GALE

GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR LGBT EDUCATION

SCHOOLS
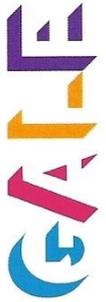
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Contents

GALE THE GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR LGBT EDUCATION
Toolkit Working with Schools 1.0

Peter Dankmeijer

Introduction

GALE is proud you have chosen to read the toolkit "Working with schools". In this introduction we will give you an idea of what "working with schools on LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) issues" is about, an overview of the content and some information on how to use the toolkit.

Working with schools

The introduction of LGBT issues in schools is not the most obvious theme for schools. In most schools, sexuality in general and LGBT issues specifically are taboo and in many cases even forbidden. This kit aims to provide tools to help schools, school support institutions and LGBT activist organizations to deal with this subject.

GALE and its partners have a great interest in working with schools. This is in the first place to make the school more accessible for all students and a better learning environment for LGBT students. GALE estimates that annually, more than 6 million LGBT students are dropping out of school because of harassment by peers and incredibly, also by staff.

In order to create a safer and better learning environment, the school also needs to be a safe working space for LGBT teachers and other staff. Currently, in many countries, staff can be fired just for identifying as LGBT or when they offer neutral or positive information on LGBT issues.

Finally, the content of the curriculum needs to be more relevant for students. LGBT students need to know more about issues that pertain to them specifically. They usually are not taught relevant life issues at home and have to rely on the school for this. HIV prevention and coping with stigma and discrimination are extremely important issues for them to survive. The curriculum should not only have relevant information for LGBT identified students and students who question their sexual orientation or gender identity, but also for heterosexually identified students. They may lack knowledge, behave in a prejudiced and negative way, and often feel insecure and aggressive towards non conformist behaviors. They need to get objective information and learn tolerance and respect.

Improving the performance of schools is not only a question of curriculum and

teaching. A proper school vision and policy are essential to provide a context for initiatives by students and teachers.

Until now, it is very rare to see mainstream organizations focus on LGBT issues in schools. Most initiatives to improve our schools are initiated by LGBT grass roots organizations or professional organizations which are rooted in the LGBT movements. That is why this version of the toolkit focuses in part on suggestions for activist organizations on how to access schools. However, just 'dropping' information and model curricula in schools and hoping school will use them, usually does not work. To make sure the tools for schools are tuned into the needs and possibilities of a school, and of an adequate quality to ensure a significant effect, we need to work with the schools themselves. It is this LGBT & straight collaboration we are focusing with in this toolkit.

Content of the toolkit

The toolkit has five parts:
1. Project implementation tools
2. Tools for managers and authorities
3. Tools for staff
4. Tools for students
5. Tools for parents

Project implementation tools

Activist organizations are looking for ways on how to access schools. Because school systems differ considerably across countries, the strategies also vary considerably. In some countries, the focus should be directly on schools themselves, on others, a national advocacy campaign to get access or to change the nuclear objectives or curriculum may be a more effective strategy. This section of the toolkit offers a range of tools on how to start a strategy or a concrete project.

Tools for managers and authorities

It is often most useful to work closely with the stakeholders who have real power to change the school environment. These are often (but not always) the school (location) managers or principals. In other cases local school authorities have governing power. This section offers tools to convince such stakeholder of the need for change and guidelines on how to do it.

Tools for staff

Teachers and other non-teaching staff have direct contact with students and they can have the most profound effect on the creation of a sustainable safe and inspiring learning environment. This section provides tools for them and for teacher trainers.

Tools for students

In lessons, teachers may need materials for students to hand out. This section

provides some model texts which can be edited for use by teachers.

Students may also want to take action themselves. For example, they can start a gay/straight alliance (GSA) or they can plan short actions in the school. This section provides suggestions for student action and participation.

Tools for parents

The extent to which parents are involved with schools can vary very much. Most experts agree it is important to involve parents in what goes on in the schools, or at least elicit their support for what happens in the schools. This section offers information for parents and tools to involve parents in LGBT related issues in schools.

How to use the toolkit

We collected some good materials, but we are aware there are many more good tools and practices. Also, the current tools will probably need upgrading and editing for use in different cultures and contexts. This is why GALE offers these tools both on paper, on the internet and as editable Word versions.

Editable tools

We not only offer the possibility to edit and translate these tools, but we would like to encourage it. We only ask editors:

1. Give credit to GALE as the source
2. Send their improved versions also to GALE (info@lgbt-education.info), so we can share them again with others
3. Do not copyright the new versions, and thus commercialize the materials and create competition in a field where we need solidarity and collaboration.

On-going redevelopment

This toolkit is version 1.0. In a sense it is a draft. GALE, as a global learning platform of educators, will continue to collect good practices, develop new tools, redevelop existing tools and share these as widely as possible.

With new additions and redeveloped tools, we aim to go on to publish a toolkit 2.0 in due time. In the meantime, we ask you, when you offer us new tools or redevelop existing tools, to add which version you are adding to. Any new versions added to this version will be called 1.1 versions. They will be added to the 2.0 toolkit when it is published as a whole.

Projects

The development of tools is most effective when the tools are developed based on a real need and on local practical implementation. This is why GALE encourages the development of local pilot projects to invent, redevelop or test methods and tools. GALE has over 500 members all over the world, who each in their own way are experts on education and storytelling. GALE also collaborates with other international organizations and donors, and we are the official LGBT collaboration network of UNESCO. Our website creates sharing and collaboration between all these

stakeholders, both LGBT and straight. Developing educational projects in the context of GALE has multiple added benefits:

- You can get quality feedback from hundreds of experts
- You can avoid reinventing the wheel by checking whether something has already been done and start on a higher level of quality
- You can find collaboration partners in your country or international partners
- You can easier access to international donors
- You can get support in developing your project
- You can create formal links with UNESCO
- You can use GALE to disseminate you results and good practices worldwide

If you are interested to develop a project proposal and you would like to collaborate with GALE on this, we welcome your proposals! (info@lgbt-education.info)

We hope you enjoy reading and using this toolkit and look forward to collaborate with you!

GALE THE GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR LGBT EDUCATION
Toolkit Working with Schools 1.0

Peter Dankmeijer & Leonie Kamps

SMART objectives

One of the challenges of combating homophobia, transphobia and heteronormativity is to be precise and exact in what you aim to do. Most projects focusing on LGBT issues in schools are notably underdeveloped in this area. Objectives often stay vague, like: to combat homophobia, to combat prejudice, to promote tolerance. This is an important deficit: how can you show you are effective when you objectives are too fuzzy to monitor?

In this tool, we offer a first list of possible objectives. Most of these still have to be more specified to be really SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound).
The list has been developed in the context of a Dutch project by EduDivers to make projects to combat homophobia, transphobia and heteronormativity more effective by using intervention mapping method. This method and some main features of the results are described in another tool in this section "intervention mapping to combat homophobia in schools".
Important aspects of "good" objectives is that they need to be formulated in a positive way and that they should be observable or measurable.

The proposal of EduDivers for concrete project objectives, as related to crucial change factors that appeared from a needs assessment, fall in four categories
1. Stop negative behavior against LGBT people
2. Promote social support for LGBT people
3. Strengthen resilience and empowerment
4. Reduce social distance

Stop negative behavior against LGBT people
1. Young people have knowledge about the heterosexual norm. They know how coercion to conform to this norm leads to exclusion, stress and other negative consequences.
2. Young people know that the prejudices that hinder acceptance (including the view that homosexual orientation is learned or a choice, and that all gays and lesbians intend to sexually harass others) are incorrect.

Promote social support for LGBT people
3. If there is a problem of intolerance, then LGBT and straight students support together, even when there may be a risk to their status in the group.
4. Heterosexual youth know how to respond when a friend is coming out to them.
5. Parents know where they can obtain information about LGBT issues.
6. Teachers and principals know to what extent negative behavior towards LGBT occurs at their school.
7. Teachers have skills to discuss LGBT issues and to combat negative behaviors.

Strengthen resilience and empowerment

8. LGBT young people recognize their feelings.
9. They know ways to safely express their feelings.
10. They express these feelings.
11. They maintain social relationships with other LGBT youth and heterosexual peers.

Reduce social distance

12. LGBT students and heterosexual students know from each other whether they are fancying boys or girls.
13. They do all the things people normally do together: make friends, lunch together, do homework and so on.
14. LGBT youth and straight youth learn to work together.

You may notice there is very little mention of attitudes in these objectives. This is no accident. The way these objectives are formulated now, are objectively observable. The measurement of then is therefore more neutral then monitoring attitudes, which may, in questionnaires, be tainted by social desirability (in societies where discrimination in considered not done).

Peter Dankmeijer

Developing questionnaires

Developing a good survey instrument is an academic skill. So the first advice we would like to offer you, is to contact a researcher who can collaborate with you in developing a questionnaire.

In this tool, we will go in to the most main choices you have to make before you develop a survey. We show you the way to the best practices of question batteries on homophobia and heteronormativity in general, and questionnaires that have been developed for schools specifically. Finally we make you aware of most commonly made mistakes when developing survey questions.

We are aware this tool is just a start and needs much improvement to be of outstanding quality. We therefore invite users and academics to comment on this tool and to add to it. Also, we invite users to share their actual questionnaires through the GALE website.

Main choices

The first thing you need to be aware of is why you want to do a survey. What kind of results are you hoping for? How are you going to use the results? It is extremely worthwhile discussing these questions and writing them down as a guideline for further development of the questionnaire.

Main strategic focuses of a survey could be:

1. **Needs assessment**. A needs assessment which will function as a basis for developing a project or method. A typical needs assessment could include some questions about knowledge, attitudes and behaviors, but should focus on expressed needs and challenges of the target populations, like students, teachers and principals.

2. **Empowerment**. A specific form of needs assessment is an assessment focusing on empowerment of the target group itself. In this case, LGBT and questioning students could be such a group. The best way to start empowering target groups is to involve them from the start in the assessment. This can be done by already involving some students in the construction of the survey, but also by involving them in implementing it. In such 'empowering' research, it is better to use open-ended questions and encourage open dialogue and involvement. It could be a kind of action research which recruits respondents to become activists.

3. **Baseline monitor**. A baseline monitor measures key indicators for the social inclusion or exclusion of LGBTG people. Such an instrument preferably also

looks at related general related indicators, because homophobia and transphobia are commonly not acted out in isolation but are aspects of a more general intolerant and unsafe social climate.

4. **Evaluation**. A pre- and/or post measurement of the situation in a school, or regionally, with the aim to develop or evaluate a project which improves the safety in school. Such an instrument will focus on concrete knowledge, attitudes and behaviors that you are going to change. It is only possible to develop an instrument like this after an analysis of potential objectives. An evaluation instrument may contain similar questions as a baseline monitor but will also add specific questions related to the project or method that will be evaluated.

5. **Advocacy**. You may want to use the results of the survey to make schools, administrators and politicians aware of challenges. In this case, the questions should be selected in such a way, that the results yield high percentages of intolerance, because high percentages will have a high impact in the media. For example, a question like "Have you *ever* heard *someone* calling *someone else* faggot?", will yield higher percentages then "Have *you* been called faggot in the *past month*?". Open questions about bad experiences (so-called "black books") are also useful in surveys for advocacy.

Combining two or more of these aims is always possible, but creates several difficulties. Some aims for surveys require a sound academic and independent research design, while others require a high level of involvement of target groups. These may not be easy to combine. Also, a combination of aims and methodologies may require a long list of questions. The longer the list, the more time it takes to be answered and the more difficult it becomes to implement it in schools. Schools are often very busy and giving up teaching time to research is usually not their priority. Critical choices need to be made here.

Often used question batteries

There is a long standing debate about how "homosexuality" and "gender" should be defined, and as a consequence, how "homophobia", "transphobia", "homonegativity" and "heteronormativity" should be defined and measured.

A main distinction is to measure knowledge, attitudes, skills and behavior. Good question batteries (core sets of questions that have been show to really measure what they intend to) therefore ask:

Knowledge: what students or teachers know about sexual orientation and gender identity, and to what extent their information is distorted
Attitudes: what students or teacher think about sexual orientation and gender identity, and how negative or positive these are
Skills: to what extent students or teacher are able to act in a neutral, positive or supportive way towards LGBT and questioning people
Behavior: to what extent students or teacher behave in a positive or negative ways towards LGBT or non role-conforming people

Researchers from the U.S.A. have taken the lead in developing questionnaires to measure homophobia. Examples of such question batteries or scales are:

- Hudson & Rickets: Index of Homophobia (IHP), 1980 (25 statements)

- Herek: Homosexuality Condemnation-Tolerance Scale, 1984
- Plasek & Allard, 1998
- Herek: Attitudes Towards Lesbians and Gay Men (ATLG), 1988
- Kite: Homosexuality Attitudes Scale (HAS), 1992
- Seltzer: Homosexual Attitude Index (HAI), 1992
- Morrison, Parriag & Morrison: Homonegativity Scale (HS), 1999

Homophobia has consistently be shown to be aligned with other forms of intolerance and predictors or intolerance. Therefore, "homophobia" scales are often accompanied with scales which have show to measure these other predictors adequately. Examples are:

- Spence & Helmreich: Personality Attributes Questionnaire, 1978
- Spence & Helmreich: Attitudes Towards Women, 1978 (25 short items)
- Orlofsky: Sex Role Behavior, 1981
- Levinson & Huffman: Traditional Family Ideology Scale (TFI), 1955
- Troldahl & Powell: Dogmatism Scale, 1965
- MacDonald: Ambiguity Tolerance Scale, 1970

Most of the questionnaires on homophobia offer statements to which respondents have to agree or disagree on a 5 point scale. Many of the statements represent rather extreme prejudices. The consequence of this is that some of these scales maybe be reliable in highly homophobic populations, but much less in populations where it is politically correct not to discriminate. As yet, there are few reliable scales which measure homophobia or heteronormativity in rather tolerant but not necessarily accepting populations.

In more recent years, more advanced sets of questions have been developed. Most notably, the availability of fast computers has made it possible to develop new and very refined tests that measure implicit prejudiced feelings and attitudes: the Implicit Association Test (see: https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/). The problem with these test is that they are still difficult to implement in schools (you need online computers for every student). There have been some attempts to create paper version questionnaires that try to emulate the refinement of Implicit Association Tests (see for example Chris Parker, 2003).

Questionnaires for implementation in schools

We would like to refer to two questionnaires that have been developed specifically to measure homophobia in schools: the School Climate Survey of GLSEN (U.S.A.) and the School Safety Quick Scan of Rutgers Nisso Group & EduDivers (Netherlands). Both instruments have been used extensively and proved to be reliable.

The School Climate Survey

The School Climate Survey is a long questionnaire (74 items, 23 pages). It focuses mainly on LGBT issues, but there are also questions on other forms of discrimination and the school in general.

Subjects that are asked about are:
- Hearing homophobic remarks in school
- Hearing racist remarks in school
- Hearing sexist remarks in school

- Hearing remarks on gender expression in school
- Safety and harassment in school
- Characteristics of you school (general and related to LGBT)
- Academic experiences and plans
- Feeling comfortable in school (mostly related to LGBT issues)
- Personal characteristics

Because of the length of the questionnaire, it seems the School Climate Survey is best usable in schools that are already interested in mapping the situation on LGBT issues, or online.
The GLSEN Survey is not a public document, but it can be obtained in English and Spanish from GLSEN (glsen@glsen.org).

The School Safety Quick Scan
The School Safety Quick Scan is a shorter questionnaire with 28 items (6 pages). This questionnaire is an adaptation on the Dutch National School Safety Survey (which does not focus very much on LGBT issues) to which 12 gay and lesbian items and some items about non gender conforming behavior were added. These items are completely embedded in a range of more general questions about school social safety. Subjects that are asked about are:
- What happens at school? (range of negative incidents)
- Do you feel safe at school?
- Interacting with others
- How do you treat each other in your class?
- What is it like in you school?

The School Safety Quick Scan is available in three versions: primary school students, secondary school students and teachers. Because of its focus on safety in general and it's short length, the School Safety Quick Scan is usable in a range of schools even if schools are not interested in or resistant against LGBT issues. The results yield practical advice on social safety in general to the school. It also makes it possible to relate LGBT safety to more general safety concerns. However, the number of questions related to LGBT issues is limited and therefore less adequate as an in depth needs assessment.

Suggested core questions in school research
Below are two questions we advice researchers to ask consequently about discrimination of LGBT teenagers in schools. They focus on social exclusion and on social support. The questions can be used in a local youth health monitor, in specific studies into the school situation or in the region or in evaluation studies with (for example educational) interventions.
The questions ask for specific behavior rather than cognitive or attitudinal opinions, which make them more usable in different cultural and social contexts.

Next to a question concerning social exclusion, it is important to ask a question concerning social support. From research in the Netherlands[1], it became clear how important mutual social support in schools is for a good school environment in general and specifically for vulnerable teachers and student, like LGBT.

The questions have been developed by the Dutch Institute for Social Sexual Research (the Rutgers Nisso Groep). They give a statistically reliable indication for the social acceptance of homosexual young people. They can also be used to translate facts in practical school policy.

1. Social exclusion

For the BOYS: Suppose there is a boy in your class who fancies boys (he is gay). What would you do, would you hesitate to do, or would you not do?

For the GIRLS: Suppose there is a girl in your class who fancies girls (she is lesbian). What would you do, would you hesitate to do, or would you not do?

a. I would feel at ease becoming friends with him/her
☐ certainly, ☐ yes, ☐ maybe, maybe not, ☐ no, ☐ certainly not

b. I would make it clear he/she should keep his/her hand off me
☐ certainly, ☐ yes, ☐ maybe, maybe not, ☐ no, ☐ certainly not

c. I would feel at ease making homework with him/her
☐ certainly, ☐ yes, ☐ maybe, maybe not, ☐ no, ☐ certainly not

d. I would rather sit next to someone else during the break
☐ certainly, ☐ yes, ☐ maybe, maybe not, ☐ no, ☐ certainly not

e. I would find it annoying to share a room with him/her on a school excursion/project week
☐ certainly, ☐ yes, ☐ maybe, maybe not, ☐ no, ☐ certainly not

To discuss social discrimination more widely, you can take a similar questions relation to racism or gender:

For the BOYS: Suppose there is a boy in your class who is not originally Dutch, but from another culture (for example Moroccan). What would you do, would you hesitate to do, or would you not do?
For the GIRLS: Suppose there is a girl in your class who is not originally Dutch, but from another culture (for example Moroccan). What would you do, would you hesitate to do, or would you not do?
(Use the same questions/answer possibilities as in question 1a)

The answer on these questions gives you an indication of the integration of several groups of young people and offers you the opportunity to make a comparison between intercultural and homosexual integration.

2. Social support

For the BOYS: Suppose there is a boy in your class who tells some students he is gay. Within a week the whole school knows it. Some students tease him or make nasty comments. Problems arise in your class too. What would you do?

For the GIRLS: Suppose there is a girl in your class who tells some students she is lesbian. Within a week the whole school knows it. Some students tease her or make nasty comments. Problems arise in your class too. What would you do?

a. I think it is his/her own fault, he/she could have known there would be trouble. I would not do anything.
□ certainly, □ yes, □ maybe, maybe not, □ no, □ certainly not

b. I regret his/her situation, but I would not do anything
□ certainly, □ yes, □ maybe, maybe not, □ no, □ certainly not

c. I would defend him/her, as long as I don't get into problems myself
□ certainly, □ yes, □ maybe, maybe not, □ no, □ certainly not

d. I would defend him/her, even when I would get into problems because of it
□ certainly, □ yes, □ maybe, maybe not, □ no, □ certainly not

Source: Graaf, H.; Meerendonk, B. van de; Vennix, P.; Vanwesenbeeck, I. (2003) "Health Teacher, Health School. Job perception and health of homosexual and bisexual teachers", Enabling Safety for Lesbigay Teachers/RutgersNissoGroep, Dekkers, Utrecht (full report available from
http://www.edudivers.nl/onderwijsbeleid/onderzoek/graaf_2003/english)

Common pitfalls in developing a questionnaire

From our experience, we see how activists and even professional researchers can make serious mistakes when creating a questionnaire about homophobia. In this paragraph we list some of the pitfalls we encountered. We invite readers of this tools to send GALE

Asking questions that are ambiguous

Some researchers ask questions that are ambiguous. An example is "Agree or disagree with this statement: 'heterosexuality is normal'."

Presenting statements with prejudiced images that may be true

In scales with statements, it is common to check if students have prejudices. So it seems logical to present some of the most common prejudices as statements. A pitfall of such statements is that they may be morally and heteronormatively charged. For example, a common statement could be "(All) male homosexuals are effeminate". In societies where a considerable number of same sex attracted men behave effeminately, such a statement may be quite true, while the researcher may (maybe

with a heteronormative perspective) that gay men are not necessarily effeminate. The adding of "all" in this question makes it a bit more reliable, but it remains unclear what you are really measuring: distorted or real images.

