

Project Q



OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL

GUIDANCE TO BE READ BEFORE SHOWING THE PROJECT Q FILM

Project Q has been created to support schools to prevent and address Homophobic, Biphobic and Transphobic bullying. National statistics indicate the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender students are vulnerable to increased rates of bullying, self-harm and suicide. You can find out more in <http://www.stonewall.org.uk/school-report-2017>

In our local bullying survey (2016) 10% of young people who identify as LGBT **never** feel safe in the classroom (compared to 1% of those who identify as heterosexual)

- 23% of all students hear name calling and insults in relation to “being gay” most days,
- 30% hear the word gay used as a derogatory term “most days”

It is therefore crucial that the Project Q resource is used in a sensitive and planned way, bearing in mind that there will be LGBT young people watching the film who could be adversely affected by the content. The film should be used as part of your educational approach to prevent and reduce LGBT bullying, not as a one off.

1. Watch the film through in advance to familiarise yourself with the content and the issues that are being raised. Check that the film is appropriate for your audience taking into account such factors as age, individual vulnerability, etc. and discuss with Senior Leadership Team if you have any concerns. You will note that the film was inspired by the suicide of Dominic Crouch – please see the resource sheet for more information. The film starts with a scene depicting a potential suicide and is not positively resolved until the end. It is therefore crucial that the **film is watched in its entirety** before revisiting individual scenes to carry out follow up work.
2. Use the film as one aspect of your whole school plan to prevent and tackle LGBT bullying. Ensure you have consulted with your Senior Leadership Team and that there is an overall plan in place. Stonewall’s Getting Started toolkit is an excellent starting point <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/resources/getting-started-toolkit-secondary-schools>. You could also refer to Oxfordshire County Council’s [Equality School Champion Award](#)
3. Before showing the film, point out to students that the content deals with issues that some people may find upsetting. Make sure you signpost what support is available to anyone that needs it. This should include what support is available on the school site e.g. pastoral team, school counsellor, school health nurse. Young people may be concerned that by seeking support they may need to disclose their sexuality or that their gender identity. Explain to students that support available is confidential and the exceptions to this (e.g. concern about safety). Signpost national sources of support e.g. Child Line 0800 1111 and websites where young people can find out more information. <http://oxme.info/cms/health/lgbtq>. Schools can use a noticeboard or school website to display this information so that students don’t have to draw attention to themselves when seeking support. If there are any students in the group who you know may be particularly vulnerable to the film, review with colleagues who might be the best person to check in and offer support if needed.

4. We would not recommend that this film is used in an Assembly or large group. Recent focus groups with young people indicated that they don't feel this provides them with opportunities to ask questions and obtain the appropriate follow up support. Tutor time and smaller groups will be much more appropriate – or smaller groups during off time-table days. The resource sheet provides a series of short activities that can be combined to create a longer session.
5. Read the supporting resource materials below and create a plan for the follow up work you will carry out with students, including timescales, to ensure maximum impact and benefit to students. Make sure that staff members feel confident to lead sessions in relation to the material. Further training for staff may be needed. Please contact jo.brown@oxfordshire.gov.uk for details of Oxfordshire County Council training or <http://www.stonewall.org.uk/get-involved/get-involved-education/secondary-schools/secondary-school-champions-programme>

POSSIBLE FOLLOW UP ACTIVITIES:

These can be used to follow up the film as part of your PSHCE & Citizenship work.

Remember, as stated in the guidance above, this is not just a one-off lesson, you should see it as part of a sustained programme of activities designed to create an atmosphere where LGBT+ students or those with LGBT+ family members, feel safe and secure to be open and honest about themselves within your setting.

