

Challenge Homo phobia & Trans phobia: A Campus Guide

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Introduction

A message from the Queer & Trans Constituency Group

Dear activist,

Welcome to the campus guide to challenging homophobia and transphobia. The idea for this guide came from activists who identified the need for additional tools to take action against homophobia and transphobia on campuses.

Queer and trans-identified students who are part of the Queer and Trans Students Constituency Group have worked together to develop this guide. The constituency is one of many that meets at general meetings of the Canadian Federation of Students-Ontario. We exist to share issues facing queer and trans students on college and university campuses, develop and implement campaigns and to be a voice for queer and trans students from across the province.

In order to challenge homophobia and transphobia on our campuses, we partner with the Lesbian Gay Bi Trans Youth Line on many initiatives, including the development of this guide. The Youth Line is a toll-free service provided by youth for youth that offers support, information and referrals and works with other organizations to challenge oppression.

Together, we created this guide to build our collective capacity to fight for a more equitable society and challenge all forms of discrimination and oppression. In addition to the guide, we have created outreach materials, including buttons, posters and leaflets to help activists like you organize on campus.

Throughout this guide, the terms queer and trans will be used to describe and encompass a wide diversity of sexual orientations and gender expressions. Identifications and expressions differ across geography, community, personal experience and other factors. There is no term or phrase that adequately represents this diversity, but queer and trans are used as a concise way to reference a myriad of identifications and expressions.

Queer and trans students continue to face discrimination and oppression on and off campus. Too often we have seen this manifest in the form of violence, physical and otherwise. However they may manifest, homophobia and transphobia create unsafe campus and community spaces for students, faculty and staff.

Discrimination and oppression against queer and trans people are a barrier to education. When students, faculty and staff work or study in unsafe spaces, their access to, or ability to provide, quality education is compromised. Bullying, discriminatory language and assumptions, lack of queer and trans spaces

on campus, physical violence and other forms of assault make our campuses unsafe for everyone. Students across Canada must unite to fight all barriers to post-secondary education, to call for increased accessibility and to proclaim that education is a right.

Whether or not we identify as queer or trans, challenging discrimination is up to all of us. Fighting for equity begins with reflecting on and challenging our own assumptions and biases, and actively working to challenge the manifestations of oppression around us. Regardless of our identities, we must recognize that homophobia, transphobia, heterosexism and cissexism affect all of us. Perpetuating ideas about which sexual identities and gender expressions are normal and valuable and which are not adds to an environment that is oppressive and unsafe for queer and trans students. Uniting for equity means rejecting homophobia and transphobia and challenging the way it is expressed by individuals, institutions and society at large.

Whether you consider yourself a seasoned campus organizer or are new at equity activism, working with a pride centre, coalition or by yourself, we hope that this guide gives you the tools you need to begin work or add to work already being done on your campus to work towards equity for all.

In solidarity,

Queer and Trans Students Constituency Group

Canadian Federation of Students-Ontario

May 17, 2012, International Day Against Homophobia & Transphobia



Ontario Human Rights Code

Protections for queer & trans people

OVERVIEW OF THE ONTARIO HUMAN RIGHTS CODE

The Ontario Human Rights Code provides a legal framework for understanding the discrimination and oppression faced by queer and trans people. The Code is a law that provides for equal rights and opportunities and recognizes the dignity and worth of every person in Ontario. It protects individuals from discrimination based on race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, age, marital status (including same sex partners), family status, receipt of public assistance and record of offences. The following information is taken from the Ontario Human Rights Commission website: www.ohrc.on.ca.

PROTECTIONS UNDER THE CODE

Gender Identity

People who are discriminated against or harassed because of gender identity or gender expression are legally protected under the Code. This includes transsexual, transgender and intersex persons and other people whose gender identity or expression is, or is seen to be, different from their birth-identified sex.

The Code defines gender identity as a person's sense of being male or female, both or neither. Gender identity is clearly distinct from sexual orientation in the Code and therefore separately, but equally protected.

Sexual Orientation

The Code provides for equal rights and opportunities and recognizes the dignity and worth of every person in Ontario.

Under the Code, a person cannot be treated unequally or harassed because they are gay, lesbian or bisexual. It is also illegal to discriminate because someone is in a same-sex relationship. Homophobic conduct and comments are prohibited as part of the Code's protection against discrimination based on sexual orientation, no matter what the target's sexual orientation is, or is perceived to be.

Harassment

Under the Code, harassment is defined as demeaning or hurtful comments or actions that are known or should be known to be unwelcome. Inappropriate behaviour does not always have to happen repeatedly to be against the law. In many cases a single incident can be a violation of the Code.

Discrimination

Discrimination happens when a person is treated unequally or differently based on a ground protected by the Code and it results in a disadvantage to that person. It is against the law to discriminate based on race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, age, marital status (including same sex partners), family status, receipt of public assistance and record of offences.

Discrimination can result from a person's actions or from an organization's rules and policies. It can be obvious or subtle. Discrimination can happen on a bigger, systemic level, such as when a rule or policy may appear to be neutral but has disproportionately negative effects on a group. For example, individuals should be recognized as the gender they express, and be given access to washrooms and change facilities on this basis, unless they specifically ask for other accommodation (such as for safety or privacy reasons).

THE DUTY TO ACCOMMODATE

Organizations in Ontario, including post-secondary institutions, are responsible for implementing policies and practices that uphold the Code. Under the Code, employers, unions, landlords and service providers have a legal duty to accommodate people. The goal of accommodation is to allow people to equally benefit from and take part in services, education, housing or within the workplace.

Post-secondary institutions, employers, housing providers, service providers and others must make sure that their environments and services are free from discrimination and harassment. They must take action if they know or should have known about harassing behaviour based on a ground as recognized by the Code. This includes prohibiting the use of discriminatory language, even if nobody complains about it. Organizations must address harassment complaints.

MORE INFORMATION

The Ontario Human Rights Commission's *Policy on Discrimination and Harassment Because of Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation* and other publications are available at www.ohrc.on.ca.

To make a human rights complaint (called an application) contact the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario at:
Toll Free: 1-866-598-0322
TTY Toll Free: 1-866-607-1240
Website: www.hrtto.ca

To talk about your rights, contact the Human Rights Legal Support Centre at:
Toll Free: 1-866-625-5179
TTY Toll Free: 1-866-612-8627
Website: www.hrlsc.on.ca

Terms & Concepts

Some key anti-oppression terms for queer & trans activists

DEFINING TERMS

When organizing to promote equity, it is important to consider the language we use. Language can be a powerful tool to explain complex concepts and articulate identities and emotions, but it can also serve as a barrier to participation and engagement. Familiarize yourself with the following terms if you are undertaking work on queer and trans issues. This is not a comprehensive list. It attempts to provide a picture both of the diversity of queer and trans communities and the varying ways in which discrimination and oppression against these communities can be characterized.

Many of these terms are in flux and are constantly being redefined by queer and trans communities. Culture, economic background, region, race, and age all can influence language and an identity may be empowering for some but not for others. Meanings vary for different people and are subject to personal interpretation, cultural space or community experiences. These terms are a starting point for understanding this diversity but should not be considered discrete or final.

GENERAL TERMS

Sex & Gender

Sex refers to the classification of people as 'male,' 'female' or 'intersex' based on bodily characteristics. Gender refers to the socially constructed characteristics of femininity and masculinity associated with being a 'woman' or 'man.' Gender characteristics can change over time and are different between cultures.

Sex & Gender Binary

This refers to the notion that there are only two possible sexes and genders, that they are opposites and discrete categories.

Gender Identity

A person's internal self-concept with regard to gender categories like 'man' and 'woman'. This is distinct from physical attributes and sexual orientation.

Language can be a powerful tool, but it can also be a barrier to participation and engagement.

Gender Expression

The external manifestation of one's gender identity often through clothing, hair style, voice or other characteristics.

Sexual Orientation

An individual's enduring physical, romantic and/or emotional attractions. This is distinct from gender identity.

SEXUAL ORIENTATIONS & GENDER IDENTITIES

Agender

Refers to someone who does not identify with either male or female genders. Also referred to as gender neutral, an agender person can be any physical sex, and some may seek to look androgynous.¹

Cisgender

Sometimes just referred to as cis, this term describes a person whose gender assigned at birth matches their body and personal identity, conforming with societal expectations and norms regarding gender.² For example, a cis man would refer to a biologically-assigned male who has a masculine gender identity. It is often used to describe people who are not transgendered and may be used interchangeably with "gender normative" or cissexual.

Genderqueer

An umbrella term that refers to gender identities of people who may not fit into the spectrum of trans but who identify as being outside of the socially constructed gender binary and culturally prescribed gender roles.³ The reasons for identifying as genderqueer vary and may include those who consider themselves both man and woman, neither, moving between genders, third gender or other-gendered and those who may also identify as trans.

Intersex

People who have ambiguous biological sex characteristics, including genetic, hormonal or anatomical variations.⁴ Intersex people are often assigned a normative sex shortly after birth and can undergo surgery to produce an unambiguously male or female body, which may or may not match their emergent gender identity throughout life. It is estimated that one per cent of live births exhibit some degree of sexual ambiguity.⁵

Meanings vary for different people based on personal interpretation, cultural space or community experiences.

