

Preventing domestic and family violence in families with LGBTIQ+ people:

What can primary schools do?



Responsibility for preventing family violence sits with everyone. This tip sheet outlines some key actions that primary schools can take to help prevent violence in families with LGBTIQ+ people. Together we can address the underlying reasons that violence exists in the community including negative attitudes and beliefs.



1. Promote inclusion, respect and equality

Let the school community and visitors know that you are an LGBTIQ+ friendly school. Display LGBTIQ+ posters, fly the relevant flags and more!

Ensure inclusivity of the language used in classrooms (e.g. avoid splitting activities by gender, teach 'family' in an inclusive way including lesbian mums, gay dads, and gender diverse parents and use LGBTIQ+ people as examples in your teaching).

Encourage the leadership and involvement of girls and gender diverse young people in all school activities, and listen to their ideas and views.

Foster kind and supportive male peer relations which do not support aggression or discrimination.

2. Challenge homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, endosexism

Respond to staff and children who use discriminatory language, modelling positive ways to approach this, and have classroom discussions about inclusion.

Use the 'All of Us' guide to support teachers to discuss gender diversity, sexual diversity and intersex topics in the classroom.

Learn and teach the letters of the acronym **LGBTIQ+** and what endosex and cisgender mean.

Challenge incorrect assumptions that all children are either girls or boys and that everyone's body looks clearly **male or female**.

3. Celebrate and educate about LGBTIQ+ people

Invite LGBTIQ+ guest speakers and workshops. Look at all letters in the acronym.

Embed LGBTIQ+ **histories, people** and events across the curriculum.

Read **books** and show media that is inclusive of LGBTIQ+ people.

Acknowledge that everyone's body is different and that's something to celebrate!

4. Normalise respectful relationships

Actively model respectful interactions between yourself, students and other school staff.

Lead activities on body safety and **respectful relationships** based on these colouring in **resources** for lower primary-schoolers.

Read **books about body safety** and discuss with your students.

5. Educate about and embrace all gender expressions, and support gender diverse children and young people to be themselves

Research shows that breaking down traditional gender stereotypes can reduce the level of violence in the community. Encourage children of any gender to do the same activities regardless of their gender (e.g. kids of all genders express their emotions respectfully, play football or cook and care for others).

Talk with children about the language they use to understand themselves and others, their bodies, sex, gender, sexuality and relationship (in line with HPE in the Australian Curriculum).

Use this **guide** for schools to be inclusive of trans and gender diverse students.

Ensure **forms and paperwork** are inclusive of students and parents/carers who are intersex, sexuality and/or gender diverse (e.g. offer "gender non-binary" and "other" as options) and allow uniform options which meet student's gender identity.

6. Create a school culture which says no to violence

Build support and funding for a **whole-of-school approach** to respectful relationships education; research shows this is most successful. Ensure consent and respectful relationships programs are inclusive for LGBTIQ+ people (all letters in the acronym).

Download and use the **Stay Safe for Kids** resource for upper-primary schoolers, with your students.

Be aware that promoting respectful relationships may lead to disclosures of family violence. Establish clear referral pathways and ensure staff are adequately trained to **respond**. Young children may not disclose domestic and family violence, **be aware of the signs**.



Creating change can lead to **negative reactions**. Expect and plan for it but don't be discouraged!

For more information or a referrals list visit [StrongSafeFabulous.online](https://www.strongsafe.org.au)