

LGBTQ+ School Resource Pack



Southend Youth Council

September 2021

Introduction

Foreword from Chelsea, Former LGBTQ+ Chair

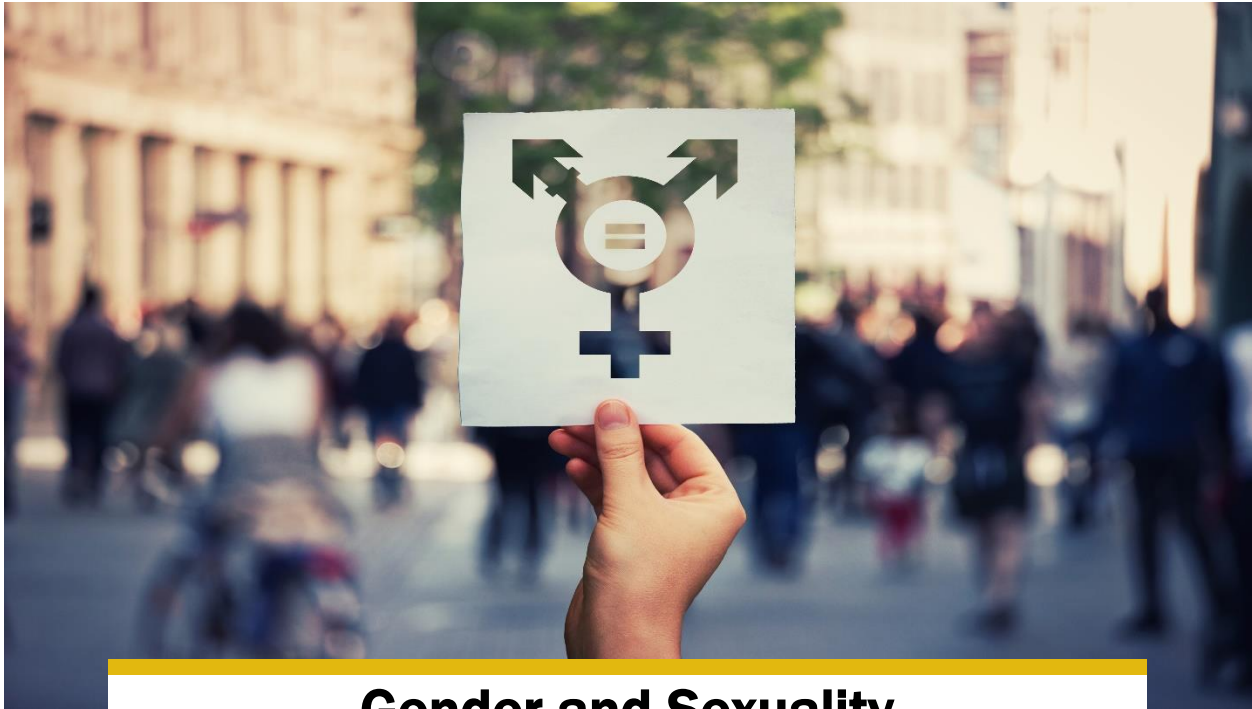
Thank you for taking the time to read this resource pack, we are happy to educate those who may not have as much knowledge about LGBTQ+ youth.

Most of the information in this pack has been written by LGBTQ+ youth, who have volunteered and taken the time to help plan and construct this.

Included in this pack are a range of views presented by our committee members who have extensively: researched, shared experiences and cross-referenced case studies, to create a list of some dos and don'ts in certain scenarios as well as, a list of charities and support groups for these vulnerable youths.

Art work created by Southend
Youth Council member, Grace





Gender and Sexuality

Gender and sexuality can be a confusing topic. This knowledge is not meant to confuse us, it is meant to bring us all closer together to become informed professionals and help all those we work with. Treating everyone as individuals and not discriminating or not favoring them lies at the heart of good quality education.

Gender: Gender refers to the way in which a person feels and thinks about themselves, and the way they dress, speak or move. This can be different to the 'sex' they were given at birth.

Sexuality: Sexuality describes your sexual preferences. Sexual orientation makes up a part of someone's sexuality, however, it covers more than just who a person is attracted to. Your sexuality is what you enjoy and how you enjoy it, whether that is about partners or activities.

How to support LGBTQ+ youth

- **Your Assumptions are wrong:** When addressing your class, try to be more inclusive of these different genders and sexualities and use the mandatory [Relationships and sex education \(RSE\) and health education](#). As we have progressed as a society, it has been engrained in our education that the idea of being heterosexual and cisgender is the norm, and although the majority of the population identifies this way, this is not true. Gender and sexuality are spectrums. Having the belief that heterosexual and cisgender are the default, paints the idea the sexuality and gender are a choice.
- **Choose your words carefully:** Words have power behind them, and when using them we often forget that they can be harmful towards other. When having conversation with LGBTQ+ youth be respectful and choose your words so that they are not dismissive. For example, phrases like “sexual preference” and “changing gender” can be offensive.
- **Don’t out people:** Confidentiality is important. Often, many LGBTQ+ youth are not safe at home or at school. If someone comes out to you, it's imperative that this is kept confidential to ensure safety. Except in the case where their safety is threatened. (AKT)
- **Be a role model for kindness and inclusion:** As a teacher, it’s important that you set the standard for equality. If you notice anyone being homophobic or transphobic (including other teachers), consult and educate them on their behaviour. This will set an example for other students to encourage equality. Challenge homophobia, transphobia and biphobia and use this as an opportunity to educate.
- **Create safe spaces:** Create spaces within the school grounds for LGBTQ+ youth to find comfort, doing this allows LGBTQ+ youth; to find a community within the school, make sure they’re not alone and can comfortably have discussions about their feelings.
- **Research and stay informed on LGBTQ+ issues:** When teaching LGBTQ+ youth make sure you know the ins and outs of current information surrounding LGBTQ+ topics, this shows you care for the community; helping those apart of it and correctly educating those who don’t know as much.
 - **Links to reports & resources:**
 - ['Growing up LGBTQ+'](#)
 - [UCL survey](#) during lockdown; ore than two-thirds of LGBTQ+ people exhibited significant symptoms of depression during lockdown
 - [Stonewall 2017 Schools Report](#)

