

How to support LGBTQIA+ young people in education

This guide has been developed based on the feedback and recommendations of LGBTQIA+ young people. It should not be considered an exhaustive list of ways to help and ACYP would recommend that if any person wants to support the LGBTQIA+ young people in their lives, they should have a conversation with those young people about how best to do so.

LGBTQIA+ inclusive schools and classrooms

- Put public displays of support around your school or campus, including stickers, flags, signs and posters to show the school is LGBTQIA+ inclusive and supportive.
- Highlight local LGBTQIA+ celebrations and events such as Pride Month, Wear it Purple Day and International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Interphobia and Transphobia.

- **Don't** use gender as an arbitrary way to group students, such as for class work or team activities.

Young people identified public displays of support in school as important for creating a sense of safety and inclusion.

Creating LGBTQIA+ support groups

- Create space for student-run LGBTQIA+ groups where students can connect and support each other.

Young people reported feeling a sense of belonging and connection when schools provided a safe space for LGBTQIA+ students to come together.

Referrals to support

- Incorporate LGBTQIA+ specific services (such as QLife and Twenty10) and local LGBTQIA+ youth support groups when highlighting general supports to all students -for example, on flyers pointing to headspace or Lifeline. Encourage your school to build partnerships with these services.

LGBTQIA+ young people noted they had limited awareness of the supports and services available to them.

Language

- Use gender neutral and inclusive language, recognising the diversity of all people. This can include introducing yourself by using your pronouns and by providing students the option to do the same if they choose.
- Use the young person's preferred name and pronouns.

Young people highlighted the importance of using gender neutral and inclusive language to make them feel safe, respected and included at school.

Bullying and harassment

- Call out bullying and homophobic behaviour and language:
- Hold students accountable for homophobic, transphobic and biphobic behaviour
- Support the implementation of anti-homophobic, transphobic and biphobic initiatives and policies in your school.
- **Don't** tell the young person to change their behaviour or appearance to avoid being a target.

Episodes of bullying and harassment are unacceptable and cause LGBTQIA+ young people to feel unsafe at school. Young people wanted to see teachers take action and intervene when they observed or were the recipient of homophobic, transphobic or biphobic behaviour.



Remember:

Be genuine. Any efforts to be supportive of the LGBTQIA+ community must be genuine to support inclusivity and not a tokenistic gesture.