



Belong To LGBTQ+
Youth Ireland

Stand Up Awareness Week

14–18 Nov

Toolkit

How to Use this Toolkit

This Toolkit is designed to supplement the Stand Up Awareness Week Guide. These are practical tools and activities that you can dip into at any time. The Toolkit is only available online, but you can print it and photocopy it.



Throughout the Stand Up Awareness Week Guide, you will see the 'Toolkit Resources' symbol.

Just click on the relevant section in the Toolkit 'Table of Contents' or look up the page if you are using a printed copy, and you will find the related resources.

Some sections of the Toolkit provide sample sections of useful resources such as 'Growing Up LGBT'. The full resource is accessible if you click on the highlighted link.

Other resources are available to download in full on the Stand Up Awareness Week section of our website:

www.belongto.org/professionals/standup



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Language and Terminology

This section gives some useful tools to support you in discussing LGBTQ+ language and terminology with your class/group



Belong To Glossary of LGBTQ+ Terms

We have developed a glossary of LGBTQ+ terms. Like all language, these terms will evolve over time and we will update our glossary to reflect any changes.

Word Searches and Crossword

Test your class/group's knowledge of the key LGBTQ+ terms with these word searches and crossword.

Gender-Neutral Language¹

Print this card to educate and encourage people to be mindful of using gender-neutral language or ask your class or youth group to create their own version and share it as a poster in prominent places in your school, Youthreach, youth service, or community centre.

¹ Read more about the original cards here: <https://www.tonilatour.com/hello-there/>

Glossary of Terms

The most important thing you need to know about language and terminology is that you don't need to know it all. Most people want to use LGBTQ+ inclusive language, but they are unsure where to begin, and LGBTQ+ terminology can feel like a minefield. A good place to start is to learn some of the key concepts and understand what the letters in LGBTQ+ stand for. Here we share a glossary of LGBTQ+ terminology



Terms related to sexual orientation/sexuality

Sexual Orientation or Sexuality

This is a term used to describe someone's emotional, romantic, and sexual attraction to other people.

LGBTQ+

This stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Queer people. The plus sign includes people with other minority sexual orientations and gender identities.

Lesbian

A woman who is attracted to other women. Some non-binary people may also identify with this term.

Gay

Someone who is attracted to people of the same gender.

Bisexual/Bi

Someone who is attracted to more than one gender. e.g. both men and women.

Queer

An umbrella term used to describe people who are not heterosexual and/or cisgender. Queer was used as a slur against the LGBTQ+ community for many years and still can be. However the word has been reclaimed by the LGBTQ+ community and many now embrace the term. Check if someone is comfortable with this term before referring to them as queer.

Pansexual

Someone whose romantic and/or sexual attraction towards others is not limited by sex assignment, gender identity or gender expression.

Questioning

The process of exploring your sexual orientation, gender identity and/or gender expression.

Asexual/Ace

Someone who experiences limited or no sexual attraction

Ally

A person who fights for, and supports others in their fight for equality, despite not being a member of the marginalised group, e.g. a heterosexual and/or cisgender person who believes in, and fights for the equality of LGBTQ+ people.

+

The 'plus' is used to signify all of the gender identities and sexual orientations that are not specifically covered by the other five initials.

Terms related to sexual orientation/sexuality

Heterosexual/Straight

Someone who is mainly attracted to people of a gender different to their own.

Coming Out

For LGBTQ+ people, coming out is the process of sharing your sexual orientation and/or your gender identity with people in your life

Discrimination

Treating individuals or a particular group of people differently, especially in a worse way than how a person might generally treat others, because they hold negative views about people with certain characteristics – e.g. a person's race, gender identity/expression, sexual orientation, class etc.

Homophobia

Discrimination against and/or fear of lesbian and gay people (including those perceived to be gay or lesbian). This also includes the perpetuation of negative myths and stereotypes through jokes and/or through personal negative thoughts about lesbian and gay people.

Biphobia

Discrimination against and/or fear or dislike of bisexual people (including those perceived to be bisexual) or of bisexuality. This also includes the spreading of negative myths and stereotypes through jokes and/or through personal negative thoughts about bisexual people.

LGBTQ+ Bullying

Bullying based on prejudice or discrimination towards LGBTQ+ people.

Outing

The deliberate or accidental sharing of another person's sexual orientation or gender identity without their permission. Outing is disrespectful and presents a danger for many LGBTQ+ individuals.

Belong To Glossary of Terms

Terms related to gender identity/ expression & sex characteristics

Gender Identity

Gender identity is the personal sense of one's own gender.

Gender Expression

How we show our gender through our clothing, hair, behaviour, etc.

Sex Assigned at Birth

The designation of a person at birth as male or female based on their anatomy (genitalia and/or reproductive organs) or biology (chromosomes and/or hormones).

**Gender Roles
and Expectations**

People are assigned a sex at birth and this often predetermines a gender role that a person is expected to fulfill e.g. someone assigned female at birth will be expected to live, identify, and outwardly present as a woman. Gender roles also created expectations such as being expected to 'act' like a woman and carry out jobs that society deems appropriate for women. Gender roles are expectations are often reinforced by society, people around us, and the media. People of all genders can find these expectations limiting and oppressive.

Gender Binary

The concept that there are only two genders, man and woman, and that everyone must be one or the other. The concept of the gender binary is often misused to claim that gender is biologically determined, e.g. that our bodies and biology define our genders. This concept reinforced the idea that men and women are opposites and have different roles in society.

Transgender or Trans

A term describing a person's gender identity that does not match their assigned sex at birth. This word is also used as an umbrella term to describe some groups of people who transcend conventional expectations of gender identity or expression.

Trans Man

A person who was assigned female at birth, but who experiences their gender identity as a man and identifies as a man.

Trans Masculine

A trans person whose gender identity and/or expression is closer to masculinity than to femininity

Belong To Glossary of Terms

Terms related to gender identity/ expression & sex characteristics

Trans Woman

A person who was assigned male at birth, but who experiences their gender identity as a woman and identifies as a woman.

Trans feminine

A trans person whose gender identity and/or expression is closer to femininity than masculinity.

Non-Binary

People whose gender identity is neither exclusively woman or man or is in between or beyond the gender binary.

Genderfluid

Someone who does not have a constant or fixed gender identity and/or gender expression.

Intersex

This is an umbrella term used to describe a wide range of natural bodily variations that do not fit the typical binary notions of male and female bodies. In some cases, intersex traits are visible at birth, while in others they are not apparent until puberty or later in life. Some intersex variations may not be physically apparent at all.

Sex Characteristics

Sex characteristics are physical features relating to sex. Primary sex characteristics include chromosomes, genitals, gonads, hormones, and other reproductive anatomy, and secondary sex characteristics are that which emerge from puberty such as breast development and the growth of facial hair.

**Gender Non-Conforming/
Gender Variant/Gender
Expansive**

Someone who does not conform to the gender-based expectations of society.

Cisgender/Cis

Someone whose gender identity matches the sex they were assigned at birth.

Pronouns

The words used to refer to a person other than their name. Common pronouns are they/them, he/him, and she/her. Neopronouns are pronouns created to be specifically gender-neutral including xe/xem, ze/zir, and fae/faer. For those who use pronouns (and not all people do) they are not preferred, they are essential.

Belong To Glossary of Terms

Terms related to gender identity/ expression & sex characteristics

Misgender/Mispronoun

To refer to someone using a word that does not reflect their gender. This could be a pronoun e.g. he/her or form of address e.g. ladies/guys. This may be unintentional and without ill intent or can be a maliciously employed expression of bias. Regardless of intent, misgendering/mispronouncing has a harmful impact. If you misgender/mispronoun someone by mistake, apologise, correct yourself, and aim to be more mindful moving forward.

Deadnaming

Calling someone by their birth name after they have changed their name. This term is often associated with trans people who have changed their name as part of their transition. This is a very hurtful and disrespectful thing to do on purpose. If you say someone's birth name by mistake, apologise, correct yourself, and aim to be more mindful moving forward.

Transphobia

The fear or dislike of someone based on the fact that they are trans, including denying their gender identity or refusing to accept it. Transphobia can result in individual and institutional discrimination, prejudice, and violence against trans, non-binary, or gender variant people. Transphobia may be targeted at people who are, or who are perceived to be, trans.

Transition/Transitioning

A process through which some trans people begin to live as the gender in which they identify, rather than the one assigned at birth. Transition might include social, medical or legal changes such as coming out to family, friends, co-workers and others; changing one's appearance; changing one's name, pronoun and sex designation on legal documents (e.g. driving licence or passport); and medical intervention (e.g. through hormones or surgery).

Social Transition

A process in which trans people begin to live as the gender with which they identify, rather than the sex they were assigned at birth. This can involve changing their name and/or pronouns, changing how they dress or certain mannerisms. This will be individual for every trans person, not every trans person will socially transition.

Terms related to gender identity/ expression & sex characteristics

Legal Transition

A process in which a trans person uses legal means to have their gender legally recognised. This can include legally changing their name via deed poll and/or acquiring a gender recognition certificate. In Ireland, this process is carried out by accessing a gender recognition certificate. (See Gender Recognition Act 2015).

Gender Recognition Act 2015

This legislation enables trans people to be legally recognised as their gender and to be issued with a new birth certificate. This Act uses a best practice framework of self-declaration, that is the trans person does not need to provide proof in any form that they are trans they can simply declare that to be true for themselves and this is honored by the legislation. However not all trans people will apply for gender recognition or will be able to access it. You currently have to be over 18 to apply and be an Irish citizen and the legislation only recognises people as male or female excluding a large cohort of the trans community. You can apply with parental consent when you are aged 16 & 17. Under 16s cannot under current legislation acquire legal gender recognition.

Medical Transition

A process by which trans people use medical means to alter their body to better reflect their gender identity, this can include hormone therapy or surgery. This will be individual for every trans person, not every trans person will medically transition.

Gender Affirming Healthcare

Healthcare that holistically attends to trans and non-binary people's physical, mental, and social healthcare needs and well-being while respectfully affirming their gender identity.

Gender Dysphoria

Distress resulting from a difference between a person's gender identity and the person's assigned sex at birth, associated gender role, and/or primary and secondary sex characteristics.

Terms related to gender identity/ expression & sex characteristics

Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) or Hormones

The use of hormones to alter secondary sex characteristics. Some trans people take hormones to align their bodies with their gender identities. Other trans people choose not to take hormones. It is a personal choice.

