

# Become 2SLGBTQIA+ Literate



Please give us feedback about this resource here:  
<https://forms.gle/ruvXb9MmZaUuvSsNA>

# Introduction

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Most educators receive little formal education about queerness, transness, and gender fluidity. Most students do not learn about gender and sexuality in K-12 schools outside of health lessons or anti-homophobia campaigns. Teacher education programs do not require that teachers learn about gender and sexuality. **This means you have been systematically denied education about queerness and transness**, so if you are worried that you do not know enough and will make mistakes, there is a chance this is true.

That being said, it's okay if you don't know everything! It's okay if you are a novice. Would you get upset at a student for not understanding something they were never taught? Would you tell them to stop trying if they made a mistake? Making mistakes are part of learning. That being said, some mistakes can be more harmful than others and it is important to learn how to respond with care when we blunder. **Learning about 2SLGBTQIA+ people is a literacy that requires practice.**

**This guide is about (un)learning, which means you might encounter new ideas and have some big feelings.**

# Learn, Practice, Act & Reflect

**In this guide, you will have the opportunity to:**

## LEARN ABOUT ...

- ☐ Your Educator Responsibilities and Rights, [go to page 5](#)
- ☐ Gender Identity, Expression, Sex & Sexual Orientation, [go to page 11](#)
- ☐ The 2SLGBTQIA+ Initialism, [go to page 19](#)
- ☐ Cis-heteronormativity, [go to page 21](#)
- ☐ Gender, Sexuality, Whiteness & Coloniality, [go to page 30](#)
- ☐ Gender Euphoria and Queer Pride, [go to page 41](#)
- ☐ Affirming Language, Behaviours & Administrative Practices, [go to page 43](#)

## PRACTICE ...

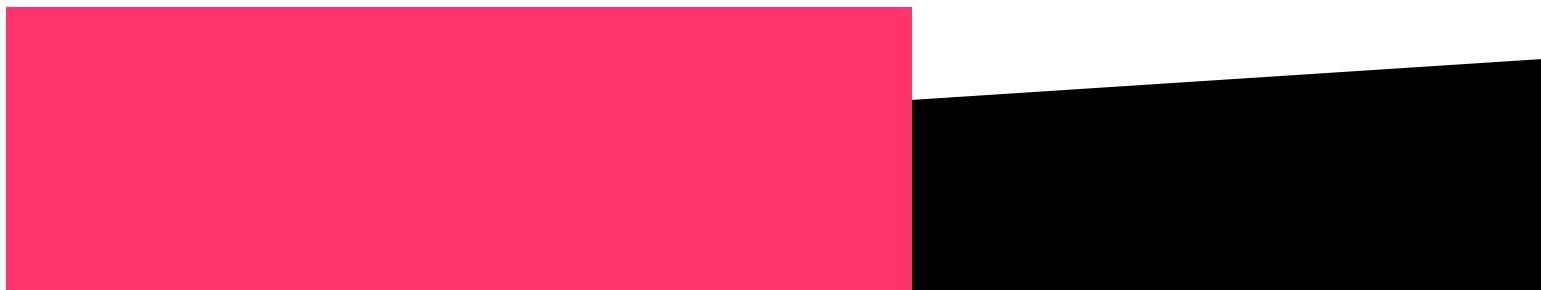
- ☐ They/Them Pronouns, [go to page 69](#)
- ☐ Queerphobic Interventions, [go to page 73](#)

## MAKE A PLAN OF ACTION TO ...

- ☐ Teach someone something you have learned, [go to page 75](#)
- ☐ Add pronouns to your email signature and zoom handle, [go to page 75](#)
- ☐ Create a “getting to know you survey” for your class, [go to page 76](#)
- ☐ See if your school has a gender-neutral washroom, [go to page 75](#)
- ☐ Talk with your colleagues about making a 2SLGBTQIA+ subject strategy, [go to page 80](#)
- ☐ Make a plan for how to connect 2SLGBTQIA+ perspectives into your subjects, [go to page 82](#)

## REFLECT ON ...

- ☐ Your Learning, [go to page 84](#)



# LEARN ABOUT

- Your Educator Rights & Responsibilities, [go to page 5](#)
- Gender Identity, Expression, Sex & Sexual Orientation, [go to page 11](#)
- The 2SLGBTQIA+ Initialism, [go to page 19](#)
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**What are my responsibilities  
as a teacher, administrator,  
school counsellor or  
educational assistant to  
support 2SLGBTQIA+ people  
and perspectives?**

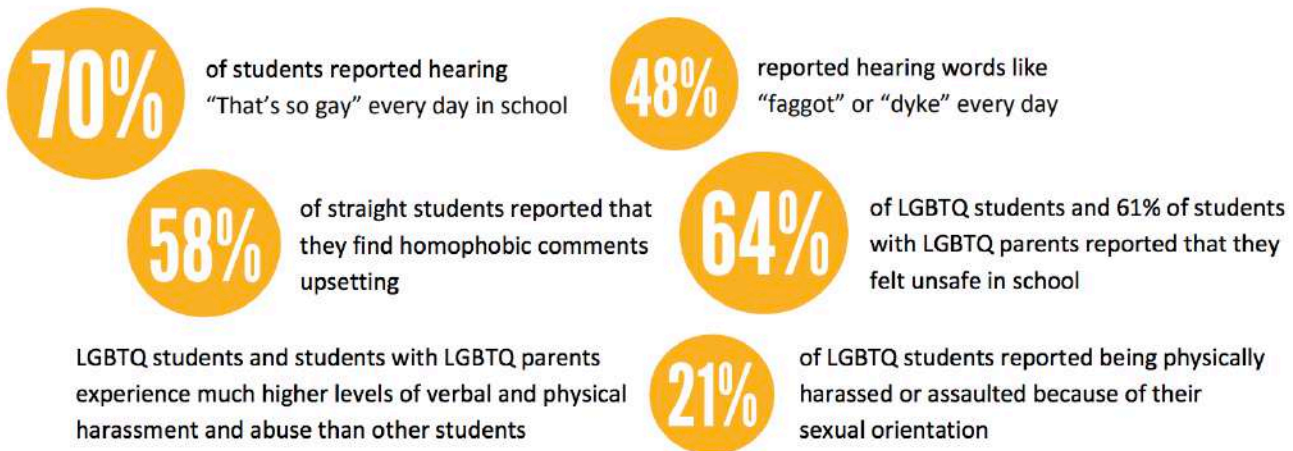
Some people wonder: *What place does gender and sexuality have in schools?*  
The simple answer is: **Gender and sexuality belongs everywhere in schools.**

In this guide, you will learn about **cis-heteronormativity** (oppressive gender and sexual norms), its negative impact on 2SLGBTQIA+ people, and ways to support 2SLGBTQIA+ people and infuse queer and trans perspectives into your teaching.

# LGBTQ Rights in Schools

Canadian Civil Liberties Association  
Canadian Civil Liberties Education Trust

**According to a Canadian research survey<sup>1</sup> published in 2011:**



Taken from Information Guide About LGBTQ Rights in Schools  
<https://ccla.org/cclanewsites/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/LGBTQ-Rights-in-Schools-CCLA-and-CCLET-FINAL.pdf.pdf>

**When we do not acknowledge the diversity of genders, sexes, expressions, and sexual orientations, or intervene when we see queerphobia, we cause harm.**

As educators, it is your responsibility to decrease student suffering and create environments where 2SLGBTQIA+ people thrive.

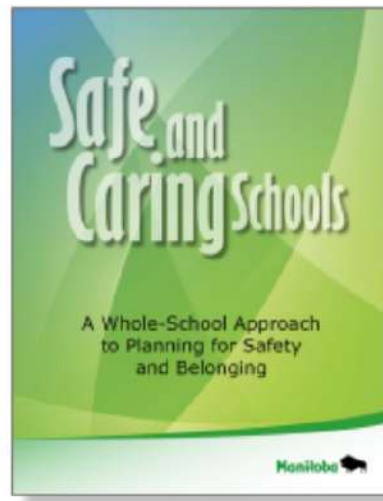
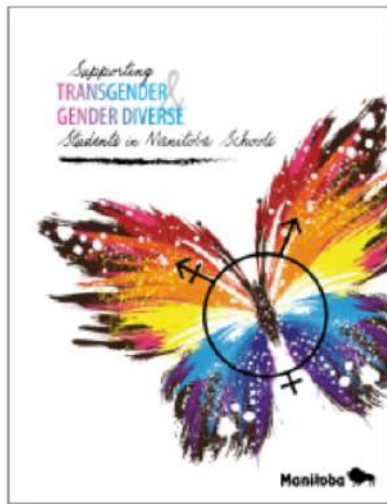
#### MANITOBA'S CODE OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE ...

1. A Member's first professional responsibility is to the Member's students;
2. A Member acts with integrity and diligence in carrying out professional responsibilities;
3. A Member avoids involvement in a conflict of interest, recognizes that a privileged relationship with students exists and refrains from exploiting that relationship for material, ideological or other advantage;
4. A Member's conduct is characterised by consideration and good faith. The Member speaks and acts with respect and dignity, and deals judiciously with others, always mindful of their rights;
5. A Member respects the confidential nature of information concerning students and may give the information only to authorized personnel or agencies directly concerned with the individual student's welfare;
6. A Member first directs any criticism of the professional activity and related work of a colleague to that colleague in private. Only after informing the colleague of the intent to do so, the complainant may direct in confidence the criticism to appropriate officials through the proper channels of communication. A Member shall not be considered in contravention of this Article in the following circumstances:
  - o a) consulting with the Society or the Member's Local president;
  - o b) taking any action that is allowed or mandated by legislation;
  - o c) where the Member is acting in good faith and without malice in the discharge of the legitimate duties of the Member's appointed or elected position;
7. A Member does not bypass immediate authority to reach higher authority without first exhausting the proper channels of communication;
8. A Member makes an ongoing effort to improve professionally;
9. A Member adheres to collective agreements negotiated by the Society and its Local; and



10. A Member or group of Members makes only authorized representations to Outside Bodies on behalf of the Society or its Locals. Without the express permission of the Society, no Members conferring with Outside Bodies may explicitly or implicitly claim that they represent the Society or its Locals.

(The Society approved new Bylaws at its 2014 AGM. Bylaw IV includes the Code of Professional Practice that applies to all teachers who are members of the Society. Bylaw IV also outlines what constitutes *professional misconduct* and how the Code is enforced. The Society's Constitution and Bylaws outline the remedies or sanctions that can be imposed against any teacher who violates the Code of Professional Practice.)



Read more about your responsibilities here:

- <https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/transgender/index.html>
- [https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/whole\\_school/index.html](https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/whole_school/index.html)



# MY RESPONSIBILITIES AS AN EDUCATOR

- ☐ To teach my students about 2SLGBTQIA+ perspectives
- ☐ To support 2SLGBTQIA+ people in my school (ensure they are not being discriminated against)
- ☐ To ensure that queerness and transness is infused throughout my teaching and not just treated like a token subject
- ☐ To teach my students that if they are discriminatory against 2SLGBTQIA+ people they are breaking the law
- ☐ To inform my students that respecting pronouns is a human rights issue
- ☐ To teach my students about cis-heteronormativity
- ☐ To not disclose my students' identities to their parents or others if they have not given me consent to do so (this could put them in danger)
- ☐ To advocate for the rights of 2SLGBTQIA+ people

## MY RESPONSIBILITIES AS AN EDUCATOR

You do not just have responsibilities you also have rights!