Asking questions like in an exam

Some researchers ask questions to test knowledge. It is necessary to keep such questions diagnostic and realistic.

When questions are asked which do not look like a diagnostic, but like an exam, students may feel uncomfortable and attempt to give politically correct answers. For example, showing pictures of different people and asking which picture is "lesbian", a "happy family" or "transgender" can be ambiguous and can create a sense of being judged.

Other questions may refer to expertise that is really unknown, like: "How many gays and lesbians are there?" Generally speaking, it is quite unclear in most countries how many people have same sex and how many label themselves as gay, lesbian or bisexual. Even if this information is available, mostly only experts know the exact statistics. It may be that researchers attempt to elicit a politically correct answer, for example referring to the 5% that Kinsey found in U.S.A. in the 1950's, or to the 10% that some (Western) activist organizations use (counting also non self-labeling bisexuals).

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Intervention mapping to combat homophobia in schools

Introduction

Combating homophobia, transphobia and heteronormativity is a new field of action and academia. Very little research has been done on how these challenges play a role schools and even less which are the key factors that need to be changed, and which methods are most effective. To date, only a handful of interventions has been tested for effect and even those researches are "black box" researches. They tell us that some methods change attitudes, but now why. There is much work to do for educators and researchers.

One way to systematically develop a potentially effective method, project or campaign is to use the method intervention mapping. The intervention mapping method has been developed by health promotion researchers at the request of health promotion practitioners who wanted to plan more effective interventions, rather than wait till their interventions were evaluated. (reference: Bartolomew, L.Kay; Parcel, Guy S.; Kok, Gerjo; Gottlieb, Neil H. (2006). *Planning Health Promotion Programs. An Intervention Mapping Approach*. Second Edition. San Francisco: Wiley Imprint/Jossey-Bass)

The Dutch organization EduDivers has initiated a project to use intervention mapping to develop an effective strategy to make schools a better environment for LGBT students en staff. This tool offers a summary of what intervention mapping is and the first results of the Dutch analysis. Although the content of this article may be typical for the European context, we hope the tool functions as an inspiration for international development of more effective strategies to combat LGBT stigma. Especially since UNAIDS has identified that combating stigma against men who have sex with men is a crucial factor in combating the AIDS pandemic, it becomes more necessary to develop ways to do this effectively.

Intervention mapping: the method
During an "intervention mapping" the following six steps are taken:

Step 1: Determine challenges and needs
We describe the problems and needs of the population at risk. What is the problem?

How often does it occur? Who is creating the problem? What does the population at risk want? What do other want?

We also assess the behavior, thoughts and feelings causing the problem. We explore which factors have a strong influence and which are there but less relevant. We determine which are environmental and which factors are intrapersonal. We determine which factors can be influence most easily.

This needs assessment should preferably be done by carrying out sound research which identifies which factors are most important and changeable. However, when this is not possible because of financial or logistic reasons, more informal and participatory needs assessment methods are always possible.

An important initial choice is the population at risk. This is not necessarily the target group of the campaign, that is decided later on. In the Dutch project, LGBT and questioning students were chosen to be the focus of analysis. A secondary analysis was made on LGBT teachers, but it was decided the strategy should mainly focus on LGBTGQ secondary school students as the main population at risk. It is expected LGBT staff will also benefit from a strategy that benefits LGBTQ students.

Step 2: Formulate change objectives

To be able to monitor the effects of our future work, we need to know exactly what we want: to set concrete objectives.

To decide about this, we first determine what behavior is desired of the population at risk (in this case: LGBTQ students). Often this is difficult because the environment (for example heterosexual peers, teachers, parents) prevents the desired behavior. We could formulate an objective stating that LGBT youth can openly express their sexual orientation or gender identity and tackle discrimination. But that is not realistic in a context where significant others in the environment do not collaborate to this end.

This means we should also formulate specific objectives for actors in the environment. We need to formulate such behavior as positive and measurable goals. For example, not "to combat homophobia" but "students (are willing to) sit next to a transsexual student in class".

Then we consider the determinants that encourage or promote behavior change and formulate further objectives. For example: "teachers give examples showing that it is very common to sit next to a gay student."

Step 3: Choose methods and strategies

We then explore theoretically sound methods and practical applications from research and practice which is known to be effective, to achieve the goals we have set.

The combination of research and practice is important: although some interventions may seem to have a high impact on targets groups, this does not necessarily have the desired effect. A dramatic example is how education sessions presenting the horrors of LGBT teenage suicide very probably do *not* lead to *less* suicides, but rather to a general feeling of disempowerment of LGBT teenagers and maybe also to an image of LGBT teenagers as unhappy, pitiful people. Also what research has proven to be effective in one situation is not always effective in a different situation.

To combine theory, research evidence and practice in an adequate way, ongoing collaboration between researchers and practitioners is necessary. Wherever possible, we need to test methods. It is common that methods which have been developed in practice, are shown to be partially effective. The evaluation studies need to offer suggestions on how to strengthen the methods.

Step 4: Develop a consistent program

Many projects consist of a single method, for example carrying out a panel session,

creating a Gay/Straight Alliance or implementing an education package of a few hours duration. However, the use of single methods usually has a limited impact. In order to achieve real change, a coherent program is needed.

Think of a collaboration between the LGBT rights movement and schools with a combined package of interventions to support LGBT youth, to carry out lessons in schools, teacher training, student counseling for LGBT and homophobic students, a policy against bullying and abuse, a school vision, proper attention in books, supportive local policy and the necessary national conditions in laws and directives and sufficient financial sources.

Step 5: Run the program

Of course, we then execute the program. The program works best when all stakeholders have been involved from the start. This includes participation in the needs assessment, the development of the program, a role in the implementation of the program and in the evaluation. The sequence and roles should be established in a joint implementation plan.

Step 6: Evaluate the program

To determine the effect of the program and its implementation, we should plan an evaluation. In the evaluation plan, we establish what we exactly want to learn, what we are going to monitor and how and when we will do this. We decide when we will be satisfied with the monitored effects. With these results we can adjust the program and improve it.

An example of a needs assessment

In the Dutch project, a needs assessment was done by an intensive desktop review of research, by doing focus group discussions in several types of schools, by analyzing 30 years of own work experience and by discussing the results with academics and with educators from LGBT grass roots organizations. The next paragraphs give a summary of a much longer academic report on the needs analysis. This summary is being used to promote a national discussion on the need for more effective work in combating homophobia in Dutch schools.

Challenges and needs of LGBT youth

The principal *intrapersonal* constraints and factors in LGBT youth appear to be:

Negative self-image

Part of the LGBT youth has a negative self-image, resulting in low self-esteem and being unable to respond to various situations. Factors that have a significant impact are the heteronormative environment and daily negative responses to sexual diversity.

The dilemma of openness

Many gay and lesbian young people struggle with the dilemma of openness about sexual orientation. The secrecy of their sexual orientation can lead to stress and mental problems. Contributing factors are low self-acceptance and expectation of negative reactions from the environment. Openness can also be negative. The environment responds heteronormative and often also specifically homo-negative. Bullying and name-calling are daily occurrences. Violence is less common, but when this happens it is often brute force.

Self isolation

A relatively high percentage of gay/lesbian youth feels different, lonely and retreats

from social interaction. In such cases usually low self-esteem, the expectation that there will be negative reactions and a lack of knowledge about homosexuality are paramount.

Again, the most important factors are the heteronormative society and homo-negativity. But also a lack of role models, gay/lesbian friends and social support by parents and friends play a role. These cannot support their friends or children due to a lack of knowledge of LGBT issues and a lack of skills for dealing with LGBT people.

The role of the environment

The main *external* factors and environmental challenges are:

Homo-negative behavior

LGBT youth experience negative behavior. On the street, they are called names or even beaten. At school, nasty jokes are made and name calling is even more prevalent. If you come out, you are likely to be ignored, bullied or worse.

The main factors that influence such behavior are heteronormativity, machismo, poor education and low socio-economic status.

Too many people believe that heterosexuality and related expectations of sexuality and sex role expression are "normal". This "hetero normality" or "heteronormativity" leads to a lack of knowledge about sexual diversity. In addition, stereotypes about boys (masculinity or machismo) and a typically feminine role behavior predict disapproval of youth of LGBT people. Young people with low socio-economic status, and lower education often can only gain "respect" by acting out masculine of macho behavior and by putting down expressions of femininity and sexual diversity.

Social support

LGBT youth receive less social support from friends and family than heterosexuals, which may lead to a lack of self esteem, but often also a lack of knowledge on how to cope with stigma and social skills. LGBT youth may also receive little support from teachers and the school management for the prevention of homo-negative behavior. In many cases, the teachers and principals simply do not notice how homo-negative and heteronormative behavior occurs in their school. It may be these incidents are hidden, but more often homophobic events are so common that they are considered "normal". If they do see such incidents, they often cannot or will not discuss them. Sometimes they are afraid of negative parent, student or staff feedback, but more often they do not have sufficient skills to discuss controversial issues. In many cases we can also note "modern homo-negativity". Modern homo-negativity is acted out when people state that they are "tolerant" but do not behave in a corresponding supportive way: "homophobia is no longer an issue these days, is it?".

Social distance and heteronormativity

Summarizing, it appears that the main factor in the stigma of LGBT youth is the social distance between them and heterosexual youth. This social distance is maintained by both sides. On one hand there is the heteronormative environment, with at the extreme end the macho guys who create distance towards LGBT youth, on the other hand LGBT youth itself anticipating hostility and negative reactions and taking a preventive distance.

Heterosexual youth have little knowledge about sexual diversity and especially low-skilled youth do not know how to properly handle contact with LGBT youth without compromising their social "macho" status. They have a stereotypical image of male and female behavior, of what a family should look like and about sexuality and relationships. They think that nobody should deviate too much from their own peer

group. LGBT young people do not feel empowered to deal with this situation. They cope with the situation by adapting to the heterosexual norm and by ignoring or hiding their own feelings.

Possible methods

There is very little research into what methods are effective to foster acceptance of sexual diversity in schools. Yet there are some indications and a few clues.

One of the most powerful theories that appears to be relevant is the Intergroup Contact Theory. This theory states that when groups with different characteristics have more contact, more tolerance is generated. The closer the contact, the more tolerance is generated. Interactive collaboration on a common goal is even better. Implementing this theory in potentially effective interventions requires creating joint hetero/homo spaces with open discussion and collaboration projects.

Other research shows how generating empathy is a powerful tool to combat stigma. LGBT specific implementation of this theory can be created by making heterosexual young people think about the situation and to empathize with LGBT youth.

A perhaps, in schooling terms, more traditional strategy would be to correct stereotypical images. Research on other stigma's show this often works.

Furthermore, reducing self-stigma for LGBT youth could be a focus. Cognitive-behavioral techniques could contribute t a higher self esteem and better coping strategies.

A combination of these kinds of interventions would be even better. In another tool we briefly discuss interventions that are already deployed in different parts of the world.

Conclusion

A range of methods, interventions and strategies are conceivable. We cannot rule out that besides the mentioned methods, interventions and strategies there are others. For example there is some literature which points at the possibilities that parents could be better role models. There is still much to explore.

GALE aims to work with others to investigate the effect of existing methods, interventions and strategies, and where necessary develop new methods. This is essential when working with LGBT young people and schools. We hope the intervention mapping method can also be beneficial as a GALE tool to increase the quality of school interventions.

GALE THE GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR LGBT EDUCATION
Toolkit Working with Schools 1.0

Peter Dankmeijer

Suggestions on how to develop a teacher training

Introduction

GALE has been exploring how trainers create teacher training on LGBT issues and would like to attempt to propose good practices and set standards for high quality teacher training. However, at this time, this is not easy. There are very few or no teacher training courses that have been monitored for effect - at least not with published results. To gain some insight in what we are dealing with, GALE organized an international expert meeting on teacher training (2008, Warsaw) and an international workshop on teacher training by volunteer educators (Marseille, 2010). This tool is based on the results of those meetings, on our collection of teacher training materials and on the experience of the author.

Content of this tool:
1. We first discuss **levels of resources** which need to be defined when discussing teacher training.
2. Next, we offer an overview of some **major issues trainers need to take into account**: target groups, phases, goals and context.
3. The key issue in teacher training is to develop adequate **competences** to teach about LGBT issues. We offer a draft description of core competences.
4. Then we go deeper into the **possible content of a teacher training**: creating a need, information, reflection on own attitudes, skills and competences, practical suggestions, making plans, and tackling challenges.
5. We give an overview of **different cultural models** of teacher training and examples we identified in our international expert meeting.
6. Finally, we touch upon the **need to evaluate** teacher trainings better.

Resource levels in teacher training

Our experience in international meetings showed that a discussion on teacher training can get confusing when people think they talk about the same thing while they actually refer to different aspects. For example, some trainers discuss personal competences and situational interventions; others may add information on programs while a third participant may want to discuss marketing. When these discussions get mingled, confusion and frustration may arise. In other meetings, the distinction between student resources, teacher resources, teacher training and train the teacher training may be blurred, creating confusion among developers. Our recommendation is to be quite clear about which level you a discussing at a particular moment.

First it is necessary to be clear about what kind of intervention you will be developing:
1. a student level curriculum and/or materials

2. teacher guidance materials
3. a teacher training and/or materials
4. a train the teacher training and/or materials

Adequate teacher training would be most effective when you are aware of the actual student level curriculum and if you can use the teacher guidance materials in you teacher training. But often this curriculum or materials are not available, or teachers may choose to develop, or cut and paste their own resource. In that case, the teacher training should be more generic and may be less focused.
In this tool, we focus only on level 3, teacher training.

Secondly it is necessary to clarify what kind of resource you are discussing. You will have to discuss:

1. Situational interventions by the teacher trainer (unplanned, done by the trainer to adapt to group or individual needs; these are practical examples of more generic teacher training competences)
2. Planned interventions (presentations, subgroup work, discussions, interactive exercises, role plays, games; these are linked with competences but are usually also codified as concrete materials like guides, video or power point presentations)
3. Programs (collection of planned interventions tailored to meet specific objectives for specific groups)
4. Conceptual frameworks (theories, ideologies, clarifying schematics, mind maps)
5. Marketing strategies (getting training and other products sold)
6. Advocacy strategies (getting LGBT issues in the curriculum, mandatory teacher training or safer school directives)

Note: in this tool, we do not discuss materials separately from intervention levels or kind of resources. Inexperienced trainers often make the mistake of focusing on concrete materials. "We are making a video for teacher training". A teacher training video may be an interesting tool in a teacher training, but does not constitute teacher training on its own. When developing a teacher training, you should develop the curriculum first, THEN develop the video as a part of it. Too often trainers develop a video and limit the actual training to discussing the content of the video. Especially when the needs of teachers are not well thought through, such resources may look very nice and professional, but still be inadequate as an effective teacher training tool.

What to take into account
Teacher training on LGBT issues can look quite different, and a lot seems to depend on the context in which it is given and on the perspective and experience of the trainers. Here are a few issues trainers take into account when developing training.

Target groups
Although we are discussing "teacher training" here, there is no such thing as a generic teacher. There are primary school teachers, secondary school teachers, vocational teachers and university teachers. Within these subsectors, there are other distinctions like geography teacher, health teacher, and guidance counselor. Each of these teachers has different basic trainings and different interests and needs. It is clear a

counselor or a health teacher has greater needs for in depth information about (certain aspects of) LGBT issues than a math teacher. It is helpful to market and target the training or trainings to specific subgroups of teachers and to take their needs into account.

Phases

The teacher participants in training may be in different phases of readiness to engage with LGBT issues. For example, Daniel Witthaus, a trainer from Australia, uses the "discount model" to assess at which level teachers are:

LGB Discount Model

Existence- information, statistics
The starting point for the Discount Model is Existence, where there is a refusal by teachers to believe that an issue exists. To apply this to the current situation, stage one is characterized when it is not accepted that LGB students exist, and/or that their educational experience is problematic.

Significance- statistics, effects
Continuing with the Discount Model, in the second stage – Significance – teachers play down the seriousness of the problem at hand. For the purposes of the current situation, stage two is apparent when teachers believe that significant numbers of LGB students do not exist, and/or that their educational experience is not really worth their concern.

Solvability- solutions
The third stage of the Discount Model – Solvability – sees teachers acknowledge that a significant problem exists, yet believe that it is something that cannot be solved by the school itself, if at all. Dr. Maria Pallotta-Chiarolli (Univerity of Melbourne) might refer to this as it being in the "too-hard basket".

Self- strategies
 In the latter stages of the Discount Model comes the stage of 'Self'. Now aware that affirming sexual diversity and challenging homophobia is an achievable and doable prospect, teachers abdicate responsibility to "experts". As individuals there is a strong belief that they are unable to contribute significantly to any solution.

Action- commitment
Action is the final and most exciting stage of the Discount Model. Teachers are now aware that they personally can make a difference in the educational experience of same sex attracted young people, and therefore all their students. What this stage requires is that they now make a commitment to take action.

The discount model focuses on personal views and attitudes of teachers. This model represents a mainly psychological view, which links into the perspective of homophobia as being a personal attitude and challenge.

Peter Dankmeijer, from The Netherlands, developed a stage model which focuses on the phase of the school, rather than on attitudes. This model is an adaptation of John

Kotter's 8-phase model of organizational change.

School Action Model

1. **Urgency**. Create a sense of urgency. (Convince the management and some school pioneers that LGBT challenges are real issues but can be addressed realistically.)

2. **Form an internal alliance.** (The school needs to take responsibility itself. This can only be done when an internal alliance of the willing takes the lead. It is recommended to include the management, guidance counselors, social safety coordinators and a few interested teachers in the coalition and to make sure the coalition is properly facilitated.)

3. **Develop a vision.** (The school needs to clarify how it sees nondiscrimination of LGBT and combating heteronormativity as an integral aspect of their own existing framework of social security, of citizenship. In addition, the school needs to think about how they will deal with critical or prejudiced questions from parents and pupils.)

4. **Share the vision** of the team, formulate concrete implementation, plan. (The school needs to translate the vision into practical actions by all actors involved. What will the counselor do? Where will LGBT issues appear in the curriculum? How will this be dealt with? How will the school deal with teachers who feel not able to carry out this part of the curriculum/ What about the informal curriculum- how will teachers make matter of fact comments about LGBT issues and heteronormativity in a supportive way?)

5. **Ask the staff to overcome problems.** (In this phase, staff will encounter some challenges which need to be resolved. This can be done through training, coaching, or advice.)

6. **Ensure that short-term successes are rewarded.** (The school should make visible how the strategy is successful. Show the fun of classes and enthusiastic responses from students, appreciate and reward teachers and students who have good concrete ideas.)

7. **Consolidate improvements and keep moving**. (Take care the improvements in the school are not a one/off, but make they are turned into regular classes and activities, should come back regularly. Check on this and see if the activities are continuously updated and refreshed with actuality.)

8. **Anchor the change.** (The school needs to define how the integrated LGBT issues come back every year as a regular feature, how the vision and strategy is shared with new teachers, how the LGBT positive atmosphere is introduced annually to new students and maintained by higher level students.)

Both models have their validity and may be used in a diagnostic way or as tools to create awareness in training.

Goals

To be focused, any program needs clear goals and objectives. Given this fact, it is surprising how many programs actually do not list any general goals. This makes it impossible to evaluate whether they are effective.

The lack of explicit goals of LGBT teacher programs may be related to an implicit notion of the developers that the goals should be taken for granted. However, especially with a sensitive and widely contented theme like LGBT emancipation, goals

cannot be taken for granted. To illustrate this, we offer a few sets of concrete teacher training objectives, derived from different ideologies and with different outcomes.

Set 1: anti-homophobia objectives
- Teachers know the basic facts about homosexuals: that homosexuality is a normal variation of sexuality, that homosexuals are undeservedly being discriminated, how many homosexuals there are and how they live.
- Teachers know the most common prejudices against gay and lesbian people and know how to counter them in discussion with students.
- Teachers are competent do diminish homo-negative attitudes and behaviors among their students.

Set 2: anti-heteronormativity objectives
- Teachers know the basic facts about the social gender division and its limiting and marginalizing consequences on the daily lives of men, women, and transgenders, and on same-sex and other sex couples.
- Teachers are competent in discussing sexism and heteronormativity with students in such a way, that students are willing reconsider their own daily choices.
- Teachers are aware of the systemic nature of heteronormativity and are clear about what they assess as realistic change objectives and methods in their own classes.

Set 3: citizenship rights objectives
- Teachers know the human rights framework, how it applies to men, women and sexual minorities and which groups are excluded from their full enjoyment of these rights.
- Teachers are competent in discussing human rights with students in such a way that students feel that all humans should enjoy these rights fully, including men, women and sexual minorities.
- Teachers know how to integrate LGBT issues in their human rights and/or citizenship curriculum, avoiding neither unnecessarily specific attention nor inadequate attention.

