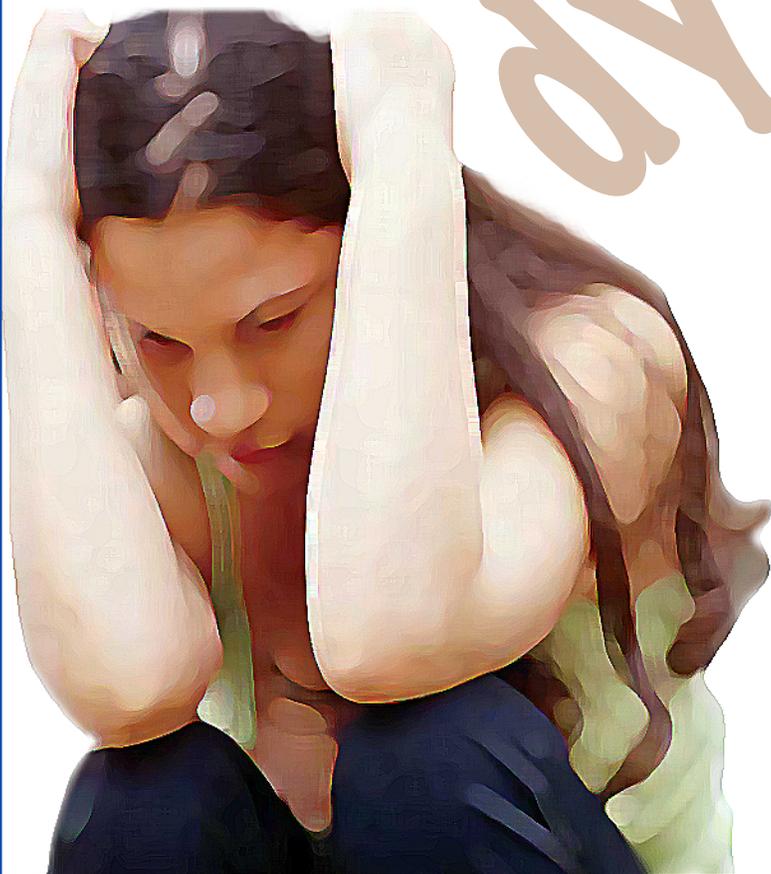


# Dealing with Name-Calling

Lezzie

dyke!

Fag  
homo!



A resource produced by



# DEALING WITH NAME-CALLING

3<sup>rd</sup> Edition 2010

## Table of Contents

### Section A – Rationale

BC Court Win for Straight Student Taunted as “Homo” and “Gay” .....	2
Prevalence of Name-Calling, Intimidation and Harassment .....	6
School Climate Quiz .....	7

### Section B – Strategies with Students

Dealing with Homophobic Comments and Name-calling .....	8
How to Support Students Who are Victims of Anti-Gay Slurs .....	10
Anti-Gay Bullying: What Can You Do About It? .....	12
Ten Things You Can Say or Do When You Hear “That’s so gay!” .....	14
“Zero Indifference”: Do’s and Don’ts Of Name-Calling.....	15
Responding to “That’s So Gay” .....	16
Responding to Name-Calling in School.....	17

### Section C – Educational Leadership for Changing School Culture

Changing the School Culture; Breaking the Code of Silence .....	18
BCSTA Passes Motion to Protect LGBTQ Students .....	20
Tips for Educators: Responding to Anti-Gay Rhetoric and Anger .....	21
Tips for Administrators: Providing Leadership on LGBTQ Issues .....	22

### Section D – Lesson Plans

Lesson 1. What’s In a Name? .....	23
Lesson 2. Why Call Names?.....	28
Lesson 3. Zack’s Story .....	30
Lesson 4. Passive, Aggressive and Assertive .....	32
Lesson 5. Assertive Statements .....	35
Lesson 6. Homophobic Slurs in the Classroom .....	38
LESSON 7: Quick Comebacks to Name-Calling.....	40

### Section E – Top Resources

Books .....	43
Videos .....	46
Helpful LGBTQ Web Sites .....	50
BCTF Anti-Homophobia Professional Development Workshops .....	51

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## **BC Court Win for Straight Student Taunted as “Homo” and “Gay”**

In April 2005, British Columbia's highest court overturned a lower court ruling that said a student could not sue a school board for homophobic bullying and harassment because he is straight. The BC Court of Appeal said that Azmi Jubran had been the victim of anti-gay bullying for five years and that Handsworth Secondary School in North Vancouver failed to stop the homophobic taunts of other students. It also reinstated a \$4,500 award set by a human rights tribunal and ruled that the North Vancouver School Board must pay all of his legal costs.

The lower court had dismissed Jubran's allegations that he had been subjected to harassment on the basis of sexuality because he wasn't gay. This was despite testimony that he was routinely called "faggot," "homo" and "gay" at the school from 1993 to 1998.

### **The Harassment:**

During the five years that Mr. Jubran attended Handsworth Secondary School, he was repeatedly taunted with homophobic epithets and physically assaulted, including being spit upon, pushed, shoved, kicked and punched by other students. The School Board did not dispute that Mr. Jubran was verbally and physically abused.

The harassment started in 1993, when he was 13 years old and in grade eight. In grade nine the name-calling, hitting, punching and spitting incidents continued. On one occasion a student in a woodworking class threw nails, wood and screws at Mr. Jubran and another student shouted "Azmi is gay." The administration at Handsworth documented over 12 incidents of harassment reported by Mr. Jubran during his grade-11 year. These incidents, which occurred both inside and outside the school, consisted of Mr. Jubran being called names such as "faggot", "queer", "gay" and "homo." As well, Mr. Jubran was pushed, shoved and had things thrown at him. In one incident Mr. Jubran intercepted a note being sent around class depicting him holding hands with another male student. In his Grade 12 year Mr. Jubran reported five incidents of harassment. In one incident in gym class, a coin sized hole was burned into Mr. Jubran's shirt by a lighter, without actually burning his body. In another incident someone urinated on Mr. Jubran's tent at 1 a.m. during a school camping trip. Mr. Jubran testified that he heard two boys outside the tent talking about how "choked up" another student (who had been suspended in the shirt burning incident) was that he was not able to go on the camping trip. The two boys then talked about how funny it would be to dip Mr. Jubran in acid.

### **Homosexuality and Perceived Homosexuality**

Jubran told the students at Handsworth, beginning in grade eight, that he was not homosexual. The evidence of several of Mr. Jubran's classmates was that, when the words were spoken by someone who was not a friend, the terms "dork", "geek", "gay", and "faggot" were used interchangeably as words of insult or as a put-down. Several of the students testified that the words were not intended to imply that Mr.



Jubran was homosexual, and that neither they nor others who called Mr. Jubran those names believed Mr. Jubran was or perceived him to be homosexual. The students denied that any of the "sting" of the words resulted from the fact that they related to homosexuality and they testified that the words were simply used as another form of insult.

One student testified that the words used were "part of the high school vocabulary", and that words like "gay" were used to describe someone, something, or a situation that a student did not like. One student testified that he himself used those words "all the time" and that it was common for a student to say "that shirt is so gay" or "the long jump is so gay" if the student did not like it. This student also said that the words "queer", "faggot" and "homo" were commonly used as part of normal conversation.

**The judgment (BC Court of Appeal) said:** The interpretive obstacle in this case is that Mr. Jubran's harassers denied that they subjectively perceived Mr. Jubran as homosexual, despite their persistent and consistent homophobic taunts. They maintained that their language was neutral, not discriminatory; they used homophobic epithets equally with friends and with those students they did not like, as a form of insult. The effect of their conduct, however, was as harmful as if they really had perceived Mr. Jubran to be homosexual. The homophobic taunts directed at Mr. Jubran attributed to him the negative perceptions, myths and stereotypes attributed to homosexuals. His harassers created an environment in which his dignity and full participation in school life were denied because the negative characteristics his harassers associated with homosexuality were attributed to him.

### **School Code of Conduct**

Handsworth formalized a Code of Conduct pursuant to a School Board policy in September 1994. This was an official compilation of disciplinary rules that had been in existence for several years. The Code of Conduct set out general principles of conduct for students, and certain forms of prohibited behaviour, such as fighting and plagiarism. It referred to prohibited behaviours based on "perceived differences". Although sexual orientation was not specifically identified, the School Board's Superintendent testified that the Code of Conduct was meant to be broad enough to cover sexual orientation.

**The judgment said:** *As a matter of legislation and case authority, there is a legitimate state interest in the education of the young, that students are especially vulnerable, that the School Board may make rules establishing a code of conduct for students attending those schools as part of its responsibility to manage those schools. Given this, and the quasi-constitutional nature of the Code, I find that the School Board has the duty to provide students with an educational environment that does not expose them to discriminatory harassment.*

## Lack of Use of Resources to Deal with Harassment

The vice-principal testified that the school lacked sufficient resources to be able to deal with bullying incidents outside of the classroom. He was of the opinion that most of the students involved in harassing Mr. Jubran were students who did not handle "unstructured time" well. During gaps in their timetable, students were allowed to spend time in the hallways and cafeteria, where support staff handled supervision.

There was evidence presented that resources were available to the School Board to assist it in dealing with homophobia and heterosexism in educational settings since at least 1992. That year, the Toronto Board of Education issued a resource guide for teachers and administrators. Pride Education Network's ["GALE"] first guide to resource material was available in September 1995.

The Tribunal found that there was no evidence the School Board sought the assistance of any individuals or outside organizations with expertise in the area of discrimination until about the time Mr. Jubran filed his human rights complaint. The principal of Handsworth acknowledged that he had no expertise or training to deal with the incidents of harassment until some time after 1996. The teachers had no exposure to training programs until April 1997. Mr. Jubran was then in grade 11, and still being harassed.

**The judgment said:** *Although Handsworth's administration did turn their minds to Mr. Jubran's situation, and discussed different approaches to dealing with it, the School Board did nothing to address the issue of homophobia or homophobic harassment with the students generally, nor did it implement a program designed to address that issue. Neither Mr. Rockwell nor Mr. Shaw were given any guidance or direction by the School Board on how to deal with the situation. I find that the administration had inadequate tools to work with, and insufficient training and education to deal with the harassment. The School Board did not seek assistance from those with particular expertise in the field of harassment, homophobic or otherwise, until Mr. Jubran filed his human rights complaint. By that time, Mr. Jubran was in his fourth year of high school at Handsworth, and the harassment he was experiencing was continuing.*

*Despite the efforts of Handsworth's administration in dealing with the harassment, when viewed as a totality, I conclude that the School Board has failed to discharge its burden of demonstrating that it accommodated Mr. Jubran to the point of undue hardship.*

The goal of a discrimination-free school environment is the ideal against which the School Board's response to the harassment of Mr. Jubran may be measured. In concluding that the School Board had not responded in an effective way to the students' discriminatory conduct, the Tribunal found that the school staff was pursuing a disciplinary approach that was not effective, and lacked resources to

adopt a broader, educative approach to deal with the difficult issues of harassment, homophobia and discrimination. The School Board failed to provide those resources to the school staff during Mr. Jubran's years at Handsworth, though some were available. Some steps were taken by school staff to educate themselves about these issues after Mr. Jubran complained to the Human Rights Commission. Only after he graduated, however, did the School Board establish a strategy to address harassment and discrimination.

