

HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN FOUNDATION

Welcoming Schools





Dear Friends and Colleagues,

The Welcoming Schools Team is excited to share our 2016 Back-to-School packet full of free materials and resources that will assist educators, families, and students in having their best school year yet! We know that when we all work together, we absolutely can have schools where each student will thrive — socially, emotionally, and academically.

We carefully chose the following resources to help you cultivate a safe and welcoming classroom to begin your school year:

Gender & Children: A Place to Begin

Simple ways for educators to create [gender-inclusive classrooms and schools](#) that affirm all children and that help all children move beyond the limitations of gender stereotyping

Actions LGBTQ Parents/Guardians Can Take to Support Their Children in Elementary School

LGBTQ parents and family members wonder if their children will be safe, respected, and embraced by their children's school. Find ways to support your child and [make your child's school more welcoming](#).

What Do You Say to 'That's So Gay' & Other Anti-LGBTQ Comments?

Taking action to stop hurtful language is a critical first step in developing a Welcoming School. [Be prepared](#) when your students use LGBTQ or gender put-downs.

Top 10 Books for a Welcoming School

High quality, [diverse books](#) are essential tools for educators to discuss LGBTQ, gender, and many more topics in a developmentally appropriate way!

Lesson Plan: Words That Hurt, Words That Heal

Sample a Welcoming Schools [lesson plan](#) to help students understand the impact of their language and actions they can take to help their classmates.

Welcoming Schools Professional Development Modules

Bring Welcoming School's professional development [training](#) modules to your school district and ensure that your school welcomes all children and all families. Training modules include:

- Embracing Family Diversity
- Creating LGBTQ-Inclusive Schools
- Preventing Bias-Based Bullying
- Understanding Gender and Supporting Transgender Students

Welcoming Schools is a one-of-a-kind resource, and we will continue to partner with you throughout the school year with new materials and cutting-edge professional development---do not hesitate to contact us with a question or to [request a training](#)!

In Partnership,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Johanna M. Eager".

Johanna Eager, Director of Welcoming Schools
Human Rights Campaign Foundation



WELCOMING SCHOOLS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT MODULES

Overview of the Welcoming Schools Approach – 45 min. to 1 hour

- Learn how Welcoming Schools helps to create respectful and LGBTQ-inclusive elementary schools.
- Discover how and why Welcoming Schools increases student success.
- Understand Welcoming Schools focus and key messages.
- The first training should include the Overview Module alone or with another module.

LGBTQ Inclusive Framework – 1.5 to 2.5 hours

- Understand the importance of developing an LGBTQ-inclusive school environment for all students.
- Be able to better answer questions from students and families related to LGBTQ topics.
- Look at simple ways to develop LGBTQ-inclusive classrooms and to be LGBTQ-inclusive across the curriculum.
- Become familiar with sexual orientation and gender identity terminology.
- Explore diverse books for classroom discussion.

Welcoming Family Diversity – 1.5 to 2.5 hours

- Learn the importance of seeing family diversity represented in your school.
- Understand family diversity as a means of teaching self-respect and respect for others.
- Engage in family diversity lesson plans.
- Explore diverse books featuring all kinds of families for classroom discussion.

Understanding Gender – 2.5 to 3.5 hours

- Develop a framework for creating a gender inclusive school.
- Be able to respond to challenging/difficult questions related to gender.
- Understand the varied nature of gender and be familiar with gender terminology.
- Understand how to support gender expansive and transgender students.
- Develop skills to reduce gender role stereotyping.
- Explore lesson plans and diverse books looking at gender stereotypes and identity for classroom discussion.

Preventing Bias-Based Bullying – 2.5 to 3.5 hours

- Develop an understanding of the extent of bias-based bullying.
- Be able to foster ally behavior among students, staff and other adults.
- Understand bystander behavior and be able to utilize the Bully Circle.
- Learn and practice critical intervention steps.
- Explore lesson plans and diverse books to engage students in discussion and learning to prevent bias-based bullying.

Welcoming Schools Law and Policy Review – 1.5 to 2 hours

- Become knowledgeable of federal, state and school district level laws and policies.
- Become familiar with language to strengthen current policy and to advocate for enumerated protection for all students.



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Actions LGBTQ Parents/Guardians Can Take to Support Their Children in Elementary School

When children with LGBTQ parents or LGBTQ caring family members enter school, families wonder if their children will be safe, respected, and embraced by the school. Some schools are welcoming and very familiar with LGBTQ families while others are not. LGBTQ parents and family members can help the school to better understand their LGBTQ family as a part of the diversity that makes the school community strong.