### What are your rights under Canadian law?

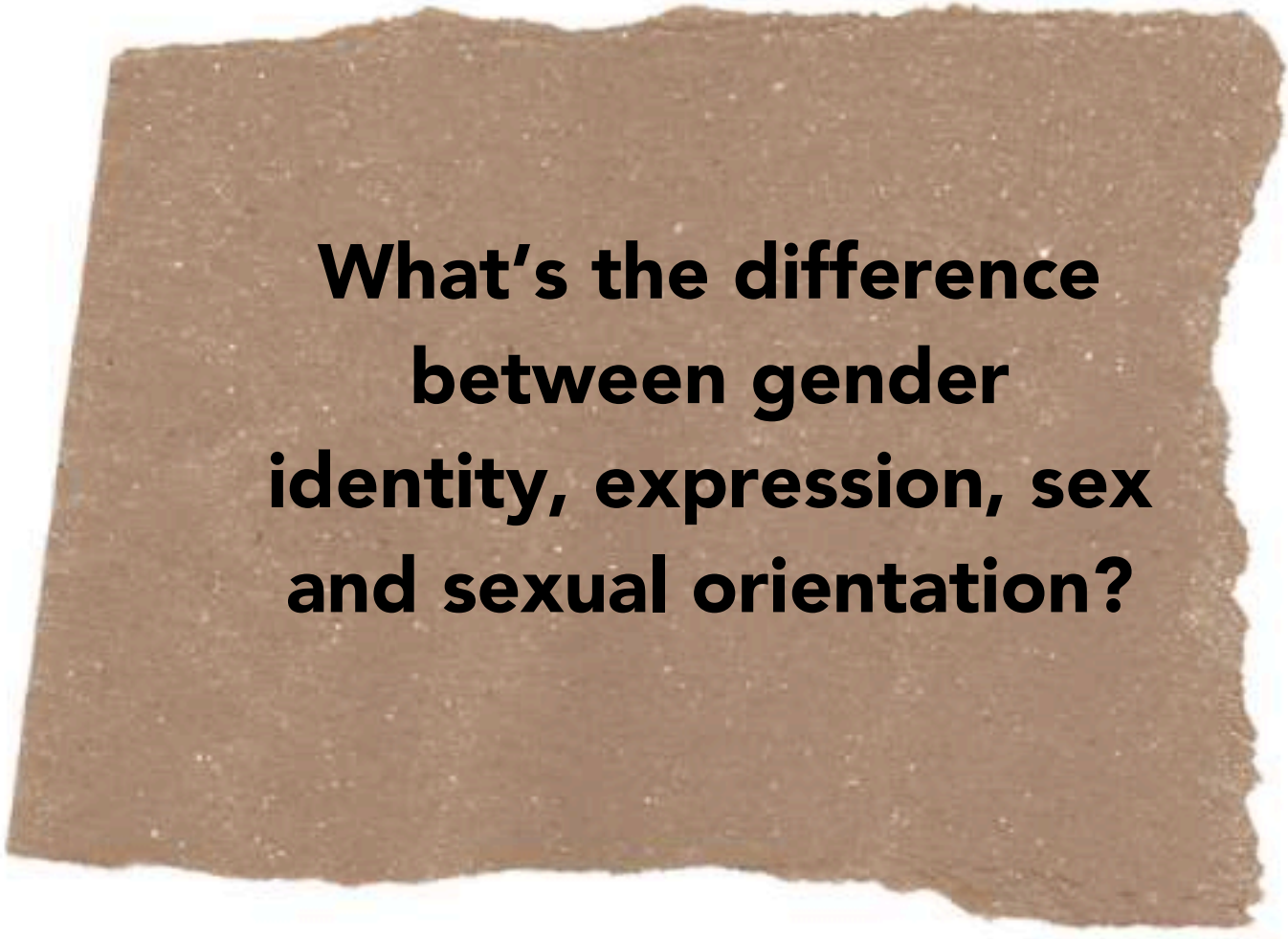
**The *Charter*  
protects freedom  
of expression,  
freedom of  
association, and  
equality**

First and foremost, the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* guarantees everyone – including high school students – **freedom of expression, freedom of association and equality**.<sup>6</sup>

Freedom of expression protects your right to express yourself – through your words, your writing and even what you wear. Wearing a rainbow T-shirt, putting up posters with LGBTQ-positive quotations or hosting a guest speaker would all be exercises of freedom of expression. Freedom of association protects your right to join and organize groups, from trade unions to political parties to social clubs. The CCLA believes that creating a gay-straight alliance and hosting LGBTQ-inclusive events could be protected by freedom of association. Finally, the *Charter* provides that all Canadians are entitled to **equal treatment under the law**, regardless of factors like race, gender, sexual orientation or gender identity. Treating GSAs differently than other student clubs could violate the *Charter* right to equality.

Like all *Charter* rights, these rights and freedoms can be limited, but only if the school proves that such limits are reasonable and justifiable in the circumstances.<sup>7</sup>

**Schools cannot discriminate against 2SLGBTQIA+ staff either!**

A piece of torn, brown paper with a rough, deckled edge. The paper is a light brown or tan color and has a slightly textured appearance. It is centered on a white background.

**What's the difference  
between gender  
identity, expression, sex  
and sexual orientation?**

# Learn from a colleague

**Teacher, Mlle./Mx. Kraft, explains the difference between sex assigned at birth, gender identity, sexual orientation, and gender expression.**



## SEX ASSIGNED AT BIRTH



When you were born, the doctor labeled your sex based on the appearance of your genitals. Many people have a combination of reproductive organs (internal/external), meaning they are intersex! This is a fixed category, unless surgery is involved.

Terms: male (AMAB: Assigned Male At Birth), female (AFAB), intersex

## GENDER IDENTITY



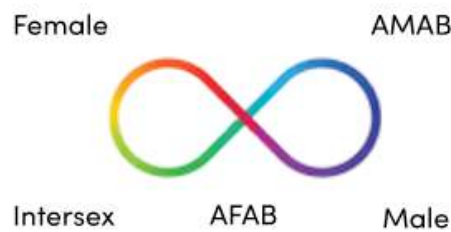
This is the way you think about yourself. Picture this as the "brain" part of your identity: how do you see yourself? What label do you use for yourself? For some people this is fixed, but for others it's fluid!

Terms: girl/woman, boy/man, non-binary, genderfluid, cisgender, transgender, etc.

If born in a hospital, all of us were assigned a **sex**. The problem is often that sex is used to make assumptions about our **gender identity** – how we feel about our gender as we grow up – and **gender expression** – how we express our gender to the world.

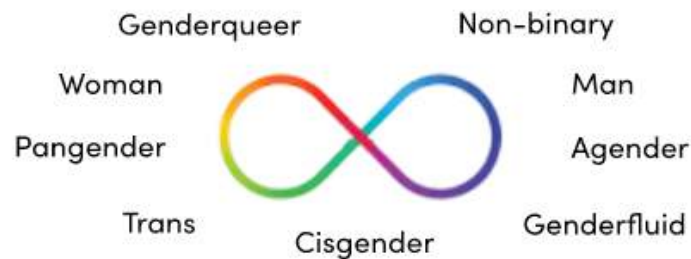
EGALE notes that assigned sex is ...

The biological classification of a person as female, male or intersex. It is usually assigned at birth based on a visual assessment of external anatomy.



Gender identity, in contrast, is ...

A person's internal and individual experience of gender. It is not necessarily visible to others and it may or may not align with what society expects based on assigned sex.



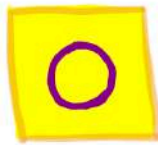


According to *Gender As Told By Science*, a comic written by scientist CV Vitolo-Haddad ...



WE TYPICALLY ASSIGN SEX TO INFANTS BY OBSERVATION, BUT THIS IS DONE FOR EASE, NOT ACCURACY. THERE IS SIMPLY NO SINGLE CHARACTERISTIC THAT DETERMINES GENDER, AND WITH 350,000 BABIES BORN EACH DAY, EASE IS KEY.

BUT FOR SOME BABIES, THIS SYSTEM DOES A LOT OF HARM, FOR EXAMPLE:



INTERSEX BABIES HAVE AMBIGUOUS GENITALIA, AND MAY HAVE ELEMENTS OF MULTIPLE OR NO REPRODUCTIVE ORGANS. THEY ARE SUBJECTED TO DANGEROUS, PURELY COSMETIC SURGERIES TO ALTER THE APPEARANCE OF THEIR GENITALS, OFTEN WITHOUT TRULY INFORMED CONSENT FROM PARENTS.

NOTE: Even though we distinguish between gender identity and sex for particular reasons, these categories are used for ease and comprehension. We use them to acknowledge the unique perspectives of people on the basis of what they were assigned at birth and how they feel. Gender and sex are both quite complicated! Also different cultures have their own conceptions of gender and sexuality that can be more fluid.

Now that you have learned more about the differences between **sex-assigned-at-birth** and **gender identity**, take some time to reflect on these terms!

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- Were you born in a hospital? Were you assigned a sex at birth? How do you know (was a marker put on your birth certificate)?
- Is the idea of more than 2 sexes a new idea for you? Were you aware of intersex people prior to reading this? If it's a new idea, how is this challenging your understanding of "gender" and "sex"?
- If you did not grow up with an awareness of intersex people, why do you think that is?
- As a child, did you notice being treated in certain ways because of the sex you were assigned at birth? Did people have assumptions about how you should express your gender (**gender expression** – see next page) based on your sex?



Outside of sex and gender identity **sexual orientation** and **gender expression** are two key terms:

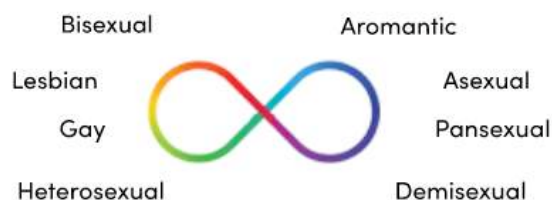
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	GENDER EXPRESSION
	
This is who you're attracted to. This is separate from your sex, gender, and gender identity: you're not necessarily attracted to women if you're a man, if you're masculine, etc. For some people this is fixed, but for others it's fluid!	This is the way you present yourself to the world. How do you dress? Do you wear makeup? What is your hair like? Do you present as masculine, feminine, androgynous, a mix? For some people this is fixed, but for others it's fluid!
Terms: gay, straight, bisexual, pansexual, queer, asexual, etc.	Terms: masculine, feminine, androgynous, etc.

EGALE explains that ...



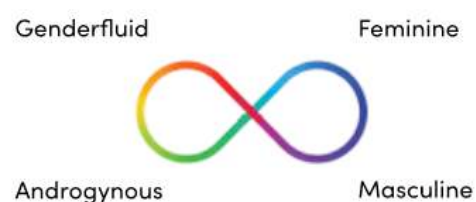
### ATTRACTION

Often referred to as a sexual orientation, attraction describes a person's potential for emotional, spiritual, intellectual, intimate, romantic and/or sexual interest other people and may form the basis for aspects of identity and/or behaviour.



### GENDER EXPRESSION

The way gender is presented and communicated to the world through clothing, speech, body language, hairstyle, voice and/or the emphasis or de-emphasis of body characteristics and behaviours.



NOTE: Not everyone feels **sexual attraction**. People who do not feel sexual attraction or lessened amounts of sexual attraction in comparison their allosexual (sexual) counterparts can all be considered part of the asexual spectrum.

WATCH THESE VIDEOS FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ASEXUALITY



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMhix4nr\\_0g](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMhix4nr_0g)



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YBW7p8\\_ft2I&t=132s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YBW7p8_ft2I&t=132s)

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- Do you feel sexual attraction to others?
- How would you describe your sexual attraction?
- Do you think sex is a private or taboo subject? What's the first emotion that comes up for you when you think of the word sex or sexual attraction?
- How do you feel when you see two people you assume are men kissing? Two people you assume are women kissing? Two people of ambiguous gender identities kissing?
- How do you feel about polyamorous/ethical non-monogamous relationships (people who have more than one relationship)?
- How do you like to express your gender identity?
- Do people make assumptions about your sexual orientation based on your gender expression? Do you make assumptions about other people's sexual orientations based on their expressions?
- How do you want your gender identity to be perceived by the world?
- Have you ever had to "come out" about your sexual orientation to anyone?