Top Surgery

This refers to gender-affirming surgeries which are carried out on the chest or breasts. Some trans people will have top surgery to align their bodies with their gender identities. Other trans people choose not to have surgeries. It is a personal choice.

Bottom Surgery

Bottom surgery, also called lower surgery, is used in the trans community to describe a variety of gender-affirming surgeries and other procedures that can be carried out on the reproductive organs or genitals. Some trans will have bottom surgery to align their bodies with their gender identities. Other trans people choose not to have surgeries. It is a personal choice.

Binding

Compressing one's chest to create a more androgynous or masculine appearance. This should be done with a chest binder designed specifically for this purpose. Binding can have negative impacts on your physical health – we advise you to talk to your healthcare provider about it.

Tucking

Tucking is a practice used by some transgender women and gender nonconforming individuals to minimise or hide the bulge of their genitals, creating a flatter and more typically feminine appearance.

LGBTQ+ TERMINOLOGY WORDSEARCH

L	G	P	A	N	S	E	X	U	A	L	T	U	A
I	E	N	R	O	I	N	T	E	R	S	E	X	D
P	N	S	T	N	E	I	H	S	P	P	N	E	L
R	D	X	B	B	T	Q	U	E	E	R	U	V	S
E	E	L	H	I	G	L	F	A	N	O	S	S	N
L	R	I	P	N	A	H	T	X	B	N	I	R	U
H	I	A	V	A	X	N	E	R	H	O	A	O	O
N	D	M	G	R	E	R	U	D	A	U	L	G	M
T	E	B	J	Y	O	M	A	G	I	N	P	I	G
X	N	E	T	W	A	C	X	F	P	S	S	D	E
U	T	D	C	I	S	G	E	N	D	E	R	N	I
B	I	S	E	X	U	A	L	P	X	H	E	C	S
A	T	S	H	E	E	Y	C	U	A	T	L	R	Y
G	Y	B	A	K	S	I	O	L	N	A	X	M	H

CAN YOU FIND THESE LGBTQ+ TERMS IN THE ABOVE WORDSEARCH?

- Pronouns
- Queer
- Non-binary
- Lesbian
- Gay
- Gender Identity
- Bisexual
- Trans
- Pansexual
- Intersex
- Lesbian



LGBTQ+ TERMINOLOGY WORDSEARCH - SOLUTIONS

L	G	P	A	N	S	E	X	U	A	L	T	U	A
I	E	N	R	O	I	N	T	E	R	S	E	X	D
P	N	S	T	N	E	I	H	S	P	P	N	E	L
R	D	X	B	B	T	Q	U	E	E	R	U	V	S
E	E	L	H	I	G	L	F	A	N	O	S	S	N
L	R	I	P	N	A	H	T	X	B	N	I	R	U
H	I	A	V	A	X	N	E	R	H	O	A	O	O
N	D	M	G	R	E	R	U	D	A	U	L	G	M
T	E	B	J	Y	O	M	A	G	I	N	P	I	G
X	N	E	T	W	A	C	X	F	P	S	S	D	E
U	T	D	C	I	S	G	E	N	D	E	R	N	I
B	I	S	E	X	U	A	L	P	X	H	E	C	S
A	T	S	H	E	E	Y	C	U	A	T	L	R	Y
G	Y	B	A	K	S	I	O	L	N	A	X	M	H

**CAN YOU FIND
THESE LGBTQ+
TERMS IN THE
ABOVE
WORDSEARCH?**

- Pronouns
- Queer
- Non-binary
- Lesbian
- Gay
- Gender Identity
- Bisexual
- Trans
- Pansexual
- Intersex
- Lesbian



LGBTQ+ TERMINOLOGY WORDSEARCH



L	G	P	A	N	S	E	X	U	A	L	T	U	A
I	E	N	R	O	I	N	T	E	R	S	E	X	D
P	N	S	T	N	E	I	H	S	P	P	N	E	L
R	D	X	B	B	T	Q	U	E	E	R	U	V	S
E	E	L	H	I	G	L	F	A	N	O	S	S	N
L	R	I	P	N	A	H	T	X	B	N	I	R	U
H	I	A	V	A	X	N	E	R	H	O	A	O	O
N	D	M	G	R	E	R	U	D	A	U	L	G	M
T	E	B	J	Y	O	M	A	G	I	N	P	I	G
X	N	E	T	W	A	C	X	F	P	S	S	D	E
U	T	D	C	I	S	G	E	N	D	E	R	N	I
B	I	S	E	X	U	A	L	P	X	H	E	C	S
A	T	S	H	E	E	Y	C	U	A	T	L	R	Y
G	Y	B	A	K	S	I	O	L	N	A	X	M	H

GUESS THE CLUE BELOW, AND FIND THE CORRECT LGBTQ+ TERM IN THE ABOVE WORDSEARCH!

People whose gender identity is neither exclusively woman or man or is in between or beyond the gender binary.

A woman who is attracted to other women. (Some non-binary people may also identify with this term).

Someone whose gender identity does not match their assigned sex at birth.

Someone's personal sense of their own gender.

Someone who is attracted to more than one gender.

An umbrella term used to describe people who are not heterosexual and/or cisgender. Was used as a slur for many years and still may be.

The words used to refer to a person other than their name, such as she/her, he/him or they/them.

Someone whose romantic and/or sexual attraction towards others is not limited by sex assignment, gender identity or gender expression.

Someone who is attracted to people of the same gender.

Someone whose gender identity matches the sex they were assigned at birth.

This is an umbrella term used to describe a wide range of natural bodily variations that do not fit typical binary notions of male and female bodies.

LGBTQ+ TERMINOLOGY WORDSEARCH - SOLUTIONS

L	G	P	A	N	S	E	X	U	A	L	T	U	A
I	E	N	R	O	I	N	T	E	R	S	E	X	D
P	N	S	T	N	E	I	H	S	P	P	N	E	L
R	D	X	B	B	T	Q	U	E	E	R	U	V	S
E	E	L	H	I	G	L	F	A	N	O	S	S	N
L	R	I	P	N	A	H	T	X	B	N	I	R	U
H	I	A	V	A	X	N	E	R	H	O	A	O	O
N	D	M	G	R	E	R	U	D	A	U	L	G	M
T	E	B	J	Y	O	M	A	G	I	N	P	I	G
X	N	E	T	W	A	C	X	F	P	S	S	D	E
U	T	D	C	I	S	G	E	N	D	E	R	N	I
B	I	S	E	X	U	A	L	P	X	H	E	C	S
A	T	S	H	E	E	Y	C	U	A	T	L	R	Y
G	Y	B	A	K	S	I	O	L	N	A	X	M	H

GUESS THE CLUE BELOW, AND FIND THE CORRECT LGBTQ+ TERM IN THE ABOVE WORDSEARCH!

People whose gender identity is neither exclusively woman or man or is in between or beyond the gender binary.

A woman who is attracted to other women. (Some non-binary people may also identify with this term).

Someone whose gender identity does not match their assigned sex at birth.

Someone's personal sense of their own gender.

Someone who is attracted to more than one gender.

An umbrella term used to describe people who are not heterosexual and/or cisgender. Was used as a slur for many years and still may be.

The words used to refer to a person other than their name, such as she/her, he/him or they/them.

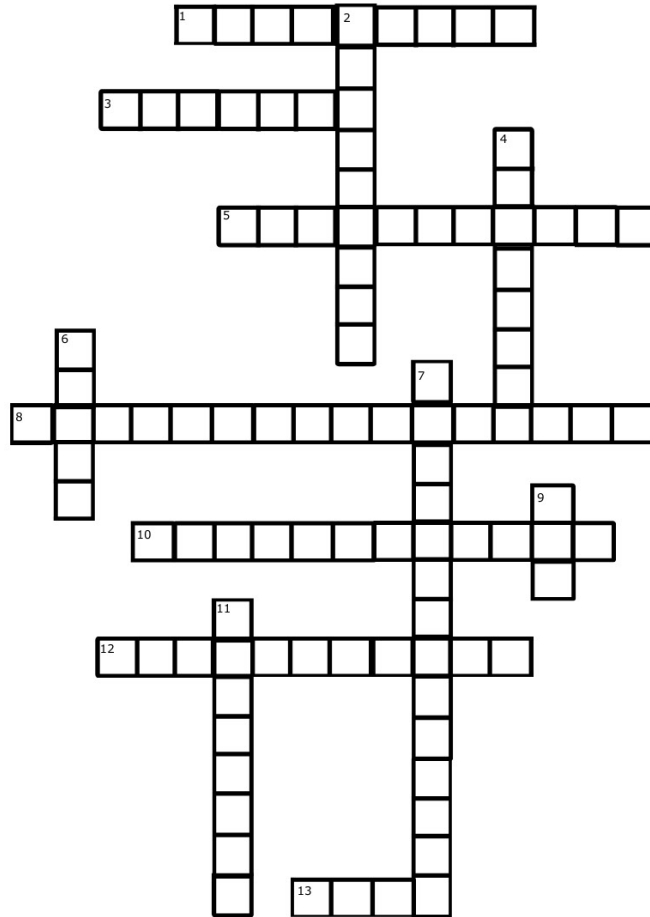
Someone whose romantic and/or sexual attraction towards others is not limited by sex assignment, gender identity or gender expression.

Someone who is attracted to people of the same gender.

Someone whose gender identity matches the sex they were assigned at birth.

This is an umbrella term used to describe a wide range of natural bodily variations that do not fit typical binary notions of male and female bodies.

LGBTQ+ TERMINOLOGY CROSSWORD



USE THE CLUES BELOW TO FILL IN THE CROSSWORD!