LGBT

LGBT is an acronym that collectively refers to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans people. There are multiple variations including the use of Q for queer or questioning, I for Intersex, 2S or T for two-spirit, A for asexual, and many others. The acronym emphasizes the diversity of sexualities and identifications.

Pansexuality

Refers to the potential for attraction towards people of any gender identity or sex, or sexuality. Pansexuality is different from bisexuality, which refers to the potential for attraction to people who identify as men or women. The concept of pansexuality deliberately rejects the idea that there is a gender binary; the notion that there are only two discrete genders, gender identities or sexual orientations; and refers to the potential for attraction to any gender expression or sexuality.⁶

Queer

Encompasses a broad range of possible sexual orientations and expressions and may include, but is not limited to, lesbian, bisexual, gay, pansexual, two-spirited and/or those who are questioning their sexuality. It is often used interchangeably with LGBT or variations of this. The term was once derogatory but in recent decades has been reclaimed by activists as a way to encompass the fluidity and diversity of identifications of sexual orientation. It is also used because it subverts the idea that there is a norm or normal sexuality. The term is often used in conjunction with trans and two-spirited because it does not adequately address the unique issues affecting trans and two-spirited people.

Trans

A general term often used interchangeably with transgendered that refers to a person whose gender identity or expression does not match the sex they were assigned at birth.⁷ This includes but is not limited to: transgender, genderqueer, agender, bigender and transsexual. Trans people may or may not decide to hormonally or surgically alter their bodies. Transsexual is an older term originating in the medical communities and while some people identify with this term, many prefer the term transgender.⁸ Trans identity is distinct from and does not indicate or assume any particular sexual orientation.

Two-Spirit

A general term for Indigenous North Americans who identify with one of many mixed gender roles found traditionally among many Indigenous communities in what is now referred to as Canada and the United States. The term usually indicates a person who simultaneously manifests both a masculine and a feminine spirit. Two-spirited people were historically considered a third gender and were honoured and revered in most cultures.⁹

These terms are a starting point for understanding this diversity but should not be considered discrete or final.

1 Asexual Visibility and Education Network
2 Schilt, K., & Westbrook, L. (2009). Doing gender, doing heteronormativity: 'Gender normals,' transgender people, and the social maintenance of heterosexuality. *Gender & Society* 23 (4), 440-464.
3 Usher, R. (2006). *North American lexicon of transgender terms*. San Francisco: GLB Publishers.
4 Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (2010). *Media Reference Guide, 8th Edition*. Retrieved from <http://www.glaad.org/reference>; Intersex Society of North America
5 Blackless, M., Charuvastra, A., Derryc, A., Fausto-Sterling, A., Lauzanne, K., and Lee, E. (2000). How sexually dimorphic are we? Review and synthesis. *American Journal of Human Biology*, 12, 151-166.

6 Rice, K. (2009). Pansexuality. In Marshall Cavendish Digital. *Sex and Society*, 2 p. 593.
7 Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (2010). *Media Reference Guide, 8th Edition*. Retrieved from <http://www.glaad.org/reference>
8 Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (2010). *Media Reference Guide, 8th Edition*. Retrieved from <http://www.glaad.org/reference>; Intersex Society of North America
9 2-Spirited People of the 1st Nations. www.2spirits.com

FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST QUEER & TRANS PEOPLE

Cissexism

The belief, attitude and bias that being trans is inferior to being cisgender or non-trans.¹⁰ This belief holds that cisgender is the norm and only valid form of gender identity. This term is related to the term “gender normative” and both refer to reinforcing conventional gender norms and delegitimizing identities that do not conform to those norms. An example of cissexism is being forced to select either “male” or “female” on a form.

Gender Normative

This refers to the matching of conventional binary gender roles (woman, man) to biologically and culturally-assigned sex (female, male). It can be used to refer to people whose gender identity matches their sex and to refer to attitudes, ideas, practices or institutions that reinforce binary gender norms.

Heteronormativity

Refers to a set of social norms that reinforce distinct, binary gender roles and the notion that heterosexuality is the only normal and valid form of sexual orientation. This term includes the concept that this bias is pervasive and systemic and that any identity or orientation that does not conform to it is devalued.¹¹ An example of heteronormativity is the often exclusive depiction of opposite-sex cisgender couples in advertising.

Heterosexism

The belief, attitude and bias that heterosexuality is the norm and the only valid form of sexual orientation. It can manifest as prejudice against non-heterosexual identities or behaviours and the assumption that everyone is heterosexual. Heterosexism can be explicit, such as the restriction of blood donations from men who have had sex with men, or implicit through erasure and underrepresentation such as the absence of diverse sexual orientations in school curricula.

Homophobia, Transphobia & Biphobia

These terms refer to a range of negative attitudes, feelings and actions towards queer and trans people or those who are perceived as being queer or trans. This can manifest as antipathy, contempt, prejudice, aversion, and irrational fear.¹² It can lead to discrimination, hostility and violence. It can also be internalized by people who experience same-sex attraction or who are unsure of their gender identity, regardless of how they identify.

Stereotyping

Stereotyping can be described as a process by which people use social categories such as sexual orientation, sex, gender, race, ethnic origin, ability, age, religion, or other factors in acquiring, processing and recalling information about others. Stereotyping typically involves attributing the same characteristics to all members of a social group, regardless of their individual differences. Is it often based on misconceptions, incomplete information and/or false generalizations.

¹⁰ Serano, J. (2007). *Whipping Girl: A Transsexual Woman on Sexism and the Scapegoating of Femininity*. Emeryville: Seal Press.
¹¹ Warner, M. (1991). Introduction: fear of a queer planet. *Social Text* 9 (4 [29]), 3-17.
¹² Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (2010). *Media Reference Guide, 8th Edition*. Retrieved from <http://www.glaad.org/reference>; Intersex Society of North America

Campaigns Organizing

The basics of successful campus campaigns

RUNNING AN EQUITY CAMPAIGN

Campaigns typically tend to be organized around concrete internal or external policies or practices that activists seek to change. Organizing to promote equity and challenge oppression can be more subtle, but is no less important. Although you may identify a concrete goal such as the creation of gender-neutral washrooms in campus buildings, an important part of promoting equity is to help change community culture. Fostering dialogue and reflection about homophobia and transphobia and shifting heterosexist and cissexist social dynamics are more intangible goals, but are vital. Organizing campaigns can also provide support for students facing oppression and to link them with others who may also be going through similar experiences.

**Decide
on the goals
and strategies
of the campaign
before you plan
activities.**

1. Develop a Campaign Plan

Decide on the goals and strategies of the campaign before you plan activities. What results do you want to achieve? Do you simply want your audience to become aware of the issue? Do you want people who hear or read the message to take an action such as writing a letter to their MPP, making a phone call or attending a meeting?

Too often organizers get caught up thinking in terms of tactics, rather than strategy. Tactics (a rally, a petition, a sit-in, etc.) are the tools that are determined by your overall strategy for influencing your target.

In order to develop a good campaign plan, you need to answer these questions:

- What are your specific short- and long-term goals?
- What resources are currently available for accomplishing them?
- Who are the primary and secondary targets of your campaign? (Which people or institutions have the power to give you the results you want?)
- What means do you have for influencing your targets?
- Who will help and who will hinder your efforts?
- What actions or steps can be taken to achieve the results?

This process should move from general to specific, from the big picture to the small, from the long-term to the short-term, from the “what” to the “how.” In order

to move through this process it is important to:

- Set a collective goal;
- Develop strategies to achieve this goal; and
- Select tactics that advance your strategy.

Goals/Ends

Develop a long-term vision of what you want to achieve, as well as short-term objectives that are quantifiable. Brainstorm objectives that will lead to your goal, and then decide on which to pursue.

Strategies/Mean to an End

Once your group agrees on a goal or set of goals, ask yourselves how you might accomplish those goals. In your planning, try to look beyond the obvious and be sure to keep your action plan flexible so you can respond to the unexpected.

Tactics

Developing good tactics mean doing what you can with what you have. Tactics are nothing more than creative and effective ways to fulfil your strategy. Tactics are the conscious and deliberate acts by which we try to change the world around us. Tactics can (and should) vary widely, depending on the strategy. They can be educational, motivational, confrontational, and so on. Good tactics also help to build new leadership.

2. Build a Coalition

Whether you call it an equity committee or coalition, a permanent and active group is the most essential tool in organizing. The committee can be put together from a group of volunteers, students' union representatives, staff and community activists. Involve your friends, put an announcement in the campus paper, contact campus clubs and course unions, put up notices on bulletin boards, set up information tables in high traffic zones on campus, and use volunteer sign-up sheets to keep track of those who say they would like to be involved.

Once your coalition is established, consider who is not present. Are you always holding meetings during the same set of classes? Are there groups of people who are not involved but should be? Discuss in your group how to ensure your organizing is as inclusive and broad-based as possible.