Set 4: sexuality objectives
- Teachers know the basic facts about same-sex and different-sex behaviors, including gendered aspects, dating, love, technical sexuality aspects, STD risks and sexual violence.
- Teachers are competent to overcome own and student's shyness and discuss these facts with students.
- Teachers are competent to empower students to make informed decisions about their own sexuality (including same-sex attraction and forming relationships) and to be respectful about choices of others, including same-sex behavior, non-heteronormative gender behavior and identifying as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender (including different types of transgender self identification and local identification labels).

These sets of objectives are just given as examples and for reflection. Since most programs don´t list goals and there is no effect research, we cannot be sure which kind of set would be best. It may well be that different kinds of cultural or situational settings require different goals.

A general recommendation for teacher training developers would be to make explicit which measurable objectives will be set.

Context

A teacher training may be "in service" (for a specific school team, given on the school premises), or it may be an open training. It may be accredited (so teacher can get a formally recognized diploma, or credits for continued training), or it can be a voluntary effort by interested teachers, or in some cases, it may be mandatory to attend. There are LGBT teacher training courses that take 1 hour and there are others that require a 100 hours teacher investment. Training may consist of one presentation for 500 teachers, it may be carried out in small interactive groups of 6 people, or it may be an e-learning course. The training may be carried out in a luxury conference center, or it may be a joint meal with discussion under a tree in the Namibian desert. All of these examples are real examples of teacher trainings on LGBT issues which were identified by GALE.

It is clear that such differences in kinds of training and contexts will make a huge difference in how the training will be carried out. There are some learning points about context:

- In service training can be more focused and effective than open trainings, but a proper needs assessment is necessary to facilitate such effects.
- Accreditation of a training gives formal credibility to the training.
- With interested teachers, the training can go more forward and in depth than with prejudiced teachers; you need less time to spend on general acceptance of equal rights.
- Trainings that consist only of presentations (even when they are more or less interactive) may raise knowledge and to some extent awareness, but cannot hope to increase competences.
- Informal settings (like sharing a meal, being together for a weekend, working in small (sub)groups, a drink after a training session) can create social safety and more opportunities for emotional learning.
- E-learning is a good option when teachers have little time for a training, have to travel too far, or when they are prevented by their school or authorities to attend a life training on LGBT issues. It should include real and virtual interaction between learners.

Teacher competences

EduDivers has developed a draft set of teacher competences as a basis for an e-learning course. The competences are organized in a matrix which is designed for e-learning and covers the domains of knowledge, attitudes, planning, implementation and reflection. EduDivers developed 3 sets of competences: for beginners, advanced teachers, and expert trainers. Here we give a short overview for inspiration. The original matrix contains 29 detailed competences per set.

<div align="center">Beginners competences</div>

knowledge	reproduces basic facts
attitude	sees him/herself as tolerant
planning	chooses a program
implementation	carries out predesigned program
reflection	recognizes successes and challenges

Advanced competences

knowledge	places facts in context
attitude	recognizes influence of heteronormativity
planning	chooses from a variety of programs
implementation	develops own program
reflection	learns from negative feedback

Expert competences

knowledge	looks for deeper understanding
attitude	explores own role as change maker
planning	develops enhanced methods
implementation	improves own weak points and trains others
reflection	systematically evaluates impact en effect

This matrix is still a draft. As far as we know, no-one has attempted to think through teacher training about LGBT issues at this professional level yet. This means a lot of ground work still needs to be done.

Still, this kind of matrix clarifies how competences are layered. Advances in expertise of teachers cannot be attained overnight. It is a challenge to prepare teacher trainings in such a way that competences and course objectives are clearer.

Possible contents of teacher training

There seem to be 7 aspects which are key contents of teacher trainings about LGBT issues.

1. feeling the need
2. information
3. reflection on own attitudes
4. skills and competences
5. practical suggestions
6. making plans
7. tackling challenges

The way actual teacher training programs plan these key contents, differ. In a later next section of this tool, we offer some examples. Here we go more into detail about the 7 aspects and offer some considerations on how to make choices for this content.

1. Feeling the need

Especially in courses for teacher who are not yet fully aware of the need for LGBT emancipation, the course needs to raise awareness. The best way to do this is to appeal to people's emotions and their sense of justice. Many courses use a short video, a presentation of discrimination cases, or personal stories by educators or by participants to raise awareness.

Much less effective is offering factual information. There are numerous courses and guidance books which attempt to raise awareness by showing statistics and quoting theoreticians. Such information may be helpful but is usually not convincing in itself. For example, the quote that 1 on 10 gay and lesbian teenagers make attempts to commit suicide is not most convincing because of the 10% statistic but because of the mental image of a teenager being so desperate.

2. Information

Basic information about LGBT issues and heteronormativity is important because most

people, including LGBT people themselves, are not aware of the facts. In the worst cases, people (both students and teachers) think their prejudices or distorted media images are real knowledge. It is necessary to check what people know, to correct misinformation and to add adequate knowledge.

One central concern is words and labels. In many cultures, now words exist for same sex love, or only derogatory words. Often these words cannot be translated as gay, lesbian or transgender, because they really refer to sexual practices or gender behavior that is considered taboo and shameful, or even to (child) rape. Word like gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or men who have sex with men (MSM) may be considered "English", "Western", or "neocolonial". Thorough a gentle discussion these words can be explored and the group can choose which words and labels they think are appropriate in their context.

Apart from words and labels, there is quite a debate about what (minimum) information is necessary for offer in a teacher training. Too much information is overwhelming, but too little information is also inadequate.

In many courses, extensive attention is given to the laws on sexual orientation and sometime about laws on gender identity. Often these courses are developed by activists, who have worked hard on legal change and feel their accomplishments need to be presented. However, it needs to be considered to what extent this is relevant information for teachers. Is such information meant to convince them of the need to give attention to LGBT issues? Is legal information the most effective way to convince them? Do they need this information to teach?

In other training courses, trainers choose a quite academic entry point, for example by explaining the competing theories of essentialism and constructivism and different ideological and theoretical conceptions of homophobia and heteronormativity. This may be appropriate for universities and it may give the course academic credibility, but it may be less helpful for the concrete challenges primary and secondary teachers face. Moreover, teachers usually express a need for concrete information; they need to feel they know more than their students. Therefore it seems most relevant to provide them with the answers on the questions that students ask most, including the detailed facts, the minimum facts to be presented to students, different strategies to answer questions (giving flat information, exploring information in the group, mirroring questions, comparing, deciding on follow-up school research and so on) and the effects of these strategies on students.

On of the other tools in this toolkit is a list of frequently asked questions by students, factual answers, and options for answering strategies.

3. Reflection on own attitudes

It is difficult to adequately teach on LGBT issues when the trainer or educator is not aware of his or her own attitudes. The teachers may be willing to combat homophobia, but still have quite an uncomfortable feeling when discussing a gay parade, same sex love or non-normative gender behavior. These hang-ups can be picked up immediately by students, who are acutely aware of whether a teacher is authentic or is faking an opinion. It is not enough to be authentic only. Being *authentically uncomfortable* about non-heteronormative behavior and identities can be very detrimental for the educational effect.

Teachers and trainers have to be aware of these mechanisms and be able to handle them. A first prerequisite is the need to accept that heteronormativity is so prevalent

that no-one escapes it, including trainers and teachers whether they are heterosexual, LGBT or "queer". A second need is to learn to reflect on this without panicking about your own self image or about the image other have of you. A third need is to learn to share such reflections with the groups you are teaching or training and do this in a focused way which enables students to be empowered and respectful.

Such reflection can best be done by interactive exercises is a safe environment. Agreements on social ground rules in the group are a basic necessity for this (see the Ground Rules Exercise). Small group work (like discussing issues in pairs or trio's) helps to create more openness and safety. Giving participants and explicit space to share or not to share also is a great tool. The Carousel Game is a good tool to learn this. Role modeling of sensitive reflection on own and others attitudes by the trainer (and in turn by the teacher to students) is also a major effective tool. In e-learning or homework, writing a reflective diary or blog can work. The effect of this is ameliorated when such reflections are commented on by others in a respectful way.

4. Skills and competences

Teacher training courses are considered most successful by teachers when they deal with concrete skills. Teachers are most inspired when they are given case studies and when they can discuss their own experiences and solutions. The trainer should facilitate such discussions in such a way that a variety of solutions is explored. Although there may be "best" teaching strategies, there is not one proper solution, because every teacher is a professional with a highly personal style. On the other hand, there are also bad solutions, and the trainer needs to know which and why such solutions are bad and how to diplomatically share this with the teachers.

Another way of training skills for difficult scenarios is to organize role-plays. Many teachers are not used to interactive role-play and may feel ashamed to expose themselves in front of colleagues. Often it is advisable to start with a sharing exercise, to go on to a joint discussion of a certain strategy, have a small group of participants prepare the play and then play the game. It is also important to stress the learning and exploring aspects of role-play and facilitate the play and reflection discussion afterwards in a sensitive way.

5. Practical suggestions

Teacher love practical suggestions on how to do things in class. Concrete anecdotes to tell, simple exercises, materials, they love it. Be aware that they almost never will implement the suggestions exactly the way you offer them. For most teachers, it is a matter of professional pride to cut and paste materials, the change exercises for own use and to make up own jokes and anecdotes.

Keeping this in mind, it is useful to rethink how flexible and editable you can present your materials and suggestions. It is also advisable to regularly update your materials and suggestions with input you have gotten from teachers in earlier courses.

6. Making plans

Good teacher training courses include a section where the participants think of what they will do next, after the course. According to the Theory of Planned Behavior, this is very important to sustain the effect of the training. When do NOT make plans, they will soon get engulfed in the normal school routine and not much will change, even when the course was very interesting. But when they make one or two concrete and

small plans which the can carry out soon after the training, this form of implementation (implementation: "trying out an innovation in a regular routine setting") is an anchor for sustained effect. General research on teacher training show that sustained effects of teacher training largely depends not on the training itself but on the durability of the transfer of learned skills in daily practice.

Next to making some plans, this transfer can be ameliorated by giving homework and feedback on the homework, organizing feedback between the participants or/and organizing a come-back meeting or even continued coaching.

7. Tackling challenges

The skills to deal with difficult situations in groups need to be identified and tried out in the teacher training. Most teachers fear scenario's like:

- A student, or several, becomes very aggressive. How do you deal with their homophobic emotions?
- Students pose questions on which you have no answer. What do you do?
- How do you deal with rejection of homosexuality based on religious arguments and on holy texts?
- What do I answer when students ask about or point to another teacher or a student who they think may be gay or lesbian?
- How do you deal with a student in class who may be gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender? During the lesson and afterwards?
- How do I deal with critical parents who protest against my classes on this issues?
- How to I deal with the school management, how to I secure support from my principal or colleagues?

Such scenario's can be dealt with through sharing experiences and role-play like mentioned earlier. It can also have a role modeling effect to collect the most interesting solutions and publishing them on internet. Regular study groups or conferences can be organized to offer space to deal with these questions. Some difficult scenarios may not be solved just by the personal skill of a teacher. In those cases, some collective action may be necessary, in the school, the district or even on a national level.

Different models

From the text above, it is clear it is difficult to present a single model for teacher training about LGBT issues. Still it is inspiring to refer to some concrete examples. In de GALE expert meeting on teacher training 3 main models seemed to arise.

Five step programs

In some Western and especially Anglo-Saxons countries, a kind of five step program was popular:

1. Warming up: diagnostic exercise and sensitization of the participants
2. Convincing the participants LGBT issues are worthwhile: stories, statistics
3. Exploring strategies and concrete interventions
4. Exploring intentions for hand-on action by participants and facing challenges

This format arises from descriptions of US and UK "standardized" training formats for LGBT teacher training.

In these programs, gay, lesbian or transgender identity and explicit rights for people with such an identity are of central concern. The focus is on personal attitudes and sometimes concrete behaviors are popular. A strongly categorized and phased approach may link into the common Anglo-Saxon training cultures.

GLSEN Lunchbox

A high qualitative example of such a program is the GLSEN Lunchbox (http://www.glsenstore.org/glsen-lunchbox.html). It suggests a "stepped-approach" as a general framework for trainings, but it is flexible because it offers a range of exercises trainer can choose from. This also allows a trainer to do a short or longer training.

Pride & Prejudice

The Australian training Pride & Prejudice is the only resource that was scientifically evaluated on the student level, and proven effective. The teacher training program itself has not been published, but is closely tailored to using the resource itself.
The Pride & Prejudice Package (http://www.prideandprejudice.com.au/index2.htm) consists of a teacher manual and a video to show in classes. The package outlines six sessions and can be tailored to suit the needs of the particular class.

1. Session 1 Difference and our reactions. Exploring differences, awareness of peer attitudes by discussing the concepts of difference and normality. Participants are asked to think of how they are different and how this relates to their experience of bullying.
2. Session 2 Framing a-gender. Exploring the understanding of sex, gender, masculinity and femininity, Allowing participants to practice listening to what their peers think. Students are asked to consider the acceptability of situations that involve gender-atypical behavior.
3. Session 3 Not everyone is straight! Encourage participants to discuss homophobia in an open atmosphere followed by a brainstorm of words and characteristics and questions generated by the students about gay men, lesbians, bisexuals and heterosexuals.
4. Session 4 All your questions answered! Exploring students reactions by showing a video. Participants get challenged to talk about sexuality, especially homosexuality, with accurate information. Real life examples create a greater awareness of experiences and perspectives of openly gays and lesbians.
5. Session 5 What's it got to do with me? Involving participants to discuss their reactions to the video characters and their coming out. Followed by a discussion of famous gays and lesbians participants are allowed to begin thinking about the number of people who they do not know about.
6. Session 6 Bringing it all together. By asking to recall and discuss the topics being covered during the program, participants develop a further understanding of the experience of same sex attracted students. Participants are challenged to support these students by addressing homophobia in their class and school.

Eclectic programs

In other countries, like mainland Europe, training may have more variety in the way they plan the activities and also in the theoretical backgrounds they are based on. Trainers make use of a range of theories and concepts, which are often blended to create an added impact. For example, theory may make use of abstract concepts (like "the norm of heterosexuality", "the gender system", "the sexual interaction career" or

"taxonomy of educational goals for tolerance") and combine them with concrete daily examples of classroom events. Trainers seem to use a series of self created mind maps as "anchors" around which they build a program with a tailored variation of exercises. Trainings may be so flexible that they actually vary per session and be continuously adapted to the needs of the participants. The quality of such "eclectic" training depends very much on the expertise of the trainers.

Integrated programs

There are a number of examples of programs which fully integrate LGBT issues in wider perspectives of human rights and professional pride.

The Rainbow Project

In one example from Namibia, rural teachers were invited by The Rainbow Project for a meal and a workshop on human/civil rights. Circling around this issue, the workshop started with exploring how the teacher felt as members of different tribes and how they were included or excluded from civil rights. In some tribes, same sex relations are completely taboo, while in other tribes there are examples of age old traditional same sex arrangements. In the course of the meal and discussion, this example was considered. The discussion format is:

1. Exploring the pride of teachers, both on the professional and on the societal level
2. Exploring social challenges and what help teachers need for this, especially in the area of human rights and also LGBT issues
3. Intentions for action.

How much LGBT issues are dealt with in the Namibian course, depends on the group and the skill of the trainer to integrate these in wider issues. Even when the organization that offers the course is an LGBT grass roots organization, the perspective is that human rights in general are more important to discuss than to single out LGBT issues. In this sense the concept of this course is a complete opposite to the five-step program concept.

This seems to work very well in circumstances were identifying as 'a' gay/lesbian/trans person is not common, and where there is high social resistance against talking about sex in general and about homosexuality specifically. In the Warsaw expert meeting this was the only example mentioned of this kind of format, but it can be recognized as well in formats of CEPAC (Brazil), INSA (India) and a recently published curriculum for migrant students by EduDivers (Netherlands).

CEPAC

The curriculum of CEPAC consists of five modules, which jointly take 100 hours. LGBT issues are addressed in the 2nd module, after addressing diversity and respect in a wider context.

Module 1 (20 hours)
  Self-esteem
  Active listening
  Clarification of values (ethics)
  Respect

Sex and sexuality
Adolescence and sexuality
Basic concepts on AIDS
Safer sex
Preparation of a work plan (to be applied in the schools)

Module 2 (20 hours)

Self-esteem
Prejudice
Teenage pregnancy
Valuing life
Adolescence and sexuality
Homosexuality: sexual orientation and gender identity, brief history of homosexuality through the ages, myths and prejudice regarding homosexuality
Review of the work plan

Module 3 (20 hours)

Cultural competence
Presentation of the activities undertaken in the schools
Expectations of the school, parents and teenagers
Behavior change
Review of concepts – AIDS
Negotiating safer sex
Drugs
Planning

Module 4 (20 hours)

Respect for diversity
Presentation of the activities undertaken in the schools
Self-esteem
Planning

Module 5 (20 hours)

Andragogy
Presentation of the activities undertaken in the schools
Stress
Planning

INSA

The curriculum of INSA, a sex education organization in Bangalore, India, focuses also starts with self esteem and civil respect, then goes on to relationships, sexuality, sexual techniques and then compares MSM, WSW (women who have sex with women) and trans (*hijra*) sex techniques with each other. Gay or lesbian identities are not part of this curriculum, although sometimes a speaker of Sangama (a local "queer" organization) is invited. This is a complete sex education training, which takes play over several days.

EduDivers

The "Respect, 2get=2give" curriculum of EduDivers was developed for lower vocational schools with mainly poor (second-generation) immigrant students from Turkey and Morocco. These immigrants feel stigmatized because of Islam phobia. They react, among other things, by strengthening their Muslim identity, with the boys displaying aggressive behavior towards women and gay men.

It is a 2 to 4 hour program, starting with the teacher asking students: what is respect? (Respect is acknowledgement and tolerance of your identity). The program then goes on to analyze identity (identity is a complex of relevant aspects to your life) and prejudice (prejudice is singling out one aspect of your identity and treating your only based on your generalized opinion of that single aspect). Here, the gay and lesbian aspect of identities are inserted and discussed, along with other for young people relevant issues like gender, migration and (Islamic) religion. The program goes on to discuss social norms and how students are co-responsible for a respectful school culture. The program ends with exercises to intervene in bullying and social exclusion. The teacher training which was developed for this student level program focuses specifically on empowering teachers to carry out the concrete tasks in this limited program and to deal with expected harsh comments of students.

Need to evaluate teacher training

Not much is yet known about evaluation methods of teacher training, which are specifically focused on LGBT issues. There are some researches (USA, Netherlands, and Australia) that show effects on attitudes of teenagers after exposure to programs. It appears that in some cases the student level programs do not have an effect in themselves, but that teacher training does. However, it is unclear (a "black box") which elements in the offered teacher trainings are responsible for the measured effects. This is an area that has to be researched further.

Marinus Schouten & Peter Dankmeijer

A systematic approach to a diversity policy

Pedagogical tasks of schools

In teaching young students to be respectful, tolerant and well mannered, the school plays an important role. Learning about respect, tolerance and general good manners is the core of citizenship education. The principal justification for citizenship education derives from the nature of peace and democracy and is shaped by how we treat each other in everyday life, how we can be ourselves, develop our own opinions and define our own identity. The school should help all students to achieve this, including lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) students, or those who are questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity.

The idea of democracy fits in a larger context of tolerance, mutual respect, and preferably: a warm interest in each other (empathy). It is the task of a school manager or principal to determine which position the school takes when it comes to citizenship. Good principals feel responsible for creating an atmosphere in which everyone participates and contributes in achieving respect, tolerance and good manners.

Added value of diversity policy

School boards and principals who are asked how to make education more tolerant, including attention to LGBT issues, often respond by claiming "this is not a relevant subject for schools", or "there are no problems in our school concerning LGBT people".

However, GALE estimates that worldwide, about 6 million students drop out of school every year because of bullying and harassment due to discrimination on the ground of sexual orientation or gender identity. This happens especially when students publicly come out for their feelings or identity, or when they do not conform to strict gender roles. Even in countries where same sex relationships are legal and where gays, lesbian and transgenders are formally protected against discrimination; most schools are not safe enough to be yourself.

It is common to find the school management to be unaware of challenges concerning sexual diversity. The staff usually hardly knows any LGBT students or teachers nor do they report hostile incidents against LGBT. Name-calling based on stigmatization of homosexual orientation or on nonconforming gender behavior is often considered "normal".

Experience and research from different countries shows LGBT people and also heterosexuals feel more confident on schools which uphold an effective diversity policy. Teachers and students appreciate the work and study climate in such a school more than those who work and study in schools with a less effective diversity policy. In school with an effective diversity policy, teachers suffer less from stress and burn out and their sense of well being is improved.