DOWN

2. People whose gender identity is neither exclusively woman or man (2 words: 3 letters, 6 letters)
4. The words used to refer to a person other than their name, e.g., he/him, she/her, they/them (8 letters)
6. An umbrella term used to describe people who are not heterosexual and/or cisgender. Was used as a slur for many years and still may be (5 letters)
7. The personal sense of one's own gender. (2 words: 6 letters, 8 letters)
9. Someone who is attracted to people of the same gender. (3 letters)
11. This is an umbrella term used to describe a wide range of natural bodily variations that do not fit typical binary notions of male and female bodies. (8 letters)

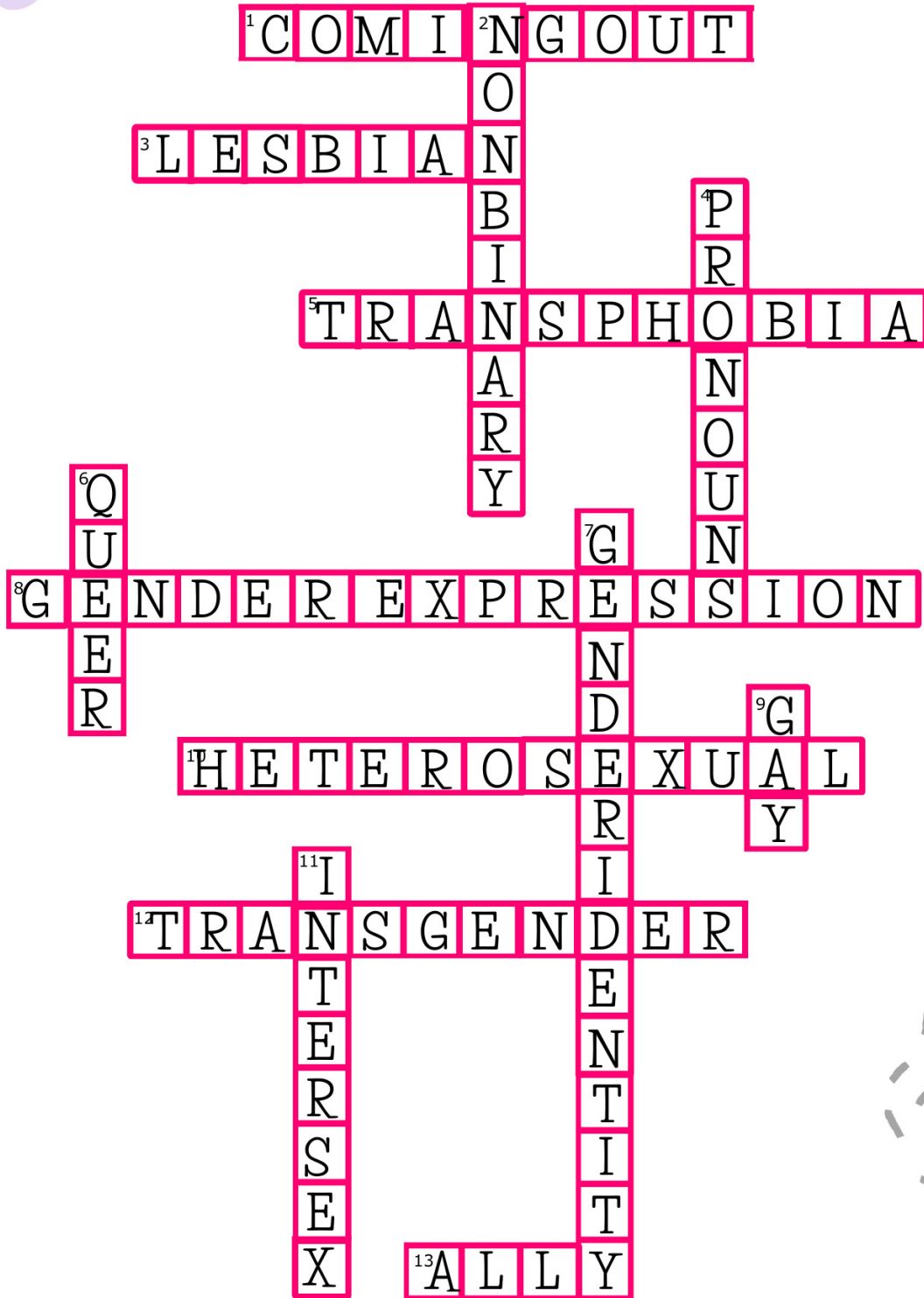
ACROSS

1. The process of LGBTQ+ people sharing their sexual orientation and/or your gender identity with people in their lives (2 words: 6 letters, 3 letters)
3. A woman who is attracted to other women. (Some non-binary people may also identify with this term) (7 letters)
5. The fear or dislike of someone based on the fact they are trans, including denying their gender identity or refusing to accept it. (10 letters)
8. How we show our gender through our clothing, hair, behaviour, etc. (2 words: 6 letters, 10 letters)
10. Someone who is mainly attracted to people of a gender different to their own. (12 letters)
12. A term describing a person's gender identity that does not match their assigned sex at birth. (11 letters)
13. A person who fights for, and supports others in their fight for equality, despite not being a member of the marginalised group. (4 letters)





LGBTQ+ TERMINOLOGY CROSSWORD - SOLUTIONS



When greeting others, be mindful of language.

Consider

“Thanks, **friends**.
Have a great
night.”

“Good morning,
folks!”

“Hi, **everyone!**”

“And for **you?**”

“Can I get
you **all**
something?”

Why?

Shifting to gender-inclusive language respects and acknowledges the gender identities of all people and removes assumption.

Based on Toni Latour's “Hello there” cards.

Learn more at qmunity.ca

Getting Started

This section gives you tools that may be useful in getting Stand Up Awareness Week started.



Get Involved Posters

Photocopy these in colour or black and white and display them to help you gather your team.

Information on Stand Up Awareness Week for Post-Primary School Senior Management and Boards of Management

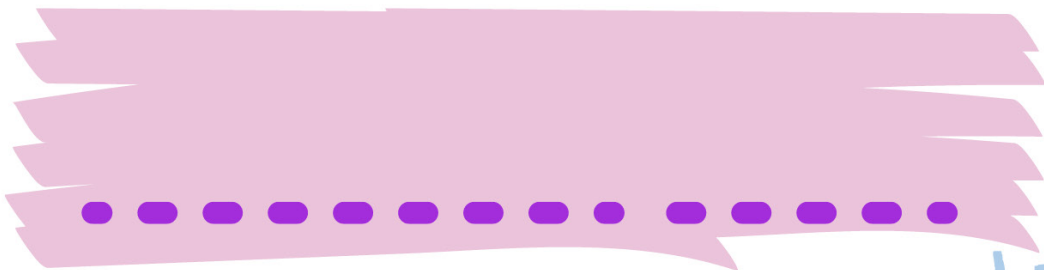
This relates specifically to school policies, but please feel free to adapt this to suit your needs in a Youthreach or youth service.



GET INVOLVED!

Support and celebrate the LGBTQ+ young people in your school or service this Stand Up Awareness Week, November 14th - 18th!

To learn more about Stand Up Awareness Week and how you can get involved, speak to your Stand Up Coordinator:



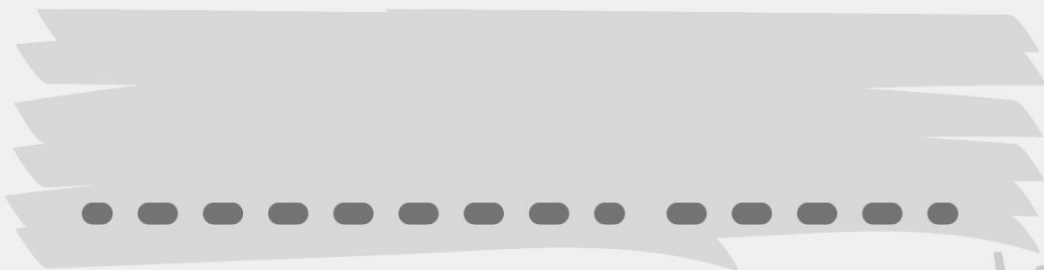
Or visit
www.belongto.org/professionals/standup/
to download a Stand Up resource pack



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Information on Stand Up Awareness Week for Post-Primary School Senior Management and Boards of Management

Bullying, isolation, and a lack of acceptance has devastating effects on the mental health of LGBTQ+ young people who experience twice the levels of self-harm, three times the level of attempted suicide, and four times the level of stress, anxiety, and depression compared to their non-LGBTQ+ friends.²

Stand Up Awareness Week is in its 13th year with almost 75% of post-primary schools across Ireland taking part in 2021. It is an annual campaign run by Belong To, giving second-level schools, Youthreach, and youth services the opportunity to celebrate and recognise their LGBTQ+ community. It is a time when we show solidarity with LGBTQ+ young people and our colleagues to ensure they feel seen, heard, and safe, and to ensure everyone knows that LGBTQ+phobic language and bullying will not be tolerated. A European study conducted last year named Stand Up Awareness Week as an example of 'Good Practices and Interventions' for LGBTQ+ youth.³

² Higgins, A., Doyle, L., Downes, C., Murphy, R., Sharek, D., DeVries, J., Begley, T., McCann, E., Sheerin, F. and Smyth, S. (2016) The LGBTIreland Report: National study of the mental health and wellbeing of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people in Ireland. Dublin: GLEN and BeLonG To. Available at: <https://belongto.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/LGBT-Ireland-Full-Reportpdf.pdf>

³ Költő, A., Vaughan, E., O'Sullivan, L., Kelly, C., Saewyc, E. M., & Nic Gabhainn, S. (2021). 'LGBTI+ Youth in Ireland and across Europe: A two-phased landscape and research gap analysis'. Dublin: Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. Available at: <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/88354-lgbti-youth-in-ireland-and-across-europe-a-two-phased-landscape-and-research-gap-analysis/>

Running Stand Up Awareness Week in your school is an excellent example of your commitment to education and prevention strategies that must be documented in your school's Anti-Bullying Policy. These strategies must explicitly deal with identity-based bullying, including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying.⁴

As part of its research during the 2021/22 school year, the Inspectorate looked specifically at the extent to which schools engaged with the requirements of the 2013 Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-primary Schools.⁵

Belong To offers training and lots of resources to support schools in running Stand Up Awareness Week.

If you would like to discuss how you might run Stand Up Awareness Week in your school, please do not hesitate to contact our Education and Training Support Team on 01 670 6223.

Thank you to our Stand Up Awareness Week funders:



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Stand Up Awareness Week is endorsed by:



JMB
Joint Managerial Body
For School Management in Voluntary Secondary Schools



⁴ Department of Education and Skills (2013) 'Circular 0045/2013 Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools'. Available at: [d2eea60740054c64a83194e67a28316c.pdf](https://assets.gov.ie/d2eea60740054c64a83194e67a28316c.pdf) (assets.gov.ie)

⁵ Department of Education and Skills (2013) 'Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools'. Available at: [3b6f3db2de154ebaa1f69a0856c97c8e.pdf](https://assets.gov.ie/3b6f3db2de154ebaa1f69a0856c97c8e.pdf) (assets.gov.ie)

Reflect

(See Step 3 of your Stand Up Awareness Week Guide)

These resources are there to support you in your initial discussions around LGBTQ+ topics and Stand Up Awareness Week.

