

Recommendations

| Recommendation | Responsibility |
|--|--|
| <p>1. Local councils across NSW should provide funding to promote the needs of LGBTQIA+ young people through events and training.</p> | <p>Local councils across NSW</p> |
| <p>2. NSW Government should provide safe spaces for LGBTQIA+ young people to access support after hours and should provide inclusion training to frontline workers.</p> | <p>NSW Government in collaboration with NSW Ministry of Health</p> |
| <p>3. All levels of government should ensure that legislative and policy changes include the rights and perspectives of LGBTQIA+ young people. Based on the findings of this consultation, ACYP also recommends that the NSW Government undertake legislative reform to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that NSW legislation protects LGBTQIA+ students’ rights regarding education and schooling; and • Remove the requirement for surgery to be a prerequisite to change a person’s gender marker on their Birth Certificate in NSW, in line with other jurisdictions in Australia. | <p>NSW Government</p> |
| <p>A. ACYP will consult with local councils across NSW to increase the number of councils hosting LGBTQIA+ pride events for young people.</p> | <p>ACYP</p> |
| <p>B. ACYP will host a series of forums with local leaders to support the elimination of violence against LGBTQIA+ young people.</p> | <p>ACYP</p> |
| <p>4. NSW Department of Education to provide funding for teachers to complete LGBTQIA+ inclusion training to promote wellbeing and inclusion of LGBTQIA+ students.</p> | <p>NSW Department of Education</p> |
| <p>5. NSW Department of Education should develop a specific Anti-Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia policy to address mistreatment and bullying of LGBTQIA+ students. This policy should be accompanied by associated resources.</p> | <p>NSW Department of Education</p> |
| <p>6. NSW Education Standards Authority should include specific reference to diverse genders and sexualities in the PDHPE syllabus in instances of education about sexual behaviours.</p> | <p>NSW Education Standards Authority</p> |

| Recommendation | Responsibility |
|---|--|
| <p>7. NSW Department of Education should ensure every school has an all-gendered bathroom option that all students, of all genders, are able to use, alongside a single-sex bathroom option.</p> | <p>NSW Department of Education</p> |
| <p>C. ACYP will support the NSW Department of Education in including student voice in the development of policies and educational resources.</p> | <p>ACYP</p> |
| <p>8. Anti-Discrimination NSW should receive funding to improve access for LGBTQIA+ young people to the complaints process, both in terms of awareness and the process itself.</p> | <p>NSW Government with Anti-Discrimination NSW</p> |
| <p>9. NSW Ministry of Health should continue to fund and expand initiatives in the NSW LGBTIQ+ Health Strategy 2022-2027, keeping young people’s needs and voices at the centre of decision-making and co-design opportunities.</p> | <p>NSW Ministry of Health</p> |
| <p>10. NSW Ministry of Health should develop an accreditation framework for LGBTQIA+ inclusive health services and link training delivered through the NSW LGBTIQ+ Health Strategy to this.</p> | <p>NSW Ministry of Health</p> |
| <p>11. NSW Ministry of Health should increase public-facing information on the NSW Ministry of Health webpage for ‘LGBTIQ+ Health’, including links to helpful resources.</p> | <p>NSW Ministry of Health</p> |
| <p>D. ACYP will design and develop a ‘helpful resources’ factsheet with state-wide resources.</p> | <p>ACYP</p> |

■ Support in the community

- 1. Local councils across NSW should provide funding to promote the needs of LGBTQIA+ young people through events and training.**

Funding should be used to host LGBTQIA+ celebration events specifically for young people. Ideally, events would be run annually and would provide an opportunity for young people to connect with peers who identify as LGBTQIA+. As a secondary benefit, events could highlight LGBTQIA+ services to young people and those who work with them – such as teachers and community leaders.

During the consultations, young people across several schools pointed to an event run by the Blue Mountains City Council to mark ‘International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Interphobia and Transphobia’ and said this was an event that connected them to one another and boosted their sense of belonging.

Funding could also be used to provide LGBTQIA+ inclusion training for Youth Development Officers (YDOs), noting that YDOs are likely the organisers of these events.

NSW Government should consider establishing a grants program aimed at supporting these initiatives.

- 2. NSW Government should provide a safe space for LGBTQIA+ young people to access support after hours and should provide inclusion training to frontline workers.**

The NSW Government should provide young people with access to safe spaces to attend if they need to leave their home after hours as a result of conflict.

ACYP welcomes the recent establishment of 20 Safe Havens across NSW for crisis mental health support and recommends these services or a similar model be further funded and expanded to support young people in distress. At present, it appears not all of these services operate during evenings or on all days throughout the week. Further funding could be used to both expand opening hours and provide access to an after-hours on-call support, so that if a young person needed access to a safe space after 10pm, a safe space could be opened temporarily to meet that need on an ad-hoc basis. This recommendation is not intended to meet needs associated with crisis accommodation.