With Your Child

- **Build resilience.** Help your child to feel proud of who they are and where they come from. Share stories and [read books](#) that reflect your family in a positive light.
- **Talk with your children about all kinds of families** — How families are alike and how they are different.
- **Talk with and model for your children** simple ways to answer questions about your family. In early elementary school, most [children's questions](#) about LGBTQ parents/guardians come from curiosity rather than prejudice.
- **Connect your child to other kids** who have LGBTQ parents/caring adults. Knowing that they are not alone and are, in fact, a part of a community of kids who have LGBTQ families will help your child gain pride and confidence in talking about their family.
- **You may fear** that your child will encounter prejudice at school because of your family. Young children do not assume that. To your children, your family is their family. That is what matters. Try not to pass on adult fears to your children.
- **Discuss with your children what, if any, support they want in school.** Do they want you to have a conversation with their teacher at the beginning of the school year about your family? If you volunteer in the school discuss how your child will feel if you are out?
- **Talk with your child and listen carefully** to see if other students are teasing them about your family. Talk through steps you or your child could take. Ask if they want your help in talking with a teacher or the principal if an incident arise (unless health and safety are at stake.)

With Your Child's Teacher

- **Help your child's teacher understand your family** and that like every other child they need acceptance, respect and understanding. Let them know how you talk about your family and what words your child calls you and other family members, such as "Daddy and Papa."
- **Ask your child's teacher:** Do they talk about [family diversity](#)? Are they inclusive of LGBTQ people? Can they change language to "family" or "caring adult" from "mom and dad" in letters home, when asking students to show their homework to someone at home, and when talking about families in general.
- **What do they do if they hear mean teasing or bullying** about [families](#), [gender put-downs](#) or [LGBTQ slurs](#)?

- **If your child's teacher feels unprepared** to answer other students' questions about your family or LGBTQ people, help them out with handouts from Welcoming Schools [Responding to Questions About LGBTQ Topics](#).
- **Show your child's teacher and media specialist**, lists with [up-to-date, recommended books](#) on family diversity including LGBTQ families, gender expansive children, and bullying and bias.

With Your Child's School

- **Determine your and your child's level of comfort in your family being out** as your children enters school. School personnel cannot be supportive of family situations if they don't know about them.
- **Provide the school with LGBTQ inclusive school resources such as books and lesson plans.** A school may not have previously addressed family diversity, but that doesn't mean it won't, if asked.
- **Find and review your school's anti-bullying policies.** Do they name the groups that are frequent targets of harassment including actual or perceived gender identity or sexual orientation? Naming it helps to stop it.
- **Talk with the principal about ways to support diverse families.** Are there visual signs that the school welcomes all children and their families? Are school forms family friendly for diverse families?
- **Ask the principal about professional development.** Has the staff had [training](#) on supporting students from [diverse families](#) including LGBTQ families? Have they had trainings on preventing gender or [bias-based bullying](#)?
- **Discuss a more inclusive approach to Mother's and Father's Day** -- if your school celebrates these holidays. Broaden the holidays to be inclusive of all kinds of family structures and honor all of the important and caring adults in children's lives.

With Your Child's School Community

- **Be prepared to come out** again and again to teachers, to students, to administrators, to parents and caregivers. Children may ask questions about your family out of curiosity. Administrators or other parents and caregivers may make assumptions that your family is heterosexual.
- **Get involved.** One of the best ways to become accepted in a school community is to get involved. Let people get to know you and your child as individuals.
- **Find support in community!** Work with other parents, guardians and educators to help develop a more welcoming school.
- **Organize an event** that will help your school community understand the diversity of families in students' lives.
- **Celebrate love and all kinds of families** by helping to [create hallway displays](#) with photos or children's artwork.



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Gender & Children: A Place to Begin

Creating schools that nurture academic achievement, provide physical and emotional safety and welcome all students are common goals for all educators. In order for students to feel supported and empowered to express their identities and interests at school, educators must create gender-inclusive environments that affirm all children and that help all children move beyond the limitations of gender stereotyping.

Checklist for a Gender Inclusive Classroom

- Use inclusive phrases** to address your class that are not gendered such as, “Good morning, everyone” or “Good morning, scholars” or choose and use a name for your class like the Dolphins or the Owls.
- Develop classroom messages** that emphasize “All children can... (dance, cook, have short or long hair, do math, make art...)”
- Group students** in ways that do not rely on gender such as table groups, letters in their names or colors of their clothes. Avoid situations that force children to make gendered choices, such as boys line up here and girls line up there.
- Provide role models.** Show a wide range of achievements and emotions for all people that move beyond gender-role stereotypes. [Read diverse biographies.](#)
- Read books to your class** that teach about gender and breakdown stereotypes related to gender expression and gender identity.
- Use lesson plans** designed to expand student's understanding of gender. Read books that encourage discussion of gender assumptions. Help students see the limitations of gender stereotyping. Ask your class to examine popular culture, advertising, or children's toys and books for gender stereotypes.
- Create classroom displays** that show a wide range of occupations and achievements for all genders. Ask students to write biographies or make hallway displays featuring people who have moved beyond traditional gender roles and have excelled in their chosen fields.
- Be a role model!** When possible, give examples of how you or people you know like to do things outside of gender stereotypes.
- Build student allies.** With your class, look at ways to be an ally when someone is teased or bullied for any reason. Can they try to stop it directly? Should they talk with an adult? Could they talk with the student who has been harassed? Use the Welcoming Schools [Ally or Bystander](#) lesson to help students think through the options.
- Be an upstander yourself.** Stop hurtful teasing or name-calling based on gender and other bias. Interrupt student comments based on gender stereotypes. Engage in discussion with students by using these situations as teachable moments.
- Encourage students** to connect with other students based upon interests and activities that they enjoy rather than connecting with other students solely based upon gendered activities.
- Ensure safety.** Be aware of whether your students feel safe both inside and outside of the classroom. In the lunchroom? Recess? P.E? Special education classes? In the bathroom? On the school bus? Use the Welcoming Schools [Name-calling and Feeling Safe at School](#) lesson to engage students on where they feel safe and what makes them feel safe.