Read through the lessons and decide for yourself what will work best for you in your school, Youthreach, or youth service. The first two lessons are designed for Junior Cycle and the last one for Senior Cycle:

Junior Cycle:

Lesson 1:

Respectful Communication

These lessons are sourced from the SPHE/RSE Resource: 'Growing Up Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender'. They give guidance on how to discuss LGBTQ+ topics in an age appropriate respectful way.

Lesson 2:

Gender

These lessons are also sourced from the 'Growing Up Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender' resource. The first focuses on 'Gender', while second focuses on 'Understanding Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity'.

Senior Cycle

Lesson 1:

Understanding Sexual Orientation and Gender

These lessons are also sourced from the 'Growing Up Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender' resource. The first focuses on 'Gender', while second focuses on 'Understanding Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity'.

LESSON

1



JUNIOR CYCLE

RESPECTFUL COMMUNICATION

This lesson links with the **Year 1 SPHE** modules: **Communication Skills** - 'Express Yourself' and 'Learning to Listen' and **RSE** - 'Respecting Myself and Others'.

Aim

To enable students to develop an awareness of respectful communication and appropriate use of language in relation to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender issues. The letters LGBT are commonly used to stand for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender.

Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- (i) Have a better understanding of some of the language used in relation to people who are lesbian, gay and bisexual.
- (ii) Reflect on the impact of disrespectful communication.
- (iii) Be more aware of how to communicate respectfully on the topic of sexual orientation.

Student Materials

Lesson 1, Worksheet 1: Vocabulary (cut into cards).

Teacher Materials

Copy of School Code of Behaviour.



Background Information for the Teacher

People who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) often experience negative attitudes from others, see research findings on p8 and p30. Negative attitudes can take the form of hidden prejudice, abusive language and physical aggression.

This lesson gives young people the opportunity to reflect on the ways in which they and their peers communicate and to learn respectful ways of communicating.

While sexual orientation exists along a continuum, three sexual orientations are generally recognised – homosexual, heterosexual and bisexual. The majority of people are heterosexual – attracted to people of the opposite sex. A smaller number are homosexual – attracted to people of the same sex. Others are bisexual – attracted to people of both sexes. A person's sexual orientation has emotional, psychological, spiritual and physical dimensions.

Many people who are lesbian, gay or bisexual don't like the word 'homosexual' because of historic prejudice and criminalisation; they prefer the word 'gay' to describe men who are attracted to men and the word 'lesbian' for women who are attracted to women.

It is generally accepted that people do not choose their sexual orientation; many gay, lesbian and bisexual men and women say that they were aware of their sexual orientation from a very young age. Sexual orientation is something that emerges and develops, especially during adolescence.

The teacher may wish to refer to the school's code of behaviour and equality legislation (see p9).

PROCEDURE

1. Introduction

Introduce the lesson by outlining the aim and learning outcomes, referring to the Background Information for the Teacher. Explain what is meant by sexual orientation. Discuss ground rules and boundaries with students, referring to the guidance in the 'Teaching the Junior Cycle Lessons' section. Remind students of sources of support.

2. Discussion

Explain to students that they are going to explore the impact of some of the ways in which we talk about sexual orientation.

The teacher reads out each scenario and asks students in pairs to discuss:

1. How might the person being spoken about feel?
2. How might other people around that person react?
3. What could be done differently?

Scenario A:

Mario is meeting his friends in town. When he gets there one of the lads shouts out, 'That shirt is so gay...'

Scenario B:

Emma opens her Facebook page to see that someone has posted, 'Now we know why Emma doesn't have a boyfriend – she's into girls...'

Scenario C:

Sam is quiet and doesn't have many friends. When he comes into class some of the lads say, 'Hey don't let him sit beside you, he's gay...'

Scenario D:

Anna isn't interested in going out with boys. One of her classmates asks her, 'Are you lesbian, or what?'

Take feedback for each scenario.

Note: The teacher should be familiar with the school's RSE policy as it relates to this issue and should ensure that the scenarios are explored as sensitively as possible. Students may need to be reminded to discuss the situations in a way that is respectful and positive and without making reference to any particular individual.

Discussion Pointers:

- Why is the word 'gay' used in such a negative way?
- How could this attitude be changed?

3. Vocabulary Activity

Introduce the activity by telling students that people use a wide variety of terms to describe people who are LGBT, some of which carry and reinforce the negative attitudes that we have just discussed. If language is used in a cruel or inconsiderate way it can have damaging effects.

In order to discuss this topic in a respectful way it is important that we understand some key words used in relation to sexual orientation that are commonly used and that don't have negative connotations.

Divide students into pairs or groups of four and give each group two sets of cards cut from Worksheet 1: the words and their definitions. Students are asked to match the word with the definition.

Take feedback; check for correct matching and understanding.

Discussion Pointers:

- Which words or phrases did you know already?
- Which are new? Did any surprise you?
- Do you think it is important or useful to know these words? Why?

4. Conclusion

Sum up the lesson by reminding students that they are going to be exploring some of the issues facing young LGBT people in further lessons and that it is important that everyone abides by the ground rules to make the learning as safe, enjoyable and worthwhile as possible.

Note: Remind students that discrimination on the grounds of sexuality is illegal under Equality Legislation, and we should avoid making personal comments or asking questions about people's intimate lives unless they volunteer such information themselves. The teacher may wish to read the relevant section from the school's Code of Behaviour.

Ask students to write in their journal one thing they have learned in this class. If time allows, invite students to share their comments with the class if they so wish.

Remind students of the importance of talking to a trusted adult if they have concerns about anything and of sources of general and LGBT-specific support (see Appendix 1).

LESSON 1 WORKSHEET 1



VOCABULARY

Bisexual

Someone who is attracted to both males and females.

Gay

Someone who is attracted to people of the same sex. Gay usually refers to males. Many females call themselves lesbian.

Straight

Means the same as heterosexual – someone who is attracted to the opposite sex.

Heterosexual

Someone who is attracted to the opposite sex – i.e. females who are attracted to males and males who are attracted to females.

Homosexual

Someone who is attracted to people of the same sex. Most people now use the words 'gay' for a male and 'lesbian' for a female.

Lesbian

A female who is attracted to other females.

LGBT

The term often used for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

Sexual Orientation

The attraction we feel towards people of a particular sex.

LESSON

2



JUNIOR CYCLE

GENDER

This lesson links with the **Year 1 SPHE** module: **RSE** - 'Images of Male and Female'.

Aim

To increase the students' understanding of gender and gender identity and to introduce the concept of transgender.

Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- (i) Have a greater awareness of male and female stereotypes and their possible impact.
- (ii) Have a better understanding of the concepts of gender identity and transgender.

Student Materials

Lesson 2, Worksheet 2 (optional): Objects - Male or Female?

Lesson 2, Worksheet 3: Qualities - Masculine or Feminine?

Teacher Materials

The lesson will be more effective if the teacher brings in a number of household items, instead of using Worksheet 2 (see Step 2 – Gender Activities).



Background Information for the Teacher

This lesson allows students to examine male and female stereotypes and to explore the ways in which these stereotypes might affect their sense of identity.

The word 'sex' refers to someone's biological sex. While the word 'gender' can also mean biological sex, it is generally used in a wider sense to refer to the social and cultural factors influencing what it means to be male and female. Although it is common to polarise, in reality most people have both masculine and feminine traits. This can be seen in varying degrees, from the ultra macho man to the ultra feminine woman, with all shades of masculinity and femininity in between.

For most people their physical sex is apparent from birth and they are generally brought up in a way which encourages the development of their identity as either male or female.

For a very small proportion of the population this is not the case; their sex at birth is not in keeping with how they perceive their gender identity. Such individuals may be born male but identify themselves as female, or vice versa. Others may feel that their gender identity is not fixed. Transgender is the umbrella term used to describe these people.

PROCEDURE

1. Introduction

Introduce the lesson by outlining the aim and learning outcomes, referring to the Background Information for the Teacher. Remind students of the ground rules, boundaries and sources of support.

2. Gender Activities

Option a)

Hold up, one at a time, a range of everyday items, e.g. a reel of thread, kettle, spanner, and ask students to call out which object they think is male and which is female.

(Alternatively, give each student a copy of Worksheet 2: Everyday Objects - Male or Female? Ask them to decide if the item shown in each box is male or female, depending on what they think about its appearance and/or its use. Write either M or F beside the object.)

Divide the board into two columns headed 'Male' and 'Female'. Take feedback in the large group, listing the items assigned to each gender on the board. Explore reasons for choices. Ask students if the exercise tells us anything about how we think of males and females.

Note: Students may make their choice based on who uses the item most, or on the shape of the item, e.g. Male - strong, angular, practical; Female - decorative, curvy, fragile, soft. Explore why we share such strong notions of what it is to be female or male. There may be discussion about the impact of individual influences on our understanding of gender (e.g. family, friends, religion, etc).

or

Option b)

Ask students to draw a line in their journals labelling one end, 'Very feminine' and the other, 'Very masculine'. Give each student a copy of Worksheet 3: Qualities – Masculine or Feminine? Ask them to write the qualities in a continuum on the line, depending on whether they think they are feminine or masculine. They can add other qualities if they have time.

Take feedback from the students on where they placed their words.

Discussion Pointers:

- Do people in everyday life fit the stereotype or do most people have a mix of qualities, whether they are male or female?

- What is it like for someone who doesn't fit the stereotype – e.g. a boy who likes fashion; a girl who likes fixing engines?
- Do we sometimes pretend to be something that we are not, just to fit in?
- What effect might this have?

Note: Explain to the students that very few people fit the gender stereotypes completely. It is important to accept who we are with our own particular personality and accept others for who they are also.

Even though most people don't exactly fit the stereotypes, most people know that they are male or female. In a small percentage of cases people feel their gender identity is different from their biological sex. The world may see them as male or female but inside they may feel they are the opposite sex. This might be confusing for a young person experiencing this, as it's a topic that isn't talked about very much and the young person might fear not being understood or supported by others. Being transgender is something that we are only beginning to understand, but many positive developments have happened in the last number of years. It is important that transgender people experience acceptance and support as they explore their true gender identity.