(Note: Underlined passages were emphasized by the judge.)

For the complete judgement, go to:

<http://www.courts.gov.bc.ca/jdb-txt/ca/05/02/previous%20judgment/2005bccca0201err1.htm>

**In summary, the school board was held liable for costs because it failed to intervene and actively work to prevent homophobic harassment on many levels:**

**Policy:** To write, communicate to students and enforce a clear District and School Student Code of Conduct Policy. This should be a wake up call to all school boards in B.C. many of which do not prohibit discrimination based upon "one's real or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity." District and School Code of Conduct policies should be changed in every school district to include this specific wording.

**In-Service Training:** The school board lacked specific policies and protocols for changing the school culture to make it less homophobic. They had no in-service training for administrators or teachers in the area of anti-homophobia education. (The BCTF offers this free as part of their Professional Development services to teachers.)

**Curricular Content:** The board and school made no attempts to infuse existing curriculum with integrated lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBTQ) friendly resources or units for students on the positive contributions of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in society. There was no effort made to combat harmful myths and stereotypes perpetuated against LGBTQ people. The effect was that a homophobic environment was allowed to thrive.

**Safety for All Students:** Irrespective of one's real or perceived sexual orientation, all students deserve the right to a learning environment that is homophobia free. Homophobic harassment can have a negative impact upon any student. All students have a right to a discrimination free learning environment in which they can reach their full learning potential.



## **Prevalence of Name-calling, Intimidation and Harassment**

### **Being Out: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Youth in BC: An adolescent Health Study, The McCreary Report (1999)**

- 82% of youth reported that students made homophobic remarks at school.
- 28% of youth said that their teachers sometimes / often made homophobic remarks.
- 63% of LGBTQ students had been verbally abused.
- 34% were threatened with violence and 17% were physically assaulted.

### **GLSEN: The 2001 National School Climate Survey, Kosciw, J.G. (2001)**

- All students heard homophobic remarks from other students, 84.6% “often”.
- One-quarter heard homophobic remarks from school staff some of the time.
- Most frequently homophobic remarks were made in areas such as hallways (85%), school grounds (73.1%) and cafeteria/lunch rooms (73.0%).
- Almost half the youth reported educators were absent or did not intervene if present.
- 82.5% reported slurs were rarely or never punished.

### **GLSEN: Tackling Gay Issues in School, Leif Mitchell (1998)**

- The typical youth hears anti-gay slurs 25.5 times a day.
- 80% of LGBTQ youth report severe social isolation.
- 78% of school administrators say they know of no LGBTQ students in their school, yet 94% of them claim their schools are safe places for these young people.

### **BC Safe Schools Task Force, (2003) Submission 3: ... one student was quoted,**

- “When I came out, fag, faggot, and queer were shouted at me as I walked down the hall. It escalated into violence in the second semester when my locker was torched. In grade 12 it got worse. I couldn’t use the student washroom because guys would harass me until I left and signs started to appear saying things like, “No fags allowed” .... “I was too afraid to stay at school so in early February I dropped out of school and I won’t get my diploma at a public school because I am too afraid to go.”

### **The Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey (1998)**

- Out of 4000 secondary students surveyed LGBTQ students scored the highest on the “school intimidation score”, meaning they scored highest on feeling intimidated by their peers. They feared having their property stolen and being threatened verbally and physically. Most of them skipped school on a regular basis.

### **Discrimination Against Gay Men, Lesbians and Transgender People Working in Education Survey, Irwin J. (2002)**

- 59% of LGBTQ educators experienced some form of homophobia or prejudicial treatment from colleagues, including ridicule, physical assault, and property damage. They reported stress, depression, illness, loss of confidence, and attempted suicide.



## School Climate Quiz

How does your school rank on the Climate Quiz? Check the following questions and find out. Mark a tick for **Pass**.

1. Are all students and parents aware that homophobic name-calling and harassment are against school policy? Are they expressly prohibited in your school Code of Conduct policy?
2. Are gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) issues visible in displays or bulletin boards? Think of examples.
3. Is homophobic graffiti in the school dealt with seriously?
4. Are homophobic incidents (name calling, violence) dealt with seriously by staff? Are students consulted in this process?
5. Are LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people) contributions included in your course curriculum? Think of examples.
6. Do you examine the resources you use for homophobic or heterosexist bias when you plan curriculum units?
7. Are there any "OUT" gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender students, teachers, administrators or other staff at your school?
8. Does your school encourage extra-curricular activities where LGBTQ students can share experiences and resources? (E.g. Gay/Straight Alliance clubs)
9. Is there a Safe Spaces Program or anything else in place at your school for people who want to be allies of LGBTQ students or staff?
10. Has your staff had a BCTF Professional Development Day workshop on anti-homophobia education strategies and resources?

**Rank Your School:** Number of ticks: 8-10 = A, 7-8 = B, 5-6 = C, <5 = Fail



## Dealing With Homophobic Comments And Name-Calling

We **can** do something about it, even if we are not comfortable with the topic.

Every day we hear a multitude of hurtful names in and around our schools. These insults take many forms, and all are hurtful. Racial, ethnic, sexual and homophobic slurs are particularly potent because they reflect and continue a history of oppression. Students do not benefit from reliving this oppression over and over. Nor do they succeed at school when their self-esteem is attacked continually. As educators, we should be able to sense the anger, pain and humiliation of the targeted students. Part of our job is to create a learning environment where diversity is recognized and celebrated, so that all students are safe to just "be" who they are. If teachers and other adults do not act to confront name-calling and bigotry, students quickly get the message that hatred of one group or another is condoned by our society and its institutions. This is particularly true for LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer) youth today.

Young people (and the not-so-young) use terms such as **faggot, lezzie, queer ...** because they have learned how effective such terms can be in attacking the self-esteem of others. These homophobic remarks are not only directed towards LGBTQs (or those perceived as such), but are often aimed at anyone thought to be different from the current group norm. Therefore, all people are fair game for this type of name-calling, and it's in everyone's interest to work for its elimination.

Educators often do not know how to deal with name-calling, especially when it takes the form of casual homophobic comments. Maybe you aren't personally comfortable talking about LGBTQ issues or persons, and you may not feel very knowledgeable about where to begin. You are not alone. But your simplest efforts will usually make a difference. By stepping in, you are not promoting a particular "lifestyle"; rather, you are just reaffirming the fundamental principle that bigotry in any form has no place at school. Congratulate yourself for taking action.

Slurs aren't always recognized as hurtful, and may even be considered as "a joke". They are frequently used without the speaker's full knowledge of their meaning. We can inform students that the terms they're using are intended to put down gays and lesbians (or more simply "*men who love men*", "*women who love women*") and that language used this way is insulting. Educators can explain the derivation of particular slurs, or students can do their own research. (e.g. **faggot** [*a bundle of sticks*] from the *Mediaeval practise of rounding up men suspected of same-sex activity, tying them together in bundles, and setting them ablaze as kindling, prior to the burning of witches [independent women]*).

There are many class exercises (here and elsewhere) for addressing the problem of name-calling. Take one and adapt it to the age/grade level of your students. Include the aspects of hurt feelings, prejudice, ignorance, the reasons for name-calling, and

possible responses to it (individual or group). Do not underestimate the power of students to understand these concepts, nor their interest in doing so. Most students will support you in making the classroom safe for all.

Many schools and classrooms have formal or informal rules, such as a Code of Discipline. Ensure that any such set of rules or principles includes language about name-calling in general (it helps to give examples), and that consequences are clearly laid out. These rules or principles should be clear and easily explained to students (which is a necessity!). All staff should agree on applying these rules at all school sites and events, so that students get a consistent message from all the adults. If they get the impression that insults and slurs are just the pet peeve of a few teachers, it's much harder to change behaviours, but **not** impossible.

Some teachers have had to work alone to educate their classes about the effects of homophobic name-calling and to make their classes safe and welcoming for all students. It can be a challenge to do this work without collegial support, but many have succeeded in making their classroom or area an **insult-free zone**, by addressing the issues in ways that do not belittle students, but help them to gain insight and maturity (discussion, literature, biographies, research, diary writing, class rules, friendly reminders, posters). Students soon learn that it's not OK to use put-downs or slurs in the presence of certain teachers. Despite some initial grumbling, most students will co-operate and will accept these "restrictive" rules, because they soon appreciate that the learning environment is better for everyone. Students who support such behavioural rules will often speak up to persuade the less co-operative students to think about and control their comments.

When we speak up on behalf of LGBTQs, it's possible that some colleagues, students or parents will be suspicious of our motives, even "accusing" us of being lesbian, gay, etc. This is a common fear for closeted LGBTQ educators, and for our heterosexual allies. Some possible responses to such comments are:

- ***"You don't have to be Black, First Nations or Asian to know that racial slurs hurt people. And you do not have to be gay or lesbian [etc.] to know that these homophobic putdowns also hurt people."***
- ***"My personal life is not an issue here (and it isn't really any of your concern)."***
- ***"Why is this issue so important or threatening to you?"***

Reducing homophobic name-calling **is** important. Consider the value of one more student not feeling victimized, of one more student who stays in school, or of one youth suicide averted. You may not see the direct results of your efforts, but you can take satisfaction in knowing that you are making life worthwhile for many youth who do not have the language or the strength to ask you for this help.

(Adapted from material developed by Dr. Virginia Uribe, Los Angeles Unified School District. She founded Project 10, a dropout prevention program designed for gay and lesbian students.)



## How to Support Students Who Are Victims of Anti-Gay\* Slurs

\* The term anti-gay is used throughout this document to refer to slurs that demean anyone regardless of their real or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity. Remember that ANYONE can be the target of these slurs at school.

Students and educators generated the following ideas:

- ◆ Be a supportive adult
- ◆ Provide safe havens for students (i.e. Gay Straight Alliance Clubs)
- ◆ Educate yourself about homophobia and heterosexism
- ◆ Acknowledge ALL students
- ◆ Be inclusive in your actions and language
- ◆ Teach lessons on diversity

How can adults and students respond after hearing an anti-gay slur?

- ◆ Seize the teachable moment
- ◆ React immediately- don't allow even "small" slurs
- ◆ Always address it
- ◆ Learn to control your emotions
- ◆ Tell students/peers that this is offensive
- ◆ Don't let comments go
- ◆ Deal with it consistently and don't give up
- ◆ Refuse to tolerate unsafe behaviour
- ◆ Talk to the students in private-Ask the name caller-"What're you so afraid of?"
- ◆ Reconnect with the victim after the event to provide ongoing support
- ◆ Tell the victim "I'm here to listen if you need me."



How can teachers educate youth and staff about the harm of anti-gay slurs?