Steps for School-wide Action

- **Professional development is critical.** Provide [training](#) on understanding gender and stopping gender-based bullying. Include all school personnel — from teachers, aides and counselors to administrative staff, bus drivers, recess aides, and cafeteria workers.
- **Practice intervening** when students are limiting each other based on gender. Adults in the school need time to prepare and [practice with simple phrases](#) to stop gendered teasing and bullying. Be ready to educate students on why it is wrong or hurtful.
- **Ensure good supervision** of hallways, playgrounds, and cafeterias to increase safety and reduce name-calling and bullying. Provide some structured or adult coached activities during recess to engage more students. Encourage and teach inclusive and cooperative games.
- **Ensure [anti-bullying policies](#)** specifically name groups more frequently targeted for harassment. Include actual or perceived gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation. Naming it helps to stop it.
- **Organize a welcoming or caring committee** to help develop a respectful, caring community in your school. This group could assess your school's current climate and practices, organize [family education events](#), or develop affirming hallway displays.
- **Hold an event for parents and caregivers** in your school community to help people understand gender and children. Share ways to talk about gender that are affirming, inclusive, and developmentally appropriate.
- **Ensure educators feel supported** by the administration and others in the school in their efforts to help create welcoming learning environments by addressing gender stereotyping, bullying, and teaching to ensure gender literacy for all students.
- **Honor the name and the pronouns that a student uses.** This improves student well-being by acknowledging that you see them for who they are.
- **Review all forms** used in your school, including registration, attendance, and class lists, to include options outside of the gender binary and for children and families to share gender and pronouns.
- **Reframe dress code policy** to describe what the school considers appropriate clothing without assigning clothing options to particular genders. For example, for a chorus concert, you could ask students to wear a white top and dark or black on the bottom.



WORDS THAT HURT AND WORDS THAT HEAL

SUGGESTED GRADE LEVEL: K – 4

LENGTH OF TIME: One 45 – 60 minute session.

GOALS

- For students to consider the importance of words and actions.
- For students to see themselves as allies standing up for each other in a caring community.

OBJECTIVES

- Students will apply literature to real life experiences.
- Students will share their understanding of the harmful nature of words or actions to make others feel “less than” or unwelcome.
- Students will strategize effective ways to welcome and stand up for someone who has been treated unkindly.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

- CCSS: SL 1.2: Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.. Also SL K.2, 2.2, 3.2, 4.2
- CCSS: RL 2.3 Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges. Also RL K.3, 1.3, 3.3, 4.3
- CCSS: RL 1.7 Use illustrations and details in a story to describe its characters, setting, or events. Also RL K.7, 2.7, 3.7, 4.7

EDUCATORS’ NOTES

This lesson illustrates how words or actions can hurt — or heal. After reading the book, *One* by Kathryn Otoshi, the teacher leads students in a discussion of words or actions that have hurt them or other students in your school. Then students discuss what they can do to help each other and stand up for each other.

If you don’t have a copy of the book, the activity and discussion can be done as a stand alone lesson.

It is important to caution students not to use people’s names or identify anyone when sharing. The intent is to ensure that students change hurtful practices without bringing attention to individual students who have bullied others or who have been targeted. Special thought and care will need to be taken if certain students are vulnerable due to differences or recent incidences in order to avoid unwanted attention or discomfort for that student. Following up with such students after the activity, in a discreet manner, may be necessary as well.



As the lesson proceeds, try to ensure that the different kinds of name-calling you have heard in your school are mentioned. If you have heard students at your grade level using “gay” as a put-down, raise that as a discussion topic, as students may think it is taboo to mention. If you have heard students being teased or excluded for not meeting cultural norms of femininity or masculinity, raise those points. If you have heard teasing about economic differences, race, or ethnicity, ensure those are brought up.

MATERIALS A large piece of paper cut into the shape of a heart

BOOK *One* by Kathryn Otoshi. (If you don’t have a copy, see the modified lesson plan below.)

BEFORE THE LESSON

- Listen to and monitor ways that students or others in the school put each other down or exclude each other. Listen for put-downs related to gender, race, class, family structure or personal appearance. Notice who gets excluded and why.