Research shows schools with an effective diversity policy have the following characteristics:

1. The school has a gender balance. It also helps when the principal is a woman.
2. The school sets clear rules on how to behave right at the beginning of the school year and the whole staff enforces the rules.
3. The school organizes mutual social support among teaching staff and students.
4. The school cultivates an open attitude towards each other and on social themes.
5. The school offers explicit information about gender, diversity and discrimination, including LGBT issues.
6. There is a procedure, open to everybody, for handling complaints and preferably an independent committee to judge the complaints.
7. There is a school counselor who knows how to support students and staff who have complaints about discrimination and other negative behavior.
8. Students and teacher initiatives to combat discrimination and to improve the school climate are welcomed.

Systematic approach of diversity policy: the DEES Model
An adequate school policy on diversity should be a coherent package of interventions in four areas:

Diagnosis: exploration of the situation and aims couples
The school adapts its strategy for citizenship and tolerance by periodically making a fresh diagnosis of the situation. Based on such a diagnosis, the management can develop a renewed strategy vision, which integrates attention for LGBT issues.

Environment and school climate
Strategies to improve the school environment include agreements on how the staff sets rules for behavior and how they implement these rules. They also include how the staff deals with bullying, name-calling, and with coming-out of other staff and students. It also involves screening and improving a range of school procedures, like the complaints procedure and disciplinary guidelines. It is necessary the school team agree on strategies that are feasible to all.

Education and integration in the lessons
LGBT issues should be embedded in the curriculum and need to be flanked by school policy. A structural approach starts with the school management stipulating how sexual diversity will be addressed: in which subjects, in which years, how to link the content of different subjects and years in an on-going spiral curriculum on citizenship and how LGBT issues are systematically included.

Student counseling and care

Students who are confronted with problems, need some counseling and sometimes professional care. The school counselors should not be afraid to ask for sexual preferences of students and know the referral opportunities to LGBT friendly professional care. Homophobic and transphobic students should not only be disciplined after negative behavior, but also be adequately counseled on how to develop more adequate defense mechanisms and pro-social behavior.

Four stages in implementing diversity policy

In the implementation of diversity policy four general stages may be distinguished:

1. Single teacher action

Before planning an integrated approach, often one or more teachers do something with the subject of sexuality. They may offer support to LGBT students, or include attention to LGBT issues in their classes. This individual involvement must be appreciated, but needs to be followed up by a systematic approach. Diversity policy must not remain a personal 'hobby'.

2. Manager action

A next stage is the school management commissioning a diagnosis of the situation of the school. This can be done for example by doing a survey, interviews or by convening a small committee of interested teachers and students to discuss the challenges. Based on the results, the principal proposes a coherent action plan to the staff team or to a core staff group.

3. Team action

A third stage is to involve the entire staff team, otherwise the impact of the strategy will remain too limited. There will be teachers who feels unable to deal with some kinds of diversity, like traditions of non mainstream cultures, religions or with LGBT issues, or with sexuality in general. Divergent opinions should be respected, as long as others are not damaged by intolerant personal opinions. Divergent opinions should not lead to undermining the diversity policy as a whole. This would be the case, for example, when a teacher refuses to teach objective sex education or voices only negative opinions about LGBT people.

4. Student action

An integrated approach finally gets implemented effectively when students start to commit themselves to the diversity policy. This implies they have a real stake and influence in the development of such a policy. Examples are students starting gay/straight alliances or school clubs, inviting LGBT people to parties, offering suggestions for classes about citizenship and diversity or staging inclusive events themselves.

Summarizing, there are sixteen 'fields' which could be filled to practically implement a diversity school policy.

	Teacher Action	Manager Action	Team Action	Student Action
Diagnosis	1	2	3	4
Environment	5	6	7	8

Education	9	10	11	12
Student Care	13	14	15	16

Some practical suggestions for actions

Here we offer some ideas for actions in each of the sixteen 'fields' of implementing and adopting a diversity policy. The numbers correspond with the matrix above.

Diagnosis

Suggestion 1

A school counselor or security coordinator initiates a short survey on diversity policy. It may turn out the school approach is more or less satisfying, but needs to be more defined on specific LGBT themes. The coordinator makes a proposal to the principal.

Suggestion 2

The principal formulates an inclusive mission. He or she makes a list of areas where diversity policy may be enhanced and where LGBT issues could be integrated. The list is checked with the team, or with a core diversity committee. Priorities are set and an implementation plan is developed.

Suggestion 3

School teams discuss their personal opinions of behavior at school. By discussing LGBT issues within a broader context of pedagogical and didactic methods, staff feels more encouraged to share a personal opinion. Possible negative or emotional objections may be reduced and there is more space for implementing practical solutions.

Suggestion 4

In peer meetings students discuss how their school deals with citizenship, tolerance and sexuality/LGBT issues and how behavioral guidelines are drafted and implemented. Higher grade students interviews lower grade students about these themes. All conversations are emphatic and personal. The meetings and interviews result in improved behavioral guidelines and suggestions for the curriculum.

Environment

Suggestion 5

A student supervisor or counselor addresses issue of homophobic name-calling in the staff team. The team agrees this kind of name-calling is stigmatizing and unacceptable. The team discusses several ways in which such recurrent name-calling can be challenged and resolves to take joint action. The staff informs the students about this decision and each staff member takes direct action when abusive language occurs.

Suggestion 6

The school chooses a diversity vision: "At our school we ensure a climate of tolerance towards religion, race, appearance and sexual orientation" (or something comparable, linking into the core of the school identity). This vision is elaborated in a few core guidelines for preferred attitudes and behavior. The guidelines are presented to

students and their parents during the enrolment procedure. Both students and parents are requested to endorse these guidelines.

Suggestion 7
Teachers are trained in doing emphatic peer interviews about pedagogy and social cohesion in the school. After the training, the trained teachers interview their fellow teachers and non teaching staff with questions like: what are you proud of, what are you worried about, what can you do yourself about his, and: what help do you need from whom? In the interviews, specific questions about how to deal with personal safety and how to deal with differences (including sexual orientation and gender identity) are embedded. This "peer interview method" makes staff more aware of what is important to them personally regarding to the diversity policy at their school and it creates a strong support for a school diversity policy.

Suggestion 8
Students who wish their school to be more open and LGBT inclusive, start a Gay & Straight Alliance (GSA). They put up posters, organize an exhibition, or focus on education by organizing a theme or diversity week about LGBT issues.

Education

Suggestion 9
A teacher takes the position of a role model as a strong women and a lesbian, among other aspects of her identity. This makes students aware that sexual orientation is just one of several normal aspects of a personal identity. The lesbian teacher may stimulate attention to LGBT issues in school, but does not take personal responsibility for these. The school needs to take its own responsibility. For example, it is not necessary for the lesbian (or gay) teacher to assume the informal role of a school counselor when she does not have that function.

Suggestion 10
The principal convenes a teacher committee with representatives from different subjects and grades. This Citizenship/LGBT Spiral Curriculum Committee identifies where citizenship and LGBT issues can be integrated best in the existing curriculum and where the curriculum needs to be adapted. The proposal are discussed with teachers and tried out in practices. Based on the practical experiences, the spiral curriculum is finalized.

Suggestion 11
The biology teaching team decides to positively approach LGBT issues and incorporates the theme in the standard curriculum. They invite guest speakers and/or do class discussions. They may upgrade the effect of the classes by intruding more interactive methods like group work, gaming and role playing. They may decide to elaborate the standard sex education curriculum to include LGBT and other relevant issues.

Suggestion 12
Case study: At primary school a boy never felt comfortable. At home he often wore

girl´s clothes. The boy and his parents decide the boy will have sex change surgery. At the start of the first grade of secondary school they inform the school and the school starts a process to inform teachers and students, to assign bathroom access, to deal with sports classes and to adapt the name and sex in the school administration.

Student Care

Suggestion 13
A student counselor at a religious school explores how students cope with LGBT issues. The search yields some reliable psychologists, social workers and LGBT grass roots organizations in the region for referral of students who are severely homophobic or who struggle with LGBT feelings.

Suggestion 14
A school committee structurally coordinates social security issues at school. Sexual diversity is an explicit theme. The group monitors what is happening in the school and reports its findings to the principal. The principal and the committee act on these findings and provide solutions for accommodating students with questions about LGBT issues.

Suggestion 15
An LGBT teacher feels uncomfortable being the only person available for students with LGBT issues. After he gets insulted several times, he approaches the principal and the student counselor with the request to uphold or create preventative policy. After implementation, the bullying stops and the intervention creates more support for LGBT people.

Suggestion 16
Some students in the school function as a natural sounding boards for others. They may be interested in becoming a "Confidential Adviser for students" and assist students with problems to reintegrate in peer groups or to mediate when there are conflicts between students. When attempting to create Student Advisor groups, it is important to develop a clear mission and boundaries of the tasks in order to not overburden the students with professional expectations.

Peter Dankmeijer

School Report on LGBT Policy

In the Netherlands, EduDivers (national expertise centre on sexual diversity in schools) has developed a 10 point list of criteria for an LGBT positive school policy. These items are taken from research on the factors in secondary schools that contribute to a higher level of well-being and coming-out among teachers and students. The list is partly used as a tool to point the way to more effective policy, but from 2011 on it will also be possible for the public to score their school online. The scoring mechanism may initiative a discussion about the relative quality of schools and may serve as a guide for parents and students to choose a good school.

1. **School vision**
   The school has a vision on diversity and discrimination; the school staff is aware of this and promotes it.

2. **A shared vision on bullying and LGBT bullying**
   The school has a vision on how to prevent and stop negative behavior, harassment and bullying in general and towards LGBT; the school staff is aware of this and promotes it.

3. **Education about gender**
   The school offers lessons on equal treatment of men and women and nuances stereotypical gender roles.

4. **Education about discrimination**
   The school offers classes on discrimination. These classes focus -among other things- on the prevention of negative behavior towards LGBT people.

5. **Correct negative behavior towards LGBT immediately**

School staff corrects negative behavior and comments towards LGBT people immediately when it occurs. The school has a clear team agreement on how to handle such negative behavior.

6. **Explicit denouncement of homophobia and transphobia**
The school makes very clear that negative behavior towards LGBT people is unacceptable, especially when students or teachers discriminate, bully, call names or otherwise marginalize them. It is not enough just to discipline negative behavior, but also to explain the impact of the hateful intentions.

7. **Counselors deal with LGBT related issues**
The school has counselors or mentors who can be approached when there are problems concerning LGBT issues. These could be LGBT students who question their feelings and who have to deal with stigma, but it could also be homophobic students who need to learn more adequate defense mechanisms (for example: being curious instead of aggressive) and better pro-social behavior.

8. **Systematic quality policy**
The school management develops a quality policy, which systematically raises the awareness and creates action by management, staff and students to prevent and stop negative behavior and the appreciation of diversity. Such a plan of action should be embedded in the broader context of the policy on school security, good citizenship, positive social behavior and non discrimination.

9. **Support when coming-out**
When a LGBT student or staff member comes out, she/he gets support by the staff. This can be done by moral support, information sessions, discussion about peer support with peers, changing the school administration to accommodate names and sex changes, assigning toilets to transgender students and dealing with discomfort about sharing showers.

10. **Support for school-improving initiatives**
When LGBT students or staff propose plans for improvement of the situation, the school management takes these in serious consideration. The creates of Gay/Straight Alliances are welcomed.

GALE THE GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR LGBT EDUCATION
Toolkit Working with Schools 1.0
Tools for teachers

Bas Koppers

Teaching about sexual diversity

Introduction

This tool offers suggestions for teachers on how to teach about sexual diversity and how to support teenagers in their personal development. Many teachers feel insecure about this. They may feel to have not enough information and fear negative responses from students and their parents. They also may feel they don't have enough competences or feel uncomfortable because their own upbringing and education did not stimulate tolerance and curiosity for a diversity of views and lifestyles.

In this tool we first give some attention to the general pedagogic role as a role model of good citizenship for young people. Then we offer more specific didactic suggestions for teaching about biology/health and sexuality education, integration of attention for diversity in teaching languages, in history, geography, citizenship education, religious education and physical education. We end with some notes about inviting lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) speakers and on providing adequate information in the school library and on the school website.

Pedagogy: role modeling

Teachers of secondary schools can support teenagers with their emotional development in several ways.

The teachers need to create a safe environment in which the students dare to speak out and be personal. Teachers can give the example by open themselves but at the same time not to annoy students with, or to elicit revelations which are too personal.

When students feel safe enough to speak out, you can start to discuss how annoying it is to be judged or rejected. In very school and class, you ideally agree with the group on rules which protect the social safety, which includes the right not to be judged or rejected but accepted even when you are different from the group, or when you express different views. Respect is a key word here. Proper safety guidelines and rules guard from disrespectful behavior while at the same time creating room for exchange of opinions and mutual curiosity.

Teaching sexuality education or biology

Sexuality education is a good angle to discuss sexual diversity. Sometimes this is

thematically connected to a course on biology. Biology should not only teach young people "technical" facts about reproduction, but are also made them aware of what life is about and develop respect and a sense of responsibility for life as a whole. Students should become familiar with biological aspects of personal life (including in the areas of health and sexuality) and the social aspects of biology, like how and sexuality are never only biological but always social and culturally manifested. For a comprehensive overview of objectives and themes, check the [UNESCO Technical Guidelines on Sexuality Education](). Here we go into some popular themes and suggest how to integrate LGBT issues in these.

Puberty

During puberty the body changes in major ways. The behavior changes too. Adolescents are searching for their identity. They often feel insecure about themselves, often also about their sexual orientation. The teacher can discuss the difference between identity, behavior and (sexual) attraction and explain these are often not aligned. You are "gay" or "lesbian" when you call yourself that, and then this says something about how you your present your identity. But you can also feel same-sex attracted or have same-sex contacts without calling yourself "gay" or "lesbian" or something else. Same-sex attraction is a natural phenomenon like other-sex attraction (heterosexuality).

Nature and culture

Homosexuality is sometimes called "unnatural". This statement is difficult to maintain when you consider that non-heterosexual behavior is of all times, of all cultures and even of most species. Discuss the idea of "naturalness". Usually this is equated with "normality", that is: falling within certain social norms. Discuss also how much culture there is in "human nature". How "natural" can you and do you want to be as a human being?

Intercourse

When "homosexuality" is mentioned, many people think this is primarily about men having (anal) sex together. To clarify this misconception you need to discuss same-sex and other-sex techniques more in detail. For example, you can do a game during which students are asked to list all sex techniques that gay men, lesbian women and heterosexual couples can perform. List these in 3 parallel lists. Do it in a dry, humorous way. The initial adolescent excitement about talking explicitly about sex will soon drain away. It will become obvious that most couples can perform any technique. There is no reason or research which suggests gay, lesbian or hetero couples have one specific form of sex or that there is a need to focus on one of these techniques. Apart from this, the social interaction in relationships is far more interesting to discuss than the technical sexuality part. But to be able to talk seriously about love and relationships, usually it is necessary to first deal with the initial distorted images and destructive forms of bashfulness among young people.

Gender Identity

At least about 5 percent of young people now and again feel ambiguous about their gender identity. This means they feel physically or mentally not quite male or female. Gender is often considered to be a simple bipolar concept: you are either male or

female. In reality, gender and the way it is both biologically and culturally constructed, can refer to concepts like identity, gender role behaviors, and biological sex, views on sexuality and to sexual orientation. Both biological and cultural factors contribute to the genesis of "men" and "women" with different sexual preferences. How "natural" is gender identity? This is a good topic to reflect on and to discuss.

HIV and risk reduction

HIV/AIDS is not a "gay disease". This is a scientific fact already for a long time, but some teachers still feel it has a lot to do with gay men because men who have sex with men are still a main group at risk. In health classes it is important not to blame men who have se with men, but at the same time not avoid discussing specific risks completely. When informing students about HIV risks (but also about other sexually transmitted diseases such as syphilis and hepatitis) it is necessary to address risky sexual techniques.

For same-sex attracted boys, anal intercourse is the greatest risk. HIV-research shows across cultures that younger boys are more at risk than older men. This is due to a basic lack of information and a low sense of self esteem and assertiveness in early sexual experiences. Schools have a task prepare same-sex attracted boys to deal with this risk, just like schools should do with heterosexual HIV-prevention.

Everyone, including heterosexuals, men who have sex with men and lesbians (using sex toys) can have anal sex and may be at risk. Most teenagers (and their teachers!) may feel awkward about discussing sex techniques in classrooms. However, we need to find ways to make this possible, otherwise we cannot provide and discuss the necessary information which young people need to protect themselves.

Teaching languages

Sexual diversity can be integrated in most normal courses teacher offer. Mostly, this is about mentioning examples of sexual diversity as a matter of course. Casual attention generally promotes positive images at students. Besides, such discussions are of significant support for potential LGBT students in the class room.

When teaching the native language or other languages the teacher can choose to give attention to gay, lesbian or transgender themes in literature. The teacher can also discuss in which way the writer's sexual orientation or gender identity has influenced his or her writings. For instance, the Columbia Anthology of Gay Literature (ed. Byrne R.S. Fone 1998, New York: Columbia University Press), provides a chronological survey of 4000 years of gay literature with Greek, Roman, English, French, German, Russian, Egyptian, Italian, Spanish, Latin American, Cuban and American writers.

In teaching your own language, interviewing each other on personal issues may be a safe, interesting and useful exercise. You can do interesting variations on this by asking students to interview LGB or T people. An even more surprising and fun variation (worth doing after interviewing LGBT people) is to experiment with "interviewing a straight person", while assuming same-sex love and relations are the norm. If this is too difficult for students, you could role-play the interviewer yourself, asking all kinds of questions like:
- How did you find out you're straight?
- How did your mother respond when you came out?

- I cannot really make much of a man and a woman in bed, with such different bodies. I hardly dare to ask: How are you doing it?

After the interview(s), discuss with the students how they felt to be forced in the role of a despised minority, and how they think LGBT people might want to be approached.

Teaching history

History offers a lot of opportunities to discuss LGBT themes in a matter of fact way. The history of sexuality is fascinating and is bound to be an interesting topic for teenage students. Moreover, the history of sexuality and changing family relations offer a world of insight into the development of the Western society and other cultures. When discussing these themes, teachers can make remarks about events that are important for LGBT people, like the death penalty on gay activities which was law in Western Europe till 1861, the Western invention of the gay identity and the coining of the word "homosexuality" in the 1860s and the emergence and development of LGBT movements in the 20th century.

History has also known individuals of whom it may be relevant to know that they were lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. Most of the current history tradition is still focused on the accomplishments of men in a nationalist context. It is often assumed famous men were ("of course" heterosexual) powerful warriors or statesmen. The role of women is often ignored, as is fact that the focus on nationalism, "father of the nation" stereotypes and the extreme stress on heterosexuality of statesmen is a relative recent phenomenon which has arisen shortly after the industrial revolution.

It can be debated whether same-sex attraction of historical figures is more or less important because of the historical relevance. In cases where this seems less historically relevant, casual attention to the fact they probably had same-sex attracted feelings or contacts can show students how this is something that has been there for all ages and cultures. A few examples of the more well-known historical LGBT personalities are:

- the 18th Dynasty pharaoh Hatshepsut (who cross-dressed to be able to be an acceptable pharaoh)
- the Macedonian king Alexander the Great
- the Greek philosopher Socrates
- the Greek poet Sappho
- the Roman Emperor Hadrian (and his lover Antinous)
- the French King Henry III (who cross-dressed in outrageous ways)
- the Dutch philosopher Desiderius Erasmus
- the Chinese eunuch admiral Zheng (who "discovered" America and Australia in 1421, before the Europeans did in 1492)
- the British philosopher Francis Bacon
- the Italian artist Michelangelo
- the Italian scientist Leonardo Da Vinci
- Queen Christina of Sweden (often considered bisexual, who abdicated the thrown dressed in men's clothing and renamed herself Count Dohna)
- the British economist John M. Keynes
- the Australian mathematician Ludwig Wittgenstein
- the British mathematician Alan Turing (who invented the computer and deciphered the German enigma apparatus during World War II)
- Eleanor Roosevelt (probably bisexual)
- Jane Adams (Nobel Prize winner)

- Ma Reiny (famous American blues singer).

With more advanced students, teachers can discuss themes relating to the history of philosophy like theories of essentialism and constructionism.

Teaching geography

In geography, international migration and differences between cultures can be discussed. Teenagers like to hear and talk about anything which has to do with sex; it could be a very interesting aspect of geography to talk about how sexuality and sexual diversity is viewed in different cultures. Examples:

- In some traditional New Guinea tribes adolescent same-sex contacts are necessary to become a real man. Women are considered weak and full of polluted blood. This implies that men have to bleed themselves to get rid of the polluted blood and to insert semen to acquire the essence of manhood. This example is excellent to discuss images of manhood and womanhood, the sometimes ambiguous relationships between men and women and the construction of images of sexual orientation (these men are warrior men who have sex with men in order to be properly male).
- In Africa and Surinam intimate relationships and marriages are important to support the independency and freedom of women.
- Geography teachers can also map the world countries in view of death penalty for homosexual activity, or legitimization of same sex marriage.
- International migration because of labor, refugee or other globalization causes can cause conflicts with respect to divergent opinions on sexuality.