- ◆ Educate about the true meanings of the slurs being used (i.e. the word faggot)
- ◆ Communicate to students/staff that it isn't acceptable
- ◆ Be open to discussing issues with students and staff
- ◆ Intervene when you hear anti-gay slurs and draw analogies between different forms of oppression (i.e racial slurs, sexist comments, homophobia etc.)
- ◆ Model the comebacks you want students/colleagues to use
- ◆ Challenge stereotypes in personal actions. Explain that "It may start off fun but someone always gets hurt and they may not tell you because they're your friend."
- ◆ Follow up events with concrete actions to educate the school community

## How can we broaden the school's response to anti-gay slurs beyond the scene of an incident?

- ◆ Find support with administration and colleagues
- ◆ Educate staff by a free BCTF workshop on Homophobia/Heterosexism in schools
- ◆ Encourage students to ask their friends/peers for support
- ◆ Teach bystanders their role in perpetuating the “code of silence” around anti-gay harassment and homophobia in schools. They cannot side with the oppressor by remaining silent when homophobic harassment happens.
- ◆ Work with the parent community to educate them about the harm of anti-gay slurs and how it relates to other forms of name calling
- ◆ Bring in youth organizations (i.e. GAB Youth Services) to educate students
- ◆ Get the students to step forward to challenge slurs and not just remember a slogan as a quick comeback to an incident
- ◆ Encourage students to always tell an adult when they hear or are victim of an anti-gay slur
- ◆ Correct bad comments with positives- i.e. “You’re better than that.”
- ◆ Get more information about what is really going on in your school
- ◆ Have an anonymous drop box or email so that students can tell you what is really going on
- ◆ Encourage the students to deal with it themselves and allow them to (i.e. Don’t punish victims who stand up to the name caller)
- ◆ One student said, “If teachers aren’t going to stand up for kids who are being made fun of, the least they can do is allow us to stand up for ourselves.”

## Who can students turn to for support if they are victims of anti-gay slurs?

- ◆ Teachers (especially those who are openly gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender)
- ◆ Counsellors
- ◆ Role Models- i.e. parents, friends and siblings
- ◆ Support groups- i.e. Gay Straight Alliance Clubs
- ◆ School Boards that specifically support youth through anti-homophobia education and policies to protect students from anti-gay harassment (i.e. Greater Victoria (SD #61) and Vancouver (SD #39) (see Gale web site for more districts & policies)
- ◆ Police and School Liaison Officers
- ◆ Media coverage



# Anti-Gay Bullying: What Can You Do About It?

Anti-gay bullying is far too common in our schools. The use of the terms fag, dyke, lesbo, gay and the phrase “that’s so gay” are used indiscriminately, and anyone can be their target. This form of bullying thrives because of the silence around it. Homophobia will continue to be the norm in schools unless we act collectively. So what can we do?

## 1. Stop the harassment and speak out

Interrupt name-calling or put-down comments. Stop the behaviour in a way that prevents emotional or physical harm. Respond verbally to immediate situations; state that the behaviour is inappropriate.

Deal with the situation in context. It is important that all students, whether onlookers, potential victims or harassers, get the message that students are to be safe and protected in this school. Make sure all the students in the area hear your comments.

When intervening, do not assume that the incident is isolated. This will make the situation less safe for all students. Sometimes bystanders or witnesses may need to talk to you in private, to protect their own safety.

## 2. Identify the harassment.

Label the form of harassment: “You just made a homophobic comment or put-down.” Accurately describe the behaviour that is unacceptable. Point out if this has happened before in the class and/or if this is a repeated behaviour by the student. Ensure that the “spotlight” is focussed on the name-calling behaviour not on the victim. Do not imply that the victim is a member of that identifiable group. Be sure to interrupt any minimizing by the name-caller that this was a joke or they were just kidding or fooling around. Harassers must realize the ramifications of their actions.

## 3. Broaden the response and take ownership of the problem

Personalize your response at this stage. Point out the impact of their behaviour on others. “This is offensive to me and others in this classroom.” Point out that name-calling can be hurtful to others who overhear it or witness it. It can create an unsafe classroom climate.

Draw analogies between homophobic name-calling and other forms of harassment based on race, religion, ethnicity, abilities, gender, age, economic status and size, etc. Anti-gay name-calling is no different than racism or sexism in that it is used as a weapon to oppress people. Homophobia is further linked to sexism, in that historically the feminine has been viewed as less valuable in our society. Comments such as “sissy, girl, and wimp” are gender based.



You are a role model who can make a huge difference. Debunk the “us vs. them” mentality of some students, who may view LGBTQ people as other. Help put a human face to the issue. If you are LGBTQ and can safely do so, come out to your students and colleagues and be a positive role model. If you are not, invite LGBTQ people into your classroom to speak to the students.

#### **4. Insist on a change in future behaviour**

Insist on a change in behaviour from the harasser, and ask how they will take responsibility for their actions. “At this school, we do not harass people. How do you plan to make amends?” “Our community does not appreciate hateful or thoughtless behaviour. What assurances can we have that this will not continue?” Consequences will need to be discussed and implemented.

Check in with the victim at this time. “If this continues, please tell me, and I will take further action. We want everyone to be safe at this school.” Again, be sure not to treat the individual like a helpless victim or a member of any target group.

#### **5. Report, record and follow-up**

Follow-up with school behaviour forms, think sheets, referral forms and put the problem on staff committee or staff meeting agendas. Record what happened, where, why, when, who was involved, how many times it has happened, how long it has been going on and who were the bystanders. This can be used to assess and identify repeated behaviour of aggressors and victims and facilitate discussions with parents, police and any other community agencies.

Report the problem to your administrator, who will need to follow up with:

- School Code of Conduct policy changes
- A School-wide Strategy to deal with homophobic slurs
- Case-by-Case intervention plans
- Parent and Community education programs



## Ten Things You Can Say or Do When You Hear “That’s So Gay!”

1. Ask, “How would you feel if your name/identity was inserted instead of “gay”?”  
i.e.: “That’s so Bryce/ Gurvir / Aisha! etc.” and it was used repetitively.
2. Ask, “What does that mean?” or say, “That’s so *what?*”  
Typical student response, “It’s stupid, weird, ugly, etc.”  
Teacher response: “That’s the same as saying, ‘Gay people are stupid, weird, or ugly’ and I find that offensive.”
3. Ask, “How can a book, idea, or song have a sexual orientation?” if they are referring to an inanimate object when using this slur.
4. Say, “You might be surprised to know that what you just said could hurt someone’s feelings.”
5. Say, “This is a homophobia-free zone. Homophobic slurs like that are not tolerated here.”
6. Ask, “What does gay mean?” Use this opportunity to discuss the language of oppression.
7. Show one of the NFB videos: [Sticks and Stones](#), [One of Them](#) or [In Other Words](#).
8. Download classroom posters on this topic from the PEN website:  
**[www.pridenet.ca](http://www.pridenet.ca)** (go to “Posters”)
9. Say, “Gay is OK.”
10. Make links between homophobic slurs and other forms of discrimination. Use analogies between racism, sexism, ableism, ethnocentrism, etc.

USE A STRATEGY THAT REFLECTS YOUR PERSONAL TEACHING STYLE AND IS APPROPRIATE TO THE SITUATION AT HAND.

“Homophobia is like Racism and Anti-Semitism and other forms of bigotry in that it seeks to dehumanize a large group of people, to deny their humanity, their dignity and personhood... I appeal to everyone who believes in Martin Luther King Jr.’s dream to make room at the table of brother and sisterhood for lesbian and gay people.”

- Coretta Scott King



## “Zero Indifference”: DO’S AND DON’T’S OF NAME-CALLING

There is not one way to deal with all incidents of name-calling but there are a variety of responses one can use. Educators must develop a “Zero Indifference” coined by GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network) to create schools where all students are respected and safe. This requires a consistent disruption of name-calling and homophobic comments, such as “That’s so gay!” When dealing with an incident, it is essential to focus on the name calling incident, harassment or intimidation and not on the real or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity of any student being targeted.

### DON’T

- Ignore incidents
- Excuse it or minimize them
- Become fearful of dealing with name calling and unable to act
- Re-victimize targets of name calling by discussing specifics of the incident with other students or staff.

### DO

- **Stop it**-Stop it in the moment. Disrupt the behaviour in a way that ensures no one will get hurt. Get help if needed.
- **Name it**-Describe the behaviour (“That is a homophobic remark.”) Point out that it may be hurtful or embarrassing to others. Remind all involved of the expected behaviours and rules of the school.
- **Educate about it**-Provide immediate support, reassuring students this is a safe place, set a compassionate tone, provide basic information and model taking a stand. Be careful to save face for both aggressors and targets so that the incident does not escalate.
- **Assess it**- Get views of the aggressors, targets and bystanders. Find out about the history and intent of the incidents. Has this happened before? Same aggressor students? Same person being targeted?
- **Report & Record it**- Document what happened and who was involved. Report to Administrators if appropriate. Follow regular reporting and disciplinary procedures in your school.
- **Resolve it**-In the moment, request a change of behaviour or help students mediate a resolution. If it is a one time event that may be enough. If it is a recurring event, notify and involve the parents of both students and/or groups of students.
- **Follow it up**-Check to make sure the resolution was successful. Determine counselling or other needs. Follow up with parents, other teachers (if applicable) and administration to help prevent repeat incidents.

## Responding to “That’s So Gay”

When responding to “That’s So Gay”, many students will comment with the following:

- “We don’t mean anything by that”
- “It’s just a word we use.”
- “Everyone says it”
- “We were just joking and we always do that.”
- “I don’t care if s/he says that, it doesn’t bother me.”

It is important to point out that it does mean something and that it is being used in a negative way.

### Possible Responses:

- What do you mean by that?
- How do you think a gay person would feel about that?
- Is that a compliment?
- So if the connotations are negative, you’re saying it’s a bad thing?

### Benefits:

- Students realize that you won’t dismiss it or ignore it.
- Puts the responsibility on the student.
- Not accusatory, more curious.
- Can open discussion.

### Challenges:

- Student may not say anything.
- Student may not be willing to take ownership of their behaviour.
- Student may still minimize or dismiss it.

# That’s So Gay!

## Responding to Name-Calling in School: Considering the Time and Place

Your response to name-calling and harassment will be impacted by both the setting in which it occurs and the time available to you. The choices you make while walking rapidly through the hallway on your way to teach your next class will, of necessity, be different from the options you can choose with plenty of time to spare and the structure of a classroom supporting you. If “time and place” allow for only punitive or reactive responses, or if the needs of the targeted student will be better served by your speaking to the offending student(s) later, make sure to carve out a future “time and place” to deal with the situation more reflectively. Education will go much further than punishment alone!