INTRODUCING THE LESSON TO YOUR CLASS

- Gather students in a group and say, “Today, we are going to talk about and explore our classroom paying attention to how we treat each other—what makes us feel welcome, happy, and important and what makes us feel lonely, sad and unimportant.” Explain that students often have difficulty fitting in because they are in a situation where groups of students have already formed bonds of friendship or because they are different in some way. Point out that some people will automatically put up barriers to another student, deciding quickly that they dislike the student, without even trying to get to know him or her. State, “In our class and school we want everyone to be treated kindly, to belong and to do their very best.”

LESSON INCLUDING READING THE BOOK, *ONE* BY KATHRYN OTOSHI

Before you begin reading:

- Ask your students to pay attention to the colors that are in the book and what the colors mean. Also, ask them to think about the word count. Count refers to two different things in the story—something that matters and numbers.
- As you read, pause to ask the students questions and reflect on the book.
 - After Red says, “Red is hot. Blue is not,” you could ask how they think Blue feels?
 - After Red picked on all of the colors and got bigger and BIGGER, you could ask your students, if they were one of these colors how would they feel at this point?

Crumpling up a heart activity:

- After reading the book, ask your students if they have ever noticed in your school or classroom, people acting like “Red” or people feeling sad or unimportant because of things that were said that might have hurt their feelings.

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- Ask them to take a minute to think about these things.
 - Say that you have a heart that you are going to crumple up a bit each time someone says one of these things that hurt. The heart represents student's hearts and when something is said to us that feels unkind it makes our hearts hurt.
 - To start things off, ask again: have you heard anybody say unkind things or do mean things in our classroom or our school?
 - Interact with students as they bring things up. Ask them follow-up questions for clarification or to see how it felt to either hear the unkind words directed at them or to hear the unkind words directed at someone else. Appreciate them if they have said something that may have been difficult.
 - Are there any words that they have heard other students say that are hurtful?
 - Each time another student says something that they've seen or heard that is hurtful, crumple of a part of the heart.
 - After students have had a chance to say a number of things about what has been or could be hurtful and after you have had a chance to interact with students on these experiences, turn to what could make things better.
 - Ask the students, what are some things that they could do to help when they have heard or seen something mean. How would they make someone feel more welcomed again? How would they help stop the hurtful teasing or bullying?
 - Say that each time someone comes up with an idea you will smooth out the heart a little while they are talking.
 - If somebody was being mean to you and making you feel unimportant, what would you hope someone would do?

Optional: Mini role-play with the students:

- After students have had a chance to name ways that they could help a person who is being teased or bullied, have students think about the end of the book.
- Ask: who was it that stood up to red? What did One do to let Red know that picking on the other colors was not okay behavior? (Answer: He stood up straight and tall like an arrow. If students don't come up with that answer, prompt them or turn back to that page in the book to remind them.)
- What number do you think you would be in the book? (Someone will probably say the number one.)
- Ask who else would want to be number one? Raise your hand. Who would want to be number two? How about number three or four?
- If you raised your hand, stand up.
- Look at all the people standing up. If all of these people stood straight up like an arrow and said, "No." (Have kids say, "No.") Do you think it would help stop someone from getting teased or hurt?

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- How do you think it would feel to see people standing up for you if you were the one being teased or hurt?
 - What would you think if you saw someone else standing up for someone?

Going back to the book:

- After One stood up and said, “This is not okay” and the other colors did the same, did you notice how that word count was used? The book says, “Blue saw the colors change. He wanted to count.” What does Blue mean? Discuss how it feels good to count.
- At the very end of the book red blew a fuse and then got smaller and smaller and smaller. Did red disappear? Did you notice, what happened to red at the end? He turned another color, right. And then it says, “Then red laughed and joined the fun.” What do you think about that ending? Were the colors just standing up to red and saying, “Stop it. Go away. We don’t want to see you ever again” or were the other colors saying, “Hey, you stop. You don’t have to be mean. We know you can be nice”? Even though somebody is mean to us they can still be nice if we help them and they listen.

Going back to the heart:

- Ask: Why did I crumple up the heart? Why did I smooth it out? What do you notice about the heart? Does it look the same as when I started? How is it different?
- This is the same as when somebody is bullied. If someone is bullied and told they’re not important, and *even if* someone says, “I’m sorry, I didn’t mean to do that,” the person’s heart can never be the same.
- Discuss how this is true for anyone who is targeted —called names or bullied for being different. So that’s why it is important to not be mean to other people and to help to be a kind and welcoming person.

LESSON PLAN WITHOUT READING THE BOOK

- Ask students to think for a minute about ways they have heard kids tease others, or words that they have heard kids use to put someone down that made them feel lonely or unhappy. Our words and actions are important and have outcomes. Ask, “Have you ever felt that you hurt in your heart when you hear or witness sadness?” (Educator might give personal example.) Our words and actions matter. In this activity we’ll show that discomfort or sadness by crumpling a paper heart when we share a hurtful word or experience. Invite students to share the kinds of teasing, hurtful acts, or bad words that they have heard at your school. Each time a mean thing is said, scrunch up a piece of the heart to make it wrinkly.
- After everyone has had a chance to share, ask the students how they think they would feel after hearing these kinds of words. Would they want to come to school? Would they feel like doing their best work? Do hurtful words and actions help each other?