**What does the  
2SLGBTQIA+  
Initialism/Acronym  
Stand for?**

## Learn from a colleague



Teacher and researcher, Ms. Cavanaugh explains the 2SLGBTQIA+ initialism.

[https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/e/2PACX-1vRnfFI36QIWITHuMz52o3Ff\\_FOCyfl8kPsYQxAdnAoV477RM-gE98qF9f8oyll\\_r4t7Pcu3lH024E8U/pub?start=false&loop=false&delayms=3000](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/e/2PACX-1vRnfFI36QIWITHuMz52o3Ff_FOCyfl8kPsYQxAdnAoV477RM-gE98qF9f8oyll_r4t7Pcu3lH024E8U/pub?start=false&loop=false&delayms=3000)

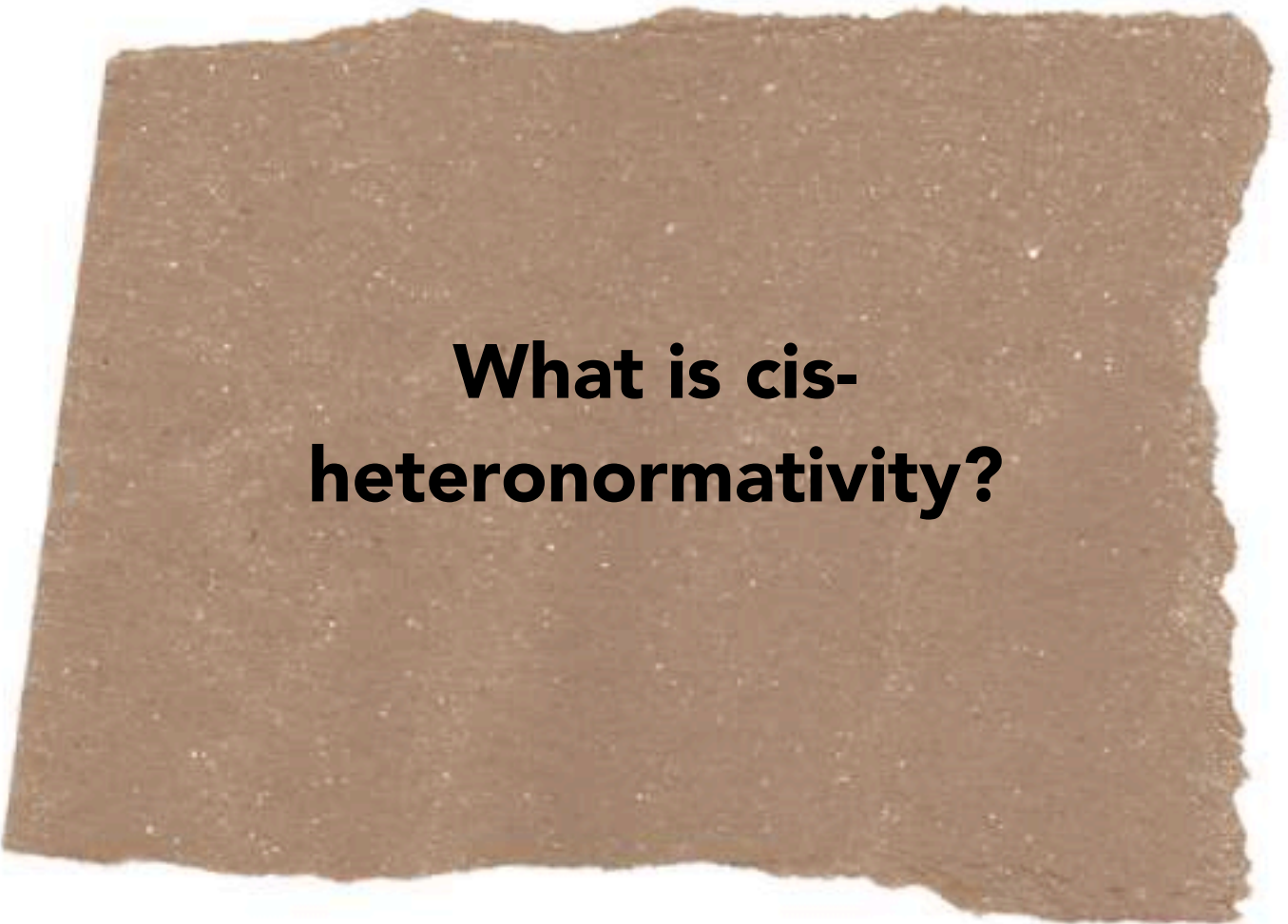
## Important terms: 2slgbtqia+ literacy

All of us have been **systematically-denied** education about queerness (sexual orientations) and transness (gender identities) in schools

**Understanding queerness and transness is a literacy**, meaning it takes time and practice to become more knowledgeable and confident

**Now is a chance for you to learn more** about 2SLGBTQIA+ identities





**What is cis-  
heteronormativity?**

**Cis-heteronormativity** is the oppressive belief that cisgender people (people who identify with the sex they were assigned at birth) and heterosexual people (people who feel attraction to genders different from their own) are **natural** and **normal**.



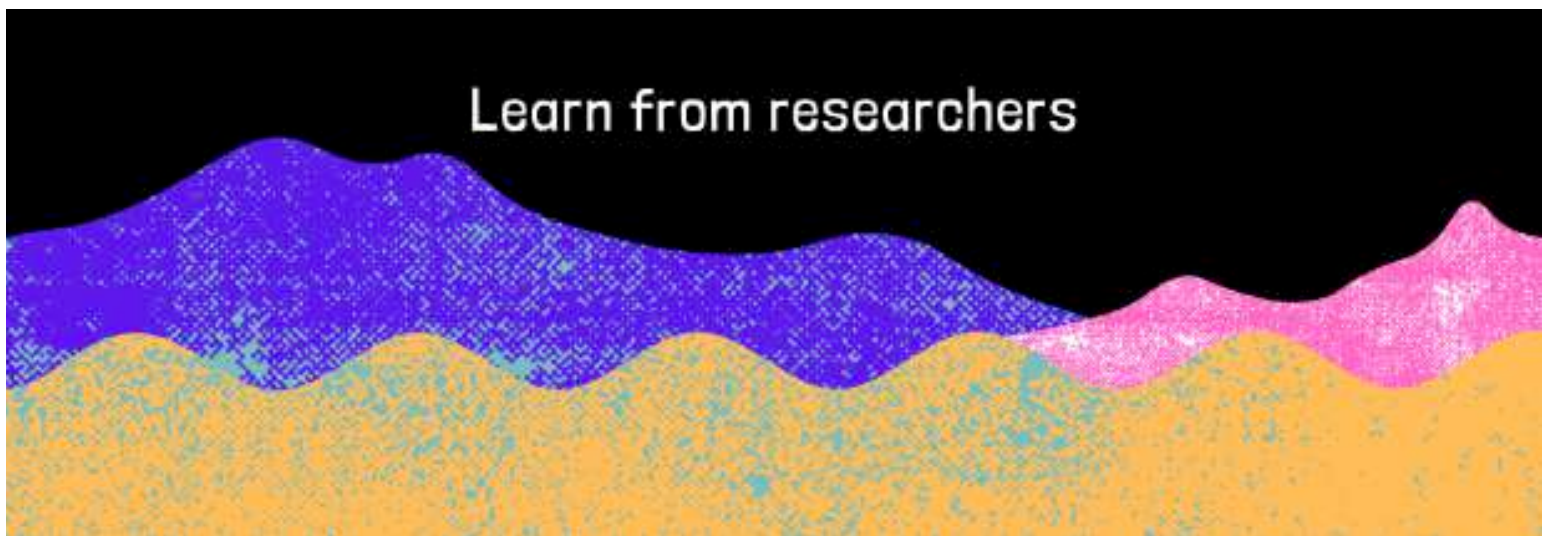
Within this belief system is the spoken or unspoken belief that 2SLGBTQIA+ people are **unnatural** and **abnormal**.





Cisgender and heterosexual people make up the majority of the population. They are what we call **dominant groups**. Consequently, cis-heteronormativity is a dominant way of knowing and being that oppresses 2SLGBTQIA+ people. Sexual and gender minorities (2SLGBTQIA+ people), who do not fit within these dominant ways of knowing and being have been punished across many different cultures and contexts.

Punishment often comes through subtle and overt forms of **gender and sexual policing**, even within countries that recognize 2SLGBTQIA+ rights.



Egale



Gender and sexual policing, which is a direct result of cis-heteronormativity, happens frequently in schools.

In 2011, a national survey on homophobia and transphobia in Canadian high schools found that **64% of all LGBTQ+ youth felt unsafe in schools**. In 2021, ten years after that initial survey, researchers found that gender and sexual policing is still pervasive in schools.

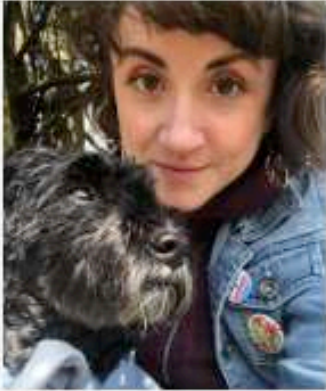
**Cis-heteronormativity is at the root of subtle and overt forms of gender and sexual policing.**

- Subtle forms of gender and sexual policing are **microaggressions**: exclusionary language, absence of perspectives, and tokenism.
- Overt forms of gender and sexual policing are **queerphobia** (homophobia, biphobia, lesbophobia, transphobia, intersexphobia etc.): physical, emotional, and sexual harassment and discrimination.

*Did you know that being deemed "abnormal" and "unnatural" (aka living in a cis-heteronormative society) can have a negative impact on your physical and mental health?!*

Meyer (2003) came up with a framework and theory called **minority stress theory** to explain the detrimental health effects of oppression on marginalized people. His research can be applied to 2SLGBTQIA+ people, as well as BIPOC, disabled people, people living in poverty, and people affected by misogyny.

## Learn from a colleague



**Teacher and school counsellor, Mx. Wilson, explains what minority stress theory is and why it matters.**

### **WHAT IS MINORITY STRESS THEORY?**

Minority stress theory is an extension of social stress theory.

It identifies the higher levels of stress to be found in the experiences of groups or demographics that have been marginalized.



@mxswilson

### **WHAT IS THE MINORITY STRESS MODEL? 1/2**

The Minority Stress Model was developed by Ilan H. Meyer in 2003, as a way to assess and identify unique strengths and vulnerabilities experienced by marginalized groups and how they influence and impact mental health outcomes for said groups.



@mxswilson



**Cis-heteronormativity** contributes to minority stress because it creates conditions where people are socially, physically, and spiritually punished for being “unnatural” and “abnormal.” Queerphobia is the most obvious symptom of cis-heteronormativity; however gender and sexual norms show up in many other ways, including in everyday language, behaviours, and education practices.

Take for example, that many teachers refer to their students as ‘girls and boys’ when doing class activities. Or the fact that there are “girls” and “boys” change rooms. Within the belief system that there is a need for separate washrooms and change rooms are underlying assumptions about attraction and danger. There is the assumption that men and women will always been attracted to one another and that girls need to be protected from predators (who are usually “boys and men”).

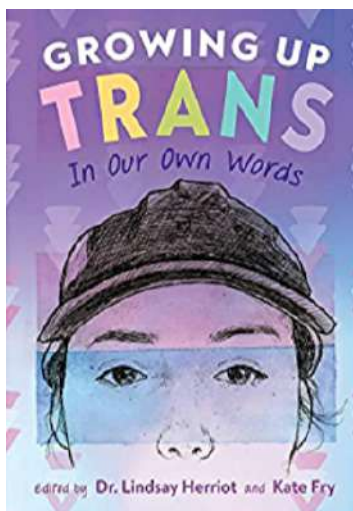
There is a lot to unpack there! Spoiler: patriarchy (the denigration of women to dominate them) and femmephobia (the hatred of femininity) are linked to normative gender roles. So is coloniality and whiteness – more on that later!