To discuss these themes will make geography more fascinating for teenagers. After informing the students, the teacher can ask them how divergent opinions can exist side by side. Just think about the opinions of traditional Muslims and Christians in relation to liberals or the LGBT movement.

Citizenship and pro-social behavior

In some countries there are special courses to introduce students to adequate social behavior and to functioning in a plural society. These classes are sometimes labeled as "citizenship", "social classes" or "mentoring classes". They may also be integrated in other formal subjects like history or religion, or in sexuality education.
In such classes, themes like "respect", "identity development", "empowerment", "self-esteem" and "social interaction" can be discussed. Since this curriculum is more focused on social issues than biology or health education, it is useful to incorporate cultural differences in dealing with sexuality. Examples of issues to discuss are:

- Marriage: in countries where marriage is open to people of the same sex (or where there are separate arrangements which more or less offer the same rights), teachers can discuss arguments for and against same-sex partnership arrangements. The best way to do this is to focus on different kinds of arrangements and discuss the consequences for partners and for children in such partnerships. It helps asking the students what arrangement they would like to if they were gay or lesbian, or transgender. It is counterproductive to focus on a discussion based on prejudices or on religious statements. In such more abstract, ideological or emotion-charged debates, the students easily lose track of the real damage that is done to loving partners and their children when basic rights are denied.

- Gay Prides: gay prides are parades of LGBT people, which are usually held on the third Saturday of June to celebrate the (symbolical) first time LGBT people stood up against discrimination. In 1969, the visitors of the Stonewall Inn in New York started a riot (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stonewall_riots) after continuous raids by the police. The images in media often distort the variety of people who take part in such parades and do not report on the importance such events have for the participating LGBT people. Questions that can be discussed are: Why do people organize such a parade? Why is it important? For them, for others? What is your impression of these parades? What do you know about the parade? What are the media images, what is reality?
- Bullying: a related topic is the widespread phenomenon to bully or ignore someone because of his or her sexual preference. This happens everywhere: in schools, sports clubs, work and nearby. Sometimes through silly jokes (not funny and pretty damaging for the victims), sometimes by insults and fights. Often, like during parades, visibility of LGBT people, and people who do not strictly conform to "heterosexual" standard norms are victims. Does this happen at you school? Which kind of students are victims, perpetrators or bystanders? How should the community take a stand here? And how the school take a stand? Who has to do what exactly to stop this kind of discrimination?

Religious education

The international human rights that most countries in the world agree on state that freedom of religion, freedom of expression and the principles of anti-discrimination should be upheld. In religion, it would be a good topic to discuss how we need to balance these three basic rights.

There are theologians and believers who interpret some Biblical, Quranic and Hindu texts which seem to condemn same-sex acts between men. Such texts are often taken out of context and also used to condemn any same-sex loving relationship as offensive or forbidden. However, there are also theologians and believers who show how these texts can be interpreted in a more nuanced sense. In context, the infamous passages about Sodom can be interpreted to be about hospitality and rape, rather than about same-sex love. The list of prohibitions which includes "men shall not lie with men" includes several other prohibitions which are specific for the Jewish tribes of 2000 BC, but are not implemented nowadays, even by fundamentalist believers. Studying and discussing the context of religious texts is thus quite important for people who put much importance on such texts. In a religious school, the teacher can get students from diverse religious beliefs together and analyze the religious texts about sexuality. Provide both fundamentalist and liberal interpretations. Let the students explore these different interpretations and form their own opinion. Never forget to ask them to imagine how they would feel about this when they would be LGBT themselves. It is too easy to judge "others" while not even considering others feelings and situations.

Another approach, which may be more suited for a non-religious school, is to discuss religious beliefs as separate from religious texts. Some believers think God's or Allah's plan for man and woman is to be in a heterosexual relationship only, while others maintain that God or Allah created all men and women like they are, so they are perfect the way they are in all their diversity. Teachers can start a debate on the three human rights we mentioned before, and discuss a series of dilemmas which arise due to the seeming incompatibility of these three rights. Still, all people need to work out

how to live together and accept that everybody has the equal right to all human rights.

Religion and LGBT themes are often topics in the media. It often happens that religious leaders make statements about LGBT issues or there may be news about churches taking a more tolerant stance on same-sex partnerships and ordination. Take care to discuss both negative and positive developments.

When it comes to religion and sexual diversity, it is very important not to discuss concepts in a too abstract way. Bring the theme close to the experiences of the students. Equality and the right to make own choices are central issues here. By discussing sexual diversity not as a separate topic, but in a wider context which reflects the perceptions of students, the teacher can lodge the conversation in a broader framework of the relationship between sexuality and faith. For instance, start with discussing the love between a Muslim girl and a non-Muslim boy. Such a girl may also experience challenges based on religion or related cultural opinions and norms. Starting with "heterosexual" dilemmas will prepare the students for, and make them more sensitive in a later discussion on LGBT themes.

Other courses

Courses which deal less with human relations give fewer opportunities to discuss sexual diversity in a more specific way. But also in these courses, exercises and examples often have to do with daily life. Teachers try to find concrete examples and applications, like in the following example for mathematics: "Peter is tiling the bathroom for Marcia. The bathroom is A x B meter. How many tiles of Y x Z centimeter are needed and how many tiles need to be cut?" In such an example you can also speak about Saskia and Marcia or Peter and Vincent.

Physical education

In sports typically "masculine" qualities as strength, endurance and winning are highly valued. There may be a prevalent prejudice that gay men do badly in sports because they are weak. In such cases, poor performance may be linked to "not being a real man", "being a sissy" and teachers may even use such labels as put-downs. Girls may suffer from the fairly strict gender roles which sometimes prevail in sports. For example, a girl may be barred from playing football. For many LGBT students, physical education is a traumatic experience because of the constant put-downs, not getting elected on teams and uncomfortable and threatening situations in communal showers. Research show how a majority of LGBT people later in life avoid team sports or choose to be in gay and lesbian sport teams and competitions because of these experiences. Physical education classes provide an excellent starting point to highlight that people might not behave according to stereotypical gender roles, but should be treated equal in all cases. Here are some suggestions.

Positive role performance
The teacher is an important role model for students. In this role he or she actively shapes sports(wo)manship. The teacher gives the example by demonstrating positive behavior and in both speech and behavior to show that it is important that everyone is respected. Everyone can participate in sports and gets a turn. Show that good

sports(wo)manlike conduct is: good collaboration, team spirit and not being mutually exclusive.

Collaboration
In sports classes, it is important to not only focus on competition but also on cooperation through teamwork. For instance: ask students to prepare the sports hall and clean it afterwards. Promote leadership and teamwork, and take care there is no misuse of power in the team (top-dogs and underdogs). When students work together and do more fun things together in a team spirit, tolerance towards each other increases. In more competitive sporting activities, take care the competition does not degenerate into the exclusion of students who cannot keep up.

Bullying
A negative attitude towards sexual diversity is rooted in sexist ideas and so-called "heteronormativity". Discrimination is not always intentional, but is often indirect and unintended, for instance by calling for "gay" or an exclamation like "You're not a sissy, are you?" When people are (still) not sure about their sexuality, such remarks can be quite traumatic. Don't make or ignore such comments, but respond to them. You can do this, for example, in a surprised way. By asking questions about students make such a remark, the teacher can discuss prejudice and promote pro-social behavior.

Distinction and discrimination in sports
Consider to do a thematic session during the sports class, for example by having a group discussion on typical male and female sports. A discussion topic could be the difference between discrimination and legitimate distinction in sports. Which sports cannot be done by men, women, or by LGBT and because of what legitimate reasons? It is also interesting it debate the existence of private sport clubs for gays and lesbians, and the organization of the Gay Games. Many students may feel these clubs and games are offensive or separatist, but they don't really consider their own excluding role, which is a main reason for such clubs and games in the first place.

Specific panel sessions on LGBT and diversity

GALE estimates there are about 150 LGBT peer education groups in Europe, providing work for about 1.500 to 2.000 volunteers who reach out to an estimated 400.000 teenagers and adults every year. Seen from the European perspective, this is an impressive feat, especially since these interventions are usually not supported by any funding and entirely carried out by volunteers who have to take free days of their work or study to do the sessions. The sessions usually consist of a testimonial, an opportunity for questions and answers and a structured dialogue on values and norms. Some research shows such sessions have an effect on students because the concrete personal narratives tend to break down stereotypical images students may have. Peer educator also report that the discussion they facilitate is often more open and frank than a teacher can offer. This may be an added value of these sessions.
Teachers can benefit from inviting such guest speakers when they are insecure teaching about LGBT issues themselves, but also as an added bonus in addition to their own program. Experience shows that the sessions increase in effect when the teachers prepares and debriefs the sessions with the students and when topics

discussed during the sessions are recalled by the teacher and students on relevant moments afterwards.

It depends on the cultural and religious background of the students to what extent these panel sessions are the right method for attention for sexual diversity. In some (sub) cultures starting a session with open testimonials about gay or lesbian identity may be experienced by some young people (for example by immigrant youth from Islamic countries) to be very shameful (haram). In such cases they will also be too ashamed to engage in the session. Peer educators may need specific training in dealing with such target groups and modified (more indirect) methods may be needed to be effective.

School library, intranet and internet

The number of books and movies on LGBT themes is growing every year. For schools it is recommended to buy and store standard works in the school library. LGBT movies can be used in educational contexts too, for example as a kick off for a discussion or to ask written commentaries.

For LGBT students, it is very important to be able to find specific information for them in the school library. This could be magazines, empowerment books, novels, reference literature and flyers. On the school intranet, there could be a LGBT page with references to useful websites.

Teaching students how to use internet is a good way for them to find additional information, for themselves and school assignments. Make sure the internet and mail filters block porn, but not informational websites and mails on LGBT issues.

For LGBT students and their parents, it is useful to have information on the public school website. They would want to know the school´s position on bullying and whether the curriculum is appropriate for them.

GALE THE GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR LGBT EDUCATION
Toolkit Working with Schools 1.0
Tools for teachers

Peter Dankmeijer

Frequently asked questions & answers by teachers

This tool offers some answers to questions teachers may have about teaching and counseling about LGBT issues. The questions are collected from real situations and tested in face to face contact and trainings with teachers. But, every teacher, school and country is different, so take these answers as suggestions and make up your on mind.

As a global platform of educators, and as good educators, we know that you can only teach adequately if you continue asking questions, reflect on your actions and learn continuously. We welcome comments and improvements. Also, if you have more questions, mail them to info@lgbt-education.info, and we will look into it and maybe list them in a next version of this toolkit.

How to deal with questions by students

Many questions by teachers are about how to respond to difficult, morally challenging or prejudiced questions by students. It is useful to read the tool "Frequently asked questions by students". We develop the answer on these questions by dividing each answer in three parts:

1. A short and clear answer based on facts
2. An elaboration to put the question and the information into context
3. A mirroring question which stimulates the students to reflect on why they ask the question

Questions by students about LGBT issues are often not simple questions for facts. In a lot of cases the questions don't even reflect a curiosity. This is because many students feel LGBT people are weird and their questions represent a feeling surprise, shock, disgust or fear. In many cases, a question is a comment disguised as a question. The comments often are formulated as closed (yes/no) questions, aimed at getting the teacher to agree that their prejudice is warranted. "Sir, is it not true that all homosexuals are promiscuous?"

What to do

The first thing a teacher needs to do is to monitor her or his own feelings about the question and the way it is asked. If you feel confused, afraid, offended or angry, it will influence you feedback. Taking a few seconds time to let the feeling sink in and developing an appropriate response is wise. The intent of the student is his or her intent, and as a teacher you have to relate to it, but not become a victim of it.

The second thing a teacher needs to do is to check whether a question is asked out of earnest curiosity, of whether it is a comment in disguise. Usually, this is clear right away from the tone of the question: comments in disguise are often asked in a derisive or even offensive way. However, it is always safe to check this, because giving feedback to curious students as if they are prejudiced and offensive may create an unsafe atmosphere in class.

The third thing to do is to deal earnestly with the question. The question represents a real need of the students, even when it is harsh, negative or offensive. It deserves to be treated seriously. This does not mean you have to agree with the student, just that you have to show you recognize the need of the student, even when the student does not really know what need he or she is trying to voice.
Answering questions can be done in various ways.
You can offer facts, but more than often the students need to be opened up and made sincerely curious before they are willing to really absorb objective information.
In many cases, especially with "closed" questions, it is wise to first inquire what is meant with the question; what images does the student have, what emotions come to the surface, for what kind of answer do they hope for. By engaging in a discussion about this, and showing a bit of you own emotion as well, you can create a more open and safe atmosphere in which curiosity and offering more information is possible. Or discuss attitudes and prejudice.
At a further stage, bringing in information that counters the student's opinion (by asking opinions of other students, or by offering information and experiences yourself) can further the discussion and create more balanced images and curiosity. Mirroring questions (What do you think yourself?) can also be helpful to stimulate self-reflection.

Ideally, you can close a question and answer session by summarizing facts and opinions, and formulate a conclusion which reflects tolerance and the need to be open, empathic and curious about new issues. This can be a clear cut conclusion (when the class agrees on something), it can state that people may have different opinions on this, but there is a need to be respectful of differing opinions, or you can formulate some unanswered questions that need to be researched. In the last case, preferably ask the students to research these themselves (and as a precaution against biased results, look into it yourself).

Four kinds of questions
Frequently asked questions from students can be divided into the following general categories:

1. Questions about ***orientation and preferences***, such as how same sex attracted feelings arise, if a sexual preference may change, whether it is natural and if one knows for sure he / she is LGBT or same-sex attracted. Research does not clearly tell us why people develop same-sex or opposite-sex attraction. It is probably a mix between genetic influence and environmental influence. However, questions are often asked just about same-sex attraction and not about other-sex attraction. This shows the question may be biased with negative feelings against same-sex attraction. So dealing with question in

this category usually requires discussing why students think other-sex feelings are better or more natural than same-sex feelings.

2. Questions about **being different and/or "provocative"**: what happens after you come out, what is LGBT discrimination and questions about LGBT (sub) cultures. Answers to this require some background information about gay, lesbian and transgender history and (sub) cultures and about the effects of discrimination. The need to come-out is a direct effect of discrimination: if same-sex attraction and a variety of gender behavior were considered a normal variation of emotional life and expressions, everyone would share such feelings and expressions without question. So any discussion about coming-out and visibility of LGBT subcultures should include a discussion of the responsibility of society and of the students themselves in allowing space for such variety. Most aspects of LGBT subcultures also are direct or indirect effects of social exclusion. These need to be explained. A final aspect of "being different is the definition of "normal". Students often say LGBT, their behavior or sub cultural expressions are not normal. Students need to be made aware that "normal" is not a static concept and that what is considered normal has to be updated continuously. It was not even a century ago that women wearing trousers and studying was not considered "normal". The real question should not be if LGBT expressions are normal, but who claims the right to define this, with what reasons and what is righteous.

3. Questions about **dating, sexuality and relationships**. In this category, the "normality" of some behavior is often questioned by students. It is relevant to ask them what they think is "normal". Often this comes down to more or less extreme traditional views on sexuality. In the most extreme cases, students may maintain that a relationship should be between a man and a woman, they should be married, the relationship should be monogamous, romantic and ever-lasting, and the sex should be only in the missionary position with the purpose of procreation. This rigid set of social norms and ideals has been called the "norm of heterosexuality" (Alice Schwartzer, 1965) and later "heteronormativity" (Gayle Rubin, 1993). In discussions, the teacher can have the students describe their ideals and practices, and then compare opinions and practices. This will show there is much more variety in ideals and practices than the social norms prescribe, and it will become clear how most students value the opportunity to make own choices in this area. This right to make own and informed choices is also a human right (although there currently is a vehement discussion in the UN about whether this should be codified as an essential part of the Right to Education). If students agree that the right to make own and informed choices is important, then this it is righteous to apply this to all people, not only people with opposite-sex attraction.

4. Questions about **gender roles**, in public and in gay and lesbian relationships. In Western societies, one of the most basic standard divisions is the division in men and women. From birth on, people are categorized, even to the point that babies with ambiguous gender marks are operated "for their own good" (read: to make them acceptable in a society that does not accept gender ambiguity).

In schools, especially teenagers, who are experimenting with dating and social roles, nonconforming gender behavior is extremely threatening. But also adults may feel (very) uncomfortable with nonconforming gender behavior. Transgender children are the most serious victims of this pressure, but also boys who are not macho "enough" (sissies) or girls who don't want to play the passive and seductive role ("tom boys"). Teenagers are often unclear about this "heteronormative" framework and can be confused about their own behavior and the negative feedback by others. Some adult gay and lesbians have worked through this, and may consider constant and oppressive "heteronormative" behavior so irritating, that they stage parodies of such extreme stereotypical behavior ("camp"). So, nonconforming gender behavior can be both natural and staged as a form of frustration, humor and protest. In the classroom, a discussion about these more or less rigid gender roles can be very clarifying. Usually girls will be more adamant of les rigid gender roles than boys. Girls have more to win from less heteronormative social pressure, they are often more experienced in handling their emotions about such matters and in more emancipated countries they may also have more experience in fighting for their rights. Boys feel much more pressure to be macho and not waver in their opinion or macho behavior. Their status in the group and at home may depend on extreme heteronormative behavior. So for them these discussions are much more difficult and challenging. The teacher should create safe atmosphere in which the advantages of flexible and constructive behavior are discussed. Boys may have difficulty to voice emotions, but they are more apt to discuss the practical advantages of sensitive and respectful behavior (to girls, to each other, to same-sex attracted people, to transgenders). A general conclusion macho boys can usually relate to is that a real man does not let himself get carried away by negative emotions into destructive and a-social behavior.

Dictionary of often used jargon

Bisexual - Attracted to the own and the other sex. Bi means two

Gender dysphoria - A psychiatric classification: discontent with the biological sex they were born with. Describes the attributes related to transsexuality, transgender identity, and transvestism.

Gay (sexual) - term to describe sexual and romantic desire between (fe)males. 'Gay' is Latin for 'equal'. Previously it was 'gay man' (from 'filia', Latin for attraction) to avoid any association with sex.

Intersexual - in humans refers to intermediate or atypical combinations of physical features that usually distinguish male from female. Also known as 'hermaphrodite' but recently, intersex has been used and preferred by many such individuals, encouraging medical professionals to use the term[1].

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[1] Intersex Society of North America | A world free of shame, secrecy, and unwanted genital surgery http://www.isna.org

Lesbian - term to describe a sexual and romantic desire between females. The word *lesbian* is derived from the name of the Greek island of Lesbos.

Transgender - general term for people whose sex / gender identity differs from the sex assigned at birth. It may include transsexuals, intersexuals or people who cannot or will not measure up to traditional sex roles.

Transsexual - someone who finds the sex assigned at birth does not match what he or she feels, and wants to correct through surgery and lifestyle. Transexuality also occurs amongst teenagers. There are male-to-female transsexuals and female-to-male transsexuals.

Transvestite - a man or a woman who likes or feels comfortable of sexy by wearing clothes such as those of the opposite sex.

Dealing with specific questions

In the tool "Frequently asked questions by students", you will, find examples of how you can literally answer questions. In this section, we offer some answers to questions you might have yourself.

Why do people have negative predispositions against LGBT persons?

Young people usually assume that everybody is heterosexual and are often surprised when it turns out that isn't the case. Like many other people, quite a few young people believe behavior that deviates from their own values is shameful and a disgrace. People feel encouraged in disapproving when people *openly* deviate from the accepted standards in their own group. This is a general human mechanism, but higher educated youth and social classes usually have learned to be more "tolerant" of differences (at least on the surface level).

How do prejudices rise and lead to discrimination?

If people feel "different" or are "deviant" on one or more aspects they can experience a certain fear. This emotion (anxiety) can lead to rejection and selective perception of the other. The negative attitude leads to the practical exclusion and stereotyping of a different identity or behavior that is labeled as deviant. This stereotype leads to even more selective perception (vicious circle in motion). Discrimination is therefore a self-reinforcing process.

How can I recognize LGBT students?

Research shows each LGBT student copes with his or her feelings in a different way. Some experience no problems at all, others may suffer from poor school results, dealing with behavioral problems or those who fear rejection, feel isolated or depressed. Supportive teachers will only be recognized by LGBT students in case they can share their feelings with them. To recognize and accommodate a list of specific issues should be based on stereotypes and also problems which are unrelated to sexual preference.

It is also important to note that a large number of young students experience LGBT feelings or fantasies. As they grow older, this percentage decreases. When they are

about 18, between 3 and 15 percent of young people come out to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. Researchers conclude LGBT feelings are a normal aspect of sexual identity development, even for young people who later develop heterosexual preferences. The number of young people and adults that come out depends on the culture, focus on individual personality within cultures and the social pressure not to come out.