- Ask the students to list the main themes of the film and discuss them in groups. Each group should then feedback their thoughts to you so that you can facilitate a whole class discussion, correcting any misconceptions as you do so.
- Tell the students the story of Dominic Crouch – *Dominic crouch was a 14 year old boy who attended a school in Cheltenham. Someone filmed him kissing another boy during a game of 'spin the bottle' whilst on a school residential visit. By the time he got back to school the video had been spammed to most of the other students, who plagued him with teasing and questions about his sexuality, so much so that one lunch time he took his own life by throwing himself from the top of a multi-story carpark.* The tragic story led one of his teachers Suranne Dickson to set up the national charity 'Diversity Role-Models' which aims to present positive images of the LGBT community to young people by coming into schools and telling their 'story'. In this way she hoped no child would ever be driven to suicide simply because they were so appalled at the thought that others might think they were gay. **HEALTH WARNING: teachers must make sure they are aware of the needs their group before sharing this story. It should in no way be used to present suicide in a 'glamorous' way or as an alternative to talking problems through. This may not be suitable to very vulnerable students or those who are risk of being adversely affected by this story.**
- Present your group with some statistics e.g. '*LGBT young people are more likely to self-harm*' OR '*even though many schools now recognise LGBT bullying as an issue many still do nothing to specifically tackle it.*' (Many other statistics can be found in the Stonewall School Report 2017) they form a useful starting point for discussion and also a stark reminder of the work that

still needs to be done. <http://www.stonewall.org.uk/school-report-2017>

- Ask your students if they have heard any stereotypes of LGBT people e.g. '*all lesbians are butch*' or '*all gay men walk funny*' (these are genuine examples of things young people have said). Ask them if they think that this is true? Challenge the misleading thinking. Explain there are LGBT people who will fit certain stereotypes but that there are many more who do not. If students are unwilling to share their ideas, you could anonymise the activity by giving them slips of paper and asking them to place their slips into a box which the class teacher can share as appropriate.
- Ask your students to rate on a scale of 1-10, the following questions: 'How safe would someone feel to come out as LGB or T in our school?' 'How comfortable would someone with close family members who identify as LGB or T feel about talking openly about their family member at our school?' Gather responses and unpick according to the responses you get. For example if students feel someone would not feel safe to come out in your setting find out why. Discuss with students what action both they and the school could take to help students feel safer. Agree how this might be carried forward
- Prepare scripts that specifically tackle *HBT language and rehearse them with your students. People often complain that they don't know what to say when confronted with *HBT language or casual homophobia. Rehearsing dialogue empowers teachers and students and helps embed responses to tackle *HBT language and bullying. Students could also be asked to prepare their own short scripts based on conversations or scenarios they have heard. This type of activity is especially effective for tackling casual homophobia. (See Appendix 1 – sample script for tackling *HBT language and Activities for staff training – Responding to HBT Language – Developing a Script)
- Bullying or Banter: ask your students if they ever hear the word 'GAY' used in a derogatory context e.g. to describe something that they think is rubbish or defective. Ask the students if they think this is ok? Ask them if they think it is ok if the other person describes it as just 'banter'? Your ultimate aim should be to help the students reach a point where they realise it is NEVER ok to use the word gay in this way. One effective method for helping them to understand this, is to ask them if they would accept use of the word 'black' or 'Muslim' in place of the word 'gay'. The aim is understand the effects of hearing the word 'gay' used in this way on young LGBT people and their subsequent reluctance to want to be perceived as something which is bad or wrong or just not as good as everyone else.
- Create a display board in your school featuring famous LGBT people through time – ask the students who they would like to include. This helps students understand that LGBT people have existed throughout history and just like the heterosexual community do a variety of jobs, come in a myriad of shapes and sizes, colours and creeds and ultimately that they cannot be pigeonholed into unhelpful and misleading stereotypes.
- Get involved in initiatives such as LGBT History Month (February) or IDAHOT (international day against homophobia and transphobia – usually held in May).

- Use resources such as the RUComingOut website to look at real-life coming out stories as told by LGBT people (NB teachers will need to check these beforehand and may wish to direct students specific pages to ensure content is appropriate). <http://www.rucomingout.com/>
- Make plans to create your own 'Project Q' style dramatic performance to show to the rest of the school to help combat LGBT bullying and HBT language. Students at the Warriner School began by collecting stories from students past and present about their experiences of bullying and what it was like for them to come out. They also used the story of Dominic Crouch as a starting point. They combined these two elements to formulate a piece which featured physical theatre, movement, dance, verbatim accounts and short sketches. This was shown to an invited audience and eventually to the whole school. Since rolling this out, Warriner students report that pupils at their school feel much more empowered to tackle HBT language when they hear it and that the incidence of HBT language and bullying has dropped significantly.

*HBT = Homophobic Biphobic Transphobic

Appendix 1: Sample script for tackling homophobic language:

Person 1: Oh my god, that lesson was so gay!

Person 2: How do you mean?

Person 1: That lesson was so gay, I'm glad it's over.