3. Conclusion

Ask students to spend a few minutes reflecting on their own qualities and write down a list of qualities that they like in themselves.




























Conclude the lesson by reminding students that we are all different. Our difference is something to value and not something to be afraid of. Being a part of a society where it is normal to be respectful and accepting of others helps everyone.

Remind students of the importance of talking to a trusted adult if they have concerns about anything and sources of general and LGBT-specific support (see Appendix 1).

LESSON 2 WORKSHEET 2



EVERYDAY OBJECTS – MALE OR FEMALE?

LESSON 2 WORKSHEET 3



QUALITIES - MASCULINE OR FEMININE?

Drinks a lot	Good with children	Noisy	Takes risks	Emotional	Shows off
Aggressive	Into fashion	Competitive	Caring	Sensitive	Careful driver
Peacemaker	Well behaved	Likes to gossip	Good at housework	Romantic	Logical
Indecisive	Jealous	Illogical	Sweet	Strong	Sensible
Doesn't talk about emotions	Into computers	Always on a diet	Talkative	Fast driver	Flirty
Impatient	Loves sport	Good at maths	Easily hurt	Gentle	Cries easily

LESSON

1



SENIOR CYCLE

UNDERSTANDING SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY

This lesson links with **Senior Cycle RSE Resource Materials Lesson 7** - 'Human Sexuality' and **Lesson 16** - 'Accepting Sexual Orientations'. It also links with **TRUST Lesson 9** - 'Sexuality' and **Lesson 10** - 'Sexual Orientation'.

Aim

To increase the students' understanding of sexual orientation and gender identity.

Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- (i) Have explored what is meant by sexuality, sexual orientation and gender identity.
- (ii) Have reflected on the experience of being LGBT.

Student Materials

Copies of mainstream popular magazines –
One copy for each student.



Background Information for the Teacher

Sexuality

Sexuality is an integral part of being human. It is not just about sexual activity. It includes gender, sexual orientation, sexual expression, capacity for enjoyment and pleasure, our relationship with ourselves and others, and reproduction. We are sexual from the time we are born until the time we die.

Sexual Orientation

While sexual orientation exists along a continuum, three sexual orientations are generally recognised – homosexual, heterosexual and bisexual. Most people are heterosexual – attracted to people of the opposite sex.

A smaller percentage is homosexual – attracted to people of the same sex. An even smaller percentage is bisexual – attracted to people of both sexes. A person's sexual orientation has emotional, psychological, spiritual and physical dimensions.

Many people who are lesbian, gay or bisexual don't like the word 'homosexual' because of historic prejudice and criminalisation; they prefer the word 'gay' to describe men who are attracted to men and the word 'lesbian' for women who are attracted to women.

It is generally accepted that people do not choose their sexual orientation; many gay, lesbian and bisexual men and women say that they are aware of their sexual orientation from a very young age. Sexual orientation is something that emerges and develops, especially during adolescence.

Gender Identity

Gender identity is a person's internal feeling of being male, female or some other gender or combination of genders. Some people identify as having no gender at all while others feel their identity is outside the traditional male/female genders. The term 'transgender' is an umbrella term, which includes people of different gender identities and presentations, such as people who cross-dress, people who don't define themselves as being either male or female, transsexuals and others. A transsexual is someone who identifies with or has a desire to live as a member of the sex other than their sex at birth.

Society understands and interprets gender through our gender expression – i.e. how we appear to others, our mannerisms, clothes, the way in which we walk or talk. Gender identity can't be changed by treatment or counselling and is separate from sexual orientation.

PROCEDURE

1. Introduction

Begin by reminding students that they have already been introduced to the topics of sexuality, sexual orientation and gender identity in Junior Cycle.

Introduce this lesson by outlining the aim and learning outcomes. Discuss ground rules and boundaries with students, referring to the guidance in the 'Teaching the Senior Cycle Lessons' section. Remind students of sources of support.

2. Discussion

As a whole class activity or working in pairs or small groups, ask students what they think the terms 'sexuality', 'sexual orientation' and 'gender identity' mean.

Take feedback, discuss students' responses and clarify and correct any misinformation as necessary, using information from the Background Information for Teacher.

Explain the words that are generally used in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity – i.e. lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender. Together they are often referred to as LGBT.

3. Magazine Activity

Tell students that they are going to look at some popular magazines and to think about whether the lives of LGBT people are reflected in the photographs.

Give each student, or a pair of students, a magazine and ask them to look at the photos and consider the following questions:

1. Do LGB people or issues feature in the magazines?
2. Why do you think this is?
3. Do transgender people or issues feature?
4. Why do you think this is?
5. What messages might this be sending?

Conclude the discussion by reminding students that as a society we sometimes forget about the lives and feelings of people who are in a minority and assume that everyone is the same. In the case of LGBT people this can make it more difficult for them to be open about who they are. In the next activity we look at the story of well known GAA player, Dónal Óg O'Cu sack and how hard it was for him to tell his parents that he was gay.

4. Reading

Dónal Óg Cusack is an Irish hurling legend. Born in 1977 in Cork into a traditional hurling family, he was part of two Cork hurling teams that won All-Ireland medals. He kept his identity as a gay man quiet for a long time, but then came out. In this extract from his autobiography he describes telling his parents about his sexual orientation.

Read the extract from Dónal Óg Cusack's autobiography – 'Come What May: The Autobiography', Penguin.

They all sat down and waited. Now, I've always been comfortable with who I am, but this wasn't easy. To them I was a son or brother, a hurler. I was a leader in a world of men's men. In Cloyne I had standing because I was a hurler, and hurling matters. Our house had produced three hurling sons and I had brought some serious medals through the lintel. I knew the pride that gave them. The room we were sitting in had its walls and shelves filled with the stories and mementos of hurling lives. Mainly mine.

So I told them the story pretty much exactly the way it had happened. The other, secret, story of this son they had reared in this house. I said, 'Look, I'm not into labels, I'm not this or I'm not that but this is what I've been doing, this is it, this is me blah, blah, blah. If that makes me whatever, then I am what I am, but I refuse to go down the road of labels and stuff like that. I don't know what's ahead of me but that's where I am. That's me. Still Dónal Óg' (page 155).

Discussion Pointers:

- What do you think it was like for Dónal Óg to keep this secret?
- Why do you think he doesn't want to put a label on himself?
- Are there extra problems in coming out if you are a sportsman or woman and if so, why?

5. Conclusion

Conclude the class by asking students to reflect for a few minutes on what they have learned in this lesson and to write it down in their journal.

Remind students of the importance of talking to a trusted adult if they have concerns about anything and of sources of general and LGBT-specific support (see Appendix 1).

Additional Information:

The full 'Growing Up Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender' resource can be found [by clicking here](#). Accompanying [videos are available here](#), sort by 'title' to view the videos in order.

Other Useful Resources:

- [Being LGBT in School](#)
- [Relationships and Sexuality Unit for 1st Years](#)
- [Talking Relationships, Understanding Sexuality Teaching \(TRUST\)](#)
- [NCCA Resources for learning and teaching in SPHE/RSE](#)
- [PDST Relationship and Sexuality Education Resources](#)
- [Growing Up LGBT SPHE/RSE](#)

Belong To Resources:

Share our videos with your students or youth group during Stand Up Awareness Week to help them learn about LGBTQ+ identities and why language matters.

There is an accompanying Learning Pack to facilitate educator and youth workers to have an informed, safe and empowering discussions with young people about some of the key issues regarding the experiences of young LGBTQ+ people. The pack includes three videos on different issues, with corresponding lesson plans, handouts (where relevant), and links to additional information for teachers.

- [Stand Up Awareness Week In-class Video Learning Pack:](#)
- [Lesson One Video: Being LGBTQ+ & Coming Out](#)
- [Lesson Two Video: Words we use and why they are important](#)
- [Lesson Three Video: Trans Identities](#)

TENI (Transgender Equality Network of Ireland) Resources:

- [TENI and UL Gender Identity and Gender Expression E-Resource for Second-Level Schools](#)
- [TENI: About Gender Recognition and the Gender Recognition Act](#)

Helpful Videos:

- [AMAZE video resources on LGBTQ+ topics and identities \(Mainly for 1st years\).](#)



Roll It Out

(See Step 5 of your Stand Up Awareness Week Guide)

The majority of your time will be spent in the planning stage, but don't forget to take lots of photos as you roll out Stand Up Awareness Week. Record everything! You can send it to us at www.belongto.org/sendit, but also send it to your local media. They are always looking for great content – and this is it! The Media Guide below will give you all you need.



Media Guide

Spend some time on publicity and PR and let your wider community and county know about the amazing work you are doing to celebrate LGBTQ+ youth through Stand Up Awareness Week.

A. Media Activities

In 2 minutes

Re-tweet or share Belong To's social media posts about Stand Up Awareness Week and comment letting your followers know that your school, Youthreach, or youth service is participating in the campaign this November.

In five minutes

Write your own social media post and let your followers know you are participating in Stand Up Awareness Week. Let people know what kind of activities you are participating in, share photos, videos, or artwork alongside your post. Don't forget to tag Belong To:

- Twitter: @BeLonG_To
- Facebook: @belongtoyouthservices
- Instagram: @belongtoyouthservices

In 30 minutes

Send a press release to your local newspaper and radio stations using our handy template as a basis. Let them know if there is a spokesperson available for interview or if you can welcome a press photographer at your school, Youthreach, or youth service.

In 60 minutes

A picture tells a thousand words! Coordinate a photocall using our guide below and coordinate an image to share with your local newspaper. You can invite their photographer to take the photo or take a high-res image on a camera preferably and send it your local newspapers along with the Press Release.

B. Photocall Guide

A Photocall is a time arranged for photographers, often press photographers, to take pictures of an event, activity or group of people for publicity purposes.