Generating Ideas

Generating ideas is key to any campaign. It is a way to develop strategies that organizers may not have thought of and to ensure participants feel ownership over the campaign. Have idea generating sessions both individually and collectively.

A time limit should be agreed upon in advance. Creativity must be welcomed and encouraged. It is easier to tame an idea into a workable format than to think of new ones. Someone should be assigned to take down the ideas. When the session is over, the list of ideas should be copied and distributed for analysis. Selection of the best ideas can happen later.

An important part of promoting equity is to help change community culture.

Tips for effective idea generation sessions:

- Everyone should suspend judgment of ideas until evaluation time. Never dismiss anyone's idea, no matter how unconventional it may seem.
- Build on other ideas to contribute to a sense of unity and build energy.
- Give everyone a chance to participate in the way they feel comfortable.
- Have a "no idea too silly" part to encourage interesting ideas that can lead to more concrete ones.
- Make sure you have people taking notes in small and large format. This allows people to visualize ideas and work off of them.
- Set a strict time limit to maintain focus and narrow the scope as time goes on.
- Go with the flow: don't derail the conversation because a popular idea isn't the one you wanted, let the group decide.
- If you're facilitating, bring the conversation back from drifting away. Gently remind people you only have so much time and need to hammer out a concrete plan of action.
- When a decision is made, divide up tasks amongst those present and set time lines for things to get done.
- Finally, thank everyone for their time and input – people like to feel valued!

Assessing your Resources

Explore all possible sources of in-kind donations for your project. For example, can a coalition partner donate free photocopying of your materials? If you aren't a funded student group, can you apply for a public grant to fund your work? Can the faculty association sponsor an advertisement in the campus paper? Be creative and remember that it never hurts to ask for help.

Sharing The Work

Organizing and delegating tasks must be decided by the coalition. Once people have taken on tasks, they should be responsible for reporting back to the coalition. Make sure that assignments are delegated to individuals who are keen to take responsibility for them. By scheduling deadlines for tasks, you will create a sense of expectation for the time required to complete them.

It is important to share as much of the work as possible. If only a few people are doing most of the tasks, there can be a sense within the coalition that others are not required. Remember, everyone will be more dedicated if they have a sense of ownership over the campaign.

3. Logistics

It is never too early to ensure that relevant facilities and resources will be available. Ensure that regular meeting rooms are booked so that organizing coalition meetings can be well publicized. Make sure that bookings for events are arranged well in advance. Sound and video equipment might be needed, as well as a coalition volunteer who is able to operate it. Ensure that facilities are accessible, and note that on any promotional materials you distribute. Ensure you advertise in advance that accommodations can be arranged.

As campaigns unfold, make sure you continuously share successes and challenges.

4. Outreach

Your energy and enthusiasm for the project will motivate others to participate. Promote the positive! Instead of just stating what you need from volunteers, show potential volunteers what they will gain from being involved with your campaign. Volunteers need to feel wanted and valued. If you recruit people who are eager to help on the campaign, but do not make them feel valued or needed, you will lose them.

Clearly describe the activities that volunteers will be involved with in the campaign, as well as the overall goals and objectives. Be honest about the time commitment involved and other challenges that student volunteers might encounter. Realize that volunteers are students who may be working, caring for a family, or dealing with other issues.

Diversify your efforts. Reach out and involve students from different constituencies and backgrounds. When planning a campaign or event, make sure that it does not exclude certain groups or individuals from getting involved. One of the most effective forms of outreach involves talking to students one-on-one. Set up an info table in a busy area on campus and, standing in front of the table rather than sitting behind it, engage students by being friendly and approachable.

Seek out partners like clubs, course unions, faculty councils, and community organizations to help organize and promote the campaign. By coalition-building, a campaign can reach a wider audience. Remember that other groups are more likely to promote a campaign that they have played a role in organizing.

5. Publicity

Effective publicity is essential to the success of any event or campaign. The power of student groups relies on the number of people engaged in an issue so getting the word out is one of the most important things you will do. This requires a well-thought-out strategy. Use the following principles: visibility, simplicity, clear language, positivity, creativity, repetition, reputation and focus.

There may be local media, like magazines or weekly television shows, that plan content ahead of time and require advance notice. If you want media coverage, prepare media releases and updates regularly. Consider using public service announcements on your campus radio stations.

Don't forget how important letters to the student newspaper are. Even if coverage is sparse, letters can ensure a weekly presence and visibility. You can highlight your events by organizing regular submissions to your campus paper.

6. Evaluation

Keeping track of ongoing work is critical. As campaigns unfold, make sure you continuously share successes and challenges. Hold a post-event meeting for organizers and participants to debrief and learn from any mistakes. Treat this as an opportunity to celebrate your hard work and to delegate post-event tasks. Evaluate your work by reviewing media coverage, participation, speakers, facilitation, planning, and outreach. This will build the cohesiveness of your group and allow you to improve your campaign over time.

Fighting for Equity Backgrounder for activists

UNDERSTANDING OPPRESSION & DISCRIMINATION

In order to challenge discrimination and oppression against queer and trans people, it is necessary to understand how discriminatory attitudes, practices and outcomes can be reproduced throughout our society, from individuals to institutions. This section will outline several concepts that are essential to understanding how oppression works and is perpetuated.

Discrimination and oppression manifest in two main ways, overtly and covertly.

Overt & Covert Discrimination

Discrimination and oppression manifest in two main ways, overtly or covertly. Overt forms of transphobia and homophobia tend to be public, obvious and often individual acts. These may include calling someone a blatantly derogatory term, obvious threats and ultimately violence because of one's perceived or actual sexuality or gender identity.

Covert forms of discrimination are subtler, disguised, can be subconscious and are sometimes hidden. Covert discrimination can be both intentional and unintentional. This form of discrimination is often more than a one-time occurrence and become the daily experience of some students. Broad generalizations about groups of people fit within this category and fuel biases that perpetuate discriminatory attitudes and practices. Covert forms of homophobia and transphobia are continually embedded in our daily interactions on our campuses and can be reinforced through silence or lack of response to discriminatory language or behaviour that challenges it.

Trans students disproportionately experience covert forms of discrimination. There is a large disparity between resources for trans students and those for cisgendered queer-identified students. Gender identities are often assumed, and there is a lack of acknowledgement of identities that do not fit into the conventional gender binary. Trans students are often excluded from programming, advocacy, literature, and representation. Gender-specific washrooms and change rooms that exclude identities that do not conform to the gender binary, use of the wrong pronouns and binary categories of "sex" or "gender" on application forms are all ways in which transphobia and cissexism manifests on campuses.

Power & Privilege

Homophobia and transphobia, as well as any other forms of oppression and discrimination, are rooted in power and privilege. Privilege is a complex concept that manifests as systemic advantages and identity traits that are celebrated, preserved, given advantages and normalized by society. Power is the exercise of that privilege. It is the set of invisible tools that allow some people to inhabit a dominant position over others. Being non-racialized, able-bodied, male, cisgender, or wealthy are forms of privilege.

Homophobia and transphobia, as well as any other forms of oppression and discrimination, are rooted in power and privilege.

People who identify with the dominant or normalized group are often unaware that these characteristics should be understood as privileges. Privilege allows certain groups of people to have better access to social mobility and the ability to better navigate certain spaces. The consequences of privilege has led to a system where men earn more than women, non-racialized people are overrepresented in media and government and where privileged groups more easily pay the high cost of tuition fees.

Understanding how discrimination and oppression manifest requires an acknowledgement that everyone has some form of privilege. By doing this, we make space for those who experience forms of oppression that we don't, and we begin the process of listening to those experiences. Acknowledging our privilege and working to dismantle the barriers and the invisible lines between us is essential when challenging the covert ways oppression operates. For people who do not identify as queer or trans, choosing to be a queer and trans ally means acknowledging one's sexual and gender privilege, working to dismantle homophobia and transphobia and recognizing that oppression affects everyone by stigmatizing certain identities.

Systemic & Institutional Oppression

Discrimination at the systemic or institutional level refers to the presence of homophobia, transphobia or other forms of oppression in an organization's or government's policies, practices, procedures and "normal ways of doing things." These policies and practices may directly or indirectly, consciously or unwittingly, promote, sustain, or entrench disproportionate advantages for some people and disadvantages for others. For example, laws regarding marriage exclude same-sex couples in many jurisdictions around the world.



INCLUSIVE ORGANIZING

Challenging discrimination starts with all of us and a willingness to reflect on our own assumptions, ideas and biases. Inclusive organizing requires that a diversity of queer and trans communities and individuals are participating in this work. Being inclusive means reflecting on ourselves, our privilege, the work we do, considering who is left out, being open to feedback and making changes. Here are some general concepts to keep in mind.

Multiple & Intersecting Oppressions

For many students, oppression intersects based on multiple identities. Queer and trans students who are racialized, Aboriginal, women, low-income, disabled, immigrant, religious, spiritual and/or other factors have multiple identities and face different forms of oppression. Transphobia and homophobia can be compounded by racism, ableism, classism, sexism, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, colonialism, xenophobia and other oppressions. These can manifest themselves anywhere on campus, including our own campus pride centres and spaces.

Queer and trans students may experience more than one form of oppression or discrimination based on other perceived differences. In addition to sexual orientation and gender identity, discrimination and oppression occur based on, but not limited to, the following: sex, race, social or economic class, disability, age, country of origin, ethnicity, language, culture and religion. Oppressions are not divisible from one another or simply layered upon each other. The experience of more than one form of oppression is referred to "intersecting" or "interlocking."

Oppression within Queer & Trans Communities

Homophobia and transphobia also manifest within inclusive spaces such as pride centres, queer and trans events, programming and groups. Oppression present in society can be reproduced in these spaces and privilege certain kinds of identities over others. This is not limited to queer and trans communities. Other social movements have reproduced privilege such as the women's movement in North America which has tended to privilege the perspectives of white middle-class women.

It is important to reflect on who is excluded in our work and on campus; oppression can be reproduced in any space.

Some forms of gender identity and sexual orientation frequently face discrimination within queer- and trans-identified spaces, including effeminate gay men, butch women, gender-variant people, transgender and transsexual people. Conversely femme-identified queer women and 'straight-acting' gay men can also be targets of discrimination within our communities. Assumptions of gender, lack of acknowledgement of bisexual, pansexual, or asexual identities, and a negation of multiple identities are forms of exclusion and discrimination.

It is important to reflect on who is excluded in our work and on campus. Oppression can be reproduced in any space. As work is undertaken to challenge homophobia and transphobia, recognize that these forms of oppression are linked to other forms and ensure that events reflect the diversity of experiences and are welcoming to all.

Gender Identity & Sexual Orientation

It is important not to make assumptions about the identities of others and to ensure that you allow people to express their identities however they choose. Queer folks do not necessarily identify as trans and can be cisgender. Trans folks do not necessarily identify as queer and can be heterosexual. It is important to represent the difference between sexual orientation and gender identity in your campaigns and events organizing. Be careful about how issues are framed and ensure that gender identity is not just an add-on to discussions about sexual orientation.

Identity & Oppression

You do not have to identify as queer or trans to experience heterosexism or cissexism. Transphobia and homophobia affect us all. Hatred, fear and ignorance of queer and trans people result in the social and systemic policing of sexuality and gender identity. For example, a cisgender heterosexual woman can face cissexism from friends if she fails to dress femininely. Queer and trans people face far more intensified forms of heterosexism and cissexism. Together, we should determine how best to work together to unlearn problematic assumptions and biases in order to challenge all forms of oppression.



Quick Facts

Indicators of oppression and inequity

USING COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH

Research can provide indicators of the oppression and discrimination faced by queer and trans people. This helps to demonstrate the concrete effects of systemic inequity, providing a rallying point for activists and compelling more people to work for change. There are many more intangible effects of oppression that are harder to measure and the following data only scratches the surface.

Homophobia & Transphobic Comments

- 70% of all students who participated in EGALE Canada's National Education Survey reported hearing expressions such as "that's so gay" every day in school and almost half (48%) reported hearing remarks such as "faggot," "lezbo," and "dyke" every day in school.¹³

Verbal Harassment

- 74% of trans students, 55% of queer students and 26% of students who do not identify as queer or trans have been verbally harassed about their gender expression.¹⁴
- 68% of trans students, 55% of female queer students, and 42% of male queer students reported being verbally harassed about their perceived gender or sexual orientation. Trans youth report high levels of harassment on the basis of perceived sexual orientation because often trans individuals are perceived as lesbian, gay, or bisexual when they are not.¹⁵

Physical Harassment

- More than one in five (21%) queer and trans students reported being physically harassed or assaulted due to their sexual orientation.¹⁶
- 37% of trans students, 21% of sexual minority students, and 10% of students who do not identify as queer or trans reported being physically harassed or assaulted because of their gender expression.¹⁷
- 20% of queer and trans students and almost 10% of students who do not identify as queer or trans reported being physically harassed or assaulted

13

Taylor, C. & Peter, T., with McMin, T.L., Elliott, T., Beldorn, S., Ferry, A., Gross, Z., Paquin, S., & Schachter, K. (2011). *Every class in every school: The first national climate survey on homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia in Canadian schools*. Final report. Toronto, ON: Egale Canada Human Rights Trust.

14

Ibid.

15

Ibid.

16

Ibid.

17

Ibid.

about their perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.¹⁸

- Hate crimes motivated by sexual orientation doubled in 2008, and increased by another 18% in 2009.¹⁹
- In 2009, 74% of hate crimes motivated by sexual orientation were violent crimes. 63% of hate crimes motivated by sexual orientation resulted in physical injury to the victim—far more than any other identifiable group.²⁰

There are many intangible effects of oppression that are harder to measure.

Sexual Harassment

- The following groups of students reported having experienced sexual harassment in school in the last year: 49% of trans students; 43% of female and 42% of male bisexual students; 40% of gay male students; and 33% of lesbian students.²¹

Unsafe Spaces

- Almost two thirds (64%) of queer and trans students reported that they feel unsafe at school.²²
- 49% of queer and trans youth identified gender segregated change rooms as being unsafe and 43% identified their school washrooms as being unsafe.
- 31% of queer and trans students reported personal harassment on the internet or via text messaging, compared to 8% of students who do not identify as queer or trans.²³
- 57% of trans people face a lack of acceptance from co-workers.²⁴
- 57% of two-spirited people report feeling unsafe revealing their sexual orientation in the broader queer community. 55% reported feeling unsafe revealing their sexual orientation in their Aboriginal community.²⁵

Health & Employment

- Queer people report higher levels of mood and anxiety disorders compared with heterosexual people.²⁶
- 77% of trans people in Ontario have considered suicide in their lifetime.²⁷
- 47% of trans youth aged 16-24 seriously considered suicide in the past year.²⁸
- Only 37% of trans people have full-time employment.²⁹
- 50% of trans people earn less than \$15,000 per year, and another 21% earn less than \$29,000.

18 Ibid.
19 Statistics Canada (2009). *Police Reported Hate Crime in Canada, 2009*. Retrieved from: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2011001/article/11469-eng.htm#a1>
20 Ibid.
21 Taylor, C. & Peter, T., with McMin, T.L., Elliott, T., Beldorn, S., Ferry, A., Gross, Z., Paquin, S., & Schachter, K. (2011). *Every class in every school: The first national climate survey on homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia in Canadian schools*. Final report. Toronto, ON: Egale Canada Human Rights Trust
22 Ibid.
23 Ibid.
24 Ibid.
25 Barlow, K., Ristock, J., & Zoccolle, A. (2005). *Addressing homophobia in relation to HIV/AIDS in Aboriginal communities: Final report of the environmental scan 2004-2005*. Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network. Retrieved from: http://caan.ca/new/wp-content/uploads/2010/03/CAAN_homophobia_e_FINAL.pdf
26 Tjepkema, M. (2008). Health care use among gay, lesbian and bisexual Canadians. Statistics Canada. *Health Reports*, 19 (1). Retrieved from: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-003-x/2008001/article/10532-eng.htm>
27 Trans PULSE (2010). Ontario's trans communities and suicide: Transphobia is bad for our health. *Trans PULSE E-bulletin* 1 (2).
28 Ibid.
29 Trans PULSE (2011). We've got work to do: Workplace discrimination and employment for trans people in Ontario. *Trans PULSE E-bulletin* 2 (1).

Bullying, Harassment & Hate Crimes

What you need to know

WHAT TO DO WHEN FACING HATE

If someone you know is being bullied or harassed because they are (or are thought to be) lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, Two-spirit or queer, you need to let them know that **they are not alone**. Many people feel that homophobic bullying is “just kids being kids” or that it’s “harmless.” This type of harassment is anything but harmless, particularly for queer and trans youth, whose identity is attacked. Youth who experience bullying, harassment or hate are at risk of experiencing the following: depression (low mood, a sense of hopelessness); poor health (e.g., headaches, stomach aches); school absenteeism and academic problems; leaving home; contemplating, attempting, or committing suicide; social anxiety, loneliness, isolation; low self-esteem; aggressive behaviours; drug and alcohol abuse. If this is happening to someone you know, reach out for support and ideas. Be sure to listen and honour the comfort level of the person experiencing hate when acting as a support.

If someone you know if being bullied or harassed let them know that they are not alone and that help is available.

Reporting Hate

There is no one course of action that is right for everyone in every situation, when it comes to experiencing bullying, harassment and hate. It is sometimes best for those experiencing hate to try to talk about what's happening with a volunteer from an organization like Lesbian Gay Bi Trans Youth Line, or with someone in their school, family or community whom they trust.

If you believe that what's happening to someone is against the law, you can suggest reporting what is happening to police. There is an anonymous reporting tool found on the Youth Line website: www.youthline.ca/bullying_harassment.php. When the report button is clicked, the user will exit the Youth Line website and enter a secure site that will not track the computer's IP address. The report will be submitted to Crime Stoppers, and forwarded to your local police service in Ontario. It is important to take direction from and support the person experiencing discrimination or harassment so they feel agency in dealing with their situation and determine whatever is best for their circumstance.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS³⁰

When does bullying become a criminal matter?

Bullying becomes a criminal matter when it constitutes a criminal offence pursuant to the Criminal Code. Repetitive, aggressive behaviour that intends to emotionally or physically injure another person is bullying. Bullying may be physical, verbal or written. Some examples include physical abuse, coercion, and exclusion.

Since bullying may include various types of activities, there are a number of criminal offences in the Criminal Code that may be attributable to bullying. Not all forms of bullying which are considered criminal are those that cause physical harm to another person. Bullying activities which are considered to be crimes include: causing bodily harm with intent, criminal harassment, uttering threats, assault, assault with a weapon, assault causing bodily harm, sexual assault, forcible confinement and wilful promotion of hatred of an identifiable group.

What exactly makes something a hate crime? Why is it different from other crimes?

The key factor that differentiates hate crimes from other offences is the underlying motivation. Hate crimes are committed when a criminal act is motivated by bias, prejudice or hate of a particular race, nationality, ethnic origin, language, colour, religion, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, or other distinguishing factor. As such, individuals are often victims of hate crimes not because of anything they have said or done, but rather because of who they are.

Research suggests that hate crimes differ from non-hate crimes in a number of ways. Hate crimes tend to be more violent than non-hate crimes (assaults comprise almost 50 per cent of all hate crime, but constitute less than 20 per cent of non-hate crimes); The vast majority of known hate crime victims live in urban communities; and individuals committing hate crimes tend to be young males. Where there is evidence that a crime committed was motivated by hatred, the Criminal Code enables judges to increase the severity of the sentences levied for the underlying criminal offences.

The Criminal Code also includes specific provisions making it an offence: to (a) “advocate or promote genocide” (i.e. to promote the killing of members of group based on particular identifiable traits), and (b) to communicate (through audio or visual means, such as telephone) hatred in a public place so as to incite hatred of a particular identifiable group.

What if I’m being “hated” because I’m trans? Are my rights protected too?

Everyone living in Canada is entitled to protection and equal treatment under the law, regardless of race, colour, religion, sex, or sexual orientation. This is entrenched under s.15 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. This section guarantees equality before and under the law, as well as the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination. Everyone has the right to be free from hateful crimes and speech. Under s.7 of the Charter, we have the right to life, liberty, and security of the person. While the constitution does provide for freedom of expression, it does not sanction the expression of hateful speech.

If the victim of a crime is targeted because of who they are, the crime takes on the additional significance of being a “hate crime.” The hateful nature of a crime is assessed at sentencing. Under s.718.2 of the Criminal Code of Canada, the court is required to consider whether the offence was motivated by “bias, prejudice or hate based on race, national or ethnic origin, language, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation or any other similar factor.” A crime motivated by hate towards transgender people would fall under such a category. Accordingly, if one commits a crime against another because of their sex or sexual orientation, that individual can be prosecuted both for the crime committed and the aggravated circumstance of hateful motivation.

The Criminal Code also provides protection from hateful speech. S.319 of the Criminal Code is perhaps the most important section. It imposes criminal liability for those who publicly communicate statements that promote hatred against an identifiable group. If a person violates this law, they can potentially be found guilty of an indictable offence and liable to a term of imprisonment not exceeding two years.

If someone is bashing me and I fight back can I be charged?

Yes. If you respond with physical aggression then you can be charged with an assault. This is true even if the other person agrees or invites you to fight. If you respond verbally but issue threats to cause serious harm to that person or to that person’s property then you can be charged.

However, if your response to the bashing is strictly due to self-defence, Sections 34-37 of the Criminal Code do allow the use of “reasonable force,” generally defined as the minimal force required in order to deter the attack and to prevent it from reoccurring. These sections will likely not preclude you from being charged with assault, but can be raised as a defence to the charge.



What if the cops are homophobic or transphobic? How do I complain?

If the cops are homophobic or transphobic, you may file a complaint with your local Police Service by mail, email, fax, or in-person to any police station, the Complaints Administration section of the PRS-Risk Management Unit, the PRS-Investigative Unit or the Ontario Civilian Commission on Police Services. The complaint must be in writing and signed, filed within six months of the incident. There is a standard form available at any station and online: www.occps.ca

We are all entitled to protection and equal treatment under the law, regardless of our race, colour, religion, sex or sexual orientation.



Legal Resources

Where to look if you need legal advice or assistance

WHERE TO LOOK FOR LEGAL HELP

Legal Aid Ontario

Legal Aid Ontario (LAO) provides legal services to financially disadvantaged people, as long as the legal issue is one that LAO covers. LAO covers criminal charges that would likely result in jail time, as well as some family, immigration and refugee matters. Those on social assistance or with no income usually meet the financial qualifications and will likely be provided with free legal services. Those that have some income or assets may still be eligible for legal aid, but may have to pay for part of their services, depending on the situation. LAO runs a certificate program through its network of 51 offices across Ontario by issuing certificates to retain a private lawyer to represent low-income clients in proceedings before the criminal or family courts, certain administrative tribunals or immigration/refugee boards. LAO also provides duty counsel services for people who arrive in criminal, family or youth courts without a lawyer.

LAO can be contacted at **1-800-668-8258** to find lawyers that accept legal aid certificates. Detailed information regarding financial eligibility and the kinds of areas covered is available on the LAO website: **www.legalaid.on.ca**

Community Legal Clinics

There are numerous community legal clinics throughout the province. Those not eligible for a legal aid certificate can often receive legal help with issues such as tenant rights, workplace safety, employment rights and human rights. Many if not all communities in Ontario are served by Community Legal Clinics. There are also numerous satellite clinics with toll-free numbers. The LAO website provides a list of clinics based on geography (**www.legalaid.on.ca**).

Student Clinics

There are six student law clinics operating throughout the province, including four outside of Toronto, which provide legal services for summary offences and a variety of other areas, including family law, immigration law, tenant and housing. The contact information for these student law clinics is included below.

<i>Queen's University</i> Queen's Legal Aid Ontario Room 210 213 Macdonald Hall Kingston ON K7L 3N6 Telephone: 613-533-2102	<i>University of Ottawa</i> Community Legal Clinic 17 Copernicus Street Ottawa ON K1N 6N5 Telephone: 613-562-5600
<i>University of Toronto</i> Downtown Legal Services 655 Spadina Avenue Toronto ON M5S 2H9 Telephone: 416-934-4535	<i>Osgoode Hall Law School</i> Community Legal Aid Services Program (CLASP) 4700 Keele Street Toronto ON M3J 2R5 Telephone: 416-736-5029
<i>University of Western Ontario</i> Clinical Legal Education Program Room 120 London ON N6A 3K7 Telephone: 519-661-3352	<i>University of Windsor</i> Community Legal Aid Ontario 304 Sunset Avenue Windsor ON N9B 3A9 Telephone: 519-253-7150

Pro Bono Lawyers and Online Help

Pro Bono Law Ontario (PBLO) is a charitable organization that promotes opportunities for lawyers to provide free legal services to persons of limited financial means.

Telephone: **1-866-466-PBLO**

Website: **www.pblo.org**

Law Help Ontario provides pro bono legal services to people who cannot afford to hire a lawyer and are unrepresented in a legal matter. There are currently two self-help centres in Toronto, but future centres may be launched in other locations across Ontario. The website provides free online resources available to the public.

Website: **www.lawhelpontario.org**

Lawyer Referral Service

The Law Society of Upper Canada also operates a Lawyer Referral Service (LRS). The LRS charges \$6 to provide the name of a lawyer who will give a free 30 minute consultation over the phone or in person. The service can be accessed by calling: **1-900-565-4LRS (4577)**

Those who are incarcerated, institutionalized, under the age of 18, calling about a Child Protection issue, or are in crisis (domestic abuse) situations may call toll-free from anywhere in Ontario: **1-800-268-8326**.

For more information and frequently asked questions about the Lawyer Referral Service, consult the Law Society's website: **www.lsuc.on.ca**.

Planning Events

Tips for planning successful events

THE BASICS OF PLANNING EVENTS

A good way to increase awareness and to challenge homophobia and transphobia is to run events or initiatives as part of an awareness campaign or on its own. Successful events require a lot of time, work and dedication. But there are three things that every group initiative must do if it has any chance of hitting the ground running:

1. **Membership:** increasing membership is important for the efforts and continuity of your group. Reach out to people you know would like to be involved with your campaign, but place an emphasis on attracting people who may be sympathetic to your cause and haven't really been involved before.
2. **Unity:** organize a meeting to hash out the goals and ideas of your event so that everyone is on the same page. You may have a particular end you're hoping to achieve (ie. a school board anti-discrimination policy or a mandatory positive space workshop in your school) but try to allow members of the group to come up with how the campaign will unfold.
3. **Engagement:** you'll never get anywhere if you're preaching to the choir. Focus your efforts on reaching out to students who know little to nothing about your issue to get them on your side. There's strength in numbers!

Getting Started

You'll want to plan out your event in advance. Maybe you have an idea in mind, maybe you're not sure what you want to do at all. Either way, it's probably good to organize a planning meeting with volunteers and other interested parties.

