
 - to say that staff intervene more often and more effectively,
 - to feel attached to their school.



Key findings


Institutional Responses:

- ▶ LGBTQ students who believed their schools have anti-homophobia policies were much less likely . . .
 - to have had lies and rumours spread about them at school or on the Internet,
 - to have had property stolen or intentionally damaged,
 - to feel unsafe at school,
 - to feel depressed about their school, and
 - to have been verbally or physically harassed.




Recommendations:

Healthy Schools for Healthy Lives: The First National Climate Survey on Homophobia and Transphobia in Canadian Schools (2010)

1. Require anti-homophobia and anti-transphobia policies and programs at provincial, school division, and school level.
 2. Make these well known to students, parents, administration, and all staff.
 3. Develop LGBTQ-inclusive curriculum units and resource materials and mandate these at the Ministry level. Mandate inclusion in B.Ed. Degree programs.
 4. Support students in developing GSAs (Gay/Straight Alliance student group) in the school system.
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Recommendations:

Healthy Schools for Healthy Lives: The First National Climate Survey on Homophobia and Transphobia in Canadian Schools (2010)


5. Address the safety and wellbeing of lesbian and bisexual female and trans students, along with the needs of students with LGBTQ parents (three groups at high risk in the study).
 6. Begin by developing a mandatory professional development workshop on the impact of homophobic and transphobic language and how to address it.
 7. Consult individuals and organizations with established expertise in LGBTQ-inclusive education be consulted in all of the above.
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What does all this mean?


Unfortunately, there is an abundance of research that shows us that individuals who experience homophobia often develop:

- ▶ Low self-esteem
 - ▶ Feelings of worthlessness
 - ▶ Emotional distress
 - ▶ Major depression and suicidal ideation
 - ▶ Guilt and/or shame
 - ▶ Feelings of social isolation
 - ▶ Loneliness
 - ▶ Fear for their personal safety
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Facts and Figures

- ▶ The average age that a LGBTTT person recognizes their sexuality is 13 years old
 - ▶ 50% of parents react negatively to the disclosure of their child's alternate sexual orientation
 - ▶ Of those, 25% go as far as disowning their child
 - ▶ LGBTTT youth are 3-4 times more likely to attempt suicide than their heterosexual peers
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Why Is It Important to Address Homophobia in Schools?

- ▶ LGBTTQ* individuals comprise approximately 10% of the overall population.
 - ▶ It's estimated that LGBTTQ* students comprise between 4% & 10% of the student population. In other words, if a school has 1000 students, as many as 100 of those students could be LGBTT. Many of these students will also have siblings or cousins that attend the school.
 - ▶ Approximately 1-2% of students will have same-sex parents
 - ▶ Being inclusive of ALL types of families helps to create a feeling of normalcy for all students
 - ▶ Diversity is something to be appreciated and celebrated
 - ▶ Everyone has the right to learn in a safe environment, free from discrimination and harassment
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What Can I Do?

- ▶ Use inclusive language such as; they, partner, special person or phrases like "are you seeing anyone" rather than "do you have a boy/girlfriend"
 - ▶ Request that your school purchase library books that reflect the diversity of your students and staff
 - ▶ Include LGBTT specific content in your classroom curriculum
 - ▶ Educate yourself on the topic using reputable resources
 - ▶ Showcase positive LGBTT role models
 - ▶ Make LGBTT resources or information regarding resources available to your students
 - ▶ Be a visible Ally
 - ▶ Support the creation or existence of GSAs
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How to Handle Harassment in the Hallways in 3 Minutes!

1. Stop the Harassment

- Interrupt the comment/halt the physical harassment.
- Do NOT pull the students aside for confidentiality unless absolutely necessary.
- Make sure all students in the area hear your comments.



How to Handle Harassment in the Hallways in 3 Minutes!

2. Identify the harassment

- Label the form of harassment: “ You just made a harassing comment/put-down based upon race” (religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender etc)
- Do not imply that the victim is a member of that identifiable group



How to Handle Harassment in the Hallways in 3 Minutes!

3. Broaden the response

- Do not personalize your response at this stage: “ We at this school do not harass people” “Our community does not appreciate...”
- Re-identify the hurtful behaviour: “ This name calling can also be hurtful to others who can over hear it”



How to Handle Harassment in the Hallways in 3 Minutes!

4. Ask for change in future behaviour

- Personalize the response: “Chris, please pause and think before you act.”
- Check in with the victim at this time: “If this continues, please tell me, and I will take further action. We want everyone at this school to be safe.”



Support GSAs

- ▶ GSA—Gay/Straight Alliance school student group that support diversity & inclusion
- ▶ GSAs work to:
 1. Create safe environments in schools for students to support each other and learn about homophobia and other oppressions,
 2. Educate the school community about homophobia, gender identity, and sexual orientation issues, and
 3. Fight discrimination, harassment, and violence in schools.
- ▶ www.mygsa.ca
- ▶ www.gsanetwork.org



RRC Resources

Rainbow Resource Centre

170 Scott Street; Winnipeg, MB; R3L 0L3; (204)474-0212

www.rainbowresourcecentre.org

- ▶ Peer Project for Youth:
 - Monday & Wednesday evenings Youth Programming
 - Fiona: Youth Programmer—284-2799
- ▶ YEAH! Program: Youth Educating Against Homophobia
- ▶ Anti-Homophobia Education Workshops
 - Reece: Education Coordinator—284-5590
- ▶ Camp Aurora—August 23–26th 2011
 - Coordinators: Sarah: 474-0212 or Fiona: 284-2799
 - Website: www.campaaurora.ca





Thank You!

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WWW.RAINBOWRESOURCECENTRE.ORG

COMMUNITY + SOCIAL JUSTICE & ADVOCACY + HARM REDUCTION + VOLUNTEERISM + CELEBRATION + HARMONY