Let’s take some time to read about a high school student’s experience.



# Learn from students

LETTER TAKEN FROM *GROWING UP TRANS*, Anonymous BC Student



## Letter from a student in regards to backlash on the SOGI curriculum

I don't want to be afraid to go to school. I don't want to have to tear down signs and notes stuck on my locker, I don't want to have to wear my headphones while I walk in the halls so I don't have to hear the things these kids say about me...

You say that you don't want the school experience to be ruined for your kids with teaching of [Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity], but my school experience has been forever tainted by the unkind things said and done by those kids. **They tell me that a man I don't even know hates me, and that I'm going to Hell for being who I am; they tell me that I am disgusting and a disgrace.** There are so many other words that they've said to me that have become ingrained in my mind so deeply that I was convinced that I didn't even deserve to be alive. The number of days I lay in bed terrified to go to school far outweigh the number of days that I'm not.

**Do you know how it feels to be afraid to walk down the hallways, terrified that everyone around you is talking about you behind your back? To be terrified that someone might hurt you or shout at you? Do you know how it feels to walk up to your locker and see words scrawled across it, and papers pasted to it reading words that hurt more than any punch ever could?** Every single day, I am terrified to go to school, to go to a place built on learning and love, but

cis  
normativity  
↓

↑  
minority  
stress

that's filled with hatred. I'm terrified to check my social media ever since someone posted a picture of me with a noose drawn around my neck. I'm terrified to live.

If students knew that I am no different than they are, maybe I wouldn't have to be so terrified. Maybe, I would be able to live my life carefree, like I did when I was a young child. If we could teach at a young age that being transgender, or being queer in general is okay, maybe I wouldn't have lost as many friends as I have. If we could teach children that it is okay to be themselves, think of how much happier they could be. **When I was 10 years old and said that I liked people of the same gender, I had two different responses from the people around me: they were either indifferent or they were violently grossed out and were quick to judge. I wish they didn't care. I wish I never had to hear people telling me that "that's not what God intended," or "that's a sin," or "that's gross."** I was a young kid, no, I was a *child*.

cis  
normativity



cis  
normativity



People say that we are pushing our "agenda" onto kids, **yet we see babies, and toddlers wearing clothing with slogans like "ladies' man" and "chick magnet" amongst many others, so it begs the question: whose alleged "agenda" is being forced on whom?** We don't have an agenda. We just want to educate kids and teens to make them understand that it's okay to be "different". I wish that this was part of the curriculum when I was younger, I wish that I could have said "yes, I am transgender" without people asking me what "*turned me*" this way, or what "*made me feel like*" I had to be. Nothing made me want to be trans, nothing *made me* want to be "different", I just wanted to be **me**, and wanted to be accepted.

minority  
stress



I'm lucky because I have family who support me; I'm lucky because I at least still have some friends who weren't appalled by my existence. Some kids aren't. **I've lost friends who weren't accepted by their families, and peers to suicide. These deaths weren't because they weren't brave enough or strong enough like some may say. It was because they had to fight every day and they were in a place that they could not win. They were beaten, and bruised with words and fists and notes.** They were disrespected and harassed by people around them and this group has the audacity to say that they don't tolerate hate? How dare you. How dare you let these kids suffer and lead themselves to destruction because you don't want your children to know that they exist? How dare you say that you won't tolerate hate, when it is the same people who attack me and my friends. How dare you say that you want what is best for the kids when the only

kids you care about are the "normal" ones.

My teachers, counsellors, and the other staff at my school... they have done so much to support me, they have done so much to be inclusive and to be respectful to *all* students. We aren't asking for "special rights", we are just asking to be acknowledged and respected. We aren't asking for "more" we are asking for the same respect that all students deserve. We're asking to be treated like *people*. That's all I want. I just want to be treated like a *person*.



**How has colonization  
and white supremacy  
shaped cis-  
heteronormativity?**

## Learn from a public educator



Alok Vaid-Menon is a artist and speaker.

Here are some of their book reports (shared also on instagram) that show how colonization and white supremacy shaped dominant understandings about gender and sexuality!

The first book report in this guide is based on the book *Re-Dressing: America's Frontier Past* by Peter Boag. The second book report in this guide is based on *The Heart of Whiteness* by Julian B Carter. More of these book reports can be found on Alok's instagram: @alokvmenon. The graphic designer for the book reports are Agustín Cepeda.

These reports connect with Kimberlé Crenshaw's notion of **intersectionality**. Learn more about intersectionality here. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ViDtnfQ9FHc>

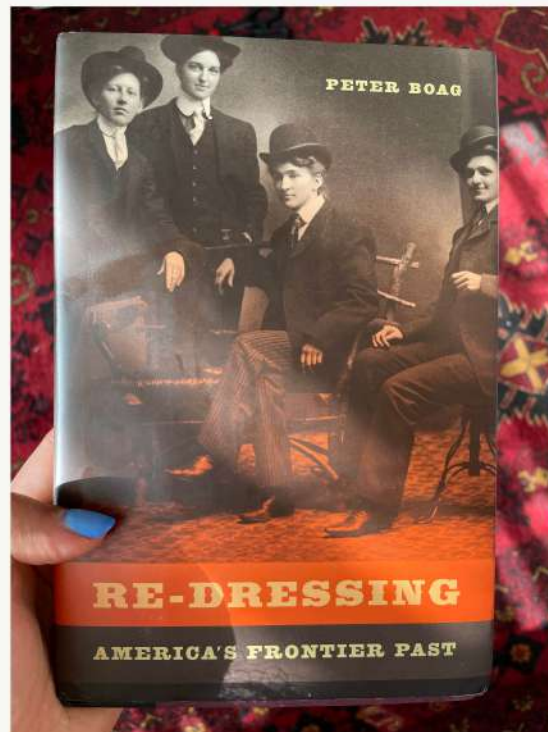


Kimberlé Crenshaw: What is Intersectionality?





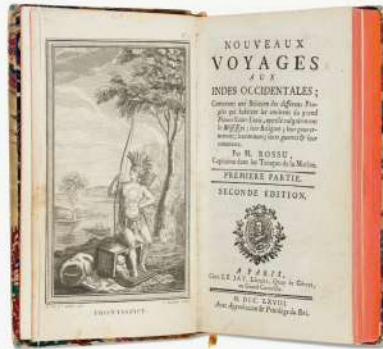
## the racial history of gender non-conformity



University of California Press (2011)



There is a long history of villainizing BIPOC by “blaming” them for homosexuality and gender non-conformity. White colonists would depict racialized people as cross-dressers as a way to dehumanize them and sanction violence against them. They would point to the existence of gender non-conforming BIPOC

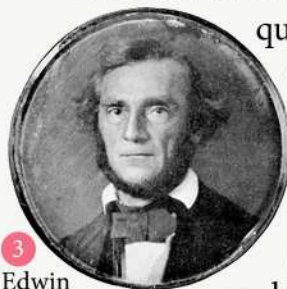


2 *Nouveaux Voyages aux Indes Occidentales* by Jean Bernard Bossu (1768) chronicals his travels through Louisiana and the Mississippi Valley.

people to make the claim that entire communities were “perverse.” Because they believed that only masculine men were capable of sovereignty, demasculinizing racialized people was a strategy to deny self-governance.

In the 1750s French colonist Jean Bernard Bossu demonized Indigenous Choctaw people by depicting them as gender non-conforming:

“[they are] corrupt men, who have long hair and wear short skirts like women...they are morally



3 Edwin Denig

quite perverted, and most of them are addicted to sodomy.” In the 1830s, colonist Edwin Denig wrote about Indigenous gender non-conforming people bemoaning how tribes allowed males to “assume the dress and perform the duties of females, while women turn men and mate with their own sex” (150).

As they actively attacked Indigenous communities, colonists would tell stories about Indigenous people who were “treacherous and deceitful,” “explaining that they might serve as spies and lookouts from accomplices in deadly crimes all the while deceptively appareled in female attire” (144).

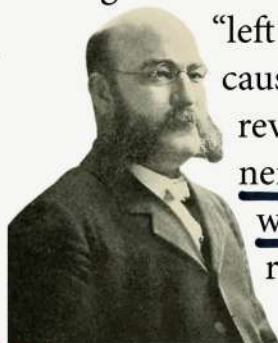


Associating gender non-conformity with BIPOC and pretending that all white people were binary gendered was a tactic of white supremacy. Austrian critic Max Nordau argued in his book *Degeneration* (1892) that Europe had passed its “pinnacle of development and had entered into a period of decline” (171). Queer people were scapegoated as one of the primary causes of this decline. By the 19<sup>th</sup> century sexologists like Krafft-Ebing believed in degeneration theory: the idea that queerness was a manifestation of an ancestor’s transmittable abnormality.



4 1900 cartoon titled “Assessment End of Century,” ridiculing the “degeneration” of French society.

Queer people were seen as evolutionary throwbacks, vestiges of “primitivity” (or what they called “atavism”) that lingered in the white race. Dr. James Kiernan argued that the far distant ancestors of human were intersex and that the “residual psychical elements of this earlier stage of human evolution were handed down to subsequent generations when disease interfered with normal development” (174). Sexologists argued that nervous exhaustion (“neurasthenia”) “left one open to an atavistic attack that caused one’s physical sex to become reversed” (174). The “cure” for this nervous disorder that led to queerness was hyper-masculinity, strict gender roles, criminalizing interracial intimacy, and selectively removing LGBTQ+ people from the race.



5 Dr. James Kiernan



US American eugenicists believed that Ancient Greek and Roman empires collapsed because they made space for queerness and effeminacy. They pledged to eradicate gender non-conformity from the US so that white people could achieve the ultimate civilization on Earth.

“Effemination has occasioned the downfall of many nations,” warned physician James Weir in 1893. “Let us guard against it with all our power.

Let us train up our boys to be manly men, and our girls to be womanly women.”



**The gender binary is a colonial tool that requires the policing of gender norms and the rejection of gender non-conformity.**

**Scapegoating LGBTQ+ people has long been a tactic to distract from actual problems and crises.**



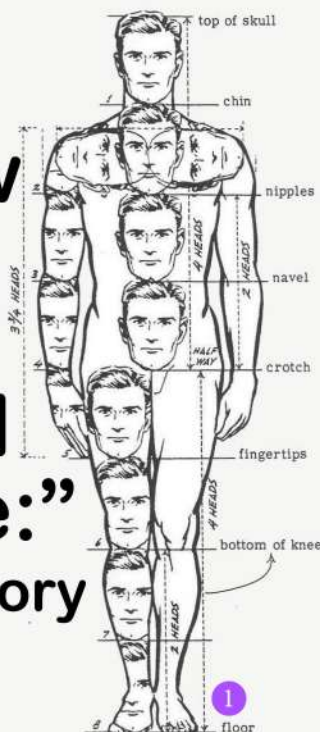
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- 1 Loveis Wise (@loveiswiseillu)
- 2 *Nouveaux Voyages aux Indes Occidentales* by Jean Bernard Bossu (1768) via christies.com
- 3 Portrait of Edwin Denig via Wikipedia
- 4 Cartoon first published in *Le Pèlerin* Magazine (1900) via Wikipedia
- 5 Portrait of Dr. James Kiernan via Wikipedia
- 6 Detail of an ancient Greek Fresco in Paestum, Italy called the "Tomb of the Diver" depicting men during a banquet, via 123rf.com
- 7 Sarula Bao (@bao\_\_haus)
- 8 Cartoon via curiosity.lib.harvard.edu



- 8 1813 cartoon depicting "The Three Best Physicians" (for treating neurasthenia) Dr. Diet, Dr. Quiet, and Dr. Merryman.

how  
"normal"  
became a  
code word  
for "white:"  
a eugenic history







The language of “normal” has historically been used to disguise racist values as benign and politically neutral. In the context of the US, normal was infused by eugenics (a racist, pseudoscientific strategy to “improve the race”). Normality is not about objective facts, rather it makes specific claims about the superiority of particular traits.



Take for example the construction of the two statues “Norman” and “Norma” designed in 1939 to represent the average US-American male and female, despite the fact that almost no one embodied these proportions. A contest (4) was held to find the ideal woman who most closely resembled this sculpture. Eugenicians deployed the language of “normal” to cultivate the white race and discipline people into particular appearances and ways of living in order to become the most “advanced” civilization on Earth. They cared more about presumed perfection than the poetry (hairiness, fatness, gender non-conformity) of actual bodies.





In particular, “normal” became the code word to describe “sexual fitness,” or the ability to align one’s sexual practices with the interests of the race.



Racist evolutionary thought regarded reproduction as the primary mode for racial development. In the early 20th century, monogamous, heterosexual, intra-racial marriage was upheld as the only

legitimate mode of sexuality specifically to foster the growth of the white population. White people were taught that they were responsible for civilization and that practicing sexual self-restraint would ensure the continued progression and advancement of the next generation.



This self-restraint was in contrast to the alleged sexual decadence of “savage” peoples who were depicted as merely motivated by primal sexual urges, incapable of “civilized” romance and family structures. During this time, we see white anxieties coalesce around the figure of the “degenerate” “queer” who was seen as a remnant of weakness and primitivism in the white race. Queer people were pathologized as having a form of “sexual disability,” preventing them from evolving into appropriate “modern” heterosexuality.





Exclusive  
heterosexuality  
was marketed  
as essential for  
national stability  
and racial progress.

11



12

This normative standard conferred legitimacy and



status such that later in the century  
one of the primary ways that (Irish,  
Italian, Jewish, etc.) immigrants were  
able to assimilate into the nation was by  
adopting heteronormativity (assuming  
traditional gender roles and family  
structures). As Carter argues, “aligning  
oneself with normal heterosexuality had  
the effect of performing one’s alignment  
with ideal whiteness” (98).

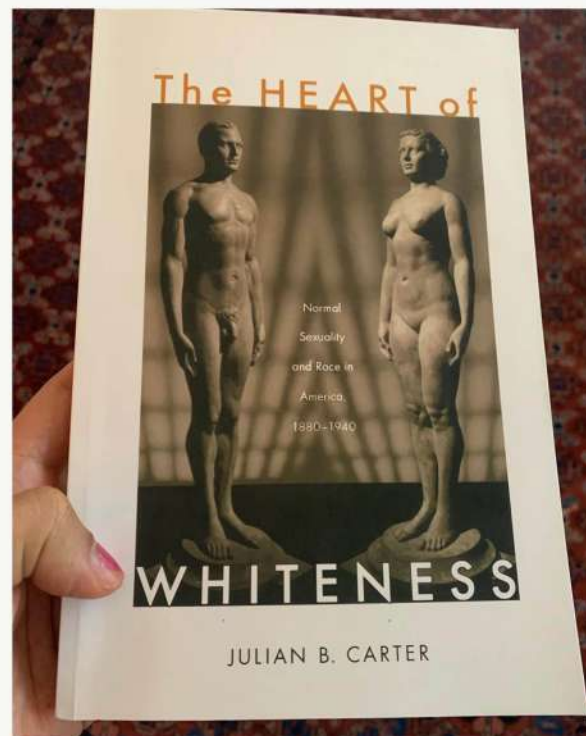


13

Despite the fact that no one  
can actually achieve this  
illusive idea of “normal,”  
perceived proximity to  
normality awards legitimacy  
and power. This is  
why racialized people might  
respond to loss of status  
from racism by reinforcing  
traditional gender norms.  
This is also why gender non-  
conforming people experience  
such profound cruelty.



14

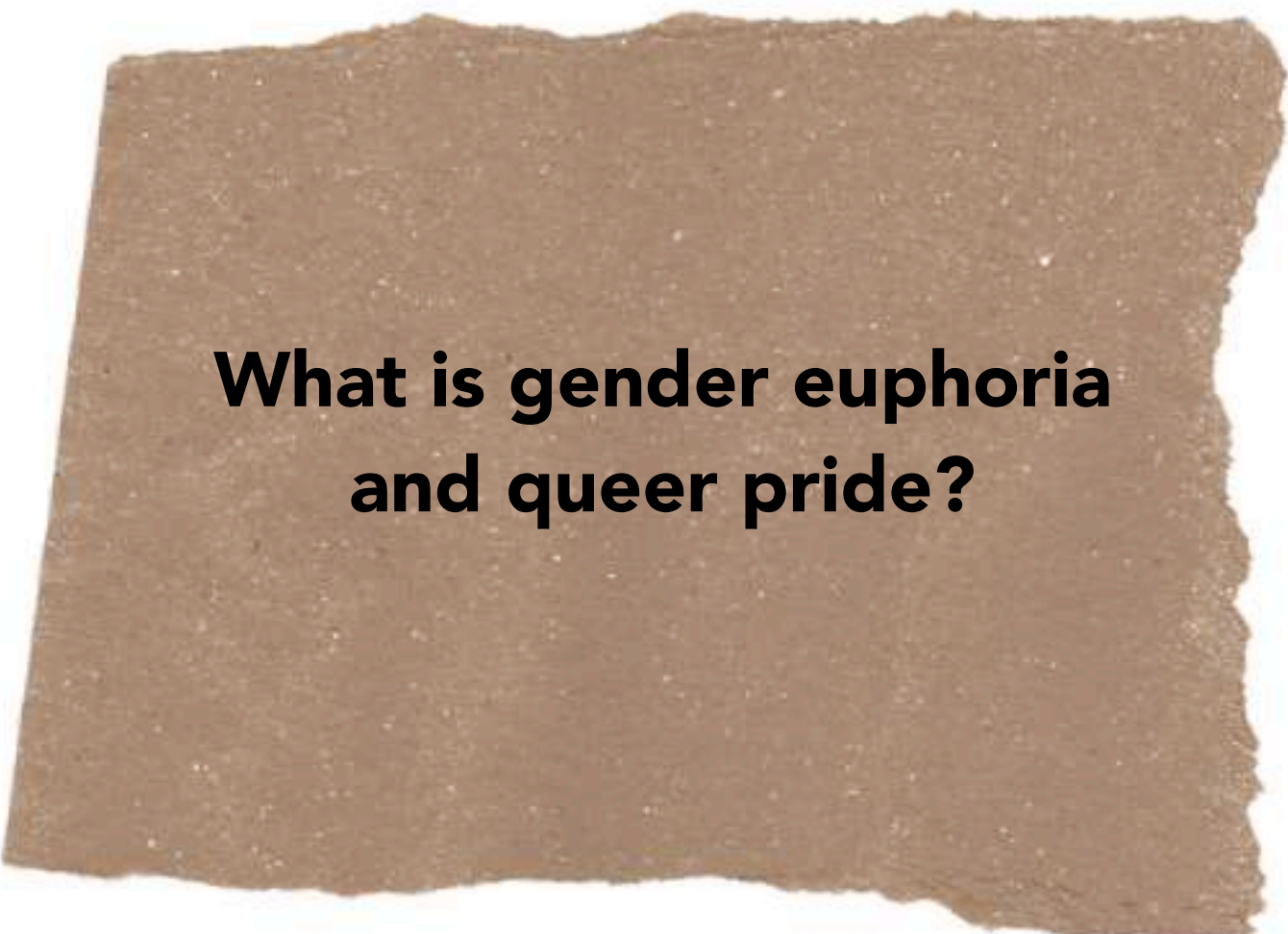


Duke University Press (2007)

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- 1 Proportion of the human figure, from "Drawing the Head and Figure" by Jack Hamm, the Berkley Publishing Group (1963)
- 2 3 7 1920-1930s eugenics posters, the Eugenics Society Archive, Wellcome Library, London
- 4 "Normman" and "Norma" by artist Abram Belskie and obstetrician-gynecologist Robert Latou Dickinson (1943), Cleveland Health Museum via cabinetmagazine.org
- 5 A contestant in a 1942 national search to find a man and woman whose size and proportions exactly matched the national average.
- 6 "La Danse" by Colombian artist Fernando Botero (2005), Opera Gallery
- 8 Illustration from vintage wedding card.
- 9 Cover art from 1968 novel "Gay Traders" by Aaron Thomas
- 10 London Metropolitan Archives, City of London, from the Campaign for Homosexual Equality via theguardian.com
- 11 Universal History Archive/Getty Images via irishtimes.com
- 12 "I Can't Forget You!" Our Love Story #2 (1969) Pencils: John Buscema, Inks: John Romita via sequentialcrush.com
- 13 Photo by Carlos Velez of Christine Rich, Mrs. Eco USA 2019
- 14 Spring Break 1961™ Barbie® and Ken® Giftset, barbie.mattel.com



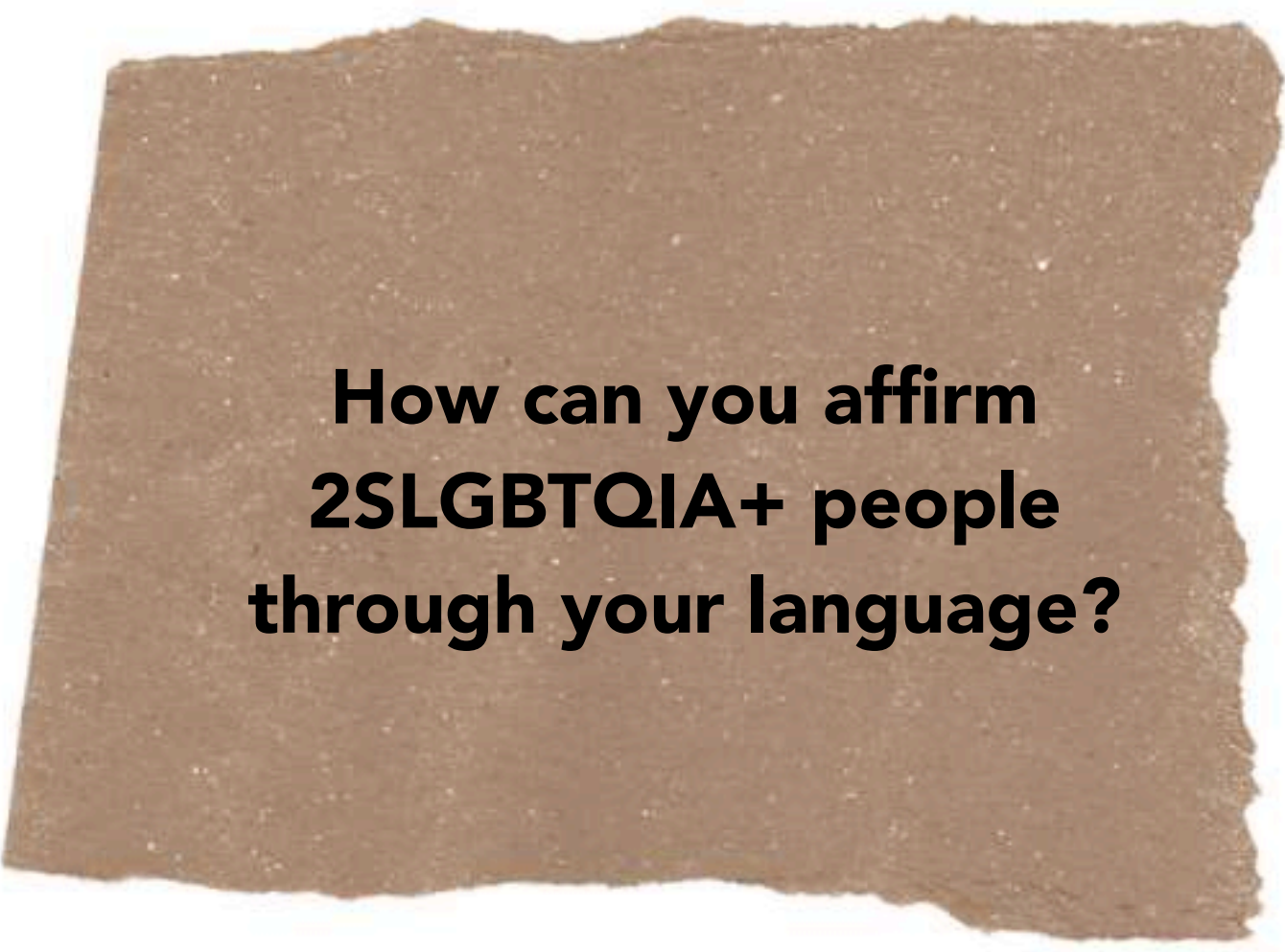


**What is gender euphoria  
and queer pride?**



**Gender euphoria:** the feeling of joy that trans and gender nonconforming people feel when they are validated.

**Queer pride:** the feeling of joy that queer people feel when they are celebrated.



**How can you affirm  
2SLGBTQIA+ people  
through your language?**



# WHAT WE SAY

Affirming &  
Inclusive  
Language



# Replace language that reinforces a gender binary

Very often teachers, students, and admin use language that erases the existence of non-binary and gender non-conforming people and spotlights people who may be transitioning or exploring their gender identity.