Specialist LGBTQIA+ inclusion and support training should also be provided to domestic violence and crisis support services. Crisis services should consider hiring practices to promote gender and sexual diversity. Police should be provided similar training, including a focus on building understanding of appropriate referral pathways for LGBTQIA+ people experiencing domestic or family violence.

- 3. All levels of government should ensure that legislative and policy changes include the rights and perspectives of LGBTQIA+ young people.**

When considering legislative and policy changes related to the LGBTQIA+ community, the NSW Government should consult widely with LGBTQIA+ young people about how potential changes can protect and uphold their rights, safety and wellbeing.

Based on the findings of this consultation, ACYP recommends that the NSW Government undertake legislative reform to ensure that NSW legislation protects LGBTQIA+ students' rights regarding education and schooling. Schools should not be permitted to make decisions about a student's position at the school or exclusion from it based on their gender identity or sexual orientation.

ACYP also recommends that reform should be undertaken to remove the requirement that surgery is a prerequisite to change a person's gender marker on their Birth Certificate in NSW. This change would bring NSW in line with other jurisdictions in Australia.

■ ACYP commits to

A. Consult with local councils across NSW to increase the number of councils hosting LGBTQIA+ pride events for young people.

ACYP will work with local councils to understand how many of the 128 local government areas currently host LGBTQIA+ pride events and how many do so specifically for young people. Throughout this process, ACYP will support more local councils to host those events, working towards the aim of each local council hosting an annual celebration for LGBTQIA+ young people.

B. Host a series of forums with local leaders to support the elimination of violence against LGBTQIA+ young people.

ACYP will work with relevant government agencies and local services to host discussions with community leaders about how to address violence against LGBTQIA+ young people in their communities.

This would involve sharing insights from the report and hosting a deliberative conversation about what support community leaders would need to shift attitudes among people in their local areas.

Key groups could include leaders across schools, regional and rural areas, multicultural community leaders and faith leaders.

■ Education

4. NSW Department of Education to provide funding for teachers to complete LGBTQIA+ inclusion training to promote wellbeing and inclusion of LGBTQIA+ students.

The findings of this report indicate a lack of awareness among many teachers of LGBTQIA+ concepts, as well as a lack of acceptance among some. In rolling out this training, the Department should prioritise school leaders, year advisors, and teachers who may be interested in establishing an LGBTQIA+ support group, but ACYP notes training is important for all education staff. ACYP recommends the Association of Independent Schools and Catholic Schools NSW also take up training for all staff.

Within this training, staff should be encouraged to maintain confidentiality when a student chooses to disclose their sexuality or gender to teachers, wellbeing staff and school leaders. This will protect students' wellbeing in that it may not be safe for the student if the staff member were to mention their disclosed identity to parents or carers.

Where students choose to disclose a desire to affirm their gender identity through their name, pronouns or uniform, staff should:

- Make clear to the student the requirements for parental consent before those changes can be made; and
- Work with the student to understand their home context before contacting their parents or carers about such requests.

5. NSW Department of Education should develop a specific Anti-Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia policy to address mistreatment and bullying of LGBTQIA+ students. This policy should be accompanied by associated resources.

Developing an Anti-Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia Policy would highlight the need to directly address homophobic, biphobic and transphobic behaviours in schools. This would address both overt behaviours and more subtle behaviours that reinforce cultural norms – such as students’ perception that teachers do not take homophobic jokes seriously. The Department of Education currently has an Anti-Racism policy that sits alongside the existing Bullying Prevention and Response Policy and the Student Behaviour Strategy. Development of this policy could be analogous to the Anti-Racism policy.

Development of this policy should include accompanying implementation papers and resources, as well as clearly outlining responsibilities of all school employees.

6. NSW Education Standards Authority should include specific reference to diverse genders and sexualities in the PDHPE syllabus in instances of education about sexual behaviours.

In current PDHPE Stage 4 and 5 syllabus materials, students learn about a number of topics, including: sexual relationships; how to engage in sexual behaviours safely; how to understand contraception and preventative health practices; and understanding consent. ACYP acknowledges the syllabus does not specify references to heterosexual behaviours or health information, and that sample resources developed for classroom teachers already include some references to LGBTQIA+ concepts in sexual education.

However, findings from this consultation indicate sexual health education for LGBTQIA+ young people is limited. ACYP recommends the syllabus should overtly highlight the need to include LGBTQIA+ concepts in education about sexual behaviours.

This information should be applicable to a range of sexual behaviours. In the same way that students who may not currently be sexually active need to understand sexual health, it is important for all students to learn about safe sexual practices that reflect the diversity of genders and sexualities represented across society.

7. NSW Department of Education should ensure every school has an all-gendered bathroom option that all students, of all genders, are able to use, alongside a single-sex bathroom option.