	<b>Less Time/Public Space (at dismissal, during recess)</b>	<b>More Time/Private Space (during class, after school)</b>
<b>Structured Setting (Class, library)</b>	<p>“That expression is unacceptable in this room.”</p> <p>“You know the class rules.”</p> <p>“Please Apologize.”</p> <p>“Take a time out.”</p> <p>“Leave her/him alone.”</p>	<p>“What did you mean by, ‘That’s so gay’?”</p> <p>“That was a stereotype. Stereotypes are a kind of lie, and they hurt peoples feelings.”</p> <p>“That was a homophobic putdown and it doesn’t belong at school.”</p> <p>“That was hurtful. Your comment hurt by...”</p>
<b>Unstructured Setting (Hallway, gym, recess)</b>	<p>“Cut it out.”</p> <p>“That’s way out of line.”</p> <p>“Stop it right now.”</p> <p>“Whoa, that is <b>NOT</b> okay!”</p>	<p>“That is bullying. It is against school rules.”</p> <p>“At this school we do not harass people. Do you want me to write this up as a bullying incident?”</p> <p>“That was really mean. Why did you say that?”</p> <p>“Do you understand why that was so hurtful?”</p>

# Changing The School Culture; Breaking the Code of Silence

Students and staff are sometimes reluctant to challenge homophobic slurs in schools. This may be due, in part, to a discomfort in dealing with topics related to sexual orientation and gender identity. Part of changing this dynamic involves open and honest discussion among staff about sexuality issues. Some staff members may fear that discussing homophobia and homosexuality requires that teachers talk about “gay sex” at school. This is not the case. Anti-homophobia education can occur from kindergarten onwards in age-appropriate ways. Here are some tips to help you succeed in doing this:

## 1. Name homophobic slurs for what they are

Don't use generic terms like, “We treat everyone with respect here.” This does nothing to specifically identify the problem or assure students that their experience will be acknowledged. (See **Anti-Gay Bullying: What Can You Do About It** on pages 12 - 13 in this handbook)

## 2. Draw analogies between different forms of oppression

To support colleagues and students point out the importance and harm of shared hurts. Post the BCTF's “That's so gay” poster prominently in hallways. Use the “Evolution of Slurs” poster from the BCTF ([www.bctf.ca/social/homophobia/](http://www.bctf.ca/social/homophobia/)) as a starting point to teach students about how homophobia is just as harmful as racism, sexism, etc.

## 3. Do not let bystanders off the hook by supporting the code of silence

Bystanders are often silent because they fear being labeled as LGBTQ themselves or fear physical or verbal retaliation, simply by standing up against homophobic comments that they find offensive. Explain to students that they do not need to be a person of color to oppose racism, nor be a woman to challenge sexism. Engage students in lessons and activities that make them reflect (orally or in writing) about what they would do if they were the targets of a homophobic slur. Promote events like the National Day of Silence and the National Day Against Homophobia ([www.bctf.ca/social/homophobia/](http://www.bctf.ca/social/homophobia/)) in your secondary school to build support for LGBTQ people who are silenced daily about their realities.

## 4. Challenge negative myths and stereotypes about LGBTQ people

Examine your current curriculum. Make mention of famous LGBTQ individuals within curriculum topics. Have students respond to topical stories in the media (E.g. equal marriage). Teach about the interconnection of oppression. For example, use fairytales to examine how sexism influences characters in traditional and fractured

versions of the popular stories. What gender stereotypes are evident? If it feels appropriate, you could further extend this activity by asking open-ended questions about the possibility of princes or princesses being married to one another, instead of marrying the opposite gender.

Show videos on different kinds of families, such as “That’s a Family”, available from the BCTF, and examine the similarities and differences between many types of families. Define what makes a family and discuss how each character in the film felt about their family.

Have students examine how homophobia influences their own personal choices in styles of clothing, hair, mannerisms, potential occupation, etc. Make personal connections for students to their daily lives.

## 5. “Normalize” the topic of LGBTQ issues in education

Talk about these issues with colleagues. Share ideas on resources and lesson plans. Celebrate your successes. Make it part of your “lens” through which you examine your teaching practice.

## 6. Revise your school code of conduct policies

Homophobic harassment is demeaning treatment to all students, students’ parents or guardians, and employees regardless of their sexual orientation. Harassment based on gender identities is also demeaning to all students and employees. These forms of harassment and discrimination are prohibited under the B.C. Human Rights Code.

The code reads in part: *No person shall discriminate against anyone because of the race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex or sexual orientation of that person or class of persons.* (Section 3(1) BC Human Rights Act, September 1993)

Ensure your school’s code of conduct policy uses specific and inclusive language such as:

**“Discrimination and harassment towards students or employees on the basis of their real or perceived sexual orientation or gender identification will not be tolerated.”**

Don’t only use general terms such as “we respect everyone here”, which does not acknowledge the silence and harassment LGBTQ students and staff deal with. Make sure the code of conduct is a “living” document, which is used to direct behavior expectations and deal with issues of conflict.



## BCSTA Passes Motion to Protect LGBTQ Students

On April 1, 2005 the Annual General Meeting of the British Columbia School Trustees Association debated and passed a motion to protect lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBTQ) students and those perceived to be LGBTQ in our public schools. It was brought forward by progressive trustees in the metro Vancouver area as a result of a lack of action by the BC Ministry of Education to advocate for LGBTQ students' safety in schools. Both the Liberal and NDP governments have largely ignored the plight of these youth in schools.

The 2003 Safe Schools Task Force, which travelled around B.C. on behalf of the Liberal provincial government, called attention to the challenges faced by lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans-identified youth in British Columbia schools. Its report stated: **"In nearly every community visited [ . . . ], no matter how large or small, individuals made presentations about the issue of harassment and intimidation based on sexual orientation. Presenters talked about their experience in the school system and the ways that homophobic discrimination had led to harassment and intimidation that made their schooling difficult. Many gay and lesbian youth told us that they dreaded coming to school."**

Furthermore, the Task Force found that **"even the perception of being homosexual or of being tolerant of homosexuality is enough to result in harassment and intimidation, including both emotional and physical abuse from those who choose to bully."**

B.C. school trustees should be congratulated for their public stance. We look forward to comprehensive and specific policies being developed to protect LGBTQ youth in school districts as a result of this motion, which reads as follows:

### **Safety for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Trans-Identified Youth**

*Be it resolved:*

*That the BCSTA encourage and support school district policies that specifically address the safety concerns of, and prohibit discrimination against, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans-identified students, as well as students who are harassed due to perceptions of their gender identity or sexual orientation; and have the (BCSTA) Education Committee draft a sample policy to aid school districts in this process.*

Please work with community coalitions, your union and progressive local school trustees to begin to develop an LGBTQ student policy in light of this new motion being adopted by the BCSTA. To date, only the Vancouver (S.D. #39) and Greater Victoria (S.D. #61) school districts have comprehensive LGBTQ student policies. The Vancouver School Board has passed a detailed action plan and budget that accompany their policy.



## Tips for Educators: Responding to Anti-Gay Rhetoric and Anger

When educators are dealing with homophobic name-calling, supporting LGBTQ youth and using LGBTQ-friendly curriculum, they often fear being confronted or verbally attacked by angry colleagues, parents or other members of the community. Here are some suggestions for dealing with anti-gay rhetoric and anger.

Remain calm. Do not take the anger personally. It's important that your verbal and nonverbal communications be clear and positive. An angry person is often not rational, so use effective listening skills and respond matter-of-factly and non-defensively. Don't be drawn into their attempt at extended debate. Hostile people are not usually interested in constructive dialogue, so arguing with them does not lead to any resolution.

The anger, fear or irrationality may be founded in moral indignation. Such a position might bring forward comments such as:

- *"Homosexuality is a choice; I don't want my child learning anything about it."*
- *"There are no gay students in this school or town. This isn't our issue."*
- *"You're just trying to recruit young people to become homosexuals."*
- *"In my religion, homosexuality is considered a sin, and I can't condone it."*
- *"I'm not prejudiced against anyone, but I'm against homosexual behaviour."*

In response, reframe the objection in terms of universally held beliefs:

- *"Do you believe that all students should be safe at school?"*
- *"Do you believe that every educator must work to safeguard the rights of those students who are, or who may be perceived as, different from the majority?"*
- *"Do you believe that schools should make all students confident in themselves?"*
- *"Do you believe that all students are deserving of dignity and respect at school?"*

It sometimes diffuses the anger and hostility to acknowledge their feelings with comments such as:

- *"I hear what you're saying. You seem to have strong opinions here."*
- *"Thank you for your honesty in making that comment."*
- *"I don't agree because... "*
- *"In my experience, I have found that... "*

If the hostility is repeated and prolonged, you could respond with any of the following points which refer to sound, commonly-held educational principles:

- *"We'll have to agree to disagree. However, I believe that most educators and parents do agree with me on these issues. "*
- *"The minimum required of us as educators is to support every student, and that means we have to work to safeguard the rights of those who are different (including LGBTQ people), or those perceived as such."*
- *"As teachers it's imperative that we treat our gay [ etc.] students with full respect, even if it runs counter to our moral views. "*

**Remember, the real issue is about safety and inclusion for all students.**



## Tips for Administrators: Providing Leadership on LGBTQ Issues

Principals have a responsibility to create a safe, inclusive and welcoming school environment for LGBTQ youth and their families. When dealing with incidents of overt and covert homophobic harassment, administrators need to identify effective actions that will help them to prevent future occurrences of the problem.

### Key Questions for Administrators

When incidents of homophobic harassment occur ask yourself:

1. What is/are the central issue(s) in this situation?
2. Is the physical or emotional safety of students or staff members an issue here?
3. What immediate intervention or support can I take to rectify the problem?
4. As a school leader, what long-term strategies can I try to put in place to help correct this situation and prevent a reoccurrence of this problem?

### Key Incident Intervention Points:

1. Take complaints seriously.
2. Acknowledge that the issues/problems are occurring.
3. Support the victim(s). Educate the perpetrator(s) and school community via available anti-homophobia education programs and resources.
4. Follow the usual discipline protocols.
5. Demonstrate leadership in your school community.
6. Know who to contact and use available resources for support.
7. Be mindful that every situation, every school culture or family dynamic is unique.
8. Familiarize yourself with school district, provincial, and federal anti-discrimination policies and laws.
9. Lobby your Provincial Administrator's Association for policy and procedural changes that will effectively protect LGBTQ students and their families (See VSB School Board Policy, BCSTA and BCTF motions passed since 1997, as potential sources of models.)
10. Make supportive statements about LGBTQ youth and encourage staff to teach about LGBTQ lives and family realities.
11. Support curricular change initiatives and make use of print, video and human resources to challenge harmful stereotypes about LGBTQ people within your school.



## LESSON 1: WHAT'S IN A NAME?

### Grade Level

**Grades 4-7** (this lesson can be adapted for younger or older students)

### Learning

#### Outcomes

-to identify common labels, putdowns and name-calling

-to increase empathy by understanding another person's feelings

### Context

This is part of a series of lessons that deal with name-calling. Each lesson builds on the previous lesson's skills and knowledge. Teachers can use them separately if they are familiar or comfortable with the material or have done similar lessons with their students. The initial goal of these lessons is to help students understand the hurtful effects of name-calling and the reasons why people call one another names. The students will develop skills for dealing with name-calling and be able to identify aggressive, assertive and passive responses to name-calling.

