

A Guide to Stand Up Awareness Week

November 4–8, 2024



Belong To LGBTQ+ Youth Ireland





Stand Up Awareness Week is a fantastic whole-school opportunity to celebrate and endorse inclusivity and diversity. These principles should be at the core of every school. Failure to embrace it is a missed opportunity as it enables both staff and students alike to reflect on their outlooks and practices.”

— Nicola Fannelly, Andscoil Rís, Dublin

Thank you to our Stand Up Awareness Week funders:



Stand Up Awareness Week is endorsed by:



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Fáilte

Each year, ever greater numbers of people are coming together to support young LGBTQ+ people by hosting Stand Up Awareness Week in schools, Youthreach centres and youth services across Ireland.

At Belong To - LGBTQ+ Youth Ireland, we are so proud to see communities across the country where LGBTQ+ young people feel protected and respected to be who they are. To each of you - thank you for making this happen!

2024 marks the 15th year of this annual campaign – 15 years of young LGBTQ+ people in all kinds of settings being made to feel seen and included.

However, the work is not done. Our recently published research, *Being LGBTQI+ in Ireland*¹, conducted by Trinity College Dublin sets out the context for Stand Up Awareness Week. The research findings showed that in Ireland today, compared to the general youth population, young LGBTQI+ people experience three times the level of severe or extremely severe symptoms of depression and anxiety, three times the level of self-harm, and five times the level of suicide attempts.

The findings are upsetting, but there are some positives to be taken from the research; in particular, the important role of creating safe spaces for young people where they feel safe and included.

Once again, from November 4-8, communities across schools, Youthreach centres and youth services will come together to make LGBTQ+ inclusion and safety a priority, and celebrate and recognise LGBTQ+ identities.

Stand Up Awareness Week is a time to focus on decreasing homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying, and increase friendship and support of LGBTQ+ students by other students.

We are proud that the Department of Education has funded and supported Stand Up Awareness Week for many years. The national action plan on

bullying, *Cineáltas*, commits to the Department's continued support for Stand Up Awareness Week.² The plan also recognises the importance of age-appropriate information on LGBTQ+ identities as a mechanism to prevent and address bullying, which we provide for you through our online education hub at www.belongto.org ➔.

This guide sets out information on hosting Stand Up Awareness Week in your school, Youthreach centre or youth service, learning about LGBTQ+ language and terminology, and delving into a host of activity ideas for November.

This year, the theme of Stand Up Awareness Week is 'Standing Up in our Communities'. For true LGBTQ+ inclusion and to reduce discrimination and bullying, we need a community-wide response. It is important that all of us, in all spheres of life, make LGBTQ+ young people welcome and safe. From local government to our sports and cultural communities – we all can join together and work for more inclusive communities which celebrate LGBTQ+ people.

Additional guidance and advice can be found in the *Being LGBT in School* resource, published by GLEN and the Department of Education and Skills.³ *Being LGBT in School* provides guidance for school staff in supporting LGBTQ+ students across a range of key areas. You can download the resource from our [online education hub](#) ➔.



We are grateful to every school, youth service and Youthreach centre that joins Belong To for Stand Up Awareness Week and comes together to create a safer Ireland for LGBTQ+ young people.



Moninne Griffith

Moninne Griffith (she/her)
CEO, Belong To - LGBTQ+ Youth Ireland



01

Stand Up Awareness Week



What is Stand Up Awareness Week?

Stand Up Awareness Week is a national LGBTQ+ anti-bullying week running in post-primary schools, Youthreach centres and youth services across Ireland each November. We are proud to now be in our 15th year of running Stand Up Awareness Week, and to have steadily increased the number of young people taking part year-on-year.

Stand Up Awareness Week is a time to celebrate LGBTQ+ youth in all of their diversity and to come together in support for LGBTQ+ young people. The campaign also acknowledges the harms of anti-LGBTQ+ bullying, and makes clear to young people that this behaviour is both serious and unacceptable.