Many young people are not amused when they are labeled as "gay", as they are pushed to question their sexual identity. Moreover, the process of sexual orientation can also change over the years. This does not mean that telling students this might just be a phase is the right thing to do. Imagine how you would feel when someone tells you your heterosexuality may just be a phase and can always change.

What does coming-out mean?

Coming-out is short for "coming out of the closet", i.e. hiding. Expressing sexual orientation, known as coming-out, can be an important step for LGBT people in their acceptance process. Teachers should know that for some LGBT people a coming-out is not possible or desirable. In some cultures, but also in the some youth cultures in schools, coming-out can be very unsafe. Coming out should never be imposed but if possible supported in close cooperation with the person involved.

What are the problems LGBT students are dealing with?

Research shows questioning students and students who are already certain about their LGBT feelings, may suffer from social and emotional problems. These are mainly caused by a hostile environment. Most students assess the risks to come-out to the main student body as too high, so they hide completely or come out only to their best friends.

Questioning LGBT students may feel "different" because of their sexual orientation and fear that others will judge them. In particular male students are more afraid of others finding out about their LGBT feelings. In practice this means students remain silent about their LGBT feelings.

Students who have come out, may be at risk of bullying, especially when they don't conform to strict gender roles.

How can teachers offer support to LGBT students?

LGBT students should take the first step to share their feelings. Supporting LGBT students can only be efficient when a safe environment is created and students can talk openly about their LGBT feelings. The school should organize some activities to make visible that specific support for LGBT students or students with questions is available. For example by showing poster or leaflets. Such signals at school ensure (LGBT) students are taken seriously.

A counselor can help a student to share feelings by saying something about own experiences or about experiences of acquaintances. "I once had a gay neighbor, who told me that..."

How to organize a high quality education session about LGBT

Handling LGBT subjects during sexuality education is preferable because it conveys a broader context for specific attention for LGBT issues. The subject matter should be integrated naturally in the curriculum and documentation on this subject can be found

on the internet or intranet. Usually teachers who want to do something against LGBT negativity, start off preparing lessons on LGBT or one session with experts or peer educators. The idea behind such specific information is: unknown makes unloved. More knowledge leads to more acceptance. This is essential because research shows as soon as students get informed they are likely to adjust stereotypical judgments and show more respect. Students with a strong negative attitude towards LGBT people are not very interested in LGBT issues, but their interest has to be focused on broader themes such as diversity and discrimination; that affects them personally. For example, immigrant students recognize the problem by also discussing racism and young females understand marginalization if differences between male and females get discussed. You can read more in the tool "Teaching about LGBT issues".

How to deal with negative emotions?

Students respond immediately when you raise a taboo subject like LGBT. Getting into the most sensitive issues right away will lead to an atmosphere charged with excitement. Because students can express their emotions this can have a positive effect on the education process, but the teacher needs to be able to handle such a high level of emotion. In such charged environments, it is important to question students: where do these emotions come from, what thoughts and ideas are behind certain emotions, and how realistic are these? The teacher should approach students with respect, regardless of their statements. However it is not recommended to accept just any expression; the aim is to encourage students to gain a clearer vision on the backgrounds of their thoughts, ideas and values. The teacher could start this process by asking clarifying or neutral questions which clarify the expression or position of a student. These are open questions as: "What do you mean by ...?" Or "Can you explain why you say this?"

Another method is using the *mirror technique*. Judgments about taboo subjects often have an underlying message or are based on underlying (pre)judgments. By "translating" a student remarks into other words, the teacher can determine what the student really means and if the student actually agrees with his or her own remarks. Another level of *mirroring* is to reflect certain personal opinions to the opinions of the rest of the class. The teacher asks the class if they share the same opinion or have different views. Especially with controversial issues, it is extremely important for the teacher to remain objective, and not always enter into the discussion.

Teachers who feel less competent to deal with highly charged classroom environments, may choose to start the discussion with exercises that increase the group safety, and with introducing the class with a more general and less taboo subjects like (heterosexual) dating or discrimination on different grounds. Such starting points offer the opportunity to agree on certain basic issues like respects and equal rights with the groups and lay a safer groundwork for more intense discussions. It also helps to structure the classroom discussions by using strongly teacher-lead games and exercises.

How to deal with religious views on LGBT issues?

The best way to discuss religion-based convictions about LGBT issues is to put them in the wider context of human rights. It is also possible to discuss religious texts and interpretations, but we recommend that strategy only for teachers who are well-versed kin religious texts and a variety of interpretations, and who are religious

themselves. See also the tool "Discussing homosexuality with religious young people".

What if students get verbally aggressive?

If a student shows offensive behavior by calling names such as "faggot" ore saying "that's so gay", give immediate feedback. This usually has a strong surprise effect. Walk quietly and directly to the student, point to the student with the index finger and call him or her by name. One teacher told us: "Say firm (not angry): *This is not acceptable! Can I talk to you in private for a second?* Isolate the student from the group and in a private, quiet setting confront the student with his or her behavior. Describe what kind of behavior you observed and emphasize that such behavior is not acceptable at this school, nor in any other environment. It is important to emphasize you reject such behavior. However ask why the student showed such an angry attitude. The student needs to explain what bothers him or her. Show understanding for his or her feelings and for de-escalating matters avoids to immediately oppose it."

GALE THE GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR LGBT EDUCATION
Toolkit Working with Schools 1.0
Tools for teachers

Daisy Jaspers & Peter Dankmeijer

Simple classroom exercises

How to use exercises

This tool offers classroom exercises teachers can do to make discussions about LGBT issues more interactive. In this tool, we offer simple exercises which do not require a lot of experience. In other tools, we will offer more suggestions on how to use more complicated exercises, like role-play and student participation methods.

Why would you use exercises? Is it not enough to transmit knowledge to students, and discuss the facts with them for greater understanding? No, it is not enough. Sexual issues and especially sexual diversity are taboo subjects and not always easy to discuss. There may be considerable resistance among students to listen to factual information and it may be a challenge to engage in a balanced discussion. Interactive exercises are tools to deal with negative emotions. They can create a safety in the classroom with a proper atmosphere to discuss diversity and sexuality. They can also help the teacher to open up the students for more information and help them to deal with ambiguous feelings and attitudes.

Students with strong negative attitudes towards LGBT people may not be very interested in LGBT issues, because their resistance closes them off from any but negative information. Still, such students may be reached by focusing on issues they are interested in: for example broader themes like diversity, discrimination and relationships; especially when you deal with them in a way that affects them personally.

When do you do these exercises? It is important to choose a proper context. Appropriate contexts are for example sexuality education or civic education. Exercises you choose, should of course be related to you general curriculum. So exercises that specifically deal with sex and relationships will be more appropriate for sexual education, while civic education would call for exercises about discrimination and social in- en exclusion.

The word association game

Overview
Students are invited to list words that pop into mind when given a key word. They should not censor their thoughts. This brainstorm technique is intended to enable students to learn more about thoughts and feelings, in an atmosphere of non-judgmental curiosity and acceptance. This will lead to new personal insights and meanings. The exercise is best used in groups that a fluent in their language and can participate in an unstructured discussion.
Estimated time: 15-45 minutes.

Objective
Assessing the knowledge of LGBT issues and attitudes towards LGBT people by giving everyone an opportunity to share something briefly.

Procedure
1. Start the game with the question: ´What pops up in your mind when I say the words: lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. Write the words on blackboard or on a flipchart.
2. Let the students associate freely for about 10 minutes, until the stream of associations slows down. Write down every association, also the negative. Don't make comments in this phase. In this way you show you value the effort of your students. When the associations stop, announce the end of this phase by thanking the participants to be so open and sharing.
3. Look with you students to the words written down. Classify the ideas in terms of: relationships, appearance, sex, etcetera. Ask the students why they mentioned these words. What is behind them? What images and information? A lot of words will represent negative images, prejudices and misinformation. Without judging, try to find out where students get these images from. You can also ask students to correct obvious misinformation, or write down questions about the associations. This way you create an agenda for the rest of the education session.
4. If you want, you can extend the exercise by going deeper into the words and offer correct information yourself. You can ask the students to discuss what they think each of the words: Do you agree? For what reason you disagree? Why do people think the way that they think about LGBT? How do you create your opinion? Complete the game and explain the students what general conclusions can be drawn from the discussions so far. Also, you can make agreements with the class on which words to use in further discussions.

Materials / resources needed
Blackboard or flipchart, markers

Variation
In classes where students are very loud and not used to take responsibility for a respectful structured discussion, you can ask them to write down associations on small notes and reproduce them on the blackboard, or you can give one student a crayon to write down an association and then let him-her give the crayon to another student until all students had their turn.

The fact & opinion mind map

Overview

In this exercise student learn to distinguish between facts and opinions. This is done by creating word maps.
Estimated time: 30 minutes

Objective

This exercise enables students to gain new insights into the diversity of lifestyles. Students learn to identify their personal opinions and to differentiate between facts and opinions, between emotions and rationality.

Procedure

1. Explain that people often have predetermined ideas about many things, and they may not be aware that some "facts" are really opinions, and whether opinions are based on facts or on impressions. Tell students you are going to create a word map which will help to distinguish between facts and opinions. Draw a vertical line on the blackboard and write the words "facts" on the left and "opinions" on the right. Above the line, write: "gay" (or lesbian, or bisexual, or transgender, or all of them). Leave space at the bottom.

2. Ask the first word or phrase that comes to mind when thinking of LGBT issues. Should it be written left or right? Why? When it is a fact, where did you get the information? How do you know this information is true or reliable? Offer counter information if necessary. When people agree, write down the word or phrase. When undecided, write the word or phrase at the bottom of the blackboard; this is to be researched.

3. Come up with other keywords or phrases that are closely related to the topic and use the relationship arrows to draw connections.

4. By the end of this lesson, students will be able to explain the difference between facts and opinion. Ask your students which keywords or phrases relate to their emotions and opinions and which relate to the facts. If needed, you can circle facts and opinions that are highly or lowly emotional charged with red or blue. Are facts always facts? (or are facts always true?) Can people disagree on facts? Why can they?

Materials / resources needed

Blackboard or flipchart, markers

Completing sentences

Overview

Students complete unfinished sentences on a sheet. The different completed sentences are compared and discussed. This exercise helps students to explore how they arrive at a conclusion. This is a quite 'traditional' school exercise, can be used when teachers or students do not have much experience with more interactive work. Estimated time: 15 minutes

Objective

This exercise allows teachers and students to get a deeper understanding of how they and other groups feel about LGBT issues.

Procedure

1. Show the worksheet and ask your students to complete some of the sentences. They can choose which one to finish, so if they don't feel comfortable doing one, they can choose another. Reassure this is not a test, but just a way to get an overview of opinions about LGBT issues.
2. Start with the first question and ask who completed it. Ask also other students who did this one and conclude whether everyone agrees or whether there is a variety of opinions or definitions. Don't press you own point of view (although you can voice it).
3. Discuss a few other questions that where answered by several students. If there are only sentences completed by one student each, ask how others would complete them. Discuss the given answers shortly and summarize. Emphasize that every person has a right to have his or her own opinion.
4. Finalize the exercise by concluding that people have different opinions about LGBT issues and that it is interesting to share these views.

Materials / resources needed

Worksheets

Worksheet: Complete the sentence

Please complete one or more the following sentences:

- Give a brief definition of LGBT. LGBT is...

- When a man wears make up, I think...

- I can (not) recognize LGBT people because...

- Someone who is married to a LGBT person is ...

- If a 12 year old boy/girl says he/she is lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender, I think..

- HIV is/is not a disease caused by LGBT, because ...

- When I think of two women making love, I feel....

- If someone thinks I am a LGBT person, I feel ...

- LGBT people parade every year for their rights, because ...

- Lesbian and bisexual women suffer double discrimination because ...

- Children who are raised by two persons of the same sex will be...

- When I think of two men making love, I feel ...

- If someone says being gay is fashionable, I say ...

- If I found out my teacher is a lesbian, gay, bisexual or transsexual then I ...

- When I hear "that's so gay" I think this is...

- I think same sex feelings are innate/caused by something else, because...

- What I would like to know about LGBT, is...

Newsflash

Overview

In this lesson, students will take a critical look at press photos and in particular captions and headers that appear below and above the image respectively.
Estimated time: 45 minutes

Objective

To understand how images and their viewers make meaning and to determine what role images play in our perception of daily live. Develop critical and creative thinking skills and teach students to see the powerful potential for media images influence on their personal imaging.

Procedure

1. Prepare yourself for this exercise by finding six LGBT related images (from newspapers or magazines) and paste them onto a sheet of paper. Hang the sheet on the classroom wall.
2. Give each student receive two pieces of paper (post-its): one red and one green. Explain that every student has to create a red or green caption or heading for every image: red for negative and green for positive comments.
3. All students puts their comments next to the images (negative comments on one side, positive comments on the other).
4. Ask students to compare the comments. Discuss with them each image and the comments. To get an interpretation of the photos give the students some time to look at the photos and employ multiple interpretations. Explain that interpretations can play an important role in image processing. Encourage students to share their findings and ask them (for example):
   - How many different interpretations were there for each image?
   - Did different students see different things in the same pictures?
   - Reading a newspaper or magazine, what attracts your attention: picture or caption?
   - Do pictures always tell the truth?
   - How do editors use pictures to deliver information, stir emotions or create sympathy?
   - How are you influenced by these images, and by media in general?

Materials / resources needed

Large sheets of paper
Six LGBT related images
Strips of paper/post-its (red and green)

Fatima needs advice

Overview

In this exercise, students are asked to give advice to Fatima, who questions her same sex feelings and wonders about her loyalty to peer and family. The different advices given reflect the personal opinions op students. Discussion can focus on exploring these opinions and on promoting empathy for LGBT questioning students.
Estimated time: 45 minutes

Objective

Students learn to explore their own attitudes towards sexual orientation, especially when they would be confronted personally with questioning peers. They start to recognize how prejudices can hurt others and be counterproductive to someone health and well being. Their empathy with the situation of others is raised.

Procedure/method

1. Tell the students about the Fatima-case:

Fatima (15) is having a difficult time. She doesn't enjoy hanging out with boys like her friends. She prefers the company of her female friends much more.
She red in a magazine there are women out there who feel attracted to the same sex, she wonders if is this also case with her. She is confused because she likes boys but doesn't feel like going out with them yet and certainly doesn't want to sleep with them. She would like to hear what peers think of her situation.

2. Read the case and ask students to write a good advice letter to Fatima. As the letter is personal, it should contain the following aspects: personal view, experience and an advice.
3. While the students write their letter, walk around and assist if necessary.
4. After fifteen minutes ask who would like to read his or her good advice letter to Fatima (or instead of reading let students talk about their advice to Fatima).
5. While the students talk, write keywords on the blackboard.
6. Use the comments written on the board for discussion and ask students:

    *   Which of the given advices are most useful according to you? And why?
    *   Which ones do not seem very appropriate or effective?
    *   How did you decide on your advice?
    *   How do you think would Fatima feel about this advice?
    *   If you someone else would give you such advice, would you be satisfied?
    *   How would you feel if someone would give you this kind of advice?
    *   If Fatima in real life would be your friend, you would probably not write her a letter of advice. How would you cope?

Materials / resources needed

Blackboard
Paper to write letters on

Write a rap song

Overview
Students write rap songs about respect and LGBT issues. Scenes and feelings drawn from students' everyday world, lyrics of contemporary rap music are a valuable source of learning. By doing this in a positive way, negative images from youth cultures can be corrected and balanced. Writing a rap song is writing about personal feelings and expressing.
Estimated time: 30 minutes

Objective
Students express what LGBT discrimination or unequal treatment based on sexual orientation or gender identity means.

Procedure/method
1. Let students, either single, in pairs or in groups, write a rap song about LGBT and unequal treatment, or about falling in love with someone of the same sex.
2. Let students share their rap lyrics with their classmates by performing or reading the songs.
3. If necessary, discuss the songs with questions like:
   - Why have you chosen these lyrics?
   - Was it hard to write the lyrics?
   - Were you able to picture something regarding the subject?
   - Do have any experience of your own regarding discrimination and were you able to use that experience in your lyrics?

Materials / resources needed
Paper sheets to write songs on

Variations
This exercise works especially well with students who don't like formal discussions. The facilitator can consider not getting into a discussion to reflect on the choices made to develop the rap, but create a more informal learning process by just doing it.
It may be that students feel uncomfortable when they think LGBT issues are not something to be promoted. In such cases it is interesting to experiment with existing rap songs and change the words, and have a good laugh about it. Humor works well.
It is also possible to rap about respect and love in general and attempt to make the text sex neutral, swap or change the often stereotypical gender roles and experiment in other playful ways with love and respect.
It could be interesting to video the raps and maybe publish them on the school website or on YouTube (if the students give permission of course). This can be a powerful statement in the school and community.

I am, I am not

Overview
Students are asked to take sides on a range of statements about aspects of their identity. They experience the discomfort of being "the only one", the risk of being stigmatized and the need to stay in the closet to maintain a status in the peer group. This is a short and powerful game to start a course or training on diversity or on LGBT issues.
Estimated time: 10-15 minutes

Objective
This exercise enables students to experience what it means to belong to a minority at various levels.

Procedure/method
1. Introduce the game:

   - In a minute, I will give you a range of statements; you have to choose if this statement is true of you by moving to the left of the room (I am) or to the right of the room (I am not)
   - Don't talk to each other during this game, we will discuss afterwards
   - It is not possible to refuse to take a side or to stand in the middle, you have to choose a position
   - If you feel uncomfortable, you are allowed to lie in this game
   - After answering the question, take a few seconds to see who's on your side and who is on the other side
   - Remember the feelings you experience with each question

2. Read out the questions and let students choose their position. The teacher also participates the game by choosing sides. Because nobody is forced to give honest answers, the last question is: I have at least once lied during this game.? The teacher chooses the "I am" with this question. This encourages students to take this position also.
3. Discuss what students noticed and felt during the exercise by asking questions like:

   - What did you notice during the game?
   - Were you surprised by something?
   - What feelings did you experience during this game?
   - What kind of questions did you find difficult to answer, and why?
   - Why are people not always honest when answering questions?

4. Close the exercise by concluding it is not always easy to be the only one in a group, and that people may sometimes feel they have to "cover" or be "in the closet" to avoid being singled out or stigmatized.

Materials / resources needed
Worksheet with questions for facilitator

Worksheet: Questions I am, I am not

1. My journey to school takes less than 30 minutes.

2. I helped my mother at least one last week.

3. I love Brussels sprouts.

4. I love to eat at MacDonald's.

5. I have a job to get some income.

6. I have a disability.

7. I am a real man.

8. I am a real woman.

9. I have visited a gay or lesbian bar.

10. I have travelled without paying fare at least once.

11. I have kissed a man or a boy.

12. I have kissed a woman or a girl.

13. I think sexuality is an essential part of my identity.

14. I've had some erotic fantasies about someone of the other sex.

15. I've had some erotic fantasies about someone of the same sex.

16. I would feel OK when I would be gay or lesbian.

17. I think some statements in this exercise are quite difficult to answer.

18. I lied at least one during this exercise.

Revelations

Overview

Act out a role play to activate the students' imaginations and allows them to assume the role of a (LGBT) person and to determine his or her actions.
Estimated time: 5 to 10 minutes per scene. If possible, play three to five scenes.

Objective

Students experience what it feels like when someone reveals something personal to them.

Procedure/method

1. Explain the aim of this role-playing exercise. This is a role play to learn about how you can react when a friend tells you something personal and unexpected. In this play, you don't have to necessarily "be yourself", but you can play and experiment with ways to do things. It is not a staged theater, so you don't have to be a "good" actor.

   Introduce the students to this fictional scenario:

   Two students share a tent at camp week. Just before they go to sleep, one of the students reveals something personal.

   I have 5 cards with a personal revelation on each of them. We are going to play each scene and see how you can react.

2. Ask one pair of students to play. Give one of them the first card. The cards read:

   - My grandmother (or) friend has just passed away.
   - I'm in love with someone with a different religion than mine.
   - It appears I have a serious illness.
   - I just got a promotion at work.
   - I think I am lesbian (or) gay (or) bisexual (or) transgender.

3. Set the scene. Ask one couple to play the scene in the tent. The student with the set of cards surprises his friend with a message. Let the students play for about 5 minutes.

4. Evaluate each scene shortly afterwards, first with the players and then with the observing students. Ask for example the following questions:

   - How did it feel when you were confronted with this revelation?
   - Was it easy to react?
   - Would you reveal something like this to a friend in reality?
   - What kind of revelation do you consider (un) acceptable?
   - How "different" are your friends allowed to be?

Materials / resources needed

Five cards with personalized revealing messages.

GALE THE GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR LGBT EDUCATION
Toolkit Working with Schools 1.0
Tools for teachers

Peter Dankmeijer

Discussing homosexuality
with religious students

Introduction

Many religions fundamentally reject homosexuality. Especially believers trying to follow Bible and Qur'an texts closely and to the letter will condemn homosexuality on the basis of some scriptures. For atheists and members of public institutions it can be difficult to cope with such condemnation.