Gender neutral terms are a great way to avoid assumptions so as to not categorize students according to how you may perceive their gender.



Beyond using gender neutral terms to address a whole group, avoid using binary pronouns unless you know those are the pronouns people use. For example, when talking about students or colleagues or parents, use they instead of she/her or he/him.

**Instead of:**

I saw **her** walking from Mx. Taylor's class to Mr. Johnson's class.

**Try:**

I saw **them** walking from Mx. Taylor's class to Mr. Johnson's class.

OR

I saw **[insert name]** walking from Mx. Taylor's class to Mr. Johnson's class.

If people are using multiple pronouns (e.g. she/they, he/she/them, they/he), try switching between the different pronouns. Do not just use the pronoun you are most comfortable with, which is often "she" or "he".

**Instead of:**

I saw **him** complete the test. **He** did great.

**Try:**

I saw **them** complete the test. **He** did great.

Another tip for people who are pronoun fluid, is to check in with them personally (not in front of the class) to ask them more about what feels affirming to them. Everyone is different.



## **Engage student, teacher and administrative leaders to make morning announcements social-justice focused**

A great strategy for creating a more affirming school environment is to have PA announcements that raise awareness about the importance of using pronouns, tips on affirming language, and how to be an ally to 2SLGBTQIA Black, Asian, racialized community members.

Student announcements could teach students about the following:

- What Mx. means
- Ways that they/them has been used historically in the English language and is grammatically correct
- Different 2SLGBTQIA+ identities
- Strategies for being anti-racist
- What racial microaggressions look like
- How to go deeper with territorial acknowledgements (beyond a script)
- How to pronounce the names of local Indigenous places

## **Ask students about their name and pronouns (don't make assumptions)**

A great strategy for supporting 2SLGBTQIA+ students is to ask them pro-actively about their name and pronouns. As teachers, we often do community building and "getting to know you" activities at the beginning of the year. Doing a survey is one fantastic way to get to know students.

See a template for a "getting to know you" survey on the following page.

# Welcome to my class!

*My name is [Mr., Ms. Mx \_\_\_\_\_]. My pronouns are [them/them/their, she/her/hers, he/him/his, they/she, he/she/they etc]. I will be your teacher for [insert name of course]. I'm really excited to get to know you. Thanks for being here :)*

First things first, what name do you like to go by: \_\_\_\_\_

Please spell out how to pronounce your name by how it sounds (even if you think it's obvious - thanks!):

*Are you okay with me referring to you by this name when talking ...*

with the class                  with other teachers                  with your parents/caregivers

*If you would like me to use different names with different people, please clarify:*

What pronouns do you like to go by (circle which one applies to you):

she/her      he/him      they/them      pronoun fluid:      neopronoun:

I'd preferred to be referred to by name/no pronouns please

*Are you okay with me referring to you by these pronouns when talking ...*

with the class                  with other teachers                  with your parents/caregivers

*Is there anything more you need or want me to know about your pronouns?*

How are you feeling starting this class (circle all that apply):

excited      meh      neutral      anxious

*Is there anything you want me to know is going on for you?*

What access needs to do you have?

Here are examples of access needs:

- I need to be seated near the front because I have sight loss and am hard of hearing.
- I would like to be near the door because I have digestive issues and have to use the washroom frequently.
- I would like to be able to move my body a lot because I have ADHD and have a hard time sitting.
- I would like to be able to stim as someone with autism.
- I would feel better not being called on because I have a lot of social anxiety.

Have you had mostly positive or negative experiences with learning [insert subject]? Is there anything you would want me to know about these past experiences?

What are you most passionate about (doesn't have to be related to this subject at all)?

What are your three biggest strengths?



# Familiarize yourself with Mx. honorific

Many people are aware of these honorifics  
Ms.      Mrs.      or      Mr.

## WHAT IS MX.?

People might be less familiar with the honorific Mx. This is a gender neutral title for educators do not feel comfortable using Ms., Mrs. or Mr. This could be a very affirming honorific for non-binary, genderqueer, Two-Spirit and gender variant people.

## HISTORY OF MX.

It was added to the Merriam-Webster dictionary in 2017.

"Pronounced to sound like *mix* or *mux*, the title *Mx.* (which, like other honorifics, is styled without the period in British English) is used increasingly on various official forms in the UK, including driver's licenses and banking documents.

Although the earliest print evidence of *Mx.* is from a 1977 issue of an American magazine called *Single Parent*, the title has not seen much official or published use in the US. It did, however, appear twice recently in *The New York Times*: a June 4th article noted *Mx.* as someone's preferred honorific, and a June 5th article all about *Mx.* made it clear that the June 4th use was an exception. The title simply isn't familiar enough to the newspaper's readers to be fully adopted.

It's not clear whether or when *Mx.* will catch on in the US. The timeline for such developments can be long, as the title *Ms.* taught us not all that long ago. Coined in 1901, the now-commonplace *Ms.* wasn't fully adopted by *The New York Times* until 1986. *Mx.* seems to be moving more rapidly—it was added to Merriam-Webster Unabridged in April 2016."

Taken from the Merriam-Webster's Dictionary




## HOW TO EDUCATE PEOPLE ABOUT MX.?

The first step for action is learning what Mx. means. The second step is communicate this to staff, students, and community members.

During staff meetings or professional development, administrators can take time to educate teachers, EAs, school counselors and other community members on the existence of Mx.

Feel free to also use student announcements or newsletters to communicate what Mx. means.

For example, during a student announcement, you can explain that Mx. was first used in 1977 by a single parent and has since been used by many different people for different reasons.



# WHAT WE DO

Positive  
Behaviours

# Have Courageous Conversations with Your Students & Colleagues

## WHAT ARE COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS?

Courageous conversations are about challenging the status quo to improve schooling as a system. Having these conversations can hopefully lead to meaningful challenges. Courageous conversations are about creating brave spaces, not just safe spaces.

- **A safe space** is an environment where people are not judged based on their identity or experience. Learning can occur in these spaces but the ultimate goal is to provide support. Think for example of a GSA or a support group. These places are about providing safety and affirmation.
- **A brave space**, in comparison, is an environment centred around shifting oppressive mindsets. Brave spaces require dialogue, discomfort, and a lot of self-reflection. It is beneficial to have elements of safety (a trauma-informed stance) for brave spaces to occur -- people need to feel like they can be vulnerable to grow and change and considerations for marginalized people within those spaces -- but the main goal is learning, not comfort. A key component of a brave space is working through difficult emotions that come up while doing anti-oppressive education: fear, guilt, shame, and sadness. Brave spaces often occur in classrooms during lessons and require thoughtful implementation. They can also occur in staff meetings and between colleagues when talking about current practices.



*What are some examples of topics that might require courageous conversations?*

**With students ...**

- "I've been noticing that people are using the \*f@g slur in the hallways and classroom ..."
- "I've been noticing that people are shaming others for what they are wearing because they think it is 'girly' ..."
- "I heard someone say they think there should be a straight pride"

**With colleagues ...**

- "I notice that lots of teachers are using 'boys and girls' when talking about students"
- "I noticed that you are using the wrong pronouns for one of your students"
- "I noticed that you want to talk to your students' parents about their pronoun change but that could be very unsafe for them if they are not out"

**HOW DO I HAVE COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS?**

Here are some tips for having these courageous conversations with a group of students (e.g. your class) ...

**Proactively**

- Set up a classroom etiquette
- Do something to calm yourself (breathing exercise, walk, have a snack)
- Write down some talking points for yourself and practice it in front of a loved one
- Make sure you are in connected with your wise adult self and not so triggered that you will respond with anger (yelling or speaking in ways that will cause harm to others)



### In the moment of the conversation

- Possibility: Invite students to come sit in a circle
- Possibility: Ask them to do a mindful exercise
- State your observation (tip: try to not make it targeted to one student in the moment because this will likely elicit shame)
  - E.g. "I've been noticing that people are using the f@g slur in the hallways and class ..."
- State its impact on you
  - E.g. "When I hear people use that word, it makes me feel sad and hurt because there are queer people in my life and that word has been used to shame and discriminate against them"
- Ask the students about their impact
  - E.g. "How does it make you feel when you use that word? Why do you think people use that word? Is it meant as an insult? Did you know it is a slur? Do you know what it means?"
- Listen to their intentions and then talk to them about the difference between intention and impact
  - E.g. Student's answer: "We were using that word as a joke. We didn't mean to hurt anyone"
  - E.g. Teacher's answer: "I can understand that was your intention. The reality is that sometimes our intentions don't match up with the impact of our actions. We can cause harm even when we do not intend to. 2SLGBTQIA+ have been oppressed and discriminated against through the law and society and if we use words like that, we are part of the problem."
- Ask students how they are feeling
  - E.g. Teacher's Question: "Now that you know that, how are you feeling in your body?"
- Invite students to come up with a solution to the problem
  - E.g. Teacher's Question: "Now that you understand the impact of this word, what do you think we should do?"
  - E.g. Student brainstorming: "Not use the word. If we hear it, teach other people about it."