During Stand Up Awareness Week, LGBTQ+ young people and their allies learn about LGBTQ+ identities, take part in LGBTQ+ solidarity actions, and come together to create a safe and supportive environment for all young people.

Stand Up Awareness Week Objectives

When planning Stand Up Awareness Week in your school, Youthreach centre or youth service, it may be helpful to keep the campaign's key objectives in mind:

- Increasing friendship and support of LGBTQ+ students by other students.
- Increasing awareness of LGBTQ+ students among other students, teachers, principals and others in the school-wide community.
- Increasing respect for diversity and LGBTQ+ identities.
- Increasing the likelihood that LGBTQ+ students will report bullying.

When brainstorming and planning activities for Stand Up Awareness Week, it can be useful to think about which of these objectives you can meet with each activity. For example, inviting students to co-create a solidarity mural or noticeboard could be an effective way of increasing friendship and support of LGBTQ+ young people by other young people.

Having a class discussion on the harmful effects of LGBTQ+phobic bullying and emphasising your school or service's commitment to a zero-tolerance approach to bullying could help increase the likelihood of LGBTQ+ young people reporting this behaviour. Communicate these objectives to all staff and young people at the beginning of Stand Up Awareness Week and make them a focus throughout, so that everyone is clear on what you are trying to achieve.

Sharing anonymous surveys before and after Stand Up Awareness Week is a helpful way to see if you have achieved these objectives.

Check out our online education hub ➔ for sample surveys you can adapt and use in your setting and a host of other resources that you can use in your Stand Up Awareness Week activities.

Additional Stand Up Awareness Week Resources

In addition to this guide, we have a number of supplementary resources available online to support Stand Up Awareness Week including:

- A Step-By-Step Guide to Hosting Stand Up Awareness Week
- Language and Terminology
- Allyship in Action
- Stand Up Awareness Week Activities and Actions

You can find these resources and more at www.belongto.org

Anywhere you notice this icon ➔, it means that we have additional resources available about these topics on our website for you to use.

Why we Need to Create LGBTQ+ Inclusive Spaces

Why we Need to Stand Up

Recent decades have seen huge strides towards equality for LGBTQ+ people in Ireland. In the education space in particular, significant work has been done to ensure that LGBTQ+ students are safe and supported in schools across Ireland.

Our *School Climate Survey* research shows that, in the 2021/22 academic year, only 35% of LGBTQ+ students are taught SPHE in a way that is representative of LGBTQ+ identities.⁴ The absence of LGBTQ+ identities from the curriculum was also highlighted in a review of Relationship and Sexuality Education published in 2019.⁵ The review found that the lack of representation of LGBTQ+ identities in the curriculum was the most important topic highlighted by young people, and was mentioned frequently by parents and school staff.

In response, the SPHE curriculum redevelopment for Junior and Senior Cycle integrates LGBTQ+ identities across a number of areas, including Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) and teaching on students' understanding of themselves and others.

The Department of Education also recently published *Bí Cineálta*, an update to the 2013 *Anti-Bullying Policies and Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.⁶ The new procedures retain the requirement for all school anti-bullying policies to detail specific prevention strategies relating to homophobic and transphobic bullying. The Department of Education lists *Belong To's Stand Up Awareness Week* among resources for post-primary schools in meeting their *Bí Cineálta* requirement to tackle homophobic and transphobic bullying.⁷

As detailed in the following sections, this progress is hugely important in ensuring the mental health and wellbeing of LGBTQ+ young people during their school years.

Sadly, this progress has resulted in education becoming a key battleground for anti-LGBTQ+ actors over the past year, with coordinated efforts to limit the visibility and inclusion of LGBTQ+ lives in Irish schools. These actions extend to our communities, where libraries have been targeted by anti-LGBTQ+ disruptions and local Pride celebrations have faced serious security threats.