### Preparation

- ◆ Print out charts for students to fill in
- ◆ Make large wall chart or use an overhead to record whole class responses

### Lesson

Have students work in pairs to brainstorm words they have heard commonly applied to each group listed on the chart. The chart can be modified to be more relevant to the populations present in your student body or community.

Have the students share their words with the whole class and add them to a large wall chart. Once you have all the words collected, have the students discuss why there are more words for any particular group (e.g. women). Clarify definitions for any words misunderstood-dyke, faggot, etc.

Tell the students that the next activity requires the use of feeling words. Have them brainstorm quickly a list of words, so that they don't depend on words like sad, mad, and bad. If they can't think of them introduce words like:

weird, dumb, different, afraid, embarrassed, angry, jealous, ashamed, irritated, anxious, excited, disappointed, frustrated.

## **Guided Imagery Activity**

### **Step I**

To help the students empathize with others, have the students close their eyes and imagine that they are short.

### **Step II**

Create a scenario. The teacher reads this aloud, for example, "Imagine you've always wanted to try out for the basketball team. As you enter the gym, the tall, athletic captain of the team says, 'You're not trying out for the team, you \_\_\_\_!'" (Teacher inserts in the blank the list of words from the class putdowns under the short category).

### **Step III**

When done, ask them to open their eyes. When they are ready, they can write on their chart how it felt to be called those names.

### **Step IV**

Select up to six categories from the worksheet. Design and read mini scenarios for each category prior to reading putdowns aloud. Students repeat recording their feelings on their charts.

### **Step V**

After completion of the scenarios develop a master list of common feelings amongst students from their recorded responses. Chart these where everyone can see them.

### **Step VI Debrief**

Reinforce that the words on the putdown list are hurtful and mean and all forms of name calling cause similar harm. Teachers need to draw analogies between all forms of oppression and tell students that racial slurs are just as hurtful as sexist remarks and homophobic comments. Teachers need to state that "the names on the putdown chart are unacceptable in this classroom and in the school. From now on this classroom is a safe space for all and bullying-free zone."

### **Step VII Closure**

Teacher needs to express appreciation for the student's hard work on this subject.

### Extension

Post name-calling posters from the PEN website in your classroom. There are a number of good posters you can download for free with a colour printer.

### Assessment

- ◆ Student is able to identify common putdowns.
- ◆ Students will have more empathy for others and will be able to describe how someone experiencing name-calling may feel.
- ◆ Student is able to complete the chart and participate in developing classroom chart.
- ◆ Students will begin to make some connections between racism, sexism and homophobia.
- ◆ Student will understand why the classroom is a bullying-free zone.



## NAME-CALLING WORKSHEET

Different Types Of People	Labels Or Put Downs	How You Would Feel If You Were These People And Were Called These Names (Pick From List)
short		
overweight		
English Second Language		
person wearing glasses		
girl/woman		
gay man		
gifted student		
First Nations person		
person with AIDS		
person with a learning disability		
poor		

Different Types Of People	Labels Or Putdowns	How You Would Feel If You Were These People And Were Called These Names
special needs		
street person		
senior citizen		
five year old		
teenager		
person with unusual physical features		
person of colour (Asian, Indo-Canadian, Black, etc.)		
lesbian		
boys/men		

## LESSON 2: WHY CALL NAMES?

### Grade Level

**Grades 4-7** (this lesson can be adapted for younger or older students)

### Learning Outcomes

-to gain an awareness of group-biased name-calling and classify name-calling

-to understand that the purpose of name-calling is to oppress members of groups and discourage us from looking at people as individuals

-to become aware of why people call names

### Context

This is part of a series of lessons that deal with name-calling. Each lesson builds on the previous lesson's skills and knowledge. Teachers can use them separately if they are familiar or comfortable with the material or have done similar lessons with their students. The initial goal of these lessons is to help students understand the hurtful effects of name-calling and the reasons why people call one another names. The students will develop skills for dealing with name-calling and be able to identify aggressive, assertive and passive responses to name-calling.

### Preparation

- ◆ large chart paper and felt pens for each group
- ◆ 6-8 large cards to be used for the categories

### Lesson

In co-operative groups of four students, have them brainstorm and record on large chart paper a list of reasons why or circumstances when people use name-calling and putdowns. Ask them to be prepared to present their ideas to the class. After 20 minutes have the students return to the large group.

Post the charts up as the reporters from each group take turns reporting the ideas on their chart that have not been reported already from another group. After their presentations work with the students to come up with 6-8 categories for most name-calling (e.g. power or domination, low self esteem, peer pressure, group/gang pressure, lack of communication or friendship skills, learned from adults (role models), revenge (feel abused by others), difficulty dealing with difference (ageism, racism, homophobia, sexism, ableism, etc.). Post these categories on the wall.

Have the students cut their charts up into strips with one idea on each strip. Make sure each student has a strip and have him/ her place their ideas under one of the categories.

Discuss any disagreements or questions students have about which category was selected for which ideas. Explain to the students that you will focus on dealing with differences in the next lesson.

**Assessment**

- ◆ Student actively participated in group work and was able to categorize their idea on the larger class chart.
- ◆ Student is able to articulate why their word is classified in its category.

This is a sample of some ideas students may come up with. Every classroom/school culture will be different in their responses.

Why Do People Call Names?				
Poor communication skills	Peer Pressure	Power	Dealing with difference	Revenge
I didn't know what else to say.  everybody does it  no one listens to me until I call them names"	my friends told me to do it.  it was a dare.  if I didn't do it they would call me names	he's a bully  to be mean  to pick on you	people call names because they are racist  putdown girls about how they look  make fun of boys who don't play sports	everyone picks on me so I just have to defend myself

## LESSON 3: ZACK'S STORY

### Grade Level

4-7 (this lesson can be adapted for younger or older students)

### Learning Outcomes

-to develop an awareness that name-calling is used to oppress LGBTQ people.

-to increase awareness and understanding that families are the people who love you and that there are many types of families.

-to introduce a family with same-gender parents.

### Context

This is part of a series of lessons that deal with name-calling. Each lesson builds on the previous lesson's skills and knowledge. Teachers can use them separately if they are familiar or comfortable with the material or have done similar lessons with their students. The goal of this lesson is to help students understand the hurtful effects of name-calling and the reasons why people call one another names.

### Preparation

Book: *Zack's Story, Growing Up With Same-Sex Parents* by Keith Elliot Greenberg, Lerner Publications co., 1996

### Lesson

Read *Zack's Story* to the class and share the photographs of Zack's family with the class. Discuss the people in Zack's family. Talk about the personalities of each mom and the relationship he has with his Moms and his Dad. Other issues in the story are invitro-fertilization, and step-families. Students may need some clarification on these issues.

Discuss the kinds of name-calling Zack experienced and his strategies for dealing with it.

*Zack ignored it the first time it happened and felt hurt and isolated. The second time it happened he was very angry. After he talked to his Mom, he was able to find a way to tell his friend how it made him feel and why. When Zack was assertive, his friend was able to admit his mistake and to remain a friend. Zack's self-esteem and self-confidence were protected.*

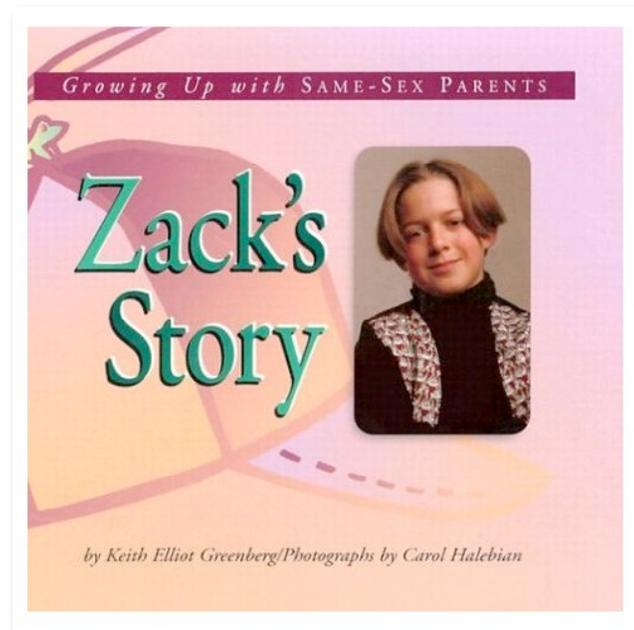
### Activities

- 1) Have students write a journal about why people use name-calling and its impact on people.
- 2) Have students write a letter to Zack, telling him how they felt about the name-calling and how effective they thought his strategies were.

- 3) Have the students complete a Venn diagram showing how they are the same and how they are different from Zack or how one of their parents compares to one of Zack's Moms.
- 4) Discuss with the students what makes a unique individual and why we need to understand, appreciate, and celebrate differences.
- 5) Optional (if trust has been built in your class): Have students write about something they are sensitive about and would not want others to tease them about. Assure confidentiality and collect these to read privately.

### Assessment

- ◆ Student is able to complete a journal expressing their ideas about name-calling and is able to write about their own feelings and issues that are important to them.
- ◆ Student is able to communicate in a letter to Zack their understanding of name-calling and empathize with Zack in his situation.
- ◆ Student can complete a Venn diagram, comparing personality traits, traditions and interests of their family to those aspects of Zack's family.



## LESSON 4: PASSIVE, AGGRESSIVE AND ASSERTIVE

### Grade Level

**Grades 4-7** (this lesson can be adapted for younger or older students)

### Learning Outcomes

-to develop an understanding of the concepts "aggressive", "passive" and "assertive".

-to be able to recognize these behaviours

-to be able to identify when certain behaviours might be used.

-to choose to use assertive behaviour to solve problems, so that everyone wins.

### Context

The goal of this lesson is to help students understand the hurtful effects of name-calling and the reasons why people call one another names. As well, the lesson will provide possible responses to name-calling. The students will develop skills for dealing with name-calling and be able to identify: aggressive, assertive and passive responses to name-calling.

### Preparation

- ◆ Photocopy Responses to Bullying Chart for all students.
- ◆ Print scenarios on cue cards.

### Lesson

Tell the students the meaning of the words *passive*, *aggressive* and *assertive*. Give simple examples that focus on putdowns and bullying. Ask them to identify what they would see, hear, feel and do if they were acting or reacting passively to someone who was bullying them. Model how to fill out the first column of the Responses to Bullying Chart. Ask students what they see, feel, hear or do if acting or reacting in an aggressive manner? Repeat this for assertive reactions. Have them complete their chart.

After students have a clear understanding of each concept, put them into groups of 4 and give them one scenario per group (see next page). Have the students act out their scenario three times. They must show a passive, aggressive and assertive way of dealing with the situation. The audience's job is to try to figure out which type of behaviour they are demonstrating. After each group has acted out their skits, discuss the benefits and risks of each type of behaviour. Use the sample questions on next page as a guide.

### Sample Questions

- ◆ When is it appropriate to use this behaviour? Why or why not?
- ◆ What is the outcome likely to be? Is it a safe situation?
- ◆ Who wins in this situation? Who loses? (if anyone) What is the goal? What do people want in this situation?
- ◆ Is this a win-lose, lose-lose or win-win outcome? How can everyone win?