What not to say to LGBTQ+ youth

- **Make sure you are using the correct pronouns:** It's important to use the right pronouns for people, so that you are affirming their identity and showing your acceptance of them. Also, it allows people to express their gender/sexuality. If someone tells you their pronouns it is paramount to use them and allow people to feel validated with something so small being normalized and accepted. Please do not intentionally use the wrong pronouns for people as this can be upsetting.
- **Do not use deadnames:** Deadnaming occurs when someone, intentionally or not, refers to people who are transgender by the name they used before they transitioned. For transgender people, undergoing a name change can be an affirming step in their transition and allows them to begin to see themselves as the gender they know themselves to be. If you use a person's deadname it can be upsetting as well as hurtful. Being outed like this can be stressful and lead to discrimination and harassment as trans people are far from having the same rights and acceptance as cisgender people.
- **Sexuality is not a "choice" or a "phase":** For people who have come out about their sexuality it can be invalidating for their identity to be seen as just a phase as things like gender and sexuality are fluid and what a person knows themselves to be is not a fleeting decision, just like how being cisgender or heterosexual is not a phase. Also, sexuality is not a choice and should be considered as a part of someone's identity.



Southend High School for Boys LGBTQ+ Committee Case Study

Southend High School for Boys operates a number of student-led equalities committees. A member of staff at the school has been designated the 'Equalities Coordinator' who is responsible for overseeing all equality-related activities and other related actions. At the beginning of the year, the coordinator held a meeting for sixth-form students where the different committees were set up. Committees were created based on the protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010, although some were put together such as sexual orientation and gender identity were merged into an LGBTQ+ Committee rather than having 2 separate committees. Outside of that initial meeting, the coordinator has mostly taken a step-back from the committees and has let the sixth-form students work independently.



Looking specifically at the LGBTQ+ Committee, the membership consists of a number of students from the sixth form, most are members of the LGBTQ+ community, however there are also members who identify as cisgender and heterosexual. This committee works both online and in person, working to improve LGBTQ+ education across the school.

Examples of actions taken by the Committee include:

- Hosting assemblies for younger year groups to raise awareness of LGBTQ+ issues
- Writing articles for the school newspaper
- Creating an equalities Instagram account and posting information on there
- Working with teaching staff to make sure PSHE education is inclusive, representative and accurate to the lived experiences of queer people
- Curating a notice board in the school with information regarding the LGBTQ+ community
- Fundraising for the committee and LGBTQ+ charities
- Preparing to host events for Pride month

Setting up an LGBTQ+ Committee doesn't need to be difficult. Find some friends who share the same goals as you and talk to your school's equalities coordinator (they may go by a different title), or another senior member of staff. Explain why you think it's important to set up a committee, and off you go!

Feel free to use the ideas mentioned above or do something else which helps to show your pride! Case study written by Southend Youth Council member, Oliver.

LGBTQ+ charities and support

- [BROOK](#) free and confidential sexual health and wellbeing experts.
- [Brook Southend service](#) Southend sexual health provider.
- [akt - LGBTQ+ youth homelessness charity](#) supports lgbtq+ young people aged 16-25 in the uk who are facing or experiencing homelessness or living in a hostile environment.
- [Southend Pride](#)
- [COLOURS Youth Network](#) uplifts, empowers and supports young black and people of colour who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, intersex (QTIBPOC) aged 16-25, to explore and celebrate who they are through meaningful connections to other young people and a team of experienced QTIBPOC youth workers.
- [Elton John AIDS Foundation](#) funds frontline partners to prevent infections, fight stigma and provide treatment with love, compassion and dignity for the most vulnerable groups affected by HIV around the world.
- [Stonewall](#) stand for lesbian, gay, bi, trans, queer, questioning and ace (LGBTQ+) people everywhere.
- [Livewell Southend](#) Southend's health and wellbeing website.
- [LGBT Foundation](#) is a national charity delivering advice, support and information services to lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) communities.
- [Mind | Essex | South East and Central Essex Mind](#) supporting mental health in the community.
- [Transpire](#) transgender support network Southend-On-Sea.



Thank you for reading our resource pack, we hope you found it useful. Southend Youth Council is open to young people aged 11-18 who live or go to school in Southend.

For more information about Southend Youth Council please visit the [Southend Youth Council website](#) or follow us on Twitter [@sosyouthcouncil](#).

We would like to thank the Brook team for their feedback in developing this pack.

If you have any questions about the pack please email youthmayor@southend.gov.uk