Opposition to LGBTQ+ inclusion in our schools and communities is part of a global anti-human rights movement, and is designed to distract us from our shared mission to create an Ireland where every LGBTQ+ young person is equal, safe and thriving. Within this context, it has never been more important to be proactive and visible in creating spaces where LGBTQ+ students have access to spaces where they feel valued, supported and safe to be themselves.



Coming Out as LGBTQ+

Being LGBTQ+ can be challenging; particularly when someone has not told others about their sexual orientation or gender identity. For LGBTQ+ young people, discovering and beginning to accept their identity is often associated with a sense of isolation, fear of rejection, and confusion. Many LGBTQ+ young people do not feel safe to come out, or to share their sexual orientation or gender identity with people in their life. By making your school, Youthreach centre or youth service LGBTQ+ inclusive, LGBTQ+ young people can take refuge from stress and anxiety in a safe and supportive space.

Irish research shows that between 6-10% of young people identify as LGBTQ+,⁸ meaning that you are likely working with at least one LGBTQ+ young person in your classroom or youth group, who may or may not have come out to others about their LGBTQ+ identity.

Published in 2024, the *Being LGBTQI+ in Ireland* research shows that, among 14-25 year olds in Ireland today, the most common age to realise their LGBTQI+ identity is age 12!¹ The most common age for this group to first tell someone about their LGBTQI+ identity, or 'come out', is age 14.

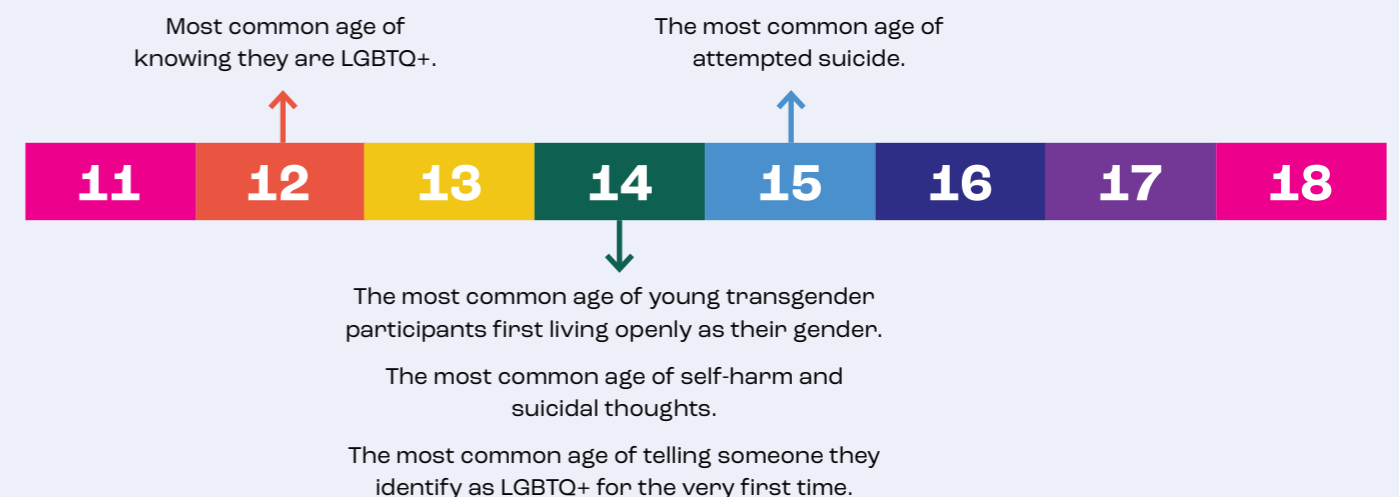
Among 14-25 year old LGBTQI+ people in Ireland, age 14 was also the most common age at which a person experienced self-harm or suicidal thoughts. The most common age of attempting suicide for this cohort was age 16.