### Scenarios

The same student is constantly taking your personal things out of your desk and then flaunts it at recess, calling you a sissy.

During sports day, two boys in another class, mimic how you run in one of the races.

The teacher asks the class to find partners. No one picks you and when the teacher assigns you a partner, the student is angry and won't talk to you.

You don't like school very much. You talk to the teacher at recess and during lunch. Everyday you start to feel sick and phone Mom after lunch. The other kids leave you out and have started calling you, "teacher's pet".

Another student makes a derogatory comment about your mother.

During dance lessons in PE, you find out that you like to ballroom dance. The other boys like rap. The teacher has asked you to demonstrate and you hear the other boys snicker and jeer.

(Other scenarios can be found in the Second Step manual under empathy for grade 5/6/7 and in the book, Getting Equipped to Stop Bullying noted in the references at the end of these lessons.)

## Possible Responses to Putdowns and Bullying

	<b>Passive</b>	<b>Aggressive</b>	<b>Assertive</b>
What would I see? (body language, eye contact, physical contact)			
What would I hear? (tone and volume of voice, types of things being said, body/objects used in any way)			
What would I feel? (scared, humiliated, proud, etc.)			
What would I do? (fight, flight, stand up for myself, etc.)			

## LESSON 5: ASSERTIVE STATEMENTS

### Grade Level

**Grades 4-7** (this lesson can be adapted for younger or older students)

### Learning Outcomes

-to develop an understanding of the concepts "aggressive", "passive" and "assertive".

-to be able to recognize these behaviours

-to be able to identify when certain behaviour might be used.

-to choose to use assertive behaviour to solve problems, so that everyone wins.

### Lesson

To build on their skills developed in Lesson 4, have students work in co-operative groups and brainstorm a few problems or situations they have witnessed or experienced. Give each group an Assertive Response Chart (page 34) and have them write down one of the problems they have been discussing. Have them describe it fully.

Have the students develop three possible responses or statements they would use in this name-calling or put-down situation.

Does it sound assertive?  
Does it look assertive?  
Does it feel assertive?  
Is it an assertive action?

Have the students act out their responses, practising how they would sound, look and feel. Ask the audience: Is it possible? Is it realistic? Does the student get what she/he wants from the situation? Is it safe? Talk about any unexpected reactions they might get and possible actions they might have to take if these things happen.

### Assessment

- ◆ Demonstrates an understanding of the concepts aggressive, passive and assertive.
- ◆ Can recognize these behaviours.
- ◆ Can identify when certain behaviours might be used safely.
- ◆ Can choose to use assertive statements and behaviour to solve problems, so that everyone wins.

### Follow-up Activities for Dealing with Name-calling

- 1) **Develop a Classroom Code of Conduct** with regards to name-calling. Ensure that words regarding one's real or perceived sexual orientation are included in the list of prohibited putdowns. Have clear consequences outlined for misconduct.

Communicate this to your students' families, explaining the importance of inclusion and safety for all.

- 2) Use the **Second Step-A Violence Prevention Program** (Grades 6-8) to develop empathy, develop assertiveness and teach students about acceptance of differences.
- 3) Design additional lessons that help develop self-esteem, friendship skills and teach about anti-bias and accepting differences.

### **Resources**

*Anti-Bias Curriculum, Tools for Empowering Young Children*, Louise Derman-Sparks and A.B.C. Task Force, National Association for the Education of Young Children, Washington, D.C., 1989.

*Getting Equipped to Stop Bullying: A kid's Survival Kit for Understanding and coping with Violence in the Schools*, Becki H. Boatwright, Teresea A. Mathis, and Susan J. Smith-Rex, Educational Media Corporation, 1998.

*Rethinking our Classrooms, Teaching for Equity and Justice*, Rethinking Schools, Ltd., 1994.

*Words Can Hurt You, Beginning a Program of Anti-Bias Education*, Barbara J. Thomson, Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 199



# ASSERTIVENESS RESPONSE CHART

Describe the situation:

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How serious a problem is it?

- |                |           |               |               |
|----------------|-----------|---------------|---------------|
| 4<br>extremely | 3<br>very | 2<br>somewhat | 1<br>not very |
|----------------|-----------|---------------|---------------|

Possible responses:

<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>			
<input type="checkbox"/> is it reasonable? <input type="checkbox"/> is it safe? <input type="checkbox"/> will it work?	<input type="checkbox"/> is it reasonable? <input type="checkbox"/> is it safe? <input type="checkbox"/> will it work?	<input type="checkbox"/> is it reasonable? <input type="checkbox"/> is it safe? <input type="checkbox"/> will it work?	<input type="checkbox"/> is it reasonable? <input type="checkbox"/> is it safe? <input type="checkbox"/> will it work?



## LESSON 6: HOMOPHOBIC SLURS IN CLASSROOMS

### Grade Level

**Grades 4-7** (this lesson can be adapted for younger or older students)

### Learning Outcomes

- to help students understand the analogy between homophobia and other forms of oppression
- to teach students the accurate meanings of terms like gay, lesbian, fag, etc.
- to give students the opportunity to write personal responses on how they would respond to homophobic slurs.

### Vocabulary

racism  
homophobia  
slurs  
faggot  
gay  
lesbian

### Context

Any student can be the target of homophobic hatred. Homophobic slurs affect everyone. Anyone can be the target of these based upon their real or perceived sexual orientation. Students need to see that homophobia, racism and sexism are all equally hurtful.

### Preparation

Photocopy a blank T-chart for students with the heading Racism on the left side. Leave the right side heading blank.

### Lesson plan

#### Step 1

Discuss the concept of racism with students. Brainstorm a list of racial slurs they've heard or said. Emphasize that you do not want to debate the validity of the terms. Focus on the harm they do to people.

#### Step 2

Print the word "fag" or the phrase "That's so gay" in the middle of the right side of the chart. Ask the students if they know what the terms mean and to describe how and when they are used to hurt others. Paraphrase and clarify their responses. Publicly acknowledge laughter or giggling as a way of responding to uncomfortable or unfamiliar topics. Tell students you expect them to be mature about it just as they were on the topic of racism.

#### Step 3

Clarify the meaning of the word "faggot". Teach students that it is a French term to describe a bundle or kindling of wood. Men and women who were perceived to be gay in Medieval times were murdered and their bones or dead bodies were used as kindling to burn women, perceived to be witches, at the stake. (See Sticks and Stones video in Resources Section for excellent information on the origins of words.) Point out to students the harm homophobic slurs have on everyone and impress upon them that anyone can be their real or intended target.

#### **Step 4 Brainstorm Homophobic Slurs**

Brainstorm a list of homophobic slurs or phrases on the right side of the chart. Title it with the heading Homophobia. Draw analogies for students between race and sexual orientation. Explain the common harm of the use of both. If students bring up myths and negative stereotypes of LGBTQ people, record these on the chart also. It will be a good springboard for debunking myths later.

#### **Step 5 Paragraph Writing (Day Two)**

Review terms and language from existing T-charts. Use them to write a paragraph on racism or homophobia.

Their paragraph should include:

- a definition of racism or homophobia (in their own words).
- a description of how they've seen or heard the slurs used.
- who they would tell if they were a target.
- what they can personally do to stop racism or homophobia in their school or community.

#### **Step 6 Paragraph Writing and Sharing (Day Three)**

Have students write paragraphs using the same criteria on the opposite topic from the first day. (Most will often choose racism paragraphs on the first day due to personal comfort levels and familiarity with the topic.) Ask students to share and read aloud their paragraphs. Choose a few on each topic. Compliment students on their paragraph ideas and frequently refer back to the terms racism and homophobia to "normalize" the topics for students. Acknowledge reticence or discomfort in sharing paragraphs and reiterate importance of sharing so as to gain a better understanding of the harm these slurs generate upon individuals.

#### **Extensions**

- 1) Paragraph sharing with younger classes in the school. This is a good opportunity for older students to educate their peers.
- 2) Design posters, which discourage the use of anti-gay and racial slurs.
- 3) View the NFB film "Sticks & Stones" with your class. The film is about children from same gender families who are teased at school. After the film ask follow up questions like:
  - a) In this film, what is the message for students?
  - b) Have your attitudes changed towards gay or lesbian people now that you know more about homophobia and homophobic slurs?

#### **Assessment**

- ◆ Do students' paragraphs demonstrate an awareness of the harm caused by homophobia?
- ◆ Can students articulate in their own words the similarities between homophobia and racism?
- ◆ Is there evidence that students' attitudes have changed towards LGBTQ people?



## LESSON 7: QUICK COMEBACKS TO NAME-CALLING

**Grade Level**  
**Grades 8-10**

**Learning**  
**Outcomes**

-to be able to verbally state their concerns about name-calling

-to articulate and gain a deeper understanding of reasons for name-calling

-to share known ways to respond to name-calling and add some new ones to their repertoires

-to be able to realistically analyze the extremity of personal problems and the reasonableness, safety and potential usefulness of possible solutions

**Vocabulary**

heterosexual  
bisexual  
gay  
lesbian  
straight  
transgendered  
stereotype

**Context**

This lesson will assist students to quickly diffuse incidents of name-calling in the classrooms and hallways. The lesson does not stand alone nor deal with the systemic roots of name-calling. Teachers need to look to other lessons such as the Sociometry of Oppression lesson, which draws analogies between various forms of oppression. (available for download from the resources section of the PEN web site)

**Instructional Strategies**

- ◆ pair share
- ◆ group brainstorming
- ◆ small group discussion
- ◆ large group discussion

**Lesson**

Pose the following questions to the class:

- ◆ "What gay slurs are you worried about being called?"
- ◆ "What forms of harassment have you experienced?" (verbal, graffiti, notes, etc.)

Have the students quickly share some ideas with a partner before brainstorming with the whole class. Record the student's ideas on the chart paper, board or overhead.

As a large group to brainstorm reasons why gay slurs are used against others. Some possible responses are:

- power/control
- peer pressure
- to be cool
- modelling from parents & other students
- poor communication skills
- revenge/vindication
- isolate/intimidate
- false beliefs
- misunderstanding
- cultural conditioning

Have students record their ideas on chart paper and present their lists to the class.

Next discuss ways to respond to gay slurs. Possible answers are:

- ignore it
- confront it honestly and clearly
- get adult help
- check with peers
- talk with parents or other trusted adult
- humour
- help lines

Work in small groups to list quick comebacks they have used or someone they know has used when gay slurs have occurred. Have them discuss their effectiveness and come to a consensus as a group on which are the best comebacks. Have the students present their ideas to the class. (see sample of Quick Comeback Responses at the end of this lesson.)

### **Activities**

- 1) write a paragraph about how they would take action in the face of homophobic slurs
- 2) develop a school wide action plan for dealing with name-calling.
- 3) develop a presentation or document for addressing class concerns with administrators, counsellors or student council.

### **Assessment**

- ◆ ability to discuss homophobic bullying with peers.
- ◆ awareness of the reasons for the use of gay slurs.
- ◆ ability to problem solve.
- ◆ increased awareness of the harm caused by gay slurs.