Person 2: You mean you thought it was rubbish?

Person 1: Duh...yeah!

Person 2: If you think something is rubbish...then say it's rubbish – that's seriously offensive to gay people!

(Optional) Person 3: Yeah my brother's gay; are you saying that he's rubbish?

You could invite students to complete this scenario in whatever way they see fit.

ACTIVITIES SPECIFICALLY RELATING TO TRANSGENDER AND GENDER IDENTITY

- Having watched the film in full, re-watch the 3rd scene, around 3 minutes in, which explores gender identity and gender stereotyping. Although the word "trans" isn't specifically used this scene specifically explores gender stereotyping and gender identity and can provide a starting point for discussion. Watch the scene and ask students to consider what gender stereotyping goes on at school, within their peer group and in society. Does this promote a situation where young people are safe to be themselves? Ask students to share definition of transgender and clarify definition as follows:

Trans *An umbrella term to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth. Trans people may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms, including (but not limited to) transgender, non-binary, gender queer.*

Share the results of the Oxfordshire bullying online survey 2016 which found that only 16% of secondary school students thought that someone who was trans and "out" at school would feel safe from bullying. Ask students to suggest why that might be and seek their opinions about what could help transgender students feel safe.

- Use the genderbread person – <http://itspronouncedmetrosexual.com/2015/03/the-genderbread-person-v3> to explore gender and sexuality. Alternatively use the gender unicorn <http://www.transstudent.org/gender>
- Definitions exercise – provide each group of students with a group of definitions cards to match the word with the correct definition. (Appendix 3 can be enlarged to create the cards) These definitions cover both sexuality and gender. Follow up by clarifying any words the students don't understand and then ask whether there are any words missing. Students may suggest the following (and probably others!).

Pansexual – the sexual, emotional or romantic attraction to someone else regardless of their sex or gender identity. This includes people who don't identify as male or female and it rejects a gender binary

Asexual – someone who isn't sexually attracted to other people

- I am Leo documentary films from CBBC: Watch the films about Leo on CBBC “Leo's tips for coping with bullying” (<https://youtu.be/IMCPeFVE3T4>) & “I am Leo” (https://youtu.be/0x_u2cs8Dpl) Use the films to explore and discuss about what makes people who they are; what forms our identity and how they see themselves; what, if anything they feel is an essential ingredient of their identity which they could not/would not want to change; consider whether there is any aspect of their identity which they would want to keep hidden
- Explore the area of being trans and the law in the UK and elsewhere. Explore the Equality Act and the protected characteristics- use case studies from the past to explore why this legislation is necessary. Consider the case of the Trans women sent to male prisons and debate whether this was fair; Discuss the law around being trans and living/travelling abroad. Where is it safe for trans people to live and travel?

ACTIVITIES FOR STAFF TRAINING

- Many of the follow up activities for young people can be used as part of staff training – e.g. exploring gender and sexuality using the genderbread person, the gender/sexuality terminology exercise (Appendix 3)
- Provide staff with a copy of the script (Appendix 2) and discuss how this might be used in practice. Create a selection of HBT language phrases based on what is commonly heard around school. Once staff have familiarised themselves with the script, set up a carousel activity to practice responses to HBT language. Label staff A or B and get A's to move their chairs so they are facing a B. This is their first partner for the exercise. First A's will each have a HBT language phrase that they present to the B who is their pair. B's have to respond to the language using approaches from the script. B's then move to a new partner and respond to a new phrase. It is then the turn of the B's to present the phrase to the A's who move in order to practice and respond to each of the phrases. Follow up by a group discussion about what responses are most effective.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ITlp8Hdu5Xc> This is a film clip about Ciera Taylor, a teenager who has successfully transitioned in Leicestershire. The film is a useful starting point to consider how best to support trans and gender questioning young people.