While many people experience challenges to their mental health and wellbeing during adolescence, the *Being LGBTQI+ in Ireland* research shows that, compared to the general youth population in Ireland, LGBTQI+ young people aged 14-18 experience 3 times the level of severe or extremely severe depression and anxiety, 3 times the rate of self-harm, twice the rate of suicidal thoughts, and 5 times the rate of suicide attempts!¹

Over the course of LGBTQI+ people's life, the research also found a correlation between those who had experienced bullying, and poorer mental health and wellbeing outcomes. LGBTQI+ people who had been bullied had statistically significantly higher symptoms of depression, anxiety and stress; higher rates of self-harm, suicidal thoughts, suicide attempts and eating disorders; and lower scores for happiness, self-esteem and resilience.¹

LGBTQ+ Youth Mental Health

Time of immense change and self-discovery for young people in terms of school, peer friendships, and romantic relationships:



The Impact of LGBTQ+ Inclusion

LGBTQ+ Young People's School Experiences

In 2022, we spoke to 1,208 LGBTQ+ second-level students living in Ireland as part of our School Climate Survey with Columbia University.⁴ Our research shows that, in the 2021-2022 school year, a shocking 76% of LGBTQ+ students felt unsafe at school. 69% of LGBTQ+ students reported hearing other students making homophobic remarks, and a concerning 58% of LGBTQ+ post-primary students reported hearing a homophobic remark from a teacher or school staff member.

Sadly, many young people experience bullying at some point in their school lives. However, research shows that LGBTQ+ young people are far more likely to experience school bullying than their non-LGBTQ+ peers.⁴

It is vitally important for education and youth services to create an environment where all young people can be themselves and feel welcome, celebrated, safe and supported. For some LGBTQ+ young people, this may be their only safe space to relax, feel comfortable in their identity, and be their true selves.

Among second-level LGBTQ+ students in Ireland:



76%
feel unsafe at school.



69%
heard other students make homophobic remarks.



1 in 10
are unsure of whether they will complete the Leaving Certificate.



86%
have been deliberately excluded by peers.



3 in 10
missed at least one school day in the past month because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable.



58%
heard a school staff member make a homophobic remark.⁴

Compared to the general Irish youth population, LGBTQ+ students are:

x4

times more likely to feel lonely at school.

x3

times more likely to feel disliked by other students.

x3

times more likely to feel like an outsider at school.

x2

times more likely to have difficulties making friends at school.⁴

Protective Factors and LGBTQ+ Inclusive Schools

Although LGBTQ+ youth face many challenges, there are a number of actions that individual staff members, and their school, Youthreach centre or youth service can take to support LGBTQ+ young people.

Supportive Staff

In our 2022 *School Climate Survey*, we were delighted to see that half of LGBTQ+ students could identify ten or more school staff members supportive of LGBTQ+ identities.⁴ Additionally, 99% of LGBTQ+ students in Ireland could identify at least one school staff member supportive of LGBTQ+ students. Our findings show that LGBTQ+ students who enjoy a higher level of staff support for LGBTQ+ identities are:

- More likely to feel accepted by the student body.
- More likely to feel like they belong in school.
- Less likely to miss school days because of school safety.

Stand Up Awareness Week is a great opportunity for all staff in your school, Youthreach centre or youth service to be visible in their support for the LGBTQ+ community. The Department of Education's resource guide accompanying the new *Bí Cineálta* anti-bullying procedures also name Stand Up Awareness Week as a way to prevent homophobic and transphobic bullying in schools.⁷ Having staff participate in Stand Up Awareness Week events, displaying a small Pride flag in their classroom, or a putting a rainbow sticker on a laptop or tablet can be subtle yet meaningful ways of demonstrating their support.



Inclusive Curriculum

The 2022 School Climate Survey found that half of LGBTQ+ students were not taught anything about LGBTQ+ topics in the 2021-2022 school year, and only 35% had received LGBTQ+-inclusive SPHE. However, LGBTQ+ students who had been taught LGBTQ+ topics felt more accepted in their school, and were less likely to miss school days due to feeling unsafe.⁴

Stand Up Awareness Week is a great opportunity to encourage your colleagues to prepare a dedicated lesson on LGBTQ+ topics. **Check out our online education hub** ➔ for guidance on how to integrate this into a lesson across 14 Junior Cycle subjects, from business studies to geography and music.

Staff Interventions

Research shows that identity-based bullying, including bullying associated with someone's LGBTQ+ identity, is particularly harmful to their wellbeing. Intervening when LGBTQ+phobic language or remarks are used is one very important way for staff to create an inclusive and safe environment for LGBTQ+ young people.

Our *School Climate Survey* research found that 69% of LGBTQ+ students had heard homophobic remarks from other students.⁴ However, when school staff proactively intervened when overhearing homophobic remarks, LGBTQ+ students were:

- More likely to feel accepted by the student body.
- More likely to feel like they belong in school.
- Less likely to miss school days because of school safety.

Check out our online education hub ➔ to see how you can support your colleagues to agree a common process for responding to, recording and reporting LGBTQ+phobic language. As part of your preparations for Stand Up Awareness Week, why not encourage your colleagues to complete our free e-learning training module 'Creating LGBTQ+ Inclusive Schools and Youth Services'. Upon completion, staff could display their certificates on their classroom doors as another way to show their commitment to LGBTQ+ inclusion!



02

Standing Up in our Communities

– Stand Up Awareness Week Theme 2024



This year for Stand Up Awareness Week, we are focusing on local actions to demonstrate support for the LGBTQ+ community. This theme links with one of our specific objectives for the campaign – increasing awareness of LGBTQ+ students among other students, teachers, principals, and others in the school-wide community. The recently published *Being LGBTQI+ in Ireland* research shows the importance of community groups and spaces in allowing LGBTQ+ people to foster connections and self-acceptance which enhances their overall mental health and wellbeing.¹

Over the past 15 years, schools, youth services and Youthreach centres have seen the positive impact that participating in Stand Up Awareness Week can have on LGBTQ+ young people and their peers. Now, we want to empower young people to take actions that can help create safe and supportive environments outside of these settings, in their local communities.

It is important that young people within communities are actively involved in the decisions that impact their lives, as outlined in Tusla's *Child and Youth Participation Strategy 2019-2023*.⁹ Youth participation within the community brings about many benefits, including improved decision-making, skill development, changing attitudes and positively enhancing personal development. As young people are experts within their own lives and experiences,¹⁰ long-term youth participation can lead to a better-informed society which will be passed on to future generations.

What is a Community?

When we think of our community, we might think first about the street, estate or town that we live in. In reality, we all live in multiple distinct and overlapping communities at the same time, and this is no different for young people.

A community is a group of people who share some common identity, culture or set of common interests, and they come in all shapes and sizes. The type of communities we occupy, as well as how we engage with them, can depend on a number of factors. For example, young people may engage more with online and digital communities, and they may increasingly rely on the support of these communities as they progress through adolescence.

Communities are diverse spaces and include people from all different walks of life. Young people may be members of a sports community, like a camogie team or soccer club, or within a youth group or musical community. They may also be members of a religious or faith-based community, or an ethnic or minority language community, or within a group of people with disabilities. Then, of course, there is also the LGBTQ+ community.

Of course, none of these groups are mutually exclusive of one another. So, a young person might be a keen basketball player living in a Gaeltacht area while attending the same school as another young person who is an avid guitar-playing Taylor Swift fan who uses a wheelchair. There will be many circles in which these two young people's paths intersect, and many in which they do not at all. At Belong To, we want to support young people in all their various communities to support their LGBTQ+ peers to feel safe and welcome.

Why is Community Important?

A sense of belonging within the community is fundamental to the wellbeing of people of all ages and can be particularly important for young people.¹¹ As social beings, the desire to feel like part of a group, family and community is hardwired within us. On the other hand, things that make us feel like we are an outsider within communities can have a negative impact on our wellbeing.

It is important that no-one is made to feel excluded from these spaces just because of who they are, whether it's because they are LGBTQ+ or another aspect of their identity. Research has shown that LGBTQ+ young people whose local communities are not LGBTQ+ friendly can feel particularly vulnerable and isolated.¹¹

The 2022 *School Climate Survey*, published by the Teachers College, Columbia University and Belong To, found that inclusive spaces within the school community can positively impact the overall wellbeing of a young person.⁴ If we are aware that inclusive spaces positively impact the mental health of young people within the school environment, then it may also be worth looking outside the school community and within your own local village or town.



Barriers and Entry Points

Depending on the particular community or space, there are different factors that might impact how easy or difficult it is for a young person to feel welcome. Some of these barriers are not immediately visible or obvious, and may impact some young people more than others, or in different ways.

Examples of specific barriers and entry points are listed below.

Barriers:

- ▶ Frequent use of unchallenged LGBTQ+phobic language can create an environment which feels unwelcoming for LGBTQ+ people and their allies.
- ▶ A lack of representation and visibility of LGBTQ+ identities.
- ▶ Instances of LGBTQ+ exclusion, harassment or bullying may prevent young people from returning to a space.

Entry Points:

- ▶ Visible support for LGBTQ+ people, such as flags, posters and stickers.
- ▶ The existence of, and support for, LGBTQ+ and allies groups.
- ▶ Community-based events and activities specifically for LGBTQ+ people and allies.
- ▶ Online communities and societies for LGBTQ+ young people and allies.

Taking Pride into the Community

With the understanding of the importance of LGBTQ+ young people feeling safe and supported in all spaces in which they find themselves, as well as some of the specific barriers and entry points for community, what practical steps can young people be supported to take to make this a reality?

We can break this down into three areas that our young people are involved in within the community, how they can make an impact and what actions are needed within each of these areas:

Your School, Youthreach or Youth Service Community

Think of all the people that make up your community. This might include students, young people, teachers and youth workers, but also young people's families, the non-teaching staff, Board of Management and so on. The community should feel like a welcoming and inclusive space for everyone, both inside and outside the building.

Each year, schools, youth services and Youthreach centres carry out a huge range of actions for Stand Up Awareness Week, from presentations and art competitions to bake sales and rainbow jumper days. Staff and young people really enjoy these! This year, as well as these kinds of activities, perhaps the young people in your setting could organise a coffee morning to welcome all members of the community (including, for example, parents and guardians) to join together to show their support for the LGBTQ+ community and learn more about LGBTQ+ inclusion.

SAMPLE ACTIONS

- ▶ Coffee morning for parents, guardians and members of the Board of Management.
- ▶ Students prepare and deliver a presentation on Stand Up Awareness Week to your Parents' Association and Board of Management.
- ▶ Invite the whole school community to participate in a Pride flag-raising, or Rainbow Jumper Day.

Your Local Village or Town

Every year during Pride, lots of community groups and businesses show their support for the LGBTQ+ community by displaying flags and posters. These same groups and businesses may be willing to participate in a special display of support during Stand Up Awareness Week. Identify the local spaces that the young people in your setting spend most time outside of school – a community centre, sports hall, shop or café. Write to the business owners or people running these spaces and invite them to participate in your Stand Up Awareness Week.

Think also of the other groups in which the young people in your setting might participate. For sports clubs, you could invite players and coaches to complete Belong To's **45-minute e-learning module 'LGBTQ+ Safe and Supportive Sports Clubs'**, which allows them to learn more about creating LGBTQ+ inclusive clubs. ➔

SAMPLE ACTIONS

- ▶ Create posters showing LGBTQ+ inclusivity and ask local businesses to display them during Stand Up Awareness Week.
- ▶ Ask your local sports hall or community centre if you can organise a Stand Up Awareness Week sports event in their venue.
- ▶ Ask local sports teams to wear rainbow laces or armbands to show their support for LGBTQ+ inclusivity, and invite them to complete Belong To's e-learning module on creating LGBTQ+ inclusive clubs. ➔

Your County

As well as the people in the immediate local vicinity of your school, Youthreach centre or youth service, the young people in your setting could engage with decision-makers in your County or City Council. This year has seen two referenda, local elections and European elections, and a general election is due to be called by early next year. That makes 2024 a great time to support the young people in your setting to learn more about civic and democratic processes. What kind of decisions do local representatives have authority to make that could support the inclusion of LGBTQ+ people in your local community? Perhaps a councillor would be willing to come to your school or youth service during Stand Up Awareness Week to show their support.

SAMPLE ACTIONS

- ▶ Support young people to write to your local council asking them to paint a rainbow walkway nearby.
- ▶ Invite a local council representative to visit your school, Youthreach centre or youth service to join in with a Stand Up Awareness Week activity and meet with a group of students, such as your LGBTQ+ and Allies Club.
- ▶ Ask your local representatives to commit to supporting the LGBTQ+ community and taking a stand against anti-LGBTQ+ actions for the length of their time in office.

New in 2024:

Stand Up Awareness Week Awards!

This year, we are introducing the Stand Up Awareness Week Awards to celebrate the diversity of inspiring and impactful actions that will have been carried out in schools, Youthreach centres and youth services all over the country.

The Stand Up Awareness Week Awards is dedicated to recognising and honouring outstanding contributions to LGBTQ+ visibility, advocacy and education during Stand Up Awareness Week.

The award categories aim to recognise the efforts of individuals and groups in fostering a supportive and inclusive environment for young people.

How to Participate

Nomination Submission:

Nominations can be submitted through the official Stand Up Awareness Week Awards page on the Belong To website. Detailed instructions and nomination forms are available online at www.belongto.org/standup

Award Ceremony:

Winners will be announced at a high-profile online ceremony in December 2024.

Award Categories

- ▶ **Stand Up Awareness Week Impact Award**
– Recognising impactful and well-organised Stand Up Awareness Week programmes of activities that meet the objectives of Stand Up Awareness Week.
- ▶ **Stand Up Awareness Week Theme Award**
– Recognising creative interpretation of the theme for Stand Up Awareness Week 2024, 'Standing Up in our Communities'.
- ▶ **Stand Up Awareness Week Visibility Award**
– Recognising efforts to increase the visibility and representation of LGBTQ+ identities in the school community during Stand Up Awareness Week.
- ▶ **Stand Up Awareness Week Creative Expression Award**
– Recognising the impactful use of art, music, writing or other creative outlets for Stand Up Awareness Week.
- ▶ **Stand Up Awareness Week Photography Award**
– Recognising the most impactful photographs captured of Stand Up Awareness Week activities.
- ▶ **Stand Up Awareness Week Youth Participation Award**
– Recognising high levels of youth involvement in the planning and running of Stand Up Awareness Week.





03

Activities and Actions



Stand Up Awareness Week Activities

Looking for inspiration for your Stand Up Awareness Week? Check out some of our activity ideas below to see some of the wonderful actions undertaken by schools, youth services and Youthreach centres across Ireland last year!

Connect to the Curriculum

Including LGBTQ+ identities and experiences in the curriculum is a great way to sustain LGBTQ+ inclusion year-round. Young people's work on LGBTQ+ themes can be displayed in your library, hall or entrance. Our **Junior Cycle curriculum resources** suggest ways to make a range of subjects, such as science, maths, history and geography, LGBTQ+ inclusive.

Rainbow Walkway

Across Ireland, lots of towns and cities have painted wonderful rainbow walkways to celebrate the LGBTQ+ community. These walkways are a sign that LGBTQ+ people are respected and celebrated in that community. Is there somewhere on your grounds or in your building where you could create your own rainbow walkway? Create the walkway with paint or chalk at your entrance gate, or decorate a corridor, hall or front door with rainbow colours to show that your school, Youthreach centre or youth service is LGBTQ+ inclusive.