Think about what you want to get out of your meeting. Is the purpose of this particular meeting educational or is it a "working" meeting where people will be doing various tasks for the event? Once you figure this out set a time date and location. Before planning your event, make sure you have the following items handy:

- Sign-up sheet to keep people in the loop.
- Flip chart or blackboard to write things down during an idea generating session.
- A notepad to write down people's ideas and take minutes.

You will want to make sure everyone has some responsibility. Whether it's taking minutes, facilitating conversation or creating a task list, volunteering is an important way to encourage people to stay involved.

Select a Focus

The hardest part about planning an event is picking what your event will be and who will be presenting, if anyone. Work with your group to select a focus for your event that ties into the broader campaign. For tips on how to have an effective idea generating session, see the Campaign Organizing section of this guide.

Create a “no idea too silly” part of your brainstorming to encourage new and interesting ideas that can lead to more concrete ones.

There are many local and regional resources that would be happy to visit your school at little to no cost to speak about various issues. In this guide, you will find a list of local and regional resources that you can contact to come speak or even to find other groups or individuals who may be willing to visit your school. Contact speakers or resource people that you might want to appear at an event well in advance. Reconfirm with them as you get closer to the date of the event. Check to see that your event does not conflict with other events on campus or in the local community.

Inclusive Planning

Removing barriers and ensuring spaces are accessible is an important part of any planning process. If accessibility is not considered as we plan events and campaigns, we can unintentionally exclude students who may wish to participate but cannot due to physical or other barriers. Some important points on accessibility:

1. Ensure the space you choose is physically accessible to people with all types of mobility. If there are stairs leading to the event, ensure there is a ramp. Check to ensure washrooms are accessible.
2. When advertising an event, note that it is accessible and provide contact info for people who require additional accommodations.
3. Promote your event as early as possible to provide as much time as possible in case an attendant or American Sign Language interpreter needs to be booked.
4. Do not advertise an accessibility service until it is confirmed.
5. Delegate one person to be the contact for accessibility requests and to be responsible for ensuring they are followed up on.
6. Don't make assumptions about what accommodation a student needs. Ask and listen.
7. Some accommodations can be expensive. If your group lacks funding for this, contact your campus access centre or accessibility office before hosting an event to investigate if there is funding available.

The Big Day

Finally your event has arrived! Before you get started make sure you have the following items:

- Sign-in sheet with spaces for contact information so you can identify allies or new members.
- Try and get some freebies to give away, such as buttons or stickers so that students can show their support on their backpacks or books. You can get lots of these materials from various local and regional organizations who would be more than happy to share them with you.
- Big posters outlining your group's Equity Statement to remind participants that they are entering a safe space and that discriminatory or hateful actions and language is not welcome.

Make sure you assign roles to event organizers. Make sure you have someone to facilitate discussion, someone to welcome people and staff the sign-up table, and someone to take notes on a flip chart/blackboard if necessary. It doesn't have to be the same person every time, rotating responsibilities is a good way to keep everyone engaged and active.

Depending on the size of your event, you may decide to ask everyone to introduce themselves. To ensure we are creating safe spaces, ask participants to share, if they would like, the gendered pronouns they'd like to be addressed with. Finally, keep people engaged from the get go, ask them to tell the room why they came to the event.

In these kinds of settings, it is important to also designate an Anti-Harassment Adviser. This person would ideally be someone who can handle conflict effectively and is a good negotiator. The role of the Anti-Harassment Adviser is to deal with any instances of harassment that happen throughout the event, whether they witness it or are told about it by a participant. They can then intervene in the situation to de-escalate any tension and allow the event to continue while the issue gets resolved.

Many different types of people may come to an event. Supporters have already been won over and have probably helped to organize the event in some capacity. Some students may be uncomfortable or disagree with the event. If there are issues with particular participants, notify the Anti-Harassment Adviser. Treat them with respect and don't return negative comments or feedback. The majority of the participants will be new to your cause, most likely somewhat sympathetic but in need of encouragement. These are the people who you need to reach out to and build confidence with.

Finally, remind participants that this is a safe space and that discriminatory language or behaviour will not be tolerated. Also, you might want to highlight the importance of confidentiality. Some of those in the room may not be “out” to everyone in their life, if at all, and it's important to respect their right to come out on their own terms. Depending on the nature of the event, ask recorded media who may be present to identify themselves so students can determine if they are comfortable being recorded.

New participants are likely sympathetic but in need of encouragement.

Before people leave, thank them all for coming and participating. If you have any campaigns going on, remind them to sign up to receive updates about your group's initiatives and meeting times.

Wrapping Up and Moving Forward

Congratulations! Your event has finished and hopefully it was a success!

Plan to bring together your volunteers after the event to debrief. Talk about what worked, what was challenging and how you can build on the event to strengthen the campaign. With all this momentum, it will be important to keep building and moving forward. Maybe your first event was a relatively small workshop with a dozen or so students, or perhaps it was an entire assembly listening to a speaker on queer and trans issues. Either way, you should be extremely proud of yourself and start looking at the next steps.

Remind participants that this is a safe space and that discriminatory language and behaviour will not be tolerated.



Event Ideas

Some ideas for challenging discrimination & building community

PICKING AN EVENT

Identify your audience and event goals so that you organize the most effective and appropriate event. You may want to focus on creating community supports for queer and trans students, creating visibility on campus, and/or educating the campus community. Remember to collaborate with student groups, academic departments or community organizations. You may want to plan your event in conjunction with local pride events if they take place during the school year, or as part of an anti-oppression week if the students' union organizes one. Linking queer and trans issues to events marking another identity's history, such as Black History Month, is an excellent way to highlight how oppressions can intersect.

Small Social Events

Small social events are events that do not require many resources for planning and implementation. These are events that can run weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly, and work to build community and bring together queer and trans students and their allies. You can choose to organize them for queer/trans-identified students only, or expand them to allies.

These events can include: movie screenings, potlucks, pub nights, games nights, video games nights, discussion groups, etc.

Larger Social Events

Larger social events require more planning and promotional support. They give exposure to your pride group, as well as introduce students who wouldn't traditionally come out to an event to attend. Having a larger presence on campus also works to tackle homophobic and transphobic attitudes by showing support and presence. These events can include: larger pub or club nights, dirty bingo, coming out galas, trips, etc.

Educational Events

Educational events are important to build analysis and raise awareness about issues that affect queer and trans students. Educational events can often be organized in a social and fun manner. Some examples of successful events are:

- Panels to discuss intersections (the experience of trans people of colour, queer people with disabilities, queer women, etc.)

- Queer and trans events during orientation, Sexual Assault Awareness Month, International Women's Day, and other important dates.
- International Transgender Day of Remembrance (November 20) events
- Pink Triangle Day (February 14) events
- International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia (May 17) events
- Conference/Symposium
- Q & A discussions with allies on particular topics such as HIV/AIDS stigma, racism, religion/spirituality, sex worker rights, etc.
- Vigils
- Photo Walls
- Online discussions or web chats

Political Action

Students need to come together to organize for change. This might be to reverse policy, to denounce actions, or to raise awareness about a particular issue. It's important to plan out a broader campaign vision when trying to organize around a particular issue. These can include three steps:

Research

- Hosting townhalls or open meetings
- Surveying students
- Regular outreach to poll students and identify the issues facing them
- Connecting with community organizations and other campuses
- Educating yourself and your committee or coalition on the issues through books and articles
- Collecting video testimonials of students

Lobbying

- Making sure that your demands and needs are clear
- Meeting with the appropriate people you need to convince

Mobilization

- Postcard or petition collection and delivery
- Email petition drives (setting up a website where students can send emails to whomever the action is targeted towards)
- Campus rallies
- Direct action like sit-ins or occupations

Collaborate with student groups, academic departments or community organizations.

Pride Events

Pride provides an opportunity to reinsert the experiences and stories of queer/trans people into mainstream discourse. Whether your campus wants to host an entire pride week, or just one day of pride festivities, it's important to take into account how inclusive your events are. Is there a mix of social, educational, and political events? Are you creating spaces that are inclusive for trans students, racialized students and women? Are your events accessible and barrier-free? Some successful pride events include:

- Flag raising or flag drop
- Community barbecue or block party
- Pub night
- Movie screenings
- Participation in your community marches or rallies
- Starting your own community rally and march
- Panels on current issues affecting your community
- Set up a table at a community fair
- Video game night or other social





Organizations & Resources

**Provincial and national
queer & trans
organizations**

AlterHéros, www.alterheros.com

AlterHéros is bilingual social network and community for sexual diversity that seeks to foster the development of individuals in relation to their sexual orientation, gender identity and sexuality. The organization enables communication with an interdisciplinary team of mental, physical and psychological health professionals; provides space for socializing; and studies the issues and the social challenges related to sexual orientation, gender identity and sexuality.

Asexual Visibility and Education Network (AVEN), www.asexuality.org

AVEN hosts the world's largest online asexual community as well as a large archive of resources on asexuality. AVEN strives to foster open, honest discussion about asexuality among sexual and asexual people alike.