Here are some ideas:

- A group of young people all wearing t-shirts that make up the colour of the Rainbow flag (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and violet) with the principal/educator/youth worker holding the Stand Up Awareness Week Guide.
- A group of students holding a rainbow flag with the principal/educator/youth worker holding a home-made poster with the words: 'Stand Up Awareness Week'.
- Create a chalk rainbow at the entrance to the building with a number of young people and the principal/teacher/youth worker.
- See an example below:



C. Tips for Media Interviews

- The correct title is Stand Up Awareness Week run by Belong To.
- Always be prepared with the top three key messages (see press release for reference) you want to deliver being top of mind.
- There is no such thing as 'off the record' - don't say anything off the record to a journalist or anything that you don't want to see in print.
- Avoid being late for the interview as the journalist might be on a deadline and you could lose the opportunity for positive publicity.
- Stay mindful of the fact that you don't have to answer anything outside the agreed areas of questioning - it's ok to say "I'm not in a position to discuss that today... Today I want to focus on xxx".
- Reporters love good sound bites. Solid, memorable quotes for their article or newscast make a good story, a better story. Know in advance the key message, statistics, or quote you'll want to make, as it will add credibility, interest, and emotion to the interview.
- Avoid jargon - terms that are widely used in your work world are likely not terms that the average person might be aware of. Speak to that audience so that your information is accessible and understandable.
- Be concise - when the interviewer asks a question, keep your answer brief. It makes for a more effective interview and helps the dialogue between you be more conversational in nature.
- A follow-up after an interview with a reporter isn't critical but a quick, thoughtful "thank you" can go a long way. Offer to be available for future features on the topic. This gesture will help your school, youth service, or Youthreach stand out for the amazing work you are doing.
- If you can't answer a question because you don't have the information readily available - its ok to say, "I will come back to you on this as I don't have that specific info to hand." Be sure to follow up with the info you promised to share.

D. Press Release Template

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[Insert date]

Stand Up Awareness Week: (Insert School/Youthreach/Youth Service Name) Celebrates the LGBTQ+ Community

(Students/Young people) at (school/Youthreach/youth service name) are recognising and celebrating the LGBTQ+ community in (insert town/city name) by participating in a national campaign to end LGBTQ+ bullying.

For 13 years now, the Belong To campaign, Stand Up Awareness Week, has been a time for schools, Youthreach Centres, and youth services to take a stand against the anti-LGBTQ+ bullying, harassment, and name-calling that silences many LGBTQ+ young people.

Last year, 75% of post-primary schools took part in the week-long campaign. As part of Stand Up Awareness Week, running from November 14th-18th, (school/Youthreach/youth service name) has been carrying out activities and events to create an LGBTQ+ friendly environment that protects young people against homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia.

Research from the 2019 School Climate Survey revealed that an alarming 73% of LGBTQ+ second-level students feel unsafe at school. Some 77% of LGBTQ+ students experience verbal harassment (name-calling or being threatened), 38% experience physical harassment (being shoved or pushed), and 11% experience physical assault (punched, kicked or injured with a weapon) based on their sexual orientation, gender or gender expression. By participating in Stand Up Awareness Week, schools and youth services are taking an essential first step in creating an environment where LGBTQ+ young people feel safe to be who they are.

Speaking about their involvement in Stand Up Awareness Week, (name) (pronouns), (school) Principal says: (“Insert quote”).

Moninne Griffith (she/her), CEO, Belong To, says: “We are so proud of (school/Youthreach/youth service name) for joining hundreds of schools and services around Ireland participating in Stand Up Awareness Week. Through this important campaign, they are showing solidarity with LGBTQ+ young people to ensure they feel seen, heard, and safe, and to ensure everyone knows that biphobic, homophobic, and transphobic language and bullying will not be tolerated.”

ENDS

For further information, images, or interviews contact: [Insert name, title, email and \[phone number\] of Stand Up Awareness Week coordinator / key staff contact person.](#)

About Stand Up Awareness Week

Stand Up Awareness Week 2022 (November 14th-18th) is a time for second-level schools, youth services, and Youthreach Centres in Ireland to take a stand against homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic bullying. Belong To has distributed Stand Up Awareness Week Resource Packs and Posters to all second-level schools and Youthreach Centres in Ireland. For more information, visit www.belongto.org/standup

About Belong To

Belong To is a national organisation supporting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) young people in Ireland. Since 2003, Belong To has worked with LGBTQ+ young people to create a world where they are equal, safe, and valued in the diversity of their identities and experiences. The organisation also advocates and campaigns on behalf of young LGBTQ+ young people, and offers a specialised LGBTQ+ youth service with a focus on mental and sexual health, alongside drug and alcohol outreach.



Sustain It

(See Step 7 of your Stand Up Awareness Week Guide)

Stand Up Awareness Week is a springboard to get your LGBTQ+ inclusion journey started. To make a real impact on the young people in your school, Youthreach, or youth service, the positive culture needs to be sustained.



Poster and Image Bank

Here you will find a link to lots of images you can use when creating posters/other media to increase representation of LGBTQ+ families, relationships, and identities in your school, Youthreach, or youth service: <https://www.belongto.org/image-bank/>

Setting up an LGBTQ+ Club/GSA⁶

The young people that supported you in organising Stand Up Awareness Week might be interested in continuing their LGBTQ+ advocacy. Why not set up an LGBTQ+ club or Gender and Sexualities Alliance group (GSA)?

LGBTQ+ Clubs or GSAs can be a powerful tool for providing safe spaces for LGBTQ+ students and their allies, as well as creating positive change within schools. They perform several functions depending on the needs of the members, and each school's LGBTQ+ Clubs/GSA is likely to be unique.

Here are some of the important roles that your LGBTQ+ Club could play:

- **Support:** LGBTQ+ Clubs provide a safe space for students who are facing challenges with their identity, or are facing bullying and harassment because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.
- **Social:** LGBTQ+ Clubs help students who are LGBTQ+ or questioning form social connections and community with each other in a safe, accepting space. These Clubs help reducing the sense of isolation that LGBTQ+ youth can sometimes feel.
- **Activism:** LGBTQ+ Clubs can allow students to get together to take action to improve their school and community for LGBTQ+ students. They may focus on educating teachers, parents, and students; engaging with school policies and procedures; and get involved with local and national LGBTQ+ campaigns.

How to set up your LGBTQ+ Club/GSA

Nominate an Advisor: Each LGBTQ+ Club/GSA should have a member of staff acting as Advisor for the group. The Advisor will help facilitate the starting up and maintenance of the Club, supporting the members where necessary to keep things running smoothly.

Spread the Word: Let other staff and students know about the Club so you can welcome your first members.

⁶ This section has been adapted from GSA Advisor Handbook: 2nd Edition, GSA Network, October 2020 10 Steps for Starting a GSA – GSA Network. Available at: <https://gsanetwork.org/resources/advisor-handbook/>

Prepare for Meetings: Set an agenda and publicise your meeting. Think about the best way to reach young people (flyers, classroom announcements, social media).

Tips for a successful meeting

- 'Check in' at the start of meetings. Allow everyone to share their name, pronouns, and how they're feeling at the start of each session.
- Agree ground rules and ways of working – allow members to come up with their own agreements for how to work effectively together.
- Agree how decisions will be made whether by majority vote, consensus agreement etc.
- Nominate a facilitator to keep the meeting on track and on time. This role can be rotated from one meeting to the next.
- Take notes or minutes so those who can't attend a meeting can catch up
- Decide on a platform for working together for example, Google Docs, Dropbox, or whatever works best for your club.
- Wrap up meetings by agreeing the next steps and allowing everyone to 'check out'.

Create an Action Plan: Brainstorm ideas for projects to undertake. When you have chosen a project, set deadlines, assign responsibilities, and get going!

Seek Support: Get in touch with Stephen (stephen@belongto.org), the Education & Training Officer at Belong To, who can give you guidance and advice for running your LGBTQ+ Club/GSA.

Stand Up Awareness Week 2022

Theme: Tackling LGBTQ+phobic Language



Download from our Website:

- ▶ Template for anonymous survey to ask young people about their experience of LGBTQ+phobic language in your setting
- ▶ PowerPoint presentation for educating staff on LGBTQ+phobic language
- ▶ PowerPoint presentation for educating young people on LGBTQ+phobic language

R.I.E.R. Process

When tackling LGBTQ+phobic language in your school, Youthreach, or youth service, it's helpful to have all staff using the same approach as much as possible. To help you remember the steps you should consider, we have put together the R.I.E.R. process – Recognise, Intervene, Explain, and Record.

R **Recognise**

I **Intervene**

E **Explain**

R **Record**



Before you get started — Educate

If your school, Youthreach, or youth service is choosing to apply a new approach to tackling LGBTQ+phobic language, it is important that your staff and young people are educated about it before any interventions take place. You can use assemblies for the whole school or year groups to educate your students and young people about your new approach.

For staff, you can host a discussion or presentation at a whole team meeting to explain the new R.I.E.R process which should be applied consistently by all staff. PowerPoint presentation templates are available to download on our website.

It's important that parents/guardians are also aware of this new process. A letter could be sent home to all parents highlighting the new process and your commitment to supporting your LGBTQ+ community. You could also highlight it in your community newsletter if you publish one.

Stand Up Awareness Week is a great time to educate the whole community about this new approach.

The whole community should understand:

- Why LGBTQ+phobic language is harmful, and why it is being tackled.
- How LGBTQ+phobic language will be addressed in your setting.
- What the consequences will be for those who continue to use LGBTQ+phobic language.

As with all kinds of learning, you may need to reiterate and reinforce the messages several times.

R.I.E.R. Process: Recognise

It is important to ensure you can clearly differentiate between the normal use of LGBTQ+ related terms, and homophobic language. Not all language relating to sexuality or gender identity is inherently offensive or LGBTQ+phobic. It is essential that LGBTQ+ terms do not become taboo in your setting, as it may stop young people from discussing or expressing important parts of their identity.

Ask yourself:

- Is this word or phrase being used by someone to describe themselves?
- Is this word or phrase being used about someone else in a derogatory way, or to describe something as bad?

Remember, all LGBTQ+ people are individuals, and not all are comfortable with the same kinds of language that others are. One example of this is the word “queer”, which was historically used as a slur against LGBTQ+ people. While today there are many LGBTQ+ people who identify positively with the word, many others dislike it and do not identify with it at all. Therefore, context is key, and the reflection questions above will help guide you as to whether intervention is required.

Words that are commonly used by LGBTQ+ people in a neutral or positive way to describe themselves – such as gay, lesbian, bisexual/bi, or trans – should be generally acceptable in your setting and not require intervention. However, where these same words are used as a weapon against another person (for example, “you’re such a lesbian”) this would require intervention.