## SAMPLES OF QUICK COMEBACK RESPONSES

### SARCASM

"I'm sorry, you seem to have me confused with a cigarette!"

"What year is it?"

"Takes one to know one."

"What difference does that make to you??"

### EDUCATIONAL OR CHALLENGING

"Imagine if you said: That's so Chinese or Jewish", etc.

"It must be hard to be so angry or hateful."

"I don't hate you!"

"I have family members who are gay and when you use hurtful words like that you hurt me too."

"That is like racism."

"Some people may assume you are prejudiced when you say that."

### PROUD-FLIP TO POSITIVE

"Don't hate, celebrate!"

"Make love, not war."

"It's okay to be gay."

"This is a homophobia free zone."

### QUESTIONING OR CURIOUS

"Do you know what that word means?"

"What's your point?"

"Is that a homophobic comment?"

"Why would you say that?"

"And that bothers you how?"

"That's gay! Does that mean it's like a good thing?"

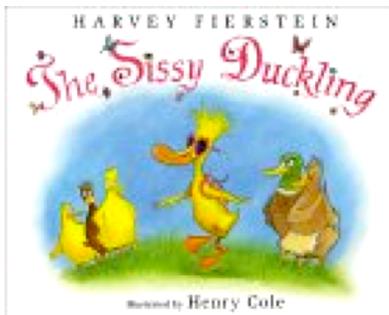
*Students and educators generated these ideas in October 2003 at the Building Queer Friendly schools Conference co-hosted by PEN and the Vancouver School Board.*

## Book Resources

*This list is intended as a starting point for students, parents and educators who wish to learn more about LGBTQ issues and persons, and about name-calling in particular. Any bookstore should be able to locate these books for you, if they are still in print, if you can give them the title, author and ISBN number. Here are a few good bookstores.*

- **Little Sister's Bookstore** - 1238 Davie Street, Vancouver, BC V6E 1N4  
Tel: 604-669-1753 or 1-800-567-1662 [www.littlesistersbookstore.com](http://www.littlesistersbookstore.com)
- **Kidsbooks** - 3083 West Broadway, Vancouver, BC V6K 2G9  
Tel: 604-738-5335 or 1-800-893-5335 [www.kidsbooks.ca](http://www.kidsbooks.ca)

dePaola, T.; ***Oliver Button Is A Sissy***; 1979; ISBN : 0-15-257852-8; His classmates' taunts don't stop Oliver from doing what he likes best. This is a subtle, moving book about a child who is seen as being different. (Gr. 1-3)



Fierstein, H.; ***The Sissy Duckling***; 2002; ISBN: 0-689-83566-3; Elmer tries to do typical boy duck activities but he just doesn't fit in. His dad calls him a sissy, and his mum calls him "special" but seems unhappy too. Elmer runs away to live alone and to avoid the other ducks, but an unexpected event results in an ingenious act of bravery and loyalty for his father. Everyone changes a bit, and he remains very "special". (Gr. 2-7)

Greenberg, K.; ***Zack's Story***; 1996; ISBN 0-8225-2581-X; This is a true story of 11-year-old Zack who lives with his two mothers and shares an very loving relationship with his father as well. The book explores how Zack deals assertively with homophobic name calling at school. Photos of Zack and his frank telling about life in a lesbian family help young students to debunk myths and stereotypes about same-sex families. (Gr. 3-6)

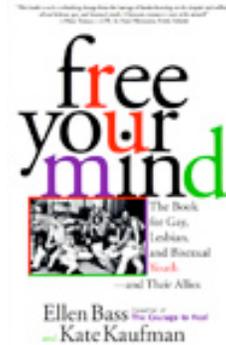
Marcus, E.; ***What If Someone I Know Is Gay?***; 2000; ISBN 0-8431-7611-3; This candid resource answers real questions from children on all aspects of sexual identity. The author dispels the myths and negative stereotypes about LGBTQ people and helps students to understand what being LGBTQ really means. Very well-written book. (Gr. 5-9).

Grima, T. (ed); ***Not the Only One***; 1994; ISBN 1-55583-275-X; 21 stories capture many of the fears, joys, confusion and energy of teens facing LGBTQ issues, in their own coming out, or in learning that a friend or family member is LGBTQ. These stories will help youth reflecting on their own anxiety, isolation, excitement, pride, or hope for the future. (Sec.)

Harterger, B.; **Geography Club**; 2003; ISBN 0-06-001221-8; This is a fast paced, funny tale about teens who don't learn anything about Geography but discover plenty about the treacherous social terrain of high school. The book's themes are friendship, first love, social conformity, peer pressure and alienation by homophobic peers. Find out how the Geography club eventually becomes a Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) club. (Sec.)

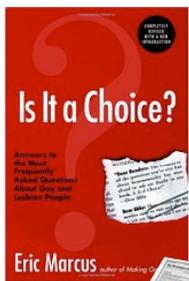
Wieler, D.; **Bad Boy**; 1989; ISBN 0-88899-083-9; [Gov. Gen. Literary Award] All that AJ wants in his life is to make the AAA hockey team, with his best friend Tully. But when he learns Tully is gay, AJ loses control. He can't keep his fear and aggression from spilling out onto the ice. He has to learn about friendship and to rebuild his trust in Tully. (Sec.)

Bass, E. and Kaufman K.; **Free Your Mind**; 1996; ISBN 0-06-095104-4; A practical guide for LGB youth and allies, with comprehensive chapters on Family, Friends, Self-Discovery, School, Spirituality, and Community. There are stories from LGB youth, info on famous LGBTQs, and great suggestions on coming out, relationships, health, school climate / hostility, resources, groups, religious conflict, supporting LGB friends/family, etc. This book really enables youth to understand and to celebrate their lives. (Sec.)



Gray, M.L.; **In Your Face: Stories From the Lives Of Queer Youth**; 1999; ISBN 1-56023-8879; A great collection of personal accounts of the lives of LGBTQ youth. (Sec.)

Huegel, K.; **GLBTQ: The Survival Guide for Queer and Questioning Teens**; 2003; ISBN 1-57542-126-7. Strategies & advice for teens about coming out, responding to homophobia, dating, staying healthy and safe, exercising their rights, life at school, community building, dealing with religion & culture, and planning for the future. Many first-person comments from happy, well adjusted GLBTQ teens who are loved and supported for who they are. (Sec.)



Marcus, E.; **Is it a Choice?** 1999; ISBN 0-06-251623-X; This book should be in every school library. The author clearly answers 300 frequently asked questions about lesbians & gays in language appropriate for almost all adolescents. It touches on religion, sex, family, discrimination, self-discovery, mass media, dating, aging, AIDS, work, coming out, relationships, and more. (Grades 6-12)

**Highly recommended**

Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) and Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO); Seeing **the Rainbow**; 2002; ISBN 0-88989-338-1 This excellent collection of essays, stories, strategies and resources (130 pages) comes from educators across Canada interested in addressing LGBTQ and Two-spirited issues in education. (Order from CTF's website [www.ctf-fce.ca](http://www.ctf-fce.ca) -- go to "Resources"). (Professional)



Derman-Sparks, L.; ***Anti-Bias Curriculum-Tools for Empowering Young Children***; 1989; ISBN 0-935989-20-X; Some young children develop biases against others by observing all the spoken and unspoken messages around them, about being different. They learn that privilege and power are connected to these differences. This book shows adults how to empower young children (pre-school to early primary) to stand up for what's right. This excellent resource provides background information, sets goals and guidelines, outlines effective activities, and provides a thorough literature review of children's books, curriculum materials and adult books. (Professional)

Fone, B.; ***Homophobia; a history***; 2000; ISBN 0-312-42030-7; This heavy book (420 pages plus notes) looks at the history of the many forms of homophobia, including ancient Greek attitudes and Biblical comments, a millennium of (European) sodomy from 500 - 1400 BC, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, the English / American obsessions with sexual differences in the 18th and 19th centuries, and the very political homophobia of the 20th century. The author examines the legal, religious, moral and political aspects in the evolution of homophobia as "the last acceptable prejudice". (Professional)



Pride Education Network; ***Challenging Homophobia in Schools***; 2000, revised in 2004. Sections of this comprehensive manual (240 pages) include Rationale for addressing homophobia, Background on a variety of LGBTQ issues, Strategies for educators, many Lesson Plans (elem. and sec.) and Resources (books, videos, community groups). The second edition includes more info on transgender issues, and on legal changes for LGBTQs in Canada and BC. (Available from PEN [www.pridenet.ca](http://www.pridenet.ca)). (Professional)

Johnson, O.; ***The Sexual Spectrum***; 2004; ISBN 1-55192-681-4; In this witty and engaging book about human sexual diversity, Johnson (a Vancouver neuro-psychologist and clinician) writes calmly about the complexities and variations in sexuality, orientation and gender identity. She details many current findings about neuro-biology, behaviour, and many social / legal questions affecting LGBTQs. Extensive bibliography is included. (Professional) **Highly recommended.**



Thomson, B. J., ***Words Can Hurt You, Beginning A Program of Anti-Bias Education***; 1996; ISBN 0-201-45502-1; This book has 49 lesson plans that deal with difference, stereotypes, and prejudice. It's based on the premise that if we really understood what a pluralistic society was, everyone would enjoy equal access to opportunities, with no one favoured or limited by their gender, ethnicity or skin colour. The first part explains how to set up a bias-free classroom, involving the whole school, parents and community. (Professional)

Toronto School Board and Elementary Teachers of Toronto; ***Rainbows and Triangles: A Curriculum Document for Challenging Homophobia & Heterosexism in the K-6 Classroom***; 2003; This is a compilation of lesson plans, definitions, FAQs, resources and community contacts. Age-appropriate teaching strategies are given, to present concepts of diverse family structures, human rights, discrimination, homophobia, and challenging all discrimination. (To order, call Toronto School Board 416-397-2595) (Professional)

## Video Resources

**NOTE:** The BC Teachers' Federation (Information Services Division) owns many of the videos listed on these pages; they can be borrowed by BCTF members.

1. *The videos described in this first section are produced and distributed by the National Film Board of Canada (NFB), and are very reasonably priced. For ordering information, call the Customer Service Centre at 1-800-267-7710, or go to [www.nfb.ca](http://www.nfb.ca) These videos can all be viewed in "closed captions" format, if the VCR has the proper decoder. The first two were recommended by BC's Minister of Education, in November 2001.*

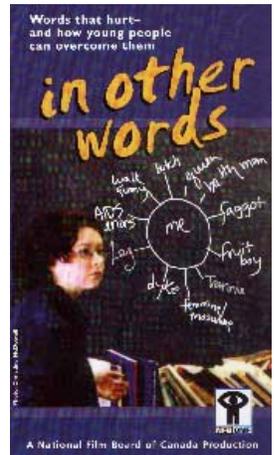
**Sticks and Stones** (17 min) (Grades 3-7) c2001 NFB  
**Highly Recommended**

This documentary looks at the lives of children aged 5 to 12, from various backgrounds, using their own words to show how homophobic language affects their lives. The two main topics in the video are family and name-calling. Children of gay and lesbian parents share their sense of isolation, their fear of discovery, and their struggle with making choices and facing intimidation. Animation sequences are added, to illustrate simple concepts and the history of homophobic slang words. Family photos of differing families are included. Information for teachers on the video liner provides background, discussion points and activities. (Secondary students could use this as a discussion starter.)