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- Ask the students some ways that they could help each other feel better. What could they do to help each other feel included and do their best? A variety of ways to reach out to a peer should be discussed. Examples might be inviting the child to play ball or draw together or sit together at lunch.
 - Say that each time someone comes up with an idea you will smooth out the heart a little while they are talking. Even when the paper heart is as flat as you can get it, the heart will not look the same as before it was crumpled.
 - Ask questions to lead students to the understanding that, although some of the damage has been repaired, when we hurt someone, they will never be exactly the same; when your heart or feelings are deeply hurt, the scars remain, just like the wrinkles remain. Chances are those scars will never go away. Discuss how this is true for any people who are targeted—called names or bullied for being different.
 - Ask the children to name reasons or differences for which children are excluded, teased or bullied.
 - Ask the children if they know anyone whose feelings have ever been hurt in this way and invite them to share about it. This invites children to speak about things that may have happened to them or their family members but does not put them on the spot or force them to identify themselves as a target.

Going back to the heart:

- Ask: Why did I crumple up the heart? Why did I smooth it out? What do you notice about the heart? Does it look the same as when I started? How is it different?
- This is the same as when somebody is bullied. If someone is bullied and told they're not important, and *even if* someone says, "I'm sorry, I didn't mean to do that," the person's heart can never be the same.
- Discuss how this is true for any people who are targeted —called names or bullied for being different. So that's why it is important to not be mean to other people and to be a kind and welcoming person.

EXTENSIONS

- Post the heart on a wall as a reminder of the power that words can have to hurt and heal. The heart will serve as constant reinforcement of a vivid lesson in kindness.
- Have students write a letter to their family about words and actions that heal activity and suggest thoughtful actions that they will use at school and at home.
- Encourage students to practice kind words and actions and record on the classroom heart.
- Include words like ally, bystander and upstander on a word wall.

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Work with your students to create a list of guidelines for making the classroom feel safe and affirming for everyone. Ask them to say what they think the goals should be in order to be a welcoming community where everyone feels safe and like they belong. Ask them to think of ways they can all participate in making these guidelines work and create strategies for intervening, requesting the assistance of an adult or joining with others to make someone feel better, safer and more welcome. Educators will monitor and encourage engagement and empathy.

SUGGESTED BOOKS FOR STUDENTS

Benjamin and the Word / Benjamin y la palabra, Daniel Olivas.

Confessions of a Former Bully,
Trudy Ludwig.

Each Kindness, Jacqueline Woodson.

Marisol McDonald Doesn't Match / Marisol McDonald no combina, Monica Brown.

Muskrat Will Be Swimming,
Cheryl Savageau.

Pinky and Rex and the Bully,
James Howe.

Say Something, Peggy Moss.

Teammates, Peter Golenbock.

Wings, Christopher A. Myers.

Adapted by Rhonda Thomason, M.A. NBCT from a lesson by Gary Hopkins, Education World, and Kevin Gogin, San Francisco Unified School District.



A WELCOMING CLASSROOM

Suggested Grade Level: K – 2

Length of Time: Two 35-minute sessions or one one-hour session.

Goals

- To use literature to create a more welcoming classroom.
- To help students understand what makes them and other children feel welcome or unwelcome in school.

Objectives

- Students will listen to the story *The New Girl ... and Me*, and talk about feelings.
- Students will apply that discussion to their own experiences.
- Students will be able to name examples of what makes them feel welcome or unwelcome in school.

Academic Standards

- CCSS RL1.1 Ask and answer questions about key details in a text. Also RL K.1, 2.1.
- CCSS SL 2.1 Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 2 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups. Also SL K.1, 1.1.

Educators' Notes

This lesson is designed not only to look at what makes students feel welcome or not but also to help students understand their feelings and how these feelings connect to hurtful teasing, name-calling and exclusion.

Name-calling can be defined broadly as the use of words (or gestures in place of words) to hurt someone.

Materials

Chart paper, markers for charts, drawing paper, markers or crayons for drawing, pencils and the handout "I can help others feel welcome by..."

Required Book *The New Girl ... and Me*, Jacqui Robbins. (see below for other book ideas)
Activity 1)

- Talk with your students about what the words *welcome* and *unwelcome* mean. You may choose to ask the students what they think *welcome* and *unwelcome* mean, or you may give the students a definition of the words.

Welcome: When you feel good/comfortable about where you are and the people you are with.

Unwelcome: When you do not feel good/comfortable about where you are or the people you are with.

