



WHAT CAN I DO? 7 THINGS ADULTS CAN DO TO SUPPORT LGBTQ YOUTH

Building a safe, caring and inclusive culture where LGBTQ children, youth, teachers and parents feel welcome starts from the inside. As an individual, family member, community member, educator or professional, you have power to make positive changes.

Think big and make small changes to start a culture of caring!



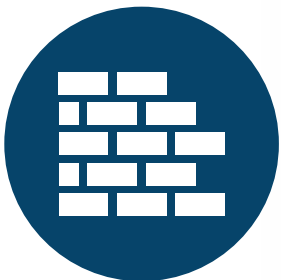
1) **EVALUATE:** Where are we now?

- Review what you are already doing and assess areas for growth
- Consult with families, children, youth, colleagues, professionals and other stakeholders to determine your needs and develop a plan
- Challenge heterosexual bias and traditional gender presumptions



2) **MODEL:** Set the example, show who you are

- Demonstrate welcoming, caring, respectful and safe attitudes and behaviour
- Be thoughtful in your messaging and use inclusive and gender-neutral language when communicating with or about families, children, youth, colleagues and other stakeholders
- Remember that most LGBTQ children and youth will be invisible, but they will still be able to witness your approach, leadership and caring if you provide it universally



3) **BUILD:** Create a positive environment

- Provide positive and inclusive imaging, graphics, posters and slogans
- Share LGBTQ community magazines, resources, event notices and health information
- Ensure forms, documents and processes are inclusive and respectful of diversity
- Provide gender-neutral restrooms



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4) **GROW:** Support, train and facilitate others

- Provide training and ongoing support to colleagues, children and youth to build their awareness and knowledge and develop strategies for inclusion
- Support Gay-Straight Alliances and other inclusion groups, initiatives and events
- Check in with school and community stakeholders on the effectiveness of strategies



5) **PREPARE:** Be aware of risk factors

- Develop preventative measures and be alert to identify potential issues
- Be alert to concurrent risk and protective factors that may be affecting the children and youth in your school or community to increase the effectiveness of your approach
- Link at-risk children, youth and families to intervention supports prior to a potential crisis



6) **RESPOND:** Be ready, use the 4 Cs

- **CARE:** Be open, respectful, non-judgemental, trustworthy and honoured by those who confide and/or “come out” to you
- **CONFIDENTIAL:** Respect individuals’ right to disclose their own gender or sexual identity
- **CONNECT:** Develop a referral process and network of community supports
- **CONSIDER:** The available supports or barriers that might exist in a child or youth’s life



7) **LINK:** Collaborate with partners and resources

- Engage partnerships, organizations and advocates for vulnerable groups
- Provide display spaces, presentation time and visibility within your school or community
- Promote your network of connections, ensuring children, youth, families and “families of choice” have access to the resources and supports they need