**In Other Words** (27 min) (Grades 7-12) c2001 NFB  
**Highly Recommended**

Language and the power of words are the specific topic here. We see the impact of homophobic name-calling on the growth and development of youth, aged 14 to 22. They share details of their lives and their struggles with their identity and their place in society. Important word definitions are given, with historical animations about the derivation of some terms. Very positive messages for LGBTQ youth and their friends. Information for teachers on the video liner provides background, discussion points and activities.



**One of Them** (25 min) (Secondary) c2000 NFB

Six high school students plan a Human Rights Day, and have to confront their own difficulties in addressing homophobia that is manifested in several ways. The focus is on graffiti, name-calling discrimination and stereotypes, rather than sexual activity. Some characters seem very stereotypical, but they nonetheless portray the negative reactions and behaviours often seen in high schools. This dramatization prompts viewers to examine their own feelings, easily leading into class discussion. Background information and class activities are included on the video liner.



**Apples and Oranges** (16 min)  
(Grades 3-5) c2003 NFB

During class discussions, children's paintings magically dissolve into 2 short animated stories. In one, a girl finds out that creativity, not revenge, is the best way to deal with a school bully. In the second, two friends skateboard together, until one finds out the other is gay. Stereotyping, name-calling, intolerance and bullying are all included.

**Straight Laced: How Gender's Got Us All Tied Up** (67 min) (Secondary)  
c2009 Groundspark

Straight-laced reveals the toll that deeply held stereotypes and rigid gender roles have on all our lives. It offers both teens and adults a way out of anxiety, fear, and violence. This documentary highlights fifty diverse students who take viewers on a powerful, intimate journey to see how popular pressures around gender and sexuality are shaping the lives of today's teens.



**OUT: Stories of Lesbian and Gay Youth** (39 or 78 min) (Secondary) c1993 NFB

Issues of discrimination, racism and homophobia are sensitively addressed in this Canadian video, filmed in Toronto and Thunder Bay. It provides awareness, understanding and hope to gay and lesbian youth, parents, counsellors and educators. In candid interviews, young lesbians and gays talk about their struggle with personal identity, made more difficult by societal and familial conflicts. Additional educational resources are included in the comprehensive learning guide. 2 versions are available.

**Taking Charge** (25 min) (Secondary, Professional) c1996 NFB

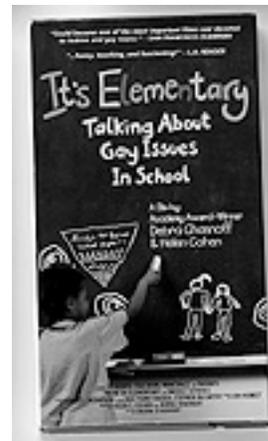
This video shows teen activists "taking charge" of their lives in an increasingly violent society. With role-playing, peer discussion groups and anti-violence collectives, they're educating their peers about the many faces of violence and its effects manifested in sexism, racism and homophobia. Their message to others is that by re-examining our own attitudes and actions, we can play an important role in changing this environment.

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**2. Women's Educational Media (WEM)** in San Francisco produced these videos. Call 415-641-4616, or email: [wemfilms@womedia.org](mailto:wemfilms@womedia.org) or go to [www.womedia.org](http://www.womedia.org)

**It's Elementary** (78 or 38 min) (Professional) c1996 WEM **Highly Recommended**

Described as "funny, touching and fascinating", this groundbreaking, award-winning production presents a powerful case for making anti-gay prejudice an educational issue. Featuring work by elementary / middle school (up to Grade 9) students and interviews with teachers of varied sexual orientations, it demonstrates how elementary schools can successfully address this sensitive area of teaching respect for all. It models excellent teaching about family diversity, name-calling, stereotypes, community building and more. A 24-page viewing guide is included. 2 versions are available



**That's a Family!** (35 min) (Elementary, Middle school) c2000 WEM

This video helps elementary children see and understand the many different shapes of today's families. With courage and humour, the children take viewers on a tour through their lives as they speak candidly about what it's like to grow up in a family with parents of different races or religions, divorced parents, a single parent, gay or lesbian parents, adoptive parents or grandparents as guardians. It comes with an extensive discussion / teaching guide, with lesson plans, suggestions for facilitating classroom discussion at different grade levels, and additional resources for teachers, families and children.



**Let's Get Real** (35 min) (Middle School) c2003 WEM



Told entirely from a youth perspective, this video gives young people the chance to tell their own stories. It examines many issues that lead to taunting and bullying, including race, perceived sexual orientation, religion, learning disabilities, sexual harassment and others. The film not only gives a voice to targeted kids, but also to those who bully, to find out why they lash out and how it makes them feel. The most heartening stories are those of kids who have mustered the courage to stand up for themselves or a friend.

## Helpful LGBTQ Web Sites for Educators and Youth

**Note:** *Web sites are constantly changing. These are some that were current in mid 2004. Most have links to other relevant sites.*

<a href="http://www.qmunity.ca">www.qmunity.ca</a>	Qmunity, Vancouver
<a href="http://www.egale.ca">www.egale.ca</a>	National LGBTQ lobby group, Ottawa
<a href="http://www.mygsa.ca">www.mygsa.ca</a>	National GSA site for educators and students
<a href="http://www.pridenet.ca">www.pridenet.ca</a>	LGBTQ educators' group, Vancouver
<a href="http://www.bctf.ca/social/homophobia">www.bctf.ca/social/homophobia</a>	BC Teachers' Federation Resource
<a href="http://www.teachers.ab.ca/diversity/Sexual_Orientation/Index.htm">www.teachers.ab.ca/diversity/Sexual_Orientation/Index.htm</a>	Alberta Teachers Association
<a href="http://familypride.uwo.ca/index.html">familypride.uwo.ca/index.html</a>	Canadian site for queer families and allies
<a href="http://www.alterheros.com">www.alterheros.com</a>	Great bilingual site for LGBTQ issues, Montreal
<a href="http://www.youth.org">www.youth.org</a>	Site for LGBTQ youth
<a href="http://www.youthresource.com">www.youthresource.com</a>	Comprehensive site for LGBTQ youth issues
<a href="http://www.personproject.org">www.personproject.org</a>	Jean Richter's excellent website
<a href="http://www.youth-suicide.com/gay-bisexual/">www.youth-suicide.com/gay-bisexual/</a>	Youth suicide, focus on GB men, lots of info
<a href="http://www.sexualityandu.ca">www.sexualityandu.ca</a>	Society of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists of Canada
<a href="http://www.familiesaretalking.org">www.familiesaretalking.org</a>	Sexuality Information & Education Council of the US
<a href="http://www.youthco.org">www.youthco.org</a>	Youth-run HIV info group, Vancouver
<a href="http://www.aidsvancouver.org">www.aidsvancouver.org</a>	Aids Vancouver agency
<a href="http://www.asia.bc.ca">www.asia.bc.ca</a>	ASIA agency, Vancouver
<a href="http://www.pflag.ca">www.pflag.ca</a>	PFLAG – Canada; English & French
<a href="http://www.pflagvancouver.com">www.pflagvancouver.com</a>	PFLAG chapter, Vancouver
<a href="http://www.pflag.org">www.pflag.org</a>	PFLAG - USA; English & Spanish
<a href="http://www.pflag-chinese.org">www.pflag-chinese.org</a>	PFLAG Resources in Chinese
<a href="http://www.littlesistersbookstore.com">www.littlesistersbookstore.com</a>	LGBTQ bookstore, Vancouver
<a href="http://www.kidsbooks.ca">www.kidsbooks.ca</a>	Children's bookstore, Vancouver
<a href="http://www.amazon.com">www.amazon.com</a>	Book & video retailer
<a href="http://www.nfb.ca">www.nfb.ca</a>	National Film Board of Canada
<a href="http://www.glsen.org">www.glsen.org</a>	LGBTQ educators' group (US)
<a href="http://www.safeschools-wa.org">www.safeschools-wa.org</a>	WA State -resources for students, educators
<a href="http://www.doe.mass.edu/hsss/program/sssch.html">www.doe.mass.edu/hsss/program/sssch.html</a>	MA Dep't of Education resources
<a href="http://www.transalliancesociety.org">www.transalliancesociety.org</a>	BC organization for all trans persons and allies
<a href="http://www.vch.ca/transhealth/">www.vch.ca/transhealth/</a>	Transgender Health Program, Vancouver Coastal Health Authority.
<a href="http://www.transgender.org/transcend">www.transgender.org/transcend</a>	Transcend group, Victoria
<a href="http://www.transproud.org/">www.transproud.org/</a>	OutProud's website for transgendered youth.
<a href="http://www.ftmi.org">www.ftmi.org</a>	FTM International, history, biographies, many links.

## BCTF Anti-Homophobia Professional Development Workshops

The B.C. Teachers' Federation provides free Pro-D workshops for districts, locals, schools, and pre-service teachers on the topics of Homophobia and Heterosexism (H & H).

***Workshops may be specifically tailored to your needs or to address specific issues in your school or district. Topics may include (but not be limited ) to:***

Elementary	Secondary	Districts & Locals
-teaching about same-gender families -homophobic name calling	-linking oppressions -dealing with homophobic name calling and violence	-district leadership -district policies, procedures, committees
-myths and stereotypes -language and terminology -student safety -working with parents	-Gay/Straight Alliance (GSA) clubs -school policies and procedures	-increasing awareness of H&H issues in schools -responding to school and parent concerns
-community and school based resources	-lesson plans -curriculum integration -developing a school action plan on homophobia and heterosexism -student and staff advocacy	-improving school safety

### ***BCTF Workshops Descriptions:***

#### ***1) Breaking the Silence-Talking About Lesbian & Gay Issues in Schools***

Let's talk! Start a dialogue within your school or district about the harmful effects of homophobia. Examine myths and stereotypes, link oppressions, and understand how you as an educator can make your school safer and more inclusive. Find out how homophobia affects all students in your classroom.

#### ***2) "That's So Gay" is Not Okay!***

Tired of hearing, "That's so gay?" This action-oriented workshop is designed for educators to explore scenarios and learn to use effective strategies to counteract homophobic slurs in schools. A resource list, lesson plans and handouts are provided. This is not a beginner's workshop; participants and schools requesting the workshop should have some previous understanding of homophobia and LGBTQ issues.

**Booking Procedure:** To book a workshop, call the Training Division of the BCTF at 604-871-2283 or 1-800-663-9163.



# NOTES

# Homophobia Free Zone



Homophobic slurs like this one will  
**NOT** be tolerated here.

They are just as hateful as racism.  
Bullying can happen to **ANYONE!**

For safety and support speak to:



**QMUNITY**

BC'S QUEER RESOURCE CENTRE

[www.qmunity.ca](http://www.qmunity.ca)