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- The teacher in the book *The New Girl ... and Me* uses the phrase, “Make her feel at home.” You may want to say that the phrase “Make her feel at home” means the same thing as “Make her feel welcome.”
 - Read the book *The New Girl ... and Me*.
 - After reading the book initiate a discussion by asking your students:
 - Has anyone ever seen an iguana? What did it look like? What did it eat?
 - What did D.J. do or say that made Shakeeta feel unwelcome or “not at home”?
 - When D.J. told Shakeeta that she looked like an iguana, what did other people in the class do?
 - How do you think Shakeeta felt when children in her class laughed at D.J.’s comment?
 - What did Mia do that helped Shakeeta feel welcome?
 - How do you think Mia felt after she talked to Shakeeta?
 - Ask the students to give examples of when they feel unwelcome. Prompt them to include in their examples things that make them feel unwelcome at school. Prompt them to include name-calling and hurtful teasing if they do not bring it up. Record their responses on a chart entitled “I Feel Unwelcome When...”
 - Then, look at this chart, review/read some of the responses, and ask your students, “What does it feel like when you feel unwelcome?” You can prompt them to think more about how it feels by using some of the examples that are on the chart. For example, you can say, “How does it feel when someone calls you a name?”
 - Next, ask the students to give examples of when they feel welcome. Prompt them to include what other students, teachers and administrators can do that helps them feel welcome. Record their responses on a chart entitled “I Feel Welcome When...”
 - Then, look at this chart, review/read some of the responses, and ask your students, “What does it feel like when you feel welcome?”

Activity 2)

- Have students draw a welcoming picture and write using the writing prompt: “I can help others feel welcome by...”
- Display the pictures around the classroom or post them in the hall near your classroom.

Modifications

- If needed, arrange to take dictation from individual students.
- Read *Chrysanthemum* or *Crisantemo* by Kevin Henkes, *Each Kindness* by Jacqueline Woodson or *The Sissy Duckling* by Harvey Fierstein.

Extensions

- *Community-Building Activity:* Brainstorm with your students what could make their classroom and the school feel more welcoming. From this list, have the students pick an action that they could take. Make a plan and carry it out.

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- *Welcoming Chart*: Label a piece of chart paper “Our Welcoming Classroom” and post it on the wall. When you notice students doing something to make a more welcoming classroom, add their names and what they did to the chart.

Assessment and Evaluation

- Can students list examples of feeling welcome and unwelcome?
- Can students identify/list examples of what makes other children feel welcome and unwelcome?

Suggested Books for Students

Chrysanthemum or Crisantemo, Kevin Henkes

Crow Boy, Taro Yashima.

Each Kindness, Jacqueline Woodson.

The Invisible Boy, Trudy Ludwig.

Oliver Button Is a Sissy, Tomie dePaola.

One, Kathryn Otoshi.

Red: A Crayon's Story, Michael Hall.

Say Something, Peggy Moss.

The Sissy Duckling, Harvey Fierstein.

Additional Resources from Welcoming Schools

- Creating Welcoming Schools: Getting Started
- What You Can Do as an Educator to Create a Welcoming Elementary School
- What Do You Say to ‘That’s So Gay!’
- Connecting with Colleagues
- Bibliography – Books to Engage Elementary Students on Bullying and Diversity
- Books for Educators and Adults



Based in part on I Feel Welcome/Unwelcome in: Froschl, Merle, and Barbara Sprung, and Nancy Mullin-Rindler with Nan Stein and Nancy Gropper. Quit it!: A Teacher's Guide on Teasing and Bullying for Use with Students in Grades K-3. Educational Equity Concepts, Inc., Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, NEA Professional Library. 1998. www.wcwonline.org

WHAT DO YOU SAY TO 'THAT'S SO GAY' & OTHER ANTI-LGBTQ* COMMENTS?

It doesn't matter if it is a first grader who might not know what the word "gay" means, a sixth grader trying to sound cool, or a tenth grader "teasing" a friend. All of these scenarios have the potential of creating an unsafe classroom or school environment and must be addressed. **So, what can caring adults do?**

STOP IT...

Keep it simple with quick responses:

- "Remember, we don't use put-downs in this class."
- "Do you know what 'gay' means?"
- "It's not OK at this school to use 'gay' disrespectfully to mean something is bad."
- "You may not have meant to be hurtful, but when you use the word 'gay' to mean something is bad or stupid, it is hurtful." Follow-up with, "Do you know why it is hurtful?"
- "Using the word 'homo' to tease someone is harassment and is unacceptable."
- "Even if you didn't mean to offend people who are gay, it is offensive to call this assignment gay (or queer); if you don't like something, then say you don't like it!"
- "It is never OK to say, 'you act like a girl (or look like a boy)' as a put-down."
- "Using the words 'queer', 'dyke' or 'fag' to joke around is not OK. These are hurtful words and can impact anyone who overhears them."
- "It doesn't matter who said it, I don't want to hear that kind of language again. Is that clear?"

DON'T IGNORE IT...

- Harassment does not go away on its own.
- Ignoring mean name-calling and hurtful teasing allows it to continue and possibly get worse.
- If other students do not see action, they get the message there is nothing wrong with it.
- Not speaking up teaches the student targeted, as well as anyone within hearing range, that they will not be protected from harassment.
- Almost any response is better than ignoring the situation. You may not know exactly what to say, but you must stop the harassment.
- Taking action reaffirms limits. Interrupting name-calling and harassment isn't always easy. With experience you will become more comfortable in handling it. Practice with colleagues.
- You can always go back to the student and say or do something else if you feel you did not respond well.

