Supporting LGBTQIA+ Youth

LGBTQIA+

Lesbian **Gay** **Bisexual** **Transgender** **Queer** **Intersex** **Asexual** **Expansive**

Understanding and utilizing the language and terminology used within LGBTQIA+ communities opens the door for connection. Click on each letter within the LGBTQIA+ acronym to explore definitions and learn additional affirming terminology.

1 in 3 LGBTQIA+ students missed at least one entire day of school in the past month because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable.

Verbal Harassment **Physical Harassment**

68.7% of LGBTQIA+ students experienced verbal harassment, while 25.7% were physically harassed based on sexual orientation.

52.4%

52.4% of students reported hearing homophobic remarks from their teachers or other school staff.

When schools implement LGBTQIA+ supportive policies and practices, all students experience:

Less emotional distress

Less suicidal thoughts and behavior

Less violence and harassment

Impact of Affirming Adults

Only **1 in 3 LGBTQIA+ youth** found their home to be affirming during the pandemic. It is important that school staff become trusted individuals to support LGBTQIA+ youth in schools. School staff can become trusted adults by engaging in affirming behavior.

LGBTQIA+ youth who report having at least one affirming adult in their life were 40% less likely to report a suicide attempt in the past year.

TEAMS
Enhancing School Health Services
From the American Academy of Pediatrics

How to Be An Affirming Adult

Being an affirming adult goes beyond mere tolerance of LGBTQIA+ students and the expression of their gender or sexuality. Research has shown that school-based supports, such as affirming staff, inclusive school policies, curricular resources inclusive of LGBTQIA+ people, and GSAs, lead to drastically better outcomes for LGBTQIA+ students.

Pronouns

A pronoun is a word used to refer to a person in the third person. Some pronouns, such as he/him or she/her, are gendered, while others, such as they/them or ze/zir, are gender neutral.

Using a person's chosen name and pronouns is a key element of affirming someone's identity. The experience of being routinely misgendered can be hurtful.

Inclusion can be created by making space for people to share their chosen pronouns. Try introducing yourself with your pronouns or asking what pronouns someone uses when meeting.

Consider adding your personal pronouns to your email signatures and class syllabus. Doing so is a very visible way to be an ally.

Anatomy of an Affirming Adult

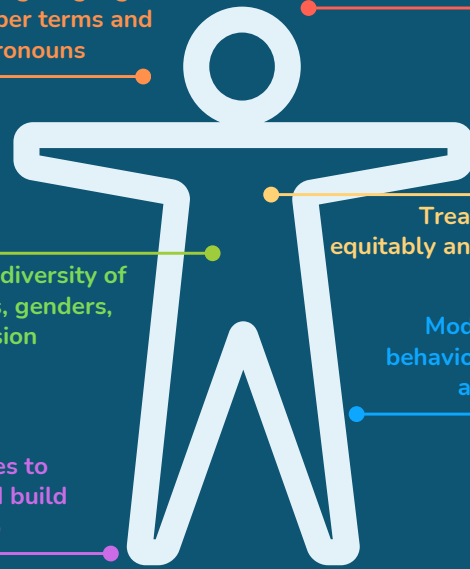Uses affirming language, such as proper terms and preferred pronouns

Educates themselves about LGBTQIA+ history and terminology

Treats all students equitably and with respect

Normalizes diversity of orientations, genders, and expression

Models respectful behavior for students and colleagues

Seeks out opportunities to connect and build relationship

Additional Resources

- Center for Disease Control and Prevention: Supporting LGBTQ Youth
- American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP): TEAMS
- GLSEN: The 2019 National School Climate Survey
- CDC: Adolescent Behaviors and Experiences Survey (ABES 2021)
- LGBTQIA Resource Center Glossary
- Project Youth Affirm
- My Pronouns
- Pronouns and Misgendering: Resource Supporting Transgender and Gender Nonconforming (GNC) Educators and Students.
- The Trevor Project: National Survey on LGBTQ Youth Mental Health 2021

Inclusive Terminology

Instead of that:	Try this:
Sexual Preference	Sexual Orientation
A transgendered	Trans woman or Trans male
Sex Change Surgery	Gender Affirmation Surgery
Homosexual or homo	Gay, Lesbian, or Bisexual

As you begin learning and using more affirming etiquette, remember it's normal to make mistakes. Practice your new skills frequently, and apologize in the moment when you make a mistake.

TEAMS