Other words are used by some LGBTQ+ people in a neutral or positive way to describe themselves – such as queer, fruity, camp, or queen (for people who identify as male) - are not accepted by all LGBTQ+ people, and therefore should be treated with caution. These words are still sometimes used as slurs, and therefore staff working with young people should pay attention to the context in which they are used, as they may require intervention.

There are a wide range of words which are sometimes, but rarely, used among LGBTQ+ people to describe themselves, but are likely to cause offence. Therefore, they will almost always require intervention. Even if LGBTQ+ young people use these words in a neutral or humorous manner about themselves, they should still be reminded that they can cause harm. These include, but are not limited to, faggot, dyke, tranny, “that’s so gay”, “you’re/they’re so gay”, fairy, poof/poofter, and fruit.

The table below shows some examples of words and phrases that young people may use in relation to themselves and others:

Words that are commonly used by LGBTQ+ people in a neutral/positive way to describe themselves	Words that are sometimes used by LGBTQ+ people in a neutral/positive way	Words that are commonly used about LGBTQ+ people in a derogatory way
Generally acceptable	May require intervention	Almost always require intervention
Gay	Queer	Faggot
Lesbian	Camp	Dyke
Bisexual / Bi	Queen (for people who identify as male)	Tranny
Trans		That's so gay
		You/they're so gay
		Fairy
		Poof/poofter
		Fruit

R.I.E.R. Process: Intervene

If you have recognised LGBTQ+phobic language in your setting, it is essential that you intervene. Consistency is key:

- By being consistent in intervening with all LGBTQ+phobic language, young people won't feel that they are being unfairly treated, or being punished more severely than their peers.
- By ensuring that all staff intervene consistently, a strong message will be communicated that LGBTQ+phobic language is unacceptable anywhere in your setting, rather than just when in the presence of certain staff.

Ultimately, this consistent approach will help make your setting a place where LGBTQ+ young people can feel safe to be themselves.

Your intervention should include an acknowledgement that you have heard the LGBTQ+phobic language and that it is unacceptable, as well as a reminder of the effect that it can have on LGBTQ+ young people, and what the consequences will be for people who continue to use it.

In the past, there were many examples of racist and sexist language that were commonly used but which are now considered unacceptable. You may find it useful to draw a comparison with LGBTQ+phobic language which should also be viewed as unacceptable.

Some staff may feel more confident than others in addressing LGBTQ+phobic language, especially if previously they have chosen not to intervene when it has been used. Remind them of the real-life consequences that it can have for LGBTQ+ young people, and offer them support from your own experiences of intervening.

R.I.E.R. Process: Explain

It is essential that after you have intervened, you follow up with an explanation. This should take a similar approach to the initial Education element:

- Why LGBTQ+phobic language is harmful, and why it is being tackled.
- How LGBTQ+phobic language will be addressed in your setting.
- What the consequences will be for those who continue to use LGBTQ+phobic language.

This helps reinforce that your school, Youthreach, or youth service is being consistent and fair in your approach, and that individual young people are not being unfairly singled out. You have already been clear on your expectations regarding LGBTQ+phobic language, and what the consequences will be going forward.

Also think about when your follow-up explanation takes place. While the initial intervention is essential to demonstrate that the language has been recognised and is unacceptable, you may feel that it is best to follow up with the individuals involved at a later stage (such as at the end of the class, or the school day). Alternatively, you might feel that the severity or context of the language is such that the explanation should take place right away. Either way, this step is crucial to the process.

R.I.E.R. Process: Record

Maintaining a record of the frequency of use of LGBTQ+phobic language is essential to allow you to track whether your interventions are having the desired effect, and if there are certain areas (such as particular friendship or year groups) where the language is still being used regularly. This will help determine whether you should take any further education actions, such as informal conversations, a specific assembly, or a review of your policy with colleagues.

You may also consider sending a follow-up survey to young people to allow them to report on how often they are encountering LGBTQ+phobic language. Not only does this allow you to understand their experience better, it also shows that you are making a strong commitment to addressing this issue, and that you are taking it seriously.



Summary – How to Apply These Steps

Before you begin

Educate

The whole community should understand:

- Why LGBTQ+phobic language is harmful, and why it is being tackled.
 - How LGBTQ+phobic language will be addressed in your setting.
 - What the consequences will be for those who continue to use LGBTQ+phobic language.
-

When you hear LGBTQ+phobic language

Recognise

Is this language LGBTQ+phobic?

- Is this word or phrase being used by someone to describe themselves?
 - Is this word or phrase being used about someone else in a derogatory way, or to describe something as bad?
-

Intervene

Your intervention should include an acknowledgement that you have heard the LGBTQ+phobic language and that it is unacceptable, as well as a reminder of the effect that it can have on LGBTQ+ young people, and what the consequences will be for people who continue to use it.

Explain

Follow up your intervention to explain:

- Why LGBTQ+phobic language is harmful, and why it is being tackled.
 - How LGBTQ+phobic language will be addressed in your setting.
 - What the consequences will be for those who continue to use LGBTQ+phobic language.
-

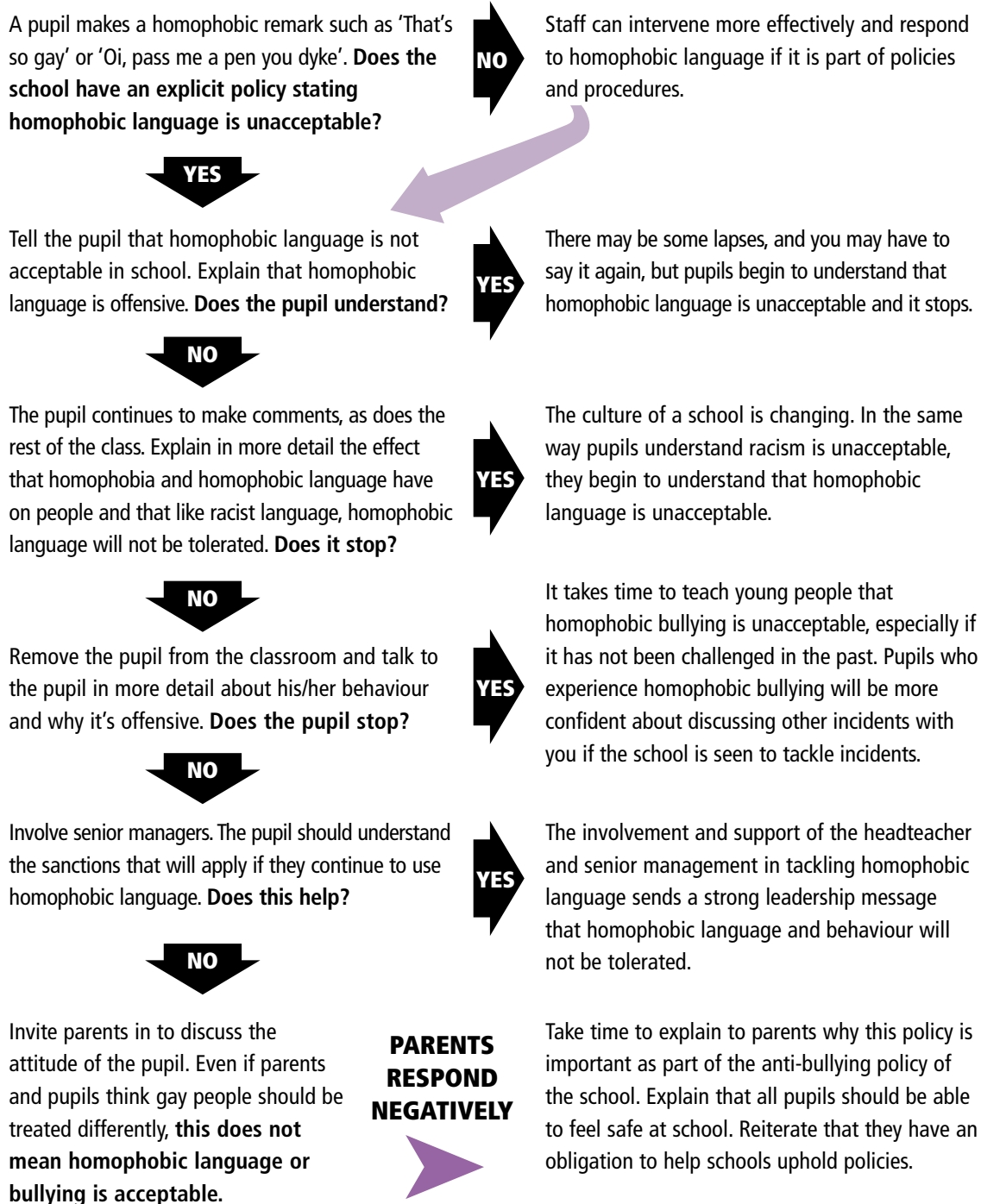
Record

Maintaining a record of the frequency of use of LGBTQ+phobic language will allow you to track whether your interventions are having the desired effect, and if there are certain areas where the language is still being used regularly.

6

How can I respond?

from: *Safe to Learn: Homophobic bullying; DCSF, 2007*



⁷ This resource has been drawn from 'Challenging Homophobic Language: Stonewall Education Guides', Stonewall. Available at: <https://www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/Resources/PDF/L/LGBT-Guide-to-challenging-homophobic-language.pdf>

Other Resources

Available to download from our website at

www.belongto.org/professionals/standup



Appendix 1: Planning Tool



Time to Plan

This Planning Tool is a great resource to use in your planning meetings with your team. You can follow the Seven Steps to Stand Up, schedule actions, and record your progress. The Planning Tool follows the Stand Up Awareness Week Guide format, and is available at Appendix 1 at the end of the Toolkit document.

2022 Stand Up Awareness Week Planning Tool

This planning tool follows the Stand Up Awareness Week Guide format.