***LGBTQ: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning**



WHY STOP ANTI-LGBTQ COMMENTS?

"Middle-school students called anti-gay names report increased anxiety, depression, personal distress and a lower sense of school belonging regardless of their sexual orientation."

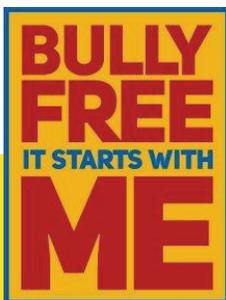
– V.P. Poteat and D.L. Espelage, 2007

"Both students who are targeted and students who exhibit bullying behavior have lower academic achievement in school."

– J. Juvonen, Y. Wang and G. Espinoza, 2011

"If name-calling or other discrimination happens at school and goes either unnoticed or is not discussed by adults, students infer that the behavior is widely accepted."

– F.E. Aboud, 2008



EDUCATE...

- If you have the time and opportunity to educate on the spot, do it. If you don't, make time later.
- If you have been hearing the phrase "That's gay" or "no homo," take time during class to make sure that your students know what "gay" means and know why it is hurtful to use as a comment or put-down.
- Be clear that using the word "gay" in a negative way is disrespectful. Be clear that using the phrase "That's gay" is hurtful to other students who may have family members and friends who are LGBTQ.
- Be prepared to provide accurate information. For the youngest students, keep it simple – for example, "The word 'gay' describes a man and a man or a woman and a woman who love each other." As students get older, they may want more explanations and discussion.
- In lessons on respect, prejudice or civil rights, include information about discrimination against LGBTQ people and the LGBTQ civil rights movement.

A safe and welcoming school environment is essential for student success. **Educators are a critical component** in creating an environment that enables all students to thrive!"

— Lily Eskelsen García, President, National Education Association

BE PROACTIVE...

- Develop an environment of respect and caring for all students in your school and classroom using inclusive language, books and other materials.
- Establish clear schoolwide and classroom policies against hurtful teasing and bullying. Ensure that all members of the school community understand what the policies are and why they are important.
- Be explicit that rules against hurtful name-calling include "That's gay!" "Homo!" "Fag!" "Tranny!" "Sissy!" and other LGBTQ put-downs.
- Develop the capacity of students and educators to be allies that stand up for students who are harassed.



I wish more teachers could elaborate on it [LGBTQ topics] and talk about it more, instead of like, two sentences and then dismiss the subject."

— Elaina in *What Do You Know? Six-to Twelve-Year Olds Talk About Gays and Lesbians* (A Welcoming Schools Film)

RESOURCES

Welcoming Schools

www.welcomingschools.org

K – 5 resources on gender, bullying & family inclusive of LGBTQ topics

NEA Bully Free Campaign

www.nea.org/bullyfree

Bullying prevention for educators

Time to THRIVE

www.timetothrive.org

Annual conference for youth-serving professionals focused on LGBTQ youth

PFLAG

www.pflag.org

Parents and allies of LGBTQ youth

The Trevor Project

www.thetrevorproject.org

Suicide prevention

GLSEN

www.glsen.org

Safe schools for LGBTQ youth

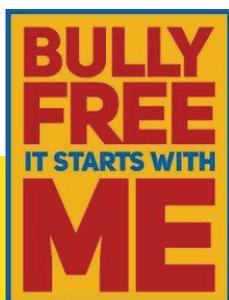
Gender Spectrum

www.genderspectrum.org

Gender identity and expression for youth of all ages

StopBullying.gov

Information and resources from various government agencies

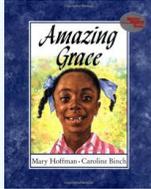
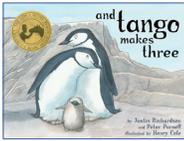
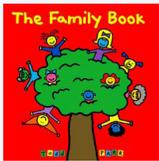
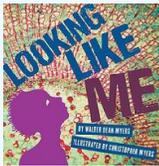


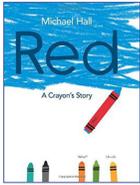
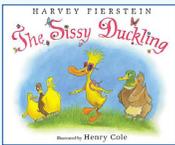
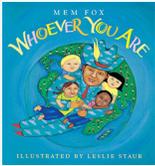