All schools should provide an option for an all-gendered bathroom that any student would be able to use if they choose to. Students should still be able to choose to use a single-sex bathroom. ACYP envisages that this would involve converting one set of bathrooms to an all-gendered bathroom and constructing new schools with all-gendered bathrooms.

An accessible bathroom would not meet the needs articulated by young people in this report, as it would require that a trans or gender diverse young person come out to the school before using it and implies a link between diverse gender identities and disability. Young people in this report also mentioned discomfort in taking the place of a person with disability by using the accessible bathroom.

All students should have access to a bathroom at all times, and bathrooms should not be locked during class times.

■ ACYP commits to

- C. Support the NSW Department of Education in including student voice in the development of policies and educational resources.**

Where the NSW Department of Education agrees to develop the policies and syllabus guides as outlined above, ACYP will support the Department in incorporating student perspectives into those documents and materials.

■ Work

- 8. Anti-Discrimination NSW should receive funding to improve access for LGBTQIA+ young people to the complaints process, both in terms of awareness and the process itself.**

The NSW Government should provide funding to Anti-Discrimination NSW to support the development of targeted information and advertising campaigns to LGBTQIA+ young people, including a focus on highlighting their eligibility to make complaints.

LGBTQIA+ young people should also be involved in reviewing the process of making a complaint to determine whether there are opportunities to make the process more accessible and youth friendly.

■ Health

- 9. NSW Ministry of Health should continue to fund and expand initiatives in the NSW LGBTQIA+ Health Strategy 2022-2027, keeping young people’s needs and voices at the centre of decision-making and co-design opportunities.**

ACYP welcomes and is eager to see the implementation of the NSW LGBTQIA+ Health Strategy.

The initiatives outlined in the Strategy begin to address the issues raised by young people in this report, including the need for more LGBTQIA+ specific services, the need for those services in regional and rural areas, and the need to upskill medical and health practitioners.

Funding for these initiatives should be continued and expanded to provide more young people with more access to appropriate services across NSW.

Where co-design is mentioned throughout the Strategy, young people’s voices should be included in that process. ACYP would be happy to assist in this process.

Training for health practitioners should reiterate the need to maintain patient confidentiality and privacy.

- 10. NSW Ministry of Health should develop an accreditation framework for LGBTQIA+ inclusive health services and link training delivered through the NSW LGBTQIA+ Health Strategy to this.**

As the NSW LGBTQIA+ Health Strategy notes, “75% of LGBTQIA+ people nationally would be more likely to use a service if it has been accredited as LGBTQIA+ inclusive.”⁴ This is consistent with the qualitative findings of this report where young people struggled to identify inclusive services.

⁴ NSW Health, (2022) *NSW LGBTQIA+ Health Strategy 2022-2027: For people of diverse sexualities and genders, and intersex people, to achieve health outcomes that matter to them* accessed via: <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/lgbtiq-health/Publications/lgbtiq-health-strategy.pdf>.

An accreditation framework for LGBTQIA+ inclusive health services should be rolled out, in tandem with the training program already proposed under the NSW LGBTIQ+ Health Strategy. The development of this accreditation framework should include an opportunity for young people to provide feedback on whether the health service was inclusive.

ACYP recommends accreditation include assessing whether the health practitioner was appropriately informed about LGBTQIA+ concepts and whether health staff use the correct name and pronoun for the young person.

ACYP also recommends the NSW Ministry of Health develop, in partnership with relevant bodies (e.g. RACGP), sample new-patient intake forms that allow, but do not require, young people to indicate their preferred name alongside their legal name, and their sexuality and gender identity alongside their sex assigned at birth. The use of key elements of this intake form could also contribute to accreditation.

11. NSW Ministry of Health should increase public-facing information on the NSW Health webpage for LGBTIQ health, including links to helpful resources.

Currently the NSW Health webpage ‘LGBTIQ+ Health’ –under the heading of ‘Find information by health topic’ –simply links to the NSW LGBTIQ+ Health Strategy rather than providing helpful information and resources as per other health topics.⁵

Updating this webpage is an opportunity to provide high-level information about LGBTQIA+ concepts, information about sexual health for LGBTQIA+ people and direct users to reliable sources of further information, including where to find an LGBTQIA+ inclusive health service or specialist.

■ ACYP commits to

D. Design and develop a ‘helpful resources’ factsheet with state-wide resources.

ACYP will develop a helpful resources fact-sheet that can point users to crisis and support services. This page will direct to resources appropriate for all young people, including those who identify as LGBTQIA+, as well as culturally specific and other generalist support services. This document will be developed in youth-friendly language and could be easily adopted and utilised by both Government and non-government sector agencies. This resource will be distributed across ACYP’s networks, including to government agencies and government and non-government schools. ■

⁵ NSW Health (2022) LGBTIQ+ Health accessed via <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/lgbtiq-health/Pages/default.aspx>. By way of comparison, see detail provided for instance on [Men’s Health](#), [Child and Family Health](#), or [Sexual Health](#).