Host an LGBTQ+ Film Viewing

Belong To is delighted to once again partner with the Irish Film Institute (IFI), Dublin to offer a limited number of free, online screenings of a selection of LGBTQ+ films for participating schools. Check our page www.belongto.org/standup in November to access the film selection and schedule a viewing into your Stand Up Awareness Week plans.



Hold your Own Spill the Tea Event

Pop the kettle on and support LGBTQ+ young people across Ireland! Get everyone together for a morning to raise some vital funds for Belong To – LGBTQ+ Youth Ireland. Have a bake sale, or if you're feeling competitive, why not host a bake off? Holding your Spill the Tea event is a wonderful chance to connect with everyone in your school community, including parents/guardians, siblings, members of your Board of Management and more. You can use the event to share the importance of allyship and most importantly have fun, all the while supporting our life-saving services at Belong To. Visit our **online hub** to get your Spill the Tea fundraising pack with everything you'll need to make your event fabulous.

Launch your LGBTQ+ and Allies Club

Stand Up Awareness Week is the perfect time to launch your LGBTQ+ and Allies Club, or to let young people know about your plans to set one up. Hosting a school assembly where staff and young people talk about the club, what you do, and how to join is a great way to spread the word to those who might feel nervous about asking for this information themselves. Already have an LGBTQ+ and Allies Club set up? Stand Up Awareness Week is the perfect time to share all of your wonderful work so far with staff and young people! Learn more about setting up an LGBTQ+ and Allies Club via **our website**.



Rainbow Jumper Day

Create a rainbow flag! Encourage everyone to wear a jumper making up the colours of the rainbow flag: red, orange, yellow, green, blue and purple for Belong To's Rainbow Jumper Day. Don't forget to take some photos and share them with us!

Raise Funds

Through our frontline supports, youth groups, training and advocacy, Belong To works to create an Ireland where all LGBTQ+ young people are equal, safe and thriving. There are lots of ways to support our services during Stand Up Awareness Week, such as asking students to contribute €2 for a Rainbow Jumper Day, holding a rainbow raffle, or running an LGBTQ+ themed bake sale. For a fundraising pack, contact Chris (he/him) from our Fundraising Team: fundraising@belongto.org / 01 670 6223.

Read the Rainbow

Stand Up Awareness Week is a great time to launch a new or updated LGBTQ+ library section in your school, Youthreach centre or youth service. As part of the Seven Steps to Stand Up, 'Step 4: Time to Plan' could include young people suggesting LGBTQ+ novels they have enjoyed or would like to read. The 'Rainbow Reads' list, put together by Children's Books Ireland and An Post, is another great place for inspiration. The list categorises a wide range of LGBTQ+ books by age group and is available at our [online education hub](#). ➔

Pride Noticeboard

Choose a dedicated noticeboard, whiteboard or wall to display messages of LGBTQ+ inclusivity year-round. This can include details of your local LGBTQ+ youth group, contact details for LGBTQ+ support services such as Belong To, and the names of staff members leading on wellbeing, guidance and LGBTQ+ inclusivity. During Stand Up Awareness Week, invite allies to sign their name on the Pride noticeboard or to leave messages of support and solidarity for the LGBTQ+ community.



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Belong To LGBTQ+
Youth Ireland

Belong To is a national organisation supporting LGBTQ+ youth.

Since 2003, we have worked with LGBTQ+ young people across Ireland offering safety and support through our services. Let your students and youth groups know about Belong To and what supports are available for them including LGBTQ+ youth groups, crisis counselling with Pieta and digital support services.

For educators, we offer online training, support and initiatives such as the LGBTQ+ Quality Mark. For youth workers, we support a National Network of LGBTQ+ youth groups and run the Rainbow Award – an action-focused accreditation programme that supports a whole-organisation approach to safe and supportive services for LGBTQ+ youth.

Learn more at www.belongto.org