Welcoming Schools

A PROJECT OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN FOUNDATION

TOP 10 BOOKS FOR A WELCOMING SCHOOL

Title Author		Grade Level	Description	Topics/ Modules	Welcoming Schools Lesson Plan
Amazing Grace Mary Hoffman		Pre-K – 1	Although classmates say that she cannot play Peter Pan in the school play because she's black and a girl, Grace discovers that she can do anything she sets her mind to.	Gender Stereotyping, African-American	Discussing Gender Stereotyping with Children's Books
And Tango Makes Three Justin Richardson & Peter Parnell		Pre-K – 2	Penguins Roy and Silo at New York's Central Park Zoo, keep putting a rock in their nest and try to hatch it. The zookeeper gives them a real egg that needs care. The penguins take turns sitting on it until it hatches, and Tango is born.	Family Diversity, Animals, Two Dads, LGBTQ	And Tango Makes Three: Using Diverse Literature to Look at Story Structure
The Family Book Todd Parr		Pre-K – K	Different kinds of families are celebrated in a funny, silly and reassuring way. Includes adoptive families, stepfamilies, singleparent families, two-mom and two-dad families and families with a mom and a dad.	Family Diversity, Multiracial, LGBTQ, Acceptance	What is a Family?
I Am Jazz Jessica Herthel & Jazz Jennings		K – 5	From the time she was two years old, Jazz knew she was a girl even though everyone thought she was a boy. She loved pink and dressing up as a mermaid and didn't feel like herself in boys' clothing. Based on the real-life experience of Jazz Jennings.	Gender, Transgender, Acceptance, LGBTQ	I Am Jazz: Reading Children's Book to Help Understand Transgender Topics in Elementary School
Looking Like Me Walter Dean Myers		K – 3	An African American boy celebrates all of who is, including a dancer, an artist and a writer. Colorful collage illustrations and catchy rhymes.	Gender Stereotyping, Acceptance	Be Who You Are: I Am Me Poems

Title Author		Grade Level	Description	Topics/ Modules	Welcoming Schools Lesson Plan
<p>One Kathryn Otoshi</p>		Pre-K – 2	Red picks on Blue. The other colors don't know what to do until One shows them how to stand up, stand together, and count. Also see the author's book, Zero, which combines learning about numbers with valuing one's self.	Bullying, Ally	Words That Hurt, Words That Heal
<p>Red: A Crayon's Story Michael Hall</p>		Pre-K – 2	A blue crayon mistakenly labeled as "red" suffers an identity crisis. Almost everyone tries to "help" him be red until a friend offers a new perspective. He's blue! About finding the courage to be true to your inner self.	Bullying, Ally, Identity, Acceptance	Discussing Gender Stereotyping with Children's Books
<p>The Sissy Duckling Harvey Fierstein</p>		K – 2	While other boy ducklings like to build forts, Elmer loves to bake cakes. While they play baseball, he wants to put on the halftime show. Elmer is a great big sissy. When his father is wounded by a hunter's shot, Elmer proves that the biggest sissy can also be the greatest hero.	Gender Stereotyping, Bullying, Acceptance	Using Children's Books to Look at Gender Stereotyping
<p>Stella Brings the Family Miriam B. Schiffer</p>		Pre-K – 1	Stella's class is having a Mother's Day celebration, but what's a girl with two daddies to do? Fortunately, Stella finds a unique solution to her party problem in this sweet story about love, acceptance, and the true meaning of family.	Family Diversity, Two Dads, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Multiracial, LGBTQ	A Note on Mother's Day and Father's Day
<p>Whoever You Are / Quienquiera Que Seas Mem Fox</p>		Pre-K – 1	A celebration of the world's diverse cultures, both our similarities and differences. "Whoever you are, wherever you are, there are little ones just like you all over the world."	Gender Stereotyping, Prejudice, Acceptance	We Are All Human Beings

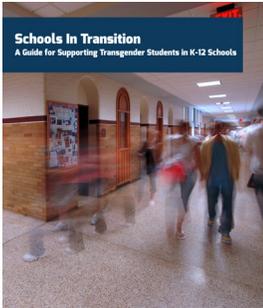


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Looking for more about LGBTQ-inclusive practices with youth? Welcoming Schools and the Human Rights Campaign have plenty of materials, and other resources no matter what you're looking for. Here are just a few places to get started:

Schools In Transition: A Guide for Supporting Transgender Students in K-12 Schools



This groundbreaking guide holds a wealth of knowledge for adults in schools who work with youth. Schools in Transition cover topics such as restroom and locker room access, harassment, and working with unsupportive parents. HRC Foundation created this guide with The National Center for Lesbian Rights, Gender Spectrum, the American Civil Liberties Union, and the National Education Association.

HRC's Annual Time To Thrive Conference



Next April is HRC Foundation's Time To THRIVE conference, the fourth annual national conference to promote safety, inclusion and well-being for LGBTQ youth... everywhere! April's conference will be in Washington, D.C. from Friday, April 28 - Sunday, April 30, 2017. Register now to get the early bird registration rate!

Welcoming Schools Training Modules



Besides free materials and resources online, Welcoming Schools also [provides staff training](#) to schools and districts. [Contact Welcoming Schools today](#) for a training at your school or district with the following professional development training modules:

- Welcoming Schools Approach
- LGBTQ-Inclusive Framework
- Welcoming Family Diversity
- Understanding Gender
- Preventing Bias-Based Bullying
- Welcoming Schools Law and Policy Review