Bullying Canada, bullyingcanada.ca

This is a general support site that is not specific to queer and trans youth where young people speak out about bullying and victimization. It is driven by youth volunteers and includes group chats, one-on-one chats, a toll-free phone line, newsletter, information about bullying, resources, and more.

Canadian Federation of Students–Ontario, www.cfsontario.ca

The Canadian Federation of Students–Ontario is the Ontario component of Canada's largest student organization, uniting more than one-half million students in all ten provinces including at the college, undergraduate and graduate levels. Contact the Federation for more information on the Queer and Trans Students' Constituency Group, other constituency groups and for local contacts and resources on your campus.

Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives, www.clga.ca

The Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives was established to aid in the recovery and preservation of Queer and Trans histories. Its mandate is to acquire, preserve, organize, and give public access to information and materials in any medium, by and about queer and trans people, primarily produced in or concerning Canada. To support this function, the Archives also maintains significant non-archival collections, which include a research library, international subject files, and an international collection of queer periodicals.

Canadian Rainbow Health Coalition, www.rainbowhealth.ca

The Canadian Rainbow Health Coalition is a national bilingual organization whose objective is to address the various health and wellness issues that people who have sexual and emotional relationships with people of the same gender, or a gender identity that does not conform to the identity assigned to them at birth, encounter. Their website provides useful links and resources.

Egale Canada, www.egale.ca

Egale is a national bilingual queer and trans human rights organization: advancing equality, diversity, education and justice. Egale promotes freedom from homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and all other forms of discrimination. Egale focuses on education, advocacy, litigation and expert consultation.

Intersex Society of North America, www.isna.org

The Intersex Society of North America (ISNA) was devoted to systemic change to end shame, secrecy, and unwanted genital surgeries for people born with an anatomy that society deems ambiguous or not standard male or female. Following the founding of another organization, Accord Alliance, ISNA closed its doors. However, their website remains an important and useful resource for information.

Lesbian Gay Bi Trans Youth Line, www.youthline.ca

The Lesbian Gay Bi Trans Youth Line is a toll-free support service provided by youth for youth.

The Lesbian Gay Bi Trans Youth Line is a toll-free support service provided by youth for youth 26-years-old and under in Ontario. They offer support, information and referrals through phone, email and instant messaging. TTY service is available. Through their website, they maintain a referral database of resources for LGBT youth in Ontario, and a blog, Facebook and Twitter keeping you up-to-date on the latest with LGBT youth in Ontario.

My GSA, mygsa.ca

MyGSA.ca is an initiative of Egale Canada focused on providing resources to youth, students and educators seeking to create safer school spaces through Gay Straight Alliances, and other initiatives. They provide an interactive space for queer Canadian youth, educators and allies, education and information, including discussions, events, campaigns, statistics, maps, school board policies, GSA Guide, lesson plans, books, news and more.

National Center for Transgender Equality, transequality.org

The National Center for Transgender Equality (NCTE) is a social justice organization based in the United States dedicated to advancing the equality of transgender people through advocacy, collaboration and empowerment. NCTE provides this presence by monitoring government activity and communicates this activity. NCTE also works to strengthen the transgender movement by highlighting opportunities for coalition building, promoting available resources, and providing technical assistance and training to trans people and our allies.

NativeOUT, www.nativeout.com

NativeOUT is a North American organization that seeks to create social change in rural and urban communities that benefit Indigenous lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and two-spirit people. Their mission is to empower Indigenous LGBTQ/two-spirit people, to educate and raise awareness, to make connections with the international Two Spirit Movement, and to support people and organizations doing outreach on these issues.

NativeOUT is a North American organization that seeks to create social change.

Native Youth Sexual Health Network, www.nativeyouthsexualhealth.com

The Native Youth Sexual Health Network (NYSHN) is a North-America wide organization working on issues of healthy sexuality, cultural competency, youth empowerment, reproductive justice, and sex positivity by and for Native youth.

Ontario Rainbow Alliance of the Deaf, orad.ca

Ontario Rainbow Alliance for the Deaf (ORAD) is an organization serving Deaf, deaf, deafened, hard of hearing and hearing people in Ontario who are queer and trans. ORAD coordinates social events, provides educational and social outreach workshops and provides referral resources.

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) Canada, www.pflagcanada.ca

PFLAG Canada is a national bilingual organization founded by parents to help families. It serves as a national voice for a more equitable, accepting society by providing support, education and resources on issues of sexual orientation and gender identity. Through the PFLAG Canada Chapter and Contact network, they assist in the recognition and growth of queer and trans persons and their families and friends, within their diverse cultures in local communities across the country.

Rainbow Health Ontario, www.rainbowhealthontario.ca

Rainbow Health Ontario (RHO) is a province-wide program that works to improve the health and well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people in Ontario through education, research, outreach and public policy advocacy.

Sexuality and You, www.sexualityandu.ca

This is the ultimate Canadian web site devoted to sexuality education and information. It is a bilingual website administered by the Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada. It includes extensive information regarding sexually transmitted infections, birth control and sexual health. This includes information geared towards youth, health-care professionals, teachers and parents.

Trans PULSE, transpulseproject.ca

The Trans PULSE Project is part research project and part activist information network. It is a community-based research project that responds to problems identified within Ontario trans communities regarding access to health and social services. Their research explores how social exclusion, cisnormativity, and transphobia shape the provision of services for trans people.



Local Groups

Resources for queer & trans people in your community

Reaching out and making connections in your community can be a powerful tool whether you are concerned about someone you know or want to find partners to help challenge homophobia and transphobia in your community.

The Lesbian Gay Bi Trans Youth Line maintains a database of referral resources for LGBT youth in Ontario. This includes services and supports that are queer and trans-specific, or that have made strides toward being queer and trans-positive in the ways they receive and respond to the needs of individuals in queer and trans communities. Below are resources that are located in regions near college and university campuses. For the full listing of resources, and for services in other cities, towns or regions, visit www.youthline.ca and search the Referral Database.

For the full listing of resources, and for services in other areas, visit youthline.ca

BARRIE

Barrie Trans Support Group

Email: sheena_brookes@yahoo.com

Info: Group support meetings held for all trans people no matter what path they are on. Email for meeting location and times.

LGBT Youth Connection Barrie

Address: c/o AIDS Committee of Simcoe County, 80 Bradford St, Unit 555, Barrie, ON, L4N 6S7
Phone: 705-722-6778 ext 103
Email: lgbtyouthconnectionbarrie@hotmail.com

Info: LGBT youth group connects LGBT youth to each other and gets adults involved in the LGBT community. For LGBT youth and their allies under 21 years old.

Sexual Health Clinic, Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (Barrie Site)

Address: 15 Sperling Drive, Barrie
Phone: 705-721-7520
Web: www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/HealthUnit/Services/Clinics/SexualHealth.aspx

Info: Public health nurses offer confidential counselling and information about birth control, pregnancy counselling, testing and free treatment for sexually transmitted infections (STIs), anonymous HIV testing and sexuality and relationship issues. Clinic services are by appointment only. All information is confidential.

CHATHAM-KENT

Young and Proud

Address: 67 Adelaide St. S., Chatham
Phone: 519-358-5393

Info: Social and support group for LGBTQ youth 14-26 years old

Pride Chatham-Kent

Email: chathamkentgaypride@hotmail.com
Web: www.pride-ck.com

Info: Group that hosts Pride Festival each year in Chatham-Kent with volunteer opportunities for youth.

GUELPH

AIDS Committee of Guelph and Wellington County

Address: 89 Dawson Road, Unit 115,
Guelph ON, N1H 1B1
Phone: 519-763-2255
Email: education@aidsguelph.org
Web: www.aidsguelph.org

Info: Provides support and services to people living with HIV/AIDS and their families including housing support, counselling, transportation support, support groups and treatment support. Offers a GBTQ Men's Drop-in.

Out on the Shelf Resource Centre & Library

Address: 141 Woolwich Street, Unit 106,
Guelph, N1H 8M5 (Also in: Waterloo)
Phone: 519-515-0691
Email: info@outontheshelf.ca
Web: www.outontheshelf.ca

Info: LGBTQ resource centre and library. Hosts Guelph's queer resource guide and community calendar.

HAMILTON

The Well: LGBTQ Community Wellness Centre of Hamilton

Address: 27 King William St. West (lower level of the Sky Dragon Centre)
Hamilton
Phone: 905-525-0300
Email: info@thewellhamilton.ca
Web: www.thewellhamilton.ca

Info: The Well is an LGBTQ Community Centre that holds community groups (including a youth group, trans support group, queer women's group, group for queer Muslims, etc.) and hosts social events for the LGBTQ community. Their website houses a community calendar for queer events happening in Hamilton

KINGSTON

F.U.S.E.

Address: 20 Montreal St., Kingston
Phone: 613-545-3698
Email: fu.se.kingstonyouth@gmail.com
Web: www.outinkingston.org

Info: Youth group for queer, trans*, genderqueer, two spirit, lesbian, bisexual, gay, pansexual, and questioning youth under the age of 19.

PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) Kingston

Phone: 613-536-1026
Email: Region3@PFLAGCanada.ca
Web: www.pflagcanada.ca

Info: PFLAG groups offer support and resources to LGBTQ people and their families and friends.

LONDON

Alphabet Community Centre London

Email: info@acclondon.ca
Web: www.acclondon.com

Info: The centre offers 24 hour crisis management, telephone and personal support, and wellness checks. It provides health care referrals, housing and shelter support, patient advocacy, education and training, partnering on research projects, employment programs and support.

London Trans Support Group-SWAT

Address: 659 Dundas St E, London
Phone: 416-986-4406
Email: info@tgstation.com
Web: www.tgstation.com/london/

Info: Trans Support has been operating for over five years. Open to all trans identified people, their support, community friends and allies.

Open Closet

Address: c/o Regional HIV/AIDS Connection, #30-186 King Street, London, ON, N6A 1C7
Phone: 519-434-1601
Email: info@hivaidconnection.ca
Web: www.aidslondon.com/open-closet

Info: Social support group for youth between 14 and 18 years of age who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, two-spirited, queer and questioning their sexual orientation (LGBT2Q).

MISSISSAUGA

QXposure

Address: 2555 Dixie Road, Unit 7, Mississauga (Also in: Peel)
Phone: 905-602-4082 x 4
Email: qxposure.emchc@gmail.com
Web: www.eastmississaugachc.org/qxposure.php

Info: Current services include: weekly support and social drop-in; one-to-one support and referral; confidential phone, email and facebook contact; primary health care and trans-specific health care; advocacy; referral to queer and trans positive services; consultations with service provider allies and families of queer and trans folks; collaboration with community organizations including education and trainings.

Youth Beyond Barriers

Address: c/o Associated Youth Services of Peel, 120 Matheson Blvd East, Suite 201, Mississauga L4Z 1X1
Phone: 905-890-5222
Email: youth@aysp.ca
Web: www.aysp.ca

Info: Provides weekly queer and trans youth support groups, and one-to-one support with an LGBT Counsellor. They train community members/workers on Anti-homophobia and Anti-racism/Anti-Oppression (ARAO) to help create more positive spaces within the Region of Peel.

NORTH BAY

Northern Pride

Web: northernpride.weebly.com

Info: A community forum for LGBTQI2S folks in North Bay and the surrounding region. It hosts monthly LGBTQ dances and events. Not youth specific but youth friendly. Join their mailing list to find out about community events.

ORILLIA

Gay Orillia

Email: gayorillia@hotmail.com
Web: www.gayorillia.ca

Info: A resource page for events and links, founded in 2005.

OTTAWA

Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa

Address: 2675 Queensview Drive, Ottawa, Ontario K2B 8K2
Phone: 613-729-1000
Email: headoffice@ysb.on.ca

Info: Provides services including emergency shelter and transitional housing; 24 hour regional crisis line and mobile response team; assistance with family conflict; addictions counselling; HIV prevention services; support for issues related to poverty, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and/or abuse; mental health services; job find programs; Youth Drop In.

Pink Triangle Services

Address: 251 Bank St, Suite 301, Ottawa (also in: Ottawa-Carleton)
Phone: 613-563-4818
Email: pinktriangle@bellnet.ca
Web: www.pinktriangle.org

Info: Offers information resources; referral services; educational workshops and seminars; training programs; a library with queer and trans materials; and a variety of volunteer-run discussion and support groups; outreach and educational services to the communities-at-large.

PETERBOROUGH

Rainbow Service Organization

Email: rso@rainbowservice.org
Web: www.rainbowservice.org

Info: Website includes events calendar, resources, news; newsletter and email updates; extensive lending library; socials and other events.

Rainbow Youth Coalition

Address: c/o PARN, 159 King St, Ste 302, Peterborough, K9J2R8
Phone: 705-749-9110
Web: www.rainbowyouth.ca/

Info: Provides drop in groups and workshops for LGBTQ youth 14-25 years old; offers support to set up and maintain Gay Straight Alliances; houses a resource library; offers training for service providers.

SAULT STE. MARIE

PFLAG Sault Ste Marie

Website: www.pflagcanada.ca
Email: region3@pflagcanada.ca

Info: Hosts monthly LGBTQ dances, bowling nights and bi-weekly coffee nights. Check website for calendar. Not youth specific.

SCARBOROUGH

YAAHA (Youth Advocating for Anti-Homophobia Awareness)

Email: yaahayouth@hotmail.com
Web: www.yaaha.org/connect.html

Info: A social/educational group that meets bi-weekly in Scarborough for youth (13-25) who identify as intersexed, transsexual, transgender, two-spirited, queer, bisexual, lesbian, gay or questioning (ITT2QBLGQ). Email for location, meeting times and details.

ST. CATHARINES

OUTNiagara

Email: martha@outniagara.ca
Web: OUTNiagara.ca

Info: OUTNiagara is a community organization that began in November 2004 with the purpose of uniting the Niagara area's sexual and gender-diverse community.

Rainbow Youth Niagara

Address: c/o Quest Community Health Centre, 145 Queenston St, Ste 100, St Catharines, ON, L2R 2Z9
Phone: 905-688-2558 ext 222
Email: svail@questchc.ca
Web: www.questchc.ca

Info: Rainbow Youth Niagara works to support LGBTQ youth in Niagara through counselling/crisis intervention, referrals to community resources that are LGBTQ positive, workshops and presentations to educators, front-line workers, community agencies who serve youth, a resource library, an outreach program, and the Rainbow Squad which is a monthly drop-in group for youth to feel safe and connected to others who are going through similar situations.

SUDBURY

PFLAG Sudbury

Phone: 705-673-3037
Email: sudburyon@pflagcanada.ca
Web: www.pflag.ca

Info: A support and social group for queer and trans people and their families and friends. Please call or email for meeting times and dates. Not youth specific but youth are welcome.

Réseau Access Network

Address: 111 Elm Street, Suite 203, Sudbury, ON, P3C 1T3
Phone: 705-688-0500
Email: aaninfo@accessaidsnetwork.com
Web: www.accessaidsnetwork.com

Info: Provides education, support, outreach and advocacy as it relates to HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C; offers LGBT2-SQQA Youth Group and TRANSFORMATIONS, a group for transgendered women; has a Healthy Sexuality and Youth Program, and Gay Men and Men who have sex with Men (MSM) Sexual Health Program.

THUNDER BAY

The Other 10%

Address: Centre of Change, 96 N. High Street, Thunder Bay
Phone: 807-343-6373
Web: www.childrenscentre.ca

Info: Drop-in LBGTTIQ + questioning group for 12-25 year olds every second Monday at 5pm to 7pm.

Trans* Support Collective

Email: tbtsc2012@gmail.com

Info: Support group for transsexual, transgender, cross dressing, gender queer and advocates of all.

Thunder Pride

Address: Thunder Pride Committee, c/o LETO, #5-1112 Russell St., Thunder Bay, ON P7B 5N2

Info: The organizing committee of Thunder Pride is a made up of a wide spectrum of Thunder Bay residents, all coming together to support friends, family, colleagues, and neighbours within our city and region. Event listings, links.

TORONTO

519 Community Centre

Address: 519 Church St, Toronto, M4Y2C9
Phone: 416-392-6874
Email: info@the519.org
Web: www.the519.org

Info: Queer and trans focussed community centre that offers multiple programs and services including support for homeless and under housed people, support groups, trans health programming, social groups, parenting programs, sex worker support programs, refugee and immigrant support programs, sliding scale counselling, addictions counselling and support, and more.

Supporting Our Youth (SOY)

Address: 333 Sherbourne Street, Floor 2,
Toronto
Phone: 416-324-5077 (phone)
Email: soy@sherbourne.on.ca
Web: www.soytoronto.org

Info: Supporting Our Youth (SOY) is a community development program designed to improve the lives of queer and trans youth in Toronto through active community involvement. SOY creates healthy arts, culture and recreational spaces for young people and provides supportive housing and employment opportunities.

WATERLOO

OK2BME

Website: c/o K-W Counselling Services
480 Charles St. East, Waterloo Region,
N2G 4K5 (also in: Kitchener)
Phone: 519-884-0000 x 212
Email: ok2bme@kwcounselling.com
Web: ok2bme.ca

Info: A set of support services for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning (LGBTQ) kids and teens in Waterloo Region. Services include LGBTQ-positive individual and family counselling; LGBTQ social and recreational youth group; trans/gender questioning youth group; public education and training; consultation and collaboration; help establishing Gay-Straight Alliances and other similar initiatives in local schools.



WINDSOR

Young and Proud

Windsor (also in: Essex)
Phone: 519-973-0222
Web: www.aidswindsor.org (under Programs and Services section)

Info: Group for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered and questioning youth between the ages of 14 and 26. The group involves discussion about various topics including relationships, coming out, safer sex, HIV/AIDS and organizes monthly social events.

Windsor Pride

Phone: 519-973-4656
Website: windsorpride.com

Info: Puts on pride festival in Windsor each year. Hosts events for the LGBTQ community throughout the year, see website for details. Volunteer opportunities for youth.





www.cfsontario.ca
www.youthline.ca