Substantially, there are four ways to confront the religious condemnation of homosexuality. Two of these concern the actual textual content of a condemnation, the other two deal with social consequences.
At the end of this article I will briefly comment on a discussion with religious "fundamentalists".

A Dealing with the actual substance of condemnation:
1. Discussion of the interpretation of Holy Scriptures
2. Discussion of the personal link with god

For atheists and representatives of public institutions it is best not to discuss the condemnation of homosexuality on the basis of textual substance, but targeting the consequences of discrimination.

B Dealing with religious condemnation in terms of social consequences:
3. Discussion of diversity
4. Discussion of social values and respect

Discussion of the interpretation of Holy Scriptures

The first way is to discuss the substance of religious appraisal while demonstrate at the same time that texts can be interpreted differently and without harsh condemnations. Concerning the Bible, this was done by Bible researchers and gay activists during the Seventies. The argument deals the tale of Sodom, on which condemnation is usually based, could relate more to a violation of hospitality or to rape than homosexuality. It also points out that homosexuality as a concept did not yet exist in antiquity. Sometimes the fact is mentioned that St Paul's admonitions, for some a basis for condemnation, are nowadays largely ignored by a major part of Christians since they have become outdated. Why forbid homosexuality, but not the consumption of pork?

The Qur'an has recently been the object of similar scrutiny; see for example Omar Nahas, "Homosexuality and Islam". Discussing Qur'an texts concerning homosexual behaviour is more controversial than a critique of the Bible, as an important part of Muslims will takes Shuras verbatim and as Qur'anic regulations will immediately influence daily conventions.
In addition, the legal system of many Islamic countries has been based on the Qur'an.

There are several disadvantages to a discussion of religious condemnation by means of religious scriptures. It is most important that a discussion leader is able to identify with an antagonist's perspective and able to introduce counterarguments, which may not be conducive to a smooth dialogue. Secondly, in order to manage this discussion one must be extremely well-informed about religious arguments, texts and feelings. Thirdly, the discussion group must be prepared to engage in this sort of discussion. Fundamentalists who tend to interpret scriptures to the letter will often refuse to do so.

Discussion of the personal link with god

A second way of dealing with the substance of religious condemnation of homosexuality, is to involve an adherent's personal relationship with god. This approach avoids any confrontational discussion. Arguments will be brought forward, such as: "God made everything and he is infallible. There are also homosexuals and consequently they are part of god's intentions."

The Bible shows a strong difference in tone between several chapters. The more reconciliatory tone of the Sermon of the Mount is sometimes used to underline that everyone deserves a place in the sun. Some see similarities within the far stricter Qur'an. Cf. the passage concerning paradise, where both fair virgins as well as young men can be enjoyed.

This type of discussion is easier to manage than the first one, although there are restrictions. Here too, a discussion leader must be well acquainted with religious movements and feelings. A discussion of one's personal link with god will only be convincing as long as discussants are able to share firsthand experience and are religious believers themselves. Fundamentalists will often refuse to discuss an individual experience of god as soon as there is no direct connection with Holy Scriptures.

Discussion of diversity

A successful form of discussion leading to broader acceptance is to discuss diversity and multiculturalism. In present society we encounter believers and atheists, various different beliefs, cultures and several different generations. All these groups have extremely diverging ideas concerning social conventions, relations, sexuality and homosexuality. How can we deal with diversity without condemning each other? A thorough discussion usually produces a number of basic rules.

Examples of such rules are: to live and let live, to respect each other's individual sphere, to oppose teasing and bullying, to grant equal rights and honour each other.

Such basic rules even apply if one does is not personally inclined to accept: it is the difference between acceptance and tolerance. In a democratic society tolerance is a basic presumption. Most religions also identify tolerance as a basic value.

A discussion concerning multiculturalism is always possible provided a discussion leader is able to adapt the level of this discussion to his audience. In a college environment abstract ideas as mentioned above will be used freely. In lower professional education discussions will be more direct and simple, as in "homosexuality is common".

Lowly trained and educated youngsters, particularly from an Islamic background, may try to invoke religion as a pretext to be intolerant. Within the framework of multiculturalism it is useful - without mentioning texts – to discuss how religion refers to diversity and tolerance and what they think about tolerance with respect to other ethnic or religious groups. At one time the enslavement of black people was equally based on the bible.

Discussion of social values and respect

For some groups tolerance is a concept too difficult to grasp within the context of diversity, particularly for youngsters with very rigid ideas. Such youngsters often live in a dangerous environment. Young people in a school or neighbourhood without mutual respect and positive social values will sometimes only accept the predominance of the strongest and be opposed to everything else. In such cases it is wise to concentrate on the basic condition for tolerance: social values in general. By a combination of group discussions and the imposition of rules to be upheld in a friendly but strict manner, teachers can improve social skills.

Although this seems obvious, it is recommendable to explicitly mention the fact that general respect also relates to homosexuals. To many of these youngsters it is by no means obvious that homosexuals deserve respect as well. Research amongst gay bashing teens showed that arrested youths were astonished the police disapproved of maltreating homosexuals. The lesson to learn is that it is extremely important that adults and especially moral authorities, like religious dignitaries, police officers and teachers, officially and openly disapprove of antisocial behaviour against homosexuals. It can be useful to mention during group discussions that no religion in the Netherlands condones violence against or intimidation of homosexuals. This impression may have been caused by the NOVA TV-programme some years ago in an interview with imam El Moumni, but this interview was flawed as the fragments in which he condemned anti-homosexual violence were cut out by the programme makers before retransmission.

A note on "fundamentalism"

In the above text I gave special attention to didactic tools for teachers or group leaders in coping with the religious condemnation of homosexuality by young people. I want to conclude with a few general observations. From time to time and in a rather simplistic manner I have mentioned "fundamentalists" as people who take Holy Scriptures by the letter and who are not open for discussion. I would like to nuance this observation.

First of all it is important to realize that the idea many people in the Netherlands have concerning homosexuality is still rather limited and blurred. This applies not only to Muslims or orthodox Christians, but also to the population in general. For this reason it is crucial to determine existing ideas about homosexuality and their background. Wherever necessary, prejudiced ideas should be corrected. In case such ideas are based on media footage of extravagant rallies, an explanation concerning the diversity of gay lifestyles is important. When dealing with young people or adults from various ethnic communities they may not be familiar with the word homosexuality in their mother tongue. Some cultures have words for homosexual behaviour, but such expressions are frequently negative and denigrating, sometimes synonymous with paedophilia or rape. It goes without saying that such misconceptions must be straightened out.

Secondly it is important for group leaders to respect different opinions about homosexuality during discussions, even if these seem over-simplified, condemning, intolerant or harsh. It is important to preserve interest in the mindset of young people.

An unforgiving and intolerant attitude may be the result of various factors. Sometimes youngsters have not been adequately informed about their own religion and they may just copy the concepts of their parents, imam, vicar or reverent. Many people find security in what parents or religious dignitaries say. Teens experience a turbulent period in their life, unhinging their feelings of security. As a result they need clear guidance concerning what is good and bad even more than adults. A sharp condemnation of unacceptable behaviour can be helpful.

To shut out or not fully accept too much diversity is a natural mechanism knows to most of us. Tolerance works only up to a point. Some adults and youngsters will reach their limits sooner than others. Which strategy you choose to follow discussing homosexuality with teenagers or adults, it remains crucial to be open to their ideas and concepts, to examine where there is uncertainty and to engage in a respectful discussion.

GALE THE GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR LGBT EDUCATION
Toolkit Working with Schools 1.0
Tools for students

Peter Dankmeijer

Frequently asked questions & answers by students

You don't hear much about lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) people. Maybe you hear about them sometimes in the media, but often this kind of information is distorted. What is the truth? Here you find some questions you might have and answers. If you have more questions, mail them to info@lgbt-education.info, and we will look into it and maybe list them in a next version of this toolkit.

Informational questions or prejudiced questions
Before we go into the questions themselves, first a note about how questions are asked. Do you ask the question because you are curious and want real information? Or do you think LGBT people are weird and do you ask questions because you are surprised, shocked, disgusted or fearful? Is your question serious or are you looking for ways to prove you view of the world is right? When you are not really curious for the answer, you question is prejudiced and not a real question but a comment in disguise.

Four areas of questions
Frequently asked questions from students can be divided into the following general categories:

5. Questions about *preferences*, such as where do same sex attraction come from.
6. Questions about *being different:* what happens after you come out, what is LGBT discrimination and questions about LGBT (sub) cultures.
7. Questions about dating, sexuality and *relationships*.
8. Questions about *male and female roles* and people who are called sissies, tom boys or trannies (sorry for the derogative words..)

Questions about preferences

Why do some people experience same-gender attraction?
For the same reason heterosexual people experience opposite-gender attraction.
It is something you notice in yourself and there is no specific reason, it is just a natural thing. In this, heterosexual and homosexual attraction is not different.
Ask yourself this: would you ask this question also about other-sex attraction? Why (not)?

How do you become lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender?

You don't become one. You have same-sex attracted feeling or not. You feel comfortable in a female or male body or not. How you call yourself depends on your own choices and how your environment reacts.

But if you earnestly want to know about the research in this area, we can summarize it like this. There is research that shows same-sex attraction is partly genetic (that you are born with this inclination). Other research show that the way people show these feelings differs per country, culture and times. There is also research that show that it is possible to suppress same-sex feelings for a while, but impossible to "cure" (it is not an illness, you see).

Anyway, you might as well ask how to you become straight. So the question is a bit strange. Some people ask this question because they would like to know if LGBT people can be "cured" or if same-sex attraction can be changed.

We have some questions for you to consider. Why did you ask this question? Are you experiencing feeling that you cannot fit into expectations of others? Are you afraid you may be gay, lesbian or that this body of yours is the wrong sex for you? Or do you really think LGBT people are weird and maybe there is a way to change?

Can you become gay or lesbian by seduction or rape?

No. People do not choose to have same-sex feelings. You have them or not.

Most gay and lesbian people have tried to fall in love or have sex with people of the opposite sex before they conclude their same-sex feelings are more dominant. Some men say lesbians can be converted to being heterosexual by having sex with men. There are many reports of such "macho" men who rape lesbians with this reason. Of course this never works. Rape is a horrible crime and people who say they are doing this for the well-being of other are extremely perverted.

Are you thinking of seducing someone, or even considering rape? Or are you curious and would like to try to have same-sex, but are afraid one encounter may "turn" you? Maybe you should discuss this with someone you trust. If you think rape will turn somebody heterosexual or it will increase your status as a macho man, you are completely wrong.

Can you change a sexual preference?

Sexual preferences can change slightly over time. Sometimes you feel in love, and other times not. You may feel like having sex and at other times you don't. These may be by choice, or you just feel like it. But actively changing them medically or through therapy is impossible.

It is the same with same-sex feelings: they are a lot of variations in what you feel, what you do and how you present yourself. In societies where homosexuality is considered bad, most people will start out to try to be straight. But often, later they will recognize their real feelings. Sometimes people experience both same-sex and opposite sex feelings. They may ignore one or both sides of this, or choose to live according to one of them, or to both. They may keep this hidden or come out as "bisexual". Also men who call themselves gay and women who call themselves lesbian women may recognize some of their feelings are bisexual, or heterosexual.

Why should anyone want to change their sexual preference? Why do you think heterosexual or homosexual preference is wrong? Is (expected) discrimination enough reason to change who you are?

Is there a cure for being LGBT?
First of all, let's be clear about one thing: being same-sex attracted is not a disease. Also, feeling that your gender is different from your body is not a disease. It is like an ugly nose you don't like and that you can change if you feel better with another nose. Doctors used to think homosexuality was a disease, but over time it became clear it is a normal variation of nature. Homosexuality was taken of the list of psychological diseases in by the American Psychiatric Association in 1973 and on 17 May 1990 by the WHO. Still, some very old fashioned medical practitioners and churches keep on trying to "cure" same-sex attracted people. Research into such "therapies" shows that if the person really wants to get rid of these feelings, it is possible to suppress same-sex feelings for a while, but impossible to "cure" them.
Why are you looking for a cure?

Are same-sex feelings natural?
Yes. Sex between people of the same gender has been recorded in almost every human society and at every stage in history. Also a great number of straight people experience some same-sex attracted feelings. Straight people can also have the occasional "same-sex fantasy" (and gay and lesbian can have straight fantasies), although most of them deny having such fantasies.
A popular prejudice is that sex is only good and proper in order to make babies. This prejudice is fed by some religious organizations that would like that people have only sex for procreation. All other forms of sex, including same-sex, were condemned as morally wrong. But most people enjoy sex because it is a nice thing to do. There seems to nothing wrong with having sex for fun, as long when you do it with respect for each other.
Why should this only be true for heterosexuals?

Questions about being different

Is being gay, lesbian or bisexual fashionable today?
No. Fashion is short-lived and changes from season to season. Fashion is an invention of marketing companies.
How men/women or boys/girls have sex, what their sexual preferences are and if or how they talk about it, is different throughout history. How cultures deal with LGBT people is very different. Dealing with the phenomenon can change, but much slower than fashion. It depends to on marketing or a sudden wave, but on slow cultural movements. There is a trend in the last 100 years that same-sex attracted people became more open. Some start to call themselves lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, intersexual or transgender. There are some people who like to try out things and call themselves bi-curious. This is because people slowly feel to be more free, and not a short-lived fashion.
Have you ever heard of a marketing company which promotes to be homosexual or bisexual next season? Would you enjoy it if there where such a fashion? Why did you think being gay, lesbian or bisexual fashionable is fashionable today?

Religious persons don't have same sex attracted feelings!
Same sex attracted feelings are not related to any religion. So any religious person

can also experience same-sex attraction or nonconforming gender feelings. However, in conservative religions, such emotions may be difficult to deal with, let be express them. Main religions, like Christianity and Islam punish same-sex behavior. These religions started out as ideologies for people living in the desert, and making lots of babies was important to survive in those times. The guidelines in holy books from that time may be out of date, but orthodox believers do not want to make such nuances. Anyway, many religions are not only a set of beliefs but also a community of people who support each other. When you feel same-sex attracted, the risk of losing that support can be very threatening. In other religions, like Hinduism and African tribal religions, same-sex attraction was part of society in old times, but after being colonized by Christian countries, homosexuality was made punishable there also. The weird thing is that many Indians and Africans now say "homosexuality is a Western import" while in reality the laws against homosexuality are Christian imports.

Why do you think religion does not combine with same-sex attraction? How does your religion talk about love? Does it speak about feelings or just about behavior? Are the guidelines of that religion still all functioning (look at all guidelines and whether believers still adhere to all of them, not just the ones about same-sex behavior). To what extent do you think a religion should be flexible according to the times? Are you allowed to make own decisions in this religion, or do you have to comply to what books or religious leaders tell you?

Do animals show same-sex behavior?

Yes. Researchers have documented same-sex sexual behavior throughout the animal kingdom.

Researchers have found examples of sex which is related to power and dominance. For example big male apes often grab smaller male apes to reinforce their power. But there are also examples of what human would consider real love, like the two male flamingo's in the Amsterdam Zoo which steal eggs of other flamingo's each year and insist to raise young flamingo's themselves.

Have you ever seen animals have same-sex?

How do you know (for sure) you are LGBT?

The best way is to sincerely look at you own feelings. What do you dream about? Who is it you look for first when you are at school? Who do you think is "beautiful", and who do you consider "attractive"?

As an adolescent boy or girl you start to have sexual feelings around puberty. Friends and fellow students may pressure you to approach people of the other sex, to date or have sex. They may also push you to be typically macho towards other boys and girls, or to be seductive to boys. It may be difficult to make own choices about this because of all these expectations and pressures.

Some young people are certain about their LGBT feelings from a young age on and may identify with a label like lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. Others are not so sure about their sexual orientation. There are different choices you can make. There is a difference between *feeling a sexual attraction*, *calling* yourself lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender, and *choosing* for a particularly LGBT lifestyle (coming-out, associating with others like you and so on).

What are you feelings? Do you feel comfortable with these feelings, or threatened by these feeling or by peers? If you have friend who may be LGBT, do you support him or

her? How? Can you talk to someone?

Can you see someone is LGBT?

No. LGBT people cannot be identified by certain mannerisms or physical characteristics.

This idea is based on generalizations of LGBT people, which tend to be biased, as feminine gays and masculine lesbians are more widely visible than masculine gays or feminine lesbians. 19th century scientists believed that LGBT people have a kind of "third gender": a gender between male and female. However that idea is outdated. Some transsexuals feel like they belong to a kind third gender, other transsexuals do not.

Is it important for you to recognize LGBT people? Why? How can you deal with your feelings if you cannot recognize them?

How gay and lesbian people make contact with one another?

Usually in the same way as heterosexuals meet other people, who they might feel attracted to: at parties, through friends or relatives, acquaintances, at a sports or cultural club or at evenings out.

At locations where both gay and straight people go it is generally easier for straight people to find a partner. There are more heterosexuals than homosexuals. When a gay or lesbian person flirts with a heterosexual person, the heterosexuals often feel threatened or offended. They still have to learn that being flirted by a gay or lesbian is not a disaster. Because of this risk, many gays and lesbians prefer to date in gay and lesbian bars or on specific websites for them.

In countries where homosexuality is taboo or forbidden, it is difficult to have gay or lesbian bars. The authorities raid them and close them. In such cases, same-sex attracted people are forced to meet each other in hidden friend's networks or have sex on the road or in parks. This is not a preferred choice, but forced by discrimination.

If you would be gay or lesbian, where would you meet new friends or potential partners? Do you express an ideal, a norm; is your choice realistic in your situation?

Why do gays and lesbian have their own bars?

Because there is a risk heterosexuals feel offended when they flirt with them in a "heterosexual" bar.

See also the explanation in the answer above.

Do you have a problem with gay or lesbian bars? Why? Where do you think gays and lesbians could best meet their partners and friends? If this would be at a general bar, how would you behave when a gay or lesbian person flirts with you?

LGBT coming out: how do parents, friends and family respond?

This depends very much on the society, the expectations from friends and acquaintances, and on how empowered the LGBT person feels.

Many young people opt to keep their LGBT feelings as a secret, others confide in friends and family. Coming out can provoke very different pattern of response: some don't have a problem with their children's sexual orientation, others totally disapprove or feel confused and frightened when they learn (or suspect) that their child is not heterosexual. Others have to think about before they respond and might find it difficult to (fully) accept it. Some parents suspected their daughter or son was LGBT

when it was a child. Friends generally respond more positively than parents, and mothers are usually more supportive than fathers.

What would happen if you came out, to your parents, or friends? Which friend would you choose to tell first? What kind of reaction would you hope for?

Career planning and job search: do you tell about your LGBT feelings?

Most LGBT people do not tell about their feelings or identity in a job conversation. It is not that they are not honest, but the risk that they will not get the job is too high. Research shows that if you tell you are LGBT, the risk of not getting the job is great. So LGBT make the right decision not to come out right away.

Most LGBT then explore the situation at work. When they have a steady contract and the situation seems to be safe, then they may come out carefully to selected people. Coming-out is preferable in a certain way. Hiding one's identity could lead to feelings of lowered self-esteem and frustration. But at the same time, when you are open, you may be a target of stigmatization, which in turn makes your life more difficult again. So LGBT people have to balance these needs and risks all the time. It depends on how much the job and company requires being open about yourself and the risk.

What job are you looking for later? How do you think is the social environment in that company or organization? Do the job or career opportunities require having a degree of personal contact. Suppose you were LGB or T, how would you operate in such an environment? Is this righteous? What can you do about this?

Do LGBT people suffer from discrimination?

Yes. Unfortunately LGBT still suffer from discrimination and people's attitude towards LGBT people can be quit negative. The extent and kind of discrimination depends on the society. Discrimination can be expressed in laws, in guidelines, through distorted media images and information, through withholding information (like in school text books) and through negative attitudes and behavior. In schools, name calling and saying "that's so gay" is an example of derogatory attitudes and behavior.

Because LGBT people are able to hide their feelings, discrimination is not the same for all LGBT people. When no-one knows you are LGBT, the discrimination is not direct, but indirect (because you hide to avoid it). So it is not true that you can avoid discrimination by not coming out: not coming-out is a direct effect of the threat of discrimination.

Do you think discrimination of LGBT is acceptable? Why? What can be done against discrimination? What do you do yourself, what can you do? Do you think saying "faggot" or "that's do gay" is discrimination? Why (not)? If you think it is just friendly banter and teasing, how do you feel when you are called like that?

Why do LGBT have their own Olympics?

Because it is fun to sport together in a friendly atmosphere. The Gay Games started because gay and lesbian sport clubs where not allowed to join regular sport tournaments. So they started their own tournament. Gays and lesbians don't want to make the same mistake as regular clubs: the Gay Games are open to everyone, also heterosexuals, as long as they don't discriminate.