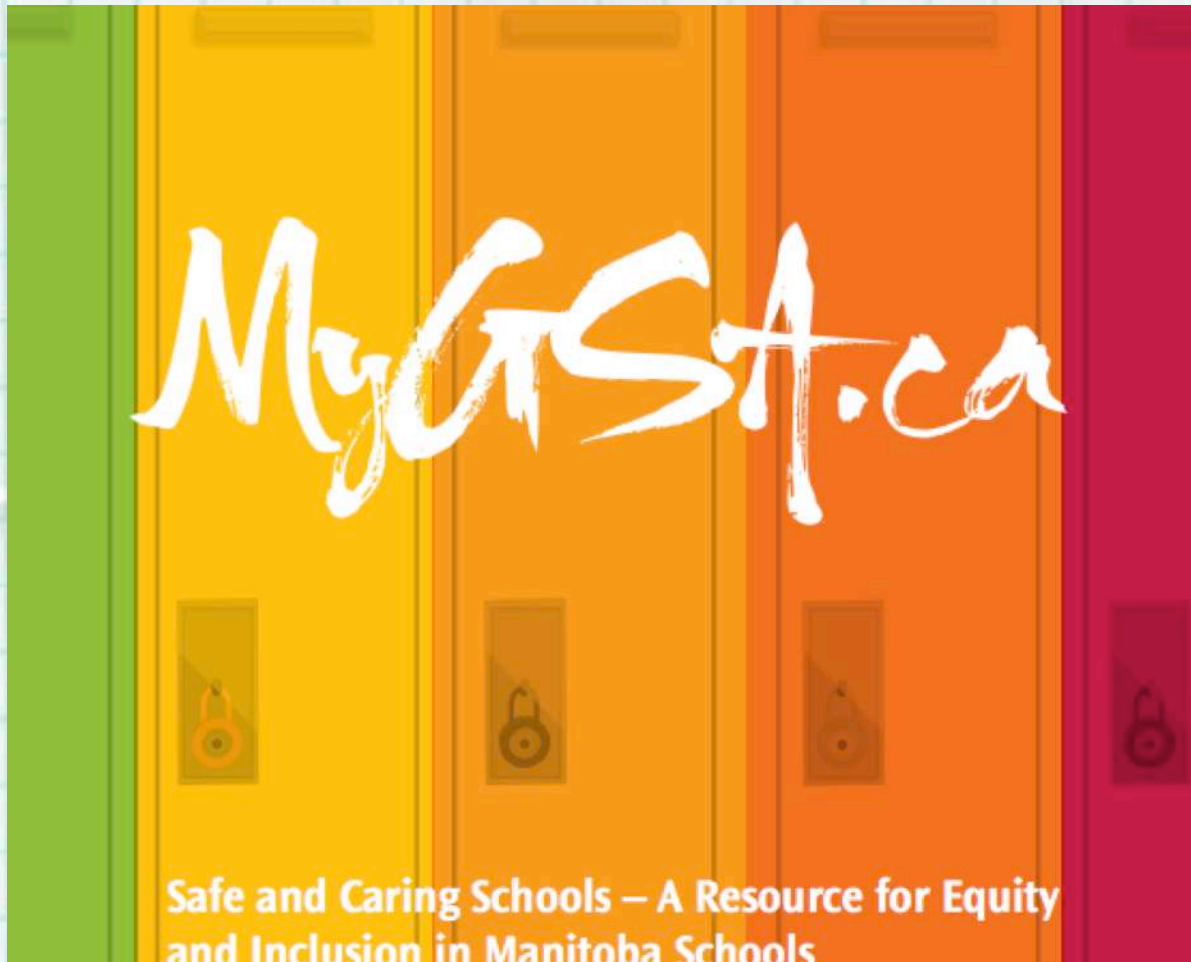
# **Intervene when you see people experiencing discrimination**


## **GET THE INFORMATION YOU NEED**

School districts often have their own policies regarding supporting 2SLGBTQIA+ people. Look up your school district and see if they have a public policy listed. If they do not, reach out to an administrator to find more information.

Check out this resource for more information and suggestions.

[https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/safe\\_schools/pdf/mygsal\\_doc.pdf](https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/safe_schools/pdf/mygsal_doc.pdf)





# WHAT WE DO

Supportive  
Administrative  
Practices



# Remove 'Male' & 'Female' From Attendance Lists

## THE PROBLEM WITH SEX DESIGNATIONS

Remember learning about sex earlier in this guide?

**Sex** refers to a person's biology: their sex organs and chromosomes.

Having sex designations on attendance lists is problematic for a few reasons.

1. It can create opportunities for misgendering students. **Misgendering** means referring to students by the wrong pronouns and invalidating their gender identity and/or expression. This is because not everyone is **cisgender** (identifies with the sex they were assigned at birth) and may not have changed their sex markers on official documents or are not male or female. This is true for people who are intersex, trans, non-binary, gender non-conforming, genderqueer and/or Two-Spirit.
2. Only having 'male' and 'female' on attendance lists reinforces the idea that there are the only two sexes; this erases people who are intersex. We don't want to erase intersex people!
3. Often 'male' and 'female,' which refers to a person's sex (their biology) is conflated with their gender identity; gender and sex are not the same thing. In some medical circumstances it is necessary to know a person's sex, but in a school environment it is not really important to know a person's sex organs or chromosomes. It is more important to know their gender identity to be able to affirm who they are.

**So how do I create inclusive attendance lists?**

## A SOLUTION

It's easy! You can remove F and M on attendance lists to create a more inclusive environment for students.

### *Approach an administrator*

Simply talk to your Office Administrator, VP, or Principal and have them printed without.

Here is a script for approaching your administrator:

*I recently learned that it is problematic to list 'male' and 'female' on attendance lists because it can cause harm for intersex, trans, non-binary, Two-Spirit and gender variant people. I am still learning about this but want to do my best to be a respectful advocate for the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. I would like to request we please print attendance lists without these sex markers. If you would like more information about this, I recommend you read this guide where I learned about this.*



Beyond talking to office administrators, when you first meet your students, model an affirming attitude by introducing yourself with your pronouns and asking everyone to do the same.

### Braver spaces

This creates a **braver space** for trans, non-binary, gender variant, Two Spirit, intersex, and gender nonconforming students to share the pronouns they go by. **Brave spaces** are environments where people are able to have difficult conversations and work through discomfort in the name of justice and supporting people. Explain that some people go by they, xi, xir, xem, she, her, and that there are an infinite number of genders out there. This is not an exhaustive list of pronouns as there are so many out there; language is always evolving. Ask students to be open and curious when people self-identify with gender neutral pronouns, neo-pronouns, and no pronouns.

### Add Pronouns to Attendance Lists If Possible

Once teachers know what pronouns people go by they can add them on the attendance lists. Please note that not all students are "out" and they may want certain pronouns used within your classroom and other pronouns to be used within the whole school community or with parents. Please respect student wishes and do not "out" people as this is their story to tell.

Everyone is different so simply ask what makes them most comfortable and what they need.



# Signal Your Pronouns

## WHAT ARE PRONOUNS?

Many languages are gendered. In English, we use gendered pronouns (he/him, and she/her) to describe ourselves and others. In French, nouns are also gendered (e.g. la chaise, le chat). English and French are Canada's two official languages and most Canadian schools are either taught in these two languages.

Gender assumptions therefore seep into our language everyday. This can cause a lot of gender dysphoria (invalidation and harm) for trans, non-binary, gender-queer, Two-Spirit and intersex people. This is because we cannot always tell someone's gender identity according to their appearance and when we make assumptions about people's gender, this can lead to misgendering.

## HOW CAN I BE SUPPORTIVE OF PRONOUNS?

- Model to others that you understand why pronouns matter by putting your own pronouns in your email signature, Zoom handle and other communications/documents
- Introduce yourself with your pronouns
- Ask students about their pronouns

# Respect Confidentiality

## WHAT ARE DISCLOSURES?

A disclosure is when someone shares aspects of their identity with you. For example, if a student "comes out" to you as queer or trans that is a disclosure. It is your ethical duty to respect disclosures and ask students the following:

- ☐ Would you like me to tell anyone this information? Is this information private?
- ☐ If a student has disclosed wanting certain pronouns: Would you like me to use these pronouns when corresponding with your parents/care-givers, teachers, or others?
- ☐ If a student has disclosed wanting to use another name: Would you like me to use this name when corresponding with your parents/caregivers, teachers, or others?
- ☐ What do you need? How can I support you?

# PRACTICE

- ☐ They/Them Pronouns, [go to page 65](#)
- ☐ Intervening Against Queerphobia, [go to page 69](#)



**How do I use they/them  
pronouns?**

**(And what do I do if I mess  
up?)**

## **Practice, practice, practice.**

It takes time to use gender-neutral pronouns proficiently if you are new to it.

DOs

- ✓ Keep trying
- ✓ Practice using someone's pronouns when you are alone
- ✓ Use gender-neutral pronouns when you don't know the pronouns someone uses
- ✓ Apologize quickly when you make mistakes and change your behaviour swiftly ("he – sorry "they")

Practice reading the following out loud:

### **Sarah (they)**

Sarah was an engaged student. They were eager to participate in activities. They listened respectfully to other students during group activities and would be the first one to raise their hand.

### **Rain (he/they)**

Rain was in my Gr. 9 English class. They loved creative writing, especially poetry. His favourite poet was Billy Ray-Belcourt.

*For people who are gender fluid, you can switch between using different pronouns. The general rule of respect is just to not use one only (especially she or he). People often fall back on she and he because they are more confident with them. It can be very affirming for people to hear different pronouns used, so make sure to switch it up!*

### **Mx. Nguyen (they/she)**

Mx. Nguyen is an excellent math teacher. They teach Gr. 11 Biology. Her class would be a great fit for your student!

# ACTIVITY

Take a moment to think about your students and colleagues. Write down a description of everything you have done today: What students and colleagues you interacted with, what activities you did etc. Then rewrite the story using only they/them pronouns. Replace all gendered pronouns. Read that story aloud! This is an activity to get you more familiar with they/them pronouns.





# ACTIVITY

Do you have a student or colleague who uses pronouns you are not familiar with? Write down a description about them. Read it aloud a few times. See if you keep tripping up! Read it until you don't trip up.

A blank sheet of yellow lined paper, tilted slightly to the right, intended for writing a description of someone who uses unfamiliar pronouns.

**What do I do if I see someone  
being queerphobic  
(homophobic, biphobia,  
transphobia, intersexphobic  
etc.)**

## **Intervene, intervene, intervene.**

It can be scary to intervene in situations when you don't know the best thing to say or do.

### INTERVENING WITH STUDENTS

#### **If students say 'that's so gay' or "f@g" in class or the hallways ...**

- ☐ Catch them on it and say that is not acceptable language (if it continues, bring in admin to come up with a plan for dealing with language)
- ☐ Use it as a discussion for the class ("teachable moment")
- ☐ Emphasize you aren't picking out one person (because if one student uses it, chances are they are not the only ones)
- ☐ Convey emotion about the situation and avoid shaming the person (distance behaviour, do not make it an individual problem)
- ☐ This is a good video for thinking critically about the expression: "that's so gay" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sWS0GVOQPs0>
- ☐ You can use it as an opportunity to discuss how our language conveys our values, and whether you intend something or not, our words can deeply impact others

#### **If students are making fun of other LGBTQ+ students or saying disparaging things about the LGBTQ+ community in the class ...**

- ☐ Address it immediately
- ☐ Emphasize it's not acceptable to put down other groups
- ☐ Use it as a learning moment
- ☐ Try to understand why they are doing it
- ☐ Demonstrate how that's hurtful



## INTERVENING WITH ADULTS (COLLEAGUES OR PARENTS/CARE-GIVERS)

If parents express a view that does not accept LGBTQ+ people ...

- ☐ If it's possible, try to address this one-on-one
- ☐ Make sure you are in a grounded place and have someone you can talk to afterward
- ☐ Communicate the situation with admin or colleagues that you trust (in confidence)
- ☐ Say something that is strength-based and calm

Eg. *"You are your own person, and at the end of the day, you are the one who decides what you believe. I will tell you that this belief you hold hurts a large amount of people (myself included). When 2SLGBTQ+ people are told again and again that there is something wrong with them, that there is no place for them in the world, they start to believe it. A lot of 2SLGBTQ+ people deal with mental health challenges in their lives. This is largely due to the lack of acceptance they feel at various times in their lives. You have a chance to have a belief that could positively impact people, or negatively impact people. I hope you reconsider your stance. I think you care, and perhaps that is why you have your belief in the first place ... you think that having that belief is saving people, but 2SLGBTQ+ folks don't need to be saved in that way. 2SLGBTQ+ people don't choose their identities. They do choose to be themselves in a world that can be very cruel. I hope you change your perspective so that the world can be just a little bit kinder today."*

# ACTIVITY

Think about a situation where you heard a student use a slur or say something offensive against 2SLGBTQIA+ people. How did you respond in that moment? If you could go back, what would you say? Write down how you would respond to it now. Practice saying it aloud.

A large, tilted, cream-colored rectangular area with horizontal grey lines, intended for writing a response. The lines are evenly spaced and run diagonally across the page, following the tilt of the rectangle. The rectangle is positioned in the lower half of the page, below the text instructions.