COORDINATOR(S)	
PROJECT EMAIL	
MEETING DATES/ LOCATION & TIME	

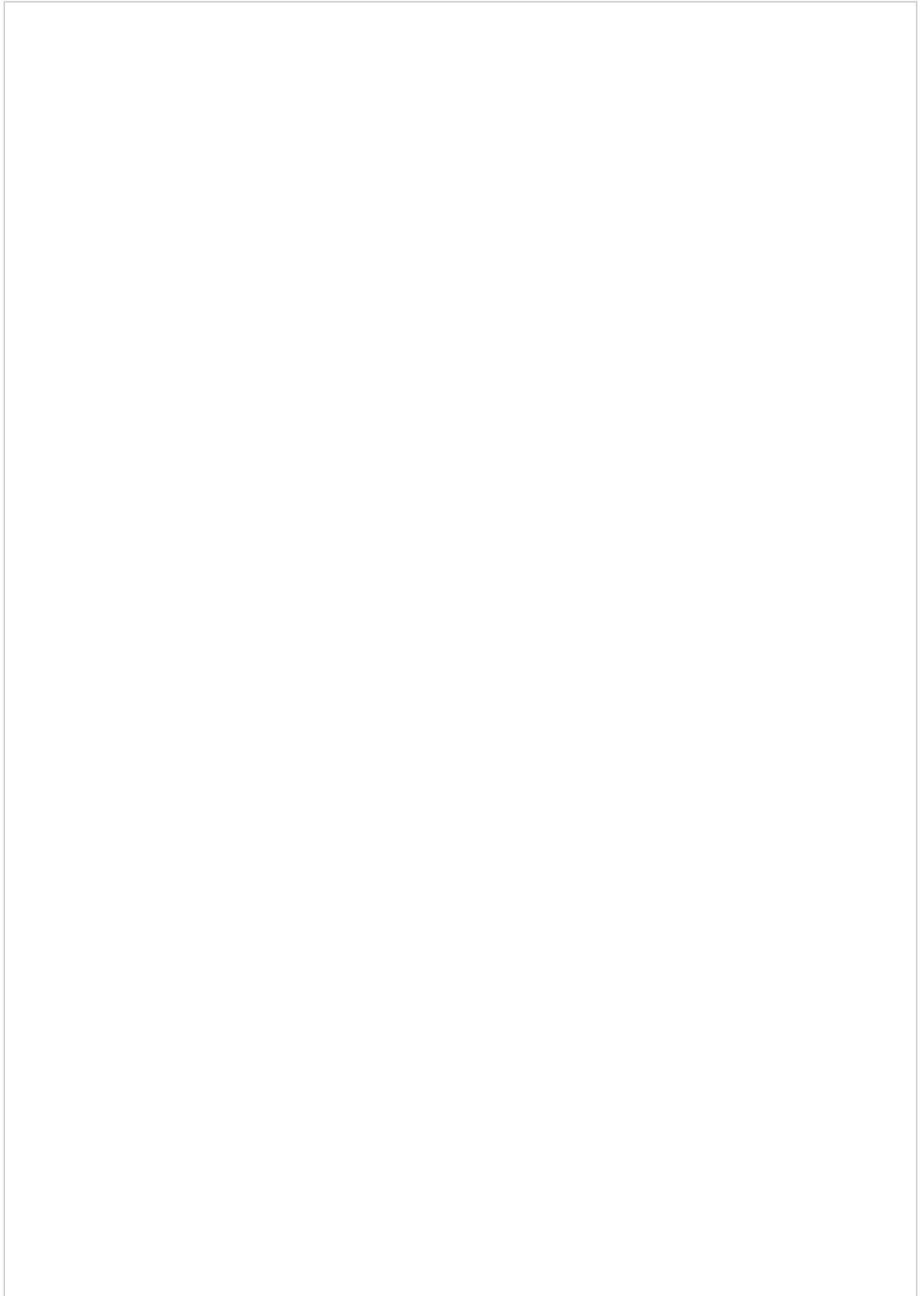
Team Members:

Staff:
Young People:

Goals

By the end of Stand Up Awareness Week, we would like people in our school/Youthreach or youth service to:

Planned Actions:

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for listing planned actions. The box is currently blank.

Planning Schedule – Who does what by when?

Activity (What/Who is needed to make actions happen?)	Who	By When

Roll It Out: Stand Up Awareness Week Schedule:

Don't forget to take lots of photos (with permission!)

Weekly schedule

Calendarpedia
Your source for calendars

Name:

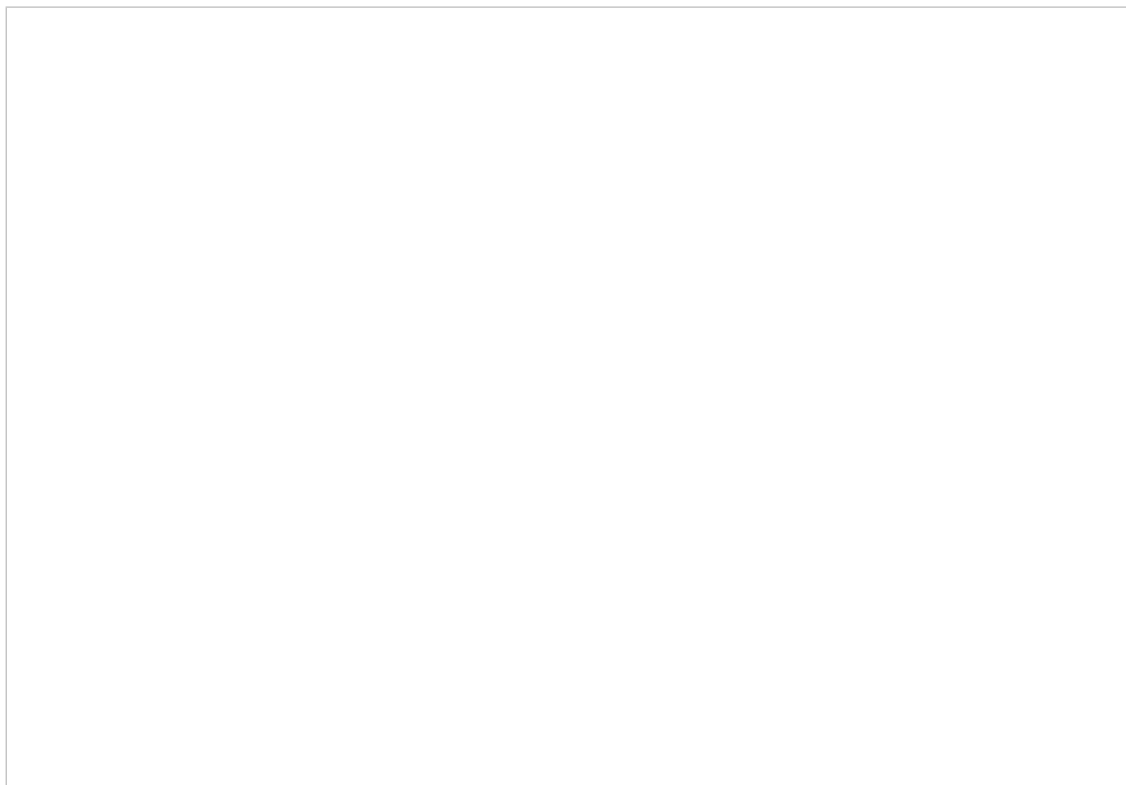
Time / period	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday

© Calendarpedia® www.calendarpedia.com

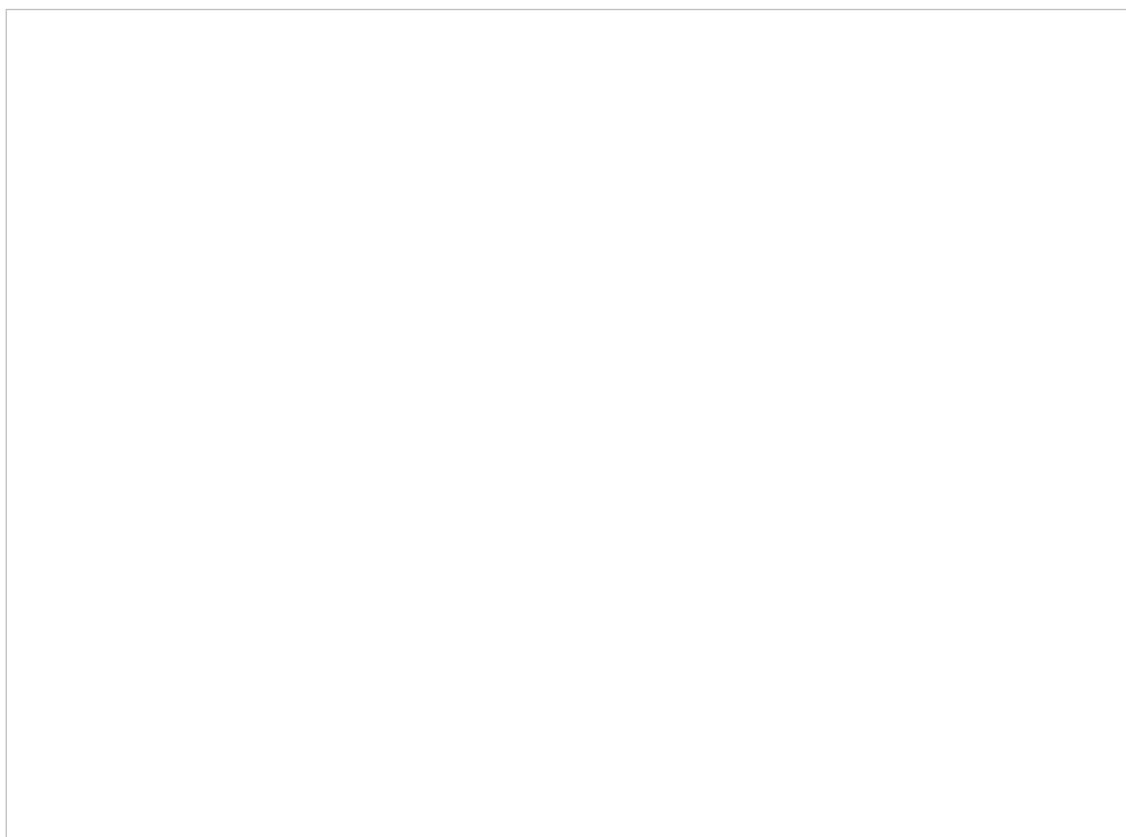
Reflect — Did you achieve your goals?

What have you learned?

Send It: Go to belongto.org/sendit and show us your Pride!



Sustain It: What happens after Stand Up Awareness Week?





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 know about Belong To and what supports are available for them including LGBTQ+ youth groups, crisis counselling with Pieta, and digital support services. Learn more at www.belongto.org

“Stand Up Awareness Week added an incredible energy to our school and left our students with a taste for social justice.”

— Peter Fitton, Class Teacher at
Bishopstown Community School, Cork

Belong To
13 Parliament St
Dublin 2, D02 P658

info@belongto.org
www.belongto.org
01 670 6223

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