Once every four years the Gay Games take place. There are also national and regional gay games. Thousands of people take part. Although the Gay Games are similar to the Olympics, the atmosphere is different. There is much more emphasis on friendship,

solidary, culture and human rights. Gays and lesbians don´t agree always on everything. An example is that a few years ago, some people wanted to limit the Gay Games to sport, while others wanted to include cultural events and a human rights conference. They could not agree and the culture-human right people started their own event: the Outgames. Most gays and lesbian activists and most people regret this division, so everyone hopes they will come together again one day.

Do you think gay and lesbian sport clubs should be able to take part in regular tournaments? Would you have a problem sharing the shower with gay or lesbian sports people? Would you or your sports club consider taking part in the Gay Games or Outgames, when it comes to your city?

Questions about sexuality and relationships

Are gay men promiscuous?

Promiscuous is a negative word: it sounds like you have sex without caring for your partner and like you have sex all the time. This is not the case for gay men. However, gay men seem to have more partners than heterosexual men, at least they admit to this. This is because they often cannot marry, they often don't have children and they have not many good examples of steady relationships. Also, some men do not agree with the ideal that you should have only one partner. Lesbian seem to have less partners, about the same as heterosexual women.

It is important to compare the behavior and opinions of gay men with those of heterosexual men. Many heterosexual men have lots of sex before they are married and have children. A considerable percentage of straight men even have extramarital sex after marriage, for example with prostitutes. The existence of prostitution is a proof that the ideal that heterosexuals are not promiscuous is a myth. But heterosexual men do not admit to this very often.

In some cultures having several wives is acceptable and in many cultures, men have high status when they have a lot of girls friends and sex. The position of women and girls is often without power and with a low status.

Consider the relationships between men and women. Is it better to have sex as a man or as a woman? What makes the difference? Should people (men and women, gays and lesbians) be able to make own choices? How are their choices influenced by expectations and norms?

Why do gay men have sex in public areas?

When there were no gay bars, the only way for men to meet other men was to meet in public areas. Search for contacts in parks or other public places is called "cruising". It is a misunderstanding that only gay men meet in public places. Go a have a look in a park and you will often find heterosexual couples as well. Not everyone has the luxury of a room of your own.

If you still live at home and you meet someone you want to have sex with, where would you go?

How do women have sex with each other?

Many heterosexuals tend to think that having sex is primarily the composed of intercourse (penetration of man's penis in the vagina of a women). However in practice sexual intercourse is usually more: a combination of kissing, cuddling,

stroking, licking, biting, fingering and penetrating. Lesbian women can do all these things also. Penetration can be done with a dildo (a artificial penis or rod).

However, consider this: sex is not only about the technique, but above all an experience. So the reduction of discussion about sex to physical movements is limiting the whole thing.

Make a list of all the sexual techniques that exist. Categorize them: can heterosexuals do them, can gay men do them, and can lesbians do them? What is you conclusion?

Is sex without penetration real sex? Why (not)? Do girls and boys think differently about this?

Is sex only a movement or technique for you? What does it entail more? What is the way you would like to talk about this?

How do men have sexual intercourse with each other?

Many people think about anal sex when they talk about is gay men. Like women (see question above), gay men can have lots of ways to have sex with each other. Penetration is just one of them.

Anal penetration can be physically pleasant, because the penis or dildo can rub against the prostate. This can be so erotic that it leads to an orgasm. Also, people find anal sex very intimate: it brings your very close together, the same way as penis-vaginal intercourse does. This applies both for men and women, for homosexuals and heterosexuals.

It is a misunderstanding that only gay men have anal sex. Large numbers of heterosexuals have anal sex, for fun and also to prevent pregnancy. But take care: anal sex may lead to more risk for sexually transmitted diseases. Using a condom is advisable.

Have you ever thought about anal sex? What are you images off it? Would you consider having it with a girl friend? If you have extremely negative feelings about anal sex (among gay men), why do you think is that? Is anal sex between men more dirty then among heterosexuals?

Questions about gender roles

Who plays the male and the female who plays in gay or lesbian relationships?

That question cannot be answered for all gays and lesbians, because every couple will decide for themselves how to divide household tasks.

Maybe you have a somewhat stereotypical idea about what typical "male" or "female" tasks are. How would you divide task in a heterosexual relationship? Is it mandatory that the women stays home, always cleans, cooks and takes care of children, while the man works out, repairs stuff and puts the garbage out? These divisions are rapidly changing in many countries. In modern societies a traditional task division may create more problems than it solves.

From another point of view, it may be you question is about sexual roles. It links into the prejudice that gay men are effeminate and the image that they [prefer a passive role in sex. Or that lesbian women prefer a butch position. All these images and

expectation link into the general idea that real women should be seductive and passive and real man active and "on top". These images and ideas are not reality. In an equal relationship you can choose what you want to do. It may be you like a traditional position or that you prefer more variety. This is true for both heterosexuals and homosexuals.

How do you think about all this? Would you like to be equal in your relationship? What tasks do you prefer and why? Are you going to discuss this with you partner? Are you going to negotiate that with each other or will one partner force the other into a pattern?

Are gay men effeminate and lesbian women butch?

No, not necessarily. Every person is different.

Again, like in the last question, this may be an idea based on a lack of information. Maybe you have only seen distorted information about this. Or maybe you think real men should be macho and real women should be soft and seductive. This is called a stereotype.

In the last century, scientists thought that gay men and lesbians were a "third sex", that is, a gender in between men and women. These scientists could not imagine how someone could be a real man or real woman and be same-sex attracted at the same time. They looked around and found some men and women that were not like macho men and soft women and thought this proved the existence of a third sex. But they missed all the homosexual men and women who look macho or soft. Later, it became clear that gender, sex roles and sexual orientation is different things and all come in a range of varieties. There are also heterosexual men and women who are not typically macho or seductive. Actually, it seems kind of offensive to push people in such extremely limited gender roles.

Have you ever thought about you own gender role? Do you experience any pressure from your peers to behave in a certain "male" or "female" way? How much space should people have to be different in this? If you feel uncomfortable by nonconforming gender behavior, why is that? How do you act on your feeling? Is this the righteous thing to do?

Marinus Schouten

Editable template for a brochure for parents (of LGBT youth)

Introduction

This tool provides a model text for a leaflet on sexual diversity for parents. We realize that parents from different classes, cultures, religions and other background may have different images and views of sexual diversity. So, providing a single text as an international model for information to all parents may seem insensitive. However, GALE has studied a range of brochures for parents about LGBT issues, and a lot of the information is very similar. Providing a tool based on these good practices seemed a useful and practical thing to do. At the same time, we do admit that the published sources are from "Western" cultural contexts; we took our examples from Europe, North America and Latin America. In these examples, there is a bias towards labeling same sex orientation as gay and lesbian, towards reifying such feelings as a core part of a child's identity and towards strengthening the right to make individual choices. In other cultures where family and wider structures are more close knit, controlling and often necessary for survival, information for parents may need a stronger shift towards mutual care and more suggestions on how to cope with social pressure. Maybe an edited version of this tool, or an additional text (in the next edition of this toolkit), could be a solution for this.

This text covers the most important issues parents have to face when their child experiences his or her coming out. In the context of schools, education for parents is important, because they represent one of the most influential environments of teenagers. They are responsible for the upbringing and behavior of their children. For To be able to secure the wellbeing of teenagers during their school career, parents need to be aware about identity issues and how to deal with being different.

The brochure will be most attractive for parents when it is not a dull text with dry information. Just a few tips:

- start your advices with personal stories, in which parents can recognize themselves
- illustrate personal stories or quotes with facts and figures from your own country context, so that parents can estimate the seriousness of what you want to tell them

In the following text some of the most important cross-cultural themes that could be part of a brochure will be discussed. Most of these themes relate directly to the

immediate concerns and question parents may have. Besides these themes, you may consider addressing themes like children and adoption, living together and marrying or another relationship status, discussing sexual orientation (of son or daughter) in the wider family, discussing an managing how brothers and sisters are going to deal with it, how you as parents can talk about the sexual orientation of your child at your job, and LGBT and religion.

MODEL TEXT

If it is your own child

Most people sometimes come across somebody who is lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) in their environment. Or see LGBT persons on television. Often, media images are not very positive and sometimes extreme. In personal contacts, LGBT people may be much less extreme because you know them better. But in some situation, people may avoid LGBT people, so you information about them may be limited.

New words

LGBT: lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender

Lesbian: a girl or woman who feels erotically attracted mainly to other girls or women

Gay: a boy or man who feels erotically attracted mainly to other boys or men

Bisexual: someone who may feel attracted to people of the same sex or of the other sex

Transgender: somebody who feels that her or his body is not of the right sex, so a boy/man may feel he is more like a girl/women and a girl/women may feel she is more like a man. Some children are born with an ambiguous sex; this is called intersexuality or **intersex** children. Other children look like a biological boy or girl on the outside but feel different. Transgenderism has nothing to do with sexual orientation.

Gender identity: the way someone prefers to present his or her gender, whether male, female or ambiguous

Heterosexual: someone who feels attracted mainly to people of the other sex

Same-sex attracted: some people prefer not to label their feelings with words like lesbian, gay, or bisexual. You can call them same-sex attracted. Some people may prefer to call themselves **queer**, as a signal that they are opposed to any kind of sexual labeling.

Coming-out: telling someone about same-sex feelings or non-biological gender identity

Outing: telling about someone else's same-sex feelings or non-biological gender identity against her or his will

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Most parents acknowledge the existence of LGBT people in general, but often have difficulty to take into account that their own son or daughter might be same sex attracted or might not feel right about his or her gender identity (being considered male or female). Moreover, many parents would feel uncomfortable with the possibility that their son would come home with a boy as his boyfriend, or a girl with a female lover. Parents hope and expect their son or daughter to give them biological grandchildren and may take it for granted that their children will meet someone of the other sex, date, get married and start a (heterosexual) family.

They can express their discomfort in several ways.

- They may be openly against coming-out. In extreme cases, they may cast out their son or daughter.
- They can emotionally suppress it, especially when they have personal negative feelings about non-heterosexual relations.
- They can keep silent about it, especially when they feel themselves ashamed (for the wider family or the neighborhood).
- They may try to overcome their discomfort by reading more about sexual diversity and talk with their child or with trusted others.

The alternative is to accept the feelings of the son or daughter, to be there for then when they need it, and to help them find a way on how to deal with what life offers them: challenges but also happiness.

The process of self acceptance

Before a son or daughter kid tells his parents that he or she feels same-sex attracted or not in the right body, he or she usually already has thought long and hard about these feelings and how to tell about it. The child (or teenager) probably has searched for her or his identity and has been through doubts and uncertainties. She or he was probably poorly informed and had to find out what is real, and what own prejudices and biases she or he had. They had to answer questions like:

- How do I feel? Why do I feel this?
- What words should I give to these feelings?
- Are these feeling acceptable? How can I get rid of feelings that are not acceptable?
- Why am I different? Why can I not be "normal"?
- How can I tell my friends, my parents, my brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, grandparents?
- How will the respond, will they keep on accepting me?
- How will the future be, will I ever get children?

There are different theories on how people deals with same-sex attracted feelings or with an unclear gender identity. It is clear people cannot exist outside their social environment, so that personal development largely depends on the influence of the culture and on the immediate feedback of parents, peers and teachers. One popular theory states that a development towards self-realization has five stages:
1. a vague feeling that you differ from other children
2. first feelings of attraction to someone of the same sex, or an awareness that stereotypical gender roles of boys and girls do not fit for you

3. seeking contact with other LGBT people, labeling feelings, getting empowered to make own choices
4. learning to deal with sexual feelings and gender identity of choice in a variety of situations
5. integrating same-sex attraction or a changed gender in a renewed identity

The moment someone tells his or her parents about its sexual orientation or gender identity depends on the trust between the person and his or her family. This can be at any time during this process. Most teenagers choose between one of their best friends or their mother to be the first to tell. It usually feels safer to start with a best friend, because the risk of losing support at home may be too great. Moreover, in general children don't want to hurt their parents.

So usually a child has thought about a coming-out at home before, however that does not mean he or she comes to the parents feeling secure and confident. Young people almost always feel very sensitive to the acceptance or rejection of their parents when it is about core values and feelings. If parents do not deal sensitively with the openness of their child, it may withdraw itself, and may become entangled in a web of questions, doubts and fears.

Acting out

After the coming-out it can happen that the teenager will be very focused on their new-found identity. At times, it may be quite extreme in highlighting its homosexuality or act out extremely feminine or masculine behavior.

For parents it is important to appreciate this is an aspect of puberty and of personal development. Young people need to find their way by experimenting with gender roles, social interaction and dating. Part of the environment may react in a negative way, which in turn may elicit a counter reaction from the young person. The child needs support to engage in this social experimenting, but also needs to be guided in order to do this in a safe way.

Parents are important

For sons or daughters it is very important to feel accepted and supported, especially when they are young and dependent on parental support. A rejection or lack of acceptance at home will have serious negative consequences for the rest of their lives. A child develops its personality within the context of a family. If this process of development is disturbed by open or implicit rejection, young people find it much more difficult to build self-esteem and confidence, which in turn will hamper their chances for a good position in society. In some cases, rejection can have such a negative impact on a young person that they commit suicide. Worldwide, research show LGBT youth have dramatic higher suicide thoughts and attempts (2 to 5 times higher) than heterosexual teenagers. It is also clear this is not due to an internal lack of health but to negative feedback from peers and parents.

Therefore, the parents' opinion is very important in the process of self-acceptance of LGBT youth. A Belgian study shows that one in four gay men has a bad relationship with his father, and one in five lesbians has a poorer relationship with the mother. This shows that even in a relatively tolerant country like Belgium, some parents never come to accept the sexual orientation of their child fully. We hope this information will

help parents learn to accept their children, in a way that also fits their own process of acceptance. Continuing to nurture parental love is an important source of inspiration.

Recognize your prejudices

There is much incorrect information and prejudice about sexual diversity. Such misinformation stands in the way of social equality for LGBT people, and it is often deeply embedded in our thinking and behavior. For parents it is therefore important to identify their prejudices before they can really have an honest conversation with their child. We mention a few of the most common misconceptions:

Someone chooses to be gay, lesbian, or bisexual

Research shows sexual orientation is not a choice, but genetic. The way people shape a gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender identity may differ in cultures and because of personal choice, but the feelings are not chosen. Did you "choose" do be heterosexual? Consider also why someone would make their life difficult by "choosing" an identity or behavior that is not always appreciated.

Homosexuality is a disease

Some parents want to send their child to a doctor to "cure" homosexuality. First, let's get the facts straight. The WHO states and the international consensus is that homosexual orientation is not a disease. Medical practitioners who are willing to "cure" homosexuals are not conforming to international standards. It is understandable there may be fear with the parents and the child for social rejection, but forcing an unnatural behavior change will just undermine the child's self-esteem and confidence. Forced treatment will also damage the trust between parent and child.

Transgenders are sick

The WHO classifies gender identity disorder as a disease. This means that people who feel very uncomfortable with their biological sex need help. Gender identity disorder can be corrected by gender reassignment surgery which changes the sex of a person towards the preferred sex. So transgenders are not really sick, but in an inadequate body.

There is a lot of discussion about this. First, it often happens that intersex children are given gender reassignment surgery shortly after birth. This happens with the best intentions of parents and medical practitioners, but because this is without the permission of the baby, it may create a lot of problems later in their lives. Second, when children start to feel uncomfortable with their biological sex, it would help if they can be treated with puberty inhibitors. This gives them more time to think and it makes a later gender reassignment surgery easier. But many countries are not willing to diagnose gender identity disorder in children or to offer puberty inhibitors. In some countries, even adults cannot be diagnosed or treated because of prejudices and failing medical systems.

My child can never be happy as an LGBT

Often this misconception has to do with the expectations of parents regarding the future of their children: getting married with children. Parents think that if their child is LGBT, it will not meet this expectation. First this is not true. LGBT people can get and raise children in different ways (donor semen, adoption, co-parenting) and be good parents themselves. It is also important that parents will see that their children

may choose to be happy in different ways, for instance by a different kind of relationship, with or without children. The different sexual orientation or gender identity is not unfortunate, but the reactions of the environment may make you less happy. This cannot be remedied by denying that the child is LGBT but by addressing the environment and by stimulating the empowerment of the child to deal with prejudiced reactions.

We have done something wrong in the way we brought her/him up
Many parents blame themselves that their upbringing is the cause of their child "becoming" LGBT. But neither sexual orientation nor sexual identity itself has anything to do with the way you bring up your child. Siblings of the same family who turn out heterosexual had the same upbringing, did they not? Same-sex attracted feelings and gender identity doubts slowly come to the surface, regardless of the family where the child matures. However, it is true that an upbringing that offers no room to be different forms a potential barrier for the child to be open.

How can sexual diversity be discussed in the family?

1. Create an open relationship with your children. That is: also talk openly about your feelings and theirs. In some cultures this is not common. In these cultures it may have great impact if parents occasionally be genuinely candid. By being aware that secrecy about love and sexuality may be related to traditional taboos which can be break through; you can take the first steps to talk about these issues and feelings with each other in your own language.

2. Check which prejudices about sexual diversity you may have yourself. That is sometimes easier said than done when you're dealing with a lot of pressure on your own (sub) culture. However, respect for others and being different has a long breath. Let your children feel that you give respect to people as they are, for instance by avoiding an atmosphere in which banter about homosexuality amounts to a form of rejection.

3. In some cultures it is an honor if children follow up on the ideals of their (grand) parents. In that case it is important to let them know that they don't stay out of it if they are different in their sexual orientation, even when as a result they will have no children. In other cultures a child not naturally accepts the dreams of his parents. Leave them in this case their own way by giving them space and freedom and combining this with interest and dialogue.

How can you respond as a parent to a child coming-out?

Here are some suggestions on how to respond when your child opens up to you:

1. Take time for yourself to process the information. Your child usually has taken some time before he or she opened up to you. It probably knows that you as parents may need some time to readjust you expectations. The child does not expect any applause, (although he or she would probably appreciate it very much if you compliment him or her for his or her openness), but he or she probably hopes for some understanding, respect and love. Such acceptance will strengthen him or her in the important step he

or she has made in his or her coming-out.

2. Try to find parents in a similar situation and discuss your situation with them. In many countries there are organizations of Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG). You can try to find such an organization in your country by searching www.nelfa.org, the website of the Network of European LGBT Families Associations (NELFA) or http://community.pflag.org (USA). See http://community.pflag.org/page.aspx?pid=752 for PFLAG's list of organizations in other countries. Otherwise, please get in touch with an LGBT organization to ask if they help you to set up such a group.

3. Read something about sexual diversity. The more you read about it, the more you will notice that many prejudices, misunderstanding, questions and uncertainties arise from a lack of information. Be aware that some religious groups (including Christian and Islamic groups) maintain that God or Allah does not approve of homosexuality. Such beliefs are based on a literal interpretation of holy texts, which are often one-sided because more liberal quotes are other religious prohibitions are ignored by such groups. But even when you read more about contending views, being aware of the existing variety of views can help you to establish a balanced relationship with your child, love being prevalent.

4. Try to make contact with people you value and who are LGBT. Their personal stories can help you get more insights than just facts can. They may also be able to offer useful suggestions to support your child.

5. Treat your transgender child, gay son or lesbian daughter like your other children. For example, you can make clear that the boyfriend of your son will be welcome or that your daughter may take her girlfriend home. This is important for your child, because then you show that you give it respect in every way. Even if you do not agree with his or her choices for life, you can still create space for mutual respect.

6. In some cultures, the general opinion of the family and society is extremely important. In some countries, the public admission to be LGB or T is considered damaging for the family honor and may forced correction of behavior. It may even warrant an honor killing. In such situations, peer pressure can be extreme. In other cultures it can be easier to make personal choices that differ from generally held social norms. However, in any culture, the key to continuing love between parents and their children is to accept each other's feelings and learn to live with each other. Every child and every parent is unique, yet they have to find ways to relate in a respectful and preferably loving way with each other. This is not a natural process; it needs to be stimulated and nurtured. Differences of views and feelings do not need to endanger family relations.

Parents and school

Parents can help their child to choose and help the school of their children to be a safe environment for sexual diversity. The school provides a learning environment and the best learning evolves in positive interaction with other children. Schooling also plays not only a role in transferring technical information, but has an important role in the development of personality.

For parents it is important to select a school which ensures the safety of children to be themselves. You can check this by asking what the school policy is on social safety, how they deal with bullying in general, what kind of experience they have with gay and lesbian students and what kind of measures the school takes to counter homophobic or transphobic bullying.

It is also important that the school provides an adequate curriculum for a variety of students. It would be very helpful if the school has adequate non-discrimination and sexuality education programs which include LGBT issues. This is both relevant when you own child is LGB or T and when your child is heterosexual.