# ACTIVITY

Do you know a colleague or student parent that is not accepting of 2SLGBTQIA+ people? Write down a strength-based and calm thing you could say to them. Practice saying it aloud.





# MAKE A PLAN OF ACTION

- ☐ Teach someone something you have learned, [go to page 75](#)
- ☐ Add pronouns to your email signature and zoom handle, [go to page 75](#)
- ☐ Create a “getting to know you survey” for your class, [go to page 76](#)
- ☐ See if your school has a gender-neutral washroom, [go to page 75](#)
- ☐ Talk with your colleagues about making a 2SLGBTQIA+ subject strategy, [go to page 80](#)
- ☐ Make a plan for how to connect 2SLGBTQIA+ perspectives into your subjects, [go to page 82](#)

# CHECKLIST

- ☐ Have I taught someone a term that I have learned?
- ☐ Have I added my pronouns to my email signature?
- ☐ Have I added my pronouns to my Zoom handle?
- ☐ Have I created a getting to know you survey?
- ☐ Have I talked to an administrator about removing sex markers from attendance lists?
- ☐ Have I talked to an administrator about including pronouns on attendance lists?
- ☐ Have I seen if my school has a gender-neutral washroom?
- ☐ If my school does not have one: have I talked with an administrator?
- ☐ Have I talked with colleagues who teach the same subject as me and made a strategy for infusing 2SLGBTQIA+ perspectives into our lessons?
- ☐ Have I made an individual plan?

# GETTING TO KNOW YOU SURVEY

What is your name? \_\_\_\_\_

Please spell out how to pronounce your name by how it sounds (even if you think it's obvious - thanks!): \_\_\_\_\_

*Are you okay with me referring to you by this name when talking ...*

with the class                  with other teachers                  with your parents/caregivers

*If you would like me to use different names with different people, please clarify:*

**What pronouns do you like to go by (circle which one applies to you):**

she/her      he/him      they/them      pronoun fluid:      neopronoun:

I'd preferred to be referred to by name/no pronouns please

*Are you okay with me referring to you by these pronouns when talking ...*

with the class                  with other teachers                  with your parents/caregivers

*Is there anything more you need or want me to know about your pronouns?*

**How are you feeling starting this class (circle all that apply):**

excited      meh      neutral      anxious

*Is there anything you want me to know is going on for you?*



What access needs to do you have?

Here are examples of access needs:

- I need to be seated near the front because I have sight loss and am hard of hearing.
- I would like to be near the door because I have digestive issues and have to use the washroom frequently.
- I would like to be able to move my body a lot because I have ADHD and have a hard time sitting.
- I would like to be able to stim as someone with autism.
- I would feel better not being called on because I have a lot of social anxiety.

Have you had mostly positive or negative experiences with learning [insert subject]? Is there anything you would want me to know about these past experiences?

What are you most passionate about (doesn't have to be related to this subject at all)?

What are your three biggest strengths?

# SCRIPTS FOR TALKING WITH ADMINISTRATORS

## **Removing sex markers from attendance lists and adding pronouns:**

*Dear [insert name of administrator],*

*I hope this email finds you well. I am writing to discuss the presence of sex markers on attendance lists and absence of pronouns.*

*I recently learned that it is problematic to list 'male' and 'female' on attendance lists because it can cause harm for intersex, trans, non-binary, Two-Spirit and gender variant people. I am still learning about this but want to do my best to be a respectful advocate for the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.*

*I would like to request we please print attendance lists without these sex markers and instead add students' pronouns. Sex markers are not important for teachers because they do not always correspond to a person's gender identity. Listing pronouns is a more helpful strategy for supporting students. This could be especially helpful for substitute teachers coming into classrooms to mitigate the chance of trans, intersex, non-binary, genderqueer, and Two-Spirit students being misgendered. I know that it is your priority to ensure youth are being respected as it one of our ethical duties to ensure care for our students. As I am sure you are aware, misgendering students can cause great harm and 2SLGBTQIA+ students are at higher risk of mental health challenges and harassment than their cisgender and heterosexual peers. If you would like more information about this, I recommend you read this guide where I learned about this information.*

*[Attach guide].*

*Thanks so much,*

*[Insert your name & pronouns]*

## **Advocating for gender-neutral washrooms:**

Dear [insert name of administrator],

*I hope this email finds you well. I am writing to discuss the absence of a gender-neutral washroom and changerooms in our school.*

*"GLSEN research shows that nearly two thirds of transgender students avoid school bathrooms because of feeling unsafe or uncomfortable. They risk verbal and physical harassment, no matter which of the two, sex-segregated bathrooms they enter. The solution here is not a new or radical concept: all schools should have private, gender-neutral bathrooms for any students to use, in the same, normal way that homes have bathrooms for guests to use and many restaurants have bathrooms that are not labeled for the sexes."*

*I urge you to create an action plan to create a gender-neutral washroom and changeroom that is accessible for our trans and gender non-conforming students and staff. By accessible I mean: students and staff with different disabilities can easily access it, it is not so far away from classrooms that students and staff have to walk across the school to get to it, students and staff do not need to "out" themselves as gender variant to use it, and it is not normally locked.*

*Here are some more information about creating gender-neutral washrooms:*

- [https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/transgender/full\\_doc.pdf](https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/transgender/full_doc.pdf)
- <https://www.winnipegssd.ca/page/9371/faq-safe-and-caring-policy>

*Thanks so much,*

*[Insert your name & pronouns]*



# PLANNING FOR INFUSING 2SLGBTQIA+ PERSPECTIVES WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES

It is recommended that you talk with your colleagues about how to infuse concepts over the years. Here is an example.

## ENGLISH EXAMPLE: What texts/concepts will we include in different grades?

Grade	Courses
9	<p>ELA10</p> <p>Single story v.s. multiple stories</p> <p>Gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation</p> <p>Book Clubs: The Miseducation of Cameron Post; Simon v.s. the Homo Sapiens Agenda; Pumpkin; The Black Flamingo; Pet; Like a Love Story</p>
10	<p>ELA20</p> <p>Cis-heteronormativity</p> <p>Counter &amp; dominant narratives</p> <p>Analyzing Children's Books for gender and sexual norms + creating children's books</p> <p>Media studies unit: analyzing for gender and sexual norms and creating satirical videos/ads</p>

11	<p>ELA30</p> <p>Counter &amp; dominant narratives</p> <p>Poetry by: Billy-Ray Belcourt (Two-Spirit author), Elizabeth Bishop (Queer author)</p> <p>Play by: Shakespeare (Queer author) – Twelfth Night</p>
12	<p>ELA40</p> <p>Creative Resistance</p> <p>Idea of queering, trans-ing, femme-inizing</p> <p>Visual Art: Kent Monkman</p> <p>Film: Moonlight (Black, Queer, Gay)</p> <p>Creative Non-Fiction: “These Bodies Will Undo Us” (Lesbian/Trans)</p> <p>Poetry: Ocean Vuong (Queer, Vietnamese Experience)</p>

# PLANNING FOR YOUR CLASSROOM

Unit	How is it connecting with 2SLGBTQIA+ people and perspectives?

# REFLECT ON

□ Your learning, [go to page 84](#)



## Moving Towards 2SLGBTQIA+ Educational Activism

SUCCESS CRITERIA	Planting Seeds <i>I am beginning to understand</i>	Blossoming "Allies" <i>I am integrating my learning into action</i>	Perennial Activists <i>I am continuously unlearning/advocating</i>
<b>Knowledge of Important Terms</b>	I am still learning all of the important terms	I am aware of the following: terms in the 2SLGBTQIA+ acronym + what each mean; gender identity vs gender expression v.s. biological sex; sexuality; sexual orientation  If I do not know something I have knowledge of how to respectfully find out (take the initiative to learn myself, don't ask people to teach me and centre my emotions)	I am aware of the key terms and am comfortable teaching others about these terms
<b>Knowledge of Pronouns &amp; Ability to Apply Respectfully</b>	I understand that pronouns are important and misgendering is a violent act (people might not say anything but it can cause harm)  I am learning that each person's relationship to pronouns is different (some people like one set of pronouns, some people are pronoun fluid, some people don't like pronouns etc.)  I am aware of pronouns and am working towards becoming more comfortable using gender neutral pronouns and respectfully switching between pronouns if someone is pronoun fluid	I am aware of pronouns and if I or someone else makes a mistake I know how to respectfully move on (apologize quickly and use the correct pronouns instead of making a long-winded apology)	I am aware of pronouns and ask students and staff about their pronouns  I do not make assumptions about people's gender identities  I use gender neutral pronouns when I don't know someone's pronouns  I use gender neutral language in my everyday life (i.e. not "boys and girls" but "students", "friends", "everyone" etc.)
<b>Classroom Environment Considers 2SLGBTQIA+ People and Signals Awareness to Queer &amp; Trans People</b>	I am considering how to make my classroom environment more affirming for 2SLGBTQIA+ people (I might put up a flag or posters)	I have some posters in my classroom	I have posters, books and resources that support 2SLGBTQIA+ people in my classroom

SUCCESS CRITERIA	Planting Seeds <i>I am beginning to understand</i>	Blossoming "Allies" <i>I am integrating my learning into action</i>	Perennial Activists <i>I am continuously unlearning/advocating</i>
<b>Self-Awareness of Need to Continuously Unlearn and Address Unconscious Biases</b>	I understand that I need to continuously unlearn and am doing work on my own to read more about gender and sexual norms	I am starting to reflecting on my own relationship to gender and sexuality and think about why I might feel uncomfortable with certain things	I am continuously reflecting on my understanding of gender and sexuality and thinking about how it relates to whiteness, coloniality, ableism and classism
<b>Awareness of the Need for an Intersectional Lens and Ability to Apply Thinking Throughout Practice</b>	I understand what intersectionality is but I'm not yet sure how to apply it to my teaching practices	I am starting to think intersectionally about gender and sexuality and how that applies to my curricular choices and teaching practices	I understand the history of intersectionality (rooted in Black feminism, in a law context, Kimberlé Crenshaw) and am constantly considering my own positionality and how to act in solidarity with others
<b>Curriculum Reflects 2SLGBTQIA+ People, Perspectives</b>	I understand that my curriculum should reflect queer and trans people and I am starting to think about ways to do that	I am thinking about the subjects I teach and how to infuse and integrate 2SLGBTQIA+ people into it	I am confident infusing 2SLGBTQIA+ perspectives into my curriculum and I am also interested in inquiry, land-based and cross-curricular activities that disrupt teaching norms
<b>Pedagogy &amp; Instruction is Queered, Trans-ed &amp; Femme-inized (it disrupts teaching norms, knowledge norms, centres care, embodiment etc.)</b>	I understand that my teaching should challenge gender and sexual norms and I want to consider care and embodiment although I'm not super comfortable with that yet	I consider how people occupy space and how that relates to gender, sexuality, race, ability, class and make choices that thinks about their needs	I centre disruption, care and embodiment in my teaching and think about trauma-informed practices
<b>Assessment Practices Are Queered, Trans-ed &amp; Femme-inized</b>	I understand that my assessment practices should challenge gender and sexual norms but I'm not exactly sure how gender and sexuality relates to assessment yet	I have some ideas for challenging assessment (moving away from high stakes testing), thinking about ways that centre students and their unique voices and perspectives (voice and choice)	I co-create assessment tools with students and try out contract grading and disruptive assessment practices that centre personalized learning
<b>Take on School &amp; Community Advocacy</b>	I do not yet feel comfortable advocating for 2SLGBTQIA+ issues in my school or teaching environment	I am starting to feel comfortable advocating for 2SLGBTQIA+ issues in my school or teaching environment	I am confident calling out inequities in my school or teaching environment and I teach my students to do the same

**Please give us  
feedback. It will be  
used to improve this  
resource and develop  
more materials for  
educators. Feedback  
link is on the first  
page.**

**Thanks!**