Responding to homophobic, Biphobic and Transphobic and other prejudiced language: Developing a script – Appendix 2

Key skill and tips for challenging prejudice

- Make sure you know the school's policy and legal requirements, have something in your Anti-Bullying policy about all prejudice-related language
- Challenge all incidents, behaviour and language and be seen to be doing this
- Be calm and constructive (responding and helping to build skills)
- If appropriate talk away from an audience although be clear with the whole group that the language/behaviour was unacceptable
- Provide the young person a chance to back-track and change their behaviour
- Be critical of the language but not the individual so that the person can still feel ok and able to move on
- Role model how to challenge in a non-aggressive way
- Ask questions to explore what the child/young person means and encourage them to reflect and allow time for them to do so
- If the language is not acceptable explain why in an age-appropriate way and make it clear what you are looking for (e.g. to use an alternative word to mean rubbish, not to label certain behaviour, not to use that language in the future)
- Be mindful of what happens next with friendships etc.
- Make sure you respond as your policy/the law dictates (recording and reporting the incident if necessary)

Examples of things you could say:

Explore and explain:

- What do you mean by e.g. "those trainers are gay"?
- There's nothing wrong with crying. It's just as normal for boys to cry as it is for girls.
- Gay is a word that's used to describe people who love people of the same sex, it's not ok to use it as a word to mean rubbish
- If you use the word "gay" to mean rubbish – how do think someone gay might feel?
- How do you think Jamal feels when you call him that? How would you feel if someone said that to you?
- What if your friend was gay? Do you think he'd feel comfortable to come out?
- What else? What would work with the young people you work with?

Organisational response:

- In this school are values are to respect each other and
- In this school we don't use disablist language because
- That kind of language is racist and it is against our school policy

Personal response

- I'm not happy with what you said
- That language offends me because.....
- What you've said disappoints me. I hoped you realised it's not ok to use that kind of language.

What someone continues to use prejudice-related language

- Follow school behaviour policy in relation to any derogatory language – refer to Stonewall guide "Ten steps to tackling HBT language in your school <http://www.stonewall.org.uk/get-involved/education/secondary-schools/homophobic-language-materials>

Understanding Terminology – Sexuality and Gender – Appendix 3

Sexual Orientation

A person's emotional, romantic and or sexual attraction to another person

Gender Identity

A person's internal sense of their own gender, whether male, female, or something else

Sex

Either of the two main categories (male and female) assigned to a person on the basis of primary sex characteristics (genitalia) and reproductive functions. Sometimes used interchangeably with 'gender' to mean 'male' or 'female'

Homosexual

This might be considered a more medical term used to describe someone who has an emotional, romantic and/or sexual orientation towards someone of the same gender. The term 'gay' is now more generally used.

Bisexual

Refers to a person who has an emotional and/or sexual orientation towards people of more than one gender

Trans

An umbrella term to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth. May encompass one or more of a wide variety of terms, including (but not limited to) transgender, cross dresser, non-binary, gender queer

Questioning

The process of exploring your own sexual orientation and/or gender identity

Queer

In the past a derogatory term for LGBT individuals. The term has now been reclaimed by LGBT young people in particular who don't identify with traditional categories around gender identity and sexual orientation, but is still viewed to be derogatory by some.

A cisgender person

Someone whose gender identity is the same as the sex they were assigned at birth. Non-trans is also used by some people.

Non-binary

An umbrella term for a person who does not identify as male or female

Gender Variant

This is usually used in relation to children or young people for someone who does not conform to the gender roles and behaviours assigned to them at birth.

Intersex

A term used to describe a person who may have the biological attributes of both sexes or whose biological attributes do not fit with societal assumptions about what constitutes male or female. Can identify as male, female, or non-binary.

A transsexual person

Used in the past as a more medical term (similarly to homosexual) to refer to someone who transitioned to live in the 'opposite' gender to the one assigned at birth. This term is still used by some although many people prefer the term trans or transgender.

Gender dysphoria

Used to describe when a person experiences discomfort or distress because there is a mismatch between their sex assigned at birth and their gender identity. This is also the clinical diagnosis for someone who doesn't feel comfortable with the gender they were assigned at birth.

Pronoun

Words we use to refer to people's gender in conversation - for example, 'he' or 'she'. Some people may prefer others to refer to them in gender neutral language and use pronouns such as they / their and ze / zir

Transitioning

The steps a trans person may take to live in the gender they identify as. Each person's will involve different things. For some this involves medical intervention, such as hormone therapy and surgeries, but not all trans people want or are able to have this. It also might involve things like telling friends and family, dressing differently and changing official documents.

Gender reassignment

Another way of describing a person's transition. To undergo this usually means to undergo some sort of medical intervention, but it can also mean changing names, pronouns, dressing differently and living in your self-identified gender. It is a characteristic that is protected in the Equality Act 2010.

Coming out

When a person first tells someone/others about their identity as lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans